

## The different languages of Kola Saami literature

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The history of Kola Saami fictional literature is generally considered to begin in 1989, when Oktiabrina Voronova (1934–1990) published her bilingual poetry collection *Jaalla/Žizn'* in Saami and Russian. Voronova's sister Iraida Vinogradova (1936–2004) published mainly poems for children in the 1990s and 2000s. In our paper, we describe how Voronova's and Vinogradova's texts, and the discussion concerning them, are related to Saami ethnic and language revival. Our starting point is the idea that the production of literature in the Saami languages has played a central role in the revival project.

In the popular-scientific discourse on Kola Saami writing Voronova is represented as the “first Saami poet in Russia” precisely because she was the first writer to publish in Saami (Bol'shakova 2012; Sergejeva 1995). Like Voronova, the Skolt Saami writer Askol'd Bazhanov (1934–2012) started publishing in the 1970s, but solely in Russian (Rießler 2018b). The emphasis on the language of publication is also evident in earlier Soviet discourse. Thus, Bazhanov is presented in the anthology of young Murmansk writers *Stupeni* (see Zaitsev 1979) as “a Saami poet” who writes in both Saami and Russian. This is wrong because Bazhanov had virtually no knowledge of the then evolving written standard for Saami used in the Soviet Union (cf. Bol'shakova 2021) and based on Kildin Saami language. Bazhanov, however, was a native speaker of Skolt Saami.

Similarly, the sisters Voronova and Vinogradova were not native speakers of Kildin Saami, but Ter Saami. However, both took active part in language planning activities for standardized written Kildin Saami. This regards in particular their co-authorship of primers, readers, and didactic materials, in addition to the aforementioned literary production.

Interestingly, whereas Vinogradova's literary texts follow the orthography for standard written Kildin Saami, Voronova's Saami language production has been described as Ter Saami in the literature (e.g. Gaski 1996). At the same time, it has never been clearly described what makes her text “Ter Saami” – a language which is otherwise not known to have been used in writing by any other author to date.

Moreover, the way in which the collection has been produced raises some questions. Voronova had published in Russian earlier; primary sources (Smirnov 1995), scientific-

popular discourse (Bakula 2012) and research (Bakula 2019) suggest that Voronova originally wrote her texts in Saami and then translated them together with the Murmansk writer Vladimir Smirnov into Russian. It is, however, highly unlikely that Smirnov knew any form of Saami. It is also noteworthy that the Saami and Russian sections in *Jaalla/Žizn'* are not identical but differ in both form and content. A similar difference can also be seen in Iraida Vinogradova's bilingual texts.

In our paper, we examine the above problematic in the context of Kola Saami and pan-Saami ethnic and linguistic revival and the production of minority literatures in the Soviet Union and Russia. Our main research question is how and for what purpose have Saami languages been used as literary languages within the Saami revival in the Soviet Union and Russia in the 1980s–2000s. The primary material consists of different language versions of Voronova's and Vinogradova's texts as well as of scientific-popular discourse on Kola Saami literature.

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