
**Documentation of Kven culture:**

**bibliographies and databases**

The focus of this article will be the bibliographic work about the Kvens and the presentation of that work on the Internet and the World Wide Web. First I will give a definition of the term Kven and a brief outline of the Kven migration to northern Norway.

**Definition of the term Kven**

Who are the Kvens and what does the term Kven mean?

There has been much controversy about this question in recent years especially in the early nineties when there was a heated discussion in the newspapers.

A lexical definition would say that it is a descendant of Finnish speaking people who immigrated to northern Norway over a period of several centuries.

A lot of people would not like to call themselves Kven however because of the derogatory connotations of this etnym. This is a result of discrimination and suppression of this minority group by the Norwegian authorities especially before the Second World War. After the war there has been a rehabilitation of the term.

**Kven migration to northern Norway**

**Historical background**

The Kvens came from northern Finland and from the Tornedalen of northern Sweden. We may see this immigration as a continuation of Finnish farmers colonization of Finnish and Swedish Lapland. This colonization moved gradually northwards until it reached the borders of present Norway in the eighteenth century. From there they moved into northern Troms and western Finnmark into the areas of Skibotn, Alta, Børselv and Tana. The largest wave of immigration came in the next century and this time it took an eastern course to the Varanger area with a concentration to the city of Vadsø. In a number of places they actually made up the majority of
the population. In the nineteenth century there also was a large wave of immigration of Kvens to the Kåfjord copperworks near Alta.

The historical terms Kven and Kvenland are much older dating back to the account of Ottar to king Alfred in the ninth century. They refer to a people living in an area north of Sweden and to the east of northern Norway. Kvens and Kvenland can also be found in the saga literature, in Egil Skallagrimson's saga from the beginning of the 13th century. According to the Finnish historian Jouku Vahtola Kvenland means a depressed low humid land and this fits into the area around the the Gulf og Bothnia. The terms are linguistically connected to the present day Kainuu, Kainuunmaa and Kainulaiset. This hypothesis is controversial.

After the Second World War there has been a new wave of immigration from northern Finland to the fishing industries in northern Norway. This was a labour migration which started in the nineteen sixties and faded out in the eighties. These labour migrants would not use the term Kven about themselves.

Today there are quite a number of Kvens or descendants from Finnish speaking peoples in northern Norway. It is difficult to estimate the exact number because of the integration and intermarriage of the population and the strong Norwegianization of the authorities before the war. The last time the Kvens were recorded as a separate group was in the census of 1930. 8215 persons called themselves Kvens. There are reasons to believe that the actual number was higher. The low estimate is a result of the suppression of the authorities.

In recent years there is a growing consciousness about Kven identity and Kven culture centering around language, education, media and other cultural expressions.

**Organization of Kvens**

In 1987 Norske Kveners Forbund was founded and this organization demands the status as a national minority the same as the Saami. In 1995 a Kven newspaper was started which has a relatively large circulation: **Ruijan Kaiku** The title means Echo from Norway. It is bilingual in Norwegian and Finnish. There are at the moment two newspapers the other being **Ruijan sanomat** (news from Norway) published by Vadsø finnish society and North Norwegian Finnish organization.

**Literature about the Kvens**

As a result of this growing consciousness and searching for identity and family roots there has been a growing increase in the literature about the Kvens. In the wake of better organizational and financing conditions there has been written about almost every aspect of Kven culture: history, migration, folklore, linguistics, place names, social aspects, music tradition etc. Last year there even was two television productions. A steady stream of articles, books, thesis and dissertation have seen the light of day. I have tried to present this in an illustration. As we can see from this illustration covering the last decade there has been two theses for the doctorate, one in linguistics and one in ethnology. In addition there has been a large number of post-graduate thesis totalling 15 in all. This is largely due to a special program initiated by the Norwegian Research Council for promoting Kven studies and research. The subjects covered are linguistics, history, church history, politics, migration, education and literary science. 7 monographies have
been published within largely the same fields together with 6 committee reports which is quite a high number. The primary cause for this is the authorities' need for background information as a basis for political and financial initiatives. One collection of Kven texts or anthology and three local history books have been published in the same period.

So much for the literature about the Kvens. Such a high number of publications demands a bibliographical supervision so to speak.

**Kven bibliographies**

The first Kven bibliography appeared in 1981 with the title: "Forsøk til en "kvensk" bibliografi" (Attempt at a Kven bibliography). Notice the quotation marks around "Kven" which indicates an uncertainty in the use of the term Kven. The bibliography is a joint Nordic effort. It is written by Håvard Dahl Bratrein from Tromsø Museum, Carl-Uno Hanno from The labour and popular movements archives in Luleå, Venke Olsen from Trondheim and Lassi Saressalo from University of Turku.

It is only a leaflet of 25 pages and about 300 records. It is alphabetically arranged with very scant information barely enough to identify the literature. It contains references to books and monographies, periodical articles and some newspaper articles. One of the authors, Lassi Saressalo informed me that much of the basis for this bibliography was collected from the card catalogue in Rovaniemi public library.

The historical background for this bibliography are the many projects and reports about the situation of the Kvens in the nineteen seventies and the great Kven seminar in Rovaniemi in 1980. In the so-called "Varanger project" which was led by Tromsø Museum, researchers from Norway and Finland participated. The research situation in the early eighties created a demand for survey of the Kven literature. The first attempt at a Kven bibliography was a cooperation between researchers from Norway, Finland and Sweden and the recorded literature is Norwegian, Finnish and Swedish.

This bibliography was followed up by an enlarged version of the leaflet from 1981. It was published in 1987 in a series from Tromso Museum called Tromura. It has the same alphabetical arrangement and the simple layout of the earlier version. The number of pages was doubled but most of the new records were from the eighties so the bibliography can rather be seen as an update than a new version. The bibliography was part of a large research program called "Sami and Kven language, history and culture" financed by the Norwegian Research Council and the Academy of Finland in Åbo. The subproject had the title "Finnish/Kven cultural research in Norway. The main disciplines were ethnology and folkloristics with main emphasis on traditions and culture. But if you look through the records you will soon notice that the records refers to disciplines like linguistics, history, law and rights questions, ethnology and folklore, religion and church history, education and politics especially security policy in short a broad specter of fields within humanities and social science.

I made an update of this bibliography with records from the databases MINTTU/KDOK (Lapponica database from Rovaniemi) UBO:BOK and BIBSYS (national and university databases from Norway). It is just a leaflet and an attachment to a guide to searches in Nordic
The title is "Finns in Northern Troms and Finnmark". It was only meant as an example how you can edit bibliographic records from different bibliographic databases.

In 1994 I got financial support from Norwegian-Finnish cultural foundation to update earlier Kven bibliographies. I scanned electronically the bibliography from 1987 and added new records. At the same time I regorganized the records and divided the bibliography into an alphabetical and a chronological part. The latter is meant to give an overview of recent literature and literature published at a specific time. The bibliography was published in connection with the convention of Norwegian Kven Organization in Tromsø and a conference arranged by the University of Tromsø with the title: "The Kvens - a forgotten minority".

**Presentation on the Internet**

Then in 1997 I received a grant from Statens bibliotektilsyn (Norwegian library council) to update the bibliography and publish it on the Internet. It is called Kvensk database.

A special bibliography by Just Qvigstad (the celebrated Norwegian expert on Saami affairs) on Saami and Kvens in Norwegian newspapers from the last century was also made accessible on the Internet. It is an electronic conversion of Qvigstad's handwritten notes.

To publish the bibliography on the Internet was not a difficult task. The main job was to update the records from 1994 to 1997. It is now updated regularly. The home page contains links to other relevant databases for example the Aurora database in Rovaniemi where the Kven newspaper "Ruijan kaiku" is indexed. The articles here are therefore not indexed in my bibliography. In addition there are links to the Norwegian-Finnish organization in Tromsø and the National Documentation project in Norway.

Within the Documentation project we recorded some material which may be interesting to Kven research among other things the ethnographical maps of Jens Andreas Friis (1821-1896).

Friis was professor of Saami language at the University of Christiania. The maps are an important contemporary source to the ethnical composition of the population in Finnmark and Tromsø (the relationship between Saami, Kvens and Norwegians). By using special symbols the maps give detailed information about place of residence, size of population, language, housing situation etc. Three series of maps were published the first one in 1861-1862 containing only the county of Finnmark. These maps were revised in 1888 and enlarged with the county of Tromsø and Lofoten parish in the county of Nordland in 1890.

My Kven homepage also has a link to a database in Finland which contains information about the Kvens.

It is bilingual in Finnish and English and has practical information about travel, photographs of Kven places, references to useful addresses, recent literature. It has links to other sources of information about the Kvens. Gradually there has been published a lot of information about the Kvens on the Internet. The Web information is an excellent first introduction to the Kvens and the Kven culture. It seems as if this activity takes place by accident and uncoordinated.
What do we want to do with our homepage

The most important part of our homepage is of course the bibliography part. These bibliographies (alphabetical and chronological) are pure textfiles. The records are rather primitive, barely sufficient to identify the literature. There is no subject classification. What we want to do is first of all to record the literature in a separate bibliographic database like for instance MikroMarc. It would then be recorded in marc format (standard export format) with possibilities for classification codes for subject, placenames, names of persons etc. Within the Documentation project we recorded various North-Norwegian local history bibliographies with MikroMarc ("North-Norwegian topographical and local history bibliography").

The arrangement of recording which we worked out for this bibliography could be transferred to Kven bibliography. It is a big job and would demand that we look into each record for correction and supplement. It presupposes the use of qualified librarian who can handle the marc format. Our model could be the Saami bibliography at the National Library in Rana.

In the same way as the North-Norwegian bibliographies the Kven bibliography could also be published on the Internet for example on MikroMarc's server in Oslo.

From bibliography to database

Even if the bibliography is the most important thing for us as library workers we would also like to record other material than books like for instance texts from important Kven books, photographies, sound etc. In this way the documentation of Kven culture could be made into a multimedia database.

We have relevant material at the University of Tromsø, at Tromsø Museum and Finnish Institute at the Faculty of Humanities. In the library we have the books and the literature. We could scan and convert a selection of important Kven literature with links from the records in the bibliography part.

At Tromsø Museum the "Kven archive" contains the following parts:

Catalogue of the Kven archive of Tromsø Museum

I. Collection of Anton Sommerseth
   o Copy of manuscript (Folkloristic material of Anton Sommerseth - A.S. was tradesman from Skibotn)

II. Collection of Samuli Paulaharju
   A. Correspondence
      1. Letters to Samuli Paulaharju
      2. Letters from Samuli Paulaharju to J.K. Qvigstad
   B. Samuli Paulaharju's field notes from nineteen twenties and thirties
   C. Samuli Paulaharju's drawings

III. Venke Olsen's interviews from Skibotn 1968
IV. SKNA (Suomen kielen nauhoitearkisto) Helsinki - Tape archive of the Finnish language (Helsiki, 1971-72)  
   ○ interviews

V. Material from Varanger 1973-1974  
   A. Interviews  
   B. Descriptions and drawings of houses  
   C. Field notes  
   D. Diaries

VI. Material from Bugøynes, Joensuun korkeakoulu - University of Joensuu, 1975  
   ○ interviews

VII. The Kven Project  
   A. Correspondence  
   B. Interviews

VIII. (Norwegian) Committee of Resources 1975  
   A. Correspondence  
   B. Interviews  
   C. Various material  
   D. Diaries

IX. Norwegian Ethnological Research (Norsk Etnologisk Gransking NEG)  
   A. Questionnaires  
   B. Answers

X. Various material  
   ○ catalogues, articles, seminars  
   ○ etc

At the Finnish institute we find this material:

- Transcribed samples of Kven dialects from different parts of Finnmark and northern Troms  
- Kven place names from Finnmark and northern Troms  
- Morphological collection of Kven dialects of Nordreisa, Børselv in Porsanger and Vestre Jakobselv in Vadsø

This material could be enlarged with other material from Finland.

Problems with converting and publishing the material
There are great problems with converting this material electronically concerning questions of copyright and protection of privacy. A lot of this material could be sensitive. According to the law of archives you have to get permission for establishing archives of personal records. A first
step could be to work out detailed general catalogues and publish them on the Internet to give an overview of what is actually at hand. Literature older than 75 years of the author's death can be published freely.

**Organization of the database**

The best way to organize this database would be to arrange it topographically. From a specific place the Kven database could contain references to Kven literature, texts from Kven books and the archive material.

A multimedia database could as no other media document the Kven culture. The system must be open for additional material for example in the educational system. In this way the database could contribute to cultural and local identity. It could be very useful in schools and universities. It could also be a helpful instrument for state and local authorities in shaping a good minority policy.

*Tor Sveum*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Litteratur om kvenene</th>
<th>1988-1998</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. avh.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lingvistikk</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etnologi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hovedoppg.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lingvistikk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stedsnavn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(sosiologi)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>historie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>politikk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>migrasjon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kirkehistorie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pedagogikk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lingvistikk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pedagogikk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>politikk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>litter.vitenskap</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>migrasjon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monografi/avh.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>historie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biografi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>migrasjon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>historie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>politikk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stedsnavn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapporter/utredninger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tekstsaml/antologier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bygdebøker m/kvenskstoff</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tornedalen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porsanger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LITERATUR OM KVENE 1988-1998

**DOKTORAVHANDLINGER:**

Saressalo, Lassi  
Dr.avh.

Lindgren, Anna-Riitta  
Avhandling (doktorgrad) - Tromssan yliopisto, 1992.

**HOVEDFAGSOPPGAVER:**

Skoge, Klaus  

Ryymin, Teemu  
Hovedoppgave i historie - Universitetet i Bergen, 1998 I.

Bogetvedt, Helena  
Hovedoppgave i finsk litteratur - Universitetet i Tromsø, 1998.

Soleim, Marianne Neerland  
Hovedoppgave i historie - Universitetet i Tromsø, 1998.
Sundelin, Egil W.
Utdanning og ulikhet : forsterker særegne religiøse og etniske forhold utdanningsulik-hetene i Finnmark?. - Tromsø : Universitetet i Tromsø, 1997. - 166 s. -
Hovedoppgave ved ISV, seksjon for sosiologi og sosialpolitikk.

Utvik, Hanne Elin
Norske ord i finsk språkdrakt : en studie av nyere skandinaviske substantivlån i kvensk/rujafinsk tekstmateriale med hovedvekt på norske lån. - Tromsø : [H.E. Utvik], 1996. - 293 s., 5 vedlegg : kart
Hovedoppgave i finsk språk - Universitetet i Tromsø, 1996

Seppola, Bjørnar
Hovedoppgave i finsk språk

Flå, Vibeke
Hovedoppgave i historie
(Omfatter også finske innvandrere som videreutvandrer til Amerika)

Skjesol, Hanne Moesgaard
Kirkens rolle i kvænfornorskningen : med utgangspunkt i Varanger stift 1877-1888 : spesialfordypning i kirkehistorie / ved Hanne Moesgaard Skjesol. - Oslo : Universitetet i Oslo, høsten 1995. -
Hovedoppgave i historie

Mauno, Hanne Marit H.
[Hovedoppgave i historie - Universitetet i Tromsø, 1994].

Antonsen, Jan
Hovedoppgave i historie

Rushfeldt, Reidun

Andreassen, Irene
Hovedoppgave i finsk språk

Pedersen, Aud-Kirsti
Hovedoppgave i nordisk - Universitetet i Tromsø, 1988.

Junttila, Jorid Hjulstad
Hovudoppgåve i nordisk språk : Universitetet i Tromsø.

**MONOGRAFIER/AVHANDLINGER**

Kaukiainen, Leena

Imerslund, Bente
Finske stedsnavn i Nordreisa / Bente Imerslund. - (Storslett) : Nordreisa kommune, 1993. - 208 s. : ill. ; 31 cm + 3 kart (60 x 42 cm fold. til 30 x 21 cm) + rettelser (1 bl.). Under tittelen: Boka er bygd på samlingene til Anna-Riitta Lindgren og Petri Hiltunen.
ISBN 82-993078-0-5 (ib.)

Jensen, Eivind Bråstad
ISBN 82-7380-158-6

Søndergaard, Bent

Korkiasaari, Jouni
Harju, Marjut
Samuli Paulaharju : Ruijanrannan reppuherra. - Helsinki : Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 1989. - 332 s. - (Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran Toimituksia ; 490)

Mellem, Reidun
ISBN 82-991755-1-8

RAPPORTER/UTREDNINGER

Kvenenes historie og kultur (1997 : Nordreisa)
(Anmeldt i Nordlys 15.6.98, s. 6: Asbjørn Jaklin: Bok om den usynlige minoriteten)

Karikoski, Elin


Seppola, Bjørnar


Evaluering av forskningsprogrammet Samisk og kvensk språk, historie og kultur / (Evert Baudou ... et al.). - (Oslo?) : Rådet for humanistisk forskning (RHF), Norges allmenvitenskapelige forskningsråd (NAVF), 1992. - 89 s.
ISBN 82-7216-798-0
**TEKSTSAMLINGER/ANTOLOGIER**

Mellem, Reidun  
ISBN 82-993308-0-7

**BYGDEBØKER MED KVENSK STOFF**

Pettersen, Arvid  
(Bygdebok for Porsanger b. 2)


Nielsen, Jens Petter  
ISBN 82-992148-0-7