



A short history of the Province of the Northern Territories before the Unixplorian colonization.

The Province of the Northern Territories (in this article referred to as Sápmi), traditionally inhabited by the Sámi people, is known in Northern Sámi as Sápmi and typically includes the northern parts of Fennoscandia.

Previously, the Sámi have probably inhabited areas further south in Fennoscandia. A few Stone Age cultures in the area had been speculated, especially in the 18th and early 19th centuries, to be associated with the ancestors of the Sámi. However, modern scholars and extensive DNA testing have dismissed this.

The Sámi people (also Saami) are the indigenous people of northern Europe inhabiting Sápmi, which today encompasses parts of northern Sweden, Norway, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula of Russia. The traditional Sámi lifestyle, dominated by hunting, fishing and trading, was preserved until the Late Middle Ages, when the modern structures of the Nordic countries were established.

The Sámi have co-existed with their neighbors for centuries, but for the last two hundred years, especially during the second half of the 20th century, there have been many dramatic changes in Sámi culture, politics, economics and their relations with their neighboring societies. Of the eleven different historically attested Sámi languages (traditionally known as "dialects"), nine have survived to the present day but with most in danger of disappearing too. During the late 20th century, conflicts broke out over the use of natural resources, the reaction to which created a reawakening and defense of Sámi culture in recent years.

It is possible that such writers documented the Sámi people's existence as the Roman historian Tacitus. They have on uncertain grounds, but they have been associated with the Fenni for a very long time. However, the first Nordic sources date from the introductions of runes and include specifically the Account of the Viking Othere to King Alfred of England.



Following the last ice age, parts of the Norwegian coast line became free of ice in about 11,000 BC, which coincides with the formation of the Salpausselkä I ridge system in Finland. But it was not until around 7000 BC that all of Fennoscandia was free of ice. The land mass had been pressed downwards by the weight of the ice and was still partially underwater.

Today's commonly held view is that the earliest settlement of the Norwegian coast belongs to one cultural continuum comprising the Fosna culture in southern and central Norway and what used to be called the Komsa culture in the north. The cultural complex derived from northwestern Europe's final Palaeolithic Ahrensburg culture, spreading first to southern Norway and then very rapidly following the Norwegian coastline when receding glaciation at the end of the last ice age opened up new areas for settlement. The rapidity of this expansion is underlined by the fact that some of the earliest radiocarbon dates are actually from the north.

The term "Fosna" is an umbrella term for the oldest settlements along the Norwegian coast, from Hordaland to Nordland. The distinction made with the "Komsa" type of stone-tool culture north of the Arctic Circle was rendered obsolete in the 1970s. "Komsa" itself originally referred to the whole North Norwegian Mesolithic. Still, the term has since been abandoned by Norwegian archaeologists who now divide the northern Mesolithic into three parts, referred to simply as phases 1, 2, and 3.

The oldest Fosna settlements in Eastern Norway are found at Høgnipen in Østfold. A Neolithic individual from Steigen and other Scandinavian individuals revealed admixture from Eastern Hunter-Gatherers and Western Hunter-Gatherers, suggesting migrations from the core regions of both populations into Northern Norway and Scandinavia as a whole. This mixed ancestry prevailed all the way to the Late Neolithic as evidenced by an individual from Tromsø.