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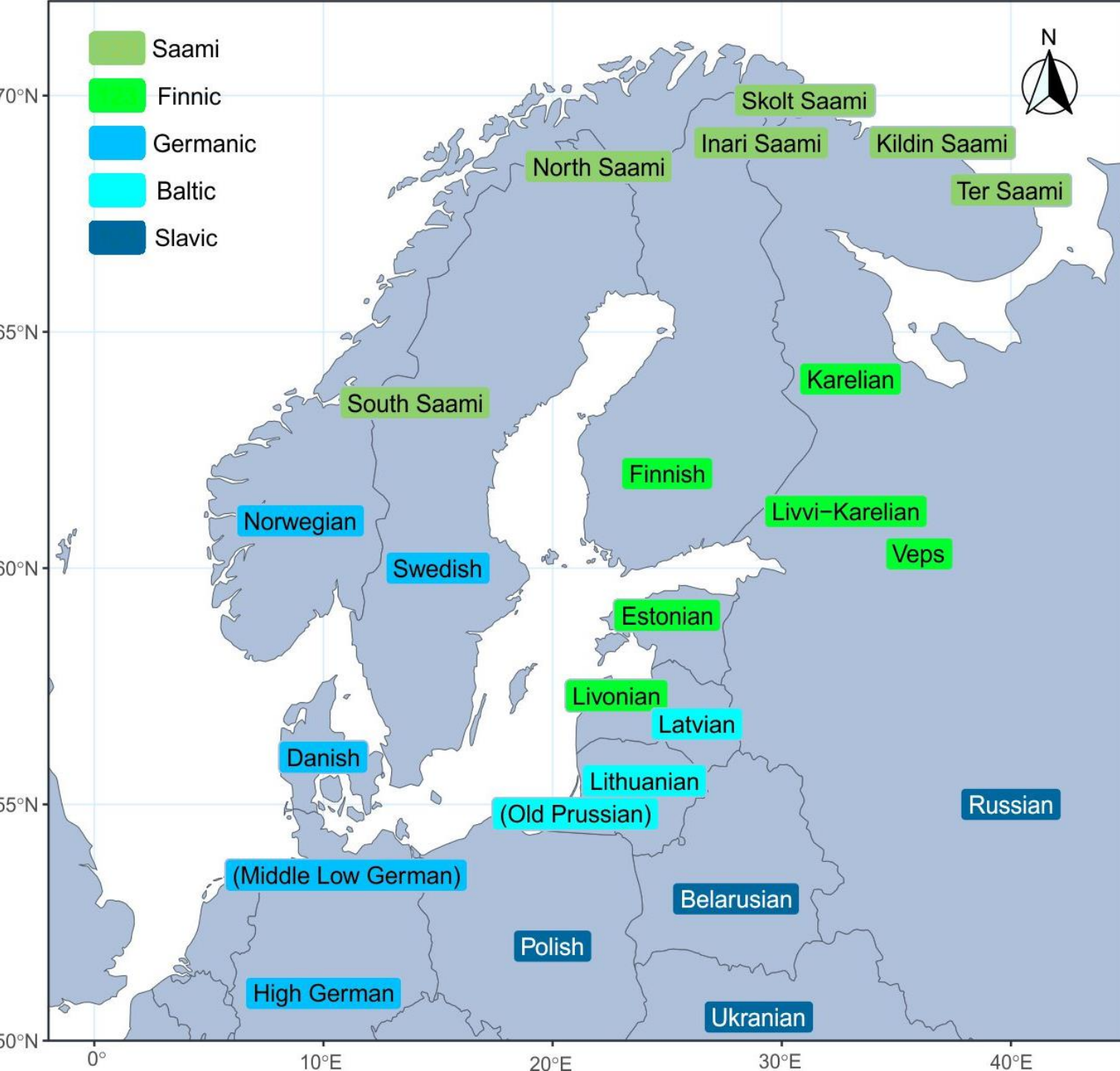
Circum-Baltic kinship terminologies through the lens of areal and contact studies

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Circum-Baltic Contact Superposition Zone (Koptjevskaja-Tamm & Wälchli 2001)

Convergences in grammar and phonology of the CB languages

- ❖ almost no isoglosses covering the whole area
- ❖ instead heterogenous overlapping macro- and micro-convergences belonging to different temporal strata
- ❖ micro-convergences are usually confined to 2–3 languages
- ❖ if more languages are involved, it can usually be explained by overlapping and superposition of language contacts that usually go beyond the CB area

Linguistic features correlate with historical events

- ❖ strikingly **high degree of continuity** as it has been populated by speakers of only 5 major language groups (Germanic, Baltic, Slavic, and Finnic and Sami) for the last 3-4 millennia
- ❖ **numerous multilingual areas**, intensive contacts, migrations, colonization, expansions, and constantly changing spheres of influence since prehistoric times

The aim of our research:

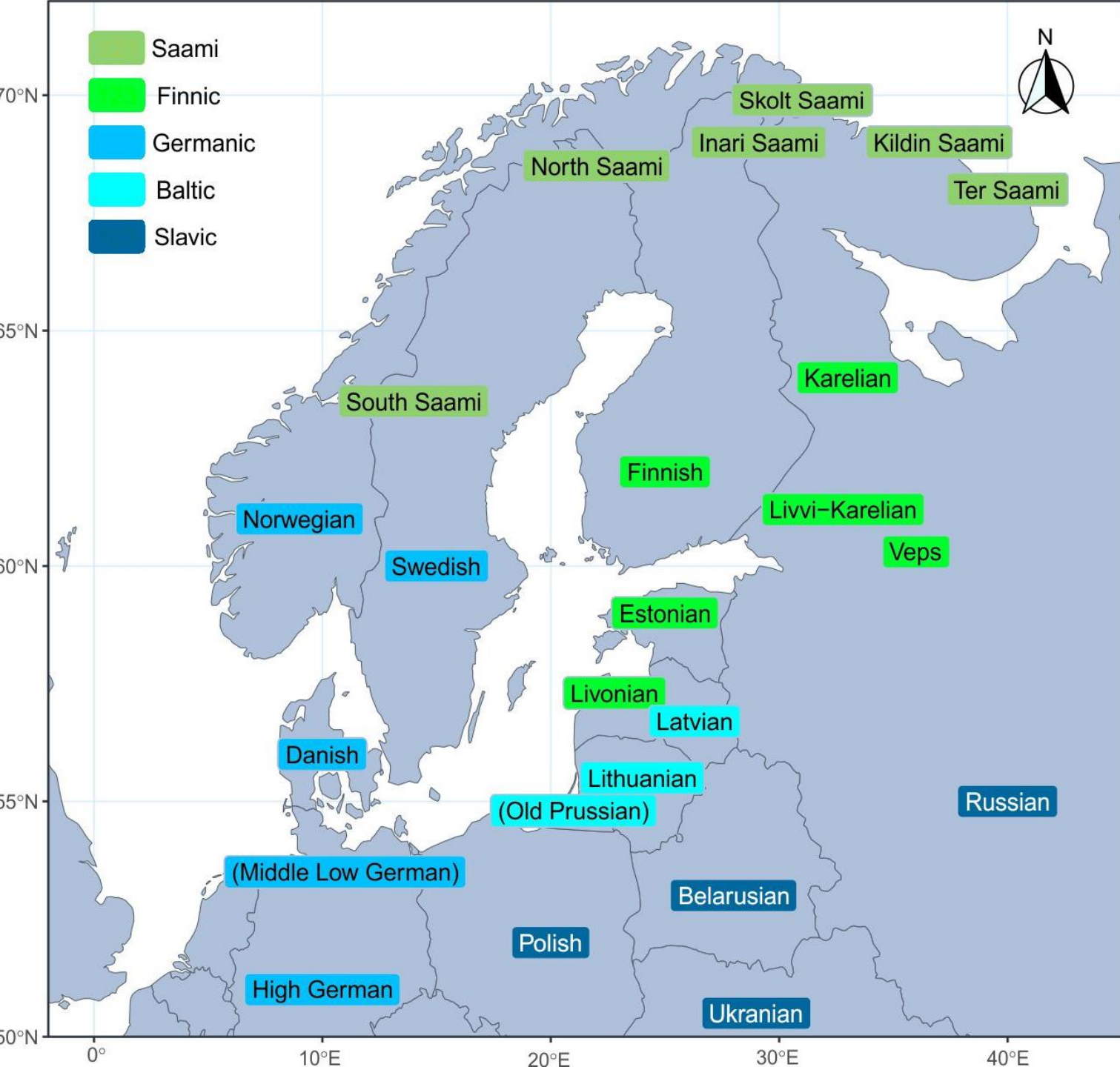
Study of Circum-Baltic kinship terminologies via the analysis of

- ❖ all kinds of borrowings (loanwords, calques, and loan blends)
- ❖ area-specific structural features

Research questions:

RQ1: Do convergences in CB kinship terminologies follow the same tendencies as convergences in grammar and phonology?

RQ2: Do CB kinship terminologies have area-specific structural features that make them different from other European kinship terminologies or unique in the global context?



Scope

Sources

- ❖ Kinbank: www.kinbank.net
- ❖ Kinura: A database of kinship terminology from the Uralic Language family [Data set]:
<https://zenodo.org/record/6673055>
- ❖ Parkin 2015

Convergences

Temporal strata of convergences:

Early convergences (borrowed before 1000 CE):

❖ loanwords

Late convergences (borrowed after 1000 CE):

❖ loanwords, calques, loan blends

Source	Recipient	Borrowings per branch
1. Early convergences (before 1000 CE)		
Proto-Finnic	Proto-Saami	4
Proto-Baltic	Proto-Finnic	4
	Proto-Saami (via Finnic)	2
Proto-Germanic	Proto-Finnic	2
	Proto-Saami	1
Proto-Norse/Early Old Norse	Proto-Saami	5
Later Old Norse	Saami languages	7
2. Late convergences (after 1000 CE)		
Middle Low German	Scandinavian	6
	Latvian	1
	Estonian	1
	Livonian (via Latvian)	1
	Finnish (via Scandinavian)	1
New High German	Polish	1
	Lithuanian (via Polish)	1
East Slavic	Lithuanian	3
	Yiddish	2
Russian	Veps	8
	Skolt Saami	3
Scandinavian	Finnish	3
	South Saami	1
Finnish	North Saami	4
Latvian	Livonian	2

loanwords
(number of borrowing events)

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	Finnish (via Scandinavian)	1
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	Yiddish	2
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Prehistoric contacts between the Finns and the Saami (Aikio 2012: 67–70)

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	Finnish (via Scandinavian)	1
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Russian	Veps	8
	Skolt Saami	3
Scandinavian	Finnish	3
	South Saami	1
Finnish	North Saami	4
Latvian	Livonian	2

Baltic loanwords in Finnic and Saami borrowed in the 1st millennium BCE (Kallio 2008, 2015: 78–79, 90)

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1. Early convergences (before 1000 CE)		
Proto-Finnic	Proto-Saami	4
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	Estonian	1
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	Finnish (via Scandinavian)	1
New High German	Polish	1
	Lithuanian (via Polish)	1
East Slavic	Lithuanian	3
	Yiddish	2
Russian	Veps	8
	Skolt Saami	3
Scandinavian	Finnish	3
	South Saami	1
Finnish	North Saami	4
Latvian	Livonian	2

Proto-Germanic or Northwest Germanic layer borrowed at the turn of the Era (Kallio 2012)

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Proto-Finnic	Proto-Saami	4
Proto-Baltic	Proto-Finnic	4
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	Estonian	1
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	Finnish (via Scandinavian)	1
New High German	Polish	1
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East Slavic	Lithuanian	3
	Yiddish	2
Russian	Veps	8
	Skolt Saami	3
Scandinavian	Finnish	3
	South Saami	1
Finnish	North Saami	4
Latvian	Livonian	2

Proto-Norse and Early Old Norse terms, borrowed possibly between 200 and 700 CE (Aikio 2012: 76–80)

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1. Early convergences (before 1000 CE)		
Proto-Finnic	Proto-Saami	4
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	Yiddish	2
Russian	Veps	8
	Skolt Saami	3
Scandinavian	Finnish	3
	South Saami	1
Finnish	North Saami	4
Latvian	Livonian	2

Viking Age loanwords

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Proto-Finnic	Proto-Saami	4
Proto-Baltic	Proto-Finnic	4
	Proto-Saami (via Finnic)	2
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	Estonian	1
	Livonian (via Latvian)	1
	Finnish (via Scandinavian)	1
New High German	Polish	1
	Lithuanian (via Polish)	1
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	Yiddish	2
Russian	Veps	8
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Scandinavian	Finnish	3
	South Saami	1
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MLG influence associated with the Hanseatic trade and the Teutonic Order (12th–16th cc.) and later German influences

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	Yiddish	2
Russian	Veps	8
	Skolt Saami	3
Scandinavian	Finnish	3
	South Saami	1
Finnish	North Saami	4
Latvian	Livonian	2

East Slavic influences:
Ruthenian in Lithuania (13th–
17th cc.) and Russian influence
on indigenous languages of
Russia (after the 17th century)

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1. Early convergences (before 1000 CE)		
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	Yiddish	2
Russian	Veps	8
	Skolt Saami	3
	Finnish	3
Scandinavian	South Saami	1
Finnish	North Saami	4
Latvian	Livonian	2

Recent micro-regional convergences in Fennoscandia and the Baltic States

Overlapping micro-convergences indeed

- ❖ Most convergences in the domain of kinship are confined to a few languages
- ❖ Macro-convergences covering more than a few languages are usually the result of a superposition (borrowing of etymologically related forms from different languages or dialects) or a chain-reaction borrowing ($A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C \rightarrow \dots$) and all of them go beyond the CB area.

Superposition

- ❖ Slavic term *vnuk* ‘grandson’ borrowed into many Uralic languages within and outside of the CB area embracing a large territory from the Volga-Kama region to Hungary (Metsäranta et al. accepted ms.) + Lithuanian *anūkas*
- ❖ But from different donor languages:
 - Lith. *anūkas* ‘grandson’ from Ruthenian
 - Veps *vunuk* ‘grandchild’ from a Russian dialect
 - Hung. *unoka* ‘grandchild’ from a South Slavic language

Superposition + chain-reaction borrowing

MLG *swāger* ‘male in-law’ with *swēgerinne* and *swēgersche* ‘mother- or sister-in-law’

→ Scandinavian (e.g., Dan. *svoger* ‘brother-in-law’ and *svigerinde* ‘sister-in-law’, Sw. *svåger* ‘brother-in-law’ *svägerska* ‘sister-in-law’) → Finnish dialects: *suoveri*, *suokeri*, *vuoveri* ‘brother-in-law’

NHG Schwager ‘brother-in-law’

→ Pol. *szwagier* → Lith. *švogeris*

(also outside of the CB area: Slovak *švagor*, Hung. *sógor* → Serbo-Croatian *šogor*)

Calques: MLG *elderen* ‘parents’

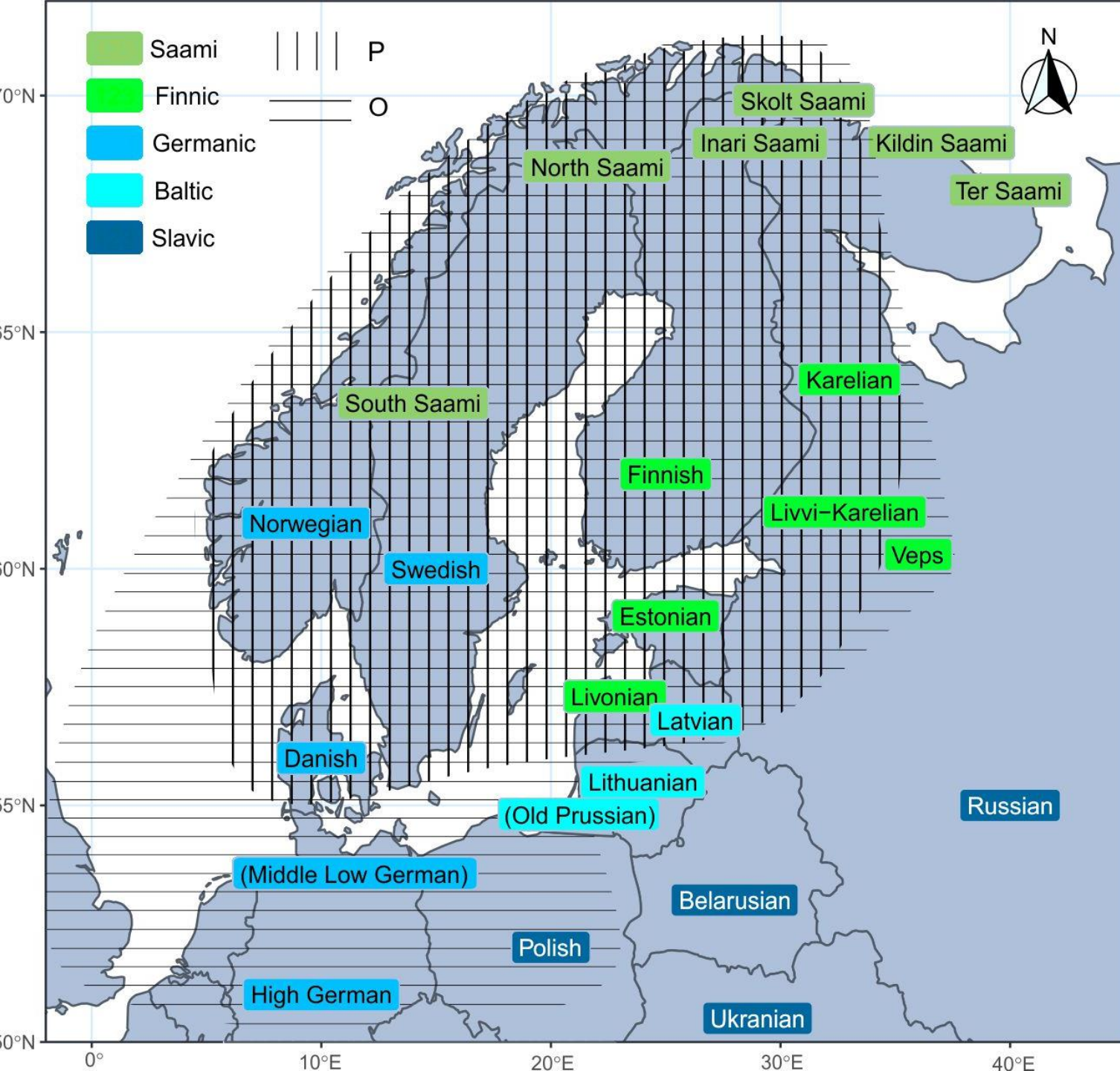
- (1) a. MLG
elderen
old-PL.CMPR
‘parents’
- b. Latvian
vecāki
old-PL.CMPR
‘parents’
- c. Estonian
vanemad
old-PL.CMPR
‘parents’

Calques: MLG *vōreldern* ‘ancestors’ (→ Scan. ‘parents’)

- (2) a. MLG
vōreldern
fore.old-PL.CMPR
‘ancestors’
- b. **Dan.**
forældre
fore.old-PL.CMPR
‘parents’
- c. **Sw.**
föräldrar
fore.old-PL.CMPR
‘parents’
- d. Est.
esivanemad
fore.old.-PL.CMPR
‘ancestors’

Calques: phrasal terms for non-primary blood relatives induced by Scandinavian

- (3) a. Sw.
barnbarn
child-GEN-child
'grandchild'
- b. Est.
lapselaps
child-GEN-child
'grandchild'
- c. SkSaami
pää'rn päärnaž
child-GEN-child
'grandchild'



Geographical distribution of Scandinavian phrasal terms (marked as P) and the MLG pattern '(fore-)older ones' = 'parents' (O)

The full list of lexical items under study can be downloaded on:

<https://kinura.univie.ac.at/materials/>



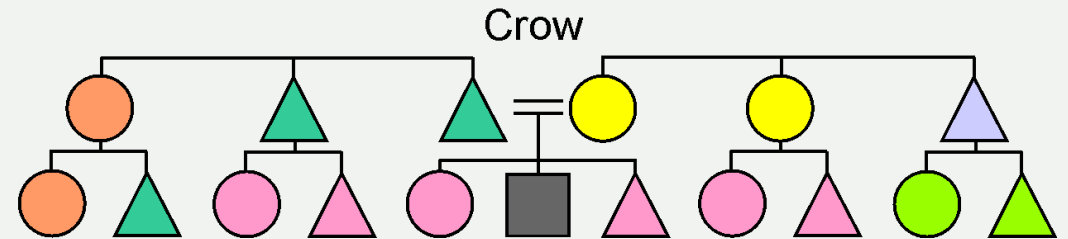
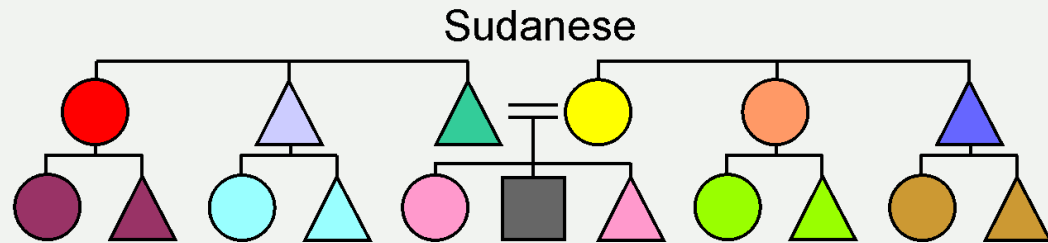
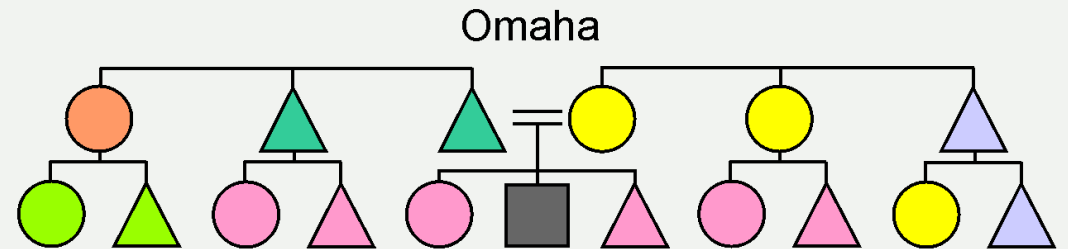
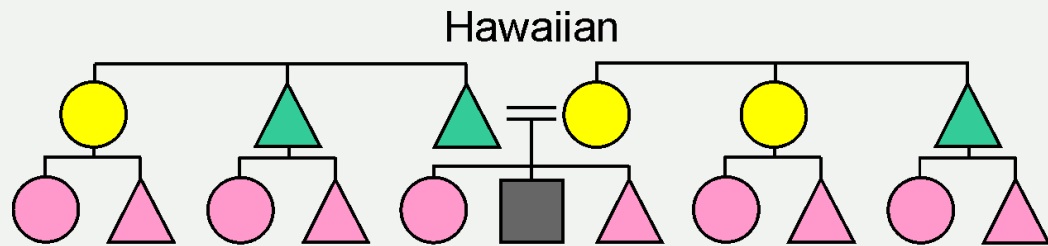
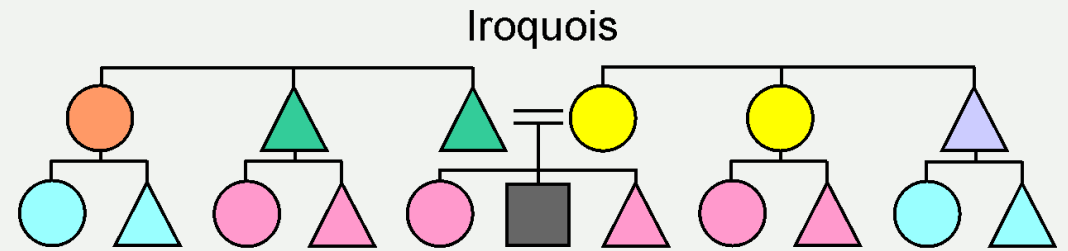
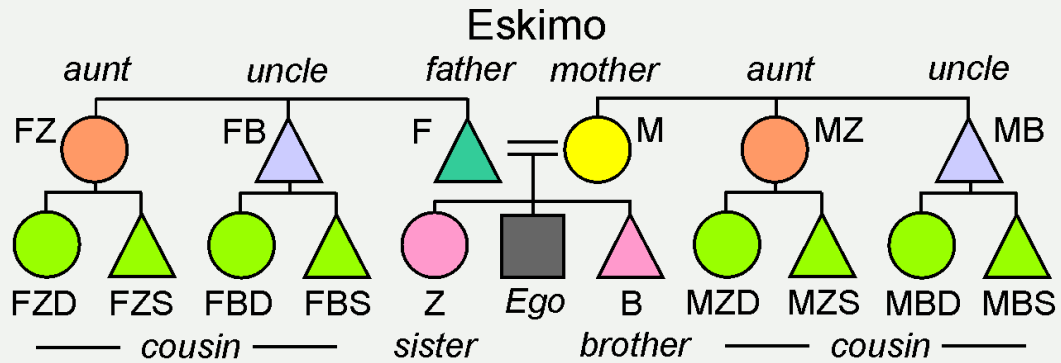
**Area-specific structural features
of Circum-Baltic kinship terminologies**

Analysis of structural features of kinship terminologies (classical evolutionism)

- ❖ descriptive (genealogical tree model): Europe, Near East
- ❖ classificatory: Asia, Oceania, America

(Morgan 1871)

Analysis of structural features of kinship terminologies (Murdock 1949)



Analysis of structural features of kinship terminologies (Neo-evolutionist approaches)

- ❖ Allen (1986. Tetradic theory: an approach to kinship.)
- ❖ Dziebel (2007. *The Genius of Kinship: the phenomenon of human kinship and the global diversity of kinship terminologies.*)

Analysis of structural features of kinship terminologies (Critique of all evolutionist approaches)

- ❖ Schneider (1984. *A Critique of the Study of Kinship.*)
- ❖ Read (2013. *A New Approach to Forming a Typology of Kinship Terminology Systems: From Morgan and Murdock to the Present*)
- ❖ Passmore & Jordan (2020. *No universals in the cultural evolution of kinship terminology.*)

Analysis of structural features of kinship terminologies (structuralist approach)

8 types based on 5 (or rather 6) main cross-linguistically expressed dimensions (Nikolayeva 2014):

- 1) kinship line (equation or non-equation of lineal and collateral relatives)
- 2) direction of kinship (differentiation or non-differentiation of the linking relative)
- 3) age (whether there is older-younger distinction within the same generation)
- 4) sex (differentiation or non-differentiation of males and females in a set)
- 5) Ego's sex (gendered vs. ungendered Ego)
- 6) generation (whether there is a merging of two different generations)

Contact and areal studies of kinship terminologies

- Murdock (1968a, 1968b, 1970) on distribution of various structural patterns (e.g., sibling terminologies)
- Marschall et al. (1984) on sibling terminologies in Oceania
- Trautmann (2001) on the necessity of areal studies of kinship terminologies

Contact and areal studies of kinship terminologies

- Milanova (2020) on areal differences of Indo-European kinship terminologies
- Milanova & Holopainen & Bradley (2020) on contact phenomena in kinship terminologies in Central Eurasia
- Liljegren (2022) kinship terminologies in the Hindu Kush
- Honkola & Jordan (accepted ms.) on borrowing tendencies on the global scale
- Metsäranta & Milanova & Honkola (accepted ms.) on borrowability of kinship terms in Uralic languages

Structural features of CB kinship terminologies (except for the traditional Saami kinship terminology)

- ❖ difference between lineal and collateral relatives (e.g., father \neq uncle)
 - ❖ no older-younger distinction within one generation
 - ❖ no gendered Ego
 - ❖ no generational merging of any kind
- ▶ descriptive terminologies (in Morgan's classification), common for West Eurasia

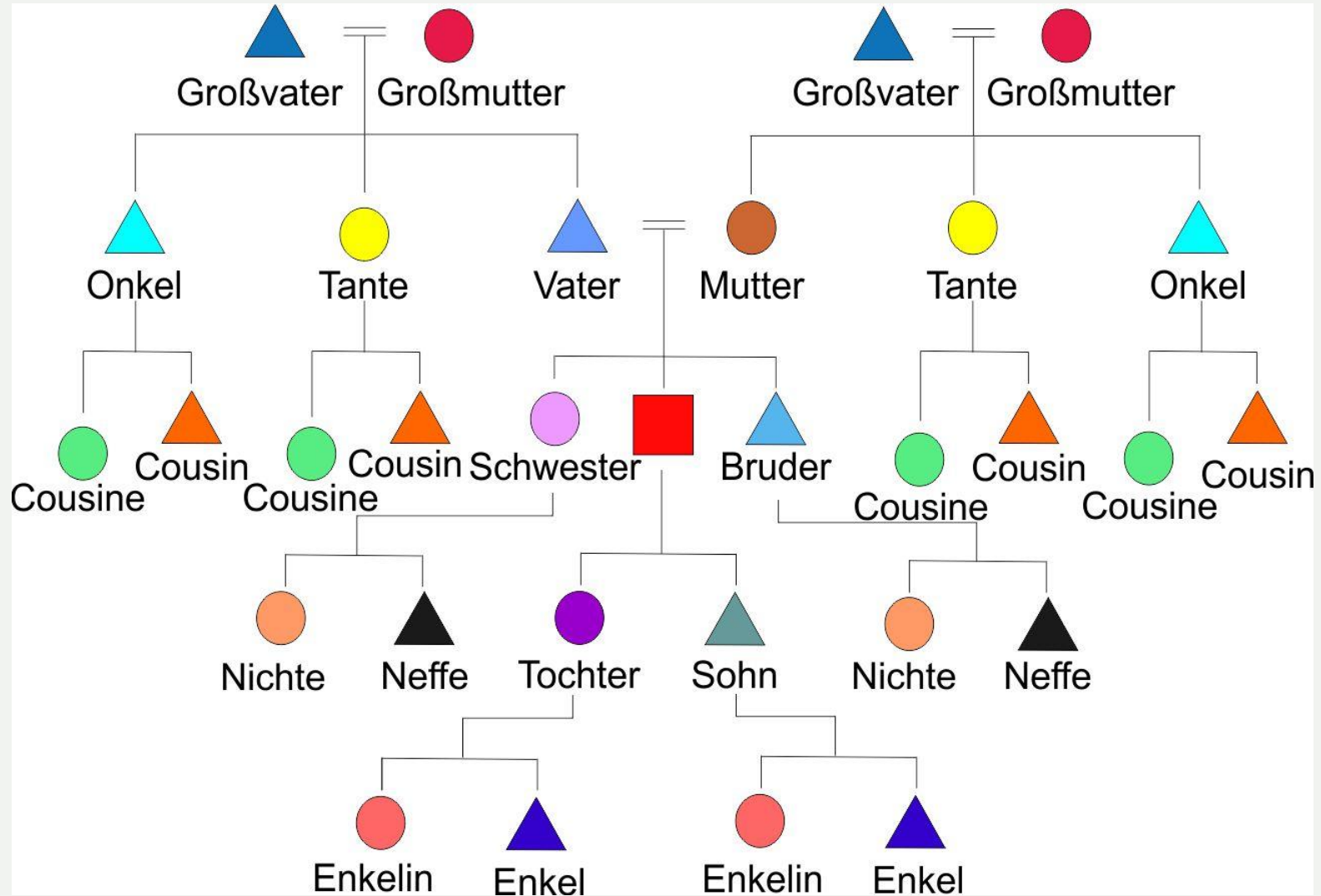
2 types of descriptive terminologies:

❖ cognatic (\approx lineal, ‘Eskimo’),

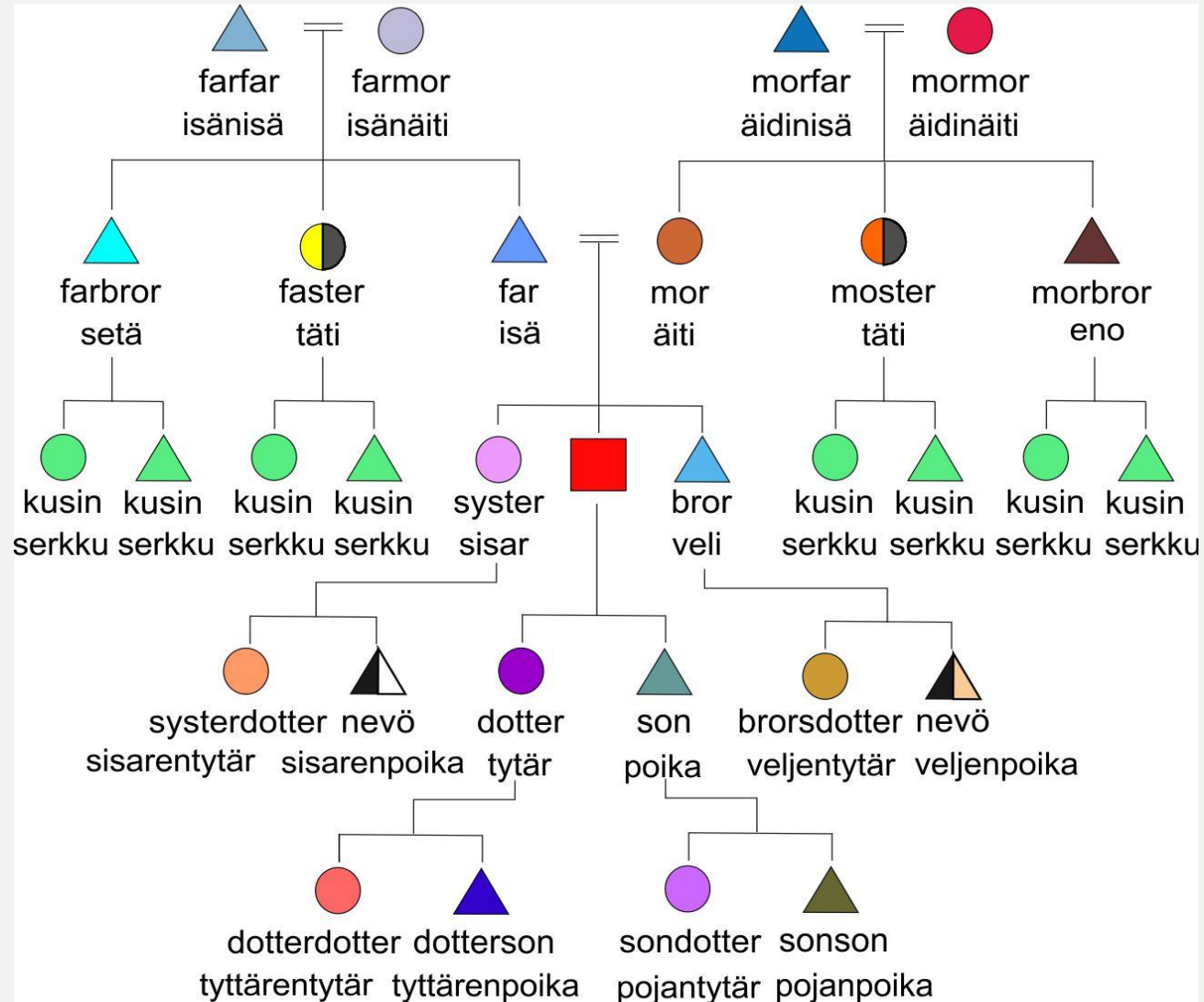
- first emerged in Early Romance languages and has gradually spread throughout the whole of West Europe

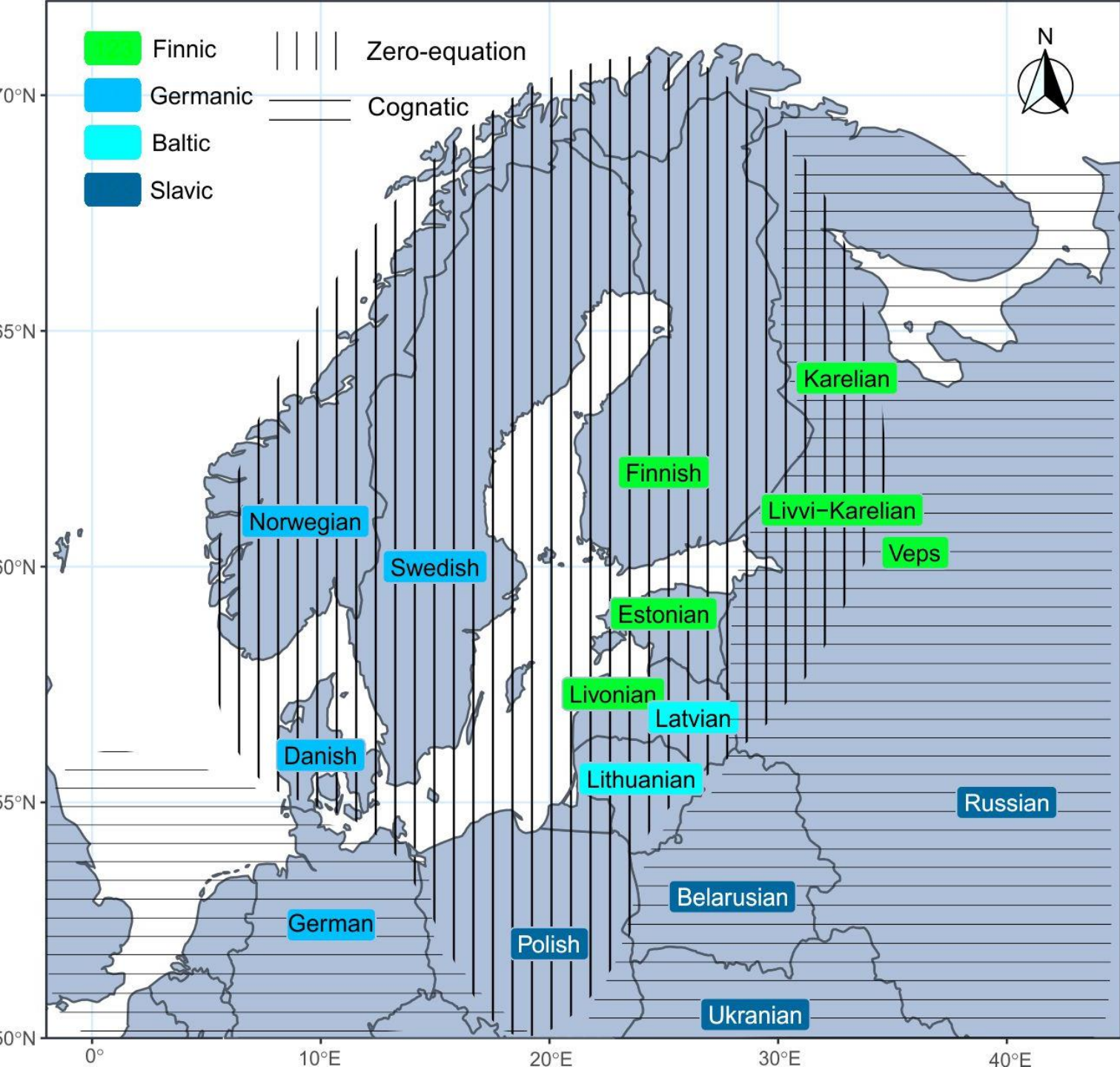
❖ zero-equation (\approx bifurcate collateral, ‘Sudanese’)

Modern Standard German terminology (cognatic)

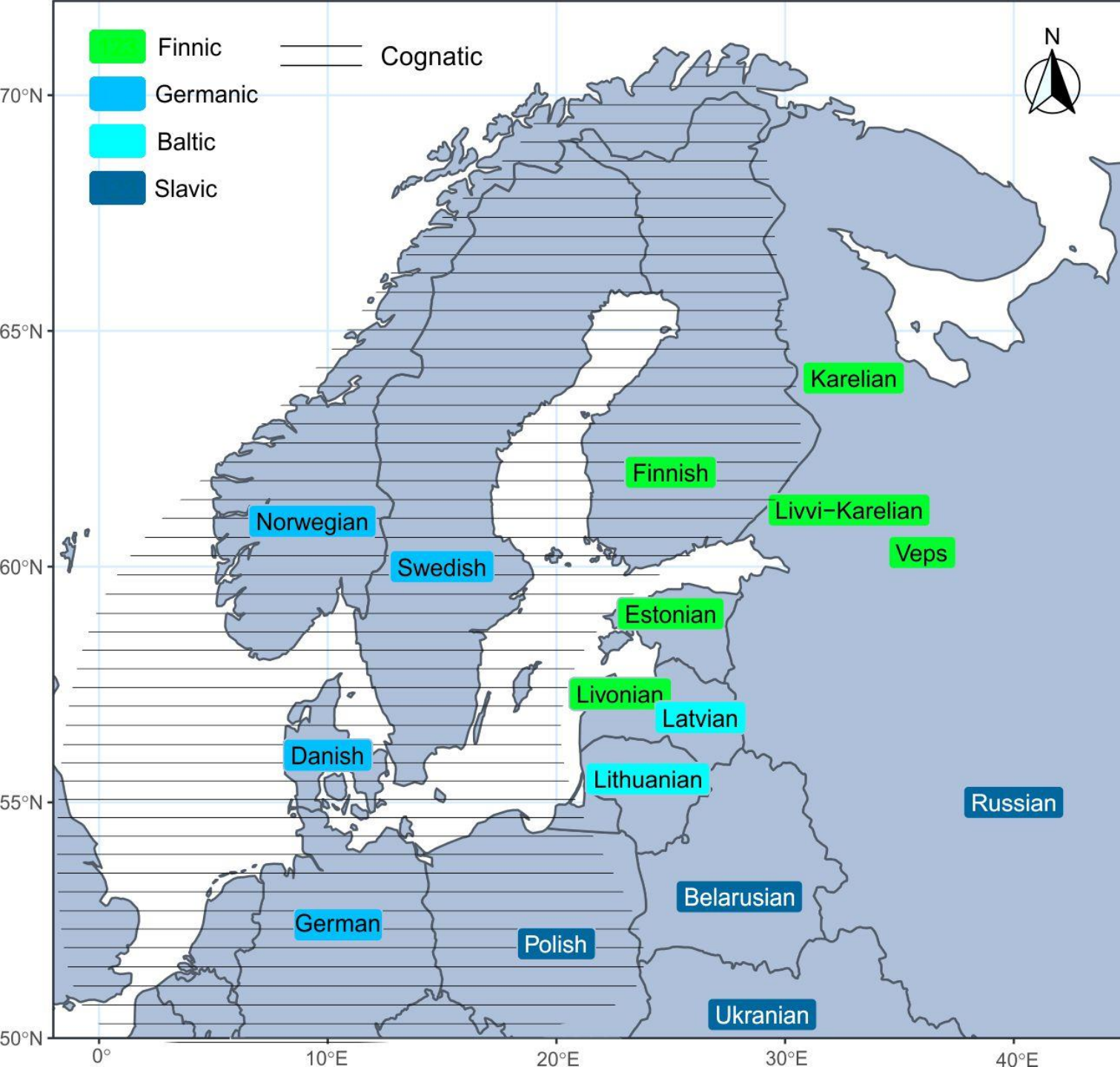


Finnish and Swedish kinship terminologies (zero-equation)





Blood relatives



In-laws

Traditional Saami kinship terminologies

- ❖ gendered Ego
- ❖ older-younger distinction for parents' siblings and some in-laws
- ❖ specific type of generational merging referred to as alternate generation equivalence (self-reciprocal terms, e.g., 'grandfather' = 'grandchild', 'uncle' = 'nephew')

Traditional Saami kinship terminologies: alternate generation equivalence

Grandparents	Grandchildren
<i>áddjá</i> ‘grandfather’	<i>áddjut</i> ‘grandchild (male Ego)’
<i>áhkku</i> ‘grandmother’	<i>áhkkut</i> ‘grandchild (female Ego)’

Uncles and aunts	Nephews and nieces
<i>siessá</i> ‘father’s sister’	<i>siessal</i> ‘brother’s child (f Ego)’
<i>eanu</i> ‘mother’s brother’	<i>eanu</i> ‘sister’s child (m Ego)’
<i>eahki</i> ‘father’s older brother’	<i>eahki(t)</i> ‘younger brother’s child (m Ego)’
<i>čeahci</i> ‘father’s younger brother’	<i>čeahcit</i> ‘older brother’s child (m Ego)’
<i>goaski</i> ‘mother’s older sister’	<i>goaski(t)</i> ‘younger sister’s child (f Ego)’
<i>muottá</i> ‘mother’s younger sister’	<i>muotta(l)</i> ‘older sister’s child (f Ego)’

Contemporary Saami kinship terminologies: structural adjustment to the Finnish, Russian, and Scandinavian terminologies

❖ Loss of older-younger distinction

- in several varieties of North Saami, Lule Saami, and South Saami, older-younger distinction had been lost by the 1920s–1930s (Kejonen 2020)

Contemporary Saami kinship terminologies: structural adjustment to the Finnish, Russian, and Scandinavian terminologies

- Loss of alternate generation equivalence
 - Collinder (1938: 148): in the Lule Saami Forest dialect terms of the type *áhkkov* are archaisms
 - Whitaker (1979): in Karesuando Saami (Northern Sweden) in 1952 self-reciprocal terms were still used parallel to phrasal terms (*oabba-nieida* ~ Sw. *systerdotter*), but in 1972 terms denoting younger relatives in the reciprocal pairs were not mentioned any more
 - In Kildin Saami all self-reciprocal terms for nephews and nieces have been displaced by Russian loanword *plie'mnehk* (Michael Rießler, University of Eastern Finland, p.c.)

Conclusions

RQ1: Convergences in the domain of kinship terminologies confirm that the Circum-Baltic area is “Contact Superposition Zone”

RQ2: Circum-Baltic kinship terminologies are well-integrated into the general West Eurasian context, and in this sense, unique on a global scale. On a smaller scale, this is the place where one can especially vividly observe the clash of western and eastern tendencies within West Eurasia.

Thank you for your attention!



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