

Art and the Expression of Indigenous Identity

From "Angry Sámi" to "Happy Sámi"

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Abstract

This thesis explores the theme "Sámi art", questioning how we can define the concept Sámi art in the contemporary society and how the way Sámi artists express their ethnic identity through their art has changed over time. The thesis is written based on the fieldwork that was conducted in northern Norway area during the spring and the summer in 2016. It follows seven artists of Sámi ethnic origin across different age groups and art fields, and involves observation and semi-structured interviews. The research reveals Sámi artists of different age groups differ in the way they perceive their ethnic identity and how they attempt to reflect it in their art. Younger artists tend to be more open in dealing with their relationship with the Norwegian society and in incorporating new elements from different cultures in their art practices even when they are trying to express their Sámi ethnic identity through their art. However, it does not mean that the word "Sámi art" or "Sámi artist" loses its meaning. As long as Sámi artists are producing the art that can only be created by those who are living this world as Sámi, like they do now, the discussion on Sámi art will be valid.

Keyword: Sámi, art, ethnicity, identity, indigenous

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1 Introduction

1.1 Motivation

The first time I got to know about Sámi people was in 2015 spring, when I was taking a Norwegian language course and read a chapter about Sámi people in the textbook. The fact that I had never known about Sámi people when it was my fourth semester in Norway, and the fact that Norway, which is known for its own painful history of having been colonised for a long time, also once brought another people under harsh colonisation until quite recent time made me become interested in the issue. I wanted to know more about the experiences of Sámi people. The chapter did not go too much into the history, and it was only after I started to study Visual Cultural Studies in Tromsø, the region historically belonging to the Sámi area (Sápmi), that I got to know more about the Sámi issue.

And then there is another topic that has always intrigued me—it is art. Though I have never got official education on art I have been always interested in it, made artworks myself, and read quite a lot about art. As I was interested in art and in people, it was natural that I became interested in Sámi people's art. Using art as a means to voice political views has always drawn quite a bit of controversy. Some people argue that art should remain politically neutral, and others say that art can actively participate in political debates. I myself am more on the latter side, simply because I see no reason why art should not contain political matters. I believe that art is a means to express one's worldview and how he/she interprets and attaches meaning to his/her experiences. We are living in a world whose parts are connected to each other within an intricate web of politics and power relations, and thus it is very difficult (some might say impossible) to find experiences that are politically neutral. My opinion is that it is just too hard a task, and does not make sense, for art to remain politically neutral when almost everything we go through in this world is governed by politics.

My idea about the master's project has therefore stemmed from the wish to merge two themes that I have long been interested in—Sámi people and the politics of art. I

wanted to see the process through which artworks are made when it was combined with the politics of indigenous identity.

1.2 Research Question

Most of the literature I could get about Sámi art was focusing on the works of artists who were about the age when they were socially conscious and informed when the discrimination against Sámi (See 1.4.3 for more details) was still strong and overt. As such was the case, the image of Sámi art was formed as something resistant against Norway in my mind. Therefore my initial research question was a simple "How Sámi artists establish, express and re-create their indigenous identity through their art?"

As I was contacting some younger artists, though, I felt that their idea of being a Sámi artist was quite different from what I was assuming. Many of the artists did not show interest in my research for the reason of being busy, but among countless refusals of similar kinds, I could hear an artist saying that being Sámi was just a part of her whole being that she did not feel my topic suited for her way of thinking, or another artist saying that he was Norwegian as much as Sámi and was always looking for a way to reconcile those two identities. This was another finding that I did not expect when I first delved into the topic, and thus my second research question was set. "Has the way Sámi artists express their indigenous identity through their art practices changed over time? If so, what has driven such change?" And finally, "What is Sámi, and what is Sámi art in this world where the boundaries of identities are constantly fluctuating?"

1.3 Research Design

My fieldwork was conducted in Tromsø, Norway, which has been a part of Sápmi and Sámi culture is actively promoted. In addition, I occasionally travelled to other regions when there were specific events that could be helpful in my research – for example, I once visited Harstad to attend a book reading event of one of my writer participant. The fieldwork period was from the end of March 2016 until the end of July 2017.

I followed the activities of seven artists and interviewed them, two of whom worked as a team. Those were Hans Ragnar Mathisen, Marry Ailonieida Somby, Sigbjørn Skåden, Northern Soul, SlinCraze, and Inga-Wiktoria Påve. Hans Ragnar Mathisen and Marry Ailonieida belong to the older generation, being born around 1950, and the other artists are considered to belong to younger generations, their age varying from 25 to 40. I followed around Hans and Marry throughout the spring and summer and recorded their activities, but ended up having brief meetings with younger artists. I interviewed Sigbjørn Skåden once at his studio, and met Inga-Wiktoria Påve, Northern Soul and SlinCraze at Riddu Riddu festival, an annual indigenous music and cultural festival held in a town in northern Norway region called Manndalen, recording their performances and interviewing them.

The result of my fieldwork had to be a 30-minute long film and a written thesis of around 50 pages. Therefore, camera equipment was my main tool in recording the activities of the field.

1.4 Presentation of the Field

1.4.1 Sámi

The Sámi people are indigenous people of Arctic region Sápmi, which stretches across the northern Fenno-Scandinavia region and to the Kola Peninsula, and is divided by modern national borders of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia today. It is said that while diverse groups of people first arrived in Fenno-Scandinavia and today's far north-western Russia as the ice had retreated around the end of the Ice Age, the Sámi hunters were settled at Karlebotn in Varanger by 2000 BC and were firmly established in most of northern Norway, the northern half of the province of Norrland in Sweden, all of Finland, the Kola Peninsula and today's Russian Karelia by the dawn of the Christian era. (Kent 2014, 6) Nowadays the Sámi people are the northernmost indigenous group of people which has been recognised and protected by the international conventions of indigenous people. The Sámi people have Finno-Ugric root and their language belongs to Uralic language family, which greatly distinguishes them from the people from the nations which hold the Sápmi region nowadays.

The Sámi people have suffered severe discrimination as the Sámi of Sápmi were outnumbered by the Norse and Russians. Norway, among all countries, was strongly criticised by the international communities for its forceful norwegianisation on the Sámi people and the discrimination against them. The Sámi people's traditional way of life and religion were forced to give ways to those of Norway by the 18th century, and the School Law from the end of the 19th century dictated that the education be given only in Norwegian, a policy which continued to exist until the Second World War. (UNRIC) Nowadays, the Sámi in Norway has its own parliament which enables them to promote and work with issues that are particularly perceived as concerned with the Sámi people. However, it is still reported that the Sámi people are exposed to discrimination, and their languages are considered to be threatened by UNESCO. (UNRIC, *ibid.*)

1.4.2 Sápmi, Tromsø

Tromsø is historically situated within Sámi area, and therefore Sámi population is relatively high compared to more southern parts of Norway. However, as the discrimination against the Sámi people and the norwegianisation policy led to forceful assimilation of the Sámi people into Norwegian culture and made the Sámi people hide their ethnic identity, the Sámi culture became noticeably invisible within the region.

The Sámi culture sought its revitalisation since 1970s across the whole Norway along with the desire among the Sámi to strengthen the Sámi identity, and Tromsø was not an exception. Today there is a Sámi kindergarten and Sámi language classes in certain schools of Tromsø, and university level teaching of the Sámi language is provided by the University of Tromsø. A Sámi language centre was established in Ullsfjord to counter the decline of the use of the Sámi language, and Manndalen has the Center of Northern Peoples to maintain and promote Sámi culture. Tromsø municipality arranges celebrations of Sámi People's Day every year, and the city provides Norwegian-Sámi bilingual signs at a number of places.

However, there was recently a strong tension between those who were in favour of Sámi culture playing active roles in Tromsø and those who were against it. In 2011, the Municipal Board made an application which promoted that Tromsø join the Sámi

Language Administrative Area. It would have made the Sámi language hold the equal place with Norwegian in certain administrative spheres such as toponyms or official notifications. It also would have let the Sámi people communicate with the local authorities in the Sámi language if they wished to, and officials in the local authorities would have been able to ask for the leave of absence to learn the Sámi language if there was demand for it. (Fjellheim and Skeie 2011) Several political parties such as Høyre, FrP and Venstre opposed to the application made by the Municipal Board and made the position as a part of their election campaign, stressing that Tromsø was a Norwegian city. The public was also generally against the application. According to the survey conducted by iTromsø at that time, 38 per cent of the respondents were strongly against it, 16 per cent were mainly against it, and 27 per cent said that they did not know. (Nilsen 2011) The parties which were in opposition to the Sámi culture obtaining a larger role in Tromsø won the election, and the application was reversed. Currently the municipality has been in cooperation agreement with Sámi Parliament since 2013, which was aimed at the promotion of Sámi language education and Sámi culture in Tromsø.

1.4.3 Historical Context—Assimilation Policy

The policy that Norway conducted over the Sámi in the modern era can largely be summarised as assimilation policy, or norweginisation. The period stretches from around 1850 until roughly 1980, and the beginning and the end of the period can be linked to the specific events. The beginning is marked with the establishment of *Finnefondet* ('the Lapp fund'), a special item in the national budget aimed to change the language and the culture of the Sámi. Alta Controversy that lasted during the period between 1979-81 is considered as an important point where Norway stepped away from its century-long oppressive policy over the Sámi. (Minde and Blomgren 2005)

Norwegian policy towards the Sámi in the beginning of the nation after 1814 was rather based on humanistic and romantic ideas—speaking one's native language was considered as a human right. However, this line of policy was soon opposed by the Norwegian upper class of Finnmark. By the time it reached mid-twentieth century, the

policy regarding the northern minorities, or indigenous people, became tougher. (Minde and Blomgren 2005)

Upon the establishment of Finnefondet, norwegianisation was first focused on the Sámi in 'transitional districts' (It is defined by Minde and Blomgren (2005) as areas which had become ethnically mixed with a substantial element of ethnic Norwegians and other Norwegian speakers. This became synonymous with Coast Sámi areas in twentieth century). Norwegian language teaching was promoted in those districts, and it was believed that it would bring about 'enlightenment' on the Sámi. These sorts of measures were carried out under civilising and nationalistic considerations. From the late 1860s the norwegianisation measures began to be tightened, with additional highlight on security policy. (Minde and Blomgren 2005)

One of the most notorious measures conducted during the norwegianisation period is the language policy in schools. The previous clauses which guaranteed children's rights to learn their mother tongues were repealed, and new instruction which required all Sámi children to learn to speak, read and write Norwegian, was issued by the Directors of Troms diocese in 1880 for the transitional districts. The capacity to norwegianise Sámi children became a basis for wage increase for teachers. In the final and the most long-lived school instruction that was issued in 1898, the use of the Sámi language was strictly limited to the minimal, 'as an aid to explain what is incomprehensible to the children'. Even the languages used in the conversations during breaks became the objects of monitoring. The funds that were spent in the teaching of the Sámi language at Tromsø Teachers' Training Seminar were revoked, and the scepticism towards the admission of Sámi students to Tromsø Teacher's Training Seminar increased throughout the period since they were deemed as not competent enough in norwegianisation of children. (Minde and Blomgren 2005)

The enactment of norwegianisation policy was related to strengthening Norway's control over its northern areas, which were strategically important in regard to its relationship with Russia. (Lehtola 2004, 44) Norwegianisation measures were tightened considerably in the early twentieth century, for fear of 'the Finnish menace' and the national agitation that followed the dissolution of the union with Sweden. Boarding schools were built around the Finnmark county, which separated Sámi children from their home environment where they could learn their language and tradition. There were no more courses in Sámi at Tromsø seminar, and the tuition scholarship for pupils with Sámi background was abolished. Teachers with

Norwegian ethnic background were preferred in schools, and the state began to take more control over the norwegianisation measures. (Minde and Blomgren 2005)

The norwegianisation policy was partly based on the social Darwinist view, and it can be seen clearly in the statement of Chr. Brygfjeld, the state's chief inspector of norwegianisation measures from 1923 to 1935:

The Lapps have had neither the ability nor the will to use their language as written language. (...) The few individuals who are left of the original Lappish tribe are now so degenerated that there is little hope of any change for the better for them. They are hopeless and belong to Finnmark's most backward and wretched population, and provide the biggest contingent from these areas to our lunatic asylums and schools for the mentally retarded.

(Quoted from Eriksen and Niemi 1981, cited in Minde and Blomgren 2005)

For Brygfjeld, norwegianisation was an indisputable civilisation task for the racially inferior groups, something that was for the good of those groups. The instruction of 1898 was in power until far into 1960s.

The powerlessness that the Sámi had to experience during the norwegianisation period brought about many social-psychological consequences. Hvinden (2000) mentioned that in an extreme situation, the experience of being oppressed can 'mark one's self-image, undermine one's self-respect and self-esteem, and at worst cause self-contempt and an exaggeratingly critical attitude towards other members of one's own group.' (Hvinden 2000 cited in Minde and Blomgren 2005) This analysis explains a large part of the attitude that the Sámi showed towards their ethnic identity.

The Sámi language was of low status at school during the norwegianisation period, and it was common for pupils to feel left out because of their language. Those who spoke no or poor Norwegian were often ridiculed by teachers. Misunderstandings, humiliations and sense of incompetency followed the racist attitude of educators and being unable to keep up with the lectures and to express one's true abilities. It happened often that many people graduated schools without being able to speak neither Sámi nor Norwegian properly, for they were disconnected from their mother tongue during the whole school days and were not taught Norwegian in an appropriate manner. (Minde and Blomgren 2005) There are few examples of organised resistance

among Sámi regarding the norwegianisation policy, and it can be assumed that it is because the sense of powerlessness was too great for that.

Another important measure taken by Norway in 1860s to norwegianise the Sámi area and Sámi people is related to property ownership. Competency in the Norwegian language became the base of the first decree on property ownership—those who wished to have the priority rights to buy land from the State had to be able to speak and read Norwegian. By 1895 free access to land was proclaimed, but it was only for those who held Norwegian citizenship which could be gained through the authorities' certification on the person's mastery of the Norwegian language. The land ownership got more firmly connected with the language by the law that assigned Norwegian names to properties. (Lehtola 2004, 44)

Under this kind of circumstance, there were quite a number of Sámi who turned their back from the Sámi language, especially among those who wished to establish themselves in the Norwegian society. They connected modernity, progress and successful future to being capable in the Norwegian language and becoming Norwegian. The attempts by the school boards to make changes in their harsh language policy towards Sámi were met by opposition from the side of the Sámi. Old norwegianisation policy and the crisis in the self-esteem, the feeling of shame towards their ethnic background made the Sámi wish their children to learn Norwegian and successfully adapt themselves to the Norwegian society. (Lehtola 2004, 62, Minde and Blomgren 2005)

The norwegianisation policy succeeded in realising its goal in certain areas such as the Coastal Sámi districts, where changes in language and identity occurred. For example, the statistics show that the proportion of the Sámi in Kvænangen was reduced from 44% to zero during the period of 1930-1950 (Bjørklund 1985, 12 cited in Minde and Blomgren 2005). This complete 'disappearance' of an ethnic group can only be explained by the change in the self-ascribed identity. Many people identified themselves as ethnically mixed and then changed the attitude over a period of 20-30 years during the first half of the twentieth century, identifying themselves as Norwegian. (Minde and Blomgren 2005)

The worldwide movement for the rights of indigenous people that began to spread at the end of 1960s also inspired the Sámi people, especially who belonged to the "boarding school generation." (Lehtola 2004, 70) The negative image of the Sámi in Norway could be finally met by strong, collective counter-movement, and Alta

Controversy of 1979-1982 is said to be one of the most memorable breakthroughs. Alta Conflict arose due to the planning of the Alta-Kautokeino waterway that would submerge the Sámi town Máze and devastate the area used by the reindeer Sámi people. What started with the protection of a specific region and the means of livelihood soon became a fight for Sámi people's land in general and their status as the indigenous group of the land. (Thuen 2002)

The attitude of Norwegian government towards the demonstrators of Alta Conflict was uncompromising. The plan was put to stop for some time and the original plan was modified so that Máze could be saved, but the demonstrators' camps were cleared in January 1981 and the new power plant opened in 1987. However, the controversy is still considered as a symbol that marked one historical point in the history of the Sámi in that the violence used by officials awakened the consciousness of many Sámi people. The international attention on the attitude of Norway towards the Sámi made Norway change its policy in minority affairs. A state committee to deal with cultural and legal issues regarding the Sámi was appointed in 1980. The recognition of the Sámi people as the indigenous group under the Norwegian Constitution, the establishment of Sámi Parliament, and the Sámi language act followed in the course of 1980-1990. (Lehtola 2004, 72-73)

However, it is not that there was no resistance against the Sámi rights movement among the Sámi even in the late twentieth century. Some measures devised to safeguard the Sámi language in broadcasting and in the elementary schools were met by opposition from the Sámi side, from those who felt that the assimilation policy could bring about better future for the Sámi. (Thuen 2002)

Before Sámi Assembly, the main political organisation of the Sámi was 'The National Association of Norwegian Sámi' (NSR) that was founded in 1968. Some loose notion of Sámi peoplehood and the idea of a future Sámi nation were suggested. However, the dilemma of the Sámi concerning their status within the majority society persisted, and a new organisation was established in 1979 in opposition to the NSR. The new organisation maintained that the Sámi should respect Norwegian institutions, the King and the Parliament. It later opposed to the establishment of the Sámi Parliament. (Thuen, *ibid.*)

In 1980s, the Norwegian government showed active attempts to compensate for its past norwegianisation policy, declaring Sámi as a distinct group and acknowledging their specific rights. However, the movement from the government to declare certain

communities such as municipalities or school districts as Sámi brought about quite some protests and internal cleavages. Those who identified themselves as Norwegians claimed that it was a form of 'Sámification', that Sámi culture was forced upon them. (Thuen, *ibid.*)

1.4.4 Sámi Artists in Politics

Sámi artists differ from the artists of the majority populations in that they cannot just sit in their studios producing works of art. They must participate in many activities. Sámi culture is at a stage where everyone needs to work to further Sámi politics, organizations, and culture. Artists also need to be engaged in order to develop and advance Sámi culture. (Synnøve Persen, cited in Lehtola 2004, 95)

One of the notable aspects of the Sámi rights movement at the turn of the 1970s was that art was used as an essential tool. Literature and music especially came to the fore, and the period is called "Sámi Renaissance". (Lehtola 2004, 70) Joik became the symbol of the Sámi spirit, and writers attempted to build new Sámi identity with their works. Traditional Sámi handicraft became the centre of attention again.

During the 1970s the Sámi art scene prospered and there came a lot of young Sámi artists who had higher education in art. A town called Máze in Finnmark was the base of many of these artists, and in 1978 the "Máze Group", or "Sámi Artist Group", consisting of eight artists, was formed to redefine the Sámi identity and replace the stereotypes attached to the Sámi. (Gullickson 2014) They organised a collective, touring exhibition in February 1979 and made a tour around the Sámi area. The fact that the exhibition opened at The Sámi Collections in Karasjok, the first national Sámi cultural institution, provides one context which speaks of political signification of the exhibition. Also the main subject matters of the artworks were landscapes, and the association between the exhibition and the Sámi area could easily be made. In addition, Sámi political activist Ailo Gaup took charge of the catalogue text and stated that the artworks must be understood in the political context of the time, which was closely related to the Alta Conflicts and the fight for the Sámi people's right as an indigenous group of the area. (Hansen 2014)

Around the time the group was formed the Alta Conflict broke out, and the conflict also affected the Sámi Artist Group, having them make artworks which reflected the scenes and the sentiment around the conflict. In addition, Sámi cultural revitalisation movement took place along with the demonstrations which lasted from 1970 until 1981. The need for visual representations was high in demand during the revitalisation period, and the group was involved in a number of projects regarding producing visual materials such as LP covers, book illustrations, posters, as well as public art projects and exhibitions. (Hansen, *ibid.*) The first Sámi flag was made during the period of Alta Conflict by Synnøve Persen.

One important task that Sámi artists tried to accomplish in the 1970s and 1980s was to establish the feeling of integration and self-awareness regarding the Sámi identity through their art practices in the time where the society was in rapid transition. (Lehtola 2004, 95) The world has gone through the worldwide awakening of the rights of indigenous peoples and it became one of the critical backdrops of Sámi revitalisation movement. It was common experience for young Sámi in 1970s and 1980s to have spent their youth in boarding schools where they were disconnected from their home, which made them alien to their own culture about the time they graduated. The rebel against Norway's assimilation policy and the disappearance of the old Sámi culture was actively conducted by this generation. The trauma and the problems with their self-images were expressed through their artworks. (Lehtola 2004, 95-96)

At the same time they had to reconcile the old and the new in their art. They delved into their old tradition as the reaction to the suppression they had to go through in the Norwegian society, but many visual artists built up their educational background at modern art schools and musicians got influence from western pop cultures and world music. How should they reflect the old Sámi heritage in their works using the new, modern languages and worldviews they acquired from their education? All these thoughts and feelings delivered in the forms of art became the catalyst for the feelings for numerous compatriots of theirs. (Lehtola 2004, 94-95)

2 Methods and Methodology

2.1 Filming

My main tool of recording the field was a video camera as a part of my project was to make a 30-minute film. Video camera is an excellent tool when recording information not only in detail, but also in a more vivid way. Field notes and journals are of a great help, but one cannot deny that this new technique allows us to return to our home with more detailed, vivid and rich materials. It captures information much faster than writing does, and untold details such as facial expressions, gestures, nuances, pauses, repetitions emphasis, etc. can be all captured in the film materials. When these kinds of little details are saved, the possibility of misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the record decreases. When we think that the purpose of ethnography is to capture the richness and irreducibility of human life, the amount of information that the camera can record and the way it is recorded can be of a tremendous help for an ethnographer. In addition to that, the richness of the information can be enhanced when the ethnographer utilises long takes—they help him/her preserve the integrity of social situations. (Henley 2004)

The camera also helped me concentrate on the field more intensely. Unlike written notes that can be produced after the activities have finished (though human memory puts some limit to the details and precision of the record), film materials cannot be produced after the moments of the activities have passed. Under this kind of condition where the recording tool does not allow the second chance, the ethnographer is asked to pay intense attention to everything that is happening around him/her, to always look for something that can be filmed only then and there, to arm himself/herself with "acute observation and a total immersion in the event." (Henley, *ibid.*)

However, it is one of the drawbacks of my methodology that I did not come back from my fieldwork with rich field notes and photographs. I was always holding the camera and looking for things to film, and therefore my field notes became more like field diaries and journals that I mostly wrote retrospectively after the filming had finished. It also limited my capability of participation in the activities going on, as my position was always first and foremost an ethnographic filmmaker. For example, I had to give up some of the joy I could have had if I had joined Riddu Riddu festival

purely as one of the audience. I always had to remain a step aside from the festival scene to be a filmmaker and an analyst, and such obligations hindered me from fully immersing myself in the heat of the concerts and socialising with new people apart from the artists I got to have interviews with.

2.2 Ethnography and Participant Observation

Ethnography is about understanding the lived experiences of others, the world as it is perceived by their view. Therefore ethnography is primarily based on observing people's actions, since actions are profound motivations that push the world forward—people respond to the world by making actions followed by evaluation and interpretation of the world, constructing and mapping their identity with those actions in certain institutional context. And these institutional contexts are again something that are constituted by people's actions resulting from the perception of their own and others' needs, interests, values, etc. (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 168) Therefore it is crucial to put focus on observing people's actions when one is to understand the lived experiences of people, for they indicate how these people interact with the world. However, actions themselves cannot stand alone as a valid data—meanings and possible inference of those actions complete the collected data. As Spradley (2016, 5) says, ethnography concerns what all those actions and events mean to the people we wish to understand. People use complex meaning systems to understand themselves and others, plan out and organise their actions and make sense of the world they are navigating through. These meaning systems are often indicated through direct words and actions of people, which answers to why participant observation should be a key tool to ethnography.

Throughout my fieldwork period, I followed my participants and observed their activities. I focused on recording the art practices of my participants such as painting and performing, and conducting occasional interviews with them. Most of the fieldwork materials were saved as a form of film materials. Again, film materials provided me with valuable chances to re-live the fieldwork experiences and to get to observe things that I had not paid much attention to when the filming was happening, enabling me to catch the details of music performances or facial expressions and

vocal tones of my interviewees that I could not register in my memory while I was paying attention to bigger chunks of information.

2.3 Interview

In my research, the interviews I conducted with my participants were based on the idea of the qualitative, semi-structured interview. If we think that the purpose of ethnography is to understand the lived experiences of other people from their perspectives, this form of interview can be considered suitable for ethnographic research as it gives interviewees certain amount of control over where the interviews would head for. Under this research tradition, meaning systems and terms of the interviewees are considered more important than those that already exist outside the interviewees' world.

The word 'semi-structured' tells us that the structure of the interview is not thoroughly determined in advance. The 'craftsmanship' of the interviewer plays its part - the interviewer needs to be quick in understanding what is being said by the interviewee, situating the contents in the context and deciding what to catch up and make follow-up questions to. (Kvale and Brinkmann 2015, 70-71) For my research, I made around 10-15 initial questions, and from the answers my participants gave to those questions I branched out and made follow-up questions then and there. For initial questions, some questions were asked to all participants and some were made specifically for each artist according to the activities he/she does.

2.4 Case Study

Like mentioned earlier, my research consists of 7 participants, two of which working as a team. 2 of them belong to older generation (those who were born around 1950), and the rest belong to younger generations (All of them are in their mid twenties-early forties). I intentionally tried to recruit younger artists as much as possible as I discovered the differences of the underlying ideas regarding the Sámi identity between the older generation and the younger generations, hoping that I could go

deeper into the initial differences I faced and make more significant findings out of them.

The differences between generations were quite visible, but at the same time there were differences between artists who rather belong to the same generation. It seemed to me that as much as it is valid for me to talk about the differences between the generations based on my fieldwork materials, it is also important to address the differences within the same generations. Each of my participants has his/her own way to view his/her Sámi identity and to reflect it in his/her artworks. Therefore I chose to make use of case studies method to my research. As Mitchell (1984) mentions in his article, case studies are distinguished from more general ethnographic reportage in that it contains 'the detail and particularity of the account' (Mitchell, *ibid.* 237). I set the unit of analysis, or the 'case', as one individual. Later in the thesis I will present my data first according to the general differences observed between different generations, but as I go further with my analysis I will mention the particularities of each of my participants and link it to the discussion.

3 Theoretical Approach

3.1 Art

What is art? There are quite a few ways to define art, but it seems that all anthropologists agree that art is a way to interpret and represent the human experiences of world. Morphy (1994 cited in Morphy and Perkins, 2009) developed a working definition of art objects as "ones with aesthetic and/or semantic attributes (but in most cases both) that are used for representational or presentational purposes." Friedman (2006) states that art "is the creation of representations of the world that contain an interpretation of the world in their very organization." To him, art provides insight into the reality it represents, and this ability of art to suggest insight and interpretation is the aesthetic core of art. If we think that anthropology is a study of culture it becomes clear that the art world can be one of the main themes of anthropological research, as culture is a collective body of knowledge that guides a

certain group of people on how to attach meanings to their experiences (Spradley 2016, 6) and art is the means to express the result of such meaning-making.

Then Schneider and Wright (2006) make an interesting suggestion on the similarities and the differences between anthropology and art. While both anthropologists and artists are concerned about interpreting culture, artists dive into their own culture and engage themselves while anthropologists remain as observers of other cultures and maintain certain distance. They quote the words of an artist Joseph Kosuth—'art is manifested in praxis; it depicts while it alters society.' (Kosuth 1993, 113 cited in Schneider and Wright 2006) Artists are considered to add something to their own cultures and influence them while anthropologists keep their influence to minimum. An artist 'is totally immersed and has a social impact. His activities embody the culture.' (Kosuth 1993, 119 cited in Schneider and Wright 2006) The similarity that the main concerns of anthropology and art hold to each other and the differences that branch out create a potential for art and the following phenomena to become interesting topics of anthropological research.

3.2 Ethnicity

The traditional view on ethnicity which stresses biological background and shared culture within certain geographic territory is generally being refuted due to its implication on isolation of ethnic groups from each other and the static continuation of cultural properties. It seems that culture is recognised as something fluid where the boundaries are socially constructed for the purpose of identification with a collective of certain political aims (Thuen 2002). Barth (1998) says that boundaries of ethnic groups are maintained despite the flow of personnel and cultural exchanges. Sense of belonging to a certain ethnic group persists even when one changes participation and membership in the course of life histories. Unlike the traditional view that distinct characters of a certain ethnicity retain themselves over time through the absence of or limited interaction across the boundaries, Barth asserts that there can be found stable and persisting social relations across the boundaries. Cultural differences can be maintained in spite of inter-ethnic interaction and interdependence. Rather, such social relations are often vitally important in building the sense of belonging to a certain ethnic group.

Barth (ibid.) mentions that when analysing ethnic groups, the attention should be focused on the boundaries themselves and how they are maintained, not on the particular cultural traits. According to him, it is actually difficult to set similarities and differences of such cultural traits between two ethnic groups in a clear-cut way. Rather, he stresses the vitality of self-ascription and identification by the actors themselves in the maintenance of ethnic groups. In Barth's view, sharing of a common culture, which has been seen as a critical element comprising an ethnic group, is considered as an implication or the result that comes with boundary generation and maintenance rather than a primary characteristic of ethnic group organisation.

In this line, Barth asserts that the cultural features that are to be taken into account should be only those that actors themselves consider to be significant, not the sum of 'objective' features. By focusing on socially relevant features such as self-ascription and differential in the importance of cultural features deemed by the actors, it becomes possible to explain the continuing dichotomisation between insiders and outsiders despite the change in the cultural features that signal the boundaries between ethnic groups, and to investigate such changes.

The boundary of an ethnic group is a social one, and the membership to a certain ethnic group is put through continual expression and validation within the interaction between the members. Certain ways of behaviour and social relations are organised within the boundary. The members come to share criteria for evaluation and judgment, and this makes them to share the potential for diversification and expansion of their social relationship. On the other hand, perception of someone as an outsider might lead to the limitations on shared understanding and further interaction. In this way, interactions across boundaries of different ethnic groups actually become the vital factor when retaining the boundaries in that they mark and renew the differences that make up the boundaries. (Barth 1998)

3.3 Art and Ethnicity

Heith (2016) points out that the focus on pure delight and disinterestedness when we are talking about appreciation of art and the aim of art have been derived from the Eurocentric, white aesthetic discourse. The whiteness has become the norm which does not need to be overtly acknowledged or named in this pervasive discourse, and

as a result the racial character in art goes unnoticed. This kind of phenomenon not only marginalises the ethnic minorities from the discourse of aesthetics and art but also makes the privileged fail to grasp and analyse the meanings and messages embedded in artworks in respect to the experiences of abuse and marginalisation.

However, art has been consistently used as a strategy for those who have been the objects of othering to mark out their different experiences. Using Barth's concept of the ethnic marker and his idea that ethnic borders are defined by the differences in culture that are considered significant by the actors (Barth 1998 cited in Heith 2016), Heith shows that the artists from the marginalised side actively use ethnic markers such as the history or the language in their works to express their different experiences and alternative views. Edelman (1996) stresses the active role of art within politics, saying that 'art is not ancillary to or reflects the social scene but a major and integral part of the transaction which engenders political behaviour.' (cited in MacClancy 1997a) In this way, artworks act as performances of anti-colonial critiques against the homogenising force of modernity.

Art objects are the fields where ever-changing boundaries of identities and social relationships are reflected. According to Karin Barber, '[art forms] are in themselves important means through which consciousness is articulated and communicated.' (Barber 1987, 8) Townsend-Gault (1997), using the examples of material cultures—including artworks— of Northwest Coast, asserts that they embody the local or national identity projects, the conflicts inherent in the relations between the indigenous people (peoples of First Nations, in this case) and the dominant society. The visual and the social encounter each other. The reality of continuous repression, denigration and marginalisation, and the disjuncture between it and the rhetoric of rights become the underlying ideas of the creation of the tangible works. Material culture in First Nations is being used 'as a form of resistance, as a counter-hegemonic strategy and as a way to reshape their own social world.' (Townsend-Gault, *ibid.*, 151) By managing the material culture, a people acquires the power of representation—what to translate and show and what to keep to themselves, what to transform and re-invent and what to protect, etc.

However, there is a danger when stressing the relationship between art and ethnicity—it is too easy to put a group of people into a stereotyped box and label them with words such as 'authentic' or 'exotic'. Art from non-western areas is oftentimes presented in a way that the notions attached to it create and reinforce the

image of primitive, exotic people, which can work as oppressive symbolic tools used by the West onto indigenous people. (Svašek 1997) In the same article, Svašek mentions the situations Ghanaian art students had to face—even when many Ghanaians turned to Christianity due to the influence of colonialisation by the British and the missionaries that the demand for objects that worked as symbols for indigenous political and religious power had decreased, the students had to produce them under the wish of the colonial teachers. The image attached to African art by the West, which is 'primitive' and unspoiled by the influence from the outside world, was still in effect. This image of primitiveness and backwardness of African art was directly connected with the image of Africa itself, forming powerful hegemony.

It can also happen among 'the insiders' that people put certain norms onto artists who belong to the same ethnic group as theirs. We can find the example from Svašek (ibid.)'s article. Upon the emancipation of African artists that has the nationalist and pan-African movements in the late 1940s and 1950s as the backdrop, art started to be perceived as a tool to represent the African identities on their own terms, a weapon for independence. Signs of anything that can be considered modern and European, something that were not typical African and Ghanaian, were deliberately removed from the African artists who turned to figuration, even when the image did not match the actual scenes. The similar example can be found in MacClancy (1997b)'s article, where he examined the discourses around the concept 'Basque art'. The Basque nationalism which arose since the mid-1870s led to the encouragement of 'good' Basque painting, which 'idealized an overly folkloric, impossibly ever-harmonious view of Basque rural life'. The nationalists wanted the ideological messages to be explicit, and for them art that did not serve a propagandistic purpose for a nationalist end did not have value.

Counteraction against this kind of movement can occur by individual artists along with the societal changes. For instance, Ghanaian artists began to feel that the idea that their art should be the expression of their African or Ghanaian identities in certain styles was no more valid when the illusion of national and pan-African unity was breaking down. The idea now was seen as oppressive since it did not allow artists to express their individual identities or personal opinions. Many young artists in 1970s wanted to view themselves as to belong to the international community of artists rather than to primarily identify themselves as blacks or Africans. Svašek (1997, 47) quotes the words of Atta Kwami, a painter and art teacher: 'I am African, but then I

am not proud of being African. It is no big deal; I am just a human being, in the sense that Africans are not special'. The notion of group identity was fading, and artists wanted to divide the world into international social networks forming professional fields, rather than into African and non-African parts. Values such as individualism, innovation and originality came into play.

3.4 Indigenous Media

Ginsburg (1995), in her article "Mediating culture: indigenous media, ethnographic film, and the production of identity", discusses the nature of 'indigenous media'. Indigenous media shares the property with the ethnographic films in that it is intended to communicate culture "in order to mediate (one hopes) across gaps of space, time, knowledge, and prejudice." Yet in addition, it also aspires to mediate disruptions in time, memories and history.

The word 'media' does not only mean newspapers or television programmes—it indicates all the things that can cause intervening, mediating effects. Then art-related activities and the resulting works can also be called media, as they are followed by one's meaning-making process and intuition, and the will to express and communicate them with the outside world.

In the same article, Ginsburg also mentions that indigenous media is about contributing to the processes of identity construction rather than about "re-creating a preexistent and untroubled cultural identity "out there"". Indigenous people aim to take control of how to represent and express themselves through building up their own media, and Sámi art is not an exception.

Art can be one of the most powerful media for people who want to display their self-determination and to represent themselves on their own term (MacClancy 1997a). By dealing with subject matters such as Sámi history, politics, religion and society, but oftentimes incorporating their fantasy rather than strictly sticking to historical documentation, Sámi artists have been creating a bridge that link Sámi tradition and modern ways of expression. In this way, Sámi culture endures in the modern times through new kind of narratives and transcends every time. The artists provide the views with the ability to see and understand the world in different ways and to

generate various interpretations. (Gullickson 2014) In this respect, Sami artists situate themselves at the position of indigenous media producers.

Hansen (2014) points out that Sámi art has long been described in the perspective of Eurocentric art history. Concept such as "primitive", "connected to tradition" or "as a hybrid between tradition and modernism" is oftentimes used when the majority society describes Sámi art, and this tendency results in dichotomy between tradition and modernity or Sámi traditional art and Western modern art, and in marginalisation of Sámi art. It all makes it seem as if the Sámi people and Sámi art is stuck in the past without any advancement into the present days. (Hansen 2014) These kinds of conceptions cover up the fact that identity building is a never-ending process, that tradition and modernity cannot be sharply dichotomised and that history is not processed in a linear form of tradition-modernity.

Ailo Gaup, in the exhibition catalogue of the collective, touring exhibition of Sámi Artist Group in 1979, wrote:

The driving force behind these pictures is of political character. They are made out of a contemporary understanding of society. They have a political function as well. (...) Each nation has the right to its own visual art, as the people has the right to its own language and culture, the right to rule themselves in the broadest meaning of the word. This is the contribution of visual art to the process of little by little reconquering our human worth and pride belonging to indigenous people. (Gaup 1979, translated by Hanna Horsperg Hansen)

With this statement, Ailo Gaup, and the Sámi Artist Group, made it clear that they were responding to the contemporary need and were creating a link between the past tradition and the present world in which they were living, rather than staying behind the wall which cuts across tradition and modernity as Eurocentric views perceived them.

3.5 Globalisation—Flow and Closure

Until now social scientists have been largely focusing on the homonising effect when talking about globalisation. Developments in the communication and transportation technologies made the free flow of people and goods easier, adding uniformity across

the globe. However, it is becoming clear that such uniformisation entails emphasis on cultural difference. Indeed, the world is diversified in a whole new way in the globalisation era. (Long 2000) According to Long, it is when two different domains interface with each other that their different values and interests become especially visible.

So far anthropologists have rather assumed their study unit—be it a tribal community, a whole societal institution—as something with fixed boundaries and static properties. However, the way globalisation is affecting every little corners of the world, and the way people attempt to 'grasp the flux' (Hannerz 1992 cited in Meyer and Geschiere 1999) put such approach in test. Further studies on globalisation urge researchers to replace their notions on culture as something static and homogenous with something more open and fluid.

However, as much as viewing culture as something with fixed boundaries causes a number of problems—such as engendering the notion of 'authenticity' of certain cultures and isolating them—it is undeniable that the concept of 'identity' is gaining importance along with the global flow. Efforts are put into controlling the flow and searching for a fixed orientation. As Meyer and Geschiere (1999) put it, 'grasping the flux often actually entails a politics of 'fixing'—a politics which is, above all, operative in struggles about the construction of identities'. (9)

Bayart (1996 cited in Meyer and Geschiere) shows that identity is a polyvalent thing, and this makes it possible for groups and societies to share certain identities that hold the heterogeneous members together. The openness of identity enables it to protect itself from changes or make adequate adaptations. However, it is at the same time this polyvalency and openness that create obsession towards clarification and fixing. Possible reinterpretation and change cause uneasiness and desire for unequivocal signs and 'true' identity. The combination of plasticity and the illusion of truthfulness is what makes identity an ambiguous concept, and this ambiguity is even more emphasised in the process of globalisation along with the constant flow of different elements across boundaries. As the ambiguity is being made more tangible than ever and the uncertainty grows, attempts for clarification and 'identification' become stronger. (Meyer and Geschiere 1999) Tendency to search for fixed identity and to reaffirm the old boundaries and construct new ones begins to appear. Existing cultural difference is often reinforced in the process of globalisation, and sometimes even new

oppositions are made during the process. In this way, globalisation and closure of identities go hand in hand.

3.6 Signification

Humans interpret their experiences, make sense of the world and organise their behaviour based on complex meaning systems they have constructed regarding different events and actions happening in the world (Spradley 2016). This basic concept of meaning system of Spradley can be connected to Grønhaug's signification theory in that Grønhaug maintains that actors consciously produce signs and symbols to convey meanings (Grønhaug 1975).

Grønhaug introduces two concepts in signification—metaphorisation and metonymisation. Metaphorisation occurs when an actor moves a certain idiomatic practice from a well-known context to a new one. When the actor lets such an idiomatic practice signal larger sequence of implications, it becomes the metonymic operation. In this signification process, the meaning of a certain sign or a symbol largely depends on the position it holds within the larger sequence and the relationship it maintains with the other elements of the sequence. Actors select a certain idiom from an existing patterned whole where elements are related to each other metonymically and position it in a new context in a metaphorical way, which establishes a new whole and new relationships. By consciously manipulating the positions of idioms people construct signs and meanings which then establish social interactions and social fields.

In the same article, Grønhaug points out that the process of metaphorisation and metonymisation also influences in building identity—a person selects an element, positions it in a certain context and lets it stand for a chain of meanings. When the person wishes to give a change in his/her identity, he/she again picks an element and moves it to another context in a metaphorical way, creating a new metonymic sequence. Such identity are communicated in the interactions with others, validated and strengthened. Different social fields, within each of which an actor holds a position, contain different signification systems. When we take into consideration the different identities the actor owns within different social fields and the

interdependency of them, we can study how a social person, and his/her identity, is produced.

4 Empirical Findings and Analysis

4.1 Hans Ragnar Mathisen

Hans opens his computer and shows the map that he was working on digitally, along with the list where he preserved the place names that were originally on the map. He talks about the difficulty of working with different dialects, some of which are nearly or completely extinct. He says that he needs the help of other experts for it. Various phonetic signs are also one of the difficulties that Hans always faces.

He embarks on the actual work—putting a place name on the map. The map on the computer monitor, the one Hans is working on, does not have that many place names along the coast and Hans is trying to put a name on one of the locations. He opens a book that contains a more complicated, complete map of the same area and starts to find the location that he wants to put name on on his own map with a magnifying glass in his hand. The place names on the map in the book are not Sámi and that is what complicates the work—Hans will get help from his consultant with finding the right name to put on his map.

Hans keeps examining the map on the book with the magnifying glass muttering "This is so difficult." He turns to his own map on the computer monitor and moves the location of one place name slightly to the right. He then pulls out another map, examines it, and again says, "This is so difficult." He adds one place name he has found on the map in the book to his place name list on the computer, and then on his map. Now that he has found the name of the location, it is time to place it on the right location as precisely as possible. He adjusts the font size of the place name he just put in his map, and then after a while he draws out another map, this time a big sheet of paper, and starts to examine it with the magnifying glass, looking for the location he just put name on. He puts away the map and says, "This is so difficult." for the third time today. He goes back to the book, matching the locations on it with those on his

own map on the computer monitor. He again adjusts the location and the form of a few place names, and finalises the process of placing the name on the right location. It took him about 20 minutes to work on one place name.

Hans Ragnar Mathisen is a Sámi artist belonging to the older generation, born in 1945. Therefore he experienced the time when the Sámi people were under violent suppression of Norway. He does a lot of activities—he paints, he makes woodblock paintings, he does bookbinding, and sometimes makes installation works. But amongst all he is most famous for his maps—he makes maps of Sápmi with Sámi place names on it. He explains his motivations:

I have always been interested in maps since I was a schoolboy, and in drawing and also in names. When I saw that Sámi place names were ignored or mistreated on the existing maps at that time—in the 60s and 70s, I decided to make the map of all the Sámi area with only Sámi place names to show that we can do without Norwegian names. Our names are actually more descriptive and more usable than Norwegian place names, so they are more valuable. And another thing is that many of the names have connotations to stories, to special use, for example, not to mention the sacred places, and that goes thousands of years back in time. So the Sámi place names are also cultural relics and have historical values as well. So place names are a part of the language, and in fact the oldest words in a language can be found in place names.

A group of people's unique worldview seeps into the language they use, and the language in turn affects how they think and feel. A language leaves a strong and complex trace on the operation of minds of the speakers, and author Kerttu Vuolab puts it this way: "only in the Sámi language do I have the taste of life. I experienced it through living and feeling. Later I learned the Finnish language in school and in books. It was something I learned from the outside. A foreign language is always a limited tool, it doesn't have the depth of life." (cited in Lehtola 2004, 85) As Hans says, a language, including place names he works with, points to stories and usages that only the speakers of the language can grasp. A language resonates with the collective spirit of the speakers, and especially the root of the Sámi language is a completely different one from that of the Norwegian language. It works as a critical

ethnic marker of the Sámi people who are now scattered across four modern nations, and it is no wonder that the harshest form of the assimilation policy of Norway on the Sámi people could be found in its language policies.

Another element that comprises a big part of Sámi culture today is the love for Sápmi. Even though Barth (1998) asserts that occupying a specific territory is not a prerequisite in forming a culture, Sámi people's affection towards their traditional territory is somehow inevitable in that they were denied the ownership of the land since the modern national borders were set.

In the process of nation building of Norway, Rudolf Keyser suggested a theory in 1839 that claimed that Norway (and Svealand) was the main area of the Norse tribe. Keyser supposed that there was no sedentary population in the northern areas before the Germanic peoples arrived, that there were only '...a few nomadic flocks of Lapps strolling around.' (cited in Pedersen 2002, 171) According to Pedersen (2002), the idea of private ownership was vital in the development of Norwegian society, and the Sámi were viewed as nomadic people who were positioned on the lowest stage of social development. It became common perception in Norwegian historical school that Sámi people had simply been wandering around the northern areas in a nomadic way and that such a way of life could not qualify them as owners of the land. The idea that Sámi culture is something primitive that has a qualitative difference from Norwegian culture was strengthened during the 1860s when Fredrik Brandt, a student of Keyser and Munch—another prominent figure of Norwegian historical school—, reinforced the governmental view concerning the ownership of Finnmark that the area was under the ownership of the king/state from time immemorial. In the process of applying his academic background when formulating theories, Brandt again made use of the old view about the sedentary and civilised Norwegians versus the nomadic and uncivilised Sámi.

The traditional means of living of Norway was agriculture, and therefore agricultural ideals and the idealised image of the free Norwegian farmer played a huge role in Norwegian nation building and its legislation. When the Sámi were defined in 1848 as nomads, it led to the idea that they were a kind of people who were not qualified to own land. It was perceived that ownership of land should be based on farming and agriculture. Nationalistic spirit was high, and the nationalist ideology—'one people—one state—one law'—blinded the sight of alternative ways of seeing land ownership.

Then common European thinking about nomads as a lower kind did little help in relieving the predicament the Sámi people were facing. (Pedersen 2002) By 1860s, acquisition of land ownership was decided based on language competency—those who could speak and read Norwegian were given priority rights to buy land from the state. (Lehtola 2004)

At the same time, there is argument that the idea of Sápmi is strictly speaking a social and political construction. Eriksson and Karppi (2002) maintain that Sápmi is a dynamic metaphor, rather than a static primordial reality, which was constructed in pursuit of the unity of the Sámi as a single people with a single homeland. They are by no means denying the old heritage of the Sámi. However, they argue that the image of a single, common homeland called Sápmi rather appears to be a phenomenon of 20th century, where the Sámi are dispersed across four different nations and in need of cooperation on the transnational level to further assert their rights.

Whether Sápmi is an immutable reality or a social construct, it is undeniable that the concepts of land and nature are an indispensable part that comprises Sámi culture and Sámi art. Sámi material culture and spiritual culture have been heavily based on nature. Nature was something that provided them with means of livelihoods and distinct culture as well as something they should respect and protect. (Lehtola 2004, 88) Such perspectives towards nature show through a lot of Sámi artworks produced during the 20th century depicting nature.

Hans is also one of the fervent nature lovers—he constantly makes watercolour paintings of the scenery of Sápmi. Tromsdalstinden, the mountain that is considered holy by Sámi people, is the recurrent theme of his paintings. Also, he was very eager to take me to lakes to show himself feed ducks and wanted me to film the scenes several times.



Figure 1 Hans holding his watercolour painting of Tromsdalstinden

Another powerful theme that repeatedly appears in Hans' works is the experience of suffering from the suppressive and discriminative policy that Norway maintained towards the Sámi for a long time.

But on the whole in Norwegian society there is too little knowledge, in my opinion, on the time of the forced assimilation and humiliation that Norwegian society, both as individual and as the government, has inflicted on our people. It has been too much brushed under the carpet. It needs to come up in full openness, because I think that an average Norwegian, for example in Stavanger or most part of Norway, they have very little knowledge and extremely little interest in this, and that cannot be accepted. They have to be taught. Through the schooling, that this has actually happened, and that they have no reason to be proud of their relationship to the Sámi people. Any betterment of situation begins with acknowledging the fact, and how can fact be acknowledged if they are ignored? So it is extremely important that it is brought out.

Even though the policy of Norway towards the Sámi is turning towards more friendly direction, Hans was still holding strong, negative emotion towards Norway. Among different activities and artworks I have seen during my fieldwork, his installation works were especially showing such attitude well. I was introduced to in total of six installation works of his, and five of them were dealing with the suppression that the

Sámi, or colonised indigenous people in general, had to go through. He made an installation work that reminded people of what Sámi people had to go through, borrowing a motivation from a book about Jews, and also an installation work that shows a burnt lavvu (traditional Sámi tent) with a hint of glow of fire in the centre to show that there is still hope left for revitalisation (Figure 2). He talks about how spiritual legacy of Sámi people were robbed of and replaced by written culture of Scandinavia, by making Sámi shaman clothes with a big hole in the centre, words written all over the fabric and books hanging under (Figure 3). He also made an installation work comprised of a wine box filled with stones to arouse people's attention to alcoholism that pervades the societies of indigenous people. He once made an installation work that features the Norwegian flag with guksi (a type of drinking cup) placed upon it, cut by the crosslines of the Norwegian flag, to imply the impact the Norwegian society had upon the Sámi society. Among all those six works, I was introduced to five works within one day—he was very eager to show me all those works and did not mind installing them in the finished forms one by one with care.



Figure 2 Installation work of a burnt lavvu



Figure 3 Installation work of shaman clothes

His identity as a Sámi also shows in his other activities, though less radically than in his installation works. His woodblock prints feature themes such as the landscape of the Sámi area and the situation indigenous people are under. All his art practices—map making, watercolour painting, installation, woodblock printing—are related to his Sámi identity. He consciously focuses on what distinguishes Sámi culture from other cultures, such as affection towards Sápmi and the nature and the experience of suppression. In this way, he is projecting the ethnic markers of the Sámi ethnicity that he has gained throughout his life his onto his artworks to assert the worldview of him and his people, and to resist colonisation.



Figure 4 Hans' woodblock print showing a foreign hand driving indigenous people from their homeland

One thing Hans mentioned regarding the definition of Sámi art and Sámi artist was that:

This is a bit controversial, but I think there is an important distinction. A non-Sámi person who makes art that has some Sámi content, this cannot be said to be Sámi art in my opinion. There have been exhibitions where participants have been non-Sámi. And people who do not know that, they think ‘okay, this is Sámi art.’ But in fact it is not, so it is a bit tricky.

This statement is directly connected to the theory of indigenous media that stresses the right of indigenous people to choose how to represent themselves. If we combine the theory of indigenous media and Hans' idea on the concept of Sámi art, an artwork with a theme that does not strictly deal with Sámi-related issues is more qualified to be called a representation of Sámi art and Sámi spirit rather than an artwork with a Sámi-related theme made by a non-Sámi person, in that the former is the voice that came directly from an artist belonging to the Sámi people, from somebody of shared history and experiences. It also reminded of what Sámi writer Hans-Aslak Guttorm mentioned—he believed that only the Sámi could capture the life and the way of thinking of the Sámi, since they are the ones who have internalised those through their language. (Lehtola 2004, 51) Hans mentioned that art that does not directly deal with

Sámi-related themes could also be called Sámi art as long as it is made by artists of the Sámi origin. However, it still seems that Hans' concept of Sámi art is somewhat closed rather than open, based on his own art practices and interview excerpts.

4.2 Marry Ailonieida Somby

Writing is usually a solitary activity with limited actors and therefore working with a writer participant could sometimes be monotonous, especially when you have to use a visual tool. However, there comes a chance from time to time when a relatively dynamic event occurs, such as a book reading event.

Festspillene in Harstad is a cultural festival based on the small city in northern Norway called Harstad and is hosted annually since 1965. It aims to encourage art from northern Norway by providing opportunities for artists from different fields such as theatre, music or visual art to collaborate with each other and present their works to the public. Marry's book reading was a part of the festival.

A spacious green tent is standing at a children's park in town of Harstad. The inside of the tent is lit by beautifully shaped lamps emitting yellowish light. The only other light source is a big screen in the front where they will screen illustrations from Marry's book. It feels cosy inside.

Soon Marry arrives. She is wearing a white dress that looks like a theatre costume for a fairy or a princess, and on top of her head is a silver crown. Marry says that she prefers to wear such costumes when she is attending an event where the main audience is children, to show respect to children.

The tent is quite empty and there are not so many people in the children's park either. For some unknown reason there was not a word about Marry's book reading event on the website of Festspillene or in the programme booklet, and I had to contact Marry several times to get the exact information about the time and the venue. Just when we were unsure if there would come enough people to the event, children and their parents begin to come into the tent one by one. Soon the tent is full and the event starts.

Marry first begins the session by teaching the kids some simple Sámi words. Now the kids can introduce their names and greet the sun in Sámi. Marry soon starts reading

one of her book called <Stáinnak>. Her reading is theatrical and dynamic. She mimics the voices and the faces of the characters. She sings and dances from time to time.

Marry said that the book reading event would last for about 15 minutes, but she ends up reading the whole book. By the time she has finished the book reading with a final drumming and joking performance, she has used almost 40 minutes. From the beginning till the end Marry shows that she respects children by always considering the eye level of children (sometimes physically, always mentally) when she talks and reads to children. Children will go back home with new knowledge on Sámi culture.



Figure 5 Marry at the book reading event holding her book and a Shaman drum

Marry Ailonieida Somby is a children's book writer born in 1953, and she became the person who wrote the first children's book written in Sámi. As a writer she participates in events such as book readings, and at the same time she works with paintings and theatre works. She also presents drum performances at various events and participates in shamanistic rituals.

She was motivated to write children's books because there was no children's book written in Sámi when she was young even though her father was a great storyteller and she liked to hear stories. She always had to rely on her older siblings who learned Norwegian and therefore could translate children's stories in Sámi for her. She gets her inspiration from nature, which is a very important theme in Sámi art, and traditional Sámi mythology.

I get my inspiration a lot from Sámi histories. The mythology, especially, or the belief system. And then nature is a huge resource. For example, if you sit by a little creek and listen to the water, then I can hear joiks and I can also hear some stories. Or at least get inspired very much. (...) I paint much from my imagination and also much from, kind of the shamanic journey that I take because then you change your consciousness somehow and you get to see pictures and images which are extremely helpful, especially in painting.

While I was interviewing her, she stressed several times that nature is very important element in Sámi legacy. Upon my question where I asked her if she could observe certain changes in Sámi art in its themes or political temperature, she answered:

Yes, that I believe that it has something to do with political environment, but what never changes is the relationship with nature. The sacred relationship with nature. Our belief is that everything in the nature has a soul. That includes everything, like rocks, trees, rivers, creeks, animals, and some of the animals are like teachers and so are the trees and creeks and rocks, and everything. And the earth itself with all the variety and the whole star system and the universe and the sun and the moon, and that goes to everyone on this planet. But for us it is very, very sacred and we have very deep philosophy about that.

Like Hans' case, almost all of Marry's art practices—literature, drum and joik performances, painting—are about preserving and strengthening traditional Sámi cultural legacy.

Once, I was exchanging text messages with Marry discussing when we should meet next time. And then at some point Marry suddenly called me, saying that she was having an art exhibition and I was welcome to come and film. I asked her when the preparation started, and she said that it would be the very next day.

Sirma is one of the last pure Sámi communities in Finnmark comprised of Sámi-speaking people. Now the authorities are trying to close down a school in that area and move the people to more norwegianised areas. In the meantime there is a well-qualified Sámi school in Utsjoki on the Finnish side. Now Sámi people intend to make an international school for Sámi children, partly to loosen up the national

borders made by non-Sámi people. This is the background story of how Marry suddenly got to have an art exhibition—while she and Hans Ragnar were talking about what they could do to support the movement against the act of Norwegian authorities Hans came up with the idea of an art exhibition. Since Hans' restaurant has room for hanging pictures and he often hosts exhibitions, the decision could be made all of a sudden within one day. The beginning of the exhibition itself was very much political, and the paintings displayed at the exhibition were also ultimately implying political messages in that they were deeply connected to shamanism which is an inseparable part of traditional Sámi culture.

The Sámi shamans, or noaidi, are highly respected in Sámi culture. They use the sacred drums and joik to transcend their spirit to another dimension to encounter the spiritual world. They are also healers who have the power to diagnose and treat illnesses. (Gullickson 2014) Sámi artists often incorporate shamanistic elements in their artworks or apply their art in shamanistic practices, for example painting figures for the sacred drums used in the shamanistic rituals. Marry is the one who actively uses shamanistic elements in her art practices—her literature has much to do with Sámi mythology and other dimensions where nature is regarded sacred. She explains that her paintings at the exhibition at Hans' restaurant are the sceneries from the spirit land and She presents drum performances at various events. By incorporating one of the strongest elements that characterises Sámi culture, she marks her Sámi identity in her art practices.



Figure 6 One corner of the exhibition hall with Marry's paintings

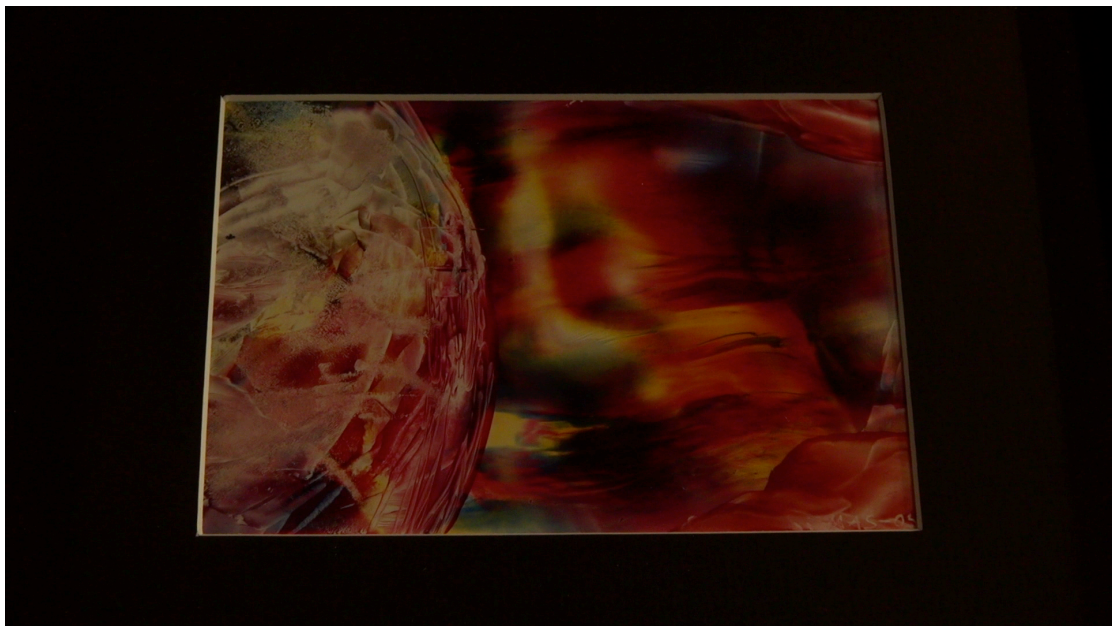


Figure 7 One of Marry's paintings

However, while many of Marry's art practices are tightly connected to the traditional Sámi culture, she also talks about changes in her art upon my question on whether she feels some changes in her works.

Yes, I'm not all that very tied up to mythology anymore. Instead I'm able to create more of my own story, stories that go on. I am still inspired by

mythology, but before I could be a little bit tied up to that. Now it's much freer.
So there has been a change.

Unlike Hans who said that he does not communicate a lot with younger artists, Marry is the one who actively interacts with Sámi artists from different generations. Whenever there were some social events that invited various Sámi artists of different fields, generations, etc., Marry was always spotted among fairly large groups of people. Marry says that she communicates a lot with artists of younger generations and thinks highly of them, unlike Hans who said that he does not socialise that much with artists of younger generations mentioning that he senses differences in their art practices. Marry mentions that she does not feel that the younger artists were that much different from the artists of her generation as she sees a lot of activists among them. She mentions that she and they would inspire each other both in art and in activism. Perhaps this active interaction with the younger generations might be one reason why Marry is still open to changes even though she belongs to the older generation and has established her own way of art practices over a long period of time.

4.3 Sigbjørn Skåden

Among all books that are occupying Sigbjørn's desk, one particular book grabs my attention. Its format is square rather than the rectangular shape which is the common format for most books. Upon my request to introduce his books one by one shortly, Sigbjørn opens the square-shaped book. My attention is instantly drawn to the way the words were laid on the pages—it seems like they are scattered over the pages. I can take a peek at illustration works that remind me of modern pop art. The design of the front and back covers is inspired by the look of the LP disc. Indeed, it is a book inspired by the post-punk movement in England. The names of the two main Sámi characters, Ian and Debbie, are not really Sámi names. Rather, the characters were named after Ian Curtis, the lead singer of Joy Division which is one of the bands that belong to the post-punk movement era, and his wife Debbie.

Sigbjørn explains that the book, which is a collection of poems about these two characters, is a parallel to this movement in England and that he wanted to recreate the energetic voice to do something Sámi. He says that he wanted to say something

about the movement in the modern Sámi society, which was somewhat regarded as a taboo and a cultural problem in where he came from. He wanted to inject the energy of English post-punk movement into the story of Sámi cultural revival.



Figure 8 Sigbjørn holding his book inspired by the post-punk movement in England

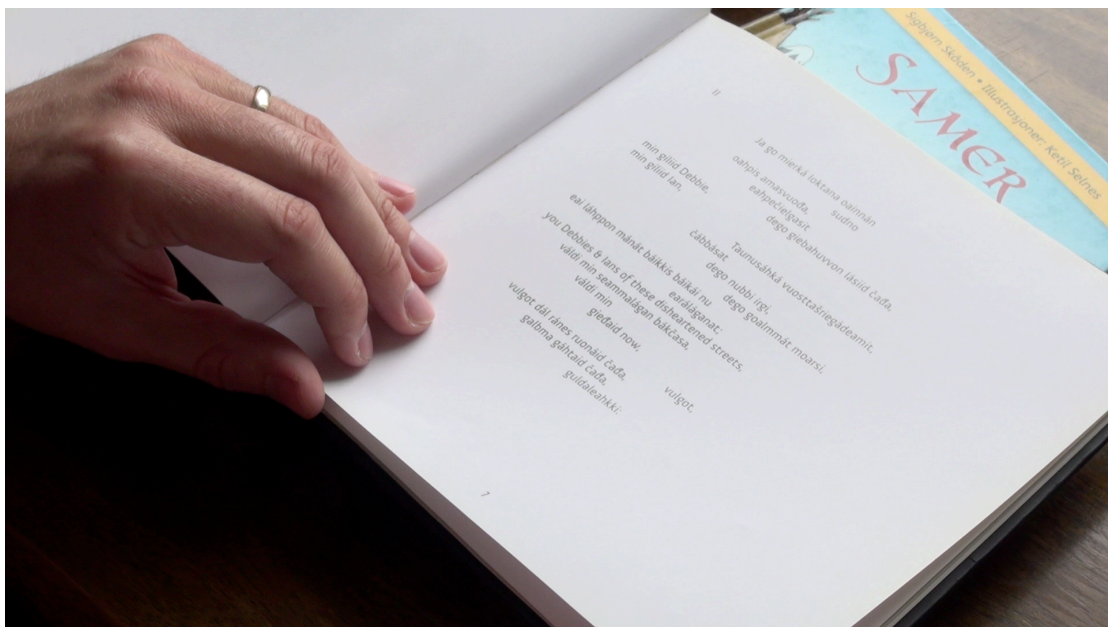


Figure 9 Inside of the book in Figure 8

Sigbjørn Skåden is a writer born in 1976 and he writes novels and poems for adults (he wrote an educational book about Sámi people for children once). He says that

Norwegians would say that all his books are Sámi books. The main characters of his books are all Sámi and the books touch upon different aspects of Sámi people's lives. He says that he tries to project where he comes from onto his literature.

At the same time he introduces in his books Sámi characters and Sámi lives that are slightly different from what outsiders might expect to see from a Sámi writer's books, the outsiders who know Sámi only by their painful history upon colonialism and expect to see that side of the Sámi life. In one of his books he injects the myth of 'wandering Jews' and introduces a Sámi character who has been influenced by a variety of factors. He also wrote a book about a Sámi lesbian girl borrowing the form of a blog, considering that there has not been any book that had a Sámi belonging to sexual minority as a main character and that it was time to touch upon the sexuality issue in Sámi literature. As mentioned above, he gets his inspiration from English post-punk movement and creates two Sámi characters to tell the story about the movement of cultural revival in the modern Sámi society. His latest novel is also about touching upon the silence of the Sámi society on sexual matters. How he came to come up with such a variety of topics could be well explained by the words of Sigbjørn himself:

The case about every literature, every people's literature is that there are some stories that you have to tell. In the start of the literary world of a people there are some stories that must be told, and I think we have used much of the early days, like the 80s and 90s, the Sámi writers who wrote literature back then had stories that they felt had be told because nobody had told them before in written fictions or poetry or things like that. (...) But I think maybe we are moving a bit away from the point that we write stories that have to be written. I think you see that in every kind of literature. There is a national literature awakening where there are stories that must be told and you have to write them up to a point, and when you reach that point you can start to branch out. And I think maybe for the last decade we've come to a point where we can start branching out.

Indeed, it seems as if people's perception of Sámi art is still closely related to the traditional Sámi handicraft or the Sámi art that you could discover around the period of Sámi cultural revitalisation era where Sámi art in its traditional forms was actively used in the political arena to defend Sámi people's right. I remember that it was quite

hard for me to find references about Sámi art that has been made by artists that belong to today's younger generations, i.e. those whose age ranges from twenties to forties. Surprisingly, people seem to forget that the Sámi society is also made by people living in this modern age and being constantly exposed and influenced by the passage of time and the flow of global trend—just like Westerners are more enthusiastic about African art that seems exotic to them rather than something that is actually more trendy and highly regarded in African art scene. Sigbjørn's books show that there are diverse sides in Sámi people's lives, just like other peoples' lives, and nobody can tell it better than the Sámi themselves who are living the very lives. It might have been the case that Sámi literature was actually bound to certain topics at some specific period, but it is now branching out, both in forms and contents, which is shown in Sigbjørn's case and in the cases of other artists of the younger generations that will be shown afterwards.

It reminded me of one of Marry's book she mentioned briefly. She once wrote a book which contained sexual and political contents in. Some people were provoked by the book, and the publisher did not really advertise the book so it remained 'underground'. However, it was important for Marry to use all the old Sámi words for sex, many of them beautiful. Sigbjørn mentions that sexual matters are considered rather like a taboo in Sámi literature, and here I could see how both Marry and Sigbjørn attempted to branch out from old themes and touch upon wider subject matters that are also important in the lives of Sámi people and yet have not been talked about enough.

Even though he incorporates a lot of elements into his works that are quite new to Sámi literature, he also shows quite strong political stance about his Sámi identity in Norwegian society at the same time.

I was raised in an area where the Sámi have not been treated very well through history. My parents' generation and my grandparents' generation had a really hard time just for being Sámi, just for speaking the language and having that culture. And in my village almost no one of my age speaks Sámi so it's a language that's disappearing. Now people have started taking it back, but if you go 30 years back in time it was disappearing fast, dying. So of course it is a political choice for me to choose to write in Sámi even though not many people read Sámi. Like, maximum 20 000 maybe can actually read what I write, so it's

a very small language. But I made that choice quite early, that I wanted to write in Sámi because I think it's important to have Sámi literature, to try to preserve and develop the language, the literature and culture.

We can see the process of both flow and closure in Sigbjørn's literary practices if we borrow the language of Meyer and Geschiere. By making a choice to write in Sámi even when it is not spoken by so many people, he attempts to make sure that one of the strongest ethnic markers of the Sámi culture, i.e. its language, is safeguarded. But at the same time he translates his book into Norwegian himself to reach wider audience, and one of his books is now being translated into English by another person. In the meanwhile, the act of translating books that were originally written in Sámi into Norwegian can be read in a different light—it is not only a way to reach the Norwegian audience but also a way to reach more Sámi readers, since a number of Sámi people today do not actually speak Sámi. In this respect, publishing books both in Sámi and in Norwegian serves two purposes—letting the books ride the global flow, and securing that those who are Sámi but do not speak the language can also get access to the literary culture of theirs. As for the contents of his books, Sigbjørn does not hesitate to inject elements from other cultures into his books. At the same time, such experiments ultimately serve to touch upon the lives of Sámi people who are living through the constantly changing modern society. The Sámi spirit and the global flow coincide in Sigbjørn's literary practices.

4.4 Northern Soul

Northern Soul started as a project for Varangerfestivalen 2014. With the electronic music composer Herman Rundberg and the modern dancer Simone Grøtte at the centre, the band presents the audience with a performance that blends music, dance and image together at Riddu Riddu festival. The music has very much contemporary style, and it is the same with the dance. The images capture the sceneries of life in northern Norway in a dreamy way. At first sight, it does not seem as political as Hans' or Marry's works.



Figure 10 Performance of Northern Soul at Riddu Riddu festival 2016

Perhaps my first impression is not quite so wrong—Upon my question on how she reconciles her part as a Sámi and another part as a Norwegian, Simone Grøtte, the dancer of Northern Soul, answered:

For me, personally, I have not experienced the things that my ancestors have experienced. So I don't have that... I'm not angry with the rest of the society. So for me, it's more about just finding the good and interesting and unique things about the Sámi culture and just use it to show the rest of the Norwegian people and the rest of Norway, with an approach that is more like, 'Look how wonderful it is. This is our background, and this is what we are.' Something that you're proud of. So not that you force it on them, as 'You have to see this approach.' It's more like, 'just enjoy'. (...) So we are more... two "Happy Sámis".'

The performances of Northern Soul are political in a way that it has the intention of showing the beauty of Sámi culture to the world, but the method it uses is quite different from that of the artists of older generation. They still use significant ethnic markers of Sámi culture such as the scenes from the lives of the north or musical elements from joik, the traditional form of songs of Sámi people. However, such markers stand less prominent in their works, since they are intermingled with modern

elements from other cultures and other times—such as electronic music, hip-hop music, western orchestral sound and modern dance. Their stage is a cultural melting pot, and it seems that such an approach is yielding a notable result. As Simone recalls one of the performances where Herman composed the music and she danced:

We went to, for instance, the capital of Oslo and showed them (the performance) to the people there. We didn't actually go out there and said 'This is a Sámi piece, this is a Sámi dance performance, we are Sámi artists...' we have just shown it. And then the feedback afterwards from the Norwegian audience has been very good. It's been like, it was so interesting to see Sámi culture being shown in such a modern way. It was just there. We didn't make a big deal out of it. They experienced it differently and approached differently. They didn't know it until they sat down and saw the performance.



Figure 11 Simone Grøtø dancing at Riddu Riddu festival 2016

Sámi ethnic markers do exist in the art practices of Northern Soul, but they are emphasised to lesser extent in the presentation of their art. As a result, the boundary between the Sámi and the Norwegian, which is established by emphasising such markers, also becomes blurred. By this way, the performances of Northern Soul opened the gate through which they could access the heart of the Norwegian audience.

It could be assumed that Sámi artworks that imply too much a clear boundary between the Sámi and the Norwegian, or that contain contents about the conflict between the two, can make the Norwegian audience step back, as they will remind Norwegians of their shameful history in regard to their old policy towards the Sámi. Direct statement of historical facts with an admonishing tone and a sense of clear boundary might be an effective reminder, but it is doubtful if such a method could win the hearts of the Norwegian audience and make them become interested in Sámi culture. Some Sámi artists might not be interested in such interaction, but if one is interested in doing so, Northern Soul showed that it is important to take in the global flow and weave Sámi elements into it, thus lowering the threshold for the outsiders.

And yet, the word 'outsider' might not be an appropriate word here. I told them an episode that I encountered while contacting different artists to ask them to participate in my project before it began. I got a text message from a young artist, where she said that she did not think that the direction of her art practices was suitable for my project. She said that the Sámi identity was just one part of her identity and that she did not feel that being a Sámi should describe her identity or her art. When I mentioned the episode, Simone answered:

We don't see ourselves as only Sámi artists. I don't think you have to put it into different boxes, because we grew up with so many different... We have actually 3 languages in my county where I come from. In Sápmi there have always been all kinds of different cultures meeting... The borders weren't that defined earlier, and I think for me it's like I'm a part of a lot of different—I see myself as a Sámi artist, a Norwegian artist, a world artist... (laugh) and also I'm a dancer and yeah, it's all these different types of parts of us. In that sense I would agree with her. I don't want to be just a Sámi artist, because I'm a lot more. That's just a part of the package.

Later, after she talked about the different approach they were taking in regard to the Norwegian audience, Simone also added: "I see myself as a part of the Norwegian society as the Sámi society, so maybe that's also the reason why I don't want to separate those. It's combined. It's just the part of who I am." By no means she is saying that she feels herself less Sámi—it is just that she has multiple identities each of which is all a solid part that comprises who she is, just like the art pieces of

Northern Soul are incorporating elements from cultures of all places and times including those from the Sámi culture. When I asked them how they experience the change in the Sámi culture over generations, the composer Herman Rundberg answered:

I think the Sámi music is developing like it is for all the music development in the world. You see new young electronic artists use the Sámi language and combine it with modern sounds. So for the Sámi music, I think it's the same as for the rest of the music business.

And also I think some young Sámi artists use elements from the Sámi culture, maybe some words in Sámi. Or they may be inspired by joik, but it's not like traditional joik. I think it's starting to get integrated, like a normal thing to do. That's really cool and that's how you can take a traditional culture and make it developing.

During the interview they stressed several times that they are grateful for their tradition and the artists who try to preserve it. But at the same time they describe their art as a normal process of development, as something 'cool', and say that both sides are needed. For them, Sámi art is something dynamic—constantly developing with any other cultures of the world. The Sámi, the Norwegian and the world are all blended together in their art. It would not do justice to all the novel attempts of the young artists if we try to appreciate and understand their art based on their Sámi ethnic background alone, regardless of the fact that they are proud of their Sámi culture.

The incorporation of modern elements not only draws Norwegian audience—it is also a way to appeal to the younger Sámi audience who lived all their lives in a modernised world. Simone explains:

Especially we see that the younger audience can get introduced to a lot of Sámi culture by getting it served as a modern package. For example, it can be that they go and see a contemporary dance performance then suddenly it's about an old shaman. So they can learn about their old tradition, their background, but they learn it through a modern way. So especially the younger audience is important for us to try and reach.

Their openness towards the new and the changing leaves a question: would it be ever possible to generate a coherent description on the concept 'Sámi art' in this globalised world?

4.5 SlinCraze

"Are you ready for joiky hip-hop?" shouts a guy on the stage on the last night of Riddu Riddu festival. The audience cheer. The song starts. The trendy intro is soon followed by singing that definitely reminds of joik. Modern elements and traditional elements interweave into each other ceaselessly. The letter 'SC' on the screen at the back of the stage, the abbreviation of the name of the artist 'SlinCraze', is a mixture of fashionably designed font and reindeer-inspired ornamentation. The audience in Sámi traditional clothes move their hands according to the grammar of hip-hop listeners. Things somehow look surreal here.



Figure 12 Concert scene of SlinCraze at Riddu Riddu festival 2016

SlinCraze is a rapper who incorporates strong Sámi ethnic markers such as the northern Sámi language and joik into his music. His songs are not only about politics—he explains that sometimes his lyrics can be very personal, depending on

what he is feeling at the moment he is writing the song. However, Riddu Riddu festival introduces his music as to be about how it is to live as a Sámi, the life where you are faced with a lot of prejudices and racism. At the same time, just as Sigbjørn's choice of writing books in the Sámi language itself has made his activity a political act, it can be said that SlinCraze's choice of rapping in northern Sámi also makes his art practices political acts even when he is talking about personal feelings.

Upon my question on how joik inspires him, he answered:

I've always known joik because I was born and raised hearing it. Joik is basically what rap is to me. It's just joik with words, in a way, because joik is very rhythmic. You've seen a lot of people that joik use motion with their hands when they're joiking, and that's basically what I do, also. Instead of joiking I rap and I use my hand (shows the hand movement that often accompanies hip-hop music) as a rhythmic tool. That's the way joik inspires me.

The way he explained how joik inspired him, how the rhythmic aspect of joik seems to be resembling that of hip-hop music to him surprised me, since I had never seen such connection between them even though I had known what both music looked like. His words made me ponder upon the common spirit that exists in joik and hip-hop music that had been unseen to me so far, upon how the old and the new could be bridged through such a spirit that is there for those who have the right eye and the right sense to discover and grab it. It also reminded me of the interview with the Northern Soul members where they praised the powerful and rhythmic aspect of the Sámi language.

When I asked him how he thinks art can contribute to establishing indigenous identity, he said:

In my case, Sámi hip-hop has awakened a lot of young people's desire to be a Sámi again. They are not ashamed anymore to show that they are Sámi. I've had a lot of young people from the cities in Norway coming up to me saying, "Finally I have, I love hip-hop and I have finally someone I can listen to, even rap, in my language." So I think that's the way it will strengthen and establish the Sámi identity amongst the future generation, that they would feel more

proud, and whenever you are proud of what you are, you can accomplish whatever, you know.

For a long time, Sámi culture has been framed as something stagnant and outdated, and it can be assumed that it has affected how young Sámi people who have been exposed to mainstream pop culture think of their background. Hip-hop music is considered as one of the most modern and rebellious kinds of musical forms, and upon hearing what SlinCraze said I could imagine how exhilarating it would have felt for Sámi youths to hear such music written in their own language that has been looked down on, to see a young artist rapping in their own language about stories that they can identify themselves in, in the form of trendy music with elements of their ethnic background blended in it.



Figure 13 Concert scene of SlinCraze at Riddu Riddu festival 2016

But at the same time he also has a sense of being a Norwegian. He says that he considers himself not only as a Sámi but also as a Norwegian, a Norwegian with a different culture, and that he is proud to be Norwegian as well as to be Sámi. He sees that his generation and the generations after do not have that much problem with the Norwegian society in general.

I think my generation and the generations after will be very nice generations. I don't think we have that, like... Of course we hate if we meet a racist or something like that. That's the same reaction for everyone. But we consider ourselves as Norwegians as well, but with a different culture. If Norway went to a war, for example, or Norway was attacked, I think the Sámi people would be the first one to defend it, because it's our country as well. We are proud to be Norwegians, but we are also proud to be Sámi, and that we can make our culture, what our grandfathers and grandmothers have taught us and so forth, so yeah, I don't think really there's much difference between my generation, one generation above me and younger generation.

He also admits that nowadays' Sámi art is not so different from mainstream art with the influence of pop culture, though he keeps trying to blend elements of his Sámi culture into his music.

I think a lot of Sámi art is the same as any other art in the world. But we have our own elements like our traditional clothing involved in it, we have reindeer parts, and we have our own kind of signs also, of course, like old ancient signs. But I think the modern Sámi art is not too different from mainstream art, to be honest. A lot of young people, painters today, especially painters, when they are making art, you can see they are inspired by pop culture. Whilst in music, I think it's the same. We have that pop music from America and we listen to that, but when we make our own music we try to make it our own. At least I do, and I do know a lot of others artists who do that too. We try to incorporate in some way, it doesn't even have to be much, but in some way we try to incorporate our culture, our upbringing.

Distinctive ethnic markers such as the language and the traditional musical elements are clearly seen in SlinCraze's music, setting a boundary between SlinCraze's music and the mainstream music from other cultures. But at the same time the boundary is more permeable here than that of Hans Ragnar, for example—considerable exchange of cultural elements occurs across the boundary that marks SlinCraze's music. The global flow and the inevitable encounter with different cultures are embraced rather than defied.

4.6 Inga-Wiktoria Påve

I enter the building of the Center of Northern Peoples while I was participating in Riddu Riddu festival as a volunteer and a journalist, and immediately fairly large-sized paintings grab my attention. Sámi people in their traditional clothes are depicted in quite a heavy way. The colours are toned-down. I vaguely think that the paintings were made by one of the older painters. It was quite a surprise when I learned later that the paintings had been made by a 25-year-old painter called Inga-Wiktoria Påve who was actually picked as This Year's Young Artist.



Figure 14 Inga-Wiktoria Påve's paintings at Center of Northern Peoples

The next day I visit the lavvu where I could see her work. The drawings and paintings set outside the lavvu feel brighter than the paintings I saw the day before. Images that were inspired by old stories are captured in exquisite lines and delicate colours. I feel that now these feel more 'young' and 'modern'. But then as I enter the lavvu, I am again surrounded by paintings of faces captured in bold lines and heavy colours. Inga-Wiktoria explains that those are the faces of the Sámi people who are important in Sámi history.



Figure 15 Inga-Wiktoria's paintings exhibited outside the lavvu



Figure 16 Inga-Wiktoria's paintings installed inside the lavvu

Inga-Wiktoria Pålve is a 25-year-old painter who was picked as Young Artist of the Year at Riddu Riddu 2016. She came from a reindeer herding family in Sweden. She has been very much inspired by ancient sagas and legends since she was young, and conveys such inspirations often with traditional media such as brush and pencil.

Inga-Wiktoria is rather in a special position among my participants. Unlike Northern Soul or SlinCraze, she says that she has to choose what to become, being it a Sámi, a

Swedish, or both. She describes it as pain that her generation has to go through and that this makes her generation political and rebellious.

I think that's my generation's pain because we have to choose which one, or both. I think it has put a lot of young people into a painful process, and I also think that's why the artists of this generation are so political and kind of rebellious, because of the pain they have to go through that other people have put on them. I think it's everyone's pain in this generation that we have to choose.

While it did not seem so difficult for the Northern Soul members and SlinCraze to feel themselves as Norwegians as well as Sámi, Inga-Wiktoria described it as a painful process where people had to choose which side to take. When considering that SlinCraze and Inga-Wiktoria are actually the same age, the difference struck me strong. Like her works that rather revolve around more traditional themes and styles than the works of Northern Soul or SlinCraze, Inga-Wiktoria's conception of the boundary around what Sámi is seemed somewhat harder. Such a perspective also showed through when I asked her how she would define the word 'Sámi art' and 'Sámi artist':

I think if you have a ground in the Sámi kind of way of living or maybe background, or have a general sense of the Sámi identity and also have deeper insight in it, then I think you could be called a Sámi artist. But then also there are people that in a sense don't work with the 'typical' Sámi art or music, but they still belong to the Sámi people so they can also be called Sámi artists.

Even though she added the cases of artists who do not work directly with Sámi-related themes, the fact that she first came up with concepts such as 'Sámi kind of way of living' or 'a general sense of the Sámi identity' as the elements that comprise a Sámi artist drew my attention. It was a different kind of reaction from Northern Soul who came up with words such as 'dynamic' and 'developing' when asked to define Sámi art, or from SlinCraze who said that modern Sámi art felt the same as any other art in the world. The answers I got from them before were stressing the aspect of global flow

and mixture. In contrast, Inga-Wiktoria's answer was implying a rather clearer boundary regarding the concept of Sámi art and Sámi artist.

When I mentioned the artist who refused to participate in my project saying that she did not want her ethnicity to define her art, Inga-Wiktoria expressed her view:

I think it's a problematic thing with—I think people don't want to be put in boxes like, you are this and you are that, especially with Sámi people with the history, having the Swedish community looking down on them and already putting them in a box that's kind of lower than them. I think it's very problematic to be put in a box where you maybe have a sense that I'm not going to reach as far as, if I only call myself this, (...) I think it's that point of view why people are maybe hesitating for calling themselves just a Sámi artist.

When I talked about the same artist during the interview with SlinCraze, he answered that he would be proud to be called a Sámi artist, that he did not feel that the word would lock him in a box. Simone of Northern Soul mentioned that she did not want to be called just a Sámi artist because she was a lot more than that. However, she did not connect it to the stigma that has been attached to Sámi ethnicity—rather, she described herself as a less angry, happy Sámi. SlinCraze also mentioned that those of his generation "don't have any problems with anyone", that they do not have the feeling that those who are now in their fifties or sixties have towards Norway. From the interviews with Northern Soul or SlinCraze, it is easy to get the impression that their generations are not facing the old stigmatisation over their ethnicity anymore. However, Inga-Wiktoria is talking about something else—the old stigmatisation that is still inflicting today's young Sámi people. Perhaps the difference between Norway and Sweden in their attitude towards Sámi might have functioned as an important factor that has characterised their art and attitude respectively—embracing the flow, or reinforcing the boundary?

5 Discussion—Sámi, Sámi art

The modernisation process that started to sweep through the world also left its traces on Sámi culture—the modern way of living which requires settlement in one place and the use of new technology conflicted with the traditional Sámi way of living, and

formal education crafted by the majority society inevitably influenced Sámi people's worldview. (Lehtola 2004, 57) The fact that Sápmi is divided into four modern nations is also something to be taken into consideration—a nation shapes the lives and worldview of its people by assigning them certain rights and obligations, and each nation provides them with public policies that differ from one nation to nation. The power and the impact of the way Sámi issues are dealt with—that is, administered by specific branches of the central and regional administrations or by the Sámi Assembly—do not seem to amount up to those of the way general policies are carried out. (Thuen 2002, 284)

Ascription of ethnic identity is considerably influenced by two factors—origin and the ability to perform certain distinctive cultural aspects. (Thuen 2002, 289) It seems obvious that the latter one is in a crisis when it comes to Sámi issues. A lot of Sámi people do not speak the Sámi language even though the revitalisation movement of the Sámi culture has helped the Sámi language live on, and reindeer herding has declined along with the establishment of modern borders within Sápmi and the destruction of the natural environment suited for reindeer herding. Self-ascription of ethnic identity is not only influenced by how one thinks about one's identity oneself but also by how others think about the one and the relevant ethnic markers. It can be assumed that a number of the Sámi people would be hesitant to affirm their Sámi ethnicity when their competence over important ethnic markers that have been traditionally regarded as Sámi both inside and outside the Sámi community is becoming lower and lower along with the passage of time of modernisation.

The reason why quite a few Sámi would hesitate to affirm their ethnic identity is also inevitably related to the stigma that has been attached to Sámi identity for so long. Sáminess has been the object of discrimination and ridicule, and such stigmatisation is still an ongoing thing though the situation differs from place to place. It is not easy for the Sámi to shake off all those history and memories at once and openly affirm their ethnic identity. This will cause some Sámi to assert their Norwegian identity or dual identities upon facing questions regarding their ethnicity.

Whether it is about the decreasing visibility of distinct Sámi ethnic markers or about the ongoing stigmatisation upon Sámi ethnic identity, the Sámi people are in a position where they could be easily hesitant in claiming their ethnic identity. The non-Sámi people frame the Sámi identity according to the traditional ethnic markers such as the language or the means of living, which would cause them to define Sáminess in

a narrow way, and this kind of view can be also found among the Sámi themselves. The old stigmatisation on the Sámi identity still affects many Sámi, making it difficult for them to claim their ethnicity in an assertive way. Such hesitation becomes a significant factor that makes the boundary around what Sámi is and what is not less and less clear as time goes by. The Sámi revitalisation movement definitely gave more life to the then disappearing boundary, but the inevitable flow of modernisation and globalisation, and the old stigmatisation that is hard to unroot within one day are also in force now.

The same situation can be seen in art as well—"I am from a small Sámi village, but I received a western art education. I have tried to fit these points of departure together without hurting myself." says Synnøve Persen, a Sámi painter. (cited in Lehtola 2004, 118) Many Sámi artists who are active these days got trained in modern art schools where the views of the majority are conveyed through education, and it becomes a job for Sámi artists to balance their ethnic heritage and the education they have got. It can often be seen that the dilemma is resolved in a way that traditional Sámi themes such as the history or mythology are expressed in contemporary art styles such as abstract paintings of western styles or installation.

The issue is also obviously seen in the interviews with my participants. Sigbjørn Skåden steps further from the old literary tradition and searches for wider range of ways of expression and subject matters. Northern Soul members embrace the flow of globalisation as something that would develop and enrich Sámi art. SlinCraze mentions that contemporary Sámi art is like any other art in the world. If we may borrow the words from Grønhaug (1975), Sámi artists of younger generations are placing the old Sámi culture within a new context—they are combining the old and the new and bringing the traditional Sámi cultural elements like the language and joik into a new arena, into the world where so many other cultures collide with and bind to each other ever so dynamically. Here, the decision on how Sámi art and the Sámi people are represented in the world is made by Sámi artists themselves—they defy being put in a box that other people has designed.

The Sámi culture, armed with the unique mixture of deep-rooted old elements and the newly brought elements from many other contemporary art scenes, is now being located in a new sphere through the process of metaphorisation and is given a new sequence of meanings as metonymisation starts to take action. As the Sámi culture is perceived in a different way from how it used to be in this new context with a

different meaning system, a new ground upon which the Sámi people could build up their identity is formed. And this new ground is closely related to the dawning of modernisation and globalisation—global flow is clearly blurring the ethnic boundary of Sámi culture. Would it be possible to talk about what Sámi art is at this point? Would it be meaningful?

As much as the global flow is strongly affecting Sámi art, the abovementioned words from Synnøva Persen are also still in force. Many younger artists such as the members of Northern Soul or SlinCraze are still trying to incorporate elements from traditional Sámi culture in their art. SlinCraze says that Sámi art nowadays is like any other art in the world, but it is not that we could find rap music like that of SlinCraze in any other parts of the world. We could find it only from SlinCraze. Then it might be possible for us to still talk about the boundary that marks Sámi culture—it is only inside this boundary that we could listen to SlinCraze's music or see the performances of Northern Soul. It is only within this boundary that we could meet Sigbjørn's books, not to mention the paintings of Inga-Wiktoría. The boundary-building is still at work today.

Even if it is impossible to deny the impact of globalisation in today's Sámi art, it is impossible at the same time to deny the uniqueness in it. Elements of the traditional Sámi culture are actively taken up by artists of new generations and incorporated into the new forms of art. The ethnic markers, though in less obvious ways, still resonate in Sámi art made by those who have been deeply influenced by modern cultures from different parts of the world. The way Sámi indigenous identity is expressed in the art of younger generations is less assertive and aggressive—it is more like a gesture of invitation towards the Sámi territory, a soft yet clear message that is to spread the beauty and uniqueness of Sámi culture. To some people's eyes, for instance those who actually have gone through the harsh time when the Sámi identity was overtly discriminated and oppressed, this softness and the search for the harmony with the rest of the society might seem unsatisfactory. Some would want a more clearly defined, harder ethnic boundary. It is, however, the impact of globalisation and the inevitable change that the passage of time has brought about that cannot be avoided.

If Sámi artists wish to sustain the boundary that distinguishes Sámi art from the art of others, however fluid it has become today, it would be the assignment for them to constantly search for the ways to instill the unique elements of Sámi culture into the forms of art that can appeal to not only the Sámi themselves but also to those standing

outside so that the idea of the boundary could be shared across it. And it seems that the process has been in success until now. Within the dynamic movement of contemporary Sámi art, distinctive elements of the Sámi culture still resonate. It is undeniable that the ethnic boundary has become more fluid and blurred than before, and it is possible to assume that it will become even more fluid and blurred. However, the attempts to sustain the boundary in organic and harmonious ways that correspond to the situation of the contemporary world, the attempts to express the Sámi indigenous identity through art, are constantly being made. As long as there exist those who make such attempts, it is meaningful to talk about what Sámi is, and what Sámi art is.

6 Conclusion

The biggest finding of my research was in the difference between how Sámi artists of older generation and younger generations deal with their Sámi identity in their art practices. Those of the older generation, who went through the harsh time of norwegianisation themselves, still choose to establish a rather strong boundary around what Sámi is from what is not, using old ethnic markers such as the affection for Sápmi or Sámi mythology as their main source of inspiration. Negative emotions towards Norway still exist in their words and art practices. Those of the younger generations, in contrast, show much open attitude towards cultural elements from outside. The experimental spirit in the forms and subject matters prospers. There is a writer who writes about a story of a Sámi lesbian girl in the form of a blog. There are musicians who bring electronic music and modern dance into their art along with elements from the Sámi heritage.

But then still, it is not that the older generations and younger generations are clearly polarised into two completely different directions. An old writer takes a new step in search of subject matters that are quite different from what she has been writing about so far. There is a 25-year-old painter whose art practices are pretty much filled with traditional forms of art and subject matters, who talks with a solemn face about the hardship young Sámi in Sweden are put under even to this day. We cannot really say

this generation is this and that generation is that. Things are way more complicated than that, and perhaps this is what provides richness to today's Sámi art.

The boundary that marks Sámi art from other art is more fluid and open than ever. In the meanwhile, we can still sense the attempts of the artists to instill Sámi ethnic markers into their art, however subtle they might seem. Elements from the traditional Sámi culture function to colour even the most modern and trendy forms of today's Sámi art. Fluid and open boundary does not equal complete disappearance of the boundary. As long as there exists the art that can be made only by the artists of Sámi origin, art as a means to express indigenous identity and discussion on Sámi art still stay valid.

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