

# **Sámi natural resource exploitation in a *markebygd* and its significance today.<sup>i</sup>**

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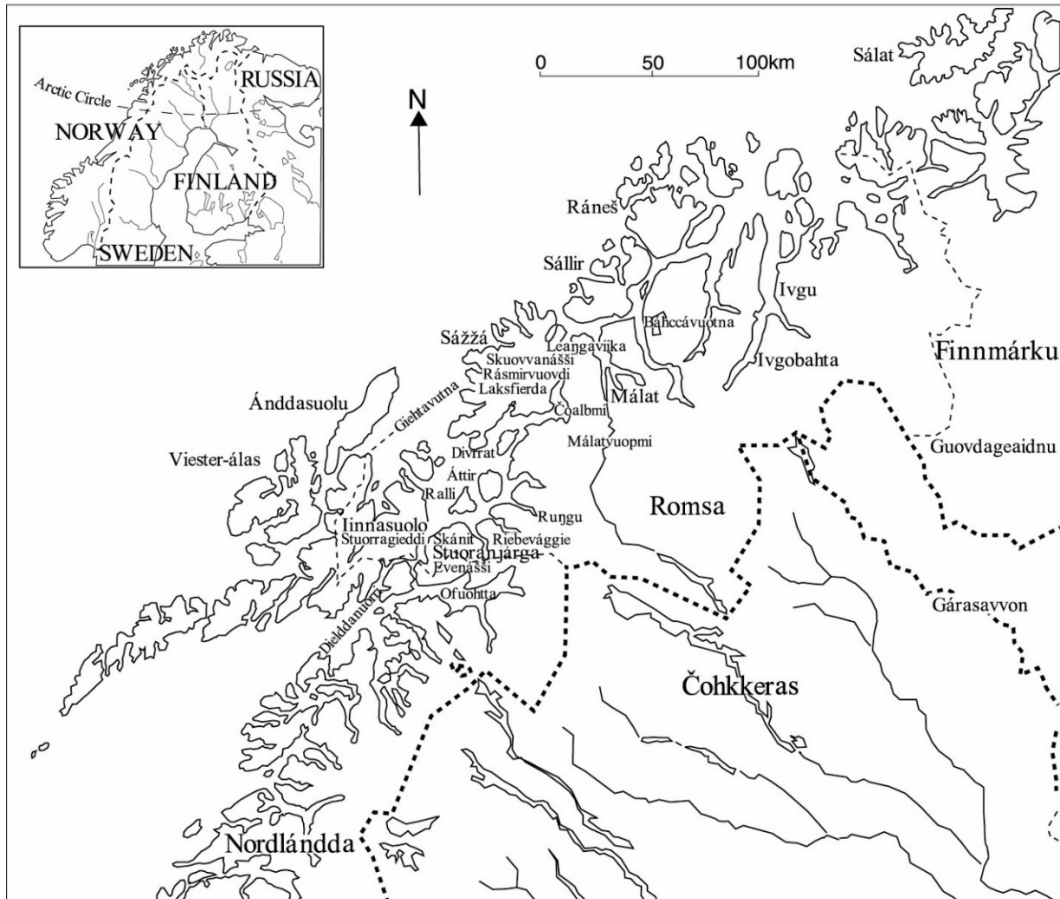
## *1. Introduction*

In my investigation (Storm 1990) of the *markebygd* of Rásmirvuovdi/Gressmyrskogen on the island of Sážžá/Senja in the province of Romssa/Troms, I have reconstructed the settlement process from 1700 to 1900 AD. The focus was on the practice of Sámi resource exploitation – which resources and resource areas were used, and how the land was exploited – and what kind of Sámi settlements were connected to the different land-use patterns. By way of an introduction, I will discuss the concept of a Sámi coastal settlement, for which I have chosen to use the Norwegian word *markebygd* as a technical term<sup>ii</sup>, and its position in relation to Sámi resource exploitation. I will point out the method by which these different economic adaptations can be studied over a period of two hundred years. This investigation forms a base from which one can work both synchronically and diachronically. At the moment, I am continuing the investigation, concentrating upon the resource exploitation patterns over the last century. As a conclusion, I will present some perspectives on the significance of documenting Sámi land use in a specific area.

The *markebygds* in the provinces of Nordlándda/Nordland and Romssa/Troms have been discussed earlier in the scientific literature by Vorren (1958, 1976). He saw the settling process as indicating a change in the economy from a nomadic society via fishing and hunting to a settlement based on farming and fishery. He also focused on the economic differences between the Norwegian people along the coast and the *markebygd* population, and later on the sociological differences between Norwegian society and the Sámi settlements. Knut Kolsrud (1947) has investigated the Sámi people in Ofuohtta/Ofoten and analyzed their different economies and their attachment to the area. In particular, he has focused on the *markebygd* in about 1700 and given this settlement geographical expression (Kolsrud 1947: 73). The outlying fields are regarded here as a meeting-place for the nomadic population from the Sámi nomadic villages east of Kjølén<sup>iii</sup> and the reindeer-herding population along the coast. The outlying fields provided room for the settlement to develop in isolation from the effects of the process of Norwegianization, which was carried out until after the World War II. Alf Kiil (1981) described the Norwegian colonization of Málat/Malselv county in the province of Romssa/Troms during the turn of the 19th century.

They settled on localities where there were Sámi nomadic routes and along the Málátvuotna/Malangen Fjord where there were Coastal Sámi settlements. In the same area, Johanne Volden (1979) focused on the conflicts between the *markebygds*, the Sámi reindeer-herding population and the Norwegian colonists in the last part of the 19th century.

The region of study in the counties of Nordlándda and Romsa.



Figure/ Govva: Ernst Høgtun, Tromsø Museum, The University Museum 1999

### 1.1 The concept of localization

The *markebygds* are located in the provinces of Romssa/Troms and Nordlándda/Nordland from the Málátvuotna/Malangen Fjord and southwards. The settlement pattern forms a neat network where the Norwegian settlements are intertwined with the old (i.e. *pre-markebygd*) Coastal Sámi settlements, the areas used by the nomads and the *markebygds*. The *markebygds* make up rural districts which developed in the coastal area from the 18th century onward. I want to put forward the hypothesis that the change of settlement pattern in these areas can possibly be connected to the widespread old Sámi coastal settlements in the Ofuohtta/Ofoten and Southern Romssa/Troms area (Andersen

1991: 130, 133-136; Hansen 1990: 132, 162-163, 195). Both Andersen and Hansen have suggested such a possibility, from very different standpoints, on the basis of studies of medieval settlements in the area. Here the areas are classified as resource exploitation areas and land-use areas for the Coastal Sami population, for the nomadic population and the developing *markebygd*. In my investigation, I have documented the close connection between the different settlements from the end of the 17th century (Storm 1990). They cannot reasonably be regarded as situated "outside Sámi districts, and ... in the outlying district of the North Norwegian main society" [my translation]<sup>iv</sup> as Storli (1991: 99) has written, misinterpreting my account of the development of the *markebygds* (Storm 1982: 36-38).

The *markebygds* do not appear as coastal villages, strictly speaking. During the period under investigation, they were not only localized along the seaside, but were also found in the outlying fields, in areas higher up, in valleys both on the big islands, away from the seashore on an isthmus, and on the mainland, from the outer coast to the inland and in the mountain areas. In the province of Romssa/Troms, they occur from the big islands of Viester-álás/Vesterålen, linnasuolu/Hinnøya, Sážžá/Senja to the mainland in the areas of Skánit/Skånland and Evenášši/Evenes, and eastwards and north in valleys such as Ruonğu/Spansdalen and Báhcčávuotna/Balsfjorden. The word *markebygd* (see note ii) is the term used by the local people. The male census of 1701 reads "who are staying in the woodlands up country from the farms" or "are living out in the woods and most of them in the mountains during the summer" [my translation]<sup>v</sup> (Manntall 1701). The place-names describing the landscape are mostly in the Sámi language. In my investigation, the term *markebygd* is chosen as a concept where localization constitutes the primary basis, on the grounds that the settlements are mainly localized in the outlying fields. These rural districts and the way they were established suggest that they were always orientated to the coast and the economy there. The concept *markebygd* therefore also contains a statement about the recognition that the economic basis was related to a coastal adaptation. This connection varies in form and significance during the period of study.

*What the Sámi exploitation of resources in a markebygd encompasses: a methodological approach*

### *2.1 Sámi exploitation of resources*

Sámi resource exploitation comprises a wide variety of activities focused on the outlying areas such as the encompassing forests and fields, as well as on land in lower and higher regions and resources at sea. It includes gathering berries, hay, peat, etc.; fishing in

rivers, lakes and the sea; and hunting birds, fur-bearing animals, and sea mammals, as mentioned by the "Resource Committee for Finnmark Plateau" (NOU 1978: 18). The Resource Committee had studied resource use from 1975 to the present. The documentation and mapping of Sámi resource exploitation covered the period from the turn of the century to the present through interviews and the study of literature (Kalstad & Storm 1978: 162-181) and exposed a flexibility of choice closely connected to the economy of each household.

It is precisely through the notion of "flexibility of choices" that I will be discussing the process of changing adaptation from the hunting period in about the 16th century until the present. Today this flexibility is expressed as different choices among combinations of resource use. Land-use areas and resource areas can be specified as "that space ('place') which people create and use in their lives, and the geographical space which is a part of the wider social structure" [my translation]<sup>vi</sup> (Bærenholdt 1990: 91). The space or land also changes as the settling processes go on, and will also depend on the changing economy. These changes also lead to different ideas about how to use the resources and the land.

What kind of cooperation and conflicts has this changing use of resources led to? The investigation contains examples of complementary uses, both in the rural settlements and between the *markebygds* and the Norwegian and Sámi coastal settlements. It also provides an example of a conflict over the exploitation of the forest and grazing areas, similar to the ones presented by Volden from the district of Málát/Målselv (Volden 1979: 3-5).

## 2.2 *The Rásmirvuovdi/Gressmyrskogen study*

Rásmirvuovdi/Gressmyrskogen is the area where the historical and cultural study of the *markebygd* was carried out covering the period from 1700 to 1900. The economy was based on self-sufficiency and was the result of an economic adaptation "based on farming, fishing and comprehensive exploitation of all available resources" [my translation]<sup>vii</sup>, as Kalstad (1982: 30) has stated on the basis of the studies in the fjord area of East Finnmárku/Finnmark. The economy of the outlying areas was based on the exploitation of all resources in the forests and outlying fields, in the rivers and the lakes, in the mountains, in the valleys and along the coast. Such a comprehensive utilization is most easily summed up by viewing the exploitation of the resources and the economic life as different components in an adaptation of a mixed economy where the content will vary. In Rásmirvuovdi/Gressmyrskogen, I wanted to map the traditional exploitation of the resources, the areas which they comprised and their exploitation pattern over a two hundred year period. The area of investigation is situated on the eastern part of the island of Sázzá/Senja, in Rásmirvuovdi/Gressmyrskogen, a small community around

Rásmirvuovdijávri/Gressmyrskogvatnet a lake north of Luossajohka/Lakselva. In a regional perspective, the area is defined from the forest belt east of the Kjølén mountain range, from the parish of Čohkkeras/Jukkasjärvi to the high mountain areas on the island of Sázzá/Senja.

### 2.3 Substantial findings: Selection of groups and time periods

In order to conceptualize the Sámi groups using the land and exploiting the resources in the region, it is necessary to delineate the population which could be defined as connected to the *markebygd*. In my study, the Sámi population was classified as (1) the Coastal Sámi settlement in the coastal area situated between or next to the Norwegian settlements, (2) the nomads who were using the coastal areas in their seasonal migrations, and (3) the growing population in the *markebygd*. The study is limited to three different groups of people and three different time periods. I have focused specifically on:

1) the Coast Sámi in Čoalbmi/Gisund County<sup>viii</sup> (later in Leaŋgaviika [Læŋgaviika] /Lenvik County) and at the end of the hunting society period in the areas of "Tingevarre" and "Siggevarre" from about 1700 until the middle of the 19th century

2) the nomadic population utilizing the Sárevuopmi district in Čohkkeras/Jukkasjärvi parish and the coastal districts within the area under study from the 1700-1900

3) the growing settlement of the *markebygd* within the area under study from 1700-1900.

Methodologically, there are problems in talking about these different groups, since they have utilized partly overlapping areas. To visualize the connection between resource use and each individual or group, a critical examination of the sources was required.

The process of establishing the *markebygd* may be broken down into the following four stages:

- Nomadism
- the movement out of nomadism towards a mixed resource use and economy
- establishing the settlement, the resulting existence of a distinct Sámi settlement in rural district – a *markebygd*.

In my investigation, I do not assume that the stages necessarily follow each other in any causal way. They may be viewed both as economically or ecologically different adaptations or phases of settlement in the rural district. They can be studied at the household level. There is also the opportunity to focus on each person in the censuses of 1801, 1865, 1875, and 1900 to illustrate the family's economic base and resource use by following one person's occupational record or lifecourse. In order to understand the different economic and/or ecological adaptations, it became necessary to divide the survey into three periods. The availability of the sources also played a major role in that decision (Storm 1990: 23-31).

The starting point for my study of the *markebygd* was the investigation of Sámi traditional land use in Rásmirvuovdi/ Gressmyrskogen. After preliminary studies of the literature and fieldwork in selected areas, my analysis seemed to lack historical depth. It was necessary to establish a historical perspective for a more thorough appreciation of the establishment of the *markebygd* as a process. The primary intention of the study was closely tied up with a historical investigation of Sámi exploitation of the resources in order to attempt to map the use of different resources as components in a complex economic life.

For a given period, a land-use area will be determined by how the people on the farm unit and in the households exploit various resources and how the different items in their economic life fit together. For example, these may consist of a farm with animal husbandry, sheep and reindeer, the use of outlying fields, forestry, picking berries, fishing in the lakes and rivers as well as the sea, and hunting birds and fur-bearing animals. However, the resource and land use areas will be partially overlapping with the areas of other groups. Which delimitations had been drawn earlier, and how? To obtain such information, further studies were needed focusing on very limited areas or source material.

#### *2.4 Collection of sources*

The selection of sources was made with specific reference to the three named population groups, and with particular emphasis on one, the *markebygd*. The information to which I had access was diverse and often open to comparison. The censuses of 1865, 1875, and 1900 allowed a comparison of the coastal settlement and the *markebygd* in the area under study on the island of Sázzá/Senja. Consequently, I chose to focus on the level of the family/household or the farm unit. The exploitation of the resources was highly diversified, and some of the sources offer an opportunity to localize some of the various resource units. Furthermore, I have tried to assemble material to reconstruct the areas of land use for the different Sámi settlements.

The information about Sámi settlements and resource exploitation stem from fragments of sources. The written sources are censuses, court assize minutes, estate conveyances and mortgage lists. Furthermore, I have utilized travel books and the works of the different reindeer-herding commissions who, in a most thorough manner, have been mapping the area and province of Romssa/ Troms - its geology, vegetation, and the areas for reindeer herding as supplied by interviews with reindeer herders at the turn of the century. The sources comprise documents written from different perspectives - those on deforestation from the chief county forester's viewpoint, those on land use from reports on conflicts with the expanding farming communities in the valleys. The information in these reports, which

highlights the Sámi settlements and their economic life and resource exploitation, is primarily given from a point of view defined by the interests of the nation-state. Having the intention of documenting Sámi economic and ecological life, one must therefore carry out a critical analysis of the different sources, similar to what Hansen (1985) does in the introduction to his study of the situation in the south of Romssa/Troms in the 17th century. In the area of the *markebygds*, one finds that for the period from 1700-1900, available sources reflect national attempts at suppressing and assimilating the Sámi population. These sources are primarily connected to the establishment of the national border between Sweden and Norway in 1751. However, the documents dealing with the administration of the land used by the nomadic population and the Norwegian agrarian people do convey a wide range of information.

### 2.5 1700-1780

The study of the establishment of the *markebygd* and the resource exploitation connected to that settlement provided a variety of information. I have ascertained that a distinct Sámi use of resources has been maintained, both for the Coastal Sámi as far as this population can be traced as well as for the nomads and the *markebygds*. For the Coastal Sámi population, land use was dominated by farming and fishing in combination with hunting sea and land animals for fur as well as for meat. Salmon was caught in the rivers and in the sea. Boat building is documented for two farms: on the farm Lávkehalla/Laukhella, my sources reveal that one six-oar boat was built, and on Skuovvanášši/Skognes, two twelve-oar boats. During the period from 1780 to 1820, three boats were built (Storm 1990: 204-206). In the case of the nomads, they were frequently observed hunting for meat and fur and fishing in the sea as well as in the rivers and lakes during their stay along the coast, in combination with their reindeer-herding activities. In 1753, the nomads paid rent to the province of Romssa/Troms to be able to carry on an economy combining reindeer herding with hunting and fishery (Qvigstad & Wiklund 1909: 37-39). In the census of men in 1701, the economy of the *markebygds* is described as "rowing out to fish, as well as making big and smaller boats and the necessary oars and other similar items" [my translation]<sup>ix</sup> (Manntall 1701). In other words, it appears that the Sámi population along the coast during this period used a wide range of resources: forests, bogs, peat, berries, eggs, fish, birds, etc. Some of the activities tied to these resources are thoroughly documented and described in the literature and archival material. This goes for salmon fishing, hunting sea mammals, collecting eggs on the island, building boats, hunting bears, selling firewood, as well as keeping reindeer.

### 2.6 1780-1840

This is the period when the *markebygd* in the area under study was being established. From 1770 to 1838, the number of farm units increased from eleven to forty-two, mainly located in the outlying fields. The settlement was expanding into the inner parts of the island, occupying the valleys and outlying fields near the nomads' settled areas. The economy was based on farming and seasonal fisheries in Lofoten and Finnmark. Reindeer herding also played a part. Documents show a large variety of resources used, like that for the previous period. At the turn of the 19th century J. Qvigstad (1928) collected the fairytale "A Hunting Fib" from the island of Sáǰǰá/Senja. It was related by Lars Larsen Tverrás who lived in Rásmirvuovdi/Gressmyrskogen during the last part of the 19th century. The story may be said to illustrate the different areas of land use, connected especially to hunting and seen in a *markebygd* perspective, during the beginning of the 19th century.

#### A Hunting Fib<sup>x</sup>

*It was an old man at the head of the jord who told me this:*

*He was once rowing and he had with him the trader and his wife. Then he came across some common seals there in Laksfierda and shot the boat full. Then it was bad weather, and it was not possible to return home. The weather drove to the islet Lawkhælsuolo, and they had to stay there for three days and nights; they nearly froze to death; but he flayed eight of the common seal skins and built them a tent which they stayed beneath as long as the bad weather lasted, until there became an interval of fine weather. They had not brought along any food and ran out of food. He had tinder and steel and flint; with that he made a fire and fried the seal meat and the seal blubber; they lived there on that for three days, till the weather became fine. Then he spread out the blubber, so the boat was full. When they came honte, it took his father three days to bring up the blubber.*

*So another time he was again rowing in the same fjord; he did not come across anything there and he did not have a gun with him; then he started to row homewards. Then near the shore on a skerry he runs into a common seal; but he does not have his gun with him and he does not know how he can take that seal. Then it struck him that he had some rope with him. He tied the seal to a stone while he went home to get a gun, and the seal was tight in the rope while he was going home for the gun, and he shot the seal and got it. When he came to the landing place, he sees the tracks from a group of otters having gone up along the river like a covey of ptarmigan. He went to track them down and found them higher up in the river and shot them there, all of them, altogether twenty otters.*

*Once again, he sees tracks of a bear who has gone up to the mountain Noaddevarri; he did not then dare to go after it to track it down before he had gone to his father and heard*



*what he said. When his late father heard it, he seized the gun. He led him to the bear tracks; they tracked the bear straight down to the bear's winter lair; but he did not bother to shoot; he just struck the top of the door of the winter lair with his axe-hammer. Then the bear came out; he just hit it on the head with the axe; then the bear died. Then his late father cut a thick young birch, thicker than a stick, and from which he twisted a wither band; then he tied it around the neck of the bear and started to pull and pulled it straight down to the shore; he pulled it to a hollow by the river below the farm; but two horses were not able to pull it from there up to the farm. They had to slaughter it there and the bear carcass made up four loads.*

This story, which is from the area under study, illustrates the land use areas for a person with his homestead in a *markebygd*. It is a "good" hunting story. The elements of which "A Hunting Fib" consists could easily have happened one at the time. The story gives us an introduction to the area and some of the knowledge about it which the storyteller refers to, and may have used as a basis for his hunting. It shows us how some of the area was utilized from the beginning of the 19th century. It also shows some of the knowledge - about birds and animals, about the weather etc. - which is a requirement for successful hunting in the different areas connected to the *markebygd*, both on the island and on the mainland. In spite of the changing stock of fur-bearing animals and other resources, the island and the mainland were rich in resources during the 19th and until the middle of the 20th century. My own interviews confirm the richness of these hunting grounds and the active resource exploitation which went on until a few decades after World War II.

Based on evidence from the court assize minutes, I have found that 40 bears were shot in Čoalbmi/Gisund county during the period 1780-1820; on the island of Sázzá/Senja, 27 bears, three yearlings, and one cub; and on the mainland, seven bears and one cub. The bears were shot by fourteen bearhunters residing in the county (Storm 1990: 200-202). In a commentary to the census of 1900, it is noted that Niels Andersen from Grepsliddja/ Grepsli, who was ninety-five in 1900, had shot 45 bears during his lifetime (Folketellingen 1900). Kraft (1835: 482) also described the hunting and remarked that "there are several good shots, both among the Norwegians but especially among the Sámi" [my translation].<sup>xi</sup> Particularly in this area, the men from the *markebygds* hunted bears, something which the previous discussion confirmed. Kraft (1835: 483) also mentions that wolves were less often hunted, but foxes and in particular otters were sold to the Russians.

### *2.7 1860-1900*

The *markebygds* and the coastal settlements in the area under study have been focused on in particular until 1900. The two groups include people who were defined as being either

Sámi or as Norwegian. I have compared the two types of settlements both demographically and in respect to economic life on the basis of data from the censuses from 1865, 1875 and 1900. The data were statistically analyzed by computer in cooperation with the Norwegian Historical Data Archives at the University of Tromsø. The coastal settlements and the *markebygd* were compared for those three points in time illustrated by the censuses with reference to the following variables: place of birth; migration; ethnicity/language/nationality; occupation/employment; and farming, which included cows, sheep, goats and reindeer.

The study showed that the *markebygd* mainly have a Sámi population, while at the same time the population in the coastal settlements mainly was Norwegian.<sup>xiii</sup> From 1865 to 1900 agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries underwent development which by the end of the century produced a rather similar economic situation in the two areas. The comparison makes it clear that the areas differed radically from each other in their resource use, in the composition of the economy and in the balance of the different sorts of resources used. The *markebygd* shows a wide range of combinations in exploitation of the resources, and – according to the 1900 census – different sorts of occupations (Storm 1991). But specialization in different occupations had also started in the coastal settlements, while the standard combination here still consisted of agriculture and fisheries.

### 2.8 Other studies

The mapping of resources and land-use or resource areas that has been carried out for this area can be compared to other types of investigations, for instance to a large-scale investigation in the Northwest Territories in Canada at the beginning of the 1970s, where they documented Inuit and Indian land use and occupancy in an area of approximately 1.5 million square miles (Freeman 1976, I: 19). The investigation was undertaken after a proposal from the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada to the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs to produce a comprehensive and verifiable record of Inuit land use and occupancy in the Northwest Territories of Canada. According to the preface of the report, the record so obtained would delimit the present and past use and occupation of the land as well as the marine environment and would categorize the different uses in any particular area. In view of the continuing role which land use and resources play in defining the cultural and ecological circumstances of Inuit society, the aim of the research was also to provide an explicit statement – by the Inuit – of their perception of the man–land relationship. There is some variation in the manner in which land use reports have been written. Though these reports could have been standardized, it was decided that several advantages followed from an empirical diversity: first, the special skills and insights of the different authors are retained;

second, this exposes the reader to several different viewpoints or facets of an important topic (Freeman 1976, 1:19). Taken together, they describe land-use areas for each single population group (Freeman 1976, III: xv).

An alternative approach would be to map the pattern of movement connected with the exploitation of one of several specific resources. Such investigations have been undertaken for small-scale mapping of particular resources, such as the ptarmigan trapping during the winter of 1954-55 in Nuorgam, Ohcejohka/Utsjoki in Northern Finland by Valonen (1956). Other examples of the same procedure on a larger scale are: the Dene's hunting grounds (Asch et al. 1986); Ørnulv Vorren's mapping of the migration routes of the Sámi nomads from Finnmark/Finmark, outlining the picture for the period of 1953-57 (Vorren 1962: 7-9); and the study from Helgeland, which represented the pattern from the turn of the century until 1940 (Vorren 1986: 34).

The investigation on the island of Sázzá/Senja cannot be compared directly to any of these studies. The mapping here will necessarily become fragmented because the resource areas are reconstructed on the basis of historical sources which contain very different kinds of material. But they show the activity in one place at one time, and several activities in several places for longer periods. An investigation like the one presented will be carried out in a limited area for a selected period between 1850 and 1950. To reconstruct patterns for each resource for a greater area and for several resources is only possible in a larger-scale project and over a longer period of time.

*3. What significance does documentation of Sámi exploitation of resources have today?*

How can documentation of Sámi exploitation of resources be considered useful today? I want to look at this question from the perspective of basic research as well as applied research, and in particular with reference to my own investigations in the *markebygds*. Documenting exploitation of the resources can be regarded as a way of obtaining detailed knowledge about an area and the population living there for a chosen period. In the attempt to discern which resources were used, where the resource areas were, and how the land was exploited and by whom, thorough studies are necessary. They encompass different ways of collecting information, both through fieldwork and by studying literature and source materials. The fieldwork included studying the cultural landscape, the cultural mounds and sites, and conducting interviews with the people who are settled there or who otherwise have a connection to the area. All are elements of what is understood as basic research.

In a statement about "ethnoscience", Alf Isak Keskitalo, curator of the Guovdageaidnu Gillišilju/Kautokeino regional museum and a Sámi philosopher, has maintained that, from the perspective of the minority, there are at least two areas of priority for research:

It is vital for an ethnic group in a minority situation that it be able to legitímate its policy and claims through scientific documentation of its past history and rights. This can only be achieved through very exact and painstaking research. I think that modern ethnoscience has underestimated the minority valuation of a historical confirmation and the immense extension and complexity of such work. The obvious policy is broadscale coordination of effort and resources and consultative attitude to minority priorities. (Keskitalo 1976: 412).

Documentation of Sámi exploitation of the resources in the *markebygd* forms a part of this basic research and can be viewed as a part of such a historic documentation. In accumulating the data, there is also a long-term perspective: archives of information can be generated to be used in future research.

In the context of applied research, investigations of this character can be seen as a basis for supplementing historical-juridical studies as part of a basis for administration or management of land use. This also involves the administration of the Cultural Heritage Act (Law of 9th June 1978 no. 50). The administration of this law leads to the initiation of new research, while it is simultaneously dependent on the continuation of basic research. In applied research, investigations from the two last decades may be mentioned which have arisen due to technical developments and the fast pace of the building industry – for example, research connected with hydro-electric projects, the search for mineral resources, and planning for leisure activities. For such projects, outlying fields and the mountain areas are highly attractive. With a view to preserving the cultural environment, several reports have been made in later years documenting the cultural/historical value of such types of settlements. For example, the "10-year plan for the conservation of the water-courses" (Lunde et al. 1983) gives an in-depth presentation of these problems on a national level.

In a historical-juridical context, I would especially like to point out the work about Sámi rights to land and water (Smith 1984) in multi-ethnic areas. The investigation of the establishment of the *markebygd* at Rásmirvuovdi/Gressmyrskogen demonstrates that the areas in the middle of the province of Romssa/Troms which were occupied by the different ethnic groups until the 19th century can be viewed either as separate, partly overlapping or to some extent concurrent areas. Documentation as well as the appreciation of the fact that Sámi exploitation of the resources has taken place up until after the World War II will, however, form part of a process of the growing acknowledgement and understanding of the presence of the Sámi people. Here, in particular, one must take into the consideration the

areas which earlier were treated as "deserted" but which we today can prove have been actively settled since the Stone Age. New research in the fields of archaeology, history and cultural studies shows that these settlements will underline the presence of Sámi through prehistory and history.

Historical documentation may also have important functions in connection with economic life of today. It may serve both as a basis for and a confirmation of further development, where the combination of various sorts of economy today may serve as a point of departure. The present-day mixed economy in the Sámi settlements along the coast and in the fjords has been analyzed in a report (Solbakk 1988) carried out by the Ministry of Labour and Local Government. This investigation arose from the repeated insistence of Sámi organisations who argued that the existing agreements between the Government and the trade unions did not give sufficient attention to certain types of mixed economy, especially the combination of agriculture, cattle breeding and resource exploitation (Solbakk 1988: 7). Recently, preparations have been made for a more purposeful and systematic public effort to secure economic wellbeing and stability, specifically emphasizing the mixed economy in the Sámi areas. Today this is on the agenda of the Sámi Parliament in Norway, both as a special issue and in connection with other fields of interest. Basic research gives us detailed knowledge of limited areas over specific periods through the careful handling of the source materials. This may form an element in a process whereby the Sámi presence in settlements and exploitation of resources in the coastal areas is confirmed and acknowledged through scientific as well as more general presentations. The knowledge obtained may well be a basis for further research, investigative reports or public use.

### *3.1 Ethical framework*

There are several ethical aspects to research concerning the individual – both in the capacity of researcher and of informant - as well as society, the area under study, the sources, and various aspects of storing and presenting the assembled knowledge. The investigation presented here took place in an area where at least two ethnic groups have lived side by side for a long time. How the relative balance of power between the two population has developed in a historic perspective is an open question. The process of Norwegianization went on from the last part of the 19th century until after World War II. How is this reflected in the area under study by the people and their identity? Documentation of the changing exploitation of resources in an area reveals some of the cultural and historical processes each group has lived through. As part of these processes, the documents can serve as a basis for discovering such resource exploitation and land use. The areas discussed here were situated

in the settlement and land-use areas along the coast, in the outlying fields, in the valleys and mountains along the coastal area in Southern Romssa/Troms as well as along the sea, mainly the nearby coast and the seasonal fishery localities. The economy of the Coastal Sámi settlements is not easily reconstructed, since the relevant information may be spread out over many different sets of statistics and thus is not easily compiled. It requires great pains to assemble an overall view of the economy in these areas. Here, I have only wanted to point out the many areas where this kind of investigation will encounter questions and choices of value and weighting.

#### *4. Conclusion*

The reconstruction of resource use in a specific area within a cultural context depends on a long series of choices: about the area size, the time frame, the selection of sources, and the perspective from which the investigation should be viewed. In my investigation of Rásmirvuovdi/Gressmyrskogen, a *markebygd* on the island of Sázzá/Senja, the choice of time periods made it possible to combine a diversity of sources ranging from elements and features of the landscape to studies of written and oral sources. In order to carry this study through and give it historical depth, it was necessary to combine the discussion of the process of establishing the *markebygd* with the description of some of the specific or distinct resource units, and indicate some of the exploitation areas during the period of study. Through this investigation, a methodological approach for treating source material has been established in such a way that detailed knowledge can be obtained about resource use connected to the groups of Sámi settlements and the areas exploited.

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## Notes

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<sup>ii</sup> Markebygd translates into English as: “mark—“ ‘land,’ ‘field’ in one fiscal meaning of the word; “bygd—“ ‘enclosures of houses and farms in a rural district’. The enclosures can sometimes be compared to a village. Originally, the term had pejorative connotations, expressing the disapproval of the Simi by the majority society along the coast.

<sup>iii</sup> Kjølén = ‘the keel’. Kjølén is the mountain range stretching from south to northeast between Norway, Sweden and Finland and is more precisely defined by the watersheds in those countries. Kjølén mainly coincides with the national border established in 1751, which divided those states.



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- iv «utenfor lappmarkene, og ... i utkanten av det nordnorske storsamfunnet».
- v «opholder sig i Skougmarken ofuer Bøndernis Gaarder ...» or “holder till udj Skoufuene og de fleeste til fields om sommeren ...”.
- vi «... det rum eller Sted ['place'], som mennesker skaber og bruger i deres liv, og det geografiske rum som er en del av den større samfundsstruktur ...».
- vii «... basert på jordbruk, fiske og en allsidig utnyttelse av alle tilgjengelige ressurser”.
- viii Gisund tinglag is an administrative unit comprising both Lenvik and Målselv, and some parts of Hillesøy.
- ix «... saa vel af Vdroer som med legte, Baader, og fornöden Smederie der til Item med Aarer og disslige at giöre ...».
- x “A Hunting Fib” was collected by J. Qvigstad and is presented in his volume of Sámi fairytales and legends. The informant was Lars Larsen Tverrás, a Coastal Sámi, born ca. 1821 (Qvigstad 1928:320-3). The story was related in the Simi language and translated to Norwegian by J. Qvigstad. The translation into English is mine. The fjord mentioned is Laksfierda/Laksfjorden in Lenvik community.
- xi «... imidlertid findes gode Skyttere, saavel blandt de Norske, som især blandt Søefinnerne».
- xii Who is what? The sources have to be read carefully. One has to go through each list and the names and countercheck. The numbers for each group are only accessible after detailed studies of church archives and after following the individuals through the lists of births, confirmations, weddings, and death.