Being Sami: an ethnography of identity through the lens of the Riddu Riddu festival

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of The Australian National University.
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Abstract

Since the 1960s Sami people have been actively seeking recognition of their Indigenous status. The notion of Sami people as Indigenous has developed along with the rise of indigeneity since the Second World War. The push for recognition received a major boost in the late 1970s – early 1980s during the conflict over the proposed Áltá dam. Building the dam would have led to the flooding of the Sami majority village of Mâze and disrupted reindeer herding and salmon fishing. The activity against the dam and the attention it gained marked the beginning of traction in political arenas that has since influenced Sami people’s access to rights and recognition as Indigenous.

An increasingly articulated part of the process of recognition is the negotiation and transformation of Sami identity including that of Coastal Sami people. Control over Sami identification has gone from being primarily the domain of non-Sami colonisers to that of Sami people themselves. The conditions surrounding presentations, articulations and transformations of Sami identity are explored. This exploration includes an examination of the traits people need to have to present themselves as Sami and have their identities recognised by others, as well as how these traits are expressed in order to gain recognition and rights.

Inspired by Brubaker and Cooper (2000), identity is adopted as a category of analysis. This means clearly presenting processes, practices and relationships in terms of their implications for identity. The ethnographic lens through which these issues are examined is principally the Riddu Riđđu festival, an international Indigenous peoples’ festival held in Norway run primarily by Sami people.
Giitu, tusen takk, thank-you to all of the people that have helped over the years.

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In the end we will always be judged by our ability to report events, formulate knowledge that was worth the effort of inquiry and will be worth the effort of reading (Fabian 1991, p. ix)

I hope this thesis is worth all of our efforts.
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Map of Gáivotna in relation to Norway and Romsa County (clockwise: Map of Norway (Wikimedia n.d.), Map of Troms (Google maps n.d.) & Map of Kåfjord (n.d.))
Chapter One

‘I am Sami’

Each summer in the village of Olmmaivaggi\(^1\) in Gáivuotna, one of the strikingly beautiful fjords in Northern Norway, a group of (mostly) Sami people organise and run the international Indigenous peoples’ festival called Riddu Riđđu (eng Storm by the Sea\(^2\)). This politically, artistically, and culturally motivated event has done much to promote and celebrate Indigenous culture from around the world as well as the cultures of people from the Arctic region — Sami communities, Coastal Sami communities, and the Sami community of Gáivuotna more specifically.

Before I first went to Gáivuotna in 1999, Coastal Sami people had begun changing their participation in regional and national Sami political activity. Although there had been a history of Sami political activity in the area, it was clear that Coastal Sami issues did not enjoy the same level of recognition as Sami people from communities considered to be more obviously Sami, namely those in inner Finnmárku (nor Finnmark) and other communities associated with reindeer herding. This changed in the 1990s as Coastal Sami people began to take up the fight for recognition in new ways. The Riddu Riđđu festival was part of this push and by 1999 it had already been successful to some extent in their less recognised community having a stronger position in the wider Sami political

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1 See Appendix A for technical notes on names, terms and translations.
2 Riddu riđđu more strictly translates as ‘small storm by the coast’.
arena and in discussions about who was Sami and what Saminess was. By the time I arrived, the Ridda Riddu festival had expanded to explicitly include international Indigenous issues, so joining the struggle to have Sami people and Coastal Sami people recognised as Indigenous in Norway and in the international Indigenous movement that Sami people had been heavily engaged in since the 1970s. By 2015, Ridda Riddu had become a well-established international Indigenous peoples’ festival. In Norway it is playing an important part in the successful transformation of the recognition of Coastal Sami issues, and the recognition of Sami people as Indigenous.

Sami issues remained in the shadows of Norwegian politics until the conflict, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, over the building of the Áltá dam, with its potential consequent flooding of the Sami majority town of Máze (nor Masi) and disruption to reindeer migration and salmon fishing. Even so, claiming a Sami identity remained problematic for many Coastal Sami people throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The annual Ridda Riddu festival was started in 1991 as a move to recuperate Sami identity and it has played an increasingly important role in the revitalisation of Sami practice and identity ever since. In 1998–9 I lived for 18 months in Northern Norway undertaking ethnographic fieldwork, and subsequently returned for 3 one-month periods in 2003–4. I arrived the year that the Ridda Riddu Searvi, responsible for organising the festival, was established. Looking back from the perspective of today, it is clear that this was a turning point, not just for the festival, which has grown from strength to strength, but also for

3 While best known as the Áltá dam, it is actually called the Virdnejávr dam.
4 This is discussed further in Chapter Six. See Robert Paine’s Dam a river, damn a people? (1982) and Thuen (1995) for further discussion.
5 eng Riddu Riddu Association.
the recognition of a strong and positive Sami identity that challenged much local, regional and national prejudice. Such have been the changes in the past 15 years that it is hard to understand the pressures and negativity that had to be overcome at that time. This thesis, although it is written in the ethnographic present, provides an historical insight into a crucial period in the emergence of the contemporary internationally recognised Indigenous Sami identity so strongly manifested at Riddu Riđđu today.

The people involved in running the festival navigated and negotiated (internally and externally) a complex and often ambiguous socio-political arena. They did so in order to establish their own Saminess as well as their place and the place of their community in the wider Sami community and the international Indigenous community. Importantly, the people who established and ran Riddu Riđđu also provided a significant event through which lasting relationships were formed and representations were performed in a positive environment that aimed at and succeeded in redressing oppressive stereotypes of Sami and other Indigenous peoples.

The ways in which identity recognition is achieved and the role Riddu Riđđu plays in the broader processes of postcolonial transformation of Indigenous and, to a lesser extent, non-Indigenous identities in Sápmi⁶ (the transnational region in which most Sami people live) and Norway will be explored. The aspects of Indigenous, particularly Sami, identity discussed include: the transformation and maintenance of Indigenous identity, the recuperation of Sami identity, the processes of being and becoming Sami and the ways Sami people harness

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⁶ See Fig. 2.1, page 40.
discourses of Sami difference to gain rights and recognition. This will be through a discussion of the content of Sami identity. This is not an ethnography of the Riddu Riđđu festival. It is an ethnography of Sami identity but using the festival as a lens for the discussion. It is also an attempt to use identity as the primary category of analysis. My conception of identity and how it can be used as a category of analysis is as follows:

**Identity**

Identity is socially, historically and culturally constructed. While there is individual choice and freedom of movement, in practice this is circumscribed by shared conventions, codes, values, by what Pierre Bourdieu (1992, p. 66) calls ‘the feel for the game’ a second nature instilled from childhood (in Taylor & Spencer 2004, p. 2).

So social identity is the result of seeing oneself as, and being to others, a person possessing certain traits, capabilities, capacities, proclivities and knowledges. It is necessary that the traits are recognised by others as part of a set that belong to a particular cultural group. The recognition of an identity is complicated because there is fluidity at the boundaries of the group that shares the traits (Barth 1969b) and by changes to the traits associated with the group.

Saminess and identities in general are the result of the negotiation of a multitude of interactions, decisions, and practices that then shape people individually and as members of a group. People’s views of themselves and their place in a community or group are the result of the complex negotiation of this myriad of experiences both internally and externally. A person encounters and negotiates their sense of self temporally (from childhood to adulthood or from day to day or hour to hour), spatially (as bodies in space), sensorially (through the multitude of sensory experiences that crowd everyday life) and emotionally (through the mundane and profane responses to people, events, objects, situations and...
thoughts). Negotiation does not refer only to face-to-face discussions between separate individuals, it refers to the interpretations and also responses each person has with each encounter that relates to any aspect of their self. The results of these negotiations are identity forming, as each point of negotiation requires new information and/or influences to be integrated into a person’s sense of self. Each negotiation and integration transforms a person’s sense of self and impacts on their public, articulated and performed identity, which is reliant on ritualised, repeated performance or ‘iterability’ (Butler 1993, p. 95).


These scholars, amongst others, have written about the implicit and/or explicit discussion of the ability of people to negotiate their individual and social identities at one and the same time — what Jenkins (1996, p. 20) calls the ‘internal-external dialectic’. While the internal and external distinction is on some levels a false
distinction, it is nevertheless an analytically useful one. The internal and external are in and of each other; inextricably linked. The external is the point of symbolic expression and understanding through the embodied practice of the internal.

For instance, when a person says they are Sami, or wears a gákti⁷, they embody externally their internally experienced self. For the purposes of analysis, there is a need to maintain that there is a dialectic. This is in order to be able to withdraw from discussions about individual identity and ego or other psychological and philosophical arguments that, although important, distract from the broader external arenas of socio-cultural identification⁸. The expression of an individual or group identity or a distillation in the process of identification requires some settling of this internal-external dialectic, whether consciously or unconsciously. Recognition of this dialectic allows for the acknowledgement of agency and change within the process of identification as settling on an identity requires choice and renegotiation.

It is the performativity (Butler 1993) and performance (Goffman 1959) of identities that makes them real in the world for others. The process of performing identities is part of the process of identity formation. It is a key part of the visceral dynamism of the process. It is the continual performance of identity, through the articulation of aspects of being Sami, that reinstates those aspects as Sami as well as requiring their recognition and interpretation by others. This notion can be extended to argue that the negotiation and integration of identity-forming

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⁷ Sami costume, discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.
⁸ Individual identity has been comprehensively theorised within psychological and philosophical debates (e.g. Tallis 2004; Taylor 1989).
processes rely on the performance and the performative capacity of aspects of a given identity.

The knowledge of these aspects or cultural elements and a person’s ability to use them in this way, stems from what Bourdieu called habitus and doxa — habitus being ‘a socialized body, a structured body, a body which has incorporated the immanent structures of a world or of a particular sector of that world’ (Bourdieu 1998, p. 8), and doxa being the experience of a sense of reality stemming from the naturalisation of a society’s own arbitrariness or ‘the world of tradition experienced as a “natural world” or taken for granted’ (Bourdieu 1977, p. 164).

Before reading Bourdieu more closely, my understanding of habitus had been something more akin to a combination of habitus and doxa. Upon closer reading, the visceral aspect of habitus made it a more powerful concept. The process of identification is profoundly influenced by habitus and doxa. Any one identity, once embodied (Butler 1993), becomes incorporated into habitus via, a stylized repetition of acts … which are internally discontinuous … [so that] the appearance of substance is precisely that, a constructed identity, a performative accomplishment which the mundane social audience, including the actors themselves, come to believe and to perform in the mode of belief (Butler 2006, p. 192).

While this goes some way to explaining the process of identifying, it is also important to consider what, then, are identities.

Identities are ‘nodal points’ (Žižek 1989, p. 87) within the process of identification. It is interesting to consider the juncture in the process that a nodal point is settled upon. It is a point of consolidation of conscious and unconscious choice. When struggling with understanding the very point of settling I found Žižek’s (1989) notion of ‘the uncanny’ (via Freud and Lacan) helpful. The uncanny helps
describe the point between being and not being that is, settling on a particular formulation of one identity rather than another. It is the unfathomable point when the unconscious becomes conscious and articulated. In terms of group identity, it is the point at which a person choses to use or articulate cultural elements in a particular combination to ‘be’ something (e.g., Sami).

Thus, an identity (or the nodal point in the process of identification) is habitus/doxa plus the uncanny. Once mediated through the subconscious and then the conscious, it becomes embodied through expression and performance. Through this, it is then incorporated into habitus and doxa. This cycle is infinite and allows for constant transformation and expressions of agency. For this discussion of process to be brought to bear in relation to group identity it is also important to distinguish between individual and group identity.

Many scholars have written about identity as a personal sense of self and/or people’s sense of themselves as part of a group and/or the relationship between these types of identity. These scholars include Freud, for whom ‘identity is not stable or rational, but a[n] ever-conflicted tension between id and ego, conscious and subconscious mind’ (Turnau n.d., p. 2), and Marx (1904, p. 11–12), for whom ‘it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary it is their social being that determines their consciousness’. The issue of identity can be crudely conceptualised as lying anywhere between the personal (Freud) and the social (Marx). That Freud and Marx privilege one over the other is primarily because the focus of their discussion, for the purposes of their broader projects, informs their reading of identity and the type of identity they discuss.
For the purposes of this work, I privilege social or group identity over individual or self identity. This is not to say that one does not inform the other or that the relationship between the two is easily disentangled. It is only to point out that these discussions are beyond the scope of this work and that, in discussions about Indigenous identity, and Sami identity more specifically, the main concern has been social or group identity.

Important aspects of the discussion of the relationship between individual and group identity are formation and maintenance. Cohen (1994, p. 11) argues that:

groups have to struggle against their own contradictions, which lie precisely in the fact that they are composed of individuals, self-conscious individuals, whose differences from each other have to be resolved and reconciled to a degree which allows the group to be viable and to cohere.

The reconciliation of the differences in individuals' identities is indeed necessary give the reliance of the viability and cohesion of the group on this reconciliation.

The reconciliation folds back into the process of group identification as each individual must reconcile their individual identity with their group identity. Individual identity is not a priori or singularly attached to one group identity and the two are constantly intertwined.

As suggested above, group identities such as ‘Sami’, are constantly negotiated, transformed and iterated in context. They are also ‘multiple, fragmented and fluid’ (Brubaker and Cooper 2000, p. 6). Any one individual or group identity is a node or crystallisation within the continual process of identifying. An identity is furthermore influential insofar as the iteration of an identity affects any other person’s or group’s process of identification and the identity that is constructed through the process.
Fortier (2000, p. 3) argues that ‘constructing cultural identity is also about constructing cultural difference’. This leads to a concept that is crucial to understanding Sami (and Indigenous) group identity — Spivak’s (1987, p. 205) concept of strategic essentialism, or more specifically the ‘strategic use of positivist essentialism’. Strategic essentialism is employed by all political groups (indeed by any sociocultural group) in order to present a coherent and comprehensible ‘face’ or profile to other perceived or real groups that require negotiation. In some senses, strategic essentialism can be seen as part of the creation of an imagined community (Anderson 1983). Strategic essentialism is the imagining of a community, or the imagining of a group, and its expression. Strategic essentialism has been the key to the success of Sami people. As for other Indigenous groups (and other individuals), the capacity to successfully negotiate essentialism from other parties, and from within the Sami community, to produce a strategically essentialised image or ‘identity’ has meant an increased visibility in the public political landscape as well as a unifying image, or identity, for Sami people to concretely negotiate. It is a strategy of difference and diversity, of alterity and multiethnicism.

Bhabha (1994, p. 34) defines cultural diversity as ‘an epistemological object’ and said that cultural difference ‘is the process of the enunciation of culture as “knowledgeable”, authoritative, adequate to the construction of systems of cultural identification’. In The Location of Culture, Bhabha (1994, p. 2) argues that distinguishing cultural diversity (the traditional field of anthropology) and cultural difference was important. He goes on to say that:

the borderline engagements of cultural difference may as often be consensual as conflictual; they may confound our definitions of tradition and modernity; realign the customary boundaries between the private and
the public, high and low; and challenge normative expectations of development and progress (Bhabha 1994, p.2).

Bhabha (1994) and Fanon (1970) further highlight the importance of the enunciation of culture/ethnicity/identity. For instance, Fanon (1970, p. 37) claims that cultural statements and systems are constructed in a contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation that means ‘symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew’.

Bhabha (1994, p. 31) also critiques the use of terms such as ‘cultural difference’:

In order to be institutionally effective as a discipline, the knowledge of cultural difference must be made to foreclose on the Other; difference and otherness thus become the fantasy of a certainty of a form of theoretical knowledge that deconstructs the epistemological ‘edge’ of the West.

Just as the Other must be foreclosed in order to incorporate it into academic, disciplined, theoretical discussion, so too must identity. This is not to claim that it is done simply for convenience but that it is necessary at some level if the debate is to continue beyond categorical, definitional, semantic debate. This then allows the discussion to move on to how identities are negotiated between groups as well as within them.

A comment Vered Amit and Nigel Rapport make is as useful in thinking about identity as it is in thinking about community:

the conceptualization, the ideology and the practice of community in the contemporary world [their emphasis] … involves a tension between efforts to fix social and political relations in communal frames and the considerable pressure toward individuation and fragmentation which regularly undo these efforts, but may also be constrained by them (Rapport & Amit 2002, p. 1).

Something similar could be said of identity and the process of identifying oneself and identification of and by others. It is the need to be able to distil an identity or
suite of identities, to fix these social and political relations in terms of who you claim to be in a given context. In order to do this, identity markers (also known as carriers (Goffman 1959, p. 13) or signifiers (Laclau 1996, p. 40)) are reified for there to be a recognisable group identity. Further, the choices and uses of these are crucial to understanding the process of strategic essentialism.

Important in the reification of identity markers is the choice and development of the specific markers. Spivak’s (1996, p. 214) notion of strategic essentialism is the ‘strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest’. This concept further accounts for the process of the reification of identity markers and supports the possibility of identity as a category of analysis.

Individuals essentialise aspects of their identity in order to articulate them to others, particularly in highly politicised arenas. This essentialising is strategically engaged because of its capacity to encourage others to recognise and respond according to the desire of those identifying. In an arena such as Indigenous politics, it is easy to see strategic essentialism in play.

Within the Sami community the recognition of reindeer herders and the speaking of Sami as quintessentially Sami has been used by the Sami population to gain recognition by the non-Sami community. In this case, strategic essentialism can be seen as the successful manipulation of dominant discourses and can be employed on many levels. Here I will discuss two, the group and the individual.

Strategic essentialism is employed by an individual when presenting to a group they consider themselves to be part of. It is required for recognition by others. It would be impossible for all people within a group to fit more specific criteria, so generalised and essentialised criteria, or identifiers within the identification
process, are presented. For example, in order to gain recognition from the Norwegian government it has been necessary for the Sami community to be represented as one consisting of Sami speakers. This is partly due to the role of language in the Sami community and in the history of nation building in Norway, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven. Not all the Sami community speak a Sami language and not all Sami languages are spoken in equal numbers. Despite the varying use of Sami languages, language has become a significant, recognisable and unique aspect of Sami life that plays an important role in identity formation and recognition. Language as a carrier of Saminess has been strategically essentialised to gain group recognition.

Individual strategic essentialism is the employment of essentialised aspects of identity presented in relation to a person as a member of a group. This is usually a more intricate and nuanced presentation, often made in response to generalised group aspects of identification. To again use Sami language as an example, an individual must negotiate their relationship to Sami language because they do speak a Sami language or because they do not. That the group identity marker of language has been strategically essentialised for the group means each individual must negotiate their own relationship with the marker. Both ‘I am Sami because I speak Sami’ and ‘I am Sami; I do not speak Sami’ are essentialising and their articulation, whether private or public, is strategically employed in context.

Reading anthropology meant that identity became a blur of ideas, concepts, descriptions and theories that led me to see the term as almost too ephemeral to be useful in explaining how it is that people are. Rogers Brubaker and Frederick
Cooper (2000) discuss the ephemeral nature of identity in their article ‘Beyond “identity”’. They argue that, despite its ephemeral nature, identity should maintain its capacity to be an analytical category as well as being the descriptor of a social practice: “Identity,” is ... both a category of practice and a category of analysis’ (Brubaker & Cooper 2000, p. 4). While the term ‘identity’ is used as shorthand for a shifting bundle of ideas and practices, for it to be useful as an analytical tool it must also be capable of performing the role of a descriptor of the way people are, whoever and whatever it is they claim to be in any given context.

As argued earlier, one essential and essentialising aspect of the identifying processes includes a process of reifying identity markers, which is an important process employed in identity politics. Brubaker and Cooper (2000, p. 5) argue that accounting for the process of reification involved in creating a community that can be imagined is the way to render identity a category of analysis. Describing and exploring the identity markers and their contexts goes some way to accounting for the process of reification of Saminess. Identity is thus rendered a category of analysis in relation to the Sami community.

The links between identity, the positive content of cultural practices, and ideology are important as it is in this relationship that identity, as a category of analysis, also has a basis.

What creates and sustains the identity of a given ideological field beyond all possible variations of its positive content? ... the multitude of ‘floating signifiers’, of proto-ideological elements, is structured into a unified field through the intervention of a certain ‘nodal point’ (the Lacanian point de capiton) which ‘quilts’ them, stops their sliding and fixes their meaning (Žižek 1989, p. 87).

While not specifically discussing group identity but the identity of ideological fields, this can be read in terms of group identity and provide fertile ground for
using identity as a category of analysis. The same question Žižek posed could be asked of identity more broadly: What creates and sustains a given identity beyond all possible variations of its positive content? The response then becomes: The multitude of floating signifiers, or cultural elements, is structured into a unified field through the intervention of other articulated identities that share their basis in the same field of positive content. This then quilts identities and, in turn, the positive content, stops their sliding, and fixes their meaning at least temporarily and for long enough for the process to continue consistently. From this, the positive content that is quilted together becomes a knowable field that can be used to analyse identity and renders identity a category of analysis.

In following chapters, identity is used as a category of analysis in discussions about some reified Sami identity markers including those involved in the presentation of Saminess, family, relationships to land, language, and participation in Sami events such as Riddu Riddu. Having established identity as a category of analysis and the importance of the field of cultural elements and its positive content, it is important to discuss these in relation to Sami identity.

Sami Identity

What, at any given time, are considered conventional, implicit or non-focussed knowledge and orientations may be derived from interaction in concrete events and other discursive material. Since “Sami” clearly is a totalizing and precarious identity — such that nearly everything one does and thinks is a potential expression of one’s Sami-ness, such negotiations will color the discourses of day to day life in Sami local societies (Harald Eidheim 1997, p. 53).

It is in the everyday ways of being that Sami people are Sami. It is in child-rearing practices, cooking styles, economic activity, resource exploitation, dress, craft, organisational styles, and responses to official procedure as well as relationships
to family, land, community and language and participation in Sami cultural activities including Riddu Ríđđu. These and others form the positive content of Sami identification processes and are some of the aspects of Sami social practice that Sami people explained as what made them Sami. Their relationship to discussions about identity, Saminess within Norway, being Sami in Sápmi, and Saminess at Riddu Ríđđu provide the context for the ethnographic material in future chapters.

Sami identity markers and social actors’ roles in their creation, transformation and maintenance are crucial for understanding an individual's ability to recognise and reiterate them successfully. This then allows people to be, claim to be, and be recognised as, Sami. One of my aims is to sort through the bundle of concepts, markers and practices to come to a clearer way of describing what Sami people taught me about what it was to be Sami, how they perceived of their Saminess and to better understand Saminess as an identity and a set of identities.

While Žižek (1994) uses the notion of the uncanny to further investigate personal, individual identity formation, it is useful for considering Sami group identity. There is a line between being Sami and not being Sami, where Sami is a stated, public, group identity. What do people need, what traits do they need to possess, to be able to claim to be Sami? Additionally, what traits do people need to present publicly as Sami and have their identity recognised and legitimated by others? Who says ‘I am Sami’ and how does it occur? Who calls themselves Sami and what makes it possible for a person to say ‘I am Sami’?

These, in all their complexity, are the questions contemplated throughout this project. The short answer is: People who believe they are and show, own and
express or perform a number of Sami sociocultural connections, capacities, competencies and proclivities can, and do, say ‘I am Sami’. Provided they have enough of the accepted sociocultural traits et cetera — that is, the right habitus and doxa — the utterance of this identity claim is part of making a person Sami as well as reflecting their ability to say it. Saminess, and by extension identity in general, is self-ascribed as much as it is socioculturally prescribed. It is also ‘constituted in practice and is always oriented towards practical functions’ (Bourdieu 1990, p. 52).

This leads to the question of what makes any one of the elements of the sociocultural connections, capacities, competencies and proclivities Sami. The answer lies in the investigation of the elements that may make up a person’s Saminess and how these elements are Sami; it is because they are owned and expressed by Sami people, as Sami people. It is precisely the complex, circular and fundamental nature of this issue that has made it so important to Sami debates and other debates about identity and indigeneity. The results of such discussions about Sami identity have real and important consequences for all Sami people and add to more general understandings of identity and identities. The need and desire to define who and what is Sami or what is Saminess has become ever more important as the rights of Sami people, as Indigenous, have become increasingly recognised and acted upon by Sami and non-Sami individuals and authorities.

There are concrete benefits to being recognised as Sami and for Sami people to be recognised as Indigenous. In Norway, amongst other gains, Sami people have land and water rights, access to education through quota systems and curriculum,
culturally sensitive health care, funding for a range of Sami-specific activities, and political representation through the Sámediggi\(^9\) (discussed in more detail in Chapter Two). Recognition of the Sami community as Indigenous is crucial to the gaining of these concrete benefits. However, in discussions about Sami identity in academic works ethnicity has been the dominant discourse. Sami difference is usually characterised as ethnic difference. More recently, Sami difference and Sami identity have been increasingly discussed in terms of indigeneity.

**Ethnicity**

It is for historical, academic and regional reasons that Sami issues have most commonly been included in discussions of ethnicity and ethnic groups with a focus on cultural difference e.g., by Marcus Banks (1996), Fredrik Barth (1969b), Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2010), Trond Thuen (2012, 1995) and Hans Petter Sand (2014). This differs in Australia, where Aboriginal difference has a history of being part of discussions of race in a biological framework. This means that Sami and Aboriginal difference and identity have been joined in the debate about indigeneity from quite different directions.

Two of the reasons for the primacy of ethnicity in anthropological discussions about Saminess, particularly in Norway, are the general discourses of difference in Europe and Fennoscandia, and the influence of Barth and others who contributed to *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969a) on anthropological debates. That is not simply because Barth was Norwegian. Here I am primarily concerned with the anthropological debate.

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\(^9\) eng Sami Parliament, nor Sametinget.
Perhaps Barth’s greatest contribution to anthropology and social theory in general is his notion of ethnic boundaries. He advocates for no longer focussing on the ‘stuff’ of cultures but instead investigating the edges, or boundaries, of cultures as it is there that the real issues relating to culture and cultures were to be found.

Barth (1994, p. 13) sees ethnicity as ‘the social organization of cultural difference’ and described an ethnic group as biologically self-perpetuating, having shared cultural values, having a field of communication and interaction and having a membership which identifies and is identified as a distinguishable category (Barth 1969b, p. 10–11). Riddu Riddu is one of the fields of communication and action that Barth speaks of and it is in these fields that much boundary maintenance work is conducted.

For Barth, the importance of ethnic boundary maintenance is an aspect of the process of ethnic identification, particularly the maintenance of those boundaries, regardless of the movement of people into and out of ethnic groups (Barth 1969b, pp. 9–38). Later, Barth characterises his endeavour, and that of others who contributed to *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969a), thus:

> We chose to regard ethnic identity as a feature of social organization, rather than a nebulous expression of culture... focusing on the boundary and the processes of recruitment, not on the cultural stuff that the boundary encloses (Barth 1994, p. 12).

Applying this to Sami identity issues means that the boundaries become the focus of the process of identifying between Sami groups as well as in relation to the non-Sami population. For the Sami community in Gáivuotna, the boundaries between them and other Sami groups need to be maintained. As a Coastal Sami community they are considered and consider themselves to be in some ways
different from other Sami communities, such as the reindeer herders of inner Finnmárku. As part of their efforts to change their level of recognition, Sami people in Gáivuotna confronted both the non-Sami and wider Sami community at the same time as transforming their identity in relation to those groups.

One of the interests of many who have written on ethnicity since Barth has been the process of maintaining boundaries. As Joane Nagel (1994, p. 158) states, one of the important themes has been that: ‘ethnic boundaries shift, shaping and reshaping ethnic groups according to strategic calculations of interest, and that ethnicity and ethnic conflict arise out of resource competition’. This can easily be applied to Coastal Sami communities as the members have reshaped the boundary of ‘Sami’ in order to access resources. This is even more poignant when considering recognition as a resource. Nagel (1994, p. 154–155) goes on to say that ‘ethnic boundaries, and thus identities, are constructed by both the individual and group as well as by outside agents and organizations’. Here Nagel clearly includes the context of identification as one of the bases of boundary maintenance that Barth (1994, pp. 17–18) sees as a key to the endeavour ‘of analysing boundary processes, not of enumerating the sum of content’.

The Sami people in Gáivuotna could be said to have occupied what Barth would call an ethnic boundary (Barth 1969b, pp. 9–38). They were marginal to the most commonly recognised Sami population. It is precisely this marginality or boundary positioning that the people involved in Riddu Riddù work to incorporate more fully into the wider Sami community while harnessing to their advantage the power of being on the boundary. This is a key issue in the discussion of not only Sami identity in Gáivuotna but Sami identity in general. To some extent, the boundaries
become the focus of the process of identifying with other Sami people as well as creating a connection to the non-Sami population. This process is often framed in terms of ‘culture’ and what constitutes Sami culture. In more general terms, Identity and culture are two of the basic building blocks of ethnicity. Through the construction of identity and culture, individuals and groups attempt to address the problematics of ethnic boundaries and meaning. Ethnicity is best understood as a dynamic, constantly evolving property of both individual identity and group organization. The construction of ethnic identity and culture is the result of both structure and agency — a dialectic played out by ethnic groups and the larger society. Ethnicity is the product of actions undertaken by ethnic groups as they shape and reshape their self-definition and culture; however, ethnicity is also constructed by external social, economic, and political processes and actors as they shape and reshape ethnic categories and definitions (Nagel 1994, p.152).

However, there is a danger of then seeing ethnicity and identity as synonymous or co-referential. Marjut Anttonen (2003, p. 49) argues that the terms ‘culture’ and ‘ethnicity’ have long been ‘connected and intertwined’ in academic and general use. She argues that this is due to the circular nature of the explanations and essentialist early writings on culture. Anttonen also states that the definitions are circular because the theories define each other and so do not explain either; that culture is described as an entity that defines ethnicity and ethnicity is defined as the expression of a culture. This can also be said of the terms ‘identity’, ‘culture’ and ‘ethnicity’. They are often used to define each other in co-referential relationships. Regardless, ethnicity is a form of difference that is useful in thinking about Sami identity, as the Sami community has long been seen, internally and externally, as a group of people who maintain their distinction from other groups at the same time as managing these distinctions despite changes within the group.
This raises another point Barth (1969b, pp. 9–10) makes:

categorical ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of mobility, contact and information, but do entail social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories are maintained despite changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories.

This notion that discrete ethnic categories are maintained despite changes in the group allows for not only social change but agency that results in change. This is necessary when contemplating the changes to what it is to be Sami made by the people involved in Riddu Riddu. This also leads to wondering what traits people need to belong to the group and have the authority to make changes to the group.

Nagel (1994, p. 160) says that ‘discussions about group eligibility are often translated into controversies surrounding individual need, individual ethnicity, and ethnic proof’. The maintenance of boundaries includes a constant negotiation of ethic proof or the content within the boundaries as well as what constitutes the boundaries themselves. In relation to this, and Saminess in particular, Trond Thuen (1995, p.261) writes that the important constituent factors for being Sami are descent and cultural capital:

the distinction between the idea of descent as the basic tenet of ethnic identity, and the behavioural skills that are customarily associated with the social performance of roles that signal this identity as they pertain to the management of Saami-ness’. I discuss these in detail in coming chapters in order to understand not only the processes of boundary maintenance and change but the role of the stuff that forms the content of the boundaries and therefore constitute the bases for the boundary maintenance and transformation.

Part of this boundary maintenance has been the changes to the category ‘Sami’ in relation to being Indigenous.

An aspect of this discussion is the link between ethnicity and indigeneity, if indigeneity is conceived of as different from ethnicity. Hylland Eriksen (2010, p. 5)
states that ethnicity refers ‘to aspects of relationships between groups which consider themselves, and are regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive’. That ethnicity is also a broader category that is kindred to race and no less benign (Hylland Eriksen 2010, p. 7). It could be argued that race is a subset of ethnicity with a biological focus while ethnic difference is structurally similar with a focus on cultural differentiation. This is what Hylland Eriksen argues in the first two editions of *Ethnicity and Nationalism* (1993 & 2002) but in the third edition (2010) he argues that it is useful to keep them separate though related (Hylland Eriksen 2010, p. 8). In some sense, the same can be said of the relationship between ethnicity and indigeneity that is, they could be kept separate but related. This raises the question of where to situate discussions about Saminess.

While there is much to be said for discussing Saminess in terms of ethnicity, in current debates it also seems difficult and slightly treacherous. Indigeneity could easily be considered a subset of ethnicity but there is something to be said for relocating the debate firmly in discussions about indigeneity. If ethnicity were the key defining characteristic of indigeneity it would mean contributing to a discussion that Levine (1999, p. 165) describes as having been abandoned by anthropology, one that has been comprehensively and successfully carried out by the Manchester school eg., by Mitchell (1956) and later Ronald Cohen (1978) and then Hylland Eriksen (2010). Through that work the discussion becomes about whether ethnicity is primordial or situational or a mix of both, and this has significant implications when discussing indigeneity.

The defining of Indigenous difference has great weight in debates about what rights Indigenous peoples are entitled to. Sami people are Indigenous. The
strength of their argument for their entitlement to rights does not lie in strategically presenting their difference in terms of being structurally similar to the other ethnic groups around them that also differ from the majority. It lies in their distinct difference to those groups around them. While they are obviously related, indigeneity is theoretically and politically different from ethnicity. Conceiving of indigeneity as a form of ethnicity brings it in line with other forms of difference that do not harness the same level and kinds of rights, and it has been used to minimise claims to rights. This explains my discomfort with the discussion of Sami difference in terms of ethnicity.

In some ways, the discussion of Sami issues as part of a discussion of ethnicity is equally uncomfortable if current Sami discourses are taken into account. As Sami people have worked hard to be recognised as Indigenous and have firmly placed themselves in that arena, it is important to consider placing discussions about Sami alterity in a similar way. As Nils Erik, a Riddu Riddu staff member, notes:

The Sami question depends largely on people because there are other arguments. People say that the Sami should not be themselves so much because they are a very small percentage. We get so much talk about being Sami et cetera. It loses its sense and the international becomes more important.

This is not to say that locating discussions about Saminess in the arena of indigeneity is simply about the international aspects of Sami political activity but that the sense of the discussion has been lost and needs reformulating in order to accommodate contemporary Sami radical alterity.
Indigeneity

‘Indigeneity’ as a term has come to relate to the identities and processes of belonging of people who are part of first nations. ‘Indigenous’ has become a politically motivated term quite different from its original meaning. It was closely related to the scientific use of ‘indigenous’ for categorising animals other than humans, plants et cetera and implies ‘inherent essentialism, primordialism and primitivism, as well as … residual colonialism’ (Guenther in Guenther et al 2006, p. 17). While Indigenous peoples are still considered original to a place, the political aspects of the terms have rendered the terms problematic. Because of this the terms ‘Indigenous’ and ‘indigeneity’ are used according to their full contemporary, political meanings.

The claim to indigeneity includes a sense of moral right to recognition and the redressing of past wrongs. It also requires the recognition of the importance of the relationship between belonging and place. Hylland Eriksen (2010, p. 18) defines Indigenous groups as having a stateless political system with relatively little power. I would add that indigeneity is primarily based on people being ‘earliest’ occupants of place, signalling a relationship to land for which there is a moral, political and legal imperative to accept Indigenous claims to land over those of others. It also means that indigeneity has specific elements that give it a particular position within discussions of difference and identity politics.

Will Kymlicka has written extensively on indigeneity and identity politics (e.g., Eisenberg and Kymlicka 2011, Kymlicka 2011, Kymlicka 1995a, Kymlicka 1995b, Kymlicka and Bashir 2008). Kymlicka (2011, p. 184) argues that indigenous groups are very similar to national minorities, as they are:
culturally distinct groups living on their traditional territory, who think of themselves as a distinct people or nation, and show a deep attachment to their cultural distinctiveness and to their homeland, which they have struggled to maintain despite being incorporated (often involuntarily) into a larger state.

The difference between Indigenous peoples and national minorities is not simply that Indigenous people are originary or been subject to colonisation (Merlan 2009). Indigeneity is particular to each Indigenous group and relative to other groups in their particular states (Merlan 2009). This raises more questions about who is able to claim indigeneity.

Who is an indigenous person, and how much indigenousness is needed in order to accept a person’s identity as for instance a Sami, an Aborigine or Native American? On the surface, it is fairly easy to find definitions that most scholars would agree upon, but there are still hierarchical differences within the indigenous groups themselves on the matter of who may speak for whom, and who may claim representativity on behalf of whom (Minde 2008a, p. 19).

As Henry Minde points out above, the politics of representation within Indigenous communities is of great import, as there is a hierarchy of belonging within groups. While Minde is referring to international Indigenous politics, the same can be said about each country with an Indigenous community and about the definition of particular indigeneities in those countries.

Here it is useful to compare the definitions of indigeneity in Australia and Norway. Aboriginality in Australia is defined fundamentally as racial. Although community belonging is included as an important criterion, the primary condition to be satisfied is and has always been a biological relationship to someone already considered Aboriginal. The seemingly autochthonous quality of Aboriginal people in Australia (due to perceived geographic isolation and long occupation prior to colonisation) has meant that there have been few challenges in Australia and internationally to Aboriginal people’s claims to indigeneity. On the other hand,
Sami people in Norway are Indigenous people living in a country in which the
debate about indigeneity is conducted within a discourse of ethnicity.

‘The Sámi are the only group in the European Union who are officially recognized
as an indigenous people’ (Valkonen & Valkonen 2014, p. 27). This is important
as the discourses about Sami difference are embedded in European and
Scandinavian discourses about difference and they centre on ethnicity rather
than race. In Norway, the primacy of ethnicity and its position as the most
recognised and discussed form of difference has meant that indigeneity has sat
uncomfortably in the debates about Sami difference. It is partly for this reason
that it has taken some time for Sami people to be recognised as Indigenous in
mainstream Norway, despite them having been recognised as such by the
Norwegian government and in international arenas early on.

The recognition of the Sami community as Indigenous was part of a modern
global cultural flow within an ideoscape (Appaduria 1996) in which Indigenous
people, in the West in particular, were commanding greater recognition. This was
linked to the rise of indigenism (Niezen 2003) in international administrative
institutions such as the United Nations.

In The Origins of Indigenism: human rights and the politics of identity (2003),
Ronald Niezen discusses the emergence of indigenism as a global phenomenon.
His work sheds light on the development of international Indigenous collaborative
efforts to gain rights and recognition for Indigenous peoples. He argues that
Indigenous identity is ‘a quintessentially modern phenomenon’ (Niezen 2003,

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10 Einar Niemi (1997, p. 69) points out that Sami people were recognised as Indigenous by the state from
at least the early 19th century.
p. xii) that developed out of a revolt against globalisation and the resulting ‘cultural uniformity and the appropriation of indigenous peoples’ sovereignty by states’ (Niezen 2003, p. 2). Niezen differentiates between ‘indigenous’ and ‘indigenism’. ‘Indigenous’ is self-referential (it is the identity shared by a group of people with shared histories, lands or experiences within nations) while ‘indigenism’ is a global identity shared by indigenous people. Sami activists have been involved in the development of indigenism and the recognition gained in the global arenas has been important to the recognition of Sami people as Indigenous in Norway.

In a discussion about Sami issues in Norway, Else Grete Broderstad (2008, p. 35) argues that:

The present acknowledgement of indigenous rights at the state level, but also internationally, where indigenous peoples are subject to international law, confirms the distinct status of indigenous peoples. The Norwegian authorities’ statement in a Saami-Norwegian context, illustrates this acknowledgement; i.e., that the Norwegian state is established on the territory of two peoples — the Norwegians and the Saami (White paper No. 52 to the Storting 1992–93).

This acknowledgement of the Sami community as Indigenous within Norway has been the result of the work of a number of activists who have been heavily involved in this change in the dominant discourse about Sami difference in Norway. The people involved in Riddu Riđđu have been part of that change.

**Riddu Riđđu**

- Do you know exactly what Riddu Riđđu means in Norwegian?
- Storm. Riddu means ‘little storm’. We had a plan with that name, we wanted to start a powerful movement (Lene Hansen in Thorkildsen and Fjellheim 2004, n.p.) [my translation].

Riddu Riđđu is one of the largest Sami festivals in Norway and probably Sápmi. The festival has been held during the Northern summer of all but one year since
1991 and has grown over time. As for many festivals, each year there is a struggle for funds as well as for participants and audience numbers. In 2008 Riddu Riđđu was named the premier cultural festival in Norway. This award meant there was easier access to resources as well as showing the regard in which the festival was held, the importance of its contribution to Norwegian cultural life, and the impact it had had on perceptions of Sami people and Coastal Sami people more specifically.

For several years the festival has had a number of programs, including a series of concerts, exhibitions, a film festival, a children’s festival, a youth camp, seminars, workshops, courses and a market. It is held over a number of days with the main concerts being performed on a central stage over a weekend. The focus of almost all the events of the festival is Indigenous culture, that of the Sami community and others. Many international Indigenous and Sami musicians, artists, filmmakers, craftspeople are invited to the festival. Each year the programs vary to some extent according to a theme\(^\text{11}\).

As Lene Hansen says above, in the local Sami dialect Riddu Riđđu means ‘little storm’ (often translated as ‘small storm by the coast’) and it is just that. The festival itself is a storm, stirring up energy and controversy around the people of Gáivuotna. The festival is also the result of a number of people weathering a storm that consists not of rain and wind but of continuing doubt and reproach as well as encouragement. The people who run the festival deliberately harness this tension. It is partly a storm of their own making. Like a storm, Riddu Riđđu is also part of a greater weather pattern. It is located not only in Gáivuotna but moves

\(^{11}\) Some of these themes have been: Coastal Sami, celebration, fashion and clothing traditions and technology.
through and away from the fjord, waxing and waning and then returning strengthened or weakened, depending on its activities.

The implications of Riddu Riđđu and the actions of the people involved in it are varied. Some of these people live in places other than Gáivuotna and they move back and forth at different times of the year and phases of their lives. They have different interests and ambitions outside Riddu Riđđu. Many are involved in other Sami-focussed activities, some are studying or working. Those who come to Riddu Riđđu also are from diverse backgrounds and attend for a multitude of different reasons, from a general interest in Sami issues to a desire to listen to music, a chance to see family and friends or a chance to perform. The energy for Riddu Riđđu builds up throughout the year creating a level of atmospheric tension that results in an often literal as well as metaphoric deluge of activity that is the festival itself.

Using Riddu Riđđu as the point of focus provides an opportunity to map the issues that surround the festival and its role in Sami identity issues. An explanation of its importance in Sápmi and wider arenas highlights significant changes that have occurred in discussions about Sami interests, including those that prompt discussions about identity. The activities at Riddu Riđđu also provide an interesting example of the interactions between Indigenous people on an international level. It is easy to say that there is an international Indigenous community but it is hard to pinpoint what it is, except in relation to political organs such as United Nations working groups and conferences.

Focussing on Riddu Riđđu provides an opportunity to also discuss a place where Sami identities are expressed in relation to each other at the same time as
highlighting contentious issues within the Sami community. It is important to note that Riddu Riđđu is not officially a political event, which makes it easier for the people involved in organising and attending the festival to avoid, if they choose to, the details of politics while maintaining a focus on what could be described as grassroots politics.

In relation to Sami people involved in Riddu Riđđu, it is the changes they made to what it is to be Sami which shows the fluidity of the conditions for being Sami, of what is within and of the boundaries of the group. These people were already recognised as Sami through the traits they exhibited and practiced. The changes they made to the traits and practices that supported claims to Sami identities were legitimised by their prior recognition as Sami. Those changes were adopted by others and incorporated into their claims to Saminess.

However, the changes were at times challenged through rendering the transformed traits less authentic and/or undermining shared notions of Saminess and so presenting a threat to group boundaries. The transformed traits were often said to be a new or invented Saminess, as if there were no pre-existing Sami identity. When challenges are considered to have some weight, the change agents modify their approaches to changing the traits. Through this cyclical process, the boundaries of the cultural group, Sami, shift and allow the incorporation of different practices and the incorporation of people who adopt those practices. For the people involved in Riddu Riđđu, this notion of identity and change is key to their success. They have harnessed what makes them Sami to make changes to what is recognised as Sami. As Nina, a Riddu Riđđu staff
member, said, ‘They are building their modern identity’. It is not new or invented but reimagined in a contemporary context.

Fieldwork

My interest in Sami issues stems from experience of Indigenous issues in Australia. A desire to learn about another Indigenous community led me, by a circuitous route, to the Sami community in Norway. My field research was initially focussed on official Sami political life, including the Sámegi. That eventually took me to the village of Olmmáivággì in the fjord of Gáivuotna. Olmmáivággì is a small fishing village on a fjord in far Northern Norway and was conceptually far from the hustle and bustle of the urban environment in which I had first intended to work. In Olmmáivággì, I met and worked with the people who were organising and running the Riddu Riđđu festival.

I see my work as a long-term project. Surrounding intense participant observation periods have been years of library and internet research and formal and informal interviews in England and Australia as well as by phone and Skype. For eighteen months in 1998–9 and for three one month periods in 2003–4 I conducted participant observation in Sápmi. While relying heavily on my fieldwork examples, I include more recent information on Sami issues and Riddu Riđđu events. In light of recent changes, I discuss Riddu Riđđu in the broader context in which the festival is held and use examples from more recent festivals.

Over the years, festival staff members have changed and programs have been added but the basic intentions and the broader project appear to have remained the same. Official recognition of the festival as a premier cultural event in Norway
certainly gave rise to it attracting more attention and it gaining more stable funding but it does not seem to have changed the festival to any great extent.

My fieldwork was conducted in a number of locations but mainly on Gáivuotna, in Romsa and Finnmárku. Travel came to loom large in my experience of Sápmi. Not only did I travel quite a bit in trying to keep up with what was going on in the Sami community, but the process of travel and the things that occurred during travel had a profound effect on my experiences and what I learnt. Many important conversations were had on buses, trains (only in southern Norway as there are no trains in the North\textsuperscript{12, 13}), ferries and other boats, airplanes and cars and while skiing and walking. The conversations took place while travelling to and from meetings, visits, Sámediggi sittings, parties, weddings, conferences, festivals and other gatherings.

Another theme that recurs in my considering my time in Sápmi is the notion of extremes. Norway in many ways is the opposite of Australia, which is also an extreme place. First, there is the water. Regardless of having lived much of my life in Australia near the ocean, Australia had always seemed a dry place. I grew up hearing the stories of droughts and irrigation battles, I watched the grass and plants dry up in summer, and the image of the desert centre of Australia was omnipresent. In Australia water is always considered a valuable asset, never to be wasted or treated frivolously.

\textsuperscript{12} The main train service in Northern Norway stops at Bodø, approximately 80kms north of the Arctic Circle. Perhaps time spent in Jernbanestasjon (eng Train Station) in Romsa could be counted as doing fieldwork on a train in Northern Norway. Jernbanestasjon is a pub in the middle of town that has train bench seats and train sounds and announcements are piped through the sound system. It is considered a good joke in Romsa and is known as a Sami pub.

\textsuperscript{13} The notion of the North in Norway is discussed in Chapter Six.
Norway has an abundance of water. I lived surrounded by water. Romsa is a small island among other islands with a hint of the mainland in sight and Gáivuotna is a fjord. Travelling meant traversing lakes or taking ferries through fjords, driving over bridges and along coastal roads. Winter meant copious amounts of snow, upon asking where all the snow was taken when people swept the streets, I was given a withering look and told ‘We put it in the sea’. Spring meant melting snow, rivulets of water running down the streets and much mud. Autumn meant rain. Summer provided a chance to go to the beach and be free of the rain and snow. Even the aerial maps of Norway show a land streaked with patches of water in lakes and fjords left by great travelling mountains of frozen water — glaciers. When I first arrived in Norway, I stayed on a large farm on which a friend’s cousin worked. While driving through the fields one day I pointed out a pump and asked him what it was. He said it was for the water, at which point I said, ‘Oh, yes, irrigation — for bringing water onto the field for the crops’. His answer was, ‘No, for pumping the water off the fields’. It was an earth-shattering discovery for an Australian. Imagine a place where there is too much water!

Northern Norway is as beautiful as all the travel guides say it is but the physical extremes have a profound effect on the way you live your life. I asked, as do many, how people keep doing ordinary things when it is so cold, in all that snow and during the long, dark winter or long, light summer. The answer is simple. If you need to get to work when it is cold and dark, you put on appropriate clothes and turn on the lights. If there is a lot of snow, you drive, walk or catch a bus just like you do on any other day. Of course, you could also ski if you would like to. Any of these activities mean intimate contact with snow but you do it regardless. It became so mundane and obvious that questions such as these seemed
inappropriate. Life with snow is just like life without snow. You don’t seem to travel any slower or do any less. In fact, if you want something done in Norway you do it in the winter. During summer everyone is on holidays, out enjoying the sun.

Beyond these physical differences there were the adjustments to mores, traditions, perspectives and the multitude of confrontations that any anthropologist must face. Most importantly for me was the profound effect Sami people had on me and how I now approach issues of identity.

I was first at the Riddu Riddu festival as a volunteer, a friend and an anthropologist. The original reason for going was to help friends who had just had their first baby. These friends worked for the festival so, one of the easiest and best ways to help them was to work at the festival. This involvement gave me the opportunity to live and work with the people who organised and ran Riddu Riddu. It was from this relationship and experience that I decided that Riddu Riddu was an excellent context in which to discuss Sami identity issues.

The structure of this thesis reflects what I have learnt and how I have learnt from Sami people about being Sami. Just as in the work of all anthropologists, there are no ‘fieldwork stories’ without me. While writing these stories my intention has been to resist the temptation both to write myself out of them as well as writing myself into them too much. Regardless of my role in my fieldwork, the important people in this story are the Sami people who taught me so much — trying to do so at times and despite trying not to at other times.
Methodology

As mentioned above, I conducted participant observation in far northern Norway for eighteen months in 1998–9 and for three one month periods in 2003–4. It was during my preliminary research that I decided to conduct my research in northern Norway, based on my early interest in the Sámediggi and other Sami organisations that were located there. I understood that the Sami community was diverse and a slight change in focus could have led me to another area in Fennoscandia. I did spend short amounts of time (from a few hours to 10 days) in southern Norway, northern Finland and northern Sweden.

The Australian National University funded my research and I gained ethics approval via the university’s processes. I also maintained a familiarity with codes of ethics (such as the Australian Anthropological Society Code of Ethics (2012)) and was aware of the considerable changes that were made to these during the course of my project. All reasonable attempts were made by me to ensure that my research was conducted ethically and data kept securely. I also chose to keep sensitive data out of this ethnography so that its contents could be made available to the widest possible audience.

Having worked with Aboriginal people in Australia, I had some notions about what it might be like to work in a Sami community. This is not to suggest that I considered the communities to be interchangeable but that I thought there was some chance of there being similarities. This was partly from talking to Aboriginal people about their knowledge of Sami people whom they had met and worked with at international Indigenous events. My previous experiences also meant that I had some confidence in there being a familiar network that could be navigated
and would be populated by people who would also steer me to some extent. I was well aware that my preconceptions were potentially deeply flawed but as I had no experience with the Sami community, this was the best comparison I had. I chose to conduct long-term fieldwork and participant observation, as my primary research method during this fieldwork. I was trained in, and had experience with, participant observation which meant I was confident that I could undertake successful research using this method. I considered it necessary to do long-term fieldwork in order to collect the depth and breadth of data my topic required. Identity is a broad and almost formless topic, one that is not easily targeted in ethnographic research. My earlier work in Australia had shown me that an attempt to gain a broad and detailed understanding of the context and content of issues, which related to Sami identity, would be essential if I was to come to an understanding of such a fundamental and nuanced aspect of Sami life, regardless of the specific Sami community I focussed on.

My preliminary research and choice of method were rewarded. For instance, I met members of the Sami community within a day of arriving in Tromsø thanks to the kindness of strangers and those in the anthropology department at The University of Tromsø, with whom I was affiliated during my time in the field. From there my list of informants grew through a combination of snowball and network sampling. As my knowledge of the community and issues grew my sampling became more strategic in order to ensure a broad range of informants. During my research this sampling led me to people involved in Riddu Riddu which eventually led to my decision to use the festival as the lens for my discussion.
My informants numbered in the dozens if not hundreds. They came from various socio-economic statuses, occupations and political persuasions. They also belonged to a range of age groups. As my research developed my most prominent informants were adults, active in the Sami community and somehow connected to Riddu Riddu. This is not to discount the many other Sami and non-Sami people I came to know and talk to about Sami issues, particularly identity (both Sami and non-Sami).

Interviews with informants ranged from informal, unstructured conversations that occurred when the opportunity arose to semi-structured interviews that were arranged via appointments. These interviews were documented in a number of ways. I took scratch notes, full notes and voice recordings where appropriate. In addition to interviews I gathered newspaper and magazine articles (including from the collection held by Riddu Riddu), web sites, images (I took photographs and collected some from other sources), academic texts that were not available in Australia (from libraries and other collections) and other forms of data such as music CDs, DVDs, programmes, posters, duodji and an Arctic bumblebee (which I brought home in a matchbox). This data was sorted, coded and analysed upon returning from fieldwork each time. This meant that I was able to refine my topic as I went. The themes covered in this ethnography reflect the themes that emerged from my preparation, data collection, data recording and data analysis.
While Riddu Riđđu remains my primary example, this is not an ethnography of the Riddu Riđđu festival. It is an ethnography that explores the issue of Sami identity through the lens of the Riddu Riđđu festival. To refer back to Brubaker and Cooper (2000), this is an ethnography of Sami identity that uses identity as a category of analysis as well as its subject matter. Riddu Riđđu provides examples to illuminate the analysis and subject matter.

In order to provide context for Sami identity issues and the Riddu Riđđu festival, Chapter Two focusses on background information about the Sami community in Norway. Chapter Three then provides ethnographic material on the festival itself and introduces members of the staff of the festival and the programs offered at it.

How Sami people can be recognised as Sami is the focus of Chapter Four. This is discussed in terms of specific carriers of Sami identity namely, physical characteristics; forms of Sami expressive culture including duodji (Sami handicraft), gákti (Sami costume), and yoik (Sami song/chant); and participation in international Indigenous peoples’ forums.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven are based on three of four key statements made by Sami people when they explained what made them Sami. The first of these statements, ‘I am Sami’, was the subject of this introductory chapter; the next three statements form the basis of a suite of chapters. Chapter Five, ‘My family are Sami’, is a consideration of family and relatedness; Chapter Six, ‘I am from…’, is focussed on land and community; and Chapter Seven, ‘I (don’t) speak Sami’, is a discussion of language as a key indicator of Saminess. Each of these
chapters is structured to provide background and discussion of the issues and each finishes with a summary of the impact of the issues on the community in Gáivuotna and how they are dealt with at Riddu Riđđu.

For a comprehensive understanding of how the people involved in Riddu Riđđu managed to make changes to how Saminess is comprehended in the region, it is important to look closely at the ideology behind the festival, why it was developed in Olmmáivággi, and how it is run. Discussion of these is presented in Chapter Eight.

Embedded in the chapters are several overarching themes that relate to local, national and international issues that affect Sami identity processes. Local issues include the increasing regionalism of Sami debates and the resulting recognition of a variety of Sami interests. Riddu Riđđu has played an important part in this and one of the stated aims of those involved in the festival is to foster better understanding of Coastal Sami identity and cultural practice.

The national issues raised include the negotiation of Sami identity in the face of colonial and nationalist notions of Sami difference, Sami responses to oppression and assimilation, the efforts made by Sami people to gain rights and recognition, the political good will shown by the Norwegian government in recent years towards these efforts, opposition and criticism of Sami efforts from within and outside the Sami community, and responses to these issues.

The impact of international recognition of Indigenous peoples and the endeavours to rectify the oppression of Indigenous peoples are also discussed throughout. The role of Sami people in those endeavours, the willingness of the Norwegian government to engage with their international obligations, and the role
of Riddu Riđđu in establishing Sami people as Indigenous in Norway are also explored.

All of these provide the content and context for a nuanced understanding of why and how those involved in Riddu Riđđu were and continue to be successful in projecting and having accepted their ‘way of being Sami’ and what their way of being Sami was.
Chapter Two

Being Sami in Norway and Gáivuotna

The complexities of the presentation and transformation of Sami identity are enlightened by understanding the social, political and historical conditions under which Sami people in Norway live. This chapter provides a broad sweep of the conditions that impact Sami identification processes and the context in which Sami people negotiate their rights and recognition. It includes a discussion of Coastal Sami identity issues and what it means to be Sami in Gáivuotna as these are particularly important to the people who run the Riddu Riddù festival.

The Sami community in Norway

There has not been a census that has collected information on Sami population numbers in Norway since 1970 (Todal et al. 2008, p. 16). In 2007, Statistisk sentralbyrå (n.p.) (eng Statistics Norway), the Norwegian government statistics agency, stated that there were 40,000 Sami people living in Norway. In 2014, Statistisk sentralbyrå (2014b, n.p.) stated ‘no one knows exactly how many Sami there are today’ and there are no figures on their website or in the reports attached. Other population estimates range from 40,000 to 100,000 Sami people living in Norway which has a total population of 5.2 million (Statistisk sentralbyrå 2015c, n.p). The most commonly used figure is 60,000, but many contemporary texts use the figure of 100,000. The highest estimate of the total Sami population in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia is 200,000 (Pietikäinen et al. 2010, p. 4). It is assumed that there has been an increase in the Sami community in Norway. The reasons for the increase include the emergence and transformation of Sami
identity in recent years and that this has led to increased awareness and comfort in identifying as Sami.

Even if the figures provided by Statistisk sentralbyrå in 2007 are now considered low, they give some indication of the approximate population distribution of Sami people throughout the four countries in which they live. Those figures were: Norway 40 000, Sweden 20 000, Finland 7 500, and Russia 2 000¹ (Statistisk sentralbyrå 2007, n.p.). Of the 40 000 Sami people then living in Norway, 38 500 lived in the region known as Sápmi, for which the official administrative term is ‘the Sami Development Fund region’, which is defined as north of Saltfjellet (Statistisk sentralbyrå 2007). Sápmi, which is sometimes known as Lapland² or Samiland, is the region where most Sami people live. Its span is from central western Norway and Sweden, across the north of Norway, Sweden and Finland, and the Kola Peninsula in Russia (Fig. 2.1).

¹ There are also Sami communities in Alaska and other parts of the United States of America and elsewhere in the world, but they are small and consist mostly of relatively recent migrants.
² ‘Lapland’ is also the name of the northern-most county of Finland.
There are 10 Sami languages, and approximately 50% of Sami people speak a Sami language (Sámediggi c2007, n.p.). The Sami Language Act (1990)\(^3\) recognises eight Norwegian municipalities and by extension they are government-recognised Sami municipalities. These municipalities also have the largest percentages of Sami population.

The majority of Sami people are best known as reindeer herders, but they have also always been fisher people and/or farmers or a combination of all three. Only a small percentage of Sami people have ever relied exclusively on reindeer herding. Nelson Graburn and Stephen Strong (1973, p. 22) state that reindeer herders ‘though usually described as “typical”, have probably never constituted more than 10 to 20 percent of the total Samek\(^4\) population’. Today it is estimated that some 10% of the whole Sami population are reindeer herders\(^5\). Instead, most Sami people rely on work in tertiary industry, fishing and/or farming.

It is thought by some that Sami people arrived in Sápmi from approximately 8100BC (Moring 2006)\(^6\) to approximately 500BC. Many argue that the Sami migrated north from Eastern Europe, probably the Volga-Ural region. As well as archaeological evidence to support the theory that Sami people migrated from that region, there is linguistic evidence as Sami languages belong to the Finno-Ugric family of languages. However, as the excerpt from Erik Norberg and Birgitta Fossum’s (2011, p. 203) work below highlights, Sami archaeology is still contested:

\(^3\) Discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight.
\(^4\) ‘Samek’ is a now rarely used term for Sami people.
\(^5\) Statistisk sentralbyrå state that there are 2,820 people involved in reindeer herding. The above figure would then need to be revised to 7% (Statistisk sentralbyrå 2009, n.p.).
\(^6\) ‘The peoples from the southern shores of Lake Ääninen and around Lake Ladoga reached the River Utsjoki [in Northern Finnish Lapland and forming part of the modern border with Norway] already around 8100 BC’ (Moring 2006).
In spite of the fact that today there is a broad consensus among archaeologists that the South Sami have been living in the area for a very long time and that they are descendants of the prehistoric people who lived here and inheritors of their culture, opinions surface occasionally which challenge this. In 2005, the collective publication "Tørendals historie" (The history of Tørendal) (Bull et al. 2005b) came out, in which Ida Bull and Audun Dybdahl support the immigration theory even today (Bull 2005, 265; Dybdahl 2005, 159). This theory was put forward by Yngvar Nielsen in 1889 and, put briefly, argues that the Sami people immigrated to the area in the 1500s and 1600s. In 1889, he based his arguments for this on what he considered to be an absence of tombs and sacrificial sites and Sami placenames in the Røros area. In part 1 of the publication (Bull et al. 2005a) a different view is put forward by archaeologists who show that the Sami population existed in the central parts of Norway during the Iron Age (Aronsson & Ljungdahl 2008).

Early Sami communities were nomadic but they settled in the coastal areas, where they became sedentary, and in inland areas, where they became semi-nomadic. Generally, the economic pursuits in the coastal areas included fishing and farming, whereas reindeer herding was the predominant economic pursuit in the inland areas. Many of those early communities engaged in a combination of fishing, farming and reindeer herding, to varying degrees, and most remained in the area now known as Sápmi.

Sápmi is a region that crosses national borders and has a history of settlement by non-Sami people, so it has been subject to various legal and administrative systems. Sometimes people, especially Sami people living in Sápmi (especially Sami people) have been under more than one administration at the same time. In the 16th century the Norwegian, Russian and Swedish governments all claimed control of the northern region, which meant the inhabitants had to pay taxes to each of the three administrations. This was partly due to hundreds of years of disputes over the northern borders that were decided in 1826. Even today, the necessity for easily crossed borders in the north is recognised officially through
the granting in some areas of border crossing rights to reindeer herders and their animals.

The Sami communities in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia have been subjected to processes of colonisation that can be compared to processes in other Western postcolonial countries such as Australia, New Zealand, United States and Canada. The colonisation of Sápmi can be characterised as a slower, less defined process but one that aligned itself with the processes of colonisation in places like Australia over time. By the 20th century, the treatment of Sami people reflected trends in the treatment of Indigenous people in other colonies or postcolonies.

While there are clear colonial histories in many countries, such as Australia, where the colonial period starts with the arrival of the British in 1788 with a distinct colonial agenda, in Norway the colonial period is not as easily delineated. The colonisation of Sápmi did not start with the invasion of the area by one government with a distinct agenda to exploit the resources of the area they had come to inhabit. Instead, the colonisation of Sápmi was a slow process that began in the 17th century with claims to ownership of land by the Swedish crown. By the 18th century, while Norway was under Danish rule, a clearer process of colonisation began whereby non-Sami migration from the south was encouraged by the allocation of land and tax exemptions for non-Sami people. The similarities between the colonisation of Sápmi and countries such as Australia are: the claiming of land and resources by alien governments, the imposition of administrations upon the Indigenous communities, and the regulation and limiting of access to resources that had previously been seen as fully exploitable by the
Indigenous inhabitants. In part, this history of disenfranchisement gives weight to Sami people’s claims to indigeneity.

By the 19th century Sami/non-Sami relations were influenced greatly by social policies such as Norwegianisation (nor Fornorsking). Norwegianisation was implemented from the 1850s to 1959 (Steilien 1989, p. 2), if the post-Second World War education policies are taken to be the end of the assimilationist policies. However, Minde (2005, pp. 6–7) considers the beginning of assimilationist policies to be the establishment of the Lapp Fund (nor Finnefondet) in 18517 and the end to have come after the Áltá conflict in the late 1970s–early 1980s. Norwegianisation policy was part of the process of building a Norwegian nation independent of Denmark and ‘implied — in practical as well as ideological terms — that all Norwegian citizens should share the same cultural skills that underpinned the reconstruction bureaucracy, namely Norwegian language, culture, and identity’ (Bjøklund et al. 2002, n.p.).

Another key period in the history of Sápmi is the Second World War. Between 1940 and 1945 the German army occupied Norway in order to gain control of the ice-free harbours and the iron mines in northern Sweden. As the German army retreated from northern Norway they employed a scorched earth policy, burning the majority of the built structures in the region. As a result, structures that survived the Second World War, such as Holmenes Farm8 in Gáivuotna, are significant social history sites. The German army also built roads and other

7 ‘The Lapp Fund’s formal purpose was to strengthen the educational system, and especially the teaching of Norwegian language, in Sámi and Finnish areas of Northern Norway’ (Greneresen 2014, p. 1). See Greneresen (2014) for more on the Lapp Fund and the documents relating to it.
8 Holmenes Farm is a Coastal Sami farm is now run as an outdoor museum.
infrastructure, many of which are still used today — for instance, the road into Gáivuotna from the east was built by the German army.

During the German occupation, most of the northern Norwegian population was evacuated to the south. Many people remember this time as formative, as one that led to many significant changes in their communities. Upon their return, the communities had to rebuild socially and physically. This was done peacefully and had a significant impact on the relationships between Sami and non-Sami inhabitants. Sami people’s oral accounts of this time that I heard were of positive cooperation that improved relations and bound communities more closely.

Harald Eidheim (1997, pp. 38–39) argues that ‘during the period of rebuilding in Norway which followed in the wake of WII it became increasingly obvious that the standard of living in the Sami areas … lagged far behind the rest of the country’. Redressing this was the focus of Sami activists at the time and they turned their attention to education which, by the 1990s, seemed to ‘have reached the level of the national average’ (Eidheim 1997, p. 39). The increase in wealth in Norway in the 1960s and 1970s, aided by the exploitation of North Sea oil, provided more resources to develop Sami communities.

In the 1970s and 1980s Sami culture in Norway enjoyed a revival similar to that of other Indigenous communities around the world9. The timing of the revival is related to changes in international philosophic, economic and social trends. Late modernism, late capitalism, liberal ideas of the individual, and concepts of ethnicity and difference contributed to changes in how Indigenous peoples were perceived, and how national and international institutions interacted with

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9 The same could be said of the Sami communities in Sweden and Finland but not in Russia.
Indigenous communities. Awareness of Sami issues also increased through Sami participation in the international Indigenous political landscape, which was helped in part by the relative economic success and political freedom enjoyed in most of the countries in which the majority of Sami people lived — that is, Norway, Sweden and Finland.

During the second half of the 20th century and into the beginning of 21st century, the government and administrative bodies in Norway — and to differing levels in Sweden, Finland and Russia — have increasingly recognised Sami rights (Minde 2005, Beach 2007). This recognition has led to improved access to land, fishing and language rights as well as the provision of education, health and social services comparable to those available to the non-Sami community. Norwegian government responses to Sami claims to rights have been significantly informed by the findings of the Sami Rights Commission and the Sami Culture Commission. The Commissions were established in 1980, prompted by the Áltá conflict. The reports published by the Commissions led to substantial changes in Norwegian government/Sami community relations, such as the establishment of the Sámediggi in 1988 via The Sami Act 1987. Norwegian government participation in international bodies such as the UN and ILO, has also had an impact on the recognition of Sami rights. In 1990 the Norwegian government ratified the ILO Convention 169 — Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention — and in 2007 Norway supported the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
Being Sami in Norway

As outlined above, Norwegian Sami people have been subject to colonisation and assimilation and more recently have had a level of recognition. With each of these has come a complex set of expectations and requirements for the Sami community in relation to various administrative bodies that have had the power to make decisions about access to resources both the government and the Sami people value.

As Northern Norway became more integrated into a broad national Norwegian economic, political and social system, the Sami population faced an increasing need to be able to operate in national arenas and create a way to be Sami in this wider system (Barth 1969b, p. 32). Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (1992, p. 60) argue that ethnicity is the result of specific historical processes, and therefore it takes on the ‘natural’ appearance of an autonomous force. For the Sami community, this integration meant negotiating notions of their being ‘naturally’ different in a nation in which similitude was valued. The overwhelming image of Norway is of a country that is culturally homogenous and where belonging is only partially defined by citizenship. Sami insistence on difference challenged notions of being Norwegian. The desire for cultural homogeneity in Norway was borne out most obviously in Norwegianisation policies.

Amongst other things, Norwegianisation resulted in Sami children in some areas being taken from their families to attend boarding schools, policies that forbade the use of Sami language in some contexts (language being ‘the measure and a symbol of the failure or success of the policy of norwegianisation’ (Minde 2005, p. 7)), and, in some areas, ‘symbolic ethnic cleansing’ through the stigmatising of
Sami identity to such an extent that Sami people renounced their Sami identity (Bjørklund 1985, p. 12).

Harald Eidheim (1969, p. 40) writes that there was a ‘conspicuous lack of “contrasting cultural traits” between Lapps and Norwegians’ but notes that ethnic labels were in daily use and that Sami people suffered from living with a stigmatised ethnic identity. This notion of stigma is prevalent in discussions of Sami issues and is interpreted as symbolic representation of Saminess presented in a negative light, resulting in discrimination. Discrimination in respect of religion, language and access to land and resources was most often cited by Sami people as the result of stigma attached to being Sami. For instance, pre-Christian Sami religion\textsuperscript{10} was eradicated from public view in the 17\textsuperscript{th} and 18\textsuperscript{th} centuries but people continue to be practise it to some extent. The attempts at eradicating pre-Christian Sami religion included the destruction, removal or prohibition of religious objects such as shamans’ drums and practices such as sacrificing (see Kjellström 1987). Other forms of discrimination included those in relation to language and access to land and resources. These were varied and are discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven and Chapter Six respectively.

While this stigma and resulting discrimination has diminished, the following shows that they remain in a subtle form. I spoke to two non-Sami students in Oslo and asked what they thought non-Sami people’s attitudes to Sami people were. One said ‘Norwegians don’t think Sami people are normal Norwegians’. The other said ‘Norwegians are not against them but they make fun of them’. These comments sum up the stigma that still haunts Sami people and they show why,

\textsuperscript{10} Traditional Sami religion was animistic, shamanistic and polytheistic.
although the stigma is less, as Minde (2005, p. 8) puts it, ‘the historical legacy of the norwegianisation policy [is] morally problematic and politically sensitive even to this day’.

Eidheim (1969, pp. 39–57) says the Coastal Sami community he worked with in the 1960s suffered greatly from the stigma attached to identifying as Sami. Michael Levin (1993, p.168) concludes that by 1993 ‘the stigma of ethnicity has been replaced by recognition of its universality’. In his work, Arild Hovland (1995), an anthropologist who conducted fieldwork in Gáivuotna in the mid-1990s, supports this observation. For Hovland, the Sami youth in Gáivuotna had discovered and promoted their Sami identities in an environment where Sami ethnicity was accepted at least on a national scale.

Else, who was born in Gáivuotna in the early 1970s, told me that as a child she had been ashamed of being Sami but this had changed and as an adult she had become proud of her Saminess. Several Sami people also spoke of having hidden their Sami identity because of the shame attached to being different in Norway and being Sami in particular. This sense of shame was openly discussed and often brought up as something that had changed with the positive national and international recognition in recent decades. This quote from Nils Erik shows that while this stigma is still acknowledged it is within a process of reversing the negative connotations associated with Sami difference: ‘in stories, Sami people laugh about themselves. So, that is their way of survival. They know they have made a branch. They laugh about their pronunciation et cetera. They don’t care and that’s very good’.
Since the end of norwegianisation policies, political good will towards the Sami population in Norway has increased slowly. Thuen (1995, p.237) sees the situation as having improved by 1995 to the extent that ‘Saami issues are now met with governmental sympathy and negotiated in a spirit of cooperation’. With this improvement have come recognition of Sami difference and inclusion of Sami people in conceptions of what it is to be Norwegian rather than an insistence on similitude.

Further, Senka Božić-Vrbančić (2008, p. 31), in her discussion about New Zealand, points out that the colonial experience does not just transform the colonised but transforms the coloniser. This is achieved through the efforts of the coloniser to dominate the colonised and their resistance to, and accommodation of, changes made by the colonised. This continues in the postcolonial period and can be seen in Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations in Sápmi and Fennoscandia11 where ‘Indigenous’ and ‘non-Indigenous’ can be equated with ‘postcolonised’ and ‘postcoloniser’ — or, in Norway, ‘Sami’ and ‘non-Sami’.

When discussing nationalists in Australia, Ghassan Hage (1998, p. 20) asserts that:

> Whiteness and Australianness can be accumulated (up to a certain point) and people can be said to be more or less White and Australian. How White they can be depends on the social attributes they possess.

The same can be said of Norwegianess and even Saminess, especially if Sami people are to be considered Indigenous. For Indigenous people, the possibility of being considered more or less Indigenous is fraught. The discourses of loss and historical, cultural and resource-related disenfranchisement mean that asserting

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11 Fennoscandia is the geographical region that includes Norway, Sweden, Finland, the Kola Peninsula and Karelia.
such a position relies on their totality. If claims were based on ‘more or less’
indigeneity it could open the doors to arguments that people ‘more or less’ have
claims to rights.

Sami people were often considered an ethnic minority rather than Indigenous and
so there has been a public debate about Sami people’s rights to claim Indigenous
status. During a conversation with a Norwegian anthropologist in 1999, the issue
of the use of indigeneity as a political tool in Norway was raised. It was suggested
that Sami people were more than happy to participate and identify with other
Indigenous peoples in international forums but were reluctant to do so in Norway.
It was also suggested that this was possibly most sensible as indigeneity as
concept was not well received in Norway. I would be surprised if such a claim
would be made today as the conception of Sami people as Indigenous has
become generally more accepted.

The conditions for acceptance of indigeneity could be said to be provided by the
stability and confidence in the Norwegian nation — that is, that the Norwegian
nationalist project has successfully fixed the boundaries of the nation and

once the liminality of the nation-space is established, and its signifying
difference is turned from the boundary ‘outside’ to its finitude ‘within’, the
threat of cultural difference is no longer a problem of ‘other’ people
(Bhabha 1994, p.150).

So disenfranchised minorities such as the Sami community are able to influence
national cultures because difference ‘within’ the nation’s boundaries no longer
signifies ‘otherness’.

In many senses, this stance is supported by the situations in Australia and
Norway. It has been argued by many, notably Andrew Lattas (1990), that
Australia has forged its unique international image through the promotion of
Aboriginal cultural symbols. This is also true of Norway as Sami cultural symbols are being increasingly promoted as unique qualities of Norway. In the North (for Norway, Sweden and Finland), Sami people have always played an important part in the production and projection of a particularly northern landscape and culture-scape that is inhabited by Sami people. As Sami people gain control of this image they also more strongly influence the national and international representations of the nations in which they live. In turn they become a more influential element in the Norwegian national image and what it means to be Norwegian.

Despite this development, Sami people in Norway have also been subjected to the effects of ‘internal orientalism’ (Hage 1998, p. 17), an extension of Edward Said’s (1978) orientalism. Hage argues that internal orientalism involves the reduction of the Other to a passive object of government. On that basis, while Sami people were successfully dealing with stigma and incorporation into the imaginings of the Norwegian nation, they were also negotiating the effects of policies based on Sami people being the passive object of government. This process included addressing the necessity of defining Saminess so that the government would have a clear population to govern.

**Official definition and recognition of Saminess**

In reference to the United States, Nagel (1994, p.159) asserts:

> the construction of ethnic identity in response to ethnic rules for political access can be seen in the national debate over affirmative action, in the composition of judicial (judges, juries) and policy-making bodies (committees, boards), and in the enforcement of laws designed to end discrimination or protect minorities.
The same could be said for the ‘ethnic rules’ constructed by the Norwegian government in relation to Sami people and the need for ‘ethnic proof’ (after Nagel 1994, p.160) to satisfy those rules.

For the Sami community to gain recognition and rights it is essential that there be a coherent Sami community to which they can be granted. This is particularly important when claiming legal rights:

the process of making legal claims still makes more salient the problem of identifying the collective beneficiaries of rights. It calls for clearly defined subjects, attached to specific communities, ideally identified by ethnonyms and demarcated territories, to whom specific rights and duties have been allocated (Niezen 2009, p. 10).

For the Norwegian government, the Sámediggi and other governing institutions to govern successfully, definitions of who they are governing have had to be developed. It is impossible for Sami rights to be recognised by the Norwegian government if there are not ‘clearly defined [Sami] subjects’. Similarly, within the Sami community it is impossible to share the outcomes of the granting of rights if those who possess these rights cannot be defined and identified.

The official governmental definition of who is Sami is the one included in The Sami Act 1987 (s2.6):

All persons who make a declaration to the effect that they consider themselves to be Sami, and who either

a. have Sami as their domestic language, or
b. have or have had a parent, grandparent or great-grandparent with Sami as his or her domestic language, or
c. are the child of a person who is or has been registered in the Sami electoral register.

This definition specifically defines those who can be included as voters on the electoral roll for the Sámediggi. It was created in consultation with Sami people and has been shaped by them over time.
To create a definition of Saminess that satisfied both Sami definitions of who was Sami and what would be acceptable within legal processes, required the government to first define who was representative of the Sami community and could be included in the designing of the definition. So who was Sami was defined out of necessity. This definition was influenced by those who presented themselves as Sami representatives and were recognised as such by enough of the Sami community. As Sami activists were already recognised by the government as Sami, they were negotiated with. They in turn heavily influenced the official definition of who is Sami. This official definition then not only makes it possible for governing bodies to not only know precisely who they are governing but provides clarity on to whom they are providing rights and resources.

Importantly, such a definition also provides a basis for recognition without the need to redefine who exactly is Sami. In recent years, the recognition of Sami people has been expressed in national and international legal instruments. One example is the 1988 (Baer 2011, n.p.) change to the Norwegian Constitution (1814) to include Article 108\(^\text{12}\) which states: ‘The authorities of the State shall create conditions enabling the Sami people to preserve and develop its language, culture and way of life’. Further, Norway signed and ratified the ILO Convention 169 (in 1990) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (adopted in 2007). These have led to the Sami community being increasingly recognised by mainstream Norwegians and thus changing the profile of Sami people, in Norway, as Indigenous.

\(^{12}\) Prior to May 2014 this was Article 110.
Sami political landscape

The definition and recognition of Sami people has obviously been heavily influenced by the Sami political landscape. This includes the governing, representation and administration of the Sami community through the Norwegian government as well as Sami and international bodies.

The Norwegian government Department of Sami and Minority Affairs in the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation ‘has chief responsibility for formulating and coordinating the state’s policies towards the Sami population and the national minorities’ (Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation 2015, n.p.). The department must ensure the conditions included in Article 108 of the Constitution are met, and has responsibility for Gáldu (Resource Rights of Indigenous Peoples) and the International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry, for coordinating international Indigenous policy, and for the budget and administration of the Sámediggi.

In terms of direct representation, in 1906, Isaac Mikal Saba was the first Sami Norwegian Parliamentarian elected and he was the only one elected on a platform of Sami issues until the 1990s (Josefsen 2010, pp. 13–14). Several Sami politicians have been included in the lists of Norwegian political parties and have gained office in a number of other governing bodies such as municipal governments. In 1999, Sámeálbmot bellodat (eng Sami People’s Party) was established with a view to gaining Sami representation in the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament). As Eva Josefsen (2010, p. 14) points out, efforts for
representation have been focussed primarily on gaining a separate elected body. This was achieved in 1989 with the opening of the Sámediggi.\(^{13}\)

The Sámediggi is a democratically elected body whose remit is to ‘strengthen Sami political standing and promote Sami interests in Norway, as well as working to pave the way for the Sami to preserve and develop their language, culture and way of life’ (Sámediggi c2015b, n.p.).

The Sami Parliament’s most important goal is to work towards the Sami achieving self-determination, based on their rights as a people and as an indigenous people … The process of developing self-determination is dependent upon several factors including obtaining legitimacy and support from the potential electorate as well as furthering acknowledgement from the Norwegian central authorities (Gaski 2008, p. 221).

The Sámediggi sits in Kárášjohka and has offices in Guovdageaidnu, Unjárpa, Gáivuotna, Divtasvuodna and Snåase. Currently it has thirty-nine representatives, who are elected by direct vote from seven constituencies that cover all of Norway.\(^{14}\) Elections are held every four years, the latest being in 2013 when there were 15,005 people on the roll (Slaastad 2014, p. 25).

Some of the activities undertaken by the Sámediggi include administering funds;\(^ {15}\) carrying out administrative tasks allocated by the Norwegian government; and overseeing and promoting issues important to the Sami community. The Sámediggi also has a number of committees focussed on specific areas of importance such as planning and finance, childhood and

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\(^{13}\) Sweden and Finland also have Sami Parliaments that are recognised by their national governments. Russia has a Sami Parliament that is not recognised by the national government but is recognised by the other Sami Parliaments.

\(^{14}\) The constituencies are: Nuortaguovlu (Eastern region), Ávjavarri (Steep Mountain), Davveguovlu (North region), Gáiseguovlu (Mountainous region), Viestarmearrra (Western Sea), Åarjel-Saepmie (South Sápmi) and Lulli-Norga (South Norway).

\(^{15}\) These include funds allocated annually from the Norwegian government and the management of The Sami Fund that was set up in 2000 as compensation for earlier assimilation policies. The Sámediggi administers a budget of ‘$50 million (NOK 250 million), which is roughly half the amount spent on Sami programs by the Norwegian government’ (Robbins 2009, p. 9).
education, and trade and culture. The day-to-day running of the Sámediggi is conducted by the Sámediggeráđđi (eng Sami Parliament Council) which consists of the President of the Sámediggi and four others, one of whom is Henrik Olsen, who was the CEO of Riddu Ríđđu for several years.

The Sámediggi has no statutory rights but it can send proposals to the national government:

The proceedings of the Saami Assembly [Sámediggi] engender considerable attention in the government, and a special interdepartmental committee has been established with the mandate of following up issues from the Assembly’s agenda (Thuen 1995, p. 237).

Thuen (1995, p. 53) argues that the Sámediggi’s most significant achievement is its unquestioned representative quality: it embodies the minimum organizational precondition for the transformation of the Saami population to a people claiming to represent a heterogeneity of interests, occupations, political allegiances, cultural and linguistic variances comprised of those who consider themselves to be Saami.

For many people I spoke to, the success of the Sámediggi is indeed in its representative quality. One person said ‘in Karasjok more people voted for the Sami Parliament than for the Norwegian Parliament’.

Conversely, Hovland (1994, n.p.) suggests that this representative quality is not universal:

Sami spokespeople coming out of those (peripheral) areas seem to speak the same general “language” as those of the inland, sharing general goals and living off the same institutions. Those who do not speak this general “language”, who represent other views have very little to say in the running of Sami institutions such as the Sami Parliament.

This statement is about people who garnered the most recognition as Sami — namely reindeer herders from inner Finnmárku — as opposed to those in more norwegianised areas such as Gáivuotna. This variation is becoming increasingly
diminished as the debates about who can claim to be Sami have become more nuanced and Sami people from less recognised communities have gained power.

This leads to the questions of who are the representatives in the Sámediggi and how they become representatives. Many are members of political parties and run on party tickets. Some of the political parties such as the Labour Party and SV are large national parties that participate in the Storting elections and others are Sami parties such as NSR, and Árja\textsuperscript{16}. NSR (eng Norwegian Sami Association\textsuperscript{17}) is and always has been the most highly represented party in the Sámediggi, with three of the four Sámediggi presidents having been members of NSR.

NSR, established in 1968, is the largest Sami association in Norway and dominates Sami politics. It does not have any particular political affiliation in terms of being ‘left’ or ‘right’, but is focussed on representing all Sami communities. Its aims are to advocate for Sami rights, organise activities that enhance the Sami community’s position and disseminate correct information about Sami people (Brantenberg 1991, p. 75). Over time, other Sami organisations have included NRL (nor Norske Reindriftssamers Landsforbund, eng Norwegian Reindeer Herding Sami Association), established in 1947 to represent the interests of Norwegian reindeer herders; and SLF (nor Samenes Landsforbund, eng Sami Association), which was founded in 1979 as a breakaway group from NSR and NRL during the Áltá conflict and stood against the establishment of the Sámediggi (Thuen 1995, p. 42).

\textsuperscript{16} See Brantenberg 1991 for a comprehensive history of Sami political organisations and the establishment and early years of the Sámediggi.

\textsuperscript{17} sme Norgga Sámiid Riikasearvi, lulesami Vuona sámij rikjasiebre, southsami Nøørjen Saemiej Rijhkesiebrie is variously translated into English as Norwegian Saami Association (Thuen 1995, p. 3), National Association of Norwegian Saami (Thuen 1995, p. 22), and National Association of Norwegian Sami (Brenna 1997).
As well as the establishment of organisations that focussed Sami people’s efforts there was a significant movement that continues to influence discussions about Sami politics. ČSV (three letters in the Sami alphabet) began in the early 1970s and remained strong well into the 1980s. It was not a formal organisation but a social movement and ‘a rallying call for radical Sami, i.e. Sami people who had a confrontational attitude toward Norwegian society’ (Bjørklund 2000, p. 29). The movement had no name aside from ‘ČSV’ but several slogans were devised that used the letters, including Čájehehkot Sámi Vuoŋŋa (Show Sami Spirit) and Čohkkejehket Sámiid Vuitui (Unite the Sami for Victory) (Bjørklund 2000, p. 29). ČSV emerged during a surge in Sami political activity. As one person said, ‘Being part of Sami politics in the 1970s was like being in a religious movement’. The impact of this movement is still evident and ČSV continues to be invoked when people refer to radical Sami politics. In the 2007 film Firekeepers, Sara Marielle Gaup, who was born in the 1980s, says that:

Other teenagers teased me for being ČSV. ‘She is so ČSV’ … ČSV was a slogan in the late 70s, more or less … when a movement of awakening for Sami identity arose. So people started using it, ČSV ‘show Saami spirit’ … We who haven’t experienced it, have lived in its aftermath, ČSV. It became a negative phrase, about those who wanted to be more Saami than others, or in any way stuck out, they were called ČSV.

This consciousness of past Sami political activity and its impact on current politics was echoed by Nils Erik, who was born in the late 1960s, while speaking about the political landscape in Gáivuotna:

Northern Norwegian local communities, most of them, in the 50s, 60s, 70s over 60 to 70% voted for the Labour Party. Some over 80%. So Labour Party membership is very important. It is not being Sami but what sort of

18 Firekeepers (2007), directed by Rossella Ragazzi and produced by Britt Kramvig, explores the lives and work of joik artists Lawra Somby and Sara Marielle Gaup focusses on ‘how joik is a vehicle for existential revelations of the self to one’s community, to imagined communities, to former and future images of self as a Saami subject’ (Ragazzi 2012, p. 1).

19 See Vigdis Stordahl (1997) for discussion of the ‘ČSV generation’ who were politically active Sami youth during the 1970s.
membership you have got. Labour Party does things and organises their people. K_, an SV person, applied [for a job] but didn’t get it. So, it is political. Even though they were from Manndalen. B_ is loyal to the head of the Labour Party. Those on the board are also loyal to the Labour Party.

Nils Erik was discussing what he saw as the Labour Party’s stranglehold on the jobs in the Gáivuotna area. In particular he was referring to someone from Riddu Ridđu who had applied for an important position but didn’t get it, despite being the obvious choice for the job. It was explained to me that that was because the unsuccessful applicant was a member of SV and the person who won the position was a member of the Labour Party and had worked closely with the leader of the Labour Party in the region.

The political landscape in Gáivuotna was influential in Riddu Ridđu’s garnering support and funding. One important turn of events was the election of a mayor who was sympathetic to the ambitions and work of those working for the festival. Not only did the mayor support Riddu Ridđu but he spoke in Sami in an official capacity, which was another important symbolic form of support for the identification of the region with Saminess. Nils Erik said: ‘The mayor has been speaking for the festival. No mayor has done that before. He has officially spoken Sami and that is the first time it has happened’.

As with all politically charged communities, the Sami community has its share of radicals. Some of them are young, left-wing, politically active people who have a range of views on how Sami people should engage with the issues. One evening I was with two Norwegian friends when we met a pair of young, radical Sami activists. When they discovered that one of my friends had Sami family but didn’t identify, one of the young radicals heatedly insisted that they should identify, that they had a responsibility to do so and to become involved in the Sami political
movement. The young radicals were then told that my other friend was Sami and an artist. At this point the young radicals asked what kind of art my friend made. On being told that it was not ‘Sami’ art, they then insisted that my friend had a responsibility to make ‘Sami’ art.

After the young radicals left, my friends and I talked about what had happened and what it was like to be confronted with those views. Neither felt particularly put upon and agreed that it did bring up some interesting issues including the pressures to be involved in Sami politics in particular ways. One said ‘It isn’t fair for people to make others be Sami in their way. We should be allowed to be Sami in whatever way we want’.

Another aspect of the Sami political landscape is transnational governance. While I was in Sápmi there was some discussion about the setting up of a transnational Sami Parliament\textsuperscript{20}, similar to the national Sami Parliaments that exist but that would represent the Sami population in all four countries. This was seen by some as potentially the first step to independence for Sápmi. I was never given the impression that there was a Sami separatist movement, but there was a distinct call for Sami people to have more control over decisions that affected them, particularly in Sami majority areas. It was acknowledged that a transnational Sami Parliament would be a complicated instrument to establish as it would require satisfying the laws of each country.

Sami people in Norway are represented by a number of transnational Sami bodies including the Sami Council, a pan-Sami organisation made up of

\textsuperscript{20} In 1988 the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish Sami Parliaments established the Sami Parliamentary Council but this is not considered by many to be the first step to a transnational Sami Parliament.
representatives from political organisations in all four countries. Sami interests are also represented in international Indigenous bodies such as the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and there is a Sami representative with Norway in the state section in the UN. This cooperation and participation leads to a discussion of the notions of Sami transnational and international representation and a Sami nation.

The Sami nation

‘Nation’ is now used by Indigenous peoples around the world to describe their political units and smaller cooperative groups that the term ‘first nations’ refers to. Sami people occasionally declared themselves part of a Sami nation and there is a pan-Sami movement that has brought together people from many different Sami communities, primarily to negotiate with the governments of their countries and, at times, on behalf of Sami people in other countries.

The establishment and strengthening of a pan-Sami movement has led to the construction and existence of a pan-Sami identity. Sami people throughout Norway present themselves and represent others in relation to this pan-Sami identity or set of identifying characteristics. As one person said, ‘The conception of Sami people as one people can be found throughout Sápmi’. Thuen (2012, p. 245) also takes up this notion of Sami nationhood and says that since the 1960s there has developed:

the idea of a not just contrasting, but complementary Saami collective identity, a nationhood, subsequently to be accepted and confirmed by the Norwegian government as a correction to the formerly dominant and precious idea of national homogeneity.

21 The term Sami Ädnan means Samiland or Sami Earth and would be the logical term for the Sami nation but was not used as a universal term. This may have been partly due to it being the title of the song performed as the entry for Norway in the 1980 Eurovision Song Contest and its being the name of a Sami organisation in Sweden (Sami Ädnan). Instead, people more commonly identified as being part of Sápmi.
The beginning of pan-Sami cooperation is generally marked by the first Sami Congress that was held in 1917 in Trondheim, Norway. At that meeting Norwegian and Swedish Sami delegates first came together with pan-Sami interests in mind. In 1952 a joint meeting of Sami delegates from Norway, Sweden and Finland was held to discuss common issues (Nicul 1977, p. 81). During that meeting, a committee was established and it organised a pan-Sami conference in 1953. The Sami Conference has been held every three or four years since\(^\text{22}\) (Ingold 1976, p. 235). At the second Sami Conference in 1956, the Nordic Lapp Council was founded. It held its first meeting in 1957 (Nicul 1977, p. 81). The Nordic Lapp Council was renamed the Nordic Sami Council and then the Sami Council (sme Sámiráđđi). It continues to conduct the Sami Conference.

The Sami Conference has been used by delegates as a forum for discussing and making decisions about a range of issues that affect Sami people across Sápmi. At the Sami Conference a range of pan-Sami symbols have been decided upon, including the Sami flag, the Sami anthem (‘Sámi soga lávlla’) and the Sami National Day, which is celebrated on the 6\(^{\text{th}}\) of February, the anniversary of the first Sami Congress in 1917. Importantly, the Sami Council proposed the development of the Nordic Saami Convention and in 1995 established the first committee to inquire about it.

In 2005 a draft of the Nordic Saami Convention was released with the intention that a final version be developed by 2015 (Bankes and Koivurova 2013a, p. 1). ‘The purpose of the Convention is to allow the Saami people to safeguard and develop their language, culture, livelihoods and way of life with the least possible

\(^{22}\) The 20\(^{\text{th}}\) Sami Conference was held in Murmansk, Russia in 2013.
interference by national borders’ (Josefsen 2010, p. 9). While Russia is not covered by the Convention, its development remains an important step in creating grounds for pan-Sami representations to the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish governments on issues that affect all Sami people23.

These transnational bodies and instruments are part of the development of a pan/transnational-Sami political landscape that has done much for building a sense of nationhood and pan/transnational-Sami identity and identification with a Sami nation of sorts.

Tim Ingold (1976, pp.237–239) argues that the pan-Sami movement in the 1970s had developed an image of ‘pure Lappishness’ that was theoretical and increasingly distanced from ‘facts’ and local context. Based on this argument, there could be three stages in the development of Sami consciousness and rhetoric within Sami activism in Norway in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. First, Ingold’s theoretical stage, when Saminess was distanced from ‘fact’ and local context; second, Hovland’s education-inspired activism during which Sami people engaged in formal theoretical knowledge of Sami issues and returned to local contexts in which they implemented their knowledge; and third, an early 21st century period during which the theoretical knowledge, ideas and ideals had been established within Sami communities that had previously been known to have been ‘norwegianised’. During the third period the local context is well and truly established and Sami people are once again learning the ‘facts’ of being Sami in their local communities. They are still gaining theoretical knowledge which is still

being used to gather information but there are also importantly local Sami practices that are normalised rather than theorised.

This is not to say that the earlier periods show that there had been a break in continuity of Sami practice but that there has been a change of practice and that level of practice has now been sufficiently localised and normalised. While this is primarily a set of conditions internal to the Sami community, other sociocultural conditions are mediated both internally and externally. An important one of these is the stereotyping of Sami people and culture.

Sami stereotypes and stereotypes of ‘Sami’

Sami stereotypes are generated from within and stereotypes of ‘Sami’ are generated from outside the Sami community. Sami people have had to deal with how these influence the behaviour of others towards them, including the decisions they make about them. In part, the content of these stereotypes are what is stigmatised about the Sami community.

For instance, the most influential stereotype of Sami people and one that is often discussed in Sápmi is that of Sami people as reindeer herders. This stereotype includes a number of negative and positive and historical and contemporary connotations. Reindeer herders are seen as being of the past but caught in the present, having been forced from their ‘natural’ ways of being into a postcolonial society that is, at the very least, difficult to navigate given they are out of their ‘natural’ state. The ability of Sami people as ‘reindeer herders’ to navigate this unnatural state and the State suggests that they are an old people coping with the new, which, for the architects of the stereotype, is a positive and desirable attribute.
Even though few Sami people engage in it, ‘reindeer herding is the metonym of Saminess in Sami society’ (Hovland 1994, n.p.) and alternative images of Sami people with similar power to that of reindeer herders have been very difficult to establish (Hovland 1994, n.p.). It is precisely this alternative image of being Sami that the people involved in Riddu Riddu have been successful at establishing in more recent years. It is an image that has gained considerable strength and continues to transform Sami and other people’s images of Saminess.

People living in Gáivuotna have dealt with many assaults on their claims to Saminess, not least of which have come from the academic arena. As late as 1973, Graburn and Strong, in their sympathetic piece in Circumpolar People: An Anthropological Perspective, recognise that few Sami participate in reindeer herding but that they are fisher people, hunters, farmers et cetera. However, they also go on to say:

> in recent decades those who have nothing to do with reindeer are less likely to identify themselves as “Lapps,” as they are assimilated into Scandinavian national society (Graburn and Strong 1973, p. 11).

What Graburn and Strong argue is not untrue in terms of stereotyping Sami people. The portrayal of non-reindeer herding Sami people as assimilated, and therefore not identifying as ‘Lapp’, permeated the Sami community as well as the academic one. Many Sami people reiterated this argument to me to explain why Saminess became unpopular for a time when forms of Saminess not attached to reindeer herding were considered less authentic.

Graburn and Strong’s argument no longer holds as more people are identifying as Sami and quite clearly in many parts of Norway many Sami people are not reindeer herders and different expressions of Saminess, such as Coastal Saminess, have gained recognition. So the argument about assimilation has not
stood the test of time and something needs to be added to it to explain the lack of willingness to identify as Sami. While assimilation is and has been strongly influential in Sami people not identifying as Sami, the conditions and attitudes in the non-Sami community and the understanding and acceptance of indigeneity in international arenas have had an equal effect on people’s willingness to identify as Sami. This can be said of other indigenous communities such as those in Australia, Canada and the United States of America. Indigenous people themselves, as well as general philosophical changes made within modernity or late modernity, perhaps carefully related to the rise of postmodernity, have helped change of attitudes in the non-Indigenous community.

The stereotypes of ‘Sami’ such as Sami people as reindeer herders are primarily externally generated stereotypes, but there are other stereotypes of Sami people and culture that have been generated primarily from within the Sami community (Sami stereotypes). These include people known as country boys and Seminar/Asphalt/Super/Airport/New Sami.

The ‘country boys’ are young Sami men who live in rural communities, ride snow scooters, wear motorbike jackets, drink homemade vodka, fight, and stay in their communities with no future prospect of gainful employment. This group is related to general stereotypes of rural youth in Northern Norway but the Sami version includes a dash more roughness. The ‘country boys’ stereotype is also more strongly connected to Sami youth than comparable stereotypes are to non-Sami youth.

Seminar/Asphalt/Super/Airport/New Sami are politicians, academics and administrators who spend much of their time at meetings, conferences, seminars
outside their home communities, predominately in urban environments — hence the reference to asphalt. This group of stereotypes suggests that Seminar/Asphalt/Super/Airport/New Sami have become somewhat removed from their ‘authentic’ ways of being Sami as well as being disconnected from their home communities and natural environments. This set of stereotypes is internal rather than external and is an inverted set of stereotypes in that they are critical of the elite.

One evening with a group of what could be described as Seminar/Asphalt/Super/Airport/New Sami people I attended a play in Guovdageaidnu performed by Beaivváš Sámi Teáhter, the Sami National Theatre. One of the scenes in the play opened with three people sitting on chairs with briefcases on the floor next to them. The three people were wearing a combination of gákti and business suits with Sami accessories such as a tie with the colours of the Sami flag and a Sami flag lapel pin. The soundtrack made it clear that they were sitting in an airport. They had their mobile phones and papers out and began a conversation. As the dialogue progressed several jokes about Seminar/Asphalt/Super/Airport/New Sami ensued. The audience, including the people I was with, roared with laughter at these jokes. It showed that while these may be stereotypes with negative connotations they are, to some extent, openly discussed and identified with. It probably also says much about Sami people’s humour, which is often self-deprecating.

Finally, there is a well-worn stereotype that is promulgated about Sami people as drunk. For example, Karin, a non-Sami Norwegian woman from the North, told me that her Sami boyfriend was a binge drinker and that this was ‘typical Sami’. Annie, another non-Sami Norwegian woman, but from southern Norway, said:
My view of the Sami is very limited. I was never taught anything at school. All I know is this TV show I watched when I was young. I think Samis still live in tents and drink vodka all day. I know it isn’t true but I don’t know what is true.

This is not an uncommon stereotype of Indigenous people and it is heightened by the ascetic aspects of Lutheranism which imbue much of Norwegian life. Drinking is also associated with other aspects of Sami cultural activities such as yoiking which, I suspect, was rarely heard by non-Sami people unless they were in the company of Sami people on social occasions — where, it must be said, it would not be only Sami people who were drinking.

The architects of stereotypes are often the elite or relative elite as they usually have the power to influence discourses. In the case of stereotypes of ‘Sami’, the architects are the elite from the broader society, therefore the elite in comparison with Sami people. Sami stereotypes are created by and in response to the elite within the Sami community. In this context, the elite are part of what Ronald Niezen terms ‘publics’. For Niezen (2010, p. 1) publics consist of ‘social actors who are intangible, abstract and notoriously unpredictable’ as well as, in some senses, imagined. Just as nations are imagined communities, so too are publics. It is not simply the imagined social fact of the nation and publics that influence ‘strategic collective representation in campaigns of justice’ (Niezen 2009, p. 7), but the content of their discourses and the motivations underlying the development of the discourses. Publics are particularly powerful in this respect as, at times, what are imagined to be the thoughts and beliefs that steer their discourses are realised in the media, policy, academic work and conversation. Contact with these iterations reinforce or refute the imagined content of discourses of publics which are then acted upon or reacted to.
Michael Herzfeld (2005, p. 202) argues that:

the act of stereotyping is by definition reductive, and, as such, it always marks the absence of some presumably desirable property in its object. It is therefore a discursive weapon of power … it actively deprives the ‘other’ of a certain property.

In the struggle over control of identity processes, stereotypes are a weapon of power. Not only do stereotypes function to control definitions of the ‘other’, they re-present the power of the architects of the stereotypes.

Stereotypes not only mark the absence of a property of the object, they also enhance less desirable qualities of the architect and the ‘other’. The reduction of the ‘other’ is achieved by employing archetypes that are not simply phantasmagorical. Stereotypes are a collage of mundane, though often exaggerated, characteristics of many people stitched into one image. They are also imbued with moralism and act as warnings to others of what not to become. Stereotypes are not created to showcase ways of being that are worthy of aspiration, but even so, some aspects of them may be desirable. This allows us to understand how stereotypes become part of identity processes. When exposed to them, a person evaluates the various elements of the stereotypes and chooses to identify with or discard each element of the stereotypes.

These and other stereotypes affect Sami identification processes publicly and privately. They are important ‘on-the ground essentializing strategies’ (Herzfeld 2005, p. 209) that form part of the way Sami people negotiate their identities in reference to Sami and non-Sami images of Sami people in Norway. As has been mentioned briefly before, one of the aspects of Sami culture that influences images of Sami people is religion, particularly Læstadianism, which is practised
in areas that have significant Sami populations and has become closely identified with Saminess.

**Sami religion**

Marit Myrvoll (1998) argues that there is little known about pre-Christian Sami religion and that much of what is known was written by priests and missionaries. Myrvoll (1998) further contends that most of the information related to men in North Trondelag and that this knowledge has been imposed on all Sami religion.

Some maintain that pre-Christian Sami religious practice was almost completely eradicated, while the continuity of Sami religious practice is propounded by others, such as Rydving (1993) and Myrvoll (2010) — who writes that Sami religiosity, even if it is not strictly the practice of pre-Christian Sami religion, has been continuous. Yet others argue that more recently ‘global influences and local traditions’ (Kraft, Fonneland and Lewis 2015, p. 1) have been sought out during a process of cultural and religious revival.

Pre-Christian Sami religion (sme noaidevuohta) was animistic, shamanistic and polytheistic. Most naoidi (shamans) were men and they played the key spiritual role in a community as soothsayers, priests, ritual leaders and healers, although they were not the only healers within a community. The best-known spiritual tool is the shaman’s runic drum (Fig. 2.2) which was used to communicate with the spiritual world and as a predictor. There are very few old drums remaining in Norway as most were confiscated and destroyed by missionaries. The first missionaries arrived in Norway in the 14th century (Myrvoll 1998) and Christianity

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24 Sami healing is discussed further in Chapter Four.
25 Other well-known aspects of pre-Christian Sami religion are the underground people, wood nymphs, Stolle the troll and unrest (or hauntings) in houses.
became the main religion via missionising efforts from the 17\textsuperscript{th} century onwards (Kraft 2009, p. 186). From around 1600 missionaries began punishing those who did not convert (Myrvoll 1998). These punishments included orders to kill, witch hunts and the burning of shamans’ drums (Myrvoll 1998).

By the mid-19\textsuperscript{th} century the dominant religion in the Sami community was Læstadianism, a conservative Lutheran sect for which ‘ecstasy and exaggerative asceticism are characteristic features’ (Svensson 1992, p. 63). It was founded on the work of Lars Levi Læstadius, a Sami Lutheran priest\textsuperscript{26} who introduced his reading of Lutheranism to the Sami population in the 1840s. His success is said to be due partly to the use of Sami language in his sermons, his knowledge of the community, and the incorporation of Sami cosmology and creation stories in his teaching (Myrvoll 1998).

The success of Læstadianism has meant that for several generations the dominant religious life in many Sami communities has been very conservative and at odds with pre-Christian Sami religion. This influences the image of Sami

\textsuperscript{26} People often pointed out that he was part-Sami.
religious life held by non-Sami people. Læstadianism, known by reputation if not by name, has led to many people considering conservative, fundamentalist religion as part of Sami life. However, Læstadianism is also associated with opposition to non-Sami religion in Norway.

The Læstadian church ‘has generally a critical attitude to the state Church27, but has refrained from breaking its bond to it’ (Thuen 2012, p. 243). It is partly due to this attitude that Læstadianism also became an important counter-cultural movement in response to non-Sami Norwegians and became part of being Sami (Myrvoll 1998).

I rarely heard a person claim Læstadianism as part of their selfhood statements but it was often mentioned in wider discussions of family and personal experience. In Gáivuotna, Læstadianism had a quite strong presence. Espen said:

In Birtavarre [Gáivuonbahta] everyone is Læstadian and it is a Sami thing. Læstadianism is just in the North. It’s just, it’s not for the south. The priest here was the first priest who preached in Sami for the people so I maybe think that he kind of made a connection to the Sami people. He was a kind of liberator. You can go to church and you actually hear a priest speaking in your own tongue so I think that he made a connection there and maybe that’s, I think, carried on.

Although they were mostly from other villages, many people talked of Gáivuonbahta as the most religious village on the fjord. It had a reputation for being the most conservative village on the fjord and much of this was attributed to the robust religious life in the village. This was not the only reason for Gáivuonbahta’s conservative image. Other incidents and oral histories highlighted it as such, but most related to religion. Regardless of the reality of the

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27 Norway, Sweden and Finland are constitutionally Protestant Lutheran states.
religious life in Gáivuonbahta, the perception of Læstadianism as conservative (hyper-conservative almost) has become part of people’s opinions of their own villages as well as others. Many people saw their own village as less conservative than Gáivuonbahta and the hold of Læstadianism as less strong in their community.

People spoke of both religious traditions and the traditions of both religions. People told me that in Gáivuohta there were two religious traditions working side by side and that the attempts to abolish pre-Christian Sami religion had not been entirely successful. For some people the two religions had melded into one and they lived with the contradictions, indeed some embraced them. Discussing an influential member of the community, Nils Erik said: ‘He is a noaidi. That is a big thing in the Sami community. Traditional healing, religion, Christianity. Very important but not spoken of’. This suggests that for some, the relationships between the traditions and practices was more fraught.

Thomas, another Riddu Riđđu staff member, made a very interesting point about the influence of religion at Riddu Riđđu:

All these people you see working for Riddu Riđđu have been strongly influenced by religion. It is in their culture. You can see it in restrictions to the self. Promoting the self. They are very modest. They don’t think they are so special themselves.

This notion of modesty being a result of the influence of Læstadianism could go some way to explaining the responses other community members had to the festival and why, as Thomas put it, ‘The Christians don’t like the festival. Each time they say something’. As an aspect of the asceticism of Læstadianism, modesty is valued, then the overt promotion of a particular group within the community could be interpreted as immodest. This is enhanced by the
conservative nature of Læstadianism and the festival promoting difference. Added to this is that Læstadianism preaches abstinence and Riddu Riddu is a celebration that includes public drinking. This makes for a heady cocktail of disapproval by the religious members of the community.

There is ongoing tension between Læstadian, pre-Christian, neo-shamanic and New Age practitioners. One of the issues is:

the centrality of the noaidi ritual in the formulation of Sami identity would upset the Læstadians (for whom the noaidi is a more or less demonic figure), and at the same time suggest a connection between Sami nation-building and neo-shamanic movements. Views on the latter appear to be changing, but many Sami see contemporary neo-shamanism as fabricated and inauthentic (Kraft 2009, p. 187).

This view of Sami neo-shamanism as fabricated and inauthentic within the Sami community is problematic as the symbols of pre-Christian Sami religion are also increasingly being used in presentations of Saminess in general. The drum, symbols from drums, and images of Sami gods are reproduced on items such as jewellery, clothing, signage, publications, and websites.

Sami New Age and neo-shamanism include elements of pre-Christian Sami religion. I met Magnus and others who practiced Sami shamanism and healing and clearly separated their practice from that of New Age practitioners but not necessarily neo-shamanism. They claimed to be ‘Sami shamans’ or ‘Sami healers’, not ‘neo-shamans’ or ‘neo-healers’. The legitimacy of the practices they engaged in was emphasised by their noting connections to pre-Christian Sami religion.

Magnus was a well-respected noaidi. He taught me much about Sami shamanism and the rules of soccer between teasing me about having ended up in Northern Norway. He often greeted me with ‘What the fucking, hell, shit did you do wrong
to end up here?’, sometimes loudly at public events. Magnus was very generous with his time and knowledge and taught me while we were at soccer matches in Romsa, at his home, and at Riddu Riddu events in Romsa and Olmmáivággí. He did not consider himself a New Age shaman but was somewhat comfortable with the stereotype. He said that it meant that he got to have sex with New Age tourists. The more serious side of this for him was the strength of the New Age connection with Sami shamanism and the impact this had on what he considered to be the more authentic shamanism he practiced. He said that some people posed as shamans in order to gain the benefits associated with being considered a Sami shaman that included paid work.

While the complexity of religion in Sami communities and other aspects of religion play a role in processes of identifying as Sami in all Sami communities, other aspects of the sociocultural milieu are specific to particular Sami communities. Some of these relate to the group known as Coastal Sami communities as distinct from other Sami communities.

**Being Coastal Sami**

Coastal Sami is a categorical term for Sami communities that reside in coastal areas and have historically been engaged predominantly in fishing and farming. Importantly, it is a term that differentiates these communities from others and provides a platform for their shared interests. Coastal Sami issues that have been taken up in order to gain influence over government decisions and the discourses of the publics include: access to fishing rights and land, increased recognition of local cultural practices such as language, and recognition of the historical events that have impacted the community. The lack of recognition of Coastal Sami communities by the government and the publics, has been due partly to the
relative success of Norwegianisation which led to those communities being perceived of as ‘less’ Sami and ‘more’ Norwegian than some other Sami communities, particularly those in inner Finnmárku. I do not discount the role of Kveeni\textsuperscript{28} (sme kveanat, nor Kven or Kvæn, eng Kven) cultural practices and influence on coastal communities, but in my work and in many discussions they do not feature prominently.

Assimilation in coastal Sami communities was most strongly pursued from the 1940s to the 1960s (Hovland 1996b, n.p.). Hovland argues that this was enabled by the Sami people within these communities in order to protect their children from the hardships they had endured: ‘if you can’t beat them join them’. As a result, there was a break in continuity of Sami cultural practice, including denial of Sami heritage (Hovland 1996b, n.p.). Hovland claims that this situation lasted until the 1980s when the new wave of Sami youth in coastal communities started to revitalise Sami culture.

While Hovland sees a break in continuity in Sami cultural practice, it was explained to me as a change in the expression of Sami cultural practice in public. Thomas explained to me that although individuals may not have identified as Sami, some members of the community maintained knowledge of cultural affiliation:

People could be Sami but they don’t know or can’t prove it. The definition here is more about local knowledge. Cultural change that has come in local

\textsuperscript{28} ‘Kvæn people are Finnish settlers in Northern Norway [particularly the coastal regions] and their descendants. Originally coming from the area around the Gulf of Bothnia, they began to settle in Finnmark from the Late Middle Ages. A regular migration took place from early eighteen Century to the two northernmost counties in Norway, Troms and Finnmark’ (Minde 2005, p. 7). The Kveeni community retain a hybrid Finnish/Norwegian language and have established representative organisations that are currently engaged in gaining recognition and rights. At times, members of the Kveeni community have joined Sami debates in an attempt to gain similar rights. The Kveeni community is currently recognised as an ethnic minority and the Kveeni language was recognised as a minority language in Norway in 2005. See Aarekol 2009 for more on Kveeni issues.
communities. The grandparents had very detailed knowledge about people. Know lots about kinship, cousins, cross-cousins, sisters’ cousins’ children. In Sami you are cousins ‘fetter’. Saminess is culturally based. People’s knowledge. If you don’t know you have grandparents who spoke Sami there would be others who would know.

Thomas and other people in Gáivuotna never stated or implied that there was an overall break in continuity but that the public expression of Sami cultural practice had been strategically avoided. Some were not encouraged to reveal or were discouraged from revealing their Sami cultural competence to others. Others were not taught Sami competencies such as language but were exposed to them and were aware of aspects of their enculturation as Sami.

Hovand (1996b, n.p.) writes also that the cultural revitalisation in coastal Sami communities is constituted by invention and that for Sami youth from the interior identity is ascribed whereas for coastal Sami youth it is achieved. This raises an important aspect of Coastal Sami identification in relation to Sami communities that were perceived to have been less affected by Norwegianisation. Thuen (2012 p.245) problematises the issues by posing a question about how Coastal Sami people are to present themselves as Sami while being aware of what makes more recognised communities Sami:

So how could the predominantly Norwegian-speaking, not reindeer-breeding ‘potential’ coastal Saami be persuaded that they were Saami after all, and how were they to persuade others, the reindeer herders and the Saami speakers as well as their Norwegian neighbours, of their Saami identity?

This was clearly an issue that people working for Riddu Ridđu had negotiated. For instance, while discussing the attitudes of Sami people from Finnmárku to the efforts made in Gáivuotna, Mette said that, ‘For other Sami people, who never have these kinds of problems, they grew up with the language, with all the symbols. They also understand now, in a way, why it is like that here, why it’s
significant’. For Else, an important moment in her public presentation of her Coastal Sami identity was acceptance and recognition by people from Finnmárku: ‘I remember the first time someone from inner Finnmark came to me and accepted me as Sami. It was a real moment for me’.

One of the key issues in this discussion is the categorisation of identities in Coastal Sami communities as necessarily dichotomous:

- categorical prescriptions in the regional and national political discourses on ethnically related issues, typically offered in the form of an allegedly unambiguous ‘either-or’ dichotomy between Saami and Norwegians, contradicts the individual and local experiences characterising the life worlds of coastal populations (Thuen 2012, p. 241).

Thuen (2012), Kramvig (2005) and others argue that this notion of a dichotomous construction of identity in Coastal Sami communities is not useful or appropriate. Indeed, Kramvig (2005, p. 60) contends that the discourse of purity — that is, being one or the other, and the quest for purity is a form of conceptual violence. The argument is that Sami and Norwegian (and Kveeni) are not mutually exclusive but should be seen as coexisting.

Rather than forcing a choice of one or the other (Sami or non-Sami) identity and creating a break in identification as Sami Thuen (2012 p. 239) argues that assimilation in coastal communities led to the hybrid Sami/non-Sami identity category of Northerner:

- Contrary to the intention, governmental assimilatory efforts served to reproduce the boundary as the basis for a ranked society and left coastal Saami individuals in some confusion as to how to define themselves, often opting for a mixed category of Norwegian and Saami, labelled ‘Northerner’. Ethno-political emancipation in recent years has tended to put pressure on this identity construction and promoted a dichotomised identity as either Saami or Norwegian.

While the Northern label is prevalent, it is a broader category than Coastal Sami as it is a term used for all the people in the North. It does connote connections
with Sami, Norwegian and Kveeni influences, but it does not necessarily presume identification with all of them. For example, a person can be a Northerner with no intention that that means they identify in any way as Sami and/or Kveeni whereas, a claim to be Coastal Sami makes clear the link with being Sami.

This link is influenced by the recognition of some aspects of cultural practice as clearly associated with particular cultural groups within the community and people being well aware of which cultural practices belong to particular groups. Language is a clear example of this. Sami, Kveeni and Norwegian languages are still separable even if they are at times mixed. Many cultural practices are shared of course, and some are hybridised. It is possible that efforts at assimilation have aided this continued separation because in the process Sami practices were clearly labelled as such and targeted and so were kept separate.

On that basis, Coastal Sami identity is not hybrid, ‘Northern’ or exclusive of Norwegian and/or Kveeni identities but includes multiple competencies. Perhaps identity in Coastal Sami communities is stirred, not shaken, in that each person has more or less of each potential cultural competency and each remains mixed to different extents. At best this metaphor allows for some continuity of distinct practice and identification. This is supported by what people in Gáivuotna told me about their identities. Some people foregrounded their Saminess, but discussions about their Norwegian and/or Kveeni connections were not denied or shied away from. There was a distinct sense that it was desirable to be able to identify with any combination of identities.
Gáivuotna is a fjord that is part of a municipality with the same name. Gáivuotna municipality (of which the fjord is part) covers an area of 997km² and has a population of 2182 (Statistisk senralbyrå 2015a, n.p.). The fjord lies 75km, as the crow flies, from Romsa, the capital of Romsa County and the largest town in the part of Sápmi that lies within Norway. Gáivuotna is 130km from Romsa via a winding coastal road and a car ferry or 170km by road only. The fjord is located between Romsa to the west and the more rural areas including towns to the east such as Guovdageaidnu and Kárásjohka that are Sami centres. The five villages29 dotted around the fjord have a combined population of approximately 1200 people. Olmmáiváaggi (Fig. 2.3) with a population of approximately 800 is the largest village.

The two major geographical features of Gáivuotna are ubiquitous, assuring and slightly daunting (Fig. 2.4). They are the sea and the mountains. For me, the sea was overwhelmingly of more importance as it was more immediate and I spent

29 The other villages include Dálošváaggi (nor Olderdaløen), Gáivuonbahta (nor Birtavarre), Nordmannvik, and Djupvik.
more time on the sea than in the mountains. It was also discussed more by the people I met. It is important to the community because fishing has played a crucial role in the life of the village. This is reflected in the annual fishing festival, Fiskefestivalen, held in Olmmáivággí.

Arne fished almost every day after work. One evening he came home with a very large cod that was approximately one metre long. I was in the living room with Arne’s wife and about five children. Arne laid newspaper on the floor and proceeded to cut the fish up while talking the children through the process. When Arne cut open the belly of the fish the room went quiet. What Arne found inside was alarming. The fish had a type of tumour or sack in its belly. It was not a plastic bag or even the usual tumour occasionally seen. The adults knew that whatever this was it could be devastating for the fish population and until it was identified there would be some concern. Arne quickly wrapped the fish up and took it away to be inspected by others in the village.

The importance of the fish’s health and the implications for the health of the rest of the fish population in the fjord were clear. Although few people I knew relied solely on fishing in the sea, its bounty was of great importance. The traditional
resources of the fjord are still important economically and there is a strong sense that they must be protected for the future. While Norway is an oil-rich nation, many people pointed out that it had not always been and would not always be, no matter how well the oil money was invested in infrastructure. For many Sami and non-Sami people in Norway, the sea provides a continuous source of wealth that is not always exploited fully but must be protected for when it will be needed again.

Fishing practices have become an important point of differentiation between Sami and non-Sami people in Gáivuotna. As fisher people, the Sami community in Gáivuotna, as in other parts of Norway, became invisible to the authorities during the period of Norwegianisation (Brattland 2005, p. 6). More recently the status of Sami fisher people has changed but it is still reliant on the differentiation between Sami fishing practices and those of non-Sami fisher people in the region.

During Ridd Riđđu there are often activities arranged that involve interaction with the sea. In 1999 there was a fishing expedition for the visiting artists and staff, and in 2004 a large party for the visiting artists and staff was held on a ferry which sailed around the fjord. These events are important as they showcase the fjord as well as Riddu Riđđu. Those involved in Riddu Riđđu, like others living in the fjord, explained their Saminess as tied to their relationship to the landscape in important ways (discussed in more detail in Chapter Six). As Nils Erik pointed out, even the notion that Olmmáivággj was isolated, in part because of its geography, was a myth as people traversed the area for a variety of reasons: ‘[it is] a myth that Olmmáivággj has been closed to the outside. They used to fight across the water. Olderdalen against Olmmáivággj. They used to row boats across the water and fight’.
The Gáivuotna community is predominantly Norwegian speaking and is one of eight municipalities in Norway recognised under the Sami Language Act. This means that it is officially bilingual and enjoys access to resources for the purpose of encouraging Sami cultural and social activities. This was a contentious issue in Gáivuotna as some people, including some Sami people, would prefer it was not recognised as a Sami municipality. There were also some who believed that the Sami people in Gáivuotna had very little claim to being Sami because of the relative success of Norwegianisation in the area and the changes in cultural and economic practices it had brought. Nils Erik called these people Sami resisters and provided an example: ‘Sami resisters. Parents are Sami, she spoke Sami, her Sami was much better than her Norwegian but she denied she was Sami’.

The formal economy of Gáivuotna is based on fishing, farming, reindeer herding, the public service, small business, tourism and a variety of other tertiary industries (see Appendix B for further details). While most of the income for people living on the fjord comes from tertiary industry the informal economy relies on occupations such as fishing, gathering and craft.

The community of Gáivuotna has a social, economic and religious life with obvious connections to the cultural groups that make up that community. Gáivuotna has long Sami, Norwegian and Kveeni histories that are expressed in the ritual and everyday life of the community. Gáivuotna is not an ideal hybridised community, with everyone seamlessly integrating traditions and histories. There is some history of tension but there is also an overriding sense of wellbeing and cooperation. Generally, members of the community incorporate a myriad of cultural practices and beliefs with differing origins, sometimes within households.
Hovland writes of Guovdageaidnu that there are ‘local versions of community identity that are maintained side by side with those invented and distributed on the extra-local but still Sami level’ (1994, n.p.). This is also the case in Gáivuotna where Sami identities are influenced by extra-local Sami practices and interests. However, extra-local versions of Sami identity do not entirely dictate the terms of Sami identity in Gáivuotna and local detail of Sami practices and interests are privileged. Sami fishing practices and land usage are Sami-wide, but the precise practices local to Gáivuotna are the focus of local discussions about Sami fishing rights and land usage.

Anita Lervoll (2007, p. 22) writes that since the 1970s there has been a shift in some Gáivuotna community members’ identification from Norwegian to Sami. She argues that people ‘have during youth or adulthood “changed identity”, or rather, they have changed parts of their identity’ (Lervoll 2007, p. 22) [my translation]. Lervoll also points out that since the early 1990s there has been considerable public discussion about this shift and that the area was known for this controversy. As Lervoll was a member of this group of people whose identification had changed, and a founding member of Riddu Riđđu, she was well placed to comment on how and why people had made these changes, despite the controversy. Lervoll (2007, p. 6) says that people ‘thought they had had a traditional Norwegian upbringing and that they were ethnic Norwegian, until they had met people outside the municipality and experienced a indefinable “otherness”’ [my translation]. This otherness was in relation to other Northern Norwegians as well as other Norwegians in general (Lervoll 2007, p. 31).

While I was in Gáivuotna, Hovland was best known for the book he wrote, *Moderne Urfolk: Samisk ungdom i bevegelse* (Modern Indigenous [People]: Sami
youth in transition) (1996a), based on fieldwork he conducted with young Sami people in Gáivuotna in the 1990s. He argues that Sami identity in Gáivuotna is invented and achieved, not ascribed, and that Sami youth were heavily influenced by their tertiary education.

Hovland argues (1996a, pp. 93–100; 1996b, n.p; 1995, n.p.) that for Sami youth in Gáivuotna: ‘higher education has been their gateway into saminess and into organized Sami activism’ (Hovland 1995, n.p.). This could be read as a criticism of Sami activists in Gáivuotna as having been disingenuously engaged with their Sami identity because of what they discovered during their higher education. It could also be read as higher education having provided the information and arguments that made for successful revitalisation.

From my experience, the people working for Riddu Riđđu were highly reflexive about their position as Sami within their community, the effect higher education had on them and the opportunities it afforded them in terms of their political aims. Also, several people involved in Riddu Riđđu had joined the organisation prior to having had higher education or had not had any. While many acknowledged that higher education did have some influence on the political movement, it was not enough to claim this as the main impetus for Sami youth to become so active in pursuing their cultural identity and rights.

Various people in Gáivuotna, some of whom said they had worked with Hovland, were critical of these arguments. They interpreted his position as: undermining the authenticity of their claims to Saminess, portraying their claims as being purely invented, and threatening the work they were doing to revitalise Sami identity in the area as well as Coastal Sami identity more generally.
In relation to Sami identity in Gáivuotna more generally, Hovland (1996a, p. 84) writes:

Material from Kåfjord [Gáivuotna] shows that Sami identity affiliation and commitment to the Sami in Kåfjord initially primarily represents a potential. This formulation points to two sides to affiliation: on the one hand it is understood as a resource for those who seek it and develop it, or, to use Pierre Bourdieu’s (1984:4) term a form of cultural capital… On the other hand the affiliation is negative… some reject it or simply circumvent it, as it is understood as an unpleasant reminder of a past they think, believe or hope is far behind them [my translation].

Rather than assuming that Hovland means to portray Sami identity in Gáivuotna as purely invented, Hovland’s position can be viewed in terms of the realisation of potential. The potential mentioned in the quote above could mean ‘existing but not realised’ — that is, that the community in Gáivuotna was Sami but was in the process of realising latent Saminess. Regardless, I refrain from evaluating Hovland’s findings in comparison with mine, as Hovland’s are based on observations made before I started my research. By the time I arrived in Gáivuotna, Saminess was accepted and Sami identity had transformed from ‘potential’ to ‘realised’, not fully realised (no identity is ever fully realised as it is processual) but closer to realised than potential.

Another of Hovland’s (1996b, n.p.) conclusions was less discussed in Gáivuotna:

Sami identity used to be a stigma. This is still the situation for some. In many respects this has been turned upside down. Sami identity … has become a resource … Being a Sami, which used to close most avenues of development for a young person … now opens opportunities often envied by others.

What I observed in Gáivuotna supports this conclusion. There was still stigma attached to being Sami but people told me it had become less over the years. That was because identifying as Sami was by then also attached to positive models such as those developed by young Sami activists. As the object of the efforts of Sami activists is to improve the standing of Saminess, it can be said to
have been achieved to a great extent in Gáivuotna as the groundwork had been done to combat the stigma.

The people in Gáivuotna were busy defining themselves as Sami through what they were, more than through what they were not. This included considering Sami people in Gáivuotna not as having transitioned from not being Sami to being Sami or as inventing Saminess, but as looking to what already made them Sami and finding ways to bring that to light.

Sami youth in Gáivuotna are now exposed to Sami consciousness from an earlier age. Now they are exposed to a localised and normalised Sami identity regardless of their education level. There is a generation of young people who have grown up in Gáivuotna and have witnessed the actions and heard the discussions of the people Hovland wrote about.

Conclusion

To understand Sami identification processes and the circumstances that influenced those that ran Riddu Riđđu, the above description and discussion is crucial. Being Sami in Norway is impacted by international, national, regional and local conditions that affect identities articulated in various arenas. The discussion leads to the understanding that Sami identity processes are embedded in complex relationships that Sami people negotiate at different stages of their own identity processes and that those negotiations are dependent on the context in which they identify.

With improvements in national Sami/non-Sami relations has come an increase in the recognition of regional and local issues, Coastal Sami issues amongst them. Discussion of Coastal Sami issues highlights important aspects of the debate
about Saminess in Sápmi. It is a debate that continues in the media and in government, academic and Sami activist arenas as well as among the publics.

One of the important aims of the Riddu Riđđu Searvi is to improve the knowledge and recognition of Coastal Sami issues. For the people involved in Riddu Riđđu it has been important to gain acceptance in their community as well as outside it. Acceptance within the community of Gáivuotna is what has made Riddu Riđđu possible each year and has enabled it to grow and so encourage the recognition of Coastal Sami communities. With this in mind, and having discussed the conditions under which Riddu Riđđu was and is organised, it is important to give some detail of the festival itself.
Chapter Three
Riddu Riđđu festivála

Riddu Riđđu July 2004

The smell of burning birch enveloped the festival grounds. It was strongest in and around confined places such as the lavvu² (Figs 3.2 & 3.3) and the goahti³ (Fig. 3.19). From the hill above the festival grounds, the main camp appeared to smoulder. I could smell the smoke on my clothes when I finally got to bed in the early hours of the morning. I woke up to it in my hair. It was a warm, sweet smell. It was the smell of conversations in lavvus, barbecues, walks in the mountains and fishing trips. As I walked through the camp I could see people sitting, standing and occasionally dancing around birch wood fires. No self-respecting group in a lavvu was without a

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¹ Fig. 3.1 Riebangárdi, Riddu Riddu logo (Holm n.d.). ‘The logo of Riddu Riddu is called «Riebangárdi». It comes from a children’s game where a fox tries to catch a hare who runs along a circular path’ (Riddu Riddu 2015c, n.p.). It was designed by Geir Tore Holm.
² A lavvu (sme lávvu, nor lavvo) is a Sami tipi-like tent generally made from canvas and birch logs. It is most commonly associated with reindeer herders. However, many Sami people, regardless of their economic pursuits, use lavvus. Several people used canvas or synthetic lavvus in the camping areas at Riddu Riddu (Figs 3.2 & 3.3).
³ A goahti (sme bealljegoahti, nor gamme) is a broad tent or turf hut. The Riddu Riddu goahti is made from turf, the type generally used as a more permanent dwelling in many Sami communities. It was built in 2003 as part of a Riddu Riddu Searvi project (see Olsen 2003), and is located behind the main stage (Fig. 3.19). It was a music and workshop venue as well as a place for socialising and resting during the festival.
fire once the temperature dropped a little in the early hours. Some people used the fires for cooking food and boiling water for coffee; others used them as the focus for the spaces in which they sat. As I passed by a lavvu a man came falling through the doorway, dragging the tent cover with him. He exposed the interior of the tent and a group of four men and a woman sitting around a fire. The very idea of lighting a fire in a polyester tent, even if it was shaped like a lavvu, filled me with fear. I realised this was misguided as these were Sami people and they knew what they were doing. Something I appreciated very much about Sami people was their cultural competence that translated into confidence and feeling safe in a landscape that could be dangerous and was at least unfamiliar to me.

Figs 3.2 and 3.3 Main camp (Hansen 2004n and 2004o)
1. Ája
2. Main stage
3. School
4. Kindergarten
5. Soccer field
6. Goahti
7. Main camp
8. Direction of family camp

Fig. 3.4 Festival site. Clockwise from bottom left: main stage, main camp, beer/seminar lavvus, and backstage lavvus. (Hansen 2004j)

Fig. 3.5 Aerial map of the festival site (Norgeskart 2015)
Other smells, associated with food and alcohol, became noticeable at different times during the festival. There was even the occasional scent of marijuana. The presence of marijuana was significant as it was controversial and would mean problems for the organisation later. Once the media got hold of information on the presence of drugs there was negative publicity, as there was about alcohol. Wafts of beer breathe and perfume mingled with *pølser* (sausages) and coffee. Overall, the smells were comforting and inviting rather than intimidating.
Walking through the camp I could hear the occasional yoik. After having heard some talented and famous yoik artists on the stage throughout the festival, it didn’t seem so unusual. The soundscape of the camp was Sami. As I was recording the sounds, I became aware of what was there that sounded Sami. It was the low talk, the occasional shout, people speaking Sami and the yoiking. It was sporadic and varied. Yoik can be mundane or even offensive and some associate yoiking with the inebriation that occasionally goes with it, but for me it was still a privilege to be in an environment with the intermittent, yodelling-like singing that is yoiking (discussed in more detail in Chapter Four).

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4 sme luohti, nor joik.
There were also the sounds of the performances on the main stage. They could be heard at different levels depending on the time of day or night and where you were in the festival grounds. At times the music sounded Sami. At other times it was Sami music performed by Sami artists but was not recognisable as Sami — aesthetically it could have been from anywhere in the world. When member of the local band Turdus Musicus belted out their heavy metal songs, it was hard to tell that it was local music. It sounded very much like heavy metal music from other parts of the world. The backdrop to all these sounds was the dull roar of Olmmáiváteatnu, the river that runs along the side of the Ája Sami Centre (sme Ája Sámi Guovddáža) (Ája) and the main camp (Fig. 3.11).

In other parts of the festival grounds, there were other sensory experiences that added to the Saminess of Riddu Riđđu. For meals, many of the artists went to the main hall of Ája where traditional Sami, Norwegian, Sami/Norwegian and international fare was available. The main hall of Ája was full of diverse groups of people sitting at long tables or standing in line at the counter to the right of the main
doors. These groups consisted of staff, artists, audience members and media representatives. To the left of the door were two exhibitions, one of Nunavut sandstone carvings that were for sale, and the other of San paintings. The hall had the capacity to seat several hundred people but was set up to seat approximately 200. The food on offer included lapskaus (a traditional Norwegian lamb stew), waffles with sour cream and jam, fruit salad and rye and white bread. The klippfisk baccala\(^5\) (dried cod stew) had run out early as there was more demand for it than expected.

Food was available all day in the hall. Artists and staff were given food and the public could purchase it. Outside there were other food and beverage outlets. There were small booths in front of the main stage and in the main camp that sold pølser med brød (sausages in rolls, a favourite snack in Norway), ice creams, chocolate and crisps. These stalls also sold batteries, film, t-shirts, CDs, soft drinks and coffee. For many it was impossible to imagine one would survive a big night without a pølser med brød or coffee and the stalls had a steady stream of customers.

\(^5\) Baccala is a recipe that has come to Norway from the Mediterranean countries. Traditionally it uses salted cod but klippfisk (dried cod) is a specialty version requiring that the fish be soaked in water for a week before cooking.
Between the main stage and the main camp were three large white lavvus, the beer and seminar lavvus. They were situated in a fenced area with one entrance next to the entrance for the main camp. Both were guarded by professional security guards to ensure that no-one under the legal drinking age of 18 years got in. Beer was sold in two of the lavvus. These both had seating in the form of tables with benches. The other lavvu, and the area outside all of them, had large tables with benches. Altogether there was seating for 360 people (Fig. 3.13). This was an important place for discussion and imbibing, as alcohol was allowed only there and in the main camp. It was a place to sit and talk and bump into people and later a place in which not to be seen too much as that meant you weren’t working — and everyone was aware of the media attention that the sale of beer was going to attract. Although it was important for staff to be there to work and network, there was a notion that it wasn’t the best place to be seen. This was because it was not considered a ‘good look’ for the staff to be drinking and if there was going to be a place for the media to find
negative images of the festival it was in this area\textsuperscript{6}.

Both being seen and not seen is important at Riddu Riđđu. There are many levels of being seen and sights that were important to and at Riddu Riđđu. The non-Sami audience were being seen at a Sami festival and seeing Sami people. Some Sami people were being seen at a Sami festival but they didn’t want to be seen as Sami. Then there were people who didn’t care who saw what. Unfortunately for Riddu Riđđu, there were also people — namely some media representatives, who would show others what was happening in a less than favourable light.

\textsuperscript{6} While I was sitting in this area one day, newspaper photographers spent some time taking photos of people drinking. Their presence was discussed by the staff, particularly in reference to their obvious interest in an intoxicated audience member. Jokes and comments were made about ‘drunk Sami’ and the possible headlines for the next day. Sadly, these predictions were quite accurate, as there was some negative media attention.
Because Riddu Riđđu is a politically charged and motivated event it is important for the staff and particular members of it to be seen at the more public events such as the opening ceremony on Thursday night. This ceremony afforded me one of the great sights of the festival. Standing on the stage were the festival director, Lene Hansen; the publicity manager, Torun Olsen; the organiser of the Northern Peoples Program, Marina Olsen; and another staff member. All four women were dressed in their traditional costumes, three in gákti and one in a Buryat costume. They were all beautiful and were made up for the occasion. In the audience were most of the Riddu Riddu staff, who were wearing their gákti. Many more in the audience were also wearing their gákti. Gákti are generally quite colourful and this was the night to show your colours, so to speak.

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Fig. 3.15 Torun and Lene before going onstage to open Riddu Riddu 2004 (Hansen 2004cc)

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7 The role of costume is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.
There was also a lot of watching going on in the school hall up the hill from Ája. That was where the Indigenous Film Festival was held. Next door, but accessed from the top road, was the exhibition commissioned by Riddu Riđđu. The exhibition was visually and metaphorically striking and was considered by some as potentially a powerful influence on how Riddu Riđđu could be seen. It was not just the content of the exhibition but the context in which it was presented that highlighted its significance as a political issue for Riddu Riđđu and people in Gáivuotna. Inviting controversy was one way that the people at Riddu Riđđu maintained their political profile and influenced the debates that surrounded them. That was how they got themselves seen by others and controlled the way they were seen.

The ambience and atmosphere of Riddu Riđđu is the hardest of all to convey. The physical is easier to describe than the mood. Both were generally warm, by northern standards. It rained intermittently. The light fluctuated a little through the day/night and the midnight sun was seen off and on through the clouds. The air was clean and crisp in the early hours and warm for the rest of the time. During some spells people wore t-shirts and then jumpers came out or, if they were lucky, they had a luhkká (Sami cape) to keep them warm. The ground underfoot was occasionally muddy.

There was a particular spot on the road between Ája and the market area that was always muddy. People walked around it or forgot and walked through it. The rain made everything sticky and almost cold.

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8 There was also an exhibition in an adjacent room that showed work from the students of the Culture School in Gáivuotna (nor title: Barnekunstutstilling, Elever fra Kulturskolen i Kåfjord).
The mood of the festival was similar. People were mostly happy and affable, but at times the atmosphere became cold and less than friendly. People danced and laughed, talked and walked, watched and listened. There were several moments that were exciting and filled with joy. One such joyous moment was when during her performance Mari Boine announced that one of the Riddu Riddu staff members had given birth and then yoiked the new baby. Other moments, such as the rare arguments or fights, were frightening or sad. Overall the mood was one of friendliness, cooperation and appreciation. People showed enthusiasm — and exhaustion at different stages, as many of the staff worked long hours before and during the festival.
Those described above were some of the elements that made Riddu Riđđu Sami. Although some are, not all of these sensory elements are exclusively Sami, but the combination is particular to Riddu Riđđu and it is this combination that makes the festival as a whole a Sami event. The smell of birch wood smoke, the sound of yoiking and the light of the midnight sun all go to making Riddu Riđđu a Sami festival. Each element, whether or not exclusively or originally Sami, contributes to an overall experience of Saminess. As Brattland (2005, p. 11) argues, when discussing fishing practices in Gáivuotna, ‘to investigate the issue of whether these traits are Sami or Norwegian is in my opinion a futile task’ — that is, any adaptations are the result of Sami people’s engagements and that they are therefore Sami.

There is more to be experienced at the festival and not all of it is exclusively Riddu Riđđu or Sami related. The description above will, on some level, be familiar to anyone who has attended structurally similar festivals. Riddu Riđđu is a festival like many others but my interest lies in what makes it Sami. It is the combination of cultural activities that are performed and practiced and proclivities and competencies that are displayed that make Riddu Riđđu a Sami festival. For instance, burning birch is not an exclusively Sami practice but it is a Sami practice and its strong presence is part of the Saminess of Riddu Riđđu. Many of the Riddu Riđđu sights, sounds, tastes and feelings could be and are Norwegian. The key is the combination. It is the particular cluster of these sensual experiences that make a walk through the Riddu Riđđu området (eng area) a lesson in Saminess.

Saminess is not monolithic. While many Sami communities share similarities, their differences were also at Riddu Riđđu. People from a range of Sami communities
from Norway as well as Sweden, Finland and Russia were there. Often the difference between communities was apparent in the variety of gákti that people were wearing. Language was another indicator but much harder to decipher unless you had a keen ear for the different Sami languages. Knowledge of people’s community affiliations was also conveyed by word of mouth and as networks developed in the crowd, affiliation was keenly recognised. As happens among many crowds of people, smaller groups, based on those who already knew each other, formed. This grouping was common among the Sami people at the festival as there is a large community of active Sami people from a range of Sami communities who meet for a variety of purposes such as meetings and celebrations.

Riddu Riđđu is also importantly an international Indigenous festival. There were diverse expressions of indigeneity and expressions of various indigeneities throughout the festival and in many of the areas described above. Many groups wore their national costume, and it was common to see people in a range of national costumes when they were performing. Many languages could also be heard, depending on the constitution of the group speaking. Not just Sami, Norwegian and English but the various languages of the visiting artists and audience members could be heard. The soundscape was also shaped partly by the sounds of assorted Indigenous music and song.

**Festival organisation and participation**

Structurally, Riddu Riđđu is similar to many Scandinavian and European summer music festivals. A large group of people come to a particular location to listen
musicians, to watch performers and to participate in a variety of other activities, with a stage as the central focus. The most heavily attended part of the festival is the weekend music festival that highlights Sami and international Indigenous artists and groups. In this, the festival fits into a mainstream cultural practice and attracts people from outside the Sami community. For some, Riddu Ridđu is a Sami festival, for some an Indigenous festival and for others a music festival.

The festival has been held every year bar one since 1991. The 24th festival was held in July 2015 (see Hansen 2008 and Leonenko 2008 for detailed histories). The festival started small, as a party to bring together interested Sami youth. It grew in reputation and size and by 1995 it had taken on the name Riddu Ridđu. As Nils Erik said, 'I had heard about the festival but it wasn’t Riddu Ridđu yet. ’95 the name came’. Nils Erik also said this about the history and development of the festival (discussed in detail in Chapter Eight):

The history of Riddu Ridđu is a long story. It depends if you believe in coincidence or not. A series of coincidences, predetermined by order of nature. You meet who you are supposed to meet. Forefather spirits determine who you are supposed to, or should, meet.

It is held over a weekend at the end of July with extra days before that the Arctic Youth Camp and the Children’s Festival. Although the festival usually runs for six days, for some people much of their year is dominated by the festival because of their heavy involvement in its organisation. The amount of time individuals put into the festival also results in weeks leading up to, during and after the festival often being referred to as ‘Riddu time’. Staff don’t make plans and don’t organise holidays⁹

⁹ Many staff told me that they hadn’t had a summer holiday for many years though there were agreements that they should at different times.
— and time for sleep, especially during the festival itself, becomes increasingly valuable.

In 2004, the festival was organised by the Riddu Riđđu Searvi (eng Riddu Riđđu Association). The Searvi was run by a board elected from members of the Searvi. Its focus was on enhancing and promoting Sami culture in the area. To this end, it ran a number of programs throughout the year, with the festival by far its largest project. Nina explained the structure of the organisation in these terms:

Everyone can be a member of Riddu Searvi. They pay membership. The Searvi organise things: meetings, julebord [Christmas parties], parties. All people can be in dugnad10 [communal voluntary work events or working bees] etc. Under the festival is Riddu staff. Riddu staff are mainly members but some are becoming members. There is the Riddu Searvi board and the Riddu festival board. Someone on the Riddu Searvi is a member of the Riddu festival board. Festival director and two elected members of the Searvi are on the festival board. The festival director is from the board (Lene in 2004 so she is leader). They work all year.

Since 2010, the festival has been run by Riddu Riđđu Festivála AS (RRFAS) and ‘the mission of the Riddu Riđđu Festivála AS is to promote and develop the Sami coastal culture. The company has no commercial purposes’ (Riddu Riđđu 2015a, n.p.).

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10 Thomas explained: ‘dugnad, that is a cultural form in local communities. Not Sami. Volunteer work is important for building the community’.
Other projects the Searvi undertook focussed on local Sami cultural expression such as costume and built structures. One of the projects consisted of research into the history of gákti in the area (see Antonsen and Olsen 1995). In 2002, the Searvi, in collaboration with the Gáivuotna Culture School\(^\text{11}\) (nor Gáivuona Kulturskuvllain), also ran a project promoting the contemporary wearing of gákti. It included producing a set of postcards depicting Coastal Sami youth in gákti (Fig. 3.18)\(^\text{12}\), as well as research by Kjellaug Isaksen of the Sami Language Centre (sme Sámi Giellaguovddáš) into a reindeer skin coat (sme doarka, nor dork) that had been worn by fisher people\(^\text{13}\) in the area (Antonsen 2002, p. 43). Another Riddu Ridđu Searvi project was the building of the goahti (Fig. 3.19) on the grounds of Ája (see Olsen 2003), where the festival is held each year. Often these projects, such as the building of the goahti which was used as a venue during the festival, related to the festival directly.

\(^{11}\) ‘Every municipality in Norway is required by law to have a public music school or ‘culture school’ as they are called. Until October 2004 designated money was available but now funding is no longer specifically designated to culture schools. These schools offer after schools programmes but are increasingly integrated as electives into the public school system. Approximately 15 to 18% of all children go to culture schools, but the government aims for 30% participation’ (Espeland c.2005, p. 1).

\(^{12}\) See Antonsen 2002 for more on this project.

\(^{13}\) This research led to the production of a coat. In 2004 the coat was on display in the local Husfliden (craft centre).
Apart from providing practical ways to increase knowledge of cultural objects and skills, another key strength of the projects run by the Riddu Riđđu Searvi was that they were intergenerational. The older people in the community were relied upon to teach others in the community and the wider audience. Older people contributed important knowledge and skills in areas such as craft, language, and food, including cooking. Several people also said that the reason for Riddu Riđđu was to give the youth of Gáivuotna something positive to focus on, something to keep them in the area and to draw attention to Coastal Sami issues. There was a clear goal to include older people in the teaching of youth and children about aspects of local Sami culture. This intergenerational focus meant that all age groups could be involved in projects and that people from many age groups attended the festival.

In 2004, Riddu Riđđu had an office in the basement of Ája (Fig. 3.20) which also housed the Ája management offices, the local office/studio of NRK Sami Radio14, the Sami Language Centre, the Nord Troms Museum, a reception hall that included

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14 NRK (Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation) is Norway's major broadcasting institution with nine radio stations and two TV channels with an approximately 100% coverage.
an industrial kitchen, and rooms that were used for the local youth club. Several parts of the centre were utilised by the festival when it was running. The relationship between the Ája staff and the Riddu Riđđu staff was an important one, as each relied on the other for financial and infrastructure support. For Ája, the festival provided important exposure and income and for Riddu Riđđu, Ája provided the essential housing and grounds they needed for the festival.

This relationship was under some pressure in 2004 and was being renegotiated. Although these negotiations were very interesting and they say much about the relationships between Riddu Riđđu and Ája, they were of a sensitive nature and not out of the ordinary in such a working relationship. However, they are best left aside. Regardless of what went on then, Riddu Riđđu and Ája had and continue to have, a close working relationship and both are now located in the Centre for Northern Peoples which opened in 2011 (Fig. 3.21). The Centre for Northern Peoples houses the Museum for Northern Peoples, the Sami Language Centre, a library, exhibition halls, a café, a commercial kitchen and an office area. The centre is used by the Sámediggi, NRK Sápmi, Riddu Riđđu, Ája gáfedat (coastal Sami food and catering company), Save Design, the University of Bergen, the Manndalen Sports Committee and a municipally-run youth centre.
For many years, the festival was largely self-funded. Most of the funds came from the sale of tickets that, in 2004, ranged from a child’s day pass for 50NOK (approx. 10AUD) to a family festival pass for 1600NOK (approx. 300AUD). An adult festival pass was the most commonly bought and it cost 850NOK (approx. 170 AUD)\(^\text{15}\).

\(^{15}\) In 2015 the prices for similar tickets were: child/youth day pass 230NOK; (38AUD) family festival pass (2 adults and 3 children) 2650NOK (440AUD); and adult festival pass 1,150NOK (191AUD).
These were very reasonable prices, considering that the cost of living in Norway is high. The Sámediggi and local and national governments have provided varying levels of financial support over the years. In more recent times, the festival ‘has permanent support from the Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs, the Sámediggi, Troms county and Kåfjord municipality’ (Knudsen 2009, n.p.).

One of the indications of increased government recognition and support for Coastal Sami issues and Riddu Riđđu, was naming Riddu Riđđu a primary national cultural festival of Norway in 2008. This recognition of the festival has led to increased exposure of the issues those involved have addressed and the award has increased the festival’s profile on a national scale. No doubt it has also led to more secure funding and other forms of support.

In 1999, the festival was a great success, which helped to ensure funding for the next year. Approximately 2400 people attended (Riddu Riđđu 2005, n.p.). Most stayed for at least one night and many for the entire weekend. In 2004, the ticket sales indicated that some 2500 general audience members attended. This number was boosted by approximately 200 artists and invited guests, of whom approximately 90 were artists); 40 members of the Arctic Youth Camp; and 60 to 70 media representatives. There were also 300 volunteers and staff in attendance, making the total attendance 3500 people. This figure was more than four times the population of Olmmáivággi. In 2014, 5634 people attended the festival (Davvi álbmogiid guovddáš OS/Senter for nordlige folk AS 2015).
The continued high level of attendance meant that Riddu Riđđu could be self-funded to a large extent but government grants played an important part in keeping the festival running and ensuring its capacity to build. The Sámediggi became a significant contributor by providing ongoing funding, including funding for a new stage in 2002 as well as an extension to the Ája. However, grant money was not unproblematic as at times it was not increased as it needed to be, so the funding of the festival was an ongoing issue.

Funding had been sourced through government grants within Norway\textsuperscript{16}, and internationally\textsuperscript{17}, and through collaborative projects with other organisations\textsuperscript{18}. In 2004, Kirkens Nødhjelp (eng Norwegian Church Aid), in collaboration with the Riddu Riđđu Searvi, brought a group of 15 San artists from Botswana to the festival. Sponsorship deals also helped with funding\textsuperscript{19}. I heard very little disquiet expressed about the use of sponsorship deals. They were generally accepted as a practical way to fund the festival. Other helpful revenue-raising tools were the \textit{kronerulling}\textsuperscript{20} and markets held throughout the year.

\textsuperscript{16} Grants were awarded by the Sámediggi, Troms fylkeskommune (eng Troms County) and Kåfjord kommune (eng Gáivuotna Municipality).
\textsuperscript{17} I was told that international funding was difficult to obtain as there was so much funding available in Norway.
\textsuperscript{18} Other organisations and institutions Riddu Riđđu collaborated with in 2004 were Davvi Nuorra, Sámi dutkamid guovddáš (eng The Centre for Sami Studies, University of Tromsø), Nordlys, Olmmáivággi School, Gáivuona Kulturskuvllain (eng Gáivuotna culture school), North-Troms Museum, Avataq Cultural Institute, Makivik Corporation, Ája Sami Centre and Lydteamet.
\textsuperscript{19} Sponsors included the newspaper Nordlys (eng Northern Light), Romsa’s largest newspaper, and Sparebank 1 Nord-Norge (eng Savings Bank 1 North Norway).
\textsuperscript{20} A \textit{kronerulling} (eng money collection/roll) is a pyramid style donation collection event during which a person or group donates a nominated amount of money then challenges a number of others to donate the same amount. This raised 80 000NOK (approx. 14 000AUD) for Riddu Riđđu in 2003.
In 2004, in response to increasing financial needs, the Riddu Riddu Searvi established a company, Riddu Riddu Reangatt, to generate income that would be used to run the festival and perhaps provide some income for staff\textsuperscript{21}. Riddu Riddu Reangatt was a registered business wholly owned by the Riddu Riddu Searvi and was run by Martin Urheim, a long-standing member of the Riddu Riddu Searvi. The two organisations, Searvi and Reangatt, worked in tandem, sharing staff, including volunteers, infrastructure and other resources. The company took over the supply of food and drink to the artists, staff and ticket holders. Thomas explained:

This is a new phase for Riddu. A lot of people think it is going in the wrong direction. Some people want a strong market. They think it could make money. Riddu Riddu Reangatt is owned wholly. Profit will stay in trust for capital for the festival for loans, not wages. We have to prioritise very carefully to manage all our responsibilities.

One repercussion of this organisational change was related to the long-running debate about alcohol consumption in the Sami community and at Riddu Riddu in particular. At one time, alcohol was banned from Riddu Riddu but the audience numbers dropped dramatically, so it was decided not to continue as an alcohol-free festival. In 2004 Riddu Riddu was granted a licence to sell alcohol, which was managed by Riddu Riddu Reangatt. The granting of the alcohol licence was, in part, made possible because the Mayor of Gáivuotna at the time was supportive of Riddu Riddu. He had been a staff member in the past and was one of the first people with an actively positive attitude to Riddu Riddu to hold such an influential position within

\textsuperscript{21} Despite accusations that people had profited from the festival I saw no evidence of this. One person said sarcastically ‘Oh, yes, we all got so rich from Riddu, just look at the way we all live’. This was a reference to the fact that none of the people involved in Riddu showed any outward signs of wealth and almost all continued to source their incomes from outside the organisation.
the municipal government.

Another of the repercussions of this change was its effect on Ája. Previously, it had run the food and beverage services and so had provided and organised the labour needed. The shift of responsibility meant that a proportion of Riddu Ridđu volunteers and staff had to focus their energies on the running of Riddu Ridđu Reangatt and the services it provided.

In 2004, of the approximately 65 staff, there was only one full-time paid position and three part-time positions within the organisation. These positions were held by the full-time CEO, the accountant, the publicity manager, and an administrator who arranged the travel of artists from the Russian Federation. Other short-term positions became available throughout the year, mostly during Riddu time\textsuperscript{22}. Most of the people who had been working for Riddu Ridđu for many years had either never been paid for their work or been paid only a very small amount. While I was there, one of the paid Riddu Ridđu employees was not taking their wage in order to help ensure the financial security of the festival. In 2015, the Riddu Ridđu (2015c, n.p.) website stated:

\begin{quote}
Today Riddu Ridđu has 4 permanent employees in addition to a staff of 120 people that year round contributes with an invaluably huge manpower for planning, preparation and execution of the festival. About 200 volunteers help during the liquidation of the festival.
\end{quote}

Because of the festival’s heavy reliance on volunteer participation, the economy of Riddu Ridđu can be viewed in terms of person hours as well as krone. Riddu Ridđu relies on thousands of unpaid person hours worked by a wide variety of people,

\textsuperscript{22} All were paid by the Riddu Riddu Searvi, not with festival funds.
including paid and unpaid staff and volunteers, from the Gáivuotna community and elsewhere\textsuperscript{23}: ‘There are a lot of people [who work at Riddu] I don’t know. They come from Finland, Italy, Germany, Australia [laughs]’.

These hours are worked by staff engaged in general activities related to organising programs they are responsible for and participation in activities that relate to the running of the festival as a whole, such as \textit{dugnader}\textsuperscript{24}). Division of labour is informal and, as one staff member said, ‘People do the bits they want and if there are positions to fill we recruit’. Another staff member characterised the way work is managed as:

\begin{quote}
A couple of key people know everything but others know what they need to, or want to. Everyone relies on the key people and everyone is very loyal and positive about them.
\end{quote}

As Cecilie Grape (Fig. 3.22) says in Anita Lervoll’s (2004) film \textit{Greater Than Ourselves}:

\begin{quote}
The best part about working with the festival is the atmosphere, and achieving something together with others. It’s a lot of fun! I don’t think I would have enjoyed being at Riddu without working here.
\end{quote}

This was echoed by several people I spoke to and I can attest to it. It was genuinely fun to work at Riddu Riđđu, regardless of the long hours, and everyone was given the opportunity to enjoy the festival, even if they were working. The staff of Riddu

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{23} During the festival some volunteers came from surrounding communities such as Romsa and further afield. \textsuperscript{24} Throughout the year there were several dugnader (working bees). During Riddu time, there were more than at other times of the year. In 2004, they included: one to clean up the festival area and clear the main stage (which is used to store equipment); and another to set up the Mongolian yurt that was to be used as a venue for Mongolian artists. These dugnader were important times for cooperation and involved many hours of unpaid person hours. It was also an important time for communication between staff members and a chance for social interaction. Usually dugnader ended with dinner provided by the Searvi. In 2004, there was also a party organised after one of these dugnader, as an opportunity for the staff to unwind before the festival began. Many of the members of the Riddu Riddu staff attended these which shows the willingness of staff, and members of the Searvi, to work at a variety of tasks (from the glamorous to the less than glamorous).}
Riđđu had garnered the continued support of their community and provided many people with practical ways to express their Saminess and/or their support for the greater Riddu Riddu project. Whether it was through preparing the field for the camp, working as a guard at a concert, serving at a stall or running a program, each person was valued and encouraged to the extent that they often returned as volunteers. As Mette said of the willingness of volunteers to return:

Very weird. They will say something about why they are here every year. It’s so special. I thought maybe they were proud of doing what they can, I think.

The ability to garner such a large number of volunteer work hours shows the capacity of the people who staff Riddu Riddu to present the festival in such a way that many people, who would otherwise be less than comfortable associating with a public Sami event, were happy to participate in the festival. It also provided a forum in which a variety of people could express their political convictions, free from judgement and to whatever extent they wished by virtue of the many options for involvement.
Many of the staff of Riddu Riddu lived on the fjord and others were based in Romsa or surrounding areas. Most Riddu Riddu-related activities were held in Gáivuotna and a few were held in Romsa to keep the festival’s profile high and take advantage of the venues and audiences available there. However, Riddu Riddu remained firmly located on the fjord. Consciousness of its location and relation to the coast and coastal peoples was a key driving factor for the festival.

The group that made many of the decisions about Riddu Riddu was quite small and in 2004 many of them were the original members of Davvi Nuorra25. The members of the group had been working together for several years and were able to develop a set of practices for running the Searvi and the festival. It is important to note that, to some extent, the festival was run for the staff and artists as well as by them. This was articulated by several staff members as the reason for working on Riddu Riddu: that they gained from the communication and education that came with working with people from other communities. The high level of staff participation in and attendance at the festival reflects their continued interest in the content of the festival, not just their part in it. I noticed the comings and goings of staff members at a range of events during the festival, although it was difficult for them as they were busy running their own programs.

When asked who the festival was run for, staff members gave different answers, including:

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25 Davvi Nuorra was a Sami youth organisation set up in 1995 in Gáivuotna and dissolved in 2007 (see Buljo 2007 for a short article on the dissolution of Davvi Nuorra).
audience mostly, Sami but lots of non-Sami too. The festival is run personally for myself, for the children and also other people. I don’t want it to be just for Sami people (Nina).

It is probably mostly for the people of Manndalen (Else).

Programs and People

The festival consisted of several programs\(^\text{26}\). Each served to benefit the local Sami community, the wider Sami community, the international Indigenous community and the general public. The most highly attended of the programs was the music program, a series of concerts held over the weekend — from Thursday to Saturday. Other programs and projects in 2004 included the coordination of volunteers, the Children’s Festival, the Arctic Youth Camp, the Indigenous Film Festival, the seminar series, the art program that included Young Artist of the Year and exhibitions, the Northern Peoples Program, the focus group who were the San from Botswana, a range of courses, and the market\(^\text{27}\).

The following list of a number of the programs run in 2004 is not exhaustive and the details do not include the names of many important participants and staff members, but it goes some way to explaining the depth of involvement and the breadth of experience needed to organise and execute the festival. Riddu Riđđu is run by a diverse group of talented and dedicated people, all of whom play vital roles. Every staff member and participant at Riddu Riđđu had a strong awareness of the festival’s role in promoting the Sami community in Gáivuotna and by extension the broader

\(^{26}\) In 2004 there were approximately 10. In 2015 there were 15.

\(^{27}\) See Appendix C for the full Riddu Riddu 2004 program.
Sami community and other Indigenous communities.

Apart from the programs, there was also a series of activities involving the staff and volunteers, including the preparation and organisation of the festival. These activities ranged from picking up rubbish to picking up artists and transporting them to and from Romsa and Gáivuotna. More pleasant there was the welcome party for the artists before the beginning of the festival that most of the staff attended\textsuperscript{28}.

For the staff, the festival began several days before the opening, with meetings and impromptu performances. Constant contact with the artists and much interaction with everyone involved led to a sense of camaraderie. During the festival, people sought out those they already knew in the larger crowds. Places in the festival compound and around the village provided similar spaces for socialising. Some of those places were staff members’ houses and the cabins by the sea that were rented to accommodate visiting artists. The Artists’ café in the basement of Ája was an area where artists and staff could relax away from the main crowds. In 2004, this was also where the wrap party was held.

The music program

As well as being the CEO of the festival as a whole, Henrik Olsen was responsible for the music program which was held largely on the main stage. It involved all the visiting artists who performed at least once over the three days — Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Friday and Saturday nights were the headline concerts, with Saturday

\textsuperscript{28} In 2004 the staff and artists were taken on a ferry ride through the fjord in the midnight sun and in 1999 it was a fishing trip on a boat in the midnight sun.
night the bigger of the two. Often an international act was booked to play the finale of this concert. In 1999 the band was Jerry Alfred & The Medicine Beat, a First Nations band from Canada, and in 2004 it was Drum Drum, which included artists from Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Australia.\textsuperscript{29}

Some 200 artists performed at the festival. Concerts went for several hours and featured several different acts. Other events, such as a fashion parade organised by the Inuit guests from Nunavut, were included in the program. As part of the 2004 festival Riddu Riddu commissioned two special concerts featuring a collaboration between Johan Sara Group, from Sápmi, and Wai, a Maori band (Figs 3.23 & 3.24). The two groups had rehearsed together in London before arriving in Gáivuotna and the concerts attracted a great deal of attention.

\textsuperscript{29} Others have included Yothu Yindi (2000 and 2015), Angelique Kidjo (2008) and Buffy Sainte Marie (2009).
Henrik Olsen was the CEO of Riddu Riđđu for several years and had been a long-term member of the Riddu Riđđu Searvi board, as had Lene Hansen, the 2004 festival director\textsuperscript{30}. These two held the most public positions in the festival organisation and it is to them that the media turned as the ‘faces’ of Riddu Riđđu.

Henrik Olsen – The festival started out as a rebellion, we wanted to focus on Sami political issues. Today, the artistic aspect has more importance to us, within the niche that we have chosen, which are the Coastal Sami, the local and the international cultural meetings. We want to bring the world to us, especially minorities and indigenous peoples from northern areas, but also from other parts of the world. The uniting effect is motivating me.

Lene Hansen – To begin with, we wanted to offer social activities. Over time the political spirit has grown. To reach out through a festival is unique. It’s rewarding when people are moved, to see their joy, and to give genuine experience to people. We focus on things that are usually drowned in commercialism. Locally, it’s all about giving the dignity back to people. One shouldn’t be ashamed about one’s own past, but put it into something positive. We have something unique; it’s a gift we can give to the world.

(Excerpts from \textit{Greater Than Ourselves}, Lervoll 2004)

\textsuperscript{30} In 1999 Kristina Solberg was festival director and there have been several others. Lene Hansen was the festival director several other times between 1991 and 2005.
These quotes highlight that their relationship to Sami issues and the trajectories of their careers rather than being about any disagreement over Riddu Riđđu’s primary goal being political or artistic. Henrik and Lene voice different views of the festival, but it remains the vehicle for their broader ambitions for their community. Their united position can be seen in numerous media articles and their working relationship. That Riddu Riđđu has been so successful is due in part to such positive working relationships amongst the staff.

Henrik stepped down as CEO of the festival in 2007 to take the directorship of the Centre for Northern Peoples, the objective of which is ‘to promote culture and art year-round, with focus on the cultures of northern peoples’ (Riddu Riđđu 2012, n.p.). Lene continued to be the festival director in 2005 but after that turned to her political and journalism career. In 2008 Lene published Storm På Kysten, a book about Riddu Riđđu based on her Master’s thesis. In 2015 Karoline Trollvik was the festival CEO and Kirsti Lervoll the festival director.

The volunteer program

Few people I talked to about Riddu Riđđu did not mention that without Jorunn Løkvoll (Fig. 3.26) Riddu Riđđu would barely have happened. Jorunn was a modest person who would be unlikely to agree with this comment. She had been involved in Riddu since its early days but remained in a less public role than many of the other staff members. Jorunn was in charge of the volunteers. This was a vital position as without the 300 or more volunteers Riddu Riđđu would not be able to function. Although
most volunteers received a free ticket in return for nine hours work, it was a lot to ask of people in a small community in the summertime.

Jorunn’s position was also significant as it was one of the frontlines of Riddu Riđđu’s political battles. By no means had everyone in Gáivuotna always been supportive of Riddu Riđđu and rallying people to work meant having to face people with their personal views on Saminess as well as Riddu Riđđu. Jorunn had done a lot of the work of approaching people as well as in the coordination of each volunteer’s participation. There were accounts of people hanging up their phones when first asked to help, of callers being abused and of social repercussions such as being ignored on the street. These were some of the responses to early attempts to get people to help.

In 2004 Håkon Eriksen (Fig. 3.27) was also involved in organising volunteers as he coordinated and managed the security for Riddu Riđđu. As well as organising the volunteer guards, he collaborated with the police, ambulance service and professional bouncers31. Håkon is widely regarded as the founder of the festival.

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31 There were professional guards/bouncers on duty at all times at the entrances to the main camp and the area where alcohol was served.
According to the written (e.g. Hansen 2007) and oral histories that I collected, Riddu Riđđu it stemmed from an idea that he had. Håkon had first suggested to a group of friends that they hold a barbeque to celebrate Sami culture in Gāivuotna, and Riddu Riđđu grew from there. As with many who were given credit for aspects of Riddu Riđđu, Håkon refused to take the credit.

The Children’s Festival

The Children’s Festival has been run almost every year that the festival has run and is a very important part of Riddu Riđđu. For several years, the organisation and running of the Children’s Festival had been in the hands of two Sami teachers from Romsa, while infrastructure needs and some logistics were handled by other Riddu Riđđu staff. In 2004, the Children’s Festival was attended by approximately 100 children. It ran from Tuesday until Friday and included a number of activities including special concerts by key artists.
In a clearing in the little forest behind the school, a group of San dancers performed for a crowd of approximately 100 adults and children (Fig. 3.28). The San artists sang and performed a hunting scene and then invited the children to join them to play a game. This was done with a running commentary in Norwegian and Sami and occasionally in English.

In the circle surrounding the performers, I saw a number of people I knew with their children and a number of children without their parents. My then two-year-old son, Jude, lay in the lap of one of the crèche staff, drinking milk. Also there were Berit, Laila, Karoline and Stian, the children of Riddu Riđđu staff members. They ranged in age from 3 to 12 and they attended the Children’s Festival each year, or at least a number of the activities organised for the festival depending on their age. The younger children attended the festival in conjunction with attending the crèche that was set up for the children of the Riddu Riđđu staff. Stian was an older boy of 12

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32 Each year an Indigenous group is chosen as the focus of Riddu Riddu. In 2004 it was the San from Botswana.
who would rather have been playing football in the school yard, and did so a lot of the time, but occasionally he attended concerts and went on excursions, including a camping trip to the Holmenes Farm in Gáivuonbahta.

The children’s concerts were informative as well as entertaining. A key aim of the Children’s Festival was education, especially the education of Sami children in aspects of Sami and other Indigenous cultures. Talking to the children, whose parents were mostly Riddu Riđđu staff, it was obvious that it was a great excitement to be able to attend the festival. The age for attendance alone, without crèche supervision, as well as when someone was considered too old to attend was discussed at length. The same can be said of attendance of the Arctic Youth Camp. For the children, being old enough, and for the staff members, being too old, to attend was also discussed by many.

The Arctic Youth Camp

Riddu has been an arena where Indigenous youth, from Sápmi and elsewhere, can see they have a lot in common. Similar histories, different geographies but similar lives (Thomas).
The Arctic Youth Camp was an important part of the festival as it provided a place for Indigenous youth from Arctic communities to come together and participate in group activities and share their experiences. It was through such activities that Riddu Riđđu forged relationships and imparted shared skills, thus establishing a cohort of youth that would hopefully maintain relationships between the communities in the future. The Arctic Youth Camp was renamed the World Indigenous Youth Camp in 2005. Later it was known as the Indigenous Youth Gathering and in 2015 it was the Youth Program. It has been expanded to broaden the range of communities from which participants can come.

In 1999 the camp included 15 people, six of whom were from outside Sápmi. In 2004, there were approximately 25 attendees. In 2015 65 positions were available in the youth program. In 2004 those who attended the camp stayed together in rooms in the school and attended workshops held by many of the participating artists.

In 1999 the yoik workshop was a focal activity of the youth camp. It was run by Ivvar-Niilas Somby (Fig. 3.29), a very well-known yoik artist from an inland community, and his nephew, Andé Somby (Fig. 3.29), another well-known yoik artist, academic and public personality. Andé’s son, Lawra Somby (Fig. 3.30) also attended the camp. The presence of these men was considered something of a privilege because of their reputations and because three generations were involved at the same time. This, added to the thrill of having so many competent and respected artists from other Indigenous communities involved, made for something like a

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33 Lawra has since become a well-known performer in his own right.
blessed company. The participants in the camp spent five days working together, culminating in a group yoik during the opening concert of the festival.

The Indigenous Film Festival

By 2004 the Indigenous Film Festival had been running for three years. The program was extensive and went from Thursday to Sunday. It was held in the main hall of the school opposite the kindergarten (Fig. 3.5) and was organised by Bård Grape. In 2004 the film program enjoyed new success due to the expanding of the seating. Fokus, the main cinema in Romsa was demolished and some of the seats from it were purchased by Riddu Riđđu. Late one night, members of the Riddu Riđđu staff went to the cinema to help dismantle the seats and move them onto a truck and transport them to Gáivuotna.

Some 28 films by Indigenous film-makers from around the world were screened over three days in 2004. Included in them was the film Greater Than Ourselves by Anita Lervoll (Fig. 3.31), a Riddu Riđđu staff member, who made the film as part of the requirements for a Master’s in visual cultural studies at the University of Tromsø. Greater Than Ourselves was filmed during the 2003 festival and focuses on the staff
of Riddu Riddu and their motivations for participation in the festival. In 2004, Anita was also responsible, along with Tor Mikalsen, for the environmental project. In 2003–4 Riddu Riddu had gained accreditation as a ‘green’ festival by the government.

The seminar series

In 2004, the seminar series was run by Ole Bjørn Fossbakk (Fig. 3.32) who was the chairperson of the Riddu Riddu Searvi and worked in the municipal government. The seminar series was held during the day from Thursday to Saturday in the beer/seminar lavvus. The topics of the five seminars were ‘Homosexual-Bisexual.com’, ‘Land and Art’, ‘Northern People: Nunavik Inuit’, ‘San People, the Kuru Project’. Another seminar, entitled ‘Regionalisation, Power and Democracy’, was run in conjunction with Riddu Riddu’s biggest sponsor, the Nordlys newspaper.

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34 In 2004, the Searvi had four other members: Jorunn Løkvoll, Cecilie Grape, Øystein Oldervoll and Lene Hansen.

35 This seminar was part of the sponsorship deal with Nordlys.
Each seminar was attended by approximately 50 people and ran for approximately two hours. Attendees were intellectuals from Sami-related institutions, artists and audience members. In 2015, the seminar series consisted of four seminars on: the history of the forced evacuation of the area in 1944–5; Northern Indigenous contemporary art; fishing quotas; and the Rainforest Foundation’s work in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The seminars are important arenas for academic and non-academic issues to be aired and discussed. They also reflected the breadth of activities provided at Riddu Ridđu that serve to attract a wide range of participants as well as being practical ways by which to communicate and disseminate information relating to local, national and international Indigenous issues.

The art program
Crowded into a small, hot room at the back of the school, holding glasses of white wine, we waited for the exhibition to open. Borghild Braastad was there, although having given birth only days earlier. Borghild one of the leaders of this project, but was pregnant during the preparation of it so she had handed over the reins to Rita Lindvall.

Media people were also there. The exhibition was consciously a site of controversy. Many people told me before the exhibition opened that there would be some heated debate about it, especially as the artist was not Sami but was addressing Sami issues. We weren’t disappointed. Svein Flygari Johansen’s exhibition, *Territorial Holiday* addressed several themes, including land rights. In her opening speech Lene Hansen highlighted the importance of giving such topics voice in forums such as Riddu Riddu. That evening, there was some discussion about this. Later, in the media there were more heated debates not only about the exhibition but also about the artist and the particular land rights issues relevant to Gáivuotna that he addressed (discussed in detail in Chapter Six).

Over the years, the art program has also included Young Artist of the Year and Artist of the Year exhibitions and several exhibitions by other visiting and local artists. Each year since 2000 a young Sami artist aged between 15 and 25 has been chosen to present their work at the festival. As Nina said, ‘There should be space for young artists. They may become famous but they may not. If they perform at Riddu it can be very big for them’. Amongst those chosen have been musicians, designers, an actor, a director, a painter, a photographer, an author and a poet. Artists of the year have often been from the focus group of that year’s festival. In 2015, the Northern
People of the Year were the Six Nations of the Grand River in Canada and the Artist of the Year was Shelley Niro, a member of The Six Nations Reserve, Turtle Clan, Bay of Quinte Mohawk.

As Else pointed out to me, art was an important conduit for the delivery of the political and other cultural interests of those who ran Riddu Riddu:

> We use art and communicate in another way. It was the point to communicate. My motivation is political, to do something concrete. You can communicate with people on different levels through art. You reach their hearts. They become curious, then they may engage differently, making people a bit more conscious and curious about things.

The Northern Peoples Program

Marina Olsen (Fig. 3.35) went to live in Gáivuotna in 1998. By Riddu time 1999 she lived in Olmmáiváaggi, 10 minutes’ walk from Ája. Marina is from Buryatia, a federal subject of Russia, north of Mongolia. She had been involved in RAIPON (Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North) before moving to Norway. In 2004
she was teaching Russian and studying remotely at the University of Tromsø. Marina was also running the Northern Peoples Program at Riddu Riđđu.

The program began in 1999 and focussed on bringing Indigenous artists from the Arctic region to Riddu Riđđu. The artists had come mostly from the Russian Federation, including Tuva, Mongolia, Buryatia and Kumchatka. In 2004 the program was extended to include a focus group, which was Nunavik for that year. It was separate from the general focus groups for the festival, which were the San and Inuit in 2004.

Marina’s knowledge of Russian bureaucracy and her connections to Indigenous groups in the Russian Federation enabled her to organise the artists’ travel. This was a complex job as visas were difficult to attain as was conveying people from different parts of the Russian Federation to Norway. To assist with this program, Riddu Riđđu had a part-time paid staff member in Moscow. Each year, the Northern Peoples Program brought approximately 20 artists, teachers and students to perform and participate in the festival. The visitors participated in performances, seminars, courses and the Arctic Youth Camp. They were also invited to sell items at the market. One year, a yurt with all its accompanying furniture (Fig. 3.36) was purchased by Riddu Riđđu and brought to the festival on the buses with the visitors.

Probably the most controversial event ever staged at Riddu Riđđu was part of the Northern Peoples Program in 2002. It centred on the ritual slaughter of a sheep by

36 The groups are chosen through discussion amongst the Riddu Riđđu Searvi. Marina’s knowledge, contacts and language capacity in the Russian Federation has had some considerable influence.

37 When Marina was still living in Russia she was involved in Indigenous politics.
visiting Ita people. There was an outcry in the media and the organisers were roundly criticised by many for what they saw as an act of animal cruelty. It was also used by politicians as an argument for removing support from the festival (Hansen 2008, p. 27). One staff member remarked that they were confused by the uproar as ‘It was so natural for me. People here do it in the same way but are not allowed to anymore. They have to go to the [abattoir]’. Riddu Ridđu was eventually fined for not having a permit to perform the slaughter.

One of the reasons for the interest in Indigenous people from the east of Sápmi was a cultural connection felt by some Sami people in Gáivuotna. It was articulated best by an older man who said that he thought that the Sami came from the east so the origins of Sami culture were in the east. The Northern Peoples Program was developed for this and other reasons, including the capacity to help financially less well-resourced communities and it continues to grow. One staff member said ‘It is part of the expansion of Riddu, that the circle gets bigger and bigger’ — that Riddu Ridđu becomes more inclusive of communities more distant from the Sami community in Gáivuotna.
The main camp buzzed with the noise of people talking, laughing, yoiking and arguing. Edel and Kristian walked ahead into their lavvu, which they had set up in ‘Riddu Heights’, the prime real estate in the camp. They lived on the other side of the fjord near Dalošvággi so they found it easier to stay at the camp for the festival rather than travel back and forth. Edel had long been a member of the Riddu Riddu staff but chose to have 2004 free and attend Riddu Riddu. This was something staff members were encouraged to do. Kristian built and lit a fire in the middle of the lavvu and six of us sat around to share a drink and to chat. There was a lot to talk about in the festival, the last festival I was at, what was happening and had happened in the camp, and gossip. Through the evening, people came and went from the lavvu, and eventually Edel and Kristian lowered the flap and went to sleep.

Each tent would have had a similar story. People used the camp as a place to socialise as well as to sleep. Some people never ventured out of the camp area to

38 The camping area is not divided into sites. People arrive, choose a site and set up their tents. Sites are not reserved or designated; it is a first-come, first-served system. Getting a spot in ‘Riddu Heights’ is a matter of choice, and getting there early enough.
the festival itself; some would not even have had tickets for the festival. The important aspect of Riddu Riddu for these people was the chance to catch up with friends, and for a few it was a chance to party and only party. The partying was one of the reasons why the family camp was situated further from the main festival location and was an alcohol-free area.

The audience, volunteers, courses and workshops

![Guri (Hansen 2004k)](image)

Although it couldn't be said that there were any typical Riddu audience members, Guri’s experience is a good example of the level of participation of some audience members, volunteers, and course and workshop participants. Guri was in her 30s and lived and worked in Romsa. She had a son who had participated in the Children’s Festival in previous years. In 2004, Guri decided she would go to the festival but that she would also participate in the Sami language course that involved walking for five days from Guovdageaidnu to Gáivuotna\(^{39}\). Just prior to leaving for

\(^{39}\) The course was part of the festival. Its purpose was to teach people Sami while walking, so providing a unique opportunity for the participants. The end of the course coincided with the beginning of the festival.
the walking language tour, Guri received a phone call from a Ridd Bu Ridd Bu staff member, asking her to be a volunteer during the festival in return for a ticket\textsuperscript{40}.

After completing the walking language course, which was run for the first time in 2004 and was a great success, Guri worked in the main kitchen in Ája and at the barbecue near the main stage, while staying in the family camp. Around working, Guri managed to attend many of the concerts and other activities including some of the 11 workshops that there were in 2004.

**Conclusion**

It is in the organisation and execution of the multitude of tasks that go into running Ridd Bu Ridd Bu and the skills and convictions of the people who work for the organisation and their ability to support each other that make Ridd Bu Ridd Bu an extraordinary Sami festival. Each action of each person is done with constant consciousness of the purpose of the festival and a clear view of it being to further the broader project in some way — to support, promote and articulate Saminess and indigeneity in Gáivuotna.

In all the areas of Ridd Bu Ridd Bu described above, Saminess and in some cases non-Saminess and/or indigeneity were performed and presented in a number of different ways. For the Gáivuotna community, it was the presentation of a local Sami identity in several different contexts. It was done during the Children’s Festival, which was attended mostly by local Sami children; in the yoik workshop with Sami artists from

\textsuperscript{40} This staff member and Guri had known each other for several years as they had lived in the same apartment block in Romsa and had studied at the University of Tromsø at the same time.
other parts of Norway or other parts of the world; on stage as masters of ceremony; and working with the media as the faces of Riddu Riđđu. In each of these activities, Gáivuotna Sami identity was presented as complementary to but different from other ways of being Sami.

This difference was expressed through the choices made for the concert program and the content of workshops, the food that was served and the clothes people chose to wear. It was all done under the scrutiny (if only perceived) of the wider Sami community, the local and wider non-Sami community, and other Indigenous people. Although not all of what was presented at Riddu Riđđu was obviously Sami, it was Sami and/or important to the Sami people involved in the festival. On those things that are Sami, Hovland (1994, n.p.) argues:

> these objects and images are appropriated and integrated by locals into meaningful frameworks. They are not ‘Sami’ or local, but they are made ‘Sami’ and local by their consumption and appropriation, by their placement into the local context and by their juxtaposition with older elements.

I argue that they are Sami and local, even if not exclusively. Their consumption and placement provides the context for them to be considered Sami. The people involved with the Riddu Riđđu Searvi were constructive in helping to make and distil Sami identities. The festival and other Riddu Riđđu Searvi projects also provided contexts in which this could happen, while encouraging and challenging others' participation in the processes.
Chapter Four

Apparent Saminess and indigeneity

To more fully understand how Saminess is presented at Riddu Riđđu, it is important to discuss carriers of Sami identity, how they are perceived and interpreted by others, and their roles in the defining of Saminess and Sami indigeneity. One question I have often been asked throughout my research by non-Sami and Sami people is how or if you can recognise someone as Sami in Norway. The discussion in this chapter goes some way to answering the question and explaining the complexities. Much of the answer lies in a discussion of the presentation of specific carriers of Sami identity.

In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Erving Goffman (1959, p. 1) noted that:

> When an individual enters the presence of others, they commonly seek to acquire information about him or to bring into play information about him already possessed ... Information about the individual helps to define the situation, enabling others to know in advance what he will expect of them and what they may expect of him.

This loop of recognition and presentation can be connected to the notion that identity is a process, one that requires constant iteration, interpretation and reiteration. The aspects of Sami culture used to present Sami identities form vehicles for the information sought and already possessed as well as the information a person wishes to present.

Nils Erik said: ‘Nobody knows who is Sami unless they communicate that in some way. Some look that way but not many, so that is meaningless’. This comment makes it clear that physiological signifiers are usually insufficient for recognising
someone as Sami and that Saminess needs to be presented explicitly in other ways. Some of the other ways Sami people signify their identities and alterity are through forms of expressive culture and participation in international Indigenous forums.

In order to highlight contexts in which people present themselves as Sami, I have chosen to associate each with a realm of presentation. The schema runs thus: individually/bodily through physiological difference; locally/regionally through handicrafts (duodji and costume); nationally through the performance of yoik; and internationally through participation in international Indigenous forums.

Sami and non-Sami presentations of identities are rendered somewhat separate but it is important to explain the relationship between them as well as between different interpretations of them by Sami people. It is easiest to think in terms of cultural flows (Hannerz 1997 and 1996) and acculturation (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits 1936).

Ulf Hannerz (1996, p. 60) contends that culture flows from the centre to the periphery and that this forms a hegemonic process as the centre dictates the content and nature of the flow. Culture thus becomes ideology and ‘cultural diversity, then, may be cultural resistance’ (Hannerz 1996, p. 60). This resistance, Hannerz argues, is usually orchestrated by the elite of the periphery but can be from a broader peripheral base, and ‘It is also a type of argument for the maintenance of bounded cultures which can readily and fairly unobtrusively be combined rhetorically with the claim of a right to one’s own culture’ (Hannerz 1996, p. 60).
While the notion of cultural flows explains the path of cultural information and the role it plays in presenting difference, acculturation goes some way to explaining the impact of cultural flows. The impact of cultural flows between the Sami and non-Sami communities can be partly explained by acculturation which is ‘those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups’ (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits 1936, p. 149). Aspects of Sami and non-Sami culture influence each other but I am more concerned with the way these influences are responded to by Sami people as a form of counter-hegemonic resistance, which is the focus of this chapter.

**Physical difference and bodily capacities**

As Nils Erik said, few, if any, people look Sami. There are no significant physical signs of Saminess that mean Sami people can be recognised as such without other cues. Not being recognisably ‘different’ in public, at least not to many people, means being able to participate in various forums as ‘Norwegian’ or non-Sami with little risk of racism or confrontation. However, it also means that recognition of difference must be obtained overtly in other ways.

If a Sami person is to avoid being slighted unknowingly by those who do not realise the person is Sami or who would otherwise not express racist attitudes, they have to declare their Saminess overtly. At times this can require telling people around them that they consider themselves to be Sami or projecting Saminess in some other way, such as through dress or political statements. Several times I witnessed racism that would not have been expressed had the people involved been in the company of Sami people or known they were. When
I met Martin, a Sami man in his 20s, he was about to quit his job in Romsa because his boss, who did not know that Martin was Sami was constantly making disparaging remarks about Sami people.

After having been in Sápmi for approximately six months, I thought I could recognise people as Sami based on physiological characteristics. I soon realised that it was not Saminess I was seeing. The Sami population is not very large and I had managed to visit several Sami communities and had met Sami people from many parts of Sápmi. I moved in certain circles and knew several members of some families. I came to believe that what I recognised was family resemblance rather than Saminess — that is, that the people I saw looked like members of the Hætta or Olsen family or my friend Thine from Nesseby. Several people, such as Petter from Gáivutona, looked like Sami people to me but were not.

It could be argued that there are potential advantages to not having easily recognisable physical differences from the majority population. However, in Sápmi this does not mean that Sami people are not subjected to discussions of physical difference or attempts to categorise and recognise them as physically different. While it has not been pursued to any great extent in academic circles, it certainly is in general public discussions. When people claimed they could tell who was Sami, their claims centred on Sami people being short, having dark hair, skin and eyes, and being heavily set¹. All the tall, blonde, blue-eyed, slight Sami people I met put paid to this theory, as did all the short, dark haired, dark-eyed and dark-skinned and heavily set non-Sami Norwegians.

¹ These were relative to what was considered typical non-Sami Norwegian physical characteristics.
The interest in being able to ‘spot’ a Sami person is not a modern phenomenon. In the 19th and early 20th centuries the Sami population, like many others, was subjected to the investigations of several branches of scientific study that focussed on physiological classification. These studies are often seen as having had a negative impact on Sami people, and have left a lasting impression on many in the Sami community.

Late one night, I found myself in the Rypa pub in Kárásjohka, talking to Gunnár who had been a teacher in the town for many years. Gunnár asked me what I was doing in Sápmi and what I wanted of his people. He became increasingly agitated as we discussed anthropology and its history in Sápmi. He told me that many people, including himself, remembered having their heads measured by anthropologists² and said that if that was what I was doing there, I should leave. Gunnár obviously wanted to have this history noted, as he knew from early in the conversation that I was not interested in this area of anthropology and that I shared his point of view.

Later, Inger told me that members of her family had memories of being measured and photographed for scientific purposes. She also told me that until the 1960s Sami women were routinely sterilised and both men and women were lobotomised and experimented on. I found no evidence of this apart from Inger’s claim. Regardless of the veracity of Inger’s claim, that she told me it as a fact represents Inger’s willingness to believe such a claim. This, in turn, shows that some Sami people have a sense that the Sami community in general has been unfairly treated by scientists.

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² Phrenologists and physiognomists had been identified as anthropologists.
Kjellaug, Michelle and I were sitting in Kjellaug’s living room enjoying our umpteenth cup of the weak, black, percolated coffee that is always offered at social occasions in Norway. Kjellaug was talking about her work, her family, my clear failure as an adult in not knowing how to bake bread, and about things Sami. Kjellaug had shown Michelle and me the book that maps the families in Guovdageaidnu and I was thinking how fabulous it was to have all that kinship work done and wondering if there were such books for every community in Sápmi. They do not all have such a book. This led to a discussion about kinship and Kjellaug’s family and eventually to who is Sami, who is not Sami and how you can tell.

Kjellaug took my hand and said, ‘You are Sami. See here, your third finger is longer than your index finger’. At that point, Michelle asked Kjellaug to look at her hand. Kjellaug said she was not Sami. It was a bit of a blow for Michelle, as she had been living and conducting research in Guovdageaidnu for some time and Kjellaug was her friend. I was new and had become Sami in an afternoon. A little put out but put firmly in her place, Michelle sat down and said little else for a while.

Kjellaug was not really saying that I was Sami. We all knew that. She was really saying that Michelle had not become part of the community; she did not have the sensibilities to be considered a possible candidate for Saminess. The reason I had been used as the conduit for Kjellaug’s message was complicated.

I had arrived in Sápmi only a few weeks before this meeting and had attended a Sami function in Romsa. I had arrived at the function early and started chatting to the young woman at the front door. We had quite a long talk about her life, what I was doing in Sápmi and we had got along well. A week or so later I had
gone to Guovdageaidnu and found myself in Kjellaug’s living room. Looking
around, I saw a photo in a frame sitting on a side table and recognised the young
woman I had met in Romsa. I asked Kjellaug about her. As it turned out, the
young woman was her daughter. Kjellaug realised that I was the Australian
woman her daughter had told her about. This coincidence made for an important
form of introduction. From what she had been told, Kjellaug assumed I would
understand what she was doing by saying I was Sami but Michelle was not.

What is interesting about this story is that, as dubious as her argument and
motivations were, Kjellaug chose a physical trait to define Saminess. I did not
witness or hear of another person using this specific technique to identify Sami
people and I wouldn’t rely on it, as it would mean that most of the world’s
population could be Sami. Kjellaug used a physical trait to tell Michelle that she
could not be Sami, no matter what she did. It was subtle but devastating. Michelle
would have known that, especially for women, being Sami is somewhat fluid and
that acceptance in the community would allow for moving easily through it.

This is not the only time physical traits were the identifying features that Sami
people used to indicate their’s and other people’s Saminess but it was the most
striking event for me. Kjellaug had shown me and Michelle just how easily the
stereotypes and images generated by scientific research\(^3\) could be turned to
someone’s advantage. Kjellaug had turned the scientific stereotyping that her
community had been subjected to, back onto a proponent of it. Michelle was a
researcher and a foreigner, and so she was perceived to be part of the scientific

\(^3\) These images are not necessarily the real results of scientific research but are the stereotypes that have
become part of public discourses.
world that has created stereotypes of Sami people and done the research to ‘prove’ them⁴.

Beyond the issue of physiognomy, and the politically and scientifically charged issues around visible physical difference is a set of bodily capacities that are attributed to Sami people. Briefly, three of these are the stopping of blood, intuitive diagnosis, and Sami healing. These are carriers of Saminess because they play a role in the definition and recognition of people as Sami.

Sami people are known in and outside the Sami community to be able to stop blood. As one person told me, ‘Stopping blood is a low level of healing. Every household had someone who could stop blood’. I was also told that stopping blood was one of the treatments used by Sami healers when called to treat people in hospital⁵. This skill involves being able to stop bleeding without what western biomedicine would regard as the required physical intervention. Generally, each family would have a person with this skill and there seemed no reason why any particular person would have it. It was not a skill that could be taught and was not described as hereditary.

Once, at a party at Ája Nina and I were talking. Earlier that day Nina had told me that she was pregnant and that only her husband, Steinar, and I knew. A man Nina knew only as an acquaintance approached us and started to chat. He offered Nina his congratulations, at which Nina asked why he would be congratulating her. The man said that he knew she was going to have a baby but

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⁴ I, too, was a researcher in this situation but as Michelle had been there longer and had been working with Kjellaug, she was associated more strongly with research.

⁵ In Romsa hospital, Sami patients have the right to request a Sami healer. Blood stopping is said to be practised in hospitals with the knowledge of doctors and is said to baffle the established medical profession.
that it was very early. We were both a bit rattled by the conversation and Nina was a little annoyed that Steinar had told others. Steinar denied having told anyone and said that the man was well known for being able to discern pregnancy in women and that intuitive diagnosis was a skill several Sami people had. Again I was told that it was not a skill that could be taught or was necessarily inherited. As with the stopping of blood, intuitive diagnosis was not necessarily attached to being a Sami healer.

Sami healers are well known in Sami communities and are consulted in place of or in addition to a western biomedical practitioner. As Barbara Miller (2009, n.p.) argues, ‘Among the Sami today the inspiration of the healer receives not one uniform interpretation’. There is often some overlap with religion and some healers say that they have access to a spiritual helper (Miller 2009, n.p.). Several time I heard people discussing their use of Sami healing and the different settings in which it was used. One such setting is illustrated in the following account.

When Oliva came to stay with me in Australia, she developed a physical condition that required some attention. She telephoned a Sami healer in Norway and had them treat her over the phone. There were several jokes about whether the treatment would work but there was a strong belief that it would and that this technique had been used before. More commonly, people sought treatment in healers’ and their own homes.

These bodily capacities were not shared with the non-Sami community and provided indications of Saminess. It was clearly recognised that being able to stop blood was a Sami skill. So, too, were intuitive diagnosis and certain forms of healing closely associated with being Sami. In some respects, there would be
little need to exhibit further signs of Saminess if these skills were presented in the right situations. It is not enough to rely on physiological characteristics to be recognised as Sami, although being able to declare another person Sami via physical characteristics certainly is a sign of a person being Sami.

Expressive culture

Expressive culture is defined by Joyce Burstein (2014, p. 132) as:

> the processes, emotions, and ideas bound within the social production of aesthetic forms and performances in everyday life. It is a way to embody culture and to express culture through sensory experiences such as dance, music, literature, visual media, and theatre.

These expressions of culture also include expressions of identity. They are the forms in which identity are expressed. This section is a discussion of a limited number of aesthetic forms — namely duodji, gákti and yoik. They are all closely associated with Sami identity and used as markers in local/regional and national arenas.

Daniel Miller (1998, pp. 3–21) differentiates between asking ‘Why things matter’ and ‘Why some things matter’ [my emphasis]. It is clear that duodji, gákti and yoik, amongst other things, matter to Sami people. It is taken as given that they have come to matter for a range of reasons, including a multitude of influences on cultural, historical and environmental conditions and experiences. The extent to which duodji, gákti and yoik matter could be said to be reflected in my having chosen to discuss them.

What is telling is that the three forms emerged from my fieldwork because of the interests of those I worked with and, to a lesser extent, my own interests. If I had
worked with more Sami writers, Sami literature\(^6\) would no doubt have emerged as a form on which to focus. As it was, I met people who spoke more about duodji, gákti and yoik than other forms of Sami expressive culture and used those forms to present their Sami identities.

Duodji

Duodji is creative practice and the products of that practice. Most commonly, the term refers to handicrafts, including gákti.

The Hurtigruten are the ferries that carry tourists, travellers and freight up and down the coast of Norway and around the top of Norway to Kirkenes. Romsa is the main Hurtigruten port in the North, so the Hurtigruten stop there on their way around the top of Norway. One day, as usual, the market in the centre of town was set up to greet the passengers and the ‘Sami stall’, run by Cilia and Per, was looking splendid. The stall was filled with items made by Cilia and Per. For sale were Sami dolls (Fig. 4.1) ranging from cheap little 50NOK ones to large ones costing several hundred krone, knives (Fig. 4.11) of varying sizes and prices, reindeer leather coffee and sugar bags, guksi (birch cups) (Fig. 4.5), reindeer leather necklaces with little reindeer horn pendants, children’s reindeer leather

\(^6\) For discussions of Sami literature see Gaski (1997b) and Helander & Kailo (1998) amongst others.
boots with woven ribbons (Fig. 4.20), a beautiful white Arctic fox hat, and a variety of other items.

The Olmmáivákkí Duodjesearvi is between the service station and one of the supermarkets on the main road around Gáivuotna. It is a low, wooden building with a turf roof. Inside it was clean, looked new and smelt like wool and pine. Opposite the entrance hanging on the wall were a number of rátnu (nor grener) (Fig. 4.3). To the right was the workshop, with walls lined with shelves filled with coloured wool and fabric; gákti were displayed on mannequins. There was a very large table in the middle of the room and a loom in the corner. The other looms for making rátnu were in the office next door. To the left of the entrance was the shop. To the left, when you entered the shop door, there were jumpers, scarves, hats, gloves and other items of clothing. To the right was a glass cabinet full of silver jewellery and then the counter. Further inside were shelves with Riddu Riddu t-shirts, postcards, books and other items. In front of the window three women were sitting around a coffee table with cups of coffee. They were chatting and knitting Gáivuotna jumpers and socks. These women were producing items that would later be sold on commission through the shop. The pattern most of

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7 nor Manndalen Husfliden. A husfliden is a craft workshop and many towns in Norway have one.
8 Rátnu are woven woollen rugs which are quite valuable and are now usually used as wall hangings.
them incorporated into their knitting was the ‘Manndalsmøte’ or ‘Russian’ design⁹ that Gáivuotna is well known for (Fig. 4.2). These women may or may not have been Sami.

In Nina and Steinar’s kitchen, in Olmmáiváaggi, two sets of monogrammed guksi, that were made for them as wedding gifts, hung from a shelf that held birch storage boxes. In the living room hung a rátnu, also a wedding present. In the door jamb hung a gietkka¹⁰ (baby’s cradle) in which Laila slept on and off (Fig. 4.4). Hanging on the gietkka were numerous ¥ielat (amulets) attached by woven woollen ribbons. The number and quality of pieces of duodji, and the way they were being used went some way to indicating that this was a Sami household.

Many of the items described in the ethnobites above are duodji. Three different environments, three different collections. The items in the collection at Celia and Per’s market stall are designed were made for people interested in regional products. They are the most commonly recognised Sami duodji and the ones

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⁹ I was told that this pattern was adapted from patterns seen on Russian fishermen’s and traders’ clothes.
¹⁰ This gietkka, while owned by one family in Olmmáiváaggi, was used by many families in the village while their children were young enough to use them.
most Norwegian and international tourists are interested in buying. Objects such as the silver jewellery in the Olmmáiváikki Duodjesearvi are regional to some extent and others such as the rátnu and knitted designs are local and predominantly for a local market. As Gunvor Guttorm (2012, p. 70) explains, ‘duodji … has its origin in “everyday life” in Sápmi, the activities, the conventions; the aesthetic understanding has been formed within this “everyday life”. This is clearly true of the duodji that was incorporated into Nina and Steinar’s household. Most of the items incorporated local designs, were made by people from Gáivuotna, and were being used regularly.

Part of the revival of Sami cultural practices has been an increase in the research into the re-creation, transformation and use of as well as the skills needed to produce duodji\textsuperscript{11}. The number of \textit{duojárat} (the makers of duodji; singular, \textit{duojár}) has increased over recent years, as has the market for their work. Often duodji is

\textsuperscript{11} For instance, the Sámi allaskuva (Sami College in Guovdageaidnu) offers bachelor’s and master’s programs in duodji (see Guttorm 2012).
described and viewed as a ‘traditional’ Sami practice. However, the works created by duojárat are often divided into traditional and modern objects.

Traditional objects closely follow a set of recognised patterns, colourways and materials. Modern objects are often similar to traditional ones, with some changes in some aspects of the object. For example, a traditional purse from Gáivuotna would be made from reindeer leather with wool, pewter and/or mica details. A modern version may be made of different material or the same materials in different relationship to each other. The purse may be made primarily of wool with reindeer leather detail. Regardless of whether they are described as traditional or modern duodji, the objects share an aesthetic, a Sami style.

It is important to note that duodji is classified separately from Sami design (Figs. 4.6 and 4.7) and Sami art (dáidda) (Fig. 4.8). There is also industrial handicraft which is based mostly on traditional duodji with the use of machinery (Rantala 2013, p. 106). Guttorm (2009, p. 60) explains:

duodji, or Sami craft, and Sami art both share a common history but also have their special histories. Sami craft has often had the culture as its starting-point; it has been contextualized. Sami art contains features of Sami craft, but also features that are connected with universal art.
Duodji is characterised by the skills of the duojár and the materials they use:

every piece of duodji requires the help of a duojár, a mother or father, who affectionately cares for the raw materials. Likewise a duojár cannot create without suitable materials. The duojár shapes them according to her will, at the same time showing awareness of the material’s own characteristics. Duodji cannot be born without a duojár (Guttorm 1995, p. 153).

It is a compliment to be called a duodjár, particularly if you are considered a good one. Duodji skills are often learnt within the family and the details of individual items are idiosyncratic. Many details are identified with specific communities and even specific duojárat. It is in the details that the regional and local aspects of duodji are recognisable. The skills duojárat express in their work are important vehicles of Saminess but do not bestow Saminess. Similarly, duodji is Sami and bears Saminess but does not bestow Saminess on the owner or the user of it.
At Riddu Riddu, duodji was present in a range of ways: it was sold at the market; there were duodji-making workshops; and staff, artists and audience members used duodji. The frequency with which duodji was used during the preparation of the festival site was generally the same as in everyday life. Guksi were used for coffee during breaks and reindeer leather bags were used for coffee and sugar. Knives were particularly prominent. They were used for a wide variety of purposes and many people, particularly men, carried a large (stuorranibi) and a small knife on their belt.

One afternoon, I was preparing lunch for a group of staff and asked if anyone had a knife. The people around me laughed and someone swept their arm across the area, indicating all the people working, and reminded me that these were Sami people, so of course they had knives. They then carefully chose someone I should ask, as people can be very particular about who uses their knife.

Local duodji skills and resources were harnessed by the Riddu Riddu staff and volunteers. Duojárat in the community were called on to teach their skills during workshops as well as using them for other things that needed to be done to
prepare for the festival. At the Olmmáivákki Duodjesearvi workshop one year, three Riddu Riddu staff members and I sewed the banners for festival. During the festival the workshop was also used for a ribbon-weaving course conducted by local duojárat.

Costume

Perhaps the most noticeable use of duodji at Riddu Riddu in particular and in Sápmi in general is the wearing of costumes. Tom Svensson (1992, p. 62) states that:

"Clothing is viewed as the most efficient means of non-verbal communication of cultural identity as well as culture-specific values and standards … clothing makes statements about 1) identity, in the sense that it helps to express group conformity and individual status, and 2) culture-specific aesthetics, i.e., a reflection of norms and standards for that considered beautiful in a given culture."

Svensson (1992, p. 62) further argues that identity can be conveyed via various aspects of clothing, including materials and techniques used to make them and their design.

In Norway, wearing costumes is an important part of the presentation of Norwegianess as well as of Saminess. Although bunads (Norwegian costumes) are most commonly referred to as ‘national’ costumes in Norway, it is an overarching term for a set of regional costumes. This is similar for gákti, which refers to a set of regional costumes. The regional information contained in costume designs shows the potential of costumes as signifiers of regional differences within the Sami community as much as they are useful for defining difference to the non-Sami community.

Many regions in Norway have recognised bunads registered with the Bunad- og Folkedraktsrådet (Bunad and Folk Dress Council), to be considered legitimate
bunads must be registered by the Council\textsuperscript{12}. Gākti are similarly regional and localised. However, they are not included in the registration process and are worn on more occasions. There is also less formal clothing, ‘Sami clothes’, worn by some in the Sami community. It incorporates aspects of gākti design such as colour ways, symbols and materials (Fig. 4.12).

Gākti and bunads are often worn on formal and celebratory occasions. A great proportion of people wear their costume on Constitution Day each year. Constitution Day is a celebration of the signing of the constitution in 1814, upon Norway’s cessation from Denmark, and is the most important non-religious national holiday in Norway. Every year on 17\textsuperscript{th} of May thousands of people march in or watch parades\textsuperscript{13} in cities, towns and villages in a show of national

\textsuperscript{12} There is also a range of festdrakt (folk dress). These costumes are not as commonly registered and have a more localised affiliation than bunads.

\textsuperscript{13} These parades consist of a children’s parade (nor barnetoget) in which the children march in school groups, and a main parade (nor toget), in which adults parade in community groups (Gullestad 2002).
belonging\textsuperscript{14}.

On Constitution Day, after the parade was well and truly over, I was sitting in a café with a group of non-Sami Norwegian people, having coffee and talking. After the parade, we were cold and wet and we had all gone home to change our clothes. My friend, Britt, had let me try on her bunad. Everyone thought it was quite funny and they convinced me to go to a café in it. I was very reluctant but agreed after much encouragement. When we got to the café we sat for a while but I became increasingly uncomfortable with being in a bunad on this day of all days. The friends I was with agreed that it was strange and said I should make sure people couldn’t identify me as not Norwegian. Eventually, we decided it was best for me to go home and change.

Once I returned we had a conversation about why my wearing a bunad made everyone uncomfortable. Several issues were raised and explanations offered. It was not because I was not allowed to wear the bunad or that it was morally improper, but that it was just inappropriate. As I was a foreigner, it would have been acceptable because I had been given permission to wear it by its owner. My friends also pointed out that there were plenty of American Norwegians who wore bunads\textsuperscript{15}. They had initially thought that it was acceptable as the parade was over and the day’s celebrations had finished. The discomfort was not even because it was Constitution Day, it was that I was wearing a bunad in public at all. It was fine in private but the public display was too challenging.

\textsuperscript{14} Often the day also includes social events before and after the parade including family dinners and gatherings of friends.

\textsuperscript{15} Although this seems incomparable, several non-Sami Norwegians I spoke to thought this was not as legitimate a use of bunads as theirs and thought the comparison, to my wearing one, legitimate.
On another occasion, I wore another friend’s costume. This time it was a gákti. We were at a workshop that had included a discussion of gákti. My friend had her gákti with her, to show people. While I was admiring it, she told me I could try it on. I did and I have to admit that it was a thrill. However, this time there was no question of my being seen in public wearing it. My friend was very careful to make sure that the door to the room was closed and she told me not to leave the room while I was wearing it. It would not have been right for anyone to see me in a gákti, as I am not Sami. Anyone who saw me would know it was her gákti as she had made it herself and was known for her skill as a duojár. Also, she was from a community that few people in the area were from, so it would have been easily recognised.

These two stories explain some of the importance of costume, both Norwegian bunads and Sami gákti, in Norway. In one sense, the bunad has a more flexible presence in Norway than the gákti. On the other hand, the gákti is more loaded with meaning, individuality and political importance. This is due partly to the efforts Sami people have had to make to be able to present themselves in their costumes.

Costume is a visual language that people in Norway are well versed in. For the Sami community, gákti are important indicators of their ethnic and Indigenous presence in Norway and other Nordic countries. Whatever a person’s relationship to wearing a costume, they have to face the fact that it is a strong symbol of their identity and in Norway one that is unmistakable for most people.
Bunads

By no means do all non-Sami Norwegians own or wear a bunad but the numbers have been increasing in recent decades. It is a nationalistic act to wear a bunad — something to be proud of as a Norwegian. They are also important signifiers of people’s national, regional and familial histories and allegiances. Bunads from some regions are better known than others. The East Telemark bunad (Fig. 4.13) is worn by Queen Sonja of Norway and is considered to be particularly beautiful.

![Fig. 4.13 Queen Sonja of Norway wearing the East Telemark bunad (n.d.)](image)

Women’s bunads consist of a skirt, waistcoat and shirt or a dress and shirt. They are often embroidered and are worn with black shoes with silver buckles. There are a number of optional accessories, including an embroidered purse, an embroidered apron, a hat or headpiece, a scarf, a cape and silver jewellery (Figs 4.14 & 4.15). Men’s bunads usually consist of three-quarter-length pants, a
shirt, a jacket with silver buttons, and woollen socks. They are worn with black shoes and occasionally a hat and/or a scarf (Fig. 4.16). Children wear small versions of women’s and men’s bunads. Many people do not own all the accessories to their bunad. Most often they will have some silver jewellery, most commonly the silver brooches worn on the shirt. The design of each element of a bunad is different from others, so making the overall combination easily recognisable as belonging to the particular region after which they are named.
The construction of contemporary bunads began in earnest at the turn of the 20th century, during a period of Norwegian nationalism and mainly through the work of Hulda Garborg and Klara Semb.

Most areas of Norway have their own bunad, even where there are no records of local traditional folk costume. In these cases the bunads are constructed, based on and inspired by, other things than clothes, like an embroidered purse, a shoe, or the local flora and nature. It has become important for many communities to have their own bunad, and therefore we have a large variety of bunads today, with very different historical backgrounds (Norsk Institutt for Bunad- og Folkedrakt16 c2009, n.p.).

For an outfit to be a bunad it needs to be registered as such by the Bunad- og Folkedraktrådet (eng Bunad and Folk Costume Council) (2009, n.p.), whose purpose is to: ‘promote, protect and further the use and production of bunads and folk costumes in Norway, as an expression of cultural identity’ [my translation]. The Bunad- og Folkedraktrådet is part of the Norsk Institutt for Bunad- og Folkedrakt, which holds a collection of material related to bunads and folk costumes and conducts research into them.

The first bunad a person acquires is usually for their confirmation, when they are around 15 years old. Assuming it still fits them, people often then have this costume for some years and could wear it at their wedding, other people’s weddings, christenings and confirmations and on Constitution Day each year. Women are more likely to own and wear bunads than men but this is slowly

16 eng The Norwegian Institute for Bunad and Folk Costume.
changing. People do not often own more than one at a time, as bunads are expensive (approximately 2000AUD to 7000AUD\(^{17}\)).

People usually wear bunads belonging to the area in which they grew up, live in, or from which their mother’s family originates. This is complicated by other factors such as personal choice and changes in residence. For instance, Anna lived in Romsa but grew up in a small village in southern Norway. Her father’s family had lived there for hundreds of years but her mother was from Vestfold in western Norway. Anna chose to wear a Vestfold bunad (Fig. 4.17), as she considered it to be nicer than the one from the area in which she grew up. Her children, in turn, would be able to choose which one they would prefer to wear. They could choose

\(^{17}\) These prices are from Norsk Flid Husfliden (2015). Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2005, n.p) estimates that there are approximately 4 billion euros (6.2 billionAUD) worth of bunads in Norway. As the popularity of bunads has increased in the decade since Eriksen made this approximation, today the figure would be considerably higher. The bunad business is dominated by Norsk Flid Husfliden, a chain of stores that sells bunads and the materials to make bunads and provides training in how to make them. Controversially, some bunads have been made more cheaply in China (Hylland Eriksen 2005, n.p.).
the bunad Anna chose to wear or the one from the area in which Anna grew up. If Anna chose to stay in Romsa and bring her children up there, they could also chose to wear a Troms bunad or Romsa festdrakt\textsuperscript{18} (Fig. 4.18).

Gákti

While bunads are associated with non-Sami Norwegian identity, gákti are signifiers of Sami identity and difference from the non-Sami population. Older, negative connotations associated with gákti are being transformed into positive ones, making the gákti a powerful tool in Sami political and social action. Instead of being associated with unsophisticated, rural-dwelling Sami people or, in the case of Sami people in Gáivuotna, less authentically Sami, the gákti has become increasingly accepted and respected. Just as many non-Sami Norwegians wear their bunads on Constitution Day, so many Sami people wear their gákti.

For some Sami people, wearing a gákti is an everyday practice or something they have done on occasion throughout their lives. For others, it is something they are confronted with later in life and have an ambiguous relationship to. For yet others, wearing a gákti has become a symbol of their political position within Sápmi and in the wider Norwegian and/or Fennoscandinavian community. Regardless of people’s relationships to gákti, the costumes represent important regional differences and provide a vehicle for presenting regional allegiances.

Gákti from different regions are quite distinct but share some elements that make them easily identified as Sami. Gákti share a basic design of a flared, collared tunic and pants for men and a flared, calf-length dress for women (Figs 4.19 & 4.20). The tunic and dress are worn with a belt and reindeer leather boots or

\textsuperscript{18} Festdrakt are more localised, often associated with towns or smaller regions than bunads.
shoes (komager) fastened with woven woollen ribbons (Fig. 4.21). Belts are often made from reindeer leather and are decorated with a range of materials, including wool embroidery, metal studs, silver medallions and mica details. Men often wear knives in reindeer leather sheaths\(^{19}\) on their belts and women hang purses from theirs. Children wear a smaller version of adult gåkti.

The tunics are predominately made from plain-coloured wool crepe. Blue, red, green, black, white and fawn are the most commonly used colours. Less formal gåkti can also be made from a wider range of materials such as velvets and floral fabrics. Svensson (1992, p. 64) argues that the introduction of the sewing machine in the 1920s led to an expansion in the repertoire of fabrics used as well as the level of ornamentation on the gåkti.

\(^{19}\) Often men carry two knives; one large and one small. Women often carry a small knife. The sheaths can also be made from reindeer horn or birch wood and can be decorated. More elaborate knives and sheaths are often ceremonial. Some Sámi men also wear knife belts when not wearing a gåkti.
In Fig. 4.19 above, it can be seen that women from some communities wear scarves around their shoulders. These are most desirably imported silk scarves with long fringing or woollen tartan scarves. They are usually in bright colours, with red tartan being the most popular. The scarves are fastened at the neck and chest by circular silver brooches, similar to the silver jewellery worn with and on bunads. In Gáivuotna, scarves are not worn as often as in some other areas. However, some people wear a *luhkká* (shawl) made from the same material as the gákti. Hats are not worn by everyone and not all the time. The best-known hat is the ‘four-pointed cap [sme *savka*], poetically called "the cap of the four winds", or rather cardinal points, worn in several varieties by the men’ (Svensson 1992, p. 65). They are worn particularly in Finnmárku and north-west Finland. Many people do not own a hat to match their gákti and if they do they wear it on certain occasions such as when it is very cold or at formal events.

The coat [tunic] made of cloth … displays the greatest regional divergence, with variations seen in colour, shape and embellishment. The basic colour of the cloth is blue in various shades, but black and white occur, as well
as green in rare instances. A few narrow strips in red, yellow, green and blue, colours characteristic for all Sámi ornamentation, are attached in such a way as to beautify the costume and make it regionally distinctive (Svensson 1993, p. 63).

The regional differences in the shape of the tunic include the flare of the tunic as well as: the wearing or not of scarves and silver jewellery; embroidery on the garments; and the design of the neckline, such as the Lyngen gákti, which is worn in Gáivuotna and has a chest piece with a high neckline (Fig. 4.24).

As with other things in Sami life, some gákti are more readily recognised by the wider population. This, yet again, leads to some Sami people being considered ‘more’ Sami when compared with others because of the gákti they are wearing. One of the reasons for this is the history of gákti wearing in Sami communities and the frequency with which they have been worn. The gákti from inner Finnmárku are most easily recognised and most commonly used as generic images of gákti in Norway.

Fig. 4.22 A couple wearing Guovdageaidnu wedding gákti (Hætta n.d.)
The Guovdageaidnu tunic (Fig. 4.22) and savka (Fig. 4.23) are probably the most widely recognised. This is due in part to the level and continuity of usage. They are also those most closely associated with reindeer herding communities. This is changing with time as regional differences within the Sami community are discussed in more detail and the wearing of gákti becomes more common in all regions.

Gákti are worn more often than bunads. Gákti and bunads are both worn at events celebrating important life stages such as weddings and confirmations, as well as on Constitution Day, but it was not unusual to see people wearing their gákti at less formal parties and at meetings. I did not see nor could imagine a person wearing a bunad at a meeting or a party that was not connected to an event marking a stage of life.

Gákti designs have undergone a similar process of revitalisation to that of bunads. In areas where there has been a discontinuous history of everyday use, recent decades have seen research into and development of regionally
appropriate designs. Just as for bunads, the information for gákti designs has at times been gleaned from historical sources. The weight of historical evidence gives legitimacy to newer gákti designs. In contrast with bunads, gákti do not have to be the Bunad- og Foledraktrådet. Acceptance is through informal community approval and adoption of the outfit.

On one level, wearing a gákti is an act of defiance, a direct and obvious way of confronting the non-Sami community with difference. Wearing a gákti is one way of showing the strength of the community and its ability to retain its unique cultural elements. This depends on the context in which a gákti is worn. In some communities wearing a gákti is unremarkable whereas in others it is highly remarkable. These reactions vary depending on what kind of gákti is worn and by whom. Below are three stories explaining some of the complexities surrounding who can wear a gákti.

Toril got her first gákti when she married Thomas in 1999. She grew up and still lived in Gáivuonbahta but was not given a gákti at her confirmation, as they were not available. She said that to begin with it felt strange to wear a gákti, as if she were a fake of some sort. She now proudly wears it. Thomas is not Sami, so he cannot wear a gákti. In fact, it would be unusual for him ever to wear one. Vibeke, another resident of Gáivuotna, said that it was harder for men to become Sami than women and that while a non-Sami woman could have a gákti when she married a Sami man, this was not possible for a non-Sami man who married a Sami woman.

Years after his marriage, one non-Sami man, who had married into the community, reluctantly admitted that he would wear a gákti if he were offered one.
His reluctance was because he considered it a privilege to be Sami and doubted that he had the necessary credentials, although he did have some Sami relatives deep in the past. Later in the same conversation, he said that he felt Sami to some extent but this was only after many years of working in the Sami community on Sami issues, and having married a Sami woman and brought up his children as Sami.

Lena was a Sami woman living in Gáivuotna. She had four children who were all teenagers or older. She told me that she and her children owned gákti and bunads and wore whichever was more appropriate for the occasion. Her husband was not Sami and he had only a bunad. Lena said that she and her children were slowly wearing their gákti more often than their bunads and that she wore her gákti most often when she was in the southern Norway. Lena and her family were unusual but their choices show the flexibility there was for wearing bunads and gákti and the level of acceptance that existed in some families. Individual decisions are made about when to wear bunads or gákti and Lena explained to me that some people had no problem distinguishing which one was more appropriate.

This raises the issue of the difficulties people face when choosing to wear a gákti for the first time, as it can be seen as a request for acceptance from other Sami people. The regional aspects of gákti lead to a person’s position within the wider Sami community being instantly recognisable. For some communities, such as that in Gáivuotna, where the regional gákti was revived in the 1990s and is being worn with increasing frequency, this has also meant negotiating the recognition of their gákti and acceptance of them wearing it.
The revival of the regional gákti in Gáivuotna was driven by the efforts of Sami organisations such as the Gáivuona Sámesearvi (eng Gáivuotna Sami Association), which undertook research and reproduction efforts to reproduce the local gákti (usually referred to as the Lygen gákti\(^\text{20}\)). In 1995, the results of this research were published in the booklet entitled *Sjøsamisk klesbruk i gamle Lyngen: Mearrasámi bivttasv ierrut boares Ivgus* (Sea Sami clothing usage in old Lyngen) (Antonsen & Olsen 1995).

Riddu Riđđu has also been instrumental in the revitalisation of the gákti in the region, particularly by providing platforms for the wearing of the gákti and influencing the way it is perceived. As discussed in Chapter Three, in 2003 the Riddu Riđđu Searvi participated in a project to promote gákti in Gáivuotna. The project concluded with the production of a set of 10 postcards featuring

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\(^{20}\) Lygen is the Norwegian name of the region in which Gáivuotna lies.
photographs of young Sami people wearing gákti in a variety of settings (Fig. 3.17). The postcards were designed to present gákti in a way that reflected the relationship of young people to gákti and to promote the wearing of gákti by young people.

The festival has also provided a place where people can wear their gákti without fear of criticism. This was particularly important when people in Gáivuotna first began wearing gákti in the mid-to-late-1990s. Several people involved with Riddu Riđđu spoke to me about the difficulties they faced when they first wore a gákti.

Mette, an active member of the Riddu Riđđu staff, told me:

> it was hard, for example, the first time wearing a gákti because what if people speak to you in Sami language and you can’t answer? That was the worst. But right now, I think also for other Sami people who never have these kinds of problems with the language, or the symbol, they also understand, in a way, why it’s like that.

This highlights perceived expectations of a person ability to speak Sami. They could be called on to exhibit cultural skills they are not confident with if they made claims to Saminess through wearing a gákti. One thing Mette did not mention is the further scrutiny attracted because of the regional design of the gákti she wore. Her Gáivuotna gákti would show that she is from a predominantly Norwegian-speaking community and this could prompt unsympathetic people, as an expression of power, to point this out by speaking to her in Sami.

Other Riddu Riđđu staff members explained that they also had difficulties when they first wore a gákti:

> People wore their kofte [gákti] and walked around the back way to avoid people. People are so proud now of the kofte (Per).

> It was very much harder for us to wear gákti, for example (Toril).
Here, in 1995, it was more difficult because I was yelled at by a boy from G. He just told me to ‘fuck off with your kofte’ and that was the first time I had worn one that I had sewn myself. I started to cry (Else).

One of the people quoted above, Else, also spoke of the importance of being accepted by other Sami people upon first wearing a gákti:

I remember the first time I wore a gákti. It was at the Easter Festival at Guovdageaidnu. I was really scared. There was an acceptance. Å_ didn’t have a gákti and felt so stupid. She said she wanted to go home. I was so scared but it went so well. It was a kind of acceptance.

Else went on to say ‘Riddu is an important place to show identity. Many people want to have kofte just for Riddu. Now it’s just jubilation.’ At Riddu Riđđu, many people wear a gákti or some part of it. In particular, the luhkká (shawl), with or without other parts of the gákti, is commonly worn by staff and audience members (Figs 4.26 & 4.27). It has become emblematic of being at Riddu Riđđu. The wearing of gákti or parts of it such as the luhkká, has played an important role in the acceptance of the Gáivuotna gákti in the community, including younger members. As Espen said, ‘Sami young people wear them here at Riddu. I think it’s kind of cool, not ‘hari’ [eng tacky] anymore. It’s more cool and modern. It’s not hari to be Sami’.
If there were any doubt about the political nature of wearing gákti it can be challenged by considering an alternative scenario. I cannot imagine someone wearing their bunad to Riddu Riđđu, unless it was done out of ignorance or as a deliberately inflammatory or humorous act. To flaunt Norwegianness so overtly would be highly provocative, partly because people would not generally wear a bunad at such events and also because Riddu Riđđu is primarily a Sami event and symbolises a struggle against norwegianising efforts.

However, whatever the motivations of whoever and wherever, gákti are worn as a conscious presentation of Saminess. They are worn in the knowledge that they represent difference in some contexts and regional similarity in others. At the risk of overusing my point for other expressions and presentations of Saminess: it is not the wearing of a gákkti that makes a person Sami; it is their Saminess that prompts them to wear a gákkti.

Yoik

The yoik has always been one of the cornerstones of Sámi identity, a strong expression of Sámi distinctness (Lehtola 2002, p. 106).

Yoik is the best known of the Sami performing arts and is widely practised privately and publicly. It is, as Lehtola (2002, p. 106) states above, ‘a strong expression of Sámi distinctness’ that is recognised by Sami and non-Sami people. As with other aspects of Sami culture, yoik plays a role in non-Sami imaginings of Sami people and is incorporated into Norwegian national representations.

21 ‘Northern Sami distinguishes between the terms “juoigat” which means yoiking and “luohti” which means a joik’ (Hanssen 2014, p. 4).
Yoik is a Sami form of chant that ‘is vocal without necessarily being verbal’ (Anderson 2005, p. 214). A yoik can include words but this is not generally done to create a song; words are included for form as well as function. Ánde Somby (1995, p.1), a well-known yoik artist and academic in Norway, and who is mentioned in Chapter Two in relation to the Riddu Riddu Artic Youth Camp, described how yoik differs from European forms and notions of singing as:

One does not yoik about someone or something, but one simply yoiks someone or something. In a manner of speaking, a yoik has no object. In fact, it is altogether impossible to envision yoik in terms of subject and object.

On the other hand, Myrdene Anderson (2005, p. 22) argues that ‘the emotional associations with particular natural and interpersonal phenomena are the subject and object of the yoik’. A person yoiks something or somebody or somewhere. They do not yoik ‘at them’ or ‘to them’ or ‘about them’. It is a practice of bringing to life, or invoking, an essence or being.

Anderson (2005, p. 221) further explains that yoiks:

may be about people, subsistence activities associated with reindeer herding, other animals, landscape, or nature generally, and these common yoiks are imbued with profound personal power without being actually dangerous (Gaski and Kjellström et al).

People yoik to express, impress, connect, celebrate, ridicule, threaten, invite and warn themselves and others. There is also a spiritual aspect to yoik. As Ebba Westerfjell explains, in the film Firekeepers (2007), ‘Through yoik … you can give something of yourself to others. Through yoik, you can call on help from the spirit world’.

A yoik can be created for someone in particular and it becomes their yoik.22 ‘It is

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22 Such yoiks can be gifted and inherited.
not the one who composes a yoik who owns it, but rather that which is yoiked’ (Gaski 1999, p. 5). Ownership extends to who can perform a yoik. Einár, a respected yoik artist, created a yoik for his uncle, who was also a yoik artist. Einár told me that the yoik belonged to his uncle but that Einár retained the right to perform it, and that only he and his uncle should perform that particular yoik. A personal yoik will usually be created by someone who knows the person well. This is different from being yoiked, as people can yoik someone with a different yoik from the yoik that is theirs.

Good yoik artists command much respect within the Sami community. Many practitioners learn and practice their skills within family contexts. To this extent, the origins of yoik are quite private. Informal performances of yoik continue to be an important part of Sami life. People yoik during many celebratory and close personal occasions.

The private nature of yoik is linked, to some degree, to the history of yoik. Yoik was banned in many communities because of its links to shamanism (perceived or otherwise) and was considered a threat to the spread of Lutheranism and Læstadianism. Yoik was sin (Lehtola 2002, p. 106; Juuso in Helander & Juuso 1998, p. 133) and ‘it is said that the devil fallen back from heaven yoiked’ (Lehtola 2002, p. 106). It was banned by the Læstadian Church but now it is allowed as folk music. As one Sami person explained, ‘Yoik went from being a pagan tradition to being a folk tradition’.

Gaski (1997a, pp. 9–10) explains that yoik also presented a political challenge to the dominant regime:
in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries … the yoik, became a medium for inside agitation among the Sami, challenging them to resist the demands of the colonizers that they give up their language and culture … The yoik was chosen as a form of expression not only because of its central position among the Sami, but also because the yoik [no italics in the original] had the subtle system of double meaning and metaphorical imagery. It was necessary to camouflage the yoik’s political content because some of the public officials had acquired an elementary knowledge of the Sami language.

This, along with the response from the Læstadian church, led to yoik taking on an important role as a point of difference and resistance. To yoik came to be an act of defiance against attempts to eradicate Saminess.

For many years, the stereotypical yoik performance was that of drunken Sami people yoiking in public. This was not often countered by positive experiences of yoik, as it was not otherwise often heard in public. Today this stereotype is being redressed by the artists and practitioners of yoik in a variety of ways.

Yoik has always had a special place in Sami consciousness because of role as identity marker in the old religion… in more recent years, it has experienced a renaissance as a source of inspiration for modern musicians (Gaski 2008, p. 350).

The recent history of yoik has involved some key artists who have popularised yoik through a variety of means and approaches. One of the most prominent of these was Nils-Alsak Valkeapää who, in the 1970s, was the first to release records featuring yoik. Valkeapää recorded a variety of yoik styles, including traditional yoik, and paved the way for the recording of all forms of yoik. This was the beginning of a wave of musicians experimenting with yoik and other forms of music, especially contemporary music (see Jones-Bamman 2001, pp. 194–198). Since the 1990s, Mari Boine has been very influential in promoting yoik and has had the most international fame, partly due to being included on Peter Gabriel’s Real World label.
Thomas Hilder (2012, p. 163) states that:

expanding rapidly over the last decades, Sámi music has become a
dynamic arena characterised by a plethora of musicians, performance
spaces, musical institutions and mediating technologies’.

I also agree with Hilder’s (2012, pp. 162–163) further assertion that Sami music
has played a part in the Sami political movement. Yoik is just one area of Sami
music but it plays a key role as it is uniquely Sami and thus has taken on a
particular role as a signifier of Sami identity.

Today, Sami music covers a range of genres including traditional yoik, techno,
rock, heavy metal, pop, new age, ambient and Sami singing. Sami singing is a
genre that developed particularly in inner Finnmárku after yoik was discouraged.
It can be described as Sami folk singing and is often accompanied by acoustic
guitar. This genre shares some sounds and intonation with yoik but is more reliant
on words. The popularity of this genre is indicated in its inclusion, along with yoik,
in the largest Sami vocal competition in Norway, the Guovdageaidnu Grand Prix,
held each year during the Guovdageaidnu Easter Festival.

Performers travel to this and other festivals throughout Sápmi, including Riddu
Ridđu. They also perform in venues in places such as Romsa and other cities
and towns. Just as in other parts of the world, recording has become inexpensive
in Norway and less well-known groups are able to produce their own recordings
for sale and distribution. Many of the bands that played at Riddu Riđđu had
recorded albums for sale even though many of them did not have recording
contracts. The internet is also used to distribute music through sites such as MIC
(Music Information Centre of Norway) and iTunes, via which it is possible to
download songs and albums.
As well as being part of the music industry and an important expression of Saminess, yoik has become a symbol of Saminess (and to some extent Northern Norwegianess). Yoik has been included in public events including Norwegian national events. The most striking occasion of this was a lone yoik artist, Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, beginning the Winter Olympics opening ceremony in Lillehammer in 1994. This was an important defining moment and one that had an impact on the image of Sami people in Norway. The more exposed the wider population has become to yoik the more legitimate, and less associated with drunkenness it has become.

For non-Sami Norwegians, at times yoik is a tool of derision, at others a carrier of difference that commands respect. Yoik is a Sami practice that is rarely taken up by non-Sami people, although perhaps the most famous yoik ever performed was in the song ‘Samiid Ædnan’ performed by Sverre Kjeldsberg, a non-Sami Norwegian, at the Eurovision Song Contest in 1980 (see Gaski 2008, p.353; Jones-Bamman 2001, pp.199–203). The song was written in response to the Áltá conflict (discussed in Chapter Six) and included a traditional yoik by Mattis Hætta, a Sami man from Máze. The yoik became known as ‘Låla’ because Mattis Hætta used the sounds ‘lo’ and ‘la’ instead of the Sami text (Jones-Bamman 2001, p. 201). This yoik has become the most recognisable of all yoiks and, for most non-Sami Norwegians, probably the only recognisable yoik.

Sitting on the benches in the middle of the crowd, Magnus and I watched the soccer while talking about Sami issues. On the other side of the pitch a crowd of spectators sat or stood while cheering, shouting and singing. Magnus pointed out

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23 Sámiid Ædnan is a Sámi term for Sámi homeland.
a group of approximately 10 young male Romsa supporters wearing Sami hats (Fig. 4.28). There was a near goal and during the chanting we could hear yoik, or at least an attempt to mimic yoik. They were chanting ‘Låla’. The yoik was being used by the group of Romsa supporters to identify themselves in the crowd. Later the opposing side’s supporters chanted this yoik back at them as a form of ridicule and derision.

For the non-Sami supporters at the football match, their relationship to Saminess is that, as Northerners, as part of the image of the North in Norway (discussed in Chapter Six), and they associate and are associated with being Sami, even if they are not. The stereotype is that people from the North are country bumpkins, the unsophisticated cousins of the southerners. The image of being Sami is similar and is incorporated into notions of being from the North. This derision was articulated in the chanting of ‘Låla’ by the opposing team’s supporters. Part of what the Romsa team supporters were doing was in response to this. They took the tool of derision, the yoik, and used it as a source of strength and a point of difference.

This example explains to some extent the perception and use of yoik in broader
national and regional, predominantly non-Sami contexts. At Riddu Riddu yoik is performed in private, in places such as audience members’ lavvus, and in public on the stage and at events for the staff and visiting artists. It also plays an important role in international cooperation with other Indigenous groups. One of the important ways this was achieved was in yoik workshops, including those that were part of the Arctic Youth Camp, where groups of young Indigenous people came together to learn yoik and then performed together on stage. This realisation of international Indigenous cooperation is an important aspect of what Riddu Riddu staff work to achieve and is part of broader participation in international Indigenous forums by Sami people.

International Indigenous forums

The presentation of Saminess on an international scale is closely tied to participation by Sami representatives in international Indigenous forums and in cooperation with other Indigenous peoples. This stems from national, regional and local community interests and is presented in several arenas and in a number of locations while. This participation and cooperation has led to the recognition of the Sami community in Norway as Indigenous, an ability to draw on the influence of international instruments, and the creation of strong ties with other Indigenous peoples.

Sami representatives have been involved in international Indigenous organisations since they were established in the 1970s (see Minde 2003; Minde 2008b)24. This involvement has played an important role in the development of

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24 See Minde 2008b for a discussion of the history of international Indigenous instruments in the UN such as the World Council of Indigenous Peoples and Sami people’s involvement in them.
politics in Sápmi and at the same time Sami political interests have found their way into international arenas. Forums that have long had Sami representation include the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), and the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP).25

Sami involvement has gone hand in hand with the increased recognition of the Fourth World in general and the need for governments to address the issues that face Fourth World populations in their national boundaries. The level of the involvement of Sami people in the development of even the definitions of indigeneity is discussed by Henry Minde (2003, p. 85), who argues that Sami indigeneity was questioned in the early period of international Indigenous cooperation and that their acceptance and participation was partly responsible for the broadness of early definitions of indigeneity.

Not only has Sami participation been influential in the development of international Indigenous bodies and their activities, but it has been instrumental in changing the image of Sami people within Norway: ‘The Saami themselves have pushed the perception of rights into the public political conscientiousness by appealing to human rights standards and international law’ (Broderstad 2008, p. 12). This has been influenced by an expressed aim in Norway ‘to being in the international forefront of issues pertaining to the development of human rights and the democratization of interethnic relations’ (Thuen 1995, p. 236).

25 The WCIP was active from 1975 until 1996.
This intent has been realised in the Norwegian government’s adoption of a range of international instruments. In 1990, The Norwegian government was the first to ratify the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) (ILO 1996–2012), which led to the recognition of the Sami population in Norway as Indigenous. This is often cited as a turning point in Sami political activity and the starting point of recent changes to the capacity of Sami people to access self-governance and make claims to land and resources.

Minde (2003, p. 80) argues that Sami participation in international forums was also ‘in the context of the general re-evaluation of Sami culture that was also occurring at the same time’. Eidheim (1997, pp. 36–37) explains further that:

during the course of the 70s and 80s…The spread of an awareness of a shared destiny and common interests with comparable peoples in distant lands planted the seeds of a new and more global dimension in the discourse on the significance of being Sami… To a greater and greater extent, the Sami viewed themselves as participants in a greater global movement of indigenous peoples which fought for their rights and their cultural survival as peoples on the international arena.

Subsequent action by Sami representatives helped shape contemporary constructions of Saminess and had a significant impact on the tenor of Sami political activity.

However, it is important to note that:

the fact that one can describe such processes as indigenization in general and even global terms, does not mean that indigenous movements are mere inventions as has often been argued… the identification process works very much because the images created in such movements resonate with those who participate and that this is because they are grounded in specific shared experiences (Friedman 2008, p. 40).

Those engaged in international Indigenous activities are not simply hybrid cosmopolitans (Friedman 2008, p. 40) but engage as significantly in local and localised activities and tie their identities to local identity categories.
Riddu Riđđu provides a good example of this engagement, as it offers a local context for international Indigenous cooperation and participation. The identities of those involved in the festival are clearly tied to the local community but their global Indigenous ties are overtly expressed through their work with the festival and in their choice to participate in an international Indigenous peoples’ festival. At Riddu Riđđu, international Indigenous participation and cooperation happens most significantly — that is, in Gáivuotna the participation is international but happens on a local stage. One factor that has contributed to the festival’s capacity to attract attention to Sami issues has been in the attendance and participation of artists from other Indigenous communities.

People working for Riddu Riđđu said that they saw the connections to other Indigenous peoples as valuable and that they were conscious of the similarities between their own experiences and that of others. Lisbeth said:

> What is happening in the valley is closely related to what is happening in other Indigenous communities all over the world … three processes. The first one I call the political process, the second one is culture evolution and the third is institutionalisation of Sami culture. I could make another process, like the legal process.

At Riddu Riđđu, these similarities are the catalyst for cooperation in a number of activities involving international Indigenous artists and visitors beyond their main purpose for attending, such as performing at the concerts. The organisers make a concerted effort to develop opportunities to get to know their guests as well as working on meaningful projects together.

**Conclusion**

The recognition of aspects of people’s presentations of themselves and the arena in which they choose to present themselves are important to how Sami people
define, maintain and promote their Saminess. A person’s Saminess may be expressed, embodied and performed through pointing out physical specifics, creating and using duodji, wearing a gákti, yoiking or representing the Sami community in an international forum.

Other aspects of Sami expressive culture have similarly important roles in the presentation of Saminess. Literature, media and dance are some of them. Yet others are the management and development of education, continuing primary industry practices such as fishing, farming and reindeer herding, and engagement with the tourism industry.

The importance of these carriers of Saminess are summed up well in the following excerpt:

The process of ethnic incorporation and establishment of a Saami political movement required images and symbols that ‘worked’ both internally within the Saami population and externally vis-à-vis the Norwegian government and public. These images were built from language and other cultural features. They consisted of visible signs that articulated a difference from the symbols of Norwegian culture, such as Saami costumes, music and handicraft and other cultural features such as ecological sensibility, equality, harmony and spirituality (Schanche, 1993) (Kramvig 2005, p. 47).

To return to my initial question of how a person can identify someone as Sami, the answer is complex and the engagement with any one of the aspects of Sami culture discussed in this chapter will not make a witness sure of a person’s Saminess. It is a combination of these aspects of behaviour and presentation that can bring a person to that conclusion. If I heard a person yoik while wearing a gákti at an international Indigenous peoples’ conference or at Riddu Riddu, I could be pretty sure they were Sami. Of course, the answer can be simply gained by asking a person if they are Sami. The next three chapters discuss the main
aspects of Saminess articulated in people’s explicit verbal declarations of being Sami, at times in direct response to being asked if they were Sami.
Chapter Five

‘My family are Sami’: articulations of relatedness

During my time in Sápmi, I asked several people what it was that made them Sami what made them see themselves as Sami. The responses to my questions varied: ‘That’s a hard one’; ‘Um’; ‘Well my grandmother was Sami’; ‘I just am’; ‘My parents are Sami’; ‘My family are Sami’; ‘I was brought up to be Sami’; ‘I grew up in a Sami family/community’. These responses occasionally came after I had explained what I meant by the question: ‘What are the things that make you Sami?’ Once or twice the question elicited a short response but mostly people responded in detail, after some consideration. The most common structure of the responses was: ‘My parents/grandparents are/were Sami, I grew up in … (a Sami community or the North) and I speak (or do not speak) Sami’. These next three chapters reflect the structure of those responses. This chapter deals with the first of the indicator groups: relatedness.

A person cannot claim Saminess without familial connection:

kinship is the most important organizational category of Saami society at the same time as the Saami kinship classification system is distinguished by its openness and the willingness to integrate others (Kramvig 2005, p.57).

This is certainly true for identification as much as it is for many other aspects of Sami culture. Familial connection can be attained through birth, adoption or marriage. However, claims to Saminess through adoption and marriage were not
uncontested and were rare in comparison with claims through birth. Regardless of the type of connection, all Sami people claim familial connection. In this way, Sami articulations of family have played a crucial role in the continuation of Sami identity. Within official definitions of Saminess (see Chapter Two), familial connections are specifically mentioned as a primary way that Saminess is transferred. Many definitions of Saminess include the condition that to be Sami a person must have an antecedent who spoke or speaks Sami. This assumes that a person who speaks Sami can be defined as Sami and that this Saminess is transferred through familial connection. As one person said, ‘Blood and language make people Sami’.

The concept of family is approached in terms of relatedness, as ‘shaped by human engagement’ (Carsten 2004a, p. 6). This allows the discussion to open up to include terms of relatedness, as used in Sami people’s conceptions of themselves as Sami: the way Sami ‘people live out and articulate notions of kinship’ (Carsten 2004a, p. 17).

Rather than focussing on formal kinship, I am interested in articulations of relatedness that reveal Sami conceptions of relatedness. A variety of forms of relatedness, as articulated by Sami people, are explored, ranging from the traditional forms of relatedness and cooperation embedded in the *siida* system, to the less-than-traditional evocation of the mafia in Olmmáiváaggi. Further, the notion of a ‘Riddu Ridđu family’ is considered as an indicator of those who work for the festival forming a community of practice.

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1 Language is discussed in detail in Chapter Seven.
Janet Carsten (2000, p. 3) argues in *Cultures of relatedness: new approaches to the study of kinship* that the Western biological focus on kinship has previously been destabilised by Schneider and others and one way to approach kinship is to: ‘describe relatedness in terms of indigenous statements and practices’. With this in mind, clearly Sami ‘ways of acting out and conceptualising relations between people, as distinct from notions derived from anthropological theory’ (Carsten 2004b, p. 310) are valuable for discussions of Sami relatedness. The focus on the contemporary continuity and reshaping of Sami identity lends itself to looking at relatedness, as expressed by Sami people. It is the public as well as the private articulations of relatedness that give weight for the argument that Sami people actively articulate aspects of Saminess to achieve continuity and change in identification processes.

I agree with Ingold (1991, p. 360), Schneider (2004), Sahlins (2013) and others when they argue that kinship is culturally constructed, peculiar to Western thought, and writ large in anthropological discussions. I do not agree with Kronenfeld’s reading of Schneider as arguing ‘that the things that we describe as kinship are all figments of our anthropological imagination’ (Kronenfeld 2012, p. 678). My understanding of Schneider’s position is that the relationships described and discussed by anthropologists under the term ‘kinship’ are, to a degree, shaped by the expectations imposed on systems of relationships because of the history and theory of kinship held tightly by some in anthropology. I do not regard Schneider’s to be a call to entirely abandon kinship as the content of discussion, but that it was in need of reconfiguration by way of a reflexive turn. An important part of this reconfiguration became the problematic nature of the division of biological and social relationships.
To abandon the distinction between biologically and culturally-based kinship would be problematic (Latour in Carsten 2000, p. 33) and abandoning kinship (Schneider 2004, pp. 257–274) is unnecessary, rather:

‘Relatedness’ makes possible … ways of being related without relying on an arbitrary distinction between biology and culture, and without presupposing what constitutes kinship (Carsten 2000, p. 5).

Further, as Sahlins (2013, p. 2) describes the current anthropological orthodoxy, kinship can be explained as:

the proposition that any relationship constituted in terms of procreation, filiation or descent can also be made postnatally or performatively by culturally appropriate action.

The positions taken by Carsten (2000) and Sahlins (2013) allow for kinship to be discussed without a need to divide or privilege cultural or biological aspects of kinship. Using Sami people’s statements and the practices these statements indicate to describe relatedness in order to understand how Sami relatedness influences Sami identity means privileging the content of relatedness. The articulations provide specific, externalised insight into Sami people’s notions of relatedness.

Sami people I spoke to had a clear understanding of the difference between biological and cultural kinship, with biological kinship being the norm in discussions about family. However, kinship was also expressed in terms of cultural connections — for instance, via adoption, marriage, friendship and working relationships. Being Sami, via relatedness, again both biologically and culturally, was most commonly the first part of people’s explanation of what made them Sami. ‘My family are Sami’ is a statement of relatedness. While this wasn’t the exact phrase that was always used, it encompasses the range of statements of relatedness I heard.
The biological nature of Saminess is also contentious on the grounds that it is difficult to separate the claim to biology from the claim to cultural transference. To be born into a Sami family includes being enculturated into Sami lifeways. I spoke to people who claimed Saminess through biological connection when it was deemed necessary. Their claims to Saminess were strengthened by claims to enculturation from birth. Kari was born into a Sami family but was enculturated as non-Sami, whereas Siri was born into a non-Sami family but was adopted by a Sami family and enculturated as Sami. Both claim to be and are recognised as Sami.

Sami relatedness

The first time I met Gunvor we sat on her couch chatting about all things Sami. She produced a book that recorded the kinship of Guovdageaidnu, the town she grew up and lived and worked in. Gunvor showed me the pages that included her family and pointed out herself and her parents. She told me that the book had been produced before her children could be included and that it needed updating. The book seemed to be a published version of a classic anthropological genealogy that covered the whole town.

On another couch, in Kárášjohka, my partner and I sat talking to the family whose basement we were staying in. Their main source of income for the household was reindeer husbandry and their son, Einár, was telling us about his first reindeer. Einár showed us the book in which all the reindeer earmarkings were recorded, proudly pointing out his own. He explained each element that made up his mark and the origins of them. Each small cut was inherited from a relative: his mother,
father or other family members. He named each and explained how the combination then made his mark unique\textsuperscript{2}.

On a cold winter's night in Olmmáiváaggi, there was wine, women and song. About six women were having a great time drinking wine, telling stories and laughing. We were in a small kitchen and the window next to the table we were sitting at was covered in steam. All the women except me were Sami and from the village. One of the many conversations turned to relationships. The other women realised I didn’t know the history of the relationships between them and others we knew. With much laughter, one of the women drew a kinship diagram in the steam on the window. It showed the history of romantic relationships for those in the room and others we knew well, the endings of those relationships and with whom new ones were formed. Offspring from these relationships were also included. The hilarity was infectious and everyone delighted in telling the stories, correcting each other over minor details and righting the wrong that was my lack of knowledge. It was clearly information crucial to my being in the community. This was not your classic kinship diagram. It was of people and their relatedness through romance, formal and informal, as well as biological ties.

Kari did not consider herself Sami but knew that some members of her family were Sami. She said her uncle was Sami and was known in the family for wearing a gákti almost all the time. Kari’s mother was born in Áltá and many of Kari’s

\textsuperscript{2} See Näkkäläjärvi 1996 for discussion of reindeer earmarking.
mother’s family were still living there. Looking at the family tree on a wall of her mother’s living room, it was obviously split down the middle. It seemed that Kari’s father’s family was not Sami and Kari’s mother’s family was. The majority of Kari’s mother’s family were born and died in well-known Sami communities in Finnmárku and had Sami surnames. Of course, these did not ensure they were Sami but the indications were strong. When asked about this, Kari said, ‘I have Sami family but it is upbringing, not blood, that makes people Sami’.

The ethnobites above show a range of forms of Sami relatedness and articulations of them. The stories of Gunvor and the kinship book, Kari’s family tree and the kinship diagram on the window highlight the use of representations of kinship and systems of record keeping that are not traditionally Sami forms but are used to represent Sami notions of relatedness and family. The story of Einár and his reindeer earmarkings also highlights a traditional Sami system of representation and record keeping (reindeer earmarkings) entwined with a non-traditional one (the published book). Each system is rendered Sami through usage and the content that is represented. The structural differences inherent in the lived forms of Sami relatedness are shown to be capable of being represented in known forms of representation that are not generally recognised as Sami.

The process of representing Sami relatedness in recognisable and readable formats draws attention to some critical ways that Sami people view relatedness. For Gunvor, it is the primacy of biological familial ties. This is not to say that that is the case for Gunvor, or Sami people in general at all times. The story of the

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3 It is not common in Norway to display family trees in such a way. I did not see another one like it. By exhibiting her family in such a way, Kari’s mother was displaying quiet but profound acknowledgement of her family ties.
kinship diagram on the window is testament to this. The relatedness expressed in that case was primarily social rather than biological. Of course, the children of the relationships are considered to have biological familial ties and there was a sense that the sharing of a child was tantamount to creating a familial connection. This position is partially impacted by notions of partnership and parenthood in Norway in general.

In Norway the level of cohabitation (unmarried, live-in partnership) is high, running at 25% in 2001 (Noack 2001, p. 104). In 2011 it was 26% (Statistisk sentralbyrå 2014a, n.p.). For comparison, in Australia in 2011 the figure was 16.2% (Australian Institute of Family Studies 2014, n.p.). This level of cohabitation adds to the social regard for the legitimacy of such unions and leads to that the strength of familial connections not being reliant on the marriage of parents.

Einár’s relatedness was writ upon the ears of his reindeer and the pages of the book that served as the register for reindeer earmarks. The earmarks included in the book were those registered with the Statens Reindriftsforvaltning (Eng Norwegian Reindeer Husbandry Administration). Einár could trace his relatedness through these marks and pages and his main focus remained his Sami forms of relatedness and representation.

For Kari, her Sami relatedness was not as easily determined. While the knowledge that some of her extended family identified as Sami gave her the capacity to claim Saminess, her immediate family did not and, as she said, she was not raised with ‘a Sami consciousness’. Later, Kari investigated this aspect

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4 nor samboer.
of her life and she relied on her relatives beyond her immediate family to fuel her inquiries.

For some Sami people, such as Kari’s mother to an extent, the stigma attached to being Sami led to a need and/or desire to hide their Sami identity. Their Sami family histories had been discarded or concealed from individuals within the family. For others, the recognition of Sami family connections had been continuous. Still others who had some sense of their Sami family history had traced their family trees to find they had extensive Sami family ties. While this indicates Saminess, it may not lead to being able to claim Saminess if a person does not have the cultural proclivities, capacities and knowledges that leads to feeling, being or being accepted as Sami.

Regardless of the basis of claims to Sami relatedness, the bonds formed and the links provided were key drivers in people’s claims to Saminess. As in other aspects of Saminess, relatedness is a fluid and complex set of connections, the treatment of which reveals the agency of Sami people in determining their relationships to Saminess and it provides the power to form and reform Sami relatedness and Saminess.

**Family**

Amongst other things, family predetermines geographical ties, social relationships within communities and access to cultural competencies. It is generally within families that Sami knowledge is transmitted and reinforced. The role of family members as traditors becomes increasingly important in communities, such as Gáivuotna where Saminess has a history of being downplayed or hidden. Many people said that they had learnt their Sami skills
from their parents or grandparents. For others, it was their sense of self as Sami that they were taught: ‘I always knew I was Sami’, ‘My parents always talked about being Sami’. For others it was their grandparents, parents or other family members newly identifying as Sami that made them aware of their Saminess. To use the example of Kari again, when she began identifying as Sami, many of her family members revisited their relationship to being Sami. In this case, again it was biological ties that were relied on in the investigations.

To make a statement such as ‘My mother is Sami’ or ‘My grandparents were Sami’ is to lay claim to a personal Sami history, a familial tie that is innately Sami — because an antecedent is/was Sami, then you are Sami. It is the legitimacy of this claim and the lack of a need to prove this further that shows the importance of familial ties to identifying as Sami. However, having familial ties does not necessarily result in being Sami.

I asked Hiedi, a young volunteer at Riddu Riđđu, if she was Sami and her response was, ‘No, but I think there is some Sami blood in my grandfather because he came from here’. Espen, another young volunteer, replied to the same question with this comment:

my mother … my grandfather was only a quarter or an eighth Sami or something so it would be – I don’t think it’s necessarily stupid, but she doesn’t call herself Sami. Some of my mother’s aunts like, no, my mother’s sister, she lives as Sami. Her husband and their kids wear gákti and they don’t have any more Sami blood than I do … she’s much younger than my mother so my cousins, they wear gákti. She has four kids and they don’t normally wear gákti but they do at special occasions like Sami weddings … and they have a lot of Sami friends … I think it’s because she has a lot more Sami friends than my mother and because she had kind of similar interests. They’re always invited to weddings and things.

Espen’s comment raises several interesting issues, including that Saminess can be seen in degrees. Most people did not engage in discussions about fractions
of Saminess or other identities they claimed, such as Norwegian or Kveni. I suspect this is partly in response to the difficulties such a discussion can create in any sociocultural arena in which authenticity is problematic and would only serve to lessen people’s claims to plurality.

Else said that she preferred not to see blood relations as a precondition for being Sami:

> Because the blood argument is a dangerous way of thinking. It was important 30 or 40 years ago. Sami people are educated and developed politically. The blood argument will kill the Sami.

This is a reference to the complexity of the history of relationships between Sami and non-Sami people. It is also an acknowledgement of what has happened in other Indigenous communities.

Else also spoke of the notion of blood in relation to adoption. Again, she argued that it was not helpful to consider blood as a form of belonging and indicator of Saminess. When asked if someone could be Sami via adoption, she replied, ‘If you use the blood argument, no. If you use the cultural argument, yes. I think if they grow up Sami, I think so, yes’. Else made it clear that the cultural argument outweighed the blood argument. Else’s responses show that to be brought up Sami was the most important thing for her and that family is an important platform for the transmission of Sami knowledge and identity.

Parents, grandparents and other older members of families are key traditors, as are the children within families the future traditors. There has been some discussion of Sami childrearing practices by psychologists. Javo, Rønning, and Heyerdahl (2004) argue that childrearing practices within Sami families and households are different from those of non-Sami families and households. They
conducted research into the influence of Sami parental values and their effects on children’s ethnic identity. Being reared in a specifically Sami way influences individuals beyond the skills learnt. Therefore, Sami children have structurally Sami childhoods not simply contextually or in terms of content.

While I did not look at childrearing practices in detail, I did notice that the parents in Olmmáivággi who wanted their children to be raised with a Sami consciousness made concerted efforts to expose their children as much as they could to Sami cultural practices. The Sami kindergarten played an important role in this and it was clear that the exposure children gained there was highly valued. Some parents also learnt Sami, with the express wish to be able to speak to their children in Sami (discussed in Chapter Seven).

Being part of a Sami family can mean there is transmission of Saminess but it is not a necessary outcome. On several occasions people said, ‘My grand/parent/s are/were Sami but I am not’. A person is not necessarily born Sami but comes to be Sami or non-Sami. This is fluid and can change throughout an individual’s life. The choice to be Sami or the choices family and community members make to have a person come to be Sami are a clear indicator that agency is an important factor in being Sami and they explain the role agency plays in Sami identification (Holland et al 2001). Nina said ‘It is the children’s choice to be Sami’. This was after discussing her bringing up her children as Sami but acknowledging that it would not be necessary for them to identify as such.

Family also determines how one is perceived within the community and so what one’s public persona is, to some extent. A person born into a known Sami family will be assumed to be Sami because their family is. This can be avoided by
moving out of the community in which one’s family is known or recognised. However, while they are in the community, no amount of denial will stop someone from being considered Sami. For Siri’s father, leaving Gáivuotna made it possible to stop being Sami. If he had stayed in Gáivuotna it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to stop being Sami in the eyes of the people who knew him. Because he now lives in a different community, he can choose not to be considered a Sami person in his new community.

For yet others, identifying as Sami later in life can be similarly complex. For a person to newly identify as Sami in a person’s home community where they and their family are not recognised as Sami could prove difficult. Moving from the community is one way of being able to present oneself as Sami without the pressure of denial from community members. When she began identifying as Sami, Kari did not move communities but became involved with a different set of people. She added new associates to her existing ones and expanded her social circle. This was possible because Kari lived in a town with a population large enough for her to shift her associations. Within this transformed personal community she could be accepted as Sami, within this transformed personal community, regardless of whether or not members of her previously existing circle accepted her claim.

It is one thing to have Sami familial connections from birth and another to gain them in other ways. Two ways that Saminess can be claimed, beyond birth into a Sami family, are through marriage and adoption. In Gáivuotna, I met married and adopted people who had come to identify as Sami. In fact, I heard people being corrected when they assumed an adopted person was not Sami because
of the obvious absence of physical relationship to their parents. Claims to Saminess through marriage were more common and more contentious. As many as said it was possible to claim Saminess through marriage also said it was not.

Those who argued that Saminess could be claimed through marriage said that it was possible for women but it was less likely for men. A few people said that men could take on a Sami identity after marrying a Sami woman but didn’t name any specific examples of this. Many argued that only women had the capacity to make the claim and there were examples within the community. The contentious nature of this claim is borne out by the lack of formal recognition of claims to Saminess through marriage.

Those who marry into Sami families cannot enrol to vote for the Sámediggi. This crucial point, as it means they are not officially recognised as Sami. This was explained to me by a Sami person who had worked for the Sámediggi. They said that a person who married into the community could, on the cessation of the marriage, take their official/political rights with them but may abandon their cultural Saminess. This could open up the political landscape to take over from non-Sami people. I do not have comparable data on the official status of people adopted into Sami families. The rules do not stipulate that the familial tie must be biological, so adopted people could potentially be included on the roll for the Sámediggi.

What was clear was that there was a range of opinions on the flexibility of being able to claim Saminess through a range of forms of relatedness. Regardless of formal acknowledgement, there was a range of forms of relatedness that could lead to acceptance as Sami within the community. While there were open
discussions about people’s claims to Saminess through marriage and adoption, they were not often challenged publicly and the community in Gáivuotna seemed open to these relationships making it possible to claim Saminess. These were nuanced and complex conversations and specific aspects of individuals’ life stories were raised to determine the strength of people’s claims. They were also reliant on people’s choices to identify as Sami.

Some Sami families had members who identified as Sami and others who did not. Siri lived in Oslo. Her father did not identify as Sami. However, her relatives on her father’s side, Siri’s paternal uncle and his family, who lived in Gáivuotna, were Sami. Siri went to Gáivuotna to attend Riddu Riddū and talked to me about her interest in the Sami side of the family, which was sparked while attending the festival. She hadn’t realised that her family were ‘so’ Sami and that she could be Sami as well. She never claimed to be Sami although she enjoyed the possibilities it offered her while at the festival. During the festival she wore parts of her cousins’ gákti, a clear sign that she was at least comfortable with being identified as Sami. It was also significant that others had encouraged her to do so in such a public place. To be allowed to wear even some of a gákti was an indication that, at some level, she was accepted as Sami or potentially Sami by members of her family. Again, it was within a family that this was made acceptable. People knew who Siri’s cousins, uncle and aunt were, so they would be very unlikely to challenge or confront her. From my experiences, it was safe to assume that many who met Siri would have considered her Sami even if she did not identify as Sami.
While family clearly made for important connections and conditions for identifying as Sami, other articulations of relatedness were also indicators of Saminess. One that was being used with increasing frequency in Gáivuotna was siida.

Siida

Siida is a ‘traditional’ form of Sami kinship based on cooperation and is considered exclusively Sami (Naess et al 2009; Paine 1957). It has a symbolic position as an irrefutably Sami practice that provides an important indicator of Saminess and Sami difference. While I was in Sápmi, ‘siida’ was used as a term to indicate that the relationships being described were particularly Sami forms, something that members of the Sami community could use to present their difference to the non-Sami community and form boundaries within any given Sami community.

A siida is a group of people belonging to one or more families that primarily works together in relation to access to resources. It is the basis of Sami customary law:

The most fundamental building block in the Saami society was the siida, a village assembly that traditionally played an important role in distribution of land, waters, and natural resources within the Saami society. The siida structure varied in different parts of Sápmi, often depending on the main livelihoods in the various regions. For example, the reindeer husbandry siida differed from the siida structure in the Fishing Saami communities (Ahrén 2004, p. 67).

Siida are most commonly associated with reindeer herding communities. Paine (1982, p. 12) explains the role of siida in relation to reindeer herding:

Reindeer are individually owned and inherited – by women and children as well as men — but they are herded collectively with perhaps several families combining to make one work unit. This husbandry unit (whatever its size) is known as a sii’má and individual families are likely to group and re-group in different sii’má formations in the course of the pastoral year.
In a reindeer herding community a siida can consist of 2 to 12 family units that manage their combined herds of reindeer. A siida usually consists of all the members of two or three families and membership can change throughout the year, depending on the task required (Kramvig 2005, p. 56). A siida ‘is fluid in composition, for its members can always leave to join another band in which they have kin ties’ (Ingold 1980, p. 270).

The pooling of work requires a high level of cooperation and eases the workload of managing a herd of reindeer in small family units. In the spring, when the herds are rounded up for branding and slaughter, family groups will come together to share the workload. It is easier to handle all the reindeer at once and separate the herds once they have been corralled rather than trying to round up one herd at a time.

A siida typically has a norra (council) that makes decisions for the siida. It is usually headed by a male, who also settles disputes (Arhén 2004, p. 72). The norra is responsible for making major decisions about siida activities, such as when and where reindeer will be moved at different times of the year. As Marie explained to me:

Siida winter together and separate during the summer. Each family has one representative on the siida council and the council chooses a leader. In winter they go on hunts for things like wild reindeer. The sick and old get cared for by the siida.

This leadership is not formalised and changes in people’s fortunes can mean changes in leadership (see Ingold 1980, pp. 264 – 285). While men are generally in the highest positions within the siida, women play very important roles, partly

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5 The siida is used in many contexts. In North America the main Sámi organisation is called the Sámi Siida of North America. It has come to mean the cooperative group and extended family, and plays into forms of community, belonging and spiritual connections to the Sámi community in Sápmi.
because many women are owners of their own herds, even if they connect their herds to those of their husbands.

Marius Næss et al (2010) make explicit the link between this form of cooperative pastoral production and kinship, as well as giving a reason for its success. They argue that ‘High levels of relatedness coupled with a large potential labour pool had an increasingly positive effect on herd size’ (Næss et al. 2010, p. 246). This represents an important gain for reindeer pastoralists and highlights the success of such a system of cooperation and relatedness.

The siida system was employed in Coastal Sami communities (Arhén 2004, pp. 70–71). However, I did not investigate their role in Gáivuotna. What I did notice was that the term ‘siida’ was increasingly used to refer to Sami cooperative organisations. The association that manages the land and resources won in the Svartskogen case in Olmmáivággii (discussed in more detail in Chapter Six) is called Čáhput Siida. In 2013, Riddu Siida was established (Fig. 5.2). It was an area of the festival grounds within which a range of activities were available (Riddu Riddu 2013, pp. 22–23). These included a language lavvu, an Indigenous youth lavvu, a Nisga’a6 longhouse in which films were shown, and other dwellings in which a range of groups presented and exhibited (Riddu Riddu 2013, pp. 22–23).

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6 Nisga’a are an Indigenous people from British Colombia, Canada.
‘The family’ in Gáivuotna

In Gáivuotna, another articulation of relatedness was bestowed on a group of people that could be potentially and more generously be referred to as a siida. For me, the group more closely resembled a siida and the relatedness structures embedded in siida. Referring to the *Cosa Nostra* or ‘the family’, this group was called the ‘Jensen/Karlsen mafia’. It was a group of people from Gáivuotna (mainly Olmmáivággi) who were heavily involved in local Sami activities, including at Riddu Riđđu. The use of the term acted as an accusation that this group had profited from the work of others and held some control over work that was done in the community, especially at Riddu Riđđu. Interestingly, it was a member of the Jensen/Karlsen mafia that told me about this conspiracy theory. It was brought up as a subject in jest with a tinge of anger. However, the accusation was taken seriously to some extent and was disputed.

Members of the Jensen, Karlsen and other families had set up groups to work on and mobilise workers for the festival. Because of the close connection to the

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7 While *Cosa Nostra* translates as ‘our thing’, the term was taken from popular cultural references which usually us ‘mafia’ and ‘the family’ synonymously.
organisational structure of Riddu Riddu and familial ties within the group, it was viewed as being structurally similar to a mafia. Close relationships existed within and between the families and there were strong, longstanding connections. Members of these families had developed other forms of relatedness. Members of the Jensen and Karlsen families had become samboer (unmarried life partners) or had married and had they had children together. This was not unusual in Gáivuotna, as several people found life partners within the community.

Members of the Jensen/Karlsen mafia who spoke to me about this considered that the criticism of them stemmed from jealousy or envy and that it was an attempt to stem the concentration of power, however small, in the families. For those outside ‘the family’ to whom I spoke to about this, the issue was generally laughed off and criticism was short lived.

I saw no evidence of members of the Jensen or Karlsen families operating as mafia in such a way as would warrant that menacing moniker. There was no evidence of a conspiracy to profit from Riddu Riddu or any other organisation they were involved in. I am also confident that the criticism was not to be taken quite so literally. This interpretation, of course, depends heavily on one’s idea of profit. If it is material gain, then there had been very little for anyone involved in Riddu Riddu. In fact, the opposite was true, as people had sacrificed much of their time and personal resources to be involved in the organisation.

What is important about the notion of a so-called mafia operating in Gáivuotna is that it was a form of relatedness that was articulated. Its evocation represents the possibility of a group of people developing a form of relatedness within the community that gave them the power to gain control of resources. That those
outside this field of relatedness were aware of it and felt compelled to comment on it reflects the importance of the form of relatedness. People perceived a divide in the community along familial and social lines and that there was a concentration of power that could be manipulated in favour of members of a particular group.

It is interesting to note that the choice of the term used had negative connotations and was not a Sami term. The use of ‘mafia’ has clear negative connotations, and its use served as a form of social control and sanction — to warn the group of passive social surveillance and the need for members of the group to keep a check on their activities. Its use also served to demonstrate a recognition of a subtle separation of this group from others in the community, including and as well as other people who worked for Riddu Riđđu. The evocation of the term was part of internal negotiations of what constituted Sami relatedness: if the people in the group were to be compared to non-Sami forms of relatedness it was a warning that they must watch that they did not overstep the boundaries of Sami forms. ‘Mafia’ is not a Sami term. Perhaps it was chosen precisely because of that as well as reflecting the nature of the criticism being levelled at the group. While I did not pursue this line of inquiry, I am prepared to hazard a guess that had this attention been positive, the term would not have been used.

The Riddu Riđđu family

While the ‘mafia’ label was imposed by people outside the group involved in organising Riddu Riđđu, there was also an internal label for those involved in Riddu Riđđu. Many of them talked about the closeness they felt to the people they had worked with for so many years. Some went so far as to say that it was
like a family, that the closeness was akin to that they felt within their own family. This sense was added to by the fact that many of the people involved in the festival did have familial ties to each other. In a population of little over 2500 and with an organisation that harnesses 300 volunteers, the chances are that people will be related to others in some way. In such a group, personal and family histories are interwoven in complex ways through birth, marriage, friendship and adversity.

Several staff members referred to a ‘Riddu Riđđu family’, a term amongst others\(^8\) used to describe the relationships developed though the work done around the festival and other activities undertaken by the Searvi. The term was inclusive of old and new members of the staff, both permanent and temporary, but it was not applied consistently. At times it was a reference to only longstanding staff and at other times it was an all-encompassing term. Its application depended on the speaker’s standing within the organisation and their personal preferences for using such terms. There was at least one dissenting voice. That person preferred not to use the term, as they considered it a means of creating a clique that could appear impenetrable to some, so putting them off joining the organisation\(^9\).

The staff of Riddu Riđđu form a ‘community of practice’ (Wenger 1998; Lervoll 2007, p. 27–28). This notion was developed in linguistic circles to refer to a group who work together and develop linguistic practice that also acts as a function of the links created. For the staff of Riddu Riđđu, working closely together led to the development of linguistic practice that includes the term ‘Riddu Riđđu family’ to

\(^{8}\) Other terms included ‘Riddu Riddu spirit’ which is discussed in Chapter Nine.

\(^{9}\) Lervoll (2007, pp. 59–60) described one person who had been reluctant to work for Riddu Riđđu because of their perception of the group as impenetrable.
refer to the community of practice itself. It reflects the closeness of the working relationships as well as the personal relationships and relatedness embedded in the community of practice.

Those who used the term also suggested it implied a level of loyalty to the community of practice as well as the work they did together. There was a sense of pride that went with being part of this group and it was considered a valuable group to be a member of. For many, it was this that made working for Riddu Ridđu so attractive and helped them to maintain their enthusiasm for the work, whether or not they agreed with the use of the term.

Conclusion

While biological familial ties remained the most common and powerful determinants of Saminess, they were not the only form of relatedness that carried weight in the process of bestowing or claiming Saminess. Although they were not uncontested, cultural ties such as marriage and adoption were also legitimate channels through which to claim belonging to the Sami community.

Articulations of yet other forms of relatedness were also used as symbols of Saminess. More broadly, the inclusion of this discussion of articulations of relatedness is the explicit link between relatedness and Sami identity. Relatedness is a constituent part of Saminess. It provides ‘proof’ of Saminess and articulation of relatedness is an important practice of being Sami.

Siida, a uniquely Sami form of cooperation and relatedness, was increasingly used to refer to groups of practice outside reindeer herding communities. In Gáivuotna, it was an evocative and useful term to describe particularly Sami organisations. It is also important that these organisations are seen as making
positive changes to the place of Sami people in the community. One much more private and negative evocation of relatedness — ‘mafia’ — was not a reflection of a Sami form of cooperation, so it was not given a Sami term.

The notion of relatedness also extended to the people working for Riddu Riđđu, some of whom referred to the ‘Riddu Riđđu family’. It was clear that the ties in this family was not as strong as traditional familial ties, but served as a potent term used to describe the relatedness developed through the work people did together for and at the festival. It also served to separate those relationships from other social relationships and contributed to establishing the boundaries of the group that constituted the Riddu Riđđu community of practice.

The link between relatedness and being Sami is also closely linked to place and community. Families are located and contextualised through location. Some people said ‘My family is Sami’ this statement was at times articulated as ‘My family are from … (a Sami community/place)’. This compound statement claims family as well as community and place. More often, people differentiated between family and community/place and used the statement ‘I am from … (a Sami community/place)’ very soon after their claim to Sami relatedness, sometimes in reverse order.
Chapter Six
‘I am from ...’: Sami land and community

As in the previous chapter and the one following, this chapter is based on material gathered from discussions with Sami people about what they considered made them Sami. When defining their Saminess the second defining characteristic cited most commonly was that they came from a Sami community. Typical comments included ‘I am from … (a Sami community)’ and ‘My family are from … (a Sami community)’. The terms used for the communities were usually based on place names of an area, town or village. It was clear that location and community were closely intertwined. In the following discussion they are separated into the place in which the community resides and the community itself.

Sami relationships to land and sea, or more generally bodies of water, are mired in familiar readings of Indigenous relationships to land and sea: Sami have a stronger and different connection to land and sea than do other groups and they have ‘their own special ecological wisdom’ (Valkonen & Valkonen 2014, p. 25). This view is imposed by colonial discourses about Indigenous people and will be critiqued in seeking to understand the history of Sami land rights in Norway. It is also clear that Sami people have come to use this traditionalist image of their relationships to prove their difference and therefore strengthen their claims to rights. Thus, while the imposition of the view can be considered problematic, it has been used to Sami advantage. The major part of the discussion in this chapter focusses on Sami relationships to land but it is important to point out that,
especially in Coastal Sami communities, the sea plays a crucial part in Sami people’s relationship with the environment.

Sami relationships to land and sea

Regardless of livelihood, the natural environment has always formed a vital part of the Saami identity, and the Saami people’s way of life has constantly responded to changes in the surrounding environment (Arhén, 2004, p. 67).

I do not disagree with Mattias Arhén’s assertion above. However, it should be problematised in order to understand the complexities of the role of this image in Sami identity formation and access to land rights. Although it is a major criterion, it is not simply an historical relationship to the land that makes Sami relationships to it particular. Non-Sami farmers and fisher people and others also have important relationships to land. The difference for Sami people is that for centuries Sami interests in land were overlooked to the benefit of non-Sami interests.

Through their influence in government and industry, non-Sami Norwegians have had and continue to have the greater part of political power and control over land and resources. Sami people want access to a portion of both. To gain that access, they need to be able to establish their rights within the framework of Norwegian legal and moral concepts of land ownership and use. Further:

for the Sami politicians the relationship between the Sami people and the land is considered to be profound, and to protect and preserve the land and the natural resources are viewed as absolute conditions if the Sami culture is to be maintained and developed (Gaski 2008, p. 224).

This positioning is based on the interests of the Sami community in general and not simply the desires of Sami politicians. In practice, it requires the negotiation of traditional connections to and ownership of the land.
Particularly in communities such as that in Gáivuotna in which fishing has been critical, Sami people’s relationships to the sea are crucial to understanding Sami relationships to land. While land is the location of homes, farms, herding grounds and gathering areas, the sea is of equal importance for fishing and travel.

The importance of fishing culture and the role of Coastal Sami culture in the wider Sami milieu have become increasingly recognised. They have also gained increasing attention in general and academic debates. Most of the research currently underway is in the scientific and geographic disciplines, but there is increasing interest in social sciences. This is reflective of a change in the possibilities for Sami people to express and promote their more specific differences in the broad cultural landscape. That is not to diminish the earlier work of social scientists such as Paine. His seminal work, Coast Lapp Society I: A Study of Neighborhood in Revsbotn Fjord (Paine 1957), and Ivar Bjørklund’s 1985 work, Fjordfolket i Kvaenangen. Fra Samisk samfunn til norsk utkant 1550–1980 (eng The Fjord People in Kvaenangen: From Sami society to Norwegian outskirts 1550–1980), focussed on Coastal Sami issues and have had a lasting impact on the field of Sami studies. However, the overall increase in interest in Sami issues and the widening of the debates and the issues being approached are having an impact on the stature of Coastal Sami issues in academic, political and administrative arenas.

It is generally held that Coastal Sami people were not given as many resources and that they garnered much less public attention to their political activities than other Sami communities. This led to a feeling in Coastal Sami communities that

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1 See Ulfsdatter Søreng (2013 & 2008) for discussions of Sami fishing rights, and Sami and non-Sami discourses about fishing, in Norway.
the imbalance needed to be redressed. That Coastal Sami people are having their agenda heard is evidence of an increase in more detailed attention to regional differences in the Sami population.

For the people involved with the Riddu Riđđu Searvi, addressing Coastal Sami issues have been important political aims. The promotion and expression of Coastal Sami culture in Gáivuotna have been the primary focus of the activities of the Searvi and much of the festival is focussed around that culture. Coastal Sami issues are also indirectly highlighted by the international activities at the festival, as the community on the fjord gains attention and is recognised as part of a greater international, Indigenous community. The connections between Sami and other Indigenous people, developed at Riddu Riđđu are enabled by similarities they see in their struggles for rights and discourses they encounter, including those in relation to land.

Sami people are acknowledged as having a long connection to Sápmi, longer than that of non-Sami people. This gives Sami people a claim to the region which is difficult to dispute. Using the example of Aboriginal people in Australia as a contrast again Aboriginal people are generally seen as autochthonous, despite the archaeological record, non-Aboriginal colonisation of their land took place only some two centuries ago, which is a short time when compared with the history of colonisation in Norway. The long history of the occupation of Australia by Aboriginal people and the relatively short history of colonisation gives Aboriginal people moral and historical claims over land that are not easily challenged by non-Aboriginal people.
By contrast, the history of non-Sami occupation in Norway is much longer. It is generally accepted that Sami people have resided to Sápmi for several hundred years while colonisation by non-Sami people began in the Middles Ages. Even the characterisation of non-Sami settlement in Sápmi as colonial has been debated, although less so in recent years. The connotations are that Sami people migrated just as non-Sami people did, but much earlier. This, in addition to the perceived consequences of the long-term interaction between Sami and non-Sami residents of Sápmi, leave Sami claims to land open to challenge.

Sami connections to land have developed over a significant period and in specific cultural contexts, long before non-Sami people came into the area (cf. Ingold and Kurttila 2000, Länsman 2004, Helander 1999, Mustonen & Salin, 2004). The portrayal of Sami people as having timeless relationships to land is one of the important avenues by which the relationships Indigenous peoples have to land are objectified and simplified. To evoke a much-used binary that has affected images of Indigenous peoples around the world, the concept of timeless relationships to land has been used as part of a negative stereotype of Indigenous people that frames them as on the side of nature rather than culture.

The image of Indigenous people as specially and especially connected to land plays a crucial role in the ongoing justification for the exploitation of natural resources by non-Indigenous people rather than Indigenous people. The flawed logic runs like this: Indigenous people have a special connection to land and this is a crucial part of what defines them as different from non-Indigenous people; their interests are cultural and especially spiritual; they use only what they need

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2 Including what Milton (1996, p. 109) describes as a mythical ‘primitive ecological wisdom’ portraying people such as the Sami as ‘paragons of ecological virtue’.
of the land, which ensures sustainability; the exploitation of the natural resources in the way non-Indigenous people want to use them would be anathema to their difference. The primary flaw in this argument is the assumption that the construction of Indigenous difference is immutable and invariable. Sami people are portrayed as ‘prisoners of their culture by claiming that their distinctive nature relation determines the Sámi as individuals, regardless of time and place’ (Valkonen & Valkonen 2014, p. 28). This picture is based on imaginings of ‘traditional’ Indigenous culture that must be visible and recognisable in non-Indigenous systems, if Indigenous people are to have any real claims to the difference that would allow them to make claims to rights such as access to land. This issue feeds back into the construction of the discourses and identifications.

In a discussion about Australia, Elizabeth Povinelli (2002, p. 6) makes a point that is equally valid for Norway. She argues that colonial dominance of discourses and identifications inspires:

subaltern and minority subjects to identify with the impossible object of an authentic self-identity … a domesticated nonconflictual “traditional” form of sociality and (inter)subjectivity … As the nation stretches out its hands to ancient Aboriginal laws (as long as they are not “repugnant”), indigenous subjects are called on to perform an authentic difference in exchange for the good feelings of the nation and the reparative legislation of the state.

In Norway, Sami people have had to identify with and perform the traditional aspects of Sami relationships to land as imagined by the colonisers in order to gain recognition as Indigenous and to access the political goodwill that accompanied it. It is a double bind, as traditional Sami relationships to land were anathema to existing land legislation, which ruled out traditional Sami land ownership. At the same time, if Sami people were to gain rights there had to be a consistent insistence on the traditional connections to land. The success of the
Svartskogen case required the Supreme Court of Norway to recognise that Sami and non-Sami connections to and usage of land were equivalent. This was partly achieved through the recognition of contemporary Sami connections to land and constructions of these connections.

Sami relationships to land are local and individual. However, ‘a universal Sámi nature relation is ... widely delivered and cultivated in both everyday and scientific discussions’ (Valkonen & Valkonen 2014, p. 33). The articulation of contemporary local and individual connections to land solidify and make concrete Sami claims to land. Below are a few examples of stories about land that highlight contemporary relationships to land and ‘Sámi ... identities as performatively constructed, i.e. as repetitive and reality-creating, and therefore as subjectifying but also deeply political’ (Valkonen and Valkonen 2014, p. 26).

While we were driving along the road from Romsa to Gáivuotna, Steinar pointed to a forest and told us a story. Late one night several years ago, a meeting was called in the forest. The purpose of the meeting was to set up a new Sami youth organisation. A number of young people who had been involved in the NSR, the largest Sami political party in Norway, had decided they wanted to leave NSR and start their own organisation. It was a clandestine meeting and one that would change Sami youth politics.

Stian was 12 years old. He sat on the floor of his uncle and aunt’s living room, jammed into the corner between the two couches. He worked himself up into a frenzy of storytelling:

If you drive down the road between Manndalen [Olmmáiváaggi] and Birtavarre [Gáivuonbahta] there is one point, just past the little waterfall, that is very dangerous. It’s haunted. My friend’s mum was driving past
there really fast and someone knocked on the window … Another person
who was alone then had someone sitting next to them … Other people
have had someone banging on the roof … Also, a woman was driving her
son to a party up from Samuelsberg [in Olmmáiváaggi] and she ran over a
man who jumped in front of the car. When she looked back there wasn’t
anyone there. She drove back along the road later and the man was sitting
in the car with her … Another night my friend’s mother was driving along
the road and at that point her car broke down. It was cold [it is dangerous
for your car to break down at night in the cold] so she was a bit worried
and not sure what to do. She heard a noise and thought she saw
something. Then she heard something on the roof of her car and became
very afraid. After a few minutes she decided to try to start the car. The car
started and she drove off.

While driving along the road into Kárášjohka, Behkká showed us some of the
sites. He pointed out the hut on the side of the river he was born in. Later he
stopped at his mother’s house in a hamlet off the main road. He pointed out the
house in which one of his cousins had decapitated his other cousin, who had
been accused of sleeping with his wife. Earlier we had stopped in Gilbbesjávri
(fin Kilpisjärvi) to get supplies, which is a must when passing in and out of Finland
on the way from the west to the Finnmárku Plateau. We met a Sami reindeer
herder who needed a lift. He got into the car and we dropped him off in what I
thought was the middle of nowhere. The reindeer herder got out and walked off
into the snow to join his siida.

While looking over a field, Anté told us about the seven blues. He explained that
one way to measure distance in Sápmi was to count the blues. Looking towards
the mountains, you see each range as a different shade of blue, the shades
reflects the distance you are from those mountains. People describe distances
such as that from home saying ‘I am two blues away’.

Each of these is a story about land. Most are located very specifically and they
all directly relate knowledge and familiarity with land. These stories and countless
others demonstrate some of the complexity of contemporary Sami relationships to land.

Steinar’s story is a history of an event that is significant to the forest and to Steinar’s personal history in Sami politics. Behkká’s story also relates his personal history. It includes his intimate knowledge of a region and specific places within an area as well as some gruesome local history. Stian’s story is one of many an urban/rural myth or old community story retold in a modern context, Anté’s story reflects his general knowledge and understanding of his landscape. Each shows personal knowledge of land as well as an ability to reiterate and retell the information, and that they are Sami stories about Sami land.

All these stories reveal an intimate and culturally specific knowledge and understanding of land that is particular to their performative identification as Sami. They are concrete examples of Saminess embedded in their relationships to land and they are the articulation of relationships to land as part of their identification. Articulations, knowledge and understanding such as in these examples provide the evidence Sami people need to claim rights to land. This aspect of Sami land rights has been played out in the courts in Norway. Other discourses have played a crucial role in the process of negotiating Sami relationships to land. These discourses include natur, which has strong links to Norwegian national identity, and the North, a regional discourse to which Sami people are attached.

Natur and the North

Sami relationships to land are mediated by powerful discourses, two of which are natur and the North. Norwegian national identity is closely tied to land via the discourse of natur. While Sami people are recognised as Norwegian and they are
recognised as having strong connections to *natur*, they are considered to have different relationships to *natur* and therefore land, land ownership and interests in exploitable resources:

A nature relation is part of a performatively constructed Sámi identity, and because of the culturally shared understanding of the Sámi’s close relation with nature, it is culturally possible, understandable, believable and even desirable. This is precisely what is expected: the Sámi are supposed to have a close relation with nature (see Valkonen, 2009) (Valkonen and Valkonen 2014, p. 34).

Sami people are also linked to discourses about the North, a place associated with complex notions of difference in Norway. Sami people have harnessed these discourses as proof of difference and used this status of difference to gain access to rights.

*Natur*

‘Nature’ is … not only a source for metaphors of identity but also an arena for activities and practices that are at once both practical and symbolic, political and cultural (Roepstorff, Bubandt & Kull 2003, p. 184).

This is very true of the people of Norway. A good Norwegian loves *natur*, they love to be in and part of it. Many Norwegians said it was in part their love of *natur* that made them Norwegian and that it was Norwegian to love *natur*. This is demonstrated in everyday and occasional activities. At Easter time it is traditional to ski: families own cabins in the mountains or by the coast and they visit them so that they can be closer to and in *natur*: on Sunday afternoons people walk up a mountain, take out a bag of coffee, build a fire and enjoy all the *natur* they survey. People fish, hunt and gather in order to be in *natur* as well as getting some meat and/or berries for their freezers. Even the household recycling ethos that is so strong in Norway is connected to the protection and maintenance of *natur*. These values were often included in Norwegian people’s descriptions of
Norwegianness and the activities they listed as part of the way they connected to \textit{natur} and being Norwegian.

The concept and the strength of this shared conception of \textit{natur}\textsuperscript{3} is so closely linked to being Norwegian that it forms a cultural umbrella over all of the land of Norway: Norwegians establish a claim to the land by imbuing it with cultural meaning through the concept of \textit{natur}. For many Norwegians this is strengthened by a history of occupation of particular land. The Næss family had been living on the same ness, from which they took their name, for hundreds of years. Their sense of place was strong, as strong as that of many Sami people living in small communities in Sápmi. However, not all non-Sami Norwegians live in circumstances where their connections to land are through long family and community attachment. Many live in urban areas in which their connection and relationship to \textit{natur} are different.

For the urban population, connections to \textit{natur} take on a strong discursive role, given that everyday interaction with \textit{natur} is less practised. As there is less interaction with \textit{natur} but it remains an important defining characteristic of being Norwegian, the articulation of connections to \textit{natur} play an important role in identifying as Norwegian. Articulated connections to \textit{natur} become clearly defined, embodied acts of Norwegianness.

Sami people are Norwegian as well as being Sami and they share this discourse of \textit{natur} to some extent. A claim on land rights by Sami people over and above non-Sami Norwegians is a challenge not just to conceptions of land but an

\textsuperscript{3} This shared conception of \textit{natur} is separate from philosophical understandings of there being many contested natures (Macnaghten \& Urry 1998) or that nature is not comprehensible in its entirety (Haila \& Lähde 2003 in Valkonen \& Valkonen 2014, p. 29).
important nationalist value. Jarno Valkonen and Sanna Valkonen (2014, p. 25) propose that Sami relationships to nature could be broken down into two sets of relations, practical and discursive:

that there are in fact two different nature relations, which we describe as practical and discursive. It seems that on the one hand, the “special” nature relation of the Sámi refers to local habits and areas and therefore is not generalizable. On the other hand, there are political and performative constructions of indigenous Sámi identity that are tied to notions of nature relations.

The story below is an example of Sami people negotiating nature relationships, both the local habits and areas and the political and performative constructions of Sami identity.

While I was in Norway there was a popular television show being aired called Gutter på tur (eng Boys on tour) which followed a group of four men as they travelled through Norway hunting, fishing and camping. The term was used often in general conversation. My experience of a Sami version of this was on the return trip to Romsa after Riddu Riđđu. I was in a van with six men all from Gáivuotna, who had been at the festival. I sat with Åsbjørn with a dried cod across our knees nibbling our way out of our exhaustion and hangovers. Except for the driver, the others shared joints and beers. Just outside Gárgán (nor Nordkjosbotn) we stopped at Piggsteinen (Fig. 6.1), a well-known rock on the side of the road that was covered in graffiti. The men insisted I take a photo of them in front of the rock with their backs to me and their pants down (Fig. 6.2). Someone said it was ‘Sami gutter på tur’. Gutter På Tur was such a ‘Norwegian’ show — it was all about Norwegian relationships to land, relationships that exclude the Sami. Here they
were playing up a stereotype of Sami people and subverting the discourse about Sami people’s relationships to *natur*.

The very point that Norway is north-facing is a national identity-marker, a part of the self-perception and self-image of the country’s inhabitants (Skagestad 2010, p. 8).

When I first arrived in Norway I stayed briefly near Oslo. I was asked by many people why I wanted to go to the North and they suggested it would be better if I stayed in the southern Norway as there was nothing in the North. It had been the lack of knowledge of the Sami that had first interested me in the field, and it was this lack of knowledge, assumption of nothingness and lack of import that excited me. My suspicion was that the people who believed this were wrong and I was guaranteed an exciting experience of something even many Norwegians I met had little knowledge of.

The North

The term ‘the North’ is not to be confused with the term ‘the High North’ which is usually used in reference to foreign policy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ (2006) ‘High North Strategy’ (see Jensen & Hønneland 2011; Skagestad 2010).
Many people told me that Norway could almost be described as two countries: the North — generally considered to consist of the three northern counties of Nordland, Romsa and Finnmárku or anywhere north of the town of Bodø⁵ — and the south. The majority of the population live in the south and the south is the political, economic, administrative and ideological centre of Norway. Southerners generally have a tighter grip on mainstream discourses about Norway. As can be expected, the North fares worst in the battle for recognition and respect in this real or imagined division. The North is portrayed as barren, cold, boring, empty, inhabited by reindeer and covered in snow. The people of the North are portrayed as dull, unsophisticated, uneducated, underemployed or unemployable, and insignificant.

These negative images of the North encompass all the people who live there and more specifically Sami people. The North is also identified with Sami people because it is imagined that, as a 16-year-old volunteer at Riddu Riđđu put it, ‘Everyone who comes from above Bodø actually has some Sami’. I heard people from the south tease people from the North by calling them Sami as if this were enough to sum up their otherness and backwardness. This happened even in the North. For southerners, the North is the home of their compatriot Other.

As with representations of the Other, there are positive attributes as well as negative ones included in the discourse. One of the recurring positive attributes articulated by southerners was in relation to natur. The North was considered more richly natural — untouched and pristine. By extension, the people of the North were considered to be more attuned to natur and as having more capacity

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⁵ This depended on where a person lived, who they knew and their familiarity with the North. A few people even claimed that the North started in Bergen though this is quite a way south.
to exploit and live in harmony with *natur*. Sami people were seen as even more in touch with *natur*; a more ‘wild’ people than non-Sami Norwegians. For many scholars of Indigenous issues this will sound familiar. The positive is tinged with the negative and Sami people are seen, in part, as naïve and instinctual, therefore lacking the capacity to truly understand or exploit their situation. The North is considered rough, exotic, untamed, unsophisticated, rural and extreme. Sami people are so intricately embedded in this image of the North that they too become all that the southerners are not, both negatively and positively.

Norway, like other Nordic counties, has a very distinct international image, one that is identified with internally. Norwegians are considered and appreciate themselves as highly sophisticated, efficient, and technologically and stylistically advanced. This is particularly associated with the south. The North is considered to be a place where the trappings of society do not impinge so strongly on everyday life and people live their lives without undue influence from civilising factors. Sami people are seen as the product of a less tainted world, a people who have been able to live with less cultural pollution.

The discourse about the North has a long history and is realised partly through the notion of the North as a region. The term ‘Nord-Norge’ (eng North Norway) was coined in 1884 by North Norwegian intellectuals living in Oslo (Zachariassen 2008, p. 118). Einar Niemi (in Zachariassen 2008, p. 118) characterises the history of North Norway in these terms: 1860s to 1914, awareness of specific history and fate; 1914 to 1940, knowledge of the region spread within and outside the region; 1940 to c.1970, focus on social and economic growth (little organised regionalism); c.1970 to 1990, strong regional identity and institution building; 1990 onwards, the idea of North Norway as one region questioned. One the other
hand, Hallcard Tjelmeland (in Zachariassen 2008, pp. 118–119) characterises it as follows: 1900 to 1935, private-led economic recovery led by notions of modernisation; 1935 to 1970, state-led economic modernisation and regionalism developed by local elites; 1970 to 2000, economic differences between north and south diminished, focus on unique qualities of the North.

While Niemi’s timeline is focussed on the awareness of Northern Norway as a region and Tjelmeland’s on the economic history of the region, there are some important correlations between the timelines. Both include the growth of regionalism from the turn of the 20th century until its decline in the late 20th century, but Odd Gunnar Skagestad (2010, p. 7) characterises the North as a national discourse with a much longer history that is still potent, the suggestion being that this is a national discourse whose import has not diminished:

In Norwegian politics and public discourse, national challenges in the North is a recurring topic. It was an old classic already in 1302, when King Haakon V Magnusson established the Vardøhus fortress as a marker of the national turf in the extreme north-eastern corner of his realm. It is relaunched from time to time in a new, contemporary wrapping, with the recurring message that the national challenges in the north are particularly acute just now — at this particular time and hence, that just now is the time to take pro-active measures to cope with these challenging developments.⁶

Evidence of this is in recent Norwegian government policy and statements that refer to the region (for example Ministry of Petroleum and Energy 2014). One significant of example is the 2006 High North Strategy by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which has been the catalyst for the use of the term the ‘High North’⁷. In these policies and statements, the Norwegian government addresses issues that

⁶ In 1952, the North Norway Plan was implemented. It was to modernise the North, most notably through education, infrastructure and investment in existing and new industries (Bjørklund 2000, p. 12).
⁷ The High North is not precisely defined, nor is it limited to Norwegian territory. Interestingly, the cover of this publication includes a photograph of people heavily involved in the Riddu Riddu festival.
are specific to the region and require relevant policies, which are considered
different from the issues and policies that would be relevant in the south.

While the south may be the seat of notions about the North, this regionalism is
also articulated in the North:

People in the south are illiterate when they come here to the North. It is
like another country. In the North people look out more. Trade in the North
has a long history so it has been an international environment. It is more
natural for Northern people to be like that (Else, Riddu Riddu staff
member).

Else’s comment echoes those of others I spoke to in the North. There was a pride
in their difference from the south. Sami people often also described the south as
a place of opportunity but said they intended to return to the North if employment
was possible. Mette had returned to Gáivuotna from Oslo with her children to find
work but had not been able to by the time I left some six months later. Earlier,
Mette had been employed as a professional and had moved to Oslo for another
position. She thought that it would be quite difficult to find work in the North, as
employment was limited and people tended to stay in their positions for many
years. This perception of a lack of employment opportunities is supported by
numerous studies (see Tuohimaa et al. 1995).

The strength of the notion of the North and of Sami people being from the (far)
North is strong and raises some issues for Southern Sami communities. They are
considered less Sami by the majority of Norwegians because Southern Sami
people live closer to the southern Norwegians and assimilation has been more
successful in many Southern Sami communities. However, recent recognition of
regional differences has also increased knowledge and recognition of Southern
Sami issues.
A further complication is that many Sami people do not live in Sápmi. Some who do not live in Sápmi maintain a connection to people who do, and they continue to consider themselves to be part of Sápmi as they travel there often and intend to return. Yet others have little or no connection to Sápmi but are expected to and are treated as if they have. For Sami people in the south, the constant reference to Sápmi, or the North, is a challenge to their claims to Saminess. On the other hand, if a person wishes to establish Sami credentials it is often necessary to claim a connection to Sápmi in some way: ‘My family are from …’.

**Sami land rights and the law**

Sami relationships to land and the communities that are located on that land are obviously not simply the subject of verbal claims to Sami identity. Land and community is also connected through political and legal action. Connections are expressed in complex, varied and fluid ways in a number of arenas. Political action by the Sami community has been crucial to raising awareness of Sami land rights and has been an important part of the development of Sami communities and identities. One of the most significant land rights protests was the Áltá conflict in 1979–81. Not only did this conflict raise awareness of Sami issues nationally and internationally, but it was a watershed in the broader Sami community and led to significant changes to Sami people’s access to a range of rights.

These rights were realised most significantly through changes to Norwegian laws. The road to recognition in statutory legal systems never does run smooth and for Sami people this road has been long. A brief history of some of the significant changes to Norwegian statutory law in relation to Sami people’s access to land
provides background to the import of the Svartskogen case discussed in the following section.

Some significant Sami political action has been directly in relation to land and water rights. One of the most influential of these was the Áltá conflict, during which Sami issues gained a great deal of attention. This was in part due to the rise in consciousness of Indigenous rights in international arenas. The Áltá conflict was a catalyst for changes in Norwegian statutory law, including the establishment of the Sámediggi.

The Áltá conflict

The Áltá conflict ‘was the first event to put the question of Saami aboriginal status on the national political agenda’ (Thuen 1995, p. 23).

In 1978, the Norwegian government announced the proposed building of a dam on the Áltá River. The river runs north from Guovdageaidnu on the Finnmárkkoduottar (nor Finnmarksvidda, eng Finnmark plateau) to Áltá on the north coast. It is the main source of water in the central Finnmárku area and one of the richest salmon rivers in Sápmi. While the protection of the water and salmon source was of concern to many and was one of the platforms for demonstrations against the dam, other outcomes were what people rallied against most. Developing the dam area would require flooding Máze, a small town on the banks of the river, and would result in severe disruption to important reindeer grazing areas. Máze is a town of approximately 300 people and is

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8 Also known as ‘the Alta/Kautokeino conflict’, ‘the Alta controversy’, ‘the Alta saga’ and ‘the Alta turmoil’.

9 Although the issue had been ongoing since the 1960s and there had been earlier protests, this final announcement rang in the biggest protests (for further information see Dalland 1997; Minde 2003; Thuen 1995).
considered to be one of the last remaining ‘pristine’ Sami communities. Some 90% of the inhabitants speak Sami as their first language and many are involved in reindeer herding, which is the main source of income for the town. The proposed flooding and relocation of the town outraged many in the Sami and non-Sami communities.

Robert Paine’s *Dam a River, Damn a People* (1982) is based on a brief written for the Supreme Court of Norway. He points out that the issue was impacted considerably ‘by informational failures’ (Paine 1982, p. 4). Paine describes these informational failures as not being the result of the Norwegian government’s lack of felicity towards Sami interests. Instead, he says, it was because of a focus on the damage to Sami communities only in terms of reindeer herding due to the loss of pastures (Paine 1982, p. 4). This focus ignored the damage to Sami lifestyle and culture.

There were several significant protest actions in the Áltá conflict. These included the establishment at the site of the dam of the Detsika camp, which had a population of 5000 people in September 1979 (Dalland 1997, p. 45) and a lavvu camp on the lawn of the Storting (eng Parliament House) in Oslo. There were mass protests around the lavvu camp which came to a head during a hunger strike by seven members of the camp. Another event of significance was the barricading of the proposed site of the dam itself, delaying construction. This protest was held during the winter of 1980–1 and came to a head when the Norwegian government sent in approximately 600 police, with support from the
army, to remove some 700 protesters\textsuperscript{10}.

What I found most fascinating about the stories of the Áltá conflict was the sheer number of versions I heard while in Sápmi. Many people told me they had been involved in the conflict and were proud of their participation. I was told one of these stories by a non-Sami Norwegian man while we travelled from Leavdnja (nor Lakselv), the airport nearest Áltá, to Guovdageaidnu. As we drove along, Nils told me his version of the Áltá conflict, including his involvement and some of the political intrigue that went on behind the scenes. As we passed Máze, Nils stopped the car and showed me the town from the ridge above. The conflict had played an important role in his identification with the North and the Sami community and had been the catalyst for his moving to the North and becoming involved in Sami issues.

Nils was one of the many protesters I met and talked to while in Sápmi. At times it was difficult to imagine that everyone who claimed to have been involved had been and to the extent they claimed. I discovered that it was easy to identify the most influential protesters as they would be pointed out to me. One night, at a party to celebrate the anniversary of a political party, a man I had been talking to asked me to dance. After dancing with him, a good friend came up to me and asked if I knew who the man was. I said I knew his name but nothing more. My friend told me that he had been one of the hunger strikers during the Áltá conflict. It was made clear that it was a privilege to have danced with him. This was just

\textsuperscript{10} ‘On the 12th of January in 1981 the Norwegian government sent 10\% of the total police force of the country (600 police) to a place called Nollpunkten (Point Zero) where protesters camped to hinder construction machines from reaching the place where the dam was to be built. This was the largest police operation in Norway since World War II’ (Dubec 2014, n.p.).
one of many times that key figures in the Áltá conflict were pointed out to me and their role in it explained.

Another significant set of events that I heard several accounts of was the 1982 attempted bombing of a bridge over the Tverr River. This account is a compound of several versions I was told, some by people directly involved in the events. Niillas Aslaksen Somby, John Reier Martinsen and a third person, who has never been publicly identified\(^\text{11}\), tried to damage a bridge in protest over the Norwegian government’s announcement that the building of the dam would go ahead. The bomb detonated prematurely and Niillas Somby sustained serious injuries to an arm, which was later amputated, and an eye. Niillas Somby and John Martinsen were both arrested, charged and imprisoned. Niillas Somby, with the help of an accomplice, made a daring and inventive escape from prison and went into exile in Canada, where he was hidden by First Nations communities. He later returned to Norway, but was not imprisoned. The bridge is now locally known as the ‘Somby Bridge’. A few years after this incident, John Martinsen was run over by someone driving a snowmobile and killed. I was told that people knew who had run him over. It was suggested that he was run over deliberately and in retaliation for his political actions, including the attempted bombing. There are very serious implications to aspects of this story and its veracity is not under consideration here. What is interesting is that some details are not publicly discussed and the events have taken on almost mythical status.

The protesters eventually managed to have the size of the dam changed, which prevented the flooding of Máze. Other important outcomes included the

\(^{11}\) More than one person made it clear they knew who this person was. One person implied it had been them but did not admit it explicitly.
establishment of the Sami Rights Commission\textsuperscript{12} which, over the next several years, prepared a number of reports and recommendations for the government. The first report, presented in 1984 (NOU 1984), recommended the establishment of the Sámediggi. This was acted upon very quickly and in 1987 The Sami Act was passed. The Sámediggi was officially opened by King Harald V of Norway in 1989.

The Áltá conflict also attracted substantial local, national and international media attention and with it a significant increase in awareness of Sami issues. In the Sami community it is often described as a watershed in the Sami community that led to a revival in Sami identification and a return to Sami values and practices. Part of the reason for the intense coverage of the conflict was that Indigenous cultural revival was gaining momentum around the world. International forums were able to be used as platforms for raising Sami issues during these protests.

The Áltá conflict also changed the direction and profile of Sami issues nationally and the way they were negotiated between Sami representatives and those of the Norwegian government.

Once the Alta affair had been defined by the media as both a Sami matter and an indigenous people’s matter, the political rules of the game altered drastically. The authorities’ handling of the Alta issue was no longer evaluated in connection with electrical power and modernization; rather with colonial legacy, the assimilation policy and the Norwegian self-image of playing a leading role in the development of international human rights (Mine 2003, p. 101).

Part of the legacy of the Áltá conflict are the changes to Norwegian law in relation to land.

\textsuperscript{12} Chaired by Carsten Smith.
Norwegian land law in Sápmi

As described in Chapter Two, Sápmi is a transnational region that has a long history of struggle concerning its borders\(^{13}\). Regional issues in Sápmi are considered and dealt with administratively within nations and transnationally. On the one hand, issues relating to the area of Sápmi that lies within Norway are dealt with by the Norwegian government and administration, including national and regional Norwegian legal instruments. On the other hand, there is a complex web of transnational organisations, such as the Sami Council, the Arctic Council, and the Barents Region Council, that deal with Northern regional issues that include all of Sápmi. These organisations oversee an array of issues and their establishment is recognition of the regional nature of Sápmi.

Unless they were discussing particular national issues, people most commonly used the regional term ‘Sápmi’ rather than referring to the areas in individual nations. At times, conversations led to a discussion of the broader concern of whether Sápmi should be declared a separate region\(^{14}\) and be given some autonomy with the establishment of a transnational Sami Parliament. Some said it would be difficult to achieve this solution because of the complex relationships that Sami communities had with the national government and administration in each country.

Given the proximity of Finland, Sweden and Russia to Norway and the fluidity of their borders, there have been constant negotiations between the countries over

\(^{13}\) It was not until the late 18\(^{th}\) and early 19\(^{th}\) centuries that state borders were established in northern Fennoscandia (Niemi 1997, p. 66).

\(^{14}\) There was not a very strong separatist movement, in nationalistic terms. I did hear more considerable discussion of regional administrative separatism.
centuries, with numerous alliances and land and tax agreements. In order to maintain distinct cultural, linguistic and political autonomy and differentiation, there have been policy changes. During the Middle Ages, Sami people were obliged to pay taxes to up to three states simultaneously\(^{15}\). This was an onerous responsibility that entrenched the poverty of the Sami population. In 1751, the Treaty of Strömstad, which included the Lapp Codicil, was signed. The border between Norway and Sweden\(^{16}\) was settled and from then Sami people then had to pay taxes to only one state.

Apart from taxes, one of the most commonly cited issues relating to the history of Sami land ownership and administration was that in the 19\(^{th}\) century Sami people had their right to own land removed and denied:

In 1864 the Norwegian Supreme Court passed a judgement holding that local people no longer had the right to utilize renewable resources in their customary way. In order to guarantee completely the non-Saami population’s control over the Saami people’s traditional lands, a Land Sales Act of 1902 stipulated that Saami speaking persons should no longer be entitled even to buy (their own) land (Ahrén 2004, p. 87).

This removal and denial of rights to access and then own land was often explained to me as one of the factors in the control of and discrimination against Sami people in Olmmáivággi. Many people related this during conversations about indications of the identifications of Sami people in the village and around the fjord. The implication was that not only was Sami customary ownership removed and denied but it was done through statutory law. This meant that to gain land rights Sami people first had to gain of the right under statutory law to own land and then had to gain recognition of customary rights to land.

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\(^{15}\) Niemi (1997, p. 65) points out that the inland was ‘as early as 1326, by way of a treaty defined as joint territories (Fellesdistrikter) between Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Novgorod, in which the collaboration states had equal rights to taxation and trade’.

\(^{16}\) In 1751 Norway was still a territory of Denmark. Norway gained independence in 1814.
The recognition of Sami rights to land is complicated by notions of customary law. Arhén (2004, p. 64) argues that customary law stems from a culture, just as statutory law does and that it is not inferior to statutory law. The reason for discrimination against customary law comes from the denigration of the culture from which the customary law stems. For Sami people, this has meant that the gaining of land rights also required a significant change in the valuing of Sami culture, so that for rights under customary law would be considered a valid claim.

Sami customary land ownership ‘rests on the perception that land, waters, and natural resources are vested in the collective’ (Arhén 2004, p. 71). As many Indigenous communities around the world have found, this tradition of customary collective land ownership is problematic when attempting to gain rights to land in the face of statutory law. In addition to removing and denying the right to own land, the Norwegian government had declared ownership of what was deemed ‘ownerless’ land:

ownership was based on a kind of terra nullius perception which can be called the state land doctrine. It ensured that the state could take supposed "ownerless" land into possession without any treaty or agreements with people that already inhabited and used the areas (Ravna 2011, p. 425).

The state possession of land easily overrode any Sami customary ownership of land. Sami customary land ownership was deemed ‘ownerless’ and no acknowledgement was made through a treaty or agreement, despite immemorial usage of land.

Until the 1960s, there was no legal protection for immemorial usage of land. This was made clear in the decisions in the Dergafjeld (1931) and Marsfjell (1955) cases in which Sami land use on privately owned farmland regardless of immemorial usage was refused. Since the 1960s, there have been decisions in
other cases, including Brekken (1968), which have contained recognition of Sami land usage rights based on immemorial usage. These decisions mean that now:

Norwegian law does provide for long-term use as a foundation for rights acquisition, for example in the Act on Prescriptive Rights [lov om hevd] of 9 December 1966, in which use indicated by the existence of permanent facilities contributes to supporting claims for rights acquisition through customary use’ (Ravna 2006, p. 89).

By 2001, with the decisions in the Selbu and Svartskogen cases, Sami ownership through immemorial usage was recognised.

The changes that were required to be made to statutory law so that Sami ownership would be recognised were assisted by an amendment to The Reindeer Husbandry Act 1996 that ‘reversed the onus of proof, making it necessary for landowners to prove that there is no right to herd in outlying fields included in a designated reindeer-husbandry area’ (Bankes & Koivurova 2013a, p. 11). The significance of the reversal of the burden of proof so that it was on landowners is its recognition of Sami customary law in land ownership cases.

In 2005, the Norwegian Parliament passed The Finnmark Act (nor Finnmarksloven)\textsuperscript{17}. Under this law in July 2006\textsuperscript{18} a significant level of control over some 45,000km\textsuperscript{2} or 95\% of the land in Finnmárku was handed over to the people of Finnmárku. The Finnmark Act applies to land only, sea rights are still under discussion (Solbakk 2006, Department of Labour and Social Inclusion 2006a, 2006b, Ravna 2011). The land is managed by an organisation known as the Finnmark Estate (sme Finnmárkkuopmodat, nor Finnmarkseiendommen), which became the biggest private land owner in Norway. The Finnmark Estate consists

\textsuperscript{17} For an English version of The Finnmark Act see The Australian Indigenous Law Reporter (2005).
\textsuperscript{18} Prior to the implementation of The Finnmark Act, 96\% of the land in Finnmárku was owned and controlled by the Norwegian government via the State Forest and Land Corporation (nor Statskog SF).
of six members, three appointed by the Sámediggi and three by the Finnmark County Council (Josefsen 2007, p. 19).

The Finnmark Estate is responsible for making decisions regarding hunting, fishing and gathering as well as economic development. The Estate is bound by national regulations and laws, including the Road Traffic Act and the Planning and Building Act (Department of Labour and Social Inclusion 2006a, n.p.). The Finnmark Act is specific on some rights:

The Act states that over time groups of inhabitants may have acquired a special right to use or to own a particular area. By 1 January 2007, a special commission shall be appointed to look into such rights, and if there is disagreement, the matter will be referred to the Uncultivated Land Tribunal. This means that it may be several years until we know the final outcome of these endeavours (Department of Labour and Social Inclusion 2006a, n.p.).

Some interpret The Finnmark Act as handing control of land to the Sami community by virtue of the percentage of the Finnmárku population that is Sami as well as the special provisions giving the Sámediggi ‘authority to regulate how the effects of various measures to secure Sami interests are to be assessed’ (Department of Labour and Social Inclusion 2006c, n.p.). Indeed, the Department of Labour and Social Inclusion states that this is the purpose of The Finnmark Act. However, The Finnmark Act does not specify Sami rights to land and is open to all Finnmárku residents.

For others, The Finnmark Act is a vehicle for extinguishing Sami claims to rights. This is similar to readings of reports prepared by the Sami Rights Committee particularly the final report (NOU 1997), which focussed partially on land and water rights:
the report (NOU 1997, p. 4) states a principle that land rights should not be given on “individual ethnic basis,” but rather shared by the local population within defined geographical area, irrespective of ethnic roots’ (Niemi 1997, p. 77).

While some read this and other aspects of the Committee’s work as acknowledging Sami rights, for others it opened the door to the permanent extinguishment of Sami claims to land (Jull 2003, p. 32).

In time these misgivings may prove salient. However, it does not seem to be the intention of the Norwegian government to extinguish Sami claims to land. Court cases such as Svartskogen show that the intention may be to find ways to grant claims to land.

Svartskogen

The Svartskogen (eng The Black Forest) case relates to land at the back of Olmmáivággí and has been hailed as one of the first successful Sami land rights claims in Norway. Its significance is that it was one of the first successful claims to land ownership\(^\text{19}\) and, while the case was not exclusively a Sami land rights case, it can be claimed as a Sami land rights victory.

Svartskogen (Fig. 6.3) is an arctic birch forest to the south of Olmmáivággí that covers approximately 116 km\(^2\). It stretches into the valley that is formed by Olmmáiváteatnu (nor Mandalselva, eng Mandal River). For the people of Olmmáivággí the forest had long (there is a temptation to say ‘always’) been a source of natural resources. It was still inhabited by a few families and was used as ‘a kind of common’ (Ravna 2011, p. 431) for resource collection and for recreation.

\(^{19}\) The Selbu case (2001) being another. See Ravna (2011, pp. 429–431) for a brief discussion of this case.
The forest was annexed by Norwegian National Forests (nor Statskogen) meaning that the land and the resources of the forest were controlled by the Norwegian government. The people of Olmmáívággí had their access restricted and they were not recognised as the owners of the land.

The Svartskogen case stands out because it related to property rights rather than usufruct rights and it led to significant changes in Norwegian law. The court recognised that it would be discriminatory not to grant land rights (Ravna 2013, p. 196). Another interesting aspect of the Svartskogen case is the question it
raises of whether it was a Sami or a local land rights case. As mentioned earlier, the recognition of Sami people in Olmmáiváaggi is complex and although it is recognised as a Sami village, it is not populated solely by Sami people.

Svartskogen was returned to the local community, not just the Sami community. While the people of Olmmáiváaggi were granted ownership of and control over the forest, the decision by the court does not stipulate that it is for the benefit of the Sami people of the village, nor does it recognise the difference between the Sami and non-Sami inhabitants of the village. Svartskogen is a Sami victory by implicaton. Olmmáiváaggi is acknowledged as a Sami village, the claim was made on ‘Sami’ land, using evidence based on Sami immemorial usage et cetera, and therefore the outcome of the case is implicitly a Sami victory.

The issue decided in the Svartskogen case was first raised in 1985 in the Utmarkskommisjonen (eng Uncultivated Land Commission):

The verdict from this tribunal, in 1999, stated that the Norwegian state was the owner, but that the locals had usufruct to the pasture and the forest. The people of Manndalen [Olmmáiváaggi] did not accept the verdict of the tribunal and took the case to the Norwegian Supreme Court (Bjerkli 2010, p. 222).

In 1993, the process for the Supreme Court case began:

when the Norwegian state sued the freeholders (approximately 200 freeholders in a total population of about 800) in the valley of Manndalen in Northern Norway to settle once and for all usufruct and ownership rights (Bjerkli 2010, p. 222).

During the hearing, a number of arguments were presented that influenced the decision. The arguments were about the fencing of the area, the ability of members of the community to engage with the state, and the characterisation of ownership of the land amongst community members. There was also a call for rights to be recognised under international law.
The argument about the fencing of the area centred on a possible review of the land register, which would have acknowledged the state as having title over the land. The fact that land was not fenced by the state was raised by the Supreme Court as a reason not to review the land register (Ravna 2011, p. 431):

Perhaps surprisingly, the Supreme Court suggested that the fact that possession of property by the State was not marked by any visible delineation, since a planned fence was never erected, was a reason why it was not necessary to examine the land register (Ravna 2013, p. 197).

As the land register was not being reviewed, the Supreme Court could treat the land as not having state title over it. The court was able to treat the community’s claim of ownership as unimpeded by state title.

Josefsen (2004, p. 43) explains that another argument put forward was the fact that the people of the village had been Sami speaking and that this had affected their ability to negotiate with the administration. It was argued that it would have been difficult for community members to articulate their ownership of the land in terms that would have made it clear to government and administration. This focus on language as a primary indicator of difference and oppression is interesting and the Supreme Court considered it a legitimate argument for proof of difference from the Norwegian administrative bodies. This difference was recognised as significant enough to warrant a finding of historical discrimination and unjustified denial of rights.

While the community may not have characterised its control and use of the area as ownership in terms recognisable or communicable to the administration, it was argued that ‘they had exercised a degree of control that qualified it as such’ (Josefsen 2004, p. 43). This is an argument for customary law to be recognised
as equivalent to statutory law without the necessity of its being directly translatable into existing notions of ownership of land.

Yet another argument put forward was in relation to international law. The ILO Convention 169, which was ratified by Norway in 1990, was raised in the case and it was pointed out that it was the responsibility of the court to take into account international legal obligations. So ‘the case that for a long time had been recognised and understood as a local conflict over land was brought into the global realm of human rights processes’ (Bjerkli 2010, p. 222) and international law was taken into account in the decision.

The case was won by the people of Olmmáiváaggi in 2001 and control over the forest was handed back to the village. As Bjørn Bjerkli (2010, p. 222) explains:

> The verdict represented the first time that the Supreme Court gave ownership rights to land (a common) to an unspecified group of people. The landowners were only identified as people living in the valley of Manndalen.

The case had been ‘tried using the standard of Norwegian property law, immemorial usage (*alders tids bruk*), although with some modifications’ (Allard 2013, p. 220) and it was ‘the first example of a Fennoscandinavian court finding that the Saami people have acquired ownership to a land area through traditional use’ (Åhrén 2004, p. 102). The acknowledgement of customary law and ownership through immemorial usage rang in a significant change in Norwegian statutory law. It was made possible by the court deciding it was necessary to give the community rights that would also be enjoyed by other Norwegians.

In its decision, the Supreme Court stated, as immemorial usage would have been acknowledged as ownership, as elsewhere in Norway, it would be discriminatory
not to grant the claim (Bjerkli 2010, p. 221; Broderstad 2010, p. 65 Ravna 2013, p. 196). Ravna (2013, p.197) argues that:

The decision may not be out of line with other cases on the requirement of good faith in relation to acquiring property rights, even if the reasons for judgment may give the impression that the Supreme Court seems to have gone out of its way to show that good faith was present. On the other hand, the decision may be understood as an attempt to recognise and honor the oral Saami tradition, and to compensate for lack of fluency in the Norwegian language, legislation and legal culture.

Control of the forest now lies in the hands of Čáhput Siida, a representative committee of villagers. During my time in Olmmáivággí, there was a challenge to the right of this committee to make decisions about the forest, as some in the village were claiming that the committee represented only a small interest group in the village. This resulted in some discussion and media attention. Regardless of this disagreement, the forest remains owned and governed by the villagers.

The problem with describing the Svartskogen case as a Sami land rights case is that the land has not been returned to the people of Olmmáivággí simply because they are Sami and nor has it been given back to only the Sami people of Olmmáivággí. Indeed, the land is available to all the people of the village. For the people of Gáivuotna, and particularly Olmmáivággí, this case has strengthened their sense of community as well as solidifying the importance of the forest.

As Else said, not only did the case give legal recognition, but the academic work that went into the case and the evidence gathered resulted in a sense of acceptance of the Saminess of the villagers. Nils Erik also said:

Svartskogen is a political and academic struggle. Researchers who did the work, if they hadn’t done it, we wouldn’t have it. It is a victory of political struggle and academic acceptance.

Bjerkli (2010, p. 221), one of the key researchers on the Svartskogen case, argues that ‘landscapes are constituted as meaningful entities through events’.
Below I discuss one of the many events that played a role in the building of a sense of community around the Svartskogen case, as well as other activities that made Riddu Riđđu a site for community.

Riddu Riđđu as a site for community

Svein Flygari Johansen’s exhibition, *Territorial Holiday*, at the 2004 Riddu Riđđu festival focussed on Sami land rights and some pieces that related directly to the Svartskogen case. The exhibition was considered controversial, not only because Svein Fygari Johansen was a non-Sami Norwegian, but because of the subject matter. The organisers of the festival had not shied away from the controversy, partly because they considered the subject matter important to the community. The organisers of Riddu Riđđu often spoke of their view of the festival as a site of community and they saw the exhibition as highlighting a community issue that deserved attention.

Pictures of three of the pieces at the exhibition that related directly to the Svartskogen case are below. The first (Fig. 6.5) was a flag that included elements of the Sami, Norwegian and Norway/Sweden union flags. The symbolism of this can be read as a comment on the cultural plurality of the community of Olmmáiváaggi and the complexity of identities in the village. Villagers who identify as Sami were represented by the majority of the flag being the Sami flag. The strong Norwegian connections were represented by the Norwegian flag in the top left corner, and interaction with neighbouring countries was represented by the Norway/Sweden flag, the green and yellow in the top left corner overlaying the Norwegian flag. I suspect that the inclusion of the Norwegian and
Norway/Sweden union flags was also a comment on the imposition of legal and administrative instruments.

The second piece (Fig. 6.6) was a photograph of the flag above planted in the ground in Svartskogen. It represents the claiming of Svartskogen by the villages. On the right of the photo are the coordinates of Svartskogen, which was possibly a reference to the general habit in Norway of relating the latitude of locations. It is a point of pride and is recognition that living in the far north of Norway is exceptional. This piece clearly referenced the community’s claim to Svartskogen, and this notion was strengthened by the third piece (Fig. 6.7).
The third piece was a map of the area of Svartskogen that had been claimed. It was marked out on the floor by tape and filled with soil from Svartskogen. On the soil was a single footprint that replicated the first footprint on the moon. As you stood by this soil map you could hear the voice of Neil Armstrong saying, 'That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind'. This piece referenced not only the success of the case but that it was one of the first cases of its kind.

The exhibition opened up further discussion of the case as well as bringing the issue to the attention of a wider audience. This is one of the skills often shown by the organisers of Riddu Riddu, and a clear focus of their work. They were able to maintain the local community elements of the festival and make Riddu Riddu a site for the local community as well as making it relevant to a wider audience.

Communities are imagined and symbolic (Anderson 1983 & Cohen 1985). They are also enacted, presented (Goffman 1996), performative (Butler 1997) and situated. The imagined and symbolic nature of the Sami community is discussed elsewhere (see Chapter One). Location, the site of enactment and performativity, plays a role in the creation and maintenance of Sami identity through notions of
community. Specifically, Riddu Riđđu provides a site for the enactment and performance of Sami community and identity.

Community is negotiated at Riddu Riđđu so that it can be temporal, spatial and episodic. The festival provides opportunities for people to act within their community and become part of a community. In many respects Riddu Riđđu is a community and the site of several communities. It is also a site within a particular community, one that is located in space and time.

Many audience members identify with and participate in the community only for the days that they attend Riddu Riđđu. If community can be temporary and temporal as well as spatial, then its ephemeral nature is grounded in a place such as Riddu Riđđu as much as anywhere else. This is abundantly clear at Riddu Riđđu and in the time leading up to it and after it. The community that is created is recognised by others and it is expected to provide certain capacities in a wider field or community as well as on its own terms. People expect Riddu Riđđu to be a certain place, to provide a certain site for community. People expect Riddu Riđđu to be a forum for interaction between Sami people from different areas of Sápmi and other parts of the Indigenous world.

Each person who attends the festival encounters a community they encounter that they are part of and at least one other community that they are not part of. Many people go to the festival principally to watch and listen. They are both part of the community of other audience members and outside the community of staff members. For Sami people from outside Gáivuotna there are communities of other Sami people from outside and inside Gáivuotna. Staff members are part of a different community, one that consists of other staff members, artists and media
representatives. Each of these communities is temporary to different extents, and they interconnect at several different points. It can be said that in some ways the festival grounds become the site of a greater community that consists of smaller communities that interconnect for a variety of reasons at various of times and in a range of places in the festival area. During their time at Riddu Riđđu, each person can move through different sections of the greater community and the festival space.

By providing such a site for community, Riddu Riđđu also gives people the opportunity to present a new form of being Sami and relating to Sami people. It provides a location for creating a Sami community, one in which Sami people are relatively free to challenge the images of Sami people held outside Riddu Riđđu. At the same time, Riddu Riđđu and what happens there affects the images of Saminess outside it and feeds them back into it.

When people come to Riddu Riđđu they come to Olmmáivágg on Gáivuotna. They enter a community delineated by government, infrastructure, belonging and participation. It is belonging and participation that I am interested in as these were the most commonly articulated aspects of community that people spoke about when discussing their connections to the Sami community.

Most of the festival was held at Ája and on an area that consisted of a couple of fields patched together for the event (Fig. 6.8). The main stage was located on a field belonging to Ája and the main camp on a field belonging to a farmer who rented the land to the Riddu Riđđu Searvi. Included in the festival area was the

\[20\text{ Since it was built the Davvi álbmogiid guovddáš (eng Center for Northern Peoples), that is adjacent to the original Ája building, has also been utilised.}\]
school by the road and other buildings in the near vicinity.

It takes a lot of work to prepare the area for the festival. As mentioned in Chapter Three, some of this work was done during dugnader (singular dugnad). Staff members and other volunteers, mostly from the local community, come together with specific work tasks to complete. These tasks include *hashe* (described below), erecting lavvu and the Mongolian yurt, cleaning the area, and clearing the main stage that housed equipment between festivals. By far my favourite task was *hashe*.

To *hashe* (verb) is to cut and dry grass to make hay. After the grass is cut, it is spread over fences to dry (Fig. 6.9). People working for Riddu Riddu do this each year for the farmers who own the land on which the festival is held. The fences are used to delineate spaces in the festival area. During one dugnad, at which some 20 people participated, one of the tasks was to *hashe*. Most of the workers were Riddu Riddu Searvi and staff members as well as close friends and relatives of theirs. A week or so before the festival, we met by the river behind the main stage. When I arrived, people had already started to set up and cut the grass. I
spent the day piling grass onto wire fences and asking an unnecessary number of questions about how I should be doing it.

Not all the workers were involved in the hashe. Some worked on the main stage or cleaned parts of the festival area. The reason for having the dugnad was to get as much preparation work done as possible. I was struck by not only the hard work but the joie de vivre. There was much joking, teasing, talk of last year’s festival and general chat. The strong positivity was articulated by some of the people I spoke to on the day. They talked about how good it felt to be part of Riddu Riđđu and said that it gave them a focus as well as an opportunity to do something for the community, the Sami community more specifically. Andrea told me that she really only felt good about being Sami after she started working for Riddu Riđđu and that it provided many chances to be Sami in a practical way. It also provided her with opportunities to learn skills that were sometimes specifically Sami.

The ability of the people who run Riddu Riđđu to gather people to help with dugnader and other work is one of the ways that community is articulated and
performed outside the time of the festival. One of the reasons why is that the work becomes a series of community events. The tasks are undertaken in a clear location and at a specific time. In that activity people can enact community and it provides shared experience for community members. This community activity makes space for the performativity of Sami identity in specific locations that hold meaning.

Conclusion

The connection between land and community is significant for Sami people not simply because it provides a platform for evoking a connection. Sami people have presented contemporary connections to land and community partially through negotiations with administrative and legal instruments. Sami identity has been presented with a focus on the difference that is comprehensible in the light of national and regional discourses about Sami connections to land and community. Sami people have successfully harnessed these images of their difference to their advantage by emphasising positive attributes associated with their connections to *natur* and the North.

This raises the wider issue of Sami identification with nature, a ubiquitous subject of discussion about Indigenous peoples, including Sami people:

> The categorization of the Sámi by their relationship with nature rather than by area enables the construction of an ethnic identity and its reproduction regardless of the place in which the person was born or lives (Valkonen & Valkonen 2014, p. 34).

This is a common experience for Indigenous peoples. While they are associated and considered to have unique relationships with nature, this difference from non-Indigenous people is considered to be an overarching identifier rather than as attached to specific places.
The struggle for many Indigenous peoples, including Sami people, is to have their unique connections to specific places recognised. The people of Olmmáiváaggi had their unique connections to Svartskogen recognised and they were granted ownership of that land. The decision was dependent on the court understanding and acknowledging these connections, most of which were Sami connections.

It is almost always the immemorial relationship that would prove the kind of connection to land that would satisfy the criteria that legal systems require to be met. For the people of Olmmáiváaggi, the similarities between their extant relationships to the claim area and the willingness of the court to accept that there was a clear link to immemorial relationships led to the success of their claim. This willingness on the part of the court reflects the relative political goodwill shown by the Norwegian government, and demonstrates the ability of Sami people to articulate their ownership of land.

International attention to Indigenous issues and the increased value placed on Indigenous culture have also been harnessed by Sami people to gain rights. The Áltá conflict was an event that garnered support nationally and internationally. After that, Sami people used international instruments to support their political actions. This use of international instruments was echoed in arguments presented in the Svartskogen case. It was put that land ownership had to be granted to the village if Norway was to abide by international law as laid down in ILO Convention 169.

This view on international arenas is further echoed in the work of Riddu Riddu, where community is multi-faceted. International connections are a focus of the festival, but so too is local community. It is a located and localised effort that
grows out geographically from Olmmáiváaggi and Gáivuotna. Riddu Riđđu provides the possibility for promoting community that extends beyond the local and localised arena but it maintains strong ties to these localities. It gives a variety of people space for expression and participation while maintaining a strong focus on the festival organisers’ own specific and localised agenda, which is to promote Coastal Sami culture in Gáivuotna.

Having teased out some of the issues associated with land and community in relation to Sami identity, I will now turn to language as an identifier. Valkonen and Valkonen (2014, p. 34) state:

Those who are born in the Sámi region regard the Sámi language as the single most important element and criterion of Sáminess. For those born outside the Sámi region, the most important element is the nature relation. Most of my informants were born in the Sami region so it is difficult to assess this aspect of the statement, but from experience this is true. This statement could also be reread as Sami people regarding language as the most potent criterion of Saminess, while for non-Sami people the most important criteria are the connections to land and community. This chapter has been about notions of Saminess heavily influenced by the discourses and actions of non-Sami people. The next chapter addresses notions of Saminess much more heavily influenced by Sami people.
Chapter Seven

‘I (don’t) speak Sami’: language as a primary indicator of Saminess

At Riddu Riddu in 2004 I was sitting in the Artists’ Café talking to Per, a prominent Sami artist, writer and activist, about the work he had done and his views on being Sami. He had just finished telling me about a public debate he had had over comments he had made about Sami language capacity. He told me that Sami people should speak Sami if they are to call themselves Sami. He went on to say that he thought people should take two or three years out of their lives to learn Sami properly and then go back into the world. Per then said, ‘Don’t tell anyone in public, but you can tell the young people that I think this. In fact I want you to’.

This was just a small part of our encounter and it is not the only inflammatory thing Per said. However, I was particularly shocked by it. It struck me as I had not expected to hear this line of argument except as something feared by those who did not speak Sami. I did not expect it to be a view actually held by any prominent or influential Sami people. Per’s attitude highlighted for me the explicit pressure non-Sami-speaking Sami people encountered from some others in their community.

I told ‘the young people’, by whom Per meant the people working at Riddu Riddu, but only after they asked me what he had said and had guessed this was something he had raised. They were not shocked and laughed it off. There were more serious discussions about the issue later but, as everyone was busy, the
middle of the festival was not the time or the place for it. This encounter taught me much about internal Sami identity politics, the confidence of the people working at Riddu Riddu in their Sami identity, and the power of Sami language competence as an indicator of Sami identity.

For the Sami community, language is an important ‘dimension of identity and a means of facilitating in-group cohesion’ (Kvermo 1998, p. 123). It is certainly true that language is an important ‘dimension of identity’ and that the primary indicator of Saminess in many arenas is whether a person speaks or does not speak a Sami language. It also has an important role in ‘facilitating in-group cohesion’, as the issue of speaking or not speaking a Sami language is problematic within the Sami community and is one point of tension. This tension is multifaceted. One example of this is people’s attitudes to the use and usefulness or otherwise of the Sami language itself. One person said, ‘hardly anyone speaks Sami and there is no point learning it as it is less than useful’. Another person said, ‘I speak Sami to friends and family and most Sami people speak Sami, especially older people, who only speak Sami’.

Regardless of the dimensions of the discussion internal to the Sami community, it has been crucial for language to be used by the Sami community as a powerful point of difference from their colonisers. Its power lies somewhat in the general interest and awareness of language use in Norway. Non-Sami and Sami people spoke often about their own and others’ dialects and accents. People were generally very good at placing others by their accent when speaking Norwegian and there were accents associated with Sami communities. There is also a suggestion that accents from Sami communities have been influenced by Sami
language patterns. This was true in Gáivuotna, where one person said, ‘I was teased for my accent because it was Sami’.

Just as Sami people were discriminated against by the non-Sami population because of and through language, the Sami community used language as proof of difference and so proof of claims to specific rights. However, for Sami people who do not speak Sami, the focus on language has not always been a useful or fulfilling way by which to identify as Sami.

In some cases, the primacy of language competence as an identifier has led to Sami people’s authenticity as Sami being questioned by others and themselves. The story about Per above shows one way that this is constructed. That Per, knowing his influence in the community, could so forthrightly call on ‘the young people’ to learn Sami and that ‘the young people’ were not surprised by the call, demonstrates that the issue is not simply imagined by those who feel less Sami but is openly levied at Sami people from within the Sami community.

Pierre Bourdieu (in Bucken-Knapp 2003, p. 8) writes that ‘linguistic relations are always relations of symbolic power through which relations of force between the speakers and their respective groups are actualized’. The power of the most influential groups within the Sami community is based partially on their language competency. Sami people who do not speak Sami must navigate this in order to claim Saminess.

Another aspect of the role of language in the identification of Sami people is in the need and/or desire of successive governments for there to be concrete identifiers of Sami communities. These allowed for the defining of Sami communities, who belonged to these communities and who had claims to rights.
In Norwegian nation building, Sami assimilation and revitalisation policies language has often been focussed on. In Norway, the history of government recognition of Sami language ranges from its being banned in some contexts in the early 19th century to its being recognised as an official language in the late 20th century. For the Sami people of Norway this goes hand in hand with being recognised by the government as an Indigenous people.

Sami languages

There are differing opinions on how many Sami languages there are. Some scholars say that there are nine languages (Albury 2014, p.316; Bull 2002, p. 29; Pietikäinen et al. 2010, p. 3). Others argue that there is one language with a number of dialects (Huss & Lindgren 2011, p. 4). Deciding the number is beyond the scope of this project. To be inclusive, I will say there are 12 Sami languages. They are: South (Åarjelsaemien gïele), Ume, Pite (aka Arjeplog), Lule (julevsâmêgiella), North (davvisâmêgiella), Inari (anarâškielâ), Kemi, Skolt (nuõrttsä'ëmõlï), Akkala, Kainuu, Kildin and Ter Sami. As can be seen from the map below (Fig. 7.1), there is also a number of dialects, including the Jämtland, Åsele, Torne, Sea [Coastal] Sami and Finnmárku dialects.
In Norway, approximately 20 000 people speak Sami; in Finland, approximately 3 000; in Sweden, approximately 10 000; and in Russia, approximately 1 000. North Sami and Lule Sami are the most commonly spoken dialects with 30 000 and 2 000 speakers respectively (Steinfjell 2014, p.2):

the total number of speakers can be estimated at 35,000\(^1\) and the percentage of speakers of each variety is about 25% to 30% of the total population belonging to each Sámi linguistic group, except for Akkala Sámi which recently lost its last speaker\(^2\) (Rasmussen & Nolan 2011, p. 36).

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\(^1\) Jon Todal (1998, p. 356) states: ‘there are no reliable statistics on the number of Sámi speakers. However, the number of Northern Sámi speakers is often estimated at about 20,000’. Ole Henrik Magga (1995, p. 221) also estimates the number at approximately 20 000.

\(^2\) ‘Lule Sámi, Skolt, Inari and South Sámi would be spoken by between 300 and 500,Kildin by about 650 and Ume, Pite and Ter, as already mentioned, only by some elderly speakers’ (Bull 2002, p. 31).
It is estimated that 75% of the Sami-speaking population speak one of the three major Sami languages (North, Lule and South Sami), and the majority of Sami speakers live in Norway (Bull 2012, p. 31).

These figures cannot convey the levels of competency in the Sami languages and whether people have Sami as their ‘home language’. For some, speaking Sami does not necessarily equate to viewing oneself as Sami. That could mean that people do not declare their language capacities. Still others, who do not want to be perceived as Sami, also do not declare their knowledge of Sami languages. It would be easy to imagine that these figures are slightly higher, but they would not be so much higher as to change the linguistic profile of Sápmi extensively.

Sami languages are members of the Finno-Ugric family, a subfamily of the Uralic languages, which include Estonian, Finnish and Hungarian. There are six standardised written forms; South, Lule, North, Inari, Skolt and Kildin Sámi (Bull 2002, p.30; Sammallahti 1998, p.1). They use the Roman alphabet with added diacritics except for Kildin, which uses a variation of Cyrillic (Bull 2002, p.30):

Sámi has existed as a written language for several hundred years. The oldest written Sámi material is a small dictionary from Kola written down by an English sea-captain in 1557. The first printed work was a tiny primer in a mixture of Sámi and Finnish, printed in Stockholm in 1619 (Bull 2002, p.32).

Sami languages have:

no distinct linguistic boundaries; neighbouring languages or dialects on each side of a language boundary are normally close to each other in vocabulary. In other words, the Sami languages or dialects form a chain in which people from adjacent language areas can understand each other easily. These linguistic boundaries do not correspond to the national borders of the respective states; instead they reflect the internal boundaries of traditional Sami settlement areas (Sammallahti 1998) (Henriksen 2008, p.28).
In communities in inner Finnmárku, such as Guovdageaidnu and Kárásjohka, you can hear Sami spoken in shops, on the street, in the Sámediggi, at the theatre\(^3\) and in people’s kitchens and living rooms. When talking to Sami people in these places about their everyday lives, language competency was also a topic of conversation. They were highly aware of their linguistic environment, including the role of Norwegian and English. The families I met in these towns often included parents and children who spoke three languages. Language is an important component of any process of identification, and it was clear that, for Sami people who lived in Sami-speaking communities and were proficient in Sami languages, language was crucial to their sense of themselves and others in their communities as Sami.

### Sami identity and language

Sami language is an important culture bearer and identity marker (Sámediggi/Sametinget c.2015c, n.p.) [my translation].

Jarle summed up the importance of language for his identification as Sami by explaining his response to reading Sami road signs. He told me that he was not conscious of reading Sami, that he just did it. Because he engaged with the language unconsciously, it was a given that he was Sami.

Added to individual identifications through language competency, language has become a meta-element of Sami culture and Sami identity criteria. It is common to see language listed separately from culture in documents created by Sami organisations. That language is isolated from the more general term ‘culture’

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\(^3\) Beaivváš Sami Teáhter, based in Guovdageaidnu, has been running since 1981. They perform in Guovdageaidnu and tour Sápmi and elsewhere. See Beaivváš Sami Teáhter (c2015) for more information.
shows the value of and focus on language.

The website of the Sámediggi reinforces this theory of the primacy of language as an identifier. As the Sámediggi represents the Sami community of Norway, it is interesting to look at how language is presented publicly by this institution. The Sámediggi internet home page includes a series of blocks with links to areas of interest. ‘Språk’ (language) is the first block. It is followed by ‘Kulturliv’ (cultural life) ‘Opplæring’ (Education), ‘Næringer’ (Industry), ‘Helse of sosial’ (Health and social), ‘Miljø, areal og kulturvern’ (Environment, spaces and cultural protection), ‘Land og ressursrettighetter’ (Land and resource rights), and ‘Internasjonalt arbeid’ (International cooperation) (Sámediggi/Sametinget c.2015b, n.p.). That language is listed first is telling of its importance.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, for a person to be registered on the Sámediggi electoral roll one must declare that one:

- Perceives oneself as Sami
- Has Sami as one’s home language, or at least a parent, grandparent or great grandparent who has, or has had, Sami as their home language, or be the child of someone already registered on the Sami electoral roll (Sámediggi/Sametinget 2005) [my translation].

The first of these criteria is subjective, and the second is objective. The first, in the form of the subjective ‘perceive oneself as Sami’ highlights the importance placed on individual perceptions of Saminess. Group perceptions of Saminess, the second and objective criterion, relates to language (Sara, 2002, pp. 15–17). In many ways, language becomes the main criterion, as it is objective and ensures that only an objectively defined category of people can claim to be Sami.

For those who come from Sami communities that have been more successfully assimilated or norwegianised the language criterion has proved difficult. This
explains why the Sámediggi has amended the criterion in The Sami Act (from which criteria were initially taken), to include the final clause ‘or be the child of someone already registered on the Sami electoral roll’. This opens up possibilities for people to enrol in future without having to prove Sami language connection.

As with all political struggles, part of the struggle of Sami identification is in defining the struggle itself. It includes defining who is ‘us’ and who is ‘them’, as well as managing how the group is defined by others. Some people in the Sami community believe ‘us’ can be better created, defined and maintained through language rights⁴ — that is, that the Sami community would be stronger and more united if everyone spoke Sami. Language has also been very important in the construction of a national image of Sami people that was necessary for the whole Sami community to be recognised as entitled to the same rights as non-Sami people. Some of the efforts to gain those rights have centred on language emancipation⁵ (see Huss & Lindgren 2011). On another level, the language skills of those involved in political bodies have been important in public claims to having strong ‘authentic’ and ‘legitimate’ Saminess and therefore being representative of the Sami population.

The first president of the Sámediggi, Ole Henrik Magga, is a professor of Sami Language at the Sámi Allaskuvla (eng Sámi University College) in Guovdageaidnu. In his positions in the Sámediggi and as the first Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Ole Henrik Magga has done a

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⁴ Sometimes referred to as ‘linguistic human rights’ (Paulston 1997, p. 74).

⁵ Language emancipation is ‘improving the position of an underprivileged language through political efforts and language planning’ (Huss & Lindgren 2011, p. 2). It is similar to language revitalisation and reverse language shift (RLS) (Fishman 1991) except that it does not require a language to be endangered (Huss & Lindgren 2011, p. 8).
great deal for the Sami community in Norway, Sami people in general and
Indigenous people around the world. He is a North Sami speaker from a reindeer
herding community in Inner Finnmárku and has been instrumental in having Sami
recognised as an official language in Norway as well as having it incorporated
into political, institutional and public life⁶. It cannot be said that this is the only
focus of Ole Henrik Magga’s extensive work, but it has been an important
component of it. Ole Henrik Magga’s language competency strengthened his
position as Sami and it was in part why he could be representative of the Sami
community in Norway.

However, for some other Sami people, the strong focus on language has meant
that they lack a feeling of belonging. The focus on language leads to Sami people
who do not speak Sami being reminded constantly of a perceived ‘lack’ in their
upbringing or adult choices:

as the indigenous languages are very important for identity issues and are
highly politicized in Sámi communities, both language competence and the
lack of it mark people and place them within a hierarchy of ‘Sáminess’
(Pietikäinen 2010, 85).

One woman, a Sami reindeer herder from Finnmárku, said that not speaking
Sami had caused her a lot of emotional difficulties, as ‘Being a non-Sami
speaking reindeer herder is almost a contradiction’. She went on to say that she
‘had anger about it’. This led to her interest in her children being taught Sami so
that they would not have the same experiences she had had.

A few people repeated that they perceived the focus on language as creating a
hierarchy of Saminess and they said that it could be counterproductive to the
Sami rights movement. Saminess is not a sliding scale. If some members of the

⁶ Including having interpreters present at conferences, meetings and the Sámediggi.
community felt less Sami than others, it did not serve the ambitions of the community. While primacy of language played an important role in external projections of Saminess in the form of strategic essentialism, its reiteration internally served to alienate potential activists.

One afternoon, I attended a paper about Sami issues at the University of Tromsø presented by a senior academic anthropologist who had been working in the field for several years. In the room were a number of academics, Sami and non-Sami. Eva was a Sami academic from a South Sami community, a community where few people spoke Sami but which, like many such communities, was experiencing language revival. During the seminar the academic said, in essence, that ‘real’ Sami people spoke Sami and those who did not had tenuous claims to Saminess. That such a senior academic could be so tactless, and that no-one challenged him, was significant. This prejudice was so ingrained and longstanding that it had ceased to be something to be challenged or even open to challenge.

Over the years I have had a number of discussions with Eva about this aspect of Saminess. She told me about being involved for several years with the Sámediggi. As an employee, she was pressured to learn and work in Sami. It was not her community’s language but North Sami that she was expected to use. Although Eva did learn some North Sami to help with her work, she continued to use Norwegian as her working and home language. A point of contention, both personally and professionally, for Eva in her relationship to Sami language was that she was expected to have competency in a specific Sami language.
While Eva’s issue, and that of others mentioned above is primarily internal to the Sami community, external factors have influenced this situation. One of those is the place of language in Norwegian nationalist agendas and assimilation policies.

**Language assimilation**

The history of Norwegian nation building includes a focus on language as a defining criterion of Norwegian identity. In the 19th century, early in the construction of a national Norwegian identity, language was one of the aspects of Norwegian culture that became the focus of nationalist efforts:

The major force in play in destabilizing and marginalization of indigenous and minority languages in Nordic countries has been the modernist ideology of the homogeneous nation state (Pietikäinen et al. 2010, p. 5).

In the pursuit of homogeneity, language was used as a tool to oppress and assimilate the Sami population of Norway.

Language in Norway was heavily influenced by Danish until 1814, when Norway became independent of Denmark. A concerted nationalising of Norwegian language followed\(^7\). Today, Norway has two official non-Sami languages: Bokmål (eng Book language) and Nynorsk (eng New Norwegian)\(^8\). Bokmål is the most commonly spoken language, with Nynorsk being spoken mainly in western Norway.

From the 1880s until the 1960s, Sami language rights were tied to Norwegian national identity politics (Bucken-Knapp 2003, p. 2). Pierre Bourdieu (1991, p. 45) argues that:

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\(^7\)In 1450, Norway entered into a treaty with Denmark and by 1536, Norway ceased to be an independent kingdom.

\(^8\) Nynorsk was developed from the dialects spoken in the countryside at the time of Cessation. Attempts to form one common language were unsuccessful.
the official language is bound up with the state, both in its genesis and in its social uses. It is in the process of state formation that the conditions are created for the constitution of a unified linguistic market, dominated by the official language.

In Norway, the national elites considered it important that there be only one national language unique to Norway (Bucken-Knapp 2003, p. 100 & pp. 107–108; Albury 2014, p. 3). Sami languages were considered a threat to the nationalist agenda and something to be excluded: ‘

the idea that only one language could officially occupy one national space directly implied that any group within a nation’s borders that did not use the officially sanctioned language could not be considered part of the nation (Brucken-Knapp 2003, p. 108).

These efforts to create a monolingual nation led to ‘active measures to secure and strengthen majority-only language practices’ (Pietikäinen et al 2010, p. 7). The active language assimilation of Sami people ‘probably reduced the number of speakers of the Sámi language to a third of what would otherwise have been the case’ (Trosterud 2008, p. 103).

A number of deliberate language assimilation policies led to the reduction (Trosterud 2008, p. 111). They included the banning of the use of Sami in some schools (Kvernmo 1998, p. 126), which meant that some Sami people learnt to speak, read and write only Norwegian in schools. Because Norwegian became the only accepted official language, the older Sami people were also forced to learn Norwegian so that they could deal with the authorities. As mentioned in Chapter Six, one example of this forced learning was that it was illegal to own land unless a person had a certain command of Norwegian (Pietikäinen et al
These efforts by Norwegian authorities went a long way to ensuring that Sami became a private language. Their ‘forbidden language’ was ‘downgraded to something shameful’ (Huss, 1999, p. 127). An impact of all this on Sami identification was that the shame felt about speaking Sami became shame of being Sami. As Joshua Fishman (1991, p. 4) puts it, ‘the destruction of a language is the destruction of a rooted identity’. Although Sami languages were not destroyed, they were subjugated and so was Sami identity. The story below shows that the impact of these policies was still felt.

During the very first days of my time in Sápmi, I met Behkká, a musician and songwriter. While he was teaching me the Sami alphabet (North Sami, as he was from inner Finnmárku), Behkká told me that he chose to write songs in Sami or English rather than in Norwegian in response to attempts by Norwegian authorities to destroy Sami languages. Behkká said that he considered Norwegian to be the language of the oppressor. It was not unusual for language assimilation to be raised as an issue when discussing Sami oppression.

Language assimilation policies were enforced for approximately a century until the end of the Second World War. Rasmussen and Nolan (2011, p. 41) argue that the relocation of the Northern Norwegian community during the Second World War marked the beginning of a significant language shift from Sami to Norwegian. Many Sami people living in the south learnt Norwegian and began

9 The law was abolished in 1965 (Pietkäinen et al 2010, p. 7).
10 This is something Paine (1994, p. 181) raised in Herds of the Tundra when he explained that reindeer herders had to present their arguments in a Norwegian context and style when defending there herding rights.
speaking to their children in Norwegian. However, at this time the Norwegian elite changed their attitude towards Sami languages. There was a new awareness of the importance of minority groups within Norway and there was also international recognition of minority groups as having been the victims of past injustice ‘and such injustices were now expected to be acknowledged and addressed’ (Brucken-Knapp 2003, p. 100). This harkened the beginning of Sami language revitalisation.

Language revitalisation

Sami activists took on language as a platform from which they would be heard by the Norwegian government and they have been very successful. Language has been recognised as one of the unique qualities of Sami culture. Rather than language being used as a tool of oppression Sami activists used it as a tool of revitalisation of not just Sami language but Sami culture generally. Since the 1970s, language revitalisation has been a platform for gaining group rights and a vehicle for redressing the effects of assimilation policies (Magga & Skutnabb-Kangas 2001, n.p).

Florian Coulmas (1998, p. 63) argues

against the idea that languages are objects deserving of legal protection, because languages only exist in the heads of individual speakers who, however, under circumstances to be specified, should enjoy freedom of choice in the languages they wish to use.

Whether or not it is agreed that languages of themselves deserve legal protection, the freedom to choose the language a person wishes to use can be extended to the freedom of a community to choose to have their language protected by law.

11 Nils Jernsletten (1993) discusses the language shift within Sami families: grandparents spoke Sami as their first language, parents spoke Sami to their parents but Norwegian to their children and the children spoke Norwegian primarily.
Coulmas (1998, p. 68) says that ‘given the tradition of using language as a marker of nationality/ethnicity, the language rights of groups can be considered as a kind of self-determination’.

This is certainly true for Sami people in Norway who have gained ground on access to rights with a ‘reverse language shift’ (Fishmann 1991) that has led to the recognition, development and maintenance of the number of speakers of Sami languages (Magga & Skutnabb-Kangas 2001, n.p.). Nationally, this reverse language shift is reflected in legislation and official recognition such as by the Sami Language Act (discussed further below).

It is also important to note that:

the identification of language rights as part of general human rights has had positive effects. Governments with aspirations in human rights have listened to arguments about language rights … As long as states could enhance their international profiles as defenders of human and indigenous rights without having to grant large concessions, they were willing to support cultural and other rights for indigenous peoples (Magga & Skutnabb-Kangas 2001, n.p.).

Since the rise of the international human rights movement, the Norwegian government has been interested and willing to participate in the recognition of human rights. It is therefore not surprising that Sami language rights would be supported. That support has been important symbolically, even though, as Ole Henrik Magga and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas argue above, it has not led to the granting of large concessions.

The absence of a need for large concessions by the Norwegian government is in part due to the Sami language revitalisation in Norway having been dealt with in
a neotraditionalist\textsuperscript{12} way — that is, with little incorporation of Sami language into the wider Norwegian community (Albury 2014). The neotraditionalist revitalisation included no need to incorporate Sami languages into the non-Sami community, such as teaching non-Sami people Sami languages. The reason for choosing this path to revitalisation could have been to avoid the ‘the colonization of yet another indigenous commodity’ (Albury 2014, p. 2). Regardless of the reasons and the merits or otherwise of taking this path to revitalisation, the people I spoke to considered it a success.

One of the significant achievements of the efforts of Sami people to revitalise Sami languages has been the Sami Language Act\textsuperscript{13}. In 1990, a series of laws were changed and these became known as the ‘Sami Language Act\textsuperscript{14}’. The overall goal of these changes was ‘cultural preservation and development’ (Magga 1995, p. 222), ‘to enable the Sami people in Norway to safeguard and develop their language, culture and way of life’ (Sámi Act 1987, s1.1), and to give Sami and Norwegian languages equal status (Corson 1995, p. 500). The Act also brought Norwegian law in line with international covenants and conventions that had been ratified by the Norwegian government (Magga 1995, p. 231).

The Sami Language Act recognises six Sami municipalities in which Sami languages are given equal status with Norwegian languages\textsuperscript{15}. These communities make up what is known as the administrative area of the Sami

\textsuperscript{12} Under neotraditionalist approaches Indigenous languages are kept for Indigenous people to reinforce distinct cultures and identities (Albury 2014).

\textsuperscript{13} One of the many examples of government action to support language emancipation and revitalisation is the ‘Plan of Action to strengthen Sami languages’ (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion 2010).

\textsuperscript{14} ‘In reality the regulations in question involved changes in three laws, primarily the law on the Sámi Assembly (Parliament) [The Sami Act], and also laws on education [The Primary and Lower Secondary Education Act] and on courts of law [The Courts Act]’ (Magga 1995, p. 219).

\textsuperscript{15} Under the Sami Language Act ‘Sami and Norwegian are equal languages with equal status, pursuant to the provisions of section 3 of the Act’ (Magga 1995, p. 223).
Language Act (Albury 2014, p. 11; Magga 1995) and include Guovdageaidnu, Kárášjohka, Porsáŋgu (nor Porsanger), Deatnu (nor Tana) and Unjárga (nor Nesseby) in Finnmárku county; and Gáivuotna in the county of Romsa. The law applies in effect only to North Sami districts apart from educational provisions. Lule Sami and South Sami have been left out of the administrative area (Magga 1995, p. 230). Since Magga wrote this, South Sami and Lule Sami municipalities have been included in the administrative area (Peitikinen et al. 2010, p. 17).

Inhabitants of these municipalities have ‘the right to use and to receive a response in Sámi in all official connections’ (Bull 2002, p. 33). The Sami Language Act states that health, education, government and other services must be delivered in Sami as well as in Norwegian. If a Sami person wishes to communicate in Sami with any official and the official does not speak Sami, an interpreter must be used (Albury 2014, p. 11). Other specific outcomes include Sami being offered in schools without special request and paid leave being granted for those who want to learn Sami.

To support these measures, the Sami Language Committee (sme Sámi Giellagáldu) was established. The Committee’s field of operation is to preserve and develop the Sámi language, to give advice and assistance to the public and the authorities on language questions, to inform people about their language rights and to produce an annual report on the status of the Sámi language to the Sámi Parliament and the Government (Magga 1995, p. 226).

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16 In 2011, the then Romsa town council decided to apply for membership of the administrative area but it lost an election and the new council abandoned the plan (Hiss 2013, p. 178).
17 See Magga (1995, p. 223) for a list of the requirements of local and regional bodies, police, courts, prisons, health and welfare institutions, schools and the Church for using Sami languages in the administrative area.
18 Outside the administrative area, at least three students must request education in Sami, for this part of the law to be implemented (Albury 2014, p. 11).
The Committee also manages a register of translators and interpreters, and develops ‘national and inter-Nordic co-operation as regards language questions’ (Greller 1996, p. 77)\textsuperscript{19}.

Many of the outcomes of the implementation of the provisions of the Sami Language Act are considered positive. However, there have also been some negatives and they are still being worked on. With Sami language policy territorialised, problems have been faced by Sami people who live in communities not included in the administrative area. Some municipalities not included in the administrative area removed existing Sami language services because they were not required by law to provide them (Magga & Skutnabb-Kangas 2001, n.p.). Another issue that arose was around the privileging of North Sami over other Sami languages.

**North Sami**

the most widespread and least threatened of the languages, Northern Sámi, has emerged as the Sámi language (Todal 1998, p. 358)

North Sami speakers had a very strong hold on the Sami language realm. It was recognised as the main or shared ‘national’ Sami language. The Sámediggi was conducted in North Sami, most Sami publications were in North Sami, and North Sami was being taught to Sami people in order to create a common language for when participating in Sami forums. This focus on one Sami language had proved useful to some extent as the debate was not complicated by regional differences. The pattern in Sami and probably many other efforts to gain rights is that initially strategic essentialism is employed on the whole group level: as some rights are

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\textsuperscript{19} In 2013–4, the work of making decisions about terminology, standardisation, and place names was also taken up by Sámi giellagáldu that was established by the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish Sami Parliaments (Sametinget (Sweden) 2015, n.p.).
achieved, the subtleties and regional variations among the group members are brought into the discussions and negotiations.

It is understandable that North Sami assume the position of the Sami language. It is the language most widely used by Sami people and is strongly associated with reindeer herding communities in Inner Finnmárku. For the reindeer herders, Sami language has always been an easy identifier to rely on, as their communities have been the majority Sami-speaking communities and they have been less ravaged by language assimilation. It is true that a society is never totally monolingual and the structures of power are usually also intertwined with the mutual relationships of the languages. One language may signal a privileged position, another, an underprivileged one (Huss & Lindgren 2011, pp. 1–2).

Those who speak Sami languages other than North Sami continue to have difficulties associated with the dominance of North Sami.

It is also certainly true of the Sami community that ‘debates over regional languages are never just debates over language’ (Kymlicka & Patten 2003, p. 5). For some individuals, speaking a Sami language other than North Sami reflects inauthenticity and unworthiness. Bjørg Evjen (2004), in an article about the evolution of Lule Sami identity and identification, states that for a long time many Lule Sami felt that speaking Sami did not mean that they viewed themselves as Sami, because they had been given the impression that ‘real’ Sami people spoke North Sami. Lule Sami was not considered as legitimate a Sami language as North Sami and so their claim to Saminess was not as legitimate as those who spoke North Sami.

Jernsletten (1993) also discusses the effects of this hierarchy of language and explains to some extent why it was established. In his article ‘Sami language
communities and the conflict between Sami and Norwegian’ Jernsletten (1993) argues that the Southern Sami were the first organising Sami communities and that their grasp of Sami language was part of their desire to fight for cultural protection. Jernsletten further argues that because the Southern Sami families were isolated in the villages in which they lived and their children spoke Norwegian at school, Sami language remained the principal language spoken at home. In Inner Finnmárku, where there were majority Sami-speaking villages, Sami continued to be spoken in general daily activities as well as at home, so Norwegian was relegated to a school language.

I met Aslak when he was five years old and I was staying with him and his parents in their home in Guovdageaidnu. Sami was Aslak’s first language and Norwegian and English were equal second. If anything, his English was better than his Norwegian. This was due partly to the fact that he would not be taught Norwegian until he went to school and much of what Aslak watched on television was in English with Norwegian subtitles. Both of Aslak’s parents were trilingual, with their aptitude in each descending from Sami to Norwegian then to English. Both professed (in English) not to be able to speak English but both were very competent in English. Revitalisation of Sami languages had made it easier for Aslak and his parents to keep Sami as their home language. This was supported by the use of Sami language in education, the media and their language environment. Below is a discussion of details of the language environment in

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20 In Norway, children generally start school at age six.
which Aslak, his parents, other Sami and non-Sami\textsuperscript{21} people live.

**Sami language in education, media and toponymy**

Some of the areas that Sami language revitalization and reverse language shift has affected are education, media and toponymy. In each area, there has been an increase or change in the use of Sami language that has required considerable effort from the Sami community to implement. Language is an important aspect of identity. Gaining the resources needed to produce material in Sami languages goes some way to confirming that Sami identities have been increasingly recognised. It also indicates the desire of the Sami community to maintain aspects of culture that influence identity.

**Sami language and education**

We Sami have for many years been working to establish that the use of Sami in education is so fundamental for Sami children and so necessary for all children who live in Sami areas that it should not be possible to opt out of it. It should in other words be obligatory (Magga 1995, p. 229).

This is not a position shared by all Sami people but it was conveyed to me on more than one occasion, admittedly mostly by people who had Sami as their first language. Many others were well aware of the importance of having Sami language education at varying levels. One of the reasons people gave for Sami language education was that it would redress the effects of the assimilation policies under which Sami languages had been banned from schools. These policies included those from the 19\textsuperscript{th} century:

\textsuperscript{21} Several non-Sami people complained to me about the use of Sami in different public and private spheres. It was ironic, as their complaints were based on their perception that they were being forced to learn Sami and/or that Sami people should just use Norwegian (one person even suggested that Sami people should learn to speak Norwegian properly).
Norway ordered Sápmi schools to shift entirely to Norwegian and salary structures made teachers reliant on bonuses for successfully implementing Fornorsking [Norwegianisation] (Magga, 1994, p. 221). Boarding schools were founded in Finnmark to remove indigenous children from traditional schooling and assimilate them (Bucken-Knapp, 2003; Bull, 2002) (Albury 2014, p. 3).

This language policy lasted until 1959 (Pietkainen et al 2010, p. 8) and it has left a lasting impression on the Sami community. Nils Erik said that:

In the 50s kids got beaten at school for speaking Sami so their parents didn't teach the kids. Easiest psychology.

Not only did children have to learn Norwegian in their home communities, but they were removed from their families to do so. From the 1800s until the 1960s in Norway there were boarding schools where education with the express purpose of assimilating Sami children was provided (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 2010, p. 9).

Even in recent years, children were discouraged from learning Sami, if not because of the language itself then because of perceived issues around multilingualism. The story below about Lawra Somby was told in the film Firekeepers (2007). Lawra was in his early 30s when he appeared in the film along with his mother, Nanni Mari Westerfjell. Nanni spoke of her experience of being the parent of a multilingual Sami child:

Back then we didn’t know that kids can relate to three languages, and he was starting kindergarten. Ánde, his father, had spoken northern Saami to him and I had spoken southern Saami. In kindergarten they said he didn’t speak at all, and they thought it was because he couldn’t handle three languages simultaneously. So I started speaking northern Saami instead, we chose that language. Later we got to know it is common behaviour for multilingual kids.

In the film, Lawra responds to hearing this story for the first time:

You know I am very angry of this language stuff … And I have no words for it. You know I never heard that it was the kindergarten. It’s just a … It’s been a fucking mystery. I know that they chose but I didn’t know why. But
I feel that losing the language … it’s just … cut … You know, it was my first language. A whole foundation of me that is ripped away.

It is clear that Lawra felt strongly that limiting his languages had a profound effect on his identity as Sami.

Since the 1980s, when Lawra was in kindergarten, there has been increased interest in improving Sami language education. This had come with increased interest in Indigenous rights internationally, nationally and locally. It led to ‘the reflection of one’s identity and ethnicity [in education]… becoming popular’ (Keskitalo, Määttä & Uusiautti 2014, p. 71). With the language revitalisation efforts that stem from this interest and the resulting legislative changes, children in the administrative area now have the right to Sami education (Albury 2014, p. 11).

By law, children living in communities recognised under the Sami Language Act must be able to receive all schooling in Sami language (see Appendix D for a list of education entitlements), and Sami language teaching is embedded in schools through a variety of models (Lie 2003). There are several bilingual kindergartens and primary schools. Bilingual secondary schools are less common. However, there are opportunities for students to take at least some instruction in Sami at all levels of education. In several secondary schools, Sami language is taught as an elective subject.
In Norway, as in other Scandinavian countries, students can attend a folk high school (nor folkehøgskole) for a year before proceeding to university. In that year, students choose an area of study they want to focus on and they attend a school that specialises in it. These specialist areas include sports, science, art and humanities. Some folk high schools in Norway offer Sami subjects.

Sami students have several options in the tertiary system. The University of Tromsø has a Sami language and linguistics program that can be taken as degree courses. Sami studies subjects are also offered in other disciplines, such as literature and anthropology, which are usually taught in Norwegian and occasionally in English. The University of Tromsø also has the Sámi dutkamiid guovddáš (Sesam) (eng Centre for Sami Studies), which takes an active role in developing curriculum for the university. Subjects and course are also offered in tertiary colleges, including the Sámi allaskuvla in Guovdageaidnu.

The teaching of Sami to adults in communities falls to centres such as Sámi Giellaguovddáš (Sami Language Centre) in Gáivuotna (discussed later in this chapter). Those who work in these centres provide language classes, produce teaching material and consult with local government. There are a number of Sami language centres, most of them in the administrative area.

22 Folk high schools are attended after upper secondary school. They cover non-core educational subjects such as craft, computer skills, outdoor living and international solidarity. Some folk high schools offer formal educational course that lead to qualifications at diploma level, but they are not part of the formal education system. They give students a more relaxed atmosphere in which to learn. Most students also board at the schools, so it is an important time for socialisation.

23 There was a Sami folk high school in Kárásjohka which became a Sami art school in 2011.
The implementation of Sami education has contributed to the reverse language shift, especially in the administrative area. However, the application of the law has not been a simple matter, because it seems that current Sámi language teaching lacks a functional idea of multilingualism and that the revitalization of Sámi is not emphasized at the curriculum level, even though the perspective in the curriculum is bilingual (Keskiatlo in Keskitalo, Määttä & Uusiautti 2014, p. 76).

This is most probably the result of the neotraditionalist approach to Sami languages in Norway. Given the numbers of Norwegian-speaking students and the need to accommodate them as well as Sami-speaking students and students who request Sami medium education, incorporating Sami language into schools is a complex process.

Sami languages and media

Sami media ‘plays a central role in the administrative area’ (Albury 2014, p. 11). There are Sami language newspapers, magazines, television shows and radio, all directed at the Sami community. There is little Sami content in non-Sami media (Peterson 2003). Sami media policy is staunchly Sami-only and neotraditionalist and most is produced in standardised North Sami (Albury 2014, p. 11; Kelly-Holmes, Moriarty & Pietikäinen 2009, p. 238; Pietikäinen 2008, pp. 25–26).

There is a long history of Sami language newspapers and magazines. Some of the publications include Ávvir (a daily newspaper), Gaba (a women’s magazine), Leavedolgi (a children’s magazine), S (a youth magazine) and Nuorttanaste (a religious periodical). Much of the rest of the Sami media is run by NRK.

24 The newspapers Min Áigi and Áššu merged in 2008 to form Ávvir.
NRK\textsuperscript{25} is the largest media organisation in Norway. It is government owned and has a section called NRK Sápmi which has 11 offices\textsuperscript{26}. The head office of NRK Sápmi, which includes broadcasting facilities, is in Kárášjohka (NRK 2015b, n.p.). In 2012, NRK Sápmi broadcast 246 hours of television, 1754 hours of FM radio, and 6 545 hours of digital radio (NRK 2015b, n.p.)\textsuperscript{27}.

Sami Radio plays a very important role in distributing information to the Sami community in Sápmi and ‘the development of Sámi radio goes hand in hand with the awakening and development of the Sámi movement and organizations since the early twentieth century’ (Pietikäinen 2010, p. 92). Sami Radio is based in Kárášjohka but has smaller offices in other Sami communities such as Gáivuotna. The main office in Kárášjohka manages all broadcast material while local offices are responsible for collecting information and producing programs to be broadcast. Most of what Sami Radio broadcasts is in North Sami with some programs in Lule Sami and South Sami. Television broadcasts have a similar language profile (NRK 2015b, n.p.).

Only a few hours of Sami language television are aired each week; a Sami children’s show is aired daily and four or five documentary shows are aired each year. Sami language television programs aired on a national basis number only around one hour a year. However, this is in a state of change and production and air time is increasing.

\textsuperscript{25} NRK is the Norsk rikskringkasting AS (eng Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation). NRK broadcasts through three national television channels and 13 national radio channels. ‘On any average day in 2012, 88 percent of the population used one or more of NRK’s services on television, radio, text-TV, web or mobile’ (NRK 2015a, n.p.).

\textsuperscript{26} The NRK Sápmi offices are in Deatnu, Kárášjohka, Guovdageaidnu, Anár, Giron, Gáivuotna, Romsa, Skánit, Divtasvuodna, Snáase and Oslo (NRK 2015b, n.p.).

\textsuperscript{27} In 2015, Sami Radio broadcast Monday to Friday from 7.00 am until 5.00am and for brief periods over the weekends (NRK 2015c, n.p.).
The internet is playing an increasingly important role in disseminating information to the Sami population and to a wider audience about the Sami people. Many Sami organisations have websites that are bilingual or multilingual. Many of the websites of the larger organisations are presented in North Sami, Norwegian and English and some sites are available in other Sami languages. Some discussion about the use of Sami language on the Web has centred on the need to develop Sami language display programs. As each Sami language has different diacritics, specific programs have to be developed for each (Lona 1999, pp. 17–21).

The use of Sami languages in media is a clear indication that the producers and users have the skills to generate and read the material. Their use is also central to identification as Sami. It is clear that the more strongly a media outlet or organisation identifies as Sami, the more likely it is to include Sami language.

‘Competing systems of spatial signification’ and toponymic resistance

Traipsing down the well-worn path of ‘social justice, symbolic resistance, and place naming as a cultural arena’ (Rose-Redwood, Alderman & Azaryahu 2010, p. 426), this section has discussion of place-naming processes. They reveal power relations and some of the mechanisms of Sami identity politics:

The socially contested nature of place names comes from the fact that they are powerful semiotic texts embedded in larger systems of meaning and discourse that are read, interpreted, and acted upon socially by people in different ways (Duncan, 1990; Pinchevski and Torgovnik, 2002) (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010, p. 458).

This is certainly true of Sami place-naming. Since the beginning of Sami struggles in Norway, part of the debate about Sami issues has been the importance of

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recognising Sami place names. When non-Sami Norwegians moved into Sápmi they redrew the maps, delineated the borders with Sweden, Finland and Russia, and gave places Norwegian names. Sami people have always resisted this practice and have fought to have the Sami names of places reinstated or at least used in conjunction with Norwegian names for those places.

Some place names in Sápmi have been decided on the basis of ‘cross-cultural communication rather than toponymic subjugation and silencing by the hegemonic language group’ (Brattland and Neilsen 2011, p. 276), but others have been subjugated and silenced. Toponymic subjugation was reflected in Sami place names being included on maps and official documents in parentheses or after or under Norwegian place names (Helander 2009, pp. 258–259). With silencing, Sami place names were not included at all. Language assimilation resulted in the Sami names being replaced in spoken language with Norwegian names.

Between the 1800s and the 1930s, there was a policy to translate Sami place names into Norwegian (Brattland & Neilsen 2011, p. 278). One of the ways this was implemented was explained to me in the following way. There is a place near Áltá the Sami name of which is ‘Jiemmaluovtta’. It was translated into Norwegian as ‘Hjemmeluft’. The similar-sounding words ‘jiemma’ and ‘hjemme’, which mean ‘seal’ and ‘home’ in Sami and Norwegian respectively, and the words ‘luovtta’ and ‘luft’, which mean ‘bay’ and ‘air’ in Sami and Norwegian respectively, were used for the translation. So, ‘Seal Bay’ became ‘Home Air’.

The Norwegian Place Names Act 1990 recognised Sami place names and the Norwegian Mapping Authority (nor Statens Kartverk) was directed to enter Sami
and Kveeni place names on maps. The Norwegian Place Names Act also requires Sami place names to appear on road signs and official registries. However, although

the Act guarantees Norwegian names priority protection… [it] does not require that Norwegian names must be in use among the local people to retain their official status, even though this is required for Sámi names (Helander 2009, p. 264).

The struggle to have subjugated and silenced Sami place names reinstated is a form of toponymic resistance (Brattland and Neilsen 2011, p. 275). Camilla Brattland and Steinar Neilsen (2011, p. 275) argue that places are usually renamed with Indigenous names where boundaries are clear. This is not so for Sami areas, which are mostly sparsely populated and in which only small numbers of non-Sami people settled. Anita Lervoll (2007, p. 40) reflects on the fact that she had not questioned why Sami place names were used in Gáivuotna until she was researching Sami issues later in life.

Hans Ragnar Mathisen, a well-known Sami artist, writer and activist, who lives in Romsa and is a member of the Romsa reindeer herding siida, created some of the best-known artefacts of Sami toponymic resistance. His maps of Sápmi (Fig. 7.2), that show the Sami toponymy rather than Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish or Russian toponymies29 are often displayed and referred to. These maps are often mentioned during discussions of mapping and the ability of the Sami community to re-establish Sami toponymy30.

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29 Hans Ragnar Mathisen has also produced maps based on the hats worn in the different Sami communities and one of fishing grounds.
30 For more information on Han Ragnar Mathisen’s work, in his own words, see Mathisen (n.d.).
In Gáivuotna, a local battle over the linguistic landscape (Landry & Bourhis 1997) and Sami toponymy is also very well known. In the Tromsø Museum, a permanent exhibition dealing with Sami issues\(^{31}\) includes a road sign. The sign reads ‘Gáivuona suohkan/Kåfjord kommune’ (Fig. 7.3). Someone had used a shotgun to shoot out the ‘Gáivuona suohkan’ part of the sign. The sign in the museum is one of many signs like it. The council stopped replacing the sign, which was on the side of the road into Gáivuotna, because each new sign was shot through. People in the community knew, or at least seemed quite sure, who was doing the repeated shooting, but they did not seem to take it seriously and they did not take any action on it. However, they were clear about the symbolic importance of the effects of the behaviour.

Florian Hiss (2013, p. 181) explains that there were similar responses to changes in road signs in Romsa and that those responses were because ‘people perceive

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\(^{31}\) The ‘Sápmi: becoming a nation’ exhibition that was opened in 2000.
the official use of Sámi in Tromsø [Romsa] as an icon of Sámi identity and thus as a threatening shift of the town’s identity’. This is indeed the case for the road sign in Gáivuotna.

![Fig. 7.3 Gáivuotna road sign after having the Sami language section shot out (Gáivuotna road sign n.d.)](image)

**Samégiella**\(^{32}\) in Gáivuotna

It changed before why can it not change again? (Steinar).

This question was asked during a conversation I was having with Steinar about Sami language use in Gáivuotna. We were sitting in his living room just before Riddu Riđđu one year. Steinar was telling me that ‘the experts’ had come to Gáivuotna and they had said that because Sami was so sparsely used in Gáivuotna, it would be impossible to revive it to any real or meaningful extent. Exasperated, Steinar asked why, if Sami language use was once common, it could not be brought back. Steinar also said ‘many people spoke Sami until the 1920s and still some older people don’t understand Norwegian well’. In a sense, this encapsulates the meaning of all revitalisation work in Gáivuotna. The desire

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\(^{32}\) Samégiella is North Sami for Sami language.
for reverse language shift as well as a rewriting and re-righting of the practice of Sami culture in Gáivuotna is what spurs the revitalisation work.

In communities such as Gáivuotna much of this activity is undertaken with a perception that experts are pessimistic about the possibilities for language revival. Sami languages are generally categorised as endangered (Albury 2014, p. 14; Moseley 2010; Keskitalo 2014; Pietikäinen et al. 2010), but this is based on the numbers of people who speak them. The endangered tag is maintained not simply because languages are valued by the Sami community, but because it is a political tool. The endangered tag has been important politically and it has been used to gain access to resources to address the reverse language shift, so it is important to maintain it.

In Gáivuotna, Sami language was showing no signs of becoming further endangered. Indeed, the opposite was the case. Some of the signs of healthy reverse language shift in Gáivuotna include the transmission of language in families, education, and the dissolving of notions of shame and silence related to identifying as Sami.

The Sami language spoken in Gáivuotna, Gáivuotna Sami, is a local variant of North Sami. It is influenced by Karesuando\textsuperscript{33} Sami and the reindeer herders from Guovdageaidnu, who bring their herds to graze in Gáivuotna in the summer (Solstad et al. 2012, p. 55). The Norwegian spoken is also a dialect that includes Sami words and what people generally recognise as a Sami accent (Lervoll, pp. 53–54):

\textsuperscript{33} Karesuando (sme Karesuanto, Gárasavvon or Karasavvon) is in Sweden and is home to Læstadius’ first church.
The sentence structure is Sami when speaking Norwegian. Norwegian pronunciation, Sami accent so it could be difficult to understand what they say and the context. You don't know what the end and meaning of the sentence will be. That is the local community. It sounds like mumbling sometimes. Very informal way of speaking (Nils Erik).

Several people said that the Gáivuotna Norwegian dialect and accent were an indicator of difference with negative connotations. The general interest in dialect and accent in Norway mentioned earlier has led to people being identified as Sami via language whether or not they spoke Sami.

Many people said that people had never stopped using the Sami language. A number of people, particularly of the oldest generation, had good knowledge of Sami from childhood:

My mother speaks Sami and Norwegian but her younger brother and sister, they speak very bad Sami but OK Norwegian. When it comes to my generation, we were of course told Sami but taught Norwegian (Berit).

Helene, while talking about her grandmother, said:

No, she didn’t define herself as Sami, no, but she spoke Sami with her brother always. In 1992, 1994, something like that, when the Sami became public, she stopped speaking Sami. She spoke Norwegian from that time, she and her brother, and her brother was about 80 when he died. He was really angry when we began to talk about Sami things. He used to say ‘It’s 40 years too late’. He said, ‘It’s too late for me, I’m too old. I can’t do anything about it’. He had a kind of sorrow because he didn’t have the opportunities that we have now.

Because Sami language competency had skipped generations, Sami people in Gáivuotna had problems being officially recognised as Sami. Many couldn’t prove that they, their parents or grandparents spoke or had spoken Sami as their home language (Lervoll 2007, pp. 36–39). These problems have since been overcome through research by residents and others uncovering Sami speakers in family histories.
In more recent years, the inclusion of Gáivuotna in the administrative area has had an impact on the profile of Sami language around the fjord, but that did not come without its problems. When changes were made there were some in the fjord area who were not pleased. For instance, the telephone exchange workers threatened to quit when they were told to answer the phone with the Sami as well as the Norwegian name for Gáivuotna. Others voiced their disapproval of Sami being offered in the schools as they preferred their children not be exposed to it. They thought English was a more useful language to concentrate on. Still others preferred the Sami and Norwegian kindergartens not to be so closely tied, for the same reason.

There were three kindergartens and three schools in Gáivuotna. Only the kindergarten in Olmmáivággi had a Sami medium section. The Sami kindergarten was housed in the same building as the Norwegian kindergarten and had the same number of 12 students. One of the challenges this presented was that as each day the children of both kindergartens interacted for a good deal of their time and as their common language was Norwegian, they used it more often, so to some extent defeating the purpose of having a Sami kindergarten.

The parents of many of the children who attended the Sami kindergarten did not speak Sami themselves or did not speak to their children in Sami on a regular basis. Steinar and Nina’s two youngest children attended the kindergarten but Steinar spoke only a little Sami and Nina spoke none. Steinar did not speak to their children in Sami on a regular basis because he was not confident about his competency. This is not isolated to children who live full-time in Gáivuotna. Silje lived in Romsa but spent a great deal of time in Gáivuotna and was an active
member of the Riddu Riđdu staff. One of her children attended the Sami kindergarten at Tromsø University and Silje was learning Sami. She had become proficient enough to talk to her child in Sami, which she did with an aim for it to be their home language. Silje’s story is not common but it does show that it was possible to take on learning Sami as an adult and try to establish it as the home language. Other adults were learning Sami at different levels and were actively encouraging their children to learn Sami. This came with its own issues for some:

My child learnt Sami from their mother and I couldn’t talk to them. One day I was so upset about it I went home and cried (Ivar).

Ivar’s continued commitment to his child learning Sami showed the dedication to reverse language shift he shared with others of his generation.

The primary schools on the fjord did not yet provide Sami medium education. However, Sami language was offered as an elective in the nearby high school that many children attended. The adults learning Sami were doing so through a number of organisations and institutions, including Sámi Giellaguovddáš that was housed in Ája but is now housed in Davvi álbmogiid guovddáš (eng The Centre for Northern Peoples). The courses offered for different competency levels run throughout the year. People at Davvi álbmogiid guovddáš also do a range of other work, including producing teaching materials, translations, a language café and consulting with local government.

As mentioned earlier, Davvi álbmogiid guovddáš played a crucial role in language revitalisation in Gáivuotna (Zmyvalova 2014, n.p.). Part of its success was achieved through the employment of older Sami-speaking residents to teach school children and adults. These people also wrote down their language knowledge and had it written down for them if they could not write in Sami
(Antonsen & Broch Johansen 2013). Davvi álbmogiid guovddáš also ran in Sami language many community activities centred on Sami cultural practice. These all contributed to the early and ongoing interest in Sami language and culture in the community and went some way to reducing the stigma associated with being identified as Sami.

One way to avoid the stigma associated with being Sami in Gáivuotna was to not speak Sami in public. Below is an example of the use of Sami in public that highlights the ‘secret’ or ‘private’ nature of Sami:

The older people speak Sami. It is a private language. Because of the hostile environment for Samis they developed this conversation technique. When you see a group of men down in the corner of the shop speaking and you hear them when you come closer, you hear that they speak Sami. Once they recognise you as a stranger they speak Norwegian. They whisper behind the shelves. Lately, I have heard people speaking Sami without caring (Nils Erik).

Ironically, I had the very opposite experience. One afternoon, in the supermarket in Olmmáiváaggi I heard a group of three people holding a conversation in the corner of the store. They were speaking Norwegian. As I approached them, they switched to Sami, assumedly so that I wouldn’t understand their conversation. The use of Sami language had clearly become so much less stigmatised that it could be used strategically in a public place without fear of retribution. It was a clear sign of the lessening of shame associated with being identified as Sami.

In Gáivuotna, the numbers of Sami language speakers is increasing, as are language competency levels. The factors contributing to the change discussed above are bolstered by the use of Sami at public events such as Riddu Riđđu. Many of the people involved in Riddu Riđđu are amongst those learning and beginning to use Sami within the community. These people are also ensuring that
their children become proficient in Sami in order to increase its use in Gáivuotna. As traditors, the people on the staff of Riddu Riđđu were choosing language as one of the primary criteria for the articulation and expression of Saminess in their community.

Language at Riddu Riđđu

The three main languages used at Riddu Riđđu were Norwegian, North Sami and English. Over the years that I attended, there was a marked difference in the use of Sami at the festival. The most common place to hear Sami spoken was in the main camp. Groups of people from many different parts of Sápmi camped there and some of them were from the majority Sami areas of Sápmi. For a number of those people, Sami was their first and primary language. Sami was also used by performers and presenters on the stages, as many artists chose to speak Sami. Yoik is often in Sami and some music groups choose to write their songs in Sami. Norwegian and English were also used by performers, out of awareness of their diverse audience. Some of the films in the film festival were also in Sami, often with English subtitles, so bypassing Norwegian. Signs (Figs 7.4 & 7.5), posters (Fig. 7.6), programs (Fig. 7.7) and public announcements were in Norwegian and Sami and occasionally English. This meant that Sami took a prominent place in the linguistic landscape of the festival as well as the aural and speech environment.
One opening ceremony was delayed because, as I was told by a staff member, they were waiting for the festival leader’s opening speech to be translated into Sami. It was the first year when there was a member of staff that could take on the task. This was made more significant by the fact that the person doing the translating was a younger member of the staff. It was symbolic of the increased linguistic competency not only within the Riddu Riddu organisation but within the community. It was a sign of the reverse language shift that Steinar imagined possible.
People involved in Riddu Riđđu supported and encouraged each other in their endeavours to express and develop the Sami aspects of their lives, including learning Sami, in a comfortable and positive way. Because there were others learning Sami and many opportunities were provided for learning and using it, there was a positive learning community. As time passed and the number of people and level of Sami language competency grew among the Riddu Riđđu staff, there was talk about the importance of learning the Gáivuota dialect of Sami, rather than the North Sami dialect from Finnmárku, which was usually taught.

The increased proficiency meant that the direct translation work done by Davvi álbgmogii guovddáš staff was becoming less crucial. However, as the teachers of Sami to the staff and the wider adult community in Gáivuohta generally, they continued to play a crucial role. The Davvi álbgmogii guovddáš was housed upstairs from the Riddu Riđđu office. The two organisations had a close working relationship and had participated together in a number of projects. Davvi álbgmogii guovddáš provided important translation services for Riddu Riđđu and the staff were often involved in the festival in a number of different roles. In 2004, Halldis was working as a contractor at the Sami language centre and was a staff member at the festival. Halldis worked on one of the main festival projects as well as doing translation work (translating the program and posters etc.). Given the number of applications for Sami at the festival, it was necessary to have on hand people such as Halldis who could translate easily.

Because of the increased focus at Riddu Riđđu on international programs, English had also taken on a significant role. English was the international language of the festival. It was necessary for many of the staff to use their
considerable English skills to work with international artists. It was not unusual to hear a staff member speaking English to a person for whom English was also not their first language. Many of the staff would protest that their English skills were not good but generally the opposite was the case. I found that many Sami people spoke English very well, as do many non-Sami Norwegians. It was also common for people to play down their capacity to speak it. At Riddu Riđđu, English is used in press releases which go to a wider audience, some seminars, during performances, on the program, on the website and on some posters and signs around the grounds.

As mentioned in Chapter Three, each year Riddu Riđđu has an overarching theme. In 2013, Riddu Riđđu celebrated the National Year of Languages. This was done in cooperation with Davvi álmbogiid guovddáš and Sámi Giellagáldu (the Sami Language Committee). The aim of the theme ‘was to stimulate interest in Sami language both among Sami and non-Sami, as well to document similarities and differences in Sami language within and across Sápmi’ (Riddu Riđđu 2013, p. 21) [my translation].

Sami language was incorporated into the festival program in a number of ways, including the development and publishing of a booklet containing information about Sami languages that was illustrated by Anders Sunna, the festival’s young artist for 2009. A number of pieces were also commissioned, including a song in Lule Sami written by Lovisa Negga and premiered at the festival; a monologue by Sarakka Gaup that was performed; a poem in the Skånland dialect of North Sami that Sigbjørn Skåden wrote and read; and a poem in North Sami that Rawdna Carita Eira wrote and read (Riddu Riđđu 2014, n.p.). All the texts were
made available to the Riddu Riddu audience. There were also two seminars that focussed on Indigenous language.

Choosing language as a theme for the festival led to direct engagement with the many issues that have been raised about languages in the Sami community. Because language is a primary indicator of Sami identity, the engagement with language issues in respect to Gáivuotna, an area that had been considered linguistically marginal, becomes a reclaiming and strengthening of Sami identity in the area. In this way, Riddu Riddu has played a role in the revitalisation and reverse language shift of Sami languages and has encouraged and enabled Sami identification without stigma.

Conclusion

The power of distinguishing the Sami community by highlighting its unique linguistic characteristics and difference from the non-Sami population has been reflected in the promotion of a range of Sami cultural activities mediated through language rights debates. With a concentration on North Sami as the ‘national’ Sami language in Norway and Sápmi more broadly, that aspect of the festival did not work to the advantage of all Sami communities and individuals. It created wide enough inroads to encourage a continued and increasingly inclusive debate.

Sami language revitalization efforts have been successful. However, those language efforts have also faced difficulties. Majority attitudes were easier to influence in favor of minority languages when the whole debate was at the level of principle. To influence everyday practice has proved much more difficult (Magga & Skutnadd-Kangas 2001, n.p.).
It is clear that in recent years through policy and legislation the Norwegian government has taken positive steps to granting Sami language rights. However, the implementation of policy and legislation has not always been smooth\textsuperscript{34}.

Finally, there is fertile ground for discussing Sami language rights in relation to broader international trends in Indigenous language rights:

Most … threatened languages are indigenous languages, and concern for their disappearance is related to larger trends towards rethinking the status of indigenous peoples, and to redressing historic injustices against them (Kymlicka & Patten 2003, p. 7).

It would be valuable to investigate the activities of the Sami community and the Norwegian government in regard to this trend. That investigation could include an evaluation of the policies and procedures that have been implemented and their relationship to international policies and procedures, or indeed whether or not the case should be taken up in an international forum (Kymlicka & Patten 2003, p. 17)\textsuperscript{35}.

Some of the stories in this chapter highlight some of the problems encountered by Sami people who do not speak Sami and others show the difficulties encountered by people who speak languages other than North Sami. This aspect of Sami life is changing as regional/local differences between Sami communities are being recognised and addressed. As each community becomes increasingly

\textsuperscript{34} There is also much room to discuss the impact of the Kveeni language revitalisation efforts in Norway and the links between Sami and Kveeni language revitalisation (see Lane 2011; Pietikäinen et al. 2010).

able to express and have recognised its unique position within the Sami population, so the debates about language become more locally focussed.

Sami languages have not been relegated to dictionaries on the dusty shelves of linguists. They have been embraced by Sami communities, not least by people in Gáivuotna and those involved in Riddu Riđđu. Less-used Sami languages and dialects are gaining prominence. Indeed, as regional Sami communities become more prominent and local languages and dialects become increasingly noticeable, it is possible that even more language learning will be encouraged. After all, it is not just Saminess that is important to people, but ‘their’ Saminess.

The definition of Sami as being tied to language capacity and family linguistic history and not being applicable for all Sami people also makes the subjective aspects of Saminess powerful. The discussion of the details of this provides insight into how Sami identities are constructed and maintained in relation to language competency. Not speaking Sami cannot make someone less Sami but it can make them feel less Sami and make others perceive them as less Sami. Whatever a person’s relationship to Sami language, the history of language use and the use of language, Sami people must express and maintain their claims to Saminess in relation to it. However, it is important to emphasise the criteria for a person’s self-perception as Sami. If one learns Sami one does not become Sami by virtue of being able to speak Sami. It is not the language itself that carries the essence of Saminess but other aspects of individuals who speak it and many who do not.

Having discussed the four key statements that commonly made up people’s claims to Saminess and the context in which Riddu Riđđu was developed and
run, the focus is now back on Riddu Riđđu directly. The final question I want to address is: given all the background and context that has been discussed, why and how has Riddu Riđđu managed to be so successful in contributing to the revitalisation of Saminess in Gáivuotna and Coastal Sami culture more generally? While this has been discussed to some extent in all chapters, to give a detailed account of how one community managed to have an impact, the next chapter is focussed on the views of the people involved. This is important as social change is often too complex to describe in detail. With the material already presented, the details that follow are grounded sufficiently for the members of the community to explain their success.
Chapter Eight
Riddu Riđđu: a perfect storm

Riddu Riđđu provides fertile ground for the expression of Sami and other cultural practices and identities. It has also been the catalyst for social change. This change comes in the shape of the transformation of the recognition of Coastal Sami communities which has in turn transformed the boundaries of Saminess. The people involved in Riddu Riđđu have achieved social change in a particular context, with particular goals in mind and in a particular manner. A shared ideology that supports the aims of the wider project and is flexible enough to allow for individual differences in approach is crucial to this process. More concretely, a series of choices was made by the people who established and ran Riddu Riđđu that affected how shared goals would be achieved. Investigating these gives insight into how social change has been achieved.

The reasons why Riddu Riđđu was established, why it was established in a particular location and why a festival was the vehicle for change are crucial to understanding how changes to perceptions of Coastal Sami issues were achieved. This is best explained by the people themselves. For this reason, I rely heavily on direct quotes in this chapter. They are used to illustrate people’s explanations of why and how they have achieved their goals.

Nils-Erik summed up the conditions under which Riddu Riđđu was established: ‘It was the right time, right people, right place’. The perfect storm of context and charisma.
Dear guests, dear artists, dear Riddu Riddu friends,

Welcome. Riddu Riđđu 2004 looks to be the biggest, both in numbers of people and nationalities. You who come as guests and you who volunteer make it possible to arrange a festival that has a heartbeat — for thousands of people, in a village of only 800 people.

Every local community, every organisation, every union of people needs something to bind it. What binds Riddu Riđđu can be summed up in three words: together we create.

This began in 1991 — when we were few. Gradually we became more. Gradually we learnt more about our identity. Gradually we cleared the path\(^1\) and opened a new door that before was closed and locked. Gradually we have expanded the perspective from the Sea Sámi here in Lygenfjord\(^2\) [Ivgovuotna] — to the international Indigenous world.

But the large can only grow from the small. The land you have pitched your tents on is the hayfield of a pair of local, stalwart men. One woman who has come to visit heard about Riddu Riđđu while she was washing the dishes in London and listening to the BBC. The BBC found us because local voices had spread the news further — and further — and further.

Volunteers have moved out of their cabins and houses to accommodate guests from home and abroad. There is a feeling amongst all the villagers that we are indeed few\(^3\) — but we have room for many. Very many! Volunteers have worked with programs, with artists, with the magazine, with the security lists, with the stage, with cutting grass and making coffee. It is good to live in a little village, in a small region, in a part of the country where people are not divided — together they can create a collective spirit that means a lot to many.

This year the theme for Riddu Riđđu is technology. Used incorrectly and without human control, technology can obliterate nature and people. Used correctly, new technology can contribute to developing and building bridges between people and cultures. Indigenous people have a bond and we have made Riddu Riddu friends all over the world through new technology — whether we talk through SMS, CD, the internet or the possibility to travel quickly and cheaply.

That is why there are many guests here. From four continents and countless nations. A special welcome to the representatives from

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1. This phrase has been translated from ‘vi flyyttet stein’ which translates directly as ‘we moved stones’.
2. Ivgovuotna is the large fjord from which Gáivuotna stems. The term is used to refer to the larger area that includes Gáivuotna and the other municipalities in which Ivgovuotna lies.
3. This phrase has been translated from ‘Det ligger i hele bygdas ånd at her er vi riktignok få’ which translates directly as ‘It lies in all the villagers that here are we indeed few’.
the San People of Botswana and our northern guests from Nunavik in Canada. Together we create new bonds. On behalf of all in Riddu Riđđu, in Gáivuotna, in North Troms, in North Norway, in Norway, in Sápmi, in the North, in Europe, in the world — we hope you all have a good and happy festival! Together we create something greater than ourselves.

With these words, I declare Riddu Riđđu 2004 open! (Lene Hansen 2004) [my translation].

As Lene’s speech suggests, Riddu Riđđu was organised by many people for the benefit of many more. Lene’s speech is also a distillation of the processes of the wider Riddu Riđđu project of celebrating and promoting Saminess and indigeneity in a way that few other organised public events do. This is due partly to the nature of the cultural material that is presented and showcased at the festival. It is also related to the aims of the people who organised and ran it, the way that they ran it and what it provided the people who ran it and attended it.
Riddu Riđđu ideology

Riddu Riđđu is political but not so overtly that politics and political discussion are the overwhelming flavour of the festival. For many, it is possible to escape much of the overt political text at the festival and be for fun or their art or performances. However, a shared ideology amongst those who organised the festival was plainly a driving force for their involvement and continued contributions.

When discussing the nature and strength of the ideology that drives Riddu Riđđu, some pointed to shared ideology and others to individual ideologies:

We know what we want [from Riddu] (Mette).

Our ideology at Riddu is that everyone who wants to comment or say something about identity, ethnicity or something like that, then they are welcome to do that. If they are curious and they want to learn about Sami culture and Indigenous questions, then they are very welcome. It is important to open up to improve people. We are an arena where we can raise some critical issues. You can do that through art such as the exhibition (Else).

My aim, and that of many people who work for Riddu Riđđu, is to make people more tolerant and curious about Sami culture, and it has given Sami culture another image (Elin).

There is an agenda beyond Riddu. Everyone in Riddu has always wanted Ája to become bigger than what it was supposed to be, but this has not happened. They have their own agenda. One of them says it should all be in Manndalen. Other organisations have noticed this. The original idea was that Ája would be a central place for the coastal area. They have not managed to focus outside. They have a traditional museum from Manndalen but it is isolated (Nils Erik).

I think maybe it happened more than a conscious effort to make Riddu open to everyone. You need conferences et cetera. Maybe we have two different purposes (Thomas).

These understandings of the ideology underlying Riddu Riđđu were continually raised in organisational decision-making. Else also offered the following example of how the inclusive aspect of the ideology was tested in the face of a direct challenge:
A few days ago there was an issue at the _ course [at Riddu]. The course leader said someone only wanted pure blood Sami people to go. She was really reacting and we were reacting. I said, 'This is not Riddu. This is not our spirit. It can't be like that'. She was sad and the course leader was sad. I don’t know if she went to the course or accepted the decision.

This example also highlights how identity is conceived, within the ideology behind the festival, and how decisions are made by the staff in reference to it. The notion of Saminess as being dependent on being of ‘pure blood’ is anathema to the inclusiveness of conceptions of Saminess at Riddu Riđđu.

This inclusivity was intended to provide a freedom to associate with Saminess without the usual pressures experienced in the wider community. Many Sami people talked to me about the freedom Riddu Riđđu afforded them to be Sami.

Inger said:

I go to Riddu Riđđu because I can just be Sami there. I can see my friends and family and we all get to be Sami together.

Inger explained that in her everyday world in Romsa it was not so easy to be Sami, that being Sami in an everyday way was sometimes a struggle, as her alterity was the focus of how she was perceived. Riddu Riđđu afforded her the opportunity to be in a Sami environment in which she did not need to be particularly conscious of her Saminess as a point of difference. For Inger, being Sami at Riddu Riđđu is the norm, not the exotic or unusual.

At Riddu Riđđu the tensions surrounding claims to Saminess melted away to a great extent. This was in part because the festival was held in Gáivuotna, where to claim Saminess was already contested. The issue is already dealt with by the time you get to Riddu Riđđu. There is no need to reassert yourself as Sami in that context, except as you desire.
The acceptance of difference, including different ways of being Sami, extended to participation during the festival. The recognition of people’s ability to explore their relationship to various aspects of their identity was put by Else in the following way:

We should be an arena where identity and ethnicity can be constructed. You can wander and meet yourself and make the world wider or smaller, if you get scared.

People could present various forms of Saminess and other identities in an environment that was both accepting of difference and open to interpretations of various forms of difference. Identity and the importance of presenting forms of Sami identity and promoting it were often mentioned when discussing the ideology of those working for Riddu Riđđu. Some of the comments addressing this included:

Riddu is a kind of protest or reaction to the way people live as Sami — fishing, gákti and the rest. Those who aren’t Læstadian and have no reindeer [laughs], Riddu is a reaction to this. We made our own world and our own way of being Sami. People use their education and minds for something. It is our way of being Sami (Elin).

The identity becomes more important when people come to Riddu because they meet people who are more conscious of their identity. I have Norwegian friends who say, ‘You are so proud’ and started to ask, ‘What is my place? What is my heritage?’ I also met people from inner Finnmark who admire what we are doing here because they haven’t had anything to fight for (Else).

This is a very liberating place. You don’t have to worry about what you are. You can be yourself and I think that helps everyone to realise who they are and helps them realise who others are and will just build up the respect between people (Kari).

Friends who come from here, it’s not like they’re trying to hide it [being Sami]. They are not trying to expose it too much, either. It’s just… it’s not a big deal, actually. Yeah, I know pretty much who is Sami. Some are not, you know … it’s not a big thing, it’s not a big thing at all (Espen).

When you go there you can be like ‘No, I’m not Sami’. But your friend, he probably knows that he is Sami. He probably knows that somewhere deep inside but when you come here, you just realise that, you just see that
there is no difference between because we are all people and we have the same, I don’t know, maybe respect for each other (Rune).

The quotes above show that the ideology is also embedded in the general experiences of being or not being Sami at the festival. They also show that those who established and ran the festival had managed to realise their shared ambitions to provide a space in which Saminess was not just ‘our way of being Sami’ but open enough for others to be ‘their way of being Sami’.

A festival as medium for the message

It is interesting that a festival was chosen as the format for the activities of the people who established it. A festival such as Riddu Riddú can be framed in terms similar to Mikhail Bakhtin’s (1968) notion of a carnival⁴ as a social institution distinct from a formal feast which provided:

- temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions (Bakhtin 1968, p. 10).

It is easy to conceive of Sami people in Gáivuotna using a social institution to provide a setting in which the ‘suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions’ would allow for the voicing of opinions that challenged these.

Bakhtin (1968, p. 9) also argues that carnivals ‘were the second life of people, who for a time entered the utopian realm of community, equality, and abundance’. This certainly rings true for Riddu Ridđu, where encouraging community and equality were professed aims of the organisers. Abundance was also achieved

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⁴ While Bakhtin (1968) was discussing medieval carnival festivities in relation to Rabelais’ work, it is easily transferable to discussions about contemporary festivals.
through the plethora of overt expressions of Saminess and indigeneity during the festival.

To extend Bakhtin’s conception of the carnival as a suspension of the usual sociopolitical conditions, festivals can be said to heighten and/or invert everyday life for a time. For several people, Riddu Riddu did not just happen for the days in July that it ran for the public. For these staff members, the time it took to organise the festival meant that it was their everyday life for a good portion of the year. The distinction between everyday life and something else, such as something that inverts it in some way, is thus blurred and things that seem extraordinary can be the extension of ordinary or everyday life.

The efforts of the people heavily involved in the festival could be said to constitute everyday life until perhaps the festival itself. During those few days, aspects of their everyday lives were heightened rather than inverted. For many others who attended and participated, the festival could be said to be an inversion of their everyday lives — a distinct reversal of their usual experiences of the sociopolitical contexts in which they lived. For members of the Sami community, this included the inversion of the importance of Sami cultural activities. Sami cultural content as the primary interest was an inversion of the lack of prominence it had in mainstream Norwegian everyday life. In terms of identity, the organisers were inverting their everyday experiences of being Sami and they could use the festival as an expression of that inversion.

Arnold van Gennep’s (1960) notion of rites of passage explains the transformative capacities of a festival:
although a complete scheme of rites of passage theoretically includes preliminary rites (rites of separation), liminal rites (rites of transition), and postliminal rites (rites of incorporation), in specific instances these three types are not always equally important or equally elaborated (van Gennep 1960, p. 11).

At Ridda Riddo, the rites of separation include the coming together of people to one place separate from their usual place of being in the world and the rhythms of their everyday lives. The rites of transition occur during the festival itself, and the rites of incorporation include people taking with them new experiences and understandings. In terms of Samininess, the separation is from everyday experiences of Samininess. During the festival, Samininess is inverted and transformed by new styles of presentation and expression. When people return to everyday life, these new forms of Samininess are incorporated. This can be to greater and lesser degrees, depending on individuals’ experiences during the festival and their responses to them. What is chosen as the cultural content included in the rites of transition is significant, as it is this cultural content that organisers of the festival want to have incorporated differently into everyday life.

The festival itself takes on the role of a site of presentation and transmission of Sami culture, as well as being a site of transition:

The Sámi festival thus now takes on the role of the museum in providing a ‘contact zone’ (Clifford 1997) with cultural heritage … Here, musicians perform, collaborate and impart their embodied knowledge to local, national and international audiences. Likewise, workshops, seminars, art exhibitions and film showings offer opportunities for indigenous traditions to be revived, repatriated and transformed (Hilder 2012, p. 175).

Riddu Riddu is certainly a ‘contact zone’, a place for the transmission of Sami knowledge and experiences of Sami cultural heritage. As Roger Abrahams (2003, pp. 214–215) states, it is in zones such as this ‘that identities are most subject to being tested and changed or reconfirmed’. Riddu Riddu provides a
'contact zone' in which Sami identity and indigeneity is performed and expressed while reviving, repatriating and transforming Sami identity and indigeneity.

As the professed aims of those who worked for Riddu Riđđu included the reconfiguration of perceptions of the Sami community, it is understandable that the provision of a contact zone that suspends normative sociopolitical conditions, and allows for the transformation of Sami cultural practices as well as perceptions of the Sami community, makes a festival an appropriate medium for the message and vehicle for social change.

Why in Olmmáiváaggi

It was understandable to me that Sami people in Gáivuotna would want to make changes to their status as Sami and that a festival was developed to facilitate this change. What puzzled me was why Riddu Riđđu was established in Olmmáiváaggi, rather than in another Coastal Sami area or even another village in Gáivuotna. One staff member said, ‘Riddu couldn’t be arranged in any other place. It would have been something else’. The reasons for this are complex. Thomas summed them up: ‘Consciousness, history and location. Awareness of culture. Also, they were the same age and they were youth’.

Others expanded on these themes in terms of the history of the village and their experiences of being Sami in Olmmáiváaggi:

It is because of the history of Manndalen in Kåfjord. Manndalen was the bottom. Here are the Sami people. Olderdalen [sme Dålošváaggi] people were cool and laughed at people from Manndalen. There is hierarchy everywhere. South Troms is better than North Troms. Even Tromsø South is better than North. In [greater] Gáivuotna, Kvænangen [sme Návuona suohkan] is better than Kåfjord. Olderdalen is the centre of Kåfjord. Kåfjorddalen and Manndalen are the bottom. You know, you look

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5 Else refers to Troms County [sme Romssa fylka] then the city of Tromsø [sme Romsa].
6 The area in the south of Gáivuotna in which Gáivuonbahta sits.
to others and your place in the hierarchy. It is a way of thinking. Now the young people are proud to say they are from Kåfjord. Åse used to say ‘Oh, you are from Kåfjord’ as if it is something to be proud of (Else).

What does it mean to be from Manndalen? Based on my experiences, it meant that we were made fun of because of our dialect. That could happen if we went to the city or other places. Being from Kåfjord hasn’t given us a high status. People pointed at the way we looked and how we talked. As a teenager you believe that the critique is pointing at you personally, there’s something wrong with me, and you lower your head a little, in shame. But there’s nothing wrong with me or the others. But it is our Sami history and heritage that people are making fun of that is the bad, the negative thing (Lene Hansen in Lervoll 2004).

It was a real awakening for me as a 19-year-old. I started to reflect about my history and how I was ashamed of the way I spoke and the way my grandmother looked and I realised that the shame that I felt wasn’t about me. There was nothing wrong with me. It’s not me the people laugh at when I speak or when my friends speak or my parents speak. It’s not me they laugh at, it’s Sami history, it’s the Sami thing. And then I thought, ‘Well, does it have to be like that? We have to do something with the Sami history and we have to make people proud of their Sami history, their Sami background’ and because I have had this experience and this Sami thing, or the history I have with me, I can’t walk away from it. It’s in me and comes up sometimes and I wanted to make this part of me, a resource or something I could be proud of and not be ashamed (Mette).

As part of the explanations for why the festival was established there, rather than elsewhere, there were also references to what kinds of people lived in Olmmáivággí:

People in Manndalen are more tolerant and more hospitable (Nina).

There are a lot of creative people in Manndalen. A lot of original people. They have been tolerated here. The collective is strong. People help and care (Else).

This notion of the people in Olmmáivággí as being of a particular kind extended to a view that there were socio-economic and historical particularities that created conditions conducive to raising Sami political awareness:

There are not many people here who have rich families, but they have these cultural events — consciousness of Saminess, the historical positions that have shaped the Sami community. It is a difficult question. You need to go back to the 70s and 80s in the fjord. There were different groups. The Sami issue brought them together. The founders of Davvi Nuorra, they set it up in the forest. So the Saminess, the consciousness of
being Sami, brought them together and they found the place, the most appropriate place, to do Saminess. There was a house here [Olmmáivággi] with a lot of youth living there together (Nils Erik).

Another difference between Olmmáivággi and other villages in Gáivuotna was the role of religion and a rebelliousness:

Happened here. Other communities very Christian ... Things started slowly. It is a little bit rebellious in Manndalen. They threw the police in the sea — in the 1800s, maybe. They are a little bit funny [humorous] here. Happened here because of the people, the place. Didn’t happen in Olderdalen or Birtavarre [Gáivuonbahta]. They are not rebellious there (Nina).

When discussing this rebelliousness, Sjåbakkenhuset (eng The Sjåbakken House) or Sjit helvedes kåken (eng The Shit-awful dump) was also mentioned. Sjåbakkenhuset is a small house in Olmmáiváiggj that has been a museum since 2009. The house was owned by Anton Sjåbakken who wrote a letter to the government in 1949, complaining about being asked to pay for what he saw as a ‘shit-awful dump’.

These observations formed part of a history of responses to oppressive regimes and political activity in the area that was often raised. It was part of the perception that the people of Olmmáivággj had long been the most ‘Sami’ and politically active of the communities of the fjord:

Olmmáivággj was the strongest Sami community. We were very oppressed but we never gave up. People never gave up, no matter what the government said (Else).

the political forces. Here in this valley there’s people who have taken part in this. Those who were older than me and myself, we were active in political organisations and making political statements and going to meetings and arguing and looking at traditional people and also lots of culture, like traditional dress, taking back Sami dress (Lisbeth).

It was a local Sami organisation, part of the Norwegian Sami Association. So the project here was politics and culture and Sami. Sami language work was done by the organisation (Nina).
Political agenda here was strong, in other places. Storfjord [Omasvuotna] et cetera, in the beginning of the 90s (Thomas).

The political orientation of many in the village was cited as influencing the conditions that made Olmmáivággí the most likely place on the fjord to establish politically motivated social action. Nina and Nils Erik both brought up the leftist politics of many in the village:

Strange that it is so conservative, Læstadians and the rest, and it is so left (Nina).

Everything is done on party lines here. North Norway is run by the Labour party and SV⁷ is the main opposition (Nils Erik).

While it was clear that the history of political orientation and action in relation to Sami issues influenced the conditions from which Riddu Riđđu sprang, there was also discussion of the role of education. As mentioned in Chapter Two, this was partially in response to the work of Arild Hovland (1994; 1996a; 1996b), who argues that tertiary education, particularly at Tromsø University, was one of the main catalysts for political action amongst the cohort who established Riddu Riđđu⁸. This theory had gained some traction in general discussions about those involved in Riddu Riđđu, including amongst their critics who claimed that it showed Saminess in the region was fabricated and inauthentic. Some of the people I spoke to were well aware of Hovland’s theory and commented on the role of education:

Tromsø University was very red [left wing]. They pushed for a northern university, not just a southern European-style university. The Sami issues then became part of it. University has been very important to Riddu. We have been made conscious in the university and gained skills there (Else).

Not all the people who set up Riddu were educated. Lots of the staff aren’t, not at university. It is coincidence or just the people here (Nina).

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⁷ Sosialistisk Venstreparti (eng Socialist Left Party)
⁸ This group is also referred to as the Riddu Riddu generation (e.g. Pederson & Viken 2009, p. 196)
It is not that the Riddu people are educated. The reason is that it is a Sami community. Their fathers and grandfathers are Sami. They have a consciousness. Not all at the top of Riddu are educated. Consciousness and society work together. It is social background and a bit education. You have to be conscious enough to organise this (Nils Erik).

Else also noted that the sociopolitical conditions in Gáivuotna meant that:

There are a lot of powerful people in Riddu and all of these people are using their contacts and influences. It’s very clear-minded, very intelligent people working in different areas.

This speaks to the personal qualities of the people involved in the festival as well as the way they ran it. The success of the festival and the larger aims of those involved were obviously heavily influenced by the way the festival was run.

Getting the work done

It’s more equal when you go here and you see that people can work together even though they are different and it doesn’t matter in any major way because you can work and you can have friends and just be together and have fun (Espen).

The last part of the quote above, ‘you can work together and you can have friends and just be together and have fun’, is important to understanding the success and longevity of Riddu Riđđu. Several people, when they spoke of the work they did, noted that enjoyment, camaraderie and a strong sense of the collective project were closely tied:

Doing something together, something fun together. It is like drinking or taking drugs. It has just the same affect. When you are at the festival everybody is so excited. It is from the collective work and everyone is happy. You cannot have this feeling alone. When you do it and you know everyone is doing something for this one big thing, then it makes everyone feel they are belonging (Nina).

The people who set it up became friends because of Riddu Riđđu, not before (Mette).

We go on holidays together, watch the same TV programs, have children of the same age, have the same sense of humour (Nils Erik).
When to do Riddu work. A lot gets done in a social network. The leader gets paid but not much. Many years of work. Hard, hard, hard work without pay. We get a sense of belonging to a larger scheme. A sense of direction. Also, we have created attention to the local community (Thomas).

As well as the sense of collective accomplishment mentioned in the quote from Thomas above, there was reference to wider benefits such as gaining skills and opportunities:

I would never have the opportunities I have had without Riddu Riđďu. It has been a very important arena for gaining skills. Young people have gotten jobs because of the skills they gained at Riddu Riđďu. That was an important thing. It is not invisible work; the outcomes are everywhere (Else).

With the work they have done for Riddu, they may be recognised and get other opportunities, but that is not the point (Nina).

While people clearly saw many benefits in working on Riddu Riđďu, including gaining skills, there were also some negative outcomes of the long hours and hard work. One staff member told me that when they first started working they looked forward to hiding in the office and having a coffee break at least once each festival. Then, after working for a few years, they realised ‘There was no time even for a coffee’. They also said that one year it was so stressful that they lost hair. It must be noted that comments such as this were usually asides and did not figure significantly in conversations.

One of the key reasons people gave for continuing to work at such a level was the way the organisation was run. This included the structure of the organisation and the division of labour. It was clear that many saw the organisation as somewhat flat — that the division of labour was based on skill and interest, and that everyone’s contributions were valued:

There is no hierarchy. It is a moving status (Rune).

Not very formal structure. We have a structure but that isn’t how it works (Torill).
Riddu is a constant issue. All day, every day it pops in and out of conversation. Small details, overriding principles, politics, attitudes, opinions. M_ suggested a concert in Tromsø. During the afternoon it was discussed with S_, N_ and A_. They all decided it was not a good idea just now, but later. Meetings held. Decision made! [Excerpt from my fieldnotes]

People do the bits they want and if there are positions to fill, we recruit (Else).

Different kinds of people with different skills and education. Electricians, farmers, carpenters — everyone has their place and everyone is acknowledged for this gift. People are acknowledged as being as valuable as each other (Nils Erik).

The value placed on each person’s contribution was articulated regularly and there was a sense that no one person made a more valuable contribution than any other. This was achieved through constant and consistent verbal acknowledgement, such as:

S_ gets inspiration often, makes dreams come true, listens to people’s ideas. Very good at making people feel special. Very good at taking care of people and making them feel valued (Nina).

However, there was also a recognition that, for it to be successful, the organisation needed to have some people overseeing aspects of it. I also noticed that people were quick to praise others and acknowledge the part others played in the organisation but would dismiss comments that pointed out the importance of their own role. For instance, each of the people who made the comments below moved swiftly away from discussing their own role to focus on that of others:

So, Å_ knows all the people around. That is why they are such a key person (Nils Erik).

A couple of people know everything but others know what they need to or want to. Everyone relies on the people who know everything. Everyone is very loyal and positive about them (Lisbeth).

I don’t think the festival would have been what it is without S_ (Hans).

S_ had ambition. Not personal but for the community. S_ is a person who can do things and make ambitions reality. Something started in S_’s head and S_ started to present it. Said ‘Yes, we can do it’ (Nina).
As could be expected, not everyone agrees on all aspects of the organisation and at times people voiced frustrations. However, these were rarely aired in public and they were explained to me as normal for such an organisation. As Else put it, ‘It isn’t all a bed of roses — or it is, but with the thorns’.

This points to a balance between consensus and conflict that allows the organisation to continue its work. The internal conflicts are many but ultimately there are projects, including the festival, to be run — and they are. This is why the conflicts within the organisation of Riddu Riđđu are far less significant than the consensus. As Ole-Bjørn Fossbak (Lervoll 2004) says:

We have managed to create the festival together, despite different political orientations and views on life. We have a common purpose. We do something greater than ourselves. It means something not only to us, but for the region, and maybe to other indigenous people.

This overall consensus and view of a higher purpose were often cited as the reasons why conflicts were conscientiously avoided and resolved quickly. Staff members said that part of the reason for this resolution was that conflict with parties external to the organisation had been varied and ongoing and it was of more importance than internal conflict. Below is an example of just one of many points of conflict with external local parties that Riddu Riđđu staff faced:

‘Good Norwegians’ saw red and shot at Sami signs with shotguns. And Riddu — with its strong use of Sami symbols — helped raise the level of conflict (Lene Hansen in Thorkildsen and Fjellheim 2004, n.p.) [my translation].

Lene Hansen’s comment shows that the people involved with Riddu Riđđu are aware that the attention they command is not always positive. On occasion, it was suggested that controversy was incited to gain attention and to challenge existing notions of Saminess and indigeneity.
Being international

As discussed in Chapter Two, over time the ambitions of the Riddu Riđđu organisers resulted in the scope of Riddu Ridđu becoming wider than the local region to increasingly include international artists and participants. The logic behind this was that the further out the net was cast, the more people would learn about and understand their position — that Coastal Sami issues would gain more attention if they were put on a world stage rather than remaining on a local stage.

You have to have a focus on the world outside. If we are going to realise something in the Sami world we need friends who have power. We have to have them understand or we are just angry. That is a way of doing things. You have to say clearly what you want. I believe in building bridges for people to walk over and talk peacefully together and because I have seen it from my own experience, how little I have learnt of the Sami culture. I see daily that people in Tromsø, and especially in Oslo, don’t know anything (Else).

It is a Sami cultural festival, but Riddu would be much poorer without the international aspects (Nils Erik).

In 1996, it started feeling Indigenous and became more Indigenous since 2000. It made it loud (Elin).

Some would have preferred that the festival remained a local event, focussing on local people and harnessing local talent more than encouraging international participation. These people appeared to be in the minority. Those who supported the international component told me that people who did not want the festival to grow did not want to work hard to make the festival successful. Those who did not want the festival to have an international component said that the festival had stopped benefiting the Gáivuotna community and had gone beyond their political ambitions to the extent that it no longer reflected their concerns.

Regardless of this discussion about the principles of the festival, the people involved in Riddu Riđđu seemed generally and genuinely interested in the issues
and cultures of the international guests. During the festival, there was much talk about contact with international invitees and staff made a lot of effort to interact with them, despite how busy everyone was.

There were several opportunities for staff to spend time with invitees such as while travelling to and from the festival, at the Artists’ café, and at seminars and parties. These occasions allowed for mostly informal interaction rather than the formalities that typically go with the usual round of international Indigenous meetings and conferences. As Camilla Brattland (NRK 2007, n.p.), who was the festival director for several years, explains, this informality enabled people to discuss issues and build relationships in less formal ways:

> We don’t invite this or that person with the intention of demonstrating how similar we are. Let people find it out for themselves. That is precisely what happens at Riddu Riddu. You might meet an artist from Canada and get to know each other. Or somebody from Guatemala or New Zealand or Finland. You can discover your similarities without having them pointed out for you.

Nina described some of the similarities she noticed as well as the significance of the connections made during the festival:

> Now in the village, people know about the Italmen⁹, for instance. They can talk to the artists. They can see the way they are living and that it is very close to the way here. They get this feeling of belonging. Life is everywhere life. They have the same concerns and have to deal with similar political and government issues such as fishing rights and mining.

> It is easier to meet Indigenous people if you are Indigenous but this is really true if you work with Indigenous issues. Indigenous are minorities. They have the same problems. The majority want to dominate. The majority are the best and right all the time and at a higher development level. I knew it from my childhood. You have to prove all the time that you are as good as them.

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⁹ Italmen, along with Even, are the predominant Indigenous communities in Kamchatka Krai (Tomaselli & Koch 2014), a federated subject of Russia in the north-east of the Russian Federation.
There was also a clear sense that Riddu Ridđu had drawn attention and contributed to the wider Indigenous debate:

Riddu has played a role in the Indigenous argument, for ordinary people now see the Sami as Indigenous, rather than it being an academic or legal argument (Else).

At the same time, the inclusiveness of the festival was not undermined by a strict adherence to any rules regarding Indigenous participation:

Not all at the Arctic Youth Camp are Indigenous. Can’t say, ‘You cannot come here because you are not Indigenous’. This is not right. But there are only 30 or 40 in the Arctic Youth Camp so you have to be careful (Nina).

In this last quote, Nina raises not only the issue of Indigenous participation but the distinct aim of those organising the festival to focus on young people’s participation in the festival as both attendees and organisers.

**Staying young**

From the outset, Riddu Ridđu was a youth festival run by youth. By the time I first attended, those who had been working for the festival since its establishment were no longer very young but the focus on youth was maintained and there was a clear notion that the older staff members would make way for younger people. In many ways, Riddu Ridđu had grown and matured with the people who worked on it:

It should be a space for the young. Riddu people not young anymore [laughs]. They have had no years off. They say, ‘Maybe less’ each year but it doesn’t happen. Maybe if they find new people they will stop (Nina).

Not only did people need a break, but several people said that if the festival was to continue to be of benefit to local youth it needed to allow for the inclusion and participation of younger people. One of the ways that Riddu Ridđu managed to continue to attract young people was through its impact on the perception of
Saminess. This was summed up by Espen, a young volunteer working at the festival, as: ‘Riddu Riđđu makes it cool to be Sami’.

Cool is relative, contextual and to some extent generational. Thorsten Botz-Bornstein (2011, n.p.) defines cool as social expression that follows mainstream expectations to some extent but veers away from them in appropriate ways. ‘Cool resists linear structures’ and it is the ‘fusion of submission and subversion’ (Botz-Bornstein 2011, n.p.) that gives these social expressions acceptability while being challenging. In part, the very basis of Riddu Riđđu is to submit and subvert. The transformation of Sami identity is presented so that it is generally recognisable, but with some variation. This is achieved in a multitude of ways at Riddu Riđđu, from the artists chosen to perform and present to what organisers say to the media. It is not simply the organisers who engage in this process; audience members are also encouraged to do so. One very simple example of this is the common practice of staff and audience members wearing parts of gákti, such as luhkká, with non-Sami clothing such as jeans.

Fig. 8.2 A young staff member during a late-night concert (Hansen 2004d)
When targeting a young audience the importance of being cool should never be underestimated. That the festival has remained not only relevant but in the vanguard has played a large role in the success of the festival and the morale of those involved. This is due partly to the continued conscious effort made to involve young people in the planning and organisation of the festival.

While one of its key focuses was on the interests of young people, Riddu Riđđu managed to cater for a wide range of tastes. It remaining cool for those who cared, but being cool for the young was not prioritised over other political or artistic goals. It would be very easy for the festival to be targeted at young people exclusively and include only material obviously of interest to them. However, a broad selection of genres and practices was included in the Riddu Riđđu program. There was a range of music genres, fine art, children’s art, fashion and crafts. One other thing Riddu Riđđu managed to present was a diversity of cool. By not focussing on one type of cool but a wide selection of genres, the festival was accessible and attractive to a broad range of people from different generations and with different tastes. This was achieved partly through the distinctly Northern aspect of much of what was presented. The ‘cool’ was conflated with being Sami and Northern. It is Northern cool, Sami cool and it influences what these are.
Espen, mentioned earlier, also said that the ‘cool factor’ was one of the reasons he was happy to work for the organisation and why some of his friends did, too. Espen also said that it provided opportunities for interacting with people in a particular way:

I don’t come here because it’s a summer festival. I think everyone together here is just as important. It’s perfect … and people come from all over the world. It’s not just Sami people coming together for a big party. Yeah, the connection between people is very special.

Another young volunteer, Svein, talked about the opportunities Riddu Riđđu provided for young local musicians. He was in a band made up of young people from Gáivuotna and that had played at the festival the year before. He said ‘It’s very hard, it’s brutal’, when talking about trying to get gigs, and that ‘it’s real good’ to be able to play at the festival.

The festival provides not only the opportunity to perform but it has become a desirable gig. The up-and-coming band, Resirkulert, which consists of teenagers from Omasvuotna (nor Storfjord), performed at the 2015 festival. The Riddu Riđđu webpage (Riddu Riđđu 2015b, n.p.) stated:
We are really looking forward to finally present Resirkulert from Storfjord on our main stage. They will blow our audience away and we are so impressed that they write their lyrics in dialect.

Jonas Nilsen (Riddu Riddu 2015b, n.p.) from Resirkulert was quoted as saying:

Playing on the Riddu-stage has been our dream and goal since we began making music together. Finally we have the opportunity!

The festival was partly developed as providing these opportunities for young people as artists, audience, and staff members because the people who established and ran the festival had first done so when they were quite young. It was explained to me that when they were younger the people who ran the festival had worked hard to change the associations with Saminess that had made them uncomfortable. They also wanted to make sure that young Sami people who came after them did not face the same difficulties.

In one of my later interviews, Elin, a young member of the Riddu Riddu staff, talked about her experience of the revitalisation processes that Riddu Riddu had been part of. She said that she had got the tail end and most dramatic part of the revitalisation process. Other members of the staff talked about Saminess having become easier for young people in the region to express:

Young people on the coast and in Finnmark have it easier to say they have a Sami background than older Sami people. The young ones, it’s not something they think about. They are Sami and some would say they are Norwegian as well. It is not a problem for them to be both, I hope it’s not (Else).

The young generation know they are Sami and say, ‘That’s a fact and we are proud of it and that’s what we are, so fuck off’. They tell people to go read the history books (Nils Erik).

This shift to being proud of being Sami, or at least not having shame attached to being Sami, had to be maintained. There was not a sense that the work was complete. There was a strong sense that the festival needed to continue and that
this meant that succession after the older staff members needed to be planned for.

Planning ahead

The future of the festival was of some concern to staff members. Some of the issues raised were the size and complexity of the festival and the corporate knowledge of those who ran it:

It gets bigger all the time (Steinar).

Not big enough to do without Å_ or the key people. Å_ is a very important person but is worn out. They know everyone in the local area. Very, very good knowledge and skills. There are very good skills in the team of people. A person could do what Å_ does but it would take years to learn it (Nils Erik).

Another concern was who would take on the running of the festival. It was clear that the staff wanted and expected young people from Gáivuotna to run the festival. One of the specific issues, especially considering the size of the festival, was whether there were enough young people interested:

There are maybe not enough young people yet to keep Riddu Riđđu going (Nina).

I am very nervous about Riddu keeping going because of recruitment (Thomas).

Most young people involved in the festival seemed interested in remaining involved. For some, the issue was the level of involvement needed:

It’s not a burning commitment to me like they have. We all want to make it better and make it bigger and make it work, of course. I want to have this festival here but it looks like I would commit several years of my life to do this but I would do that for other things (Espen).

Some staff members were more confident that there would be enough young people to take over, partly because of the attitudes of young people in the area to being Sami:
I can see that a new generation is taking over because of their own interest. That’s what we’ve wanted all along, working with Sami issues — that young people take over. That they are proud of being Sami, proud of being from Kåfjord (Geir-Tommy Pederson in Lervoll 2004).

Since this time, many of the people who established the festival have become less involved and younger people from the region have taken over the running of the festival. Over the years since I conducted my field research there have been several changes to the staff, although some I worked with are still involved at different levels and for different purposes.

Conclusion

Riddu Riđđu is a modern Sámi public event with social, cultural and political significance or, as Nils Erik said, ‘it is a kind of modern Sami ritual’. There are few celebrations of its kind on the Sami calendar and certainly not one that focuses so strongly on international Indigenous issues or brings together such a range and number of Indigenous people from around the world. For some people, attending Riddu Riđđu is an expression of their Saminess. For some it is also an expression of their support for and interest in Sami issues. Even if they do not agree with the aims of those who run the festival or what happens there, most people would have to agree that Riddu Riđđu has had an impact on the community and on perceptions of Saminess.

This is the social change achieved by all those involved in the festival in all capacities. The ‘how’ of social change is explained here through aspects of the running of the festival and the way those involved engaged with Sami issues, particularly in relation to Sami identity. The people involved in Riddu Riđđu have had to come to terms with their own personal issues around identity and transforming Sami identity in Gáivuotna. By expanding into a Sami-based
international Indigenous festival and attracting other Indigenous people from around the world, they have further entrenched their identity as Indigenous people, which is something that was not readily recognised in previous decades and has been hard won.

The aims of those involved in the establishment and running of the festival included the transformation of perceptions of the Sami community and the projection of a particular set of Sami identities. That Riddu Ridđu was established and run by a particular group of people from Olmmáiivággí and was run the way it was meant that the festival had been successful as a vehicle for the work needed to achieve these aims, as well as a broader aim to equalise the sociopolitical position of the Sami community. Else suggested that this broader aim had been realised to some extent:

The Sami way is equal now. The houses, medicine, the new acceptance of Sami knowledge. It is an equal way of living.
Chapter Nine

Riddu Riđđu spirit

This investigation of Sami identity through the lens of the Riddu Riđđu festival shows that the process of Sami identification and identity articulation is constructed, maintained and transformed through a series of actions within and reactions to the cultural milieu. Individual and group identities are a distillation of the complex negotiations each individual undertakes in the face of their position and actions within this milieu. The investigation of details about the most pertinent aspects of the cultural milieu in which Riddu Riđđu was established and run in regard to the processes of identification allowed for a nuanced understanding of the implications of Sami people’s positions and actions in this complex set of negotiations. This provided an understanding of the work done at Riddu Riđđu to influence the cultural milieu that impacted Sami identity.

Bente, one of the Riddu Riđđu staff, said during a drive between Olmmáivággí and Romsa one glorious Spring afternoon, ‘If there is one thing you can do for us, it would be to tell us what this Riddu Riđđu spirit is’. This was a compelling invitation and the request had a profound effect on much of what I have written and thought about since this conversation.

Riddu Riđđu spirit was something that several people discussed with me during my time at Riddu Riđđu and while working with the people involved in Riddu Riđđu and even some who were not directly involved but had witnessed or been told about it. It
was the spirit of what drove people to devote their time and effort to such a large project. It was the spirit of what was aimed for and what was achieved. It was the spirit of what happened at the festival and it was the essence of what some involved held as the driving force of the organisation itself:

Something you can experience the day the festival starts. It is connected to people. Spiritual in a religious sense, linked to ritual. It is a total experience. It is used in meetings. There has always been too much work to think about it too much (Nils Erikk).

Riddu Ridđu spirit was not something that haunted the festival but was a sense of what bound the people who worked for Riddu Ridđu. It was a noun and a verb. It was the way Riddu Ridđu felt and the way to be Riddu Ridđu. I heard people say, ‘This doesn’t feel like Riddu’, ‘It isn’t Riddu yet’ and ‘Now it feels like Riddu’. On the other hand, some people involved with Riddu Ridđu did not agree with the notion of Riddu Ridđu spirit, as they saw it as having the potential to limit the organisation:

I used to talk about it but not now. I don’t like it. If you make this spirit you become closed. It is the atmosphere under Riddu maybe. It is not because you belong to Riddu [and others don’t] (Nina).

For those who believed, it was the binding and guiding force of their involvement. Being true to Riddu Ridđu spirit was what ensured that Riddu Ridđu lived up to people’s expectations and that they in turn lived up to these expectations. Being true to the Riddu Ridđu spirit also protected Riddu Ridđu from becoming untrue, inauthentic or un-Riddu Ridđu.

In this way, Riddu Ridđu spirit was the Riddu Ridđu habitus and doxa, or way. It was the feel for the game and the naming of the uncanny that was the essence of being Riddu Ridđu and, by extension, the repackaging of being Sami in ways that reflected the desires and ambitions of those involved. The notion of Riddu Ridđu spirit ties nicely into my theories about Sami identity. It sums up how it is that Riddu Ridđu was
Sami, how a person could be Sami and how we all identify and/or settle on an identity, however multifaceted it may be. Riddu Riđđu spirit meant that things were done according to this way.

This Riddu Riđđu way was something akin to the Sami way I argue for in Chapter Two. It was a distinct way in which things were done that stemmed from a range of influences and competencies that developed within the Sami community and imbued everything that was Sami and everything that Sami people did. Again, this is not something unique to the Sami community; every community has its way. Riddu Riđđu is a small-scale Sami community, and the Sami community is Riddu Riđđu writ large. So, too, Riddu Riđđu spirit was a small-scale Sami spirit and the Riddu Riđđu way a small-scale Sami way. However, the Riddu Riđđu spirit was not simply a subset of Sami spirit; it was something in and of itself while being closely related to the larger community spirit. It is undeniable that Riddu Riđđu had its own character as an organisation and that this was embedded in the festival.

The ethnographic material used in this thesis was drawn from considerable long-term fieldwork conducted in Sápmi, primarily Norway and with smaller amounts of research conducted in England and Australia, with people involved in Riddu Riđđu, and with other members of the Sami and non-Sami communities. While the field research was conducted a number of years ago, it was done at time when Riddu Riđđu was going through changes and becoming increasingly influential in the arenas the people involved were interested in. These arenas included the rights and recognition of Coastal Sami communities in Norway and Sápmi and of the international Indigenous community. Riddu Riđđu had and continued to be influential.
in the transformation of Sami and particularly Coastal Sami identity. Those involved also continue to influence the role of the Sami community in international Indigenous arenas and the recognition of Sami people as Indigenous in Norway. My field research provides not only a view of the people involved in Riddu Riđđu at a particular time but is informed by some years of further research including observing the development of the festival and changes in Sami and Indigenous access to rights and recognition.

The material collected through my ethnographic research influenced the structure as well as the content of this thesis. Chapters One, Five, Six and Seven were especially influenced by Sami people’s explanations of what made them Sami. From a distillation of the responses collected, it was clear that four main criteria were most commonly cited. Those criteria were that they were Sami (Chapter One), that their family was Sami (Chapter Five), that they came from a Sami community (Chapter Six) and that they did or did not speak a Sami language (Chapter Seven).

To explain the significance of the utterance of ‘I am Sami’, the concepts of identity, ethnicity and indigeneity were explored. Social identity was defined as ‘seeing oneself as, and being to others, a person possessing certain traits, capabilities, capacities, proclivities and knowledges’. I also argue that identity can be conceptualised as habitus and doxa (after Bourdieu) plus ‘the uncanny’ (after Žižek), that identity is embodied and naturalised (habitus and doxa) and includes a sense of being or not being (the uncanny). This led to the understanding that the utterance of ‘I am Sami’ makes a person Sami as much as it reflects their ability to say it, provided they have the right amount and type of sociocultural traits et cetera.
Ethnicity was discussed as having a long history in anthropological debates, particularly in Europe and Scandinavia, and that this has implications for the Sami community. Indigeneity has become an important alternative to ethnicity for Sami people and some of the implications for internal politics are that Sami people have needed to and continue to negotiate this.

Family, land, community and language are dealt with by teasing out significant aspects of each to provide context for their role and use at Riddu Riđđu, which is discussed at the end of each chapter. I argue that these statements of identity are prioritised in Sami efforts to gain rights and recognition. Notions of family in reference to relatedness are not only part of official definitions of who can claim Saminess; they are embedded in everyday life through the application of cultural concepts such as siida. Land and community are discussed with reference to the conditions that led to the Olmmáivággi community being successful in the Svartskogen case, which is hailed as one of the first successful Sami land rights cases in Norway. I argue that the work of the Sami community and the comparative political goodwill from the Norwegian government laid the groundwork for this outcome. Language is the final chapter in this suite. In chapter Seven I argue that language is a primary indicator of Saminess and teased out the complexities of the positions of those who do and do not speak a Sami language.

Background information about the Sami community in Norway and the Riddu Riđđu festival were provided in Chapters Two and Three respectively. The history and current position of the Sami community in Norway show that Sami identity has had to be negotiated through complex conditions of difference in a post-colonial
environment. Lina Gaski (2008, p. 221) argues that in the last 50 years the Sami community has moved away from ‘being a poor, stigmatized and politically unorganized population’ to ‘a much more self-confident society’. Riddu Riđđu has benefitted from this growing self-confidence as well as contributing to it.

The people who worked for the Riddu Riđđu Searvi and on the Riddu Riđđu festival made important contributions to the negotiations of conditions of difference that developed alongside the growing self-confidence. Their work was done to support and promote the Sami aspects of their community as well as to elevate Coastal Sami issues and create opportunities for international Indigenous cooperation. The festival has also served as a vehicle for the personal and public ambitions of the people who worked for it. This is essential to the success of the festival and the organisation. Further, Riddu Riđđu provides a unique environment for Sami people to be Sami and for Sami and non-Sami people to interact with each other. It also enables people to act out their political convictions in practical ways through a range of different activities and to a level with which they feel comfortable.

One of these activities is the presentation of Saminess in a public place. The importance of costume and duodji are discussed as public presentations of Sami identities (Chapter Four). It is the ability of Riddu Riđđu to provide and encourage the expression of Sami identity and other Indigenous identities which partially explains the festival’s success in raising awareness of Sami issues in local, national and global contexts (Chapter Five). In Chapter Eight I explain how the festival was used as a vehicle for social change and the intricacies of the ways people’s involvement was shaped for them to be successful in making this social change.
Overall conclusions, embedded in several chapters, include that although Sami people have been oppressed by colonial instruments and through actions and discourses, in more recent years they have often used these very instruments and discourses to their advantage. The tools used to prove Sami difference from the majority Norwegian community included family structure, land ownership and usage, language, and material culture such as costumes and duodji. I show, in the chapters that focus on these that Sami people have turned the negative connotations of their difference in respect to these to their advantage. Sami difference was already defined and engaged to justify Norwegianisation policies and other instruments of oppression and assimilation. When it came time to prove difference in order to gain rights and recognition, the Sami community could easily point to these policies and discourses. They were also the focus of practical measures employed to redress oppression and assimilation.

The rights that come with having an identity acknowledged and encouraged by the government and the publics include the right to maintain and express alterity within the postcolonial cultural landscape. It is in this way that Sami identity is expanded from a sense of self because of its normative value to an articulated political aim. The people involved in Riddu Riddål are consciously and deliberately part of the process of transformation of the Sami and non-Sami communities, and identity recognition and expression is a stated aim within their project.

Another overarching conclusion is that the strengthening of Sami identity has been made possible by the extraordinary work of Sami people. This has been helped in recent years by comparative political goodwill from the Norwegian government. This
goodwill has been influenced by the international shift in attitudes towards Indigenous peoples and the development of instruments of international organisations to support the redressing of the oppression of Indigenous peoples. Sami activists became involved in these organisations early and they remain strong contributors to them. The Norwegian government’s willingness to take seriously its recognition of these international instruments underlies active support for Sami efforts in Norway.

Of course, the path to rights never does run smooth. In their efforts to maintain and revitalise the aspects of Sami culture that sustain Sami identities, Sami people have faced opposition and criticism from outside and within the Sami community. This opposition and criticism is based on resistance to change and the threat that Sami agency poses to the majority community. Within the Sami community there is also a constant struggle to define who has the right to speak for the community, not just officially through the Sámediggi and other representative bodies but in less formal situations. This struggle includes criticism as well as strong support, both of which are meted out strategically.

Regionalism was another overarching theme in this work. I see a pattern in the regionalisation of Sami issues that relate to Sami identity processes. In many instances, strategic essentialism was employed to present a united ‘national’ position on Sami issues. That Sami people were seen as North Sami speaking reindeer herders from inner Finnmárku was useful during initial negotiations with various majority population bodies. As each aspect of these negotiations has developed, they have become more nuanced and sophisticated. This has led to a
recognition of the diversity within the Sami community and of the variety of needs and desires. In many cases this has resulted in the regionalisation of debates, discourses, laws, policies and other instruments of Sami, non-Sami and collaborative governments and administrations.

While the positions of Sami postcolonial identities change, non-Sami postcolonial identities are affected. Just as Norwegian national identity processes play a role in Sami identity processes, the reverse is also true. The people involved in Riddu Riddu have been explicitly focussed on changing Coastal Sami recognition by changing Sami and non-Sami perspectives. This change in perspective led to changes in the identification of all Sami and non-Sami Norwegians to differing extents.

I do not think the Saminess that Riddu Riddu facilitates or the people who established and ran Riddu Riddu were particularly anti-establishment. Nor is Riddu Riddu part of a necessary trajectory of Sami politics in Sápmi or Gáivuotna. Through a series of events and the conscientious efforts of a number of people, there have been real and lasting effects on Gáivuotna, the Sami community in Gáivuotna, Coastal Sami issues and perceptions and articulations of Saminess in general.

While there are many issues raised by the work presented, contributions made by this work play into a range of areas of interest. The research results of this project add to ethnographic knowledge about Sami people, the Riddu Riddu festival and the conditions that impact Sami identity processes. They also add to the ongoing discussions within anthropology about indigeneity, identity processes and the conditions for identification as well as being an example of an ethnography that uses identity as a category of analysis. Many anthropologists say that large projects such
as this reflect a personal drive to understand an issue. For me, the drive was to understand identity in an Indigenous context and, by extension, identity in general, including my own. For me, this has been achieved thanks to the efforts of the people of Sápmi who were generous enough to teach me how it was for them to be Sami.
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Hansen, K 2004a, Ája Sami Centre.
- 2004c, Audience in front of the main stage.
- 2004d, A young staff member during a late-night concert.
- 2004e, Back stage lavvu.
- 2004f, Beer/seminar lavvus.
- 2004g, Behind the main stage.
- 2004h, Cecilie and friend.
- 2004i, Edel.
- 2004j, Festival site. Clockwise from bottom left: main stage, main camp, beer lavvu, back stage lavvu.
- 2004k, Guri.
- 2004l, Johan Sara Group and Wai.
- 2004m, Kristian.
- 2004n, Main camp.
- 2004o, Main camp.
- 2004p, Marina Olsen.
- 2004q, Nunavut fashion parade.
- 2004r, Olsen family members in front of a hashe fence.
- 2004s, Participants in the Arctic youth camp, Riddu Riddu, 2004. Photo shows a range of gákti. Front row from left to right (identification approximate): Gáivuotna, Kárášjohka, possibly Gáivuotna, Giron, Guovdageaidnu, Guovdageaidnu, obscured, possibly South Sami, possibly Lule.
- 2004t, Path leading to the main camp from the beer/seminar lavvu.
- 2004u, Police patrolling the main camp.
- 2004v, San dancers performing at a children’s concert in the little forest.
- 2004w, Signs outside the goahti during different festivals.
- 2004x, The market.
- 2004y, The main stage.
- 2004z, The Riddu Riddu goahti.
2004bb. *The seating area outside the beer/seminar lavvus.*
2004dd. *Turdus Musicus playing on the main stage.*
1999a, *Gietkka hanging in Nina and Steinar’s house.*
1999b, *Guksi used for coffee on a fishing trip.*
1999c, *Olmmáivággí.*
1999d, *Romsa supporters wearing Sami hats.*
1999e, *Sami gutter på tur.*
1999f, *Sami knife used to gut a fish.*

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Appendix A

Technical notes

- For anonymity, the names of participants have been changed except where it was appropriate to use actual names, such as in the ‘People and Programs’ section of Chapter Three.

- I use the international standard abbreviations for English (eng), Norwegian (nor), North Sami (sme) et cetera, as stated in ISO 639-3 (SIL 2015).

- ‘Sami’ (Sámi sme, Same nor) is often translated into English as ‘Saami’, ‘Sámi’, and, in older texts, ‘Samek’. Sami people have also been known as ‘Laplanders’ or ‘Lapps’. ‘Lapp’ has a derogatory connotation in Scandinavian languages (it connotes scrap or piece) and is no longer used in academic and informed, non-academic arenas. I have chosen the form used in most English language academic texts, thus avoiding the spelling in any one Sami language. This is on the advice of Henry Minde, a much-respected Sami historian and academic (pers. comm. 2007).

- Where possible I refer to places by their Sami names even if they are better known by their Norwegian names in the places themselves — for example, Olmmáiváaggi and Gáivuotna are better known as Manndalen and Kåfjord respectively. The issue of toponymy in Sápmi is discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.
- Gáivuotna is a municipality in the county of Romsa (nor Troms) in the north of Norway. The name comes from the fjord at the centre of the municipality, on the edge of which the village of Olmmáivággi sits. When I refer to Gáivuotna I am referring to the fjord, not the whole municipality.

- *Mearrasámi* is the North Sami term and *Sjøsame* is the Norwegian term for Sami communities who live on the coast. Both translate as ‘Sea Sami’. As was pointed out by Marit Myrvoll (pers. com. 2007), while these communities may be located by the sea, the people in them do not live on the sea or necessarily rely solely on the sea but live on the coast and often pursue lifestyles reliant on both the sea and the land. For this reason ‘Coastal Sami’ is now used more commonly.
Employment in Gáivuotna

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Employed persons 15-74 years, Gáivuotna, 2011</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians and associate professionals</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical support workers</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service and sales workers</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft and related trades workers</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant and machine operators and assemblers</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary occupations</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix C

Riddu Riddû Program
[My translation where required].

**Tuesday July 13**
12.00 Opening of Children’s Festival
14.00 Departure to Holmenes Coastal Sami farm in Birtavarre (overnight trip)

**Wednesday July 14**
11.00 Children’s Festival
11.00 Course program
11.00 Opening of Arctic Youth Camp
15.00 Film program
15.30 Concert for children with Naro Giraffe Group
17.30 Opening of exhibition: San art and handcraft
18.00 Opening of exhibition: Northern people
19.00 Opening of exhibition: Exhibitor of the year: Svein Flygari Johansen
19.00 Opening of exhibition: Kåfjord Cultural school

**Thursday July 15**
11.00 Children’s Festival
11.00 Course program
11.00 Film program
12.00 Seminar: homofil-bifil.kom
14.00 Seminar: Land and Art
15.30 Children’s concert: South Sami theatre
17.00 Concert in the Yurta: Tyva Kyzy
18.00 Special concert: Johan Sara jr. & Wai
19.00 Opening of Riddu Riddu 2004 and concerts: Akinisie Sivuaraapik & Evie Mark, DJ Ante, Turdus Musicus, Olchey, Sınuupa, Mara Fahd and Crowhexed

**Friday July 16**
11.00 Children’s Festival
11.00 Course program
11.00 Film program
11.00 SESAM seminar: Technology, profitability and sustainable fisheries
13.00 Presentation: Sami guides
13.15 Nordlys seminar: Regionalisation, power and democracy
15.30 Children’s concert: Drum Drum
16.00 San people
18.00 Film seminar in the Sami turf hut
18.00 Special concert: Johan Sara jr. & Wai
20.00 Concerts: Maki Putulik & Laina Grey, Mari Boine, Ivvár-Niillas yoik Concert, Origami Arktika & Tanya Taqag, Tyva Kyzy, Taima, Hangface

**Saturday July 17**
11.00 Film program
12.00 Northern people day
13.00 Nunavik Creation, Fashion Show
14.00 Seminar: Northern people, Nunavik
15.30 Seminar: San people, The Kuru ... quot; project
17.00 Yurta concert: Tyva Kyzy
18.00 Concert: Olchey
18.00 Film seminar in the Sami turf hut
18.00 Nunavik Creation, Fashion Show
20.00 Concerts: Drum Drum, Vajas, Niko Valkeapää, Wai, Johan Sara jr, Nuoraid Lavdi

**Sunday July 18**
11.00 Film program
**Concerts: Friday 16th July**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Performers</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akinisie Sivuaraapik &amp; Evie Mark</td>
<td>Johan Ante Utsi, Annbjørn Hetta, Sara Inga Utsi, David Trana, Morten Pettersen and Fredrik Alvestad.</td>
<td>Nunavik, Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dj Ante, Year’s Young artist</td>
<td>Halvard Rundberg, Finn Fodstad, Carl Chr. Lein Størmer, Paul Velaguez, Alexander Johannessen</td>
<td>Sápmi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turdus Musicus</td>
<td>Ajan-ool Sam, Arat Ak-ool</td>
<td>Tuva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinuupa</td>
<td>Edward Snowball, Alexandre Boisse, Robert Macdonald, Patrick Blonk</td>
<td>Nunavik, Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mara Fahd</td>
<td>Marita Solberg, Kenneth Sørensen, Jack Williamsen, Frank Iversen, Ragnhild Gjems</td>
<td>Sápmi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowhexed</td>
<td>Jørgen Stensrud Nilsen, Frank Dalheim Johansen, Eirik Dalheim Johansen and Halvard Lyshaug</td>
<td>Sápmi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Concerts: Saturday 16th July**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Performers</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Puppuq</td>
<td>Maki Putulik &amp; Laina Gray</td>
<td>Nunavik, Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mari Boine</td>
<td>Mari Boine, Roger Ludvigsen, Svein Schultz, Gunnar Aukland, Kenneth Ekornes, David Solheim, Carlos Qispe and Herbert Reaver.</td>
<td>Sápmi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivvár-Nillas joikekonsert</td>
<td>Ivvár-Nillas, Ole Larsen Gaino, Inga-Maret Juuso</td>
<td>Sápmi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naro Giraffe Group</td>
<td>Xgaiga Qhomatcãa, Bega C'ase, Xgara Tcoma, Qgam Khanxa, Qoexoa Magu, Xguka Krisjan, Qguba Ntcubi, Ncõx'ae Ntcubi, Sarah Cgara, Bau Fretz, Dixgao Magu, Bau Lekgoa, Mieke van der Post, Tsg’abe Taase, Maude Brown</td>
<td>San, Botswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origami Arctca &amp; Tanya Taqag</td>
<td>Tanya Taqag, Kai Mikalsen, Kjell Ø. Braaten, Bjarne Larsen, Rune Flaten, Kjell Runar Jensen and Tore Bø.</td>
<td>Norway/Nunavut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyva Kyzy</td>
<td>Tumat Choduraa Semisoolovna, Kuular Shoraana Tkashovovna, Damyrang Ailangmaa Bailakovna, Ondar Ailang Viktorovna, Tumat Belek Makarovich.</td>
<td>Tuva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taima</td>
<td>Elisapie Isaac, Alain Auger, Roger Miron, Mathieu Gagne, Francis Fillion and Alexandre Fallu</td>
<td>Nunavik/Canada</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hangface  
Bjørnar Flaa, Dag Jørgen (Daggi) Helling, Hogne Rundberg and Espen Hogmo  
Sápmi/Norway

## Concerts: Sunday 18th July

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Performers</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nuoraid Lávdi</td>
<td>35 youth from Sápmi, Kallalit Nuunat, Nunavik, Sahkalin, Nenets and Tuva</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drum Drum</td>
<td>Mark Smith, Airileke Eaton, Phillip Eaton, Anna Ingram, Paia Ingram, Aiva Kadiba</td>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vajas</td>
<td>Kristin Mellem, Nils Johansen, Ande Somby</td>
<td>Sápmi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niko Valkeapää with band</td>
<td>Per Willy Aaserud, Georg Buljo, Helge Harstad, Harald Skullerud</td>
<td>Sápmi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wai</td>
<td>Wai Lorenda Ripia, Gaynor Rikihana, Maaka McGregor, Soloman Simmons</td>
<td>Aotearoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johan Sara jr. Group</td>
<td>Geir Lysne, Knut Aalefjer, Erik Halvorsen, Einar Ytrelid, Johan Sara jr.</td>
<td>Sápmi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Other Concerts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Performers</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.and 17.7</td>
<td>Yurt concert with Tyva Kyzy</td>
<td>Tumat Choduraa Semis-ooolovna, Kuular Shoraana Tkashovovna, Damyrang Ailangmaa Bailakovna, Ondar Ailang Viktorovna, Tumat Belek Makarovich.</td>
<td>Tuva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.07 x 2</td>
<td>The Power of the Shaman</td>
<td>Mari Boine, Gunnar Aukland, Brita Pollan, Herbert Reaver, Mikkel Gaup</td>
<td>Sápmi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Indigenous Film Festival

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Filmmaker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oarbbes cizás (The Land Robbery)</td>
<td>Bjarne Store Jakobsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Than Ourselves</td>
<td>Anita Lervoll (Sápmi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with Gods</td>
<td>Reni Wright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Home, My Heartache</td>
<td>Trude Haugseth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. July:</td>
<td>Homosexual-Bisexual.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With documentary “Lesbian in Kautokeino”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by Nils Porsanger. Focus on the right to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>have a homosexual or bisexual lifestyle in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sami community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. July:</td>
<td>Land and Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art in context with nature or landscape.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Landscape from a cultural perspective.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. July:</td>
<td>Northern People: Nunavik Inuit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. July:</td>
<td>SESAM seminar …quote: Technology, profitability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and sustainable fisheries.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
researcher at the Institute of Marine Research, Bergen.


17. July  | San People, The Kuru Project  | Mieke van der Post

Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Course leader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Norwegian herbs</td>
<td>Tom and Linda Lien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inuit stone sculpture</td>
<td>Joshua Sivuaraapik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printmaking</td>
<td>Victoria Grey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance and rhythm with San</td>
<td>Naro Giraffe Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance and rhythm from Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>Drum Drum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inuit throat singing</td>
<td>Evie Mark and Akinsie Sivuaraapik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking on an old reindeer track</td>
<td>Sami Language course Elle Merete Utsi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flammeband (weaving for gákti)</td>
<td>Eva Solhaug</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

The entitlements of children living in the administrative area:

(a) All children have the right to receive instruction in Sami, or through the medium of Sami, in all subjects.

(b) Until the seventh grade, parents have the choice of whether their children will receive instruction in or through Sami.

(c) From seventh grade, the pupils are able to decide this for themselves.

(d) Children receiving instruction in or through Sami are exempted from instruction in one of the two forms of Norwegian (bokmål and nynorsk).

(e) Local education councils may allow children with Sami as their mother tongue to be taught through the languages for all nine compulsory years.

(f) Local education councils may allow children with Norwegian as their mother tongue to have Sami as a subject.

Outside Sami areas, the following laws apply:

(i) Instruction in or through Sami may be given to pupils with a Sami background.

(ii) If there are no fewer than three pupils in one school whose mother tongue is Sami, they can ask either to be taught through their language or have it as a subject. (This requirement is likely to be changed so that even one pupil in a school can be taught through the language or have it as a subject.)

(iii) In general, anyone, regardless of background, has the right to be taught Sami.

(iv) Sami history and culture are included in national curriculum guidelines as topics with which all children should be familiar (Corson 1995, pp. 500-501).