

Identities, Ethnicities
and Borderzones

KJELL OLSEN

IDENTITIES,
ETHNICITIES AND
BORDERZONES

*Examples from Finnmark,
Northern Norway*

ORKANA AKADEMISK

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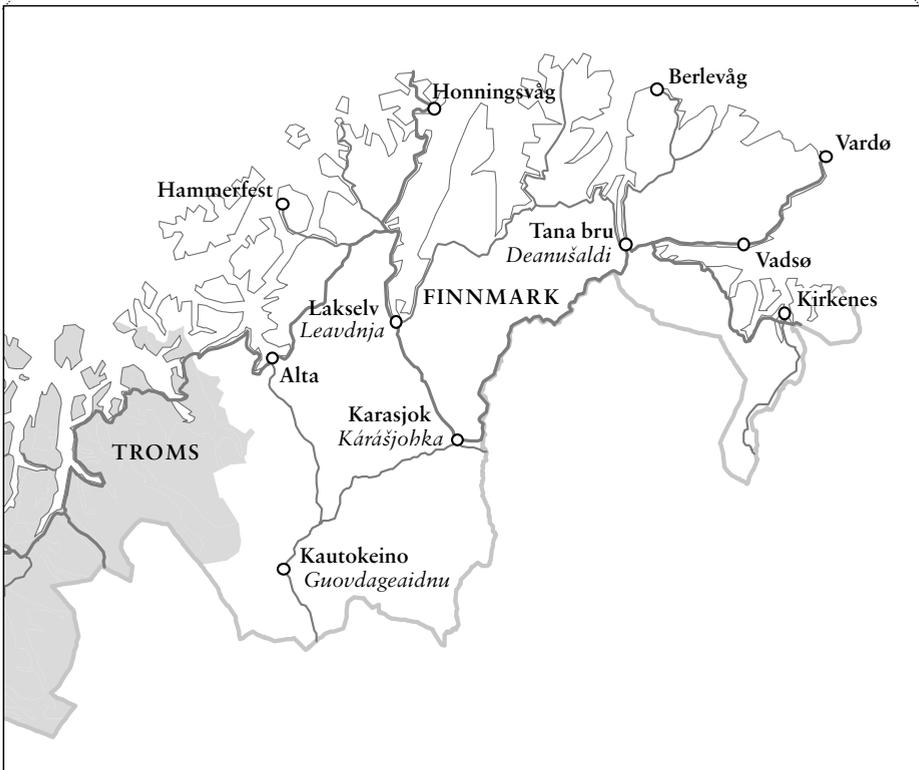
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This book is the preliminary result of 20 years of living and working as an anthropologist in Finnmark, Northern Norway. The chapters compiled here have originated at different times in this period; those that have been published elsewhere have been rewritten in order to contribute to a coherent whole. Together, they cover a period from the early 1990s to the first years of the next millennium; roughly, this equals the period from the founding of the Saami Parliament to the early days of the debate on the Finnmark Act, which was to put the ownership of 96 percent of the land in the county into new hands. During the process of land hand-over from the government to the Finnmark Estate, which was appointed to act on behalf of the people in Finnmark regardless of ethnic belonging, some identity processes have changed while others, as I will argue, have gained momentum.

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Alta, November 2010

Kjell Olsen



Chapter 1

THE PLACE AND THE PROBLEM

FINNMARK, THE NORTHERNMOST COUNTY OF NORWAY, has for about 1,000 years been known as an area associated with both Norwegians and Saami. This cultural heterogeneity has been continued in spite of the area's increasing political and administrative integration into the changing state formations. In the middle of the 19th century, a formal national policy was initiated that aimed at the cultural assimilation of the Saami and the immigrated Kven populations of Finnmark. In the beginning, this goal of assimilation of the minorities of the area was undertaken by the national church and a school system which increased its influence in the country (Jensen 2005: 32). The minorities' conversion to Lutheran Christianity and Norwegian language was the initial goal of the emerging Norwegian nation-state. This aim of Norwegianising the northern population had its greatest impact among the Kvens and the coastal Saami living in the fjords and along the coastline. In these areas, the population was culturally heterogeneous and the Norwegian culture had the strongest impact. In the interior, where the Saami made up a majority, the impact of Norwegian culture was less direct. Throughout the 20th century, Finnmark was included in a general modernisation process that reinforced the impact of the Norwegian culture. The turning point came after World War Two. Most of the buildings in the

county were burnt down by the German Army and the population was evacuated to the south. Reconstruction was entirely in Norwegian style, and the majority of material representations of coastal Saami culture vanished. This change was reinforced by the growth of the Norwegian Welfare state that through its institutions fully integrated Finnmark in the Nation. From then on, the major part of the coastal population saw their future as Norwegian regardless of their former belonging. Despite this development, which appeared to see the disappearance of the Saami culture, the Saami culture is today a vital culture in the area. The Saami have gained particular political rights, and have developed their own political institutions inside the framework of the Norwegian State.

Ethnographic descriptions of the fjord areas in Western Finnmark in the 1940s and 50s give little hope for such a development among the Saami. Knut Kolsrud (1955: 174) laconically ends his description of a fjord settlement by stating that the label “coastal Saami” no longer had any physical-anthropological, social, or cultural meaning. Only with regard to the language did he find some remnants of the old coastal Saami culture. In all other respects the population had been assimilated into the Norwegian culture. According to Kolsrud, the coastal Saami culture was practically dead. Ten years later Harald Eidheim (1971: 52) describes a nearby settlement as appearing to outsiders to be without any features of ethnic differences. Clothing, food, houses, social institutions, ideals and values appeared to be the same as those in every Northern Norwegian community. During his thorough fieldwork Eidheim (1971: 53) experienced that the locals were eager to tell him how well-travelled they were, and how competent in modern fishing and farming. Among the women, the high hygiene standards of their housekeeping was a frequent topic. All these expressions of what could be understood as a belonging in modern Norwegian culture were told in a slightly broken local Norwegian dialect, and with an eagerness that surprised Eidheim.

Later on in his fieldwork, Eidheim was told by some of his informants that the majority of the people in the settlement were ‘a kind of Saami’, and some

people ascribed the lack of local economic prosperity to this fact. In the local settlement there was a clear hierarchy in which all arenas, except for a closed Saami sphere, were dominated by Norwegians and Norwegian cultural values. In this region, all locals knew who belonged to the two categories Saami and Norwegian. For the Saami section of the population it was necessary that: "... in order to achieve the material and social goods they appreciate, and to share the opportunities available in the society, people have to get rid of, or cover up, those social characteristics which Norwegians take as signs of Lappishness" (Eidheim 1971: 56). Only by becoming Norwegian could they fully participate in the Norwegian welfare state. Nevertheless, to become Norwegian meant to get rid of all local signs of Saaminess, and locally this could only occur over several generations. The alternative was to move away (Eidheim 1971: 66; Høgmo 1986).

It is these, to an outsider, invisible dividing lines based on local signs and knowledge that Eidheim (1971), in line with Fredrik Barth (1969: 13-16), analyses as the persistence of ethnic boundaries between Saami and Norwegians. This is an ethnic dichotomisation among a population with an apparently homogeneous culture. Still, in this analytical approach ethnic identity was regarded as imperative, guiding all social interaction (Barth 1969: 17; Eidheim 1971: 50). In the fjord community in Western Finnmark, a Saami ethnic identity became a stigma that hierarchically ordered the relationship between Norwegians and Saami. The coastal Saami themselves had internalised this hierarchical order. They regarded the signs of Saaminess as something shameful that should be hidden and not transmitted to a new generation. In relation to the expanding trans-local and national institutions of the welfare state, the competencies of the Saami culture were irrelevant. A Saami culture and identity only had a place in a closed Saami sphere, and became a stigma in all other situations in the local community (Eidheim 1971: 59, 62). The educational system, the church, the business sector, the labour market, the health care system, farming and fisheries and the connected institutions were all spheres of the Norwegian

culture (Eidheim 1971: 69). Contemporary research on Saami culture also perceived this culture as vanishing and belonging to the past (Eidheim 1993: 257). This was the general opinion with regard to the coastal Saamis in the population. Compared to the Saami of the interior, the coastal Saami lacked all the colourful and exotic cultural features that, from an outside perspective, could set them apart from the modern Norwegian. At least, the reindeer-herding Saami in the interior could still be seen as Noble Savages, even if their culture too was predetermined to have an insecure future.

It was in the Saami interior, in milieus that the coastal Saami in the fjord areas had no contact with, that the idea of a revival of the Saami culture was found. In the 1950s, a small group of educated Saami and Norwegian academics started a political process that in the 1990s put Saami culture and language on an equal legal footing with Norwegian (Eidheim 1971: 76; Eythórsson 2005: 256). Eidheim (1971; 1992; 1997) analyses this development as a process of dichotomisation and complementarisation. Throughout this political process the Saami and their culture became visible as different but equal to the Norwegian society, and the Saami could thereby gain political rights normally ascribed to distinct peoples. In this process, features of Saami culture were re-codified to appear as equivalent to the Norwegian counterparts. The ethno-political struggle was externally aimed to create equality between the Saami and the Norwegians. Internally among the Saami it developed what Eidheim (1992: 3) labels 'a collective Saami self-understanding' that made it possible for Saami to speak about themselves as a people similar to the Norwegian people. Primarily, this collective self-understanding, and its external representation, draws upon a symbolic content that originated in the interior where Saami culture appeared as most different from Norwegian culture (Eidheim 1997: 42; Stordahl 1996: 148 ff.; Hovland 1996a: 152 ff., 215 ff.). Few, if any, of these symbolic expressions of a collective Saminess were present in a contemporary coastal Saami society. This Saami self-understanding, as based on a collective representation that dichotomises Norwegian and Saami culture, has mainly

been formulated inside the frames of and have been embedded in practices in public national institutions.

The Saami ethno-political struggle was fought in national forums and later on as an indigenous struggle in international political forums. In the field of art, education, health care, cultural preservation, science, the church, and in regional policies the political changes in the relationship between Norwegians and Saami have gradually been embedded in national institutional discursive practices. Today these discursive practices perpetuate a clear-cut boundary between Saami and Norwegian where the first is seen as a distinct ethnic group and an indigenous people. As the national institutions and their discursive practises during the Norwegianisation period and the early welfare state had an assimilationist impact on the self understanding of local communities, groups and individuals so, too, the new way such institutions represent the relationship between Norwegian and Saami, has made an impact in Finnmark. In sum, these institutional discourses dominate the national discourse. Notwithstanding, today there are a number of visible expressions on ethnic identity in Finnmark that take several different forms. These expressions range from statements of individual identity to political comments on ethnic relations. This means that several discourses are operative at the same time in the field of ethnicity and belonging in Finnmark. Concomitantly, these expressions relate to the dominant discourse of ethnic dichotomisation. In this situation, more attention needs to be paid to the ways in which people try to work out their everyday statements of identity in a changing social landscape.

The first five chapters analyse how the Saami culture is codified and delimited against the Norwegian culture in trans-local discursive practices. Heritage preservation, the museum industry, tourism, the Norwegian Church, and the arts are all institutions with practices that co-opt and transform symbols of Saminess in terms based on these institutions' own prerequisites and presuppositions. These trans-local institutions are embedded in global and national

discourses as well as being present in local contexts where they represent their version of the relationship between Norwegians and Saami. In local contexts in Finnmark, such institutional discursive practices appear to represent and claim a distinct border between Norwegian and Saami as two ethnic groups on equal terms. It is this method of representation and the discursive assumptions of these institutions that dominate the national public debate on ethnic issues in a way that comes close to an ideological monopoly.

When I arrived in western Finnmark in 1990 I saw little that related to the stigma pointed out by Eidheim (1971) in his work. Neither did I, except when I visited museums and other institutions, experience much of the Saaminess that my analyses reveal is codified in public institutions. The everyday life that I encountered did not differ much from elsewhere in Norway regardless of the area's multicultural reputation. This discrepancy raises the question that is answered in the last two chapters; how is the institutional way of representing the Saami meaningful for local people – regardless of a Saami identity or not – and how does this way of codifying Saaminess manifest itself in a local context?

The two last chapters analyse the local discourse in Alta, the largest town in Finnmark. The municipality of Alta has today incorporated those places that Kolsrud (1955) and Eidheim (1971) described about 50 years ago. In this town at the end of the Alta fjord, one finds people who have moved from the coastline, smaller fjord settlements, and the interior, as well as many other places. Like most growing centres, the place is a mixture of people who can trace their background to what can be conceptualised as a multitude of different ethnic groups, regional identities, and nationalities. These two chapters demonstrate how a local discourse on identity relates to the dominant discourses of the national institutions, and how they interact with and diverge from this discourse.

THE PLACE AND THE PEOPLE

Finnmark is Norway's northernmost county. In the east it borders on the Kola Peninsula of Russia and Finnish Lapland. In the south it borders on the county of Troms. The surface area is 48,637 square kilometres. Despite its size, Finnmark has only about 73,000 inhabitants. In fact, the population is lower than 40 years ago. Although the county lies between 70 and 71 degrees north, the climate is relatively mild compared with places situated at similar latitudes such as Greenland, Siberia and Alaska. The Gulf Stream ensures that the harbours along the coast do not freeze over. But if the coast enjoys relatively mild winters, the contrast to the relatively cold winters of the interior of the county is noticeable. On the mountain plateau the temperature can drop to -40°C in winter. The main industries are fishing, aquaculture, tourism, reindeer farming, mining, and services. More recently, inauguration of the search for oil in the Norwegian and Russian parts of the Barents Sea has sparked optimism. However, no conclusions as to the consequences of these opportunities for the county can yet be drawn.

Alta, with its approximately 18,000 inhabitants, is the largest town in Finnmark. While most other places in the county have seen their population fall steadily since the late 1950s, Alta's has been, and still is, increasing. In many ways, this development mirrors a common feature, wherein many small settlements have vanished in the post-World War Two period, while regional and local centres have survived. The settlement pattern has thus changed dramatically in the last thirty years. The history of Alta can also be said to be typical for the ethnic history of the area (Nielsen 1990, 1995; Eikeseth 1998, 2003). In the 12th century, the area began to become gradually integrated in a European economy. Later on it was to become politically and culturally integrated in the Norwegian nation-state. For most of the coastal and fjord areas, this meant that the indigenous Saami population and the Kven immigrants that first came to the area in the seventeenth century became less visible, and in the last part of the

twentieth century were apparently incorporated into the Norwegian population. This ethnic development means that Alta belongs culturally to the coast and fjord areas. In the interior, the Saami culture has maintained its position as the dominant culture of everyday interaction. Because of the seasonal migration of the reindeer herds, this particular part of Saami culture is highly visible along the coast in summer. Situated between the coast and the interior, Alta was, until the 1930s, a market place for trade between the different coastal settlements, the inland, and the South.

Northern Norway has been called ‘the Meeting Place of Three Tribes’ (Schøyen 1918). This name refers to the Saami, Norwegians, and Kvens, but ignores the fact that people of many other nationalities have also made an impact on this multicultural area. People from northern Finland have used the coast of Finnmark as a natural part of their labour market. There was a strong Russian presence in Finnmark due to the Pomor trade, the commerce between the Norwegian coastal population and the Russians from the regions by the White Sea, which lasted from the end of the eighteenth through the whole of the nineteenth century before gradually dying out in the 1920s. The Russian impact has once more been felt after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Once again the Russian language is commonly heard in the county. The fisheries have meant that people from Central Europe have been coming to the area since the twelfth century; as a consequence, it was a colony on the outskirts of the Danish kingdom until 1814, a situation that created a constant stream of civil servants, and which continues today. To reduce the movement and presence of people to only three tribes is a simplification. As the leader of the Saami party Finnmarkslista and Member of the Saami Parliament, Torhild Bakken, writes in a letter to the editor:

‘Many of us have problems because we are a mixture of Norwegian, Saami, Kven, and often a little bit of aristocratic Danish blood from a deported Lord. Then it becomes difficult to select the Saami and say that one feels so much more Saami than anything else’ (Bakken 2005: 11).

Bordering on the northern edge of Troms, Alta also is a centre for sections of the population in this area. Alta was incorporated as a town in the year 2000, but it still has all the structural features of, and is regarded by most of the people in the area as, a rural community, a *bygd*. The word implies a lack of the intimate physical structure and the social life that is a striking feature of the many small towns and settlements along the coast of the area. Measuring twenty kilometres from one side of the municipal centre to the other, the physical environment resembles many other so-called *bygdebyer* (rural towns) found elsewhere in Norway. What is now the new town centre is located between the two previously separate settlements of Bossekop, to the west, and Elvebakken, to the east. Local rivalry still exists between the two, even if the ethnic dimension no longer plays a prominent part. Until World War Two, Elvebakken was regarded as a Kven stronghold, while Bossekop was seen as Norwegian. An old woman who had grown up in Bossekop in the 1930s told me that, when she was a child, she was regarded as posh because she was not able to answer in the local Kven dialect when visiting friends at Elvebakken. Today, the influence of Læstadianism can still be seen in the eastern part, and is probably the main cultural division in the town (Olsen 1993).

The town began its development as an educational centre in the 1950s (Eikeseth 1998: 433 ff.; 2003: 91 ff.). The municipal administration grew up between the two old settlements, with first a high school and later a teachers' college and a district college. This has made the town an educational centre for the area. The development has had an impact because local people do not have to go away for higher education, and it attracts students from other places. Finally, its status as an educational centre has linked the town to a national labour market for people with higher education.

ENCOUNTERING THE FIELD

When I now try to recount my first encounter with this meeting place of three tribes, I am in danger of exaggerating my feeling that Alta is just an ordinary place in Norway. As Jenkins put it:

‘The more people have to do with each other in everyday life, the more likely they will be to identify each other as *fellow* individuals, rather than primarily by reference to their collective identifications. Others, looking into the everyday human world from a distance or “outside” will, however, be more likely to identify them first as members of a collectivity, as *contemporaries*’ (2004: 123).

Perhaps, because I have lived in the area for so long, my analysis of everyday life in Chapters 6 and 7 emphasises fellow-individuals’ desire to create common belonging, and might under-estimate the differences that exist. Hopefully, this pragmatism is analysed in such a way that it reveals the power relations inherent in such a way of conceptualising people in everyday encounters. As Foucault’s perspective on power enables us to demonstrate, inequality in power relations is also present in the continuous creation of groupness in everyday encounters.

In spite of creating a sense of belonging just like everywhere else in Norway, it is easy to notice differences. The northern area has been a buffer for the national labour market. Newly-educated people from the South have, in times of a tight labour market, taken up the jobs in the public sector in the North. Due to lower education levels in the North, the top positions have commonly been taken by persons from the South. The national policy that entitles several benefits if you live in this area has also accelerated the movement of an educated labour force from the South to the North (Eikeland 1991: 242-243). Certainly this has led to a categorisation of Southerners in terms of their accent, behaviour, and frequent lack of experiences and skills common for locals.

Southerners are also assumed to leave the area after some years after they have acquired the experience that qualifies them for better positions in the Southern labour market. During my first years, I was always being asked when I was going back, until later, when people teasingly started to tell me that I would never go back. Since the Second World War, there has also been a large migration from the North to the South, which means that most people have at one time lived, or have close relatives living, in southern Norway, which has probably strengthened the prejudice whereby people living in the North are contrasted asymmetrically with those in the South (F. Eidheim 1993: 46ff.).

There were other differences as well. To me the most striking was the mixed attitude to the Saami and Saami culture. Each year when students presented themselves, there was someone from the interior of Finnmark who said: 'I'm Saami from Karasjok/Kautokeino, and I'm going to be director of the municipal Culture office in Karasjok/Kautokeino.' More seldom, people from coastal areas presented themselves as Saami. When I got to know people better, some would say that they were probably some kind of Saami but that was something in the past. Others had Saami relatives or claimed to be a mixture of several ethnic groups, but most perceived themselves as Norwegians. At least, they were not like the Saami from the interior. As Eidheim (1971: 51-52) writes, from the early 1960s the coastal Saami culture was hidden and not recognisable for outsiders. I also observed a quite frequent use of derogatory terms applied to the Saami, or rather to 'Finnan', the local term applied to the people living in the interior of the county that is known as the Saami 'core area'. The old saying that there is a difference between 'people' and the Finns is not uncommon, and things are said to be 'Finn' custom or painted with 'Finn' colours. A lot of local stereotypes could be heard in expressions like 'the Finns are so easy to tease', or hearing some boys, about ten years old, end a quarrel by one of them saying: 'Are you going home to fetch the knife, you bloody Finn!' Despite what I regard as the relatively high frequency of such derogatory expressions about the Saami, many people also claimed to have some Saami background.¹

Usually this occurred in contexts, often initiated by my interest in this matter, in which they were able to direct the conversation. This may be due to the fact that I seldom said: “you are from such and such a place and therefore you must be Saami”. Such categorisations are not uncommonly made by people from Southern Norway with some knowledge of North Norwegian history. That I seemed to be aware that a Saami heritage did not necessarily mean that one was like ‘Finnan’, the people living in the interior, probably also made it possible to speak about these matters more easily. Obviously such attitudes to one’s Saami or Kven heritage have changed in the last fifteen years. Today this past has become less problematic in many social contexts, but individuals’ acknowledgement of this past and, in particular, the consequences such a past should have, can still create tension within families, and can be contested by others. There continues to be a strong difference between the coast and the interior. This difference is rooted in an old dichotomy between the population on the coast and in the interior as well as in cultural differences.

Coming from an area where most people can usually trace their ancestry back two or three generations in their distinct living communities, the most surprising thing I experienced in Finnmark was the lack of knowledge of the past. This lack of knowledge was in particular found among many people of my own generation. Early on I had heard about Reidar Nielsen’s (1986) book, *Folk uten fortid*, but to experience this seemingly collective oblivion in real life was something else. This lack of knowledge, or to be more correct lack of knowledge and rewriting of their Saami past, found among many coastal Norwegians has been one of my main interests in my work in Finnmark. Today, hearing such stories has become a normal experience, but in my first years in Finnmark I had difficulty believing them. Just to give some examples of this ‘lack of a past’, I shall retell two stories that highlight some of the problems with the past. A Norwegian woman in her mid-twenties told me that, at family parties, her grandfather would withdraw after a few drinks and retire to his chair. There he always sat muttering something she never understood. Now

she realized that he was speaking Saami. Because of her many Saami friends she was well acquainted with the Northern Saami language spoken in the interior, but she had never recognised her grandfather's coastal dialect. When she asked him about this, he told her that Saami was his first language, something her grandmother strongly denied and still does several years after his death. Another example: there are people, some of whom now regard themselves as Saami, who were fully aware that they had Saami relatives and even that one or both of their parents were Saami - but they themselves had no doubt that they were Norwegians.

These stories point to two prominent features in this area. Firstly, that in many places and in many families the Saami past has never been a topic of conversation. Parents' and grandparents' change of identity has never been mentioned, and the past has been edited in a way that has made it ethnically neutral and/or a Norwegian past (Høgmo 1986: 409). Secondly, what in the past could indicate a Saami heredity has never been interpreted as such. Symbols of Saaminess have been altered so that they were neutral because most Norwegians in the area would also find them in their past. As Kolsrud (1955: 174) writes in the postscript to his study of the Coastal Saami in Rognsund, a part of the Altafjord, people appear to be so intermixed with Norwegians and Norwegian culture that it is doubtful if the label Coastal Saami can be used.

Symbols that point to a Saami ancestry have also been looked upon as belonging to the past and not extending into the present. For many, a Saami past or Saami parents have never meant that they themselves are Saami. In the same way, what is common for many, whether Kven and/or Norwegian and/or Russian descent, does not mean that they are something other than Norwegians. Such a view on the past, its impact on the present, and on ethnic identity may not and often does not, cause problems for anyone other than scholars. The exception is when such views are contested by dominant discourses. As Comaroff and Comaroff (1992: 61) maintain, ethnicity takes

on a convincing reality in cases where such ascribed differences rationalise political structures. This turns the local idea of Norwegianness into a fragile concept if it can be contested by new narrations of the past and its consequences for the present. The claim of historical continuity of ethnic identities found in dominant discourses contests the belief that a Saami past is something that has no impact on who you are today.

The majority of the informants I have met may be contrasted with those Høgmo (1986), in his widely read article “Det tredje alternative” (“The third alternative”), describes as a generation where many regard themselves as neither Saami nor Norwegian. This generation discussed by Høgmo is what he calls a “third generation”, often born in the pre-World War Two period, in coastal families that have changed their identity from Saami to Norwegian over three generations.² Høgmo (1986: 402-406, 411) emphasizes the guilt associated with the recodification of Saami symbols found in this generation. This is something seldom found among the majority of my generation. They are instead, for the most part, the children of those Høgmo describes. Their attitude to a Saami or Kven identity in their family’s past is often quite relaxed, and frequently they lack any specific knowledge of this past. Furthermore they are faced with the many-stranded possibilities of what Rosaldo (1989: 217) has called “cultural borderzones”. They can change ethnic belonging as well as play on the hybridity these categories create. The other side of the coin is that identities become fragile. As long as the past can always be interpreted within the frame of a different ethnic category, people are always in danger of their self-understanding being contested by others in the quotidian as well as by public institutions. Furthermore, individual choices have implications for others. The many-stranded individual possibilities may have consequences for relatives, friends and own children, which sometimes turn the many-stranded possibilities of the borderzone into vulnerable positions. It is therefore important to analyse the power relations involved in encounters and how they shape the way identities can be expressed.

OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

To orient the reader, I turn now to an overview of the chapters, each a case study in themselves but all analysing the relationship between individuals' identity, local categories, and the ethnic discourse perpetuated by different institutions. Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 6 build upon articles published previously (Olsen, Johansen & Solli 1994; Olsen 1995; 2000c; 2001; 2003; 2006; 2007). Therefore, because of the structuring of the argument, they repeat some of the general information on ethnic relations in the area.

In Chapters 2 to 5, I analyse how different trans-local institutions transform local cultural elements and represent them framed by discourses that emphasise clear boundaries between different peoples. At the core of these discourses are concepts of ethnicity based on clear cultural differences between distinct peoples, and of indigenous peoples as traditional, in contrast to a single all-embracing modernity. In these chapters, I demonstrate how local apprehensions of differences set in a multicultural context contest these institutional representations. Such contestations reveal a cultural creativity that evolves from and is given directionality by institutional discourses at the same time as they can be traced to local traditions of categorisation. Chapter 2 reveals how the public policy of heritage preservation is backward-looking in the case of Kven culture while individual identity might be characterised by an emphasis on the future, being set inside the frames of an individualistic and anti-authoritarian tradition in the area. Chapter 3 demonstrates, by an analysis of Alta museum, how public museums reinforce the old local distinction between coastal areas and the interior. Their representation of Saami culture in contrast to Norwegian makes the coastline appear as Norwegian or neutral in the ethnic terms applied in museum practices. Chapter 4 analyses how the field of tourism represents the Saami by the use of emblematic symbols attached to the reindeer herding section of the Saami population. Thereby the Saami culture appears as traditional and indigenous in contrast to a Norwegian modernity. The last of these

analyses of concrete fields of representation display how the Saami song tradition of joik becomes disembedded from local webs of meaning and embedded in meanings that find their expressions in a globalised ethnic vocabulary adopted by among others, the Norwegian Church.

In Chapter 6 I analyse the local resistance in Alta, the largest town in Finnmark, when attempts are made to introduce modern Saami symbols into new public contexts. The argument is that the temporal dimension found in large scale discourses becomes spatially ordered in the local community. A co-existence in time cannot be neglected in the town, but the Saami culture can be suppressed to certain cultural spaces where it does not interfere with the rest of the everyday life regarded as Norwegian. When Saami symbols are brought into new contexts they create a possibility for a modern Saami everyday life that in local culture is relegated to the interior or to a private sphere. Therefore, in the town of Alta there is a continuous struggle over where the Saami culture has its place. The crucial question in this struggle is whether a Saami culture is knowledge, performances and symbols that belong to the interior and have disappeared at the coastline, or whether it is possible to regard the local everyday life in Alta as a part of a collective Saami self-understanding?

The question of how the local discourse on cultural difference between Saami and Norwegians can be mapped by the concepts of time and space is the focus of Chapter 7. The main argument is that in the regional centre in the county, the possibility of expressing a Saami identity is constrained to social contexts where such a statement does not interfere with the rest of everyday life. This spatial arrangement allows the main part of local culture to appear as ordinary modern Norwegian while the Saami culture is highly visible in some public institutions; is expressed as some people's heritage on certain occasions; belongs to a political field; and becomes a private belonging. Because of the cultural similarity among people created by their integration in national processes and their often hybrid backgrounds, seemingly identical ways of living

can be understood by the individual as Saami, Kven, or Norwegian. This is what I label a private identity because it is seldom given a collective expression or based on visual differences except in contexts where standardised symbols can be applied. On most occasions such an identity can only be based on the individual's feeling of belonging and be expressed in contexts where the individual feeling is given defining authority.

SAAMI ETHNIC IDENTITY

It is viable to argue that ethnicity has been accentuated as a part of identity processes in Finnmark in as much as other organising principles have been thrown into the background (Eriksen & Høem 1999: 132-133). On the other hand, it is not remarkable that the study of ethnicity has had a prominent place because of the dramatic changes partly, caused by Saami ethno-politics, that have taken place in a Saami society. The development of a collective Saami self-understanding in contrast and complementarity to Norwegian culture is a process that Eidheim (1992; 1997) mainly analyses at a macro level in terms with a distinct perspective on ethnic relations. This perspective on ethnicity that emphasises boundaries between groups (Barth 1969) had an impact on the ethno-political movement where Eidheim also played a part (Stordahl 2005; Eyþórsson 2005; Ramstad & Thuen 2005: 240). This is a perspective on ethnicity that is politically effective by emphasising symbols that simultaneously mark boundaries against others while creating belonging inside the group. As Eidheim expresses it: with regard to Saami self-understanding, it is a '... "vocabulary" with which to speak of oneself internally as well as inter-culturally' (Eidheim 1992: 3). This self-understanding; '... acquires a content and is confirmed as a contrasting identity in relation to the majority counterpart – *Daza* – and, at the same time, as a complementary identity which gives the opportunity of experiencing equality vis-à-vis that majority' (1992: 5). Eidheim's influential works have been extended at a micro-level by Stordahl (1996) and Hovland (1996a).

Stordahl (1996: 148ff.) demonstrates how modern and dynamic Saami identities have developed, inside the frames of a collective Saami self-understanding, in Karasjok in the interior of Finnmark. Hovland's (1996a) work reveals the dynamic dimensions in identity processes among young people in Kautokeino and Kåfjord. In spite of the dynamics in these identity processes they still rely heavily on the idea of a 'Saami core' in the interior and therefore create quite different contexts for the youths in Kautokeino in the interior and in the fjord areas where Kåfjord is located (Hovland 1996a: 152 ff.). As Thuen points out; '... "culture" as skills and performance [is] at the core of minority identity articulation' (1995: 262) and these skills and the performative competence is unevenly distributed among people that regard themselves as Saami.

This reified way of thinking about culture is at the core of much of Norwegian public policies concerning Saami matters (Oskal 1999: 158 ff.). These policies presuppose a distinction between two groups – Norwegian and Saami – and Eriksen and Høem (1999: 132-133) criticise Norwegian research on the Saami in general for taking these categories for granted. This means one lacks an understanding of other organising principles and an understanding of what is Norwegian culture in these areas, except as a contrasting culture to the Saami. This is a critique that holds some truths and might be explained in several ways.

Firstly, from being a research tradition that documented a vanishing Saami culture that belonged to the past, Norwegian research on the Saami changed into analysing the political field of revitalising a Saami culture in ethnic terms in the present (Eidheim 1993: 257). Necessarily more attention was paid to fields of conflict than to arenas for cooperation where ethnic belonging was not necessarily an issue. Next, this centre of attention to political revitalisation also focused on areas, occupations, and milieus where this revitalisation was most obvious and studied them at what Barth (1994: 20) labels a median level where processes that create collective action and group solidarity are found (see for example Eidheim 1992; 1997; Thuen 1995). My aim with this book is

to analyse the ethnic representations as they materialise in certain institutions, at a median level, and compare these discourses when they unfold in an everyday context and interact with other understandings of relationships in everyday life in areas that not are usually regarded as Saami and where the aim of ethnic revitalisation is not prominent in a political field.

Increasingly, scholars have paid attention to the reluctance to embrace collective Saami symbols found in many coastal and fjord areas (Andersen 2003; Bjerkli 1997, 2000; Bjerkli & Thuen 1999; Hovland 1996a; Kramvig 1999, 2005; Odner 1995; Olsen 1997; Paine 2003; Thuen 1995, 2003). Many of these authors have pointed out that the dichotomy between Saami and Norwegians is too simple to cover these multicultural areas. In these areas, Saminess relates to local values and knowledge and the dichotomy among ethnic groups promoted at a median level often threatens local ideas of communality. According to Kramvig (1999: 117, 136; 2005: 58) there is often an insistence on local belonging as the primary organising principle of identity, and local communities in this area often develop performative structures to integrate people rather than creating boundaries between them. Thus, places that in some texts are analysed in ethnic terms can be described by others through local categories of belonging that do not refer to the ethnic categories at the median level (Vangen 2005).

What these studies (Andersen 2003; Bjerkli 1997, 2000; Bjerkli & Thuen 1999; Hovland 1996a; Kramvig 1999, 2005; Odner 1995; Olsen 1997; Paine 2003; Thuen 1995, 2003) have in common are that they 1) demonstrate a local – sometimes defined as coastal Saami – identity in contrast to what Eidheim describes as a collective Saami self-understanding, and 2) they do this by empirical studies situated in small – usually – fjord settlements that are contrasted to the interior and the modern ethno-politics. This has some resemblance to that which Appadurai (1988) observes for ethnography in general, where the connection between topic and place becomes the defining characteristic of a people to the exclusion of other perspectives. For the identity processes in

Finnmark this seems to be the Saminess of the interior that for most sections of the population in the region are peripheral, and an attention to contrasting local identities in small fjord settlements that are even more peripheral. It appears that the ethnographic tradition and possibly the Saami's recognition as an indigenous people have left larger urban settlements as a *terra incognita*. It is in such towns that the majority of the population in the area actually lives. Alta, the largest town, alone contains more than 25 percent of the population in the county. In such urban centres a large proportion of the inhabitants are newcomers from other municipalities in Northern Norway or elsewhere. The fact that these towns are Norwegian implies that differences have to be expressed in the standardised way of official discourses or as personal commitment. Such places are characterised by mobility, partial identities, short-time relations, multicultural backgrounds and other qualities usually ascribed to modern urban centres where people continuously have to represent themselves. Therefore, attachment to a collective ethnic identity at this micro level must mainly be analysed as a choice based on a personal commitment that people can express in several ways, the ethnic repertoire at a median level only being one of several options.

ETHNICITY?

Asking the question '*Beyond ethnicity?*' Thomas H. Eriksen claims that studies of ethnicity often have: 'accentuated the enactment of boundary mechanisms and the use of overt markers of distinctiveness in the reproduction of ethnic identities' (1993a: 156). In so far as ethnicity is given all-encompassing relevance, the scholarly attention to ethnicity can be a hindrance for recognising other – sometimes more – relevant ways of structuring relations. Consequently, the attention paid to ethnicity and small-scale peripheral communities by most research in Finnmark can create 'moments of non-recognitions' when encountering the social life in towns in the area where ethnic categories often do not

seem to matter. Still, other parts of social life demonstrate clearly that ethnicity is an ordering principle. Institutional practices create discourses of binary categories that unfold in local contexts and influence people's everyday life. These practices and encounters must be analysed in a way that reveals the enactment of boundary mechanisms, the markers of difference, and the reproduction and production of ethnic categories (Eriksen 1993a: 156). At such moments ethnic categories take a concrete form that must be negotiated in the immediate social context. For analysing these discourses I rely on a fairly common perspective on ethnicity as an analytical concept described by Thuen (1995) in his analysis of the ethno-political development in Northern Norway.

Thuen (1995: 18-19) takes his point of departure in Barth's (1969) formalist position that underscores; '... communicative interaction as well as societal distribution of assets and statuses,..' (1995: 18) and in Eidheim's (1971: 79) emphasis of two interrelated aspects of codification: complementarisation and dichotomisation. Whereas the first of these twin concepts aims to describe the establishing of equality among groups, the other relates to the process of internal appropriation of demarcating symbols inside a group. And as Thuen adds;

'.., the innovative character inherent in the processes emphasized by Eidheim is counterbalanced by a process of *conventionalization* [...]. Some of the cultural elements that make up the idiomatic material of dichotomization and complementarization are objectified as they gain a metonymic character of representation: this character is observed when governmental agencies accept a responsibility of "cultural protection" of the Saami' (1995: 19 italics in original).

The first four chapters in this book explore the latter part of this perspective that Thuen labels 'a process of *conventionalization*'. I do not describe this conventionalization as an internal appropriation of a collective Saami self-understanding in a Saami society, but as how the institutions perpetuate these

large-scale processes in multicultural local communities with a local culture that is considered as Norwegian by the local majority. The strong impact of public policies and public institutions in these centres renders ethnicity into a slippery analytical concept. The different chapters in this book reveal how an ethnic vocabulary in many ways has been co-opted by public institutions and a political field. From a starting point as an analytical concept, this way of conceptualising cultural and social processes in the relationship between Norwegians and Saami has become integrated in institutional practices and political rhetoric that must be analysed (Gaski 2008).

Consequently, ethnicity becomes difficult as an analytical concept in this area. Therefore, ethnicity in this particular context will be regarded as a concept that must be analysed as belonging to discourses on certain levels (what Barth (1994) labels as macro and median levels). As Barth puts it, the macro level is characterised by bureaucracies' need of formal criteria and ideologies that are articulated and imposed. According to Barth, the macro level articulates closely with interests on what he labels a median level (Barth 1994: 21-22). At a median level collective understandings are created and at this level group solidarity is found. Here at this level; '... package deals and either-or choices are imposed, and many aspects of the boundaries and dichotomies of ethnicity are fashioned' (Barth 1994: 20).

The perspective on ethnicity briefly sketched gives an analytical grip of those discourses that are mainly perpetuated by the practices of public national institutions such as museums, the heritage preservationists, political discourse, and the tourist industry. Such fields reproduce ethnicity at a median and a macro level by emphasising boundaries, and fits well into a nationalist rhetoric implicitly and explicitly expressed in an ethno-political discourse (Eidheim 1997: 50). Even if these discourses evolve from a macro and median level, they come together locally in face-to-face relations sometimes with, other times without, strong emotional contents and in special kinds of sensual experiences where

they become extensively contextualised (Hannerz 1996: 26 f.). This is a micro level where, according to Barth (1994: 21), individual identity is shaped in everyday life. The practices of national institutions cast in ethnic terms, also play a part in everyday life. Nevertheless, the categories that fit into a median and macro level becomes recast as identities. As Hannerz (1996: 27) claims for locals in general, ‘as an intellectual category they seem more protean than primordial’. Therefore, as Brubaker advises: ‘...we should not uncritically adopt *categories of ethnopolitical practice* as our *categories of social analysis*’ (2004: 10 italics in the original).

At this level, ethnicity as an analytical concept must give way for a perspective on identity that gives more space for flexibility and for the individual. As Cohen claims;

‘... that the political expression of cultural identity has two distinctive registers to which we should attend. The first is used for apparently dogmatic statements of more or less objective doctrine: [...]. The second is for contentious statements which treat ethnicity as the context of, or as an aspect of, identity with very *uncertain* implications. [...]. The apparently monolithic or generalised character of ethnicity at the collective level does not pre-empt the continual reconstruction of ethnicity at the personal level. (1994a: 120-121 italics in original).

The problem of analysing these continual reconstructions of identity at the personal level as an aspect of ethnicity is that it limits the creativity caused by the flux and complexity of everyday life. As Eriksen (1993a: 157) suggests, social identity is perhaps a better term. Cohen states that: ‘Boundaries are zones for reflection: on who one is; on who others are. There is no axiomatic rule which stipulates that the boundaries of selfhood are less significant in this regard than are those of collectivity’ (1994a: 128). The ethno-political struggle in Finnmark has emphasised boundaries in an area that in primordialist terms

can be characterised by the majority of the population having a mixed cultural background. This multicultural history and the ethno-political struggle have been a fertile ground for individual as well as collective identity processes, but have also stressed the need for creating common belonging among a heterogeneous modern population. Therefore, a concept like social identity better enables the analysis of individual's continuous construction of culture in shifting encounters in complex everyday life. In the construction of 'groupness' in everyday life, ethnicity becomes one of many – and seldom the most important – identities that are expressed and direct social interaction in the quotidian.

Therefore, the difference between discourses of different scale demands different analytical concepts. The macro and median level boundary-making discourses embedded in enduring institutional practices necessitate an analytical perspective of how such markers of distinctiveness and boundary mechanisms are enacted and, thereby, conventionalised. These discourses can be analysed by a perspective, inspired by Barth (1969; 1994), on ethnicity as a boundary-making process creating dichotomization and complementarisation (Eidheim 1971; 1992; Thuen 1995: 19ff). The continuous construction of common belonging and groupness in the constantly changing meaning-making process of everyday life demands a more flexible concept such as social identity. Such a more flexible analytical concept allows for the creativity of individuals as well as heterogeneity and differences and enables the mapping of processes of less enduring quality than institutional practices.

Separating discourses into separate levels creates a need for a concept of discourse that can bridge this analytical division when discourses come into action in everyday life. Therefore, the concept of discourse must pay attention to shifting social contexts and changing power relations.

DISCOURSE

In the rural town of Alta the collective representation of Saminess is easily recognised in certain institutions, in certain zones, and at particular times. It is these representations, their boundary-making and founding premises that in this book are analysed as dominant discourses. Their dominant position in public institutions renders them into official representations of ethnic differences, and their way of expression. These discourses at a macro and median level have become part of a Norwegian political understanding of the relationship between two distinct peoples, and are reproduced at a micro level in certain spaces. As Gerd Baumann writes about the ethnic discourse in Great Britain this is a level of discourse that:

‘... equates categories with social groups under the name “community”, and it identifies each community with a reified culture. This is done by the politicians, the mass media and the ethno-political entrepreneurs but also by many researchers who select a community and describe it as an autonomous culture’ (Baumann 1996: 10).

According to Baumann (1996: 10) this dominant discourse is set in contrast to an everyday life where common belonging is continuously created depending on the purpose and context. This allows people to ‘... create new *communities* as well as to subdivide or fuse existing ones’ (1996: 195). In Brubaker (2004: 12-13) and Barth’s (1994) perspective this can be understood as dominant discourses that make use of an ethno-political vocabulary that creates either/or categories at a macro and median level while ‘groupness’ is continuously created at a micro level depending on context and purpose. In contrast to the pragmatism and flexibility (Baumann 1996: 189, 196; 1999: 132) that is a characteristic of everyday discourses, the dominant discourse might be characterised by five dominant features:

: ‘... its conceptual make-up should be economical, not to say simple; its communicative resources should border on monopoly; it should

be flexible of application and should allow for the greatest ideological plasticity; finally, it should lend itself to established institutional purposes' (1996: 22).

Baumann's perspective on discourse as a wide, simple and pragmatic concept is continued in this book. As Baumann (1996: 10) emphasises with reference to Abu-Lughod and Lutz (1990) this use of the concept is a way of connecting discourse to the pragmatics of language and social practices. Such a pragmatic use of the concept also connects a macro level to actual social contexts and the relationships present. Such a wide, simple, and pragmatic use of the concept also permits an analysis of the change of meaning according to changing social contexts (Kaarhus 1992: 114). Discourse then becomes a concept that can be used to describe how certain reified expressions about and representations of culture and ethnicity can be linked to certain contexts, to different metonymic relations, and to changing power relations in shifting contexts. This is done in relation to particular institutions in Chapters 2 to 5 in this book.

The development of a collective Saami self-understanding has been pivotal in identity processes in the area. Therefore it is important to understand how the discourses that perpetuate this self-understanding can define the understanding of different contexts and how resistance and contestations are shaped. A perspective that can explain the productivity of these discourses is necessary. In Foucault's view it is essential to '... not imagine a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominant discourse and the dominated one: but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play in various strategies' (1978: 100). Instead of a binary understanding of discourses, Foucault suggests that we understand discourses as '... tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations; there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy' (1978: 101-102). Power is everywhere;

not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere' (Foucault 1978: 93). Its presence in all relationships turns it into a productive force, a view that is summarized when Foucault claims: 'Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power' (1978: 95).

Power always produces resistance, and the latter is always inscribed in power as an irreducible opposite (Foucault 1978: 96). That power is not anything given, points to the productive forces of power as seen by Foucault (1980: 119). It opens up spaces for resistance in various forms, but never as a mere reflection of dominance. Such a view opens the analysis to the integration of creativity and agency on behalf of the individual, even if this is not a prominent feature of most readings of Foucault's work. But contrary to this more positive and productive perspective, in which different forms of resistance are regarded as an immanent feature of power, it also enables us to '... use them [sorts of resistance] to tell us more about forms of power and how people are caught up in them' (Abu-Lughod 1990: 42).

The argument put forward in the present book is that to understand identity processes in Northern Norway, one has to analyse several discourses because each of them creates different possibilities and denials. People use them reflexively by purpose and context, and, as Bruner (2005: 128) writes, create polyphony. Just as people's meaning-making is polyphonic and related to purpose and context, so the institutions that dominate it have their purposes and contexts, which must be understood. To analyse the dominant discourses present in institutional settings I apply Baumann's (1996) perspective on discourse as a wide, simple and pragmatic concept that can be used to explain how certain reified expressions about and representations of culture and ethnicity at a macro and median level are perpetuated in some realms of everyday life. To describe the creativity these discourses have caused in other contexts, as contestations or denials, it is necessary to rely on a concept

of power as immanent in all relations as described by Foucault (1980). This helps to analyse the productivity found in the ongoing processes of identity-making in everyday life.

METHOD

My introduction to the field of identity in the area was through personal, or what might be called ontological, narratives (Somers 1994: 618 ff.).¹ Regarding myself as an Africanist who was only supposed to live in the area for nine months, and later for one more year, and so on, I never planned any long-term research in the area. I was told stories, got explanations to my questions, and observed certain patterns in everyday encounters. People started to talk to me about their grandparents for several reasons. First of all I was teaching courses that made such topics close at hand. Identity being a part of the Norwegian cultural policy, it was an obvious topic for discussion. The college was also a context in which such discussions, at least for the most part, were not hampered by presuppositions from people's local milieu and in which derogatory attitudes were seldom expressed, even if one could assume they were sometimes present. In addition, the presence of students from the South, some of whom had a keen interest in Saami culture and most of whom had a neutral attitude and vague ideas about the Saami, made the college milieu an arena in which ethnic relations could be discussed quite freely. Outside these contexts, I often made it clear that I was interested in the topic. More by luck than cleverness I think I managed to contribute to a context where people could express their own opinion on the discourse on ethnicity. In this way, my living in the area can be regarded as continuously ongoing fieldwork which in periods also includes more formal research such as interviews and gathering information on particular points of interest.

Later on my knowledge in this field was more restricted by the demands of research, but these first impressions also guided this part. The different cases I

analyse are the result of more normal scholarly work such as reading written sources, interviewing, and observation on site. This also relates to the overall analysis of the identity processes in the area that frames these case studies. Furthermore, living and working in a small town in Norway is, whether one likes it or not, a way of participant observation. Not necessarily in the sense that the anthropologist consciously tries to get involved in different contexts, but rather the opposite. Increasingly one becomes involved in new and changing contexts that make up a local community.

The research target has never been the “Saami”, “Kven”, “Finnmark” or “Alta” society, identity, community, and so on, or a distinct segment of such a unit. Rather, it has been my own person and my changing status repertoire that has given direction to my gathering of empirical material, which is therefore biased in favour of people born around 1960 and later. These people are often relatively well-educated and have lived in several places in Norway and in the Northern area. I met them as part of my job, as neighbours, as parents in joint activities for our children, or in my leisure time. As already mentioned, the majority of the informants may be contrasted with what Høgmo describes as a generation where many regard themselves as neither Saami nor Norwegian. They are Norwegians, and some of them can become Saami; others regard themselves to be both or a mixture.

Doing anthropology as a part of one’s everyday life often makes it difficult to separate the researcher’s private role from the scientific role. The shift from contact with the informants, in the field, to the writing, out of the field, becomes impossible. Instead fieldwork becomes ‘an attitude or lifestyle’ and a part of the reflexivity that has become a component of high modernity. The assumed detachment from the field when the anthropologist goes back home reveals itself as invalid, and this book is written in full awareness of that (Gullestad 1998: 72).

This ‘familiarity’ with the field means that I have a lot of information about persons that these persons are unaware of. Some of this is gathered from people

who have agreed to be informants, and from information about informants gathered from others. In a way this exemplifies my initial integration in the area. Like most locals, I have started to be able to situate people by reference to people we both know. And other locals are able to do the same with me as someone's father, husband, friend, or as living in a particular place. Still, the structural features of the modern *bygdeby* also provide anonymity and frequent encounters with strangers.

Information can be linked in many ways. Most of the information that has come my way without the knowledge of the person considered will not be explicitly used in this book if it is not from public sources. The knowledge will be implicitly present as part of the text. It frames many of my arguments and, in those contexts where there is no danger of reference to real people, it will be used explicitly. More significantly, this closeness to 'the field', where people appear as fellow-individuals (Jenkins 2004: 123), has also convinced me that identity processes in the area cannot be understood without a focus on the individual level, at which culture is experienced. I have met my informants as individuals, and they have told me stories that cannot neatly be subsumed under broad categories and ethnic labels. Obviously, people in Finnmark are drawn into processes that make roles available for them to play that are different for those available to people in Southern Norway. Therefore it is important to analyse the dominant representations of ethnicity that, in many contexts, have an impact on the way people are able to articulate their identities.

This I have done by analysing particular cases in Chapters 2 to 6. In these cases I have utilized written sources such as formal documents, local newspapers, and brochures as well as conducting interviews with the practitioners in the field. However, fieldwork is still used extensively as a method in these case studies. Not only by visiting and observing at those sites that I describe but also by living in the area, I frequently meet the practitioners as neighbours, acquaintances and in my professional work as a college teacher. Aware of the value of

scholarly research, these practitioners have always been and are still helpful in providing me with information that they think is of interest for my research, as well as answering my questions on topics that perhaps are beyond their interest.

Chapter 2

THE AUTHORITY OF THE PAST: HERITAGE PRESERVATION AND IDENTITY AS A WHOLE LIFE OF STRUGGLE

SELDOME IS THE CONFUSED, incomplete, and partly erroneous interpretation that equates categories with social groups and identifies each group with a reified culture, as profound as when an attempt is made to conserve the past and to represent it as a heritage. Heritage preservation at heart nurtures the idea that each social group has its own past, and that this past can explain the group's situation in the present and point to its future. For many ethno-political movements the grounding idea of Western-heritage preservation has been a necessary guideline. The problem with this idea is that it usually includes only certain parts of social activity in its concept of culture. The culture has to be represented according to Western predilections that seldom leave room for the individual. As Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett puts it: 'What the heritage protocols do not generally account for is a conscious, reflexive subject. [...] Performers are carriers, transmitters, and bearers of traditions, terms which connote a passive medium, conduit, or vessel, without volition, intention, or subjectivity' (2004: 2). Therefore, the practices of public institutions of heritage preservation provide an example of how

discourses at a macro and median level might diverge from how individuals situate themselves in changing contexts.

Vital contemporary economic processes are usually not included in the reified idea of culture found in these protocols. Therefore self-consciousness that relates to the present and the future in economic matters seldom finds its place here. In particular, this is the case when such self-consciousness relates to a general idea of modernity that is usually regarded as being outside the realm of the ethnic and indigenous. I will argue that the idea of heritage usually relies on ontological assumptions, institutional concerns, economic requirements, and political policies of social regulation that systematically deny access to some expressions of identity. They presuppose that identity processes shall be cast in certain distinct concepts, expressions, and use a generalized vocabulary which provide access to the dominant institutional discourses, thereby bringing about a distinct split between the dominant and the everyday discourses.

This chapter shows that the Norwegian institution of Heritage Preservation – *Riksantikvaren* – is unable to include an economically forward-looking perspective in its work, despite the possibility of its being categorised as firmly embedded in a distinct culture that emphasises economic adaptation based on a multitude of resources. This cultural adaptation and situatedness in the world can be found in individual narratives that situate the individual within moral, social and historical habitats (Cohen & Rapport 1995:7). Instead, *Riksantikvaren* counteracts such a perspective by emphasising socio-cultural processes that make the local way of life this perspective promotes increasingly more difficult to pursue in contemporary Finnmark. The result is that a reified material culture is preserved, while a way of living vanishes.

Until the last fifteen to twenty years, Norway in the post-World War Two period has been regarded as a culturally homogenous country.⁴ New migrants and the revitalization of ethnic minorities that earlier were supposed to have assimilated

into the majority population have altered the image of the population as homogeneously belonging to a Norwegian culture. Despite this so-called ‘colourful plurality’, the everyday life of the majority of the population has probably never been so homogenous as today. The overwhelming majority is integrated in the Norwegian welfare state and its socio-economic system. Despite a more visual plurality, this homogeneity is probably the case for most minorities. In most rural areas, the public sector is the largest employer, and the supermarket chains have made consumption increasingly similar throughout the country.

The simultaneous processes of global homogenization and heterogenization point to a vocabulary of ethnic revitalisation of minorities in some fields and to their ‘Norwegianisation’ in others. The ethnic revitalisation is seen partly in the fact that Norway has recognised the Saami people as the indigenous population in Northern Norway and has granted the Kvens, the Jews, the Taters, the Wood Finns and the Gypsies the status of National Norwegian minorities; Norway further aims to preserve these cultures (Kommunal- og regionaldepartementet 2000). Concurrently ethnicity and identity have been given a shape in the political discourse that demands certain roles, arguments and forms. Ethnicity has not only become a viable form of organisation but has also been given a shape that denies some expressions of identity, often because they are not cast as ethnic or do not fit into the dominant discourses. In such cases, identity is not a part of the ethnic renaissance but becomes ‘a whole life of struggle’. The idea of identity as ‘a whole life of struggle’ is given directionality by these large-scale processes in which identity and ethnicity are not supposed to matter. It is found in the relationship to market forces, which in Norway have increasingly gained the status of a natural given, in ‘purely’ administrative matters, but also in discourses of culture, where this concept has come to serve political, administrative, and scholarly ends.

This analysis of the Heritage Preservation authorities’ – *Riksantikvaren* – listing of a so-called Kven house in Vadsø, eastern-Finmark, demonstrates how the

national discourse of heritage preservation also creates distinct roles, and demands certain arguments for those who contest the decisions of *Riksantikvaren*.⁵ The national media reported one man's struggle against the listing of what he claimed to be his estate in terms of a bureaucracy that was pursuing its interests on behalf of the individual. In my opinion the struggle should be understood more as an expression of an identity that is highly distinct from an assumedly neutral institutional culture. Furthermore, this is an expression of identity that is difficult to submerge in a national discourse and in the work of cultural preservation because it is not articulated as ethnic, and, in its concern for socio-economic matters, it is directed towards the present and the future rather than the past. In my opinion these attitudes provide a foundation for identity that is found in many places in Northern Norway. Such identities are seldom embraced by the discourses that have created an ethnic revitalisation in Norway. The individual and collective struggles against centralization, the assumed necessities created by market forces, the centralization of public and private institutions, and the structural standardization of everyday life brought by national and global processes have instead made the articulation of identity into a whole life of struggle.

HERITAGE PRESERVATION IN NORWAY

The current tradition of heritage preservation in Norway dates back to the first part of the nineteenth century. In 1841, the painter I. C. Dahl was among those who undertook to found the *Foreningen til norske fortidsminnesmerkers bevaring* – the Heritage Preservation Association. Dahl had already been active in the struggle to preserve the Norwegian *stavkirker* – wooden churches dating back to the Middle Ages – which were rapidly being destroyed, in part because of the new requirements concerning the size of church buildings imposed by a new Church law.⁶ Not only Dahl's work for heritage preservation but also his paintings of Norwegian nature and peasants have made him one

of the more famous people in the Norwegian National Romantic movement. It was a romantic nationalism of a brand indebted to Johan G. Herder's writings that also characterized the work of the Heritage Preservation Association (Lidén 1991; Danbolt 1997).

Herder's idea of the *Folksgeist* – the spirit of the people – is that the enduring character of a *Folk*, its distinct culture, is engendered by its relationship to the natural environment it occupies. This grounding was a particular problem for the Norwegian Romantic Nationalists. Only from the late tenth to the early fourteenth century was Norway an independent kingdom. The last king died in 1319, and the fusion with the kingdoms of Denmark and Sweden, the decline of the aristocracy and the socio-economic catastrophe caused by the Black Death, which reduced the population by close to fifty percent, caused Norway to disappear as an independent kingdom. The Danish King's abolition of the Norwegian Council in 1537, thereby ending Norway's formal independence, was merely a confirmation of a state of affairs that had long been a reality. When Norway in 1814 acquired a Constitution and became a joint kingdom with Sweden, it lacked most of the institutions and institutional buildings that usually characterised an independent state. Civil servants, even if they were Norwegian-born, were educated in Denmark, and the written language was Danish. What was left of an aristocracy had been swallowed up by the Danish aristocracy and there was no strong class of Norwegian landed gentry left.

In their search for a Norwegian *Folksgeist*, the Norwegian romantic nationalists turned to the Viking age and the period before 1319, the great eras of Norwegian history. Furthermore, the Norwegian free peasants were assumed to be the class that had best resisted the influence of other cultures and could provide a continuity of the *Folksgeist*. The interest in rural culture, the history of a certain period, and Norwegian nature became a joint focus for Norwegian artists, scholars, and the upper classes. It was in these areas that the Norwegian culture could be found. The same interest is also found in the work of the

Heritage Preservation Association, and their interest for the peasant culture was directed towards certain geographical areas that were supposed to have had less contact with foreign cultures. According to this logic, interest was directed primarily towards a few inland areas in the southern part of Norway. Norway's long coastline and the northern areas were of less or no interest for the construction of a Norwegian national culture (Lidén 1991).

At the end of the nineteenth century, the volunteer heritage preservation movement acquired a public counterpart – *Riksantikvaren*. The establishment of a bureaucracy was followed in 1905 by national laws concerning material objects, thereby making this particular field of Norwegian cultural policy the only one to have a strong national administration and judicial framework.⁷ The ideological features outlined above also guided heritage preservation work during most of this period until the 1960s. At this time, the interest took a more environmentalist turn, and drew growing attention from other social classes. The Saami ethno-political struggle has also had an impact. In the 1992 revision of the legislation, the definition of material culture was extended to embrace non-manmade objects, thus allowing natural sites connected with beliefs and historical events to be listed by the Riksantikvar.⁸ Today the Riksantikvar is a directorate within the Ministry of Environmental Issues. At the regional and lowest levels, the office of the Fylkesantikvar has merged with the county administration.⁹

Several programs have been set up to work with minority-group cultures, and a distinct Saami heritage preservation administration has been set up. Even if the present work of the heritage authorities has attempted to include the past and ideological views of a large variety of social interests and ethnic groups, the overwhelming part is still focused on material culture of distinct groups. Cultural borderzones are a problem, and identity processes that depart from assumptions are seldom included. This is the case with some of the Riksantikvar's attempts to preserve Kven culture.

THE KVENS

Historical sources indicate that Kven is a very old name for a part of the population in Northern Scandinavia. At the end of the ninth century it was used as a name for the peasant population that lived in the upper part of the river valleys in the interior of what is today Northern Sweden and Finland. These people also traded, hunted, and taxed other peoples over an area that extended to the Barents Sea (Hansen & Olsen 2004: 162 ff.). Their settled presence inside Norway's present borders dates back at least to 1520, the date of the first tax list for Northern Norway, but the main migration probably took place in the early eighteenth century. Several places became known as Kven strongholds, but in the interior of Finnmark most of the Kvens apparently soon assimilated into the Saami population. Some Saami families still have Kven names and are remembered as such. The Kven immigration to Norway accelerated in the 1830s and, at its culmination in the 1870s, constituted at least, and probably more than, 24 percent of the population of Finnmark, approximately 5,800 people. Up until World War Two, the Kven language and culture were dominant in many communities despite the strong Norwegianisation policy begun in the middle of the nineteenth century. It has been claimed that one of the reasons for the strength and persistence of this policy in Norway was the assumed danger of a Kven population at a time of Finnish nationalism (Eriksen & Niemi 1981; Niemi 1994).¹⁰

It is estimated that between 10,000 and 15,000 people still regard themselves as Kvens (Kommunal- og regionaldepartementet 2000) and probably many more look upon a Kven past as a part of their mixed ancestry. Few people, most of whom are elderly, speak the Kven languages, but the interest for learning the language is increasing. The Norwegian Kven Association – *Norske Kveners Forbund* – was started in 1987 and took a more radical attitude, inspired by the Saami ethno-political movement, than previous organisations in their struggle for recognition. During the 1990s, there was a heated discussion about whether

or not the Kvens should claim a status as an indigenous people. This does not seem to be a realistic claim for the Kvens at present, but it can be justifiably said that the Kven movement learned many of its tactics from the Saami movement (Anttonen 2000).

ETHNIC REVITALISATION

The development of ethno-politics has created a growing interest in the realm of preservation of minority cultures. That Saami material objects need only to be more than hundred years to be automatically listed, in contrast with the Norwegian limit dating to 1537, and the extension of the law to include non-manmade objects points to the willingness to include a non-Western tradition. Concurrently, such a ruling reveals important cultural ideas. Norwegian Heritage preservation still contains crucial elements of the Herderian tradition. First of all its ideological insistence on the past as something that stretches as a continuity into the present and the future. Secondly, its focus on material culture. And last but not least, the idea of boundaries between distinct peoples.

In many ways, the field of heritage preservation can be regarded as having a low epistemological profile in the sense that its juridical grounding somewhat problematises the clear-cut categories it makes. At the same time, its practices are intertwined with 'institutions, economic requirements and political issues of social regulation' (Foucault 1980: 109). Field practices are guided by governmental policies, which practitioners are supposed to advise and implement in a scientifically satisfactory manner at the same time as they subsume under a juridical discourse. The distinction between automatically listed items dated before 1537 and younger objects in need of particular consideration, the division between immaterial and materiel culture, earth bond objects or not, and the different legislation applied to different ethnicities often appear as awkward compromises between juridical considerations, current discourses

in scholarly fields, ideology, and institutional traditions. This awkward position is an almost necessary outcome of a practice that engages in the practical task of genealogic history.

Based on Wagner's (1986: 81ff) work on the perception of time, Berkaak describes two separate ways of relating to the past: one genealogical and the other organic. According to Berkaak (1991), the genealogical sense of history is founded on general values. It is grounded in the idea of 'the nation' or 'the *folk*', and connected to the heritage and heredity of a certain group. Objects and expressions are given symbolic value in terms of history, as meant to express and contain the idea of continuity over time and an imagined community (Berkaak 1991: 14). This is a historical sense that is entangled in formal institutions such as the academic profession, heritage preservation, and museums. It receives its legitimacy from these institutions and dominates the academic literature, is embedded in laws, and has hegemony in the educational curriculum. The genealogical sense of history also provides roles for the distinct classes, regions, and ethnic minorities in its narration of the 'life of the nation'. Such provision of roles is seen in national museums, where distinct entities are situated as particular parts of the nation as a whole (Canlini 1995). The way the Saami have been situated in relation to the National Open-air Museum – Norsk Folkemuseum – in the capital provides a striking example of these processes of inclusion and exclusion (Mathisen 2004: 17-18). Until the 1960s, the Saami collection was housed in a part of the Ethnographic museum and not included in the exhibit at the Norsk Folkemuseum, which merged the different regional traditions into a single exhibition of the Norwegian *folk*. As in the work of the heritage preservation association and later on the Riksantikvar, Saami culture was not included as a part of what was supposed to make up the Norwegian genealogy. Saami artefacts belonged to the timeless present of traditional peoples (B. Olsen 2000a: 16, 20-26; Hansen & Olsen 2004: 10-13). After the collection was moved to the national open-air museum under Saami political pressure, the ideological climate changed. Many members of

the Saami ethno-political movement preferred to ascribe a role to the Saami which was distinct from that of other Norwegians, and give them a role in the global community of fourth-world peoples. In this view, the collection should be situated in Sápmi rather than in Oslo, the capital of the colonizing power.

In the field of heritage preservation, this is a discourse that ‘... equates categories with social groups under the name “community”, and it identifies each community with a reified culture’ (Baumann 1996: 10). To be included in this genealogy and as a community with a culture, one needs to be able to present the features this sense of history attributes to its entities. This reification process makes it necessary to conceptualize one’s traditions as an entity ‘... a symbolically-laden “thing” toward which one can take a stance ...’ (Keesing 1994: 15). Folk songs, dances, dishes, dress, religious expressions, buildings, and so on, all have the potential to be objects that are supposed to symbolically express the culture of a people. The difficulty this genealogical sense of history presents to its practitioners is easily seen in Finnmark. Saami and Norwegian are two distinct cultures governed by different laws. The traditional Saami turf huts, *Gamme*, have a lifespan of approximately 100 years. If they are older than this, their remains are automatically listed according to the heritage preservation law. The problem is that the *Gamme* was a type of building also made by most other people in the area and did not necessarily symbolically represent the Saami. Furthermore, the people who made the building and the family who used it could often be from different ethnic groups. The practical solution to this problem is often to describe it as being rounded. In this case it is probably Saami and at least listed, because a Norwegian *Gamme* is supposed to be squarer. This is often the practical solution to epistemological problems raised by institutional and economic requirements, and the political issues of social regulation.

The historical and some of the present-day processes of inclusion and exclusion by Norwegian heritage preservation have been thoroughly described by

others (Berkaak 1992; Danbolt 1997; Lidén 1991). To a large extent heritage preservation has included the history of more and more peoples by extending its work to ever more social groups and minorities. Combined with some of the other changes in Norway's minority-groups policy, this may substantiate the idea of an ongoing *ethnic renaissance* in Norway. The creation of a Saami administration and political organs, the formal acknowledgement of the presence of national minorities, the making of Saami into one of three national languages, the increase of the number of different languages used in schools, the inclusion of minorities in national curricula, and in the Saami case a distinct national curriculum, all point to such a renaissance. The investment in Saami and Kven museums and heritage preservation, once more a distinct Saami administration, adds to the visibility of such a renaissance. But this renaissance is taking place in certain fields, and many of these fields are unable to include the heterogeneity that is found in Northern Norway.

First of all this creates a problem when identity processes that are not cast in the distinct concepts, the expressions, and generalized vocabulary that characterize the dominant discourse. As in the case under consideration, such processes do not necessarily relate to the dominant discourse at all, do not have a role in it, and rather seem to relate to a field where ethnicity does not matter. Sometimes they become inscribed in other public narratives that alter and hide the actors' intentions to make it comprehensible for a larger audience.

One of the reasons for this is that individual identity processes relate to another sense of history than that found in the dominant discourse on heritage preservation. The *genealogical sense* of history stands in contrast to what Berkaak (1991: 14) calls an *organic sense* of history. The latter relates to individuals' sense of continuity and their experiences as shaped by time, space, and relationships in an ever-changing life-course (Cohen & Rapport 1995: 7-8). In this sense of history, objects and expressions receive their meaning as a part of individual experiences and rely less on general values. Obviously, objects and expressions

that play a part in the genealogical sense of history may also become a part of individuals' organic sense of history (Olsen 2000c). But there is a big difference in the manner of representation: whereas a genealogical representation relates to assumed general categories and is seemingly detached from what can be labelled local discourses, the organic sense of history has much more difficulty with representation outside the immediate context of expression. The organic sense of history relates to individualized experiences, reminiscences of particular artefacts and local meanings in its expression and, consequently, has difficulty reaching a general audience.

Just as important is the fact that such identity processes are often found in fields where ethnicity is not supposed to matter. These processes relate to the particular socio-economic adaptation in the area, are a defence of the local way of life, and often confront national policies that are assumed to be neutral and where the local view seldom has an illocutionary power. This means that they are seldom included in the fields where the ethnic renaissance is found, but more often are a part of general national politics, which is usually analysed as structural conflicts between the centre and periphery and the demands of market forces.

For this reason, it is appropriate not only to talk about an ethnic renaissance but also to invoke what Steven Webster (1998), speaking of Maori culture in New Zealand, calls 'the other side of the coin': identity as a whole life of struggle. Using this dichotomy, Webster attempts to point out that, despite the cultural florescence Maori culture has undergone, in particular in the last twenty years that have been called the Maori Renaissance, most social parameters have simultaneously worsened, to the Maori population's disadvantage. According to Webster, '... Maori cultural life and social reality appear to diverge as though independent of one another' (1998: 25). Webster's Marxist analysis of the Maori situation will receive more attention later, but at this stage I would simply like to highlight what I see as a great discrepancy between the heightened visibility of cultural differences in Northern Norway

and increasing socio-economic integration in matters that not are regarded as ‘cultural’. These matters are often kept out of the fields that are crucial to the renaissance, while the corresponding discourses do not provide a role from which such socio-economic arguments, which in themselves might be a striking expression of a distinct culture and identity, might be expressed. As in the case of the listing of the Kven house in Vadsø, such arguments are unable to gain access to the national dominant discourse.

THE FIRST STORY

Compared to other parts of Norway, Finnmark has few buildings listed for heritage preservation. This is because Finnmark is not only peripheral to the Norwegian centres but also to the romantic nationalists, who utilized other regions in their construction of the national culture. Few buildings are preserved because of the region’s distinct history. When the German Army withdrew in 1944 in the face of the advancing Red Army, most of the buildings in the region were burnt. In some places like Vadsø, in the eastern part of the county, a few buildings remained, but the town had already been severely damaged by Allied air attacks. As a coastal town quite close to the route followed by the ship convoys to Murmansk in the Soviet Union, Vadsø, like most coastal towns in Finnmark, had been the target for air raids during the whole of World War Two.

Vadsø has long been the administrative centre of the county. It is also known as the Kven town in Finnmark and has several buildings that attest to this heritage. What made the buildings under consideration into important objects for the Heritage Preservation authorities was the fact that they are among the few remaining constructions that show the combined farming and fishery adaptation found among the Kvens. In addition they are situated in a town, actually in the part of town known as ‘Inner Kvenby’, previously a Kven stronghold. The buildings here are well preserved compared to other buildings and

therefore document important parts of Kven and Norwegian history. The buildings on the site date back to the 1870s and many of them are built of timber from Archangels, something that was quite common before the Pomor Trade ended in the 1920s. The main house is inspired by the so-called ‘Swiss style’, which was popular at the turn of the century. Two other buildings were used as a cattle shed, a barn, and for tasks connected with fisheries. One building was used to dry the nets, and a slipway and a pier were situated in front of it. Boats were built on site, and an old fishing vessel could still be seen on the slipway in the early 1990s.

It is not my task here to discuss the juridical matters involved in the case, but it is important to point out that the Riksantikvar had fulfilled all the juridical obligations connected to listing in Norway. In spite of this, some criticism was raised by one of the owners because of the slowness of the bureaucracy – something that was obviously the case but was not extraordinary – and what he saw as a mutual understanding between persons who knew what was going to happen beforehand. That the latter was any kind of conspiracy is unlikely. Vadsø is the administrative capital of Finnmark, containing both regional and national administrations, but it is also a small town, so such a theory of conspiracy may well be imagined in retrospect even with a lack of evidence.

The chronology in the case is as follows: On an initiative from the Riksantikvar in 1976, the local cultural administration applied for money to register the buildings. The registration was carried out, and one of the owners later became very embittered because he had allowed this. The local authorities passed a plan for preservation in 1980. This plan made it possible to preserve the buildings enforced by the local authorities, but this law - Plan- og bygnings loven – is a weaker protection of building than listing them under the Heritage Preservation Law. The local authorities therefore appealed to the Riksantikvar about listing of the buildings. Nothing happened until 1988, when the Riksantikvar started preparations for the listing of the buildings. When such preparations are

started, a house is protected as though it was listed. No changes can be made without the agreement of the Riksantikvar, and the owner is under obligation to maintain the buildings in their current state at his or her own expense. In 1990, the buildings as well as the site became listed. The area where the buildings were situated was listed because it was important to protect the whole milieu; but as a consequence, plans for a new house on the estate were stopped. Several of the joint owners complained, but the decision was upheld by the Ministry of the Environment and was therefore final. The owners were seven siblings or their children if the original siblings were deceased. As far as I know, they never reached an agreement, and the case later gave rise to a fierce struggle among some of them. But the joint ownership was often forgotten in the public debate. One of the owners, Alfred Bietilæ, the oldest son of the family who also lived close to and used the buildings, was the man who struggled for his rights with the authorities.

ROLES FOR RESISTANCE

Most cases of listing do not occasion any dispute. For that reason, they are seldom interesting for local, regional, and national media. This is not true the few times the work of the Riksantikvar creates a conflict with the owners. Local and regional media often cover such cases and, as in the present one, some reach the national level. Usually journalists evoke two separate plots both of which relate to class, or rather to cultural capital, in Bourdieu's sense. The first is the struggle between entrepreneurs and real-estate companies that see their profits endangered by the Riksantikvar listing. Due to the modest fines that were previously the common reaction, most cases ended with the owner demolishing the house and paying the fine. Recently, however, the fines have been raised, and imprisonment is also a possibility, so now entrepreneurs seldom get away easily with such actions. Still, they argue the need to modernise, and that the Riksantikvar is backward and protects a past where there is no

money or employment. Implicitly this argument is often couched in terms of well-paid civil servants who want to protect old rubbish that no one else finds interesting. Sometimes, but not that often, the second plot raises the matter of private ownership.

Private ownership of land is held in high esteem in Norway. On farmland the *Odelslov* – the juridical preference for oldest child or closest relative taking over the land for a reasonable price, set by the authorities – dates back to the Middle Ages. Private house-ownership is both the general political aim and the preferred way of living, and whatever is seen as a violation of private ownership by the authorities is often met with fierce opposition. This is sometimes the case when such assumed violations are enforced by the Heritage Preservation Law. Even if the Riksantikvar claims that most buildings gain value by being listed, when a conflict arises, the owner's responsibility for maintenance and the restrictions put on the building are regarded as an infringement of individual ownership. This is obviously the case when the building listed is in such a condition that few others than experts can see any value in it. When such cases attract the interest of the media, they are usually assigned the plot of the lone individual's – often fierce but mostly unsuccessful – struggle against the public administration. In Norwegian, this is known as the struggle of *den lille mann*, probably best translated by the German equivalent *der kleine Mann*, an expression that connotes the helplessness of the individual in modernity, as described by Hans Fallada; in a Norwegian context, however, it might – in certain cases – also evoke associations with some of Ibsen's figures, like Brandt and Doctor Brockman: strong, stubborn personalities that stick to what they believe is right despite the cost.

This is the plot that the media evoked for the case in Vadsø. 'Rather in jail than listing' and 'Angry pensioner fights the Riksantikvar' were some of the headlines. A television program made by the regional branch of the national broadcasting company presented the case with more depth than the newspapers,

and it is this case that I have used for an analysis of the way a role is provided, and the limitations of this role in dominant discourse, for those who oppose the Riksantikvar.¹¹

The program starts with an old man, dressed in a leather jacket and wearing a hat, who walks among some old shabby buildings. His face is weather-beaten and in his mouth he has a homemade cigarette. The scene is accompanied by Finnish accordion music, and the camera zooms in of the battered face of the man who says: ‘This is crazy. It’s more than crazy. They have to be God-damn crazy if they want to repair something like this!’¹² The next picture shows the *Fylkeskonservator* – the senior administrative officer for Heritage Preservation in the region. She is dressed in a nice coat, scarf, and a beret, and she says: ‘In this case it is important to stress that it is the buildings – the whole site that we list. We do not list the owner.’ After this, she talks about our common heritage and the national responsibility to preserve it for future generations.

These two scenes make a contrast that gives direction to the other events in the program. The genealogical sense of history promoted by the *Fylkeskonservator* is compared to the individual story or organic sense of history, which is endorsed by her opponent. To tell this story, the program-makers rely on several features: the struggle between the individual and the bureaucracy, the distinction between classes found in taste and bodily habitus, and a notion of authenticity with regard to individual appearance.

The program continues with some old photos of the owner’s descendants and makes a contrast between the different calculations for the restoration of the houses. The *Fylkeskonservator* claims that approximately NOK 1,825,500– is needed to restore the exterior of the buildings, and it is the latter that are listed; but she admits that, due to the conflict, they have not been able to do a thorough inspection of the houses. The interior may be altered after approval of the Riksantikvar. For the Heritage Preservation authority, cost is of less

importance. They have an obligation to preserve the site for the present and the future. The assumed owner says that at least NOK 3,500,000 – is needed and that he will not take on such a debt, which would be a burden to his family after his death.

The next scene shows the owner with his hat, fisherman's gear, and the home-made cigarette that accompanies him throughout the program. He is dragging his boat onto shore and he says that he has been fishing since he was thirteen years old. Even though he will soon be seventy-three and is retired, he still goes out to sea each day. A new cut, and the owner walks through the main house while he tells about its different rooms. Rooms and extensions are explained with reference to the history of the family. Births, childhood, and occupation are told and explain why the house is made the way it is. That it is not only the buildings but also the whole estate that is listed becomes a topic. This is a hindrance for his children who are now not allowed to build on a piece of the land. His idea was that, if one of his sons should set up as a fisherman, he would have the necessary buildings and access to the sea close to his house.

In the continuity, he explains why he started to demolish the floor of the barn. The police stopped this, and he was told to come for questioning on his seventy-second birthday, but he told them that this did not suit him, and they agreed upon a day that he suggested. In one of the last scenes, he says that time is running out for him. He aims to develop the estate for the next generation, but this struggle against the authorities takes too much time.

I argue that the program-makers have a preference for the organic sense of history instead of the genealogic sense represented by the authorities. To express this view they utilize the familiar role of the 'little man' found in Norwegian public discourse about cultural preservation. They do not question the juridical aspect but emphasise the individual narrative as more 'sincere' than the perspective from above. Utilizing the authentic appearance of the main figure

and the cultural distinction to the Fylkeskonservator makes it easy to communicate such sincerity to a general audience.

The program emphasises the close and intimate relationship between the buildings, the owner and his relatives. Pictures of his parents, who migrated at the end of the nineteenth century, are the starting point for the story. It was they who made the journey to Archangels for the timber used in the main building. It is also told that the owner and all his siblings were born in the house, and the owner shows the bed where his mother gave birth. He also points out the damage to the roof. He recalls his childhood when, as soon he was able, he had to go to the attic to place bowls under the leaks. As he says, they had little money and used the cheapest materials. The house was built in their spare time, and what they did in their leisure time was 'work and work'. Every change to the building, maintenance and new investments can be related to changes in the family, its income, and requirements: 'When Mum and Dad got old, the children built a new bathroom.' He can also recall the smell of the barrels used to hold bait for the fishing lines, which had their place in the kitchen.

In this way, television manages to give preference to the organic sense of history. By emphasising individual experiences, it attempts to create recognition of the individual's life-course. Such an immediate recognition is set up as a contrast to the scholarly approach provided by the Fylkesantikvar. Her role in this narrative is to represent the genealogical sense of history, which, in this plot, is the public institutions with their agenda that ignore the individual. The individual is instead overruled by institutional bureaucracy and jurisdiction. In the narrative provided by the program-makers, the individual's reminiscence appears as the true story. The closeness of the individual's experiences of the building and his 'authenticity' is something TV manages to communicate. His language, easily recognised as the Finnmark dialect, and his vocabulary do not situate him among the educated classes. His outfit is 'typical' of an old fisherman and very different from the good taste expressed in the Fylkeskonservator's dress.¹³

His weather-beaten face, his movements, the way his strong, scoured hands protect the flame to light his homemade cigarette, the way he handles the fishing gear, his gaze at the sea, in sum his whole appearance builds on the notion of a fisherman's life. This is a man who, in his sunset years, will see the results of his work expropriated by the authorities. The program leaves little hope of success in his struggle against the authorities, even if the program ends with a close-up of the owner, who says: 'I continue to demolish. I do it my way and as I have planned for my descendants. I don't give a damn about what they do to me. They can lock me up in the borough of Akershus, and put me there for the rest of my life. But I will not give in.'¹⁴

The program-makers quite effectively utilize the role provided in the dominant discourse on heritage preservation in Norway. I have used this program in my teaching for several years, and a majority of the students, even if one could expect support for the Riksantikvar from students doing a course in Heritage Preservation, feel that this is a case of the little man's struggle. But students from the area, and in particular those who have some knowledge of the man, are more reluctant to accept this plot as the only one present. Some from the area close to Vadsø have even pointed out that he is a typical Kven.

A DIFFERENT STORY

A former student, who at that time worked in the local cultural administration, introduced me to this conflict. After a conference, arranged by the regional cultural administration that was at the time seen as the opponent in the conflict and where I had been among the speakers, she told me that this case probably was a question of interest. I was brought to the estate and was shown a hand-made poster that, as I recall, read: 'if anyone who belongs to the staff of the Riksantikvar or anyone else who wants to steal the property enters, they will be shot.' As I had just started to teach a course in Heritage Preservation,

a topic about which I had only a certain amount of theoretical knowledge, I got the idea to use this case to gain some practical knowledge. My guide told me that she was acquainted with the man I then believed was the sole owner, Alfred Bietilæ, and that he held the opinion that they were in some way or other related to each other. She doubted it was true but, because that she lacked the knowledge of kinship ties that many older people in Finnmark have, she was not sure if he was wrong. At any rate, she wanted to introduce me and arranged a meeting some time later that year.

She accompanied me on my first visit and we were shown the buildings. Alfred Bietilæ told us about the different buildings and rooms in a way quite similar to that described earlier concerning the TV program. Afterwards we were invited in to his home, situated close to the listed buildings. Here my companion disappeared with Bietilæ's wife into the kitchen. She was served the local delicacy of Pollack boiled together with liver and spawn – *seimølje* – which I have the drawback, as an anthropologist in Northern Norway, of not being able to eat.

In the lounge Bietilæ and I smoked, drank coffee and talked about 'the case'. I was eager to convince him that he could expect little help from me, based on my lack of financial founding and my position as an anthropologist. Nevertheless he seemed keen on giving me the right impression of the case. Therefore, in both this conversation and at a later meeting, he quite soon started telling me some stories that, at first appearance were out of context.

Story-telling is a more important and widespread skill in Northern Norway than in the urban parts of the South. Many people are highly skilled narrators, and it has also been shown that narratives may play an important part in identity processes. In his analysis of Minke whaling in Lofoten, Mathisen (1996) has shown how narrative is still important to local identity in Northern Norway. During the struggle in the 1980s, when whaling was heavily criticized

by other nations and environmentalists, stories about the pioneer in this trade, Rangvald Dahl, or Dahl the Pirate, were used as expressions of a local view. In this particular type of whaling, which started in the 1930s, Dahl managed to utilize old knowledge and new technology to establish the trade as an additional income in an area that suffered under the general depression. He not only bridged the gap between tradition and modernity, he was also a ‘trickster’, who often operated outside and on the fringes of the law. At the time of the prohibition, because of his cleverness, he managed to overcome the obstacles put in his path by the authorities and took great pleasure in this game. In the 1980s, these stories received new actuality because of the struggle with international NGOs. In Mathisen’s (1996) view, these narratives can be analysed as a communication of skills, abilities, actions, and a defence of the local community held in high esteem as an ethos in the area.

Bjerkli (2000) provides a similar perspective in his work in Manndalen. When he started his fieldwork, people jokingly asked him if he dared to talk with the locals because sometimes they were, as they said, difficult. It was never said what he should be afraid of, and after his first period in the field, such questions became less frequent (Bjerkli 2000: 161). Later on he noticed frequent references to old times, when the local people had driven the authorities out of the community. Such expressions referred to cases where the authorities had tried to impose changes that were regarded as not for the good of the local centre. The actual events were seldom explained, and Bjerkli analyses the statements as symbolic expressions of a local ethos – how the locals regard themselves. It is an expression of the fact that the locals are not afraid of conflict with the authorities, and put action behind their words when they feel that local values are threatened. This self-ascribed local ethos, or identity, is matched by the view found in the neighbouring communities. Here people from Manndalen are regarded as ‘special’ and a ‘wild bunch’ (Bjerkli 2000: 162).

It is reasonable to regard the stories I was told in a similar perspective. As an academic born in the South, I probably did not have the right background to understand what the conflict really was about and then should be guided into the, for Bietilæ, right perspective by stories that first occurred to me as off the subject. Furthermore, these stories cannot be analysed only as what the teller regards as the proper local ethos but also as an access to individual consciousness and as the individual situating itself in the world (Cohen & Rapport 1995: 8). I argue that this self-situating which the following stories point out is not matched by any roles or categories provided in dominant discourses about ethnicity in Northern Norway, or by the common roles provided in conflicts concerning heritage preservation.

At our first meeting, the discussion of the case was, in my opinion, interrupted by a story from Bietilæ's experiences during the war. As I retell it now, I have to omit the frequent references to relatives and acquaintances, and also the different side paths of the story they evoke because, at the time of telling, they seemed to me to apply to most people living in eastern Finnmark during the war. In short the story was:

One day during the war a ship came from Tromsø to Vadsø. It was fully loaded with ammunition, and the captain, a very able man who had previously plied his trade in the Arctic, refused to go any further. The Germans threatened to jail him but the captain still refused because he had a large family. In his opinion, it was too dangerous to go any further because they would then be in the range of Russian planes. Bietilæ was at the time a young man and a bachelor, and he also had a suitable boat; so he offered himself and his boat on the condition that no action should be taken against the captain from Tromsø. He thought that his thorough local knowledge of the area, which the other captain lacked, would make it easier for him to hide from the airplanes. The Germans agreed, and ammunition and petrol were taken onto his boat as cargo.

When they neared their destination, they were spotted by two Russian airplanes. Throughout the journey, they had been hiding close to the shore, but at this particular point they had to cross a fjord and did not have time to reach shelter in an inlet. The airplanes started the attack right in front of the boat and fired their machineguns. The planes were flying low, and they could see the bullets drop into the water in a straight line directly towards the boat. Bietilæ reasoned that he had two alternatives. Because the planes were so low they had either to go straight up or they would have to turn to one side or the other. He had to do the opposite. He went straight ahead and the planes turned to one or the other side and did not hit the boat. Before the planes could attack again, the boat found shelter in the fjord.

After the story we continued to discuss other things more related to the case. At first, the story seemed to be mal-apropos of what we were talking about. It had no obvious connection to what we had previously talked about or what we talked about afterwards, and I wrote it off as an expression of a particular generation's fondness for, and often exaggerations of, their wartime experiences, which are of less interest for my generation. My opinion changed when I met Bietilæ the second time, about half a year later. In the same abrupt manner, he told me this old story about a local fisherman:

A man, Wilsgaard, invested all his savings in fishing gear. The fishing went well, and in the autumn he had a lot of first-class stockfish. But his money had run out, and he could not afford to buy thread to tie up the bundles of stockfish. Instead he tied them with twine – *spergarnstraad* – which was normally used for the repair of nets. The people from Bergen, the brokers in this trade, took all his fish and sent it to Italy. Later on the Bergensers' told him that the fish was of low quality and would not pay him the money they had agreed upon. But Wilsgaard knew his fish was first class. He managed to raise money

and travelled to Italy. There the buyers showed him the bundles of fish that were supposed to be his. The fish was of low quality, but the bundles were tied up with the thread commonly used. Looking around the storehouse he recognised his bundles tied with *sperrgarnstraad*, and the quality of this fish was prima. The Bergensers' attempt to cheat him was exposed, and he received the money first agreed upon.

In my opinion these two stories can be a starting point for the way an individual situates himself in the world in changing contexts. In this conscious attempt at self-contextualization, the struggle against the Riksantikvar, it is obviously necessary to convince the listener that this is not the little man who is struggling. In his own opinion he does not fit into this role provided by the dominant discourse and that is ascribed to him by most Southerners like the researcher. The telling of narratives can be understood as an attempt to explain this. His actions during the war and the implicit comparison with Wilsgaard can be understood as an attempt to situate himself in a different role. Here is a strong, action-orientated individual who is claiming his rights, is willing to take a risk in both economic matters and in war, and who, by his abilities, cleverness and inventiveness, is able to overcome difficulties and obstacles put in his path by the authorities. In the first case the German occupants, in the second the merchants from Bergen, and in the latter the Heritage Preservation authorities, with their base in the Norwegian capital. This is a figure that has more in common with Ibsen's Brochmann than with Fallada's Pinneberg but, in contrast to both, he – in the narratives – ends up the winner. It is a self-identity in which the man as an individual has to take responsibility and do things his own way. In this perception of self, one cannot rely on the welfare-state authorities. Quite contrary to the ideal of the Norwegian social democracy, where the state is regarded as a provider for the individual, the national authorities are here regarded as an unwanted interference in individual obligations. Alfred Bietilæ was not comfortable with the role imposed on him by the media, and this was probably what he was trying to make me understand by telling stories. He claimed

to have told the same stories to a local politician who had once talked to him and to the papers about how horrible it was that the authorities did not protect the private property of the little man. He had replied, he told me, that he knew three generations of the politician's relatives, and it was the politician and his family who were the little men. They had never managed to build up something and provide for the future of their kin. Although he had entered his seventy-second year, he claimed he was still able to beat up the politician and would do it if he ever dared to call him a little man again.

Bietilæ's self-consciousness and his abilities, cleverness and inventiveness were also fully used in his dealing with the officials from *Riksantikvaren* and the media. When the officials from the capital arrived in Vadsø, and visited the site to which he denied them access, the media were always present. The following transcript from the news on the regional radio shows his deliberate dealings in the case:

‘Seventy-two year-old Alfred Bietilæ has stated that today he will demolish parts of his listed buildings. The Riksantikvar and the Fylkeskonservator in Finnmark listed the main building, sheds, and pier. As our reporter NN, you are now at the Bietilæ estate where Alfred Bietilæ was supposed to start demolition of the pier and the seine walk at twelve o'clock. Has he started?’ (NRK-Finnmark 09.01.1992).¹⁵

In advance, the radio station had planned that the reporter should broadcast live at 12.10 AM in their main news.

Local and regional politicians were also contacted during the struggle. In the end, the county's political Committee for Education and Culture, which at the regional level is in charge of Heritage Preservation, formally asked the Riksantikvar to lift the listing, a request that was refused.

In his self-conscious telling of his struggle against the listing, Alfred Bietilæ does not fit into the discursive roles provided in the dominant discourse. He regards himself as being in a tradition where a man has to fight for his rights and have trust in himself, his abilities, and his cleverness. As during the war and in the case of Willsgaard, one cannot rely on other people and those who are close, one has to struggle to get one's own way against the authorities, who have power but can still be defeated. But to do this one has to be clever and not give in. Rather than the little man, this is the strong man, a common figure in the narratives found in the genre called Kven heroism. This is a figure who had to build his future with his own hands, often with the authorities working against him, and who left his home for a better future for his family. Such a man does not give in to the system but fights it in a just struggle. This genre shows that a man can be stubborn when his rights are threatened but also generous to others. In this perspective, one has to utilize one's strengths, and in the media Bietilæ's person becomes one of his assets. As an old *notbase* – the person who, before sonar became common on fishing vessels in Northern Norway, using just a string and a sinker knotted to his thumb, decided when the nets should be cast – he is fairly aware of his charismatic personality (Barth 1966).

Alfred Bietilæ never told me that he regarded himself as a Kven. His parents were Kvens but his struggle against the Heritage Preservation authorities was never cast in the vocabulary of ethnicity and ethno-politics. His arguments represented different elements found among people in Northern Norway. One of these elements is appearance because in many coastal societies it is important to show oratorical skills, cleverness, and to be action oriented in the public sphere (Bjerkli 2000; Mathisen 1996). Another of these elements is the individual's role in society. It is the individual's task to make a living for his family and himself, and in this it is not possible to rely on the official authorities, who are instead often seen as an obstacle to making a living in these areas. This view is found in the distinction between the North and the South, where national policy has always been imposed from the South on a Northern population that often has

had a different socio-economic adaptation than that found in the Southern area where the policies are formed. Usually these policies have been promoted by officials from the South, who have often filled up the positions in the regional and the national administration situated in the area. Therefore Bietilæ's struggle can be set in a long tradition where Southern national policies have been forced on the local population. In the same way, his struggle can be analysed as part of a tradition of resistance, where the population in this area have cast their arguments from a position and in roles outside the dominant discourses, and then have seldom been heard (Bjerkli 2000; F. Eidheim 1993; Eyþórsson 1996). In this perspective, local control of resources has been a crucial element, something that is also found in Bietilæ's argumentation. As listed buildings, they are 'dead capital'. They cannot be handed over to his children as security so they can always turn to fishing for a livelihood. In our conversations he pointed out that he had offered the buildings for educational purposes. Youngsters could learn about the maritime culture and gain the skills needed for fishing in a real milieu and thus acquire abilities they could never learn at school. They would have access to everything they needed, even a boat; and they could also restore the buildings. But to simply list these old buildings seemed to him ridiculous. Because, as he pointed out several times, the past is something you talk about. In the present you act and the future you plan.

In this way the struggle can be understood as a difference in culture that can be articulated both as a difference in class – or rather cultural capital – and a difference in sense of history. The difference in cultural capital is found in the answer of how people can be so 'God-damn crazy' that they will start to repair old shabby buildings. A part of our conversation illuminates this.

Bietilæ told me how he had mobilized the media when they had been told that some officials from the Riksantikvar were supposed to visit the site. As he said, they did not dare to turn up and confront his brother and him, who were ready to throw them off their estate if they showed up. But later in the afternoon, he

was visited by one of the officials. Bietilæ's wife told me that they had heard earlier that one of the officials was used as a 'trouble shooter' because he was such a reasonable man that usually got along with most people. This was the official who visited them, and he showed up as a kind man with whom it was easy to get along. He was invited into their house and, as customary along the coastline, served coffee. They had been talking for a long time and Bietilæ's wife had observed the man for some while. Even though he was a kind and likeable man, he was not like them, there was something unfamiliar about him. She was wondering about this feeling of strangeness and suddenly realized the reason. It had to be his education. Education did something to people that made them different from them and most other people. This is a difference that is often assumed to be noticeable in accent, dress, and so on in the North (F. Eidheim 1993: 119ff.). But the difference in this particular case is also found in a different sense of history.

Alfred Bietilæ's was himself very interested in the history of his kin and the region. His knowledge of events in the past, his vast knowledge about kinship relations in the area, and the historical material he had collected about his family had the potential to be of great use for the historical understanding of the region. But this knowledge of history was primarily organic, related to the individual's sense of continuity and to experiences shaped by time, space and changing relationships. Furthermore, it was narrated in a tradition that can be embraced by the label 'Kven heroism' and thus connected to a cultural identity that extends beyond the individual (Klepp 1974: 8-9). Consequently Bietilæ could be easily recognised by many of my students from that part of Finnmark as a 'stubborn Kven'.

This is not an identity that is articulated in ethnic terms and given a material expression that would permit the Heritage Preservation authorities to include it in its work. Bietilæ's arguments applied to the present and the future. They were socio-economic in the present; and for the future, about how to be a man,

and about ownership. They were grounded in a distinct tradition, and a particular relationship to national authorities that cannot easily be included in an exhibit or in the preservation of culture.

The Tuomainen estate is situated some hundred meters from where Bietilæ was living. It has long been listed and represents the Kven culture by objects dating mainly back to the late nineteenth century. Alfred Bietilæ died some years ago. The Bietilæ estate was bought by the Riksantikvar, and the restoration has lasted for some years. The struggle ended in a juridical dispute between the seven joint owners. The Fylkeskonservator's remark at the start of the TV program, 'We do not list the owner', may be an expression of the limits of the dominant discourse on heritage preservation. *Riksantikvaren* has its institutional and economic requirements, its epistemological limitations and its political issues of social regulation. It provides certain roles, includes certain elements and denies access to other expressions from other contexts. I argue that this is not the case only for the field of heritage preservation but is a feature found in much of the Norwegian cultural and minority policy. These processes, in which certain zones are reserved for ethnic differences while others deny them, may explain why one can observe an ethnic renaissance, on the one hand, and why identity has become a whole life of struggle, on the other.

RENAISSANCE OR STRUGGLE?

In his work on Maori identity in New Zealand, Webster points out a problem of description concerning what is assumed to be contemporary Maori society. Maori culture has been enjoying a cultural florescence since the 1950s–60s. The last thirty years in particular, not unlike the situation for Norwegian minorities, have seen a cultural revival that has been called 'the Maori renaissance'. On the other hand, many socio-economic parameters have worsened during this time, when the Maori population has been likened to 'white' Pakheia. Webster

claims that ‘... Maori cultural life and social reality appear to diverge though independent of one another’ (1998: 25).

The renaissance, which is predominantly a cultural matter, is connected to a general conception of essential or traditional Maori culture that has ‘... deep roots in European Romanticism and images of primitivism, the “noble savage”, and folk society as well as in the records of Maori traditional culture’ (1998: 28). An assumed ‘core’ of cultural features, which are obviously found on occasion, has become more dominant during the renaissance than ever before. Even if central features of Maori renaissance are cultural, they have also had political and economical results for the creation of jobs and for individual carriers of this assumed core of Maori culture. According to Webster, this impact is not purely superficial, but neither has it caused any deep changes in New Zealand’s political economy, in which the Maori population is fully integrated. Furthermore, the renaissance has also created new differences in the Maori society between those who have the cultural capital that the renaissance promotes and thereby gain access to its socio-economic results, and those who have lost or never gained access to this part of Maori culture (Webster 1998: 32-33, 44-45).

In Webster’s opinion, ‘It appears that the Renaissance, good will, optimistic initiatives, and momentarily favourable legislation and policies, even altogether, cannot easily reverse the entrenched economic results of a history of exploitation and resource loss’ (1998: 37). Despite the substantial cultural, educational and political gains the Maori movements have achieved, the majority of the Maori population have remained outside the renaissance. In the renaissance cultural and spiritual values seems to have become independent of the social realities in which most Maori live, social realities that point to a decline in most social parameters for a majority of Maori.

Obviously there are some differences between the context of the Maori renaissance and the situation in Northern Norway. Even if many parameters set

Finnmark apart as the socio-economic loser among Norway's regions, the Norwegian welfare state is quite different from New Zealand, where approximately 20 percent of the population are below the poverty line. What may be illuminating in Webster's analysis is the discrepancy he finds between social realities and culture. In the contexts of Finnmark, this can be seen as a discrepancy between dominant socio-economic discourses and those discourses that relate to what is perceived as culture.

As with the Maori, the history of Finnmark and Northern Norway, too, can be understood as a colonial history of exploitation and resource loss. This is the case both for the juridical ownership of land and resources, and for control of the management of local resources (Bjerkli 2000; Eyþórsson 1996, 2003); and this is true not only of the ethnic minorities in the area but also for the population at large, irrespective of ethnic boundaries. In many ways local management of resources, local knowledge, and economic adaptations that did not fit in with a national policy have been made impossible or marginalized. Eyþórsson (1996) describes the case of local fishermen who, on the basis of their local experiences and values, argued against the national policy of whaling and the new technology used in the fjords, as a running conflict between two systems of knowledge. There has been a local knowledge based on everyday experiences and local values that, since the end of the nineteenth century, has opposed the professional knowledge of the scientists, who have regarded their task as a national matter. Eyþórsson (1996: 298) maintains that the scientists see their mission as not only providers of scientific knowledge but also as servants of the young Norwegian nation-state. The fjord fishermen in Northern Norway had no access to this national discourse, and their petitions and descriptions of the damages inflicted by the new technology were regarded as irrelevant. Bjerkli (2000) describes a similar struggle over the right to control local common resources. This struggle, too, dates back to the nineteenth century, and Bjerkli sees it as an important feature for the maintenance of a local coastal Saami ethos in Manndalen. He also points to the paradox in the

national policy, which aims to revitalize and support Saami culture in the area at the same time as the government refuses, and for more than hundred years has been refusing, to acknowledge the local institutions and values that have maintained a Saami identity which runs deeper in Manndalen than in similar communities (Bjerkli 2000: 175). Hence, these identity processes are not cast within the frame of an ethno-political vocabulary.

One reason for the paradox Bjerkli observes is that the Norwegian minority cultural renaissance has also occurred in other areas such as education, language and cultural policy. Even if this renaissance, as in the case of the Maori culture, has had a significant impact in some fields, other, and often more dominant, fields have opposed such a general development. As Webster (1998: 37) maintains for the Maori, good will, optimistic initiatives, and momentarily favourable legislation and policies cannot easily reverse the well-established economic results of a history of exploitation and resource loss. I argue that one of the reasons for this is that the cultural revitalization has largely been connected to a general conception of culture as traditional and essential, and having deep roots in European and Norwegian Romanticism. As Baumann argues: ‘There is a discourse that has come to dominate the representation, descriptive as well as political, of people singled out as ethnic minorities. This dominant discourse equates categories with social groups under the name “community” and it identifies each community with a reified culture’ (1996: 188). In Norway, this discourse has been turned predominantly towards the past, the traditional and the essence of the culture of the people singled out as ethnic minorities, thereby excluding many of the arguments set in the present that relate to socio-economic adaptations which have often differed quite dramatically from what is common at a national level. Frøydis Eidheim (1993: 104ff.) describes when the coastal women’s movements met with the Prime Minister during the fisheries crisis in the early 1990s. She writes that the women felt that the Prime Minister and her staff did not understand what they were talking about. Their arguments were not seen as a part of the case. And I will add that they probably

did not understand because the arguments were cast from a social position and based on values that did not have access in the dominant discourse.

That such processes of exclusion are found is easily seen in the case of heritage preservation. Culture has been defined by scholarly devices, institutional matters and juridical needs, which enables and forces the Riksantikvar to concentrate on the material remains of the past. Socio-economic arguments from the present that reject the past as something that should be preserved in its own right do not gain access. In this particular organic sense of history, the value of the past is judged in relation to context and purpose. In such a judgment, the socio-economic context of access to resources and the possibility of the continuation of an adaptation grounded in utilizing different resources from different fields based on a wide range of skills, and the individual's need to do things his own way, gain hegemony. In Bietilæ's narrations it is possible to see glimpses of a particular view of the past, the way the individual situates himself in relation to authorities and kin, and the way maleness is supposed to be expressed in this cultural context. This is an expression of an identity that differs from the dominant discourses, which often links identity to the past, to material objects and symbols that create clear-cut boundaries. Furthermore, the dominant discourses normally link the expression of a minority identity to the language and symbols of ethno-politics that dominate distinct spheres in national policy.

Unwillingness to cast the argument in the vocabulary of ethnicity and inside the frames of the different cultural discourses often ends in accusations of working against the revival of one's own culture. This has been a common accusation against the *Samenes Landsforbund* (SLF), the Saami National Association, an opponent of the more ethno-politically conscious NSR – *Norske Samers Riksforbund*. Recruiting their members mainly on the coast, the SLF have regarded supporting the local fishing industry and building roads as more important than language, rights to the area, and educational matters, which were

important for the NSR. As Bjørklund (2000: 27) writes, many of the SLF's political arguments were based on rejection of goals that were important for the NSR. In the 1980s, these goals included a Saami parliament and administration, and a White Paper on the Saami's legal rights. The goals of the NSR have been attained, but the need for road-building and the problems in the locally-based fishing industry are still matters that impoverish many small coastal communities. These questions have been mostly kept outside the ethno-political debate and relate to other discourses, which attempt to impose a national policy in which there is seldom room for the local way of living, values, economic adaptation, and social relationships. The increasing national standardization created by these large-scale processes may explain why an ethnic renaissance occurs simultaneously with processes that make a local identity into a whole life of struggle.

Alfred Bietilæ's struggle was not restricted to the Riksantikvar. When the national broadcasting company covered the events that followed the new law prohibiting smoking in many public areas, one of the cases cited was that of the pensioners in Vadsø, who were no longer allowed to smoke in their usual meeting place at the local café. Once more Bietilæ was the one who spoke out against the ridiculousness of national bureaucrats and defended the local way of life against laws made 2,000 kilometres away.

Chapter 3

ETHNICITY AND REPRESENTATION IN A 'LOCAL' MUSEUM

CHAPTER 3 ANALYSES THE WAY ETHNIC BOUNDARIES are represented at the Alta Museum, the most visited museum in Finnmark. The analysis reveals that the ordering of the permanent main exhibit is based upon two grounding discursive principles: a temporal and a spatial dimension in line with Fabian's (1991: 198) analysis of ethnographic writing in general. I will argue that the permanent exhibit at the museum is structured by a scholarly tradition that perpetuates the dominant idea of three distinct separable groups in the area and reinforces the division between the traditional and the modern. This way of structuring does not obstruct heteroglot competing and contesting readings by museum visitors. Nevertheless, such understandings seldom find their way into the dominant discourse as represented in museums. They seemingly exist as separate discourses that relate to different social fields.

Museums are probably those public institutions that best demonstrate the ontological ordering of the world into separate categories equated with social groups. From being what today seem unsystematic exotic collections labelled Wunderkammers, Studiolos, World theatres and Memory theatres, which in

the eighteenth century exhibited the then-known world for the elite, they became in the nineteenth century representations of entities such as the *Folk*, the nation and different scientific disciplines. Places that, from a contemporary perspective, seem to display unsystematic and messy compilations of objects have been turned into institutions that represent artefacts symbolising familiar ‘imagined communities’ like the nation (Anderson 1991). During the twentieth century, museums represented increasingly smaller but now well-known entities like local, regional and ethnic groups as well as progressively more finely graded social groups. Moreover, Norwegian museums are organised in a way that presupposes such anticipated communities as well as associations according to the ethnic group they are supposed to represent.

The museum praxis can be understood as a way of turning objects into ethnographic artefacts for classification. As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett put it: ‘[Objects] are ethnographic [...] by virtue of the manner in which they have been detached, for disciplines make their objects and in the process make themselves’ (1998: 18). Not only the selection of objects but also their ordering in the exhibit are a statement of how the world should be apprehended: ‘Just as the ethnographic object is the creation of the ethnographer, so too are the putative cultural wholes of which they are a part’ (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 20). Increasingly museums have parted with the scholarly disciplines and are ‘... treating their collections as the heritage – someone’s heritage of the communities [from] which the objects come or of the visitors to the museum’ (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004: 7-8). Even if they have long been recognised, both by scholars and by practitioners, as firmly embedded in Western thought, museums had and still have a prominent position in indigenous peoples’ and minorities’ struggle for recognition. In the endeavour of indigenous groups’ to win the right to self-determination, ‘a history on their own’ has been regarded as important not only by ethno-politicians. A museum of their own is usually considered to be the proper place to represent such a past. The past is in these struggles an important argument for the understanding of the present and the future. In this

way museums are significant actors in ethno-political struggles where minorities lay claim to political and territorial rights. On the other hand, the museum through the exhibit delimits when and where such claims should not be made.

The importance of the past in ethno-political processes is noticeable in a multicultural area like Finnmark. Kvens and different Saami groups all have had ‘their own’ museum as an important goal in their struggle to rescue, continue, and revitalise their culture. In Finnmark, with its slightly more than 75,000 inhabitants, it is possible to visit at least five publicly funded institutions that explicitly claim to be Saami museums: Guovdageainnu Gilisillju /Kautokeino Bygdetun, Kokelv Sjøsamiske Museum, Sámiid Vuorká-Dávvirat/De Samiske Samlinger, Tana Museum/Deanu Musea, and Várjjat Sámi Musea/Varanger Samiske Museum; at least one Kven museum: the Vadsø museum – Ruija kven-museum including Tuomainengården; and two museums that claim to be multiethnic: Porsanger Museum and Sør-Varanger Museum/Grenslandmuseet (<http://www.kulturnett.no>). In addition, a Skolt Saami museum is planned and several other collections with a local and ethnic focus can be found.

The present chapter investigates the exhibitions at the Alta Museum, the local museum in the municipality of Alta. The museum is local in the sense that it is a foundation owned primarily by the municipal authorities and has an obligation to focus on history in Alta. Simultaneously the museum has other obligations because of the field of rock carvings, registered on Unesco’s World Heritage List, situated just outside the museum building. As a consequence, a large number of tourists visit the museum during the summer season (Johanson & Olsen 2010). These facts imply that the Alta Museum by no means represents the average local museum in Norway.

The Alta Museum is a Norwegian museum in the sense that the municipality is not declared as a Saami area and therefore does not fall under the jurisdiction encompassing such a status. Nevertheless, having a long Saami as well as

Kven history and a comparatively large population that regard themselves as Saami, the museum joined the Saami Museum Association and now has dual membership.

The rock carvings located outside the museum building, and their listing as a World Heritage Site, is the main attraction for the tourists that make up more than two thirds of the annual visitors. The outdoor exhibit mostly relates to what can be labelled a pre-ethnic period. This chapter therefore focuses on the main exhibition. At least three kinds of narratives may be analytically separated even if all can exist in the same person's reading of the exhibition. The way the Alta Museum deals with the three ethnic groups officially recognised in the county can be understood as a traditional Western temporal division between traditional and modern people, a spatial division between Saami in the inland and Norwegians at the coast, and as narratives – projected from local knowledge – about ethnic boundaries, which in many contexts are blurred or of no significance. New narratives concerning the ethnic situation may always be maintained because museum contexts '... serve to open a meaningful space between the object's maker, its exhibitor, and its viewer, with the latter given the task of intentionally, actively, building cultural translations and critical meaning' (Clifford 1991: 239). This perspective requires an analysis that situates the museum in a political context but also demands attention to the intersection between the museum, its exhibition and the audience, partly '... because disembodied decontextualized narratives have no politics, as there are no persons or interests involved. Without a specified audience narratives have no meaning, because the meaning is only in the audience's reading of the text' (Bruner 1993: 14).

A CULTURAL BORDERLAND OR A CONTACT ZONE AT THE MUSEUM?

The heterogeneity of the ethnic situation in Finnmark creates several difficulties for a museum. A term that perhaps covers the empirical ethnic situation in Finnmark is what Renato Rosaldo (1989) has called a *cultural borderland*. This notion refers to ethnic contexts that are characterised by border zones being ‘... always in motion, not frozen for inspection’ (1989: 217). The contexts are ‘... sites of creative cultural production that require investigation’ (1989: 208). In such an ethnic context, it seems clear that most strategies for an exhibition – or other scholarly representations – of ethnicity may be contested, and that the museum for that reason always may be looked upon as a contested site (Bruner 1993: 14). Mary Luise Pratt’s (1992) concept of *contact zone* puts more stress on power relations. A contact zone, Pratt explains, is

‘... an attempt to invoke the spatial and temporal copresence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect. By using the term “contact” I aim to foreground the interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by diffusionist accounts of conquest and domination. A “contact” perspective emphasises how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other. It treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travellers and “travelees”, not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power’ (1992: 7).

A contact perspective ‘... complicates diffusionist models, whether they be celebratory (the march of civilization and Western exploration) or critical (the relentless spread of capitalist commodity systems)’ (Clifford 1997: 216). At the same time

such a concept, by emphasising subjects' relation to each other in a certain context, obliterates the idea of a single all-embracing history of encounter. Therefore it can be useful to contest narratives of revitalisation made in contrast and complementary to dominant discourses in asymmetrical power relations. The concept of contact zone opens the way for the analysis of real encounters framed by asymmetrical relations of power that might change from context to context, yet still be recognised by the particularities of local and individual *organic sense* of history. In this way it becomes possible to bridge the differences between micro and median levels of analysis. Rosaldo's (1989:217) concept of border zones for creative cultural production might be framed by relations of power.

Still, for ethnic minorities it is crucial to draw attention to their own past, their history and culture. A relation to a structural level – a history – is a strategy that necessarily succumbs to individual experiences (Comaroff & Comaroff 1992: 61-63). In this way it is possible to distinguish the group as a separate entity as opposed to the majority culture and other ethnic groups, and thereby to claim the political rights Western culture normally attributes to such groups. In such a struggle for recognition, museums become important sites for representing ethnic groups and boundaries. The Alta Museum, in the municipality of Alta in the county of Finnmark, is one such site. Although the museum is located in Alta, which has not been officially proclaimed a Saami town, it houses one of the most important exhibitions on ethnic relations in the county. With an average of 67,742 visitors annually from 2000 to 2004, the museum is the third largest tourist attraction in Finnmark in numbers and the largest that provides a scholarly representation of ethnic relations in the county.¹⁶ With its large number of both local and tourist visitors in a county of approximately 75,000 inhabitants, it is possible to suggest that the museum plays a part in the perception of ethnic boundaries among many people.

The Alta Museum was built in 1991. It is located in Hjemmeluft, not far from the town centre.¹⁷ The museum building is located close to the E-6, one of the

two main routes for tourists on their way to North Cape. From the road and the museum, one has a view to the fjord and the fields of rock carvings between the museum building and the seaside. Probably the pleasant and convenient location is an important part of what makes the museum a tourist attraction as well as a popular place to visit for locals (Johanson & Olsen 2010; Mehmetoglu & Olsen 2007). Another factor is its professional attitude to tourism. A professional staff, well-organised facilities, brochures in many languages, professional exhibitions, many well-qualified guides and opening hours from 8 AM to 9 PM during the summer, are also important for the tourist trade (Mehmetoglu & Abelsen 2005). The will to adjust to tourism does not impoverish the staff's professional ambitions. In 1993, the Alta Museum was elected European Museum of the Year. A national Rock Art Centre is under study, and the museum plans to build a new permanent exhibit. The current main exhibit was constructed for the museum's opening in 1991. The material presented in this chapter is primarily based on visits made between 1993 and 1994 but also draws upon numerous later visits. With a minor exception in the first part of the exhibit, the main part is still as described in this chapter. The start of the labyrinth described here has been replaced by a small room with activities for children.

THE EXHIBITION

The visitor enters the museum through a large foyer containing a café, a ticket counter, and a display of souvenirs and books for sale. The products are of high quality, many of them made by local craftsmen, and the shop does not carry the mass-produced souvenirs often found elsewhere. Between the ticket counter and the café with its panoramic view of the fjord is an entrance to the rock-carving field. To the right of the main entrance is the hall where the permanent exhibition is located. In a brochure, the staff have traced a self-guided walk through the exhibition.

The recommended route is divided into five main topics and starts with a section called *From Rock Art to Christianity: Rock art and religious beliefs, pre-Christian Sámi religion and Church history*. The first object is a model of the Northern Hemisphere. By pressing some switches it is possible to see how different rock-carving motifs are found around the world. The next part of the section is a kind of labyrinth. At the entrance, the audience is introduced to the rock carvings. A text, mostly in Norwegian but with some English relates the rock carvings to cosmology and art connected with beliefs and religion. A Norwegian text presents a wide interpretation of the meaning as understood today: ‘Today some connect them [the rock carvings] with Sámi pre-history, others connect them with Alta, and some relate them to tourism’ (Alta Museum 1992). Inside the labyrinth rock-carving motifs are painted on the wall and accompanied by an explanatory text. A large stone slab with carvings is exhibited. A few metres further on, one finds a model of a Saami bear hunt. Texts and recordings in Saami and Norwegian associate the bear hunt with the Saami religion and Saami experiences of nature. In a round compartment is a presentation of Saami cosmology. Symbols of the Saami gods on a magic drum are highlighted, and two steps further on it is possible to sit down on a reindeer hide and listen to the – reconstructed (?) – drumming and joik of a Saami shaman. The tape is played in a loop, and the sound is audible at most places in the permanent exhibition. On the walls of the labyrinth are pictures of natural sites, and their meanings in Saami pre-Christian cosmology are explained. Lakes and stones with distinct shapes are explained as dwellings for Saami gods, which are therefore worshipped. In a niche, a stone sacrificial site has been replicated. Several coins can be seen as is the case with other easily reachable sacrificial stones in the area. From the round place and labyrinth, one is led into a square semi-detached room designated as ‘a Church’. Along one of the walls is an exhibit on the Christianisation of the Saami and the so-called ‘Saami apostle’, Thomas von Westen. Along the other wall, actually a display case, are late-medieval sculptures from West Finnmark. Leaving the sculptures, one enters the next section.

This section is called; *Treasure and Market*. *The famous Alta Market and silver hoards dating back to the Viking Age*. The section is a partial reconstruction of the market in Bossekop as it appeared in December 1906. Bossekop is one of the two former villages that now are more or less merged into one administrative centre. The staff have tried to recreate the milieu at the market, for example by reconstructing a country store built of logs. Wild-animal skins and barrels stand outside. Nearly full-sized pictures of people at the market are displayed in an enclosure, and several items connected with different ethnic groups are presented. The pictures are given titles, such as *Woman from the fjord area, Person from Alta, Fisherman, Sámi settler, Sámi reindeer nomad and Buyer*. Inside the country store, or the market stall as it is called in a brochure, several commodities are displayed. It is possible to listen on headphones to more information about the market.¹⁸ The other part of this section focuses on the display of silver hoards, some of them found in the vicinity of the market place, while old trade routes are shown on the wall. Copper mining in nineteenth-century Kåfjord, a small settlement in the Alta fjord, is also represented.

To the extent that these two sections, called **From Rock Art to Christianity** and **Treasure and Market**, can be regarded as making up one narrative, an interpretation of the kind of narratives to which the first parts of the exhibition give direction can be attempted. Visitors move through a space that creates a temporal dimension (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 59). As a narrative, the two sections make up a whole in that they introduce an historical evolution followed by sections more disembedded from chronology. The three remaining sections present in 1994 were called respectively: *Alta – River and Fjord – from the Ice Age to Hydroelectricity*, *War and Peace in Finnmark* and *The Northern Lights and Copper Mines*. The last two sections were situated on the ground floor, and the last one has now been replaced by other displays. All of them emphasised particular themes.

The first two sections make up a foundation for ‘the story’ the museum wants to represent. One of the main subjects in this story is: ‘Alta has been a meeting

ground and a melting pot for different ethnic groups for thousands of years. In recent times the Alta tribes have been the Sámi, the Norwegians and the Finns' (Alta Museum 1992). The question I will consider is: How does this exhibition give direction to the perception of ethnic relations today? By themselves museum objects are only fragments of more-or-less bounded cultural entities. From their metonymic position in use, objects have been put into a scholarly context that is presented to an audience and which turns the perception of the objects into a new whole and new metonymic positions (Baxendall 1991: 34; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 18-20). It is an *in context* exhibit that orders the frames of interpretation of the relationship between the objects (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 23). In this case, the Norwegian and Saami cultures are ordered as a development of time before they are brought together at the marketplace, where they are ordered by a spatial arrangement that relates the Saami culture to the interior.

I will argue that the display calls forth several possible oppositions in the interpretations made by the audience. The display starts with a wide presentation of the rock carvings in the distant past. They are connected by text to a cosmology, with no particular reference to ethnicity. From these objects, the visitor walks into a Saami universe. The use of the image of labyrinth and circular shapes is continued in this part. Spirituality, cosmology and closeness to nature are emphasised in the use of sound, text, a sparse use of objects and photos. The square form of the display called 'Church' contrasts with the intimacy of the labyrinth. The squareness and the transparent glass wall – which rather than an impression of far-vision provokes a feeling of being shut in – signal a new universe introduced by Christianity, while the joik and the shaman's drum are still heard in the background. This evolution from an open representation of the cosmology of the distant past, through the Saami universe made up of a nature-centred cosmology and European Christianity, ends in the fairground. The market display from the close past can be interpreted as the meeting of 'the Alta tribes'. Viewing this display, I get the impression that the Saami come

from outside the parish, mainly from the interior and from the nature. The other figures, the *Buyer* and the *Woman from the fjord area*, are, like the local people, not marked by any ethnic distinction.

It is possible to identify different kinds of plot here – made as oppositions to the lay-out comprised of sound, pictures, text, shapes and objects. One of these plots is a distinction between nature and culture. This is consistent with a distinction between indigenous people (nature) and modern people (culture). These oppositions fit in with the market scene, which makes a distinction between people from outside the parish and those from inside. People from the ethnic minority are found outside the local community. These are the Saami people, who are connected mainly to a nature-based cosmology and to the outside of the community. The display covers a period of 6,000 years. In this time axis, it seems to me that the Saami tradition is connected to nature and to a hunter-gatherer tradition. The Norwegian tradition may be present in a distant past, but is reintroduced with Christianity from the outside, mainly as an alien colonial tradition. Between the non-ethnic pre-historic rock carvings and the medieval church, the Norwegian tradition is not present. This is an ordering of the discourse that separates the two different groups into familiar spatial and temporal dimensions.

The following display sections do not alter this story. The section called *Alta – River and Fjord – from the Ice Age to Hydroelectricity*, is the only one remaining on the first floor.¹⁹ The audience faces a display that has its point of departure in the struggle against the damming of the Alta-Kautokeino River. The struggle is presented as ‘... a turning point in the struggle for recognition of Sàmi rights and nature conservation in Norway’ (Alta Museum 1992). Another display, presented by text, objects and pictures, is the slate trade in Alta. Opposite, objects connected with salmon fishing in the Alta River are exhibited. A riverboat and equipment for fly fishing – mainly gifts from ‘salmon lords’ – are presented. A heading in Norwegian: ‘Fly fishers in

the Alta river. Dukes, millionaires and people from Alta' (my translation), introduces an assemblage of pictures that portrays, among others, the ninth Duke of Roxburghe, Joseph Pulitzer, Charles Ritz – the heir of the Ritz hotels and in this context perhaps more importantly the author of *A Fly Fishers Life* –, and the local resident, Peder Jøraholmen.

Next stop is a stand of trees in a forest and a description of local ecology. Beside it is a model of a house entitled: *Finnish Immigrants and Houses without Chimneys*. The Kven immigration during the seventeenth century is told by a text, and the difference between Norwegian, Saami and Finnish building traditions is emphasised. On the other side of the forest is a model of the Alta River. Here it is possible to see reindeer used in transport, and different traditional ways to catch salmon. Behind this model, one returns to what the museum describes as the first part of the section. Here the distant past is displayed, with a copy of a stone-age skin boat. Several stone-age tools are exhibited, with a focus on chronology and aesthetics. Tribes from the inland and the coast are described as different ecological adaptations.

The two remaining sections on the basement floor concentrate on the history of the armed forces, with emphasis on World War Two, and the research on the Northern Lights that was conducted at an observatory on a local mountain.²⁰ Neither makes any reference to ethnicity, though the reference to research on the Northern Lights can be set in a national tradition, the leading figure for some years – Kristian Birkeland, who is on the NOK 200 note – was prominent in the building of Norway's metallurgy industry.

CONTESTING AND SIMULTANEOUS STORIES

Readings of exhibitions are frequently criticised because they often present a reading based on academic values represented as coming from a more-or-less

general spectator, rather than taking into consideration what people themselves experience at museums (Fyfe & Ross 1996: 130-131). As Clifford (1991: 239) and Bruner (1993: 14) explain, it is necessary to focus on a specific audience. This is not to say that exhibitors and their intentions are absent in the different readings of an exhibition. As in the Alta Museum the exhibition gives direction to such readings by the way exhibits are plotted. In the first part of the Alta exhibition, these plots frame the way ethnic relations might be perceived. This is done through the oppositions set up in the exhibition and the way these oppositions fit into more-or-less dominant ideas about fourth-world peoples and ethnic relations in the area. The oppositions between nature and culture, traditional and modern, and inside and outside the municipality fit well with what Harald Eidheim (1992; 1997) has described as the development of a Saami selfhood with a symbolic expression based on features usually ascribed to the interior.

The Saami culture of the interior also fits into what has been called an *aboriginization* of Saami selfhood (Eidheim 1992: 13-15). Audhild Schancke (1993: 55) has shown how features such as a more ecological attitude, a peaceable disposition, harmony with other people as well as nature, an egalitarian mind, and spirituality are emphasised as a Saami contrast to the Norwegian and Western colonial culture. The semi-nomadic reindeer-herders make it possible to invoke a connection with other indigenous peoples often attributed with similar values by the Western colonial tradition. For many coastal Saami communities with no or few visual features to distinguish them from their immediate neighbours, it was much more difficult in the early 1950s to show a contrast to and complementarity with Norwegian culture. The Coastal Saami have been regarded as being under pressure from the Norwegianisation policy. In most communities, the Saami language disappeared after World War Two. The Norwegian way of living became the ordinary everyday life, and most visible signs of the Saami heritage were suppressed and not visible to outsiders (Eidheim 1971: 52). Many local communities that, in the beginning of the twentieth century,

were dominated by the Saami had become Norwegian by the 1950s according to the population censuses. The result of this policy could be interpreted as a loss of Saami culture, a culture that survived in the interior of Finnmark.

In many ways these narratives offer the official view on Saami culture, which says that Saami culture survived in particular among the reindeer-herders and disappeared more or less in the coastal areas. As I read it, the exhibitors' intention at the museum is to display the contrast between an indigenous people and a Western culture. A Saami tradition is abruptly colonised by the Christian Norwegian tradition, and the fair in Bossekop is the *contact zone* (Pratt 1992) for these separate traditions. In this narrative, the Saami are located in the interior and contrasted to the local population. I will suggest that it is this more-or-less official narrative of Saami culture which is presupposed in the plotting of the exhibition. Nevertheless, this narrative is not a necessary outcome of the audience's meeting with the exhibition.

CONTESTING NARRATIVES ABOUT THE SAAMI

As Edward Bruner (1994) shows, the audience's impression of an exhibition depends to a large extent on their cultural knowledge. Different parts of a display are highlighted by individual recognition. With regard to one of the most important groups of visitors to the Alta Museum, tourists' knowledge of the area is in all likelihood varied. Nevertheless it is possible to make some statements about how most tourists experience the ethnic situation in Finnmark. Tourism can be analysed as a visual mode of consumption (Urry 1990, 1996; Wood 1998) and this reflects the way tourists describe the Saami population. Many tourists attach Saami identity to visible signs such as costume, reindeer and traditional buildings like the lavvu – the tent used by reindeer herders (Lyngnes & Viken 1997). This implies that most tourists attach a Saami identity to the reindeer-herding adaptation and to the tourist

products more or less derived from this particular part of the Saami society and from an adaptation of the past (Viken 2000: 27-29). The everyday life of today's Saami does not fit the tourist's understanding of an aboriginal people (Pedersen 2005: 10). This general description of the tourist's impression of Saami culture can be applied to the Alta Museum. Even if the museum is not looked upon as a 'Saami museum', it is probably one of the main 'on-site' sources of knowledge about Saami culture for tourists. The museum is therefore important in the making of the Saami image. One of the reasons for this is that the tourist goes to museums to learn how something 'really' is (Harrison 1997: 37), and the plots provided in the Alta Museum tell that the Saami are an indigenous people. It seems probable that tourists will connect Saami culture with a Western idea about indigenous peoples, and in a wider sense with 'ethnic peoples'. This idea of 'the ethnic other' in Western culture is an idea that minorities have been forced to deal with when claiming political rights (Veber 1997). The symbolic oppositions made in the exhibitions at the Alta Museum also conjure up such ideas. Cosmology, nature and being outside the modern community are linked to indigenous peoples. Combined with a visual cultural difference, this sets 'the visible Saami' apart from the presumably modern, Norwegian population. I argue that tourists' impressions of ethnic relations in Finnmark are given a direction that runs counter to observed life. This also explains why many tourists did not know they were in a so-called Saami core area when they were asked about the Saami by researchers in Kautokeino and Karasjok (Lyngnes & Viken 1997: 65).²¹ Even these Saami-speaking communities do not fit into the tourist's image of the indigenous people.

For local people, this understanding of the exhibition may seem far-fetched. Most of them will endorse a view of Saami identity that is not grounded in a Western idea about indigenous peoples close to nature. Confronted with such views, they will describe the ecological problems in the interior as a result of over-grazing and the motorised way of reindeer-herding common today. Another

common response would be a reference to Saami neighbours and the villages of Kautokeino and Karasjok, where on the surface everyday life is not very different from elsewhere in Finnmark. Local people in Alta will rather invoke a narrative based on the sharp distinction between the local Norwegian community and the Saami from the outside. This understanding of ethnic relations in Finnmark has a strong tradition. The coastal people have looked upon themselves as different from the Saami – or in the local terminology *Finman* – in the interior and the Norwegians from the southern part of the country (F. Eidheim 1993: 43 ff.). In this perception of ethnic boundaries, the past has no part. Language, dress and settlement in the interior in the present situation have been looked upon as criteria for a Saami identity. Many people do not see Saami-speaking grandparents or parents and their identity as coastal Saami as relevant ethnic markers for themselves. This results in what to an outsider may seem to be notable occurrences wherein people with an unquestionable connection to a coastal Saami past deny this and claim it is irrelevant. This may be a result of the stigma put on a Saami identity in the coastal area, in particular under the Norwegianisation policy, but it also stems from the way Saami culture in the last twenty to thirty years has been set apart as distinct from Norwegian culture. The construction of complementarity and contrast between Saami and Norwegian society has represented ethnic boundaries by using symbols that are found in the interior, whereas this is a culture that was also distinct from the coastal areas, which have long been integrated in Norwegian society and culture. People from the coastal area who look upon themselves as Saami, or coastal Saami in particular, but without the knowledge and competence in those cultural features that define the boundaries between Saami and Norwegian in the master narrative, may experience the exhibition as a confirmation of the hegemony of the Saami in the interior of Finnmark. As long as the Saaminess of many coastal Saami cannot be expressed by those features highlighted as the ‘real’ Saami culture, they may feel they are regarded as less Saami, more Norwegianized, as ‘second-rate’ Saami or as not Saami at all.

But local people may also invoke other narratives. This is best seen in a display situated in a small room in the middle of the Alta Museum. Here the visitor can watch a slide show of about ten minutes called *People I have Met*.²² Even with my knowledge of Alta, the slide show is difficult to understand except as an aesthetic display. Accompanied by pop, folk and church music are pictures of local life. Portraits of older people with weather-beaten faces predominate. Churchgoing, the celebration of the national day and activities from everyday life are shown. The only signs of ethnicity are a woman on a pier and a picture of two men, all in traditional Saami dress. From the way most people are dressed, I would guess that the pictures date back to the 1970s. Other information might be gleaned by someone born and raised in Alta fifty years ago. Many of the pictures are from the fjord area. This area was previously recognised as a predominantly coastal Saami area. The picture sites might be known. Individual experiences might be contextualized and many of the people in the pictures might be known. Background information known to the spectator might give a different picture of ethnic identity. The use of the Saami language fifty years ago, the family's history, knowledge of kinship ties and the recognition of places previously recognised as Saami might all blur the plots in the exhibition at the Alta Museum. But this focus on individual identity and boundaries is very difficult to display. Ethnic criteria, such as knowledge of a person's relatives who spoke Saami at the local store fifty years ago, are not easily shown in a museum setting, in particular when they depend on an audience – both tourists and locals – that will probably no longer find such boundaries significant. As previously, most local people prefer the distinctions made in the exhibition where the Saami past is found outside the community.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As they did in the development of the European nation-state, museums play an important part in indigenous peoples' struggle for political rights and their

attempt to develop a selfhood that might be recognised by groups with a political hegemony. In so doing, museums also play a role in a political process in which it is necessary to display clear-cut boundaries, often by means of the folklore used by nation-states. Language, folk art and folklore are put forward to symbolise ethnic boundaries. In the Saami case, these boundaries seldom fit into the cultural contexts of the coastal and fjord areas, where such clear-cut boundaries often did not exist or were maintained by knowledge about kinship or belonging in the local community. This is therefore an ethnicity that is difficult and often impossible to display for a general audience. In addition, this is a kind of ethnic identity that faces difficulties if a group wants to claim political rights.

I have argued that the exhibition at the Alta Museum may be perceived in many different ways. People with different cultural knowledge may evoke different narratives. At least two highly distinct groups can be found: tourists and local people. For the first group, the exhibition fits into a common picture of the distinction between modern Western people and indigenous peoples. For the second group, this reading may be contested. A narrative of the distinction between coastal areas and the interior may be invoked, but the display may also be looked upon as a manifestation of second-rate Saaminess or a lack of cultural skills or as a point of departure for reminiscences that do not account for ethnic boundaries at all. This does not mean that the exhibitor's intentions do not matter. Walking through the exhibit, the visitor experiences an ordering, and this ordering relates to familiar ideas about time and space. The plots created by oppositions between nature and culture, traditional and modern, and inside and outside direct the audience's reading of the exhibition. In most cases these plots deny a reading of an ethnic situation marked by a hybrid cultural context because this history relates to Western discourses that still predominate.

Museologists have long been aware of the difficulties involved in representing heterogeneity and the tradition of 'Othering' in Western thinking. But even

this recognition does not alter the tradition. In an analysis of three Nordic Saami Museums, Bjørnar Olsen (2000a) concludes that all of them perpetuate a rather nostalgic view of the Saami. The 'real' Saami culture is presented as something located in the past and is materialized as a static and traditional state that was destroyed by the surrounding peoples (B. Olsen 2000a: 26-27). Despite attempts to present a constantly changing Saami culture, Saami museums seem to be very much in tune with Norwegian museums (B. Olsen 2000a). Nevertheless, this awareness increasingly changes the way indigenous peoples are exhibited and cultures delimited. Yet traditional ethnographic thought has found new fertile ground. As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett put it: 'Where do old ideas go to die? Tourism, a museum of the consciousness industry' (1998: 176).

Chapter 4

MAKING DIFFERENCES IN A CHANGING WORLD

TOURISM AS A PHENOMENON IS FOUNDED on the spatial and socio-cultural differences that emerged as a part of the modernising processes of the nineteenth century. The cultural-made presuppositions of differences as other nations and other categories of people became the objects of the cultural curiosity that could be satisfied by the technological inventions which made mass tourism possible (Wang 2000: 153). This spatial and socio-cultural ordering is underpinned by public institutions like those described in previous chapters but it is probably most profound in the tourism industry. At the core of this industry is a need for continuation of images of cultural difference that can be made into tourist attractions. Therefore contemporary international tourists in Finnmark still regard the Saami as a traditional indigenous people, in contrast to themselves and modern Norwegian society, despite what can be observed (Viken 2000: 27-29). If this was not the case the Saami would no longer be a tourist attraction.

It is interesting to investigate how such radically different images between Saami and Norwegians can be upheld in spite of the similarities in the quotidian.

Tourism is obviously one of several fields that perpetuate such ideas of disparity (Olsen 2006). As an integral part of modernity, tourism is based upon ideas of differences found in modern Western thought (MacCannell 1976: 11; Urry 1990: 2-3; Wang 2000: 177 ff.). One of these assumptions is the idea of a single all-embracing modernity in contrast to the traditional societies of the past where 'the other' belongs. When 'the other' is obviously a part of the present and does not stand out from the modern, as often is the case of the Saami as well as of many other fourth-world peoples, the relationship between traditional and modern people has to be re-ordered. This can be done by constructing cultural spaces where such a difference can be shown. For this purpose tourism is important, not only for the sake of tourism itself, but also because the conceptual differences exposed within tourism can be connected to other fields.

This chapter first analyses the persistent reproduction of the Saami touristic image as a traditional people. By analysing local and regional brochures from Finnmark and Saami tourist sites, it is shown how the opposition between the indigenous Saami and the modern Norwegian is sustained. This reproduction relies on a long-standing discourse on 'the Other' in Western thought. Peoples are put into this category, which is understood as the opposite of modern (Fabian 1991; Keesing 1992; Larsen 1998; Pagden 1987; Rosaldo 1989; Ryan 2002), in tourism as well as in political discourse, and attributed with cultural features such as ecological awareness, peacefulness and spirituality supposedly not found in modernity (Dann 1999; MacCannell 1976; Olsen 2008a, 2008b; Schancke 1993: 55; Thuen 1995: 262; Wang 2000; Wood 1998). In tourism this is also done by the very people portrayed, who utilise the colonizers' own terms of differences and in that way engage in what Wallis (1994: 271) has called 'Self-Orientalism'.

The touristic image of the Saami in Norway is entangled in this global discourse. Some of the representations simultaneously relate to particular national and local discourses. The dividing line falls primarily between the brochures and

the sites where the latter are firmly embedded in national and local discourses, and in history. The second part of this article shows how the tourist sites that people actually encounter expose a greater variety than that found in the tourist brochures. The argument put forward is that the sites can be understood as part of distinct Norwegian and local discourses about Saami, while still being within the frame of the global discourse. The global discourse seems more to dictate the reproductions found in commercial brochures that aim to create a general exotic difference common in tourism adverts (Dann 1999). These findings highlight the necessity of studying image-making in tourism as a process (Gunn 1997). The images people encounter pre-trip are not necessarily reproduced in on-trip encounters, even if all these images are inside common frames of a global discourse.

As Guneratne (2001: 527) writes, globalisation serves localised cultural purposes, only in the most superficial sense is a general global culture produced. In the case of the Saami in Northern Norway, one of these localised cultural purposes is to emphasise ethnicity and clear-cut boundaries between different segments of the population in the area. I suggest that the representations found in the touristic image serve ethno-political purposes because other local organising principles, among which the distinction between coast and the interior, between separate Saami groups, classes and local communities, has increasingly been replaced by ethnicity in the national political field (Eriksen & Hoëm 1999: 129).

THE SAAMI AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COLLECTIVE SAAMI SELF-UNDERSTANDING

Early on, the Saami acquired an image as ‘the last nomads of Europe’. Several scientific expeditions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries studied them and made descriptions of their way of life. The Saami also played an early role

in the flourishing trade of exhibiting ‘primitive’ peoples all over Europe (Altick 1978: 273 ff.; Gjestrum 1995; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 45). Already in 1822, William Bullock exhibited a Saami family in the Egyptian Hall in London. The Southern Saami family was put on display, together with live reindeer, and became a quite popular attraction (Altick 1978: 273). This was probably the start of a tradition of exhibiting living Saami that continued at least until 1930, when thirty-two Norwegian, Swedish, and Finnish Saami toured Germany during the summer and autumn of that year. With them on this tour, they brought a fully equipped Saami camp, dogs and fifty reindeer (Hætta 2003b: 85 ff.). For the 1822 exhibit, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett writes, ‘[t]he Laplanders had been brought to care for the reindeer, who, it was hoped, could be introduced into England, but when this proved impractical, the Laplanders were recycled as ethnographic exhibits’ (1998: 45). In this recycling, the Saami had to adapt to an ethnographic tradition. Already Bullock’s first exhibit introduced a persistent tradition that also became a feature of the Lapp camps set up to serve the growing tourism in Northern Norway in the last part of the nineteenth century. This was a tradition that probably paid more attention to an ethnographic tradition than to the Saami performers’ ideas of entertainment. In the poster made for the exhibit in the Egyptian Hall, there is a marked difference between the ‘primitive’ objects and the modern spectators. Framed by a tableau of the sublime natural beauty of Northern Norway, the exhibited Saami made a striking contrast to the visiting Londoners. Their nomadic-style shelter, their clothing and the exhibited utensils present a sharp contrast to the modern way of life at the time.

The poster is interesting in several ways. Firstly, it exhibits the Saami in a way that is still common today. Most of the features found in the poster advertising the 1822 London exhibit can be found in tourist brochures today. Only two features are seldom found in contemporary images of the Saami. One of the features that have vanished is the spectators, who have disappeared from contemporary pictures in the tourism industry. The second is the reindeer sledge,

which is no longer such a prominent marker. The tremendous sense of speed this transport gave at that time no longer makes an impression.

Secondly, the poster relates to the tradition of regarding ‘the Other’ as a Noble Savage, people who are closer to a pre-modern state of innocence of mankind. But as pointed out by Larsen in relation to the nakedness of the American Indian, ‘Innocence and transgression – nudity is a sign of both and the two counterpoints run side by side up to the period of the Enlightenment and into our own time: the Barbarian (the transgressor) and the Noble Savage (the innocent)’” (1998: 176; my translation).²³ The Barbarian – as uncivilized and backward – became a much more important metaphor in the national policy directed at the Saami living in Norway, even if the opposite was also present to a certain degree in the public discourse.

Mathisen (2004: 8) points out that the way the Saami were exhibited in the Egyptian Hall was actually rooted in a European scholarly tradition. According to Altick (1978: 273), Bullock engaged the author Thomas Dibdin to make a ‘play’ that the Saami would perform in. In his autobiography Dibdin describes his ‘actors’:

‘... a little greasy round man who looked like an oil barrel [...] his correspondingly beautiful wife, in dimensions like a half anker [wine cask]; and their son, about the height of a Dutch cheese, with a hat on: this trio sang, danced, played the fiddle, and displayed their several accomplishments so as to puzzle me amazingly on this point – how I could possibly turn them to any stage account. However, the piece was written: my leader, Mr. Erskine, [], composed overture, songs, melo-dramatic music, dances, &c – the scenes were painted; the dances rehearsed at the Haymarket, [...]; all the dresses made from authorities furnished and models kindly lent by Mr. Bullock; and when all subordinate matters were arranged, the performers were

summoned to hear me read the piece of “The Laplanders,” at my apartment in the Surrey Theatre’ (Dibdin 1827: 195-196).

The Laplanders never showed up at Mr. Dibdin’s apartment because ‘... eight of the reindeers had run themselves out of breath’ (Dibdin 1827: 196). While waiting for new reindeer, ‘the little round man, wife, and child, were, in the mean time, to drive their rapid sledge round the spacious plains of the Egyptian-hall’ (Dibdin 1827: 197). This became what probably was the first exhibit of Saami outside the Northern area.

Even if Dibdin did not manage to set up his play in full scale, as Mathisen (2004: 8) writes, the Saami’s own ideas of entertainment was turned down, probably in favour of a more proper ethnographic account compiled by Dibdin. Song, dance and playing the fiddle still do not have a part in Saami attractions. Dibdin’s ideas of how the Saami could become a stage play endure.²⁴

Summing up the post-World War Two development of Saami ethno-politics in four countries Eidheim writes:

‘.., it may seem surprising that this dispersed Sami population during the course of only a few decades gradually developed a collective self-understanding, a unifying communications network and an ethno-political fellowship. This was also manifested through a flowering cultural creativity’ (Eidheim 1992, quoted from Eidheim 1997: 29).

As a consequence of this flowering cultural creativity, Saami culture and society have been pointed out as a separate tradition, in contrast and complementary to Norwegian culture. The Saami have thereby not only invested a distinct culture in contrast to the Norwegian; they also belong to a different conceptual category, labelled *aboriginal*, *ethnic*, *indigenous*, or *traditional*, which is constructed in contrast to the modernity to which Norwegian society and culture

ostensibly belong. These processes are in many ways captured by Pratt's concept of 'autoethnography' (1992: 7). According to her, the concept refers to '... instances in which the colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that *engage with* the colonizers own terms [...] ... in response to or in dialogue with those metropolitan representations' (Pratt 1992: 7). In relation to tourism, this representation by the colonizers' own terms usually takes the form of what Wallis (1994: 271) calls 'self-Orientalism'. No one no longer thinks that anyone will see Saami people singing, dancing and playing the fiddle; Thomas Dibdin's 1822 play has also become the standard for Saami tourist entrepreneurs.

THE TOURISTIC IMAGE OF 'THE OTHER'

Tourists' decisions about where to go seem to be a matter of individual choice and personal freedom. In fact, however, these choices are informed, influenced and given direction by collective definitions and representations (Wang 2000: 136). Collective definitions and representations, as images, of other cultures, nations, peoples and differences, can be understood as results of long-standing grand-scale discourses in Western society. One of these grand-scale discourses, also prominent in tourism theory, concerns the relationship between the modern and the traditional, or to put it another way, between the West and the rest. Tourism, understood as a quest for otherness, for the exotic, for the authentic and for differences, means that indigenous, ethnic, tribal or traditional peoples are attractive to tourists. As Wang put it: 'Exoticism is thus an idealization of "Others" and "savages" in terms of the loss of authenticity, simplicity, and innocence in the home society' (2000: 139). Furthermore, '[t]he sensation of the exotic is [...] more often derived from exotic customs, cultures, and peoples, particular[ly] when they are remote in both time and space' (Wang 2000: 145). Friedman claims that this idea is found in Western societies in general:

‘... the indigenous is now a part of a larger inversion of Western cosmology in which the traditional other, a modern category, is no longer the starting point of a long and positive evolution of civilization, but a voice of Wisdom, a way of life in tune with nature, a culture in harmony, a [*G*]emeinschaft, that we all have but lost’ (1999: 315).

For most people tourism is the way to encounter this Wisdom and way of life.

As long as a quest for difference and otherness are motivations for travel and tourism, those peoples that can fulfil the expectations of otherness have an advantage. As Wood puts it: “Ethnic” becomes a signifier of something interesting to see, promote, and experience locally and afar’ (1998: 230). The Western discourse about ‘the other’ not only provides a touristic advantage to some ethnic groups, it also put some demands on them to adapt to the Western view and the tourists’ gaze. Adaptation to the demands of tourism may give some minorities an advantage, while others are less able to conform to the ethnic and indigenous images. Because they fail to fulfil visitors’ expectations, they are unable to provide the product, or rather the pre-conceived images, the tourists have bought. As Firat puts it sharply: ‘Cultures that cannot succeed in translating some of their qualities into spectacles or commodities seem to vanish only to become museum items’ (1995: 118). This implies that customs, rituals, traditions and material culture have to be shaped or reshaped in a form that is recognisable for tourists. Culture has to conform to a pre-conceived image and forms shaped by a dominant discourse predominantly found in the culture of Western societies because ‘[t]he more modern the locals become the less interest they have for the occidental tourist. Tourists come from the outside to see the exotic [...]’ (Bruner 1995: 656). To a certain extent this has its political counterpart in Rosaldo’s claim that ‘the emphasis on difference results in a peculiar ratio: as the “other” becomes more culturally visible, the “self” becomes correspondingly less so’ (1989: 202). And, Rosaldo continues, ‘[t]hus they conceal the ratio’s darker

side: the more power one has, the less culture one enjoys, and the more culture one has the less power one wields' (1989: 202).

As an attraction, the ethnic and indigenous constitute another time and category than the modern. Modern is a concept that claims generality and universality for a certain point of view in which 'the Other' is conceptualised as something different. As Koselleck writes:

'In such cases, a given group makes an exclusive claim to generality, applying a linguistically universal concept to itself alone and rejecting all comparison. This kind of self-definition provokes counter-concepts which discriminate against those who have been defined as "the other"' (1985: 160).

In the case of the tourist image of indigenosity and ethnicity, this ostensibly sets the object of their gaze outside that which is usually regarded as a single modernity with an exclusive claim to generality (Sahlins 1999: ii-vi, xi). Sahlins argues that '[t]he struggle of non-Western peoples to create their own cultural versions of modernity undoes the received Western opposition of tradition vs. change, custom vs. rationality – and most notably its twentieth century version of tradition vs. development' (1999: xi). According to Sahlins (1999: ii-vi), the idea of one modernity is one of several assumptions common in Western thought that he finds 'are not too enlightening'. Still this assumption informs what can be called an organic image of indigenous peoples.

The concept of 'organic images' is meant to cover the totality of what people know in advance or perceives about a place or possible holiday destination (Dann 1999; Gunn 1997). This knowledge is informed by all possible sources in Western society and is usually regarded as the most powerful factor influencing travel decisions (Gunn 1997: 37). To understand the images in tourism, it is necessary to consider several stages in the making of distinct images for

distinct people. Image-building can be regarded as a process that is divisible into several stages, for example: pre-trip, on-trip and post-trip (Dann 1999; 2001: 5; Gunn 1997: 29; Wang 2000: 135-136). According to Wang (2000: 135-136), travel brochures are a part of a phase two, in which people search for more information about a destination of which they already have a favourable image.²⁵

In many ways the touristic image of the Saami fits nicely into the general image of the indigenous. Summarising the data collected among, respectively, potential and actual foreign tourists in Northern Norway, Viken (2000: 29) points out that the image of the Saami is an image of a traditional people. Features that are uncommon in the quotidian of most Saami people living in Norway are those that make up the tourists' impressions of the Saami. This is an impression held by the pre-trip informants, but it seems also to be confirmed in the encounters with the Saami tourist industry, where seemingly traditional features are utilised as resources (Viken 2000: 29-30). What the tourists regarded as typically Saami were reindeers/reindeer-herding/nomadism, indigenouness, a different culture and way of living, and traditions, traditional dress, and the landscape and nature (Viken 2000: 27-28). In many ways these features are similar to those emphasised in Bullock's exhibit more than 180 years earlier. Turning to the tourist brochures on the Saami, it is easy to see how such a timeless present is perpetuated.

THE NORWEGIAN SAAMI IN TOURIST BROCHURES

The Saami are seldom the main attraction for the predominantly summer tourism in Northern Norway. The Midnight sun, North Cape and nature in general are the main attractions for international tourists (Viken 2000). Still, Saami themes have a significant place in tourist brochures produced by different local and regional authorities, and companies in the region. The text in these brochures usually points out that the Norwegian Saami are a part of modern Norwegian

society, a point usually most emphasised in brochures from public authorities but which still make strong references to a traditional culture (Olsen 2003: 8-9). Turning to visual communication in the regional and local brochures, the exotic difference is much more prominent. In this study, five brochures are analysed with regard to their pictorial representation of the Saami. Three of them represent regional levels: one called *Die Grüne Arktis* (Landsdelsutvalget n.d.) and covers the regional cooperative level of the whole of Northern Norway; one is a *Finnmark – Holiday Guide 2004/North Norway* (Finnmark Reiseliv AS 2004) representing the county of Finnmark; the third, entitled *Guide – Alta, Kautokeino, and Loppa* (Destinasjon Alta AS n.d.), is a common brochure for three municipalities in western Finnmark. The last two are municipality-based brochures: one is called *Karasjok: Sápmi – Land der Samen* (Karasjok Opplevelser as n.d.), the other simply *Kautokeino* (Kautokeino Kommune 1994), referring to the name of the municipality. The last two brochures cover what is usually known as ‘the Saami core area’. The criteria for selecting these brochures were, firstly, that they were produced by public authorities or publicly funded destination companies covering the three municipalities of Alta, Guovdageainnu and Karasjohka. Secondly, that the brochures were easy accessible at tourist attractions, hotels and tourist information centres in the area. To my knowledge, these brochures made up the totality of the tourist brochures covering the area made by public or publicly funded actors. In their visual representation of the Saami, they do not differ much from brochures produced by national and international commercial companies but they usually provide a more nuanced written account of the Saami (Olsen 2000b).

Analysing the representation of indigenous peoples in tourist brochures poses some obvious methodological questions. In brochures that cover multicultural areas, as all these brochures do, and where ethnic belonging may be hybrid, how does one decide what are the representations of Saami culture? There is a risk of simply reifying the pre-programmed knowledge of the researcher as long as a Saami in modern clothing does not differ from the Norwegian or Russian

equivalent. Nor do Saami-owned cars differ from Norwegian-owned ones.²⁶ Therefore the pictures are divided according to their relation to the idea of a single modernity with an exclusive claim to generality in opposition to traditions (Sahlins 1999: ii). Saami modernity, according to what Sahlins (1999: xi) maintains for non-Western peoples in general, in many ways undoes the Western opposition of tradition vs. modernity and merges with Norwegian culture. A good argument for analysing the contrast between the image of Norwegian and Saami as a difference between modernity and tradition can be found in the brochures from the two municipalities where Saami people constitute the majority (Karasjok Opplevelser as n.d.; Kautokeino kommune 1994). In both brochures, modern Saami features are absent. The Saami never appear as administrative officers, nurses, or someone on her PC, but are always associated with something that appears traditional. As Conrad (2000: 126 ff.) writes concerning Saami symbols in general, they as well as symbols in tourism usually refer to what seems to be the past. Thus the oppositions of tradition vs. change, custom vs. rationality, and tradition vs. development are reinforced.

Therefore only the pictures in the *Finnmark – Holiday Guide 2004/North Norway* (Finnmark Reiseliv AS 2004) in which traditional features of Saami culture are present are taken into consideration. In the brochures that cover western Finnmark and the two Saami municipalities, all pictures are analysed. In the latter two, which present themselves in particular as Saami areas, and in the Saami section of the *Die Grüne Arktis* (Landsdelsutvalget n.d.), nature is also an important feature of Saaminess because it is apprehended in relation to the total image evoked by the brochures.

In the five brochures, 86 pictures were analysed. Many of the pictures include several motifs relating to Saami culture and an opposition to modernity. The most frequent motif was nature, included in 39 of the pictures. Traditional clothing was found in 38. Reindeer, crafts and heritage motifs were found in respectively 17, 13 and 11 pictures. Both bonfires and food featured in five

pictures. Typically these themes are linked in metonymic relations. Bonfire-, food- or coffee-making, *lavvo/gamme* (tent/hut), traditional clothing and nature seem to make up a coherent message. The same applies to reindeer, traditional clothing and nature. These motifs are linked in many of the pictures. The general impression is that these pictures perpetuate the way of exhibiting the Saami found in Bullock's 1822 exhibit in the Egyptian Hall. Features that contrast with modernity are emphasised. In these pictures, the Saami represent an exotic contrast that seems not to have changed for hundreds of years. They are still 'the Last Nomads of Europe' as they have been for a long time in Western colonial discourse. What has changed is the position of the representatives of modernity. In Bullock's poster, the spectators were very present. They constitute a contrast to the objects of their gaze. In the tourist brochures of today, the spectator is usually absent. There are only Saami people in most of the pictures in which the traditional motifs of *kofte* (costum), *lavvo* (tent), nature, reindeer and bonfires are present. In contrast to what has been said to be a general characteristic of 'the Other', the Saami pictures are not dominated by women, elderly people and children. Of 48 persons pictured, 29 are women, and only a small number are elderly or children.

Dann (1996) has argued that tourism advertising seldom portrays local people and tourists together. When this is done, it is in particular settings and therefore is a spatial ordering of the relationship. In the case of the Saami, where people are a spectacle in themselves, this is even more prominent. In most cases tourists are not portrayed together with the object of their gaze, as was the case in Bullock's poster. This change can be understood in Fabian's terms (1991: 198), who argues that the temporal ordering which relates some people to the traditional and others to the modern often gives way to a spatial ordering. The consequence for both strategies is to deny the other coexistence in a single cultural version of modernity. Therefore the absence of tourists in these pictures probably points to the growing difficulty of maintaining this distinction

in contemporary society. In Bullock's 1822 poster, this categorical difference was not contested by a coexisting spatial presence.

That the opposition between tradition and modernity cannot always be upheld is clearly seen in the five pictures in which riverboats are found. The boats are usually linked to nature and modern clothing. In some of the pictures tourists are present. The same applies to sport, usually snowmobiling, where modern clothing is predominant. A third field in which the dichotomy is no longer upheld is in artistic expression. It seems that some fields enable 'others' to express their version of modernity without contesting the necessary difference between tourists and themselves (Olsen 2008a). As Thuen (1995: 262) argues, when he considers the possibility of developing what will be regarded as a modern Saami cultural expression, this is most probably in the realm of art.

The tourist brochures show that such links to a modern expression of Saminess are also found in other fields. Out-door life and some winter sports seem to bridge the gap between the traditional and modern, and bring the Saami into modernity (Olsen 2008a). Still the main impression given by tourist brochures – and in this case brochures published by regional and local authorities where a contemporary Saami culture is most prominent – is that the old tradition of representing the Saami as radically different continues. This may partly explain the impression received by visiting tourists, who regard the Saami as traditional and characterised by markers such as reindeer, reindeer-herding, nomadic lifestyle, indigenoussness, a different culture and way of living, traditions, traditional costume, the landscape and nature (Viken 2000: 29). This is not to say that such features do not play a part in modern Saami culture. A picture of an old lady with a dog and reindeer standing in the wilderness is both a tourist cliché and a part of modern Saami society. This was pointed out by a Saami student, who simultaneously could see 'the othering' of the Saami as a people and that this was part of the everyday life of her aunt portrayed in such a picture. For many Saami there is no dichotomy between what, from an outsider's

perspective, can be apprehended as belonging to the two distinct categories of tradition and modernity. From an insider perspective, this all exists in the present within the framework of a Saami contemporary modern culture. As others (Pratt 1992: 7; Graham 2005: 625) point out, autoethnography and cultural displays are typically heterogenous, on the receiving end as well as from the perspective of the insider. In the case of pictures, knowledge of regional and local differences in Saami costume can give a lot of information even without knowledge of the persons portrayed or the purpose of such representations. Yet, for the tourist audience, such pictures probably fulfil their idea of a traditional people even if most locals will notice contemporaries.

THE SAAMI SITES ALONG THE ROAD

From the start of tourism in Northern Norway in second half of the nineteenth century, the Saami were integrated as attractions. Typical of this exposure were the so-called Lapp Camps set up by reindeer-herders summering in the pastures on the coast. The reindeer-herders became the Saami marker in tourism, and only seldom did the coastal Saami settlers enter this occupation.²⁷ This may be explained by the fact that tourism fitted nicely as a niche for the reindeer-herders, who could produce handicraft during the winter and sell it to the tourists in the summer months spent on the coast. Another explanation is that the semi-nomadic herders fit the idea of the Noble Savage much better than the coastal Saami. The multicultural coastal areas did not show such a radical difference, and Norwegian authorities usually considered the coastal Saami culture to be vanishing (Eriksen & Niemi 1981: 325; Kolsrud 1955: 174).

Today reindeer-herding Saami keep sales stalls, but these are now set up along the main roads, and particularly along the roads to North Cape. In Finnmark most of the shacks that function as stands are clustered together where it is convenient to park cars or busses. Because the shacks in Finnmark are usually

set up by reindeer owners, they are often located close to the herder's summer pasture and are tended by his or her relatives or by the herders themselves when they are not occupied with the animals. Encountering reindeer therefore becomes a potential 'marker' of a sales stall. The selection of souvenirs might sometimes look strange to a visitor. Traditional Saami handicraft – *duodji* – made by the seller, dried reindeer meat and reindeer hides are often mixed with items produced in Hong Kong or elsewhere. For the sellers it seems to be unproblematic to combine apparently traditional Saami artefacts with modern global products. An impression of untidiness is given by the temporary appearance of the shacks. Plastic coverings often set on a wooden frame or what might have been found of other materials complete the shacks.

The shacks have a visual advantage that they share with most other attractions which a majority of tourists reckon as Saami. Reindeer, traditional Saami clothing, folklore and other more or less emblematic ethnic signs of the Saami are what a large part of the annual 400,000 to 500,000 tourists in the area identify as Saami (Lyngnes & Viken 1997). Compared with the more carefully made souvenir shops further south or other places in Finnmark, the roadside shacks have an advantage; they blur the distinction between front-stage and back-stage – a famous dichotomy in the field of tourist research (MacCannell 1976: 91 ff.; Olsen 2002: 165 ff.). In fact, in some places one can see the tents or mobile homes of the reindeer-herders just behind the shack, and the animals may be grazing in the area. It is no surprise that many tourists look upon these shacks as the most genuine Saami artefacts they encounter on their tour of Northern Norway. The shacks fulfil many of the expectations and anticipations about ethnic cultures found in a Western-European discourse where tradition and modernity are asymmetrical counterconcepts. Their run-down appearance visualizes a radical alterity in way of life, economic adaptation, dress, taste and degree of development. They differ from the tourists' everyday life and fulfil most expectations about traditional others. Such connections to the idea of the ethnic are also created in other areas, but few fulfil the need for a visual

radical alterity better than the shacks. Furthermore, the shacks can also point to more than 150 years of tradition to tourism and the tourist industry's integration in the Saami everyday life. As a woman who has spent all her summers as child and youth at such a site tells; 'As a teenager I hated to sit there "acting poor". But my Dad insisted. It is a tradition and what he regards as summer. Actually it is great fun. Meeting people and socializing with friends and relatives. And "lying" for the tourists'. Other people with other ideas of Saaminess may despise the run-down impression these shacks give, and some regard them as an offence to both Saami culture and tourists (Pedersen 1998). Still, their effectiveness as Saami symbols cannot be contested. The shacks represent a tourist trade that does not fit into the more heroic narratives of the fourth-world people, but might easily be included in stories about poverty, subordination and dominance, regardless of the actual socio-economic situation among the people in the reindeer herding industry. In sum, they fit into some important aspect of the discourse on indigenoussness. This is an aspect that tourists recognise from a global discourse on fourth-world peoples, and is perhaps what makes some tourists call the Saami a 'souvenir culture' (Viken 2000: 28). The shacks also signify an important difference between the coastal population and the reindeer-herding Saami of the interior. The latter have long been included in the concept of indigenous, and, as all of the shacks are owned by the inlanders, they symbolise a difference that has had strong political impact which is still felt today: What is regarded as the real Saami culture is found in the interior while the coastline is Norwegianized (Olsen 1997: 238).

The shacks can also be seen in the light of a different ethno-political discourse on the Saami. In contrast to the run-down impression of the shacks along the road, many new exhibits and souvenir shops – the souvenir shop at the Alta Museum being one – are attempts of artistic and scholarly-inspired ways of communicating inside the frames of a global discourse on indigenoussness that was rooted in Norwegian politics in the 1980s. As pointed out by Eidheim (1992: 13-15), this was a period of *aboriginalization* of the Saami political

struggle, and a time when the relationship to other fourth-world peoples was emphasised. In this discourse the assumed spirituality, peacefulness and the particular relation to nature that was supposedly found among the indigenous as Noble Savages was emphasised as a symbolic mark of fourth-world peoples. In Norway, younger educated Saami who identified with a global fourth-world community and who found new ways of expressing their identity endorsed these ideas of Saaminess.²⁸ This was not only a global discourse penetrating into a Norwegian-Saami political realm, it became embedded in distinct local discourses, in which the more radical and globally oriented Saami party, Norske Samers Riksforbund, opposed the coastal-based and less radical Norske Samers Landsforbund, which emphasised Norwegian citizenship. This discourse can also be traced to the distinction between coast and interior (Bjørklund 2000), and is embedded in Norwegian history, local culture, individual memory and identity. The seemingly global discourses are thus situated in distinct localised contexts as well as being recognisable in different ways of expressing Saami culture in tourism.

Similarly embedded is a Saami tourist site that lies further to the south. *Same Jakki* has two souvenir shops, which display many of the emblematic Saami signs but with a strong connection to the representation of the Saami in the 1950s and 60s (Olsen 2000b, 2003). *Same Jakki* was the name of a film directed by Per Høst about the life of the reindeer-herding Saami, which was a success at the 1957 Cannes film festival. It is said that the director had to search for Saami that were 'natural' enough for this purpose (http://www.temaweb.net/sider/Perioder/Etterkrigstida_Norge/NorskEN/norsken.html). The two sites belong to the family that was portrayed in this film, and they still use the image of the natural Saami that was predominant in this period. The shield that wishes visitors welcome is in colours typical of the period and features a smiling child-like Saami wearing a cap with three pointed tassels on top. This is an image of the Saami as 'the children of nature' living in harmony with their natural environment. This perspective enabled a Danish zoo to include

a 'Lapp Camp' in its presentation of the wild animals of Scandinavia (Olsen 2000b: 57). Such representations relate to the political perspective found at a national level and among Saami ethno-politicians in the late 1950s and 60s. The Saami culture was to be preserved as an important tradition within the framework of the Norwegian nation, not as something different that necessitated the granting of particular rights to individuals and groups. This view was contested by the turn in ethno-politics in the 1980s. This opposition can still be found at local and regional levels. The willingness to finance a Saami museum and to preserve the culture is much stronger than that to grant individual rights which would give equality to autonomous individuals, as argued by Oskal (1999: 162-163) in his analysis of the ideological foundation of the work of the Saami Rights Commission, a committee that investigated and made proposals concerning Saami land claims in Finnmark. Oskal points out that the proposal lacks a discussion of the commission's wish to avoid creating tension and conflict between the different groups in the area, and of whether the basis for this harmonious co-existence also promotes justice. The stability and so-called harmonious co-existence between Saami and Norwegians that is often praised by those who oppose particular Saami rights and evoke the time before Saami ethno-politics gained momentum are, in Oskal's view, an obstacle for Saami public autonomy and citizenship under equal conditions with Norwegians. Oskal sees the reluctance to impose political decisions as an unwillingness to propose arrangements that might provoke the Norwegian majority. On the contrary, the willingness to preserve the abstract idea of a culture inside institutional frames is more widespread and does not have the same provocative potential.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Pictorial representations intended to amplify existing images are among those collective definitions and representations that inform tourists' choice of where

to travel. To tie the destinations to discourses of various types and levels is one way to appeal to the international tourist market. For those groups struggling for recognition as an indigenous population, this could be an opportunity as well as an iron cage. To claim indigenesness usually means that one has to focus on the distinction between the modern and the traditional, two concepts that relate to a temporal dimension where the latter is seen as less developed than the former. The traditional is situated in a time where humans were at ease with themselves in a way that make them appealing to the tourist's gaze (Friedman 1999: 315; Wang 2000: 139). For the Saami population in Norway, this means that their image as a unique people shows a strong degree of persistence. The image evoked to attract visitors in London in 1822 depends on the same dichotomy between tradition and modernity as the contemporary brochures and sites. Therefore many of the same artefacts are still viable representations of the assumed Saami culture. Pratt claim for her concept of autoethnography or autoethnographic expressions that '... colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that engage with the colonizers' own terms' (1992: 7). What the representation in tourism brochures lack is the dialogic element that Pratt includes in her concept. Even if slightly more nuanced, the Saami attractions most tourists encounter also fully obey a rather stereotyped image that can be traced back to Western colonial thought. Even if they are more heterogenous when it comes to reception, they also relate to a global language of tourism emphasising the difference between the modern and the traditional.

The dichotomy between modernity and tradition previously depended on a temporal dimension. Today, when Saami everyday life does not differ dramatically from that of Norwegians, it is more dependent on spatial arrangements. Some culturally constructed spaces like those found in tourism enable an expression of radical difference. The spaces made for the indigenous in tourism deny access to other parts of their culture. In an ever-changing heterogeneous Saami daily life, the hegemonic discursive division between modernity and tradition

splits Saami modernity into different conceptual categories and permits only a few features to be emphasised in tourism. This also splits the Saami population into those who have a relationship to what is regarded as traditional core of Saami culture and those who only have a part of modernity.

The idea of a single all-embracing modernity is a global discourse that claims generality and attempts to deny other people's experiences temporal co-existence (Fabian 1991; Sahlin 1999). This renders that a Saami modernity that at the surface does not differ from the Norwegian counterpart has less possibility of gaining access to the field of ethno-politics. While global in impact, these ideas become localised in Finnmark, Northern Norway. The representations of Saami culture at the different sites are strongly embedded in local and national history. They are shaped by local ecology, and their impact on politics and identity processes implies that only in the most superficial sense is a general global culture produced. To grasp this it is necessary to study the images as part of a process and in their development at a local level, and not as dis-embedded representations in the global field of tourism.

Chapter 5

HERITAGE, RELIGION AND THE DEFICIT OF MEANING IN INSTITUTIONALIZED DISCOURSE

THE MAIN DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DOMINANT and everyday discourses is that the former equate categories with social groups with a reified culture and the latter depend on context and purpose, which creates a multitude of possibilities (Baumann 1996: 10, 195). In particular this is the case when the political label of ethnicity is attached to certain people by national institutions and certain cultural features are chosen to represent them. Embraced by national institutions, the meaning of cultural artefacts and expressions is altered. Such cultural features are infused with new contents, formerly attached meaning is denied access in the transformational process, and cultural expressions and artefacts are subsumed into categories in which they previously had no place. Such processes do not usually change the appearance of the expressions or objects that are incorporated very much; instead, expressions and objects become conserved or frozen in terms of Western ideas of tradition. The changes occur because of their systematic selection and the new context of performance or exhibiting, which creates a new context for reception. Therefore the transformation of everyday culture into folk heritage is a process that creates both an excess and a deficit of meaning.

Such a process occurred when, in the middle of the nineteenth century, selected parts of the Norwegian folk culture were integrated into the nation-building process. Expressions and artefacts that previously had gained their meaning in a predominantly local or regional context became the building blocks of the representation of a Norwegian national identity. In this process, the artefacts both gained new meaning and lost meaning that had previously been attached to them.

Similar processes can be seen today among peoples belonging to the Western-colonial concept of indigenoussness. The ‘indigenous’ and the ‘ethnic’ are integrated in and have become a part of global and national discourses that are embedded in institutional settings such as the museum world, the heritage industry, tourism and art. This is not to say that cultural expressions and artefacts become ‘standardised’ when linked with global and international institutions. As all parts of what is regarded as belonging to the globalizing processes, they are still part of highly localized and local discourses. Rather, these processes highlight the differences between institutionalized discourses and what is found in many local contexts. One of these discrepancies can be seen between the institutionalized categories that subsume different cultural features under the heading of someone’s heritage, and the local and individual experience of culture in a life-course (Olsen 1997: 238-239, 2000a: 26-27).

Chapter 5 aims to show how this is the case with the Saami song tradition – *joik*. As a symbol of the abstract unit of the Saami people, joik was infused with new meanings when it was embraced by institutional discourses. At the same time, there is a deficit of meaning that becomes striking when institutional discourses unfold in local contexts. Joik has gained recognition as Saami folk music, subsumed under this category in institutions such as the educational system, heritage preservation, museums, the global music industry, in the political system, and by the Norwegian Church. For the latter, and for many of the others, joik is a folk-song tradition that symbolizes the heritage

of the Saami people, complementary to Norwegian and many other traditions. Because of such a categorization, it can be included in the institutional religious practices as similar to the Norwegian – or other – folk-song tradition. A closer look at discourses on joik in a local context shows that the integration in institutional discourses has created a deficit of meaning that is still present in the local community.

JOIK

The Saami song tradition, the joik, differs dramatically from the other song traditions found among peoples in Northern Scandinavia. It is easily recognised as distinct from Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian folk songs, and is closely connected to the Saami as one of their distinct cultural features. The joik was and still is found in most Saami-speaking communities. The styles differ, approximately according to the boundaries between the dialects of the spoken language. In particular in the interior of Finnmark, the northernmost county in Norway, which is regarded as a ‘core area’ for Saami culture, joik is a vital tradition that is still in use in the quotidian. Kautokeino, where the empirical material this article builds upon was gathered, is a predominantly Saami-speaking community where reindeer-herding is still a prominent occupation. It is also an educational centre for Sápmi, the Saami area that stretches over four nation-states.

The joik in this area differs dramatically from the traditions found elsewhere in Saami areas. In Kautokeino people often claim that further south and east they do not have ‘the real’ joik. In these areas, the Kautokeino purists claim, they ‘sing’. This means that they regard the joik traditions in these areas as more similar to other Scandinavian folk-song traditions. On the contrary, people from other places might characterize the Kautokeino joik by saying the performers ‘shout’ and use a strong and sharp voice (Hætta 1994: 70-72).

In pre-Christian times, the joik was an important part of the Noaidis' (the Saami ritual specialist in the schamanic tradition) techniques for reaching the trance that enabled them to move between different worlds. Joik was and still is connected to other realms than the religious. One can joik a person, and many individuals have their personal joik that can be joiked when people remember them. Joik might also describe and belong to particular places and animals. The joik can thus be seen as an expression of social and cultural belonging in an area and in Saami societies (Nordland 1993:54). A joik can express an individual's relationship to and experiences in a certain area, his or her relationship to animals living there, to the reindeer herd or to other people. The joik was also a practical tool used by the reindeer herders. By joiking they kept in contact with the other herders and became aware of their position in relation to the herd. The introduction of snowmobiles and mobile phones has now made joik less important in this work.

In the attempt to Christianise the Saami that gained momentum in the last part of the seventeenth century, the Noaidi and his techniques were the main target. Even if the Saami population had been in contact with Christianity much earlier – some of them were Christian, other practiced both Christianity and the Saami rites, while others still firmly rejected the new religion – the early part of the eighteenth century was a turning point in the mission among the Saami. This momentum can be traced to both the merger of Lutheranism with the formation of the Scandinavian states and these nations' ambitions of integrating the northern areas more tightly as a part of their respective areas (Hansen & Olsen 2005: 315 ff.). The period of Norwegianisation that began in the middle of the nineteenth century and lasted until at least the middle of the next, had further impact on the process of stigmatizing the Saami song tradition. Norwegianisation was a conscious policy aimed at integrating the population in the northern area administratively, economically, and culturally in the Norwegian nation-state. This integration made, among others, joik into a symbol of backwardness and poverty (Bjørklund

1988). When ‘entering modernity’ the joik was among the features that were supposed to be left behind.

Just as important an influence on the symbolic content of the joik is found in the Christian revival that occurred in the 1840s and 50s in northern Scandinavia. From Karesuando in Sweden, the teaching of Dean Lars Levi Læstadius spread among the Saami population in the northern area. This religious movement, known as Læstadianism, was not only a religious movement but also one of social change. Læstadius and his followers attacked the use of alcohol and the – usually Norwegian – liquor sellers. ‘The Devil’s pee’ or “the Worm’s pee”, as Læstadius in his imaginative language called alcohol, became one of the main signs of the division between sinners and the faithful. Both because of its strong relation to the Noaidi and the pre-Christian religion and because of its relations to drunkenness, the joik were also regarded as a symbol of the faithless (Bjørklund 1988). Like most Scandinavian people, many Saami people reach an emotional stage when drunk, and then often start to sing or joik. This emotional outlet was something that made joik into an activity that did not belong to the repertoire of the faithful Christian. The faithful had to turn his voice to another tune.²⁹

The joik as a symbol of an often-stigmatized Saami identity and its relation to a non-Christian way of living might explain why this song tradition has been suppressed in many local communities. This has been the case not only in those communities where people appropriated a Norwegian identity. Even in Kautokeino, where Saami costume and language have always been in use, there has been an attempt to suppress joik. In the middle of the twentieth century, there was a more or less official prohibition on joik in the municipal centre. Furthermore, the local education board prohibited joik and the use of it for educational purposes in schools in 1953. This decision was confirmed in 1961, 1976 and 1977 (Hætta 1994:72).

JOIK AS AN ETHNIC SYMBOL

Joik has had and still has a symbolical meaning in the division between non-believers and the faithful. But it has also a meaning as an important ethnic marker. In coastal areas in the post-war period, it became a symbol of a stigmatized Saami ethnic identity. To gain access to the Norwegian welfare state, what appeared as symbols of a Saami identity had to be left behind (Eidheim 1971: 56). As long as the main part of the population seemingly changed their identity to become Norwegian, the Saami identity and all that marked it out were looked upon as something that belonged to a past. This past had no place in the developing Norwegian welfare state. This view was also found in the interior, where Saami language and material culture were much more visible. The future was seen as being Norwegian in a Norwegian-cultured nation-state. This future perspective was changed by the ethno-political struggle for a cultural revival.

Recognition of the Saami as representing a tradition in contrast and complementary to the Norwegian culture thus makes it possible for Saami expressions and artefacts to be embraced by Norwegian institutions as though they were similar to their Norwegian counterparts.³⁰ In a broader public context, joik can be regarded as the traditional folk song of the Saami, similar to the Norwegian folk song and with similar aesthetic evaluations attached. By establishing this similarity in contrast, joik could gain the same recognition and the same founding practices in the Norwegian system of cultural policy. As traditional folk song, joik is also part of the global processes of tourism, world music and art music. By the conforming activity of national and international institutions, joik, in some particular contexts, becomes valued in discourses based upon criteria that to a certain degree have become disembedded from particular places. The same 'as-if' activity is also found with regard to the religious field. The Norwegian Church, eager to correct previous wrongs to the Saami, has included joik as suitable for their services. Hence joik becomes

similar to Norwegian song traditions, upon which many Norwegian psalms are based. It is also likened to other cultural traditions also embraced by the church. As an aesthetic expression within the framework of a European tradition, the music is rid of its former connotations of pre-Christian religion and its local webs of meaning.

By being embraced by various institutions, joik is increasingly being drawn into the realm of the genealogical sense of history. The genealogical sense of history is founded on general values. It is grounded in the idea of the nation or the *Folk*, and connected to the heritage and heredity of a certain group (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004: 7-8; Bendix 2000: 50). Objects and expressions are given symbolic value in the sense of history, as meant to express and contain the idea of continuity over time and an imagined community (Berkaak 1991:14). This historical sense is entangled in formal institutions like the academic profession, heritage preservation and museums. It receives its legitimacy from these institutions and dominates the academic literature; it is embedded in laws and enjoys a hegemony in the educational curriculum.

The genealogical sense of history contrasts with an organic sense. The latter relates to individuals' sense of continuity and their experiences shaped by time, space and relationships in an ever-changing life-course. In this sense of history, objects and expressions receive their meaning as a part of individual experiences and rely much less on general values. Obviously objects and expressions that have a part in the genealogical sense of history might also become a part of the organic sense of history of individuals (Olsen 1999, 2000a). But there is a huge difference in the manner of representation; where a genealogical representation relates to assumed global categories and is seemingly detached from what can be labelled local discourses, the organic sense of history has much more difficulty attempting representation. It relates to individualized experiences and local meaning in its expression, and has difficulty reaching a general audience. Often this view of the past is active when objects and expressions are discussed.

When Norway hosted the 1994 Winter Olympics, Saami culture was included as a part of the cultural exhibit. For many Norwegians living in the South, it came as a great surprise that some Saami people had strong objections to the inclusion of joik in this program. A lay preacher from Karasjok described the joik as a ‘parasite in Saami culture’ and claimed that it was a product of drunkenness and heathen beliefs (Solvang 1993). Another such example is from *Altaposten* (09.11.1994), a regional paper in Northern Norway. In an article, they reported that a member of a Pentecostal congregation had made a ‘joik to Jesus’. The joik had been performed at a meeting in Kautokeino where people said to be representing the indigenous Maori population of New Zealand had also been present. Several members of the congregation protested because the person who had made the joik was no longer a member of the Pentecostal congregation in Kautokeino. He had started his own congregation with the purpose of a mission among the Saami on the Kola Peninsula.

A preacher in the Pentecostal congregation as well as an individual that claimed not to be among the most faithful himself said, in an interview with the local paper, that it was not proper to bring joik into Christian services. He added that in churches it was the psalms, the organ and the sermon that should rule. Expressions that testify that joik does not fit neatly into institutional purposes in many local contexts are not difficult to find. The boundaries of where it is proper to joik, and whether or not it is proper to joik at all, differ dramatically from how joik is understood in most institutional discourses. An old woman remembered from her youth that, when they were haying, she and all the other workers would joik. An old reindeer herder passing by stopped and said to her: ‘No, no, no, you must not joik here. You have to go to the mountains to do that.’ That the meeting between local and institutional views is not so easy is also recognised by people prominent in the ethno-political movement. Former president of the Saami parliament, Ole Henrik Magga, who was born in a small settlement outside Kautokeino, told the papers, during the debate about joik in the Winter Olympics, that joik should not be a part of religious

services. His view was based upon local traditions, and he added that, even if both reindeer meat and cloudberries are delicious foods, you do not mix them into the same dish (Solvang 1993).

DEFICIT OF MEANING

The view on joik found in most institutional discourses, both global and national, represents a shortage of meaning compared to what is found in a local context. This is also the case for the Norwegian Church, which in general tends to see joik as a folk-song tradition stripped of most of its connotation to the pre-Christian religion, drunkenness and a local Saami aesthetic view. Music is usually regarded as neutral in itself, a purely aesthetic matter separate from morality and politics. The Church has embraced Saami culture in many ways as if it was equivalent to Norwegian and this causes conflict when local views contest the institutional ones. Such conflicts can be analysed as an encounter between genealogical and organic views of the past, where the latter relates to religious beliefs by the fact that it reflects individual experiences which have caused strong and long-lasting modes and sentiments that make up religious beliefs (Geertz 1973:90).

In the genealogical sense of the past, the joik represents a continuity in the Saami tradition but also the heredity of an imagined group of people. Obviously not every part of this past has found a place in this rather aesthetic view of music. The joik's relationship to non-Christian religion is not emphasised. Nor are many other features that are found in local contexts a part of this view. It is instead the general values of the Western notion of the *Folk* that are highlighted. The joik as symbolic of Saaminess is highlighted, its expression of a folk tradition and its commensurability with other folk tunes.

This apprehension of the joik can be contrasted with the view expressed in an interview by a woman in her late sixties (Johansen & Solli 1994; Olsen, Johansen

& Solli 1994).³¹ Her family were *dalomat* – settled Saami farmers – in a small village on the outskirts of the municipality of Kautokeino. In her view the joik has no place in Christian congregations and it is impossible for a Christian to praise the Lord by joik. A longer excerpt from the interview shows this view, together with many other different meanings of Joik:

‘In the way I know joik, from my childhood and my youth, and as I think today, joik is a melody that belongs to the Saami. Joik is a melody and you joik without music. I believe that it is that joik that is the real joik, without music. At the time when people were living in the mountains, and there they would joik, and everyone had their own joik. They, the Saami, were clever to make a melody for each individual Saami. Each of them had their own melody. In particular those who had a high reputation, and everyone, yes, everyone had their own melody. Yes – joik as it is called. But the reason that older people do not like joik, and we Christians do not like it, is that they had to be drunk. Then they would joik, and it was not the custom in those days that you would joik in the house or when you were sober.

But when they drank they would joik and make a spectacle. I remember the first time I heard a man joiking. I knew he was drunk and I was so afraid. I was terribly afraid. I was thinking that he was going to eat me. Then my mother said: It’s not as dangerous as it sounds. And that was true. I felt horrified and was terribly afraid. What has damaged the joik is that they joik when they are drunk, and that clings to us older people, and even the younger ones. There is too much joik when they are drunk, and if they get angry with another Saami, or, they threaten them. And they swear and it is such a terrible noise they make – but there are also joik they joik with love. If they are in love with a girl, or if it is someone they like. Then it was

a more quiet joik, but they had to do it when they were drunk. It was not the custom to joik at those times.

It happened when they were on the mountain, and the boys were driving the reindeer in the moonlight – in such a romantic setting – then they joiked. Then they could also be sober. It was not as if the joik had its place there and there. There was a kind of boundary. What has made a problem for the joik is that they did it when drunk. However, I look upon joik today from another angle. I have read a little bit more, and have been thinking about it, and it is only a melody that belongs to the Saami. It is such a distinct melody. How can I explain it, 2/3 time?

This long excerpt shows different features, which continue through the rest of the interview. First of all it shows that joik is in opposition to a Christian behaviour. In this woman's view this is not because of the joik itself but because people have damaged the joik by joiking when drunk. This relationship between joik and drunkenness might be explained as a result of the massive repression of Saami culture that occurred in the pre-war period, both as a part of the Norwegianisation process and the impact of Christian beliefs. It might also be explained by the strong emotional content of joik, which is well suited as an expression when drunk. In all events, it became a symbol for improper behaviour for the Christian Saami.

The improper behaviour also points to another feature of joik. This song tradition is also used to insult, threaten and to curse other people. This is a feature seldom recognised when joik is explained as a melody that can belong to distinct individuals. The joik someone makes to you is not always particularly flattering. As Nordland (1993) points out, joik is an expression of social and cultural belonging in a Saami society but, as in most societies, it does not always express social cohesion and peaceful relations. It can also express conflicts and strife between individuals and families.

The danger this woman felt the first time she heard a joik was experienced in a predominantly Saami-speaking community by a girl who at that moment had no mastery of the Norwegian language. As a member of a Christian Saami community, she grew up in a society where joik symbolized boundaries between people. Because of this, she has experienced different encounters, different places and relationships in her life-course that upheld this division between joik and Christianity. These experiences have caused long-lasting moods and sentiments that not easily are altered by a more ‘rational’ explanation. Emotionally she relates joik to liquor and non-Christian behaviour, which was something she experienced in her youth. At that time people who became Christian turned their voice to the Christian melody. She recollects:

‘I know a older lady, she is 80 years old, and she is from [...]. She was clever at joiking when she was young. When she joiked, you could hear her all over the valley. She turned to God when she was quite young. Then she started with Christian melodies. She turned her voice to an other melody.’

Her view is made up by such experiences, which have made a distinction between Christianity and joik, but also by other boundaries for joik and an aesthetic view of this tradition.

In her opinion, it was not the custom to joik in the village, except when drunk. Neither was it the custom to joik inside, even if the family was not Christian. Her view is that this shows the respect the Saamis have for Christianity. People did not joik if Christians were present, and in weddings where often several hundred people might be present, they tried to respect the Christian view. She remembers an occasion when they had a Christian house meeting. Two drunken men entered the house joiking, but when they realized what was going on, they shamefully withdrew. In her opinion the joik belongs to the mountains and in this view it is also an aesthetic element.

She tells that she had read in the paper that a bishop had expressed the opinion that Christians too could joik. In her view this is something he said because he does not know what joik is. He just wanted to be kind to the Saami. She also rejects the use of joik in Southern Saami liturgy, first of all because they do not have the real joik – the Kautokeino tradition – and then because a Priest who has never lived in the mountains can never be able to joik. Even if she had not heard it, she was convinced that he was singing because joik is not something you can be taught in school. This is also her attitude to the use of joik in the educational curriculum:

‘I have an opinion about joik. It will be taught in the school but it is not the same. A joik belongs to nature, it is the melody of nature. You cannot, a teacher cannot stand up and attempt to joik. I believe not many can joik as they did before, and as some still do today.

Now they have spoiled the joik: even worse, it is no longer natural because now they use music. That does not belong to the Saami culture that they go on to a stage and joik and scream. But I can’t direct the world.

Real joik, well you can’t say real joik. I believe, real joik is something that happens on the mountain, and people who were born and grew up there have shared joiks between them.’

As Hætta also points out, this aesthetic view is a not an uncommon feature of older people’s attitude to joik. With regard to the prohibition of joik in the school in Kautokeino, Hætta claims that this was not only on behalf of Christian values. An aesthetic view was also taken into consideration: ‘A majority of the school board were older people who realized that the teachers did not master joik and had no competence to teach it’ (Hætta 1994:72; my translation). A similar view was expressed in the interview. A teacher could

not simply stand up and try to teach everybody to joik. The close relationship to nature and to living in nature that is attached to joik in this aesthetic view makes it close to impossible to teach in school. For the non-Christian the joik could be a profane way to praise nature, but the association with drunkenness made it impossible for, in particular older, Christians to do this: 'We have been taught that it is sinful, and that clings to us. Today I am of the opinion that it is a profane melody. It is not more sinful to joik than many other things, but it does not belong to the Christian tradition'.

HERITAGE IN THE PRESENT: THE GENEALOGICAL VS. THE ORGANIC SENSE OF HISTORY

Heritage, in its origin, is a concept that is attached mainly to a genealogical sense of history. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, this is a view on the past that has been embraced by institutional policy, law and academic institutions. As a primarily Western phenomenon, the idea of heritage has developed as part of the idea of the nation-state. It has as its prerequisite the idea that the past can be detached from the experiences of the individuals who were part of it, and be attached to and made into a representation of an abstract unit as a people. This idea also necessitates a relativistic view that such abstract units as peoples can be compared with each other as similar but different. As the Norwegian nation has its past, it is also possible to conceptualize the history and culture of the Saami people inside the frames of the category that supposedly characterizes such an abstract ideological unit. The Saami had their distinct ecological adaptation, their particular tradition of costume, languages and song. All these cultural features are transformable into the political realm, where certain rights are granted to a people. The ethno-political struggle for Saami political rights presupposed such a transformation of culture into this realm so that the Saami could be comparable to the Norwegian. This mainly political process necessitates detaching the past from the immediate experience and subsuming

it into a general level where it can be regarded as though it were similar to other people's history. The same must be done with a cultural feature like song.

This implies general categories in which the different expressions can be made commensurable. In such a general category, folk music appears as an expression of a distinct culture but also inside new aesthetic frames. With regard to the latter, folk music enters a realm where a purely aesthetic judgment results in a deficit of meaning at the same time as the inclusion in the category of culture results in an excess of meaning.

To make a song tradition like joik into a popular aesthetic form of expression represents such a deficit and addition of meaning. It also makes it possible to 'lift' the joik out of the social contexts in which it previously had and still has its place. Such an aesthetic view detaches the joik from its use by the pre-Christian shamans, an expression used to curse people, and makes it simply an expression and not a feature of drunkenness. Its elevation to the general sphere of cultural heritage makes it possible to use joik in new situations. The bishop can decide that it is an aesthetic Saami tradition which might be used in services. Pentecostal preachers can use it in their congregations, and in addition it can serve as a global connection to other fourth-world peoples present in Kautokeino, like the Maori.

That the joik might be regarded as distinct from social contexts is a view that is also expressed in the transcript of the interview presented above. This woman had in her later years reached the conclusion that joik was the music of the Saami, a profane music, that for her and for others of her generation was destroyed by its use by non-Christians. As she also pointed out, for her it was still difficult to make the distinction between the expression and social contexts. This is a view based on an organic sense of the past, where experiences have formed the attitude towards joik. Such experiences make it difficult to detach joik from drunkenness and to dissolve old boundaries that once regulated its

use. The same applies to her aesthetic view on joik. This is a view that attaches joik to a certain form of life, certain ways of performance, and to certain occasions. The real joik and the good joik, is the local joik that she heard in her youth. It is the joik that was joiked with love by the boys driving their reindeer on the mountain, the joik of the people who had a semi-nomadic adaptation and spent most of their life with the herds. This is not a joik that she expects a Priest might have learned, and in her opinion it is impossible to learn this expression in school. In this view, joik is part of an organic sense of history that contests the general spheres found in the genealogical sense. Joik cannot be compared with other song traditions because its meaning and its aesthetics cannot be regarded without reference to the social context experienced by the individual. For many people at the coast and the fjord areas this was a context dominated by shame because of the stigma put on a Saami identity. The joik was among those features that should be left behind when entering the Norwegian welfare state as a Norwegian.

However, the cultural apprehension of a song tradition can be altered. Brought into new social contexts, joik has developed into an art for a larger audience. This is a fairly rapid development that has occurred in the last thirty years in some Saami communities. An example of this change is the joik contests that take place during the Easter celebration in Kautokeino. The celebration has developed from being the traditional time of weddings in the municipality – due to the seasonal reindeer migrations– into a large festival attended by locals, people with relatives in the municipality and tourists. Among many of the events that take place throughout the week is a joik contest. The traditional vocal joik is performed as well as a separate class for more modern Saami music where joik is accompanied by music. In the early 1970s the context for this event, called the Sámi Grand Prix, was shaped by local traditions. Hætta (2003a: 69) tells that dogs were walking around in the hall where the concert took place. The performers were accompanied by barking dogs and crying infants. One year a man walked onto the stage because he was unaware of the

necessity of registering for the competition in advance. During the concert it was common for some among the audience to start joiking. In particular at the entrance several joikers performed alongside with the competitors on stage. As Hætta (2003a: 69) stresses, no one was thrown out because the parallel performances were not meant to compete with the contestants. They were just spontaneous expressions inspired by the other joiks. There were many skilled joikers among the audience and they had no knowledge of performing on stage or of how this should be done in the context of Western art. Today, thirty years later, the Western way of performing has become internalized among the audience in Kautokeino. Now, no one starts to joik during the contest unless they are on stage. As in the church service, the joik has been stripped of some meaning, and some meaning formerly unknown in a local context has been added. This use of joik as an art form still stirs resistance and criticism from elderly people familiar with the old values attached to this song tradition which they either relate to sinful behaviour or a despised Saami past. But new generations that encounter the song tradition in new contexts shaped by national institutions attach their meaning to the joik and have started to make it a part of their everyday life, even if in a form that violates many older peoples' aesthetics.

CONCLUSION

I have argued that the use of joik in Christian assemblies presupposes a genealogical view of the past. This is a view that, in the case of joik, detaches the expression from many of the experiences that are connected to the use of the song tradition. This detachment also represents a deficit of meaning, in which certain views and experiences are denied access and deemed irrelevant to the apprehension of the joik. A reattachment is necessary for the tradition to continue inside the frames of modern institutions. This also applies to the Norwegian Church, which wishes to integrate a Saami culture as though it were the Norwegian culture. In this view, joik is an aesthetic expression of a

folk tradition. But such abstract units necessitate a departure from the organic view on history as expressed by many older Saami people as well as the organic view of their peers in fjord areas. Alternatively, the institutional continuation of a tradition creates new organic views that maintain joik as a living tradition.

The distinction between an organic and a genealogical sense of history invokes other oppositions that are crucial in Western thought. Traditional and modern, authentic and inauthentic, and organic and genealogical are all oppositions that endanger the continuation of a Joik in a modern institution such as the Norwegian Church, which embraces a genealogical view on history. This makes it necessary to say that all experiences of culture belong to the organic sense, even in new institutional settings. It is experience in local contexts that makes different and new modes and sentiments, but subjects are attached to new discourses of national and global scale, which makes new experiences possible. Hence the heteroglot and processual character of culture.

Representations in institutionalized discourse build upon an organic sense of history. The past and culture are transformed into heritage, and this co-optation changes the expressions. Heritage implies continuity between the past, the present and the future. As heritage, the cultural expressions are lumped together, expressing putative wholes that no longer necessarily represent a scholarly view but which serve the needs of identity politics. Implicit in the idea of heritage is the assumption that this is someone's heredity, and this someone is usually delimited by institutional discourses. In Finnmark, institutions make up certain classificatory spaces where a radical difference between distinct ethnic groups is upheld and reinforced. What make this possible is not only the spatial divisions of socially constructed arenas but also the temporal division that is evoked by the ordering between an indigenous population and a modern one. As the debate on joik shows, this discursive ordering is contested when it is taken out of the institutional discursive frames.

Chapter 6

ENTERING MODERNITY: EVERYDAY SYMBOLS OF IDENTITY

IN THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS I ANALYSED the dominant discourse as it is materialised in different public institutions. What the institutional discourses that dominate the public realm have in common are: 1) they represent a heritage that is assumed to determine belonging today; 2) they create a distinction between the indigenous Saami and modernity; and 3) what in these discourses appear as the major differences in the area are conceptualised in ethnic terms. The ethnic categories of dominant discourse are equated with Kven, Saami and Norwegian, as three ethnic groups, each represented with a reified culture in which emphasis is put on differences, i.e. boundaries. Two features of this discourse that become crucial are the prominence of the idea of cultural continuity and the difference between the traditional and the modern that are the foundation of the ascription of particular political rights to some and not to others. At this political level one is forced to choose an either/or affirmation.

In other parts of everyday life this discourse on differences in ethnic terms usually has to give way to other traditions of conceptualising differences. Rather than differences, the discourses in the quotidian emphasise belonging and

ever-changing communities. Such an emphasis is often necessary in an area that can be described as a ‘cultural borderland’ as well as being fully embedded in the differentiating processes of modern society. Despite the nation-states’ need for categorical order cast in ethnic terms, this dominant discourse becomes only one of several possible ways of categorising processes in an everyday life where community is created from context and purpose.

The hegemony of the dominant discourse found in certain cultural spaces like public institutions, national politics and media is seldom prominent in other fields of everyday discourses. Still, on some occasions the conceptual repertoire of the dominant discourse gains hegemony and blurs boundaries in everyday discourse. This chapter describes and analyses three cases where the everyday discourse comes under pressure from the ethnic vocabulary of dominant discourse. The first case is the debate sparked by the municipal authorities in Alta when, during the 1990s, they stubbornly refused to raise the Saami flag outside the town hall on the Saami People’s Day, the 6th of February. The second case is the debate stirred by the leader of the Norske Samers Riksforbund (NSR) when he insisted on using his mother tongue, Saami, in a public debate in Alta. The third is three chronicles, published in several regional papers, by the former leader and cofounder of the NSR and academic, Odd Mathis Hætta, in which he attacks the current NSR leadership because of their alleged nationalistic ambitions and the claim – which Hætta rejects – that the Saami are an indigenous people according to the criteria set out by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Notwithstanding an ethnic revival, in which Saami culture in particular becomes prominent and visible in a dominant discourse that is materialised in many public institutions, this seldom causes any controversy in the quotidian. What the three cases under consideration demonstrate is what happens when the conceptual ordering of the dominant discourse is brought into everyday discourse. This implies that Saami culture, conceptualised as a counterpart,

becomes something on which one needs to take a stand in everyday life. A Saami identity then becomes something that no longer can be categorized as belonging to the interior of the country or to those who have actively sought this part of their descent. When the matter of Saaminess is brought into new realms of everyday life by public institutions on the coast, the everyday distinction between us and them becomes blurred and has to be defended. The reaction is a denial of access to certain cultural spaces and/or a contestation of some basic assumptions in the dominant discourse.

I will argue that the main reason such minor matters as the use of flags outside the town hall and the use of language at a public meeting few people actually attended can stir such controversy is that in this area the concept 'Norwegian' becomes a fragile idea. The dominant discourse creates highly visible and bounded entities of seemingly traditional minority cultures, and in the case of the Saami one, with a core in the interior. What remains as Norwegian is the rest, or rather the pragmatic side of modernity, that is not set out as something else. When minority cultures get access to this modernity, they place some demands on those who do not feel a part of the dominant image of the minorities. One of these demands is to create boundaries that demarcate what local Norwegianness is not. In this way, local Norwegian culture becomes a negation of what in dominant discourses is represented as a highly distinct bounded indigenous culture. Therefore it is necessary to uphold boundaries between different cultural constructed spheres.

CATEGORIES IN EVERYDAY DISCOURSE

Previous chapters in this book have shown how dominant discourse situates Kven culture as something in the past that has to be protected from a modernity in which it is assumed to have no place. The Saami culture is represented, in museums and in tourism, as a distinct tradition separate from the Norwegian

tradition. In tourism, the Saami are singled out as an exotic attraction opposed to modern life. Joik becomes a symbol that is contrasted to Norwegian song tradition and is linked to a certain way of life. All these institutions create clear-cut boundaries between separate categories and divide ‘the ethnics’ from modern everyday life. This way of thinking in ethnic categories relates to the political field. At the macro and median levels to which the dominant discourse refers, ethnicity takes on a cogent existential reality to which people are forced to relate (Comaroff & Comaroff 1992: 62-63). This is the categorical order of the nation. But as Malkii (1995: 3-4, 6) writes, in relation to a quite different context, everyday life is often characterised by identities one moves in and out of and by a refusal to be categorised and fixed within national categories. Such an attitude is a necessity when the aim is to create communality in ever changing contexts.

As Kramvig (1999: 119) describes the political debate in Finnmark, the cultural categories it contains do not match people’s own experience. The categories of Kven, Saami and Norwegian do not cover the variety of quotidian and individual understanding. Nor does the ethnic vocabulary of the dominant discourse fit old ways of categorisation in the area. Drawing upon ethnographic material from a small settlement in a fjord close to Alta, Kramvig (1999: 127) shows how terms like *Finn*, *Fjellfinn*, *Fjording* and *Fjordfinn* were previously viable categories used in encounters with people. Not one of these categories covers or is covered by the ethnic term Saami in the dominant discourse that implies a community with a common culture. Kramvig (1999: 117, 137) argues that, in contemporary coastal Finnmark, flexible and open categories and, in particular, belonging to places are most important in everyday discourse.

Frøydis Eidheim (1993: 43 ff.) describes how, in the coastal community of Honningsvåg, the locals understand themselves in contrast to and as a negation of the categories *Søring* – Southern – and *Finnan*. The latter category could be divided into people in the interior who have their summer pastures

in the local area, *Fjellfinnan*, political activists and a more diffuse group said to have Saami ancestry (F. Eidheim 1993: 58). Furthermore, all uses of these categories depend on a rather specific local knowledge, context and purpose (F. Eidheim 1993: 58 ff.). In Honningsvåg, *Finn* is a category that can also be used in a derogatory manner to describe unwanted actions. As Kramvig (1999: 127) indicates, these categories refer to differences in economic adaptation, a different way of life and a belonging outside the local community. They depend on a belonging in a local community and a local knowledge that, in the late 1950s, enabled locals to situate people inside frames of such a vocabulary in a relatively large area (Eidheim 1971: 54-55). Nevertheless, such categories are not necessarily ethnic in the terms of the dominant discourse. They point primarily to belonging in the local community, a belonging that many people achieve in spite of the way they are conceptualised in dominant discourse. As long as you behaved like a local you could be included, even if in other contexts a relation to *Finnan* could be used against you. This is a flexibility discourses within contexts defined by public institutions deny.

The socio-cultural context of the local community thus becomes important for understanding the local categories of identity. In the case of Alta, as well as other places in Finnmark, it is difficult to transfer local categories when they aim to create communities in a process directed by context and purpose. As Frøydis Eidheim (1993: 47 ff.) and Kramvig (1999: 119 ff.) describe local categories of identity on the coast of Finnmark, they are based on, usually thorough, local knowledge, places and categories that differ from those found in the dominant discourse. Moreover, just as belonging in a community is often based on common local knowledge, the local identity is also based on what ‘we’ are not. As Frøydis Eidheim puts it, writing about Honningsvåg:

‘The coastal population emphasise their particularity by negations. They are not Saami. They also emphasise the major difference between them and “the Southerners”, yet they regard themselves as

being of the same order as “the Southerners” because they are both Norwegians as opposed to “Finnan” (1993: 60; my translation).³²

This makes local Norwegian culture what a highly visible Saami culture represented in dominant discourse is not, as well as excluding behaviour regarded as belonging to the category Finnan in everyday discourse. Still, negation as a basis for belonging makes it hard to generalise about local coastal Norwegian culture as long as belonging and the continuous construction of local communities depend on highly local knowledge set in a particular context. This creates a need for attention to a micro level: ‘... the management of selves in the complex context of relationships’ (Barth 1994: 21), or as Eidheim wrote more than thirty years ago: ‘We must bear in mind that it is the general character of *local* ecology and society which provide the meaningful context in which a Lappish/Norwegian ethnic dichotomy is articulated’ (1971: 67; italics in original). Therefore, the contemporary contexts make it necessary to take under consideration a reflexive modernity as well as the current mobility of people, which characterise the meaningful context for identity articulation in Finnmark’s largest town, Alta.

ALTA

Alta is sometimes provocatively called the largest Saami town in Finnmark. The town is not located on what in Finnmark is regarded as the coast – actually people from ‘the real’ coast use it as a contrast to themselves – but at the end of the long Alta Fjord. Even if Alta lacks the close proximity to the fisheries and much of the sociality ascribed to coastal communities like Honningsvåg, it still shares some features with them. One of these is that the dominant majority of the population regard themselves as Norwegian yet different from ‘Southerners’. The municipality covers 3,845 square kilometres. The majority of the population, approximately 12,000 out of a little

over 18,000 people, are settled in the town centre. The town centre was previously made up of two villages, Bossekop and Elvebakken, situated about ten kilometres from each other. Among people born and raised in the town, there is still a strong sense of belonging to the distinct villages, but this is more seldom the case among newcomers even if most are aware of the differences. Newcomers are also an important part of the town. Since the 1960s the town has experienced more or less continuous growth. This is something quite extraordinary in Finnmark, where most towns and municipalities have undergone a fall in population. The increase is due to Alta's development into an educational and commercial centre in the western part of the region. People from both the Southern part of the country and other places in the North have moved to Alta. It is not uncommon that people who come from Finnmark move to Alta if they return to the area after living some years in the South. Still, many people move out of the town each year. The annual growth stems mainly from births. Hence, the town today is a place where you are always meeting strangers and newcomers.

What is now the municipality of Alta was, until 1963, two separate municipalities: Alta and Talvik. Alta used to cover the area in the bottom of the fjord and extend to the high plateau, where it bordered on the municipality of Kautokeino. Talvik was made up by the western and eastern fjord areas, divided by the Alta Fjord. In earlier times, when people travelled by boat, this was a reasonable division; but when the automobile became the common mode of transport, this organisation proved to be awkward. A certain pattern of ethnic dominance was found in the nineteenth century. The western fjord area, in particular Langfjorden, was dominated by coastal Saami settlements. The exception was the end of the fjord, where Kvens made up a majority until the 1930s (Eikeseth 1998: 198-199). The church and trade centre, Talvik, was a Norwegian area. For a long time, Kåfjord was set apart by being under the jurisdiction of the Mining Laws, *Bergverkslovene*. The population was made up of British directors and miners from a Southern Norwegian and Kven background. The

western part of what today is the town centre was mainly Norwegian and the eastern part was Kven.

Saami families were scattered around, while the eastern valley, Tverrelvdalen, was largely inhabited by Southern Norwegian farmers from Østerdalen. Further east, the Kvens dominated Rafsbotten. The eastern fjord settlements were mainly dominated by coastal Saami. In the interior the vast areas were used by the semi-nomadic reindeer herders (Eikeseth 1998: 198 ff.; Nielsen 1995: 196 ff.). This picture is further nuanced by frequent intermarriage and multi-linguism, but it represents the main distribution of the ethnic groups in the area. The 1910 census indicates that the Saami and Kven minorities were still prominent at the beginning of the last century. As previously described, the dominant groups were distributed in certain locations even if most settlements were fairly heterogeneous. Kolsrud, with the ‘colonial nostalgia’ of observing a vanishing culture, reports from a settlement in the outer western part of the fjord: ‘.., it is now difficult to make a sharp distinction between Norwegian and Saami’ (1955: 95; my translation).³³

The decrease in the official numbers of the Saami population can be seen in that only 1,277 people in Alta and the neighbouring municipality of Kvalsund had registered as Saami on the 2005 electoral rolls, even though the population in Alta is five times larger than in 1910. In the 1910 population census, 990 out of 4,842 people in what is now the municipality of Alta were listed as Saami. Hence, the shifting ethnic categories of the pre-World War Two censuses do not tell us everything about ethnic relations in the area. They say little, for example, about the local apprehensions of differences, yet they point to a heterogeneous population with a certain ethnic distribution that had an impact. However, frequent intermarriage among different groups, attachment to several different groups, and the multilingualism of the area are not covered.

Turning to the contemporary context, the multiculturalism of the pre-war censuses is much more difficult to see. The physical appearance of the town gives

an initial impression of being purely Norwegian. Like most other places in Finnmark, as well as in the so-called Saami core areas, there is little that tells outsiders that the old market place in Bossekop was the meeting place of ‘the three tribes’ and that people of different ethnic backgrounds live here. The former market place now is partly a potato field behind the buildings of the Motor Norge car dealership, and the rest is covered by local housing developments.

Traces of the different ethnic groups are, among others, found in the museum, in brochures for the tourists, and one hotel has used coastal Saami culture as their theme. People coming to the town probably become aware of the unfamiliarity of the names of some places. Shielding that announces places with names like Kaiskuru and Gakori, which come from Kven dialects, is not common in Southern Norway. Occasionally visitors from the interior also add to the notion of multiculturalism in everyday life, either because they wear traditional Saami costume or use the typical style of reindeer-herders’ equipment. It is common to hear Russian spoken, but today Russians are no longer so easily recognised by differences in style. In the winter, snowmobiles on trailers and in the summer, the frequency of All Terrain Vehicles can cause some surprise among visitors from the more urban parts of Southern Norway.

Observant visitors and locals can also notice other particularities. Dried fish or reindeer meat hanging on the verandas and fenced by nets to protect it from the birds is a characteristic feature. To a certain extent, this can indicate the house owner’s background as either from the coastal area – fish – or from the interior – meat, but the owner might just as well be a Southern Norwegian. Most locals have other ways to characterize people’s background with regard to local belonging in the town centre. Elvebakken and in particular Kronstad have the reputation of being strongholds of Kvens and Læstadianism (Olsen 1993). Everyone knows that Kronstad has a reputation for having been a Kven settlement in the past. Few places are particularly known for being Saami. Small places in the fjord and towards the interior are usually known to be or

to have been Saami. Still it is possible to encounter people born and raised locally that are not aware of any 'Saami places' close to the town centre. Others can point out one or two 'Saami places' situated at each end of the centre. In fact, all around the outskirts of the town centre one can find Saami families that have been living there for a long time. The Saami language is still spoken by the people living in these places, and the inhabitants of one of them made their living as reindeer herders until recently.

Knowledge about persons is also something that can be used to invoke ethnicity as an ordering principle in the local community. People engaged in ethno-politics, those who stress their ethnicity, people from Saami areas, which means for the most part the interior, and knowledge of a Saami background can be made relevant in interaction and when talking about people. But what can easily be described as a Saami past does not necessarily mean that a person is regarded as a Saami. More important is how they now appear, whether they claim to be Norwegian or Saami and make this significant, for many people in the area have a mixed background. Often self-ascription is crucial. If no background is explicitly stated, one is seldom regarded as Saami but is assumed to be local, Norwegian, a Southerner or from someplace in the North, when identity is relevant. In all events, everyone is expected to have mastered cultural skills and performances that appear as Norwegian.

Saami identity may be regarded as relevant for interaction because of behaviour that is assumed to fit into the stereotypes of the Saami (Olsen 1997: 235). An informant told me about a friend she felt sorry for in her youth. Her friend was regarded as Norwegian but when her aunts came to visit them they acted and dressed like Saami – or rather the local category, *Finnan* from the interior – and thereby exposed her friend's mother as Saami. Other people she had known from her childhood she had never imagined could be Saami, even if both their parents were born in communities that until, World War Two, were predominantly Saami. This applied to persons who even had the physical features

many locals usually ascribe to Saami. As long as they behaved like everyone else, they all fell into the local Norwegian category. This indicates that a Saami identity for people born on the coast often has to be an active statement or they are assumed to be Norwegian in most contexts. Everyday life seldom singles people out as Saami, and to indicate such an identity was in many contexts an individual choice and not ascribed by others. This became clear to me when one of my former neighbour's daughters, on the 17th of May – the Norwegian national holiday – showed up in traditional Saami dress. I had known the family for three years, and it had never been my experience that any of them had said anything about ethnic background except for the wife in the family, who was born in Southern Norway. Because of our common background, we had discussed the strange habits of 'them' – the natives. In the context of everyday encounters, ethnicity had never been an ordering principle or a matter of discussion, even though the distinction between Southerners and people from the North was a frequent topic. That the husband in the family can trace his descent to a fjord area makes it quite possible that he comes from a Saami family. In all events, this is a meaning that has to be attached actively to this category. In itself it does not refer to ethnicity but it does include a potential for several categorisations.

On other occasions, ethnicity is a matter for negotiation. At a pub, I ended up sitting at a table with some strangers. Three of the men were workmates. After a few drinks, one of them continuously and jokingly referred to the other's place of birth in a community in eastern Finnmark that is regarded as Saami. This was obviously an attempt to tease the man, but no one else at the table took any notice of this. We continued to discuss our common experiences of the main roads between Kristiansand and Stavanger in Southern Norway that the supposed Saami, as a former truck driver, knew well. That ethnicity often is kept out as an ordering principle of a context is sometimes remarkable because of the common pattern of talk in the area. If people do not know each other they, usually engage in questioning about where the

other was born, where her or his family comes from, and in that way try to figure out mutual acquaintances and friends. Usually you do not need much knowledge about the past ethnic patterns of settlement to be able to detect the likelihood of a Saami past, but this is seldom done. One of the reasons for this is that such a past, on such occasions, seldom has a determining effect on the present context partly because ethnicity in the quotidian is a private matter that is for the individual itself to make relevant. If no one does, the collective identity of Finnmarking, Northern or locality is usually evoked. One night I went salmon fishing with a friend and we had a drink with a fly fisher who had his camp further down the river. The two locals soon started asking each other about fellow acquaintances, relatives and backgrounds, something that enabled me to situate them, according to the dominant discourse, as having a background in two distinct ethnic groups. This was never mentioned in their conversation. All the time, the ordering principle was our different backgrounds from the various parts of the North and the South, which explained my lack of skill as a salmon fisher.

One of the characteristics of Alta can be said to be the privatisation of ethnicity. With many newcomers and characterised to a certain degree by flux and fluidity in peoples, a state of change that is added to by being an educational centre, it is often up to the individual to decide whether or not to emphasise being something other than Norwegian. If one decides to do so, one has a whole range of possibilities, from engagement in Saami and Kven politics and the respective local and national organisations, to keeping it a strictly private matter, or sometimes using traditional Saami costume on occasions like weddings, the 17th May, and confirmations, when it is regarded normal for both Norwegians and Saami to use traditional costume. What is important is that such statements have different implications according to whether they are regarded as private or public-political or they are made in such a way and in such contexts that ethnicity is relevant. And, as I will argue further in the next chapter, proper conduct often depends on the statement's implications for others'

identity, and these implications differ in different contexts. Therefore, it might seem surprising when what appears as peaceful co-existence in everyday life suddenly turns into fierce protection of ethnic boundaries.

Reluctance to use the Saami flag on the Saami national day and quarrels about which languages it is proper to use in a public debate might seem like minor matters in an area where ethno-politics has flourished the last thirty years. These cases are of interest because they highlight some important features of the discourses about ethnicity and ethnic boundaries in the area. They take Saami symbols out of classificatory spaces defined by public institutions and into new spaces where everyday discourses claim that such symbols have no place. They reveal the incongruity between different levels of discourse. Furthermore, these examples are also related to other cases, some of them minor some of them not; such as what is felt to be unwillingness on the part of the municipal authorities to support the building of a Saami centre, the shooting of road signs in Saami and, ultimately, the discourse on Saami rights to the land that is the result of the work of the Saami Rights Commission, *Samerettsutvalget*. In this way it is possible to speak of intertextuality between discourses (Briggs 1993). These cases thus relate to the question of political power in the area – a relation set in ethnic terms by dominant discourse – that potentially influence the everyday life of most people living in Finnmark. Moreover, such cases also have an impact on everyday discursive features about Saami, Norwegian and Northern Norwegian identity. Put succinctly, all these debates can be seen as lying at the interface of two levels of discourses. Dominant discourses which imply that a Saami heritage also entails a Saami present – despite other belongings – and discourses that are predominantly regional and local and which state that, for most people on the coast, the Saami heritage belongs to the past and has little if any practical impact on everyday life, i.e. discourses with the main purpose of creating belonging in a local context.

What the cases analysed here do, regardless of their practical importance, is to blur boundaries in many of the present discourses on ethnicity found in a

regional field, at the same time as they break down conceptual boundaries created by the dominant discourse on ethno-politics. These two discourses have in common the fact that they can both be used to create boundaries between a Saami interior and a Norwegian coast. In the processes of boundary maintenance, they rely on conceptual differences that situate the Saami in the past and in the interior, as indigenous, in contrast to a modern Norwegian identity located in the present. These discourses differ in their aim for the future, their view of the present, many of their basic assumptions and in ideology, but are equally well-suited to maintaining established boundaries.

THE CHOICE OF LANGUAGE IN PUBLIC MEETINGS

The Saami language – or more accurately the Northern Saami dialect that seems to have become a synonym for the Saami language – is still used by a majority of the population in the interior. Among people on the coast and the fjord areas, fluency in this language is quite uncommon except for old people. Command of the Saami language became a symbol, in the Norwegianisation period, of backwardness, while the ethno-political movement made it into a symbol of a surviving Saami culture. To be able to speak Saami fluently as a mother tongue is probably at the inner core of the skills and performances Thuen (1995: 262) points to as articulating a Saami minority identity. The practical use of language in multicultural contexts has thus been subdued to the advantage of its function as a symbolic marker. As a symbol, the Saami language seems to represent a continuum along which people can be situated somewhere between a Saami core and a Norwegian modernity (Olsen 1997: 231, 238). Consequently, language can be used as a symbolic statement that orders the population into certain categories.

On Friday the 4th of February 2000, a research group at Finnmark University College, Urfolksgruppa – the Research Group for Indigenous Peoples – held

a public meeting at which the proposals put forward by the Saami Rights Commission were supposed to be discussed. The day of the meeting was deliberately chosen because the Saami People's Day, the 6th of February, fell on a Sunday. Prominent local and regional politicians, who opposed the proposals, were invited from coastal municipalities and were to meet the President of the Saami Parliament and Janos Trosten, the leader of the NSR, the largest party in the Saami Parliament. Unfortunately President Nystø was unable to attend because of sickness. The debate was led by Jahn-Arne Olsen, the editor of *Finnmark Dagblad*, who previously had kept a high profile in the debate about Saami rights. The stated aim of the research group was to bring together different views in a public debate that the media had polarized. They also wanted to inform people about the facts concerning the Saami Rights Commission's proposals, which were originally published as a White Paper to the Parliament of several hundred pages, and, one can assume, was hardly read by many in the area. The hope of a less-polarised debate was in vain.

The meeting did not turn out as the research group had hoped. The question of particular Saami rights in the area and the proposals of the Saami Rights Commission were pushed into the background during the debate and in the local papers' coverage of the event. The main topic was Janos Trosten's refusal to speak Norwegian during the meeting. The questions of whether or not Trosten knew that Norwegian was supposed to be the language of the meeting, or should have known it, or whether or not the organising committee was to blame were of minor importance in the debate.³⁴ The fact was that Janos Trosten spoke Saami during the debate. As a practical solution, a member of the organizing committee and former leader of *Alta Saamiid Searvi*, the local Saami association, as well as an NSR member, ended up interpreting. One might well speculate about the NSR leader's motives or lack of them, for his – what was pointed out by several other Saami politicians – insistence on his obvious right to speak his mother tongue. As most of the same politicians also pointed out, this insistence on his right did not necessarily make the debate any easier,

neither in the particular meeting nor in general, something he should have been well aware of. It is therefore interesting to try to analyse the debate that followed as reactions to an – intended or unintended – symbolic statement.³⁵

The refusal to speak Norwegian and the insistence on using Saami in a public meeting stirred up a heated debate, even though Saami is one of the three official languages of Norway. *Finnmark Dagblad*, a daily newspaper published in Hammerfest, which covers most of the western coastal area of the county, received, in the space of a month, approximately thirty articles and letters to the editor pertaining to the meeting. Saami and Norwegian politicians, at local, regional and national levels, engaged in the debate alongside ordinary people, most of whom had been active in the earlier ethno-political debate. Members of the national *Verdikommisjonen*, the Value Commission, and its regional counterpart also took part.

Altaposten, a daily published in Alta, was less involved in the case. Some of the same chronicles and letters to the editor that had been published in the *Finnmark Dagblad* found their way to this paper. Letters to the editor of a different kind could also be found. Language was discussed in relation to everyday practices. Many of these letters pointed to the Norwegian population's expectation that Norwegian would be spoken in contexts where monolingual people – and in Finnmark this means non-Saami speakers – were present. Therefore the little of what was debated in *Altaposten* had a proximity to parts of what I experienced of the debate among people in Alta.

As a symbolic political statement, Trosten's refusal to use the Norwegian language in which he and the overwhelming majority of Saami are fluent, points to the idea that the Norwegian language is seen as being neutral in spheres that are regarded as Norwegian. In this perspective, language becomes a practical tool, simultaneous interpretation is unnecessary and expensive, and those who insist on using other languages are being difficult or trying to make a political

statement.³⁶ As pointed out by Joks and Andersen (2000: 8), this is a common attitude both in public meetings and in everyday life in Finnmark. Practicality is made to seem neutral. Not to be practical is to make a statement. Many regard it as impolite to insist on speaking Saami where some people do not understand. In some letters to the editor, Saami speakers complained about this expectation and about some people's rude behaviour in reaction to their conversations. For them it was important to speak to some friends in Saami and it felt unnatural to use a different language in certain contexts. The expectation – sometimes felt, sometimes expressed – was that Norwegian would be used when non-Saami speakers were present.

The expectation that Norwegian will be used as a practical tool is not only an argument used by those who speak only Norwegian. This was also a view raised by other Saami people, among them a member of the Value Commission, the actor Nils Utsi, who said that it was bad behaviour not to pay attention to the majority that were present (Hestvik 2000: 7). To regard language only as a practical tool for communication, as Utsi seems to do, creates several problems for Saami speakers in their everyday life. The Saami language is defined as improper and unsuitable in most public areas and, in places like Alta and most other places along the coast, it becomes a private matter and is only allowed to enter a public space in contexts set out as spheres proper for Saami expression. In some ways Saami is still a hidden language, as Eidheim (1971) and Paine (1957) describe it in the case of coastal communities in the late 1950s. Saami is still reserved for what is regarded as mono-cultural Saami contexts. Common spheres are assumed to be the realm of the practical use of language, i.e. the use of Norwegian, and this makes Saami a 'hidden language' with a symbolical function in most public contexts. Brought forward in a pragmatic everyday context, the Saami language is always in danger of being perceived as a symbol that in dominant discourse emphasises boundaries.

This is not to say that one is not aware that some people speak Saami and that the Saami language cannot be heard in public. It is not uncommon to

hear conversations in Saami in queues, often between people from the interior, and in other places in the public space. Neither it is uncommon to hear people you know speaking Saami together and continuing to do this for a short time when you meet them, before switching to Norwegian; but one can always rely on Norwegian as the norm. This privacy of the language became clear when I worked at a local event as a ‘doorman’ together with a Saami born in the interior. He greeted all the Saami in the Saami language, and the proportion of Saami speakers was far greater than I had imagined, even if not everyone he greeted was necessarily fluent in the language. Furthermore, people I had met but had never heard speak a word of Saami turned out to be fluent in the language.

Despite the idea of multiculturalism, the notion of the Norwegian language as merely a practical tool for communication means that Saami becomes unnecessary, both for many young Saami who grow up in Norwegian-speaking communities and for Norwegians. For many in a generation of Saami with Saami-speaking parents, the language is used only in the private sphere, at home and among relatives, and as a subject in school, and they seldom need the language in other contexts. For Norwegian speakers, the Saami language becomes unnecessary because everyone speaks Norwegian. Norwegian speakers are not expected to learn Saami, and if someone demands its use, this becomes in nearly all contexts a political statement. To insist on bilingualism is to blur the boundaries for the use of the Saami language. The dominance of Norwegian in the public and multicultural spheres, backed by the argument that it is a practical communication tool, is threatened by attempts to make the languages equal. The Saami language and culture thus become symbolic statements that have the potential to interfere with everyone’s life. It becomes a matter not only for those who regard themselves as Saami, those who have chosen to live in a Saami milieu, or as something in the private life of some people. By insisting on using Saami in contexts where the language is not supposed to be present, Saami culture penetrates both public arenas and private

spheres, and this is probably one of the reasons why this symbolic manifestation stirred such a debate.

For those who formerly did not, and usually do not, have to relate to the Saami language in public and private, and who in private can express their annoyance about people who ‘Just go on nattering’ when they as monolinguals enter the scene, Trosten’s action was a breach of the local code. It became an example of the way Saami ethno-politicians attempt to extend their influence in the area. Alternately, for many Saami speakers, Trosten’s action was an opportunity for them to express their annoyance at being expected to keep the language inside an, often strictly, defined private sphere and to have to switch to the purportedly neutral Norwegian language when others come around. For Saami speakers living in areas where Norwegian has become the neutral and practical tool, this also penetrates their private sphere. Teaching their children Saami becomes difficult as long as it is seldom a proper language in other places than at home. Hence it is difficult for children to become fluent in the language as long as it is kept out of most public spheres in their everyday life. Trosten’s symbolic statement can thus be analysed as revealing a complex of hidden power relations in everyday discourses. Belonging to a common local culture is achieved by voluntarily obeying assumed pragmatics. Whatever does not appear as pragmatic Norwegian skills and performances should be kept where they belong and not allowed to interfere with everyday life.

No doubt languages have been practical tools in the area. Bilingualism and multilingualism have been frequent, and many Saami, in particular among those living in the interior, have been fluent in Saami, Norwegian and Finnish. In many places, Russian or the border language ‘Russenorsk’ was also part of the common repertoire. From the middle of twentieth century, on the coast and increasingly in the interior, as well in the 1960s, many people grew up without any knowledge or without sufficient knowledge to speak Saami fluently. This apparent disappearance of the Saami language can in many places also be

understood both symbolically and practically. Symbolically the Saami language pointed to a past and an identity that could be stigmatized, and therefore had no place in the public sphere and in a future that was Norwegian. Practically speaking, mastery of and fluency in Norwegian was crucial for a career in the Norwegian welfare state, and the Saami language was perceived as an obstacle to this goal (Olsen 2000a: 27). For many there seemed to be no practical reason for learning Saami.

The symbolic content of mastery of the Saami language changed during the development of the ethno-political Saami movement in the 1970s and 80s. Saami youths who were not fluent in the language were looked upon and sometimes also saw themselves, as 'second-rate' Saami (Olsen 1997: 238). Fluency in the language became a scarce good that could be converted into cultural capital in the ethno-political milieu. Lack of the Saami language became a loss and was sometimes regarded as a sign of Norwegianisation. Furthermore, mastery of Saami has also been among those features that have established a distinction between the coast and the interior. Widespread fluency in Saami in the interior is one of the features that has made this a so-called core area, regarded by Norwegian institutions as well as among many Saami as more Saami than the coast. This power relation immanent in the idea of a common Saami cultural unit, in dominant discourses grounded in ideas of authenticity, became a second theme in the debate.

A member of the Research Group for Indigenous Peoples as well as a member of the Saami Parliament, Eva Josefsen (2000: 9), argues, in a letter to the editor, that even though it should be the most common thing in the world to use one's mother tongue, Trosten's action was not an advantage for the coastal Saami population. His use of Saami highlighted some of the attitudes towards the Saami language and culture found among the population along the coast and spoiled an opportunity to create alliances with coastal politicians. The latter is something the coastal Saami population, in Josefsen's opinion, are in need

of, and Trosten's declaration of principles could, in the long run, damage the revitalization of Saami language, culture and identity on the coast. What could be understood as stubbornness on the part of the NSR leader might well have had such a political effect, but it also highlighted the distinction that is found between the coastal population, Saami or not, and the interior. Trosten's insistence on using Saami was understood by many as a performance in which the real Saami culture was set in contrast to the Norwegianized coast. In this perspective, Trosten's performance became an exhibition of the cultural dominance that the interior – the core area – exercise in the dominant discourse on Saami matters and Saaminess. To refuse to speak Norwegian as a bilingual person could easily be interpreted, and was by some, as an insult to all those who never had the opportunity or were hindered in their attempts to learn Saami.

This demonstration of cultural capital that fluency in Saami actually represents among many Saami on the coast can therefore be regarded as a symbolic statement in an internal discourse in the Saami movement. The dichotomy represented by the coastal Saami's lack of cultural capital seems always to be present, but not necessarily explicitly stated, in meetings where Saami matters are discussed. The interior, or so-called core areas, are seen as reaping the benefits of the ethno-political struggle, while their 'poor cousins' on the coast have to wait until the Saami culture is secured and can spread out from the 'real' Saami area. In such a perspective, the coast's historical 'surrender' to Norwegian culture appears as a deceit to their origins (Høgmo 1986: 411).

Trosten's actions were also regarded as symbolizing an extreme position in the discourse concerning Saami rights in the area. This is the danger Josefsen (2000: 9) pointed out when she criticized him for not taking into account the need for alliances and cooperation in coastal areas. The symbolic message can be seen as reinforcing the dichotomy between an ethno-political movement regarded as extreme by many, who prefer to point to the need for unity regardless of ethnic backgrounds, and those who claim that no concessions should be made to the

Saami. Such a connection between the attitude concerning language and other positions regarded as extreme is made, among others, by the Conservative Party in Finnmark – *Finnmark Høyre*. In an editorial, they link Trosten's use of language to other of his usages (Finnmark Høyre 2000: 3). Among them is the claim that any oil and gas found off the coast belong to the Saami, that the Saami Parliament should have the right to veto any mining in the area, that the Saami should administer most of the resources in Finnmark, and that the fish quotas in the area should belong to the Saami population. Other indigenous populations have succeeded in winning such claims, which makes them even more threatening for a huge part of the population in the area. An attempt to bring the Saami language into a context where it is assumed not to belong therefore can also have the effect of reinforcing discursive categories.

Trosten's symbolic statement destroyed the pragmatic attitude to language as merely a communication tool. As long as the overwhelming majority master Norwegian, it is possible to create a community that includes everyone. To insist on using the Saami language is to insist on a difference that matters. Language becomes a symbol that gives priority to the dominant discourses' conceptualisation of difference in ethnic terms. Similarly the local difference between Finnans of the interior and the coastal population is activated. These categories are based on the ideas of boundaries that can be set in motion when there is an insistence on differences. The use of language as a symbol also has the consequence of ranking people according to the concept of authenticity. This idea reinforces the apprehension of Finnans as different while it puts the coastal population in the category of Norwegianized. The latter is something that many feel comfortable with as long as their Saami past belongs to the past. For those who feel themselves to be Saami, the symbolic use of language ranks them on the fringes of what the dominant discourse represent as the Saami.

THE SAAMI FLAG IN ALTA

Language has had a symbolic content in dominant discourse as well as in everyday life for a long time. In the period of Norwegianisation, the change of language was probably the main symbol of a change of identity into modern Norwegian. As a symbol, language may contain different competing meanings linking individual narratives to political processes. Compared to language, the use of the Saami flag as a new invention relates to the more political realm of nationalism by its ability to subsume individuals under a single political unit.

On the 7th of February 2000, the local paper in Alta, *Altaposten*, printed an interview with the leader of *Alta Saamiid Searvi* (Alta Saami Association) in which he expressed his disappointment that the municipal authorities had not raised the Saami flag on the Saami People's Day, the 6th of February.³⁷ He said that the association would ask the political authorities, *Alta kommune*, to draw up guidelines for the public sector's use of the flag so that this problem might be resolved for the future. He also said: 'It is not pleasant to have to remind *Alta kommune* to raise the Saami flag each year on the day of the Saami people' (*Altaposten* 07.02.2000).³⁸ The leader's last comment refers to the fact that, at least since 1996, there has been a debate every year about the use of the Saami flag and what seems to be the reluctance of the authorities to raise the flag outside the town hall. Each of these years *Altaposten* has run reports on the celebration of the day organized by the *Alta Saamiid Searvi*, and each year there have also been reports and editorial letters referring to the use of the Saami flag.

The Saami artist, Astrid Båhl, from Skibotn in Troms, made the Saami flag in 1986 as a political manifestation of the Saami people to the Nordic Saami Conference in Åre, Sweden. The blue, red, green and yellow flag was made the official Saami flag by the 13th Nordic Saami Conference. At the Saami Conference in Helsinki in August 1992, the 6th of February was declared to be one of the

seven days that the flag should be in official use. Many have used it in different forms as a symbol of Saaminess, as stickers and in art. In the last ten years it has become a more familiar sight on flagpoles on public occasions. This visibility has occurred primarily in the municipalities that are defined as Saami and in particular in Karasjok, which has many public Saami buildings. It also has been quite frequently used in advertising, in particular in tourism, where it has signalled Saami attractions. Despite the frequent use, there have until recently been no public regulations for the use of the flag. This was also the excuse used by the public servant in charge of the use of flags in Alta when questioned by a journalist in 1996 (Kristensen 1996: 5). At that time the Saami flag, as a flag for all the Saami in four countries, was not officially ranked as a national flag. According to the official ranking, the Saami flag was ranked as similar to the flag of the Norwegian Church, after the flag of Greenland, which was not a national flag either, but before municipal and county flags. Because of formal ranking, it was up to each municipality to decide, even if the *Fylkesmann* – the highest civil servant representing the national government in the county – saw it as natural that the flag was used in the county. The authorities in Alta had a different opinion, an opinion that was highly contested by some Saami students at the local high school – owned by the county authorities – which had not used the flag either (Kristensen 1996: 5). Other public institutions – all government owned – as a part of their policy raised the Saami flag on the day without anyone questioning this action.

The following year was quiet, but in 1998 there was a heated debate before the 6th of February. This was an election year for the national parliament, and both national and local politicians used the expectations raised by the proposals of the Saami Rights Commission as a major point in the debates. A local politician, Ove Andresen, who belonged to the Socialist Party, (SV), launched the debate. A vote concerning municipal policy on the Saami flag was planned in the town council, *Kommunestyret*, where Andresen represented his party. The *Alta Saamiid Searvi* had tabled a formal request in which they asked the

municipal authorities to institutionalise the use of the Saami flag on the 6th of February on all buildings owned by the municipality. Andresen had told the paper that he was going to vote against this proposal because it might provoke non-Saami, and in the current situation it was more important to work for cooperation among all people in Finnmark. His view was backed by some local members of the party but strongly contested by others.

SV have a long tradition of support for minorities both nationally and internationally, and had for a long time been strong supporters of Saami ethnopolitical claims. In Finnmark, which since World War Two has had a socialist majority made up mainly by the Labour Party and the SV, the views on Saami rights had created two different fractions in the SV. The party's prominent candidate to the parliament, Ole Gunnar Ballo, a locally born GP, was the front figure for those in the party who claimed that many of the supposed suggestions of the Saami Rights Commission created boundaries between people in the area. The granting of particular rights with regard to natural resources to the Saami was seen by this fraction as a violation of the idea of equality. They instead supported a policy that encouraged the building of Saami cultural institutions as in the arts and museums and the teaching of the Saami language in the schools. Particular Saami rights in other areas were seen as a threat to the interests of the rest of the population in Finnmark. Later Ballo's election caused a split in the party in Finnmark. Ballo and Andresen, who later joined the other fraction of the party, voiced identical views about the official use of the Saami flag. Both of them referred to their local knowledge acquired by living in the community for a long time. They both claimed that such a symbolic action could cause insecurity in the local community and that many would perceive it as not natural to raise the flag in a municipality that is not a part of the official Saami area. Ballo claimed that there was no need to provoke the part of the population that was opposed to extending Saami rights in the area and pointed to local democracy as the best way, with all its weaknesses, for resolving such cases. Andresen also promoted the need for unity in the area and

thought it was necessary to fight nationalistic claims among both Norwegians and Saami (Andresen 1998: 11; Steine 1998b: 12). Such views stirred a debate in the party at a national level. The national leader did not agree with the opinion expressed by her fellows in Finnmark and proposed that the municipal authorities in the capital should use the Saami flag on the holiday. At that time the *Formannskap* in Alta had already, in a meeting on the 14th of January, decided not to use the flag outside the Rådhus, against three votes, one of which was Andresen's. One of the arguments raised in the *Formannskap* was that official use of the Saami flag could promote Saami nationalism, an argument that was fiercely opposed by the SV leader and ridiculed by others (Kristensen 1998: 7; H. R. Mathisen 1998: 11).

The Mayor of Alta, Eva Nielsen, representing the Labour Party, which has governed Alta during the post-war period, did not attend that particular meeting in the *Formannskap*, and like Ballo favoured local democracy. In her opinion, it was positive that many schools, kindergartens and the local museum, all owned by the municipal authorities, had decided and for many years had had the tradition of using the Saami flag. Her opinion was: 'It becomes more natural when the schools themselves make the decision. If they agree internally to use it, or if they agree not to do so, that is best. In this way it cause less conflict and becomes more natural ...' (Steine 1998a: 6).³⁹ A similar view was expressed by a woman who stated that a practical solution was that Saami people could raise the flag on their private flagpoles. On public buildings it should only appear in Saami municipalities (Altaposten 14.01.98: 5)

In 1999, the Mayor of Alta decided that a second flagpole should be erected outside the Rådhus and that the Saami flag should be flown on the 6th of February, despite last year's decision in the *Formannskap*. According to the Mayor, this decision was made as a mutual agreement between the different parties (Mjøen 1999b: 6). But the following year, the flagpole outside the Rådhus was empty on Saami People's Day.

Nevertheless, the local papers' announcement of the policy change in 1999 was made simultaneously with the covering of the Labour Party's refusal to reserve an area of land at Komsa for the purpose of a Saami Immersion Centre planned by Alta Saamiid Searvi. One of the politicians told the paper:

'I realize that the majority are in danger of being accused of being against the Saami case. We are at risk of once more hearing the old story about how we have forgotten our own history. But this is not the essential point. Both the majority and minority are positive about the centre, but the majority do not wish to locate it in such an attractive public area as Komsa ...' (Steine 1998b: 6).⁴⁰

The refusal to make this land available to the Alta Saamiid Searvi came as a proposal to the *Kommunestyre* from a political committee.

The leader of Alta Samiid Searvi, Jan Erik Henriksen, accused the majority of exactly what the Labour Party member had said they were at risk of being accused of.⁴¹ Henriksen argued that they had been told by the municipality to make the plans for the centre located at Komsa, an area that the municipality, in its own plans, had marked for a Saami kindergarten and other Saami cultural purposes. His interpretation of the proposal to use the land for other purposes was that there was perhaps a hidden political message that says: '... It's OK for you to use your flag, but don't think that you are going to get any land. At least you won't get any land that makes the Saami visible. Maybe we can get a piece of land as long as it is less visible' (Mjøen 1999b: 6).⁴² Later on the *Kommunestyret* turned down the proposal, but the case highlights a topic that has frequently been present in the debate in Alta. Many regard the municipal authorities as supporters of Saami culture in tourist brochures and for touristic purposes, but as less willing to support Saami culture outside this field.⁴³ I will argue that this is a, perhaps, unconscious attempt to uphold conceptual borders in the area. It is also something that is reflected in many of the letters to the editor received by the *Altaposten*.

Many of those who were against the use of the Saami flag argued that, as long as Alta does not belong to those municipalities that are officially recognised as Saami and hence in some cases are governed by separate laws, one should not use the flag on official occasions. Alta was not regarded as a Saami municipality either, and the view was that the few Saami living in Alta could fly the flag in private, i.e. on their own flagpoles. Quite typical is a woman who, claiming that she had nothing against Saami people, asked rhetorically what would happen if people from other nations living in Norway should demand to use public flagpoles, and recommended that the Norwegian flag was raised. As she writes: ‘... raise the Norwegian flag. It should be good enough for all people living in this country’ (*Altaposten* 21.01.1998, p. 5).⁴⁴ Some Saami expressed a more ironic view in their editorial letters, as in this example:

‘I totally agree with the municipality in Alta that they should not raise the Saami flag on Saami People’s Day. That shows their surroundings that they are honest because they have actually never accepted or respected the Saami population in the past and the present. It would be improper if they raised the flag only on this day, says Ravn Hætta, who claims that she has experienced repression and being made invisible when living in Alta’ (*Altaposten* 16.01.1998, p. 5).⁴⁵

The opinions expressed by various actors in the paper jibed with the views I encountered among people I met and with whom I discussed the topic in Alta. A frequently used argument against the use of the Saami flag was that it was not the official flag of any nation, neither was Alta regarded as a Saami municipality in an official way or because of its past, so why should the authorities spend time and money on this? For some, the case was easily dismissed as the result of some all too eager ‘Super-Saamis’, who saw politics, and normally suppression of the Saami, in every incident. The mixture of leftist politicians and Saami ethno-politicians engaged in the debate made it easy to dismiss the debate as a traditional quarrel. In addition the Saami – or more correctly the

local category of Finnans – are known to be touchy on many matters, a not uncommon local opinion that is usually seen as being confirmed by the acts and the usages of the ethno-politicians. Against this background, the case could easily be regarded as one of the ordinary debates in the paper concerning the relationship between Norwegians and Saami. This was also the case for many who saw no problem with the use of the Saami flag. It made no one a Saami, and as long as the Saami wanted to raise the flag on the day, why could that not be allowed and why is it so difficult to admit a Saami ancestry and past? For many, this was a conflict between two extremes, those who denied every trace of a Saami past and those who saw this remote past as crucial for the present.

Nonetheless, what could easily be regarded as an ordinary debate in the local paper between two extremes perhaps gained a different momentum by being set in the context of the debate that postponed the Saami Rights Commission's assumed proposals in its forthcoming White Paper to the Parliament. It stirred more engagement among more people, and highlighted some features that are seldom explicitly put forward. Among these features are the invisibility and the privatization of a Saami identity in Alta. Saaminess is supposed not be forced upon people and it is usually the Saami who are expected to make sure that this does not happen. As long as the local culture is regarded as neutral and a practical tool for sociality, anything that smacks of ethnic symbols becomes a threat to local communality (Thuen 2003: 274; Paine 2003: 301-302). It is still regarded as improper to bring language, artefacts and behaviour into contexts where they are not supposed to appear, for they may rearrange the conceptual ordering that reserved certain spaces for the Saami.

When Henriksen (Mjøen 1999b: 5) assumes that the Alta Saamiid Searvi can probably get land as long as it is less visible, he is not only using the rhetoric of the ethno-politician but also relating to the experiences that were highlighted by many Saami in the debates concerning the flag and the use of the language. Eidheim (1971: 58-59) showed how symbols of Saaminess in a coastal

community in the 1950s and the 60s seemed just as improper and were sanctioned by both Norwegians and Saami when they were brought into contexts that were not regarded as strictly closed Saami spheres of interaction. I have argued that processes with some resemblance to Eidheim's findings are at work today. These processes attempt to keep symbols of Saaminess outside contexts that are regarded as Norwegian, not by denial of others' right to express such Saaminess, but by a denial that Saaminess has any influence or consequences for other people and other communities and those who are regarded as non-Saami. One shall not impose one's Saaminess on someone nor is it proper to impose an assumed Saami heritage or identity on others (Thuen 2003: 274 ff.). As the Mayor seemed to claim, in accord with other locals: common belonging should be emphasised by the municipal authorities. When disagreements arise, it is, according to the local discourse, better to maintain the status quo or attempt a practical compromise. What is often forgotten is that this pragmatism has its own structure of power relations that usually are in favour of what is not regarded as Saami.

In this way, both of the cases I have described can be seen as a struggle about establishing boundaries for what is Saami and what is Norwegian. One position in such a struggle is the promotion of assumed neutral categories like local, Finnmarking or Northern Norwegian. Such categories attempt to evade the dichotomy between Norwegian and Saami and emphasises the distinction between North and South. These categories assume an openness wherein the individual herself is free to claim a personal identity. Still they retain the need to understand the culture as merely a practical tool for sociality. In this assumed neutrality, the understanding of Saaminess found in institutional discourse is doomed to lose because it has to be kept in certain spaces. Brought into other parts of everyday life, it will interfere with people's personal belonging because of the political content of the symbols. What is apprehended as belonging, irrespective of the past, is brought into the political realm of ethnic concepts.

This struggle is a political one in which such symbolic statements such as the public use of the flag and language are seen in a broader context that creates what is said to be a fear, but must rather be seen as a suspicion, of Saami nationalism. But it is also a symbolic struggle about boundaries, which in my opinion is more important, wherein the use of symbols of modernity becomes an attempt at ontological and conceptual ‘bricolage’. By using the symbols of modernity and simple nationalism, it is possible to alter the discursive and conceptual distinctions between coast and interior, the traditional Saami and the modern Norwegian, and thereby invoke a new plot for many people’s understanding of their own identity. Saaminess becomes no longer a feature of the interior and of an, often assumed, cultural competence, but is made into an opportunity for everyone who relates to the symbols of simple nationalism in their everyday life. It is many people’s own self consciousness that is at stake when these boundaries break down; and if they disappear, a new plot becomes necessary for the narration of own experiences and one’s past for many people on the coast.

Such a rewriting is not made necessary by many of the other discourses on ethnic relations in the area. The emphasis on Saaminess as a culture of radical difference to modernity is typically Norwegian and dominates the public domains on the coast, while the privatisation of Saaminess in distinct spheres fosters the continuation of ethnic difference between the coast and the interior. For many, it makes a Saami identity into a choice that resembles what Webster (1998: 39) describes in the case of born-again Maori; the change is primarily individual, psychological or spiritual. Bringing Saaminess into those fields that currently are regarded as Norwegian, or as neutral in the sense that a Saami identity is a matter of no concern, will necessarily alter the distinction between coast and interior, but it will also probably alter the idea of what it is to be a Saami.

Saami then becomes a modern identity that can be appropriated by a majority on the coast as well. Hence this is a political identity that elevates certain

political claims which are not necessarily supported, in particular because these political claims are grounded in a particular idea of an indigenous Saami culture and are in danger of ranking people according to the abstract idea of authenticity (Thuen 2003: 279). Therefore, when Saami symbols enter coastal modernity, many of the ethno-political claims based in a Western discourse on ‘the Other’ are in danger of loosing ground.

SAAMI CULTURAL COMPETENCE, BEING INDIGENOUS
‘THE ILO- WAY’, AND THE ONTOLOGICAL
DIFFERENCE OF SIMPLE NATIONALISM

The debates on the use of the Saami language in public meetings and the use of the Saami flag on the Saami People’s Day can be understood as events in the discourses that are trying to order ethnic boundaries in the area. This is primarily a regional debate that proceeds on the basic assumption that there is a significant difference between the coast and the fjord areas and the interior. In this discourse the long-standing assumption of a difference between a coastal population as Norwegian, or of a different Saaminess in the fjord areas than the interior, has merged with the ethno-political claim of indigenoussness. What Eidheim (1992: 14-15) calls the *aboriginalization* of Saami ethno-politics that occurred in the 1980s has maintained the previous boundaries in these discourses. This distinction has been possible to handle in coastal communities like Alta by attributing Saaminess to certain areas, to some institutions dealing with heritage, to particular social fields by privatization and to the past. By defining common everyday life as impartial and modern Norwegian, such boundaries may be continued by an ontological order that makes Saaminess something that is not supposed be imposed on people. Hence this way of ordering ethnic boundaries coincides with the demand that one has to feel Saami to become a Saami. Saaminess in everyday life becomes a matter of conviction, which is a potential nuisance for others only in the

cases of ethno-political interested actors that attempt to extend the fields for ethnic expressions.

This annoyance consists of the fact that many of the claims and symbols of Saaminess blur the boundaries drawn between coast and interior, private and public spaces, and have a potential to destroy the distinction between past and present. The use of what can be labelled symbols of simple nationalism does not put Saaminess in the category of a radical difference that is supposedly found among *Finman* and the indigenous. Saaminess becomes something one can, and often has to, relate to through everyday experiences in the modern welfare state. This is something that has long been the case in the interior of Finnmark but currently is something one actively has to choose on the coast. One has to define oneself as committed to Saaminess and to work out one's identity that can be expressed only in some distinct cultural spheres in everyday life.

This bridging of concepts creates a problem not only for those who are Norwegian but also for Saami ethno-politics. When Saaminess becomes a part of modernity, where there is no actual radical difference found in everyday life, what then is left of claims based primarily on a radical difference in culture and conceptual belonging? The former prominent Saami politician, previous NSR leader and former editor of the Saami paper *Sagat*, Associate Professor Odd Mathis Hætta, has raised this question. In three chronicles in *Finnmark Dagblad*, he describes the development of Saami ethno-politics as a start in a struggle for cultural revitalization and equality that has ended in nationalistic claims (Hætta 1998a, 1998b, 1998c). In many ways Hætta's questions are a part of the everyday discourse in Finnmark. At least in coastal areas, these arguments were given weight by Hætta's former prominence in Saami politics, his long-standing work for Saami culture and his academic position. Moreover, he also indicates what, in my opinion, are crucial questions concerning ethnic relations in the area even if he, once again in my opinion, gets the conclusions wrong.

Hætta claims that in the 1970s the NSR aimed for a revitalization of the Saami culture but today its aim is nationalism. He finds the main reason for this change of orientation in the fact that the Saami, and in particular the main Saami organisations like the NSR and Norske Reindriftssamers Landsforbund (Norwegian Saami Reindeer-owners Organization), have never been so Norwegianized as today. He argues that, when the NSR was founded in 1968, it was founded by people with what he calls a Saami cultural competence. His aim and that of the other founders was to mount a Saami cultural resistance against the enforced use of the Norwegian language, social discrimination, cultural suppression, and for equality (Hætta 1998a: 18). He traces the development of nationalism in the NSR to the new members that joined the organisation in the 1980s and came to dominate it in the 1990s. According to Hætta, these new members were people who themselves did not have any Saami cultural competence but who could trace their ancestry to Saamis. The new groups that joined the organisation came to dominate it and introduced what Hætta call nationalistic claims and national symbols like the flag, a national anthem and other Saami symbols complementary to Norwegian national symbols. They had no experiences based in a Saami culture but rather in a Norwegian milieu, and that is, according to Hætta (1998b: 15), the reason for what he regards as the shift of focus from Saami culture to ideology and nationalism in the NSR. A consequence of such a shift is the Saami Parliament's –and the NSR in particular – demands for particular rights and control of the natural resources in the area seen as formerly under Saami control. As Hætta (1998c: 13) points out, these claims are based on the juridical foundations provided by the ILO convention concerning indigenous people. This charter is ratified by Norway and supports indigenous ownership and control of natural resources. In his chronicles, Hætta points out that the ILO convention does not necessarily apply to the Saami. It only concerns the rights of indigenous peoples that have retained all or some of their own social, economical, cultural or political institutions, and in Hætta's opinion this is hardly the case for the Saami. According to him, the only possible exceptions are some individuals in the reindeer-herding industry and parts

of small villages in the interior of Finnmark. The overwhelming majority of Saami live a quite ordinary life inside the structures of the Norwegian welfare state that does not set them apart from the Norwegian population in general, either in their cultural values or in their material culture. In Hætta's opinion, the cultural differences are greater between a farmer in Finnmark and a Saami in the urban centres than between an urban Saami and the street sweeper in Oslo (Hætta 1998c: 13). Against this background, the ideology of indigenoussness and solidarity with other fourth-world peoples creates an image outside the Saami society that is not matched by the cultural competence and everyday life of those who regard themselves as a part of this Saami society. What Eidheim (1992: 14-15) terms a process of aboriginalization has, in Hætta's view, become an ideology of indigenoussness and a substitute for a Saami culture based on a cultural competence that differs from that of Norwegians.

Hætta's views sparked a heated debate, as they often do in the area, and some of the reason for this must be sought in the small world of politics in Saami society, Northern Norway and Norway in general, where political and personal conflicts tend to be intertwined.⁴⁶ Part of the reason for the debate, both the agreement and the opposition, must be seen against the background of Hætta's position as a well-known Saami politician and scholar, but, in my opinion, it also arose because he points to crucial dilemmas in the area. First of all is the fact that the distinction between the Saami and the Norwegian society is based on the assumption that there is a difference between indigenous people and modernity, and in most discourses this implies a radical alterity. As Kuper (2003: 389, 395) points out, generally speaking, in much rhetoric terms like indigenous perpetuate a long-standing debate in Western thought about the primitive, the native and race. Culture has, according to Kuper, become the successor to such categorical differences. Secondly Hætta, also points out that such radical alterity is seldom found in everyday life in the area where the majority of the population is integrated in the structures of the Norwegian welfare state. Thirdly, he points to what he calls Saami cultural competence,

something one must assume was the result of a society radically different from the modern Norwegian one, and by this he connects to a central discursive feature found in the regional debate. To be Saami is an identity that belongs to a society found in the past because this assumed competence is a thing of the past in most coastal areas, and a Saami identity can therefore not be retained. On the contrary, Hætta also unmasks and confirms the suspicion substantiated by people's everyday experiences that the interior population, as a group, does not display the radical alterity that is assumed to be the basis of ethno-political claims.

But Hætta's view, like the dominant local discourse in Alta, is based on a distinction between tradition and modernity that is continuously under negotiation and is bridged in everyday life in the interior (Stordahl 1996: 101 ff.). To be Saami is also to be modern and implies attachment to the symbols of simple nationalism, as well as to what, at different points in time and in different contexts, is regarded as traditionally Saami, and to a cultural competence suited to the modern everyday life most Saami live. That this modern everyday life closely resembles the everyday life that the majority conceptualizes as Norwegian does not alter its Saaminess.

Hence the dominant political discourse is mainly a matter of preserving a culture and the reluctance to impose political decisions in other fields than cultural policy is an unwillingness to make arrangement that might provoke the Norwegian majority (Oskal 1999: 162-163). I agree with this analysis, and I think that much of the nostalgia for the well-ordered past and the potential danger of resistance against political decisions that attempt to create a new political order may be explained by the conceptual understanding of ethnic differences on the coast.

This understanding of the connection between past, present and future can be seen in people's ascription of identity to other persons and in their self-ascription.

People do not have to be regarded as Saami even if some of their relatives fit into the idea of *Finnan* from the interior. Nor does the knowledge that someone's parents were Saami determine others' apprehension of their ethnic belonging. If they fit into the idea of the local Norwegian population, they are usually regarded as Norwegian as long as they prefer to be so themselves. It is also a question of self-ascription. A Saami-speaking uncle or parents who are Saami are not something that determines people's idea of their ethnic belonging. In a letter to the editor, *Where have the coastal Saami gone?*, Mortensen (1999), a local politician in Hammerfest, a coastal town in Finnmark, writes that there is no reason to doubt that Hammerfest and the surrounding fjord area were inhabited by Saami people. This is also the reason why the leading Saami party, the NSR, claims the area; but Mortensen's question is: To whom shall the area be handed back? He tells the story of his own father, who was born in a small community on one of the islands in the fjord in the beginning of the twentieth century. As a youngster his father moved to Hammerfest and became one of the pioneers in the taxi business in the 1920 and 30s. Thomassen never heard his father speak a word of Saami and he grew up with the conviction that he was Norwegian like all his classmates. Even if he now knows that his father was Saami, he claims the right to regard himself as Norwegian, and this is a right that is granted by most local discourses. If people act in a way regarded as Norwegian and themselves claim to be and feel Norwegian, there are few occasions where others will contest their Norwegianness. It is the fragile character of this Norwegian identity that necessitates that Saami symbols are kept in certain culturally constructed spaces.

To be able to do this, the local discourses need to emphasise a particular narrative structure that orders the past so that it influences the present in a different way than in the dominant Norwegian and ethno-political discourses. The past as a Saami past is allowed to influence the present and the future in only a few particular public spheres and in the private sphere. In, among others, museums, heritage preservation and tourism, a Saami past can be manifested because in

these fields it does not, for different reasons, necessarily interfere with the present. The same can be said of many private expressions of a Saami identity, and this is usually an identity that does not fit in with the way Saaminess is represented in the dominant discourses. In these cases identity becomes a private matter, just as what Webster (1998: 39) describes for born-again Maori; the change is primarily individual, psychological or spiritual. What Webster sees as an ironic truth in the phrase 'born-again ethnic' is an irony that presupposes that ethnicity figures at a collective level and needs to be a basis for collective action. In the case of Finnmark, the collective level that enables such individual, psychological or spiritual changes is situated with a core in the interior of the county.

A reason for this is the narrative structure that guides the regional and local discourses in their apprehension of the past. During the Norwegianisation period, this narrative structure dominated by its insistence on the idea that the past was Saami, but that the present is in need of a change, and that the future is assimilation into the Norwegian culture. It presupposed the need for a change of ethnic identity that was not only individual, psychological or spiritual but also economic and social; and many on the coast made this change. That this change was not only socio-economic but also ontological can be seen in the many cases where an obvious Saami past is not regarded as having any determining effect on the way people regard themselves today. Or rather, this past is ordered by a plot that presumes that ethnicity is not essential but something that can be left behind when people enter the Norwegian welfare state. What the Saami ethno-political movement was able to do was to invoke a new plot that was found in a global discourse about the traditional people and their relationship to modernity. The Saami ethno-political movement insisted that the Saami culture belongs to the present and the future, and that it is possible to situate oneself as part of both the indigenous and the modern. But this construction of a collective Saami self-consciousness has until recently also upheld a distinction to Norwegian culture that has reinforced the dichotomy

between the traditional and the modern. In the boundary-making processes the ethno-political discourse has emphasised features that connect the Saami culture to the concept of traditional. The Saami culture of the interior fits into what has been called an *aboriginalization* of Saami selfhood (Eidheim 1992: 13-15; Schancke 1993: 55).

Hætta (1998a, 1998b, 1998c) points out some of the dilemmas that arise when an attempt is made to extend Saaminess to a different modernity. Such attempts can be attacked by applying the dominant discourses' own logic and grounding in cultural authenticity. If Saami culture, at its core, nurtures a certain cultural difference – if it was ever present – this is lost on the coast and is a remote past that can not be collectively reclaimed. Alternatively, if the Saami culture is equated with modernity, why make such a fuss? Why not be ordinary citizens in a Norwegian welfare state with your Saaminess as a private belonging?

CONCLUSION

The debates in Alta concerning the proper use of the Saami flag and language can be analysed as events in an on-going debate where different discourses provide different views on the relationship between the past and the present, and the modern and the traditional. Such symbolic statements bring the ethnic vocabulary of the dominant discourse into new spheres of everyday life. The local discourse has ordered this relationship by its insistence on Saaminess as something that belongs to a different category, *Finnan*, which symbolically and more seldom in fact can correspond to the image of radical alterity with respect to modern Norwegian culture. In so far as it points to this alterity, the Saami identity belongs to the past, a cultural competence that cannot be retained and that, if imposed, violates most people's idea of who they are. To uphold this categorical difference in an everyday life where such a radical alterity is obviously not present, Saami culture and identity must be kept in certain spheres.

By being kept private, as a background feature in the interior, as a certain form of behaviour, or as belonging to the realm of the Super-Saami and their ethnopolitical quarrels, it seldom interferes with an everyday life regarded as modern and pragmatic – but often fragile – and Norwegian. Bringing Saaminess into the realms of simple nationalism in everyday life blurs the current local boundaries for Saaminess and destroys the distinction between past and present, tradition and modernity, and thereby implications for the future. New plots for narration of individual life-courses are provided and make up new possibilities for claiming a Saami identity, an identity that has the potential to contest the current emphasis on the assumed traditional culture of the interior.

Chapter 7

WHEN ETHNIC IDENTITY IS A PRIVATE MATTER

THIS CHAPTER ANALYSES HOW THE DISCREPANCIES of the different discourses are handled in ordinary everyday life. The argument put forward is that contradictions found in and among the diverse discourses are handled by separating them into different cultural spheres in such a way that contradictions interfere as little as possible with the pragmatics of everyday life. Everyday life is assumed to be neutral as long as everyone is supposed to be familiar with the local pattern of interaction. The assumed neutrality of pragmatic everyday life can be analysed as 1) being a continuation of previous categorisations as well as 2) shaped by global cultural processes and 3) regional socio-cultural processes. Therefore the analysis of identity processes in the area has, primarily, to be regarded as a result of processes in what can be labelled ‘local society and ecology’ (Eidheim 1971: 67).

Harald Eidheim’s (1971) article, ‘When Ethnic Identity is a Social Stigma’, is probably the most influential work on Saami identity in Northern Norway (Eriksen & Høem 1999: 127; Stordahl 2005). Based on his fieldwork in a small fjord area in Western Finnmark around 1960, he demonstrates how people

attempt to hide an ethnic identity such as Saami when Norwegians are present. A Saami identity is only expressed in what Eidheim describes as closed mono-ethnic Saami spheres. A Saami identity becomes a stigma that guides interaction in all spheres because, due to local knowledge and highly local symbols, locals are always able to dichotomise between Saami and Norwegians (Eidheim 1971: 50, 62). Since ethnic background was supposed to be a private matter and shame, turning this into an explicit topic in the public sphere or actually mixing cultural spheres was a breach of conduct for both Norwegians and Saami (Eidheim 1971: 65). Eidheim's (1971: 50) article thus demonstrates how ethnic categories organise interaction and create ethnic boundaries in a context where an attempt is made to hide ethnicity in the local community and make it invisible for outsiders. A Saami identity was a proper basis for interaction only inside what Eidheim (1971: 60) terms a 'closed Lappish sphere'.

Following Eidheim (1971), the aims of the present chapter are, firstly, to point out some socio-economic changes that have had an impact on ethnic relations in the area where Eidheim did his fieldwork more than forty years ago. Previously this was an area where people lived in small local communities scattered along the fjords of the coastline because they could make a livelihood from a mixed adaptation to farming, fisheries and, after World War Two, seasonal work in the region. Today the majority of the population lives in larger local and regional centres. In these centres ethnicity is no longer a private matter, in the sense that it is supposed to be kept out of multi-ethnic social contexts because of the stigma attached to the individual recognised as Saami. Local social interaction is regarded as a pragmatic matter where everyone has mastered the local culture that is defined as Norwegian.⁴⁷ Symbols of ethnicity have no place in such interaction because of the implications a Saami ethnic identity might have for others and oneself (Thuen 2003: 276). Expressions of a Saami identity are supposed to be kept private or in certain spaces. Rather than emphasising differences, locals stress belonging (Paine 2003: 301; Thuen 2003: 274). To create this sense of local belonging dominant discourses that make a clear-cut

division between Saami and Norwegian have no place. Consequently, ethnic identity purportedly still ‘does not matter’ in social interaction, as Eidheim pointed out (1971: 65) forty years ago, not because it is a stigma but because it emphasises difference instead of the local cultural value of belonging. If such differences are to be articulated it has to be done in particular spheres.

Secondly, I suggest that, even if dramatic changes have occurred in the socio-economic as well as discursive relations between Saami and Norwegians in the last forty years, there is continuity in the way the conceptual difference is upheld. During Eidheim’s fieldwork, the Saami way of living was looked upon as something that belonged to the past. The future was to be integrated in the developing welfare state by becoming Norwegian. Today, when the overwhelming part of the population, regardless of ethnic belonging, have the cultural skills necessary for a career in Norwegian society, the dichotomy between Norwegians and Saami must be based on a different conceptual ordering. While the conceptual order was previously based on a temporal order on the coast, today it is based upon an organisation of space. What Fabian (1991) calls a denial of coevalness between the modern and the traditional has, in the case of ethnic relations in Finnmark, altered. In his Foucauldian analysis, Fabian points out: ‘The significance of time can be eliminated altogether by its reduction to space, real or classificatory space ...’ (1991: 198). I shall argue that expression of a Saami identity in most apparently Norwegian communities in Finnmark is restricted to spaces – real or classificatory – that imply that it has no impact on the quotidian or on those who prefer to live their everyday life as modern Norwegians in the population centres. Some of these spaces, like museums, voluntary organisations and the school, are grounded in public cultural institutions; others are particular occasions, like weddings, baptisms and national celebrations. At these occasions a Saami belonging appears as a heritage. Except for such spaces specifically set apart, the bulk of Saami everyday life is supposed to be kept private. It is a private matter to choose such an identity, and one is supposed not to blur those often fragile boundaries created

by conceptual and rhetorical devices which uphold differences between two ethnic groups that in dominant discourses ostensibly belong to two different categories: the modern and the indigenous. Because the indigenous Saami, in the modern welfare state of Norway today, can no longer be separated from Norwegians by the notion of time in a local context, this conceptual difference must be upheld by the cultural construction of spaces in which a Saami identity can be expressed. The temporal dimension that separates the population into distinct ethnic groups in dominant public discourses cannot be upheld in everyday life. Hence, in some contexts, such as occasions where Saami culture appears as someone's heritage, and contexts where everyday life can be turned into personal and subjective narration, differences can still be expressed without the danger of breaking down boundaries in everyday discourse.

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL CHANGES

Both theoretical changes in anthropology and empirical changes in Finnmark have occurred since Eidheim wrote his article. With his attention to ethnic boundaries, Eidheim played a part in the Wenner Gren workshop that resulted in the seminal work *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (Barth 1969).⁴⁸ Although influential, this perspective on ethnicity is contested and supplemented by perspectives that emphasise belonging as well as differences (Baumann 1996; Cohen 1985, 1987, 1994a; Jenkins 2004; Schiffauer, Baumann, Kastoryano & Vertovec 2004). Since the 1960s it has developed views on ethnicity that 1) promote fluidity, multiculturalism, situationality, power, heterogeneity and differences between discourses (Barth 1994; Baumann 1996; Clifford 1997; Cohen 1994a, 1994b; Eriksen 1993a; Rosaldo 1989; Werbner 1997), and 2) point out the actor's perspective of fixed ethnic belonging (Bentley 1987; Caplan 1996; Gil-White 1999) as well as 3) emphasising the impact of the nation-state, which enforces clear-cut boundaries (Bauman 1996; Comaroff & Comaroff 1992; Donnan & Wilson 1999; Duijzings 2000; Eriksen 1993a; Malkii 1995).

Eidheim's theoretical aim was to show how ethnicity was articulated and maintained in social interaction, in particular in a context where few if any physical and cultural traits or distinct economical and political arrangements were attached to the separate groups. At the time Eidheim (1971: 50) did his fieldwork, the particular fjord area was what he calls a 'transitional zone' with a large degree of homogeneity among the population. The population was apparently on their way to becoming Norwegian. Still Eidheim was able to show how local knowledge and local symbols always made it possible for locals to categorise other locals as either Saami or Norwegian and, more important, this categorisation had an impact on social relations where the Saami had the inferior role.

From a different theoretical angle – and with the passing of time – such a 'transitional zone' can come to appear as a 'cultural borderzone' that is 'always in motion, not frozen for inspection' (Rosaldo 1989: 217). These zones are sites for creative cultural production and areas for creative identity processes that refuse to fit into neat entities, or cultures, with clear-cut boundaries and claims of authenticity (Rosaldo 1989: 207-208). In such zones, identity processes in the quotidian deny order and reflect people's creativity in the way they express themselves as individuals. As Rosaldo puts it: 'In rejecting the classic "authenticity" of cultural purity, [they] seek out the many-stranded possibilities of the borderlands' (Rosaldo 1989: 216). As will be elaborated later, these changes in theoretical emphasis also correspond to an ontological shift among the people living in Finnmark. Such a shift is partly the result of changes in the way ethnicity and indigenous peoples are approached in Western culture, in general, and in Norwegian national politics, in particular.⁴⁹ In the last forty years, the idea of cultures dying has, in the case of the Saami, given way to cultural revitalisation and the granting of, often modest, political rights. To understand this development, not only are macro- and median-level processes are important but an understanding of the local context in which such processes come together as a lived context for individual activity and interpretation is necessary in order to understand the creative processes, their denial, and their necessary

admittance (Barth 1994: 21). As Eidheim put it: ‘We must bear in mind that it is the general character of *local* ecology and society which provide the meaningful context in which a Lappish/Norwegian ethnic dichotomy is articulated’ (1971: 67; italics in the original).⁵⁰ The local ecology and society of the area today allows ‘many-stranded possibilities’, while the local social organisation give directionality to their articulation. In a lived context, many processes promote the classic authenticity of cultural purity.

One change in contemporary local society since Eidheim did his work is the success of a strong Saami ethno-political movement that has had its centre of gravity in the interior of Finnmark. This political strategy has been productive in the Foucauldian sense that the Saami ethno-political struggle has been the pivot for other identity processes that are seldom organised at a political level. As Foucault (1978: 95) writes, resistance in various forms is an immanent feature of power relations. Power is a productive force because it provides spaces for a multitude of contestations. (Foucault 1980: 119). These heteroglot processes, as contestations, or parallel operations, or oppositions to the political Saami movement, have often emphasised the differences, the particular, the local, and the heterogeneity in this ‘cultural borderzone’ (Kramvig 1999; Olsen 1997: 239-240). Many people have acknowledged a Saami past, and some of them have chosen a Saami future or have articulated this as part of their history. Still, the dominant discourses are strong agents, promoting the boundaries that make ‘pure’ ethnic categories viable for social action in a political field (Comaroff & Comaroff 1992: 62-63)

A second characteristic of the local ecology and society that has changed since Eidheim did his fieldwork in the late 1950s and early 60s is that the area was then under pressure from the conscious policy of Norwegianisation. Even if this policy was officially abandoned after World War Two, it continued to be conducted locally and to be reinforced by development of the welfare state.⁵¹ This was quite a different policy from the contemporary one, which promotes

the revitalisation of Saami. Furthermore, the local socio-economic framework too has changed. This area in a remote part of Europe has become, and one might add always has been, thoroughly integrated in global processes that are given a local shape. Even more importantly, political and economic changes in Norwegian society mean that patterns of settlement and occupation have totally changed in the last forty to fifty years.

THE ALTA FJORD AREA 40 YEARS AGO AND TODAY

Eidheim (1971) did his fieldwork in a coastal Saami settlement, Lille Lerresfjord, in a fjord in Western Finnmark in the late 1950s and early 60s.⁵² When he arrived in the municipality, he did not recognise any cultural features that reflected a split within the apparently homogenous population (1971: 51-52). Instead, the locals emphasised their Norwegian identity, their competence in modern fisheries and farming, their modern housing, kitchens, and their cleanliness in accord with Norwegian hygienic standards. All conversations were held in Norwegian – even if it was often slightly broken. In the course of his work, Eidheim (1971: 54-55) recognised that, even if it was quite impossible for outsiders to see differences, locals could classify peoples in the whole district – starting in their own community – as either Norwegian or coastal Saami. The district, from the individual person's point of view, was an area within a radius of 30 to 50 kilometres from their home. In Lille Lerresfjord, where he lived, only 6 out of 150 inhabitants were classified as Norwegian by the locals themselves. The rest of the population were coastal Saami and recognised as such by locals. After demonstrating some fluency in the Saami language, he also discovered that Saami was used at home in 40 out of 50 households and when locals met other Saami in the district. When Norwegians were present, or on occasions defined as public, the Saami language was never spoken. In the administrative centre of the region, which at the time of Eidheim's fieldwork was Talvik, on the opposite side of the fjord, only 20 out of approximately 300

people living there were Saami.⁵³ These settlements represented two ends of a continuum of what locals categorised as ethnic belonging.

After a while, some of the inhabitants, mainly middle-aged men, did tell him that they were 'a kind of Saami'. Until World War Two, the settlement was dominated by the Saami style in housing, clothing and traditions. The rebuilding was done exclusively in Norwegian style. Furthermore they also told him in confidence that Norwegians ridiculed them because of their lack of Norwegian cultural competence. For many, too, the lack of economical prosperity in the settlement was seen as a result of the Saami heritage. In spite of not being regarded as equal by other Norwegians, they often used their meetings with reindeer-herding Saami from the interior to demonstrate their Norwegianness and regarded the reindeer herders as inferior. Like most settlements in the fjords of Finnmark, whether or not they are predominantly Saami, seasonal work outside the district was necessary to make a living. They competed in this regional labour market and were part of a sphere in which Norwegians and other Coastal Saami in a similar position as themselves were present and acted according to a Norwegian cultural code. Their dilemma, as Eidheim (1971: 56) pointed out, was, in order to gain access to the economy and the possibilities in the developing Norwegian welfare state, they had to hide their Saaminess. They attempted to hide their Saami identity because social ambitions were directed at an apparently mono-cultural Norwegian society where Saami cultural skills were of no use.

Nor did these communities have any contact with the emerging ethno-political movement among the Saami in the interior of Finnmark. In the interior the Saami were a majority, making up between 80 and 90 percent of the population. A minority of this population were occupied in reindeer herding, while the majority got their main income from dairy farming. The few Norwegians living in the interior were employed mainly in public service. In the coastal areas, the coastal Saami combined farming and fisheries, like the non Saami-speaking

majority that made up about 75 percent of the population. Only in two fjords were Norwegian and Saami speakers equal in number.

Compared to Eidheim's description (1971) of more than forty years ago, the present situation in the area is characterised by changes in many of the determining features of the local ecology and society emphasised by Eidheim. The situation described forty years ago was that of an economic adaptation in which the men of households in small settlements combined fisheries, farming and seasonal labour migration. Today such an adaptation is not representative of the majority of the coastal and fjord population. More characteristic for the major part of the population – in particular in the area where Eidheim did his fieldwork – is that such settlements have been depopulated and people have moved to other places all over Norway or to regional centres. Such regional centres, as in the case of Alta, are inhabited in part by first- and second-generation descendants of the informants Eidheim describes. Often, the generation Eidheim (1971) described have followed their children and settled in such centres (Eikeseth 1998: 360 ff.; 2003: 24). Here people earn their living in the public sector or in the service industry, which dominates such centres all over Norway. In a regional centre like Alta, they meet people who have moved from other parts of Northern Norway, from the interior of Finnmark, from Southern Norway, and from many other European and non-European countries. Approximately half of the residents in municipalities in Finnmark were not born in the place where they live and a relatively large proportion, an average of 25 percent, come from places other than Finnmark and Northern Troms (Munkjord 2006: 8).

Even if such small fjord settlements are still found – many in the process of becoming holiday resorts and some as still-thriving communities – they are not representative of the everyday life of the majority of the population in the area; or in Eidheim's (1971: 67) terms, of the local ecology and society where most ethnic processes unfold. Still there is a persistent tradition in Norwegian

anthropology that Saami studies should be conducted in small places or in the interior. Paine (Komagfjord and the interior) and Eidheim (Polmak, Lille Lerresfjord, and the interior), set firmly in the tradition of social anthropology of the 1950s and 1960s, seem to have set a standard whereby others have come to regard the small local community as the most suitable arena for the study of Saami ethnicity.⁵⁴ Hence Vangen (2005), in her analysis of Manndalen, has demonstrated that a theoretical stress on belonging rather than on differences means that ethnicity often is of little importance in local interactions in such small places. Internal belonging and homogeneity are points usually seized upon by other authors (Thuen 2003; Paine 2003; Bjerkli 1997), but are combined with a theoretical perspective on ethnicity that emphasises differences to other categories, overshadowing other organising principles (Eriksen & Høem 1999: 129).

Today Lille Lerresfjord is a part of Alta, the largest municipality in Finnmark. Alta has 18 488 inhabitants, making up 25 percent of the total population in Finnmark.⁵⁵ From 1980 to 2002, Alta's population increased by around 30 percent, which positions the town among the fastest-growing centres in Norway. The increase was mainly in the municipal centre where, today, 73 percent of the overall population lives. On the outskirts, where Lille Lerresfjord is located, there has been a decrease of 75 percent since 1960. This has happened in a period when the population of the municipality has doubled (Alta kommune 2003). The growth of the centre and decline of the outskirts is a long-standing process that has been ongoing for more than 40 years. Yet ethnicity seems still to be a matter that anthropologists are studying on the fringes.

THE CHANGED CONTEXT

Lille Lerresfjord was a small settlement where the majority could be traced to a coastal Saami past. Alta is a much larger town, where Norwegians and Kvens

previously were much more prominent than in the dominantly Saami settlement of Lille Lerresfjord. Yet there are some resemblances. When I moved to the regional centre, Alta, in the early 1990s, I had an identical experience to what Eidheim had had in the fjord community thirty years earlier. For an outsider, ethnic differences were hard to see. The exceptions were that one could sometimes see older people in Saami costume and that some people presented themselves as Saami. With few exceptions, all were originally from the interior of the area. Except for older people, who were usually dressed in Saami clothing, everyone had a fluent command of Norwegian, exhibiting no more than the dialectal differences common in Norway. Even those who emphasised a Saami identity very seldom stood out from the average Norwegians found everywhere. Due to the homogenising effects of the nation-state, people of my own age, born in the early 1960s, shared most experiences that I had had and the cultural knowledge I myself had gained when I was brought up more than 2,000 kilometres further south in Norway. Like Eidheim (1971), after a while I also started to be told by people other than Saami from the interior that they could be ‘a kind of Saami’. ‘A kind of Saami’ in the 1990s refers to a quite different local ecology and society than thirty years earlier, to different experiences of a Saami past and also to a different ontological understanding of the relationship between Saaminess and Norwegian identity.

Three characteristics of the local ecology and society were important for the way ethnicity was articulated and maintained in the 1950s and 1960s (Eidheim 1971). Firstly, local knowledge enabled people to recognise others as either Saami or Norwegian in a relatively large district. Secondly, the time when people were Saami was a relatively close past. Most people had lived in a community and had led an everyday life which were regarded by themselves and others as coastal Saami. Thirdly, the contact with other Saami in the interior was only with the reindeer herders on their annual migrations to the coast. The emerging ethnic revival in the interior settlements and in academic milieus was unknown. Today, in the regional centre, people’s knowledge of each other is

much more fragmented. The Saami past, conceptualised as such, is for most of the inhabitants the past of their parents, their grandparents or even further back. The Saami language was spoken – if it was heard at all – by old people or reindeer herders, and was seldom passed on to younger generations. Also those who grew up in settlements in the fjords usually spent their childhood in settlements that were regarded by themselves and others as Norwegian. They made up a Norwegian population, in contrast to the Saami population in the interior, even if they were different from the Southerners who often took up central positions in the booming labour market of the 1960s and 70s. Last but not least, the ethno-political movement has made the Saami culture in the interior today into a modern vibrant culture where there are a multitude of possibilities to express a Saami identity. This is so even if ideas of authenticity that emphasise the culture of the minority occupation of reindeer herding and general ideas about indigenosity found in a global fourth-world discourse are still predominant (Eidheim 1992, 1997; Thuen 1995, 2003; Stordahl 1996; Hovland 1996a).

As already demonstrated, the settlement patterns have changed in Western Finnmark. In the regional centre where most people live, the everyday encounters are mainly with people you have less information about than in the fjord settlement. This is not to say that it is impossible to obtain personal information about one's neighbours and acquaintances. Much information is often easily accessible through social networks, but it is difficult to obtain accurate knowledge about a Saami past. Since 1100 AD, the fjord areas have had a population of mixed ethnic origin. Norwegians, Kvens and other nationalities have made these areas heterogeneous. Multilingualism has been frequent, and changes of ethnic belonging have occurred at both collective and individual levels. To know that a person comes from a particular place in the fjords – to be a *Fjording* – might indicate a Saami identity but you seldom know for sure. It is a relational term seen from the individual's standpoint. People originally from different places may put different contents into the word. For some, it

relates to Saami, for others it might be neutral, and still others may attach a Kven identity to the word, all depending on purpose and context. Therefore, the label *Fjording* is a potential rather than a closing description.

Usually it is up to the person herself to make ethnicity relevant in social interaction. Compared to a background from Southern Norway or from the interior of Finnmark, belonging to the fjord areas is a much more open category. An exception may be particular places individuals know well, where they can categorise families as having been Saami. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean that a person from this family regards herself as Saami today – even if some of his or her relatives may. One usually needs a personal statement, which may vary for each individual in the family.

Most people do not know much about their past compared to people from southern parts of the country. A famous name for the coastal population has been ‘the people without a past’ (Nielsen 1986). Those who experienced the change from Saami to Norwegian seldom talked about what they had lived through (Høgmo 1986: 404). Their former identity as Saami belonged to the past. This was an ontological ordering of ethnicity that also had a strong impact on those who grew up in Norwegian settlements. One example, of a person who grew up in a small coastal community close to Lille Lerresfjord, shows how the coastal Saami identity disappeared and became attached to the past.⁵⁶

In this settlement the shift occurred in the late 1950s and early 60s. A man who was brought up in this settlement in the 1970s recalls that, even if he knew that many of his older relatives spoke Saami, he, like the rest of his peers, never thought of themselves as anything other than Norwegian. Nor did he experience any problems because of what today is regarded as a Saami heritage. People interpreted any signs that might point to a Saami identity as belonging to the past. If such signs appeared in the present, as described by Høgmo (1986: 409) for a generation brought up thirty years earlier, they were rendered

neutral or reinterpreted as Norwegian. As the man said: ‘We were Norwegians! What else could we be?’ The Saami, or rather Finnan, were reindeer herders, people of the interior, or a derogatory label put on those whose actions did not conform to the local culture. Someone could act like a Finn, but not claim a continuity with a Saami past because this past had been left behind. In his childhood, when his mother – herself brought up in a Saami family – once teased him by telling him that she intended to give her vote to the Saami Party, he could not believe her because they were Norwegian and did not stand out from the local cultural community, in spite of what some older relatives said about Saami being their mother tongue. Consequently, his Norwegian mother could not vote for a party that was supported by Finns only.

This example, as well as that of Eidheim (1971), is representative of the development in the coastal areas as well as indicative of the differences in individual stories. The example also points to the changes that have occurred in the last forty to fifty years. My informant experienced his childhood and youth as Norwegian, is fully integrated in modern Norwegian society, and has skills and an education gained in the Norwegian educational system. The small fjord settlement, as Saami, is a part of his parents’ past. For him it was a Norwegian settlement that he had left for the regional centres which offered employment and educational opportunities. For him and many others, their relatively newly found Saami past is a rather distant past that previously did not belong to them. They live in a contemporary society where the consequences of this past can be debated and negotiated primarily due to the Saami ethno-political movement. The dilemma is that the dominant discourses, of which ethno-politics are a part, seldom offer a vocabulary that captures their experiences. Their reactions to this can be multiple. They can call themselves Finnmarking, Saami, Coastal Saami, Norwegian, a mixture, a cocktail, or mongrels, and few will oppose their own choice of belonging in a local context. Nor will such a choice have any consequences for social interaction in the local public sphere pragmatically defined as Norwegian. What makes it possible to reclaim this past,

regardless of what one calls oneself, is that the ethno-political movement as a part of general processes in modern society has changed the way of thinking about a Saami culture. Today for many, Saaminess is a real opportunity for people in small settlements as well as in regional centres. What has changed most are the possible ways of expressing Saaminess.

The consequences of the change of socio-economic context since Eidheim's (1971) study are, firstly, that, in contemporary local ecology and society, people have less knowledge of each others' backgrounds, and peoples' backgrounds are rather heterogeneous. Secondly, there is the possibility of attachment to different identities. Thirdly, what can be seen as a Saami past is more remote and much more heterogeneous than what Eidheim describes for the fjord settlement. And finally, people master the Norwegian culture fully. These empirical changes also coincide with an ontological change in the way ethnicity is thought of by large parts of the population in the area.⁵⁷

The privacy of ethnicity described in Eidheim's work is a result of, firstly, a temporal ordering of ethnicity in the fjord areas and, secondly, a spatial organisation that separates the coast, the fjord areas and the interior. At the time of Eidheim's (1971) writing, people were on their way to becoming Norwegian, and what belonged to the past had to be kept private as a private shame or inside a distinct sphere, and caused stigma when made public by some peoples' lack of cultural competence. Today a spatial organisation of ethnicity still separates the interior, the coast, and the fjord areas. What, in the institutionalised discourses, are symbols of Saaminess are features that, on the coast, are regarded as belonging to the interior. The change is that the temporal organisation on the coast has broken down. It has been eliminated by its reduction to real or classificatory spaces (Fabian 1991: 198). The establishment of such real or classificatory spaces means that ethnicity is still a private matter. But the reason for this privacy has changed, too. Today, being Saami is seen as a private choice that has no implications for others, but only in certain spheres

can a Saami identity be expressed without having such an effect. The problem is that the boundaries between these spheres often break down.

SPHERES OF INTERACTION

The changed local ecology and society, and the altered ontology have led ethnicity to organise interaction in a new way, in other spheres with other codes, themes and values than previously. The temporal organisational principle has had to give way in most contexts, except for a few institutionalised settings in a public sphere described in earlier chapters. Inspired by Erwin Goffman's sociology, Eidheim (1971) points out three separate spheres of interaction: a public sphere, a closed Norwegian sphere, and a closed Saami sphere. All three spheres were organised differently according to ethnicity. Today, in the regional centre, the organisation of ethnicity is best understood with reference to: 1) a public sphere where some spaces allow expression of a standardised Saaminess that uphold a temporal division; 2) a public Saami sphere where a collective Saami self-understanding has hegemony; and 3) private spheres where the clear-cut boundaries of the two former usually are rejected and identities are continuously under negotiation.

The public sphere

What Eidheim (1971: 58-59) describes as a public sphere in the fjord areas can be understood as ordered by temporality. The Saami culture and identity did not belong in contemporary modernity even if everybody knew which people had such a past. To bring Saami identity into a public sphere resulted in huge social costs (1971: 63). As long as Norwegians were present or in Norwegian arenas like the local shop or school, the language was Norwegian and nothing pointed to an ethnic division among the population. Even if it was expected that no one signalled a Saami identity in public in the fjord settlement or the

area as a whole, all inhabitants knew who was of Saami descent. Such local knowledge was based upon the ability to attach identity to signs such as certain living places, what was regarded as a Saami ‘physical appearance’, the accent, and behaviour such as passivity in public meetings, which was perceived as lack of reliability and ‘keeping to themselves’. According to Eidheim (1971: 59), the consequence was a local community where initiative in the public sphere belonged to those who fully mastered the Norwegian code, or said in another way, the Saami past had no place in the present.

Compared with the regional centre of today, few of these signs can be used by locals to predict a Saami identity. Physical appearance and descent from certain fjord communities known as Saami might be an indication of the person having a Saami identity. But people seldom have thorough knowledge of the same areas. Therefore this is not, as previously, a collective knowledge. The mobility of people means that local knowledge is always fragmented. One’s own background, growing up in a certain area, may give people the ability to ascribe others as belonging to certain places or families with Saami identity, but this is only a partial knowledge of some areas. This is not knowledge one can expect other people to share even if they may have similar knowledge of other areas. The only exception relates to the division between the coast and the interior, which also often implies a certain dialect. Neither can people’s conduct in a public sphere be used today as an ethnic marker. The local culture has long been conceptualised as Norwegian only showing the local differences as every other place subsumed under the label of Norwegian culture. Nor is ethnic belonging a part of the interaction in local public spheres. As long as everyone is assumed to be familiar with the local culture, ethnic belonging becomes a non-topic for ordering social interaction so long as no one insists that ethnicity matters.

A short encounter with a neighbour shows how ethnic belonging is a non-topic in the community, whereas it structures the relationship between ‘us’ – the locals – and ‘them’ – the interior. In the autumn it is common to buy reindeer

meat directly from the reindeer herders. Knowledge about where, when and from whom is usually a kind of information provided by more experienced friends and acquaintances even if such information is sometimes found in the adverts in the local papers.⁵⁸ Information from other buyers is usually the best because they will know about the expected quality of the meat, and your relationship with them will hopefully give you an advantage by forming a relationship with the seller. To buy from someone you know may also be regarded as favourable because such transactions do not necessarily involve the Tax Office and the Public Health inspector. One neighbour told me that the meat she had bought this autumn was of particularly good quality, and she said that she could make an arrangement for me with the seller next autumn. The meat was of such good quality that she intended to buy dried meat from the same seller, a woman she knew quite well. The reason for this good quality was that the meat was tenderized so well and as she put it: ‘... *Finnan* do not do this.’ Such an ethnic reference must be understood both as a text, i.e. an expectation about my local cultural competence, and as a part of a context, i.e. the social setting in which this reference to ethnicity was uttered.

People in this area use the word *Finnan* as a name for the predominantly Saami people from the interior in general, and for the reindeer-herding Saami in particular. It is based mainly on a distinction between ‘us’, the people on the coast, and ‘them’. A literal translation would probably equate *Finnan* with a – sometimes derogatory – term for the Saami; but in local speech the latter meaning is too broad to cover the intended meaning in more restricted encounters in Alta. Saami people living on the coast would usually not be called by the singular *Finn*, but more probably be referred to as *Fjordfinn* or by the open ethnic marker *Fjordfolket*, people of the fjords. The latter terms are also used to make a distinction between ‘them’ and ‘us’, but in this case a more specific knowledge about who ‘we’ are and who ‘they’ are is necessary. To fully apprehend the cultural content of categories, one needs first of all to know something about the two people involved.

The woman who said that *Finman* do not tenderize their meat is herself among those who could be referred to as ‘from the fjord’. Her background from a small settlement in a fjord in Finnmark makes it very likely that she herself fulfils most of the criteria for inscription on the Saami election rolls. By earlier references to her mixed background, she is well aware that I know about her being of partly Saami descent. Being from the fjord herself, and my being a Southerner, implies that the word *Finman*, in this particular context, refers to the boundary between the reindeer-herding population of the interior and us, who live in Alta. The word *Finman* thus refers to a certain way of living and settlement in a particular geographical area, something that in most cases is also a marker of ethnicity, but one that does not cover all Saami people. My neighbour is excluded by this usage, but would have been ethnically characterized by the term *Fjord Finn* and to some degree by being called a person ‘from the fjord’. To my knowledge she might well have been listed in the electoral roll to the Saami Parliament. What is significant is that such terms can be used by people of Saami descent – or persons like herself who can claim to be partly Saami – to make a distinction between *Finman* and themselves. The terms used relate to ethnicity, locality, certain assumed ways of behaving and to a way of life. The local discourse cannot therefore be easily translated into the official discourses of ethnicity in public institutions.⁵⁹ Encounters between neighbours enable the individual perception of him or herself to take prominence and define relationships in the particular context. Experiences that have no access to dominant discourse may be included in concepts that change meaning in other contexts. What in dominant discourse appears as ethnic differences between my neighbour and me does not in the contexts of everyday life become a hindrance to creating other communities guided by other organising principles. In this particular context, we, as well-educated parents living in Alta, are what are important. This is what we feel, irrespective of the differences that can be constructed by the ethnic vocabulary. Therefore people contest the dominant discourses that insist on ethnicity as a major ordering principle. Nevertheless, the dominant way of ordering ethnic relations is always a potential that may contest other ways of creating communities.

Nor are such labels regarded as derogatory per se even if they may well be so. In the same way as the use of the word *Finnan* supposes local cultural knowledge, its meaning is dependent on a mutual understanding of the social context. Once again this implies a mutual understanding about who ‘we’ are and who ‘they’ are, but this is an understanding that can be contested by evoking new plots. Such contestations are important in everyday life because the kind of plot that gains hegemony has consequences for one’s own and others’ understanding of individuals’ past, present and future. In this example, as in most social interaction in the local public sphere, there is an emphasis on belonging to the local or the Finnmark culture. Shared cultural competence and symbols that are pragmatically defined as Norwegian become the frames for social interaction. Equality is emphasised, but this is a fragile communality. Insistence on the dominance of the institutional discourses alters the way interaction is organised. Insistence on the right to use one’s mother tongue, the radical difference represented in museums, tourism and political discourse, all emphasise differences, or in Eidheim’s terms (1971: 79): dichotomy and complementarity. The ‘us’ created among two neighbours could have, by bringing the dominant discourses into play, been altered to an ‘ethnic’ encounter. This fragility also implies a certain power relation long-embedded in the relationship between the North and the South because the local way of categorisation never gains access in dominant national discourse.

Public spheres for the articulation of ethnic differences

In spite of a local culture that often appears to be pragmatically Norwegian – ‘everyone’ has these cultural skills, and the use of Saami codes and language will only make trouble – several spaces are available for the expression of Saaminess.

People, usually from the interior, who speak Saami often use the language in conversation with people who have the same language skills. It is not uncommon

to hear Saami in public places, but it usually signifies an origin in the interior. The same applies to those who use traditional Saami costume in an everyday setting. Usually those who wear such dress in daily life are not only from the interior but also of an older generation. The same does not apply to special occasions, like the national celebration on the 17th of May, weddings, baptisms or confirmations. Here one can see many young people and adults who do not necessarily come from the interior wearing traditional Saami costumes. Traditional coastal Saami costume is commonly seen, even if not as frequently as the costumes from the interior. On these occasions, such an identity marker can be used by people who, in everyday life, have never claimed a Saami identity because it was never meant to be significant for ordering interaction among locals. Having mastered the local codes fully, they need to make a particular claim that their ethnic identity should be taken under consideration in everyday matters. In making such a claim they would have made a political statement that contests the assumed neutral practical ordering of the public everyday life.

It is not only at public celebrations that some spaces are reserved for expressions of Saaminess. Public institutions like the schools provide education in Saami culture and language for those who themselves, or whose parents, choose this as a part of the curriculum. Alta has a local Saami association, and Saami traditions can be observed as artistic expressions at several public events. After several years of struggle, the Saami flag is now raised on the Saami People's Day, the 6th of February, and recently the local authorities have decided to use Saami names on road signs where Saami names have been in local use. Signs in the Northern Saami language also are recognisable on public governmental buildings but always in addition to Norwegian. Few of these gains have come without a struggle.

Compared with Eidheim's (1971) earlier description of a public sphere, the present context differs in many respects. Yet there are some resemblances. As Eidheim (1971: 63) points out, there seems to be an agreement on a public

sphere with a joint identity. Ethnicity is not something that is meant to order interaction because everyone is supposed to be familiar with the local code and language that is defined as Norwegian. The main difference from Eidheim's old description is that today certain spaces in the public sphere are made available for the expression of a Saami identity. This can, in Fabian's (1991: 198) terms, be understood as classificatory spaces where such an identity and the past can be made visible without interfering with everyday life. People's past or personal ethnic belonging do not matter in everyday encounters. If they choose to express such an identity, they can do it in classificatory spaces without interfering in the pragmatic coping with everyday life. One of the reasons for this is that these expressions of a Saami identity are usually effected by means of symbols that belong to dominant discourses. Such symbols have emerged through what Eidheim calls the development of a joint '...“vocabulary” with which to speak of oneself internally as well as inter-culturally' (1992: 3). Stordahl describes this development of 'a joint vocabulary': 'We witnessed a “symbolic warfare” [...] against everything Norwegian and the symbols that were chosen to be markers and represent the Saami society externally, were as described earlier, simple us/them categories and stereotypes' (Stordahl 1996: 152; my translation).⁶⁰ As described in previous chapters, it is this vocabulary, which promotes ethnicity as an organising principle that is perpetuated by institutions through their dominant discourses. In addition, the way Saami culture is represented in these spaces is ordered by the dichotomy between indigenous and modern, and by a temporal dimension, in a way that sets it apart from modern everyday life. As will be discussed later in this chapter, an expression of ethnicity usually becomes problematic only when others feel it has been forced upon them. This might be felt as a threat when the spatial arrangement becomes altered.

Private spheres

Eidheim (1971) described a closed Saami sphere that does not penetrate into the public sphere. Signs of Saami identity were supposed to be kept out of public spaces by both Saami and Norwegians. What was an emerging Saami ethno-political movement in the interior had no impact in the fjord settlements. A contemporary public Saami sphere in the interior of Finnmark has been discussed by Stordahl (1996). She describes a dynamic field where the definition of a modern Saami identity – or rather identities – is emerging as a result of several groups contesting the symbolic expressions making up what Eidheim (1992: 5) calls a collective Saami self-understanding. The latter is primarily the result of the ethno-political struggle that aimed for a contrast and complementarity to Norwegian national culture as promoted by public institutions. At certain points in this struggle, the global discourse on fourth-world peoples also became an important asset for symbolic productions. This discourse, which relies heavily on the difference between a single modernity and traditional peoples, becomes contested in the identity processes Stordahl (1996: 148 ff.) describes in the societies in the interior of Finnmark. Still, it is this cultural symbolism that presently dominates the spaces organised for expression of a Saami identity in the public sphere in the regional centre. Traditional costume on certain occasions, traditional symbols such as joik, *lavvo*, etc., and the institutional framing of museums, public school and cultural events turn these spaces into expressions of an official image of differences. In many ways these images are also quite alienated from what has been local Saami culture along the coast.

This means that, firstly, the public Saami culture visible on the coast and the fjord areas often appears as a political statement. It is the result of an ethno-political struggle in which symbols that could relate to indigenoussness and make a contrast and form a complement to Norwegian culture were promoted. Usually this symbolic expression reinforces the old spatial difference between coast and interior. People in coastal communities have often defined themselves

in contrast to the interior, and this is still done today. This symbolic division is also present in the following example.

Some years ago I by coincidence read the script called 'Big Same in Kautokeino' made for a revue number by some school girls in Alta. It was a rephrasing of the then-popular TV-program 'Big Brother'. The content of the script was mainly stereotypes about the Saami of the interior. In the coastal tradition, it was full of jokes about reindeer, joik, traditional costumes, naïve Saami, and the naming tradition of the interior, where people often have several first and middle names (F. Eidheim 1993: 54-56). It was not the content of this revue number that interested me most, though. Rather it was the names of the actors and the script-writers that amazed me because I was aware that several of them had a background which – when they turned eighteen – qualified them to register on the Saami electoral rolls. They were fully aware of this fact themselves, and some of them had followed the Saami curriculum in school. What is interesting is that, among many who make up the Saami coastal population, the symbolic spatial difference is perpetuated by the same symbols as previously. Yet the ethnic vocabulary of the dominant discourses does not coincide with the way they present themselves.

The seemingly radical difference between Saami and Norwegian is attenuated in many private spheres. A description of a discussion among some of the same adolescent girls who were responsible for the 'Big Same' revue number reveals some of the characteristics that can be found in such private spheres. Four of the girls were discussing the important matter of how to dress for their coming confirmation. In Norway this is an important question, in part because for girls this is often an occasion for acquiring a Bunad – a costume based on Norwegian folk tradition. The outfit is quite expensive, and to save money skilled older relatives often take on the time-consuming work of sewing these dresses. Not only is the expense for these often once-in-a-lifetime outfits of interest. The Bunad differs from region to region and sometimes between

local communities. It is often assumed that the owner should originally come from the same place, or at least have some family connections with the place where the Bunad originated. The need for a family relation to the place one's Bunad comes from is probably a tradition that the young girls' mothers – or most likely the mothers' older relatives – are keener to uphold than the young girls themselves. Even if this informal rule limits one's choice, most young people have a family background that can satisfy the idea of descent from several places. The Bunad that is protected by copyright is not the only option; the less-formal Drakt is open to greater variety, and the possibility of nice dresses makes such discussions important and time-consuming events.

On this occasion about nine months in advance of their confirmation in May, two of the young girls present could trace their descent to several places in the Southern part of Norway, while the two others could do the same to different places in Northern Norway. Aware of their mothers' limits in terms of descent, economy, time and skills within the family – even if they were not pleased at losing the opportunity to select what they found most pretty – they still had several options to choose among. One of them was a Saami Kofte. At least they agreed that two of them could choose this traditional Saami dress as long as they had a partly Saami ancestry. One of them refused this opportunity because the coastal Saami Drakt that she could wear because of her origin was not particularly nice. Her choice was a Finnmarks Drakt because of the possibility of different embroideries. She had to decide early because of the need to order it long in advance and because one of her aunts had promised to do the embroideries of her liking. The other girl with ancestors from Northern Norway would have loved to have a Kofte like her younger sister had. The problem was that her grandmother had been ill and did not have the time to make it for her. As she pointed out, it was a Saami tradition that the Kofte was made by relatives, and it would not be the same to buy one. She had already ordered a Nordlandsbunad. All of them agreed that the two with family from the South could not wear Kofte even if they would have looked gorgeous. Due to the

limitations outlined previously, both of the girls ended up with a dress. Aware of the prices of the traditional costumes, they agreed that their dresses should be expensive and that a trip to a larger city was needed to get the right ones. It is interesting to note that, even if one of the girls could also trace her ancestry to Russia, this was never mentioned in the discussion; and a Russian folk costume, which would have been easily accessible in Alta, was not considered.

What these discussions in a private sphere show is that a Saami identity and its expression is just one of several possibilities for some of these children. Nor does the Saami identity appear as a contrast to their identity as coastal. They refuse to make a choice among separate categories and are allowed by their peers to be ambivalent in this context. A crucial difference to the public sphere is that the private sphere renders the discourse much more open. The autonomous individual and his or her belonging gain a position that is seldom allowed in the public sphere. What you feel you are, where you belong, becomes an authoritative statement that seldom can be contested. As in an inner-directed Western culture in general, the individual and personal feelings are cast in a power relation that, in the immediate context, takes priority. Therefore one's personal opinions can direct categorisations.

INDIVIDUAL CONSTRAINTS AND LEAKAGES BETWEEN SPHERES

While a public sphere reserves certain culturally constructed spheres for the political expression of differences between Norwegian and Saami culture, and the private sphere emphasises belonging in spite of individual differences, what Eidheim (1971: 62) calls unintended leakages may occur between the spheres. In Eidheim's material, such leakages occur between the private Saami sphere and the public one. The reasons may be inter-ethnic quarrels, and in some rare cases – often with long-lasting effects – the Saami were able to define situations and

set standards (1971: 63). Nevertheless, Eidheim claims: ‘... the Norwegians have as a rule the last word in such quarrels and the Lapps are the losers’ (1971: 62).

The two cases described in the previous chapter can be understood in this perspective even if the consequences would be quite different today. Both the pressure put on the municipal authorities to raise the Saami flag on the 6th of February and the NSR leader’s insistence on using the Saami language in public meetings are attempts at producing ‘leakages’ between a Saami public sphere, a public local sphere and the latter’s internal ordering. Both these examples can be understood as cases where symbols are brought into spheres in which they have an impact on the way belonging is understood as well as on social interaction. This interloping of public Saami symbols is usually met with an attempt at resistance in the local public sphere in the form of the construction of spaces where such symbols do not interfere with pragmatic everyday life. Quite typically, flying the Saami flag is now included, while language still is kept outside inter-ethnic relations. On signs, the use of Saami can be understood as a pragmatic solution to language use, while in everyday-life encounters the minority language is perceived as a threat to the pragmatic idea of common belonging.

For the individual, leakages between the public and private spheres may be experienced as more dramatic. To express a Saami identity in spaces organised for this purpose in the public sphere may well be unproblematic for locals as long as it has no impact on them. This is far from being the case of ‘the Old Aunties’ – a euphemism for relatives with other opinions. Even if Alta is big enough to give a sense of individuality, it is small enough that many people are also seen as belonging to a family and kin group. Using a Saami costume for the first time on a public occasion often prompts the question: ‘What will the Old Aunties say?’ By bringing your own private relation to a Saami identity into public you also obliterate the privacy of your relatives. If your relative claims to be Saami, it may imply that you and the rest of the family are also Saami (Thuen 2003: 276-281). The expression ‘Old Aunties’ usually refers to the

generation described by Eidheim, which sometimes still regard a Saami identity as a stigma. Still, leakages between personal feelings of belonging and a public sphere where such feelings may have implication for others are not restricted to family. Why are you a Saami when your past is identical to your Norwegian peers? As a man describes his and some friends reaction to what he labels the ethnic conversion of a childhood friend: ‘Why should he be Saami? He is just like us! If he was something else than Norwegian he should have turned out to be a Kven because that is what he is.’

The consequences of an act such as bringing personal belonging into public can be the danger of being ridiculed. Relatives can jokingly refer to ‘the Family’s Finn’, a relative claiming Saami identity in an otherwise Norwegian family. Other such leakages can result in more serious conflicts among family members. The problem is that the private understanding of identity is brought into a public sphere where other defining powers are found. The heterogeneity and private specificity usually found in individual narratives among people on the coast give way to the dichotomy between the coast and Finnland in the interior, or the political idea of Saaminess. To enter the public spheres where a Saami identity can be expressed is therefore a potential transformation of the way people look upon you as well as your relatives, as a person. This is not so much a danger in relation to friends or acquaintances, where a private opinion may have hegemony, but in relation to people who do not know much about who you are. The latter category is made up of many in the *Bygdeby*. Irrespective of their own ethnic belonging, they may put you into the category of *Finn* from the interior – an identity a coastal belonging rejects – or as ‘a Born Again’ in the framework of a collective Saami self-understanding that usually belongs to the political realm. Put into the first category, you are asked to have the cultural competence attached to such an identity. Children in particular are in danger of being teased by their peers, who ask how many reindeer they have, ask them to joik and so on. Being situated in different social networks makes Rosaldo’s ‘many stranded possibilities of the borderland’ also constraints. As

Beck (1992: 99) argues, the subjective consciousness of autonomy is often not matched by objective realities.

Leakage between a private sphere and a public can therefore cause negative reactions, positive reactions, or no reaction at all. If you insist on a Saami identity as a public issue, only the identities as a Finn, the political 'Born Again' or the private and individual feeling of a heterogeneous Saaminess are viable options. Only in contexts where the autonomous individual is put forward – in a private sphere – is the heterogeneity that a Saami identity may conceal able to unfold. In such contexts, the political idea of Saaminess or the dichotomy between the coast and the interior disappears. Therefore many people refuse the label of Saami because other labels are able to contain the individual and heterogeneous aspects of belonging. Such labels are easily included in the public sphere of everyday life, where belonging and pragmatic solutions dominate and organise the public space. They do not interfere with social actions.

Eidheim demonstrates '... how the stigma of Lappishness is related to performance on public stages as well as to unintentional leakages from their ethnically homogeneous closed stages' (1971: 62) as well as from inter-ethnic quarrels. The result of this stigma was that:

'The Lapp is often either a rather passive partner or he grants Norwegians extravagant role-support by being servile and manageable. If he anticipates confrontations which may focus upon his identity he is apt to withdraw, avoid persons, or even to change his place of work' (Eidheim 1971: 63).

The local flow of interaction in Eidheim's study was not the result of an unbiased agreement on a joint identity but a result of the social costs attached to showing Saami behaviour or promoting a Saami identity. The techniques that were used to conceal the Lappish identity and to keep up the boundaries

between the spheres sustained a stigma that people were not able to escape (Eidheim 1971: 63-65).

I have demonstrated that this stigma no longer plays an important part in social relations in the municipality. This is because a change in ‘the local ecology and society’ has occurred since Eidheim did his work in Lille Lerresfjord. Instead of a public sphere where unintentional leakages and the lack of cultural competence signal a Saami identity, creating a certain relationship between Norwegian and Saami, the contemporary public sphere in the municipal centre is characterised by nearly all people having the competence needed as locals. In this sphere, belonging displaces previous emphasis on differences. In addition, this public sphere is defined pragmatically in such a way that both Saami and Southerners in most everyday encounters – by context and purpose – can be included in the local ‘us’. Mastering the repertoire of social relations, as nearly all people do, relations can be based on a mutual agreement on a shared identity as belonging to a Norwegian culture. As Thuen writes: ‘.., we see that “culture” as skills and performance is at the core of minority identity articulation’ (1995: 262). The same applies to the articulation of belonging to a local majority culture. Skills and performances that do not ostensibly belong to other categories are lumped into the broad, flexible and dynamic category of modern Norwegian everyday life as it unfolds in a local context. Additional belongings can be expressed inside certain spaces in standardised forms or in private spheres that do not hamper the flow of everyday life. Those who do stand out or insist on difference can easily be assigned to the familiar roles of the ethno-politician or the old and familiar *Finn* from the interior. In all events, this fragile way of pragmatically defining a local culture can be upset for some by relatives and peers displaying a Saami identity in public, or, for larger groups, by a public Saami culture, with the help of national politics, entering the domain of Norwegianness.

PRIVATISATION AND VULNERABILITY AS CONSEQUENCES

The incongruity of discourses and the complexity of local society mean that one needs a firm understanding of the context and of the other to understand the terms in which ethnicity can be discussed. This is because other people can be insulted and because of political differences, but also because the choice of plot can have direct consequences for others' self-understanding. For example, when one person proclaims a Saami identity, this does imply a plot that necessitates that other people reorder their own self-understanding. The similarity in people's heterogeneous background and the different possibilities of narrating this background mean that one's own choice of identity has an impact on the plot others choose. To claim to be *Finnmarking* both alters a political-social order in which ethnic purity previously had hegemony for self-understanding and contests the institutional discourses that necessitates a choice between Norwegian and Saami.

The hidden character of ethnicity in everyday encounters, where such a clear categorisation is not supposed to matter, can therefore also be understood as a recognition of vulnerability. The general concepts in use might have direct consequences for the individual's particular experiences of self. Ascribing different social positions through formative statements in different discourses leads to certain orderings of identity. This is not only the case when it comes to the need to affirm a Norwegian or a Saami identity. Inside the frames of what is labelled Saami, both in local discourse and in institutional discourses, Saaminess is seen as a core that enables a grading of people according to their abilities to fulfil the assumed idea of Saaminess. This means that it is not only in the distinction between Norwegian and Saami that vulnerability is generated. This vulnerability is also found among those who proclaim a Saami identity because their personal experience of self can always be contested, both by Norwegians with a background similar to themselves and by those that the

discourse situates at the core of a Saami culture. This is because the categories and their assumed contents in dominant discourse seldom fit with individuals' consciousness of self.

The privatisation and zoning of a Saami identity has other costs as well. Except for the standardised symbols, Saami identity is in danger of being transmitted merely as a personal feeling, individual experiences and private symbols. As long as most spheres of everyday life are considered to belong to a local Norwegian modern culture, few arenas are left to the values of attachment that can be defined as Saami. This causes a problem for many parents who are eager to pass on a Saami identity to their children. In many ways this situation has changed diametrically from the time of Eidheim's (1971) writings. In Lille Lerresfjord, many families prevented their children from learning Saami and were eager to make them fully competent in the Norwegian culture. Today, many parents who have reclaimed a Saami identity belong to the generation that was kept from learning the Saami language. Their mastery of the language may range from being fully fluent, to rather rudimentary, to non-existent, depending on their individual past. The solution for those with a rudimentary or no knowledge of Saami and unable to claim education in the child's 'mother tongue' is to enrol their children in the public schools' courses in Saami language and Culture, or in Saami as a second language. The challenge, or rather the nearly impossible obstacle, is that, except for these courses, few if any contexts in everyday life necessitate using the Saami language. The two cultural spaces where Saami can be used are the public space of the school, for a couple of hours a week, and the home if one of the parents speaks the language. In addition Saami is often taught in the Northern Saami dialect of the interior, which can be quite distinct from that spoken in the parent's place of origin. Even for Saami-speaking parents with relatives living in Saami-speaking areas, it can be difficult to transmit a language for which the children often have no or little practical need in daily life. The ordering of the spheres that make up the local ecology and society makes the Saami language into an emblematic

sign reserved for a certain space. The Saami language does not become a part of the majority's everyday life as long as everyone masters the pragmatic local culture, due to the fact that everyone has aimed to 'qualify themselves as full participants in Norwegian society' (Eidheim 1971: 51). Nor does it become a part of many Saami people's everyday life without a conscious attempt, and the possibility, to use it as a private language.

Therefore the transmission of an identity, conceptualised and symbolised as Saami, between generations often takes the form of private narratives, memories and symbols. Outdoor life is important for many parents who want to transmit their identity to their children. That nature shall be used, and not just as recreation in the Southern Norwegian tradition, is something they want to teach their children. You need a purpose for the trip. This might be picking berries, hunting or fishing or just preparing for such activities later on. They also want to teach their children the skills needed for outdoor life in this area. Stories about places, memories of them and their family's relation to such places are something children should learn. Places, as Saami places, become a part of this identity and they are usually found in nature and not as a part of modernity in the town centre (Andreassen & Nilsen 2003). The problem is that this belonging to places and skills in outdoor life does not differ from what is the common way of life in the area (Pedersen 1999). Everyone, or at least males, is supposed to be able to light a fire and to be skilled in the outdoor life that characterises this area; this is not reserved for a particular ethnic group. Consequently, such a private way of expressing ethnic belonging usually remains private and cannot be articulated as something that gives directionality to local social interaction.⁶¹ When Eidheim was writing, local ecology, as nature in use, did not create any division based on ethnicity either. This relation to nature, continued as outdoor life, still does not have any particular ethnic marking. As Eidheim puts it: '... if ethnic groups should not happen to coincide with contrasting economic systems or with firm and enduring political groups, there will always be the problem of "transitional zones"' (1971:

50). Today this problem extends to much of the private sphere, as in the case of outdoor life, where differences can be thought of only as an individual belonging and not made relevant for social action.

While vulnerability is one of the features of the everyday discourses of ethnicity in the area, this situation also provides a fertile ground for creativity. As Foucault put it: ‘Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power’ (1978: 95). Power can then be seen as a productive force that opens up spaces for resistance in various forms, but never as a mere reflection of dominance (Foucault 1980: 119). Many of these productive results of the discourses on ethnicity in Finnmark – at the moment – afford fewer possibilities for a collective expression that can gain recognition in the field of institutional discourses. This is because many of them depend on local knowledge, utilise the symbolism of the institutional discourses in their own way, and rely on contexts where individual expression predominates.

CONCLUSION

As Eidheim (1971: 67, 50) maintained, it is necessary to analyse the local ecology and society as a meaningful context in order to understand ‘how ethnic diversity is socially articulated and maintained’. This chapter has shown how changes in the local ecology and society in Western Finnmark have caused important changes in the articulation and maintaining of ethnic diversity. Since Eidheim did his research in the area, the patterns of settlement have changed radically, the ethno-political Saami movement has gained influence on the coast, and what was regarded as a Saami past is now for most people a rather distant past. Furthermore, in a society where the apparent autonomy of the individual has gained momentum, more people look to their past in an attempt to understand the present. The processes of change emphasised here all extend

to larger national and global fields, but they come together in a local context and shape identity processes. In a local context, identity discourses become ordered by ascribing a public Saami sphere to the interior, while regarding the public sphere in the town as Norwegian. In Alta, certain public spaces that do not interfere with everyday interaction are reserved for the expression of a standardised Saaminess, while a Saami identity is supposed to be a private matter. This enables the local culture to emphasise belonging within a collective identity that can embrace a multitude of heterogeneous experiences and belongings. In this discursive ordering, leakage between the spheres contests the disparate categories. This may come from dominant public discourses that promote either/or categorisations and have a different ordering of the relationship between the past and the present. For some, such leakages are caused by individual's expressions of belonging that also can be transmitted to others in the public sphere. Nevertheless, the result of this ordering is that the Saami identity in many ways remains private.

Therefore, even if changes in the local ecology and society undermine the social articulation and maintenance of ethnicity in the area, there are still important continuities. One of them is the spatial division between the coastal area and the interior. This division has been reinforced by the development of a collective Saami self-understanding brought out in the ethno-political struggle. What has been most altered is the temporal division. It has changed and become strengthened by the dichotomy evoked between indigenous and modern, while the new continuity between past and present on the coast creates many possibilities that aim to reject the 'classic authenticity of cultural purity'.

Chapter 8

IDENTITIES IN A BORDERZONE

IN THE FOUR FIRST CHAPTERS OF THIS BOOK I demonstrate how the Saami and Kven culture is codified and delimited against the Norwegian culture by discourses of trans-local national institutions. These institutions, i.e. heritage preservation, the museum world, tourism, the Norwegian Church and the art scene are all institutions with practices that co-opt and transform symbols of a common Saami culture in terms based on these institutions' own prerequisites and presuppositions. I have analysed these practices and representations as making up dominant discourses that direct how the relationship between the Norwegian majority and Saami and Kven minorities can be articulated at a national arena and inside the frames of national institutions. Such an analysis thereby reveals what kind of statements that are excluded from these discourses and the areas they dominate. The two last chapters reveal how this dominant discourse that is cast in ethnic terms relates to a local discourse on identity where changing identities are activated by purpose and contexts, where a common local belonging is emphasised, and is usually founded on other assumptions about differences and communality.

The overall argument of this book is that there is a discrepancy between the ethnic vocabulary found in dominant discourses and the conceptualisation of

identities in everyday life in the towns of Finnmark. Everyday life, here exemplified by the case of Alta, gives opportunity for articulation of more fluid and ambiguous identities in addition to the more monolithic views found in the dominant macro discourses. This co-existence of contradictory discourses necessitates a certain ordering of everyday life into different cultural spaces. An emphasis on belonging goes together with a privatisation of ethnic identities as well as the cultural construction of distinct spaces where radical difference can be communicated. Spaces where ethnic differences can be articulated include both institutional settings and occasions where an ethnic belonging can be expressed as a heritage that the individual claims or reclaims as a private identity.

This way of spatial ordering is primarily a consequence of a dominant discourse that, within an ethnic vocabulary, situates different categories respectively as traditional and modern, and a local discourse that situates what for many is a Saami past as a past that does not necessarily define who you are today. Both these discourses situate the core of collective Saaminess in the interior as a counterpart to a modern Norwegian coastline and the centres in the fjords. This discursive distinction, between the coast and the interior, and tradition and modernity, is continuously challenged by a modern Saami identity that claims access in new social spheres on the coast. Modern Saaminess has its origin in what Eidheim (1992: 3) has labelled a collective Saami self-understanding, with a joint vocabulary to speak of oneself as well as new expressions of identity that have had Saami ethno-politics as a pivotal force. Here, contrast and complementarity and nationalist rhetoric have been emphasised. In the interior this Saaminess has a dynamic that is absent in the Norwegian dominated areas. Here it becomes conventionalised and reinforces clear cut boundaries.

The perplexity I experienced when I moved to an area where a radical cultural difference was much more prominent in media, scholarly work and exhibits than could be observed in everyday life dominates the introduction to this book. This perplexity was fed by many local people's lack of knowledge and interest

for what to me appeared as a colourful and exciting heritage relating to what are recognised by public institutions as several distinct groups. The puzzlement led to two theoretical issues which have guided much of my research since I moved to Finnmark, and have also structured this conclusion:

- the relations of power between dominant and everyday discourses
- individuals' conscious attempts to create order in shifting contexts dominated by often contradictory usages

POWER RELATIONS BETWEEN DOMINANT AND EVERYDAY DISCOURSES

Rather than differences, shared identities is often the ordering principle in local discourse. The fallacy inherent in what is shared emerges when the indigenous becomes a counterconcept opposed to a single modernity, as it usually does in a political struggle for particular rights. In such political struggles, the problems of identifying who qualifies as indigenous and in what contexts indigenoussness matters, become a different issue than that in the local discourse because of the presuppositions found in what Kuper (2003: 395) calls 'our own current ideological debates'.⁶² As shown in the case of tourism in Chapter 5, this current global discourse emphasises radical alterity that can be, and has to be, turned into a spectacle. Several of the earlier chapters have shown that these presuppositions also nurture a claim that contemporary Saami should adapt to 'our' idea of the native.

Indigenoussness might well be defined as a relational term set in time and in the context of the nation-state under the control of a majority. The problem is that the categorisation of groups made by national institutions seldom fits well in everyday discourse (Baumann 1996; Cohen 1994a, 1994b; Kuper 2003). In the case of Finnmark, there is a particular misfit as long as this perspective assumes a harmony between the nation-state and the cultural identity of those

who make up the contrast to the indigenous group. I argue that the identity of peoples in Finnmark in many contexts differs from a general Norwegian identity. Instead it is often shaped taking the dominant Southern culture as a contrast (F. Eidheim 1993: 60). The local cultures may vary in the area, but they have in common the contrast to the South and the fact that they are labelled Norwegian as long as they do not explicitly claim the label of Saami. The reason for this is that Norwegian culture at the coast and in fjord areas has become the label for modernity in contrast to Saami. At the same time, as shown in Chapters 6 and 7, the Norwegian identity can be fragile because of the possible contestations shaped by the distinct history of the area. The fragility of this pragmatic Norwegian identity is explained when one understands the emphasis put on belonging. A common belonging can easily be destroyed when contested by various discourses emphasising differences based on ethnic criteria (Thuen 2003: 274; Paine 2003: 301).

The previous chapters have demonstrated how public institutions one-sidedly represent certain differences as ethnic and how such conceptual ordering comes close to hegemony in institutionalised discourses. At regional and local levels, such a hegemonic view can be contested in public discourse. Nevertheless, other ways of categorisation and different ways of conceptualising communities are difficult to articulate outside local contexts. In particular, the local view that doubts the idea of indigenesness applied to the Saami creates difficulties when it enters the national political field where ethno-politics is a moral matter (Minde 1999: 78).

A relational perspective that fixes the relationship between the indigenous and modern as a moral matter is particularly awkward because of its perspective on power as a one-way flow. The Saami are in an unequal power relation with the Norwegian state. This does not necessarily mean that this power relation can be transferred to other levels of analysis. By bringing local events into a national arena the Saami culture gains a moral advantage that is not found in the local context or, contrary wise, loses such an advantage. Applying the

Foucauldian perspective outlined in the introductory chapter makes it possible to perceive power to be present in all relations and not only as a one-way stream.

The population in the area that has not embraced the Saami label may be regarded as being on the margins of the nation-state. A Northern identity is shaped in contrast to the South, which dominates the national discourse. Among the Norwegian population in the northern area, it is often felt that the Saami of the interior have a stronger impact on national policies than the coastal population. One of the reasons for this is that the invention of a new Saami master paradigm and the corresponding struggle for political rights was a moral strategy (Eidheim 1992: 4).⁶³ General values in Western thought, embedded in the principles of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and International Labour Organization convention number 169, were utilized in a struggle that also created a sense of belonging in a global community of indigenous peoples (Eidheim 1992: 13-14). The Alta affair accentuated this moral dominance versus the Norwegian nation-state. As Eidheim describes the struggle against the damming of the Alta-Kautokeino river for the purpose of making a hydroelectric power plant, it was ‘... a mega-happening which accentuated all the vital aspects of the Saami’s situation as a *people*, as an *ethnic minority* population in Norway, and as an *indigenous* people in a global perspective’ (1992: 21; italics in the original). Large parts of the Norwegian population felt sympathy for the Saami struggle, and the ethnic struggle joined forces with the ecological movement in the country. This moral strategy and the relationship to a global debate are still found in matters concerning Saami rights.

In a book edited by Eidheim with the purpose of giving some background for the proposals by the Saami Rights Commission, the historian Henry Minde writes that the Commission has found that international conventions must have consequences for the national policy. What the commission does not say, but what Minde (1999: 77) finds more important, is that the Norwegian policy will have consequences for other indigenous peoples in their daily struggle.

The examples Minde (1999: 77) points to are the daily struggles against the oil companies in Ecuador and the mining companies – I suppose the multinational ones – in the Bolivian rainforest. The moral advantage of the Saami also finds its place in the academic discourse.

This Saami ethno-political moral hegemony is often felt on the coast as being perpetuated by the institutional discourse described in earlier chapters. The resistance against using the Saami flag on the municipal building enters metonymic relations that include the nation-state's past wrongs and the present moral claims of indigenous peoples as well as local conflicts in the past and present. The Norwegian population in their political struggles, when entering a national discourse, become signifiers for the despised 'redneck' culture of the outskirts or as people who have betrayed their past; while the Saami of the interior become part of a more exciting global discourse when viewed from the South. This is also a hegemony that is easily evoked when other regional and local debates reach a national level. From being the heroes of Norwegianisation, when the aim was to assimilate into Norwegian society, the local agents of this modernisation today appear as those who betrayed their past. Dependent on context and purpose, the question of being Saami or not links individual consciousness to global and national processes where Saami ethno-politics have a moral advantage. This is a moral advantage that does not always necessarily produce political results in favour of Saami institutions, but which nevertheless is always potentially present when ethnic relations are discussed.

The development of a Saami self-understanding and a Saami master paradigm also necessitated a change in the understanding of modernity. Assimilation into the majority culture had to lose its dominance as the future perspective for minorities. The ethno-political struggle meant that Saami culture no longer was something that had its place only in the past but that it continued into the present and the future. In this way, the ethno-political struggle contradicted the view that was previously common in the area and which had been a foundation

of national politics. The Norwegianisation and change into being Norwegian were seen by a majority of the people on the coast as a necessary development for gaining access to the Norwegian welfare state. This means that the Saami master paradigm came to represent a change in the view of ethnic continuity. A Saami past presupposed a Saami present and future. In this perspective there is also a moral claim, wherein the change of identity might be seen as treason against one's own roots. As Høgmo (1986: 411) shows for some of those who grew up in the post-World War Two era, this could be felt as moral treason both by individuals themselves and by peers who took a different stand. Today, these moral accusations are present in the distinction between coast and fjord areas and the interior. As described in Chapter 6, the symbolic use of the Saami language in a context where pragmatics are assumed to dominate evokes the idea of language as a loss on the coast at the same time as it emphasises skills and competence usually found in the interior. As Stordahl describes this: 'Many people experienced that to be a Saami was something they did not master. They had a feeling that they in their individual lives were not familiar with what was emphasised as a Saami cultural competence' (Stordahl 1996: 154; my translation).⁶⁴

Many people in the area still hold the view that the Saami culture – or more correctly their Saami culture – belonged to the past and had no influence on the kind of people they are today. In the moral context of national debates on ethnicity, this view has all too often been regarded as outmoded or a denial of the past. In my opinion, there needs to be an analysis of how such a view on ethnicity and historical continuity finds its place as a part of a modernity where former heritage is seen as something to be celebrated and often turned into a commodity. Without such an analysis of modernity and its conceptual counterparts, the everyday discourse found in Finnmark and other areas with indigenous populations will not be acknowledged as topics of research that shape daily life. What this book has revealed is that the supposed continuity between the past, the present and the future, common in the rhetoric of the nation-state and made visible by

institutions dealing in heritage, does not necessarily have a basis in everyday life. As in most fields of personal identity, ethnic belonging may also be regarded as something that ended years ago. This is easily recognised in everyday life, where people try to cope and create communities according to ongoing daily tasks rather than promoting the differences of institutional discourses. This does not imply that ethnicity does not matter. Nevertheless such a belonging is contextual, and its possibility of expression changes as well as its intended content. In these processes of everyday life that continuously create cultural practices, categories conceptualised as ethnic have a fluidity that can be modelled quite differently according to the immediate context in which life unfolds. Grasping these power relations in their immediate context and the way they give directionality to performance is a necessary part of the understanding of social life as it is lived.

The way the Saami and Kven cultures are codified and delimited against the Norwegian culture by trans-local national institutions are a part of social life as lived in Finnmark. These institutions represent what in Chapters 2 and 5 has been analysed as a genealogical perspective on culture and history. The institutions of the growing Norwegian welfare state in the middle of the 20th century had a strong impact on peoples' organic understanding of their past, present and future. The overwhelming majority of the population in the coastal and fjord areas changed to regarding themselves as Norwegian, while they saw the Saami as something that belonged to the, increasingly, distant past. At the same time, the trans-local institutions and the discourses they perpetuate about ethnicity have an impact on contemporary life. Symbols like traditional costume, language, joik and much more become a part of peoples' everyday experiences that in modern society is made to a large extent inside the frames of public institutions. Thus, this public transmittance of culture influences individual consciousness, and culture is shaped and reshaped as an organic sense of individual history. What this means for the dichotomy between Saami and Norwegians remains to be seen. What I have demonstrated in this book is that an order of cultural spaces for the different way of representing the relationship

between Norwegian and Saami has been created. At the same time, these discourses have given direction to individuals' self-understanding that takes other paths than expected from the institutional discourses that supposedly promote a clear-cut dichotomy. This creativity is a result of the continual negotiation of what it means to be Saami, where this identity belongs, how it should be expressed, and what consequences it should have.

INDIVIDUAL CONSCIOUS ATTEMPTS TO CREATE
ORDER IN SHIFTING CONTEXTS DOMINATED
BY OFTEN CONTRADICTORY USAGES

Narration is a way to situate oneself in the world. As Cohen and Rapport suggest, ‘“Narrative” expresses, and suggests a focus on, the development, continuity and change of the individual’s acts of orientation. Individuals own – and perhaps come to be owned by – unique narratives which unfold and mutate as these individuals situate themselves within moral, social, cultural and historical habitats ...’ (1995: 7). Somers (1994: 616) claims that such narratives have a causal *emplotment* that is embedded in time and space. Emplotment has an evaluative capacity that:

‘... demands and enables *selective appropriation* in constructioning narratives. A plot must be thematic. The primacy of this narrative theme or competing themes determines how events are processed and what criteria will be used to prioritize and render meaning to them’ (Somers 1994: 617 italics in original).

As demonstrated in Chapter 2, such an emplotment does not necessarily relate to the ethnic terms prominent in dominant discourse. Alfred Bietilæ, when situating himself within a moral, cultural and historical habitat, did not rely on an assumed Kven community with a reified culture. His self-understanding

aimed for action in the present and the future. The past was something to think about, while the individual had to rely on own abilities in relations with political authorities as well as scholars who aimed to ‘freeze’ what he saw as his assets as the heritage of an abstract group. To him, the criteria of heritage preservation had no meaning. Rather, his actions and aims for the future were directed at fields in the present and the future, where the dominant discourse has no place for heritage. The economic politics and the competition for access to marine resources seem to be guided by economic processes in an assumed neutral modernity. This is a modernity that, in dominant discourse, is separated from heritage. Therefore the Bietilæ’s emplotment has no possibility to gain access to the dominant discourse because it is set in the present and in a local context that are integral parts of the understanding. The same argument can be employed in relation to the use of joik as a neutral symbol, as demonstrated in Chapter 5. The emplotment guiding the organic sense of history can seldom be converted into the dominant discourses’ emphasis on the culture of the ethnic groups present in the area. Consequently, an ‘ethnic renaissance’ may occur at the same time as a local identity becomes ‘a whole life of struggle’. That individuals situate themselves within moral, social, cultural and historical habitats with different emplotments than those found in the dominant discourse has also been emphasised in Chapters 6 and 7. Shared identities and the primacy of the individual shape categorisation and guide interaction in everyday life, and this necessitates different plots than in dominant discourse.

As Cohen puts it:

‘To assert the primacy of the self does not entail the redundancy of categories of collectivity, such as “culture”, society, “ethnic group”. It does require that we cannot merely derive the individual self from these categories, and that we have therefore to regard their relationship as problematic’ (Cohen 1994a: 133).

It is this ‘problematic’ pointed out by Cohen that probably caused my discomfort when encountering everyday life in Finnmark. In the quotidian, individual selves often contest the clear-cut categories of collectivity endorsed by institutional discourses. Nevertheless, the reified categories of ethnicity found in dominant discourse have an impact on everyday life.

As Comaroff and Comaroff have written: ‘... in systems where “ascribed” cultural differences rationalize structures of inequality, ethnicity takes on a cogent existential reality. It is this process of reification ... that gives it the appearance of being an autonomous factor in the ordering of the social world’ (1992: 61). This also explains why ethnicity is a viable ground for collective identity: ‘... the very fact that such action is conducted by and for groups marked by their cultural identities confirms the perception that these identities do provide the only available basis of collective ... action’ (Comaroff & Comaroff 1992: 62-63). Writing in a southern African context, the rationalised structures of inequality are quite different to those in Finnmark; still, in the political realm they are a viable basis of collective action and reinforce us/them thinking, which has to be conceptualised in broad categories in political discourse and actions. In Northern Norway ‘ascribed’ cultural differences conceptualised in ethnic terms are a reality in some realms and must be analysed as such, and in these areas such differences are often the only available basis for collective action. In the fields of heritage preservation, museums and tourism, such ‘ascribed’ differences are among the premises of these institutions’ work. They have difficulty representing the flux of everyday life – past and present – and to claim a heritage inside these fields usually necessitates making a choice among separate traditions. Relying on the typical, the authentic and the essence of a culture requires boundaries. As described by Kramvik (1999: 123-124), the way dominant discourses order the world can be analysed as a conceptual violence because of the discrepancy between this ordering and individual experiences in the area.

As Malkii, among others, demonstrates, one feature of the nation-state is its need for categorical order. This is a categorical order cast in ethnic terms that is

found in most of the institutions analysed in this book. Historically, the impact of the Norwegian nation-state in Finnmark can be analysed as ‘...the status of nations as a *categorical order*, and the effects of that kind of classification on the essentialization, aestheticization, policing, and historical transformation of our social and political identities’ (Malkii 1995: 6). In creating this national order and imposing it in the outskirts of the nation, national institutions have been – and still are – important agents. The social sciences, too, have had an impact, in particular in Finnmark, on the process of creating this national order of social categories. Eriksen and Høem (1999: 132-133) claim that this still is the case for social sciences in Norway, which tend to reproduce the categories of the public policies in Northern Norway.

This does not imply that ethnicity is imposed only by national institutions. As Friedman points out, one feature of contemporary globalisation is

‘... an increasing fragmentation of identities, the break-up of larger identity units, the emergence of cultural politics among indigenous, regional, immigrant and even national populations. This is not merely a question of the *re-emergence* of former identity units, but of a general **process of indigenization** that may produce new and strange combinations” (1999: 315; italics and bold in the original)

Such a feature of contemporary globalisation is also found among people on the coast of Finnmark, who can trace their background to many apparently different traditions. Just as often as feeling attachment to prescribed national or minority self-understandings they produce new, strange and ambiguous combinations that emphasise the local and the individual. As Malkii writes:

‘... they tended to seek ways of assimilating and of inhabiting multiple, shifting identities – identities derived or “borrowed” from the social context of the township. Here, identities were like “porous

sieves” ... to move in and out of, and assimilation was always intricately situational’ (Malkii 1995: 3).

CONCLUSION

The different chapters here subsumed under a single heading as a book are the result of living and working in an area for more than fifteen years. In many ways the chapters are ‘case studies’ of certain topics that at a particular time and for personal reasons have caught my attention. Hence the theoretical outline and the texts certainly lack much of the elegance and parsimony of a model, but to quote John Borneman:

‘The question for me, as an anthropologist, is not whether certain experiences or events lend themselves to serve a particular model (to prove or disprove) but from what perspectives might one account for and do justice to particular experiences and events. In other words, social science is put less in the service of itself than of the objects it seeks to constitute and explain’ (Borneman 1998: 187).

Such an eclectic attitude is probably necessary as long as one writes in ‘the field’, and events continually challenge or enhance one’s anthropological thinking, in particular, as long as one’s knowledge of people becomes more and more thorough and adds nuances to their narration. As Jenkins (2004: 123) says, subjects become fellow individuals rather than members of a collectivity.

Nevertheless, there are some continuities from the first years I was living in Finnmark. The stories of people ‘being some kind of Saami’, the change from being Norwegian to becoming also Saami, the insistence on a different Saaminess than in the public discourse and – seen from the coast and the towns in the fjords – from the Saaminess found in the interior, and the private character of these

reorientations, are stories I still frequently encounter in everyday life. The public institutions face discursive difficulties with this heterogeneity, which seems to have been reinforced by the ethnic revival that has spurred extensive construction of institutions promoting Saami culture as heritage. Nevertheless, local communities today seem better able, through their own heterogeneous discourses, to transform these representations into a local understanding than they did fifteen years ago. Furthermore, what formerly were private processes of identity that were expressed only when they could be concealed from the public sphere have now gone public. Alta and Kvalsund electorates have got their first Member of the Saami Parliament who explicitly promotes the heterogenic background of the coastal population in Finnmark. Ten years ago, this refusal to choose was only a potential for political action (Olsen 1997). Today, these private ideas of belonging have resulted in an attempt to bring a heteroglot past into the present realm of ethno-politics. Alternatively, from the perspective of those already involved in Saami ethno-politics, this turn of events may be regarded as a privatisation of public processes and thereby an hindrance for the development of a collective Saami self-understanding as something more than the expression of a heritage outside the so called Saami core areas. Nonetheless, this development underlines the dynamic character of diverging identity processes in the area.

Identity processes in Finnmark continue to be dominated by an evolutionary thinking that attaches different features to what is conceptualised as traditional peoples in relation to those that can monopolise a modern identity. Also a moral claim, this relationship has a moral impact on the different levels of discourse in the area. Being at the margins of the nation-state, Finnmark's coastal population has less possibility to bring their particular experiences into a national discourse shaped by presuppositions about communities identified by reified cultures. Nevertheless, this context of heterogenic possibilities makes the area a fertile ground for individuals' conscious attempts to express who they feel they are.

NOTES

CHAPTER 1

- 1 For outsiders it often seems strange that people who themselves claim a Saami background and or are rather sympathetic to Saami political claims, can make rather crude remarks about the Finnan. This often occurs in a context where the difference between the coast and the interior is emphasized. In such a context the dominant ideas of ethnic division have no place.
- 2 It is important to note that both Høgmo (1986) and Eidheim (1971) describe particular places with a development that cannot be generalised inside the frames of the finer nuances of local discourses. The change from being coastal Saami to becoming Norwegian occurred at different times and in different ways in settlements close to each other and even among families living close to each other.
- 3 In Somers' view, is it through narrative processes that we locate and construct social identities for others, experience an ever-changing world, and are guided in action. According to Somers, what is made: "... on the basis of the projections, expectations, and memories derived from a multiplicity but ultimately limited repertoire of available social, public and cultural narratives" (1994: 614). The important features of narratives are that they connect different events and different kinds of cultural knowledge. Narrative presupposes that parts are fit into and are understood as a part of an intelligible whole with temporality. These connections are ephemeral and embedded in time and space. According to Somers, these connections are made by causal emplotment (1994: 616). Emplotment has an evaluative capacity that "... demands and enables *selective appropriation* in constructing narratives. A plot must be thematic. The primacy of this narrative theme or competing themes determines how events are processed and what criteria will be used to prioritize and render meaning to them" (Somers 1994: 617).

CHAPTER 2

- 4 The debate on cultural differences inside the frame of the Norwegian nation-state has been biased in the sense that it focuses on the situation in the southern part of the country. As Melhuus writes, 'With the recent immigration to Norway of peoples from Turkey, Pakistan, Chile, Vietnam (to name a few), the issues of foreignness (and loyalty) take a

different turn. They challenge in a very different way what it means – or should mean – to be a Norwegian’ (1999: 71). The idea of Norwegianness has seldom been challenged by the multi-cultural context of Northern Norway.

- 5 *Riksantikvaren* is a term used in the national heritage administration; it is also the name of the office held by the leader of this administration. It’s denotative meaning can therefore relate to both the person and the administration or to both, symbolised by the person.
- 6 Among Norwegian historians, the Middle Ages are dated between 1000 and 1536.
- 7 The 1905 law was mainly a result of the excavation of the ninth-century *Oseberg* ship. There was a real danger that many of the items found in this burial site might be sold out of the country.
- 8 An example might be a small peninsula in a lake. Some of those were used to separate reindeer herds. Other examples are mountains and sacrificial stones
- 9 A public institution dealing with Saami Heritage Preservation is also found. In addition, six University Museums are also involved in different archaeological findings. In this case, a non-Saami building constructed after 1557, the previously mentioned institutions are not involved.
- 10 Eriksen and Niemi (1981: 324 ff.) claim that the practical policy, seldom expressed openly, that aimed to stem the Finnish impact in the area merged with the ideological ideas of Social Darwinism and nationalism, which regarded both the Saami and the Kvens as two vanishing cultures.
- 11 NRK- Finnmark 1991. *Bare skrot? Kulturvern eller statlig tyveri*
- 12 In a Norwegian context it is important to note that the person speaks what for most Norwegian is recognisable as a typical dialect from Northern Norway.
- 13 This contrast is evoked despite the fact that the Fylkeskonservator also is a native of the county.
- 14 The borough of Akershus is the area where the Riksantikvar has its office.
- 15 In Norwegian: ’Den 72år gamle Alfred Bietilæ har annonsert at han i dag skal rive deler av de fredede bygningene sine. Hus med tilhørende uthus, kai og notbane er fredet av riksantikvaren og fylkeskonservatoren i Finnmark. Og reporter [...] du befinner deg akkurat

nå ved Bietilæ-anlegget der Alfred Bietilæ skulle starte rivingen av kai og notbane klokka tolv. Og har han kommet langt i rivingen' (NRK-Finnmark 09.01.92).

CHAPTER 3

- 16 The numbers are from Lyngnes & Viken (1997: 51). Other statistics show a population of 74,622 in 1994 and 66,499 in 1993.
- 17 Hjemmeluft is derived from the Saami word, Jiepmaluokta, or the 'seal bay'. In an English-language booklet it is translated as Homeair.
- 18 At the time – the winter of 1994-95 – that I did the research this paper is based upon, the headsets were not working.
- 19 The Alta Museum brochure presents this section in a way opposite to that which I, and others I have observed, find natural.
- 20 The section *War and Peace in Finnmark* was produced by the Museum of the Armed Forces in Oslo.
- 21 Some tourists gave the opinion that Magerøya, where North Cape is situated, was the most typical Saami place in Norway. This opinion is obviously based on the visible presence of reindeer and reindeer-herders because of the summer pastures and the souvenir-sellers associated with the tourists. It is easy to believe that for the tourists, the local population some of whom are the coastal Saami, becomes 'the Norwegian' counterpart to the Saami.
- 22 This slideshow was removed in 1996, but it illustrates the difficulties of exhibiting history for a general audience.

CHAPTER 4

- 23 In the original: 'Uskyld og overtredelse – nakenheten kunne tjene som tegn på begge deler, og de to kontrapunktiske temaene løper side om side fram til Opplysningstida og inn i vår egen tid: villmannen (overtrederen) og den edle villmann (uskyldigheten)' (Larsen, 1998: 176).
- 24 As Briggs demonstrates for the editorial practices and the collection of folk traditions by the Grimm brothers, it was directed at a bourgeois audience: 'Ease of de- and

recontextualization translates into ease of commodification: neatly bounded, structured, homogenized, and somewhat sanitized narratives could be easily packaged and sold in the growing market for literary antiquities, thus helping to satisfy the bourgeois appetite for nostalgic cultural forms' (Briggs 1993: 397-398). A similar practice can be noted in the case of the play *Dibdin* wrote for the Saami at the Egyptian Hall. The Saami culture had to be recontextualized in a way that fitted into the audience's image of the Other. This is still the case in Saami tourism.

- 25 Wang claims that the travel experience can be divided into eight phases: the accumulation of mental images about vacation experiences, modification of those images by further information, the decision to take a vacation trip, travel to the destination, participation at the destination, the return home, modification of the images based on the vacation experience, and the revelation of the modified images of the destination to their friends (Wang 2000: 135).
- 26 This problem was demonstrated unconsciously by a research team made up by four Nordic tourist researchers at the winter festival in Jokkmokk, Sweden. In their aim to categorise Swedish and Saami products, all of them categorised the outlet for reindeer meat as Saami. The necessary consequence was that the Hamburger shop had to belong to the Swedish culture.
- 27 The Saami have become a part of tourism as producers of tourist attractions, in traditional costume as attractions in themselves, and as performing tourism themselves. In a study of the Saamis, who have mainly become tourist attractions in themselves – primarily elder women in the interior who wear traditional costume in their everyday life – Gaino (2005) demonstrates how the informants in this category are well aware of the touristic quest for authenticity. This is an understanding gained from both their everyday life as well as their own practice as tourists. Several of the informants pointed out that the tourists' interest in Saami culture had for them been a point of pride in their youth when a Saami identity was more stigmatised than today. They also criticised the use of what they regarded as fake Saami culture and stressed the need to promote what they felt was the real traditional Saami culture.
- 28 It is also possible to visit tourist attractions that thrive on the idea of a joint fourth-world culture. As Polmakmoen Gjestegård says on their internet site: 'Ester [Utsi, the owner] says herself that Polmakmoen is the place for mystery, traditional food and Sami culture. [...] She offers healing and aromatic massages. Or she will fire up her Indian sweating shed, the sauna or the outdoor bathtub – where you can sit and look up at the northern lights or stare out over the mountains' (<http://www.samitour.no/english/polmak/index.html>).

CHAPTER 5

- 29 A similar process occurred among Norwegian lay Christians in the southern part of the country. The music and the instruments that could be connected to drinking and dance were regarded as non-Christian.
- 30 This was also done earlier, but an important shift is that the Saami tradition did not belong only to the past. It gained a future in the ethno-political struggle and could be seen as a continuity, like the Norwegian culture. Obviously this is not the only view that is attached to Saami culture, and to fourth-world peoples in general.
- 31 The interviews were conducted by Monica Johansen and Solgunn Solli in 1994.
- 32 In the original Norwegian: ‘Vi ser at kystbefolkningen understreker sin egenart gjennom negasjoner: De er ikke samer. De understreker også at det er store forskjeller mellom dem og “søringan”, dog regner de seg for å være av samme orden som “søringan”, i den forstand at de begge er norske, i kontrast til “finnan”’ (Frøydis Eidheim 1993: 60).
- 33 In the original Norwegian: ‘Av den grunn er det no vanskeleg å dra eit skarpt skilje mellom norsk og samisk. Storparten av folket i Rognsund er nok av sjøsamisk eller blanda opphav, men deira etniske sermerke held på og blir borte’ (Kolsrud 1955: 95).
- 34 Trosten (Jensen 2000: 4) claimed that he supposed that simultaneous interpretation would be provided at a public meeting. The leader of the debate, Jahn-Arne Olsen, claims that neither he nor the organizing committee were aware of the need for interpretation before Trosten started to speak at the meeting (Olsen 2000).
- 35 Both the former President of the Saami Parliament, Ole Henrik Magga, and the current President, Sven-Roald Nystø, who belongs to the same party as Trosten, agree with his refusal to speak Norwegian. Nystø also adds that the leadership of the NSR continuously evaluate the policy of the organization (Palm 2000).
- 36 Mainly, interpretation or translation into Saami implies that the Northern Saami dialect should be used. As long as the Saami language can be separated into ten different dialects – few of them mutually understandable, and seven of them spoken in Norway, the use of interpreters often gives the impression of a symbolic statement.
- 37 The use of the Saami flag outside the town hall still attracts attention. In 2007 the leader of *Alta Saamiid Searvi*, John Harald Skum, contacted the local daily because, as he said, the authorities had probably forgotten to raise the flag. The reason for this was that

official flags should, according to official regulations, not be raised before 10:00 am in the Northern area. This was expressed, with what seemed to be some malice, by the man in charge of flags at municipal buildings

- 38 In Norwegian: ‘- Det er lite hyggelig å måtte mine Alta kommune på denne flaggingen hvert eneste år til samefolkets dag, ...’ (*Altaposten* 07.02.2000)
- 39 In Norwegian: ‘- det blir mer naturlig når skolene får bestemme selv. Dersom det er intern enighet om a heise, eller for den saks skyld la være å heise flagget, så er det det beste. På denne måten skapes få konflikter, og avgjørelsen blir mer naturlig ...’ (Steine 1998: 6)
- 40 In Norwegian: ‘- Jeg ser at flertallet lett kan bli beskyldt for antipati mot samesaken. Dermed kan vi fa den gamle lekse om at vi ikke kjenner var historie. Men det er ikke dette saken handler om. Bade flertallet og mindretallet er positiv til et Samisk identitetssenter, men flertallet ønsker ikke å legge det til et så attraktivt område som Komsaflaten, ...’ (Steine 1998: 6)
- 41 Jan Erik Henriksen is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Social Work, Finnmark University College.
- 42 In Norwegian: ‘Det er greit at dere får ha flagg, men tro ikke at dere skal få tomt. Iallefall ikke et sted der det Samiske kan være synlig. Kanskje kan det bli et råd med tomt om den bare er tilstrekkelig langt ute av syne.’ (Mjøen 2000b)
- 43 It is interesting that when the municipal authorities supported the plans to establish a so-called ‘traditional Saami Siida’ in the centre of Bossekop in the summer, a Saami from the interior was the only one who criticized the plans. The artist, Trygve Lund Guttormsen, claimed that to engage in such a tourist attraction was to ‘sell people’s soul and identity’ (Hestvik 2000: 7).
- 44 In Norwegian: ‘... heis det norske flagget. Det burde være godt nok for alle som bor i landet’ (*Altaposten* 21.01.1998). It is interesting that most people make the unsubstantiated claim that few Saami live in Alta. In a letter to the editor, Jan Erik Henriksen (1998: 10) points out that there are 11,700 voters in Alta. Among them 316 were also listed on the electoral rolls for the Saami Parliament. This is 2.7 percent of the population older than 18 years. It is a fact that the numbers from the electoral rolls are not representative for all those who fulfil the formal criteria for registration.
- 45 In Norwegian: ‘- Jeg er helt enig med Alta kommune i at de ikke bør heise det samiske flagget på den samiske folkedagen. Det viser at de er ærlige overfor omverdenen siden de faktisk aldri har respektert eller akseptert den samiske befolkningen hverken før eller nå.

Det ville derfor være upassende om de heiste flagget den ene dagen, sier Ravdna Hætta, som sier hun selv har opplevd usynliggjøring og undertrykking som bosatt i Alta kommune' (*Altaposten* 16 .01.1998).

- 46 At least is this a common opinion among observers and the actors themselves. In an editorial, *Finnmark Dagblad* (2000) comments upon a debate between Hætta and Ole Henrik Magga. Professor Magga at the Nordic Saami College and former President of the Saami Parliament and leader of NSR had, according to Associate Professor Hætta at Finnmark University College, former leader and founder of the NSR, editor of the Saami paper *Sagat*, and my colleague, raised doubts about his academic qualifications, something that caused Hætta to decide to withdraw as external examiner at Nordic Saami College. The debate between the two former compatriots from Kautokeino – Hætta approximately ten years Magga's senior – was seen by the editor of *Finnmark Dagblad* as a mixture of academic, personal and politic dispute. I find this opinion reasonable.
- 47 Eriksen & Høem (1999: 129) criticise the Norwegian research on the Saami because Norwegian culture is never taken into account. To them it appears that most researchers implicitly assume a particular Norwegian culture with certain distinct features to which the Saami have to relate. I argue that it is the Saami, and to a lesser degree the Kven, culture that decides what is regarded as Norwegian culture. The minority cultures in their emblematic form that one encounters on the coast are distinct and easy recognisable. Therefore Norwegian culture is what these bounded units are not. By this I mean that what is not explicitly Saami or Kven is lumped into a contrasting Norwegian culture that does not have to be problematized in everyday life. Hence the communities shaped in these two contrasts are not necessarily the same. In contrast to Saami culture, the local culture relates to modernity: while in contrast to the South, it relates to a colonial past in which the Saami might also be included.
- 48 The article was first published in this book.
- 49 Bruner (1986: 140 ff.) argues that the shift from a story of acculturation to one of ethnic resurgence among American Indians occurred among both natives and researchers in the 1950s. Eidheim (1993: 257) describes this change in research among the Saami (see also Eythorsson 2005). For a more contemporary account on *indigenisations* as a feature of globalisation processes, see Friedman 1999. Such a shift is also reflected in that the concept of ethnicity in many ways has been appropriated by politics (Baumann 1996; Malkii 1995; Duijzings 2000). In the case of the Norwegian Saami, there is a strong degree of mutual understanding between researchers and public authorities in their understanding and conceptualisation of this highly Norwegian scholarly field (Eriksen & Høem 1999). Simultaneously the shifting policies have influenced the ethnic

formations in the area. Verdery (1994) has pointed out the tendency towards the fixity of ethnic identities in Western Europe. The modern nation-state is in need of a persona with a fixed identity. As Duijzings put it: 'Modern state-making presses toward single identities out of a situation of multiple and often diffuse identities' (2000: 23). Such emphasis on the power of the nation-state is also needed to modify and clarify the boundaries for the creative processes that may be found in such cultural borderzones.

- 50 In contemporary Norwegian society the label Lapp is regarded as a derogatory term. Since Eidheim's work, Saami has become the politically correct term.
- 51 It might be discussed whether or not the modernising processes, ultimately concluded after 1945, had a much stronger impact on the ethnic changes than the Norwegianisation policy. The latter has been studied mainly in relation to education and the Church, where it obviously had a strong impact. Hence, the impact of the need to become part of the growing welfare state as a driving force in this process has been of less interest than Norwegianisation in a research tradition emphasising indigenous revitalisation.
- 52 Eidheim never used the proper name of the place in the original article. In a recent interview, he confirms what most Norwegian anthropologists know, that the place was Lille Lerresfjord (Eythórsson 2005: 252-253).
- 53 Due to the merging of two former separate municipalities, Talvik, the administrative centre at the time of Eidheim's writing, is today just one small settlement among several others in the new municipality. The municipality, Talvik commune, Eidheim describes was divided into two parts by the Alta Fjord. Even if Saami people were also settled in the western part where the administrative centre was, and some municipalities were dominated by Saami until World War Two, the eastern part, where Eidheim's fieldwork was conducted, had a much stronger Saami dominance. The two municipalities merged in 1963.
- 54 Manndalen (Bjerkli, Bjerkli & Thuen) Kåfjord (Hovland) a small fjord settlement in western Finnmark (Høgmo), Smørfjord (Andersen), a small fjord settlement in eastern Finnmark (Odner), a small settlement in western Finnmark (Kramvik). In the interior; Karasjok (Stordahl) and Kautokeino (Hovland).
- 55 In the neighbouring county of Troms, the city of Tromsø holds 40 percent of the population. Here the main centre is not regarded as a suitable place for the study of identity either.

- 56 The example in the previous chapter demonstrates a similar development. The example from Hammerfest, in the previous chapter, shows how this change occurred at different periods of time in different locations. The ethnic change in the Hammerfest family, from a fjord settlement, took place 40 years before the change in this family described here.
- 57 Ontology is used as defined by Bateson: ‘Philosophers have recognised and separated two sorts of problem. There are first the problems of how things are, what is a person, and what sort of world this is. These are the problems of ontology. Second, there are the problems of how we know anything, or more specifically, how we know what sort of a world it is and what sort of creatures we are that can know something (or perhaps nothing) of this matter. These are the problems of epistemology’ (Bateson 1972: 313).
- 58 Lien (1989) shows how the local distribution of food in non-monetary spheres is important for identity processes in some communities in Finnmark. Some types of food stuff, such as cloudberries and fish, cannot be bought in some communities. They are distributed as gifts symbolising integration in the local community.
- 59 For a discussion of these concepts in the context of the small town Honningsvåg, see Frøydis Eidheim (1993: 52 ff.).
- 60 In the Norwegian original: ‘Vi var vitne til en “symbolsk krigføring” (Cohen 1985) mot alt det norske, og de symbolene som ble valgt ut for å være markører og stå for og representere det samiske samfunn utad, var, som vi har vært inne på tidligere, enkle vi/dem kategoriseringer og stereotypiseringer’ (Stordahl 1996: 152).
- 61 This argument relies on Gilbert Lewis’ distinction between expression and communication: ‘Expression is not the same thing as communication. You can express your feelings to a stone, yet it is unmoved. You could also, like the mystic Henry Suso (Huizinga 1965, p. 148) eat three-quarters of an apple in the name of the Trinity and the remaining quarter in commemoration of “the love with which the heavenly Mother gave her tender child Jesus an apple to eat” and unless you or Henry Suso told me, I would not, though I watched you twenty times, discern your symbolism or even that what you did was symbolical’ (Lewis 1980: 1).

CONCLUSION

- 62 Kuper’s (2003) perspective has been criticised by several authors who acknowledge the difficulties of creating boundaries between those who are indigenous and those who are not, but rather regard this relationship as a matter of unequal power relations (Plaice 2003: 396, Kenrick & Lewis 2004: 9, Saugestad 2001: 306). The problem with such approaches

is that it relates to a legal discourse on indigenoussness and the rights attached to such an achieved status. As several of the chapters demonstrate, most institutionalised discourses do rely on a dichotomy that situates Saami in cultural terms as radically different from Norwegian culture. This accounts for the ethno-political discourse as shown by Eidheim (1994) as well as for the scholarly debate, cultural policy (Chapters 2 & 3) and the tourist industry (Chapter 5). The representations in these discourses all rely on a distinction between traditional peoples and modernity that situates the Saami in a different category from the Norwegian where the one is used to define the other.

- 63 Eidheim claims that “..., it appears that the ethno-political rewards which the Saami have been able to record have accrued as the result of a moral strategy. That is to say that the Sami Movement pressed concessions from the states by systematically accentuating their opponents’ - the state societies’ - “commitments” regarding political morality, human dignity and respect of minorities’ right to live. They demonstrated among other things the lack of correspondence between what Norway claimed in international fora where it presented itself as a spokesman for ethnic minorities’ and indigenous people’s rights and freedoms, and on the other hand, the discrimination of the Sami language and culture which was practiced at home” (Eidheim 1992: 4).
- 64 ”For mange ble det å være same opplevd som *noe man ikke behersket*. De satt igjen med en opplevelse av at de i deres individuelle liv ikke var blitt fortrolige med det som ble fremhevet som *samiske kulturelle kompetanser* ”(Stordahl 1996: 154).

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