Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Faculty of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences

‘History Has Its Eyes on You’

– A story about the identity of young Sami women, following the Girjas case

Izabel Nordlund

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Språket, renen och jojken som kulturbärare
Ska laga mitt splittrade inre
Men det är inte kolten som får mig hel
Eller näbbskorna
Det är du mamma

The tongue, the reindeer and the joiking
Are supposed to mend my shattered soul
But it is not the garments that heals me
Or any of those cultural carriers
It is you mother

Izabel Nordlund (2019)

Abstract

This study aims to understand some of the complexities of the Sami identity amongst young Sami women in Norrbotten County, Sweden. The Sami people are the only indigenous people living in the European Union and as many indigenous people around the globe, they are facing issues such as struggles over land rights, health issues and fragmented identities. The point of departure for this research is the settlement of the Girjas case, an end to a ten-year struggle about the authority over the fishing and hunting rights in the area between the Girjas Sami village and the Swedish Government. The Girjas case has given rise to a debate about indigenous rights and the Sami identity. The purpose of this thesis is to explore the complexity of the Sami identity to understand the perception of who is considered to be a genuine Sami today. To do so, I have interviewed eight young Sami women. To be able to understand their stories, and turning their words into a wider context, four main theoretical concepts have been used; identity, gender, intersectionality and heritage. The stories of the participants show that the Sami identity is perceived in many ways; it can be born out of upbringing, heritage and way of life, and not necessarily by ancestors only. Typical cultural carriers or symbols can confirm the Sami identity, but the participants mean that those are not a must. Different Sami identities are clashing with the created stereotypical image of who the genuine Sami is. This research shows that the Girjas case unite the Sami women in this thesis, regardless of their backgrounds or how they perceive their Sami identity. From the interviews, it appears that participants share a narrative of the importance of passing on the Sami heritage, never leaving the future generations with insecurity about their Sami identity. To understand the complex Sami identity, greater knowledge about Sami people and their history must be spread. By acknowledging that the Sami identity is not homogenous, further polarisation within the Sami community could be prevent, affecting political decisions ahead.

Key words: Sami people, identity, gender, heritage, the Girjas case

Sammanfattning

Denna studie syftar till att undersöka den komplexa samiska identiteten hos unga samiska kvinnor i Norrbottens län, Sverige. Samerna är det enda urfolk som lever inom den Europeiska unionen och precis som många andra urfolk runt om i världen måste de kämpa för rätten till land och vatten, samtidigt som de påverkas av hälsoproblem och splittrade identiteter. Utgångspunkten för den här uppsatsen är Girjasmålet, en tio år lång process emellan Girjas sameby och den svenska staten. Målet har handlat om vem som har jakt- och fiskerättigheter i området, där samebyn hävdar sin rätt genom att åberopa urminnes hävd. Girjasmålet har väckt debatt om urfolksrättigheter och den samiska identiteten. Syftet med den här studien är att undersöka den komplexa samiska identiteten för att förstå vem som anses vara same idag. Intervjuer med åtta unga samiska kvinnor har legat till grund för det. För att förstå deras berättelser i en större kontext, har fyra teoretiska ramverk använts; identitet, genus, intersektionalitet och kulturarv. Informanternas berättelser visar att de ser på den samiska identiteten på olika sätt; den samiska identiteten behöver inte grunda sig i enbart släktningar, utan kan också skapas ur uppväxt, kulturarv och livssyn. Typiska kulturbärare så som duodji, de samiska språken och renen kan bekräfta den samiska identiteten, men de är inget måste. Olika samiska identiteter går i klinch med den skapade stereotypa bilden av vad en same är. Studien visar också på att informanterna förenas genom Girjasmålet, oavsett deras bakgrund eller vilken samisk grupp de tillhör. I intervjuerna lyfts vikten av att föra det samiska arvet vidare. Informanterna vill att kommande generationer inte ska behöva känna en osäkerhet kring deras samiska identitet. För att förstå den komplexa samiska identiteten måste större kunskap om samers situation och historia finnas. Genom att visa att den samiska identiteten inte är en gemensam kulturell identitet, kan ytterligare polarisering inom det samiska samhället undvikas. Detta kan i förlängningen påverka hur poliska beslut tas i framtiden.

Nyckelord: samer, identitet, genus, kulturarv, Girjasmålet

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To all my friends who have done their best to encourage me throughout the journey. Thank you for five good years, and hopefully more to come.

Finally, thank you to my mother for never denying me my Sami heritage.

Uppsala, in June 2020

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1 Introduction

The Sami people are the only indigenous people living in the European Union (Sametinget 2016a). Historically, their traditional livelihoods have been fishing, hunting and reindeer herding, which require connection to the land they are living on (Lundmark 2012). On the 23rd of January 2020, the Girjas case reached a settlement after ten years of struggle. The case began in 2009 when the Girjas Sami village[1] sued the Swedish Government, as they believed that they should have the authority over the fishing and hunting in the area based on time immemorial[2]. The Supreme Court ruled in favour of the Girjas Sami village and gave them authority over the fishing and hunting rights in their Sami village, located in Gällivare Municipality[3]. The case has been a long going process and the debate has evolved to concerning not only land rights, but the view on Sami people as an indigenous population.

In the negotiations, representatives of the Swedish Government have been criticised for referring to historical laws that academic representatives argue have not been necessary for the case. These laws contain racial language, by referring to Sami people with the old and derogative word 'lapp' for example. The representatives used the language uncritically in court, which Swedish media reported made people questioning the Swedish Government's attitude towards Sami people (Svenska Dagbladet 2019; Sveriges Television 2020b; Västerbottens Kuriren 2020). After the court decision, hateful and threatening comments toward Sami people occurred on social media, where people, mostly anonymously, wrote about shooting reindeer and 'starting a war' according to several news articles. The chairman of Girjas' neighbouring Sami village reported that he received a death threat against him following the Girjas case (Norrländska Socialdemokraten 2020; Sveriges Television 2020a). The opinions of the outcome of the Girjas case have divide the Sami community and it has created friction between different Sami groups. The debates about who gets the advantages of the outcome of the case have taken place in Swedish media, inter

[1] A Sami village is a legal entity for reindeer herding in Sweden. Only members in a Sami village can conduct reindeer herding in the specific grazing areas (SFS nr: 1971:437).
[2] Time immemorial is defined as 'the distant past no longer remembered; time before legal memory, fixed by statute as before 1189 (law) (Chambers 2014).
[3] Sweden is divided in 290 municipalises which are geographical areas. The municipalises are responsible for some public services, as schools and elderly care (SKR 2019).

alia, as critics mean that only members of Sami villages benefit from the court decision. As only a minority of the Sami people are members of a Sami village, the Sami people standing outside are the ones who lose according to opponents as they do not have any legal rights or access to land (Norrbottens Kuriren 2020; Sveriges Television 2020c).

The conflict of land rights that led to Girjas Sami village taking legal actions against the Swedish Government has a historical explanation. The history of Sami people, and the colonisation of Sápmi[4], contains events as racial biology, assimilation and ejection from the lands they have lived on for centuries (Lundmark 2012). Policies made in the past have also shaped gender structures in the Sami community, affecting what it means to be a Sami woman today (Amft 2000). Many Sami people feel that they have been countered by the Swedish Government and the Girjas case is one of many examples. The settlement of the Girjas case has led to several unanswered questions, including the question of the Swedish Government's position regarding the public international law for indigenous rights. Initially concerning land rights, the Girjas case has now also come to shed light upon the situation of the indigenous population of Sweden, both today and historically.

1.1 Aim and Research Questions

The current court decision of the Girjas case has led to a debate about land rights in rural areas in Sweden, as well as a discussion about different Sami groups and indigenous people's right to land. The Girjas case is about the influence on natural resources, the right to conduct and have authority over fishing and hunting rights due to time immemorial. As a consequence, different Sami groups have been set against each other. The Sami identity is becoming more important to discuss as the debate about the Girjas case is raising questions about who is considered to be a genuine Sami. Embedded in this, making it even more complex, is the aspect of gender.

The aim of this research is to explore the complexity of the Sami identity amongst young women in northern Sweden to understand the perception of who is considered to be a genuine Sami today. To create an understanding of the Sami identity, I will analyse the participants' stories based on the following guiding questions:

1) *How do young Sami women construct their indigenous identity?*
2) *In what way has the Girjas case affected their identity?*

[4] Sápmi is an area that stretch across four countries; Finland, Norway, the Kola peninsula in Russia and Sweden. The area is geographical, but also cultural and linguistically (Sametinget 2016).

1.2 Thesis Outline

The outline of this thesis is constructed around two research questions. These questions will be answered through the stories of the participants, understood through theoretical frameworks and my own personal understanding of being a young Sami woman.

The thesis is structured as follows. It will begin with a background about Sami people and their historical relation to the Swedish Government. Legal rights, both historical and present, will be presented in this chapter. In the following chapter, the theoretical and methodological framework is described. I will introduce how the concepts of identity, gender, intersectional analysis and heritage relate to my theoretical standpoint. The concept of cultural carriers is also explained. The chapter will proceed into describing the methodological choices of this thesis; using qualitative research methods and oral history. Henceforth, the empirical findings, divided into six sections, are embedded with my theoretical analysis. In the first section of this chapter, the experiences of being a Sami today are described. In the second section, the perceptions of the Sami identity are explained, where the stereotypical image is questioned. In the third section, divided in three subsections, the cultural carriers of the Sami culture are explained. The forth section provides the participants' experiences of being a Sami woman. The fifth section covers the Sami heritage and the importance of passing it on to the generations which follow. The sixth, and last section, of the findings examines the perceptions of the Girjas case and how the identity of the participants has been affected. At last, the study will end with concluding remarks.

2 A Historical Context of the Sami People

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.

Maya Angelou (1978)

The quote above is an excerpt from Maya Angelou's *Still I Rise*. The poem carries a narrative about the struggle of racism, discrimination and injustice that follows the misuse of power. I believe that the spirit in the poem could be understood in a Sami context, due to the history of colonialism. The complexities of the Sami identity must be understood within a historical and political context. This chapter will begin with a brief background of the history of the Sami people and leads forward to the historical and current rights of indigenous people in Sweden.

For centuries, and before borders of nations were drawn, the Sami people have lived in Sápmi, an area that stretch across four countries; Sweden, Finland, Norway and the Kola peninsula in Russia. The area is geographical, but also cultural and linguistic (Sametinget 2016a). In Sweden, it is illegal to carry out census on ethnicity and therefore it is not possible to know how many Sami people are living in the country. The Sami Parliament, which is both publicly-elected and a State agency, has made a conventional estimation that there are approximately 80 000 – 100 000 Sami people living in Sápmi, whereas 20 000 – 35 000 are living in Sweden (Sametinget 2016a). The Sami community is as complex and divided as all modern communities. While adapting to modernity, the Sami people still strive to maintain the links to the traditional values in their policies. An important part in the Sami culture is the connection to land, something that has become harder in the time of the environmental crisis (Gaski 1993). Global warming affects the areas near the poles fastest, which make societies in cold climates most affected. For Sami people, this will require adaption. Reindeer herders must for example support feed their reindeer to a greater extent, as warmer winters will create a glaze making it impossible for the reindeer to graze under the snow (Sametinget 2017a).

The traditional livelihoods of the Sami people have historically been fishing, hunting and reindeer herding. There are different types of reindeer herding; the fell reindeer herding is the most dominant, having a structure of moving the reindeer between the fell and the forest depending on season. Another type of reindeer herding is the forest herding, located to one area; the forest. Regardless of which type of herding is performed, it has to be within a Sami village (Lundmark 2012:7–8). A Sami village is a geographical area where reindeer herding is conducted and each village is an economic and administrative association having their own board. There are 51 Sami villages in Sweden and every village is an economic association, whose members are individual reindeer herding companies (Sametinget 2019a). In Sweden, around ten percent of the Sami people are members in a Sami village, roughly estimated (Samiskt informationscentrum n.d.). There are no wild reindeer in Sweden, all animals are owned by a private person within a Sami village and should have a mark, so-called 'renmärke'[5], that connects the animal to the owner (Sametinget 2017b). In 2019, 2781 men and 1868 women were registered as reindeer owners in Sweden (Sametinget 2019b). Today, the majority of the Sami people are not members of a Sami village and therefore have no rights to perform reindeer herding. Since the reindeer as a symbol is strongly linked to Sami culture and politics, Sami who do not practice reindeer herding nor own reindeer become less visible in Swedish society.

Another important cultural marker is duodji, roughly translated as craftwork, which has become a symbol for the Sami culture and identity. Gunvor Guttorm (2015:63), professor in duodji, writes that the word duodji cannot be directly translated to craftwork or art, if one wants to understand the Sami point of view. Duodji is closely connected to the Sami way of life, both as a relation to one another and the actual production of the craftwork. Guttorm (2015:63) writes that 'by using the term duodji we also launch a discussion on how the term itself was used in the past and the links it has to the contemporary world'. Henceforth, the word duodji will be used instead of craftwork. Duodji has historically been a part of everyday life, as a nomadic necessity. Koslin (2010:8) writes about duodji and how 'its role to sustain the harsh Sámi existence of the past is no longer relevant, but it constitutes a powerful marker of Sámi identity.' Duodji has historically been divided in hard and soft arts, and traditionally, this has been gender based. The division partly lives on today; women mostly do the soft arts as sewing for example. The traditional suit of Sami people is called kolt and how it is designed differs depending on gender and which part of Sápmi one comes from. Sami people wear the kolt on special occasions and it has become a symbol for the Sami identity (Samiskt informationscentrum n.d.).

The Sami culture is also carried by the Sami languages. The languages are divided in three main languages (east, central and south), but have nine variations, some of them differ more to each other than the different Scandinavian languages do (Lundmark 2012:7). The Sami language is one of the five minority languages in Sweden, which means that it is officially acknowledged by the Swedish Government. The inhabitants who live in the administrative areas for the minority languages have

[5] 'Renmärke' is the combined cuts in both ear of the reindeer. Every mark is unique and often inherit within the family. Without a mark, the reindeer is owned by the Sami village (Sametinget 2017b).

the right to education of their mother tongue for their children in school (Riksdagsförvaltningen 2009).

2.1 Legal Rights and History of Sami People

> After all, it is important to remember that
> native [Aboriginal] title is not really a descriptor of
> Indigenous relationships to country, but a category of white law,
> and thus it must be understood from within the confines of that law.
>
> Shaunnagh Dorsett (2002:33)

The previous section gave broad explanations of what are considered to be the traditional cultural carriers[6] for the Sami culture. Not all Sami people speak the Sami languages, have knowledge about duodji or have connection to reindeer herding. Still, they can express and make claims to their Sami identity. The identity of Sami people, as for all indigenous people, is complex and carries many aspects, not least a legal one. In the Sami Parliament Act (SFS nr 1992:1433) the definition of a Sami is described:

> § 2. In this Act, a Sami refers to an individual who considers him/herself to be a Sami and
> 1. can demonstrate a probability that he/she has or has had Sami as the language in the home, or
> 2. can demonstrate a probability that one of his/her parents or grandparents has or has had Sami as the language in the home, or
> 3. has a parent who is or has been included on the electoral register for the Sami Parliament, without this subsequently being decided otherwise by the county administrative board.

This means that the Sami Parliament[7] is using a definition of a Sami as a person who self-identify as Sami and comes from a Sami family. These requirements must be met to vote in the Sami Parliament election (SFS nr 1992:1433). In Sweden, there are five national minorities, Sami people being one of them (Regeringskansliet 1999). The Sami people were acknowledged as indigenous people by the Swedish Parliament in 1977. The acknowledgment led to an international law requirement for cultural discrimination for Sami people (prop. 1976/77:80). A common definition of indigenous people is that they, as people, lived on the land at the time of colonisation. Colonisation is when a national state takes land in possession. This is born out of

[6] Cultural carriers are both the traditional culture symbols and the person who carriers them. I will explain the concept further in chapter 3.1.

[7] The Sami Parliament is a parliament that is both publicly-elected and a State agency. The Swedish Sami Parliament Act controls what the Sami Parliament should work with. Sami people who have the right to vote according to the act can cast their vote on different political parties that have different agendas (Sametinget 2016b).

colonialism, which is the pursuit of control and exploitation outside the own territories. The reason for colonisation is often about natural resources and the need for land (Sametinget 2018). The acknowledgement from 1977 is also an acknowledgement of the colonial relationship between Sweden and Sápmi.

The colonisation of the Swedish part of Sápmi became problematic when the Swedish Crown re-distributed of land in 1873. Parts of Sápmi were given to settlers who cultivated the lands that in the eyes of the Crown were considered as wilderness. The Swedish Crown decided that agriculture and reindeer husbandry could co-exist. Prior to 1886, the state had to a certain degree acknowledged Sami customary claims to land. However, in 1886 the first *Reindeer Grazing Act* was established as a consequence of the increased conflicts between settlers and Sami people. This act was the beginning of a new era, as the Swedish Government formed special laws of Sami people (Mörkenstam 1999:79-80). In 1867, the cultivation border was drawn. The aim with the border was to separate Sami people and settlers; west of the cultivation border, the land was reserved for Sami people where the reindeer could graze free. This was a way to undermine the conflicts and to minimise the amounts of poor settlers who needed land to cultivate. The conditions for cultivation were harder in the fells[8]. The border pushed the Sami people further up in the fells (Lundmark 2002:33-34). In the 18th century, the hunting and fishing rights were entitled only to the Sami people. The Sami people lost the land they were entitled to in the late 19th century. The land became a possession of the Swedish Crown, as the Sami people were considered unable to acquire individual ownership (ibid:61).

In the beginning of 1900th century, the Sami people were considered to be on the 'low nomad cultural stage', while in the end of the century, the Sami people were instead seen as a 'biologically inferior race' (Lundmark 2012:141-145). The Sami people went from a culture to a race. The state agency *Lappväsendet* was established in 1885, as the Sami people were considered unable to handle their own affairs. Racial biology became common by the end of 19th century and in 1922, the Swedish government established the *Swedish Institute for Racial Biology*. Examinations of skulls, often found by grave robbery, were one of the methods that researchers from the institute used to define Sami people as 'short heads'. Studies of race biology, in the lead of the race biologist Lundborg who supported Hitler, were done in Sápmi, amongst other places. These studies contained examinations as skull measurements, amongst other things, and were often done in a patronising and exposed way (Lundmark 2012:141-145;214). In the same period, the Swedish Government believed that the Sami people needed to be parted from the 'civilisation' as they were only adapted for the nomad life. This led to a *Lap-should-be-Lap-policy* which categorised different Sami groups, portraying the genuine Sami as a nomad reindeer herder, living in a cot in the fell (Lundmark 2002:63). Swedish policies prevented reindeer herders from living in houses or having another husbandry than reindeer herding, using the argument that only reindeer herding could be performed in the fells (ibid:74). This was the beginning of the categorisation and division that we see

[8] I will use the word 'fell' instead of 'mountain', referring to the Swedish word 'fjäll', meaning a barren and high landscape.

in the Sami community today. Another division occurred when the union between Norway and Sweden dissolved in 1905. When the border was drawn, Sami people suddenly became divided into nationalities. The *Reindeer Grazing Convention* was signed by the two countries in 1919, which restricted the grazing rights, leaving many reindeer herders in Sweden without summer grazing on the Norwegian side of the border. The convention and lack of grazing for the reindeer, led to forced relocations[9] of the north Sami people to the south (Lantto 2014). This created oppositions between different Sami groups as they had different ways to herd their reindeer amongst other things (Lundmark 2012: 201-202).

In 1913, the first nomad school was established. The Swedish Government thought that a regular school could make the Sami children used to 'civilisation', which in extension would prevent them to go back to a nomad life. The nomad school segregated the Sami community; Sami children should either be nomads and go to a nomad school, or they should be assimilated going to a regular Swedish school (Mörkenstam 1999:100). The nomad schools were supposed to give Sami children lower civic education than other Swedish children, 'protecting' them from the Swedish culture. In both the nomad and the regular school, the education was held in Swedish. The school reform was criticised by the Sami people without hearing (Ruong 1982:134-135). These political decisions led to that the 'genuine Sami' should go to a nomad school and learning less than other children. The Sami children who were considered not to be genuine should instead go to a regular school; being considered neither Sami nor Swede. The Sami languages were forbidden in both Swedish and Nomad school. Mörkenstam (1999:106) writes that the Swedish Government practised a Sami politic that created a connection between reindeer herding, nomad life, 'Saminess' and rights.

In the Reindeer Grazing Act from 1928, the Swedish Government defined reindeer herders as the only group of Sami people. Reindeer herding as a husbandry became the focus in politics and those Sami people who did not perform herding were categorised as 'other population' (Lundmark 2012:210-211). The act weakened the position of Sami people, especially for Sami women. The legal status of the act was linked with marital status; a woman who carried the right to perform reindeer herding lost the right if she married a man without it. At the same time, a man could marry whoever he wanted as he kept the right regardless. When losing the right, women needed to leave the life of reindeer herding. A woman was a minority in the Sami community, as well as in the majority society (Ledman 2012:85). This show how the rights of Sami people should only transfer within the Sami male line. The status was removed in the Reindeer Husbandry Act from 1971, where instead it is implied that Sami woman should be subordinate to her father or husband according to Amft (2000:190). In the act from 1971, it is written that all Sami people have access to the

[9] The compulsory transfer of Sami people contains numerous events, see *Herrarna satte oss hit* by Elin Anna Labba (2020) for example.

rights, reindeer herding including, that are described in the law on account of prescription from time immemorial[10] (SFS 1971). In the following paragraph of the act, it is written that reindeer herding can only be performed by members of a Sami village (SFS 1971). Around ten percent of the Sami people are members in a Sami village, due to categorisation of Sami people in the past (Samiskt informationscentrum n.d.).

The historical and political actions described in this chapter are just a few examples on the rich history of Sami people. The Swedish Government continues to be criticised for how the Sami people are treated to this day. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (2018) wrote a resolution criticising the situation of Sami people in Sweden, and the United Nations have written several reports, including the *Human Rights Council* (2015) in which the Swedish Government was recommended to sign the *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention* (ILO 169). The convention is about acknowledge and respect land rights for tribal and indigenous people, inter alia (International Labour Organization 1989). The historical events that are presented in this chapter are just an excerpt of the rich history of Sami people. I have chosen to include these events as I believe that they are important for understanding the Sami identity. History has shaped how the Sami identity is perceived today.

2.2 Previous Research

> Identity for Indigenous peoples is grounded in their relationships
> with the land, with their ancestors who have returned to the land
> and with future generations who will come into being on the land.
> Rather than viewing ourselves as being *in* relationship with other people
> or things, we *are* the relationships that we hold and are part of.
>
> Shawn Wilson (2008:80)

This section will provide a brief overview of previous research on indigenous people from diverse countries. By contrasting the historical and present situation of Sami people with other indigenous people, a broader contextual understanding can be reached. Many indigenous people around the globe are facing similar issues such as struggles over land rights, health issues and fragmented identities as a result of colonialism, displacement segregation and assimilation. This master's thesis can be a way to contribute to create a greater knowledge of Sami people and how their identity is affected by the history. The research articles below carry stories from different places and different indigenous groups, nevertheless, they highlight a collective theme; the multifaceted indigenous identity.

[10] Time immemorial is defined as 'the distant past no longer remembered; time before legal memory, fixed by statute as before 1189 (law) (Chambers 2014).

In my search for previous research on indigenous people and their identity, I first came across Christina Åhrén's (2008) PhD dissertation, *Är jag en riktig same? (Am I a genuine Sami?)*. Åhrén, with an ethnologist point of view, questions the simplified image of Sami people as one group who shares the same reality and cultural values. In her dissertation, Åhrén shows that the Sami people are a diverse group were the majority of them are living their lives without a constant display of the Sami culture for others to see. Their Sami identity is carried inside themselves and not necessarily exposed in their everyday lives. How the Sami identity should be defined is complex, as it is carried by a variety of people with different heritage, backgrounds and believes. Christina Åhrén (2008:12-13) gives an example on how the Sami population is a heterogeneous group by looking at The Sami Parliament, where there are different political parties. These various groups have different interests that oppose each other and create gaps, which have created different political orientations within the parliament. Åhrén writes that the policies adopted by the Swedish government throughout the 20th century, and the late 19th Century, have had a great impact on the Sami population and their situation of today. Åhrén argues that policies, as the *Reindeer Herding Act*, have created a classification of 'the real Sami' and affected the way people look at the Sami identity.

A part of the research field of identity of indigenous people emphasis on indigenous right to self-determination. Nilsson (2019) means that the Swedish national legislation has changed the understanding of the Sami identity; focusing on rights, rather than responsibilities or relations. Nilsson writes that indigenous people should be able to decide their own identity according to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP), which means that the Sami people should decide by themselves who has the right to vote in the Sami Parliament. Nilsson (2019:14) writes that 'throughout history the Swedish state has clearly, through politics and legislation, not only emphasized biological ancestry but also shown that the amount of blood matters for who constitute the group that can call themselves Sámi.' From another part of the world, Hilary N. Weaver (2001) writes in her article *Indigenous Identity: What Is It, and Who Really Has It?* that the indigenous identity is a controversial topic; hard to define and categorise. Weaver writes about indigenous identity in three ways; self-identification, community identification, and external identification. Weaver argues that self-perception is a crucial part of identity and that a cultural identity is a constant process of change that leads to a sense of who one is, which may result in rediscovering an indigenous identity.

Much of the research on identity of indigenous peoples focus on how the history has shaped how the identity is perceived. Harris, Carlson and Poata-Smith (2013) mean that the indigenous authenticity is often rooted in colonial racism and born out of racial categorisations. Harris, Carlson and Poata-Smith (ibid:1) write that 'expectations of Indigenous cultural purity or environmental naturalness exist alongside the imposition of varying degrees of blood quantum as criteria for citizenship, political recognition and access to resources and services'. They argue that the authenticity, both cultural and biological, shapes state policies and practices, which affect the everyday lives of indigenous people globally.

Colonialism is identified as an important aspect of understanding the situation of indigenous people today. In *Beyond Recovery: Colonization, Health and Healing for Indigenous People in Canada,* Lavallee and Poole (2010:275) write about identity as an important aspect for understanding the health of indigenous people in Canada. The authors argue that colonisation has caused disruptions in the cultural identity of indigenous people, leaving them with a low self-esteem and a problematical view on their own identity. Bronwyn Carlson (2011) writes about the Aboriginal identity with her own identity as a point of departure in *The Politics of Identity: Who Counts as Aboriginal Today?*. Carlson writes that the colonial history of Aboriginal people has led to many people feeling a disconnection from their Aboriginal roots. Carlson (ibid:316) means that Aboriginal people play a part in the modern struggle by upholding the community practices, created by the government in the past. Carlson (ibid:317) writes that 'in the process, we continue to deny some Aboriginal people their particular history of being Aboriginal and what it now means to them.' The research I have presented carries similar findings on the complex identity of indigenous people, and shows how many people carries fragmented identities as a consequence of governmental policies.

3 Theoretical and Methodological Framework

This section will provide knowledge of the theoretical concepts that I have use to analyse the empirical data. To be able to understand the stories of the participants, and turning their words into a wider context, I draw on three main theoretical traditions; cultural studies on identity, gender theories centred on intersectional analysis and heritage studies. The methodical choices that led to building this thesis, brick by brick, will be presented further into the chapter, where I also present my part in the narrative and reflect about my own Sami identity.

3.1 Theoretical Framework and Definitions

The empirical data that this thesis is based upon contains both similar and different experiences of being a young Sami woman today. I have used identity as a theoretical concept, as I wanted to understand how the participants construct their own Sami identity. I believe that the stories of the participants need to be understood through intersectionality and a gender perspective to highlight certain issues that Sami women face in their lives. Finally, the concept of heritage is used to understand how the participants look at the past, as well as the present, trying to understand why the Sami heritage matters.

The Sami people have been marginalised through parts of their history, and therefore it is important to understand that the perceptions of the Sami identity today are shaped by the past. This is an effect of colonialism, which can be seen in other parts of the world as well. Lavallee and Poole (2010:275) mean that the identity of indigenous people has been wounded, and to heal from the past, both the individual and collective identity must be understood. Lavallee and Poole (ibid:279) write that healing for indigenous people requires an understanding of their cultural practices, which is not done by applyping the Western approach for recovery. Lavallee and Poole mean that the health of indigenous people can be improved by acknowledging the past, with a history of colonisation, and teaching people about the cultural traditions of indigenous people. Healing of wounded indentities demands an understanding of the indigenous indentities.

3.1.1 Identity

Sociologist Stuart Hall (1990:222-225) argues that identity should be seen as a constant process that is never complete, but constituted within representation, rather than a fact that is already accomplished. Furthermore, Hall means that cultural identity could be explained in two ways; as a shared culture or something that one becomes. When looking at the cultural identity as a shared culture, the identity becomes merged with people that share ancestry and history, and the cultural identity becomes one with the ones that share the same cultural codes. Hall writes that this creates a 'oneness' in an unchangeable frame, which becomes the essence and truth of a cultural identity. This 'truth' is the truth that people in the shared culture must discover and express, something that Hall argues has become a conception in the post-colonial world as it has developed to be a representation of marginalised people. In the second position, cultural identity is something one is 'becoming or being', according to Hall. It belongs to the future, as well as to the past. The culture identity has an origin, a story, but is in constant change and a subject to the play of culture, power and history. Hall (ibid:225) writes that the past speaks to us; it is not the essence of our cultural identity but it is partly constructed through it:

> Far from being grounded in a mere 'recovery' of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which, when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past.

By looking at cultural identity as something that is changeable, Hall (1990:225-226) writes that 'the colonial experience' could be understood. Hall argues that the way major regimes have positioned marginalised people is a consequence of cultural power, which has created a sense of alienation. The dominant regimes have constructed a position where marginalised people are categorised as 'the other', not only by the dominant discourse, but by themselves as well.

Bronwyn Carlson (2011) means that some Aboriginal communities have a custom of questioning certain Aboriginal identities, which often creates an emotional distress and feeling of alienation in the ones that search for it. Carlson research on who is Aboriginal today and what is required for it, with people that are, as Carlson describes it, 'part-Aboriginal'. Carlson means that they often need to prove their heritage due to discourses and ideas about Aboriginal people, which are born out of categorisations made in the past. Carlson (ibid:302) writes that 'the threads of older discourses persist into the present'. Furthermore, Carlson means that the participants in her study had a strong consensus of what it means to be an Aboriginal today and what criteria it requires. Carlson means that an Aboriginal 'must' know their history. It also involves a process of understanding the heritage and ancestor lineage to identify oneself as Aboriginal. Those people who do not explicit the indigenous identities from the categorisations, often undermine trustworthiness in their identities and become 'half-indigenous' instead. Experiences of 'halfness' and the need to know one's history can be found in stories told by the participants in this research as well. This is a consequence of how the Swedish Government has categorised the Sami

people through the history, creating a narrow image of who the genuine Sami is. Harris, Carlson and Poata-Smith (2013:5-6) argue that indigenous identities are produced both on self-designation and recognition of others. This means that the indigenous identity is changeable and can be seen as a process of *becoming* indigenous, rather than *being* indigenous. The authors write that the indigenous identity also can be affected by political notions and constructions, as they create an anticipation of what the indigenous identity contains. Harris, Carlson and Poata-Smith (ibid:8) describe how indigenous people often use symbols, as a necklace for example, to ensure that their indigenous identity is recognised by others.

A cultural identity can be seen in many ways; as part of a shared culture or as ongoing process, always changeable. The participants in this research tell different stories about their Sami identity, which create an image of the Sami identity as a process rather than a constant state within the stereotypical view on the Sami culture. The identity of indigenous people is often created with historical policies ever present, and the categorisations created by governments are often sustained by the indigenous people themselves. Indigenous people often feel the need to prove their identity by self-designation and living up to the created stereotypical image, carrying typical cultural symbols to be recognised by others as Harris, Carlson and Poata-Smith (2013:8) describe. From this I derive that even if the Sami people, as a marginalised group, are emerging from the same history of exclusion, they do not inevitably share one constant cultural identity. In the stories of the participants, and in my own experience being Sami, the concept of cultural carriers is brought to light. Cultural carriers are the traditional culture symbols as duodji, the Sami language and the reindeer, but it could also be personalised as a person who carriers them could be a cultural carrier.

3.1.2 Gender and Intersectionality

Many theories about gender and gender structures have been made throughout the years. The American philosopher and theorist Judith Butler is one of the most prominent. In her book *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Butler (1999) writes that the subject of women is not understood through abiding terms any longer. Instead, Butler (1999:9-10) argues that 'gender is culturally constructed: hence, gender is neither the causal result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex.' Butler (1999:23-24) writes about the 'truth' of sex, that she argues is created by the practices of the matrix of coherent gender norms, which in turn affect identities. These practices create oppositions between 'masculine' and 'feminine', which shape an idea that there is a strong difference between what is considered 'female' and 'male' attributes. According to Butler, performativity describes the actions in which we *make gender,* by behaving in ways that either sustain or challenge the normative idea of sex and gender. The 'truth of sex' can therefore be questioned by actions that do not abide to the idea of male and female appearance and behaviour, and hence resist the general perception of sex, gender and sexuality. To understand the issues being told by the participants in this thesis, gender theories are a necessity.

Feminist theories are often criticised for having a simplified approach and only including Western perspectives. A cultural diversity within feminism has grown where Chandra Talpade Mohanty, with her postcolonial and transnational feminist theories, is one of the most prominent scholar. Mohanty (1984) writes that Western feminism is treating women outside the West as a homogenous group, creating a 'Third World Woman' and ignoring the great diversity that these women carry. Mohanty argues that feminist theories are portraying women outside the West as victimised and uneducated who need saving by the modern Western women. This viewpoint is born out of colonialism according to Mohanty, as the feminist scholarships merge women outside the Western world into one homogenous group. Mohanty (ibid: 335) criticising the Western feminism for the created difference between 'us and them':

> It is in the production of this "Third World Difference" that Western feminisms appropriate and "colonize" the fundamental complexities and conflicts which characterize the lives of women of different classes, religions, cultures, races and castes in these countries. It is in this process of homogenization and systemitization of the oppression of women in the third world that power is exercised in much of recent Western feminist discourse, and this power needs to be defined and named.

Intersectionality is a theoretical framework that views 'the interaction between gender, race and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power' (Davis 2008:68). The notion of intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, professor of law, with women of colour as a point of departure. Crenshaw (1989:139-140) means that women of colour are often excluded from the discourses of both feminist and antiracist theory, due to the lack of attention to the interaction between gender and race, which creates a marginalisation. Crenshaw argues that simply including women of colour in debates do not solve the issues of marginalisation. According to her, both gender and race, and the way they interact with each other, must be considered for understanding their situation. It is therefore important, not only to include women of colour in the discourse, but to include the complexity of the pluralistic exclusion of being a black, or otherwise marginalised, woman. Feminist theories are based on the experiences of white middle-class women, while anti-racist theories are based on the experiences of black men, hence disregarding how these features interact. Crenshaw (1991:1298) further writes that because policies about identity are based upon these socially constructed ideas, women of colour are facing a multi-layered exclusion, not only from the theoretical debate but from the political agenda as well.

I show how the stories of the participants need to be understood through a gender perspective to highlight some issues that Sami women face in their lives. As in the case with black women, Sami women are caught in-between structures and intersecting lines of ethnicity and gender, as the former is based on the experiences of being a Sami man, while the latter is based on the experiences of being a 'Swedish' woman. A Sami woman is therefore excluded from the debate; her experiences of being both a woman and a minority are not taken into consideration.

3.1.3 Heritage

The geographer, David Lowenthal (1998:167-169) argues that heritage and history are different viewpoints of the same past. According to Lowenthal, the purpose of both approaches is to bring the dead to life by making the past understandable. Many events share features of both history and heritage, the two viewpoints are often close-knitted and can evolve to one another; a historical document found in the archive of an ancestor evolves from being a historical source to becoming one's heritage. Lowenthal means that there is more to history by itself, but the *whole* of history is simply heritage. Lowenthal (1998:167) writes that 'heritage departs from history in what it sees, what it stresses, and what it changes. From the same past, history and heritage carve out unlike and often competing insights.'

Heritage is often built on history, but changed and costumed to fit our needs of today. Lowenthal (1998:156) means that history is easier to forget than heritage, since heritage often contains personal attachment and stories which affect one's self. The ones that forget the past might be fated to live it once again, forgetting about the costs, whereas the ones that memorise it will live with it forever. Lowenthal (1998:13) writes that 'for most people, the past was not a foreign country but their own', as people have historically always trusted tradition and connected closely with their ancestors until modern times. There was rarely any distinction between the past and the present, no separation between the dead and the living. People lived with the constant presence of their ancestors in their everyday lives, never saying farewell to past moments. Lowenthal (1998:2-3) means that every person carries their own heritage, even if some parts of each heritage can be shared within the group we belong to. By the viewpoint of Lowenthal, the individual cultural identity that Hall (1990) writes about becomes instead a collective heritage when sharing it with others. It becomes a collective heritage when meeting the individual identity.

The conception of heritage is used to understand how the participants look at their past, as well as their present and the generations which follow. The ones before us and the not-yet-embodied generations are brought together through a shared heritage. As the background chapter viewed, the Sami people have a complicated relation to the Swedish Government, and how one understands it becomes one's heritage. Sharing the same history does not mean that a group is sharing the same heritage as it depends on how it is interpreted. I believe that the participants' understanding of the Sami history, and furthermore their own heritage, affect their view on the Swedish policies and the current Girjas case.

3.2 Methodology

> Stories remind us of who we are and our belonging.
> Stories hold within them knowledges while simultaneously
> signifying relationships. In oral tradition, stories can never be decontextualized
> from the teller. […] They tie us with our past and
> provide a basis for continuity with future generations.
>
> Margaret Kovach (2009)

This thesis is based on semi-structured interviews with eight women, all of them self-identified as Sami, with roots in Norrbotten County in Sweden and below the age of 35 years. This delimitation has been made to explore the complexity of the Sami identity amongst young women in northern Sweden. I have chosen to listen to the participants' stories with an oral historical point of view; believing that their stories belong to themselves, as well as to a greater perspective, and their perception of their present situation has a historical explanation. Oral history is a way to tie us to the past, as well as provide a springboard for future generations. By using oral history, the historical context can help me understand how the participants make sense of the world. I believe that oral history as a method can raise important aspects when researching on Sami identity, as it rises the voices of marginalised groups, indigenous people inter alia. Kovach (2009:96-97) writes that as a researcher of oral history, it is import to maintain the spoken words, as a homage to the past, but also to connect the research to a wider historical context. A story could be a part of a collective memory. Kovach (ibid) argues that when attempting to understand a story with a Western perspective, the researcher often miss the point when sharing the story, since the historical context is missing. I believe that I can understand the stories of the participant partly, since I, as a Sami, understand how it is to live with the Sami history.

This thesis is built on interviews, which are a form of qualitative research. In qualitative research, the view on validity differs from quantitative methods, as it does not focus on measurable results, as numbers or statistics (Kvale & Brinkmann 2014:296). I have used qualitative methods since I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perspective on their identity. Interviews as a method are criticised since stories told by people cannot be valid as true. However, it can say something about the participant personally (Kvale & Brinkmann 2014:301). A narrative approach can be seen as a conversation between the participant and the interviewer. The interviewer becomes a part in the narrative through the questions asked. The aim with a narrative approach is to understand the personal story of the participants and how they perceive their lives (Kvale & Brinkmann 2014:194-196). I will not research on the truth in the given stories, but rather on how the participants in this thesis perceive and speak about their identity. As the sociologist Catherine Kohler Riessman (2005) writes:

> Narratives do not mirror, they refract the past. Imagination and strategic interests influence how storytellers choose to connect events and make them meaningful for others. Narratives are useful in research precisely because storytellers interpret the past rather than reproduce it as it was.

The participant's stories are the basis of this thesis. For a period of two weeks, I interviewed eight women with roots in Norrbotten County. My choice of only talking to women was based upon my own experience as a young Sami woman, but also to shed light on the situation of young women in the Sami community. I was interested in how these young women construct their Sami identify and if the interviews could show a shared narrative of the Sami identity. I wanted to know if the participants believed that there is a stereotypical image of the Sami people and if so, how they perceived this image.

Before the interviews, all participants were aware of my aim. The interviews have taken part in the participants' homes, in their workplace or at a local café. One interview was by video call. The interviews have been guided through partially prepared questions (see appendix 1) as I wanted to have a template for myself. The participants have been given space to share their story outside the given framework as I wanted to hear their personally view on their Sami identity. Every interview was between one and two hours, and the material from the recorded dialogues have been transcribed afterwards.

3.2.1 Ethical Issues

LaFrance and Crazy Bull (2009) write about the importance of respect for indigenous people's norms and charters. They argue that recent discussions about indigenous populations need to be examined by the researcher, who also needs to respect eventual difference in culture, gender and religion (Creswell & Creswell 2018:93). When collecting the data, the researcher should let the informant speak to the greatest extent possible, and not interrupt. The researcher should also reflect on the power imbalance which may arise through the data collection. Therefore, the researcher should premise that a power imbalance exists. Indigenous people and other minorities are often exploited, and to avoid that, the informants should be able to involve in the research process and review the material for approval before it is published (Creswell & Creswell 2018:93-94).

All participants have seen the result from the interviews before the publication of this thesis, and they have been given an opportunity to change their story. The analysis of the result is my own, and the participant have not been given access to the material beforehand. Kovach (2009:98-99) argues that oral history creates a relationship between the listener and the narrator, which demands the researcher to be trustworthy. When a story is shared, the researcher has a responsibility to guarantee that the story is understood correctly. The participant should be able to approve the used materials, especially in research about indigenous people as it is often misrepresented.

The delimitation of this research, interviewing young Sami women with roots in Norrbotten County, has made the group of participants small. Some of the participants I knew from before the interviews, and one woman is my relative. This may have affected the interviews, but I do not believe that it has been crucial for the reliability of the thesis since I have not spoken about the Sami identity with the participants before. In rural areas, an especially in a Sami context, the communities are small and therefore it is hard to maintain the participants fully anonymous. Small details about the backgrounds of the participants may give a clue about who they are. I have changed the names of the participants as they should remain anonymous in this thesis. The names were chosen to give the reader a feeling of who the participants are and I used the most common names for women born in the 1990s in Sweden according to Statistics Sweden (SCB 2020).

3.2.2 Myself as a Part of the Narrative

As long as I can remember, my mother has always told me that you can never be half a person. Still, I have borne a sense of a broken identity for a long time. With one foot in each world, one as Sami and one as Swede, it is hard to know which world is mine. As my life has gone by, I have realised that I share this experience with many other people. These thoughts have led to an interest in further research of what the Sami identity is today. My thoughts about my own heritage have led to this research and it has been a framing of the outcome of this thesis.

Reflexive objectivity is described as a reflection of the researcher's own knowledge and contribution to the research field. This can be seen as being objective in relation to the subjectivity. For the researcher, this means honesty in their research, by writing about these unavoidable prejudices that may affect the research (Kvale & Brinkmann 2014:292). Since I identify myself as Sami, I am part of the research field I have approached. The research field is also a part of my life, which may have affected my objectivity. At the same time, everyone carries stories that may affect the research field at some point. I believe that my heritage has helped me in my research, as I have knowledge of the issues that many Sami people face; we share a similar history. This can have affected the way I perceived things as I may have assumed that I understand certain parts that I did not. As a Sami myself, I already had perceptions of what the Sami identity was before the interviews. This may have affected the conversations, but it could also be way to create trust between me and the participants as I share similar experience as them. I believe that it is easier to have a conversation about the Sami identity with someone that has knowledge about the Sami culture as there is no need to explain things that I state as obvious to Sami people. As I have grown up with parts of the Sami culture and heard stories about the Sami history, the historical events are obvious for me. This has been a challenge for me throughout the work of this thesis, as I have taken for granted that parts of the Sami culture and history are general knowledge. As these parts are obvious to me, the meaning of what I have written could carry implicitly, leaving out fragments that I believe is obvious.

All of the participants know parts of my own history, with a Sami mother and a Swedish father, and how this has left me with a feeling of not being a genuine Sami. Before the research begun, I had some preconceptions about what the Sami identity contains. This has not changed with the interviews, it has confirmed my perception of the Sami identity as both complex and multifaceted. This thesis has been a way to make sense and create an understanding of my own heritage. As the Sami language was taken from my mother, it was also taken from me and my brother. This made me wonder of what else has been taken. The Sami heritage has been marginalised throughout the history and if my generation is going to have a chance to heal from the past, we need to find our own ways to do that by combining the history of our ancestors with our own present. Doing research with Sami people can be a way to heal.

4 Stories of the Sami Identity

Stories remind us of who we are and of our belonging.
Stories hold within them knowledges while
simultaneously signifying relationships.

Margaret Kovach (2009)

In this chapter, stories about the Sami identity are presented through the narratives that were brought to life by Amanda, Anna, Josefin, Elin, Sofia, Jenny, Linnéa and Malin. Together with thoughts on my own experience, the analysis will be guided through my conceptualisations of identity, gender, intersectionality and heritage. The stories contain both similar and different views on the Sami identity; creating an image of the identity as both individual and as part of a greater narrative. The way Sami women construct their identity is partly made through struggles, both within and outside the Sami community. In this chapter, the importance of heritage for identity-making is revealed, as the policies from the past still remain in fresh memory until this day. The chapter will end with a discussion about the current Girjas case, which involves questions of both identity and indigenous rights.

4.1 Being a Sami Today

Some of the participant share similar views on the feeling of being different compared to their environment. Amanda describes how she knew that she was different as a child, mostly because her father was a reindeer herder and worked all days of the week. Amanda believes that she would not have noticed that she was different to the same extent if her father had had an 'ordinary' job. Josefin shares a similar feeling as Amanda, saying that her father being a reindeer herder made her and her sister different in the community they grew up in. Which community one has been brought up in seems to have an impact on the way the Sami identity is constructed, something that Elin agrees with. She believes that the community matters, but also to what extent the community has knowledge of Sami people as she does not have to explain her culture. Malin, who was brought up outside a Sami community, says that she never felt different as a child. She has always known she is Sami and she believes that her Sami identity comes from her upbringing and from her parents. Hall (1990)

means that dominant regimes, as the Swedish Government, have created discourses that have affected the marginalised groups' view on themselves. The marginalised group is considered to be the different, the 'other', not only by the main community, but also by the minority. This is a consequence of colonisation and a structure hard to break, complicating the identity-making.

The participants have different views on their Sami identity, depending on their heritage and upbringing. Anna was brought up in a Swedish community, and she describes herself as a Swede who wants to have a Sami identity. The mother of Anna experienced cruelty and victimisation throughout her childhood for being Sami, and she chose to move from the Sami community when she became an adult. Anna says that this affected her view on her own Sami identity, as her mother has distanced herself from the Sami culture. Anna says that she has always been curious about her heritage and she believes that it is a consequence of her mother never encouraging her to have a Sami identity. Elin, on the other hand, is brought up in a Sami community with the Sami culture always present in her life. She says that it is common to have reindeer and practice the Sami culture in her hometown. Elin describes how she has always seen herself as a whole person and she has never denied her Sami identity.

Some of the participants have one parent that is Sami, and their narratives align with a discourse about 'halfness'. The mother of Josefin is Swedish, and her Sami father has always said that she could never be half a person; one is either a Sami or not. During her childhood, Josefin thought more about her identity than she does today. She believes that some people are more sensitive than her and that they make things harder for themselves, as the identity should not only lay in the parents' heritage. Jenny shares a similar story, as she is brought up in a Sami community with her mother being Sami, but not her father. Jenny remembers how a teacher in preschool said that just one of her parents was Sami, and Jenny says that she could not understand whom of her parents the teacher talked about, as for her, their heritage did not differ. Despite that, Jenny declares that she has never thought about whether she is a whole or a half person, as she always considered herself being Sami. Malin agrees, remembering that her mother always said that she cannot be half-Sami, as one cannot be half a person. Amanda describes herself as a 'concrete Sami', who always hang out with Swedish people, rather than Sami people, and she feels rather odd when being in a Sami community according to herself. Amanda describes how she called herself half-Sami in the past, but that she now sees herself as a whole person. Amanda says that she bears her Sami identity with pride, as well as her Swedish identity; they are not parted but united.

In the participants' stories about parents telling them that they are not half-Sami, I recognise my own story where my mother told me the same thing. Despite this, I have carried this feeling of 'halfness', which according to Carlson (2011) is common in indigenous communities due to colonisation. Categorisations of indigenous people made by governments, as the Swedish Government did with Sami people, still exist. As Carlson puts is, 'the threads of older discourses persist into the present'. This

categorisation has also created criteria of what is required to be able to identify yourself as Sami. Amanda says that she has never been questioned by others whether she is being a genuine Sami, but she describes it as a feeling hard to shake off:

> This is something that I feel is horrible, that it will continue in the same way, even for my child. One has always been questioned as a Sami.

Anna carries feelings of people judging her for not being Sami enough, but she cannot tell who those people are or if it is just a feeling. Anna says that one should be able to speak a Sami language and participant in typical Sami events, as confirmations, to be considered as a genuine Sami by others. Anna also thinks that the Sami culture is harder to reclaim if several generations have chosen not to live with it present, as one has more to prove. Sofia, on the other hand, has never carried the feeling to prove herself as a Sami, but instead she sometimes feels that she needs to prove *which* kind of Sami she is, as her parents come from different parts of Sápmi. Sofia says that she never carried the feeling of not knowing where she belongs and she says that she cannot put herself in the shoes of someone who is insecure of their Sami identity. Sofia believes that she has gotten the Sami culture all the way and that she lives up to the Sami stereotype; working with reindeer, speaking the Sami language and having the Sami heritage from both of her parents. People sometimes tell her that she has been lucky, but Sofia argues that it is not only luck, her ancestors have been fighting for it. Like Sofia, Linnéa is also brought up in a Sami community. She believes that no one has ever questioned her Sami identity. Her father is a reindeer herder and Linnéa was often together with him and the reindeer when growing up. She says that she has not always been sure about her Sami identity, and that her interest for the Sami culture decreased after she finished upper secondary school. Linnéa says that she later understood how lucky she had been, having the reindeer herding and the Sami language when growing up, something that she is never going to take for granted again.

Stuart Hall (1990) shows that the cultural identity of a group is often framed by a 'truth' that is created by governments. In a post-colonial world, this truth becomes the representation of the marginalised group, forcing the members of the group to adopt to the given frame. Some of the participants who describe how they never have been insecure about their identity, also speak about the closeness to the reindeer. The reindeer has become a symbol for the Sami people and the stereotypical image of a Sami being a reindeer herder is created through policies made by the Swedish Government. When looking at the stories of the participants, I recognise myself mostly in Anna's experience of being judged as not being a genuine Sami. Still, I am not able to tell who is judging me. As Carlson (2011) argues, the categorisation born out of colonisation has created criteria of the genuine Sami, and the ones that do not fit in this categorisation are often considered to be 'half-indigenous'. The Sami identity is constructed through Swedish policies made in the past, ever reminding of the colonisation.

Elin describes how her grandparents grew up in the time when the Swedish Government had the Lap-should-be-Lap-act, which divided and categorised the Sami people

as either Sami or non-Sami. Elin believes that the policy created a stereotypical image of the genuine Sami, an image that is still maintained within the Sami community, as people continue to be colonised. Elin says that the narrative of 'half' or 'quarter' Sami should be erased, and by discussing different Sami identities, racism could be reduced as a heterogeneity is viewed. Bronwyn Carlson (2011) writes that Aboriginal people play a part in the modern struggle by upholding the community practices, created by the government in the past. Carlson's view could also be applied on the Sami community. Sofia believes that the Swedish policies made in the past still create issues in the Sami community. She believes that many people do not know that they are Sami, as the policies stole the Sami heritage from their ancestors. Sofia also says that people like her, who grew up in a Sami community, are sometimes blamed by other Sami people for having all parts of the Sami culture for free. This creates a division between different Sami groups according to Sofia, who believes that the Swedish Government is the solution to the problem. The Government needs to make up for all the wrongs they made against the Sami people throughout the history. Sofia says that if one has an understanding of the historical events that have affected the Sami people, one can understand the situation of the Sami people today.

> If you have a historical background, you will understand every conflict, why people are downhearted and why they have lost their Sami identity. It gives an understanding of why we live as we do today.

The stories of the participants carry different views on their Sami identity, affected by the policies made by the Swedish Government. Hall (1990) argues that the cultural identity could be seen as a shared culture or something that one becomes. The stories of the participants show that there is a shared image of what the Sami identity contains, which some of the participants compare themselves to. Carlson (2011) argues that when upholding historical community practices, we continue to deny some people their indigenous identity and what the identity means for them. Sofia being told that she should feel lucky to have the Sami culture near, showing that those who are considered to be 'genuine' Sami are blamed for getting it for free, while those who do not have it as a matter of course are considered to be 'half-Sami'. The narrative of people being half-Sami, with parents convincing their children that they could not be half a person, is born out of historical policies. The 'truth' of the genuine Sami leads to people needing to ensure themselves and other that they live up to this truth.

4.2 Perceptions of the Sami Identity

When talking to the participants, I recognise a shared narrative of perceptions of the Sami identity. Amanda believes that there is no typical image of what a 'genuine' Sami is today, since there are so few reindeer herders that live up to the stereotype. Anna says that it is hard to say who is Sami, but she believes that one needs to have some Sami origin and interest in one's ancestors. The Sami identity contains an understanding of one's past. Jenny, on the other hand, believes that the Sami identity is about how people identify themselves and how they have been brought up. She

says that she has cousins that have as much Sami heritage as herself, but they do not identify themselves as Sami. Malin believes that one cannot have pointers of who is Sami and not, since Sami people are a minority. She thinks that the ones that feel Sami should be able to call themselves Sami, as long as they do not require any rights as indigenous people. Malin says that for her, the Sami culture is about putting the individual thoughts to the side, and instead think of everyone. She believes that the Sami people should gather, rather than judge each other.

According to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,* indigenous people should be able to determine their own identity. In the *Sami Parliament Act*, a Sami is partly described as a person that identify as Sami, but who also has a Sami heritage. Jenny's story about her cousins confirms that it is not only the Sami heritage that matters for the Sami identity. To have indigenous rights, one must consider oneself as Sami. Sofia says that it is easier to call oneself a Sami today, compared to 50 years ago, as the political climate has eased for Sami people to some extent. Sofia thinks that there is room for different Sami identities, and she believes that one does not need to own reindeer, nor speak the language, to be Sami. She thinks that the reindeer is an important cultural carrier, but she says that everyone cannot be a part of reindeer herding. Instead, Sofia believes that the Sami identity is a way of thinking, a value of life and nature.

> I do not believe that you need connections to anything, I am not one of those people who thinks that one must speak a Sami language or have anything of the traditional things. I believe that one need to feel Sami, have it as one's identity and know about one's ancestors and where one comes from.

Carlson (2011) means that indigenous people often have a strong consensus about what it means to be indigenous. According to this point of view, indigenous people are supposed to know about their ancestors and heritage to confirm their identity. The quote shows the importance of knowing one's ancestors for the Sami identity according to Sofia. She does not believe that the cultural carriers are crucial. For me personally, my Sami ancestors have a great impact on the construction of my identity, since it gives me confirmation that I am Sami. This may be born out of the created stereotypical image of what a genuine Sami is, as I do not have the typical attributes of the Sami culture, I need my heritage to confirm my identity. My personal view differs from Jenny's belief. She means that being Sami is about what type of cultural carrier one is; doing duodji, speaking a Sami language or taking care of reindeer are all parts of oneself and something that creates a belonging to the Sami culture. Malin disagrees with this, believing that having reindeer does not make one a genuine Sami, as she argues that this is a belief created by the Swedish Government. Malin wonders what would happen if those who believe that the reindeer is the most important carrier for the Sami culture, would lose all the reindeer. She asks who they would be then; would they then no longer see themselves as Sami? Malin says that she thinks it is sad that people have their identity buried in the animal, rather than in themselves. Another view is Linnéa's, who believes that everything belongs together in the Sami culture. She says that one does not need to have reindeer, doing

duodji or be able to speak a Sami language, to be called Sami. Linnéa says that she understands that not all Sami people have been growing up with reindeer and a Sami language, as she has, and this does not make a person less Sami.

> One should help the ones who want to take back their heritage and identity, and not be the one that has opinions about who is entitled to a Sami heritage. Who decides that?

Linnéa continues by saying that even if she is certain about her Sami identity, she does not always reveal that she is Sami when she meets new people, as she first wants to know what they think about Sami people. Linnéa says that as a Sami, one needs to defend everything about the Sami culture. She describes that she always needs to give people knowledge about Sami people and that she does not always have the energy to explain her whole life and defending her culture. I recognise myself in Linnéa's story, finding myself in situations where I need to explain, not only my Sami identity and 'halfness', but also the Sami culture and the legal system that affects the Sami people. Malin describes that she started to think about her Sami identity even more after she was on a longer trip in Asia, where she learned about indigenous people living on that continent. Malin realised that she knew very little about Sami people and her own culture, and she almost did not tell people she was Sami because she could not answer their questions. After the trip, she moved to Norrbotten county to dig deeper into her Sami heritage. Elin, who is brought up within a Sami community, says that she had to learn about Sami history through education. This has given her flesh on the bones when she gets into discussions about Sami people. Jenny has the same perception and she says that as a Sami, one should know about rights and legal parts. If one does not have the knowledge about Sami people, the Sami identity is questioned by the society.

> As a Sami, one should now so much, and teach other. One should be pedagogical, well-read, talk the Sami language perfectly and having reindeer. It is unfair, the society has created all this demands on young Sami people.

A cultural identity could be seen as a common frame, containing cultural codes and a shared history. This 'truth' about the cultural identity affects the identity of the Sami people, both our own view on it, and also how the rest of the society acknowledge it. Having a political awareness becomes important, as the surrounding will judge one's Sami identity based upon the extent of knowledge about the Sami culture and the legal rights. This corresponds to a history of political struggle and colonisation. To be a genuine Sami, one needs to represent the Sami culture and maintain the cultural identity created for us, wearing the symbols that have become associated with the Sami culture. The stereotypical image of a Sami needs to be questioned, as people without knowledge about the political struggle that the Sami people have faced, have no understanding of the complex identity that is constructed like a path that twists and turns between what is considered to be Sami and the own perception of what the Sami identity is. Malin raises the question of what the genuine Sami is, criticising the image of a Sami as a reindeer herder, as she argues that this

is a belief created by the Swedish Government. I believe that these notions of the cultural identity of Sami people need be replaced with new valuable understandings which the Sami people can acknowledge. The stereotypical image of a Sami leads to simplifications, gathering all different Sami identities into one frame. As Linnéa puts it, a Sami needs to defend everything about the Sami culture. She also describes how she is adapting to the context in which she is, listening to people's opinion about Sami people before revealing her Sami identity.

4.3 Cultural Carriers

As the previous section tells, the perceptions of the Sami identity are sometimes connected to cultural carries. Cultural carriers are symbols that are important for a culture. A person who carry attributes or symbols could also be a cultural carrier. In the stories of the participants, I recognise three symbols that seem to be important as carriers of the Sami culture; duodji, the Sami languages and the reindeer. These carriers are presented below.

4.3.1 Duodji

One of the cultural carriers of the Sami culture is duodji, which is a tribute to the past as the tradition and knowledge is passing on from ancestors to future generation, reminding us of the ones before us. One important part of the duodji is the traditional clothing; kolt. Anna believes that the kolt is an important symbol for the Sami culture and she wants to be able to sew one by herself. Anna goes to courses to learn duodji, and she has noticed that there are only female participants in the courses. Several of these women are sewing traditional clothes to their men and sons, which Anna finds strange as she thinks that the men could attend to the course and sew a kolt by themselves. Anna believes that this has to do with women doing 'soft' craftwork, as sewing, while men creates knives for example. Anna says that many still live in stereotypical gender roles and that this could be born out of assimilation, which she believes created typical gender roles within the Sami community.

The kolt seems important as a cultural symbol. Harris, Carlson and Poata-Smith (2013) describe how indigenous people often use symbols, for example a necklace, to ensure that their indigenous identity is recognised by others. For me, the kolt has always been important for my Sami identity. My mother has sewn one for me, which makes it a symbol for the Sami culture, as well as a reminder of my Sami ancestry. Josefin says that she barely wears kolt and she only has it on occasions when it is required. She has been on traditional Sami events without wearing it. Josefin says that she has never seen her father wearing a kolt, and argues that the reindeer are the main focus in her family. Josefin believes that there are people who are 'more Sami' as they want to be seen and heard by the public. Josefin describes how these people always wear kolt when going to typical Sami events, without knowing anything about reindeer herding. She says that being Sami almost has become a trend and that people like the attention that it brings. For Sofia, the kolt is an obvious part of her

and she sew them on her own. She believes that the kolt, and which design and colour it has, is important for the heritage as it represent one's ancestry. For Sofia, with parents who come from different areas of Sápmi, wearing different kolts becomes a way to demonstrate that she has different cultural heritage. She describes how people sometimes questioning her heritage when she is wearing a kolt from one of the areas. Both Josefin and Sofia are part of reindeer herding, but the way they look at the kolt differs. Josefin believes that the reindeer herding is the main part in her Sami identity, while Sofia considers the kolt to be an important part for her Sami identity, demonstrating that she could wear different kolts due to her heritage.

Anna thinks that her mother's experiences of being a Sami, and the poor treatment that followed it as people bullied her for her heritage, have made her distance herself from the Sami culture. As a consequence, Anna feels that she must learn about her heritage on her own. Anna says that her mother has always been uncertain about her own identity and that she carries a feeling of not belonging anywhere. Anna says that her mother has a kolt hanging in her wardrobe that she rarely uses, since she says that it feels like wearing a costume. Anna remembers when her mother was ashamed of her when Anna was planning to wear kolt on an occasion they both should attend. Anna says that moments like this has made her even more insecure about her Sami identity. Anna says that her mother rarely support her exploring her Sami heritage, and she feels the need to distance herself from her mother's feelings.

> She cannot take the Sami heritage from me and decide not to make me a part of it. That is not her choice. She can take it away from herself, but not from me and the next generations.

Åhrén (2008) writes that the majority of the Sami people are living their lives without a constant display of the Sami culture for others to see and that their Sami identity is carried inside themselves. Harris, Carlson and Poata-Smith (2013) write that symbols can make the indigenous identity acknowledged by others. Duodji is a symbol for the Sami identity, both for the one that creates it, but also for the one that carries it. Duodji can be a way to express a Sami identity, and by wearing the kolt for example, one can wear a conscious part of the Sami identity.

4.3.2 The Sami Languages

As we have seen in the previous parts, the Sami languages have been brought up as an important part of the identity for some of the participants. Jenny says that the language is important for her identity and that she has put a lot of effort in keeping it, and she took courses in the language all her school years. Jenny believes that she could speak better in her youth. Today, she can talk fluently, but she has trouble writing in Sami. Jenny describes how many people fear to speak the Sami language, since there are people who tell them that they pronounce words wrong or that their grammar is incorrect. Jenny believes that a living language needs loanwords and new creations, and she says that it would be better if people actually spoke the language, regardless if the grammar or dialect were incorrect. Jenny says that there is an idea

that it is better to have been brought up with a Sami language, than to learn it as an adult. Linnéa speaks Sami language, as her parents, mostly her father, speaks it. She says that her father did not want them to learn the language from the beginning, but that they now use the language to talk to each other. Linnéa did not have the Sami language as her mother tongue, and she says that she must put in effort to maintain it, something that is hard as she hears and talks Swedish every day. She says that she got away her barrier to speak when she worked with Sami children, and she is no longer afraid to say anything wrong or grammatically incorrect. Linnéa believes that the Sami language is important for the Sami culture, as it contain words that can describe life in a way that the Swedish language cannot. Linnéa says that is important to support the ones who want to learn and take back the language. The father of Linnéa did not want her and her siblings to speak Sami language, but Elin says that her parents, mostly her mother, have been pushing her and her siblings to learn the Sami language and also be part of the reindeer herding. Due to the history of assimilation and segregation, many Sami were ashamed to speak the Sami languages, something that is still recognisable today.

Amanda does not speak nor understand Sami languages, and has little knowledge of the Sami history according to herself. Her father speaks the language as it is his mother tongue, but Amanda thinks that he was too lazy to teach her and her siblings when they grew up. Amanda continues by saying that her father was raised in a time when using the Sami language was considered shameful, and Amanda believes that her father thinks he spared his children from the same experience as he lived through. Amanda wishes that her father had taught her the Sami language, but she has begun to learn the language so that she can pass it on to her child, as she believes that would affirm the Sami culture. She describes how the learning takes a lot of effort, but the language is important for her.

Anna share the same view as Amanda, believing that the language is a key to the Sami culture. She says that she does not speak the Sami language, since her mother never spoke it, but Anna thinks that the language is a symbol, and that one is a more genuine Sami if one can speak it fluently. Anna talks about the childhood of her mother and how she never spoke Sami language at home, as her older siblings did not want her to experience the same victimisation as they did. Her mother understands Sami language, but always answer in Swedish. Anna believes that her mother has a barrier of speaking, as people are quick to judge her when the words are incorrect. As Carlson (2011) argues, indigenous people often uphold the community practices that the governments created in the past. *The Lap-should-be-Lap-policy* that the Swedish Government created, painted a picture of who the genuine Sami was. This image can still be found, as the Sami languages should be spoken correctly, otherwise one is not genuine. Here, the consequence of colonialism is clear.

Anna has started to learn the Sami language, but she has realised that she will never speak it as if it was her mother tongue. She is afraid that as she does not speak it fluently, she could never pass it on to the next generation. Anna describes how she feels like the only Swede at certain occasions, as she does not understand when others speak Sami language, which makes her feel alienated. This is something that

Josefin also has experienced. Josefin says that she wanted to go to a Sami upper secondary school, but when she visited the school, the teacher only spoke Sami language, even if Josefin said that she could not understand a single word. This made Josefin go to another school, since she felt excluded. No one in the family of Josefin have spoken the Sami language, but instead Finnish, which her father barely speaks. Josefin says that she wanted to learn Sami language in school, but it became a problem when she was not living in a Sami community. She believes that this has not affected her, since her family never spoke the language and therefore it is not a part of her heritage.

The Sami languages are valued similar by the participants, they are important for their identity and for the Sami culture. The ones that have been brought up with the language need to put effort into keeping it alive, while those who did not have the language want to take it back. The language becomes a symbol for the Sami culture, and it recognises the Sami identity. Who speak the Sami language are partly sprung from historical events, as the Sami people were badly treated for speaking it. Hall (1990) writes that 'identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past'. The cultural identity belongs to the future, as well as to the past. How the participants identify themselves in relation to the Sami language is partly found in the way they perceived the history. The marginalisation of their ancestors still echoes in the present.

4.3.3 The Reindeer

Another important cultural carrier is the reindeer. Linnéa thinks that the reindeer constitute a crucial part in the Sami culture, and she does not know what the culture would be without the reindeer and the Sami languages. She says that the duodji is important for maintaining traditions, and a great part of the used materials in duodji are taken from the reindeer. Josefin comes from a reindeer herding family; her father and grandfather were reindeer herders in a forest Sami village. Josefin says that she is not into family history, but the reindeer herding has always been important for her. Josefin believes that reindeer herding is a way of life and it plays a great role in her Sami identity. Contributing in the reindeer herding is necessary for her, and she says that her father expects that she is participating, even if he would never say it out loud. Josefin describes how her father always have been in the forest working and his focus was on the reindeer. The family's husbandry was depending on the reindeer. Josefin says that her sister never had the same feeling of responsibility for the reindeer as herself, but that it may be because she has always been in the forest with her father. Josefin says that she wants to learn as much as she can about reindeer herding, but that one need to be in the forest as often as one can; every day that one is away, one forgets. She says that one cannot study to become a better herder, one must learn through practice.

> I feel obligated to be in the forest and learn everything that I need for having reindeer; mark my calves and not feeling lost when we slaughter. […] I do not want to feel that all knowledge is slipping though my fingers, that I did not take the opportunity to learn while I still could.

Josefin describes how different groups of reindeer herders face different issues, as problems with different predators for example. The ones that are voting in the Sami Parliament election may not understand how important the contributions for predators are for the ones standing in the forest and looking on a dead calf. Josefin says that it is unfair that people who may never have seen a reindeer can vote on things that affects her father's everyday life. For Jenny, the reindeer is also important because it has been a part of her life since her childhood. She says that that the reindeer are important for her wellbeing and if she misses out on any event connected to the herding, she feels like half a person. Jenny describes how she has fought to be accepted in the Sami village, and by being accepted, her Sami identity has strengthened.

Anna thinks that the stereotype images of a Sami, as a reindeer herder, is not working in a modern society, as so few people have the opportunity to have reindeer herding as their livelihood. She continues by saying that it is unfair that there is a narrative that only the ones that do reindeer herding can be called Sami people, as this affects how Sami people outside Sami villages feel and identify themselves. Anna says that her ancestors have had some issues with their Sami village. The right to maintain their old cottage, placed on the land of reindeer herders, was questioned by the Sami village. Anna says that she has inherited the struggle of calling herself Sami, as her ancestors have been discriminated by their Sami village in the past. She says it is tiring to be discriminated from every direction.

Amanda, on the other hand, talks about reindeer mark, a necessity to own reindeer, and reflects on why she wants to have a mark of her own. She wonders if she wants to have it for a confirmation of her Sami identity from others in the village, or if she wants to have for her own sake. Amanda fears that if she does not have one on her own, she will not be considered to be a genuine Sami by others. Amanda wants her child to have a reindeer mark, but she fears that her Sami village will not approve a membership. Amanda criticises the fact that the Sami village can deny a person's heritage as it creates inequality. She says that she wants her child, and future generations, to be able to move freely in the fells and feel welcomed in the Sami village. She hopes that this will change if her child participates in important events and that this will make the child more welcome in the future. For Amanda, taking over the reindeer herding from her father was never an option. Instead, her brother is a reindeer herder. Amanda says that her father grew up with sisters, and as the only son in the family, the reindeer herding was his fate. Amanda says that she spent a lot of time with her father when he was with the reindeer, but when Amanda became a teenager, she stopped going with her father, and with time, she was parted from the reindeer herding community. She says that she wants to start participating in reindeer herding activities again, as it brings back memories from her childhood, but she fears that she would be in the way for the reindeer herders.

The *Reindeer Husbandry Act* gives a clear frame; reindeer herding can only be performed by members of a Sami village. The reindeer is often associated with the Sami people, and many of the participants affirm that the reindeer is important for their Sami identity, both as a symbol and to preserve their heritage. The reindeer affirms their Sami identity. The participants that do not have the reindeer near, are instead questioning why the reindeer is a great part of the Sami culture and why not everyone has the opportunity to have a reindeer mark and be members in a Sami village. The reindeer is a natural part in the lives of the participant who have a reindeer mark, and questioned by those who does not have a mark. Though the Sami people, as a marginalised group, are emerging from the same history of colonisation, they do not inevitably share one constant cultural identity. Again, the view on the culture carrier could be explained by looking at the history.

4.4 Being a Sami Woman

Reindeer herding is considered to be a male coded profession due to history and there are more men than women who perform the herding (Sametinget 2019b). Sofia dreams of becoming a full-time reindeer herder, but when she was younger, people said that she would not be able to be a reindeer herder because she is woman. Instead, they thought she should study. Sofia says that is hard to hear people comment that she should do something different, but that it gives her strength nowadays. Sofia continues by saying that she does not believe that women are as welcomed in the reindeer herding as men. She says that she knows women who want to be a part of the reindeer herding, but that they do not feel welcomed. Sofia says that the first time in the reindeer pasture can be hard, but in the end, everyone are colleagues independent on gender. Sofia wonders if things would be different if her brother was older than her, as she believes that he would have a greater space than her in the reindeer herding then. Today, both of them have equally much to say about the herding. Sofia believes that support from home is important. Her parents have always said that she can do as much as a man. She believes that not everyone has that support from home, and then it is harder to become a reindeer herder.

Linnéa says that there is an old perception in the world of reindeer herding; women should be at home, taking care of the children and the household, while men should take care of the reindeer. Women are told to choose another job than reindeer herding, as they are seen as weak. Linnéa says that she gets annoyed when older men tell her that she is too weak to be a reindeer herder, she knows that she is weaker than most men, which has led to her coming up with other solutions and new ways of thinking. She says that she chosen not to take part in the activities that are ‘left’ for women, such as vaccinate the reindeer in the pasture, as this would lead to her not learning about other activities. Jenny shares the same view; she believes that the reindeer herding is a male dominated profession and that is not simple to enter that world as a woman. Jenny believes that men are expected to have knowledge about

reindeer herding, even before they begin, while women are expected to know nothing. She continues by saying that she needed to prove herself in the beginning, but that people now know that she has the knowledge.

These stories paint a picture of women not being welcomed in the reindeer herding to the same extent as men. The reindeer herding is male coded, something that is constructed throughout the history. In the *Reindeer Grazing Act* from 1928, women lost their right to perform reindeer herding if marrying a man without it, whereas men could marry however he wanted. This created inequality. Butler (1999) writes that the 'truth' about sex creates norms and attributes that are coded as male or female. This led to certain practices considered to be gender related, like the reindeer herding. The participants describe how they perceive resistance to work with reindeer from others, due to their gender. Women are told to do something else with their lives rather than becoming reindeer herders. Mohanty (1984) writes how Western feminism exclude the complexity of women coming from cultures outside the West. The unwelcoming of women in reindeer herding is not only because of gender structures, it is also a colonial imprint. When encouraging a woman to never enter reindeer herding, it will also give her less access to important cultural carriers as the reindeer. Women and men are treated differently.

Elin describes how everyone in her family is active in the reindeer herding and that there is no difference of what is required between her or her brother. Her father is working full-time with reindeer herding and her mother has always been involved in the work. Elin says that other families seem to do it differently, as their structure is gender based, men in the family are taking all decisions that relate to the reindeer herding. Elin believes that her family works more equally as her mother did not became a member of a Sami village before she was an adult, which affected her view on the division of work. Even if the mother of Elin always says that everyone should work equally, Elin remembers that her father brought her brother to the reindeer more frequently than he took her and her sister. The sisters needed to ask their father to come. Today, Elin is often working with the reindeer, and she says that more and more women are being active in her Sami village.

Josefin says that if she was a man, the reindeer herding would have been inherited by her, but because of her gender, she will not become a herder. Josefin believes that she is not made for being a full-time reindeer herder, even if she wanted to, as she thinks that she is too weak to be in the forest all day. She says that her grandfather once told her father that it is a shame that he only got daughters. Josefin does not believe that he meant any harm by the saying, as he is very proud of her being with the reindeer. Her grandfather is from another time when women were not supposed to be reindeer herders. The grandfather of Josefin is honestly concerned that no one will take over the reindeer herding after her father. Even if Josefin is often in the forest with the reindeer, she says that she always needs to prove herself since she is a woman, and that one cannot afford to fail in a male-dominated world. This could also facilitate for her, as she always gets helped by other as she is considered weak when being a woman. Inheriting the reindeer herding as a man is recurrent in the stories of the participants. The father of Amanda inherited the role of being a reindeer

herder from his father as he was the only son in the family. Amanda describes how her aunts do not have the rights to be in the fell that they grew up in, since they never became reindeer herders and therefore do not have any legal rights. Being a reindeer herder as a woman is hard according to Amanda, and she has heard stories about how her Sami village had to create new rules, as not being drunk in the pasture for example, when more women become members in the village. She believes that people in the Sami village need to think more about the way they speak and their manners when women are present.

Crenshaw (1989) writes about the marginalisation of being a minority and a woman, as the dominant discourses often focus on one factor for alienation at the time. Crenshaw means the debate must raise both issues together, not leaving one behind. As a Sami woman dreaming of becoming a reindeer herder, one will not just face the difficulties of being a reindeer herder, but also the difficulty being a minority within the minority. Some of the participants have been told that they could not become a herder since they were children, portraying the genuine reindeer herder as a man. Josefin says that she could not become a reindeer herder due to her weakness, but she also describes how her grandfather told her father that none of his daughters will inherit the reindeer herding. Amanda explains that her father did not have any choice but to inherit the reindeer herding, the burden of being the only son in the family.

Josefin says that she does not know how the lives of Sami women looked forty years ago, but she believes that they were oppressed to a greater extent, and that the Sami community is more equal now than it was then. Elin believes that women are less able to call themselves reindeer herders than men. She describes how she has noticed that men present themselves as reindeer herders even if they work full-time with something else, a phrase that she never heard a woman say. Elin believes that this is a consequence of colonisation as the Swedish Government has created a stereotype of a reindeer herder, portrayed as a man on a snow mobile, driving on the fell with dogs and reindeer in front of him. Elin says that the idea of men performing reindeer herding belongs to the past. But the stereotype has led to women having less space to call themselves reindeer herders, even when they are working to the same extent as men. Elin says that people get provoked if she says that she is a reindeer herder, as she has another job. Elin thinks that it would be interesting to research on how many in her Sami village are considering themselves herders.

> You get stigmatised as a woman, you are a burden, no matter how good you are at driving a snow mobile or how well you know the lands.

When reading the quote above, my thoughts go to Crenshaw's (1989; 1991) view on intersectionality once again. Sami women are not only seen as weak and unfitted for reindeer herding, they are also considered to be a burden for men. Because of their gender, and the gender structures within the reindeer herding community, men are expected to inherit the herding role within the family. This could be connected to the *Reindeer Grazing Act* from 1928, as the right to perform reindeer herding was transferred within the Sami male line. A woman who married a man without a Sami her-

itage lost her right. Reindeer herding men were benefitted. In the *Reindeer Husbandry Act* from 1971, Sami woman should instead be subordinate to her father or her husband according to Amft (2000). The perception of the Sami identity becomes a perception of gender, evolved from historical laws. The participants share stories about the constant struggle when they need to prove themselves within the reindeer herding.

But it is not only women who are facing difficulties to enter the world of reindeer herding, due to the gender structures. Linnéa believes that men also have a hard time getting into the reindeer herding as they have a lot of pressure that women do not have. She says that people in the Sami village will comment on men if they do not have the strength or the knowledge about reindeer from the beginning. Linnéa believes that too harsh comments will scare young people away from the reindeer herding, and if they take a pause for a while, people will say that they have lost too much knowledge to come back. All pressure creates mental illness amongst Sami people, according to Linnéa, who says that many people find it easier to move away from the Sami community, even if they leave their heritage behind. Malin also believes that men suffer from the macho culture in the reindeer herding, as they believe that they need to prove themselves for each other. She believes that men could make it easier for themselves if they were willing to learn, rather than believe that they already have all the knowledge. Elin believes that the reindeer herding is very old-fashioned and that the development is slow, as women are treated different than men. Unfortunately, the young men that are growing up today have the same view as the old men according to Elin, who gives an example on how men often call their young relatives who are boys, rather than the girls, when help is needed with the reindeer. The men are taught that they should pass their knowledge of reindeer herding to boys. Jenny does not believe that the reindeer herding will change, as there are so few female herders today. She continues by saying that the system of the reindeer herding must change, due to climate change that will decrease the reindeer lands. Sofia, in the other hand, believes that a change is coming, slowly but surely.

4.5 Passing on the Sami Heritage

In the stories told by the participants, a shared narrative about the importance of passing the Sami heritage is found. Amanda describes how she begun to think more of her Sami heritage when she gave birth to her child, as she wants her heritage to pass on to the next generation. Amanda is certain that she will raise her child as a Sami and that she never will deny the Sami heritage. Amanda is thinking about putting her child in a Sami preschool, so that the child will be in a distinct Sami context and therefore reduce the risk of getting the Sami identity questioned. She continues by saying that she never wants her child to experience the same shamefulness of being a Sami as she did when she was younger when her father was reindeer herder.

> I want to pass the Sami heritage to the next generation, because it is my father's heritage, but even more because it is a part of me.

I recognise my own feelings about the Sami heritage in Amanda's story. I do not have access to all the cultural carriers mentioned in previous chapters, just like Amanda has not. The cultural carriers seem to be more important to pass on to the next generation, almost creating a feeling that the Sami heritage is a constraint. Anna says that her Sami heritage is important, because without it, she would feel half. In Anna's story, the 'halfness' alludes to her heritage, while in the stories of the other participants the feeling of 'halfness' is about missing important Sami events, which, by extension, refers to guarding their heritage. Some participants describe how the absence of Sami events make them feel half, missing a part of themselves.

Anna sees her Sami heritage as a responsibility; it needs to be passed on to the next generation. She describes how she wants the next generation to feel confident about their Sami identities and never question it the way she has done all her life. She believes that this could be done by dressing her possible child in typical Sami symbols, like a Sami hat or kolt on school photos, or going to a Sami preschool. At the same time does Anna wonder if her children would be bullied for being too Swedish in a Sami preschool. She says that the next generation should be able to create their own identity; being both Sami and Swedish at the same time.

> My ancestors have walked on this land for generations, it is important to preserve it for forthcoming generations. I do not want the Sami heritage to die with me, my choices affect all forthcoming generations. If I chose to take distance from my heritage, then it is gone forever.

Elin says that for her, it is not a necessary to have her possible children in a Sami preschool, as the cultural context comes naturally when they live in a Sami community. She says that she wants her children to have a pleasant childhood, regardless of which school they attend. Elin means that her children will have Sami language as their mother tongue as both her and her partner speak it. Linnéa also wants her possible children to have the Sami language as their mother tongue, and she says that she needs to put an effort to maintain the Sami culture for them. She does not want her possible children to feel the need to search for their Sami heritage when they become older, just because she has been too lazy to maintain it. Jenny says that she started to reflect on what she believed was important to bring to the next generation when her friends begun to have children. Jenny says that she wants to pass on the Sami language if she gets children, as she believes that speaking the language gives a strength to the Sami identity. She says that she wants to give her possible children a part of herself and her heritage, and give them the best prerequisites to take part in the Sami society. As a minority, she believes that is even more important. Jenny continues by saying that she heard a section on the radio once, where a 11-year-old girl said that she wanted to learn a Sami language so she could pass it on to her children in the future. Jenny thinks that the responsibility of maintaining the Sami culture lies too heavy on young people.

Again, the cultural carriers seem important when passing on the Sami heritage to the next generation. All participants carry their own heritage, but some parts of their heritage are shared within the group of Sami people. Symbols for the Sami culture

become important to maintain, to confirm the Sami identity, as the participants agree that they do not want the next generation to be left with fragmented identities. Not all participants have a strong connection to the cultural carriers, as they were stolen from their ancestors in the past, but the carriers are still important today. Lowenthal (1998) writes that heritage and history are different viewpoints of the same past, and the *whole* of history becomes heritage. This means that the same history could be perceived differently, creating different heritage. The history, and all that it contains with stories and perceptions, becomes one's heritage. The history of the participants is the same; the Sami people have been marginalised through time, and these happenings, we inherit from the past. The Sami heritage creates a wall between us and them, distinguishing the Sami people from the majority, creating an even greater idea of responsibility for us to pass it on to future generations. Even if we, as Sami people, do not share the same identity nor the same view on the Sami culture, we share a cultural identity in the eyes of the majority society. This shared cultural identity shall live onward, remembering the heritage of our ancestors. Linnéa says that she often thinks of passing the Sami culture to the next generation, and she believes the she would feel empty if she did not pass her heritage. Linnéa thinks that one can be taught by one's own childhood, and chose what to pass to next generation and what to make different than her parents. She says that one cannot judge the past generations too harshly, as they have their explanations why they chose not to pass everything they knew.

> One need to uphold the culture to be able to pass it on to the next generation. One need to have the knowledge about the lands, the migratory routes and be able to tell these stories for generations to come.

Josefin says that she wants her heritage to pass on to the next generation, since it is a Sami heritage, but mainly because it is her own heritage. Josefin says that if she gets children, she wants them to have the basic knowledge about the Sami culture that she got. They should to be able to be in the forest and mark their own reindeer. Josefin believes that her possible children should be able to go to which school they like, and that they do not need to go to a Sami preschool nor learning the Sami languages; they should be able to carry a Sami identity anyway. Malin says that she thinks a lot about how she can pass the Sami culture to her child, as they are not living in a Sami community. She wants her child to have a Sami upbringing to the extent that is possible, but Malin fears that it will be hard. She says that she wants her child to have a place and feel confident in the Sami culture, so the child can choose to have a part of the Sami culture. Nothing is eternal, the Sami culture will, and must, change through time and by generations. This affects the Sami heritage, which is always changeable, adapting to the time and consumed to fit the needs of today. The heritage makes us who we are. I believe that we need the past, and we need to preserve the present, to give meaning to the future. We cannot escape our past, as the history has its eyes on us, still present in the issues that Sami people face today. We save the things that we believe are important parts of our own Sami identity, to give to those not old enough to create their own view.

4.6 Perceptions of the Girjas Case

When I was talking to the participants, the Girjas case was brought up, since the court decision was recently taken at the time when the interviews took part. The court decision gives hunting and fishing rights to the members of the Girjas Sami village and discussions about the Sami identity and different groups have followed. For Amanda, the outcome of the case has left her with divided feelings. She says that the case is great for the Sami people as a whole, but for her personally, it is not advantageous as she is not a member of a Sami village. Amanda says that as a Sami, one should have similar rights independent of whether one has reindeer or not. Her brother is a reindeer herder and has therefore legal rights, and Amanda says that her father is as much a father to her, as he is to her brother. She continues by saying how upsets she gets when she hears stories of killed reindeer, and Amanda believes that the hatred against Sami people mainly affects reindeer herders. The hatred has also affected her Sami identity, making it more displayed. After the Girjas case, Amanda was very clear about her Sami heritage and dressed her child in a typical Sami hat when going in to town, not ashamed over her heritage.

> You are never as Sami as when you are facing hatred against us as a group. That is the moment when I am most patriotic.

When Amanda describes how the hatred against Sami people affects reindeer herders, she confirms how the genuine Sami is portrayed; the public sees Sami people as reindeer herders only. Hall (1990) writes that the 'truth' of a cultural identity, which people in the shared culture must discover and express, becomes a conception in the post-colonial world as it has developed to be a representation of marginalised people. Amanda describes how she is patriotic and that her Sami identity has become even more important to display in the society after the court settlement. At the same time, Amanda believes that she should have as much legal rights as a reindeer herder. Hall (1990) argues that a cultural identity could be seen as a shared culture when the identity becomes merged with people that share the same ancestry and history. For Amanda, the cultural identity is affected by the Girjas case; becoming both shared, by defending the Sami people as a group; and individual, as she compares her Sami identity against the reindeer herder group.

Jenny believes that the Girjas case is one step in right direction for increasing the rights of Sami people, as the court settlement proves that these rights exist. After the case, and the hatred that followed it, Jenny says that she has not been comfortable wearing her Sami hat in town. She says that she does not feel threatened, but that one never knows who one meets on the street. Jenny believes that the Swedish Government has created a system were only reindeer herders have legal support, and that the laws are not as strong for all Sami people. Jenny says that the laws must change to protect all Sami people, and not just the reindeer herders. Jenny believes that the Swedish Government are not interested in solving the infected situation that they have created. Sofia thinks that it is good that people are talking about the hatred that Sami people have faced after the Girjas case, and hope that this can lead to a change. Sofia sees the Girjas case as a victory for all Sami people; if one Sami wins, everyone

wins. She continues by saying that the Girjas Sami village getting authority over the lands is one step closer to self-determination for Sami people. Sofia argues that is easier to give the rights to a Sami village than to a Sami group, as it is harder to prove which group have been on the land historically. Sofia believes that the Sami village has a great knowledge of who has the right to be on the lands and that everything will fall into place with time. She says that there is a lot of conflicts about rights within the Sami community, but that this is based upon a deeper conflict, born in the history of marginalisation. Sofia believes that the Swedish Government should take action, it is not enough to write a convention of truth and then leave the consequences to the local people according to her.

Hall (1990:225) writes that 'identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past'. Both Jenny and Sofia believe that the Swedish Government must take action for solving the conflicts and the infected situations that one sees today. They believed that the court settlement is a step in the right direction to increase the rights of Sami people. The policies made in the past are reminded when reindeer herders are being benefitteded once again; the group have more rights than other Sami groups after the settlement of the Girjas case. The legal rights are not as strong for all Sami people, but as Sofia puts it; if one Sami wins, everyone wins.

It is hard to draw a line of which Sami group should have legal rights according to Anna, as she believes that the ones that have knowledge about the lands, also should have the authority. Anna believes that Girjas is about ILO 169[11]. She is afraid that if ILO 169 was ratified, Sami people outside the reindeer herding would have no legal rights. She continues by saying that the Swedish Government has created a categorisation within the Sami community, where the reindeer herders are 'genuine Sami' and everyone else is not enough. Anna thinks that you can see different Sami groups by looking at the Sami Parliament, where there are disagreements between different political parties, which demonstrate that the situation is not equal between Sami people. Anna says that she does not want to either fish or hunt, but she thinks that it is important to talk about to who the legal rights are given. Anna says that her uncle took over the reindeer herding after her grandfather, and that it would be hard for her being a herder if she wanted to, as the reindeer mark will be inherited by the children of her uncle. Anna says that she sometimes wishes that she could be a reindeer herder, but she believes that the ship has already sailed as she was brought up outside a Sami community. She believes that one needs knowledge about the reindeer herding from childhood to have a way into herding, and that the Sami village which her family belongs to would not let her become a member on these premises. Anna says that she knows a woman who got married to a male reindeer herder and suddenly became a more genuine Sami. She thinks that it is strange that one can marry into the traditional husbandry and become Sami, she believes it would be harder for a man to marry a Sami woman and have the same experience. This shows that the remains of the *Reindeer Grazing Act* from 1928 still exist. Women lost their right

[11] ILO 169 is about acknowledge and respect land rights for tribal and indigenous people, inter alia (International Labour Organization 1989).

to perform reindeer herding if she married a man without it, while men could marry whoever he wanted.

Malin believes that taking the Girjas case to court was good as it gives a clear explanation of how the laws should be understood. Malin says that the case does not affect her personally, as she is not a reindeer herder, but that the Sami culture is not about being selfish. Malin says that as long as different Sami groups are set against each other, they are not united against the Swedish Government. Josefin also says that the Girjas case has not affected her personally, and that the hatred against Sami people following the case is nothing new. Josefin says that she sometimes feels that she is living in a lawless country when she sees how people are hurting reindeer without legal consequences. She does not understand what will change, now that the Girjas Sami village writing licences instead of the County Administrative Board.

Linnéa believes that the Swedish Government are experts on turning Sami people against Swedish people, and she gives the Girjas case as an example. She says that even if the Sami village won, they faced a lot of threats and hate afterwards. Linnéa is disappointed at the Swedish Government for just leaving the case without telling the public about the historical events that have led to this case. Linnéa is glad that the Girjas Sami village won the case and she never thought it would be possible that they would get authority over their land and water. She says that she gets scared when she sees that different local groups are set against each other, living in the same municipality. Linnéa says that she is not surprised by it, as she knows that the hatred against Sami people exists.

> The Swedish Government is just an audience, sitting there, waiting for the war to take place while doing nothing.

Elin says that she has an understanding of why people are angry after the Girjas case. She believes that many local inhabitants in Gällivare Municipality work in the mine and with the money they earn, they buy a snow mobile to drive in the fells. Elin says that these people live in their own world, without thinking about the wider image of the situation and what the case decision means to the Sami people. Elin says that nobody cares about the northern part of Sweden, and that people living outside Norrbotten county wonder how the racial treatment toward the Sami people can continue without consequences. Elin is disappointed at the Swedish Government as she believes that they do not take responsibility for their actions historically.

The Girjas case has become a fuel to the flames in the debate about the rights of indigenous people. The shared narrative of the participants contains thoughts about the failure of the Swedish Government and the participants believe that the Swedish Government has abandoned them as a people once again. None of the participants are surprised by the hatred towards Sami people which have occurred after the Girjas case, painting a picture of the hatred being something common. The hatred is against the Sami people as a group, but affects mostly reindeer herders. All of the participants agree with the decision, regardless of their position. Some of them saying that the Girjas case is not advantageous for them because they are not reindeer herders.

Furthermore, reindeer herders are mostly men, leaving less women having rights. Looking at the outcome of the Girjas case in this way, the legal rights will accrue to one gender, as the main part of the reindeer herders are men. The Girjas case was an opportunity for the Swedish Government to break the path of historical colonisation and alienation, which the participants believe has not occurred.

5 Conclusion

This thesis demonstrate that the Sami identity is complex and heterogeneous. In a modern society, the multifaceted identity should be taken into account to create an understanding of different Sami groups. The stories of the participants show that their different Sami identities are clashing with the created stereotypical image of who the genuine Sami is, leading them to either recognise themselves in the image, oppose it or creating a feeling of 'halfness'. This 'halfness' is not about blood quantum, but rather about the prerequisites to exercise the given frame of the Sami culture. This 'halfness' can be seen in other indigenous groups as well. By using the concept of cultural identity, I have gained an understanding that the Sami identity is not one shared cultural identity, but rather many identities that share the same culture. For Sami people, cultural carriers, as the reindeer, the Sami languages and duodji, can become a way to confirm and create a Sami identity. The cultural carriers are symbols, that can ensure that the indigenous identity is recognised by others. How young Sami women construct their indigenous identity differs depending on who one asks, which, once again, show how the Sami identity is not one shared cultural identity.

There are many secrets to decode about the history of Sami people, and a beginning is to rise the issues of today. By using the concept of heritage, I demonstrates that even if Sami people share the same history, we perceive it differently; creating our own heritage, which in turn affects our Sami identity. The stories of the participants in this thesis carry different views on the past and how historical policies have affected them. The Swedish Government's view on Sami people and their culture has changed through the history; going from being considered as a culture, to a race, to a husbandry. These views have all been categorising Sami people into different groups with no room for complexity, making them either Sami or non-Sami in the eyes of the main society. This categorisation is ever present as the participants tell stories of how the stereotypical picture of a Sami is a reindeer herding man, sitting on a snow mobile and gazing out over the fells. Women facing opposition when being reindeer herders as they are considered to be weak and unfitted for the hard work. Instead, they are encouraged to choose a different lifestyle. When looking at this categorisation with the concept of gender, and especially intersectionality, I understand that being a Sami women cannot only be seen through the perspective of

gender. The situation of young Sami women must be understood through many layers as the historical policies shaped the gender structures that one can see in the Sami community today.

Historical policies have also made different Sami groups have different legal support. The settlement of the Girjas case benefits members of a Sami village and does not take other Sami groups into account. Despite that, the Girjas case has strengthened the Sami people as a group against the surroundings according to the participants in this thesis. When looking at the case through the concept of identity, I understand that the Girjas has strengthened the Sami identity as a shared cultural identity, which is expressed through the battle against the Swedish Government. It becomes a Sami fellowship, united against the Swedish Government, regardless of their background or Sami identity. After the different groups have united, they are divided once again when questions about who gets legal rights are raised. This shows that the act of restitution from the Swedish Government is significant for the participants in this thesis. The Girjas case will point out the direction for similar legal cases henceforward. As the case benefits a particular Sami group, a greater polarisation within the Sami community could be crated. This polarisation could be about memberships of Sami villages, as well as gender and legal rights.

In today's legal system, some Sami groups are benefitted, as a consequence of historical events. History still has its eyes on us. A first step to break this path of marginalisation is to change the tune of the stereotypical Sami, creating a general understanding of the maze that the Sami identity is. The Sami identity is both complex and variable. When a general knowledge about Sami people is fortified, I believe that further research should dig deeper into the diversity of the Sami people and how this can be reflected in the Swedish legal system to prevent further polarisation within the Sami community in cases as Girjas. Because of the legal system of today, only some Sami groups are premiered, and there is no place for different Sami identities. I also believe that research about gender structures in the Sami community is important to continue to sort out, rising the situation of being a Sami and a woman, a minority in the minority. The Sami women of this thesis paint a picture of the issues they face as women, but I believe that this has just roughen the surface.

6 At the End of the Road

As I write these final words, I have come to an agreement with myself; the time for questioning my own Sami identity has passed. The Sami identity is complex, as all identities might be, and it has no clear frames. The way one look at the Sami identity is born out of heritage, conceptions and the history that has shaped the present.

So here I am, trying to tie up loose ends. This has been a journey full of knowledge, experiences and emotions. Everything I thought I knew about the Sami identity has got a turn, since I realised that every person carries their own perception of what the Sami identity consists. The one thing that we all have in common, me and the participants in this thesis, is the importance of passing on the Sami heritage. The participants that have become mothers have their own way of giving their children a Sami upbringing and maintaining the Sami culture close. But even for those who do not yet have any, the thoughts of a Sami upbringing for any possible children seems ever present. We share a narrative of the importance of passing on our Sami heritage, never leaving the future generation with the same fragmented Sami identity that some of us have experienced due to historical events. This generation wants a change to come; creating an easier path for future generations to call themselves Sami and bringing light to the complexity of having one shared cultural identity, created by the Swedish Government. This brings my thoughts to springtime last year, living in Scotland and listing to the Broadway musical Hamilton, where the American composer and lyricist Lin-Manuel Miranda (2015) ask himself:

> Legacy. What is a legacy?
> It's planting seeds in a garden you never get to see.

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Appendix 1

What does it mean to be Sami for you?

What is important for your Sami identity?

Looking back at your childhood, what place has the Sami culture had?

Who has been important in your life and for your identity?

Are your ancestors and their stories important for you today?

Has your identity changed through the years?

How do you believe other perceive your Sami identity?

What role has the typical culture carries (duodji, the reindeer, the Sami language) for your identity-making?

Do you think there is a stereotype of what a Sami is?

Do you believe that there is an idea of who is a ‘genuine’ Sami?

What do you think about the Girjas case?

Are you a member of a Sami village? How has it affected you?

Do you think the Swedish Government has influenced who calls themselves Sami today? Has it affected your identity?