LUND UNIVERSITY

Looking for Sápmi

Navigating representations of Sámi history and Sámi culture in Southern Sweden

Laurine Palomba
Social Anthropology: Master's (Two Years) Thesis – SANM03
Spring Semester 2023
Department of Sociology, Division of Social Anthropology,
Lund University
Supervisor: Nina Gren

Abstract

In Skåne, Southern region of Sweden, where the idea that no Sámis live in the area is largely spread across the Swedish population, the few Sámis living there find themselves navigating their ethnic identity, between performativity, agency, and making use of the policies implemented at a national level. In a context of ongoing decolonisation of the Sámis and their lands, official institutions such as public libraries and museums, following the laws and regulations they are subjected to, are working towards an evolution of their structure, their actions, and a wider inclusion of Sámi people in their institutions.

Keywords: Sámi people, Sweden, official institutions, representation, social anthropology

Acknowledgements

I want to thank all the librarians I met around Skåne, who took the time to answer my questions and to reflect on a topic they weren't expecting in the first place, to the curators and producers, as well as my friends, who agreed to take part in this study, sharing with me some parts of their life, of their work, and their perspective on my research questions, and all the members of the association Samer i Syd I met along the way, who welcomed me, taught me a lot and took the time to answer all my questions, even the ones that sounded silly. A special thanks, *tack så mycket*, *gijtto*, to the impressive woman mentioned in this thesis under the name Majbritt[1], for giving me so much of your time, your kindness, your knowledge, and your patience in front of my language skills. I hope this thesis will do justice to your words, and that you will enjoy this reading.

[1] All people named in this paper have been anonymised.

Table of contents

Preface

A small yellow house with green window frames at the back of the open-air museum Kulturen, at the heart of Lund, Southern Sweden. Music from contemporary Sámi artists fills up the room while the visitor passes through the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi". Among Sámi artefacts, from clothes to everyday utensils, and history texts, the visitor stops in front of a black and white picture titled "The Mårtensson family at the Paris World Fair, 1889". In the picture, the entire Mårtensson family, men and women, parents and children, are gathered under a tree in the *Champ de Mars*, at the feet of the Eiffel Tower, a Sámi *goathi* in the background. On the right of the picture, under the portrait of Mårten Mårtensson, a small Sámi sledge, designed as a children's toy, is kept under a glass box, acquired from the Mårtensson family by the founder of Kulturen in 1889, when they were travelling through Lund to reach Paris.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

In 1889, the family Mårtensson, a Sámi family from Northern Sweden, travelled across the country to go to Paris and be part of the world exposition. On their way, they stopped in Lund, in Southern Sweden, and sold some of their belongings to a man called Georg Karlin, who was later to found the open-air museum Kulturen, located in Lund. It seems that some Sámis had at least travelled through Southern Sweden. However, when asking archivists about documents related to Sámi people who lived or travelled in Southern Sweden, the common answer was that "there are no Sámis in the South". Beyond the archives, I kept hearing this response in many places I visited during the fieldwork on which this paper is based; in public libraries displaying books in Sámi languages, in museums displaying exhibitions about the Sámis, their history and culture, but also in my everyday life. Most of the time when I was explaining what I was writing about, I was met with surprise on the face of my Swedish interlocutors.

Going further with this fieldwork, I slowly realised that there are Sámis living in Skåne, the Southern region of Sweden. Some of them are living in Lund, studying at the university. Some of them are people I know but didn't realise they were Sámi before talking with them about this research project. Some of them lived in Skåne for decades, and created an association for Sámi people, *sameförening*. After noticing that, it was impossible to accept the presupposed idea of the absence of Sámis in Southern Sweden as an explanation for their lack of visibility in the public sphere.

Moreover, a paradox started to emerge, between this assumed absence and the presence of representations of Sámi culture in official Swedish institutions, through exhibitions in museums or the presence of books in Sámi languages in public libraries. If no Sámis are living in Southern Sweden, why are public libraries providing books in Sámi languages on their premises? If Swedish people living in Skåne don't have much knowledge about Sámi history and culture, how are exhibitions about this topic created?

In Sweden, the inclusion of Sámi people is supervised by several laws and regulations. The first of them is the *Lag (2009:724) om nationella minoriteter och minoritetsspråk* (Act on National Minorities and Minority Languages (2009:724). At the beginning of the Act, section 2, the Sámis are categorised as a national minority in Sweden, together with four other minorities: Jews, Roma, Swedish Finns, and Tornedalians. Under section 4 it is written that the national minorities' languages should be protected and promoted, that people from a national minority should be able to maintain and develop their own culture, and that the cultural identity

and use of the language for children from a national minority should be prioritised. Then section 6 determines the different administrative areas for three of these national minorities' languages, respectively Finnish, Meänkieli (i.e. the language spoken by Tornedalians), and Sámi. Following this delimitation, the Act mandates the administrative institutions, courts, educational structure, and elderly care structure to provide service in those three languages if requested. The same applies to administrative areas outside of this delimitation, if one of the employees can speak any of those languages. Moreover, the Swedish government adopted a law specifically addressing libraries, both public and school libraries, called *Bibliotekslag*. This Library Act writes under section 5 that every library should give particular attention to providing books and literature in the five national minorities' languages, together with other languages than Swedish and literature in "easy-to-read" Swedish, for people from the five national minorities and people whose mother tongue isn't Swedish. This can be interpreted as a recommendation that every public library across Sweden should own some books in the national minority languages, including Sámi. Both the Act on National Minorities and Minority Languages and the Library Law are influencing the ways institutions such as public libraries and museums are representing and including Sámi people.

The purpose of this paper is to explore how these official Swedish institutions located in Southern Sweden, primarily public libraries and museums, under the guidance of these laws and regulations, are working to provide a representation of the Sámis, and how these efforts and discourses are being perceived by Sámis living in Skåne themselves. Through this thesis, I will reflect on the question of how Swedes and Sámis are navigating the representations and visibility of Sámi history and culture in Skåne, Southern Sweden, through practices of public libraries and museums.

This thesis will be divided into seven chapters. After this introductory chapter, the next chapter will provide more information about the historical context of Sámi people. Then, in the third chapter, an overview of previous research projects that will be of use for this thesis will first be presented, with a focus on articles, books, and essays discussing the notion of decolonisation, which will be central in the analysis, and on theories that will be applied to the specific case of Sámis in Southern Sweden. Afterwards, the methodology of the ethnographic fieldwork on which this thesis is based will be presented in the fourth chapter. When entering the analysis, which will be divided into three chapters I will reflect on the context in which Sámis are living and institutions are working, with a focus on the experiences of some Sámis living in Skåne, the mission of the official institutions mentioned above, and the Swedish

national context influencing the discourses about Sámi people, their history and culture, in the fifth chapter of this paper. Then, in the sixth chapter, I will examine how the laws and regulations mentioned above, applied to these official institutions, are meeting the reality and the needs of Sámis living in Skåne. Finally, I will discuss the ongoing changes happening in these official institutions, on several levels, and how they influence the ways Sámi people are being represented and made visible in Skåne, in the seventh chapter, before concluding this thesis.

Chapter 2 – The historical context of Sámi people

The Sámi history starts some 9000 years ago[2] when almost all of Scandinavia has been freed from ice and people started to move around and began a nomadic lifestyle, following resources that could be extracted from hunting and fishing. With this lifestyle, people didn't leave that many marks behind them, both for better and for worse (*både på gott och ont*) as the *sameförening* underlines in the exhibition. Nevertheless, some foreigners, either intellectuals or politicians, started to relate their encounters with those nomadic people living in Northern Europe, believed to be the ancestors of the Sámis. For instance, in the year 98 A.D., Tacitus, Roman historian and politician, wrote in his book *Germania* the first source about hunter people living in Northern Scandinavia, by describing the Fenni people. His description was quite similar to the one made by Procopius, historian from the Byzantine Empire, in 555. At the end of the year 800, the Nordic explorer Ottar, during one of his expeditions departing from current Norway, met Sámi people and told what he learned, about their culture but more importantly about these valuable reindeers that they domesticated throughout time. Contacts between Sámis and other people continued for many centuries, along with diverse exchanges of goods, knowledge, and ideas.

In 1886, the first law on reindeer pasture was adopted in Sweden, and together with it numerous changes occurred. With the supervision of reindeer pastures at a national level, by the government, rights to tame and nurse reindeers strongly deteriorated, and with them the living and working conditions of Sámi people did too. But the discrimination didn't go unanswered, and Sámi communities across Northern Europe started to organise to defend their rights. For instance, on February 6th 1917, in Trondheim, Norway, took place the first Sámi national meeting (*samiska landsmötet*), at the initiative of Elsa Laula. Nowadays, February 6th is celebrated as Sámi national day. This first Sámi national meeting was followed by many more, that are still happening nowadays, and various other initiatives came into existence after that. During the Nordic Sámi conference (*Nordiska samekonferensen*) of 1986 in Åre, Sweden, several important decisions were made regarding the Sámi people and their unity. For example,

[2] During my fieldwork, I was invited by Samer i Syd, an association for Sámi people, *sameföreningen*, based in Southern Sweden to visit an exhibition taking place at Dunkers Kulturhus, a museum in Helsingborg, and presenting both the history and culture of Sámi people and the history and culture of the Mapuche people, one of the indigenous people living in Chile, South America. In this exhibition, the *sameförening* created several signs introducing some general information about Sámi history. I decided to use their texts and their words in this introduction, as I consider that they are the most capable of telling their history, with a perspective centred on them and not on the way other people view their history.

decisions were made on a unique flag for the Sámi people, as well as a date for a national day, February 6th, and a national song, "Sámi soga lávlla".

Nowadays, according to the definition of *Samer*, the Swedish term for Sámis, that can be found in the *Nationalencyklopedin*, around 36000 Sámis live in Sweden, against 60000 in Norway, 10000 in Finland and 2000 in Russia (Thomasson & Sköld 2017). In Sweden, most Sámis nowadays live in the North, in their land, called Sápmi. This doesn't mean that all Sámis live in Northern Sweden, as many moved around Sweden, and some decided to settle in Southern Sweden, as will be discussed later in this paper. The Sámis are the only indigenous people in Europe, and most of them have a nomadic lifestyle, living from reindeer herding, or hunting and fishing. Nowadays, many Sámis don't live from these traditional activities anymore, for example live from tourism or mining, for the ones who live in Northern Sweden, or from other activities, in the case of the ones who moved from Sápmi.

Over centuries, Sámi people have faced discrimination and oppression. After the earliest contact between them and other people living in Northern Europe, the nation-states of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia engaged in a process of colonisation of Sápmi, the land of Sámi people. This colonisation was both physical, claiming parts of the land to exploit its resources, for example for mining activities, and social. The four nation-states began to evangelise Sámi people, to create boarding schools for Sámis, to forbid the use of Sámi languages, of Sámi traditional clothing, to regulate their activities of subsistence such as reindeer herding, in a process to assimilate Sámis to the nation-state's society (McGuire 2022).

Nowadays, Sámi people are still facing some of these issues. While the evangelisation stopped and boarding schools have been shut, they are still fighting for their rights: rights to the land, rights to practice reindeer herding in appropriate conditions, and fighting against the discrimination resulting from stereotypes created around their culture by the majority people of the countries they are living in. Moreover, as highlighted by Thomas Hylland Eriksen in his book *Small Places, Large Issues*, Sámi people are still facing a process of "being assimilated to a majority ethnic identity", despite "a stronger ethnic incorporation and chosen segregation in recent decades" (2010: 299). Moreover, even though the colonisation of Sápmi and Sámi people is in some forms still ongoing, it seems that the four nation-states are moving from a process of colonisation to a process of inclusion, while many Sámis are asking for a process of decolonisation to be implemented. This notion of decolonisation will be discussed further in the upcoming literature review.

Chapter 3 – A study anchored in previous research

Overview of previous studies: decolonising Sápmi

Through time, the history and culture of Sámi people and their land Sápmi, has become the subject of various studies, either in anthropology or in other scientific disciplines, both inside and outside the Nordic countries. More recently, since the beginning of the 21st century, these studies started to focus on the decolonisation of Sápmi and how it affects Sámi people, with a large number of articles, books and essays being published in the last five years. However, while focusing on the decolonisation of Sápmi, these studies present different perspectives on the question.

As this short overview of previous research will make visible, various dimensions to the decolonisation of Sápmi should be taken into consideration when analysing it, and many perspectives a researcher can decide to focus on when studying this object. This paper aims to start from a different point of view: the decolonisation of Sápmi from the perspective of national institutions, in the particular case of Sweden. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that most of the studies mentioned above centre on geographical areas that are part of Sápmi, while this paper will be set in Southern Sweden, quite far from Sápmi, which will hopefully bring another perspective to the broad analysis of the decolonisation of Sápmi, The land Sápmi appears to go beyond its geographical delimitation, and can be considered as the gathering of Sámi people, united through their shared history and culture, even though some of them live in other areas than the North.

When the reader thinks about the decolonisation of Sápmi, a stop is needed on the physical decolonisation, on the decolonisation of the land itself. This question can be seen as quite complex, considering that Sápmi, the land, is nowadays still being colonised, with ongoing exploitation of its resources, for example through mining or forest-cutting. Therefore, if the different states, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, are aiming to decolonise this geographical area, it seems reasonable to argue that they need to include Sámi people in those discussions. The agency of the Sámi people in the decolonisation of Sápmi is analysed, for example by Helena Eriksson (2021) and Elsa Reimerson (2015), completed with reflections on the complexity of deciding how to decolonising Sápmi, even for Sámi people themselves, as explored by Elisa Maria López (2021). While this thesis is set in Southern Sweden, where Sámi people don't need to fight for their rights to the land, as will be discussed later in the analysis, the spatial dimension of decolonisation happening in Sápmi is important to keep in mind, as it

is underlying in the discourses of Sámis living in Skåne and influencing the way they present their identity, culture and history, with an activist perspective, advocating for the rights of their community and relatives living in the North.

Decolonising Sápmi also means decolonising the history of its colonisation. This history, as it is told at a national level, is quite influenced by the perspective of the states who practised colonisation. Therefore, some researchers, such as Carl-Gösta Ojala (2020), decided to analyse the conflicts between the different versions of the colonial history of Sápmi.

When studying the decolonisation of Sápmi, some researchers choose to centre on practices. This dimension can be explored through the performativity of the Sámi identity, such as Astri Dankertsen's research (2016). In this article, the author explores how Sámis in Norway are performing their ethnic identity, following centuries of colonisation that fragmented this identity that they now need to take back and make their own, idea that resonates with the situation of Sámis living in Skåne, as the analysis will make visible. The process of decolonisation also goes through the practice of traditional Sámi crafts, called *duodji*, as analysed by Natalia Magnani and Matthew Magnani (2022), In this article, the authors point out the importance of the practice of *duodji* in the process of decolonisation and of taking back one's identity as Sámi, which is at the core of the discourses found in Southern Sweden, as will be discussed later in this paper.

When studying the decolonisation of Sápmi, some researchers decided to focus on the notion of language, and its interconnection with the feeling of belonging to an indigenous community, here belonging to the Sámi community. This has for example been explored by Erika Katjaana and Satu Uusiautti (2013). In this article, the authors discuss the relationship between Sámi identity and knowledge of a Sámi language, notion that will be explored further in this paper.

To accomplish the decolonisation of Sápmi, some researchers suggest that a decolonisation of the educational system should be initiated. The decolonisation of the educational system is for example analysed by Hilde Sollid and Torjer Olsen (2019). Moreover, the importance to include Sámi people in academia is discussed by some researchers, such as Harald Gaski (2013).

These different studies allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of decolonisation of Sápmi, being more aware of the various dimensions shaping it, which helped inform this study and make it go forward.

The theoretical framework

Concepts and notions that will be developed further in this paper have been reflected upon and theorised by different researchers in their studies. The significant texts emerging from their work provide a theoretical framework for the subsequent analysis, where these theories, concepts and notions will be reinterpreted, sometimes modified, and applied to the specific case of the representation of Sámi people in Southern Sweden.

The first study of influence for this paper has been the book *Indigeneity and Decolonization in the Bolivian Andes. Ritual Practice and Activism*, published by Anders Burman, Swedish social anthropologist, in 2016. In this book, Burman analyses here how the Aymaras, one of several indigenous people living in Bolivia, answer the processes of colonisation and decolonisation taking place in Bolivia, both in ontological and ritualistic ways, through notions of illness and cure. Through his analysis, Burman develops a conceptualisation of the notion of colonialism, experienced as a "loss", of a part of one's identity, of cultural knowledge and practices, and often of linguistic skills (2016: 72). In the case of the Aymara ontology, colonialism can also lead to a physical and spiritual loss, the illness that will then be ritually cured. According to Burman, colonialism isn't merely a process happening and visible on the outside, but it also influences people who are subjected to colonisation internally, including their bodies and their minds (ibid.). The author underlines that Aymara people, experiencing this loss caused by colonialism, are aware of it, and therefore the experiences, conceptions and practices related to their indigenous identity are influenced by this awareness, both in the way they feel part of the Aymara community and in the processes they implement to counter this loss and take back these lost parts of their identity (op.cit. 122).

Two main dimensions of the process of decolonisation are highlighted in Burman's work. On the one hand, decolonisation is a phenomenon happening, and pushed for, at a national level, by the government and official politics, for example with various policies initiated by Evo Morales, president of Bolivia from 2006 to 2019, and its first indigenous president, such as the integration of the notion of decolonisation into the New Constitution adopted in 2008 (op.cit. 217). However, Burman points out that, despite the integration of decolonisation and indigenous people into official political documents and discourses, the

influence of indigenous people in Bolivia remains low, as they cannot access positions of power and "their function is emblematic" according to the author (op.cit. 222). Moreover, these political decisions are sometimes seen as "a politically correct expression that lacked the support of conviction or action" (op.cit. 218). However, decolonising practices don't only come "from above", from the government and official institutions, but they also come "from below", from indigenous people themselves, for example through the curing rituals mentioned earlier (op.cit. 231). The author highlights the importance to consider the individual dimension of those practices, which can vary from one person to another when it comes to taking back the parts of their identity that have been lost through colonisation. In those cases, Burman notes that this reappropriation of one's indigenous identity doesn't always act in total opposition with the colonial influences, when elements deriving from colonialism are sometimes kept and used. The agency of indigenous people, as people who have faced colonisation, is here important to keep in mind.

In this book, Burman also introduces a notion that will be developed further through additional works, the importance of official institutions in the implementation of discourses about colonialism. By providing an official discourse about colonisation, through media, schools and other educational institutions, the Bolivian state, like other states, gives a justification to the different occurrences of encounters with colonialism in people's everyday life, giving sense to the various discrimination faced by indigenous people, as an inevitable part of the nation-building process (op.cit. 84-85).

Finally, Burman highlights the importance of performing one's indigenous identity, to be recognised as part of an indigenous community. In Bolivia, this process takes place for example by showing that one of their relatives was part of an indigenous community, through tangible evidence such as their ancestor wearing traditional indigenous clothes, to legitimise their place as indigenous people and their position as government officials, especially in the eyes of other indigenous people, in a context of ethnic mix (op.cit. 219).

As the concept of nation is quite important in this paper, the theorisation of this object made by Benedict Anderson will be useful. In his book *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* published for the first time in 1983, Anderson reflects on the concept of nation and nation-building, highlighting the importance of official institutions in these processes, through examples from different times and geographical areas. Firstly, the nation is conceptualised by the author as an "imagined political community" (Anderson 2006:

6), since it doesn't exist per se, outside of any human influence, but rather is a social concept, built in agreement or under duress on various characteristics raised as elements of unicity between people who will then form a nation. Among these characteristics is the use of an identical or standardised language (op.cit. 109). Therefore, during the nation-building process, official institutions are pushing for the establishment of a unique language across the nation, to the detriment of other languages, such as regional languages and minority languages, of which indigenous languages are part.

The homogeneity of the people isn't enough to create a nation, especially considering the diversity of multicultural and multiethnic nations, and thus requires the action of official and governmental institutions. This action passes by various institutions connected to the government, listed by the author as "the mass media, the educational system, administrative regulations and so forth" (op.cit. 113-114), spreading an official and homogenous discourse at a national level. Among these institutions, Anderson particularly emphasises the importance of the educational system which, through the regulation and standardisation of its shape and content, allows the feeling of a shared and "coherent universe of experience" (op.cit. 121). Moreover, the author points out the expansion of the educational system to include people who have been colonised, either through the state or through religious or private organisations (op.cit. 116), a notion that can also be observed in the case of Sámi people.

As Sámis are often defined as an ethnic minority, it is important to go back to both notions of ethnicity and minority, with the work of Thomas Hylland Eriksen, for instance with his book *Small Places, Large Issues* published for the first time in 1995. In this book, the author defines the concept of ethnic group as "a minority group which is culturally and often visibly distinguishable from the majority" (2010: 276). This idea of an ethnic minority having to be visibly distinct from other ethnic groups, part of the majority or other minorities, implies the need for specific cultural characteristics to base this distinction upon, such as ontology, cultural practices and rituals, language or professional activities (ibid.). Moreover, Hylland Eriksen highlights that the connection between ethnicity and "objective cultural differences" is similarly anchored in the perceptions of ethnic groups, either minorities or majority groups (ibid.). In settings where differences between ethnic groups aren't visible enough to build a sustainable system of distinction and classification, the distinction thus depends more on the use of stereotypes (op.cit. 278). According to the author, the notion of ethnic groups is thus based on oppositions materialised by two or more ethnic groups, relational rather than existing beforehand.

Through his book, Hylland Eriksen also analyses the relations between ethnicity and nation. In a context where ethnic minorities are assimilated into a broader nation-state, one's identity may "switch situationally between being a member of an ethnic minority and a member of a nation" (op.cit. 295), carrying a double identity. Moreover, belonging to a nation as part of an ethnic minority means performing one's ethnic identity, oftentimes bringing to the spotlight cultural practices considered as traditional, that may have been lost through colonisation, in a process conceptualised by Hylland Eriksen under the term of "ethnic revitalisation" (op.cit. 302).

With the use of the notion of ethnic minority comes the need to approach the concept of agency, particularly agency of people who are part of a minority. In her essay *Can the subaltern speak?* (2010), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak analyses the possibilities for people facing some kind of domination, identified as "subalterns" to raise their voices and be heard as agents, using the case of Third World women, more specifically the ritualistic immolation of widows in India. Here, the notion of speech doesn't merely refer to the action of talking, to the words, but more generally to actions conveying a message, a revendication. According to the author, the position of subaltern makes especially difficult for people to speak. Moreover, when they speak, she points out that they are usually not heard, their words and actions being reinterpreted under the dominant prism. Considering this impossibility of being listened to, Spivak highlights that therefore people who claim to hear the subalterns speak have a tendency to speak over them, in place of them.

Finally, the notion of representation will be central in the following analysis, of an ethnic majority, the Swedes, presenting a picture of an ethnic minority, the Sámis. The perspective presented by Lila Abu-Lughod in her essay "Writing Against Culture" brings an important light to it (1996). By challenging the representation of women and ethnic minorities in a large part of the anthropological literature, the author underlines the risks of generalisation, of essentialisation of a part of society, which anthropologists need to remain aware of when collecting, analysing, and writing about data. Moreover, Abu-Lughod reminds the reader that "culture is the essential tool for making other" (1996: 470), that distinctions between people and social groups are first and foremost socially constructed. While this paper won't focus on the work of anthropologists, but on official institutions connected to the state in Sweden, these notions will be important to keep in mind during the analysis, as it will deal with questions of representation of a cultural group by another cultural group.

To summarise, several concepts from these authors will be used in the following analysis of the data collected during this fieldwork. After setting the notion that Sámis can be considered as an ethnic minority, the following analysis will employ some concepts from Hylland Eriksen's book, the notion of distinction as generator of ethnicity and the use of stereotypes in the distinction process. As underlined in the previous part of this paper, the notions of colonisation and decolonisation will be quite central in the analysis. Therefore, the idea of loss and performativity of indigenous identity, as well as the role of national institutions in the decolonisation process, as theorised by Burman, will be applied to the case of the decolonisation of Sápmi. Moreover, considering that official institutions (in this case public libraries and museums) will be at the core of this thesis, the notion of nation-building as developed by Anderson will be of use. Finally, since this paper will address the representation of Sámi people, their history and culture by the Swedish majority, both the notion of listening to and talking over the "subalterns", developed by Spivak, and of essentialisation of another culture, developed by Abu-Lughod, will be important to keep in mind through the analysis.

Chapter 4 – Methods

Delimitation of the field

With the research focus stated in the introduction, the field has already been geographically delimited. This fieldwork has been almost entirely conducted in Southern Sweden, in the county of Skåne, from the beginning of November 2022 to the end of February 2023. During ten days, at the end of January and beginning of February, I travelled to Stockholm and four cities administratively part of Sápmi, Östersund, Jokkmokk, Kiruna and Abisko. This fieldtrip was a way to collect some data to compare the representation and visibility of Sámi people and culture in the South to the one in Northern Sweden, as a tool to go beyond the idea that Sámis aren't visible in Skåne because they are far away.

In practical terms, the field was divided into three main parts. The first part consisted in observing and analysing the presence of books and other documents in Sámi languages in public libraries around Skåne, following the regulations and recommendations from the *Bibliotekslag* presented above. This consisted in going to different public libraries around Skåne, observing what kind of books in Sámi languages were displayed and then interviewing librarians to get more information as well as their perspective on having books in Sámi languages in Southern Sweden.

The second part of this fieldwork focused on exhibitions about Sámi people and/or Sámi culture displayed in museums around Skåne. Considering the number of such exhibitions in Southern Sweden, this part of the fieldwork consisted mainly of the observation and analysis of two different exhibitions. The first one is the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" displayed at Kulturen, in Lund. After visiting the exhibition several times, I interviewed some of the people who were involved with its organisation. The second one is the exhibition "Urfolk möts – skogssamer och Mapuche" displayed at Dunkers Kulturhus, in Helsingborg. Along with two separate visits to the exhibition, I mostly met and communicated via email with one of the active members of the *sameförening* co-organising it. I was also planning to visit the Historical Museum, Historiska Museet, in Lund which used to own and display Sámi remains, but didn't have the time to during this fieldwork.

The third part of this fieldwork took place in the archives, more specifically the city archives of Malmö, Helsingborg, and Lund to analyse further this idea of absence of Sámis in Skåne, later completed by a visit to the archives of Stockholm. The aim of it wasn't to do archival research, but rather to go to different archives to observe the answer I would get from

asking for documents about Sámi people and what kind of documents I could have access to by visiting archives in Southern Sweden.

Data from libraries: what the books teach us

The part of this fieldwork focusing on public libraries took place in various cities and villages. Firstly, I went to the *stadsbibliotek* (city's library) of Lund, Malmö, Lomma, Helsingborg, Eslöv and Staffanstorp. My methodology was to first observe and then interview. Each time, I tried to spot where the books written in Sámi languages were located, compared to the global structure of the library and the organisation of the shelf, count them and observe the type of books and the dialect used by the author, part made quite easy by the precise tagging system used by the libraries. Following that, I went to find a librarian and ask to do an interview with them about this. Sometimes they booked an interview with me directly, others gave me the email address of one of their colleagues who they thought would be more competent to answer my questions than them, or the main email address of the library if they didn't know specifically whom I should contact. In total, I could interview five librarians, from Lund's, Malmö's, Lomma, Helsingborg and Eslöv's city libraries. All the interviews took place in a meeting room located in the employees' area of the library they work at. In Staffanstorp's library, the librarian I talked to during my visit, who thought she wasn't the most competent person to answer my questions, advised me to contact the main email address of the library that she gave me, which I did but didn't get any answer.

All these interviews followed a similar structure, as there were specific questions I wanted answers to, and I was aiming to compare the different libraries with each other to discern a possible pattern. However, part of the interviews was tailored to the interviewee, either depending on what I observed at the library beforehand, or on elements from their personal life, on what we discussed before starting the interview, for example regarding their knowledge of Sámi culture and history.

To complete these observations, in three cities, Malmö, Lund and Helsingborg, which are bigger, I also went to some of the public libraries located in the suburbs or villages nearby but which are part of the same municipality (*kommun*). In those libraries, while using the same method of observation, I didn't find any book in Sámi languages and decided to try to analyse this absence.

Simultaneously, I went to both the Main University Library, *Universitetsbiblioteket*, of Lund University and the library for the faculty of languages and linguistics, *SOL-bibliotek*,

following the same structure of observation. Afterwards, I interviewed one of the librarians at *SOL-bibliotek*. Moreover, as a more global perspective on this question, I interviewed one of my Swedish friends, Alice, who studied library sciences at Lund University and is now working in a school library.

These data were completed by a comparison with public libraries of Stockholm, Östersund and Jokkmokk.

Data from museums: what exhibitions teach us

The part of this fieldwork using data from different exhibitions mainly centres on the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" displayed at the museum Kulturen located in Lund. Firstly, I went to the museum and walked through the exhibition while taking notes. For this first visit, I observed, in particular, the arrangement, the structure and the kind of topics presented throughout the exhibition. During the next visits, I stopped more on the content of the different spaces of the exhibition, divided into three sections with distinct angles on the history and culture of Sámi people. After the first visit, I got in contact with the head of exhibitions of the museum, who worked at the time the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" was created, and we organised an interview together where he shared with me the genesis and process behind its creation, as well as some thoughts on the representation and visibility of Sámi people in Skåne. At the end of the interview, he gave me the contact information of the independent curator who worked with the exhibition. I contacted and interviewed her the week after on the same topic.

Both interviews followed a similar structure, as I wanted to compare my observations of the exhibition to their perspective, but were at the same time shaped around the role each of them played in the building of the exhibition, and influenced by their own personal and professional background. Despite contacting the *duodjar*, master of Sámi crafts, and the *Samiskt informationscentrum*, both mentioned in the analysis, I didn't receive any answer from them.

The exhibition "Urfolk möts – skogssamer och Mapuche" also took an important place in this part of the fieldwork. This exhibition has been displayed at Dunkers Kulturhus, in Helsingborg, from February 6th 2023 to March 5th 2023. After meeting Majbritt, the active member of Samer i Syd, the *sameförening* who was behind the co-organisation of this exhibition, on February 11th 2023 in Helsingør, Denmark, for the first time during the celebration of the association's 20th anniversary, she answered some questions and invited me to join her for a visit of the exhibition in Dunkers Kulturhus the week after. Following this visit, we communicated via email and she answered some other questions I had. I came back to

Helsingborg a week after, when she was also there, and talked with Emma, another active member of the association.

This perspective on my research focus going through observation and analysis of museums and exhibitions was later completed by a comparison with some other exhibitions about Sámi people and Sámi culture displayed around the country, outside of Skåne, at Skansen and Nordiska Museet in Stockholm, Jamtli in Östersund and Ájtte in Jokkmokk, using a similar method of observation. I also got the opportunity to interview the producer of "The Arctic – while the ice is melting", exhibition displayed at Nordiska Museet and mentioning Sámi people alongside other indigenous and non-indigenous people from the Arctic.

Data from archives: what the absence teaches us

The part of this fieldwork based on data collected in the archives started in the city of Malmö, at the city archives, *stadsarkivet*. While I went there looking for documents related to Sámi people to picture the direction my fieldwork should take, the employees I met, quite surprised by my request, explained to me that the city archives of Malmö didn't have such documents, considering that as far as they know very few or no Sámis are living in Southern Sweden. They advised me to turn to the archives of cities located North of Sweden, or in Stockholm, since it is the capital of the country and its archives are more likely to have documents related to Sámi people. However, this idea of Sámi people not being present in Skåne, at all or at a lower rate, piqued my curiosity and I decided to dig deeper into this.

Being in Helsingborg for a day, I took the opportunity to go to Helsingborgs stadsarkivet. Receiving an answer similar to the one I got in Malmö, the employees still advised me to look into the *riksarkiv*, national archives, a different system from the *stadsarkiv*, city archives, either in Lund or in Stockholm. Nevertheless, going to the Arkivcentrum Syd, gathering *Lunds stadsarkivet, Lunds riksarkivet* and other kinds of archives, the answer to my request was in Lund similar to the ones I received in Malmö and Helsingborg, and the employee recommended to look into *Härnösands riksarkivet*, the one located the furthest North. During my short stay in Stockholm at the end of January 2023, I visited both *Stockholms stadsarkivet* and *Stockholms riksarkivet*. While employees at *Stockholms riksarkivet* offered me to either start with a general book about Sámi history or to look into the Royal Library (*Kungliga biblioteket*), one of the employees at *Stockholms stadsarkivet* helped me to find documents talking about Sámi people, that I could look up.

I didn't search through the archives myself, due to the language barrier and to a wish to hear the perspective of archivists. This means that I might not had access to some documentation that I could otherwise possibly have been able to find.

The perspective from Sámi people

Given that the biggest part of this fieldwork focused on the Swedish majority and that data was collected mostly through interactions with Swedish people, as it will be addressed in a coming part of this chapter, I aimed to, as much as I could, get the perspective of Sámi people on the way their community and their culture was pictured by the majority community in this specific geographical context where this fieldwork was set. However, it has been quite challenging for me to get in contact with Sámis, as will be further discussed later in this chapter.

The first person of Sámi descent I could get in contact and have an interview with was one of my friends, Tuva. During the interview together, she presented to me her background, her family's history, and how she identifies herself as Sámi through kinship. She also gave me her opinions and perspective on the representation of Sámi people in Southern Sweden. Moreover, as a Norwegian citizen, she also provided a ground for comparison between Sweden and Norway on that matter, bringing to light some other interesting elements in the case of Sweden. When preparing for the interview with her, I decided to include both semi-structured questions, to get her thoughts and opinion on specific topics related to my fieldwork, as well as general questions aiming to know and understand better her life, the background she is coming from, and her particular situation in this context.

Other Sámis I could get in contact and talk with were mostly members of the association Samer i Syd. At first, I contacted the president of the *sameförening*. As she was quite busy and travelling between Skåne and Sápmi a lot at that time, she offered to give my contact information to the vice president of the association, so she could contact me and do an interview with me. Unfortunately, with time passing by, my request got lost. Nevertheless, thanks to the librarian from *Helsingborgs stadsbibliotek* I interviewed, I got the contact of another active member of the association, Majbritt, who is also the mother of the president. As mentioned above, we started communicating with each other via email, before meeting a first time in Helsingør, Denmark, and a second and third time in Helsingborg, Sweden. During our meeting in Helsingør, she allowed me to have a short interview with her, carried out in Swedish, with the help of a journalist from *Sameradion* who was there for the day and acted as interpreter for me. Later, we exchanged few emails in Swedish with some more questions for her. All

communications with her were in Swedish, which raised the issue of the language barrier, as I am not at all fluent in Swedish and she isn't confident enough in English to communicate entirely in English. In Helsingør, I also met and talked with other members of the *sameförening* and Sámis invited for the day, in Swedish and English. Moreover, the second time I went to Helsingborg, I met another member of the association, Emma, living close to Lund, and we could talk together about her life, the association, the exhibition, in a combination of Swedish, French and English.

At the beginning of April 2023, I was invited by Majbritt to Önnestads folkhögskolan, a residential college for adult education located in the city of Önnestad, in Skåne, where the movie "Kállok – gruva utanför Jokkmokk Norrbotten" was being screened for the students. Since this documentary deals with the resistance from Sámi people to a mining project planned to take place in Jokkmokk, the school contacted Samer i Syd and ask them to participate in the event. That's when I met both Ida and Kia, two Sámi sisters in their twenties who are also members of Samer i Syd, and could both watch the movie, listen to the students' questions to them and talk with them.

During my fieldtrip in Northern Sweden, I had some informal conversations with few Sámis I met, which brought new insights to the data already collected.

Ethical dilemmas

As presented in the introduction, this fieldwork aimed to focus on an issue related to a specific indigenous group, the Sámi communities in Sweden. However, as made visible above, most informants and participants aren't Sámi, of Sámi descent, or even part of other indigenous communities from another part of the world. Among them, two have non-European backgrounds, which brought another perspective to the question, and the rest of them are part of the Swedish majority. As explained by Maritta Soininen, it appears that migrants are included in Swedish society by being categorised as ethnic minority groups, which seems to create an idea of a Swedish majority, in opposition to ethnic minorities (1999: 686). The demographic situation of the people who participated in this fieldwork is especially important to take into consideration when going forward with the analysis and one must be very careful with the type of underlying discourse these interviews include, for example, the unmentioned, forgotten or erased colonial context, and the position of talking about a minority as part of the majority themselves.

For that reason, I wished to interview more Sámi people or people of Sámi descent, but was at the same time confronting the discomfort of asking, once again, a lot from a discriminated minority, who is already fighting for their rights and oftentimes have to educate the majority due the resources at hand and will from people to educate themselves[3]. This brought me back to this ethical dilemma and long-lasting questioning in social anthropology about the position of the researcher towards people whom they work with, especially if they are part of a discriminated minority, as to how to spread their voice without talking over them, following the theorisation of Spiwak, explaining the difficulties they are facing without victimising them, and in the case of this paper analysing the discourse the majority has on the minority while acknowledging and making clear to the reader that it is a social perspective, with all biases it can contain.

In the end, considering the rather small number of interviews and discussions I could have with Sámi people, it will be important to keep in mind that those cannot be used to generalise a perspective to the entirety of Sámi communities, but rather provide a specific perspective on how Swedish people apprehend Sámi people, as well as individual personal stories and histories.

And some reflexivity

As some anthropologists say, beyond scientific research social anthropology also invites to reflexivity and introspection. When this fieldwork began, I wished to learn more about the challenges faced by the only indigenous people of Europe, the Sámis. However, when my research focus switched to their representation and visibility in a region quite far from Sápmi, I began to see some elements resembling the context of my own country. In the past, France colonised many countries around the world, for several centuries. This led many people from various countries to move to France, either during the colonisation or nowadays, for different reasons linked to this colonial past. However, in my opinion, the French colonial past isn't addressed as much as it could and should be. People who migrated in these circumstances are facing discrimination, partially due to this lack of education. Throughout this fieldwork, I oftentimes stopped and reflected on this situation, to slowly realise that, even though the French context is quite different from the Swedish context, the notion of representation and visibility of minorities in France is worth having a look at.

[3] The question of education has been part of the discussion I had with Sámi people I met and interviewed, and will be analysed further in a dedicated part of this paper.

In this process, I started to become aware of some of my own biases. Before this fieldwork, I never really thought about how ethnic minorities living in France were feeling about the way the French government and French people are picturing them. While being aware of the discrimination, sometimes racism, that they are facing, I didn't pay enough attention to how this representation is contributing negatively to the discrimination and harm made to them. There, an uncomfortable truth appeared to me: instead of facing my cultural background and the historical context I am coming from, I decided to observe another part of the world, another context. But one cannot escape forever. Therefore, the following analysis also brings me a new perspective on my home country and my own biases while, hopefully, contributing in a way to this area of research in social anthropology.

At the same time, being a French woman in her twenties brought both advantages and disadvantages to this fieldwork. While making communication harder with some of my informants and perhaps blocking me from interacting with some people who didn't feel comfortable in English, due to my lack of knowledge of Swedish, it placed me in a position of outsider. This maybe made my informants share more information with me, to teach me, due to my age and nationality.

Chapter 5 – The joys and troubles of being Sámi in Southern Sweden

Creating a community

The experience of being Sámi while living in Southern Sweden quite differs from the experience of being Sámi while living in Northern Sweden, on various dimensions. Creating and being part of a community is central to this experience, and happens on several levels. The first level relates to being part of a community gathering Sámis also living in Skåne. However, this can become quite difficult considering that various people living in Skåne nowadays don't know they have Sámi relatives and don't call themselves Sámi, that some people might not be comfortable displaying their Sámi heritage, and that there are no actual distinctive signs allowing people to define someone as Sámi at first glance, as will be discussed later. In these circumstances, with a lack of previous network, for example, through familial connections, some Sámis living in Skåne decide to turn to associations, such as Samer i Syd, where they can find a community. As told by Majbritt, who founded the association twenty years ago, Samer i Syd emerged from the meeting of twelve Sámis, living close by in Southern Sweden. The idea of creating an association came from the impulse of her daughter, current president of the association, showing that family takes an important place in creating a network and a community. Since then, several members joined the association, some of whom are young Sámis, such as Ida and Kia, the two Sámi sisters I met.

Even with the *sameförening* to enter the Sámi community in Skåne, it can still be difficult to find it for some people. In the case of Tuva, who immigrated from Norway, she explains that, compared to her time in Norway, she doesn't know where to look for such community. She explains that she hasn't really been looking for it either, being a bit nervous about how the Sámi community in Skåne would react to her not speaking any Sámi language, since in Norway her identity as Sámi was sometimes questioned, either by Sámi and non-Sámi people, because she isn't "looking like a Sámi" and doesn't know the language. She didn't clarify what she meant by "looking like a Sámi", but it is possible to imagine that in her perspective then being Sámi is something that can be materially visible, perhaps through some physical features or material attributes, such as clothing. For example, when talking with another Sámi woman in the city where she was studying in Norway, the latter challenged her identity, by asking her how much Sámi she knew. After she said one of the words she knew,

the Sámi woman questioned her pronunciation, which she didn't consider as right, and exclaimed "Well, you're not a proper Sámi".

Being part of a minority doesn't mean that the community in itself is free from conflicts, tensions and discrimination between its members, as centuries of discrimination can make people more cautious and "protective of their culture", as underlined by Tuva about her experience with some Sámis she met. As pointed out by Hylland Eriksen, a minority should be visibly distinguishable from other ethnic groups to be recognised as such, and this conceptualisation is equally anchored in the minority groups as it is in the majority group (2010: 276). As highlighted by Burman, visibly performing one's indigenous identity can be a way to legitimise their position inside the indigenous group (2016: 219).

Nevertheless, the knowledge of Sámi languages never appeared as a prerequisite to be part of the *sameförening* Samer i Syd, since, as will be discussed later, some of the members I met either don't speak any Sámi language at all, such as Emma, or are currently in the process of learning one of them, like Ida and Kia. Being part of the Sámi community in Skåne, for example through an association, can also be a way to reconnect with the knowledge that has been lost through colonisation and discrimination, both linguistic and cultural, that under other circumstances would be transmitted within the familial circle. Moreover, being part of a *sameförening* can be used more politically, to participate in making Sámi people more visible, for instance by organising exhibitions like "Urfolk möts – skogssamer och Mapuche", going to Önnestads folkhögskola for a movie screening and a discussion, or even when crossing the border to Denmark, with the celebration of the 20th anniversary of Samer i Syd.

Being Sámi in Skåne also means navigating a double identity, as Sámi and as Swedish. As underlined by Hylland Eriksen, in a national context, someone who is part of an ethnic minority is performing either their ethnic identity or their identity as member of a nation, depending on the situation (2010: 295). This is something experienced for example by Ida and Kia, who explain that they either present themselves as Sámi or as Swedish depending on the context.

For Sámis living in Southern Sweden, creating a community also means creating a community with Swedes. When thinking about the reasons why Sámi people are less visible in Skåne than they are in Sápmi, one of the students in the first year of the Bachelor in Social Anthropology at Lund University, that I met with my supervisor Nina Gren in April for a visit of the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" at Kulturen, made the hypothesis that Sámis who live in the

North are prouder and more expressive about their identity than the ones living in Southern Sweden. However, sharing their own experience, experiences of their relatives or experiences they heard, some Sámis I met currently living in Skåne describe living in the North as Sámi as more difficult compared to living in the South. Majbritt, Ida and Kia, who are all Swedish citizens, explain that it is easier, "*lättare*" to live in Skåne as Sámis, since there is much more racism in Sápmi, especially towards Sámi people. Majbritt underlines that there are a greater variety of cultural groups living in Skåne, compared to Northern Sweden being more culturally homogenous. Therefore, being Sámi in Skåne isn't a problem, as it is easier to blend in with the rest of the population and not be pointed out or discriminated against for one's ethnic identity, said Majbritt in our interview.

It is thus possible to suppose that the reasons why Sámi people are less visible in Skåne aren't only linked to the fact that there are fewer Sámis compared to Sápmi. From Majbritt's words, it appears that Sámi people living in Southern Sweden don't need to be as visible, they don't need to perform their ethnic identity as strongly as Sámi people living in the North. The reason could be a lower risk for them to have their rights immediately threatened by Swedish people around them in Skåne. For instance, Sámi people living in Skåne aren't reindeer herders and thus don't need to protect their rights to practise this activity or their rights to the land, which would imply that they wouldn't need to display their Sámi identity as visibly as in the North, in an activist manner. This idea was also highlighted by a Sámi woman who visited the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", as recounted by Victoria, curator of the exhibition, explaining that such exhibition wouldn't have been possible to create in Northern Sweden because of many ongoing conflicts, sometimes at a personal level, and a strong resentment from Swedish people living in Sápmi.

The relationships between Sámis and Swedes can be seen as more pacified in Skåne than they are in Sápmi, without conflicts over the land, or about rights to fishing, hunting and reindeer herding. This situation leaves more room for cooperation and interactions between both communities and thus for the creation of a community gathering both Sámis and majority Swedes. Besides the formation of cooperations and collaborations between Sámis and Swedish institutions, which will be discussed later, it is interesting to note that some members of Samer i Syd aren't Sámi but Swedish, with a strong emotional connection with Sámi people. At Kulturhus Syd, during the celebration of the 20th anniversary of Samer i Syd, one of the tables was held by a member of the *sameförening* who is Swedish and crafts different artefacts, such as knives and *guksi*, typical Sámi drinking cups. While he learned the techniques at the

Samernas utbildningscentrum in Jokkmokk and borrows Sámi patterns for his objects, in the same way *duodjar* do, he explains that what he does cannot be called *duodji*, since he isn't Sámi himself.

This interaction can bring the notion of genetics and its place in Sámi identity. As mentioned by Tuva, Sámi Norwegian woman, during our interview, when talking about how someone can register in the Sameting, the Sámi parliament in Norway, "a lot of people have grown up with the culture surrounding them and one also wouldn't know if they were born into a Sámi family because one suppressed the culture that hard so it might be hard to look into the whole family tree to find this specific Sámi in your family […] and also as long as you care for the protection of the Sámis rights and stuff like that I think you should be eligible to vote", meaning that in her view it isn't necessary to have familial connections to the Sámi community to be part of Sámi institutions. However, in the case of the Swedish artisan I met in Helsingør, it appeared quite clear that he isn't Sámi and doesn't consider himself as Sámi, for "genetic" reasons, despite his strong emotional connection with Sámi people and Sápmi.

While an exchange can happen between Sámis and Swedes, for example of knowledge, a need appears for this exchange to be done with respect to the ethnic minority, meaning respecting the rules, the techniques, the ideology, and not appropriating but rather appreciating the other's culture and history. The concepts of cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation are complex notions that are currently discussed by various researchers, in diverse disciplines. Angela Garcia B. Cruz, Yuri Seo and Daiane Scaraboto analyse the dimensions of cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation in the consumption of elements from Korean culture and K-pop (2023). Discussing the tension between cultural appreciation and cultural appropriation, they define the first as taking elements from another culture to make it one's own, to diffuse it to a larger audience, anchored in a multicultural context, while the second is defined as a distortion of another culture's elements, without addressing the context of domination associated and perpetuating it (Cruz, Seo & Scaraboto 2023: 2). Applying those reflections to the case of the Swedish craftsman I met in Helsingør, it is possible to categorise it as cultural appreciation rather than cultural appropriation since he seemed aware of the domination dynamics crossing this exchange and to not modify the techniques and patterns he is borrowing.

Hsiao-Cheng Han is also discussing these concepts regarding art schools (2019). Regarding the notion of cultural appreciation, she emphasises the importance of researching,

practising, and sharing about the element from another culture that is made one's own (Hsiao-Cheng 2019: 9). This is something that can also be seen in the case of the Swedish artisan, who educated himself about *duodji* before starting his practice. Moreover, she highlights the importance of recognising and giving credit to the culture from which the element is taken from, and to avoid perpetuating stereotypes about a culture, but rather celebrate it (ibid.). This recognition appears in the Swedish craftsman's practice when he clarifies that his craft isn't *duodji,* as he isn't Sámi himself. As described in my interview with Victoria, curator of the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", this process was similar when the *duodjar* and her decided to implement the braiding activity in the last room of the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi". They wished to share this knowledge, this part of Sámi culture, with the main audience, but carefully chose the pattern, making sure that it was simple enough for everyone to be able to try it while being a pattern that non-Sámi people can "borrow" and craft with, considering that some patterns cannot be used by non-Sámi people, for a respectful practice.

As indigenous people, Sámi people often feel a stronger connection, a sense of understanding each other, with other indigenous people. For example, Tuva has a friend who is Maori, who was one of the first people to not question her Sámi identity, and together they could discuss and share their experiences about "how much of a struggle it is always have to explain in layers why one would call themselves an indigenous person", considering that her friend, who doesn't speak the Maori language, had similar experiences and could relate to her, as she explained during our interview. According to Tuva, going through similar struggles, as part of an indigenous community, it is sometimes relieving to be able to share and connect through them, especially in Skåne, where it can be hard to build a Sámi community, as explained above. The multiculturality of cities like Lund and Malmö sometimes allows those meetings between people from different indigenous communities, sharing similar struggles.

A meeting between two distinct indigenous communities can lead to a long-term partnership, as is the case for the *sameförening* Samer i Syd and the *förening* Gulamtun. The association Gulamtun, gathering Mapuche people, contacted Samer i Syd more than ten years ago, and since then the two associations collaborated on various projects, including art exhibitions, and lectures, around Skåne. Beyond their common experiences, they also shared their culture, their culinary traditions, their music, their handicrafts (*duodji* for the Sámis) and much more. Moreover, they are celebrating together the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, happening on August 9th. Therefore, creating a community with other indigenous people can appear as another way to raise their voices and fight for their rights, an

attempt to become more powerful by uniting to defend the rights of all indigenous people. Together Samer i Syd and Gulamtun created the exhibition "Urfolk möts – skogssamer och Mapuche", a place where Sámis and Mapuches meet, showing to the public the similarities of their histories, and presenting a face of indigenous people as globalised, united in their fight.

In an era of globalisation, with people moving and being in contact across the globe, it is easy to get in contact with people from different countries, different cultures, especially in Southern Sweden, as highlighted above. When meeting and talking with people from other countries, some Sámis realise they usually don't know a lot about their identity, their history, their culture, meaning that Sámi people usually need to explain many things to them. When Tuva tell her international friends in Sweden that she is Sámi, they usually find it interesting but don't really know what it entails, nor do they know about Sámi culture. For example, one of her friends, noticing that she was wearing outerwear decorated with Sámi designs, was quite confused as she thought it was a poncho, and Tuva explained to her that it was a Sámi piece of clothing. Another example comes from the movie screening at Önnestads folkhögskola when Ida and Kia answered questions from the students who watched the film. It appeared that some students weren't Swedish, as their Swedish proficiency and a Swedish lesson afterwards suggested, and most of their questions were related to Sámi culture, which they wanted to learn more about, as they might never have been in contact with Sámis, nor heard a lot about Sámi history and culture before that day. However, comparing the reactions of her international friends to the ones of her Swedish friends, Tuva underlines that she would "rather have the questions than them [Swedes] assuming things". She prefers people being honest about their lack of knowledge and asking her questions, rather than people relying on stereotypes.

While people from other countries don't know a lot about Sámi people, their history and culture, there is still space for understanding, respecting each other and finding similarities with each other. Some people coming to Dunkers Kulturhus to visit the exhibition "Urfolk möts – skogssamer och Mapuche" didn't speak Swedish, but Majbritt emphasises that they always understood each other, by respecting each other's culture. She remembers a man from Syria who came to visit the exhibition, looked at one of the copper coffee kettles displayed and, while he couldn't speak Swedish, exclaimed "I have it in home" in English, seeing the similarities between this Sámi coffee kettle and a coffee kettle he had from Syria. As highlighted by Majbritt, even though people are different, have different cultures, they have similarities, which bring them together. Sámi people are also an international people, who can connect and relate with people from different parts of the world, as will be discussed later.

In conclusion, being a Sámi person in Southern Sweden means creating a community on different levels, a community with other Sámis, a community with Swedes, a community with other indigenous people, and finally a community with people from different parts of the world, each of these created communities accompanied by diverse processes and interactions between people.

Swedish institutions as educational tools about Sámi history and culture

To be educated and know about Sámi people, their history and culture, one needs to have access to suitable tools. According to several Swedish people I met during this fieldwork, schools are considered as one of these tools, as they can allow Swedish people to learn about the colonisation of Sápmi and its current status from an early age. However, several of the interviewees appear to note that the Swedish educational system doesn't meet their expectations of the role it should play in educating Swedish people about the situation of Sámi people. For example, Linn, librarian at Helsingborg's city library, considers that she is "a quite good example" of the way the Swedish educational system is dealing with the history of colonisation and national minorities, as she cannot remember much from what she learned in school and considers that she lacks knowledge about it. In the same way, Lovisa, librarian at Lomma's city library, doesn't remember learning about Sámi people and their history while she was in school.

Some people, like Gill, librarian at Lund's city library, imagine that, even though they didn't learn a lot about Sámi history in school, the education system of Sweden should have improved and discuss this topic more nowadays. However, such improvement doesn't seem to have occurred in the Swedish education system. When talking to people in their twenties, the same patterns emerge, with few mentions of the colonisation and different national minorities, including Sámis, meaning that the knowledge they have, if larger than the average, comes from their research and interest in the topic, as will be discussed later and underlined by the case of Alice. Victoria underlines that her children, who are quite young, don't learn a lot about this topic at school either, the knowledge being very limited and simplified compared to what she would expect, showing that the evolution of the education system of Sweden, requested by some, hasn't happened yet. It is important to take into consideration that the Swedish people interviewed through this fieldwork all had an interest in Sámi history and culture, meaning that they aren't representative of the overall Swedish population. Comparing the situation of Sweden to Norway, Tuva highlights her surprise seeing various Swedish people close to her knowing so little about Sámi people and not acknowledging the colonisation of Sápmi.

Schools aren't the only institutions that could play a role in educating Swedish people about the colonisation of Sápmi and the situation of Sámi people nowadays. As underlined by Anderson, various institutions connected to the nation-state have an important influence on nation-building, among others by providing a homogenous discourse that can be spread nationally. Similarly, different kinds of official institutions in Sweden, for example libraries and museums, appear as tools to convey a discourse about the colonisation and decolonisation of Sápmi. These institutions are all in a way connected to the Swedish nation, for example through funding, or laws and regulations moved by the government, rules influencing the actions they take. Therefore, official institutions in Sweden such as libraries and museums, seem to be assigned a pedagogical mission, including regarding the history of Sápmi and Sámi people, as it is part of the national Swedish history, and therefore part of the building of the nation-state.

This pedagogical mission seems to be embraced by people working in those institutions whom I talked to. When talking about the goals of the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", Daniel, head of exhibitions at Kulturen, and Victoria, curator of the exhibition, underlined a wish to spread knowledge about Sámi history and culture, for visitors to learn things from it. However, this pedagogical mission doesn't stop at the doors of the museum but continues beyond it. As highlighted by Daniel during our interview, the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi' was designed "in a way that makes people curious about learning more", not merely providing direct knowledge for the visitor to consume, but giving them tools to keep learning, guidance on where to look if they want to expand their knowledge, sparking their curiosity about the history and culture of Sámi people, that otherwise appears for part of the Swedish population as quite spare, as discussed above.

As highlighted by Gill and Linn, librarians at Lund's and Helsingborg's city libraries, by reading books, visiting exhibitions, going to various events about Sámi history and culture, Swedish people could build their knowledge, taking elements from here and there, each resource complementing the others. From their perspective, learning about Sámi history and culture seems to be, for an important part, an individual process, requiring the effort of looking for and finding resources. In some cases, the individual part of the education process happens in the familial circle, also in Sámi families. When conversing together at Dunkers Kulturhus, Emma, Sámi woman who lived in Skåne for decades, explains that she didn't learn about the history of colonisation and Sámi history, especially about race biology and its impact on Sámi people, when she was in school, and neither did her children. After researching about it on her

own, she is now more knowledgeable about her history and thus can teach it and pass it on to her children and grandchildren, since it is part of their history, as she highlights.

In the case of Swedish people without any particular connection to Sámi people or Sápmi, especially the ones living in Skåne, it is possible to imagine that the individual part of the process of learning about Sámi history becomes quite important, and official institutions such as libraries, museums and archives can turn into central pedagogical tools. Reading books about Sámi people, their history and culture, visiting exhibitions about it, going to events organised around this topic, can sometimes be an entry point into learning more about Sámi culture and history, as well as the colonisation of Sápmi. Alice, young Swedish woman who is now a school librarian herself, started learning more and getting curious about the topic after coming in contact with books from Sámi authors through a national initiative when she was younger.

Behind these official institutions, it is possible to notice individuals taking part in this pedagogical mission, sharing knowledge about Sámi history and culture, and in a way taking on the task to educate about this topic. Considering what this fieldwork has made visible, it appeared that these individuals are usually Sámi people themselves. As will be discussed later, they are the ones owning the knowledge, from long ago or through a reappropriation process, about their history and their culture, and therefore are the ones called by institutions wishing to arrange an event about this topic. As explained by Gill, librarian at Lund's city library, this situation isn't peculiar to Sámi people but is the same for various minorities living in Sweden, who are contacted for specific events or offered the possibility to use the library's space to create their arrangement.

It is possible to question if education should always rely on Sámi people. Some Sámis decide to dedicate part of their time to it, for example with Samer i Syd, which has been created to educate Swedish people living in Skåne about the presence of the Sámis as indigenous people in Sweden and to present the culture of Sámi people living in Southern Sweden. However, some Sámis consider that their role isn't to educate Swedish people, as they are already facing various discrimination and fighting for their rights, becoming more protective of their culture with time, as underlined by Tuva. Moreover, after meeting several people who acted sceptical about her Sámi identity and questioned it, while she already went through a long journey before calling herself Sámi, she oftentimes decides to not talk about it, not introduce herself as Sámi, to avoid these struggles.

Additionally, only relying on Sámi people to educate about Sámi history and culture isn't sustainable practically, as there are quite few Sámis living in Skåne, and in Sweden. Regarding Sámis living in Skåne, they can't answer each request from Swedish institutions. Samer i Syd is very active in Skåne, especially around Helsingborg, and talking with Majbritt I realised how many projects she had simultaneously. Therefore, while they were contacted and met Victoria to participate in the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", they couldn't be as involved as others, said Victoria during our interview. As for Sámis living in Northern Sweden, the ones that are known in Skåne, and thus are contacted by the institutions, are usually quite famous nationally, such as Sámi artists, meaning they are themselves already very occupied and cannot take on more commitments, as highlighted by Gill. Therefore, it is important for Swedish people working in different institutions to also take part in the discussion and in spreading knowledge to educate the main audience about Sámi history and culture. As explained by Daniel, being part of the discussion isn't "to make the final right statement", but rather to reflect on their position regarding the historical context and acknowledge the wrongs.

The question of accessibility of knowledge has also emerged from interactions during this fieldwork. This accessibility can for instance go through diverse medias. For example, having movies about Sámi people, their history and culture is a way to reach a larger audience, said Lovisa in our interview. Moreover, spreading the knowledge and educating about Sámi people also goes through representing Sámi people on a larger scale. When Swedish people notice books, television programmes, radio channels, children's movies dubbed, in Sámi languages, they acknowledge the presence of Sámis in the country nowadays, which can lead some of them to learn more about Sámi history and culture, following the pedagogical path discusses above.

In conclusion, in Sweden, beyond schools, various other institutions act as pedagogical tools about Sámi history and culture, partly influenced by the national discourses about this topic. These pedagogical institutions allow people to spark their curiosity and to go beyond the knowledge they provide, with the support of Sámi people, raising further challenges, and the aim to reach a larger audience.

The discourses on the colonisation and decolonisation of Sápmi in Sweden

When discussing with the different people who have been part of my fieldwork, it was interesting to observe on what terms the historical context, especially the colonisation, was

mentioned. Among ten Swedish people interviewed, only four of them audibly brought up the concept of colonisation and spoke about the different discrimination faced by Sámi people, alongside other national minorities. It is easy to understand that the absence of these terms doesn't mean that the other interviewees aren't aware of the historical context, which is more of a given, common ground during these conversations. This doesn't mean that every Swedish citizen is aware or accepting of the colonisation, as the colonisation of Sápmi is still a controversial issue (Ojala 2020). However, not clearly using the terms related to colonisation appears symptomatic of the approach of the Swedish government toward the colonisation of Sápmi.

As it appeared from few mentions of the Swedish education system, it seems that the Swedish government made the choice to not speak on clear terms about this part of its history and didn't intelligibly address it publicly. As pointed out by Lovisa, librarian at Lomma's city library, "no one has really said, you know, 'I'm sorry' and it's still a bit problematic". However, as highlighted by Burman (2016), the government plays an important role in the process of decolonisation, for example through the implementation of politics or the inclusion of indigenous people in political institutions. Therefore, it is possible to imagine that, with the Swedish government not addressing clearly the colonisation, it can become harder to implement actions towards the decolonisation of Sápmi and Sámi people.

Moreover, not mentioning the historical context and colonisation can erase part of it, by not assessing the connections between colonisation and the situation of Sámi people today. For instance, when mentioning the lack of books written in Sámi languages, both Gill and Linn, librarians at Lund's and Helsingborg's city libraries, didn't express directly the connection between this absence of books in Sámi languages to the loss of language resulting from the colonisation and discrimination associated, even though it appears that they both draw the parallel between these, as will be discussed later. It is possible to imagine that not talking about the colonisation may lead to a wrong or incomplete picture of it and its empirical consequences both on Sámi people and on the Swedish society.

During few conversations with Tuva, Norwegian Sámi woman, the concept of Sweden as a "politically correct" society came back twice. The first time, talking about the reactions of people when she announces that she is Sámi, here is what she explains

> The Swedish reaction is as most Swedish reactions are, pretty much trying to be neutral and trying to be as politically correct as possible. They don't ask a lot of questions

> because I think in their head that would be offensive, but I'd rather have the questions than them assuming things.

Following her reflection, it seems that Swedish people not asking questions nor talking about the colonial past doesn't mean that they present a "politically correct" discourse about it. On the contrary, as highlighted by Tuva, not addressing it could possibly appear as offensive, at the antipodes of what "politically correct" would mean.

Later on, while discussing the lack of media coverage of the Sámi national day that she noticed in Sweden this year, she points out that it's interesting "how the country of Sweden wishes everyone see them as like the political correct [sic] society doesn't acknowledge the colonising story of the Sámi". When the Swedish government decides to not talk about the colonisation of Sápmi and Sámi people, it doesn't mean that they are neutral and not taking a political stance. For example, Victoria, curator of the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" explains that the Swedish government hasn't yet signed the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention of 1989, C169, regulating the rights of indigenous people, "because it would jeopardise the mining industry", something discussed also by Jonathan Eng in his thesis (2017). In this case, it appears that the government took a political stance, on the side of economic growth through mining, as has been discussed by researchers such as Rebecca Lawrence and Sara Moritz (2019). Moreover, it means that the Swedish government would avoid taking on some responsibilities that are its own, such as signing documents like the one mentioned above, or properly apologising for the colonisation of Sápmi and discrimination towards Sámi people, as underlined by Lovisa and mentioned above, compared to other Nordic countries who already did. As underlined by Victoria, "on a government level there's also responsibilities […] so there is a lot to do politically as well".

Moreover, the idealisation of Sweden as a "politically correct" country and society appear to prevent racism from being properly addressed, both by the government and by individuals. As highlighted by Alice, "a commonplace is that Sweden isn't a racist country but that's not true, racism very much exists in Sweden", based on a stereotype influencing both the Swedish perspective and the image outsiders have of Sweden, as discussed by Camilla Hällgren (2005). In the case of Sámi people, for example some years ago a chain of stores selling party supplies and costumes started to sell a costume largely inspired by Sámi traditional outfits, which is a very blatant form of racism and highlights that Sweden isn't over the racism towards Sámi people, this racism is still significantly alive. This is one example among various others,

happening especially in Northern Sweden, but pointing out that racism towards Sámi people occurs at a national level and isn't geographically delimited to Sápmi. Therefore, it seems that by keeping this image of Sweden as a "politically correct" society there isn't much space left to discuss and solve its issues with racism, and later move forward and improve the situation.

In regards to this situation, all the efforts that will be discussed in the following chapter, through the law, appear in the eyes of some Sámis who are more politically engaged, like Tuva, as "a cute thing on paper" without any tangible action on the inclusion and improvement of living conditions of Sámi people. Therefore, a call for Sweden to "shape up and be better", as Tuva said, keeps growing in Sámi communities living across Sweden, and the fight of Sámi people to defend and take back their right seems far from being in the past.

In conclusion, a particular way for Sweden to talk about the colonisation of Sápmi and Sámi people is to create a specific paradigm of decolonisation and discourses about decolonisation and racism, which aren't always meeting the expectations and needs of Sámi people.

Chapter 6 – When the laws and ideals meet the reality

Representation at the core

There are different ways for a minority to be represented in society. One of them is through the presence of the minority's language in different contexts. In Sweden, this presence is supervised by several laws and policies implemented at a national level, such as the Act on National Minorities and Minority Languages, adopted in 2009, and the Library Act. According to the Library Act, section 5, every library should give particular attention to providing books and literature in the five national minorities' languages, together with other languages than Swedish and literature in "easy-to-read" Swedish, for people from the five national minorities and people whose mother tongue isn't Swedish. This can be interpreted as a recommendation that every public library across Sweden should own some books in the national minority languages, including Sámi.

When visiting different libraries around Skåne, I could notice some books in the different Sámi languages displayed on the shelves, in the city libraries of Malmö, Lund, Eslöv, Lomma, Helsingborg, Landskrona Båstad and Staffanstorp. When asked about the presence of books in Sámi languages at the library they work at, librarians from Lund's, Malmö's, Helsingborg's, Lomma and Eslöv's city libraries all explained that this choice was dictated by the law. Nevertheless, they all agreed on the importance of having such law, for several reasons. First, having laws regulating the presence of books in all national minorities' languages in every public library across Sweden is a good way to incite them to prioritise acquiring those books. As underlined by Ilda, librarian at Malmö's city library in charge of buying books in different languages, librarians in Sweden are quite free when it comes to purchasing books, meaning that purchases often depend on the librarian's own interests and background, as confirmed by Linn, librarian at Helsingborg's city library. Therefore, Ilda reinforces the idea that, with the *Bibliotekslag*, public libraries "have to make space for minorities", and prioritise buying books in minority languages.

Moreover, Ilda explains that it makes the librarians' work easier, as they receive a budget dedicated to these acquisitions. This law can also be used as a justification, as an authority for librarians to establish the presence of books in minority languages at their libraries against critiques from people who wouldn't agree to these books available, as highlighted by Alice, currently working at a school library, when discussing the legislation for school and public libraries in Sweden. Sweden isn't the only country implementing those kinds of

regulations for national minorities, especially indigenous minorities. In Canada for example, Calls to Action were created in 2015, where among decisions were asked to work towards "protecting Indigenous languages, providing appropriate curricula, and supporting Indigenous research" (Farnel et al. 2018: 11). These Calls to Action were later used as a ground to create various initiatives across Canadian libraries, as it has been the case for instance at the libraries of the University of Alberta (ibid.).

In New Zealand, the National Library is working towards the inclusion of its ethnic minorities. For example, in the document *Collections Policy. Access*, the version established in 2003 emphasises the goal to "identify, preserve and make available information relevant to New Zealand and its multicultural heritage, and the Pacific" (National Library of New Zealand, cited in Fuentes-Romero 2004: 53), for example by improving the access to Maori resources in New Zealand libraries. Similarly, library institutions in Australia are aiming at providing resources reflecting the multiculturality of its population, through documents such as the *Strategic Plan* of the State Library of South Australia for 1995, or several years of the *Strategic Plan* of the National Library of Australia (Fuentes-Romero 2004: 54). Closer to Sweden, in another Scandinavian country, the *1983 Public Libraries Act* centred on questions related to ethnic minorities living in Denmark, with the intent to both integrate them to the Danish society and support them maintaining their native language and culture (Berger 2002).

The requirement for all public libraries in Sweden to own and draw attention to national minorities, including Sámi people, is also a way to make them more visible, and acknowledge their identity and history. Making national minorities more visible through books is something mentioned by both Linn and Lovisa, librarian at Lomma's city library. According to Lovisa, having these books and bringing them to light can be a manner to show that their presence is being acknowledged, but more importantly that their history, and all discrimination they faced are recognised. All five national minorities in Sweden have faced, and are still facing, discrimination through time, in different ways for each of them, and are now part of policies working towards their inclusion into the Swedish society, such as the Act on National Minorities and Minority Languages. This could explain why books in these minority languages are located together on the same shelving unit in the city libraries of Lund, Lomma, Helsingborg and Båstad. Their similar experiences could be a reason for official institutions to gather them under the same section in policies, such as the Act on National Minorities and Minority Languages, and the *Bibliotekslag*, and maybe later gather books in the minorities' languages in a specific part of public libraries.

In the city libraries of Lund and Lomma, a sign is clearly indicating the name of the five minority languages, together with the flag of each national minority. However, books in Sámi languages are located together with other finno-ugric languages, usually Estonian and Hungarian, at both the main university library and library for literature and languages of Lund University, as well as Landskrona's city library. It is possible that this choice relates to the purpose of the libraries, research libraries where languages are organised depending on the linguistic group they belong to, as Sámi languages are finno-ugric languages.

It is possible to wonder why public libraries decide to specifically display some books in national minorities' languages on their premises, considering that most of their collections are stored inside the magasin, which can be borrowed under request from visitors. When visiting the different public libraries, each one usually displayed one shelf, or one shelving unit in the case of a bigger library like Malmö's city library, of books in Sámi languages. These books are usually fiction books, in Nord Sámi for the major part, as it is the most spoken dialect in Sweden, as underlined by Ida and Kia during their presentation in Önnestads folkhögskolan. However, when looking up their full collection in the catalogue, for instance in the city libraries of Malmö and Lund, a larger amount of books were indicated, above two hundred in Malmö and above a hundred in Lund, meaning librarians made a choice to display some of the books, instead of others, and by displaying them, showcase the presence of Sámi people as a national minority in Sweden.

Different techniques are used by some of the libraries to put the national minorities of Sweden in the spotlight. Besides the signs displayed at the city libraries of Lund and Lomma, Båstad's city library presented a narrow four-sided turning shelving unit located close to the entrance, where each side presented a selection of books connected to one of the national minorities, in this case Romas, Tornedalians, Jews and Sámis. The side dedicated to Sámi culture includes both fiction books and facts books. Making Sámi people visible in public libraries doesn't go only through having books in Sámi languages. As pointed out by both Ilda and Linn, librarians at Malmö's and Helsingborg's city libraries, it also goes through providing books about Sámis, written in Swedish. Ilda explains that having books about a minority in Swedish is a way to allow both people who are part of said minority to read about their history, to connect with their past and their present, and the rest of the population to learn about the history, about the way minorities have been treated, "because if you forget the history, you can make the same mistake again", as she said during our interview. In that sense, having these

books can be seen as a cure against prosecution, discrimination, even genocide, of national minorities.

Beyond being visible, beyond having their history acknowledged, being able to find books in Sámi languages can also be a way to feel included in the Swedish society. Having the possibility to read in one's native language is something important, as underlined by both Ilda and Darin, librarian at Eslöv's city library. According to Alice, when discussing her wish to provide more books in languages other than Swedish and English at the school library where she works, it is especially important for children to see that they are represented, that they are cared about, seen, and heard. This idea can be broadened to everyone, not only children. Everyone should feel represented inside a public library. This idea resonates with the work of Spivak, pointing out the importance for people who are part of a minority to feel heard by the majority, not only through their words but more generally through their actions. The notion of being represented, of being acknowledged, was particularly central during the interview with Darin, who repeated the word *bekräfta*, to acknowledge, various times along the discussion. Giving his own experience, as a Middle Eastern man arriving for the first time some decades ago, he describes the happiness he felt when seeing books in his native language at the library, and supposes that any Sámi coming from the North and seeing books in their language in Eslöv's city library would feel the same.

Moreover, Darin emphasises the importance for public libraries to make everyone feel at home, helped, and included. He adds that "*bibliotekets policy är att alla ska känna sig hemma i biblioteket*" (translation: the library's policy is that all should feel at home in the library). In that sense, the *Biblioteksla*g isn't only working towards including the five national minorities of Sweden, but more broadly all minorities living in Sweden, as interpreted by the interviewed librarians, including minorities emerging from immigration to Sweden. This notion of feeling at home is discussed in detail by Marija Dalbello (2022), where she describes the different dimensions of feeling at home and applies it to the specific case of the New York Public Library's system when it comes to working towards the inclusion of immigrants in New York City, United States of America. Among various dimensions, the concept of feeling at home as a "citizenship machine" (Dalbello 2022: 15) is quite interesting, where public libraries turn into a means to integrate immigrants into society, through the implementation of different programs, like events and happenings related to different areas of everyday life, cultural events, services directed to non-English speakers, either to help them learn the English language or to assist them in different administrative tasks, and finally book collections in the different mother

tongues of the local immigrant community (ibid.). Similar programs are implemented in Sweden, for instance with cultural events where one specific culture is put in the spotlight and celebrated, through discussions and food among others, as described by Darin, or with workshops provided by the municipality, religious institutions or associations to assist immigrants who don't speak Swedish fluently yet in their administrative procedures, as described by Lovisa.

In various public libraries located in Malmö, including the city library and neighbourhood libraries of Rosengård, Lindängen, Kirseberg and Bellevuegård, the section for books in other languages than Swedish is indicated by the sign "*Malmös många språk*" (translated by "the many languages of Malmö"). This could show a process of inclusion of minorities, including Sámi people, into the Swedish society, compared to for instance discourses highlighted by Dalbello (2022), where the term "foreigner" is central. However, the inclusion isn't always visible, for example with the indication "*utländska språk*" (translated by "foreign languages") in the city libraries of Lomma and Båstad and "*världens språk*" (translated by "languages of the world"), seeming to locate those minorities outside of the Swedish society.

In conclusion, despite the first assumption of the absence of Sámi people in Southern Sweden from people who live in Skåne, including librarians, to be able to find books in Sámi languages plays an important role to show that the history of Sámi people is acknowledged, make them visible, and make them feel included in Swedish society.

What the absence tells us

For the reasons cited above, the librarians interviewed don't pay attention to the number of borrowings of books in Sámi languages, even though they are all aware that there are very few or none. The librarians from Malmö's, Lund's, Lomma's and Eslöv's city libraries all mentioned that books in Sámi languages probably weren't borrowed during the interviews. After our interview, Lovisa, librarian at Lomma's city library, checked with and confirmed that the books in Sámi languages owned by the library haven't been borrowed, similarly to the books in Yiddish. However, they all think these numbers don't matter. Gill, librarian at Lund's city library, adds that "it's not in the law, and it wasn't ever, to get every book to be as much loaned as possible, because it's enough if somebody finds it […] otherwise we should be a book shop".

When asked about the reasons for these few borrowings, they assume that it relates to the absence of Sámis in Skåne, as has been a usual answer throughout my fieldwork, as mentioned in the introduction. However, another truth emerged from it: there are Sámis in

Southern Sweden. Some of them even founded an association, Samer i Syd. Therefore, the alleged absence of Sámis in Skåne isn't enough to explain why books in Sámi languages available at public libraries aren't being borrowed as much as other books. While we will later explore and analyse the ideas and stereotypes behind this conception, a question remains, and we wonder why Sámis living in Skåne don't borrow those books.

One reason suggested by Linn, librarian at Helsingborg's city library, may be that nowadays many Sámis don't speak nor read any Sámi dialect. This idea has been confirmed when meeting several women who identify themselves as Sámis. Starting from the youngest ones, who are in their twenties, Ida and Kia didn't learn Sámi as children. Later, while they were in their early twenties, they moved to Sápmi, to the city of Jokkmokk where they studied for few years at the Samernas utbildningscentrum, the Sámi's education centre, an institution directed by Sámi people, for Sámi people, to teach them about their culture and their language. At the Samernas utbildningscentrum, Ida and Kia learned *duodji*, the Sámi crafts, and one of the Sámi dialects, North Sámi (*nordsamiska*), which is the one most spoken in Sweden. Today, they know the basics of this dialect but aren't fluent, since it is quite difficult to practice it, as they explained during their presentation at Önnestads folkhögskolan.

Similarly, Tuva, Sámi woman of the same generation coming from Norway, didn't learn to speak Sámi as a child. Now, as a young adult in her twenties, she wants and is trying to learn the Sámi dialect that was spoken by her family. Emma, Sámi woman in her fifties coming from Gällivare, in Northern Sweden who moved to Southern Sweden few decades ago, who is from the generation prior, told me that she doesn't speak Sámi, while Majbritt, who is older than her, speaks Lule Sámi. However, Majbritt told me during one of our conversations that while she can speak Lule Sámi, she isn't able to write it. She explained to me the reasons why, which will be analysed later.

As highlighted by Burman, the concept of loss of elements from one's ethnic identity, especially the language, is likely to happen throughout colonisation (2016: 72). There are several reasons explaining the loss of Sámi languages across Northern Europe. Firstly, throughout the colonisation process of Sápmi, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia introduced the creation of boarding schools for Sámi children. As underlined by Anderson, the assimilation of colonised people into the nation-state also goes through education, strengthening the process of nation-building by providing a uniform discourse (2006). In these boarding schools, the use of Sámi languages was forbidden, to the advantage of Swedish language, to assimilate Sámi

children into the Swedish society, as underlined by Lynette McGuire (2022: 4-5), accompanied by various policies with a similar goal. Colonial contexts oftentimes come with the concept of linguistic imperialism, as theorised by Phillipson (Spolsky 2002: 140), where the enforcement of the coloniser's language becomes a tool for the assimilation of the colonised people. Moreover, as highlighted by Anderson, the process of nation-building partly relies on shared characteristics, among which language is quite central (2006: 109), phenomenon that resonates with the Swedish context and the enforcement of Swedish language on Sámi people.

Even though boarding schools for Sámi children have been reformed since their creation at the beginning of the 20th century (Svonni: 2021), parts of their structure are still similar, and have resembling consequences on Sámi children, including on their knowledge and practice of Sámi languages. Telling me about her childhood, Majbritt recalls the Swedish school reform that led her to study in a Swedish school, instead of a Sámi boarding school. While both students and teachers in Sámi boarding school are Sámi themselves, in the Swedish school where she studied, all other children and all employees spoke Swedish. She was the only child speaking Lule Sámi, one of the Sámi dialects spoken in Sweden, which made her experience difficulties in both languages. She had to learn and adapt to Swedish in the school context, while not being able to practice Lule Sámi. She felt deeply handicapped in the learning process of both languages, and, today, while she can perfectly speak both Swedish and Lule Sámi, she still experiences difficulties when writing in both these languages. When we talked together, as we talked in Swedish, communication was made difficult by my lack of knowledge of the Swedish language, and the fact that we couldn't completely converse and understand each other brought back those difficult memories from her childhood, to this own sorrow, "*den egna sorgen*", to not be able to fully understand people around her, on both sides.

The Swedish education system thus not only led to Sámi children losing their native language but also made them painfully feel excluded from the rest. The emotional weight of this situation could explain why some Sámis from the same generation as Majbritt lost their native language, and consequently didn't pass it on to their children and descendants. Moreover, the enforced religious conversion of Sámi people is another factor in the loss of language. Indeed, as highlighted by Spolsky, indigenous languages can be preserved through religion and religious ceremonies, therefore a massive religious conversion of an indigenous group is often accompanied by the loss of their native language (2002: 147-150).

Another factor that explains the loss of Sámi languages is closely connected to the familial transmission of languages, especially indigenous languages. In their articles, both Nevins (2004) and Spolsky (2002) highlight the important role played by the family, especially by the older generations, who are usually the forefront teachers when teaching an indigenous language to the children. For example, Ida and Kia are Sámi because their paternal grandmother is Sámi herself, but, as their grandmother never spoke in Sámi in front of them during their childhood, they didn't learn the language, before studying at the Samernas utbildningcentrum later in their youth. Nevertheless, they found themselves unable to practice it, even today after learning it, as Sámi is mostly spoken in the private, familial circle. For Tuva, the process of losing the language in her family was quite similar. Her maternal grandfather, who died before she was born, stopped speaking Sámi at some point in his life, and never pass it on to her mother before. Nowadays, the words she knows in Sámi mostly come from interactions with her relatives and their friends.

Some reasons seem to explain why their elders took the decision, at some point in their life, to stop practising their native language. In the case of Tuva's family, she underlines that Sámi culture, together with the language, has been quite stigmatised in Norway, through what she calls the "norwegianifying/gentrification processes", echoing the concept of assimilation developed by Lynette McGuire (2022: 4-5). Moreover, this decision oftentimes results from the strong stigmatisation faced by their elders. Analysing the reaction of her mother, who didn't investigate her Sámi heritage that much, compared to the journey Tuva engaged into, she guesses that it could relate to her growing up in the North, where discrimination towards Sámi people is more blatant, as discussed earlier. Therefore, not embracing her Sámi heritage, and hence not passing it to her children, could be a way to protect them from the same discrimination she faced. Similarly, Navajo parents aren't teaching their children their native language, to spare them the discrimination they went through because of their language (Spolsky 2002: 145). When asked by students at Önnestads folkkhögskolan about the reason why their grandmother didn't speak Sámi at home, Ida and Kia answered that she thought "*det är fult att prata samiska*" (translation: it is ugly/bad/something negative to talk Sámi). It is possible to imagine that she didn't come up with that idea independently, but probably was told for decades similar things and thus internalised them with time.

These reflections on the loss of language by current Sámi people circle back to the primary question of the absence of Sámi people in Skåne. There have been discussions, both among language activists and among linguistic researchers, on the relation between language

and identity, some people arguing a "totalistic linkage between language and identity" (Errington 2003: 725), thus challenging the identification of one as Sámi if they lost the language. This question isn't simple to solve and should be looked at carefully. For Sámi people, speaking the language isn't a prerequisite to be allowed to call oneself Sámi. For instance, Emma undoubtedly identifies herself as Sámi, without question, and made clear during our conversation that she doesn't speak any Sámi language, stressing that however, she speaks Swedish, Finnish, English and French. Nevertheless, there seems to be a strong connection between self-identification and learning the language, with Ida and Kia starting learning Nord Sámi in their twenties, and Tuva expressing her wish to learn Sámi. She also pointed out how important it is for her to focus on people who lost their Sámi heritage, lost the language, and to provide structures for them to take their heritage back, for example through learning the language, in a more political perspective, for example through her engagement with the Norwegian Sameting, Sámi parliament. It is then possible to think that, even though knowing the language isn't mandatory, it still takes a central place in someone's self-identification as Sámi. As underlined by Burman, this process of loss is influencing the ways one is feeling they belong to an indigenous community, and thus influencing the processes they implement to counter it (2016: 122).

Finally, to be a Sámi living in Southern Sweden, one needs to identify as Sámi. However, as highlighted by McGuire (2022), many colonial structures and processes implemented by the governments aimed toward the reduction or suppression of the self-determination of Sámi people, including their capacity to identify themselves as Sámi. For instance, any person of Sámi descent who wasn't subsisting from reindeers herding but from another activity was considered non-Sámi and assimilated to the rest of the Swedish population (op.cit. 5). As this happened several decades ago, for the most part, there are most likely many families, many people, who are of Sámi descent, and could identify themselves as Sámis, but don't because they aren't aware of their heritage, of their family history, that has been repressed some generations ago, as mentioned several times by Tuva during the interview we did together.

This kind of case is perfectly illustrated by Mats Jonsson in his graphic novel *När vi var Samer*, where he tells his family's history. Being born and raised in Northern Sweden, he never knew about his Sámi heritage until the death of his paternal grandfather, who left some documents behind that made his family realised that he was Sámi, but had to repress this part of his identity and "become Swedish" to keep his lands, his rights, and prevent his descendants from the discrimination his elders faced. In this graphic novel, Mats Jonsson recounts his story,

starting before he knew, and what followed this discovery, his journey in the footsteps of his Sámi heritage. It is important to not erase this portion of people and to realise that the number of Sámi people and people of Sámi descent in Skåne, like in Sweden in general, is higher than it seems.

Moreover, as underlined by Tuva, it isn't because someone is Sámi and aware of it that they would "scream out at the top of their lungs" that they are, considering the history of systemic discrimination and racism that Sámi people faced throughout time. This phenomenon is also highlighted by Hylland Eriksen, when he writes that "In the early 1960s, the coastal Sami were a culturally stigmatised group, meaning that they were looked down upon by the dominant Norwegians. For this reason, they under-communicated their ethnic identity in public contexts, in the shop, on the local steamer and so on. They then presented themselves as Norwegians, and overcommunicated what they saw as Norwegian culture to escape from the stigma." (Hylland Eriksen 2010: 280-281).

In conclusion, exploring the reasons why books in Sámi languages aren't borrowed in public libraries allows the reader to go beyond the assumed absence of Sámis in Southern Sweden, but rather to understand the processes behind the loss of the languages and further challenges related to this loss, especially in the experience of Sámi people.

But how effective are these laws and regulations?

Coming back to the law, the way ideas are articulated in it, the ideals formulated by the different librarians resulting from it, it is possible to observe how they appear to fit the needs of Sámi people living in Southern Sweden, in light of the previous reflections. Firstly, some libraries don't have books in Sámi languages on their premises, such as the public libraries located in different neighbourhoods of Malmö, for example Husie, Rosengård, Lindängen, Kirseberg, Limhamn and Bellevuegård, in different neighbourhoods of Lund, for example Linero and Klostergården, as well as in several villages that are part of Lund's municipality, for example Södra Sandby and Dalby. In bigger cities like Malmö, Lund and Helsingborg, a *kommun*, municipality, is established, gathering the different neighbourhoods of the city as well as some of the surrounding villages. In those *kommun* books in Sámi languages can usually be found at the main city library, while public libraries located in the neighbourhoods and surrounding villages rather focus on having books in the languages spoken by people living in the same area, pragmatically. For instance, in the area Rosengård in Malmö, without any books in Sámi languages, a shelving unit is dedicated to books in English, Persian and Arabic. Considering

that Rosengård has quite large communities of inhabitants coming from Iran and Arabic-speaking countries, it appears that Rosengårdsbiblioteket focused on providing books in both Persian and Arabic to fit the demography of the area. Moreover, in a context of war in Ukraine, with many Ukrainians having to emigrate, and more Russians fleeing from their country, the community of inhabitants coming from Ukraine and Russia became wider in bigger Swedish cities like Malmö, which can explain the presence of several books in Ukrainian and Russian, for example in Rosengårdsbiblioteket, Garaget and Kirsebergsbiblioteket.

While some might think that these choices, leading to the absence of books in Sámi languages in some of the public libraries, contradict the Library Law of Sweden, on the contrary this aligns with a notion highlighted by many librarians that I met, the inclusion of people whose mother tongue isn't Swedish through the structure of public libraries in Sweden, who are defined as part of the prioritised groups, *prioriterade grupper*, in the *Bibliotekslag*. According to the fourth and fifth sections of the *Bibliotekslag*, these *prioriterade grupper* are people with disabilities, the five national minorities, and people whose mother tongue isn't Swedish. Therefore, by deciding to prioritise purchasing books in languages such as Persian, Arabic, Ukrainian or Russian, as mentioned above, public libraries are following the *Bibliotekslag* to meet the needs of the *prioriterade grupper*.

To include those groups of people, public libraries thus need to adapt to their audience, to the people living in said area, neighbourhood, or village. This concept of adapting the purchases of books to the public of the library has been highlighted by the librarians of Malmö's, Lund's, and Helsingborg's city libraries during our interviews. This is also something Alice keeps in mind when purchasing new books for the school library she works at, to adapt to the needs of the students, in their mother tongue, especially when some of them expressed to her that they would like to be able to read some books in their native language. Therefore, to be effective, people working at public libraries in Sweden shouldn't blindly follow what the law dictates, but rather, as they are doing, adapt to the particular context of each library to fulfil what emerges as one of the missions of the *Bibliotekslag*, being the inclusion of every Swedish resident in society.

In the *Bibliotekslag*, under the section dedicated to the prioritised groups, the fourth paragraph is centred on people who have disabilities, and that each library should provide literature and technical help according to their needs, to allow them to equally access the resources of the library. This is something that Gill, librarian at Lund's city library, for example

pointed out during our interview. However, having these different minorities, people with disabilities and national minorities, together with other ethnic minorities, gathered under the same section of the *Biblioteksplan* can generate obstacles when it comes to the programmes and structures that the library can implement, on both sides. As they are gathered under the section "*Prioriterade grupper*", it is likely that they are assigned to the same employee or focus group, while they call for distinct types of actions and programmes. For instance, Adam, librarian at the Library for Literature and Languages at Lund University, recounts his participation in a working group for equal opportunities. The notion of equal opportunities is broad, meaning they had to focus on all kinds of discrimination, including discrimination faced by national minorities, as well as discrimination faced by people with disabilities. Therefore, they decided to focus more on the questions around discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, disabilities and such, rather than discrimination and inclusion of national minorities, as they considered that "the amount of work would be very very disproportionate to the number of people that would benefit from it", said Adam during our interview. While this wouldn't perfectly correspond to the way the law is written, it corresponds to an interpretation of it, given by librarians working at public libraries. Moreover, it lines up with the bigger picture, with the reality of the field, with very few people reading any Sámi dialects in Skåne, that would benefit from it, while a focus on other kinds of discrimination and on adaptation to disabilities will benefit a larger part of the students.

Another prioritised group in Swedish public libraries is children, as pointed out by Gill, librarian at Lund's city library. As highlighted by Alice and her in their respective interviews, it is important for children to have the opportunity to read in their native language, both for them not to lose their mother tongue and to improve their capacity to learn other languages, such as Swedish. Therefore, the public libraries in Sweden make an effort to especially provide books for children, also in the national minorities' languages, as I could notice during my visits to the different city libraries in Skåne and as librarians emphasised during the interviews with me. As Gill, librarian at Lund's city library, told me "[they] have plans for how to use the money, and in Sweden children's department is always *favoriserade*". In Lomma, as explained by Lovisa, the schools are sending a form to the families of their students, that they can fill voluntarily with the languages other than Swedish that they speak at home. The results are then collected by the city library, basing the book acquisitions on them. Here it seems that children are the prioritised audience when it comes to acquiring books in other languages, which appear to follow the line of the *Biblioteksplan*. Darin, librarian at Eslöv's city library also emphasises

that "*våra barn är vår framtid*" (translation: "our children are our future") which can make sense of the importance of children, both in the *Bibliotekslag* and in the missions of Swedish librarians. Moreover, talking about books in the national minorities' languages, including Sámi languages, Ilda, librarian at Malmö's city library underlines that, despite the rare borrowings, "at least the small children's books have been borrowed", showing the importance for public libraries in Sweden to provide these books. Their presence also serves as a bridge to reach the adults, the parents, who wouldn't necessarily look for or borrow books in their native language for themselves, but often come to the library to borrow some books for their children, or books that they can all read together at home, as described by Ilda.

Some librarians expressed other obstacles to having books in Sámi languages in every public library in Sweden, practicality that doesn't seem to have been anticipated by the government when establishing the *Bibliotekslag*. As highlighted by Ilda, there are very few books in Sámi languages being printed, compared to other national minority languages such as Finnish, with a much broader collection of books being published and printed regularly. There are probably various reasons for this lack of books being printed, referring to issues discussed above. Therefore, in the case of bigger libraries, such as the city library of Malmö, the librarian in charge of acquiring books in the national minorities' languages will buy all of the newly printed books in Sámi languages, like Ilda is doing for Malmö's city library.

However, for smaller libraries with less budget, this creates another issue. Since there are few books in Sámi languages being printed, and they aren't bought in as large quantities as other books, they are fairly expensive, as stated by the librarians at Malmö's, Lomma and Eslöv's city libraries, making it more difficult for smaller libraries to buy them. In those cases, public libraries depend on other systems and structures. For instance, the city libraries of Lomma and Eslöv rely on institutions such as *Kulturstöd* and *Kulturrådet*, at a national level, regularly sending out selections of books in different languages, both for adults and children, for free to public libraries around Sweden. Moreover, all public libraries in Sweden are connected through a system, making possible for any of them to borrow documents from another library, called *fjärr lån* in Swedish, meaning that a public library in Skåne for instance can loan books from a public library in Sápmi, as each national minority in Sweden has a reference library and the one for Sámi is located in Northern Sweden, or to the International Library, *Kungsholmens Internationella bibliotek*, in Stockholm, as explained by Lovisa. These systems can act as solutions for public libraries in Sweden, and especially in Skåne, to be able

to provide books in Sámi languages, as recommended by the law and regulations, despite the costs of these books.

However, regarding the selection of books in Sámi languages presented by public libraries in Skåne, considering what was mentioned above, the usefulness of having such books can still be questioned. As established earlier, several Sámis, for instance among the ones I met, don't speak any Sámi language. Therefore, for them seeing books in Sámi languages, as well as in other minority languages, in public libraries can be seen as "a cute thing on paper, doesn't do much action toward including the Sámis or the other minorities", said Tuva, young Sámi woman from Norway who has been quite active politically in different fields, including defending Sámi rights. Something that could be interesting, and perhaps more fruitful, could be for example to buy and provide language textbooks and such literature for learning some of the Sámi languages, since nowadays various Sámis from the newer generations, particularly young adults, are putting the focus back on learning their indigenous language. However, when visiting different public libraries in Southern Sweden and looking at their collections of language textbooks, I didn't see any textbooks to learn or practise any Sámi language.

Therefore, it is especially important for public libraries in Sweden to also provide books written in Swedish, either about Sámi culture and history, as mentioned by Ilda and Linn, but also fiction books written by Sámi authors, as underlined by Linn and Alice. The latter especially emphasises the importance of putting those books, fiction books written by Sámi authors, in the spotlight. However, this isn't something I could notice in the different libraries in Skåne, except for the city library of Båstad, putting a shelving unit about four of the national minorities close to the entrance, where people are more likely to notice them when coming into the library. On the contrary, going a bit more up North, it is possible to notice that Sámi authors, and Sámi culture more largely, are more put to the forefront. In the city library of Stockholm, *Stockholms stadsbibliotek*, in front of the main entrance are displayed few books, including children's books, from Sámi authors as reading recommendations, for all Swedish residents, together with some signs presenting the five national minorities of Sweden and especially the Sámis. In the city library of Östersund, *Östersunds bibliotek*, a whole room named *Samiskt rum* is dedicated to the Sámis and their culture, displaying, both books from different scientific disciplines about areas of Sámi culture and history, in Swedish, Norwegian, Sámi, English and French, and a section of fiction books, music records and other media in the different Sámi languages spoken in Sweden.

It doesn't mean that those two libraries are representative of all public libraries in Northern Sweden and the capital. For example, going further North, the city library of Jokkmokk, *Jokkmokks stadsbibliotek*, doesn't put in the spotlight Sámi culture and Sámi languages as much as could be expected considering the importance of the city for Sámi people, as an important cultural meeting place for Sámis, for example with the Samernas utbildningcentrum, or more importantly the annual Sámi market, *Jokkmokk marknad*. On the first floor of the library, a section called *Jokkmokks rummet* gathers books from different scientific disciplines about the city of Jokkmokk, including its Sámi inhabitants, who have been and still are a large part of it, and two shelving units are dedicated to fiction books, both from Sámi authors and from other local authors. As for Stockholm's city library, which I visited on January 27th 2023, it is possible to imagine that these efforts mentioned above were connected to the imminence of the Sámi national day, on February 6th. As far as I know, no such arrangements were created in public libraries in Skåne.

In conclusion, similarly to other laws, to apply the *Bibliotekslag*, especially in Southern Sweden, means to adapt the decisions to the context, to prioritise groups that will make use of having these or those books, either other minorities than Sámi people or children for example, as well as to adapt to the needs of Sámi people, that may not be the same as the ones perceived by the government who implements those laws and regulations.

Chapter 7 – Changes in institutions

Changes in museology

Apart from public libraries, other places and institutions represent Sámi people in Sweden, even in Skåne, including museums. Nowadays, many changes happen in museums: in the way they are structured, the types of exhibitions they displayed, and the discourses they convey, not only in Sweden but in various countries and parts of the world. These changes can be connected to the process of decolonisation, since, as official institutions, museums play an important role in this process (Burman 2016). Basing her analysis on the case of the Netherlands and the United States of America, Christina Kreps brings to light an ongoing process of decolonisation of museums, defined as follow:

> a process of acknowledging the historical, colonial contingencies under which collections were acquired; revealing Eurocentric ideology and biases in the Western museum concept, discourse and practice, acknowledging and including diverse voices and multiple perspectives; and transforming museums through sustained critical analysis and concrete actions (Kreps 2011: 72)

Those changes appear to also affect the exhibitions displayed in Swedish museums about Sámi people, their history and culture. Looking at the structure of current exhibitions about this topic in Southern Sweden, it is possible to note an evolution in the relationship to the objects part of the museums' collections and displayed. Along the centuries, throughout colonisation, many European countries accumulated objects, artefacts, belonging to the people who were being colonised, using various techniques, from legal ones, such as buying these objects, to more illegal and unethical ones, such as robbery and the use of power dynamics to obtain different things, material and immaterial, from colonised people. In the beginning, and for some centuries, these artefacts were then displayed in museums, in large quantities, with few information on their history, the way they were collected, and who they belonged to before that. This is still visible today in several museums around Europe, like the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris, France, the Museo Egizio in Turin, Italy, or in Scandinavia the Nationalmuseet in Copenhagen, Denmark, with at least one section presenting an accumulation of artefacts, coming either from a specific geographical area or from various geographical areas gathered, with minimal informative signs.

This lack of information about the collections was underlined by the head of exhibitions at Kulturen, the curator of the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", and the producer of the exhibition

"The Arctic – While the ice is melting" at Nordiska Museet in Stockholm. In response, when building these exhibitions, an important work was done to find more information about the Sámi artefacts included in the museum's collections. Among the information searched for, they pay attention to the circumstances of the acquisition of these objects by the two museums. For Kulturen, Victoria, the independent curator who worked on the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", found out that all Sámi artefacts present in Kulturen's collection were bought by its founder Georg Karlin, either from people travelling to Sápmi, who purchased the objects he then bought from them when they came back to Skåne, or from Sámi people and families travelling through Skåne, such as the family Mårtensson mentioned earlier. Victoria recalls her relief seeing that the collection didn't include any human remains or objects coming from human remains. She explains that, if it had been the case, despite not wanting to exhibit those kinds of objects, they would have had to tackle the issue through the exhibition.

Regarding the exhibition "The Arctic – While the ice is melting", Max explains that all Sámi objects displayed are owned by Nordiska Museet. During the building of the exhibition, a careful research process took place to determine the exact circumstances of the collection of each item, for instance by looking in detail into the receipts, ensuring the objects weren't stolen, and so on. When discovering something unclear, a grey area, they decided to not display the said object before determining what happened, to then tackle the issue. While hoping none of the objects currently displayed through the exhibition were stolen, he is aware that if it was to appear to be the case, the museum will have to create a separate exhibition to discuss it and present it to the public, as he said during our interview.

Moreover, this phase of research was the occasion for Kulturen to correct some wrong information related to the artefacts owned by the museum. Daniel, head of exhibitions at Kulturen, explains that for instance they realised, thanks to the knowledge and help of the *duodjar* that will be mentioned later, that some objects classified as Sámi objects weren't Sámi, while some others were more "touristic attraction objects", specially crafted for tourists to buy them. Regarding those artefacts created for touristic purposes, they decided to display them through the exhibition, with a sign clearly indicating their purpose, which can be used as a tool to convey modern discourses about Sámi people, as will be discussed later.

This process undertaken during both the exhibitions "Fokus Sápmi" and "The Arctic – While the ice is melting" consisted in looking back into history, into the circumstances of the collection of these objects, and taking actions depending what was found. This comes close to

the notion of cultural restitution, defined by Kreps as "a process in which the historical conditions under which objects and remains were acquired are acknowledged and rectified through concrete actions" (2011: 75), concept part of the ongoing changes in museology around the world and related to the trend of decolonisation of museums described above.

This research process and aim to identify more precisely each object then reflect on the way they are displayed through the exhibitions. When previous exhibitions displayed their collections as an accumulation of artefacts, as mentioned above, as "old dead objects", said Daniel in our interview, resulting in a representation of people as "decorated stone age people", said Max in our interview, both Kulturen and Nordiska Museet worked to present these objects in a modern way. For instance, they picked fewer objects and displayed them with a sign containing more information about each object compared to other museums and exhibitions, sometimes accompanied by short texts about the people and specific parts of Sámi history in the case of the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi". Nevertheless, Daniel and Victoria expressed the wish to have done more to bring these objects to life, but they were hindered by practical concerns, such as the design of the room, those glass cases they had to use, the nature of the artefacts that needed to be stored in protective cases and not receive too much light to be preserved, and accessibility of the exhibition, making them write shorter texts so everyone could access the information, even if for example Victoria wanted to write more about an impressive woman belt displayed in the exhibition. After being displayed as mere decorations, evidences of the life of "exotic" people, said Victoria and Max, these objects are now put at the core of exhibitions, with an emphasis on their own history, and the stories of people they once belonged to.

In the exhibition "Urfolk möts – skogssamer och Mapuche", this perspective is clearly visible, with the artefacts put in the centre of the room, with a sign identifying each of them, and indicated who they belong to. This exhibition was co-created by some members of Samer i Syd who are Sámi themselves, and the objects displayed were all part of their personal and familial collections. Moreover, current exhibitions pay a closer attention to the techniques, the art of crafting, *duodj*, also corresponding to the way Sámi people are displaying their artefacts to a non-Sámi audience. The *sameförening* Samer i Syd organised on February 11th 2023 a day in Helsingør, Denmark, to celebrate the association's 20th anniversary. During the day, several speakers, members of the association or acquaintances, presented their work, their history. One of them is a Sámi author and ethnologist who presented her book about the different techniques of knitting gloves, the different patterns and their own histories. Here, the techniques are

highlighted and the artefacts are anchored in history, instead of being presented as objects floating outside of a historical and cultural context.

Similarly, Ájtte, museum located in Jokkmokk, in Sápmi, North Sweden, a museum designed by Sámis about Sámi history and culture, and the history of the land, Sápmi, brings to light the techniques and history behind *duodji*. Inside the museum, an entire room is dedicated to *duodji*, showing its history, with artefacts from the past and from present days, and descriptions of the aesthetic and technical differences between *duodji* from different areas within Sápmi, accompanying the objects displayed. Therefore, by learning from Sámi people, artists, researchers, as will be discussed later, non-Sámi curators, producers, and other employees in museums are trying to implement this perspective when displaying the Sámi objects belonging to their collections through diverse exhibitions.

Working with Sámi objects owned by Swedish museums also means working with the process of repatriation. Some Sámi objects once collected and added to the museums' collections are now being sent back to Sápmi and Sámi museums. While visiting Ájtte, I got the opportunity to look at a temporary exhibition created around the recent repatriation of objects from the Ethnographic Museum, Etnographiska Museet, in Stockholm, including clothing pieces, for adults and children, jewelleries, accessories, knives and other everyday items. As underlined by Max, producer at Nordiska Museet, the museum is currently working with one curator who is Sámi herself and opened a discussion with a focus group and employees at Ájtte about which objects from their collection should be returned to Sápmi, and given to Ájtte, and which ones should stay at Nordiska Museet. For now, the objects repatriated are mostly sacred objects, such as *seitas*, or *sieidis* in Nord Sámi, sacred stones used for rituals and sacrifices. This process of repatriation isn't unique to Sámi objects, but is happening in various countries around the globe (Schorch, McCarthy & Hakiwai 2016). This process is wanted by people previously colonised, as well as indigenous people. Inside Ájtte, the wish to have Sámi artefacts returned to Sápmi is for example materialised with a text on one of the signs inside the room for *duodji*, emphasising how repatriation of these "wonderful treasures" that are "kept far away from [them] Sámi people and Sápmi" would "enrich [their] lives". In Skåne, the most controversial repatriation has been the one of Sámi remains displayed at the Historical Museum, Historiska Museet, in Lund, as mentioned by Lovisa, librarian at Lomma's city library.

At Kulturen, none of the Sámi artefacts owned by the museum were repatriated to Sápmi during the creation of the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", since they were all legally acquired by the

founder of Kulturen. However, a process of virtual repatriation, as theorised by Philipp Schorch, Conal McCarthy and Arapata Hakiwai (2016), took place. The three authors analyse the ongoing changes in museology by following Maori objects displaying in museums in Germany, Hawai'i and Australia. Among different notions, the authors discuss the concept of virtual repatriation, in this context consisting in sending digital versions of Maori objects kept in other parts of the world, for example in Germany, back to museums located on Maori land, such as in Hawai'i and Australia. Even though in Kulturen the Sámi objects weren't sent back to Sápmi, neither physically nor digitally, a partial virtual repatriation happened. On the one hand, virtual repatriation happens by "filling in missing gaps of knowledge caused through colonial alienation, disconnection, and displacement" (op.cit. 56). For the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", it consisted in tracing back the origins of each object of the collection, finding the missing information and rectifying the mistakes.

On the other hand, virtual repatriation, as theorised by Schorch, McCarthy and Hakiwai, is about reconnecting the objects to their history, to their primary owner, and sometimes their descendants. Even though the team behind the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" didn't repatriate any of the artefacts, Victoria explains that, thanks to a close collaboration with the Sámi Council, Sametinget, they were able to find the relatives and descendants of the Sámi people who had a connection with the exhibition[4]. This process might have been a way for some of them to take back a part of their history that was erased through centuries of discrimination, and strengthen their identity, by learning about those objects once belonging to their ancestors, and reconnecting with a part of their Sámi identity, that some of them might not have been aware of before that.

Another reason can explain the choice to keep these Sámi objects in museums. When discussing it, Max, producer at Nordiska Museet, underlines that some artefacts should remain in Stockholm, as there is a quite large Sámi community in the city, who should be able to access resources about their culture and feel represented through institutions, including museums, as highlighted earlier. This vision isn't merely an ideal, but corresponds to a reality. For instance, in his graphic novel *När vi var Samer*, Mats Jonsson recalls his interactions with a Sámi collar displayed at Nordiska Museet, first through his journey of learning about his Sámi heritage, and then when telling his daughter about this heritage. As established previously, some Sámi people

[4] She didn't give much details on how they found and got in contact with the relatives and descendants of the Sámi people who had a connection with the exhibition.

live in Skåne and should be represented and included through exhibitions in the same way as Sámis living in Stockholm. As underlined by Victoria during the interview with her, some Sámis visited the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" and enjoyed it.

In conclusion, among the various changes happening in the structure of exhibitions, the place of objects plays an important role, with more attention given to the artefacts themselves, a re-reading of their history, often a reconnection to their origins, and a display in way that are closer to their place for Sámi people.

Changes in the actors and collaborators

As started to appear above, Swedish people weren't the only people involved in these exhibitions. Various Sámis have been involved, at different stages of the exhibitions. This idea suits the conceptualisation of the decolonisation of museums of Kreps, underlining that "acknowledging and including diverse voices and multiple perspectives" is part of the process (2011: 72), as it is visible in various museums in the United States of America presented in her essay. Therefore, it seems that changes in the actors and collaborators aren't unique to Swedish institutions, but rather happen in different parts of the world. It appears that indigenous people become actors, collaborators in the way they are represented in different institutions. Regarding Sweden in this paper, this phenomenon will be analysed regarding official institutions that are museums and libraries.

Firstly, Sámi people become counsellors, when people employed in these institutions seek their knowledge to paint a fair picture of Sámi history and culture. For the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", it started with Victoria, curator of the exhibition, travelling to Northern Sweden, to Sápmi, to meet the Sámi Council, Sametinget, and consult the Samiskt Informationcentrum, an information centre located in Östersund, related to Sametinget, providing information about the Sámis. When meeting them, she asked them to be "kind of fact checkers", by going through the different texts she wrote for the exhibition and ensuring she didn't convey false information. Moreover, they helped her with her research process, providing her with additional knowledge to complete her documents and guiding her to people who could help her go forward, among other things.

During her trip she met a *duodjar*, master of Sámi crafts, in a hotel in Jokkmokk. Showing her pictures of the collection held by Kulturen, she was amazed by it, seeing some objects she had never seen before. Victoria realised how much knowledge of *duodji* this Sámi woman has, and asked her to come to Skåne and work with them for a while. The *duodjar*

accepted and when she came to Kulturen, went through the whole collection of Sámi objects, to identity them, their nature and where they came from. Victoria recalls, "full of admiration for her", how she could even recognise the artisan of the object, determine when it was crafted and in which Sámi community only by looking at the stitches of a collar or at the material and patterns of a knife. She underlines that thanks to this *duodjar* they have been able to find many information about the artefacts, correct many mistakes, and thus go forward with the exhibition and the work mentioned above.

By sharing her knowledge with the team working on the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", the *duodjar* also allowed them to have more elements when it came to deciding how to deal with the objects owned by Kulturen, what to do with them, choices discussed above. The participation and collaboration of Sámi people appear here as an important element to finding "more culturally appropriate ways to manage and care for collections" (Kreps 2011: 79), important part in the process of decolonising museums.

Sámi people not only became advisors, but also creators and researchers themselves. At Nordiska Museet, the texts and content of the exhibition "The Arctic – While the ice is melting" have been produced by a gathering of researchers in both social and natural sciences from different institutions and universities across the Nordics countries, including Kjell-Åke Aronsson, researcher at Ájtte. When going through the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", in the last room the visitor has the possibility to try braiding some red threads in a typical Sámi pattern, activity thought about and created by the *duodjar* working with Victoria. She explains that the team wanted an interactive activity for the visitors to engage more with the exhibition. The *duodjar* was the person finding the kind of activity to implement, the braiding, as well as the pattern to recreate, considering that not all Sámi patterns are accessible to everyone, as was discussed earlier, and the choice to braid with four threads instead of three, making it accessible to a larger audience. She was the one shaping the activity, as she is the one who has the knowledge, and can transmit it.

At Dunkers Kulturhus, the exhibition "Urfolk möts – skogssamer och Mapuche" emerged from the initiative of two associations of indigenous people, the association Samer i Syd and the association Gulamtun, association of Mapuche people based in Malmö. As underlined by Majbritt in an exchange of emails, all content of the exhibition was created by those two associations. For the part about Sámi people, occupying half of the exhibition hall, all texts presented were written by members of Samer i Syd, first in Sámi, and then translated

to Swedish, and all objects displayed belong to members of the *sameförening* and their family. Majbritt explains that they received help and support from employees of Dunkers Kulturhus, providing them with a professional perspective on how to structure and shape the exhibition. A cooperation appears here between the cultural and historical knowledge of Sámi people and the museological knowledge of Swedish people working at the museum.

This highlights how indigenous people, here Sámi people, appropriate some techniques and media from the coloniser society to provide an image, a representation, of themselves to the mainstream audience. This notion isn't unique to Sámi people, but was implemented in diverse contexts, in different parts of the globe. For example, Terence Turner (2019) describes how a Kayapo community, indigenous people living in Brazil, is appropriating the techniques of video as a tool to produce a representation to themselves and share it with a larger audience. In Sweden some institutions wish to offer their spaces for Sámis and other minorities to make their own and present themselves the way they want. As highlighted by Gill, librarian at Lund's city library, institutions "have the technique and the room to do it", for external organisations and associations to create arrangements. However, this means that the initiative should come from the minorities themselves, including Sámi people, raising the challenges discussed previously.

Sometimes, the initiative comes from non-Sámi people and asks for the support and knowledge of Sámi people, to improve it. For example, teachers at Önnestads folkhögskolan, wanted to show the movie "Källok – gruva utanför Jokkmokk Norrbotten" to their students, a documentary dealing with the resistance from Sámi people to a mine project planned to take place in Jokkmokk, until the project was abandoned in 2018[5]. For the occasion, they contacted Samer i Syd and asked them to participate in the event, for students to be able to ask questions about Sámi history and culture, to Sámi people directly, after the movie screening. They accepted and Ida and Kia, the two young members of Samer i Syd, drove to Önnestad to take part in the event, introduce themselves and their history, and answer the students' questions.

Engaging Sámi people from today can also go through the use of objects. In the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" for example, the visitor can notice in the last room different objects crafted by contemporary *duodjar*. Moreover, Victoria, curator of the exhibition, explains that all materials and objects that can be found on the large table covered by glass were loaned to them by Sámi companies selling them. She adds that the birch trees that are used as a support

[5] The mine project is nowadays being discussed by the Swedish government again.

for the braiding activity were imported to Lund from Sápmi. Bringing elements from contemporary Sámi artisans can be a way to present Sámi people as contemporary actors, "showing the presence today of the Sámis" as Daniel, head of exhibitions at Kulturen, said, anchoring them in the present time, as will be discussed later.

Finally, the opinion of Sámi people is requested when these exhibitions are ready to open for the public, to get an approval from them. For example, once the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" was finalised, Victoria contacted the Sámi Council, for them to go through it and give their approval on it. Moreover, the *duodjar* she worked with came back to Kulturen for the opening of the exhibition. Recalling her reaction, that she appreciated the final result, Victoria expressed her joy and relief. Here, the approval of the indigenous people the exhibition is talking about, here the Sámis, is greatly valued, as it acts as an ethical assessment of the work they are doing.

This moral backing from the relevant indigenous people is especially important considering that they are talking about the minority despite not being part of them. As highlighted by Spivak (2010), when a group that is in a position of "subaltern" is being talked about and represented by the dominant group, the risk of speaking over the minority is higher, which could mean that getting the approval of the "subaltern" is quite important in those situations. As both the head of exhibitions and curator of the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" underlined, they tried to present the exhibition, the objects, and the historical content, through the Sámi perspective. Yet they are both part of the Swedish majority, and thus cannot entirely adopt the Sámi perspective in their work, explaining the collaboration with Sámi people at different levels and through different stages of the creation of the exhibition.

In other exhibitions about indigenous people around Sweden, such as the exhibition "The Arctic – While the ice is melting" at Nordiska Museet and the exhibition "Samerna" at Jamtli, in Östersund, the perspective isn't the Sámi perspective, for various reasons. While the exhibition "Samerna" is entirely about Sámi history and culture, the purpose of the exhibition "The Arctic – While the ice is melting" is to give a perspective on how climate change impact the Arctic and people living there, and an overview of the lifestyles of the different people living in the Arctic. Therefore, its focus on various indigenous people from the Arctic rather than on Sámi people only can explain the perspective chosen, which wasn't a Sámi perspective, that wouldn't serve the purpose of the exhibition, as underlined by Max, producer of the exhibition. However, the exhibition "Samerna" displayed at Jamtli focuses entirely on Sámi history and

culture, but the Sámi perspective isn't visible. Through this exhibition, Sámi people are rather portrayed as a representation of people from the past, as will be discussed later.

Moreover, the interview with Max points up that the advices, consultancy and approval of Sámi people weren't as requested at Nordiska Museet as they were in Kulturen, in Southern Sweden. This could result from the fact that, Sápmi being further from Skåne than from Stockholm, and fewer Sámis living in Skåne than in Stockholm, the team behind the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" felt a stronger need for collaboration with Sámi people, as they couldn't rely on previous knowledge and prejudices ensuing from a more obvious presence, as it is in Stockholm and in Östersund. In the end, the assumed absence of Sámis in Southern Sweden and perception of Sápmi as far away turns out to become an advantage to the improvement of the structure of institutions such as museums, allowing Sámi people more room to become actors of their representation.

In conclusion, Sámi people are more and more becoming actors of their representation in official institutions, as counsellors, knowledge producers, creators, approvers, especially in Southern Sweden where the need for their participation might be stronger and the prejudices associated to their identity might be lighter, which can counter the risk of essentialisation highlighted by Abu-Lughod (1996).

Changes in the discourses

Through exhibitions in museums and other Swedish institutions, a change in the discourses can be observed, in the ways Sámi people are being represented, either at an institutional level, via the official discourses provided by the arrangements, or at an individual level, in the discourses emerging from the picture people have of Sámis.

Firstly, the variations in the way Sámi artefacts are presented in exhibitions influences the larger picture of Sámi people. By not presenting those artefacts as "old dead objects" anymore, said Victoria, through the different processes mentioned above, and connecting them to Sámi history, for example through the texts of the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", these exhibitions anchor Sámi people in a strong historical context and thus in a concrete reality. In the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", the different texts include information about Sámi culture, as well as historical context. Within the historical context, the emphasis is, among other, put on the colonisation and various discrimination that Sámi people faced in the past and are still facing today, with precise stories to illustrate it, anchoring history even more to reality. In the exhibition "Urfolk möts – skogssamer och Mapuche", while all the Sámi artefacts are gathered

at the centre of the room, except for three outfits displayed on mannequins in the right corner of the room, several posters are hanged up on the right wall. Among them, three are dedicated to Sámi history, written from a Sámi perspective by members of Samer i Syd, with an emphasis on the colonisation and various discrimination that accompanied it. In both those exhibitions, the historical perspective is thus very vivid. The historical context, of the colonisation, is oftentimes also quite present in Swedish people's minds when thinking about Sámi people. For instance, when discussing the importance to provide resources in libraries for Sámi people, both Lovisa and Alice underlined the historical context, the colonisation and discrimination faced by Sámi people, as a reason to prioritise them, as some form of reparation.

While the historical context takes an important place in the representation of Sámi people, it doesn't mean that they are "people from the past". As highlighted by Max, when exhibiting ancient Sámi objects, the focus should shift from "a representation of the old world" to "a representation of the old world in their place", as these are indeed representations of the past, of Sámi people as they were some decades or centuries ago, which doesn't mean that Sámis living today are a representation of people from the past, as he explains. For him, an effort must be done when displaying these objects to make clear that they are traces from the past of another people, the Sámi people, but shouldn't be confused for traces from the past of Swedish people. It is possible to imagine that this perception of Sámis as people from the past, or as living representation of the past of Swedish people, could partially be related to the influence of evolutionist theories from the 19th century. As part of the history of cultural anthropology, evolutionist theories implemented concepts such as the idea of present cultures located on a timeline, with some societies being people of the past and others being people of the present, as different time periods of a unique culture. With researchers such as Taylor, Frazer and Morgan, these theories started to influence conceptions outside of academia, and it is possible to imagine their influence on the representation of Sámi people described by Max, that the different exhibitions mentioned before try to counter.

An effort was done by the teams behind these exhibitions to emphasise the place of Sámi people in the present time, and accentuate that Sámi people are a current and living people, "people of the present". At Kulturen several methods were employed to attain this goal. As explained by Victoria, the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" was shaped in a circular way, in accordance with the Sámi conception of time, going from present times, to the past, and coming back to the present. The visitor first enters a room with several portraits of Sámis living today, from twenty-one to thirty years old, of different genders, different occupations, taken from an

Instagram page with the permission of the people portrayed, hanged up on the walls, each of them presenting a picture and a short text from people presenting themselves. At the end of the room is hanged a Sámi flag, and music from contemporary artists, from traditional *joik* to rap and hip-hop music, is constantly playing in the background. Telling about his wish to turn up the volume of the music when going down to visit the exhibition, Daniel, head of exhibitions at Kulturen, explains that he wants "that immediacy of 'we are here, we are part'", accentuating that Sámi people are here, living in the present, at the same time as us, and not in a supposed past far from us.

Continuing through the exhibition, after passing the two rooms dedicated to ancient Sámi artefacts and history, the visitor reaches the last room with a table displaying *duodji*, jewelleries and objects crafted today, located next to texts about Sámi history nowadays, around the room, and posters of cultural events connected to Sámi people, including movie posters, advertisements for theatre plays, posters from music festivals, and a poster for the Sámi LGBTQIA+ pride in Östersund in 2018, gathered and hanged up near the entrance and exit door. As underlined by Victoria and Daniel, this room is very important to bring to light the modernity of Sámi people today, and to connect the past times, with the ancient artefacts, to the present days, with artefacts crafted today, renewing the design and modernising the techniques, while still applying the traditional *duodji* techniques transmitted from generations to generations.

This notion of Sámi people being present, being in the here and now, is even more visible in the exhibition "Urfolk möts – skogssamer och Mapuche". As all content was produced by Sámis, some elements are written in the first-person plural, similarly to the museum Ájtte. Moreover, all objects displayed belong to people and families currently living, in Southern Sweden. During the three weeks when the exhibition was open, members of Samer i Syd came several times to Dunkers Kulturhus, on different occasions, many times per week. For instance, Majbritt came four times, for three hours each time, to answer questions and interact with the visitors, for an interview, and on March 5th, together with her daughter and president of Samer i Syd, for the closing ceremony of the exhibition. Every time she was there, she invited me to come to Helsingborg and join her to talk and answer my questions. By being present at the exhibition, she made obvious that Sámi people are people of the present.

When visiting different places in Skåne and asking about documents regarding Sámi people, especially in the city archives of Malmö, Lund and Helsingborg, the most common

answer was that there are no Sámis in Southern Sweden. While previously established that this is partly a misconception, the reasons why this idea is so spread around Skåne can be analysed. The first reason for people to think that there are no Sámis in Southern Sweden seems to be related to unconscious stereotypes still present in people's mind when picturing a Sámi person. As underlined by Daniel, when analysing the reactions of his colleagues questioning the use of the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", since they assume there are no Sámis in Skåne, he makes reference to the old and persistent stereotypes of Sámi people going around in traditional outfits. Therefore, as Sámi people nowadays don't wear a traditional outfit in their everyday life, some people assume that they don't live in Southern Sweden. As mentioned earlier, according to Hylland Eriksen (2010), the concept of ethnic minority depends on how visibly distinguishable it is from the majority group. This also means that in cases where the differences aren't apparent enough, the distinction will rely on stereotypes (Hylland Eriksen 2010: 278).

Daniel appears to be aware that not wearing a traditional outfit doesn't mean they don't live in Skåne, as there are many reasons for Sámi people to not wear those outfits every day, including the discrimination they faced because of their identity mentioned earlier. This led some of them to try to "conform" to the rules and appearances of the majority, as pointed out by Daniel in our interview. Moreover, Burman (2006) points out that, as agents, indigenous people who faced colonisation oftentimes decide to keep and use elements from the coloniser culture in the expression of their ethnic identity, emphasising similarities between them.

As underlined by Abu-Lughod (1996), when a cultural group, especially a majority group, is giving a representation of another cultural group, especially a minority group, there is an important risk of generalising and essentialising the other's culture. To counter this risk, people working with the different exhibitions talking about Sámi people and Sámi culture tried to shine a light on the diversity of Sámi people nowadays. In the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", this is especially visible in the first room, through the different portraits, showing that "young Sámi people are like any other people, they travel, they do different things, some live more traditionally [sic] lives […] some go to school, to university, they go travel, they have different interests" like any other community, said Victoria during our interview. This is also something that Max is working toward at Nordiska Museet, showing the "spectra" of Sámi people and how they can be represented, for example by showing Sámis working in diverse fields, with various identities, on the upcoming exhibition he is working on now.

Seeing Sámis in different events and exhibitions, with diverse identities, makes easier to realise that they are, like any other community, people with multiple and complex identities. During the 20th anniversary celebration of Samer i Syd in Helsingør, some of the speakers made the choice to wear their traditional Sámi outfit and *joik*, while other picked a different outfit. When I met Ida and Kia in Önnestad, none of them worn a traditional Sámi outfit. Just like other Sámi youths introduced in the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" they are like any other young people, studying to become a social worker, *socionom,* and a home help worker, *vårdbiträde i hemtjänsten,* who wouldn't obviously appear as Sámi if people were to follow the stereotypes enunciated above. Therefore, it is important to see accurate representations of contemporary Sámi people, in their entire diversity.

The discourses on representing Sámi people are also evolving from picturing a larger and anonymous group to make some prominent individual figures appear. In the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi", various signs are dedicated to important figures in Sámi history, such as Elsa Laula Renberg, Sámi woman who initiating the first Sámi meeting in Trondheim on February 6th 1917 and other, and to people whose objects displayed in the exhibition belonged to, like the family Mårtensson. In the exhibition "Urfolk möts – skogssamer och Mapuche", three signs are dedicated to the stories of three strong Sámi women, "*starka samiska kvinnor*", who lived between the 19th century and the middle of the 20th century, Elsa Laula Renberg, as well as Kristina Katarina Larsdotter, known as "The Lappland Giantess", *Långa lappflickan*, and Karin Stenberg, Sámi rights activist. Another sign is dedicated to Majbritt's father. Introducing specific people during these exhibitions is another way to anchor Sámi people's existence and presence in the reality.

Using the perspective of Sámi people through these exhibitions also mean presenting them as actors, not as passive people through history. When the colonisation of Sápmi and discrimination resulting from it started to be acknowledged at a national level, Sámi people began to be represented as mere victims of the colonisation process, as underlined by Sigrid Lien and Hilde Nielssen (2011). However, they have always been actors of their history and fought back the multiple discrimination they were enduring. During our interview, Victoria told me the story behind one of the pictures shown in the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi". This photograph was taken by Herman Lundborg, founder of the Swedish Institute for race biology, *Rasbiologiska institutet,* of a Sámi man in traditional outfit. When looking closely at the picture, it is possible to notice the number "1928" embroidered on the collar, in reference to a law passed in 1928 by the Swedish government. This law decided that were Sámi only the people who

were part of a *sameby*, administrative organisation for Sámi people, both making their life conditions more difficult and dividing the Sámi community. While some people would argue that accepting to be photographed by Herman Lundborg to serve his racist project, means that Sámi people weren't resisting but accepting their situation, it is important to underline that, in that context, Sámi people had no other choice than to accept, forced by the authorities. Nevertheless, many of them in fact resisted, in various manners, and being photographed with the number "1928" embroidered on the collar of his collar was one of this expression of their resistance, and it is important for the exhibitions to show those forms of resistance. As pointed out by Victoria, curator of the exhibition, "it's quite often that you hear "but why didn't anybody say anything? Why didn't they protest? Why did they go there to be photographed', but there's also an artist who has been looking into this and she found that of course there was some resistance, people didn't want to go to be photographed, but they did because you did what the authorities told you to do in those days". This is only one example among the various forms of resistance presented through the exhibition.

Moreover, the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" shines a light on the contemporary forms of resistance by Sámi people, especially in the last room of the exhibition. Victoria underlines that the use of the music, that can be heard throughout the exhibition as the space is quite open, is also a way to feel "the power of Sápmi", of those young Sámi people fighting for their right, bringing hope in the future, according to Daniel. This notion of power, of agency, also correlate with what was discussed earlier, about Sámi people taking back their heritage, becoming creators, collaborators in exhibitions and events connected to their culture and history, as Samer i Syd has been doing for more than twenty years in Skåne.

Finally, while some old conceptions and stereotypes tend to picture Sámi people as only living in Northern Sweden, who don't travel nor have interactions with the rest of the country, as isolated indigenous people, newer exhibitions try to show the connections between Sámi people, even the ones living in Sápmi, and the rest of the population of Sweden. In the exhibition "Fokus Sápmi" for instance, the connections between Sámis and Swedes are presented, with the case of the Mårtensson family mentioned earlier, among others.

In conclusion, the discourses about Sámi people and the way they are being represented, especially by Swedish majority people, are currently evolving, going from a representation of "people from the past" to "people of the present", from an essentialised and uniform culture to a diverse people, from a stereotypical model to individuals, from victims of the colonisation to

agents of the decolonisation, from isolated people to globalised people, in contact with the rests of the world. This more complex picture of Sámi people can be seen as an attempt to not only include them in Swedish society but also to decolonisation.

Conclusion

Coming back to the assumption that there are no Sámis living in Southern Sweden, it is possible to conclude that there are Sámis in Skåne, even though they may not be as visible as the ones living in Northern Sweden. They are still navigating through official institutions, performing their ethnic identity and founding communities, as theorised by Hylland Eriksen (2010). With official institutions playing a part in the colonisation and decolonisation processes, as highlighted by Anderson (2006), both Sámis and Swedes are taking part in the dialogue. Sámi people act as collaborators, counsellors, knowledge producers, becoming actors of their own representation and in the decolonisation process, as underlined by Burman (2016). Moreover, as recipients of policies implemented at a national level, they find themselves navigating and adapting to the rules of the majority. As for Swedish people, the changes implemented in those official institutions seem to encourage them to make the knowledge about Sámi history and culture their own, to go beyond what they have been taught, and to join the discussion alongside Sámi people. This also means allowing Swedes space to express themselves and to be wrong in the discussions, considering the notion of speaking over the "subalterns" raised by Spivak (2010), and the risk of essentialising another culture raised by Abu-Lughod (1996).

What first appeared as a drawback is now turning into an advantage. Being far from Sápmi, from the land where Sámi people are living, and not knowing a lot about them means more space to learn, to build collaborations and partnerships, without the stereotypes and prejudices anchored in the North. Therefore, there is more room to reform the structures and the discourses of the representation of Sámi people by Swedish people. However, this doesn't mean that the process is over, as there are still many things that can be done to improve the representation of Sámi people and the way they are included into the Swedish society, in accordance with the needs they express. While some Sámis are advocating for decolonisation, it seems that the Swedish government is rather working towards their inclusion into Swedish society, in something that could resonate with the idea of a "politically correct expression that lacked the support of conviction or action" expressed by Burman (2016: 218)

As a prolongation of the topic of this study, it could be interesting to investigate how other institutions are dealing with the representation of Sámi people, such as schools, as the educational system appeared to play an important role in the representation Swedish people have of Sámi people, their history and culture, as well as the discourses associated to the colonisation and decolonisation of Sápmi and of Sámi people.

Bibliography

Abu-Lughod, L. (1996). Writing Against Culture. In R. G. Fox (ed.), *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, pp. 137-162. School of American Research Press.

Anderson, B. [1983] (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.

Berger, A. (2002). Recent trends in library services for ethnic minorities: the Danish experience. *Library Management* 23(1/2): 79-87.

Bibliotekslag (2013:801). https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/bibliotekslag-2013801_sfs-2013-801 (Downloaded 30 March 2023).

Burman, A. (2006). *Indigeneity and Decolonization in the Bolivian Andes: Ritual Practice and Activism*. London: Lexington Books.

Chakravorty Spivak, G. (2010). *Can the subaltern speak? Reflections on the history of an idea*. R. C. Morris (ed.). Columbia: Columbia University Press.

Dalbello, M. (2022). Immigrants being at home in libraries: How the immigrants brought their home to the New York Public Library. In *Reading Home Cultures Through Books*. London: Routledge.

Dankertsen, A. (2016). Fragments of the Future. Decolonization in Sami Everyday Life. *Kult* 14: 23-37

Eng, J. (2017). *A Discourse Analysis on the Swedish Non-Ratification of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention: A Critical Postcolonial Perspective*. Bachelor thesis. Department of Political Sciences, Lund University.

Eriksson, H. (2021). *Solidarity in decolonization: Indigenous-Environmentalist alliance and the struggle against clearcutting in Sápmi*. Master thesis. Department of Political Science, Stockholm University.

Errington, J. (2003). Getting Language Rights: The Rhetorics of Language Endangerment and Loss. *American Anthropologist* 105(4): 723-732.

Farnel, S., Koufogiannakis, D., Laroque, S., Bigelow, I., CarrWiggin, A., Feisst, D. & Lar-Son, K. (2018). Rethinking Representation. *The International Journal of Information, Diversity, & Inclusion* 2(3): 9-25.

Fuentes-Romero, J. J. (2004). National Libraries: their Position with regard to Cultural and Ethnic Minorities. *Alexandria* 16(1): 49-59.

Gaski, H. (2013). Indigenism and Cosmopolitanism: A Pan-Sami view of the Indigenous Perspective in Sami Culture and Research. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 9(2): 113-124.

Hällgren, C. (2005). 'Working harder to be the same': everyday racism among young men and women in Sweden. *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8(3): 319-342.

Huyghe, E. (2021). Le postcolonialisme : une impasse conceptuelle à interroger ? https://theconversation.com/le-postcolonialisme-une-impasse-conceptuelle-a-interroger-161970 (Downloaded 8 March 2023).

Hylland Eriksen, T. (2015). *Small Places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology*. London: Pluto Press.

Ivison, D. (no date). Postcolonialism. https://www.britannica.com/topic/postcolonialism (Downloaded 7 March 2023).

Jonsson, M. (2021). *När vi var samer*. Stockholm: Ordfront Förlag.

Kreps, C. (2011). Changing the rules of the road. Post-colonialism and the new ethics of museum anthropology. In J. Marstine (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics: Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First-Century Museum*, pp. 70-84. London: Routledge.

Lag (2009:724) om nationella minoriteter och minoritetsspråk. https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-2009724-om-nationella-minoriteter-och_sfs-2009-724. (Downloaded 30 March 2023).

Lawrence, R. & Moritz, S. (2019). Mining industry perspectives on indigenous rights: Corporate complacency and political uncertainty. *The Extractive Industries and Society* 6: 41-49.

Lien, S. & Nielssen, H. (2011). Conventional Ethnographic Display or Subversive Aesthetics? Historical Narratives of the Sami Museum, RiddoDuottarMuseat-Sámiid Vuorká-Dávvirat (RDM-SVD) in Karasjok, Norway. *Great Narratives of the Past. Traditions and Revisions in National Museums*: 599-615.

López, E. M. (2021). *Transforming Kiruna: Producing Space, Society, and Legacies of Inequality in the Swedish Ore Fields*. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.

Magnani, N. & Magnani, M. (2022). Decolonizing Production: Healing, Belonging, and Social Change in Sápmi. *Current Anthropology* 63(4): 386-406.

McGuire, L. (2022). The Fragmentation of Sápmi: a Nordic Model of Settler Colonialism. *Scandinavian-Canadian Studies* 29: 1-12.

Nevins, E. (2004). Learning to Listen: Confronting Two Meanings of Language Loss in the Contemporary White Mountain Apache Speech Community. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 14(2): 269-288.

Ojala, C-G. (2020). Mines and missions: Early modern Swedish colonialism in Sápmi and its legacies today. In M. Spangen, A-K. Salmi, T. Äikas, M. Fjällström (eds.), *Currents of Saami pasts: Recent advances in Saami archeology*, pp. 160-176. Archeological Society of Finland.

Reimerson, E. (2016). Sami space for agency in the management of the Laponia World Heritage site. *The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability* 21(7): 808-826.

Sarivaara, E. K. & Uusiautti, S. (2013). Taking Care of the Ancestral Language: The Language Revitalisation of NonStatus Sámi in Finnish Sápmi. *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies* 6(1): 1-16.

Schorch, P., McCarthy, C. & Hakiwai, A. (2016). Globalizing Maori museology: Reconceptualizing Engagement, Knowledge, and Virtuality through Mana Taonga. *Museum Anthropology* 39(1): 48-69.

Soininen, M. (1999). The 'Swedish model' as an institutional framework for immigrant membership rights. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 25(4): 685-702.

Sollid, H. & Olsen, T.A. (2019). Indigenising Education: Scales, Interfaces and Acts of Citizenship in Sápmi. *Junctures: The Journal for Thematic Dialogue* 20: 9-42.

Spolsky, B. (2002). Prospects for the Survival of the Navajo Language: A Reconsideration. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 33(2): 139-162.

Svonni, C. (2021). The Swedish Sámi boarding school reforms in the era of educational democratisation, 1956 to 1969. *Pedagogica Historica*: 1-19.

Thomasson, L. & Sköld, P. (2017). Samer. https://www.ne.se/uppslagsverk/encyklopedi/l%C3%A5ng/samer (Downloaded on 14 May 2023).

Turner, T. (2002). Representation, Politics, and Cultural Imagination in Indigenous Video: General Points and Kayapo Examples. In F. D. Ginsburg, L. Abu-Lughod & B. Larkin (eds.), *Media Worlds Anthropology on New Terrain*, pp. 75-89. Berkeley: University of California Press.