

Epilogue

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This collection of contributions addressing Indigenous research methodologies in Sámi and global contexts organically come to stress the responsibility of Indigenous research. This book grew out of years of collaboration. It started with a workshop at the Sámi University of Applied Sciences in Kautokeino. More correctly, in Guovdageaidnu. Using the Sámi name of a Sámi place is an important part of Indigenizing our research. At the Guovdageaidnu workshop, scholars from different institutions and countries in Sápmi met to talk about doing Indigenous research.

Few years – and many workshops – later, we can fairly say that we learnt something about the importance of research, but also about the challenges and the need to have an anchored and reflexive approach to doing research. Talking about “Indigenous research” and “Indigenous research methodologies” may suggest that these are concepts that are fixed and easily defined. They are not. It could have been better to talk about our approach and about the process we have been through as “Indigenizing research methodologies”. This is because the processual dimension is both important and defining for the movement that currently exists, consisting of researchers that in different ways strive to do their research in proper and ethically sound ways according to different kinds of Indigenous protocols and claims. Our book should be seen as an attempt to take part in an ongoing struggle to Indigenize research methodologies. As such, it is not a methodology textbook. Nor is it an encyclopaedia of Sámi research methodology. It is, however, a collection of works by scholars who in their own ways suggest how and what research can be.

Reading this clearly shows the fluidity and diversity of this Indigenizing process. On one hand, the work in the network, and thus the papers in this book, can be described as filled with diversity, tension and disagreement. The authors come from different places, institutions and disciplines – and even generations. Diversity, tension and disagreement can be difficult to handle. At the same time, they are all integral to the community of scholars. Diversity is a key description of Indigenous communities, both in general and in specific terms. The Sámi are but one of a huge number of Indigenous peoples living all over the world in a large number of contexts. The Sámi are also one people, but they live in many different places and ways, and use different dialects. Consequently, having and applying a diversity perspective in the articulation of Indigenous research methodologies mirrors what Indigenous communities

look like. We cannot and should not aim to create or articulate one Indigenous research methodology.

Diversity, tension and disagreements aside, working together in a network has also shown a great deal of joint effort, agreement and companionship. We have shared the idea and recognition of the need to make changes in academia when it comes to Indigenous research. We have shared the critical reading of and perspective on some of the dominant heritage within research related to Indigenous communities. We have shared the recognition of the importance of Indigenous voices, ways of thinking, knowing and doing, and perspectives becoming an integral part of academia.

This recognition, and the struggles mentioned connected to it, have several dimensions. First off, they apply to the actual research being done by scholars and students. As this book shows, methods and methodologies are affected by such recognition.

Secondly, there is an institutional dimension. This book gathers authors from a number of institutions, from Helsset/Helsinki, Oulu and Roavvenjárga/Rovaniemi in Finland, Ubmeje/Umeå in Sweden, to Guovdageaidnu, and Romsa/Tromsø in Norway. Most of our institutions have, as shown in Chapter 1, quite a history of carrying out Sámi research. As such, we already carry some institutional recognition into this network. However, we have also shared the quite often mentioned experience of being, to different degrees, islands in our home institutions in the interest of doing Indigenous research.

We argue that there are several tendencies simultaneously in operation. There is a general tendency of institutional recognition of Sámi and Indigenous research, shown for instance in how UiT The Arctic University of Norway gives Sámi education and research central places in strategy documents. At the same time, the level of recognition varies, as does the level of implementation of this recognition. Further, the recognition does not come of itself, nor is it a fixed situation. The institutional recognition of Sámi and Indigenous research has not come without a struggle, and this struggle continues. It is in itself a process. This is a similar kind of Indigenization wherein the goal is, following Martin Nakata, to make institutional spaces that are uniquely Indigenous. We would argue that Indigenous research methodologies should be integrated into the institution to a higher degree.

A part of this process is the development and further building of Sámi and Indigenous research with connected methodologies. More than three decades have passed since Indigenous research methodologies surfaced. More than two decades have passed since Linda Tuhiwai Smith set the agenda with her book *Decolonizing Methodologies*. This means that the field is no longer a new field. It is in fact already established. It also means that this field, like all

fields, needs critical perspectives that are directed inwards. In the process of Indigenizing research methodologies we therefore call for the aforementioned diversity, tensions and disagreements to be an integral and defining part of what Indigenous research methodologies can be.

After this book had been written, an edited volume came out, *Applying Indigenous Research Methods: Storying with Peoples and Communities* (2019), by Sweeney Windchief and Timothy San Pedro. Their book dealt with questions relating to applying Indigenous research methodologies, and focused on North America and Hawai'i. Our book contributes to these contextualised discussions, broadens the methods beyond the storywork, as well as reflects the use of Indigenous research methodologies from diversity of backgrounds.

Finally, we would like to point out that as educators and researchers, no matter what is the background, we should constantly remind ourselves of our deep responsibility. In this process of imparting knowledge and encouraging a more inclusive production of knowledge, we should undergo continuous self-assessment: what are the values and structures that we follow and what is the motivation and logic that our intentions embody? We must have a long-term commitment to nurturing Indigenous knowledge, frameworks, and perspectives and making them thrive, and for that there is no magic or immediate solution.