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Sámi dutkama máttut: The Forerunners of Sámi Methodological Thinking

Jelena Porsanger and Irja Seurujärvi-Kari

Abstract

The chapter highlights the methodological importance in research of knowledgeable Sámi persons who had formal academic education and traditional knowledge-based competence. We regard these persons as the forerunners of present-day Sámi methodological thinking, *Sámi dutkama máttut*. They envisioned how Sámi issues can be studied and written about. They were able to write and conduct research based on their knowledge about the Sámi ways of thinking, philosophies and life maintenance. Between the 17th and 20th century, non-Sámi scholars were in the majority in shaping information about the Sámi. Today, Indigenous research methodologies shed light on Indigenous languages and experiences when theorising Indigenous knowledges. These ideas can be traced back to Sámi thinkers over the last five hundred years, even if this not overtly articulated in their writings. In their work, one can identify certain methodological choices, which we nowadays almost take for granted. This chapter is a tribute to the great Sámi thinkers who contributed to the rise of Sámi research from the Sámi perspective until Sámi research was institutionalized by the establishment of the Nordic Sámi Institute in 1973. In this chapter, we also introduce and apply the *lávnu* method as an analytical tool.

Keywords

Sámi research history – the forerunners of Sámi methodological thinking – Sámi epistemology – Sámi ontology – Sámi language – writing in Sámi language – *lávnu* method

1 Tribute to Early Sámi Methodological Thinkers

*Viimmát álbmot oažžu sáni
Ságavuoru divodeaddjin
Beassá cealkit šikkotkeahtá*

Doalvut dieđuid dálá dilis
Dálkkas diehtemeahttumiidda
Eahpitkeahttá

(From a poem written by Issát Sámmol Hætta for the 10th anniversary of the Nordic Sámi Institute in 1984)

The above excerpt from the poem indicates in an artistic way central methodological issues in Indigenous research, which are focused on in this chapter. The poem tells that after centuries of being silenced, the Sámi are finally empowered to raise their voice in the field of research to tell their stories based on their language and knowledge. This is an act of empowerment that enriches and reconstructs the discourse of representation of Sámi people whose voice can no longer be subjugated. This voice conveys and shares knowledge about the present – not only about the past as has often been done before – to heal the wounds of a colonized Sámi people and to empower them. The importance of these methodological issues for the first Sámi research institution celebrating its 10-year anniversary in 1984 is highlighted as unquestionable, *eahpitkeahttá*.

This chapter begins and ends deliberately with the establishment of the Nordic Sámi Institute in 1974, which was a significant landmark in the institutionalization of Sámi research (see Porsanger 2018; Schanche 2005, 245–249). In the 1970s, discussions on the decolonization of Indigenous peoples increased worldwide, and a paradigmatic change emerged and developed towards post-colonial research (see Chapter 1). Essentialized truths were to be questioned, the connections between knowledge and power were to be pondered, and the dichotomies produced by research were to be de-constructed since these elements simplify truth and maintain unequal relations. In the context of Indigenous peoples, de-colonization has meant reorganizing such central power hubs as research institutions and education systems, as well as establishing the institutions equipped to meet the Sámi world view (Seurujärvi-Kari 2012, 113). This process of institutionalization is closely linked to the right to self-determination in research, and the desire to break free from the colonial past. According to Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999, 173), research is an important part of the decolonizing process and is a tool to justify knowledge. For the Sámi and other Indigenous peoples, this means freedom and power to acquire knowledge about their life and everything in the world, and about connections between various phenomena in order to develop their culture and identity (Magga 2008).

The Nordic Sámi Institute deliberately chose methodologies that focused on the Sámi language, traditional knowledge and experiences, healing and empowerment, demystification, and capacity building. Thus, the first Sámi research institution was very much ahead of its time by paying attention to

these crucial methodological issues long before the concept of Indigenous methodologies was introduced in the late 1990s. The establishment of the Nordic Sámi Institute in the traditional Sámi rural area of Guovdageaidnu (Kautokeino) was a result of comprehensive debates, in which the legitimacy of this research institution was argued to be closely related to its teaching of the Sámi language and living culture.

This chapter focuses on some chosen Sámi accomplishments over many hundreds of years of Sámi theorising and thinking which we consider significant for the development of contemporary Indigenous methodologies. This is a non-conventional and novel way of presenting the Sámi history of thoughts by focusing on Sámi persons whose legacy deserves a profounder analysis than it has had previously.

Accounts of Sámi research history often emphasize the significance of various contemporary universities, academic departments, and scholarly contributions, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike who have contributed to research about the Sámi, their culture and language. In research history, methodology is often presented in its connection to established academic disciplines with their respective theoretical advancement. From the 1990s, the focus was put on multidisciplinary research and on an approach from within Sámi culture itself (Gaski 1998; Kulonen et al. 1994; Kulonen et al. 2005, 5, 17; Seurujärvi-Kari et al. 2005, 356–370; Stordahl 1994).

In this chapter, we intend to highlight some significant Sámi thinkers throughout history stretching back to the last five hundred years or so. We also pose the question: What were the methodological choices of early Sámi thinkers? This chapter shows that much of the Sámi science-theoretical and methodological contemplations, which nowadays are regarded and taught as part of Indigenous methodologies, can be traced back to many Sámi intellectuals. Methodology as we currently perceive it might not have been articulated in the writings of these notable Sámi persons, who had formal academic education or traditional knowledge-based competence or both. However, in their work, writings, and publications one can identify methodological choices which today we almost take for granted in Indigenous and Sámi research.

This chapter is a tribute to some of the great Sámi thinkers who contributed to the rise of research on Sámi issues from the Sámi perspective, based on Sámi epistemology, ontology, and value systems. Their contributions can be seen as a succession of generations. Therefore, to make a brief analytical presentation of these contributions, we have chosen the traditional Sámi holistic conceptualization of genealogy. The Sámi concept of *máttut* ‘predecessors and ancestors’ is proposed to present these notable Sámi persons as forerunners of Sámi methodological thinking and research in general, *Sámi*

dutkama máttut. The recognition of the forerunners or ancestors in the Sámi history of thoughts is needed, in our opinion, to understand the essence of Indigenous methodologies in the Sámi context. In addition, our contemplations about methodological thinking are visualized and applied in the chapter by a new tool, developed for university teaching on Indigenous methodologies, the *lávvu* method (Porsanger 2015–2019).

The selection of Sámi thinkers is based on our long-time teaching and research on and about Sámi history and culture. Methodologically, the selection is grounded on the following criteria: these persons had good knowledge of the Sámi language, culture, traditions and ways of livelihood; they lived and worked in the traditional Sámi areas among the Sámi, and their contributions have had a direct or an indirect impact on the Sámi history of thoughts and on representations of the Sámi. Working within the discourses of their time and colonial set of power relations, they all employed a Sámi perspective, although they did not always articulate it as we do today (see also Chapter 3).

2 Sámi Conceptualization of Indigenous Research Methodologies

The main principles of Indigenous methodologies can be specified as follows: these principles put Indigenous languages, experiences and knowledges at the centre of the construction of knowledge about Indigenous peoples (e.g. Ahenakew 2016; Chilisa 2012; Denzin et al. 2008; Hokowhitu et al. 2020; Kovach 2009; Kuokkanen 2000, 2007; McKinley & Smith 2019; Seurujärvi-Kari 2012; Smith L. T. 1999, 2012; Wilson 2008). In the Nordic countries, the concept of Indigenous methodologies has been quite slowly acquiring its place in university education since the early 2000s (Porsanger 2004¹).

In this chapter, the symbolism related to a traditional Sámi nomadic way of living is employed, and a new method is developed and applied to present the holistic nature of Indigenous methodologies. The concepts related to a movable dwelling, *lávvu* 'tent' (Ruong 1969/1982, 105–110) are used to visualize the Sámi theorising on research methodologies. This so-called *lávvu* method provides multiple possibilities for visualization and conceptualization of the main principles of Indigenous research methodologies for educational purposes, for teaching and learning about Indigenous research, as well as for research conduct. *Lávvu* is a temporary shelter with a fireplace in the middle, designed to withstand high wind and rough weather. The basic structure consists of three wooden forked poles called *válddáhagat*, which are interlocked and form a tripod (see Figure 2.1). The other poles (*lávvomuoorat*) are straight and laid upon this framework of three poles in a circular fashion to solidly hold the cover,

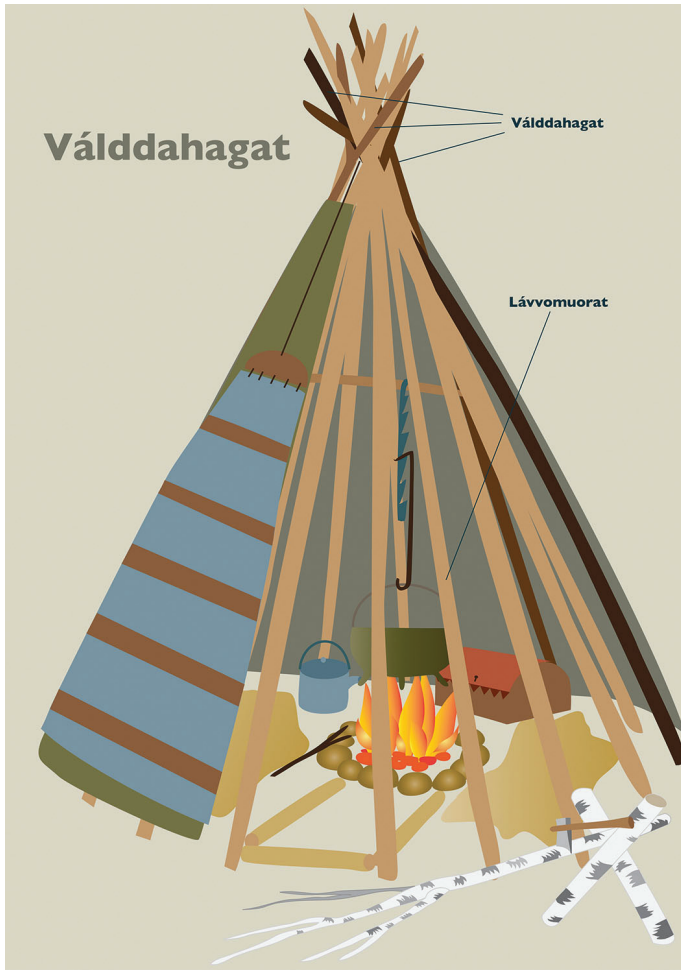


FIGURE 2.1 A traditional Sámi *lávvu* (Design by Davvi Girji, from Porsanger 2018, 10)

which is placed on the poles. The number of the straight poles depends on the desired size of the *lávvu*. A fabric covers the whole construction, leaving a smoke hole in the middle. The *Lávvu* is movable, can withstand all kinds of weather; provides its occupants with warmth, care, and protection; and is socially important to keep families and their allies together (Porsanger 2018).

In the metaphorical sense, the three main poles (*válddáhagat*) that hold the whole construction represent the main basic structure of any Indigenous methodology:

1. Indigenous theory of knowledge (epistemology)
2. Indigenous understanding of reality (ontology)
3. Indigenous value system (axiology)

The *lávnu* method allows one to see the interconnectedness of the three main dimensions of Indigenous methodologies in a holistic way. It helps to visualize the methodological choices in the contributions of the chosen Sámi thinkers in this chapter, such as the use of the Sámi language (concepts and conceptual thinking, theorising and research tools), lived experiences (life maintenance, means of livelihood, colonization and “othering”), and knowledge (traditional knowledge, philosophy, holistic ways of thinking and perception of reality).

The crucial value of Indigenous languages to Indigenous research is its ability to reflect and build identity, culture and cultural heritage on a much more sophisticated level than any other learned languages could do. By means of language, individuals and communities give meanings to relationships, social and physical environment, to material culture and immaterial heritage. Languages are not only tools of communication, they also offer a theoretical basis for understanding Indigenous traditional knowledge and reconstructing this knowledge (Battiste 2001, 40). It is an epistemic system, which combines people by participating in a common environment and in common experiences (Black 2014; Stavenhagen 2002, 18). Indigenous concepts give access to an understanding of the nature and basis of knowledge, and of various ways of knowing, especially in respect to the sources and the limits of knowledge (Seurujärvi-Kari 2012, 101–105). Language helps to choose, recognize and understand something as knowledge (see also Chapters 3, 4, & 7 in this volume). Indigenous conceptualization reflects the ontological assumptions that are specific to a particular Indigenous culture. Indigenous terminology about various phenomena of specific interest for the way of life and life maintenance can and have been used to enrich and deepen the scientific understanding of these phenomena (for the Sámi it might be concepts related to reindeer husbandry, kinship relationships, snow and ice conditions, types of landscape, etc.).

Indigenous peoples have experiences of subjugation, discrimination, and assimilation throughout the processes of colonization. These common experiences have crucial importance for the design and use of Indigenous methodologies. They make visible Indigenous understandings of the past and the present from within an Indigenous culture. The so-called outsider perspective has mostly been employed throughout the history of thought and research on and about Indigenous peoples. Although they may have the best of intentions, outsiders could not have experiences of being Sámi during the times of colonization. This ontological challenge has often caused representations that might have romanticized, or exotified, or victimized, or even mystified Indigenous peoples. This is related to representations of Indigenous peoples as “the other” in Lappology, the early study of the Sámi conducted from an outsider

perspective² (Lehtola 2017; Mathisen 2000; Nyssönen & Lehtola 2017, 50–62; Pulkkinen 2005, 189–191).

For Indigenous methodologies, it is important to ensure that Indigenous peoples' stories are told in their voice, that intellectual property rights are observed, that Indigenous knowledge is protected from misuse and misinterpretation, and that the research outcomes are communicated back to the owners of this knowledge in order to support them in their desire to be subjects rather than objects of research. The approach involves respect for Indigenous knowledge, responsible relationships, reciprocity and relevance (Porsanger 2004, 120; Seurujärvi-Kari 2012, 113–117). This is part of Indigenous value systems and research ethics, which in Indigenous contexts often focuses on the positioning of a researcher, relational accountability, and on the impact of any research project on Indigenous peoples or groups (see e.g. WINHEC Research and Journal Working Group 2010).

Knowing about genealogies is a vital part of the Sámi cultural heritage, the conceptualization of history and Sámi identity. Genealogy in general traces lineages of kin relationships back in time. In Sámi, there is no one single term for genealogy, as for example *whakapapa* in Maori, probably because the traditional Sámi conceptualization of kinship relations is not linear, but instead covers an extensive network of multiplex relationships between ancestors referred to by the collective noun *máttut* (in the plural) in Sámi.³ The Sámi understanding of a genealogy is therefore more like a seine fishing net with hundreds of important net cells, covering all the lineages of the extended families, in a holistic multilevel totality with many branches.

3 Educated Sámi Persons in Early Missionary Activities

The accounts of the early history of Sápmi in the 17th and 18th centuries quite seldom focus on the influence of Sámi persons of that time as executive officials, clergymen or scholars (Rydving 2010). This approach can be changed by examining the sources from a Sámi perspective and by accentuating the role of significant Sámi persons of that time. Rydving (2010) underlines that the contributions of such influential persons as, for instance, Johan Graan or Olaus Sirma, deserve to be thoroughly analyzed.

The missionary activities and exploration of the traditional Sámi territories started to advance in the 1600s and 1700s, and the Sámi were in an in-between two understandings of reality and the surrounding world: their own Indigenous religion and spirituality, and the Christian faith. Under the Swedish crown,

which at that time controlled most of the territories of the Scandinavian Sámi, the University of Uppsala became the place of education for Sámi clergymen and ministers (Hansen & Olsen 2004, 319, 327).⁴ Since that time, Uppsala has contributed to the rise of many prominent Sámi. In the time of the missionary activities among the Scandinavian Sámi, three significant Sámi persons with higher education from Uppsala are of particular note: Johan Graan, a governor of Västerbotten and – for a limited time – the Österbotten counties of the Swedish kingdom in the 17th century; Olaus Sirma, a clergyman in Eanodat (Enontekiö, Finland) between the 17th and the 18th centuries; and Lars Levi Laestadius, a pastor and administrator of the Swedish Lutheran Church in the Sámi areas. Laestadius was the founder of the Laestadian movement and was a significant 19th century Sámi theologian, linguist, ethnographer and botanist. University education equipped these three notable Sámi with the means to focalize Sámi knowledge, language and experiences, and to contribute politically, socially and scholarly to subsequent generations. Their Sámi background and knowledge provided them with tools to apply an insider perspective.

Johan Graan (ca. 1610–1679) gained a decisive influence on the political development of the Sámi lands. He had a Master of Arts degree from Uppsala and an academic degree from the University of Leiden (Holland), which corresponds with the present doctoral degree in law studies. He took Sámi language and knowledge into account and appreciated the information about the Sámi he received *in situ*, locally, from the Sámi people themselves. These priorities connect him and his contributions to Indigenous methodologies (Aikio 1992, 174; Rydving 2000a, 261–262).⁵

When the Swedish crown was shaping its policies to expand to the North, Graan used the Sámi insider perspective on the way of living to affect the policies of the King, with great success. He launched the so-called parallel theory (Swedish: *parallell teorin*) (see Nordlander 1938; Klein 2020, 164–167; Nyholm 2021). According to his letter to the “commission on the population of Lappmark”, the Sámi and settlers could live side by side in the North without disturbing each other, because they used different resources. Therefore, Swedish settlements, enjoying several tax-free propositions, could expand to the North without reducing or oppressing the Sámi population. The Royal Act of 27 September 1673 concerning the settlement of Lappmark, commonly known as the Lapland White Paper (Swedish: *lapmarksplakatet*), was almost entirely based on Johan Graan’s proposal (Nyholm 2021).

Although, as an official attendant of the state authorities, Graan influenced the colonization of the North, he made a significant contribution as a Sámi person to the protection of Sámi interests. Based on his knowledge of Sámi traditional life maintenance, Graan suggested keeping land records (Swedish:

jordebok), which could protect the Sámi territories from migrations and settlements. He was also critical of the persecutions of Sámi religion. Therefore, there were no witch hunts (Swedish: *häxprocesser*) and trials in the counties of Västerbotten and Österbotten during Graan's time as a county governor (Aikio 1994, 174; Rydving 2010, 262).

Graan contributed to making significant changes to royal church and educational policies. He suggested educating the Sámi who were knowledgeable about language and culture as clergymen for the Sámi areas, and recommended avoiding the intermediation of church interpreters (Aikio 1992, 175–176; Rydving 2010). In his view, a lack of linguistic and cultural competency obstructed quality preaching and education to the Sámi (Aikio 1986, 109;). Graan proposed⁶ the establishment of special Sámi parishes from Ubmi (Umeå), Luleju (Luleå), Durtnos (Torneå), and Giepmá (Kemi) to Ávjovárri and Ohcejohka (Utsjoki) (Aikio 1986, 109). These proposals were followed by the Swedish crown (Aikio 1994, 174–177).

Johan Graan influenced Johannes Schefferus's *Laponia* (1673), the most widely cited monograph on Sámi culture and Indigenous religion, and a work that signified the birth of Lappology. Graan was the key person who contacted local clergymen and ministers in Sámi parishes to gather information for this magnum opus.⁷ He was convinced about the importance of local Sámi knowledge and the direct involvement of the people who worked in the local Sámi communities rather than depending on generalized descriptions. A search for the primary sources that present the views and opinions of the Sámi themselves, is an important part of Indigenous methodologies. Although most of the ministers were not ethnically Sámi, the principle of the validation of the information at the local level, including local language sources and place names, is one of the essential methodological requirements of present-day Sámi as well as Indigenous research. The contribution of another Sámi, Olaus Sirma, is also relevant concerning discussions on Indigenous methodological thinking. Sirma focused on the internal Sámi viewpoint, the use of traditional oral knowledge in writing, and the articulation of the needs of Sámi language in education.

Čearbma Ovlá (Sámi name), *Olaus Sirma* (Finnish name), Olof Mattson Sirma (Swedish name) (1655–1719), from Soabbat (Sompio), was knowledgeable about his Indigenous oral tradition, especially the yoik.⁸ His knowledge included life maintenance, spiritual customs, and the richness of his mother tongue, the Kemi Sámi (*giemasámi*) language. During his studies in Uppsala, he provided Schefferus with two texts of the Kemi Sámi yoiks along with his own translations. Included in *Laponia*, the texts were the first contribution to European knowledge about the oral tradition of the Indigenous people of the

North, and were translated into several languages. These texts have been much studied as masterpieces of the traditional Sámi yoik by numerous scholars and mark the birth of Sámi literature (Bartens R. 1999).

The texts have remained the outstanding pieces of the Kemi Sámi language, which became extinct already by the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries (Tegengren 1952). The use of the minority language, Sirma's mother tongue in writing, without any existing orthographies at that time, and the noticeable use of metaphors and verbal expressions of Indigenous aesthetics make his contribution both relevant and important for current contemplations about Indigenous methodologies. In our view, the methodological significance of the texts is in the use of the local Sámi language in documenting the local oral tradition. In Indigenous methodologies, there is a need and demand to break free from the generalized representations of Indigenous issues. In this interface of theory and practice, local varieties of material and immaterial heritage, language varieties and dialects, personal names, genealogies and place names are crucial for research and for source criticism from a Sámi perspective (Porsanger 2007).

Additionally, it is notable that these texts were the first and only secular texts in Sámi ever published until the 17th century and long thereafter (Aikio 1992, 173). All Sámi language texts were translations of religious texts, because of the mainstream politics and education imposed on the Sámi through the course of time in the North. In this colonial discourse, there have been no arena or possibilities for the appearance and dissemination of texts in Sámi about everyday life, traditional practices, customs, and folklore up until the 19th century. Hence, two poetic texts presented by Sirma are methodologically much more than pieces of Indigenous literature or sources for the study of the obsolete Indigenous language. Rather, they are examples of Indigenous self-representations within a dominant mainstream discourse.

The internal Sámi perspective on correlations of language and education is another issue, which makes Sirma a pioneer of Indigenous thinking and argumentation about knowledge development and literacy among the Sámi. While a clergyman in Torneå Lappmark (Durdnos) and following the tendencies of his time, he translated ABC books and sermons into Sámi, but was unable to publish them. Convinced of the significance of the mother tongue in education, Sirma was disappointed that in his parish there was very limited access to *Manuale Lapponicum* (1648) (Aikio 1992, 170–171), which he wanted to use for educational purposes as a textbook. To date, scholars have not uncovered why the book could not be used. Was it because it was written in a mixed language of Swedish and Sámi (*ibid.*), or because it was physically unavailable in the Sámi parishes, or because the Sámi language of this extensive textbook was different

from Kemi Sámi? Sirma's dissatisfaction about the lack of Sámi textbooks and Sámi language teachers (or clergymen at that time) can be paralleled by contemporary struggles in the field of Indigenous education worldwide where the aim is educational development on the terms of the Indigenous peoples themselves.

The legacy of Olaus Sirma should – in our view – be raised to a higher level than the conventional and widely accepted view of him merely as a Sámi student who contributed to *Lapponia* (Hirvonen 2018, 23; Itkonen 1963, 7).

4 Unification of Missionary and Scholarly Work

In the first part of the 19th century, scholars were inspired by Herderian deterministic ideology and Romanticism and they became interested in Sámi people's life-style documenting Sámi folklore and Sámi cultural features including language. Theologians joined the documentation because of their need to learn Sámi language in order to conduct missionary work, and hence many writings on Sámi language, its history and structures appeared (e.g. Bartens 2005, 193–195; Hirvonen 2005, 115; Mathisen 2000, 105–108, 114–126; Rantala 2005, 363). Numerous collections of Sámi folklore and linguistic material were gathered across the whole Sámi area, representing valuable material corpuses formed by many scholars, including Lars Levi Laestadius.

Lars Levi Laestadius (1800–1861) deserves more attention in Sámi research history as a scholar than just as a revivalist leader and founder of the Laestadian movement (Jonsell et al. 2000). Laestadius made extensive and varied work as a theologian, philologist, ethnographer, and botanist. He founded the literary Lule Sámi language and contributed to the use of the written form of the Lule and North Sámi languages. His religious, ethnographic, and botanical works were based on information acquired from Sámi sources during fieldwork. He collected Sámi material from the Swedish part of Sápmi in the 1840s, first at the initiative of a French expedition, *La Recherche*. His research interests were not limited to only one field, for he worked in number of fields and took a holistic and interdisciplinary approach in his research. Laestadius possessed a deep knowledge of Sámi languages and Sámi culture, including traditional Sámi knowledge and their material and spiritual culture. Thus, he experienced, interpreted, and reinterpreted the world around him through his “cultural mother language”, Lule Sámi. Laestadius was born and lived in a bilingual Sámi-Swedish family in an area that was linguistically and culturally diverse⁹ (Pentikäinen & Pulkkinen 2011, 13–14; Rydving 2000b, 70–71).

Laestadius was the only Sámi of his time who wrote directly in the Sámi language, neither translating from other languages nor rewriting other religious

texts. He created the orthography of the Lule Sámi language in 1839, and wrote and published booklets and books in Lule Sámi between 1839 and 1847. These works included *Hålaittem ristagasa ja satte almatja kaskan* (1839), *Nubbe hålaittem* (1847) and a Bible paraphrase including 259 pages published under the title *Tåluts suptsasah, Jubmela pira ja almatji pirra* (Old stories of God and human beings, 1844). These publications, which became popular because his written language was close to the spoken language, made Laestadius one of the first writers in Sámi. He wrote his religious texts in authentic Sámi without using loan words or other foreign features, utilizing the language expressions, metaphors and logics of the spoken Sámi. For the first time the Sámi were able to read more widespread texts in their own language. It took over a hundred years until the modern Lule Sámi writing system was adopted in the Nordic Sámi conference in 1977 (Rydving 2000b, 75). It was as late as in the 1980s and 1990s that Lule Sámi texts comparable with Laestadius's texts from the 1830s and 1840s started to be published.

Being a pastor of the Swedish Lutheran Church and a missionary, Laestadius realized that sermons or writings would not bring the desired results to the Sámi if they were in a foreign language. Instead, he chose to use cultural codes familiar to the Sámi that would allow them to understand and learn. Through his childhood, fieldwork, and activities as a minister in the heart of his area of research Laestadius had the opportunity to become deeply acculturated to many essential elements of the Sámi way of thinking, lifestyle and language. As a mythologist, he gathered a great amount of data on Sámi beliefs and wrote a synthesis of them in *Fragmenter i lappska mythologien*. This manuscript was first published long after Laestadius's death, in a shortened form in 1959; the complete version was published in 1997 (see Laestadius, Kviedland & Pentikäinen 1997) in its original language, Swedish, and an English translation was made in 2002 (Pulkkinen 2005, 125–128). When he critically discusses the earlier research on Lapparnas hedniska Religion (Lappish Pagan Religion) he introduces the concept of Lapparnas inre hushållning (the “interior household” of the Sámi). Since the concept of religion does not exist in the Sámi language, Laestadius uses an Indigenous way of conceptualizing religion, indicating his understanding of the language of religion and his ability to describe the secret inner meanings of the Sámi religion and the Sámi view of the world (Pentikäinen 2000, 81). He equates the concept of religion with his cultural mother tongue. As an ethnographer he was an expert at listening to the oral history that had been mastered by people he knew, and as an ecologist, he was able to observe and listen to nature around him (Pentikäinen 2000, 77–78). “Laestadius’ cultural idiom was Sámi, the heritage of his Sámi identity” (Pulkkinen 2005, 171; see also Outakoski 1991).

In our view, it is appropriate to re-evaluate the legacy of Laestadius as a Sámi scholar. To many, it is challenging to distinguish him as a person and as a scholar from attitudes toward the Laestadian revival movement. His extensive and varied scholarly work and his important contribution to the documentation of Sámi religion and traditional knowledge have not been appreciated sufficiently enough. His use of the Sámi language in writing and his understanding of Sámi religion based on information acquired from Indigenous sources were commemorated by Nordic scholarly circles in Laestadius's bicentennial anniversary (Jonsell et al. 2000).

Based on Laestadius's fieldworks and his personal experiences he managed to make a synthesis of Sámi beliefs, which he called Sámi mythology. His plans to finally write the Sámi's own history did not materialize. His main methodological significance in Sámi research is based on cross-disciplinarily, a holistic methodological approach to research, and his use of Sámi inside knowledge and cultural codes, such as his research into Sámi language and religious education.

5 Traditional Professorship in Sámi Knowledge

Comprehensive Indigenous knowledge has mostly existed orally. Transformation of oral knowledge into a written form is one of the biggest research challenges, especially in Indigenous research, because fixation of the living cumulative tradition into a firm written form immobilizes advancement of this collective knowledge. The appreciation and use of traditional knowledge and oral tradition as a source of information and as a means of analysis and as a representation of Indigenous life maintenance, culture, philosophies and values, has been imperative for modern Indigenous research. Internationally, Indigenous scholars have designed and applied methods to make visible and promote the legitimacy of traditional knowledges and skills. The focus has been on the needs of communities who are the legal owners and possessors of their traditional knowledges. In documentation on traditional knowledge, it has been essential to strengthen communities by developing methods that allow both protection for and accessibility to traditional knowledge (Battiste 2008; Porsanger & Guttorm 2011).

In this field, a contribution by a South Sámi, Anders Fjellner (1795–1876) is significant. Fjellner worked as a pastor in Suarsa (Sorsole) in the 19th century. He was a folklore enthusiast and documented the South Sámi oral tradition in his studies/in his research/ at the University of Uppsala. He collected oral tradition about the Sons of the Sun, Päiven Pärne'h,¹⁰ and other stories

(see Hirvonen 2018, 41–44) told by the Sámi in Härjedalen, Suarsa (Sorsele) and Čohkkiras (Jukkasjärvi). The poetic and epical characteristics of these texts immensely influenced the general Nordic public and had a considerable impact on research on Sámi literature and the Sámi oral tradition (e.g. Collinder 1971; Gaski 1987, 2003; Hirvonen 2000, 2018, 39–44; Jansson 1962; Lundmark 1979; Sallamaa 2015; Wiklund 1906). Questions have been posed concerning the authenticity of these Sámi texts, their structural features, rhyme, poetry, lyrics and language. However, Fjellner's accomplishments as a recorder of the Sámi oral tradition by means of the Sámi language have not been questioned by scholars (Hirvonen 2018, 42), nor by the Sámi themselves, whose national anthem¹¹ declares that the Sámi are the descendants of the Sons of the Sun (Gaski 2003).

However, Fjellner's methodology of recording oral tradition deserves – in our opinion – more thorough analytical research in the future. In the meanwhile, some introductory observations can be made. He relied heavily upon oral sources in the original language that he commanded perfectly well. To document and publish this material, he was obliged to put the authentic performances by the South Sámi storytellers into a written form. As no orthography existed, Fjellner made his own notes in the same way as Olaus Sirma did almost 200 years earlier. The published texts or the absence of the “original” hand-notes in South Sámi have been a challenge for numerous scholars in their search for confirmation and validation of the oral traditional material. In this sense, Fjellner's contribution is a good example of the ontological challenges in research on Indigenous traditions. Various questions come to mind. How can the credibility of the oral source information, which is neither written nor recorded in any other form, be traceable and verified? Who asks this question and why? Is there a connection between the relational accountability of Fjellner as a member of the Sámi society of that time, and the legitimacy of the traditional knowledge which he recorded? What set of values does research on these issues operate within?

According to Fjellner's family stories (see Fjellner L. 1996), he was a skillful storyteller and eagerly performed stories from Päiven Pärne'h orally in his old age when he became blind and was unable to write any longer. Anders Fjellner was awarded the honorary title of “Professor in Sámi and Finnish literature and languages” (Jansson 1962, 19) because of his proficiency and competence in oral tradition and languages.

Johan Turi (Ovloš Juhána) (1854–1936) was a traditional reindeer herder without any academic university education. However, he can be seen as one of the forerunners of Sámi methodological thinking who laid the foundation for Sámi research on traditional knowledge and literature written and published in Sámi

in the early 20th century. His book *Muittalus samid birra* (An Account of the Sámi), which came out in 1910 in Sámi and Danish, explored and described the Sámi way of life from a Sámi perspective, using Sámi concepts and traditional storytelling, and combining individual and collective wisdom and knowledge. This book is the first secular book to be published in Sámi. It became a classic of Sámi literature and cultural history and was taught in university courses internationally and translated into several languages: German (1912), English (1917 and 2012), Swedish (1917), French (1974) and Finnish (1979). In 1965, the book was published in North Sámi using the Bergsland-Ruong orthography, edited and published by Israel Ruong.

Turi structured his presentation of Sámi culture according to the Sámi perception of time as cyclical, based on the traditional Sámi philosophy of life maintenance. This way of writing allowed him to connect material and immaterial, reindeer herding and yoik, storytelling and beliefs, the creative world of Sámi orality and down-to-earth traditional practices. Thus, Turi's book is based on the Sámi conceptualization of time, space and life maintenance. According to Hirvonen (2018, 83), Turi presents his story in a holistic manner, where the general understanding of the cycle of life comprises equally importantly the natural environment and social structures making a whole. Turi grounded his book on the traditional Sámi logics of orality, letting the storyteller testify his story by referring to people he is speaking about, or to those from whom he had heard the story. He even includes time and place references, increasing and strengthening the credibility of his storytelling. In addition, his drawing technique and the visual representations of the stories follows his storytelling, thus legitimizing his account of the Sámi by grounding it into the origin, the beginning, the genealogy: "Mun lean okta sápmelaš" (I am a Sámi) (Turi 1910/2012,¹² 11; also Gaski 2011, 116, 119). His aim was to tell the story of the Sámi people from a Sámi point of view, introducing first-hand information that he calls in a traditional way "the truth about the Sámi". Turi builds his account on the Sámi collective cultural heritage and epistemology by applying the Sámi methodology of memorizing.

It is typical of Turi's method of storytelling that his text follows a special kind of logics: similar to Sámi oral storytelling, the text may in some places jump from one story to a totally different story (Hirvonen 2011, 17, 20–21, see also *Sámi dieddalaš áigečála 2/2011–1/2012*). His idea was also to bring complete and thorough information to the authorities in order to improve and widen their limited knowledge about the Sámi way of living at that time. As Harald Gaski (2010, 2) points out: "story is true, it doesn't doubt or question, it explains why things are as they are". Turi's work is of considerable importance in Sámi-language literature and in Sámi-driven research that recognizes storytelling

as a methodology that is nowadays utilized and appreciated in Indigenous research. If he was living today, he would no doubt have been awarded an honorary doctorate in traditional knowledge (Gaski 2010).

6 The Sámi Enter the Academy

The first attempts to unite and consolidate Sámi political forces against the assimilation policies pursued by the nation-states was made in 1917 by the prominent Sámi woman activist *Elsa Laula Renberg* (1877–1931) (Jernsletten 1991; Johansen 2015; see also Chapter 6). However, it was not until the middle of the 20th century that the more active and comprehensive cultural-political consolidation of the Sámi was set in motion. The Sámi had been a despised group for centuries. As Professor Israel Ruong (1987, 16) has pointed out, the appellation Lapp, as well as many other pejorative denominations used of the Sámi, indicated discriminating attitudes towards the Sámi. The first Sámi institutions that emerged were as follows: the Sámi Council (1956, Nordic Sámi Council until 1992),¹³ Sámi museums in Norway and Finland in the 1950s, and in Russia in 1962,¹⁴ the Finnish Sámi delegation in 1973, the forerunner of the Sámi Parliament in Finland, and the Nordic Sámi Institute (1973). The institutions on the Scandinavian part of Sápmi were part of the emerging decolonizing processes, which aimed at the de- and reconstruction of power relations between the Sámi and Finnish, Norwegian, Swedish, and Russian majority populations. From the outset of Sámi political mobilization, the core idea was to use and promote the Sámi language in politics, as well as in education and Indigenous research (Porsanger 2018; Seurujärvi-Kari 2011, 37–78). The revival of the Sámi language was in focus, bringing with it the revitalization of Sámi forms of knowledge. Language plays a vital role in creating a national and cultural identity and in strengthening a sense of mutual cohesion and solidarity. This work brought hope for transformation and change from “othering”, challenging cultural oppression and aiming toward social equality and justice. The Sámi cultural-political program adopted in 1971 in the Nordic Sámi conference focused on the Sámi language and education. This programme statement indicated the Sámi collective spirit designating Sáminess and respect for Sámi values.

Israel Ruong (1903–1986) made his life-long mission to improve the living conditions of the Sámi under the assimilatory policies, by actively participating in Sámi social and organizational life and by developing Sámi research and methodology. Ruong's contributions in Sámi research are many-sided. His academic work involved studies of traditional knowledge and practices both in the

older and in the contemporary Sámi culture. Secondly, he carried out research on the Sámi language. His methodological principle both in political activities and in research was to achieve a holistic view. This means that in research on Sámi issues at least three perspectives and approaches should be taken into account: ecological, cultural, and psychological. Thus, e.g. regarding reindeer herding, a close relation existed between ecology and Sámi lifestyle, life maintenance and language. Ruong thoroughly studied the Pite Sámi language, its structure and its verb derivatives. He defended his dissertation *Lappische Verbalableitung argestellt auf Grundlage des Pitelappischen* in 1943, which is regarded as a thorough mapping of the Sámi language (Keskitalo 1999, 9; Ruong 1948). In this dissertation on his mother tongue he drew upon direct knowledge of his own language skills. On this basis he also encouraged young Sámi who had learned Sámi in their childhood to study their own mother tongue, since native language linguists were sorely needed (Ruong 1987, 23). Cultural, linguistic and livelihood issues needed to be dealt with holistically because “none of these issues exist alone, but all are linked together” (Ruong 1987, 13–14).

Ruong became a Docent in Sámi Language and Ethnology at the University of Uppsala (1949–1969) and was nominated Professor in 1969. He contributed to the establishment of the Sámi research department at the University of Umeå and the Nordic Sámi Institute (Korhonen 1986, 2005). Ruong based his work on the Sámi way of thinking, arguing that Sámi institutions should acquire a recognition academically and politically in the Nordic countries, and that Sámi language and culture should be recognized in the majority societies. In his opinion, the feeling of weakness and inability among the Sámi was largely because of colonial power relations, which did not allow them to decide about their own affairs (Keskitalo 1999, 10).

His ethnological knowledge was comprehensive and deep since he carried out exhaustive fieldwork on Sámi livelihoods and heritage. He published studies on mountain Sámi in Čohkkiras (Jukkasjärvi, *Fjällapparna i Jukkasjärvi socken*, 1937) and on reindeer milking in the South Sámi area (*Om renmjölkningen på sydlapskt område*, 1954). He conducted research on the Lule Sámi community of Jåhkåkaska, which represented to him classical Sámi nomadism more than any other reindeer herding areas in Sweden (1964). His first publication is a study on the Pite Sámi culture (*Studier i lapsk kultur i Pite lappmark* 1944) in his home area. Based on his observations and a large data collection comprising interviews, he depicted the changes in reindeer herding practices in the Pite Sámi area and its surroundings. An ecological aspect of this collection of data is essential, showing Ruong’s aspiration for a holistic approach to research data. In the study of Jåhkåkaska sameby he presented his theoretical triangle when explaining reindeer herding changes as follows:

The framework of the investigation can be illustrated by a triangle with the sides denoted by the landscape, mankind and the reindeer, as the most important means of exploiting the landscape. This means, in other words, the production factors in reindeer breeding. In this connection, the degree of tameness of the reindeer must be regarded as a result of the long-term investment of labour, a kind of capitalization of labour, in order to increase the efficiency of the reindeer as a production factor. The former regular milking maintained the tameness of the reindeer (Ruong 1964, 46).

This triangle indicates that Ruong approaches theorising from the cultural-ecological point of view, and that his innovative methodology is based on Sámi conceptual thinking and a holistic understanding of interconnectedness of different aspects.

Thanks to his extensive fieldwork on Sámi culture in the Sámi areas, his research perspective was from inside Sámi culture, paired with participant observation and the scholarly analytical perspective (Fjellström 1986). Indigenous research emphasizes participant observation with the aim of gaining a closeness or familiarity with a group, through taking part in their daily activities over a long period of time and being part of this group (Wilson 2008, 40). Being a participant observer allowed Ruong to take an even more action-oriented approach. While engaging with knowledge-holders, he was simultaneously observing and analysing why they were doing things in the way they did. For him knowledge-holders were the main sources on which his research work heavily relied. To gain access to traditional knowledge requires that one observes carefully and listens to knowledge-holders knowing one's ecology but also people's skills necessary to manage and sustain in that environment. Indigenous epistemology is derived from immediate ecology, from people's experiences, thoughts, and collective memory, shared with others.

Indigenous knowledge is closely related to ecology in a certain place and to relationships embedded in that place. Sámi people's environmental and traditional knowledge inspired Ruong to study Sámi livelihoods and language. In our view, he was seeking for and found the spirit of his people in Sámi language, which is closely related to ecology. Indigenous knowledges can be expressed in language, its structures and in specific terminologies. Language is an instrument for thoughts and the community, thoughts are even born in a certain language (Virtanen & Seurujärvi-Kari 19; see Whorf 1956). Ruong shows that specialized language is necessary to life maintenance, resource management and survival in the North: he uses Sámi concepts related to the characteristics of the landscape, snow and ice, and to reindeer according to the animals' gender, age, colour, shapes of antlers, etc. (Ruong 1964, 46–95, 1969/1982, 64–84).

Ruong specialized in the study of the Sámi language, its structures and its rich vocabulary on ecology, reindeer herding, snow and landscape, which he deals with especially in the publication *Samerna*, first published in 1969.¹⁵ This publication is a synthesis of Ruong's research. In this well-known publication, Ruong emphasized an empirical material and historical perspective, but simultaneously he openly dealt with current issues such as the development of Sámi political and cultural institutions, education and land rights issues (e.g. the Skattefjällsmålet, Tax Fell case in Sweden¹⁶) which shows his life-long quest for Sámi rights.

To Ruong, the linguistic aspect of local knowledge is very relevant, since it contains and transmits histories, oral traditions, philosophies, and literatures to future generations. Ruong's important legacy to Sámi research and methodology is that linguistic competence is a prerequisite for research in Indigenous issues. In the same way one of the most important principles in current Indigenous theoretical thinking is that Indigenous languages can offer a means to open up theories of knowledge embedded in Indigenous concepts and methods for understanding Indigenous knowledge, and to engage in a paradigmatic process for restoration and healing of Indigenous peoples. Indigenous languages reflect and construct a reality of transformation in their holistic representations of processes that accentuate interaction, reciprocity and respect, and relational accountability (Wilson 2008).

Ruong was a pioneer in Sámi-driven research from a many-sided, cross-disciplinary, community-based perspective, carrying out comprehensive and long-lasting fieldwork in the communities, documenting social and material Sámi culture and traditional livelihoods, and analysing research material from ethnological, linguistic, and ecological aspects. Ruong was an active participant observer in the Sámi communities all his research life. He became a part of those communities he was working in, thus building strong reciprocal and respectful relationships through his deep understanding of being accountable to the Sámi communities. The methodology used by Ruong implied work to the benefit of the Sámi, implementing an Indigenous methodological strategy of researching back and reporting back, required in current Indigenous research.

Israel Ruong was the first Sámi person who became Professor in Sámi Language and Ethnology, a Sámi activist, a principal of a nomad school and an editor of *Samefolket* (1960–1973) (see Ruong & Ruong 1985). He contributed to deepening the understanding of his people and to sharing diverse and research-based information about the Sámi and their culture in the past and today. In 1984, at the 10-year anniversary of the Nordic Sámi Institute, Ruong awarded a scholarship carrying his name to Nils Isak Eira, praising the young Sámi scholar for his rich research knowledge on reindeer herders' professional

language, conducted in Sámi (published in Sámi first in 1994). He encouraged the establishment of the Sámi political, cultural, research and educational institutions in the spirit of collectivity, mutual cohesion, and respect for the language (see Eira 1994).

The South Sámi, Professor Emerita at the University of Stockholm, *Louise Bäckman* (born in 1926), is one of the important forerunners of Sámi research. Bäckman is the first Sámi woman who became a Professor (Swedish: *professor med lärostol*) in Stockholm in 1986. Since the 1970s, she has contributed to the gradual change in the presentations of Indigenous Sámi religion, focusing on the internal perspective and source criticism from a Sámi perspective (Bäckman 1975; for other publications, see the collection of her articles in *Studier i samisk religion* 2013). One of her outstanding contributions is the inclusion of the gender perspective in research of Sámi cultural heritage. This has allowed her to show the previously silenced role of women in Sámi religion and in society, thus making Bäckman one of the Sámi pioneers in women's studies and the history of religion (Westman 2013, 9; see also Bäckman 2013). She lays the groundwork, highlighting that the source material about Indigenous Sámi religion was mainly and almost exclusively produced by outsider scholars (Westman 2013).

Bäckman has shown that this outsider perspective has over the centuries affected and shaped representations of Sámi tradition, religion and spirituality (Westman 2013), especially the role of the most important religious specialist, *nâejtie* (South Sami), encouraging the subsequent generations of scholars to abandon the use of the term “shaman” in the Sámi context, and to employ the Indigenous Sámi term (Bäckman & Hultkrantz 1978). The use of Sámi storytelling as source material for research on Indigenous religion, which can also be traced to Laestadius's work, is her novel methodological contribution, which legitimately connects her research methods to contemporary Indigenous methodologies (Porsanger 2007, 76–77).

Grown up in a traditional reindeer herding family, educated as a child in nomad schools,¹⁷ she has used her Sámi traditional knowledge, language skills and experiences in her research, although this has demanded courage since such a combination contradicted accepted ways of doing academic research (Westman 2013). Bäckman's publications display the time when the use of the pejorative denomination Lapp in academic writings was gradually replaced by the ethnonym Sámi (Porsanger 2007, 288–298),¹⁸ and Bäckman has actively contributed to this change. As capacity building is one of the prerequisites and consequences of Indigenous methodologies, Bäckman deserves particular attention as she has encouraged and contributed to the growth of Sámi academic circles¹⁹ (Westman 2013).

During her long professional life, she has been awarded the title of honorary doctor at the University of Umeå (2003) and many Sámi peoples' awards²⁰ (Gaup 2019; see also Lindstrand 2019). Among the predecessors of Sámi methodological thinking, Bäckman is the first and only Sámi woman who succeeded to the professorship level in the 1970s-1980s, when even in the mainstream academy women were in an absolute minority. Her contributions, especially her role in the introduction of gender studies, deserve much more attention in scholarly training and education across the Nordic countries, and especially in Sámi higher education. Her example makes the role of Sámi women in research and education visible and appreciated.

The era of institutionalization of Sámi research in the early 1970s was marked by a remarkable contribution by a Sámi philosopher *Alf Isak Keskitalo* (*Alf Issát*, born in Guovdageaidnu in 1944). His article *Research as an Inter-Ethnic Relation* (Keskitalo (1976/1994²¹), which is based on his speech given in Tromsø at the 7th Nordic Ethnographic Conference in 1974, illustrates the main principles of Indigenous methodologies, highlighting imbalances in research on and about minority issues (see also Chapters 1 & 3). Keskitalo describes this asymmetry in Indigenous research by introducing the term “imbalance in minority-majority relations”, meaning that the mainstream academy had long kept the power to decide priorities, theories, and methods of research on and about Indigenous peoples.

In Keskitalo's speech, he outspokenly argues that the Sámi themselves should establish their own institutions in research, education and cultural heritage, and to conduct research on their own culture, language and society, based on their Indigenous philosophy, language and experiences, theories of knowledge and value systems. The rise of Sámi research of this quality and capacity would – in Keskitalo's argumentation – challenge and change the established outsider paradigm prevailing in research on minority issues of that time, as well as undo unequal power relations in the academy. The establishment of the Sámi-driven and managed institutions would – in Keskitalo's argumentation – necessitate access to reasonable research funding, distributed by the state authorities (Keskitalo 1976/1994, 12–23). Sámi institutions emerged as a result of the powerful Sámi political movement. Keskitalo argues for the need for capacity building that would result in the advancement of the Sámi academy with its specialized expert knowledge and language skills. The growth in the numbers of Sámi with higher education and a change in research methodologies would move the Sámi society from the position of being an object of mainstream research, which has resulted in the consistent accumulation of knowledge about the Sámi for the sake of knowledge for the mainstream society itself. According to Keskitalo, other Sámi academics and leaders of the Sámi movement, the urgent need of the Sámi society was to advance on their

own terms, enjoying the rights to self-determination equally with the mainstream society (Keskitalo 1976/1994, 18–21).

Keskitalo delivered his conference speech in English, which in the 1970s was unconventional in the Nordic countries, arguing for the use of a “neutral” language, equally foreign to both Sámi and non-Sámi scholars (Keskitalo 1976/1994, 5–6). He gave attention to the necessity of developing Sámi as an academic language and argued that the Nordic majority languages did not need to be the dominating tool in discussions about research that affected the Sámi. Along these lines, Keskitalo showed that the choice of language in research influences power relations. His article remains relevant to this day, being one of the most valuable educational texts in Sámi research. His contribution came simultaneously with the establishment of the Nordic Sámi Institute and marked the start of the era of methodologically contested Sámi research as we know it today (Porsanger 2011, 229–230).

Keskitalo – together with Israel Ruong and many other prominent Sámi scholars and Sámi activists – was involved in the establishment of the Nordic Sámi Institute, where he was employed as head of the department of social sciences in 1982–1985. In 1972 Keskitalo became the head of the first ever Sámi-driven cultural institution in Norway, Sámiid Vuorká-Dávvirat (Sámi Museum), which became a meeting place for various Sámi community interests and organizations, where the Sámi language, Sámi ways of living, epistemologies, values and cultural knowledge were appreciated and confirmed (RDM Hederpris 2018). Professor Ruong and Keskitalo represent the generation of Sámi scholars in the 1960s–1980s who were actively involved in cultural political movements and societal work.²² At that time, scholars’ participation in community work and their contribution to social development was not credited in a professional manner as it is nowadays, when academic contributions, and the development of curriculums and education are evaluated to be equally important as scholars’ contributions to community work and societal development. This combination of academic and societal activities has through the course of history been characteristic for contributions of almost all prominent Sámi scholars. From the 1960s and 1970s, an increasing number of Sámi started entering the academy, accumulating critical mass, which allowed Sámi research to become self-sustaining and to create further growth. This is the time when more and more Sámi across national borders acquired higher education.²³ At that time, the University of Oslo in Norway was the only academic institution where there was a lectorate and a professorship responsible for education and research in Sámi language. Many prominent Sámi scholars educated in Oslo made remarkable contributions to the growth of Sámi research, the development of Sámi methodological thinking, and simultaneously they all took part

in the advancement of Sámi society politically, culturally, educationally and intellectually. Among them, three significant persons can be mentioned: *Ásllat Niillas* (*Aslak Nils Sara*, 1934–1996), the first leader of the Nordic Sámi Institute in 1973–86; and *Juho-Niillas* (*Nils Jernsletten*, 1934–2012), his Licentiate thesis in 1974 was on prosody in the Deatnu Sámi dialect, he became Professor in Sámi language and literature at the University of Tromsø 1990–2012) (Jernsletten 1974; *Sámi dieđalaš áigečála* 1/2004; Seurujärvi-Kari 2005b, 379), and *Ole Henrik Magga* (1947–). Magga's doctoral degree in 1986 was on the study of his mother tongue; he became Professor in Sámi language at Sámi University College from 1997, led the establishment of the common North Sámi orthography in Finland, Norway and Sweden in 1977, and was the leader of the language department at Nordic Sámi Institute in the 1970s (Trosterud 2005, 360–363; Ylikoski 2019, 59–68).

7 Conclusion

The holistic approach binds Indigenous epistemologies, an understanding of reality and value systems together, as illustrated by the *lávvu* method. Such an approach is characteristic of the legacy of many knowledgeable Sámi persons presented in this chapter. They worked in multicultural and multilingual environments, and were both empowered and limited by the existing power relations of their time during hundred years of colonization and the slightly shorter period of decolonization and transformative practices initiated by the Sámi people themselves.

Choosing certain pioneers over a period of four hundred years illuminates the intellectual history of Sámi methodological thinking. The forerunners of Sámi research empowered the whole Sámi society and local communities and influenced the beginning of a shift in power relations in society and academia. In spite of the prevailing scientific and social paradigms of each historical period, the Sámi contributors chosen in this chapter did to some extent change the research and methodological tradition from an outer perspective to an inner perspective on culture. Through pursuing Sámi ways of thinking and conceptualizing in Sámi, these researchers started to pay attention to whose voice would be heard more than earlier when presenting the Sámi cultural heritage and sources in research and social discourses. They are forerunners – *máttut* – who deserve a distinctive place in the comprehensive, many hundred years long ancestral network of Sámi research.

Followed by the increasing number of Sámi scholars who emerged starting from the 1960s, these remarkable persons contributed to Sámi knowledge

and the further development of Sámi methodological thinking based on their mother tongue, their traditional knowledge and experiences, Sámi philosophy, values and knowledge systems. Thus, they relied upon the three main poles of Indigenous research methodologies and the legacies of many significant Sámi thinkers throughout the course of history, together building the Sámi *lávvu* of knowledge. The establishment of the Nordic Sámi Institute was a major turning point for the institutionalization of Sámi research and its further growth.

Notes

- 1 This essay on Indigenous methodologies was based on a series of lectures developed for the first Master's program in Indigenous Studies at the University of Tromsø (Norway) in 2003–2004. At that time, this program unit was called “Indigenous representations and self-representations”, because the concept of Indigenous methodologies was not accepted as a university subject.
- 2 The paradigm used in research since the publication of *Laponia* by Johannes Schefferus (1673) until the middle of the 20th century has been called Lappology since the term ‘Lapp’ was used by scholars when referring to the Sámi in their writings. The research approach of Lappology was mostly from outside the culture, and the term in present use bears with it the connotations of cultural imperialism and Social Darwinism.
- 3 *Máddu* (singular) can be applied to both people and to non-human beings.
- 4 In addition, schools were established in Piteå (1614), in Lycksele (1631), and the Skyttean school along the Ubmi (Ume) River (1632). The aim was to educate Sámi boys to become pastors in their home areas. It is worth mentioning, that an Ume Sámi, Lars Rangius, translated the whole New Testament into his mother tongue in 1713, although this translation was never published.
- 5 He was also known as Johan Gerhardsson, because he was a son of Gerhard Johnsson – or Gerhard Jonae – the first Sámi person in Skellefteå to become a minister by the end of the 16th century, and the first Sámi member of the Riksdag, the supreme decision-making body under the Swedish crown. Johan received his surname Graan based on his home place-name when the king raised him to the nobility in 1645.
- 6 In *Memorial* (1673), his writings about the new settlements and church activities in the Sámi areas under the jurisdiction of the Swedish king.
- 7 For the source criticism of the written account from the 17th century, see e.g. Rydving (2000a, 21–22).
- 8 In North Sámi language *luohti*, *juoiggus*.
- 9 His family first lived in Árjepluovve (Arjeplog) in the Pite Sámi area and then in his early childhood he moved to Huhttán (Kvikkjokk), which is a Lule Sámi area.
- 10 The text in Swedish, first published in the Swedish journal *Läsning för folket* in 1849, was reproduced in *Morgonbladet* number 84 (4.11.1850) in Helsinki, which adapted the text from the Swedish *Post- och Inrikes Tidningar*, see <http://old.no/samidrum/peiven-parneh.html#noter1>
- 11 Based on the poem written by Isak Saba in 1906, and approved as the National Anthem of the Sámi in 1986.
- 12 Turi (1910/2010), the newest edition in North Sámi.

- 13 Professor Israel Ruong was one of the founders of the Sámi Council.
- 14 In the 1950s, the Sámi museums in Anár and Kárášjohka were first the outdoor museums, then Inari's Sámi Museum, the predecessor of Siida Museum, was established in 1963, and Sámiid Vuorká-Dávvirat – The Sámi Museum in Karasjok in 1972; the South Sámi culture society in Snåase (Snåsa), the predecessor of Saemien sijte, was established in 1964; the Museum of the history, culture and livelihood of the Kola Sámi was established in Lujaa'vvr (Lovozero) in 1962.
- 15 The second and third edition in 1971 and 1975 respectively, and the much-revised edition *Samerna i historien och nutiden* in 1982.
- 16 The dispute between reindeer herders and the Swedish state over land ownership rights. Reindeer herders claimed a right to usufruct of land for traditional reindeer herding (see Seurujärvi-Kari 2005a).
- 17 In Swedish *visteskola*, a form of schooling for reindeer herders' children in Sweden for the lowest grades from the early 20th century to the beginning of the 1940s.
- 18 It is worth mentioning that the change of terminology from Lapps to Sámi in academic writings became an accepted practice in the Russian academy since the early 1940s, through several contributions by non-Sámi scholars.
- 19 As a young student, Bäckman contributed to the foundation of the first Sámi society in Stockholm.
- 20 An award of the Sámi Parliament of Sweden (1998), an award of the Sámi Women's Forum (2010), an honorary award of the Umeå Sámi language week (2012), an honorary award of the National Union of the Swedish Sámi People (Svenska Samernas Riksförbund) (2019), Sveriges Radio P4 Västerbotten (2012).
- 21 Both the original publication in 1974 and the second edition in 1994 are published in the research series *Diedut* of the Nordic Sámi Institute.
- 22 Keskitalo was actively involved in the establishment of the Norwegian Sámi Association in 1986. In the period 1980–1982, he was a member of the Sámi Law Committee (Norwegian: Samerettsutvalget), established by the Norwegian government after powerful pressure for the recognition of rights for the Sami, resulted from the so-called Alta controversies in the late 1970s to early 1980s. As a result of the work of this Committee, the Norwegian authorities initiated a study of Sámi cultural and political rights to land, water and natural resources.
- 23 On the Russian side of Sápmi, higher teacher education for the Sámi was institutionalized in the 1950s through the Institute of the Peoples of the North established in Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) in 1939. Since the 1970s, most of the Sámi actively involved in cultural-political movement in Russian have had higher education, though they do not occupy academic positions.

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