

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Amanda Sophie Green for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Anthropology presented on June 9, 2016.

Title: Tastes of Sovereignty: An Ethnography of Sámi Food Movements in Arctic Sweden.

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Joan E. Gross

In this dissertation, I examine the process of building a Sámi food movement in northern Sweden. Using 15 months of ethnographic research that included observation of food events (n=100) and semi-structured interviews with food producers and activists (n=47), I describe how Sámi individuals are incorporating global food activism frameworks into their efforts to maintain Sámi cultural and livelihood practices. Two frameworks have become salient to Sámi efforts: food sovereignty and rural food development. I find that on the one hand food sovereignty provides a discourse that enables Sámi activists to address their concerns with land access and climate change, which threaten their food production. On the other hand, the protection and development of their heritage foods, through programs like Slow Food and other third party certifications, enable them to connect with consumers and to address their concern for the cooptation of Sámi knowledge, which equally threatens their ability to make a living selling Sámi foods and culinary knowledge. I demonstrate that new discourses and spaces become available – nutrition science discourses and national food conferences for example – which Sámi activists accustomize for their own ends. This dissertation is one of the first to address how indigenous sovereignty movements and food movements are together enabling indigenous peoples to work towards sovereignty in new discourses and spaces. It advances our understanding of how food movements can contribute to building indigenous sovereignty and economies, at the same time it introduces us to some of the risks inherent to this approach.

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Tastes of Sovereignty: An Ethnography of Sámi Food Movements in Arctic Sweden

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Amanda Sophie Green

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Major Professor, representing Applied Anthropology

Director of the School of Language, Culture and Society

Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

Amanda Sophie Green, Author

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Tasting Indigenous Culinary Politics

This dissertation is titled *Tastes of Sovereignty* because it argues that food producers and food activists who identify as Sámi are using the tastes and tasting of Sámi foods to petition for their distinct rights as indigenous peoples. The emerging movements for food rights and sovereignty, as well as contemporary interest in heritage cuisines, is enabling indigenous peoples like the Sámi to claim their distinct rights to food, culture and land in this new space and discourse. I use the term *tastes* for two reasons. First, I argue Sámi food activists are using taste – its potential loss, cooptation, or transformation – as a framework to argue for their rights to food sovereignty and the accompanying rights to land and culture. Second, I use the term *tastes* because I argue Sámi organizers are asking consumers to taste the products of Sámi culinary practices with discernment, and if possible, to become allied with the Sámi food movement. Taste is an appropriate action in alliance with indigenous food activists. A taste limits consumers to a sample rather than full consumption and co-optation of Sámi cuisine.

In this dissertation, I focus on food-related work undertaken primarily in the small town of Jokkmokk, which lies in northern Sweden, just above the Arctic Circle. I examine the processes that food producers undergo as they bring Sámi foods forward for the public to taste and argue for rights to maintain these tastes. The process of going public with Sámi foods and food rights is fraught with tensions and questions which Sámi

organizers have considered and continue to debate: What should consumers taste, and alternatively, what should they not be permitted to taste? What threatens the continued production of those tastes, and what should activists do to prevent specific Sámi tastes from ceasing to exist? Who should be allowed to (and who wants to) produce these tastes? What are the rights and policies that Sámi food organizers need recognized from the state, the EU, and other international governing bodies in order to continue producing tastes from Sámi cuisines?

Why Food?

In contemporary worlds, food, and specifically heritage cuisines, have been constructed in two ways: as a human right and form of sovereignty and as a panacea to lagging development. Food has always been recognized as a basic human right in the United Nations through the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights. Yet more recent concern for food security, food sovereignty and intangible cultural heritage has propelled more nuanced understandings of these concepts that incorporate heritage and cultural practices into their definitions. For example, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food defines this as “the right of every individual, alone or in community with others, to have physical and economic access at all times to sufficient, adequate and *culturally acceptable* food that is produced and consumed sustainably” (de Schutter 2014: 3, my emphasis). International bodies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization also define food security in a way that incorporates individual preference: “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and *food preferences*

for an active and healthy life” (FAO 2006, my emphasis). Alongside food security, food sovereignty has also become a salient concept, particularly for indigenous peoples in the food movement, as it pushes the link between the right to food further by recognizing it as a right of individuals and groups to define their own food systems. Furthermore, culinary traditions are also recognized as part of intangible cultural heritage in the forum of UNESCO’s 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

I will demonstrate in this dissertation how these sets of rights and discourses contribute to the development of a Sámi food movement. The work of Sámi food organizers reflects the contemporary concerns of many Sámi for their rights as indigenous peoples: the negative impacts of climate change, the push for mines in northern Sweden that threaten Sámi land uses, and the cooptation or exploitation of Sámi knowledge, symbolism and foodways by industries with little to no Sámi connection. Food rights and food sovereignty discourses have become a medium in which Sámi individuals and organizations can conceptualize their rights and the forces that threaten those rights. A research collaborator and Sámi political activist told me, “Food is easy to talk about. For me, it’s the same work in different clothes.”

In the second framework of food, non-profit and profit-motivated organizations proliferate in efforts to promote traditional foods as a form of economic development and cultural revitalization. The development of rural foodways is offered as an economic solution to lagging development across Europe (Cavanaugh 2007, Grasseni 2014), particularly as European governments increasingly shift the burden of care away from

states and onto individuals, in this case food entrepreneurs, in the contexts of industrial decline.

For example, in 2008, the Swedish Ministry of Rural Affairs funded the project, *Sverige: Det Nya Matlandet* (Sweden: The New Food Nation), with the goal of creating more jobs and increasing exports and sustainability in Swedish foods. The agency funded regional projects that focused on food tourism, restaurants, food production and processing with the promise of increasing the quality of life and growth of rural regions (Kontigo 2013). Through this national program, two projects organized by the Sámi Parliament in Sweden have been funded which focused on Sámi food production (Kontigo 2013: 36), and my field site of Jokkmokk also became enveloped in this development project when it was selected as Sweden's annual *Matlandethuvudstad* (Culinary Capital) in 2014.

Legislative and programmatic efforts that are intended to assist peoples in protecting or promoting their culinary heritages run the risk of negatively impacting fluid and performative practices and their users. Such processes can be examined from multiple theoretical perspectives: they may be rationalized from a Weberian "iron cage" perspective, regulated and formalized from a Foucauldian perspective, commodified from a Marxist perspective, and within the politics of recognition separated out as authentic and inauthentic (Brown 2003, Shepherd 2010). At the same time, these efforts open up room for dissent against conventional systems of food production, enable a reanimation of indigenous identities and practices, and offer alternative economic paths in a neoliberal era where individuals bear the burden of self-care (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009).

The conditions of neoliberalism have given rise to many food movement phenomena such as third party certifications like Fair Trade and GMO Free as well as the philosophies of organizations like Slow Food, all of which rely on consumer choice to promote their missions to transform food systems. As described by David Harvey (2005), one facet of neoliberalism is the focus on the promotion of individual freedoms through strategies like consumer choice in lifestyles, products, and cultural practices. According to Paige West, third party certifications represent the culmination of the neoliberal capitalist market, as these certifications are focused on production and consumption at the level of the individual who has the freedom to choose what politics they support (or do not support). In her research on third party certified coffees, West finds that instead of assisting producers, these certifications only ensure that consumers encounter similar products that they desire at their local grocer (2012: 243).

The consequences of engaging with food movements are documented by many researchers of ongoing food efforts, such as Slow Food's programs to revitalize indigenous, ethnic, and regional cuisines. I include a description of Slow Food because it is primarily through Slow Food that Sámi food producers and activists have begun to petition for Sámi food rights and food sovereignty. In the 1980s, Slow Food began as a small organization focused on promoting food traditions through an "eco-gastronomy" ethic in Italy's Piedmont region. Since 1989 it has developed into an international organization with 100,000 members. As part of its mission to promote values like biodiversity, Slow Food has established 476 Presidia, or food communities, that work to continue or re-establish the production of unique foods for local and global markets. Presidia are "political projects," according to Valeria Siniscalchi, in that they are

“prototypes that define a paradigm of production to be preserved” (2014: 232). They mediate between Slow Food’s political projects to transform the food system and economic practices to develop global markets for unique food products. Presidia “aim to give a social and economic meaning to productions threatened by the powerful agro-industry because they lack economic viability” (2014: 231).

Some scholars suggest that Slow Food programs and discourses romanticize “cultural diversity” which in turn creates an “imperialist nostalgia” (Rosaldo 1989). This nostalgia (where people mourn the passing of what they themselves have transformed) fails to critically engage with historic, economic, and political circumstances that actually shape community and individual food preferences and food traditions (Donati 2005; Pilcher 2004; West and Domingos 2012). By ignoring political-economic histories, the organization risks reproducing the very discourses and policies of the colonial past which conflicts with its indigenous participants’ explicit wish to decolonize food systems (Green 2011). Moreover, Rachel Laudan argues that gastronomic movements arise when a wealthy middle class that can enjoy its products exists, while the peasantry continues to be stuck with a “tyranny of the local” food products and earns no economic profit (2004: 144). Jeffrey Pilcher also points out the contradiction in Slow Food’s valorization of “peasant foods” in Mexico (for example, the fresh ground tortilla traditionally prepared by poor, peasant women) for largely middle and upper class consumers. Though its goal may be to generate new livelihoods based on traditional foods and cuisines, Slow Food risks alienating the very cultural practitioners it seeks to assist.

It is also possible that Slow Food's programs may bureaucratize and rationalize fluid cultural practices through their efforts to create and regulate standards of quality and authenticity (West and Domingos 2012). In fact, Lotti (2010) identifies that in the Basque Presidium, efforts to "singularize" products moves them out of the easy range of exchangeability, but simultaneously Slow Food's practice of designing shared standards to create consistency moves these singular products into the realm of commodities by codifying the formally fluid and unique practices of production. Similar arguments can be made for other certifications, such as the European Union's geographic origin designations most familiar to consumers in labels like Champagne and Parmesan. These certifications also establish standards of production for products that are deemed unique to a particular territory or cultural group. Their standardizations risk rationalizing fluid cultural practices and transforming foods into commodities, which again, may alienate food producers.

Sámi food organizers work with the belief that by selling Sámi cuisines based on reindeer meat and other ingredients from the north, they enable more people to remain in the north working as herders, fishermen, plant and berry gatherers and processors. Furthermore, by building international interest in Sámi cuisines, they popularize a small niche Sámi experience industry for Sámi individuals to make a living as chefs, sous chefs, servers, food producers, educators, and food tourism organizers. At an organizational meeting, one food educator made this hope clear when she stated, "If they see how special it is here, maybe the young people will stay!"

Why Jokkmokk?

In September 2013, while I was visiting Sweden's capital Stockholm, I encountered many of Jokkmokk's inhabitants. These individuals were present in Stockholm in order to participate in a national protest of Sweden's mine policy which aims to triple the number of mines in Sweden by 2030 (Swedish Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications 2012). At the same time, they were also in Stockholm to sell foods, handicraft, and the idea of a vacation to Jokkmokk at the annual "Jokkmokk in Huddinge" fair. At one stand, I bought the highly desired fish of northern Sweden, Arctic char, to prepare for my grandmother that evening as well as a protest t-shirt featuring an iconic image of a Sámi man giving me the finger and the words "Change the Mining Laws" inscribed below him. Jokkmokk was constructed by these individuals as a site of enjoyment and protest, an image that followed me throughout my research.



Figure 1 A protest t-shirt designed by Anders Sunna with a stylized image Sámi man giving the finger and the words "Change the Mineral Laws" is posted at the protest site at Gállok/Kallak in Jokkmokk County, March 2014.

When I arrived in Jokkmokk only a few weeks later, I saw signs in town for a city-sponsored “Citizen Dialogue” to disseminate information and quell anger over a proposed mine in Kallak (Gállok) by British company Beowulf Mining. I also saw signs celebrating Jokkmokk’s selection as Sweden’s 2014 Culinary Capital by Sweden’s Ministry of Rural Affairs. The timing of these two events put in stark contrast two potential and divergent futures for Jokkmokk, its human inhabitants, and its food-producing land, water and air. A butcher I interviewed posed the question simply: “Is it a mine or fish in Sápmi?” The future of mining in Jokkmokk remains unsettled. A 2014 Norrbotten County study recommended against the development of the Jokkmokk mining district (Sveriges Radio 2014), and in 2015, Sweden’s Mining Inspectorate referred the application to the national government for consideration (Forss 2015).

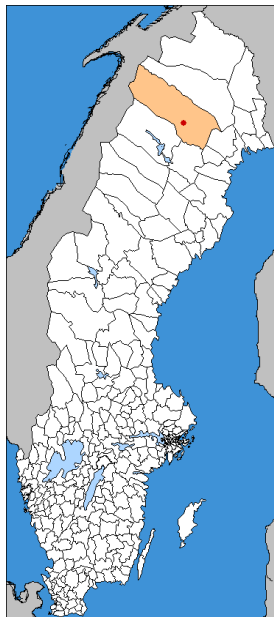


Figure 2 A map of Sweden's municipalities with the town of Jokkmokk and Jokkmokk Municipality highlighted.

Jokkmokk lies in Norrbotten County, just above the Arctic Circle at 60 degrees north, with 5000 inhabitants and 19,477 square kilometers of land. Simultaneously, Jokkmokk lies in Sápmi, the territories of the Sámi peoples who live across Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Jokkmokk is Sweden's second largest municipality (the size of New Jersey), home to the Laponia UNESCO World Heritage Site, four national parks, and the Lule River system which produces approximately 10% of Sweden's electricity via a series of 11 hydroelectric dams (Nyberg 2012).

Jokkmokk exists at the confluence of many cultures including the original Lulé Sámi, the North Sámi who were forced to migrate south after Norway and Sweden closed their borders to transnational transhumance reindeer herding¹, the original Swedish settlers, more recent Swedish arrivals, and countless individuals from countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, England, Romania, Iran, Afghanistan, Syria, Thailand, and the U.S.

Jokkmokk is home to a thriving wild foods system with wild plants like angelica and mountain sorrel, fish such as Arctic char and brown trout, berries such as lingon and cloudberry, birds such as ptarmigan, mushrooms like the porcini, moose and the domesticated reindeer. The individuals who work in this wild food system are diverse: Sámi reindeer herders and fishermen, butchers from all backgrounds, Thai, Swedish and Sámi berry pickers, Iranian, Sámi and Swedish chefs, to name only a few.

¹ Transhumance refers to the seasonal migrations of humans and livestock to seasonal pastures.

Jokkmokk is an ideal location for observation of Sámi food organizing because historically and currently it serves as a hub of Sámi cultural practices, home to the center for Sámi Duodji (Sámi Handicraft), Samernas Utbildningscentrum (Sámi Education Center), the Sámisk Mat och Kompetens Centrum (Sámi Culinary Center) as well as the annual Jokkmokk Winter Market.

The question “Why Jokkmokk?” was also posed to the Minister of Rural Affairs during a question and answer about the national Matlandet Project. The minister, who oversaw the program responsible for selecting Jokkmokk as the Culinary Capital, responded, “Because of a number of good things. I know that when an expert panel discussed it, the focus areas that exist in the Matlandet project were met. The wild was a big deal, the wild animals and nature. Moreover, here there are two unlike cultures, the Sámi and the so-called mountain households [fjäll hushållet or original Swedish settlers]. A small place can do something big. We admire Jokkmokk. It gives us a taste, this from the reindeer. It’s a new and different experience....” Here, the minister refers to the importance of taste in coming to know Jokkmokk and its many food producers. Yet, I explore below and in Chapter 7 the ways in which this invitation to taste and experience new tastes at the national level is not the same invitation to taste and become allied with indigenous food movements.

In Jokkmokk, food has come to represent an alternative vision of the future for many of its inhabitants and political and economic organizers. A local development leader stated that food industries “are an alternative and sustainable industry for our region.” These are alternative industries to things like iron mines, yet they offer different

forms of employment and revenue for the region. Due to the proposed mine, Jokkmokk's Culinary Capital leader Victoria Harnesk and I drafted a study of the region's food producers, the Jokkmokk Food Assessment, based on models I brought to the table: the Community Food Assessment and the Food Sovereignty Assessment.² My primary goal was to identify the economic, cultural and social value of the food system, while Harnesk focused on organizing and empowering local food producers in order to build the regional food system. Though never explicit, we understood the study as a means to explore alternative forms of development for the region in light of the proposed mining district.

Our study found that many people were worried about mining's impact on the land, whether it impacted their livelihoods directly or whether they felt mines were unsustainable. For example, reindeer herders and affiliated businesses such as butchers would be affected, explained by one butcher: "A mine, it's practical. There will be more people. We'll sell more reindeer meat. But Sweden's free lands are shrinking for everything, moose, reindeer, and so the open lands shrink. How does it help us if we have more customers but no raw materials, no ingredients?" In addition, we found that people valued the image of Jokkmokk as a clean and natural area. Many food producers relied on this image for marketing and worried it would be lost: "What we sell is clean land, clean

² We used a combination of the First Nations Development Institute's Food Sovereignty Assessment Tool (available at <http://www.indigenousfoodsystems.org/sites/default/files/tools/FNDIFSATFinal.pdf>) and the Oregon Food Bank's Community Food Assessment (available at <http://www.oregonfoodbank.org/our-work/building-food-security/community-programs/community-food-assesments?c=131109189311295307>)

water. You can destroy that also. It's a label that you should care about. It takes 100 years to bring land back from a mine, or longer.”

Many culinary entrepreneurs I spoke with had chosen to work with food because of a passion they had for flavors, the land, customer service, and so on. Most of them didn't wish to expand their businesses much more, as they had intentionally chosen their livelihoods already knowing it would produce a small income. This situation presents a clear challenge to alternative forms of development: those who already work within this regional food industry do not wish for extreme growth of their personal businesses. Thus, they will not provide significant employment opportunities for others. Instead, they encourage interested individuals to pursue their own paths in food entrepreneurship.

Ideally the Jokkmokk Food Assessment will guide entrepreneurs to develop new food sectors and make visible alternative systems of value that place cultural and familial practices on par with economic profits. For example, we hope that decision-makers in the local government will also consider alternative reasons food entrepreneurs do their work and the value their work gives to the region, such as public spaces for people to meet (chefs and their restaurants), ways of remaining and working on the land (selling fish to tourists in the national parks), and affirmations of cultural identities (the work of food educators). Considering values beyond economic profit may enable local officials to support projects and entrepreneurs they previously considered inconceivable.

Why Sámi?

I hope it has become clear from the above discussions of food in Jokkmokk that Sámi individuals, organizations and Sámi foodways play dual roles: they are critical actors in contemporary movements for indigenous food rights and sovereignty at the same time that they are essential to efforts to develop rural regions of northern Sweden. The term *Sámi* describes the indigenous peoples historically and currently occupying the northern regions of Finland, Norway, Sweden, and the Russian Kola Peninsula. They form part of the ring of circumpolar peoples living across the Arctic. Sámi political organizations often describe the Sámi as a people divided by four nations, and they now refer to their Arctic homeland as Sápmi.



Figure 3 A map of Sápmi, stretching across Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia's Kola Peninsula. LocationSapmi map is licensed by Rogper under the CC BY-SA 3.0 and available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=53461>

Historically, Sámi people have pursued migratory reindeer herding, fishing, hunting and small-scale farming, speak Sámi languages of the Finno-Ugric branch, and share cultural and religious practices and beliefs. From current anthropological perspectives, the Sámi are also a highly mobilized and quite heterogeneous indigenous collectivity that has demanded economic, linguistic, cultural, and natural resource rights in their respective nations and in global forums such as the EU and the UN (Beach 2007, Henriksen 2008, Lantto & Mörkenstam 2008, Lawrence 2005; Conrad 1999). There are approximately 70,000 to 100,000 people who may be identified as Sámi. Roughly 40,000 to 60,000 live in Norway, 15,000 to 20,000 in Sweden, 7000 to 9000 in Finland, and 2000 in Russia (Aikio-Puoskari 2009: 238). The numbers are wide-ranging because data on ethnic identity are not collected in Sweden. Of those Sámi, it is estimated that half of them now speak a Sámi language (Aikio-Puoskari 2001 in Pietikäinen 2003: 582). No one who speaks a Sámi language is monolingual (Pietikäinen et al. 2010: 4).

Contemporary Sámi people are integrated within the industrial food system at the same time that they pursue subsistence harvesting, hunting, and reindeer herding on their historic lands. The health care, education, and social security infrastructure of the Swedish state has served all northern inhabitants well, and Sámi life expectancies and standards of living do not differ much from the majority population. In fact Sámi reindeer owners and herders show lower risk of dying from cancer than the majority population (Hassler et al. 2001) and do not suffer excessively from diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and other issues associated with indigenous peoples' nutrition transition (Nilsson 2012). Livelihoods based on working and eating from the land are partially credited for these circumstances.

Traditional foods and the processes of hunting, herding, fishing, gathering, processing, and sharing are pivotal to health and survival, intergenerational knowledge transfer, the (re)creation of community, and the unique relationship circumpolar peoples enact with their environment and animals (Nuttall et al. 2005; Jordan 2010). On the other hand, these daily, unreflexive activities are also becoming reflexive; they are part of the process of articulating indigenous identities, often done to position their claims to land and culture in a human-rights, late capitalist, neoliberal-logic driven world (Li 2000; Povinelli 2002). Thus indigenous circumpolar peoples maintain (and actively work to maintain) their relationships to land, animals and one another, and the UN framework for human rights (and indigenous rights) as well as the reliance on ethnic identity as a marketable commodity (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009) offer ways forward in maintaining these practices and relationships. Importantly, engagement with these frameworks can fold indigenous peoples into the politics of recognition (Taylor 1994, Appiah 1994), wherein they must meet specific criteria to qualify for protection of their rights from nation-states (Sylvain 2002) or they must present themselves as “authentic” from the perspective of consumers in order to successfully market and earn a living from their heritage (Cattelino 2010).

In the early 2000s, Sámi individuals began to engage with the international Slow Food movement. In 2003, the first Swedish Slow Food Presidia was in fact a product, *suovas*, made by Sámi reindeer herders. The Suovas Presidia featured a lightly salted and cold smoked reindeer meat. Scholar Christina Åhren states that the Suovas Presidia had an immediate effect on Sámi society: it filled a vacancy by organizing Sámi processing companies where there previously was little organization (Åhren 2013). Herders involved

in the project expressed both surprise and satisfaction that this ”everyday food” of the Sámi people could become an internationally acclaimed food. Now a second presidia product from reindeer meat is being established, *gurpi*. Gurpi is a fresh sausage made from reindeer meat coarsely chopped and then wrapped in the caul fat (also called net or stomach fat) and smoked. The importance of caul fat to the production of gurpi is the primary reason fat has become a key topic in Sámi food discourses, further discussed in Chapter 8.

In 2009, the Slow Food Sápmi convivium was officially established with the goal to organize food producers and other interested individuals living in Sápmi, across the borders of Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia. In June 2011 it hosted the first Indigenous Terra Madre – a conference that invited primarily indigenous participants and focused on discussions of decolonizing the food system. Four Sámi flags were raised at the entrance to the conference center in Jokkmokk, and meetings were held in a structure based on the traditional Sámi *káta*, with participants seated on reindeer pelts (see Chapter 5 and Green 2011 for a full description). In 2015, a second Indigenous Terra Madre was held in India.

Slow Food Sápmi released two cookbooks in 2014 about Sámi foods, *Smak på Sápmi* (Taste of Sápmi) and *Beapmoe* (Food). These books were a collaboration between Sámi chefs, butchers, writers, food educators, and holders of traditional culinary knowledge. The decision to use the word *smak*, or taste in English, in the title of the first book was significant. The book authors understood it as an invitation to taste Sámi cuisine and culture. For this reason, I consider *taste* in this dissertation. The term to taste,

att smaka, or taste, *smak*, have similar connotations in both Swedish and English.

Variations of the words captures the action of sampling, savouring, and experiencing, as well as the flavor or the taste of food. The taste and tasting are actions and sensations which become significant to building a Sámi food movement.



Figure 4 The cover of the *Smak på Sápmi* cookbook (left). Following the release of the *Smak på Sápmi* cookbook, an image of Sweden's largest open pit iron mine appeared on the Facebook site "Gruvfritt Jokkmokk" or "Mine Free Jokkmokk." It states: Taste of Sápmi: The Colonizer's Best Recipes. New Chapter: Mining Boom 2.0 (right).

Occurring contemporaneously with Slow Food's programs, the Swedish government designated 10 million kronor (1.2 million USD) for Sámi foods in conjunction with the constitutional recognition of the Sámi as a people by the Swedish Parliament in 2011. Six million kronor (723,000 USD) were directed towards work in reindeer herding, hunting, fishing, agriculture, and efforts to get Sámi products into stores and restaurants. The remaining 4 million kronor (480,000 USD) went to the Sámi public elementary schools to provide Sámi school children with Sámi foods during the following four year mandate period (Samefolket 2011). The funding (1.5 million kronor or 180,000 USD) continued in 2012 via the Jordbruksverket (Board of Agriculture) for both school

food and continued work to build the Sámi food economy (Lantbruk 2012). The programming and funding is largely administered through the Sametinget (Sámi Parliament).

Other programs have been organized including *Renlycka*, a third party certification that guarantees reindeer meat products are Sámi-owned and meet certain quality standards. Renlycka's goals, according to a June 2014 meeting, are to increase profits to reindeer herders and increase the percentage of Sámi ownership at different scales in the reindeer meat market. Since starting in 2007, the organization has carved out a niche market for Sámi owned slaughterhouses, butcher shops, and boutiques from the Swedish reindeer meat industry, which is controlled primarily by larger operations such as Polarica,³ a slaughter, butcher, processing and distribution company operating within Finland and Sweden as well as Russia.

In Jokkmokk, Sweden's Board of Agriculture financed a Sámi training kitchen from 2010-2012 to develop the competence of Sámi restaurant and business owners for 1.93 million kronor or 234,000 USD (Samernas n.d.). Approximately 20 students went through the one and two year programs, and several went on to own restaurants and businesses inspired by Sámi cuisines. The Sámi training kitchen was funded again in 2012 (from 2013-2015) by the Sámi Parliament and EU's agricultural program (Sveriges Radio 2012). Now called the Sámisk Mat och Kompetens Centrum (The Sámi Culinary Center), the program was run by two women trained in home-economics who organized

³ More information on Polarica can be found at their website: <http://www.polarica.com/About-Polarica/>.

courses in Sámi culinary practices such as slaughter and bread-baking, developed Sámi-inspired products, and did research on the nutritional qualities of foods like reindeer fat. Funding was discontinued for the Sámi Culinary Center, but its organizers continue to apply to turn it into a permanent education program. By 2016, it still has not been approved by the Swedish education agency.

Most recently, projects related to Sámi food received support during Umeå's year as Europe's 2014 Cultural Capital. Umeå, which lies along the Gulf of Bothnia approximately 400 kilometers south and east of Jokkmokk, is one of the southern points of Sápmi. During the year, half a million kronor (60,000 USD) were designated to the Sámi Parliament to present Sámi foods in Umeå. The funding agency, the Ministry of Rural Affairs, stated the project "will lead to more jobs in Sámi food production and tourism" (Landsbygdsdepartementet 2013a). Even prior to many of these programs, food was a target of EU programming. Idre Sameby in the southern part of Swedish Sápmi received 2,230,000 kronor (2.69 million USD) from the EU to build a South Sámi center in traditional and modern slaughtering practices. The goal was to increase the profits for Sámi reindeer owners (Idre Sameby 2007).

By 2014, much Sámi food work was organized and funded through the Sámi Parliament. Originally, the Parliament did not fund organizations like Slow Food Sápmi. According to Åhren (2013), the Slow Food concept was simply not comprehensible to the government agency and so Slow Food Sápmi fundraised on its own. On the heels of its successes, and with the growing focus on food by the Swedish Parliament, the Sámi Parliament began to fund food-focused projects. In 2014, it had four areas it funded: Slow

Food Sápmi (two projects Luondo Biepmu and Njalle), the Sámi Culinary Center, Renlycka, and the Sámi elementary school lunch programs. A 2015 annual report by the Sámi Parliament designated two goals related to food: 1) to make visible Sámi foods and cuisines and 2) to develop small-scale artisanal and traditional food production (Sametinget 2016).

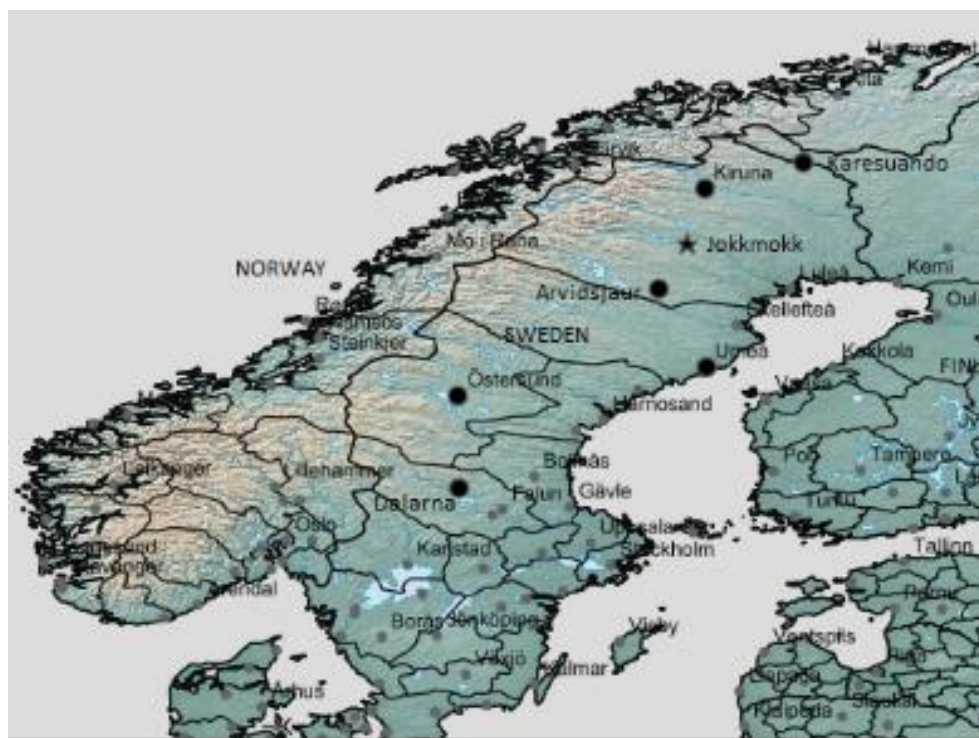


Figure 5 A map of Sweden with important cities such as Jokkmokk, Umeå, Karesuando, Arvidsjaur, Dalarna, Kiruna and Luleå identified.

A recent study 2010-2012 of Sámi food entrepreneurs by the Sámisk Matakademi (Sámi Culinary Academy), a temporary project housed at the Sámi Education Center in Jokkmokk, identified all the Sámi businesses working with Sámi food in three regions of Sweden: northern Sápmi from Karesuando to Jokkmokk, southern Sápmi from Arvidsjaur to Dalarna, and Stockholm (Sámisk Matakademi n.d.). The study found that these businesses focused on primary food production (such as raising reindeer),

processing (such as butchering and processing reindeer, moose and fish) and tourism (such as restaurants and bakeries, Sámi cultural experiences, and outdoor adventures in the region). Most businesses had begun in the past ten years, though many began nearly twenty years ago. Most had 1 or 2 employees, and the largest had 5-10 employees. In the thirty-four businesses they identified in the northern region of Swedish Sápmi, twenty-four of them focused on the experience economy of Sámi related activities that could also involve food (restaurants, guided tours, wilderness camps). Seven of them were processing centers, and three businesses focused exclusively on culinary education and presentations. In the southern region, twelve worked in the experience economy and nine in processing and two as a bakery and a berry and plant processor.

Tourism was the primary way that people worked with Sámi foods. Tourism businesses tended to focus on food experiences such as restaurants, outdoor adventures, and Sámi cultural excursions. There was much variation in the extent to which food was a component of the tourism businesses, from restaurants with chefs working within Sámi cuisines to lodges and huts where food experiences were offered as optional parts of tourism packages. Processing was a small component of the work with Sámi foods. Contemporary Sámi food activism is focused on strengthening all of these sectors, primarily through the certification and marketing of Sámi owned or inspired restaurants and processors. As one participant stated, “The goal is to have more Sámi people working with Sámi food.”

Research Questions

I pose several set of questions that the accumulated scholarship on food movements in the context of Sámi foodways raise. First, given the complexity and contradictions of food movements, what do Sámi food activists seek from their engagement with various food movements? That is, what are the desired and actual outcomes of their engagement, and under what logics are these plans pursued? How do they represent challenges to the state and market capitalism and their control over Sámi economies and lands at the same time that activist-producers work within these systems that exert control over their economies and lands?

Second, given the extensive focus on Sámi foods in EU, Swedish and Sámi programming, what have Sámi food activists done to construct a common representation that captures the heterogeneity of Sámi cuisines? Specifically, how are reindeer herding Sámi and non-reindeer herding Sámi brought together, separated, erased or highlighted in the discourse and practices of movement organizers? Similarly, how are the diverse set of culinary practices represented or erased in the same practices and discourses?

Third, given that efforts to revitalize, protect, or commodify heritage cuisines can have unintended consequences on practitioners and foods, what impacts (anticipated or unanticipated) are visible for Sámi food producers and Sámi foods? Finally, given that Sámi people do not own or control much of their land as well as the laws that regulate how they can produce food from that land, what opportunities and constraints do the

different food movement models provide for Sámi activists, particularly in their efforts to control land and food production regulations that impact Sámi foodways?

Research Objectives

This dissertation describes how Sámi individuals are incorporating global food activism and food development frameworks into their efforts to maintain Sámi cultural and livelihood practices in Sweden. It examines the discourses, strategies and impacts of these efforts. The key research objectives are:

1. To describe the food movement discourses and models used in the narratives of Sámi food organizations. Therein, I seek to:
 - a. Identify the organizations targeting Sámi foods for development and activism.
 - b. Document events, spaces and the discourses being used as well as their relation to making claims for food, culture and land rights and development.
2. To critically examine the existing and potential impacts of those models and activities on Sámi foods and people. Therein, I seek to:
 - a. Identify the goals and activities organizations are pursuing with regard to food.
3. To examine how and if new livelihood strategies are opening up due to engagement with food movements. Therein, I seek to:
 - a. Document how people are working with or planning to work with Sámi foods.

Relevance

The importance of food and food practices to individual and group identities, cultural practices, economies and politics has been described from many perspectives and many ethnographic settings by food studies scholars. This dissertation addresses two new facets of that field. First, I examine the ways the emergent fields of food rights and food

sovereignty movements have been taken on by indigenous actors in order to advance their general rights to sovereignty and/or self-determination as well as to build their local economies. Second, I pursue this set of questions related to food movements in a location not often identified in the food movement scholarship: wild foods of the Arctic. Focusing on indigenous food systems of the Arctic enables me to consider issues beyond those addressed in food movements based in agriculture: such as the role of contaminants, melting snow and ice, and the unpredictability of seasonally-based wild foods. Additionally, focusing on the Arctic reveals the ways in which both food movement models (sovereignty and development) work hand in hand as part of the continuum of circumpolar efforts to maintain subsistence ways of life in the context of capitalism, the “mixed economies” of the North. This dissertation places two fields of study, food studies and critical indigenous studies, in conversation with one another in order to advance our understanding of how indigenous identities and politics are being positioned within the emerging fields of food rights and food sovereignty.

Outline of the Dissertation

In Chapter 2 I lay out a theoretical approach for conceptualizing Sámi movements for food sovereignty and its implications. I use perspectives in the literature from social movements, indigenous movements, food movements and sovereignty movements. This framework is put into conversation with key historical moments in the colonization of Sámi lands and lives and the co-occurring forms of political and social resistance that led to the formation of contemporary Sámi identities, politics and social movements. I conclude with perspectives introduced by Sámi scholars, namely that food organizing and

entrepreneurship are a form of coping, a means for Sámi individuals to continue crafting lives in the north under the precarious conditions introduced by late capitalism as well as climate change.

Chapter 3 is an ethnographic overview of contemporary and historic Sámi relationships to the Swedish state and its impact on social movements and food practices. First, the roles of land and rights (under the condition of Swedish settlement) are examined in relation to Sámi food production and the contemporary importance of Sámi foods. Second, I consider the trajectory of Sámi social and political movements, tracing their history and their contemporary articulations in order to frame current food movements.

Chapter 4 provides a discussion of the methodological approach of this dissertation, which is grounded in ethnographic approaches to fieldwork and data collection. I also provide a background on my own relationship to Sámi histories and lives as well as a discussion on the relationship between research, ethics and work with indigenous peoples.

In Chapter 5, *A Movement for (Food) Sovereignty*, I take up the discussion of the trajectory of Sámi food movements. While the discourses and strategies deployed by movement organizers tend to be grounded in the political activism Sámi organizers have undertaken over the past century in a multitude of other fields, including land, cultural and linguistic rights, I argue that international movements for food rights and food sovereignty offer a new space of contestation for Sámi participants. I describe two models utilized by Sámi food activists from 2011-2014: food sovereignty and rural food

development. I examine the way food activists blend these otherwise conflicting programs, one which asks for state and international recognition of Sámi rights to food sovereignty and another which asks consumers to vote for Sámi rights by purchasing authentic Sámi food products.

I illustrate the process of defining Sámi cuisines in Chapter 6, *The Documentation and Modernization of Sámi Cuisines*. Through four case studies, I identify the individuals, venues, discourses, and outcomes of a series of events and decisions that led to the content of the public presentations of Sámi cuisines. Describing this process matters because it makes visible the negotiations and disputes that lead up to a finished product, in this case the “what” of Sámi cuisines and foodways. It also makes visible what foods, practices and people might be dropped from the larger narrative of Sámi cuisines and the possible impacts of that erasure.

The purpose of Chapter 7, *Producing Sámi Food Politics through Food Experiences*, is to further examine the political scope of Sámi food activism, in particular the ways that food activists and producers use the embodied experience of food and the relationship between producers and consumers as part of their political activism. Many scholars have described the efforts of individuals in the food movement, both producers and consumers, to create authentic relationships and experiences between themselves, animals and the land. I argue that through food encounters, food producers and activists are working to collapse the distance between themselves, others, their land, and animals, and the things that threaten them. Beyond the moment where consumers “taste” Sámi culture, I try to capture the moment when food enters into politics, when culinary rights

spill into consumer experiences. I also illustrate the demand that consumers have for creating the possibilities for these moments, as well as cases where those demands and efforts have failed.

In Chapter 8, *The Pursuit of Food Sovereignty through the Taste and Nutrition of Reindeer Fat*, I use the ongoing work with reindeer fat to discuss Sámi efforts to transform current food systems in the northern Swedish region of Sápmi. I examine the ways food organizers use nutrition science and their own embodied knowledge to discuss reindeer meat and fat. These various engagements with food generate conflicts between using a nutritional paradigm of food and “other ways of knowing” food (Carolan 2011, Mudry et al. 2014). Both sets of discourses lend themselves to a critique of the Swedish state, extractive industries, and human-induced climate change, all of which negatively impact the nutritional profile of reindeer meat and fat and limit the ability of Sámi food producers to practice their crafts.

Chapter 9 concludes the dissertation. I open with a summary of my findings and how they lead us to consider the differences and similarities between Sámi food organizing and other European and global food movements. I end with a series of vignettes about food producers from the Jokkmokk region in order to consider the ways that food producers experience the discourses and practices of food movements.

Appendix 1, *Being a Food Producer in Jokkmokk: A Report from Jokkmokk Matlandethuvudstad*, is our report from our study of food producers in Jokkmokk in 2014. It details the challenges and assets that food producers identified in the region. The report also provides an introduction to the key food production systems in Jokkmokk,

including berries, fish, reindeer, moose, mushrooms, and the food tourism industry (restaurants, cafés, hiking trail kiosks), detailing the challenges and future development producers in each of those sectors foresee.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review Theorizing Indigenous Food Movements

In this chapter, I lay out a theoretical approach for conceptualizing Sámi food movements and their implications. I use perspectives in the literature from social movements, indigenous movements, food movements and sovereignty movements. This framework is put in conversation with key historical moments in the colonization of Sámi lands and lives and the co-occurring forms of political and social resistance that led to the formation of contemporary Sámi identities, politics and social movements. Using these historical and theoretical perspectives, I consider throughout this dissertation the ways in which Sámi foods and food politics represent a radical challenge to the politics of the state at the same time that they are being folded into the development projects of Sweden, the European Union, and Slow Food International.

Social Movements

According to Alberto Melucci, the challenge that social movements present is in their “upsetting of cultural codes” (1996: 9). Collective action is “a message broadcast to the rest of society” (1996: 9) that signals the presence of something else or indexes the current state of the world (Melucci 1995). Collective action is inherently heterogeneous, fragmented, and containing multiple meanings, actions and organizations (1996: 13). Thus to broadcast a message effectively, social movement participants must manage their complexity.

Collective action is a shared field of action, where, Melucci argues, actors perceive, evaluate and decide, which enables them to tackle three critical tasks of social action. First, participants must invoke solidarity. Second, they must engage in a conflict with a visible opponent for control of some set of material or symbolic resources. Finally, and in the most critical dimension, they push the conflict in ways that break the rules of the game and challenge the legitimacy of power (1996: 29-30). The collective identity, or sense of solidarity, of social movement participants is essential to the movement, as it allows them to make sense of what they are doing. That identity is formed in a relational field, where activists become self-aware through the process of distinguishing between themselves and their environment. They partake in the identification of the “we.” The formation of this collective identity also involves a constant restructuring of the past and the future into the present (Melucci 1995).

These processes represent part of the work of positioning (Li 2000). Referring to Stuart Hall’s discussion of identity and articulation, Li describes positioning as a moment of “articulation” wherein a collective identity (or position) is made explicit (distinct, comprehensible to an audience) and made conjoined (cohering together under certain conditions) (Hall 1996: 141-142; Li 2000: 152). Articulation entails a positing of boundaries that separate what is within from what is without. It requires the selection of elements, such as food or linguistic practices that are meant to characterize what is within. Elements are pulled from the local repertoire of livelihood practices and cultural ideas, and through processes of simplification and stereotyping they are altered (Li 2000).

Sámi activists have continually engaged in the process of positioning via the multiple activist efforts for rights to land, language and culture (Eidheim 1971, Svensson 1991, Gaski 2008). My research on Sámi food activism also reveals that Sámi individuals are engaged in a process of positioning using livelihood and cultural practices based on their foodways articulated within the discourses and spaces opened up by the multiple food movements, especially Slow Food. The questions I seek to answer in the following chapters are: What elements of Sámi food culture are selected to characterize what is within the boundaries of contemporary Sámi identity and culture? What messages are Sámi food organizers broadcasting using their culinary practices and the food movements, and how might those messages upset given cultural codes?

Indigenous Movements

Melucci has made clear that social movements are rarely singular and are often contested, and indigenous social movements are no different. To slot the overwhelming heterogeneity of indigenous peoples into a unitary category requires much discursive work that often denies the histories of interaction between natives, settlers and other groups. Moreover, what might be called a “global indigenous movement” in the singular has never had a unified ideology or aim and instead has been fraught with tensions and antagonisms (de la Cadena and Starn 2007: 6, 10). Political approaches have ranged from militant ethnic nationalism, radicalism, oppressive patriarchy to antiracist and feminist movements. From concerns to claim land, control cultural heritage, increase bilingual education, to issues of indigenous representation, these movements have also addressed a

range of subjects that are often situated in the local political and economic circumstances of specific movement organizers.

Perhaps rather than a shared political agenda or identity, Linda Tuhiwai Smith writes that “the movement has developed a shared international language or discourse which enables Indigenous activists to talk to each other across their cultural differences” (1999: 110). Scholar Anna Tsing identifies one manner through which the shared international language on indigeneity takes form, via the “travel” of different models of indigeneity between indigenous groups (2007). Indigenous movements, like all social movements, generate shared discourses and models. Recognizing that models travel, the role of the scholar is to trace the links that enable divergent indigeneities to circulate between specific locations in the world. This process reveals the linkages between indigenous peoples’ social movements and allows scholars to avoid universalizing characteristics shared between different indigenous movements.

In her analysis of the international indigenous peoples’ movement, Alice Feldman applauds Melucci’s approach (1996) for its emphasis on the discourses and languages that can challenge and open dominant codes and symbolic orders. Yet in addition to discourses, Feldman points out that the international indigenous peoples’ movement has also created alternative spatialities and new geographies that provide critical locations for indigenous peoples to mobilize. According to Feldman, “The emergence of a constituency of indigenous peoples...created a significant imaginative space: an emotional, psychological, and intellectual space of freedom” (2002: 36). The international mobilization of indigenous peoples since the 1960s has operated in two

critical ways. First, the framing of claims and grievances was done in a way which provided a language of possibility. Second, the physical space of meeting and organizing at conferences and events gave form to the discourses of indigeneity and nationhood (2002: 36).

“Indigenous peoples’ movements of resistance—and in many cases their very survival—have rested upon the recapturing of their self-concepts and their cultural roots to re/create spaces of consciousness, possibility and presence through the re/construction and mobilization of indigenous discourses, identities, and claims in a variety of social, legal and political arenas” (Feldman 2002: 34).

Social movements and the process of mobilization create “public spaces of representation” which allow the actors in movements to recognize themselves and be recognized as the constituents of counter publics (Melucci 1996: 220; Warren 1998 in Feldman 2002: 33), or more appropriately alternative and/or indigenous publics. By alternative or indigenous publics I recognize that indigenous peoples are creating distinct publics, grounded in their own epistemologies and forms of governance rather than the democratic principles of the public sphere as defined in the Habermasian tradition (N. Barnd, personal communication, June 2016).

This line of argument points to an indigenous cosmopolitanism rooted in a form of activism that is oriented to global indigenous identities. According to some scholars, what distinguishes indigenous activism from other forms of ethnic activism is that rather than being essentializing and primordialist, the demands of indigenous peoples have been framed “through the language of human rights, democratic citizenship, and the modern anthropological theory of ethnicity” (Minde 2008: 7). On the other hand, scholars have also argued that indigenous peoples have always been cosmopolitan (Teuton 2013).

Certainly, this is the case in northern Sweden where over centuries Sámi individuals have practiced multilingualism and cross-cultural exchange with the speakers of different Sámi languages, as well as Russian, Finnish, and Scandinavians who also traveled through, lived and worked in Sápmi (Broadbent 2010).

Yet other scholarship highlights how indigenous peoples, in the process of self-positioning, may risk producing “the hyperreal Indian” (Ramos 1998), or the imagined native that is considered more indigenous than the real indigenous person. This hyperreal Indian is imagined to be more insular and less cosmopolitan in its orientation. Or, if the elements selected to represent indigenous tradition are not adequately present, indigenous activists may be accused of being imposters if they do not measure up to stereotypes (de la Cadena and Starn 2007, Povinelli 2002, Sylvain 2002, Gaski 2008, Cattelino 2010). Indigenous activists seek to recode and resignify the social categories of collective identities in order to be recognized (Taylor 1994). But in so doing, they are often bound to the tyranny of the new scripts they have coded (Appiah 1994). For indigenous peoples, the double bind of their identity is particularly dangerous as they must provide evidence of their indigeneity, usually through scripts that limit their flexibility when reclaiming rights to land and culture from colonizing states. Many Sámi individuals are often disqualified from petitioning for specific rights to land, language and culture because they do not exhibit the outward signs of authenticity that the state, the courts or other arbiters of authenticity (most often nongovernmental organizations) require (Beach 2007, Gaski 2008, Conrad 1999).

Scholars recognize that Sámi political activists have pulled from a repertoire of discourses on indigeneity to construct claims to land, language and culture (Tsing 2007, Gaski 2008, Minde 2008). The movement message is both cosmopolitan in its orientation as well as essentializing (producing the hyperreal Sámi) on some occasions (Spivak 1990). The literature on indigenous movements suggests the following questions: What and how are models or discourses of indigenous food rights traveling? How do Sámi individuals and organizations use such discourses to petition for special rights as indigenous peoples in Sweden? Finally, who is disqualified from claiming these because of the politics of indigenous recognition?

Social Movements and Indigenous Cosmopolitanism

The historic and contemporary indigenous cosmopolitan outlook is cultivated by indigenous activists in international arenas like the UN, where indigenous peoples petition for their rights as citizens of the world rather than of colonizing nation-states.⁴ Indigenous activists continue to participate in an “unintended and lived cosmopolitanism and this is of growing importance: the increase in interdependence among social actors across national borders” (Beck and Sznaider 2006: 7). Moments such as Slow Food’s conference Indigenous Terra Madre held in Jokkmokk in 2011 and India in 2015 are examples of global cosmopolitan ritual, the emotional engagement and social integration

⁴ The cosmopolitan character of indigenous peoples’ engagement (that is, the multilingual and multicultural nature of their existence) since time immemorial has been noted by many scholars, particularly Teuton. For the purpose of this dissertation, I focus on their engagement with the United Nations because it is through its right to food framework that Sámi activists are pursuing some of their work with food.

(Beck and Sznaider 2006) of indigenous participants from across the world in discussions of their local foodways. These food activists and producers become part of a condition “in which people view themselves simultaneously as part of a threatened world and as part of their local situations and histories” (Beck and Sznaider 2006: 11), as part of a world threatened by loss of global biodiversity and climate change and their own place and culture-specific knowledges and cuisines. Indigenous Terra Madre, as a cosmopolitan ritual event, is a space in which people can view themselves collectively as (indigenous) citizens of the world.

Other scholars, however, are now arguing that indigenous politics are not creating a counterpublic or an alternative space for indigenous peoples that is based in cosmopolitan outlooks. Rather, some forms of indigenous activism are challenging the very logics of late liberalism and its public spaces (de la Cadena 2010). There is a strong critique of the cosmopolitan proposal, driven by Isabelle Strenger’s cosmopolitics. Latour (2004), referencing Strenger, argues that the cosmopolitan proposal assumes how the world is, that our views are the same. Cosmopolitanism proposes a mononaturalism, the idea of there being one cosmos, while Strenger’s cosmopolitics proposes a pluriverse. Cosmopolitanism, according to Latour, is a gentler form of European philosophical internationalism, of Kant and the Stoics that proposes we leave our views at the door to enter a public sphere. However, Latour argues, peace cannot be attained if people must leave “their gods” (their own cosmologies) at the door. Those gods must be let through the door to achieve a true cosmopolitics. However, getting those gods through the door and into the cosmos is difficult or perhaps even impossible.

There is evidence that the cosmologies of indigenous peoples are increasingly making their way through the door, able now to be voiced (or voicing themselves) in political spheres. For example, earth-beings have appeared in Latin American protests and constitutions and may be a “moment of rupture in modern politics” (de la Cadena 2010: 336). Rather than having a cosmopolitan orientation, scholars like de la Cadena suggest that “indigenous politics may exceed politics as we know them” (2010: 335). De la Cadena argues that it is not a new mode of being indigenous but rather an insurgence of indigenous forces and practices that may disrupt prevalent political formations and render illegitimate the exclusion of indigenous practices from nation-state institutions (2010: 336).

If modern politics offers inclusion “in its own terms” (2010: 359) but the barriers to inclusion are being broken by some indigenous political mobilization, I ask, do indigenous food politics also allow for a disruption of modern political formations? More importantly, do Sámi food activists seek to disrupt and challenge late liberalism or do they work within the cosmopolitan public sphere? Is Sámi food politics slotted within the contemporary terms of international governing bodies that opens up space but does not challenge the very logics of inclusion? Specifically, I am speaking of the frameworks established by the UN recognition of the right to food (1948, 1999), the Food and Agriculture Organization recognition of the right to food and food security (de Schutter 2014) as well as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP 2007). Or do Sámi food politics rely on different logic that exceed contemporary understandings of who or what can be included in indigenous rights?

Sámi activists have a cosmopolitan orientation in their activism, evidenced in their reference to the UN as the ultimate enforcer of law, above the Swedish state. For example, at the mining protests in Jokkmokk in the summer 2013, police began forcibly removing protestors. The protesters included well known writer Igmarr Apmut Kuoljok. In a video posted to Youtube, Kuoljok tells the officer, “I will report you to the UN.” In addition, leaders of Jokkmokk’s protest group including Henrik Blind and Tor Lundberg Tuorda mailed a letter to UNESCO reporting Beowulf Mining for disturbing the Laponia World Heritage Site. They posted an image of themselves placing the letter in the mailbox on their Facebook site “Mine Free Jokkmokk.”



Figure 6 In February 2013, several protestors from Jokkmokk submitted a report to UNESCO that the mine in Gällöck would threaten the Laponia World Heritage Site.

In another example, I sat beside a Jokkmokk artist at the Citizen Dialogue on mines. She posed the question to the panel of speakers: “How can the Swedish state do

this [allow the mine] when Sweden receives so much criticism from the UN for its policy towards the Sámi?” When the question is brought up to be answered by one of the represented government agencies, it is ignored. The dialogue moderator asks the panel, “Who can answer it?” The Kommun representative responds that it is not a question for the Kommun. The representatives from the County Government and the Mining Inspectorate all respond in the same way: This is not our question and we follow Sweden’s rules. Not surprisingly, a representative from the UN was not present at the dialogue to enforce a cosmopolitan order of law, one that would recommend Sweden comply with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which it voted for in 2007, or its own constitutional recognition of the Sámi as a people, adopted in 2011.

Food Movements

As noted in the introduction, Sámi heritage foods have been incorporated into two sets of discourses and programming. On the one hand, certain foods are discussed as part of a set of rights held by food producers and consumers, particularly in the contemporary definitions of food security and food sovereignty that both focus on the right of access to and control of production of culturally appropriate foods. On the other hand, heritage foods have been rolled into discussions of rural development, championed as ways forward in regions beset by rural outmigration and low tax revenue, including Sweden. Such processes reflect the neoliberalization of state care for rural regions where individuals are now expected to become self-made entrepreneurs. It also reflects the reduction of state regulations that necessitate and enable the emergence of third party certifications which fill the vacuum that is left by the retreat of the state.

Such processes offer hope, new ways of becoming, and alternative ways to gain rights and incomes for rural inhabitants. Authors J.K. Gibson-Graham (2006) argue that collective mobilization gives form to alternative visions and counter-hegemonic languages through the creation and broadcasting of movement messages, or discourses, even in contexts of neoliberalization, particularly where large industry has left rural areas. Gibson-Graham advocate for a “postcapitalist politics” that will open new discourses and subject positions, allowing people to craft alternative livelihoods and identities based outside of capitalist discourses. Gibson-Graham term this a “process of becoming” (2006: 25) where individuals are able to imagine a different subjectivity because, while subjection can be dominating and resisted it can also be affirming and desired (2006: 33, 51). Moments when the way things are or the way things should be are interrupted open up a possibility to cultivate alternative subjectivities and discourses.

“Identity becomes less something to be policed and maintained than a site of becoming and potential connection. Desire is set in motion again, though with somewhat less force, and disappointment is distanced from disillusion” (2006: 129).

Still, as scholars and advocates, we should not remain uncritical of these efforts to rebuild in contexts of late capitalism. When fluid and performative practices around food culture become targets of legislation and activism, unintended consequences identified in the work of many scholars, including Michael Brown, may follow: “...as soon as indigenous heritage is folded into comprehensive regimes of protection it becomes another regulated sphere of activity, something to be managed, optimized, and defined by formal mission statements” (2003: 214). I take this opportunity to expand upon some of the criticisms of food movements.

Slow Food's Moral Economy

The intended and unintended consequences of food activism are documented by many scholars of the Slow Food Movement and its efforts to revitalize heritage cuisines. The Slow Food movement and organization began in the 1980s focused on promoting food traditions in Italy's Piedmont region. With over 100,000 members, it has developed into an international organization that promotes the mission of "good, clean and fair" food. Slow Food describes itself (and is described by others) as the only movement and organization that can intervene in the entire food system, capturing the concerns of multiple movements such as organic, Fair Trade, non-GMO, and agrobiodiversity.

The shift in Slow Food's focus over the years speaks to the diversity of its concerns (Siniscalchi 2013). In the 1990s, Slow Food placed its attention on biodiversity and created the Ark of Taste to inventory products of merit as well as the Foundation for Biodiversity to support biodiverse producers. In the 2000s, social justice for producers became its focus, similar to Fair Trade, but according to Siniscalchi, Slow Food also integrated consumer power into the process of preserving the diversity of products as well as the well-being of producers (2013: 296). Additionally, Slow Food shares its motives with environmental movements, but unlike many of these, it understands the environment holistically as "a collective good and at the same time it is linked to individual, private ways of producing food" (2013: 297). The term "eco-gastronomy" sought to capture the interest in gastronomy and ecology, integrating artisanal culinary knowledge alongside fields and pastures.

Slow Food has established 476 Presidia, or food communities, in order to continue or re-establish the production of unique foods for local and global markets. Presidia are “political projects,” according to Siniscalchi, in that they are “prototypes that define a paradigm of production to be preserved” (2014: 232). They mediate between Slow Food’s political goals (the promotion of a food system where food is produced fairly and sustainably) and economic practices (the sale of heritage foods). Presidia “aim to give a social and economic meaning to productions threatened by the powerful agro-industry because they lack economic viability” (2014: 231).

As Slow Food becomes one of the leading organizers in the food activism movement, activists and critics have posed critical questions to the organization. For the purposes of this dissertation, I focus on those critiques which analyze efforts to “protect” and “revitalize” so-called heritage foodways. Siniscalchi (2013, 2014) suggests that the organization is building or working towards a moral economy, one based on Slow Food’s ethic of “good, clean and fair” food. Siniscalchi regards Slow Food as both a private enterprise and a non-governmental organization; international association and political movement. Slow Food (including Slow Food Sápmi) has dues paying members, statutes and regulations. It publishes books and organizes events. It runs a private university and it operates humanitarian projects in the global south. All of these projects contribute to Slow Food’s “moral economy” of “good, clean, and fair,” which Siniscalchi argues is offered as both an alternative to liberalism as well as a reform of it (2014: 229). Though this moral economy may not (yet) be a reality, “it still traces the contours of a new moral economy” (2014: 229) where fair working conditions and good food are guaranteed for all. Such descriptions of Slow Food do not go unchallenged, as Siniscalchi herself admits.

Harry West and Nuno Domingos critique Slow Food because it “conceives of itself as a movement in opposition to global consumerism, and yet it is part and parcel of this same phenomenon; it calls upon members to remake the commoditized food world, but to do so through consumption” (2012: 6). In fact, the work of Sámi food activists reflects the tensions and contradictions of this moral economy that Siniscalchi discusses: both the Sámi and the international Slow Food organizations attempt to integrate the tensions between the competing agendas of “market, morality, and politics” (Siniscalchi 2014: 235). Yet while the activities of food activists are diverse and perhaps contradictory, Sámi activists are quite aware of and work through these tensions, which is explored in Chapter 5 on Sámi models of food activism.

Currently indigenous producers are quite active with Slow Food, particularly following the foundation of Indigenous Terra Madre and the first meeting hosted by Sámi organizations. Some scholars suggest that Slow Food romanticizes “cultural diversity” which in turn creates an “imperial nostalgia” (Rosaldo 1989). This nostalgia (where people mourn the passing of what they themselves have transformed) fails to critically engage with historic, economic, and political issues that actually shape community and individual food preferences and food traditions (Donati 2005; Pilcher 2004; West and Domingos 2012). In so doing, the organization risks reproducing the very paternalistic and othering discourses and policies of the colonizing past, the very discourses and policies that indigenous participants work against.

In the United States, Slow Food participants tend to rely on and reproduce a romantic ideology of European (and especially Italian and French) peasants as a

benchmark of authentic food traditions (Gaytán 2004). It points to a potential conflict: the use of Europe as a standard of appropriate consumption and appropriate food culture, and it indicates the possibility that other international Presidia operate under the assumption that they “lack” and so they must develop a peasant artisan culture based in a sense of terroir. In the case of Sámi and Swedish food organizing, this focus on French food practices and products as a benchmark was very apparent. Many individuals lamented that in Sweden certain things were not done as in France. During a meeting of food organizers with Sweden’s artisanal food production center, Eldrimner, the leader exclaimed, “It’s so nice to be there [France] because everyone in France knows what artisanal food is.” During the 2014 Culinary Capital conference, one of the presenters brought up the French paradox: “The French sit together to eat. In the Swedish culinary experience we need confidence in the old ways.” As an effect of these processes and orientations to other (ideal type) food cultures such as France, Slow Food’s programs may reify, objectify, and so change the very food traditions they intend to protect (Lotti 2010, West and Domingos 2012).

Rachel Laudan also argues that Slow Food has created a brilliant marketing strategy based on the concept of French terroir, the concept that certain foods like wine and cheese reflect their local environmental characteristics. That strategy, originally instituted in the 1860s and 1930s to supposedly benefit the French peasantry, did not in fact benefit them. Laudan argues that gastronomic movements arise when a wealthy middle class that can enjoy its products exists, while the peasantry continues to be stuck with a “tyranny of the local” (2004: 144). Jeffrey Pilcher also points out the contradiction in Slow Food’s valorization of “peasant foods” in Mexico (for example, the fresh ground

tortilla traditionally prepared by poor, peasant women) for largely middle and upper class consumers. Both authors seem to conclude that Slow Food relies on a disillusioned belief that gastro-tourism and the preservation of tradition can benefit rich and poor alike. Such critiques raise the question whether food movements will benefit food producers. In Jokkmokk, it appears the economic impacts of food movements have been uneven. Some butchers reported positive growth in their business, while other food producers such as fishermen and chefs experience valorization of their work by the surrounding community at the same time their profits have not become more stable.

Following Brown (2003), it is possible that Slow Food's food revitalization programs may bureaucratize and rationalize fluid cultural practices through their efforts to create and regulate standards of quality and authenticity. In fact, Ariane Lotti identifies this process in the Basque Presidium. She finds that in the creation of Presidia, Slow Food seeks to "singularize" products which moves them out of the easy range of exchangeability, but simultaneously Slow Food's practice of designing shared standards to create consistency moves these singular products into the realm of commodities by codifying the formally fluid and unique practices of production (2010: 73). Moreover, she argues that "taste" becomes commodified through its inclusion in the Presidium standards and its teaching in Slow Food's Taste Education programs.

Is a Moral Economy Enough?

The work of philosopher Slavoj Žižek moves towards a rejection of characterizing some aspects of food organizing as a social movement. Instead, Žižek describes what many would call activism as a form of charitable consumption. He argues that charity in

“cultural capitalism” is where we rely on the logics of capitalism to fix those problems (poverty and unsustainable food production) which capitalism itself produced. Žižek’s examples come largely from charitable purchases within the food system, from buying a cup of fair trade coffee to an organic apple. According to Žižek, “You don’t just buy a coffee. You buy in the very consumerist act - you buy your redemption from being only a consumerist. You do something for the environment; you do something to help starving children in Guatemala; you do something to restore the sense of community here and so on and so on” (RSA Animate 2010, Žižek 2009). But these acts of consumerist charity do nothing to address the root causes of poverty and injustice; we continue to work within the same system which produced the problem.

Similarly, critical food studies scholar Julie Guthman argues that consumerist approaches leave power structures intact as the approach “tends to neglect the sources of the problem in production and lets off the hook those most responsible for the problem (corporate bad actors and policy makers)” (Guthman 2011: 187). Such critiques lay bare the question whether a movement that relies on consumer choices, a movement that remains rooted in the logics of late capitalism, can have a lasting impact in redressing poverty, injustice and unsustainable food production.

As an initial introduction to my research, it appears that Sámi food organizing is many things at once: it is very much reliant upon the logics of late capitalism via its emphasis on certifying and marketing Sámi foods to well-intentioned consumers. Simultaneously, it is very much rooted in challenging the source of the problem by challenging the control of the Swedish state over Sámi foodways and lands. It is also very

much cosmopolitan with its focus on global rights frameworks. Leaders of Sámi movements for food speak about creating a food system where individuals who are Sámi control the means of production and representation within a capitalist system. Simultaneously they also promote food sovereignty for Sámi peoples via their critique of the Swedish state and the EU for policies which negatively impact Sámi food sovereignty. I consider these complexities throughout the following chapters.

Sovereignty and Food Sovereignty Movements

Food sovereignty is a term that gained international traction in 1996 when peasant labor movement, La Via Campesina, proposed the concept as a counter to the FAO's promotion of food security (Trauger 2015). Its roots go back to the 1980s when Mexico's government and Central American activists began to use it largely to refer to national control over their own food systems (Edelman 2014). Today, food sovereignty is broadly defined as:

“The right of peoples, communities and countries to define their own agricultural, labor, fishing, food and land policies which are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances. It includes the true right to food and to produce food, which means that all people have the right to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food and to food-producing resources and the ability to sustain themselves and societies” (Food Sovereignty: A Right for All, 2002, Nyéléni, Rome NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty).

For the purposes of this dissertation it is important to recognize that the term *food sovereignty* is best characterized as a “free-floating signifier filled with varying kinds of content. It is at once a slogan, a paradigm, a mix of practical policies, a movement and a utopian aspiration” (Edelman 2014: 959). On the other hand, Amy Trauger provides a

firmer description as an “emergent discourse and politics that engages directly with the failure of food security measures to address hunger” as well as a critique of the neoliberal market as the mechanism for managing food security initiatives (2015: 1-2). Food sovereignty is a discourse mobilized around many social movements, at the same time that it has become a public policy for many regional and national governments. Like social and indigenous movements, food sovereignty movements might have as many interpretations as there are organizations and individuals using the concept.

For this dissertation, I ground my understanding of food sovereignty in the ways Sámi food activists interpret and represent the concept while at the same time I acknowledge Edelman’s historicization of the concept with roots going back to the 1980s. This reliance on Sámi interpretations means that I am less concerned with food sovereignty’s focus on alleviating hunger or promoting the food self-sufficiency of nation-states and more interested in food sovereignty as an assertion of control over food production and food-producing lands for indigenous peoples.

The term sovereignty can be tricky to deploy because Western conceptions of sovereignty are rooted in supreme authority, territorial integrity, statehood and individual rights (Moreton-Robinson 2007). Sovereignty, as a concept, is controversial because of its association with statehood. For example, in discussions of the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1994), the UN had to carefully consider the wording of indigenous peoples’ rights to sovereignty, as this directly conflicted with the UN charter of national sovereignty and sovereign nations. “Self-determination” becomes the proxy for indigenous sovereignty in these discussions (Brown 2007), and the debate over the

use of sovereignty or self-determination is one of the primary reasons it took nearly fifteen years to draft and approve the 2007 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Contemporary indigenous peoples have largely been allowed to practice only circumscribed forms of autonomy, such as self-determination. Self-determination, as it stands, is actually self-management, the administration and management of communities rather than real policy control and decision-making that might be seen when, for example, budgets are handed over. Neoliberalism has also enabled nation-states to perceive and treat indigenous peoples as all other citizens, handing over their fates to markets, which, Moreton-Robinson (2010) argues, retrenches structural inequalities and blames Indigenous peoples and their cultures for their impoverishment. Sovereignty remains controversial because of the nature of late liberalism: Via the logics of late liberalism, the state, despite its many historic failings towards indigenous peoples, continues to be able to justify its interventions into indigenous sovereignties (Byrd 2011, Povinelli 2002).

Audra Simpson argues that in most scholarship, scholars gesture to sovereignty or vilify it, rather than addressing sovereignty straight on. This inability to address sovereignty, for Simpson, represents the liberal assumption of shared values (cosmopolitanism) as well as white fear of Indians reacquiring their land, gaining self-governance, accumulating capital, and making their own decisions. She reiterates that Indian sovereignty is real:

“It is what they have; it is what, in the case of the United States, they have left; and thus it should be upheld and understood robustly – especially as Indians work within, against, and beyond these existing frameworks. Indians continue to exercise their sovereignty through the moment of empire and within an empire that is of such hyperbolic force and self-definition that it can imagine itself as deterritorialized, global, all the while retrenching its territorial force within borders. They do this within the geopolitical borders of nation-states that cut through their land and across which they must now ask permission to traverse” (2011: 211).

Few scholars and activists have considered the implications of sovereignty in the term *food sovereignty*. Edelman (2014), however, has posed the question: Who is the sovereign? Specifically, who will enforce food sovereignty and what policies will they enforce? Such questions raise harrowing dilemmas regarding the implementation of (mandatory?) local food consumption, people’s own taste preferences, and production of luxury goods that are sold internationally. While these questions are important, Sámi activism has historical roots that already shape what they seek from food sovereignty. First, they seek veto power or consensus over *sameby* lands⁵ so that Sámi herders can control what activities take place in reindeer herding, fishing and hunting areas. Veto or consensus would reduce the precarity of their situation where herders are not sure what infrastructure projects the state will authorize on their lands. Then they seek what many small food producers want from the state: flexible regulations that enable niche food production and sales.

The importance of sovereignty over land remains the critical point for many, if not most, indigenous peoples. Many groups continue to possess a sense of rootedness in

⁵ Sameby lands refers to the land that is owned by the Swedish state and co-managed by sameby organizations and the state. The sameby is an economic association of reindeer herders tied to a specific area of land to be used primarily for reindeer herding activities.

the landscape and continue to push for their rights to land, water and ice. Land figures quite prominently in discussions in Sweden and Jokkmokk especially due to the Swedish government's plan to triple the number of mines by 2030. This process will largely take place in Norrbotten, Sweden's northernmost province, often referred to as Sweden's internal colony by Sámi and non-Sámi alike due to the history of resource extraction and lack of infrastructure and development in the region. NATO flights and weapons testing take place, hydroelectric dams abound to produce power, and timber is harvested throughout. According to one interviewee angered by this internal colonial situation, "Kiruna doesn't have a real hospital. LKAB [Sweden's state-owned mining company] is located there, and it has 90% of Europe's iron, but it doesn't even have a real hospital. They can't even do births there."

Sámi individuals and collectivities in Sweden have won back self-determination through the establishment of the Sámi Parliament (Sametinget) in 1993 after decades of activism. With the Parliament, new criteria of being Sámi were instantiated in order to determine who can vote in Sámi Parliament elections. They are: "one must feel oneself to be a Sámi (subjective criterion), and one must have used the Sámi language in the home or had a parent or grandparent for whom Sámi was a home language (objective criterion)" (Beach 2007: 11). Language criteria still serve to disqualify some from participating, for example, when herders in southern Sweden have not spoken Sámi languages in generations because of Swedish assimilation policies.

Yet in the very moment it granted Sámi self-determination, the Swedish Parliament also took away Sámi control of small game hunting on sameby lands and

handed it over to Swedish County governments. Moose hunting rights are also regulated by the state. For example, in Norrbotten, the regional government controls who can participate in the moose hunt and allocates how many moose can be hunted by each sameby. A research participant characterized the situation this way: “They don’t think the Sámi can think for themselves.” He is insistent that the samebys should divide the moose hunting permits. He reiterates, “They have a system in place, a good system that they find works for them.” In another discussion, a hunter asked me, “Why should we [Sámi] be nice and let them [Swedes] hunt on our lands? We’ve been overlooked enough. When we have the right to hunt, why should we step aside? They are hunting for fun and we are hunting for our livelihoods.”

Reindeer herding rights are similarly regulated by the state. Mats Peter Åstot summarized the situation of reindeer herders in Sweden during a presentation he gave in Jokkmokk, “You live by the terms of the state as a Sámi. You don’t know how long you have the land. It’s all determined by Länsstyrelsen [the county government].” These are examples of both the precarity of living as a reindeer herder as well as the state’s unwillingness to grant full self-determination and/or sovereignty to indigenous peoples to control the moose population, the reindeer land, or the fish populations. The logics of the state are deemed more valid than logics of local people who are hunting, fishing and herding on the land.

Is it possible that the right to food, and the promotion of food sovereignty, is a way for Sámi peoples to traverse their lands freely, crossing the geopolitical borders of nation-states that cut through their land? Can the promotion of food sovereignty enable

these individuals and collectivities to use the/their land as they want, without deference to the hunting laws, seasons, and limits created and enforced by agencies of the Swedish state?

Sámi perspectives on Sámi food organizing

Scholars who are Sámi themselves or have familial relationships to Sámi individuals discuss the Sámi food movement as a movement of entrepreneurs. Christina Åhren (2013) most explicitly calls it a movement of social entrepreneurs. By social entrepreneur, Åhren argues that these entrepreneurs are not just starting a business; they are creating an organization or an activity, or they are meeting a need in the Sámi community. According to her description of the origins of Sámi food activism, there were not many Sámi who thought a Slow Food Sámi organization would succeed. Certain concepts were not fathomable initially: To sell traditional Sámi food and believe someone would want to eat it and to pay for one's knowledge? To succeed in business without giving up one's culture? To have better income just by being themselves? The discursive constructions of these revelations – “to sell” and “to pay” – also reveal the extent to which the Sámi food movement is focused on building a movement through capitalist practices.

Yet by calling these participants *social entrepreneurs*, Åhren identifies how Sámi food activism is more than an economic class of individuals seeking to build markets for their products. While the focus is certainly on building markets, the broader benefit of their work with Sámi foods has enlivened more Sámi individuals' interest in working with and passing on traditional knowledge of Sámi culinary heritage. In my own

research, interviewees reported that more individuals were showing interest in the knowledge they offered by enrolling in their courses on slaughter, cooking, and plants, to name only a few.

Sámi religious scholar Anna Westman mentioned the concept of “birget”⁶ to me during a conversation. This term, in Sámi, means to cope, to manage or to survive (A. Westman, personal communication, 2013). She told me that food entrepreneurship may be a form of *birget*, of coping. In contrast, mining is not birget. I asked Westman, “Is this interest in food an entrepreneur movement or a social movement?” She responded that it seems to her that it is primarily small business owners who are participating. It is small companies who are trying to make a Sámi way of life. In this sense, the production of Sámi foods is a form of managing or surviving, remaining on Sámi lands. What are the circumstances that have led Westman to characterize the work of Sámi food producers as a form of coping or surviving?

Anna Tsing’s *The Mushroom at the End of the World* points us towards a framework for understanding Sámi engagement in capitalist systems as a form of *birget*, of coping. Tsing, describing how individuals across the world have come to utilize the matsutake mushroom in areas of industrial ruin, talks about living along an edge that is both inside and outside capitalism (2015: 280). In Finland, Tsing finds a man who dreams of harvesting matsutake in order to get by, his own *birget*. This individual uses matsutake as one strategy to get by in contemporary circumstances of precarity, which Tsing

⁶ The term is *birget* in North Sámi and *bierrgit* in Lule Sámi and have the same meaning.

identifies as the condition of our time, the inability to plan, indeterminacy, where we are thrown into shifting assemblages or open-ended gatherings that do not presume a forward trajectory. For Tsing, this man's work, "this *is* capitalism; everyone wants to be an entrepreneur. On the other hand, entrepreneurship is shaped by the rhythms of the Finnish countryside, with its mixture of silent deprivations and enthusiasms to improve" (2015: 280-281). As the matsutake moves from this man's basket into global flows, it necessarily is transformed into a commodity and breaks from these connections to the countryside. Tsing comments that "The irony of our times, then, is that everyone depends on capitalism but almost no one has what we used to call a "regular job" (2015: 3). Mushroom gatherers participate on the edges of capitalism, pursuing livelihoods that are neglected in the larger narrative of development but ensuring their own ability to get by without "regular jobs" and the development narrative.

Like the matsutake, work with Sámi foods will not lead to "twentieth-century development dreams" (Tsing 2015: 4), specifically forms of development that will provide "regular jobs" for people in northern Sweden. In addition, as Sámi foods move from local production into global flows, they will be further transformed into commodities. Those individuals and activists involved in these processes lead precarious livelihoods, without security, vulnerable to shifts in the meat market, to seasonal and increasingly irregular weather patterns, and to encroachment of extractive industry. But in the case of Sámi food activists, their efforts seek to stabilize precarity, to guarantee good prices for reindeer meat, consistent and fair access to land, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Unlike the ruined, timbered or poisoned, landscapes where matsutake emerge, the landscapes that produce Sámi foods have yet to be totally ruined.

It is in fact their remaining wholeness that Sámi food activists seek to protect from ecological ruin in order for them to cope, *birget*.

CHAPTER THREE

Ethnographic Setting

A Historical Perspective on Sámi Foodways, Land and Activism

Introduction

Sámi culture and Sámi people are historically stereotyped as reindeer pastoralists – a stereotype that reaches far back into the 1500s with Olas Magnus’ map of the Scandinavian region depicting a woman milking a reindeer. It is a stereotype that is still strong in the present, visible for example in National Geographic features such as Benko’s 2011 “Sámi: The People Who Walk with Reindeer.” A stereotype is the reduction and domestication of a relative unknown which influences interpretation of the past and anticipation of the future (Anderson 1991). Swedish policies and histories have limited Sámi interpretations of the past and possible futures in Sweden by tying the Sámi narrative to a stereotype of reindeer herding. Sámi have been “boxed by a narrative of Sámi identity that limits indigenous history in time and space, and identity by activity” (Broadbent and Lantto 2009:353).

The strength of these stereotypes has roots in state policies. The Swedish state came in contact with the Sámi through the imposition of a Sámi tax during the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries (Hassler 2005). Direct legislation began with the first Swedish Reindeer Grazing Act of 1886 in which only the Sámi were granted the right to herd reindeer, and to hunt, fish and timber on Sámi lands. The act also declared traditional Sámi lands to be the property of the Crown so that Sámi actually lost ownership of their land at the moment they were granted special status as herders (Lantto and Mörkenstam

2008: 29; Össbo and Lantto 2011). Through this and later legislation, Sáminess came to be associated with an activity and occupational category (herding) rather than an ethnic or indigenous identity (Beach 2007; Lantto and Mörkenstam 2008). In the Reindeer Grazing Acts of 1928 and 1971, different groups of Sámi were established with different rights based on their membership in a Sameby, a differentiation that is largely still intact to this day. The state framed Sámi hunting and fishing rights in such a way that only reindeer herding Sámi were given usufruct rights of access to the land (Beach 2007: 4). Non-herding Sámi were treated as ordinary citizens and forced to assimilate.

In 1993, the Sámi Parliament (Sametinget) was instituted in Sweden after decades of Sámi political activism. The clearest impact was that the Swedish state was forced to deal with the Sámi as an ethnic group rather than simply an occupational category (Beach 2007; Lantto and Mörkenstam 2008). The new criteria of being Sámi were instantiated in order to determine who can vote in Sámi Parliament elections. They are: “one must feel oneself to be a Sámi (subjective criterion), and one must have used the Sámi language in the home or had a parent or grandparent for whom Sámi was a home language (objective criterion)” (Beach 2007: 11). Herding, however, remains critical to Sámi stereotypes as well as lived experiences.

The Sameby Structure and the Limits of Sámi Food Production

There are approximately 160,000 square km used for herding, or 34% of Sweden’s land. Two legally recognized groups continue herding, the Forest and Mountain Sámi. Forest Sámi work in the forest during both summer and winter, while the Mountain Sámi use the forest only in the winter and the rest of the year are on the mountains of the Norwegian-

Swedish border. Jokkmokk is home to both Forest and Mountain samebys, with grazing lands stretching from Sweden's coast to the mountainous border between Sweden and Norway.

Today, in order to herd reindeer, one must be a member of one of the 51 samebys in Sweden. The sameby operates as an organization that manages reindeer herding and the rights to hunt, fish and use the forest for a specific geographic area (Poppel 2006). Of the 20,000 Sámi that live in Sweden, only 10% are members of one of the samebys (Sametinget 2009, Beach 2007). Thus, a very small percentage of Sámi people have rights to sameby lands from which to gather traditional foods and herd reindeer. There are approximately 950 private family herding businesses and 2000 discrete herders in the 51 samebys (Poppel 2006: 76). In Jokkmokk, there are five samebys.

Historically the state required evidence of an ancestral link for an individual to have the right to herd reindeer. Individuals who had rights were of "Lappish origin" wherein the father, mother, or grandparents had been permanent reindeer herders (Lantto and Mörkenstam 2008: 32). The right could be lost. For instance, women who had ancestral Sámi herding rights relinquished them if they married men without those rights (Lantto and Mörkenstam 2008: 32), and if one's ancestors gave up the right to herd reindeer, then one's own right was relinquished as well. In this way, Sámi herding and land rights became encoded in a genealogical model so that the right to use the land is permitted for "traditional forms of occupation only (reindeer herding)" and those traditional form of occupation are "inherited through Sámi descent" (Beach 2007: 4). More recently, membership is open to all. Membership belongs to the individual, who

can be voted into the sameby or inherit their status from their parents. It is nearly impossible to become a member of a sameby unless one is born into it or marries another member, as I explain below.

Herders need at least 400 reindeer to survive solely on reindeer herding (Borchert 2001), which generates income from compensation for loss of reindeer, sale of skins, antlers, and meat sales. Herders support themselves through the sale of reindeer meat in Scandinavian, Russian and other European niche markets. Forty-three percent of income comes from meat, 20% from compensation for loss of reindeer, 26% from hunting and fishing, and 11% from Sámi village wages (Poppel 2006: 76). However, herders and sameby members often cannot make an adequate living unless they combine the sale of reindeer products with a secondary source of income, from fishing, hunting moose, or work in the mines or service industry (Svensson 1987, Poppel 2006). Fishing is only economically important in Jokkmokk, while hunting moose generates substantial income for many reindeer owners across Sweden. Supplementary income also comes often from women who take jobs in handicraft production, nursing, tourism, and many other industries (Poppel 2006, Anderson 1987). Outside of the sameby structure, most Sámi today support themselves through work in the wage economy.

The sameby is a very prescriptive structure for its members. Sameby organizations were and are forbidden to undertake any economic activity other than herding. The herder also could not and still cannot earn more than 50% of their income from a non-herding source without running the risk of being expelled from the sameby or being forced to reduce their herd size (Beach 2007: 5). Hugh Beach, like many scholars

and Sámi people, demands, “Why is it considered that herders must draw their livelihoods essentially from herding alone? Why can the Sameby not engage in other economic activity?” (1990: 324)?

Challenging the logics of the sameby structure is a priority of some Sámi food activists, though little to no advancement has been made as it would require restructuring a centuries old Swedish law. Were samebys and/or herders allowed to pursue other economic activities without repercussions, food production and food tourism would be strong paths forward, using the reindeer, moose, birds, fish, berries, plants and mushrooms naturally growing in sameby territories.

Because of the sameby structure and its associated rights, the division between sameby members and non-members, reindeer herders and non-herders, is a contentious issue. Recalling that the Swedish state legislated Sámi identity as an occupational category (reindeer herder), sameby members then have access to material and symbolic resources other Sámi do not. In Sweden, the herding of reindeer and being a member of a sameby have become salient markers of Sámi identity (Anderson 1991, Beach 2004, Brännlund and Axelsson 2011), effectively excluding the majority of Sámi people from expressing such an identity.

The criteria for reindeer herding were changed in 1993 with the institution of the Sámi Parliament. Today, in order to herd, one has to be of Sámi ancestry (evidenced through Sámi language use in one’s family) and must be a member of a sameby. Little has changed, however, because one must be accepted as a member of a sameby. Current sameby members exercise restraint in allowing other members in because of the

maximum reindeer quota, a law imposed on them by the Swedish government. Beach argues that structural limitations, including ecological, market, and political, continue to inhibit non-herders from taking up herding: “there is still a vastly larger number of Sámi with immemorial rights who still occupy the lands of their forefathers but who are barred from practicing their right to hunt, fish, or herd that these forefathers established” (2007: 10).

There are petitions to change the Reindeer Grazing Act to expand its applicability to more Sámi. The expansion can be interpreted in two ways: 1) an expansion of the rights of sameby resource use so that it can engage in other economic activities; or 2) an expansion of the sameby membership base to include Sámi who have immemorial rights but are not herders and might not intend to become herders. Beach suggests that:

“Sámi who stand outside of the Samebys have always been engaged in all manner of “regular Swedish” professions; but were the Sameby “expanded”, Sámi could be employed in numerous ways other than herding, as part of a special user group possessing a monopoly on certain land-based resources” (2007: 16).

There are other rights to use the land (other than herding reindeer) that could be valuable to those Sámi who are not sameby members and do not have the right to herd. Again, this points to the largely untapped resource of food production, education and tourism that could take place on sameby lands without the exercise of reindeer herding.

Settlement and Colonization of Sápmi

The Swedish crown took ownership of areas that were Sámi land through administrative operations such as reforming the system of land concessions and introducing legislation such as the Reindeer Grazing Act of 1886. These acts dispossessed Sámi of their land by

altering the terms of the game, specifically the terms of land ownership. These represent processes of colonization, as well as a core-periphery model (Wolf 1982) wherein Sámi groups were treated as an extractive industry utilized by the dominant society to harvest natural resources they themselves were unable to exploit (Wheelerburg 2008: 168).

Össbo and Lantto explain:

“Regarding the indigenous Sámi people and their rights to land and water, the actions of the Swedish state are characteristic of colonial policy. This policy has created a path dependency, a process including the characteristics of colonialism such as transformation of the social organization and the dispossession and displacement of indigenous peoples.” (2011: 327).

Colonization of Sámi lands began in the Middle Ages, grew in the 13th and 14th centuries, and was completed from 1751 to 1826 when different nations laid claim to parts of the Sápmi region. Taxation of Sámi by Scandinavian states began formally by the Norwegian war tribes in 872 and in Sweden in 1553 (though taxation had been ongoing for much longer through middlemen) (Anderson 1978). Processes of colonization proceeded through the increasing presence of settlers, designation of borders, creation of legislation, and the imposition of industry. The last half of the 19th century was the “darkest chapter in Sámi history” as the impulse of the Industrial Revolution drove states and industries to extract raw materials and human labor from Sápmi (Baer 1994). Increasing colonization encouraged by the Swedish government through industry and infrastructure led the Sámi to become a minority population in their own lands, competing with other inhabitants and industries to maintain their livelihoods.

In 1751 the border between the nations of Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland was established. The treaty between these nations also enabled the creation of the Lapp

Codicil, the “Magna Carta” of the Sámi, as an addendum to the border agreement. The countries wished to avoid separating Sámi and their traditional resource use since they provided an important tax base. States agreed to confirm traditional Sámi rights to use lands on both sides of the border in order to preserve the “Lappish nation.” The agreement covered herding primarily, but contemporary analysts argue it also covered fishing and hunting rights. Sámi were required to become citizens of one state, based on patterns of land use. Though they became citizens of a state, “they were not part of society; they were viewed as a nation within the nation” (Lantto 2010: 545). The border still laid one of the first divisions between Sámi people, prevented them from holding land in both countries, and ultimately undermined their rights to land as later border agreements did not affirm their rights to cross-border access.

With the dissolution of the Union between Sweden and Norway in 1905 and the declaration of Finnish independence from Russia in 1917, borders transformed into permanent barriers for Sámi nomadism. The borders were of little consequence to the Sámi as long as they could pass through them. When borders did close, Sámi still could pass through them with some negotiations. As borders closed permanently with the creation of today’s states, waves of migration of Sámi and their herds relocated further south to access pasture, instigating additional waves of migration even further south (Anderson 1978). Consequently, “The Sámi were forced to form new communities within the borders of the nation states, cooperating in a new direction with groups they previously had had little or no contact with” (Lantto 2010: 553). Many Sámi were displaced from their summer lands in the Norwegian mountains and relocated south to areas like Jokkmokk. In the Jokkmokk region, the division between the original Lulé

Sámi and the relocated Northern Sámi remain salient, in the practices of language and herding particularly, but these different groups must work alongside one another within Jokkmokk's five samebys.

Each state reacted differently to the Sámi now encased in their borders. In Norway, Sámi were seen as obstacles to national development and agriculture, so the state pursued policies of assimilation. In Sweden, the reindeer industry was viewed as a good use of the interior areas and sought to support herding in order to prevent poverty and assimilation (Lantto 2010: 549). The infamous "Lapp shall be a Lapp" (*Lapp ska vara Lapp*) policy came to fruition as the Swedish state attempted freeze Sámi herders in time by isolating them from outside influences that would "contaminate" their traditional herding practices. Being Sámi meant that one herded reindeer, lived nomadically, could not live in permanent housing and could not combine agriculture with reindeer herding (Lantto and Mörkenstam 2008: 31). The state excluded herding Sámi from anything "modern" because they argued that might contaminate the Sámi's pure nomadic practices (Lantto and Mörkenstam 2008: 33-34). They went so far as to isolate herding Sámi from non-herding Sámi. Herding Sámi children were educated in "nomadic" schools with special state funds, while non-herding Sámi were expected to assimilate through the Swedish education system.

Later Reindeer Grazing Acts treated Sámi differently in Sweden. The 1919 Reindeer Herding Convention closed large areas to Sámi herders in Sweden. In the 1949 and 1971 Acts, Sámi living in Sweden lost 70% of their remaining grazing areas in Norway. They received no compensation for losses. The policies were a result of

Sweden's decreasing interest in reindeer herding, and increasing prioritization of mines, hydropower, and forestry. By the 1950s and 1960s, the Swedish state began to implement modernizing and rationalizing policies to the herding industry. For the herding Sámi, this change in discourse and practice implied that reindeer herding would be treated as an economic pursuit (rather than a cultural practice) that competed alongside other users of land (Hassler 2005: 6; Lantto and Mörkenstam 2008: 34; Wheelersburg 2008: 169). Loss of an individual's herding rights was now based on a discourse of market logic wherein a reindeer herder's economic failure was a labor-market problem.

Many factors have negatively impacted the flexible use of land and livelihood strategies historically undertaken by Sámi peoples, including the closing of national borders to migration, the encroachment of industry and settlers, and the regulation and limitation of Sámi land use via the Reindeer Grazing Acts (Brännlund and Axelsson 2011). Previously flexible occupations (combining herding, fishing, hunting, and agriculture) became impossible to pursue if one wanted to maintain rights to sameby membership, while at the same time the ability to successfully herd became more challenging as land bases decreased and herds were impacted by industrial development. By the 1960s, however, a movement for cultural rights also began to find traction within some herding and non-herding groups. This moment was clearly enabled through the anti-colonial, indigenous rights, and UN rights discourse of that period and culminated in the creation of the Swedish Sámi Parliament and the recognition of the Sámi as a people in the Swedish Constitution.

Sámi Social and Political Movements, 1900s-present

The colonization of Sámi lands by Nordic states enabled the emergence of an ethnic identity and ethnic mobilization via the development of relations of inequality between Nordic settlers and Sámi. These categories of identity and associated relations of inequality continually articulated and repositioned Sáminess in an open-ended process into the present (Clifford 1999). The decisive factor that triggered ethno-political development was the sharpening of interests, particularly pressure on traditional Sámi lands, beginning at the Industrial Revolution in the 1880s, continuing with the national border closures between Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia in the early 1900s, and culminating with the series of Reindeer Grazing Acts (1886-1971) that targeted Sámi reindeer herders. Svensson postulates that, “This [increasing resource competition] is probably the beginning stage of Sámi ethnicity, a phenomenon which is inconceivable unless it is viewed in relation to a contrasting social unit, in this case the nation-state” (1991: 124).

The first Sámi activism was locally-based. In 1904, Elsa Laula Renberg (1877-1930), one of the first Sámi political organizers, argued that Sámi held older rights to land than Swedish settlers. She stated that Sámi should be granted ownership of all land designated as reindeer grazing areas with the freedom to decide how the land would be used, including the option to farm (Lantto and Mörkenstam 2008: 30). Laula argued that the Sámi were one people, regardless of occupation. The argument is echoed by many of today’s activists primarily because Laula’s aspirations were largely unheard and mostly unsuccessful. It was followed by other efforts through the reindeer herding unions

(Lantto and Mörkenstam 2008) and the educated Sámi elite (Eidheim 1971) who were able to gain footing in political discussion and recodify Sámi identity.

Two critical episodes in Sámi history are credited with the dramatic mobilization of Sámi people. These events exploded Sámi issues onto national and international agendas. The first, the Alta Dam, was a “mega-happening” that accentuated the Sámi situation (Eidheim 1997: 45). Norway dammed the Alta-Kautokeino watercourse, which hurt reindeer grazing areas, calving areas, salmon spawning, wildlife and vegetation (Brantenberg 1985). The action highlighted the disparity between Norway’s international efforts to support indigenous people and its national failures to support Sámi people. Following Alta, more Sámi incorporated the ideas generated by the Sámi elite, including “we were here first,” “we are a people,” and “Sápmi is our cultural heritage.” These ideas eventually became conventionalized and taken for granted categories of thought in Sámi everyday experiences (Eidheim 1971).

The second case, the Taxed Mountain Case (Skattefjall Case 1966-1981), was heard by the Swedish Supreme Court. The case was intended to clarify the legal rights of reindeer herders in the Taxed Mountains. Several samebys and individuals in Jämtland, south of Norrbotten, sued the state for full ownership rights to the property. Though a loss (the state maintained itself as the owner of the property), the case recognized a constitutionally protected Sámi right to use the land (Lantto and Mörkenstam 2008). The Taxed Mountain and Alta cases were losses for the Sámi. Their usufructuary land rights were not transferred into ownership rights, but the legal process and statements put them in a better position. The Swedish Supreme Court clarified existing Sámi rights based on

immemorial usage and considered them to be equally firm as private ownership rights (Svensson 1991: 127; Svensson 1987). Both Sweden and Norway established Sámi Rights Commissions to make an inquiry into Sámi issues, such as land rights, constitutional rights, a special Sámi language law and Sámi Parliaments (Svensson 1991: 128). The Norwegian and Swedish commissions determined that the Sámi are not a “people” and so are not entitled to full self-determination (Beach, Anderson and Aikio 1992), but Finland, Sweden, and Norway established Sámi Parliaments as a step in enabling some forms of self-determination. In 2011, Sweden officially recognized the Sámi as a people in its Constitution.

The Sámi Parliaments in their respective nation-states are not truly tools of sovereignty or self-determination; they are part of national administrations. The Parliaments have successfully implemented education reform, language policy, and Sámi-run academic research institutions. At the same time, these concerns for language and culture have also sidelined more difficult issues of land and water rights (Conrad 1999: xiv; Eidheim 1997: 48). Many argue that the right to control development of northern landscapes is essential to ensuring cultural survival of the Sámi (Baer 1982; 1994). Svensson (1991) and Beach (2007) argue that the Sámi need the right to influence the location of industrial projects so that they have the least possible damage and prevent exploitation that severely affects local groups of Sámi. What is needed is a right to veto, but the Sámi rights commissions in Norway and Sweden have denied rights to an absolute veto.

The Right to (Use) Land

In 1999, a special investigator determined that Sweden is not in compliance with ILO Convention 169⁷ because the boundaries of the area of Sámi use rights are unclear and not yet established (SOU 1999: 25-26). In response, Sweden created a border delineation commission (Gränsdragnings-kommission) that determined two boundaries: an inner boundary consisting of lands Sámi herders are entitled to under an indigenous use rights framework of ILO 169 and an outer boundary of lands used as winter pasturage from October to April which are not subject to indigenous use rights (SOU 2006: 33 in Wheelersburg 2008: 166).

Despite official recognition of Sámi use rights, today more and more small private landowners are claiming that reindeer cause damage to their land and timber products. Approximately 1000 landowners are refusing reindeer access to their land and are suing samebys (Borchert 2001). Sámi use rights to the land are confirmed in legislation and by the ILO investigation, but legislators still have yet to firmly designate the geographic boundaries where these rights exist which would prevent samebys from being sued. Moreover, Wheelersburg has pointed out that too little is known or understood about the use and location of other subsistence resources (wild foods, raw materials, and pasturage) of Sámi herders to come to a clear solution in designating these boundaries (Wheelersburg 2008: 169-173).

⁷ ILO 169, established in 1989, is short for the International Labour Organization Convention 169 that recognizes and protects indigenous peoples' land ownership rights. Sweden has not signed ILO 169.

Mining, timbering, hydropower, settlements, agriculture, parklands, and recreation historically and currently compete with Sámi subsistence practices in the north (Andersson, Östlund, and Törnlund 2005; Össbo and Lantto 2011; Bäck 1996; Svensson 1987). Generally industry has been prioritized over northern citizens in order to promote the national economy and the common good. Predatory animals are a large threat to herding livelihoods, though herders are compensated when they can provide evidence that a reindeer has been killed by a predator. Hugh Beach deftly refers to this system as paying Sámi herders to feed government owned wolves (2004). Combined with the protection of predatory animals is the pressure from environment and animal welfare groups. In the 1990s, these groups began to frame Sámi herders as “ecological criminals” through accusations that they were destroying biodiversity (through management of the wolf population) and destroying the tundra (through use of motorbikes and reindeer overpopulation) (Beach 2000: 237-288).

Given accusations that Sámi are not adequate stewards of the landscape, Hugh Beach raises the question: “What obligations does the state hold toward the protection of the livelihood and culture of a small, indigenous people when balanced against the obligation to preserve Nature for all of humankind?” (2004: 110). Raising this question enables Beach to identify the hypocrisy of the Swedish state and the Swedish majority in their arguments against Sámi rights to use land. First, throughout its history, the Swedish state has allowed for the exploitation of the North to large industries such as hydropower, timber and mining, industries that have had far more negative impacts on ecosystems than Sámi activities. Second, the concept of nature that the state and majority citizens wish to preserve is a nature separated from humans. Third, the state and its majority

citizens assume its unproblematic ownership of the land. This is revealed in the language of ownership: “The Sámi are destroying the Swedish mountains” (Beach 2004: 112). The discursive construction of these accusations erases the many factors that have led Sámi to overexploit their land: industry and settlers have pushed them into smaller and smaller parcels of land to pursue livelihoods based on nature. The desire of the majority and the State to reduce Sámi presence in so-called wilderness or natural areas is also problematically based on the Enlightenment divide between nature and culture, a division which is strongly criticized in indigenous and anthropological epistemologies (Cruikshank 2005; Nadasdy 2007).

“It is the majority Swedish society which has permitted the massive exploitation of northern natural resources, forced herding into a tight corner, and which now castigates and fines small-scale Sámi livelihoods for being ecologically unsustainable and threatening that terribly diminished ‘wilderness’ which the majority wants to maintain for its own needs of tourism and nature romanticism” (Beach 2004: 121).

Finally, nuclear fallout from the 1986 Chernobyl accident impacted the markets for reindeer meat as well as the foods available for subsistence harvesting. Sámi people became unsure how much reindeer meat was safe to consume (Håglin 1999: 38; Broadbent 1989; Stephens 1995). The “lichen-reindeer-human chain” (where radioactive material is taken up in lichens which reindeer consume) implied that the Sámi could intake higher rates of radioactive elements by consuming reindeer meat (Ross 2006: 556), as well as from the fish and game they get from affected lands and water. Like other circumpolar peoples, Sámi have been faced with making decisions about their diet, forcing them to consider their knowledge of the potential risk for contamination.

Faced with these threats from nuclear contamination, loss of land to mining, infrastructure and tourism, and a loss of support for Sámi ways of life from the majority Swedish society, many Sámi food activists pull from the discourse of culture loss to frame the real risks they perceive in their world. Some Sámi activists claimed that, “If the reindeer doesn’t survive, we don’t either.” Newspaper coverage designed by Sámi food organizers also explained their need for food sovereignty because, “Without access to undisturbed lands for reindeer herding, fishing, hunting, berry and plant picking there will not be a Sámi cuisine.”

Such expressions reflect similar observations made by Alexander King in his work in with Chukchi and Koryak people in northern Kamchatka. King found that, despite not operating with reindeer in their daily lives, Koryaks and Chukchi essentialize themselves by insisting that reindeer are vital to understanding them. The profundity of this process is exemplified in a statement made by Slava, a herder, who remarks: “These last deer are everything. Without deer we are not people. Without deer there is no culture, nothing.” (King 2003: 138). King responds:

“Herding deer is not only a way of life, it provides the core meaning for Chawchu existence. I had noticed that many native people living in the regional capital, Palana, often talked about reindeer and the problems confronting herders. It seemed to be a much bigger issue than demography or economics would warrant; these people also derive much meaning for their lives from their reindeer-herding relatives, even if vicariously” (2003: 138).

King explains that people that live away from home continue to know they are Koryak because of the deer in the herd that belong to them: “they are secure in the knowledge that they participate in the traditional relationship of deer and owner” (2003:

147). Similarly, research participants in this study understand the important symbolism of the reindeer and the act of reindeer herding to Sámi identity, even if so few Sámi can or have the right to practice reindeer herding.

These sentiments also speak to the discourse of loss that many indigenous peoples pull from in asserting their rights. Stuart Kirsch notes that the theme of loss “echoes throughout the indigenous world, often in association with damage to and/or displacement from their land” (2001: 167), but the theme of culture loss poses theoretical challenges in anthropology given current understandings of culture as a continual process rather than a stable or essentialized thing (Gupta and Ferguson 1992). Loss, in this sense, represents the process of change that is inherent to the definition of culture. Kirsch suggests that, “claims of loss are particularly salient for indigenous communities, which frequently have special ties to land and place that, while they have analogues elsewhere, differ in relation to the way that these societies organize and reproduce themselves” (Kirsch 2001: 178). Specifically, loss of land jeopardizes material subsistence as well as the base from which practices of social reproduction, local knowledge and relationships to place are built (Kirsch 2001: 176).

In the case of individuals who identify as Sámi, increasing alienation from the land jeopardizes livelihood practices of reindeer herding, moose hunting, fishing and gathering as well as the social relations embedded in those provisioning strategies – social relations that extend to family members and friends who live far from Sámi lands but who may be provided with foods from the land by those who work it. Maintaining and/or regaining rights to land (and to use the land in culturally appropriate ways) is

essential to the maintenance of these cultural practices and social relations that knit together a sense of being Sámi for so many individuals who otherwise may lead very different lives.

Subsistence Living and Wage Earning in the Arctic

Subsistence is central to Arctic cultural survival. To subsist, from the perspective of anthropology, refers those practices and beliefs that support the way people make their living. The objective of subsistence is not total self-sufficiency nor the accumulation of capital; rather, it is the continuous flow of goods and services (Sahlins 1971). Subsistence is not just livelihood; it is also social arrangements, beliefs, and cultural traditions (Freeman 2000). In the Arctic and subarctic environment, adaptive strategies for subsistence activities include a flexibility to seasonal cycles of harvest and resource use; detailed local knowledge and skill sets; mechanisms for sharing and social networks of support; and intercommunity trade (Berkes and Jolly 2001).

Today these adaptive strategies exist alongside other livelihood strategies to diversify incomes in the market economy. For example, there is often no distinction between subsistence hunting (for oneself), hunting for sport, and hunting for selling – in fact, one carcass may serve all three purposes (Condon et al. 1995: 44). While *subsistence* is a disputed term because of its association with the premodern and unchanging (Gombay 2005), it is still meaningful to employ when integrated within contemporary socioeconomic conditions that combine hunting, herding and fishing with other activities, i.e. the mixed economy. Wolfe and Walker (1987) put forward the concept of the “mixed economy” to describe an economy that depends on cash

employment and subsistence practices. In mixed economies of the circumpolar region, households use a blend of formal and informal economies to support themselves. Studies indicate that subsistence foods continue to play an important role in the diets of circumpolar peoples. The SLiCA study found that traditional foods were at least half of the diet for 85% of native Alaskans, 67% of Inuit in Greenland, 75% for Canada, and 96% for Inuit in Canada, and 57% for Chukotka (Poppel and Kruse 2009: 57).

Scholars have observed changes in the practices of subsistence harvesting across the Arctic. Suggested reasons for changes include: 1) inadequate training in hunting and fishing due to time spent in school; 2) a lack of necessary funds to get tools; 3) changing dietary preferences and presence of market foods; 4) lack of interest in a marginalized economic activity; and 5) dependence on wage employment that limits time (Condon et al. 1995; Collings et al. 1998). Here we see the many constraints and circumstances that limit and transform the ways individuals wish to and can practice subsistence harvesting. The well-employed are constrained by their job schedules, but the underemployed and welfare dependent are constrained by their lack of resources to purchase equipment. Changes in the economy also impact possible sources of income derived from market and subsistence harvesting. For instance, the European ban on seal skins and subsequent crash in prices in 1983-84 and the animal rights campaigns against Arctic fox pelts decreased prices, and these animals could no longer provide needed income (Wenzel 1991). Additionally, in Sápmi, the threat of nuclear contamination from Chernobyl deeply cut prices for reindeer meat.

Sedentarization changes the location of harvesting due to relocation from historically used lands and transportation constraints. Networks of sharing also shift as close kin become present in the everyday lives of people in settlements. The Copper Island Inuit, for instance, shifted towards kinship-based sharing patterns, whereas previously sharing was more extended (Collings et al. 1998). New technologies have changed harvesting and herding patterns and knowledge. For instance, snowmobiles in the 1970s profoundly altered strategies. Perti Pelto (1973) observed the impacts snowmobiles had as they were introduced into Sámi reindeer herding in Finland. Hunters and herders were able to spend more time in town and less time on the land with the new means of transportation. Pelto, reflecting on winter activities, writes, “Since there are no winter herds, no draught reindeer, and no spring calving, the majority of able-bodied Skolt males cannot consider themselves to be reindeer herders in even a residual sense. They are now technologically unemployed” (1973: 134). This situation is made more obvious by the fact that herders have to make payments on the tools they purchase, and they need cash to buy gas to get anywhere. The people in the weakest economic positions suffer most because they will be unable to compete with the wealthier families. Condon and co-authors (1995) also observed that contemporary young men were raised as snowmobile hunters. Younger hunters do “day trips” and they emphasize speed of travel. How fast and how far they went in one trip seemed almost as important as how much they harvested. Many hunters also prefer to travel and hunt alone, whereas in the past it would be necessary to work cooperatively.

Additionally climate change threatens to significantly change indigenous peoples food systems, including the availability and predictability of traditionally harvested and

consumed foods, as well as the quality and quantity of these foods. As the climate changes so will the food security and food systems of northern peoples. New foods will be introduced, such as invasive species traveling further north, and consumption of store bought foods will likely continue to increase. Yet, Dickson writes, “the extent of these impacts and their implications for nutritional well-being of individuals and communities is not yet well understood” (2003: 3).

The conditions of subsistence harvesting will change. For example, environmental cues used by hunters to predict the weather and behavior of animals have become less effective predictors. Precipitation, break up and freeze up of ice, and fire regimes will impact the availability of country foods to harvest. Transportation across landscapes, accessing traditional harvest areas, erosion, barge travel, and salmon runs will all be impacted. Arctic indigenous communities have proven adaptive and resilient for millennia (Krupnik 1993; Berkes and Jolly 2001), but current rates of environmental and social change test these adaptive capacities. Three studies have explored the issue of livelihood sustainability under conditions of climate change: The Arctic Human Development Report (2004), the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (2005), and Krupnik and Jolly’s *The Earth is Faster Now* (2002). These studies show that the “capacity of households, communities, and regions to adapt is heavily conditioned by their position within physical, socioeconomic, and political contexts. These contexts both constrain and enable their adaptive capacity and thus shape their vulnerability to environmental and social change” (West 2011: 218). Similar contexts constrain the adaptability of Sámi herders, fishermen and hunters, such as hunting and herding regulations of the state.

Climate change *remains one of many* interrelated problems that impact livelihoods (Nuttall et al. 2005). Livelihoods are also influenced by the market economy and government policy that contribute to the redefinition of hunting, herding and fishing. “Today, arctic peoples cannot adapt, relocate or change resource use activities as easily as they may have been able to do in the past, because most now live in permanent communities and have to negotiate greatly circumscribed social and economic situations” (Nuttall et al. 2005: 664). They live in planned settlements with infrastructures, and their hunting and herding is impacted by resource management regimes, land use regulations, land ownership, and the market (Anderson and Nuttall 2004). While regulatory regimes aim to protect and conserve wildlife, they also restrict access to essential resources.

“Changes to landscape, fire, migratory patterns, and seasonal variation, are all compounded rather than mitigated by federal or state policies, which regularly include fairly rigid fishing and hunting quotas as well as intermittent closures of entire traditional hunting grounds. Communities faced with meeting short-term food security needs therefore opt to purchase market foods as a more consistent but imperfect substitution for country foods’ (White et al. 2007: 3).

Across the circumpolar world, indigenous peoples combine subsistence provisioning strategies alongside wage earning. And many of these people, including Sámi food producers, are aware of the ways their food provisioning has changed and are concerned for the ways they will have to adapt as climate change advances. I turn now to specific consideration of historic and contemporary Sámi food systems.

Sámi Foodways and Diets Past to Present

The northern boreal forest, or taiga, begins above 60 degrees north in Sweden. Its forest is dominated by pine and spruce, as well as a sub-alpine birch region in the mountain

foothills to the west. The timber line demarcates the natural landscape for its users, marking especially the difference in food abundance found in the forests and coasts with the less-abundant mountains (Ruong 1982). Animals such as bear, moose, reindeer, beavers, lynx, wolverines, pine martens, otters, black grouses, and hazel hens reside there. Beaver and moose are commonly found animals at archaeological sites in the interior. Salmon, perch, whitefish, pike, burbot (freshwater cod), trout, and char were fished in freshwater rivers and lakes (Broadbent 2010).

Early inhabitants of Sápmi were dependent on a combination of ecosystems in order to survive and to not overexploit the resources of one area (Broadbent 2010; Andersson, Östlund, and Törnlund 2005). Strategies may have included reciprocal settlement where reindeer hunting and herding were pursued in the interior and whaling was pursued on the coast (Broadbent 2010: 25). Seasonal food procurement cycles would have proceeded in this way: bird hunting (May-June); river salmon fishing (July-August); inland hunting of reindeer (September-October); and hunting of whales and seals (November-April) (Simonsen 1965: 403 in Stephenson 1984: 23).

Roots, plants and birds' eggs also played an important role in early diets. Angelica, (*Angelica archangelica*), sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), lactuca (*Lactuca alpine*), Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), and various berries were used as foodstuffs and medicinals (Fjellström 1989; Eidlitz 1969; Berman, Östlund and Zackrisson 2004). Birch sap was used as an antiscorbutic and to make wine, and the collection of birds' eggs was a specialized activity done by building nest-boxes (Fjellström 1989; Eidlitz 1969). Barks of spruce, pine, birch, poplar and willow were used, sometimes as seasoning or flour

(Eidlitz 1969). Lichens, usually harvested from the reindeer stomach, were also consumed (Eidlitz 1969). Berries, for the most part, were not utilized as much by circumpolar peoples as they are in the present. Lingonberries were the most important in northern Sweden. Mushrooms also did not figure prominently in diets (Eidlitz 1969).

For at least one thousand years, Sámi people hunted wild reindeer and kept tame reindeer for transportation and decoys (Wheelersburg and Kvist 1996; Lundmark 1989). Reindeer herding developed only in the 16th century, and only in the last 300 years has reindeer pastoralism become the specialized occupation of approximately 10 percent of the Sámi population (Paine 2004). By at least the 1600s, domesticated reindeer were kept for milk. The milk and cheese products were critical food sources, often more valued than meat in some regions (Eidlitz 1969; Ruong 1982). Milking pens existed in southern Sámi territories of Västerbotten and Jämtland, and calves were muzzled in order to milk female reindeer, much like in dairy cattle production. Milking is an historic loan from Scandinavians, evidenced in the loan words from West Nordic language for milk, cheese, and associated tools and activities (Ruong 1982: 29). Under most circumstances, domestic deer were kept for milking and transport and only wild reindeer were used for meat (Ruong 1982).

Contemporary analyses tend to attribute the development of pastoralism to the increasing imposition of taxes placed on Sámi peoples from developing states (Lundmark 1989; Wheelersburg 1991). As Sweden, for example, expanded its empire ambitions in the 17th and 18th centuries, it turned to the north not just for furs but also for meat and fish to feed its growing armies (Wheelersburg and Kvist 1996: 156; Lundmark 1989). In

turn, Sámi herders adapted to these demands, developing larger herds for meat production.

“Once the empire began to exert its influence over the area, however, large surpluses were required to satisfy increased taxation and expanding trade. The Swedish state did not treat the region as a self sufficient portion of the realm, but as a peripheral area where indigenous economies produced state revenues” (Wheelersburg and Kvist 1996: 161-162).

By the 1500s four distinct Sámi groups could be identified: Mountain, Coastal, Forest, and destitute. The Mountain Sámi developed extensive pastoralism and the nomadic lifestyle with migrations from the Bothnian coast to winter and summer pastures in the Norwegian mountains (Ruong 1937), that dominates popular conceptions of Sámi culture. Forest Sámi of Sweden were semi-nomads who practiced intensive herding alongside river fishing and hunting. Coastal Sámi pursued fishing and farming along the coasts among Norwegian settlers. They migrated short distances to undertake winter hunting and trapping and sometimes kept a small number of reindeer. The *bøydefinner* were impoverished Sámi, rendered as sedentary vagrants and beggars in Norway by the advent of the pastoralist economy that they were unable to participate in (Stephens 1984; Anderson 1978; Wheelersburg and Kvist 1991).

As colonization of Sápmi proceeded, from 1850 to 1930, scholars identified the following changes in land use and foodways: increased grazing in the forests; increased pressure on fish and wildlife; decreased secondary deforestation (firewood) in high altitude forests; increased secondary deforestation in low-altitude forests; abandonment of pine bark as a source of food; abandonment of milking grounds; agricultural cultivation of abandoned reindeer grounds; and introduced hay-harvesting on riverbanks

and wetlands (Andersson, Östlund, and Törnlund 2005: 307; Berman, Östlund and Zackrisson 2004). Sámi were no longer following their herds into the high mountains, so use of this landscape declined resulting in increased pressure on other landscapes. Other food sources became available as well, particularly milk and carbohydrate sources from settlers.

“In only 23 years the intensive reindeer herding, milking and bark harvesting practices ended when farming was introduced together with its new products and related life-style adaptations” (Andersson, Östlund, and Törnlund 2005: 307).

Bark harvesting stopped by 1899 because alternative carbohydrate sources were available. By 1915, reindeer milking stopped because more energy was put into a combined reindeer herding and cattle breeding economy. Settlers and Sámi used many resources similarly, for instance fishing and use of the forest for firewood, small prey, and plants. Many Sámi actually participated in the settlement of the north as they too took up settler strategies of agricultural cultivation and cattle breeding. The strategies previously used by Sámi, including flexible seasonal movement within a diverse landscape, use of cross-border social networks, and mixed subsistence strategies, became less viable during this time period as borders between the nation-states of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia became barriers. With the incorporation of Sámi territories into different nation-states, a “new game of politics” was introduced to Sámi inhabitants, who were required to navigate the borders, legislation, and institutions that enfolded their land and livelihood strategies within them (Össbo and Lantto 2011).

Contemporary Sámi people are integrated within the industrial food system at the same time that they pursue subsistence harvesting, hunting, and reindeer herding on their

historic lands. The health care, education, and social security infrastructure of the Swedish state has served all northern inhabitants well, and Sámi life expectancies and standards of living do not differ much from the majority population. In fact Sámi show lower risk of dying from cancer than the majority population (Hassler et al. 2001) and do not suffer excessively from diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and other issues associated with the indigenous peoples nutrition transition (Nilsson 2012). Livelihoods based on working and eating from the land are partially credited for these circumstances.

The Sámi diet prior to the 1800s is described as higher in meat and fish and lower in vegetable and bread consumption compared to today's diets (Håglin 1988, 1999). Fatty fish may have been more important than reindeer meat in the diet of Sámi in the 1930s to 1950s (Nilsson 2012). Still bread and cereals have been eaten for at least 200 years via trade, and grains may have been available as early as 200 A.D. (Fjellström 1985: 640). Diets were highly dependent on season, area, and work. In the summer, dried reindeer meat, boiled fish, coffee, bread, butter, and berries were consumed (Håglin 1999: 37). If bread or potatoes were not available, reindeer blood was used to make bread or pancakes, or dried fish was substituted as bread.

Present day diets are still found to be high in meat, fish and fat and low in vegetables. Yet, compared with traditional diet patterns, current Sámi diets tend to include higher intakes of carbohydrates, fruits and vegetables and lower intakes of protein (Ross et.al. 2006: 556; Hassler 2005: 13). Fatty fish consumption still exceeds reindeer meat among reindeer herding Sámi. Most reports on Sámi cardiovascular disease (CVD) after 2000 link the transition from a reindeer herding lifestyle to a "westernized"

lifestyle with an increased risk for CVD. The movement entails a nutrition transition from a high protein to a high carbohydrate diet and from an active lifestyle to a sedentary lifestyle (Håglin 1999: 42; Hassler et.al. 2005: 623; Ross et.al., 2009: 383; Ross et al. 2006: 553).

Scholar Phebe Fjellström (1985) wrote one of the most extensive ethnographic accounts of Sámi cultural history and practice. One of the more interesting observations Fjellström made is that there was only one way to prepare reindeer meat, and this style of preparation did not vary across regions of Sápmi (unlike other practices such as language and herding styles). Reindeer meat was always boiled and never pan fried, according to documentation from the 1700s, 1800s, and into the 1970s. Fjellström suggests that this style of preparation may be a result of the lack of iron pieces for making cast iron pans until the 1900s.

Though the mode of preparation was limited to one style, all parts of the reindeer were consumed and the blood was carefully taken. After the reindeer slaughter, specific cooking rules pertained to all Sámi areas. The first cooking was the back, marrow/pith and the kidneys. It was followed by the head, hooves and heart. Then the sides or shoulder, and the shoulder was dried or smoked. The poorest Sámi couldn't afford salt so they would simply smoke it in the *kåta* as smoke rose daily, according to one of her informants. Fourth came the steaks which were cut in half and deboned then dried in the strong spring sun, hung on a contraption made of three birch legs.

For herding and non-herding Sámi today their traditional foodways continue to be important (Wheelersburg 2008), and reindeer are especially significant (Conrad 1999).

Individuals work creatively to incorporate traditional Sámi foods, particularly reindeer, into their diets and practices. Sharon Stephens found that for southern Sámi the everyday practices of food preparation and herding are central to their culture, producing themselves as Sámi via the “bodies, senses, memories and connections to one another, their deer, and the places where deer are pastured” (1995: 298-300). Making blood sausage and reindeer blood pancakes still continues despite the difficult logistics in procuring fresh reindeer blood (Conrad 1999). In town, reindeer pelts are left to dry outside of garages and mesh bags of salted meat are hung from eaves to dry. These are signs and acts of consumption, based both in subsistence production but also the active and outward performance of culture. Through the consumption of reindeer products, all Sámi can “fortify their own Sáminess, consuming something that is the ultimate marker of Sáminess” (Conrad 1999: 189-190).

Conclusion

To conclude, I would simply like to pose a set of questions that I believe the accumulated scholarship on Sámi topics and social movements raise. First, given that social movements require discursive work that simplifies and amplifies their messages, what have Sámi food activists done to construct a common message that captures the heterogeneity of Sámi experiences? Specifically, how are reindeer herding Sámi and non-reindeer herding Sámi brought together, separated, erased or highlighted in the discourse and practices of movement organizers? Similarly, how are diverse sets of culinary practices represented or erased in the same practices and discourses?

Second, given the complexity and contradictions of food sovereignty as a discourse and model, what do Sámi food activists seek from the food sovereignty framework? What agendas do activists pursue, and under what logics are these plans pursued? How do they represent challenges to the state and market capitalism at the same time that they work within these systems?

Third, given that efforts to revitalize, protect, or commodify heritage cuisines can have unintended consequences on practitioners and foods, what impacts (anticipated or unanticipated) are visible for Sámi food producers and Sámi foods? Finally, given that Sámi people (and sameby members especially) do not own or control much of their land as well as the laws that regulate how they can function, what opportunities and constraints do food movements provide for Sámi activists, particularly in their efforts to control land and food production regulations that impact Sámi foodways?

CHAPTER FOUR

Methodology

From my field notes

We've been invited by Sussane and Lasse to visit them at Vaisaluokta, a *sameviste* (Sámi mountain village) located across the Ákkhá reservoir from Ritsem. They spend much of their summer there with their children, fishing, going to reindeer calf markings, and simply being part of village life. They've also invited an old Swedish friend and her husband and children for a visit. In the evening, after all the children have gone to bed, the six of us are seated around the kitchen table talking in the dim light of a late summer evening. We learn that Sussane's friend and her husband both studied anthropology at university, just like my husband and I. The four of us discuss how funny it is to study anthropology because nobody knows what you study. Sussane jokes back at the four of us, "*I guess it's just the Sámi who know what an anthropologist does.*"



Figure 7 Áhhká Mountain and Reservoir in the Lapponia World Heritage Site.

Positionality, Research Fatigue and Ethnographic Refusal

My presence as a cultural anthropologist studying indigenous food movements in Jokkmokk did not go unquestioned, and I would like to open with this aspect of my methodology because it narrowed and shaped the trajectory of my research and the questions I could and should ask. During my tenure in Jokkmokk, artist Katarina Pirak Sikku debuted her work entitled, "Can sorrow be inherited?" Sikku subjectively examined the studies done by Sweden's Institute for Race Biology in the early 1900s

with the goal of understanding the experiences of those Sámi who were photographed and measured by Swedish scholars and the impacts that experience has left on their families. During my study, researchers, their motives, and the consequences of their actions were being critically examined by those who chose or chose not to participate in research.

In many ways, researchers are people to be managed by the research community. I was avoided, ignored and redirected, and for good reason: at the same time that I consider myself a food activist and ally, the Sámi fight is not my fight; their knowledge is not my knowledge; and their life is not my life. I was introduced to groups of potential research participants by a key informant several times as “an anthropologist here to do her race biology studies.” My feelings were hurt at the same time I felt more comfortable as a researcher knowing that people were very aware of anthropology’s unethical history of research and they felt comfortable saying no, that refusal to participate was really an option.

Perhaps more than skepticism, I was met with fatigue, specifically research fatigue. Jokkmokk is a central location for scholars interested in climate change, mining policy, and anything Sámi. Even I was asked to participate in research a few times as I walked along Jokkmokk’s main street or shopped at the grocery store. While I was in Sweden, the nature of this fatigue was examined during a workshop Umeå University organized on research ethics. Anette Löf and Marita Stinnerbom presented on the process of engaging an entire sameby in a climate change research project. One of the main challenges they identified was the legacies of previous researchers. They would ask a

person to do an interview, and they would decline because the person had already done an interview with someone on climate change. But who? The participant didn't know. And why? They didn't know. And published where? They didn't know. This was a major setback to their research project, and they began to ask themselves: Who was asking the elders for their knowledge and leaving no trace? Where was the data? Would they also be permitted to see it?

I was forced to consider these questions often, posed to me in workshops and by research participants themselves. During one of my first interviews, the interviewee told me, "I don't want my name or picture with any of this, okay?" I agreed. She continued, "I've done so many of these that I don't want my name with it." I reflected, this is probably a bad start to the interview. I did not realize that she had participated in so many interviews that she was tired of it, a clear case of research fatigue. This tense feeling of having overstepped or asked too much of someone stayed with me throughout the interview and throughout my research.

After the interview she told me, "I still don't understand why you're here. You could have studied anywhere, and you're here. You could have studied with the Inuit, for example, or in South America. You're so far away from home." I told her my narrative, the "personal history" used in many of my grant applications: In 2008, I participated in Slow Food Terra Madre where I sat down in the bus right beside a Sámi butcher from Gällivare, a town near Jokkmokk. This chance encounter led to my eventual interest in doing dissertation research on Sámi food activism. This story does not seem to convince the participant. Thus, I continued with my personal narrative: My mother is from

Sweden. I grew up speaking Swedish and traveling to Sweden. Also, my mother's sister (my aunt) is married to a man who identifies as Sámi (my uncle), which also attracted me to the research.

Her inquiries remained with me. Who am I in relation to Sáminess? I discovered my relationship was much more complex than I imagined. During my year of research I learned that my own family's roots were much more entangled in Sweden's colonizing and settlement history than I had ever realized. The more versed I became in the Swedish language, Swedish and Sámi history, the more people opened up to me, including my family members. From my *mormor* (mother's mother), I learned that as a young girl growing up in the city of Östersund (in the southern part of Sápmi and the middle of Sweden), she would be called indoors by her mother as the caravans of Sámi herders arrived in town to conduct their business. She vividly recalled seeing the colors of their kolts, the traditional Sámi clothing often made of wool and leather, and the aura of mystery that surrounded these people her mother did not want her near. I learned over coffee from my great uncle, my mormor's brother, that for one summer during his youth he had in fact been a teacher in one of the infamous nomad schools,⁸ a site of culture and language loss for many Sámi today. I asked why, and he responded that during his youth they would recruit Swedes after high school to teach at these schools during the summer. Thus my own family and self is very much implicated in Sámi histories. These

⁸ More information on the nomad schools and other education policies can be found at the Sámi information site: <http://www.samer.se/4581>.

individuals my family members interacted with could be the parents and grandparents of the individuals I was asking to participate in my research.



Figure 8 The cemetery in Östersund where my great grandparents are buried.

As I integrated myself into the community, I explained myself, my story and my questions to many. Some people accepted my explanations and were excited to work with me, particularly because we shared an interest in food and its transformative potential, while others found my story or the food movement itself lacking. No one refused to participate in my research, but they refused to disclose all the data I sought.

Ethics of Doing Indigenous Research

Kay Warren and Jean Jackson wrote in 2002 that the most challenging dilemma for anthropologists in the present is how to analytically consider the representation of cultural continuity asserted by indigenous movements. Such assertions are deeply implicated in the forging of national, indigenous, and personal identities, as well as the projects of reclaiming land, culture and language. Jonathan Friedman, also concerned

with such issues, warned that analyzing these processes is a “deadly game” as it is deeply bound to individual’s and population’s ontological foundations. Forms of scholarship that deconstruct indigenous constructions of continuity are “a question of the existential authenticity of the subject’s engagement in a self-defining project” (1992: 846).

Indigenous intellectuals and activists have become key critics of their non-indigenous colleagues, suspicious both of their motives and their findings. Anthropology and anthropologists in the 1990s were confronted by native self-defining groups, but not because of the failure of ethnography, according to Friedman, but because of a transformation in the world. The hegemony of modernist discourse (a discourse that emphasizes the scientific researcher as all knowing) was chipped away, resulting in the confrontation of anthropology by the subjects of its inquiry. Charles Briggs’ (1996) elaborated on this process whereby the researcher becomes all-knowing. He argued that the position (or distance from power) of the people who are making claims to representation is related to their ability to make such a claim. Essentially, anthropologists construct their own panopticon via their ability to access more information than any other individual (through interviews, observation, and archives they can consult using their grant funding). With their wider range of materials, anthropologists can generate more discursive authority than those they represent, giving them the ability to determine and the platform to present what is authentic and inauthentic.

Making a similar point, Martin Sökefeld tells us that emic and etic models delineate between insider and outsider meanings, but there are problems with this model. It assumes that scholars can actually distinguish between natives and anthropologists

(2001: 329). Scholars now realize that “(t)he authority – or, to say it more bluntly, the power – to define and delimit concepts has become much more widely dispersed” (2001: 329). In contrast to Bourdieu (1987) who argues the researcher exists in the realm of theory and the researched in the realm of practice, Sökefeld asserts: “Researcher and researched are interconnected in a web of relations of interaction (practice) and both researched and researcher are continually constructing knowledge and theories, i.e. generalized abstractions far exceeding the range of practical experience” (2001: 330). This challenges the power of the cultural sciences to define concepts because the researched also construct knowledge and interpret the world.

My own research experiences reflect these challenges to my authority to construct final interpretations and knowledge. During my time in Jokkmokk, the national Swedish elections took place. Over beers with friends, we spoke about Almedalen Week that is held each election cycle in southern Sweden. All the political parties gather and discuss their positions prior to the election. Our friends explained that they knew some Sámi people there to petition for Sámi rights, and it was going well. One of them reported that there was an article in the DN (the Dagens Nyheter, one of Sweden’s national papers) with pictures of the Sámi representatives. I responded, “Oh, that’s interesting. I’m interested in looking at how Sámi politics are represented in the Swedish press.” Another person laughed at me: “So you’re going to take your American perspective to look at the Swedish perspective on Sámi representation.” Everyone laughed, and I agreed with his criticism that I held the final and objective perspective on Sámi representation.

Warren and Jackson give specific examples of the transformation of scholarship in Latin America. Activism in Latin America shifted, they state, from “self-appointed foreigners speaking on behalf of groups, to the repositioning occasioned by the growing recognition that many groups have generated their own spokespeople and agendas for engaging the state and international nongovernment organizations” (2002: 6). Because of these processes, anthropologists are more aware of the implications of their positionality and research, particularly the impacts of the deconstructive approach. This is especially sensitive when groups petition for rights and they are legally required to establish legitimacy by positing cultural continuity. In these moments, government assumptions about the nature of indigeneity and culture come into conflict with new anthropological assumptions about culture. While anthropologists study how meanings, essences and authenticity are constructed, indigenous peoples petition for rights to their lands, cultural practices and languages, and position themselves often by utilizing strategic essentialisms (Spivak 1990) to meet the framework required by government courts.

Decolonizing Methodologies

A second concern is the presence of indigenous scholars and indigenous-informed theories and agendas within academic institutions. Some scholars have put forward that the academy now has indigenous scholars working within it, thus helping to alleviate and avoid some of anthropology’s past failures. Yet, Andrea Smith⁹ responds that

⁹ I have relied on Smith’s scholarship long before I became aware of the questioning of her identity as Cherokee. I agree with Smith’s argument regarding the academy and the concept of Native peoples as co-theorists. But given that Smith herself may also not be indigenous, she may also be in need of a co-theorizing partnership that enables a conversation across difference.

anthropology must move beyond recognizing the small numbers of indigenous anthropologists as a way of acknowledging remedy. A few representatives incorporated into the discipline does not make it more just. Instead, what is needed is more Native peoples and structures, that is, people and institutions that work for a different historical consciousness that affords Indigeneity a present, past, and future. One starting point would be to shift the focus of ethnography from the study of Native peoples for knowing them to the study with Native peoples as co-theorists so that they can tell us about the world we live within (Smith 2008 cited in Driskill et al. 2011: 4). Scholarship that takes Indigenous knowledges as a basis for social theory is not one which avoids dissent. Instead, it seeks to frame Indigenous knowledges as “conversations across differences” (Driskill et al. 2011: 8).

Scholars Linda T. Smith and Maui Hudson have proposed sets of approaches to indigenous research methodologies that are grounded in the work of movements for decolonization and self-determination. Smith (1999) advances respect as a key value in these relationships. Respect requires recognition of indigenous perceptions of research and researcher as colonizing forces and recognition of the university as an institution historically grounded in Western values that privilege certain forms of knowledge and knowledge-making over others. Smith’s model of the “indigenous research agenda” centers itself on self-determination, surrounded by decolonization, transformation, mobilization and healing. Much like Eve Tuck’s “desire-based research” (discussed below), Smith looks at research as a process, a site of critical becoming. In the ways I structured my research questions and the ways I have written up my analysis I have sought to describe Sámi engagement with their foods in language that privileges this as

one of many sites of becoming, sites of healing, transformation, mobilization and decolonization for Sámi peoples, just as Sámi food activists do themselves.

In a more concrete form, during a research ethics seminar I attended in Umeå, Hudson provided a set of questions researchers should pose to themselves. Such guidelines focus on participation, consultation and access: Is the research community consulted regarding the relevance, usefulness and ethics of the study? Is there access to data for the research community? Are they able to participate in shaping and disseminating the results of the study?

I found that many research participants prompted our initial introduction with these sorts of questions. If they didn't, I opened our dialogue with them. Such questions were formed in the following ways: 1) How did this project come about? 2) Who is paying and controlling the project? 3) How do we know it's going to produce what you say? 4) Who will keep the project safe? 5) What are the research questions and how are you going to answer them?

I developed my research questions in consultation with literature written by Sámi and non-Sámi scholars, which privileged the larger perspectives on Sámi decolonization and critical indigenous scholarship. I also undertook two preliminary studies in Sweden in 2011 and 2012 in order to meet potential research participants and work in the Ájá archives in Jokkmokk. Even with this preliminary work, local interests changed even in the course of a few years, particularly with the introduction of the Swedish Food Nation project in 2013. My original research objectives shifted as I learned what questions interested local study participants and the research community, an exciting facet of

ethnography that is responsive to local circumstances. As a result of the responsive nature of ethnography, I was able to work with research participants and local food organizers to draft a complementary study, the Jokkmokk Food Assessment, during my fieldwork.

The addition of the food assessment to my research agenda drew much of my time away from my original research objectives. This applied research study was drafted in the field with the Jokkmokk's Culinary Capital program manager Victoria Harnesk. I chose to prioritize this study over my original research objectives because I chose to prioritize the applied aspects of my research that privileged collecting data that community members deemed valuable. During my fieldwork, I essentially ran two projects that overlapped extensively with one another. For my discussion of methodology, keep in mind that these projects largely relied on the same data collection techniques and research participants. A separate methodology and IRB are included in the Jokkmokk Food Assessment project summary, which is included as Appendix 1 to this dissertation.

Desire-based Research

A final issue has to do with the framing of research agendas and how they claim the “significance” and “relevance” of their work. Education scholar Eve Tuck criticizes researchers for relying on the framework of “damage” to promote their research, a perspective that implicitly assumes communities and individuals are broken. In an open letter entitled “Suspending Damage” (2009), Tuck urges researchers to move from a framework where communities are singularly defined by their histories of oppression to a framework that captures how communities are much more than broken. The term “desire-based research” has been proposed by Tuck as a new framework for research in

indigenous and other historically marginalized communities. In this framework, the complexity and contradiction of lived experience are brought to the fore. This approach is in part based on Avery Gordon's argument for "complex personhood" which acknowledges "that all people...remember and forget, are beset by contradiction, and recognize and misrecognize themselves and others" (1997: 4). For indigenous activists, who must often work within the expectations of their "indigeneity," the lens of complex personhood provides space for them to exist as complex beings and collectivities. This desire-based approach is reflected in de la Cadena and Starn's argument for a new direction in indigenous scholarship that "should be about enablement and not endless deconstruction" (2007: 22).



Figure 9 Chef Máret Rávdná M. Buljo competes in the 2014 Sápmi Awards to be the best Sámi Chef. She won the competition.

The intent of my dissertation has been to frame my own questions and findings within the trajectory of desire-based research. My interests in the relationship between food and indigeneity lend themselves quite nicely to a desire-based framework. One

could position food movements in the framework of damage through the metaphors of loss and cooptation of traditional foods. Yet because food is the focus of many new social movements, it has become a productive site for making claims and forming identities for indigenous peoples. Food movements are more accurately portrayed as complex sites of desire where individuals can craft new visions of their past, present and future. I implicitly use the lens of desire-based research to conceptualize how Sámi people within Sweden engage with food. The framework enables me to capture the contradictions, complexities and self-determinations inherent to such engagements.

I open my presentation of methodology with a discussion of positionality, fatigue, refusal and indigenous research ethics because they are significant to contemporary research agendas. Adaptation is the nature of ethnographic fieldwork as we match our research interests to local circumstances. It is also an adaption to refusal and fatigue, the refusal of many participants to participate in the ways I had planned. This research originally included a cultural domain analysis to explore salient concepts of the domain of Sámi food. The act of listing was not interesting nor possible for most research participants, and I dropped that component from the interview process. The research also included a social network analysis to document who shared food with whom. Research participants were unwilling to share that data with me in the ways I desired, and I also dropped this component. I would not bring a cultural domain analysis back to this research project (as I discuss in Chapter 5), but I believe a social network analysis of cooperative food networks would provide valuable information to understanding how the land and its resources contribute to building social relationships. Following Charles

Briggs' thoughts in *Learning How to Ask* (1986), I needed to learn how to ask about these specific topics in order to conduct research in an ethical and effective manner.

Research Plan

Summary

I have been conducting ethnographic fieldwork on Sámi food activism since 2008, when I first met a Sámi Slow Food participant at the Terra Madre meeting in Italy. After exchanging contact information, this individual became a key facilitator for my introduction to Sámi food, politics and history during two preliminary visits I took to northern Sweden in 2011 and 2012. I participated in the 2011 Slow Food Indigenous Terra Madre meeting, held in Jokkmokk, Sweden, and organized by Slow Food Sápmi. In 2012, I traveled to Jokkmokk again. My research focused on locating archive materials related to food and Sámi people in order to facilitate future comparisons between past food practices and discourses with present ones. In September 2013, my husband and I relocated to Jokkmokk for the year. The bulk of my dissertation research took place from 2013-2014, when Jokkmokk served as Sweden's 2014 Culinary Capital.

This dissertation draws from interviews (n=47) and observation of food producers in the region of Jokkmokk. I define the term food producer loosely to include all those who work (or have worked) with food in some capacity, as chefs or cooks, butchers or meat processors, wild plant specialists, educators and activists. The divisions between the job titles of processor, educator, butcher, herder and cook are porous and most of those I interviewed take on many different jobs in order to earn their livings via food. I also ate

at restaurants, participated and observed in kitchens and facilities where I could, attended food workshops, and was part of several meetings to discuss the documentation and development of the region's foods. Interviews and observations were recorded (when permitted) and transcribed. Each set of interviews and field notes was coded for themes that emerged from the interviews (inductive coding) and for themes I developed from the literature (deductive coding). I applied coding techniques including in vivo coding, or identification of indigenous categories of understanding (Strauss and Corbin 1990) as well as question-related themes (Ryan and Bernard 2003).

Data Collection

Sampling Strategy

The research participants for this study are primarily composed of individuals from the Jokkmokk region who work with food. More than half of those interviewed (n=47) identified as Sámi (56%) in order to focus on my research questions regarding the process of building Sámi food systems. I also interviewed other residents of the region who were involved in food production or organizing because of my complementary research for the Jokkmokk Food Assessment. I was able to compare experiences of food producers by ethnic or national identity, livelihood, and rights to land use.

Individuals were recruited for both studies first using several key informants with whom I had established relationships. These individuals included my first contact at Slow Food Terra Madre and other leaders of Slow Food Sápmi. My husband, a chef and butcher, also played a key role because of his employment in several Sámi-owned food

production businesses. His employment at a butcher shop, restaurant, and mountain lodge allowed me to develop research relationships with many individuals working with food. Additionally, participants were recruited through Jokkmokk's small business network as well as sites such as the Sámiskt Informationscentrum (Sámi Information Center) in Östersund, the Átjje Sámi museum in Jokkmokk, Jokkmokk's church choir, library, and cafés. This process was followed with respondent-driven sampling, where I asked current research participants to provide my name, contact information, and the purpose of my study to other individuals who could then contact me if they were interested in participating in the study. Though data from a purposively selected sample cannot be generalized, I chose to limit my research participants to those who worked with food in some capacity because my research questions involve this population specifically.



Figure 10 Aaron Schorsch, my husband, stirs reindeer blood following a slaughter for household use.

Key Informant Interviews

Several key informants contributed to this research. I conducted informal conversations, exploratory interviews and semi-structured interviews with them, which allowed me to further familiarize myself with the topic of Sámi foods and to formulate appropriate questions for later phases of data collection (Spradley 1979). The key informants had expertise in aspects of the field of Sámi foods, food activism and/or food from the region.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 47 individuals, between the ages of 25-70. All but three lived in the municipality of Jokkmokk. Broken down by identity, 27 identified as Sámi, 12 identified as Swedish, and the remaining 8 were originally from outside of Sweden including countries like Germany, Thailand, the Netherlands, Iran and Australia. Thirty were women and seventeen were men.

It becomes more difficult to categorize individuals by their work with food because many of them work across sectors, however, I will provide a brief summary. Nine individuals worked with berries, either picking them and/or processing them into jams and juices. Nine individuals worked as chefs or cooks, some of them owning their own restaurant and some working for others. Sixteen individuals worked to varying degrees in reindeer herding. Two individuals worked as full time reindeer herders, and the remaining fourteen combined herding with other income. Of those fourteen, six worked as butchers and herders. Six worked with herding and tourism, primarily selling foods like smoked fish and *gahkku* (Sámi flat bread) to tourists following the major

national park hiking trails. Two individuals worked as fishermen. Four individuals worked in food education, focused primarily on educating the public about Sámi cuisines. Four individuals owned shops in the region where they sold locally produced goods, such as smoked fish, reindeer meat and bread. Six individuals worked in other fields, whether with dairy cows, mushrooms, new product development, or project management.

Table 1. Interviews

Research Participants		n = 47
Ethnic or National Identity		
Sámi		27
Swedish		12
Iranian, Australian, Dutch, German		8
Gender Identity		
Women		30
Men		17
Occupations		
Chefs and Cooks		9
Reindeer Herding Full-Time		2
Reindeer Herding Part-Time		14
Butchers		6
Tourism		6
Fishing		2
Shop and Boutique Owners		4
Educators		5
Other (dairy, mushroom, product dev't)		3

Figure 11 Table 1 description of interview research participants.

I chose to use the semi-structured interview format because it allowed me to guide interviewees to my questions of interest and provide comparability between interviews, while giving them the flexibility to lead me to topics they considered most relevant (Spradley 1979). Semi-structured interviews addressed four domains: (1) the nature of their work with foods; (2) their perception of the value of their work; (3) the nature of their collaboration with other local food producers; (4) their involvement in food

activism. First, research participants were asked about the details of their food practices, how they were learned, how they are currently practiced, where and when they work, and if it provided enough income to support them. Second, participants were asked about how they, their families, and others valued their labor. Third, they were asked about their networks with other food producers and local businesses. Fourth, I asked about their participation in food activism, including how and why they became engaged and what kinds of activities they undertake and organizations they work with. I used an interview guide to ensure I addressed a specific list of questions in a particular order in all interviews. Interviews were digitally recorded when participants agreed, and lasted between 20 minutes to two hours. When interviews were not recorded, I took extensive notes and transcribed the interviews from those notes immediately following the interview. Demographic data was collected including age, gender, occupation, education, sameby membership, location, and languages spoken. Interviews were conducted in Swedish and/or English depending on the research participant's preference.

Participant Observation

The bulk of data used for analysis in this dissertation comes from participant observation during my time in Jokkmokk in June 2011, August 2012, and October 2013-September 2014, as well as time at Slow Food's Terra Madre in Turin, Italy in November 2008 and 2012. I was able to participate in and observe just over one hundred discrete events related to Sámi foods, from public festivals, food activist meetings and food classes to work in herding, fishing and berry gathering as well as food tourism. The purpose of my observation was to experience working and organizing with food, but more importantly

to document the different ways people use and talk about Sámi foods. The seasonal distribution of food production limited the number of times I was able to participate in certain types of events, such as reindeer slaughters in the winter and fall and berry picking and fishing in the summer.

Because so much of this dissertation is based on observation, I provide a detailed list of some of the types of events I observed:

- Courses in reindeer slaughter (n=1) and wild plant identification and uses (n=3).
- Planning meetings for food-related events and organizations in Jokkmokk (n=6)
- Weekly presentations on local business development in Jokkmokk (n=10)
- Public presentations and entertainment on Sámi foods (n=14)
- Interactions between Sámi food producers and tourists (n=8)
- Reindeer herding events, such as calf marking, winter separations and slaughter (n=10)
- Food processing (n=6)
- Fishing, including ice, net and pole (n=4)

The first purpose of my participant observation was to gather rich, naturally occurring speech and dialogue on the topics of Sámi foods and Sámi food producers. The objective was to document the multiple discourses about Sámi foods as they were used in different contexts by different individuals and organizations. I compared these discourses as they occurred in different contexts. The second purpose was to document the norms that govern uses of Sámi foods. I compared how these norms differed by context to understand variation in efforts to revitalize or preserve Sámi foods and food practices. For instance, I compared the expectations and practices of food used at a household slaughter, Sámi cooking competition, a Sámi cookbook workshop, and at a presentation of Sámi foods. Observations were meticulously recorded as field notes during and

following key events. I also made audio and video recordings of events when appropriate and permitted.

I had several opportunities to be an actual participant in Sámi food production and presentation. My first opportunity to work with food arrived when my husband's employer, a reindeer butcher business, required extra labor during the high season. I worked at the butcher facility for three days, primarily grinding reindeer meat into sausage and vacuum sealing reindeer filets. This experience provided the opportunity for extended conversation with butchers, the opportunity to observe reindeer meat production practices, the demands on butchers' time, and their customers.



Figure 12 I wrap up a reindeer shoulder at a butcher shop in Jokkmokk's kommun.

I also worked as a cabin host (*stugvärd*) for the Swedish Tourism Organization along the King's Trail (*Kungsleden*) in the Laponia World Heritage Site. I was responsible for greeting summer hikers along the King's Trail and taking payment for their lodging as well as maintaining the large cabin where they spent the night, including

the more challenging tasks of cleaning porter potties and burning trash. This opportunity allowed me to work alongside a Sámi family that provided transportation across the lake and sold foods including fresh and smoked fish, dried reindeer meat, *gahkku* bread, as well as sodas and generic snacks. I was able to participate in and observe the interactions between visiting tourists and individuals selling food in the Laponia World Heritage area.

Finally, my work as a community researcher for the Jokkmokk Food Assessment brought me in to some of the planning meetings for the Jokkmokk Culinary Capital activities. For example, I was able to attend some of the meetings for the national food conference held in Jokkmokk as well as workshops for Jokkmokk's food producers. These events inevitably addressed the topic of Sámi foods because many of these foods, such as reindeer, form the backbone of Jokkmokk's culinary landscape.



Figure 13 The Experimental Workshop for Jokkmokk's Culinary Capital project in which my husband and I participated.

This dissertation privileges participant observation and observation as its primary form of data, while interviews provide elaboration and discussion of my observations. I

found that meetings and events were key sites of negotiation for food movement organizers, while interviews were spaces for reflection on those negotiations. Charles Briggs opened his 1986 book on interviewing with the statement that “interviewing has become a powerful force in modern society,” and it is true that we have become accustomed to the ubiquity of interviews when we visit the doctor, apply for jobs, or listen to interviews with politicians or entertainers, whether we live in the U.S. or Sweden (1996: 1). Interviews are valuable for collecting data but they are a specific type of communicative event, governed by specific communicative norms, discourses and roles that interviewee and interviewer take on. For this research, observing events outside of these norms was a more important site for understanding Sámi food movements.

Data Analysis

Interviews and field notes were transcribed into word processing documents. Interviews and participant observation occurred in English and Swedish, dependent upon the event and the interviewee’s preference for speaking in English or Swedish with me. All final materials were translated into English by me. Each set of interviews and field notes was coded for themes that emerged from the interviews (inductive coding) and for themes I developed from the literature (deductive coding) using MAXQDA software. I applied multiple coding techniques including in vivo coding, or identification of indigenous categories of understanding (Strauss and Corbin 1990). I also utilized coding techniques summarized by Ryan and Bernard (2003) including: words counts, missing data, theory or question-related themes, and metaphors. In particular, interviews were often coded using question-related themes, as the interview format lends itself quite nicely to

identifying key questions of the research. For example, all interviews were coded for descriptions of an interviewee's training, economic situation, and perception of value of their work, to name only a few. Interviews were also coded for themes that emerged, such as the idea that Jokkmokk leaders were *hemmablind*, or blind to the natural values of their home region. Field notes were coded in the same manner, with a much greater focus on themes that emerged. These included themes such as jokes about the inability of reindeer herders to purchase reindeer meat because it was too expensive as well as comparisons between (poor) Swedish and (excellent) French food cultures.

Interviews and field notes were also analyzed using critical discourse analysis (Blommaert 2005), where the ways individuals construct narratives that reflect shared categories, expectations and logics were examined. These are places where, as Bakhtin (1981) so eloquently describes, words and ideas echo or taste of the previous contexts in which they have been used. I look at how individuals entextualize or link together different discourses (Silverstein and Urban 1996), reflecting shared cultural understandings as well as perhaps emerging understandings of Sámi foodways.

Confidentiality, Anonymity and IRB

Participants in this study are given pseudonyms that I have chosen. Data from public events where individuals present on their areas of expertise are not deidentified because it is important to represent these individuals alongside the body of work that is their own. For example, well-known Sámi food experts and activists such as Ol-Johán Sikku, Greta Huuva, Anneli Jonsson, and Victoria Harnesk are identified when I discuss statements

and work they have done that is public. However, if I included any statements by these individuals that were made in interviews or private settings, I provide a pseudonym in keeping with the goal of providing the anonymity this study seeks to offer for study participants.

Both this dissertation and the Jokkmokk Food Assessment underwent ethical review at Oregon State University's Internal Review Board (IRB) and were approved. In Sweden, ethical review is optional for research such as mine and can be pursued through one of the regional review boards. I did not pursue this review as many scholars criticized it simply as an alibi, a way to submit articles, though one might criticize IRB protocols the same way. Still, I believe they are valuable processes. During my tenure with Umeå University, scholar Anna-Lill Ledman began spear-heading the question of a Sámi research ethics. She criticized the Swedish state (and society) for assuming that all people are treated equally under Swedish law. Knowing that all people are not treated equally in research, she advocates for Sámi organizations to consider drafting an ethical review of their own.

I was confronted several times by research participants regarding who I had consulted with in order to conduct my research. My own response reflects Ledman's critique of research ethics in Sweden, or the lack thereof. Over coffee in Jokkmokk, I discussed my research with several individuals who identify as Sámi. One person commented that I should expect criticism from Sámi people no matter what: "They're going to ask who you are and who said you could do it and why you did it." I agreed but explained that I was having trouble answering these questions because from whom do I

ask permission? A sameby can only represent its members and both of my studies go beyond the sameby. The Sámi Parliament, which represents people beyond the sameby, has no mechanism for evaluating research ethics, so who do I ask (aside from each participant) at this point in time? He responded that in Kautokeino (at the Sámi University College) they have good research ethics program. I said, well, yes, but I think they would say that I shouldn't be doing my research. He agreed with this statement. "Just expect criticism," he warned.

I do anticipate criticism and I hope those who have alternative interpretations bring those forward to me or to the field of food and indigenous studies. Additionally, I believe that my outsider perspective as a food studies scholars can still contribute to our scholarly understandings of indigenous food movements as well as our applied work in community food organizing. I have done my best to represent individuals and organizations within a decolonized (Smith 1999) and desire-based (Tuck 2009) framework, but I also recognize that my own focus and interpretations are shaped by my own background and interests. My interpretation of the movement for Sámi food sovereignty and the work of food activists to build a regional food system in Jokkmokk (events which are already couched in the language I prefer) is but one of many possible interpretations of this series of events and occurrences, though its status as a work of scholarship (Briggs 1996) may grant it particular authority.

CHAPTER FIVE

A Movement for (Food) Sovereignty

In this chapter I trace out the models and discourses that Sámi food organizers pull from in building a Sámi food movement. In their discourses, the goal of food sovereignty emerges strongly. Food sovereignty is described largely as Sámi control over land, food production, and related knowledge, including cultural, linguistic and culinary knowledges. I place this model of food sovereignty in conversation with the actual activities food organizers have pursued, which largely reflect a focus on marketing Sámi foods. I conclude by considering some of the complexities of these goals and activities and their ability to meet the framework of food sovereignty that activists discursively lay out. This chapter is both grounded within the specific experiences of the Sámi food movement at the same time that I trace out the linkages between the Sámi food movement and other (food) movements.

Introduction

“A revitalization of Sámi food means that power over land, natural resources, food and food prices should be increased. It is the essence of the global concept of food sovereignty for indigenous peoples across the world in their fight for their right to define indigenous peoples’ own food policy.”

– Luonddu biebm, Project of Slow Food Sápmi, Final Report, 2014

Food studies scholar Lois Stanford has put a proposal forth in the study of food movements. She writes, “If, as many scholars contend, multiple perspectives characterize food sovereignty and food justice movements, then our analyses of the terms, implications, and dynamics of local efforts must be grounded in the perspectives of

participants themselves. That is, rather than valorizing the movement components that reflect the priorities of the privileged, it may be more appropriate to recognize the autonomous nature of these other perspectives and to ground analyses within the specific experiences of those agents” (Stanford 2015). Using Stanford’s framework, this chapter takes as its starting point the perspectives of the participants themselves and attempts to ground an analysis of their perspective in the specific experiences of Sámi food producers and activists.

At the same time, we can recognize that these movements do not operate in vacuums: they reflect the ideas and priorities of their surround. Anna Tsing (2007) identifies one manner through which shared international languages (ideas and priorities) takes form. Tsing’s example comes from indigenous studies where she describes the “travel” of different models of indigeneity between indigenous groups. Recognizing that models travel, the role of the scholar is to trace the links that enable divergent indigeneities to circulate between specific locations in the world. This process reveals the linkages between indigenous peoples’ social movements and allows scholars to avoid universalizing shared characteristics.

Tsing’s concept proves valuable for food movements, and as scholars we can identify the divergent models of food activism that circulate between specific locations in the world and their local manifestations. Additionally, as scholars we can examine how individuals construct narratives that reflect these models as shared categories, expectations and logics – places where words and ideas echo or taste of the previous contexts in which they have been used (Bakhtin 1981). Laura Graham (2002) utilizes

Bakhtin's concept of the dialogic nature of discourse (Bakhtin 1981) to describe how Indians (and all of us) blend voices when we speak. That is, discourse is made up of a diversity of voices and our words are half someone else's. Thus, the discourses that Sámi activists use are inevitably composed of a diversity of voices so that they echo and taste of the discourses that are circulating historically and currently. I argue that activists integrate two models of food activism that have traveled to them, one focused on building a moral economy for Sámi food producers within the framework proposed by Slow Food and another that seeks to decolonize food systems within the framework of food sovereignty.

What has surprised me most is the shift in food activists' discourses from a language of decolonization to a focus on food sovereignty over the course of my research. In 2011 the term *decolonization* was used by Sámi political activists to describe the concept of the Slow Food Indigenous Terra Madre (ITM) meeting and the work that needed to be done by indigenous activists in their food systems. From 2013-2014, my field notes contain only a few traces of that term and instead food activists speak in terms of food sovereignty. Additionally, at the 2011 ITM meeting, Slow Food's philosophy of "good, clean and fair" is not included in the official language of the statement made during the event, while from 2013-2014 the Slow Food philosophy is often invoked alongside food sovereignty. The differences beg the question: is this representative of a shift in context or does it represent the possible travel of models of food sovereignty? I suspect both: the shift in context (from a primarily indigenous audience in 2011 to a primarily Swedish audience from 2013-2014) has propelled a shift linked to Slow Food's discourse and its consumer-focused moral economy. But in addition, food sovereignty

appears to have become ubiquitous as a concept for indigenous peoples in the food movement, particularly following 2012 when the UN began to use the concept in reference to indigenous peoples (UN Press 2012). This chapter will elaborate on the shift in discourse by Sámi food activists seen in the focus on practices of decolonization to the promotion of food sovereignty policies.

In this chapter, I attend to several questions related to the circulation of discourses, models, ideas and words within the different food movements. First, how do the discourses and activities of Sámi food activists reflect an orientation towards the Slow Food organization and its conception of a moral economy, an economic model based on Slow Food's philosophy of producing and consuming foods which are "good, clean and fair" (Siniscalchi 2014). At the same time, how do their discourses and activities also reflect an orientation towards the model of food sovereignty that is advanced by many peasant and indigenous groups that is understood by many activists and scholars to be a form of resistance to neoliberal food production (in which the moral capitalist economy of Slow Food is embedded) (Edelman 2014, Trauger 2015)? I place these two models in conversation with one another in order to debate the nature of Sámi food organizing (in its multiple forms) and how it advances both a moral economy and a model for food sovereignty. In this debate I ask, do Sámi food activists ever step outside, around or resist the capitalist (moral) economy, pulling from discourses that articulate a different set of logics beyond building a (morally embedded) market for Sámi foods? The essential question is concerned with how activists integrate a moral capitalist economy and a model of food sovereignty into their work and philosophies.

Background

Many scholars have noted that the discourses in which Sámi activists resist are often terms set by the state and the majority society. For example, reindeer herders might argue that herding is environmentally sound, in which case they rely on the popular discourse of environmentalism to advance Sámi objectives. Lantto and Mörkenstam argue “To become a serious participant in a specific discourse like Swedish Sámi policy, it is necessary to share the common language in which reality is depicted and problems formulated” (Lantto and Mörkenstam 2008: 28). If the Sámi do not adhere to the frames or the common understanding set by a specific system of knowledge, they risk being marginalized or ignored. Food movements might offer Sámi activists an ability to be heard in the common language of contemporary food politics and desires. At this particular moment in time, that common language is in constant flux as organizations worldwide debate policies that address local, regional and international food systems and food sovereignty. This idea was articulated by an International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) representative who spoke to a group of indigenous food activists and producers in 2011: “We need to speak a different language, especially on food.” Are emerging food discourses, such as *food sovereignty* and *good, clean, and fair*, enabling Sámi and other indigenous peoples to speak a different language and resist in ways that challenge or change food systems?

No matter what discourse is used, food politics figure prominently in contemporary Sámi political commentary. For example, Stefan Michaelson, President of the Sámi Parliament at the time of my research, spoke at the premier of the film *Forest of*

the Dancing Spirits, a documentary on the Aka in the Congo made by a Swedish filmmaker. After the film, Michaelson brought up how food is portrayed in the film – though food was not the focus of the documentary. He observed the importance of traditional foods to the survival of the Aka in the context of the UN’s 2020 Millennium Development Goals to get at the root of extreme hunger. Michaelson exclaimed, “We can’t meet these goals if we don’t try to make food in our own lands. We need to make food here. Norrbotten [the administrative department where Jokkmokk is located] makes 20% of its own food, and it’s likely more for the Sámi. What you see in this film is their use of traditional food. Once you take that away and make them get food from a store, then they are forced to get a job. And it is the same here.” Michaelson participated in the 2011 Slow Food Indigenous Terra Madre, acting as MC for the event, and he and other Sámi politicians and leaders have participated in many other food-related events, making it clear that food sovereignty models (and other related models of food rights and food security) have traveled and become salient to their political and cultural conceptions.

Food sovereignty is a term that gained international traction in 1996 with its emphasis by peasant labor movement, La Via Campesina. The concept is often proposed as a counter to the Food and Agriculture Organization’s (FAO) promotion of food security (Trauger 2015). To reiterate, food sovereignty is broadly defined as: “The right of peoples, communities and countries to define their own agricultural, labor, fishing, food and land policies which are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances (NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty 2002: Food Sovereignty: A Right for All).

For the purposes of this chapter it is important to recognize that the term food sovereignty is best characterized as a “free-floating signifier filled with varying kinds of content” (Edelman 2014: 959). Amy Trauger writes that food sovereignty is an “emergent discourse and politics that engages directly with the failure of food security measures to address hunger” as well as a critique of the neoliberal market as the mechanism for managing food security initiatives (2015: 1-2). Food sovereignty is a discourse mobilized around many social movements, at the same time that it has become a public policy for many structures of governance, from regional food sovereignty policies to its reference by the UN in 2012 regarding indigenous people’s food rights (UN Press 2012).

Food sovereignty movements have as many iterations as there are organizations and individuals that utilize the concept. For this chapter, I ground my understanding of food sovereignty in the ways Sámi food activists interpret and represent the concept. This reliance on Sámi interpretations means that I am less concerned with food sovereignty’s focus on alleviating hunger and more interested in food sovereignty as an assertion of control over food production and food-producing lands for indigenous peoples.

Few scholars and activists have considered the implications of *sovereignty* in the term *food sovereignty*. Edelman (2014), however, has posed the questions: Who is the sovereign? Moreover, who will enforce food sovereignty and what policies will they enforce? Such questions raise harrowing dilemmas regarding the implementation of potential food sovereignty policies such as mandatory local food consumption and production which will clearly misalign with contemporary desires to produce and

consume exotic foods (coffee and chocolate) that can only be grown in certain climates. While these broader questions are important, Sámi activism has historical roots that already shape what they seek from a food sovereignty model. First, at the largest scale they seek veto power or consensus governance over sameby lands so that Sámi herders can control what activities take place on the lands where they derive their livelihood. Second, at a smaller scale that intersects with what many small food producers want from the state, they seek flexible regulations of food production that will enable food producers to survive from niche production and sales. They also seek further protections provided by the state and the EU from cooptation of their Sámi-specific knowledges.

The importance of sovereignty over land remains the critical point for many, if not most, indigenous peoples. Audra Simpson (2011) argues that in most scholarship that addresses indigenous peoples, scholars gesture to sovereignty or vilify it, rather than addressing sovereignty straight on. This inability to address sovereignty, for Simpson, represents the liberal assumption of shared values (cosmopolitanism) as well as white fear of Indians reacquiring their land, gaining self-governance, accumulating capital, and making their own decisions. Many groups continue to possess a sense of rootedness in the landscape and continue to push for their rights to land, water, ice and snow, but real sovereignty has remained unattainable for most indigenous peoples. Control over the use of land figures quite prominently in discussions in Sweden and Jokkmokk due to the Swedish government's plan to triple the number of mines which will impact northern peripheries like Jokkmokk much more than Sweden's southern centers (Swedish Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications 2012).

Sámi individuals and collectivities in Sweden have regained limited self-determination through the establishment of the Sámi Parliament in 1993 after decades of activism. Yet in the very moment it granted this self-determination, the Swedish Parliament also took away Sámi control of small game hunting on sameby lands and handed it over to Swedish County Governments. Moose hunting rights are also regulated by the state. For example, in Norrbotten, the county government controls who can participate in the moose hunt and allocates how many moose can be hunted by each sameby. Reindeer herding rights are similarly regulated by the state. Mats Peter Åstot summarized the situation of reindeer herders in Sweden during a presentation he gave in Jokkmokk, “You live by the terms of the state as a Sámi. You don’t know how long you have the land. It’s all determined by Länsstyrelsen [the county government].” These are examples of the state’s unwillingness to grant full self-determination and/or sovereignty to indigenous peoples to control the moose population, the reindeer grazing lands, the fish populations, where the rules of the state are deemed more valid than the knowledge and rules of local organizations who hunt, fish and herd on the land. The food movement offers an important space of resistance for many Sámi individuals because of these specific circumstances, the threat of further land loss to mining, hydro, solar and wind power, and climate change.

In addition, throughout Europe and including Sweden, the food movement offers hope for rural revitalization (Cavanaugh 2007), and European governments and the EU support this with legislation and funding. This aspect of contemporary food models is related to the movement of ethnic identity into the marketplace as a commodity that people like the Sámi can earn a living from (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009). Many food

entrepreneurs in Jokkmokk work with the hope of building future work for their children, that is, enabling youth to remain in Jokkmokk despite the decreasing availability of secure employment. At the same time, because of the international interest in ethnic or heritage cuisines, non-Sámi businesses are also using Sámi-ness to market their food products. Thus, Sámi food organizers work with a sense that Sámi knowledge is being co-opted or exploited by non-Sámi businesses.

The scholarship on sovereignty and consumer-based food movements raises broad questions in the context of Sámi politics and history: Is it possible that the right to food, and the promotion of food sovereignty, may give Sámi peoples the right to traverse their lands freely, crossing the geopolitical borders of nation-states, provinces and counties that cut through their lands? Can the promotion of food sovereignty lead to policies that will allow these individuals and collectivities to use the/their land as they want, without deference to the hunting laws, seasons, and limits created and enforced by the Swedish state? And finally, how is a consumer-based approach, the “moral economy” of Slow Food that Sámi activists also clearly pursue, integrated within these approaches that are much more focused on Sámi rights to land and self-determination?

This chapter relies extensively on several events I observed that were organized by Sámi food activists. They include the June 2011 Slow Food Indigenous Terra Madre, the 2014 Slow Food Sápmi book release party and televised recording of Sámi food presentations in Umeå, the 2014 Matlandet conference in Jokkmokk, and the 2014 Renlycka meeting in Jokkmokk. The interviews I draw from and the events I observed

were often tied with Slow Food Sápmi through similar funding sources, shared staff, and collaborative projects, though they often focused on different project goals.

The Blending of Food Movement Models

As scholars we seek to understand our research participants' understandings of salient concepts. I found this work to be easy during the tenure of my ethnographic research as Sámi food activists presented the topics of food sovereignty and Sámi foods in multiple venues to indigenous, Sámi and Swedish audiences. Their goal was not only to advance the goals of their movement but to educate the public about the very nature of that movement, thus making quite explicit their understandings of food sovereignty.

In the following pages I have separated out the discourses Sámi food activists and organizations have used in discussing Sámi foods. These include: 1) decolonization of foodways; 2) control of land; and 3) control of the production and marketing of food products, cultural knowledge and stories. Additionally, I consider moments where the goals and models of Sámi food activists and the Swedish state coalesce in order to consider the productive space that is opened when the trajectories of food movements align. I end with a discussion of the implications of these diverse discourses for a new kind of economy and food system for Sámi peoples.

Integrating Sovereignty into Decolonization

In June 2011 I participated in the first Indigenous Terra Madre (ITM), co-hosted and organized by Slow Food Sápmi, Slow Food Sweden and Slow Food International¹⁰ and funded by the Sámi Parliament of Sweden, the EU, and the Christensen Fund. My 2011 field notes record use of the term “food sovereignty” three times during the conference and in interviews. Instead, the buzzword of the conference, echoed in nearly every presentation, was *decolonization*. Conference organizers deliberately invoked the practices of decolonization at three scales: 1) in the organization of the conference; 2) in the organization of an indigenous-controlled food movement; and 3) in the outcome goals set for Indigenous Terra Madre.

At the first scale, the setting, language, representation and decision-making processes of the conference were intended to be decolonizing. ITM was held at the Hotel Jokkmokk, a fairly typical but beautifully located establishment. Outside its buildings, an enlarged rendition of the Sámi *goahte* (káta) or *lavvu*¹¹ was erected for the conference. The hybrid *lavvu* structure is often used during Jokkmokk summers as an event center for weddings, conferences and dinners. These events sometimes invoke more Sámi symbolism and other times do not. Inside the *goahte* it smelled smoky and earthy from the wood fired stoves lit throughout the space and the dying, matted grass underneath our feet. Reindeer hides were thrown across the grass to symbolically represent the natural

¹⁰ Henceforth, Slow Food will be referred to using the acronym SF followed by the specific organization, including SF Sápmi, SF Sweden, SF International.

¹¹ The *goahte* (káta in Swedish) typically is used to refer to an earthen Sámi dwelling while *lavvu* is used to refer to a hide or canvas Sámi dwelling (sometimes translated to tent-tipi in English).

world and to provide spaces where people could sit on the ground around the central stage.



Figure 14 The tent kâta at the 2011 Indigenous Terra Madre meeting,

Ol-Johán Sikku, an important leader in Slow Food and Indigenous Terra Madre, in his opening speech, told delegates that: “This meeting, we planned as a decolonization. We are not meeting in a square room, a conference room. We are sitting in a round room. Here everyone sees everyone. We are using the Sámi languages, not the Swedish language.” Sikku spoke in North Sámi throughout the conference. He and co-host, Nils Henrik Sikku (his brother), made the decision to speak in North Sámi very clear to conference participants, as Nils Henrik Sikku stated, “We have translation into six languages. The main language of this country [Swedish] is not here. It is now a minority language. Swedish is only spoken in two countries. Sámi is spoken in four countries.”

Practices of decision-making were carefully considered between the organizers of SF Sápmi, SF Sweden, and SF International. Cristina Gaitan, a leading figure in SF Sweden and the SF Presidia projects, told delegates: “When Ol-Johán first talked about decolonization, I didn’t understand. But now I know there is institutional racism in this country. So I thought what is our role in this? We have decided to just have indigenous peoples as delegates (...) Delegates have the right to make the decisions. Slow Food Sweden will support you, indigenous delegates. You own indigenous Terra Madre. We are also colonized by people who want to make our food bad. We need to decolonize the mind (...) and we can decolonize the frameworks of the UN.” SF Sweden’s decision to act as listeners at the event reflects a different approach than that of the national government during another food conference held in 2014, which I consider in Chapter 7.

The conference organizers also decided to use consensus-building as the model of decision-making for the conference. Delegates were told that “no one would be outvoted” in the process of drafting and approving “The Jokkmokk Agreement.”¹² Processes of consensus building are gaining leverage for the Sámi as their customary model of governance. Many of those I spoke with who were voting members in the Sámi Parliament lamented the current structure of the Parliament which was modeled after the Swedish system of voting rather than building consensus.

A public debate also emerged regarding the question of ownership of and responsibility for the maintenance and revitalization of indigenous food knowledges.

¹² The Jokkmokk Agreement is available for download at Slow Food Sápmi: <http://nebula.wsimg.com/c1ae2490193ed326ffc0ca5d38f91b28?AccessKeyId=7D466BF6A3E7C8C287C2&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

Carlo Petrini, founder and charismatic leader of Slow Food, told the delegates: “Our new big idea is Granaries of Memory. Every community can use video cameras to take video of their elders. Films of elderly people will be the greatest library that is!” Petrini continued that these videos would be uploaded to a sort of public database, a “youtube” of knowledge. An outcry to such a plan emerged in many venues and conversations afterwards. Questions of ownership and efficacy were voiced. Phrang Roy, coordinator of the Indigenous Partnership for Agrobiodiversity and Food Sovereignty, explained, “We do not want a document in a science book, but a document for community knowledge. We want them to preserve it for themselves.” Again, the discourse of ownership and serving the interests of specific indigenous communities where the knowledge is rooted surfaces in later descriptions of food sovereignty by Sámi activists.

The primary outcome of the conference, the drafting of a Manifesto on Indigenous Foods titled The Jokkmokk Agreement, shifted the discourse from one of decolonization to one of rights and sovereignty. Unlike the conference, which used a discourse of decolonization, The Jokkmokk Agreement is primarily framed within the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). While Sámi food activists spoke of decolonization in their presentations, the Jokkmokk Agreement reflected the language of food sovereignty. I attribute these differences first to the practical fact that food sovereignty emerged as a tool of decolonization—both models seek indigenous self-determination over land and practices. Secondly, it is the result of the travel of discourse and the nature of genre that influences the style of language in which activists would craft their message. First, many participants at ITM brought the language of food rights and food sovereignty with them. For example, Andrea Carmen,

Executive Director of the International Indian Treaty Council¹³ and a collaborator on the drafting of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, gave a presentation on indigenous rights. She told the primarily indigenous audience,

“Our rights can be upheld. They can’t be given or taken away. Rights are inalienable and inherent. And one of the rights that we saw, that was recognized from the beginning is the right to food and the right to well-being, which goes beyond just survival. It’s to be who we are on our original land. And this is a quote from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.”

Carmen was responsible for the note-taking during the drafting of The Jokkmokk Agreement, and her work and knowledge are grounded in the discourse of rights recognized by the UN and the framework of food sovereignty. Carmen and other representatives to the UN formed a core part of the ITM event, thus making it unsurprising that the language of rights and sovereignty were introduced into this first indigenous Slow Food event. Not only were Sámi food activists’ discourses impacted, but the discourse of food rights and sovereignty would have been heard by the entire audience of indigenous food producers and organizers, which had the potential of shifting SF International’s focus as well.

Regarding genre, the expectations of speech differ with the expectations of a formal document, which shifted activists’ discursive choices. The formal manifesto is written in what is becoming the internationally recognized and ubiquitous discourse of food sovereignty. While decolonization has no formal recognition or policy as it is a

¹³ The International Indian Treaty Council also embraces the frameworks of the right to food and food sovereignty, further reflecting a shared orientation to these frameworks amongst indigenous organizations working at an international scale. http://www.iitc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/FoodSovereigntyENG_092713-WEB.pdf

social movement, food sovereignty has become a model for food policies at the highest levels of governance (UN Press 2012). The Jokkmokk Agreement and its advocates pushed for a food sovereignty that advocated land reform, communal rights, democratic or consensus models of governance, and protection from industrial food practices. These concerns for land reform and protection from industrial practices also become progressively more visible in Sámi food activism after 2011, however, Sámi activists integrated other sets of discourses that differed significantly from the Jokkmokk Agreement. In particular, they spoke often about controlling Sámi knowledges and resources in an economic market where they risked the cooptation of their knowledge by non-Sámi actors. I will explore these similarities and differences in the following pages.

Claiming Land in a New Discourse

“The Sámi build onto what nature gives. Reindeer are a natural and environmentally friendly industry. But in order to continue they need untouched land, food sovereignty, and development that comes from traditional knowledge. Food sovereignty is a global idea that we are working with. It’s an idea that’s growing. It’s about the importance of food. Then, undisturbed land is important because without it there is no food.”

–Ol-Johán Sikku, Renlycka Meeting, 2014

The importance of land to food sovereignty was articulated repeatedly in representations of Sámi foods. For example, Slow Food Sápmi designed a newspaper insert in 2014 that went out across Sweden in major national and regional papers. There it was stated that food sovereignty means approximately “the right to food connected to our land” with further description as “indigenous peoples who are pressured by industrialization shall own the right to produce and process their ingredients on their lands through managing their lands themselves.” Stated specifically for the Sámi, it was written: “Without access

to undisturbed lands for reindeer herding, fishing, hunting, berry and plant picking there will not be a Sámi cuisine.” The Sámi Parliament also addressed food via its “Vision for Sámi Food” (Sametinget 2012), where it states that food sovereignty, “It is increased Sámi control of natural resources like the moose hunt, the small game hunt, and fishing on Sámi lands where Sámi titles are threatened.” Access to land and control over the activities that take place on it figure prominently in presentations of Sámi food sovereignty. These pronouncements, while straightforward, entail complex negotiations on the position of indigenous peoples within sovereign states like Sweden, which I will illustrate in the following example.



Figure 15 The front page of the newspaper insert on Sámi foods that was distributed in Sweden

In 2014, during Umeå’s tenure as Europe’s Cultural Capital, Slow Food Sápmi organized a series of presentations on Sámi foods, delivered in front of a live audience (that included myself) and recorded by Sweden’s UR channel (available to stream on the

Internet). The event took place in the museum's conference hall with speakers set in front of a symbolic Sámi káta and behind birch planks. Victoria Harnesk, project manager for Slow Food Sápmi and a collaborator with my research, moderated the event, introducing and asking questions to each participant. I mention this because Harnesk's own understanding of Sámi politics and the food movement shaped the questions she asked and the responses of presenters.



Figure 16 Victoria Harnesk, left, and coffee expert Annie Wuolab, right, at the UR televised presentations on Sámi foods.

Slow Food Sápmi's president, Anneli Jonsson, spoke specifically on the concept of food sovereignty during the event. Jonsson's description of food sovereignty, and Sámi food sovereignty, is multi-faceted and complex, ranging from the need for consumers to carefully consider their choices to the need to protect Sámi lands and Sámi knowledges from exploitation.

Jonsson opens with the statement “Sámi food has a place in the future, but how it will be developed is out of our control. Politics, competing land uses, climate change, they keep us from controlling how our food will be grown.” She asks the audience if they know of the UN Right to Food, which she describes as a general right and one of the conventions of the UN. Jonsson goes on to explain that in addition there is the concept of food sovereignty, which means that people have the right to develop and control their own food: “Food sovereignty is new for Slow Food Sápmi. We want to define it. From the ground of SF Sápmi, we know it is important. From producers to consumers, we decide our food culture and our production technology and that nature be respected.” Jonsson shows a picture from a reindeer herding event and continues, “Food sovereignty is a part of Sámi society. This [the herding] is a moment to be together in a group. Food sovereignty comes from family, culture, language, having similar values, expressions, common sense, economy, and wellbeing.”

To conclude she asks, “What needs do we have to give us the possibility from the majority society? It’s not just Sámi. It’s also other local, small scale food producers. There are competing land uses. Mine policies is an example that we Sámi and other people and organizations are protesting. This is a problem when land is lost. We need to be rid of exploitation, splintered land. We need these lands to get to feeding grounds. The reindeer needs a clean nature. If the reindeer doesn’t survive, we don’t either.”

Jonsson’s question regarding what Sámi food activists need from the majority society is interesting as it illustrates the complexity of the concept of sovereignty for indigenous peoples who are simultaneously citizens of states like Sweden. In many

discussions, research participants reiterated the point that Sámi people do not wish to leave the Swedish state (or, as one person told me, they are more realistic than that in their goals). While scholars like Arce, Sherwood and Paredes have proposed understanding food sovereignty as a “cosmopolitan reality” rather than a “prisoner of the state” (Beck and Sznaider 2006: 6, Arce, Sherwood and Paredes 2015: 128), in the case of many indigenous peoples, the state remains the regulatory body that determines how land will be used (by transnational corporations) and how food can be produced and sold (often in transnational settings). Yet, we can also recognize that food sovereignty movements promote transcendent social transnationalities, creating connections between people beyond the state, such as the case of ITM and the orientation of Sámi food activists to the UN as the ultimate regulatory agency. But these connections and orientations still do not grant Sámi food producers control over their land.

Following Jonsson’s presentation Victoria Harnesk came to the stage. She says that food sovereignty is new, and it’s the day’s hardest theme because it’s hard to understand. She asks Jonsson, “It’s not something that the Sámi came up with. It’s a UN idea. Is it exclusive? A way to fight back?” Jonsson says that she believes strongly in it. “You can grow your plants and feel these are good and clean. This can happen everywhere. It is out of what oneself wants. It’s something that you should have. But countries also have it.” Harnesk asks, “But one doesn’t need a country to have it?” Jonsson says, “No, it’s all citizens or anyone anywhere. This is a new way to go, to demand these rights. This can be put in different degrees. Look at the large food industry, for example. This we can do as consumers. We can ask, what’s in a product? Where’s it made? If we ask the industry, they have to change. But also research and the government

needs to know too. There are some constitutional laws that include food sovereignty in some countries, as well.” Jonsson’s characterizations reflect the reflexivity of Sámi activists, a level of awareness regarding the complexity of food sovereignty and Sámi representations that echoes throughout this dissertation.

Jonsson’s presentation of these discourses and models which emphasize the importance of land to the production of food also enables a new politics of possibility (Gibson-Graham 2006). By stressing the importance of land to a cuisine that is valued not only by its practitioners but also the consuming public at large, a new discourse of rights emerges that combines the models of food rights, food sovereignty and Slow Food’s right to the pleasure of good, clean and fair food. Jonsson also hints at consumer responsibility to ask what is in a product, deftly combining the structure of a moral economy or responsible consumers within her understanding of food sovereignty.

Like Jonsson who points to a “new way to go” that the framework of food sovereignty offers to Sámi people, Slow Food participants in Siniscalchi’s research also describe their engagement as a “looking for new ways and new spaces of engagement” (2014: 227). However, what makes the Sámi food movement unique in contrast to the work of other Slow Food organizations is the simultaneous focus on indigenous rights. The discourse and space of engagement is quite a different proposal for Sámi individuals in contrast with Italians or Swedes. The Swedish state continues to avoid (or fails to redress) Sámi rights to land according to the UN General Assembly’s special rapporteur James Anaya (Anaya 2011). The framework of food sovereignty opens up possibilities

for Sámi individuals to continue to petition against uses of the land that compete with the production of Sámi foods, in a new discourse.

Claiming Knowledge and Representational Sovereignty

“When something is trendy, if we don’t define what we want, someone else will. That’s what we are concerned about. When there is a Sámi restaurant with no Sámi connection, we begin to feel exploited. One feels you’re not liked, but now you’re the face of some business. –Anna-Marja Kaddick, Slow Food Sápmi, 2014

Beyond control of land, food sovereignty is often described as control over knowledge, stories and representations of Sámi cuisines. At a meeting for Renlycka, a reindeer meat certification associated with Slow Food Sápmi with approximately eight producers, Ol-Johán Sikku made statements that are similar the one above by Anna-Marja Kaddick.

Sikku explained to the gathered herders and butchers the criteria to participate, “In Renlycka, there is a demand for quality. The reindeer must have natural feed.... And it must be a Sámi production facility. It’s important to our culture and our history. We can’t sell out our culture. Where do we want to be in 50 to 100 years in the future? If we don’t own our culture, where will we be in 50 to 100 years?” Sikku continues, “Much of what we do is “storytelling” [English word used]. And this storytelling is what we don’t want these other businesses to use. That is exploitation to use a story that is not yours.”

During the launch of the Taste of Sápmi cookbook, control over representation and storytelling was also addressed. Swedish photographer Bianca Brandon-Cox, a collaborator on the Slow Food Sápmi cookbook, discussed why the book was titled *Smak på Sápmi* (Taste of Sápmi). “It is more than tasting food,” she explains, “It’s tasting the culture. The goal with the book was to create knowledge transfer, to learn the traditional

Sámi recipes, but also to take food into the future.” She continued, “Somebody else will take it if we don’t, if you don’t do it. Should we share this knowledge? For hours we’ve discussed this question. We, or you rather, must do it now. Soon someone will take this and make it theirs. Someone else should not get money from Sámi food.”



Figure 17 The display of photographs and foods at the launch party for the Smak på Sápmi cookbook.

Many food activists expressed the feeling that they must claim Sámi knowledges because non-Sámi businesses have already begun to pull from the repertoire of Sámi symbols to promote their own products. For example, the words *suovas* and *Sámi-smoked* have been used to describe pork-based sausages. Jonsson addressed this issue directly in her presentation: “With *suovas*,¹⁴ *suovas* as a smoked pork, the source isn’t Sámi. No one there has a connection with Sámi society. We don’t like it as an indigenous people when our knowledge is taken.” In a more light-hearted but still critical moment, my husband’s

¹⁴ *Suovas*, meaning smoked in Sámi languages, is today used to refer to a salted and smoked reindeer meat. It is also Sweden’s (and Sápmi’s) first Slow Food Presidia product, which means it is a unique food product supported by Slow Food in order to support its production.

colleague who identifies as Sámi joked with him when my husband asked about the “Sámi-smoked ham”: “I wonder if it’s hard to keep a Sámi person lit.”

The threat of exploitation is perceived not just with reindeer meat. Greta Huuva is a plant expert and the Sámi Food Ambassador for Sweden. Following her presentation in Umeå, Harnesk asked Huuva if there were plant organizations. Huuva likened the organization of plant experts and products to that of *duodji* or Sámi handicrafts. Sámi plant specialists are where *duodji* was 50 years ago from her perspective. Sámi handicrafts are part of a well-regarded training program at Jokkmokk’s Sámi Education Center. A certification that guarantees a product is Sámi made, scholarships and competitions are also available to support artisans. Huuva has already worked towards her proposal of developing Sámi foods the way handicraft is organized. Huuva herself established the two-year Sámi culinary training program at the Sámi Education Center and she is collaborating with a network of plant experts to determine which plants should be harvested in the north in order to avoid over-exploitation of sensitive plant species.

These five individuals, Sikku, Kaddick, Brandon-Cox, Jonsson and Huuva, speak largely of a need for Sámi individuals and organizations to control the production of knowledge, representation and products that are linked to historic and contemporary Sámi culinary practices. These discourses are all constructed with reference to the marketplace, that Sámi culture, people and practices are exploited by other (non-Sámi) businesses through the sale of Sámi products or through the use of Sámi cultural symbols to sell those products. There is a sense of urgency and risk in these discussions. In many ways it is a request (or a demand) that Sámi food experts, food producers, and food activists

increase their presence in the marketplace in order to carve out or claim space that has been produced via the global interest in food. I explore this facet in two examples below: the marketing of products and food tourism.

Making products available to consumers

Sámi food organizing is spoken about as a means to share Sámi foods and knowledge with new consumers. Centralized control of the reindeer meat industry by only a few businesses like Polarica is described as a system that keeps consumers away from products that they should be able to taste. For example, Anna-Marja Kaddick explained the Slow Food philosophy to her audience and stated, “If we go to the store, there’s very limited types of reindeer meat for you. And what we [Sámi] think is good should also be out and available to the world.” Greta Huuva also invoked her audience as potential consumers of new Sámi foods. At the conclusion of her presentation, she said, “This is just a little to inspire you. There is more than reindeer filet and reindeer *skav* [thinly sliced reindeer meat] in Sámi food. Go and try something else.”

Combined with the encouragement to try other cuts of reindeer meat is the physical presence of a Renlycka certified butcher at the Umeå events. Thus, the audience is able “to go out and try something else.” For example, during the cookbook release party, Chef Kristoffer Åström was asked to present some of the foods he prepared for the event. He spoke about some of the dishes, which included a reindeer sausage, reindeer *suovas*, smoked Arctic char, smoked butter, and reindeer blood pancakes. At the conclusion of his presentation, Åström stated that all the meat products can be bought at the reindeer meat stand located in the outdoor museum market. This aspect of the food

movement clearly focuses on building Sámi food production in niche capitalist markets, markets embedded in moral economies where (newly educated) consumers are able to purchase reindeer meat from authentic producers.



Figure 18 Salt-baked potatoes with suovas filet served at the Smak på Sápmi book release party.

Building food tourism

Food tourism is a strong focus in the work of Sámi food activists. Anneli Jonsson's explanation of food sovereignty also included a discussion of the importance of tourism to the future of Sámi foods: "First it is local food. It gives it an attractive character to the local area, for tourists and for those living there. This is employment in food tourism. Slow Food International promotes food tourism." Not only is food tourism promoted by Slow Food, it also is strongly promoted by Swedish tourism organizations. In my interviews with many reindeer herders, tourism was often perceived as a threat to reindeer herding as tourists tend to disturb the reindeer as they are grazing and the infrastructures for tourism can often disrupt reindeer migration routes (particularly visible in southern Sápmi regions where vacation homes disrupt wilderness areas). Thus, the

shift to focus on developing Sámi tourism is a unique challenge for those involved, but there are strong links between the development of Sámi foods and Sámi tourism, most visible in the connections between Slow Food Sápmi and Sápmi Experience, an organization that guarantees a business is Sámi-owned and focused on ecotourism.

The leader of Sápmi Experience, Dan Jonasson, also spoke at the Umeå presentations about the potential for developing Sámi food tourism. During his presentation, Harnesk asked, “How can society strengthen this industry?” Jonasson’s immediate response was, “It should first come from the Sámi themselves.” The two acknowledge that Sámi herders are often fearful of developing tourism because of its potential negative impacts on the land. However, Jonasson argues that these impacts can be avoided if the tourism is run by Sámi owned companies. Again, these projects reflect an understanding of food sovereignty that entails the control of Sámi cultural, culinary, and experiential production within a market system. Food activists encourage consumers to critically participate in a market exchange that is less anonymous (and more authentic) because it is controlled and produced by Sámi individuals themselves (which I explore further in Chapter 7). The promotion of Sámi food products and food tourism forms a large part of the work of Sámi food organizers – and this is unsurprising given that the goal of organizers is to enable more Sámi people to work in Sámi livelihoods. Thus a critical question of this dissertation is how the focus on working within capitalist markets is integrated into the pursuit of Sámi food sovereignty.

Alignments of Indigenous and State Food Organizing

Presentations of Sámi foods also weaved together the contemporary development discourses of the Swedish state and the EU – the need to keep jobs, money and people in rural regions. Where these two discourses intersected, a productive space emerged where conversations and funding flowed to Sámi food projects. For example, Ol-Johán Sikku has utilized this discourse of rural development in discussing the work of Renlycka: “This is a local economy. Sámi establish slaughterhouses, more Sámi restaurants grow. It increases businesses and jobs, and you grow the local economy. But now, it [the money and jobs] goes out.” And, funding has flowed from the EU and the Swedish Parliament for developing Sámi food products (see Introduction).

Much of the work of Sámi food activists meshed well with the efforts of Sweden’s rural food development programs. Sweden’s Rural Ministry’s Matlandet (Food Nation) Project addressed many of the same issues identified by Sámi food activists. Matlandet began in 2008 with the intent of using food to develop several areas in Sweden: rural development, food processing, international exports, and tourism. During the Matlandet conference in Jokkmokk, Eskil Erlandson, Minister of Rural Affairs, gave a report on the year’s progress. He stated, “We’ve increased exports of products. There’s a new slaughterhouse every month, which is important for animals and for jobs.”

Erlandson explained that Matlandet focuses on consumers because “One wants a story around food. When you go to an elderly home, what do you talk about? The weather and the food. What are you having for dinner? What does it smell like? Children need to know: what is the tradition in your region. They need to know the smells and the

tastes of where they're from. And new potatoes. Stories strengthen us.” Like Sámi food activists, the Matlandet emphasized storytelling, the production of narratives that might add value to and increase interest in Swedish food products, particularly those coming from rural regions.

At the same time that their goals align in the realm of marketing, there is also a space opened up where food activists and producers can directly criticize major actors in the Swedish state for their exploitation of land for mining, wind, solar and hydropower. On the one hand, the Ministry of Rural Affairs advocated building Sweden into the new European Food Nation through investment in food production and tourism infrastructure (Kontigo 2013). On the other, Sweden's major parties devised a comprehensive strategy for further development of the mining industry¹⁵ in the north, the historic lands of the Sámi and the reindeer herding area.

The 2014 Matlandet conference opened up new spaces for criticism and hope when Jokkmokk was nominated Sweden's Culinary Capital. The conference took place in Jokkmokk in the same space and at the same time of year as the Indigenous Terra Madre. Many of the same Sámi food activists were present, in addition to Sweden's Minister of Rural Affairs and Sweden's national food ambassadors representing all of Sweden's provinces. Ol-Johán Sikku opened the conference, speaking in North Sámi as he had before but then switching to Swedish: “I must begin by congratulating Jokkmokk, the Sámi and local businesses. There have been many new possibilities in the most recent

¹⁵ Sweden produces 90% of the iron ore mined in the EU, with 16 metal mines employing approximately 8,400 people in 2010 (Swedish Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications 2012).

years. The Sámi food producers are a branch community, and they are one result of the Matlandet investments.” Here Sikku acknowledges the funding that has flowed from the Minister’s Matlandet program that finances rural (including Sámi) food development.

“But,” he continues, “One can worry about another development [man kan gruva sig för en annan utveckling] that is outside of the clean nature, health, and locally produced food, with no connection to the long term, to culture. It’s development by somebody far away, not in Sápmi, who gets the profits. Yes, one can really worry about it [gruva sig]. The Sámi, locally produced, natural products are a growing trend. People are more aware of the earth, of resources, and that we need to take responsibility now. We’re doing that now. That’s what I call development.”

With several hundred individuals in attendance, including the Minister, Sikku indexes (points a finger towards) Sweden’s mining policy supported by the Minister’s party as well as the potential mine in Jokkmokk. The key play on words is the term *gruva sig*, which is related to the term for mines in Swedish, *gruvor*. Through this play on words, Sikku worries about (*gruva sig*) another type of development, the development of mines (*gruvor*). While Sikku has been a strong leader of Slow Food Sápmi and Renlycka, he has been equally active in protests against Sweden’s new mining policies, including the Kallak mine in Jokkmokk. The venue was ideal for voicing this protest as the Minister of Rural Affairs is also a member of the Center Party which has strongly promoted mining as Sweden’s future development. Sikku used the food platform to challenge Swedish mining policies that will take land out of food production and will

generate an infrastructure that will negatively impact reindeer grazing (Länsstyrelsen 2014).

Discussion

Food Sovereignty in Practice

How are the goals of Sámi food movement discourses translated into action? In practice, the activities of Sámi food organizers seek to create organizations and businesses that are owned and run by individuals who identify as Sámi, seen in the creation of SF Sápmi, Renlycka, and the Sámi Culinary Center, as discussed below. First, Slow Food Sápmi established itself as an organization separate from Slow Food Sweden with the goal of creating its own Ark of Taste commission to control what Sámi products are made into Slow Food Presidia products. Many Sámi activists explained that SF Sápmi came into being because of problems with the Suovas Presidia. Suovas, the salted and smoked reindeer meat, became a Slow Food Presidia product in the early 2000s. The Suovas Presidia was originally created by SF Sweden. According to Sámi activists, there were many mistakes regarding the regulations and standardization of suovas production, largely because SF Sweden and SF International did not have enough knowledge of suovas's production to accurately define its parameters. Sámi activists concluded that the Presidia process should be controlled by Sámi actors knowledgeable in Sámi cuisines.

Suovas is targeted for further protections. In 2015, Slow Food Sápmi and collaborating organizations in Finland and Norway co-applied for an EU product origin designation that would allow only certain facilities to produce suovas. With this

designation, Sámi words like *suovas* would no longer be useable by uncertified businesses. Geographical indications from the European Union are often signs, like place names or names that are linked with a place whether Champagne or Feta, used to identify a product. The EU offers three different protections for foodstuffs—territory, geographic or traditional specialty designations—that food producers can apply for. These are considered important to the EU, because according to them, “They can create value for local communities through products that are deeply rooted in tradition, culture and geography. They support rural development and promote new job opportunities in production, processing, and other related services” (European Commission 2013). Moreover, they are perceived as protections for intellectual property. The goals of the geographic indications clearly aligns with the second model of food delineated in this dissertation: a focus on rural development enacted through the commodification of heritage foodways. To earn one of these labels, applicants must describe the product according to designated specifications and submit their application to national authorities who determine whether the application should be passed on to the EU Commission who make the final decision. I further examine the application for *suovas* that was submitted to the Swedish authorities in 2015 in Chapter 6.

Renlycka was also created during the same time period as Slow Food Sápmi. A third-party certification run by Sámi individuals and funded through the Sámi Parliament, Renlycka’s label guarantees that reindeer products are owned by Sámi people the entire way through the production chain. Other food activists have established the Sámi Culinary Center with an education program that trains and validates Sámi chefs and Sámi cuisine, in order to create more restaurants owned by Sámi individuals. All three of these

organizations have contributed to the production of the cookbooks, presentations, and workshops about Sámi food, a process which has inserted a Sámi perspective and story in the public archive.



Figure 19 A butchershop in Jokkmokk Municipality displays its Renlycka certificate at different markets.

How are these activities meeting Sámi goals of food sovereignty, as defined by Sámi actors? The work of Sámi food organizers stakes claims on Sámi food products, using EU and Slow Food designations as well as their own organizations, certifications and training programs like Renlycka and the Sámi Culinary Center. These organizations also enable Sámi producers and activists to control the process of identifying, describing and marketing Sámi foods to the public. This work limits who can produce certain Sámi foods and how they can be produced and eliminates Sámi dependence on Swedish and other organizations. However, the EU and Slow Food International also remain regulatory agencies in some cases. Moreover, the funds for small food entrepreneurs and

these organizations come from Swedish government agencies like the Matlandet project and the Sámi Parliament which is funded and overseen by the Swedish Parliament. Thus, to a limited extent, this work increases Sámi control over specific forms of food production and marketing, but much of the support remains outside of Sámi control.

These certifications, labels and organizations also target accompanying cultural and linguistic knowledge. For example, Sámi words become protected as part of labels such as *suovas*. They also assist in making the transfer of culinary and linguistic knowledge possible amongst Sámi with, for example, the chef training program and documentation efforts.

However, like much of Sámi political activism, the work of food activism has a limited scope. Its primary benefit is to those Sámi who are members of *samebys*, the Sámi who have rights to herd, hunt and fish on *sameby* lands. This population constitutes 10% of Sámi in Sweden, and so the practical effect of food activism may not impact many Sámi nor challenge the key historic legislation that disenfranchised so many Sámi more than a century ago. Sámi food activism in many regards fails to challenge the negative impacts of Sweden's historic legislation (the Reindeer Grazing Acts) that prevent most Sámi from producing food from the land. Still, many non-*sameby* members are participating as chefs, butchers, and tourism leaders – ways that are for the most part not dependent on *sameby* membership.

Regarding control of land, there is a space opened up in these public presentations, cookbooks, and newspaper inserts, where food activists and producers can directly criticize major actors in the Swedish state for their exploitation of land and

legislation that limits Sámi abilities to control their food systems. These efforts also educate their consumers and the public about the challenges that Sámi producers face, though relying on consumers can make for weak politics (West 2012).

Moral Economies in Practice

Sámi food activism articulates with three dominant forces in contemporary society: the industrialization of the food system, the mining of the Earth by international corporations, and the increasing importance of marketing heritage or culture in late capitalism. On the one hand, activists are confronting the negative impacts the industrialization of the food system has had on their own livelihoods and health, primarily the consolidation of the reindeer meat industry in the hands of a few large corporations and the increasing shift towards more processed foods and sedentary lifestyles. They are also facing historic, present and potential losses of land for reindeer, fish, and plants due primarily to the mining, hydropower, wind and solar power industries and their infrastructures. On the other, they are participating in what Comaroff and Comaroff (2009) term “Ethnicity, Inc.,” the movement of ethnicity into the marketplace as a commodity, as Sámi food activists work to build a food movement based on entrepreneurship in Sámi foods by individuals who identify as Sámi. While the process of incorporating identity and cultural practices is problematic, becoming an “ethno-prenuer” (2009: 141) also opens up room for dissent and opportunity. Ethnicity has emerged as a means of self-construction as well as a source of material sustenance for many communities: it “appears to (re)fashion identity, to (re) animate cultural subjectivity, to (re)charge collective self-awareness, to forge new patterns of sociality, all within the marketplace” (2009: 26).

Sámi food activism has enlivened people's personal confidence and interest in Sámi cuisines (Åhren 2013), a clear indication of its success in decolonizing Sámi food systems by revalorizing them for Sámi peoples. Yet, it remains to be seen if it can provide a sustained economic and political foundation that enables people to remain in and regain traditional Sámi livelihoods and landscapes. According to Cristina Grasseni, "alternative forms of economic production and exchange have burgeoned in Europe precisely as neoliberal economic policies have intensified their pressure" (Grasseni 2014: 80). These market-driven approaches to revitalize or re-invent local products in marginal and rural Europe have largely failed. Similar conclusions have been reached regarding Sweden's attempt to revitalize rural regions through its *Matlandet* program which has financed some Sámi food projects: it has not met its goals to create job growth or increase tourism to rural areas (Kontigo 2013, Olsson 2014). And these entrepreneurial projects, often supported by the state, have little to say regarding how land is developed. One of the movement's most daunting challenges is whether Sámi organizations can gain any control over the landscapes of food production through legislative (or judiciary) actions by the state that might limit land loss, and this is a key tenet of the food sovereignty model that Sámi activists define.

The work of Sámi food activists reflects the conflicts Valeria Siniscalchi has described in the international Slow Food movement: the tension between being a political and social movement at the same time that they operate as an economic entity. The "moral economy" of Slow Food International seeks to integrate these seemingly contradictory aspects, and according to Siniscalchi, it is successful because in the pursuit of its economic activities (the marketing and sale of products deemed unique in some

sense) it simultaneously pursues its political agenda to preserve these unique products in sustainable and socially just ways. Siniscalchi points to the Slow Food Presidia as political and economic projects, which according to Slow Food brochures preserve traditional knowledge, protect territory and save biodiversity. The entrepreneurialism of the Presidia projects opens up space to build political projects for the preservation of land (as a necessary ingredient to food production), and this possibility is visible in the discourses used by Slow Food Sápmi activists who reiterate their need for land in public presentations and written materials. Moreover, activists use the venues opened up by state support for food entrepreneurialism to criticize state policies that make food entrepreneurialism impossible, seen at the Matlandet conference.

But does Slow Food International, and more specifically Slow Food Sápmi, propose to dismantle the food system it criticizes (the global industrial food system) using the very same techniques (neoliberal capitalism) which produced it? Based on its pursuit of ethno-preneurialism, it does appear that Slow Food Sápmi has chosen to pursue its goals of claiming Sámi cuisines and supporting reindeer herders through the market. Cultural geographer and food studies scholar Julie Guthman has argued that most food activism often misses its target: “For activist projects, neoliberalization limits the conceivable because it limits the arguable, the fundable, the organizable, the scale of effective action, and compels activists to focus on putting out fires” (2008: 1180). In fact, “agro-food activism is often quite removed from a politics that names and addresses actually existing neoliberalizations of the food system” (2008: 1180). Yet, Sámi food activists do name and address the challenges they face using the framework of food

sovereignty at the same time they utilize neoliberal tools (certifications) to advance their projects.

The simple act of claiming knowledge in the market has the effect of “decolonising the mind” (wa Thiong'o 1986), increasing Sámi confidence in their foodways and encouraging younger generations to join their elders in the production of Sámi foods (largely for a Swedish market). It has also raised the public visibility of Sámi foods and the challenges to those foodways. Even I observed greater knowledge of Sámi lives, from food to politics, amongst my Swedish family, friends and acquaintances in the Stockholm region during my years of ethnographic research. When I began, most of them had been largely unaware of most Sámi political issues prior to the work of food activists. However, their knowledge and interest increased, particularly after activists released a newspaper insert on Sámi cuisines in all of Sweden's major newspapers.

Additionally, Gibson-Graham argue in *A Postcapitalist Politics* (2006) that the metanarrative of capitalism disguises or erases the diverse economy that exists, what they term a “heterospace” of capitalist and non-capitalist economic forms that include activities like wage labor and subsistence gardening. This heterospace echoes scholarly descriptions of the mixed economies of circumpolar peoples in that capitalist activities are used to enable noncapitalist activities such as subsistence harvesting. The reliance of these two forms of production on one another leads me to ask: can Sámi activists imagine and enact food production and food sovereignty outside of capitalist forms of activity focused on educating and marketing to consumers? Does their food activism work in fact reflect the mixed economy of the north?

The purpose of this chapter is also to consider Sámi articulations of food activism in their own terms rather than solely focusing on global priorities or my own interests. Anna Westman's suggestion of *birget*, meaning to cope or to survive, points to the work of Sámi food entrepreneurs on the edges of capitalism. Gibson-Graham point out that our assumption – as social theorists – of the dominance of capitalism as the major force in contemporary life is part of the neoliberal global order. They have suggested that we denaturalize the dominant public discourse of the economy as capitalist-centered. Following Gibson-Graham (2006) and Westman's suggestion of *birget*, the work of Sámi food activists can also be understood as an alternative way forward under the conditions of neoliberalization (the continuing withdrawal of state regulation and increasing threat of mining from less regulated mining companies). It is a way forward that perhaps adapts historical traditions of coping and self-reliance to modern political and economic circumstances that transfer the burden of care to individuals and collectivities, well exemplified by the rise of the food entrepreneur.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have described sets of discourses blended by Sámi food activists from 2011-2014: decolonization of Sámi food systems, food sovereignty as the need for land, food sovereignty as control and marketing of Sámi culinary knowledge and products, and food movements as rural development. I have characterized the nature and goals of Sámi food activism within scholarly literature and within more local understandings of the movement, both of which point to the role of entrepreneurialism as a way for Sámi individuals and collectivities to build and sustain livelihoods and cultural practices. The

discourses point to a focus on entrepreneurialism as a form of political and economic activism, a facet which reflects the insights of Comaroff and Comaroff (2009) on the incorporation of ethnic identities occurring globally. Their discourses also reflect the language of Slow Food International's moral economy which focuses on marketing unusual products in order to preserve and protect them using capitalism. Through public presentations, cookbooks, and websites, Sámi food activists seek to protect their unique foodways by reaching out to their consuming public. They seek to educate and connect this public not only to the goodness of Sámi products and Sámi cultural practices but also to the political and economic challenges Sámi food producers face. In so doing, they often confront the state (or representatives of the state), and this, I conclude does name and address some of the challenges to Sámi food sovereignty, namely their inability to control the future of the lands they use.

I conclude that Sámi food activists have developed a highly sophisticated, two-pronged approach to pursuing food activism. On the one hand, they work tirelessly to educate the public and the Swedish government about food sovereignty and Sámi food rights as defined in the framework of the UN. They have identified and named the barriers they face, primarily the loss of land and climate change. On the other hand, they pursue politics in the market, using Slow Food and their own labels and certifications to singularize their products as authentically Sámi in the hopes that a knowledgeable consumer base will choose their products over others. And these strategies are well adapted to the inequities Sámi people perceive in their food system: first, that their knowledge is valuable for Sámi development but also being coopted by others and so

must be claimed, and second, that they do not control the land and climate from which their foods come and so must confront the Swedish state and the world.

CHAPTER SIX

The Documentation and Modernization of Sámi Cuisines

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the process of defining Sámi cuisines and its possible consequences on culinary practices and practitioners. I identify the individuals, organizations, venues, discourses, and outcomes of a series of events and decisions taking place in 2013-2014 that led to the content of public presentations of Sámi cuisines during that time period. Describing this process makes visible the negotiations and disputes that led up to a finished product, in this case the “what” of Sámi cuisines and foodways. It also makes visible what foods, practices and people might be dropped from the larger narrative of Sámi cuisines and the possible impacts of that erasure from the complex cross-cultural narrative of Sápmi that involves regional, familial and cultural exchange over centuries.

Introduction

In June of 2014, I sat at a table with 10 food activists and food producers in Jokkmokk, Sweden. We were there at the invitation of Eldrimner, Sweden’s National Artisanal Food Production Center, with the goal of discussing and tasting traditional foods and recipes from this area of northern Sweden, and, as Eldrimner’s nationally regarded director put it, “to record this knowledge and figure out ways to build businesses and make money from it.”

This goal is now part of a classic anthropological observation, described best by Comaroff and Comaroff (2009). It is the present focus on the marketing of all things related to heritage, including cuisine, in order to make money, or to make a living. In marketing heritage, Comaroff and Comaroff describe the processes of objectification, codification and commodification that envelop previously fluid cultural practices. Their work also demonstrates the accompanying opening up of space for dissent against conventional systems, the reanimation of identities and practices, and the enablement of alternative economic paths in a neoliberal era where individuals bear the burden of self-care.

During this meeting with Eldrimner, a leader in Slow Food Sápmi reflected on the recent and similar work of Sámi food organizers in the making of their new cookbook *Smak på Sápmi*. To begin inventorying knowledge, she and other Sámi food organizers created a series of Food Workshops where they gathered together knowledgeable food elders, food producers, chefs, journalists, food activists, and a professional food photographer. They realized during the process, as this food leader stated to us, “Oh! We’re beginning to define Sámi food!”

Across the globe, people are working to document, and in some cases, commodify and transform heritage cuisines (Pilcher 2004, Lotti 2010, Cavanaugh 2007, Cavanaugh and Shankar 2014, Weiss 2011, 2012, Garcia 2013). Possibilities to engage in these projects for Sámi cuisines in Sweden are numerous, from designing Sámi cookbooks, documenting and teaching Sámi food traditions, to competing to be the best Sámi chef. Such projects inevitably enlist food producers with very different backgrounds and

different motivations. Sámi food producers, and likely most indigenous food producers, engage with their culinary heritage with very different knowledges and for very different reasons beyond simply earning money. According to many interviewees, this work is done also to maintain and honor diverse family and traditional knowledges and to maintain Sámi places on the land. With such divergent backgrounds and goals, the results of their work to define (and transform) Sámi cuisines can take multiple, conflicting and complementary forms.

The different knowledges and goals of Sámi food producers and activists were apparent during this same Eldrimner meeting. We tasted the culinary products of old-time recipes prepared by a staff member of Eldrimner. Four local food experts were present: two who are likely the best known educators in Sámi foods as well as the two directors of the *Sámisk Mat och Kompetens Centrum* (Sámi Culinary Center). Their simultaneous presence was unusual and productive, and there was much discussion of their own culinary knowledges in relation to one another. Near the end of the session, Eldrimner's leader was so impressed with the amount of knowledge that had been produced during the day that she exclaimed, "We need to invite you all to a seminar and have this discussion."

Processes of discussing and writing down recipes are ongoing across northern Sweden as Sámi culinary traditions are revalued. Certain knowledges and practices are recorded while other knowledges are left aside. From such processes a public Sámi cuisine emerges; the process and results of these negotiations are the topic of this chapter. I discuss the negotiation of these knowledges in this forum with Eldrimner as well as

three others, the creation of the *Taste of Sápmi* cookbook, an application for an EU protection designation for reindeer meat product *suovas*, and the teaching of Sámi cuisines at the Sámi Culinary Center.

The Production of Cuisines

Cuisine, according to John Brett, is based on place, process and culture: “a cuisine emerges as a result of ecological opportunities and constraints (available foods), human manipulation of those foods (processing and cooking), and cultural and symbolic meaning attached to them, whether in terms of ingredients or final consumed product” (2012: 158). When we critically consider cuisines today, we must understand them in their “social-political-historical context” (Brett 2012: 157). In the specific case of Sámi foods in the region of Jokkmokk, we must consider the constraints of the sub-Arctic ecosystem, including the open range of the fjäll (Swedish mountains), and the dense growth of the lower elevation forests that produce many wild foods from plants like angelica and mountain sorrel, berries like cloudberry and lingon, wild fish, moose and the domesticated reindeer.

Additionally, understanding Sámi cuisines means considering the ecological opportunities and constraints introduced via the historical manipulations of the land (mines, dams, railroads) that impact the ecology. We must also consider the access people and animals have to certain regions and their foods that has been limited due to this resource extraction as well as the sedentarization of what was a primarily nomadic people. Further, understanding Sámi cuisines means considering the cultural and symbolic meanings attached to the land, the food and the people. Today those meanings

of Sámi cuisine are strongly impacted by the global food, indigenous and decolonization movements, where the value of decolonization of Sámi land and culture has become strongly tied to the revalorization and revitalization of cuisines based on foods from Sámi lands. Those meanings are equally impacted by European efforts to revitalize rural regions through the (re)development of local foodways. Public understandings of Sámi cuisines emerge amongst these intersections of ecology, culinary practices, and social-political-historical contexts. In this paper I situate my description of the process of making a public Sámi cuisine within the social-political-historical contexts that shape it.

Scholars have identified numerous moments where the value and meaning of cuisines and foods have been renegotiated in present contexts that celebrate foods and cuisines as ways forward for the world's rural peasantry. For example, in the edited volume *Reimagining Marginalized Foods* (2012) scholars critically examine how foods are repackaged in order to place them in mainstream markets. To move foods from margins, the authors argue:

“it may be necessary to symbolically reshape foods and culinary traditions; to represent them to new markets as newly desirable. This may mean reimagining foods as valuable from numerous different standpoints: they may be presented, for example, as environmentally friendly, as inherently healthy, as representative of identity, or as reflecting complex and “authentic” tastes” (Finnis 2012: 5).

The foods forming the base of contemporary Sámi culinary practices—reindeer, moose, Arctic char, brown trout, berries, angelica, to name a few—are not marginal in the sense that they are not stigmatized. They are marginal in the sense that few people, outside of Sámi areas, consume them on a regular basis because of limited access and supply chains. That is, many of these foods are limited in quantity and by season,

complicating the work of reimagining them. Those who have chosen to reimagine and repackage these foods (with the goal of increasing the customer base for foods from Sámi areas as well as food experiences) are also reimagining them as environmentally and bodily healthful, representations of Sámi identity, and full of the unique tastes due to the Arctic climate.

Yet unlike many examples of taking marginal foods public (Garcia 2013), the current process of taking Sámi foods public is conducted by Sámi actors rather than non-Sámi actors. Historically, the herding of reindeer, the gathering of fish and wild plants have been done primarily by Sámi individuals, while the presentations, packaging, shipping and sale of Sámi foods has been controlled by non-Sámi actors such as Polarica. The goal of the Sámi food movement, then, is to increase Sámi shares in the processing, marketing and sale, and representing of foods which are tied to Sámi identities, lands, knowledges and practices.

Critical Reflections on the Protection of Heritage

Efforts that are intended to assist indigenous peoples in protecting or promoting their cultural heritages run the risk of negatively impacting those practices and their users. Michael Brown, in particular, critiques the approach he calls “Total Heritage Protection,” which he accuses of quarantining communities in the hopes of protecting their cultural knowledge and of rationalizing and regulating practices that are inherently fluid. As an example, Brown discusses the document entitled “Protection of the Heritage of

Indigenous Peoples”¹⁶ (1997) which suggested that indigenous groups itemize and inventory their cultural resources. Brown pulls from Max Weber’s famous image of the “iron cage” to discuss the implications such policies might have. As legal procedures are instituted and bureaucracies grow to assist in the itemization and protection of cultural practices, unintended consequences such as taking the passion and fluidity out of practices may transpire. Calling on Foucault’s discussion of regulatory frameworks, Brown warns that the imposition of regulatory frameworks on indigenous knowledges may shift power to those who do the regulating: “From the Foucauldian perspective, as soon as indigenous heritage is folded into comprehensive regimes of protection it becomes another regulated sphere of activity, something to be managed, optimized, and defined by formal mission statements” (2003: 214).

Scholar C.J. Shepherd warns that once uncovered, “local knowledge is set to be rationalized, revived, fortified, and mobilized, under the guidance of applied-development anthropologists” (2010: 629, see also Orlove and Brush 1996, Sillitoe 1998). The issue with these approaches to heritage protection and revitalization is that they assume that “local knowledge *really is*,” that local knowledge exists as a thing. But, according to Shepherd, anthropologists have already undone the concept of “culture” through the critique of “cultural essentialism” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992). Julie Cruikshank (2005), for example, has demonstrated how local knowledge is dynamic,

¹⁶ Also known as the UN Daes Report, sponsored by the UN and issued by Erica-Irene Daes in consultation with indigenous leaders and experts (Brown 2003: 209-213).

complex and produced in human encounters, rather than an object that always already exists.

Shepherd encourages researchers to consider the processes that mediate between the continuums of “local knowledge” and “essentialized culture” as organizations engage with individuals and communities in the recognition of traditional knowledge and practice. Shepherd, in his 2007 study of *in situ* conservation of biodiversity in the Peruvian highlands, finds that “the Andean” becomes a site of negotiation of what belongs and does not belong to “Andean culture.” This process contributed to the essentializing of culture by rendering it visible and usable for the purposes of conservation. Those who were “pro-Andean” became gatekeepers (regulators) of what counted as “Andean” through their decisions of inclusion and exclusion (2010: 630, 635). Shepherd’s findings point out the need to understand how local knowledge is made, legitimated and enforced, that is the “local knowledge politics” that now continually inform conservation efforts and the anthropology of development.

Despite these scholarly critiques and participants’ own awareness of the dangers of documenting their cultural practices, indigenous and/or local knowledges continue to rise in prominence as a means to promote indigenous determination and development. The work of Sámi food activists to document, revive, and sell culinary practices falls within this set of efforts to protect (and regulate) Sámi cultural heritage. Following Shepherd’s encouragement, I examine the process and results of Sámi activism as they (self-reflexively) navigate between the continuum of local knowledge and essentialized culture, but first I turn to food-specific studies of culinary revitalization.

The Protection and Valorization of Cuisines and Foods

Food studies scholars have documented food producers' and local leaders' efforts to revalorize and repackage (heritage) foods. For example, Cavanaugh (2007) documents the processes that transform Bergamasco salami as producers and consumers debate applying for an EU origin designation and regulating forms of production. She calls this a transformation of the symbolic and material value of Bergamasco salami. Like Sámi food activists, the example of Bergamasco salami is a case of "locals making choices about their own product in ways informed by global processes" (2007: 154). In both Bergamo and Sápmi, most food industry production is locally owned meaning that many of these decisions to seek certifications or repackage products are driven by locals themselves. Also like rural Sweden, the people of Bergamo hope that this branding and tourism will slow depopulation, reflecting the general trend throughout Europe to pin development hopes on the revitalization of local foodways. The processes of labeling, of determining "authentic" production methods, and of selling Bergamasco salami, Cavanaugh writes, "are struggles over what salami should and does mean as an index of local culture, but also what the salami itself will and should taste like" (2007: 168). Cavanaugh's example illustrates the ways local actors and local products have multiple meanings that are being reshaped and revalued in the context of a development program focused on heritage foodways.

In a second example, West and Domingos (2012) investigated Slow Food's Serpa Cheese Presidium in Portugal in order to problematize Slow Food's efforts to valorize heritage cuisines and foods. The authors argue that the political-economic context of

Serpa cheese production – one based on poverty, hunger and lower socio-economic class standing—actually shaped the taste preferences for Serpa cheese. This context deepens and complicates the narrative Slow Food has created about Serpa cheese. By erasing and simplifying the social-historical-political context that shaped taste preferences, the authors argue that Slow Food in fact works against its stated mission to produce food that is “good, clean and fair” (2012: 35). Moreover, the mission implies that producers should be treated equitably, but the authors find that if producers begin to produce the Serpa cheese according to Slow Food’s standards of taste and hygiene, they would likely have to work harder and longer, invest more money, and receive less return (2012: 40), thus rendering Serpa cheese production less fair. The authors suggest that the complex histories and sociologies of foods and regions must remain relevant to the establishment of Presidia, otherwise the projects will be undermined.

The creation of the Slow Food Suovas Presidia by Slow Food Sweden illustrated similar issues, where Sámi food organizers have argued that the Swedish organization did not have enough knowledge of suovas production to create a fair set of standards. Instead, the standards developed for suovas production created unfair limitations and inaccurate descriptions of suovas, issues which Slow Food Sápmi has sought to redress in their EU origin label application for suovas, which I discuss in this paper. The work of West and Domingos point to the erasure of complexity from the histories that shaped certain food products, erasure that is done in order to advertise and attract consumers for heritage foods but that can negatively impact food producers.

Ariane Lotti (2010) also analyzes one of Slow Food's Presidia projects, a Basque Presidium that produces a special breed of pigs. Lotti offers one of the most valuable and applicable critiques of the Slow Food Presidia mission and its actual implementation and effect on products. Using Igor Kopytoff's (1986) and Arjun Appadurai's (1986) analyses of object commodification, Lotti outlines the process whereby products identified and sponsored by Slow Food are transformed from non-commoditized to commoditized products (2010: 72). Slow Food seeks to "singularize" products which moves them out of the easy range of exchangeability (commodities), but Slow Food's practice of designing shared standards to create consistency moves these singular products into the realm of commodities by codifying the formally fluid and unique practices of heritage food production (2010: 73). When these singular (even collectible) food products are sold to customers over the counter for a price, they become commodities (2010: 76).

Lotti argues that Slow Food commodifies taste as well by defining "good taste" as a standard for inclusion in a Presidium. A "non-monetary value" like "good taste" can now be bought and taught through Taste Education programs (2010: 77-78). Moreover, Slow Food only selects the "best" local tastes for its Presidia which may result in less local agricultural biodiversity by emphasizing one local taste over others (2010: 78). Similarly the public presentation of a selection of Sámi recipes may reduce local biodiversity by narrowing public focus on a few specific ingredients and modes of preparation. Lotti concludes that the Presidia often have the opposite effects of Slow Food's mission to protect biodiversity by narrowing the gamut of "good" tastes and standardizing heritage food production.

Lotti's analysis of a Presidia's impacts is very important to understanding how singularized agricultural products must take on commodity qualities in order to travel outside of their local markets. By marketing products extra-locally, Slow Food participates in the same capitalist market system of conventional agriculture that it seeks to resist. Yet by participating in these niche capitalist systems, Slow Food Presidia products communicate their locality and may contribute to growing local and moral economies. Paige West's analysis of coffee production in Papua New Guinea points to similar challenges when it comes to third party certifications and labeling. West explains that third-party certifications can hollow out the richness of the Highland coffee industry, making images of them flat, empty and sanitized (2012: 239-241) by relying on the images of primitive and impoverished coffee producers in marketing. In the case of coffee, the rolling back of regulations in the 1980s and 1990s gave way to new forms of coffee production and certification that focused on marketing the origins of coffee beans. However, the growth in certifications (origin, fair trade, organic, etc.) that arose in the vacuum simply resulted in new forms of standardization. West argues that third-party certification is in fact a "new postmodern uniformity" (2012: 243). Instead of assisting producers or diversifying stories, these certifications only ensure that consumers encounter similar products that they desire at their local grocer (2012: 243). Moreover, third party certifications represent the culmination of the neoliberal capitalist market, as these certifications are focused on production and consumption at the level of the individual who has the opportunity to choose what politics they support (or do not support).

These examinations of revitalizing, certifying and standardizing food production raise several questions with regards to the Sámi process of documenting, revitalizing and marketing heritage Sámi foods. Namely, what histories and practices are erased in the process of documenting and marketing Sámi foods? Who are the gatekeepers or regulators of what may count as Sámi culinary practices and products? What standards are created and how do they impact the diverse array of production styles and tastes of Sámi foods? What foods, symbols and culinary practices are entering the realm of commodities and how might this impact producers and the culinary products?

How is Sámi Cuisine Defined?

Despite (or perhaps because of) efforts to define and document Sámi cuisines, there is a simultaneous hesitancy to participate in this process. Food producers and educators prepare, serve and present what is called Sámi cuisines, but there is often a refusal to fully define Sámi foods. Additionally, there is an ongoing discussion amongst Sámi food experts about the nature of Sámi cuisine. Such hesitancy is unsurprising. Scholar Christina Åhren (2013) describes a hyper reflexivity on the part of Sámi food entrepreneurs; they have an awareness of what has been written about the Sámi by others and how that knowledge can be objectifying *and* useful for marketing Sámi foods. In addition to reflexivity, food producers and activists engage in ethnographic refusal (Simpson 2007), described as a refusal to be known ethnographically. Many refuse to (or ambiguously) participate in the objectification of their own culture, a facet which I experienced as a researcher. For example, I often asked producers how they defined Sámi

foods. Many responded by refusing to call what they produce Sámi or by posing the question back to me, as in these exchanges from my field notes:

During one of my first interviews, I explained my interest in Sámi efforts to revitalize foods and demand clean land and water for food production. The interviewee responded, “Well, it can’t be that different than what you’re doing in, for example, Oregon? People want clean water there as well, don’t they?” Throughout this interview, the research participant confronted the assumptions of my study, namely the premise that Sámi food organizing constituted something different than food organizing occurring across the globe. Later I asked her what Sámi food means to her. She responded, “It’s too obvious for me. I can’t do it, I can’t put words to it.” For me, this statement was clearly a refusal to list knowledge. I was forced to reconsider my own presence and my own assumptions as an applied anthropologist: Did the very questions I asked in interviews essentialize knowledge? I arrived at the answer: Yes. Was I assuming that Sámi cuisine actually was (Shepherd 2010) (as in it was a thing in the world) rather than something which is dynamic, ephemeral and produced in human encounters? Yes. I have come to understand that through my very questions I was also (a small) contributor to the processes I sought to describe.

Food producers did seek to define Sámi foods (for me, for reporters, for presentations), but many of their descriptions remained ambiguous: In an exchange with a cook, I asked her “And what about the expectation that you’re serving Sámi food? What does that mean to you?” She responded, “Sámi food, what does it mean to you?” I replied, “I don’t know. It can mean so many different things, so that’s why I asked you.”

She continued, “Sámi food is so amazingly big. I mean we have suovas a la carte for people who want more traditional style foods. We have smoked mountain trout. We serve the *renlâden* which includes suovas, potatoes and gravy with a cloudberry parfait. I can’t say myself what it is. Some of it is making use of the entire animal. (...) I don’t know what people expect with Sámi food.”

Some producers made distinctions between what they made for the market and what they made at home, as this example from my field notes: “I tell Lasse that I am interested in studying Sámi food traditions and the people that are working to promote Sámi foods. I’m actually interested in talking with people like him, who run businesses processing and selling reindeer meat. He responds, “Well what I do is not Sámi food. We do Swedish food. We’re making reindeer meat for a Swedish market. We are experimenting with different products and ways to use the meat and we make only some traditional food.” The nature of his labor fell in line with his words. He prepared his own suovas, dried reindeer meat, and sausage that was significantly different in smoking and drying time as well as ingredients when compared with the products he sold. He suggested I needed to talk to older people as these were the only ones who still ate a truly Sámi diet.” Another producer iterated a similar perspective when he commented, “The things we make the most and sell the most are the things I eat the least.” The comment again pointed to the production of these foods for Swedish consumers. While these producers’ diets were based on the same raw ingredient of reindeer and moose, it was prepared in very different ways.

Another chef had an alternative view of people's expectations of Sámi foods. When asked about Sámi food, he began with what he believed people expected of it: "Most people think Sámi food is two things: reindeer filet and reindeer skav (thinly sliced reindeer meat). Then some will know about suovas. That's what most people think Sámi food is." I asked the same chef what he thought Sámi food was, and he responded, "Of course it's reindeer, but also fish. It's blood, smoking, salting, curing as ways of preparing the food."

The aspect that most producers appear to agree on – and most people representing those producers in print media – is that Sámi food means holism or using everything from an animal and using ingredients from the local tract - reindeer, moose, ptarmigan, fish like arctic char, brown trout, white fish, and perch. Elaine Asp, one of the most well-known chefs preparing Sámi foods, was interviewed by a reporter. In the report (Tidehorn 2013), the journalist describes Asp as drying reindeer hides following the slaughter, and in response, Asp tells the reporter, "It's commonsense that you use the whole animal." Laila Spik, a Sámi cultural representative and educator, told a reporter that taking advantage of everything was the way of cooking, using, for example, the skin, head, heart, liver and blood of a fish (Anttila 2009).

The catalogue of work produced by anthropologists also serves as a resource for food activists and educators, illustrating how our discipline participates in the documentation and objectification of knowledge decades (or even a century) after its production. During an interview with a Sámi culinary educator, she told me, "Of course, there's also a lot of concentration on reindeer. But there's a lot more than that, for

example, fish. I've been reading [Ernst] Manker's work, and he shows that at the Lule River, where we're standing right here between the Big and Little Lule Rivers, fish were very significant, before hydropower. I'm curious how fishing has changed, how the fishing economy developed. Manker showed there was knowledge of fishing." Producers and educators are returning to the work of anthropologists like Ernst Manker (1941, 1944) to reformulate contemporary understandings of Sámi cuisine, reinserting resources like fish into the discussion even if the ecology and geography of dams continue to limit the amount of fish that can be harvested in the Jokkmokk region.

Because of food producers' playful and serious awareness of what has been written about Sámi peoples (historically and in the present), there is a breadth of interpretation of Sámi foods. That is how one chef can prepare smoked cloudberry for his dessert, while the chef at the Sámi elementary school can prepare tacos and pizza using ground reindeer and moose meat. It's why another cultural representative can smile and tell a reporter that pizza is an old Sámi food, using *gahkku* (a Sámi flatbread) with reindeer fat, reindeer tongue and sausage. These examples demonstrate that there is a flexibility in what can count as (authentic) Sámi foods, while at the same time there are still ongoing efforts to create standardized culinary products.

Case Studies: Documenting, Modernizing, and Educating

I want to illustrate these processes using a series of four case studies: the meeting with Eldrimner, the creation of the Slow Food Sápmi cookbook, the application for EU origin protection for suovas, and the Sámi Culinary Center training program. Documentation is

a primary goal across these case studies, but it takes many forms. Some documentation is done for archival reference and training, while other documentation is done for future innovation in cookbooks, product development, and product certifications. The process of documenting Sámi culinary practices thus is equally oriented towards preserving and transferring knowledge as it is towards shaping and altering those practices to fit the needs of modern reindeer herders, butchers and the desires of contemporary consumers.

Archiving a National Heritage

The meeting in Jokkmokk organized by Eldrimner was entitled “Recipes from old processing methods.” Norrbotten and Sápmi food experts presented ideas on food traditions from the region, and Eldrimner's leader discussed how in 2005 Eldrimner produced a cookbook based on recipes from across Sweden. The primary purpose of the current program was a “Taste Workshop” to test recipes and products that were submitted by meeting participants in order to consider putting them into artisanal production. Those who turned in recipes, primarily women who already worked with Sámi foods, were invited to discuss them and how they found them. Several individuals provided recipes of traditional foods from the region, and on the day of the meeting, Eldrimner’s staff member prepared these items with the help of staff from the Sámi Culinary Center so that participants could taste test the recipes.



Figure 20 The tasting plate from Eldrimner's 2014 meeting in Jokkmokk. From left to right: juobmo, Tornedalsrieska, coffee cheese, sima, reindeer liver pudding, and reindeer blood pancake.

We were presented with a rectangular plate featuring six different foods which included juobmo (made from wilted mountain sorrel and sugar), a Tornedalsrieska (a bread), coffee cheese, sima (a drink), reindeer liver pudding, and reindeer blood pancakes. I focus on the discussion of blood pancakes as it is the food I had the most experience with outside of the meeting.

The first time I had reindeer blood pancakes my husband prepared them for me. We had been gifted a container of fresh blood from a recent reindeer slaughter for personal consumption. Below my husband is pictured whipping the blood that would need to be immediately consumed or frozen, which is what most people do today with blood from household slaughter. In the past, the blood would have been dried in an emptied reindeer stomach to conserve it and make a light snack to carry in the woods (Fjellström 1985, Greta Huuva presentation 2014). The dried blood would have been

reconstituted in something like a blood pancake. Technology like freezers has rendered drying blood irrelevant to most food preparation and preservation.



Figure 21 Aaron Schorsch whips blood to keep it from coagulating following a reindeer slaughter (left). He used the blood to prepare pancakes (right).

Our friend told us on the drive home from the slaughter how to prepare fresh reindeer blood pancakes. He has a simple formula: “You take 40% water, ½ teaspoon salt, and flour. No eggs”. As he dropped us at our home, he realized he would like to get some of the blood we have so that he can make his children pancakes for dinner. We ran upstairs and dumped 3 deciliters of blood into another container, an empty plastic ice cream tub, and ran down the stairs to give it to him. Later, my husband prepared the pancakes. They were very dense. He concluded that next time he would give them the “full treatment” with eggs and milk and baking powder. Our friend reported to us with some surprise that these were the pinkest pancakes he’d ever had, probably because Aaron and I whipped the blood more than he’s used to (having designated blood whippers was a novelty) which resulted in less coagulation.

During the Eldrimner meeting, I wrote in my field notes: “The first food we taste is blood pancakes made from the blood of reindeer. This tasting is my second try at blood pancakes, and, for me, the pancakes have a taste of iron that I’m unfamiliar with. The pancakes are also a bit rubbery, so I don’t like the texture.”

The following discussion ensued, which I have summarized. After trying them, one food expert commented that they should be made with just blood. Eldrimner’s staff member comments that the recipe says to use water. The other food expert stated that she uses a bullion mix in hers. Another commented that there’s too much flour. The Eldrimner staff members asked, “Is it a living tradition?” Someone volunteered, “It’s not just the Sámi who ate them.” And another person added, “But the Sámi remain eating them now. Not many Swedes eat them.” Others agreed that there are fewer and fewer people eating blood foods in the north. The first food expert comments, “But in the [Swedish] farmer society they used to slaughter pigs and cattle and eat these.” Another person added that reindeer blood has more taste than pig blood. Following this discussion of taste, another commented that older people like their blood pancakes crackly, and even if there’s the fat debate, one needs butter or reindeer fat to give it the crunchy taste. The second food expert concluded the discussion with, “It’s easier to do an oven pancake. It’s fatter with eggs. It should be warm, which is nice when cooking for kids.”

The discussion is recorded by Eldrimner’s staff member. The recipe and the commentary form part of the database of knowledge that Eldrimner is collecting across the traditional cultural regions of Sweden, and we received the notes from the meeting a few weeks later via email. The portion on blood pancakes reads so: “Everyone has

slightly different recipes, some have only blood in them, and others have it with bouillon. In this recipe it was blood mixed with water (half blood, half water). Blood pancakes are home cooking in the Sámi culture.”

The recipe for reindeer blood pancakes is also recorded in the new Sámi cookbook where two recipes are included, what they call a traditional recipe, and what I call a contemporary. The traditional recipe includes water while the contemporary one includes water or bullion as well as syrup (molasses or corn syrup). Neither recipe uses eggs and both call for fresh blood (rather than dried).

The inclusion of two recipes in the cookbook illustrates the reflexivity of Sámi food activists in their presentations of Sámi cuisines: the recipes point towards the past, present and future of Sámi culinary practices. Still, inevitably, certain pieces have to be left out of these complex narratives (and recipes) when they are reformulated for public documentation (and preparation). In the case of blood pancakes, the use of eggs (that appeals to children and likely many others like myself) is not recorded in the recipes. In addition, the preparation of blood pancakes by Swedish settlers is not acknowledged in the written archives. That piece of history remained present in discussions, the locus of dynamic human encounters. Restricting the record to one or two recipes—whether for blood pancakes, juobmo, or liver pudding—potentially contributes to a loss in diversity of culinary practices and plant-animal knowledge. That is, by focusing on only a few preparation styles and a few ingredients, the variation in preparation methods and ingredients used can be reduced.

Similar to our discussion of reindeer blood pancakes, several other foods and preparations were brought up during the workshop. Mushrooms are one of the most contested foods in discussions of historic and contemporary Sámi diets. They are ubiquitous across the northern forests and mountains, and Kerstin Eidlitz Kuoljok's (1969) seminal dissertation on food and emergency foods of the north named mushrooms as an emergency food. Contemporary Sámi cultural expert Laila Spik told me during a conversation that, of course, Sámi people would have eaten mushrooms in their stews, particularly when there was little meat to go around. She also stated, during the meeting with Eldrimner, that her mother and father did pick and eat mushrooms, the smoke mushrooms especially: "We did have knowledge on how to get mushrooms," she stated, "Many families had different traditions." Greta Huuva explained that Sámi only used mushrooms when there wasn't enough food. Though their accounts differ, Greta and Laila agreed with one another that "you go from the knowledge you have yourself" in their teaching and work. Both acknowledged that there is no monolithic Sámi cuisine but rather a plethora of practices based in family and regional knowledge and history.

Rendering the complexity of the north of Sweden and the presence of many different cultural and linguistic groups is a challenge for food activists and producers. Often, complex stories are erased or simplified in formal presentations and documentation. For example, a Norrbotten extension agent presented several ideas for recipes based on Norrbotten cookbooks. She opened her presentations with the question: "Norrbotten is what?" to which she replied: "It is Finnish, Sámi, the rivers, the coast, and the mountains. This is why liver pudding is different, as other cultures come in. It's a thousand year tradition." Yet, the process of documenting and making public Sámi

cuisines almost requires that Sámi cuisine differentiates itself from this Norrbotten description that acknowledges the mixing of multiple cultures over thousands of years. At the same time, food activists try to acknowledge the diversity of food traditions both within Sámi groups themselves (by territory and language) and within the wider region of the north. I transition now to a discussion of the production of a Sámi cookbook.

Creating a Sámi Cookbook

“Put Sámi in front of a name and it will sell.”
Greta Huuva quoted in Isacsson 2014

Slow Food Sápmi and several collaborative organizations across Sweden and Norway released two cookbooks in 2014, *Smak på Sápmi* and *Beapmoe* (Food). While *Smak på Sápmi* followed a relatively traditional format for contemporary coffee table cookbooks (recipes and features on chefs and foods as well as some work on Sámi food terminology), *Beapmoe* is a reference book on the processes of slaughter and food preparation and a dictionary of lexical terms from the South Sámi language related to slaughter and food preparation. Both also include extensive discussion of food sovereignty and Sámi rights.

One of the leaders of Slow Food Sápmi reflected on the process of producing a Sámi cookbook. She confessed during a meeting that the book was never the goal of the original food organizers. Rather, a series of events led to its production. First there was the interest of a professional food photographer as well as extensive documentation done in southern Sápmi by Sámi journalist and food writer Gustav Jillker (2011). With these pieces in place, they applied and received funding from the Sámi Parliament to produce

the book, estimated at 270,000 kronor (18,000 USD) but perhaps costing twice that to produce organizers later realized. To build content for the books, two groups (Swedish and Norwegian food organizations) held a workshop with 35 participants, sponsored by the Sámi Parliament. According to an organizer, “We had four groups. Each group worked with different parts of the reindeer. We hoped to get 8 recipes, but we ended up with 28 new recipes. We knew that we needed to do more with this. Then later we had one more workshop in Jokkmokk.”

Another organizer reflected that it was hard to get the recipes and to describe the cooking process. But even more challenging, they often confronted the issue that some recipes and practices they simply did not want to give away. Instead, they chose to hold those back from the books. Those involved in writing the books were very aware of the unfortunate and unforeseen consequences of engaging in the writing down of indigenous knowledge. In particular, they were aware of the limitations set on the definition of *suovas* for the Slow Food *Suovas Presidia* (discussed in this chapter).

According to the writers of the *Beapmoë* cookbook, the Swedish and Norwegian organizations for southern Sápmi had different goals resulting in the different content of each book. While Sweden pursued innovation, Norway pursued documentation. On the Swedish side, Anna Marja Kaddick explained that the Taste of Sápmi cookbook was a collaboration between Slow Food Sápmi and Renlycka. At Renlycka, they wanted to create new ideas for using reindeer meat in order to build a stronger niche market for Sámi reindeer herders and processors. Thus, the producers of Taste of Sápmi sought a balance between documenting traditional and contemporary food practices and creating

new (and desirable) preparation methods that would push consumers towards purchasing more Sámi products, particularly reindeer meat. Building a niche reindeer meat industry was not being pursued in Norway, most likely, because reindeer meat (like all meats) are sold through Norway's centralized meat board that stifles much creative entrepreneurship in the country (Reinert 2006). Thus Norwegian meat production markets are relatively unopen to certifications and labeling which are often pursued in the context of neoliberal openings of markets that are not (yet) seen in Norway.

I asked a chef who runs a restaurant featuring Sámi foods from the north about his involvement in the cookbook. He explained that he and two other chefs tested the recipes in the book. According to him, the goal of the cookbook was to put out knowledge of the Sámi and also to increase the use of reindeer meat. I asked this chef if his goal is to develop Sámi foods. He responded immediately, "No," because he thinks it's already developed. I decided I've used the wrong word and I ask again, "Is his goal to let other people know, to educate them about Sámi food." He says, "Yes, of course, it happens naturally as one does this sort of work, however. It's not a specific goal." He explains that he isn't trying to be some guru, and he doesn't believe that other chefs are either. Instead they are trying to get Sámi food out to the public.

Though philosophically, chefs may believe that Sámi foods don't need development, most of them choose to innovate when they serve food to certain audiences. For example, in a product development competition I attended in Jokkmokk in 2013, two chef/butchers (who also collaborated on the cookbooks) described their goal in creating a new type of reindeer charcuterie: "We wanted to take a traditional reindeer product and

think it through in a new direction. Instead of salting and smoking it as heavily as some dried reindeer products often are, we lightly smoked it, 30 minutes using birch, and lightly salted it.” For serving it, they put a dollop of crème fraiche and hardened honey on top. One of them stated that they wanted to make a product that would go well in Stockholm at the many fine restaurants where so often they serve Italian charcuterie as a first course. He lamented to the audience: “There is nothing from the north in these Stockholm restaurants, and this is our answer to that.” Similar to the drive to create appealing recipes in the cookbook, these food innovators sought to make their products relevant to contemporary consumer desires. They altered preparation techniques to reduce the heavy tastes of smoke and salt that typically characterize many cured reindeer meat products, reflecting the oft-noted transformation of taste done in the work of Slow Food’s Presidia (Lotti 2010; West and Domingos 2012).

The language used to describe foods and recipes in the books was also debated. For example, Taste of Sápmi includes *rencarpaccio*, or reindeer carpaccio, which is served by Chef Elaine Asp at her restaurant. Asp chose to use the internationally known term *carpaccio* (Italian in origin) to discuss this raw meat dish. On her restaurant menus, though, she uses two to three lines from the South Sámi language to describe the item followed by the entire recipe in Swedish. In *Beapmoe*, she tells the writers, “I want to mediate not just a food experience but a whole culture and that’s where the language is an important part” (2014: 26). The cookbook participants openly debated these naming practices. Some believed that *rencarpaccio* should go by a Sámi name in the book, while others did not.

Some individuals argued that the Sámi languages can protect Sámi foods from cooptation because specific terms from the Sámi languages can become a label. First, they argued, it's unlikely that non-Sámi would use the Sámi language (not having knowledge of it) and second, the Sámi terms can be protected using EU and Slow Food certifications. But in fact, the authors note in *Beapmoe*, a Sámi name doesn't always guarantee that the food or the preparation style is Sámi. For example, the Tornedalen Reindeer Concession samebys¹⁷ do not sell reindeer meat in their own language (Tornedal-Finnish or Meänkieli) but use Sámi because they find it sells better. This example illustrates the fear organizers have that foods and preparations that are historically Sámi will lose their identification as Sámi. Huuva's wry statement to journalist Av Lotta Isacsson (2014), "Put Sámi in front of a name and it will sell" rings true in these situations. For this reason, these organizers have also pursued an EU origin designation in order to prevent others, like the largely non-Sámi Concession Samebys members and non-Sámi butchering businesses, from using Sámi terms to describe their products.

Applying for an EU Origin Protection

"The product suovas and smoking are intimately linked with nomadic housing forms, the traditional Sámi culture and Sámi lifestyles. By protecting suovas, we also protect the traditional handling of meat, conservation methods and even kata building knowledge, knowledge which is in the process of disappearing as a housing form in the Sámi area."

Suovas Swedish/EU Origin Protection Application, 2015

¹⁷ There are 8 concession samebys where most of the owners and herders are not Sámi, though the primary herder must be Sámi in these samebys (see Jernsletten 2007).

Suovas, a salted and smoked meat made from reindeer, has gained much attention primarily through the work of Slow Food Sweden (and later Slow Food Sápmi) to make it into a Slow Food Presidia product in the early 2000s. In March 2015, Slow Food Sápmi and several other Sámi organizations also submitted an application for suovas to Swedish authorities for a “Skyddad Ursprungsbeteckning” (Protected Denomination of Origin) in the EU. It is the most restrictive designation offered by the EU (the other two being a Protected Geographical Indication and a Controlled Denomination of Origin), and it requires that all stages of production, including harvesting, processing, and preparation, occur in the designated area. The suovas EU application process had been ongoing since the late 2000s, however, the project stalled because efforts to designate suovas had been held up by one challenge: the question of territory. Where was this food from and where could it be produced given that the production of suovas by Sámi herders crosses national borders. The transnational production of suovas forced the negotiation for an origin label to include agreement between Sámi producers from Sweden, Norway and Finland. Russia was not included as it does not form part of the EU.



Figure 22 Suovas for sale at one of Stockholm's higher-end saluhalls or indoor markets.

Originally suovas producers in these three regions were asked if they wished to be part of the application. In Sweden, they were for the designation of suovas. In Finland,

the Sámi there were also for it, primarily because it presented a marketing advantage for them. In Finland, it is not just a Sámi majority who own reindeer, so the designation of *suovas* as a Sámi product might make their product more attractive to consumers. But in Norway, they were not excited about the protection initially. Perhaps, an interviewee suggested, it was because *suovas* is not as important in Norway. Yet by 2014, Norwegian partners were showing interest in a *suovas* designation and the application process was taken up again and completed in March 2015.

The term *suovas*, meaning smoked in North Sámi, has been transformed to mean smoked foods such as particular cuts of reindeer and fish. One interviewee suggested that *suovas* has actually been incorporated into the Swedish language as a word that means smoked reindeer meat, while *suovas* remains the term for “smoked” for speakers of Sámi languages. Another speaker of North Sámi explained to me that one can tell if a person is Sámi when they say *suovas*. Sámi languages have a number of diphthongs where the vowel sounds combine. She told me that a Swede will pronounce it as /su.ovas/, giving both the u and the o voice. Instead, according to North Sámi pronunciation, the “u” should slide into the “o” sound as a diphthong. Today non-Sámi businesses are producing *suovas* as well as other products they market as smoked in a Sámi style. In Jokkmokk, I encountered this labeling quite often on a locally produced ham labeled “Sámi-smoked” ham. Slow Food Sápmi activists expressed frustration at the cooptation of *suovas* as well as Sámi culinary practices, accusing companies of taking Sámi knowledge and language. Yet Sámi chefs are also playing with the term *suovas*, as well as the tradition of smoking. One chef offered a *suovas* cookie, or a cookie with *suovas* reindeer meat in it, as part of his menu.

Sámi food activists and food producers struggle with the narrowing of the definition of *suovas*. Part of the confrontation comes from the earlier process of creating a Slow Food Suovas Presidia. Current food organizers argue that the original Presidia failed to accurately capture the production of *suovas* and misapplied the word *suovas*. The decision to use the term *suovas* for the Presidia product by the Swedish Ark Commission came before the necessary dialogue was finished with Sámi producers.

According to Anna-Marja Kaddik, it was an unlucky set of events because the name *suovas* does not mean the same thing across Sápmi. First, *suovas* is not always made with reindeer flank, as described in the Presidia. There are different names for *suovas* based on different language areas. However, she continued, “you can’t market a product with different labels just because it has different names in different language areas, which is why the original applicants used *suovas* as the label.” Instead, she stated, “it should be the business itself that tells the customer what type of *suovas* they have for a local variant.” With the EU origin protection application, Slow Food Sápmi is working to change the criteria so that they fit better with this reality. The mistake, the writers of *Beapmoe* and Kaddick have argued, occurred because the Sámi didn’t have their own Ark Commission. Future mistakes should be limited because Slow Food Sápmi is applying to have an Ark Commission so that they can decide which products will be made into Presidia and how they will be described (*Beapmoe* 2014: 26-28).

These issues echo what one butcher explained to my husband: traditionally they [Sámi people] would use the leg to make *suovas* but they [these Sámi butchers] use the shoulders. They think it tastes just as good and then they are able to use the leg for the

dried reindeer meat instead. The flexibility in cuts of meat used by butchers reflects the realities of both different territorial traditions and the strategies of businesses.



Figure 23 Aaron Schorsch hangs lightly salted reindeer filets in the káta to be smoked for suovas.

The current suovas EU origin application does account for several of the issues that arose in the Suovas Presidia, though of course it may introduce its own unforeseen challenges. The product description portion of the application reads:

“It is a lightly salted and cold smoked reindeer meat. It means smoked in Sámi and represents reindeer products that are cold smoked in a traditional Sámi smoke káta. The ingredients for suovas come from reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus tarandus*) on natural feed. Reindeer are a half domesticated deer and are cared for in a traditional way and cared for by reindeer herding Sámi. Both whole muscles and parts of muscles are used. The meat is salted first and then smoked. The meat gets a dark deep wine red or almost black.”

The description sets up several clear boundaries: that the reindeer should be cared for by Sámi herders (which excludes reindeer owners in the concession samebys in Sweden, who are primarily Swedish, and non-Sámi herders in Finland); that the reindeer should be on natural feed (likely excluding reindeer that do not migrate and are cared for

more as cattle), that the area of production includes reindeer that are “born, raised and slaughtered and butchered” in the region of Sápmi (which excludes reindeer from most of Russia or any shipping of reindeer after slaughter), and that it is smoked in a Sámi káta using fire wood made of naturally growing trees from the region, such as birch, willow or al.

At the same time there are strict regulations, the application also builds in flexibility to the production of suovas by allowing for use of three different cuts of meat and bone-in or out, variation in taste and color based on the season the reindeer is slaughtered and the age of the reindeer, and leeway in the amount of salting and smoking an individual processor uses. Taste, in particular, is given flexibility based on the season but narrowed based on natural feed. For example, the taste profile is described as different from reindeer who are freely grazed: “This makes reindeer meat have a clear taste from the natural feed and a special character that only freely grazing and naturally fed animals in the area can have.”

The application also indicates that the reindeer meat should be classified according to the EU’s EUROP system, and the reindeer are tracked first according to the traditional earmark followed by the plastic ear tag placed on a carcass after slaughter and initial processing. The area of production is quite large, the whole of Sápmi, which is indicated on a map. These barriers exclude reindeer that might be born and raised in Russia or any reindeer that might be shipped out of the region for further processing and/or packaging. The limitations are justified first because it reduces unnecessary

transport tying it back to being a more natural product and second because it guarantees the roots of the product for consumers.

The application is a very interesting *mélange* of traditional production techniques grounded in specific cultural practices melded with contemporary hygiene and tracking demands. These criteria are particularly visible in the demand that the meat be smoked in a traditionally constructed *kåta* that is located in proximity to a certified butcher facility. The application includes a precise description of the *kåta*, nearly six paragraphs: it is “constructed with traditional Sámi building construction” though it can be of cloth, earth or wood. At first read, this level of detail seems unusual or unnecessary except that it ensures the additional continuation of the Sámi practice of *kåta* construction. However, upon further reflection, the inclusion of the criteria of *kåta* may be one of the designations that ensures that it is primarily Sámi-owned butchers and slaughter facilities that produce *suovas*. The *kåta* may stand in for the criteria of ethnic (or rather, indigenous) identity.

Identity of the actual producer of *suovas* is not a part of the *suovas* criteria. In fact, its inclusion (or using it as a limiting criteria) would not reflect contemporary realities of the production of *suovas*. During my time as a fieldworker, many people from various backgrounds (including my American husband) worked at butcher facilities and assisted in the production of *suovas*. This reality is not hidden by producers, reflected in an exchange I had with a butcher: While reading an article in the Sámi food newspaper insert, I realized my own husband had made it into the newspaper via his work at a butcher shop. His boss mentions that it can be difficult to find qualified people, though they did find an American.

I said to his boss, “I thought it was funny that you mentioned Aaron in your article. His response was immediate: “Why? It’s true.” I floundered for a moment and explained, “Because it makes it less Sámi, to show that you have non-Sámi working here.” He replied, “Oh. I think it makes it more interesting. (...) It’s more interesting. More what do you call it? More multicultural.” My husband worked as a seasonal laborer in the butcher industry, like many other (primarily) men who are not Sámi and not from Sweden. These men work in Sweden’s butchering and slaughtering facilities during the fall and winter when the reindeer and moose seasons are underway. This system of labor is the reality of contemporary reindeer and moose meat production, the need for flexible, competent and strong laborers.

The suovas EU certification may create requirements that become increasingly difficult to fulfill because of climate change impacts and loss of land. For example, the reindeer are to be fed natural feed only, and these types of feed are described based on their seasonal availability. Climate change will make some of these natural feeds increasingly difficult to access, for example, when winter lichens are buried deeply below hard frozen snow that reindeer can no longer paw through, which I explore further in Chapter 8.



Figure 24 Food carts and food stations sell suovas at Jokkmokk's Winter and Summer Markets.

Suovas was sold as fast food in Jokkmokk and many other northern locations, and an EU origin designation may force these businesses to change their marketing. On the streets of the annual Jokkmokk Winter Market in 2014, I saw three stands selling prepared suovas in the northern *tunnbröd*, a flat, pita-like bread. The first stand had two huge woks (3 feet across) where they were cooking suovas, which was formed into a round patty. It looked more like kebab meat than the thinly sliced suovas skav (that usually resembles a Philly cheese steak cut). Customers received their suovas wrapped in aluminum foil with iceberg lettuce and dressing. On their advertising, it said “suovas” and “100% reindeer meat, real food.” There was no advertising for where the reindeer

meat came from. The second stand selling suovas was at the next major intersection of the market. It was a large food cart with blue and yellow coloring, The Suovas King. They advertised suovas wraps for 80 kronor and hotdogs for 15 kronor. They had thinly sliced suovas skav in their wraps rather than the patties, and they were also wrapped in northern flat bread with lettuce. The Suovas King is owned by a member of a local sameby who earns additional income traveling around northern Sweden and selling food at these festivals, but he also did not indicate the origin of the reindeer meat.

If the EU origin designation is approved, the fate of these street vendors using the terms *suovas king*, *suovas roll* and *suovas kebab* (pictured) is questionable, particularly if they are not purchasing their suovas from an approved facility. An origin protection designation will limit who can apply the term suovas to their products and in their marketing, and according to the applicants (Eira 2015). Additionally, the chef who sold suovas cookies on his menu may also no longer be allowed to use the term suovas to describe the plethora of foods that he smokes, from cookies to butter and carrots. Knowing the term suovas means smoked in Sámi, it is possible that a critique will come against those applicants if the term suovas will no longer be available for use by this chef, who is also understood to be serving Sámi cuisine and knowledgeable in Sámi cuisines gleaned from his grandmother and from culinary training.

Finally, it will become the responsibility of Swedish (and respective) government agencies to enforce the EU designation for suovas. Thus, Swedish agencies will prevent others from using the term suovas on their labeling to describe foods unrelated to this type of reindeer meat. Though the origin protection label will be an advantage for Sámi

suovas producers, it will also transfer the responsibility of enforcement to a Swedish agency rather than the Sámi themselves. It raises the question if Swedish government agencies should be the ones to enforce the boundaries between these foods when Sámi food activists have worked so hard at other forms of decolonization, where they have assumed responsibility from Swedish actors for the identification and description of Sámi food production.

Teaching Sámi Cuisine

“First we need to invest in teaching Sámi chefs about traditional foods and then we can have them retain the Sámi way of thinking.... Therefore it’s very important that there are young Sámi chefs that get the Sámi traditional knowledge from the older people and apply it in a modern way.”

Participant in Slow Food Sápmi Food Workshop, *Beapmoe*, p. 12

To document and transfer culinary knowledge, food educators and producers have worked actively to start a Sámi culinary program in Jokkmokk. In 2010, Greta Huuva ran a culinary program at the Sámi Education Center, the well-known school in Jokkmokk where individuals receive training in Sámi languages, reindeer herding, and Sámi handicrafts. Huuva oversaw a culinary training program for two years that many of today’s better-known chefs in the region attended. According to Huuva at a presentation she gave, “We started the school program to increase the quality of cooks in Sámi food, to promote traditional ways. There are many who have restaurants now. We don’t get knowledge the same way today, and you need other knowledge to run a restaurant. There is no permanent culinary education program today in Sámi food. We want a center for food, to meet, develop, produce and inspire ourselves.” Huuva has told the public that Sámi knowledge is transferred from grandparent to grandchild, but this mechanism is

broken today because children live far from their grandparents. Younger Sámi need new ways to learn the knowledge she gained as a child from her grandparents. The shift from localized and embodied knowledge to school-based and codified knowledge will of course change Sámi culinary practices today and in the future.

Huuva expresses ambivalence about her role as Sámi food representative and educator. In 2009 she was selected by Sweden's Ministry of Rural Affairs as the Sámi Food Ambassador. During a Sámi food conference she stated, "Sámi food got a face when I became the food ambassador. Journalists want to talk to me, sometimes I feel too much, because there are more out there than just me. Ten years ago Sámi food didn't exist in society. It's been in our kitchens, of course." (Isaksson 2014). By 2014, following five years of work as the Sámi Food Ambassador, Huuva warned that, "Sámi has an exotic sound and the risk is that traditional recipes will be modernized into something unrecognizable, without a knowledge base. The Sámi are being exploited again." Despite their misgivings, food organizers like Huuva continue their work, particularly because they express a fear of someone else coopting the knowledge. Thus food producers feel they must work with traditional foods, but they do this work with a knowledge that taking these steps may change the essence of what they're working with.

Funding for Huuva's culinary program ended in 2012, and since that time efforts have been made by several individuals to institute a permanent culinary training program as part of the Swedish adult education program (the *yrkeshögskolan*), but these efforts have not yet succeeded. Two women took over the Sámi culinary training program from Huuva, running courses from 2013-2015 with funding from the Sámi Parliament and the

Board of Agriculture. The program was no longer a full one- or two-year curriculum. Rather, the instructors offered short courses on specific topics, such as slaughter, wild plants, fish processing, and baking *gahkku* during the weekends and evenings.

Like Huuva, the new instructors often discussed the question whether students should be producing and consuming traditionally prepared or more modern Sámi delicacies. As an example, I was told in an interview that in making the well-known Sámi bread called *gahkku*, the instructors chose to use a sourdough base, organic wheat, rye flours and real vegetable oil instead of white flour and margarine. The instructor knew she was being “non-traditional,” but she wanted to be healthy and stay with the trends. She also admitted that she wanted to make something her grandchildren were allowed to eat, since their mother doesn’t let them eat white flour.



Figure 25 Gahkku, or glödkaka, baked at Umeå's Västerbotten outdoor museum during Sámi Week festivities, 2014.

In another decision about what to teach, the women brought a charcuterie expert from southern Sweden to teach a meat curing course. The course received criticism,

people asking what can we learn from a charcuterie expert from southern Sweden? The charcuterie expert had in fact been recommended to her by local butchers who identify as Sámi who had also trained with him. Interestingly, those butchers made sure I understood that most of their products were geared towards Swedish consumers. In the efforts of food innovators to build competence in Sámi cuisine and get more Sámi people working with Sámi foods, there is a push-pull relationship between learning traditional ways of food preparation, updating those ways to meet today's interests, and learning skills for the restaurant and food trade. As one person put it, "Are food producers to learn traditional techniques or food sanitation? What's more important?" Food producers, and their instructors, sit at this uncomfortable juncture deciding what skills to teach to students, what foods to prepare for the public, and what public they aim for.

Though there is interest in Sámi food courses, a hierarchy of value remains when it comes to how a person learned their knowledge, for example, in slaughter. One educator explained, "Lasse has an unbelievable education [in slaughter, from working with his uncles], but a lot of the younger people don't know. They don't know how to slaughter today. Yes, they might go to a reindeer separation. But if they were alone, standing there alone at a separation, and had to slaughter their own reindeer, they wouldn't know how to. If they were out in the mountains and one of the reindeer had broken its leg, or it had been bit by an animal, or its eye taken out by a wolverine, they wouldn't know how to put it out of its misery and take advantage of the meat. So there is a big interest in learning how to slaughter now. When someone hears that someone is going to a slaughter course, another says, 'oh I also want to go to a slaughter course!' In the courses now, they'll follow along to a slaughter course with an older Sámi that will

show them how. But when they have to do it themselves, they won't know how. They won't know how to take the skin off, how to get the blood. They will ask, 'where do I stick it in the heart to get the blood?'" Instructors, then, understand themselves as filling in a gap in knowledge transfer that younger Sámi are interested in, but having learned how to slaughter while "in the field" is often referred to as the more authentic form of knowledge.

In addition to teaching, the Sámi Culinary Center has a documentation component. They do this work for the practical need for teaching materials. There is a real need for materials on Sámi foods as the Sámi elementary schools are supposed to be teaching students about Sámi cuisine. One interviewee posed the question to me and to others, "How are they supposed to teach Sámi cuisine when there are no books out there on the topic for teachers?" She was told that teachers were expected to find materials themselves.

They also pursue the work because the process of documentation is meaningful to people's Sámi, familial and personal identities. Three individuals were working on documentation as part of the Sámi Culinary Center. I was told by a participant that, "It's a big project, and needs to be done well. The older people are beginning to disappear, which is depressing." The interviewee noted that she often asks herself "Why didn't we ask? Why didn't we ask our father about what he was doing? It was so everyday, being in the káta, working, so that we wouldn't think to write it down. My father would be 100 years old today. He was 40 years old when snowmobiles came. He remembers when

shoes first came. His feet hurt so much from the shoes, and when he got rain boots, he was so happy.”

Discussion

From these four case studies, I take up four topics: over-regulation, essentialization, reevaluation of Sámi foodways and the creation of a Sámi culinary narrative. First, there is a clear possibility that some aspects of Sámi cuisine may come under the regulation of Swedish government agencies, making Sámi knowledge “another regulated sphere of activity” (Brown 2003: 214) outside the daily use and production of Sámi practitioners. This risk is particularly visible in the pursuit of an EU origin protection designation where Swedish agencies will eventually become those that determine who has the right to produce *suovas* and who has the right to use terms such as *suovas* to describe their products, though Sámi organizers remain those who set out the criteria in the original application.

While an EU designation may transfer power to Swedish and EU regulatory agencies, some Sámi food activists pursue alternatives that may give more power to Sámi associations. For example, according to one of the individuals involved in the Sámi Culinary Center, they would like to create the Sámi equivalent of Eldrimner. They are inspired by Eldrimner’s work to document, protect and teach traditional production methods in Sweden. This desire to create an Eldrimner-like organization is consistent with the trajectory of Sámi involvement with Slow Food. Once a featured culinary resource in Slow Food Sweden, Sámi food practices are now under the umbrella of Slow Food Sápmi, which gives organizers more control over the process of nominating Sámi

foods to Slow Food's Ark of Taste. By controlling the processes that nominate, document, standardize and certify Sámi foods, Sámi organizers express a belief that they can better decolonize and control their food system. However, such processes seem to inevitably objectify fluid practices (Lotti 2010, West and Domingos 2012).

The process of taking Sámi food public lends itself to essentializing and objectifying (Shepherd 2010) Sámi cuisines. As reporters and researchers (like myself) seek sound bites or cultural consensus about the nature of Sámi cuisines, food activists and producers are forced to produce Sámi cuisines within the pre-determined expectations of these audiences. We (reporters, researchers and the public) assume that Sámi cuisine "really is" (Shepherd 2010) rather than understanding cuisines as dynamic and produced within interactions. In the simplest case of essentialization and objectification, a large newspaper feature on Jokkmokk described Sámi cuisine as a "thousand year old tradition." Like many claims to indigenous authenticity, such simplified exclamations erase the ways food practices are produced in daily encounters and so are always changing. Such exclamations also serve to reproduce indigenous peoples and their culinary practices as highly different than other practices, and when that difference is not deemed sufficient, scholars (and indigenous peoples themselves) have found that their claims to cultural, land, linguistic and culinary rights are no longer supported by the state and/or the majority society (Povinelli 2002, Sylvain 2002). Amongst Sámi producers themselves, there is a sense that the foods they produce are also not entirely authentic or Sámi enough, such as the statement made earlier, "Well what I do is not Sámi food. We do Swedish food. We're making reindeer meat for a Swedish market." Instead, food producers point to other individuals as the locus of authentic food

production, even as Sámi food organizers position Sámi food producers like this person as truly authentic using EU origin designations and Slow Food Presidia.

Interestingly, the Experimental Workshops organized by Slow Food Sápmi are encounters where the dialogic nature of knowledge and culinary production occurs. The bringing together of Sámi food producers with divergent knowledges to discuss and work with Sámi foods is one of these moments where cuisine is produced ephemerally in human encounters. Simultaneously, the act of documenting, of photographing and setting down in words, the results from these workshops moves the fluidity of these discussions and practices out of the realm of local or dynamic knowledge and into the realm of essentialized culture (Shepherd 2010), now rendered useable for Sámi food activists. And this is what many Sámi food activists want – to take this dynamic knowledge and render it visible and knowable so that it (a variation of the knowledge and practice that they themselves have sculpted) can be inserted into narratives and marketing about Sámi foods. Such processes enable Sámi food activists to “tell their own story,” even if these same activists know that the image they have made may not fully represent reality (which they disclose in their commentary on the production of their cookbooks). Those opposed to or hesitant about such processes warn that traditional recipes may be modernized into something unrecognizable. Such complex participation reveals what T.M. Li argues, “Simplified images may be the result of collaborations in which “natives” have participated for their own good reasons” (2000: 173).

Third is the interesting question of how a food producer identifies (and is identified) ethnically and if and when it matters. During my year in Jokkmokk, I found

much collaboration between people of different ethnic identities. This was especially the case because Jokkmokk was Sweden's 2014 Culinary Capital, and so the town's small business association organized a series of events with local food producers. The leader of Jokkmokk's programming identifies as Sámi and had worked with Slow Food Sápmi. Because of her connections, food work in Jokkmokk existed at the intersection of Sámi and Swedish food activism. Moreover, because of the power of Sámi symbolism in the north of Sweden, many events had strong Sámi overtones. These intersections illustrated the porous boundaries that actually do exist in some contexts between Swedish, Sámi and many other identities, particularly in the production of food. Despite the porousness of these boundaries, some food producers who identify as Swedish decided not to participate in certain events that were Sámi specific. As one person explained to me, "I know they want more people to work with Sámi food. They want more Sámi food made by Sámi people. I am not a Sámi company. I have said to them, no I can't do that." These issues are similar to that of my husband producing suovas for a Sámi company, a reality that was not hidden (and was in fact celebrated) by his boss. Will the porosity between the boundaries of Sámi and non-Sámi food producers become hardened as these organizations and protections become institutionalized, or will they continue to exist but simply be erased from public record, especially the political-economic context of reindeer meat production that relies on temporary, non-Sámi labor in slaughterhouse systems?

Yet, from my experiences in Jokkmokk, the practice of erasure or the simplification of Sámi foodways does not appear to be that common amongst food activists and food producers who identify as Sámi. For example, a visiting performance artist met with several chefs in Jokkmokk. She posed the question, "If you were to make

a Sámi sandwich what would you put on it?” to each of them. They all responded similarly: a Sámi sandwich would be made with gahkku, smoked reindeer flank, and cheese from Swedish mountain cows. It would have no vegetables or mushrooms. These chefs explained to this artist that Sámi would have been on the move, so vegetables wouldn't have been possible. They didn't explain that the mountain cow cheese was made locally by a Dutch man. These chefs chose to include this product that was historically part of Sámi foodways when the first Swedish settlers arrived, making it also a part of contemporary Sámi food narratives. Thus I would put forth that Sámi food activists and food producers are often filling in a partial narrative that was previously hollow with some of the complexities of historic and contemporary foodways.

Conclusion

Can it be argued that Sámi engagement with their foodways is a filling-in, a reanimation, of a hollow narrative of Sámi foods (largely established by non-Sámi businesses)? While still a simplification and contested representation of Sámi foodways, I believe these four examples illustrate that food organizers are working to construct a vibrant set of images and stories about Sámi foodways from Sámi perspectives. Though economic/monetary gains remain to be seen, their efforts have yielded positive impacts on people's interest and pride in Sámi cuisines. Moreover, they have provided important venues for key actors in Sámi food production to have discussions on the future of Sámi cuisines. Yet, even if these narratives are coming from Sámi food organizers and producers themselves and are having positive impacts of people's perceptions of these foodways, the common

issues of objectification and essentialization of cultural practices and the transfer of regulatory power to (unthinking and uncritical) government bureaucracies still remain.

The discussions and tastings at the Eldrimner meeting illustrated the ways the regions of Norrbotten and Sápmi share space and cuisine because the region has existed at the confluence of many groups since time immemorial. More recently, Sámi herders, fishermen and farmers, Swedish settlers, and recent arrivals from across the world have contributed to contemporary culinary practices – from the collection of ingredients to the processing and serving of food products. However, the establishment of Sámi organizations, such as Slow Food Sápmi and the Sámi Culinary Center, has required an alteration (or an erasure) of these shared culinary narratives. This erasure of the historic political economic context of Sámi cuisines occurred (and continues to occur) for the sake of applying for certifications and marketing foods as Sámi (particularly reindeer products like *suovas*). Additionally, perhaps this erasure has also taken place simply because more Sámi individuals have held onto practices (such as making blood pancakes and blood sausages) than Swedish individuals because of the continued work of Sámi people with reindeer and the decrease in homesteading and farming of Swedes.

The creation of a Sámi cookbook (*Taste of Sápmi*) and reference book (*Beapmoe*) illustrate the critical reflexivity of participants in taking Sámi food public. As they explain, not all recipes and products were included, particularly those related to plants, because they wish to guard some knowledge. Instead, much of the work focused on using cuts of reindeer meat in order to help reindeer herders sell more meat. It also focused on prized fish of the region in hopes of building a stronger Sámi fishing industry. This focus

on marketing reindeer meat and some fish clearly shapes what constitutes Sámi cuisines for the cookbook, and it necessarily excludes other narratives of Sámi cuisine, a clear case of erasure of the complexity of Sámi foodways.

The EU origin protection application for *suovas* illustrates the tension in who is allowed to produce and sell Sámi cuisines. While the herding of reindeer remains (almost) unquestionably Sámi because of Swedish legislation, the slaughter, butchering and production of *suovas* takes place in the hands of many actors with different backgrounds. While some Sámi food producers find this aspect of their food production interesting, multicultural, or even irrelevant, other producers or organizers as well as certain audiences might find this inauthentic as they want to purchase “Sámi food” (whatever that has come to mean to them).

Finally, at the Sámi Culinary Center, key decisions are being made regarding what future Sámi chefs and food producers will learn. For this reason, I believe it is a key site for determining what will constitute future Sámi cuisines produced by Sámi actors, as those who have graduated from this program go on to be representatives of Sámi cuisine in their own businesses. In addition, the Center may become an important pedagogical center as they document and produce materials that school teachers and others can use for their courses. The program is no longer funded, but its organizers continue to work to make it an adult education program through the Swedish school system.

While the “what” of Sámi cuisines remains relatively unrestricted for the moment, the mechanisms are in place that may narrow who and what is considered authentically Sámi and who may enforce the boundaries between certain forms of Sámi and non-Sámi

production. From EU and Slow Food labels to culinary training programs and cookbooks, the stage is set for the full commodification of Sámi foods. Sámi food activists and producers have chosen this route for their own very good reasons: in an era where economic markets are opened up, labels and certifications appear to be critical tools of distinction in global food markets. Selling Sámi cuisine appears to be the way to keep Sámi people on the land, and that, ultimately, is the goal of this food movement.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Producing Sámi Food Politics through Food Experiences

The purpose of this chapter is to further examine the political scope of Sámi food activism, in particular the ways that food activists and producers use the sensory experience of food as part of their political activism. I examine two instances where food producers and activists bring their audiences into a discussion of Sámi culture and Sámi rights using stories and tastes of specific foods. Many scholars have described consumers' search for authenticity in their relationships to food (Weiss 2012, Shankar and Cavanaugh 2014). I describe how Sámi food producers and activists take advantage of this consumer interest in authenticity by constructing narratives and sampling tastes connected to the work of food production from Sámi lands. Beyond the moment where consumers "taste" Sámi culture, I try to capture the moment when food enters into politics, when culinary rights spill into consumer experiences. I also illustrate the demand that consumers have for creating the possibilities for these moments, as well as cases where those demands and efforts have failed.

Introduction

The work of Sámi food activism is two-pronged: it is an effort to encourage consumers to buy Sámi foods as well as an effort to bring the public into an understanding and promotion of Sámi politics, particularly Sámi rights to food sovereignty. The encounter with Sámi food can act as a mediator between consumers and Sámi individuals and their

rights. Jillian Cavanaugh's work in Bergamasco, Italy, with salami producers and consumers, echoes my sentiment: "Consuming this salami would equate with consuming a little bit of that culture and history, just as producing this salami would also equate with producing a little bit of that culture and history" (2007: 159). In addition to consuming and producing Sámi culture and history, consumers and producers also consume and produce Sámi political rights. That is, the production and consumption of Sámi foods also equates with a political act, an act that supports Sámi food rights. Food producers and activists do much semiotic and material work to enable food to convey this culture, history, and politics. That is, they imbue their foods (and the entire food experience) with meanings that forge connections between producers, consumers, Sámi lands and animals, and occasionally, Sámi rights.

An Experiential Food Politics

The well-known truism "food is good to think with"¹⁸ remains relevant to this dissertation as well. Production and consumption of Sámi foods enable producers, activists and consumers to think through issues within contemporary food systems, and in particular, the circumstances of indigenous peoples' food systems. Similarly, Cavanaugh observed that within the culinary scene, certain foods are becoming "markers of cultural continuity and economic possibility" (2007: 149). Italian foods, like Bergamasco salami, become "reference points" for Italians themselves (Cavanaugh 2007: 150) and a way for people to "think about, and through, the issues of social change, economic

¹⁸ From Levi-Strauss who wrote, "Les espèces sont choisies non comme bonnes à manger, mais comme bonnes à penser." Species are chosen not as good to eat but as good to think.

transformation, and political crisis” (Helstosky 2004: 164 in Cavanaugh 2007: 150). I propose that foods related to Sámi lands and cultural practices offer a means for Sámi activists and food producers to think about and through ongoing social changes, particularly the nature of Sámi rights to food sovereignty. But again, such moments do not often arise spontaneously. Rather, food activists and producers must construct such moments so that consumers and the public experience not just the taste of Sámi foods but also the culture, history and politics connected to the sensory experience of taste.

Scholars such as Valeria Siniscalchi (2013, 2014) have described the ways the act of ritual tasting has become a way to connect producers and consumers in a new kind of economy, a moral economy focused on Slow Food’s mission of “good, clean and fair” food. Writing on the Slow Food movement, Siniscalchi explains that the act of tasting is a ritual activity that enables producers and consumers to consider new ways of being in the world. Tastings are “rituals in which food becomes a connection, a means of communication producing different forms of sociability, linking producers and consumers to specific physical and knowledge environments but also imagining new kinds of economy” (Siniscalchi 2014: 302). While the effectiveness of this approach as a form of political action is debatable (see Chapter 4), Siniscalchi leads us to consider the importance of taste (and other sensory experiences with food) as an invitation to experience the cultural practices, histories and politics of food producers. The belief that these rituals instantiate new modes of economic and political being for producers and consumers leads organizers in Slow Food International and Slow Food Sápmi to pursue

these sorts of activities to advance their missions. Tastings¹⁹ produce social connections through the act of engaged consumption. Producers produce food and construct narratives that consumers excitedly ingest alongside slices of reindeer meat, and in so doing they instantiate new social relationships.

The work of Brad Weiss (2011) in North Carolina's Piedmont focuses on the materialization of the value of authenticity through social relationships. According to Weiss, contemporary ethics and local food movements promote complex wholes other than the whole of the agri-industrial food complex. The "food reform movement" has an organizing principle – "people's desire for "authenticity" in the foods they eat and the social processes through which this food is produced" (2012: 615). Weiss acknowledges that all forms of food production have connections, but only certain types of food production count as authentic in the food reform movement. Weiss asks, "Which connections count, then? How should proper connections be forged, and what distinguishes the kinds of complex wholes locavores aspire to assemble?" (2012: 615). Weiss concludes that it is the "character of the connections that determines the configuration of the totality and the value of its constituent parts" (2012: 622). The connections that count occur in face-to-face interactions between food producers and consumers as well as through narratives that link places, animals and producers together for consumers. The structure of narratives is critical to the production of authenticity within this system of relationships as narratives link places together for the audience.

¹⁹ Tastings also provide economic support, according to some research participants. Sampling reindeer meat costs a few euros a plate at events like Terra Madre and also illustrates another co-occurring process: the commoditization of the taste experience.

Weiss describes the presentation of a dinner by a local food organizer in the North Carolina Piedmont. This narrative, “links a series of places across the Piedmont (the market, the farm, “Mill Creek” and “Pinelands”) with the animals raised on the farm, and—crucially—includes the audience within this sensory field” (2012: 448).

Cavanaugh and Shankar (2014) describe how language is used to construct authenticity and how linguistic forms become materialized. Cavanaugh’s work in Bergamasco illustrates how particular linguistic forms, such as recurring words and places in Bergamo that index the place and community of speakers (2014: 55), are used to produce the authenticity of a product. In their case studies, producers “work to bind these types of linguistic practices and representations to material objects, creating what we call linguistic materiality” (2014: 54). Shankar and Cavanaugh focus on the production of economic value from these linguistic forms, but I in this chapter I produce examples that demonstrate that there is also the possibility for the production of political value in the structuring of these narratives of authenticity.

The forging of these connections is context-specific, and in the case of North Carolina, Weiss describes participating individuals as a well-resourced, cosmopolitan community that is committed to local foods as part of their work to “take root” (2012: 616) in the Carolina Piedmont. This is a discerning public, not just a consuming public, and such distinctions are important, for example, because of the taste of the pork. Acquiring a taste for local pork is a skill in the sensory field, “cultivating discernment helps generate the value held to inhere in such “local” pork” (2012: 453). These individuals appreciate innovative tastes; it is part of their reconfigured sensory field. The

consumers have chosen to cultivate a palate for a particular taste (the unique flavor of an unusual pig).

Weiss' case is compelling in the way it describes the production of authenticity as a value, forged in the connections between producers and consumers, producers and animals, and consumers and animals. These relationships materialize the value of authenticity that people (producers and consumers) desire from a local food system. Like Weiss' example of a food organizer's presentation of pork to an audience, Cavanaugh describes a moment where an organizer describes something as typical, identifies its geographic location, names the producer and provides other details, forging connections between the sausage people are looking at now and sausage of the past. In both Weiss and Cavanaugh's research, the forging of these connections is highly interactive between and among producers and consumers.

In Sweden, the desire to have authentic food experiences and authentic relationships to food producers is equally evident. For example, during the 2014 Matlandet conference in Jokkmokk the desire for food experiences was brought up during a break-out discussion on the topic "Taste as a reason to travel." A conference participant stated that when they traveled to Jokkmokk they wanted to know if there were any food experiences between Gällivare and Jokkmokk. They lament, "But all we could find was just eating. We wanted to experience the food, not just eat it. I couldn't find anything, and I am someone who is used to looking for it. I think this area could work more for making food experiences, not just eating." The food experience economy is in its nascent form in Jokkmokk. Most production facilities do not have guides nor glass windows where

tourists can view the art of butchering, smoking or drying reindeer. And while some producers are interested in developing tourism experiences, others are decidedly not interested.

Still Sámi food producers are engaging with consumers, connecting them to their reindeer, fish, landscapes, and waterways, in order to generate authentic relationships between themselves, consumers and their foodways. Yet beyond the connection to animals and land, I am interested in the ways food producers and organizers seek to make connections to the factors that threaten their animals and land. The following examples will illustrate the ways food activists and food producers work to connect themselves, their animals, land, and politics with consumers.

Producing Material and Discursive Connections in Food Systems

How are Sámi food producers and activists engaged in building these relationships between themselves, consumers, and Sámi foodways? Most important to my argument is the narratives they construct and the tastes they offer of their own products and Sámi foods in public forums. Producers have traveled to Italy to represent Sámi foods and their own products at the Salone del Gusto and Slow Food's Terra Madre conference. They have also worked across Sápmi, offering tastes and narratives about their foods at their workplaces, local conferences and fairs.

The structure of narratives, the sampling of tastes from the landscape, and the act of being together all contribute in different ways to bringing consumers into Sámi food cultures and food politics. I open with a few vignettes from my field notes to illustrate the

different ways that the encounter with food can be structured in order to convey Sámi cuisines and cultural practices.

“I am listening to an explanation of *gurpi*, a fresh smoked sausage that is the current focus of Slow Food Sápmi’s efforts to create a new Presidia product. The chef before me explains, “I’m a cook and a producer. When we make *gurpi* we use the stomach fat, the stomach net. Or, it’s called the *aisalaken* in South Sámi. It looks like a spider web. You roll in reindeer meat, usually ground reindeer meat, but traditionally they would chop it up very fine and then roll it in the fat. You salt it to preserve the meat. You could smoke it for 2 hours, and then you have a finished product. It’s like a fresh sausage that you fry up. When you’re out in the forest, working with the reindeer, you take bread, usually the *gahkku*, and the *gurpi*.”

This narrative ties together the reindeer, South Sámi language and history, and the woods. It is thoughtfully constructed by its speaker who is presenting this information to a public that Sámi organizers seek to engage in Sámi food culture, and potentially, Sámi food politics. The chef points to *gurpi*’s relationship to Sámi languages as well as its long history of production or the older techniques used to make it. The speaker also pulls from a trope that I often hear used in descriptions of *gurpi*, that it is a food that you take into the forest when you work with the reindeer, directly indexing the landscape from which the reindeer come and to which they return as human sustenance. Such narratives produce the authenticity that is sought by contemporary participants in food movements, reflecting the observations of both Weiss and Cavanaugh and Shankar.

In another moment, the experience of being together on the land is combined with tasting products from the landscape and a narrative about those products and their producers. From my field notes: “I’m invited to go out on a tourism excursion with an acquaintance. My friend and guide is peripherally connected to food production and activism through her network of family and friends that herd, butcher, fish, serve, etc. After we make our way to our destination, she opens up the káta and drags out reindeer hides. She makes shelves on the snow with a shovel. She puts out the bags that have food on them. There is coffee and hot water for tea, as well as reindeer boullion. There is the northern flatbread you can buy at Jokkmokk’s Hantverkbutiken. There is a packet of Bregott margarine, a cream cheese, onion and reindeer spread, reindeer sausage and dried reindeer meat from her cousin’s shop, and three types of cheese which are mainly French style cheeses. As we ate, our guide/ my friend explained where each food was from in Jokkmokk. I’m not sure if she did this consciously, especially since she knew about my interest in local foods, but clearly she bought local items on purpose. First she talked about the bread, and then she talked about the cheese. Then she said that the sausage is from her relatives. After we finished eating the main dishes, we had some sweet foods. Coffee cheese (kaffe ost), berries, and honey. She told us the honey was from a local café. The berries, blueberries and cloudberry or hjortron, she had just thawed from her own freezer.”

These examples illustrate the ways in which Sámi individuals invite non-Sámi into Sámi and Jokkmokk culinary worlds through taste accompanied by narratives that link those tastes with the people and places that have produced them, placing consumers within those narrative connections as well through the experience of taste and personal

connection. The following examples illustrate such processes that then exceed culture and move into politics.

Example 1: The Matlandet Conference

My first example comes from the June 2014 Matlandet Conference held in Jokkmokk during the year that Jokkmokk was Sweden's Matlandethuvudstad (Culinary Capital). Food producers and representatives from across Sweden traveled to Jokkmokk to celebrate and plan food development in Sweden. Revealing the level of awareness food activists and producers have of the need to produce authentic relationships between consumers and producers, Jokkmokk's lead food organizer said that at the conference, they didn't just want Jokkmokk's producers selling their products. They wanted to have local food producers actually speak on stage, because, according to her, these producers are selling a product and also selling their experience and knowledge. She was disappointed with the outcome of the conference because producers in Jokkmokk received so little time on stage, approximately one hour during which three Jokkmokk producers were invited to present briefly about their work. I want to analyze the preparation for this meeting and its actual production because it illustrates efforts to forge relationships between producers and consumers *as well as* resistance to that process.

The planning started in March when three employees from Sweden's Board of Agriculture visited Jokkmokk to organize the event. An open meeting for the people of Jokkmokk was held so that the public could provide suggestions about the conference directly to the representatives. About ten people from the area were in attendance, including myself. I describe three topics addressed at the initial planning meeting and

follow them to their final form at the conference itself. These three topics - reindeer herding, food experiences, and innovative cuisine - illustrate how Sámi food organizers, as well as others in Jokkmokk, worked to connect consumers to Sámi cuisines, experiences and politics as well as the resistance and barriers to making those connections.

Building Relationships through Personal Narratives

Learning about reindeer herding is the pinnacle experience in northern Sweden. Knowing this, Jokkmokk's Culinary Capital leader organized for a reindeer herder to come speak about his lifestyle to the three Board of Agriculture visitors, or as she explains it: "Pelle is coming in to discuss herding. He is going to tell us how it is different from producing a cow because the reindeer is not just meat. It's a culture bearing animal as well."

Pelle opened by saying that herding is something that gets passed down through generations: "It's not just a job. It's not just about money." During the discussion, Jokkmokk's leader asks him, "How do you know about the meat quality of a reindeer." He responds, "You just know, after you've spent your whole life since you were a child, you have a vision. You know when to sell. You learn this as you're growing up with it."

"What about the taste of the meat," someone asks, "during the different seasons?" "The taste in the fall," he pauses, "is perhaps a bit stronger than it might be in the winter. The reindeer are eating the lower lichens, the white lichen on the ground. In the winter she's not eating that. She eats the hanging, black lichen on the trees. In December and January you might get a better quality meat." Pelle structures his narrative in ways that

reflects his personal knowledge and experience as a reindeer herder, and the meeting participants pose questions that also reflect their discerning interest in his work and the product of his work.

The discussion of seasons prompted Pelle to address the impact of predators on reindeer herding. From this point forward, Sámi food politics entered the discussion as the group from Jokkmokk described the impact of predators, extractive industries, the limitations of the sameby structure, and future potentials of reindeer herding. Pelle explained in detail, for example, how in the winter, reindeer sink into the deep snow and cannot escape from bears, wolves, and foxes. The conversation moved from the impact of predators to that of extractive industries such as hydropower, timber and wind power. Another herder at the meeting sighed at the description of the series of hydropower dams that flooded Sámi sites across Jokkmokk, “All of my history, my culture, is under water.”

Jokkmokk’s Culinary Capital leader shifted the conversation to the topic of samebys and the challenge they present to Sámi people. Pelle explained its structure, first saying “I’m not sure how much you know” but continues, “We have the right to use our land. The sameby is made up of individuals. In the summer, we work more together, all the separate businesses. Then in November, December and January, we separate into working groups. It’s not just by kin, it’s also by friendships.” Jokkmokk’s leader further explained the limits the sameby system, the limits imposed by Swedish law. She stated (and I summarize her words) that the key problem is that the sameby, as an organization, can only engage in reindeer herding. The sameby organization cannot engage in tourism. But, as an individual, Pelle has the right to start a tourism business. She continues, “But

imagine. Pelle builds a tourist cabin on the collectively owned Sameby lands, and others see his wallet filling up with money and they get annoyed.” As a solution, he is not able to even put the money he has earned towards the entire sameby.

“Why?” asks a government representative. The leader responds, “It’s just Swedish law. It’s not Sámi law.” She continued, stating that there are also laws about how many reindeer can be on the land. With the hydropower, mines, and timber, the land is made smaller and so now the government decides that only 8000 reindeer can be on that sameby’s lands.

In addition to the limits set on land and the number of reindeer, the leader explained that, “To be a full time herder, more than half of your income cannot come from something other than herding. You can only earn 49% of what you earn from herding. If someone earns more than that, well it’s that person that has to cut their herd when the government lowers the number.” “Who decides this?” the delegation asks. She responds, “The County Government and the Reindeer Herding Commission.”

The challenges do not end there. “Then imagine,” she says, “that Pelle has a wife and children. His children have needs. They see what other children have and they also would like to have these things. But Pelle can only earn 49% of his income from something other than herding. So it falls to his wife to earn more. She can earn more than 49% of her income. That is why they’ve found that Sámi women are often more educated because they get the money for the husband who holds the cultural heritage together. But she can’t be part of reindeer herding.”

The delegation asks about how many children continue as reindeer herders. Without any specific numbers to give, the leader volunteered her own story: “Well I can give you my own example. My brother went out in the forest often and learned to herd. I didn’t. So when my father passed, my brother got the reindeer and I got the house and land.” After she finished her story, one of the representatives said, “Well this isn’t so much about the conference.” Everyone laughs.

This isn’t too much about the conference was the right statement. Two months later in June when the actual conference took place, very little was mentioned about the above complexity, though politics seeped into these discussions of food, though through other gaps.



Figure 26 Victoria Harnesk, leader of Jokkmokk's Matlandethuvudstad, speaks on stage with three food producers from Jokkmokk during the 2014 Matlandet Conference.

Victoria Harnesk opened the Jokkmokk portion of the 2014 Matlandet conference with the following words: “We don’t grow anything up here in Jokkmokk, except for the mountain cow cheese, but we use what animals and plants are growing wild that we already have. We want to make a difference. We have Sámi and Norrland and

Norrbottnens food. We have deep traditions, like the Sámi gurpi, that was featured on the TV program Sweden's Nicest Farms. We had a recording with UR in Umeå, which as you know, is the Cultural Capital. Our area is fantastic and threatened." "Fantastic and threatened" has struck me as an apt segue into further discussion of the ways discussions of the fantastic food cultures of the north can spill into discussions of the industries, land loss and climate change that threaten it.

Before bringing the herder to the stage, Harnesk introduces him with the statement, "We have 5000 reindeer in Jokkmokk slaughtered every year, 16 tons of moose meat, and berries..." She then invites a reindeer herder from the Sirges Sameby up. As she did with Pelle, she asks him, "Why are you a herder." He responds, "It's nothing one becomes, it's something one is born into." Harnesk continues, "I've heard the reindeer changes taste over the year." To this question she receives a simple, "Yes, they eat grass in August, in September, it's mushrooms. Customers say it has a strong taste then." The audience and I begin to remark that this is a funny interaction. While Harnesk asks long, thought-out questions, her interlocutor answers with short responses, glancing at the audience with a bit of shyness and some nervousness perhaps. She continues, "How should you eat the reindeer?" "Salt," he answers. She coaxes for more, "For the fat and natural flavors to come out?" she asks. "Just salt," he responds.

Until this moment it has been a discussion of herding practices and taste. Harnesk then poses the question, "What impacts herding?" Together, the two of them explain to the audience that the feeding grounds for reindeer are getting smaller which changes how the reindeer can be raised, making it more like a confined cow. He answers the question

of land access simply with the statement: “I’ve never gone back to an area where I saw the same amount of land.”

In the 60 minute space allotted Jokkmokk’s food producers during the national conference, this simple exchange is all that comes forth from the above discussion of the complex set of circumstances that impact Sámi herders. Despite this limitation, others were able to use the encounter with food to convey the issues facing Jokkmokk and its food producers as I discuss below (see Ol-Johán Sikku in Chapter 5 as well).

Building Relationships through Songs and Tastes

When the Matlandet conference dinner was finished, a Jokkmokk food producer and entertainer, Eva Gunnare, came to the stage. She didn’t introduce herself. She simply began singing and we were all immediately brought to attention. This was a presentation I recognized, one she does for her business Essence of Lapland during which she talks about the different seasons and what plants one works with. She sings songs and offers tastes for each season. This performance was a bit different, I immediately noticed, with a commentary on the mine that may come to Jokkmokk. Gunnare told the audience that in Jokkmokk we have these things called “forever machines.” “They are working without us knowing,” she explained. “They don’t ask any help from us and we don’t notice them.” In contrast, there are industrial machines. She says that these other machines don’t work like the forever machines. “What are these forever machines? They are the berries and plants and trees in our forests that work without us noticing.”

Following this introduction, she told us about different plants and berries in the forest during the different seasons. She has matched each plant or season with a food. She gave us a taste of chocolate with blueberry, a puff pastry with a cream filling that is garnished with spruce tips and spruce tip oil, a dried cloudberry fruit leather. The food tastes are passed around the large banquet tables on small silver trays or on birch bark platters.

Gunnare's mission is to connect people to northern Sweden and her experiences of Sámi culture through song and food. Her work clearly fits within the trajectory of efforts to build relationships between producers, consumers and foodways, yet it also represents a shift in these efforts because of the inclusion of politics. Her decision to shift her performance to put forth the idea of "forever machines" of renewable and sustainable food, land and water resources in contrast with nonrenewable industries was timely. Attending the event was Minister of Rural Affairs Eskil Erlandsson, the creator of the Matlandethuvudstad project, and a member of the Center Party that supports mine development in the north. In asking us to taste the forests and mountains of Jokkmokk, to hear them in her song, and to visualize them from her narrative, she connected us to the culinary practices of the region. Her vignette on forever machines gently spilled the food conversation over into politics, highlighting the future Jokkmokk faces as a foreign mining company considers placing a mine just outside of town, potentially disrupting its forever machines.

Failing to Build Relationships at the Dinner Table

The conference dinner was served at the tent kátas at Talvatis Lake and prepared by a local chef. There was a note at each table with the menu as well as a statement that the reindeer were the chef's own and her two sons and the cloudberry were picked around Jokkmokk. As we ate the first course, a salad of Arctic char, a local butcher walked in carrying a whole roasted reindeer on a spit. People stood from their tables and snapped photos of the spectacle. Aside from these two moments, little work was done to connect consumers with the producers of the meal, from the reindeer herders, fishermen and berry pickers who had gathered the raw ingredients to the chefs and butchers who prepared them for us. Little work was done to construct narratives and place people in face-to-face relationships with the individuals that produced the foods for the conference.



Figure 27 A whole roasted reindeer is served at the Matlandet Conference dinner by a local Jokkmokk butcher.

Many critiques of Jokkmokk's food were voiced during the Culinary Capital conference, from the lack of food experiences to the poor quality of the restaurant food. Many of Jokkmokk's food producers assumed that tourists want one type of food, as one

chef told my husband during a dinner they worked together: “After you’ve done it for so many years, you know what people expect to eat when they come up here. It’s cloudberries, reindeer and arctic char. If you do those three, you’ve got everything.”

During one of the lunches for the Matlandet conference, the conference attendees were so disappointed with the food that it became a key topic of the conference. I attended this lunch and sat next to attendees from a region just south of Jokkmokk. When the food came out, it was a pile of smoked reindeer meat (*suovas*) with mashed potatoes that had been put through a press to make them look like spaghetti. There was a slice of tomato and a cucumber in the potatoes. They were sprinkled with lingon berries. The food was very salty. We all ate the food, though, the food ambassador left many bits of the *suovas* on the plate. The women were laughing and looking at the table next to us. I asked why. They explained that the two men at that table were premier food personalities in Sweden. They wanted to see how they reacted to the food. The lunch prompted many questions: How can this food be served at Sweden’s Culinary Capital? Is there no production of local water so that we don’t drink corporate sodas, particularly since there is such good water up in northern Sweden?

The meal was disappointing to attendees, I believe, not simply because it was not innovative nor prepared well. Rather, the meal of reindeer filet or roast, cloudberries, and arctic char is formulaic to many. These visiting foodies wanted the exotic and they wanted a story with it - and they got neither. They desired tongue, heart, intestines; they wanted berries prepared in a new way; they wanted unusual parts of the fish; they wanted lichens.

The response of these elite consumers in Sweden is not surprising when compared with research in local food movements. Weiss (2012) argues that “authenticity” is the central value of the food system he describes in North Carolina’s Piedmont where producers, their pigs, and consumers work to build a local food system. The value of authenticity is materialized via specific connections, between consumers and producers, between consumers and animals, and between the parts of the animals. The parts of the animal most iconic of the animal (the pig) operate as important signs of authenticity in this system. Historically Americans have demanded an ellipsis between animal and meat (Vialles 1994: 5), or, as Sahlins observed, the edibility of a cut of meat is inversely related to its closeness to humanity (Sahlins 1976: 175). However, in the food reform movement, Weiss argues, the signs are reversed: “the character of the living animal—whose welfare and material standing are iconic of the wider processes of ecological well-being, healthy eating, artisanal craft, and ‘honestly raised good meat’ –is most plainly expressed in such parts” (2012: 621). The failure of some food producers to grasp this reversal of signs (a reversal I believe is also ongoing in Sweden) means that food producers (primarily chefs) have failed²⁰ to connect consumers to the animals, and so have failed to help consumers grasp the values they seek in their Sámi food experiences – an authentic taste experience rooted in Sámi cultural traditions and the health of the animal (the reindeer).

²⁰ An alternative interpretation suggested by Natchee Barnd is that they perhaps fail to concede to consumers desire to connect with their food. I agree that for some producers this is true, which I consider in the second case study.

Example 2: The Autumn Slaughter

A critical moment for Sámi herders to be and work together as a group takes place during the autumn slaughter of the *sarvs*, the male reindeer. Because of the emphasis on this moment by Sámi individuals, some reindeer owners even speak jokingly of it, expressing disdain at the apparent demand that they must be there “like it’s some sort of religious moment.” My husband and I were invited to attend the autumn slaughter with his colleague. Two chefs from an upscale restaurant featuring local foods in Stockholm were also supposed to join us. The chefs purchase reindeer meat for their restaurant from my husband’s colleague and they wanted to learn and experience being with the reindeer from them. This desire on the part of the chefs (and my husband’s colleague who is always excited to work with new flavors and new people) represents this desire for an authentic relationship between chef, producers, and animals. The chefs were unable to come, however, so in their place, my husband, a chef from the nearby mountain lodge, and myself came along.

Two interesting moments arose. First, while we were seated around the *árran*, the hearth, boiling coffee during one of the breaks in the work to mark the calves and begin separating the males from the herd, one person commented, “there’s a lot of riff-raff here.” The person he was speaking with, also a visitor, asked for clarification. He went on to explain that there were a lot of people there who had no business there, who weren’t invited. Who was invited and who was not invited, I asked myself. I recognized a number of individuals from Jokkmokk who were not Sámi but who had Sámi friends. Like us, they tagged along as friend-tourists in order to experience this moment.



Figure 28 During the *sarvslakt*, the autumn slaughter, of male reindeer, we take a break for coffee around the *árran*, or fire ring.

Our chef friend is there to buy reindeer. He and his co-workers would like an entire reindeer so that they can practice butchering and preparing cuts of meat on their own. He asks our colleague who he should buy from, and he suggests a specific family. He buys two reindeer from them. The three of us stand together and watch as the work progresses and then he places the reindeer in the trunk of his car on a tarp. Such acts of buying directly from reindeer owners used to be more common place, according to many interviewees, but today are far less common as people prefer to purchase already prepared cuts of meat they can pull from the fridge and place in the skillet. It is chefs like my husband and his co-worker who are interested in this type of knowledge and practice. Thus what was commonplace (the presence of non-Sámi prepared to purchase whole reindeer) has become unusual and, perhaps, uninvited at times.



Figure 29 My husband and I observe the slaughter and butcher of male reindeer.

The following day, I stood with an acquaintance Lisa at the corral watching the action. Her son is with us. The sarvs are being pulled from the corral, some immediately slaughtered and butchered on site for household consumption and others herded into trucks for transportation to certified slaughter facilities for public sale. The corral has plastic around it so that the reindeer can't see out. It means we stand up on wooden platforms to see over the fence. There is a Swedish woman standing there, and she is asking Lisa questions. Lisa is very annoyed by her, and after the woman asks too many times, she walks away without explanation. Her son is there, looking quite adorable in a Sámi hat. The woman asks me if she can take a picture of him. I tell her that it's not my child, so I can't answer.

Co-presence, or being together, is important to generating these authentic links between food producers and consumers. However, the presence of consumers (both cultural consumers and edibles consumers) can overwhelm these moments. First there is a risk that too many consumers chip away from the authenticity of a moment, making it simply a spectacle for tourism. By overwhelming the event, this moment of being

together for Sámi herders and reindeer owners is also co-opted, stripped of its integrity as a place where Sámi people enact being Sámi. Specifically, there may be “hidden costs of producing authenticity” (Cavanaugh and Shankar 2014: 61) as the production of authenticity by using culture and language may be alienating to those who use them in their everyday lives. A balance must be struck in order to enable people to experience Sámi culinary practices, but to hold them back far enough to maintain the integrity of the event for those who are really part of it, who are working as reindeer herders and butchers.

Discussion

I want to turn back to the final statement made by a Board of Agriculture conference organizer in response to the discussion that was being held on reindeer herding: “Well, this isn’t very much about the conference.” The description of the challenges facing Sámi reindeer herders and their families was very much about the conference, from the perspective of Jokkmokk’s food organizers. They assumed that the conference was a space to challenge and shift Swedish laws on food production, and by enabling these political representatives to forge authentic relationships with Sámi herders, they sought to forge the authentic connections that would allow a discussion of Sámi politics to emerge. However, the assumption that the conference was a space of transformation was where many failed in Jokkmokk. The conference was not about politics; it was about selling food experiences, also valuable but perhaps, as Paige West writes, “This supposed embedding of the political and social into capitalist consumption may make for a good cup of coffee, but it makes for lukewarm political action.” (2012: 248).

Sámi food organizers carefully constructed the experiences of the Board of Agriculture visitors in order to connect them to the food and food producers from Jokkmokk. Food organizers provided tastes and narratives that were delivered in face-to-face encounters with real reindeer herders, butchers, fishermen, and chefs. These representatives were invited into Sámi (and Jokkmokk) culinary practices, which then spilled over into an invitation to Sámi politics as well as rural politics (in the case of the mine). The dialogue between conference organizers and food producers clearly demonstrated the organizers' interest in the threats to Sámi food-based livelihoods. However, when it came time to invite the larger public to the table at the conference, Jokkmokk's food organizers were largely denied the time and space needed to discuss the complex challenges that threaten Sámi foodways. The Matlandet conference, and the entire Culinary Capital program, was never conceived as a transformative space, particularly for Sámi indigenous politics. Rather, it was conceived as a means to increase Swedish exports of Swedish-produced foods. Still, certain individuals were able to seize these encounters with food to address some of these challenges, such as Gunnare's poetic discussion of renewable food systems in contrast with the extractive industries.

The efforts of Jokkmokk's food organizers indicates that food was (and is) good for them to think with (and through) Sámi circumstances. For example, contemplating Sámi circumstances through the lens of food reveals the ways that the structure of the sameby limits individual entrepreneurs and the sameby organization as a whole from pursuing alternative livelihoods that would make reindeer herding a more viable industry. Moreover, thinking about reindeer herding as food production has enabled Sámi food activists and producers to consider a new kind of future, one that is centered on the

production of exclusive reindeer meat and fish which enables Sámi herders (and their families) to continue cultural and economic practices.

Knowing that certain types of consumers are looking for authentic relationships to their food, Sámi food activists and producers are now producing themselves in ways that meet these consumers' desires. They structure narratives that link foods that consumers are tasting with producers, reindeer and the land, through references to specific people, places and languages. They create experiences where consumers can meet food producers out on the land. Through the forging of these linkages, food activists can at times connect their consumers to Sámi politics, when they learn about the threats of mining, climate change, and state regulatory regimes that inhibit the means of food production, the very tastes they are enjoying in that moment. However, consumers must both be willing and discerning participants in these exchanges.

Conclusions

To conclude, Sámi food activists and producers are creating opportunities to build relationships between consumers, themselves and their foodways and constructing narratives that substantiate their claims to authenticity in order to advance Sámi rights. The argument is not novel because Sámi foodways, cultural practices, histories and identities have always been tied to Sámi political circumstances as indigenous peoples within Sweden, a circumstance that is common for indigenous peoples across the world.

The roots of indigeneity, or the difference of indigenous peoples, are diverse yet we can point to specific political circumstances (and resistance to them) as one of the

characteristics shared by most indigenous peoples. Simply by identifying as indigenous, a person or organization claims a set of rights that are advanced under the conditions of colonial occupation or settlement. On this topic, Audra Simpson writes, “Indigeneity—indigenous difference—is fundamentally the condition of “before,” of cultural philosophical, and political life that connect to specific territories and of the political exigencies of this relatedness in the present. This present is defined by the political projects of dispossession and settlement, and the difference that is Indigeneity is the maintenance of culture, treaty, history, and self within the historical and ongoing context of settlement” (2011: 208).

Being Sámi in Sweden implies a particular relationship – a maintenance of culture, treaty, history and self—to the Swedish state, and producing Sámi foods might also imply a similar relationship because the production of Sámi foods is equally bound up in the maintenance of Sámi lives that Sámi individuals and organizations have been pursuing since settlement. Herding, fishing, hunting and gathering (the acts which produce Sámi foods) are maintained but have been and continue to be deeply impacted by policy decisions of the Swedish state. For this reason, a narrative, an experience, or a taste of Sámi foods is nearly always accompanied with a discussion of the threats to these foodways and Sámi political rights. Tasting Sámi foods is not simply tasting a thousand year old tradition. For Sámi food producers and activists, it is also tasting the tenacity of people that have maintained food practices within the ongoing and continued context of settlement.

It is evident from these examples that Sámi foods are welcome as part of the relationships that are being forged between consumers and producers. The accompanying political narrative, however, has often been left aside, especially in the case of the Jokkmokk Matlandet Conference when Jokkmokk's food producers and activists were not given the opportunity to facilitate a complex discussion on Sámi rights. Even with or without these opportunities, not all Sámi food producers are as adept at building relationships between consumers and themselves, seen in the failures to construct authentic narratives about the food served at the conference. Finally, not all food producers wish to build these relationships, in all places, and at all times. Such resistance to building these relationships was evident at the autumn slaughter of male reindeer when many people perceived that there were too many non-Sámi present and that these visitors were distracting from the event.

Will this approach to food activism and food rights – the invitation to experience authentic Sámi food production activities and Sámi narratives – be an effective approach to advancing Sámi rights? If consumers (and the public at large) are willing to not only ingest a tasty piece of reindeer meat but also knowledge of the threats to the production of that reindeer meat, alliances could be formed that assist Sámi food producers. Moreover, if consumers become sympathetic to Sámi causes, it will certainly assist Sámi activists in making cases for particular rights. Yet, the case of the Matlandet conference is interesting because Sámi activists and food producers were given the opportunity to both collaborate with and confront an agency of the state. When confronted with an opportunity to invite the public into a discussion of the state's history of resource

extraction and damaging legislation against Sámi people, this particular state agency chose to leave that part of the narrative out.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Pursuit of Food Sovereignty through the Taste and Nutrition of Reindeer Fat

In this chapter I explore how Sámi food activists bring their taste preferences for reindeer fat into the struggle for food and land sovereignty. I examine the Sámi food movement as a discursive and material space where Sámi actors are revaluing the taste of reindeer fat in the cookbooks, workshops, and presentations they produce. In particular, I am interested in the ways food organizers use nutrition science and their own embodied knowledge to discuss reindeer fat. These various engagements with food generate conflicts between using a nutritional paradigm of food and “other ways of knowing” food (Carolan 2011, Mudry et al. 2014). Both sets of discourses lend themselves to a critique of the Swedish state, extractive industries, and human-induced climate change, all of which negatively impact the nutritional profile of reindeer meat and fat and limit the ability of Sámi food producers to practice their crafts.

Introduction

In Jokkmokk, Sweden, at the Sámi Cuisine and Competence Center (*Sámisk Mat och Kompetens Centrum*), two women, both Sámi and trained home economics educators, are developing and marketing new Sámi food products. In 2013, they sent samples to a Swedish lab to compare the nutritional quality of reindeer fat with butter. According to the analysis, the reindeer fat is more nutritious and less fatty than butter. However, the fat must be prepared in a particular way to retain its healthful qualities: melted in the oven

not in the frying pan. The specific data indicated that transfats and cholesterol are lower in reindeer fat and vitamins C, B6, B12 and iron are higher in reindeer fat. These findings are being used in many channels to discuss the healthfulness of reindeer fat, such as food workshops, slaughter courses, public lectures, and the marketing of reindeer meat.

In this chapter I use the ongoing work with reindeer fat to discuss efforts to transform current food systems in the northern Swedish region of Sápmi, the land of the Sámi. In particular, I am interested in the ways Sámi engagement with food plays into the “savage” or “tribal slot,” (Truillot 1991, Li 2000) enticing and perhaps pigeon-holing Sámi food organizers and producers into talking about and working with food in predetermined discourses related to indigeneity. On the other hand, I am also interested in examining the ways food organizers use nutrition science to market reindeer meat. These various engagements with food generate conflicts between using a nutritional paradigm of knowing food and “other ways of knowing” food (Carolan 2011, Mudry et al. 2014). The case of reindeer and their fat offers an interesting intersection of these two lines of inquiry. First, arguably many individuals who identify as Sámi have known food in a way different from Western, nutritionist paradigms yet nutritionist discourses have become appealing in advancing the sale of reindeer meat. Second, engagement with either discourse—nutritionist or alternative ways of knowing food—may both contribute to placing Sámi food organizers and producers within particular binds, limiting both their discourse and practice to the predetermined expectations of their different audiences.

Knowing Food

At a time when scholars and food activists are pushing for “other ways of knowing food” that emphasize embodied or sensory knowledge (Mudry et al. 2014, Carolan 2011), Sámi food organizers have adapted nutrition sciences to advance food-related interests. Many contemporary food scholars criticize “nutritionism” (Scrinis 2013) as an impoverished approach to eating because it can create a “singular definition of “good food,” which implies a standardized notion of health (Mudry et al. 2014). Mudry characterizes the difference between the nutritionist and alternative approaches as a contrast between *episteme*, implying formalized knowledge or knowledge derived from theory, and *techne*, knowledge from art or craft or knowledge developed through doing (Mudry et al. 2014: 27). In the same article, Kimura provides a counterpoint and encourages scholars to move beyond the binary of a nutritionist approach and an alternative approach to food. She argues that both are necessary to health programming, and moreover, consumers want and rely on both (Mudry et al. 2014: 31).

In this chapter, I demonstrate the ways Sámi food organizers draw from both, positioning themselves and their foodways within the two dominant discourses: the episteme discourse of nutrition science and the techne discourse of knowledge gained through embodied experiences. The combination is not surprising, as Åhren (2013) argues that the work of Sámi food organizers occurs quite reflexively. Organizers plan with an awareness and deployment of the key symbols of Sámi culture and identity that have been used in previous efforts to claim rights to land, language and culture (Eidheim 1971, Svensson 1991, Gaski 2008). When discussing and marketing reindeer fat, food

organizers describe an innate or embodied knowledge possessed by elders regarding the health of reindeer products. Simultaneously, there is also an awareness of consumer interests in products deemed nutritious, and discourses of health and nutrition are more often employed by food organizers to describe reindeer meat and fat. These discourses resonate with multiple audiences in the spaces opened up by food movements.

The continued reliance on traditional foodways, combined with the emergence of global food movements and the right to food (Holt-Giménez 2011, de Schutter 2014), are now enabling many indigenous peoples, including those who identify as Sámi, to assert distinct rights to culture and land in the new discourses introduced by food movements. Social movements, such as the emerging food movements, upset cultural codes by giving form to alternative visions and counter-hegemonic languages through the creation and broadcasting of social movement messages (Melucci 1996, Gibson-Graham 2006), the generation of new subject positions and discourses (Gibson-Graham 2006), as well as the creation of alternative spaces and geographies that provide locations from which people can mobilize (Feldman 2002). At the same time, social movements (and the discourses and projects they generate) involve many risks, particularly for indigenous peoples: the rationalization and commodification of fluid knowledges and practices, the separating out of the authentic from inauthentic, and the demand for self-representation in essentialist terms (Brown 2003, Shepherd 2010, Comaroff and Comaroff 2009, Povinelli 2002, Sylvain 2002).

A means to discuss the process of engaging with social movements and making new claims is through Li's concept of positioning (Li 2000). Referring to Hall's

discussion of identity and articulation, Li describes positioning as a moment of “articulation” wherein a collective identity (or position) is made explicit (distinct, comprehensible to an audience) and made conjoined (cohering together under certain conditions) (Hall 1996: 141-142; Li 2000: 152). Positioning is a concept that helps scholars understand actors as agentic beings operating within fields of power. Li argues, “Simplified images may be the result of collaborations in which “natives” have participated for their own good reasons” (2000: 173; for more examples see Eder 1994, Neumann, 1995, and Jackson 1995). The practice of “accustomization” (Greene 2009) also describes a key way indigenous peoples are domesticating the language and spaces opened up by food movements. In the contexts described below, looking closely at how people choose to work with food – eating it, studying it, discussing it - reveals how individuals engage in processes of positioning and accustomization.

As Alison Leitch noted in her description of Slow Food in Italy, the organization has always “mixed business and politics” (2003: 440), slipping easily between the realms of “advertising, commerce and cultural critique” (2003; 456). Slow Food Sápmi is no exception as it works explicitly to build the market in reindeer meat and also criticizes Swedish and foreign policies that limit Sámi food sovereignty. The first approach embraces neoliberal capitalism, believing that educating consumers about reindeer meat will enable herders to continue their work. The second approach addresses political and economic structures, believing that building Sámi rights will also enable Sámi culture to survive. Whatever the goal and means, organizers continue to focus on reindeer herders who they see as key culture bearers of Sámi traditions.

Fat

Historically, fats have served as a critical calorie source for laborers (Mintz 1979, Leitch 2003), and remain energy-dense products that are essential for processing fat soluble vitamins (Harris 1985). Their ubiquity as a household food source has generally waned with the availability of other sources of calories and protein as well as with modern diet fads. However, there is growing awareness that fat is essential to nutrition and different fats have different qualities. For example, within the realm of meat production, more researchers argue that feed type impacts the quality of an animal's fat, especially fatty acid composition. Grass-fed beef has better fatty acid compositions than grain-fed beef (Daley et al. 2010, Sternson 2011), a pattern responsible for the nutrient composition of reindeer meat as well (Wiklund et al. 2003). This can set up a distinction between the good and the bad fats, as well as the good and the bad meat production. Healthy eating now becomes a question of eating good fats. Those who continue to consume bad fats are often of lower socioeconomic status and have less access to so-called good fats (Gewertz and Errington 2010).

More recently, Leitch's analysis gives us a "phenomenology of pork fat" (2003: 443) which contrasts the multiple local meanings of pork fat as well as its eventual commodification largely through the work of Slow Food and the producers of *lardo*. Originally a source of calories for laborers, *lardo* became a gourmet food, a patented product. Unlike Leitch's analysis which reveals the ways in which the debates over *lardo*'s production were also a debate about the reach of the European Union and its hygiene standards and the perceived threats to national identities, the increasingly visible

profile of Sámi foods and reindeer fat requires other perspectives. Certainly the EU's reach equally impacted the economic viability of herders and butchers in Sweden as they did elsewhere in the early 1990s. Sámi individuals, however, often embody multiple identities, and so the work of food organizing is also a critique of the extension of the Swedish state into Sámi food production and an appeal to the European Union and the United Nations to intervene on behalf of Sámi rights. This paper will demonstrate that the debate around reindeer fat is less a discussion of "Europeanness" (Leitch 2003: 442) and more a discussion of Sámi rights in the context of an encroaching Swedish state and the unequal distribution of the impacts of climate change.

Listening to how fat is discussed and observing how it is used reveals the ways Sámi organizers are trying to transform contemporary food systems and position their work with food in ways that advance collective Sámi rights and interests in Sweden. This is an unprecedented moment in history where public discussions of reindeer, their fat, and the byproducts from their slaughter are becoming part of discourses used by Sámi food organizers in public debates of food. Talk about fat didn't occur just at home or in butcher shops. It was named and discussed at cookbook release parties, at public conferences, and at meetings between slaughterhouse owners and reindeer herders, between government bureaucrats and local food organizers. Reindeer fat is presented as a nutritious, healthy fat, a use for byproducts of today's wasteful industrial slaughter complex, and a valuable commodity.

Reindeer fat is unique: it is regrown and lost by the reindeer as they follow annual seasonal cycles and it is solid at room temperature. This means that a bite of reindeer fat

followed by a cold glass of water produces an uncomfortable film in the mouth, unpleasant for those not used to it like myself and an expressed preference for others. A Sámi food organizer described reindeer fat to a visiting government representatives as an unusual taste. She paused and continued, “It has an umami taste. The old people say that it’s not gamey. But it’s not a common taste.” No further explanation of “umami” is offered with the assumption that all present understand the concept and its likeness to reindeer fat. In one other context I observed, reindeer fat was likened to having an umami flavor. These moments illustrate the accustomization (Greene 2009) of what was once a concept localized to Japan but is now a circulating metaphor used to describe unusual flavors such as reindeer fat.

Reindeer fat can be gotten in two primary ways: from one’s own (or a friend or family member’s) reindeer during seasonal slaughters or from local boutiques. At a butcher shop in Jokkmokk, one can purchase 500 grams of fat for 30 kronor, about five American dollars. According to the shop owner, it is the fat from the kidneys, collected from different reindeer and used to cook in by most people. If one isn’t a reindeer owner, getting reindeer fat can be difficult. Following a presentation on the value of reindeer fat at a meeting with agents from the Board of Agriculture, a representative asked if people continue to cook with the fat. One food organizer responded that, no, not at an industrial level. Another responded, yes, but only for household use. The government representative continued, “So no one can procure reindeer fat?” One of the Sámi food organizer lamented, “I’m not sure young people today are interested in buying reindeer fat.” She continued, “It’s too bad we can’t talk about taste, about the taste of bone and fat. If it would be here, we could talk about it, but there is no way to buy a bone from the

market.” Fat and bones have been understood to be undesirable by butchers, who in general, state there has been a shift in consumer preferences from fat adult reindeer to lean reindeer calves.

For those who do eat reindeer fat, it makes its way into the stomach in a few ways. It might still be attached to meat, it might be part of a reindeer bouillon stew, it might be set to the side like a butter used to pan fry blood pancakes or fish, or it might be part of a sausage. One of the first ways I ate reindeer fat was as part of a reindeer boil, which involves boiling fatty parts of the reindeer, with the bone, and adding pieces like tongue. When the stew is done boiling, a bouillon remains into which you dip dry bread. The bouillon is often drunk separately, as part of the meal or another meal. It is a hearty cuisine, full of salt and fat, which can keep a person full while they work.



Figure 30 Reindeer fat is kept on a cutting board for use on breads and for frying meats and fish.

Fat is also kept in hunks, like chunks of butter, to use for cooking (see Figure 2). Some people explain that one should fry fish or reindeer blood pancakes in fat. When people talk about cooking in this fat, they say it’s what gives the pancakes the taste. It’s what makes them crackly and crunchy. I was often referred to speak to specific

individuals whose diets were considered “more traditional.” These individuals would invariably continue to prepare their foods in reindeer fat.

In most slaughterhouses and butcher shops, the bulk of reindeer fat ends up being used to make sausages: in the salted, smoked and dried sausages often used during the summer to pack along with herders or hikers or in *gurpi*. For individuals who work with reindeer meat, processing it and selling it to customers, their own personal stashes of meat are sometimes different than what they package for customers. Specifically, their personal stashes have more fat on them because they state it tastes better that way. They perceive that customers will not purchase meat with too much fat on it, and so they remove most of it from their products. Expressions like, “Somebody really needs to teach people how to eat reindeer fat” could be heard often as butchers worked to cut fat from the filets they would be selling at boutiques. These expressions position the boundaries between “us” that appreciates reindeer fat and is willing to eat it, and “them,” the public that purchases reindeer meat but prefers less fat.

For individuals who identify as Sámi, use of reindeer fat varies significantly. Thus, as food organizers engage in the process of bringing reindeer fat to public consciousness, they open up many risks as the public begins to scrutinize Sámi uses of reindeer fat. In truth, fats like butter, oil and margarine are used more often in cooking by most people in their everyday lives, smeared on bread and then layered with hunks of dried reindeer meat or melted in frying pans before throwing in reindeer meat.

I observed a cooking demonstration by Jokkmokk’s Sámi elementary school for Sweden’s 2014 Culinary Capital conference in Jokkmokk. The purpose was to

demonstrate how Sámi schools were incorporating food into the curriculum. The students prepared *suovas* for us to sample, thinly sliced salted and smoked reindeer meat that is cooked in a pan, in this case a large outdoor cast iron pan over the fire (see Figure 3). The students used *Bregott* to cook in, specifically lactose free Bregott, reflecting adaptations to food allergies occurring throughout Sweden. Bregott is a butter and rape seed oil blend, invented in 1969 in Sweden and Sweden's most popular cooking fat. Use of Bregott (rather than reindeer fat) was noted by the conference participants, whose roles were primarily as food researchers, educators and government bureaucrats.



Figure 31 Students from the Sámi Elementary School in Jokkmokk demonstrate how food preparation is incorporated into the curriculum at Sweden's Matlandet Conference 2014.

Here risk is visible: the expectation of the Swedish majority is that Sámi schoolchildren who are learning about traditional Sámi cuisines use reindeer fat. The presence of Bregott reveals the sameness and modernity of the cuisine and its practitioners, a clear example of the politics of recognition (Taylor 1994) as well as the double bind individuals who identify as indigenous often find themselves in (Povinelli 2002). To use Bregott indexes, or points to, their modernity, while to use reindeer fat indexes their sameness with an (imaginary) authentic Sámi past. The politics of

indigenous recognition does not allow these students and their teachers to move fluidly along a continuum between modern and historic cooking practices. The process of positioning food practices as Sámi (and subsequently indigenous) allows organizations to apply for special funding sources and receive special legislation, such as the extra funding given to Sámi schools by the Swedish Parliament for lunches. However, support (which comes from the majority) is often only given when (indigenous) difference is sufficient.

Health and Nutrition

At the release of the new Sámi cookbook, *Smak på Sápmi* (2014), various Sámi food organizers presented on specific aspects of Sámi food, with topics ranging from the movement for food sovereignty to the role of coffee in Sámi cultural practices. Held in Umeå, the symposium on Sámi foods was even recorded by Sweden's public television program (UR) and later broadcast periodically the following year. The research on reindeer fat done by the Sámi Culinary Center was brought up frequently. Ol-Johán Sikku, the head of Renlycka and a board member of Slow Food Sápmi, for example, explained to the audience the nutritional qualities of reindeer meat and fat. He exclaimed, "It's no wonder Sámi people have lived so long, for thousands of years, because of the goodness of the food. The meat has minerals we need. It's too bad that the reindeer is only 5% fat because it's healthy fat with omega-3s like you get at the health store."



Figure 32 Ol-Johán Sikku, Renlycka’s leader and a founder and board member of Slow Food Sápmi, presents information about the health of reindeer meat.

To further convey the health and taste of reindeer fat, many individuals will compare it with well-known fats or, as above, the supplements one can purchase at specialty stores. One woman, a well-respected Sámi food expert, explained that reindeer fat is like olive oil, in that it contains healthy, nutritional qualities like omega-3 fatty acids.

Hand in hand with a discussion of the health of reindeer fat goes discussion of the western or biomedical medical paradigm which has framed fat as bad. Mention of the fear of fat came up at almost every public discussion of reindeer meat I attended. For example, when a discussion of fat arose during the meeting with Board of Agriculture representatives, a Sámi participant volunteered, “We’re going back to fat now. Older people knew the fat was healthy. The older generation didn’t know about cholesterol.”

At the same time that food organizers rely on nutrition sciences to demonstrate the health of reindeer meat, they also always state that older generations simply knew it was good for them. Thus some have criticized the research on fat, wryly commenting,

“They’ve done research on something we already know, that reindeer fat is healthy.”

Most food organizers appear aware of the contradiction in using *episteme* or nutrition science to corroborate the *techne* or innate and traditional knowledge of their elders. To illustrate, one woman stated: “When we learned about cholesterol, we didn’t know about reindeer fat. We are affected by our surrounding society, but it’s good we have science. We learn that some things, like smoking with birch and reindeer fat, are good.”

During a public presentation, Slow Food Sápmi organizers Victoria Harnesk and Ol-Johán Sikku discussed the importance of the Sámi languages to Sámi foods. Harnesk states, “I’ve had trouble with language in describing reindeer when done in Swedish,” to which Sikku responds,

“It is a Sámi concept. If we translate, it’s not the same. Reindeer fat...my father...he’d cook with it. It was a knowledge. But it’s hard to say it’s low fat [in Swedish]. It doesn’t work, it has a negative meaning. The word [in Sámi] has another meaning. It’s a special meaning. It’s a knowledge that’s thousands of years old. And...which fat to use, it’s a knowledge that’s still here and then we need to use it...how we present it in a restaurant.”

The statement is interesting in its combined usage of the nutrition and embodied knowledge discourses, both of which Sámi food organizers would like to use in the marketing of reindeer products to restaurants. This demonstration of Sámi food organizers’ willingness to utilize Sámi knowledges for economic gains is often repeated in discussions of the development of Sámi foods. Importantly, it is a process which can potentially objectify and commodify fluid linguistic and cultural practices, as demonstrated by other scholars (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009).

Conventional Food Failures and Slaughterhouse Waste

In public discussion there is a critique leveled at slaughterhouses for the way they do not make use of all parts of the reindeer. In the meeting with Sweden's Board of Agriculture, the Jokkmokk Matlandet project leader described current slaughter practices as a "culture killing event." She goes on to explain, echoing the willingness of Sikku above to build an economy from Sámi traditions,

"The reindeer is treated like a cow or a pig. The skin, antlers, and skull – it's called waste. The craftsmen, seamstress, they lose these products. Our handicraft and food is disappearing, and when it disappears, we lose words, knowledge and taste. All you get is a kilo price for meat. We've slipped into this. It's not a Sámi tradition, but we deliver the meat. You can create jobs and salaries if we take advantage of these products."

In another unprecedented meeting between slaughterhouses and herders that was organized by Renlycka, a local Sámi food organizer working to develop products from the so-called waste of slaughter asked the slaughterhouse owners if they make use of the entire reindeer. "Yes," says one, "we use the heart, the liver. Tongue, blood." The other slaughterhouse also says they do that: "We use the reindeer fat. It sells. It's not a big price, but we use it." The first one continues, "We use the stomach fat and make gurpi, but we only take from the nicest reindeer."

While it may be true that these larger slaughterhouse operations are making more use of so-called waste from slaughter, according to Sámi butcher shop owners, it is a relatively recent change. They agree that the larger Swedish- and Finnish-owned slaughterhouses that perform the bulk of slaughter have started to keep certain fats, particularly the stomach fat. Not coincidentally, this development has occurred at the

same time that Sámi products such as *suovas* and *gurpi* have been made popular by Slow Food Sweden and Sápmi. In fact, some food organizers express frustration that the larger slaughterhouses have been producing and marketing products that are traditionally Sámi. They refer to it as a form of colonialism, false marketing, and a cooptation of Sámi knowledge. Some of these individuals are applying for EU and Slow Food designations that would limit the threat of copying by non-Sámi companies. At the same time, other individuals are working with slaughterhouses because they need more reindeer fat for their own production. Some Sámi butchers, for example, explain that without the larger slaughterhouses, smaller operations like themselves would not survive.

Value from Waste

Fat plays a small but increasingly important role in the marketing and sale of reindeer meat. In particular, *gurpi*, the sausage made from chopped reindeer meat, wrapped in caul fat and smoked, may be the next *presidia* product seen at a Slow Food Terra Madre conference. The goal of making *gurpi* a *presidia* product is, according to the president of SF Sápmi, to generate knowledge and a market for the product in order to give reindeer herders another venue to sell meat from. She, and many others, consider *gurpi* a food product that makes use of parts of the reindeer that would be otherwise thrown away with other waste. It may let herders and food producers add value (and so price) to reindeer meat.



Figure 33 During the annual fall slaughter of reindeer, a herder-butcher removes the caul fat from the reindeer while another herder-photographer documents the process.

There is the possibility that due to the work of Sámi organizations to promote reindeer, reindeer meat and reindeer fat may become high end products, served more often in new Nordic restaurants than in Sápmi. Some herders have commented that one shouldn't want to increase the sale of fat as there isn't much reindeer fat to begin with because calf slaughter is predominant and calves do not have as much fat. Herders and butchers will likely benefit from the increased meat and fat prices, and herders will always have access to meat as it is still an important tradition to take a *matren*, food reindeer, for the year. However, for those who don't own reindeer (90% of Sámi) or don't have close family willing to share, this style of cooking becomes harder to enact.

I've asked research participants if they believe the increasing price of reindeer meat has prevented some Sámi people from eating it. Some of them balk at the question or brush it aside, but others say, obviously! When asked for elaboration they state I should look how people buy reindeer meat— they buy small pieces and they don't buy a whole reindeer like they used to. As people rely on butcher shops and grocers to access reindeer meat, they will have much less access to fat and other products considered waste

from the slaughter. Still, many individuals have remarked that those less common products, such as fat, blood, and inner organs, are being made available at many northern grocers. Thus it is possible that, as a result of growing the market for reindeer meat products, more products will also become available to individuals living in northern Sweden.

Climate Change, Feed and (un)Healthy Fats

Reindeer fat has its specific nutritional profile because of the way it is raised: grazing freely on lichens, mushrooms and grasses, dependent upon the season. However, not all reindeer are or can be raised in this manner. Sikku explained the process to a group of herders during a Renlycka meeting: “If you put a reindeer on pelleted feed for more than 2 or 3 months, the meat is changed. The vitamins decrease, the minerals decrease, and the fat becomes dangerous fat. The system depends on natural feed.” Putting reindeer on pelleted feed is not a simple decision. Rather it intersects directly with environmental degradation, climate change and economic decision-making.

I witnessed this during the past winter when warm temperatures and heavy, wet snow combined to create a thick layer of snow-ice concrete. The reindeer were no longer able to break through the snow pack to get to the critical winter feed that comprise their winter diet. Most herders gathered their reindeer in corrals and fed combinations of pelleted food, hay, and in some cases, tree lichens.²¹ During a slaughter course this same

²¹ Historically tree lichens were more available, but the timber industry has prevented the robust regrowth of most lichens.

winter, a butcher showed the students the ring of fat around the stomach, the caul or net fat. He explains to us that it's best to remove it now during the slaughter process. He takes it out and places it in the snow and the students collect it later when they prepare to process the different parts of the reindeer. There is also a reindeer whose fat is the wrong color and its stomach is distended. The butcher tells us that it's been on pelleted feed too long. He instructs the students not to take the fat from it.

Here we see the risk, that with a warming Arctic climate and increasingly limited access to land, the current marketing of reindeer as a healthy meat with healthy fat because of natural feed may become increasingly challenging for most reindeer owners to produce. According to most climate models, temperatures will continue to freeze and warm during the winter which will make the snow pack wetter and heavier. The reindeer will be unable to access the natural winter feeds that ensure the quality of their meat and fat. The selection of the reindeer fat as part of the current position of Sámi herders becomes potentially dangerous for herders whose reindeer fat no longer contains those desired omega-3 fatty acids.

Discussion: The Fat of the Land

Like many food activists throughout Europe, Sámi food organizers have sought to singularize, protect and sell their products. Yet, unlike the production of foods such as lardo (Leitch 2003) and serpa cheese (West and Domingos 2012) which were galvanized as protections of an endangered and unique food heritage, products from reindeer fat such as gurpi have primarily been singularized and promoted based on the nutrition and health

of reindeer fat, the episteme way of knowing. In the examples presented here, only then do food organizers mention that elders or the Sámi have always known the goodness of reindeer fat, the techne way of knowing food.

Both discourses are critical, however. I argue the combination of these discourses are necessary to constructing the authenticity of Sámi products. Referring to the “old people” and “a knowledge that’s thousands of years old” builds connections, or interdiscursive links, between the past and the present (Cavanaugh and Shankar 2014: 54-55). This linguistic form, variations of an innate Sámi knowledge, is repeated, building what Cavanaugh and Shankar call a linguistic materiality that transforms heritage as a sign of authenticity into an economic value. Reference to these other ways individuals have known the value of reindeer fat may seem unnecessary, but they are likely essential to getting the marketing right. Without these references, reindeer fat may appear inauthentic, that is, not the indigenous food of the Sámi people. The work of Sámi food organizers must strike a “precarious balance...between cultural and economic value production” (Cavanaugh and Shankar 2014: 61), between building the economic value of reindeer fat and building a platform for continuing Sámi culinary practices.

The focus on nutrition and good fat is crucial to a third and an often unstated point. Specifically, an important caveat is added, particularly by Ol-Johán Sikku who explained several times that this fat comes from reindeer that graze on natural feed. Once fed pellets, the reindeer loses those good fats. At this juncture, a critical argument is made: without the land in a more natural state and without access to that land, Sámi herders can no longer produce healthy and nutritious reindeer fat. Sámi food organizers

may accustomize the competing discourses of nutritionism and embodied knowledge in their descriptions of reindeer fat, but both discourses point towards a third element: the necessity of (viable) land to the production of good reindeer fat.

This turn towards land is not surprising given that it was land which nation-states such as Sweden took from native peoples (Moreton-Robinson 2007: 2). The specter of losing more land (whether through its alteration by the mining industry and climate change or through barriers to access) haunts Sámi food organizing. The loss of further land threatens economic, cultural and (for food organizers especially) culinary loss. Kirsch describes these processes for the inhabitants of the Marshall Islands, arguing that “(t)he alienation of land is of general concern for indigenous peoples...the loss of otherwise inalienable homelands can jeopardize not only the material conditions of survival, including subsistence practices, but also the requirements of social reproduction as embedded in kinship relations. Local knowledge and relations to place may be affected as well” (2001: 176). The further loss of land generates multiple threats in the case of the Sámi: (1) a threat to the material subsistence practices of herding, hunting and fishing; (2) a threat to the cuisines and knowledges built from those subsistence practices; and (3) a threat to losing what makes Sámi culture authentic—to themselves and to the outside world. Individuals who identify as Sámi are quite aware of the consequences of losing land, as much has already been sacrificed to hydropower, mine and timber development, with clear impacts on the production of food via the destruction of fish, moose and reindeer habitats.

I attribute this pointing to land to the hyperreflexivity of Sámi food organizers, an awareness they possess of the representations and expectations of Sáminess as they craft their own messages about Sámi foodways (Åhren 2013). In some moments food organizers have certainly positioned themselves, Sámi herders and reindeer in essentialized terms in order to strategically make claims, “for their own good reasons” (Li 2000). However, the reliance on a nutritionist discourse has enabled food organizers to also assert their rights to land and culture in an alternative discourse that avoids playing into the tribal or savage slot by making a case using nutrition science for their access to (their) lands. In the careful construction of these discourses, the potential exists for a message that is counter-hegemonic in its criticism of unsustainable uses of land and the differential impacts of climate change (Melucci 1996, Gibson-Graham 2006). However, for the time being, food organizers’ discursive emphasis tends to remain focused on neoliberal strategies: educating consumers in order to build a market for reindeer meat.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have attempted to illustrate two dominating discourses used by Sámi food organizers to discuss reindeer fat—the episteme knowledge of nutrition sciences and the techne knowledge of embodied experience. Reindeer fat is described in discourses as a nutritious and healthy food as well as a means to add economic value to reindeer herding by circumventing the waste from industrial slaughter practices. Working with these discourses enables Sámi food organizers to position Sámi foods, and especially reindeer fat, within broader public concerns such as the consumption of so-called good fats and the critique of food waste. Underlying these discussions, however, is growing

knowledge that the production of reindeer and their fat are threatened by climate change and the general loss of land for Sámi reindeer herders. Good fat can only be produced when herders have access to good land. By utilizing both episteme and techne ways of knowing reindeer fat, Sámi food organizers have potentially positioned themselves and Sámi foodways in a new space and language that will further Sámi rights to land. This research raises further questions regarding how the work of Sámi food organizers will impact daily uses of reindeer fat by individuals who identify as Sámi.

CHAPTER NINE

Conclusion

This dissertation examined the potential for a transformative indigenous food politics from the perspective of Sámi food producers and activists. I have argued that foods related to Sámi lands and cultural practices offer a new medium for Sámi activists to think about the nature of their rights to sovereignty as an indigenous people in Sweden. I demonstrated how Sámi food activists accustomed the discourses of global food movements, particularly that of food sovereignty and Slow Food's moral economy. Broadly, this dissertation was an effort to identify Sámi food organizations, their discourses and goals, and the real and potential consequences of their activities on Sámi foodways and food practitioners. Documentation and analysis of these organizations, discourses and activities furthers our understanding of the ways food and indigenous activism have come together as a set of discourses and practices that may transform both food movements and indigenous organizing. In this conclusion, I review some of my key findings and consider the unique aspects of Sámi food activism in relation to contemporary scholarly understandings of the Slow Food movement (as well as other third party certifications) and the food sovereignty movement.

I set out three specific objectives for my research: 1) To describe the discourses and models of food movements used by Sámi food organizations; 2) To critically examine the existing and potential impacts of those models on Sámi foods and food

producers; and 3) To determine how and if new livelihood strategies are opening up due to engagement with food movements.

First I sought to identify Sámi food organizations and to describe the multiple discourses and models they were using in their work. In Chapter 5, I examined the discourses and activities of Sámi food organizers, both in the terms posed by Sámi food activists and in the terms of global food movements. I asked, given the complexity and contradictions of global food movements, what do Sámi food activists seek from food movements? I identified a strategic blending of two models: food sovereignty and rural heritage food development. I found that the model of food sovereignty enabled Sámi food organizers to identify and protest the factors that threatened their livelihoods: (1) Sweden's new mineral strategy that promotes developing mines primarily on historic Sámi lands; (2) human-induced climate change and unpredictable weather patterns; and (3) the lack of Sámi controlled businesses in the food industry that prevent Sámi from controlling how the resources they provision are marketed and sold.

The model of heritage food development, the focus on building rural foodways situated in moral economies, enabled food organizers and producers to support themselves financially and to connect with consumers. Heritage food entrepreneurialism is a way for Sámi individuals and collectivities to build and sustain livelihoods and cultural practices in the North under the precarious conditions of contemporary capitalism where human-induced climate change, unsustainable land use in Sámi areas, and unpredictable markets generate instability for Sámi producers. This model of food movements, promoted by Slow Food, other third party certifications, and the EU

geographic origin certifications, enables Sámi producers and organizers to build more Sámi controlled businesses and labels and to address a fourth threat to their livelihoods, the co-optation of Sámi cuisines and marketing by non-Sámi. At the same time these certifications may increase their financial stability, they also build a new platform where Sámi producers and activists can connect with consumers, generating authentic relationships between producers, consumers, land and animals.

I concluded that these two models both represented challenges to the Swedish state and late capitalism at the same time that they worked within these systems. Sámi producers and activists pursued politics in the market by making their own Slow Food organization and building their own reindeer meat labels and certifications to singularize their products as authentically Sámi in the hopes that a knowledgeable consumer base would choose their products over others. Simultaneously, they informed those consumers about Sámi rights as indigenous peoples and the concept of food sovereignty. In their food sovereignty discourse, they repeatedly touched on their need for land not disturbed by other industries and their need for government regulations that recognize their special rights as indigenous people to produce their own foods. These strategies were well adapted to the inequities Sámi people perceived in their food system I addressed above, and they may complement one another, as I detail below.

The complementary nature of these two food activism models reflects the nature of circumpolar livelihoods, discussed in Chapter 3, wherein individuals combine cash employment and subsistence practices. Wolfe and Walker (1987) put forward the concept of the “mixed economy” to describe an economy that depends on wages to support

subsistence practices. In mixed economies of the circumpolar region, households use a blend of formal and informal economies; it is a “pluri-activity in that cash is generated through full-time or part-time paid work, seasonal labor, craft-making, commercial-fishing, or other pursuits such as involvement in tourism that support and supplement renewable resource harvesting activities” (Nuttall et al. 2005: 656). The money generated in wage earning, commodity production, or government transfers enables households to carry out harvesting activities that depend on the availability of cash to purchase technologies (boats, rifles, snowmobiles) for modern harvesting activities and rising standards of living. Cash, ironically, has made hunting, herding and gathering possible in some cases, rather than causing its decline (Kruse 1991, Nuttall 1992). Finding ways to earn money is thus a major concern for many Arctic inhabitants (Caulfield 2000). Individuals in these economies do not see wage and subsistence as alternatives to one another, but instead understand how to mix the two (Dombrowski et al. 2013: 3), pointing out the alternative paths pursued by circumpolar peoples. Poppel articulates that separating out the two sets of activities poses a double bind in that it assumes how circumpolar peoples should live:

“It is often assumed that indigenous peoples have only two options for their future: to return to their ancient ways of life, or to become assimilated into the dominant society. They should however, also have a third option, to modify their lifestyles, combining the old and the new in ways that maintain and enhance their identity while allowing their economy to evolve” (Poppel 2006: 66).

The assumption that indigenous food activists would work only in one food model – challenging the structures of the state using food sovereignty or working within the moral economy to earn cash – points to a double bind that food movement critics and scholars place activists and producers within. That is, they fail to contextualize the work

of indigenous food activists within the larger political-economic circumstances wherein Sámi activists must maintain themselves through work within capitalist systems. Earning incomes from that work is necessary not only to earning a living but also to enabling their work with food: cash is needed in order to purchase snowmobiles, vehicles, trailers, four-wheelers, GPS systems, fuel, and supplemental feed that are critical to the production of foods like reindeer meat. For those who work in processing, even more cash is needed to maintain state-inspected facilities. Again, this points to the need to acknowledge other options for indigenous peoples, one that enables them to exist complexly combining subsistence and wage provisioning in a mixed economy. This perspective also points us towards Gibson-Graham's encouragement to denaturalize the dominance of capitalism, and certainly the situation of Sámi and other circumpolar food producers leads us as scholars towards the conclusion that their activism is necessarily contradictory and complex as they work towards alternative food systems but necessarily must maintain themselves utilizing a mixed economy.

In my second objective, I sought to examine the impacts of the discourses, models and strategies Sámi food activists and producers were using. In Chapter 6, I described four case studies that illustrated the multiple and seemingly contradictory food activism approaches that sought to document, protect, teach and market Sámi foods. Given that efforts to revitalize, protect, or commodify heritage cuisines can have unintended consequences on practitioners and foods, I wanted to identify the impacts (anticipated or unanticipated) on Sámi food producers and Sámi foods. The creation of Sámi cookbooks illustrated the critical reflexivity of participants in taking Sámi food public as well as how a diverse set of culinary practices were represented or narrowed in practices and

discourses. Not all recipes and products were included, particularly those related to plants, because organizers wanted to guard some knowledge. Additionally, reindeer meat became the focus of the cookbook recipes, which narrowed the public definition of Sámi cuisines and may disproportionately benefit reindeer herders.

I also found that the establishment of Sámi organizations, such as Slow Food Sápmi and the Sámi Culinary Center, required an alteration (or an erasure) of shared culinary narratives of the north of Sweden. This erasure of the historic political economic context of Sámi cuisines occurred (and continues to occur) for the sake of differentiating Sámi foods in applications for certifications and in marketing foods as Sámi (particularly reindeer products like suovas). The EU origin application for suovas revealed the tension in determining who is allowed to produce and sell Sámi cuisines. While the herding of reindeer remains (almost) unquestionably Sámi because of Swedish legislation, the slaughter, butchering and production of reindeer meat takes place in the hands of many actors with different backgrounds. Some Sámi food producers find this aspect of their food production an asset, but other producers or organizers as well as certain audiences might find this inauthentic as they want to purchase “Sámi food” (whatever that has come to mean to them).

Finally, at the Sámi Culinary Center, key decisions were being made regarding what future Sámi chefs and food producers would learn. For this reason, it is a key site for determining what will constitute future Sámi cuisines produced by Sámi actors, as those who have graduated from this program go on to be representatives of Sámi cuisine. While definitions of Sámi foods and food producers are still flexible, I conclude that the

mechanisms are in place that may narrow who and what is considered authentically Sámi and who may enforce the boundaries between certain forms of Sámi and non-Sámi production.

In Chapter 8, I looked closely at one product, reindeer fat, and how two discourses enabled Sámi food activists and producers to imply what Sámi food producers need in order to continue their craft. At the Sámi Culinary Center, Sámi food organizers were analyzing the nutritional content of reindeer fat. Finding that the nutritional profile of reindeer fat was much richer in omega-3 fatty acids and other minerals than other fats like butter, Sámi food activists began referring to this information in their cookbooks and presentations. Using this discourse of nutrition science, as well as their own embodied knowledge of the health of reindeer fat, food activists were able to strategically deploy these two discourses in their activism. That is, reindeer fat only maintained this specific nutritional profile if reindeer were grazed on their natural and seasonal feeds. A critical argument could be made at this juncture: without the land in a more natural state and without access to that land, Sámi herders can no longer produce healthy and nutritious reindeer fat. Sámi food organizers accustomed the competing discourses of nutritionism and embodied knowledge in their descriptions of reindeer fat, but both discourses point towards a third element: the necessity of (viable) land to the production of good reindeer fat.

As my third and final research objective, I examined the livelihood strategies people employed in their work with food in order to understand the impact of food movements on development in the Jokkmokk area. This data forms a baseline of

information for future evaluations of the economic impact of food organizing on the regional development. I address the strategies of food producers in the Jokkmokk Food Assessment (Appendix 1). In our research, we found that nearly all of those laboring with food chose their line of work because of passion: their passion for flavors and tastes, their passion for meeting and serving customers, their passion for being in the woods, on the lakes, or in the reindeer corral, or their passion to be a part of a cultural and familial practice. They chose this livelihood in order to make a living doing work they found meaningful. Many of them work other jobs in order to support themselves, but they consistently return to work with food. They expressed pleasure to be a part of Jokkmokk and its reputation as a clean and natural area, and they express pride, frustration and relief that they often work as their own boss, that they control their labor.

Thus far, it is evident that the impacts of food movements are uneven. They are uneven because of the nature of particular industries – the limited fish supply and the hard labor fishing requires – and because of the focus of Sámi food organizers – the attention given to selling reindeer meat in order to assist reindeer owners and herders. While nearly all those interviewed reported increasing interest and admiration for their field of work – whether picking and processing berries, running restaurants with local foods, butchering, fishing, and hunting – fewer reported increased incomes from their work. For example, fishermen reported little to no growth, while local butchers reported continuing growth and interest. Many restaurant owners operated on very tight budgets, sometimes working at a deficit, because of the expense of northern ingredients like moose, reindeer and fish as well as the extreme seasonal fluxes in customers.

To conclude, I wish to consider how Sámi food activism complicates our understandings of food and indigenous movements and their transformative potential. First, as critical scholars and activists, we must consider what happens when moral consumption of heritage foods is no longer an important identity politics for individuals (West 2012) and when it no longer represents a lucrative funding opportunity for governments and organizations. For example, Sweden's Culinary Capital program was defunded in 2015 when its major supporter, the Center Party, was replaced by an alliance led by Sweden's labor party, the Social Democrats. Thus I ask: How long will consumers be willing to pay extra for a taste of Sámi foods that have been guaranteed by third party certifications like Slow Food Sápmi and Renlycka? How long will organizations and governments focus their funding on assisting food entrepreneurs? For this reason, the blending of both models (food sovereignty and heritage food development) appears essential. The focus on consumers builds a public both aware of and sympathetic to Sámi rights. The Swedish state may continue to ignore Sámi requests for guaranteed land access and control, but activists have designed and promoted a framework – food sovereignty – which, if supported by allied consumers, may force the State to ensure Sámi rights for a much longer time than a simple taste.

In many ways, the trajectory of Sámi food organizing follows closely that of environmental movements. Hugh Beach (2000) has reflected on the environmental movements of the 1990s that brought together Sámi herders and Swedish environmental activists to address unsustainable uses of lands in northern Sweden. Those alliances, however, began to fray when environmental activists and Sámi herders conflicted over issues such as the control of predator populations like bear, wolf and lynx that feed on

reindeer as well as the use of motorized vehicles in national parks in the herding of reindeer. Like Beach, I agree that environmental activists (as well as others) exhibit hypocrisy when they criticize herders for these practices given that it is extractive industries like mining and hydropower that have a much more significant impact, or footprint, on land degradation and loss of animal life when compared with the motorbikes and snowmobiles of herders. The alliances were productive spaces to advance Sámi and environmental interests, but they were not enduring.

Tsing (2007) found similar alliances became productive spaces in Indonesia where the environmental movement became one of the only sites where the public could discuss justice in Indonesia's oppressive regimes of the 1980s and 1990s. Indonesian environmental activists allied with rural indigenous communities. The circumstances differ considerably between Indonesia and Sweden, but the space and alliances that environmental movements enabled are similar. Moreover, Tsing identifies how the discourse of the environmental movement and international indigenous organizing enabled further articulation of a Sámi indigenous status. In the early work of the indigenous rights movement, the status of Sámi participants as indigenous peoples was challenged by the Norwegian and Swedish states and by New World indigenous peoples. The 1978 Alta conflict, discussed in Chapter 3, crystallized Sámi status as indigenous and enabled alliance building between Sámi, Norwegian environmentalists, and other indigenous peoples.

Similar alliances have been built between Sámi food producers and contemporary food activists, both indigenous and non-indigenous. Like their environmental

counterparts, these alliances open up new political spaces and discourses from which Sámi activists can mobilize and voice their concerns. Together, these food producers and organizers seek to decentralize industrial food systems and to promote local, heritage and sustainably produced foods. Food movements are so powerful because so many interests coalesce under their banner: concerns for sustainability, local economies, inequality, health, democracy (Holt-Giménez 2011), and indigenous rights. But these alliances may be even more precarious than environmental alliances because they are often based on moral consumption, relying on consumers to make morally embedded decisions (Guthman 2008, Mares and Alkon 2011). Consumers and producers may also engage with food movements for very different political and moral reasons. Thus the spaces that become available in food movements are fraught with the tension of competing agendas, which once pushed to their limits, may destabilize those alliances just as in earlier environmental movements. Additionally, there is the threat of simply not being heard by those with which one shares this new political space, as demonstrated by the Swedish Matlandet Conference.

A key strategy of Sámi food activism was the effort to bring consumers into authentic relationships with Sámi foods and food producers in order to enable those consumers to experience Sámi cuisine and, at times, Sámi politics. In Chapter 7 I used two case studies – the 2014 Matlandet conference sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture and the 2014 autumn slaughter of reindeer - to illustrate the ways Sámi food organizers and producers sought to build relationships with consumers. During the conference planning, Sámi food organizers carefully constructed the experiences of the Ministry of Agriculture visitors in order to connect them to the food and food producers

from Jokkmokk. These representatives were invited into Sámi (and Jokkmokk) culinary practices, which then spilled over into an invitation to Sámi and rural northern politics (in the case of the mine). Yet, when it came time to invite the larger public into Sámi and Jokkmokk politics, Jokkmokk's food organizers were largely denied the time and space needed to discuss the complex challenges that threaten Sámi foodways. Food organizers were mistaken in believing that the national Matlandet conference and project were transformative spaces, particularly for Sámi indigenous politics. This silencing is representative of the danger inherent in building alliances between parties with similar but still different interests. This process is necessary to making a transformative indigenous food politics, but the end goal must go beyond gaining consumer support to getting legislation that guarantees Sámi rights.

Can these relationships be transformative and in favor of Sámi (food) sovereignty? If Swedish consumers become sympathetic to Sámi causes, it will certainly assist Sámi activists in making cases for particular rights to the Swedish state. Yet, inviting consumers into these experiences can also alter them as we saw in the case of the autumn slaughter of reindeer. In this moment, many individuals experienced the overwhelming presence of outsiders at the event. Food activists and producers will have to strike a balance between the need to build these relationships with consumers and the need to retain the integrity of events if this form of activism will be successful in building Sámi food sovereignty.

The analyses of the discourses and models led me to reframe our understanding of the boundary between Sámi foods and Sámi politics. That is, Sámi foodways, cultural

practices, histories and identities have always been tied to Sámi political circumstances as indigenous peoples within Sweden. This connection became apparent when I considered how people constructed narratives about Sámi cuisines, often referencing the imposition of hydropower dams, timber harvests, or laws that impacted the ways the particular food we were discussing could be produced, harvested and processed. Herding, fishing, hunting and gathering (the acts which largely produce Sámi foods) have always been impacted by policies of the Swedish state and crown since initial contact. Tasting Sámi foods is not simply tasting a thousand year old tradition. For Sámi food producers and activists, it is also tasting the tenacity of people that have maintained food practices within the ongoing and continued context of Swedish colonization and settlement.

These circumstances are what make Sámi (and other indigenous) participation in food movements unique: the discourses and models they use are “shot through with the intentions and accents” (Bakhtin 1981: 324) of words they and their activist predecessors have stated many times before in their efforts to regain sovereignty from colonizing states. Just as the food justice movement pulls from environmental justice movements in U.S. communities of color (Gottlieb and Fisher 1996), indigenous food movements pull from the repertoire of discourses and models they have used in previous movements for decolonization, rights and sovereignty. In order to accustomize global food movements, certain ideas must be sloughed off. For example, Slow Food International’s discourses that reproduce colonial relations by claiming to protect indigenous knowledge for the world rather than for the indigenous community itself are left aside. In place of those ideas, new ones are blended into the discourses of Slow Food, such as food sovereignty. Discourses like food sovereignty enable indigenous peoples to tie in their continued

efforts to achieve other types of sovereignty. The movement for indigenous sovereignty challenges colonialism, while the movement for food sovereignty challenges the impacts of neoliberal policies and industrial food systems on indigenous foodways. Food sovereignty asks for a restructuring of land, environmental and food management policies in order to recognize the rights of humans, indigenous and non-indigenous, to control their food systems (Mares and Alkon 2011).

Indigenous sovereignty movements, however, have “betrayed” their followers, according to Michael Brown (2007), because the implications in the term sovereignty are unattainable. In the specific case of indigenous rights, sovereignty has “broadened from its conventional implications to encompass every aspect of indigenous life, including education, language, religion and the expressive arts. Sovereignty is reimagined as a condition of autonomy from other cultures and political entities (2007: 173). Sovereignty and self-determination have betrayed their adherents primarily because they imply that a collective group can exist independently of others,²² a possibility that does not (and perhaps never did) exist in our interconnected worlds. Tsing adds that sovereignty is not “uniformly empowering” because it can also advance patriarchy as well as the interests of some indigenous groups and members over others (2007: 52-53). Similarly, Edelman’s tracing of the lineage of *food sovereignty* echoes Brown and Tsing’s concerns regarding indigenous sovereignty. All three scholars raise questions regarding how practical policies are to be established which would enable real autonomy for indigenous groups or

²² Brown goes on to suggest that the use of sovereignty should end because it implies a mandate to exclude and advance one people’s goals at the expense of another’s. I do not agree with this line of argument, but I find the idea of betrayal useful to thinking about the potential of food sovereignty.

food producers and consumers under the circumstances of interconnected worlds or food systems. It may in fact be impossible to achieve a conventionally defined sovereignty for Sámi peoples, whether indigenous or food.

I asked in Chapter 2 if the model of food sovereignty would enable Sámi to traverse their lands freely, to harvest, hunt, and herd on Sámi lands without deference to the laws and borders of nation-states. Engagement with Slow Food and other third party certifications, whether controlled by Sámi, Swedish or other organizers, will not change the laws of nation-states and transnational governing bodies, because they focus on marketing and educating consumers. The nation-state, and in the case of the Sámi the EU, remain the governing organizations which can grant true sovereignty to Sámi food producers (the ability to determine production laws and land use), while consumers can only support the continuation of Sámi food production within capitalist systems of production. While a sympathetic and allied consumer base may prove useful to Sámi activists in promoting food sovereignty, a critique of third party certification engagement is that they may supplant or usurp the direct pressure and collective action which could actually lead to a reform of state policies (Brown and Getz 2008; Mares and Alkon 2011). By concentrating on consumers, Slow Food Sápmi and other Sámi certification schemes risk supplanting collective action that could promote a food sovereignty that would enable a structural transformation of their situation within Sweden.

Additionally, the focus on promoting local and heritage food production can unwittingly contribute to exclusionary practices. First, there is always the risk that by raising the price and interest in foods from Sápmi like reindeer meat, certain Sámi will no

longer be able to afford or access those foods, whether through purchase or sharing. The food movement may inadvertently prevent many Sámi from taking part in food rituals that have been essential to the practice of being Sámi. Second, as I detailed in my discussion on the narrowing and objectification of Sámi cuisines, the complexity of food production in the North is simplified and erased in these narratives that are largely designed for marketing. A shortcoming of this dissertation has been my tendency to also concentrate on Sámi food production in Jokkmokk at the expense of food harvesting and processing done by other non-Sámi individuals. It is not just Sámi who produce food in northern Sweden. Many individuals in Jokkmokk occupy this precarious position, earning a living from the wild food resources found in the mountains and forests around Jokkmokk. This aspect of the food movement, the plurality of individuals who work alongside, with and separate from Sámi food producers is outside the scope of this dissertation, though a brief introduction is made through the Jokkmokk Food Assessment. Critically examining the ways food movements bring separated individuals together in the act of food production and promoting rural areas would equally advance our scholarly understandings of the transformative potential of food movements.

To conclude and transition us to the Jokkmokk Food Assessment included as an Appendix to this dissertation, I wish to consider the stories of these individuals who work with food in order to provoke thoughts on whether the food movement can have a positive and lasting impact on them. Additionally, these stories illustrate the connections people have to food practices as familial, cultural and social ties. Ethnography is built on human experience, and through these personal stories we can glean the impact of food movements as well as the importance of food to individual and group identities.

One young woman explained to me that she chose to attend the Sámi Culinary Training because she had Sámi heritage, her grandmother, and food was a medium through which she could reconnect with that aspect of her identity and past. She runs a restaurant with a man who attended the training with her. He fell into food in high school, his grades qualifying him for the cooking program and little else. Yet, his experience with his family yielded Sámi culinary traditions that have become valuable to their restaurant. As Sámi foods and Jokkmokk became better known, his own profile as a chef has risen and he's now one of the better known chefs in the region. They have trouble getting enough customers interested in their local food menu throughout the year because of Jokkmokk's isolation, but they haven't given up yet.

Another man has fished on the lakes of the Laponia area long before it was designated a World Heritage Site. He catches arctic char, brown trout and white fish by net and they are flown by helicopter to the buyers who wait outside the Laponia borders. It is difficult work but it's necessary for him. He has combined fishing, herding and handicraft to earn his living since he was a young man. No one in his family will continue fishing the lakes for income. Perhaps no one in his sameby will either. People postulate that the work is too hard and too poorly paid. Instead, younger people will continue to fish for their own subsistence and pleasure, enjoying the taste of fresh caught fish in the summers. Fresh caught and smoked arctic char from the region's lakes will simply cease to exist on menus and in local grocery stores.

Finally, another woman and her family chose to open a butcher shop. They simply needed more to live from. With two children growing up, they wanted some sort

of livelihood to be available to them should they choose to remain in Jokkmokk. Living from reindeer herding alone was simply not a possibility. They received funding and support from local Jokkmokk organizations and the Sámi Parliament, and they are part of the Renlycka certification and have contributed many hours to Slow Food Sápmi and Jokkmokk Culinary Capital events. Each year their business grows as more and more people learn about them and become interested in reindeer meat. They aren't rich, but they're beginning to break even.

The impacts of food movements are uneven. Certain reindeer butchers have experienced positive growth and feedback, while fishermen receive positive feedback but very little financial incentive to continue fishing the waters around Jokkmokk. Opening restaurants based on local and Sámi foods is lucrative as an idea yet difficult to sell given the isolation and low population of Jokkmokk. Still, engaging with food is what these individuals have chosen because of their passion for the land, for their past, for their family.

Scholars have tended to divide the food movement into two camps: one focused on moral economies, voting with your fork, and another focused on structural transformations like food sovereignty. This dissertation helps us understand how indigenous peoples, like the individuals and families described above, blend both, living with the contradictions and complexities of these models. Moral consumerism may not address the root causes of injustice and colonialism, but Sámi food producers participate in these systems for their own good reasons. Their efforts reflect the local Sámi concept of *birget*, of coping and making do, as well as the global condition that they occupy in

late capitalism: they lead precarious livelihoods, without security, vulnerable to shifts in the global meat market, to seasonal and increasingly irregular weather patterns, and to encroachment of extractive industry. The space opened up by food movements enables them to work towards stability in their own lives and towards a transformative indigenous politics.

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Appendix

APPENDIX 1

To be a food producer in Jokkmokk Municipality

A Report from Jokkmokk Matlandethuvudstad



Amanda Sophie Green, Ph.D. Candidate

Oregon State University

February 2016

amagreen@gmail.com

Summary

The town of Jokkmokk was selected as Sweden's 2014 *Matlandethuvudstad*, or Culinary Capital, by the Swedish government. Because of this honor, we chose to develop a study of food producers in Jokkmokk's Kommun in order to understand their realities, aspirations, and challenges. Over forty interviews were conducted with local food producers, ranging from chefs, butchers and makers of jam to reindeer herders, mushroom and milk experts, berry pickers and fishermen.

We found that nearly all of those working with food chose their line of work because of passion: their passion for flavors and tastes, their passion for meeting and serving customers, their passion for being in the woods, on the lakes, or in the reindeer corral, or their passion to be a part of a cultural and familial practice. They chose this livelihood in order to make a living doing work they found meaningful. Many of them work other jobs in order to support themselves, but they consistently return to work with food. They express pleasure to be a part of Jokkmokk and its reputation as a clean and natural area, and they express pride, frustration and relief that they often work as their own boss, that they control their labor.

Many diverse challenges face these food producers. The most common include difficulties in getting financial support and loans, labor costs, shipping products, and reaching and attracting customers due to Jokkmokk's isolation. The more difficult to address challenges include the potential of a mine, which many perceive as a threat to Jokkmokk's reputation and land base, and the perception that leaders are *hemmablind* and lack creative responses to contemporary issues facing Jokkmokk. As a researcher, an unmentioned challenge is the lines that are drawn and networks that are formed between people based on where they are from originally. Building an inclusive local food system and environment will require reaching out personally to everyone, *everyone*, who works with food and seeking to understand how they actually work with food.

Those working with food hope that Jokkmokk will continue to grow as a food destination and that other entrepreneurs will develop new products and new food tourism. With this growth and association of the name Jokkmokk with local foods, they hope that

more businesses can stay open during the evening and weekend hours to meet the growing demand of new tourists.

They also hope that Jokkmokk's kommun will consider purchasing local foods. Many, many food producers expressed this interest, and they especially wanted freshly-prepared and local foods served to school children. They understand the challenges of this demand, and they hope the kommun will look to other kommuns such as Åre for guidance.

This report is a collaboration between myself, Amanda Green, a doctoral student in Applied Anthropology at Oregon State University, Victoria Harnesk, the director of Jokkmokk Matlandethuvudstad, and Strukturum and its staff. Any mistakes or misrepresentations are my own. I was not able to reach and speak with many food produce. I welcome feedback and criticism in order to strengthen the content and direction of this report. I am very grateful to everyone who spoke with me.

Thank you,

Amanda S. Green

Introduction

This project was undertaken because in 2008 the Swedish government launched a project to invigorate rural communities by increasing production of local foods (called Sverige: Det Nya Matlandet or Sweden: The New Food Nation). The general aims of the Matlandet project were to increase the number of food-related jobs, businesses, restaurants, exports and tourists in Sweden. Each year the Ministry of Rural Affairs selected one city in Sweden to be its “Food Capital.” In 2014, Jokkmokk was selected. The goal of this study was to identify the assets and barriers Jokkmokk’s food producers face with the goal of developing food in Jokkmokk within this larger national framework.

The study’s methodology is based on the “community food assessment” model (Oregon Food Bank n.d., First Nations Food Sovereignty Tool n.d.). Currently no data exists regarding Jokkmokk’s food system, including how many people work with food, how many food resources exist, or an evaluation of what individuals and businesses need



Figure 34 Rapadalen in Sarek National Park

in order to succeed. The goal of the study is to fill this gap in knowledge. The purpose of this study is to assess the food system in the county of Jokkmokk in northern Sweden in order to inform the local public as well as future policies and programs considered by local organizations and government. The study has three specific objectives:

- 1) to identify the number of individuals, organizations, and businesses working with food; which food resources they work with; and, where appropriate, which general areas they harvest in;
- 2) to identify the assets and challenges dealt with by the region's food producers (hunters, fishermen, reindeer herders, farmers, berry-pickers, chefs, butchers, etc);
- 3) to identify the region's inhabitants' access to and interest in locally produced foods.

Data from this project will be used in reports and presentations by Strukturum, Jokkmokk's business development organization. Data will also be used by the student researcher for her dissertation, papers submitted to peer-reviewed journals, and papers given at scholarly conferences.

The goal with a Community Food Assessment is to tell the story of a community or a region and to engage those who work in the region so that they also can tell the story. The result is a report that demonstrates both the numbers on production and consumptions as well as the experience of food producers and consumers. The main framework of the research depends on looking at a community's resources from a positive perspective rather than a negative. Researchers identify resources that already exist in the community rather than simply talking about needs. One looks for a solution within the community itself rather than from outside the community (Oregon Food Bank, n.d.).

Amanda Green has interviewed 45 people. They come from different places but they all live in Jokkmokk County now. It includes people with their roots in Sámi, Swedish, Thai, German, Dutch and Iranian societies. It includes 14 men and 27 women. More than half of them (nearly 75%) owned their own business. For half of the group, their food work represented their primary income. Nearly everyone agreed that they didn't do their work to become rich, but that was never their goal, a facet that we review in this report.

Themes

What is Good within Jokkmokk's Food System

“The name Jokkmokk is great!” Nearly everyone mentioned that the name Jokkmokk, and its association with clean water, land, plants and animals, was a positive part of their business. Many also agreed that Jokkmokk is *actually* clean, with water you can drink straight from the mountains, animals grazing on wild pasture, fish from clean lakes and rivers, and berries and plants from clean forests. Jokkmokk’s wild food resources and tastes also inspire the work of many food producers.

Politically, many people found it easy to find and approach the appropriate people if and when they needed help. “Jokkmokk isn’t that big so that’s better. If I want to have contact, I can. We’re near the decision-makers, the development office, property managers.” Others found that Strukturum was a very helpful organization, and the



Figure 36 Holiday Market in central Jokkmokk

majority of food producers had received some sort of assistance from them such as networking, consulting or workshop help, though many had not, an issue that is discussed in each sector. Finally, many found that it was easy to live in Jokkmokk with a smaller income because it is less expensive to live in Jokkmokk.

Many of those who work with food have chosen this field because it gives them a flexible schedule and allows them to be creative. One person commented that running her business is difficult, however “From a long-term perspective, my business has made me more creative. When I was employed, people led me. But now I have to be inventive, resourceful and confident.” Another person who had previously worked in government commented, “I have worked for the Kommun and it goes like this: You just go round and round in circles. It’s like a yearly cycle and every year you have to start from the beginning. And even if you work more, it’s still the same result. If you work less, then

there isn't any change either. Now it's a challenge, a little competition with yourself. You decide yourself. There's not boss."

"From a long-term perspective, my business has made me more creative. When I was employed, people led me. But now I have to be inventive, resourceful and confident."

What inspires them?

Everyone has different reasons they choose to work with food. Nearly everyone stated that they work for the income, even if it is small. Some describe their work as a hobby, but it is so much more than a hobby. All of those who work with food express a passion for their work, whether because they love the region, the land and its resources, or they enjoy controlling their own labor. Listen to their voices as they describe the reasons they choose to work with food:

- ❖ *I was inspired by my grandmother (mother's mother) and have always wanted to work as a chef.*
- ❖ *I saw how good the ingredients are in Jokkmokk and I also wanted to change my life and do something new.*
- ❖ *I've grown up with it (berry and plant gathering). It's important that we make use of everything out there.*
- ❖ *I just want to gather! It lives in me to do it!*
- ❖ *I pick for my health.*
- ❖ *I do it because my parents have done it, and I want to continue a tradition.*
- ❖ *I want to create a job for my children, something for them so that they can also stay in Jokkmokk.*
- ❖ *To be out with the reindeer is all that I want to do.*
- ❖ *I pick because I want to be out in nature, in the forest.*
- ❖ *I want there to be competition for those who already buy up berries. I thought it wasn't right that someone could say no to my product. I had nowhere else to sell!*
- ❖ *It feels good to be able to live in Jokkmokk and create your own job.*
- ❖ *We needed a little more when we had children.*
- ❖ *I decide myself. There's no boss, or rather I am the boss and I can compete with myself and see changes.*
- ❖ *I like to share my knowledge with restaurants and with reindeer owners.*
- ❖ *I want to share knowledge to everyone about Jokkmokk, berries, plants and the forests.*
- ❖ *I see myself as a culture bearer.*
- ❖ *It's so much fun! I fantasize about what I will bake. I look forward to waking up in the morning just to try something new. Nature has so much!*
- ❖ *I think it's fun to be alone on the lake. And I can't make it only on reindeer meat.*

Major Challenges

Food producers are happy to work in Jokkmokk, but they face many challenges due to the remoteness of the location, the lack of external funding, and the potential threats of land loss in the region. Below are the common challenges that food producers brought up in interviews.

Loss of land to mining

The response to a possible mine in Jokkmokk were diverse. Some food producers thought a mine would increase the population which would in turn increase the number of customers and assist their business. Those few who supported the mine were concerned that Jokkmokk was emptying of people and they hoped that a mine could allow more youth to stay. More food producers did not support a mine. They believed the number of customers could increase, but they also did not wish for a mine to develop. The reasons they listed were: 1) the environmental consequences to the land; 2) the reduction in land that is needed for food production; 3) disbelief that a mine would bring more inhabitants and customers; and 4) damage to the image of Jokkmokk as a clean and natural area.



Figure 38 Akka in Stora Sjöfallet / Stuor Muorkke National Park

“What we sell is clean land, clean water. You can destroy that also. It’s a label, a varumark, that you should care about. It takes 100 years to bring land back from a mine, or longer.”

A local butcher worried that they would have more customers but less productive land. “A mine, it’s practical. There will be more people, maybe 20,000 more people. We’ll sell more reindeer meat. Sweden’s free lands are shrinking for everything, moose,

reindeer, and so the open lands shrink. How does it help us if we have more customers but no raw materials, no ingredients? The smaller the land we have, the smaller reindeer herding will be. There are so many around the reindeer herding who would also be impacted.”

A local food educator stated, “I want people to look at this fabulous area and how I use the food and wild herbs as a new connection. I have a big belief that we have so much value in our land that is destroyed by the forest and mining industries. They destroy this living thing. I wonder, what if you knew that there were things in your forest worth thousands of kronor? Would you use those things before you cut the forest down?” Another butcher remained skeptical of a mining industry. “Maybe a mine will increase the number of restaurants, the number of people. But is it worth it? Maybe my children can work in the mine, but can we survive without it? Is it a mine or fish in Sápmi? There are other things one can focus on. Increase tourism.”

Food producers understood the importance of development to the region, however, they were largely advocates of alternative forms of development, from tourism to further food production. They advocated finding alternative values in forested lands before they are logged or considering the renewable value of a fishing industry over a mining industry.

Hemmablind: A Failure of Imagination

Many food producers hinted that there was little imagination in Jokkmokk when it came to alternative industries to natural resource extraction such as mining, timber and hydropower. Many of these individuals believed that more businesses like their own would be the best way forward for Jokkmokk.

Many stated that people in Jokkmokk could be *hemmablind*, or blind to the values in front of them. One person criticized, “The Kommun believes that a real job is a job that is destructive and ruins. They don’t see cooking, ecotourism as real jobs. One is *hemmablind*, home blind. They don’t think about how we can protect nature and culture here, and that’s too bad”

A food producer who recently relocated to Jokkmokk agreed, “In Jokkmokk the kommun has a group for organizing, but it only wants mining. But it is tourism that can work in Jokkmokk. We have a great opportunity here. We can see it from the outside. It’s a local blindness. They are blind that they have a multibillion dollar tourism industry to tap into. People who are working in the kommun don’t know how to sell it. They can talk about Jokkmokk Winter Market all they like, but you can’t wait 408 years for the next big thing to happen here.”

“We have a great opportunity here. We can see it from the outside. It’s a local blindness. They are blind that they have a multibillion dollar tourism industry to tap into.”

Another producer advocated for many small businesses. "I think for Jokkmokk, I see the value in many small entrepreneurs rather than one big industry. That is where we are now. Vattenfall and the forest industries have been here historically and left. Now there is much more value to have many small companies than a big one that takes money away from Jokkmokk. They don’t live here. Some might work here. But it’s not a profit



Figure 40 Kvikkjokk Delta at Tarra River

for us. I think the Kommun is building a luftslot, a castle of air, when they think a big company is a solution.”

This same person continues, “Small companies, cooperating together is equal to one big industry. Together, those working with food, with knowledge/IT, with experiences and tourism, can work together. There can be many of us who use the area without making big holes or gaps. There are ways forward. It takes longer and it’s not as much money. But they want big money and fast. And we are a very poor Kommun. So I understand why they want big money, fast.”

“Small companies, cooperating together is equal to one big industry. Together, those working with food, with knowledge/IT, with experiences and tourism, can work together. There can be many of us who use the area without making big holes or gaps. There are ways forward. It takes longer and it’s not as much money.”

Starting a business

Getting start-up money was difficult for many individuals, and they emphasized that it was important to persevere, to not give up, when the banks first said no. “We thought it would be easy in the beginning because we have a lot of friends, and we thought, okay, they’ll help us. And we went in there, and we said, okay, well we think we might need this and this. And we came out without very much money. Then we sat down with someone who is more of an expert. And she said, no, you don’t *think* you need this, YOU NEED THIS. So we marched into that meeting the next time, and we had written up everything we needed to start this, including the renovations and the machines. And we said, we need this and this and this. And we came out much better the next time. So if you get no the first time, go back. Go back and ask again.”

Another person who works with animals explained, “It’s difficult to get money, and farming costs money. It costs a lot and has very little profit. There are no shortcuts. If you need a machine, you have to buy that machine. If Jokkmokk wants more primary production, they will have to be more active in supporting with money or leases to those who want to produce.”

“If you get no the first time, go back. Go back and ask again.”

These individuals point to two issues. First, those interested in developing a small food business must not take no for an answer, and they will likely be told “no” when they first ask for financial assistance. Second, a discussion may need to occur between banks, kommun officials, and small businesses regarding the need for financial assistance for new food entrepreneurs.

Shipping Products

For nearly everyone who produced goods such as reindeer meat, jams, cheese etc., they shipped much of their product to other parts of Sweden. The cost and logistics of shipping are a major challenge because of Jokkmokk's location. Some producers choose to make customers pay for the cost of shipping, while others do not. It may be useful to have a discussion of the best ways to ship products to other parts of Sweden and the EU



Figure 41 Cloudberryes gathered along the Padjelantaleden

and if cooperation between businesses is a possibility.

Marketing and Consulting

Some food producers believed they still need some help to grow their businesses. Some suggested simply having a mentorship program would help where they could be connected with someone who could guide them through bureaucracy. Others stated they needed help and encouragement to use social media such as Twitter, Facebook and other formats for story-telling.

Destination Jokkmokk

Many smaller and seasonal businesses were frustrated with Jokkmokk's tourism office. They believed their business was too small to pay for a membership. One person stated, "I want the Tourism Office to be open to everyone, that one didn't need to pay to be part of Destination Jokkmokk. I would need to be in my boutique an entire month in order to pay the membership dues. They've forgotten the small businesses, those who are maybe open a few months every year." Others expressed satisfaction with Destination Jokkmokk, particularly in 2014, as they found more tourists were coming to their businesses.

Changes Food producers hope for



Figure 42 Coffee prepared at Matlandet

Growing Jokkmokk's Food Reputation

Many individuals hoped there would be more food producers and local products to create more of a name for Jokkmokk. They also believed more tourists throughout the year would help (though they didn't want thousands and thousands of tourists). One producer suggested, "This is an exclusive area, with many resources. You can export that exclusive feeling with products, with food and handicrafts in a more organized way than what we do now." Others also hoped that a network of food producers

could develop in order to advertise and work together.

Attracting Tourists

A major challenge to strengthening tourism is keeping businesses open during the weekend and having enough customers to make remaining open worth it. One boutique owner commented, "Jokkmokk, they can live on the name, but it's closed everywhere during the weekends. It's only us that are open on Saturday and Sunday. My husband says that Jokkmokk loves to be closed. For Jokkmokk, it's only the Jokkmokk Market that exists."

One suggestion is to move businesses outdoors during the summer months, like the town of. Another suggestion is to organize some sort of outdoor food event during the summer, where everyone who works with food could sell: "There could be live music. I think we need to liven up the center of town. It's so sad when it's so dead. We need more places to meet and socialize."

Many agreed that a sign on the roundabout in Jokkmokk on E45 that indicated the local food producers and locations would be very helpful. The sign could also say that Jokkmokk was the 2014 Matlandethuvudstad. A Vuollerim producer noted that the signs in Vuollerim are outdated, and one sign is empty and impossible to reach. They hoped that the kommun would consider updating those signs.

More Affordable and Lenient Permits

One person involved in organizing events for the Jokkmokk Winter Market hoped that the permits could cost less. If they cost less, they suggested, perhaps people would plan more events during other parts of the year. They stated, “It’s difficult to organize fun events because it costs so much money. When I organize the music for the Jokkmokk’s Market, I have to pay so much money to sell beer. Maybe more people would be willing to organize fun events if it were easier and didn’t cost so much.”

Another issue were the rules regarding cash register use and taxes. One person stated, “The winter market must have easier rules. When it is -30 and you are trying to work a cash register. Bad idea. With too much paper work and rules, no one sells and no tourists come.”

Food in Schools and Elderly Homes

The most common change that food producers wished for was a change in the food served in Jokkmokk schools and elderly care homes. Many wished that the Kommun could learn from other regions about purchasing locally produced foods. For example, one person stated, “I think that all the restaurants and the Kommun could use locally produced food. The Kommun can buy in food from its area. It will be hard with EU rules. They are required to open bids, for example, if the Kommun wants to buy lingonberry jam, then maybe they have to buy a generic lingonberry jam that’s half apples instead of something that’s more expensive. Some Kommuns have bought locally produced food. It would be better if one could buy meat, reindeer meat for example. The Kommun is the biggest buyer in Jokkmokk.” Many made a statement similar to this one: “I think it’s too

bad that Jokkmokk that has so many resources in food and forests takes advantage of so little of it.”

Some acknowledged the skills of the people who prepare the school and elderly care food, and they believed these individuals could meet these demands: “I wish they served good food in the schools. I’m so disappointed with the food in the schools. It



Figure 44 Students from the Sámi Elementary School prepare food at the Matlandet Conference

shouldn’t transport and warm up the food. Fish should look like fish!” They believed too that if Jokkmokk schools were known for their healthy, locally produced foods, perhaps more parents would be willing to move to the area and enroll their children in its schools.

”We need to change the Constitution. Food has to cost something. School food must cost something. We give bad food to children and they then get sick. They must get good food, but it’s a question of price. We must value food and then we will get bigger revenues in reindeer and fish and then more and more people will want to produce food.”

Others wished that people understood that good food was important and would simply cost more, for individuals and for the government. Some believed that if people paid more for food, then this would encourage more people to become involved in producing food: “We need to change the Constitution. Food has to cost something. School food must cost something. We give bad food to children and they then get sick. They must get good food, but it’s a question of price. We must value food and then we

doesn’t have to cost a lot of money. I know those working in the kitchen, they know their work. They’re trained and they can hire more people.” Another person seconded this idea: “I think the schools need to cook their own food. They

will get bigger revenues in reindeer and fish and then more and more people will want to produce food.”

Finally, many spoke of the role of students, teachers and cooks when it comes to berries. Many remembered picking berries for school and they lamented that the schools don't do that anymore. When it was mentioned that the laws perhaps prevented them from picking their own berries, one person had this response: “If the teacher wants to go outside, then they should be allowed to out and pick berries. There have been so many clever teachers that have been outside with the children. Why should we buy berries when they grow here? Every student can pick four or five kilos of berries. And then the cooks can take care of them. If they aren't allowed to do it, then they can come to my house and then I'll take care of them! One should not say it's illegal. That is just a lack of imagination!”

”One should not say it's illegal. That is just a lack of imagination!”

Plants

Methods

For this data, one individual was interviewed directly regarding plants, and three others who work with plants were observed in their work as educators.

Introduction

Very few people work with plants in Jokkmokk, but use of wild plants is a growing industry throughout Sweden. In Jokkmokk those few individuals working with plants are responsible for growing local people's interest.

Additionally, an increasing number of

individuals are being educated about plants via

the Sámisk Mat och Kompetens Centrum, the Samernas reindeer herder trainings, and independent classes with plant experts. The industry around plants is primarily a

knowledge and experience industry, rather than a production industry. Those knowledgeable in wild plants provide courses, presentations and guided tours to

interested groups in Jokkmokk and throughout Sweden. The food production part of most of these businesses is quite small.

The season for working directly with plants, offering guided tours and experience-based courses is largely limited to the late spring, summer and early fall. Indoor presentations occur throughout the year. Plant experts work independently and full-time. For the most part, they do not employ other individuals. One individual commented that she was trying to make her work full-time, and she is “positive we have the flavors, tastes and products to build on. I think what we have is interesting for other people, and maybe other countries as well. I know we have to step it up, but I'm not ready. I would need a partner to build the production side, someone who was more interested in production. I want to pick in my own peace.”



Figure 46 *Fjällsyra or sorrel*



Figure 48 Angelica

Most of those working with plants learned their special knowledge from families and elders as they grew up. Others gained their knowledge from being on the land with friends and colleagues and in courses given by those individuals who have

more traditional knowledge.

People working with plants use the buds, leaves, flowers, roots and berries. Plants typically harvested in Jokkmokk include angelica, mountain sorrel, birch leaves, spruce and pine tips, meadowsweet, blueberry leaves, rosenroot, skvatram, and sprängtica.

While many of the plants in Jokkmokk can be found throughout Sweden, they do have unique properties because they grow above the Arctic Circle. One plant expert commented, “Scientific reports show that berries and plants from up here have lots of value. They’re higher in antioxidants and minerals than wild berries and plants from southern Sweden. They have a higher concentration of these antioxidants and minerals. They speculate it may be the shorter growing season and the midnight sun that makes them have a higher concentration.” The knowledge of the superior value of Arctic plants and berries is critical to the marketing of these products by plant specialists.

In addition to those individuals making a living from plants, many people gather these plants for their own domestic use. For example, one individual who owns reindeer, hunts moose, and fishes explained, “I used to dry angelica, but I bought them from Viddernas for a few years. Now I try to candy them myself. I make a dried tea with kvänne and algjort (meadowsweet). I pick the flowers. I freeze the birch leaves fresh. It’s a medicine. It’s like a penicillin for the reindeer. Birch is cleansing. We make juobmo with fjällsyra, mountain sorrel.” Such accounts are typical for the region, but many

people have limited time to gather plants and so they purchase goods from the region's plant producers.

Goals and Profits

The goal of most of these plant experts is to make a simple living by showcasing the diversity and value of plants from the region. All of them share a concern for maintaining a balance between educating the public and ensuring that the plants are not over-picked by that public.

One person explained that she has chosen to start a new career because wants to work with nature's pantry, to use the natural tastes of her area, and to work with her hands. Another person explained that her interest in plants began because of their medicinal value for her own personal health. Finally, another specialist told me a story about her work to educate other industries about alternative values of the forest. She presented to Skogstyrelsen, and "I wanted to teach them the other values in the forest. I wanted them to taste the forest so I served them the pine and birch. I want to show them that the trees come back every year, that I am taking from places where I am not hurting the growth. I wanted them to get that."

Rather than becoming big producers through the harvest and production of plant-based products, many plant experts have chosen to produce a small amount and add value by offering courses and presentations on these plants. For some of these plant experts, they hope to generate an appreciation and awareness of the area's natural resources outside of timber, iron and water. During a presentation in Umeå, an audience member asks Greta Huuva how one can harvest the bark today because the timber industry doesn't allow it. She agrees with the statement, explaining that "Today it's harder. You have to talk to the landowner. And we should talk to the timber companies because you can see where they don't use some of the resources." These and other statements point to a need for more communication between private landowners, timber companies, and plant specialists.

Cooperation

The few individuals working with plants have extensive cooperation networks. They work within tourism, providing seminars at hotels and museums in Jokkmokk, Sweden and throughout the world. They provide herbs to local restaurants, and in some cases, to restaurants throughout northern Europe.

Working with plants in Jokkmokk does not require much cooperation for sharing the land base (given the size of Jokkmokk and its low population density), but it does require much cooperation and respect for their work with the public. Most individuals choose not to work in a niche that someone else already occupies. One person explained, “We pickers in Jokkmokk have an unstated system. I know that certain things are another person’s products. For example, I make something with salt and this other person makes something similar but not exactly the same with salt. We try not to take each other’s products.”



Figure 50 Meadowsweet or älgjort

Challenges

Regulating Gathering

Those working with plants are primarily concerned about the potential over-harvesting of wild plants. Because of Sweden’s Allemansrätten, or right of public access, plant specialists believe that other individuals may believe they simply have the right to take what they can from the land. If an industry in wild plants becomes quite large, the right of public access becomes a threat because large numbers of people will begin to over pick or pick the wrong plants.

In response, plant experts have formed a group. Their goal is to recognize approximately ten plants that can safely be harvested because of their abundance and their unique qualities. One plant expert commented, “If we identify those 10 plants, maybe that can help us, the network of pickers. We have a chance to steer the path of development in the way we want it to go. I think it’s better to have 20 people with small companies than one big production company that vacuums it all up.”

“If we identify those 10 plants, maybe that can help us, the network of pickers. We have a chance to steer the path of development in the way we want it to go.”

Moose

Methods

Eight moose hunters and two moose butchers were interviewed regarding the hunting and sale of moose. The hunters were all sameby members, thus the data does not represent all possible perspectives. The experiences and challenges of non-Sameby members should be included but were not due to a shortage of time and contacts.

Introduction

Moose are hunted throughout Sweden. In the county of Jokkmokk, people may hunt moose on privately owned lands, state lands, and within the land of the five samebys. Moose hunting begins in September and continues into October. Sameby members tend to combine hunting moose with reindeer herding and fishing activities. All those who hunt report that they first hunt for their own domestic use. They sell the remaining meat to one of the slaughter or butcher facilities, primarily Svantes in Harads and Sápmi Ren och Vilt in Jokkmokk.

Some moose meat hunted in the region is for sale in restaurants and grocers in the region. For example, Saltoluokta Fjällstation purchases moose meat for its restaurant from Sápmi Ren och Vilt who buys moose from local hunters. These simple exchanges illustrate how a local food system network can be strengthened, perhaps with additional storytelling and marketing to customers.

Cooperation

People hunt as a team, including men and women, and share moose meat or profits from the sale of a moose. Hunters will get a moose and must deliver it to the butcher facility within two to five days depending on the weather. Hunters deliver the moose directly to the processing facility, which makes the work easier for butchers than working with reindeer (where butchers purchase reindeer live from herders or carcasses from slaughter facilities and must provide transport). Most of those interviewed agreed that they called

around and sold their moose to the facility offering the best price, and the butcher facilities know that hunters operate this way as well. The hunters are paid directly by the butchers, between 40 to 60 kronor per kilo. The horns can also be sold for around 65 kronor per kilo, and these are usually sold directly by hunters to private customers.

Challenges

One of the challenges to building an economy based on moose hunting is the Guest Hunting Laws in Norrbotten. In Norrbotten, guest hunting is not allowed. In contrast, Västerbotten allows guest hunting. Such permissions can advance a tourism industry in moose hunting. If this situation is compared with the experience industries in plants (where most plant specialists also earn an income from selling their knowledge as well as their plant products), there are opportunities for growth. However, a group of interested individuals must consider the pros and cons of this approach and address policy makers. A key issue will be the conflicts between private landowners and sameby lands. This conflict is beyond the scope of this report, but it should be discussed before any steps are taken.

Reindeer Owners and Herders

Methods

Four full-time herders and nine reindeer owners were interviewed. Only two of Jokkmokk's five samebys are represented in this study, so the results do not represent all possible perspectives. Additional material from these samebys would strengthen the report.

Being a full time herder

Earning one's primary income from reindeer herding is unique in Jokkmokk. Most of those who own reindeer also have additional sources of income. Those who do work full-time report that they have made a decision to live simply in order to do what they love: work with the reindeer.



Figure 52 Reindeer near Saltoluokta in June

Reindeer owners and herders in Jokkmokk typically sell their reindeer to slaughterhouses and private customers during the fall and winter. At the fall and winter separations of reindeer, there are usually two or more buyers that include Sápmi Ren och Vilt, Svantes, and occasionally others. All herders expressed satisfaction selling to Svantes or Sápmi Ren och Vilt, though some expressed support for also developing a local slaughter facility.

Seasons

One herder described their year as such: "In June and August I fish. In July there are meetings and the calf marking. In September there is the slaughter and moose hunt. The moose hunt is the 20 or 25th of September and goes until October 22nd. In November and December we take care of the reindeer and we continue to care for them separately in January, February, March and April when they begin to move back. In May I'm in the fjäll as they calf. It's nice to be in the fjäll then as it gets light." They continued to

describe the relationship of food to these seasons: “Every food has its own season. In September it’s meat. In the spring it’s smoked meat. In the summer it’s dried meat and fresh fish. There’s a suovas time. It used to be spring, but now it’s all year.”

There is a challenge to the seasonality of herding and income. One Sámi business consultant remarked that planning for the seasons can be very challenging for a herder. “Then it’s a question of capital and good knowledge. How can one set aside enough reindeer meat so that it lasts the entire year? The slaughter happens in the fall and early winter. You must slaughter enough reindeer and then put away a large amount. The demand depends on the market. Should reindeer meat just be bought during a certain period or should there be enough to last the entire year? And that costs money as well.”

Money

One herder recounted this pattern of money expenditure and intake for their average year: “In the summer, we get money from selling fish, and in the fall we sell fish and are working for the sameby, from August to October we are working on the fences. From the autumn male reindeer slaughter, we get a little bit. We get more income in January and February and March. We have to plan and be frugal. We never feel rich and are sensitive to catastrophes. It means you worry. The cost of fodder, this year (2013-14), for example. With fodder you have more cost but you also have more control of the reindeer. We don’t live with an overflow. We have not chosen this life to be rich. My freedom, I have it and calm and the freedom to control my time.” Other full-time herders make similar comments, that in order to herd full time, they cannot want or have nice things.

Most of them have or continue to make full use of reindeer meat, fish, berries and plants from the mountains. They pick their own hjörtron and catch their own fish in addition to raising and slaughtering their own reindeer and hunting their own moose. One person explained, “In September we take the matren (the household consumption reindeer) for the whole winter. It’s the sarvs, the males who are the biggest. I try to use everything, blood for blood sausage. I sell the dried skin. The skin on the legs I sell for the bellingsars (for making the boots), but we do throw away the skull.” Some adults struggle to make use of the entire animal like their parents and grandparents did. This is partly because their own children have acquired different tastes and partly because of the

demand of their own busy schedules which limit the amount of time they can dedicate to processing more difficult parts of the animal such as skulls, intestines and hooves.

Many herders will complement their income from herding with other work, whether fishing, handicraft, tourism, and butchering, to name only a few. Most full-time herders have found ways to remain in the fjäll where they can monitor their reindeer in combination with other work. Some cooperate with STF and provide boat transportation across the rivers and lakes or snowmobile transportation into the mountains for hiking and skiing tourists. Some have cabins (stugas) that they rent to hiking and fishing tourists in the spring and summer, while others will sell fish, dried reindeer meat, gahkku, Sámi handicraft and other goods to tourists.

Cooperating

Nearly all of the reindeer herders and owners interviewed for this study are originally from Jokkmokk. This means that they have extensive cooperation networks and do not experience isolation in their work with reindeer and selling their reindeer, though some expressed isolation from larger Swedish society.

Some herders find that working in the sameby structure can be very frustrating, particularly when they compare Jokkmokk with other regions. Because so few people work as full-time herders, planning for many of the samebys requires telling people far in advance when events will happen, such as calf markings and slaughters. If the weather is bad (which it can be very bad in the fjäll), there is little flexibility. Thus events such as calf markings, where owners identify and mark the new calves for the year, can take place under less than optimal weather conditions.

Value for society and themselves

Herders had different reactions to the perceived value of their work. Some believed that wider society appreciated what they do and the quality of their reindeer, while others expressed the opposite. For example, one herder stated that, “Generally with food, the state thinks it should be cheap. From a food perspective, we’re like a farmer. They’re not valued as a food producer. It’s the same with cheap shoes.” Another herder expressed ambivalence to the question of value: “I don’t know what society thinks. I don’t know

many Swedes. I don't hang out with Swedes. It's not so often that we're here in Jokkmokk either."

"I have not chosen this life to be rich. It's what I want to do, to put my energy into it. I want to be with the reindeer. That's what I want to do."

Though many didn't experience being valued by society, they strongly valued the work themselves. One person explained, "I have not chosen this life to be rich. It's what I want to do, to put my energy into it. I want to be with the reindeer. That's what I want to do. I've thought, what can I combine with this. But I don't want another job. I value freedom." Another stated, "I can't do anything else. It's my biggest dream. School was just necessary. There was nothing else for me." And another: "We have our food. Why should I buy other food? That's why I keep doing this."

Changes in herding

One full-time reindeer herder remarked that herding, "It's not as physically demanding. In the past, there were no snowmobiles. Some people had cars. There was no truck transport. Now we have to have gasoline to move them down to Murjek. But they go by foot back up. It's not good for health with all these machines. We used to use skis, it was harder. Skis and a backpack. But with machines, with technology, it's economically demanding now. You need to sell more. It's money that decides." The increase in technology and machines has increased the cost of herding significantly, which entails that herders have to take on extra work to earn more income. A herder described this process, "It's worse for herders now. There's so much stress with climate change, the mine, forest logging, water pollution. Those periods of quiet (between working seasons) are now when you're supposed to work (at other jobs)."

When Sweden entered the EU, regulations shifted the way reindeer meat can be sold. Sale and laughter of reindeer outdoors was no longer permitted, and many lament that they cannot sell at a small scale. One herder wished that they would be permitted to sell a small number of reindeer independently using an onsite veterinarian inspection. He states, "In Finland they follow the EU rules. They can slaughter though with a veterinarian inspection. If we had that we could sell 5, 6, 8 reindeer at a small scale, we



Figure 54 Reindeer calf at winter separation

could have the right to sell it. But to get the inspection you have to go to the slaughterhouse."

Another change is that the focus of herding is now on the sale of calves. As one herder explained, "When we sell sarvs (uncastrated males), it's less money. It's better to sell calves than sarvs. I've experienced that. I saved sarvs for the fall, but they

didn't show up. No one benefits from a sarv who stays in the mountains in the winter time. And we're supposed to live from this. I try to sell the vajas, the females, before they're too old and they're still good." Others explained that the new slaughter regulations forced a decline in the sarv slaughter, as it primarily took place in the mountains where the animals had better pastures. "Now they move the reindeer earlier. They take them all the way to Arvidsjaur to Grunnäs. They slaughter for Sápmi Ren och Vilt and Utsi Ren. People used to slaughter outdoors but the new rules made it impossible. In the fjäll, there is still household slaughter, but it's more expensive with the helicopter. "

Challenges

Women

"It's hard to work alone, when I'm alone and have to slaughter and butcher myself. It's difficult. I usually can get help to put it down, but then I come home, and take it out. It's physically demanding. I want to be comfortable. So there's training of the body so there

are no injuries.”

Reindeer herding is physically tough for all those involved, and women report having to maintain their health and strength in order to be able to do the hard work.



Figure 55 A male reindeer at the fall slaughter at Sirges Sameby

Women in male-female partnerships are often the ones who work outside the sameby and so are often distanced from herding even if they own reindeer. In addition, women have historically experienced discrimination in the sameby, often forced to give up their memberships when they marry a person in another sameby. Today, when couples are from different samebys, they sometimes face many tough decisions and can vacillate between the two samebys.

Different Knowledges

One butcher noted that sometimes herders don't know when they should sell their reindeer for slaughter. While they know when they want to slaughter their own reindeer to get the best quality for household consumption, they lack that knowledge for public sale. For butchers, this challenge can be enjoyable for them as they get to answer questions posed by herders and provide training regarding meat classifications and prices. One herder discussed how they learned about the slaughter, processing and classification of reindeer meat. Their knowledge came primarily from home, but then they also attended a slaughter and butchering training in Harads, many years ago. The training allowed them to be a reindeer classifier, and when Jokkmokk had a mobile slaughter unit, they worked as a classifier. The training, “was really good for me. It was an internship. We'd learn how to hang them and take out the stomachs before the helicopter would come get them. We learned different techniques from the traditional, how to work with the industry, to be careful with hygiene, to hang the nicer cuts to let them ripen. With

hanging, I used to think you didn't need to hang, but now I hang because that's what I've heard. I'm reading a book on slaughter. It shouldn't freeze down so fast they've said. It should be a long chilling at -15 I learned at the course."

As programs develop to train butchers and herders on meat qualities, the question has arisen if training should be in traditional or modern methods. A simple answer is both, according to one butcher: "Both of them in my opinion, but there's a lack of knowledge amongst herders. They don't have enough knowledge on food production. We have modern methods and they are important to follow so that we don't destroy the taste."

Land and Law

The encroachment of other industries on reindeer herding lands is likely (and has always been) the biggest challenge to reindeer herding. As one herder noted, "It's all civilization that we have to fight against always: snowmobiles, traffic, hydropower, highways." When asked what changes this herder would like to see, he responded, "I would like the feeding areas, to have them free and not worry about civilization. Tourism can be bad, the tourism snowmobiles in May, the roads built for tourists. They interfere with our work. As a tourist, you shouldn't be noticed." The herder argued that, "We should be able to say no from reindeer herders. We're always on the losing side. There's no chance there. The mineral laws that determine the laws are archaic, ålderdomlig." These are decisions at the highest level of government, but they greatly impact the kind of local food system that Jokkmokk can develop.

A reindeer herder and independent researcher asked, "Would people keep coming up to the fjäll if there weren't reindeer to work with there? I don't think so. Sure the tourists will come, but people won't come up to spend as much time as they do now." The question points to the important link between reindeer herding and cultural practices that are connected to specific places in the fjäll. In Jokkmokk, this link is most apparent because of the designation of Jokkmokk's fjäll as a World Heritage Site. Challenges to reindeer herding in the region are also challenges to the status of Lapponia and the continuation of cultural and economic practices on the land.

Reindeer Processors

Methods

Four butcher-shop owners were interviewed from Jokkmokk, and two additional butchers who work outside Jokkmokk's kommun were interviewed and observed at their work.

Introduction

Reindeer, moose and fish butchers and processors are some of the most visible local food businesses and volunteers in Jokkmokk's kommun. Not only do these businesses sell fish, reindeer and moose meat to locals and tourists alike, they are often found at local festivals and conferences, preparing food for crowds or representing and selling the iconic foods from the region. Many of them are happy to participate in these events because it puts their business name out in the public, but it can generate burnout in these individuals.

Some butchers buy, process and sell reindeer, moose and fish as well as some berries, while others focus almost exclusively on reindeer meat. Because there is no slaughter facility in Jokkmokk, butchers purchase reindeer from larger slaughterhouses such as the facility in Arvidsjaur. Alternatively, butchers also purchase live reindeer from local samebys and transport them down to Arvidsjaur to be slaughtered and brought back to Jokkmokk

Some butchers purchased their business and facility from its previous owners, while others started from scratch. Some received support from the Sametinget, without whom their business never would have started. Most received some consulting assistance from Strukturum and Sattje.

Many business owners have higher education and training in other fields (teaching, nursing, engineering) and so have chosen to work with reindeer butchering in addition to or rather than their fields of training. Some butchers learned how to slaughter and butcher reindeer from family members for personal or family use. Others received on-the-job training in slaughtering and butchering and/or they attended the reindeer herding course at the Samernas Utbildning Centrum in Jokkmokk where they acquired

skills they brought with them to their own businesses. There is a general trend that can be described: these individuals learned first to slaughter and butcher from family members



Figure 56 Reindeer hang ready to be processed into smaller cuts

as they grew up. They then acquired more skills from the reindeer herder course and/or from working at slaughter facilities.

The reindeer butchering industry grew in Sweden, according to many who were interviewed, because of changes in the law in the 1990s. One butcher explained that the law forced them to decide whether or not to continue selling meat to the public, “Then came a large change. All the meat needed to be certified and handled in an approved slaughter facility. To handle our own meat, we needed to sell it to the slaughterhouse. We took our reindeer to Karlrens in Gällivare. We sent them in

and came to get them the next day. It was very close. The law forced us to choose.”

Value

Those who work as butchers and processors generally feel valued by the surrounding society, including the Kommun and Strukturm. One processor expressed that they have “good, positive feedback from everyone. From family, yes. Those who live here are happy on Christmas Eve that I’m here. I have no problems with the Kommun. They know who I am. I am passionate about food.”

Another butcher explained how they received help from Strukturm and the Sametinget when they considered building a reindeer butchering business: “Yes, it feels like they thought it was a good idea. We got support as well. We did a feasibility study

with Strukturum. They did the calculations, and it felt positive. We didn't have any money in the beginning. But you've got to pay, to inspect the building. The feasibility study helped economically with that. It was good."

Another butcher explained that they enjoy their work because of the positive feedback they get from sharing knowledge with customers and others: "It's fun to sell when you're sure about the quality of your product. I like to share my knowledge to the delis and restaurants on how you need to prepare the food."

Butcher shop owners work like many in the food system: they take on extra work (combining processing with herding, teaching or tourism, to name a few examples) in order to support themselves fully. Or, they may rely on a spouse's income for their livelihood. Most of the processors hoped that their own children would be able to take over their businesses, and they started their businesses in order to create a source of future income for their children.

Customers

Reindeer butchers find that their biggest customers are high-end grocers, restaurants, tourism businesses, and then private customers. These processors sell to restaurants and stores in Jokkmokk, as well as stores and restaurants in Luleå, Umeå, Stockholm, and Jukkusjarvi. Many processors also sell their meat directly to customers at markets and exhibition fairs in Skelleftea, Piteå, Lycksele, and Huddinge to name only a few. The Jokkmokk in Huddinge market has become a popular Stockholm venue for reindeer meat, and butchers often sell out of reindeer meat.

The internet has impacted meat sales. While one processor finds that most of their customers are from Norrbotten, they are also selling more and more on the internet with internet and phone orders. They describe this process, "They may meet us first when we're out on the road selling at a market. Then there are summer tourists in Jokkmokk that will find us and call in an order later."

Butchers ship cold foods with Bussgods, while dried meats may be sent with the post office. It's expensive for customers who pay the shipping costs, and it can be tricky sometimes to get products to southern Sweden. There may not be freezer or cooling

facilities. Because of these limitations, it can be difficult to sell meat online and over the phone unless it is through a distributor or wholesaler. With private customers, it can be difficult to ensure that the entire trip has freezer transport. With better transportation channels, butchers may be able to sell more and different kinds of products.

Changes

Most butchers have noted a significant change in how people buy reindeer meat: "Twenty years ago you could sell a lot directly from the corral to those who lived in Jokkmokk. They took the whole carcass. There was no slaughterhouse, no butcher. Jokkmokk's inhabitants don't want to buy the whole body. Most want to buy finished pieces at the store. You can still buy a whole reindeer at the slaughterhouse, if you wanted to but few people do that anymore. They don't want to have ice chests, freezers. They want to buy when they want to have it, usually skav or smoked meat. "

Such changes are also remarked upon by an individual who has been involved in the industry for decades. This butcher commented, "Previously we sold small amounts that were inspected to private customers. In the 80s and 90s, we sold a lot to older people that bought big quantities. Today, people buy this much [he shows a small amount using his hands]. Reindeer meat was cheap in that time. Now it's a luxury meat. There isn't enough. People eat less reindeer meat. I read a statistic that Swedes eat 2 hektos of reindeer meat per person."

Some worry that reindeer meat will become too expensive, making it difficult for most people to enjoy it. At the same time, they want the demand to grow so that the reindeer industry can continue to support reindeer owners, herders and butchers. One herder remarked that people purchase reindeer meat differently because of its high cost, but the cost could be controlled if more reindeer could thrive. "It doesn't have to be an exclusive meat. It shouldn't be exclusive. It's natural and wild and has many things you need. We need more reindeer meat out on the market to stabilize the price. There's the predator problem that stops us from getting more volume out. It costs the state to deal with predators. It costs with the remunerations to the samebys, to research, to guard. This

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Some also advocated that the public needs to recognize the real cost of food.

“With reindeer it can be hard to change people perspective and get them to see that it is a healthy to eat good food and good food has to cost money. This is about life! One can leave behind buying expensive cell phones and instead buy good food. It’s maybe a Slow Food philosophy. So the challenge is to teach people how one eats well.”

Employment

Butchering facilities offer a fair amount of employment. The employment is seasonal and temporary, as the need for labor increases and decreases based on the season. Most places employ one to two people year round, and they increase to five or six people working from November to January when the reindeer slaughter is at its highest. For all of the processors, it is family members who work first for them and primarily men (though not always). Processors look for flexible but knowledgeable and interested labor. When more people are needed, most processors hire temporary labor who don’t depend on the work for their livelihood and know it’s seasonal.

When hiring, processors look for “Those who can butcher and are used to it. The work can go fast. It has to go fast. One needs to have a tempo, a rhythm, for it. The meat can’t hang in the freezer. They’ll go bad.” For younger people who want to work with butchers (including women), the processors find that they need more experience: “They need internships. We can’t slow down for them. Internships are a definite need. We can’t

afford to take them in in our business.” Reindeer butchers are working with perishable materials. The food must be handled when it’s fresh, which means that there are hard seasons when butchers have a lot to do.

Challenges

Profits and supporting reindeer owners

Most butchers did not make a profit when they first began and today it still takes a long time to convert the meat they sell into money. However, most of them find that they feel more secure about their financial stability today. Many butchers believed that others thought they were growing rich from their business, but they explained that this was not true. Many of them feel pressure to (and an incentive to) produce more products that might be more exclusive to get a higher price.

Another challenge is that most of the processors in Jokkmokk are quite small. To gain recognition in a big reindeer meat market, they cooperate with organizations like Renlycka. Renlycka may want to make members, who are some of the smallest meat producers in Sweden, pay for their membership. Most processors in Jokkmokk do not see this as a possibility, since their profits are so small.

Organizations like Renlycka want to work so that the reindeer owners get more money, but processors (who are also often reindeer owners) need to also increase their margins which means buying reindeer cheaper (or paying reindeer owners less). As the price of reindeer goes up, butchers initial costs go up. Some butchers stated that they pay more for their reindeer than other larger slaughter operations would. Small, local processors are in a no-win situation because they need to earn money to keep their business alive and they are also expected to help reindeer owners (who are often part of a tight-knit community and/or family of reindeer owners).

Slaughter facilities

Many people stated that the mobile slaughter unit, started about 20 years ago in Jokkmokk, came too early. Today, an enterprise like that would succeed because people are more interested in purchasing local foods. One person stated, "I sometimes worked a bit there. There was no solidarity. If they paid 50 ore less, they would sell somewhere

else. The slaughter was too expensive. It would be nice to have since there are so many reindeer. It's 70 km to Svantes, 150 km to Arvidsjaur, 200 km to Grunnäs. With the slaughter bus you could slaughter at once. But it was hard to make it work. The water freezes. Where do you put the waste? Do you bury it or do you bring it down from the fjäll?"

Another herder remarked that a cooperative slaughter unit did not work, but one owned by an individual would work. "It needs to be owned by one person. To make it give money, to get a salary from it." Many individuals supported this approach or they advocated changing reindeer slaughter regulations to make an exception for small scale slaughter.



Figure 57 Reindeer sausages ready to be smoked

Many people expressed satisfaction with the regulation of the reindeer meat market began after Sweden entered the EU. For them, the regulations increased the value of reindeer meat because it guaranteed a good product for customers. At the same time, the same people expressed frustration that they couldn't slaughter on a small scale to sell to private

customers. Some believed that finding a law that would allow for small scale slaughter would be best, while others argued for a local slaughter facility. "We can't sell these reindeer we slaughter ourselves. People can process moose, but they can't process reindeer. And why not? If we are going to decolonize our food system, we have to get a slaughter facility."

However, a slaughterhouse might compete with already existing processors who purchase reindeer from regional slaughterhouses. One business adviser raised the following questions: "How should a slaughter facility look today without taking out the

legs from Sápmi Ren och Vilt? Are they a model? Who should own the building? Who takes the risk for it? Does everyone have their own slaughter facility or?" Others raise similar questions: "A slaughterhouse should exist, but who will run it? How will the veterinarian work? There's Harads and Arvidsjaur, who need high volumes."

In addition, some of the smaller processors see the bigger processors as assets. Svantes, for example in Harads, is seen as good for the reindeer market. One butcher said, "They make a good name. It raises the quality for reindeer products. We're so small. We're not a competitor for them. We push prices up by having good high quality. We need him so reindeer meat is on the market. You wouldn't see reindeer meat in the market in Luleå without Svantes. The same with Polarica."

Storytelling and Reaching Consumers

Some businesses find that they don't have time to focus on marketing. One person explained, "We're selling the most expensive meat in Sweden. We need nice packaging and a nice way of presenting things. We need more storytelling. We need to develop that part of our business." However, they do not have the time and funds to dedicate to developing a marketing branch. Rather than sit in meetings, they confessed, they prefer to be producing. Others are conflicted about how reindeer meat should be presented. On the one hand, it is a natural and wild meat that contributes little to climate change and pollution. On the other hand, they remarked that truck and snowmobile transportation produce emissions. They questioned how herding should be marketed as a green industry.

Staying Local

Most butchers struggle with the demands of the peak season. Many of them are reindeer owners or herders themselves, so when their own sameby is marking or slaughtering, they are engaged in their personal herding rather than their butchering business. For example, one butcher explained, "People ask me, the herders ask me, do you want to buy from us? But I can't buy from them. I can't buy from my cousin because I'm also working with the reindeer at the time. If we could use our own reindeer that would be great, but it can't work that way yet. It's timing not volume" Many end up buying reindeer meat later in the season from nearby samebys.

Am I a reindeer herder or reindeer butcher?

One butcher who is also a herder pointed out an acute problem they face in their employment (and the identity that employment gives them). If they are a reindeer butcher, they have less time to be a reindeer herder. This is troubling because younger reindeer herders are needed and the butchering becomes a distraction from innovating in



Figure 58 An antler in Padjelanta

herding. A local business consultant explained, “Not everyone wants to process their own reindeer meat. In fact, the majority might not want to. It’s a lifestyle for the reindeer herder. They don’t see themselves as butchers. But there are those who want to do it.”

One butcher explained his personal situation and understanding of the balance between herding and butchering: "The problem is if I develop this butchering business, then I won’t be working with the reindeer. The Sajtte project is bad for reindeer herding (rennäring). We should have competing companies for reindeer herders. The samebys need to have herding as their priority, they need to

develop herding. It’s bad from a fifty year perspective. It distracts us from herding. I have cousins in Norway who work just with herding. On the 5th day they’ve been relaxing, they say, okay, now we’ll find something to do. They have time to think. When you have time to think, you start to research, to innovate. This is what develops reindeer herding. In 50 years, you have these small innovations."

Restaurants, Boutiques and Grocers

Methods

Six restaurant owners/chefs, four boutique store owners, and four individuals selling food to tourists along the hiking trails were interviewed. Because these businesses target very different customers and have very different needs and demands, they are separated out for



Figure 60 The Julbord at Cafe Gasskas

discussion.

Restaurant Customers

Most restaurants in Jokkmokk rely primarily on the “dagens lunch” customers for their survival. Some restaurants also depend on special arrangements, such as catering events, cooperating with the Inlandsbanan, or

visitors to STF lodges. For most restaurants, their customers differ by season. The winter is mainly local, while the summer is many more tourists. Most restaurants report that their customers are repeat customers. Even during the winter market, they have the same customers return each year.

Most of the restaurants focus on local foods during a limited part of the year, usually the Jokkmokk Winter Market and high summer. Most restaurants find they can sell more local food (such as Arctic char) to visiting tourists during the summer. Some restaurants find it difficult to attract customers who live in Jokkmokk using local food. They believe people from the area already have their own fish, moose and reindeer and are unwilling to pay for local, higher priced foods. Others find that they have attracted a small, niche customer base who are interested in local, healthy or made-from-scratch foods.

For restaurants who choose to focus on local foods, they state, “It feels fun, to try to highlight things from here, to be able to bring in things here. We want to, or rather, our customers expect, that we do things ourselves, and we want to meet their expectations.” It

can be challenging to live up to those customers' expectations every day, "They have certain thoughts when they come here and so we have to meet their thoughts of what we are and what we do. "

Boutique and Grocer Customers

Those running boutique and grocery stores in the region have very different customers depending on local attractions. In Jokkmokk, some stores find they have many local customers and some tourists for their bread and jam products. Near the ski resort, the grocer and bakery there have many tourist guests who ski during the weekends. During the summer, there are many day tourists from the coast who stop in, and there are also commuters who might live on the coast but work in Gällivare or have a cabin in the mountains nearby. The owners are surprised at how many people do stop and express surprise and pleasure at finding the place.

Family

Many people choose to work together, whether family members, friends or business partners. This strategy seems to make the work time more manageable. In some cases, neither person keeps track of the hours they work. They simply do the work. One pair of boutique owners remarked, "When there's two of you, it can be easier. I never would have done this without her. And when you work together, you can't keep a time card. We don't keep time cards."

While family members, including partners/spouses and children, may help with the restaurants and boutiques, most restaurant owners do not expect their children will take over the business when they retire. Their children may live in other parts of Sweden or have different jobs. In contrast, those selling food to tourists in the mountains do anticipate their children will take over some part of their business.

Time

For most restaurant and shop owners, the work is more than full-time during the high season, which is the summer for some, the winter for others, and the Jokkmokk Winter Market for nearly everyone. Some restaurant owners simply take very little time off, perhaps one day per week. During low seasons, others may take a second job, continuing to work as chefs or working in a different industry. Even during the low season, people who run shops may work many hours in order to keep their stores open.

Employees

Restaurants are one of the industries that employ more people, though the work tends to be temporary, part-time and seasonal. During high seasons, restaurants will hire an additional 1 to 5 full-time employees, but the duration of employment is very short (the Winter Market or a short summer). In most restaurants, extra people are hired for the summer, primarily as servers but also as cooks. The bigger restaurants, such as Saltoluokta Fjällstation, hire many more people for the winter, spring and summer seasons, and these individuals come from all over Sweden.

“I would like to have someone who enjoys the work, not someone who is just working for the money. You must like it. If you don’t like the job, then the food and the experience will be bad.”

Some restaurant owners commented that it can be difficult to find qualified employees, particularly those trained as chefs, but who have the flexibility of not needing full-time work all year. Many people echoed the same sentiment of this restaurant owner: “I would like to have someone who enjoys the work, not someone who is just working



Figure 62 Fresh bread at K&M Bageri

for the money. You must like it. If you don't like the job, then the food and the experience will be bad.”

Cooperation

Restaurants and stores are critical for promoting local foods. Some boutiques will sell Jokkmokks korv, meat from Utsi Ren or Sápmi Ren och Vilt, C/O Gerd products, Jokkmokks bär, Skabrams ost. Many restaurants will also use these products, purchasing cuts of meat from butchers, using Skabrams ost, or purchasing fish, ptarmigan and berries from local hunters and gatherers. Many restaurant owners also purchase other supplies from the local grocery stores.

Matlandethuvudstad

For many restaurant owners, the designation Matlandethuvudstad did not impact the way they operate. For example, one restaurant owner explained that, “It doesn't matter for me. There are a lot of projects here, and they invite in only their families. We're not Swedish



Figure 63 The counter at Viddernas Cafe

and they don't invite us in.” They also do not cooperate or feel networked with other restaurant owners in Jokkmokk. On the other hand, some restaurants (particularly those serving local food) did feel a positive impact from Matlandethuvudstad, though they state that it may be simply that Destination Jokkmokk is referring more tourists to their restaurant than before.

Why they work with food

Those who work in restaurants often talk about their love of cooking for people and having people appreciate the work they put into the food. They also enjoy meeting new

people from across the world through their work, who appreciate the food they make. Some of them care about what they and their families eat, and they bring that philosophy to their cooking.

One person stated, “It makes you feel so good when you get positive feedback from people. You shouldn’t mix in too much into the food. You make it as good as you can. Now we know we can do this. It’s fun to work, fun to have good customers, who want to book a table and want to eat the food we make. And our prices are



Figure 64 Passengers on the Inlandsbanan stop at Fjällglimten

pretty good too, so that everyone can eat here. We want everyone to be able to come here.
"

Others continue the work of previous generations, they work to keep traditions alive as one person stated, “I do it primarily because of my parents, to continue what they did. My parents opened this in 1970.”

These restaurateurs also do work for the income. Even if it is small for all of them, it is important to their livelihoods. Some restaurants provide a full income for their owners, while other restaurants require people to work other jobs. In one case, running the restaurant is a hobby for a retired couple. While the way they currently run their restaurant wouldn’t be enough to live from, they believe that someone could open the restaurant the entire year and make enough perhaps. Others also choose to run their own business because of the independence and creativity it gives them.

Value by society

People feel their work is valued by family and customers, and to a certain degree by Jokkmokk. Most restaurant and boutique owners believe people appreciate their skill and believe what they’re doing is interesting. Many of them find that the positive feedback is

increasing. As one person exclaimed, “It’s always good to get positive feedback from people. You can never get enough of the positive because you always get criticism too.” However, many experience that they are ignored or not valued by society at times as well.

Two restauranteurs believed that customer values have changed: “I think people want to eat the food from up here. They want organic food. I think they’re more aware of what they eat, and that’s why we do get younger customers who decide to eat well. It’s a choice. You don’t have to buy a new snowmobile. You can choose better food instead.”



Figure 65 A view over Saltoluokta Fjallstation

Challenges

Staying Open

In the summer, most restaurants find there are enough customers for all the restaurants to make money. During the winter months, however, it can be difficult to have enough customers.

Many restaurant owners choose to stay open only during the summer months and during special times such as the Winter Market. Others stay open for dinner or lunch only.

The top complaint of those working with tourists is that few restaurants are open in the evening that serve the local foods that tourists are seeking. Addressing this issue is critical to building Jokkmokk into a well-known tourist destination, however, several restaurant owners expressed that they were happy with the way their restaurant was currently run. They didn’t want to get bigger or stay open longer, though they thought it was possible to grow their businesses if someone wanted to. Most of them understood the complaint and agreed that a restaurant serving local foods should be consistently open, but they didn’t foresee changing their own business strategies. Thus the question remains, who will take on this role.

Too many restaurants?

Another major challenge is saturation. As one restaurant owner explained, “Just consider that Jokkmokk has about 2000 inhabitants. And how many of them eat out? We have 16 restaurants in Jokkmokk, and maybe 300 people eat out every day. Divided between 16 restaurants, how many can you get in one day? It’s not good. We’re too many restaurants in Jokkmokk. And the first month everyone comes to the new restaurant and the other restaurants lose customers. Everyone thinks it’s great to have more restaurants but it’s not good. They don’t think about what happens to you, the restaurant owner, and about how many restaurants already exist. We compete with one another, but it doesn’t matter to the politicians in Jokkmokk. They don’t think about us.” If Jokkmokk were able to increase the number of tourists, the saturation of the market would be less of an issue. However, the low seasons will likely continue to be difficult for many restaurants unless more people move to the area, which encourages them to limit their opening hours. These two challenges – saturation and limited open hours – feed directly into one another.

Hiking Tourists and Food

Methods

Informal discussions were held with six individuals who sell food such as smoked and fresh fish, gahkku, dried reindeer meat, and other snacks to hikers along the Padjelanta and Kungsleden trails in the Lapponia World Heritage Site.

Introduction

Some people have been selling food to tourists for twenty plus years, while others have only recently begun. They typically work for two months



Figure 67 Smoked fish and gahkku from Petsjaure

during the high summer when they are in the mountains for calf markings, though some extend their seasons into the spring and late summer. Many of them report that it is profitable to run their small cafes for tourists.

Customers

For those catering to tourists in the mountains, many of their customers might visit the mountain lodges at Saltoluokta, Kvikkjokk or Ritsem first and then visit their location for the day or during their hiking journey south or north along the Padjelanta or Kungsleden trails. These entrepreneurs combine the sale of food with cabin rentals and they are typically busy in the spring and summer. Their cabin rental customers are often repeat customers who stay a week to fish and enjoy the mountains. Many times, these businesses never know how many visitors they will have during a day, which can make planning difficult.

Cooperation

Many people cooperated with Länsstyrelsen or other organizations to begin their businesses, or they cooperate with STF to coordinate tourism activities. Some expressed that they feel left outside of cooperative networks such as Strukturum, the Kommun and Destination Jokkmokk. One person explained that they had little help from the Kommun, Strukturum as well as the Sametinget for the kind of work they do in Lapponia. She concluded, “If Sweden wants its urfolk (indigenous people) they have to support them so they can live from the land.”

Challenges

Those serving food to tourists in the mountains have many logistical challenges. First, they often must transport products to the location, and transportation costs can be high. Coordinating needs can also be difficult, as they communicate with others



Figure 69 Fish smoking at Kutjaure

via satellite phone which may not work. Regulations can be difficult if people wish to do more than serve smoked fish and gahkku. To run something more like a restaurant, they would have to meet a number of requirements, such as running water, freezer and fridge capacity, none of which are possible in the mountains where electricity is largely limited to solar and generator power.

“If Sweden wants its urfolk (indigenous people), they have to support them so they can live from the land.”

Mushrooms

Methods

Very few people work with mushrooms in Jokkmokk, so this section is based off of one interview with a local mushroom expert and comments from several other individuals who work with plants and mushrooms.

Introduction

Dealing in wild mushrooms will be tricky. Each year the mushroom harvest will vary. For example, several years ago people tried to harvest a Japanese mushroom called matsutake in Vuollerim with the goal of flying them to Japan to sell. But that year, no mushrooms came in Vuollerim. Mushroom seasons vary, and in order to make a living picking and selling mushrooms, a person may need more than one leg to stand on or a partner with another income.

“Mushrooms are essential to good food,” expressed one person. “To have great reindeer and fish but no mushrooms? That doesn’t work!” According to the resident mushroom expert, if someone began harvesting and selling mushrooms, they would have no competition. To be first could be very good, and it isn’t expensive to live in Jokkmokk, so someone could manage on a smaller income. There are also fewer poisonous mushrooms in Jokkmokk compared with southern Sweden, so picking mushrooms is not as dangerous. One also can’t over pick the mushrooms, like plants, but they do need forests in order to grow. Picking mushrooms would take advantage of the forests that have been protected, and those people who live here could take advantage of them.



Figure 71 A porcini near Saltoluokta



Figure 72 A bjorksoppa found along the Kungsleden

Challenges

A major challenge to building a mushroom industry is that, except for a few people and organizations, there is little interest in mushrooms in this area and very little recent tradition in using edible mushrooms. Many debate whether mushrooms were

part of the Sámi diet, with the consensus that certainly when people were short on food they would supplement with mushrooms. Interestingly, the mushroom that people do pick in the area is the morel, which is poisonous unless it is boiled at least twice. Those individuals who were interviewed who pick morels often laugh at this fact and report that they and their family members have eaten morels all their lives and have yet to suffer from it.

Jokkmokk's resident mushroom expert calls the region the "forgotten land" as people often drive through the forested region straight to the mountains. But he states, "There is a lot of biological diversity in this area." Local government may not understand that Jokkmokk is unique for its mushrooms and the many mushroom-interested people it attracts. For example, three years ago the Swedish Mycology Organization visited Jokkmokk but nobody from the Kommun came to greet the organization during their visit.

Other products: Milk and biscuits

Skabram produces Skabram's Ost, Kaffe Ost, and Yogurt. Generally, customers for these products are not primarily in Jokkmokks kommun, except for a few local places such as Viddernas Cafe, the Hantverksbutiken, and ICA. Café Gasskas, Ajtte, Hotel Jokkmokk and Saltoluokta also purchase small amounts of cheese to cook with each year. Instead, the cheese sells more to restaurants along the coast, Stockholm, and Malmo. About 70% of the product is sold through distributors and 30% is sold directly to restaurants or super markets, and most of the restaurants buy through distributors.

In 2014, the dairy provided some employment. Four to five people are working in the dairy. There are two people working full time at the farm in Vuollerim, and one person works fulltime in the dairy. Skabrams cheese is a good example of marketing based on Jokkmokk's name, according to its previous owner. It is also difficult to begin a business such as a dairy due to the high cost of machinery that is needed for milking and producing cheese: "It's difficult to get money and farming costs money. It costs a lot and has very little profit. There are no shortcuts. If you need a machine, you have to buy that machine. If Jokkmokk wants more primary production, they will have to be more active in supporting with money or leases to those who want to produce."

"There are no shortcuts. If you need a machine, you have to buy that machine. If Jokkmokk wants more primary production, they will have to be more active in supporting with money or leases to those who want to produce."

Two individuals started producing biscuits for sale in Jokkmokks kommun. There is great enthusiasm for their product. They have cooperative networks established with local berry processors and with business associations along the coast. However, they face many challenges. Like other small businesses, labor is their greatest issue, as they explained, "It's been a difficulty. The labor costs in Sweden are incredible. We wanted to put these in a café. The café owner asked me to come up with a price. The ingredients



Figure 73 A midsummer celebration in Jokkmokk

versus the labor costs were incredible. The cost of electricity didn't add much. It was all labor. It's labor intensive to scoop and lay out the cookies. They are easy to serve in a café. But the price of a biscuit ends up being more than a cake." Many other

businesses, from butchers to restaurants, echoed this statement. The high cost of labor prevented them from experimenting with new products or increasing the size of their business.

Fish

Methods

Three people who fish as part of their yearly income and four people who buy, sell and sometimes process or smoke fish were interviewed. Informal conversations also took place with four people who catch, smoke and sell fish for tourists.

Introduction

The fishing industry in Jokkmokk has changed significantly over the past century. This is in part due to the construction of hydroelectric dams along the Lule Rivers that continue to shift fish populations, and it is due to increases in farmed fish. For most individuals in Jokkmokk, fishing and the sale of fish is not financially lucrative. It provides a small income for those who can live modestly. For many of those who have succeeded, selling fish was a way to extend their primary season selling reindeer and moose meat. Fish usually come in during the summer when the moose and reindeer activities are slower. This point is critical – fishing is one of many legs these individuals use to make a living. They emphasized that they needed all of these different jobs to survive.



Figure 74 Smoked fish on Saltoluokta's Easter buffet

Many interviewees explained that the technology has not changed that much for fishing over the past century. However, the presence of farmed fish has changed the industry and customers have different expectations. One family fishermen stated that they used to salt and layer fish, in tons. Today, they sell filets, vacuum packed, because that's what customers want. There is little to no demand for salted fish.

Today, most individuals who continue to fish are men. They learned to fish from their elders, whether direct family such as parents or parents-in-law. Some of them have taken trainings in hygiene and the handling of fish.

They catch Arctic char (röding), white fish (sik), örring (brown trout), perch (abhorra) and pike (jädä). They can sell either to Rönnbacks, Sápmi Ren och Vilt, Bjorn Tunborg's, Karlgrens, Stenberg's Vilt, to local restaurants, to private customers or to tourists along the Padjelanta or Kungsleden. For members of local samebys, they fish in the lakes in and around the Lapponia World Heritage Site (Suorva Dam, Vaisaluokta, Sitojaure, Kutjaure, Vastenjaure, Virihaure). Fiskflyg picks those fish up with their



Figure 75 Arctic char or röding

helicopters approximately two to three times a week. Fiskflyg in Porjus began as a fish purchasing business, as evidenced by its name, though today it concentrates more on the transportation of tourists and materials in Lapponia and the surrounding region. The business Rönnbacks stores the fish at Stora Sjöfallet and sells them throughout northern Scandinavia and Finland.

Prices and Customers

Fish prices vary by year and fish. Generally a good price for röding is 65 per kilo and for sik 35 kronor per kilo. These fish might sell at a grocery store later for 120 / kilo. When fish are flown out of the fjäll via helicopter, between 5 to 12 kronor per kilo goes to pay for transportation. People try to transport at least 50 to 100 kilos of fish to make the trip financially worthwhile for them.

Fish can be sold directly to private customers as well, and most individuals do little marketing to find private customers. As one person stated, "The fish sell themselves." Smoking and fileting fish is expensive for most individuals, so they prefer to sell fish fresh or frozen. For hiking tourists along the trail, it is more profitable to sell them fresh fish than smoked fish. Tourists usually want to buy fish, often salted and smoked but sometimes fresh, while they hike along the Kungsleden and Padjelantaleden. They sell the smoked fish for 60 kronor each and the fresh for 40 kronor each, others

might sell smoked fish for 80 kronor each. One interviewee commented that they make good money on the fresh fish, but the smoked fish isn't worth it: "You only make 20 more kronor, and you have to do much more, put in an hour more of work for it."

For those who do sell fish and other foods to tourists, they typically spend the summers at homes on lakes in the mountains. Many offer accommodations to tourists and fishermen in addition to simple foods such as fish that they catch and smoke themselves, gahkku that they prepare, and some packaged foods. Most of them keep generators for freezers to store the fish. Working with tourists offers herding families extra income during the summer months.

Developing a Local Fishing Industry

Are there enough fish in the waters of Jokkmokk? According to many fishermen that were interviewed, yes, there are enough fish but their numbers rise and fall each year depending on other factors (release of waters behind dams primarily). Store owners and fish processors have experienced a decrease in the number of available fish since the 1990s, and they continue to have trouble getting enough fish like Arctic char. However, everyone agrees that there is room for development, if someone wants to do it and is willing to put in hard work.

In order to develop a fish industry in Jokkmokk, several logistical issues must be addressed according to interviews. These include the transportation and freezer storage of fish that are caught in the fjäll. Hydropower has and continues to impact fish populations in unpredictable ways that may impact people's ability to earn a living. In addition, they believe one person with the appropriate training (rather than a sameby or cooperative group) must invest in the business and wish to earn an income.

One strong example comes from Sapmi Ren och Vilt who have developed their fish sales. With growing recognition that they buy fish, more people are delivering fish in the winter and summer seasons. They found that fish was easy to work with because their facilities were already certified and because fish only require packaging and no further processing.

Why do people continue to fish?

Fishing is sometimes the primary income, or it offers some additional income to reindeer herding, for many people. Aside from the income, one interviewee explained that he enjoyed being alone on the lakes.

Another person stated that he simply can't do anything else, and working with fish and reindeer was his biggest dream – there was nothing else for him but this. Many people fish for themselves, and they ask, why should I buy food if I can get good quality food from here?



Figure 76 Fish smoke inside a kâta for personal use

One fisherman feels that people do appreciate the work he does, acknowledging the difficulty of fishing. However, he recognizes that there are only two people who fish now in his area and maybe five or six in the larger region. Other people expressed ambivalence about people's appreciation of their work. They believed most people in Sweden wanted cheap food, or they were unsure what Swedish people thought of their foods, particularly the foods of Sámi people.

Challenges

Potentially, the biggest unforeseen challenge to developing a vibrant fishing industry in the region will be the retirement of the current generation of fishermen. Many of those I spoke with did not believe their children or other youth would take over. The youngest person fishing for a living is nearing retirement age. Younger people continue to fish with their elders, and they will continue to fish for their own use and for smaller sales, but few people will earn a living from fishing. In contrast, those businesses who are processing fish expect that the younger generation will take over their businesses (that often include the processing of reindeer and moose). These small family businesses are seen as ways to

help children remain in Jokkmokk, but fishing for a living is not viewed with the same positive outlook.

A second challenge is regulations of wild caught fish. Some restaurants must



Figure 77 A Fiskflyg helicopter used to transport people and fish into the mountains

follow guidelines set up by other organizations such as STF. In 2014 STF was using the World Wildlife Federation guidelines that indicate if a wild species is in danger. In this specific case, chefs are prevented from ordering specific species of wild caught fish and forced to buy the farmed species, even if the chefs believe that the local people wouldn't fish

in the area if they didn't believe there were enough fish. Despite these guidelines, Saltoluokta Fjällstation does purchase local fish and this is one of the clearest cases of a successful long-term partnership that provides a livable income for fishermen. If Jokkmokk is going to grow a fishing industry, it will be critical to consider the impact these listings might have on people's willingness to purchase wild caught fish.

Finally, stereotypes and suspicions of fishing activities are prevalent throughout Jokkmokk and should be openly addressed by those who are interested in developing a fishing industry. During interviews and in conversation, many generalizations about fishing in the Lapponia area were invoked. Some accused people who fish of putting too many nets in the lakes and emptying, or overfishing, them.

Berries

Methods

Ten people who work directly in the berry industry were interviewed. These include berry pickers and buyers born in Sweden and Thailand, those who process berries into jams and other products, and those who sell berries and berry products.

Introduction

Sweden's berry industry relies primarily on migrant labor coming from Asian countries, such as Thailand. In 2014, Migrationsverket received 3300 visa applications from Thailand, and in 2015, they received 4000 applications. Berry pickers from outside the EU who receive visa



Figure 79 Fall blueberries

contracts have the right to a salary of 19,772 kronor for full-time work. However, the region of Jokkmokk has few contracted pickers and instead more free pickers.

In Jokkmokk, the pickers, buyers and processors are primarily women. More than half of them are not originally from Jokkmokk (coming from other parts of Sweden and other countries), though most of them have lived in Jokkmokk for over twenty years. For those who process berries, two of them have had training through Samernas Utbildning and/or Eldrimner, while a third person received training from high school.

In Jokkmokks kommun, people pick cloudberries, blueberries, lingonberries, crowberries and occasionally odon and raspberries. Cloudberries can be picked from midsummer to August, blueberries from late August to September, lingonberries in September, and crowberries from September until the snow arrives.

Many who work with berries and food in Jokkmokk state that the plants and berries are more nutritious above the Arctic Circle. For example, one person says,

“Scientific reports show that berries and plants from up here have lots of value, they’re higher in antioxidants and minerals than wild berries and plants from southern Sweden. They have a higher concentration of these antioxidants and minerals. They speculate it may be the shorter growing season and the midnight sun that makes them have a higher concentration. I’m not sure how big this difference is compared with the south, but I’m selling that idea.” These studies are important to the marketing of Jokkmokk berry and



Figure 80 Cloudberries

plant products.

Buyers

In the town of Jokkmokk, there are three individuals who purchase a large quantity of berries from free pickers. There are also individuals in Porjus, Vuollerim and Kabdålis purchasing berries. These buyers are purchasing for other businesses that are processing or shipping berries closer to coastal towns such as Harads and Luleå. In general, most berries do not stay in Jokkmokk for processing. However, there are four smaller operations who purchase berries or pick their own berries for processing in Jokkmokk and nearby villages.

Family, friend and country-of-origin networks are very important for moving berries. Most buyers in Jokkmokk have some sort of relationship with the business they sell to nearer the coast, and the same is true for local processors who tend to receive offers of berries from friends who know they process berries.

To be a berry buyer, one needs infrastructure such as garages for storing berries and a connection with one of these larger buyers near the coast. Buyers typically receive the bins and other materials needed from the business they purchase for. The businesses come every two to three days to pick up the berries from their local buyers.

Pickers

Many pickers will sell to the highest buyer, though, according to most individuals, the price for berries is relatively similar across buyers. The price can vary by a few kronor each day, but prices remain relatively stable during a season. Pickers also sell to those they have an established relationship with, whether familial or simply a friendship developed over the years. Picking and cleaning berries is often organized through family relationships. One individual who had been picking in Jokkmokk's woods for nearly 35 years reflected that previously she had been alone out in the woods. Today, there are more people picking and there are more people buying.

Seasonal

Each year the berry season is different. Many of those interviewed made statements similar to this one: "There are years with berries and years without berries." Consequently, berry pickers cannot rely on berries as a steady income every year. One interviewee stated that there were few berries this summer (2014), so they were not bothering to go out to pick. Prices can vary: a hotel in Jokkmokk purchased berries from Polarica for 440 kronor per kilogram during the cloudberry shortage a few years ago. In 2013, a very good cloudberry year, the same hotel purchased berries from local pickers in Gällivare and Porjus for approximately 110 kronor per kilo.

In 2014, berry pickers were being paid between 60 to 100 kronor per kilo for cloudberries. In 2012, they were being paid 120 kronor per kilo for cloudberries. The "normal" price per kilo is between 60-80 kronor per kilo for cloudberries. Blueberries typically get 10-12 kronor per kilogram, while lingon berries get 16-18 kronor per kilogram.

Buyers in Jokkmokk do not decide the purchasing price for berries. It is larger businesses who decide together. According to buyers, prices depend on how much is in storage for large processors like Polarica. Some interviewees stated that the price for berries dropped significantly following a recent labor scandal, from 120-150 to 60-100

kronor. In addition, following the scandal, visiting pickers were required to be paid a salary.

Time

Most individuals spend different amounts of time working with berries depending on the season. For those who are picking and buying berries, it is full time work only during the summer.

Typically, these individuals balance two jobs during the summer, picking and/or buying berries when they are not at their primary job.

Those who are processing berries also work during the fall, winter and spring. The amount of

time they spend at this work varies. For example, one individual states, “I saw that I work full-time even if I work a little more or a little less depending on the season.” Another person laughed at the question of how much time she spent at her work: “Listen here. It’s like this. When you own your own business, it’s always fulltime, in my opinion. There are no precise hours that you work.”

” Listen here. It’s like this. When you own your own business, it’s always fulltime, in my opinion. There are no precise hours that you work”

Why do people work with berries

All those interviewed stated they picked berries because they enjoy being out in the woods, regardless of whether they are originally from Sweden or another country. For example, one person states, “I pick in my free time. I love being out in the forest and of course it’s good to get paid.” Another agreed, “I think it’s enjoyable to be out in the



Figure 81 Lingonberries

woods,” while another picker stated, “I do it in my free time, for leisure. If I’m free then I ask someone, shall we go out? I like being in the woods, and you make some money.” Tradition is another important reason many people pick berries. One person stated, “You have to understand that I’ve grown up with it. My parents believed that one must take advantage of or make use of what’s out there.”

Buyers who were originally from Thailand emphasized the social aspect. One began their work because, “It’s also nice to speak your first language, to see friends



Figure 82 A carpet of darker crowberries, blueberry or bilberry

because you don’t see them in winter.” Another buyer from Thailand stated she began a relationship with a coastal buyer because, “She knows me, she can speak Thai. It’s a nice social thing as well.” When she originally began, a buyer stated, “We felt bad for them [pickers from Asia]. They got no pay. They get

a salary now, like Swedes. 19,000 something is what they get.”

However, individuals also understand their work as a buyer as a hobby. She states, “I sit here at my house and my friends come. It’s for a limited time, but it’s every day as long as there are berries. It’s part time. The pay is really bad. It’s a hobby. It’s not a job. You make just a little money. It’s not a normal job. And I sit here 3 to 4 hours every day. So it’s not that much money. Maybe extra money for clothes, go to town, buy ice cream.”

Profits for Picking

Regardless of country of origin, people stated that the money they earn is important but not essential to their yearly survival, as one person stated, “I don’t do it to survive. I’ve always had another job. This here is a bonus with my money. I’ve had fun with the money, bought luxury items. I bought new glasses, traveled. A teacher doesn’t have money!”

Most of those interviewed stated that they did this work – picking, buying and processing – for other reasons than the money. According to many of them, the extra income was a nice benefit, but there were many other benefits as well. For pickers, buyers and processors, the profits from their work with berries is just enough to live from or simply not enough. “One would never be rich from this work,” stated one individual. On a good year, an average picker may earn several thousand kronor.

One picker understood the system this way: “So now I am going to make money from the berries. He’s going to make money, Svantes [a processor in Harads] is going to make money. So if I got 18 kronor per kilo for my blueberries (and that’s quite a bit), then the berries are sold at the square in Göteborg for 34 kronor per liter. He’s got to make money too. And he sells buy the liter but buys by the kilo. It gets rather difficult.”

Another picker explained, “I don’t pick for the sake of money. You don’t get paid for the work you do when you pick berries. In the afternoon, maybe I can make 200 kronor. I can pick blueberries from 12 to 18, so about 6 hours. Then it’s about 2 or 3 hours to clean them. And for all that, you get 200 kronor. That covers the fuel for the car. So, it’s not for the sake of money that I pick. It’s more for health. It’s good that you get paid and you can feel healthy when you pick.”

Adding Value

Some pickers and buyers add value to their product by cleaning them and selling berries to private customers. One picker and buyer stated, “We also clean blueberries so they’re ready to eat. It is a processing, or adding value of sorts. We got four times as much pay. Your time gets paid for. Its 40 kronor per kilo for cleaned and 10-12 kronor per kilo for

uncleaned. It's difficult to compete with the berry industry. They have machines to clean them. They wash them and then have blowers to blow away all the debris."

Profits for Processing

For those working with berry processing, their profits are small. Most of them need a second income from a second job or income from a spouse or partner. When asked if they could live from their business, one person laughed: "Yes, if one doesn't have big needs. One cannot be a millionaire from berries. I don't have any time for expanding. If I did it, then I would need to employ people and right now it's just a family business and I like it how it is now. As long as one thinks it's fun, then one can continue."

Two processors explained that they would need to hire someone else if they wanted to increase their production. All processors are happy with their current level of production and do not wish to hire anyone else. For example, one processor wishes to focus on producing a high quality product. Another is happy to focus on the tourism side of her business rather than the production. "The best thing is to give information and have a small production. That way people can also bring home your products and share them with friends and family, a small taste. I personally am not aiming to become a big producer. I think it's also important to spread knowledge so more people can pick for themselves."

One berry processor believes that most of their customers come from outside Jokkmokk, while another believes most of the customers are from Jokkmokk. Their businesses target different customers. Some focus sales over the Internet or to boutiques along the coast or in southern Sweden, while others focus their sales on locals and tourists in Jokkmokk.

Value of their work by society

There are very different opinions when it comes to the question of value. Some pickers and processors believe their work is valued by their family, friends and wider society. Others believe their work is considered odd by wider society but appreciated by their customers. For example, one berry picker responded, "No. Yes. What should I say? They

think that I am dumb because they don't understand. They think that I go out to make money. Those who buy the berries, they think it's good that I pick, obviously." Another picker found that people were becoming more appreciative of her work. She stated, "But it's a local interest, it's a trend. So people are a little jealous of me, that I go out and pick so much."

Processors believe their work is valued by many, but because they are not making a large profit and are not employing other people, they feel their work is less valued by the Kommun and local business. For example, one processor responded to the question of whether people valued their work, "Yes, I think so. They maybe look over their shoulder a bit from the Kommun's perspective because they want to show that it can be profitable and that one can employ other people. But I enjoy it as it is. It might be nice to be more powerful. I don't feel marginalized, that I don't feel. But everything is counted in money in society. And one more thing, it feels more important, or a simpler way, is that instead of being big, one can be luxurious or high end." Another processor responded that when it came to value, "Not in the entire society, but of other people I am valued. For society, we don't exist. I experience that all of our customers value us. They tell us, what luck! Now you can't close this store. They think it's good."

"...it feels more important, or a simpler way, is that instead of being big, one can be luxurious or high end."

Challenges and Further Development

Berry pickers and buyers in Jokkmokk do not plan on developing their own products from berries. They perceive it as a complicated undertaking with inspections and materials, and they have other jobs and incomes. Processors also do not plan on building their businesses beyond their current size. They enjoy their work as it is currently.

Jokkmokk's berry industry is small but strong and building recognition. Potential for more development exists, however, those who have built the industry and name



Figure 83 A carpet of lingon and crow berries

recognition do not foresee getting bigger themselves. A discussion may be fruitful between berry processors and local buyers regarding building more berry-based businesses.

Stereotypes

Those interviewed from Sweden believed it was a good thing that people from Thailand (and other countries) were coming to pick berries. Otherwise, many stated, the berries would simply rot and not be used. One person explained, "There are many that are angry with the Thai people that come here and pick. I think that who will pick they don't? We won't do it." Another person stated, "During that time period, we thought that they were taking our berries. But now I think that it's just

good because people from Jokkmokk don't pick. I think it's good. We laugh with one another, we greet one another. I'm alone. We don't pick together, but we can be together in the same place. I have no problem with them."

There are two ethnic stereotypes: People from Sweden are too lazy to pick effectively or to pick at all and people from Thailand pick efficiently. People born in Sweden believe they pick for the enjoyment and an extra small amount of money, while people coming from Thailand pick to earn money, and thus they are much more efficient pickers than themselves. Those interviewed also believe that few people pick in Jokkmokk, which all those interviewed believe is unfortunate given the high unemployment. Others believe that Swedish residents are discouraged from picking because of taxes that people from other countries don't pay.

Facilitating conversations about these stereotypes and what the reality of the situation is would be important if someone in Jokkmokk chose to develop a larger berry purchasing or processing business. Understanding how people actually work—regardless of their ethnic identity or country of origin—is important. Based on these interviews, it appears that all individuals work for the enjoyment of picking and the extra income.

Methods

In the United States, all research with human subjects must go through an ethical review with the Institutional Review Board (IRB). This study has been approved by Oregon State University's IRB. The most important thing as a researcher is that one must demonstrate that people who participate in the study will not be negatively impacted by the study. This means that participants must understand how the data will be used and remain confidential, that they may say no to participating in the study at any time, and that their identity will remain anonymous as much as possible. Participants were not paid to participate in the study. I asked everyone who participated in the study the same questions and in the same order; however, some interviews were short on time, which meant that not everyone had the opportunity to respond to all the questions.

Interview Questions

Can you tell me how you work with food?

Which food resources do you use?

Where do you get them?

Where and to whom do you sell?

Do you sell to people and businesses in the area or in another region?

Do you work full-time or part-time?

If you work part-time, why do you work part-time? Are there barriers that limit your production?

Do you work for yourself and do you work for someone else?

Which season do you work the most in?

What training and education do you have?

Why do you do this work?

What do you feel about your work? Pride, enjoyment, frustration, etc.?

Do you cooperate or share with other Jokkmokk businesses or entrepreneurs?

What is good about Jokkmokk's food system?

What challenges do you face when you work with food?

What changes would you like to see in Jokkmokk's food system?