



REWRITING THE SOUNDSCAPE: TOWARDS A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF  
SÁMI POPULAR MUSIC AND IDENTITY IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

By

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Topic

The Sámi of northern Scandinavia and northwestern Russia are a cultural minority residing within the national boundaries of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. They are also an indigenous population; they are considered the first settlers to this territory and maintain special status according to local governmental and global politics due to their unique situation as Scandinavia's First Peoples.

In the thousands of years since they first arrived in what is today known as Sápmi or Lapland, the Sámi have undergone dramatic social change. Their continuous contact with their non-Sámi neighbors has led to important technological, economic, and education innovations, but has also been marked by a history of cultural oppression, assimilationist policies, and attempted cultural genocide.

Throughout their history the Sámi have maintained traditions unique to their people that, in confrontations with outsiders, have served as important markers of Sámi identity. Musical performance, as a special setting for the designation of difference between cultures, served an important role in constructing a unique Sámi identity; and the *joik*, a vocal tradition practiced exclusively by the Sámi and the only indigenous form of music-making found in both spiritual and everyday practices, is one such important marker of Sámi identity. Despite its suppression by missionaries for several hundred years, who viewed it as a heathen practice and by state officials who treated it as a threat to assimilation, joik performance continued throughout Sámi oppression.



During the 1960s, a period characterized by decolonization, the creation of new states, and a worldwide folk revivalist environment, the Sámi were, for the first time, recognized globally as a distinct people who deserved special rights to self-determination because of their indigenous status. The Sámi also began to recognize their own status and value, and came together in a pan-Sámi movement that closely mirrored other indigenous movements throughout the world. Consequently, they also became involved in global indigenous politics and acknowledged the kinship they shared with indigenous peoples worldwide.

During the 1970s and 1980s Sámi political activists and artists who saw the value of cultural symbols like the joik in constructing a united pan-Sámi identity, encouraged the revitalization of uniquely Sámi traditions; but musicians also recognized that in order for the joik to serve as a politicized icon of Sámi identity, it had to be detached from its traumatic history. The joik, which was still associated with pre-Christian traditions and with the poor Sámi self-image promoted by state assimilationist policies, had to be re-contextualized so that it could serve a purpose separate from this past. Through globally popular artists like Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, Mari Boine, and Wimme Saari, the joik was inserted into popular music, effectively removed from the past and employed for the promotion of a modernized, culturally vital picture of pan-Sámi identity.

Since the 1980s the Sámi have gained cultural rights that have brought them closer to the right to self-determination they seek. The joik has continued to be an important cultural symbol and is still found in most Sámi popular music. The Sámi no longer locate themselves at the periphery of Nordic culture, but have absorbed a paradigm that emphasizes their special indigenous status. As First Peoples, they

recognize their central positioning in the history and future of northern Scandinavia and northwestern Russia. Today's youth, the first generation to accept this paradigm, are in a much different situation than the parent generation because their identity is not as overtly challenged. At the same time, today's young people are recognizing their unique status, not just as Sámi people, but as multicultural peoples, living at the crossroads of many possible identities. Therefore identity is no longer constructed based on symbols exclusively attributed to the Sámi, but is constructed based on the many cultural influences of Sámi youth.

As young Sámi redefine their own identities, they are also redefining the role of Sámi traditions. They recognize that in musical performance, the joik is only one of the many musics to which they have access. While the joik remains an important symbol of Sámi identity, other styles of music, both Sámi and non-Sámi, are just as important to the construction of self.

### Approach

The purpose of this thesis is to illuminate the shifting focus of Sámi musicians and audiences in expressing their Sámi identity in the new millennium. The Sámi joik served as an important marker of Sámi identity in the 1970s and 80s, reconstructed and revitalized through its insertion into popular music; but its significance for Sámi musicians and audiences in the last twenty years has shifted.

Many musicians are increasingly exploring musics of many cultures beyond their own, and identify the joik as just one aspect of their broad musical influences. This does not connote an abandonment of traditional Sámi music, however—the joik still appears on the majority of Sámi albums—nor does it signal a lack of interest in asserting a unique

Sámi identity. Instead, this shift in perception reflects a desire of both Sámi musicians and Sámi audiences to explore, through music, the globalized, multicultural worlds in which they live, the increasing interest in self-determination, in deciding for themselves the character of Sámi music and culture, and in the expression of a more internalized and personal sense of identity.

### *Methodology and Historical Framework*

The research for this paper includes both library research and original fieldwork conducted over a three-year period, and culminating with a six-week field research excursion to northern Finland in 2004. In the spring of 2004 I accepted two grants from the Finlandia Foundation National Capital Chapter and from the Finlandia Foundation National Chapter to conduct field and library research in Finland. I was affiliated with the University of Oulu, and spent six weeks conducting field and library research in Finland. Beyond initial contacts that I made during my first trip to Finland all original fieldwork for this thesis was conducted during this six week period.

Original fieldwork is based on current ethnographic standards, and has been approved by the Institutional Review Board concerning research on Human Subjects. Fieldwork includes formal and informal interviews, observation of live musical performances, and follow-up correspondence over email.

### *Theoretical and Ideological Framework*

#### Theories on Identity

This thesis seeks to draw conclusions about the way people express their identities through music. Therefore, the discourses surrounding identity in the social sciences must first be addressed. Identity is a way of situating oneself and of marking difference

between people. It is not a single, unified concept, nor is it limited to an essentialized notion of self; instead, every individual is composed of multiple identities. Ethnic background, race, class, gender, religious orientation, national or regional heritage, language group, and political affiliation are all possible elements of an individual's multifaceted identity.<sup>1</sup> As individuals we can give precedence to any one of these identities at any given moment, so that in a manner, we are constructing an identity for ourselves everyday and at every moment.<sup>2</sup> We receive aspects of our identity from the world in which we live, from the people we encounter—parents, teachers, spouses, friends—throughout our lives. Their identities affect who we are as people, and at the same time, their perceptions of who we are affect who we become. We create multiple and changing performable selves, and thus, we are performing an identity based on the changing contexts of our daily lives.<sup>3</sup>

Music, as a powerful, culturally constructed means of creating meaning, conveys societal values and views of the world; it also negotiates boundaries between cultures and within cultures. Music can serve many functions, including the transmission, creation, reproduction, or even reconstruction of identity, and musical performance creates a special space for the performance of identity, unlike any other context we encounter. According to Philip Bohlman, “Music clearly plays an important role in symbolizing community, expressing and structuring the relationship of parts to wholes, male to

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<sup>1</sup> Kay Kaufman Shelemay, *Soundscape: Exploring Music in a Changing World* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2001), 249.

<sup>2</sup> Shelemay, 249.

<sup>3</sup> Vivien Burr, *An Introduction to Social Constructionism* (London: Routledge, 1995, Reprint, 2001).

female, tradition to modernity, self to collectivity.”<sup>4</sup> None of these entities is stable or singular, however, because of the performative and malleable nature of identity.

Pirkko Moisala suggests five ontological stances that explain why musical performance is a special context for the performance of identity. Although her analysis focuses on gender performance and music, these stances can easily be assessed in the performance of any kind of identity.

First, “music is, like language, a primary modeling system; that is, a system that guides or forms our perceptions of the world or a system on which we model the world around us.”<sup>5</sup> Through music, and other cultural modeling systems, we learn how to pattern the world around us, which directly affects how we perceive ourselves and others.<sup>6</sup> Music is one of the first modeling systems to which we are exposed, and thus affects how we perceive reality at a very young age. In Moisala’s examples, women’s roles in Finnish society can be found within musical performance. Children see this process and adapt to or challenge it.

Second, “music is a bodily art...The body reacts and resonates to music; and body movements are central in music making...It is the site where we learn how to experience socially mediated patterns of kinetic energy, existence in time, emotions, desire, and pleasure.”<sup>7</sup> As we learn music, we physically respond to music, and we learn how to physically act out our identities; we learn what kinetic patterns are socially acceptable.

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<sup>4</sup> Philip V. Bohlman, “Ethnomusicology: Contemporary Theoretical Issues,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* (Accessed September, 2004), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>.

<sup>5</sup> Pirkko Moisala, “Musical Gender in Performance,” *Women & Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture* 3 (1999): 1.

<sup>6</sup> Moisala, 4.

<sup>7</sup> Moisala, 8.

Third, “music is most often publicly performed and, thus, subject to social control.”<sup>8</sup> Music is performed for a community of listeners, who react to and mediate the performance. Musical performance is an exceptional modeling system because its public nature allows it to address societal values.

In conjunction with these ideas, Martin Stokes says, “music informs our sense of place.... The ‘places’ constructed through music involve notions of difference and social boundary... Music does not simply provide a marker in a prestructured social space, but the means by which this space can be transformed.”<sup>9</sup> Musical performance not only transmits identity, but can serve as the space in which identity changes, or in which a new identity can be adopted, without the societal restraints of everyday life. Bohlman also argues that music-making is often the primary context in which a culture can define and “transform” its sense of identity.<sup>10</sup> Musical performance is a liberating space in which societal roles can be embraced, negotiated, challenged, or even ignored.

Fourth, “music exists only in performance, even though the norms of performativity are brought to bear on the performer.”<sup>11</sup> Moisala argues that a staged performance allows a performer to slip “in and out” of a society’s acceptable gender roles.<sup>12</sup> Similarly musical performance can create a freer space for the expression of other identities that may be oppressed in other settings. At the same time, it is also subject to the norms of society. Moisala continues: “because music is human expression taking place in time, it exists only in performance and, furthermore, musical performance is

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<sup>8</sup> Moisala, 1.

<sup>9</sup> Martin Stokes, ed., *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place* (Berg: Oxford, 1994, Reprint, 1997), 3-4.

<sup>10</sup> Bohlmann, “Ethnomusicology.”

<sup>11</sup> Moisala, 1.

<sup>12</sup> Moisala, 13.

performative of many other aspects of culture.”<sup>13</sup> At the same time that an artist performs music, he or she is also involved in the performance of other aspects of his or her culture, such as gender, ethnicity, race, religion, etc. The performance serves as more than just social commentary, but can *create* various societal values. As a reader of Moisala’s work commented in her article, “‘Music is always an action that creates the condition it represents.’”<sup>14</sup>

Fifth, “music has the ability to alter consciousness and state of mind.”<sup>15</sup> This quality means that musical performance can, in a very real sense, transform societal values and transcend societal roles. Each of these ontological stances forms my assumptions regarding the relationship between Sámi identity and popular music. The fifth stance, in particular, will be applicable: in Chapter 3 I demonstrate how the public performance of indigenous Sámi music directly affected the organization of the community and Sámi social status in Scandinavia.

#### Theories on Indigeneity

This thesis will examine a people that have embraced an indigenous identity, a highly contested marker of difference between “settlers” and colonists and the world’s First Peoples. I refer to this kind of identity as “indigeneity,” which gives this identity status not just as a descriptor, but as a highly developed paradigm—a tangible and global configuration of personhood that crosses all other cultural boundaries to bring together all people who choose to emphasize their indigenous status.

Sámi scholar Odd Mathis Hætta states, “...an indigenous people is a people that inhabited an area before the present dominant group settled and decided the national

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<sup>13</sup> Moisala, 13.

<sup>14</sup> Moisala, 14.

<sup>15</sup> Moisala, 14.

borders.”<sup>16</sup> They are those people, nearly 300 million in seventy different countries, who believe their ancestors were the first to settle in their present-day homeland. While the U.N. first recognized the needs of indigenous peoples in the 1960s it was not until the meeting of the ILO (International Labor Organization) Convention No. 169 in 1989 that the question of who can be considered indigenous was directly addressed. The convention manual states clearly, however, that “ILO Convention No. 169 does not define who are indigenous and tribal peoples. It only describes the peoples it aims to protect.” The convention addressed the rights of both “tribal” and indigenous peoples, and distinguishes between these peoples and dominant culture groups according to the following criteria:

The convention applies to: tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations...peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonisation or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.<sup>17</sup>

In addition, the ILO states that “Self-identification as indigenous or tribal shall be regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining the groups to which the provisions of this Convention apply.”<sup>18</sup> Therefore the ILO places high value in internal definitions of indigeneity.

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<sup>16</sup> Odd Mathis Hætta, *The Sami: An Indigenous People of the Arctic*, trans. Ole Petter Gurholt (Karasjok, Norway: Davvi Girji OS, 1996), 66-67. In this thesis a “Sámi” researcher applies to a researcher of Sámi descent, not to a researcher who specializes in Sámi studies.

<sup>17</sup> *Report of the International Labor Organization*, “ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, 1989 (no. 169)” (Geneva: International Labour Office, 1989), 13.

<sup>18</sup> *International Labour Organization*, 14.



The World Council of Indigenous Peoples, an organization that Sámi cultural representatives helped found, proposes the following definitions of indigeneity: “1. the original inhabitants of an area; 2. the descendents of the original inhabitants of an area who are colonized, or 3. those who live in an Indigenous way.”<sup>19</sup>

These institutional definitions are crucial to the concept of indigenous identity, because indigenous communities themselves have, by and large, accepted this conception of indigeneity, and have used it to achieve political and cultural rights in their home countries. As Ronald Niezen in *The Origins of Indigenism: Human Rights and the Politics of Identity* has described, “the international legislative bodies of states—the United Nations and its satellite agencies—have provided the conceptual origins and practical focus of indigenous identity.”<sup>20</sup>

The significance of indigeneity, for those who choose to embrace it can be analyzed in much the same way that we examine ethnicity. In his introduction to *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, Stokes borrows the following ideas on ethnicity from Chapman, McDonald, and Tonkin’s *History and Ethnicity*: “Ethnicities are to be understood in terms of the construction, maintenance, and negotiation of boundaries, and not on the ‘putative’ essences which fill the gaps within them. Ethnic boundaries define and maintain social identities, which can only exist in a ‘context of opposition and relativities.’”<sup>21</sup> The global indigenous movement utilizes a similar ideology to ethnic movements. It exists in order to counter the hegemonic power

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<sup>19</sup> “What is Indigenous?,” in *Baiki: The North American Sami Journal Online* (Accessed August 2004), <[www.baiki.org/indigenous.htm](http://www.baiki.org/indigenous.htm)>.

<sup>20</sup> Ronald Niezen, *The Origins of Indigenism: Human Rights and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 9.

<sup>21</sup> M. Chapman, E. Tonkin, and M. McDonald, “Introduction,” in *History and Ethnicity* (London: MacMillan, 1985) quoted in Martin Stokes, *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music: The Musical Construction of Place* (Berg: Oxford 1994, Reprint, 1997), 6.

of dominating culture groups, much in the same way that ethnic minorities in a country may adopt an ethnic identity to counter the cultural hegemony they experience.

Indigenous peoples use this ideology to draw boundaries between themselves and cultural majorities. They are constructing, maintaining, and negotiating boundaries that allow *them* to maintain an identity in opposition to other cultural groups. At the same time, discourses on ethnicity and indigeneity are also often invoked to *reinforce* hegemony, especially when employed by state powers.<sup>22</sup>

Politics of ethnic identity are fundamentally tied to musical performance. Musical performance can construct a space for the performance of ethnic identity that can reflect the history of a given group, and can contest their marginalization within their own nation. It can also uncover an identity that maintains links with the past or a common homeland. Newly invented musical styles convey important and new meanings.<sup>23</sup> For refugees and immigrants who no longer have physical ties with their homeland, or for indigenous peoples who have lost their homelands to others, this is a powerful experience. Moreover, musical performance can actually construct ethnic meaning. Bohlman argues, “Musical performance is increasingly seen as a space in which meanings are generated, and not simply ‘reflected’; ‘ethnic’ markers, like any other, are the negotiated products of multiple, labile, and historically constituted processes of difference making.”<sup>24</sup>

Despite the similarities between the cultural politics of ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples, indigenous peoples are not simply adopting a kind of ethnic

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<sup>22</sup> For example when employed by state powers to control ethnic minorities based on Darwinian conceptions of cultural superiority/inferiority.

<sup>23</sup> Shelemay, 250.

<sup>24</sup> Bohlman, “Ethnomusicology.”

identity—and this is an issue raised by both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. Niezen argues that both ethnic and indigenous groups are made up of peoples whose right to self-determination has been challenged, but the concept of “indigenism,” as Niezen calls it, differs from ethnicity because it is a global phenomenon. Niezen applies indigenism to “the international movement that aspires to promote and protect the rights of the world’s ‘first peoples.’”<sup>25</sup> Since the inception of a definition of indigenous identity by the U.N. in the 1960s, we have come to terms with the development of an indigenous identity and a global community, composed of all indigenous peoples, linked by the shared experience of colonialism and their denial of the right to self-determination by settler populations with whom they share their land.<sup>26</sup> Certainly recent literature has explored the common socio-cultural histories of ethnic minorities —postcolonial theory sheds light on their similar experiences; but the theory of indigenism has had, from its inception, an idea that all indigenous peoples belong to the same global community. As a result conceptions of this global community are codified with phrases like “the Fourth World,” “First Peoples,” and in Canada, “First Nations.”

The main goal of indigenism is “distinct collective rights” to lands and livelihoods denied to indigenous peoples by settlers.<sup>27</sup> Indigenism does not, like ethnonationalism, have as a goal separatism, and the creation of an independent state.<sup>28</sup> This does not mean, however, that some indigenous communities have not fought for status as nations, however; and many indigenous communities, including the Sámi, have fought for self-government. Indigenism operates within the boundaries of nations, and has as a primary

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<sup>25</sup> Niezen, 4.

<sup>26</sup> Niezen, 3, 7.

<sup>27</sup> Niezen, 18.

<sup>28</sup> Niezen, 8.

goal cooperation and coexistence between indigenous peoples and settlers. Indigenism also differs from other liberation movements such as decolonization, antiapartheid, and civil rights movements, however, where the goal is cultural equality. For indigenous peoples, “equality” is associated with assimilation.<sup>29</sup> Instead, indigenism is built on the concept that indigenous peoples have a exceptional claim to their lands and livelihood that surpasses the rights of settlers because, to put it simply, they were here first.

Land rights are a central issue in the struggle for indigenous status. If a people are considered indigenous, then they were the first to settle on a given piece of land. Therefore, they should be given ultimate authority over how that land is used. Land rights refers to more than just the physical earth on which they settled, however. Indigenous peoples are fighting for the right to control their entire *environment*, which as Jens Dahl argues, is made up of three basic components: the physical landscape, which includes the lands, water, ice, and minerals; the renewable resources, which refers to the animals and plants, and the *territory*, which Dahl applies to the “*cultural landscape*” (emphasis in original) of a given region.<sup>30</sup> By extension, the rights indigenous peoples seek do not necessarily comply with concepts of land ownership. Dahl says, “The indigenous people have long since expressed in public forums their ‘territorial identity,’ based not on the so-called property rights, or rights to own land, but the rights to have control over the lands they have used since ‘time immemorial.’”<sup>31</sup>

Besides being a means of claiming a space in reality, or of situating oneself, identity allows an individual access to power. Power is relative, and for marginalized

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<sup>29</sup> Niezen, 17.

<sup>30</sup> Jens Dahl, “Arctic Peoples, Their Lands and Territories,” in *Essays on Indigenous Identity and Rights*, ed. Irja Seurujärvi and Ulla-Maija Kulonen (Helsinki: Yliopistopaino, Helsinki University Press, 1996), 16.

<sup>31</sup> Dahl, 17.

peoples, identity is a powerful marker of difference. Stokes states, “Dominant groups oppose...the construction of difference when it confronts their interest. Ethnicities are violently suppressed and excluded from the classification systems of the dominant group.”<sup>32</sup> Indigeneity can clearly be inserted here. By laying claim to an identity distinguishable from majority populations, indigenous peoples are laying claim to power; and a fundamental means of claiming this identity is through music. If, in fact, indigenous peoples share a history of what Niezen describes as “state-sponsored genocide, forced settlement, relocation, political marginalization, and various formal attempts at cultural destruction,” which, according to historical record they do, then the very act of claiming an identity for themselves is an act of defiance in light of these traumatic events.<sup>33</sup>

At what point is the social status of indigenous peoples overtly challenged by indigenous peoples? What factors lead to the designation of a distinctive identity? Niezen says, “At some point in the colonization of indigenous nations, a tremendous disparity between the technology and organizational powers of dominant and dominated peoples makes itself felt.”<sup>34</sup> This response to cultural oppression occurred on a global scale during the heated socio-political climate of the 1960s, when indigenous peoples began to recognize their lower status as an “underclass” in their own homelands.<sup>35</sup> In response to this new cultural awareness, “many groups have reformulated and codified what they could of the accumulated traditional memory. Cumulatively, many small efforts of this kind have produced a global cultural revolution, little noticed by outside observers

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<sup>32</sup> Stokes, 8.

<sup>33</sup> Niezen, 5.

<sup>34</sup> Niezen, 12.

<sup>35</sup> Niezen, 11.

because of the relative insignificance of its components.”<sup>36</sup> In other words, indigenous people reinvented themselves in a way that emphasized their status as First Peoples, as opposed to emphasizing their status as ethnic minorities or underrepresented communities.

Before I continue, I would like to contextualize this research within current developments in indigenous politics. This year, 2004, is a particularly important one for indigenous peoples. It marks the end of the International Decade of Indigenous Peoples, proclaimed by the United Nations upon the recommendation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993, which followed the International Year of Indigenous Peoples in 1993.<sup>37</sup> Within this decade, a primary goal was the establishment by the General Assembly of the U.N. of a permanent forum for indigenous peoples within the U.N.; the permanent forum was established in at the meeting of the General Assembly in July 2000, and the first assembly of the permanent forum was held in 2002.<sup>38</sup>

This autumn the Smithsonian Institute of Washington, D.C., located a mere fifteen miles from my front door, has just opened the National Museum of the American Indian. Over 20,000 people who consider themselves indigenous participated in its opening.<sup>39</sup> It seems, after centuries of cultural marginalization, indigenous peoples are finally on the map of consciousness for Europeans and North Americans.

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<sup>36</sup> Niezen, 12.

<sup>37</sup> Eero J. Aarnio, “The Future of Indigenous Peoples,” in *Essays on Indigenous Identity and Rights*, ed. Irja Seurujärvi-Kari and Ulla-Maija Kulonen (Helsinki: Yliopistopaino, Helsinki University Press, 1996), 11-12.

<sup>38</sup> “International Decade of the World’s Indigenous Peoples 1995-2004,” in *The United Nations* (Accessed September 2004), <<http://www.un.org/rights/indigenous/mediaadv.html>>.

<sup>39</sup> *The Washington Post* Online, 22 September 2004, <<http://www.washingtonpost.com>>.

If this global indigenous movement went unnoticed at its onset by the rest of the world, it is certainly quite visible now. The opening of the National Museum of the American Indian and the tremendous amount of media coverage it received reflects the fact that the world's settlers are no longer able to write the world's indigenous peoples into the past. Indigenous peoples are very much a part of the present, and are building a future for themselves based on a claim to self-determination and self worth.

### Theories on Popular Music

Indigeneity, as a global phenomenon, benefits from its transmission through the phenomenon of popular music, a global commodity.<sup>40</sup> Popular music has a special relationship with the politics of identity because it travels, as recorded music, throughout the world. Thus, consumers are able to locally experience another culture's music that may have originated on the other side of the globe. This phenomenon alters our idea of what is local, and as George Lipsitz has said, brings us into direct contact with the significance of place, as we are exposed to people and musics from other places. Lipsitz argues that popular music has the potential to be a "mechanism of communication and education, as a site for experimentation with cultural and social roles not yet possible in politics."<sup>41</sup> Popular music, as a commodity form, has the potential to incite tremendous social change at the global level, to challenge the very power structures that make its dissemination possible. Indigenous musicians can use the medium of popular music to construct and reinforce connections with indigenous musicians and audiences in other parts of the world, thus strengthening the global community to which they belong.

Popular music also exists in the post-colonial world, however, meaning that the same

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<sup>40</sup> George Lipsitz, *Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism and the Poetics of Place* (London: Verso, 1994), 3-4.

<sup>41</sup> Lipsitz, 17.

cultural politics and power structures that permeate cultural exchanges are carried into the global music market: popular music is dominated by western artists, and historically colonized peoples remain marginalized within the market.

In this thesis I discuss rather broadly two categories of music: popular music and world music. Many scholars, musicians, and audiences I have encountered in this research have separated the two terms. Some argue that world music is a kind of popular music that is applied to musics emerging beyond the European-American tradition, but as we will see this narrow definition of world music can be problematic, and is contested by some of those very musicians it includes. In addition many of the artists and genres associated with popular music are also globalized, or are part of the global music market. Therefore both world music and popular music are subjective terms, used in many different ways, but are generally applied to any commodified music tradition that exists on a global scale.

The analysis included in this thesis will benefit from a working definition of popular music, despite the ambiguities of the term. Boden Sandstrom, lecturer of “World Popular Musics and Identity,” an undergraduate course at the University of Maryland, brings the concepts of world music and popular music together and presents five components that help define world popular music, and that accurately synthesize the complex and contested discourse surrounding these categories.<sup>42</sup> They are useful in a theoretical application of popular music, because they create a simple, useful frame of reference for popular music that can be applied cross-culturally.

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<sup>42</sup> Boden Sandstrom, “World Popular Musics and Identity,” university lectures (2003), University of Maryland, College Park, Md. The following description of the components of popular music comes from this source.



The first component of popular music is commercialization, which refers to how the music is presented to its audience. It is commercialized, or advertised to a wide audience through the media, music videos, concert tours, etc. The second component, commodification, is linked to the commercialization of the music, and implies that the music is turned into a product. An album, for example, is mass-produced and distributed. Based on these first two components, it is clear that popular music is defined largely by its relationship with music industries and to consumer culture. It is a product that is marketed and consumed. The music industry does not, however, retain full control of the direction popular music takes. As Andy Bennett argues, “Consumers take the structures of meaning—the musical and extra-musical resources associated with particular genres of pop—and combine them with meanings of their own to produce distinctive variations in patterns of consumption and stylistic expression.”<sup>43</sup>

The third component of popular music refers to specific social contexts for the performance of popular music, such as concert venues and clubs, as well as other contexts for popular music performance, including recordings played on personal stereos, MP3 players, on the radio, and in movies and television. As an additional result of the commercialization of popular music, musicians often enjoy an elevated social status; one or more of the members of a musical group will exhibit star-like qualities, that is, they may be locally, nationally, or internationally famous. This is explained by the star system, the fourth component of popular music.

Finally the music is directed toward a youth audience, especially teenagers and young adult who comprise the youth component. The youth component of popular music

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<sup>43</sup> Andy Bennett, *Popular Music and Youth Culture: Music, Identity and Place* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, Inc., 2000), 46.

came to the foreground when scholars first began considering the social ramifications of popular music during the 1950s with the emergence of rock ‘n’ roll. Here was a genre that, like none before it, was intrinsically linked to the youth segment of the population and in opposition to the rest of the population. Thus, the power of popular music as an expression of a counter-hegemonic agenda was acknowledged.<sup>44</sup>

A popular musical form may exhibit one or more of each of these qualities of popular music. One may also argue that there are particular genres of music that are generally associated with popular music, such as rock, hip hop, and country; but to define popular music by genre alone would ignore the fact that there are many music genres that are not usually associated with popular music—folk or classical music, for example—that also exhibit one or all of the five components of popular music.<sup>45</sup>

Roy Shuker suggests a similar definition of popular music that includes both its commercial aspect and its own aesthetics. He states, “Essentially, all popular music consists of a hybrid of musical traditions, styles, and influences, and is also an economic product which is invested with ideological significance by many of its consumers. At the heart of the majority of various forms of popular music is a fundamental tension between the essential creativity of the act of ‘making music’ and the commercial nature of the bulk of its production and dissemination.”<sup>46</sup>

Popular music, as a commercialized, commodified music, is directly linked to the process of globalization, which disseminates information throughout the world at an incredible pace.<sup>47</sup> Timothy Taylor defines globalization as “the intensification of

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<sup>44</sup> Bennett, 34.

<sup>45</sup> Sandstrom, university lectures.

<sup>46</sup> Roy Shuker, *Popular Music: The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 1998), 228.

<sup>47</sup> Sandstrom, university lectures.

worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.”<sup>48</sup> The context of globalization affects popular music artists, who can participate in cross-cultural collaborations, make their music heard on a global level, and create new music or hybrid genres.<sup>49</sup>

In the context of globalization popular music expands the audience and influences of a musical style, which will consequently significantly change this style. The popular musics of economically and culturally hegemonic nations, especially the United States and the United Kingdom, strongly influence popular music throughout the world. In the post-colonial world, we are beginning to recognize the power dynamics between the former colonizers and the formerly colonized, but that does not mean that these power relations have disappeared. The popular music market can be viewed as a microcosm of power relations in the postcolonial world, in that the musical styles of the western world still dominate, and western influences still permeate throughout the formerly colonized world. What has arisen out of this process is a form of global, or world popular music, based on commonly-understood aesthetics that we tend to assume came from the western market. Timothy Taylor explains, “North American and U.K. popular musics have traveled far more widely than any other western idiom, resulting in what Simon Frith has called a ‘universal pop aesthetic.’ This very pervasiveness means that popular musics help raise musical and theoretical issues better than other musics, even better, perhaps than any other cultural form.”<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Timothy D. Taylor, *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets* (New York: Routledge, 1997), xvi.

<sup>49</sup> Taylor, 197.

<sup>50</sup> Taylor, xv. See Simon Frith, *World Music, Politics, and Social Change*, ed. Simon Frith and Peter Martin (New York: Manchester University Press, 1989), 2.

The “pervasiveness” of U.S. and U.K. musical idioms in world popular music does not mean that popular music traditions in other countries are simply copy-cat versions of popular music styles in the U.S. and the U.K. Instead, the peoples of non-western cultures are active participants in this cultural exchange. Taylor explains, “Rather than cultural imperialism simply wiping out indigenous musicking and indigenous sounds, new popular musics are being made, old ones altered or maintained, sometimes museumized and sometimes lost altogether.”<sup>51</sup> In order for a music tradition to survive, it has to change. It must continually be restructured to meet the changing needs of the community. Otherwise, it will no longer contain meaning for the community, and will become moribund. Therefore the adoption of U.S. and U.K. musical stylings is not a cut and dried case of western hegemony wiping out cultural difference, but instead represents a vital process in the creation of meaning in music: the process of change.

Two important ideas arise out of the power relations in popular music: First, there is no denying that North American and U.K. popular musics can be found throughout the world, and that these musics have had a tremendous impact on non-western popular musics. This results in the formation of a global music phenomenon—based on common popular music aesthetics. Second, because popular music is a global phenomenon, it is an excellent musical form for exploring the expression of a global cultural identity. It can serve as a site where theories of cultural politics are raised, and theories of power relations are challenged. This is especially significant for indigenous communities for whom local expressions of identity in music most likely were suppressed by a dominant population. Popular music gives indigenous peoples access to power. It can serve as a

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<sup>51</sup> Taylor, 197. Cultural imperialism and popular music will be further addressed in Chapter 5.

political vehicle for embracing musical traditions and allowing them to resurface with a new construction and new political meaning.<sup>52</sup>

Popular music has created a global soundscape to which musicians and audiences alike have access. The term soundscape, which was first articulated by composer Murray Schafer in *Tuning of the World*, was originally defined as “the sonic environment. Technically, any portion of the sonic environment regarded as a field or study.”<sup>53</sup> Today the term is more closely aligned with Arjun Appadurai’s methods of forming perceptions of the world. Appadurai’s five “-scapes,” the finanscape, mediascape, ethnoscape, technoscape, and ideoscape define the complex world in which we live.<sup>54</sup> Music is affected by each of these -scapes, but can also be understood in its own -scape: the soundscape. A particular soundscape has characteristics and meanings for specific performers, listeners, and locations. It also centers on a time and space in which musical events take place. Our soundscapes are constantly evolving to incorporate the new musical sounds we encounter everyday.<sup>55</sup>

In the global post-modern age, as we live and come to terms with difference, we are coming to terms with a global soundscape. Soundscapes are changing, and yet identity is still reflected in the music; and additionally, in the global soundscape musical identity has the attention of a global audience. But how do we locate ourselves in the music? How do we extract our identities from a global soundscape, in which no single tradition is necessarily isolated from the rest of the world?

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<sup>52</sup> Carolina Robertson, personal correspondence with the author, April 2003, University of Maryland, College Park, Md.

<sup>53</sup> R. Murray Schafer, *The Tuning of the World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), 274.

<sup>54</sup> Arjun Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy,” *Public Culture* 2 (Spring 1990): 1-24, cited in Taylor, xv.

<sup>55</sup> Shelemay, 8.

In effect, the very nature of music as described above makes musical performance an important context for understanding the dichotomy of roots versus rootlessness. Steven Feld explains, “Music is the most highly stylized of social forms, iconically linked to the broader cultural production of local identity and indexically linked to contexts and occasions of community participation.”<sup>56</sup> Musical performance not only creates an ideal space for the creation and transmission of an identity with a clear link to a specific social space; it is also an ideal site for unraveling the complexities of identities performed without reference to a concrete social space, as is very often the case in popular music performance. Sámi musicians have found various solutions to the problem of locating themselves in popular music, as will be discussed below.

Popular music is inherently defined as a kind of music disseminated globally through mass media. As such, can it also be a music that represents *local* politics and ideologies, and as Peter Manuel asks, “Does popular music rise from the people who constitute its audience, or is it superimposed upon them from above?”<sup>57</sup> Who decides what popular music will sound like? If it is inseparable from the global music market, then how can it be used to reflect “the aesthetic and ideological needs and aspirations of the individual, ethnic group, or class,”<sup>58</sup> Manuel concludes that the power relations within popular music are complex, and cannot be understood simply as a reflection of the values of those at the bottom, or at the top of any social hierarchy. One must consider the

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<sup>56</sup> Steven Feld, “From Schizophonia to Schismogenesis: On the Discourses and Commodification Practices of ‘World Music’ and ‘World Beat,’” in *Music Grooves: Essays and Dialogues*, ed. Steven Feld and Charles Keil (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 269.

<sup>57</sup> Peter Manuel, *Popular Music of the Non-Western World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 8.

<sup>58</sup> Manuel, 8.

“musical and extra-musical parameters” of any situation to determine who really has hegemony over popular music expression.<sup>59</sup>

Bennett presents two contrasting views of the popular music industry and the balance of power that exists between the recording industry and the consumers. He argues, “...it is the stylistic or ideological appeal of performing artists and their music that generates profit for the industry.”<sup>60</sup> Therefore, the recording industry must, on some level rely on the artists to produce the kind of product that is profitable, that appeals to the tastes of the audiences. At the same time, “In the process of producing and marketing pop, the music industry clearly imposes structures of meaning on particular genres and sounds which, in turn serve to frame audience’s uses of popular music.”<sup>61</sup> Perhaps the only universally understood characteristic of popular music is that it takes place on contested territory.

Having presented the theoretical and ideological framework in mind I will now move on to the central topics examined in this thesis. In Chapter 2 I provide the historical framework necessary to examine modern Sámi popular music. The chapter includes an overview of Sámi cultural history, and examines specific events in this history that have directly affected the development of popular music and a pan-Sámi identity. I also examine traditional Sámi joik, and the aesthetics and social functions of this music. In Chapter 3 I move on to discuss a period of intense cultural mobilization in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, and the development of the Joik Renaissance. I examine specific popular music artists who had a significant impact on the construction and promotion of Sámi identity. Chapter 4 consists of several ethnographic stories, drawn from my initial experiences

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<sup>59</sup> Manuel, 12.

<sup>60</sup> Bennett, 41.

<sup>61</sup> Bennett, 45.

with Sámi music and from the research conducted in 2004. These stories illuminate some of the primary issues in the in the construction of Sámi identity in popular music today. Finally in Chapter 5 I examine specific problems that arise from these ethnographic stories and from the current literature on Sámi music, in order to hypothesize about the nature of Sámi identity in the new millennium. In particular I examine notions of authenticity and strategic anti-essentialism, cultural appropriation, the problem of world music, and generational differences in the perception of Sámi popular music and identity.



## Chapter 2: Sámi Cultural and Musical History

An ancient joik or song cycle *Sámeeatnan álgoolbmuid birra* (Of the Ancient Inhabitants of Sápmi), first transcribed by Jacob Fjellman in 1830, traces the mythical origins and early cultural development of the Sámi. The song recounts three eras in the history of the Sámi presented in a synopsis here:

...the first era begins when the ancestors of the Sami ‘discover’ their own country, conquer the native population, and begin to learn important culture-skills, beginning with the making of fire. In the second period, another people arrive; these are related to the first, but represent a more advanced cultural level, possessing such skills as the domestication of cattle; their lives are given meaning by a system of religious beliefs and of shamanism. This second people oppress the first, but gradually become merged with them. The third era is ‘the Age of the Kings;’ these rulers bring their own system of laws to Lapland, where previously ‘the law of man had been the law of nature,’ and they demand of the Sami that they renounce their ‘foolish ways.’<sup>1</sup>

This joik on the origins of the Sámi people provides an excellent framework for analyzing their cultural development, from their first arrival in Fennoscandia through their colonization and forced assimilation by the Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, and Russian nations. It also reveals that the Sámi story closely mirrors the experience of many indigenous peoples: the first arrival, encounters with outsiders, colonization and cultural assimilation (or annihilation, in many cases). Finally this joik demonstrates how, throughout this history, music has played a major role in organizing Sámi reality.

### Early Sámi History

The Sámi, formerly known as the Lapps, are the European Union’s only recognized indigenous people. The term “Lapp” was a common word for the Sámi coined by non-Sámi settlers and travelers. Today it is considered derogatory, and has ultimately

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<sup>1</sup> Samuli Aikio, Ulla Aikio-Puoskari, and Johannes Helander, *The Sami Culture in Finland* (Helsinki: Lapin Sivistysseura (Lapland Cultural Series 1994), 13.

been replaced by an internally-valued descriptor derived from the Sámi word for themselves, *sabmelas* or *sápmelaš*.<sup>2</sup> The name is a cultural designation that distinguishes the Sámi from their Scandinavian neighbors.<sup>3</sup>

The employment of Sámi-derived vocabulary illuminates a primary discourse surrounding indigenous politics: the right to self-determination. Naming is a vital part of that right, so that when Sámi terms for their people, their towns, and their homeland are adopted by the hegemonic populations, the Sámi are validated as a people. They are no longer invisible, ignored, or the subjects of another people. They stand as their own cultural group.

Estimates on the size of the Sámi population range from 60,000 to 100,000 people, depending on the source of the data.<sup>4</sup> Most Sámi researchers agree that approximately 40-50,000 Sámi live in the northern province of Finnmark in Norway, 15-20,000 in Sweden, 7,000 in Finland, and 2,000 in Russia.<sup>5</sup> Their homeland is called Sápmi or Sámiland, and expands across national borders throughout Russia's Kola Peninsula, northern Finland, Sweden, and Norway, and extends south into central Sweden. Figure 1 displays the Sámi settlement areas and the major language groups, distinguished by shading.

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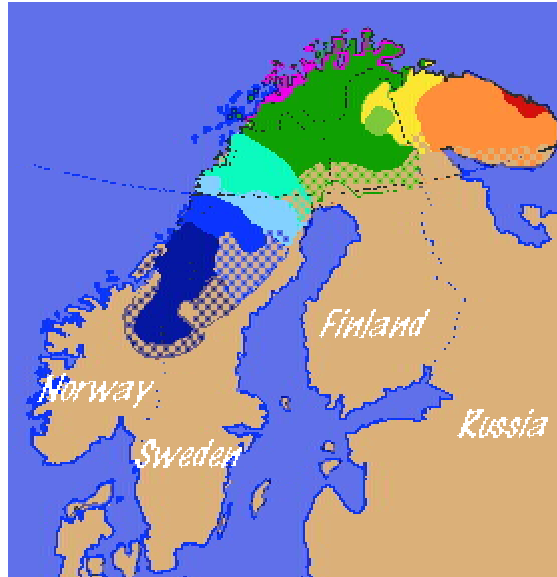
<sup>2</sup> Pekka Aikio, Martti Linkola, Helvi Nuorgam-Poutasuo, and Lassi Saressalo, "The Sami People in Finland," *Cultural Minorities in Finland: An Overview Towards Cultural Policy*, Juha Penttikäinen and Veikko Anttonen, eds. (Helsinki: Publications of the Finnish National Commission for Unesco No. 32, 1985), 51.

<sup>3</sup> The author will employ the spelling used in all current literature and research by Sámi scholars, and which most closely represents correct pronunciation.

<sup>4</sup> Elina Helander and Kaarina Kailo, eds, *No Beginning, No End: The Sami Speak Up* (Edmonton: Canadian Circumpolar Institute, University of Alberta, 1998), 17. Population statistics from Sámi research tend to be much higher than statistics from Scandinavian and other sources.

<sup>5</sup> Veli-Pekka Lehtola, *The Sámi People—Traditions in Transition*, trans. Linna Weber Müller-Wille (Aanaar (Inari), Finland: Kustannus-Puntsi, 2002), 10.

Figure 1: Map of Sámi Settlement Areas<sup>6</sup>



Sápmi is more commonly known as Lapland, but today Sámi and Scandinavian scholars recognize Lapland as the general area of northern Scandinavia above the Arctic Circle that includes both Sámi and non-Sámi inhabitants. Sápmi refers specifically to Sámi territory. Finnish and Sámi scholars also draw a distinction between Sámi and Laplanders: Laplanders are Sámi *or* Finnish people who live in the province of Lapland. Moreover, Sápmi is considered the homeland of the Sámi and includes the land, the people, and the language. Its geographic borders are based on traditional settlement areas and language groups of the Sámi, and are situated far north of the Arctic Circle.<sup>7</sup> The Sámi municipalities of Finland, where I conducted most of my research, include

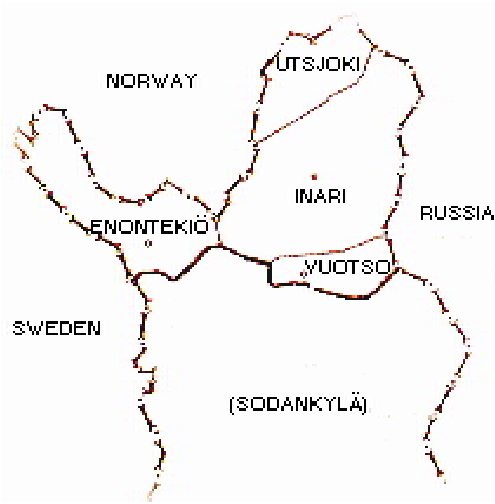
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<sup>6</sup> “The Sami Homeland,” *An Introduction to the Sámi People* (Accessed November 2004), <<http://www.itv.se/boreale/samieng.htm>>.

<sup>7</sup> Helander and Kailo, 17.

Enontekiö (Eanodat),<sup>8</sup> Inari (Anár), and Utsjoki (Ohcejohka), and Sodankylä (Soadegilli). The entire Sámi area of Finland is about 30,000 km<sup>2</sup> in extent.<sup>9</sup>

Figure 2: Finnish Provinces in Sápmi<sup>10</sup>



Sápmi is part of the circumpolar region, an area that includes all land above the Arctic Circle and is characterized by permafrost—a condition in which the ground continually remains below freezing—and by tundra and taiga, the coniferous, boreal forests found throughout the sub-Arctic region. The tundra begins at the edge of the tree line, or the northern limit of tree growth, and constitutes the environment in the Arctic, while the environment above the Arctic Circle but below the tree line represents the sub-Arctic.<sup>11</sup> These two ecological zones are quite different: according to anthropologists Nelson Graburn and Stephen Strong, the tree line “represents an important ecological and

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<sup>8</sup> Corresponding Sámi terms for these regions follow in parentheses. Finnish names are indicated here first because these are the Finnish municipalities recognized by the government. Unless otherwise indicated, Sámi place names will be used with corresponding national place names in parentheses.

<sup>9</sup> Aikio, Linkola, Nuorgam-Poutasuo, and Saressalo, 46.

<sup>10</sup> Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, “The Sami Domicile Area in Finland,” *Virtual Finland: Your Window on Finland Online* (Accessed September 2004), <<http://virtual.finland.fi>>.

<sup>11</sup> Nelson H. H. Graburn and B. Stephen Strong, *Circumpolar Peoples: An Anthropological Perspective* (Pacific Palisades, CA: Goodyear Publishing Company, 1973), 1-2.

cultural boundary dividing the tundra from the taiga.”<sup>12</sup> Sámi have traditionally settled in both the Arctic and the sub-Arctic, and thus their subsistence patterns and other lifeways have been quite varied.

The circumpolar region is defined by an overall low natural production compared to other parts of the world, a result of the harsh northern environment.<sup>13</sup> This environment has had an effect on the kind of music cultures that develop. Most circumpolar cultures have not traditionally developed a variety of musical instruments. The natural environment consists of few significant sources of raw materials for instruments, such as wood, and subsistence methods have largely been based on a semi-nomadic lifestyle, due to the low natural production. As a result, cultures like the Sámi, who practiced semi-nomadism in their early history, were unable to carry burdensome instruments from one camp to the next, and have developed a musical repertory based almost exclusively on vocals. Overall, the circumpolar region can be musically defined by an emphasis on vocal repertoires, partially as a result of the circumpolar environment.

#### Methods of Subsistence

The Sámi have practiced a variety of subsistence methods in their history, depending upon their settlement areas. The Sea Sámi, who comprised the largest group of Sámi, lived on the shores of the Arctic Ocean and focused predominantly on fishing and sea mammal hunting. Sámi living further inland hunted in the forests, practiced small-scale farming, and conducted fresh water fishing. The Forest Sámi, who dwelled in the coniferous forest extending throughout central Scandinavia and into the Kola Peninsula, practiced diverse methods of subsistence, including hunting and gathering, fishing, and

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<sup>12</sup> Graburn and Strong, 2.

<sup>13</sup> Graburn and Strong, 2.

by the 1600's, reindeer herding. Those Sámi known as the Reindeer Sámi are perhaps the most well-known group; they practiced wide-scale reindeer herding through the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Eanodat (Enontekiö), Giehtaruohtas (Käsivarsi), and Soabbat (Sompio).<sup>14</sup> The Sámi transitioned to a wage-based economy around World War II, and today livelihoods are as varied in Sápmi as they are throughout the Nordic countries.

Social organization was traditionally based on the *siida*, a type of Sámi community first defined by the Forest Sámi. The *siida* was a village unit comprised of several families, who would have exclusive rights to a particular area of land. Each *siida* was a migratory, but permanent unit that would only move within its strictly defined borders.<sup>15</sup> With the adoption of the wage-based economy the *siida* unit was replaced by individual households.

#### Arrival in the North

As of today, no single theory predominates regarding the origins of Sámi culture. The issue of Sámi origins is highly contested, in part because of the politically-charged debate over indigenous rights, and whether or not the Sámi in fact can be considered indigenous. Two theories, however, encapsulate the majority of scholarship on the issue within the last few decades. The first theory is based on the belief that both Sámi and Finnish peoples came from a common population or a proto-Sámi culture in the Baltic area. According to this theory, the original distinction between the two groups was based on subsistence patterns and cultural influences, and not on genetics. The Finns were long ago influenced by Indo-European or Germanic cultures and adopted many of their culture patterns and lifeways, while Sámi culture developed relatively separate from these

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<sup>14</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 12. Previous paragraph from this source.

<sup>15</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 26.

influences.<sup>16</sup> A second theory is based on the same assumption of a proto-Sámi culture, but argues that this culture originated with the Komsa culture, which was located in the Kola Area from 7000 to 2500 B.C. Odd Mathis Hætta argues for this interpretation, stating that Sámi culture can be traced back to the Komsa culture from the Old Stone Age (8,000–4,000 B.C.) This was followed by the Neolithic Period (4,000–800 B.C.) and the Sámi Iron Age (800 B.C.–1100 A.D.).<sup>17</sup> Others estimate the Sámi settled in Sápmi at the end of the Ice Age, as early as 11,000 or 10,000 BC.<sup>18</sup> The ancestors of the Sámi presumably moved into the region of Sápmi by following their game, the reindeer, along the edge of the receding glacier at the end of the Ice Age.<sup>19</sup> Most researchers agree that the ancestors of the Sámi arrived in the area no less than 2,000 years ago, and the culture as we know it today developed within the region of Sápmi.<sup>20</sup>

### Language Groups

Linguists argue that the Sámi and Finns must have constituted a proto-Sámi culture because their languages share so many qualities today. Sámi and Finnish come from the same language family of Finno-Ugric, and Finnish is the closest neighbor of the Sámi language—the next closest language is Estonian. Researchers like Tuomas Magga, director of Giellagas, the Sámi Institute at the University of Oulu, believe this is because the Sámi and Finns once spoke the same language.<sup>21</sup> His colleague and my advisor in Finland, Veli-Pekka Lehtola, argues that they spoke a common language up to three or 4,000 years ago.<sup>22</sup> When they separated as culture groups, they also developed distinctive

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<sup>16</sup> Helander and Kailo, 19.

<sup>17</sup> Odd Mathis Hætta, *The Sami: An Indigenous People of the Arctic*, 14-15.

<sup>18</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 19.

<sup>19</sup> Hætta, 11.

<sup>20</sup> Hætta, 14.

<sup>21</sup> Tuomas Magga, “Saami Culture” 2000 (?) (photocopy), University of Oulu, Finland, 3.

<sup>22</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 11.

languages. Sámi did not evolve as a unified language, however; instead it separated into distinct dialects by settlement region, and eventually into distinct languages. The two main language groups in Sápmi are East Sámi and West Sámi. Western Sámi languages include South, Ume, Pite, Lule (with 3,000 speakers), and North (17,000, 2,000 in Finland). Eastern Sámi languages include Anár (Inari, 300-500), Skolt (650), Kildin (650), Ter (unknown), and Akkala (dead language). Overall Lehtola estimates that 50,000 people speak a Sámi language, and North Sámi is the dominant language.<sup>23</sup> As such, Sámi literary publications, radio broadcasts, and the lyrics in most commercial releases of Sámi music are in the North Sámi language. Therefore people who speak a Sámi language other than North Sámi must also learn the North Sámi language. In fact, as of 1979 Norway, Sweden, and Finland had all adopted North Sámi as the standard written Sámi language.<sup>24</sup>

#### Indigenous Status

The debate over the origins of the Sámi is contested in part because it directly affects the indigenous status of the Sámi. If the Sámi and the Finns are, indeed, part of the same proto-culture, can both cultures be considered indigenous? Scholars like Hætta argue that the Sámi are considered indigenous people because they were the first to settle in Sápmi.<sup>25</sup> This argument is difficult to dispute because Hætta distinguishes between Sámi homeland and Scandinavia. In other words, he demonstrates that the Sámi have indigenous status not because they were the first to arrive in Scandinavia, but because they were the first to arrive and settle in the area of present-day Sápmi.

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<sup>23</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 11. Previous information on languages comes from this source.

<sup>24</sup> When authors included in this thesis refer to Sámi language in the singular, they are referring to the North Sámi language, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>25</sup> Hætta, 15.



Hætta also argues that Sámi culture *developed* in northern Fennoscandia: “The Sami were definitely not immigrants...Cultural evidence from the Stone and Iron Ages, linguistic history, historical records of Roman historians and others, and evidence from Icelandic sagas underline the fact that the Sami are indigenous people.”<sup>26</sup> The Sámi did not arrive in Sápmi as Sámi, but instead grew into their current state as a culture group after they arrived. This does not, however, address the situation of the Finns, who by all accounts also developed as a culture group in Scandinavia.

By now it is clear that a group’s indigenous status is controversial, highly politicized, and often contested. In spite of the contradictory arguments regarding Sámi indigenous status, most people in Scandinavia accept the Sámi as an indigenous people, and at the same time have accepted that there are no genetic differences that separate the Finns and the Sámi. One explanation for this discontinuity comes from the WCIP’s third criterion for indigenous status: “those who live in an indigenous way.”<sup>27</sup> The Sámi do not necessarily have to prove they were the first to arrive in the area of Sápmi if they can prove that their lifeways are accepted, internally and externally, as representative of indigenous lifeways.

### Sámi Music: The Joik

In its early history Sámi musical expression was based solely on a vocal tradition called the *juoi’gan* or joik.<sup>28</sup> The Sámi verb *juoigat* translates as “to produce a musical sound.”<sup>29</sup> It applies to the genre, the act, and the sound produced. Joik was originally

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<sup>26</sup> Hætta, 15.

<sup>27</sup> *Baiki* online.

<sup>28</sup> Joik is the Finnish word for this vocal tradition, but is more commonly used than the Sámi term, and more accurately reflects the pronunciation according to the standard notation of the International Phonetics Alphabet. Joik may also appear as yoik or jojk.

<sup>29</sup> Richard Jones-Bamman, “Saami Music,” in *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* vol. 8: *Europe*, ed. Timothy Rice, James Porter, and Chris Goertzen (New York: Garland, 2000), 299.

performed without instrumental accompaniment other than in shamanic rituals, and most often by solo voice. When shamanism was still a dominant spiritual practice in Sápmi the joik, in combination with the shaman's drum, also allowed the shaman to obtain a trance state and communicate with the spirit world.<sup>30</sup>

The most important social function of joik is that it is a way of remembering. It encapsulates its subject matter so that even if one cannot see what the joik is about, one can experience its subject through the music. Matts Ansberg, Israel Ruong, and Håkan Unsgaard state in their large joik collection called *Joik/Yoik*, “Yoiking at its best is an art of recollection. When you yoik, you recall to mind something you have experienced. It is not a question of something that has been learnt by heart more or less mechanically. You are associated emotionally, often strongly and intensively, with what you yoik about.”<sup>31</sup>

#### Joik Aesthetics<sup>32</sup>

Yoiking is comparable to yodeling, in that the singer delivers ornaments or grace notes by flipping quickly between chest and head register in a cutting fashion. The singer usually emphasizes the use of the throat and nasopharynx and often sings at full volume, creating a somewhat forced, nasal vocal timbre. The Sámi recognize the distinctive sound of yoiking, and contrast it with a “Scandinavian way of singing,” called *lávlut*, a term borrowed from Finnish early in Sámi history and applied to Finnish hymn singing.<sup>33</sup> Yoiking employs an extraordinary vocal aesthetic; once one has heard it, it is easy to identify in any setting.

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<sup>30</sup> Seija Somby, “Saami Culture,” university lectures, (2001), University of Oulu, Finland.

<sup>31</sup> Matts Ansberg, Israel Ruong, and Håkan Unsgaard, *Joik/Yoik* (Stockholm: Sveriges Radios förlag, 1969, 39. This concept will be addressed further below.

<sup>32</sup> The following description of Sámi joik is limited to joik practices in the Scandinavian countries. The author does not address music traditions of Russia's Kola Sámi here.

<sup>33</sup> Aikio, Aikio-Puoskari, and Helander, 107.

Traditional joik is based heavily on vocables, or meaningful sounds, in combination with, or instead of, meaningful words. Vocables are often misrepresented as nonsense syllables or meaningless syllables, but vocables can convey meaning in much the same way that lexically understood words can, and in the case of joik, they serve an equal or superior function than words in transmitting meaning. The most common Sámi vocables are monosyllabic and end in a vowel: no, na, loa, lai, vo and yo are a few examples.<sup>34</sup> These vocables are not arbitrary syllables, but instead may convey meaning only understood in an original context by a local Sámi audience, or may convey a meaning that has been lost over time, and related to words that are no longer a part of Sámi vocabulary. In fact, a joik may become less text-oriented, and may include more vocables than when it was first performed. The vocables are not considered as substitutes for the words, however, but are considered a fundamental part of joik.

Joik also has as a key aesthetic an emphasis on improvisation. The heavy use of ornaments or grace notes in performance illustrates this. A person will never sing a joik in the exact same manner more than once. A joiker is not judged by his or her ability to repeat, but by his or her ability to invoke the subject matter. As time passes, the performer will naturally find different ways of interpreting the subject matter.<sup>35</sup>

Breath control in vocal delivery does not conform to textual or musical phrasing.<sup>36</sup> A joiker will sing until he or she has run out of breath, breathe, and then continue singing as if there were no interruption in the performance. Thus the singer may breathe in the middle of the joik cycle. This particular aesthetic is not common practice in popular music today. As joikers have incorporated instrumental accompaniment into their

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<sup>34</sup> Jones-Bamman, "Saami Music," 299.

<sup>35</sup> Jones-Bamman, "Saami Music," 300-301.

<sup>36</sup> Arnsberg, Ruong, and Unsgaard, 51.

performances, they have had to conform to more standardized phrasing. Otherwise instrumental phrasing would have to follow the breathing of the singer. Joikers may also find this aesthetic somewhat jarring and difficult to understand compared with other vocal traditions specific to western classical and popular music traditions. In order to conform to these global pop aesthetics, more standardized vocal phrasing may be employed.

A final element of joik is a noticeable rise in the basic pitch level in vocal delivery. To musicians trained in the western classical tradition this may sound as if the singer is losing his or her sense of pitch and drifting up to a higher pitch center; but this upward motion occurs with a steady rise, and is absolutely intentional. It is a key aesthetic of traditional joik, and varies from a subtle shift to a deliberately wide shift, so that the ending basic pitch may be a fourth or fifth step higher than the starting basic pitch.<sup>37</sup> Arnsberg, Ruong, and Unsgaard suggest this technique is associated with the emotional delivery of joik. As the joiker's emotions build with the intensity of the song, the pitch level goes higher and higher, corresponding to rising dynamics.<sup>38</sup>

Most joiks are characterized by a cyclical form based on one or two simple motifs. In a typical joik performance the singer presents a basic motif and repeats it over and over until he or she has determined the joik is complete, varying each cycle slightly with ornamentation and variation in the vocables.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Vilddas, a popular music group, explore this aesthetic on their latest album. While pitch level is typically more standardized in popular music, they have included a traditional joik on the album in which the singer, Annukka Hirvasvuopio, purposefully slides up into a higher pitch center over the duration of the joik. See Vilddas, "Hirvas-Niila luohti," *Vilddas*, Wood Productions, 024, 2000, compact Disc.

<sup>38</sup> Arnsberg, Ruong, and Unsgaard, 53.

<sup>39</sup> Arnsberg, Ruong, and Unsgaard, 51.

Figure 3 is a transcription of a joik performed by Nils-Aslak Valkeapää (discussed in Chapter 3) and Áilen Aiga Elle called “Elle.”<sup>40</sup> Other than the fact that the joik is a duet, it is characteristic of traditional joik. The transcription is based on the vocal lines of both singers transcribed in concert C. Vocal inflections are marked by grace notes, delineating approximate note values. Slides and dips in the vocal line—common features of joik that occur when the performer moves from one pitch to the next, especially in a larger interval—are not notated here. Vocables are not notated because they vary with each repetition of the cycle. Although western standard notation is not ideal for transcribing the vocal aesthetics of joik, this transcription does reveal the overall structure of the joik, and demonstrates the typical length of traditional joik.

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<sup>40</sup> Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, “Elle,” *The Magic of Sámi Joik*, Finlandia Records 3984-22112-2, 1998, compact disc.

Figure 3: Joik Transcription of “Elle”

Phrase 1

Elle

Phrase 2

E

V

E

V

Detailed description: The image shows a musical transcription of a joik titled "Elle". It is divided into two phrases. The first system, labeled "Phrase 1", consists of two staves: the top staff is labeled "Elle" and the bottom staff is labeled "Valkeapaa". Both staves are in 3/8 time and use a treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The second system, labeled "Phrase 2", also consists of two staves: the top staff is labeled "E" and the bottom staff is labeled "V". Both staves are in 3/8 time and use a treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The transcription includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and slurs, indicating the melodic and rhythmic structure of the piece.

Cyle performed 7 times through into 8

To summarize, several distinctive characteristics emerge as essential elements of Sámi traditional joik performance. As I will further argue below, these aesthetics are used in any combination to invoke joik in popular music performance. They include a particular vocal timbre, vocal ornamentation, emphasis on vocables, a cyclical form, and improvisation.

Although all Sámi language groups have practiced joik, like these language groups the joik developed in various forms from one region to the next. The most prominent type of joik, as one might surmise from the prominence of the language, is the North Sámi joik, called the *luohti*. Musically it is characterized by a wide pitch range, complex rhythmic patterns, and an overall “triadic orientation.” In addition, vocal delivery often includes “disjunct melodic motion,” in the form of large leaps in the melodic line.<sup>41</sup> The South Sámi joik, which is only performed in a few locations today, is called the *oruvuolle*, and is characterized by a narrower range than the North Sámi joik, more gliding notes, and less complex rhythmic patterns, most often based on duple and triple meters. The greatest difference in joik styles can be found between North and East Sámi joiks. The Skolt Sámi, located in Finland near the Anár (Inari) region, were originally located on the Russian side of Sápmi and have brought with them influences from Russians and the Kola Sámi of the Kola Peninsula. Skolt Sámi call their vocal tradition the *leu’dd*, and it is different from joik in that most of the songs are epic in length and subject matter. North and South Sámi also maintain epic joiks, but these are not typical of the genres. A characteristic Skolt *leu’dd* can last half an hour, while most joiks are no longer than a few minutes in duration, and many last less than a minute. *Leu’dds* also have a more fixed structure and lyrics, leaving little room for improvisation.<sup>42</sup> The Skolt Sámi constitute a very small percentage of the Sámi population, and thus today *leu’dd* performers are extraordinarily rare. Therefore the genre was not seen to reflect a broader pan-Sámi vocal expression, and has only recently achieved a broader audience through popular music. The North Sámi joik, as the

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<sup>41</sup> Jones-Bamman, “Saami Music,” 301. Previous statements come from this source.

<sup>42</sup> Aikio, Aikio-Puoskari, and Helander, 107. Previous information on *leu’dd* comes from this source.

dominant genre, easily became a symbol of culture during the pan-Sámi movement of the 1970s and 80s because it was the most widely known and practiced.

### Functions of Traditional Joik

Classifying joik aesthetics will aid in understanding contemporary Sámi performance and in identifying those characteristics of joik present in popular music. The most important feature of joik is not how it sounds, however, but what it is able to transmit. The function of joik, in the past and today, is to invoke a person, animal, place, or experience. Joik is sung as an act of remembering. When someone joiks a person, he or she is not just reminiscing about that person, but is, in effect, bringing that person into being through the joik. The joik becomes a “tangible and interpretable configuration” of that person.<sup>43</sup> Joiking is an act of remembering because it allows the joiker and his or her audience to commune with the subject matter for the duration of the joik. Richard Jones-Bamman states, “In such a manner, family and friends (not to mention animals and places) are perceived to remain viable as individuals, as long as they joik them into existence whenever feeling inspired to do so.”<sup>44</sup> Similarly Hugh Beah says, “By conceptualizing in sound the characteristics of a person, animal, or place, the joiker could feel himself close to his object, he could ‘remember’ it.”<sup>45</sup>

Joiking involves a number of topics, including people, animals, nature, landscapes and landmarks, and special events; however, the most common kind of joik is the personal joik, which is sung in honor of a person.<sup>46</sup> Personal joiks are a sign of prestige in the community. People with a high social status might even have multiple joiks

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<sup>43</sup> Jones-Bamman, “Saami Music,” 302.

<sup>44</sup> Jones-Bamman, “Saami Music,” 302.

<sup>45</sup> Hugh Beah, “The Saami of Lapland,” *The Minority Rights Group* 55, (1988): 13.

<sup>46</sup> Jones-Bamman, “Saami Music,” 302.



performed in their honor.<sup>47</sup> It is rare for one to joik oneself, however, because the purpose of a personal joik is usually to praise or criticize the actions and character of another person. In this way joiks serve the social function of identifying people within the community, and propagating those personal characteristics valued in Sámi society. Finally personal joiks are also a way of remembering people who have left or have passed away, and are often written after the person is gone.<sup>48</sup> Lehtola states, “Yoik is said to remove distance: the friend who is gone is brought back through a yoik.”<sup>49</sup> As is the case in all joiks, the personal joik does not describe the person, but is sung in the transitive or active form. In other words, if a singer sings a personal joik, he or she is *joiking* that person; not joiking *about* that person.

Text in joik, which is often minimal, is also often allusive, and merely *suggests* its subject matter, rather than describing it in detail; with a single word a joiker can paint a complex picture. Arnsberg, Ruong, and Unsgaard note, for example, “A yoik to a mountain alludes not only to the mountain itself but also to the reindeer that graze or have grazed upon it and the people who have or have had it for their pasture.”<sup>50</sup> This characteristic highlights a primary feature of the genre: the text comes secondary to the melody and rhythm; and words that are used may be used in an enigmatic way, so that they only provide hints to the meaning of the joik, and are not clearly applied to the subject matter at hand.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, it is up to other features of the performance to convey the message; and it is also up to the audience to be knowledgeable enough to figure it out.

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<sup>47</sup> Aikio, Aikio-Puoskari, and Helander, 108.

<sup>48</sup> Arnsberg, Ruong, and Unsgaard, 23.

<sup>49</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 106.

<sup>50</sup> Arnsberg, Ruong, and Unsgaard, 25.

<sup>51</sup> Jones-Bamman, “Saami Music,” 300.

In my research this summer I interviewed Finnish ethnomusicologist and musician Marko Jouste who spoke at length about the social function of joik, and how it has changed over the years. He said the main objective for joiking was not to create entertaining music, but was a means of communicating something; and at some level, this is still true today. He implied that the reason there are so few words in joik is because the joik does not just describe its subject; it provides “little hints” to the meaning, and those people who are familiar with the subject matter will understand.<sup>52</sup> He said that it is similar to when one goes to see a movie, and one can talk about some little joke in the movie with others without giving away the entire plot. People who have seen the movie will understand. The same is true of Sámi who listen to joik. Jouste said, “When audience and joikers share the same experience and memory it’s easy to communicate with really little clues.”<sup>53</sup>

Thomas Maschio describes a similar characteristic, which he calls “allusive” lyrics, in mourning songs of the Rauto in Southwestern New Britain.<sup>54</sup> In this tradition, called *serpoua*, singers employ “poetic representations” or “composite metaphors” to allude to a specific subject matter and to the feelings associated with that memory.<sup>55</sup> As a result Maschio says, “*serpoua* do not simply reiterate the social scenarios during which specific emotions are usually experienced—thereby simply reproducing emotions associated with these scenarios. It would be more accurate to say, as I do here, that the songs reflectively create a meta-emotion for, and a meta-thought about the character of

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<sup>52</sup> Marko Jouste, interview with the author, 15 June 2004, University of Tampere, Tampere, Finland.

<sup>53</sup> Jouste, interview. Previous paragraph comes from this source.

<sup>54</sup> Thomas Maschio, “To Remember the Faces of the Dead: Mourning and the Full Sadness of Memory in Southwestern New Britain,” *Ethos* 4 (1992): 400.

<sup>55</sup> Maschio, 389.

death and loss.”<sup>56</sup> At the same time that they allude to situations in which people grieve, the singers also allude to culturally agreed-upon rules on how to deal with death.<sup>57</sup> The allusive lyrics of the joik, in combination with the characteristics of vocal delivery, are quite like the *serpoua*, in that the combination of only a few words and vocables can encode the true character of a person or other subject matter, as well as rules governing social behavior.

A joiker can convey a “meta-thought” in a performance that is meant only for Sámi ears. Gaski recognizes the importance of these allusive lyrics in creating an exclusive experience for Sámi people, however. He says, “these double layers of communication have both the goal and intention that a Sami should be able to understand more than a non-Sami.”<sup>58</sup> As a result, joiks have “[an] exclusive and, to some extent, excluding ability as a communicative form.”<sup>59</sup> While they may serve as entertainment for non-Sámi listeners, these listeners are excluded from the underlying meaning that is communicated through joik.

#### Contexts for Sámi Musical Performance

Before the development of concert performances in Sápmi joik performance was open to anyone, and was often performed by an individual when he or she was alone, during daily activities. As a result joik performance was open to anyone. Joik was not transmitted through formal education or apprenticeships, nor was it ever transmitted in any written form. Instead, people learned to joik by listening to others. Family joiks were passed down from generation to generation, and the more skilled joikers would teach

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<sup>56</sup> Maschio, 389.

<sup>57</sup> Maschio, 413.

<sup>58</sup> Harald Gaski, *Sami Culture in a New Era: The Norwegian Sami Experience* (Karasjok, Norway: Davvi Girjji OS, 1997), 211.

<sup>59</sup> Gaski, 211.

their friends and neighbors their favorite joiks. Now that recorded joiks are available, most of today's artists learn to joik by listening to old recordings.<sup>60</sup>

Before active conversions by Christian missionaries began in Sápmi, Sámi practiced a form of circumpolar shamanism that centered upon animistic beliefs and a spiritual leader within each *siida*, or community. These beliefs reflected an adaptation to the northern environment, and revolved around the seasonal cycles.<sup>61</sup> In Sámi shamanism, the physical and spiritual world was “bridged” by the *noaidi*, or shaman, whose activities correlated with crises within the villages, such as illness or famine. The *noaidi*, usually a man, was able to commune with and travel to the spirit world, and served many functions in the community. He healed the sick and injured, rid the village of predators, prophesied about the future of the community, and ensured successful hunts.<sup>62</sup> When necessary the *noaidi* would travel to the spirit world through trance, always induced by the sound of joiking and the shaman's drum. As he entered the trance he himself would joik and play the drum; but once he was in the spirit world other participants in the ritual would begin joiking, in order to remind the *noaidi* of the human world, so that he would not get lost.<sup>63</sup> The *noaidi* would also joik to help heal the sick and to prophesy.

Ideally, each *siida* had within its community a shaman. When the *siida* would break up into smaller units according to the seasons, the *noaidi* traveled between the various units. In his absence, heads of household assumed various shamanic functions

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<sup>60</sup> Jones-Bamman, “Saami Music,” 304.

<sup>61</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 28.

<sup>62</sup> Jones-Bamman, “Saami Music,” 304.

<sup>63</sup> Jones-Bamman, “Saami Music,” 304.

including joiking and playing the drum—each household usually kept a drum for divinatory purposes, although no one traveled to the spirit world other than the noaidi.<sup>64</sup>

While the Christian church became a presence in Sápmi as early as the 13<sup>th</sup> century, active and forced conversions took place mostly in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. During this period shamanism was almost completely replaced by various denominations of Christianity, particularly Lutheranism.

Jouste says that today the most important season for musical performance in Sápmi is during Easter. For a two week period there are as many as one hundred Sámi music events at several festivals. The Sámi adopted the Easter festival, and most other Christian traditions when they converted to Christianity, and Easter observances are quite similar to traditional Christian festivals. Easter coincided with Market at the Arctic Coast when Sámi communities and Scandinavians would gather to trade, and was one of the few times of the year that large numbers of Sámi came together. Therefore, most young people were married at Easter, when everyone could attend. All of the couples were married together at the church on Easter Sunday.<sup>65</sup> To this day many Sámi couples are still married at Easter, and most musical events continue to take place during Easter, bringing together Sámi communities around the same events they have been celebrating for centuries.

In the past the joik constructed a sense of community, bringing together those who performed and listened to it. A personal joik was much like a naming ceremony; it gave the person who was being joiked a sense of identity and place in the community, which was validated by the audience who heard it performed. Jones-Bamman describes

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<sup>64</sup> Jones-Bamman, “Saami Music,” 304.

<sup>65</sup> Hætta, 41.

this relationship: “It is within the interpretive collective that an individual achieves full recognition—develops a concrete Saami identity—and the personal joik makes this transformation possible.”<sup>66</sup> The joik, then, in its earliest manifestations was an important part of the construction and transmission of individual identity and strengthened a sense of solidarity within the community. It was not until Sámi artists of the 1960s, 70s and 80s combined the joik with global popular music idioms that the joik took on meaning as a symbol of pan-Sámi identity.

### *Sustained Cultural Contact*

Unlike some circumpolar peoples that have been isolated from outside cultures for much of their development, the Sámi have had sustained cultural contact with outsiders for more than two millennia, essentially as long as they have been a distinct culture group.<sup>67</sup> Nelson Graburn and Stephen Strong identify three modes of cultural contact: During the prehistoric period the Sámi inhabited the same territories with non-Sámi, even in the northernmost parts of Sápmi. Sámi engaged in trade with non-Sámi throughout their history, and endured a lengthy period of taxation by the Nordic states, that would send tax collectors into Sámi settlement areas to collect their debts. Finally, for most of their history the Sámi have shared in the technological developments of the non-Sámi, and this has continued through the present day.<sup>68</sup>

Between the first and eleventh centuries the Sámi participated in fur trades with non-Sámi, and eventually came to rely heavily on these trades for their livelihood. Prior to the fur trade most Sámi practiced various forms of hunting and gathering according to the seasons. The wild reindeer was always an important game animal. As a result of

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<sup>66</sup> Jones-Bamman, “Saami Music,” 303.

<sup>67</sup> Graburn and Strong, 25.

<sup>68</sup> Graburn and Strong, 25.

trades with Scandinavians and other European merchants, and to meet the needs of large-scale taxation, it became the main focus of subsistence patterns during this period.

Large-scale nomadic reindeer herding became necessary from the 1500's, as wild game was depleted by the fur trade. The fur trade affected the social organization of Sámi, not only by leading to the dissolution of the siida system, but also by emphasizing "private ownership and private enterprise."<sup>69</sup> The popularity of reindeer herding during this period also led to broad generalizations in both social and official capacities about Sámi lifeways: from the 1600's forward, Sámi livelihood was associated only with reindeer herding, despite the short history of full-scale semi-nomadic herding and the large number of Sámi who did not practice it.

The development of semi-nomadic herding had a direct impact on the joik tradition. Herders followed the natural migratory path of the reindeer, and were therefore alone in nature for weeks at a time. In order to keep themselves company, and to protect their herd and ward off animals and evil spirits, the herders would practice spontaneous joiking.<sup>70</sup>

#### Religious Assimilation

In the 1700's the churches of the Scandinavian countries established a network of catechists who served as traveling teachers, and who were often members of the local Sámi community. Their educational goals naturally included religious education.<sup>71</sup> Catechists traveled to villages and stayed for about two weeks, teaching the children and helping out with household chores. They were paid by the states, which trained the

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<sup>69</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 26.

<sup>70</sup> Joste, interview.

<sup>71</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 34.

catechists to promote literacy and to “spread the message of Christianity.”<sup>72</sup> Through this system the Church and State could achieve their assimilationist goals for the Sámi: The Church sought to christianize the Sámi, and the State believed the Sámi should adopt the agricultural practices of the settlers. Both belief systems were transmitted through the catechists. The catechists and other missionaries were so successful, that by the 1800’s the noaidi had disappeared from spiritual practices, and was altogether replaced by Christian seers and healers who did not travel to the spirit world.<sup>73</sup>

Lehtola says of this period of Christianization, “The intent of Christian priests seems to have been the complete destruction of the old world-view, not just the shamanic practices. Besides the traditions firmly linked to shamanism, the church judged many other unfamiliar customs to be heathen, such as the secular yoik tradition...Because conversion was a matter of replacing the complete world-view, it probably, despite force, was nowhere near complete in a few decades.”<sup>74</sup> The goal of the Church and State in promoting Christianity and wiping out shamanism had as much to do with their economic goals for the region—to convert reindeer herders and hunters and gatherers into agriculturalists—as it had to do with Sámi spirituality. Altering a people’s entire worldview is a difficult undertaking however, and some elements of old customs were preserved, despite religious persecution. For example, many Sámi retained shaman drums for many years and continued to play and joik in secret. In Anár (Inari) Sámi brought offerings usually taken to *sieidis*, natural former sites of worship such as prominent rocks or fells on the landscapes, to the church instead.<sup>75</sup> In addition the vocal aesthetics of joik

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<sup>72</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 34.

<sup>73</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 29.

<sup>74</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 28.

<sup>75</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 28.



were carried into hymn singing, so that Sámi hymn performance, to this day, is quite different from Scandinavian performance of the same hymns.<sup>76</sup> This is evidenced in the fact that the Sámi themselves distinguish between the Sámi way of singing hymns and the Scandinavian way (*lávlut*).

Despite the consensus between the Church and State regarding religious and cultural assimilation, religious conversions cannot be solely credited to their endeavors; instead assimilation is in part due to the work of one man, Lars Levi Læstadius, and to the subsequent Læstadian movement. Læstadius was the third generation of Lutheran ministers in Sápmi. He was born in Ume Sápmi in southern Swedish Sápmi to a Sámi mother from Bihtán (Piteå). As an adult, Læstadius blended together elements of Sámi cultures, such as the four Sámi languages in which he was fluent, as well as supernatural figures from Sámi spiritual practices with Christian spiritual practices. He conducted extensive research on Sámi spirituality, and used the knowledge he gleaned to attack the “old ways” in his teachings.<sup>77</sup> As a Christian leader and a Sámi, Læstadius affectively criticized the Sámi worldview because he understood it. His activities were exceptionally successful; to this day many Sámi are still practicing Læstadians.<sup>78</sup>

Læstadianism had a great impact on the performance of joiks. In fact, joiks were the central cultural expression attacked by Læstadius.<sup>79</sup> Many Sámi today still view joiking as a sin.<sup>80</sup> As Lehtola argues, “The yoik has always been one of the cornerstones of Sámi identity, a strong expression of Sámi distinctness...It is no wonder that, in its

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<sup>76</sup> Aage Solbakk, ed, *The Sami People* (Karasjok, Norway: Sámi Instituhtta and Davvi Girji O.S., 1990), 169. For a recent recording of Sámi hymn singing see Wimme’s *Instinct: Solo Joik*, North Side 6078, 2004, compact disc. It includes six recordings of Sámi hymns.

<sup>77</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 38.

<sup>78</sup> Læstadians are also an important religious minority among Finns.

<sup>79</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 106.

<sup>80</sup> Lehtola, interview with the author, 25 May 2004, University of Oulu, Oulu, Finland.

attempt to break down the Sámi belief system and world view, the church attacked joiking.”<sup>81</sup> Joiking was like a cultural boundary separating Sámi from non-Sámi; if it were eliminated, then the division between the two groups was blurred, and assimilation would become a real possibility. Læstadius and his followers successfully alienated joikers from the 19<sup>th</sup> century forward, which subsequently led to a decline in the practice of joik.

In the 1960s when Arnsberg, Ruong, and Unsgaard set out to make a collection of joiks they encountered many Sámi who were also Læstadians and condemned the practice of joiking; but they also encountered Sámi Læstadians who practiced joik in secret. They met one man in their journeys through Swedish Sápmi who refused to perform when he heard there was a chance the joiks would be broadcast. He said he was a strict Læstadian, and would have been willing to do it “for scientific purposes,” if his joiks were not made public.<sup>82</sup> Evidenced in this encounter is the fact that, despite the absorption of Læstadius’s teachings regarding the joik, this indigenous music-making survived underground. Additionally, hymn singing in Sámi Læstadian parishes, as in other denominations, maintained many of the aesthetics of the Sámi joik, even as the actual tradition was condemned by worshippers.<sup>83</sup>

#### Nationalist Movements and Cultural Assimilation

Nationalist movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, first implemented by Norway and then copied by Sweden, Finland, and Russia, greatly affected Sámi rights. The siida system was dissolved, and a Nordic municipal government was adopted in Sápmi. Large numbers of Sámi adopted an agricultural economy, and many Sámi motivated by tax

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<sup>81</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 106.

<sup>82</sup> Arnsberg, Ruong, and Unsgaard, 97.

<sup>83</sup> Solbakk, 169.

reductions promised to colonists, and coinciding with the depletion of wild reindeer and fish, actually became colonists, thus legally abandoning their titles as Sámi.<sup>84</sup>

Government policies applied to Sámi culture were based in Darwinism and the Nationalist movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the belief in the cultural superiority of Europeans. The Nordic governments believed that assimilation was the best solution for so-called “lower” cultures which would benefit from national societal values.<sup>85</sup>

A few significant events from Norway exemplify the actions taken under nationalist movements: In 1851 the Crown mandated that all education in Sámi schools would be conducted in the Norwegian language. In 1864 the Crown decreed that only people who could read and speak Norwegian had the right to own land. In 1898 the Sámi language was forbidden altogether in schools. Finally in 1902, “the use of interpreters [was] forbidden in administrative institutions.”<sup>86</sup>

#### The Boardinghouse System

One of the most profoundly traumatic movements for many Sámi people, and an extension of the idea that assimilation was best for the Sámi, was the boardinghouse system instituted in all three Scandinavian countries, beginning with Norway in the first half of the twentieth century. The public objective of this system was to overcome the problem of absenteeism resulting from the long distances between homes and schools in Sápmi; but the underlying objective was to assimilate the Sámi into the majority culture.<sup>87</sup> Lehtola claims, “While attending schools run by the majority society and taught

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<sup>84</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 42.

<sup>85</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 44-45.

<sup>86</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 44.

<sup>87</sup> Hætta, 44.

in a foreign language, Sámi adopt the values of the Nordic countries and often become estranged from their own background.”<sup>88</sup>

After World War II the catechist system was officially abandoned, and Sámi living in remote regions were forced to send their children to central schools. Thus, the boardinghouse system was established.<sup>89</sup> The children were separated from their families and local communities and placed in schools where they were forced to adopt the language and practices of the majority population of each Nordic country. By far the boarding schools became the most successful means of assimilation.

While the boardinghouse system was short-lived, it served to exacerbate the poor self-image of Sámi people and created an entire generation, later known as the “boardinghouse generation,” who were taught to despise and deny their own cultural identity.

#### The Sámi after World War II

World War II brought drastic cultural and economic changes to Sápmi, just as in the rest of Europe and caught between the dominant world powers, the Sámi were forced to serve in the war in their respective nations, which meant that often Sámi were pitted against other Sámi. In addition much of Sápmi was evacuated during the war, leading to prolonged displacement among the Sámi and Laplanders. Much of Sápmi was under German occupation during the war, and many towns and roadways were destroyed during their retreat at the end of the war.<sup>90</sup>

Snowmobiles were a technological innovation of the postwar era, and had a tremendous impact on every facet of Sámi life. In his excellent study called *The*

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<sup>88</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 57.

<sup>89</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 53.

<sup>90</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 52. Previous information on World War II comes from this source.

*Snowmobile Revolution*, Pertti Pelto examines how the introduction of the snowmobile aided herders in keeping track of the herds by allowing the herders to travel long distances in a shorter period of time. The first snowmobile arrived in Sápmi via Canada in the early 1960s.<sup>91</sup> In 1963 there were sixty snowmobiles in the northern herding districts of Finland, and by 1966 and 1967 there were 335 snowmobiles.<sup>92</sup> Today nearly every Sámi reindeer herder uses the snowmobile. Although Pelto agrees that this innovation positively influenced the local economy, he argues that it also negatively influenced social organization by encouraging social stratification and creating a schism between community members based on economic success, and increasing Sámi dependence on outside energy resources. Reindeer were also affected by the machines. The loud snowmobiles frightened the animals thereby inhibiting reproduction, and animals were often injured by the snowmobiles, and the birth rate declined as the death rate increased.<sup>93</sup>

The snowmobile greatly affected the joik tradition as well. In our interview, Marko Jouste said that in the 1950s many people still practiced joik, but by the 1960s, when the snowmobile arrived, fewer people were joiking.<sup>94</sup> Originally herders had to travel many weeks alone with their herds, following their natural migratory routes on skis. A primary among the reindeer Sámi before the snowmobile was that performing joik would protect the herds from wolves and other predators. It also helped the herders pass the time alone in the wilderness. It was a way for them to keep themselves company, and

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<sup>91</sup> Pelto, Pertti J., *The Snowmobile Revolution: Technology and Social Change in the Arctic*, (Menlo Park, Ca.: Cummings Publishing Company, 1973), 67.

<sup>92</sup> Pelto, 72.

<sup>93</sup> Pelto, preface.

<sup>94</sup> Jouste, interview.

much like joiking in shamanic ritual, it was a way for the herders to remember where they belonged, and to where they should return.

By traveling by snowmobile, Sámi were able to keep track of the herd without having to stay with them at all times. They could visit the herd and quickly return home, whereas before the journey home would have taken too long. Therefore, herders spent much less time alone and spent less time entertaining themselves with joik. Before the introduction of the snowmobile, herding families would also come together for weeks at a time around the reindeer herds, for example at the reindeer round-ups, because many people were needed to control the herd. When they gathered they often joiked and told stories to entertain each other. The joik was an essential element of these social functions, and when the people no longer needed to gather in this way, joiking was not as common.<sup>95</sup>

The period following World War II marked a new era for the Sámi, coinciding with a period of cultural and economic change in Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. Before the war the Sámi did not recognize a sense of cultural identity that encompassed all Sámi peoples. Sámi simply did not communicate with each other across far distances, and thus understood community only on a tangible, local level, and not on a more abstract, national level. Therefore, there was no concept of Sápmi as a unified territory.<sup>96</sup> This changed in the years following World War II, the result of a new awareness of Sámi rights as an indigenous people.

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<sup>95</sup> Joste, interview.

<sup>96</sup> Harald Eidheim, "Ethno-Political Development among the Sami after World War II," *Sami Culture in a New Era: The Norwegian Sami Experience* (Karášjohka (Karasjok), Norway: Davvi Girji OS, 1997), 29.

### *Shifting Perceptions of Identity*

The Sámi of the postwar era ultimately saw the development of a pan-Sámi identity. Drastic changes to their culture resulting from war devastation and new technologies, as well as encounters with new refugees led to the re-organization of Sápmi; a regionalized understanding of identity was largely replaced by a broader collective identity.

A sense of collective identity resulted from several components of post-war life: As villages within Sápmi adopted a more standardized economic system and came into contact with Sámi refugees from other parts of Sápmi, they began to recognize the far-reaching territory of Sápmi, and understood they shared a similar culture. They also began to recognize that they shared a common history of cultural oppression, not only with Sámi from other regions, but also with indigenous peoples throughout the world. Harald Eidheim remarks that the Sámi “developed strong bonds of solidarity with indigenous populations of other parts of the world and have, in a more general perspective, positioned themselves as a people, as a nation in [an] inter-cultural global space.”<sup>97</sup> The Sámi began to identify with not only a pan-Sámi society, but with a global indigenous community as well.

As communities began to recognize the larger region of Sápmi, they adopted a new worldview that included a broader sense of identity. Eidheim summarizes the cultural developments of the postwar era succinctly: “It goes without saying that these general developments in education and knowledge, and in welfare and consumption, combined with the increasing identification of the Sami with the notion of being an ‘indigenous people’ marked a discernible shift in lifestyles and in notions of what it

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<sup>97</sup> Eidheim, 30.

meant to be Sami. Analytically speaking, we may say that people came to handle a larger and larger repertory of new and strange sign material, something which had the effect of intensifying the discourse concerning what it meant to be a Sami.”<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Eidheim, 41.



### Chapter 3: Cultural Mobilization and the Rise of Sámi Popular Music

#### *Reconstructing Identity*

The broad acceptance of a pan-Sámi identity was due in part to the careful strategizing of a Sámi political elite that emerged in the 1950s, and created the Sámi Movement, as it is now known. According to Eidheim, these elites “began to build up an organized and unifying ethno-political people’s movement.<sup>1</sup> Their participation in Nordic politics, and their carefully crafted constructions of a broadly-based Sámi identity were crucial to the de-marginalization of the Sámi people. By the 1960s Sámi who were raised in the boardinghouses, and those who were still a part of that system, began to recognize its detrimental affect on their own culture. In order to reconcile their situation the Sámi found it politically and emotionally valuable to adopt a pan-Sámi identity; but in order for this identity to be accepted it had to replace the more localized, village-based sense of identity. Lehtola believes that Sámi adapted to this identity at varying times and to varying degrees throughout Sápmi, but the debate over Sámi identity climaxed during the Áltá Conflict around 1980 and 1981, addressed further below.<sup>2</sup> At this time, Sámi political leaders became aware of their need to assert a united Sámi identity to a global audience, and to assume control of their own lives, land, and representation. What these political actors—consisting of cultural activists from all levels of Sámi society and including many Sámi musicians—were able to accomplish, was the creation of what Eidheim calls, “[a] paradigm for Sami self-understanding,” which required “the

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<sup>1</sup> Eidheim, 32.

<sup>2</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 57.

recodification of Sami history, culture, and distinctiveness.”<sup>3</sup> In other words, if the Sámi were to successfully reclaim their space in reality they would have to rewrite their story in a way that would emphasize those cultural characteristics distinguishable from the majority populations, and would de-emphasize their victimization.

#### Human Rights Politics

A positive outcome of the global atrocities of World War II was an international awakening to the need for human rights policies, and especially regarding indigenous, refugee, and ethnic minorities. As a result preliminary transnational dialogues commenced regarding the rights of indigenous peoples, and following the war, the U.N. added a section to its Charter, “securing serious attention for the priority of aboriginal peoples’ rights.”<sup>4</sup>

Sámi youth in the 1960s, who were the first boardinghouse generation, were the first to participate in a pan-Sámi movement, and “the worldwide awakening of minorities defending their rights,” which served as the backdrop for their efforts.<sup>5</sup> Sámi musicians were at the forefront of this battle for representation, and they ignited what would historically be known as the Joik Renaissance. During this period, musicians played an active role in bringing Sámi rights to the attention of Nordic authorities and an international audience of people concerned with indigenous rights. They were political activists and cultural ambassadors, and they were the first generation of Sámi musicians to proudly perform joik as a symbol of Sámi identity, and to access the global music market—and in turn, a global audience—by inserting the joik into popular music. Their actions as cultural ambassadors brought attention to the Sámi struggle over land rights,

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<sup>3</sup> Eidheim, 32.

<sup>4</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 58.

<sup>5</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 70.

which culminated in a battle over a damming project that lasting over a decade, known as the Áltá Conflict.

### *The Áltá Conflict*

Perhaps the most globally significant event in Sámi history, and certainly the first event that brought the Sámi to the center of the global debate on human rights, was the Áltá Conflict a ten -year struggle in which the Sámi protested the building of a hydroelectric dam in Norway that would flood a Sámi village and vital reindeer grazing areas. Before the Áltá Conflict the Sámi had just begun to think in terms of a pan-Sámi identity, but through this experience they became united, as never before. Spread over a vast territory in four countries, they were under-represented at the mercy of four distinctive national powers; but united as a single, separate people, they were able to change the nature of national policies regarding the Sámi and raise awareness about the plight of indigenous peoples everywhere.

Dam construction in Sápmi dates back to the 1930s, and its proponents have always met resistance from Sámi communities.<sup>6</sup> Resistance to damming projects can partially be explained by the damage they cause to the Arctic environment. Dams are harmful to the delicate ecology of lakes and rivers and often flood large areas of land. There is a deeper significance to dam construction for the Sámi, however. Damming construction projects are controlled by the State and State sponsored entrepreneurs; in other words, outsiders enter into Sámi territory and make use of Sámi lands because they believe this will most greatly benefit the greater nation, and the Sámi have no say in this matter. Damming constructions directly violate an indigenous community's self-determination and land rights—issues that are at the heart of the struggle for indigenous

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<sup>6</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 71.

status and rights to cultural independence. The Sámi believe they have the right to use their land as they see fit, and damming projects irreversibly violate that right.

The largest Sámi demonstration against a damming project took place in Norway beginning in the 1970s and lasting twelve years when the Norwegian crown proposed a dam in the Áltá-Guovdageaidnu (Alta-Kautokeino) River system. The “immediate issue” for the Sámi was the right to self-determination concerning their lands; but the Conflict also sparked political action throughout Sápmi and the struggle for Sámi recognition in the Norwegian Constitution, and ultimately led to the establishment of a democratically-elected Sámi political body. In addition, the Conflict received international news coverage because of confrontations between demonstrators and police, and “the violence used by officials against the aboriginal population opened the eyes of many people—especially young people—and awakened the Sámi identity of many.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 71.

Figure 4: Map of Áltá-Guovdageaidnu (Alta-Kautokeino) River System<sup>8</sup>



Plans for the Áltá dam began in 1968 when the Norwegian state energy company proposed creating an artificial lake that would flood the Sámi village of Máze (Masi). Sámi protests delayed construction throughout the 1970s, and in 1979 demonstrators set up a permanent camp at the proposed construction site in the village of Stilla. When plans moved forward in December 1980 demonstrators chained themselves together, blocking the bulldozers. In January 1981 police, under the order of Prime Minister Oddvar Nordii and by a vote in Áltá in favor of state intervention, cleared the camp. The event received international attention because of the large number of police officers (six hundred) that

<sup>8</sup> “Kautokeino, Finnmark, NO,” *Mapquest* (Accessed September 2004), <<http://www.mapquest.com>>. This map displays the river system on which the dam would be constructed, as well as the village of Máze (Masi), which was originally to be flooded.

were called in to arrest a relatively small number of demonstrators (around eleven hundred).<sup>9</sup>

Ultimately Sámi demonstrations did not successfully block the dam's construction, and in 1987 a new power station was set into operation. Authorities claimed the dam would flood pastures of 21 head of reindeer, but following construction 4,000 head of reindeer were lost, and as many as 25,000 were affected by the loss of grazing pastures.<sup>10</sup> In 1990 Prime Minister Brundtland publicly admitted that "the electricity [the dam] had produced had not had much economic significance."<sup>11</sup>

#### Adoption of Nationalist Symbols

Eidheim calls the Áltá Conflict a "mega-happening," in which, for the first time, Sápmi appeared on the global map and the Sámi people, their history, their struggles, and their rights as an indigenous people received international attention.<sup>12</sup> Although the Sámi lost the battle against the dam, they did incur official status as an indigenous minority in Norway, which led to the establishment of official institutions dedicated to Sámi cultural heritage and rights.

A pan-Sámi identity also developed and was reflected in the creation of national symbols for Sápmi. The Sámi flag was created, and its official design was adopted in 1986. The flag's circle represents the Midnight Sun, and its colors of red, blue, yellow, and green are a culmination of the various colors of the *gaktis*, or the Sámi national

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<sup>9</sup> Inker-Anni Sara, "The Social Ramifications of the Damming of the River Alta," in *Essays on Indigenous Identity and Rights*, Irja Seurujärvi-Kari and Ulla-Maija Kulonen, eds. (Helsinki: Yliopistopaino (Helsinki University Press)), 1996. 102.

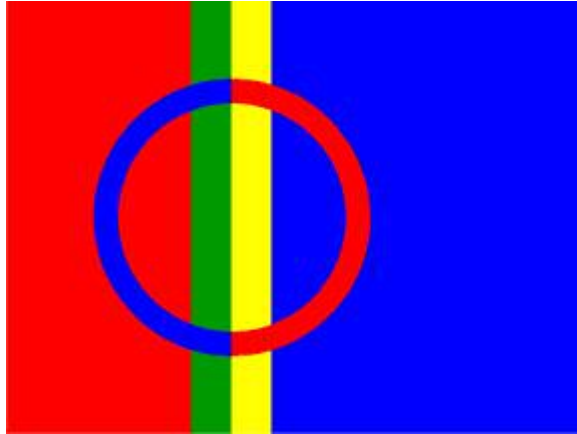
<sup>10</sup> Sara, 104.

<sup>11</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 76.

<sup>12</sup> Eidheim, 45.

costumes throughout the Nordic countries.<sup>13</sup> That same year a Sámi National Anthem was adopted.<sup>14</sup>

Figure 5: The Sámi Flag<sup>15</sup>



With these clearly nationalist symbols, in combination with traditional symbols of Sámi culture, such as the gakti, handicrafts, language, and music—centered almost solely on the joik—the Sámi asserted their independence from the Nordic countries, and demanded recognition as an indigenous people.

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<sup>13</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 73.

<sup>14</sup> “Sami People,” in *YLE Sámi Radio* (Accessed September 2004), <<http://www.yle.fi/samiradio/saamelen.htm>>.

<sup>15</sup> Zeljko Heimer, “Flag of the Sami People,” *Sami People* (Accessed September 2004), <<http://flagspot.net/flags/saa.html>>.

Figure 6: The Gakti<sup>16</sup>



The Áltá Conflict had far-reaching affects on Sámi art; it even inspired the release of the first Sámi pop hit, called “Sámiid Ædnan” (Sámi Homeland). The song, written by Mattis Hætta, an artist born in the village of Máze—the village originally slated for flooding during the Conflict—was a collaboration with Norwegian pop star Sverre Kjeldsberg.<sup>17</sup> It was based on a traditional joik from the Máze region, combined with popular music idioms such as common rock instrumentation including guitars and a drum set, a pop ballad song structure, and pop vocal aesthetics. In the song Hætta addresses a specific event of the Áltá Conflict, when several Sámi demonstrators erected a *lavvo*, or traditional temporary dwelling shaped like a teepee in front of the Norwegian Parliament building in Oslo on October 8, 1979.<sup>18</sup> The event was one of the most highly publicized during the Conflict, and the song was so successful, that it was a contender in the

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<sup>16</sup> Matti Tirri, “National Minorities of Finland, The Sámi,” *Virtual Finland—Your Window on Finland* (Accessed November 2004), <<http://virtual.finland.fi>>.

<sup>17</sup> Richard Jones-Bamman, “‘As long as we continue to joik, we’ll remember who we are’: Negotiating Identity and the Performance of Culture: the Saami Joik” (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1993), 304.

<sup>18</sup> Jones-Bamman, “As long as we continue to joik, we’ll remember who we are,” 305.



Eurovision Grand Prix song contest that year.<sup>19</sup> It also set the stage for future Sámi artists to explore indigenous politics in popular music.

### *The Sámi and Global Indigenous Politics*

Pan-Sámi political activities date back to the first Sámi Conference held in Johkamohkki (Jokkmokk), Norway in 1953, but activity increased in the 1970s and 80's.<sup>20</sup> At the beginning of the Áltá Conflict and throughout its unfolding the Sámi organized as a unified culture group spanning the Nordic countries. At the Jiellevárri (Gällivare) Sámi conference, which took place in Sweden in 1971, participants declared, "We are one people. We have a common language, common history and culture, and we have a strong feeling of belonging together... We need to put in place in society our values to be developed... We are Sámi and wish to be Sámi, we are not more nor less than other peoples."<sup>21</sup> State sponsored Sámi parliaments were established, which were proof that the governments were willing to address Sámi self-determination. A Sámi Parliament, called Sámediggi, was established in Finland in 1975, in Norway in 1989, and in Sweden in 1991.<sup>22</sup>

Sámi representatives participated in the first meeting of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) in 1975. In fact, the second meeting of the WCIP took place in Sápmi in Giron (Kiruna), Sweden in 1977.<sup>23</sup> The Sámi are now also represented by the Sámiráđđi, a member organization of the WCIP and a pan-Nordic, international NGO open to all Sámi that organizes Sámi conferences.<sup>24</sup> Through the WCIP the Sámi continue

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<sup>19</sup> Jones-Bamman, "As long as we continue to joik, we'll remember who we are," 304.

<sup>20</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 60.

<sup>21</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 78.

<sup>22</sup> Eidheim, 57.

<sup>23</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 78.

<sup>24</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 84.

to seek “rights to land, water and traditional livelihoods which the Nordic countries do not acknowledge.”<sup>25</sup> Finally in 1990 Norway ratified the International Convention on Indigenous Populations (No. 169) of the International Labor Organization (ILO), which gives the Sámi status in Norway as an “aboriginal people,” and not as an ethnic minority.<sup>26</sup>

### *The Joik Renaissance*

During the Áltá Conflict key Sámi political figures recognized the advantage of bringing together all Sámi under a common identity, and they constructed a united front against the hegemony of the Norwegian government. In order to create this pan-Sámi identity these leaders looked to the successful nationalistic ideologies of the Nordic countries, and using this same ideology, turned to the key cultural symbols of Sámi that had long been persecuted by their Scandinavian neighbors. Eidheim explains this process:

We have seen that the invention of this paradigm, and what can be understood as its operationalization, was accomplished by means of an exhaustive mediative procedure in which central aspects of Sami history, language, folklore and life style were transformed into signifiers of ethnic distinction and communality. In this mediation, nationalist rhetoric has occupied a central position, both explicitly and implicitly. This rhetoric has a structure which testifies to the fact that mediation is organized as an operation of double comparison. Firstly, it involves an objectification and glorification of a Sami estate—viewed **in relation to other peoples’ estates**. Secondly, it concerns an objectification of a new and dignified life in which the Sami **themselves** can nurture and develop this estate. This new modality is constituted **in contrast to the past**, particularly that aspect of the past which betokens powerlessness and oppression and feelings of inferiority and ignorance.<sup>27</sup>

Sámi political leaders recognized the power of nationalistic ideology, and used it to construct a unified Sápmi. What they did not want, however, was to create a separate State. Their goal was to work through state politics to achieve the right to self-

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<sup>25</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 84.

<sup>26</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 84-85.

<sup>27</sup> Eidheim, 50-51.

determination. This could only be accomplished by creating a history for the Sámi that emphasized their value as a people, and not their victimization as a minority; and they created this history by turning to those elements of Sámi history that most clearly marked difference between the Sámi and their Nordic neighbors, and could affectively bring together the Sámi people. Vigdis Stordahl, borrowing from Anthony Cohen, calls this process a kind of “symbolic warfare”: “Symbolic because the weapons used were signs, symbols and categorizations loaded with ethnic meaning.”<sup>28</sup> These symbols were used to recodify Sámi culture in order to mobilize people toward political action against the majority populations. Stordahl explains that these symbols have to be narrow in range, and thus can lead to disputes within a specific culture regarding their application: “In order to mobilize as many as possible to political action...the idioms employed have to be symbolically simple. The risk is then that individuals find the idioms too narrow to organize their personal experiences around.”<sup>29</sup>

Sámi leaders sought out those symbols that would most likely be embraced by all Sámi and recognized and understood by outsiders. Reindeer herding became an important symbol of Sámi culture, but those Sámi who did not practice reindeer husbandry were, and are in the majority, and for them reindeer herding overshadowed their forms of livelihood. There were also conflicts over the fact that in Sweden and Norway Sámi reindeer herders maintained land and resource rights not made available to Sámi who did not practice reindeer herding.<sup>30</sup> This element of Sámi culture was not all-encompassing. Therefore other cultural symbols were necessary to bring Sápmi together. The gakti was

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<sup>28</sup> Vigdis Stordahl, “Sami Generations,” in *Sami Culture in a New Era: The Norwegian Sami Experience*. (Karasjok, Norway: Davvi Girji OS: 1997), 146.

<sup>29</sup> Stordahl, 146.

<sup>30</sup> Beach, 12.

important as a visual marker of difference. Language certainly served a central role in defining Sámi identity; but through its broad application it was necessarily limited to the North Sámi language and ignoring other distinctive language groups. The political figures of the 1960s were inspired by the folk movements taking place in other parts of the world, through which artists and musicians were at the center of culture rights movements. They recognized that one of their most valuable assets in bringing together their people, and in offering something uniquely Sámi to the world was the joik.

In the late 1960s the joik, which had been persecuted for hundreds of years, began reemerging. In the heated socio-political climate of that decade joik performance defied cultural domination and forced assimilation, and allowed the Sámi to reclaim power and reclaim identity. The joik emerged as symbol of everything the Sámi were forced to give up under assimilationist policies. As a form of music-making historically associated with those beliefs and practices the Nordic societies, missionaries, and even many Sámi condemned, it miraculously resurfaced to become an international marker of Sámi identity.

The nature of its performance, which had always involved encoding messages through what Gaski calls “a subtle system of double meanings and metaphorical imagery,” allowed the joik to serve multiple functions: it could serve as a rather neutral symbol of Sámi culture, while simultaneously conveying messages of political resistance, and existing as a form of popular entertainment for insiders and outsiders.<sup>31</sup>

This period of musical and cultural revitalization became known as the Joik Renaissance. Through numerous recording releases, increased media exposure through Sámi radio, and new opportunities for live performance, the joik rapidly moved to the

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<sup>31</sup> Gaski, 9-10.

center of Sámi musical expression. The joik that emerged, however, and the function it served, were quite different in the context of the 1960s. It was now a part of Sámi popular music-making.

Sámi musicians came to popular music as the new context for joik by drawing upon the very music they heard everyday. Traditional joik was not a central part of the Sámi soundscape at this point in their history; the youth of the 1960s were part of the boardinghouse generation, and grew up separated from their families, listening to the radio, and specifically to European-American popular music. Those who did not develop a direct aversion to traditions like the joik often grew up thinking that the joik was too “monotonous and old-fashioned” compared with the popular music they heard.<sup>32</sup> Many young Sámi were disinterested in traditional joik. In order for the joik to have meaning for *this* generation it had to be re-contextualized to meet their aesthetical needs. Over a period of more than twenty years beginning around 1970, artists like Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, Mari Boine and Wimme Saari rekindled interest in the traditional joik by bringing together the two greatest influences on Sámi music: western popular music and the joik.<sup>33</sup>

#### The Artists: Cultural Ambassadors

The Áltá Conflict sparked a folk revival movement in Sápmi that involved visual artists, musicians, and writers. Many of the most popular Sámi artists that emerged in the 1970s and 80s were activists during the Conflict, and were inspired by the events to help promote their culture.<sup>34</sup> By the 1960s Sámi artists had learned to embed messages of

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<sup>32</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 106.

<sup>33</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 106. Previous paragraph comes from this source.

<sup>34</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 95.

political resistance in joik performance, while at the same time using the joik as an overt symbol of Sámi resistance, and appealing to audiences as entertainment.

The first Sámi music group to gain wide-ranging popularity was Deadnugátte nuorat (The Teno Valley Youths). They first emerged in the 1970s, and from the beginning of their careers included both traditional joik and, as Lehtola calls it, “European-style songs” in their performance. Lehtola discusses some of the main themes the band explored that resonated with the Sámi audience at the time, including “love for the land of one’s childhood, criticism of the exploitation of nature, and ballad-like, lyrical singing.”<sup>35</sup> Sámi Radio music programmer Pentti Kusmin said of the group that they are “like the Beatles of Sámi music.” Their most popular album to date is *Buoremusat* (The Best Of).<sup>36</sup>

In the same period of the success of Deadnugátte nuorat other artists, especially Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, were exploring the musical possibilities of inserting the joik into popular music. In his interview with Elina Helander in *No Beginning, No End: The Sami Speak Up*, Valkeapää, known as Áillohaš in Sámi circles, responds to a question regarding how he began his artistic career: “I have been doing all this kind of work for as long as I can remember. And the opposite could also be said: I remember doing this work before I can remember doing anything else. I have no beginning, no end, and there is also no beginning, no end in the work I do.”<sup>37</sup>

Valkeapää was at the forefront of the Joik Renaissance. He was the first singer to revitalize the joik on a pan-Sámi level and to affectively combine it with popular music,

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<sup>35</sup> Lehtola, “The New Winds of Music,” trans. Kaija Anttonen, in *Siidastallan: From Lapp Communities to Modern Sámi Life* (Oulu: Pohjoinen, 2000), 186.

<sup>36</sup> Pentti Kusmin, interview with the author, 31 May 2004, YLE Sámi Radio, Anár (Inari), Finland.

<sup>37</sup> Helander and Kailo, 87.

and he is still considered one of the most important figures in Sámi history.<sup>38</sup> He was a cultural activist, teacher, writer, painter, and actor, and combined all of his many skills in his performances. He was the one of first Sámi artists to take advantage of the medium of staged performance, effectively moving the joik out of the realm of everyday experience and bringing it onto the concert stage. Beginning in 1966 his public performances featured joik and popular music and contributed to a heightened awareness of the symbolic nature of the genre.<sup>39</sup> In 1968 he released the album *Joikuja* in which he drew heavily on the influences of the 1960s folk music revival, and combined the vocals of joik with acoustic guitar, string bass, and ambient sounds suggesting Sámi lifeways, such as the sounds of reindeer herding.<sup>40</sup> The album was a milestone in Sámi musical history because it was the first commercial release of joiking and the first time the joik was combined with popular/folk idioms. Although he did meet some initial resistance within Sámi communities to his combination of joik with instruments, his activities revitalized the joik and opened the doors for other musicians to experiment with the joik and popular music.<sup>41</sup>

Valkeapää's music was incredibly popular among the Sámi. By removing the joik from traditional contexts and placing it on the concert stage he was able to separate it from its associations with shamanism and Sámi past. This, combined with the fact that his style of joiking was influenced by his experiences with music in the Christian church, led to wide acceptance of his interpretation of joik, even among more evangelical listeners.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Timo Leisiö, "Joiku: Songs in Saamiland" in *Finnish Music Quarterly* 4 (1986), 52.

<sup>39</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 106.

<sup>40</sup> Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, *Joikuja*, OT 155, 1969, LP.

<sup>41</sup> Jones-Bamman, "As long as we continue to joik, we'll remember who we are," 280.

<sup>42</sup> Jones-Bamman, "As long as we continue to joik, we'll remember who we are," 282.

Valkeapää continued to experiment with the joik and popular music throughout his career. As he adapted the joik to popular music, some of the aesthetics of joik were adjusted to fit into the standard rhythmic and melodic structures of folk and popular music. Valkeapää was concerned, however, that folk music was compromising joik aesthetics, so he experimented with building instrumentation around the joik, as opposed to adjusting the joik to pop and folk instrumentation.<sup>43</sup> In 1988, he combined his many artistic talents in the publication of the acclaimed book, *Beáivi Áhcázan*, (*The Sun, My Father*), a compilation of his drawings and poetry in the North Sámi language and ancestral photos of the Sámi people, accompanied by a soundtrack of the same name.<sup>44</sup> The project, which was meant only for Sámi audiences, was incredibly successful, winning Valkeapää the Nordic Council's annual prize for literature.<sup>45</sup> In 1994 Valkeapää achieved international status as a musician and cultural ambassador when he opened the Winter Olympics at Lillehammer, Norway with a joik performance, and instantly brought worldwide attention to Sámi music.<sup>46</sup>

Music continued to be an important part of Valkeapää's artistic expression until 1996, when he was nearly killed in a car accident. After his recovery he never sang again.<sup>47</sup> On November 26, 2001, on his way back from Japan, Valkeapää died of a brain lesion at the age of 58. It was a tremendous loss to the Sámi people.

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<sup>43</sup> Jones-Bamman, "As long as we continue to joik, we'll remember who we are," 323.

<sup>44</sup> Valkeapää with Esa Kotilainen, *Beáivi Áhcázan*, DAT CD-4, 1988, compact disc.

<sup>45</sup> Jones-Bamman, "As long as we continue to joik, we'll remember who we are," 328-330. Originally Valkeapää refused to allow the book to be translated into any other language because he argued that it was intended to be a gift to the Sámi people. Eventually he conceded, and allowed the book to be translated in multiple languages, but demanded that it be published without any of the photographs from the original publication. In this way, the original book remains the exclusive property of the Sámi people.

<sup>46</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 109.

<sup>47</sup> Nathan Muus, "Nils-Aslak Valkeapää" in *Baiki: The North American Sami Journal Online* (Accessed April 2003), <<http://www.baiki.org/valkeapaa.htm>>. Previous information on Valkeapää comes from this source.



Throughout his life Valkeapää sought to reclaim a sense of identity for the Sámi. He always believed that the joik was a living cultural tradition, and was therefore constantly evolving. As Jones-Bamman describes, “This ‘modern’ approach to joik was not meant to challenge Saami culture, to shock the population into action/reaction. It was instead an affirmation of that aspect of Saami culture which Valkeapää felt was the source of its greatest strength: its adaptability.”<sup>48</sup> Valkeapää saw no contradiction between adopting popular music idioms and using the joik as symbol of Sámi distinctiveness. Gaski quotes Valkeapää in *Sami Culture in a New Era: The Norwegian Sami Experience*: “The joik does not belong in a museum, it ought to live on as an important medium and symbol for the Sami.”<sup>49</sup> In only a few years since the release of *Joikuja*, Valkeapää was organizing mega-events featuring joik, and every Sámi radio station featured joik performances in their broadcasts.<sup>50</sup> The joik moved from a peripheral symbol of shame for the Sámi people to an overt symbol of Sámi identity, nearly within a single decade.

Like Valkeapää, other artists have used popular music to revitalize the joik and reconstruct identity. Mari Boine is a Norwegian Sámi artist, and perhaps the most internationally known joiker. She did not grow up singing the joik; her parents were strict Læstadians and, according to Jones-Bamman, “felt that any expression which did not glorify God was sinful.”<sup>51</sup> When she was in her thirties she became interested in the joik tradition, however, and taught herself to joik by listening to archived recordings.<sup>52</sup> She has since spent much of her life cultivating this art form. She has created a syncretic form

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<sup>48</sup> Jones-Bamman, “As long as we continue to joik, we’ll remember who we are,” 281.

<sup>49</sup> Gaski, 215.

<sup>50</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 106.

<sup>51</sup> Jones-Bamman, “As long as we continue to joik, we’ll remember who we are,” 370.

<sup>52</sup> Jones-Bamman, “As long as we continue to joik, we’ll remember who we are,” 372.

of joiking in which she combines her singing with musics from around the world, such as Peruvian and classical Indian music, as well as West-African drumming.

In her music Boine embraces indigenous peoples all over the world, and addresses their shared experiences as oppressed peoples. In her first album, *Jaskatvuodan mann/Etter stillhettan* (After the Silence), released in 1985, Boine addressed her own cultural shame as a member of the boardinghouse generation.<sup>53</sup> She moved on to write more confrontational music like the song, “Vilges suola” (White Thief).<sup>54</sup> She often incorporates signifiers of indigeneity, such as the didjeridoo of the Australian aborigines, or symbols of American Indian culture, exemplified in a song entitled, “Goaskinviellja” (Eagle Brother). Boine has also brought back Sámi shamanic elements in her music through her use of the djembe, a popular West African drum. Instead of playing the djembe according to broad West African aesthetics such as an emphasis on polyrhythm and improvisation, Boine employs a steady pulse, reminiscent of the rhythmic pattern that would have been used by *noaidi* to go into trance. Jouste argues that Valkeapää was the first artist to introduce the drum to Sámi music, but Boine was the first to bring attention back to shamanism because of her drumming style in performance.<sup>55</sup>

Boine’s 1992 album, *Gula Gula* (Listen, Listen), includes a wide variety of instruments and music traditions: it is based on acoustic and electric stringed instruments, as well as wind and percussion instruments, performed by both Scandinavian and Sámi artists. The album even included a collaboration with Peruvian expatriate Carlos Quispe. Jones-Bamman says of the album, “[it] emphasized an all-inclusive, culturally non-

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<sup>53</sup> Jones-Bamman, “As long as we continue to joik, we’ll remember who we are,” 370. See Mari Boine, *Etter stillhettan*, Hot Club Records 1001, 1985, compact disc.

<sup>54</sup> Jones-Bamman, “As long as we continue to joik, we’ll remember who we are,” 373. See Mari Boine, *Gula Gula*, Real World 62312, 1993, compact disc.

<sup>55</sup> Jouste, interview.

specific approach to music making which provided ample room for her to demonstrate the links that she perceived between Saami culture and other Fourth World peoples.”<sup>56</sup>

Like Valkeapää, Boine is interested in the preservation and development of Sámi music, and in promoting Sámi identity, but she recognizes the similarities between the Sámi story and the story of most indigenous peoples.

*Gula Gula* also successfully launched Boine onto the global music market, thanks in part to its release outside of Scandinavia, repackaged by Peter Gabriel with English translations. In 1991 Boine’s band also participated in the WOMAD festivals in Britain and Canada.<sup>57</sup>

One cannot emphasize enough Boine’s popularity among the Sámi, as well as her perceived contribution to the revitalization of the joik tradition. Jouste commented in our interview that Valkeapää’s instrumentation of the joik and Mari Boine’s world music ideas are the root of all Sámi popular music today; everything going on today can be attributed to the influence of these two great artists.<sup>58</sup> Today Boine is rivaled in popularity only by one other artist: Wimme Saari, popularly known by his first name.

Wimme is a Sámi artist from Finnish Sápmi with a profound interest in cultural identity. He had a similar upbringing to Boine; his mother is Læstedian and stopped joiking as a young child, and Wimme learned at an early age that it was considered shameful to joik in public. He did, however, begin joiking in secret, and is well-known for his superb voice and delivery in performance. Wimme began his career singing with the Finnish electro-acoustic jazz group, RinneRadio, and the band helped him launch his

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<sup>56</sup> Jones-Bamman, “As long as we continue to joik, we’ll remember who we are,” 374.

<sup>57</sup> Jones-Bamman, “As long as we continue to joik, we’ll remember who we are,” 374. See Mari Boine, *Radiant Warmth*, Polygram Records 533520, 1995, compact disc.

<sup>58</sup> Jouste, interview.

solo career as a joik singer.<sup>59</sup> His band members perform a wide variety of instruments, including woodwinds, keyboards, percussion, guitar, banjo, mandolin, ukulele, and synthesizers. Wimme is interested in combining the traditional joik with the latest trends in popular electronic music, to create “ambient freeform soundscapes.”<sup>60</sup>

In many ways Wimme bridges the gap between the parent or boardinghouse generation and the youth of today. After Mari Boine, he is the most well-known and widely appreciated singer among Sámi audiences and has managed to achieve an audience of all ages and lifestyles. In addition, while traditional joik forms the basis of his musical performance, Wimme experiments with many kinds of music making; he is interested in new technology and new combinations of musical sounds. This interest has kept him on the cutting edge of popular music in Sápmi, and more broadly in Scandinavia. His collaborations with RinneRadio are also significant, in that his music has always included multi-cultural influences. He is just as at home composing an album of electro-acoustic jazz with a Finnish group as he is composing an album of traditional, unaccompanied joiks.

Jouste commented that he found it interesting that in Wimme’s music, “the oldest music style in Europe [the joik] is connected to the newest, and there is no contradiction.”<sup>61</sup> He said that Wimme was the first artist to popularize techno/electronic music among the Sámi, and yet he practices the most traditional style of joiking. Perhaps more so than any other Sámi artist from the boardinghouse generation, Wimme is interested in the vocal aesthetics of solo joik. Lately he has also become interested in

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<sup>59</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 110.

<sup>60</sup> Jussi Niemi, “Yoiking the Nomadic Past in the Electronic Present: Wimme Saari is the Modern Master of the Archaic Sami Way of Singing,” *Finnish Music Quarterly* 3 (2000): 8-15. Previous information on Wimme comes from this source.

<sup>61</sup> Jouste, interview.

traditional contexts for joiking. His latest album, *Instinct: Solo Joik*, is entirely comprised of unaccompanied, solo voice and includes twenty original joiks by Wimme that are built on his daily experiences. Several joiks from this album, “Morning Coffee,” “The Meat Pot,” and “The Ice Hole” illustrate Wimme’s interest in spontaneously joiking around daily activities. The album also includes seven traditional Sámi hymns, all of which are also found in variations in the Nordic countries.<sup>62</sup> While many other Sámi artists have released sacred albums, this album is the only one, to my knowledge, that juxtaposes two strands of Sámi traditional music: the joik and the hymn.

When these artists first began experimenting with popular music, some Sámi and non-Sámi listeners criticized them for contaminating the joik, for abandoning tradition, and for creating something they perceived to be inauthentic; but as Lehtola argues, these artists were just as familiar—if not more familiar—with western musical values as they were with the Sámi joik because they were raised in the Scandinavian school systems. He says, “Western art is a part of every Sámi’s education, and there is no point in trying to eliminate its influence.”<sup>63</sup>

### The Modern Joik

Several elements of joik performance were affected by the joik’s insertion into popular music. Musical performance was no longer participatory and open to anyone, but instead was transformed into a stage art. Joste believes that the idea of a Sámi “artist” is fairly new; the idea that a person can make his or her living as a professional artist only arose for the first time in the 1970s and 80s, with internationally popular artists like Valkeapää. Before that, there was no division between audience and professional

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<sup>62</sup> Wimme Saari, *Instinct: Solo Joik*.

<sup>63</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 96.

performer. While skilled joikers were certainly valued, everyone joiked, and often joiking was a private affair; rarely a structured performance, and rarely a display of a singer's artistry. The division between the artist and audience was strengthened during the Joik Renaissance in conjunction with a new emphasis on individual performance and expertise.

In addition, the vocal aesthetics were affected by the vocal style of popular music, and were in some ways conventionalized; the song structure was, in many cases, altered in order to fit the joik within the verse/chorus structure and standardized length of popular music. The structure and sound became more standardized than in a traditional context because the voice is accompanied by instruments, and thus must conform to the harmonics of that instrument.<sup>64</sup>

Valkeapää, Boine, Wimme, and many other important musicians played key roles in the creation of a pan-Sámi identity, and joik was at the center of this cross-regional expression. Joik still maintains its status as a uniquely Sámi genre and therefore continues to be an important symbol of Sámi identity. Aikio, Aikio-Puoskari, and Helander expressed the beliefs of most scholars, listeners, and audiences when they called the joik “a symbol of Sami culture.”<sup>65</sup>

At the same time these artists, the first cultural ambassadors for the Sámi, also illuminate a primary element of Sámi popular music from its very inception: it has always involved multiple cultural and musical influences. Even these artists, who have played such a crucial role in revitalizing the joik, were not unaware of the historical influence of other cultures. For example, Valkeapää, Boine, and Wimme have all, at some level,

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<sup>64</sup> Jouste, interview.

<sup>65</sup> Aikio, Aikio-Puoskari, and Helander, 104.

incorporated the aesthetics of hymn singing into their performances. This year Wimme has gone a step further and included actual hymns on his latest album. Therefore, it is difficult to draw an absolute distinction between the activities of artists in the boardinghouse generation, often characterized by their emphasis on joik, and the artists of the new millennium. Even as the joik was viewed by the artists and the audiences as the central element of Sámi popular music during the Joik Renaissance, other styles of music, from hymn singing to rock, jazz, and folk music, were just as visible in Sámi performance.

Valkeapää said to Helander in their interview, “I myself believe that if a culture is to live, then it must change constantly, bring with it new material and customs and utilize them in a manner suitable for everyday use. In my opinion a culture is not a museum artifact, but must be something that lives from day to day. And it must change according to its needs and possibilities.”<sup>66</sup> These artists recognized the importance of the joik as a cultural symbol, but they also recognized that the joik is a living, dynamic tradition. Finally, they recognized that the joik was but one element of their far-reaching personal soundscapes.

#### Reemergence of the Traditional Joik

An interesting outcome of the creation of Sámi popular music has been the reemergence of traditional joiking, that is, joiking performed solo and without instrumental accompaniment, as well as a reemergence of spontaneous joiking. The style of music that was forbidden for so many years, and became so disconnected from its original context of everyday activities, has now reappeared. As Carolina Robertson argues, this time gap is essential for many suppressed traditions, because it “allows the

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<sup>66</sup> Helander and Kailo, 89.

fields to follow.”<sup>67</sup> With the passage of a significant amount of time the joik emerged separate from the negative associations of Christians, settlers, and many Sámi and became an even stronger marker of identity than it had been in the past. The joik even has a place at the highest level of education in Sápmi: the Sámi College in Guovdageaidnu (Kautokeino), Norway offers a program in folklore, and the program’s curriculum includes workshops on joik. In addition, the city of Anár (Inari), with sponsorship from Sámi organizations, is preparing for the construction of the first Sámi Music Centre which will have joik as a central focus. The joik may have been forced underground, but it was never eliminated from Sámi consciousness.

In any cultural context there is a contract of movement between the dominant music and minority music. The dominant music often assumes the central location; but the Sámi music tradition, which has traditionally been marginalized, has moved from the periphery to the center. Sámi identity is so prevalent in the Scandinavian popular imagination today that it has even been appropriated by the dominant cultures. Sámi music, handicrafts, and clothing can be found in the southernmost towns of Scandinavia; sold to tourists as markers of Scandinavian identity. The joik, however, remains a distinctively Sámi genre, and while it is certainly a focus of Arctic tourism in Europe, it has not been embraced cross-culturally as an indigenous Scandinavian commodity.

### *The Next Generation*

While the “symbolic warfare” waged by Sámi political elites and musicians successfully mobilized the population for political change, it employed a narrow range of symbols that could not continue to broadly define Sámi cultural experience. Many of today’s youth find it difficult to organize their personal experiences through the symbols

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<sup>67</sup> Robinson, personal correspondence with the author.



offered up by the previous generation. As a result of the gains made by Sámi cultural activists and through the commodification of the now-accepted Sámi symbols in Scandinavia, young Sámi are in a different cultural space than their parents, and are therefore finding different ways of expressing their identities. Stordahl argues, “Thus, processes of ethnic incorporation, or identity politics as it is also termed, is potentially full of dispute and conflicts with consequences not only for the relation between the two ethnic groups involved, but also for the relation between individuals within the group.”<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Stordahl, 146.

## Chapter 4: Shifting Perceptions of Music and Identity

Valkeapää, Boine, and Wimme have no doubt had a tremendous effect on Sámi popular music, but their work by no means represents all of Sámi music; and their perceptions of Sámi identity and the Sámi joik does not necessarily extend to include the sentiments of all new artists who have begun performing in the last ten to fifteen years. Sámi people today are living in a much different world from that of the boardinghouse generation; they are not as underrepresented a community as they were in the 1960s, nor is their right to self-determination as overtly or violently challenged as it was before the 1960s. Therefore, identity performance in music is quite different in the new millennium.

### *First Encounter with Joik*

I first became interested in joik while attending anthropology courses on Sámi culture as an undergraduate exchange student at the University of Oulu in Finland. I had decided earlier that same year to pursue studies in ethnomusicology after working with an ethnomusicologist at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. As a singer, I was excited to come across this genre, and hoped even as early as 2001 to make it a focus of my future ethnomusicological research. My coursework at the University of Oulu included two excursions to northern Sápmi. I attended the first excursion in April 2001 just before Easter, when Sápmi was still under thick snow cover.

During that first trip I visited Anár (Inari), and participated in activities at a working reindeer farm that also serves as a tourist destination. At the farm I heard the house matriarch, Maarit Anna Paadar, perform traditional (solo, unaccompanied) joik, accompanying herself on a simple frame drum struck with a piece of reindeer antler—

much as I assume a *noaidi* would have done centuries ago. The scene was quite dramatic. My colleagues and I snuggled together on reindeer skins after a meal of reindeer stew, around a roaring fire in *alavvo*, or large, traditional tent. Maarit Paadar stood on one side of the fire, drumming and singing with great force. It was all a carefully strategized spectacle, and it was spectacular.

Figure 7: Photograph of Maarit Anna Paadar<sup>1</sup>



On my second excursion to Sápmi, conducted in November 2001—and again in frigid winter conditions—I visited many of the same locations, including Paadar’s reindeer farm. This time I had a brief conversation with Maarit Paadar. With a Finnish friend as an interpreter, I asked her whether or not she thought the joik had a future. She said, without hesitation, that it certainly did. Everyday more children are learning the joiks from their parents or grandparents. Her grandchildren were even learning to joik in grade school.<sup>2</sup> Naturally, I was thrilled by the news, and relieved because I was not sure

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<sup>1</sup> Photograph by the author, April 2001, Anár (Inari), Finland.

<sup>2</sup> Maarit Anna Paadar, personal correspondence with the author, interpreter, Mari Eteläperä, November 2001, Anár (Inari), Finland.

how popular the joik was. Little did I know then, at age twenty-two, that the joik was one of the most important symbols of Sámi identity, and that an unimaginable number of singers were performing it throughout Sápmi and Scandinavia—and many scholars were following them around, some concerned for the joiks preservation, others quite sure it was a living tradition.

My first two experiences with performed joik were both in a staged setting, and part of the tourism industry. The performances were marketed and sold exclusively to tourists, the majority coming from outside of Scandinavia. The tourism industry is thriving in Sápmi, in part because those same traditions the Sámi cherish as symbols of culture are also valued by tourists as markers of difference; of the exotic, of a real cultural experience. This thesis is not the place for an in depth investigation of community-based tourism, such as I experienced at Paadar's reindeer farm, but I want to stress that these staged performances also play an important role in revitalizing tradition and in constructing identity. For example, Maarit Paadar's children learned to joik from her, in part because the family developed a market for joik performance. Validation by others who come to hear the joik also leads to assumptions about cultural value and self worth. Critics of community-based tourism often overlook the real cultural significance of staged performance in tourism because we are distracted by the power relations of this capitalist industry.

### *Return to Sápmi*

I returned to Finland for the third time in the summer of 2004, funded by two grants from Finlandia Foundation's National and National Capital Chapters. My research was conducted under a much different theoretical framework and understanding of joik,

having spent two years of graduate school examining joik, popular music, and identity, and having been exposed to numerous recordings of Sámi popular music.

My core objectives for this research were to attend performances of Sámi popular music, conduct extensive library research at centers of Sámi cultural studies in Finland, discuss Sámi music and identity with other scholars, and develop a theory on Sámi identity and popular music, and the current role of joik in the expression of identity. I visited under the assumption that the joik was still a central—and essential—part of Sámi popular music, and as such, still served a central role in the construction and transmission of a distinctive Sámi identity.

What I discovered was that Sámi musical expression cannot be summed up by cultural signifiers like the joik, and as a result, does not transmit an essentialized Sámi identity. Instead, many Sámi popular musicians today define their music much differently from the artists of the last thirty years. While no less aware of their indigenous identity, and no less respectful of the joik, they are consciously performing musics that reflect not just their Sámi experiences, but their experiences as bi- and multicultural individuals. Their music expresses their interest in the global soundscape of popular music. The community of listeners is also aware of its multicultural reality, and accepts both the traditional and the modern, often on the same concert stage.

While researching in Finland I was affiliated with the University of Oulu, studying under Sámi lecturer and researcher Veli-Pekka Lehtola. I conducted three excursions to Sápmi to conduct library research, interviews, and to attend musical performances. I also traveled south to the Music Anthropology Department at the University of Tampere to interview other scholars who are examining the joik.

*Ijahis Idja: The Indigenous People's Music Festival*

Early in my research I returned to Anár (Inari). Anár is home to one of the earliest permanent Sámi settlements, and is a center of Sámi culture today. It is the location of Siida, the Sámi Culture Museum, and is the future home of the Sámi Music Centre that will, pending funding approval, commence construction in 2006.

The Anár Sámi

The Anár Sámi constitute a minority within Sámi culture; they number only around nine hundred, and fewer than 350 speak the Anár Sámi language.<sup>3</sup> This language is quite different from North Sámi and shares more linguistic characteristics with Eastern Sámi languages. Therefore, Anár Sámi value their language as a marker of difference between themselves and other Sámi.<sup>4</sup> Despite educational activities such as the establishment of an elementary school conducted in the Anár language, and the promotion of the language by music artists like hip hop musician Amoc, who are performing in the Anár language (discussed below), Anár is considered a moribund language. The Anár Sámi are a unique Sámi community because they represent the only language group that falls completely within the borders of a single country.<sup>5</sup> Their settlement rests on the banks of the giant Lake Anár in northern Finland.

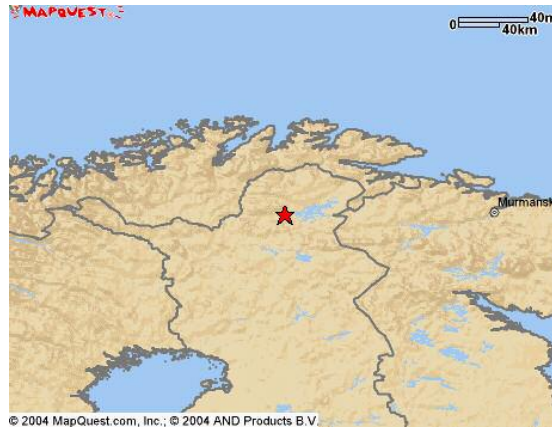
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<sup>3</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 64.

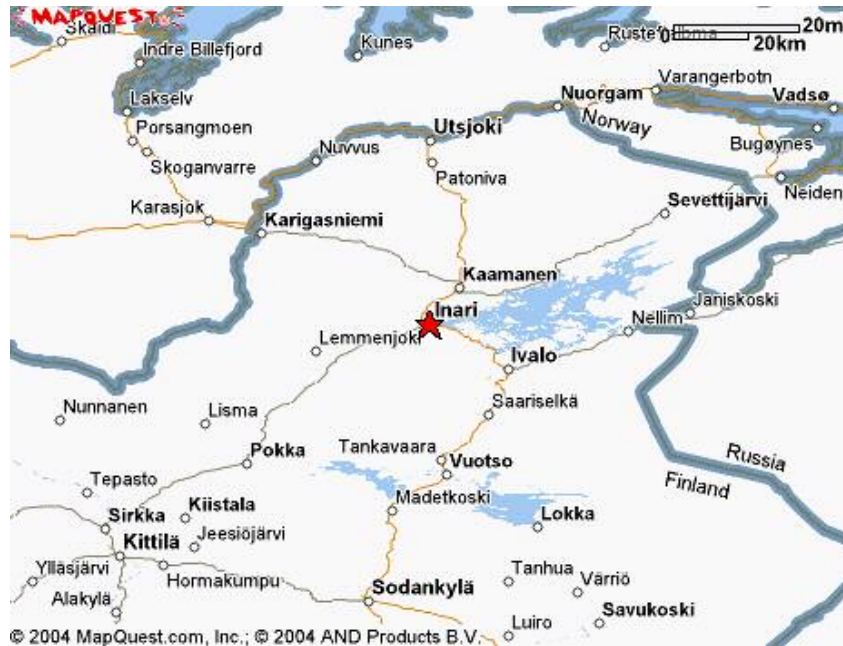
<sup>4</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 64.

<sup>5</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 64.

Figures 8 and 9: Maps of Anár (Inari), Finland<sup>6</sup>



Northern Finland



The Anár Sámi have been a minority in their settlement area since the turn of the last century. Finns have traditionally settled the area since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and by the 20<sup>th</sup> century, outnumbered the Sámi. The Skolt Sámi, who were relocated from Russia to Finland during World War II, also settled in the Anár region. Due to significant and long-term contact with settlers and missionaries (unlike other Sámi communities), the Anár

<sup>6</sup> "Inari, Lappi, FI" *Mapquest* (Accessed September 2004), <<http://www.mapquest.com>>.

Sámi joiking tradition was completely wiped out until its recreation in the 1960s. Many Anár also assimilated into the majority population, effectively assuming identities as colonists.<sup>7</sup>

I traveled to Anár because Lehtola told me there would be a festival of indigenous music that would certainly feature Sámi joik. The festival, called *Ijahis Idja* (Indigenous People's Music Festival) took place on a single day at the end of May, and revolved around a visiting Russian scholar and an East Siberian shaman, both of whom participated in lectures in the morning at the Siida museum, and in performances later in the day. I spoke with the museum curator, who explained that the reason the festival was called *Ijahis Idja* was in order to include the guest artists.<sup>8</sup> The musical performances would be presented by only two indigenous groups, however: the Sámi and a single shaman from East Siberia.<sup>9</sup>

#### Lectures at Siida Museum

On the day of *Ijahis Idja*, or the Indigenous Music Festival, I attended several lectures at Siida, which included a lecture by Annukka Hirvasvuopio, a joiker Lehtola had advised me to contact, and leader of the band *Vilddas*. The organization of the lectures clearly reflected the fact that the entire event was organized by Sámi culture and heritage organizations *for* a Sámi audience. Each lecture was translated into Sámi through microphones and headsets, so that all Sámi listeners could understand the speeches.

#### Afternoon Performances

In the afternoon I attended the performance component of the festival, which took place outdoors in front of the Sámi bookstore in the center of town. About one hundred

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<sup>7</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 64.

<sup>8</sup> Arja Hattikainen, interview with the author, 31 May 2004, Siida Museum, Anár (Inari), Finland.



people attended the early part of the festival; there were many children present, and there seemed to be a large number of Sámi in attendance—the emcee for the evening spoke only Sámi. Most Sámi adults and children were dressed in their gaktis. I noticed a few tourists and several Finnish families, but overall the performance was characterized by a Sámi audience.

The performances started early in the afternoon, and began with a dance performed by several children and led by Petra Biret Magga, to a recording of a recent pop hit that had been dominating the airwaves.<sup>10</sup> The hook of the song, which is repeated throughout in English, states “I’m a Sámi Boy.” The use of English language here is not unusual. Many pop songs produced in other countries feature English. By using English the performers are able to access a larger market of listeners, in this case including Sámi, Scandinavians, and people living outside of Scandinavia. On the other hand, the use of the English language may also be a reflection of American and U.K. hegemony over the music market. If anyone wants access to this market they must cater to the aesthetics—and language choices—of its consumers.<sup>11</sup>

The festival performance proceeded from young local musicians to professional joikers, and finally to the headlining performer, Wimme Saari. The first two solo performers were both local Sámi youths, and quite literally juxtaposed the musical influences they shared. The first singer, Satu Aikio, is a twenty-year-old woman from Anár, who performed original songs she wrote in the Anár Sámi language. Aikio performed her songs a cappella, but exhibited no vocal characteristics of the joik, and were reminiscent of pop ballads, in vocal timbre, song structure, and melodic scale. She

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<sup>10</sup> Kusmin, interview.

<sup>11</sup> These power dynamics are addressed above in Chapter 1.

sang with a straight tone and a noticeable vibrato at the end of long phrases, much like female pop singers. The second singer, Heaika Paltto from Lemmenjoki, was a boy of ten or twelve who sang traditional joik. He had a powerful voice, and had already developed a personalized joik style that the audience appeared to greatly appreciate.

Aikio and Paltto were followed by a performer that completely took me by surprise. He calls himself Amoc. Unlike the first two performers Amoc did not wear a gakti. He wore an oversized, slightly wrinkled collared shirt, unbuttoned at the top and un-tucked, coupled with baggy khaki pants. From his outward appearance I was not even sure he was Sámi. Amoc is an up and coming hip hop artist who has become incredibly popular throughout Sápmi. He delivered his rhymes in the Anár Sámi language over pre-recorded ambient keyboard music in an aggressive, fast-paced manner, dancing all over the stage and employing mannerisms common in hip hop performance. I was not sure how the audience would react to such a performance. With so many older joikers in the audience I expected some to take offense to his performance. If they did, they certainly did not outwardly express it. The entire audience reacted, if not enthusiastically, then pleasantly, to his performance. Not only was Amoc a surprising addition to this indigenous music festival, but the contrast between his performance and the rest of the performances simply highlights the broad-ranging nature of Sámi music today.

Figure 10: Photograph of Amoc<sup>12</sup>



Amoc pictured second from left

Amoc was followed by a trio of well-known traditional joikers, all at least sixty years old and dressed in the finest gaktis. I was later informed that these were members of the *Juoigiid searvi* (Joik society), an organization dedicated to maintaining the joik tradition.<sup>13</sup>

The final performance of the evening, given a full two hours after the beginning of the concert, featured Wimme Saari. He was not accompanied by the Finnish band, RinneRadio, or by any instrumentation, but appeared alone, and sang traditional joiks, including many from his latest album, *Instinct: Solo Joik*. During the performance it became clear to me why Wimme is so famous in Scandinavia. He has a phenomenal voice and stage presence, and absolutely mesmerized the audience.

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<sup>12</sup> Jarkko Kumpulainen, untitled photograph in “Hip Hop Inari Rap,” in *Kalti: Pohjois suomalainen Aikakauslehti* (Northern Finnish Daily News) (Accessed October 2004), <<http://www.kaltio.fi/index.php?405>>.

<sup>13</sup> Hattikainen, interview.

By the time Wimme performed so many people had come to the festival area that no one could see Wimme on the short stage surrounded by a half *lavvo*. So Wimme climbed on top of the one-story bookstore behind the stage and sang from the rooftop. From where he stood one could only see his dark form against the bright sky. His performance of traditional joiks lasted nearly an hour, during which he continued to sing from the top of the bookstore.

As much as I enjoyed Wimme's performance, I could not stop thinking about Amoc. When I spoke to Pentti Kusmin at the Sámi radio station in Anár the next day he told me a little bit about the performer. I had asked him what was new and interesting about Sámi music today, and he said that Amoc (or Amok—his full name is Mika-Lanti Morottaja) is the most local popular singer today, and is often featured in radio broadcasts. He is especially popular in Anár because his raps are performed in the Anár Sámi language.<sup>14</sup> Amoc composes the background music himself, most frequently on the keyboard, and unlike many hip hop artists Amoc's music does not feature sampling.<sup>15</sup> Kusmin currently includes three of Amoc's songs on the Sámi Radio playlist. Amoc has only released these songs as singles, but plans to release an album soon.

*Interview at Sámi Radio, Anár*<sup>16</sup>

On my last day in Anár, I visited Sámi Radio, a station affiliated with the Finnish broadcasting company *Yleisradio* (YLE), to interview the station's music program coordinator, Pentti Kusmin. The Sámi radio stations are each divisions of the national radio stations in the Nordic countries, and broadcast in locations with the largest

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<sup>14</sup> Kusmin, interview.

<sup>15</sup> I have not had a conversation with Amoc, but it would be interesting to discuss with him why he chooses not to sample, especially considering sampling serves as the backbone of much North American hip-hop, and can serve as a way of situating the artist and his or her influences.

<sup>16</sup> Kusmin, interview. All information in this section comes from this source.

concentration of Sámi listeners. The three stations are located in Kárášjohka (Karasjok), Norway, Giron (Kiruna), Sweden, and Anár (Inari), Finland.<sup>17</sup> I was interested in the role of the radio station in mediating the kinds of popular music heard in Sápmi and in preserving and promoting Sámi language and culture. Lehtola believes that the communications media is vital to the promotion of Sámi identity and aids in the creation and maintenance of a Sámi society, because it reaches a large audience across national borders.<sup>18</sup>

#### Broadcasting Statistics

Sámi Radio broadcasts around nine hours each day, and Kusmin's position involves choosing all of the music for both morning and evening broadcasts.<sup>19</sup> Almost every program features both music and talk radio, including news, interviews and weather. All broadcasts are in the North Sámi language except for a weekly broadcast in Anár, which caters to the local population. The Anár broadcast also features a mix of music and talk radio.

My conversation with Kusmin revolved around the nature of morning and evening programming and the types of music chosen for these broadcasts. Three general factors affect the kind of music featured by Sámi Radio: copyright issues and licensing fees, audience demands, and of course, Kusmin's personal aesthetics. While we did not have the opportunity to discuss Sámi Radio's legal access to music, we did discuss the tastes of both Kusmin and the station's target audience.

The radio station has conducted studies on audience demographics, and has learned that an older audience tends to tune in to the morning programming, called

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<sup>17</sup> Solbakk, 177.

<sup>18</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 91-92.

<sup>19</sup> Kusmin, interview.

*Buorre idit Sápmi* (Good Morning Sápmi), while a younger audience, including teenagers and young adults, listens more frequently to the evening programming, called *Ruitu*.

Kusmin’s system for choosing music is typical of any radio station: music is chosen from a computer database by category. Depending upon the target audience, the music of one time slot may be quite different from another.

Kusmin showed me the playlists for recently-aired morning and evening broadcasts. Table 1 includes two playlists each for morning and evening, with the length of the broadcast, the number of minutes of talk, and the number of minutes of music.

Table 1: Sámi Radio Morning and Evening Broadcast Examples

	<b>Morning Broadcasts—<i>Buorre idit Sápmi</i> (Good Morning Sápmi)</b>		<b>Evening Broadcasts—<i>Ruitu</i></b>	
Example 1	Length	65 min.	Length	90 min.
	Music	44 min. 29 sec.	Music	49 min. 20 sec.
	Talk	20 min. 31 sec.	Talk	40 min. 40 sec.
Example 2	Length	65 min.	Length	50 min.
	Music	31 min. 21 sec.	Music	24 min. 30 sec.
	Talk	33 min. 39 sec.	Talk	25 min. 30 sec.

Kusmin commented that the afternoon and evening programming typically consists of about 50% music and 50% talk. The morning program shows a little more variety in formatting, with anywhere from 80% of the program devoted to music, to a more even 50/50 division between music and talk.

#### Programming Choices

Of the music that is played on a typical morning program, Kusmin estimates that 80% of the recordings are by Sámi artists and only about 20% fall into the categories of “World Music” or “Iskelmä musiikki” (Finnish schlager music).<sup>20</sup> The evening programming features more European-American popular and world music, which may

<sup>20</sup> Finnish schlager is a genre of German-influenced romantic ballads popular throughout Finland, generally among an older audience.

relate directly to the fact that a younger audience tunes in to this programming. Kusmin said the airwaves are always dominated by Sámi artists, however. He estimates three of every four songs broadcast are by Sámi artists. During our meeting Kusmin showed me the line-up for several programs. If one considers the kinds of music broadcasts as falling into the two broad categories of Sámi music (or music performed by Sámi artists) and non-Sámi music, one notices that Sámi music is subdivided into various genres, while non-Sámi music falls under the general category of “World Music,” with the exception of “Iskelmä musiikki.” Table 2 is a sample of the categories falling under Sámi music and non-Sámi music.

Table 2: Sámi Radio Categories of Music

Sámi Music	Non-Sámi Music
New Sámi Music	World Music
Sámi Hittit (Sámi Hits)	Iskelmä musiikki (Finnish Schlager Music)
Same Vanhat (Old Sámi Music)	
Same 2000 (Sámi music released between 2000 and 2003)	
Joiku (Joiks)	

Kusmin commented that Sámi Radio takes “a wide approach to what [they] play.”

The Sámi categories can include anything from pop and rock to traditional joik and accompanied joik, all by Sámi musicians. In other words, as long as a Sámi artist is performing the music, then it is considered Sámi music. He said that Sámi Radio plays “all kinds of Sámi music,” because the station does not want to exclude any Sámi artist.

Kusmin stressed in our discussion that Sámi are making all kinds of music—everything from traditional joik to heavy metal; and all of the musicians perform in Sámi languages—although some have included some English language lyrics. He played a

performance from a recent broadcast by a Sámi artist, who played classical piano and sang in the North Sámi language, to illustrate the variety of Sámi musical explorations.

Kusmin said his favorite music to play, other than Sámi music, is world music. He said he prefers playing this instead of playing the same pop songs every other radio station is playing. Kusmin took me through the world music category, and I noticed a wide variety of artists including Värttina, a popular Finnish folk group (discussed below), Salif Keita, Africando All Stars, Manu Chao, Yothu Yindi, and Susana Baca. The Dixie Chicks are even included in this list, although Kusmin is not sure if they belong there.

Figures 11-14 include four playlists Kusmin forwarded to me by email, that he thinks are representative of typical broadcasts. I have included two morning broadcasts and two evening broadcasts. The date of the broadcast is shown in the top right corner. The far left column designates the time each song was played, followed by the length of each song. The third column is a code number used to locate the song in the database. The fifth column includes the name of the artist, and the sixth column, the song title.



Figure 11: Morning Broadcast 1

Ohjelman soittoraportti					
Ohjelma: Buorre idit Sapmi				01.06.2004	
Alkuaika	Kesto	MUSA-avain	Esittäjä	Teos	Säveltäjä
07:11:02	2'01	0359845-A01	Ilmari Mattus	Jovna kanda	
07:14:39	3'07	0608270-A02	Wenche M. Heatta	Sahtta go na?	
07:18:09	2'23	0002537-A10	Salamakannel	Maalarin franssin sotiisi	
07:21:54	2'10	0200487-A03	Ann Kristin Simma	Sami nieiddas	
07:24:11	2'49	0182201-b09	Anders Porsanger	Biiga	
07:28:06	2'25	0258528-A16	Treixöset	Geasse oruhat	
07:51:34	3'32	0464486-A08	Lokua Kanza	Salle	
07:57:00	3'12	0625231-A12	Johan Kitti	Engelat lavlodit	
08:10:56	3'21	0599936-A10	Niko Valkeapää	Beaivvas ligge litnasit	
08:25:17	1'40	0607356-A17	Anfissa Agueva/Domja Klo...	Duottar	
08:28:12	1'56	0417027-A14	Johan Anders Baer	Laila Stien	

Kpl lkm: 11    Kestot yht./ohjelma: 28'36 / 65'00   

Figure 12: Morning Broadcast 2

Ohjelman soittoraportti					
Ohjelma: Buorre idit Sapmi				02.06.2004	
Alkuaika	Kesto	MUSA-avain	Esittäjä	Teos	Säveltäjä
07:11:00	4'02	0567258-A07	Ulla Pirttijärvi	Inger-Mari	
07:16:44	2'00	0176716-b01	Maze Nieiddat	Jogasgaddis	
07:18:53	3'34	0489023-A13	Johan A. Andersen	Nillas Elle	
07:23:30	2'12	0217270-A12	Bendix	Shadoggie	
07:26:17	4'01	0316212-A08	Lena Hansson	Liekkas leage munnje	
07:35:44	3'11	0623914-A04	Biret Margit Healta	Ruonas vuovdi	
07:47:24	1'59	0180424-A01	Erik Prost & Co	Samba hei	
07:50:37	3'40	0406706-A02	Uxia	A Laranxa	
07:56:36	3'36	0548802-A07	Sancuari	G-Luohti	
08:10:56	4'10	0588211-A04	Jiella	Gollejohka	
08:24:42	2'00	0537567-A14	Anifisa Agueeva	Meles	
08:27:40	2'31	0430989-A03	Ann Kristine Gaup	Niehkumailbmi	

Kpl lkm: 12    Kestot yht./ohjelma: 36'56 / 65'00

Figure 13: Evening Broadcast 1

Ohjelman soittoraportti					
Ohjelma: Ruitu				03.06.2004	
Alkuaika	Kesto	MUSA-avain	Esittäjä	Teos	Säveltäjä
15:11:54	3'45	0617057-A11	Ammun Johnskareng	Mailmmalas soalddat	
15:16:50	2'37	0533708-A01	Deatnogatte Nuorat	Deanu Majja	
15:23:51	1'32	0183543-A11	Veijo Länsman	Duottarjavrrre unna gadja	
15:25:44	4'42	0216798-A06	Sagittarius	Rahkis mu	
15:35:06	4'32	0016947-A10	Sting	Fortress around your heart	
15:46:03	4'06	0244196-A04	Sverre Porsanger	Vänämöinen lavlla	
15:51:13	1'15	0607356-A11	Marit Gaup Eira	Johan Martin	
15:55:38	4'34	0465362-A10	Angelit	Eatnama Heagga	
16:10:31	3'32	0559112-A06	Piera Jovvna Somby	Veahket ija cada mu	
16:15:27	3'53	0545947-A02	Robbie Williams	The road to Mandalay	
16:23:18	3'18	0625231-A14	Siv Hermansen	Almmi nastit	
16:26:48	3'37	0208137-A06	Katri Somby ja Kai Somby	Atte Oasasan	
16:35:07	4'42	0479924-A08	Cheikh Lo	N'dokh	
16:42:48	3'19	0599284-A01	Vilddas	Halidan	
16:47:31	2'04	0289815-b10	Creedence Clearwater Revival	Molina	
16:55:52	4'17	0417027-A06	Johan Anders Raer	Rarane	

Kpl lkm: 16    Kestot yht./ohjelma: 55'45 / 90'00    [Tarkista...]    [Yle Musaan...]    [Paluu]    [Ohje]

Figure 14: Evening Broadcast 2

Ohjelman soittoraportti					
Ohjelma: Ruitu				23.06.2004	
Alkuaika	Kesto	MUSA-avain	Esittäjä	Teos	Säveltäjä
15:11:50	3'52	0309206-A01	White circle	The Journey	
15:15:38	4'12	0617691-A02	Michael Buble	Moondance	
15:25:56	4'07	0567844-A09	Orbina	Ale spiekkas	
15:35:07	3'46	0262586-A03	Crash test dummies	Mmm mmm mmm mmm	
15:41:31	3'59	0618799-A07	Ann-Mari Andersen	Mailbmi mavssaha	
15:53:20	1'40	0607356-A17	Anfissa Agueva/Domja Klo...	Duottar	
15:57:05	3'00	0145423-A05	Buffy Sainte-Marie	Starwalker	
16:12:14	4'18	0626764-A06	Johan Kitti	Engelat lavllodit	
16:16:26	1'46	0625578-A06	Marit Gaup Eira	Jussen Ante	
16:22:25	4'00	0040853-A10	Fleetwood Mac	Dreams	
16:26:19	3'42	0575980-A02	Marit Susanne Utsi	Oabba	
16:35:08	3'43	0388032-A07	Marta Sebestyen	Istenem, Istenem	
16:39:27	3'16	0430529-A07	John Arvid Johnskareng	In halit	
16:42:43	4'11	0389110-A06	Deatnogatte Irene ja Tore	Mu rahkkasan	
16:50:21	2'46	0200487-A05	Ann Kristin Simma	Guldal darkil manazan	
16:53:03	1'05	0182201-h08	Ante Mihkal Gaun	Meahccesihkkelat	

Kpl lkm: 17    Kestot yht./ohjelma: 58'20 / 90'00    [Tarkista...]    [Yle Musaan...]    [Paluu]    [Ohje]

These figures, if they are indeed representative of typical morning and evening broadcasts, reveal that Sámi artists do dominate the broadcasts. Of the artists visible in these four figures, a total of 39 performers out of the 55 songs broadcast are Sámi artists. A remaining eight performers are non-Sámi, and eight performers are unidentifiable by name or song title. The morning broadcasts are clearly dominated by Sámi artists, including all Sámi artists with the exception of four unidentifiable artists. The evening broadcasts include several more songs than the morning broadcasts, and a larger number of non-Sámi performers —a total of eight, and an additional three unidentifiable artists.

Western popular music featured on Sámi Radio includes the classics from the 1960s and 70's, such as Elvis Presley, Simon and Garfunkel, Fleetwood Mac, the Rolling Stones and the Beatles, as well as a wide variety of current and recently popular artists, like Norah Jones, the Robbie Williams, and Sting.

Kusmin commented that he plays world music often because it “goes together with Sámi music.” This opinion could stem from several significant factors. First, Sámi popular musicians have often been classified as world music artists, and have thus been a part of the world music market. Many artists have consequently also been conscious of the world music genre, and have incorporated sounds from various parts of the world into their music. Mari Boine is an excellent example of this, because she has collaborated with other artists in the world music category. Second, Kusmin may recognize that non-Sámi artists who are performing world music employ similar aesthetics to Sámi popular artists. On the other hand, this assessment may stem directly from Kusmin's own aesthetics, and his affinity for both Sámi music and world music.

In any case, the world music category is broad, and Kusmin is probably not using the term in the same way I, or anyone else without his specific background, may use it. Kusmin said he cannot play much more world music than he does now because the radio station has to appeal to the older listeners, who do not seem to enjoy world music as much as he does.

The fact that all non-Sámi artists fall under the category of world music illuminates its ambiguities. It also illuminates an interesting set of power dynamics in Sámi Radio. In the western music market, any artists outside of the European-American tradition are most often placed in the world music category, and to my knowledge, all Sámi music sold in the United States is categorized as world music. This categorization is a simple marketing tool, but it is also a means of otherizing. In the case of Sámi Radio, music from the western industry, as well as all of those artists outside of the Sámi tradition, fall into the world music category, and thus are otherized, while Sámi artists dominate broadcasts and are divided more specifically.<sup>21</sup>

#### Sámi Radio and a Non-Sámi Audience

Through several recent surveys the radio station has discovered that people who are living in Lapland and do not speak Sámi—and by this they mean both Sámi and non-Sámi, but more specifically Finns, Swedes, and Norwegians—will listen to this radio station, even though they cannot understand the language of the broadcasts. Kusmin said he does not want to play “too much Fleetwood Mac,” or other mainstream pop artists. He argues, “I think we should give people an alternative, that there’s something different.” Kusmin thinks people who do not speak North or Anár Sámi will tune in because Sámi Radio is playing something different from the other available stations. Scandinavian

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<sup>21</sup> The world music category will be addressed further in Chapter 5.

stations, much like radio and other media throughout the world, is dominated by artists who are easily marketable in the popular music industry, and European and North American musicians generally dominate the airwaves. Kusmin believes that by offering something different, like Sámi artists and various world music artists, listeners can circumvent the recording industry and access performers alternative to those musics the industry considers “digestible”—whether or not this is the case will have to be the subject of further investigation. It is Kusmin’s personal opinion, however, that world music and Sámi music are more interesting than their alternatives, and this assumption certainly affects his views on why Scandinavians tune in. He believes the wide variety of music artists featured on Sámi Radio is the reason for the diverse audience of both Sámi native speakers and Sámi and Scandinavians alike who cannot understand the languages.

#### Interview Conclusions

Through our interview and the subsequent examination of Sámi Radio playlists it is clear that the station invests heavily in the promotion of Sámi artists. These include both the most recent Sámi artists, as well as some of the Sámi “classics” from the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Consequently, the station plays a major role in the continued popularity of Sámi music. They are also actively promoting the survival of the Sámi language by refusing to broadcast in any of the Scandinavian languages. Their language choice does not exclude non-Sámi listeners, however; both Sámi and non-Sámi tune into the station throughout its broadcasting region.

#### *Jutajaiset Festival*

Several weeks after my visit to Anár I traveled back to Sápmi to Rovaniemi, a town that rests on the Arctic Circle. I had already visited Rovaniemi once this summer to

conduct library research, and I returned to attend an annual outdoor festival called *Jutajaiset*. Each year *Jutajaiset* is organized around a different theme and features various kinds of creative performance art including folk dances, polkas, popular music, folk music, and often Sámi music. This year's theme focused on the world's reindeer herding cultures. While one would expect the festival to concentrate on the country's indigenous reindeer herders, most performers were Finnish or guest artists from other countries. Although Sámi performers participated in music events throughout the ten-day festival, the events advertised as "Sámi" took place during a single dance ceremony, and during a night of Sámi music called "Voices of Sami."

#### The Artists

I attended the night of Sámi music with a friend from Oulu, and we arrived at the festival grounds in terrible, rainy, cold weather around 4:00, when the performers were scheduled to begin. The first performer was Ulla Pirttijärvi-Länsmän, a female Sámi joiker who used to sing with the popular all-female group *Áŋgel Nieidat* (Angelit, The Girls of Angeli), and has since had a successful solo career. Pirttijärvi performed entirely traditional joiks, sung solo and a cappella. Like Wimme, she was an impressive performer, with an incredible voice, stage presence, and bodily gestures that appeared to allude to the subject of the joiks. She explained the meaning of each song in Finnish before she sang, and most of the songs were personal joiks for her children. Each joik was quite short, and altogether her performance only lasted about twenty minutes.

I was sure the audience would be as thrilled as I was with Pirttijärvi's performance, but they responded rather solemnly. The audience was small to begin with, but the combination of the rain and the early concert time may have inhibited the

audience's enjoyment. I saw very few people in gaktis, and every audience member I overheard spoke Finnish. In addition, Rovaniemi is a predominantly Finnish town, with an even more marginal minority of Sámi than Anár. From this information I concluded that the majority of the audience was Finnish. It was the first time I had experienced Sámi joik among a Finnish audience. Their somber reaction may have been due to a lack of understanding of the aesthetics of solo joik.

Pirttijärvi was followed by Jiella, a trio consisting of a father and his two daughters. The group opened with a song in Finnish, but the remaining songs were all performed in North Sámi. The women only sang one traditional joik, and their harmonizing and vocaltimbres fit completely within western pop aesthetics. Their music was dominated by synthesized sounds produced on the keyboard, and based in the club and dance beat aesthetic popular in Europe.

To be honest, I was surprised by how positively the audience reacted to this performance. Coming with my own set of biases, I thought Pirttijärvi gave a much stronger performance, and had a much more developed style of singing. But the audience loved Jiella, even cheering for an encore. After the concert I tried to “unpack” my personal feelings about Jiella's performance. I did not like it, and it was not because the singers were not talented. I did not like it because the sound of the keyboard, with all of the imitated instruments it features, to my ears, gives the music a certain inauthentic quality. It is a value judgment I simply cannot shake. I am not accustomed to hearing synthesized keyboards and pre-packaged drum beats played in a professional ensemble. I am also aware, however, that this type of performance, based heavily on so-called “canned music,” has also become an aesthetic in some parts of the world. When I

interviewed Kusmin he mentioned Jiella, and said they are quite popular right now.

Whatever the reason for the popularity of the group, they certainly did not rely on joik in their performance.

Vilddas were the headliners of the Sámi performers. Each song they performed employed a different set of instruments played by members of the band. The instrumentation was so diverse that I did not even recognize some of the percussion instruments. They opened with a song from their first album called “Beaivvážis, šaddet beaivvit” (The Days Growing from the Sun), which features a rain stick at the beginning and end of the song.<sup>22</sup> The lead singer, Annukka Hirvasvuopio, also played a bell chain similar to those I have seen in West Africa musical performance, which she held in her hands. Instrumentation ranged from this interesting combination to any combination of soprano and alto saxophone; clarinet; ūd, a short-necked plucked lute found in most Arabic-speaking countries; the ney flute, a rim-blown flute also found in the Arab world; upright bass; djembe; snare drum; cymbals; and voice.<sup>23</sup> All players were incredibly skilled on each instrument, and their combinations of so many instruments from so many parts of the world, in combination with Hirvasvuopio’s joik-based vocals, created an incredible wash of sound with no context for each individual tradition. A djembe solo would flow right into an upright bass solo. A traditional joik would be followed by a raucous jazz-influenced jam session.

Hirvasvuopio wore a gakti but unlike the design of traditional gaktis, her dress was a black velvet fabric. Marko Jouste, a Finnish musician whom I had earlier

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<sup>22</sup> Vilddas, *Vilddas*.

<sup>23</sup> Instrument information comes from Christian Poché, “Ūd” and Scheherazade Qassim Hassan and Jean During, “Ney” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* (Accessed November, 2004), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>.



interviewed, sang many of the songs, even those that were based on joik. His vocal timbre and performance style were quite similar to Wimme Saari's—a deep, growling quality typical of male joikers.

The first few songs the band performed did not feature joik at all. In fact, the performance was dominated by extended instrumentalsolos. The first song that clearly featured joik was called “Dánses Lille Sára” (Dance, Little Sara) from their second album, *Háliidan*.<sup>24</sup> The song begins with a traditional a cappella joik sung at lightning speed, and then with no transition, the instruments enter at full volume. It was an exciting and surprising way to bring the instrumentals and the joik together, but it is certainly not characteristic of Vilddas's music, which tends to focus more on a subtle blending of joik aesthetics with instrumentation. The song also featured a *jouhikko*, a Finnish bowed stringed instrument.

#### Jutajaiset and Audience Reception

Jutajaiset is a yearly event that lasts for several days, and usually features more Finnish folk musicians than Sámi musicians. It was a much different event than Ijahis Idja, a first-time festival organized by and for a Sámi audience. It was no wonder that the Sámi musicians on the day I attended Jutajaiset were the opening for the featured act of the evening, the Finnish group Värttinä, an internationally popular music group featuring three female singers whose performances are inspired by old Finnish rune singing and *Kalevala* texts.<sup>25</sup> In fact, the Sámi artists played almost two hours before Värttinä performed. Their place in the performance line-up certainly inhibited their chances of

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<sup>24</sup> Vilddas, *Háliidan*, Wood Productions 033, 2003, compact disc.

<sup>25</sup> *The Kalevala* is the National Finnish Folk epic. See Elias Lönnrot, *The Kalevala*, trans. Keith Bosley with an introduction and notes by Keith Bosley and a forward by Albert B. Lord, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989, reprint 1999.

having a large audience. In addition, most of the Sámi performers performed a second time in the evening at a near-by bar, after Värttinä's concert. Although I was unable to attend these performances, I suspect the performers had a much larger audience because the timing was more suitable for a popular music performance and Värttinä had brought in a huge crowd to the festival grounds—an audience that would very likely stay to hear more music before going home.

Questions of power relations in world music or popular music usually surround the relationship between western and non-western artists where, in most cases, the western artist acts as a cultivator, bringing the non-western artist into the limelight and validating his or her musicianship so that he or she may be accepted by a western audience; but do these typical power relations play out at an event like Jutajaiset? Here Värttinä assume the hegemonic position. They are the only internationally successful performers. They are the headliners. They are Finnish, meaning they belong to the dominant culture group in Finland. The Sámi performers at Jutajaiset are not signed to any major record labels, and they are the cultural minority; but their positioning within society does not necessarily extend to the performance stage, at least not in this case. The organizers of the event consciously separated the Sámi and Finnish performances with an unexpected two hour gap. The musicians did not perform side by side, nor did they really even perform at the same event. They all just happened to perform on the same evening on the same stage and at the same festival. Everything else about the performance was different—different staging, different special effects, different audience, different time of day, and even a different performance titles. The old power relations are visible, nonetheless. The Finnish band is the moneymaker, not the Sámi bands, which relates to

the size of Värttinä’s market in Finland and the money invested in their success. Värttinä, who are just as likely to be catalogued alongside Sámi performers as ethnomusic, world music, or folk music, are performing stylized Finnish folk music. They are making Finnish history interesting and validating the Finnish experience—something quite popular among a largely Finnish audience. They are also performing texts from the nationalist epic, *Kalevala* which, as a national epic is a strong marker of Finnish identity.

Overall, Jutajaiset was clearly an event intended for a largely Finnish audience, and was also attended by a large number of tourists. The Sámi constituted a relative minority in the audience. The concert confirmed my theory regarding Sámi musical performance and identity, however. During the same event, traditional joik, joik-infused popular music, and various popular music genres were featured in a single event. Ulla Pirttijärvi, Jiella, and Vilddas are all popular among Sámi audiences, but perform inherently different musics.

*Characteristics of Festival Performances*

During my research I attended two events featuring Sámi music, and witnessed a total of ten separate performances. Table 3 lists each of these performances.

Table 3: Performers in Ijahis Idja and Jutajaiset

<b>Ijahis Idja (Indigenous People’s Music Festival)</b>	<b><i>Jutajaiset</i></b>
Petra Biret Magga (Vuotso) and children	Ulla Pirttijärvi-Länsmän
Satu Aikio (Anár Sámi)	Jiella
Heaika (Heikki) Paltto (Lemmenjoki)	Vilddas
Trio from <i>Juoigiid searvi</i> (Joik society)	
“Amoc” (Mika-Lanti Morottaja)	
Wimme Saari	

Of these performances, the children's dance lead by Petra Biret Magga set to the recorded pop song, "I'm a Sámi Boy," was the only performance that did not feature live musical performance. Only two other performers, Satu Aikio and Amoc, both from Anár (Inari), did not employ any components of joik. Aikio performed original compositions in the pop ballad tradition and Amoc performed hip hop. A total of four performances, given by Heaika Paltto, the joik trio from *Juoigiid searvi* (Joik society), Wimme Saari, and Ulla Pirttijärvi-Länsmän featured only solo, unaccompanied joik. In addition the performance by Vilddas included one solo, unaccompanied joik. Table 3 displays the names of each performer or group in the two festivals.

*Vilddas and Interview with Marko Jouste*<sup>26</sup>

Upon Lehtola's recommendation, I traveled south to Tampere to interview ethnomusicologist Marko Jouste at the Music Anthropology Department at Tampere University. Jouste specializes in music analysis, music of northern peoples—especially the Sámi—popular music of Turkey and Greece, and 19<sup>th</sup> century guitar music. He is also a founding member of the band, Vilddas.

Jouste and I had an informal interview that lasted most of the afternoon. We covered many topics, including resources for my research areas, various music recordings, and his experiences with Vilddas.

Modern Understanding of Joik

We spoke at length about how interpretations of joik are quite different in a modern context. Before large-scale assimilation Sámi grew up with joiks, and could understand the allusive lyrics in joik performance because they heard the music on a daily basis. In addition most people composed joiks, so that there no division between

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<sup>26</sup> Jouste, interview. All information in this section comes from this source, unless otherwise indicated.

performer and audience. Today many Sámi have little or no knowledge of joik, because few have grown up with the joik and would not necessarily take away any more meaning from its performance than someone outside of the community. In addition, today's generation of Sámi may find it difficult to understand encoded messages in older Sámi joiks, as in many cases, their original meaning has been lost over time. Therefore in a modern context the performer must specify the meaning in a way that he or she would not have had to in a traditional context. Joik performances tend to feature more words and specific references to the subject in a modern staged performance.

As demonstrated in the examination of joik and popular music in the 1970s and 80s, the joik itself came to serve as a symbol of Sámi culture, even if the underlying symbolism *in* the joik is not understood. This is still true today. Jouste said, "Sámi have always this idea of symbol." Even if most Sámi have not grown up with the joik and do not understand to what a joik refers, they know that the joik is an important symbol of Sámi culture. The division between performers and audience members has grown, as has the division between experts and non-experts in the tradition; yet a fundamental belief in the inherent Sáminess of the tradition remains.

I asked him then, if this is the case, what he makes of Sámi musicians who are not joiking at all. He paused for a moment and then responded with a story about a Sámi student of his who wrote a paper about Sámi identity. In the paper the student argued that a thing does not have to have anything about it that is "Sámi," and still it is Sámi. In other words, something can have cultural value—a musical performance, for example—even if it does not exhibit any latent characteristics of that culture. In fact, at the surface it may have nothing at all to do with that culture; but if other people within the culture agree that

it is a cultural expression, or even if only the person who created this thing believes it is a cultural expression, then it is.

### The Shaman Drum as a Symbol of Culture

Throughout this paper I have focused on the shifting perception of the joik in popular music; but I would be remiss to ignore another element of the Sámi soundscape that has emerged, if not so much aurally then visually, as an icon of Sámi culture.

Jouste actually drew me to the question of the drum's significance in modern culture. He said that it is interesting how the shaman drum had been accepted again as a symbol of Sámi culture, both within and outside of the culture. It is perhaps the strongest visual representation of Sámi culture. One sees the image of the drum everywhere. Jouste said that it is coming back in music as well—more performers, including his own group, *Vilddas*, include frame drums reminiscent of circumpolar shamanism in their performances. I also witnessed use of the frame drum in a tourist setting when I saw Maarit Paadar perform.

The shaman drum has become a distinctive marker of Sámi identity for several reasons.<sup>27</sup> First, like the joik, it was associated with Sámi traditional worldviews, and Nordic settlers sought to eliminate it. Therefore its reemergence is a sign of the power of the culture to overcome years of oppression. Today the remaining original shaman drums number only about seventy, and are all housed in museums in Scandinavia. All other drums were collected by missionaries and burned during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Sámi drum is also the only instrument attributed to indigenous Sámi music. As such, some Sámi may believe it is just as important an icon of Sámi identity as the joik. Perhaps it is even more significant as an icon, because unlike joik, the drumming

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<sup>27</sup> Following theories on the shaman drum developed by the author.

tradition was destroyed by settlers and missionaries, and therefore its recreation today is an overt display of counter-hegemony.

Second, the Sámi drum is distinguishable from other frame drums in the circumpolar region because of the pictures that were painted on the surface in alder bark juice. These pictures represent elements of Sámi traditional beliefs.<sup>28</sup> They have been reproduced in Sámi visual art, and are found in many Sámi commodities. When I first met Hirvasvuopio, she was wearing a shawl covered in prints of suns and shaman drums. Traditional drum and sun images, and other figures borrowed from the drum paintings, such as reindeer and the noaidi himself, are popular visual symbols in Sámi art today.

Finally, the drum is an important symbol because of its association with the sun, a revered symbol in Sámi culture.<sup>29</sup> It is shaped like a sun, and was often painted with images of the sun. The sun, which directly affects every element of Arctic life, disappears for many months of the year. When it reappears it signifies that summer is coming. The sun is a powerful image for Sámi people, and their drum, like their flag, is a visual representation of it.

#### Language and Performance

I asked Jouste why language seems to be so important in performance, and if he agrees that almost all Sámi artists perform in Sámi languages. He said language has always been an important part of Sámi identity; but then he implied that this is also not necessary for the performance to have meaning for the Sámi community. He told me about the band Transjoik, which employs few words in performances, but instead explores the aesthetics of the vocables in joik. When text is used, it is most often derived

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<sup>28</sup> Hætta, 8.

<sup>29</sup> Hætta, 19.

from sampled recordings. The band has used samples of Sámi joiks, but just as often they sample recordings in other languages and from other music traditions. In fact, on their newest album, *Uja nami*, the band collaborated with a Finnish singer who sang texts from the *Kalevala*, the Finnish national epic.<sup>30</sup> Jouste said, “And still it’s considered Sámi.” This is an important point. Identity is clearly internally defined here. Here we have a group using the national epic of the hegemonic culture—an epic which features enemies from the far north that many scholars agree may refer to the Sámi—in their performances.

I commented that as a student in ethnomusicology I find myself constantly trying to codify identity, to narrow it down to basic cultural symbols, like the joik. Identity is not so easily explained, and there are so many more ways of being Sámi. Jouste replied, in regards to the way researchers define Sámi by their cultural signifiers, “I think Sámi are quite annoyed by this.”

#### Vilddas

Jouste is a founding member of the group Vilddas, and was busy throughout the summer touring with the group, throughout Finland and Sápmi. Vilddas presents an interesting set of challenges to field research, because the three founding members, Annukka Hirvasvuopio, Marko Jouste, and Mikko Vanhasalo are all students in ethnomusicology. They met while attending courses in the Department of Music Anthropology at Tampere University. Thus, they all are familiar with ethnomusicological fieldwork and have conducted extensive research on Sámi music. Four members of Vilddas are pictured in Figure 15.

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<sup>30</sup> Transjoik, *Uja nami*, Vuelie 802, 2004.



Figure 15: Vilddas<sup>31</sup>



From left: Marko Jouste, Annukka Hirvasvuopio-Laiti, Mikko Vanhasalo, and Karo Sampela

Vilddas—the name means “untamed,” or “frisky” in North Sámi—was founded in 1997 when Jouste, Vanhasalo, and Hirvasvuopio began experimenting with the combination of their relative research interests in Turkish *ūd*, the ney flute, and the Sámi joik into musical performance. Eventually three percussionists joined the group; drummer Karo Sampela joined in 1998, followed by percussionists Risto Blomster in 2000 and Ari Isotalo in 2001.<sup>32</sup> Vilddas had built a solid fan base in Tampere through live performances, and with funding support from the Sámi Parliament (Samediggi), The Finnish Music Promotion Centre, and the Foundation for the Promotion of Finnish Music

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<sup>31</sup> “Music” in *Vilddas* Online (Accessed October 2004), <<http://www.vilddas.net/lang-eng/historia.html>>.

<sup>32</sup> “History,” in *Vilddas* Online.

they released their self-titled first album in 2000.<sup>33</sup> Following the album release Vilddas focused on promoting the album through tours all over Finland, Norway, and Germany. Then in 2001 they began recording their second album, *Háliidan*, which was released in 2003.<sup>34</sup>

Jouste said that Vilddas is invited to perform at many kinds of events, including Sámi festivals, Finnish and Norwegian clubs, and various concerts; and today they are often the headliners at these events. I asked Jouste what kinds of people are interested in Vilddas's music, or what the audience demographic seems to be. He responded frankly that anyone interested in world music would be interested in their music.

I asked Jouste early in our interview why the group decided to include joik. He said that maybe a better line of inquiry is why they decided to include "Oriental" music; the group formed because they thought that the joik, the ūd, and the ney flute would make an excellent combination of sounds. From the beginning of the group's formation all three musicians brought their individual interests to the group; the music did not center on joik, but instead joik was considered one of many musical influences in their performance. They did, however, consciously choose to perform in the North Sámi language. According to their website this was due to Hirvasvuopio's background.<sup>35</sup> Sámi is Hirvasvuopio's second language, however—her first is Finnish—and Jouste and Vanhasalo are both Finnish. In fact, judging from comments made by Jouste the group seems to often compose songs in Finnish and then Hirvasvuopio translates them into Sámi.

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<sup>33</sup> *Vilddas* Online.

<sup>34</sup> *Vilddas* Online.

<sup>35</sup> "History," in *Vilddas* Online.

Jouste said if I listen to *Háliidan* I will notice that the album includes acoustic instrumental tracks, pop, and traditional joik. Often songs include no joik at all. Therefore the group's performances are not built solely around the joik. When I first met Jouste I found it difficult to understand the group in these terms. At the time I assumed the group focused on Sámi joik, simply because Hirvasvuopio, a scholar in Sámi music, was the lead singer; but Jouste was quick to point out that joik is just one of the group's many musical interests.

This does not mean, however, that the group's performances do not include a significant number of joiks. In fact, the majority of the vocals are derived from joik, and both of Viddas's albums include solo, unaccompanied joik. Below I have examined each song on both *Viddas* and *Háliidan*, based on whether or not characteristics of joik are included. My criteria are based on the aesthetics of joik described in Chapter 2: the basic repeated motif, which is labeled the cycle, the distinct vocal timbre and ornamentation found in joik, labeled simply "style," and the use of the North Sámi language. All of the songs are sung in Sámi, so this category applies to both pop-derived and joik-derived lyrics. What I have concluded is that several traditional, well-known joiks are covered by the group—called "Old Joik" in the chart—, occasional new joiks written by Jouste or Hirvasvuopio, joiks with instrumental accompaniment, and several songs with joik-derived lyrics. A few songs are not based on joik, and often these songs derive their overall sound from the research interests of other members of the group. These charts reveal that, although Jouste insists the band is a culmination of each member's respective research interest, the joik dominates on both albums.

Table 4: The Joik in Vilddas's *Háliidan*

L = North Sámi Language  
 C = Cycle  
 S = Voice

<b><i>Háliidan</i> (2003)</b>	
Háliidan	Joik-derived vocals. L,C,S
Vuolgge fárrui	No joik. L
Boađan du lusa	No joik. L
Go moai leimme mánat	No joik. L
Vilges suola	Joik-derived vocals. L,S
Moarseluohiti	New joik, a cappella. L, C, S
Lasse-adjáluohiti	Old joik + pop vocals. L, C, S
Ohcejohka	Pop vocals. L
Dánses Lille Sára	Old joik + instruments. L, C, S
Dolla	No vocals, ūd solo.
Dola mun cahkkehan	No joik. L
Irggástallan	Joik-derived vocals + pop vocals. L, S

Table 5: The Joik in Vilddas's *Vilddas*

<b><i>Vilddas</i> (2000)</b>	
Savkalanlávlla	No joik. L
Jiekŋaahpi	Joik-derived vocals, improvisation. L, S
Oarreluohiti - Nanne luohiti	Old joik, a cappella. L, C, S
Beaivvážis šaddet beaivvit	Joik-derived vocals-male, pop vocals-female. L, C, S
Dán ija	Joik-derived vocals + pop vocals. L, S
Biegga	Joik-derived vocals. L, C, S
Hirvas-Niila luohiti	Old joik, a cappella, ascending pitch level. L, C, S
Ráfi	Pop vocals. L
Pauanne	Joik-derived vocals, all vocables. L, S
Guhtur-Ándde-Reijo	New joik. L, S, C
Eadni lavlu	Old joik lullaby, a capella. L, C, S
Báze dearvan	Joik-derived vocals-male, pop vocals-female. L, C, S

Jouste is adamant in his wish that Vilddas's music be understood as a combination of the various musical talents and research interests of each member of the group. The group has tried to make this clear in their website by briefly describing the inspiration for each song. For example, they explain that the album *Háliidan* was greatly

influenced by a recent trip to Athens during which the band heard Greek “gypsy” music in the bars. They attribute their use of the clarinet and much of the vocal style on the album to this music.<sup>36</sup>

But joik still dominates their performances. All songs are written in the Sámi language. Hirvasvuopio, the only Sámi performer, is marketed as the leader of the group. The power structure within the group is designed to highlight the indigenous member of the group. Her musical traditions dominate. Her cultural traditions are visible in clothing—as seen in Vilddas’s performance at *Jutajaiset*—and instrumental accompaniment through the frame drum. Her presence on the stage is the focus in performance.

### Conclusions

In his chapter titled “Music Between Tradition and the State” Lehtola states, “Yoik, hymn, melody, rock, country, jazz, orchestra, symphony, ethnomusic.... In the past few decades Sámi music has gone through the whole spectrum of western musical forms from one end to the other. This experimentation created an explicitly Sámi music thanks to Sámi language, Sámi themes, and the yoik tradition.”<sup>37</sup> This statement illuminates the characteristics of Sámi popular music that distinguished it from the global popular music market; but what I have learned after my last visit to Finland is that often only one of these characteristics may be represented. Perhaps joik is not included, nor “Sámi themes,” which I assume refers to Sámi markers of difference, but the Sámi language is used. Or perhaps a performance includes all of these elements, but the

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<sup>36</sup> Vilddas Online.

<sup>37</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 106.

performers deny they are doing anything overtly Sámi, and would prefer to be defined by other criteria.

## Chapter 5: Conclusions: Sámi Music and Identity in the New Millennium

### Issues of Identity: Sámi Youth

In her article “Sami Generations” Vigdis Stordahl explains that the youth of the 1990s and today are the first generation of Sámi who have not had to contest an assimilationist vision for Sámi culture. They have grown up in an education system that emphasizes Sámi language and culture, and have developed a sense of self that is not overtly contested by a majority population. While their conflicts with Nordic cultures are certainly not completely resolved, Sámi young people do live in a world much more respectful of their culture than their parents did. Stordahl states, “There is reason to believe that this training, together with the intensified debate on Sami issues, has influenced the development of a much more obvious self-image in this generation who, in contrast to their parents, have no lost Sami past to avenge or mourn.”<sup>1</sup>

The Sámi of today do not necessarily feel the need to assert a Sámi identity distinctive from the cultures surrounding them and based on key cultural signifiers like the joik, reindeer herding, and the Sámi costume. For the boardinghouse generation, these signifiers were important. They created an umbrella identity for all Sámi people. These cultural symbols were powerful markers of difference, and demanded the attention of the rest of the world. Today many people, especially young people, are challenging these essentialized notions of what it is to be Sámi, and instead are uncovering a more internalized sense of Sámi identity based on a more personal notion of cultural significance. Jouste’s student who wrote a paper on Sámi identity understood this. Young people may not engage in overt displays of culture. They may even choose to disassociate

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<sup>1</sup> Stordahl, 147.

with some elements of their culture; and yet they may still feel themselves to be Sámi. They also recognize that being Sámi means being multi-cultural. For thousands of years Sámi have been surrounded by and interacted with other cultures. Though this interaction has most often been to the detriment of Sámi rights, it also led to mutual cultural influences.

### *The Sámi and Multiculturalism*

Many people recognize that Sámi culture was never isolated from the rest of the world. Thus, why should the Sámi isolate themselves now? Instead why not embrace the many cultures that constitute Sámi experience? The artists examined here are interested in defining themselves by the many cultures that make up their identities; and popular music directly reflects this desire. On the stage, Amoc is *both* a hip hop artist and a Sámi. Hirvasvuopio is a scholar, a Sámi, a singer, and a citizen of Finland.

Harald Eidheim argues that the way young people express their identities today is not so much a shift in perception as it is a result of the development of socio-cultural politics since the 1960s. He states: “The *new* (my emphasis) Sami self-understanding which spread slowly among the population from the 1960s onward shows that Sami identity is experienced by more and more people—not as a contrasting identity to the minority’s majority counterpart, the *Dážá* (a Sami word, meaning any non-Sami) but, at the same time, as a complementary identity which creates the possibility of experiencing equality vis-à-vis the same counterpart.”<sup>2</sup> In the new millennium, Sámi musicians are finding ways to adapt to this new understanding of self and of the other. Eidheim calls it a

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<sup>2</sup> Eidheim, 33-34.



“double signature,” in which signifiers of Sámi culture are combined with signs from the outside world.<sup>3</sup> Nowhere else is this more visible than on the stage.

Eidheim concludes that Sámi identity today is no longer defined in contrast to non-Sámi identity, and that the cultural paradigm devised by Sámi political elites has now dissolved into the overall worldview of Sámi people. He states,

“Following the Alta affair, an increasing number of Sami have become familiar with and have assimilated the paradigm, based on Sami history, majority/minority dynamics, such notions as ‘we were here first,’ ‘we are a people,’ and ‘Sapmi is our cultural heritage,’ that was originally formulated by a tiny elite. This knowledge has not only been accepted as accurate and authentic, and has not only been collectivized, but it functions now more and more as conventionalized knowledge, as non-problematized and taken-for-granted categories of thought and action in the Sami world.”<sup>4</sup>

The Sámi youth are also defining themselves differently because they are living in a world where bi-culturalism is not just a by-product of their location, but is actually a requirement in the educational and economic system. In the formal education system, for example, traditional Sámi knowledge tends to get marginalized as the Sámi work to find jobs. Most young people attend college in the Nordic system, which means they must leave Sápmi to get this education.<sup>5</sup> They must learn to adapt to both Sámi and non-Sámi worldviews in order to function in everyday life.

Lehtola asks the question, “What actually is a *Sámí*?” He says,

Nowadays a ‘real’ Sámi may be a city dweller, may be a professional computer programmer, or an astronomer...the modern view of identity is an on-going process, continually being produced. There is no such thing as a complete and unchanging identity; it is in certain ways created all the time...Traditionally being Sámi was considered to be connected to reindeer herding, language, and traditional livelihoods in Sápmi. For the younger generations of Sámi, those criteria are no use as identifying features. A person should not ‘have’ to speak

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<sup>3</sup> Eidheim, 54.

<sup>4</sup> Eidheim, 52.

<sup>5</sup> Stordahl, 151-152.

Sámi in order to be a Sámi. Someone who is on the voter list of the Sámediggi (Sámi Parliament) does not necessarily have to live in Sápmi.<sup>6</sup>

Some children are actually rejecting those basic markers of Sámi identity as a kind of cultural representation they do not wish to share with their parents. The generation gap can be explained by the fact that, from the child's perspective, the parent is now the "establishment," against which the child rebels. But Stordahl warns that what is happening among the youth today is not at all a rejection of culture: "They are, on the contrary, claiming their right to determine their own terms and symbols of Sami-ness which they feel appropriate to the demands of their own time."<sup>7</sup>

#### Identity and Popular Music

In his dissertation on the importance of joik to Sámi identity, Richard Jones-Bamman concludes on musical performance, "...the piece in question must either feature joik prominently or be demonstrably derived from joik in some manner. As a distinctive Saami musical event, joik, elaborated in myriad forms during performance, continues to evoke a profound response from Saami audiences, by focusing attention on the culture form from which it arises to an extent that no other musical expression can achieve."<sup>8</sup> While the joik certainly continues to arouse emotional responses and a sense of solidarity among Sámi audiences, and continues to serve as a cultural marker, I am not so convinced that, in the new millennium, the joik is a necessary component in Sámi performance, or is necessary for the performance to serve an important function in demonstrating Sámi identity. In fact, even as artists like Vilddas continue to perform joik

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<sup>6</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 86.

<sup>7</sup> Stordahl, 148.

<sup>8</sup> Jones-Bamman, "As long as we continue to joik, we'll remember who we are," 317-318.

in popular music, they argue for a more complex portrayal of Sámi music that includes their many musical influences. Other artists, like Amoc, do not perform joik at all.

### Identity and Language

The only symbolic characteristic that seems to bring together all of the musicians examined here is the use of Sámi languages in performance. Language clearly is important to these artists, so much so that bands like Vilddas will translate lyrics into North Sámi rather than sing into their first language of Finnish. Kusmin said that for Amoc writing hip hop rhymes in the Anár Sámi language is a laborious process, because he too grew up with Finnish as his first language.<sup>9</sup> *Why* are Sámi languages used? If young Sámi today are intent on defining themselves on their own terms, and if they are interested in exploring their own multiculturalism, why not sing in Finnish or Norwegian?

Some scholars suggest that the language, and by this they mean the dominant North Sámi language, is the only way to express the Sámi experience in performance. Sámi teacher Hans-Aslak Guttorm put it this way: “the Sami language is the only possible instrument for a satisfactory communication of the life and the thinking of the Sami.”<sup>10</sup> Guttorm believes that many Sámi concepts are simply not translatable. Another explanation may be that language is a means of encoding Sámi worldviews that keep them completely private and off limits to non-Sámi speakers. Or perhaps learning a Sámi language is like learning a musical instrument: those performers most proficient in the language are considered more talented, or at least more dedicated musicians.

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<sup>9</sup> Kusmin, interview.

<sup>10</sup> Aikio, Aikio-Puoskari, and Helander, 117.

According to Harris Berger in *Global Pop, Local Language*, language has a special status within all societies because it is not only the way we express our identities, but is also the way we *construct* our identities. We achieve our identity through linguistic behavior. Language not only conveys these identities semantically, but can also serve as a symbol of these identities. So for native peoples, the use of a native language relates to the ability of the language to reflect the culture's worldview; simultaneously the language can be a symbol of that culture.<sup>11</sup>

Mikael Svonni argues that language continues to be an important marker of Sámi identity for several reasons: First, the current definition of who is considered Sámi in all three Nordic countries is based in part on language.<sup>12</sup> Outsiders are defining who is Sámi based on who can speak a Sámi language. Second, even though most Sámi cannot speak a Sámi language, they value the language as a cultural symbol. Svonni cites a study that revealed that a majority of Sámi parents who are not proficient in a Sámi language hope that their children will become proficient.<sup>13</sup> Therefore the language is serving as a cultural symbol, much as Berger argued, and this function may be more important than its use in communicating.<sup>14</sup>

#### Identity and the Gakti

In addition to language, Sámi traditional dress, or the *gakti* continues to serve as an important marker of Sámi identity. Of the two music festivals I attended this summer, only one Sámi performer, Amoc, was not dressed in a *gakti*. All other Sámi performers

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<sup>11</sup> Harris M. Berger, "Introduction: The Politics and Aesthetics of Language Choice and Dialect in Popular Music," in *Global Pop: Local Language* (Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi, 2003), xiv-xv.

<sup>12</sup> Mikael Svonni, "Saami Language as a Marker of Ethnic Identity among the Saami," in *Indigenous Identity and Rights*, Irja Seurujärvi-Kari and Ulla-Maija Kulonen, eds (Helsinki: Yliopistopaino (Helsinki University Press: 1996), 113.

<sup>13</sup> Svonni, 120.

<sup>14</sup> Svonni, 121.

appeared in national costumes from their home regions, or appeared in a version of the national costume they had altered, perhaps to update their look or to give it a personal touch. Annukka, for example, appeared at Jutajaiset in a gakti but in black fabric. Much of the audience also wore the traditional costume.

Clearly the national costumes serve a symbolic role. One explanation for this may be that they are an efficient, very public way of marking difference between the Sámi and other Nordic peoples. As an indigenous people Sámi must battle issues of race that differ from the experiences of most other indigenous groups: The Sámi are white. They are physically indistinguishable from their Nordic neighbors. Sámi scholars who have participated in global indigenous conferences and interacted with other indigenous peoples recognize that their physical appearance is problematic for both non-indigenous and indigenous peoples. Gaski comments, “You know we Sami people are in an odd position in the world—an indigenous people traditionally, culturally, and politically, but still we are ‘white’ in regard to color. All the rest of the indigenous world differ visually from White Man, except the ‘White Indians of Scandinavia,’ i.e. the Sami people.”<sup>15</sup> The gakti, therefore, serves as a visual marker of difference. When one sees this costume one knows the wearer is Sámi, and therefore indigenous—while conducting research I certainly used the gakti as a way to situate performers and audiences. Gaski noted that when he attended conferences, he witnessed that Sámi were only accepted as indigenous representatives when they were in their gaktis. In plain clothes, they were treated as outsiders.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Gaski, 202.

<sup>16</sup> Gaski, 202-203.

There appears to be no conflict here, however, between their desire to distinguish themselves and their desire to be considered modern. A Sámi can wear a traditional costume, play an electric guitar, sing an ancient joik, speak in both North Sámi and Finnish, and even perform a pop song in English, all in the same performance. This juxtaposition of traditional and non-traditional, of Sámi and non-Sámi, is a purposeful technique; it calls into question the tendency of European-American societies to judge indigenous societies as isolated and pre-modern by bringing both old and new Sámi traditions onto the performance stage.<sup>17</sup>

### Generational Differences

Among the Sámi, opinions differ regarding what should become of the joik. There are many Sámi who still view joiking as a sin, and do not wish for the tradition to continue. There are others, even musicians, who believe that joiking should not include outside musical influences, especially western popular musical influences. Inga Juuso, a journalist for Sámi Radio in Guovdageaidnu (Kautokeino), Norway, and a very popular singer maintains a strong opinion about the fate of joik.

In her interview in Helander and Kailo's *No Beginning, No End: The Sami Speak Up*, Juuso says, "If you mix Western music with yoiking, it will spoil that yoik. In any case it is going to be influenced. And I think that Sami music is moving in a direction which means that you won't even hear traditional music after a while anywhere. Where can the young people learn to yoik in a traditional way if yoiking changes and adopts a Western form?"<sup>18</sup> In the same interview she remarks on the negative comments people made to her when she began teaching herself joik as a child: "When I first started

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<sup>17</sup> Non-Sámi members of these groups, however, did not appear in gaktis. This cultural symbol was exclusively off limits to non-Sámi performers.

<sup>18</sup> Helander and Kailo, 134-135.

yoiking, many people, especially the older ones, told me off although generally speaking I have never been much criticized. Of course many Samis claimed that yoiking is a sin, that one should not take it up.”<sup>19</sup>

As a child Juuso was criticized for joiking, and now as an adult she criticizes young people for joiking in a different way. On one level, her interests in preserving the traditional joik cause her to overlook the contradiction between the fact that she was criticized for performing traditional joik and now she is critical of contemporary joik; but Juuso grew up in the boardinghouse generation. She grew up in an environment where the general attitude toward everything Sámi was negative. Despite criticisms, she saw it as her destiny to joik, and because of her work, and the work of others, joik is still a prominent art form. Why would she not fear for the survival of a genre she knew to be so persecuted as a child?

As Stordahl points out, it is difficult for today’s parent generation to understand the youth’s attitudes toward cultural symbols like the joik, when they fought so hard to obtain cultural rights in the 1960s and 70s.<sup>20</sup> She says,

Today’s parent generation were young adults in the 1970’s, a decade in which the debate on Sami ethno-political consciousness and cultural revitalization peaked.... For the youth of the 1970’s today’s parent generation, the life project was to create a Sami identity solely based on Sami traditions such as Sami languages, Sami food, Sami costumes, Sami architecture, Sami music, and Sami folktales.... At the same time it was in opposition to their own parents’ generation whose life project had been either to keep quiet, [and] hide their own identity...<sup>21</sup>

The parent generation, including Juuso, has come to cherish those cultural symbols that gave them the power to assert their own identity in the 1970s and 1980s.

One can recognize the passion singers like Juuso have for the traditional joik. She says, “I

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<sup>19</sup> Helander, 133.

<sup>20</sup> Stordahl, 148.

<sup>21</sup> Stordahl, 144-145.

yoik wherever I am so yoiking acts more as medicine for me. I have had many difficult moments in my life and I have often ‘had to walk uphill,’ I have had to struggle hard and yoiking has been my therapy so that I don’t have to visit a psychologist. I don’t know why but yoiking removes bad feelings and relieves you if you feel troubled. This is one of the reasons why I don’t want the young people to forget yoiking. This is also one reason for my yoiking, that it should be preserved for the future because it is part of our culture.”<sup>22</sup>

But today’s youth do not face the same challenges that Juuso’s generation did. Stordahl implores the parent generation to see that what children and young adults are doing is only possible because of the parents’ accomplishments. They are able to define themselves on their own terms because the parent generation has created a cultural space for the Sámi within the Nordic countries. Stordahl says, “Many Sami parents...feel that their youngsters risk losing contact with Sami culture because, in their view, Sami culture is not represented in the social space the youth create for themselves.”<sup>23</sup> She continues, “When they (the youth) insist on their own social space and categories of meaning, it is not necessarily Sami culture or their Sami identity they reject but their parents’ generation’s way of expressing this identity.”<sup>24</sup> Today’s Sámi are no less invested in their own culture, but have a different way of expressing who they are. Amoc is an excellent example of this. Here is an artist who has a tremendous investment in his own culture, as clearly displayed in his performance in the Anár language; but still he does not incorporate Sámi traditions in the same way as the parent generation.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Helander and Kailo, 144.

<sup>23</sup> Stordahl, 143.

<sup>24</sup> Stordahl, 143.

<sup>25</sup> Amoc also teaches Anár to children part-time.



The musicians examined above have been shown to be deeply invested in the joik or other Sámi traditions, even while they demand respect as multicultural citizens. The very make-up of Vilddas is a testament to the fact that the Sámi are not living in a cultural vacuum, but are in constant contact with their neighbors. They collaborate with them in music and create hybrid musics, based on their interests in each other and other cultures. Audience reception, as evidenced in the Sámi Radio playlists and discussions included in Chapter 4, also seems to point to the positive way joik continues to be received; but it also demonstrates the Sámi are interested in non-Sámi musics as well, and that these play a prominent part in their soundscape.

Cultural signifiers are not the only things that hold a community together. The Sámi youth are finding different ways of expressing their solidarity with their Sámi friends and family, with their Scandinavian neighbors, with indigenous and non-indigenous peoples across the globe. Just as joik was like a medicine for Juuso, hip hop is a medicine for Amoc. He finds ways of expressing his personal identity as a Sámi, an artist, a youth, and a multicultural person through a new kind of music. But he has not abandoned his heritage. He is merely expressing identity in a different way.

### Issues of Authenticity

The issue of authenticity naturally arises in a discussion of identity because there are those both within and outside of Sámi culture who believe that artists who move away from Sámi traditions like the joik are being inauthentic. Juuso clearly expressed some strong opinions about notions of authenticity in popular music.<sup>26</sup> Authenticity is as hotly contested and as consistently re-defined as the concept of identity, but unlike identity it is a concept with which many people would prefer to disassociate, rather than confront. We

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<sup>26</sup> My reaction to Jiella's performance is evidence of my own perceptions of authenticity in popular music.

all have our own ideas of what is authentic. Our notions of authenticity dictate who we think we are, what we choose to do with our lives, and what we value. The way we construct authenticity means that by its very nature it is a flexible, even fluid concept, and often we contradict ourselves in its construction.

### Western Notions of Authenticity

Issues of authenticity are at the surface of any discussion of popular music because the musical stylings in popular music tend to be short-lived. Stokes describes authenticity as “a way of talking about music, a way of saying to outsiders and insiders alike: ‘this is what is really significant about music,’ ‘this is the music that makes us different from other people.’” Authenticity is a cultural construct and is a way for people to situate musical authorship and define difference. It is not a concept that can be easily dismissed because our personalized sense of authenticity affects how we view the world. Audience reception is often understood through the way the audience judges the authenticity of a performer. In fact, authenticity is so pervasive that we are able to overlook the contradictions—in their style or ideologies—of our popular music artists if we can believe them to be authentic.<sup>27</sup>

The question of authenticity also arises when non-western musicians adopt popular musical idioms from European-American traditions, or vice versa, in the case of Viddas. Culturally constructed ideas of authenticity are often applied cross-culturally, and artists are criticized for not living up to the standards of authenticity of hegemonic groups.

I always brace myself for criticisms from family members and friends when I describe the research I am conducting. Their notions of authenticity naturally shade how

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<sup>27</sup> Bennett, 43.

they judge the way various cultures preserve or abandon musical traditions. I recall this summer I explained to a family friend how I was examining these groups of musicians who did not want to be pigeonholed into playing traditional music anymore, and she somehow managed to interpret what I said as meaning that their indigenous musical traditions are dying out. She exclaimed, “Oh, what a shame.” I am not surprised by her response, nor do I know how to react to this kind of sentiment. Truly she is concerned and compassionate about these people and their music. For her, hearing traditional indigenous music—or in this case, imagining it—serves a significant purpose; it creates a sense of nostalgia, or continuity with times gone by. It reassures her that the world is not completely homogenized and that there are still people in the world who are living a simpler life. It is a reflection of her personal sense of authenticity. For her, indigenous peoples who decide not to perform their traditional music are, in a sense, inauthentic.

Taylor recognizes three different levels of authenticity: “authenticity as historical accuracy (in ‘art’ music) or “cultural/ ethnographic accuracy in world musics,” “authenticity that refers to a person’s positionality as racialized, ethnicized, subaltern, and premodern,” and “a sincerity or fidelity to a true self.”<sup>28</sup> All three of these levels affect the western construct of authenticity which, when applied cross-culturally, places an unfair expectation upon non-western artists to remain “traditional,” in an essentialized and narrow sense. Artists who attempt to make popular music are accused of being inauthentic, of being too commercialized, or selling out. The same accusations are made of artists in hegemonic nations as well, but non-western artists are certainly expected to live up to a different standard than western artists. Taylor says, “If world musicians depart from their assumed origins they run the risk of being labeled as a sellout and/or

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<sup>28</sup> Taylor, 21.

perhaps losing their world music audience. If this is true then it is ethnocentric. North American and U.K. artists can make whatever kind of music they want without being accused of inauthenticity.”<sup>29</sup>

Bruno Nettl argues that the idea that western musicians can employ any styles of music they choose, while non-western musicians must perform culturally specific music arises out of the colonialist attitudes that created the dichotomy between these two groups in the first place. He states, “The adoption of specific concepts and artifacts from Western music by colonized peoples may be interpreted variously: as the adoption of the West’s superior technology, as an attempt to enter into the international musical system, as a syncretic device, or as denigration of the traditional system.”<sup>30</sup>

#### Cultural Imperialism and Notions of Authenticity

This sense of authenticity is a reaction to the cultural imperialism thesis developed in the 1970s. According to Tony Mitchell, this thesis argues that, “the power of market capitalism—dominated by the USA, Japan, and Western Europe—not only ‘dumps’ its own cultural products on an unsuspecting world but appropriates, technologizes, contaminates and commodifies the cultural products of Third World and economically weaker nations and channels them into a global economy which denies recognition or reward to the product’s originators.”<sup>31</sup> Cultural imperialism is based on the belief that the world is becoming homogenized and people are losing their traditions, because of our global domination. Despite the fact that this thesis was replaced by a more balanced understanding of cultural influences through the discourses surrounding

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<sup>29</sup> Taylor, 23.

<sup>30</sup> Bruno Nettl, “Colonialism,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* (Accessed October 2004), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>.

<sup>31</sup> Tony Mitchell, *Popular Music and Local Identity: Rock, Pop and Rap in Europe and Oceania* (London: Leicester University Press, 1996), 49.

globalization in the 1980s—it is all more of a random process, and cultural influence does not just flow in one direction—many people still hold on to the belief that the non-western world must be protected from outside influences so that it may continue to thrive.<sup>32</sup>

The truth of the matter—appropriate semantics, considering our authenticity debate—is that relationships between the West and the Rest are terribly complex. We are not just “contaminating” their music with our music. They are also willingly soaking up cultural influences from all over the world, and their music, in turn, is influencing our music.<sup>33</sup> Music is moving in multiple directions throughout the world, and musicians are actively choosing which traits they wish to adopt from the outside, what they choose to preserve from the inside, and what they choose to abandon altogether. To deny this fact is patronizing and paternalist, and is to deny non-western peoples, and in the case of this thesis, indigenous peoples, the right to cultural self-determination, and the right to modernization.

For many Sámi, the idea that they must continue to perform only traditional music is akin to the policies of Norway and Sweden following nationalist policies, summed up by the slogan, “A Lapp Must Remain A Lapp.” In their opinion, if the Sámi concede to western—and some Sámi—demands for authenticity in the form of cultural preservation, then they are in effect denying *themselves* access to modernity. They are frozen in time, unable to develop as the rest of the world around them has. Valkeapää expressed his outrage over this demand for authenticity in his book, *Terveisia Lappista*, published in English as *Greetings from Lappland: The Sami—Europe’s Forgotten People*: “My word,

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<sup>32</sup> Mitchell, 49.

<sup>33</sup> Mitchell, 51.

watch out if you don't feel duty-bound to *yoik* when a *dačča* [foreigner, outsider] requests you to, and even worse if it should occur to you to tune up with an aria from the opera *Faust* by Gounod..."<sup>34</sup>

An individual is only able to judge a music's authenticity by his or her understanding of what is important about the music; but by recognizing authenticity as a cultural construct, we may be less likely to reject a music, and more likely to attempt to analyze its worth in its own context.

What one must keep in mind, to borrow Appadurai's terms, is that the Sámi dwell within the same mediascapes, technoscapes, and finanscapes as the western world. In both a cultural and economic sense they are a globalized and post-modern people. Most readers would agree that it is a blatant misrepresentation to describe the Sámi, or any other indigenous culture for that matter, as pre-modern; but denying the Sámi access to the popular musical idioms circulating throughout the world is to deny that they are indeed modern. Those researchers, musicians, and audience members alike who claim that Sámi music must be built on the joik, that Australian indigenous music must include the didjeridoo, that American Indian music must include the drum, are denying indigenous peoples access to modernization, and are often unaware that this is what they are doing.

Lipsitz describes this trend in the following manner: "Music from aggrieved communities still serves traditional purposes of novelty, diversion, and exoticism for many consumers, but a poly-lateral dialogue among aggrieved populations and a crisis of confidence in declining industrialized nations gives new valence to the cultural creations

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<sup>34</sup> Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, *Greetings from Lappland: The Sami—Europe's Forgotten People*. Trans. Beverly Wahl (London: Zed Press, 1971, Reprint, 1978, English Translation, 1983), 22.

emanating from aggrieved communities, making the relationship between ‘margins’ and ‘center’ dramatically different.”<sup>35</sup> As indigenous peoples slowly move out of the periphery toward the center, locally and globally, a new precedent is set, in which music created by indigenous peoples can no longer be understood in the same terms as it has in the past.

#### Strategic Anti-essentialism

In his research on Youssou N’Dour and Angélique Kidjo, two musicians who are often accused of being inauthentic because they choose to operate in the realm of popular music instead of so-called traditional West African music, Taylor concludes that what the two artists are practicing is a kind of strategic inauthenticity. They are, in effect, “beating them [or their Western critics] at their own game.” They “engage with the West on the very terrain that it affords the most prestige—art and the aesthetic.”<sup>36</sup> These artists employ western popular music as an influence in their performance in order to deny the West its notion of authenticity. Something concerns me about this idea, however. By calling the music “strategic inauthenticity,” the music is still viewed as inauthentic, or not real, whether the artists consciously treat the music this way or not. In addition, the term continues to otherize these two artists by placing the power to judge in the hands of the western audiences. It is not inauthentic to them; it is inauthentic to us. Taylor argues that N’Dour and Kidjo are not concerned with authenticity. I disagree. They may not be concerned with our demands for authenticity, but one certainly would not deny them the right to make their own demands for authenticity.

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<sup>35</sup> Lipsitz, 7.

<sup>36</sup> Taylor, 125.

A colleague at the University of Maryland suggested that what N’Dour and Kidjo are really employing is a kind of meta-authenticity. We in the West might not get it, but they and their fans do.<sup>37</sup> I appreciate this term for not being as value-laden, but there is also something strategic about their employment of western popular music idioms.

For this reason I opt for Lipsitz’s idea of strategic anti-essentialism, a concept that seems to apply to many Sámi artists today, especially artists like Vilddas. Strategic anti-essentialism is built upon Gayatri Spivak’s concept of strategic essentialism, in which a group “overlooks the heterogeneity of the group in order to build unity around common needs and desires.”<sup>38</sup> In other words, it is strategic process, in which essentialized notions of a particular group are used to unify the group, for the good of the group. What happened with Sámi cultural politics in the 1970s and 80s can be seen as a kind of strategic essentialism. Here, a select elite, including musicians and political actors, emphasized group solidarity by highlighting essentialized notions of Sámi identity, like the joik, the gakti, Sámi languages, and livelihood. These actors enabled the Sámi to make great leaps toward self-determination and they demanded the attention of the Nordic government. They also overlooked the vast diversity in the Sámi communities, however, leaving some people, and certainly the next generation, alienated.

Some members of the next generation are employing a kind of strategic anti-essentialism, which Lipsitz defines as the encoding of one’s identity while adopting a guise of something else, in order to “highlight, underscore, and augment an aspect of one’s identity that one can not express directly.”<sup>39</sup> Lipsitz uses the example of Maoris

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<sup>37</sup> Joe Williams, “World Popular Musics and Identity,” university lectures (2003), University of Maryland, College Park Md.

<sup>38</sup> Lipsitz, 62.

<sup>39</sup> Lipsitz, 62.



adopting African American styles because they believe African American alienation closely mirrors their own alienation in New Zealand. Lipsitz says, “the key to understanding each of these groups is to see how they can become ‘more themselves’ by appearing to be something other than themselves.”<sup>40</sup> Some Sámi musicians adopt identities as western popular musicians, not because their identity as indigenous peoples is challenged, but because the multiplicities of their identity are challenged. They receive unfair criticism from older Sámi and from outsiders for defiling Sámi traditions, so the identity that is challenged and that must be encoded is the newer internally defined idea of being Sámi. These challenges make it difficult to express the complexities that make up one’s personal identity, so popular music creates a space for the performance of alternative and multiple identities, that may not be accepted in other parts of daily life.

Vilddas represents another level of strategic anti-essentialism. Lipsitz states: “For some people, anti-essentialism is a kind of essentialism. They participate in so many communities and cultures all the time that expressing their ‘essence’ means exposing the plurality of their cultural and personal identity.”<sup>41</sup> By emphasizing cultural essentials in their music Vilddas uses these musical elements as symbols of their multicultural selves. They adopt personas in which they are comfortable moving within vastly different musical cultures in a single performance. By adopting essentialized notions of multiple cultures they can strategically embed their own multicultural identities in the performance, and at the same time challenge an essentialized notion of Sámi identity.

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<sup>40</sup> Lipsitz, 63.

<sup>41</sup> Lipsitz, 64.

Amoc

Where would Amoc fit in this argument of strategic anti-essentialism? Amoc is a young artist who is operating in a sphere of musical expression completely different from the parent generation, and from most Sámi artists today. Of all of the performances I have witnessed in Sápmi his was one of only two that did not include joik. He operates in the genre of hip hop; his vocal performances are based on spoken word. His music does not—at least at this point in his career—feature joik, not even in the instrumental accompaniment or ambient sounds he employs.

Amoc's use of hip hop brings us back to the idea that there is a universal pop aesthetic, and a global youth audience that supports this system. Hip hop is one of the most popular genres among today's youth, not just in Europe and the United States, but throughout the world; and artists throughout the world are appropriating the aesthetics of hip hop into local music-making, and affectively claiming the genre as their own.<sup>42</sup> Hip hop today functions much like rock in the 1950s and 60s: it is *the* counter-hegemonic genre of the youth, and as Adam Krims argues, represents a “model resistance.”<sup>43</sup> In addition, marginalized peoples like the Sámi may be acting out an affinity with the marginalized urban African American populations, from which hip hop emerged, and are participating in a kind of “cultural relocation.”<sup>44</sup> They may be modeling themselves after African American much as they Maori in Taylor's example have. Krims states, “The identification based on social trauma easily translates, in hip-hop culture, into a position of mutuality and common critique of an oppressive dominant society.”<sup>45</sup> Here the

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<sup>42</sup> Bennett, 62.

<sup>43</sup> Adam Krims, *Rap Music and the Poetics of Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 8.

<sup>44</sup> Bennett, 62.

<sup>45</sup> Krims, 187.

dominant society can apply to many things: Amoc may feel a real sense of cultural crisis, as an Anár Sámi, an under-society even within Sámi culture. Perhaps for Amoc the dominant society is also represented by older Sámi, and as a young person, Amoc feels marginalized.

Krims investigates Cree hip hop in Alberta, Canada, and concludes that “Cree youth, like youth of many marginalized communities, find themselves largely trapped between, on the one hand, traditional identities that may have been persuasive in past generations, and on the other hand, the often more pervasive and persuasive ‘youth culture,’ whose increasing penetration of the object world affects the Cree no less than any other population.”<sup>46</sup> The inference can be applied cross-culturally to artists like Amoc. While I can only hypothesize on his personal motivations for employing hip hop in performance, I cannot ignore the pervasiveness of hip hop as a globally invoked icon of counter-hegemony for marginalized youth.

The division between the generations is not so clearly drawn, however. First, from all of the empirical evidence I gathered while in Sápmi, it does not appear that Amoc is receiving significant criticism for the music he makes, and other artists like Transjoik, who often do not include joik in performance, are highly respected musicians. Audience reception in these instances does not allude to an overall concern over a lack of authenticity in Sámi musical performance. Those artists and audiences who are concerned with Sámi popular music that alters the joik or abandons it altogether appear to be in the minority.

In addition, many of the characteristics of Sámi popular music today can be found in the early developments of Sámi popular music. There were artists in the 1970s and

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<sup>46</sup> Krims, 183.

80's who did not include the joik in performance; and there are many Sámi artists today who engage in the cultural symbolism of the 1970s and 80s. The general perception of Sámi identity today, however as it plays out in popular music, can be understood through the absorption of the paradigm of the 1970s and the social changes that occurred since then. Today's musicians are living in a different world, and the way they define themselves is different.

The Sámi truly are, to borrow Lipsitz's discourse, at a "dangerous crossroads," at an "intersection between the undeniable saturation of commercial culture in every area of human endeavor and the emergence of a new public sphere that uses the circuits of commodity production and circulation to envision and activate new social relations."<sup>47</sup>

Sámi musicians are quite aware of this dynamic. Some bemoan the commercialization of Sámi music while others celebrate its increasing diversity. Some write songs of struggle and resistance only to have their music travel to other countries and get tucked away on the World Music shelf in the record store, to be consumed with no regard to their original purpose, while others write popular dance songs that become anthems of Sámi culture. We can no longer gloss over Sámi popular music as a broad musical expression, as joik with instrumental accompaniment; and we cannot assume that all Sámi popular music is meant to resist Scandinavian hegemony or that it serves to unite the Sámi under a pan-Sámi identity. Instead, we must try to understand that the perception of Sámi identity and Sámi popular music today has shifted—that musicians and audiences alike are in the process of defining themselves on their terms. In Chapter 3 I quoted Eidheim, who believes that major social changes in Sámi culture, especially from World War II through the Áltá Conflict, have led to a discernible shift in Sámi identity. At the same time, Sámi

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<sup>47</sup> Lipsitz, 12.

are able to handle “a larger and larger repertory of new and strange sign material,”<sup>48</sup> which has translated into an adept employment of a larger repertory of sign material in music.

### Issues of Cultural Appropriation

Groups like Vilddas are composed of skilled musicians, schooled in the traditions of other cultures from very different parts of the world, and they bring these traditions to the concert stage. When diverse musical traditions are de-contextualized and brought together seamlessly into performance, questions of appropriation naturally arise. Specifically, how do artists like Vilddas justify their use of other culture’s musics, with little or no connection to a solid, recognizable tradition? Is their music pastiche? Are they culturally sensitive? Or are they permitted to cross certain boundaries that western artists could not, because they *are* culturally marginalized and marginalized in the music industry? How do they account for their ethical obligations as ethnomusicologists?

#### Vilddas and Cultural Appropriation

When I listen to Vilddas I am unable to identify the many musical influences that are brought into a single song. I recognize that what I am hearing has no cultural boundaries: one musical style bleeds into another, bringing together multiple musics from multiple countries so that they exist equally on the same playing field, within a single recording. The old and the new, the Sámi and the non-Sámi are brought together, and the audience is given no explanation about where one tradition ends and the other begins. Are artists like Vilddas aware that they have blurred the boundaries of cultures? Are they conscious of the schizophonia they have created?

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<sup>48</sup> See Chapter 3.

The idea of schizophonia was first developed by Canadian composer Murray Schafer, in reaction to what he perceived as recent trends in electro-acoustical transmission. He states, “Schizophonia refers to the split between an original sound and its electro-acoustical transmission and reproduction.”<sup>49</sup> With technological developments in music transmission, especially the invention of the tape recorder, a sound can be separated from its source. As Feld argues, “digital sampling, CD-ROM, and the ability to record, edit, reorganize, and own any sound from any source [is] the final stage of schizophonia.”<sup>50</sup> In the popular music market, where music is a commodity, the very sound is separated from its source and sold. The final product—the album, the MP3—may have no connection to the original performance. We find, “mediated music, commodified grooves, sounds split from sources, consumer products with few if any contextual linkages to the processes, practices, and forms of participation that could give them meaning within local communities.”<sup>51</sup>

Musical appropriation is a dangerous business. Feld states the problem of musical appropriation most eloquently: “Musical appropriation sings a double line with one voice. It is a melody of admiration, even homage and respect, a fundamental source of connectedness, creativity, and innovation... Yet this voice is harmonized by a countermelody of power, even control and domination, a fundamental source of asymmetry in ownership and commodification of musical works.”<sup>52</sup>

Can we consider Vilddas’s music cultural appropriation, and if so, why is it that Vilddas is validated in the Sámi community, when it is made up of largely non-Sámi

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<sup>49</sup> R. Murray Schafer, *The New Soundscape* (Toronto: Clark and Cruickshank, 1969), 90, cited in Feld, “From Schizophonia to Schismogenesis,” 258.

<sup>50</sup> Feld, “From Schizophonia to Schismogenesis,” 259.

<sup>51</sup> Feld, “From Schizophonia to Schismogenesis,” 259.

<sup>52</sup> Feld, “Notes on World Beat,” in *Music Grooves: Essays and Dialogues*, 238.

members, and it employs the musical aesthetics of other cultures in a de-contextualized manner?

Vilddas is also a band of music researchers and ethnomusicologists. These scholars are quite familiar with issues of authenticity and ownership, and issues of exoticism. Hirvasvuopio has surely witnessed the exoticism of her own culture on a first-hand basis. Yet they do not seem to find a contradiction between their desire to promote Sámi identity, the identity of a marginalized and often exoticized people, and at the same time their presentation of de-contextualized traditions from other cultures. The audience also seems unbothered by this dynamic. How do the scholars in the group ethnically situate themselves?

I cannot begin to provide adequate responses to all of these lines of inquiry. At some level these questions I purposefully leave these questions unanswered because these are issues at the heart of any examination of popular music and cultural identity. I can begin to theorize around the positive reception of Vilddas, and why their music is not overtly criticized, at least not by predominantly Sámi audiences.

I propose that, first and foremost, the power relations with which Vilddas operates are much different from those of a European or North American pop star who appropriates signifiers from other cultures in their music. After all, they market themselves as an indigenous music group, and thus as a marginalized group. They do not have hegemony over a non-western musical style in this situation, because their music is marginalized as well.

In addition, Vilddas's members are not major contract artists; they release their music on a small, private label and do not even have access to the global music market—

their music is not yet distributed in the United States. As Feld argues, there is a direct relationship between economics and musical ownership: "It is clear...that the flow of products and the nature of ownership is differentiated by market valuation factors."<sup>53</sup> The more that is at stake, the more conflict arises. For example, when Paul Simon was accused of exploiting various non-western artists with whom he "collaborated," especially with South African artists on his *Graceland* album, there was a great deal at stake. He is an internationally known pop star who was signed to an international record label. His album was controversial, not just because of the issues of ownership it illuminated, but also because of Simon's positioning in the popular music market. The gap between Simon and the musicians with whom he collaborated is much larger than, for instance, the gap between Viddas and the cultures from whom they borrow musical traditions.

#### The Problem of World Music

I also propose that Viddas's understanding of world music or ethnomusic as scholars in Finland often call it, the genre that they invoke to explain their musical identity, stands apart from the discourse on world music that decries the genre as another result of western dominance over non-western peoples.<sup>54</sup> Their understanding of world music is more closely aligned to what Feld believes most people subscribe: that world music means "musical diversity."<sup>55</sup> World music opens up the possibility of creating a syncretic music, full of all of the musical influences to which one has access. For them, their setting within the category of world music allows them access to other people's musics. Their appropriation of the musics of other cultures may be akin to the

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<sup>53</sup> Feld, "Notes on World Beat," 246.

<sup>54</sup> Feld, "From Schizophonia to Schismogenesis," 266.

<sup>55</sup> Feld, "From Schizophonia to Schismogenesis," 266.



appropriations practiced by other world music artists. Taylor argues that British-Indian singer Sheila Chandra employs the music of another culture “as an aestheticized object,” rather than because of any “particular attachment to any mode of representation.”<sup>56</sup> As professional musicians the members of Vilddas appear to be as interested in the sounds of the musics of other cultures, as they are the particular cultural contexts for the music.

I spoke with many people about music this summer, and a majority of the musicians and scholars used the terms “world music” and “ethnomusic” interchangeably, without any of the negative connotations I personally might have had about these categories. Veli-Pekka Lehtola, my advisor at the University of Oulu, Pentti Kusmin, the music program coordinator at Sámi Radio, and Marko Jouste of Vilddas all applied the terms in various ways to Sámi popular music, and seemed quite content with the labels. Perhaps their understanding of world music is akin to Veit Erlmann’s world music, “a new aesthetic form of the global imagination, an emergent way of capturing the present historical moment and the total reconfiguration of space and cultural identity characterizing societies around the globe.”<sup>57</sup>

Erlmann’s argument differs from other constructions of the world music phenomenon. In one sense world music is a marketing strategy born out of the music industry in 1987. As a category of music it refers to any music that originated in a non-western country, or from minority cultures in the western world.<sup>58</sup> Through this strategy the boundaries between cultures are blurred, as all music outside of the European-American tradition is crammed onto the same shelf. “World music” is also invoked by

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<sup>56</sup> Taylor, 154.

<sup>57</sup> Veit Erlmann, “The Aesthetics of the Global Imagination: Reflections on World Music in the 1900s,” *Public Culture: Society for Transnational Cultural Studies* 19 (1996), 468.

<sup>58</sup> Mitchell, 53.

ethnomusicologists and other scholars as an organizational feature, in an effort to overcome the hegemony of western art music. Some researchers prefer to use the phrase “world music” as an all-inclusive term, instead of using the word “music,” which is often associated with the western classical tradition.<sup>59</sup>

The basic discourse surrounding world music has been based on the assumption that world music creates an important space for “an assertion of political difference.” Erlmann argues to the contrary, that by its very nature, world music blurs boundaries. Erlmann argues that “synthesis is the central category of this global aesthetic in the making.”<sup>60</sup> Therefore, world music is not based on a politics of difference, but instead is based on a converse relationship between homogenization and differentiation, both of which play an equal part in defining world music aesthetics. At one level, the music is homogenized by the particular socio-cultural predicament imposed by globalization. As various parts of the world are brought together in closer proximity to one another, the differences between the cultures are minimized. At another level, the global aesthetics created by these transcultural influences are based on a desire for otherness, for difference. As a commodity form world music may encompass, as an incidental benefit, cultural politics and the politics of difference; but this is not inherent in the *form* of world music. One may say world music is an efficient “factory” for difference. Difference may be a product of it, but difference is not the underlying basis for it.<sup>61</sup>

Erlmann calls for a re-examination of world music based on the aesthetics it creates, rather than on the “postcolonial economics and power dynamics” it is said to

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<sup>59</sup> Mitchell, 54.

<sup>60</sup> Erlmann, 468.

<sup>61</sup> Jonathan Dueck, personal correspondence with the author, 26 October 2004, University of Maryland, College Park, Md.

reflect.<sup>62</sup> World music is based on a goal of synthesis, of cohesion, and at the same time its aesthetics are also based on perceived difference. According to this line of thinking, Vilddas's music is not firstly based on a politics of difference; they are not asserting the musical styles of various parts of the world to express their solidarity with these oppressed people, or to educate their audiences about other cultures. If they are, this is just a by-product of the category, not the basis of it. Perhaps their music is a clear reflection of the new global pop aesthetic. As Erlmann says of this aesthetic, these "transcultural sounds" that emerge in world music are a "*global phenomenon*" (emphasis in original).<sup>63</sup> He continues, "We are in fact dealing with the most ramified, all-encompassing environment ever in the history of artistic production, independent of the continued creativity of individual artists. In this environment, the relationship between different musical subsystems may simply be conceptualized as 'circuits' through which styles and the relationships between them are reproduced within a variety of local circumstances."<sup>64</sup>

The outcome of the world music aesthetic is not a new non-western music but rather "a historical moment in which value is no longer dependent on the natural use of the world, or on a logic of commodity exchange or a structural web of signs. Value, in the viral stage, develops from pure contiguity, from the cancerous proliferation of values without any reference point at all."<sup>65</sup> But the system is also based on perceived authenticity, and the proliferation of values leads the performers and audience to believe that these values have roots somewhere. But value in the "viral stage" of endless self

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<sup>62</sup> Erlmann, 470.

<sup>63</sup> Erlmann, 470.

<sup>64</sup> Erlmann, 473.

<sup>65</sup> Erlmann, 475.

reproduction is essentially rootless: “The local, then, is not the historical antecedent of modernity, but essentially a myth produced by the growing differentiation of society.”<sup>66</sup>

If we consider Erlmann’s thesis, then the division between the local and the global, and indeed between the peripheral and the central, is only an imagined construction.

A final element to Erlmann’s new analysis of world music concerns the role of the performer as part of this concrete, historicized system. The performer is an active part of this system, not a product of it. Erlmann argues, “Thus, musical ethnographies will increasingly have to examine the choices performers worldwide make in moving about the spaces between the system and its multiple environments. Rather than casting these moves in binary terms such as choices between the West and the Rest, between participation and refusal, the politics of global musical production creates numerous, highly changeable ‘border zone relations’ that allow performers to constantly evaluate their position with the system.”<sup>67</sup>

### Concluding Remarks

Eidheim argues that “the appropriation of an ethnic collective identity, selfhood or personhood, implies a collectivization of conceptions and images which makes it possible continually to reinvent this selfhood in a more and more complex life-world.”<sup>68</sup> Thus, these conceptions and images, like the identity itself must be malleable. They must constantly be used in different ways to account for a changing world.

In Sámi popular music there seems to be no internal conflict regarding the vastly different musical stylings each artist brings to the table. Likewise, many young Sámi

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<sup>66</sup> Erlmann, 479.

<sup>67</sup> Guilbault, Jocelyne, “On Redefining the ‘Local’ through World Music,” *The World of Music* 2 (1993): 37, cited in Erlmann, 474.

<sup>68</sup> Eidheim, 42.

today seem to find little contradiction between a pan-Sámi identity and a combined move away from some Sámi traditions and toward other popular music traditions. Ruth Glasser observed a similar situation with Puerto Rican immigrants in the United States, who would employ the musical stylings of Cuban musicians while still claiming that the music is inherently Puerto Rican. She argues, “musical subcultures can exist side by side or within a dominant culture with varying degrees of exchange and musical influence...indeed, all sorts of combinations are possible, depending upon the conditions in which cultural forms and social, political, and economic relationships have developed.”<sup>69</sup>

For the Sámi, identity is more internally defined than it has been in the past. Identity is defined with the perceptions of other insiders in mind, or perhaps with cultural and aesthetic concerns of the performers in mind, rather than symbols of Sámi identity more broadly understood in, and perhaps in part defined by, the dominant society. This is certainly a direct reflection of the crucial steps made in the direction of self-determination.

What I have concluded, having considered indigenism, indigeneity, and popular music as these concepts apply not only to the Sámi but to the global indigenous community, is that it all boils down to the indigenous right to self-determination. We as ethnomusicologists have as a cornerstone of our scholarship the issue of representation. We seek to represent the people with whom we work fairly and justly. Indigenous people are quite aware of this discourse in the social sciences, and have made use of it in their communities, governments, and in their popular music. Since the U.N. first declared such

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<sup>69</sup> Ruth Glasser, *My Music is My Flag: Puerto Rican Musicians and Their New York Communities: 1917-1940*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 7.

a thing as an indigenous person, indigenous people have sought self-determination, and now they seek it in the music they perform. The Sámi may indeed sing joik, but they may also play the didjeridoo, the drum, or the guitar; they may rap or perform classic Finnish schlager. They may perform jazz, classical piano, or experiment with trance techno. The world of music to which they are exposed is at their disposal. The Sámi can, and are taking advantage of their global soundscape, and are doing so on their own terms. Therefore, through popular music they are assuming control of their own representation by employing a broad variety of symbols not usually associated with the Sámi.

Finally, perhaps the Sámi have finally reached a stage in their cultural and musical history in which they are no longer required to overtly assert their Sáminess. History cannot be undone or ignored. But perhaps the significant cultural changes achieved by Sámi political activists, artists, and musicians of the pan-Sámi movement have achieved for today's Sámi some remnant of the cultural assuredness their ancestors shared before cultural and religious assimilation. Taylor says, "Conceptions of identity do flow, but they ebb as well, and sometimes they even rest."<sup>70</sup> He says that oftentimes scholars focus only on the flow of identity because it offers the clearest model for the expression of identity in music. But for the Sámi, perhaps the ultimate reward for centuries of cultural struggle is to be able to rest. What I have tried to illuminate in this thesis is that perhaps it is time to rewrite the soundscape of the Sámi, and perhaps for all indigenous peoples; to reach a new understanding of the ways in which the world's First Peoples negotiate the multiplicities of identity through musical performance in the new millennium.

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<sup>70</sup> Taylor, 164.

## The Future of This Work

In this paper I have tried to include as many sources by Sámi scholars as possible to underscore their significant contribution to this research, but also to overcome the considerable hegemony of the dominant populations of Scandinavia in writing the history of these indigenous peoples. Lehtola argues that Sámi have assumed responsibility for telling their own history in part because of global trends on the treatment of indigenous peoples. “The premise is that the ideology of development of the majority populations has influenced the whole picture of aboriginal peoples and their past.”<sup>71</sup>

In many ways the Sámi are using the arena of academia to take back their own representation. Today Sámi anthropologists, musicologists, linguists, sociologists, psychologists, and ethnomusicologists abound, and as can be expected, they have a much different tale to tell. Their version of Sámi history, in many ways, challenges the writings of current non-Sámi scholars. For example, Sámi researchers are critical of the tendency of much research to continue to freeze the Sámi in time: while other cultures continue to “evolve” and take part in the postmodern world, the Sámi are still un-modernized. Researchers like Hætta deplore the act of scientific literature including the same information on Sámi people from previous editions, when contributions by Sámi scholars may be more accurate and current.<sup>72</sup> They cite this trend as evidence that the Sámi are still denied modernity.

Thus the question becomes, what contribution can an American researcher make to Sámi scholarship, and how can one proceed from here, given all of the postcolonial baggage such a position entails?

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<sup>71</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 105.

<sup>72</sup> Hætta, 73.

Jouste asked me in our conversations if I had “had much luck with Sámi,” or if Sámi had been responsive to my questions and research. I told him it had been hit or miss, but that in general I got the impression that people are suspicious of my work.<sup>73</sup> Some Sámi pointed out that Sámi joik has been amply studied, and others pointed me in the direction of existing scholarship. Some musicians agreed to meet with me but never followed through, while others failed to respond to my requests for interviews at all. Jouste was not surprised. He said that it relates back to this idea that researchers have been “defining” Sámi people for centuries, and many Sámi are weary from incessant questions and poor end results. He said that they would rather decide for themselves what it means to be Sámi, and what their music means to their culture.

Jouste suggested that the only solution for outside researchers is to form a partnership with the Sámi.<sup>74</sup> In order for an outside researcher to make a contribution to Sámi scholarship he or she must consider the possibility of becoming a co-researcher and co-author, of cooperating with Sámi communities at every level of research—from the first encounter with Sámi traditions all the way through to a publication. This is certainly a sensible solution, and one many Scandinavian scholars are beginning to embrace. Jouste, for example, has tried to include Sámi musicians and experts, not only in the research, but in the writing process as well.<sup>75</sup>

Sámi scholars are aware of academic research throughout the world, and while they are interested in promoting Sámi research by Sámi scholars, and in ensuring that Sámi participate in their own representation, they also recognize the value of other interpretations offered by various disciplines and by researchers from other countries.

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<sup>73</sup> Jouste, interview.

<sup>74</sup> Jouste, interview.

<sup>75</sup> Jouste, interview.



Gaski says, “At this point in history...we have an interesting counterpart to the *native* experiences represented by non-native scholars who want to understand indigenous culture and literature, and who from their theoretical point of view talk about Otherness as a challenge to *their* scientific approach and ability to understand and explain the native text [or art]...this is an interesting contrast, and as far as I am able to judge, a productive approach in the contemporary relationship between ‘us’ and ‘them,’ between the native and the non-native worldviews.”<sup>76</sup>

At the core of indigenism is a belief that native and non-native cultures cannot be separated from one another, but must learn from each other in order to coexist. Joste, Gaski, and many others believe that the only direction Sámi cultural studies can take is toward cooperation and co-authorship between Sámi and non-Sámi scholars. This is a belief I intend to consider fully in the future of my own work.

The Sámi of the new millennium have emerged out of a history of cultural questioning. When they first arrived in Sápmi they developed their own culture, lifeways, language, and music, unencumbered by the presence of their neighbors in the south. They endured centuries of contact with non-Sámi, in which their ways of life were overtly challenged, but from which surfaced a nationalistic interpretation of pan-Sámi identity. Through iconic notions of those elements of culture deemed exclusively Sámi, they challenged the hegemony of colonists, missionaries, and nations. Music, and in particular, the Sámi joik served as a marker of distinction between Sámi and Scandinavians. By embracing a pan-Sámi identity, they became involved in the dialogue over global indigenous rights, and secured for themselves unique status as the European Union’s only indigenous peoples.

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<sup>76</sup> Gaski, 212-213.

Today the Sámi still struggle with defining themselves in a postmodern world. Living among multiple cultures and multiple possible identities, they are not in agreement over how Sámi identity should be defined and performed. Sámi musical performances reflect both a quest for modernity, and a desire to maintain tradition. Some artists believe the joik must remain a fundamental symbol of Sámi identity, while others exhibit a desire to recognize all of the cultural influences in their music.

One must also bear in mind that this concept of competing agendas in performance, and a discontinuity with Sámi past, is just as much a projection of external values as it is an internal struggle. As Taylor suggested of the ebb and flow of identity, it is often easier to understand overt displays of culture, than to accept a more complex picture of that culture. Clifford Geertz argues that the only way ethnography can make a significant contribution in understanding cultures is if those of us who participate in it can learn to move past those cultural tags, or methods of codifying culture. He says, “We must, in short, descend into detail, past the misleading tags, past the metaphysical types, past the empty similarities to grasp firmly the essential character of not only the various cultures but the various sorts of individuals within each culture, if we wish to encounter humanity face to face.”<sup>77</sup>

#### In the Words of Sámi Scholars

In the spirit of indigenous self-determination I would like to conclude with the words of three Sámi scholars regarding how they perceive Sámi identity today. I ask the reader to consider how these beliefs relate to Sámi popular music today:

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<sup>77</sup> Clifford Geertz, “The Impact of the Concept of Culture on the Concept of Man,” *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 53.

“The Sapmi of today is...a complex world, exhibiting social, cultural and political trends which, in some aspects, appear to be contradictory; a world in the process of transformation which, to many Sami individuals, appears bewildering and difficult to master. There are internal as well as external voices to be heard which claim that the Sami are rapidly losing their identity, while, on the other hand, others maintain that the Sami are an indigenous population which appears to be succeeding in establishing themselves as a distinct people in dialogue and interaction with the external, modern world.” –Harald Eidheim<sup>78</sup>

“Time has changed, old beliefs disappear, but the knowledge imparted by the traditions that the Sami pay heed to is, among other things, the awareness that we are descendants of the Sun with all the obligations attached to that in terms of how we live today: as an indigenous people in more than a political sense.” – Harald Gaski<sup>79</sup>

“Sámi identity is not a question only of language, only of livelihood, only of living in Sápmi, or only of a way of life. The question is about a much deeper cultural unity, of belonging to a particular heritage of kin, language, and a whole cultural complex extending throughout Sápmi and going back in time.” –Veli-Pekka Lehtola<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Eidheim, 54.

<sup>79</sup> Gaski, 26.

<sup>80</sup> Lehtola, *The Sámi People*, 87.

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