



WHO OWNS THE LAND?

**An ethnography regarding four people's experiences of the
hydropower development along the Lule River.**

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Who owns the land?

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Summary

Veku Vaku is a 3 year InterReg Nord project that began on 1st January 2019. The aim of the project is to highlight the cultural values of hydropower in the Lule and Ule river valleys. The ethnography was started on 1 January 2020. The mission of the ethnologist has been to highlight complex, social and cultural issues within the development of hydropower along the Lule River. The work role has entailed a special focus on emphasising the Sami perspectives. The report is an account and analysis of the material that has been collected. The material consists of four interviews, three observations and a short literature study. To analyse the material, the ethnologist has used various concepts and theories. One of the perspectives used during the analysis is colonialism. Colonialism is considered a direct control over other people's geographical area. Therefore, the exploitation and extraction of natural resources in Sápmi and Norrbotten, during the early 20th century, became a colonial act.¹ In the quote below, the informant Ingrid explains how nature and man have been affected by the extraction of hydropower in the Lule River.

"If only they hadn't built the dams, you know all the trees and huts and everything, even our goat huts had totally disappeared. Because these goat huts always existed, for the goats to stay in, otherwise there were just tent huts."²

Based on the continued regulation of the water level in the Lule River, a clear post-colonial perspective emerges in the material. Post-colonial theories have an ambition to explain the effects of colonialism, areas that have been exposed to colonialism are still characterised by the effects.³ In the quote below, the informant Per-Stefan talks about the fourth regulation of the Lule River, and how it has affected him.

"It was very shallow when we moved up to the dwelling where we now live, the old dwelling, from where we moved, wasn't below the waterline then of course, but when the water rose, and I think it had already risen the first year, after they had said that they would start, then this was regulated to the height that was allowed, so that the old settlement was almost, well at least eight-nine metres under water."⁴

As the historical context often testifies to the interweaving of ethnicity with nationalism and colonialism, in order to reinforce each other's power and positions, this becomes a valuable concept in the report. The concept of ethnicity is used to analyse if, when and how ethnicity becomes something socially relevant for people.⁵ In the report, the concept is used to highlight the hierarchical system that emerges in the material. Since the 'Swedish' and 'Sami' ethnicities have for a long time been constructed against each other through dichotomies, i.e. the ethnicities have been seen as each other's opposites. The 'Swedish' ethnicity has been considered superior to the 'Sami' ethnicity.⁶ The report presents the 'Sami' identity based on how the informants describe themselves. During the interviews, the informants described their upbringing, family, place affiliation and personality. Making their own identity visible and prominent in their own chapter.⁷

1 Payne Gunnarsson Jenny & Öhlander Magnus (eds), Tillämpad kulturteori, Studentlitteratur AB, Lund, 2017

2 Interview, Ingrid, 29/05/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

3 Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, 2017

4 Interview, Per-Stefan, 11/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

5 Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, 2017

6 Hagström Yamamoto, Sara, I gränslandet mellan svenskt och samiskt- Identitetsdiskurser och förhistorien i Norrland från 1870-tal till 2000-tal, Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala, 2010

7 Interviews with Håkan, Ingrid & Per-Stefan, 2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

During the interviews, their place identity also becomes visible. The informants describe in detail the place that they consider to be their place of origin, therefore the concept of place becomes useful in the analysis of the material. Places are constructed through human activity and become part of the historical context. That context then becomes part of our present, because we continue to recreate the historical context at the place. For example, it can be added through memorial monuments, oral and written accounts of the place, or organising specific days to revisit and remember the place. The informants therefore add meaning to the place they describe and place it in its own context. The place includes the informants' ancestors, roots, history and future, which in turn becomes part of their own identity process.⁸ Based on the informants' sharing of their memories and descriptions of places, memory becomes a valuable concept. Memory is still a rather undefined concept. Common language plays a major role in how people transform an experience into a memory. The memory trace is created through a learned script, which can be created personally or culturally. In order to be understood by others, the way we tell stories and memories is programmed. Humans therefore become dependent on the social context in order to form memories.⁹

The report uses some previous research, such as the thesis by Åsa Össbo *"Nya vatten, dunkla speglingar"*. She problematises the exploitation of Norrland's - and Sápmi's - natural resources between 1910-1968. In her thesis, Össbo argues that the State's actions in the early 20th century rendered the Sami, reindeer herding and Sami rights invisible. This was deepened by industrial modernisation, the interpretative authority of the majority society and the attitudes towards the Sami population and reindeer herding.¹⁰ In her thesis, *"I gränslandet mellan svenskt och samiskt"*, Sara Yamamoto Hagström writes about the construction of the Swedish national discourse in the early 20th century. Yamamoto Hagström goes through how other ethnicities and population groups have been influenced by the Swedish national identity.¹¹ The report and analysis use the anthology *"Population and settlement in the North - ethnicity, identity and borders in the light of history"* (*"Befolkning och bosättning i Norr - etnicitet, identitet och gränser i historiens sken"*). Researchers who problematise historical notions and norms that have existed about primarily reindeer-herding Sami. For example, that reindeer-herding Sami lack the qualities to engage in agriculture. This view may be one of the reasons why the Sami lost part of their land.¹² The book *"Tusen år i Lappmarken"* written by Tomas Cramér & Lilian Ryd is used as a historical reference in the State takeover of the land in Norrbotten and Sápmi. The book deals with the rights of the Sami from a historical perspective. Cramér & Ryd write about how official documents, laws and regulations have been disregarded in order to extract forest, land and water in Sápmi.¹³

In the source-critical discussion, the author problematises his own working role, the selection of informants and materials, the short time frame of the project and the special focus of the ethnologist. Part of the work role involved highlighting and including the Sami perspective. This in itself was a complex issue, as the Sami have been portrayed as a homogeneous group for a long time. Therefore, the author has tried to avoid this portrayal by giving the informants individual chapters, where their own story is allowed to be the point of focus.

The 'Lule River' chapter presents the historical context of the State's takeover of the rights to the land and the river.¹⁴ Främst med ett fokus på hur samers rättigheter och institutioner trängdes undan i samband med industrialismens och kolonialismens framväxt.¹⁵ Vattenfall AB presents itself in the chapter through various literature sources, produced by the company itself, and from the historical section on their website. Vattenfall AB recounts its involvement in the development of hydropower.

8 Berry Gustav, Socknen - den plats vi är: En studie om platsuppfattning i Ydre kommun [Electronic resource], Institutionen för tema, Tema vatten i natur och samhälle, Geography department, Linköping, 2010

9 Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, 2017

10 Össbo, 2014

11 Hagström Yamamoto, 2010

12 Lantto, Patrik & Sköld, Peter, *Befolkning och bosättningar i Norr-Etnicitet, identitet och gränser i historiens sken*, Centre for Sami research, Umeå, 2004

13 Cramér, Tomas & Ryd, Lilian, *Tusen år i Lappmarken juridik, skatter, handel och storpolitik*, MTM, Johanneshov, 2016

14 Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, 2017

15 Cramér & Ryd, 2016

Mainly based on the history of the Porjus hydropower plant, which was started in 1910.¹⁶ Other perspectives of Vattenfall's actions in the early 20th century are then woven in from Össbo, the digital question list and the meeting evenings.

In the chapter "Håkan: Stenudden & Storsvensken" the informant Håkan tells about how the regulation of the water level in Lule River has had negative effects for him and other people who use the river. One example is that it has become increasingly difficult to get to the place where Håkan grew up, due to the low water level that makes it difficult to navigate there.¹⁷ In the chapter "Ingrid: Vuoksa & The language", the informant Ingrid explains about the family who returned to the mountains every summer because of the fishing, reindeer herding and grazing for the goats. During her interview, Ingrid describes the loss of the family's permanent goat hut, due to the dams along the Lule River. She tells how the family had to move their home and settlement as the water level rose due to the regulation.¹⁸ In the chapter "Per-Stefan: Vaisaluokta & Språket" the informant Per-Stefan talks about how he feels that the Swedish language has been used against people who have Sami as their mother tongue during the development of hydropower along the Lule River. He explains about the loss of his family's original settlement as a result of the regulation of the water level in Lule River.¹⁹ The chapter "Sonja: Messaure & Rootlessness" Sonja describes the Messaure community. What it was like to live in a temporary construction community built by Vattenfall AB. She also expresses her feelings and memories about moving away from Messaure.²⁰

The final chapter recounts the Messaure day, focusing mainly on the participants' descriptions and memories of the Messaure site. Memories and descriptions that can be linked to the concept of place. An activity observation was also carried out during the Messaure day, which is reported in the same chapter.²¹

The author's concluding remarks present the problem in a comprehensive analysis, because it is such a complex and broad subject. It is also difficult because of the informants' different experiences and memories of the hydropower development along the Lule River. It is therefore not possible to give an answer to the question "who owns the land?" because this is a complex question that can be analysed from many different perspectives that include different perceptions of ownership of land and water. Vattenfall AB still owns the fall rights in the Lule River, which means that the company continues to extract hydropower along the Lule River. An electricity supply on which Sweden is partly dependent. Hydropower accounts for about 40% of Sweden's total electricity production²². There are around 2000 hydropower plants in Sweden, 80% of which are located in Norrland.²³

Keywords

Hydropower, colonialism, post-colonialism, ethnicity, place identity, place concept, memory

16 Forsgren, Nils, Den effektfulla älven-Stänk från Luleälvens kraftfulla historia, Vattenfall Norrbotten & Porjus arkivkommitté, 1989

17 Interview, Håkan, 27/03/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

18 Interview, Ingrid, 29/05/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

19 Interview, Per-Stefan, 11/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

20 Interview, Sonja, 10/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

21 Summary Messaure day, 18/07/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

22 <https://www.energiforetagen.se/energifakta/elsystemet/produktion/>

23 <https://www.energiforetagen.se/energifakta/elsystemet/produktion/vattenkraft/>



Introduction

Background

During the autumn of 2017, Norra Österbottens förbund (the Northern Österbotten Association) contacted Norrbotten Museum. They proposed a collaboration with the aim of highlighting the cultural values of hydropower in the Lule and Ule river valleys. After a year of preparatory work, the partners were able to submit an application for funding to InterReg Nord. The Veku Vaku project was started on 1 January 2019. The position of ethnologist was added in the second year of the project, 2020. The work role has involved highlighting complex, social and cultural issues within the development of hydropower along the Lule River. The documentation would particularly include the Sami perspectives. Early in the work process there was a link between colonialism and the State takeover of land and river in the early 1900s in Sápmi and Norrbotten. Exploitation of natural resources that today is problematised and criticised by researchers and various institutions in Sweden. An example of criticism can be found in the quote below from the Sami Parliament.²⁴

*"Sápmi is farmed and used up, after centuries of predation. Sweden has understood how to exploit Sápmi's mineral wealth, hydropower, forests and other natural resources. Sápmi is full of open wounds in nature, as a lasting sore from Swedish wealth building and industrial society's needs and desires."*²⁵

The Swedish state, through its wholly owned company Vattenfall AB and its predecessor Statens vattenfallsverk, was the driving force behind the development of hydropower along the Lule River. It has therefore been important to examine how the plant and later the company have chosen to present their role and identity. The perspective will also be presented based on the informants' descriptions of Vattenfall AB. In the course of the documentation it has become apparent that hydropower development has left deep wounds that are passed on from generation to generation. Wounds that become part of people's identity creation along the Lule River.²⁶

24 Hagström Yamamoto, Sara, I gränslandet mellan svenskt och samiskt- Identitetsdiskurser och förhistorien i Norrland från 1870-tal till 2000-tal, Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala, 2010, s.111

25 Hagström Yamamoto, 2010, p.111

26 Össbo, Åsa, Nya vatten, dunkla speglingar- Industriell kolonialism genom svensk vattenkraftutbyggnad i renkötselområdet 1910-1968, Department of Historical, Philosophical and Religious studies, Umeå University, 2014

Purpose

The purpose of the documentation is to highlight complex, social and cultural issues linked to the development of hydropower along the Lule River. In addition to this, documenting and highlighting the Sami perspectives was also included. Some of the issues that have been the point of focus during the work process are:

- How does the informant represent their identity based on the place?
- What do the land and the river mean to the people living along the Lule River?
- Who has rights to use and own land on the river?
- Who has rights to use and own the water in the river?
- How has Vattenfall AB constructed its own historical context and identity?
- How does the informant present Vattenfall AB?



Theory & analytical concepts

Colonialism & Post-colonialism

Based on the material, different perspectives and concepts have emerged. One of the perspectives is colonialism. According to previous research, Sweden has not been regarded as a colonial power, but the treatment of the Sami population is a clear example of Sweden's colonial actions. Colonialism is seen as the takeover and direct control of geographical areas and their inhabitants by a central power where this was not previously the case. Therefore, the exploitation and takeover of natural resources in Sápmi and Norrbotten becomes a way of carrying out colonial acts.²⁷ As a result of these actions, many Sami have been forced to move from their original settlements. Based on the continued regulation of the water level in the Lule River, a clear post-colonial perspective is also evident in the material. Since the regulation of water levels has been ongoing for almost all of the 20th century, the take over of land and water has been a continuous process and conflict during this century. Post-colonial theories have an ambition to explain the effects of colonialism. Countries or areas that have been affected by colonial policies are still marked by the actions of the colonial period. The era of European colonialism, in the form in which it most strongly came to characterise the world in the 19th century and which many people think of when they talk about colonialism, is over. By contrast, states still pursue colonial policies today; China in Tibet and through the oppression of the Uighurs, Morocco's occupation of Western Sahara or for that matter in many of the West's unequal economic relations with developing countries. It can also be argued that colonial acts are still carried out in Sweden to some extent today. Because the colonial power, in this case the Swedish state and Vattenfall AB, has continued to maintain inequality in the country in order to achieve economic, political and cultural power. Cultural power means creating a hierarchy within people's cultural contexts and expressions, which can be anything from language, art, crafts and traditions.²⁸ The post-colonial perspective could be applied to the continued exploitation of natural resources in Sweden, as there is continued extraction of energy resources in Sápmi and Norrbotten. The takeover of geographical areas for energy resources continues, wind power is a contemporary example of energy extraction that has increased significantly in reindeer herding areas. This is despite the fact that there is limited knowledge about the effects and impacts on animals, nature and people.²⁹ Even hydropower in the Lule River continues to affect people's way of life and everyday life. The development of hydropower and the justification for it are now often supported by environmental arguments. Vattenfall AB states on its website that its goal is to make it possible to live fossil-free within a generation.³⁰ The quote below shows how Vattenfall AB describes hydropower from an environmental perspective.

"It is thanks to hydropower that Sweden has a good supply of renewable electricity and can invest in other renewable energy sources. Hydropower is the largest renewable energy source in the EU and enables other fossil-free energy production."³¹

27 Payne Gunnarsson Jenny & Öhlander Magnus (eds), Tillämpad kulturteori, Studentlitteratur AB, Lund, 2017

28 Payne Gunnarsson Jenny & Öhlander Magnus (eds), Tillämpad kulturteori, Studentlitteratur AB, Lund, 2017

29 Skarin, Anna, Sandström, Per, Alam, Moudud, Buhot, Yann & Nellemann, Christian, Renar och vindkraft II [Electronic resource] Vindkraft i drift och effekter på renar och renskötsel, Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet, Institutionen för husdjurens utfodring och vård, Uppsala, 2016

30 <https://group.vattenfall.com/se/nyheter-och-press/nyheter-pressmeddelanden/nyheter/2020/var-resa-mot-ett-fossilfritt-liv>

31 <https://www.vattenfall.se/fokus/hallbarhet/vattenkraft-ett-gront-batteri/>

Sápmi and Norrbotten once again become an important resource from an environmental perspective, not only for Sweden to use, but also globally. It allows sparsely populated power municipalities to produce electricity for cities and metropolitan areas. The taxation of production output is no longer at a local level but at state level, which means that the taxation is not returned to the municipalities. Industrial colonialism is used to highlight hydropower development in the 20th century. The concept is used to show the losses and displacement that have resulted from colonialism, which has occurred continuously and still occurs to some extent. Industrial colonialism is also based on a centre-periphery-perspective, meaning that the periphery provides the centre with resources. Parameters such as population density and proximity to central power have therefore played a major role during the extraction of natural resources in Sweden. Areas that have been considered deserted and had a low population density, such as Sápmi and Norrbotten, have therefore been more exposed to industrial colonialism than other places in Sweden.³²

Ethnicity

The concept of ethnicity is used to analyse if, when and how ethnicity becomes socially relevant for people. Ethnic identity can be constructed through affirmation in the community or as a contrast to other groups. It therefore becomes both a boundary setting and an identification in the ethnic group with which one identifies oneself. There is usually a common origin, history and a place or area that the group identifies with together. Other markers within the ethnic group can be language and religion. In the historical context, one can understand that ethnicity, colonialism and nationalism are often interwoven. The concepts have been used to reinforce each other's power and position in certain ethnic groups. Ethnicity has been used to highlight the hierarchical system that emerges in the material.³³ "Swedish" ethnicity is often highlighted as superior to "Sami" ethnicity. "Swedish" and "Sami" ethnicities have long been constructed against each other through dichotomies. In other words, the ethnicities have been seen as opposites, with "Swedish" ethnicity seen as superior to "Sami" ethnicity.³⁴ Below are some examples of dichotomies that have been used to construct 'Swedishness' and 'Saminess'.

'Sami' ethnicity	'Swedish' ethnicity
Mobility	Resident
Reindeer herding	Agriculture
Inability to develop	Development area (civilisation)
Wilderness (nature)	Village (culture)
Subordination	Dominance
Ancient times	Future ³⁵

The 'Sami' identity that emerges in the documentation is the one described by the informants themselves. The way the informants describe their upbringing, family, place affiliation and themselves bring out their identity. Thus, it is their own identity that becomes important and this emerges in the informants' chapters.³⁶ There is still a strong notion among the majority population that the Sami are a homogeneous group identified as reindeer herding nomads. This stereotypical image is linked to Sweden's construction of its own national identity and ethnicity in the second half of the 19th century. This construction led to the inclusion of some groups of Sami and the exclusion of others. Based on the 'Swedish' way of thinking, a healthy 'Sami' nomadic population was to be preserved during the 19th century. The 'nomadic' way of life was seen as threatened and dying out. Reindeer herding became a synonym for the Sami and Sami culture in the 20th century, based on the 'Swedish' national identity.

32 Össbo, 2014

33 Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, 2017

34 Hagström Yamamoto, 2010

35 Hagström Yamamoto, 2010, p.101

36 Interviews with Håkan, Ingrid & Per-Stefan, 27/03/2020, 29/05/2020, 11/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

From this point of view, restrictions and rules were introduced. For example, many mountain Sami were prevented from building permanent dwellings for a period. Children were educated in nomadic schools, which were often draughty and cold schoolhouses so that children would not become accustomed to comforts.³⁷

Place & identity

From the colonial context, Sápmi becomes not only a geographical place but also a symbol of the oppression and coercion to which the Swedish state has subjected the Sami population, through the ways it chose to exploit the natural resources of Sápmi.³⁸ Places are constructed through human activity and become part of the historical context. That context then becomes part of our present, because we continue to recreate the historical context at the place. People do this by, for example, creating memorial monuments, telling stories about the place or organising specific days to commemorate it. In the material, informants express a strong historical connection to a place, which they often refer to as their place of origin. The informants themselves therefore bring historical meaning to the place and place it in its own context. A context that for them includes their ancestors, roots, history and future. Which in turn becomes part of their own identity linked to the place. The concept of place is also embedded in the static and changing, in an age where places are constantly changing, re-evaluated and given meaning. So what happens to the place? As places change, expand and develop today, people seek out places that are not part of modern times. This is similar to the way that former Messaureans seek a place reclaimed by nature and outside of contemporary society.³⁹

Memory

The term memory is still a rather undefined concept. The common language plays a major role in transforming the experience into a memory. The memory trace is created through a learned script, which may be personal, from the culture or subculture to which the person remembering belongs. In order to be understood by others, we are culturally programmed with how we retell stories and memories. Humans therefore become dependent on the social context in order to form memories.⁴⁰

"An individual remembers, but the collective defines what is significant to remember and how this should be remembered".⁴¹

Collective memory was coined as a concept by Halbwachs during the interwar period but had a renewed impact in the 1980s. Memories become collective by being described, communicated and shared in social contexts as we shape them. Memories can also be shaped collectively based on current knowledge and for use in contemporary identification processes. Based on the source material, memory becomes particularly interesting based on the material about Messaure. The former inhabitants of Messaure use similar memories, words and descriptions of the place. In contemporary times, memory and our own identity are also affected by globalisation. It is therefore becoming increasingly important for people to remember the past through discussions about preservation, anniversaries, commemorative trips and retro gadgets. Memories are therefore becoming an important element in our identity creation. Through memory we can bring continuity to our rootless existence.⁴²

37 Lantto & Sköld, 2004, p.280

38 Coppélie Cocq, Kulturella perspektiv [Elektronisk resurs], Föreningen Kulturella Perspektiv, Umeå, 2014-

39 Berry Gustav, Socknen - den plats vi är: En studie om platsuppfattning i Ydre kommun [Electronic resource], Institutionen för tema, Tema vatten i natur och samhälle, Geography department, Linköping, 2010

40 Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, 2017

41 Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, 2017

42 Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, 2017



Previous research

Åsa Össbo is a researcher at the Várdduo Centre for Sami Research. In her thesis *"Nya vatten, dunkla, speglingar"* ("New waters, murky, reflections") she problematises the exploitation of the natural resources of Norrland and Sápmi from 1910 to 1968. Össbo notes that the consequences of the State's actions in the early 20th century rendered the Sami invisible as a group, whether they were reindeer herders, hunting and fishing Sami or resident settlers. It made reindeer herding invisible as a special industry as well as their rights. The consequences of this were exacerbated by industrial modernisation, as well as the majority society's interpretative authority and attitudes towards the Sami population and reindeer herding. Össbo argues that these historical events and attitudes live on in the present day.⁴³

Sara Hagström Yamamoto writes in her doctoral thesis, *"I gränslandet mellan svenskt och samiskt"*, ('In the borderland between Swedish and Sami'), about the creation of Sweden's national identity in the early 20th century. In this national discourse, the reindeer herding Sami were placed in a subordinate position. She goes through Sami, Kven and Norrbotten historiography and identity discourse to relate to the 'Swedish' national discourse and the social consequences this discourse has brought about. Norrland in the early 20th century was seen as a blank sheet, a wasteland with endless natural resources waiting to be discovered and exploited by the majority society. These perceptions of northern Sweden made it easier for the State to exploit the natural resources of the region. She uses discourse analysis to depict how a particular communication can reflect a specific world-view. Reflecting a specific world-view can give importance to certain groups of people while excluding others. The language within the discourse can reproduce and reshape world-views. Language is a system of signs in which words acquire meaning by being related to other words.⁴⁴

In the anthology *"Befolkning och bosättning i Norr- etnicitet, identitet och gränser i historiens sken"* ('Population and settlement in the north - ethnicity, identity and borders in the light of history'), two researchers problematise and discuss this topic. Patrik Lantto, professor at the Várdduo-Centre for Sami Research, and Rolf Sjölin, educated at the University of Gothenburg and who has researched minorities. In his text, Lantto writes about the notion of reindeer herding and its importance within the Sami movement in the first half of the 20th century in Sweden. Norms and prejudices that existed about the Sami were used in politics to preserve the culture that was considered to be Sami. He also reports on the resistance and defence that the Sami carried out regarding their right to possession of land above the cultivation boundary. The resistance involved the historical connection of the Sami to the land and that they should be recognised as owners of these lands. Sjölin writes about how the majority society has treated ethnic minorities in the historical perspective. In the 19th and 20th centuries, there were various prejudices and notions primarily about reindeer-herding Sami. For example, that they lacked the qualities to engage in agriculture. He also writes that the population increase during the 19th century and the subsequent expansion of agriculture, forestry, hydropower, mineral mining and tourism have meant that the Sami have gradually lost parts of their land.⁴⁵

43 Össbo, 2014

44 Hagström Yamamoto, 2010

45 Lantto, Patrik & Sköld, Peter, *Befolkning och bosättningar i Norr-Etnicitet, identitet och gränser i historiens sken*, Centre for Sami research, Umeå, 2004, p.280

In the book "*Tusen år i Lappmarken*" ('A thousand years in Lapland'), Tomas Cramér and Lillian Ryd write about the rights of the Sami from an historical perspective. They go through how official documents, laws and regulations have been disregarded in order to extract forest, land and water in Norrbotten and Sápmi. Cramér and Ryd write about how racial biological thoughts and exploitation dreams made the State choose to deny the Sami the right to own the land.⁴⁶



Material & method

Interviews have long been an important source material in ethnological fieldwork. This is because it is a field of knowledge that studies cultural phenomena in people and the interaction between people. Activity observation is based on a specific activity. In order to observe the interaction between people and their descriptions of hydropower in the Lule River Valley. Activity observation focuses on investigating different types of events and happenings. For the ethnologist, it is usually the interview and observation material that constitutes the bulk of the analysis material. The written sources also provide a basis for interpretation and analysis. In addition to observation and interviews, the material consists of written sources; these studies are often initiated on the basis of the ethnologist's knowledge goals or research questions and the sources that are considered relevant to the chosen topic.⁴⁷

The documentation material consists largely of four informants. The remaining material comes from three activity observations, two during the meeting evenings conducted in the spring of 2020 and one during an event in the summer of 2020. The author has also created a digital questionnaire to complement the meeting evenings that were cancelled due to Covid-19. The author has drawn on a range of literature sources and archival material. The collated material will be preserved in the archives of the Norrbotten Museum.

Informants

Håkan's relationship with the woman who appeared in several photographs in a lake regulation report, based on surveys carried out at Satisjaure in 1958, made it interesting to interview him by telephone. During the telephone interview it turned out that the woman in the photographs was Håkan's grandmother. Håkan was born in 1961 and has spent many summers at Stora Lulevatten. During the telephone interview, he talked about how the regulation of the Lule River has had a negative impact on him and other people who use the river. For example, it has become increasingly difficult to get to the place where he grew up, due to the low water level that makes it difficult to navigate there. Initially there was no knowledge of Håkan identifying as a Sami, but the interest was that there was an entry point into the historical context of the impact of hydropower on people at Satisjaure.⁴⁸ The lake regulation report from Satisjaure will be presented later in the material chapter.

For more context about the lake regulation report, Håkan referred the author to his mother Ingrid. The interview was conducted at Ingrid's home in Gällivare. She was born in 1938 in Nábrreluokta and every summer her family has returned to the mountains for fishing, reindeer herding and goat grazing. During the interview, she described the loss of the family's permanent goat hut as being due to damming. Also how the family had to move their settlement as the water level rose due to the regulation.⁴⁹

47 Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, 2017

48 Interview, Håkan, 27/03/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

49 Interview, Ingrid, 29/05/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

Per-Stefan would have participated at one of the project's meeting evenings in Jokkmokk. When it was cancelled when the Corona virus hit the county, contact was made with the participants via e-mail and they were asked if they could briefly describe why they had wanted to attend the meeting evening. Per-Stefan's response meant that it was felt that his background would be interesting to delve into during an interview. It was also clear from his e-mail that he was a member of the Sirges Sami village, which reinforced the assessment that the interview was relevant and important for the project, as the ethnological mission of the project was to highlight and raise the Sami perspectives. Per-Stefan was born in Gällivare in 1949 but grew up in Porjus. He trained as a teacher and has worked as a Sami language interpreter. Per-Stefan is the youngest of three siblings, the eldest sister Stina was born in 1947 and the middle brother Nils-Gustav was born in 1948. His father died in 1990 and his mother during childbirth when Per-Stefan was born. Per-Stefan grew up in a reindeer herder's home and when his father died, reindeer herding became his responsibility. Now he also has two children in different Sami villages, Sirges and Talma. During the interview, Per-Stefan mentioned how the Swedish language was used against people who spoke Sami during the development of the hydropower. He also talked about the loss of the family's original settlement due to the regulation of the water level in the Lule River.⁵⁰

Sonja participated in the first meeting evening in Boden. She had an interesting background for further interview, as she grew up in two construction communities, Messaure and Laxede. Communities that were built by Vattenfall AB. Sonja was born in Malå in 1958 and before she was seventeen the family had moved eight times due to her father's work. Sonja said during the interview that the family had no choice but to move to places where there was work. During the telephone interview, Sonja described Messaure; what it was like to live in a temporary construction community. She also expressed her feelings and memories about moving away from Messaure.⁵¹

Activity observation

The project had two meeting evenings; in Boden and in Vuollerim. Due to the spread of the pandemic, two meeting evenings were cancelled. These were planned to take place in Jokkmokk and Gällivare. The purpose of the meeting evenings was for the public to share their memories and opinions on the development of hydropower along the Lule River. The meeting in Boden was attended by eight people, seven men and one woman. The participants were of approximately the same age, over 64. During the evening there was a discussion about what responsibility Vattenfall AB has towards the population that has been and will be affected by the regulation. Then it was mentioned how grateful 'we', the Swedish people, should be to the workers who built the hydropower development, mainly to the male Vattenfall workers. Nothing was mentioned about all the women who worked on the dam constructions. At the Vuollerim meeting there were ten people, half men and half women. The majority of the participants were between 65 and 90 years old. Four of the participants had worked for Vattenfall AB. There was much discussion during the evening about the jobs created in the village by Vattenfall AB. The group felt that there was a positive and negative side to the increase in jobs in the area. The negative side of the influx of Vattenfall workers was seen by the participants as a form of competition for the residents of Vuollerim. During all the meeting evenings Vattenfall AB was highlighted as the 'villain', even though the participants thought that the development of hydropower created many jobs, there have been negative effects for individuals living by the Lule River.⁵²

50 Interview, Per-Stefan, 11/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

51 Interview, Sonja, 10/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

52 Meeting evenings Boden & Vuollerim

Digital questionnaire

The digital questionnaire was created to complement the two evenings of meetings that were not held. Six people responded to the questionnaire, four men and two women. Four of the people were over 50 years old, one was 29 years old and one had not stated their date of birth. As in the meetings, all those who participated in the questionnaire wrote about Vattenfall AB and the responsibility of the State, towards the municipalities and people who have been and will be affected by the effects of hydropower. Then all the people who completed the questionnaire expressed that the river has been destroyed because of hydropower. An example of such a description can be found in the quote below.

"To me, the Lule River is unfortunately a dead sterile creature. I am saddened when I see how man has violated the river. Concrete blocks for power plants with sterile stone deserts below where the river used to live".⁵³

Archive material

The archival material is taken from Arkivcentrum (Archive Centre) in Norrbotten. The material consists of a lake regulation survey carried out in Satisjaure in 1958. Since it is linked to two of the informants, it has been most relevant. The survey focussed on archaeological inventory and ethnological documentation, the latter carried out by the photographer Björn Allard. The ethnological perspective was therefore portrayed through photographs in the survey. There are many questions about the survey due to the lack of detail in the description of the place. There are many investigated sites but all are described as abandoned. There is no justification as to why the sites are considered abandoned.⁵⁴ The lake regulation surveys were established in 1942 after widespread criticism that the hydropower interests did not take natural and cultural protection interests into account. Therefore focus was placed on a cultural and historical survey of the sites. There were plans for the surveys to be more extensive, including documentation of traditions and phenomena along the river, such as fishing, reindeer herding and the migration routes of the Sami. But many of the ethnological studies were never included in the final report. Vattenfall AB felt that the proposed surveys and documentation prepared for the water regulation studies were far too extensive and this may be one of the reasons why the ethnological documentation was not included in the final reports.⁵⁵

53 Digital questionnaire, quote question 3, ref. no. 00022-2019

54 Archive material, Stora Lule Älv, Satisjaure, Lapland, 1958

55 Björnstad, Margareta, Kulturminnesvård och vattenkraft 1942-1980, Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets akademien, Stockholm, 2006



Source-critical discussion & reflexivity

A work sample was designed prior to the project, which involved creating a checklist for future interviews. The checklist highlighted the importance of using broad interview questions to involve different perspectives, concrete experiences should be mixed with the feelings of the informant associated with the change of Lule River. The informant should be able to control the interview to some extent as the aim is to capture the individual's experiences and memories. It was also important to think about how we present ourselves, how we from Norrbotten Museum are dressed and what kind of emotions this might give the informant. What equipment might make the informant uncomfortable during the interview. For example, people may become uncomfortable seeing recording equipment, interview questions and notepads. It may then be beneficial to 'hide' the equipment and learn interview questions by heart. However, the informant should be aware that they are being recorded.⁵⁶ As the pandemic hit in March 2020, most of the interviews were conducted over the phone. The only on-site interview was with Ingrid, where the recording equipment was left on the table. This was because the ethnologist had no knowledge of how much sound the Dictaphone would pick up outdoors. Therefore, it was decided to place the Dictaphone as close to the informant as possible, without disturbing her.

Groups of individuals who have previously been exposed to a great deal of media attention or in other research contexts may have some effect on the individual. As a result, individuals who identify with that group are attributed a variety of collective characteristics.⁵⁷ Highlighting and encompass the Sami perspective therefore became a complex issue in itself. As the Sami have historically been portrayed as a homogeneous group, notions that persist even in the present day, the report will attempt to avoid this. Therefore, each informant has been given their own chapter in which their story will be the point of focus. There will be maps after each informant's chapter showing the places mentioned in the interviews. The maps represent the county of Norrbotten and are created by the author. In the report and on the maps, the informants' place names will be used. For example, if the informant uses the Sami name of the place, that will be used.

Sápmi is used repeatedly throughout the report, this is actually a geographical area of land that spans Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia. But Sápmi as a term also covers both the land and the Sami people. In the report, Sápmi is used to describe the Swedish land areas over which the Sami have previously had ownership rights.⁵⁸

The project period for collating material, reading literature and finalising a report was short, therefore a selection of four informants was made, who became part of the source material. As transcription is a time-consuming task, the informants were interviewed once. More time and the opportunity to interview the individuals several times would have been desirable in order to have captured the depth of the informants' experiences. The short duration of the project is partly due to the architectural heritage focus within Veku Vaku. Therefore, this report will also be part of the historical and architectural heritage report. The second challenge due to the time aspect was to find diversity within the sample of informants. The diversity that now exists among the informants is based on gender identity, there are two men and two women. There is some diversity of ethnicity because three identify within a minority group and the fourth identifies with the Messaure Vattenfall community. However, there is a lack of selection in the age category, as all four informants are over 50 years old.

56 Fredriksen, Christine, Stenström, Åsa & Hallberg, Piamaria (eds), *Känsliga och svåra teman vid samtidsdokumentationer: erfarenheter, etik och metod*, DOSS – Dokumentation av Samtida Sverige; Västarvet, Västra Götalandsregionen, Vänersborg, 2017

57 Kaijser, Lars & Öhlander, Magnus (red.), *Etnologiskt fältarbete*, 2., [omarb. och utök.] uppl., Studentlitteratur, Lund, 2011

58 <http://www.samer.se/1002>



Historical context

It is important to explain the historical context in order to understand the present. Also to understand how Vattenfall AB and the State were able to take over the rights to the land and the river.⁵⁹ The reindeer-herding Sami were severely affected by the water regulation along the Lule River. As early as the 18th century, the Sami were in a weaker economic position for a number of reasons such as diseases in the reindeer herds, harsh winters and increased settlement. Their weaker position and the increasing value of the natural resources within Sápmi made it easier for the Swedish state to nationalise the land. There was also an ideological view within the State administration that what was considered wasteland belonged to the State and that certain industries should be prioritised on these lands.⁶⁰ According to the Sami Parliament, colonisation in the 19th century was partly due to a boom in births and a lack of cultivated land. People in Sweden sought new lands and new livelihoods. During the 19th century and onwards, the District Court and the County Administrative Board usually ruled in favour of the settlers. Because settlers were settled and farming, that was considered more valuable to the State. Skilled workers were encouraged to settle in Norrland's interior by the Swedish state because there was an increased need for workers in forestry, mining and as "navvies".⁶¹

Swedish tax land was a geographical area that paid dues to a king, without being directly part of the kingdom. Over time, surrounding countries began to make increasingly strong claims on the trade in Finnish goods and taxation of the Sami. The State then illegally took 'Sami' tax lands, they also took over the lands and waters of resident mountain Sami. Many of the Sami rights and institutions were displaced by the rise of industrialism and colonialism. From 1749, the State began to reward the settlers, with the intention that they would stay on their farms and become farmers. They were also allowed to use the water and fish within a one-mile radius of their cabins. With this, the influence of the Sami over settlements in the tax country disappeared. Then, during industrialisation, the State began to disregard Sami rights and abrogate them in practice, although this was never upheld in court.⁶²

In the first Reindeer Grazing Act of 1886, the State regulated reindeer herding, its practitioners and controlled the Sami population engaged in reindeer herding.⁶³ Det innebar att samebyar omvandlades till statligt kontrollerade samfälligheter, fast den egentligen inte innehöll lagtext att samisk mark skulle förvandlas till statlig.⁶⁴ The Reindeer Grazing Act was based on the assumption that the land above the cultivation boundary was state-owned and that Sami reindeer herders could use the land, not own it. The law regulated the rights and obligations of the reindeer herders; for example, the reindeer herding Sami were allowed to use the forest but not to build a dwelling, guest house or fence without the permission of the forest manager. Another right was that they could fish and hunt in the areas where the reindeer lived.⁶⁵

Reindeer herders were obliged to take the least damaging route across private land, pay compensation for trespassing on other people's land and were only allowed to stay with the reindeer in the winter grazing areas for the statutory period.

59 Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, 2017

60 Össbo, 2014

61 <https://www.sametinget.se/62102>

62 Cramér & Ryd, 2016

63 Össbo, 2014

64 Cramér & Ryd, 2016

65 Össbo, 2014

The Sami were not allowed to lease their original land themselves, as they were not considered capable of doing so. Since the general view in the 20th century was that 'nomads' could not acquire property rights, the State was able to take over the land and natural resources that existed in Norrbotten and Sápmi. Through colonial actions, the Sami and their rights to the land were rendered invisible.⁶⁶

The 1928 Reindeer Grazing Act strengthened and completed the colonisation of Sami lands in Sweden. The Riksdag (Parliament) and the State bureaucracy chose to ignore virtually all documentation concerning the property rights of the Sami. The State transformed the rights into a privilege, which is much weaker than civil and private law. It can be taken away through political decisions instead of going through a court. Based on this law, more stringent and special conditions were created for reindeer herding. Many of the activities and livelihoods of the Sami began to be regulated in detail, such as specifying how many goats each reindeer herding family could take to the mountains in the summer. From 1928 onwards, one basically needed to be born and raised in an active reindeer-herding family in order to obtain reindeer-herding rights and membership to a Sami village. Only members of the Sami village were granted the right to reindeer grazing, hunting, fishing, firewood, timber, huts and cabins from 1928 onwards. In this era of nationalism, racial biology and exploitation dreams, Sami land could suddenly be called Crown land and their rights to the land had disappeared. Calling land 'Crown land' does not make it state land. The term was not included in the tax categories, and therefore not in the taxes and interest recorded in the land register. With the demarcation of northern Sweden, 'Crown land' was applied as a new label for huge geographical areas claimed by the State. In simple terms, demarcation meant the drawing of boundaries between state and private land, a process that lasted from the late 17th century until the 20th century. With the success of industrialism, the State realised that the value of rivers and forests increased enormously, so demarcation also began to be implemented in northern Sweden. The customary rights of the Sami people and their permanent ownership of non-arable land stood in the way of the industrial exploitation of natural resources. In a similar way, settlers' rights to land, forests and water were also seized.⁶⁷

66 Össbo, 2014

67 Cramér & Ryd, 2016



Vattenfall AB

According to Vattenfall's historical section on its website, the State-owned company took over the rights to the water in the major rivers in the early 1900s. There were a number of disputes between the State and private interests over the rights to the river. To secure its strong position as a power producer, Vattenfall AB bought the fall rights, which gave the company the rights to use the water in the Lule River for hydropower production.⁶⁸

In Vattenfall's own study on "hydroelectric power construction from the 1940s to the 1970s", Väinö Wanhainen writes about how the first step to becoming Vattenfall AB was in 1908 when the government formed the Kungliga Vattenfallsstyrelsen (Royal Waterfall Board). The first step towards the industrialisation of the Lule River was taken by Vattenfall AB at Porjus in 1910.⁶⁹ The power plant in Porjus was supposed to have been built in the Torne River, but Vattenfall AB's own reasoning was that it was considered better to invest in the Lule River with its enormous power resources. However, there were some difficulties to overcome in Porjus. The largest dam in the Nordic countries was to be built and one of the world's first large hydropower stations was to be built underground. It was also difficult to transport materials to Porjus, as the nearest town was fifty km away. Then there was the third obstacle of building a community in the middle of nowhere. The value of the energy resource from the river meant that the construction went ahead anyway. A quote by Forsgren captures the view that prevailed in the early 20th century and the exploitation of natural resources in the north,

"In Porjus, the waterfalls would now be tamed and put to the service of man, spreading enlightenment and powering machines that made life easier."⁷⁰

What the State and Vattenfall failed to mention was that the Unna tjerusj (formerly Sörkaitum) and Sirges (formerly Sirkas) migration routes went through Porjus, which was also grazing land for the Sami villages. A migration route is used to transport the reindeer herd at certain times of the year, especially for calf marking, autumn slaughter and moving to winter grazing areas. According to the Sami Government's website, it is almost impossible to change a migration route because reindeer are easily-frightened creatures of habit. Migration routes can consist of terrain formations such as bogs, frozen lakes, valleys or cleared paths through woodland. Routes may be used regularly or infrequently, depending on the conditions of the year, and alternative migration routes may be needed.⁷¹

Vattenfall AB encountered some resistance from local stakeholders, but the company nevertheless proceeded with the expansion. It was considered to be state-owned land and therefore the Sami presence was not taken into account. The reindeer herders were portrayed as rootless, following their reindeer and able to move on from one area to another. The result was that the authorities were able to displace the reindeer-herding Sami in Porjus.⁷²

68 <https://history.vattenfall.com/sv/fran-vattenkraft-till-solceller/nybyggarsamhallen-vaxer-upp>

69 Granström, Willard & Bursell, Barbro (red.), Från bygge till bygge: anläggarnas liv och minnen : en studie över vattenkraft-byggandet från 1940-talet till 1970-talet, Kulturvårdskomm., Vattenfall, Vällingby, 1994

70 Forsgren, Nils, Den effektfulla älven-Stänk från Luleälvens kraftfulla historia, Vattenfall Norrbotten & Porjus arkivkommitté, 1989, p. 50

71 https://www.sametinget.se/rennaring_sverige

72 Össbo, 2014, p.47-49, p.74, p.77-78, p. 99

In a compilation of official statistics and studies from government agencies such as the Swedish Board of Agriculture, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and the Swedish Fish Agency, as well as county councils and municipalities, Vattenfall AB reports on its own impact on the river's environment and industries. The material consists of existing published data, with the exception of the natural environment study, where the primary material has been collated by researchers on behalf of a consultant independent of Vattenfall, writes Ingvar Wivstad, Technical Director at Vattenfall AB. In the study, Vattenfall AB writes that the development of hydropower has had a negative impact on reindeer herding, with the loss of reindeer grazing land, poorer 'ice', impact on facilities, settlements and boating, as well as fishing. They go on to say that there are positive effects on reindeer grazing due to the development of hydropower. Roads are being built to facilitate transport, both of supplies and of people, and that in some cases roads have been paid for by the hydropower industry. Furthermore, the author writes about a number of positive effects of hydropower, such as the construction of fences, slaughter and separation huts, cabins, bridges have been built or paid for in consultation with the Sami village or Sami fund concerned.⁷³

The overriding view of the digital questionnaire is that Vattenfall AB should share its revenues and profits with the municipalities concerned. Many of the participants believe that the company should take responsibility for residents living along the river and for the environment. One of the participants expressed that Vattenfall AB does not care about rural areas. That they should repay the debt that they have subjected people to historically; *"that they should give the river valley its history and soul back."*⁷⁴ Opinions about the trust in the company are divided; some believe that Vattenfall AB takes its responsibility today, but that historically they have not done so. Other participants had no trust in Vattenfall at all and were critical of the company.⁷⁵ During the meetings, Vattenfall AB was highlighted as the villain. The participants felt that the company has not taken responsibility for the consequences of hydropower. Since the majority of participants at the meetings were men, their example was also a point of focus. One example of difficulties in regulating the water level was snowmobile travel during the winter, as the water does not freeze properly. Some of the participants mentioned that it was difficult to moor their boat, as it could move due to the regulation of the water level.⁷⁶ The quote below is from a participant to the digital questionnaire and expressed the actions of Vattenfall AB and the State. As well the effects on people growing up by the Lule River today.

*"The river is a powerful force of nature that has been reined in and controlled by human needs. The river is of great importance to the district, providing much of the electricity we need. Unfortunately, it delivers few of the benefits of hydropower development back locally to those affected and those who live on and by the river."*⁷⁷

The participants of the meeting in Vuollerim expressed that many people in the village were negative about the arrival of the "navvies" (rallare) and "unknown" people. There was a division between the "navvies" and the "villagers". According to the participants, many of the inhabitants of Vuollerim looked down on the young men moving to the area.⁷⁸ At the meeting evening in Boden, the "navvies" were highlighted as heroes. The men at the meeting expressed great gratitude for their contribution to the construction of the dams. It was a kind of glorification of another time and of the people who worked on the power plant construction.⁷⁹ There was no mention of the women who worked at the sites in the form of cooks, nurses etc.⁸⁰ According to Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, this shows that the historical context of memory varies from the different meeting evenings.

73 Wivstad, Ingvar, Vattenkraften och rennäringen, Vattenfall, Vällingby, 1986

74 Digital questionnaire, questionnaire responses 5, ref. no. 00022-2019

75 Digital questionnaire, ref. no. 00022-2019

76 Meeting evening Boden, ref. no. 00022-2019

77 The digital questionnaire, questionnaire responses 6, ref. no. 00022-2019

78 Meeting evening Vuollerim, ref. no. 00022-2019

79 Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, 2017

80 Meeting evening Boden, ref. no. 00022-2019

The historical image constructed of the "nawies" in Vuollerim has been negative, when the participants then talk about it at the meeting evening they confirm each other's and their own historical context. In Boden they gave positive image of the "nawies", a glorification of the people who worked on the development of hydropower.

"An individual remembers, but the collective defines what is significant to remember and how this should be remembered".⁸¹

The informants

Håkan; Stenudden & Storsvensken



Norrbotten Archive Centre, Large Lule River, Satisjaure, Lapland, 1958, photographer Björn Allard

The original settlement where Håkan's family used to set up their hut no longer exists. It is under water due to the water regulation. The family then had to move and ended up on the north side of the lake, again an effect that can be linked to industrial colonialism.⁸² During the interview Håkan described how Vattenfall AB did not take into account either people or nature, but just built dams. He said that when the family went up above the "satis dam" it was extra important to make sure that the ice held. Sometimes the family had to wait a long time before they could get up there, especially in the spring. It was not possible to sail a boat there, so you either had to pull the boat up the hill or wait until the two lakes joined. According to Håkan, the phenomenon has to do with the dam and the water regulation.⁸³

*"Well, they just built dams without any regard for the trees. So to this day, roots are coming loose and floating on the lake. If travelling by boat, you can hit a big floating root, which can end up quite badly."*⁸⁴

82 Össbo, 2014

83 Interview, Håkan, 27/03/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

84 Interview, Håkan, 27/03/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

When Håkan described Vattenfall's tramlings, a new term was introduced, "storsvensken" ("the Great Swede").⁸⁵ According to Håkan, this term is used by the Sami to refer to the majority population, as well as to the actions of Vattenfall AB, for example, during the development of hydropower. A term about the majority population that is repeated in the other interviews and in one literature source. Sjölin uses the term "storsvenskhet" "(Great Swedishness)" within the political context of the early 20th century. A policy that was implemented with a nationalistic ideal and mindset. In the quote below, Sjölin reflects Parliament's view of the Sami in the early 20th century, or nomads as Parliament refers to them as.⁸⁶

"... how any man could come up with such an original idea as to involve nomads in this Parliament...// When dealing with complex economic and special questions, or tangled family law problems, or technical questions, such as whether to use this or that material for submarines, these poor nomads will also take part and make their judgement..."⁸⁷

Össbo writes about how the authorities and the State made the rights and needs of the Sami to the land invisible. The reindeer-herding Sami were portrayed as more mobile than the Swedish majority population and therefore Vattenfall could ignore the reindeer-herding Sami's need for land in Sápmi.⁸⁸ Håkan described the same problem in his interview in the quote below:

"Because I mean if something happens in the future, they have no say in it. That's the case for many people, they were bought out and given money. So when something has happened, they couldn't say anything. Because Vattenfall has already solved that with those families."⁸⁹

Håkan pointed out that Vattenfall AB used the situation of the Sami to buy them out. He further explained that his parents chose not to accept Vattenfall's money, which means that the company will be liable for compensation if there is damage to their house in Stenudden due to the hydropower and the regulation of the river. Håkan was asked during the interview what he would like Vattenfall AB to do and what responsibility they should take? Håkan replied that if it had happened today, given what is known, and how they treat people, he thinks that many would have acted differently. Håkan pointed out that in the early 1900s, many people were satisfied with the amount of money that Vattenfall AB offered. It was a one-off sum, he said, that would last for ever.⁹⁰

85 Interview, Håkan, 27/03/2020, Ingrid, 29/05/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

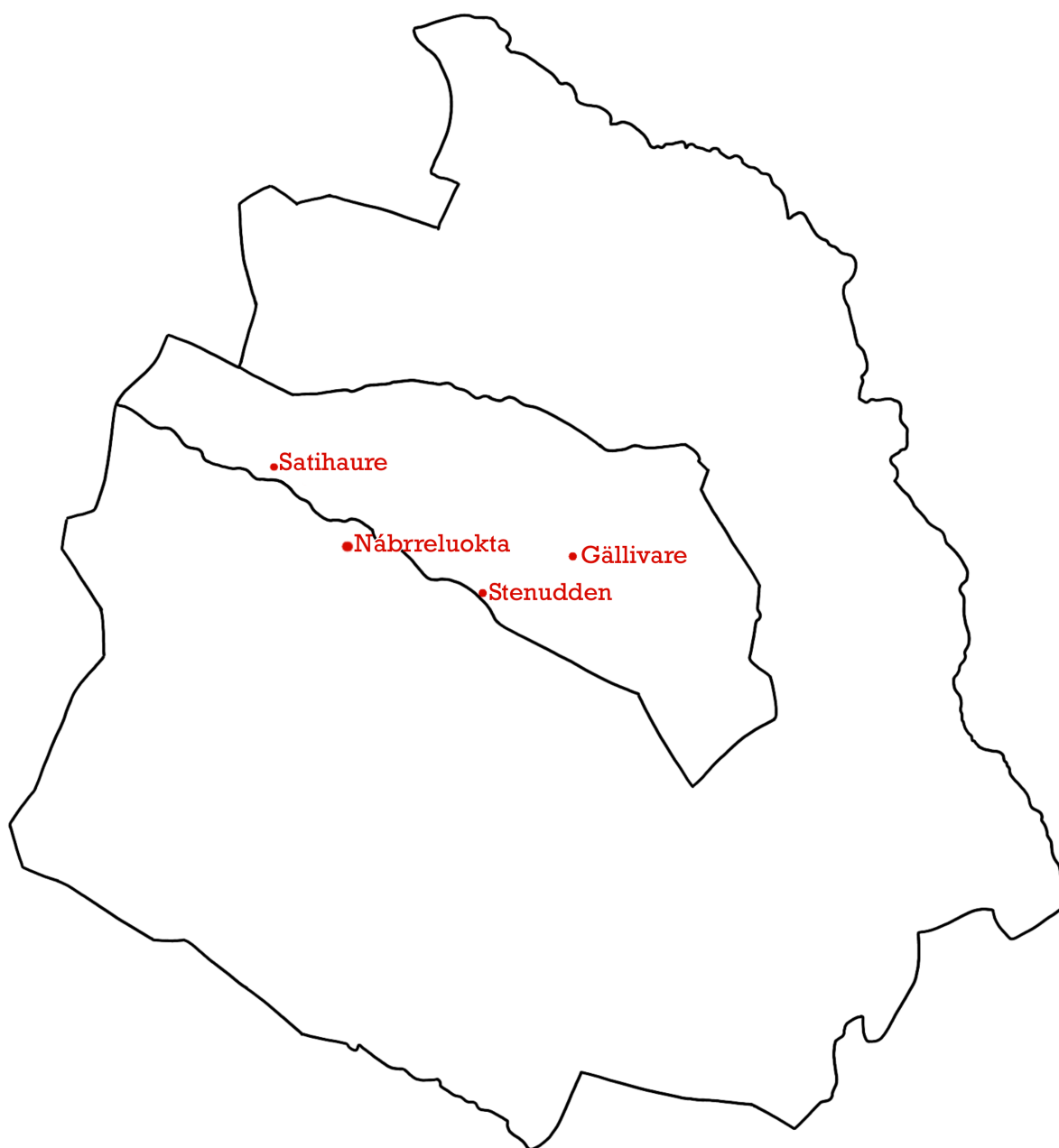
86 Lantto & Sköld, 2004

87 Lantto & Sköld, 2004, p.242

88 Össbo, 2014

89 Interview, Håkan, 27/03/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

90 Interview, Håkan, 27/03/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019



Ingrid: Vuoksa & The Goat hut



Norrbottnen Archive Centre, Large Lule River, Satisjaure, Lapland, 1958, photographer Björn Allard

From above Suorva, Ritsem. We've all lived up there, fished up there. The whole family was involved you know. We didn't have a "childhood", but I'll tell you.⁹²

Ingrid said that during her childhood she went to a nomadic school in Gällivare. She had to board for about six years. The children in the nomadic school had to go home to their families during the Christmas and summer holidays, sometimes also during the Easter holidays, but not always.⁹³

According to Henrysson, the nomad school system was introduced in 1913 primarily to keep the children of reindeer herding families in reindeer herding and the "nomadic life". It was based on cultural and political aspects, such as "Lapps shall be Lapps", but also from national economic visions, that the mountain world could not be used in any other way than through reindeer herding. The nomadic schools were built at a time when many scientists were using social Darwinism, which implied that different cultures and people evolve from our outward appearance. There were also hierarchies within this theory, where certain cultures and people were valued more highly than others, and considered to be better suited to particular geographical, climatic and historical conditions. It had therefore been concluded that the Sami were the only group of people suitable for a nomadic life in the mountain world, and should therefore be preserved in that context. The children of the settled Sami would be mainly educated in the general school system, while the nomadic children would be educated in portable tent huts or peat huts. Only in 1962, following a government inquiry, did nomadic schools become optional for the children of reindeer-herding Sami. The children could now choose between attending a "regular" unit school or a primary school, while the voluntary nomad schools were incorporated into the regular school system. Ingrid went on to say that she left school at the end of May, and as soon as the ice cleared, the family moved up to the "mountains". In the quote below, Ingrid described the preparations for the summer.⁹⁴

92 Interview, Ingrid, 29/05/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

93 Interview, Ingrid, 29/05/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

94 Interview, Ingrid, 29/05/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

*"Well, my parents shopped in Gällivare before we left, so they had all the supplies, food and whatever they needed up there. You took all the bedding and clothes, and warm clothes you needed, oh all the household goods needed when you move or when going to live up there all summer."*⁹⁵

Ingrid went on to say that there were other Sami families who moved up to the "mountains" at the same time as her family. Many Sami families in Ingrid's vicinity based part of their income during the summer on fishing. Ingrid described how the family first made their way up to Stora Sjöfallet but got stuck there for one or two nights. They used "trolleys" to transport the luggage. They made their way to Langas, where the family stayed until the ice cleared, before continuing further up. The first longer stop was Vuoksa (Vuoksáávrre). Ingrid said that one year when the family went up, all the trees and huts were gone. She went on to say;

*"If only they hadn't built the dams, you know all the trees and huts and everything, even our goat huts had totally disappeared. Because these goat huts always existed, for the goats to stay in, otherwise there were just tent huts."*⁹⁶

During the interview I asked Ingrid if she meant that the goat hut was permanent as opposed to the tent hut. Ingrid informed me that the goat hut was permanent because of its construction, it was not as portable as a tent hut. The family stayed in Vuoksa (Vuoksáávrre) for about a month and a half. This indicates that the family had permanent places to which they returned every year. Did this mean that the family could be considered settled, even if not all year round? In Yamamoto Hagström's dissertation she discusses how some Sami groups had a long tradition of being settled, but that the identity discourse created by "the Swede" in the 19th century meant that the mountain Sami in particular were considered an extreme and exclusive form of nomadism.⁹⁷ A view and perception of the Sami that still lives on in many of the majority population, which I have experienced myself during the process of working on the documentation.

Continuing her interview, Ingrid told me that her father was a "big fisherman", and the fish was initially transported in large barrels. It was therefore important to salt and wash the fish. She recalled that the family had many nets destroyed by pine trees and roots floating in the water. Ingrid and her siblings often had to help repair the broken nets. According to Ingrid, none of the children understood that the damaged nets were caused by the dams, but thought it was perfectly normal.

Ingrid said that when she got older, she and her sister started their own "boat team", a term used during the interview by Ingrid to describe their fishing work. They had about twenty-five to thirty nets caught up in the pine trees, which were out in the lake as a result of the damming. The hut that was erected after the damming and regulation could not be put anywhere, it had to be moved higher and higher up. An event that can be linked to the term industrial colonialism⁹⁸, because the effects of the hydropower mean Ingrid's family still have to adapt their settlements according to the height of the water level in the river. Ingrid recalled that when the family went to the place where they were going to fish, her colt and traditional Sami shoes got all muddy. Even her face could become muddy, a phenomenon Ingrid described was due to the regulation. Ingrid did not receive any compensation for her nets, but her father, mother and brother were compensated by Vattenfall AB. Ingrid says that fishing was not deemed equal to reindeer herding, and therefore they did not receive any compensation. Ingrid and her sister tried to get compensation. In the 1980s the sisters sought help from two lawyers, Bengt Sjölander and Tomas Martinsson, but did not win that case and therefore received no compensation. In total, Ingrid's family had about eighty-five to one hundred nets and two boat teams. Ingrid said that her parents never talked about the dams with her or her siblings.

95 Interview, Ingrid, 29/05/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

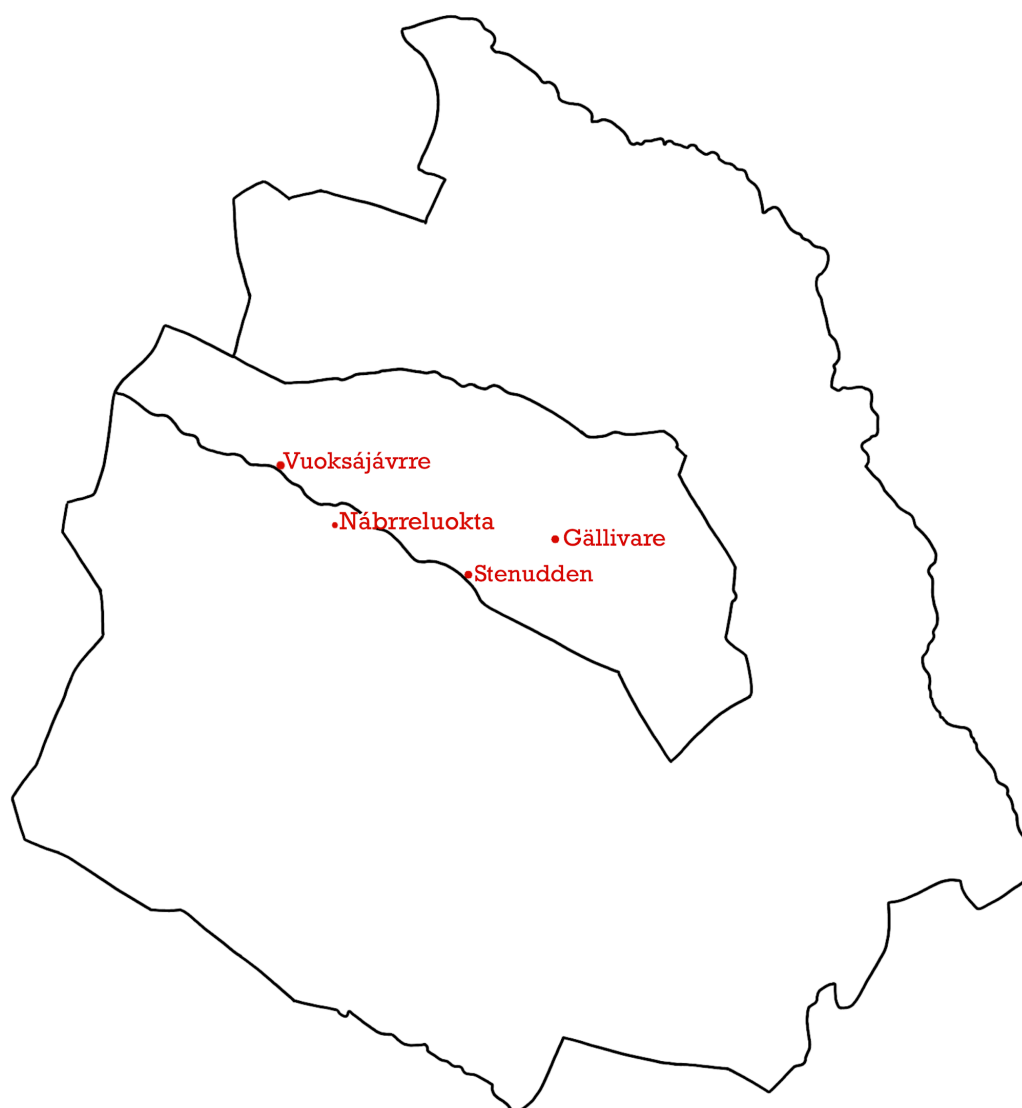
96 Interview, Ingrid, 29/05/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

97 Hagström Yamamoto, 2010

98 Össbo, 2014

There were many changes but nothing that any of the adults talked about. It was often the children's job to fetch water but it was no longer possible to take it directly from the lake because it was too muddy. Instead, the water was taken from a nearby stream or cold spring. Ingrid said that it was also the children's task to collect driftwood, which was a result of the damming and regulation of the water level according to her.

According to Ingrid, the ice outside her house has become more unstable. She said that it is thinner and that she no longer dares go out on the ice. But Ingrid told me that she takes a risk every year to go fishing. During the interview Ingrid highlighted that it is not only because of regulation that the ice has become weaker, but that it is also due to environmental pollution. Ingrid briefly described the positive effects of hydropower. For example, it has become easier to store fish and meat. This is because Ingrid's family got freezer boxes due to the electricity produced by hydropower. Ingrid said that the actions of Vattenfall in the early 20th century were only about money. She also argues that our time is focused on money, it is her own opinion that health comes before money.⁹⁹



100

99 Interview, Ingrid, 29/05/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

100 Interview, Ingrid, 29/05/2020, places mentioned in the interview, created by the author; Linnea Persson, ref. no. 00022-2019

Per-Stefan: Vaisaluokta & the language

"It was very shallow when we moved up to the dwelling where we now live, the old dwelling, from where we moved, wasn't below the waterline then of course, but when the water rose, and I think it had already risen the first year, after they had said that they would start, then this was regulated to the height that was allowed, so that the old settlement was almost, well at least eight-nine metres under water."¹⁰¹

During the interview, Per-Stefan described how his family made their way up to the summer settlement Vaisaluokta. They first travelled by boat across a number of reservoirs along the lake system in Norrbotten. On their way up to Vaisaluokta they passed several lakes and dams such as Jaurekaska, Langas, Stuor Muorkke (Stora Sjöfallet), Kårtjejaure. Then they reached "Vaisa" in Akkajaure, where the family has its summer camp and hut. A hut that has had to be moved several times due to regulation and erosion caused by the regulation, which again can be linked to the concept of industrial colonialism¹⁰². During the interview Per-Stefan expressed that it does not feel good at all to see the place he has grown up now under the surface of the water. He further explained that many of the fishing huts that existed along the lake system have also ended up underwater. With the fourth regulation, many of the huts were submerged. Per-Stefan said that during that regulation, one person in the Sami village had refused to move his settlement. There was a lot of writing about the case, Per-Stefan said, and when the water rose, the person had tied the boat to the entry bridge. Then he said that the person in question might have received some extra money because of Vattenfall's actions against the person's will.¹⁰³

Per-Stefan mentions in his interview that the negotiations with the Sami in connection with the damming and regulation of the lakes were not done properly. The language used in negotiations and agreements was always Swedish, so there were many language misunderstandings according to Per-Stefan. Since the agreements were written in Swedish, many Sami did not understand what they were agreeing to. Those who were supposed to represent the Sami also spoke Swedish and had no understanding or knowledge of the Sami language according to Per-Stefan. Therefore, there was no possibility or ambition to translate the agreements and negotiation documents into Sami.

*"But negotiations have always taken place in Swedish, and discussions with Vattenfall and even with the lawyer or representative representing the Sami. So we got the impression that the people who were supposed to represent the Sami against Vattenfall, seemed to also represent Vattenfall, which was their employer at the time."*¹⁰⁴

Yamamoto Hagström argues in her thesis that different languages, socio-political traditions, religious rites and many other aspects of people's daily lives were placed in a colonial metanarrative. In northern Sweden, population groups were categorised according to languages such as Finnish, Swedish and Sami. Yamamoto Hagström argues that in the national discourse, children with a Sami background and children who were poor ended up at the bottom of the ranking. Even if Sami children spoke Swedish but with a dialect, it was not sufficiently cultivated from the Swedish discourse and was severely punished.¹⁰⁵

101 Interview, Per-Stefan, 11/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

102 Össbo, 2014

103 Interview, Per-Stefan, 11/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

104 Interview, Per-Stefan, 11/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

105 Yamamoto Hagström, 2010

Per-Stefan pointed out that Vattenfall AB has a responsibility towards the Sami today. He said during the interview that when they chose to expand hydropower, it was important for the economy of the community, and he doesn't ignore that. But that today Vattenfall AB needs to take responsibility for its actions towards the Sami, and he described the responsibility that he himself considered the company to have.¹⁰⁶

"So now there are a lot of things that were not considered at all at the time the agreements were written and that were applied in a certain way then, but you would certainly have liked to be understood in your own language. But Vattenfall has, of course, been through all the courts and it's been determined. There is, as I see it, a human need to, to do it in a better way."

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108

106 Interview, Per-Stefan, 11/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

107 Interview, Per-Stefan, 11/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

108 Interview, Per-Stefan, 11/06/2020, places mentioned in the interview, created by the author; Linnea Persson, ref. no. 00022-2019

Sonja: Messaure & rootlessness

It would have been like nineteen sixty-four and I was six years old when we moved to Messaure. And our first residence was a flat, a long block, with two flats in it, and we had two small rooms and a kitchen, and everyone slept in the one bedroom even though it was small but Dad was hardly ever home so it was me, Mum and my sister. And in sixty-eight we moved to another flat in Messaure, a two plus one, and then I got my own room when I was in the fourth grade. So the dam, when we moved to Messaure, most of the dam workers had already moved on to the next one. So it was just, the community was left and mothers and children lived there.”¹⁰⁹



Norrbottn Museum's picture archive, Acc-no. 1983:650, photographer unknown, Messaure bus station

Sonja explained that her family moved around to different places because of her father's profession as a workshop worker and "Vattenfaller". She expressed that there was no choice but for the family to move. They kept their living arrangements minimalist because their parents knew that the place they ended up in was never permanent.¹¹⁰ At first, the family lived in a small flat in Messaure, where everyone slept in the same room. Her father was hardly ever home, so it was mainly her mother and sister with whom she shared a bedroom. She described Messaure as an ordinary Vattenfall community, with barracks and people. Mainly populated by mothers and children, as the fathers were away at work. Sonja described the community as quiet and safe. She experienced that the adults talked about social difficulties in the community but that overall the place was quiet and safe.¹¹¹ Based on Gunnarsson Payne and Öhlander, memory traces are created through learned behaviour, where we create a shared memory of places, events and people based on the shared language.¹¹² Sonja expressed that during her adult life it has been difficult to share memories and thoughts about Messaure with her loved ones. Only her mother, father and sister understood life in the Vattenfall community.¹¹³

109 Interview, Sonja, 10/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

110 Interview, Sonja, 10/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

111 Interview, Sonja, 10/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

112 Gunnarsson Payne & Öhlander, 2017

113 Interview, Sonja, 10/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

Could it be because the shared memory of Messaure does not translate into all the "languages" of memory, that not everyone has the context or background to understand the memory of Messaure. It therefore becomes as if people who did not grow up in Messaure speak a different "memory language".¹¹⁴

Sonja described that within the family and the community there was not much talk about how hydropower would affect nature or people. Sometimes there were studies in the area of the dam construction. Surveys were carried out to check whether there were any ancient monuments or cultural-historical objects, according to Sonja. She expressed that "they" were then ordered to clean up what was found in the area, which was to be dammed over. Fishing was also something that was discussed in Messaure. Her father was not a big fisherman but she heard others talking about how miserable it was when there was no longer any fishing.¹¹⁵

Sonja told us that the children of Messaure "lived on their bikes". There was usually a small forest road to explore and possibly some hut that had been abandoned as a result of the dams. There were traces of people and activities all along the forest road, Sonja described. The surrounding villages that were affected by the damming were not talked about or something that Sonja saw any traces of during her childhood according to her. Once the dam at Messaure was completed, the community gradually began to shrink. Buildings were dismantled and moved to other places. In 1971, the family moved again, this time to Jokkmokk for work. During the interview Sonja said that it was a difficult time for her. She expressed a feeling of anxiety and not fitting in in Jokkmokk. She lost all contact with her friends in Messaure. She also refers to the fact that "Vattenfaller" were not valued as highly in Jokkmokk. Therefore, according to Sonja, they were treated differently by the people in Jokkmokk. "Vattenfaller" was a bit of a slur word, Sonja expressed during the interview. Sonja said that she later trained as a nursery teacher and started working in pre-school. Furthermore, she said that when her children were born, it became more important to stay in one place. In 1994 Sonja trained as a pre-school teacher and in 2004 she became a social worker, due to a work injury, which made it difficult for her to work with children in pre-schools. During her adult life, Sonja has lived mainly in Vuollerim and for the last three years she has been living in Boden. But Messaure is the place she returns to almost every year, *"it is Messaure that is closest to my heart"*.¹¹⁶

114 Gunnarsson Payne & Öhlander, 2017

115 Interview, Sonja, 10/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

116 Interview, Sonja, 10/06/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019



117



Messaure

Messaure takes its name from a lake near the site. It is actually a Swedishisation of the Lule Sami word *Misseávrre*, which is a compound of the words *miesse* (reindeer calf) and *jávrrre* (lake). In November 1952, the most suitable place for the hydropower station was investigated. Vattenfall AB was keen to get construction underway as soon as possible because of the large supply of power that the plant would bring to Sweden. There was no doubt that the Messaure site would become a provisional community. This was so that Vattenfall AB could cope with the recruitment needs for the dam construction and avoid having to pay travel time for employees.¹¹⁸ Today the site has been completely dismantled and in many places the forest has taken over the site. It was one of the largest temporary communities in Norrbotten with 2,300 inhabitants at its peak.¹¹⁹

Messaure day

The concept of place becomes useful in this chapter. It is a place that no longer exists on the map, but it is a place that is constructed and recreated from collective memory through the commemorative day organised each year by the Messaure Association.¹²⁰ It is human activity that keeps the place alive and gives it its context. According to Berry, it may also be a counter-reaction to modern society, where improved communications, accessibility and infrastructure have made the outside world more accessible. Berry argues that this is a backlash against modern society and therefore people seek out places that are perceived as disconnected from the outside world and that lack a sense of connection to modern society. Messaure may be such a place.¹²¹

Photographer Simon and ethnologist Linnea arrived at Messaure a few minutes after the event had started. There were already quite a few people sitting close together in small groups. The people there were talking about life, updating each other on what had happened in the past year and informing each other about who had died during the year. One person described Messaure as an ideal place, expressing that it would have been difficult to feel peace and comfort in any other place than Messaure, "when you come here you come home".¹²²

Another participant spoke about the exodus from Messaure, when the school was closed in 1979, many people were forced to move. Buildings were moved and when the school year started in 1979 there were 23 children attending the last year before it was closed. According to the woman, when families started to move, it happened quickly and she expressed that suddenly families were gone without a goodbye.

Many participants during the day expressed that they remember all the roads, houses and how they went to school. The majority of attendees expressed positive memories, describing Messaure as a safe and peaceful place.

118 Hallin Maria, *Messaure: en tillfällig tätort i ödemarken*, Litorapid, Göteborg, 2004

119 <https://history.vattenfall.com/sv/fran-vattenkraft-till-solceller/nybyggarsamhallen-vaxer-upp>

120 Payne Gunnarsson & Öhlander, 2017

121 Berry, 2010

122 Messaure day, 18/07/2020, ref. no. 00022-2019

One person said that Messaure was a class society, there were different conditions and advantages depending on the position one had within Vattenfall AB.

1pm is the annual meeting, about 18 members are present. There are about 30-40 people in total who are there for the entire Messaure day. There is a motion to shut down the Messaure Association. During the voting there was an uneasy atmosphere, it was an open vote so everyone could see who voted for and who voted against. In the end, the yes side won and the association remained.¹²³



123 Messaure day, copyright Norrbottensmuseum, Acc-nr 2020_40_6



Final words by the author

It is difficult to come to an overall conclusion based on the material. The people in the material have had different perceptions, memories and experiences of the impact of hydropower. However, common themes, descriptions, words, places and expressions have emerged in the material during the analysis. Based on the concept of industrial colonialism and the post-colonial perspective, it is possible to understand that many of the informants continue to adapt their everyday lives and lifestyles based on the regulation of the Lule River.¹²⁴ Many of the informants have lost settlements, land, huts, nets and gear in the damming of the river. All informants express a strong identification with the place that they themselves describe as their place of origin. It is not possible from the analysis to answer the question "who owns the land?". It is a complex question that can be analysed from many different perspectives. A question that involves different perceptions of ownership of land and water. There are also different views on who owns the documents, the law or the power to take over and hold land rights. However, it is unavoidable from the material not to see that people have had to, and have been forced to, give up their settlements in order for hydropower to be developed along the Lule River. Places that the people in question have come back to year after year, which they themselves have experienced as their place. A place that has been safe in the family for years, which suddenly disappeared with the damming of the Lule River. Vattenfall AB still owns the fall rights in the Lule River, which means that the company continues to extract hydropower along the Lule River. An electricity supply on which Sweden is partly dependent. Hydropower accounts for about 40% of Sweden's total electricity production¹²⁵. There are around 2000 hydropower plants in Sweden, 80% of which are located in Norrland.¹²⁶ However, the pervasive view in the material is that Vattenfall AB should take greater responsibility towards the people and nature that have been and are being affected by hydropower's regulation of the Lule River.¹²⁷

124 Össbo, 2014

125 <https://www.energiforetagen.se/energifakta/elsystemet/produktion/>

126 <https://www.energiforetagen.se/energifakta/elsystemet/produktion/vattenkraft/>

127 Ethnological material, interviews, meeting evenings, digital questionnaire, ref. no. 00022-2019



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Informant 1

Name: Håkan
Age: 59
Gender: Male
Interview location: Telephone
Date of interview: 27/03/2020
Conducted by: Linnea Persson

Informant 2

Name: Ingrid
Age: 82
Gender: Female
Interview location: Ingrid's home in Gällivare
Date of interview: 29/05/2020
Conducted by: Linnea Persson

Informant 3

Name: Per-Stefan
Age: 71
Gender: Male
Interview location: Telephone
Date of interview: 11/06/2020
Conducted by: Linnea Persson

Informant 4

Name: Sonja
Age: 62
Gender: Female
Interview location: Telephone
Date of interview: 10/06/2020
Conducted by: Linnea Persson

Meeting evening Boden

Participants: 7 men and 1 woman
Location: Boden Business Park Hotell och Konferens
Date: 20/02/2020

Meeting evening Vuollerim

Participants: 5 men and 5 women
Location: Älvarnas Hotell in Vuollerim
Date: 17/03/2020

Digital questionnaire

Participants: 4 men and 2 women
Date: 18/05/2020 to 16/06/2020

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Appendices

Summary of the meeting evening in Boden

The majority at the meeting were men. The participants were of a similar age (50+). Many of the older men had worked with/on the hydropower plants in some way. The men expressed many hard values, such as economics, communication, consequences of water regulation and also tried to find solutions to (according to themselves) simple problems. The only woman who participated discussed soft values, such as social changes, cultural changes, that during the hydropower expansions new people came to Norrbotten and built up new communities around the dams and power plants.

The participants mainly highlighted the men who worked on the dams and power plants with nostalgia. They also said that it is a generation that has done a lot for Sweden. They felt that contemporary Sweden should be extremely grateful for their efforts. It was a glorification of another time and of the people who worked on the power plant constructions, who, according to them, were a much more action-oriented population than in our time. The people who were part of the active population, the participants said, were mainly the men who worked on the construction of the dams. There was hardly any mention of all the women who worked on site as cooks, nurses, etc.

Vattenfall, on the other hand, was repeatedly singled out as the villain in the negativity surrounding hydropower. They had not taken responsibility for the consequences that have occurred, according to the participants. The example highlighted mainly by the male participants was that it was difficult to ride a snowmobile during the winter because the water had not frozen due to the water regulation, then the participants mentioned that boats were difficult to use as they could move during the water regulation. One of the participants felt that he had to take a very long detour to visit people during winter time.

When asked "what would make you visit a hydropower plant?" many responded that scheduled tours would be interesting both for tourists but also for residents of nearby towns. The tours could reflect a historical angle with both positive and negative perspectives. They could also address how much power is produced and where it goes, even where all the money the government earns from hydropower goes would be interesting, participants said.

The participants were very curious about what the project will result in and how they can take part in further work within the project. They were also very eager to meet again next year. If possible, to make an excursion by bus to nearby hydropower plants.

Summary of the meeting evening in Vuollerim

Ten people attended the meeting, half of them women and half men. The majority of the participants were between 65 and 90 years old. Four of the participants had worked for Vattenfall. One of the participants was a biologist and one was/or had been a water politician in the municipality.

When asked; "how has hydropower changed you and society?" participants answered that hydropower provided jobs, as the expansion was quite fast. Many employees were needed to build up the hydropower in Norrbotten. The county contributes an extremely large amount of natural resources, Norrbotten contributes a lot to the Swedish state according to the participants.

One of the participants says that Vattenfall had created a lot for jobs until the 1970s. There were promises that were broken in 1957, according to them they were cheated. Jokkmokk with its poor economy needed to build an office building for Vattenfall even though the work is run from India as the participant claimed.

At one point during the meeting, the participants began to speculate how many people lived in Vuollerim. The participants pointed out that not all residents of Vuollerim were very positive about Vattenfall moving its operations to the site. When jobs were created during the dam construction, many local people were working for Vattenfall. At first, many locals were critical of the fact that the "navvies" and "unknown" people were moving into the village. There was a division between the "navvies" and the "people of the village", it became a form of competition. Many residents looked down on young men moving in, one was worried about the housewives around them.

Participants also discussed wages, working conditions and class differences during the construction of the dams in Vuollerim. There was also a discussion about taxes, structures in society, money, economy, property tax, infrastructure, municipal wallet, the disappearance of fish and salmon fishing.

Discussion on state promises and ethical promises, participants argued that the environment was not taken into account during the development of hydropower. Hydropower has changed society, participants said, for the better in some cases and for the worse in other aspects.

Within the group there was much speculation, rumours etc. On several occasions the group brings up the population numbers, both now and then.

When the participants talked about their memories of the river, a woman read out a poem, which will be archived and preserved in the archive at Norrbotten Museum under ref. no. 00022-2019.

Digital questionnaire

Questionnaire response 1

Gender identity: Male

Personal description

Describe yourself and your childhood

Born 1950 in Porjus - grew up in Harsprånget. My father was a shift machinist at Harsprånget Power Station, my mother was a housewife. Harsprånget was a thriving community in the 1950s but during the 1960s the community faded away. Today (in 2020) there is a tennis court and a few asphalt roads left. I myself have worked as a machinist in Rimojokk (mini power station), Ligga, Harsprånget, Porjus, Vietas, Ritsem, Vattenfall's Training Centre and IBM.

The characteristics of the Lule River

Describe Lule River

Until the 1970s, (one) spilled water in Harsprånget, (one) heard the noise in the community. The river instilled respect for the water. There were fish in it, some days it was possible to go swimming even though the temperature was at most about 13 degrees.

The importance of the river

What is the significance of the Lule River?

Nationally, the river is of great importance, accounting for about 12% of the country's electricity supply. For me, it has been my livelihood for about 30 years.

The impact of hydropower

How has hydropower affected you and/or the community?

It has been my livelihood and also created communities. Meanwhile, staffing at Vattenfall facilities has been reduced.

Responsibilities of government, authorities and businesses

How do you perceive the responsibility of government, authorities and companies?

Vattenfall should share the revenue with the municipalities concerned and also make it live with rushes per second of 20 cubic metres per second to make it live. It should be made possible to travel by boat along the river (have been asked myself if there are organised boat trips along storlule (the reservoir upstream of Porjus).

Information dissemination

How do you feel that information about the hydropower development has been communicated?

For 65 years Vattenfall had displays at the Harsprånget and Porjus power stations, but now the display has been reduced to Porjus Gamla due to reduced maintenance at the power stations.

Questionnaire response 2

Gender identity: Male

Personal description

Describe yourself and your childhood

Born and raised in Kaltisluokta, a small village on the Lule River three miles up from Porjus. 1956 was the year I was born. In 1970 the family moved to Gällivare because my father got another job in the telecommunications company. Despite the proximity of the river, 200 metres, we never got electricity. I trained as an electrical engineer but never worked as one. After fifteen different jobs, I now drive a tow truck to Gällivare. The relationship with Kaltisluokta is, as everyone knows, wonderful, the nature outside, the link to the animals that were practically everywhere. There were lynx, bear and once a wolf on the property. My family consists of a separated partner and two boys. My current place of residence is Riessjeluokta which is about 2 kilometres from Kaltisluokta. My dear father was a lineman for Televerket at that time, my mother ran a telephone exchange.

The characteristics of the Lule River

Describe Lule River

The river is quiet, it's a lake where I live. In the spring the river looks terrible, sometimes a lot of mess along the shoreline. The feeling for the river today is mostly bad but before 1974 it was good. Lots of fish, the moose could graze in the shallow water, (you) knew exactly where the ice could be bad. Today, whether the ice is good or bad depends on the water level.

The importance of the river

What is the significance of the Lule River?

For me the river is nothing but a worry, for some reason the river is very heavily regulated today. I have asked Vattenfall why it is so heavily regulated and the answer is "because we can". This gives me great concern, sometimes I can hardly get the boat out, sometimes they have raised the water so the boat rubs against rocks and moves too much. When (you) have to take the snowmobile out it is often with great trepidation, lots of water, will the ice hold etc. Energy wise it is very important for the whole country. Well there are some fishermen who go but otherwise it is of no importance.

The impact of hydropower

How has hydropower affected you and/or the community?

Hydropower has no effect on me as I still have no power. My daily life has been very negatively affected, water levels and the ice. In the past, the river was not regulated as it is today, over one metre per day. It looks like hell at low water.

Responsibilities of government, authorities and businesses

How do you perceive the responsibility of government, authorities and companies?

The government, Vattenfall and those involved in hydropower only have money on their minds. They should take responsibility for those of us who live along the river and those who have cottages, as well as the environment. But they don't care as long as the money comes in. I don't think you have to regulate the river so stringently, but I don't get any answers, I think someone could at least answer questions. That's why there is zero trust.

Information dissemination

How do you feel that information about the hydropower development has been communicated?

What information?

Questionnaire response 3

Gender identity: Male

Personal description

Describe yourself and your childhood

Born 1960 in Luleå, I have lived in many places around the world: Italy, Ireland, England, USA etc. but I have always considered Luleå as my home. Grew up with a great interest in animals and nature, got my first boat when I was 12-13 years old and started exploring the archipelago with it. My family had a cottage at the mouth of the Råneå River in my youth, spent a lot of time hiking, paddling and fishing along it. Also did a lot of fishing along the Kalix River and Ängesån.

The characteristics of the Lule River

Describe Lule River

The Lule River is unfortunately a dead sterile creature for me, I am saddened when I see how man has violated the river. Concrete blocks for power plants with sterile stone deserts below where the river used to be alive. My grandfather lived in Svartlå for most of his life and fished extensively, both for a living but also as a genuine interest in fishing itself. There is a family photo of a giant salmon he caught with a rod and reel in the 1930s, the picture has sort of etched itself in my memory.

The thought of how the city of Luleå sold out the right to build the power plants is unimaginable to me! For a pittance, a company was allowed to rape nature and perhaps destroy it for all time. Where once the rapids roared on and the salmon returned year after year as they have done for millions of years, there is

now a single open non-healing wound that shows the incredible stupidity of man. Like man is doing again now by building wind turbines in our forests.

The importance of the river

What is the significance of the Lule River?

It has no real significance today, it is dead, sterile and just a stiff corpse...

The impact of hydropower

How has hydropower affected you and/or the community?

It affects me every year, I have access to hunting grounds about 15 miles upstream of the river and drive along the river regularly in the autumns and get a bit depressed when (one) passes the concrete piles of power plants and sees the more or less stagnant water between them...

It's particularly distressing when (one) thinks of what a fantastic salmon stock the river had, an average gain of around ten kilos like Alta in northern Norway.

The pennies Luleå got for selling off our natural heritage would have been collected in a day if (you) had invested in fishing tourism instead.

Responsibilities of government, authorities and businesses

How do you perceive the responsibility of government, authorities and companies?

No responsibility whatsoever, (they) have raped our heritage, destroyed a living river that we were born, raised and live our lives around up here.

Information dissemination

How do you feel that information about the hydropower development has been communicated?

I'm too "young" to have been involved in the development of the river (I just turned 60)...

Questionnaire response 4

Gender identity: Female

Personal description

Describe yourself and your childhood

I grew up by the lake Langas, great Lule River. During my childhood years, I was born in 1959, the lake (river) was everything! Here (one) travelled by boat in the summer. All freight was by boat and STF ran daily passenger trips during the summer months. A road was ploughed of snow along the lake during the winter. Many made their living from fishing. As a youngster, rod fishing was a fun activity during the summer evenings.

The characteristics of the Lule River

Describe Lule River

For me, Lule River is a wounded river. For example, Stora Sjöfallet is, like many other cases after the river, dammed. Nevertheless, my heart beats for this river valley.

The importance of the river

What is the significance of the Lule River?

The Lule River is of great importance to the country's electricity supply. During the construction period, the municipality of Jokkmokk flourished. Lots of jobs and population growth. Now it feels like we have been left with the side effects of hydropower, while the profits and jobs are elsewhere.

The impact of hydropower

How has hydropower affected you and/or the community?

I returned to my home town after I started a family. My whole life has been marked by the impact of hydropower. My husband is a fisherman in a lake where fishing has deteriorated due to hydropower. The ice where we travel in winter is noticeably poorer due to short-term regulation and high water flow.

Responsibilities of government, authorities and businesses

How do you perceive the responsibility of government, authorities and companies?

I absolutely think that a municipality that will forever be burdened with the negative effects of hydropower development should have some share in the benefits. There are admittedly judgements that require Vattenfall to release x number of fish each year to help rectify the damage. Also to be responsible for ice roads across lakes in some places. But that is far from enough. I have confidence in the Vattenfall company of today. However, I know that in the past they did not act correctly at all. Pittances were handed out as compensation for various damages.

Information dissemination

How do you feel that information about the hydropower development has been communicated?

Focus on how clean it is. Unfortunately, the deteriorating fisheries, weak ice, impact on vegetation around regulated areas are rarely talked about. That is my personal opinion.

Questionnaire response 5

Gender identity: Male

Personal description

Describe yourself and your childhood

Born in Luleå. Involved, already during my childhood. Mostly in the woods, even during school. University in Uppsala. Ethnology and archaeology. Lots of field studies in northern forests and in collaboration with Sami

villages in Jokkmokk and Gällivare. Exhibitions in Jokkmokk's museum with Hans Anderson every summer under his direction before Ájtte was conceived. Many and labour-intensive periods together with members of both the then Sirka and Sörkaitum Sami villages. Many discussions and hundreds of hours of interviews with representatives of Vattenfall and the Sami villages, before the fourth regulation of Suorva, and under a large amount of material, both photographic and cassette recordings. Composed with and translated for Paulus Utsi, who became my friend during a boat trip in Vaisaluokta in 1968, a friendship that lasted until he passed away.

The characteristics of the Lule River

Describe Lule River

The river contains all our songs and memories. The river is born dripping, thawing ice and snow and as waking springs. The streams become the mountain watercourses and the spring tide roars against thundering rapids and falls downstream when the time is right. The river is the umbilical cord that gives life a guarantee. From the hunter's stone age to the present. Memories of the river are rather memories of my father's constant travels in service as a huntsman and as an enthusiast of giving us children a memory of bathing and rafting in the living river.

The importance of the river

What is the significance of the Lule River?

See previous response. The river is our artery and our informant of past communities along its banks. In spite of all that is called development, I would like to urge sense and reason. The river is incredibly important for our energy and has been so in all its forms since the ice age. Now I want to see husbandry and consideration with meaning, which gives the river with its surrounding biotopes and submerged ancient monuments redress after all the regulation.

The impact of hydropower

How has hydropower affected you and/or the community?

Impossible to answer. What community? I've only been enraged for 50 years since hydropower got involved with the colonisation of Sapmí. I've benefited from the availability of electricity in the cottage and the assurance that the industry keeps going. But now ...

Responsibilities of government, authorities and businesses

How do you perceive the responsibility of government, authorities and companies?

The government, parliament and Vattenfall are all in the same boat and don't care about the well-being of rural areas or the nature and culture that is being exploited. Vattenfall is a state-owned company and is entirely to blame for the drowning of settlements and the deforestation of the valley's nature. It is therefore also obliged to repay this debt now. There have been many breaches of the law, and these may now be worth highlighting once again. In order to give the river valley back its history and soul. And to revive a living river.

Questionnaire response 6

Gender identity: Female

Personal description

Describe yourself and your childhood

I am 29 years old and grew up in a reindeer herding family where both parents were and still are self-employed in the Sami industry. I grew up in Porjus, as a small town and an old power plant community in Norrbotten. Today I am self-employed working in the field of Sami industries, but also as a project employee working with regional small and medium-sized enterprises in cultural and creative industries. However, reindeer herding is still most important to me, and all my choices in life are based and founded on the reindeer first and foremost. At the moment I live in Jokkmokk, close to Porjus, which I enjoy very much even though my whole family still lives in Porjus.

The characteristics of the Lule River

Describe Lule River

The river has always been present in my life. We move and live along the Lule River with the reindeer, from the forest pasture east in Svartlå to the spring and summer pasture west in Eanonjalbme. I have family and relatives who lost their lives in the regulated river, I have grown up with beautiful but sad stories of what it was like in our summer pasture before it was dammed over. Today we have had to adapt in our lives and choices, understanding that the river is alive but also controlled by people driven by need. This affects today's generation's choices in everything from how we can move across and along the river when we are up in the mountains to if and when we can move with reindeer in places where we have to cross the river. The river is a powerful force of nature that has been reined in and controlled by human needs.

The importance of the river

What is the significance of the Lule River?

The river is of great importance to the district, providing much of the electricity we need. Unfortunately, it delivers few of the benefits of hydropower development back locally to those affected and those who live on and by the river. For me personally it carries a lot of sadness, in everything from family members who have risked and still risk their lives as the river is regulated and is never the same, to the thought of hearing about what the river once was and meant to people before the regulation. It is a grief that is still felt today as the river and water are constantly regulated.

The impact of hydropower

How has hydropower affected you and/or the community? See response above.

Responsibilities of government, authorities and businesses

How do you perceive the responsibility of government, authorities and companies?

I think that today the government and the authorities choose to turn a blind eye to the mistakes (they) have made in history, that the best thing would be to apologise so that all those affected can move on. To admit their mistake. They bear great responsibility for many tragic human deaths of the past and present. My

confidence would be increased if they chose to apologise and work in some way to give back, to make life more bearable for the local population and those affected, who continue to suffer.