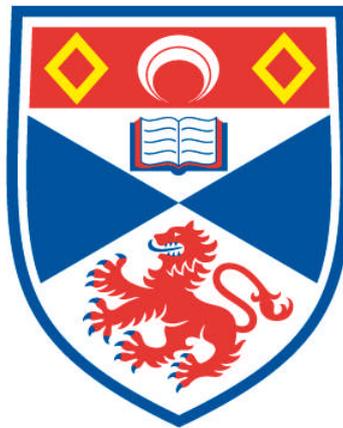


**WORKING TOWARDS "A PRODUCTION OF WELL-BEING":
AN ETHNOGRAPHY ON CRAFTSMANSHIP AMONG THE
LULESÁMI IN NORWAY**

ANNA GUSTAFSSON

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews**



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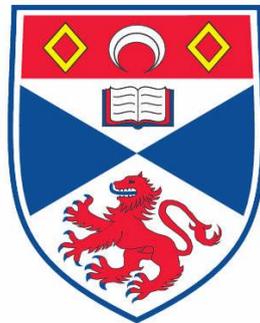
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AMONG THE LULESÁMI IN NORWAY

Anna Gustafsson



This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of MPhil/PhD
at the
University of St Andrews

April, 2014

Working Towards “A Production of Well-being”:

An Ethnography on Craftsmanship among
the Lulesámi in Norway

Anna Gustafsson

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Social Anthropology

University of St Andrews

April, 2014

1. Candidate's declarations:

I, Anna Gustafsson, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 75,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in September, 2009 and as a candidate for the degree of PhD in Social Anthropology in September 2009; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2009 and 2014.

I, Anna Gustafsson, received assistance in the writing of this thesis in respect of grammar, which was provided by Paul Valentine, Jonathan Alderman, Piotr Jednaszewski and Karolina Kuberska.

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Abstract

This thesis is an ethnographic study of craftsmanship among the Lulesámi in Northern Norway. The study, which is based on an apprentice-style methodology, focuses in particular on the role and significance of making and wearing the *gáppte*, a characteristic Sámi dress. While the *gáppte* is often employed to visually define and distinguish the Sámi in relation to other people, my aim is to move beyond such a common interpretation and unfold the garment's everyday aspects and explore how its production and use are interwoven with the Lulesámi's emphasis and ongoing creation of personal and social well-being.

The chapters address, in their different ways, the three main themes of this study. The first is concerned with the various ways in which the *gáppte* and its use affect people's sense of self and relations to others, and the factors influencing such diverse experiences. The second theme focuses on how the learning to make the garment, rather than involving a fixed set of skills, is based on an ongoing practical and sensuous engagement with the world. I demonstrate that novices not only learn the technical skills of producing a garment to be worn, but that they are also encouraged to develop certain social skills and virtues for living a good life. The third theme is constituted by an examination of the productive activities within the domestic sphere, which often go unnoticed as they cannot easily be seen or measured through tangible evidence, but which affirm and strengthen the making of a convivial society.

Through the analysis I draw and build on current anthropological debates on material culture by showing how craftsmanship is a self-transforming experience which encompasses a complete way of being, traversing and merging immaterial and material realms of life. I also wish to contribute to feminist debates by drawing attention to how the 'personal' and 'domestic' are intimately intertwined with larger historical, political and social processes.

for my father,

Lars Gustavsson (1941-2002),

who with love and humbleness showed me how beautiful the world is.

The Sámi? Who are they? They're the people who demonstrate against the state's reindeer-tending laws. Now, we also need to open the door towards the treasure of songs, poetry and handicraft that are just as important a part of who we are as the reindeer.

Said by an elder Lulesámi man

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All photographs and illustrations in this dissertation are taken or made by the author, except where indicated.

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Figure 1. View over the Divtasvuodna with Ájluokta to the right.

PREFACE

Direction Divtasvuodna

The present study is grounded in anthropological fieldwork, conducted between August 2010 and September 2011, among the Lulesámi living in the North Norwegian hamlet of Ájluokta (Drag) on the eastern shorelines of a fjord that shares the same name as the rural municipal area itself, Divtasvuodna (Tysfjord) (fig. 1)¹. For the reader unfamiliar with this part of the world, the Lulesámi are a subgroup of the indigenous Sámi of northern Fennoscandia, which comprises Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Kola Peninsula of Russia. In relation to the majority population of these countries, the Sámi consider that they have a distinct history, livelihood, language and craft practices. Today the Sámi are recognised as a minority population and they have, except in Russia, a certain degree of political autonomy within the national governments over issues regarding their ways of living, which is articulated through the publically elected Sámi Parliaments, an institution that was established in Norway in 1989².

While the borders of the Fennoscandian states are drawn from north to south, the boundaries of Sápmi; the land of the Sámi, are drawn from west to east (fig. 2). This land has a wide geographic diversity. Miles of tundra characterise the northernmost areas while forests, scenic mountains and successive waterways with dramatic rivers and calm woodland lakes typify the inlands. In the west, the Norwegian coast is composed of a myriad of impressive fjords where the mountains in many places slope straight down into the deep sea. As Hugh Beach (2001 [1993]) writes, in his ethnography of reindeer-tenders³ in the

¹ *Luokta* (Ls) means bay and the name of the hamlet specifies its location along the side of the Divtasvuodna. While the municipality is called Divtasvuodna, the fjord is referred to in definite form as the Divtasvuodna (Tysfjorden).

² The Swedish Sámi Parliament was established in 1993. In Finland the delegation of Sámi affairs from 1973 became the Sámi Parliament in 1996.

³ In this thesis I employ the terms 'reindeer-tending' and 'reindeer-tender' rather than the more commonly used English words 'reindeer-herding' and 'reindeer-herder'. I have been influenced by Anna Järpe (2007) who, in her doctoral thesis concerning the relationship between Swedish Sámi reindeer-tenders and their

Swedish Lulesámi area, these terrestrial variations frequently create natural frontiers that together with the wide physical distances within Sápmi have resulted in regional differentiations among the Sámi themselves. For example, there are currently ten distinct Sámi language groups (fig. 3). It is not clear to what extent speakers of these groups understand one another. Pekka Sammallahti (1988), a Finnish linguist and professor of Sámi languages, argues that the groups form a dialectical continuum where neighbouring people understand each other, whereas more distant speech communities might not be able to communicate at all in their respective Sámi language and, instead, have to use their national language or English.

Although Lulesámi people nowadays live all over the world, their native land expands across the rural municipalities of Jåhkåmåhkke (Jokkmokk) and Jiellevárre (Gällivare), and neighbouring areas in the province of Norrbotten in Sweden, and across the Norwegian rural county of Nordland, between the towns of Fauske, in the south, and Ballangen, in the north. Divtasvuodna is located in the middle of the Norwegian Lulesámi area (fig. 2 and 4).

There is no contemporary census for the Sámi. Norway has, however, according to an estimation made by the Swedish Sámi Parliament (Sametinget 2013), the largest Sámi population with a number of around 65 000 people. In Sweden there are approximately 35 000 Sámi, in Finland 8000, and in Russia 2000 (ibid.). There are, to my knowledge, no official numbers of the Lulesámi population. Divtasvuodna has within its 1,463 km² a population of around 2000 people, who mainly reside in the hamlets of Ájluokta and Gásluokta (Kjøpsvik). These hamlets are located on each side of the Divtasvuodna and connected through a forty minute's ferry ride. In Ájluokta around 900 people live, and approximately half of the residents consider themselves as Lulesámi. The other half consists of non-Sámi Norwegians, so called *bumenn* (N), and a few people from Sweden, the Baltic States and Russia who have moved to the area due to partnership/marriage or for employment, mainly in the industry that produces high quality quartz.

environment, argues that "the word 'herder' implies that people exercise a greater amount of direct control over the animals than what is actually the case" (2000: vii-viii). When the Lulesámi spoke of *reindrif* (N) ('reindeer management') they did not consider that people controlled their animals, but that they, as Järpe writes, "continually tend to their well-being and safety through a variety of activities" (2000: viii).

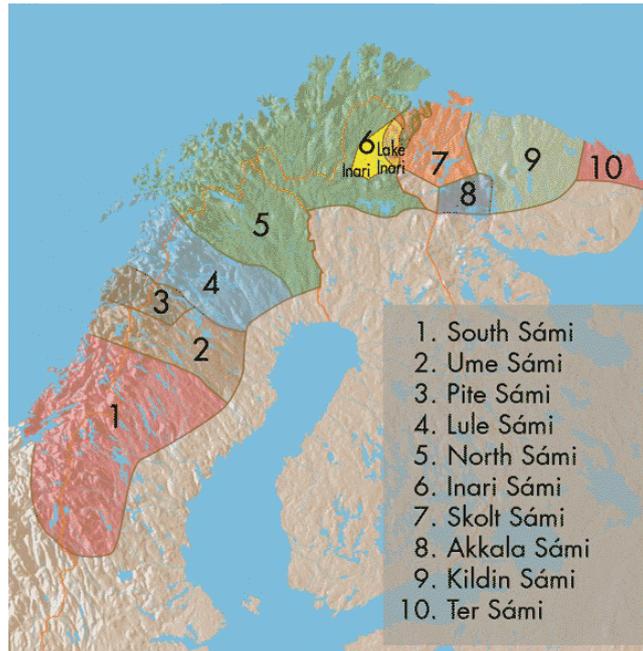


Figure 3. Map of the Sámi language areas. Reproduced from Anaråš (2014).



Figure 4. Map of Divtasvuodna. Reproduced from Norstedts Världsatlas (1996).

On a larger scale, Divtasvuodna is one of the 44 municipalities in the county of Nordland, which with an area of 38,456 km² has around 240,000 inhabitants. The largest city, Båddådjá (Bodø), is located just north of the Arctic Circle and approximately 185 km south of Divtasvuodna. Båddådjá, which today has around 50 000 residents, was heavily bombed by the Germans during their occupation of Norway between 1940 and 1945. In contrast, the city is nowadays booming with expanding shopping centres, a growing university, a busy airport and a large military airbase.

It was during my first visit to Båddådjá, in March 2010, that I came into contact with the Lulesámi people for the first time and ultimately, six months later, journeyed north again to begin my fieldwork. However, this study started earlier than that. After my undergraduate degree in anthropology, which I finished in 2008 from the University of East London, I ended up, a year later, behind the walls of St Andrews's university in Scotland with my desire to understand better what it means to be human. It is difficult to say exactly how my interest in the Sámi originally came about. I never feel to have an adequate and straightforward answer when people ask. Although I usually haphazardly respond something like "Well, as a Swede I've always been interested in the diversity of people within my home country", I believe that it was through various intersecting paths, interests and coincidences that my interest in the circumpolar north took shape (cf. Beach 2001: vii for a similar note on his research beginning).

Initially, I started out with the thought of studying human-animal relationships among reindeer-tenders. However, after a meeting with Tim Ingold, an anthropologist who has specialised in the Arctic region, to get some helpful advice for advancing my work, I came to reconsider my focus of study. Ingold cast doubt on my idea. According to him I was embarking on a similar kind of project as most scholars on the Sámi and the Arctic region more generally. Although only a minority of the Sámi are occupied in reindeer-tending, it is still the practice and image of the Sámi most often addressed and reproduced in the literature, media and popular perceptions⁴. "Wouldn't it be interesting to study something

⁴ Some of the noteworthy studies of Sámi reindeer-tenders include Tim Ingold (1976, 1997), Hugh Beach (1981, 2001, 2004), Robert Paine (1970, 1994) and Åsa Nilsson (2003).

else?” Ingold asked, and suggested, “like handicraft?” He reflected back on his own ethnographic work among the Skolt Sámi in Finland and said that craftsmanship is an important part of their lives, but that the subject has received little attention in anthropological writings.

After our conversation I mulled over his suggestion. A study of craft practices related well to my own background. My mother sewed many of my clothes as I was growing up and she still spends most evenings knitting in front of the television when she is at home. I have myself learnt and made handicraft, predominantly embroidery, since childhood and to apply this personal interest into research sparked my enthusiasm and made me question why I had not directed my attention to the topic earlier. This shift of focus from human-animal relations to Sámi handicraft practices did, however, not only bring me a greater sense of satisfaction while engaging in my preparatory literature studies for the fieldwork, but it also got me invited to Ájluokta.

In March 2010, I travelled to the city of Bådådådå to attend a two week’s course called ‘Sámi Language Documentation and Revitalization’⁵. The participation was intended as a first steppingstone for getting in touch with people working in the north and for practically learning how to approach and incorporate the Sámi language in my research. During the course I met Elias, an outgoing middle-aged Lulesámi man. At the time Elias worked as a researcher and editor at Árran- Lulesámi centre, an institution located in Ájluokta that aims to maintain and promote the Lulesámi language and *samfund* (N) (society). Elias took an interest in my research and said, similarly to Ingold, that craftsmanship has not received proper attention within contemporary Sámi studies. Consequently, he invited me to write an article about my work for *Bårjås*, a popular scientific journal published annually by Árran. I happily accepted his invitation, but as I had no first-hand experience of Sami handicraft we agreed that I board for a month in Ájluokta to finish the text while carrying out some ethnographic work to contribute to my literature studies. Apart from advancing my ideas, I perceived the opportunity of living in Divtasvuodna as an initial step for establishing further

⁵ The course took place at, what is now, the University of Nordland (until 2011 the institution went under the name of Bodø University College). It was organized by the university in collaboration with Árran- Lulesámi centre, the University of Tromsø, Humboldt University of Berlin and the University of Freiburg.

contacts and eventually finding an appropriate field-site, which at that time I did not think would necessarily be in Ájluokta. Nevertheless, at the end of those four weeks, I had started to know the residents in the area and begun as a craft apprentice among a group of Lulesámi women. When the possibility appeared to move in with Ellen, an elder, widowed and kind-hearted woman who also is considered one of the most skilled *duodjár* (Ls) (craft-makers) in the area, it felt like a given to stay.

A Note on Language

Divtasvuodna is a bilingual area with speakers of both the Lulesámi and Norwegian languages. The Lulesámi language, which traces its linguistic roots to the Finno-Urgic family, has little in common with the Germanic Norwegian language. As a consequence since the Norwegian language for long has dominated communication with authorities, conversations between Sámi and non-Sámi people in the area and has been compulsory at school, not all Lulesámi people speak the Lulesámi language.

Far from everyone is fluent in the Lulesámi language, indeed the vernacular way of speaking among the Lulesámi villagers is to compose sentences including words in both the Lulesámi and Norwegian languages. During fieldwork I had the advantage of being able to speak in my mother tongue as Swedish is mutually interchangeable with Norwegian. I also took a beginner's course in the Lulesámi language at Árran, tried to pick up as much as possible around me and adapt to the villagers' vernacular way of speaking by mixing the languages together.

In this thesis I include words written in indigenous terms where I consider translation into English unsatisfactory. This is especially the case with regards to craft terminology and when highlighting concepts that are of particular salience. Native terminology, except for personal and place names, is marked out with italics. Due to the polyglot nature of the fieldwork I indicate in brackets the language of the term on its first occurrence in the text. A Lulesámi word is followed by (Ls), Norwegian with (N), Swedish (S), and Northsámi (Ns). An English translation also follows in brackets at the first mentioning of each word and at sporadic successive occasions as reminders. A glossary of the craft terminology is provided at the end of the thesis. There exist a number of different interpretations of the Lulesámi orthography and in this work I predominantly use the spelling from Anders Kintel's (2012) online dictionary *Norsk- lulesamisk ordbok*.

Pronunciation can be tricky business in the Lulesámi language and for the reading of the words in the thesis it is of use to know the following vowel sounds:

a	short a-sound, like in cat
á	long a-sound, like in lake

Personal Names

At the time of fieldwork the request for anonymity among all villagers that I met (and in all contexts of my study) did not strike me as a concern. However, when I sat down to write the thesis I realised that it conflicted with my aim of giving a palpable appreciation of their lives and the various views within the hamlet through narratives, dialogues and lived everyday encounters. One answer to my encountered difficulty was to use fictional names and this I have done throughout the thesis. However, as the research was done in a small community, fictional names were not sufficient to protect people from identifying one another within the hamlet. Musing on this I realised that even if I never mentioned any personal fictional names, the villagers would still know with whom I lived, made handicraft with and spent most of my time with. Staying true to my aim of depicting ethnographic particularities while also respecting the villagers concerns for anonymity, I have employed a method similar to that set out by Mukulika Banerjee and Daniel Miller, in their anthropological work on the Indian sari, by often quoting dialogues and statements verbatim, but at other times drawing “together shared comments and perspectives in a single notional spokeswoman or dialogue” (2008 [2003]: 4). I have also mixed and altered personal information such as occupation, family situation and age. As such, also characters are in a sense fictional and some of the villagers might recognise themselves and others in one person, but at other times not. I ask, especially the Lulesámi readers, to keep this in mind throughout the thesis.

Place Names

In comparison to people’s wishes to remain anonymous there has been no request to keep place names unspecified. Quite to the contrary, many villagers have highlighted an interest in making their local practices visible within the literature.

Throughout the text, I adopt the Lulesámi place names that I became familiar with and spell out the Norwegian place names in brackets on their first mentioning. I include a glossary also of place names at the end of the thesis.

The Sámi

Over time the Sámi have been referred to by various names, including Fenni, Finns, Skridfinnar and, the most common, Lapps, by non-Sámi writers. It was not until the 1960s that a Sámi people's name for themselves, *sábme* (Ls), was adapted into other languages. The translation into English has varied among Same, Sami, Saami and Sámi. In this work I use 'Sámi' as it was employed by the Lulesámi themselves when speaking and writing in English and because it avoids confusion with English words. The Lulesámi, who dwell within the central region of Sápmi, are sometimes referred to by themselves and scholars alike as the Centralsámi people, yet, out of clarity, I employ the term Lulesámi throughout this work.

1. Setting the Scene

The Setting

Ájluokta's residents live scattered in clusters of houses along one main road that runs for approximately 7 km parallel to the coastline. Traveling along the road one has stunning views over the picturesque fjord and the obelisk-shaped mountain, Stetind, that in vernacular terms is labelled Norway's national mountain. Apart from the sound of rolling waves hitting the shore and the occasional noise of a humming fishing boat, a seagull's piercing shriek or a dog barking in the distance there is usually a calm silence over the hamlet. Most traffic is concentrated in the centre of the rural community, which serves as a thoroughfare for cars and trucks traveling along the highway. At the quay, where the highway from the south ends, there is often a queue of vehicles waiting for the ferry to take them over the fjord to Gásluokta, which is the municipality's administrative centre. From there, the main road continues north again. While waiting, a few passers-by make a quick visit to the small Lulesámi museum at Árran or grab a bite to eat at the restaurant on the dock. In summer, some tourists travel by boat further inside the fjord to hike far from concrete roads in the mountains and over the nearby border into Sweden.

All of Ájluokta's amenities, including the school, two kindergartens, a care home, a petrol station, a small food store and a little library, are located around the main crossroads, near the harbour. Árran's particular wooden architecture of a large *lávvu* (Ls) (temporary tent-like dwelling) is one of the most noticeable landmarks in the hamlet (fig. 5). Close by is also the white wooden gathering house for the Laestadian congregation, a Pietistic Lutheran movement that is the main religious institution in the area together with the Church of Norway. The church, which was renovated and expanded during my fieldwork, is located on a small hill towards the end of the hamlet and surrounded by a dense pine and birch forest.

When I arrived in Divtasvuodna at the end of August 2010 this forest was starting to dress in its autumn colours. Although the sun still stood high over the skyline of mountains around the fjord, the air was getting cooler and the chilly wind forced the villagers and me to zip up our windcheaters. Only a month later the first snow fell. Soon thereafter a thick white blanket covered the ground underneath the dancing Northern Lights. It was not until eight months later that the snow melted and the next to constant winter darkness was replaced by a much welcomed twenty-four hour of daylight.



Figure 5. View over the harbour and Árran.

Starting Out

I began fieldwork with the aim to study the definition of the term *duodje* (Ls). I was intrigued by the various ways in which the concept has been interpreted and translated in the literature. My idea was to contrast the scholarly descriptions of the topic with how people devoted to the making of handicraft define their practices. The most common definition of *duodje* is the making of Sámi handicraft. This includes the production of the *gáppte* (Ls), (characteristic Sámi garment), the *nijbbe* (Ls) (knife) made with reindeer antler and birch, the *gukse* (Ls) (drinking vessel) and *nahppe* (Ls) (milking vessel) carved out from birch burls, woven root baskets, knitwear and various leather works such as the *káffavuossa* (Ls) (bag for storing coffee) (fig. 6 and 7). However, Gunvor Guttorm (2007: 65-66), a Sámi craft-maker and professor of *duodje*, writes that *duodje* can also be defined as “all forms of creative expressions that require human thought and production”. This includes to weave a belt, build a boat, write a book or, even, a thought process (ibid.). The Sámi poet and musician Nils-Aslak Valkeapää (1943-2001) also says that *duodje* can be everything, from the ways one walks, drinks coffee or lights a fire to then sitting down by it. From this specific view, *duodje* is regarded as a total way of being in the world (cf. Gustafsson 2010).

Elias, who had taken an interest in my research and invited me to Divtasvuodna to write an article about the various definitions of *duodje*, was eager to help me settle in and start the work on my arrival in Ájluokta. After just a few days in the hamlet, he introduced me to some of the Lulesámi women who make handicraft. The women welcomed my study and encouraged me to employ an apprentice-style methodology in my research, by learning and making handicraft myself. Quickly it became a daily practice to develop my skills in the craftwork in their company. My immersion in the women’s activities not only enabled me to make handicraft. I was also welcomed into their lives and homes. Frequently, I was invited to dinner. We walked together in the mountains and picked blueberries in the forest. I listened to their life stories and told them mine. Moreover, I engaged in vivid conversations, over endless cups of coffee, about the tenors of everyday life.



Figure 6. Examples of *duodje*: a *gukse*, *kávffavuossa* and *nijbbe*.



Figure 7. A woman and child dressed in the *gáppte* at a baptism ceremony.

Although the relationship between the women and me grew stronger each day that we spent together, I was, however, ignored every time that I asked about the *definition* of *duodje*. At first I became frustrated when they avoided my questions. I was stressed with finishing the article and worried that I was not gathering enough first-hand information on my topic of study.

In retrospect, my focus on *defining duodje* moved me away from the women's perceptions and understandings of their practices. To *define duodje* was, in their opinion, insignificant. Instead, they placed emphasis on *learning, making, distributing* and *using* what they alternately called *duodje* or *håndarbeid* (N) (handicraft). Fortunately, I soon realised that I had been too guided by my initial idea and interest and overlooked what was important for the women themselves. In the midst of worrying about my study, I had also noticed that I was becoming more and more immersed in the craftwork and way of life that the women themselves valued and which they patiently and generously welcomed me to join. A few weeks into fieldwork, I abandoned my initial idea and followed the suggestions of scholars like Joanna Overing (1985, 2003; cf. Overing and Passes 2000), Jakob Meløe (1997, 1998), Lila Abu-Lughod (1993, 1999) and Paloma Gay y Blasco and Huan Wardle (2007) by allowing people's everyday experiences to steer and shape my research.

The Ethnographic Focus

I did not leave Ájluokta with a clear understanding of how the villagers define the term *duodje*. However, by joining the women in their craft practices and daily lives, I came to understand that their craftwork profoundly shapes and is shaped by people's sentiments and how they perceive themselves, relate to others and make their ways through life in diverse, yet interwoven, ways. I learnt that craftsmanship is a self-transforming experience that not only involves a growing dexterity in making things by hand, but as anthropologists previously have noted, encompasses a complete way of being, traversing and merging immaterial and material realms of life (e.g. Whitterspoon 1977; Overing 1989; Coote 1995; Reichard 1998 [1934]; Guttorm 2001; Marchand 2001, 2009; Herzfeld 2004).

Guttorm (2001: 58), in her doctoral thesis about the changes and continuities of the *nahppe's* design and use over time, mentions that Sámi craft practices are part of a holistic thinking about *det gode livet* (N) (the good life). According to Guttorm, 'a good life' includes aspects such as compassion and independence for the Sámi. In this study I build on Guttorm's argument by placing craftwork's potential to enhance the Lulesámi's abilities of *leve vel* (N) (living well) at the centre stage of my analysis.

What particularly struck me during my year of fieldwork was the Lulesámi's emphasis on creating personal and social well-being in everyday life, and craftwork's roles within such a philosophy and practices. I was intrigued by how the learning, production and use of the handicraft was interwoven within the creation of a good life, which for the Lulesámi entail aspects such as daily physical closeness among people, affectionate and egalitarian social relations and respect towards personal autonomy. That being said, the making of a good life is not a straight-forward process. The Lulesámi do not speak with one voice. Rather, people have different life stories which influence their outlooks on life, self-understanding and relations to other people. People also change their views towards the self and world with time, in different situations and through the joys and sorrows of life. Throughout this thesis my wish is to provide an insight into how craft practices are situated within this ever-changing realm of existence and how craftwork is intertwined with and a vital part of the villagers' continuous quest for living well.

While my aim in this dissertation is to provide a rich contemporary anthropological account of the Lulesámi, their existential realities and craftsmanship, the study also engages with on-going anthropological and especially feminist debates about the interrelationship between domestic practices and larger social, political, economic and moral spheres and webs of relations (e.g. Abu-Lughod 1993, 1999 [1989]; Overing and Passes 2000; Parker 2010 [1984]). My intention is to take seriously the craftwork that the women themselves value deeply and see how such practices speak to a wider anthropological understanding of what it means to be human.

Before moving on to the ethnography, I first highlight the main three themes that run centrally throughout the chapters that follow and place the study within a wider literary and theoretical framework. The first theme focuses on the *gáppte* and the various ways in which the garment and its use shape and is shaped by people's sense of self and relations to others. The second is concerned with learning to make the dress. I show that the learning processes, rather than involving a fixed set of skills, are based on an ongoing practical and sensuous engagement within an environment established by other craft-makers. The novices not only learn the technical skills of producing a garment to be worn, but they are also drawn into acquiring certain social skills and virtues for living a good life. Lastly, I address the productive activities within the domestic sphere, which often go unnoticed as they cannot easily be seen or measured through tangible evidence, but which nevertheless affirm and strengthen the making of a convivial society.

Considering the *Gáppte*

In Ájluokta, it is predominantly women who make handicraft today. They mainly produce the *gáppte* (Ls), a characteristic Sámi dress which I describe in detail in chapter 3, as an unpaid *husarbeid* (N) (domestic, or home-based, work) for their next of kin. Some women also make the *gáppte* on commissions from other Lulesámi villagers in return for a monetary payback as a sideline to their old age pension or salaried employment.

The *gáppte* was worn in daily life up until the mid-1900s, but has gradually since then been complemented and then replaced by what the Lulesámi call *vestlige klær* (N) (Western clothes such as suits, blouses, jeans and sneakers). Nowadays the *gáppte* is worn by women and men of all ages and occupations on special occasions that demonstrate an important stage in a person's life cycle. During my fieldwork, new-borns were dressed in the *gáppte* at their baptism (fig. 7 and 8). The garment was worn by teenagers at their confirmation ceremony and at school graduation. I saw photographs of people who had worn the *gáppte* at their wedding celebration. Furthermore, I was told that many were dressed in the *gáppte* at their death. The dress was also worn at Laestadian gatherings and church services at

Christmas or Easter and events like inaugurations of Sámi institutions, academic seminars and the annual winter market in Jåhkåmåhkke. Event names are frequently used when referring to a *gáppte* that is worn or received at particular occasions. Some examples are the *dåpsgáppte* (N/Ls) (baptismal-*gáppte*), *konfirmasjonsgáppte* (N/Ls) (confirmation-*gáppte*), *bryllupsgáppte* (N/Ls) (wedding-*gáppte*) and *festivalgáppte* (N/Ls), which is a dress worn when attending music concerts and festivals. Although these different names are used, the garments resemble one another in cut, colour and design.



Figure 8. A *dåpsgáppte*.

To understand the change in everyday clothing from the *gáppte* to ‘Western’ clothes throughout the 1900s, and the contemporary role and significance of the *gáppte*, it is necessary to place the choices of what to wear within a wider social, political and economic framework. According to the Lulesámi villagers, the transition from the *gáppte* to ‘Western’ clothes was due to numerous factors such as the increasing availability of factory-made garments and a growing cash economy. Up until the 1960s, the Lulesámi sustained themselves on a livelihood that included fishing, hunting, gathering, forestry, small-scale farming and agriculture. Their craftsmanship was an integral part of their self-sufficient living and comprised the making of all things including clothing needed in everyday life⁶. However, as people gradually became engaged in full-time salaried employment (as nurses, teachers, academics, librarians, carpenters etc.) the amount of time left during the day for making clothing declined. The monetary income increased and material supplies were bought by the money earned through labour.

In addition, the *fornorskning* (N) (‘Norwegianisation’), the state’s assimilation policy, employed from around the mid-1800s to the late 1900s, affected what the Lulesámi choose to wear. For centuries the Sámi have been subjected to various forms of oppression and control by the State and Church⁷. This governing intensified from the mid-1800s with the growth of nationalism in Norway⁸. Influenced by Social Darwinism, the Norwegian authorities viewed the Sámi as an inferior and backward people and considered them and their ways of living to ill fit the building of a ‘modern’ nation. In 1863 Johannes Steen, who was the Prime Minister of Norway from 1891 to 1893 and from 1898 to 1902, said that the only future for the Sámi was full integration into the Norwegian nation (as cited in Myrvoll 2010: 49). Little by little, the Sámi’s existence was undermined. Between 1889 and 1959

⁶ A commonly made distinction of the craft practices is between *dibma duodje* (Ls), craftwork made with soft materials (e.g. skin, textile and yarn), and *garra duodje* (Ls), craftwork made with hard materials (e.g. wood and antler). While women most often work with soft materials, such as fabrics, yarns or reindeer skins, men make primarily handicraft in hard materials, like wood and antler.

⁷ See e.g. Harald Eidheim (1971), Gutorm Gjessing (1973), Harald Gaski (1997), Israel Ruong (1982 [1969]) and Veli-Pekka Lehtola (2004) for the history of the Sámi.

⁸ The rise of nationalism correlated with Norway’s independence from Denmark, with which it had been unified between 1389 and 1814. Although Norway joined a union with Sweden in 1814 it was more or less autonomous. In 1905 Norway became a state in its own right after a large Norwegian majority voted for independence in a referendum, thereafter Norway and Sweden negotiated and signed the dissolution of their previous union.

Norwegian law stated that all school education should be held in Norwegian and prohibited the use of the Sámi language in the classrooms (Gjessing 1973: 104). Sámi history was also expunged from the school curriculum.

The Norwegianisation continued throughout the 1900s and reached such a point that many people felt ashamed of being Sámi. The state's negative perception of the Sámi had by this time also spread throughout the country and influenced many of the citizens. Some of the Lulesámi elders in the hamlet recounted that they believed and experienced that they had to *bli norsk* (N) (become Norwegian) by abandoning the *gáppte*, burn their Sámi handicraft and only speak Norwegian in order to participate in society without fear of discrimination.

However, as a reaction towards the state's paternalistic attitude, the Sámi mobilised. They demanded recognition and equal rights within the country. Their political movement gradually grew and reached its peak in the 1980s. Today, after years of political struggle, the Sámi are recognised as an indigenous people of Norway. In the Sámi Act of 1987 (Sameloven) and the Norwegian constitution of 1988 (Grunnloven) the Norwegian government declare to treat the Sámi and non-Sámi Norwegians equally. These implementations were followed by Norway becoming the first country to sign the International ILO-convention 169 to grant the Sámi people their right to self-determination and land rights.

Also in Divtasvuodna the Sámi political movement intensified during the last decades of the 1900s. In 1979 the first organisation, Nuortta-Sálto Sámiij Sijdda (Nordsaltens sameforening) was established to safeguard Sámi interests in the region. Two years later, in 1981, the organisation suggested the instituting of a Lulesámi cultural centre in the area. This proposal resulted in the formation of Árran in 1994 by the Ministry of Local Government, Nordland's county authorities and the municipality of Divtasvuodna. Marit Myrvoll (2010), an anthropologist who conducted research on religious change and continuity in Divtasvuodna during the late 1990s, writes that the centre has successfully contributed to strengthening the Lulesámi people's rights and presence in the area after years of Norwegianisation.

In consequence of these Sámi victories and achievements and together with an increasing mindfulness of human rights, many villagers have nowadays replaced the previous feelings of shame connected to their Sámi sense of self with a growing self-respect. This increasing dignity has, in turn, resulted in an *oppblomstring* (N) (flourishing) in the interest of wearing the *gáppte* among the Lulesámi.

Although the *gáppte*'s use has transformed over time, it is continuously pictured in images of the Sámi and one of the main visual markers associated with their self-identification and distinct way of life in relation to other people. The colourful dress is portrayed in watercolour portraits by the Scottish author and folklorist John Francis Campbell (1821-1885) and in chiaroscuro oil paintings by the Swedish artist Johan Fredrik Höckert (1826-1866)⁹. It is also captured by the camera lenses of Prince Roland Bonaparte (1858-1924), a honorary fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute, and by the Swedish photographer Borg Mesch (1869-1956). Furthermore, the *gáppte* was worn by the Sámi who were displayed at live exhibitions in places such as the London Museum during the 1800s¹⁰. Nowadays, the garment is seen in photographs taken at political meetings in the Sámi Parliament as well as on postcards. It is also the dress of souvenir dolls and illustrated in tourist brochures.

Looking at the literature, the *gáppte* is mentioned in the earliest scholarly works on the Sámi by the German-Swedish humanist Johannes Schefferus (1673) and the Norwegian priest and linguist Knut Leem (1767) as a defining element of the Sámi lifestyle. This view is reproduced in the many monographs written in the Sámi, Scandinavian and English languages from the end of the 1800s and up until today (e.g. Düben 1873; Turi 1917 [1910]¹¹; Drake 1918; Kolsrud 1947; Collinder 1949; Vorren and Manker 1957; Kjellström 2000)¹². During the last

⁹ Other painters who have portrayed the Sámi include Pehr Hilleström (1732-1816), François Auguste Biard (1799-1882), Per Daniel Holm (1835-1903), Anna Nordlander (1843-1879) and Johan Tirén (1853-1911).

¹⁰ Anne Maxwell (1999) writes that international exhibitions started featuring live displays from the 1800s. Mainly imperial nations, like England, France, Germany and the United States, displayed people from their colonised areas and other parts of the world. For a discussion of the exhibitions where the Sámi participated I refer to Cathrine Baglo (2008).

¹¹ Johan Turi's work, which originally was published in Sámi, is among the first books written by a Sámi author in the Sámi language.

¹² Schefferus's (1673) *Lapponia*, which is based on early texts and subsequent reports by clergymen who had settled in the north, is regarded the first academic work on the Sámi and, as such, it is of some literary importance. The earliest study grounded on first-hand experience was written by Leem (1767), who worked as

few decades, several authors have also made important contributions to the understanding of the *gáppte* by concentrating on documenting its regional variations and transformations over time (e.g. Ågren 1977; Nilsson 1981; Svensson 1994; Jannok-Porsbo 1988, 1999; Aira et al. 1995; Guttorm 2006; cf. Dunfjeld 2006). Lis-Mari Hjortfors (1999), an ethnologist working at Árran, and Aline Mikkelsen (2006), a Lulesámi craft-maker, focus exclusively on describing the changes and continuities of the *gáppte* worn in the Norwegian Lulesámi area. I draw on their studies in chapter 3 when I describe the *gáppte* in some detail.

Situating Visions

From a wider literary perspective, clothing received little attention within the social sciences in comparison to topics like kinship and religion until the last decades of the 1900s (Barnes and Eicher 1992). Previously clothes were very often merely taken into consideration to classify people into distinct cultures and represent these cultures to the world (Tarlo 1996:2). Apart from the use of clothing to make classifications, Barbara Burman (1999: 3) argues, in her edited volume on home dress-making in Britain and the United States, that academics for long considered clothing “too everyday to warrant attention” and as a superficial domain of women with little importance for human social life at large (cf. Woodward 1994; 2005; Tarlo 1996: 4; Miller 2005: 3 on a similar note). It was only with the growing academic interest in the body and agency from the 1980s onwards that clothing was placed at the centre stage of scholarly enquiries¹³. Since then, research on clothing has dramatically increased¹⁴. In anthropology and across related disciplines it is nowadays recognised that clothes are of significance for both women and men owing to their position and mediation between the self and the world (e.g. Hansen 2004; Ewart and O’Hanlon 2007; Turner 2007 [1980]). Due to a garment’s visual impact and closeness to the human body it

a missionary in Finnmark. Leem stressed the importance of living among the Sámi and speaking the Sámi language to gain an understanding into their way of life. From the turn of the century fieldwork became progressively more significant. Scholars interested in the Sámi also grew in numbers during this time and the term *lappologi* (N/S) (the study of the Sámi) was coined in Scandinavia.

¹³ See Michael Jackson (1989: 119- 155), Thomas Csordas (1996) and Frances Mascia-Lees (2011) for the history of the body in anthropology.

¹⁴ For the history and an overview of anthropological perspectives on clothing see Jane Schneider (1987), Joanne Eicher and Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins (1992) and Karen Hansen (2004).

has, according to Ruth Barnes and Joanne Eicher (1992), the capacity to both include and exclude a person from a social position or group membership and generate and affect a person's self-understanding. It can also display, define and create geographical belonging, power, economic wealth and religious affiliation (ibid.). Clothing is, in other words, an important element through which people express, transform and understand themselves in relation to others. Elisha Renne states, in her study of cloth among the Bùnú Yorùbá people of Nigeria, "An analysis centering on a concrete object may, ironically, be one of the best ways to approach the fleeting quality of social relations" (1996: 4) and "for examining the complicated ambiguity of human intentions" (ibid.: 8).

One influential approach is to study dress through semiotics. Writers, including Alison Lurie (1981) and Roland Barthes (1985), argue alike that dress is a sign system through which humans classify themselves and others. Barnes and Eicher (1992: 1) likewise write that clothing establishes visual communication "before verbal interaction even transmits whether such a verbal exchange is possible or desirable". In this study I show that the *gáppte's* immediate visual impact and uniqueness compared to other kinds of clothing make it a powerful visual marker for creating unity among the Lulesámi and distinguishing them as a distinct group in relation to other people. However, while I adopt a semiotic perspective for revealing certain important aspects of the *gáppte*, I also recognise that there are limitations to such an approach.

Semiotic analyses tend to regard the world as an independent and pre-existing signified reality which can be read as a text. The weakness with such an outlook is that it fails to consider how perceptions of the world are shaped through people's lived experiences and sentiments rather than prior to them. It also undermines various views of the world and overlooks the temporal and relational aspects of life. With regards to the *gáppte*, it has not always been perceived in the same way. The garment was worn as a practical and comfortable everyday item of clothing by the Sámi during the first half of the 1900s, while, at the same time, it was viewed as exotic by some non-Sámi and, in some instances, considered as a sign of their imagined backwardness. By studying the transformations in the *gáppte's* use and by exploring the shifting perspectives of the dress during the last decades,

the discussions in chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis reveal how people's understandings of clothing can be challenged, reconsidered and changed.

For moving beyond a mere and single semiotic interpretation of the *gáppte*, I have been influenced by Marilyn Strathern's (1979) study of self-decoration among the Hageners of Papua New Guinea and Emma Tarlo's works on clothing in India (1996) and among British Muslims (2010). Strathern (1979) argues that the Hageners engage in practices of self-decoration in the hope of gaining admiration and prestige, to facilitate new social and political relations and to develop self-confidence. Strathern brings to our attention that acts of dressing are contingent on anticipated gazes from others towards the dressed body and, equally, on how a person sees herself dressed among others (cf. Woodward 2005, 2007 on a similar note). Tarlo also recognises that dress can be understood differently depending on the audience, time and context and that "clothes are not merely defining but they are also... used to define, to present, to deceive, to enjoy, to communicate, to reveal and conceal" (1996: 8). In her studies, Tarlo unfolds how people incorporate and negotiate a layer of clothes depending on a variety of factors including life history, space, politics, religion and aesthetics.

In chapters 4 and 5 I draw on Strathern's and Tarlo's works by exploring how the visibility of the *gáppte* and understandings of clothing are shaped and interwoven in complex webs of relating to others and the world. In short, my aim is to explore, through the ethnography, how people's experiences of clothing, of ways of seeing and being seen (cf. Berger 1990 [1972]), are situated within changing and heterogeneous processes that include personal biographies, shifting political, economic and social relations, religious practices and emotional states.

A Double-edged Sword

To address the varied experiences of clothing among the Lulesámi it is necessary to step away from popular perceptions which contrast the changing manners of Euro-American dress with the idea of indigenous people's clothing being bound to a static tradition (see e.g.

Ewart and O'Hanlon 2007). While many assume that people in the 'West' constantly transform themselves and their clothes as part of who they are, changes in indigenous clothing have commonly been considered as a loss of their 'authenticity' and as a process of 'acculturation' (ibid.; cf. Tarlo 2010). The failure with such a perspective is, however, that it not only reduces the indigenous person to the stature of a passive victim of hegemonic Euro-American influence, but also constrains her within a collective and timeless way of being (ibid.).

It is important to note here that there exists no single definition of 'indigeneity', yet, one of the most common ways that indigenous people have been portrayed during the last two decades is through "essentialist images of cultural isolation, stasis, ahistoricity, and internal homogeneity" (Conklin 1997: 713). In contrast to this popular notion, one of the main preoccupations among anthropologists today is to show how multifaceted and dynamic the lives of indigenous people are. As an example, a number of writers have recently challenged the idea that changes in 'non-Western' clothing are solely a form of 'acculturation'. These authors show how sartorial modifications can be a way to manage relations with others (Ewart 2007; Gow 2007), a strategic option to profit from tourism (Otto and Verloop 1996; Rovine 2008 [2001]: 27- 52), a tool to make political claims (Beans 1989; Conklin 1997, 2007) or a "simply playful transformation of one's style" (Rovine 2008: 98; cf. Tarlo 2010).

To view the Lulesámi as bounded by collective coercive and timeless forces fits badly with their emphasis on personal autonomy and dislike of hierarchy, views that I frequently encountered during fieldwork and which have also been noted by several scholars working among the Sámi (Pelto 1962; Paine 1970; Ingold 1997; Balto 2006; Jávo 2010). In this thesis I build on the works by anthropologists such as Beth Conklin (1997, 2007) who have shown how new garments and combinations of different attires have not merely been enforced upon indigenous groups, but also have been selected and appropriated within their present lifestyle based on political and practical considerations or to bring about new forms of social relations.

While the *gáppte*'s use has transformed over time in relation to changing life conditions, it is still worn today and the garment's appearance has not greatly changed. This stability has not been collectively constraining for the Lulesámi, but rather its stylistic consistency is considered essential for enabling people to continuously generate ties of affection and kinship back and forth over time, as well as affirming their uniqueness in relation to other people. In contrast to ideas common since the Enlightenment that view the collective as coercive and repressive (Overing and Passes 2000: 13)¹⁵, the Lulesámi do not regard collectivism as opposed to personal autonomy. Rather, as I demonstrate throughout this thesis, the Lulesámi regard it vital to feel *tillhørighet* (N) (belonging) within a *felleskap* (N) (collective) composed of autonomous individuals in order to achieve both personal and communal well-being (cf. Pelto 1962; Mazzullo 2005: 310; Balto 2006). That being said, the Lulesámi are affected by other people's opinions, judgements and preconceptions. This is especially noticeable with regards to issues of 'authenticity', that is to say what it means to be Sámi, and in decisions about whether to reveal or conceal their sameness or distinctiveness in relation to other people.

Even though the change from indigenous clothes to other articles of wear is not always considered as a form of acculturation, Beth Conklin (1997: 716) argues that it is often seen as a sign of strength and cultural pride when indigenous dress is worn. Conklin (1997) shows that people in the Amazonian region often frame their histories and practices in accordance to common stereotypes of what it means to be indigenous by wearing their distinct dress in demonstrations against exploitation of their lands, to gain media attention, to obtain benefits from government and NGOs and to create solidarity with other indigenous groups.

I see many parallels between Conklin's work and my own. Bearing in mind that the Sámi have no state of their own, for them to assert their entitlements to speak the Lulesámi language in school or to participate in decisions regarding the land, they are, in many instances, forced to build upon popular ideas of indigeneity. Today the Sámi might no longer be viewed as 'primitive', yet the struggle for or against Sámi rights within the state is

¹⁵ For further scholarly discussions of how the individual and the collective have been considered as contrasting or interdependent categories see, e.g. Steven Lukes (1973), Michael Carrithers et al. (1985) and Thomas Csordas (1996).

regularly justified and channelled through particular notions of the past and especially in connection to how long the Sámi have lived within the country.

Tim Ingold (2000: 132) writes that a common interpretation is to regard indigenous people as native inhabitants of a certain area, as the so called 'original inhabitants' of a particular piece of land before settlers arrived from elsewhere, and dissimilar in their way of living from the majority population of a country. According to Ingold (ibid: 136), this definition is grounded in an assumption that indigeneity is related to ancestry or descent as a property transmitted through a line of points, or successive steps, as far back in time as possible. This view is widely employed by organisations such as the United Nations and in the ILO-convention 169, which the Norwegian government ratified in 1990.

The Lulesámi have in many instances learnt that they have to cast their political claims through terms of ancestry to gain certain rights. Within such debates, with which I engage in chapter 4, the *gáppte*'s tangible connections among the Sámi and across time have made it an important political element. I show that while trying to conform to specific understandings of what it means to be indigenous, the Lulesámi are in instances forced to provide tangible evidence of their presence in their area over the centuries by, for example, demonstrating the continuity of their dress practices. This is partly done by showing the similarities between archaeological findings of garments worn in the past and present-day clothing.

However, by viewing ancestry as an inherited property, Ingold (2000: 136) argues that people's contemporary practices are believed to be determined by the lives of past relatives and unaffected by foreign influences. Such view reproduces a fixed and homogeneous idea of indigenous people. Ingold (2000: 235) writes, "Present-day indigenous people, it is supposed, are in some sense 'the same' as the people who were there at the very beginning, because the former are descended from the latter". What such an idea neglects is, according to Ingold, the meshwork of people's practices and relations in a world that is ever-changing. It also denies the perception of many indigenous people like the Lulesámi who in their everyday lives do not see their relationship to ancestors or group membership as objects

devoid of context or fixed attributes, but as activities that are continuously generated and brought forward through actual experiences within the world (chapter 4, 5 and 6; see also Ingold *ibid*:136-138).

A decade ago, Adam Kuper (2003) argued that the notion of indigeneity should be abolished. In short, Kuper (2003: 390) writes that the concept of 'indigeneity' is socially constructed and racially prejudiced in order to gain "privileged rights" to a country's resources over other people. Justin Kendrick and Jerome Lewis (2004: 4) state that it is difficult to take seriously Kuper's argument, and especially the parallels he draws between indigenous peoples' movement and European fascism. However, the authors also argue that Kuper's article cannot be ignored because of its potential to support and reinforce discriminatory views (*ibid*). The possibility of Kuper's argument to justify the opinions of those whose interests are different from indigenous people is exemplified in the Lulesámi people's struggle for political and social rights in Norway. Like Kuper, a few critics towards the Lulesámi movement argue that the Lulesámi claim special privileges and that they ought to adapt to life in Norway like the rest of the citizens by, for example, speaking the Norwegian language (chapter 4).

People like the Sámi who nowadays define themselves as *urfolk* (N) (indigenous) have often experienced exploitation and oppression from state authorities. Likewise, Kendrick and Lewis (2004: 9) highlight that the indigenous rights movement is "a response to processes of severe discrimination and dispossession". In criticising Kuper's essentialist view of indigeneity, Kendrick and Lewis emphasise that the term must be placed within a context, and that it is in many instances vital within processes of self-identification and a useful tool in political struggles against discrimination. According to Kendrick and Lewis:

A relational understanding of the term focuses on the fundamental issues of power and dispossession that those calling themselves indigenous are concerned to address, and on the enduring social, economic and religious practices that constitute their relationship with land, resources and other people (2004: 9)

Likewise, Ingold (2000: 133, cf. *ibid*: 2000: 150-151) argues that "it is in confronting the need to articulate their experience in an idiom compatible with the dominant discourses of the

state that people are led to lay claim to indigenous status”. Thus, in defining oneself as indigenous, I argue in chapter 4 that the Lulesámi aim to assert and maintain a particular sense of self in relation to others.

Marisol de la Cadena and Orin Starn (2007: 13-14) further point out that a relational understanding of indigeneity must not only compromise the relationship between indigenous people and the state, but also an awareness of how the concept is understood in different settings, times and between generations. In their opinion, “indigeneity demands recognizing it as a relational field of governance, subjectivities, and knowledges that involves us all – indigenous and nonindigenous – in the making and remaking of its structures of power and imagination” (de la Cadena and Starn 2007: 3).

The views of indigeneity and belonging, and the relationship between identity and dress, are complex issues which I explore in chapters 4 and 5 through the Lulesámi’s own voices. Time and again the *gáppte* is like a double-edged sword with the capacity for both constructive and destructive impacts on, and consequences for, people’s lives and well-being. The *gáppte* can be located within the Lulesámi’s political struggles, yet as I show in chapter 4, its ‘foreignness’ can also be employed to undermine such rights. Moreover, at the same time as the *gáppte* is important politically to gain recognition within the state and legal status to the land, it can also reproduce certain static and singular images of indigeneity both among Lulesámi and non-Sámi people, and cause anxieties of what it means to be Sámi. In chapter 5, I show how clothes can produce feelings as diverse as pride and shame, belonging and rejection, and affection and negligence. The study highlights that decisions about what to wear at times result in the formation, affirmation and manifestation of a person’s sense of self and place within a social network. At other times, clothes create and express ambiguities, insecurities, pressures and conflicts for the individual and in relations between people. While these different uses, perceptions and consequences of indigenous clothing may be seen as paradoxical and stand in tension, I also argue in chapter 5 that these same variations can coexist and be played out differently depending on the context in which choices of what to wear are made (cf. Conklin 1997: 728-729; de la Cadena and Starn 2007: 9).

The On-going Making of a Convivial Life

Although this thesis is not concerned with defining the term *duodje*, I still want to highlight some potential preconceptions around its translation as ‘craft’, which are of importance for this study. One possible explanation for the different perceptions of *duodje*, stated at the beginning of this chapter, is the difficulty of translation. In his seminal article ‘On alternating sounds’, Franz Boas (1889) argues that humans’ understandings of the world are shaped by previous experiences and familiar perceptions. Boas aptly shows how we are able to hear (see and smell) that which we are accustomed to, while we at first become ‘sound-blind’ to perceive new and unknown sounds. With regards to the difficulty of translating from one language to another, Valkeapää says:

People who only know one language think that in another language the words are only replaced with equivalent ones. It probably never even occurs to them that the whole way of thinking may be different and that things may be seen in a different way (as cited in Lehtola 2002:14)¹⁶.

‘Craft’ is a widely debated concept among Euro-American scholars¹⁷. Commonly, the discussion centres on the separation and distinction between ‘craft’ and ‘art’. While ‘craft’ is popularly defined as a planned activity of making utilitarian things rooted in a collective tradition by hand (a bodily work), ‘art’ is seen as a spontaneous aesthetic expression of an individual’s mind independent from the collective (e.g. Boas 1955; Collingwood 1981 [1938]; Baxandall 1988; Greenhalgh 1997; Sennett 2008).

In the Sámi language the distinction between ‘craft’ and ‘art’ is relatively recent. Thomas Kintel (2008) writes that the term *dájdda* (Ls) (art) was introduced by a few Sámi artists and political activists in the 1970s as a reaction to the political, economic and social climate at the time. First, the Norwegian state changed its cultural support scheme in the 1970s and it became important for full-time artists/craft-makers to have their work labelled as ‘art’ in order to receive economic support, according to Kintel (2008: 80). Secondly, during the Sámi

¹⁶ Valkeapää’s statement relates to the well-known Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which suggests that a language shapes its speakers’ experiences and perceptions of the world (Whorf 1956; see also Meløe 1998).

¹⁷ See Greenhalgh (1997) and Sennett (2008) for detailed discussions about the history of craft.

political movement, *duodje* was an important building block for creating a strong and unified group identity and distinctiveness separate from the majority population (ibid.; I elaborate on the *gáppte's* role within the Sámi political struggle in chapter 5). While *duodje*, at this time, was seen as essential to Sámi identity and belonging, some also understood it to hinder true artistic freedom by being restricted to a collective set of values and practices (Kintel 2008; Guttorm 2009)¹⁸.

These Sámi classifications are clearly influenced by Euro-American understandings. In contrast to *duodje*, which according to the Sámi Dáiddárleksikona (Sámi Artists' Dictionary) is "craft made by the Sámi at home for utilitarian purposes", *dájdda* is described as "expressions within the present form of artistic fashions connected to universal discussions of art" (as cited in Guttorm 2001: 42, author's translation).

Prior to the influence of hegemonic Euro-American ideas of artistic expressions and the introduction of *dájdda*, there was no distinction between craft and art in the Sámi language. According to Valkeapää, "Sami culture never had art. It never had artists either [...] Traditionally to the Sámi everything was life" (as cited in Lehtola 2004: 95)¹⁹. From Schefferus's (1673) *Laponia* and up until today, Sámi craftsmanship is described as having been an integral part of the self-sufficient lifestyle in northern Fennoscandia prior to the transition to paid employment and the increasing availability of mass-manufactured goods. This literature does not portray craftsmanship as the mere manual execution of predetermined ideas, but as an ongoing adaptation, an ingenious way to make utilitarian

¹⁸ Soumhya Venkatesan writes, in her study of Labbai mat weavers in India, that a common perception is that "the craft producer is a vessel of authenticity rather than an author of his own strategies of production" (2009: 43). Michael Herzfeld similarly argues that artisans in Crete are put on a pedestal as well as given a tethering post (2004: 1).

¹⁹ Anthropologists in other geographical settings have also shown how artistic practices compose a complete way of being in the world. Gary Whitterspoon writes that art, for the Navajo, cannot be separated from *hózhó*, a concept defining a beautiful and peaceful life. For the Navajo, *hózhó* manifests social harmony in a world where conflicts are avoided, destructive feelings kept under control and personal autonomy highly valued. Among the Navajo, everyone is an artist, cooperating in the on-going generation of life. Joanna Overing (1989), in her work among the Piaroa, and Jeremy Coote (1995), in his studies of the Nilotes in south Sudan, similarly argue that art permeates every aspect of the everyday, encompassing an aesthetics of life.

things well-adapted to people's activities in the circumpolar climate²⁰. Guttorm writes that Sámi craft production is "both a continuing process and something which is in constant change" (2001: 21, author's translation). Drawing on this literature and my own ethnographic material, I suggest that understanding Lulesámi craftsmanship becomes too limited if it is merely defined as a predetermined and collectively constrained activity of making things by hand.

In chapter 7 I consider that the learning process of making handicraft does not involve a fixed set of skills, but that it is based on an ongoing practical and sensuous engagement with the world. The analysis questions the common way of perceiving learning as the transmission of skills as an internal stock of knowledge from a teacher, educational institution or textbook to a novice (see e.g. Pálsson 1994: 902-903). In the Lulesámi case, this learning model would imply that a novice is taught a set of pre-existing skills of how to make handicraft by a more experienced craft-maker. When these skills have been acquired, the novice applies them as a planned activity in the work at hand. Although I show in chapter 7 that an apprentice in Lulesámi craftsmanship gradually becomes more skilled and learns craftwork through her relationship with experienced craft-makers, there are a number of problems with viewing learning merely as the acquisition of pre-existing rules.

Gísli Pálsson, in his study of how Icelandic fishermen come to learn their work, criticises the normative approach of learning by stating that it views the learning process as a "mental code or script that exist[s] prior to and independent of human activities, [as] a recipe for action" (1994: 103; cf. Ingold 2000: 339- 361 on a similar note). From such a perspective of human understanding, skills are seen to be internalised through their transmission from one person to another and the body becomes reduced to what Michael Jackson calls "a "thing" onto which social patterns are projected" (1989: 123). What such a model overlooks is, according to scholars like Pálsson (1994) and Ingold (2000: 339-361), the ways in which skills come into being through a person's immersion within the ever-changing world, or what has frequently been described as embodiment; "a methodological standpoint in which bodily

²⁰ Apart from the functionality of the handicraft, authors also appreciate their aesthetics with the characteristic rounded and smooth forms, ornamentations and the colourful dress (e.g. Barck and Kihlberg 1981; Kihlberg 1994, 1996, 1999; Hård af Segerstad 1971; Rác 1972; Guttorm 2001).

experience is understood to be the existential ground of culture and self” (Csordas 1996: 269).

Chapter 7 follows the works by authors such as Pálsson and Ingold by showing that craftwork is not merely the acquisition and execution of predetermined skills, but a continuous coordination and adjustment of movements, perceptual attention towards the surroundings and a transformation of the body and its senses. Aside from demonstrating that learning is based on on-going active participation within a specific environment and network of social relations, I wish also to advance Pálsson’s and Ingold’s studies by revealing the social and moral aspects and implications of this particular learning process in the lives of the Lulesámi. In chapters 7 and 8 I show that it is of significance to look at the relationship between learning and perceptions of well-being to better understand why the Lulesámi learn to make handicraft the way they do and for comprehending the personal and social consequences of their approach towards learning. Such analysis fits well with the wider anthropological literature on craftsmanship, which has steadily grown during the last few decades. Several authors have highlighted that craftsmanship entails not only the development of technical skills, but also the learning of an entire worldview including “[m]orals, muscles and mind” (Marchand 2008: 6; cf. Reichard 1998; Terrio 2000; Herzfeld 2004).

A comparative reading of ethnographies on apprenticeship and learning reveals that the valued behaviours accompanying a craft practice resemble one another or differ as one engages within various settings. Susan Terrio (2000: 156) describes how French chocolatiers are ignored, ridiculed and subjected to long working hours and little pay when learning their craft in order to train them in the “mental discipline and physical stamina” needed when working in the business. Likewise, Trevor Marchand (2001; 2008: 250-253), in his work among minaret builders in Yemen, and Michael Herzfeld (2004), in his study of Cretan artisans, argue that apprentices need to become tough and confident to manage their work and the agonistic relations with other craftsmen and traders. In both Yemen and Crete there is a rigid hierarchy among masters and workers, and apprentices are heavily disciplined. Marchand (2001: 144-145; 2008: 252) and Herzfeld (2004: 107-117) illustrate that apprentices learn early on that they have to gain the skills of the craftwork themselves by

stealing the knowledge from other makers as no one accurately demonstrates the work to them.

Comparable to these three ethnographies of learning, the Lulesámi also emphasised self-reliance and endurance. However, in contrast to a learning process based on mockery and theft, as in Terrio's, Marchand's and Herzfeld's accounts, the Lulesámi highlighted virtues such as respect towards personal autonomy, egalitarian social relations and mutual sharing within the learning process.

One possible reason why the chocolatiers', minaret builders', Cretan artisan's and Lulesámi women's apprenticeship differ is that craftwork in the first three settings are produced to make a living while the Lulesámi make the *gáppte* for their domestic needs. Herzfeld (2004: 63), for example, argues that there is a fear of competition among the Cretan craftsmen and that the unwillingness to demonstrate the work prepares the novice for the tough social relations that surround the craft production and reinforces the existing hierarchical relationships. The Lulesámi women, on the other hand, encouraged others to learn the craftwork as they wished for more people to make handicraft in order to meet the growing demand of the *gáppte* within the hamlet. They also wished for people to produce for their own kin as they perceived that the *gáppte* establishes and affirms ties of affection between its maker and wearer. Furthermore, the women generously shared their skills among one other to prevent social hierarchies, to promote self-reliance and to facilitate others in gaining a set of other skills important for contemporary living. I elaborate on these dimensions of craftsmanship in chapters 8 and 9. In these chapters I show how craftwork not only involves the dexterity of skills in the work at hand, but also encompasses certain virtues, essential social skills and benefits which are important for the Lulesámi in order to create a good and beautiful sort of living.

Women and the Domestic

While the literature on craftsmanship has grown, women's domestic craftwork still seems to have an ambiguous place within academic and popular perceptions. On the one hand, Jane

Schneider and Annette Weiner (1989) write that allegories between cloth production and the generation of life have been employed by writers, thinkers and politicians across geographical locations. Already in Greek mythology the three female Moirai (Fates) were said to spin the lives of every God and mortal and to have power over their destinies (Hard 2004: 28). Likewise, Gladys Reichard (1998) portrays how the Spider Woman wove the web of the universe according to the Navajo's myth of creation. However, at the same time as several connections are made between women's craft production and the creation of life, these practices have been marginalised and considered trivial with little importance for society at large (cf. Waldén 1994; Wilkinson-Weber 1999, 2004; Sennett 2008: 23). Rozsika Parker (2010) writes that women's embroidery in England is conceived of as an act of psychological growth and resistance to predetermined images of femininity as well as associated with passivity and obedience. Similarly, Birgitta Svensson and Louise Waldén (2005) argue that Swedish women's making of handicraft at home is considered, from one viewpoint, a practice of economic and aesthetic power while, from another angle, it is seen as a seclusion and incarceration, cut off from the world.

Parker (2010: 3) suggests that the ambiguity of embroidery relates to a general academic neglect of 'women's work'. According to Parker, women's marginalised position is a result of the "patriarchal ideology" that has permeated and dominated Euro-American social sciences. Parker argues that scholars have divided and analysed human social life through asymmetrical dichotomies where the public (market economy, technology, law, politics) is separated from the private (family, affection, everyday activities), the intellect from the emotional, the mind from the body, men from women, and culture from nature.

Although a new generation of thinkers and feminist writers have challenged the essentialisation of women's and men's experiences, the rigid gendered division of society and devaluation of the domestic by turning to the everyday and heterogeneous dimensions of human life (e.g. Moraga and Anzaldúa 1984; Behar and Gordon 1995; Abu-Lughod 1999;

Overing and Passes 2000)²¹, little is still said about women's unpaid craft production at home.

Among the Lulesámi, craft-makers frequently highlighted that researchers have paid little attention to their contemporary practices. Time and again, they pointed out that people who do not make handicraft themselves are often unable to recognise the time and labour expended in its making. I was told that the women's work goes unnoticed as it cannot easily be seen or measured in tangible ways, but that it is of personal and social significance for living well.

To gain a comprehension of craftsmanship from the craft-makers own perspectives, chapter 6 addresses how the craft production is organised within the hamlet. I challenge the previous scholarly disregard of women's household work by showing how craft production and the spatial organisation among and within households relate to the villagers' understanding and making of a convivial society. Rather than seeing domestic activities as having little importance for society at large, I address how craft production is intertwined with and facilitates the Lulesámi's emphasis on personal and social well-being.

Chapter 9 continues to consider the significance of women's craftsmanship by examining certain personal and social motivations, benefits and consequences of their work. Apart from contributing to the shortage of scholarly attention around women's domestic work, chapter 9 relates to wider anthropological discussions that emphasise the significance of production within studies of material culture. As a legacy of Claude Lévi-Strauss's and Marcel Mauss's grand theories of exchange as the building block of society, the values and processes of production have received less attention within the discipline in comparison to the topic of exchange and the more contemporary interest in consumption according to Roy Dilley (2004). Dilley (2004) refers to the works of Daniel Miller and suggests that consumption has replaced the significance of production for understanding social relations and the creation of the self. According to Miller, "'consumption has become the vanguard of history', the motor of social change that has replaced the key concept of production within

²¹ To clarify, these authors do not deny that people might think through dichotomies, but argue that they do not do so in a universal and static manner as some scholars previously suggested.

the Marxist perspective” (1995: 1, as quoted in Dilley 2004: 798). Moving away from Miller’s argument and following a Marxist perspective by considering production as crucial in forming social relations, Dilley shows how production, exchange and consumption of craftworks in Senegal are mutually, but differently interwoven in various relationships and localities. In chapter 9 I follow Dilley by demonstrating how the value of Lulesámi craftworks emerges through the interrelatedness of their distribution, use and production processes. I further show that the ideas and actions, of this interrelationship, are tightly interwoven with how the Lulesámi create and perceive themselves and their world.

In order to understand what constitutes Lulesámi women’s craftsmanship I argue, throughout the thesis, that it is essential to turn towards the everyday experiences of the sentient living person rather than thinking in grand explanatory schemes of human existence. I demonstrate that it is through everyday domestic production and community relations that a convivial social life is constituted and that the personal is intertwined with larger historical, political and social realms. I also wish to highlight that it is deceptive to think only in gendered terms about craftsmanship as it might assume that the making of the *gáppte* is a ‘mere women’s work’ with little significance for or influence in the lives of men. While it is true that women are the main producers of the *gáppte*, the garment is worn by women and men alike and its production affects social relations and everyday organisation throughout the community. Having said that, I do not attempt to deny that craft practices can be connected with ideas of what it means to be a woman or a man. Such issues will be addressed in later research. In the future I also wish to explore men’s craftwork as well as their practices and roles within what is referred to as the ‘domestic sphere’, which have also been neglected topics both among the Sámi and in wider anthropological literature. The aim of this study is, however, to start giving voice to, and to unfold the significance of, the production, distribution and use of the *gáppte* in the lives of the Lulesámi. Although women’s and men’s narrations are reflected throughout the text, the women’s voices and practices predominate for the simple reasons that it is mainly women who make the *gáppte*, and that I occupied myself in their activities and spent most of my time with them throughout the year.

Chapter Outlines

The thesis is composed of 10 interwoven chapters, which in their different ways address the main themes in this work. This first chapter introduces the main topics of my analysis and places them within a wider theoretical and literary framework. In the next chapter I elaborate on my apprenticeship methodology and show how I became part of local research histories during my fieldwork. I address some of the difficulties that I encountered in my work and how the study has been continuously negotiated and crafted through my relationships with the residents of Ájluokta.

Chapter 3 introduces the *gáppte* that is most frequently made and worn in Divtasvuodna today. In chapters 4 and 5 I explore how this garment influences people's sense of self and relations to others. Chapter 4 begins to unfold how the garment is interwoven with people's perceptions of themselves and others in relation to the geography of Divtasvuodna and its surroundings, people's movement within this area over time and the sometimes complicated political relationships between Sámi and non-Sámi people. This analysis also ties in with a wider discussion about the history of the Lulesámi and issues of indigeneity. In chapter 5 I move on to place personal narratives at centre stage to address some of the diverse ways in which the *gáppte* is experienced and understood. I study the changes of the *gáppte's* use through time and how it has been complemented and replaced by other kinds of clothing. In conclusion, these two chapters draw attention to how the *gáppte*, as the craftwork that the women are most frequently doing, is not just the production of a straightforward visual identifying marker of the Sámi, but that the garment affects people's sense of self and place in the world in various ways depending on the contexts in which it is worn.

Chapter 6 addresses the ways in which craft production is organised within the hamlet in relation to the villagers' understandings of space and notions of what it entails to live well. I elaborate on the Lulesámi's emphasis on the feeling of belonging within a community through the creation of physical closeness among people and how these ideas affect the spatial organisation of everyday life and, in particular, where the women make the *gáppte*.

The following two chapters concentrate on the learning processes of making handicraft. Chapter 7 explores how craft practices that at first seem straightforward and relatively uncomplicated in fact involve a transformation of the body, an education of the senses and heightened awareness towards the surroundings. The discussion engages with current anthropological debates about learning by showing how a novice develops her skills in craftwork based on her own volition within an environment established by others (e.g. Pálsson 1994; Ingold 2000). I argue that the learning of handicraft is not the acquisition of a predetermined and fixed set of skills, but an ongoing engagement, adjustment and reflection of the work at hand (ibid.). Drawing on the works of Terrio (2000), Herzfeld (2004) and Marchand (2001, 2008, 2009), I continue the analysis of the learning process in chapter 8 by showing that it not only entails the development of technical proficiency. I demonstrate how a novice also learns that certain virtues are of importance for the making of handicraft as well as for the creation of a convivial society.

Chapter 9 discusses a number of motivations, benefits and consequences of women's craft production that normally are left unspoken in the literature and are not easily observable. I show that the making of the *gáppte* not only involves the making of a garment, but that the production practices also provide and shape the foundation for personal and social life, while they simultaneously become affected and determined by such lived experiences.

Lastly, in chapter 10, I revisit the main themes of living well and the Lulesámi's craftsmanship discussed throughout the thesis and summarise the role and importance of the *gáppte* and women's craftwork in the lives of the Lulesámi. Moreover, I reflect on the significance of my relationship with the people whom I came to know while making handicraft and drinking coffee with a view over a beautiful North-Norwegian fjord.

2. The Crafting of Fieldwork

The nature and quality of what anthropologists learn is profoundly affected by the unique shape of their fieldwork, this should be spelled out.

Lila Abu-Lughod (1999: 10)

On Apprenticeship as Methodology

In a conversation with Ellen, the Lulesámi woman with whom I lived during fieldwork, about Lulesámi craftsmanship and my research at the beginning of the year, she highlighted as if it was a commonly known matter of fact, “Anna, you’re not going to learn about *duodje* through talking about it or observing others making it... no. To learn you have to make the handicraft yourself. It’s something completely different to experience it!” According to Ellen, and many of the other Lulesámi women, when speaking of handicraft, I or any other researcher could only fully apprehend the practices by doing rather than observing or merely talking about them, in other words, they emphasised the importance of an apprenticeship methodology.

Patrick Ainley and Helen Rainbird (1991: 1) define apprenticeship as “work-based learning”. According to Gísli Pálson, this method implies:

a notion of enskilment that emphasizes immersion in the practical world, being caught up in the incessant flow of everyday life, and not simply, as many cognitive studies have assumed, the mechanistic internalization and application of a mental script, a stock of knowledge... (1994: 901)

All through the year I employed apprenticeship as my main methodological path. I assisted, learnt, made and, with time, demonstrated craft techniques to the women whom I came to know. The work included: *sjnissjkot* (Ls) (weaving) the elaborate patterned *avve* (Ls) (belt) worn around the waist of the *gáppte* and the thin *lissto* (Ls) (ribbon) that decorates the bottom edge of the dress; *låhtåt* (‘finger-weaving’) the colourful *vuoddaga* (Ls) (shoe-bands); pewter-embroidery; and sewing both by hand and with the machine in reindeer skin and

woollen cloth. This engagement allowed me, as many anthropologists have noted, to sense first-hand the various bodily sensations of practical work that are not always straightforwardly verbalised (e.g. Coy 1989; Marchand, 2001, 2008, 2009, 2010). I had neck aches and my hands hurt from pulling needles through tough reindeer skins. I felt impatient and irritated when the warp threads at the start of a weaving job endlessly tangled. Yet, with time, on completing a beautiful woven *avve*, the sense of self-satisfaction was great. At other times, when feelings of loneliness and research doubts crept upon me, the repetitive movements of weaving offered a relaxing calm. I understood how silence helps concentration. Likewise, I realised how someone cracking a joke comes to renew energy when doing monotonous tasks. Moreover, I experienced the marriage of observation, mimesis and trial and error while learning.

By becoming an apprentice I also learnt that however important the physical practices of making the *gáppte* were, the social relations among the women and with their kin were equally, if not more important. As this thesis unfolds it will become apparent how I gradually came to understand how craft practices were influenced by and influenced life at large.

Already in the 1930s Gladys Reichard (1998) recognised that learning Navajo weaving also involved comprehension of their wider society. Since then, this outlook has been acknowledged by a number of anthropologists (e.g. Terrio 2000; Herzfeld 2004) as well as by political philosophers such as Friedrich Engels (McLellan 2000 [1977]: 115). Developing these recognitions a step further, Trevor Marchand (2008) draws on his long-term fieldwork with minaret builders in Yemen, mud masons in Mali, and woodwork students in east London to demonstrate how apprenticeship in various places may render different perspectives on, for instance, education and power. On this last note, Michael W. Coy (1989: 19) argues that apprenticeship may be employed as a filter through which only certain people are allowed to pass and learn. This may help regulate who is considered a member of a specific group and who stands outside its confines (*ibid.*; cf. Dilley 1989).

I experienced that perceptions of apprentice learning differed among the Lulesámi. For some of the villagers the right to make the *gáppte* was only fully ascribable to those who were

Lulesámi, through bonds of consanguinity or affinity. Consequently, they were critical of my learning of the handicraft. In their opinion, the making of the *gáppte* creates and reproduces a particular sense of self as Lulesámi in relation to other people and manifests bonds among the Lulesámi²². However, as I show in chapter 6, kinship is also not a given and fixed property, but dependent on everyday practices and relations. While Ellen said that she would not like just anyone to learn how to make the *gáppte* from her, she stated that there was no problem that I learnt as I, with time, became *like* a daughter to her (see chapter 6). Although I did not *become* a Lulesámi, I became *immersed* among the Lulesámi and, as such, entitled to make their typical handicraft. Besides, I was conducting research on the topic and, as already mentioned, Ellen and many other women were of the opinion that I could not possibly write about the handicraft without making it myself. Others, like the enthusiastic craft-makers Sigga and Anita, stated that categories such as ‘ethnicity’ were not of primary importance for judging who could make the handicraft. Instead, they said that everyone with a genuine interest and enjoyment in craftwork and with respect to and relations with Lulesámi people could learn.

Overall, my learning and making of the *gáppte* was accepted even by those who expressed scepticism at times, as long as I did not start producing for sale or exhibitions. This seemed, as Lisa Aronsen (1989) correspondingly writes of the Akwete Igbo weavers in Nigeria, a way of maintaining economic and technical control. Hugh Beach’s (1994) fieldwork experience among the Swedish Sámi supports this suggestion. Beach states that most of the Sámi he met were happy for non-Sámi to learn and take an interest in *duodje* as long as they did so for personal use and not for commercial purposes, as this was considered morally wrong. As a result, I never made any handicraft on commission or for sales. Moreover, although I learnt to make the *gáppte*, I also learnt to knit. Knitting was a craftwork that most women did besides making the *gáppte* and as it was not considered an exclusive Sámi handicraft, as the *gáppte* was, I could engage in it without feeling exposed to criticism.

²² Cf. Dorinne Kondo (1990: 246-247, 287-289), Michael Herzfeld (2004: 38) and Roy Dilley (2010) on how the production of things can be seen as the crafting of different kinds of selfhood.

As already mentioned in the introduction, besides being a craft apprentice, my social network came to extend across the community. Regularly, I spent time with people in their homes cooking, eating, chatting, babysitting or just reading a newspaper. We walked together in the outdoors. Although I am not a Laestadian, I participated in almost all fortnightly religious gatherings throughout the year. I accompanied people when travelling to the city. Moreover, I worked as an extra in one of the kindergartens and in the care home, in part to finance my stay. This added to my overall experience and broadened my social connections. Some of the villagers also expressed their appreciation that I worked to become involved in the community. Additionally, the initial disadvantage of not having a car soon proved beneficial as I came to know people through hitchhiking my way around. At other times I borrowed Ellen's tiny electric mint green car and made myself famous around the village for trying to push it beyond its maximum speed of 30km/hour or by standing somewhere in the hamlet kicking one of its wheels in anger as from time to time it decided not to start.

Being a Part of Local Research History

My worries, while preparing for fieldwork, of feeling lonely, when moving to a place where I knew no one, were soon proven wrong. Instead, I was overwhelmed by many people's generosity and concern for my well-being. When Berit, a middle-aged Lulesámi woman, saw the Spartan interior of the cottage I initially stayed in, during the first four weeks, she came by with curtains and tablecloths to make it look less sterile and more like how she perceived a home. Sigga replaced my sleeping-bag with a duvet while shaking her head and lamenting on the fact that I slept on a set of large sofa cushions on the floor and not in a proper bed. Both women invited me for dinners and at times the neighbours came to knock on my window in the morning to say that the breakfast was ready next door and that I ought not to eat all by myself. Later, as the weeks passed by, the good-fellowship continued as I became more involved with the women making handicraft and as I moved in with Ellen whose endless good-heartedness and sly humour were highly contagious.

Nevertheless, despite most people's friendliness and hospitality, I was also deeply affected by a few Lulesámi villagers who were sceptical not only of my apprentice-style methodology, but also towards my whole research. Their critique was grounded in a consideration that the majority of researchers in the past had been non-Sámi, working with methodologies and theoretical ideas that they felt neglected the Sámi's own voices and feelings (cf. Evjen 1999; Kuokkanen 2000; Nordin 2011 on a similar discussion of the critique towards past non-Sámi researchers).

One example of such an early influential writer is Olaf Holm, who worked as a priest in the municipality between 1878 and 1884. Many of the villagers' views reflected the writings of Bjørg Evjen, who has recently studied the histories of Divtasvuodna. Evjen (1999: 13) argues that Holm's accounts of the Sámi were filled with exoticism. This is exemplified by Holm, on the one hand, describing the Sámi as glorified 'noble savages' while, on the other hand, regarding them as subordinate to the majority of the population (ibid.; cf Sørensen 2011). This seeming contradiction Evjen explains as a reflection of Holm's time. From around the mid-1800s the perceptions of the Sámi gradually changed throughout Norway. The early curiosity value and romantic Eurocentric musings regarding a native population living in 'primitive simplicity' became progressively replaced by another view, which embraced emerging nationalist and evolutionist ideologies (Evjen 1997, 1999; Hansson 2008). From these evolving philosophies grew an interest in mapping the state population and its distinct characteristics. Typical of the period was the belief that by employing methods of anthropometry, people could be organised into categories of race and specific psychological traits. In Divtasvuodna the Sámi population was documented during the 1920s by the physician Alette Schreiner and her husband Kristian Schreiner, Professor of Anatomy at the University of Oslo. Their physical anthropological work resulted in the 1932 German-written publication *Anthropologische Lokaluntersuchungen in Norge*. Turning the pages of the book, black and white photographs accompany tables with up to 28 bodily measurements taken on 210 Sámi women, men and children. These data were to serve to classify the Sámi in

relation to other identified national groups²³. In conclusion, Evjen (1997) argues that the evolutionary theorists placed the white male on top of the ladder of civilised progress while the Sámi were regarded as an inferior people. This kind of research was considered highly condescending by the Lulesámi. It caused them feelings of humiliation and was also perceived to have contributed to the displacement of the Lulesámi that took place within the municipality during the last half of the 1900s.

Schreiner's ideas were connected to the Norwegianisation, where the authorities perceived that they could rescue the Sámi from their 'savage state' by bringing them into the 'civilised' and unified Norwegian society. This policy intensified in the welfare policies after the Second World War and is reflected in the centralisation that took place in Divtasvuodna from smaller settlements around the inner fjords, where many of the Lulesámi lived up until the 1960s, to the two larger hamlets around the outer fjords.

During the German occupation of Norway, between 1940 and 1945, life became very hard throughout the country. Food and materials were scarce, diseases spread unchecked, properties were destroyed and harassment was common (see Haugland 2008). While rebuilding the nation, after regaining independence in 1945, the authorities wished to (re)generate well-being among the population (Evjen 2001). Although the intentions behind this thinking might have been well-meant Gutorm Gjessing (1973: 104) argues that the main weakness was that equal rights became synonymous with identical rights. Standardizations were encouraged throughout Norway without taking into consideration people's opinions of these matters. According to Ivar Bjørklund (2000), the state claimed that everyone should be provided with the similar education, health care and communication. This might not be a

²³ It was not only the Sámi who were measured and categorised. A. Schreiner also studied Norwegian women (1924) and the southern Norwegian population (1930). According to Evjen (1997) the Kvener (a Norwegian ethnic minority that trace their descent to northern Finland and Sweden) and the Tater ('Gypsies') were also documented. Furthermore, not only groups of people, divided into 'races' were ordered hierarchically. So too were individual persons. For instance, Schreiner (1914) argued that individuals with inferior genetics lived within society. Among these were people like the ill, the poor and the criminal. These people, Schreiner reasoned, should be discouraged from reproducing. Relating to her argument a programme of forced sterilization was permitted by the Norwegian government in 1934. According to Evjen (1997: 33-34) individuals throughout the nation were affected, but the largest number of sterilizations were forced upon the Tater by the state (see also Haave 2000). Over the years, the sterilization programme was continued, with less and less enthusiasm, until in 1977 when it was finally halted.

weakness in itself, but some of the consequences of implementing this policy were problematic.

An elder Lulesámi man, when discussing this policy, aptly commented that participating in this new society involved a centralisation of opportunities in specific places only. In Divtasvuodna at this time, the municipal government appointed a group to examine where to invest in the welfare policies. In the settlements around the inner fjords, the investigators stated that living standards, income and communication were well below the national average. The report reads:

...it should be clear that no case, based on resource-economic criteria, can be made for public investments in the area, and one must prepare for the settlements around the inner fjords to be discontinued. Such a discontinuation can be made by a relocation of workers from the area or the establishment of a concrete plan of depopulation (Bosetningsutvalget Tysfjord Kommune 1964: 51, author's translation)

In the end the authorities classified the settlements around the inner fjords as depopulated areas. All funds were directed to the villages around the outer fjords, which, in contrast to the areas around the inner fjords, are connected to the rest of the country via roads. Moreover, a housing action plan was set in motion in the early 1970s. Heavy restrictions on being granted bank loans were implemented for people remaining around the inner fjords. In addition to this, according to Evjen (2001: 40), from as early as the 1950s those living in the more rural areas were offered grants and support to migrate to the more densely populated villages.

Although some Lulesámi said that they had moved voluntarily to the outer coast to be closer to work and educational opportunities, others wished to remain living around the inner fjords. However, the state's strategy of relocation was implemented. During my fieldwork only one of the settlements around the inner fjords, Måsske (Musken), was still permanently populated. People living there have continuously fought to keep the public boat communication to the outer villages and for the maintenance of their school, which, nevertheless, was closed by the authorities in 2009. Nowadays this small village has also seen a drop in the numbers of its residents. Many villagers, especially youths, have moved to

be closer to salaried employment opportunities and schools, or as a result of finding a partner who lived elsewhere²⁴.

While the municipal authorities examined where to invest as part of their welfare political agenda during the 1960s, Lina Homme, a sociologist, conducted research on living conditions among the Lulesámi population in the area²⁵. Although few of the Lulesámi villagers have read Homme's report, because she placed it under embargo, many stories circulate about what it includes and several villagers believe that it contributed to the eventual displacement that took place²⁶. Whether this was true or not, Homme's decision to place a ban on her work added to a continuing scepticism towards non-Sámi researchers among some of the villagers.

Consequently, proposed research by non-Sámi in Divtasvuodna was rejected for a number of years (Evjen 1999: 17). Elias stated that the villagers agreed amongst themselves in the 1980s not to welcome or give consent to being interviewed by researchers who originated from outside Divtasvuodna. Later, the restrictions were loosened as it became recognised that the social sciences had changed over time to become more considerate about people's sensibilities and reflective towards their stance. Before my fieldwork, the only researcher since Homme from outside the hamlet to have lived long-term in the area is Marit Myrvoll, a Sámi anthropologist from a different region, who conducted research on religious practices among the Lulesámi. As Myrvoll (2010: 71) states, many villagers also referred to the positive aspects of some past research during her fieldwork. For example, Schreiner's study was seen to have provided them with a photographic record of their relatives. Moreover, early language documentations by the linguist Just Qvigstad have provided an invaluable source

²⁴ Marit Myrvoll (2010) writes in her doctoral thesis, about religious practices among the Lulesámi, based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted, in 1999, in Måsske, that there were around 90 permanent inhabitants. Presumably, from what I was told by the villagers, this number has dropped considerably since then.

²⁵ Homme's work was part of a larger project that was undertaken between the 1960s and late 1980s on living conditions in Northern Norway, and was led by Vilhelm Aubert, a leading Norwegian social scientist at the time.

²⁶ It was considered condescending by many Lulesámi that they were banned from reading the report. One middle-aged woman commented, "She (Homme) went from house to house, looked everywhere, in every corner, she opened every door and took notes, but what she finally wrote we don't know." It is interesting to note that many of the studies undertaken by Lulesámi scholars in the 1980s were also placed under the same ban. However, while the ban on Homme's work is considered disdainful, I never heard this mentioned of the other writings. To discuss why this is the case or how these research papers were placed under an embargo will be address in later research.

for Anders Kintel's (2012) recent work on creating a Lulesámi dictionary. Yet, despite these positive aspects of the past research histories in the area, suspicions still existed towards non-Sámi scholars and were, I believe, the reason why some villagers presented themselves as critical to my presence.

An Apprenticeship for Life

I found it hard to relate to past researchers' perspectives because they contrasted so much with mine. However, although I liked to think of myself as being different from these previous scholars, in the eyes of some Lulesámi people, as a *non-Sámi anthropologist*, I was grouped together with all the others as part of the same homogeneous category. This became evident already at the beginning of fieldwork when I was approached by a middle-aged man who raucously asked how I was going to find out if the Sámi were *folk* (N) (folk/humans) or not. Quite stunned, never having doubted that the Sámi were folk in the first place, I straightforwardly answered, "I'm here to study craft practices." "What's your research conclusion then?" the man quickly chipped in. Equally astonished, as I had just arrived at the time, I replied that I did not know yet. I wanted to write about what was salient for the Lulesámi. That was the purpose of my fieldwork, I explained. At this the man sniggered and said rather patronisingly, "If you don't know exactly what you'll write about then you should just pack your bags and leave!" Without being given the chance to reply I received a pat on the shoulder before he hastily turned around and walked away. I remained puzzled. On the one hand, I could, when looking at the past research histories, understand his and others concerns and demands to get an insight into, and in some ways control of, my work. However, on the other hand, it was difficult for me to explain fully exactly what my thesis would be about in the end as anthropological fieldwork is a dynamic process where the focus may shift according to unfolding events (e.g. Spradley 1979; Agar 1986; Gay y Blasco and Wardle 2007). Hence, rather than forcing a particular hypothesis onto people's lives, I wished to let the everyday tenors and experiences guide my research.

Although I might have fallen short in being able to present my research conclusions during fieldwork, I nevertheless, aimed to keep an open and honest dialogue about my undertakings throughout the year and pursue a kind of apprenticeship in how to go about my work. Most of the conversations about my research as well as constructive feedback from the villagers took place continuously through dialogues within the flow of everyday life. On deciding to stay and conduct my research in Divtasvuodna, it was suggested by a person at Árran to also distribute a one-page hand-out about my intended research interests among some villagers and then hope the information would spread by hearsay from that. This I did. Moreover, in December 2010 and May 2011 I was interviewed about my research by the local NRK (Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation) Sápmi Radio. I also gave two presentations of my study at Árran. In May 2011 I was invited to give a speech about the progress of my work. Three months earlier, in February 2011, I was also asked to give a talk entitled 'What do they really want?- being a researcher and foreigner in a Sámi community'. This presentation was part of a research seminar that discussed past, present and future views of Sámi research.

At this seminar it became evident that the views towards research on Sámi matters greatly differ among the Lulesámi villagers. Some people reproduced the view stated by the Northsámi researcher Alf-Isak Keskitalo, on the occasion of the establishment of the Nordic Sámi Institute in 1973, that "it takes a Saami to understand Saami culture and the circumstances in which the Saami find themselves" (as quoted in Paine 1987: 176). Others who participated in the discussion were critical of this viewpoint. Instead, they followed an argument similar to Robert Paine's statement that "we should not allow ourselves [to accept] unexamined assumptions about ethnic homogeneity and... ethnic solidarity" (1987: 170; cf. Stordahl 1987; Oskal 2008). From their perspective an announcement like Keskitalo's reproduces an idea that identity is fixed and bounded within categories such as ethnicity or state citizenship. For Keskitalo, no understanding is possible across these borders. The divide between Sámi and non-Sámi is seen as innate and no dialogue is considered possible.

Like many of those attending the seminar and the written reflections of the Sámi scholars Nils Oskal (2008) and Marit Myrvoll (2010: 91-92) among others, I agree that thoughtful

methodology and ethical considerations should be a prerequisite for *all kinds* of research, *notwithstanding* the particular people involved, its geographical location, focus or the researcher's ethnic or national identity. In the end I felt that *ethnicity* mattered less in my relations with the people whom I met most regularly on a daily basis than our sharing of everyday happenings and my genuine interest and participation in the women's lives and craftwork. The fact that craftsmanship was also a topic that many felt had been marginalised by scholars most certainly contributed to the warm welcome I received from many villagers and especially from the craft-makers. From the perspectives of the people who I came to know best and my lived experiences, this research was not set within predetermined boundaries, but negotiated and crafted through my coexistence as an apprenticeship in the continuously changing realms of life itself.

Throughout this journey I have tried to pay careful attention to the villagers' experiences and perceptions, as well as my own. I also showed consideration to their wishes by not using a tape-recorder during our conversations, rarely taking photographs – unless for personal use – and by respecting their wishes to be anonymous (see p. 18). I have listened to people's suggestions and feedback with regards to my work and shared my thoughts with many of them. The villagers' main critique towards previous researchers was, as already stated, that they neglected the Lulesámi's voices and feelings. In this thesis my aim is to understand and unfold the significance of domestic craftwork from the multi-vocal perspectives and practices of the Lulesámi people using a combination of viewpoints including a rich ethnography of everyday life, narratives, biographies, senses and emotions.

Having said this, I do not underestimate the influence that my perspective as a non-Sámi anthropologist has had on the research and that it might have led to limitations in my understanding of the Lulesámi's lives and craftsmanship. However, I believe that the limits, as well as the assets, of my position and comprehension are not solely guided by ethnic identity, but also by a range of other factors including gender, age, life experience, education, language skills, length of fieldwork, my interest in handicraft and feminism and the fact that I was not brought up religiously.

The conduct of ethnographic research does also not only comprise the time in the field. According to Clifford Geertz (1973), writing is the main medium and instrument through which anthropologists transmit their work. Texts are, therefore, of great salience with regards to the manner in which readers come to know the people among whom ethnographic studies are conducted and from which they can make their own interpretations. Many anthropologists have acknowledged the salience of reflecting upon the politics of writing and the researcher's position (e.g. Marcus and Cushman 1982; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Behar and Gordon 1995; Abu-Lughod 1993, 1999: 1-24). Drawing on this literature, I have produced a dialectic text where I include also myself within the analysis, showing that the study is not a description of a world that existed prior to my engagement within it, and which I merely took note of through my fieldwork, but rather how I was also a part of forming and understanding such a world. Taking on such an approach, Nigel Rapport argues that "writing comes to be conceived of not so much as a neutral medium of knowledge, facts and experiences, a window onto an independent reality, than a way of knowing in itself" (1997: 45).

3. Introducing the Divtasvuodna-*gáppte*

The *gáppte* is the definition of the typical Sámi dress made with textile. Up until the mid-1900s, the *gáppte* was an everyday item of summer clothing and it was made to fit the Sámi's way of life and the climatic conditions of the circumpolar north. Although the garment is no longer worn on a daily basis, its basic pieces, cut and design have remained relatively similar over time. Apart from being functional clothing, the *gáppte* is also a “non-verbal form of communication” (Svensson 1994: 62; cf. Barnes and Eicher 1992). The visual aspects of the dress have the ability to display gender differences, economic wealth and religious beliefs. Furthermore, the garment creates and manifests a sense of belonging to a community and place and distinctiveness from other people.

In comparison to the clothing of non-Sámi people, the *gáppte*'s sartorial uniqueness has made it one of the most recognisable visual markers of the Sámi throughout time. On closer inspection, however, the garment not only distinguishes between the Sámi and non-Sámi, but it also creates differentiations among the Sámi themselves. While the *gáppte* has come to bear resemblances across Sápmi through people's movements over the land, trade and intermarriages, each region also has its own, or several, distinguishing garments²⁷. These regional dissimilarities are seen in the differences of the *gáppte*'s tailoring, types of belts, decorations, designs of hats and additional accessories²⁸. In this chapter I introduce the garment referred to as the Divtasvuodna-*gáppte*. This is the most frequently worn *gáppte* in the Norwegian Lulesámi area today and the most regularly made craftwork among the Lulesámi women in Ájluokta.

²⁷ The regional differences of the *gáppte* roughly correlate with the Sámi language groups.

²⁸ See Haugen (2006) for an overview of the different regional garments.

The Divtasvuodna-*gáppte*

The Divtasvuodna-*gáppte* is composed of six basic pieces: the *gáppte* (Ls) (dress)²⁹; the *slihppá* (Ls) ('dickey'); the *avve* (Ls) (belt); the *gahper* (Ls) (hat); the *gábmaga* (Ls) (typical shoes) and the *vuoddaga* (Ls) (shoe bands) (fig. 9). What follows is a more elaborate description of each of these pieces.



Figure 9. A man's and a woman's Divtasvuodna-*gáppte*.

²⁹ The *gáppte* is the name employed for describing the full garment, including all articles, as well as the term used specifically for the actual tailored dress worn by woman and men alike.

The Gáppte

The *gáppte* is worn as a dress with tights by women. The men's garment resembles a tunic, which ends just above the knees, and it is worn with *gálsoga* (Ls) (typical Sámi trousers made with reindeer skin), black dress trousers or jeans. Apart from the length, collar and decorations, the *gáppte* has the same symmetrical cut for women and men³⁰. It consists of one *ávvdåbielle* (Ls) (front piece), one *boavtjos* (Ls) (back piece that is sewn together by two identical mirroring parts), two *sasse* (Ls) (sleeves), and two *oalge* (Ls) (shoulder parts). Some garments also have additional *giedavuollåhkko* (Ls) (wedges) sewn in underneath the armpits and along the sides of the dress to give it extra width and *sålgga* (Ls) (flexibility).

Originally, the *gáppte* was made with a loose fit around the torso and wide-cut armpits. This kind of tailoring allows air to circulate inside the garment and helps regulate the body temperature of the dressed person. Looseness also facilitates flexibility and ease of movement, which were important aspects of the dress when it was worn on a daily basis and used to work in (cf. Svensson 1994; Guttorm 2006). Today when the *gáppte* is no longer worn in daily life, it is sometimes made with a tighter fit depending on the preferences of its wearer.

Scholars like Elsa Aira et al. (1995), Lis-Mari Hjortfors (1999) and Gunvor Guttorm (2006) argue that the *gáppte*'s basic cut and design originate from the *sválltjá* (Ls) (fig. 10), a characteristic Sámi summer garment made with tanned reindeer skin and the *muoddá* (Ls) (fig. 11), a characteristic Sámi winter dress made with reindeer fur³¹. Today, reindeer skin is still seen in the *gáppte* as decorations on the *slihppá*. It is less common to spot an entire dress made with the material. Instead, most garments are nowadays made with woollen cloth or, but less common, fabrics like cotton, velvet or satin. Fabrics are purchased by the craft-makers during trips to urban areas like Oslo, via mail-order or through one of the numerous fabric stores online.

³⁰ Apart from the obvious difference of size, a child's *gáppte* is similar to the adult's garment.

³¹ In winter the Sámi normally wore two layers of clothing. The inner layer was made with the fur facing the body and the outer garment was made with the fur facing out. See Aira et al. (1995), Hjortfors (1999) and Guttorm (2006) for a comprehensive history of Sámi clothing.



Figure 10. A man's *sválltjá*. Photograph by Anne-Lise Reinsfelt/Norsk Folkemuseum. Reproduced from Norsk Folkemuseum (2014), by kind permission of Norsk Folkemuseum.



Figure 11. A man's *muoddá*. Photograph by Anne-Lise Reinsfelt/Norsk Folkemuseum. Reproduced from Norsk Folkemuseum (2014), by kind permission of Norsk Folkemuseum.

The *gáppte* is tailored individually by the seamstress for each wearer and sewn with the sewing-machine. The colours of the *gáppte* are not gender specific, but differ based on personal preferences and availability. During my fieldwork it was common to see women and men dressed in blue, green, red, purple or grey garments.

Both the women's and men's dress have an *åhtså* (Ls) (v-neckline) that is decorated with *bultas* (Ls) (three decoration bands made with cloth) (fig. 12 and 13). On the women's garment the inner band, towards the body, is always red while the others differ in colours from blue, green or yellow. On some garments the colours of the bands shift by the shoulder³². For men, the inner band of the *bultas* is usually blue or green while the other

³² I was told by one person that the colours of the *bultas* in the past indicated a woman's civil status. However, I was unable to get more information surrounding this and all craft-makers that I spoke with said that they choose the colours of the *bultas* based on personal preferences, either of how they wanted to make the garment or how the wearer wanted the garment to look.

colours vary between these two colours, yellow or red. In comparison to the women's *bultas*, the colours of the bands on the men's garment always shift around ten centimetres from the bottom edge of the *åhtsá*. The men's garment also has a five to six centimetre high collar around the back of the neck, which is made in a different colour from the dress itself.



Figure 12. A man's *åhtsá* and *sliehppá*.



Figure 13. A woman's *åhtsá* and *sliehppá*.

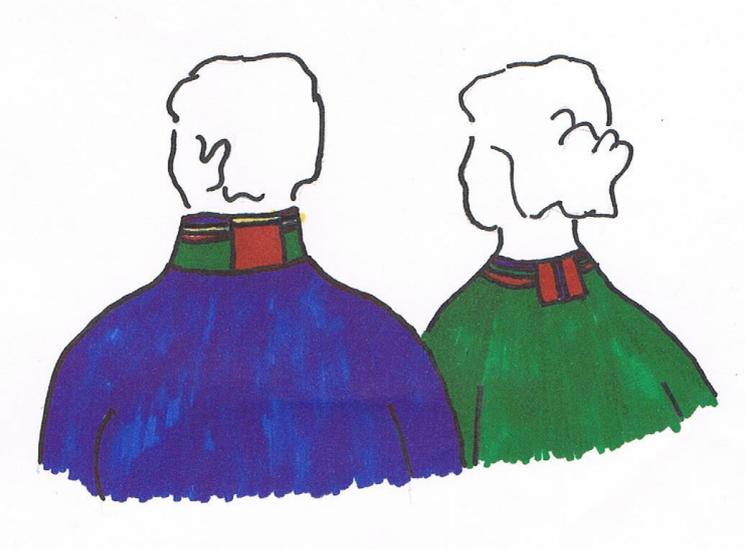


Figure 14. The *divllos* and the *gávlos*.

On the back of the neck there is a square piece of red cloth on both women's and men's garments (fig. 14)³³. The women's red piece is called a *gávlos* (Ls). It ends a few centimetres under the *bultas* and has two or three thin different coloured cloth strips running vertically through it. The men's red piece is named a *divllos* (Ls). It has the same width as the *bultas* and is usually embellished with a different coloured strip of cloth that runs horizontally across its upper part.

The ends of the *gáppte*'s sleeves are normally decorated with the same coloured cloth bands as the *bultas*.

Lastly, the *hielmme* (Ls) (bottom edge of the *gáppte*) is decorated with a *lissto* (Ls) (thin woven band) (fig. 15). An adult's *lissto* is around one centimetre wide (it is slightly thinner for children). The *lissto* is made by *sjnissjkot* (Ls) (weaving) together different coloured woollen threads with a *sjnjissjkom* (Ls) (back strap loom) (fig. 16). The back strap weaving is done with a heddle made of plastic, bone or wood through which a *suohpudahka* (Ls) (warp, i.e. lengthwise yarn) runs. One end of the warp is attached to a hook in the wall and the other to a strap around the weaver's waist. The weaver keeps the tension of the loom by pulling back, using her body weight. Every second yarn of the warp is threaded through *rájgge* (Ls) (holes) in the *lávde* (Ls) (bars) of the heddle, and the others pass through the *sálvvo* (Ls) (slots) in between the bars. As the weaver alternates to raise and lower the heddle a shed is created between the threads through which she passes the *gehpa* (Ls) (shuttle), wounded with *slivve* (Ls) (weft thread), across the warp binding the threads together in a specific pattern. It is the organisation of different coloured and numbers of threads in the warp that creates the specific pattern for the *lissto*. Half the warp is organised to create the upper pattern of the *lissto*, which when finished, consists of lines called *johkko/jågátjå* (Ls) (rivers). The other half is made to look like dots named *tjálme* (Ls) (eyes)

³³ One woman told me that the red patch relates to a creation myth, which she narrated as follows, "The Creator made the Sámi, the other humans, animals and everything else. Then he made a small reindeer calf and decided to give it to the Sámi. He threw it at them with such force that it hit one of them on the neck. The reindeer died and the red patch symbolises the blood of the reindeer." I did not gather more information around the story. The woman who told the story dismissed it as unimportant when I asked her again and none of the other villagers who I asked about the patch or recounted the story to said that they knew anything about it.

or *steiner* (N) (stones)³⁴. The bottom colour of the *lissto* should never be red, but apart from that, the women's *lissto* is predominantly red while the men's *lissto* mainly is blue or green.

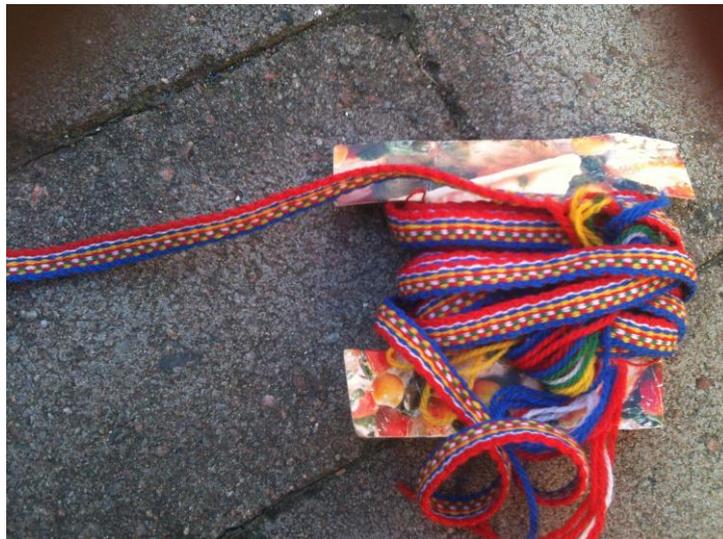


Figure 15. A woman's *lissto*.



Figure 16. Weaving a *lissto* with the *sjnjisskjom*.

³⁴ When I asked why the dots of the *lissto* were called eyes, one woman bluntly replied, "Because they look like eyes!" This was the most common explanation that I received during the year. A few people, however, also suggested that the term might originate in the so called 'pre-Christian' Sámi religion or *folketro* (N) (folk belief) where the eyes, facing the ground, protect the wearer against the *gadhnia* (Ls) (people of the underworld). I was told that the *gadhnia* live under the earth, like humans, but with greater riches. They might show themselves to humans, either as a forewarning, to scare people or to try to lure people down into the underworld with them. It is important to maintain good relations with the *gadhnia* by, for example, not pouring out hot water on the ground before saying aloud that one is doing so and give the *gadhnia* a chance to move and prevent them from being burnt. Although the majority of the Lulesámi villagers are Christians, many combined the Christian doctrine with practices of so called 'folk beliefs'. On a few occasions I heard people say aloud that they were going to pour out hot water on the ground when, for example, emptying the coffee pot after a break in the mountains (cf. Myrvoll 2010: 191-213).

The Sliehppá

The *sliehppá* is a rectangular ‘dickey’ with a three to four centimetre high collar that is visible through the *gáppte*’s *åhtsá* (fig. 12 and 13). It is always red for women and blue for men. The collar is made with small different coloured patches of cloth and white reindeer skin is hand-sewn over the stitching that binds these pieces together. Down from the collar there is often a different coloured half circle, called *halvmåne* (N) (half-moon), or a square patch of cloth, which sometimes run vertically across the entire *sliehppá*.

Many *sliehppá* are richly decorated with pewter-embroidery on the half-moon/square and/or collar patches. The embroidered decorations are made in geometrical designs such as crosses and zigzags. Some *sliehppá* are also made without any embroidery (fig. 17) and I heard three different explanations for this. (1) Some people call the decoration-free *sliehppá* for the *fattigmanssliehppá* (N) (poor man’s *sliehppá*). This name derives from the idea that, in the past, poor people were not able to afford to buy pewter. (2) It is costly in time and labour to embroider and, hence, the decorated *sliehppá* is, according to some, only worn on festive occasions, such as weddings. (3) Some believed that the local Laestadian congregation has influenced the lack of decorations as it preaches against excessive decorations on the body (see chapter 5; Svensson 1994: 64).

Although not common nowadays, I was told that many *sliehppá* in the past were made with an inner pocket in which people kept valuables like tobacco or money.

The Avve

The *avve* (Ls) (belt) is wrapped around the waist of the *gáppte*. One end is tied to the belt itself while the other is tied with a special technique that leaves around forty centimetres of the belt hanging down along the side of the body. The standard *avve* for an adult is around two to two and a half metres long and three to four centimetres wide.

Like the *lissto*, the *avve* is woven with the *sjnjissjkom*. Women and men wear the same designs, but the difference is that the women’s *avve* has red as the main colour while the

men's belt is predominantly blue or green. There are two types of designs of the *avve* and both are made with a *gahpadakhárpo* (Ls) (supplementary warp) that is placed within the warp but not through the heddle itself. These treads are pulled up or down during the weaving to create additional designs to the warp. The most common design, which also is easiest to weave, is *gahpadahka/ruossa* (Ls) (square pattern) (fig. 18). More complicated to make is the *vingok* (Ls) (pick-up pattern) (fig. 19). Some people say that the *vingok*, which can be made into floral designs³⁵, is an influence from Northsámi craftsmanship that followed with the reindeer-tenders who were displaced from the northern to the central and southern parts of Sápmi during the early 1900s. This displacement was due to the closures of borders throughout the 1800 and early 1900s, the mining industry and the establishment of hydroelectric power plants, which ultimately restricted the grazing land for the Northsámi people's animals.

During weaving of both designs, some length is saved for making the end that hangs down along the side of the body. This last bit of the *avve* can be made in different ways. Most commonly, the remaining yarn is divided into three equally large groups that individually are made into ten to fifteen centimetre long *tsavekbátte* (Ls) (threads wrapped around each other in a lined pattern) (fig. 18). Sometimes the middle group is woven together with the *sjnjissjkom*. Alternatively, each of the three groups can be *ruvddimbádde* (Ls) (braided with four sets of threads). The very endings are finished off with a large *diehppe* (Ls) (tassel). A tassel-like decoration is also made to cover the transition between the woven belt and the endings. Another, but less common, way in which the *avve* is ended is by cutting off the woven pattern and sewing on a piece of cloth or reindeer skin in which a *miessikrikkas* (Ls) (brass ring) is attached (fig. 19)³⁶.

Some *avve* can also finish by *ruvddimbádde* or *tsavekbátte* in both ends and the belt is tied so that these endings hang down on each side of the body. This is called *guovtegetsak* (Ls) and is especially common to see at festive occasions like weddings.

³⁵ Designs in the Lulesámi area are generally more geometric than the Northsámi people's floral patterns.

³⁶ Brass is regarded to have protective powers against illnesses and bad fortune. I was told that a ring of brass was often placed next to the baby for protection in the past - and also by a few people today.



Figure 17. A man's *slihppá* and a *nállogoahte*.
Photograph by Sigmund Johnsen, reproduced by
kind permission.



Figure 18. A man's *avve*, *gahpadahka*.



Figure 19. A man's *avve*, *vingok* Photograph by Anne-Lise Reinsfelt/Norsk Folkemuseum. Reproduced from Norsk Folkemuseum (2014), by kind permission of Norsk Folkemuseum.

Otherwise, the end of the *avve* which is attached to the belt itself can be made either by sewing on a small *májdde* (Ls) (buckle) made with reindeer horn, or a *gavlla* (Ls) (loop) of reindeer skin or woollen thread. The part of the *avve* which this end is tied to is lined with a fabric or reindeer skin for extra support and stability. A piece of thread or reindeer skin is also sewn into the lining for attaching the *májdde* or *gavlla*.

When the *gáppte* was worn as a daily garment the *avve* functioned as a kind of tool belt. Men and sometimes also women wore a knife on the *avve*³⁷. Women normally also wore a *guottádahka* (Ls) (belt plate) made with brass, bronze or reindeer horn on the *avve*. Attached to this plate were tools such as the *nállogoahte* (Ls) (needle house) (fig. 17). Furthermore, the *avve* is tied in such a way to create a *buogña* (Ls) (bag) inside the *gáppte*. Aira et al. (1995: 36) argue that the *buogña* served as a pocket in the past for people to put things such as their mittens when they were not worn.

The Gahper

Although it is quite uncommon for people to wear the *gahper* (Ls) (hat) (fig. 20) with the *gáppte* today, due, I was told, to the fact that headwear is not fashionable, it was still considered one of the basic pieces for the complete garment by the villagers.

The *gahper* sits high on the head, covering only the top part of the ear. It is sewn together using five triangular pieces and one rectangular piece of woollen cloth that are always dark blue. At the top, the women's *gahper* is embellished with a small red *tjuhppa* (Ls) (a thin cloth band rolled together in a spiral shape). The *hålbbe* (Ls) (bottom edge) of the women's *gahper* is also bordered with a thin red cloth band and a few centimetres from the bottom edge is another band of red cloth, decorated with two parallel pewter-embroidered lines. On

³⁷ Like with the *bultas*, some villagers said that the side on which the *avve* hung down indicated, in the past, if a person was married or not. More so, it could also point to whether a person was right- or left-handed. I was told that it was common for a right-handed person to have the knife hanging on the left side of the belt. This enabled the person to easily grab the knife and pull it out from its sheath for earmarking a reindeer or slaughtering an animal. Consequently, the loose end of the *avve* hung on the opposite side so as not to be in the way.

the men's *gahper* the *tjuhppa* is dark blue and the only additional decoration is one line of pewter-embroidery close to the *hålbbe*.



Figure 20. A woman's *gahper*. Photograph by Anne-Lise Reinsfelt/Norsk Folkemuseum. Reproduced from Norsk Folkemuseum (2014), by kind permission of Norsk Folkemuseum.



Figure 21. Hand-made *gábmaga* for a child and factory-made *gábmaga* for an adult.

The Gábmaga

The *gáppte* can be worn with different kinds of shoes. Nowadays many Sámi wear plain shoes bought from any shoe store in the city. However, it is still common for people to wear the *gábmaga* (Ls), which are the typical Sámi leather shoes with a slightly upward bent toe and ankle high shaft (fig. 21)³⁸. Villagers speculated that the upward bent toe was made to attach the past binding of the ski (a rope that went across the wooden ski) to the feet. Today, skiing is done with ski boots and new forms of binding, but the *gábmaga* has kept its particular look.

In the past, the *gábmaga* were sewn by hand from reindeer skin with a sole normally made with the stronger skins of a cow or ox. Today, all *gábmaga*, except those for small children,

³⁸ In winter, people wear a type of shoe that has the same design as the *gábmaga*. The *nuvtaga* (Ls) is made with fur from the reindeer's leg and the *gálloga* (Ls) is made with fur from the reindeer's head (Mikkelsen 2006: 246).

are bought factory-made from specialised stores. There are a number of varieties of the *gábmaga* today. Some are made without shafts, others with heels and some have engravings in the leather.

The Vuoddaga

The *vuoddaga* are a type of woven bands wrapped around the shafts of the *gábmaga* to fix the shoe to the leg. An adult's *vuoddaga* are around two meters long and they are made by *låhtåt* (Ls) (a kind of 'finger-weaving') threads together into various patterns (fig. 22). The tool, called *låhtåmmuorra* (Ls) (literally: 'finger-weaving wood'), used for this kind of work is made from an approximately forty centimetre long y-shaped branch that the bark is removed from. For managing the long threads while working, half their length is wrapped around the crotch of the *låhtåmmuorra* while the other half is left to hang down and it is these threads that the maker starts by weaving together with a technique that I discuss in greater detail in chapter 8.



Figure 22. *Låhtåt* a pair of *vuoddaga*, *vinjoga*, with the *låhtåmmuorra*.



Figure 23. Men's *vuoddaga*, *sjnierága*.

The patterns of the *vuoddaga* differ between women and men. The men's *vuoddaga* has a linear horizontal pattern in blue and red and is called *sjnierága* (Ls) (fig. 23). Sometimes it can also have an additional zigzag pattern in yellow or green. For women there are various patterns (fig. 22, 24, and 25):

- *Belaga* (Ls) is a zigzag pattern made in two different colours.
- The pattern of *guosaga* (Ls) is normally red with other coloured threads woven in to make a design that looks like *guossa* (Ls) (spruce trees).
- *Suolluga* (Ls) is usually red with other coloured threads woven in as square lines to make a design that resemble *suollu* (Ls) (islets).
- Another common pattern is *tjatjága* (Ls). The length of the *vuoddaga* is in this pattern made of three successive and different one-coloured fields where the middle part is always red. Additionally, a zigzag pattern can be woven into these fields.
- *Vinjoga* (Ls) is normally red with a different coloured zigzag pattern.



Figure 24. Women's *vuoddaga*, *belaga*, *suolluga* and *guosaga*.



Figure 25. Women's *vuoddaga*, *tjatjága*.

At one end the *vuoddaga* is thinner for around forty centimetres before it finishes off with a large *diehppe*. The other end finishes with a *garttsa* (Ls) (an approximately ten centimetres long triangular piece of reindeer skin), which is tied to the *gámagartssa* (Ls) (hook in the *gábmaga*). After tying the *vuoddaga* to the *gábmaga*, it is wrapped tightly around the shaft, from the outside and in, before being tied to the side with the *diehppe* hanging visibly on the outer side of the leg.

Additional Accessories

The *gáppte* can be worn with a number of additional accessories. These include:

- One-coloured or patterned scarves, normally with long and thick fringes, that are worn over the shoulders. The scarves are either self-made or purchased.
- A *vaessko* (Ls) (bag), usually self-made with reindeer skin and woollen cloth that is embellished with pewter-embroidery. Some bags have the shape of the *káffavuossa*.
- The *njálmme fáhta* (Ls) is a poncho used over the *gáppte*, or other kinds of clothing, as a protection against the cold. It is self-made with a thick woollen fabric and decorated with different coloured cloth bands. Some garments are also adorned with a *lissto* or tailored to have a high collar or hood.
- It has never been common to wear jewellery among the Lulesámi, but today many have started to wear purchased silver necklaces, brooches, earrings and bracelets with designs inspired by the Arctic environment such as snowflakes or the midnight sun. Some people also wear religious symbols like the Virgin Mary or Sáráhkka, the earth mother in the 'pre-Christian' Sámi religion.

4. Lives and Rights within the Hand of God

Jonas was a man approaching his mid-50s. He and I got along very well during the year of my fieldwork. I appreciated his positive outlook on life and sense of humour. We also shared common interests in the outdoors, travelling, literature and photography. I enjoyed visiting Jonas in his house to have chats and get recommendations of good books to read. From time to time he would show me his photo albums and tell me stories about his trips around Fennoscandinavia and to more faraway places like southern Europe, Thailand and the United States. The travel narratives were always entertaining and the photographs from the journeys told stories on their own.

There was one photograph that I particularly liked. It was a framed picture that hung over the sofa in Jonas's living-room, portraying a small settlement on the side of one of the inner fjords in the area. The picture was taken during summer and the colours were bright and vibrant. The small cluster of houses on the shoreline was picturesque and new details of the landscape seemed to appear each time that I looked at the photo. Once as I rested my eyes on the motif, Jonas said, "You know, I have travelled a lot and seen many beautiful places." I gazed over at him and saw that he too looked at the photograph on the wall. With warmth in his voice, he added, "But that's my *paradis* (N) (paradise). That's where I was born and where I played with my siblings as a child." Jonas smiled, pointed to the picture and repeated, "That's my paradise on earth."

In the previous chapter I introduced the most commonly made and worn *gáppte* in Ájluokta today, which is named after the municipality and referred to as the *Divtasvuodna-gáppte*. The reference to the area in the name of the *gáppte* manifests the Lulesámi people's, like Jonas's, deep attachment to the land within which they have grown up, where they perceive that their *forfedre* (N) (ancestors) have lived for centuries and through which they, by and large, articulate their identities and relationships to one another.

The Lulesámi have also co-resided with other Sámi and non-Sámi people in Divtasvuodna. Today, people with various nationalities, background and self-identification are neighbours, work and go to school together, play football in the same team and exchange news. They discuss political, social and economic matters together at neighbourhood-, village- and municipal meetings. People also participate together at *dugnad* (N) (voluntary work gatherings) by spring-cleaning the cemetery or painting a communal house³⁹. Relations among people are usually peaceful and jovial, yet at times also marked by divergent interests, conceptual differences and disagreements. The most noticeable disputes during fieldwork concerned the amount of visibility and political power of the Lulesámi within the region. Within such debates and tensions the *gáppte* was at times used to strengthen or challenge certain claims and to define identities throughout time.

Beth Conklin (1997), in a study of Amazonian people's activism in Brazil, argues that 'exotic' body images have a central role in the political struggles of indigenous groups. According to Conklin, a 'Western' audience often defines people's 'authenticity' through dress and many indigenous groups recognise the power to use such ideas for asserting their rights. Similarly, the *gáppte*, which up until the mid-1900s was an everyday item of clothing, have within the last few decades become an increasingly important political element, used both to assert and undermine Sámi rights within the state.

In this chapter I address some of the implications that the *gáppte* has in the lives of the Lulesámi and in their relationship to one another, the land and with the non-Sámi population. Throughout the pages that follow I show how the garment is interwoven with people's perceptions of themselves and others in relation to the geography of Divtasvuodna and its surroundings, people's movements within this area over time and the sometimes complex political relationships between Sámi and non-Sámi people. This analysis also ties in with a wider discussion about the history of the Lulesámi and the tensions around viewing indigeneity as an inherited property or as situated in actual life histories (cf. chapter 1: 33-38).

³⁹ A *dugnad* works by people informing one another that a specific job needs to be done, such as painting a house. No one is forced to participate in the work, but people are expected to cooperate.

'Border Crossings'

The Divtasvuodna-*gáppte* is commonly also called the Lulesámi-*gáppte* or the Jáhkâmáhkke⁴⁰-*gáppte*. These last two names and the similarities between the *gáppte* in the Norwegian and Swedish Lulesámi area create a link between people across the border. Such a connection has, according to Oddmund Andersen (2011: 67), made some people refer to the Lulesámi in Divtasvuodna as *svensksamer* (N) (Swedish Sámi). From time to time, Ellen wryly employed this reference to explain why she and I got along so well living together. However, although Ellen used the term to highlight an affectionate understanding between her and me, Andersen states that the definition may also falsely imply that the Lulesámi are immigrants to Norway rather than native inhabitants. Once, Anja, a politically active and articulate woman, commented on the term *svensksamer* as follows, "This is what they (the state authorities and some non-Sámi people) say when want to deny us (Lulesámi) equal entitlements to the land or the right to speak our mother tongue."

For better understanding these various perspectives around the idea of *svensksamer* and the *gáppte's* role within them it is of salience to comprehend the geography of the area and people's movements within the land over time. Topographically, from above, the municipality of Divtasvuodna resembles a hand. Following the popular vernacular story, God dug out this particular shape with his hand on the sixth day of the creation of the world. The Divtasvuodna, which is the widest fjord in the area, was moulded by the palm of his hand while the five main inlets, which are narrower, were hollowed out by his fingers. The land mass that was excavated in the process was thrown out to sea, forming the set of islands known as Lofoten in the northwest part of the county⁴¹. In order to remember when Divtasvuodna was created, God inscribed the number six in the granite on a mountain wall inside the longest fjord (fig. 26). After finishing, he sat down to relax at the end of this longest fjord and formed a flat terrain there by the water with his buttocks! This act of repose is also related to the name of the inner fjord area: Vuodnabahta (Hellemobotn),

⁴⁰ The Swedish town of Jáhkâmáhkke is in vernacular terms called the 'Lulesámi capital'.

⁴¹ Lofoten is an archipelago whose surrounding waters are famous for attracting large numbers of spawning cod during winter. Apart from the rich fishing, the area has also become increasingly popular during the last few decades with tourists and artists from around the world due to its scenic views, high mountains and picturesque villages.

where *vuodna* (Ls) means fjord and *bahta* (Ls) can mean end (such as the end of the fjord) or buttocks (such as the buttocks of God) (fig. 27)!



Figure 26. The day when Divtasvuodna was created.



Figure 27. Vuodnabahta.

While this narration circled widely and was told tongue in cheek, the residents of Divtasvuodna also recognised the impact of past glaciation in the formation of the fjords. Previous geological activities have also resulted in the villagers' pride of living in an area with the second deepest limestone cave in the world and northern Europe's largest canyon, which stretches almost all the way between Vuodnabahta and the border to Sweden (fig. 28). From the end of the fjord there is only around 6 km up to the border. The grandeur of the deep and narrow valley with vertical cliff walls of up to 200 meters and the close proximity to the vast lands of tundra, forests and mountains in Sweden attract tourism to the areas around the inner fjords during summer holidays. However, the first time I hiked along the serpentine path following the edge of the canyon together with Karin, one of Ellen's adult daughters, during my first weeks in Divtasvuodna, the only encounters we had were with two Lulesámi men hunting ptarmigan and a large reindeer bull (fig. 29).



Figure 28. The canyon.



Figure 29. Campfire on the Norwegian-Swedish border.

Although Ellen now live permanently in the outer fjords, she had grown up in Vuodnabahta, a settlement of around twenty cottages that is reachable by just under a two hour's boat ride from Ájluokta. Ellen had moved to the outer fjords in the 1960s to be closer to employment opportunities, but, like most of the other Lulesámi villagers, always regularly returned to the inner fjords during summer holidays and some weekends.

I cannot remember what it was we were looking for, but once I helped Ellen search for something in her house in Ájluokta. While trying to find whatever it was, she came across a rolled poster in some hidden corner and spread it out with her hands. It was a painted map of Divtasvuodna made in 1985 by the Northsámi artist Hans Ragnar Mathisen (fig. 30). I recognised it as it hung on the walls of many Lulesámi homes in the hamlet. Although Ellen had not put the map up on the wall she liked it as, according to her, it revealed how the Lulesámi people perceive the land. On the conventional topographic map, which Karin and I used when we went hiking along the canyon, the Norwegian-Swedish border is clearly

marked by a straight black-dotted line (fig. 31). In contrast, Mathisen's map does not include any borderline. Ellen explained that people in the past had not thought of the land as separated by a national border. Instead, they moved within the land (across the border) following and tracking seasonal resources and trading relations (cf. O. Andersen 2011). The fjords are famous for being rich in fish, such as redfish, cod, halibut, coalfish and the monstrous-looking wolfish, and due to the warm waters of the Gulf Stream most of the coast stays ice-free all year. On the other hand, the (Swedish) inlands are valued for gathering foods like berries and mushrooms and hunting. In the past a range of animals were hunted including reindeer, wolverine, mountain fox, bear and hare. Today hunters mainly look out for ptarmigan and elk (which I was told had journeyed north only in the last few decades). According to several scholars (e.g. O. Andersen 2011; K. T. Andersen 2007), reindeer-tenders also moved between the inlands and the coast with their animals to search for grazing land up until the 1900s. People also traded with other Sámi and non-Sámi people in the inlands and along the coast, where merchants from other parts of Europe arrived by ship. Gunvor Guttorm (2006) state that the Sámi mainly traded skins for goods including broadcloth, hemp, silver and metal-ware.



Figure 30. Photograph of Hans Ragnar Mathisen's map of Divtasvuodna.



Figure 31. Pointing out our location, close to the Norwegian-Swedish border, on a topographic map over Divtasvuodna.

It is still not clear exactly when or why the Lulesámi people started settling permanently around the inner fjords of Divtasvuodna. Most likely the transformation to a more sedentary lifestyle was the result of a combination of factors. Gutorm Gjessing (1973) argues that people settled around the fjords due to changes in the Swedish taxation policies during the early 17th-century. Although the Sámi also traded and paid tax using the hides from various wild animals before the 17th-century, Lennart Lundmark (1998) and Anna Järpe (2007) write that there had still been a surplus of game and that the Sámi managed to keep a balance between their own needs and the demands from others. However, this situation changed in the early 17th-century when the Swedish King Karl IX reformed the tax regulations. Instead of paying with various hides, the Sámi were required to pay with reindeer meat and dried fish (Lundmark 1998; Järpe 2007). Lundmark (1982, as quoted in Järpe 2007: 17-18) suggests that the transformation of the taxation system was a strategic move by the King to provide the Swedish army fighting in Poland at the time with food. The prices of skins also dropped during these years and the Sámi, who had grown in numbers due to the previous decades of relative prosperity, faced a major change as their staple supplies of game and fish were now heavily in-demand. Due to the growing difficulties of living off hunting and fishing, Gjessing (1973) argues that the Sámi reacted in two main ways. Some people expanded their small number of domesticated reindeer to larger herds to, according to Järpe, “regain a balance between supply and demand” (2007: 29). Others moved and settled more permanently elsewhere, such as around the fjords. The people who settled around the fjords sustained themselves through a combination of fishing, hunting, gathering, forestry, small-scale farming and agriculture (O. Andersen 2011).

Israel Ruong (1982 [1969]: 56) suggests that the move to the coast might also have been caused by the severe reindeer plague that swept through the inlands in the mid-1700s and reduced the number of animals. Furthermore, Just Qvigstad (1929) and Thorbjørn Storjord (1993:15) write that another reason for settling permanently around the fjords was the harsh winters in the inlands during the 1800s that lessened the nutrition in the land and caused the numbers of reindeer and other wild animals to decline.

Returning to Ellen, she highlighted that the Sámi areas throughout Sápmi do not correspond to municipal, county or national borders, but follow people's previous movements within the land. Today's frontiers, she said, are relatively recent and have been established by colonial powers without taking into consideration the people who lived within the land.

According to Nuccio Mazzullo (2005: 41-42), northern Fennoscandia was considered a *terra nullius* by the state authorities up until the 11th-century. From then on, negotiations to claim rule over this area and its rich mineral resources intensified among Denmark-Norway, Sweden, and Novgorod⁴² (Niemi 1997). In 1326 these states signed a treaty and defined northern Fennoscandia as joint territory. For the Sámi, this meant that they were subjected to pay tax to three state authorities. Denmark-Norway's sovereignty over Divtasvuodna was first settled during the Kalmar War (1611-1613). However, the present border between Norway and Sweden was not officially declared until after the Great Nordic War (1701-1720). With the 1751 border treaty, the Sámi people's movements across the border were recognised and an additional agreement, the Lapp Codicil (Lappekodisillen), was also signed. This document permitted the Sámi to continue moving over the border and it was, according to Einar Niemi (1997), especially beneficial for those reindeer-tenders who depended on grazing land that lay on each side of the borderline⁴³. The border politics have changed throughout time and been a topic of heated debates and conflicts (e.g. Ingold 1976; Niemi 1997). Although people can move relatively unhindered across the border today, the Lulesámi in Norway need, for example, a special written permit both from the Swedish state and the Swedish Lulesámi people to hunt on Swedish Lulesámi grounds.

Notwithstanding exactly when or why people settled in the fjords, Ellen and the other Lulesámi villagers perceive that their ancestors had moved, lived and raised their children within the land over several centuries. The *gáppte* that the Lulesámi today make and wear

⁴² Northern Fennoscandia was also attractive because of the possibilities of creating a North East Passage that would be economically and politically advantageous in relations with the eastern countries. At this time, Finland was divided between Sweden and Novgorod (a republic state covering the land between the Baltic Sea and the Ural Mountains between the 12th to 15th-centuries). In 1809, Sweden lost Finland to Russia. Finland became independent in 1917.

⁴³ Gjessing (1973:113) argues that the Lapp Codicil was not only signed out of a consideration for the Sámi, but also because the Sámi were the only people using the northern inlands at the time. Allowing them to continue doing so provided the states with an opportunity to collect tax from these areas.

does not originate from Sweden, but bears similarities with the one across the border due to the Lulesámi's shared practices and movements within the land for a long time up until today. The idea that the Lulesámi in Norway are *svensksamer* who have immigrated and settled on foreign Norwegian grounds is, consequently, a misconstruction of their lives according to their own perspectives and practices (cf. O. Andersen 2011: 67).

Issues of Indigeneity

The Lulesámi perceive that the movements and actions of their past relatives in the area for centuries have contributed to their contemporary existence. Consequently, many people consider the land to play an important part in creating and manifesting their sense of self and relations to others. Due to this deep attachment to the land the Lulesámi villagers struggle for their rights to participate in decisions concerning the area within which they live. They want to take part in debates about issues such as the possibility of establishing a national park in the municipality, setting up more fish farms or the right to speak the Lulesámi language through bilingual road signs. Although many Lulesámi and non-Sámi villagers consider it a matter of course that the Lulesámi population should be allowed to live within the region on their own terms, there are also people with a radically different opinion.

The views against the Sámi presence in the north are perhaps most apparent when looking back at the state's policies of Norwegianisation. Through this ideology the Sámi were viewed as 'primitive' and doomed to extinction unless assimilated into the mainstream Norwegian society. Although the increasing awareness of human rights and the Sámi people's political struggle after the war have resulted in a growing recognition of the Sámi and provided them with a certain degree of autonomy, there are still some people who are opposed to the Sámi civic and constitutional rights within the country. During my fieldwork there were massive protests when the Lulesámi sign for Båddådjá was erected next to its Norwegian name along the highway entering into the city. Not only were debates plenty and sometimes harsh in the

media and on social networks, but the sign itself was also, more than once, painted black⁴⁴. One non-Sámi person that I spoke with, who was against the bilingual road sign, said that the Sámi demanded *urettferdige spesielle privilegier* (N) (unjustified special privileges) (cf. chapter 1:pp). This person argued, in a bigoted manner, that the Sámi should adapt to *livet i Norge* (N) (life in Norway) by speaking the Norwegian language if they wished to live within the country. The person said that if the Sámi are not happy with this, they are free to move to another place and *prøve lykken der* (N) (try their luck there). According to this person, the Lulesámi are immigrants from Sweden. “If the Sámi get their name for the city (Båddådjá) recognised, then why should people from Asia, North Africa and the Middle East who live there also not get their names for the city erected?” the person questioned and added while shaking the head, “Soon we will have road signs in hundreds of languages! I tell you, it’s like the Wild West here!”

The Lulesámi, on the other hand, state that their presence in the area is different from those, who within less than 100 years, have immigrated to the country from other parts of the world. Anja once commented on this debate by saying that while many people have *moved to Norway*, the Sámi have *lived within* the land previous to the establishment of the current borders of the nation-state and governmental policies. “The borders have been erected *on* our land and the state ideology *imposed upon* us by a colonial power,” Anja forthrightly said.

Protests and opinions like these against bilingual road signs have, however, forced the Lulesámi to continuously argue for their case by providing tangible ‘evidence’ for why they should have the same entitlements as the majority of the population to, for example, speak their native language. Such argumentation, from both directions, is often grounded in issues of indigeneity, which is often grounded in ideas of how long the Lulesámi have lived within the area (cf. chapter 1: 33-38).

One piece of evidence used by the Lulesámi for demonstrating their presence within the country for centuries is based on archaeological findings. Oddmund Andersen (2011: 66)

⁴⁴ When the bilingual road sign for the municipality of Gáivuona (Kåfjord) in the North-Norwegian county of Finnmark was erected almost fifteen years ago, it triggered similar protests and was even destroyed by gunfire.

proposes that Sámi people are indigenous to Nordland based on the discovery of a kind of white stone vessel that was used during the last millennium before Christ and which has since been associated with the Sámi. There are also disagreements and among some people a deep concern, over whether the 'Skjoldehamndrakten', which is the oldest-dated archaeological documentation of a dress made in woollen cloth found in northern Nordland, is of Sámi or non-Sámi origin (see Gjessing 1938; Løvliid 2009: 19)⁴⁵. Anja, who eagerly wanted to find out whether the garment was worn *either* by a Sámi or non-Sámi person, said that its 'ethnic' origin was of importance for claiming the Sámi people's indigeneity in the area.

Although it might be important for the Lulesámi to show how their practices and lives are related to the northern lands over time in order to be granted equality and to be able to live according to their own ways within the country, there are also some potential problems with identifying the archaeologically recovered dress with a certain people based on contemporary categorisations. What such an approach risks perpetuating is an idea, and common stereotype, that indigenous people live within timeless and well-defined groups (cf. chapter 1: 33-38).

It is not only the Lulesámi who have lived and moved within Divtasvuodna over time. It is also known through the story told by the non-Sámi Norwegian *høvding* (N) (big man) Ottar of Hålogaland⁴⁶ to the English King Alfred the Great in the 9th-century, that Sámi and non-Sámi people have co-resided in the area for a long time. In the story Ottar narrates how he collected tax from a people today identified as the Sámi in the form of various animal skins (in Gjessing 1973: 48; Ruong 1982: 46). From the literature it is also known that there was regular contact between people living in the north and merchants who arrived by ship along the coast for many years before people from the south, missionaries and governmental authorities increasingly took root in the area from the 1500s. At that time it was difficult to travel overland and most people arrived in the north by sea and settled around the outer

⁴⁵ The dress was found in a grave in Skjoldehamn, around 190 km north of Divtasvuodna, in 1936. Through the help of radiocarbon dating methods, Dan Halvar Løvliid (2009: 147-152) argues that the garment is from the 11th-century.

⁴⁶ Hålogaland was a petty kingdom up until the Middle-Ages. It expanded along the coast over parts of what today are the counties of Nordland and Troms.

fjords. Another Sámi group, defined as the Seasámi, also lived in these areas. According to Knut Kolsrud (1947), the Seasámi lived and moved along the coast, at least since the 1600s-1700s, sustaining themselves primarily through fishing. They spoke a distinct Sámi language and wore a different type of *gáppte* to other Sámi people (ibid.). However, in a state authorised census that was carried out in 1920, no one self-identified as Seasámi according to Bjørg Evjen (1998: 43). Evjen suggests that this was due to Norwegianisation as well as because “people knew their own kin history, and it could be very complex seen from the perspective of ethnicity” (1998: 47).

In light of these observations, people with different languages and ways of living have dwelled in the region for centuries. They have not lived in isolation from one another, but rather people’s lives have criss-crossed through shared practices (such as fishing), trade, marriage, migration and the Norwegianisation. O. Andersen (2011: 67) shows that the coexistence of various people is revealed in both the Sámi and Norwegian languages through loanwords. Marit Myrvoll (2008) points to similarities in certain beliefs and practices around death and the ‘supernatural’ among the Sámi and non-Sámi people in Northern Norway. Such shared practices include stories around revenants and portents through dreams or signs such as unusual behaviour in birds or abnormal sounds (ibid.).

Furthermore, although the term ‘Lulesámi’ today is commonly employed both by the Lulesámi and non-Sámi population it is, according to O. Andersen (2011: 67-68), a relatively recent definition. O. Andersen writes that the name emerged first during the 1900s and was coined by non-Sámi linguists who studied the Sámi language around the Lule waterways in Sweden. As the language around these waters correlated with the language spoken in Divtasvuodna, people on Norwegian grounds also became labelled as Lulesámi. Within the political movement, O. Andersen states that the term was also employed by the Lulesámi people to distinguish themselves from their non-Sámi neighbours as well as from other Sámi groups (cf. Evjen 1998). Before the introduction of the term Lulesámi, people had, according to the older villagers, mainly identified with kin-groups through common surnames or to the place where they lived by adding the place name to the personal name. For example a person called Inga from Måsske might be known as Måsske-Inga.

The difficulty of categorising the Skjoldehamndrakten as Sámi or non-Sámi has mainly been because it shares similarities and differences with both old Sámi and non-Sámi clothing. Gjessing (1938) writes that the Skjoldehamndrakten is not Sámi by, for example, arguing that the Sámi did not use the kind of knitted socks that were found with the dress. Anja, on the other hand, firmly believe that the dress is Lulesámi based on its tailoring, *gábmaga* and the designs of the belt and *vuoddaga*, which she said resembles the Divtasvuodna-*gáppte*. However, although archaeological findings like the dress might resemble later worn clothing or other items used by either the Sámi or non-Sámi, there can be no certainty that such things were not adopted, shared or abandoned by people in the area through time and this further complicates the categorisations of the dress in terms of ethnicity. Moreover, even if people's choices of what to wear change through time, this does not necessarily equate to the fact that there has been a rupture in their way of life. Rather, it may indicate that people continuously make choices and adapt to their present conditions and experiences within the world.

With this discussion I do not wish to undermine the fact that ancestors to today's Lulesámi have lived in Divtasvuodna or their self-identification as an indigenous people to the area. However, rather than arguing about whether the Skjoldehamndrakten is Sámi or not, it might be better to focus on the fact that certain *practices* that have continued through time are still relevant for people living in the area today notwithstanding their 'ethnic' classifications. Although discourses about how long the Lulesámi have lived within the region are applied by the villagers at times for conforming to hegemonic ideas of what it means to be indigenous and for gaining understanding and recognition within the state, the importance of the Lulesámi language, land rights and the *gáppte* are not grounded in ideas about a past based on archaeological findings *per se*, but in the lived experiences of the Lulesámi. None of the villagers who I spoke with said that they wanted to wear the *gáppte* or speak the Lulesámi language because people 'have always done so'. Rather, villagers like Ellen highlighted that the *gáppte* and the Lulesámi language sensually ground many people within a wide field of relations to others and the land that they wish to pass on to their

children and grandchildren on their own terms without being subjected to discrimination from the majority of the population.

5. Eleven Voices of the *Gáppte*

In this chapter I wish to continue the discussion from the previous chapter by showing that the *gáppte*, as the craftwork most frequently made by the Lulesámi women, is not just the production of a self-evident or straight-forward article to be worn, but that it has the potential to profoundly affect and alter a person's sense of self, place within the world and relations with others in diverse, yet interwoven, ways.

Carol Hendrickson (1995: 29), in a study of Mayan dress, writes that it is not easy to gain an understanding of how people perceive clothes or choose to dress through formal interviews and surveys as “information [about clothing] does not exist in an institutionalized, codified form and does not present itself as neat, prepared “facts””. I agree with this view. Looking back at my fieldwork experience, the *gáppte* was interwoven within everyday conversations and personal narratives. The villagers never spoke of the *gáppte* “as an object of clothing, but as a lived garment” (Banjerjee and Miller 2008: 1) that changes in importance through time, in accordance with changing life conditions and in different situations and relations with others.

Sometimes I got confused by the different stories people told. A person could talk about the garment in one way at one time and in a completely different way on another occasion. My fieldnotes just seemed to get messier each day because of these numerous and diverse stories and I soon realised that the *gáppte* cannot be read as a visual text, which always symbolises the same meaning and generates the same response (cf. chapter 1: 31-33; Starthern 1979; Tarlo 2010). With time, I understood that choices of what to wear are not determined by rules or ethnic identity per se, but made by individuals in relation to the ever-changing world in which they live.

The Norwegian anthropologist Harald Eidheim (1953) argues that the Sámi are often portrayed in a homogeneous way in the literature and popular media. According to Eidheim,

such a view fails to recognise the various ways in which the Sámi view their world and live their lives. However, while Eidheim (ibid.: 53) reduces the diversity among the Sámi to a matter of generational differences, I propose, with regards to the experiences related to the *gáppte*, that the multiplicity of voices among the Lulesámi is far more complex than that. Rather than being a question of generations, I show in this chapter that persons, across ages and gender, shift and oscillate their understandings of clothing through lived experiences and through seeing and from being seen (cf. Starthern 1979; Tarlo 2010).

Instead of analysing the *gáppte* from a single semiotic perspective, my aim in this chapter is to address the various ways in which people understand, experience and negotiate the visibility of the *gáppte* and other items of clothing in relation to factors such as their personal biographies, emotional lives, governmental policies and practical considerations, together with definitions and ideas of what it entails to be Sámi. I further show the *gáppte*'s potential of having both constructive and destructive impacts on and consequences for people's lives. The study highlights the various ways in which clothing affect personal and social well-being through their capacity of generating a wide range of feelings. I demonstrate that choices of what to wear at times create, affirm and manifest a person's sense of self and place within the world. At other times, clothes produce and express ambiguities, insecurities and tensions for the individual and in relations between people.

The pages that follow are organised as a collage of thirteen overlapping voices through which I explore the changes and continuities of the *gáppte*, how the garment has been complemented and replaced by other items of clothing throughout the last few decades and a range of different experiences related to clothing. The narratives address the salience of clothes in the lives of the villagers as they retrospectively crafted and narrated their life experiences and feelings to me. Scholarly writings and a poem are also included amongst these voices. The stories presented here do not provide an exclusive view of the Lulesámi's choices about what to wear, but glimpses of the multifaceted ways in which such decisions are made, the factors that influence them and their emotional, social and political consequences.



Figure 32. The skyline of Gásluokta.

1. A View from the Factory

One grey and gloomy day I went to visit Jonas in his house to chat over a cup of coffee. I had just returned from Gásluokta where I had gone with a woman to visit her elderly mother who lives in a care-home. I told Jonas about our trip to the other side of the fjord and it prompted him to recount that many people moved from the settlements around the inner fjords to take up employment at Gásluokta's cement factory during the post-war years⁴⁷. "I'm sure you saw the factory today," he said, "it dominates the skyline together with the mountain peaks" (fig. 32).

Jonas recollected how his uncle had taken a job at the factory in the 1960s. "It was a job that guaranteed an income, but it also required a change of lifestyle," he said. "What do you mean?" I curiously inquired. Jonas explained:

⁴⁷ After the war the demand for cement increased and, as a consequence, the cement factory, which had been established in Gásluokta in 1918, expanded their business.

Well, even if it was not self-evident for people to always have food on the table in the past, they lived more freely. It was of course hard to sustain a family, but everyone was their own boss and could decide over their own work much more than they could at the factory. To work at the factory was a 9 to 5 job, under the supervision of a manger, and you had to speak the Norwegian language and wear 'Western clothes'. For sure people wouldn't have been allowed to enter the factory dressed in the *gáppte*!

"Was it first when people moved to the villages around the outer fjords that they stopped making and wearing the *gáppte*?" I asked when Jonas stopped. In response, he smiled and said that people had experienced discrimination also when they lived in the inner fjord settlements from tourists and at school. "I didn't have so many problems in school myself," Jonas said, "my mother sewed trousers and knitted jumpers for us and she had always spoken both the Lulesámi and Norwegian languages with my siblings and me." Jonas quieted and looked sad. When he continued, it was with a lowered voice:

Other children came to school dressed in the *gáppte* without understanding a word of Norwegian... and the majority of teachers came from southern Norway and they didn't know anything about the Sámi. Now afterwards many Sámi say that they felt stupid at school as they looked different and didn't understand what the teachers said. Sometimes they also received jeering comments from their peers. Not all teachers were so understanding either... and for other teachers it was probably hard, what could they do when the children didn't understand them?

We were both silent for a while, before Jonas continued:

It was maybe easier for those who still lived or had their families in the settlements around the inner fjords as those areas only were populated by Sámi people. So even if you were bullied at school, you went home and were surrounded by the comfort of your kin. From the inner fjords it's also close to Sweden and people kept regular contact with their kin on the other side of the border. As you already know, in Sweden the politics was very different from here. While the Norwegian state wanted the Sámi to become Norwegians, the Swedish authorities wished for the Sámi to remain Sámi⁴⁸.

⁴⁸ In contrast to the Norwegianisation policies of 'salvaging' the Sámi from their 'subordination' by assimilating them into becoming 'Norwegians', the Swedish state implemented a different political agenda, commonly referred to as *lapp ska vara lapp* (S) (Lapp should be Lapp). At the same time as the Sámi were perceived with inferiority in Sweden, they were also, according to Lennart Lundmark (2002), considered a valued indigenous population. Because of the rapid transformations in society, the Swedish authorities believed that the Sámi were heading towards extinction by becoming assimilated into the majority population. This view was influenced by a definition and static perception of what it means to be indigenous and Sámi. Lundmark writes that the state declared that the Sámi, due to their 'racial characteristics', were only suited to tend reindeer and should not engage in other forms of employment. Additionally, special schools, so called nomadic schools, were established. These schools provided a poor level of education to prevent the Sámi from progressing into a 'civilised state of being' (ibid.). Hence, while the Sámi in Norway were incorporated into the Norwegian system, the Swedish Sámi were often forced outside the mainstream society by the state.

Jonas took a hasty sip of his coffee and added:

But then the situation changed when people moved to the villages around the outer fjords. There they became neighbours with non-Sámi people and started working side by side with them in the factory and other places... and not everyone showed an understanding for our different ways of being. Also some Sámi people that abandoned their previous ways of living started being critical towards other Sámi who, for example, wished to continue speaking the Lulesámi language.

Jonas highlighted that it was not always the case that people would actually say negative things about the Sámi out loud, but that the Sámi realised that they had to wear clothes other than the *gáppte* and to speak Norwegian to get a job and manage to go through the educational system.

Jean Briggs (1997: 228) argues, in a study among the Utku of Canada, that previous ways of doing things for 'living comfortably' became, with the growing contact with non-Utku, 'emblems', or emotionally charged markers, that were used as 'mirrors' to understand and distinguish oneself from others. Likewise, Jonas emphasised that the Lulesámi became aware of what the differentiating elements were between them and the non-Sámi population through which projections of inferiority could be channelled. Phrased differently, people became attentive to their positions within the world and of how they were perceived by others. The *gáppte*, which had been a practical daily garment, became an evident visual indication of the difference between Sámi and non-Sámi people. Jonas described how many Lulesámi started feeling sartorial alienation and, as a result, strategically stopped wearing the *gáppte*. Many also ceased to speak the Lulesámi language and changed their personal names and surnames to become less Sámi and more 'Norwegian-sounding' (e.g. from Gælok or Gintal to Andersen and Jonsen) in order to manage their relations with others and avoid discrimination.

As we continued talking, Jonas said that the Lulesámi stopped wearing the *gáppte* to avoid emotional distress, but that, in the process, they also experienced a loss of autonomy; of being able to choose how to live without fear of discrimination. Jonas explained that many Lulesámi started feeling ashamed and lost self-confidence in who they were and from where they came.

2. A Poem

The Lulesámi poet Stig Gælok (1988) makes the same point:

*«gáppte I nav vasste»
tjullá rivggo
gáptev la
njágadam vuossaj
gå ittjijj ielve*

*slippsa ja lâtteappte
tjáppa bávsa
gehtja lik skuovajt*

*rivggo jávlla I tjáppak
gå la laden(Ls)*

«the *gáppte* is so ugly»
says his non-Sámi woman
he hid the *gáppte*
in the bag
when she did not like it

tie and suit
nice trousers
his non-Sámi woman says he's handsome

when he dresses
like a Norwegian man (author's translation)

3. The Sámi who 'Vanished'

Once as I was out walking with Petra, a Lulesámi woman approaching her mid-40s, and as we passed a house in the hamlet, she whispered, even though no one was around and could hear us, "The people who live there are *fornorskade samer* (N) (Norwegianised Sámi)." "What do you mean?" I asked, whispering back. Petra explained:

Elders have told me that the woman's parents dressed in the *gáppte*, but then they *laddeluvvat* (N) (Norwegianised) themselves, like many did after the war. The woman grew up as a 'Norwegian'. To the contrary of many people who became Sámi again, she and her husband never did. I told her once that she's Sámi, but she denied it and said that I didn't know what I was talking about.

I looked at the house and at the smoke gently rising up in the air from the chimney. Petra moved from the middle of the road as a car passed by and then said, “You know, people like them, the so called Norwegianised Sámi, they are the ones who are most critical of the Sámi presence here in Ájluokta.” I curiously asked, “Why do you think that is?” Petra shrugged her shoulders and said, “They are scared I guess... and they still suffer from a minority complex and are ashamed of their past. That’s why they don’t want to see anything around them that reminds them of their Sámi background.” She started walking slowly again, pointed down towards the fjord and illustratively said, “The *gábmaga* were thrown in the sea and when people did that, they became Norwegians.”

4. In Front of the Mirror

Inger, a woman in her early 40s, was born and brought up in Ájluokta. She rarely spoke at great length of her upbringing, but I knew that, although she regularly makes the *gáppte* nowadays, she had not worn or learnt to make the garment as a child. On one occasion towards the end of summer I was, however, rather surprised as she suddenly opened up and spoke of some memories from her teenage years. Her recollection was prompted by the confession of May-Britt, a woman of the same age, who now had decided she wanted to wear the *gáppte* for the first time. May-Britt said that she had never been allowed to wear the *gáppte* by her parents as they had worried she might be bullied by her non-Sámi peers in school. May-Britt uttered a short and rather sad laugh and said that she instead had been teased by some of the Lulesámi children who had worn the *gáppte*. “They shouted at me a few times that I wasn’t an *ekte same* (N) (real Sámi) because I never wore the *gáppte* and couldn’t speak the Lulesámi language,” May-Britt recounted⁴⁹. She went on to describe how she had felt uncomfortable with the thought of wearing the garment even as an adult as she

⁴⁹ A connection can be drawn from May-Britt’s story of the complexity of the relation between clothing and identity to Mulk-Raj Anand’s literary novel *Untouchable* (1940 [1935]). Anand describes the life of Bakha, a low caste sweeper, living in an Indian outcaste colony during the time of the Raj (British empire). Bakha is well aware that higher castes look at him as an inferior human being and his wish is to become like the British in order to be met with equality. One day Bakha is told that he can become like the British by wearing the same clothes as them. However, when Bakha dresses in ‘British clothing’ he is mocked by his father and Indian friends for pretending to be someone that he is not.

still wanted to live up to the wishes of her parents, who until they died only a few years back had not wanted her to wear it. On the other hand, she also felt uneasy about not wearing the *gáppte* as she felt that some Lulesámi villagers expected that she should wear it.

However, now, May-Britt felt that she wanted to wear the garment at her son's confirmation ceremony the following year to manifest a tie between him and herself. Inger, who seemed to identify with May-Britt's story, said:

It was the same for me and my sister. We were not allowed to wear the *gáppte* by our parents. I remember that we used to sneak in to the neighbour's house to look at the *gáppte* that hung in her wardrobe. She was a very kind woman and sometimes she let us try it on. The dress was much too big for us of course, but we stood in front of the mirror and thought that we looked so beautiful! I can't remember that we ever thought about if the garment was Sámi or not, or why we weren't allowed to wear it... for us it was just a beautiful dress. Then as we got older we decided to attend a course in making the *gáppte*. At first my parents were not so happy about it, but they accepted our decision and after a while my mother became interested as well. Today she and I sit and make the garment together!

Once, in winter, when I asked Inger's mother if her children had worn the *gáppte* when they were small she said:

No, they didn't. At that time everyone wore 'Western' clothes. They also didn't learn how to make handicraft. There wasn't any need for them to learn. My children were busy, when they finished school in the afternoon they had to do their homework and after they graduated all of them went into further education. Today they all have good jobs! I learnt to make handicraft when I grew up because I had to for running the family and my children had to learn other things so they got jobs. It's as simple as that!

She stopped and looked out the window on the light snowfall. Then she turned to me and said, with a somewhat saddened voice:

Sometimes my children have been angry and questioned me why they didn't learn to make the *gáppte* or speak the Lulesámi language. I tell them that the times were different then. We Sámi thought that we had to become Norwegians to come up and forwards in the world.

A moment of silence passed and we both looked out at the snow. Then, she said, with a sense of pride, "But when my children became adults they learnt the Lulesámi language. Both my daughters have also learnt to make the *gáppte* and all my children wear the garment nowadays on special occasions. Who would have thought that thirty or forty years ago?"

5. The Áltá-affair

Often when I asked why there was a renewed interest in wearing the *gáppte* from the 1980s onwards among the Lulesámi, people often referred to the Sámi political movement and the Áltá-affair. In this section I briefly recapitulate the *gáppte*'s role within the Sámi movement and during the Áltá-affair, and how these events affected people's perceptions of the garment.

As a reaction towards the increasing state discrimination against the Sámi, I have already mentioned that an ethno-political movement progressively grew throughout Sápmi from the 1960s. Several Sámi organisations were established and, at the centre stage, a few Sámi vanguards claimed that they had been dispossessed of their heritage. Previous to this time, Eidheim (1997) argues, there had been little organised political unity among the Sámi across the north. Instead, people had mainly identified themselves with smaller kinship groups (see chapter 6). However, after the war the belonging to a family became complemented and extended with a Sámi national identity (ibid.)⁵⁰.

In relation to the unification that took place, Eidheim argues that "the appropriation of an ethnic collective identity, selfhood or people, implies a collectivization of conceptions and images which makes it possible continually to reinvent this selfhood in a more complex life-world" (1997: 42). According to Eidheim, this 'collectivization' was created through a repertoire of symbols and specific practices that distinguished the Sámi as having a distinct 'culture' in relation to the majority population⁵¹. The defining markers of such 'culture' were adopted from a combination of previous scholarly works on the Sámi, nationalist ideas and

⁵⁰ Harald Gaski (1997) argues that the Sámi never aimed to establishing their own nation, but that their goal has been to gain constitutional recognition and rights to self-determination within the Fennoscandian states.

⁵¹ Gaski (1997: 10) writes there was no term for 'culture' in the Sámi language prior to the political movement. The Lulesámi word *kultura* derives, quite evidently, from the Norwegian word *kultur*. According to Eidheim (1997: 3), the Sámi also started to view and present themselves through 'an indigenous people's perspectives' at this time and bonds grew to other people who perceived themselves in a similar way across the globe. In 1975 the Nordic Sámi Council, a Sámi umbrella organization established in 1956, participated in the formation of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP). Between 2002 and 2005 the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues had a Sámi president.

other elements that are of specific salience for the Sámi people themselves. In 1986 at the Nordic Sámi Conference, a Sámi national anthem, day (6/2)⁵² and flag were inaugurated⁵³.

The *gáppte* also saw its revival at this time and it was frequently worn by political activists to display unity among the Sámi and distinctiveness to other people⁵⁴. From having been regarded as a marker of the Sámi's inferiority within the state, the garment became invested with pride and indicated a rejection of the colonial power's enforcing values.

An important landmark in the Sámi political struggle is the demonstrations that took place throughout Norway between 1968 and 1982 in relation to the state's planning and construction of a dam in the Áltá-Kautokeino waterways (see Paine 1982 for a detailed analysis). During these protests, Eidheim (1997) writes that the *gáppte*-dressed body became a common sight in national and international media. The garment was visible during the Sámi activists' hunger strike outside the Norwegian Parliament building in Oslo in 1979 and when the police forcefully removed peaceful demonstrators around the dam's building site in 1981. The stream of images from these events raised awareness of the Sámi people's marginal position within the state. Many people who had grown up or raised their children as 'Norwegians' became conscious of their Sámi background and started questioning their sense of self. The famous Sámi musician Mari Boine was unwilling to recognise her Sámi background as a young adult. In an interview uploaded on youtube by Freemuse⁵⁵ from 2008, Boine says that the information in the media during the time of the Áltá-affair made her "realize that I and many other Sámis were like brainwashed to hate our own background, our own language... (sic)."

Although the dam was built, the conflict marked an important political step and turning-point for the Sámi. In the 1980s the Sámi were recognised as an indigenous people of Norway and the government declared to treat Sámi and non-Sámi citizens equally. Many

⁵² The 6th of February marks the day of the first political meeting that discussed political cooperation and unity between Norwegian and Swedish Sámi, in 1917.

⁵³ This Sámi movement is called the 'Sámi Renaissance' by scholars such as Veli-Pekka Lehtola (2004: 9).

⁵⁴ The use of clothing within the Sámi political movement can be compared to the role of indigenous dress in Amazonian political activism where Beth Conklin argues that people use body decorations as "an asset in their struggle to attain visibility and support" (2007: 27; see also Conklin 1997 and chapter 1: 33-38).

⁵⁵ A non-profit organisation that advocates freedom of expression for musicians worldwide.

Lulesámi villagers recounted that they felt a sense of pride and growing self-confidence in being Sámi at this time. One female elder said that it was first after the Áltá-affair that she could wear the *gáppte* again without feeling any shame.

6. Nylon Tights and the Peaked Cap

On another occasion when I met Jonas, and we started talking about my research, he said that I should be aware that the Lulesámi did not only replace the *gáppte* with ‘Western clothes’ as a form of acculturation due to the Norwegianisation. Other kinds of clothing were also adopted, according to Jonas, for practical, economic and aesthetic reasons.

One such example was nylon tights. Jonas shook his head and said, tongue in cheek, that he never understood the value of the tights himself, but that he remembered that his mother had told him how much she appreciated them when they were introduced in the north. Similarly, Ellen once amusingly described, “When the nylon tights came all women around the fjords ran over the mountains to get hold of them! No longer did we have to wear wool all the time and the tights covered our legs so that the men did not have to see all our blemishes, bruises and cellulites!” I took a liking to the surreal picture of seeing numerous women running over the high mountains just to buy tights to look beautiful for the men, and joined Ellen in a joyful laughter.

Returning back to Jonas’s house, he said, in relation to our conversation of decisions of what to wear, “I’ve also read somewhere about this... I’ll see if I can find it and make a copy for you.” The next time we met, a couple of days later, Jonas handed me a copy of a few pages from the Swedish writer Karl-Erik Forsslund’s ethnographic work *Som gäst hos fjällfolket* (Guest of the mountain people) (1914 [1911]). Jonas had underlined a paragraph in the copy and I read with interest how Forsslund, during his travels within the Norwegian and Swedish Lulesámi area, noticed that some men had replaced the *gahper* with a peaked cap. When Forsslund asked a man why he had changed his headwear, the man pragmatically answered, “the peak protects well against the sun in spring” (1914: 24; cf. Svensson 1994: 65).

7. Laestadianism

Although the *gáppte* was complemented and replaced by other kinds of clothing throughout the 1900s, the garment never went completely out of use. Several villagers recounted how one woman had worn the *gáppte* on a daily basis until her death in the 1980s. However, even though not many others continued wearing the *gáppte* every day, some still wore it on special occasions. One of these occasions was the Laestadian *samlinger* (N) (gatherings). To gain an understanding of why the *gáppte* continued being worn at these religious meetings, it is worthwhile to at least look at the emergence of the Laestadian movement and its spread from Sweden to Norway.

Laestadianism originated in the Swedish north during the mid-1800s. Its founder, Lars Levi Laestadius (1800-1861), worked as a priest in Swedish Sápmi and was deeply concerned about the increasing alcohol abuse among the Northsámi people living in the area around the village of Gárasavvon (Karesuando)⁵⁶. Laestadius, who had grown up with an alcoholic father and experienced the destructive impact of the extensive use of liquor first-hand, started preaching more extensively with the aim to achieve a moral uprising among the Northsámi (see, e.g. Laestadius, P. 1928; Norderval and Nettet 2000).

Laestadius, who had Sámi ancestry on his mother's side, employed the Sámi language in combination with Christian teachings to achieve his mission. His religious doctrine created strict guidelines for what it meant to be a good Christian and emphasised confession and absolution. Soon the work became a *vekkelse rørelse* (N) (revival movement) and swept across the north. Kurt Tore Andersen (2007) believes that Laestadianism reached the

⁵⁶ There are no documentations that the Sámi used alcohol or other stimulants previous to the growing contact with the non-Sámi population (Gjessing 1973: 79; Kvist 2004). Instead, alcohol was introduced by state authorities during tax collection, reported as early as from the beginning of the 1600s (Kvist 2004). Roger Kvist argues that priests described alcohol consumption to be a growing problem among both the Sámi and non-Sámi people in the north as it led to violence, fighting and unwillingness to work.

Norwegian Lulesámi area in the late-1800s through people's movements across the border⁵⁷.

Although Laestadianism is not an exclusive Sámi religion, the congregation in Divtasvuodna consists almost only of Lulesámi people. Andersen (2007), a Laestadian Lulesámi man from Divtasvuodna, suggests that the reason for this is that the congregation moved over the mountains from Sweden and settled first in the areas around the inner fjords where only Lulesámi people lived. In comparison, the non-Sámi residents who inhabited the areas around the other fjords turned to the church whose missionaries had arrived along the coast by ship (Myrvoll 2010: 65).

Andersen (2007) writes that the congregation also gave room and allowed for Sámi ways of living during a time of growing Norwegianisation. According to the elders in the hamlet, some people of the assembly wore the *gáppte* and Lulesámi men became preachers and employed the Lulesámi language in their preaching throughout the 1900s. Marit Myrvoll (2010: 65) argues that the *gáppte* was also preached against in Divtasvuodna during the last decades of the 1900s when the garment was worn by political activists and associated with the Sámi movement. According to Myrvoll, the congregation was opposed to the political struggle as it did not want the Sámi ways of living to become secular and institutionalised. However, although some might have preached against the garment for a couple of years towards the end of the 1900s, the gatherings had still been, according to Andersen (2007), a meeting place for the Sámi and for long a place where the wearing of the *gáppte* has been accepted. Today, many assembly members and preachers wear the *gáppte* at the fortnightly Sunday preaching and I never heard anyone speak against its wearing during these gatherings.

⁵⁷ With time there have been divisions within Laestadianism. The congregation in Divtasvuodna follows the *førstefødte* (Firstborn, or Western) Laestadian faith, which has its parent assembly in the Swedish town of Jiellevárre.

8. The 'Sámi Suit' and the Norwegian Crown Prince

Although new kinds of clothing were introduced and worn among the Lulesámi throughout the 1900s, people did not merely start dressing like the non-Sámi population. Rather, the villagers selected some new garments and appropriated them into their lives in their own ways. One kind of clothing that was adopted by the men throughout the 1900s was the suit, which they wore on special occasions like church mass, weddings and funerals. The Lulesámi men who started wearing the suit asserted their own philosophy in the garment by rejecting the tie, which many non-Sámi men wore. This elimination was associated by the villagers with Laestadianism and the religion's central emphasis on, and distinction between, the *verden* (N) (world) and the *andelige* (N) (spiritual) spheres of life. At the religious gatherings, the preachers often stressed that a good Christian should seek to avoid *verdslige fristelser* (N) (worldly temptations) that can disturb peaceful and egalitarian social relations. This includes keeping a distance from alcohol, rhythmic music and dance⁵⁸. The preacher's orating, which often lasted around two hours⁵⁹, emphasised a restraint from the world and, instead, the cultivation of spiritual qualities such as sharing, compassion, tolerance and faithfulness. The congregation also stressed equality among its members by not visibly displaying wealth or vanity through excessive bodily decorations, like jewellery or the tie (cf. Myrvoll 2010: 109)⁶⁰.

Anderson (2007) writes that the distinction between the world and the spiritual realm, in Laestadius's preaching, originally indicated a difference between a Christian and a non-Christian way of living. However, in *Divtasvuodna*, Andersen says that the distinction also came to manifest a difference between the Sámi and non-Sámi at the turn of the century and up to around the 1970s. In *Divtasvuodna*, the sinful world became synonymous with the non-Christian and non-Sámi, while the spiritual realm was associated with a Sámi and

⁵⁸ Alcohol was said to have the potential of disturbing peaceful social relations by generating anger, violence and laziness. Dance and rhythmic music were described to potentially cause sexual temptations between unmarried women and men.

⁵⁹ Due to the length of the preaching, one man cunningly whispered to me once that it was ok to take a 'Laestadian *lur*' (N) (nap) during the gathering.

⁶⁰ Although these different elements of the faith were emphasised, they were not always strictly followed. One Christian woman who sometimes wore jewellery said once, "My relationship with God and fellow folks do not diminish if I wear a necklace from time to time!"

Christian way of life. Through such emphasis, the State's and some non-Sámi's inferior views of the Sámi became reversed and the Laestadian congregation highlighted that the spiritual living of its members would result in the blessing of God. Thus, although the suit was adopted from the non-Sámi population, it also came to reinforce and express a difference between the Lulesámi and non-Sámi, and the Sámi people's resistance against mainstream society⁶¹.

It is not only the Lulesámi who adopt and transform new types of clothing. The Lulesámi's ways of dressing also influence others. One story that can illustrate such a statement was told to me numerous times by the villagers. The story is about when the Norwegian Crown Prince Haakon visited Måsske a few years ago. For the occasion a *lávvu* (Ls) (temporary tent-like dwelling) had been raised and inside the Crown Prince was offered food and coffee while listening to stories told by the residents about their lives. Among the narrations, the Crown Prince was told that the Lulesámi do not wear a tie with their suits as they associate this with vanity. Upon hearing this, the Crown Prince had asked if it was appropriate for him to take off his tie. The residents had answered that this was ok and when the Prince stepped out of the *lávvu*, his tie lay in the pocket of his suit jacket. According to the hamlet's numerous storytellers, the Crown Prince's asking for permission to follow their local practices and then appropriating his own way of dressing to such practices were acts of respect towards the Lulesámi.

9. The Kiwi-*gáppte*

Although the Norwegian Crown Prince's act of putting his tie in the pocket of the suit was considered respectful, as he followed the residents' ways of dressing, it is not generally seen deferential for a non-Sámi person to wear the *gáppte*. According to the majority of the

⁶¹ Similar analyses of how people select, appropriate and transform new garments into their ways of living have been made in other parts of the world. One notable study is Jean Comaroff's and John Comaroff's (1997) work among the Tswana in South Africa. The authors argue that clothes introduced by colonisers and missionaries were adopted and transformed within the Tswana people's various practices on their own terms. For the Tswana, clothes were, according to Comaroff and Comaroff, included within their own "fabrication of a world divided along new sharpened axes of discrimination and difference" (1997: 273).

villagers, a person only has the moral right to wear the *gáppte* of her or his mother, father and spouse. The reason for this is that the garment manifests a person's sense of self as Sámi and her or his relations to others.

One event through which I came to learn about what the Lulesámi thought and felt about when non-Sámi persons wore the *gáppte* took place on an early September day when I was sitting eating lunch in the staff room at Árran. On the front pages of two North-Norwegian newspapers that lay on the table were photographs of a crowd of people wearing neon-green garments resembling the *gáppte* worn in Guodageaidnu (Kauotokeino). While taking a bite of my sandwich, I read that over 600 staff members from the Norwegian discount supermarket chain Kiwi had gathered from all over the country just outside Romsa (Tromsø) for a company party. For the occasion, which had a Sámi theme, the management team had provided each employee with a neon-green version of the *gáppte*. The outfit, which the managers argue was a 'funny and innocent' element of the festivity, met, however, with strong reactions. During the following days the event topped the headlines of newspapers and radio broadcastings in the north. Public comments on online newspaper websites and Facebook reached thousands.

That day at Árran, I was interrupted in my reading by Maria, a woman in her early 40s. She stated with an angry and also sad voice that the neon-green *gáppte* was a disgrace and that this happening was something I had to add to my thesis. According to her, the garment was a *tulle-kofte* (N) (masquerade dress). What became known as the 'Kiwi-*gáppte*' had, from Maria's point of view, an ugly colour that was not typical for the Sámi. It was also wrongly gendered as both women and men wore a garment tailored for men. More so, it had been cheaply manufactured in China and Maria said that the *gáppte* should only be made and worn by the Sámi. In her opinion, it was an offence that the garment had been transformed into a masquerade dress, made and worn by non-Sámi people, as it for her creates and displays ties of belonging and affiliation to the Sámi community.

Maria's critique of the Kiwi-*gáppte* agreed with the reaction of the Sámi music band Ádjágas that had been booked to play at the party, but cancelled upon seeing how the staff members

were dressed. Ádjágas lead singer explained their cancellation to a newspaper as follows: “We feel this (the Kiwi-*gáppte*) is an insult to us personally and also a mockery towards the entire Sámi population” (Pellicer 2010, author’s translation).

Unlike Maria and Ádjágas, the Sámi designer Anne Berit Anti was positive about the Kiwi-*gáppte*. In an interview with NRK Sápmi, she says, “The colour was really cool and I see great potential in this garment. I’m a proud Sámi.” (Manndal and Somby 2010, author’s translation). Maria read out a similar comment made by Anti aloud from one of the newspapers, turned to Ole, a man in his mid-20s who sat opposite her at the table, and asked, “Don’t you think it’s awful?” Ole shrugged his shoulders and said that he did not really care about how they had dressed. “It might be inappropriate,” he said, “but everyone is free to do what they want and we (Sámi) also need to have some self-irony and not take these things too seriously.” I could sense Maria’s anger intensifying to the degree that I did not dare to lift my face from the newspaper and look at her. Instead I only listened as she almost screamed out, “Imagine if we Sámi were to travel down to South Africa and see some traditional clothing there that we ask some industry in China to produce cheaply for us! Then we wear it, sing their songs and dance their dances!” She took a deep breath before furiously adding, “We just wouldn’t do that! It’s about respect!” I noticed, in the corner of my eye, how Maria glanced over at me and I kept my eyes fixed on the newspaper in front of me, feeling uncomfortable being around her anger. She then looked over at Ole, who I saw just shrugged his shoulders again and did not seem very interested in discussing the topic any further.

10. A Tourist Attraction

Ingrid, one of Ájluokta’s skilful craft-makers, frequently wore the *gáppte* on special occasions such as confirmation, school graduations and weddings. However, she avoided wearing the garment in places with a lot of non-Sámi people outside the hamlet. One such occasion was the annual winter market in Jåhkâmåhkke. Although many Sámi wear the *gáppte* on this occasion, Ingrid said that she does not feel comfortable wearing it there. She described how

she had worn the garment a couple of times at the market, but that she always felt a great *ubehag* (N) (discomfort) when tourists wanted to photograph her. “It makes me feel like I’m some kind of *turistattraksjon* (N) (tourist attraction)!” she said. To avoid such feelings and being the object of the camera lens, Ingrid now seldom wears the *gáppte* when going to Jåhkâmåhkke during the market days. She knows that wearing jeans and a down jacket will not attract any unwanted attention and, consequently, she feels more at ease. I responded by saying that it is unfortunate that she cannot dress the way she wants without feeling uncomfortable. Ingrid nodded in agreement, but also sympathetically highlighted, “Well I guess we Sámi also think other people’s ways of living is *eksotisk* (N) (exotic) when we go on holidays.”

11. Contemporary Complementary Clothing

Once, in the darkest days of November, I visited Elise, a Lulesámi woman living in Båddådjá, to attend a concert with the well-known Sámi musician Niko Valkeapää. As we got dressed and ready to go out, Elise combined a purple dress with her *gábmaga*. The *vuoddaga* that she wrapped around their shafts had the main colours of red, yellow and purple, and as such they fitted in well with the colour of her dress. As Elise tied the *vuoddaga*, she wryly said, “Other people have to see that I’m Sámi when we go out, don’t they?”

Later, at the concert, when Valkeapää’s melancholic voice echoed through the ambient basement bar, Elise introduced me to some of her friends in the audience. While trying to keep track of all the new names and faces, I noticed that many were dressed similarly to Elise in a dress, or jeans and a tight-fitting top or shirt, with *gábmaga*. A few people were also, like Valkeapää, dressed in the *gáppte* (fig. 33).



Figure 33. Niko Valkeapää performing in Båddådjá, wearing the Kautokeino-*gáppte*.

Anja, who is from Divtasvuodna, but now lives in Båddådjá was also at the concert. She wore a black top and a skirt made with a woollen fabric in the same kind of royal blue that the *gáppte* often is. Close to the bottom edge of the skirt were two thin parallel bands of cloth, one in red and one in green. The next day, over breakfast, when Elise and I spoke of the last night's happenings, I said that I liked Anja's skirt. Elise told me that the skirt was what they call *skirtto* (Ls) (Sámi-inspired clothing). "It's the kind of clothing we wear in our daily life when we don't want to wear the *gáppte*, but we still want to look Sámi." Elise said that Sámi-inspired clothing has become popular during the last years. It can be any kind of garments, from skirts, dresses and jackets, that are made to resemble the *gáppte*, but with simpler tailoring and different decorations. Elise showed me a Sámi-inspired jacket that she had and added that also non-Sámi persons can wear *skirtto*.

In addition to combining pieces of the *gáppte* with other kinds of clothing or wearing *skirtto*, Elise's wardrobe offered a wide variety of sartorial possibilities and sometimes playful options for visually expressing, manifesting or contesting her sense of self and relationships to others. She often wore accessories associated with the Sámi with 'Western clothes'. This included putting a pin of the Sámi flag on her coat or slinging handbag made with reindeer skin and decorated with pewter-embroidery over her shoulder. Sometimes Elise also enjoyed creating comic impressions and challenging common stereotypes of the Sámi through her clothes. A few years back she had bought a black t-shirt with a reindeer print at the market in Jåhkâmâhkke. Elise told me that she had worn the t-shirt once when a brusque and know-all non-Sámi woman had asked her how many reindeer she, as a Sámi, had. Elise smiled when recounting the incident and said that she had provocatively answered by pointing to the print on her t-shirt and remarked that these were the only reindeer that she owned. She said that many non-Sámi people think all Sámi tend reindeer, but highlighted with a sense of irony that she barely can tell the difference between the front and the back of the animal. "How did the woman react?" I curiously asked. "My answer silenced her," Elise proudly said. After this incident, Elise had started wearing the t-shirt more regularly and she often employed the allegory that these were her reindeer in conversations with non-Sámi people⁶². Elise was fond of the t-shirt and said it had come to express a level of self-irony while also being thought-provoking and challenging one of the most common stereotypes of the Sámi.

Placing Clothes in their Context

Throughout the year, I encountered various views of the *gáppte* and other types of clothing among the Lulesámi. Based on these experiences, I have provided snapshots of the ways in which the visibility of clothes is interwoven with people's lived experiences throughout this

⁶² See Charlotte Brunel's (2002) recent work, a discussion of the development of t-shirt prints in the United States. The study reveals the ways in which printed graphics are and have been employed through time for visually articulating political, innovative and ideological views. Chloe Colchester (2007), in her analysis of t-shirt art among Pacific islanders in south Auckland, shows specifically how stereotypes are used and transformed through prints as a "highly political and self-reflexive form of humour" (ibid.: 140).

chapter. The eleven narratives moves beyond stereotypical and singular images of the Lulesámi and reveal how the visibility and understanding of their clothing are shaped and interwoven in complex and transformative webs of relating to others and the world.

Jonas describes how many Lulesámi stopped wearing the *gáppte* in favour of ‘Western clothes’ when moving to the areas around the outer fjords and with the increasing contact with non-Sámi and governmental authorities during the years following the Second World War. At this time, many associated the *gáppte* with the Sámi’s inferior position in relation to the majority of the population. Consequently, the *gáppte* was by and large rejected as an everyday item of clothing and only worn on Laestadian gatherings among other Lulesámi. As shown in the narratives, this change of daily clothing was experienced in various ways among the villagers. Some perceived themselves as becoming Norwegians, or what Petra calls ‘Norwegianised Sámi’, when ceasing to wear the garment. Others viewed the change of clothing as a strategic choice to manage relations with others and to avoid hostility. Jonas highlights, however, that many experienced a loss of confidence in themselves and their background when they could no longer choose what to wear without the risk of feeling discriminated.

The pressures around what to wear during the last few decades have not only originated from non-Sámi people. In the case of May-Britt it is revealed that Lulesámi people also have certain expectations of what it means to be and look Sámi. Although May-Britt’s rejection of the *gáppte* might have prevented her from not being bullied by non-Sámi people, she was made to feel that she was not a ‘real Sámi’ by some of the Lulesámi who considered the garment to be an integral element of their identity.

However, as much as it gives too simplified a picture to regard the pressure of what to wear only to be a result of the Lulesámi’s relationships with non-Sámi, not everyone perceives the change of clothing as being influenced by other people’s perceptions and expectations. While Gælok writes about how a Sámi man ceases to wear the *gáppte* in order to meet his non-Sámi woman’s idea of beauty, Ellen, on the other hand, says that she adopted nylon tights with great enthusiasm to look beautiful for the men as well as for reasons of

practicality and comfort. Many exogenous items of clothing have also been incorporated in the Lulesámi's wardrobes on their own terms, such as the rejection of wearing a tie with the suit.

At the same time as the Lulesámi are influenced by non-Sámi clothing, their means of dressing also influence others in diverse ways and with different reactions. Prince Haakon's decision to take off his tie during a visit in Måsske was seen as a sign of respect towards the local practices by the villagers. However, if a non-Sámi person wore the *gáppte* this would be considered disrespectful by the majority of the Lulesámi, as the garment manifests a particular sense of self and belonging within the Sámi community.

Today the *gáppte* is one significant visual element for establishing and maintaining relations among people. It is also important in the Sámi's struggle for political recognition within the state and in global indigenous politics. While the garment has played a significant role within the Sámi people's movement and helped restore a sense of pride and confidence in their distinct way of life, it can also risk reproducing certain stereotypes of what it means to be Sámi among both Sámi and non-Sámi people.

Nowadays, people might no longer reject the *gáppte* to avoid hostility, yet Ingrid strategically chooses not to wear the garment among non-Sámi in order to escape unwanted attention. Elise, on the other hand, often chooses to wear the *gáppte*, *skirtto* or to combining specific 'Sámi accessories' with 'Western clothes' among Sámi and non-Sámi people to express and display her Sámi sense of self. Elise also enjoyed challenging and offsetting the common assumption of viewing the Sámi as reindeer-tenders through her clothing. By pointing to the printed reindeer on her t-shirt, Elise explained to the non-Sámi people who she met that those were the only reindeer that she owned.

In much literature within the social sciences, clothing transformations are either portrayed as a form of acculturation or as a strategic choice. Barbara Brodman, in her study of clothing transformations in Latin America, goes to the extreme and argues, "the imposition of Western fashion... is no less than a subtle form of genocide" (1994: 267, as quoted in Rovine 2008: 97). Such a view echoes early anthropological theories of viewing the world as divided

into fixed and neatly categorised 'cultures' with specific properties that do not traverse such boundaries and that always remain the same. On the other hand, Peter Gow (2007) writes that the Piro people of the Amazon do not perceive themselves to become 'white' by starting to wear 'white man's clothing'. Instead, they just receive a different perspective of the world depending on what they wear, according to Gow.

Through the Lulesámi's narrations, clothing transformations cannot be considered as mere acculturation nor can they be interpreted only as a strategic tool for shifting perspective or asserting specific political claims. Rather, the villagers oscillate their perceptions in relation to changing life conditions and their emotional states of being, in which Norwegianisation is only one, but an important, factor among others, such as playful, beautifying and practical transformations.

In the text I have focused on personal narratives and I argue that it is necessary to pay attention to such stories as well as to everyday conversations in order to understand the significance and power of clothes among the Lulesámi. Although individuals make different choices of what to wear, their stories show the power of clothes to define, challenge, reveal, express or conceal a particular sense of self in relation to others and their capacity to trigger strong emotional responses. In conclusion, the chapter shows that in order to fully understand the various experiences of clothing we have to look at the relational, temporal and spatial contexts in which they are worn and understood rather than simply seeing them as a sign of a particular and fixed identity.

6. Locating the Craft-makers: Unfolding an Unlonely North

The *lappsjuka* (S) ('Lapp disease') is a vernacular designation used in the Swedish language to describe a feeling of solitude caused by having little social contact. During my childhood summers, which were spent in a cottage in the Swedish countryside, my mother occasionally said that we needed to travel back to the city for a few days as she started experiencing the 'disease'. However, although our small cottage was located many miles from a town with only one visible neighbouring house, which one saw if gazing across a large cow pasture, it is not from southern Sweden that the term originates. The Swedish academy's dictionary (Svenska Akademien 2010 [1939]) states more precisely that the term is "attributed to a psychologically depressed state that often develops in people used to cultural environments when forced to live in the isolated and unsettled areas of Norrland⁶³ or Arctic regions."

Although I believe that my mother used the designation of the 'Lapp disease' rather innocently, and perhaps naively, to describe her longing for the city, specific prejudices linger rather evidently in its dictionary definition. According to the Swedish Academy's explanation, the Arctic is perceived as a secluded place that lacks 'cultural environments' and where social contacts are rare. However, the designation leaves unquestioned what constitutes the 'isolated' and 'cultural'. What is interesting is also that the interpretation assumes that spending time in the north may result in a 'psychologically depressed state'. More so, the name itself, the 'Lapp disease', brings apparent associations between the identified syndrome and the lives of the Sámi.

In comparing the northern rural parts of the Scandinavian Peninsula with the countries' more densely settled southern areas the dictionary definition is quite right in the fact that the population is not large. Furthermore, rather than consisting of large cities and numerous towns, lands of tundra, mountains, waterways and forests stretch over wide distances. In

⁶³ Norrland is the name of the northern part of Sweden, comprising nine counties.

fact, my imagination of this vast northern scenery was both what enthused and scared me while preparing for fieldwork. I anticipated that the place where I was going would resemble the setting of my childhood summers, where houses were situated far apart and neighbours had relatively little contact. I feared that I would feel lonely moving to such an area where I knew no one and where my childhood games of climbing trees and chasing our dog was now replaced by the responsibility of conducting fieldwork. I took comfort in my passion for the outdoors and thought that, if worst came to the worst and I started feeling lonely, I would be able to go on hikes and enjoy the landscape.

Now, in retrospect I could not have been more wrong in my worries. Instead, soon after my arrival in Divtasvuodna I realised that the large majority of the Lulesámi whom I met strongly disliked and tried to avoid solitude. Actually, lonesomeness and feelings of depression were, in contradiction to the idea of the 'Lapp disease', associated by many of the villagers with life in the city. Sigga, for example, pictured living in the city as being in a state of constant flux with little social comfort and security. What is lacking in the city is, according to her, the feeling of *tillhørighet* (N) (belonging) to a *felleskap/samfunn* (N) (community). Once, she narrated urban life as following:

"I see how it is when I go to the city, no one knows each other. It's very anonymous. You feel like an ant! What happens if you need help? I read once in the paper that a man had lain dead in his flat for weeks before someone discovered him!" Sigga shook her head in a disheartened manner and continued, "Families usually live far apart in the cities and it takes a long time to travel to visit each other, so family members might not see each other for weeks! I also think it is very stressful to live in the city. I see that from my daughter who lives in the city now. She never has the time for anything. She moved to the city to find work, like so many people do nowadays, but it's expensive to live there. She has a small flat and in order to afford it she has to work full-time. Maybe it's good for young people to live in the city for a while to see something else and get new experiences, but then... I think my daughter wants to move back (to the hamlet) soon. I like going to the city for the day to do shopping, but to live there is not for me!"

This chapter elaborates on Sigga's and many of the other villagers' similar thoughts on belonging and on how these philosophies affected and were intertwined with where the women made the *gáppte* and their continuous procedures of everyday life in the hamlet. I take as my starting point how I, on arrival in Divtasvuodna, located and got to know the women making handicraft.

The text is organised as a collage of places that, in one way or the other, were related to the making of the *gáppte*. Like the Finnish architect and writer Juhani Pallasmaa's view of architecture, I demonstrate how these places were "lived [in] space[s] rather than physical space[s]" (2005: 64). With this I mean, in accordance to Tim Ingold's (2000: 153) 'dwelling perspective', that the Lulesámi do not live in a world "to which form and meaning has already been attached". Rather, the spatial organisation of the hamlet and the women's craft production related to the villagers' lived experiences and actual currents of activities. Throughout the chapter I address the ways in which craft production had been organised in relation to the villagers' understanding of space and notions of what it entail to *leve vel* (N) (live well); ideas which centrally focused on ways to create physical closeness among people and in such a way make them feel belonging within a community.

At Home: To Make Handicraft in the Nearness of Kin

Spatial Organisation among Households

Anne 95672...

I read the scribbled down name and mobile phone number on the list of craft-makers in Divtasvuodna that Elias had helpfully provided me with on my arrival in order to get in touch with people. Anne was the first of the twelve names and I picked up my mobile phone and called. She answered straight away and after having confirmed that she frequently makes the *gáppte*, she explained that she does most of the production at home. Anne welcomed my work and invited me to come and visit her at her house three days later to talk about local craft practices while also to see where she works.

It was early on a cloudy Tuesday morning when I jumped on the public transport boat that ran twice a day between the hamlet and the settlement of Måsske where Anne lives. As the boat took off and heaved over the gentle waves I looked towards land. Compared to the vast distances without permanent dwelling sites in the surrounding mountains and forests, the houses in the hamlet are built fairly close together, separated by gardens that are clearly marked by some greenery (fig. 34). I noticed that many houses are built in relation to the

water; suitable for the life led some decades ago when fishing was the major source of livelihood and the boat the main vehicle of transportation. All of these properties have a small red *naust/rorbue* (N) (fishing cabin/boat house) close to the water's edge (fig. 35) while the residential buildings are located a few meters from the shoreline to provide a wide panoramic view over the fjord and also allowing the tide to rise without posing any threat to the living space. From the 1960s, when cars replaced boats as the main mode of transport and the major subsistence activities changed from fishing to works on land (in the cement industry, nursing home, school etc.) houses were also built along the road and further inland.



Figure 34. View over the hamlet.



Figure 35. Fishing cabins along the shoreline.

Notwithstanding their location, almost all residential houses are made from a rectangular frame structure of vertical lumber⁶⁴. This construction supports a gable roof of red tiles or dark sheet metal. Although the houses share this similar structure they all look clearly distinct from one another by their different colours and particular architectural features, such as verandas and bay windows. One experienced carpenter made me aware that the terraces and windows are normally built to capture as much sun as possible or to face a specific view, such as the fjord. I also came to know that nearly all houses are built by the villagers themselves. Usually a group of kinsfolk, women and men, help one another from the initial planning processes to the last stages of interior construction. While the men carry out the majority of the sitework, rough carpentry and electric and plumbing labour, the women engage in carpentry and painting and provide the workers with food and drinks.

As the boat proceeded the fjord narrowed and the view over the hamlet was replaced by high mountains rising directly up from the deep sea. It took around forty minutes before reaching the village on the side of the inner fjord (fig. 36). It was easy to tell how Måsske got its name, meaning 'a place in which you can't get anywhere else'. The gentle grass-covered slope up from the sea, spotted with wooden houses, is surrounded by high scenic mountains that, together with the steep mountains around the narrow fjord, form what is almost a wall around the settlement. I disembarked and headed up to Anne's house by following the directions she had given. It was easy to find and she invited me in for breakfast. The conversation flowed easily over the kitchen table, which was set with an abundance of food.

⁶⁴ There are a few houses that are partially brick built.



Figure 36. Måsske.

After a while an older man entered, greeted us and sat down to join us. It was Ivar, Anne's energetic father, who lives in the basement flat of their house. He explained that there is often more than one nuclear family residing within each house. Most commonly two or more generations or siblings live in separate flats within the same building; either divided between the loft, main floor and basement or in extended wings. Although not all live in these kinds of extended households, Ivar said that close kin tend to reside nearby (see p. 121)⁶⁵. He pointed out of the window and described the ways in which he was related to all the neighbours.

Ivar continued to describe how the Sámi, throughout Sápmi, before the growing state intervention and dislocation, had principally organised their daily social, political and economic life in family units, of various sizes, called *sijdda* (Ls), within which each lived and oversaw a specific geographical area (see e.g. Paine 1957, 1970; Ingold 1976; Ruong 1982).

⁶⁵ For a discussion of Sámi bilateral kinship system see Robert Pehrson (1964 [1957]).

When the Lulesámi people relocated to the areas around the outer fjords this past residential pattern was, to a large extent, reproduced to establish a life structured around the spatial proximity of kinsfolk. Sunniva Skålnes (2006), in her article on Lulesámi residential patterns in Divtasvuodna, argues that a good home is perceived by many of the villagers as having closeness to family and kin to achieve a sense of belonging, avoid solitude and to provide a social network of mutual support in everyday life.

Tasoulla Hadjiyanni and Kristin Helle (2000) argue that the Ojibwe's relocation from their native land, by Canadian and US state authorities, has resulted in a disconnection from their previous understanding of family and daily organisation that today they wish to reconstruct. This reconstruction partly takes place, the authors show, within the house, where activities like craft-making maintain and reproduce the native language, kinship relations and other, so called, 'traditional practices' (ibid.: 77). Drawing on this argument I suggest that contemporary spatial arrangements and, as I will presently demonstrate, domestic craft practices among the majority of the Lulesámi are not about just renewing, or 'safeguarding' (ibid.: 77-78), previous notions of the family and daily organisations as if these elements could be transmitted from a period prior to contemporary everyday living. Instead, I propose that the villagers bring forth certain practices of their past experiences as they feel them to be appropriate within their presently lived conditions, needs and understandings (cf. Briggs 1997; Ingold 2000).

Even if kin are likely to live close to each other, there are no fixed rules of residence. Rather, I was told that each person is given the right to choose where to live depending on their personal preferences and potentials, including economy, availability of land and emotional ties. Johnny, a man in his late twenties, had established his first autonomous household after graduating from school at the age of eighteen. At first he had lived by himself in the basement flat of his parent's house. This was a good place to live at the time, he said, as he felt the company of his family while at the same time he could withdraw to his own private space. After a year he had met his present girlfriend Julie and she moved in with him. Johnny said that he could equally have lived close to Julie's family, but that the basement flat was a good place to live as it was cheap and located in the centre of the hamlet, close to their

places of work. Julie said that she had not minded moving away from her family and that she still met them on an almost daily basis. Besides, because of the lack of available housing in the area, the young couple had been happy just having somewhere to live. Nevertheless, when I arrived to Divtasvuodna Julie's and Johnny's second child was on the way and they needed a bigger place to stay. The plot of land around Johnny's parents' house was not well suited for expanding their present flat or building a new house. Nor did Julie's parents have land on which they could build. However, Johnny and Julie had saved some money and they were lucky enough to be able to buy an attractive piece of land on the shore. During the autumn of 2010 they started, with the help of their kin, to build the house that stood ready to be move into ten months later, just before summer. From then on Julie and Johnny did not live close to either her or his family, though they still maintained almost daily contact through mutual *besøk* (N) (visits) to each other's houses in the evenings and on weekends to exchange news, eat together and help out with household duties and babysitting. This almost daily closeness is considered integral for *føle seg vel* (N) (feeling well) and Johnny's mother said on a few occasions that she felt sad and alone if she had not seen her children and grand-children for a few days.

More distant kin and friends also frequently visited each other for a chat and cup of coffee during the year. The front doors to most houses were almost always unlocked, except at nights, and if no one was at home or nearby. Knocking was normally regarded as redundant and visitors were expected to merely enter and step inside. In the beginning I was often jovially mocked for knocking and I was especially teased at the times when I called before coming to visit. Everyone stressed that there was no need for calling. I should just come around and if they were busy I could sit down, have a coffee and read the newspaper in their house or just walk back home again⁶⁶! I quickly realised that people were constantly available to one another in this way and that at any time one could find the comfort of being in the presence of others rather than stay alone.

⁶⁶ Likewise, Nuccio Mazzullo (2005:12-13) talks about his fieldwork among the Inari Sámi and says that he, at first, found it intriguing when people just entered someone else's house and drank coffee before walking out a few minutes later without saying much, or anything at all.

Spatial Organisation within the Household

Returning to my initial meeting with Anne, the spatial organisation needed to create a good home and nearness of kin among households was also reproduced within her house. After breakfast Anne showed me to the living-room, which adjoined the kitchen. Two black leather sofas stood against the wall with a coffee table between them, on which a *lãthãmmuorra* lay on top of a pile with folded clean laundry. On the other side of the room a large dining table was covered with a blue woollen cloth from which Anne said she was going to sew a *gãppte* for one of her nieces. Like most other women in the area, Anne said that she often made handicraft in the living-room or kitchen where she could be in the presence of the on-going daily traffic through the house. She explained that the making of handicraft involves a lot of sitting down, which reduces mobility, and that she preferred to stay in a communal area where she could follow what her family, neighbours and friends are doing and enjoy their company. Working in the living-room and kitchen also allowed her to alternate the craft production with other responsibilities including keeping an eye on her children at play on the living-room floor or on the boiling potatoes that she was preparing for dinner. She was also available to visitors and could lend them some milk or just offer them her company over a cup of coffee and a chat. This type of close physical interaction brought about and nurtured well-being, both to Anne and others, as she, in a similar way to Johnny's mother, expressed that "one is always happier among others than alone".

Most houses in the area had a similar floor plan. The open and communal layout of the kitchen and living-room, which allow the interaction between family members and with visitors, contrast with the rest of the house that, through a corridor or staircase to another floor, consists of a number of good-sized rooms, which often are invisible to the visitor through their closed doors and spatial distance from the public areas. These private spaces serve as bedrooms and bathrooms as well as special function rooms such as a guest room and office. Many women also have a specially allocated *syrum* (N) (sewing-room).

Anne's sewing-room was located in the back of her house. It was a small room, but well planned, with three wardrobes used for storing fabrics and other craft supplies, a number of shelves on the white-painted walls with boxes in which tools and other materials were kept

and a desk on which her sewing-machine stood. Anne said that she varied her craft production between the public areas and the more private sewing-room. Where she worked depended on the type of handicraft that she was engaged in at the time. As the name itself reveals, the *sewing-room* was mainly used when working with the sewing-machine. Anne said that the sewing-machine was heavy and bulky and that it was good to have a permanent space for it to stand where it was also not in the way of anyone else or other activities. The machine was in this way also always available when she wanted to sew, whether it being a complete *gáppte* or just a quick fix of a broken jacket.

In comparison to pewter-embroidery and *låhtåt*, sewing often leaves some fabric waste on the surrounding desk and floor. Ellen recounted how she had not had a sewing-room when her children were young and that all craft production had been done in the kitchen. She shook her head and remembered how the whole house became a mess when she sewed, as threads and small pieces of fabric followed the family members and visitors around the place under their feet and on their clothes. A specific room to sew in prevents such untidiness. Besides, Ellen said that most sewing-machines are loud and by sewing in a separate closed-off room no one gets disturbed by the noise.

However, at times the women moved the sewing-machine to the kitchen or dining table to work in the company of others. Anne moved the sewing-machine when her daughter or neighbour wanted to learn to sew something new. Then they worked in the presence of Anne, who could help and observe their work while also preparing dinner or taking care of the dishes.

Anne, and the other women, kept an awareness of their own needs and feelings as well as of those around them in the spatial organisation of their craft production at home. At the same time the type of handicraft that the women did influenced where they worked and the ways in which they organised their space and spatial movements. To make handicraft in the home enables the women to alternate their activities with other household duties while also keeping close physical contact with others and attending to the traffic of people through the house. Such an organisation and preference undermine any ideas of women as being

isolated and imprisoned within the domestic sphere (cf. Svensson and Waldén 2005; Parker 2010: xviii-xix). Instead, the Lulesámi's saturated social relations and spatial organisation continuously create, I suggest, a certain sense of belonging to a community. "To belong," Michael Jackson argues, "is... to believe that one's being is integrated with and integral to a wider field of Being, that one's own life merges with and touches the lives of others" (2002: 12). Similarly, Janet Carsten writes, "For many people, the memories of houses inhabited in childhood have an extraordinary evocative power. Perhaps this is attributed to the dense and myriad connections that link together what goes on in houses – processes of feeding and nurturance [and] the emotionally charged social relations of close kinship" (2004: 31).

Ties of Kinship

The ties of belonging and habitual close social relations were often channelled through the idiom of kinship. The majority of the Lulesámi live close to those whom they consider to be *nær slekt* (N) (close kin). Those who are considered close kin are for Anne, her children, husband, parents, siblings and their families, parents-in-law, aunts, uncles and first-cousins. These are people with whom Anne has grown up and lived in spatial proximity; whom she has given birth to and nurtured, from whom she has learnt certain skills and to whom she also demonstrates such skills and with whom she is in contact on a daily basis. These are the people towards whom she feels the deepest affection, concern and interest in their news, undertakings and health.

In addition to close kin, the kinship relations also extend to those who are said to be more *fjern slekt* (N) (distant kin). If close kin constitute those with who a person shares their everyday experiences, distant kin are brought into relation by recognition of common predecessors. Ancestry is grounded in relations to people in the past and their movements and practices within the area. I was often stunned by Ellen's ability to find kin connections with some of her visitors by telling how the paths of their lineal and collateral kin had crossed through time by marriage or co-residence. At times such wide tracking of kin, such

as to all those who wore the *Divtasvuodna-gáppte*, led some villagers to remark with a sense of wry self-irony that the entire Lulesámi population is kin with one another.

Although the villagers at times spoke of kin relatedness by blood, ties of kinship are not merely regarded as being automatically based on descent according to the genealogical model, according to which, as Ingold (2000:132-151) argues, relatedness is considered a fixed property through a chain of hereditary connections independently of surrounding circumstances such as habitation and everyday practices⁶⁷. Why the villagers' recognition of kin does not always straightforwardly follow this model is perhaps best exemplified by the fact that many Lulesámi reformulated and reconsidered their ancestry and self-identification during Norwegianisation by changes in their ways of living and alterations of names, clothing practices, residential locations, language and craftsmanship. Later, through a re-appropriation of these elements, during the ethno-political movement, kinship was again reconceptualised to retrieve personal relations to others. However, some people chose not to reclaim such bonds. Today, those persons are considered by the Lulesámi villagers to be *fornorskade samer* (N) (Norwegianised Sámi) (chapter 5).

Furthermore, people who previously were considered as unrelated had the potential to become kin through marriage, adoption, god-parenthood⁶⁸ and daily relations such as co-residence and frequent visiting (cf. Balto 2006). Johnny's mother explained that one of their neighbours, who upon moving to the area from Sweden had been considered unrelated to them, had become *like* kin by visiting their house on an almost daily basis. Likewise, after I had lived together with Ellen for two months; eating together, telling jokes and laughing, sharing of our daily undertakings and making handicraft in the company of one another, she started calling me her *ynkste datter* (N) (youngest daughter) – while also playfully refusing to

⁶⁷ See, for example, David Schneider (1980 [1968]), Jeanette Edwards (2000), Cecilia McCallum (2001) and Carsten (2004) for similar discussions on the creation and negotiation of kinship and social belonging within everyday experiences, rather than merely through genealogy, in other ethnographic settings.

⁶⁸ Commonly a Lulesámi child receives between five and ten godparents at baptism. Asta Balto writes that the purpose of godparents is to expand the "care, security and contact" (2006: 6) for a child during its upbringing by creating a large social network based on extended kinship relations. The family who appointed me as godmother to their daughter during the year explained that they wanted to extend their child's social network across geographical distance (as they perceived that I would not live permanently in the hamlet) and to create a strong bond between the family and me for the future.

say who my father was! In turn, I started referring to Ellen as *áhikko* (Ls) (grandmother). By becoming *like* kin, Ellen also shared more of her craft skills and outlooks on life with me and I with her. However, our kin relation was temporary as on my return visit to Divtasvuodna one year after finishing the fieldwork, or over the telephone, she never called me her youngest daughter. Instead, she said that she missed having me in the house as I had become *like* a daughter while living there. I also did not refer again to Ellen as *áhikko* after moving out as I felt that the relation between us had weakened through our physical distance, even if the warm memories of our cohabitation have remained. Thus, kinship is very much based on a constant nurturing of social relations that exist in and through everyday life (cf. Ingold 2000: 140-151; Carsten 2004; Balto 2006).

The fostering of kinship bonds is important. According to Anne kin relations are essential for establishing *røtter* (N) (roots) and feelings of belonging within a large web or relations that transcend death and ground a person to a specific place. Following her, the feeling of being *uten røtter* (N) (rootless) can cause a person to experience sadness, lonesomeness, self-doubt and depression. These disruptive emotional states are considered to cause harm not only to the person experiencing a lack of belonging, but also to the surrounding community of which every person is said to be a constitutive part⁶⁹. To have a large social network is significant for counting on mutual care and support through the constantly changing life conditions where people get ill, divorce, retire, die, are born, marry and move to other places. In other words, it is for the benefit of the health of each person and the entire community that social bonds are continuously generated. The creation of such a community is, as I have argued, partly maintained through the spatial organisation of craft production at home, which facilitates physical closeness and daily interaction among people.

⁶⁹ For a philosophical exploration of the importance of feeling rooted I refer to the French philosopher Simone Weil, who argues that “[t]o be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul” (2001 [1949]: 40). In *The Need for Roots*, Weil identifies a social and spiritual decline throughout the 20th-century world that she argues is caused by the uprooting of ties among people. For these bonds and the feelings of being rooted to return, Weil provides a list of ‘needs of the soul’, which includes liberty, responsibility and equality (cf. Illich 1973).

At ASVO: The Creation of a Communal Place to Make Handicraft

After a week in Divtasvuodna, Elias continued to introduce me to the women who make handicraft by taking me to Tysfjord ASVO, an organisation affiliated with the municipality of Divtasvuodna and the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service (NAV). ASVO, which was established in Divtasvuodna in 1993, is situated in a large square building with a flat roof on the shore, close to the main harbour in the centre of the hamlet. On my first visit, Martha, the friendly Lulesámi manager, informed me that ASVO's aim is threefold: (1) to give everyone an equal opportunity to engage and participate in employment and practical training, (2) to be a good partner for local businesses and (3) to contribute to a positive economic and social development of the municipal area. Martha explained that the organisation's work is especially beneficial for people who find it difficult to attend to 'regular jobs' due to physical or mental health issues. At ASVO the work is adapted to the needs and abilities of each specific employee. For some this means flexibility in terms of working hours and tasks while others are provided with a set timetable and responsibilities. The underlying goal of this type of organisation is, according to Martha, the idea of work being dignifying and promoting people's self-reliance and independence. Employees at ASVO receive a monetary income as a result of their own labour rather than relying on state benefits. Moreover, Martha argued that the feeling of belonging to a group in a place of work and the sensation of being needed for one's skills are dignifying and fundamental to a person's happiness and health.

Throughout the year, a number of people, Lulesámi and non-Sámi, were employed and worked side by side in activities including laundry services, wood production, forest cleaning and stone grinding. A few years back, *duodje* had also been introduced at the premises as ASVO wished to facilitate a local production environment that inspires people to make handicraft. As nowadays fewer people learn to make handicraft at home, Martha stated that it is important to create environments that enable people to learn the work elsewhere.

During my initial visit, Martha showed me to the two rooms that were set up for working with *dibma duodje* (Ls) (craftwork with soft materials). Sigga and Ella sat around the big oval table in one of the rooms, drinking coffee and chatting, as we entered. They were

surrounded by a bookshelf and some open cabinets that stored plenty of fabrics, yarn, a few reindeer skins, craft books and files, which I later learnt were filled with handicraft patterns and instructions of all sorts. In the wide window frames stood boxes with tools and on the middle of the floor was an old spinning wheel that looked to be no longer in use. There were some large tables that seemed suitable for working with big pieces of fabric and two sewing-machines stood on the desks facing the wall that divided the two workshops. Through the window in that partition wall I saw that there was also a desk with a sewing-machine in the adjacent room together with a fitting-doll, a table for cutting fabric and a bookshelf with plenty of craft magazines. In both rooms the large windows faced the fjord and allowed the daylight to wash in over the interiors. There were also notes around the place with craft terminology and other words in the Lulesámi language to enhance the learning of the language. Martha introduced me to the women and after briefly presenting myself and my research I was invited to join them in their work.

Quite soon, I found myself at ASVO almost every day, learning and making handicraft together with Sigga and Ella, who were the most regular craft-making employees in the building. Apart from the benefits of being engaged in such a craft environment for my research, the participation at ASVO also provided me with daily routines and enabled me to get to know the villagers. The people whom I met in the craft studios not only included ASVO employees, but also other Lulesámi women from the hamlet who came to make handicraft or just socialise in the company of others when they had a day off, some time to spare or when their kin were at work or school and they did not want to be alone. Most of the women who came worked part-time or were retired. Martha told me that ASVO keeps their facilities open for everyone who wants to make and learn in the craftwork, as well as for people who just want to come for the social interaction. The atmosphere was always warm and welcoming and the nearby kitchen regularly smelled of freshly-brewed coffee. In the craft workshops, people were allowed to borrow tools and there was a small haberdashery store which kept a stock of materials and tools available for purchase.

The employees at ASVO never made the *gáppte* for their personal use during working hours. Sigga and Ella produced a few *avve*, *lissto* and *vuoddaga* for sale in ASVO's small store and

shared their craft skills to the other women and myself. They also made things like the *káffavuossa*, key rings in reindeer skin and bags from recycled clothing that were also put out for sale. Additionally, the women repaired fabric items for local businesses. The women who came to ASVO, but who were not employed there, were almost always engaged in the making of the *gáppte* for their kin and commissioned works.

Apart from the daily undertakings at ASVO, a few Lulesámi women also arranged *sykveller* (N) (sewing-evenings) at the premises every second Wednesday evening. These occasions were normally well-attended by Lulesámi residents of all ages. The craft-making, which predominantly concerned the production of the *gáppte*, was accompanied by sparkling conversations and numerous breaks during which the sharing of food and drinks among the women renewed energy and further, Sigga said, established feelings of social closeness.

There were no designated teachers at ASVO, but people learnt in the company of one another through observation, discussion and practical engagement (chapter 7). There was no pressure to produce, but people engaged themselves in the craftwork that they liked or wished to make at their own speed and ability.

The setting up of an environment like ASVO facilitates the learning and making of the handicraft among the women in a place away from home. Sigga said that the gathering of people making the *gáppte* in the same place allows for the sharing of experiences related to the handicraft. She also highlighted that it is integral to generating the zest for life and feeling of belonging within a community by having a *felles arena* (N) (communal place/arena) where one can go and meet other people. At ASVO people always seemed available to one another to discuss the handicraft or just to have a chat about everyday matters. Marit, who worked part-time, said that it was good to go to ASVO as she often got herself occupied in other household duties, rather than making handicraft, if she stayed at home. Anita, a retired and widowed woman, said that ASVO offered her a place to go and make handicraft when her children and grandchildren went away from home during the day.

At Courses

In addition to the learning and production of handicraft at home and at ASVO some people also attend the courses that are occasionally set up by the regional *duodje* organisation Duodje Nordlanda. Since the establishment of the non-profit organisation, in 1981, courses have been held regularly with the aim of promoting the learning of handicraft among the Lulesámi. During my fieldwork there was one course over the spring semester that ran one evening every fortnight and one three-day course during summer. In contrast to ASVO where a combination of craftwork could be learnt and made the same day or evening by different people, the courses concentrate on one particular handicraft at a time. The course over the spring term focused on how to *låhtåt* the *vuoddaga* and the summer course concentrated on one handicraft a day: *låhtåt* the *vuoddaga*, weaving the *avve* and *lissto* and sewing in skin.

Duodje Nordlanda had no facilities of their own and relied on collaboration with others. The course in *låhtåt* was held at Árran and the three-day course was organised at the now closed-down school in Måsske in relation to the Julevsáme Vahkko (Ls) (Lulesámi week). Annually, the villagers arrange a Lulesámi week during summer that includes a football cup, *duodje* courses, cooking lessons in typical Sámi dishes and other events such as film making. It is a meeting place for the Lulesámi and many of those who now live in the cities or other parts of Norway return home for the occasion.

In contrast to learning to make handicraft at home or at ASVO where there are no nominated teachers, but people learn from one another, the courses always have one or two appointed instructors. Each course during my fieldwork always started with the instructor, a village person particularly skilled in the craftwork, giving a verbal, theoretical instruction in the specific handicraft that was going to be learnt. Such tuition included a historical overview of the practice, verbal instruction of the techniques, descriptions of various designs and colour combinations and the function of the finished thing. Nevertheless, although there was a designated instructor at the courses, I also noticed that the teacher-student relationship often collapsed as students tended to help, advise and observe one another (chapter 8).

To participate in the courses the villagers had to apply and I was told that the number of participants was limited. There was also, in contrast to ASVO where the participation was free, a charge to attend the courses. First, there is a membership fee to join Duodje Nordlanda. Secondly, there was always a course fee, which included materials, teaching costs, drinks and snacks. Non-members of the organisation could attend the courses as well, but then the fee was higher.

Petra was considered one of the most skilled makers of the *gáppte* today. She had not learnt to make the garment as a child, but pursued her learning as an adult through the courses run by the *duodje* organisation. In recent years, however, she had not participated in any courses as she said her irregular working hours nowadays make it difficult to attend all occasions and she did not want to pay unless committing herself for the full course. Petra frequently went to the sewing-evenings at ASVO as there she could come and go as she liked without having to pay. “But I do hope to attend the craft course next summer in Måsske,” Petra once said, “it’s always very nice to meet others and to expand on one’s skills.”

On Facebook: Virtual Closeness and Coldness

Throughout the year I felt that the hamlet was a place with intense daily social relations. However, according to Jonas, life in the community was not as *varm* (N) (warm) as it used to be when he was younger. He was of the opinion that Divtasvuodna had become a *kaldere* (N) (colder) place to live. When I asked what he meant by this, Jonas explained that the physical closeness among people had diminished by people not visiting each other as frequently as before. As a result, Jonas said that many people had started to feel lonely and withdrawn from society. Jonas speculated that there were two main causes for this change. For one, the distances among houses are, although close, still greater than in the settlements around the inner fjords. Secondly, Jonas argued that people are occupied with following others’ lives and events in the hamlet on the internet, and especially through social media like Facebook, rather than actually going over to the neighbour and talking in person.

I quickly discovered that a large majority of the villagers have a personal Facebook page through which they discuss everything from international news events, the speed limit on the hamlet's roads, and announcements of engagements to the Lulesámi orthography. Duodje Nordlanda also has a Facebook page on which they announce courses, post news and enable people to swap tips and ask each other for advice regarding patterns, appropriate colour combinations and specific techniques of the *gáppte's* making.

The online interactions regarding handicraft were said to be beneficial by a number of Lulesámi persons as they allow for the sharing and debating of craftsmanship across geographical locations, gender (also women and men who are not making handicraft are members of the Facebook group), occupation and religion. Although the internet was described as a potential threat to communal life within the Laestadian congregation, many of the Christians also recognised its potential and inevitability for life in the 21st-century. More than just paying bills online or reading the news, the virtual setting enables people to locate materials and keep in close contact and exchange experiences notwithstanding their place of residence. One preacher acknowledged, during a gathering, that the internet offers some benefits for contemporary living, but that it should be employed with moderation and not at the expense of actually going to visit each other in person.

It was the excessive use of the internet that Jonas believed had already weakened the social relations of physical closeness. He explained that Facebook excludes those, especially elders, who do not have the access, interest or skills to use the media. Besides, Jonas argued that Facebook can never replace the *koselig* (N) (cosy) and warm feelings of chatting with someone face-to-face over a cup of coffee.

After I left Divtasvuodna, Facebook has allowed many of the villagers and me to continuously follow each other's lives. The internet also permits me to learn about the changes and continuities of the craft practices within the area. However, similar to Jonas's idea, the internet cannot replace the feeling of receiving Ellen's warm morning hug, the calmness felt by holding a sleeping baby in my arms or the smell of freshly brewed coffee when entering Sigga's house. The internet can also not substitute for the feeling of social

comfort and belonging created by making handicraft in the company of one another, often in a combination of settings between the women's homes, at ASVO or through the courses run by Duodje Nordlanda. Furthermore, the internet is not a place for initiating the learning of craft practices, but only a useful tool to arrange times to meet and further develop and discuss the production. To actually learn to make handicraft, it is crucial to be in the company of others and it is to this I turn in the following chapter. Yet, before moving on, I first want to return to the start of this chapter.

According to the Swedish Academy's dictionary definition of the 'Lapp disease', northern Fennoscandia is an isolated place where social contacts are rare and where people run the risk of developing a psychologically depressed state due to feelings of solitude. The Lulesámi perceive that loneliness may cause feelings of sadness, yet their spatial organisation within the hamlet differs quite radically from the idea that the north is a lonely and secluded place. As shown in this chapter, the villagers aim to create feelings of belonging within a community and emotional comfort in daily life based on numerous and friendly social relations, often channelled through the idiom of kinship. The creation of such a life is affected and intertwined with where the women make handicraft. The women keep an awareness of their own needs and feelings as well as of those around them – both to enable the learning and production of the handicraft and for creating a good life. The making of such a community is, however, relational and temporal. Daily physical closeness and relatedness need to be continuously maintained as social security and well-being can weaken with geographical distance or factors such as excessive use of the internet. Consequently, the women's craft production and everyday life in the hamlet is a constant negotiation between constructive and destructive features, always in the making.

7. Frustration and Familiarity: The Anatomy of Learning

When I first arrived in Divtasvuodna I had some experiences of making handicraft, but at the time this was more or less restricted to embroidery. When I started learning how to make the *gáppte* and other craftworks, such as knitting, among the Lulesámi women, it was with equally great enthusiasm for widening my skills and the arduous effort of becoming accustomed to the labour. At the start of learning something new I often felt frustrated. I struggled to get to grips with the tools, materials and movements for accomplishing the same kinds of beautiful work as the women did. Nevertheless, with time and repeated practice I gradually became more skilled.

One day, as the long dark winter finally seemed to have started retreating, giving way to spring, I arrived back home from ASVO with a finished *avve* in my rucksack. For the first time I felt quite satisfied with my work and when Ellen asked about the work I had undertaken during the day I showed her the result. After scrutinising the *avve* in silence for a minute she cheerfully announced, “It’s true when I say that you’ve become almost an *expert* (N) (expert) in making handicraft!” Although I was flattered, I found her compliment too generous. I recognised that my skills had improved, but I was far from being a proficient practitioner. Moreover, I felt that I would not have learnt without Ellen and the other women. Consequently, I responded frankly, “If I’ve become skilled it’s only because you’ve taught me so well.” At this Ellen disapprovingly shook her head as if she could not believe what I had just said. “No, I haven’t taught you!” she exclaimed, “You’ve learnt because you’ve been *villig* (N) (willing) to receive the knowledge from me.”

At first I was puzzled by Ellen’s statement. Of course I had learnt to make the *avve* because she and the other women had taught me how to do it! Before I came to the hamlet I had never made any of the handicraft that the women did! However, on giving Ellen’s words some further thought, I realised that she had not denied her impact on my learning. Yet,

instead of perceiving the learning as an education of a novice (me) by a teacher (her), she had emphasised that the craftwork was “*learned but not taught*” (Fermenías 2004: 258, my italics) through my own efforts within a nexus of relations⁷⁰.

The initially different views of learning which Ellen and I had correlate to one of the major academic debates around the topic (chapter 1: 39-43). My first impression of how I had learnt craftwork was that Ellen and the other women had taught me a set of skills that I thereafter put to use in the making of the handicraft. Ellen, on the other hand, highlighted that the learning of craftwork is not merely a transmission of skills from one person to another, but based on personal and practical engagement.

There is no doubt that I learned how to weave the *avve* through my relationship with Ellen and the other women. Nevertheless, as Ellen highlighted, she did not teach me and other novices *that* the *avve* is made through the interweaving of various coloured threads. Instead, she and the other trained women strategically arranged an environment where we could learn *how* the *avve* is made by engaging in its making ourselves.

Ellen and the other Lulesámi women’s approach to learning relates to their emphasis on respecting personal autonomy. Frequently, the women highlighted the importance of allowing each person to learn based on their own capacity. They stressed that skills cannot be forced onto someone, but that each person must learn from their own volition through active participation and an education of the senses in relation to the work at hand. Furthermore, the women’s ideas of learning prevented hierarchical relations between people, such as a novice and experienced craft-makers or older and younger generations of craft-makers, as they explained that learning how to make handicraft is an on-going process within a shared environment where everyone can learn something from one another.

The aim of this chapter is to provide a detailed ethnographic analysis of how the personal learning in practice took place and was facilitated by the more experienced women. The text

⁷⁰ When Blenda Fermenías asked Peruvian embroiderers how they learnt their craftwork they normally answered, “I learned all by myself” (2004: 158). According to Fermenías embroidery is learnt mainly through imitation and the learning process is often driven by the personal motivation to become proficient enough to gain employment.

is organised as a succession of narrations that together explore the continuous journey from being a novice to becoming skilled in the handicraft. Each of the sections addresses a specific aspect of the learning stage and its relation to the body and its senses. In order to provide a first-hand account of the learning process and the various sensations involved I place my own experiences centrally in the writing. From this personal reflection I further show how the other women supported my learning and made the craftwork themselves. Throughout the chapter I demonstrate how a novice transforms in the learning through a complex and dynamic interplay of the body in practice, and how such transformation alters the learner's appreciation and understanding of the craftwork as well as of her own being.

A Confused Mind

On one of my first visits to ASVO I began by observing the women work. I sat by the oval table and watched Marit helping Ella to set up a loom for weaving an *avve*. Anita sat quietly *låhtåt* on a pair of *vuoddaga* opposite me. Sigga had come from the next door studio where she had almost finished shortening a pair of light-green curtains. She was sitting down reading a newspaper and eating a sandwich for lunch which smelled of salami. I listened to Ella's and Marit's vivid conversations about how to thread the loom correctly. However, although I concentrated on paying careful attention to what they said, I only seemed to be getting more and more lost in their craft terminology, which at that time was completely unknown to me. I had not the slightest idea about what the *slivve* (Ls) (weft) or *gahpadakhárpo* (Ls) (supplementary warp) were.

After some time, Anita questioned if I was just supposed to look and listen. "Don't you want to do some craftwork yourself?" she asked. Although I had wished to learn the work, I had been reluctant to bring it up as I knew that not everyone found it appropriate for non-Sámi persons, like myself, to make Sámi handicraft. Nevertheless, Anita and the other women at ASVO seemed to care little about my ethnicity and said, instead, that it would be difficult for me to study their craftsmanship without engaging in it. More so, Anita stated that I might soon feel very bored being the only one in the workshop without something in my hands.

Anita occasionally came to ASVO during the daytime to make handicraft in the company of the other women. She was described by many of the other villagers as being the most skilful maker of the *avve* and *vuoddaga* in the hamlet and, as such, I felt privileged when she offered to show me how to make the *vuoddaga*. Sigga, who had finished eating by then, looked up and agreed that it was a good idea for me to learn craftwork. She closed the newspaper and went up to fetch Elsa Aira's (2000) instructive book of Lulesámi woven bands for us to find an appropriate pattern. Anita flicked her eyes when Sigga returned, turned to me and said, "This is the first thing you've to learn, young people nowadays need to work with instructions and write everything down." Making a gesture of pulling out a tooth from her mouth with one hand, she continued, "I started learning to make handicraft when my first milk tooth fell out!" She uttered a warm laugh and recounted some memories of how she had learnt to make handicraft as a child during the early 1900s when the *gáppte* was still an everyday garment:

I learnt to make handicraft by observing when my mother and aunt worked. You know, we children had to start learning all kinds of housework early to be able to contribute to the needs and activities of the family. The first thing I learnt was to card wool and spin it into yarn. Then when I was seven years old I sewed my first *gáppte* on our old Singer sewing-machine!

"At the age of seven?!" I cried out. I thought of another woman's granddaughter who I had met the other day. The girl was around the age of seven and she had been running around playing in a free-spirited manner without a single pause for the entire afternoon. I had become tired just looking at her and it was hard to imagine a young girl like her sitting down for long, concentrating on sewing a dress! As if Anita had read my mind, she explained, "The times were different when I was young, we just had to learn." She nodded towards Sigga and continued, "I'm not very good with reading or writing instructions. We never used instructions when I learnt to make handicraft. I have it all in my head and my hands." Anita pointed up to her head and held out her hands towards me. Sigga indicated that Anita, but not she, had learnt the craftwork in childhood by saying, "Yes, we who learnt to make handicraft as adults need instructions to remember and as guidance for how to do the work." She winked cunningly towards Anita who amiably smiled. Anita then told me that it is good that I learn how to work with instructions as this is how people nowadays make

handicraft. In fact, Anita stated that she was trying to learn how to transfer the practical work down in written form herself.

Later, as I became more familiar with the craft practices, I understood that it was not until a few decades ago that the Lulesámi villagers had started taking an interest in documenting their work in written text. Previously, designs and instructions were not transmitted in print, but learnt among the women through observation, repeated hands-on-practice and a few verbal instructions. However, with the rapid decline in the making of the *gáppte* during the 1900s some people feared that the skills of its making would vanish. To prevent such loss, and to enable people who had not learnt to make the *gáppte* at home from their kin to now learn, a number of instructive books appeared on how the *gáppte* should look and be made (e.g. Aira et al. 1995; Aira 2000).

As the women frequently referred to these writings that same day at ASVO I looked through the book that Sigga had handed me. It reminded me of a cooking recipe book, but instead of including steps for making various dishes it consisted of instructions for different types of patterned woven bands. There were pictures of the designs and a list of ‘ingredients’ needed for the work, including the tools, material, number of different coloured threads and techniques for the making. From reading, I learnt that the *vuoddaga* are made by measuring and cutting out various woollen threads of yarn that thereafter are arranged into a specific colour combination that, when interwoven, form a specific pattern. I also discovered that the designs differ between women and men, but besides that one can choose to wear any kind of pattern depending on one’s personal preferences. However, by reading the text and looking at the photos, I still understood very little of how the *vuoddaga* was actually going to be made. In the ‘recipes’, I lacked an understanding of the doing; of the subtle movements that I later only came to learn through practice.

My uncertainty regarding how to make the *vuoddaga* from the written instruction was interrupted by Anita who suggested that I could start by learning to *lãhtåt* the *vinjoga* (Ls), a zigzag pattern. It was among the easiest designs to begin with, she said. I agreed and Anita continued to explain that a finished pair of *vuoddaga* for an adult is around two metres and,

as the yarn shortens considerably during its interweaving, the threads need to be longer when starting than the desired finished length. Anita proposed that I should start by *lãhtãt* a pair of *vuoddaga* for a child as these require shorter threads and are, as such, more manageable to work with. Nevertheless, the pattern in the book was estimated for an adult and Marit had to come and help us to calculate what threads to take away for making a child's *vuoddaga* as the bands were not only shorter, but also thinner. With time, I realised that even if the women frequently made reference to the written instructions and used them to validate how the woven bands should look like, they also regularly modified the designs depending on factors such as the age and gender of the wearer, the thickness of the yarn or the preferred finished colour combination⁷¹.

Nicolette Makovicky (2010), in her work on Slovenian lace-making, and Joy Adapon (2008), in a study of Mexican cooking, argue that diagrams and recipes not only serve to reproduce a specific handicraft or cooking, but also to authenticate and revive cultural heritage and nation-building processes. Likewise, the Lulesámi women stated that the *vuoddaga* should only be made with the appropriate designs in order to manifest a specific Lulesámi sense of self and belonging. However, as Makovicky and Adapon also show, written documentations are often pragmatically and relationally altered (cf. Ingold 2000: 349-361). Adapon writes, "A recipe is merely an intellectual prototype like a blueprint of the dish that eventually is prepared by a cook according to his or her skill or mood. Ingredients are chosen, touched and manipulated, assessed by sight, texture and smell, tasted and savoured" (2008: 16).

Similarly, the instructions for the *vuoddaga* are tools rather than rigid means to an end. Although they narrow down the accepted designs, there is allowance for flexibility and adaptation to aspects like the material at hand and the preferences of the wearer in terms of width and the colour of the *vuoddaga*. It is exactly this openness that also makes it difficult to comprehend and learn how to make the handicraft through written instructions as one

⁷¹ Aira (2000: 63) also recognises that the patterns need to be modified depending on these various factors. As an example she explains that a *vuoddaga* for an adult woman normally consists of around 26 threads while a man's *vuoddaga* is made with approximately 40 threads. Yet, these numbers differ depending on how thick the yarn is and how wide one wants the finished bands to be (ibid.). The colour chosen is contingent on personal preferences of the wearer and it is often made to match the colours of the *avve* and the dress itself.

needs to conceptualise and relate to the actual making of the *vuoddaga* before being able to use the instructions. Thus, even if I had the instructions in front of me, I was dependent on the women's guidance.

With Anita's help, I measured and cut the different coloured threads of yarn for the *vuoddaga*. Thereafter, I closely observed as she organised them into the specific colour combination for *låhtåt* the *vinjoga*. I did not understand much of the logic behind organising the coloured threads in that specific way. My head was spinning from all the new information, yet I still tried to follow as well as I could. As if Anita had read my mind, she told me not to worry if it seemed complicated. She assured me that I would understand better once I started to *låhtåt*. This was also true, because it was only after having learnt how to make the craftwork that I could comprehend and interpret how a specific pattern was made through a certain colour combination of the threads. Hence, the understanding of the handicraft emerged through practice before it could be applied into written text, rather than the other way around. It was the same also with the specialised craft language that Ella and Marit had used when setting up the loom. Their words had seemed foreign the first time that I heard them, but later when I learnt to weave myself it suddenly occurred to me that I was comfortably using the same kind of terminology and similar expressions as they were.

Looking Over the Shoulder

After all the various coloured threads of the *vuoddaga* were neatly organised, Anita took hold of them and wrapped around half their length around the crotch of the *låthåmmuorra* which Sigga had found in the workshop and lent us. The other half was left to hang loose and Anita made sure that the threads had not changed place or entangled during their movement away from the flat table surface. After having made a few corrections Anita looked up and urged me to move closer. I already sat next to her, but pushed the chair even nearer so that it touched hers. Anita changed the position of her chair slightly as well so that she sat a little bit in front of me. From this angle I could view her hands from over her left shoulder. Being sat in this way provided me with a visual impression that her hands were in

fact my own and I realised that she had made us sit in this way so that I could follow her movements from the perspective that I would later have when *låhtåt* myself.

Scholars like Jakob Meløe (1998), John Berger (1990), Tim Ingold (2000: 260), Cristina Grasseni (2004, 2007, 2009) and Greg Downey (2005, 2007) suggest that humans not only learn about the world or a specific practice from *what* they see but also from *how* they see. From over Anita's shoulder, I observed how she picked up the *låthåmmuorra* and placed its 'leg' against her belly. Seeming with ease, she then grabbed the loose threads around ten centimetres under the crotch and stretched them just enough to balance the tool between her belly and hands. I continued to carefully watch as she divided the threads in half and held one group in each hand. While working she gave me a few verbal instructions that highlighted what she was doing. "You take half the threads in one hand and the other half in the other hand, like this. Then you do like this...," she started to *låhtåt* with slow exaggerated movements and said, "You grab the outermost thread and then pull it under the two nearby threads, then over the next to threads, under the next two and so on. When you reach the middle you place it on the innermost side of the threads in the other group." She took a short pause before continuing, still moving her hands slowly, "Now you do the same thing on the other side. Two up, two down, two up... and join it with the other group." After having made a few similar unhurried rounds she increased the pace a little. "As you go along you need to keep the threads equally stretched all the time, otherwise the pattern becomes uneven," she explained while pressing the threads towards the interwoven pattern with her thumb. I concentrated on how she moved her fingers with a kind of gracious ease and how the threads gradually interwove into the pattern that I had seen on the photograph in the book. It did not look very complicated and I felt filled with enthusiasm when Anita stopped and said that it was my turn to try. At the same time as Anita handed me the *låthåmmuorra* she moved her chair back so that our positions became reversed. Now she had a view over my right shoulder as if my hands were hers. I, on the other hand, had an extra pair of eyes watching over me.

As I proceeded to learn and make handicraft I noticed that the makers frequently placed themselves in this way, keeping close bodily contact and looking over each other's

shoulders. The women at ASVO often altered their sedentary working positions by walking around the room and watching the others work over their shoulders in order to learn the craftwork. Michael Herzfeld (2004) similarly writes that male artisan apprentices in Crete gain their skills through observing experienced craftsmen work. However, in contrast to the case in Crete where Herzfeld (*ibid.*: 107) argues that apprentices ‘steal the knowledge with their eyes’ when their masters refuse to show them how to do the work, the women at ASVO encouraged each other to observe in order to learn. If a novice was sitting observing the work of a skilled woman from far away she was encouraged to move closer. I also noticed that the trained women often adjusted their work or position for the observer to have a better look at their movements.

The women not only allowed others to see their work in order to learn the craftwork, but also permitted them to give feedback by, for example, pointing out a mistake. Frequently, the women who looked over someone else’s shoulder also praised the maker for her good work. When this happened to me, I always felt a boost of self-esteem and energy to continue in the work, which at times could feel arduous.

Sometimes, beginners seemed ashamed of their work and tried to hide it from the women who approached them to observe. The novice would then be gently reprimanded through comments such as, “You’ll not receive feedback if the work is good or not unless you share it with others.” At other times, if a beginner went to sit further away from the other women, she would be encouraged to move nearer by playful remarks like, “Don’t be scared of us, we’re not as dangerous as we look!” or, “Come closer, we promise not to bite.”

Vision, which I here address as having significance for the learning of handicraft, has, according to a number of scholars (e.g. Fabian 1983; Stoller 1989; Pallasmaa 2005, 2009; Howes 2006), been given too much attention within hegemonic Euro-American scholarship for understanding the lives of other people and the ways humans come to know the world. Rane Willerslev (2009: 23) argues that some writers even state that anthropology is channelled through an “ocularcentric paradigm”. To challenge such an identified visual supremacy, anthropologists like Paul Stoller (1989) and Steven Feld (1990 [1982]) have made

what David Howes (2006: xii) calls a “sensual turn” by incorporating and engaging with the other senses, like sound, taste, smell and touch in their ethnographic works⁷². Although such studies have made significant contributions by showing and discussing the wide existential realm of human life, there are also, according to Ingold (2000), Grasseni (2009) and Willerslev (2009), problems with the ways that vision is portrayed and undermined in some of these accounts. For one, vision is left unexplored and considered merely to objectify our environment, apart and detached from ourselves like a text we read from a distance while the other senses, such as hearing, connect us to our surroundings (for a critique of the way vision has been undermined in some recent scholarly works, see Ingold 2000: 245-247; Grasseni 2009: 3). Secondly, the senses are regarded as ‘cultural’. This means that sensory understandings are seen to be collectively (pre)determined perceptions rather than grounded in the individual’s lived experiences (Ingold 2000: 285). Howes, for example, assumes that “the more a society emphasises the eye, the less communal it will be: the more it emphasizes the ear, the less individualistic it will be” (1991: 177-178 as quoted in Ingold 2000: 252; cf. Pallasmaa 2005: 25).

In this chapter, I do not wish to argue for a turn towards ocularcentrism; “a cultural, ideological bias towards vision as the noblest sense” (Fabian 1983: 106). Rather, the focus on vision as essential within the learning of handicraft is shaped by my ethnographic experience. More so, by studying the ways in which the women, as well as myself, learnt the craftwork and how they positioned themselves in relation to one another reveals that their observations do not entail a detachment, opposition to or hierarchy between themselves and the world as Howes seems to argue. On the contrary, such observations created closeness among the craft-makers and an understanding of each other’s’ works. The way a woman positioned herself or encouraged others to look at her movements indicates a sophisticated comprehension of how her practices are seen by others, which in turn is drawn

⁷² Stoller (1989: 122) shows how “words are powerful and sounds carry force” within Songhay sorcery and spirit possession ceremonies. For instance, the sounds of musical instruments in rituals manifest the voices of the ancestors and create a tangible connection between the present and the past (ibid.: 109). Likewise, Feld (1990: 3) identifies “sound as a cultural system” among the Kaluli of Papua New Guinea. In *Sound and Sentiment*, Feld shows how sounds organise and express the ways in which the Kaluli understand their world. The Kaluli live in a dense forest and it is sound rather than vision that guides the people within such surroundings. For example, the Kaluli judge distance, time and the weather through the sound of birds.

from her experiences of seeing the other women. In other words, the women employ an 'intersubjective gaze' where they consider observation, and its consequences, both from their own and the other women's perspectives.

Extending the Field of Vision

Following the works of Downey (2007, 2009) and Grasseni (2007, 2009), I suggest that the women's observations of one another's work should be considered as skilled practices. Grasseni (2007) argues that seeing is a skill that grows differently based on the activities within which it is engaged⁷³. Thus, to see is not a given, but it needs to be learnt.

Novices often remained seated behind a trained woman for long periods while a more experienced woman usually walked around and observed others for a shorter time. The most skilled women, like Anita, could also remain seated while observing others across the room through the corner of their eyes, or what Downey (2007) calls a 'sideways glance' or peripheral vision⁷⁴. Anita was, from a lifetime of experience, able to reverse the image of a craft-maker's movement from across the table and see the work as if she saw it from the maker's perspective. I was sometimes surprised when Anita, at the same time as *låhtåt* herself, made a woman across the room aware that she might have made a mistake or admired her craftwork.

This trained 'extended vision' became noticeable also when the women were engaged in other tasks than making handicraft themselves. Once at home, I was knitting while Ellen sat reading a weekly magazine across the table. Without having realised that she had paid me any attention, she rightly and impressively all of a sudden remarked that I might have

⁷³ Grasseni (2007) draws on the work of James Gibson and argues that vision becomes enskilled through a learning of being attentive towards the surroundings. Gibson, who came up with the idea of "an education of attention", identifies it in the following way: "The state of a perceptual system is altered when it is attuned to information of a certain sort. The system has become sensitized. Differences are noticed that were previously not noticed. Features become distinctive that were formerly vague" (Gibson 1986: 254).

⁷⁴ Downey (2007), in his study among capoeira practitioners, argues that trained players develop a sideways-glance that permits them to scan and be aware of their surroundings even during fast acrobatic movements. A capoeirista should avoid fixing her or his gaze on the other player and, instead, observe the other's movements through the peripheral vision. This way of seeing is a defensive strategy, according to Downey (ibid.: 226, 299) for masking what one's next strike will be - as a gaze might reveal such intentions.

dropped a stitch. In the previous chapter I also described how Anne moved her sewing-machine from the sewing-room to the kitchen when her daughter or neighbour wanted to learn to sew something. In this way, Anne could keep an eye on their work while attending to her household chores, such as cooking or doing the dishes. Thus, a trained vision allows the women to multitask.

Moreover, Anne recognised that her children might pick something up from her craftwork through the corner of their eyes with time if she sat and worked in their presence, even though they kept their main attention towards the television or on their toys. To give another example of how vision needs to be trained in relation to the work of the hands I return back to my learning of *låhtåt* the *vuoddaga*.

Incoordination

As mentioned previously, I felt eager to try and *låhtåt* when Anita handed me the *låhtåmmuorra*. The work had looked pretty straightforward when Anita demonstrated it to me and not as difficult as I had initially anticipated. With confidence, I placed the *låhtåmmuorra* against my belly, grabbed the threads and stretched them to balance the tool. However, as soon as I started moving my hands the tension of the threads either softened or strengthened and the tool kept on wobbling forwards and backwards. I did not understand how it could have stood so perfectly balanced when Anita had *låhtåt*! More so, although the *låhtåt* had appeared simple when I observed Anita doing it, I did not even manage to hold the threads comfortably in my hands! I glanced back at Anita, totally perplexed by the difficulties I had encountered immediately, and asked if she could show me again. Anita gently smiled and took the *låhtåmmuorra* from me. Again we shifted positions and I glanced over her shoulder as she started to *låhtåt*. “Just watch again, watch carefully,” Anita encouraged. I closely observed, trying to pick up on even the subtlest of her effortless movements.

Nevertheless, although I felt that I had carefully observed how Anita worked I could barely even hold the threads in my hands when she handed me back the *låhtåmmuorra*. Some

threads fell out of my hands. Others tangled. Even if I was only making *vuoddaga* for a child the threads were too long for me to handle. I became angry at my fumbling fingers that did not move in the way I wished. It was as if they had a life of their own and my hands and visual understanding of Anita's movements were completely uncoordinated. Coming to terms with the fact that the clumsy hands in front of me were my own I took a few deep breaths and continued to, rather inelegantly, intertwine the threads. It was no way near as simple as it had looked when Anita did it.

Anita, who seemed to have noticed my frustration, placed her hand on my shoulder in a way that I felt exuded reassurance. She also said, "You just have to try. It takes time for everyone to learn at the beginning. You'll see that you get used to it after a while." I sighed, but smiled lightly at the fact that there might be hope of learning the work. Anita took up her own *låhtåt* and started working next to me, allowing me to see her movements and adopt a form of 'practical mimesis' while *låhtåt* myself (see Jackson 1989: 134; Ingold 2000: 354-358; Marchand 2008, 2010). "Yes, that's good, you just have to try," Anita encouraged from time to time.

In his study of British woodworkers, Trevor Marchand (2010) writes that observation is no guarantee of a novice being able to work himself. Rather, observations affect, according to Marchand, the motor cognition of the seer, but the ability to actually do the work involves "bodily practice: *in* repetition and rehearsal and *in* simulated motor imagery of the exercise" (2010: 104). Repetition as a way of learning, however, does not merely involve reiterating a set of movements, but, as Downey (2007: 27-28) emphasises, makes the practitioner (whether of a handicraft or sport) grow accustomed to a set of new movements and, as such, transforms and attunes the body to the work at hand.

I continued to *låhtåt*, trying to be patient. I sat with a bad posture, rounded and tensed shoulders and my neck slightly bent forwards. My eyes soon started hurting as they were constantly fixed on the movements of my hands and the slow interweaving, and seemingly continuously tangled, threads. Quite soon, I experienced pain in my body as well and I

decided to take a short break⁷⁵. I put the *låhtåmmuorra* down on the table and leaned back in the chair, feeling exhausted. Perhaps because of my own aching shoulders I took note of Anita's upright position as she diligently made a perfectly even-patterned *vuoddaga*. If that was not enough for me to feel rather disheartened, her eyes also rested on Ella, who by now had started weaving, while her hands continuously worked without the supervision of her gaze! Returning to my own struggle with the work, it felt utterly incomprehensible how she could manage such a thing.

The Hand-i(n)-craft

It was not only in the process of *låhtåt* that I experienced that mine and Anita's hands differed in their dexterity. I had noticed the difference of our hands already when we prepared the threads for the work. As we were about to cut the threads I went looking for some scissors (a tool that strangely always seemed to be getting lost in the workshop). However, Anita said that we could just use our hands and rip the yarn apart. She demonstrated by holding up a piece of yarn in front of me and with a fast, confident movement her hands ripped it into two parts. "The hands are the best tool⁷⁶," she said, "My aunt never used scissors, no, she just ripped the yarn apart like this." Also this looked easy, but when I tried myself a painful, burning sensation went through my hands, down the arms

⁷⁵ It is often physically demanding to make handicraft and many women complained about pains in their necks, shoulders and backs, as well as of numbness in their arms. To avoid such strains, it was important to keep aware of my working posture and take regular breaks. One of the hardest jobs was to *sjnjissjkot* (Ls) (weave) the *avve*. This type of weaving is done with a *sjnjissjkom* (Ls) (back strap loom) where the warp is attached between a belt around the weaver's waist and, normally, a hook in the wall. In some kinds of weaving, such as when using a foot-treadle loom, it is the loom itself that creates the tension of the warp. However, in *sjnjissjkom* the tension is created by pulling the body away from the wall and, in such a way, keeping the warp under constant pressure. If doing this kind of work for long, it inflicts great strains on the lower back and the weaving is itself demanding on the shoulders. Anita said that she suffered pains in her back from weaving and nowadays she preferred to set up the warp on a table-loom or larger foot-treadle loom, which she had at home, instead of using the handloom. This was practical for Anita who only wove the *avve* at home, but for those who preferred to take the work with them and weave in different places (like at home and at ASVO) the *sjnjissjkom* was a well-suited and practical tool due to its light weight and small size that made it easy to be packed up and brought along.

⁷⁶ To measure the threads we wrapped the yarn around some nails on a plank that had been measured out by a ruler. However, in the past, before the time of the ruler, Lis-Mari Hjortfors (1999: 69) writes that the hands, fingers, arms and the eyes were used to take down measurements. This method is still routinely applied today as a complement to the tape-measure. Some elders, like Ellen, said that they could still approximate an accurate length or fit of the dress merely by using their eyes and hands.

and almost all the way along the spine. Instead of my hands ripping the yarn apart, it felt as if it was the yarn that was trying to rip my hands apart! Upon seeing my facial expression, Anita, Sigga, Ella and Marit started giggling. Anita opened her hands and showed them to me, "Have you ever seen such knotty and skew hands? These are hands that have worked!" She held up a crooked finger and laughed, "This is called *slitage* (N) (wear and tear)!"

Hands change with age. They grow bigger and eventually the skin wrinkles. They grow stronger through exercise or weaken with age or illness. Juhani Pallasmaa writes, "Hands... have their unique appearances and features... just think of the robust hands of a steelworker... or the delicate, utterly precise hands of a surgeon, pianist or magician" (2009: 26). Hence, hands are not just biological entities, but they change depending on the life that they live. Among the women making handicraft, their hands are the physical link between the body, tool and material. The hands of craft-makers become shaped in specific ways through weaving, pinning needles through fabrics, holding knitting sticks and intertwining threads for making the *vuoddaga* (fig. 37, 38 and 39). They might scar from cuts made by the scissors or other sharp tools. Many years of this type of work had marked Anita's hands that now were distinguished by their knotty, robust character and elegant dexterity.



Figure 37. Hands at work, *låhtåt* the *vuoddaga*.



Figure 38. Hands at work, untangling the warp for weaving the *avve*.



Figure 39. Hands at work by the sewing-machine.

Trained and transformed hands did not only have the ability to make handicraft, but also to judge the finished works. It took me a few weeks to finish the *vuoddaga* and when I brought them back home Ellen was eager to see, and feel, what I had completed. She took the *vuoddaga* in her hands and observed them closely in silence. Thereafter, she moved her fingertips over their surface, checking for irregularities and defects. After a while she nodded, handed them back to me and said, “They’re not bad for the first ones that you’ve made. Next time think about stretching the threads with equal strength on both sides. One side is woven a bit harder than the other.” Ellen showed me the *vuoddaga* and it was quite accurate that one side was woven harder than the other, which left the pattern somewhat uneven. I said that I had not thought about this and Ellen explained that it was most likely due to the fact that I was stronger in the hand that I am writing with. She highlighted that while my handicraft revealed different strengths in my arms, other craftworks can indicate that a maker has lost concentration or become tired and started to weave more loosely all of a sudden. Of other works, she said that the maker might have been irritated, stressed or tense as the weaving looked like it had been done with great strength. Thus, by observing

and touching the *vuoddaga* with her experienced hands, Ellen was able to judge the skills and unique features of the maker's hands and emotional state of being. In other words, aspects of a woman's life could be narrated from her hands and the handicraft that she made (cf. Pallasmaa 2009: 27). Ellen and Anita both said on separate occasions that I had very sensitive hands. Ellen said that the majority of young people nowadays have fragile hands, like mine, and she assumed that this reflected that they are not used to hard physical labour, but instead spend most time in front of the computers.

People's skills in the craftwork were often described by references to their hands. When assessing the level of someone's skills a typical question was, "are you/is she good with your/her hands?" An experienced woman in the craftwork was described as 'being good with her hands' or to 'have it (the skills) in her hands'. On the other hand, a woman who was not good at the work was said to be 'not good with her hands'.

Hearing the Rhythm of Movements

Although relatively few verbal instructions are given in the learning of a craftwork, it would be a mistake to disregard the significance of sound. In the following narration, a story of when Ellen showed me how to felt, I demonstrate one way in which sound plays a central role for developing dexterity in the work.

It was a Monday morning. Ellen was cheerful and excited as she had wished to show me how to felt for a long time. Nevertheless, it was not until this day, the darkest of December, that I had managed to knit a pair of socks that were considered good enough to be worth the effort of felting. On my arrival in Divtasvuodna I had not much experience in knitting, but it was a craftwork that the women frequently did and it was good work for me to do as it was not seen as a typical Sámi handicraft and, as such, it guarded me from being criticised for trespassing on domains that some considered as their cultural property.

I learnt to knit mainly from Ellen and Sigga. It had not been easy and I remember the women's hysterical laughter when my first pair of socks seemed to be suited for a giant!

However, due to my stubbornness and many late evenings I became, according to Ellen, quite skilled in knitting and now she also wanted me to learn how to felt. For the work we needed three things: (1) a bucket of lukewarm water with a few drops of *grønnsåpe* (N) (soft soap made of pine oil) in it, (2) something to sit on (which ended up being the toilet seat), and (3) a coarse workplace to felt on (we used a plastic footstool with an irregular surface). When all these things were prepared Ellen sat down on the toilet seat and said, “Try to stand a little bit behind me so you can see well.” I stood next to her and watched as she quickly dipped one of the socks in the bucket of water by her feet. Then she took a sturdy grip around the sock with both of her hands. She looked at me and said, “What we do now is called *duoppim* (Ls) (felting).” I nodded and continued to observe how, with slow rhythmic movements, she started to press and push the wet sock against the rough surface of the footstool in front of her. It looked almost like she was kneading dough for baking bread.

After a while, as she speeded up the rhythm a little, she started singing. The song was cheerful, simple and repetitive:

*Så gjør vi når vi tover våre sokker
når vi tover våre sokker
når vi tover våre sokker
så gjør vi når vi tover våre sokker
tidlig mandag morgen (N)*

So do we do when we felt our socks
when we felt our socks
when we felt our socks
so do we do when we felt our socks
early Monday morning (author’s translation)

She continued singing these few lines over and over while her hands felted and her body slightly rocked forwards and backwards. Then she stopped, looked up at me and said, with an apologetic voice, but cunning smile, “Well it wasn’t my intention to take the work away from you!” She handed me the sock and we swapped places. I slowly started to felt in the way I had seen Ellen do. I could feel her eyes looking at me and soon she also started to sing the same song again. Without thinking about it I found myself moving in tune with the melody. It felt like the work proceeded quite well and Ellen walked out of the bathroom and

went into the next door kitchen. I could hear her continuing to sing through the wall. It helped me to sustain my rhythm.

However, after a couple of minutes I could hear the singing becoming more distant and I guessed that Ellen had moved to the living-room. As a consequence of her faded voice, my movements slowed down and I realised how tiring felting was. Nevertheless, soon the song grew stronger again. She was on her way back! As I wanted to show myself to be a diligent learner I speeded up my movements, following her melody. When Ellen stood next to me again she stopped singing. Although I could no longer hear the song from Ellen it felt as if the rhythm now had etched itself into my body and I seemed to move with ease while the sock slowly thickened underneath the palms of my hands. I turned to gaze at Ellen who nodded and smiled.

To work with a harmonious and repetitive rhythm was important in most of the craftwork that the women did. It was perhaps especially noticeable when weaving as Sigga said that it was the *rytm* (N) (rhythm) that created an evenly woven *avve* or *lissto*. Once as one woman was struggling with the weaving Sigga encouraged her to try to find the rhythm again⁷⁷. Sigga herself frequently hummed a gentle melody when she worked, regardless of whether she sat by the sewing machine, wove or knitted.

Listening to the Silence of Voices

From time to time when making handicraft among the women, only faint sounds, like a pair of knitting needles clapping together or the sound of a moving body, were heard⁷⁸. Although it was rarely entirely silent, human voices were at times unheard. Herzfeld (2004: 103) argues that scholars tend to regard silence as “evidence of a lack of awareness, whether of self or of the surroundings”. However, this attitude does not relate to the practices of craft-

⁷⁷ Downey (2005) argues that music plays an important part in the learning of capoeira. He writes, “When a novice struggled in a game, becoming clumsy, frustrated, or anxious, he or she was exhorted to listen to the *berimbau* (a singled-string musical instrument)” (2005: 87).

⁷⁸ “Workshops are not silent places,” according to Herzfeld (2004: 81), “but the dominant sounds are the repetitive sounds of productive physical labour: the crash of materials dropped on the ground, the snipping of scissors.”

makers among whom silence is important for enhancing concentration towards the work at hand (cf. Herzfeld 2004). I suggest that one reason why it was often silent when a woman demonstrated a craft practice to a novice was to allow the beginner to fully concentrate on her observations rather than getting distracted or overwhelmed by too much talking. Likewise, once at ASVO a couple of women and I were jovially chatting when Sigga light-heartedly said, “We talk so much that I can’t concentrate on my work! Now we need to be quiet for a while to get something done!” A silence rapidly spread throughout the room and everyone started to work diligently.

Nevertheless, after too long a period of silence it was easy for the thoughts to drift off and to lose concentration. At these moments, the silence no longer produced concentration, but it became, on the contrary, counterproductive. It was therefore important to find a balance between silence and other verbal expressions, such as chatting, singing and laughter, to keep the energy, attentiveness and pleasure in the work. This was not easy and involved a continuous awareness of one’s own work and that of others in order to appropriately judge when to be silent and when to break the quietude in order to create a stimulating working environment for all.

Is it in the Blood?

When I met Anita for the first time at ASVO she asked how I had become interested in Sámi handicraft. Although I did not have a straightforward answer, I explained as well as I could and added that my mother has always made a lot of handicraft and that I became interested in the practices myself early on from watching her. In response to this, Anita smiled and said, “That’s good because then you might have it (the skills of how to make handicraft) in the blood.”

On a later occasion, during the summer craft course in Måsske, Nathalie, a shy teenage girl, learned to make handicraft very easily and the things she produced during the days were relatively well-made for a novice. Many women praised Nathalie and Marit said that she must have gained the skills from the blood of her paternal grandmother. Nathalie curiously

looked up and asked, with a low voice, to know more about her grandmother, who had passed away before she was born. She listened attentively as Marit told her how skilled her grandmother had been in making handicraft and that this ability must be flowing in their common blood. Nathalie looked happy to hear the story and I scribbled down a few notes of the conversation on a piece of paper and asked myself if certain characteristics could be transmitted through bodily fluids.

Soon, though, I realised the flip-side to such an argument. Once, during a short hike up a nearby hill, Julie confided that she sometimes felt a lot of expectations from the other villagers to be as skilled in the handicraft as her mother, who was considered one of the area's most skilled makers of the *gáppte*. At times, people's expectancies felt like a burden, Julie said, as she was not so interested in handicraft. Neither was she very good at it. "I have problems just sewing a straight line," she said and laughed.

It was true that some people found it easier to learn a craftwork than others, but as I started looking closer at who these villagers were I did not find that this ability could always be explained in terms of innate skills transmitted between kin. Rather than the skills being passed on genealogically, the blood seemed to be a reference used to manifest and enhance relations between kin, such as my mother and I and Nathalie and her grandmother. It was, I suggest, not a hereditary trait that made a woman skilled in the making of handicraft, but, on the contrary, the ability to make handicraft was at times employed to create and enhance (or in the case of Julie to compare and evaluate) a woman's relation to her kin. In my own case, I might also have found it relatively easy to learn the craftwork as I, as a child, often played with the buttons, ribbons, needles and fabrics that I found in the wardrobe where my mother kept her haberdashery. I also played next to her as she sat sewing matching clothes for me and my favourite doll. Later, I made use of such experience with the work when I, in contrast to Julie, took an interest in the craft practices myself.

An On-going Transforming Process

The learning and making of handicraft take a long time and a lot of effort and energy. Women like Ellen, Sigga and Anita habitually emphasised that the learning process was on-going through their practical and somatic engagements with the tools, materials, written instructions and other people. For the novice this was readily apparent in the initial transformations of the body by, for example, gradually starting to coordinate the visual impressions with the movements and dexterity of the hands with the help of singing, laughter and silence. With time, the early clumsiness and frustration gradually grew into familiarity with the work. Anita also stressed that after years of experience she was learning new things such as the ability to write craft instructions.

Furthermore, the body changes not only through learning and making handicraft, but also with, for example, age or through illness. Such changes, inevitably, affect the making of handicraft. Marit's mother had once been skilled in making the *gáppte*, but due to worsening rheumatism she was no longer able to work at all. Ellen did not invest that much time and effort in making handicraft herself either at the time of my fieldwork and she held her age responsible for becoming tired very quickly. Nevertheless, when she made something it looked almost like magic to me. It was as if Ellen could just pick up my tangled knitting or messy warp and untangle the craftwork with a gracious ease. Moreover, even if Ellen did not make much handicraft herself any longer, she was regularly consulted for advice regarding the *gáppte*'s making by the other women. A few years ago, Ellen had also written and published a book about the making of the *gáppte* for dolls and she was presently engaged in composing a compendium with craft terminology in the Lulesámi language. Thus, although Ellen no longer had the same energy as before for making handicraft herself, she was still filled with enthusiasm for developing new skills for her life-long passion and she took a great interest in enabling other people to learn the work.

Reflecting back on my own learning process, the craftwork that at first had looked so easy when I observed Anita *låhtåt* the *vuoddaga*, Ellen knit socks and Marit and Sigga weave the *avve* and sew the *gáppte*, were in fact not so simple at all. More exactly, as I started to learn these craftworks myself I understood that the women's skills were the result of many years

of experience and the transformations of their bodies for making such practices familiar. As I became more skilled it was, however, difficult to remember how strenuous the learning had felt at first. Now when I knit it seems strange to think that, on arrival in Divtasvuodna, I could not even hold the knitting needles properly! It is only when reading my fieldwork diary or observing someone else trying to learn the work that I can recollect, with a smile, the pains and frustrations of the handicraft that today I have become a little bit more accustomed to, the enhanced self-understanding and coordination of my body and the ways in which the women enabled me and other novices to start our endless learning.

8. Learning to Craft, Learning to Live

The learning of handicraft among the women entailed more than technical skills and the transformation of the body towards greater dexterity in the work, as discussed in the previous chapter. It also involved 'learning about learning' (see, e.g. Coy 1989: xv; Ainley and Rabinow 1991: 1; Terrio 2000: 147-182; Herzfeld 2004: 139; Marchand 2008). In other words, with time I came to understand that a novice not only learnt how to *låhtåt* the *vuoddaga* or weave the *avve*, but she also 'learnt how to learn' to make these things. This included, among other things, the importance of observation and hands-on practice as well as a set of moral virtues, attitudes and character traits about how to be and relate within the world, to other people and towards the work at hand. Trevor Marchand (2008: 246) writes of apprenticeship as an "immersion in a learning environment that, in addition to facilitating technical know-how, structures the practitioner's hard-earned acquisition of social knowledge, worldviews and moral principles."

To view learning processes as on-going, rooted in practical engagement, steps away from ideas of seeing skills as innate properties of an individual or group. It recognises people's lived everyday experiences within the ever-changing world. However, aside from regarding skills as dynamic, I argue that the Lulesámi's particular approach to learning has important social implications and provides essential skills for contemporary living.

This chapter sets out to discuss a series of personal qualities and moral principles that were emphasised and cultivated among the Lulesámi women in the process of becoming skilled in the handicraft. I describe how these virtues, including patience, personal autonomy and resourcefulness, were experienced by the person learning craftwork and others around that person. I argue that these virtues were not only significant for the making of the handicraft, but that they also had implications for people's lives at large. From a wider perspective, the chapter shows that the learning of handicraft was not separate, but highly interconnected, with a complete way of being and relating in the world and for the creation of a good life.

The Virtue of Patience

The learning of handicraft requires *tålmodighet* (N) (patience) to endure and tolerate the difficulties, self-doubts and sometimes painful efforts of the work. I start this chapter by telling the stories of two women's different demonstrations of perseverance in their learning of making the *gáppte*. The narrations exemplify how the women's levels of endurance affected their learning and how others judged their qualities of becoming skilful in the craftwork, and managing life more generally, based on such expressions.

The first story took place in Måsske during the summer when the *duodje* organisation arranged a craft course in relation to the Julevsámi Vahkko (p. 130). On one of the evenings I went to visit Ivar, who still lived permanently in the inner fjord settlement and whom I had known since my first weeks in Divtasvuodna. For the occasion of the course, Vigdis, one of his daughters-in-law, had come to stay with him and the three of us had a chat in his living-room, hiding from the gloomy and cold late June day outside. As we sat talking about a little bit of everything Vigdis also tried to untangle the threads of the *låhtåt* that she had started to learn during the day. She was deeply concentrated on sorting the work out and drifted away from our conversations at times. Occasionally, she looked up and commented on her hardship, "I try to figure out the logic behind how the threads have to be organised to interweave correctly, but it doesn't seem like I understand it right." All through the evening she tried to figure the craftwork out, grunted, tried again, sighed, tried again...

Around eleven o'clock, Ivar walked out in the kitchen and returned with some cakes on a plate. He handed it over to Vigdis and said, "I am not able to help you with the work itself, but at least I can give you something to eat so that you get some energy to continue." Vigdis, who was in the middle of entangling the threads again, shook her head, put the *låhtåt* down on her knee and took the plate. After eating a cake, she said, calmly, "I will stay up every night this week if I have to, at least to get the start of the *låhtåt* right!" Ivar amiably laughed, turned to me and proudly remarked on Vigdis's patience and determinacy, "This woman is going to become a fine craft-maker! I can tell."

The other narration is about Ragnhild. She was in her forties and had just recently started taking an interest in the handicraft as she wanted to make a *gáppte* for her son to wear on his confirmation day the following year. Sigga had visited Ragnhild in her house one day and helped her to set up a loom for weaving the *lissto*. She had also demonstrated the weaving to her and encouraged Ragnhild to try by herself a little bit every day. Around a week later the two women met again at a sewing-evening at ASVO and Sigga was eager to see how Ragnhild's work had proceeded. Ragnhild shook her head and stated, "No, I couldn't do it. I don't think this handicraft is for me." Sigga said a few words of encouragement and explained that most people feel like that in the beginning. "Let me see the *lissto* and we can figure out together where it went wrong," she said. In response, Ragnhild shook her head and declared that she did not have anything to show, "I just cut off what I had done with scissors and threw it in the bin." "You did what?!" Sigga exclaimed. "Well, I couldn't stand looking at it," Ragnhild answered. I thought I saw Sigga take a deep breath before she inquired, "How are we going to see what the problem was now then? How will you learn not to make the same mistake next time?" Ragnhild looked down into the laminated flooring. Sigga rolled her eyes, but sympathised, "I tell you what, let's do it like this, I help you set up another loom now with the remaining threads that you cut off and then you try again. Ok?" Ragnhild looked up and agreed. Together they set up the loom again; a work that took most of the evening. Nevertheless, just before everyone was about to leave and go home, Ragnhild got some time to start the weaving. Yet, immediately when she begun she complained that it was too difficult for her. As soon as Sigga or anyone of the other women went away from her side, she would stop her activity, lean back, and state that the only thing she could do was to give up!

Later, as everyone had left, Sigga and I remained alone, cleaning up and locking the place for the night. Sigga said, in a disapproving and slightly worried tone of voice, "I doubt Ragnhild will ever learn when she's so impatient! She can learn if she wants, I'm sure of that, but she can't expect it to go well from the start." Sigga paused for a moment and then continued, "You know yourself that it was difficult when you first learned to make handicraft. All of us

have started out in the same way as her, but you can't just give up! If you just give up how will you succeed with anything in life?"

What Sigga highlighted here was not only the importance of being patient to tolerate the sometimes arduous practice of learning the craftwork, but also how it affected a person's outlook and doings in life at large. She recognised that people always face challenges and that one needed to remain patient to handle such difficulties.

Patience was considered a valued virtue by several villagers and within the Laestadian congregation. Following the words of one woman, impatience could cause restlessness, despair, insecurities and self-doubt. In relation to the making of handicraft, she said that such feeling could easily impede the learning – as it indeed did for Ragnhild. Moreover, I was told by a Christian villager that impatience was considered a daily sin as it produces discomfort both for the person feeling the lack of controlling pains, frustrations and delays, and for those around her or him. According to one preacher, impatience also had the ability to cause greater sins, including to clearly express irritability towards other people through, for example, verbal abuse. The preaching during the fortnightly Sunday gatherings also emphasised a couple of times that impatience could further result in feelings of hostility and even aggressive and violent behaviour towards other people. Emotions like anger were, however, rarely expressed within the hamlet, and especially seldom among the women. Instead, patience was an appreciated quality among both the Christian and non-Christian villagers for creating and maintaining peaceful convivial relations and comfortable personal experiences of life⁷⁹.

⁷⁹ The potential of emotions such as anger to disrupt social life is also mentioned by Jean Briggs (1970) in her ethnographic account of the Utku and in the introduction to Joanna Overing's and Alan Passes's (2000) edited volume on the creation of conviviality among people of the Amazon. One noticeable exception from merely perceiving anger as a troublesome emotional expression is offered in Catherine Alès's (2000) study of the Yanomami. Alès argues that anger is also a marker for love, among the Amazonia dwelling Yanomami, as it demonstrates a person's willingness to place her/himself at risk for another person. According to Catherine Lutz's (1998) work among the Ifaluk in the Pacific, anger can also be perceived and experienced differently in various situations and relationships. To my knowledge no detailed study of various kinds of anger has been made among the Sámi. Cecilie Jávo, John Rønning and Sonja Heyerdahl (2004: 13-14) argue that the Sámi show little tolerance towards anger in children, expressed as temper tantrums (slamming doors and throwing things), and Asta Balto (2006) refers to anger solely as an emotion that Sámi children are encouraged to control. However, none of these authors mention that anger can be accounted for in different ways depending on the

Although both Vigdis and Ragnhild demonstrated certain degrees of impatience when grunting and getting irritated, the women responded to such feelings in quite different ways. Vigdis remained calm and recognised that she had to practice and dedicate time to the craft in order to learn how to make the *vuoddaga*. Ragnhild, on the other hand, did not accept the tiring efforts as a, perhaps inevitable, part of learning and gave up almost immediately when she encountered difficulties. Even though both women equally struggled with the work and were not able to “get it right”, it was through their levels of patience that Ivar and Sigga judged their abilities of becoming skilled in the craftwork.

Nevertheless, although Ragnhild had not shown a great deal of patience, Sigga highlighted that it is a quality that can be managed and cultivated, and she never lost her belief that Ragnhild one day would be able to make the *gáppte* for her son. Almost every time when they met in my presence, Sigga encouraged Ragnhild to continue trying.

“Figure it Out for Yourself!”: Learning to be Self-reliant

At first when I learnt to make the *gáppte* I often felt frustrated that my hands were not able to do the work and that the threads of both the *låhtåt* and weaving endlessly tangled. Moreover, similar to David Anderson’s (2000: 33) and Anna Järpe’s (2007: 72) irritations when learning how to tend reindeer among the Siberian Evenki and the Swedish Sámi, I experienced, when starting to *practice* the craftwork, that I was not always provided with the help that I needed. Often when I asked one of the women what I did wrong, when for example the pattern of the *vuoddaga* did not interweave evenly, they initially responded like Sigga once bluntly did, “I don’t know, you just have to figure it out for yourself!” When I asked how I should hold the threads to feel more comfortable when *låhtåt* Marit said, “You just have to try. You have to hold them in the way that feels best for you. You have to find your *måte* (N) (way) of doing it.” In reaction to answers like these, I silently thought, “Why

situation and a more detailed study of such an emotion might be interesting for further understanding the nuances and various effects of anger for social and personal well-being. The same could be said for a more specific analysis of patience, which appears to be an overlooked virtue within both the literature on the Sámi and wider anthropological studies of emotions.

can't they just help me? I've actually never made this kind of handicraft before! How am I supposed to know how to do it?!"

In contrast to Nuccio Mazzullo's (2005: 282-317) experience of barely receiving any guidance at all when learning how to make handicraft among the Inari Sámi⁸⁰, the Lulesámi women always generously shared of their skills and showed a novice how a craft practice was done at the initial phase of learning something. Yet, later when the novice practised the craftwork, it was common that the more trained women ignored any pleas for help or frankly responded that they had other things to do – even if it was just (frustratingly enough, when one asked for help) to drink coffee and read the newspaper. An elderly woman who sometimes came to ASVO snapped back rather forcefully on a couple of occasions that no one had showed her how to make handicraft when someone asked her for advice. I often felt confused when witnessing, or experiencing myself, these rather rude reactions and refusals to help as the behaviour contrasted so strongly with the usual generosity that permeated everyday life in the hamlet.

As I started paying more attention to these instances, I nevertheless noticed that a woman always received assistance a short time after she had been denied help. In fact, with time I came to understand that rather than being an eruption of sudden impoliteness, the initial rejection of help served as an incentive for the novice to practise her patience, reflect on, and somatically engage with the work on her own. The dismissal forced an apprentice to sit down and try to sort out the difficulties herself. It was then that the more experienced woman, who at first had denied her aid, either offered a piece of advice or commented that the novice managed very well without any help. The latter was often the case, because with patience and through reflection, observation of others and practical efforts most women were able to solve their problems without anyone else's direct guidance in telling them what to do. Thus, I learnt that the rejections helped to foster a novice's *selvtillit/selvtendighet* (N)

⁸⁰ According to Mazzullo (2005: 298), some non-Sámi Finnish participants at a Sámi craft course that he attended were so disappointed and unsatisfied with the teacher's pedagogical skills of just leaving them to figure out the work themselves that they made a formal complaint to the educational institution in question. From their perspective, the learning was about being taught the craftwork and not about learning how to learn the work (ibid.).

(self-reliance) by encouraging the growth of her problem-solving capabilities, concentration and endurance.

The idea that the learning of handicraft cultivates self-reliance relates to the works by a number of scholars who similarly highlight that independence is a centrally valued quality among many Sámi across Sápmi. Robert Paine (1970) focuses on how reindeer-tenders in Guovdageaidnu are trained to take fast individual decisions relating to the current circumstances when they are out, often alone, with their animals. The tender needs to relate to factors such as shifting weather conditions and the possibility of predators' attacks on the herd. Paine shows that in decision-making in relation to these aspects the tender needs to consider the consequences of his actions for herding practices, his family and other herders, and act accordingly. A wrong decision might, for example, risk the loss of animals and, consequently, a decreased income for the family. Paine writes that the training for making such autonomous judgments and relating to the surroundings is continuous through discussions and exchange of information with other tenders. Cooperation is seen here as of benefit for all since the tenders keep each other updated on, for example, tracks of wolves in an area and the quality of the grazing land (*ibid.*). The frustrations that Anderson (2000) and Järpe (2007) felt over not being taught how to tend reindeer were also a reflection of the fact that the learning process included independent engagement and thinking in order to be able to manage the tending in the future alone.

The significance of autonomy is not only apparent in the learning of handicraft and reindeer-tending. Pertti Pelto (1962) addresses the respect towards individualism throughout the human life cycle among the Skoltsámi, and the studies by Cecilie Jávo, John Rønning and Sonja Heyerdahl (2004), Asta Balto (2006) and Cecilie Jávo (2010) demonstrate alike the importance of raising children to become independent human beings among the Sámi. All these authors show how children are rarely forced to do something, but instead parents display a large degree of permissiveness and indulgence⁸¹. Balto argues:

⁸¹ In relation to my previous argument in the chapter, Pelto (1962: 100) writes that aggression is the only behaviour in a child that is met with zero tolerance and strong disciplining, including spanking. This form of punishment is, according to Pelto, an indication of the importance of maintaining peaceful relations among the

The main idea of the learning process is to develop independent individuals and much effort is put into giving the learner opportunity to gain their own experiences. Own experience is fundamental for building up the self-confidence of the child. Trial and error – you are allowed to try and do something and to fail... Sometimes it means that children are left on their own, they have to tackle challenges and often dangerous situations... Sámi give their children knives, scissors and matches at an early age, challenging them and trusting that they will learn to take care of themselves. (2006: 16)⁸²

Similarly, Pelto (1962) writes that Skoltsámi children start to learn how to make handicraft at an early age by observing and imitating adults who allow the children to learn independently. There is no emphasis on achievement, but the children are allowed to learn at their own speed.

Ellen often recounted how she learnt to make handicraft as well as other tasks such as cooking during childhood by observing her mother and other elders work. She described how her parents had permitted her to help and engage in their practices. They had encouraged, but not forced, her learning. From an early age, Ellen had also been given the responsibility to carry out certain duties herself, such as carding and spinning wool or bringing the sheep back to the house from the nearby mountains. As her parents were often busy with other activities, she had to figure out herself how her work was going to be done and solve the problems that might have appeared along the way. It was up to her to learn based on how she had seen others do the work before and by reflecting on her actions. Through such an education, Ellen not only learned the craftwork from practical experience; she also learned to be self-reliant and relate her activities to the surroundings. The independence and skills that she gained enabled her to contribute to the running of the household as well as to prepare for being able to sustain herself and her own family during a time when most things were made rather than bought, and when people lived self-sufficiently within their surroundings.

Although the times have changed much since Ellen's childhood and it was rare today that children learnt to make the *gáppte* and take responsibility over other household duties,

Skoltsámi. Comparably, Pelto (1962: 201) argues that alcohol is, among Skoltsámi adults, not perceived as a problem unless it provokes aggression in the person drinking.

⁸² Jávo, Rønning and Heyerdahl (2004) argue that this form of independent learning and emphasis on autonomy is not unique or exclusive for the Sámi. Similar analyses are made across the circumpolar region by e.g. Briggs (1970).

novices of the craft practices were still left to discover the work to a great degree by themselves. Relating the emphasis on self-reliance back to the previous chapter, it is clear that craft-making was not based on a set of rigid rules or mere copying of others' ways of doing things, but instead it encompassed a continuous adjustment to the work at hand (including the engagement with materials and tools), the ability to transform the body, to think for oneself, and to attune to other people and the surrounding world (cf. Ingold 2000: 353-375, 2011a: 51-62; Guttorm 2001). When a mistake was made it was not because a rule of how the handicraft should be done was broken, but, according to Mazzullo (2005: 287), by "misjudging a course of action". To avoid and reconsider such errors a craft-maker needs, as Gunvor Guttorm (2001) also argues in her work on Sámi craftsmanship, to learn to continuously reflect on the consequences of her doings, calculate potential risks and attune to the work.

Nevertheless, although trained women normally refused to help a novice, in order for them to grow their independency in the craftwork, beginners were never left completely on their own. Even when a skilled woman declined to help, she still closely observed how the less experienced woman got on with the work. Once, when Sigga refused to help a beginner entangle the warped threads, I could see how she discreetly glanced over the edge of the newspaper that she was reading to follow the novice's proceedings. I came to understand that women, like Sigga, frequently used their peripheral vision to observe how others worked while, at the same time, allowing them to learn the craftwork without their interference. The novice whom Sigga observed struggling with the weaving managed to sort out the problem herself and Sigga commented, "What do you need me for? You manage just fine by yourself!" The novice looked up rather surprised, I guess because she had not thought that Sigga was following her work. After a moment of silence the beginner said, in a satisfied tone, "Yes, I managed by myself!"

I recall that I always felt a sense of contentment when accomplishing to solve a problem and make the handicraft by myself, and similar feelings of satisfaction were often expressed by the other women as well. At the occasions when a novice managed to do the craftwork well, women like Sigga, Ellen and Anita always specially accentuated the fact that it was the

beginner who had done the work herself. These kinds of compliments seemed to further enhance the maker's confidence in her skills. After receiving such generous comments myself, I always felt a little bit more enthusiastic to continue to work and take on new challenges.

At the times when a novice did not manage to sort a difficulty out, one of the more trained women would offer advice and support. If the beginner seemed low-spirited and doubtful of her own abilities, other women sometimes took responsibility for the mistakes. Ellen habitually said that she might have failed to show me how to do the craftwork well or forgotten to mention a certain detail when I encountered problems. Sometimes, she theatrically blamed the material, which in fact was very much alive and changed in its qualities throughout the work, and demanded that the fabric or threads should start cooperating better! Comments like these usually made me laugh and lifted my spirit to continue with the work.

In sum, although every woman was left to learn the craftwork in her own way and cultivate her self-reliance, she was always carefully observed and cared for by others around her. Frequently, the more trained women also encouraged such independent learning through verbal expressions of admiration, warm smiles or by placing a gentle hand on someone's shoulder.

Manners of Speaking: Asserting Personal Autonomy

During one of the sewing-evenings at ASVO Berit was struggling with the *låhtåt*. She grunted slightly and remarked out loud to herself that the threads interwove unevenly. Marit, who was sitting close by, put down her *låhtåt* and approached Berit to help her with her difficulties. The reason why I recount this very short incident, which might not seem remarkable in any way, is because, just a few minutes before, I had been completely ignored when I asked if someone could help me with my weaving. I remember feeling overlooked and I wondered if Berit had received help from Marit so quickly because they were first-cousins and I, on the other hand, was unrelated to anyone. However, with time, I gradually

recognised that this happening might have had less to do with kinship than with our manners of speaking. It appeared more likely for a woman to receive assistance in her work if she remarked or worried out loud about its progress, than if she directly asked for help.

Conversations among the women were frequent while learning and making handicraft. However, it was relatively rare that one of the trained women openly asked for assistance and little by little beginners realised that they hardly ever received help when pleading for it directly. When one of the skilled women encountered problems or doubts, they solved the issues by reflecting on their work, carefully observing others, referring to the available literature or by *discussing*, rather than asking about, the matter with someone else. For example, instead of requesting “Can you help me with this?” it was more likely that a woman said, “I have done it like this, but it doesn’t seem to work. How do you usually do it?” At times the women also included flattery by saying, “I don’t get this right. I know that you can do it very well. How is it that you always make it work so nicely?” In the case of someone evidently struggling with a craft practice, but who was not asking for help, it was common that someone took an interest in helping out.

I came to understand that the women seemed to avoid asking each other directly for help. This reluctance to answer someone else’s call for help appeared not only to foster the other person’s self-reliance, but also to demonstrate a dislike for being given commands. Like in other Arctic areas (e.g. Pelto 1962; Briggs 1970) or different geographical settings (e.g. Overing and Passes 2000), the Lulesámi women cherished independence of thought and personal autonomy. This sensibility towards other people’s independence and freedom of choice was, however, the preferred way of being and relating to others, but not always adhered to. The following four subsections illustrate some various dynamics of how the craft-makers learned and negotiated a proper way of speaking and the sensitivities of being told or directly asked what to do.

Negotiating Knots

One day at ASVO I was deeply concentrated on knitting a pair of socks while Ella was weaving an *avve* and Sigga flicked through a magazine with fabrics to see if there was something she could order for the small store on the premises. After a while, Ella's rhythmic movements stopped. She held the threads in her hands and sighed. Ella was skilled in weaving the *lissto*, but she had just learnt to weave the *avve*. Probably as a result of her previous experience in weaving, everything seemed to have gone smoothly until now. I glanced up at her and saw that the *gahpadahka* (Ls) (supplementary warp) seemed tangled in the warp. Sigga remarked with an artful tone, without looking up, "Have you made a mess Ella?" In response, Ella grunted and tried to sort out the problem. However, her sighs grew in intensity. Again, without looking up from the magazine, Sigga said, "I usually find it easier to shorten the warp by making a knot on it when I weave. Then the threads don't tangle so easily and it gets much simpler to handle the warp." Ella firmly replied to the suggestion, "Well, that's your way of doing it! I prefer to do it without knots!" Sigga shrugged her shoulders and said, "Yes, you have to decide what's best for you. I sat at home and tried to weave for long before I found what worked out best for me."

Ella continued to try and fix the problem, but her grunts continued and after a while Sigga walked up to her. They started discussing how the threads were supposed to run and how Ella best should work to avoid further complications. Both women seemed equally stubborn that their way of working was most efficient. "Ok, you just have to try the way you think will work then!" Sigga said and walked back to the table. She seemed a bit annoyed. It was quiet for a while before Ella mumbled that she will just try with the knots as Sigga had initially suggested. She turned around, looked at me, winked and said, "You should learn to always listen to the elders." Although there were only a few years of a difference between her and Sigga, Ella tried to imply that Sigga was much older. It made us all laugh and I felt that the incident showed how Ella had to recognise herself, through Sigga's advice, how she wanted to continue weaving, rather than merely doing what Sigga recommended. Suggestions were usually valued among the women, but telling someone what or how to do something was

not. However, the line between recommendations and direct advice was not always clear-cut and, as a result, negotiations like that between Ella and Sigga were common.

Realising Mistakes

It was normally as rare to hear an experienced woman ask for help as to hear her give direct verbal advice without having been prompted to do so. When women walked around and observed others work, they often highlighted potential, or already made mistakes by subtle, sometimes non-verbal, signals. Seldom did I hear someone openly reveal to someone else that an error had been made and how to solve it.

Habitually, a woman would point to a miscalculation in someone's work and at times also ask, "What is this?" Such an indication allowed the maker to realise herself that she had made a mistake and correct it. At other times, a woman noticing someone else's mistake would say something like, "Ah you do it like that. I normally do it like this..." The woman then described or demonstrated how she usually made the handicraft. She often highlighted the difference between her and the other person's way of working by a change of intonation or a slowing down of her movements. This usually also made the maker aware that she had made a mistake and she normally adjusted her way of crafting.

On other occasions, a woman might ask someone to explain their work in order to make them conscious of their error. Ellen sometimes looked up from her magazine or Sudoku across from me in her living-room and asked me to explain what I was doing. In the process of describing and reflecting upon my activity, and answering Ellen's follow-up questions about the effect of a certain movement on the next stage of the craftwork, I often became aware that I had done something wrong. Although Ellen had probably noticed the mistake well before me, she normally smiled and said that it was good that I realised what I had done incorrectly myself. Like many of the trained women, Ellen said that she would never tell someone openly that a craftwork was made in a faulty manner. However, she also highlighted, "If someone asks me what I think about their work then I sometimes tell them if

I don't think it's well made. I say that I wouldn't have made it in that way, but a bit more like this or that."

If no mistake had been done, but a woman saw a novice struggling with how to hold the threads while *låhtåt* for a long time, she could describe or show how she usually did the work. Nevertheless, when doing so the woman always stressed that this was her way of working and that it was up to the novice herself to figure out and decide how she wanted to continue with the craftwork. Ellen and Sigga both emphasised that there was always more than one way of doing something and that everyone had to work in the way that felt was best for them.

Preventing Relations of Dominance

Generally, women showed great vigilance not to interfere with each other's works by making direct comments, unless it was for praise. However, although the rights and appreciations of personal autonomy dominated the villagers' preferred ways of being and relating to one another, it was not always a philosophy that was rigidly followed. Remarks were often given more directly amid close family members, especially between a mother and daughter or sisters. Occasionally, it also happened that a woman uttered critique towards others. Once during a sewing-evening at ASVO an elderly woman, who did not usually attend these gatherings, openly and rather harshly scolded a younger woman, who also did not normally join, that she demonstrated poor skills in the craftwork that she was making. The younger woman responded by looking down at the floor, she hunched her shoulders and pressed her lips tightly together. In reaction to the elderly woman's comment, Sigga confidently answered back, "We have all started out learning in the same way and it's not easy for anyone at the start. She's (Sigga looked at the young woman) improving her skills very fast and her work is not bad." "Not bad?" the elderly woman exclaimed, "I tell you, young people nowadays they call themselves Sámi, but they don't know what it means. They can't even tie the *avve* right around their waist or sew a straight line with the sewing-machine! I can tell you what it means to be skilled!" Sigga seemed clearly irritated and shook

her head, “Who can say what it means to be Sámi?” “Not today’s youths anyway!” the elderly woman quickly and briskly quipped. To this Marit responded, with composure, “I think everyone can learn something from each other. The youths have skills that the elderly don’t have and the elderly have skills that the youths don’t have.” The elderly woman shook her head disapprovingly. After this incident, the atmosphere was filled with tension and many of the women appeared provoked. Most of them ignored the elderly woman and encouraged the young woman to continue her craftwork, but it seemed like she had lost her enthusiasm.

I was very surprised when this happened. Furthermore, it brought associations to the stories that I had been told numerous times about the *språkpolitiet* (N) (language police). The *språkpolitiet* is a vernacular designation used by the villagers for describing those Lulesámi people who criticise other Lulesámi who cannot speak the Lulesámi language fluently. During the beginners’ Lulesámi course that I attended at Árran there was one evident difference between how some of the Lulesámi students and I experienced how others perceived our learning of the language. I felt that people were positively surprised and encouraging that I was interested in learning the Lulesámi language. When I practised outside class most villagers remarked that it was skilful of me to try and learn even though I did not always use the correct grammar and mispronounced words. The Lulesámi students similarly commented that there were many people who were in favour of them learning the language, but some also said that there were people who reprimanded them for not being able to speak their *eget språk* (N) (own language) fluently. The students in the course had not learnt the Lulesámi language while growing up, but took an interest as adults when many of their children were learning the language at school. In response to the teachers’ encouragement for us to practice the language as much as possible outside class, a few students said that they felt inhibited to do so for fear of receiving criticism. One woman explained how another woman had snidely remarked that she was not even able to speak her mother tongue when she mispronounced a word. This, she said, made her feel very insecure and scared of making mistakes and being criticised again. She explained that the critique not only felt like a judgment of her language skills, but also caused her anxieties for

not being *nok* (N) (sufficiently) Sámi. The teachers continually told the students not to care about the *språkpolitiet*, but they also recognised that this was easier said than done.

Thus, the fear of being harshly criticised affected some people's practice of both speaking the language and of making the handicraft. One student at the language course said that she never practised outside class and I never saw the young woman who had been criticised at ASVO return to the sewing-evenings again. I was told that she continued to make handicraft at home, where she felt comfortable, but that she had been very saddened by the critique from the elderly woman and did not feel very good about herself.

It was not always the case that someone's critique towards another person's lack of skills in the craftwork or language was related to specific ideas of what it means to be Sámi, as in the examples above. On some occasions I was told that a woman had been criticised just for her poor craftsmanship and lack of dexterity in the hands. Nevertheless, in most of these circumstances such scolding met with distaste among the majority of the villagers. Once I did, however, hear a woman express herself positively about verbal abuse, which she argued hardened and prepared a person for life. She related her argument to the Sámi concept of *narrideapmi*, which Balto (2006: 10) claims is a method to prepare children to manage their emotions, learn to be self-ironic and tackle uncomfortable situations with playfulness. Balto provides the following example of how such a manner of teasing is used:

An uncle comes to visit and starts a conversation with his nephew. "I just saw you outside the shop talking to a girl. Your girlfriend, I suppose?" Far from being annoyed, the boy laughs and says "Look who's talking! You're over thirty and if you don't find yourself a woman soon, you'll end up a wilting old bachelor!" The uncle and his nephew both have hearty laugh. The boy has completely mastered the social code. (2006: 10)

However, Balto also writes that "there is a delicate balance between what is considered constructive and what can be regarded as overly teasing or taunting" (2006: 12) and in order to be successful the *narrideapmi* should not bring about feelings of humiliation (ibid.: 11).

Sigga said as well that it was good at times to tease or question people as training for future social relations, but she also emphasised that direct and unprovoked critique had the potential to cause emotional pain. In relation to the craft-making, she said that harsh

criticism only weakens a person's confidence and impedes the ability to learn. Briggs (1970: 330) similarly writes that verbal abuse among the Utku is discouraged as it "makes other people feel unhappy... annoyed... and sometimes frightened."

In fact, among the only times when I heard the villagers speak in a negative way, about other people were in relation to someone's harsh criticism towards others or claims to be more skilled than others. Persons who behaved in such a way were said to think too much of themselves, and lack care and empathy towards others' well-being and understanding of the consequences of their actions. Sigga said that these people use acts of dominance to assert their own ways of being over others without reflecting on how it influences other people's feelings. Thus, to continuously reflect over one's doings was not only important for learning how to make the handicraft, but also in the relationship to other people, by recognising and respecting their personal autonomy.

Scolding Wastefulness

In contrast to the above, there was, however, one type of scolding that was not met with disapproval among the villagers in relation to the making of handicraft. Although Sigga was gentle with Ragnhild when she cut off the warp and threw some threads away that could have been untangled and reused, most women showed little acceptance towards wastefulness of materials. Instead, they emphasised resourcefulness and sometimes scolded persons who lacked respect towards their material environment.

The Sámi are known for having made good use of the materials within their surroundings for producing things that they needed in their everyday lives throughout time (e.g. Barck and Kihlberg 1981; Kjellström 2000; Guttorm 2001). People have acted with great ingenuity by, for example, making use of the entire reindeer, including spinning the sinews into threads, using the bones and antlers in the production of knife handles, buttons or the *sjnjissjkom*, and made clothing from the skin. Elders like Ellen and Anita often emphasised that they had to make use of what they had in the past. Ellen said that there was not such a great abundance of choice as there is today as regards materials for making clothes. She also

highlighted that materials were expensive, especially considering the time and effort that it took to collect and prepare them. Both women also said that resources had been scarce during the Second World War and that they had to learn how to be resourceful.

Today there is quite a remarkable generational difference when it comes to the understanding of what materials are and how they are produced. Most elders seemed to collect more things and to be more creative in recycling or coming up with new uses for materials or old possessions than the younger villagers. Ellen was sometimes irritated when I or one of her children cleaned her house and threw away things that we merely perceived as rubbish, but in which she saw a great potential. This could be anything from empty milk cartons to newspapers, which I usually just threw away, but which she insisted could be used for many things. Her imagination seemed endless. One could cut the top off from a milk carton, paint it, and use it as a pen holder. One could cut it in the middle, put jam in the bottom part and use the top part as a lid. Newspapers were, according to Ellen, the best material for making sewing patterns. Ellen's sewing-room was completely crammed with fabrics, old garments, yarns, magazines, and buttons and zippers that she had taken off from old garments – some stored in old, clean milk cartons! Once, one of Ellen's sons muttered, "You collect everything! What will you do with all these things? Shall I not help you to throw some things away?" Ellen narrowed her eyes and exclaimed, "Throw away? Are you crazy? No, I tell you what: young people nowadays just throw everything away and buy new things. Do you know what I think of that? I think it's downright wasteful! Then after a while they come to me when they realise that they need something and ask if I have it!" Ellen was also of the opinion that youths nowadays lack understanding of the effects of their wastefulness on the world and for the lives of future generations, and that they think resources exist in abundance.

Also at ASVO, women encouraged the villagers to hand in their old clothing or garments and they recycled them into bags or pillow covers. On a couple of occasions when Sigga bought fabrics online for the *gáppte* she was not happy with their colour or texture upon receiving them. However, instead of returning or throwing the textiles away, she used them to make curtains or storage bags for her yarn.

The reason why elders often told younger people off when they threw away materials or used them with little consideration was, I suggest, to make them realise and reflect upon their doings and to understand the importance and consequences of being resourceful. Seen from the perspective of personal autonomy, it can be argued that the skills of making use of materials also enable a person to be less dependent or reliant on others and, instead, be inventive with what they already have.

Reversed Positions

Towards the end of the year I became skilled enough in weaving the *avve* and *lissto* to demonstrate how these works were done to beginners. As I once showed Julie how to weave I noticed that I approached her learning in a similar way to how Anita, Ellen, Sigga and the others had enabled me to learn. I encouraged Julie to observe me work from over my shoulder while I wove with slow and exaggerated movements, using only a few verbal instructions to highlight some of the key movements. When we shifted positions, I carefully observed how she got on with the work from over her shoulder. Then, I left her alone to try for herself. As she struggled with how to sit and complained about pains in the body, I told her that it will get easier after a while when she adjusts to the new activity or that she has to find a more comfortable way to work. I highlighted that it was up to her to figure out what felt best.

Later, when she encountered difficulties and grunted that weaving was harder than it seemed to be, I found myself smiling as gently as Sigga did when I was painfully trying to learn how to weave. It was a smile of recognition that my skills had improved only with time and strenuous efforts and that everyone experienced similar hardships at the start of their learning process. To lift Julie's spirit and enhance her energy, I sometimes teased her or made a little joke in hope of getting her to laugh.

I also found myself pointing to an error in her weaving, asking what it was, and making her aware of the mistake. At times, I ignored her demands for help and pretended to be busy with something else. Once, she even accused me of not taking an interest in her learning,

but to be more interested in reading my book! In fact, I had not been reading at all. I had still not developed a skilled peripheral vision and was not capable of multitasking like Ellen, Anne, Anita or Sigga. Instead, I just made it look as if I was reading while I kept my focus on her proceedings. When she accused me and uninterruptedly nagged about getting help, I also felt rather irritated that she showed so little patience and continuously demanded things from me! It was in these moments that I recognised that I had not only learnt the craftwork and ‘learned how to learn’, but also learned how to enable other people to learn as well as the importance of relating to the work at hand and others with patience, self-reliance, reflection, concentration, confidence and respect.

Skills for Crafting a Contemporary Living

When women judged their own or other people’s craftworks they rarely spoke of the things in themselves, but they referred to the skills of their making. The term *suodar* (Ls) is used for describing a carelessly and badly made craftwork. According to Sigga an ‘ugly’ *gáppte* is a garment that has been made too hastily and without reflection and patience. A beautiful garment, on the other hand, has been made with accuracy, dexterity and thought. As a compound of Sigga’s and the other women’s reflections, comments and doings surrounding the handicraft, the making of a beautiful *gáppte* require constant training and practice, a transformation of the body, and a learning and cultivation of specific virtues like patience, self-reliance, diligence and concentration.

However, apart from being able to make the *gáppte*, what implications do the skills and qualities of learning how to make the handicraft have for life at large? Herzfeld (2004: 59) writes that craftsmanship and modernity appear more and more incompatible nowadays. A craft practice is, according to Herzfeld (*ibid.*: 52), “situated in a larger social context in which it is assessed, appreciated, or condemned”. In Crete, Herzfeld shows how the craftsmen who now abandon their previous trade for opening souvenir boutiques, selling ready-made things for the tourists, are “fuelled by the higher status and easier life associated with commercial

success” (ibid.: 57)⁸³. Those who continue to produce their own handicraft are, on the other hand, “locked into the role of obdurate traditionalists” (ibid.: 59-60). Herzfeld argues that Cretan artisans are marginalised within both the Greek state and Europe and that apprentices learn to become tough, fearless and confident to manage such social positions. One of the main lessons that craft apprentices now learn is to “always look out for themselves” (ibid.: 117) in “a life full of resentment and contest” (ibid.: 194). Consequently, the learning is both affected by contemporary life as much as it prepares the apprentices to live in the modern world.

Marchand (2008) similarly claims that the learning of handicraft is underestimated today. According to him, the work of the body has, unfortunately, been considered secondary to the learning of more theoretical subjects throughout time. However, Marchand argues that “practical know-how needs to be accorded the value and status it deserves – not just in terms of productivity and providing essential skills for the economy, but more importantly as a means to satisfying work and life” (ibid.: 266).

Furthermore, Jávo (2010: 86) explains that the emphasis on learning and growing qualities of personal autonomy and confidence were important among the Sámi in the past for being able to live in the sometimes harsh Arctic environment, where the weather can rapidly change with, for example, sudden strong winds and fluctuating temperatures. She argues that people had to learn how to tackle and endure adversities in order to survive (cf. Paine 1970). These skills continue to be important today to resist the discrimination that the Sámi sometimes are still subjected to by the state and some non-Sámi neighbours (Jávo 2010).

I would like to build on Jávo’s arguments and suggest that the virtues gained from ‘learning how to learn’ also have other social advantages nowadays – apart from the making of the handicraft itself. One such benefit is to prepare, especially youths, for the current labour situation. Today the majority of employment and educational opportunities are centred in the greater urban areas. Although some people from Divtasvuodna have decided to move to the cities to find a job, others wish to remain living in, or return to, the hamlet. For those

⁸³ Herzfeld (2004: 56-59), however, shows that the rapid growth of commercial business has proved to be economically disadvantageous due to, for example, a declining number of tourists.

who prefer to dwell in Ájluokta, the skills gained from the craftwork might be advantageous for creating new work prospects by, for example, starting their own businesses. Today, the growing interest in Sámi handicraft among both the Sámi and non-Sámi population has created a potential source of income from producing the handicraft for commercial purposes. Such an endeavour is now simplified by the increasing trade over the internet, which enables people to both continue living in the rural areas and expand the market to other national and international locations. Moreover, the setting up of businesses not related to the handicraft benefits from the skills provided and cultivated through the learning of handicraft. Such skills include an understanding that one has to work hard and independently, not expect help from others, but learn to think and act for oneself, reflect upon the consequences of one's doings and relate to the surroundings. Furthermore, the arduous effort and personal investment of time and energy in the learning of handicraft was beneficial, according to Anita, for becoming accustomed to hard, disciplined work and not expecting immediate results without going through some hardships. The way the women enabled a novice to learn the craftwork fostered confidence in a person's ability to take on and manage challenges as well as to be resourceful with the material surroundings.

Another advantage that an apprentice gains from 'learning how to learn' is the ability to relate to others and the world in order to create personal comfort and a society of equal and peaceful relations. The emphasis on patience, self-reliance and autonomy benefitted both the individual person and the larger group by undermining disruptive features in life such as hierarchies, anger, coercion, emotional pain and self-doubts. Within the hamlet, the villagers did not speak of or consider the individual in terms opposite to the community. Instead, the community was composed of interweaving persons. As Mazzullo argues for the Inari Sámi, "By 'personal autonomy'... we refer to a capacity to act of one's own accord that is actually constituted by the person's embeddedness, from birth, in the network of social relations of the wider community, and by the sharing of skills that this makes possible" (2005: 310). Seen from a different angle, Joanna Overing and Alan Passes write in relation to Amazonian ethnographies that "the very creation of the collective is dependent upon such autonomous selves who have the cognitive/affective skills for congenial, social relations" (2000: 2).

The philosophy of personal autonomy was, however, not always followed, but continuously aimed for through, for example, the way a novice learnt to make handicraft. The learning of the handicraft was not the only practice in which such a quality was acquired and cultivated⁸⁴, but it was an important activity with significant implications for the crafting of a contemporary living within the hamlet and a transformational experience for the novice in how to understand herself and others within the world. Apart from the processes and profits or *learning* how to make the handicraft, there was also a range of motivations and benefits related to the *production* of the *gáppte*, and it is to these that I turn in the next chapter.

⁸⁴ Qualities such as patience, self-reliance and autonomy were also reflected within the Laestadian congregation. I also noticed a similar emphasis on these character traits among a group of men who during my fieldwork collaborated in the building of a house. In terms of further research, it would be interesting to do a more detailed study of men's apprenticeship in house-building.

9. Craftsmanship of Comfort and Conflict

Tankens verk

*Sira, sira in dina tankar
i trä, horn och silver*

*Spinn, spinn in dina funderingar
i skohörullen, skinntråden
Väv, väv fast ditt levnadsöde
I skobanden, vaggans band*

*Tvinna, tvinna halsband
åt din enda lilla vän
Fläta, fläta flätor
åt din egen lilla flicka (S)*

Paulus Utsi (1980: 24)⁸⁵

The thought's work

Carve, carve your thoughts
in wood, horn and silver

Spin, spin your thoughts
in the hay for the shoes, the leather thread
Weave, weave for fixing your life story
in the shoe bands, the straps of the cradle

Twine, twine necklaces
for your only little friend
Plait, plait braids
for your only little girl (author's translation)

The *gáppte* is vital to the sense of self, of being Lulesámi, for many of the villagers. Although the garment is only used on certain occasions, it is still described by the majority of the Lulesámi as the most visible element for creating and manifesting Lulesámi distinctiveness and self-identification. For women like Sigga it was, however, not only the wearing of the *gáppte* that was of significance. She said one of her motives for making the garment was to

⁸⁵ Paulus Utsi (1918-1975) was a well-known Sámi poet and craft-maker from Norway.

enable others to wear it, but she never wore the outfit herself as she did not feel comfortable in it. Nevertheless, this did not mean that the *gáppte* was unimportant in her life, quite the contrary. Yet, for Sigga herself it was not the *wearing*, but the *making* of the garment that was of significance. Although the *gáppte* was worn on relatively few occasions, women like Sigga made the garment on an almost daily basis. In this last chapter, it is my aim to explore some of the personal and social motivations, benefits and consequences of craft production that normally are left unspoken in the literature and not easily observable.

In the text I particularly highlight and examine the role of women's productive activities within the domestic sphere, which have to a large extent been overlooked within the male-centred Euro-American social sciences (chapter 1: 44-46). As mentioned in chapter 1, women's unpaid work at home often goes unnoticed as it cannot easily be seen or measured through tangible profits and welfares shown on conventional graphs (cf. Waldén 1994, 1999; Burman 1999: 7; Wilkinson-Weber 1999: 61- 64). However, quite to the contrary of viewing women's work as constrained within the private domain and with little importance for society at large, the Lulesámi craft-makers highlighted that the production of handicraft is an essential element for creating and improving life both for themselves and for their community. "Making handicraft," Sigga said, "is not only a production of things, it is also a production of *trivsel* (N) (well-being)." According to Sigga, such well-being include the creation of tranquil, happy and independent people, and, subsequently, also the making of a convivial society.

The chapter is organised as a collage of various factors involved in the making of the *gáppte*. From these different angles, I demonstrate how craft production is perceived by the Lulesámi women to provide and shape a foundation for personal and social life, while it simultaneously becomes affected and determined by such lived experiences.

Meeting the Demands

Sigga never made a *gáppte* without having a specific wearer in mind. The start of such production could be twofold: (1) She produced a *gáppte* for a close family member (often a

child or grandchild) on her own initiative or in discussion with the wearer and family member, or (2) Upon receiving a *bestilling* (N) (commission) from a person outside her closest family. Commissioning was made by persons who did not have the skills to make handicraft themselves and lacked a close family member that did. Orders were normally placed by the wearer of the garment. Alternatively a third person commissioned on behalf of someone else, most usually a parent for a child or a wife for a husband. An order was made either when meeting in someone's home, spontaneously outside the food store or over the telephone. Sigga then met with the *kunde* (N) (client) to take measurements and do fittings in her or the client's home. Both types of order were often done in relation to a specific event such as baptism, confirmation or wedding.

Because of the decline in making handicraft during the latter half of the 1900s few of today's women had the abilities to make all the articles for a finished dress. There were some, like Sigga, Ellen, Ella, Marit, Petra and Anne, who had a wide repertoire of skills, which they had learnt either while growing up or in later years. They also continuously sought and were interested to learn new craftwork and expand their range of production abilities. Most others had skills only in one or several craftworks such as weaving the *avve*, pewter-embroidering and making the *sliehppá* or sewing the dress.

As mentioned at the start of this thesis, the villagers have experienced an *oppblomstring* (N) (flourishing) of interest in wearing the *gáppte* during the last decades, much due to the ethno-political uprising. Thus, the request for the *gáppte* has increased. Although women were continuously learning various craftworks the flourishing of production was perceived not to have accelerated as widely as the *gáppte*'s appeal. Consequently, there was a heavy demand on the women who were capable of producing the dress.

Jenny was one of those concerned about this excessive demand. She did not have the skills for producing any of the articles for the *gáppte* herself and neither did she have kin who could. As a result she had commissioned Ella to make her daughter Lilly's confirmation *gáppte* almost two years in advance in order to make sure that all was done in time. With considerable less foresight than her, Sigga received telephone calls from time to time from

villagers who wanted to commission articles for the *gáppte*, sometimes just a few weeks before they were supposed to be ready to wear. Sigga often shook her head in a disheartened manner and said that many people who have never made handicraft themselves were unable to estimate the length of time and energy expended in its production. She elaborated:

They think I can make it like that! In a night! But, in many instances I have to locate and purchase materials. Even if they sometimes bring fabric for the dress or I happen to have some at home, I need thread and the *lissto*, or if they order an *avve* maybe I don't have the right yarn or colour at home. Then I have to take measurements, create patterns and then sew or weave or whatever I have to do.

A pewter-embroidered *sliehppá*, for example, could take the equivalent of almost a week of full-time labour for Sigga to make and she was considered particularly skilled in the craftwork and usually had all the materials at home.

As a result of the high demand for *gáppte*, Sigga was constantly engaged in numerous craft *projekt* (N) (projects) at the same time⁸⁶. Even though I regularly saw her it always seemed as if she had yet another new job started almost each time that we met. This impressed me. Apart from the craftwork she juggled full-time employment, ran a household together with her husband and tended to children, grandchildren, other kinfolks, neighbours and the anthropologist! Sigga was also engaged in the Laestadian committee. Nevertheless, although her days were normally busy, I was regularly awestruck that she always tried to accommodate the demands from people commissioning the *gáppte* – even if they gave short notice. Once on accepting to sew a dress within a time span of two weeks (in combination with everything else that she was already doing) Sigga laughed and said, “Well who needs to sleep? I can sleep more next week and try to get the dress finished in the coming days.”

Marit was also always busy. In contrast to Sigga, whose children were grown-up, Marit had young children to tend to. Often she made handicraft after putting them to bed or during daytime when she was off work and the children were out playing and when the other domestic chores were done. At times she brought the craftwork with her to the school where she worked part-time as a teacher. There she made a few rounds of *låhtåt* during the

⁸⁶ One project could be to sew the dress, weave an *avve* or make a *sliehppá*.

breaks. Once, on visiting Marit in her home, she put a cartoon DVD on the television. While her children followed the moving colourful images with big eyes, she sat pewter-embroidering in an armchair next to them while also chatting with me about our daily undertakings. Marit was also dependent on the cooperation from close kin for child-care and meal preparations during periods of intense labour. Hence, the organisation of her and Sigga's daily lives were to some degree alike organised around craft production interwoven with all the other daily activities.

On numerous occasions this intense work ethic was rather proudly referred to by some of the villagers as typical for the Sámi. Anita said, "We Sámi don't like to sit still!" However, even though the working spirit was said to manifest a stark Sámi labour morale the continuous demand and toil of making handicraft had sombre implications for a few of the women. Sigga and Ella often said they felt stressed. During spring this stress eventually resulted in Ella's decision to stop taking commissions all together, with the explanation that she felt *utbrent* (N) (burned out). Ella said that she enjoyed having something to do. This was important for her in order to *føle seg vel* (N) (feel well). Nevertheless, the pressure of producing handicraft on a constant basis to meet the village demands she felt was disrupting her well-being. Still, she did not stop making handicraft altogether. Rather, she continued making Lilly's confirmation *gáppte* and focused on producing the *gáppte* for her two grandchildren who needed garments to wear at their cousin's forthcoming baptism. Thus, Ella continued making handicraft, but eradicated the strain by not taking on commissions.

Ella's decision evidently led to greater pressure on the other women. As a result some commissions had to be turned down – especially those who left their orders too late. I did not hear anyone criticise Ella for her decision. Rather, Sigga stated that Ella's choice indicated a point that had been reached in the hamlet. The increase in the demand for the *gáppte* necessitated that more people had to learn to make it, she said.

Sigga and the other women did not like to turn down orders. At the same time they wanted to avoid the disruptive feelings of stress. Therefore, they frequently conversed and gave each other updates on what kind of projects they were engaged in, the commissioning that

they had received and their expectations of future demands. They were concerned with making sure that their production skills met with the local demands. To cover the needs of production the women continuously encouraged others to learn the work.

Another suggestion was for the women to start working full-time with the craftwork. However, Sigga and many other current makers said that they personally did not have an interest in increasing the time they already spent on making handicraft and their economic income gained from the work. The reason was that they were satisfied with their current employment and agreed that making handicraft was an enjoyable sideline. Although they recognised that the craft production might provide potential employment opportunities for younger generations, there were other motivations and values – above monetary earning - that for them were of importance for learning and making the *gáppte*. It is to these I now turn.

Sharing and Savings

The *gáppte* that Sigga made on her own initiative for her family members involved the work and expenditures of her family. Materials and tools were bought from money accumulated through her and her husband's waged labour. The skills, time and energy in the garment's making were invested in by Sigga herself. In comparison, the *gáppte* that she made on commission included a payback, most commonly in the form of cash. The reimbursement was always settled before the work proceeded. The return was to cover, at least in part, the production costs that included materials, tools and labour. There was no guild or regulations that decided on the price of the *gáppte*. Rather, the craft-makers negotiated an acceptable and reasonable price among themselves. Some of them also kept in contact over the phone with craft-makers in Sweden to compare and settle on the charges. Sigga said it was important that the price was *rettferdigt* (N) (fair/just) both for herself, as the maker, and for the client. A complete *gáppte* was, nevertheless, expensive to buy. For acquiring a full outfit

one could count on spending 16,000-20,000 NOK⁸⁷. The cost depended on and fluctuated in response to a range of factors including material costs, production time and skills.

When sewing the tailored dress many of the seamstresses required that the future wearer provided her or his own material. Locating and buying fabrics was a lengthy process that required time and in many cases travelling to shops in larger cities or waiting for orders placed over the internet or mail-order. Besides, it was important for the wearer to choose a textile with a colour and feel on the skin that was pleasant and comfortable. The craft-maker often provided yarn and hides. The material cost depended on the type and quality of the material, the market rates and availability.

I am not sure exactly how the women calculated the production time. Upon asking about the time it took to produce the various craftworks the women replied that it quite obviously depended on their skills and how fast they worked. Nevertheless, compared to their salaried employment, the women agreed that they did not receive enough monetary payback for the time spent on producing the *gáppte*. Furthermore, in comparison to their waged labour, they did not set an hourly rate for their craftworks and counted and charged their labour depending on how long each work took.

The cost of the garment depended to a certain extent on the level of a craft-maker's skills. A novice like Bodil set a lower price for her work than Anita and Sigga, who had considerably more experience. Here I suggest that this variation in price did not only have to do with the fact that Anita and Sigga might produce higher-quality garments. It was also a matter of confidence. Bodil persisted with keeping the costs of her handicraft down even though Sigga encouraged her to raise them. According to Sigga, Bodil worked almost for free! As I show below the main importance was not to make a living, or to gain an economic surplus from the craft production. Nevertheless, Sigga said that they should not work completely for free and that their labour should be valued for the investment made in terms of time and labour. Yet, Bodil said, with modesty, that her craftworks were not nearly as well made as those made by Ellen and Sigga. Therefore, she did not want to charge more.

⁸⁷ This equals around 1800-2500 pounds.

Anita and Sigga never perceived that Bodil's low prices could mean fewer orders and less earnings for themselves. Rather, Sigga said she would prefer fewer orders. Anita, on the other hand, had established a reputation for producing exceptionally good craftworks and was asked by people to produce for them irrespective of the price she charged.

It was also not always true that more experienced women asked higher prices for their work. Sigga said that Anita often reduced the price for people who had a low economic income. With admiration, Sigga explained that even though Anita just lived off her pension she was, nevertheless, always more concerned that others *skal ha det godt* (N) (should have it well), rather than with accumulating wealth for herself.

I never discussed the cost of the craftwork with Anita. However, I experienced that it was not only with regards to handicraft that she showed generosity. When I visited her in her house a dark February afternoon, as we ate dinner, she narrated a few memorable events from her childhood. Anita recounted how her parents had always given away food to visitors and passers-by even if they did not have much for their own needs. Anita looked at me and said that I might find this peculiar. "Why would you share if you don't have much yourself? But, I tell you that for my family and many other Sámi, the one who shares is never *fattig* (N) (poor)!"

What Anita indicated here was not poverty in material terms. Rather she said that sharing offered a kind of *andelig* (N) (spiritual) return. Quite straightforwardly she said that it made her happy to share what she had and that this was a kind of wealth in itself. Her words brought associations with the fortnightly Laestadian preaching that both she and I attended. Often the preachers spoke against the excessive accumulation of material wealth. This was not to say that the importance of earning a monetary income was denied. However, it was stressed that working solely for increasing one's personal material capital should not be a prime motivation. Being too self-regarding the preachers associated with certain dangers. Selfishness in this way was seen as a threat to community solidarity as it risked creating hierarchies and triggering unwanted emotions such as jealousy and feelings of inequality. Similarly, Gunvor Guttorm (2001: 59) argues that taking too much pay for craftwork can

cause Sámi craft-makers *guoržuluvvat* (Ns) ('to be deprived of happiness'). Guttorm does not place this idea within a Laestadian context, but in relation to the phenomena of *tiida* (Ns), which she argues is a holistic view of how to live a good life and the considerations over the consequences of one's actions for creating and maintaining such a life.

One man, who often declared himself sceptical of Laestadian views⁸⁸, suggested that I look into why the congregation was positive towards handicraft, while at the same time, preaching against the material world, of which he considered handicraft to be a part. Although craftwork includes material aspects, it also encompasses several immaterial properties such as affection, social bonds and the capacity for promoting inner peace for their makers (aspects that I elaborate on below). These qualities, I argue, made the craft products and production processes valued within the religious assembly. Besides, although some of the *gáppte* were made in return for a monetary gain, the craftwork was not conceptualised to be made primarily for creating a monetary income. In other words, the women did not perceive the work as an opportunity for gaining a financial surplus and the production did not result in an individual accumulation of wealth, which was seen as harmful to the wider community.

Despite this view, women tended to dislike it when the commissioner tried to negotiate the price. Sigga rather cockily announced that she tells people off when they start complaining. "I tell them to just do it themselves and then they will see the amount of work that is needed!" Even so, Sigga, like Anita, sometimes reduced the prices depending on the individual client. Once, as Sigga wove an *avve* for a distant kin, she lowered the price telling me that the relative's family had done her and her husband a valued favour previously, helping to repair their boat. In this context the *gáppte* became part of the mutual support of services (e.g. craftwork, carpentry, babysitting) and goods (e.g. food or clothes) that permeated daily life within the hamlet.

These quotidian movements of services and goods were at times difficult for me to comprehend. I wondered if things and services were given and provided freely or if they

⁸⁸ According to him, the Laestadian congregation is conservative, preaching against music, dance and alcohol.

were part of an exchange system where reciprocity was expected. Upon visiting Ellen's sister Solveig one day she said that Liv, her neighbour, had come to give her a pair of knitted socks that morning. When handing them over Liv had explained that the socks were a return gift for the raspberry jam that Solveig had given her the previous week. Solveig looked terribly upset when recounting the incident. She said, "I told Liv that I only wanted the socks if she wanted to give them to me, not because I had given her something before." Also Ellen highlighted that one should only give out of personal volition and not out of obligated reciprocity. Yet, when Ellen's neighbour brought her a catch of fish she often made him a loaf of bread a few days later as she said that she wanted to give something back. Likewise, when in May a group of people had gathered for *dugnad* to help paint one of the houses in the hamlet, one of the men explained to me that he was glad to help. After a moment's silence he added that his participation also gave him the possibility to receive help later on. He stated that the reciprocity did not have to be immediate, but that it could wait until the day he and his family needed a hand with something – even if this was a few years ahead! Although the man and Ellen highlighted that their exchange system involved reciprocity, it did, however, not seem as if this was based on rules and obligations. Rather, the Lulesámi seemed to emphasise principles of mutually *sharing* one's own work, skills and material things. This mutual support was, I argue, a materialisation and affirmation of affection and a person who rarely shared or helped out was seen as *ikke veldig glad i sine nære* (N) (not very fond of her/his close kinfolds).

Furthermore, rather than making more profit herself Sigga said that it was her goal for everyone to be able to make handicraft – even if just a little. The *gáppte* was expensive to buy and if women learnt to make at least some items it would enable them to save money and contribute to the economy of their family. Sigga's views on the making of the *gáppte* were channelled through an idea of decreasing monetary expenses, by producing the garment oneself rather than for a few producers to specialise in the craftwork and make monetary profit.

Sigga emphasised that working in this way promoted independence and the valued principle of self-reliance. This emphasis is further captured in the Lulesámi proverb *ep agev galga*

ulmutjij giehtaj gahttjat, which was translated to me by a Lulesámi woman as ‘one should stand on one’s own feet’, or literally ‘one should not look at others’ hands’. To summarise, in their discussions about the motivations for producing the *gáppte*, Sigga and many others articulated an economic model of sharing, self-reliance and egalitarian social relationships.

Ties of Affections

Apart from the specific economic benefits of producing for your kin, Sigga also highlighted certain social and affectionate modes of making the *gáppte*. Sigga usually received commissions from kinsfolk, such as a niece or first-cousin. Yet, at times she received orders to make the dress from other villagers who appreciated her skills. On these occasions I found that Sigga often extended the notion of kin to tie her and the client together by tracing their descent back to a common ancestor. Once when I asked who she took commissions from, she stated with a smile, “Well you can say that all villagers are kin somehow so I produce only for my kin!”⁸⁹

Also the people wearing the *gáppte* thought it important who had made the dress. People often narrated stories about particular bonds manifested in the relation to their *gáppte*’s maker/s and about the particular times that the garment had been worn. Through three short stories I illustrate some ways in which these specific sentiments of the *gáppte* were voiced.

Ivar

After having drunk coffee together with Ivar in his house one day I took the empty mugs to the kitchen to wash them up before going home. At the same time, Ivar had walked into another room. When he returned he carried an *avve* in his hands. He carried the belt with a certain sense of admiration, almost as if it would break in a thousand pieces if he dropped it on the floor. I wiped my hands dry on the white kitchen towel and he handed the *avve* to

⁸⁹ Nevertheless, Sigga wished to receive fewer commissions and instead produce more for only her closest kin.

me. It was an evenly woven belt made of strong different coloured yarns. After I had studied it carefully in silence for a minute Ivar said that it was made by his late wife. With reverence, he described how his wife had been extraordinarily skilful in making handicraft and how she had produced things for their entire family. Continuing in a lowered voice, Ivar declared, in the most moving way, his love for his late wife. He spoke of how they had met, how they had been fishing together in the mountain and how he everyday wished that she would return and be by his side. Ivar said that now there were only memories left. Some of these, he explained, were embedded in the things which his late wife had done. The *avve*, which I held in my hands, was particularly precious as she had made it for Ivar to wear on their wedding day, more than fifty years ago.

I felt touched and privileged that Ivar had confidence in me. What he had shared was the love he felt towards another person, how this love transcended death and how his late wife and the relation and emotions between them now partly manifested themselves and remained alive in the *avve*. With great care I handed him back the belt.

Anita

Anita, as one of the most skilled weavers in the area, was often asked to weave the *avve* or *låhtåt* the *vuoddaga* for the villagers. Similarly to the way Ivar spoke of the *avve* made by his late wife, some of the villagers showed me with pride that they owned a work made by Anita. Jonas was very fond of the *vuoddaga* that he had commissioned from Anita a few years back. On showing them to me one day, he confirmed, “You know she’s one of the most skilled women around here. Anita is also such a lovely person so these are very dear to me.”

However, just before I left Divtasvuodna Anita stopped taking orders – just like Ella did. Anita explained that now, as she was getting older, she wished to make things only for her children and grandchildren. Anita said that the things that she made for her kin would continue to manifest her affection towards them and reproduce their relationship through time in a tangible sense even after her passing. This was important for Anita, both for her remaining in her relatives’ lives and her projection of their desires to continue having their

mother and grand-mother present through the handicraft that she made. She narrated how her kin always were happy to receive the things that she had made and that it, in turn, made her happy to see others appreciate and enjoy her work⁹⁰.

Moreover, during the days when her kin went to work or school and Anita did not go to ASVO or to meet someone else, she said that the making of things for her kin made her feel less lonely. "I sit down and *låhtåt* and think of the person I make the *vuoddaga* for and then it's like she is with me."

Ingrid

One day, after Ingrid and I had sat chatting for a while in her living-room about my research, she went to fetch a small cartoon box from one of the rooms at the back of the house. The box contained a concoction of things. As Ingrid took the things out, one by one, she narrated a story around each one:

These *vuoddaga* were my mother's. I remember that she made and wore them when I was a child. My father died when I was very young out at sea... he drowned when he was out fishing. My mother had to take care of us children, the household and the animals at that time. Even though she was alone she gave us children such a wonderful childhood. Yes... she was such a strong and wise woman.

Ingrid put the *vuoddaga* down on the coffee table and took up a *kaffávuossa* from the box. She said:

I learned some *duodje* as a child. This bag is among the first things I made. Then as a teenager we all stopped making *duodje*. My mother told us to stop so that we would avoid being bullied. Then I started again as an adult. This bag reminds me of how I learnt as a child. I sewed it together with my mother at our kitchen table.

Thereafter, she showed me another small bag of reindeer skin and explained:

Felicia (Ingrid's daughter) doesn't have any interest in *duodje*, but she made this at school. It made me happy when she made it as it resembles the *kaffávuossa* I made as a child. I want to

⁹⁰ A similar argument is made by Rozsika Parker in relation to embroidery. She writes, "The child sees in the mother's face a reflection of him or herself, mediated by the mother's feelings of love and acceptance. The embroiderer sees a positive reflection of herself in her work and, importantly, in the reception of her work by others" (2010: xx).

return the bag to her when she's a little bit older, maybe she'll see the value in it then, of reproducing her Sámi heritage... the heritage that her mother and grand-mother made.

She stood up and went to fetch a *gukse* that lay on one of the bookshelves in her living-room. Then she smiled and recounted:

I received this as a present from one of my early boyfriends. He had made it himself. He was a very kind man and he gave me this. But then he left and married someone else! But my bad luck then turned into good luck as I met my current husband... and in the end all went well!

We both laughed and as the things lay on the coffee table Ingrid said that the cartoon box was among the first things she would run to save if the house caught fire. She said:

Imagine it's quite funny. When I was a teenager, during the Norwegianisation, my mother and many others burnt our handicraft to eradicate our Sámi heritage. Other things were merely thrown away when they broke or when they were no longer of any use. And now I want to save all old things and would save them first from not burning!

Looking and touching the handicraft brought back various reminiscences for Ingrid which she then recounted. Likewise, Ivar's and Anita's narratives show how objects entuse emotional reactions of persons, and affectionate bonds between persons and particular events.

The responses the handicraft gave had also shifted through time. This transformation is exemplified in Ingrid's description of how objects were previously made for utilitarian use and thrown away when no longer needed or when broken. These same objects generated a response which led to their eradication during Norwegianisation. At this time craftwork became associated and used to create a Sámi distinctiveness and sense of inferiority in relation to the majority population. The abolition of handicraft cut off the ties to previous Lulesámi ways of living. Although this was perceived to help avoid the bullying, elders recounted that the elimination of their handicraft also resulted in feelings of shame, weakened social relations, lack of rootedness and low self-confidence.

Nevertheless, since the ethno-political movement, Sámi distinctiveness has been endowed with a certain sense of pride. Handicrafts are said to make visible and merge bonds of affection among Sámi people across past, present and future. It also endows them with a sense of self-worth for their distinctive Lulesámi heritage. What is rendered through the above discussion is that, even though the maker of a thing might have a certain intention

when making it, the perception towards the things may shift depending on their relational, temporal and spatial location.

What was before used in daily life or burned is now often displayed as decorations in the house. It was not only in the cartoon box that Ingrid kept things. In her house, as well as in many of the other villagers' homes, there were numerous handicrafts on display. Entering Ingrid's front door one was immediately met by a narrow bookshelf filled with things like a *gukse*, *nijbbe* and *nahppe*. On a wooden rail on the kitchen wall hung a few *avve* and *vuoddaga*. These craftworks were made by Ingrid, her children and other kinfolks. Through having the things visible around the house, Ingrid remembered and manifested her ties of affection to kin and the pride of the Sámi people's previous ways of life.

Talking Politics over a Cup of Coffee

During my fieldwork I met Sigga almost every day to make handicraft together and the days when we did not meet, for one reason or the other, she often called me. Apart from making sure I was well, she also highlighted that it was empty with one person less at ASVO. This feeling reflected Sigga's preference, and that of other women, for making handicraft in the company of one another. This penchant was mirrored in the setting up of the fortnightly sewing-evenings at ASVO, the *duodje* courses and the regular stream of women visiting each other in their homes. An important part of the craft production was the social life surrounding its making. Sigga said that making handicraft with others made her feel part of a *fellesskap* (N) (community) in which she could have it *koseligt* (N) (cosy), *snakke* (N) (talk) and avoid the unwanted feelings of loneliness.

Although the women themselves did not label their conversations while making handicraft as *sladder* (N) (gossip), it was so labelled occasionally by villagers of all ages and gender, who did not make handicraft themselves. Louise Waldén (1994: 134) identifies a similar perception directed at Swedish women's textile study circles. Waldén argues that while the meetings are important for the Swedish women to validate ideas and talk about everyday matters, their conversations are considered by others 'mere women's talk' that has little

political, economic and social relevance – especially for the wider society. Also Niko Besnier, in his work on gossip among the Nukulaelae Islanders, writes, “gossip is often dismissed as lacking in importance” (2009: 13) and relegated to women’s domains (2009: 14).

I suggest that the dismissal of the Lulesámi women’s talk as idle chatter was affected by a combination of factors. These included: (1) the location in which the talk took place, (2) the form and content of the speech, (3) the gender of the speaker and (4) the activities undertaken while talking. First, the craftwork and conversations took place outside specific conference rooms and village meeting halls; places associated with political or academic discussions. Secondly, the form of speaking was a light bantering or spontaneous expressions and reflections of ideas that often covered household concerns; a sphere that has not been associated with the political (cf. Waldén 1994; Burman 1999; Overing and Passes 2000). Thirdly, the great majority of the craft-makers were women; who also are not perceived as the main political actors in society. Lastly, it appeared as if making handicraft and political speech did not go hand in hand.

Ellen had once been politically engaged within the municipal government. At one of the meetings she had knitted while debating local political matters. This action drew so much attention that she became named as the *strikkepinnsklingende politikern* (N) (‘the knitting needle clinking politician’) in the media. She also recounted that one man at the meeting had asked if she was so little interested in politics than she had to knit meanwhile. In a determined tone of voice, Ellen commented on the man’s assumption to me:

Pah! Who did he think I was? What? I don’t need my ears or mouth to knit! It’s my hands that knit! I listened and engaged in the conversation just as much as everyone else... perhaps even more! Moving my hands made me think better (see discussion below)! Also I had a family to provide socks and jumpers for. That wasn’t done in one day!

Ellen’s response to the reactions against her knitting at the municipal meeting relates to the saying of the Women’s Liberation Movement that ‘The personal is the political’ (Parker 2010: xiv). Comparable to Ellen’s knitting among the municipal leaders, Rozsika Parker writes of British women’s needlework, “Steeped in the personal, yet shaped by the political,

embroidery displayed the power of the political on personal life, as well as the political implications of personal relationships” (2010: xiv).

Furthermore, coffee was an important and next to constant feature when visiting someone, walking in the mountains, at the communal meal following the Laestadian preaching and when making handicraft together. Waldén (1994) similarly writes that coffee breaks are an integral part of Swedish women’s textile study circles. However, she also says:

It took time before I realised that the coffee break is an important time for education in this kind of study circle. I was blinded by being used to thinking that “working time” is “lesson time” and that “breaks” are “leisure” (1994: 106).

What Waldén eventually realised was that the technical aspects of making handicraft and important everyday concerns and happenings are discussed during the breaks. For the women participating in the study circle, these breaks are just as important as the actual craftwork itself⁹¹.

Whether labelling the Lulesámi women’s talk, while making handicraft and drinking coffee, as gossip or not, I argue that it had political salience in expressing, debating and negotiating social and material productivity. Besides swapping tips about the craftwork including the feel of materials, use of tools, appropriate designs and matching colour combinations, the women also spoke of matters important for everyday life. They exchanged food recipes and household advice, discussed the labour market and economy and addressed wider national and international politics⁹². Conversations also circled around giving birth, child-rearing, personal health and love. What permeated their conversations was a constant interweaving of their everyday lives in relation to the wider world such as the current shortage of jobs due to the growing urbanisation and its effect on families, individuals’ health and the community.

⁹¹ A difference between the Swedish study circles and the craft-making in Divtasvuodna is that there are specially allocated breaks among the Swedish women while the Lulesámi women alternated their craftwork with drinking coffee when they felt tired, thirsty or just wished to relax.

⁹² This contrasts to Waldén’s (1994: 108) analysis of Swedish textile circles where women do not speak of national and international politics. Waldén suggests that these kinds of political discussions are considered too intimate for talking about during the craft meetings. She also states that the women associate conversations about party politics as belonging to the sphere of men. This was not the case among the Lulesámi women.

Conversations were orchestrated among and dependent on the people involved. When youths were present they were often asked about how it was going at school, their views of the future and life outside the hamlet and about their love life. Moderations were especially noticeable when a new person joined the group. Discussions then tended to be more low-keyed, covering topics like the weather and more general village events. Gradually, as trust had been established through talking and exchanging some light banter, the conversations elaborated to include information about the family and daily personal undertakings and opinions.

There was also a negotiated decorum of humour. The women joked in a good-hearted manner about love, men, gendered relations or a person's clumsiness or mistakes. Sexual relations were never joked or spoken of in these groups. Habitually the women spoke of men's uselessness at co-ordinating and co-operating in the households' daily tasks. At one sewing-evening, Ingrid said:

It was good that I came tonight. I don't get anything done at home when the kids and my husband are in the house. They always need me for something. It's like my husband can't find anything when I'm at home. Then he comes and asks 'Where are my socks?', 'Have you seen the blue bag?' I don't understand how he manages when I'm not there! The only thing he always knows very well is how to switch on the television!

After remarks like this the women usually laughed while nodding in recognition and agreement. However, as Bronislaw Malinowski (1922) once famously wrote, there is, at times, a discrepancy between what people say and what they do. Similarly, it was not always entirely true that Ingrid's husband just lay in front of the TV. Later, on that same evening, Ingrid spoke in an affectionate way of how her husband had been working so hard the last weekends to expand their house with a larger entrance hallway. Hence, although the women's talk of men might reflect their feelings as having the main responsibility within the household, I suggest that the jokes, at times, seemed a manipulation or exaggeration of events and relations to enhance solidarity and understanding among the women and establish a particular kind of gendered hierarchy.

Drawing inspiration from Joanna Overing's (2000) work on ludic play among the Piaroa I similarly argue that the Lulesámi kept track of the boundaries of humour. There was a

balancing, “whether banter will bring enjoyment or give offence” (Overing 2000: 70). Ellen frequently stressed the importance of laughing and joking *with* one another, and not *at* one another. At times people apologized if they suspected they had pushed a joke too far and overstepped a person’s right for their autonomous choices of being. Rather than insulting others, jokes aimed at creating and reproducing a specific kind of community based on affection, solidarity and respect.

Hence while weaving threads or sewing seams together, the social productivity was also a weaving of ideas and sewing of opinions in an interwoven and ever-shifting meshwork of daily relations in relation to the wider world. Breaking the dichotomy of seeing ‘gossip’ either as a tool for creating group cohesion (Gluckman 1963) or expressing self-interest (Paine 1967), Besnier (2009) argues that for the Nukulaele of the Central Pacific gossip both enacts and contests social relations on various levels (such as between individuals and state politics). If labelling the Lulesámi women’s talk as gossip, then I agree with Besnier’s above view and Nigel Rapport’s and Joanna Overing’s definition of gossip as, “an activity through which individuals examine and discuss together the rules and conventions by which they commonly live”, “gossip at once disassembles, evaluates and reconstitutes the everyday world” (2000:154)⁹³.

Craftwork as Meditation

In mid-March, as the seemingly never-ending winter darkness slowly retreated, but the snow still covered the ground in a thick blanket, I went to visit Ingrid at her house. It was one of the few planned interviews that I initiated during fieldwork. I was prepared with a long list of questions. With a cup of coffee each we sat down in her cosy living-room. Quite soon, though, my prepared inquiries appeared redundant. Ingrid described vividly her experiences of local craftsmanship. I listened attentively, humming at times to show I was following.

⁹³ For a lengthier list of scholarly works and discussion on gossip see Rapport and Overing (2000: 153-154) and Besnier (2009: 12-19).

After a while Ingrid said, deeply assured, that it must be very beneficial for me to make handicraft myself. At first I thought she was referring to the benefits of the apprenticeship methodology that I employed. Although this was implicitly also true in what she said, it had not been her main intention. Instead she ventured:

It must be very constructive for you to sit down and make handicraft. Writing a PhD must be very demanding. With the handicraft you can relax and free your thoughts. Then simultaneously as your hands work ideas of your study might spring to mind.

Here she paused for a while. Then she related this observation to herself:

For me it's so peaceful to bring out the handicraft in the evening when I get home from work. It makes me relax after a stressful day at the office. When dinner has been made and the dishes are done, I sometimes just sit down and make handicraft in quietude. At times I switch on the radio or television meanwhile. To make something with my hands is *beroligende* (N) (calming). It alleviates stress and worries. While working it's like I think things over that happened during the day without putting any effort into thinking. As my hands work the thoughts just appear by themselves. It might be the same for you.

What Ingrid had commented on were certain effects that occurred when making handicraft. Hitherto, sensuous enjoyments like the ones described by Ingrid have been left unmentioned in the discussion. Similarly, in the broader Sámi and anthropological literature on craftsmanship these almost therapeutic aspects of production appear to be consistently ignored. Waldén (1994, 1999) writes that the personal satisfying elements of making handicraft tend to stand in the background whereas the areas of practical skills, social relations and the consumption and exchange of the finished objects stand, as it were, at centre stage.

Ingrid's unexpected focus during our meeting led me to one of the joys of ethnographic fieldwork. She opened a new pathway of thinking around the topic of handicraft that I had experienced myself, but until then had been unable to put into words. Engaging in craftwork had been especially useful for me at times when I missed my family and friends and when I experienced doubts about my research. When I felt nervous and stressed it was calming to sit down in stillness and make my hands work in the often characteristic repetitive patterns of knitting, weaving or embroidery. These movements amputated my emotional restlessness and promoted peace of mind and a sense of liberation, just as Ingrid had described.

Also Sigga and Ellen recognised the calming effects of craftwork. On different occasions they referred to craft production as a practice of *meditation* (N) (meditation), as a break within their daily undertakings that opens a possibility of relaxation and the emergence of new thoughts. However, the sort of work that provided such a restful state differed among the craft-makers. While I drifted away into moments (or hours!) of relaxation when finally having learned to weave and knit, Sigga stated that she felt nauseous just looking at the loom. Instead, she enjoyed herself the most pushing down the pedal of the sewing-machine. When sewing she said that everything around her disappeared. I, on the other hand, felt utterly disheartened every time I took the position behind the sewing-machine as my self-imagination of being relatively skilled in sewing repeatedly was torn to tatters.

Apart from these personal preferences, to achieve a relaxed state of mind required some preliminary skills in the specific work at hand. When learning something new the initial toil and concentration seemed to extract more energy rather than endorse calmness. For a so-called meditative state to occur the body had to fall into a familiar rhythm by continuously adjusting to the work at hand; almost as a mode of continued and repetitive non-doing of doing. Tim Ingold writes that rhythm “is not a movement but a dynamic coupling of movements. Every such coupling is a specific resonance, and the synergy of practitioner, tool and raw material establishes an entire field of such resonances” (2011: 60). This pattern was evident in my own case when the learning of a new craftwork often left me completely exhausted at the end of the day. However, after a while the body felt able to move almost by itself in a more unrestricted manner by following and attuning the work to the benefits of positive transformations in feelings that made the body come to rest⁹⁴.

Although I agree with Waldén (1994) that the recreational and emotional qualities of craftwork are among the main motivations to account for why the Lulesámi women produced handicraft, I disagree with them with respect to the straightforward opposition they make of its temporal role and its relation to economics. In their studies, both authors

⁹⁴ Ingold describes a similar sensation when sawing a plank of wood by referring to the tempo of music. Having sawed for a while, Ingold illustrates that the work feels like it is “flowing in a smooth legato rhythm that contrasts markedly with the abrupt staccato passage of setting out” (2011: 55).

pose contemporary personal satisfactions in opposition to the previous aim of making things out of economic necessity. Craftsmanship, in their views, is seen to have been primarily determined by its economic role in the past, while its significance nowadays has diminished in favour for its recreational aspects. For the Lulesámi women I find it troubling to assume that there were no recreational motivations for making handicraft in the past. Such a statement I consider mere speculation. It also suggests a similarity of experiences among people, adults and children, and over the spans of various learning stages. Ellen recounted the joy she had felt when as a child she had knitted her first scarf, which was for the cat! Simultaneously she also stressed that out of economic and practical necessity there had been a need for her to start helping out at an early age and contribute to the running of the household.

When looking at the women's contemporary craftwork there was also no such clear-cut division between work, economics, social life and recreation. Ingrid stated that she found handicraft satisfactory to make and that she also had to make it herself to economise. On talking to another woman, on the other hand, she said that she did not find pleasure in making handicraft, but that she had to in order to provide her children with their *gáppte*. Hence, I suggest that craft production entailed aspects of recreation and economic necessity, motivations that occur either concurrently or are continuously shifting.

Nevertheless, returning to the beginning of this chapter, Sigga, who enjoyed making handicraft and did it out of affection and economic necessity for her family members, said that her sense of personal satisfaction was under threat by the pressures and stress she felt to meet the growing demands of commissioned works within the hamlet. With this statement, Sigga highlighted both the positive and negative consequences arising from the contemporary Lulesámi craft production today.

10. Concluding Thoughts: (Re)Considering Women's Domestic Craftsmanship

Situate yourself within the practice that [an] object belongs to, and then investigate the object and its contribution to that practice. If an object belongs essentially to a practice... then the concept of that object is our understanding of that object's contribution to the practice within which it is that object.

Jakob Meløe (1998: 393)

On several occasions Ellen pointed out that domestic work, like the making of the *gáppte*, sometimes is taken for granted. She stated that those who do not make handicraft themselves often have difficulties recognizing the time and labour behind the production of the garment. One day, towards the end of my fieldwork when autumn made its way back, Ellen once again highlighted that what happens at the *kjøkkenbenken* (N) (kitchen counter) is interrelated with discussions in conference rooms, but that many people often fail to see such connections. "You cannot imagine how often I've heard that sewing, knitting and weaving are mere women's work with little significance for society at large!" Ellen said, shook her head and added, "Do you know what I think about comments like that? I think it's *tøv* (N) (nonsense)! People who say things like that clearly don't know what they're talking about!"

I agree with Ellen on this last point and propose that some people's neglect or misunderstanding of women's craftwork should not be equated to the fact that their craft practices, and domestic work more generally, are unimportant. Quite to the contrary, as I have shown throughout this study, many of the Lulesámi whom I met recognised that their craftsmanship is an essential element for the ongoing making and well-being of the self and the community.

In this thesis I have focused, in particular, on the relevance of the learning, making, distribution and use of the *gáppte* within the everyday lives of the Lulesámi. Although not everyone perceives and experiences the *gáppte* in the same way or at all times and in all

situations, I showed in chapters 4 and 5 that the garment is indeed an important feature through which people can define themselves or be defined, display or conceal a particular sense of self, or challenge or adhere to expectations from others. The *gáppte* is also an important tool for making political claims and contesting governmental policies. Moreover, the garment visually ties and unties people together and has the potential to provide a tangible sense of security and permanence within an ever-changing world.

As I describe in chapter 6, most craft production takes place within the home. However, in contrast to ideas of regarding women's craftwork at home as a form of domestic imprisonment and separated from the 'outside world', I revealed that the spatial organisation between and within houses in Ájluokta, on the contrary, not only makes possible daily physical contact among people, but also creates a sense of belonging and prevents disruptive feelings of solitude and sadness. Rather than perceiving the home as having little to do with wider realms of life, I suggest that the so called 'domestic sphere', in many ways, lays the foundation for a healthy community life among the Lulesámi.

The pursuit of living well was also mirrored in the learning of making handicraft. In chapters 7 and 8 I demonstrated that the learning processes involve a level of self-transformation through which the novices not only learn how to relate to the craftwork at hand, but are also drawn into acquiring certain social skills and virtues for creating and strengthening personal and communal well-being. As seen in chapter 9 the production and distribution of the handicraft also aim to establish, manifest and continuously reaffirm valued aspects, such as sharing, personal autonomy, care and affection, for living well.

With my analysis I do not wish to suggest that the making of handicraft is a practice in which all should engage or that it determines the Lulesámi's course of life in an all-inclusive way. Rather, my intention is to show that craft production, as well as many other activities and aspects of life, from the spatial organisation in the hamlet to cooking and eating, is intertwined and a vital means through which the villagers continuously aim to negotiate and achieve a convivial living.

(Re)Considerations

My understanding of Lulesámi craftsmanship has emerged through my participation in the women's craftwork and daily lives, and I believe that this immersion enabled me to learn about aspects of life which are not always easily observed or verbalised. In light of this reflection, I suggest that one reason why some people misunderstand or fail to recognise the significance of Lulesámi women's craftsmanship, or women's craftwork and domestic activities more generally, is that they do not see, or attempt to see, the practices from the women's own perspectives and situate those practices within the wider world in which they belong. Jakob Meløe writes that a reindeer-tender or fisherman "sees what he sees in terms of what he does" (1998:390) and if we want to understand their activities and outlooks on life "it is from them that we should have to seek advice before we learn for ourselves what they have already learnt and in the way they learnt it" (ibid.: 392). This might be easier said than done as our understandings of the world are often formed by our backgrounds of past experiences, education and ideas to which we already are accustomed (ibid). Joanna Overing (2003: 296) states that even anthropologists, trained in methods for understanding the lives of others, often tend to regard the practices and dynamics of everyday life as insignificant in relation to the emphasis within the discipline on formulating grand structures and universal theories of the mind or culture (cf. Abu-Lughod 1993). Furthermore, Overing (2003: 296) writes, "We regard the everyday as unremarkable, and long to know about the remarkable – the shamanic journeys, the hunting with blowguns and curare. The allure of the exotic bewitches us."

In the very beginning of my research, I was drawn to the 'exotic' world of reindeer-tenders. I wanted to study and know more about a life that I was not familiar with, but which seemed exciting and adventurous and had attracted my attention. It was only after Tim Ingold's remark that I was embarking on a similar journey as most anthropologists within the circumpolar north that I came to reconsider my topic of study. Ingold stressed that the study of reindeer-tending is an important project, but that there are also other domains of Sámi life to look into – such as their craftsmanship – which tend to be overlooked by scholars. Based on his suggestion and some further thought, I decided to shift my research from

human-animal relationships to craft practices. However, although I had grown up seeing my mother make handicraft, receiving and greatly appreciating the things that she made, and learning and making some craftwork myself, I did not formulate my initial idea around these familiar experiences. Rather, I started out with the intention to define *duodje*, an unfamiliar concept to me.

It was first after the women's encouragement for me to employ an apprentice-style methodology in my work and emphasis on our everyday activities that I, yet again, came to change my initial idea. I allowed the ethnography to shape the direction that my work took and this led me back to the practices that I had grown familiar with as a child, but which I also had to (re)consider anew in the context of being immersed among Ájluokta's enthusiastic craft-makers. I paid careful attention to their work and asked them and was confronted myself with many questions. They included: what does it entail to make handicraft? Where does the work take place and how is it organised? What skills are learnt and how are these skills learnt? How does it feel to learn and make handicraft? What are the motivations and consequences of receiving, giving away and using the *gáppte* as well as other kinds of handicraft? How does the making of handicraft affect a practitioner and her or his surroundings? In what ways are craftwork connected to wider social, economic and political spheres of life?

It might be an unconventional way to finish a thesis by reiterating the questions that I initially faced and asked at the start of this study. However, in doing so, I wish to end this work by challenging the ways many other people, anthropologists, politicians and others alike, think about craft practices among the Sámi, as well as other people, and perhaps also in their own lives of the things that we might take for granted, but which have a central role for our well-being.

One of the greatest joys with anthropology is for me not only when I get an insight into and understanding of other people's ways of living and views on the world, but also when I come to see myself and my own world in a different way. By participating in the work and activities of the Lulesámi women, I not only gained an understanding of their craftsmanship and an

insight into their lives, but I also came to reconsider the significance of the craftwork that my mother had done during my childhood. As far as I can remember I have always appreciated her work, but I believe that I have also taken it for granted and not properly recognised the amount of skill, time and energy behind the beautiful things that she made and how she also enabled me to learn the work and, like the Lulesámi women, always encouraged me in times of frustration. Through the Lulesámi I was able to put words to practices, experiences and feelings that I previously had been unable to describe. It also taught me to cast new a light on the craftwork that I was doing after leaving Divtasvuodna.

During my fieldwork, Sigga often crocheted. I tried once, just after Christmas, but found the work very hard and decided to leave it aside and focus on the other kinds of craftwork that I was learning. However, during the last months of writing this thesis my mother inspired me to try again. She was crocheting a bedspread and I decided to crochet a blanket and asked if she could demonstrate the work. I observed, imitated, tried, failed and tried again –just as I had with knitting, *låhtåt* and weaving among the Lulesámi. I do not know if it was my greater experience of making handicraft or growing attentiveness and patience that made the craft practice seem easier to learn than when I had initially tried it in Divtasvuodna. With some practice I picked up the technique fairly quickly and, when the stress of writing became too demanding, I sat down in stillness and crocheted on the blanket. The repetitive work had a meditative effect and it provided me with a sense of satisfaction to see something grow in my hands. I also thought about Sigga and the other craft-makers while I worked. I remembered how we had been sitting next to each other engaging in craftwork, while talking about life and laughing, accompanied by the constantly present smell of freshly brewed coffee.

Continuations

With this study, I hope to have provided a rich portrait of the Lulesámi and an account that offers an alternative perception and understanding of the Sámi besides their reindeer-tending practices that most commonly feature in the literature and popular culture. This

thesis is a first step to explore and take seriously the craftsmanship that the Lulesámi themselves value deeply and see how such practices speak to a larger understanding of the ways they understand themselves and make their ways through the ever-changing realms of life. I do not wish to bring this study to a closure. There are still many questions to be asked and craftwork to be learnt. If I wish for one last thing, I hope to inspire more scholars, especially within the circumpolar region, to place craftsmanship and everyday domestic activities at the centre stage of their studies and consider these subjects' potential for building relations and increase tolerance between people, better come to know ourselves and others, and widen our perspective of the world in which we live. The advancement of this work, as well as the understanding of life across the circumpolar north will, most certainly, benefit from cooperation across the region among scholars and those devoted to and affected by craft practices in their day to day living.

AFTERWORD

Snapshots

In August 2012 I made my first return to Divtasvuodna after leaving fieldwork a year earlier. I was happy to see everyone again and was immediately thrown back into the craft practices and invited for coffees and food in people's homes. Sigga showed me her new projects while keeping an eye on the potatoes and fish on the stove. She was sewing three *gáppte*; one for a grandchild and two on commissions from a niece and a second-cousin. Apart from that, she was *låhtåt* two *vuoddaga* and weaving an *avve* on commissioning. She was also expecting another grandchild and was planning on making something handcrafted for the arrival. "They (my children) have to stop giving me grandchildren now for a while as I don't know where to find the time for everything!" Sigga said and smiled warmly.

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Ellen was sitting by the big windows in her living-room, wrapped in her pink morning gown, watching the tide while drinking coffee in the mornings. In the afternoons she was still engaged in the project of documenting the Lulesámi craft terminology and she was also helping one of her granddaughters to sew a *gáppte* for her wedding. Ellen greatly enjoyed helping her granddaughter and she had lifted the sewing-machine from the sewing-room to the dining table in the living-room so that she could keep an eye on the young woman's proceedings while cooking or reading the daily newspaper.

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Ragnhild had managed to practice her patience and woven a *lissto* for her son's confirmation. She had also *låhtåt* a pair of *vuoddaga*, but commissioned Sigga and Petra to make the other pieces of the *gáppte*.

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One elder woman had received a medal from the Norwegian King Harald V and been invited to the Royal Palace in Oslo for her dedicated work regarding the Sámi rights within the country. When visiting the Palace and accepting the award, the woman wore the *gáppte* – a garment which she, as a young woman, just a couple of decades earlier, had placed at the back of her wardrobe and felt ashamed of.

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The women at ASVO had taken the initiative to set up a *duodje* blog for supporting the learning and discussion of the craftwork. On the blog, the local craft practices are described and debated, and stories and news are published. There are also practical guidelines, combining text, photographs and videos, of how to make particular types of handicraft for aiding the makers in their work.

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The day I was told about the *duodje* blog, I was sitting around the oval table in ASVO's craft workshop with the keen craft-makers Sigga, Ella, Marit and Petra. Everyone was concentrated on their own work and I started to knit a pair of socks to have something in my hands and participate in the women's activities. While working, I listened and took part in the women's conversations about recent happenings. Marit and Petra were speaking about some excursion that their children were going on with the school. Sigga expressed concern about the well-being of a family where someone recently had passed away. This led the women to become anxious about the fact that quite many people nowadays seemed to go through a difficult time. Someone had lost a job, someone had been in an accident and someone else had received the distressing diagnosis of cancer. Ella also said that a woman she knows well, and who now lives in a care home because of dementia, had gotten worse. She said that it must be very saddening for her kin to see their loved one so ill and for the woman herself to no longer recognise her family when they come to visit.

After a minute of thoughtful silence, Marit suggested that someone should bring a *káffavuossa*, or something similar made in reindeer skin, to the woman suffering from dementia. According to Marit the distinctive smell of the skin and the texture of the material

might help the woman, who was said to have been an excellent craft-maker, to remember. “The odour and touch of the skin have been with her throughout life,” Marit said and proposed that the woman’s relationship with the material might evoke memories and self-confidence of how she had once been able to make handicraft. Ella nodded and said that the *káffavuossa* might also make the woman remember the numerous occasions when she has stopped for a break, made a fire and boiled coffee with family and friends in the mountains.

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Since 2005, some villagers have made efforts to establish a centre for health and care services in Ájluokta adapted to the Sámi people through, for example, Sámi-speaking care takers. Such a centre would also create employment opportunities and prevent depopulation to more urban areas. Today, there is a care home in Ájluokta, but due to the limited amount of places some elders have had to move over to the care home in Gásluokta, where they become physically distant from kin who remain on the western shorelines of the Divtasvuodna. Thus, another care home in Ájluokta would also provide more places for the elders to remain close to their families and familiar place of residence.

However, after years of planning and applications for funding from the Sámediggi, county authorities and government, the municipality decided, during autumn 2013, to stop the establishment of a new care centre in Ájluokta. According to the municipal authorities the centre would be too expensive and difficult to manage. The closing of the project was met with massive protests and disappointment among both the Sámi and non-Sámi villagers who were looking forwards not only to improved and expanded health care, but also to the growth of their community. A few villagers, in favour for the centre, also question whether the closure of a project, which would specifically benefit the Sámi population, was a continuation of the neglect towards the needs and feelings of the Sámi in the area. Debates continue and appeals have been made to the municipality and other governmental bodies to take up the project again.

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There was, however, more good news with regards to the craftwork during my return visit. The participation among ASVO, Árran and Duodje Nordlanda had improved and expanded. Together these organisations now tried to strengthen and support Lulesámi craftsmanship in the area. As a result of the joint effort to build up local practices, financial means had, although, temporarily been given by the Sámediggi to appoint a Lulesámi craft consultant to support the local craftsmanship. Since then, more courses and various seminars had been organised. One of the most recent events, during autumn 2013, was a fashion show where designers from other parts of Sápmi showed their Sámi-inspired clothes.

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"Do you still have the dove I sent you for Christmas," Sigga asked when she called me just before Christmas 2013. I looked over my desk at the knitted white dove that Sigga had made and sent me as a present for Christmas two years earlier, in 2011. "Yes," I said, "it's on my desk." I imagined Sigga smiling when she said, "Good, then you can think of us and we're always with you."

Appendix I. Glossary of Craft Terms

- ájmmme* (Ls): leather needle
avve (Ls): woven belt
belaga (Ls): pattern for women's *vuoddaga*
boavtjos (Ls): back piece of the *gáppte*
bultas (Ls): decoration bands on the *gáppte*
buogña (Ls): 'bag' created inside the *gáppte*
bryllupsgáppte (N/Ls): wedding-*gáppte*
dibma duodje (Ls): craftwork with soft materials
diehppe (Ls): tassel
divllos (Ls): men's red patch in the neck of the *gáppte*
duodjár (Ls): craft-maker
duodje (Ls): typical Sámi handicraft
duoppim (Ls): felting
duoppimgieddao (Ls): hand to felt with
dåpsgáppte (N/Ls): baptismal-*gáppte*
fattigmansslihppá (N(Ls): poor man's 'dickey'
festivalgáppte (N/Ls): *gáppte* worn at music concerts and festivals
gábmaga (Ls): typical shoes
gahpadahka/ruossa(Ls): square pattern of the *avve*
gahpadakhárpo (Ls): supplementary warp
gahper (Ls): hat for the *gáppte*
gálloga (Ls): shoes made with fur from the reindeer's head
gálsoga (Ls): leather trousers for men
gámagartssa (Ls): hook in the *gábmaga* for the *garttssa*
gáppte (Ls): typical Sámi dress, name used for the complete *gáppte* and the actual dress itself
garra duodje (Ls): craftwork with hard materials
garttssa (Ls): 10 cm triangular piece of reindeer skin at one end of the *vuoddaga*
garttsot (Ls): whip stitching
gavlla (Ls): loop
gávlos (Ls): women's red patch in the neck of the *gáppte*
gehpa (Ls): shuttle for the *sjnjissjkom*
giedavuollåhkko (Ls): wedges for the *gáppte*
gukse (Ls): drinking vessel carved out from a birch burl
guosaga (Ls): pattern for women's *vuoddaga*

guottá dahka (Ls): belt plate
guovtegetsak (Ls): *avve* with similar endings on both sides of the belt
halvmåne (N): half-moon, design of the *sliehppá*
hielmme (Ls): bottom edge of the *gáppte*
hållbe (Ls): bottom edge of the *gáppte*
johkko/jågátjå (Ls): rivers, designs of the *lissto*
jåhtem (Ls): the pile surface ('fringe effect') of the cloth
káffavuossa (Ls): a bag made with reindeer skin for storing coffee
konfirmasjonsgáppte (N/Ls): confirmation-*gáppte*
lávde (Ls): bars of the heddle
lissto (Ls): woven ribbon for the *hielmme*
låhtåmmuorra/lådåkmuorra (Ls): tool used for *låhtåt*
låhtåt (Ls): a kind of finger-weaving
náhppe (Ls): milking vessel
nállogoahte (Ls): needle house
njálmme fáhta (Ls): a kind of poncho used over the *gáppte*
nuvtaga (Ls): shoes made with fur from the reindeer's leg
májdde (Ls): buckle
miessikrikkas (Ls): brass ring
muoddá (Ls): a typical Sámi dress made with reindeer fur
oalge (Ls): shoulder parts of the *gáppte*
rájgge (Ls): holes in the *lávde*
ruvdda (Ls): broadcloth
ruvdimbádde (Ls): an ending of the *avve* with threads braided with four sets of threads
sálvvo (Ls): slots in between the bars of the heddle
sasse (Ls): sleeves of the *gáppte*
sassne (Ls): skin
sjnierága (Ls): pattern for men's *vuoddaga*
sjnjissjkom (Ls): back strap loom
sjnjissj kot (Ls): weaving
skirtto (Ls): Sámi-inspired clothing
sliehppá (Ls): 'dickey'
slivve (Ls): weft thread
steiner (N): stones, designs of the *lissto*
suollaga (Ls): pattern for women's *vuoddaga*
suohpudahka (Ls): warp, i.e. lengthwise yarn
sválltjá (Ls): a characteristic Sámi garment made with tanned reindeer skin
sykveller (N): sewing-evenings

syrum (N): sewing-room

sålgga (Ls): flexibility

tjálme (Ls): eyes, design of the *lissto*

tjatjága (Ls): pattern for women's *vuoddaga*

tjuhppa (Ls): top of the *gahper*

tsavekbátte (Ls): an ending of the *avve* with threads wrapped around each other in a lined pattern

vádas (Ls): home-spun cloth

vaessko (Ls): bag

vestlige klær (N): 'Western clothes'

vingok (Ls): pick-up pattern of the *avve*

vinjoga (Ls): pattern for women's *vuoddaga*

vuoddaga (Ls): shoe bands for the *gáppte*

åhtså (Ls): v-neckline of the *gáppte*

åvvdabielle (Ls): *duodjár* front piece of the *gáppte*

Appendix II. Glossary of Place Names

<u>Lulesámi</u>	<u>Norwegian</u>
Ájluokta	Drag
Báddådjá	Bodø
Divtasvuodna (municipality)	Tysfjord
<i>compare with</i>	
The Divtasvuodna (fjord)	Tysfjorden
Gáivuona (Ns)	Kåfjord
Gárasavvon	Karesuando
Gásluokta	Kjøpsvik
Guovdageaidnu	Kautokeino
Jiellivárre	Gällivare
Jåhkåmåhkke	Jokkmokk
Karasjoká	Karasjok
Måsske	Mussken
Romsa	Tromsø

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