

“Alla människor har sin berättelse”:
Interculturalism, Intermediality and the Trope of Testimony
in Novels by Ekman, Ørstavik and Petersen

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Abstract

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This study focuses on Kerstin Ekman’s *Vargskinnnet* trilogy (1999-2003), Hanne Ørstavik’s *Presten* (2004) and Martin Petersen’s *Indtoget i Kautokeino* (2004). The premise of this dissertation is that these novels provide a basis for investigating a subcategory of witness literature called witness fiction, which employs topoi of witness literature within a framework of explicitly fictional writing. Witness literature of all types relies on the experience of trauma by an individual or group. This project investigates the trauma of oppression of an indigenous group, the Sami, as represented in fiction by members of majority cultures that are implicated in that oppression. The characters through which the oppressed position is reflected are borderline figures dealing with the social and political effects of cultural difference, and the texts approach witnessing with varying degrees of self-awareness in terms of the complicated questions of ethics of representation.

The trauma that is evident in my chosen texts stems from interactions between Sami and non-Sami communities, and I discuss the portrayal of interculturalism within these texts. Homi K. Bhabha’s conceptualization of the Third Space and the enunciation of productive difference between cultures build the foundational analysis of representations of Sami and non-Sami in the novels. In *Vargskinnnet* in particular, intersections of difference also play out discursively through ekphrasis and intermediality. I discuss the convergence of media that echoes the productive difference of interculturalism via visual-verbal and musical-verbal ekphrasis. Of primary importance is the description of the Sami joik in *Vargskinnnet* and the aligning of intermediality with Sami-Swedish relations and traumatic history of oppression of Sami cultural expression.

The conclusion provides the implications of this study for future research, including the interrelatedness of oppression of indigenous peoples and other peripheralized groups, and land and the environment. I look at the relevance of the budding field of cognitive approaches to fiction and conclude with statements of the continued importance of fiction to exposing readers to cultural difference and helping readers envision and empathize with experiences of human and non-human trauma.

This dissertation is dedicated:

to the memory of my grandparents, the origin of the caring family in which I grew up. Although I didn't know all of you very well, the impact of your love resonates through generations. Gramps, you were the start of everything, and Granny, you were, in spirit, so often beside me when I needed you;

to my parents, who lovingly gave me both roots and wings, supported me in following my dreams and instilled in me a deep love of education;

and to Mike, who has shared with me his love and patience, and who has given me endless support and encouragement.

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Chapter One – Introduction

In this dissertation, I discuss representations of the Sami in *Vargskinnnet* (The Wolfskin), the 1999-2003 trilogy by Kerstin Ekman, and the 2004 novels *Presten* (The Pastor) by Hanne Ørstavik and *Indtoget i Kautokeino* (Entry into Kautokeino) by Martin Petersen. I use theories of witness literature to examine how testimony is used as a trope for displaying indigenous experience in literature written by members of majority populations. These texts provide the basis for an investigation of the relationship between witnessing, the portrayal of traumatic human experience, and fiction. I emphasize in my study topoi of witness literature as a genre, witnessing as a theoretical approach, testimony as a trope, and the fictional portrayal of a Sami-focused historical experience. Most often, investigations of witness literature focus on first-hand testimony of trauma; the object of study is an account, usually written in first person, by an actual (vs. fictional) witness of a specific traumatic event. I am investigating texts that use testimony as a trope, as a means of representing historical Sami experiences in a way that depicts emotions and everyday events, thereby inviting the reader to empathize with and learn from those suffering from trauma. In my dissertation, I do three things: investigate the representation of the Sami people in Scandinavian literature through the lens of interculturalism, investigate the ways in which interculturalism can be reflected through intermediality, and establish a subcategory of witness literature called *witness fiction*. This subcategory aligns with the tenets of witness literature while using fictional characters and, to some degree, fictionalized settings, events and reactions to these experiences. My work seeks to broaden further the study of types of witness literature, which has been dominated largely by study of the Holocaust novel, to other fiction based on historical, collective trauma.

Who are the Sami?

This project relies on an understanding of the indigenous Sami¹ and the general tone of the relationship between the Sami and the majority cultures and governments. While Scandinavian and Scandinavianist readers of this dissertation will likely be familiar with the Sami as an ethnic group, other readers will benefit from a brief introduction. The Sami are the indigenous people of northern Europe, inhabiting northern areas of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and a small part of Russia (the Kola peninsula). The Sami have previously been known as “Lapps” or “Laplanders,” however, these labels are now considered derogatory. The area inhabited by the Sami is called Sápmi, and in the areas of Sápmi within the Norwegian and Swedish borders, the Sami people have exclusive reindeer-herding rights. Only ten percent of the Sami population consists of reindeer herders, though it is through this occupation that the Sami community is most visible in today’s media.

The total number of Sami is impossible to know, since censuses in Scandinavia do not question Sami ethnic identification and because there is no concrete definition of who is Sami (Sámediggi 5). John B. Henriksen theorizes that estimating the population size is

¹ Other spellings include “Saami” and “Sámi.” I use “Sami” because this is the version used by the Sami parliaments in their English-language materials.

problematic because “so many people still do not acknowledge their Saami background, mostly because of the historical discrimination and stigmatization of the Saami. Earlier periods’ state assimilation policy toward the Saami has also meant that the two possibly strongest self-identification factors, the Saami language and culture, have died out in several Saami areas” (24). In *Samer – ett ursprungsfolk i Sverige*, the number of Sami is estimated to be 80,000. About half of this population (40,000) lives primarily in Norway, a quarter (20,000) lives primarily in Sweden, about 6,000 in Finland and about 2,000 in Russia (4).

Sami parliaments were formed in 1973 in Finland, in 1989 in Norway, and in 1993 in Sweden, and representation in these parliaments is decided by a democratic voting system in which people defined as Sami by the individual parliaments are allowed to vote.² The Sami parliaments have different relationships with the majority governments, with the Sami parliament in Finland having the strongest stated rights (Josefsen 11). The Swedish Sami Parliament Act of 1992 stipulates that a person has the right to vote if he or she considers him or herself to be Sami and either speaks or has spoken Sami at home, or has a parent or grandparent who speaks or has spoken Sami at home, or has a parent who is eligible to vote in the Sami Parliament (Henriksen 23). The Sami Parliament in Finland has almost identical criteria. The Sami Parliament in Norway also defines voter eligibility in much the same way, except the right is extended also to those who have a great-grandparent who speaks or has spoken Sami at home (Holmgren). Problematic in this requirement is that the instruction of and in the Sami language had been discouraged, either actively or through a lack of initiative, for many decades in the Nordic countries; membership based on linguistic abilities therefore necessitates the learning of an ancestral language through coursework. This, in turn, requires funding for instructors, meeting places and/or instructional technology, and funding is in short supply for courses in lesser-studied languages. Whether or not language is concerned, the definition of ethnic group membership is problematic, especially when rights or privileges based on ethnic status are in play. Strong historical stigmatization prevents people from continuing those cultural and linguistic traditions that are considered to be markers of their ethnic identity. Genetics-based criteria raise the question of what level of genetic connection one must have with an ethnic group, and of what happens when the ethnic group does not follow exact racial lines.

Roger Kvist focuses on the recognition or lack thereof of Sami identity by the power-wielding Swedish majority in “Swedish Saami Policy 1550-1900.” The historical tendency to favor Sami people who maintained the reindeer-herding tradition came at the expense of those who had chosen to adopt methods of agricultural production, and this outside perception of Sami ethnicity played out to a large extent in a period Kvist bounds from 1846-1913, claiming this period as one of assimilation policies. These policies resulted in a loss of linguistic abilities in the non-herding Sami community. The later period of segregationist policy reinforced that Sami rights were to be granted by the benevolence of the Swedish government (Kvist 70). This, in turn, led to institutional racism in which the Sami were not in control of political decisions, but instead were at the mercy of the governing Swedish majority. As a later development, Sami organizations

² None of the definitions laid out by these parliaments extends beyond the issue of voting rights in any one particular parliament and cannot therefore be seen as a general definition of “Sami.”

were able to gain some amount of autonomy regarding ethnic and cultural policy after approximately 1971 (Kvist 75).

Overview – Memory, History and Trauma

I anticipate in reactions to this study a questioning of the veracity of literary accounts of historical trauma of an ethnic group and a pointing to the importance of recognizing what is commonly accepted fact and what is fictionalized. It is not my goal to blur the distinction, nor do I believe is it particularly helpful to define more potently the work that falls within one realm or the other. My goal is instead to look at pieces of historically-based fiction that are explicitly marked “fictional,” and investigate the ways in which they allow the reader to engage more fully with a certain view of history. It is commonly said that history is written by the winners, the colonizers, the majority. Though the field of historiography, with the contributions of Hayden White, Frank Ankersmit, Dominick LaCapra, and others, has expanded from this simplistic view to more complex notions of voice and perspective, it is undeniable that indigenous peoples and minority groups have struggled not only with cultural, physical, geographical and political oppression, but also with their discursive oppression within and omission from history books, which have overwhelmingly been written to focus on the majority culture. Representations of ethnic minority cultures by members of the majority have tended to relegate minority cultures to the periphery, to essentialize indigenous and minority cultures and characteristics, and to equate these groups of people with an anachronistic lifestyle and primitive existence. While the authors discussed in this dissertation are members of the majority, they approach the representation of minority experience with a dedication to ethical portrayal, in part through the explicit categorizing of their works as fictional and by enacting cultural representation through characters who are themselves confronted with complex issues of ethnic membership (Risten from *Vargskinnnet*) or who are attempting to contribute to the diversity of perspectives of historical events (Liv from *Presten*, the narrator from *Indtoget i Kautokeino*). These characters are situated within a framework similar to that of other witness literature, with story origins in a traumatic event, a distance between narration and event, the depiction of power dynamics and questions of difference, a concern with the impact of the past on the present, and the essential role of the listener or audience.

To investigate witness fiction and to compare literary accounts of indigenous and minority groups’ experiences to non-literary historical accounts is problematic if one is seeking the “truth,” because historical accounts representing views from minority positions have been discouraged through the oppressive hegemonic apparatus. Nobel laureate Gao Xingjian expresses his own criticism of history writing and its relationship to authority, claiming that “History inevitably bears the imprint of an authority and is therefore revised with each change of authority” (118). He questions the ease with which history conceals truth, addressing an assumed lack of consequence on the part of the history writer. Xingjian seems to ignore the turn away from empirical histories that the field of historiography has taken; however, his point is clear that the testimony of individuals carries more weight in the field of witness literature than third-person accounts about larger groups of people, and he believes this should be the same in the

field of history. “Through retrieving lost memories, the writer seeks the truth that history has concealed and, besides digging through cold historical materials, more importantly relies on the experiences of living people” (118). He prefers a method based on metonymic, inductive reasoning. The testimony of even one person is a necessary “supplement” to history, Xingjian believes, a “preservation of memories that had been neglected by history” (119).

Trauma is based on a personally experienced history that may also be collectively experienced, in such cases as the Holocaust or genocide in Sudan. A subjective perception of events enters into a collective consciousness through the witnesses’ accounts of the trauma. The reality (and “history”) present in that testimony is both singular and communal; those who experience trauma together form a bond that only that group can understand, yet each individual may tell of his or her trauma in a different manner.³ In “Trauma Narratives and the Remaking of the Self,” Susan J. Brison, to whom I will also return below, argues the importance of the collective consciousness in the perception of historical trauma, saying, “The traumatic event is experienced as culturally embedded (or framed),⁴ is remembered as such (in both traumatic and narrative memory), and is shaped and reshaped in memory over time according, at least in part, to how others in the survivor’s culture respond” (42). Brison’s view of cultural and collective memory, addressed in more detail in Chapter Four, informs how I approach the term.

In Latin America, one finds the tradition of *testimonio*, a type of witness literature defined by Ylce Irizarry as “a narrative explicitly concerned with articulating a process of recognition and resistance of oppression” that “not only calls for the awareness of brutality, but also documents survival and self-determination” (264). *Testimonio* appeals to multiple discourses, Irizarry claims, which also problematizes the issue of truth-seeking in the genre (264-266).⁵ A “literary-polemical form” that began in the 1970s and 80s, according to Roger N. Lancaster, *testimonio* was intended “to convey salient sociological facts to a Northern audience through an exemplary life history, and to thereby solicit moral, political and economic support for local struggles” (4). While *testimonio* employs

³ The fabric of the community is essential when traumatic events affect a group of people. In “Notes on Trauma and Community” from *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, Kai Erikson talks of “traumatized communities” and “collective trauma,” the latter of which is a term she used when she first wrote about the phenomenon in 1976, in a study of a devastating flood in Buffalo Creek, West Virginia. She claims that traumatized individuals may seek out others who have experienced the same trauma, but that communities can also experience trauma in a manner that resembles individual trauma, even in bodily form. She states, “It is the *community* that offers a cushion for pain, the *community* that offers a context for intimacy, the *community* that serves as the repository for binding traditions. And when the community is profoundly affected, one can speak of a damaged social organism in almost the same way that one would speak of a damaged body” (188, original emphases).

⁴ Brison refers here in a footnote to Jonathan Culler’s use of “framing” as a more active and therefore accurate term for what is otherwise commonly referred to as “context.”

⁵ The Latin American tradition of *testimonio* deserves mention, however, not only for bringing history and literature together in its creation but also in its analysis. The Latin American Subaltern Studies Group at The Ohio State University says that “the use of *testimonio* requires historians to shift their own methodologies outside of traditional disciplinary boundaries” between history and literature. This group defines *testimonio* as “a genre of literature that retells historical events using literary elements such as dialogue, poetry and metaphors from an eyewitness perspective” and says that it “help[s] relay historical experiences” (“Who is the Subaltern”).

many literary devices, it also relies on a sense of “truth” in that the reader expects that what he or she is reading is essentially an account that reflects reality.

As is the case with witness literature, readers respond negatively to the discovery that authors of *testimonio* have fudged the “facts,” which is clear from the case of *I, Rigoberta Menchú* (Lancaster 45). A rejoinder, posed by Leigh Binford, cites many *testimonio* critics as focusing on the consumers of *testimonio* rather than the producers: “If there is a problem with *testimonio*, they argue, then it rests (principally) with *Us*, the readers” (109). The general sense that authors have told what they understood to be true at the point in time of the experience is most important, and the reader has the responsibility to take the account and use it to gain a better understanding of the world around him or her. Binford also states that the tendency in rural Latin American storytelling to integrate multiple experiences into one storyline is potentially at play in Menchú’s *testimonio* (115), signaling the collective fabric expressed through stories. The subjectivity of perception and the expression of community that are present in *testimonio* are also key aspects of witness fiction.

In large part due to the concept of subjective perception and also to a collective consciousness of history, we may embark on a comparative analysis of witness fiction without the aim of arriving at the “truth.” We can investigate the extents to which a piece of witness fiction agrees or disagrees with corroborated descriptions of historical events. We can ask, what purpose did it serve to align descriptions of certain events and malign others? In what ways does the author employ the mode of fiction, a mode in which the author may portray elements that could not be present in a factual work (e.g., another person’s thoughts, actions performed in privacy, etc.), and what effect does this have on the reader’s perception of history?

A common question discussed in terms of texts that ride the border between fact and fiction is what agreement is implicitly reached between the author and the reader regarding the level of fictionality and factuality in the text; and in witness fiction, this agreement is incredibly important. It is the responsibility of the author, out of respect to survivors of trauma, to tell the reader whether or not the author is creating fiction or writing a memoir.⁶ At the same time, a reader believes in the story to the extent that she feels illuminated as to the effect of the trauma on the actual witnesses, and the possibility that this could have been how the trauma could have been experienced. Dorrit Cohn describes fiction as “nonreferential narrative,” in that the narrative may refer to a recognizable reality, but is not bound to do so. She states, “The definitional adjective *nonreferential* allows one to discriminate between two different *kinds* of narrative, according

⁶ Efraim Sicher discusses this issue in *The Holocaust Novel*, saying, “Authenticity, when it comes to survivor narratives, nevertheless remains a crucial criterion, even if its verification is sometimes tricky and uncertain” (xiii). He cites fictional works by Bruno Dössekker (pseud. Binjamin Wilkomirski) and Helen Darville (pseud. Helen Demidenko), along with others such as Jean-François Steiner in later chapters, as “forgeries” in which the authors attempted to conceal the fictionality of their writing. Citing multiple critics, Sicher discusses the problem of truth and historical accuracy in Holocaust fiction; some, such as Alvin Rosenfeld, doubt whether literature written by those who did not experience the Holocaust has any authentic or even aesthetic value, while others, such as Joel Shatzky, present “criteria for the difference between use and abuse: [...] intellectual integrity, artistic value, and loyalty to historical truth” (131). Regarding the Wilkomirski case, Dominick LaCapra provides a more complex reading in *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, pp. 32-35.

to whether they deal with real or imaginary events and persons. Only narratives of the first kind, which include historical works, journalistic reports, biographies, and autobiographies, are subject to judgments of truth and falsity. Narratives of the second kind, which include novels, short stories, ballads, and epics, are immune to such judgments” (15, original emphases).⁷

Theoretical Framework: Witness Literature

Witness literature stems from trauma and traumatic events.⁸ Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, M.D., approach the key terms “testimony” and “witness” in *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*. Laub defines the terms in the following manner: “A witness is a witness to the truth of what happens during an event” (80); “The testimony is, therefore, the process by which the narrator (the survivor) reclaims his position as a witness: reconstitutes the internal ‘thou,’ and thus the possibility of a witness or a listener inside himself” (85). In the first definition, Laub conceives of “truth” as the subjective reality of the survivor’s experience. In the second definition, Laub discusses the process by which, during the Holocaust, the Jewish people were deprived of an “other” to which they could address themselves and make themselves heard, thereby losing their subject-hood and, simultaneously, their humanity. Testimony, though it may relate details of an event and spread information to those without that experience, is given first and foremost for the “internal ‘thou.’” The distinction between psychological testimony and literature is directional; testimony is defined by its directionality towards the internal “thou,” while literature is defined by its consideration of a reader.

A common thread throughout witness literature is that the witnesses closest to a traumatic event, those with the most dramatic story of trauma, are silenced; they are not able to give their testimony or tell of their trauma. Some of these witnesses did not survive the trauma and thus cannot speak; others, however, survived without the ability to put their trauma into words. The experience remains incommunicable. These witnesses look for someone who may be able to put their experiences into words, to present the experiences in a manner that can be understood by the audience. As Horace Engdahl states, “The difficulty in communicating is therefore not only due to the audience’s lack of experience of the kind of privation represented, but also to the witness’s inability to bring coherence to what he has experienced” (9). Scholars such as Susan J. Brison have identified the ways in which giving testimony, even if the listener cannot comprehend the trauma he or she is describing, is a means of recapturing personal identity for survivors.

The field of witness literature has tended to focus on accounts of the Holocaust, though studies of the indigenous experience and immigrant experiences are also taking a

⁷ Other current theories of biography, autobiography and lifewriting scholarship, which acknowledge the problematic of “truth” and “fiction,” might disagree with Cohn regarding parameters of “truth and falsity,” and lawsuits have been brought in extreme cases when people, places or events described in a memoir have been proven false. Cohn’s *The Distinction of Fiction* (2000) is a valuable resource, however, in which she focuses on detecting fictionality but also discusses other narratological concerns having to do with biography, autobiography, and historical fiction.

⁸ The features enumerated here are the most consistent and agreed-upon traits; as a relatively newly established genre, witness literature is still in its defining stages. Please see *Witness Literature: Proceedings of the Nobel Centennial Symposium* (2001) for the most thorough collection of statements on the genre.

strong hold in this genre. Survivors of concentration camps, decades after the original trauma, can finally begin to tell about the horrors they experienced. Many feel pressure to tell their stories because they are growing older, in fear they will die before giving their testimony. Holocaust memorial projects such as the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University aid survivors in telling their stories, but the reality in which the extreme trauma transpired is not recognizable to the listeners. Some survivors, such as Nobel Prize laureate Elie Wiesel, are able to form their experiences into literature in the form of memoirs or reflections, genres that exhibit awareness of their audience and are told for the listeners' benefit as much as for the teller's.⁹ This field is growing, now also including the study of Native American literature, Irish literature, and Iraqi literature, to name only a few.

As Horace Engdahl states, in agreement with Wiesel, testimony is the literary invention of "our time," saying, "Perhaps it is not the scale of twentieth-century misdeeds that has placed testimony in the centre; but rather our horror over the systematic erasure of memory in totalitarian societies" (5-6). The system of cause-and-effect used by narrative structure serves only to reduce historical trauma to an explicable series of events, thus "[t]he victim's reality is broken off from our own and posted to another region of being: the region of historical events" (Engdahl 10), and the lack of comprehensibility is a defining feature of the process of witnessing: "the witness talks of something that is incomprehensible in the hope that someone else will make it possible to understand and with the certainty that any explanation must be rejected as inadequate. In the revolt against explanations, testimony and literature are unified" (10). In this paradox, the witness makes an attempt at communication that the author of fiction may be better able to realize through witness fiction. The author of witness fiction brings the experiences of the witness to the reader, and while explanations may not be explicitly made, the reader is able to understand to some extent, if not the fullest extent, with the events and the characters in the narrative. Because the writer herself is not communicating personal trauma, he or she is able to concentrate on communication with the reader. Kalí Tal stresses that the experience of trauma can never truly be communicated and the personal myths of the non-survivor reader are never shattered (122); however, a careful reader will be able to glean a greater meaning from the fictional account. Tal claims that literature by non-survivors, in her case, nonveterans, "are the product of the authors' urge to tell a story, make a point, create an aesthetic experience, to move people in a particular way. Nonveteran literature is, in short, the product of a

⁹ Wiesel has been noted for his statements to the effect that the Auschwitz in fictional accounts is by no means the same as the real Auschwitz, calling into question the ability of fictional, non-eyewitness descriptions to capture the true experience to any degree. Though he believes that fictional descriptions of the Holocaust are valuable for their ability to raise awareness in readers of historical atrocity, and in spite of recognizing the fallibility of memory, Wiesel holds survivor accounts as the only truth of the concentration camps. See *The Holocaust Novel* by Efraim Sicher. In *Worlds of Hurt*, Kalí Tal discusses Wiesel in a different light, calling him a "professional Holocaust survivor" (1) and noting Wiesel's choice to present Henry Kissinger with "survivor" status via the Elie Wiesel Remembrance Award in 1991, although Kissinger emigrated from Germany in 1938 and never experienced the Holocaust (2). Tal questions Wiesel's privileged status as "the voice of 'the' survivor," stating that "the responsibility of the cultural critic is to present a continuous challenge to the assumptions upon which any communal consensus is based" (5), including the codification of the Holocaust experience.

literary decision” (116). The war, the traumatic event that prompts the writing, is simply a metaphor. But it is through this metaphor that the author can affect his or her readers in a way that exposes them to trauma of which they might not otherwise have been aware.

While witness fiction may employ as metaphors types of scenarios used in survivor-authored witness literature, the authors’ “*literary decision*” to tell the story may also be made through an ethical lens, with the author of witness fiction displaying a dedication towards the ethical treatment of trauma. The author of a piece of fiction in which imaginary characters experience historically real trauma must first research carefully and comprehensively the events surrounding the historical trauma, and then openly divulge that the work is fictional. The reader embarks on the text knowing full well that he or she is reading fiction, but believes the story inasmuch as the description of the cause of the trauma seems within the realm of the “possible,” even if it seems to have incomprehensible cause or effects. The reader feels, as a result of the encounter with witness fiction, that he or she has learned something about personal and social effects of that particular historical trauma. The responsibilities on the part of the author are many, but so too for the reader, who must remain fully conscious of reading fiction.

The Holocaust novel, increasingly recognized from the 1970s and 1980s as a distinct genre, supplements my investigation of the broader category of witness fiction. The Holocaust serves as a singular subject matter requiring unique treatment in the case of literary theory and analysis, and so my use of Holocaust novel critique will remain cautious and very selective. I will discuss a few theoretical points derived from key texts on this genre. In *Witness Through the Imagination*, S. Lillian Kremer discusses the genre I call “witness fiction,” but she primarily uses the terms “Holocaust fiction” and “Holocaust literature,” though the latter of these terms does not distinguish between fiction and eyewitness or survivor accounts. In her analysis of Holocaust fiction written by Jewish Americans who were living in the United States of America during the Nazi regime, Kremer states that, though some claim that the *Shoah*, or Holocaust, remains incomprehensible, “we may come closer to comprehension through the efforts of artists whose works incorporate and transcend representational reality, rather than through histories and eyewitness accounts” (8). Kremer observes that, with few exceptions, “most American writers portray the Holocaust universe through memories and dreams to integrate past experiences and contemporary trauma in the lives of characters” (358). This narrative technique, which serves to create a distance so common in witness literature and also present in witness fiction, is particularly relevant for the texts I investigate further in coming chapters. For example, Risten, herself only half-Sami, narrates as an old woman her experiences from when she was a young girl of the impact that one’s ethnic identity can have on others’ expectations of a person’s lifestyle and belief systems. This distance allows retrospective attribution and understanding of the impact of past events, as the ramifications have played out in the time between the event and narration.

Efraim Sicher delineates five types of Holocaust novels in the simply named *The Holocaust Novel* (2005), questioning at the same time the validity of the genre, saying that it “begs questions not only about fictionalizing the Holocaust, but also about the novel itself. Is a novel, by definition, about something that has not really happened? And does Holocaust literature only document ‘facts?’” (xi). While answering that “few would cling

to this literal historicism” (xi), Sicher addresses the complicated line between fact and fiction in imagined memories of actual historical trauma, finding differing answers in a multitude of novels. In regard to novels that are more loosely bound by the corroborated, commonly accepted “facts” of history, Sicher cites scholars who wonder why readers would turn to these instead of eyewitness, survivor testimony. In a defense that could be employed for all fictionalized accounts, Sicher states, “Novels, however, do give empathy with an unimaginable situation of daily horror, but they also benefit from hindsight of knowledge of the outcome, so that the telling of the story is informed by the novelist’s own historical overview” (114). The possibility for empathy that is opened up by the author’s appeal to the reader and other literary strategies creates a narrative that conveys the importance of the individuals subjected to trauma and the effects on the communal fabric. The freedom fiction writing provides from recreating survivor accounts, combined with an author’s ethical representation of oppressed peoples, can validate witness fiction as an elucidatory, edifying subgenre.

The trope of testimony is one of the literary strategies employed in witness fiction. Witness literature as a literary form employs the trope of testimony to display the multiplicity of history, debunking the concept of a master narrative. Gao Zingjian claims that testimony serves as a “necessary supplement to history, the preservation of memories that had been neglected by history” (119). Testimony is a history of silenced voices, and thereby cannot be seen simply as a “supplement,” but instead as a history valid in itself, disallowing the term “history” to mean only that of the victors, the authority figures, or the oppressors. Testimony is, as a literary form, used to invoke histories that otherwise would not have been told, stories of the past of oppressed peoples. In Scandinavian literature, testimony of the Sami past has recently become a common trope. Witness literature may be either fictional or nonfictional, with many texts riding the border between these classifications. The novels I am discussing here, however, are explicitly fictional and can be discussed as examples of witness fiction, as they employ fictional testimony of a Sami past to display a polyphonic history and to foreground the impact of the colonial history of northern Europe.

The Trauma of Oppression

We cannot talk about testimony and witnessing without establishing that trauma has occurred. Thus, another component to be discussed in terms of witness literature is the inclusion of indigenous experiences in relation to majority populations within a consideration of traumatic histories. My aim here is not to victimize or ascribe to any culture or ethnic group a position of powerlessness and silence, but instead to point out the importance of recognizing the effects of oppression that occurred largely without bloodshed and that therefore may too easily be passed over in the cultural memory of the majority. The recognition of stigmatization and alienation comes through the novels I am working with: *Vargskinnnet* (The Wolfskin), which is comprised of *Guds barmhärthighet* (God’s Mercy) from 1999, *Sista rompan* (The Last Run) from 2002, and *Skraplotter* (Scratch Cards) from 2003, and two novels published in 2004: *Presten* (The Pastor), and *Indtoget i Kautokeino* (Entry into Kautokeino). The only one of these novels published in English translation is *Guds barmhärthighet*, which was published as *God’s Mercy* in 2010.

In *Vargskinnnet*, half-Sami narrator Risten's acknowledgement of her Sami heritage is complicated by the trauma associated with this historical position. To illustrate the far-reaching effects of Swedish subjugation of the Sami, I turn to the experiences of Risten's grandfather, Mickel Larsson. My first example involves the joik, the vocal musical expression of the Sami that revolves around a repetitive melody that uses words, syllables and other sounds to invoke the spirit of the person, animal or thing represented by the joik. In the eyes of the Church, the joik and the Sami drum (which were used together) represented pagan belief systems, leading to later associations of shame with this form of self-expression. As Zoë-hatehc Durrah Scheffy states, "the Church denounced individuals who retained their traditional faith and used drums, claiming that they engaged in 'sorcery' and 'witchcraft.' Many Sámi were given sentences for adhering to traditional spirituality, which ranged from fines to corporal punishment and even death" (250). The shame was also grounded in the association of drunkenness and joiking: "I kritiken av den utbredda alkoholismen blandade man ihop orsak och verkan och fördömde jojken därför att berusade personer jojcade. Det blev t.o.m. så att jojck och alkoholbruk ställdes samman och jojken av den anledningen fick en syndastämpel" ("In the critique of widespread alcoholism, cause and effect were confused and the joik was condemned because drunk people joiked. It eventually came to be that joik and alcohol use were conjoined, and because of this, the joik became negatively stigmatized" (Kjellström, Ternhag and Rydving 104). The joik is used throughout *Vargskinnnet* as a marker of Sami identity, and it is not only self-expression, but also a symbol of resistance to Swedish control.

Although many Sami in the novels are ashamed of joiking because of its association with drunkenness, rebelliousness or even primitivism, some actively use joiks to express themselves and their Sami heritage. While Laula Anut, Risten's Sami uncle with the Swedish name Anund Larsson, belongs to the latter group most of the time, his father Mickel Larsson belongs to the former. Acutely aware of the historically inferior position of the Sami, Mickel Larsson never knowingly joiks in the presence of others. "Ingen hade hört Mickel Larsson jojka utom Laula Anut och det bara när gubben inte visste att han lyssnade" ("No one had heard Mickel Larsson *joik* except Laula Anut and then only when the old man didn't know he was listening" *GB* 189, Schenck 181). The joik Laula Anut hears, which implores a listener ("du," "you") to look and see the reindeer cows ("vajorna") running at twilight, is a sincere expression of heartfelt loss and is the only time Mickel expresses his sorrow over losing his herd of reindeer to harsh winters and hungry wolves. Laula Anut, only a boy at the time, is scared that others will hear his father singing about nonexistent reindeer; he acknowledges later that he hadn't understood it at the time. "Men fast han skämdes tog han efter. Han kunde inte låta bli," narrates Risten ("But in spite of feeling ashamed, he took after him. He couldn't help himself" *GB* 189, Schenck 182). The hardship and instability of the Sami reindeer-herding lifestyle is illustrated in Mickel's loss.

To add further shame after being caught stealing a reindeer from another Sami, Mickel is not even allowed the opportunity to do his penance with dignity, since his accusers exact punishment on his body with their fists and on his spirit with hurtful gossip and name-calling.¹⁰ Laula Anut offers some amount of justification for Mickel's

¹⁰ Mickel is never called anything but Köttmickel (Meat Mickel) after this incident.

transgression, saying that not only had others stolen reindeer from him, contributing to the loss of his herd, but that “det är inte så konstigt att en lapp som förlorat alla sina renar kan få längtan efter märgben och njurfeta” (“there’s nothing strange about a Lapp who’s lost all his reindeer getting a craving for bone marrow and kidney fat” *GB* 192, Schenck 184). Mickel’s experience depicts both the hardship of the Sami reindeer-herding lifestyle and the difficulty for a former reindeer-herder of transitioning from that lifestyle to one that does not revolve around the animals.

Presten by Hanne Ørstavik is narrated in first-person by Liv, who is writing her dissertation on the Sami rebellion in Kautokeino in 1852. In the events leading up to this rebellion, a group of Sami had become followers of Lars Levi Læstadius, an evangelical preacher who was himself part Sami. They observed his teachings in a fanatical manner, split from the rest of the church and the community, and condemned the authorities of the Norwegian State and Norwegian Church in Kautokeino, mostly for the sale of alcohol but also for preaching what this group of Sami deemed an untrue gospel. After public disturbances in Skjervøy and Karesuando and resulting jail terms, fines and other sentences, members of this group attacked the sheriff, shopkeeper and pastor in Kautokeino, killing the first two and torturing the last, along with the pastor’s family. The rebellion was put to an end by a group of mostly Sami men. In her work, Liv investigates the importance of language as a factor leading to the rebellion and attempts to gain a greater understanding of past trauma. As she works to find answers to the rebellion, she is confronted with her own personal traumatic past. The novel posits the possibility that the trauma she has experienced may enable her to identify with the colonial Sami past.

Indtoget i Kautokeino by Martin Petersen presents two sides of the story, through Thomas Andersen Eira, a young Sami man who was part of the group of rebels, and Fredrik Hvoslef, the pastor in Kautokeino at the time of the rebellion. An organizing narrator discusses the impetus for writing about this historical event—a visit to the cemetery where the bodies of the Sami executed for their role in the rebellion are buried—and clarifies the fictionality of the story.

This Study: Productive Difference and Discursive Permutations

The premise of this dissertation is that these novels by Ekman, Ørstavik and Petersen provide a basis for investigating a subcategory of witness literature called witness fiction, which employs topoi of witness literature within a framework of explicitly fictional writing. Witness literature of all types relies on some foundational elements in addition to the characteristics enumerated in the Introduction and Chapter Four: that there is a difference between at least two groups and a hierarchy of power that raises one group into a position of control over the other(s), resulting in traumatic events that can be present at a specific point in time or can be continuous over a longer length of time. The concept of difference appears via both interculturalism and intermediality, which I investigate before bringing this together to the alliance of the intercultural and intermedial with the topoi of witness literature in fiction.

While I refer throughout the dissertation to all of these novels, it is specifically Ekman’s trilogy that provides the most fertile ground for this investigation. *Vargskinnet*, to which I refer as a single “text” although it comprises three volumes, is also the longest of

the works, filling 1200 pages, and covers the largest span of history, about one hundred years. *Presten* and *Indtoget i Kautokeino* both focus on the specific historical rupture of the Kautokeino Rebellion of 1852. The scholarship on Ekman confirms the frequency with which she includes representations of women's history, motherhood and marginalization of female characters and groups. This appears again in *Vargskinnnet*, in an even more complex system within a far-reaching genealogical web and looping in male characters to confirm the depiction of non-biological motherhood. In this trilogy, also, the representation of peripherality extends beyond gender to ethnicity, with the representation of the Sami. The confrontation of cultures is illustrated in the first chapters of *Guds barmhärtighet*, first as the protagonist Risten encounters signs of her Sami past and next as the proper Swedish midwife Hillevi finds herself in a foreign place as she moves north and inland within her home country. This system expands to include the entire trilogy, with its complicated familial relationships, genealogies, and geographies, and the open display and debate of ethnic dichotomies.

The trauma that is evident in my chosen texts stems from the interaction between Sami and non-Sami, and I begin the second chapter with a discussion of this interaction and the portrayal of interculturalism within these texts. Homi K. Bhabha's conceptualization of the Third Space and the presentation of productive difference between cultures in these novels build the foundational analysis of representations of Sami and non-Sami in the novels. This productive difference is essential to the distinction between distinct positions of power inherent to witness literature.

The intersection of difference and dominance is not only apparent in the representation of culture, however; in *Vargskinnnet* in particular, this also plays out through ekphrasis and intermediality displayed in the text. Intermediality is, as defined by Werner Wolf, "a conventionally distinct means of communication of expression characterized not only by particular channels (or one channel) for the sending and receiving of messages but also by the use of one or more semiotic systems" (40). Wolf relates the concept of intermediality to that of intertextuality, claiming that intermediality is also contingent on the existence of a pre-text and text, though in intermedial terms these are of (at least) two different media (41). Chapter Three presents the different ways in which intermediality, presented in the text through techniques of ekphrasis that subjugate one medium to another and that weave together appeals to senses of sight and sound through language, echoes the productive difference of interculturalism first through various types of ekphrasis, namely traditional visual-verbal ekphrasis but also musical-verbal ekphrasis. Kerstin Ekman's writing is replete with appeals to various media, and while the appeal to the visual has been discussed by other scholars, I also investigate the appeal to sound and music. Of primary importance is the description of the Sami joik in *Vargskinnnet* and the aligning of intermediality with Sami-Swedish relations and traumatic history of oppression of Sami cultural expression.

The fourth chapter of this dissertation is based on the foundation of the discussion of difference from the previous chapters but turns to focus on the topoi of witness literature and appeal to testimony as a trope within these novels. The witnessing performed in each text is based on the cultural difference between the Sami and the majority cultures and governments and the historical effects of oppression, stigma and cultural loss. Each text approaches witnessing in different ways and with varying degrees

of self-awareness in terms of the complicated questions of ethics of representation as they relate to members of the majority representing the experiences of minority groups. All texts focalize characters or employ narrators who are themselves distanced from Sami culture and history in one way or another, but each text makes a different claim about the connections that can be made across cultural boundaries.

The conclusion suggests the implications of this study for future research. Further investigating the concept of witnessing in fiction, this time based on different groupings and types of difference, and using the intertextual references between Ekman's *Vargskinnet* and her book of ecological essays *Herrama i skogen* (*Gentlemen in the Forest*, 2007) as a springboard, I approach the use of the trope of testimony in ecological writing. While the inclusion of the trope of testimony in relation to both the Sami people and the environment may suggest an equation of the two, Ekman's recent works have expanded from her representation of women's history to include other peripheral groups, adding to the plurality of representation in terms of historical cultural memory. Ekman does not bind together these peripheral groups nor present their struggles in a singular and reductive manner, but instead reveals the interrelatedness of oppression of indigenous peoples, land and the environment, women, and in some cases, also children. I also suggest two more recent works that are relevant to the approach employed in this dissertation, *Lappskatteland* (2006) by Annica Wennström and *Let the Northern Lights Erase Your Name* (2007) by Vendela Vida. I present brief readings of these texts that both tie them to the work I have presented and anticipate ways in which these texts could provide interesting analytical fodder for future criticism. Finally, I look at the effects of witness fiction on collective cultural memory and the relevance of the budding field of cognitive approaches to fiction and Theory of Mind¹¹, arriving at conclusions of the continued importance of fiction to exposing readers to cultural difference and helping readers envision and empathize with experiences of human trauma.

¹¹ Theory of Mind encompasses the ability to read other people's emotions through nuanced cues and to track sources of information through subtleties in narration. Lisa Zunshine suggests, in *Why We Read Fiction*, that one of the main draws and purposes of fiction is the practice of mindreading and Theory of Mind.

Chapter Two – “Mellan två världar”¹²: Interculturalism in Literary Representations of the Sami

In this chapter, I analyze the ways in which *Vargskinnnet*, *Presten*, and *Indtoget i Kautokeino* provide representations of interculturalism. With their representation of the intercultural, these texts present views of both Sami and majority cultures from an in-between space by creating characters who struggle with cultural identity, investigating the relationship between members of the majority and minority cultures, and problematizing binary oppositions. Binary oppositions are often present when discussing culture and power dynamics: colonizer and colonized, perpetrator and victim, majority and minority. After discussing terms such as ethnicity and culture, I address Homi K. Bhabha’s notion of interculturalism, a concept of a ‘Third Space’ that will be an analytical lens for my reading of these texts. Interculturalism focuses on productive difference as a means of looking at cultures; and I use this as a measure of how the texts at hand represent cultural difference as positively charged, modeling cultural difference as didactic and progressive, as a metonymy of differences between any two individuals, or as a barrier between groups of people across which they may attempt to understand each other. I then move into a discussion of how interculturalism plays out in my primary texts, with the greatest focus on the nuanced treatment of ethnical identity and cultural difference in the *Vargskinnnet* trilogy.

A discussion of terms: Ethnicity, Postethnicity; Culture, Interculturalism

The distinction between “culture” and “ethnicity” is a veritable booby-trap of conflicting messages. At an early presentation of one section of my dissertation at a graduate student seminar in Umeå, a colleague suggested that I omit both terms, since “what we’re really talking about here is race, anyway.” I disagree with this statement in relation to my own use of the terms; however, in some critical literature and legal policies, “ethnicity” suggests “race” while “culture” suggests the symbols or signifiers of group identification. Harald Gaski, discussing a 1997 report from the Sami Rights Commission, says that the report “states that land rights should not be granted on a specific ethnic basis. Implicit in this principle is the obligation of the Norwegian authorities to secure the preservation and development of Sami culture in Norway. This means that rights have a cultural, not an ethnic basis” (“Introduction” 23). This use of “ethnic” by policymakers suggests racial designators. This dissertation employs Fredrik Barth’s definition, which states that ethnic groups are a form of social organization while culture is comprised of “overt signals or signs – the diacritical features that people look for and exhibit to show identity” and “basic value orientations: the standards of morality and excellence by which performance is judged” (14). The two concepts go hand-in-hand, and the reader will notice that each term likewise carries the suggestion of the other and in some cases are used interchangeably. The understanding of various characters in these texts as Sami or non-

¹² “Between two worlds” *GB* 384, Schenck 373.

Sami can be described as ethnic identification based on cultural signs such as dress, lifestyle, or modes of expression. Homi K. Bhabha, who discusses the concept of culture as it relates to enunciation and interpretation of cultural symbols, asserts that ethnicity is never singular since it is established as a result of difference; it therefore must be part of a plural system. With multiple ethnicities, however, come power structures displaying a hierarchical imbalance that is weighted towards upper classes, nobility and colonizers. Indigenous and colonized peoples have typically been relegated to lower strata.

While “diversity” today is a buzzword intended to indicate acceptance and tolerance as well as cultural education, Bhabha shows that the term suggests a static position: “Cultural diversity is the recognition of a pre-given cultural contents and customs; held in a time-frame of relativism it gives rise to liberal notions of multiculturalism, cultural exchange or the culture of humanity.” He goes on to criticize the reductiveness and denial of cross-cultural influence indicated in the term and concept “diversity,” saying that it is “the representation of a radical rhetoric of the separation of totalized cultures that live unsullied by the intertextuality of their historical locations, safe in the Utopianism of a mythic memory of a unique collective identity” (50). The concept of cultural “difference,” however, allows us to look more critically at the dynamic relationship between present and past, understanding that enunciations of past and present are strategies that represent authority and artifice (51-52). As I investigate my primary texts in this chapter, I will, in part, address how the authors’ representations of historical, cultural, and ethnic difference may either repeat or question such hierarchical assumptions.

While Jan Nederveen Pieterse encourages the “plain language of cultural difference” (30), he lays out a paradigm that can be helpful for discussions of ethnicity, its functions and its systems. He calls attention to the lack of mutual exclusivity of ethnic categories and acknowledges the constructed nature of such models. Any model or system of understanding cannot be assumed to function as clearly as it is intended, or it risks displaying the homogenizing tendency of which Nederveen Pieterse is rightly critical. Following his critique of the term “ethnicity,” he provides four new terms for power hierarchies and perspectives on ethnicity and culture: dominant, enclosure, competitive, and optional. A *dominant* ethnic system breeds monocultures, denial of difference amongst members of a society, and ethnocentrism. An *enclosure* system contains latent cultural differences that are not brought into the political arena. A *competition* system suggests the accepted existence of multiple ethnic groups within a community, but these ethnic groups are vying for control in the form of resources or political power. Inherent in a competitive system is that some ethnic groups are left without the resources they want or need. An example of a system based on competition is the conflict around the hydroelectric power station built on the Alta River in northern Norway. The primary stakes in this conflict were the grazing patterns of the reindeer and calving areas used by reindeer-herding Sami on the one hand and the desire for “green” energy by the Norwegian government on the other, setting Sami reindeer herders against the Norwegian State in a competition for land resources. The conflict was not strictly Sami-*dáža*¹³, as Norwegian conservationists joined the Sami in protesting the destruction of the environment and

¹³ A *dáža* is a non-Sami person, in this case, primarily non-Sami Norwegians.

portions of the Sami population disagreed with the tactics employed by the Sami protesters (Eidheim 48, 49).

After protests both in the north (Kautokeino, Masi, Alta) and in Oslo, the dam was built, though on a smaller scale than originally planned. “In the end, the Sami lost the campaign against the dam construction,” says Harald Eidheim, “but the Alta affair proved to be a watershed in Sami ethno-political history” (49). Journalist Lars Martin Hjørthol points out specific accomplishments that can be acknowledged as a result of the campaign, such as the Sami Rights Commission, the Sami Parliament, and rights to land and water in Finnmark in northern Norway, in addition to another benefit: “Alta-konflikten ble et vannskille i samisk historie, i forholdet mellom det samiske folket og den norske staten. Kampen om Alta åpnet den norske flertallsbefolkningens øyne for den urett samene var blitt utsatt for gjennom årtier” (“The Alta Conflict was a watershed moment in Sami history, in the relationship between the Sami people and the Norwegian state. The battle for Alta opened the eyes of the Norwegian majority to the injustices the Sami had been subjected to for decades”¹⁴ 14). While the conflict was more complex than a binary cultural opposition, it was primarily Sami reindeer herders competing with and ultimately losing to the Norwegian state in this struggle for land rights along the Kautokeino waterway.

In both *competitive* and *optional* ethnic systems, with the latter described next, we see an illustration of John B. Henrickson’s description of pluralistic states, in which “several people with different languages, cultures, religions, customs and norms can live within the borders of one nation-state” (18). *Optional* ethnic systems allow for the greatest mobility of all of the variations of ethnicity Nederveen Pieterse outlines. As a result of self-identification, optional ethnic systems allow group boundaries to remain fluid and group identification to be performed by the subjects themselves.¹⁵ In competitive systems, ethnic groups are set against one another in a constant reworking of power hierarchies. In optional systems, the equivalence of ethnic groups creates fluidity of identity, which risks deconstructing the entire concept of ethnicity, tradition and culture. Nederveen Pieterse sets these perspectives on ethnicity against each other in the following table (34):

Ethnicities	Variants	Keywords	Dynamics
<i>Domination</i>	Nationalism	Ethnocracy, chauvinism, monocultural regime	Engenders enclosure and/or competition
<i>Enclosure</i>	Dormant, latent Confinement, ghetto Inward-looking, self-chosen	Low mobility, monocultural	Tends towards competition over time
<i>Competition</i>	Patronage, Survival	Mobile, bicultural Competition over niches,	Tends towards optional ethnicity

¹⁴ All translations from Swedish, Norwegian and Danish are my own, with the exception of those from works published in translation such as *God’s Mercy* and those from *Sista rompan* and *Skraplotter*, which have been generously provided by Linda Schenck.

¹⁵ Norwegian social anthropologist Fredrik Barth, referred to above, is often noted for his groundbreaking work on fluidity in ethnic identity. See Barth’s *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, originally published in 1969.

		political and development resources	over time
<i>Optional</i>	Symbolic, low-intensity ethnicity Hybridity	Bicultural, multicultural Agency, ambivalence, opportunism Multiple identity	Beyond or after ethnicity

In *Vargskinnnet*, for example, we can see a progression from a domination-based ethnic system, where Swedish privilege results in stigmatized Sami cultural expression, to a competitive ethnic system that borders on optional in which a character such as Risten, who embodies both Swedish and Sami ethnicities, acknowledges the multiplicity of her identity but chooses how much to foreground her connection to Sami or Swedish identity and cultural traditions based on time, place and social situation. She does so with a great amount of fluidity that borders on optional ethnicity; however, the conceptualization of these divisions differs based on whether one considers the group in power or the group that is subjugated. Nederveen Pieterse includes the concept of “passing” in optional ethnic systems, which I would include in an enclosure or competition ethnic system. For Risten, “passing” at times has less to do with shedding her Sami identity than with owning her Swedish upbringing and supposed Scottish ancestry (signaling competition ethnicity) while at other times Risten negates her Sami identity as a marker of societal weakness, engendering a more restrictive, hierarchical enclosure ethnicity. “Passing” in the sense of not only adopting cultural signifiers of a culture but also claiming to be a member of this culture is an option only open to those who do not possess physical characteristics that would deny the possibility of their ethnic identity. Risten is passed up for adoption by one particular couple, for example, because she looks “too Sami.”¹⁶ By careful analysis of Nederveen Pieterse’s chart, we can see that the dominant ethnic group can function according to its own cultural expression, while the non-dominant ethnic group may be forced, implicitly or explicitly, to function in a more flexible mode, where their choices are governed by the opportunities based on ethnicity that may be presented in sociopolitical situations.

An intriguing endpoint of this system, discussed briefly by Nederveen Pieterse in his text, is the question of where we find ourselves “after ethnicity.” He writes, “Considering that mobility is a function of power, dominant groups and individuals are per definition more mobile than subalterns; they can choose to identify ethnic or postethnic, to identify ‘white,’ to shop for identity, to identify as liberal or humanist, or to step outside the framework altogether and identify as world citizen” (36). However, it is a survival skill for members of nondominant groups to be able to adopt other identities, to “pass,” if not in appearance, then in action. This depends on an interpretation of cultures as discrete parts of a system, even as Nederveen acknowledges that ethnicity is relational.

The process of ethnic identification in some of the texts discussed here involves a reworking of ethnic systems to such an extent that characters’ fluid expression of ethnic identity verges on the postethnic. Postethnicity, according to Nederveen Pieterse, is an

¹⁶ “Men när de druckit ur tretåren sa frun att hon tyckte att flickan verkade väldigt lapsk” (“But when they were on their third cup, the woman said she thought the girl seemed terribly Lappish” *GB* 257, Schenck 246).

extreme version of “optional” ethnicity, with superlative mobility and identity options. The subject is no longer locked in to one identity, by his or her own choice or by external labeling. While postethnicity may provide one view of non-Sami and Sami identity in *Vargskinnnet*, *Indtoget i Kautokeino*, and *Presten*, however, the concept of interculturalism seems to supply an even more productive approach.

The term “interculturalism” has been in use for just over a decade, with Robert Bernasconi and Homi Bhabha, among others, providing interpretations of the term. In comparing the similar buzzwords “multiculturalism” and “hybridity” to “interculturalism,” Bernasconi says that:

If multiculturalism, on a certain Herderian model, risks giving the impression that cultures are discrete, autonomous, even relatively static unities, then interculturalism, with its sense that cultures change, in large measure, as they interact with neighboring cultures, is a valuable corrective to it. . . . [T]he plurality of cultures is not compromised in the direction of hybridity. (289-290)

Bhabha discusses the concept of interculturalism in the chapter “Commitment to Theory” in *The Location of Culture*, designating it the “Third Space” (53).¹⁷ He claims that it is the space between cultures and ethnicities that provides the most interesting analytical fodder, referring to the Derridan “inter-” space.¹⁸ It is this space that produces cultural meaning. Bhabha writes, “[W]e should remember that it is the ‘inter’ – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *inbetween* space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture” (56, original emphasis). The enunciation of difference that takes place in the texts I am addressing displays the relational nature of ethnicity at the same time as it breaks down dichotomies through appeals to different symbolic representations.

Informed by Bhabha, Bernasconi and Nederveen Pieterse, we can investigate how the concept of an intercultural Third Space provides us with tools for analyzing ethnicity in *Vargskinnnet*, *Presten*, and *Indtoget i Kautokeino*. While these texts, particularly *Vargskinnnet*, explore the dynamic between ethnic majority and ethnic minority identification, the reader can avoid approaching these groups as mutually exclusive, homogenous entities, but instead view these portrayals as evidence of engagements in and tendencies of cultural practice. Interculturalism functions not only as a method of investigating Sami and non-Sami ethnic identity, as I will address in this chapter, but also as a model for intermediality, as I will discuss in the following chapter. In the fourth chapter, I elaborate on the ways in which the intercultural descriptions in these texts are framed within the trope of testimony and strategies of witness literature. While distinctions between oppressor (majority) and oppressed (minority) are generally upheld as is common in witness literature, the interplay of cultures and complexity of cultural difference allow the reader to gain a fuller understanding of the effects of oppression, the revitalization of

¹⁷ Also see Jonathan Rutherford, “The Third Space: Interview with Homi K. Bhabha.” *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990. 211, 220.

¹⁸ While I focus here on Bhabha, Heinz Kimmerle discusses the concept of interculturalism in *Die Dimension des Interkulturellen*, published in the same year as Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture* (1994). It is Bhabha’s view in particular that I find most helpful in investigating my texts, as Kimmerle is more engaged with the work of philosophers across cultural borders than the enunciation of cultural difference in literature.

ethnic identity, and the re-identification with a community from which one has been removed.

Representations of Cultural Difference in *Presten*: Sami History as Model of Personal Trauma

Presten is the story of Liv, a Norwegian doctoral student in theology who is writing her dissertation on the role of language in the Kautokeino rebellion of 1852. Liv, the first-person narrator, is particularly interested in the absent Sami voices in the historical documents from the rebellion. Liv is caught in a confused web of past and present, personal history and historical investigation. She uses her dissertation research, on site in Finnmark, Norway, as much to gain perspective on her own past as to uncover more about the Sami past. Her love for Kristiane, the puppetmaster who seems to have pulled Liv's strings as much as her puppets', is particularly formative in her search for personal identity in spite of the whole relationship lasting only a symbolic forty days. Furthermore, Kristiane's eventual suicide leaves deep scars on Liv and functions as a traumatic event in Liv's life. Liv struggles not only for answers to existential questions, but also for any graspable method of nearing those answers. The study of theology offers the ability to ask questions without finding answers, but Liv is unable to be content with ambiguity.

Liv repeatedly questions the problem of beginnings, drawing a parallel between the question of when the seeds of rebellion began for this small group of Sami in Kautokeino and when the tumult of her personal past began. Her inability to answer the question of when the rebellion began, along with her inability to confront her own past head-on, suggests the impossibility of drawing clear boundaries—past and present always bleed into one another. Liv's past and present are inextricably intertwined, as are her past and the Sami past, her present and the Sami present. The distinction that the novel draws between the Norwegians and the Sami of 1852 aligns with the discrete cultural representations of historical thought and has been reworked in the present day of the narrative to become much more fluid. Liv does not discuss the group of Sami that came to squelch the rebellion, nor does she address whether this other group has experienced the same trauma as the Sami rebels (and therefore reacted quite differently) or if they were affected by a different relationship with hegemony. Heterogeneity within an ethnic group is less of a concern than the ability to relate over assumed cultural differences between ethnic groups.

Connected to her view of beginnings is Liv's concern with history in its entirety, in which circumstances long past powerfully affect later situations. While standard accounts, according to Liv, neglect to portray situations as part of a long timeline of causes and effects, she is more concerned with a longer line of interconnected actions and consequences than with discrete events in time. Regarding the rebellion, she dismisses the descriptions that attribute the cause to the influx of Læstadianism in the area and the direct power struggle in the first years of the 1850s. She instead wonders if it may have begun as early as when the first Norwegians settled in (what is now) Sápmi, putting up fences and thus preventing the nomadic Sami from using the land that had been their grazing land for centuries, and treating the Sami as an inferior race of people.

Interculturalism and Interpretation

The security Liv feels in the field of theology is that it allows and even invites this Bhabhan “ambivalence in the act of interpretation,” at least in her own approach. She attends a conference commemorating the 150-year anniversary of the rebellion, at which a fellow participant presents the success of a version of the Bible published in the USA that has clarified every ambiguous word and inconsistency. She leaves in the middle of the presentation, strong in her belief that “alt som var vanskelig og sært og kranglete og rart i bibelen matte få være akkurat det. At det matte få være uforståelig” (“Everything that was difficult and special and controversial and strange in the Bible has to be allowed to be exactly that. That it has to be able to be incomprehensible” 170). In her own work, she asks unanswerable questions about specifics of unrecorded history: what the moon was like while the Sami traveled across the snow to Kautokeino, what the bells on the sled sounded like. Asking questions with impossible answers expands the inhabitable space in between the self and the other, between Liv in 2002 and this group of Sami in 1852.

The tension that built up over hundreds of years resulted in this specific breaking point, expressed by the Sami through hopping and yelling until they were hoarse. “Jeg kjente det” says Liv, “det var akkurat som om jeg hadde det samme i meg” (“I felt it. It was exactly as if I had the same feelings inside of me” 144). She acknowledges later, “Jeg kunne jo ikke vite hvordan det var å være dem. Men jeg kjente brannen, det som brant, det at noe var så viktig” (“I couldn’t know how it was to be them, of course. But I felt the burning, something burning, the feeling that something was so important” 144). Her identification with the Sami is not the same as thinking she is somehow privy to their experience to a more intimate degree than most, but at the same time, she feels the parallels very strongly. So strongly, in fact, that while thinking about the gesticulating of the Sami, she re-enacts the movements, thinking not only of the Sami but of her own past. “Hvem er det du sloss med?” asks Maja, a friend’s daughter who observes Liv’s odd movements (“Who are you fighting with?” 145).

The conflation of Liv’s personal past and events surrounding the Sami rebellion in Kautokeino are expressed directly in the text. The following paragraph describes first the devastation resulting from the realization that even though the Bible, with the New Testament translated into North Sami by Stockfleth in 1850 (Gripenstad 141)¹⁹, declared equality amongst all people, hegemonic hierarchies would tragically be upheld. This passage then morphs into an expression of Liv’s relationship with Kristiane:

Og så blev de bare ledd av. Det som var sant, det som sto i bibelen at var sant, det skulle plutselig ikke være sant likevel. Det skulle ikke ha noe med virkeligheten å gjøre. Ordene sto der og slang med tomheten sin, med sitt uforpliktende ingenting. Og da var det bare hopping igjen. Hopping og huiing og banning. Rop. Skuddet der i skogen, det skarpe smellet. Jeg rullet rundt på bakken med Kristiane, forsøkte å stoppe henne. (145)

And so they were just dismissed. That which was true, that which it said in the Bible was true, it was suddenly just as well not true. It wasn’t supposed to have anything to do with reality. The words stood there and swung around in their emptiness, with their unbound nothingness. And then

¹⁹ The New Testament had been translated into Ume Sami by Per Fjellström in 1755 (Ruong 59).

there was just hopping again. Hopping and hollering and swearing. Cries. The shot there in the forest, the sharp bang. I rolled around on the hill with Kristiane, tried to stop her.

Liv moves seamlessly from a description of a possible Sami perspective to her own interaction with Kristiane. In both cases, she only imagines herself as a witness, as she was neither there to witness the Sami group's expression of their oppression nor to stop Kristiane from shooting herself. If we read Liv's experience of a beloved friend's suicide as trauma and see her as a "reader" of the trauma of this group of Sami, we see that their trauma reverberates within Liv because of her own experience of personal trauma. Kalí Tal argues, "Survivors have the metaphorical tools to interpret representations of traumas similar to their own. The representations may trigger 'flashbacks' in the survivor-reader" (16). The experience of the reader, Tal clarifies, will be informed by his or her own trauma and will not be experienced as the survivor-author's particular trauma.

Bhabha writes, "The production of meaning requires that these two places [i.e. the I and the You] be mobilized in the passage through a Third Space, which represents both the general conditions of language and the specific implication of the utterance in a performative and institutional strategy of which it cannot 'in itself' be conscious. What this unconscious relation introduces is an ambivalence in the act of interpretation" (53). In *Presten*, the interpretation results from Liv's identification with the trauma of the Sami and her claim to this experience as relating to her own. Liv's search for the silenced voices is the search for the specific survivor-authors with whose story she connects. While the perspective of a character that is able to identify with the oppression experienced by an ethnic group may be seen to display Nederveen Pieterse's optional ethnicity, one may question whether this particular alignment represents an intercultural productive difference or yet another colonial attempt, this time to usurp the trauma of the underprivileged position as a means of illustrating personal angst.

The protagonist admits that her attempts to gain access to the Sami past, the silenced voices, parallel her desire to regain and understand her own past, reflecting part of Tal's claim to the reverberation of trauma from survivor-authors to survivor-readers. "[F]or meg var det noe med denne konflikten som hadde hengt seg fast, det var noe i den jeg måtte finne ut av, noe skjult og sammensatt. Som om den hadde direkte med meg å gjøre" ("For me, there was something with this conflict that had gotten a hold of me, something I had to figure out, something hidden and complex. As if it had to do directly with me" 32). She continues, "det var som om jeg kunne innta alle posisjonene, som prest, norsk, och søring, men også på den samiske siden, kanskje aller mest den, jeg kjente det som en grunnleggende, opprinnelig erfaring, en bølge av avmakt og raseri og fortvilelse, fordi lengselen og forventningen var så stor" ("It was as if I could assume all of the positions, as pastor, Norwegian, and southerner, but also on the Sami side, or maybe even that side fit best. I felt it as a fundamental, original experience, a wave of powerlessness and rage and confusion, because the longing and expectation were so huge" 34-35). She defines herself not only by her ethnicity (Norwegian), but also her employment as pastor and her background as a southerner—none of which determine her identity as Sami. What is most interesting in this statement is that she feels as if she can occupy the Sami position. It is as if the feelings of powerlessness, anger and desperation that inspired the Kautokeino rebellion are so basic and originary to the

human experience that they can be compared to similar feelings any individual may experience. Or, alternately, the trauma Liv has experienced connects her to other victims of trauma in spite of demographic differences.

This passage, however, raises the question of whether it was a basic human experience that this group of Sami felt and whether it is appropriate to compare the personal experience of individual of the majority culture with the longstanding oppression of any minority group. Liv's appeal to these feelings as "grunnleggende, opprinnelig" ("fundamental, original") makes them more widely applicable to the human experience, much like happiness, fear, or anger. The simplification occurs here by the removal of a position from its context, though. Liv has experienced trauma in the experience of Kristiane's suicide; however, the claim that she can therefore occupy the same position results in a negation of the imbalanced power dynamic between a Sami minority and Norwegian majority.

Liv's attempts not only to empathize with, but to occupy the position of the Sami rebels drive her to claim that her personal experience is reflected in the experience of the small group of Sami in 1852. Her recognition that she doesn't fully understand what it was like to be one of these Sami does not preclude her from feeling a kinship with this group and their actions and reactions. While the empathetic response of a reader for the oppressed peoples represented in witness fiction is part of the learning experience derived from this genre, a point to which I will return in the fourth and fifth chapters of this dissertation, Liv's response represents the risk of equivocating the experience of historically colonized peoples and their colonizers through an appeal to basic experience. While the reader can perhaps relate to a basic experience of being misunderstood, or of not having the freedom to express oneself in the way one might choose, or of not having opportunities open to oneself that one believes should have been extended, a long-standing tradition of cultural oppression results in much more drastic and further-reaching effects that disallow direct equivalence of personal angst with oppression.

Representations of Cultural Difference in *Indtoget i Kautokeino*: Learning Over Boundaries

Indtoget i Kautokeino, aside from the small sections set in the time of narration that include the narrator's first-person thoughts, fleshes out the history of the Sami rebellion by primarily focalizing two characters, one Norwegian and one Sami. These characters, the Kautokeino pastor, Fredrik Hvoslef, and a young man involved in the rebellion, Thomas Andersen Eira, are arguably the most sympathetic characters from each side; they are (explicitly) the narrator's two witnesses. Hvoslef recognizes the way in which the shopkeeper's selling of *brännvin* to the Sami people and the oppressive methods of the sheriff, not to mention years of condescension towards and ridicule of the Sami, function as methods of ultimate control. From the other angle, Thomas questions the harsh and violent conversion methods employed by the small group of Læstadian Sami he otherwise admires and identifies with, and the reader recognizes in him the impressionability of youth. The boundary between the Norwegians and the Sami becomes set within an interstitial area of empathy, resulting from an awareness of the way one's own group functions in relation to another.

The distinction between the Norwegians and the Sami is established in the very beginning of Petersen's novel:

Det var Thomas Andersen Eira der blev mit ene vidne. Han var tæt på Aslak.

Og det var Frederik Waldemar Hvoslef, en ung præst og humanist, der med sin kone var draget nordpå for at blive samernes præst.

Den morgen han hørte dem råbe, var han lige gået ud i køkkenet, endnu ikke fuldt påklædt.

Den morgen troede Thomas at han skabte en ny verden, mens Frederik så sin falde sammen. (19)

It was Thomas Andersen Eira who became my first witness. He was close to Aslak.

And it was Frederik Waldemar Hvoslef, a young pastor and humanist, who, with his wife, was dragged north to be the Sami pastor.

That morning that he heard them yell, he had just gone out into the kitchen, not yet fully dressed.

That morning Thomas thought that he created a new world, while Frederik saw his collapse.

Thomas' story is set against Frederik's, and these two perspectives are presented to the reader throughout the novel. While the initial dichotomy upholds traditional cultural divisions, the narrator displays an intellectual self-awareness of his portrayal of the two parallel stories unique in the texts addressed here. The productivity of difference, however, is lost in the traditional representations of cultural divisions. While each "group" learns about the other in the end, the majority regains control after the rebellion and the most successful Sami are those who are most able to adopt aspects of Norwegian culture and cooperate with the authorities. The intercultural is lost in favor of Pieterse's model of enclosure ethnicity.

The narrator acknowledges diversity within the Sami culture, belying a certain amount of erudition in the culture, in the statement, "Der var flere slags samer" ("There were many types of Sami" 20). He briefly describes the Sea Sami, who live in permanent homes and earn their living from the land in a manner recognizable to non-nomadic cultures, through "fiskeri, fangst, jagt og dyrehold i den omkringliggende natur" (20 "fishing, trapping, hunting and animal husbandry in the surrounding nature" 20). He then states that Thomas and his family were another type of Sami, Mountain Sami, a nomadic group that follows their reindeer herds through the seasons. This group is stuck in time and is, by the narrator's definition, oblivious to the outside world: "I denne verden havde de færdedes i århundreder. Deres dagligstue var tre hundrede kilometer lang. De grænser politikere gennem tiden ændrede og indtegnede på landkort i ministerierne, fandtes ikke i deres bevidsthed" ("In this world they had traveled for centuries. Their living room was 300 kilometers long. The borders that, over time, the politicians changed and wrote down on maps in their Ministries, didn't exist in their consciousness" 20-21). Stein R. Mathisen points out the danger in this representation:

This general idea of a "natural" people living in harmony with their natural environment of course has many positive aspects, but it also tends to establish a cognitive division between "us", living in the modern and

rational world, and “them”, living in a traditional and pre-modern world. They are considered to have their own separate “cultures”, in some way not belonging to the same global reality as the modern and developed societies. (19)

While the narrator emphasizes the artificiality of imposed political boundaries, he also reinforces the division between the “natural” Sami and the “political” (and therefore civilized) Norwegians and Swedes. The Sami were indeed aware of the boundaries being drawn by the ethnic majority authorities—especially in the year of the rebellion, 1852, when Russian authorities closed the border between Finland and Norway, “with disastrous effects for reindeer herders based in Kautokeino, who had traditionally wintered their animals in the forests of what had become Finland” (Storfjell 205). Storfjell points to multiple scholars who believe the rebellion was at least in part precipitated by the closing of this boundary (208). The taxation the Sami were subjected to due to the boundary shifts would also have left them aware of the politics carried out to the south and east.

The larger framing narrative in *Indtoget i Kautokeino* is presented by the narrator. He, like Liv in *Presten*, sees the commonality of the human experience more than ethnic difference: “Jeg rejste for at komme væk fra det komplicerede og tilbage til den rene natur. Den fandt jeg, men folks sind og skæbner er her lige så sammensatte som andre steder” (“I traveled in order to get away from the complicated stuff and back to pure nature. This I found, but people’s minds and fates are just as complex here as in other places” 17). He acknowledges the ethical question in his research, however, wondering if he is “arkæolog eller gravrøver?” (“archaeologist or grave robber?” 18). The position of the researcher in fiction about the Sami would be an interesting topic for another dissertation, but for my purposes, what is interesting is that the narrator seems to ask the question specifically so the reader gives him the benefit of doubt, that if he is concerned about this, he will approach his subject with suitable care.

The authorities presented in *Indtoget i Kautokeino* fall into two main groups: those, such as Bishop Juell and (to some extent) Pastor Nils Vibe Stockfleth, who view this group of Sami as innocent children whose perception of Christianity simply needs to be set straight, and those such as the sheriff Lars Johan Bucht and shopkeeper Carl Johan Ruth, who view them as psychologically disturbed burdens on civilized society: “‘De sindssyge lapper,’ sagde nordmændene, men for biskop Juell i Tromsø var samerne et venligtsindet naturfolk. Han oplevede deres sind som bløde og milde. De fandt Gud på deres måde, de var åbne som barn, og som børn skulle de belæres, for der var afgjort ting i deres tro som burde rettes” (“The crazy Lapps, said the Norwegians, but for Bishop Juell in Tromsø, the Sami were friendly primitives. He saw their minds as both weak and mild. They found God in their own way, they were open like children, and as children, they needed to be taught, because there were definitely things in their belief that needed to be corrected” 115). This interpretation of Juell’s feelings towards this group of Læstadian Sami who have caused a stir at multiple church services in the area by insisting that the priests and clergymen were not leading Christian lives, emphasizes the paternalistic and patronizing view of the Sami as children. The talk of the Sami as children resembles, on the one hand, simple ecclesiastical discourse for those who follow a Christian life, but on

the other hand, it also perpetuates the infantilizing discourse indicated by Mathisen, which is common in nineteenth-century representations of indigenous peoples.

Frederik Hvoslef, who had become pastor in Kautokeino just shortly before the rebellion in November of 1852, is portrayed as a peaceful leader, thrown into a tumultuous situation just before it erupts: “[H]an frygtede at en opløsning af samfundet var på vej, og fornemmelsen af at tingene var ved at krakelere, mærkede han også i sig selv. Skønt han var præst og ikke lensmand, var det nu ham der pressede på angående arrestation og erstatninger. Men han ønskede ikke at magten skulle tale gennem knytnæver og fodlænker” (“He was afraid that a dissolution of the society was on the way, and the feeling that things were about to crack he noticed also in himself. Even though he was a pastor and not a sheriff, he was the one who was getting pressured about the arrests and compensations. But he didn’t wish that power should speak through fists and fetters” 226).

Hvoslef doesn’t want to be confronted with physical violence and oppression. His fear that society is disintegrating is based on his comfort in a hegemonic, privileged class. He is the one to deal with the aftermath, taking confessions from those involved, especially Thomas Andersen Eira; and Hvoslef’s accounts of the conversation he has with Thomas, Aslak Jakobsen Hætta, and others are printed directly in the text. His desire to recuperate Thomas and to gain Aslak’s trust exhibits his fairness and his empathy for their position. As he writes in a section of the novel that was taken from real historical documents, “Hvis jeg ikke er fejl underrettet, har en stor Del af de Nordmænd der flyttede til Finnmark, ikke gjort sig altfor mange Samvittighedsskrupler ved ... at foragte og overse Finnerne sely, medens man havde en stor Veneration for Finnernes Renere og Penge” (“If I am not wrongly informed, a large part of those Norwegians who moved to Finnmark did not make too many scruples about despising and subordinating the Finns themselves, while at the same time they had great veneration for the Finns’ reindeer and money” 311, original emphasis). He goes on to say that the attitudes of each side are passed from generation to generation, and that it is difficult to win the trust of those who have been treated poorly for so long.

Frederik and Thomas develop a greater understanding of the other’s position during the course of the events. Frederik’s consistent presence and efforts to help the Sami sentenced to varying terms of prison and labor camps, and those who were sentenced to death, come from a strong work ethic and dedication to his profession as a pastor. “I Justitsministeriet er man meget bevidst om straffens egentlige betydning: afskrækkelse. Finnerne skal se den norske løve med økse i hånd” (“In the Ministry of Justice, one is very conscious of the sentence’s actual meaning: fear. The Finns shall see the Norwegian lion with ax in hand” 330). Thomas’ sense in the novel that they were going too far and that other means would help them arrive at a more successful ending point is apparent intermittently, leading up to the killing of the sheriff and shopkeeper. He becomes surer of this afterwards, when he has the clarity of hindsight and is able to see how the escalation resulted in disaster not only for the families of the people killed and imprisoned, but for the Sami in general, adding to their reputation of savagery and impropriety. Both character-narrators understand that on the other side of this ethnic divide there are simply other humans.

“Lapp eller svensk?”: Interculturalism in *Vargskinnet*

While the beginning of *Vargskinnet* indicates a seemingly naively simple distinction between Sami and non-Sami, the narrative increasingly appeals to a more fluid approach to ethnic identity and a more nuanced consideration of Sami identity. Early on, the insider/outsider distinction is exemplified not only by the relationship between the Sami and the Swedes, but is also present in an urban/rural, wealthy/poor, southern/northern juxtaposition. I will first trace the general representation of ethnic identity in the trilogy and will move from this into a discussion of how specific characters exemplify various beliefs about ethnicity, from stark distinctions and hierarchies to appreciation of difference. The narrative presents interculturalism as a complex but valued perspective for its positive and productive view of cultural difference.

In the *Vargskinnet* trilogy, Sami culture is, in large part, represented through characters who engage in traditional Sami methods of reindeer herding and wolf hunting, live semi-nomadic lifestyles, sing Sami joiks, exhibit aspects of non-Christian spirituality, live in socially and geographically peripheral areas, and display a strong connection with nature. Characters Mickel Larsson, Laula Anut and Nila Klemetsson are portrayed as distinctly “Sami.” The historical realities of political and social oppression and loss of language due to social stigma and government policies also factor strongly into the depiction of the Sami, as the characters are constantly confronted with the present-day reverberations of the history of oppression of the Sami.

Mickel Larsson, Risten’s Sami grandfather, is the victim of hardships presented by a traditional Sami lifestyle. A reindeer herder who loses his herd to wolves and difficult winters, he is accused of stealing reindeer meat due to his extreme poverty and desire for the nourishment he enjoyed during his youth. His subsequent isolation removes him even from a community of Sami, since he is reduced to a “fattiglapp [poor Sami],” that is, one without reindeer. Laula Anut also maintains a position on the periphery of the polite, gentrified society of the parish, largely because of his tendency to drink heavily and entertain others with stories, songs and joik. A talented orator with an impressive memory for words and events, Laula Anut was a promising member of Sami society as a young boy. These qualities were not only valued by the largely oral Sami culture, as both joiks and stories were passed down orally, but were also recognized as prized traits in Swedish society as well. As a young man, Laula Anut had identified himself more closely with Sami ethnicity and was thereby also externally identified by Swedes as belonging to an ethnic minority rather than to mainstream Swedish culture.

Swedish culture is largely associated with the larger cities of southern Sweden, university educations, middle-class incomes, and concern with hygiene and manners; Hillevi serves as the ambassador of gentrified Swedishness to the northern periphery. The strongly “Swedish” characters such as Hillevi and Dag Bonde Karlsson, to whom I will return shortly, are overwhelmingly portrayed as ignorant when it comes to Sami culture; they see the culture as anachronistic and existing in an evolutionary position lagging far behind Swedish culture. The trilogy follows Hillevi’s progression from outsider to insider, capturing her experience in chapters alternating with the experience of Risten Larsson, who exemplifies the intercultural experience and the value of cultural difference.

Risten

In her old age, Risten narrates the opening scene of *Vargskinnnet*. Six-year-old Risten is walking along a forest path from the outskirts into the village. The shadow she sees coming towards her from the bridge is unavoidable. It is her Sami uncle, who talks to her in an uncanny language, unintelligible yet familiar. When he joiks for Risten her fear vanishes, and she remembers that he used to sing to her when she was little; she used to call him Laula Anut, Singing Anut (he is called elsewhere in the trilogy *Jyöne* [“uncle” in South Sami] Anut, and in Swedish, Anund Larsson). Risten keeps this encounter from her adoptive mother, Hillevi, whom she knows would disapprove, since “Hillevi sa att lapparna var fulla när de jojkade och också de lappar som hon kallade ordentliga tyckte att det var en skam” (“Hillevi said that when they were drinking, the Lapps went around chanting their *yoiks* and even the other Lapps, the ones she called respectable, found it shameful” *GB* 6, Schenck 2).

The imagery throughout this passage makes a clear distinction between Swedish and Sami cultures that permeates the trilogy. Risten is moving between a sparsely populated area and one relatively more densely populated, i.e., from periphery to center. In doing so, she is traversing a path that itself is a border between the safe and the threatening, since on either side of the path is the dark and dangerous forest. The shadow she sees is at first on the bridge, a historically significant folkloric threshold symbol which holds the threat of becoming lost in another world, often in Scandinavian folklore the world of the *huldre* or mermaids and mermen, only to be saved when the spell is broken by the Christian influence of ringing church bells. In *Vargskinnnet*, the “other world” is represented by Sami culture. Risten’s initial fear and later sense of comfort with her uncle Laula Anut signals her acceptance of her place in this other world. She gains admittance by remaining silent about her encounter with Laula Anut when she comes home, for Hillevi would quickly have become a formidable opponent to Risten’s contact with her new world. Risten lives in both worlds, however, inhabiting a space in-between, a threshold point that is widened between cultures to become itself a valid arena of the intercultural. Laula Anut, though at first seemingly the transgressor of Swedish society who would pull an “innocent” young girl who had not yet begun to question her ethnic identity into the danger zone, also inhabits this intercultural space. Risten expresses, first through her claim to the Sami language and then through her silence, her identification with her Sami heritage.

Risten was born to a Sami woman and a Scottish lord who was part of a visiting party of hunting gentlemen; she was adopted by Hillevi and Trond Halvorsen when she was three years old and was raised in their household.²⁰ Certain elements of her lifestyle and beliefs represent Sami ethnic identity, as with the joik she creates in response to a photograph of the excessive spoils of a hunting weekend, an excess identified as a particularly Western (non-Sami) hunting practice. She marries a Sami reindeer herder,

²⁰ Risten’s mother was taken to a sanatorium when she was three and died when she was six years old, though Risten believes into adulthood that Inger Kari died when she was three, leading to her adoption by Hillevi and Trond.

Nila, and follows him to Norway to join his *siida*²¹. The movement of the reindeer and reindeer herders across the border between Sweden and Norway adds to the cultural web, while the primary concern remains the significance of the majority-indigenous dichotomy. Risten's choices are not solely driven by identification with Sami lifestyles and cultural practices, however. Although Nila is an active reindeer herder, he makes sure she has a house in the village of Langvasslia to live in during the winter months rather than in the *gåetie* where the other Sami live. Risten says, "Nila trivdes aldrig i Langvasslia. Det var för min skull han hyrde huset. För att jag skulle kunna handla i Samvirkelagsbrakka och slippa sitta på renskinn och björkrisbotten i en gåetie och veva min symaskin" (Nila was never happy in Langvasslia. It was for my sake he rented that house. So that I'd be able to go shopping at the general store and not have to sit in a *gåetie* on reindeer hides and a floor of birch branches turning my sewing machine by hand"²² SR 71). Risten's desire to live in town cannot in and of itself be viewed as a non-Sami element, as many Sami people choose to live in towns and not participate in reindeer herding, or participate to varying degrees from their urban domiciles. In this particular area and time, however, only those Sami who are too old and fragile to tolerate the nomadic herding lifestyle live within the town limits of Langvasslia. Those who are Risten's age, in their 20s and 30s, and who are physically able to engage with the nomadic lifestyle, live alongside the reindeer. Risten's decision to live in Langvasslia is as much to avoid elements of a Sami reindeer-herding lifestyle as to continue with the comforts of the traditional "Western" home.

Although she spatially disconnects from the other Sami in the *siida* by living in Langvasslia, she does spend some time in the mountains with her husband's family. During this time she is anxious to connect to the other women but stops herself, projecting her feelings of alienation onto them: "En daatje var jag. Jag hade velat skrika: men jag är ju lapp jag också! Men det ordet använde de inte" ("I was a *daatje*. I would have liked to scream: I'm a Lapp too, you know! But they didn't call themselves Lapps" SR 77). Signaling her distance from them is her use of the word "lapp." She knows they wouldn't use the term—it is a derogatory term used, as Risten sees it, only by non-Sami²³—but her impulse belies her outsider position.

Risten believes that none of the Sami reindeer-herding women would understand her life either. Risten is not only alienated from other Sami, but from her own sons who, unlike her upbringing in the Halvorsen family, have been raised in a Sami household. "De var hemma i den världen," she says, in a way that she was not ("They were at home in that world" SR 76). She acknowledges here that the inherent conflict and ambivalence in the intercultural position can result in feelings of being outside of any culture instead of a part of many. This is exemplified when Risten is playing a game with the other Swedish schoolgirls—a game where one has to answer questions very quickly, deciding between two options: window or door, lingonberries or blueberries, etc. One crafty young girl asks,

²¹ A *siida* is a reindeer herding community that follows the same migratory patterns, sometimes comprised of related persons but not necessarily so.

²² As indicated previously, translations from *Sista Rompan* and *Skraplotter* have been generously provided by Linda Schenck, translator of *Guds barmhärtighet* (into *God's Mercy*) and many other novels.

²³ That "Lapp" is pejorative has been accepted for a few decades now; see the "Translator's Foreword" from Valkeapää's *Greetings from Lappland* (1983). Krister Stoor has noted that "Lapp" is sometimes used as an insider term, from one Sami to another (personal correspondence).

“Lapp eller svensk?” To the girl’s dismay, Risten answers “svensk” and defends her answer with “Ja ä lika mycke svensk mäborgare som du,” as her adoptive father has taught her to say (“Lapp or Swede?” “Swede!” “I’m every bit as much a Swedish citizen as you” *GB* 336, Schenck 325).²⁴ The girl stalks away, irritated with Risten’s response as it neither gave her the satisfaction of forcing Risten to admit her Sami identity nor was as easily disputed as the girl would have hoped since Risten appeals to citizenship instead of cultural or ethnic affiliation.

“Det tycktes finnas en mening med allting, men samtidigt en annan mening. Oftast kände jag inte till någon av dem” (“There seemed to be a meaning to everything, but at the same time a different meaning. Most of the time, I wasn’t familiar with either one” *SR* 77). While Risten states this in relation to the multiplicity of meaning in the Sami world, it extends easily to her feelings in the Swedish world as well. She finds herself in the nomad’s paradox, that she simultaneously belongs everywhere and nowhere.

Laula Anut

While Risten is a primary object of the reader’s attention when considering ethnic identity and interculturalism in the trilogy, it is Laula Anut who serves as the enabler for interstitial inhabitation and who provides a more vivid illustration of the psychological impact of such an ambivalent position. As previously discussed, he draws Risten towards the Sami world, educating her about her background and heritage. He is aware of the dangers inherent in being seen as “too” Sami in this world, however. Risten says, “Han ville mig väl och därför sa han ifrån att jag skulle kalla honom Anund mobbro, inte jyöne Anund eller Laula Anut när andra hörde på. Men i hemlighet lärde han mig lite av språket. Han livade opp det i mig. För det hade funnits där innan jag fyllde tre år och Hillevi tog mig ner till byn” (“He had my best interest at heart, which was why he told me in no uncertain terms that I was to call him Uncle Anund rather than *jyöne* Anund or *Laula Anut* when other people were listening. But in secret he taught me a little of our language. He reawakened it in me. Because it had been there, before I turned three and Hillevi took me down to the village” *SR* 33).

Laula Anut’s inhabitation of the intercultural space is complex in that it is both tormented by and decidedly drawn towards the Sami. He is protective of his Sami identity and heritage, and he objects strongly to uninformed, intolerant ideas such as those of Dag Bonde Karlsson, to which I will return below. While he occupies a liminal position in Swedish society because he lives in an eight-sided sod *gåetie*, speaks South Sami, and often joiks, he is also peripheral to some strata of Sami society, since he and his father had lost all of their reindeer and Laula Anut subsequently made his living first working for rich Sami and later singing what he calls in South Sami *laavlodt*, or Swedish *boksånger*, songs in Swedish taken from books and sung for a Swedish audience. His

²⁴ Certainly, the issue of citizenship and the Sami is not simple, as Sápmi extends over four countries. Because it was largely felt that the national borders were artificial constructions and that the Sami nation needed a means of controlling issues affecting their own people, a Sami Council was established, first as a Nordic group started in 1953 and later expanded to include the Russian Sami. The Sami Council advises on cultural, political, and economical issues affecting the Sami as a whole, while Sami parliaments in the countries of Finland, Norway, and Sweden decide on issues affecting the Sami population in each of those specific countries.

outsider position is additionally related to his reputation as a drinker; as a result, many people from both cultural spheres do not take him seriously, even though he exhibits an astounding aptitude for music, storytelling, and textual memory. In a seminal scene in *Guds barmhärtighet*, Laula Anut recites (in dialect) lines translated into Swedish from Goethe's *Faust*, which he identifies as a poem by "W. Goethe" and "V. Rydberg" familiar to him from a well-worn book of poetry he has owned for a long time. This excerpt functions as a lyric depiction of the conflict inherent in intercultural identity:

*Ack, tvänne själar bo i dätta bröst
och vilja skilda baner vandra!
Den ena schlår i sinnligt kärleksrus
mä krampens styrka armarna kring världen.
Den andra sträcker våldsamt färden
te höga aners sfär ur jordens grus. (GB 399-400)
Two souls, alas, a dwellin' in my breast,
each from the other strives to pull away;
one clutchin' at the world in earthbound lust,
and clingin' fast in passionate embrace;
the other risin' fiercely from the dust,
our forebears' lofty realms its endless quest. (Schenck 389)*

When he is young, Laula Anut seems to take at face value the general social hostility towards the Sami, and, as previously discussed, coaches Risten to remain guarded in her knowledge and use of the Sami language and cultural practices. Later in his life, however, his feelings regarding the injustices experienced by the Sami come to a boil. The repressed hostility surfaces as, lying in the nursing home, he realizes he can no longer remember how to joik (*joekedh*) or even remember the songs (*vuelieh*) themselves. "Tjuvarna tog inte bara fjället och skogen för oss, sa han. Dom tog orden också. En sån som ja har inte ens ord att sänka sorgen i" ("The thieves not only took the mountains and the woods from us, he said. They took the words, too. A man like me doesn't even have words to drown his sorrows in" *SL* 258). Risten attempts to mollify this outburst by reminding Laula Anut of the many songs he has written, but Laula Anut remains steadfast in his belief that it is indeed the fault of the thieves that the joiks have disappeared. The *tjuvarna* are the non-Sami Swedes (and Norwegians), who came to the land where the Sami lived and built houses, settling in places where the Sami had kept their reindeer or traveled through on their way to the mountains or to the forests. They took the language by not permitting it to be taught in schools, by creating an impenetrable social stigma around the use of the Sami languages in public, and by outlawing the joik because of its connection to non-Christian shamanistic practices.

Hillevi Halvorsen, née Klarin

While on the whole, *Vargskinnnet* provides a perspective that allows the reader to engage positively with minority cultures, in this case the Sami, some voices in the text are less than empathetic. Hillevi, the matriarchal figure in the narrative, adopts an ideology taught by her Aunt Eugénie and sanctioned by those such as the pastor's wife when she first comes to Röbbäck parish. She makes racist comments against the Sami. Some of her

derogatory comments remind the reader no doubt of eugenic rhetoric,²⁵ as she refers to the Sami as if they were a different and essentially dirtier race. Her obsession with cleanliness and hygiene bolster those overtones. From the first pages, however, Hillevi's feelings towards the Sami are presented with ambivalence; she is confronted with them at the same time as Risten, her foster daughter whom she loves deeply, attempts to discover what her Sami heritage means to her.

When Hillevi first arrives in northern Sweden to become a midwife in Röbbäck, she expects to enter the privileged class seamlessly, becoming an insider in this society just as she was at home in Uppsala. She is aware of the difference between Röbbäck and Uppsala, recognizing some amount of the difference that is to be expected with the remote location of her current domicile. This is a conditioned, learned categorization resulting from her upper-middle class upbringing by her Aunt Eugénie. She is an outsider herself, though—a prim, proper, and educated big city girl from the south who has come to a small town in the north. She has a difficult time understanding the dialect and the norms of social interaction in the area. Following Barth's definitions of ethnicity and culture, we might see that though Swedes of at least the middle and upper classes could be seen as belonging to the same ethnic group, there are cultural variations in, for example, social norms, lifestyles, and dress (Barth 14). With some of the townspeople in this culturally and ethnically diverse (Swedish, Norwegian, Sami) area, such as the Lubben clan, our ability to define whether it is also ethnic difference or only cultural difference that makes Hillevi uncomfortable becomes more difficult, and perhaps even unnecessary because of the strength of the cultural variation.

Hillevi's introduction to the area begins at the inn in Östersund, where she stays the night and awaits her ride to Röbbäck. Trond Halvorsen, with whom she later becomes much better acquainted, confuses her with his dialect: "Frökna sitt i tånkan, sa han lågt och hon trodde först det var ett namn på den lilla släden. Men tånken var tankarna" ("Miss, you're sittin' deep in a thiiink, he said softly, and at first she thought thiiink was the name of the little sledge. But a thiiink was her thoughts" *GB* 18, Schenck 14]). Over time, and as she settles into her midwife duties, Hillevi finds herself growing close to a few members of the community and gradually begins to understand their dialect, such as their constant use of "ju," as in, "of course," used as if the listener should already know what the speaker is talking about. For example, shortly after Hillevi has arrived in Röbbäck, Verna Pålsa says to her, "Äldsta sonens fru hade ju dött," which, of course, Hillevi couldn't know—she's new to the area and hardly knows anyone ("The oldest son's wife was dead after all" *GB* 45, Schenck 41). This is a linguistic signal of a close-knit community in which the position of insider is made clear in part by one's knowledge about others in the community.

Hillevi has been taught, first by her Aunt Eugénie and later by example of the old pastor's wife, that the Sami are ethnic outsiders. While she herself comes to make the statement, "De är inte riktigt som vi" ("they aren't really like us"), she is especially aware of her own status as outsider amongst the inhabitants of this community during the first months of her residence in Röbbäck. Language serves as a constant reminder, as would using the Swedish language in public remind Sami who speak Sami in their homes of

²⁵ Troy Storfjell has pointed out that the name *Eugénie* could be a pun to signify the eugenicist tendencies Hillevi's aunt represents.

dominant/non-dominant cultures. Using Fredrik Barth's definitions of "ethnicity" and "culture," we can state that the introduction of the newcomer who belongs to the ethnic majority of Sweden but not to the cultural majority of northern Swedes problematizes the concept of a unitary dominant monoculture. The appeal to ethnicity and also nationality, that is, the appeal to a common "Swedishness," allows Hillevi to assert her identification with the Swedes in Röbbäck even though the cultural differences between southern, urban Swedes and northern, rural Swedes are presented as being quite large.

While Hillevi attempts to remain empathetic to the area's peripheral figures, particularly because she (as the town midwife and educated health care provider) wants to educate them about healthier living, she forms a distinct view of "us" and "them": those whose lifestyles she deems clean and respectable and those whose lifestyles she deems unclean and primitive. The Sami people distinctly fall into the latter category in her mind, and though Hillevi acknowledges Risten's Sami roots, she hopes to "nurture" this connection out of her adopted daughter. In her adult years, Risten questions this cultural identification (i.e., Hillevi's identification of Risten with the Swedish rather than with the Sami); at Risten's re-telling of an old Sami woman's lonely and bloody childbirth, Hillevi responds, "De är inte riktigt som vi, . . . De känner inte på samma sätt." Risten tells us, "Men jag sa: vi? Vilka är vi?" ("They're not really like us, . . . They feel things differently." "But I said: Us? Who do you mean by us?" *GB* 59, Schenck 55).

When Hillevi first "rescues" Risten from her grandfather's negligent care, she attempts to put Risten up for adoption. Risten's outward appearance proves problematic, however. "Med sina blå ögon och sitt röda hår såg hon inte ut att vara av lappsläkt. Hon såg ut som ett troll. En bortbytning" ("With her blue eyes and her red hair, she didn't look like a Lapp; she looked like a troll. A changeling" *GB* 256, Schenck 246). But when a couple interested in adopting comes to meet her, the woman says "hon tyckte att flickan verkade väldigt lapsk" ("She thought the girl seemed terribly Lappish" *GB* 257, Schenck 246). Hillevi quickly responds with Mickel Larsson's words, a near-repetition in Hillevi's "proper" Swedish ("Men det är hon inte! Inte riktigt" 'But she's not! Not really!' *GB* 257, Schenck 246), realizing too late that the young girl is within earshot and has probably learned enough Swedish to understand what has just been implied in the exchange. It is unlikely that Risten did not already understand what it meant to be Sami in this society, as exhibited in the either-or game mentioned earlier.

Dag Bonde Karlsson

Author Dag Bonde Karlsson, who eventually marries Myrten Halvorsen and who wins a plot of land from Tore in a poker game (neither action gains him the admiration and friendship of the narrator Risten), provides a negative perspective of the ethnographer/anthropologist who completes the Sami nuclear family in jokes sardonically commenting on the impact of these researchers on Sami families.²⁶ His view on the Sami appalls Risten and Laula Anut. Risten describes his lecture: "Föredragshållaren hade sagt att alla lappar kom österifrån och att vi var av en främmande asiatisk ras-typ och att lapskan var en rotvälska som vi hade blandat ihop från

²⁶ For one example, see the "Author's Introduction" to Valkeapää's *Greetings from Lappland*: "[A]n average Sami family consists of parents, three children, and an anthropologist" (3).

alla möjliga andra språk. Vi hade inget språk från början, sa han” (“The lecturer had said that the Lapps all came from the East and that we were of an alien Asian racial type and that Lapplandish was some gibberish we’d mixed together out of all kinds of other languages. We had no language at the outset, he said” *SR* 313). Laula Anut, with his remarkable memory for words, cites Bonde Karlsson as continuing, “Det låte som de kallar jojk är intressant för det visar hur den primitiva sången lät. Må ha ljudit sa han förresten. Vildarnas låte över hela jorden. Innan människan blev en kulturell varelse” (“The calls they refer to as *joiks* are of interest in that they tell us something about what primitive singing was like. Might have sounded like is actually how he put it. The cries of primitive peoples all over the world. Before man became a cultured being” *SR* 313). Risten and Laula Anut commiserate over Bonde Karlsson’s seemingly absurd notions, which directly contradict their first-hand knowledge and experience of Sami culture. Both are deeply affected and shamed by the pervading notions of Sami cultural anachronism. Furthering their shame, Bonde Karlsson’s belief in the inferiority of the Sami race is confirmed by certain locals, as Assar Fransson says to Bonde Karlsson about the local Sami, “Å dom är ju skolad nu så dom är lika hyggli som andra mänscher” (“Well, they’s schooled folks now and so they’s just as decent as ev’body else” *SR* 319). If we read this statement in its inverse, we observe the perception that if “they” weren’t educated, they would not be as decent as everyone else. We also know that in this community, only some of the non-Sami Swedes are educated beyond very basic literacy. In Fransson’s mind, a Sami person has to be educated in order to be as decent as an uneducated Swede.

The philosophical question Dag Bonde Karlsson’s authorship raises in *Vargskinnnet* is ethical responsibility in artistic and academic representation. In discussing the problems in Dag Bonde Karlsson’s view of the Sami with Myrten, Risten points out that in one of his novels, the Sami gnash their teeth when they see Christians, and in another, Bonde Karlsson writes that the Sami burned down the houses of farmers who refused to sell their land to the lumber companies. She is also offended that Bonde Karlsson writes that the Sami say “Tet är krik!” instead of “det är krig!”²⁷ Myrten claims as justification, “Författare har rätt att överdriva lite” (“Authors have a right to exaggerate a bit” *SR* 361), but Ekman’s reader has the definite sense that Ekman does not feel the same. Ekman is offering a corrective to racist representations of the Sami. Her depictions of the socio-political circumstances of the Sami, past and present, are sympathetic and enlightened. In her fiction, she has been engaged in issues of Sami representation since *De tre små mästarna* (1961, *Under the Snow* 1997), in which a murder in northern Sweden raises issues of isolation, insider/outsider dynamics, and Swedish/Sami relations. *Händelser vid vatten* of 1993, published in English translations as *Blackwater* in 1996 and set in the same area as *Vargskinnnet*, includes some overlapping characters, such as Birgir Torbjörnsson. This novel lays out some similar issues of Sami identity as *Vargskinnnet*. Magnus Persson notes in the references to the Sami in *Händelser vid vatten*: “Samtidigt som romanen synliggör den samiska kulturen och är solidarisk med den, får man väl betrakta Gudruns utfall mot

²⁷ “The war is on!” Also interesting is the reference in *Presten* to a particularly Sami accent in the majority language: “Hun hadde sånn samisk aksent der uttalen blir så tydelig, som om ordene i det norske språket var striker som matte følges hele veien ut, som små barn som må leies i hånda” (“She had that Sami accent where the pronunciation becomes so clear, as if the words in the Norwegian language were kids who have to be followed the whole way, like small children who must be led by the hand” 192).

Johan nära berättelsens slut som en varning för att romantisera gamla traditioner och därigenom förbise tillvarons materiella villkor” (“At the same time as the novel makes the Sami culture visible and stands in solidarity with it, one can observe Gudrun’s attack against Johan near the end of the story as a warning against romanticizing old traditions, thereby disregarding the material conditions of existence” 23). While I agree with Persson, I read the passage from the novel also in another way, as the expression of Gudrun’s frustration over the treatment of the Sami, her anger at the stigma she grew up with, and her desire to leave her Sami heritage behind and join the culturally privileged non-Sami Swedish community (*Händelser* 458). The ethnicity model Gudrun had grown up under was a distinct domination model in which minority cultural expression was passed over in favor of membership in the majority culture, resulting in a devalued position for the Sami people and the desire to “pass” as a member of the majority culture.

The representation of interculturalism serves, in *Vargskinnet*, as a strategy for appreciating cultural difference. The constant interplay between two cultures, each influencing the other, is a model for the intermediality I discuss in the next chapter, which is thematically linked to interculturalism. The ethical questions raised by Myrten’s statement are addressed further in Chapter Four, where I broaden the investigation from interculturalism and intermediality to the trope of testimony and the appeal to the genre of witness literature.

Chapter Three – Intermediality in *Vargskinnet*

Interculturalism and Intermediality

The interculturalism that is present thematically in *Vargskinnet* and the other novels discussed in this dissertation provides a model for the intermediality used discursively in Ekman's trilogy. Intermediality is, in its most basic form, the intersection of media such as images and text, or music and text. One of the media is the medium of representation, considered the "dominant" medium, and the other medium is invoked through that dominant medium. More than one medium can function as the medium of representation, as in a multimedia presentation, and more than one medium can be invoked through the medium of representation. The most important example, Risten's first joik, appears in relation to Sami experience and ethnic expression, and is a combination of traditional visual-verbal ekphrasis and musical-verbal ekphrasis. The next example, revolving around the representation of J.S. Bach's *St. John Passion* in the text, also combines those two poetic strategies. The final example, Elis' glass sculptures, relies on traditional ekphrasis alone. Ekman's use of adjacent discourses²⁸ performs as a kind of Bhabhan productive difference that also highlights issues essential to witness fiction of domination and agency. The non-dominant medium is subjugated to the dominant medium, prevented from speaking in its own voice in the same way that victims of trauma are silenced.

Ekman states in an interview for *.doc* magazine that ideas come to her first as pictures. "Jag ser bilder och efter det fragment av text" ("I see pictures and, after that, fragments of text" 64). The desire to make something verbal out of them, however, prevails over the visual image. "Det är en lust inför vissa bildar som lockar mig. Jag vill jobba med dem språkligt" ("It is a desire in the presence of these pictures that attracts me. I want to work with them in language" 64). The inspiration of fictional pictures for verbal production is my point of departure in the investigation of intermediality in *Vargskinnet*.

The Sami Joik

Kerstin Ekman's representation of Sami characters and culture mirrors the historical moment of the novel when early Swedish segregationist policies of the 1850s to the early 1900s (Kvist) were enacted. At the same time, Ekman calls into question the current relationship between minority and majority cultures. The positive potential of this relationship and the reader's simultaneous view of the "other" (minority) culture as both familiar and exotic, as recognizable and at the same time strange, positions a non-Sami reader²⁹ in relation to Sami cultural elements, such as the joik, as a metonymic

²⁸ "Adjacent discourses" is a term used within the study of intermediality and the sister arts, indicating converging media such as text and sound, or image and text.

²⁹ The experience for a Sami reader may be different, as he or she would likely have a greater familiarity with the elements of Sami culture Ekman represents. The joik, especially, would carry different meaning and would not have the same effect described in this chapter. Because of the nature of my argument, which focuses on an outsider view through non-Sami authors, I emphasize the experience for a non-Sami reader.

representation of Swedish to Sami culture. The relationship between a non-Sami reader and the joik, and Swedish and Sami cultures, parallels a third level, the relationship of cultural majorities to cultural minorities on the whole.

The joik (also sometimes spelled “yoik” in English) is an important mode of self-expression specific to Sami culture. A musical and verbal art form, it may use words and/or vocables (syllables used for the purpose of vocalizing) and has also been associated with pagan rituals and shamanistic practice. While the joik was, for a long time, thought of as a primitive form of musical practice and expression, the field of ethnomusicology has provided research to validate this art form within the larger field of formalized music: “variationen är lika stor som inom vilken annan musikkultur som helst. Jojken är minst av allt primitiv, tvärtom äger den förfinade uttrycksmedel för livets alla stunder. Att behärska alla dess uttryck kräver stora mått av musikalitet och känslighet” (“the variation is just as large as within any other musical culture. The joik is least of all primitive; exactly the opposite, it contains the refined means of expression for all of life’s moments. To command all of these expressions requires a great degree of musicality and sensitivity” Kjellström, Ternhag, Rydving 72). The joik requires a great amount of vocal flexibility, as the tones used to express different emotions or characters represented in the joik are performed using various amounts of tension in the throat as well as a relatively large tonal range. The joik is cyclical in structure, but need not adhere to regular demarcations, as occurs in Western music with its “bars” or “measures.” A passage that one might count as four “beats” could be followed by a rest of one-and-a-half beats before cycling again, and after the second cycle could be followed by a rest of two-and-a-quarter beats, leaving the listener with a sense that flexibility and impulse regulate the joik rather than a metronomic progression of time. The musical structure varies as much as in any other vocal tradition; and contains complex melodies, rhythms and vocal timbres difficult to capture in textual description or even Western musical notation.³⁰

Because the joik, a vocal tradition, is the cornerstone of Sami music, Sami music has developed largely as a vocal art, while other musical traditions often incorporate instruments and have developed with an interplay of voice and instruments. Drums were historically used to accompany shamanistic practices including sometimes the shamans’ joiks; many, however, were confiscated and burned by Christian missionaries during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. At the Assembly of 1725 in Åsele, Sweden, twenty-six drums were taken from the Sami. Most of these drums were saved and are now part of the collection at Nordiska Museet in Stockholm (Durrh Scheffy 250). Only around seventy drums from that era remain today (227).

Risten’s First Joik

The creation of her first joik is the primary step in the development of Risten’s cultural consciousness and acceptance of her Sami heritage. When Risten creates her first joik,³¹

³⁰ As the ekphrastic tradition does have its limitations in critical texts as well, readers are encouraged to seek out recordings of the joik by such contemporary artists as Krister Stoor (*To Yoik is to Live*, 2003), Ulla Pirttijärvi (*Åibbaseabmi*, 2008) or Sofia Jannok (*White – Ceaskat*, 2007) or traditional recordings on *Jojk* by Sveriges Radio (1970).

³¹ It is also her only joik represented in the trilogy.

she is still not fluent enough in the Sami language to compose in it easily and ends up joiking in Swedish with only a few Sami words. This moment, however, is pivotal for Risten. Swedish and Sami identity and culture collide at the moment the joik is created. The joik she creates is mostly in the “wrong” language (Swedish), as Risten says, because it is the only one she really knows any more. Her joik is inspired by a photograph, which she describes to Laula Anut. It is a picture of a number of men with the spoils of hunting – a huge pile of grouse and a red fox. Laula Anut has one thing to say about these hunters: “Dom ta för sig” (“They helped themselves” *GB* 93, Schenck 88), and Risten understands even at her young age that this applies to much more than the men who were out hunting; it also describes the manner in which people, particularly Swedes and Western aristocrats, are allowing their natural environment to be destroyed. While not explicit in the text, one can read the implication of non-Sami Swedes and perhaps other dominant cultures by Laula Anut’s tirade against “tjuvarna,” ‘the thieves,’ who stole not only the mountains and the forests but the words themselves.³² While we don’t learn whether it is Swedish or Norwegian or another nation’s companies who own the forests, it is undeniably Swedish and Norwegian governments and cultures who stigmatized and prevented the teaching of Sami languages and dialects in formal settings. Later, when Risten is narrating this story, she hears the timber trucks thundering by on the road. She implicates deforestation companies and Western society directly, echoing Laula Anut’s words in her thoughts, “Dom ta för sig” (“They’re helping themselves” *GB* 95, Schenck 89). The retention of her uncle’s sentiment displays that she understood even as a child that her ecological sensibilities aligned much more closely with the connection to nature exhibited in her uncle and grandfather’s lifestyles than with those who would exploit the resources of nature for economic gain.

In analyzing the cultural and social implications of the passage, I will investigate the theoretical implications of the ekphrastic presentation of music through the medium of language, which confirms othering through the subsuming of the non-dominant medium (music) by the dominant medium (language). The description of the photographs that prompt Risten to create this joik is significant not only in the similar ekphrastic treatment, but also in Risten’s commentary which, in its alignment with statements by Laula Anut, positions a critique against not only oppressive practices by the Swedish majority, but also unethical practices by the Western European leisure class as a whole. The intermediality presented through musical-verbal ekphrasis (music and text) and through visual-verbal ekphrasis (images and text) is paralleled by the intercultural experience Risten has when confronted with these images and sounds. She identifies jointly with Swedish and Sami cultures through these expressions. At the same time, the reader is brought actively into a play of cultural difference.

The Joik as Representation of Cultural Awakening

When Risten creates her first joik, it is not only a claim on her Sami heritage but also a claim to the validity of this art form. In the words of Richard Jones-Bamman, “[T]o joik today is not only to give voice to personal memories or to reify intimate connections with

³² “Tjuvarna tog inte bara fjället och skogen för oss [...]. Dom tog orden också.” (The thieves not only took the mountains and the woods from us [...]. They took the words, too” *SL* 258).

others, functions which the genre has long fulfilled in Saami culture; it is also an act of defiance, one which returns attention to the boundary separating Saami and Scandinavian populations, where the performance of joik largely has a symbolic function” (403). Risten learns the method by listening to her uncle Laula Anut, and makes her joik in imitation of his. Jones-Bamman points out that those Sami who could joik learned to do so through imitation, a point emphasized by Umeå University scholar Krister Stoor, in the documentary film *Joik* (2006). Though Risten’s imitation follows this claim, she is as yet not comfortable enough with the Sami language (since she was taken in by Hillevi when she was three years old) and must, in the end, create her joik “på fel språk” (“the wrong language” GB 94, Schenck 89). In doing so, a relationship between Sami and Swedish identity is performed; that is, in Risten’s attempt to have an “authentic” experience of Sami culture, she is forced to mediate this primacy via a hybrid form through the language of the majority, Swedish. The joik still contains its significance to Risten’s personal cultural development as her first attempt at this particularly Sami expression. It also, in its hybridity, is able to communicate content to the reader, exhibited in the language of the “majority” of the text of the novel. Jones-Bamman’s boundary is thus performed on multiple levels.

Søren Kierkegaard states in “De umiddelbare erotiske Stadier eller det Musicalske-Erotiske” in *Enten-Eller* (“The Immediate Erotic Stages or The Musical Erotic” in *Either-Or*), “Musikken eksisterer ikke uden i det Øieblik, den foredrages, thi om man endog nok saa godt kunde læse Noder og har en nok saa levende Indbildningskraft, saa kan man dog ikke negte, at det er kun i uegentlig Forstand at den er til, idet den læses. Egentlig eksisterer den kun idet den foredrages (“Music does not exist except in the moment it is performed, for even if a person can read notes ever so well and has an ever so vivid imagination, he still cannot deny that only in a figurative sense does music exist when it is being read. It actually exists only when it is being performed” Kierkegaard 66, Hong 68). This claim aids in the investigation of the effect of the joik on the reader in two ways. The first supports the *existence of music* through encouragement of the reader to create the music based on reading the text, and the second provides only a *figurative presentation of music* as it cannot be performed because of the reader’s inability to perform the joik. The combined effect on the reader thus validates the joik as an art form and simultaneously recognizes it as inherently *Sami*, as I will show in the following paragraphs.

The reader engages in the same imitation argued by Jones-Bamman and Stoor, as the reader attempts to imitate the joiking tradition when encountering Risten’s joik in the text, yet the reader is only able to imitate to the extent that s/he has been exposed to the tradition of joik and, for some lines, to the South Sami language. Admittedly, these readers are few in number. The joik is presented in the text in a poetic format, with short lines in italics set off from the rest of the prose:

nanaanaaa... snöölhken goehperh vääjmesne...
 [...]
 naana na naaa...
vargklon i hjärtat
röräven naa...na och ripan
alla är dom döa nu

döa vid jägarns fötter
riperna och röa räven
naaa na na...
hundkäftarna flämtar
naaa na na na na...
vargen går på rukammen
letar efter barna sina
månen och ögan hennes
glimmar i tjenna
i svartvattnet blänker dom
snöölhke, oske jih dan tjaelmieh
na na naaa...
röken stiger oppåt
na naaa...
kalla vattnet rusar
kalla vinden hu...uu
frost på myrn nu
lu lu luuu...
snart kommer snön
rätnoe lopme båata
då är ni alla borta
då är ni alla borta
lu lu lu... (GB 94-95)
 naana na naaa...
 wolf claw in my heart
 red fox naa...na and the grouse
 all of them are dead now
 dead at the hunter's feet
 the grouse and the red fox
 naaa na na...
 hounds are panting
 naaa na na na na...
 the wolf stalks the ridge
 searching for her cubs
 the eyes of the moon
 gleaming in the tarn
 in its black water they shine
 snöölhke, aske jih dan tjaelmieh
 na na naaa...
 the smoke rises
 na naaa...
 the cold water rushes
 the cold wind hu...uu
 frost on the bog now
 lu lu luuu...
 soon there'll be snow

rätnoe lopme båata
then you'll all be gone
then you'll all be gone
lu lu lu... (Schenck 89)

The first line, “*nanaanaaa... snöölhken soehperh vååjmesne...*,” has a twofold effect on the reader. The first effect is identification. The reader is prompted to attempt to create these sounds him or herself because the phonetic spelling that begins the line removes the necessity of knowing linguistic rules of pronunciation. The vocables “*nanaanaaa*” begin the invitation, and it is clear that the repeated vowel is intended to indicate length, as do note values in a musical notation. This seems to make the vocal representation by the reader more possible, because these are only intended to be performative, therefore the reader feels capable within his or her cultural understanding and awareness of creating the sounds.

The other effect, one of differentiation, occurs for a couple of reasons, both due to the non-Sami reader’s cultural knowledge or lack thereof. If he or she is without knowledge of the Sami language, at the Sami word “*snöölhken*,” the reader encounters the foreignness and difference from his or her own culture by recognizing this as an unfamiliar linguistic sign; it is too complicated in structure to simply be another vocable.³³ Additionally, because the joik does not follow traditional Western patterns of rhyme and meter, the reader cannot use Western cultural conventions for reading poetry aloud. Though the vocables call attention to the performative aspect of singing the joik, the reader may thus become estranged from the language and form. By means of the lack of recognition of language and of creative and performance practice, the role of Other is reversed and the reader becomes the Other to the joik—at least, if the reader does not joik and does not read South Sami.

Leaving aside for the moment the interspersed Sami words and vocables, the Swedish-language text of the joik does not only presents descriptions of images from two photographs at which Risten has been looking. The text also invokes the spirit of the dead animals depicted in the photos, particularly of the she-wolf, as the joik is not only a form of musical expression but is an invocation of the spirit of the person, animal, or object being joiked. In performing the joik of that person or animal, the joiker is calling that being into the present time (Arntsen, Jernsletten and Tveterås 65). In Risten’s joik, the wolf is invoked in a particular scene: “*vargen går på rukammen / letar efter barna sina / månen och ögan hennes / glimmar i tjenna / i svartvattnet blänker dom*” (“the wolf stalks the ridge / searching for her cubs / the eyes of the moon / gleaming in the tarn / in its black water they shine” *GB* 94, Schenck 89). The joik revives the wolf and places the animal in a context that is outside of linear time by comparing her to the moon and by using present tense even though the joik clearly hearkens back to the celebration Hillevi witnessed during her journey to Röbbäck parish, during which a she-wolf is gutted and her five fetuses tossed away by the group of Swedish and Sami men. We may remember Kierkegaard’s telling statement that only in musical performance does the music exist, and accordingly only as the joik is performed is the spiritual function also carried out. The

³³ The English translation leaves the Sami words untranslated; neither the reader of the Swedish nor of the English would realize that the Sami words are intrinsically translated into the text in some form if s/he did not know some South Sami, e.g. *snöölhken* means “wolf” and *vååjmesne* means “claw.”

two times in which the wolf exists (the celebration and the joik) signal a cyclical understanding of time in which the joik (and the photographs discussed in the following section) causes time to collapse upon itself, bringing the past into the present. This example also forms the foundation for the comparison of joik to the process of witness testimony, as is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

For an elaboration of a Sami emphasis of the cyclical nature of time, I turn to Sami poet and multimedia artist Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, whose *Beaivi, Áhčážan* has been translated in abridged form because “some of his writing is ‘intended to be read only by Sami’” (Gaski, “Introduction”). Valkeapää addresses time specifically in poem 566:

566. iige áigi leat, eai geažit, eai
ja áigi lea, agálaččat, álo, lea
loktana, luoitá
jápmá, riegáda
nu,
jorbbodit jándorat jagit
muohttagat suddet
luotkanit urbbit
ollána eallima rávdnji
oallása
johtolat váimmuid
duovdagiin
jollá
eallima gierdu
áiggahaga
álgguhaga
loahpahaga
ollašuvvá
iežáhuvvá
girjjohallá
eallin (Valkeapää 566)

566. and time does not exist, no end, none
and time is, eternal, always, is
rises, falls
is born, dies
thus,
days, years are rounded
snow melts
buds push
the river of life
into deep pools
in motion
the trek in the heart
land
rounded off
life's circle

infinite
without
beginning
or end
fulfills
changes
colors
life (Gaski 566)

The metaphors used for time in this poem align with Risten’s cyclical view: time is a river, flowing into deep pools; time rises and falls, is born and dies in rounded years; time has no end; time is eternal; time does not exist—it cannot be measured, counted, quantified because it has no beginning or end and thus no point from which to measure. As the cycles continue, the repetition causes the perception that the cycles have indeed collapsed upon themselves. This conceptualization of time also reflects the temporality of the joik, in which the expression is woven into an ever-cycling, omnipresent spiritual thread before spinning out of it at a given moment. Harald Gaski notes that, in *Beaivi, Áhčážan*, the first and last poems complete a circle as they repeat the same theme (“Introduction” 26). Kathleen Osgood Dana points out that the poem “can be read graphically as well as lexically. An arrowhead, the poem points toward the return of the annual cycle, while at the same time implicating the linear necessities of Western time” (72). The elements presented in the joik, too, relate to time in non-linear, non-teleological manner, and as we will see, Risten also acknowledges “the linear necessities of Western time.” Risten’s joik, which reflects death in its reference to both the photographs of the animals and the story of the disemboweled she-wolf, acknowledges that the animals may be dead in one dimension, but directly after this, they are brought back to life, they are moving through the landscape, they are breathing. The comparison of this effect in the joik relates also to the telling of testimony, as discussed in more detail in the following chapter. The narrative strategy of ekphrasis employed in this passage is threefold, in that the photographs are presented via visual-verbal ekphrasis and the act of joiking is presented via musical-verbal ekphrasis; the joik, additionally, describes the photographs via visual-verbal ekphrasis.

Invoking the Sister Arts: Photographic Images as Inspiration for Cultural Awakening

The inspiration for Risten’s joik, a symbolic expression of Sami identity, is compellingly an art form common to and created by Western European science: photography. Photographs are selectively used to chronicle significant moments in *Vargskinnmet*.³⁴ Ekman notes the composition of two photographs in the understated and critical manner that is typical of her style; in describing a pile of dead birds in one picture, Ekman writes, “Ja, en driva är det fråga om” (“Yes, it is truly a mound” *GB* 93, Schenck 88). The reader identifies with photography and indeed is even familiar with the common narrative

³⁴ Readers of *Kvinnorna och Staden* will also remember Ekman’s discussion of Edla’s photograph and its significance to Tora in *Häxringarna*, and are pointed to Cecilia Lindhé’s thorough and thoughtful dissertation, *Visuella vändningar*, for further discussion.

descriptions of visual images in visual-verbal ekphrasis. “Ekphrasis” is, in its most basic Greek form, a lengthy description. The term has come into popular use through the work of W.J.T. Mitchell and James A. W. Heffernan, among others, in the theoretical investigation of the effect of a verbal description of a visual image. Heffernan, in particular, states simply, “ekphrasis is the verbal representation of graphic representation” (299). The practice and phenomenon of ekphrasis in regards to the “showing” of the images through the narration is, in part, a demonstration of dominance and subjugation in discourse.

The verbal representation of these two photographs is interrupted by descriptions of the historical context of the photographs and Risten’s commentary. The halting of the narrative tempo that usually occurs in visual-verbal ekphrastic texts is subverted by the chaotic temporality of shifting space and time that results from Risten’s commentary. The reader is not positioned as an observer of the photograph, but instead as an audience for a show-and-tell, with the narrator as a pivot point between the object and the reader.

Risten’s narration thus calls attention to the subjective description of the picture and explicitly provides a specific context for the creation of the visual representation. Because of these two factors, the reader is privy to information external to the picture itself and from the experience of the taking of the photograph, such as, “Vi ska också nämna den som inte är där, som omöjligt kunde vara det. För prästen kunde ju inte gå på barnmorskans namnsdagkaffe” (“We must also mention the person who is missing, who couldn’t possibly have been there. After all the young minister couldn’t go to the name day coffee party at the midwife’s” *GB* 91, Schenck 86).

Addressing the first picture, taken on Hillevi’s name day in 1916, Risten recounts the experience of being photographed while she is at the same time describing the photograph itself. She describes the photographer and the foreign mechanics of his equipment, saying that he would change sheets of glass and then they, the objects of the photographer’s lens, would be burned with a bright light when finally he pressed the rubber ball. Risten indicates the objects being photographed, divulging to the reader the system of values of this society. The dogs, cows, and horses were all photographed, as well as people in their Sunday best. In Risten’s narrative, the reader receives important information not only about this community’s values, but also the way in which those values compare with the generally accepted values in the last sentence included here:

Men ofta låg hundarna stilla och stirrade in i det svarta hålet som åt tid och förvandlade den. Korna kom med och det berodde inte alltid på att de råkade beta i ett hägn invid den stuga där fotograferingen försiggick. De blev uppsökta och avfotograferade. I en helt annan tid, då de rundkulliga korna var utdöda och lägdorna där de betat hade slyat igen, fanns det fortfarande några gamla som kunde peka på var och en och säga hennes namn. Mönstret av svarta fläckar och prickar på det vita koskinnet hade för alltid bränt sig fast i minnet. Hästar blev också fotograferade vilket var mindre märkvärdigt. (*GB* 90)

So usually the dogs lay still, staring into the black hole that consumed time and transformed it. There were pictures of the cows, not always because they just happened to be grazing in a meadow near the house. People wanted their cows photographed. Much later, in a different time, when the

plump cows were long gone and the fields where they grazed overgrown, a few old people could still point out each cow by name. The pattern of black patches on the white cowhide was forever etched in their minds. Horses' pictures got taken too, but that was less surprising. (Schenck 85)

The photographing of the horses is “less surprising” because most readers, even those with a sparse knowledge of art history, will recognize the aesthetic treatment of the equine form over that of the bovine. Certainly a reader could understand that a rural community would be dependent on cows and would appreciate them accordingly; however, the desire to capture the bovines through the aesthetic mode of photography presents a set of values that may be unfamiliar to the reader, that cows are not only valuable to the economy of a family or community but also an aesthetic object to be captured on film.

Risten's conception of temporality is thrown into relief by the Western belief in linear time. This conflict is presented also as she reminds herself that the photograph is only a bit of paper. Obvious to the reader, however, is the effort with which Risten calls the conventional beliefs to the forefront. “Jag vill röra vid deras kläder och händer och ansikten. Men det går inte. Det är bara en pappskiva jag har framför mig. I nederkanten står fotografens namn i guldtryck: *Nicanor Eriksson, Byvången*” (“I want to touch their clothes and hands and faces. But I can't. All I have in front of me is a piece of cardboard. At the bottom is the photographer's name in gold print: *Nicanor Eriksson, Byvången*” GB 95, Schenck 90). She continues, “Jag tillhör en annan tid. Alla som skulle vilja lyssna till den tidens berättelser har jord i munnen” (“I belong to another time. All those who might have wanted to listen to the stories of that time are under the sod now” GB 95, Schenck 90). Risten's joik, which brings back those animals dead within a linear view of time, combined with the impulse to interact with what is represented in the photographs, displays a belief in multiplicity of time. Additionally, the manner in which she interacts with the photographs, with a description not only of the *punctum*, what is represented, but also of the *studium*, the historical context of the photograph (to borrow Barthes' terminology from *Camera Lucida*³⁵), further suggests a cyclical, non-linear belief in time. The conflict between Risten's personal belief and the conventional beliefs of Swedish society is made clear in the last sentences of this chapter: “Tider och tider förresten. Det finns bara en tid och i den är man tills man läggs ner i jorden på Röbbäcks kyrkogård” (“Times and times, incidentally. There is only one time, and you are in it until they lay you in the ground in Robäck churchyard” GB 95, Schenck 90). Here Risten corrects herself, calling herself back to traditional Western views in these statements after displaying the multiplicity of time in regards to the photographs and her memories, as Kathleen Osgood Dana reads in Valkeapää's poem 566.

These examples provide us with an understanding a view of an eternally cyclical and potentially multiple “time.” This view follows the cycle of reindeer herding, as pointed out by Krister Stoor in *Juoiganmuitalusat – Jojkberättelser: En studie av jolkens narrativa egenskaper* (*Joik Stories: A Study of the Narrative Characteristics of the Joik*, 2007). Describing an epic by Jonas Eriksson Steggo, Stoor claims that one needs to be careful when following Steggo's depiction of geography, because “han inte följer någon tidsaxel, utan han går efter renskötselårets cykel och då kan betesmarkerna han berättar om handla om nutiden

³⁵ Readers are also encouraged to read Marianne Hirsch's discussion of Barthes' terms in the introduction to *Family Frames* (1997).

(1940-talet) eller om det som varit tidigare. Kort sagt, ett cirkulärt tänkande där tid och rum inte följer en tidslinje” (“he doesn’t follow an axis of time but instead follows the cycle of the reindeer-herding year, and so he could be describing the grazing areas now [1940s] or how they were before. In short, a circular belief where time and space do not follow linear time” 118-119).

The photographer’s equipment, personified as a sort of monster, both consumes time and transforms it. Risten’s opinions on the capturing of an image in a photograph are clear in her comment “det svarta hålet som åt tid och förvandlade den” (“the black hole that consumed time and transformed it” *GB* 90, Schenck 85). This statement can be compared to and discussed in relation to Barthes’ comment in “The Photographic Message,” that “[f]rom the object to the image there is of course a reduction – in proportion, perspective, colour – but at no time is this reduction a *transformation* (in the mathematical sense of the term)” (17, original emphasis). The reduction of the object, which is not a transformation in that specific moment of photographing, *becomes* a transformation as the photograph progresses through time separate from the object captured in the photo. The transformation occurs as an interruption of the current time.

Risten states that as she looks at the pictures, there is an accompanying feeling that she cannot describe, that she is looking for something in the photos but is uncertain what it is she is looking for: “Jag söker och söker i ansiktena och vet inte riktigt efter vad. [...] Jag känner någonting som jag inte kan förklara när jag ser på dem” (“I study the faces closely without knowing quite what I’m looking for. [...] When I look at them, I feel something I cannot put into words” *GB* 95, Schenck 90). I argue that this feeling of unease results from the photograph serving not only as a representation, but also as the thing itself. A photograph is a remnant of a past time appearing in the present time. It gives a sense of rupture, of nonlinear temporality, of time travel. From the object to image there may be no transformation; however, this image *is* the past, not as a representation but as the object itself, and in this system, the transformation is one of time itself. The representation is not separated from the object, but becomes the object—transcendent and moveable. The typical object-as-representation that a person might understand a photograph to be becomes reversed in a representation-as-object. Risten’s statement that “i en helt annan tid, . . . fanns det fortfarande några gamla som kunde peka på var och en och säga hennes namn” (“Much later, in a different time . . . a few old people could still point out each cow by name” *GB* 90, Schenck 85) establishes that the representation-as-object has moved through time, via memory *and* via the photograph; it has been captured and transformed precisely because it has *not* been affected by temporal progression as the people and animals living in real time have.

Here we see that the photograph has a similar power to recall the dead as does the joik, although the photograph does not necessarily have a place within the same spiritual system as the joik. A joik that is intended to invoke a person or animal may well be performed after a person or animal has died or passed on, and joiking that person or animal hearkens that being into the present (Arntsen, Jernsletten and Tveterås 65). This process maintains an individual’s existence within a community whether he or she is dead or living, present or absent. Additionally, a person’s joik may be performed in conjunction with the joiks of other people in a community, enacting not only the strength of the community but the strength of the joik as cultural practice (Stoor 152-157). In a

similar way to the joik, the photograph calls the now-dead being into the present time, transcending the linearly temporal considerations of death and dying. The photograph and the joik share the same function of calling the past into the present. In Chapter Four, I discuss how the photograph and the joik relate to the testimonial of a traumatic event in which a past trauma can be called into the survivor's here-and-now.

The second picture that prompts Risten in her joik is the picture previously referenced in this chapter, of hunting visitors to the area and their excessive spoils. Risten describes the picture and then gives the background, dating seventeen years previous to the photograph. The visitors return to Thor's Hall in 1916 after a long absence; it is at the time of this return that the photograph she describes was taken. In this historical presentation, with the Scottish Admiral and the naming of Thor's Hall, the reader is brought back to the moment of the taking of the picture:

De första hade kommit med ridhästar och folk med klövade djur över fjället. Det var amiral Harlow och hans jaktsällskap. De kom ända från Skotland.

År 1899 var det. Amiralen och hans vän lord Bendam och deras sällskap kom till Skinnarviken och lät bygga sig en jaktvilla oppe vid Krokån. Det fanns granar av väldiga dimensioner på den tiden så det blev en ståtlig byggnad. En lövsångare från Kloven gjorde utsmyckningar på taknockarna som föreställde drakar med öppen käft. Amiralen sa att han var ättling av norska vikingar och han kallade huset för Thor's Hall. Det blev inget annat än Torshåle det.

Där ställde de säkert opp sig för fotografering när allt var klart och färdigbyggt med hundgård, ripbod och bagarstuga, isdös, jordkällare, stall och vedbod, badstuga och dass. Men något kort från amiral Harlows tid finns inte kvar. (GB 92-93)

The first ones, Admiral Harlow and his hunting party, had arrived on horseback across the mountains with servants and pack animals. They came all the way from Scotland.

That was in 1899. The admiral, his friend Lord Bendham, and their party came to Skinnarviken and had a hunting lodge built up by the Bend. The spruce trees had enormous dimensions in those days, so it was a handsome lodge. A carpenter from Kloven who had a fretsaw decorated the ridges of the roof with gaping dragons. The admiral described himself as descended from Norwegian Vikings, and he called the house Thor's Hall. To the locals, of course, it quickly became Thor's Hole.

I'm sure a picture was taken of those gentlemen in front of the lodge when it was finished too. It had a dog run, grouse shed and baking cabin, ice room, root cellar, stable and woodshed, bathhouse and privy. But there are no pictures left from Admiral Harlow's day. (Schenck 87-88)

The local information about the hunters is situated in the greater historical context: "Dessutom var det krig och amiralerna hade annat att göra än att titta till sina jaktvillor" ("There was a war on after all, and admirals had more important things to worry about than who was using their hunting lodges" GB 93, Schenck 88). In Risten's description, which in this case is distinct from her commentary, the focus is on the

peripheral figures: first the women, then the dead grouse and the dead red fox. The photograph is described thus:

Den gången kom det fruntimmer också. Det var ju andra tider och kvinnor tvekade inte för gångsport och fjälltyrer. De är med på fotografiet fast de står vid sidan av jaktarna. De har fotfria kjolar och mjuka, skotskrutiga baskermössor.

Karlarna har ställt opp med sina bössor och hundarna har de kuschat nedanför drivan av skjutna ripor. Ja, en driva är det fråga om och man undrar om de kunde göra av med allt eller om det mesta ruttnade efter fotograferingen. Det var ju höstsommar och inte möjligt att låta dem frysa till som när folket snarade fågel. En skjuten rödräv ligger där också. (*GB* 93)

Ladies came along too in 1916. Times had changed, and women were now keen on walking for sport and mountain hiking. The women are in the photo too, standing apart from the hunters. Their skirts are calf-length, and they're wearing soft Scots plaid berets.

The men are lined up with their rifles, and the dogs have been ordered to lie down in front of the hunters' mound of grouse they'd shot. Yes, it's truly a mound, and you cannot help but wonder if they could eat all of that grouse or if some just went to waste after appearing in the picture. It was autumn-summer, as I've said, and not yet cold enough to leave them outside 'til they were frozen as the locals did with birds they trapped in winter. There's a red fox lying there that they'd shot, too. (Schenck 88)

Risten's commentary clearly criticizes the excesses of the European aristocracy in favor of the sustainable living practices of the people of the area. By doing so, she creates a juxtaposition of cosmopolitan and rural lifestyles that sets the cosmopolitan as Other. A discussion of the photograph with her Sami uncle, Laula Anut, clarifies the connection between the hunters and other non-Sami people of the area. He says, "Dom ta för sig," ("They helped themselves,") in response to which Risten reflects, "Dessa ord, förstod jag, gällde för fler än jaktherran" ("Those words I realized applied not only to the huntin' gents" *GB* 94, Schenck 88). She thinks of these words every night now, she says, as she hears the logging trucks rumble past, filled with timber cleared from the forests of northern Sweden. The connection of the excesses of the Scottish lords to the widespread exploitation and destruction of the forest is implicit but easy for Risten to understand. This connection is discussed more in Chapter Five as I suggest how the witnessing of the forest is a recurring theme in Ekman's writing.

Intermediality: Music and Narrative

As previously stated, Ekman's invocation of adjacent discourses must give the reader pause in a thorough analysis of the use of the joik. In order to fully understand how the joik, in its ekphrastic treatment, affects the narrative, we may compare it to the traditional visual-verbal ekphrasis familiar to many readers. Thus we may begin to investigate just how "other" music is to narrative with fundamental words of Kierkegaard: "Sproget har i Tiden sit Element, alle øvrige Medier har Rummet til Element. Kun Musikken foregaer

ogsaa i Tiden” (“Language has its element in time; all other media have space as their element. Only music also occurs in time” Kierkegaard 66, Hong 68). Language and music may both use the element of time, but the joik does, however, create an “other” temporality in the narrative that may also be compared to the temporal effect of traditional visual-verbal ekphrasis which is the focus of W.J.T. Mitchell’s “Ekphrasis and the Other.” In traditional ekphrasis, the image is the “other,” silent and objectified for the viewer’s gaze. Mitchell draws on such colloquial phrases as “seen and not heard” to indicate the commonplace nature of this type of othering, saying also that:

The ‘otherness’ of visual representation from the standpoint of textuality may be anything from a professional competition (the *paragone* of poet and painter) to a relation of political, disciplinary, or cultural domination in which the ‘self’ is understood to be an active, speaking, seeing subject, while the ‘other’ is projected as a passive, seen, and (usually) silent object. (157)

Music is not subordinated to the text in precisely the same manner as an image, however. Music, like language, is *intended* to be heard and has a temporality of its own. The representation of music in a text is different from the description of a painting in a text, as, in basic form, an image takes up space but not time while music takes up time but not space. Narrative is necessarily temporal as well; however, admittedly the tempi of the music and of the narrative are not necessarily allied. The tempo of the narrative, because it is the dominant medium, supercedes the tempo of the music represented therein and in this way, the temporal effects of visual-verbal ekphrasis and musical-verbal ekphrasis provide a basis for comparison.

To illustrate further, both narrative and music take time as their element, according to Kierkegaard; however, we may refer to the possibility of multiple “times” addressed above. In this same way, we must read the temporal relationship of the musical time to the narrative time. The narrative, as it is the dominant discourse, also provides the dominant, and thus recognizable, temporality. The musical time is subordinated just as the musical sense and representation are subordinated to the verbal, and thus the reader remains estranged from this temporality. Because the reader is, as discussed earlier, prompted to recreate the joik, this symbolic performance of Sami culture very nearly overcomes the dominance of the narrative. Thus reading the joik enacts the relationship of a cultural minority to a cultural majority, the struggle for an autonomous voice and a distinct identity.

The Musical Other

The musical other can be related to Mitchell’s conceptualization of “two forms of (apparently) impossible translation and exchange: (1) the conversion of the visual representation into a verbal representation, either by description or ventriloquism; (2) the reconversion of the verbal representation back into the visual object in the reception of the reader” (164). This transfer and transformation indeed occurs with the representation of music in a text, and is called “transposition” by Claus Clüver (185). The conversion of the musical representation into a verbal representation quite often takes place in description rather than by ventriloquism, because the music is already “speaking.”

The impact of the combined identification and differentiation on the reader simulates the position of a cultural majority in relation to a cultural minority. The representation of the joik of the half-Sami narrator sets up the reader to both identify with and recoil from this cultural expression. In the joined representations of the joik and the photographic image, the reader first recognizes the technologically progressive movement with the photographs and then begins to understand, through Risten's mediation, the juxtaposition of the insiders and outsiders in the photographs.³⁶ The theoretically temporal aspects of the inclusion of these art forms confirm the relationship of dominant and non-dominant positions through which the art forms of the minority and the majority are conjoined. Risten enacts her Sami cultural heritage through her joik; however, as this is prompted by an interaction with an art form associated with the ethnic majority (i.e., photography, with its origins in France and with its appeal to members of privileged classes at its inception), the text suggests that the hybrid experience encourages a more complete understanding of intercultural identity. The relationship between the non-Sami reader of the *Vargskinn* trilogy to the passages discussed here is a synecdoche of the relationship of the ethnic majority to minority, in a move that expresses a capacity for learning greater cultural awareness through interactions with difference. Ekman's association of the joik and the photographs confronts the reader with the performative and cultural effects of this type of multi-voiced discourse and the parallel between ekphrasis and interculturalism.

Ekphrastic Treatment of Music in *Skraplotter*

The inspiration for another major example of musical-verbal ekphrasis, an instance much different from that which has been discussed previously, but which is relevant precisely because of the distinction, also has its roots in visual art. Ingefrid, the daughter of Myrten Halvorsen who was given up by Myrten for adoption at birth, has in turn adopted a young boy, Anand. Anand is an unusual boy, of small stature and slowed maturation, and he easily taps into whatever natural impulses may urge him on in creative endeavors. The primary method in which Anand expresses himself is by creating a sort of modernist three-dimensional sculpture that Ingefrid calls his "grej," his 'thing'; he creates these models a number of times throughout *Skraplotter* and each time the sculpture is different. Anand uses bits of cloth, paper, and mirrors, among other items, and creates a sort of room of his own by stringing them together throughout a given space. Ingefrid knows that the ultimate creation will require the largest space possible, and eventually Anand uses a chapel to create his "grej," accidentally burning the entire structure to the ground because a flickering candle lights some of the pieces on fire.

The notional ekphrasis used to describe this artwork aptly prepares the reader for the presentation of nonverbal art forms in the text. Ekman writes about Anand's creation, from Ingefrid's perspective:

Först såg hon detaljerna: knappar, spegelglas, kristall, silver, silkespapper, skinn och fjäder och trådar. Trådar, snören, strängar...

³⁶ For discussion of insiders and outsiders in relation to the inclusion of photographs in Nils-Aslak Valkeapää's *Beivi, Áhčážan*, see Chapter Four.

Nu ser hon mönstret. Anand har dragit ner henne på golvet. Råven däruppe i alabasterskålen är inte centrum. Det ligger någonstans i rummets bortre halva mot fönstret som är förhängt med en tjock filt. Därframme finns en hjärtpunkt, många trådar dras dit och förenas. Men den är inte orörlig. Den flämtar som ljuslågorna, drar sig tillbaka och träder fram igen. (SL 116)

First she saw the details: buttons, little fragments of mirror, crystal, sliver, crepe paper, leather and feathers and thread. Thread, string, guitar strings...

Now she sees the pattern: Anand has pulled her down onto the floor. The fox in the alabaster bowl up there isn't the center. It's somewhere at the far side of the room in the direction of the window, which he's covered with a thick blanket. Over there is the focal point, lots of the threads have been pulled over that way, where they meet. But it's not immobile. It glows like the candle flames, withdraws and comes to light again.³⁷

The reader is pulled into a synaesthetic presentation here as well, as other phrases such as "ljusen andas" and "ser bara rörelsen och hör hur det klingar" ("The candles breathe" and "sees nothing but the movement and hears how it rings" SL 117, 116). It is in this mobile creation that Ingefrid catches sight of a telling artifact; a small piece of a program from a music concert is suspended on a thread, acting as a cloud in Anand's artwork. This small bit of the program that is represented in the text as the recognizable layout of a concert program; though some letters are missing and only a few of the characters remain, the association is unmistakable. This visual representation in the text functions as an image itself as well as text.

When Ingefrid then goes to her own memorabilia to find her copy of the program, to check the truthfulness of Anand's claim that he took the bit of paper from Myrten's things, the program is shown in its entirety in the text. The reader follows Ingefrid as she "fortsätte jämföra rad för rad" ("went on comparing row by row" SL 122). Memory is also combined with the ekphrastic presentation of the concert program, as it was in Risten's description of the photographs, as the narrator says, "Hon kunde naturligtvis inte komma ihåg hur dessa människor hade sett ut. Inte heller hur orkestern låtit. Men det fanns där. Minnet av en klang som var en helhet. Av dessa röster som växte upp som sällsamma blommor ur orkestermörkret" ("Of course she couldn't remember what these people had looked like. Or how the orchestra had sounded. But it was there. The memory of a sound that was a unit. Of those voices growing up like rare flowers out of the darkness of the orchestra" SL 122). The program represented in the text not only creates a set of associations for the reader, but also ties together the image and music. As Ingefrid references the sounds of the day, the "klang som var en helhet," 'sound that was a unit,' the reader is observing the program for herself. The image and the sound become connected through the textual representation.

Particularly interesting in a juxtaposition of Risten's photographs and joik with Anand's "grej" and the musical event connected with it is the difference between the two ekphrastic moments of subject matter and of the approach to an artistic experience.

³⁷ Again here, as mentioned in previous chapters, I am indebted to Linda Schenck for providing translations for the passages from *Sista rompan* and *Skraplotter*.

Risten is prompted to express herself after being moved fundamentally, even ethically, by what she sees in the photograph. Anand's art, on the other hand, is abstract and closer to a concept of art-for-art's sake. The musical event connected to this is a traditional piece of music, performed in a formal concert at a church. Anand's artwork and Risten's joik, however, are both examples of site-specific art; they are created in a specific place and relate distinctly to their surroundings, and both the place and the artistic expression, regardless of medium, gain meaning because of the interplay between place and art. Interculturalism and communication of self and place become foregrounded in Anand's artwork just as in Risten's joik, as Anand attempts to find his mode of expression in his current world, a world that otherwise does not seem as welcoming because of his "foreign" look, actions, stature, etc. The parallel between interculturalism and the interplay between cultures present in Anand's artwork and intermediality plays out through the representation of J.S. Bach's *St. John Passion*, which in content is also related to the theme of witness literature and the persecution of a people.

St. John Passion

Ingefrid's experience in the audience of an Easter performance of the *St. John Passion* in Engelbrektskyrkan in Stockholm provides an excellent means for testing the experience of the ekphrastic treatment of music in narrative and the investigation of the productive difference of media, as parallel to and symbolic of cultural difference. This section of the novel describes the piece of music as it is performed, with indications of key moments in the music score and therefore a means by which to measure the timing of the text compared to that of the music. The music itself is described adjectivally and the reader receives not only descriptions of the music, but also of the effect of the music on the listener, Ingefrid. The effect on Ingefrid is often combined with the description of the music itself, when the narrator is placed in the position of experiencing the music and communicating it to the reader.

The conflict of musical time and narrative time is eased here by the appeal to the text in the music. Ingefrid refers to the text of the Passion, enabling a reader to follow the progress of the piece as well as the narrative, as can be done in actual ekphrasis when the reader knows the painting or visual artwork being described. The references to the vocal sections, with Gethsemane and the choir and the evangelist, create a distinct timeline for the correlation between text and musical performance. Here, too, we see the relationship of dominant to non-dominant media, and the temporal relationship of the musical time to the narrative time. Narrative, as the dominant discourse, also provides the dominant temporality. The musical time is subordinated just as the musical sense and representation are subordinated to the verbal.

There is, however, another way in which this particular use of music could be analyzed. If we consider the ways in which music is used in other moving image media such as film, television or theater productions, we encounter the distinction between phenomenal music and noumenal music, terms borrowed from Plato's "Allegory of the Cave."³⁸ Phenomenal music is the music the characters can actually hear, music that is being performed or played in the vicinity and that may be acknowledged by the

³⁸ For more on this definition, see Carolyn Abbate's *Unsung Voices* (1991).

characters. Noumenal music, on the other hand, is the music that occurs outside of the space provided for the characters. To illustrate, noumenal music may be a romantic melody at the time of a kiss, or foreboding music as a young woman enters a room in which an armed burglar is lurking. It is music that is not accessible to the characters, as Plato's noumen is not accessible to humankind. Typically, as may be deduced from these definitions, the audience member or viewer has access to both types of music, as the noumenal music is inaccessible only to the characters. The viewer is present outside of that space, of that "reality," in which the characters are living. The situation with musical ekphrasis is quite different. In the case of the *St. John Passion* in *Skraplotter*, the music is phenomenal to Ingefrid. She is present at the performance and aware of the production of sound. At the same time, the music is elevated nearly to the noumenal level for the reader. The reader is aware of the music because he or she has been told it is there; however, the reader cannot actually hear it. The music is, in this ekphrastic treatment, placed in the inaccessible realm of the noumen. One could theorize further based on Kierkegaard's statements on the existence of music as it is "read" rather than "performed" (see above), that the concept of noumenal music as described through ekphrastic treatments would place music as existing only in a figurative sense; though a seeming contradiction, Kierkegaard's statement serves to strengthen the argument here, as it is only through a figurative understanding that the reader could grasp the existence of the noumen.

The discursive appeal to intermediality in the *Vargskinnnet* trilogy provides thought-provoking examples from which to analyze the intersections of adjacent discourses with text as the dominant discourse. Ekman's inclusion of the joik causes the reader to question the performative and cultural effects of this type of musicalized text, and the photographic inspiration for the joik provides a springboard into an interarts discussion. The passage of musical ekphrasis in which Bach's *St. John Passion* is described invites the reader to consider the impact of a verbal representation of a musical representation. The description of Anand's site-specific installations highlights the inability of the text to represent visual art with any accuracy, as it cannot even be named appropriately as anything other than Anand's "grej."

Throughout this discussion, I have dealt with cultural production in various media – music, visual art and text – and have investigated the ways in which dominant and non-dominant media interact with each other to create the final product presented to the reader through the dominant medium of text. Likening intermediality to interculturalism allows us to see, however, that it is, in the end, the productive space of difference between media and between cultures that creates meaning. The inclusion of these other media references in *Vargskinnnet* enhances and expands the communication of culture in the texts.

Life as a Nightmare: an Ekphrastic Artistic Response to Mass Destruction

As Risten's joik and Anand's installation reflect interstices of culture and media, Elis' sculptures investigate the interstices between life and death and the aftermath of large-scale violence. Risten's joik and Elis' sculpture are connected by their ideational origins in destruction and brute force technologies. While Risten's joik is inspired by the photograph of the hunters' spoils, Elis' glass sculptures are a response to the massive

destruction of the atomic bomb and the Holocaust, which expose the reverberations of violence visited upon the next generation. Finally, we can look at the textual representation of Elis Eriksson's sculptures, which he creates under the pseudonym Elias Elv. Myrten Halvorsen, Hillevi's daughter, has a brief affair in Röbbäck with the man she knows only as the artist Elias Elv, not as the young boy, Elis, who grew up in the same parish as Myrten, in poverty, with an abusive father and grandfather. Pregnant with his child, she conceals the pregnancy from her family by living in Stockholm until she is sent away to a home for unwed mothers. Although she never learns the true identity of her child's father, she discovers more about Elv's artwork through a newspaper article, which employs visual-verbal ekphrasis in its description and critique of the objects:

livets tillblivelse som mardröm [. . .]

Medan det i hans övriga glasskulpturer finns en livsbejakande hämningslöshet och experimentlusta, som stundom kan bli en smula yr, ställs vi här inför en övervägd önskan att överrumpla och chockera. [. . .]

Föremålen är groteskt tunga och färglösa. De härmar livets tillblivelse men saknar liv. [. . .]

Den mänskliga deformationen avsatte sig under krigsåren i den bestialitet och de orgier av sadism, som öppnandet av de nasistiska koncentrationslägren har visat. Har vi icke haft nog av dem? Är det icke tid att lämna dem bakom oss? [. . .]

Är icke det lika mycket en förfälskning som den mest förskönande romantik skulle vara? [. . .]

Sedan kom de där orden som gjorde henne sjuk. Det stod: *Är det hjärnsubstans eller snö som väller ur barnets hjärna?*

Ja, hon var sjuk. [. . .] Det hade stått om ett barn på fler ställen. *Barnhuvud. En hjälplös kropp.*

The inception of life as a nightmare [. . .]

While in his other glass sculptures there is an uplifting sense of uninhibitedness and a desire to experiment, sometimes a bit over the top, here we find an artist whose conscious intent is to astonish and shock. [. . .]

The sculptures are absurdly heavy and colorless. While they imitate the origins of life, they are lifeless. [. . .]

Human deformity took expression during the war, in the bestiality and orgies of sadism revealed when the Nazi concentration camps were opened. Have we not had enough of that? Has the time not come to put it behind us? [. . .]

Is this not just as much a falsification as the most over-embellished romanticism? [. . .]

After that were the words that made her feel sick. They read: *Is it white matter or snow pouring out of the child's brain?*

Yes, she felt sick. [. . .] There had been things about a child elsewhere, too. *Child's head. A helpless body. (SR 285-287)*

The reader is bombarded with the colliding messages of Elv's history, the analytical lens through which the journalist attempts to perceive the artwork, the context of the post-war and post-Holocaust horrors which raised issues of the ethics of viewing the (tortured) human body, and the grotesque and macabre images portrayed through questioning of

whether it is brain matter or snow that is coming from the child's head.³⁹ Myrten's disgust stems from the brief affair she had with Elv (whom readers discover is Elis Eriksson from Svartvattnet) and the resulting pregnancy and birth of her daughter; the comparison of the fetus that is neither living nor dead to the idea of her own child, whom she surrenders for adoption, is uncomfortable because Myrten's daughter is also caught in-between: she lives, yet has been renamed and knows another woman as her mother.

As Cecilia Lindhé points out, "I Elias konst sammanstrålar konstverk och kropp i glaset, ett material som i de tidigare romanerna symboliserat gränser mellan kroppar" ("In Elias' art, artwork and body converge in glass, a material that in the earlier novels symbolized the boundary between bodies" 254). For Elis Eriksson, this particular exhibit demonstrates the boundary between life and death; the interstices of existence itself. He expresses his desire to create a child who is "inte dött. Inte levande heller" ("not dead. Nor living, either" *SR* 335). These sculptures are inspired by the dropping of the atomic bomb and also by the genocide of the Holocaust—mass destruction and trauma prompt an artistic response. Glass becomes a medium for representations of trauma, and the pieces lock the forms between life and death.

The Abject Womb

Elis continues his artistic production with a focus on the body, specifically on the borderliner figures who were his first objects of artistic study. A doctor friend allows Elis to see a still-born fetus, which Elis first draws in two dimensions and later incorporates in his three-dimensional artwork. Elis says to his wife Eldbjörg,

Jag ville teckna ett barn. En barnkropp. Man kan inte göra det utan att *se*.

Men det fanns ju barn...levande barn.

Det rörde sig inte om det. Inte om levande barn.

Varför skulle du teckna ett dött barn?

Inte dött. Inte levande heller.

I wanted to draw a child. A child's body. You can't do that without *seeing*.

But there were children ... children who were alive.

That wasn't what it was all about. It wasn't about living children.

Why would you draw a dead child?

Not dead. Not alive either. (*SR* 334-335)

The possibility of existence between living and dead aligns with the productivity of the space between juxtapositions and the problematizing of stark distinctions. Elis' eventual production is not a two-dimensional drawing or painting but the glass form with a "fetus" inside. The glass, which resembles amniotic fluid, provides a window into the womb, inviting the viewer's gaze.

³⁹ The chapter that follows this passage begins with a description of a painting by Hieronymus Bosch, a reference that continues the visual representation of grotesque bodies, as this Dutch artist is widely known for these depictions.

Inspired to the medium of glass by the tales of the atomic bomb turning sand into glass,⁴⁰ he thus is attempting to appropriate the womb for himself—an abject womb—in an effort to reclaim life from the dead infant from his childhood. “The abjection of flows from within [that is, bodily fluids] suddenly become the sole ‘object’ of sexual desire—a true ‘ab-ject’ where man, frightened, crosses over the horrors of maternal bowels and, in an immersion that enables him to avoid coming face to face with an other, spares himself the risk of castration” (Kristeva 53). Elis reverses the system and, instead of immersing himself in the maternal bowels, removes the womb from the maternal bowels and places this outside of the biologically intended space. The border between inside and outside is necessarily breached, and the horror displayed in the reviews of these glass sculptures and in Myrten’s reaction to these reviews are responses to Elis’ use of the abject (*Är det hjärnsubstans eller snö som väller ur barnets hjärna?* Ja, hon var sjuk. [*Is it white matter or snow pouring out of the child’s brain?* Yes, she felt sick” SR 287]).

“Formen fanns före livet” (‘Form existed before life’), according to Elis, as he considers the process of creating his glass sculptures, claiming that he does not hold such a strict distinction between life and death. An artist friend notices in an unusual glass form that Elis has created that “det är liv i det” (“there’s life in it” SR 159), though to Elis, form exists before life. As Elis creates forms, he is thus taking Kristeva’s boundary of abjection and creating another stage that is apart from the life/death distinction. In doing so, he opens up space for his own generative powers as an artist, the interstices of productive difference. We notice in Elis’ statement, the form exists before the life, a poetics related to Ekman’s description of how ideas come to her: first in pictures, then they develop into narrative. The process reflects the conscious effort of narrating trauma.

Intermediality and Interculturalism: Questions of Dominance

The intermedial expressions in the *Vargskinn* trilogy, which has been the primary focus of this chapter, parallel the theme of interculturalism present in *Vargskinn*, *Presten*, and *Indtoget i Kautokeino*. The theoretical foundations of these investigations assume the presence of power-based hierarchies, displaying distinct dominant and non-dominant positions. In certain ways, dominance does play a role as one medium inhabits the dominant position. Intermediality compares to trauma in that one medium usurps the expression of another medium. The non-dominant medium might be seen to suffer from the silencing nature of this relationship as do the victims of trauma; however, because I am talking about rhetorical strategies instead of lived experience or even fictional lived experience, the question of ethics is not directly relevant, but only by analogy.

In Ekman’s case in particular, however, I focus less on who or what is in which position and more on what is produced on these borderlines. As Cecilia Lindhé points out, the important understanding is “att förhållandet inte beskrivs som en maktkamp utan som ett dialogiskt förhållande” (“that the relationship is not described as a power struggle but instead as a dialogic relationship” 25). In the parallel relationship between intermediality and interculturalism, we can question how the ways in which one medium

⁴⁰ “När sand smälter blir det glas. Han såg ett dödens landskap av glas. Det var osmakligt men han rådde inte för det” (“When sand melts, it becomes glass. He saw a deathly landscape of glass. It was distasteful but he couldn’t help it” SR 149).

is expressed in conjunction with another help us understand the ways in which cultural difference functions. We can return to Homi K. Bhabha's statement, "[W]e should remember that it is the 'inter' – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *inbetween* space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture" (56, original emphasis). The negotiation between word and image, music and word, and the translation from one medium into another need not provide us with hierarchies in order for a productive difference to occur. Instead, the questions that arise from such a negotiation and translation are valuable for the parallel conversation of the negotiation of cultural difference.

Chapter Four – Novel as Witness, Narrative Techniques, and Claims of Historicity

The previous chapters of this dissertation outline and analyze the ways in which *Vargskinnet*, *Presten*, and *Indtoget i Kautokeino* investigate the meeting of majority and minority cultures not only through the content of the novels, but also by analogy through the collision of majority and minority discourses and media. In this chapter I will show how, based on these themes, the novels can be seen as examples of the genre of witness fiction due to the fictional representation of actual historical trauma and the appeal to particular features of witness literature, namely a distance or an absent presence and the role of the listener. These themes rely on tropes of testimony and witnessing within the fictional realm in order to bring to the reader a greater understanding of historical cultural trauma and hope for harmony and appreciation of difference in the future. While the distinction between fact and fiction is less crucial than the investigation of the impact of the texts, the narrative strategy of documentarism serves to anchor the text in a historical reality.

The concept of witness fiction cannot be discussed without knowing something of the identity of the author who is representing the experience and the ethical consideration of how the representation is approached and carried out. Kalí Tal discusses the cultural codification of trauma in her book, *Worlds of Hurt*, saying, “The work of the critic of the literature of trauma is both to identify and explicate literature by members of survivor groups, and to deconstruct the process by which the dominant culture codifies their traumatic experience” (18). Tal focuses on literature written by survivors and does not approach trauma-related fiction written by non-survivors as is the topic of this dissertation. Her discussion of codification, however, of knowing who is talking⁴¹, and of what can be achieved through awareness of these matters can be related to witness fiction written by non-survivors. Tal says, “Our end goal is a community based on the full and informed participation of all its members – a community where difference is not only accepted but cherished because it provides us with new frames of reference and new ways of understanding ourselves” (5). Important to note, and discussed in more detail below, is that Ekman, Ørstavik and Petersen contribute to the possibility for the reader to be an informed participant by engaging in a transparent presentation of their own identities. The authors further negotiate their responsibility towards the representation by primarily focalizing not Sami characters but those who are attempting to understand Sami culture and history, reflecting the role of the reader.

As discussed in the introduction to this dissertation, the topoi of witness *literature* relate to the telling of psychological trauma. Scholars such as Dori Laub and Shoshana Felman, Marianne Hirsch, Elie Wiesel and Horace Engdahl have noted the ever-present absence of the voice of the witness, an obvious silence. The literature exhibits itself as testimony given for the internal “thou,” not for the purpose of communicating coherently to the reader. Testimony is, in part, given to prevent the erasure of memory, both individual and cultural. The speaker may be talking in hopes that someone will be able to

⁴¹ Tal reveals more of herself to readers than is typical in critical works, citing Philip Hallie’s statement “Narratives need narrators, and storytellers have much to do with the nature and style of their stories” (4).

make sense of what he or she is saying, but the events may not present a reality to which the reader can relate. The listener, however, plays an important role in the construction of memory. Other features of witness literature are repetition and reworking of images or events (in the manner of Freudian analysis), the presence of a metaphorical void or discursive distance in the text, and the reflexive and generative quality of the listener.

Features specific to witness *fiction* are an imaginative reworking of events in ways that can elicit opposing reactions from the reader, either to confuse a commonly accepted sense of causality by de-codifying the representation of trauma or to imbue events with cohesiveness. Witness fiction is not to be confused with falsified witness literature in which the reader is fooled into thinking that she is reading survivor testimony. Witness fiction often includes characters who are present on the borderlines of trauma or distanced in some way from it, upholding the implicit agreement that separates witness fiction from falsified witness literature. “By simulating the position of the eyewitness, the artful writer can lend unwarranted authenticity to his text” (Engdahl 6); however, if the reader is aware that the text is “inauthentic” – that is, not actually survivor or eyewitness testimony – the impression is quite different. The ways in which this is communicated to the reader can be very straightforward. Kerstin Ekman, Hanne Ørstavik, and Martin Petersen all write under their own names and are public figures within the Scandinavian literary community. They make no attempt to conceal their identities by using pennames or pseudonyms, or by producing writing under various authorial personae.

Furthermore, their characters’ profiles encourage a distancing from the survivor-position. For example, *Vargskinnet* not only describes the experience of a half-Sami, half-Scottish woman as she investigates her ethnic identity, but also includes in tandem the experience of a Swedish woman from an urban area creating a life for herself in rural northern Sweden. *Presten* describes historical events through the narrator’s shroud of confusion, a narrator who is enacting a process many of the readers may be taking part in as a member of the privileged majority trying to understand the severe cultural oppression of a minority group. Similarly, the frame of *Indtoget i Kautokeino* supplies the reader with the curious outsider attempting to gain perspective, while the embedded story focuses half of the time on another outsider, the Norwegian pastor in a Sami region.

Vargskinnet, *Presten* and *Indtoget i Kautokeino* appeal to the Sami relationship with the majority culture as a means of both establishing and breaking down ethnic borders. The narrators act as second-hand witnesses, presenting testimony of events that occurred in a specifically Sami past. The appeal to witnessing is sometimes explicit, as in *Indtoget i Kautokeino* when the narrator says, “Det var Thomas Andersen Eira der blev *mit ene vidne*” (“It was Thomas Andersen Eira who was *my first witness*” 19, my emphasis).⁴² Each, however, uses a narrative framework that results in a wide range of effects on the reader regarding the way the Sami are perceived in relation to the non-Sami in the novels. While the non-Sami/Sami distinction in each text sets up an insider/outsider dynamic, non-Sami characters are able to identify with the Sami or outsider position in *Vargskinnet* and *Presten*, encouraging recognition of an intercultural space. *Indtoget i Kautokeino* presents a slightly different view in which the recognition of the “other” prompts a deeper understanding of self. The narrative structure of these novels, particularly the documentary strategies of *Presten* and *Indtoget i Kautokeino*, further uses boundaries to create

⁴² Fredrik Hvoslef is his other witness.

a dialogue between the narrative itself and historical documents and, by analogy, the time of narration and the time of the narrated event.

Trauma and the Sami

Dori Laub stresses the necessity of couching reflections of trauma within historical reality. This perspective on the importance of survivor testimony in light of violent personal trauma provides us with one of the main differences between the trauma of the Sami, resulting from an oppression drawn out over a long stretch of time and with violence visited on the oppressed via poverty, occasional bloodshed, and psychologically harmful stigmatization; and the trauma of an attempted genocide, as we see with the Holocaust or some brutal forms of colonization. Coming to terms with the truth of Sami historical oppression requires an understanding of the ways in which majority governments and societies stigmatized and sometimes went so far as to outlaw symbols of Sami culture, with effects that may be overlooked because of a more subtle connection between oppression and shortened lifespan, negative self-image or an occasional, small-scale act of violence. In some cases, a lack of desire to identify with one's Sami heritage may stem from these stigmas or the cultural genocide that was a result of the assimilationist policies in Norway and Sweden. This process provides a different type of psychological and physical trauma than does the planned and systematic torture and murder of family, friends, and fellow human beings in concentration camps.

A sense of being “less-than” or secondary, as well as an awareness of the lack of respect for traditional knowledge, can be read in the writings of Sami authors Johan Turi and Nils-Aslak Valkeapää. Their methods of presenting the situation represent two extremes; while Turi phrases his commentary diplomatically, Valkeapää is unhesitatingly frank and even confrontational. Valkeapää has the backing of the indignation and social conscience of the 1970s when he originally writes the Finnish *Terveisiä Lapista* in 1971, which was translated to English by Beverly Wahl as *Greetings from Lappland* and published with a new introduction in 1983. He reflects on his original intent in the introduction to the English edition, saying, “The idea was to write so as to cause controversy and to create an urge in people to get involved, argue” (1). Valkeapää confirms the culturally devastating effects on the Sami by the majority governments even in spite of a lack of bloodshed, saying, “Really highly advanced states carry out genocide without blood, without physical violence. That's how it is” (2).

One form of oppression of the Sami is the devaluation of traditional knowledge. We see an awareness of this in Turi's *Muittalus samid birra* (1910, *Turi's Book of Lappland* 2011).⁴³ In the chapter “Her begynder fortællingen om Lappernes doktorkunster,” ‘Here Begins an Account of the Sámi's Healing Methods,’ Turi reveals that he will not write about all of the medical practices developed and practiced by the Sami, because “bogen vil blive læst over hele verden og mange lærde herrer passer det slet ikke at høre om alle raadene de tror ikke paa dem, de spotter kun Lappens dumhed, skønt, hvis de saa alt, hvad Lappen udrettede, saa undredes de over den kraft, og hvorfra den kommer” (“this book will be read the whole world over and many educated gentlemen do not need to

⁴³ The translation has been provided by Professor Thomas DuBois (UW-Madison) and is forthcoming in print.

hear of these treatments. They won't believe in them, and they will just poke fun at Sami craziness, although, if they were to see what the Sami do, they would wonder at their power and where it comes from" Turi 75, DuBois 78). In this statement, Turi describes how Sami medical beliefs are perceived by "lærda herrer," 'educated gentlemen,' but we also see the conviction that if people only understood more about Sami culture, they would be impressed.

Turi is well aware of the cultural differences and seeks to educate the non-Sami public about Sami life. As Coppélie Cocq notes, Turi witnessed a great deal of change in the Sami community as a result of policies put forth by the majority governments. These policies particularly affected schooling and reindeer herding (Cocq 38). In the beginning of his book, Turi writes:

[J]eg har forstaaet, at Sverigs [*sic*] regering vil hjælpe os saa meget, som den kan; men de faar ikke den rigtige opfattelse af vort liv og stilling, fordi Lappen ikke rigtig kan forklara det saaledes som det er. Og grunden dertil er, at naar Lappen kommer ind i et lukket rum, forstaar han ikke ret meget, naar vinden ikke kan blæse ham i næsen. Hans tanker kan ikke rinde, naar der er vægge og lukket over hovedet. (1)

I have come to understand that the Swedish government wants to help us as much as it can, but they cannot manage to do so too well when it comes to our lives and conditions, because a Sámi cannot explain to them exactly how things are. And this is the reason: when a Sámi becomes closed up in a room, then he does not understand much of anything, because he cannot put his nose to the wind. His thoughts don't flow because there are walls and his mind is closed in. (DuBois 1)

Turi presents the problem as a historical misunderstanding of culture and a forced meeting on strange turf. He says in the section coyly named, "Her nedenfor fortælles mera om Lapperne, og det er næsten om hovedsagen," 'Here Below a Further Account of the Sámi is Given, and This is Practically the Most Important Thing,' (Turi 50, DuBois 53) that as far as the Crown is concerned, the Sami have been passed over like an illegitimate child. Land has been given to the non-Sami to such an extent that the Sami are unable to continue their lifestyles, and this land, once given, cannot be taken back. This section is buried in the middle of the text, and the statement that "det er *næsten* om hovedsagen" ("*practically* the most important thing," my emphasis) suggests that Turi is avoiding being too heavy-handed. He discusses the difficulty of the Sami living in close proximity to settlers, the reindeer not being able to survive on the lichen that exists in Jukkasjärvi and Karesuando, and the Sami sons being driven away from reindeer herding and forced to pursue other careers. All this because "kronen har taget horden fra lapperne og givet bønderne alle sumpene og det tørre land. Og endnu værre er det med den jord, som er delt land mellem bønderne i Finnebyen" ("the Crown has taken away all the Sámi's land given it all to the settlers, the marshes as well as the dry lands. And the situation is even worse on those lands that have been divided into open fields among settlers in Finnish villages" Turi 50, DuBois 54). Turi's diplomatic statements that he knows that the Crown now wants to correct past injustices are undermined by the repeated accusation that it is too late. His admonition comes also in the form of a moral to the story of how the dog came to be in service of the Sami. The dog chooses to serve

the Sami, in part because it has difficulty finding food on its own and in part because it is scared of the wolf. The agreement is based on the respectful treatment of those in one's service, as the only things the dog asks for besides food are not to be beaten when he can no longer do the same work and to be mercifully and quickly hanged at the end of his life (Turi 69, DuBois 72). The lesson to be learned in this fable is: "Og det skal enhver huske, at de ikke er altfor haarde mod deres undergivne, det være sig mennesker eller dyr" ("Thus every person should remember not to be too hard to those beneath him, be they other people or creatures" Turi 69, DuBois 73).⁴⁴

According to Harald Gaski, this is not the only passage in which Turi likens the relationship between the Sami and non-Sami to human and animal. The section entitled "Fortælling om Lapplands ukendte dyr," 'An Account of the Unknown Animals of the Sámi Homeland,' also reflects the relationship between the Sami and the State. Here the tale functions fully as allegory for the status of the Sami within the political climate of the early 1900s. In this depiction, the colonization of the North did not prove particularly morally problematic for the colonizers, because the previous inhabitants were so easy to scare away (Gaski, "Da tyvene" 48, Turi 125, DuBois 130-131). This parable displays the lack of understanding of Sami culture, traditions and lifestyle by the ethnic majority, and the manner in which this lack contributes to and enables oppression. It is easy for the colonizers to subjugate these people whose habits they do not understand and therefore cannot value. One should also note the forced labor of the Sami in the mining industry in the seventeenth century, in which "they suffered to such an extent in this connection that they threatened to kill the man who informed the authorities of ore discoveries" (Nickul 48). The mining industry came with more negative consequences than forced labor, however, as it also led to greater colonization of lands previously used by the Sami.

Nils-Aslak Valkeapää's incendiary polemic elicits a different response, one of a call-to-arms—not only for the Sami but on behalf of indigenous groups everywhere. He ends the introduction to the English edition with "the philosophy of life of the indigenous peoples may turn out to be very important as teaching examples for [the] world" (7). The Sami Council has been represented at the World Council of Indigenous Peoples since its founding in 1975, in which Nils-Aslak Valkeapää played an instrumental role ("Greetings" 110, Dana 71, Mikaelsson).

Valkeapää connects the traditions of many indigenous groups, pointing out similarities in abodes and weavings, and also draws parallels between the political situation of the Sami and that of the African Americans in the United States. In the latter comparison, he discusses the colonial view of indigenous and non-white cultures as primitive and incapable of the "creative work of theoretical studies" (98). Valkeapää cites Erica Simon, a French anthropologist, as saying, "If one examines this problem from the perspective of history of ideas, it's quite remarkable that this cultural repression took place in the 1800s, both in Samiland and in Africa, i.e., in the same century that romanticism and currents of nationalism held sway" (98). Simon raises an interesting point; the variety of perspectives that would have been presented by the plurality of cultures in a geographical area would have been a detriment to the process of nation-building, which relies on the concept of a community. In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson states

⁴⁴ This story is annotated by Demant Hatt to clarify that it is not the "real" story, that Turi elaborated freely because he had some extra time while writing this story down.

that in addition to being limited and sovereign, a nation must be imagined as a community, because “regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship” (7). One must assume, however, that the sense of “comradeship” would be affected if the full range of views and the experiences of the exploited were apparent to all members of the community, and that those who were exploited would have a different opinion on whether or not they view themselves or should be viewed by others as having comradeship with their oppressors.

In *Beaivi, Áhčážan* (1988, *The Sun, My Father* 1997), Valkeapää presents photo upon photo of families, individuals and activities of the Sami people. Many of these photos were originally taken by ethnographers who were studying Sami physiology, language, lifestyle, traditions, etc. The uninformed reader would see many of these pictures as snapshots of daily life or family photographs and might not understand how carefully posed many of them are, framed by the ethnographer’s eye, arranged through the ethnographer’s scientific aims. In a video produced for the *Sápmi* exhibit at Nordiska museet, The Nordic Museum, in Stockholm,⁴⁵ young Sami declare the shock they received when they realized their family photos they held on to, thinking they were commemorations of events or even simply family photos, were monuments to scientific objectification of Sami culture. Other photos in this book are distinctly scientific, as image after image of Sami people, standing naked in front of the camera, are laid out in just as scientific a manner against a black background. All of these photos testify silently to a history of cultural oppression, social estrangement, political marginalization and race-based peripheralization.

Though poems from the book have been translated into many languages, the photos are only included in the Sami original; these images, in a parallel relationship to time as images discussed in Chapter Three, call a painful past of objectification by race biologists into the present. Kathleen Osgood Dana notes that Valkeapää “was keenly aware of the fact that many Sámi cannot read their own language” (73-75), which is perhaps part of Valkeapää’s desire to include these photographs, in hopes they would bridge the communication gap that would have been lost in language and to connect with Sami culture and history the reader who identifies as Sami, but who does not read North Sami. The audio elements in the companion sound recordings aid in the accessibility of Valkeapää’s work in *Beaivi, Áhčážan*. Also drawing on poem 566, as I do in the previous chapter, Dana claims that the work done by this book is “to heal and to lay the philosophical and theoretical foundations for contemporary Sámi culture” (75). The two versions, comparing the Sami and English, but extending to the various translated versions that are also limited in their content, provide tailored experiences for witnessing Sami history through language, image and sound.

Narrative, Identity and Cultural Memory

The search for and reconstruction of personal identity that was obliterated by trauma is a key issue in witness literature. Susan J. Brison discusses the unraveling of the self as a

⁴⁵ This exhibit opened in November of 2007 and is one of the permanent exhibitions of the museum. <<http://nordiskamuseet.se/Publication.asp?publicationid=9864&topmenu=148>>.

result of trauma and the potential for narrative to aid in rebuilding identity. Focusing on memory, Brison claims, “all memory of (human-inflicted) trauma [...] is cultural memory in at least two respects” (41). The first of these is that trauma is experienced within a particular cultural context and is dependent on representations of the trauma, which are in turn, as the second respect, perceived within a cultural framework by others who may or may not be empathetic to the testimony. These perceptions form the cultural memory of trauma. The fictionalizing of traumatic events, as evidenced in *Vargskinnnet*, creates representations that are more comprehensible by others than actual survivor testimony. Kalí Tal would point to the cultural codification of these events and the dangers inherent in reducing trauma to a narrative and thematic formula (6); however, this type of representation can also be provided in a way that calls attention to its fictionality at the same time as it points to the real experienced trauma behind that fiction, thereby contributing to the goal stated in *Worlds of Hurt*, and echoed in this dissertation, of a community in which tolerance is practiced and difference is valued.

Ekman’s narrator, and indeed many narrators of witness fiction, represents the events contributing to the trauma of cultural oppression in a manner that promotes empathy, tolerance, and understanding on the part of the reader. At the same time, characters may be employed as a foil or a “straw man,” as Hillevi represents the typical urban Swede to a large degree in *Vargskinnnet*. Hillevi is potentially even more of an outsider than she, and other middle-class Swedes, considers the Sami to be in northern Swedish towns. The cultural norms she grew up with are much different from those in the rural north, the dialect is strange, and she encounters people whose lifestyles she doesn’t understand. The unfamiliarity forms the basis for her fear; though Hillevi does not rid herself of her fear of the “other,” she is a character through whom the reader can see the faults in being ignorant and fearful of those who are different. The reader, however, cannot help but be drawn into the story through Hillevi’s perspective. Although the opening scene is narrated by Risten and describes an originary point of ethnic understanding and identification for her, over the subsequent few chapters, we follow Hillevi as she gains her first insights into this new area of Sweden. Her experiences arriving in Östersund and then continuing to Röbbäck are juxtaposed against life in the city and against her own past, confirming the strangeness of the culture, language and landscape and maintaining that view as dominant until Risten’s voice emerges again.

While Hillevi is focalized and therefore provides the dominant view, however, the reader is able to read through her focalized thoughts that it is Hillevi who is the outsider; she is, for example, only making an assumption about the animal, recently slaughtered and skinned, that is hanging outside: “För det måste ju vara en ren” (“Well, it had to be a reindeer” *GB* 8, Schenck 4). The suspension of her understanding and the portrayal of her general confusion, evidenced by statements such as “Var ankomsten till gästgivargården i Lomsjö en stor och viktig tilldragelse i hennes eget liv?” (“Was her arrival at the Lomsjö inn one of the main events of her life?” *GB* 11, Schenck 7), simultaneously provide the reader with confused and opaque details and indicate to the reader that the distance between observation and understanding requires muddling through those details via techniques of “mind-reading,” a technique (discussed in more detail in the conclusion) that fiction allows the reader to practice, whereby one must keep

track of the source of information and evaluate how the situation may have looked from other perspectives.⁴⁶

Audience and the Role of the Listener

Brison considers the position of the audience of witness literature, which is expressly considered in fictionalized testimony.⁴⁷ Members of the majority culture may have difficulty listening to the stories of how their culture has repressed, oppressed, or even taken part in the genocide of a minority culture. As Brison says, “Cultural repression of traumatic memories [...] comes not only from an absence of empathy with victims, but also out of an active fear of empathizing with those whose terrifying fate forces us to acknowledge that we are not in control of our own” (48-49). This fear works in two ways. First, members of the majority understand that it is not outside the range of possibility that they could some day be subjected to similarly horrific fates. Second, and less emphasized by Brison, if members of the majority culture are forced to recognize the atrocities in which their culture has engaged, they are faced with the guilt associated with this recognition. Witness fiction, by the very fact that it is fictionalized (and explicitly so), can serve to facilitate the recognition of historical oppression and trauma for the generations following the events and thereby can have a more positive effect than the outright rejection of another person’s traumatic history or increased alienation of the traumatized subject or group.

“The listener,” says Dori Laub, “by definition partakes of the struggle of the victim with the memories and residues of his or her traumatic past. The listener has to feel the victim’s victories, defeats and silences, know them from within, so that they can assume the form of testimony” (58). Laub goes on to describe how the listener’s witnessing is twofold—first, she witnesses the witness’ trauma, and second, she witnesses her own awareness of the process. This must happen, at least, if the listener “is to properly carry out his task” (58). Laub also describes the process if it were turned in the other direction, with a listener who refuses to validate the experience of the survivor, causing a devastating end to the narrative (68). Here, as with Brison’s system, we can see the reader of witness fiction to be adopting the listener’s position. The ability of a reader to enter the mind of a character is facilitated by authorial strategies such as using first-person narration and by focalizing various characters. In *Vargskinnet*, for example, although the reader spends much of the beginning of the narrative learning about northern Swedish and Sami culture alongside the outsider Hillevi, she or he grows able to gain a more intimate experience of the life of a Swedish-Sami woman through the development of Risten’s first-person narration. Likewise, *Presten* allows for a closeness between reader and narrator through the first-person narration.

Listeners in the Text: *Indtoget i Kautokeino*

⁴⁶ This ability is similar to emotional intelligence and has been of recent interest as studies on autism spectrum disorders have begun to show the high prevalence of autism and the high number of people who cannot “mind-read” or do so with difficulty.

⁴⁷ In survivor testimony, the reader will remember, it is the survivor him- or herself who is the focus of the telling.

Horace Engdahl's "Philomela's Tongue" confirms that the figure of the listener is not only the audience of the produced text, but can also be present in the very text itself, as with the Chorus in Classical tragedy (3-4). We observe this presence in *Indtoget i Kautokeino*. As a pastor, part of Frederik's function in society is to hear testimony in the form of confession. He visits Aslak Hætta in prison in order to perform his duty, though he is an unwanted guest at the jail. When Aslak says that he has no priest to whom to confess, Frederik replies, "Men et menneske der vil høre på dig. Hvis du har brug for at tale" ("But one person wants to listen to you. If you have anything to say" 301). For his own subjective ethical reasons, Frederik isn't able to allow Aslak's view of the events resonate within him. "Du må ikke tro jeg ikke vil høre på dig, sagde han. – Men sandheden, Aslak er det første skridt på vejen til en soning med Gud" ("You must not think that I don't want to listen to you, he said. But the truth, Aslak, is the first step on the way to reconciliation with God" 302). Frederik's inability to understand how the trauma Aslak had been enduring at the hands of not only the sheriff, but also the majority culture and government could drive Aslak to these actions results in his belief that Aslak is simply not producing an accurate, truthful representation of the events as they led up to the rebellion. The reader, however, is able to read in Frederik's analysis the perspective of one with cultural privilege stemming from cultural dominance, a perspective that denies the possibility that Aslak had exhausted his options.

One risk for the listener of testimony is that some of the traumatic events will be outside the realm of his or her understanding while others aren't, resulting in an assumption of truth or a misunderstanding of the impact of the trauma. This is precisely what happens with Frederik, who is not only unable to identify with Aslak's position as a consistently oppressed and traumatized individual, but he is also unable to identify his inability to understand. The listener needs to be prepared for what he or she is to hear in order for this part of the process to be productive for the witness; as Laub says, "[the listener] can become the enabler of testimony—the one who triggers its initiation, as well as the guardian of its process and of its momentum" (58). At the same time, complicating the situation between Aslak and Frederik is that Frederik feels mistakenly that he has experienced, in large part, the same traumatic event as Aslak—the rebellion itself. Frederik has actually had a completely different experience of the rebellion from Aslak, due to his position as authority of the Norwegian government and the course that brought him to that position.

The traumatic event for Aslak, however, is not the rebellion. The rebellion is the result of the trauma for this group of Sami, not the trauma itself. "Vi ville forsvare os. Vores brødre og søstre ville I fængsle, vores rener ville I tage. Vores gud måtte vi ikke dyrke," Aslak says ("We wanted to defend ourselves. You wanted to put our brothers and sisters in jail, you wanted to take our reindeer. We were not allowed to worship our God" 302). In this passage, Aslak articulates the larger historical trauma of the Sami: the forced assimilation, poverty, encouragement of drinking and drunkenness, stigmatizing of the joik and destruction of their drums. These made up only part of the oppression of the Sami in 1852.

Conscription and the closing of the border between Norway and Finland also added to the traumatic situation for the Sami, both instances in which the Sami

themselves were not in any way part of the decisions that resulted in major lifestyle changes for this population. The border issue, in particular, seemed to retract rights that were extended in the so-called Lapp Codicil of 1751, which had codified Sami rights in relation to the majority populations of the countries in which they were living (Nickul 53). In mid-1852, the border between Finland (under Russian rule) and Norway was closed, with devastating effects on the Norwegian herders (Nickul 54, Zorgdrager 17, 107-118). The closing of the border was largely in retaliation over conflict over fishing rights in the Varanger fjord, which the Norwegian government was not willing to allow for the risk that the Russians would nudge the border further west into Finnmark. Zorgdrager points out that the Norwegian majority understood that the Sami herders were not ready for the border to be closed so soon as was planned in 1852, but they were unable to argue successfully for any magnanimity from the Russians (107). The border closed on September 15, 1852. Less than two months later, the Kautokeino rebellion erupted.

We see reflections of both of these events within the fictionalized frame in *Indtoget i Kautokeino*. First, Aslak encourages young Thomas to seek a marriage license in order to avoid conscription (202). Second, Frederik Hvoslef, after turning away a number of these marriage requests, feels guilty for having denied these requests and indirectly dooming young Sami men to conscription, and attempts to argue the case of the Sami in relation to the border disputes. Frederik seems to understand that while the majority government is able to mollify some of the effects of this border crossing by allowing the Norwegian Sami to become Swedish citizens and thereby travel between Norway and Sweden, without the need for Finnish land, “Dette ville betyde at de skulle skifte boområde og rejseruter. Og dermed livsmønster” (“This would mean that they had to shift living areas and travel routes. And therefore lifestyles” 209). He writes letters to the government on the behalf of the Sami,⁴⁸ but he still doesn’t understand the full impact of the situation; he suggests that the Sami all move towards Karesuando in Sweden but doesn’t foresee, as do the reindeer herders, that there would not be nearly enough food for the reindeer if this were to happen.

Through his conversations with Aslak, Frederik comes to feel the trauma of the Sami in a way that other non-Sami are unable to understand. Laub says, “the listener to trauma comes to be a participant and a co-owner of the traumatic event: through his very listening, he comes to partially experience trauma in himself” (57). While Frederik’s experience of listening is seemingly a bit more calculated and detached than this, he displays his increased understanding in his documented report, referenced in *Indtoget*, on the events of November 8, 1852:

Finnerne har unægtelig forðum været et foragtet og forsømt Folk, der ikke regnedes for stort bedre end Hunde. For svage til at kunne protestere kraftigen mod en saadan Behandling, har de maattet vælge Hundens Parti, der mærkes naar det er farligt at bide. Den kryber, men skjuler blot Hader under det ydmyge Ydre. Man vilde vist tage meget Feil, hvis man troede, at den Underdanighed, som Finnerne have vist i Embedsmændenes

⁴⁸ Frederik’s sense of how his letters are received parallels the feelings of the Sami as impossible to gain a voice: “Men hvad kunne en ung præst i Kautokeino gøre når ministre og diplomater holdt deres møder og lagde deres oplæg frem?” (“But what could a young pastor in Kautokeino do when ministers and diplomats held their meetings and laid out their decrees?” 209).

Nærvarelse, var oprigtig meent og et Vidnesbyrd om Ærbødighed for Lovene. (311)⁴⁹

The Sami have formerly been an undeniably scorned and neglected people, who have not been counted much more highly than dogs. Too weak to be able to protest strongly against such treatment, they have been forced to choose the dog's lot, in which it can be seen the danger that they will bite. It cringes, but hatred hides just under the humble exterior. One would be very mistaken if one believed that the subservience that the Sami have shown in the presence of the authorities was authentic and was proof [testimony] of respect for the laws.⁵⁰

Hvoslef's view, which Petersen takes from documents and embeds in a fictional characterization, matches the pastor's account of the events in Georg Gripenstad's Swedish translation, "Något om den religiösa rörelsen i Kautokeino," 'A bit about the religious movement in Kautokeino.' Here, Hvoslef observes:

Den behandling som har kommit lapparna till del har då också i många stycken stått i samklang med det betraktelsesätt att de liksom vore varelser av en lägre natur. När nu härtill kommer det främmande språket, främmande seder och bruk, det ständigt alltmer tilltagande intrånget på ett område, som lapparna sedan gamla tider är vana att anse som sitt, så kan man knappast vara förvånad över att lapparna inte hyser någon särskild kärlek till norrmännen. (121)

That treatment which has been given the Sami has then also in many cases been in agreement with the view that they were creatures of a lower nature. When added to that are the different language, different traditions and conventions, the continually increasing infringement on an area that the Sami have seen as theirs since olden days, it is hardly surprising that the Sami do not harbor any great affection for the Norwegians.

Hvoslef's reflections over the historical oppression of the Sami clarify in part why and how the Sami can be recognized as having suffered dearly at the hands of generally unsympathetic majority communities and governing bodies. Through his witnessing of events and his part as an active listener to those who suffered from the long-standing trauma of cultural oppression, Hvoslef participates in the testimony of the Sami.

While the position of the listener or audience is central in Ørstavik's *Presten* to the extent that it is an unattainable goal, it is constantly present in Ekman's *Vargskinnnet* via the many levels of and references to storytelling and memory. From Ingefrid declaring that Risten's memory had been soft for longer than was usual, resulting in Ingefrid's conviction that the world is not abstract but very concrete,⁵¹ to her testimony of being

⁴⁹ The reader should note that, up until around the twentieth century, Sami were referred to as "Finns." See Ruong, *Samerna i historien och nutid*, p. 9.

⁵⁰ Thank you to William Banks, UW-Madison, for his advice on this translation.

⁵¹ "Men hennes [Risten's] berättelser övertygade åtminstone Ingefrid om att vi lever i en värld som varken är virtuell eller abstract. Den är tät som kärnan i en hasselnöt" ("But her [Risten's] stories convinced Ingefrid, at least, that we live in a world that is neither virtual nor abstract. It is as tight as the kernel of a hazelnut" *SL* 208).

assaulted by a grieving parishioner,⁵² to Risten’s longing to remember her dead husband,⁵³ to the effect that stories have on a listener,⁵⁴ the investigation of how stories create collective memory is central to the trilogy. While many of the stories are not directly related to the telling of trauma, the general creation of collective memory is often sparked by Sami storytellers such as Laula Anut and Risten, and the text confirms the importance of traditional knowledge along with the transfer of that knowledge. As Rochelle Wright states, “Within Risten’s narrative, the traditional oral literature of the Sámi is passed along to the reader through the incongruous medium of the printed text.” Wright goes on to discuss the interaction of oral and written tradition in the text, positing that the inclusion of oral tradition in text, using particularly song (and joik) texts, is an “effort to preserve them, as an assertion of power and autonomy” (166). Storytelling in the Sami culture does not only present itself via prose, however; stories are also communicated via joik. The manner in which this happens is similar to certain experiences of the telling of trauma.

Joik and Testimony; Trauma and Cultural Oppression

In a video in the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies, as related by Laub in *Testimony*, a quiet woman tells of her experiences at Auschwitz. Laub describes her as “slight, self-effacing, almost talking in whispers, mostly to herself” (59). As she tells her story, however, “a sudden intensity, passion and color were infused into the narrative. She was fully there,” says Laub, as she describes how chimneys exploded, lighting up the sky. Afterwards, she resumes her subdued tone. Laub interprets in this situation the transportation of the person into the past, while I view it as the opposite—that the past has been brought to the present by the very telling of it. While the difference may seem to be splitting hairs, this phenomenon runs parallel to the Sami joik. The singing of joik does not objectify a person, animal or event; it invokes that very thing, bringing it into the time and place of joiking. Richard W. Jones-Bamman puts it eloquently: “A joik is meant to *be* that subject for the moment that it is performed” (148).

Another parallel of joik with testimony is that joik is also not traditionally performed for the sake of a broad audience.⁵⁵ It is a personal expression of an individual, and when it is shared, this occurs only with “denna inre krets av människor med gemensam bakgrund och gemensamma erfarenheter” (“this inner circle of people with a similar background and similar experiences” Kjellström, Ternhag and Rydving 16). Jones-Bamman interprets the joik thus: “[T]o joik alone gives voice to emotions and experiences which need no validation; but to share these with others is to acknowledge the importance of the group in the continuation of that which is distinctly Saami, by inviting/seeking their participation” (149). This process, which has existed throughout the

⁵² “Blir någonting uthärdigare för att man berättar det? Blir det ens sant?” (“Does something become more bearable because a person has told about it? Does it even become true?” *SL* 280)

⁵³ “Sent den natten jokjade Aslak [Nilas bror] Nila. Då såg jag Nilas ansikte” (Late that night Aslak joiked Nila. It was then that I saw Nila’s face” *SR* 250)

⁵⁴ “Det är så underligt med berättelser, även om de är lögnaktiga” (“There’s something amazing about stories though, even ones that aren’t true” *GB* 224, Schenck 215)

⁵⁵ I am excluding from this particular aspect of discussion the modern interpretations of joik that are intended for performance on a stage or for recording and distribution.

documented history of the joik, is akin to that of the survivor sharing testimony; the Sami culture that is being shared through the joik has been historically threatened with complete destruction and finds voice through this expression, providing a parallel to how other survivor testimony motivates an awareness of trauma.

***Vargskinnet*: Discursive Mirroring of Thematic Content**

Kerstin Ekman's *Vargskinnet* exemplifies in its very form the long-standing oppression of the Swedish Sami. Stretching over 1200 pages and spanning almost a century, it depicts a complex narratological, genealogical and thematic web. With references pointing to a long and tumultuous relationship between Sami and ethnic Swedish groups, the trilogy illuminates for the readers how cultural stigma has trapped the Sami in a cycle of oppression and poverty. By following multigenerational character threads (e.g., grandfather Mickel Larsson, mother Inger-Kari/foster mother Hillevi, narrator Risten) and displaying characters' close relationships with members of majority society, and (sometimes subtly) indicating the conflict inherent in these relationships, Ekman highlights for readers the importance of gaining an awareness of the consequences of oppression and marginalization. Readers who had believed that Sweden lacked a colonial past become aware of the centuries-old stigma against which the Sami have been forced to fight in addition to the expropriation from lands the Sami and/or their families have used for generations.

Vargskinnet alternates between first-person narration focalizing Risten, a half-Sami woman, and third-person narration focalizing other characters such as Hillevi, Risten's Swedish adoptive mother, and Elis Eriksson, who runs away from home and becomes an artist in Norway and Germany before returning to Svartvattnet for his last years. Risten's narration is dissonant, distanced from the action, as she is reminiscing late in life about her past and the past of the town and its inhabitants. The third-person narration is consonant and follows the focalized characters in their own time, which is our past.

The effect achieved by these narrative techniques is twofold. First, the dissonant first-person narrative by Risten enacts the distance discussed in Shoshana Felman's work on witnessing and the space between the experiencing and the narrating selves. Second, the destabilized position of the Swedish Sami characters is reflected in the text itself, with shifts of narrative person, focalized character, and narrative vs. narrated times.

As discussed in previous chapters, *Guds barmhärighet* opens with Risten describing an event that occurred when she was six years old. "När jag var sex år kom jag en vinterkväll gående ensam från Storflohället in mot byn" ("One winter evening when I was six years old, I was walking alone from out by Storflo marsh toward the village" *GB* 5, Schenck 1). She goes on to describe in minute detail her thoughts and feelings from that one evening: how she was scared of the forest that flanked the road on both sides, that she became more scared when she approached the shadowy figure on the bridge, that he said something she didn't understand but that she recognized. While the level of detail Risten provides here might otherwise be attributed to the narrating self filling in and interpreting the situation from the time of narration, this scene is seminal for the formation of her ethnic identity, and for this reason, it is sensible that she would remember in this amount of detail. We can imagine that this character would have also reminisced about it many

other times, and Risten does mention the event specifically at another point when she realizes that she met him that night because he had returned to the area for her mother's (his sister's) funeral: "Nu förstår jag varför du dök opp i byn den gången. Du kom till hennes begravning" ("Now I understand why you showed up in town that time. You came to her burial" *SL* 261). Risten calls attention to her own narration, with phrases such as "som jag redan har berättat" ("as I've already explained" *GB* 323, Schenck 313).

The distance between an experiencing self and narrative self can be collapsed in the moment of telling trauma. When Risten describes in *Sista Rompan* how she heard of her husband's death at a munitions plant at the end of WWII, she moves from past tense to present as she describes her experience:

Det tjugotredje juli 1945.

Jag har fläckar av minnen. Deras träansikten. Och hur jag skrek.
Vreden.

Det värsta är när ingen tar emot ens vrede. De finner den inte ens orätfärdig. Bara besynnerlig. De enas om att det är nåt fel på en.

Det var Nilas mor som blev den sörjande. Hon som sörjde med värdighet. Till henne kom de. Jag blev den besynnerliga. Hon som skrek och svor. Hon som vrålade rakt ut: *vad hade ni med deras krig!*

Aslaks ansikte lika trähårt.

Och jag skriker:

Har ni inte alltid berömt er av att vara ett fredligt folk? (*SR* 123)

The twenty-third of July 1945.

I have patches of memories. Their wooden faces. And how I screamed.
My fury.

The worst thing is when no one accepts your fury. They don't even find it unjust. Only peculiar. They conclude that there's something wrong with you.

Nilas mother was the one who became the mourner. Because she grieved with dignity. They went to see her. I was the peculiar one. The one who shouted and cursed. The one who screamed straight out: *what did their war have to do with you?*

Aslak's face just as hard as wood.

And I'm screaming:

Haven't you always prided yourselves on being a peaceful people?

She first tells of the memories she has and even refers to herself in the third person, relating how other people saw her at the time, but it is as if forcing the distance to that extent causes the experience to recoil onto itself, pulling it directly into the present as she screams in the present tense and the present day, through the memory. Risten's memory is triggered by reading Hillevi's journals in which Hillevi mentions the tragic accident. Enclosed in the journal are the torn remnants of the article, from which the reader is left to reconstruct the objective report of the event.

Presten and Indtoget i Kautokeino: Documentarism

The use of documents in *Presten* and *Indtoget i Kautokeino* presents an appeal to actual historical events. The authors attempt to present a realistic fictional account of these events by filling in the gaps and creating characters who bear witness to their first-hand experience. The inclusion of historical documents creates a multifaceted, multi-authored, polyphonic narrative that engages the imagination yet satisfies a desire for evidence of historical accuracy.

Presten includes sections of letters and statements written by those involved in the Norwegian side of the rebellion such as the Kautokeino pastor, Frederik Hvoslef, and Bishop Juell, who oversaw the goings-on in the area. A very brief bibliography is included at the back of the hardcover edition of the novel (not the paperback), indicating only the use of *Kautokeino-dokumentene* (The Kautokeino Documents), a collection of relevant documents from personal letters to judicial proceedings.

In a similar move, *Indtoget i Kautokeino* employs a number of standard techniques of the documentary novel. Although the novel is told primarily in the third-person, the narrator appears in a first-person voice in an early chapter, in which he describes his process of coming to write this novel, and again in the last chapter. Petersen includes direct quotations from documents contemporary to the rebellion, as does Ørstavik, but Petersen's sources are more varied, as I will discuss further below.

In *Documentarism in Scandinavian Literature*, Sven H. Rossel discusses the variety found in the genre of documentary fiction. First, he distinguishes between documentary literature and the documentary novel, referencing George Biztray's work on the subject, with the key difference being the "author's organizing consciousness" (1). He then treads into the territory of ethics in literature, questioning to what extent the author is expected to clue the reader in as to what of the content is "fact," i.e., in this case historical document, and what is "fiction," and whether the author is expected also to provide a bibliography. Rossel suggests three categories of documentary literature to enable discussion of the different ways in which authors address these issues and why their decisions matter. In the first, the document itself makes up the work in question. In the second, the document "becomes either the point of departure or the source of inspiration [...] for the fictional work," or it lends credibility to the narrative or message of the fictional work—this type is common in naturalistic writing of the nineteenth century. In the third, documentation functions only as a narrative strategy, a "ploy," as Rossel terms it. Though he does not indicate that the documents could be fictional in themselves, he states excitedly that for writers in this third category, "the true subject is neither history itself nor the protagonists of his stories but his own role as the *creator* of reality, which is nothing but the story itself!" (22, original emphasis).

In the novels by Ørstavik and Petersen, the documents are, in part, a source of inspiration and of historical reality for the authors—they fit into Rossel's second category. This second category is one in which the authors are most concerned with correctness of the representation of reality, and Rossel notes that authors often couch the historical documents in a discussion of what is missing or incorrect in the historical account. The emphasis, however, on the story itself and the fictionalized elements, however, straddle the border into Rossel's third category. As mentioned previously and discussed in more detail below, both Ørstavik and Petersen provide bibliographies and set apart the documentary sections clearly. While the goal of an accurate portrayal may be present in

Presten, along with the discussion of missing material—though by the narrator, not implied or real author, the inclusion of documents reveals a different, more literary, aim in *Indtoget i Kautokeino*. *Indtoget i Kautokeino* employs the documents as support for Petersen’s fictional elaboration, rooting the reader in historical accounts, and the historical reality that the documents would have displayed in their time of creation, in this novel, is seemingly upheld. Petersen uses the documents as a frame within which he can sculpt the rest of the story, with the narrator’s final claim that “Historien er nået frem” (“The story has reached its end” 368). The document excerpts interrupt the narrative in voice and script – they emanate from a different narrator and appear in italics – but do not, as in *Presten*, interrupt the narrative time or language. The interchange is additive; neither calls into question the validity of the other. The excerpts are in direct dialogue with and support the rest of the narrative. And the documents’ “authority” in the narrative confirms, in Petersen’s text, the power and control of the Norwegian government.

Presten, however, subverts the belief that documents can lend credibility. Instead, it suggests that official documents offer only one potential historical reality, thus challenging hegemonic authority. Narrator Liv constantly questions the lack of the “other side” of the story. The Sami description of the rebellion and the precipitating events is missing. The embedded documents in the learned language of the Danish rulers, as there were colonial aspects to Norway’s historical relationship with Denmark, are only from the side of the authorities. The direct quotations, combined with the shift from the Norwegian language to nineteenth-century Danish, jar the readers, moving them out of the narrative time and place of the novel, back to 1852 Kautokeino. It is significant that Ørstavik does not cite the letter from Thomas Andersen Eira to Bishop Juell, asking for leniency in sentencing, nor does she cite the letter from Lars Hætta to the Bishop, both found in *Kautokeino-dokumentene*. Neither does she cite the two texts written by Sami involved in the rebellion that are translated into Swedish and presented in Georg Gripenstad’s *Kautokeino 1852: Några tidsdokument (Kautokeino 1852: Some Historical Documents)*. Certain passages, particularly in the memoirs of Lars Hætta and Anders Petersen Bær, allude to the events of November 8, 1852 but fall short of providing an actual description. She also doesn’t include reference to the passages about the rebellion from Johan Turi’s book, in which he is careful to present that this group of Sami was not representative of the whole of Sami society. The nod to Turi through the so-named woman at the conference further suggests that even these other documents are inadequate. Even though archival research could uncover other documents, the point made in *Presten* about the representation of history and the use of documentarism is already clear: no document or account is capable of representing the past in a way that enables a person in the present to experience it. We are left with allusions and descriptions of partial histories, we are left to imagine the rest, using a phrase from Norman Rosen, to witness through the imagination.

***Presten* and Paralleled Experience**

Liv, without documents to provide answers, instead ponders endlessly the details of the uprising and remains suspicious of the role language played in the rebellion. The Sami did not have a voice, she believes, and the apparent lack of access to information in this regard supports her theory. Using this belief as a basis, she moves from this to other

aspects of her investigation. The New Testament of the Bible had been translated into North Sami by 1850; and she believes that it was specifically the messages of the New Testament, of the value of every individual life, that encouraged the Sami rebels to finally rise up against their oppressors.

Liv's inability to recover the past is conflated with her inability to access the present; she misunderstands a political demonstration outside the Sami Parliament building, thinking it is the filming of a music video. Seeing this on the TV screen at a nearby internet café just hours later, she asks the girl behind the counter about it. "[T]ror du vi *leker* Sameland?" the girl asks ("Do you think we're *playing* Sápmi?" 191). Liv's basic misunderstanding of the current Sami situation is compounded by Ørstavik's conflation of Kautokeino, where Liv is attending a conference, and Karasjok, where the Sami Parliament building is located. Ørstavik is, in these ways, playing with a different distinction between fact and fiction than Petersen. She creates fictions around historical documents and actual locations in order to establish a problematic of recovering facts.

Presten approaches the question of whether we can recover the past, finding that it is impossible to gain a full understanding of the circumstances surrounding trauma. The protagonist is located in the present day, over one hundred and fifty years after the rebellion, and is limited by the narratives of the rebellion that have survived. These narratives are unable to capture the full experience; "Textual representations – literary, visual, oral – are mediated by language and do not have the impact of the traumatic experience" (Tal 15). Liv believes that "[d]et fantes en annan versjon, fra den andre parten, som ikke var blitt skrevet ned, som ikke var blitt dokumentert" ("There was another version, from the other side, that had not been written down, that was not documented" 33). She reads the letters from pastor Hvoslef to bishop Juell and attempts to understand by reading into the gaps. The effort is in vain, however. As Kalí Tal states, "There is . . . no substitute for experience – only being is believing" (15).

The problem with Liv's investigation, and the reason her questions are unanswerable, is that they depend on the reality of experience, of eyewitness. She reads and reads, searching for traces of answers in the literature surrounding the rebellion, but in the end, "Jeg var blitt stående utenfor. Hvor mye jeg enn hadde lest, prøvd, tøyd. Jeg kom ikke inn. Jeg sto under hjellet der ute ved havet og kjente det blåse i ansiktet" ("I was left standing outside. However much I had read, tried, stretched. I did not come in. I stood under the drying rack out there by the sea and felt the wind in my face" 171). She claims that "I sameoppørret hadde mange tråder i konflikten mellom samer og nordmenn blitt i ett punkt, én kanal, som var det kristne språket" ("In the Sami rebellion, many threads of the conflict between Sami and Norwegians had become one point, one channel, which was Christian language" 32); however, words continually fail her in her attempts to understand the events as they developed and unfolded. As Ingrid Nielsen states, the problem Liv has with words is that this medium "virker ikke helt, eller det har bare en midlertidig effekt" ("has no effect, or it has only a provisional effect" Kallestad 30). Åse Høyvoll Kallestad points to the common thread between *Presten* and other examples of Norwegian literature at the turn of the last century: "Romanpersonene strever med relasjonsproblematikk, identitetskriser og eksistensielle spørsmål som de ikke evner å finne svar på, heller ikke ved hjelp av Gud" ("Characters struggle with relationship problems, identity crises and existential questions that they will not be able to

find answers to, not even with help from God” 224). The problem Liv has with language and its relationship to the Sami rebellion is as much an identity crisis as one of her research.

Liv’s mission, in looking for this “other” version, is to answer the questions: “[H]vordan begynte det? Når?” (“How did it begin? When?” 67). Ørstavik links Liv’s questioning of the Kautokeino rebellion with Liv’s own life, thus creating a simultaneous distinction between and conflation of her historical and her personal investigations:

Jeg så ut på det grå vannet, så dem for meg i snøen, langs de opptråkkede stiene, hvordan de bøyde hodet når de skulle inn døra til et hus, trampet av seg, de svarte ullfrakkene til lensmannen og handelsmannen og presten, og de andre, de butte kroppene i reinskinn, i skaller og pesk. <<Samtlige reiste sig, og alle hoppede, sloge op og ned med Armene, hujede og bandte. Nogle af dem vare saa hæse, at de næsten ingen Lyd kunne give fra sig. Man tenke sig Mennesker, iklædte Pæske, i et trangt Værelse og under de voldsomste Bevægelser i uafbrudt Hoppen.>>

Jeg kjente det, det var akkurat som om jeg hadde det samme i meg. Det som ikke fant noen vei ut og some for dem ble till hopping og huing. Når det kjentes som det presset seg rundt meg. Når selv ordene var stengt, så det ikke var noe mer å si. (143-144)

I looked out at the gray water, saw them in front of me in the snow, along the trampled paths, how they bowed their heads when they were going in the door to the house, stamped the snow off of their shoes, the black wool coats of the sheriff and shopkeeper and pastor, and the others, the blunt bodies in reindeer skins, in moccasins and jackets made of reindeer pelts. “Each and every one stood up, and they all jumped up and down, hitting with their arms, shouting and hollering. Some of them were so hoarse that they could hardly make a sound. Imagine people, clothed in reindeer skins, in a cramped room and with very violent movements in continuous hopping.”

I felt it, it was exactly as if I had the same in me. Something that didn’t find any way out and that for them became hopping and shouting. When it felt like it pressed around me. When the words themselves were closed off, then there was nothing more to say.

In attempting to recover a specifically Sami past, Liv finds a superimposition of personal history and ethnic position. As Marianne Hirsch states in an investigation of Lorie Novak’s photographic artwork, “Past Lives,” which features two photographs from the Holocaust era superimposed over a photograph of Novak and her mother, this combined image:

reveals memory to be an act in the *present* on the part of a subject who constitutes herself by means of a series of identifications across temporal, spatial, and cultural divides. It reveals memory to be *cultural*, fantasy to be *social and political*, in the sense that the representation of one girl’s childhood [i.e. Novak’s] includes, as a part of her own experience, the history into which she was born, the figures that inhabited her public life and perhaps also the life of her imagination. (6-7, original emphases)

A departure from the case of Novak is that Liv is finding her personal identity through a cultural memory of the Kautokeino rebellion, an uprising in which she finds the colonial Norwegian-Sami history to blame. Liv describes herself as a southern Norwegian (34-35), and she seems only to have a vicarious awareness of the oppression of an ethnic group through her study of the uprising in Kautokeino. All signs point to her identity as non-Sami Norwegian. Therefore, it is quite interesting that the historical experience with which she identifies is not that of the colonizer, but that of the colonized, the group oppressed by the Norwegian government, assumedly representative of her ancestors. One way to understand this occurrence is to see that Liv's experience is particularly postmodern—it is one of being isolated from and alienated by a larger group; perhaps we can draw a parallel between the postmodern individual and a historically oppressed ethnic minority which is isolated from and alienated by an ethnic majority. Postmodern alienation, however, keeps the individual isolated from a group, and while an oppressed ethnic group may be alienated from the majority, a strong sense of community can still exist within that group. Another way to attempt to understand Liv's identification with the position of person subjected to ethnically-based oppression is via Tal's suggestion that survivors of one trauma can find a commonality with survivors of another trauma through certain triggers or signs. Tal says, "the ability to 'read' words like *terror* may extend *across traumas*, so that the combat veteran of the Vietnam War responds viscerally to the transformed signs used by the survivor of the concentration camp since they mirror his or her own traumatic experience" (16). As discussed in Chapter Two, the distinction of who qualifies as a survivor of trauma becomes, in this model, ethically problematic in a way that Tal does not specifically address. In the case of *Presten*, is Liv a "survivor" because her beloved friend Kristiane committed suicide? Does this enable Liv to understand in some visceral way what is it like to be part of a community that is told repeatedly by the government for hundreds of years that it is "less-than," that it does not deserve the same autonomy over issues affecting its people, the same rights to land use, the same access to education and media in their own language? And if Liv qualifies as a survivor of trauma, we might wonder, who wouldn't?

***Indtoget i Kautokeino* and Possibilities of the Imagination**

In the silent voices of the Sami rebels there is a parallel to Liv's own unrecoverable past. *Indtoget i Kautokeino* presents a different model than *Presten*, one based on a belief in the possibility of reconstructing the past, with the clash between a group of Læstadian Sami and Norwegian authorities supported by historical documents and fleshed-out through the imagination and the use of two "witnesses," as the narrator calls them, who discover the tragic flaws of their own group through confrontation with the "other."

Martin Petersen embarks on the mission of recreating the past in a narrative that is focalized through two characters: Thomas Andersen Eira, a young man at the time of the rebellion who was taken up with the radical religious pietism on which the group of Sami rebels based their belief, and Frederik Hvoslef, the pastor in Kautokeino at the time of the rebellion. Thomas functions as the protagonist of the novel, as much of the narrative is focalized through him. The narrator, as stated above, directly calls upon Thomas as a witness, saying, "Det var Thomas Andersen Eira der blev *mit ene vidne*. Han

var tæt på Aslak” (“It was Thomas Andersen Eira who was *my first witness*. He was close to Aslak” 19, my emphasis). The narrator indicates that the significance of this character is his relationship to one of the lead rebels, Aslak Jakobsen Hætta. Thomas was indeed a witness; however, the narrator’s creation of his testimony takes the form of a fictional character. “De [begivenhedene] er grundigt dokumenterede, og jeg har taget stumper af kilderne med. Men fortællingen er min; virkeligheden er filtreret og fortolket. Det er mig der lader Thomas og Frederik opleve. De er historiske personer, og nu også fiktive figurer” (“They [the events] are thoroughly documented, and I have included fragments of the sources. But the story is mine; reality is filtered and interpreted. It is I who bring Thomas and Frederik back to life. They are historical people, and now also fictional characters” 19). Petersen makes the explicit statement here that he has manipulated reality in creating his story. This is well-aligned with the expectations of the reader of a historical novel. The basis is in reality, but the author has filled in the gaps using his imaginative and creative faculties. Surprising, then, is where Petersen arrives at the end of the novel. He claims in the end, as stated above, that “Historien er nået frem” (“The story has reached its end” 368). A version of the story has been told. The definitiveness of this statement is troubling, however, as Petersen states that *the* story has ended. The explicit fictionality of the text suggests it is one interpretation of the gaps in historical documentation. Returning to Sven H. Rossel’s categories of documentary fiction, this statement sets *Indtoget i Kautokeino* squarely in the third category. As my reader will remember, for the writers in this category “the true subject is neither history itself nor the protagonists of his stories but his own role as the *creator* of reality, which is nothing but the story itself” (22). Petersen’s claim emphasizes a privileging of the fictional story over the historical event.

The relationship between the historical documents and the fictional narrative is foregrounded as these indications are included early in the novel, yet they are embedded since the narrative has, in fact, already begun in the first pages of the novel. The meta-narrative statements interrupt the narrative of the events of around 1850. The narrator infrequently interrupts the narrative at other points in the text, telling the story as if he does not already know how the uprising will play out and remaining almost exclusively focalized in the characters. At the end of a late chapter in the novel, after a report on the beheadings of Mons Somby and Aslak Jakobsen Hætta, he interjects:

Et drab afslutter et liv. Men intet drab, uanset om det er begået af enkeltpersoner eller udføres af en stat og kaldes en henrettelse, afslutter historien om de mennesker der har været impliceret.

Når mennesker står bag døden, får den altid et langt liv. (351)

A killing ends a life. But no killing, regardless of whether it is committed by an individual or committed by a nation and called an execution, ends the story of those people who have been involved.

When people stand behind a death, it always has a long life.

The story of those involved in the Kautokeino rebellion, both the Sami people and the officials of the State, continues by being revived in Petersen’s text.

As noted, Martin Petersen makes use of various types of historical documents in creating *Indtoget i Kautokeino*, which is subtitled “*En historisk roman*,” ‘A historical novel.’ He uses these documents in the text, indicating citations in italics. The documentary

approach is thus foregrounded, with a bibliography ranging from Knud Rasmussen's *Lapland* of 1907 and Sophus Tromholt's *Under Nordlysets Straaler: Skildringer fra Lappernes Land* of 1885 (Eng. trans. *Under the Rays of the Aurora Borealis in the Land of the Lapps and Kvæns*, 1885) to more recent historical investigations such as Nellejet Zorgdrager's *De rettfærdiges strid: Kautokeino 1852: Samisk motstand mot norsk kolonialisme* (The Battle of the Righteous: Kautokeino 1852: Sami Resistance against Norwegian Colonialism, 1997, original Dutch 1989) and the aforementioned collection of historical documents, *Kautokeino-dokumentene: 117 arkivsaker om prosessene i 1851-1867 mot 48 flyttsamer fra Kautokeino* (Kautokeino Documents: 117 Archival Pieces about the Processes in 1851-1867 against 48 Nomadic Sami, 1997). Petersen notes in this bibliography section that "Der er skrevet romaner bade på norsk og svensk om hændelserne, den sidste omkring 1980" ("Novels have been written both in Norwegian and Swedish about the events, the last around 1980" 371).

Petersen uses historical testimony in order to flesh out an explanation for how the group of Sami religious fanatics separated from the rest of the Sami in the Kautokeino/Alta area in Finnmark and later engaged in a violent encounter with the community leaders in Kautokeino. He fills in the gaps in the historical documents and testimony by describing otherwise inaccessible information: private conversations, unvoiced personal feelings, unseen actions and the like. Some events only generally described in historical documents are narrated in specific detail in the novel, such as the pietists' following-through on the decision to force many other Sami to "convert" to their particular pietistic beliefs, whipping them with branches until they bled and cried out for Jesus. Petersen also describes how, after the shopkeeper Ruth and lawyer Bucht were killed, pastor Hvoslef and others were captured in his house and whipped in the same manner. The narrativizing of gaps in historical documentation offers an explanation for how and why this group banded together, how they interacted with each other and why they believed themselves to be "de retfærdige" ("the righteous"), as they refer to themselves throughout the novel and also are referred to in historical documents.

Witnessing through collective memory: Postmemory and Heteropathic Memory

Rounding out the investigation of how to define witness fiction is what purpose it serves and how it affects the larger reading public. Narratives of trauma contribute to cultural memory, and by extension, fiction written about historical events or groups of people contributes to the general understanding of history. This process is not based on personal experience, however, but on an act of the imagination. Marianne Hirsch discusses the ways in which representations of trauma, specifically the Holocaust, reveal that "memory is cultural, fantasy is social and political," and that the viewer (reader) of these representations engages with the work with the sense that she is "related to her through a cultural act of identification and affiliation" (6-7). While Hirsch refers to a specific piece of photographic art in which superimposed images expose various points surrounding the Holocaust, the concept can be extended to the experience of readers or viewers of other creative works. The sense of experience gained through the imagination is described by Hirsch as "postmemory" and Kaja Silverman as "heteropathic memory" (Hirsch 9). Postmemory differs from heteropathic memory in a closer connection between the self

and the other “through familial or group relation” (Hirsch 9). Postmemory may indicate temporal distance, e.g., generational, while heteropathic memory may involve only spatial or cultural distance. Hirsch states,

As I conceive of it, postmemory is not an identity position, but a space of remembrance, more broadly available through cultural and public, and not merely individual and personal, acts of remembrance, identification, and projection. It is a question of adopting the traumatic experiences—and thus also the memories—of others as one’s own, or, more precisely, as experiences one might oneself have had, and of inscribing them into one’s own life story. (8-9)

There exists a clear linguistic alignment between “postmemory” and “post-Holocaust” and “post-traumatic stress disorder,” all three of which indicate a temporal period following a particularly traumatic event. The struggle is to overcome a distance, and the instrument that is key, according to both Silverman and Hirsch, is the look.

In Chapter Two, I discussed the ekphrastic treatment of photographs in *Vargskinnet*, and here we see one example of the look used to overcome distance, to collapse it, as referenced also earlier in this chapter. Risten’s engagement with the photographs, some of which she remembers being taken, others not, serves on multiple levels to connect her experience with that of those represented in the photographs. She engages deeply with the victims in the photos, the grouse and the red fox, for example, and forms a network of associations based on the picture and the collective memory of the area, telling the story of the *jaktherrar* (huntin’ gents) and how they began coming to the area, who interacted with them and how, and how they interacted with the environment.

The look is also employed in the beginning of *Indtoget i Kautokeino*, in the second chapter entitled “At grave en historic op” ‘To dig up a story.’ The author-narrator says, “Det var på Kåfjord Kirkegård jeg så gravene” (“It was at Kåfjord cemetery I saw the graves” 18). He describes parking the car next to the whitewashed picket fence and listening to the wind, which sounded like a far-off joik. But it is his look at the graves of Aslak Jakobsen Hætta and Mons Aslakson Somby that forms the concrete connection; the sound of the joik in the wind becomes a ghostlike presence of the Sami, as if the joik were speaking from the past.

The requirements on the postmemorial recipient are also ethical; Hirsch states, “It is a question of conceiving oneself as multiply interconnected with others of the same, of previous, and of subsequent generations, of the same and of other – proximate or distant – cultures and subcultures. It is a question, more specifically, of an *ethical* relation to the oppressed or persecuted other” (9, original emphasis). The ethical relation requires respect for the actual distance in culture, space and time, and an understanding that the distance will only be bridged metaphorically.

While no photographs appear in the texts of the novels I have presented throughout this dissertation, those presented in Valkeapää’s *Beaivi*, *Áhčážan* create the “space of remembrance” and inspire the “acts of remembrance, identification, and projection” Hirsch discusses as elements of postmemory (8). Pages upon pages of photos invite the reader to gaze into the faces of Sami gazing back at them. While this is also a reflection of the ethnographic situation, the reader who considers the “ethical relation” to

the people in the pictures is instead him- or herself reflected in the photographs. Notable also is that the Sami edition of the book is hundreds of pages, while the Norwegian and English versions are much thinner and do not include ethnographic photographs. Via this publication method, Valkeapää is making a clear statement about insider and outsider groups and who should have access to what representations. In order to gain access to the full range of photographs, the reader has to make the effort to find the rare Sami edition, which is difficult to come by in the first place because it was not printed in large numbers and is now decades old.

Chapter Conclusions

In this chapter, I have detailed why Sami positions are interpreted as positions of trauma, even though the historical bloodshed was minimal by comparison to the treatment of some other indigenous populations. I have investigated the ways in which topoi of witness literature such as a reliving of past events in the present, the participation of the listener in reconstructing experience and a desire to bridge the temporal, spatial and cultural gap are presented in witness fiction. The impulse to connect with the position of the survivor of trauma has varied sources, from the coming to terms with one's own privileged position to the connection of personal grief with the experience of a larger collective to an increased awareness of one's own heritage. The ethical relation to others begins with the author, especially in the texts discussed here, since the authors are members of the majority. Rather than creating texts that simply soothe the conscience of the ethnic majority about their colonial past, these authors dismantle us-and-them attitudes and display the complexity of not only ethnic but also cultural difference while at the same time stressing the benefit of an empathetic connection across cultural lines. The narratives, particularly *Vargskinnnet* and *Presten*, do not seek to ventriloquize the Sami but instead position themselves liminally through characters such as Risten and Liv. The appeal to the trope of testimony and to topoi of witness literature through a fictionalized framework is approached self-reflectively and plays out through the text itself. Trauma is depicted indirectly, with the mediation of narrators and with historical distance. While witness fiction written by members of the majority may simply enable the oppressors' descendants to absolve themselves from guilt, these particular texts represent the complexity of difference and of history, elucidating the reader about the circumstances of the colonial past of the North.

From an authorial standpoint, Ekman, Ørstavik and Petersen engage in the production of cultural memory through the representation of a colonial past. Readers may then conceive of themselves as “multiply interconnected with others [...] of the same and of other – proximate or distant – cultures and subcultures” (Hirsch 9). This multiple interconnectedness, when combined with an awareness of one's ethical relation to others, can result in a humanistic sensitivity towards others with whom one would not otherwise identify.

Chapter Five – Extensions of Witness Fiction

Throughout this dissertation I have focused on the writings of Kerstin Ekman, Hanne Ørstavik and Martin Petersen, investigating the ways in which their novels represent a subgenre of witness literature called witness fiction. I have investigated the genre of witness fiction. Using the representation of the Sami as a case study, I examined interculturalism and intermediality in relation to the trope of testimony in *Vargskinnnet*, *Presten* and *Indtoget i Kautokeino*. In the conclusion to this dissertation, I suggest two means of extending the work presented above. First, I approach two additional novels related to representations of the Sami; these focus on traumatic collisions of political and geographical conflict of majority and Sami culture. The themes of these novels relate strongly to feminist issues and theories, as both texts foreground rape and gendered power dynamics. Many strands of feminist criticism, questioning power and control, parallel the postcolonial thought which provides the basis for understanding the history and trauma of the indigenous experience at the hands of the majority colonizer.

After a discussion of the relationship of feminist criticism to witness fiction, I consider how environmentalist fiction, writing that represents non-human silenced voices, relates to witness fiction. For this section, I turn primarily to Kerstin Ekman's *Herrarna i skogen* (Gentlemen in the Forest 2007), and while the connection between *Vargskinnnet* and *Herrarna* is suggested by similarities in certain sections discussed below, I do not intend to equate the Sami with the environment. Nor do I believe this was Ekman's intention. The connection is instead a concern for diversity and diverse perspectives; these texts contribute to the polyphony of voices through which a fuller history can be presented for and understood by the reader. The more numerous the perspectives, the more exposure a reader gains. While Ekman's representations of the Sami, along with those by Ørstavik and Petersen, should be noted as representations formed by a member of the majority, readers should be encouraged to seek out many other representations as well, especially representations of Sami culture by members of Sami communities. When we consider representations of the environment, however, we don't have access to representations of the forest *by* the forest; we are completely reliant on "outsiders" with the capacity of human language for representational testimony. The reader is in the position of the listener of testimony; he or she has a constructive role in the shaping of an understanding of experience, particularly when violent acts carried out on nature are concerned. The aspects addressed in this concluding chapter should be taken as suggestions for further ways in which the framework of witness fiction encourages us to seek a plurality of perspectives of silenced experience so that we gain the greatest understanding of the world around us and the benefits of difference and diversity. While some dismiss this notion as naïve, impractical, or simply impossible, others note the value of learning how other cultures approach problems in order to gain an awareness of other perspectives that may lead to solutions for problems in one's own culture. Still others ascribe to notions intrinsic to Deep Ecology, that the well-being of every entity in the ecosphere is inherently important. This concept leads to my final commentary, which revolves around the larger purpose of fiction and collective cultural memory.

The two additional novels to which I would like to call the reader's attention were published more recently (in 2006 and 2007, respectively) than the other novels included in my dissertation. They present new perspectives from which to analyze further the expanse of witness fiction. *Lappskatteland: en familjesaga* (Reindeer Pastures⁵⁶: A Family Saga 2006) by Annica Wennström, who is Sami, and *Let the Northern Lights Erase Your Name* (2007) by American author Vendela Vida are fictional representations that focus on the Sami and are set at least in part in Sápmi; both protagonists are women and the texts thematize the search for one's roots via a maternal line. They also both include a thematic emphasis on mapping through the tools provided in the publication itself: *Let the Northern Lights* includes an actual map, with markers for the towns the protagonist Clarissa travels through on her journey, while *Lappskatteland's* family tree can be seen as a metaphor for a map and encourages the reader to follow the progression of the narrative not only through space, but through generations. The inclusion of maps provides a sense of realism; and while the family tree may not be verified easily, the geographical map is accurate. Differences include the polyphonic tendencies in *Lappskatteland*, which focalizes a first-person narrator in the present day, her grandfather's grandmother Njenna from about 1860 to about 1920, and Njenna's one great love, in third person, in a slightly later period. In contrast, *Let the Northern Lights* concentrates all focalization in the first-person narrator Clarissa, and uses flashbacks to cover the backstory. Wennström's genealogical saga covers many generations, while Vida's novel goes back only as far as Clarissa's grandmother. Upon finding out that she has Sami ancestry, the narrator in *Lappskatteland* engages with Sami culture, first as an outsider and then as an increasingly accepted part of Sami society, while Clarissa flees from her mother and Sápmi, south to Helsinki and then further to Amsterdam, and then leaves Europe completely and moves to Hong Kong, where she falls in love with an Australian. Although both novels illustrate a violent meeting of Sami and non-Sami cultures on Sami ground, the particular dynamics of this meeting function in opposing ways. Additionally, while *Let the Northern Lights Erase Your Name* does not display an appeal to witness literature in its form or content but is instead content to investigate an individual psyche and non-representative personal trauma, *Lappskatteland* claims a closer kinship with this genre in its portrayal of violence towards and oppression of the Sami people.

Lappskatteland: En familjesaga is a story of a young woman trying to connect with her Sami identity after finding four Sami shoebands in a bureau in the attic. She travels to Finnmark, to Karasjok, to trace her family's past and encounters questions of cultural belonging and ownership of cultural heritage. These chapters are interspersed with chapters from Njenna's perspective, and, later, chapters focalized through Aante Naahkese and other family members. Njenna is in love with Aante, but he severs ties with her after she is raped by a Norwegian settler and becomes pregnant. She becomes engaged to the Læstadian Elias, who helps her father with his reindeer, but Njenna then runs away, gives birth to a daughter, and begins a new life in Skellefteå. The novel is separated into three "books" and comes to resemble a mystery novel in the present-day

⁵⁶ The translation of *Lappskatteland* cannot be provided in a simple word, as the *lappskatteland* were the areas in which the Sami were given particular reindeer grazing rights over the settlers' rights to the lands. The reader should note the positive association with the term and governmental acknowledgement of Sami land-use rights.

sections in the search for the story of the shoebands, which includes leads and tips such as, “Det är många som inte vill gå ner i källaren...” from the librarian at Sametinget in Karasjok (“There are many who don’t want to go down into the cellar” 114). The reader already knows where the shoebands come from through the sections focalizing Njenna, but is more concerned with the development of the narrator’s ethnic identification and cultural development as part of the Sami community.

In *Let the Northern Lights Erase Your Name*, Clarissa’s father dies suddenly, and in sorting through his things, Clarissa comes upon her birth certificate, which names a different father. She discovers that her mother, who disappeared when Clarissa was sixteen years old, had been married once before to a Sami priest in Inari, Finland. Pregnant with her fiancé’s child, Clarissa leaves for Scandinavia to find her biological father, but instead learns that she is the product of a rape by a different Sami man. She finds her mother working near Alta and confronts her in an attempt to resolve some of the issues raised not only by her mother’s sudden departure from the family but also the new knowledge about her conception. Clarissa eventually attempts to leave behind not only the residual trauma of her conception but her entire past.

Violent Confrontations and Conceptions

These two novels approach violent conceptions and the clash of two ethnicities. *Lappskatteländ* includes the relatively common portrayal of the aggressively colonial Norwegian settler vs. innocent Sami native, setting it within a multigenerational narrative that displays the reverberations of an initial occurrence of trauma through centuries. The story stands in many ways for the larger history of the dispossession of the Sami people of land and opportunity. *Let the Northern Lights Erase Your Name* turns on its head the representation of a colonial power’s physical oppression, as the narrative’s point of trauma is the rape of an American woman by a Sami man.

In Wennström’s novel, Njenna is raped by a Norwegian settler in a haunted place where according to local lore a young man was fooled into marrying a Stallo’s daughter and was subsequently cooked to death in his own wedding pot.⁵⁷ The Norwegian settler reminds Njenna of *stallo*, “men utan hund. Staloe som tog vad han ville ha, och gärna flickor. [...] Ögonen såg genomskinliga ut. Såg själlöst på henne, som om kroppen inte var bebodd av en människa” (“but without a dog. Staloe who took what he wanted, especially girls. [...] His eyes looked transparent. Looked soullessly at her, as if his body weren’t inhabited by a person” 45). The scene is a depiction of the connection between Sami mythology and the land and also of violent territorial appropriation by the non-Sami. The event is crushing for Njenna, who loses her place in the family and the potential for her life with Aante Naahkese. He ends their budding relationship; and she runs away to save herself from a life of shame.

⁵⁷ A *stallo*, or *stálu*, is a mythical figure that encapsulates the dangerous “other” in Sami culture. The *stallo* is similar to the Norwegian troll—he is larger than life, dumb, savage and eats human flesh (Turi 139, DuBois 93-94). The dog with which Stallo usually appears is particularly difficult to kill. John Lindow points out that while Stallo is a dangerous character who threatens to eat up the Sami, the opposite usually happens, with the Sami outsmarting Stallo (personal correspondence).

In Vida's novel, Clarissa's mother Olivia is researching environmental battles of indigenous peoples for her dissertation when she attends the protests against the construction of the dam and hydroelectric power plant in Alta, Norway. During these protests, she is raped by a mentally and emotionally disturbed Sami man. Olivia doesn't report the rape, saying that it would have brought negative attention to the common goal she and the rapist were both working towards. Though she wasn't positive others knew, Olivia felt she was labeled "the woman who was raped" and Clarissa would be labeled "the rape baby."

Interesting here is the characterization of the Sami man who committed the rape; there's something "not right" with him—even his mother, Anna Kristine, knows this when he's born. The portrayal of him as atypical allows for his violent act to be an anomaly of this otherwise peaceful people. Additionally, the characterization of the rapist in *Let the Northern Lights* displays an extreme shift in the ethnicity of the person committing the violent act from a member of the colonizing group to a member of the colonized group. The narrative also creates an interesting composite of characteristics by comparison to *Lappskatteland*, as the victim is gendered female, yet ethnically in the majority. Here, of course, this is more complicated because Olivia is an outsider, both non-Sami and non-Norwegian. Her position is quite different from Njenna's—Olivia is in this place by choice and has engaged in the protest because of personal convictions, while the land that Njenna and her family used was infiltrated by a violent "other." For both women, the decision to leave has to do with escaping the label of the woman who was raped and the stigma of carrying the baby of a man not of their own culture, not chosen by themselves to father their children.

History and Landscape

The intersection of history and landscape is displayed in these two novels through the figuration of traced footsteps. *Lappskatteland*'s protagonist is concerned with an experience of place, a space imbued with very particular meaning, here of the Sami culture. Clarissa, on the other hand, is on a mission to get answers about her mother's hidden past life and in doing so, retraces her steps to Inari and to Alta from there. The question arises, what does this process allow the narrators of these two novels to accomplish?

In *Lappskatteland*, the narrator begins her trip with the following sentiment: "När jag kom till Karasjok upptäckte jag att jag var död. Det var ingenting som jag hade räknat med. Tvärtom. Jag hade förväntat mig en sorts hemkomst" ("When I came to Karasjok, I noticed that I was dead. It was not something that I had planned for. Exactly the opposite. I had expected a sort of homecoming" 15). Everything seems new, history-less. She feels an intimate closeness with the first Sami woman she meets there, yet she can't talk with her. "Våra blickar skulle mötas och hon skulle veta att vi var av samma sort" ("Our eyes would meet and she would know that we were of the same sort" 16). It's clear the other woman doesn't feel the same. The narrator seems to expect immediate entry into the culture, as if recognizing the bit of one's blood that comes from a certain family or culture becomes a passcard. The narrator begins to realize that there's a code to go along with this passcard, but she doesn't know the code yet.

What this view points out is the problematic of gaining entry into a culture when what justifies membership is seemingly biological, as if the proof of ethnic or cultural belonging is specifically related to and dependent on heritage or bloodline. The protagonist in *Lappskattelund* knows only as much about Sami culture as the average non-Sami Swede. Yet she has Sami heritage; or, rather, she has a historical biological connection to the Sami, and this means to her that she should be allowed entry into the culture. She finds out through her attempts to become an insider in the culture, however, that there is much more to it. Though the biological connection seems to be crucial, knowledge of the language and familiarity with cultural norms are also expected, providing a complicated system by which one can gain entry into a cultural group. We see this concept at work in various ways also in the novels discussed in other chapters. In *Vargskinnet*, Risten, raised by a Swedish family but Scottish and Sami by blood, is unable to identify with any one ethnic group because her genetic connection to another group seemingly precludes it. The familiarity she gains over time with the customs of Swedish and Sami cultures enable her to shift from one to the other, juggling identities as the situation demands. Liv in *Presten* and the narrator of *Indtoget* do not have Sami blood or heritage, and even if they would like to enter the contemporary Sami community, this lack would presumably deny them the possibility.

In *Let the Northern Lights*, Clarissa doesn't ever explicitly consider her position within the Sami community, or if she even has one, but instead is looking for her personal history. Her initial goal is to find her mother and gain access to the past through information, not through revisiting places; in the process, however, she realizes the importance of place to her personal history. "I thought that I'd be looking for a person, not a place," she says while approaching the area in which she was conceived. "*It happened there*, I thought, looking in one direction. I turned. *Or there*. I turned again and again and again. I faced the darkness of the trees on the other side of the river. *Or there*" (128, original emphases). The resulting vertigo from this overwhelming realization that she is potentially standing in the exact place where, decades earlier, her mother was violently raped and she was conceived displays the ability of and the need for the imagination to connect the past to the present through a place.

The reader notes the intertwined gender perspective and investigation of culture in these novels. Both address the impulse to follow a maternal subject's course, and the connection of woman to landscape is illustrated in the discourse around Njenna's lifestyle and in Olivia's existence in a remote cabin near Alta. That their daughters search the landscape for signs of them highlights the connection, and the protagonists of these novels find, in some way or another, what they're looking for. The protagonist of *Lappskattelund* sees herself distinctly as an insider of Sami culture by the end of the novel, referring to herself as part of the Sami community, talking about the shame "we" have borne through the years and how "we" have always stepped to the side (283). She feels justified in claiming membership after having gained a level of exposure to and knowledge of the Sami culture. Clarissa, on the other hand, finds unexpected answers to the question of her roots, and perhaps realizes that she has unknowingly been retracing her mother's steps, not rewriting history as Olivia had hoped but instead reliving it, as she has also been raped. She continues in imitation of her mother by entering a new phase of her life, in a new place with a new man and an unborn child.

While each protagonist approaches the question of her own personal past by appealing to a larger maternal framework that includes a strong connection to place, and the confrontation of cultures is displayed through violence and unwanted production, Vida presents a largely individual investigation of personal history, while Wennström's exploration is of a representative experience. *Lappskatteländ* functions as a representation of the process of reconstructing ethnic and cultural identity when it has been left unacknowledged for generations. The protagonist's strong sense of belonging to a Sami community, even if others do not initially see her that way, suggests that this cultural identity has been present even through those generations, as a subcurrent that is then taken up by the protagonist. We see thereby a parallel to the personal investigation in *Presten* and in the larger scope of *Vargskinnnet*. Written by one who has gone through this process herself, Annica Wennström reflects on a process many are embarking upon today in Scandinavia, with the violent acts of the past experienced through the devaluation of Sami culture through assimilation to dominant national cultures and the expropriation of Sami people as a result of policies put forth by State governments. This protagonist's success at the end of the novel points to the possibility of recovering a deep connection with one's own heritage.

Extensions of Witness Fiction to Ecological Writing

The prominence of the natural world in the writing of Kerstin Ekman is well-known, from passages in her early novels such as *De tre små mästerna* (1961, *Under the Snow* 1997) to her recent collection of essays entitled *Herrarna i skogen* (Gentlemen in the Forest 2007). In intricate passages, Ekman performs the Edenic rites of existence for the natural world, describing in great detail the flora and fauna of Sweden. While I integrate here Ekman's collection of essays, I employ them as a means of investigating how the environmental detail included in her fiction could be seen as a mode of witness fiction that appeals to the experience of a non-human silenced voice, that of the environment.⁵⁸

Describing in *Herrarna i skogen* that in three decades of forest wanderings, she has met another human only six times, Ekman questions the myth of the Swede's relationship to the forest. Her charge is clear: "Det är dags att tänka efter vad vi fick av [skogen] och att värna den vilda resten" ("It is time to think about what we have gotten from the forest and to protect the rest of the wilderness" 10). The scars in the earth left by felling machines prove the power that we have over the forest, and she is ashamed that it is being exercised in this manner (*Herrarna* 537). For whose is the forest, she asks—do we share it with animals and plants or is it just ours for the taking? (454).

Witnessing for the Forest

Ekman's forest has taken many forms over the course of her writing, and it can take disparate forms even within the same novel. The shifting representations of the forest mirror the biodiversity for which the forest is crucial. In the detective novel, *Händelser vid*

⁵⁸ For an interesting perspective of the voice of the environment, readers are encouraged to read Aldo Leopold's essay "Thinking Like a Mountain" from 1948 in *A Sand County Almanac: And Sketches Here and There*. Oxford UP (New York): 1987.

vatten (1993, *Blackwater* 1996), mentioned earlier in this dissertation, the forest is a setting alternately for deforestation and for communities of treehuggers. In the anthropomorphic novel *Urminnes tecken* (Signs Immemorial, 2000), it is a place of magical, mystical beings and other-worldly conflict. In the opening scene of *Guds barmhärtighet*, it is a dark, scary unknown area surrounding six-year-old Risten on the left and right, in its absence ahead of her, guiding the way. The path to travel is one where the forest is not. But to travel through the forest even when one sticks to a path can be treacherous, as Morten Halvorsen discovers. He sets out from Norway to Sweden with his pushcart filled with goods to sell. There weren't milestones to indicate the border, however; they weren't needed—and not only because at this point, Norway and Sweden were in union. “Det var skog, skog, skog. [...] Skogen stod som en mur” (“There was forest, forest, and more forest. [...] The forest was like a wall” *GB* 155, Schenck 147). And this is where, according to local lore, Morten encounters a small Sami man who points him in the wrong direction and then tries to shoot him in order to steal his cart. Though his enemy's movements are hidden by the forest and his sounds masked by the sound of the river, Morten is the first to hit his mark, conquering in this small way the dangers of the forest of which encounters with untouched nature are encapsulated in this passage by the “savage” Sami. Morten continues to Svartvattnet and profits from the forest industry. In *Sista rompan*, the forest is the place where one will hear the cries of Eahparas, infants abandoned by their mothers. And found throughout *Vargskinnnet* is the criticism of the money-driven forest industry that is carting off the forest in its timber trucks. They took what they wanted, they stole the fells and the forests—these phrases resonate through the characters in Ekman's novels.

Anthropocentric vs. Biocentric Concerns

In *Urminnes tecken*, Ekman at first seems to provide a stark dichotomy between animals and humans, along with a list comprehensive enough for any beginning Swedish class on Swedish forest animals:

Det finns folk. Och så finns det djur. Rävar och björnar, orrar och ripor och järpar. Tjadertuppen! Och korpen. Järven och bävern. Och vajor och sarvar och kalvar. De vita renarna är blinda ibland. Eller döva på ett öra. Älg finns det förstås. Och lekatter och mårdar och småvesslor. Inte orm. Det finns inte. Men råttor: sork och mus och lämmel. Och alla småfåglar och allt fråt. Särskilt knotten. Myggen också och broms och blinning. Klara dagar seglar en örn över alltihop. (10)

There are people. And then there are animals. Foxes and bears, black grouse and grouse and hazel grouse. The capercaillie! And raven. The wolverine and the beaver. And reindeer does and bulls and calves. The white reindeer are sometimes blind. Or deaf in one ear. There are moose, of course. And ermine and martens and weasels. Not snakes. They aren't there. But rodents: voles and mice and lemmings. And all the small birds and all the flying insects. Especially the black fly. The mosquito too, and horsefly and cleg. On clear days an eagle sails over all of it.

Ekman's distinction is very clear—and would, if we stopped at the second sentence, seem to suggest a stark distinction of the type that typically results in a hierarchy that favors humankind. Her enumeration not of types of people or cultures but of nonhuman species, however, aligns with ideals emanating from a manner of thinking that is congruent with Deep Ecology, a concern with promoting egalitarian attitudes toward all members of the ecosphere (Næss, qtd in Garrard 21-22). Deep Ecology promotes the intrinsic value of any identifiable entity, a value that is not dependent on its relation to any other entity but only to its own existence. Garrard notes that some deep ecologists criticize environmentalists for their underlying goal of protecting the environment so that it will better serve mankind for longer (21). The shift from a human-centered conceptualization of the world to a nature-centered conceptualization lies at the heart of Deep Ecology. Ekman extends her contemplation of the ecosphere to “de andra. Inte folk, inte djur” (“the others. Not people, not animals” 10). The moral extension to a world of potential beings makes the distinction between human and nonhuman even more moot, since there can, with three objects, be no question of a stark dichotomy mirroring “culture” and “nature.” Because we can't prove the existence or nonexistence of these “others,” we can't insert them into a rational, discrete hierarchy. They fill in the interstices of the ecosphere.

In the foreword to *Herrarna*, Ekman claims that the forests in which she has lived, landscapes that exemplified biodiversity, are becoming monocultures as deforestation takes its toll. Ekman says that she has lived in a world that is disappearing—not only a physical world of natural forests, but a mental one in which people value closeness with the forest. In a statement that also resonates through *Vargskinnnet*, Ekman states, “Dag och natt dånar timmerbilarna förbi. De kör till Norge, till massafabrikerna, sågverken och arbetstillfällena där. Varför det måste vara så vet jag inte. Jag har legat vaken och lyssnat på dundret av timmersläpen som år efter år, dygnet runt, fraktar bort skogen. Jag har vargklon i hjärtat” (“Day and night the timber trucks thunder by. They drive to Norway, to the industrial factories, sawmills and work opportunities there. Why it has to be like this, I don't know. I have lain awake and listened to the thunder of the logging trucks that year after year, day after day, cart the forest away. I have the wolf claw in my heart” 9). The impact of the forest on the human psyche seems to be as much in her sights as humankind's impact on the forest. The imagery of a physical manifestation of this shame and grief connects human and nonhuman entities and encapsulates moral or ethical extensionism—the extension of human ethical systems to include nonhuman entities.

To exploit the landscape in such a way as is done via brute force technologies is to commit not only genocide of animal species, but can lead to cultural genocide as well. This potential exists especially in cases where an ethnic group lives in close relation to and includes, as part of the cultural expression and belief system of the group, a collective identification with that landscape. The effects of the exploitation of a landscape and the extension to cultural injustices are presented in *Vargskinnnet*. As Laula Anut says, “Tjuvarna tog inte bara fjället och skogen för oss [...]. Dom tog orden också.” (The thieves not only took the mountains and the woods from us [...]. They took the words, too” *SL* 258). Laula Anut is speaking not only of the expropriation of Sami from their native lands, and the loss of Sami languages through stigma and lack of instruction, but the centuries-old stigma of personal cultural expression by the Sami—in their language, and in joik. Thus

the extension of disregard for cultural diversity to biological diversity occurs all too easily in something akin to *immoral* extensionism.

The phrase “Jag ska ut i naturen” (‘I’m going out into nature’) shows, according to Ekman in a DN interview, that the culture has grown distant from the forest, enabling its exploitation and eventual devastation (Lenas). The division between man and nature, and the suggestion in this statement that man is not always in nature, but chooses the moments in which he is going to engage in nature, displays a problematic not new to the field of environmental studies. The assumption of this division allows and even invites exploitation, while recognizing the interplay between a landscape not formed by humans and one that was built or human-constructed could serve to enhance the perspective of those who would otherwise ransack the forests for economic gain.

The question of the division between enjoying the forest and its pleasures and exercising an anthropocentric eminent domain over it is the dilemma of the interaction between humans and the environment. It is not so clear-cut, however, since “natural and built environments [...] are long since all mixed up” (Buell, *Writing* 22), and to assume that the forests Ekman is talking about have not been affected by humans would be to deny the existence of forest-dwellers decades and centuries back. Nor does Ekman make that explicit claim about the forests. Her view aligns with that of Lawrence Buell and others who believe that “a mature environmental aesthetics – or ethics, or politics – must take into account the interpenetration of metropolis and outback, of anthropocentric as well as biocentric concerns” (22-23).

Even in *Urminnes tecken*, which largely occurs outside the realm of human consciousness, we see the influence of mankind as humans bring their own violence, with guns and grenades, to the forest landscape. Are humans prohibited, then? No, says Ekman. They must come on foot, and they have to “lyssna noga och se sig för. Man ska röra sig försiktigt men ovälkommen är man inte. Det finns ingenting som livar opp de andra som när språk och minne kommer till skogen” (“listen attentively and look around. One should move carefully, but one is not unwelcome. There is nothing that livens up the others as when language and memory come to the forest” back cover). This perspective suggests the benefit of human presence in and to the natural world and points specifically to language and consciousness as primary catalysts. Human interaction with forests can therefore serve to benefit forests by framing a defense of the environment in terms understandable to those who would otherwise destroy it.

Ecological and Environmental Witnessing

While a frame of reference to a forest landscape would seem helpful, if not necessary, for the contemplation of forest descriptions, the ecological or environmental imagination can hold the key for an experience of these other forests through textual depictions. Lawrence Buell states in *Writing for an Endangered World*,

acts of environmental imagination [...] potentially register and energize at least four kinds of engagement with the world. They may connect readers vicariously with others’ experience, suffering, pain: that of nonhumans as well as humans. They may reconnect readers with places they have been and send them where they would otherwise never physically go. They may

direct thought toward alternative futures. And they may affect one's caring for the physical world: make it feel more or less precious or endangered or disposable. (2)

The ecological imagination is figured in Ekman's writing using strategies akin to testimony and witnessing; by naming things one finds in the forest, by bringing them into the reader's awareness through vivid description and insertion into narrative form, by connecting them to objects, settings and experiences within the reader's frame of reference in order to inspire the reader's empathetic response. While in "The Social Construction of Nature," Terry Gifford claims that humans still have the need to interact with nature directly and cites studies where medicine is needed in smaller amounts for patients who were exposed to nature in an unmediated form, he states, "We not only need this sort of contact, we need to communicate it, examine it, and share its meaning through our symbolic sign systems. Our semiology of nature keeps us sane by reminding us that we are animals" (174). We remember that Ekman claimed the importance of language and memory in relation to *Urminnes tecken*—that there is nothing that livens up "de andra" ('the others') as when language and memory come to the forest—and we can see that this also mirrors not a hierarchy but an interplay of man and nature, words and spirits, memory and presence.

"Skogen är inte ljudlös" ('The forest is not silent'), Ekman has said, but it cannot put into print and disseminate its own testimony, tell its own story of life, death and regeneration. It requires ambassadors who will tell of its complexity, its regenerative capacity, and its centrality to our future. The interconnectedness of forest scenes in Ekman's writing serves as a model for the interconnectedness of nature with the constructed world and the ill-advised stark separation of the two. If we can take the witnessed experience of the forest and use this to expand our understanding of the world around us, as Ekman hopes, we can prevent the unnecessary decline of the biodiversity that is crucial for the ongoing health of the planet and develop a heightened sense of empathy that will serve us not only in interactions with nature but in acknowledging the value of the diversity of humankind as well.⁵⁹

The Work of Fiction in Collective Cultural Memory

Witness fiction is a collision of edification and imagination: it allows the reader to learn about a culture, community, or event at the same time as it appeals to the imagination and exercises the mind's ability to interpret sources and evaluate information. The result is something that many perhaps already know—that we can learn something from fiction—but the process requires clarification of how and why this happens. To better understand this intersection of cognitive psychology and literary analysis, I turn to Lisa Zunshine's *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of Mind and the Novel*.

In this book, Zunshine lays out how Theory of Mind can aid us in both analyzing fictional works and analyzing the reasons we read fiction in the way that we do. Theory of Mind, also known as "mindreading," is our ability to explain other people's behavior by ascribing to them thoughts, intentions, ideas, feelings, etc. The interest in and relevance of Theory of Mind has come into play in large part because of the increasing

⁵⁹ For human diversity *is* biodiversity to some extent; a healthy gene pool depends on biological difference.

awareness of autism, as people with autism experience varying degrees of inability to mind-read so that a trait formerly assumed to be universal is now understood in a more complex framework (Zunshine 6). The key aspect of Theory of Mind relevant to what I am looking at is the ability to, as Zunshine calls it, “track sources.” This is crucial in the reading of stories for two reasons: first, because our understanding of characters relies on our accurate attribution of sources to thoughts and perspectives within the text, and second, because our understanding of fiction itself relies on our ability to retain the author as the originary source of what we’re reading. This second reason is, in part, what serves as a distinction between what we deem as objective and what we deem as subjective.

We engage in source-tracking on a daily basis—some people more and better than others—via our interactions with journalism from various sources and social media, for example. Whether a source is deemed subjective or objective could vary from person to person and may be up for debate; while person A. may consider Fox News to be an objective source of information, person B. might claim a high level of bias. Adding another layer may be the question of content versus the delivery of information; while person B. may consider Jon Stewart to be more a comedian than a journalist, he or she may also perceive the information disseminated through his show to be “factual” in part because it may be verified by numerous other sources, for example, or because they feel themselves able to distinguish easily between fact and commentary. Certainly, both A. and B. would be engaging in appropriate source-tracking to understand that both Jon Stewart and the reporters at Fox News filter information from their own sources.

When we consider the pedagogical value of fiction, we have to consider the conditions of its creation, and that means here that we return to an evaluation of the author. By this term I do not mean some ghostly presence or disembodied mind that somehow effects a novelistic production, but an actual living being who sat down in front of a computer or took up a pen and paper and wrote the novel in question. When we consider the level of active engagement with source tracking in terms of the author, we are essentially evaluating the author’s credibility not only as a storyteller and writer but as a person. What else do we know about the author? We can take Kerstin Ekman as an example – she is potentially the most publicly and politically present living author included in this dissertation. She left her seat in the Swedish Academy in 1989 because they refused to issue a statement of support for Salman Rushdie; she regularly speaks out in support of free speech and civil rights; and she promotes biodiversity and environmental stewardship throughout her fiction and nonfiction.

It is in part these sorts of extradiegetic details that readers rely on when making the decision of whether or not it is worth the risk to suspend (and it is more a suspension than a removal) the source tag. The implicit author-reader contract suggested here is similar to Lejeune’s autobiographical contract, where it is understood that if certain criteria are met, such as the narrator’s name is identical to the author’s name, the reader feels that the contract has been signed. There exists an inherent risk here that an authoritative writing style can coerce a reader into believing “truth” where we have “fiction,” or an author can engage in different types of writing, some more fictional than others, thereby leading the reader astray, or the reader can succumb to a desire to trust the actual truthful validity of an author’s writing even when the signs are present that caution should be taken.

Zunshine offers an unexpected take on this risk, however, and how it can be interpreted. She references Leon Cosmides and John Tooby's work in which they claim, "'false' accounts may add to one's store of knowledge about possible social strategies, physical actions, and types of people, in a way that is better than true, accurate, but boring accounts of daily life" (67). Our perceptions of truth, however, and what we are looking for in terms of truth are constantly shifting, and this is a process of our evolved brains. As Zunshine says,

The constantly changing boundaries and definitions of truth are not the casualty of the social-historical change but rather the key condition of the functioning of the human brain. By adjusting and redefining what constitutes the 'truth' at every new social, cultural, and personal junction, we exploit, build on, develop, fine-tune, struggle with, tease, and train a broad variety of cognitive mechanisms underlying our evolved metarepresentational capacity. (70)

Zunshine points to the publisher's role in determining the "truth-value" of a text, but she maintains the conviction that life lessons can be learned through fiction (70-71).

Witness fiction is in part valuable because it combines the practice of source-tracking with both historical information and an imaginative appeal. The novels I have worked with in this dissertation approach the pedagogical nature of fiction in a very interesting way, by modeling this pedagogical process through certain characters. All of them include characters who are outsiders to Sami culture for one reason or another and who are trying to learn more about the history and culture of the Sami. Some are trying to gain entry to the culture itself and become insiders. Others are simply trying to understand why things happened the way that they did.

When the unnamed Swedish first-person narrator of *Lappskatteland* realizes that she has Sami roots, her travels take her not only around a certain landscape but through a learning process. She is driven to answer the questions, "Hur kom det sig att jag blev jag? Vad för något i mig får mig att leta efter det osynliga arv jag nästan alltid vetat att jag burit med mig men som alltid förnekats? Eller i alla fall förtigits, skojats bort" ("How did it happen that I became me? What is it in me that causes me to search for that invisible inheritance I've almost always known that I bore within me but that was always denied? Or, in any case was silenced, washed away" 171). Her search for personal identity and cultural heritage combined with the dual-narrative technique Wennström employs with near-alternating chapters of past and present afford the reader two ways of absorbing representations of Sami culture. Some present-day passages are easily tracked through the source of the first-person narrator, and passages from the past are focalized but presented in third-person.

Clarissa Iverton of *Let the Northern Lights Erase Your Name* is a complete outsider to Sami culture; fully raised in the United States, she also has no idea that she is of Sami descent until she is an adult. As she travels to northern Finland and Norway in search of her roots, the reader observes her outsider position from the moment she gets off the plane and attempts to make her way around this strange country. The reader follows her gradual acceptance of this culture as she learns about the people of the area, the landscape, the history and etiquette. Though she ultimately leaves the entire culture and geographical area behind, we have been a part of her journey.

In *Indtoget i Kautokeino: en historisk roman*, the experience of edification is a bit more concealed; the second chapter of the novel describes, in first person, yearly trips to Finnmark during which the narrator hears again and again the stories of the region, and he says, “En af dem er jag nødt til at grave op og transportere hertil” (“One of them I have to dig up and bring here” 17). He describes standing in the cemetery in Kåfjord and cites Knud Rasmussen’s *Lapland* of 1907 and Sophus Tromhult’s *Under Nordlysets Straaler* of 1885 as providing the groundwork for his research. The reader notices, as a result of the bibliography and references in the narrator-based sections text to other works, the resemblance to a work of scientific endeavor instead of an imaginative creation, and understands the novel as based on at least some sort of empirical evidence.

In Ørstavik’s *Presten*, Liv models the questioning of the relationship between majority and minority sociopolitical ethnic groups. Her study is about when the Kautokeino rebellion actually started, and the pedagogically valuable step that she takes is looking far in the past to uncover the oppression that builds up to a final point of eruption. The reader also learns from Liv’s missteps, however, not to pigeonhole Sami culture to “times past” in an episode also mentioned in Chapter Two of this dissertation. Liv witnesses a procession towards the Sami parliament building in Karasjok and assumes, based on the singing, costumes, and videotaping, that she’s seeing the making of some sort of music video. When she sees the footage on TV that evening, she asks the young woman behind the counter at an internet café about it. The young woman calls her out on this cultural misstep—this is footage of a political protest—and says, “Tror du vi leker Sameland?” (“Do you think we’re *playing* Sápmi?” 191). The reader sees easily from this slap on Liv’s wrist the importance of understanding not only the past but the present and the future of the Sami culture. The inclusion of direct quotations speaks for the authenticity of the sources of the text, even if the authoritative voice is the Norwegian one—this allows further the modeling of the search for missing testimony or silenced voices from indigenous and minority cultures.

In *Vargskinn* by Kerstin Ekman, we notice both modeling of the cultural learning process and the information itself presented for us; however, what makes this a particularly interesting case is that one of the main players here is not a sympathetic, but an antagonistic learner, and it is up to the reader to decide, having tracked the focalized Hillevi as a source for information about Sami culture, how to interpret the perspective gained through her. Hillevi, raised in Uppsala in prim-and-proper Victorian fashion, is appalled by what she interprets as the unhygienic living conditions of the Sami. Her fear of their homes, their bodies, their culture contaminates her perceptions; the reader gains two experiences from this: she can observe the negatively critical, even racist, perspective of the Sami that some people, and even the Swedish government, take, and she can exercise her ability to mediate the mediation in order to ascertain what knowledge is being imparted in a given scene.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ An example of this occurs when Hillevi is being confronted with not only Sami culture but life in northern Sweden for the first time in her life. Ekman highlights the source here, emphasizing the mediation of Hillevi’s consciousness in the text, by first describing the situation and then explicitly naming the moment when she begins to understand:

Det hade blivit alldeles tyst därnere. Ett grått tarmpaket vällde fram och mannen stack in händerna och grävde ut mer ur bukhålan. Blodlevar vällde över hans händer

The reader's responsibility to track sources is essential to the distinction of witness fiction from other fiction. This process begins with an evaluation of the author, taking what extradiegetic information can be gathered about the author's life experiences, education, and social and political engagements and activism. The reader can look at the novel itself to see whether there are clear references to sources and corroborating texts. And she can perform a constant evaluation while reading, suspending source-tracking when it seems appropriate, but always maintaining reservations if the pedagogical "contract," so to speak, is broken. And while the knowledge gained from reading fiction falls somewhere between traditional knowledge and academic or formal knowledge, perhaps we can see it as somehow helping to form the bridge between the two.

Final Thoughts: Witness Fiction and Collective Cultural Memory

As discussed in Chapter Four, Marianne Hirsch examines the representation of memory and the perception of others' memories within an ethical frame, saying that a person can interpret him- or herself as "multiply interconnected" to others who are both similar to and different from him or her, and that the essential component is an understanding of the "ethical relation to the oppressed or persecuted other" (9). This understanding occurs not only with the reader of witness fiction, but also for the author who also holds true to the ethical relationship. The ethical relation is most important because even fictional representations enter the collective consciousness of historical events; representations that subvert the reality of oppression and trauma are damaging to the appreciation and understanding of cultural difference. We can look again at Hirsch's claim about postmemory and revisit Susan Brison's statements about traumatic experience and culture:

[Postmemory] is a question of adopting the traumatic experiences—and thus also the memories—of others as one's own, or, more precisely, as experiences one might oneself have had, and of inscribing them into one's own life story. (Hirsch 8-9)

[H]ow (and even whether) traumatic events are remembered depends on not only how they are initially experienced but also how (whether) they are perceived by others, directly or indirectly, and the extent to which others are able to listen empathetically to the survivor's testimony. The traumatic event is experienced as culturally embedded (or framed), is remembered as

och vätte nerkanten på tröjarmarna. Lappgubben gav till ett ljud i tystnaden. Han hoade på en enda lång ton. *I det ögonblicket förstod hon att det var en vargkropp.*

[...] Så tog han fram en liten klump och slängde den i backen. En till. Och en till. Fem gånger gjorde han det. För var gång tjöt gubben på sin enda ton.

Då förstod hon att det var en varghona och att den hade varit dräktig. (GB 12-13, my emphasis)

Down below everyone was quiet. A gray bundle of entrails spilled out, and the man put his hands into the cavity and dug out other bits and pieces. Clotted blood stuck to his hands and soaked the cuffs of his sweater. The Lapp brayed into the quiet: a long, droning hoooo. *That was the moment when she realized the dead animal was a wolf.*

[...] [He] extracted a little lump and tossed it to the ground. Another. And another. Five times. Each time, the Lapp howled again.

Then she realized the animal was a she-wolf who had been with young. (Schenck 8-9)

such (in both traumatic and narrative memory), and is shaped and reshaped in memory over time according, at least in part, to how others in the survivor's culture respond. (Brison 42)

In these two statements, we observe the alignment of Theory of Mind, witness fiction, and the collective cultural memory of trauma. By melding ethically-pitched fiction with an understanding of how witness fiction as a cultural product affects cultural memory and enhancing this marriage with Theory of Mind, the reader understands the full impact of witness fiction on the creation and development of a humane, tolerant reading public.

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