This study is about rock art and cultural heritage. The main focus is how the participants in the project Rock Art in Sápmi work with these issues. The aim with the project is to increase the knowledge about rock art and cultural heritage and open up for new thoughts and visions about the past, present and future. The project involves different professions such as archeologists and various kinds of artists.

Except literature studies, this study is based on interviews with persons who are involved in Rock Art in Sápmi. As the participants work with the material and questions based on various inputs, this provides a broad basis for understanding of what rock art and cultural heritage mean and how they can be used.

The aim with this study is to examine the meaning of cultural heritage, such as rock art, how it is used and what possibilities it gives us today.

Cultural heritage is an ambiguous term. It is something that changes over time and cannot be seen as something static. It is obvious that it has and can be used by different groups to prove opinions when the interpretations support a given answer. Furthermore, it is clear that the structures in the society can be seen in the interpretations.

Due to the ambiguity of the term, different perspectives have been used in this work, for example, gender perspectives and theories of ethnicity. By examining such perspectives on the material, it shows that it is not obvious that a particular interpretation is the only right one. Interpretations can often be dependent on time and structures in the society, built on a variety of factors.

Depending on what issues that are being discussed, different theories have been tested but a constructivist approach is consistently used, meaning that gender roles and cultural heritage for example, are created by social structures and are not determined.

This study shows that meanings ascribed to cultural heritage and rock art can be seen as the effects of ideology and time. Interpretations change over time and it is clear that they often say something about how it looks in the societies in which they are made. The man, for example, has often been seen as the norm and women have been disparaged. Besides, the connection between Sami culture and rock art has in some societies been invisible, while in others it has been not. It is also clear that rock art and cultural heritage can be relevant for us today when they show universal human aspirations and challenges.