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Makadam Publishers, Göteborg & Stockholm, Sweden
www.makadambok.se
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Experienced Geographies and Alternative Realities

Representing Sápmi and Meänmaa
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Preface and acknowledgments

This book is the outcome of the research projects “Place-Making in Literature: Meänmaa in Contemporary Tornedalian Fiction”, funded by the Swedish Research Council (project no. 2015-01164), and “Other Places in the Teaching of Literature: Sápmi, Meänmaa, and Migrant Cartographies”, funded by the Umeå School of Education, Umeå University. During my work with this book I have presented work in progress at the IASS Conference at Copenhagen University in 2018, a workshop in 2018 at the University of Stavanger, a seminar at Vaartoe – Centre for Sami Research, Umeå University, and at seminars at the Department of Geography and the Giellagas Institute for Saami Studies at the University of Oulu, in September 2019. Towards the end of 2019 I presented work in progress at the Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Vienna. I am grateful for all input and comments. Thanks are due to Associate Professor Satu Gröndahl from the Hugo Valentin Centre, Uppsala University, for reading and commenting on the manuscript. I am also grateful to two anonymous peer reviewers for their comments based on a careful reading of the manuscript. The development of the book has relied on the expertise and support of editor Tove Marling Kallrén, Makadam Publishers, to whom I am indebted for assistance with editorial work. Thank you to everyone who has contributed.

Umeå, January 2020
Anne Heith
I
PLACE-MAKING
AND REPRESENTATION
Introduction

The point of departure for this book is that representations in various media contribute to place-making, and that distinctions must be made between places in the real world and representations related to diverse experiences connected with factors such as ethnicity, ideologies, political currents, and aesthetic preferences. Neither places in the real world, nor representations, are uniform and static. On the contrary, they are successively reinvented, reinterpreted and renegotiated. At certain stages of history, the places now called Sápmi and Meänmaa were regarded as wilderness. National borders have shifted and, due to the spatial turn in the humanities and social sciences, new perspectives have emerged to challenge colonialism and ideas of centre versus periphery.

The theme of this volume is place-making in Sámi and Tornedalian culture and literature, in which the concepts of Sápmi and Meänmaa play a central role. While Sápmi, which denotes a transnational area in northern Scandinavia and the Russian Kola Peninsula, is an established concept used by institutions such as the Sámi Parliament, the concept of Meänmaa is largely connected with one individual, the Swedish Tornedalian author Bengt Pohjanen. Meänmaa is a contested concept, one not necessarily cherished by a majority of Tornedalians on both sides of the Swedish-Finnish border (Appendix A). It has been used in diverse contexts with different meanings. Three distinct meanings are highlighted on the website of the Meänmaa Association: 1) Meänmaa consists of five municipalities in Sweden and six in Finland, 2) Meänmaa is the name of a joint project with the municipalities of Pajala in Sweden and Kolari in Finland, 3) Meänmaa signifies a common worldwide cultural territory where Meänkieli is spoken. The definitions of Meänmaa of interest for this book are those which involve the notion of a place with a common language and culture. This theme will be examined by analyzing Bengt Pohjanen’s use of settings in fiction and non-fiction.

Bengt Pohjanen’s writings, performances and projects relating to the making of Meänmaa are central to the discussion in part three. The concept of Meänmaa is to some extent controlled by Pohjanen, as it is a registered trademark. One vantage point is that Pohjanen’s Meänmaa project is defined by the fact that he is a Swedish citizen who belongs to an ethnic and linguistic minority in Sweden. This is why the Tornedalian material that is discussed is largely produced by Swedish Tornedalians, because minority status is seen as a decisive factor in shaping the emotions, experiences, and memories activated in the production of narratives connected with belonging, identity and ideas of home. When Finnish material is discussed, it is related to Pohjanen’s use of Finnish literature and cultural elements in producing narratives of the Meänmaa transnational area, which spans the Swedish-Finnish border.

Convery, Corsane and Davis emphasize how people are inevitably immersed in place and that place has “ontological priority in the generation of life and the real world” (Convery, Corsane & Davis 2012, 1). They highlight the way in which place is connected with the production of meaning and experiences: “people and their environments, places and identities are mutually constructed and constituted” (ibid.). Yi-Fu Tuan suggests that human feelings, the attribution of value, and thoughts contribute to articulating experiences of place, expressed for example in art and literature (Tuan 2011, 7). Following Tuan, both space and place are words that denote common experiences (ibid., 3). This view of place is reflected in Eric Prieto’s discussion of place-making: “I emphasize the human, subjective dimension of place, which gives rise to expressions like ‘a sense of place’ and has an inherently experiential dimension […]” (Prieto 2011, 15). The analyses in this book are informed by the idea that places are shaped through human encounters, events, activities, narratives, memories and emotions (see also Barenholdt & Granås 2008). An important notion is that the creation of artworks, the writing of literature, the production and maintenance of websites, the organisation of memorial days, etc., are material processes whereby experienced geographies, i.e. places, are shaped. The concept of ‘experienced geography’ has been used by geographers to emphasize connections between places and human experiences (see Pierce, Martin & Murphy 2011). A central theme of this book is the connection between place-making on the one hand, and cultural production on the
other. The central issue is that cultural production contributes to place-making. This implies that place-making is conceived of as “the set of social, political and material processes by which people iteratively create and recreate the experienced geographies in which they live” (ibid., 54). The concept of ‘alternative realities’ encompasses the notion that a place may be experienced in multiple ways, which implies that a place may be represented as diverse, alternative realities.

After World War II, the concepts of space and place have challenged the predominance of time in literary and cultural studies. Both Westphal and Tally Jr. link the increased focus on space with the abandonment of the image of history as a progressive movement towards greater freedom and enlightenment (Tally Jr. 2013, 12). As Westphal points out, after the atrocities of the war, time “was deprived of its structuring metaphor” (Westphal 2011a, 12). The disenchanted vision found in Lyotard’s influential analysis of the postmodern condition highlights serious doubts about connections between progress and progress (Lyotard 1993, 78). This is one of the factors that contributed to the spatial turn in literary and cultural studies, which explores spatial practices in literature: “The recent spatial turn in literary and cultural studies has, for the most part, been a product of, or response to, the postmodern condition” (Tally Jr. 2013, 38). Furthermore, migration and tourism have led to a focus on the distinctiveness of a given place as well as differences between places (ibid., 13). The political essence of geography has become a central theme. Tally Jr. links this to the forces of decolonization and neocolonialism, which have made it clear that “the spaces of the map were not uncontested” (ibid., 13–14). Globalization and technological advances have resulted in a destabilization of spatial barriers (ibid., 41). However, while time has come into question as the dominant explanatory concept, both Westphal and Tally Jr. emphasize how places do not emerge in a void, but that they have a historical, temporal dimension. It is also important that places are represented by somebody, and that somebody ‘reads’ those representations (Westphal 2011a, 149ff). Places, as well as representations and ‘readings’, are connected with temporal strata.

One idea of importance in this study is that places can be regarded as centres of felt value, and that texts contribute to giving a place its identity by representing it as an experienced geography. The research question in focus is the ways in which Sápmi and Meänmaa are represented in a selection of texts inspired by postcolonial theory, indigenous studies, ecocriticism and postmodernism, which are related to new ways of representing and reading places. Centre versus periphery is a central theme, one that has come to the fore in narratives that challenge the exclusion and marginalisation of places and peoples regarded as marginal and uncivilized. Both Meänmaa, in the Swedish-Finnish borderlands, and Sápmi are associated with specific ethnic groups and situated in areas that are conceived of as regional or rural, as opposed to urban or metropolitan. In his influential book *The Country and the City*, Raymond Williams analyses how places and spaces are constructed in British literature through a distinction between country and city:

“Country” and “city” are very powerful words, and this is not surprising when we remember how much they seem to stand for in the experience of human communities. In English, “country” is both a nation and a part of the “land”; “the country” can be the whole society or its rural area. In the long history of human settlements, this connection between the land from which directly or indirectly we all get our living and the achievements of human society has been deeply known. And one of these achievements has been the city: the capital, the large town, a distinctive form of civilization. (Williams 1973, 1)

Williams discusses how the term ‘metropolitan’ began to be used for describing whole societies, while ‘underdeveloped’ is used to describe agricultural or non-industrialized societies. According to Williams, imperialism is one of the models of ‘city and country’ that have evolved from this dichotomization (ibid., 279). Williams’ distinctions are useful as a starting point for analyzing representations of Meänmaa and Sápmi. Meänmaa is a place that connotes the rural periphery, both in a Swedish and Finnish national context. Sápmi, on the other hand, does not entirely fit into the dichotomy described by Williams. Historically, the land of the Sámi, who are nomadic reindeer herders, has been seen as unoccupied land. In a Swedish context, the nomadic North Sámi were distinguished from other Sámi groups through the ‘Lapp shall remain Lapp’ policy, which only recognized reindeer-herding North Sámi as “real Sámis” (Oscarsson 2016, 951). National borders have been established, as well as mining industries and settlements, which have driven the Sámi off their traditional lands. Thus, while settlers in agricultural areas were distinguished from people in urban areas, who were regarded as modern and developed, the indigenous Sámi were not recognized as owners of the lands they had used since ancient times.

Both Sweden and Finland, where Meänmaa is located, and Sápmi, which also overlaps northern Norway and the Kola Peninsula, have histories of homogeniz-
ing nation-building in which narratives played a central role in shaping ideas of the nation and the people. In all three Scandinavian nation-states the educational system contributed to ideas of the imagined community of the nation. Educational material was produced to teach children about national culture and make them good citizens through the dissemination of a narrative of the nation based on the notion of a collective ‘we’, constituting an imagined community, sharing a history, culture, and future (see Anderson 1983). In Finland, Zacharias Topelius’ Boken om vårt land (in Swedish), Maamme kirja (in Finnish) (The book about our country), from 1875, was disseminated as a reader in elementary schools. At the time, there was a need for educational material that introduced the new country created after Sweden lost Finland in 1809. For centuries, Swedish-Finnish history was dominated by Sweden, but this changed when Finland became an autonomous Russian Grand Duchy (Klinge 2000, 63 ff). A Finnish nationalist movement emerged, inspiring artists, authors and academics. One of the authors included in Boken om vårt land is the Finnish linguist and nationalist Mattias Alexander Castrén (1813–1852) who wrote about northern Finland when travelling in Finnish Lapland. Chapter 60, with the title “Om lapparna” (About the Lapps), consists of a text by Castrén that describes the Sámi as ‘short, with a low brow, protruding cheeks and small eyes. His temperament is dull, gloomy and sullen’ (Topelius 1875, chapter 61). The Sámi village, which is visited in the summer, is described as dirty, nasty-smelling and unpleasant and the Sámi people as covered with dirt. In contrast, the Finnish settlers’ farms are described as well-constructed buildings surrounded by green meadows and beautiful fields, constituting a contrast to nature, which is described in negative terms: “high, terrible mountains” and “gloomy mountains” that the travellers climbed at risk to their lives (ibid., chapter 16). In this narrative of Lapland, the Finnish settlers, taming and cultivating a threatening wilderness, represent civilization, while the Sámi are portrayed as a negative contrast. Ridanpää points out that Finnish scientific institutions played a central role in defining “the geographically defined imaginary binary distinction between the South and the North” which had a great impact in the shaping of “national literature” (Ridanpää 2007, 911). In Sweden, Selma Lagerlöf’s The Wonderful Adventures of Nils (Lagerlöf 1906–1907) has had a similar role to the one Topelius’ Boken om vårt land had in Finland. Lagerlöf’s book was also written as a reader for elementary schools and has become a classic, with translations into numerous languages. Its role in contemporary Tornedalian literature will be discussed below, as it is explicitly mentioned in Bengt Pohjanen’s proposal for a Tornedalian Finnish literary tradition that challenges colonialism and homogenizing nation-building in Sweden.

The notion that there is a specific, national culture which differs from that of other peoples has been at the core of nation-building in European nation-states from the nineteenth century onwards. This idea is challenged and deconstructed from a Norwegian vantage point in Stian Bromark and Dag Herbjørnsrud’s Norge. Et lite stykke verdenshistorie (Bromark & Herbjørnsrud 2009) [Norway. A short piece of world history], which aims to demonstrate that Norway is not unique, rather that ideas of national exceptionalism are linked to romantic notions that date from the nineteenth century (ibid., 393). In Bromark and Herbjørnsrud’s narrative, Norway has always been multicultural and diverse. These themes are also found in Swedish and Finnish narratives that question the notions of national exceptionalism. In line with the aim of denouncing notions of Norwegian exceptionalism, the second part of Norge. Et lite stykke verdenshistorie claims that the Sámi were the first Norwegians and the unknown nation-builders of Norway. There is an interesting shift in the role given to the Sámi in this postnationalistic narrative, compared with colonizing narratives that have othered and marginalized the Sámi and excluded them from the collective ‘we’ of the nation, as is the case in Castrén’s narrative in Topelius’ Boken om vårt land. This indicates that one of the catalysts for present-day counter-narratives is the notion of national exceptionalism and particularity that excluded ethnic and linguistic minorities (see Keskinen et al. 2009).

In a discussion of real and fictional spaces in geocritical studies, Bernard Westphal emphasizes the complex relationship between places in the real world and their fictional representations (Westphal 2011a). Our perceptions of places are coloured by fictional representations and texts from diverse genres, including the mimetic arts and, conversely, our perceptions are shaped by places in the real world. Westphal uses the concept of ‘intertextuality’ to describe the connections between texts about specific places. In some cases, influential intertexts continue to inspire authors through the centuries. In a Tornedalian context, Antti Keksi’s oral poem about the breaking of ice in the Torne Valley in 1677 is an intertext evoked by contemporary authors like Bengt Pohjanen and David Vikgren. This illustrates another point made by Westphal, namely that space exists in time and that layers of representations from diverse periods may inform the making of a place in the present. As the examples of Boken om vårt land, The Wonderful Adventures of Nils, and Norge. Et lite stykke verdenshistorie indicate, historical contexts
Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

‘Performativity’ is a central concept and is used on the foundation of a performative dimension to place-making, in the sense that it is connected with re-invention, re-interpretation and re-negotiation as a response to previous representations (see Heith 2012, 72). Also, ethnic identities may be regarded as being shaped through the performances of individuals and groups (cf. Butler 1990, Lloyd 1999). The activation of distinguishing markers plays a central role in the shaping of ethnic groups (see Barth 1998) and the idea of a traditional territory, or homeland, is one such marker. Bengt Pohjanen has written about the Torne Valley and Meänmaa in various genres. Before the term Meänmaa was launched, Pohjanen used the term the Torne Valley, which he still uses. He uses the terms in fiction as well as non-fiction, in serious discourse as well as in a carnivalesque mode. Bakhtin, whose concept of ‘carnivalization’ proposes the liberating and subversive influence of popular humour on the literary tradition, is explicitly mentioned by Pohjanen (Pohjanen 2007, 134 ff.). The overturning of hierarchies in popular carnival, its mingling of the sacred with the profane and the sublime with the ridiculous are elements of Bakhtin’s theory of carnivalization', and are activated in some of Pohjanen’s proposals for a specific place called Meänmaa with a culture of its own. In the first volume of a popular Torndalian Finnish literary history from 2007, in which Laestadian prayer meetings are proposed as constituting interactive performances, Pohjanen draws attention to the mode of carnivalization through a reference to Bakhtin (ibid.). Laestadianism is an influential spiritual tradition which has had a great impact on people’s lives in the

and specific literary canons also constitute intertexts that are being challenged and reread in contemporary cultural production. This is related to the diversity and flux linked to tensions between historical and ideological embeddings.

Westphal highlights how places and representations of them are heterogeneous and in flux. This can be illustrated using Keksi’s poem as an example. The Torne Valley depicted by Keksi’s poem was located in Sweden at a time when Finland belonged to Sweden. From the perspective of politics and official cartography, Finland was Swedish during this period. In the present day, when Pohjannen and Vikgren are writing about the valley and the river, the Torne Valley is a border area. Over the last few decades, postcolonial mappings of place and decolonization have introduced new modes of representing place that are connected with ethnicity, minority status and postmodernist poetics.

While there is a focus on flow and mobility in the theoretical currents that are now in vogue, there is also an opposing view which implies that the world is seen as “one of local places deep and settled in the particularities of their individuality” (see Massey 2012, xiii). Massey emphasizes that the globalized world is not placeless, but that places are constructed consciously through the use of “distinguishing markers” which create a “sense of place” (ibid.). She points out that a sense of place never arose from internally homogenous places, or from places that were reproduced in unchanged form from generation to generation, or completely walled off from the wider world (ibid.). This implies that place-making evolves as a result of negotiation and the performances of individuals and groups who may activate diverse distinguishing markers. This is related to how different social groups within any physical location may live those locations in very different ways” (see ibid., xiv). The construction of a place, or the identity of a place, may be mobilized for various reasons: “for purposes of tourism, for the maintenance of order, for the maintenance of myths, for the very survival of a particular group” (ibid.).
Torne Valley (see Heith 2018a). Describing prayer meetings as interactive and carnivalesque performances contributes to the shaping of ideas about culture, as well as to demonstrating a popular subversion of spiritual discourse.

The use of setting and the representation of place have traditionally been a theme of poetics. In this book, the theme is linked to research fields that have emerged as a response to previous narratives about colonialism and modernity. In particular, postcolonial studies, ecocriticism, indigenous studies and environmental humanism form a backdrop to the discussion of Sámi and Tornedalian texts, as methodological approaches and concepts for the critical analysis of space and place have evolved in these research fields. One relevant theory is that place-making is connected to cultural identity. Prieto presents the connection between human identity and place as a "basic fact": "human identity, indeed the very ability to be the kind of creature who has an identity [...] is inextricably bound up with the places in which we find ourselves and through which we move" (Prieto 2011, 18). According to a broad definition of cultural identity, it includes all the values associated with a specific ethnic group (see Wande 2005, 105). Cultural identities may be established through external activities, artefacts and external factors in the environment (ibid., 106). Language is one important factor, which explains why Tornedalian Finnish, now officially called Meänkieli in Sweden, has a significant role in the creation of a Tornedalian Finnish cultural identity. As regards external environmental factors, the border and the border rivers, particularly the T orne River, are used in proposals for a specific T ornedalian Finnish cultural identity that is connected to Meänmaa as a place. Another external factor, which is highlighted in fiction and in the activities of the Meänmaa Association, is the connection to the land. Works such as Liksom’s novel Impi Agafiina are postmodernist vagabonds who move between geographical, social, ideological and temporal settings, before returning to her birthplace of Lapland. Constructivism is a central element of postmodernism, understood as both

I. PLACE-MAKING AND REPRESENTATION

Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

The representations of space that will be discussed in this book have evolved on the basis of deconstructing earlier homogenizing ‘master narratives’ that excluded ethnic minorities and marginalized groups.

In a discussion of the subject’s place in history as described in contemporary Finnish literature, Hallila points out that there are fundamental discrepancies in the representations of selfhoods and identities. He claims that the most blatant is the difference between constructivism and realism (Hallila 2012, 44). One of the authors he singles out as a constructivist is Rosa Liksom, who will be discussed in part three of this book. The conventions of literary realism aim to engender an appearance of the real, i.e. an impression of realism. Postmodernist fiction, on the other hand, highlights the constructedness of the text by using metatextual irony and characters who are not typical or recognizably of the real world (see Waugh 1992, 23 ff.). Extensive use of parody and characters who are atypical, or not ordinary, feature in Rosa Liksom’s novel Kreisland, whose main character Impi Agafina is a postmodernist vagabond who moves between geographical, social, ideological and temporal settings, before returning to her birthplace of Lapland. Constructivism is a central element of postmodernism, understood as both
a cultural phase in late modern Western societies and as a poetics that informs texts through the conscious use of metatextuality (Hutcheon 1988). A central element is the problematisation of referentiality; both Baudrillard and Lyotard emphasize how conditions for knowledge production and the legitimisation of knowledge are transformed in postindustrial society. Like Deleuze and Guattari, they highlight the complex, extensive and ungraspable circulation of signs in contemporary societies, making a comprehensive view impossible. This perspective on the proliferation of signs and the ‘death’ of totalizing master narratives is central to Deleuze and Guattari’s proposal for a poetics of postmodernism.

**Text, Place, and Postcolonial Theory**
Both Sápmi and Meänmaa are located in a region that has been described as a Northern European periphery (see Bærenholdt & Granås 2008, 1). Bærenholdt and Granås point out that images of the Northern European peripheries are varied; they may be associated with remoteness, frontiers and isolation, with exotic natural scenery and attractive tourist destinations, or with colonialism and resource extraction (ibid.). The configuration of both Sápmi and Meänmaa is linked to anticolonial counter-narratives and decolonisation. These new narratives of Northern European peripheries have evolved against a backdrop of colonization, and share engagement in a critical dialogue that challenges a spatial vocabulary of colonialism. Linda Tuhiwai Smith describes the spatial vocabulary of colonialism as an organization of space, whereby colonizers established binaries between ‘The Centre’ and ‘The Outside’. The Outside, the land that was colonized, was regarded as empty land, *terra nullius*, uninhabited, unoccupied, uncharted. Smith draws attention to a phenomenon she calls ‘The Line’ in the shape of maps, charts, roads, boundaries, claims, etc., whereby The Centre exerts its control over The Outside (Smith 2008, 53). In a Finnish context, there is a concrete example of the use of a line which divides southern “Culture-Finland” from northern “Nature-Finland” on a map published by the Finnish regional geographer J. G. Granö in 1951 (Ridanpää 2007, 911–912). According to Ridanpää, this is an instance of colonialism which has marginalized northern Finland.

When explorers, missionaries, traders, and settlers came to the Northern European peripheries, so contributing to the colonization of the north, the Sámi were eventually driven off their traditional territories, so reindeer herding became difficult due to the lack of grazing land (Lundmark 2008). This is a concrete effect of the spatial vocabulary of colonialism, which contemporary Sámi artists and authors view critically. Another theme of anticolonial Sámi history is the loss of land associated with the forcible relocation of Sámi villages. In Sweden, this occurred when the state decided to dam rivers for the purpose of building hydroelectric power plants (see Heith 2015, 77). Another effect of colonialism is the development of negative self-images due to racialization and othering. One common thread in the history of the colonization of Northern Scandinavia is the narrative of scientific expeditions that mapped and charted its peoples, fauna, and flora. Another thread consists of unevenly distributed wealth. Groups of people were impoverished and marginalized as society was modernized. Consequently, ethnicity and the languages and cultures associated with disempowered minority groups could become stigmas (see Eidheim 1998, Lindgren 2003).

Sápmi is a central concept in the contemporary anticolonial Sámi cultural mobilization that aims for decolonization. When the northern parts of Scandinavia were colonized, these areas were considered to be available for cultivation and exploitation because the Sámi were not acknowledged as land owners. One reason for this is differences in ideas of place and ownership: “The brochure “Sápmi. Landet, folket” [Sápmi. The land, the people], distributed by the Sámi Information Centre, which is part of the Swedish Sámi Parliament, describes Sápmi as the area in which the Sámi have traditionally lived. It asks “Where did the Sámi come from?” and answers “Nobody knows, we have always been here”. This is not strictly true, as the area called Sápmi once was covered by ice; it was only populated after the ice melted and made life there possible for humans. The word ‘always’ is related to Sámi land rights and protests against land loss; these are linked to the building of the modern Scandinavian nation states, using elements such as settler colonialism and the exploitation of natural resources.

**Indigenous Ontology and Conceptions of Space**
Westphal argues that postmodern space is “dedicated to heterogeneity” and that this is an opinion shared by postcolonial critics “for whom space is subject to conflicting tensions that arise from incompatible systems of representation” (Westphal 2011a, 49). Maori theorist Linda Tuhiwai Smith makes the point that colonization may be challenged through a representational system that aims for decolonisation (Smith 2008, 51). According to Smith, a major difference between representational systems is that the colonial project viewed the land as something to be tamed and brought under control:
Colonial control of space stands in stark contrast to an indigenous ontology based on respect for nature. Adamson and Monani draw attention to indigenous understanding of ‘Earth as a you’ with relations to the larger cosmos: a ‘person, or a ‘sentient’ or ‘creator’ being’ (Adamson & Monani 2017, 2). This merging of humanity and nature is reflected in the name of Mother Earth, which is widely used in indigenous communities and, more recently, in political documents espousing the protection of nature. The idea of a specific ontology that does not acknowledge boundaries between humans, nature, animals and the cosmos is found in a number of research fields, including postcolonial ecocriticism, posthumanist and animal studies, and environmental humanities. This book will focus on indigenous ontology and conceptions of space in the discussion of Sámi texts that activate ancient beliefs in the creation of contemporary Sámi culture, one in which counter-narratives are produced and linked to the idea of a Sámi collective identity, a ‘we’ that has been historically misrepresented and wronged. In this context, ideas of a specific indigenous ontology and cosmology function as distinguishing markers that contribute to creating a Sámi identity, as well to the narrative of a people who lived in harmony with nature before colonisation disrupted their traditional lifestyle. In this alternative narrative of colonialism, societal modernization and a lifestyle based on consumerism and the exploitation of humans and the natural world are associated with a dominant Western lifestyle, which relies on marginalizing certain groups of people and on the exploitation of nature.

Plumwood states that rationalizing the exploitation of animal and animalized human ‘others’ in the name of a “human- and reason-centered culture” is at least a couple of millennia old, and argues that the Western definition of humanity depended on the presence of the ‘non-human’, the animal and animalistic: “European justification of invasion and colonisation proceeded from this basis, understanding non-European lands and the people and animals that inhabited them as ‘spaces’, ‘unused, underused or empty’” (Huggan & Tiffin 2010, 5, see also Plumwood 2001, 8, Plumwood 2003, 53). Colonisation and its concomitant organisation of space are based on a hierarchization of life forms (see Huggan & Tiffin 2010, 6). This is a major theme of contemporary postcolonial ecocriticism. As Adamson and Monani point out, the concepts of frontier and wilderness have undergirded the colonial enterprise and justified the occupation of ‘empty’ continents (Adamson & Monani 2017, 3). While this kind of place-making characterize colonialism, Adamson highlights how practices of resilience and resistance characterize the present-day indigenous struggle for self-determination (ibid., 10). In this context, multispecies relations “illuminate the philosophies that undergird Indigenous ecological literacies often applied in the practice of resilience and resistance” (ibid.).

The impact of humans on nature is also central to the idea of the Anthropocene, a concept that denominates a proposed epoch that starts at the beginning of major human impact on the Earth’s geology and ecosystems (Hovland Svensen, Hylland Eriksen & Hessen 2016, Sörlin 2017). It was first proposed in a short essay by Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer (Crutzen & Stoermer 2000). Although there are varying opinions on the start of the Anthropocene, there is agreement that it denotes fundamental transformations of nature. Anthropocentrism is another concept that originates from the Greek word for human, anthropos. It refers to practices that include the hierarchization of species, racism, and the establishment of binaries between human and non-human (cf. Huggan & Tiffin 2010). Garrard defines anthropocentrism as a “system of beliefs and practices that favours humans over other organisms” (Garrard 2009, 183). Activities such as the development of agriculture, industrialisation, and other processes have had a deep impact upon the ecosystem and are alien to traditional indigenous views on humanity’s symbiotic relationship with nature. From the perspective of an indigenous ecological literacy (cf. Adamson & Monani 2017, 10), the manmade transformations of nature associated with colonialism and modernity represent the abuse of a world in which man, nature and the Earth live in symbiosis. According to this form of literacy, nature and the Earth are lifeforms that are interconnected with humans and animals.

When analyzing Sámi texts, this book considers perspectives from present-day discussions of indigenous ontology and conceptions of space, as well as their implications for descriptions of humanity’s relationship to nature and the cosmos. In previous Scandinavian research in the field of literary studies, the concept of ecocriticism is frequently used in a fairly self-explanatory manner, suggesting that ecocritical readings of fiction deal with humanity’s relationship to nature in literary texts (see Jarlsdotter Wikström 2018, 170). However, a great
many perspectives, some of which are presented in opposition to earlier concepts and ideas, have evolved during the decades in which ecocritical studies developed. For example, the notion that indigenous peoples are closer to nature and more holistic than other peoples has been critically examined in studies that challenge the idea of “indigenous ecological wisdom” (Krech 1999).

One issue that has come to the fore when I have presented work in progress is that the place called Meänmaa is in Sápmi. On one occasion, I was asked whether this had caused any conflicts between Sámi, who claim that the land is part of ancient Sámi land, Sápmi, and Tornealians who claim the territory as their cultural region. The answer is that I have not encountered any indications of a conflict. However, one Sámi has commented that Meänmaa is in Sápmi. The notion of being the first people in the land called Sápmi, and therefore having rights to the land, is reflected in contemporary Sámi anticolonial art and literature. In her lyrics, Sámi musician and actor Sofia Jannok claims that “we were here first” when she challenges the colonization of Sápmi (Jannok 2016). Tornealian Bengt Pohjanen, on the other hand, claims that the Tornealians lived in the Torne Valley long before the Swedes arrived. The Sámi are not mentioned in his and Kirsti Johansson’s Tornealian Finnish literary history, in which the concept of Meänmaa plays a central role (Pohjanen 2007, 11). This shows that place-making is associated with human activities, such as the production of narratives about origin and belonging. It also shows that there may be conflicting, or multiple, narratives produced by various agents with different ethnic affiliations and agendas.

Race-Biology and Otherness in the ‘Peripheral North’

Derek Gregory uses the term ‘dispossession by othering’ in order to describe how boundaries are created between ‘us’ and ‘them’ in a colonial context (Gregory 1994, 179). According to Gregory, the rationale behind this is that ‘they’ can be categorized as unfit to govern themselves, which allows colonizers to ‘adopt the humanitarian stance of the civilizing mission’, where it becomes the duty of those in the metropolitan centre to ‘look out for’ their colonized populations in the periphery (ibid.). In Northern Scandinavia, the othering of ethnic minorities was supported by science; the establishment of boundaries between ethnic groups was enhanced by the ethnographers and anthropologists who examined ethnic diversity. In 1922, following a Government decision that was supported by all parties in the Swedish Parliament, the Swedish State Institute for Race Biology was founded in Uppsala. The aim of the institute was to examine racial diversity in Sweden. To do this, the institute’s director, Herman Lundborg, made journeys to northern Sweden to map the racial character of the population. As a result of Lundborg’s surveys, and those of his colleagues, distinctions were drawn between the Nordic racial character, that is ‘ethnic Swedes’, the East Baltic racial character, including people of Finno Ugric descent, and ‘Lapps’, i.e. the Sámi (Lundborg & Linders 1926). When the vision of the People’s Home “was launched and gaining ground, there were concerns about the ‘purity’ of the racial character of the population and fears that it would degenerate due to racial mixing (Lundborg 1922). This is one reason behind the political support for the establishment of the Institute for Race Biology in Uppsala.

Apart from ideas of race and ethnicity, there is a geographical aspect to the marginalization of the Sámi and Tornealians. Eriksson claims that the discourse that says that northern Sweden, Norrland, is essentially different to southern Sweden has been around for as long as the idea of Norrland has existed (Eriksson 2010a). The theme of a north-south dichotomy has also been explored from Norwegian and Finnish perspectives (Savolainen 1995, Ridanpää 2007). While there is a discursive polarization between north and south, according to which the urban south represents modernity and progress – as opposed to the ‘northern periphery’ – there is also an ethnic dimension to the othering of the north’s population, when the role of the Sámi and Swedish Tornealians is considered as part of the narrative of the Swedish nation. The situation is different for Tornealians in Finland, where the ethnicity of the settlers of northern Finland is not highlighted as distinctive. According to Ridanpää, a “categorical distinction between the North and the South” was constructed on the basis of a dividing line between “the centre (the South) and the margins (the North)” (Ridanpää 2007, 913). While the racialization of the Sámi constitutes one backdrop, the polarization between ethnic Finns in the north and south, respectively, was based on stereotypical notions about northerners who, according to Ridanpää, were a “cultural minority” in a Finnish national context where southern Finland was per definition regarded as civilization (ibid.).

Studies of the enactment and shaping of northern Scandinavia are an important backdrop to this study (see Bærenholdt & Granås 2008, Paasi 2012), which also examines the construction of northern Sweden as a periphery in popular representations (Eriksson 2010a, Eriksson 2010b). The focus of this study is how two groups, the Sámi and the Tornealians, and their traditional territories, have been constructed as a ‘periphery in the periphery’ and how this is counteracted...
in contemporary cultural production. The purported ‘otherness’ of the Sámi and Tornedalians relates to language, ethnicity, and social status. Diversity within the groups will be highlighted, as well as perspectives that emphasize how rural, or sparsely populated, areas do not constitute a homogenous periphery, nor do their inhabitants constitute a homogenous group of ‘Others’ (Little 1999, Paasi 2012). Ridanpää points out that the othering of people in northern Finland was performed through mapping, and illustrates this with Granös map of Finland and its dividing line between "Culture-Finland" in the south, and "Nature-Finland" in the north (Ridanpää 2007, 912). In this particular construction of a national centre and periphery, the periphery is constituted not only by the Torne Valley and the area that Pohjanen has named Meinmaa, but also by a large part of Finland. According to Ridanpää, the north was marginalized and peripheralized in the shaping of a literary canon, not only because of a geographical distance from the idea of a national centre, but also because of "intellectual distance" (ibid.).

As a contrast to Castrén’s positive image of Finnish settlers in Lapland, there are also narratives connected with the binary of uneducated, primitive people who are not quite as white as people at the centre of the modern, progressive nation. In critical whiteness studies, this theme is analyzed in discussions of the construction of certain groups as privileged whites, while other groups are seen as ‘not quite white’. Wray, for example, analyzes the category known as ‘white trash’ in an American context, and claims that the people described with this label were seen as not quite white (Wray 2006). The othering of poor, uneducated people may also activate the blurring of boundaries between the categories of human and animal. This is a theme found in contemporary fiction, drawing attention to the creation of borders between north and south through the notion of a divide between civilization and periphery (Liksom 1996, Niemi 2017). In Rosa Liksom’s novel *Kreisland*, this theme is highlighted through the depiction of the main character Impi Agafina’s biological parents as uncivilized and animal-like, as well as through her reflections on the whiteness of Finns. These are in the section about her stay with the upper-class Wallenius family, a period in which she had sympathies for the strong Finnish nationalist movement of the time. During this period, she greatly admires Germany while looking down on Russians.

One point of departure for this study is that notions of race, ethnicity, and belonging to a marginalized group regarded as different to modern progressive people, have contributed to an ‘internal colonialism’, whereby minorities and people who are considered primitive have been othered, exotified, and excluded. The theme of internal colonialism based on ethnicity has also been studied with a focus on the Celtic fringes in Britain, for example (Hechter 1975). As mentioned above, constructions of certain groups of people as being not ‘quite white’ is also a theme of critical whiteness studies, for example in studies of the exclusion and othering of groups of low socioeconomic status (Wray 2006, Heith 2018, 231–232). However, it must be remembered that these categories are not static, as groups may ‘become white’ when they are integrated into society (Roediger 2006).

In Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish national contexts, the Sámi have been othered due to ideas of race. In Sweden, this is also true of the Tornedalians (see Persson 2013). Both the Sámi and the Tornedalians were discursively constructed as different from the ‘Nordic racial character’, which was the category that was felt to be under threat in the Swedish debate on degeneration during the 1920s. While the Sámi and Tornedalians were hardly regarded as threats to the ‘Nordic race’, they were nevertheless regarded as different, or alien, elements. The reasons for othering the Sámi are diverse; while race biology and the Swedish ‘Lapp shall remain Lapp’ policy linked Sáminess to Darwinist ideas about doomed peoples in the modern world, there have also been romantic ideas of the Sámi as a people who are unaffected by modernity and who live close to nature. This is echoed in the present-day discourse on indigenous peoples’ symbiotic relationship with nature. Histories of othering form a backdrop to contemporary decolonization, as expressed in representations of Sápmi and Meinmaa as spaces legitimized by identity claims, temporal claims and spatial claims (cf. Özkirimli 2010).

**Experiences of Colonialism and Place-Making: Enacting Colonized Space versus Assertions of Ownership**

As mentioned above, the founding idea of this book is that places can be seen as centres of felt value, and that texts contribute to giving a place its identity. This section will highlight how Sápmi and Meinmaa are performed as experienced geographies through naming and the use of national symbols. This involves a focus on experiences associated with colonialism, and decolonizing challenges in the shape of counter-narratives. While land loss, identity loss and shame are central themes in narratives about the consequences of colonialism, there are also performances of pride in one’s culture and language that are reflected in representations of ownership and belonging. This is manifest in the naming of Meinmaa, which literally means ‘our land’, contributing to the proposal for a Tornedalian
'we.' The Finnish national anthem, *Maamme*, which means ‘Our Land’ in standard Finnish, was composed by the German immigrant Fredrik Pacius and has lyrics by Johan Ludvig Runeberg. It was performed for the first time in May 1848. The names ‘Maamme’ and ‘Meänmaa’ contribute to the performance of places connected with belonging and the emotional attachments experienced by the Finnish and Tornealian collectives, respectively. The terms mean the same, but they are different forms: one is in standard Finnish and the other in Tornealian Finnish, Meänkieli. "This is one example of how language is used in Tornealian cultural mobilization to shape a cultural identity, one distinct from that of the Finnish majority. In the second volume of *Den tornedalsfinska litteraturen* (The Tornealian Finnish Literature), an unconventional Tornealian Finnish literary history by Bengt Pohjanen and Kirsti Johansson, one chapter is devoted to “Tornealsången” [The Song of the Torne Valley], written by Tornealian William Snell in Swedish in 1938 and translated to Tornealian Finnish in 1947 (Johansson 2009, 28). This song is called the national anthem of the Torne Valley (ibid.). Together with the volumes about Tornealian Finnish literature and the map of the Torne Valley on their covers, with a Tornealian flag at the centre, it contributes to the making of Meänmaa. The flag was launched in July 2007 in Övertorneå (Labba 2015, Huhtaniska 2017a)." Linguistic markers are also used to perform belonging when it comes to the naming of Sápmi, sometimes called ‘Sámieland.’ It is relevant that the term, which means ‘the land of the Sámi’, includes the element ‘Sámi’ which is the name the Sámi themselves use. The term ‘Lapp’ is now seen as pejorative; while it has largely fallen into disuse in the Nordic countries to denote the Sámi people (see Kulonen, Seurujärvi-Kari & Pulkkinen 2005, 184), it is still used in geographical names like Lapland. While ‘Sámi’ is the name the Sámi have given themselves, ‘Lapp’ is the old exonym, i.e. a name given by others (ibid.). In the context of decolonization and performances of anticolonial counter-narratives, naming plays a central role in shapign places and cultural identities. Just as in the making of Meänmaa, naming and the activation of ethnic symbols that designate a shared cultural identity are central to the making of Sápmi. In 1986, the Nordic Sámi Conference adopted Isak Saba’s (1975–1921) “Sámi soga lávlla” [Song of the Sámi People] as the official Sámi national anthem (Hirvonen 2005, 201). There has been an official Sámi flag for Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia since 1986; this was designed by artist Astrid Båhl and was approved at the Sámi Conference in Åre, Sweden, in 1986 (Solbakk 2006, 15). Ecocriticism and Environmental Humanism As mentioned above, there are considerable overlaps between ecocriticism, postcolonial studies, space studies, geocriticism and environmental humanism. Connections between ethnicity and place, as well as the local and the global, play a prominent role in all these approaches. In a discussion of the ‘current phase’ of ecocriticism from a North American perspective, Slovic discerns a “third wave of ecocriticism” that is characterized by interest in the exploration of ethnicity through the study of environmental literature (Slovic 2010, 4; see also Adamson & Slovic 2009). Furthermore, Slovic highlights attempts to overcome a limiting focus on specific cultures as unique phenomena, and an impulse to study human experience in relation to “the more than human world” (Slovic 2010, 4). Despite using the wave metaphor himself, suggesting that ecocriticism has developed in consecutive waves, Slovic singles out the metaphor of the palimpsest, “or layering of ecocritical trends” that exist simultaneously, as being more appropriate to describe the development of ecocritical ideas over time (ibid., 5). Ecocriticism has been defined in diverse ways in various disciplinary, geographical and ideological contexts. Bertrand Westphal highlights how ecocriticism reintroduced the referent, “a reflection upon the eventual links between realia and representation” after the era of structuralist dominance had ended (Westphal 2011b, xi). Cherryl Glotfelty states that ecocriticism emerged as a movement among literary scholars in the early 1990s (Glotfelty 2014, ix). According to Adamson and Monani, *American Indian Literature, Environmental Justice and Ecocriticism: The Middle Place* (Adamson 2001) was the first ecocritical monograph to articulate the importance of oral and written indigenous literatures that confront EuroAmerican conceptions of nature and place (Adamson & Monani 2017, 5). This development in ecocriticism is relevant to this book’s analysis of the conceptions of nature and place in Sámi texts that challenge a modern Western ontology, which is conceived of as being destructive for humans and for nature. Ecocriticism, particularly indigenous ecocriticism, will be a frame of interpretation for the analysis of Sámi texts by Nils-aslak Valkeapää, Lars Wilhelm Svonni, and Linnea Axelsson. To some extent, perspectives from the field of ecocriticism will also be used when analysing texts by Torne almonds Hilja Byström, Bengt Pohjanen, and Mikael Niemi. Recent decades have seen a proliferation of ecocriticism anthologies. Glotfelty states that the field has been widened “beyond nature writing” over the last few decades, due to the introduction of new themes
such as environmental justice. According to Glotfelty, 2006 to 2010 marked the rise of postcolonial ecocritical studies (Glotfelty 2014, x). Themes of interest for this study of postcolonial place-making in Sámi and Torneälven texts are the connections between literature, nature, perceptions of space, construction of difference and, in the case of Sámi texts, species boundaries and ontology (cf. ibid.). Interrogations of conceptions of the human have come to the fore in contemporary ecocritical studies, and ‘race’ has emerged as an important ecocritical category (cf. ibid., xi). The nature of nature remains an important theme. There has been an increasing emphasis on breaking down the nature-culture binary, as well as criticism of ideas about a nature that is separate to the human realm (ibid., xi).

Considering diverse forms of life without the guidance of ideas about a nature-culture split also informs the field of environmental humanism (Robin 2017). Within the field, the concept of the Anthropocene is used as a metaphor for planetary changes. When describing environmental humanism, Robin emphasizes approaches that are “compatible with more than Western cultures” and the use of performance, art and narrative as methods (ibid., 3). In this context, culture, history and life history are mentioned as elements that determine human reactions (ibid.). The histories and experiences of marginalized people with “subaltern pasts” are particularly mentioned as catalysts for “different possible futures from those in the West” (ibid., 4). Here, the West functions as a metaphor for the economically dominant, modern Western world, whose wealth has been accumulated through various forms of colonialism. The people who need new and empowering narratives to challenge colonialism and marginalization are those who have been disadvantaged by “big systems and dominant practices” (see ibid., 5). Another central theme, which challenges the telos of Western modernity, is that of “democratic modes of coexistence between humans and with nonhumans” (ibid., 7). This theme is associated with issues of ethics and justice, as manifested in legislation that awards rights to non-human life forms and in concern for silenced groups whose histories have been marginalized or lost.

**Geocriticism**

Geocriticism is a method of literary analysis and theory that focuses on the analysis of representations of geographic space. According to Westphal, the spatial referent is the basis for geocritical analysis (Westphal 2011, 112). He emphasizes that geocritical methodology tends to inscribe space in a mobile perspective (ibid., 113). Westphal is careful to distinguish between the referent and its representations throughout, saying that “so called real space is polyphonic and navicular” (ibid.). Geocritical analysis involves the confrontation of several optics that correct, nourish, and mutually enrich each other. [...] The geocritical representation emerges from a spectrum of individual representations as rich and varied as possible” (ibid.). Furthermore, Westphal proposes that a geocritical method should preferably involve the analysis of texts from diverse genres and media. The theme of confrontation between optics is at the heart of the discussion about colonizing representations of space versus anticolonial, decolonizing representations. It is also central to the discussion of an optic that establishes binaries between nature and culture, and a proposed indigenous polyverse and cosmovision.

Westphal characterizes “multifocalization of views on a given referential space” as one of the methodological tenets of geocriticism (ibid., 114). This study achieves this kind of multifocalization through the discussion of Sámi and Torneälven texts by diverse authors. Among the Sámi texts relating to Sápmi there are authors from Norway, Sweden and Finland, as well as authors with mixed backgrounds. The Torneälven authors are from Sweden and Finland; some are men and some women, and they belong to different generations. The aesthetic approach of the authors varies widely; some write prose, others poetry. While some write quite conventional texts, others are experimental. One theme that is discussed is migration and its implications for place-making and identity formation. The appearance of others, whether in the context of colonization or visits by people from elsewhere, is also commented upon when this is a theme of the representations in focus. Sápmi and Meänmaa are viewed from multiple positions in a body of heterogeneous texts, which is in accordance with a geocritical approach.

Westphal and Tally Jr. highlight how a geocritical approach to representations of space in literature may be transgressive and how groups may use this to challenge established descriptions of space, for example in cartographies. This implies crossing the boundaries of the established norms sanctioned by states or governments, and proposing alternative relations and places. These alternative representations may be performed by agents or groups. This study suggests that, in the writings of Bengt Pohjanen, Meänmaa is one of the alternative representations that challenges established cartography. While contemporary state borders are real, alternative cartographies in imaginative writing indicate possible worlds.
Edward Soja explored this theme in his work on ‘third space’ (Soja 1996). The idea of a third space is echoed in the title of Bengt Pohjanen’s collection of essays Grönsens trente rum [The Third Space of the Border], which alludes to a cultural constellation that arises in a space that is neither Swedish nor Finnish (Pohjanen 2006). One hypothesis is that literary and artistic representations of Meänmää and Sápmi include representations of both experienced geographies and alternative cartographies, depicting imaginary and possible worlds.

Westphal identifies three fundamental concepts of geocriticism: 1) ‘spatiotemporality’, which highlights interconnections between space and time, 2) ‘transgressivity’, which proposes that no representation is stable, but that permanent fluidity is characteristic of representation and identities, 3) and ‘referentiality’, highlighting the way in which representation is linked to the referential world (Westphal 2011b, xiv–xv). Geocriticism makes connections between space and time in order to locate “places in a temporal depth in order to uncover or discover multilayered identities” and emphasize “the temporal variability of heterogeneous spaces.” (ibid.).

As shown by the above introduction to the theoretical approaches, they have overlaps and similarities. The major ones that influence this volume are:

- the notion that ethnicity and experiences of marginalisation play a central role in the shaping of narratives and place-making in which emotions, experiences, and memories contribute to challenging dominant Western narratives; this includes questioning the narrative of a nature-culture split that has legitimized Western colonialism and the dominance of a Western worldview. Furthermore, it implies that the production of narratives and artistic representations are seen as a response to colonizing narratives in which minorities and marginalized social groups are othered.
- the idea that there is a retrospective dimension in the production of narratives. This is manifest in the notion of layers, or temporal strata, which shape the re-presentation of places through narratives.
- the idea that the production of narratives and place-making point to the future, in the way that marginalized groups can shape new narratives that are inspired by postcolonial studies, ecocriticism, and environmental humanism. Social justice and ethics are prominent themes of environmental humanism, and are also found in contemporary narratives produced by indigenous peoples.

Contents

The book is divided into three parts, followed by final remarks. Part one, with an introduction and discussion of the background, is followed by part two. This includes analyses of Sámi texts and begins with a focus on Johan Turri’s contribution to the narrative of Sápmi’s colonization. It highlights the Sámi presence in the mobilization of indigenous peoples, which increased in the 1970s, and emphasizes Nils-Aslak Valkeapää’s involvement in this movement. This is followed by an analysis of three seminal books by Valkeapää that have been translated to English: Trekways of the Wind; The Sun, My Father and The Earth, My Mother.

The sub-chapter “Lars Wilhelm Svonni: Sámi Terrorism as Liberation and Transgression of Borders” analyzes Lars Wilhelm Svonni’s novel Overskrida gränsen [Transgressing borders], from 2005. The plot of the novel evolves around a Sámi terrorist attack on reservoirs that were built to supply water to hydroelectric power plants. Svonni’s choice of theme helps highlight the colonization of Sápmi and the destruction of Sámi lands through river regulation (see Hultman 2015, 132). Sámi terrorism is also a theme in Tharaniga Rajah’s novel Det er lenge til skumring [A Long Way to Dusk], published in Norwegian in 2018. Rajah’s novel is regarded as a contrast to Svonni’s treatment of the theme of Sámi terrorism. The theme of place-making in Sámi texts is also analysed from the perspective of Linnea Axelsson’s epic poem Aednan from 2018. Aednan is a North Sámi word that means the land, the ground, the earth. Furthermore, the lyrics and performances of singer and actor Sofia Jannok, as well as artworks by Kata- rina Pirak Sikku and Anders Sunna, are commented upon. In particular, Jannok’s album Orda – this is my land from 2016 will be discussed. The album has fifteen tracks that are interspersed with recordings from court proceedings in the case of Girjas Sámi village, which took the Swedish state to court over land rights (see Heith 2018b).

Migration, transfers, dislocation and movement are themes in contemporary Sámi texts. The forcible relocation of Sámi villages forms a backdrop to the depictions of land loss and dislocation. One theme associated with dislocation is that of relocation, of developing attachments to new places, a process which may result in multiple belongings. The theme of leaving Sápmi and moving south is found in texts whose protagonists decide to conceal their Sámi background in order to pass as majority Swedes. Travelling and moving away from – and back to – Sápmi are themes of texts that represent trajectories followed by people. The
I. PLACE-MAKING AND REPRESENTATION

The theme of migration is discussed in the chapter on “Sámi Migrant Cartographies”.

Part three consists of analyses of Tornedalian texts. Connections between place-making and the creation of cultural heritage are analysed from the perspective of the recognition of Hilja Byström as a Tornedalian literary pioneer. In Pohjanen and Johansson’s *Den tornedalsfinska litteraturen: Från Kalkkimaa till Hilja Byström* [Tornedalian Finnish literature. From Kalkkimaa to Hilja Byström], Byström is presented as the first Tornedalian author of imaginative writing (Pohjanen & Johansson 2009). Hilja Byström’s importance has also been highlighted in a musical performance, *Sånger från Matojärvi* [Songs from Matojärvi] on 18 April 2008 and at an annual event, the *Hilja Byström-dagen* [Hilja Byström Day], also on 18 April, which celebrates Tornedalian literature and culture.

The theme of ecology is discussed from the perspective of Byström’s novel *Byn* [The Village], Pohjanen’s collection of poems *Kamos i hjärtat av vintern* [Kamos in the Heart of Winter], the book *Dödens ängar* [Meadows of Death] for young adults, and Mikael Niemi’s novel *Fällvatten* [Falling Water].

Furthermore, the concept of Meänmaa is analysed. The issue of the concept’s viability is highlighted through a discussion of subjective, carnivalesque performances that contribute to place-making. In contrast, the work of the National Association for Swedish Tornedalians and that of Meän Akateemia – *Academ ia Tornedaliensis*, which cooperates with universities on the North Calotte, are foregrounded. The chapter on “Material Aspects of Place-Making: Meänmaa – a Registered Trademark” discusses the implications of Meänmaa being a registered trademark owned by the Meänmaa Association. The concepts of ‘literary field,’ ‘capital,’ ‘habitus’ and ‘consecration,’ as launched by Bourdieu in his analysis of the dynamics of the literary field (Bourdieu 1996) are used in a discussion of the performative making of Meänmaa. The role of Bengt Pohjanen and Kirsti Johansson’s two-volume Tornedalian Finnish literary history in the making of Meänmaa is also analysed (Pohjanen & Johansson 2007, Pohjanen & Johansson 2009). The presentation of subject matter is discussed, as well as the selection of writers who are presented and highlighted as being significant in a Tornedalian Finnish literary tradition of the place called Meänmaa. This is followed by a chapter in which Bengt Pohjanen’s use of the theme of smuggling is analysed, along with Mikael Niemi’s crime novel *Koka björn* [Boiling Bear] and Tove Alsterdal’s successful second novel *I tystnaden begravd* [Buried in Silence]. One common denominator is that all three authors use local history, Bengt Pohjanen that of smuggling, Mikael Niemi that of popular revivalist Lars Levi Laestadius’ life story, and Tove Alsterdal that of the people in northern Sweden who emigrated to the Soviet Union in the 1930s.

David Vikgren’s contribution to place-making is discussed from the perspective of his collections of poetry. *Anttikeksiskväde: Översättning, dikt* [Anttikeksis’s poem [sic]: Translation, poem] contains four reworkings of Antti Keksi’s seventeenth century poem about the breaking of ice and flooding of the Torne Valley.” Vikgren’s aesthetics are related to Deleuze and Guattari’s discussion of ‘rhizomatic writing’ and ‘smooth space.’ This analysis of Tornedalian texts concludes with a discussion of two novels published in Swedish in 2019, Nina Wähä’s *Testamente* [Legacy] and Pia Mariana Raattamaa Visén’s *Där rinner en älv genom Saivomuotka by* [A River Runs Through Saivomuotka Village]. The theme of both novels is the history of a family from a small Tornedalian village, although Wähä and Raattamaa Visén’s treatments of the connections between people and place vary greatly. Finally, there is a section with concluding remarks.
Colonialism and Place-Making

The texts selected for discussion in this section represent the beginning of modern Sámi literature, as well as its contemporary diversity, including texts that problematize what being a Sámi entails, an issue associated with assimilationist policies, migration and mixed backgrounds. Both Johan Turi (1854–1936), who wrote the first book published in the Sámi language, and Nils-Aslak Valkeapää (1943–2001), who produced multimedia texts and renewed the yoik genre using the North Sámi language, have each been called the national poet of the Sámi. Thanks to Valkeapää’s extensive production in various media, which started in the early 1970s with the political pamphlet Terveisä Lapista [Greetings from Lapland] in Finnish, he is regarded as a pioneer in the creation of modern Sámi literature. Both Turi and Valkeapää use land loss and colonialism as themes, and both envision a nomadic North Sámi lifestyle that is threatened when their traditional use of land is hindered or interrupted. They also contribute to the idea of a transnational Sámi territory called Sápmi. The claim that there is a territory to which the Sámi people have a right because they were there prior to colonization runs through Turi’s Muitalus sámiid birra [Turi’s Book of Lapland], which was published in 1910, as well as three of Valkeapää’s extensively illustrated poetry books that were published in North Sámi between 1985 and 2001. These three books will be discussed below, analyzing the emergence of a narrative of land loss, the loss of belonging and identity, which is complemented with a narrative of a territory, Sápmi, that is being reclaimed.

The contemporary Sámi cultural scene includes authors and artists who use both Sámi and the national majority languages. The texts also incorporate English phrases. Furthermore, there are texts that have been translated into other languages. Lars Wilhelm Svonni (b. 1946) is a Sámi politician and self-published author. Swedish colonialism is the central theme of his novel Överskrida gränser [Transgressing Borders], published in Swedish in 2005. In Svonni’s novel, the Swedish state’s marginalization of the Sámi people leads to a terrorist attack. Land loss due to the forcible relocation of Sámi villages in the past and mining projects in the present, implying exploitation of Sámi land, is the central theme of Linnea Axello’s (b. 1980) epic poem Aednan [The Land, the Ground, the Earth], published in Swedish in 2018. This is also true of works by artists Kata-Rina Pirak Sikk (b. 1965) and Anders Sunna (b. 1986), and albums by the singer and actor Sofia Jannok (b. 1982). While the pioneer Valkeapää and later authors like Linnea Axello highlight intersections between the traditional nomadic lifestyle of reindeer-herding Sámi, other authors approach the theme of migration from other perspectives, using depictions of Sámi leaving Sápmi. One example is Ann-Helén Laestadius (b. 1971), who highlights the interconnections between migration, belonging, mixed backgrounds and notions of home in her Swedish-language books for young adults. The Sámi texts discussed here constitute a basis for a geocritical analysis of place-making associated with diverse temporal strata and national embeddings. What they have in common is that connections between race, ethnicity and place-making are highlighted in representations of colonized space, as well as in its counterweight, a traditional Sámi homeland in the time before colonization. These connections are also an element of present-day decolonization and identity formation.

Anti-Colonial Responses to Land Loss

The first secular Sámi-language book written by a Sámi, Johan Turi’s Muitalus sámiid birra [Turi’s Book of Lapland], takes a clear stance against the colonization of Sámiland (see Gaski 1998, 24). The book is the outcome of a cooperation between Turi and the Danish artist and ethnographer Emilie Demant Hatt. It is about the life of reindeer herders in the Jukkasjärvi area of northern Sweden at the beginning of the twentieth century. The English translation was published in 1966, but it was not until the 1970s that the issue of the rights of indigenous peoples began to be more widely recognized. In 1975, the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) was founded in Port Alberni, Canada. The founders included Sámi from Norway, Sweden and Finland (Solbak 2006, 248). The
WCIP held several conferences, one of which was in Kiruna in Sápmi in 1977 (ibid., 249). It was a pioneering organization for establishing cooperation among indigenous peoples. Its role was eventually taken over by the UN’s Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. At the Forum’s first conference, in May 2002, Ole Henrik Magga, a Sámi who was the joint representative of the Sámi and the Inuits, was elected the Forum’s first leader. (ibid., 250). Ole Henrik Magga is one of the Sámi who were engaged in the issue of land rights in the 1980s (Magga 1985). Because the North Sámi were a nomadic people, they were not regarded as owners of the lands they used, due to the idea of ownership being based on settlement (Jebens 2010, see also Markussen 2013, i). This was the prevailing view during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Today, thanks to the ILO’s Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention from 1989, this has changed in the states that have ratified it; Norway did so in 1990, while Sweden and Finland have not yet done so. Article 14 of the Convention states that: “Particular attention shall be paid to the situation of nomadic peoples”, and that the government must “identify the lands which the peoples concerned traditionally occupy, and to guarantee effective protection of their rights of ownership and possession” (ILO Convention C169, Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989).

Another prominent Sámi who was engaged in the growing anticolonial cultural mobilisation of the 1970s is Áillohaš, Nils-Aslak Valkeapää. The debates on land rights and the rights of indigenous peoples that form a backdrop to the ILO Convention also constitute a frame for interpreting the theme of colonization in Valkeapää’s work.

In the 1960s, Valkeapää, who was a poet, musician and artist, renewed the traditional form of cultural expression for the Sámi people called yoik through his collaboration with jazz musicians (Gaski 2008a, Gaski 2008b). This is one example of the use of traditional subject matter and genres in present day cultural mobilization. While yoiking was considered symptomatic of paganism by the colonizers, especially by missionaries proselytizing Christianity among the Sámi (see Rydving 1993), this traditional song style became an ethnopolitical symbol of ancient Sámi culture in the revitalisation of the 1960s (see Hirvonen 2008, 231–232, Solbakk 2006, 149).

The Sámi originals of Trekways of the Wind, The Sun, My Father and The Earth, My Mother have also been translated into the Nordic languages, and The Sun, My Father into Finnish as well. This reflects how Valkeapää addresses multiple readerships, with diverse languages and ethnic affiliations. In his role as a Sámi cultural activist he addresses a Sámi readership/audience, which is shown in the use of the pronouns ‘I’ and ‘we’. These either refer to a Sámi character, a lyrical ‘I’, or a Sámi collective, as in The Sun, My Father, or indigenous collective, as in Trekways of the Wind and The Earth, My Mother. A recurring theme is the disruption of the life of the Sámi, and indigenous communities, due to colonisation. Another theme is the existence of indigenous modes of experiencing interconnectedness between the cosmos, nature and humanity, which stands in relief to the modern, Western nature-culture divide.

For a period, Valkeapää was the cultural coordinator of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (see Gaski 1994). He was therefore familiar with issues relating to indigenous cultures, and this is reflected in his early book Trekways of the Wind [Ruokto Väimmus in Sámi] and his last book The Earth, My Mother, which both include narratives of visits to ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’ in other, non-Sámi, indigenous groups. In The Earth, My Mother the text that describes these encounters and the impression they made on the lyrical ‘I’ is accompanied by photographs taken by ethnographers, anthropologists and Valkeapää himself, adding multiple multimodal storylines to the narrative of indigenous peoples’ encounters with Western explorers and researchers.

Valkeapää composed the music to the first major Sámi film, Ofelas (1987), which was released as Pathfinder in English-speaking countries, and he also performs the yoik at the start of the film. The film, directed by Nils Gaup, was a great success. Later, in 1994, images of Valkeapää yoiking at the opening of the Olympic Winter Games in Lillehammer, Norway, were broadcast around the world. Yoiking is now a genre that is used by a large number of Sámi musicians, who have fused traditional song with contemporary popular music genres. In 2003, Mari Boine from Karasjok was awarded the Nordic Council’s music prize. Sofia Jannok is another example. Yoik, which is an oral genre, has also been used by Valkeapää in writing that imitates yoik. This exemplifies an adaption that activates an element from ancient Sámi culture for contemporary use as an identity marker.
Valkeapää’s Representation of a Traditional Homeland

Trekways of the Wind

Valkeapää’s Ruokto Väimmus, which was published in English under the title Trekways of the Wind, is a trilogy based on three books (Valkeapää 1985). Gida ija čuovgadat (approximation: “Spring nights [are] bright”) was published in 1974, Lávllo vizar biellocizáš (approximation: “Please sing chirp bluethroat”) in 1976, and Adjaga silbasuonat (approximation: “Silver veins of a/the fountain/spring”) in 1981. The first Swedish translation was published in 1987. A Norwegian translation by Laila Stien was published in 1990. Trekways of the Wind, which was published in 1994, was the first major poetry collection by Valkeapää to be translated into English. It was translated by Lars Nordström, Harald Gaski and Ralph Salisbury. Ralph Salisbury (1926–2017) was a poet of Native American, Irish and English descent. In the preface to Trekways of the Wind, he emphasizes his Native American heritage and commitment to “brotherhood and sisterhood with native populations around the world.” This kind of commitment is reflected in the book, as well as in Valkeapää’s last book The Earth, My Mother, whose lyrical I visits indigenous peoples far from Sápmi. Although acknowledging that he is a stranger, the Sámi visitor feels connected to his indigenous brothers and sisters around the world. This is expressed through poetic descriptions of sympathy and solidarity and through direct references to indigenous protests against Western intrusion.

At the beginning of the poem which is in the form of a lyrical monologue, the lyrical I reflects on “the well fed people // In this world where three hundred million / children starve,” alluding to wars and political conflicts, and to Wounded Knee, suggesting that the past and present form part of a continuum in which the West has caused death and destruction. The massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890 was due to the conflict between the United States and Native Americans; in a clash between federal troops and the Sioux, 150 Native American men, women and children were killed. The references to this historical event, starving children and a bomb dropped by mistake over Cambodia in the text’s present provide an ironic perspective on “The enlightened human being” who talks about “how
primitive / the Sámi culture is”. The representation of Western expansionism into indigenous territories highlights the death and violence that targets people who are regarded as primitive. From the outset, Westerners are viewed from a critical indigenous perspective, while the purportedly “primitive” Sámi culture is presented as a positive contrast. In some sections, the lyrical I is a visionary who sees the past, present and future: “I see people / fill the earth / destroying the foundations of life, all humankind.” While Western culture is connected with death, the portrayal of Sámi culture highlights humanity’s place in a cosmos where everything lives and is interconnected. In this Sámi cosmos, the traditional yoik represents a manifestation of life: “The sun’s yoik, life’s yoik”.

The second part of Trekways of the Wind consists of a childhood narrative, a love story and reflections on the idea of home. This part includes a reproduction of handwritten musical scores by the Finnish composer Pehr Henrik Nordgren. The motif of assimilationist policies is included in the childhood narrative, in which the lyrical I recounts experiences of attending boarding school and being afraid, bullied, and punished. Like numerous accounts of indigenous children’s experiences of school and being sent away from their families, Valkeapää’s text highlights schooling as a negative experience and as abusive towards Sámi children:

One day in school
they learned
about short human beings
primitive people
who exist
even in our country
and are called
Lapps

He felt
how the others stared
he heard it

Negative presentations of children’s school experiences form a topos in indigenous literatures, highlighting histories of racism and socialization that result in children being disconnected from their cultural traditions.

In contrast to the loss and humiliation of the colonial present, the lyrical I expresses his respect and love for precolonial times:

How I respect
the old Sámi life
That was true love of nature
where nothing was wasted
where humans were part of nature

While the traditional Sámi world is depicted as a place of harmony and balance, the modern Western world is described as characterized by unevenly distributed wealth: “In this affluent world / every other child is starving / and one third / eat two thirds / of the world’s food”. Reflections on the contrasts between a traditional Sámi ontology and the modern Western world are interspersed with direct references to land rights, echoing the contemporary struggle of indigenous peoples who are making temporal claims on colonized land: “Our ancestors have made a fire / on every slope / they have stepped on every stone / our ancestors / they have lived and died here”. An important theme towards the end of this section is the nomadic conception of home, which deprived reindeer-herding Sámi of rights to the land because their nomadism meant they were not recognized as legitimate owners (Jebens 2010, see also Markussen 2013):

My home is in my heart
it migrates with me

You know it brother
you understand sister
but what do I say to strangers
who spread out everywhere
how shall I answer their questions
that come from a different world

How can I explain
that I can not live in just one place
and still live
when I live
The main theme of the third part of *Trekways of the Wind* is the lyrical I’s encounters with other indigenous peoples in the Arctic and the USA. Although the visitor expresses sympathy and kinship with Inuits and Native Americans, he is also aware that there are cultural differences and that he is a visitor. Problems in contemporary indigenous communities are touched upon. When in Greenland the lyrical I encounters drunk mothers with their children – one of the bleak effects of colonialism found in numerous indigenous communities around the world. While this is part of a negative, traumatizing colonial legacy, he also experiences kinship and partakes in ancestral traditions that constitute a positive life force. On the prairie, he experiences communion with Native Americans yoiking to the beat of drums: “the heart beats / hearts beat / drums beat / yoiking in the night / the warm prairie wind / hit blood.” As in the book’s title, the wind represents movement and life, a positive force in an indigenous cosmology. This indigenous place is inhabited by beings and spirits, such as a “frost bearded mountain spirit” and a “sieidi stone”, which is a holy rock. Like a noaidi, a shaman, the lyrical I travels back in time, to before colonization, when “we were part of nature and we acknowledged / nature as the real power / And we lived off the land that the Great Spirit / had given us.” This harmony is broken with the arrival of strangers who “[w]anted to possess and coveted the lands which we were part of / […] And everything they wanted according to their will. The water and its power, the iron and other deposits, the trees, the fishes. / Everything. Ourselves also.”

In the English translation published in 1985, some of the original illustrations were kept and some new ones were added. A central theme of Valkeapää’s early poems, as well as those in his final collection *Eanni, eannázan* (2001), translated into English as *The Earth, My Mother*, is humanity’s connectedness with nature (see also Dana 2003). In *Trekways of the Wind*, the idea of earth as a caring, nurturing mother is found in the depiction of an embrace experienced by the lyrical I:

The wind blew warm
light nights dark nights
with warm soft hot arms
I sucked
life in
to forget everything
forget even life itself
feel the blood quake
the waves sigh
the veins are filled
with blood
wild rivers

“Mother Earth” is mentioned on several occasions as a vital element of a Sámi ontology that represents a bond between the Sámi and the land. The theme of resistance against a Western worldview is evoked:

But sell
no
we could not sell our mother
Mother Earth
rocking us in her arms
in her lap
and whose breast we nurse

Stanzas such as this represent resistance to colonization, exploitation and the erasure of indigenous peoples’ worldviews.

Resistance is a vital theme of contemporary indigenous ecocriticism, as ‘Mother Earth’ has a specific significance in indigenous ontologies. This is reflected in political actions that aim to protect ‘Mother Earth’ and in references to ‘indigenous ecological wisdom’ (see Adamson 2014, 172). In 2010, Bolivia adopted the Law of the Rights of Mother Earth, “which enshrines the right of nature to be protected and establishes a ministry to provide water, air, and all living organisms with an ombudsman to advocate for nature’s rights to maintain vital cycles” (Edwards 2011, Adamson 2017, 4). The content of this law mirrors the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Mother Earth (UDRME), which was drafted in
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2010 at the World Peoples’ Conference on Climate Change in Bolivia (Adamson 2014, 172). These documents written after Valkeapää’s demise in 2001 express ideas that are congenial with ancient indigenous customs and modes of viewing the world, ideas which prevailed before indigenous territories were colonized.

By depicting an indigenous cosmos of multiple entangled worlds, Valkeapää presents a vision of an alternative to the modern Western world that has separated humans from nature. According to Latour, the creation of modern nations relied on a single natural order and purportedly universal ontological distinctions between things and humans (Latour 1993, 27, see also Adamson 2014, 182). This is a construct that has been under attack from indigenous groups, with have another perspective on the relationship between man and nature and the ontological status of various forms of being. Postcolonial ecocriticism and environmental humanism also highlight this theme. According to De la Cadena, the separation of humanity from nature led to the “gradual extinction of other-than-human beings and the worlds in which they existed in politics. The pluriverse disappeared” (De la Cadena 2010, 345). One theme in the writings of Valkeapää is the vision of this pluriverse as an intrinsic part of an ancient Sámi way of experiencing the cosmos, expressed by the noaidi in Beavivi abčážan. The character of the noaidi has the role of a ‘seeing instrument’ that provides the means to travel through time and view multiple realities. Thus, the noaidi is a personification of the ancestral knowledge that prevailed before colonization.

The Sun, My Father: A Sámi Family Album

A year after the 1987 Norwegian première of the film Pathfinder, Valkeapää’s photo and poetry book Beavivi abčážan was published in the North Sámi language. A multilingual translation into Swedish and the two written forms of Norwegian, titled Solen, min far, was awarded the Nordic Council’s Literature Prize in 1991 (Valkeapää 1990). An English translation, titled The Sun, My Father, was published in 1997. The Sámi original includes a vast number of photographs from various museum collections and scientific institutions, which are not included in the translations (Heith 2014, Heith 2017). The use of material from Western archives is a strategy used by a number of indigenous writers and artists. Adamson and Monani mention several renowned Native North American writers who consulted reports from the Bureau of American Ethnography about their own tribal groups, and who used the material they found to piece together cultural and ecological knowledge that had been scattered or lost due to years of oppression and racism (Adamson & Monani 2017, 6). Valkeapää uses a similar method in Beavivi abčážan, which includes photographs of Sámi people, dwellings, and handicrafts from museums and collections all round the world.

Valkeapää called Beavivi abčážan a Sámi family album. This is one way of evoking a collective identity, a ‘we’ that shares a history, homeland, and cultural identity. The text of The Sun, My Father forms a dramatic monologue in which the lyrical I is a noaidi, the most important figure in the ancient Sámi belief system. The title of the film Pathfinder alludes to an important function of the noaidi, that of a pathfinder for the Sámi people, guiding them in the present and into the future. The plot of Pathfinder is inspired by notions connected with the role of the noaidi. In the film, an old noaidi dies when his Sámi community is threatened by violent newcomers. A young Sámi man survives an attack that kills the members of his siida (Sámi village) and embarks on a journey to warn other siidas of the impending threat. At the end of the story, the young man becomes a noaidi when an old woman appoints him the new pathfinder.

Valkeapää’s text has stanzas that imitate the oral genre of yoik. This activation of the yoik genre and the use of the character of the noaidi is associated with the challenges of a colonizing discourse, that has deprived the Sámi of their immaterial cultural heritage and generated shame and stigmatization (cf. Rydving 1993). In Valkeapää’s contribution to decolonisation, the yoik and noaidi exemplify cultural elements that are re-evaluated and attributed a positive function as distinguishing markers of a specific Sámi culture. This is one aspect of the making of a positive cultural identity in the present. As Barth has suggested, distinguishing markers are essential in the construction of ethnic groups (Barth 1998). This explains why yoiking and the character of the noaidi, as well as other cultural elements, play a vital role in decolonization. The Sun, My Father, in the original version as well as the English translation, activates a number of distinguishing markers used in the creation of a Sámi cultural heritage and identity. The term ‘heritage’ is used here in the sense attributed to it by Laurajane Smith. Smith emphasizes how issues of cultural heritage are linked with the present day, and that heritage is created as a response to contemporary concerns (Smith 2006). With this in mind, the creation of Sámi and Torneålden cultural heritages in the 1970s and onwards represent a response to colonialism that is associated with decolonisation and the production of empowering and positive self-images (see Heith 2018a).
In Beaivi áhčážan, the noaidi who is the lyrical I of the monologue, which constitutes the lyrical text of the poem, regards the era of colonization as a period of deterioration. In stanza 326, the noaidi looks back upon a time when reindeer-herding Sámi moved their herds between summer and winter pastures. The land used by the reindeer herders is characterized by Valkeapää as “our own land”. The division of the Sámi people due to Norwegian and Swedish nationalization is evoked by the noaidi’s comment that “in Sweden we were Swedish Sámi / in Norway Norwegian / some with names in books / in both countries / others in none.” The past is depicted as a time when the Sámi had a land of their own, one where reindeer husbandry was a traditional livelihood based upon the use of this land. Over time, access to the land is lost, particularly after the establishment of new national borders when Norway gained independence from the kingdom of Sweden. The negative impact of these new borders is commented upon explicitly in stanza 456. Colonialism is viewed by the noaidi as the disempowerment of the Sámi; they have been made invisible in the colonizing knowledge of the strangers who laugh at and mock the Sámi when they claim to have rights. Disempowerment, exclusion and erasure are themes explicitly evoked in stanza 509, which describes a time when colonization has affected all spheres of Sámi existence:

and they will laugh
if you tell them
that we have homes, camps
that we also have rights
that we also exist
we do not seem to exist
and those
who do not exist
cannot demand
anything
anything

The noaidi of Beaivi áhčážan contrasts the dramatic transformation of nature caused by the strangers with the traditional Sámi ideal of leaving no trace of human presence. The damming of rivers is described as an erasure of life: “we have seen / you extinguish the life of rapids” (stanza 511), and trapping birds for a life in captivity is a break of the chain of life: “catch birds for cages / rupture life’s growth” (ibid.). The colonization of the minds of the Sámi is described as a cutting of the branches of “our senses” and “the deeds of our wills” (ibid.). In contrast, the Sámi mode of being is likened to a wind that leaves no traces: “we came and left / and nothing remained of us / but a yoik in the singing wind” (stanza 546).

In the noaidi’s retrospection, the arrival of strangers is viewed as an intrusion that disrupted peace and balance through the introduction of materialism, alcohol, and excess (stanzas 414–415). The strangers are described as seeing themselves as superior, expecting to be served, knowing everything, and complaining about everything Sámi (stanzas 415–417). The noaidi draws attention to the impact of traders, scientists, and missionaries upon traditional Sámi life. The ramifications of the changes is regarded as a deterioration that is associated with materialism, consumerism, and negative self-images imposed by the ‘superior’ newcomers, who also disseminated a somber view of life inspired by a Christianity focused on sin: “beauty / is sinful / that is what they taught” (stanza 429).

The Earth, My Mother

In 2001, Eanni, cunnážan was published as a counterpart to Beaivi áhčážan (1988) [The Sun, My Father (1997)]. It was translated into Norwegian as Jorda, min mor (2006) by Harald Gaski, and into English as The Earth, My Mother (2017) by Lars Nordström, Harald Gaski and Ralph Salisbury. While The Sun, My Father alludes to the Sámi ancestral myth that the Sámi are the children of the sun, The Earth, My Mother refers to another mythical narrative found among indigenous peoples all over the world, namely that the Earth is a sentient being, a mother (see Adamson & Monani 2017, 2–4). This is a notion reflected in the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth (UDRME) drafted in 2010 at the World People’s Conference on Climate Change in Cochabamba, Bolivia (Adamson 2013, 1). According to the declaration, indigenous peoples, nations and organizations share “a cosmic spirituality linked to nature thousands of years in the making” (UDRME 2010, see also Adamson 2013, 1).

The idea of Mother Earth as a sentient being is found in The Sun, My Father’s depiction of Earth as having a beating heart: “the earth itself / moves / pounds” (stanza 559). The subject of the beating heart, buried in the ground, can be traced to a Sámi creation myth (Stiessel 1995, 14–16). According to the myth, the most high-ranking god, Jubmel, created the world from the parts of a reindeer cow. The bones became the framework of the world, the meat the ground, the veins...
Painting by Nils-Adlak Valkaspää, reproduced in *The Earth, My Mother* (p. 248–249).
rivers, and her hairs became forests. The reindeer’s heart was buried deep in the ground and, according to the myth, this is why the sound of heartbeats may occasionally be heard. This story is now told as a tale for young children, making the idea of the beating heart deep in the Earth familiar to many Sámi people as a cultural element that is part of a Sámi upbringing.29

Indigenous views about nature that challenge anthropocentrism are depicted in The Sun, My Father from the vantage point of the Sámi. In The Earth, My Mother, these themes are explored in a wider context, that of indigenous peoples around the globe. Through its lyrical stanzas and the inclusion of photographs, references are made to Inuits, Native Americans, and tribes in Africa. The lyrical I of the poems visits indigenous peoples in the Arctic, in jungles and in deserts. Even if the lyrical I does not understand the languages used by the peoples, it expresses a feeling of connectedness, of being part of the same family.30 Reflections on these peoples’ ways of life are interspersed with photographs by the famous explorer Roald Amundsen, who documented the Inuits, Alejandro Parellada, an expert on indigenous peoples in Latin America, René Fuerst, an ethnographer who visited the Amazon basin, and Claudia Andujar, a photographer who documented the Yanomami tribe in the Amazon. The Yanomami, who had been secluded from the modern world, believed that everything has a spirit and that the fate of people is linked to nature. This traditional way of life was disrupted when a highway was built. One effect of their contact with the modern world was a measles epidemic, which had disastrous consequences (see Adamson & Monani 2017, 4). Other photographers represented in the book are Espen Wahle, an ethnographer who conducted fieldwork about the Efe people in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, an anthropologist who developed the concept of ‘perspectivism,’ which provides an explanation for differences between the ontological ideas of indigenous peoples and modern Western people. This concept has been used in descriptions of multiversalism as part of indigenous belief systems.

Valkeapää’s integration of photographs is a form of intertextuality that activates voices from various territories, inhabited by indigenous peoples, which have been explored by Westerners. There are also photographs by Valkeapää himself, as well as reproductions of his artworks that reflect indigenous ontological notions of a pluriverse with sentient beings.

These ideas are formulated in stanzas expressing the view that the Earth is a living organism: “this earth lives / always changing” (Valkeapää 2017, 180), “the forest / is full of / secret sounds / full of / LIFE” (ibid., 208). The lyrical I expresses an awareness of everything’s interconnectedness and of communication with nature, plants, and sentient beings as part of a pluristic ontology with no boundaries between culture and nature: “nature has its own spirit / it speaks its own language / I hear it / I listen / I commune with my brothers and sisters / with the grass the plants the animals / the rocks” (ibid., 212). The indigenous way of dealing with the multinatural world, one without boundaries between humans and their surroundings, is characterized as one of respect and consideration for coming generations: “we thank the lodge / that sheltered us / the resting place / that gave us a peaceful night / and before we leave / we gather firewood / and birch bark for lighting the fire / to make the next visitor happy” (ibid., 215), “humble // to show / humility // reverence // to show // reverence // FOR LIFE // NATURE” (ibid., 314).

As in The Sun, My Father the arrival of modern Westerners is viewed as the start of a colonization of people’s minds and a disruption of an ontology based on a respect for sentient beings, animals, holy places and natural monuments: “when they come to us / they roll their eyes at our nudity // put us down // snoop / on us […] THEY // THE Learned Wise Good Nice Clever Scientists // HUMAN BEINGS // litter / make a mess / shit / destroy / ruin / burn / desecrate / spoil // our // HOLY PLACES” (ibid., 192–193). The idea of naming as a colonizing practice is highlighted: “THEY give us these places / animals plants the entire region / weird names” (ibid., 194). Western anthropocentrism is presented as a negative contrast to a living pluriverse: “they are frightened / by the thought // that THEY // MIGHT BECOME // food // for the worms the animals the plants / for life // FOR LIFE ITSELF” (ibid., 211). The theme of indigenous self-determination is alluded to in stanza 22 that highlights the history of colonialism, and contemporary efforts by the colonizers’ descendants to ‘save’ indigenous peoples: “we feel sorry for // THEIR descendants // when their ancestors / have / put us down / criticized / cheated / stolen // STILL WE ARE // supposed to view their offspring as / martyrs / great heroes / saviors / rescuers // heroes” (ibid., 197).

A comparison between Valkeapää’s first major literary work, Trekways of the Wind, published in English in 1994, reveals great similarities with his last book The Sun, My Father, published posthumously in English in 2017, and The Earth, My Father, published in English in 1997. While the originals in the North Sámi language and the Scandinavian translations are meant for a Sámi and Scandi-
navian readership, the English translations make these works accessible to an international readership. Major themes include the shared indigenous history of colonialism, as well as the assertion of indigenous cosmology that has survived through orally transmitted genres. Resistance to cultural- and eco-genocide, and the affirmation of multispecies relationships are also prevailing themes (cf. Adamson & Monani 2017, 10). There is a continuity in Valkeapää’s books from *Trekways of the Wind to The Earth, My Mother* and, like other indigenous literary texts, they highlight an indigenous cosmovision that is connected to an alternative world.

### Contemporary Anticolonial Sámi Literature, Art, and Music

Lars Wilhelm Svonni: Sámi Terrorism as Response to Colonialism

Lars Wilhelm Svonni (b. 1946) is a Sámi writer and politician who promotes Sámi rights. He founded a political party, *Samerna* [the Sámi] in 1993, which he chaired when the party was elected to the Sámi Parliament. He was the chairman of the Parliament between 1997 and 2001. Later, he was one of the people behind *Samiska folkomröstningspartiet* [the Sámi Popular Referendum Party], which he was elected to represent in the Sámi Parliament in 2017. He is also known as a composer; in the 1970s, he wrote the music for an immensely popular Sámi song called “Goahto eadnan” [My homeland]. Svonni is also a part-time reindeer-herder. He received a prison sentence for shooting two wolverines and a lynx, which is against Swedish law. Svonni protested, claiming that he had the right to protect his reindeer.

Conflicts between the Sámi and the Swedish state is also the theme of Svonni’s debut novel *Överskrida gränser* [Transgressing Borders], published by a Sámi publishing house, DAT, in Swedish in 2005 (Svonni 2005). A translation into North Sámi was published the following year. The theme of the novel is a Sámi terrorist attack against a state-owned hydroelectric power plant. The attack causes destruction and many deaths. In the first part of the book, the fictional characters who bombed the water reservoirs speculate about the number of people who died. Eventually, it is revealed that the official number of dead and missing is 11,232. In one interview, Svonni explained that the transgression he had in mind is that performed by the Swedish state. According to Svonni, the state ignores the Sámi, which has caused enormous frustration. Svonni links the
terrorist attack in the novel to this frustration (Svanebro 2009). The novel is told in the third person by an omniscient narrator. The reason for the attack is explained as follows:

That Johan Eriksson Ruona was now lying under the tarpaulin, ready to blow up the Suorva dam, was because Jedine and he no longer could cope with seeing how the Swedish state was trying to eradicate a small people through small steps. This was their opinion about what Sweden was doing. It was quite obvious to them. The state had transgressed all borders, and somebody had to protest. (Svoni 2005, 16–17)34

Jedine, the wife of the leader of the terrorists, Johan Eriksson Ruona, shares her husband’s deep distrust of the Swedish state. Her conviction is presented through a dialogue, in which she claims that Swedish authorities enjoyed causing the death of Sámi people in the eighteenth century when attempting to force them into submission:

And I believe that they did not feel bad about it [causing the death of Sámi people in the eighteenth century]. I believe they enjoyed it. Why else have they continued to harass us? A large proportion of the Swedish people also believed in the superior intelligence of the Aryan race, as recently as during the Hitler era. We should feel bad when we see the images on TV [images of people killed by the terrorist attack], but we are not guilty, my beloved. (ibid., 78)34

The context of the dialogue is that Joer (Johan Eriksson Ruona’s nickname) and his wife are discussing the deaths that will be caused by blowing up the Siiddasjávri, Sattisjávri and Suorva dams. The terrorists motivate the attack as a righteous response to Swedish colonialism, neglect by the power company, Vattenfall, and abuses committed in the name of race biology. There are nine people involved, who blame the Swedish state for having abused the Sámi historically and in the present. One of the bombers says that his reason for joining the group is that his aunt was subjected to compulsory sterilization because she suffered from epilepsy. Another man, Ola, whose wife and children drowned attempting to cross the frozen Suorva reservoir, blames the Swedish state and Vattenfall for not checking the thickness of the ice where the water from Siiddasjávri reaches the reservoir, after passing the turbines (ibid., 48). In his mind, there is no doubt that the state and Vattenfall are to blame. Ola’s father-in-law also blames Vattenfall. As in Ola’s case, the tragedy of the drowned woman and children is presented as the grievance that triggers the protest. The presentation of the beliefs and emotions of the men contribute to establishing the novel’s depiction of a repressive state, that is negligent of Sámi lives.

Joer speculates that his fellow Sámi will see the attack as legitimate, despite the deaths of large numbers of people. On several occasions, Joer expresses pride in the bombings (ibid., 221, 342). Some time after the attack has taken place, several of the bombers express pride in having changed history by protesting against the Swedish state. When on the run after escaping from prison, Joer experiences regret when he is starving in his hideout in the mountains, but this is related to the hardship he is undergoing due to extreme hunger. The feelings of young Sámi are depicted in an episode that describes a visit by Joer’s son’s friends, who admire Joer for having bombed the dams. Towards the end of the novel, Joer mentions in a dialogue with his friend Pär that he has occasionally felt regret and anguish, but that this has become easier to deal with and he feels happy that “even politicians in Sweden have begun to understand that the state’s Sámi policies must be fundamentally transformed” (ibid., 371).36 This reflection by Joer indicates that he sees the attack as successful, in the sense that it has contributed to representatives of the Swedish state reaching the understanding that there is something fundamentally wrong with the policies regarding the Sámi people.

Although the terrorist attack in Svoni’s novel is fictional, there are some parallels to incidents in Norway associated with the Alta conflict. This conflict is mentioned in the novel as part of a Sámi history of resistance; one sympathizer for the attack is a Norwegian Sámi who took part in the Alta protests (ibid., 42). In 2012, Swedish Radio broadcast a documentary about bombings linked to the Norwegian state’s plans to build a dam on the Alta-Kautokeino River in northern Norway. The title of the documentary, “Alta-konflikten, från civil olydnad till samisk terrorism” [The Alta conflict, from civil disobedience to Sámi terrorism], highlights the same theme as Svoni’s 2005 novel (see Helgegren 2012). The documentary traces the protests’ origins to the 1970 disclosure that the Norwegian state planned to flood the small Sámi village of Masi, as well as large areas of reindeer-grazing land. One frustrated Sámi, Niillas Somby, detonated bombs near a bridge on the road to the construction site for the dam, accidentally blowing off one of his arms and losing an eye. He was imprisoned and risked a 20-year jail sentence but, with the aid of a false passport, he escaped and lived in hiding among native tribes in Canada (ibid.).
A major difference between the real bombing in Alta and the fictive one in Svonn’s novel is that the real incident did not aim to kill anyone. Nor is killing people a direct aim of the attack in the novel, but the terrorists are well aware that people will die. Despite this, they consider the attack to be a righteous response to the actions of the Swedish state, which they perceive as repressive and negligent. The catastrophe is aggravated when people are not evacuated in time, because officials fail to realize the scale of the disaster. Electricity production is halted and large areas of Sweden, as well as the North Calotte and Europe, are left without power. Another development is that the impact of the giant and destructive flood wave is greater than the terrorists had anticipated. There is significant destruction in the city of Luleå and the town of Boden is completely destroyed. Despite careful planning, the terrorists cannot control the outcome of the bombings.

Sámi frustration about Swedish colonialism is a major theme in Överskrida gränser. This theme is coloured by depictions of an indigenous cosmovision according to which water is a sentient being. The terrorists describe the bombing of the dams as liberating the water, which is characterized as furious (Svonni 2005, 12). One of the men talks about preparing to give the water in the Suorva dam the liberty to destroy and demolish everything on its way to the Gulf of Bothnia (ibid.). In the initial stage of the attack, Joer addresses the water, saying:

Water from the sources of the Lule River, I give you liberty after all these years in captivity. May you never again become the prisoner of humankind. I hope your freedom means that the state finally understands that they must give us space to live. (ibid., 51)

The notion that water is a sentient being captured by the Swedish state, adds the theme of indigenous ontology to the novel, in which nature is not seen as separate from culture. This stands in opposition to the ontology permeating the narrative presented on Vattenfall’s website, in which water is a natural resource that has been successfully controlled in order to provide electricity. However, according to the anticolonial interpretive framework for the Sámi who carry out the bombings, water regulation is seen as an abuse of sentient beings such as rivers, as well as a disruption of an ancient lifeform based on an ontology with no boundaries between humans and nature (see Adamson 2013, Adamson & Monani 2017). Consequently, Svonn’s novel is not only a book about a Sámi terrorist attack, but it also covers the theme of clashing ontologies. This theme is reinforced by...
the numerous references to Sámi gods made by the terrorists throughout the novel. For example, when on the run in the mountains, in Joer’s mind he pleads to the Sámi gods for favourable weather conditions that will conceal his tracks so his followers can’t find him (Svonni 2005, 201). Another example is when Joer’s sister-in-law, Riina, wonders whether her being interrupted by people in the forest is a sign from the Sámi gods that she should dispose of the equipment for a new attack on the Swedish power grid. Her initial intention is to weaken poles that carry electric cables, in order to make them fall in the wind:

Was it a sign from the Sámi gods that she should dispose of the cutting equipment? Maybe we have protested enough against the greater societal oppression? Maybe they should have a five to ten year respite in order to make room for the Sámi people in Sweden? Have the mighty men understood at all that they must shape decent policies for the Sámi? Must we really bomb all the dams in reindeer grazing lands for them to understand? Or topple all the high-voltage cables? (ibid., 202)

Sámi terrorism is also a theme in Tharaniga Rajah’s dystopian novel Det er lenge til skumring [A Long Way to Dusk], published in Nynorsk, one of the standard forms of written Norwegian, in 2018. Tharaniga Rajah (b. 1984) was born in Norway after her parents immigrated from Sri Lanka in 1975. When presenting the book at a workshop, she highlighted her Tamil family background and racism in Norway as a backdrop to the novel’s depiction of the harassment and killing of Sámi people. Tharaniga Rajah is a woman of colour, something she emphasized as a backdrop to the novel’s dystopian depiction of relations between Norwegians of majority background and the Sámi people.10

The setting of the novel is northern Scandinavia in a future in which the Norwegians have attempted to exterminate the Sámi. The female protagonist, Raisa, has escaped with her daughter to the north, after having survived imprisonment in a camp. They become part of a Sámi community that is struggling to build a Sámi state with the help of the UN. However, this new state is attacked by a neighbouring country and Raisa has to continue fighting. The novel depicts an imaginary place through describing a future with racial conflicts and the attempts of a dominant people and culture to erase an ethnic and cultural minority. Rajah’s novel exemplifies the making of Sápmi in the genre of dystopian fiction, relating to contemporary concerns about racism. While the novel’s futuristic setting is more extreme than that of Svonni’s Överskrida gränser, both authors highlight racism as a catalyst for terrorism. The main characteristic of dystopian fiction is the setting, which may be regarded as a metaphor for one possible direction for humans, depending on choices and actions that lead to a potential future. In this respect, dystopias represent speculative fiction. In the case of Rajah’s novel, the speculation is linked to the interconnections between place-making and racism, and themes like the ethnic cleansing of groups regarded as inferior by dominant social groups. This theme is touched upon in a comment made by Jeline in Svonni’s novel, the wife of the terrorist leader. Jeline claims that Swedish authorities enjoyed causing the death of Sámi people in the eighteenth century, and that there is a history of racism in Sweden that is manifested in sympathies for Adolf Hitler’s ideas about a superior Aryan race (Svonni 2005, 78).

**Aednan**: Linnea Axelsson’s Lyrical Representations of the Land, the Ground, the Earth

Linnea Axelsson (b. 1980) made her debut with the novel Trillingsmycket [The Twin Jewel] in 2010. She was born in Porjus, a small town in Jokkmokk municipality in the county of Norrbotten, Sweden. The history of Porjus is closely associated with Vattenfall, as it grew when a power plant was built on the Lule River in 1910–1915. The new power station, which is now a museum, was built 1971–1982. Porjus is one of the places highlighted in Axelsson’s second work, a long epic poem entitled Aednan, published by Bonniers, a prestigious Stockholm publishing house, in 2018. Aednan was a great success. In 2018, Axelsson was awarded the August Prize for it in the category of the book of fiction of the year (årets kön-literära bok). Like her debut, it is published in Swedish. It also contains Sámi place names, some Sámi personal names, and the occasional phrase in Sámi. The title word, aednan, is a North Sámi word that means ‘the land, the ground, the earth’. The poem is divided into three parts, titled ‘Aednan’, ‘Aedno’, and ‘Aedni’, the meaning of which are explained in a comment at the end of the poem; aedno is translated as ‘the river’, and aedni as ‘the mother’. As in Valkeapää’s The Sun, My Father, it proposes that the land used by reindeer herders is Sámi land.

Aednan is divided into sections by pages with Roman numerals and the names of geographical locations – initially as ancient Sámi place names – the season, year, and the name of the lyrical I in parentheses. The page for section I states the location, “Night camp at Gobmejávri”, the time of year, “Spring-winter 1913”, and the name “(Ber-Joná)”. Gobmejávri is the Sámi name for a lake in the municipali-
ty of Kiruna, in an area that the nomadic North Sámi used to stop in when moving their reindeer herds. This is also the context of the opening section, which introduces the Sámi reindeer herder Ber-Joná, who is rooted in the lands used by his kin since ancient times. The time of year, spring-winter, is one of the eight Sámi seasons. Ber-Joná and his wife Risten are at home in this land, experiencing a pluriverse with no boundaries between humans and nature. At this time, in this place, they hear heartbeats in the ground: “We heard / heartbeats in the ground” (Axelsson 2019, 30)

Ber-Joná and Risten have two sons. One is severely injured in an accident on the mountain, leaving him unable to work as a reindeer herder. After some time, he is left with settlers and shortly after this he dies. Their other son is born with a disability. Risten refuses to leave him, but eventually he is sent to a mental hospital where he stays until his death. Ber-Jona and Risten have to move several times due to land being flooded when dams are built. Aednan depicts the breaking of the circle of life and continuity, when parents lose their children, lands, and sense of belonging. Their lives are profoundly affected by their dislocation from the land they were once part of. The last section, number XXI, has the place and time information “After the burial”, and states that a vicar is the lyrical I of the section. The vicar reflects upon an old woman whose funeral service she has given, and on how little she knows about the grieving family. The final words are “And she wondered / who they were.”

Aednan is a family history of three generations of Sámi, spanning from the early twentieth century until the present day. One major theme is the loss of land, identity and sense of belonging. The damming of rivers is particularly highlighted as a backdrop to the uprooting and dislocation of Sámi people. When interviewed, Linnea Axelsson has stated that her maternal grandmother’s family was one of the Sámi families that was relocated from Karesuando to Porjus (Heikki 2018). Aednan is a narrative about Swedish colonialism, and its attendant racism and displacement of the Sámi. These are also themes used by Valkapää. In The Sun, My father, the dramatic transformation of nature caused by the strangers is contrasted with the traditional Sámi ideal of leaving no trace of human presence. The damming of rivers is described as an erasure of life: “we have seen / you ex-
between people and the land is foregrounded as a tradition passed down from parents to children. The ancestral landscape is unfolded in the body of his son through the yoik: “We sang forth / the world around us // We sang the mountain / resembling / an old woman // Hiding places / and fear / we sang // when the Swede / went to battle // Against our / old drum” (ibid., 34–35). As Rydving states, one effect of colonialism was the end of drum time, as missionaries prohibited the use of noaidi drums (Rydving 1993). In Välkeapää’s and Axelson’s depictions of the colonization of Sápmi, the prohibition of drums is one thread in the narrative of loss.

While the present is depicted as a time of loss in Aedno, there are also references to Sámi resistance and decolonization. The start of the second section, “Aedno” [River], mentions a flat in Porjus in the winter of 1977. The lyrical I of this section is a woman of Sámi descent called Lise. Lise has married a Swedish man with whom she has two children. While Lise represents a Sámi who has become assimilated, her daughter Sandra is depicted as an activist who recla-


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In real-world, present-day activism in Sweden, the case of Beowulf Mining has functioned as a mobilizer, generating protests from Sámi and environmentalists about the establishment of a mine on land traditionally used for grazing reindeer. The poem’s reference to a foreign mining company thus provides a commentary on contemporary Sámi protests against land loss.


In the final section, “Aedni” [Mother], a legal case regarding land rights is mentioned. This forms a substantial element of the last section, in which Lise’s children Sandra and Per are the lyrical Is. Sandra’s monologue contains many references to the Girjas case. In May 2009, Girjas Sámi village sued the Swedish state over fishing and hunting rights in the mountain areas traditionally used by the village. In 2015, the court decided that the Sámi have the land rights. However, this decision was later undermined by a Supreme Court decision that the county administrative board must administer the fishing and hunting rights in the Sámi village’s lands. The issue of exploitation and control of land is impor-

tant, as there are numerous conflicts about plans to establish mining and wind power in mountain areas. These present-day conflicts are a parallel to the early twentieth century, when the construction of hydroelectric power plants destroyed Sámi land (see Hultman 2015, 132). One difference is that Sámi activists, artists and environmentalists now mobilize through protest actions.


Land Loss, Displacement and Reclaiming in Sámi Visual Art and Popular Music

Land loss, compulsory displacement, and the exploitation of Sámi land are also themes used in contemporary anticolonial art, for example in the works of Kata-


One of the works in the exhibition is whether sorrow can be inherited. Identity loss, loss of land, and the abuse entailed by race biology examinations, are all themes dealt with by Pirak Sikkku, suggesting that the history that has been passed down through generations still causes pain. This theme is explicitly evoked in the work called Mutuobáigít [The Map of Memories], which included drawings straight onto the museum’s walls. The work has references both to the Swedish State Institute for Cultural History and the Sámi


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for Race Biology in Uppsala and to the forcible displacement of Pirak Sikku’s family due to dam construction (ibid., 77). The space that is the focus of the map is shaped by the exploitation and abuse of the Sámi people and, in that respect, the map of memories depicts a colonized space in which the Sámi have lost their land, their cultural identity, and self-esteem. By focusing on the role of memories and emotions, Pirak Sikku highlights the theme of the colonization of people’s minds (see Thiongo 1986).

Anders Sunna is another Sámi artist who has consistently expressed criticisms of Swedish colonialism and discrimination against the Sámi. His contribution to the series Eight Sámi Artists directly draws attention to space through its title: Area Infected. Area Infected consists of a large painting, which covered almost an entire wall of the room in Bildmuseet where it was exhibited. The area it alludes to is a space with a history of race biology examinations of the Sámi and interference from the state, which deprived the Sunna family of their traditional land and made reindeer herding difficult (Heith 2015, 77–79).

The abovementioned Girjas case also forms a backdrop to Sámi singer-songwriter Sofia Jannok’s fourth album, ORDA – This is my land, which was released in 2016. The album has fifteen tracks that are interspersed with recordings from court proceedings in the Girjas case. These represent the colonizers’ perspective, questioning the Sámi people’s status as an indigenous people and their right to the land. Like in Sandra’s monologue in Axelsson’s Aednan, attention is drawn to the state representative’s disrespectful language. The Sámi are called ‘Lapps’, a term that is now seen as pejorative. The lyrics of the album are in North Sámi, English and Swedish. Like Valkkapää in Trekways of the Wind and The Earth, My Mother, Jannok relates to an international indigenous struggle, making explicit references to the global situation of indigenous peoples. The official video for ORDA – This is my land includes shots from international marches, where indigenous peoples protest against pollution and the mismanagement of natural resources. Climate change and exploitation form a backdrop, while a proposed indigenous ontology in which Mother Earth plays a central role functions as a positive contrast.

While the representative of the Swedish state claimed there was no Sámi presence in the mountain areas featured in the Girjas case, Sofia Jannok presents a counter-narrative. One of the tracks on ORDA – This is my land is called “We are still here”, which is also the theme of the album’s official video, produced in co-operation with artist Anders Sunna. This video won the best music video category at the world’s biggest indigenous film festival in Toronto, Canada, in 2016. Sunna’s contribution consists of a film of a screen with the text “WE ARE STILL HERE” and projected photographs of the Sámi pioneer Elsa Laula Renberg and the youth politician Anne Karen Sara, a contemporary voice on Sámi rights. Both Jannok’s lyrics and Sunna’s use of the iconic Laula Renberg and a
modern young Sámi politician contribute to a Sámi narrative of agency and resilience throughout history. Elsa Laula Renberg represents a Sámi cultural heritage which highlights the history of Sámi resistance and their quest for mobilization and self-determination (Stien 1976, Lundmark 1978, Broch Johansen 2015). Laula Renberg has now been activated as a role model in anticolonial Sámi narratives. While Pirak Sikku focuses on loss and sorrow in *Nammaláhpán*, Jannok focuses on resistance and resilience in her 2016 album. This exemplifies the diversity of emotional modes that colour contemporary Sámi narratives about the past and present. Pirak Sikku’s exhibition suggests that there are traumas that need to be addressed, while Jannok’s album and Sunnà’s contribution to the video propose that Sámi agency and resilience have always existed.

It is no coincidence that the title and a Sámi flag have central roles in the official video for *ORDA – This is my land*. The video starts with a close-up of Sofia Jannok cutting a stick to which she attaches the flag, then proudly carrying...
it through a mountain landscape. These scenes are interspersed with shots of indigenous peoples’ international protests, highlighting the common agenda of indigenous peoples’ anticolonial protests and reclaiming land. At the end of the video, the flag is placed firmly in the ground, asserting the Sámi’s presence and ownership claims. The video and the lyrics emphatically propose that the Sámi have a land of their own, a specific way of life – there are scenes with a reindeer herd and reindeer herders in a mountain landscape – and national symbols of their own.

Sámi Migrant Cartographies
Migration is a central theme of literature set in traditional North Sámi reindeer-herding areas, highlighted by Nils-Aslak Valkeapää in the poem “My home is in my heart”, from Trekways of the Wind. The second line of the poem reads “it migrates with me”, drawing attention to that home is not a fixed place, but a space shaped by mobility. While Sápmi refers to a traditional homeland that spans across northern Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Russian Kola Peninsula, there are also depictions of migrant cartographies focusing on the links between transfers, journeys, dislocations and relocations that are related to disruptions in traditional lifestyles. As mentioned previously, a place may be defined as an experienced geography that is associated with people’s emotions, feelings, and memories. In Linnea Axelsson’s epic poem Aednan, the reindeer herders migrating with their herds in the early twentieth century feel connected to the lands they move over. In the Sámi poet Sollaug Sárgon’s depiction of this landscape by the Arctic Sea, traces left by the forefathers speak to the lyrical I: “the sacrificial stone whispers / the logs of the winter dwelling wave / the hearths begin to shout” (Sárgon 2013). One theme of Sárgon’s poem is that there are traces of a Sámi presence in the landscape, and these speak to later generations. While this form of migration is an integral part of a traditional lifestyle, there are also negatively charged depictions of migration. Compulsory relocations of Sámi villages is a theme highlighted by the pioneering author Johan Turi, the artist Katarina Pirak Sikku, and by Linnea Axelsson in Aednan. These relocations are connected to land loss, and also with losing the sense of belonging and of identity, as well as with experiences of dislocation, of having been uprooted from the land. For an indigenous people whose traditional knowledge is based on the notion that man, nature, and the cosmos live in symbiosis, being forced to leave the nature and land they are part of is connected with negative experiences such as trauma and rootlessness. One of the drastic consequences of the compulsory relocation of Sámi villages due to the regulation of rivers, turning large areas into reservoirs, is that the land and its cultural monuments, such as holy rocks, and signs of an ancient Sámi presence, for example burial sites, are lost forever. Material cultural heritage is destroyed and there is no going back.

Another traumatic experience associated with dislocation is found in the depictions of Sámi children being sent to boarding schools. Vuokko Hirvonen highlights how authors with this experience became interested in the themes of identity loss and intercultural conflicts (Hirvonen 2008, 91ff). Disconnection with the children’s Sámi homes and culture is a theme found in Ellen Marie Vars’ novel for young adults Kújtjí (Vars 1988), for example. This represents a form of dislocation in the sense that children were uprooted from their Sámi culture and the places associated with it when they were sent to boarding school. This theme of disconnection from Sámi culture is also found in literature about Sámi people who leave their families and attempt to assimilate with the majority society. There are numerous Sámi texts that highlight the shame caused by discrimination and how it is behind the choice to leave Sápmi, to strive to pass as a person of majority background. This is a theme in Jovnna-Ande Vest’s novel Astrid ja Anton [Astrid and Anton] from 2015. The protagonist is a woman who moves from the north of Norway to Oslo when she marries a wealthy man. She conceals her background, but old memories are revived when her youngest grandchild is born. Moving south, in a Swedish context, to escape racism through assimilation is also the theme of the successful film Sameblod (2016), released internationally as Sámi Blood, directed by Amanda Kernell. The main character, a girl called Elle Marja, leaves northern Sweden in the 1930s in an attempt to escape the restrictive life she faces due to the Swedish ‘Lapp shall remain Lapp’ policy and racist attitudes about the Sámi. Elle Marja wants to get an education, something forbidden by the policy that reindeer-herding Sámi should remain reindeer herders. She travels south, to Uppsala, and gradually suppresses her Sámi background in order to pass as a majority Swede. In old age, suppressed memories return when she goes back to her birthplace.

In Ann-Helén Laestadius’ novel for young adults, Sms från Soppero [Text Message from Soppero], the protagonist Agnes eventually reclaims her Sámi heritage, which has been suppressed by her mother (Heith 2011). Agnes’ mother moved to Stockholm and married a majority Swede; the reason for this in the novel is
discrimination and abusive language from majority Swedes, resulting in feelings of shame and vulnerability. The novel has a quest theme, which revolves around Agnes’ exploration of what being a Sámi means. Identity is a central theme, as well as how identity is linked to place. Various characters have opinions about what being a Sámi means. The mother of Agnes’ Sámi boyfriend claims that real Sámi people live in the north of Sweden, in traditional Sámi lands, which is a way of excluding Agnes from the Sámi community. However, Agnes and her mother arrive at the insight that Sámi identity and culture may be experienced in various places, even in big cities like Stockholm. They reconcile with the notion of being Sámi in the Stockholm area, and think of themselves as “city Sámi.” This implies that migration from Sápmi is integrated into an experience that can constitute a Sámi identity and the shaping of migrant cartographies, in which individuals may experience multiple belongings. One theme related to multiple belongings and migrant cartographies is that of mixed backgrounds. The mother of Agnes’ boyfriend has a purist notion of what a Sámi is and claims that, because Agnes’ father is a majority Swede, this disqualifies her from being a “real Sámi.” However, this definition is not accepted by Agnes who, by the end of the novel has reached the insight that she is Sámi, despite her mixed background and the fact that she lives in the Stockholm area.

Sms från Soppero is the first in a series of four books about Agnes as a teenager. It was followed by Hej vacker [Hello Beautiful] (2010), Ingen annan är som du [There’s No One Like You] (2011), and Hitta hem [Finding Home] (2012). Agnes’ identity formation is a central theme, complicated by her mixed background and her mother’s migration from Sápmi. In Ingen annan är som du and Hitta hem, Agnes has a little brother. She loves him, but is also slightly jealous, as her mother is eager to give the little boy access to Sámi language and culture – something that Agnes was denied as her mother suppressed her Sámi background when Agnes was little. This lack proves problematic for Agnes as she feels that she is not accepted as a “real Sámi” by those who expect Sámi people to know a Sámi language and be familiar with Sámi customs and culture. The title of the third book refers to a poem that Agnes learns on a confirmation camp in Nikkaluokta, a small place in the mountains in the municipality of Gällivare. The title reflects one of Agnes’ insights, namely that she is a unique individual and good enough as she is. The camp’s participants are Sámi youngsters from the Swedish areas of Sápmi. Agnes and one boy are from Solna in the Stockholm area. The participants speak different languages: North Sámi, South Sámi, Lule Sámi, and some don’t speak a Sámi language at all. This diversity highlights how home has different connotations for the Sámi youngsters and that their Sáminess is associated with varied life stories, some related to migration and loss, others with continuity and an unproblematic Sámi identity.

As the title indicates, the main theme of the final book in the series, Hitta hem, is about finding home. Like the previous books, identity formation is a central theme which is linked to places and place-making. The novel uses multifocalisation as various characters’ views on what counts as home are represented. On the one hand, there is the view that home is connected with roots and if people migrate from traditional territory they experience loss. This is the view expressed by Agnes’ boyfriend Henrik. However, there is an opening at the end of the novel to indicate that he could change his mind; Agnes sees an envelope from an art school in Stockholm that Henrik has contacted about opportunities for education. This is a hint that, despite his expressions of reluctance at the idea of moving from Sápmi, he might do so in order to pursue an education. Agnes, in contrast to Henrik, is in favour of multiple belongings, of being at home in Solna where she grew up, and in Soppero, where her mother’s family comes from. Unlike Henrik, she does not believe that a person has to choose between either/or, but that it is possible to embrace both/and. It is obvious that the key to the problem is migration and the views and emotions associated with moving away from land that the family has long inhabited. In Agnes’ case, her mixed background further complicates her search for home and a sense of belonging.

While the novel depicts Agnes as connected with ancient Sámi land that her
maternal family has long inhabited in a mode found in traditional Sámi notions of connection with the land that speaks to the individual, which is also found in Valkeapää’s poems and Axelsson’s Aednan, the book also shows how life in the Sámi village of Soppero can be somewhat excluding and restrictive. This is exemplified in a storyline about two young homosexual men. When the sexual orientation of the men is revealed, the majority of the people in the village deny that there are any Sámi homosexuals. This is contradicted when a man in the village confesses to Agnes that he is gay, but that he has concealed this and lived a double life, working in his business in Soppero for periods and occasionally living with a boyfriend in Luleå. This highlights intolerance and conformity, as well as people’s fear of being seen as deviant, as elements of village life. This man has never told anybody about his sexual orientation before. He only makes an exception when a teenager is being harassed for being gay. Traditional reindeer herding is also depicted as potentially restrictive through the narrative about Henrik’s artistic ambitions, which are hampered by his mother’s expectations that he will continue the family business as a reindeer herder. Implicit in this are multiple narrative threads that contribute to the making of Sápmi in the novel, some of which refer to old beliefs of connection to the land and the ancestors, others which tell stories of exclusion, conformity and intolerance.

While Væst’s novel Astrid ja Anton, as well as the movie Sami Blood from 2016, depict migration as a response to colonial cartographies in which Sáminess is associated with othering, exclusion, and discrimination, Laestadius’ young adult novels depict the reclaiming of Sámi cultural heritage and identity through Agnes’ affirmation of her Sámi background. As the term “city Sámi” indicates, Agnes’ explorations of identity formation result in the expansion of places linked to Sáminess. Mobility and flux are also themes that are found in texts depicting modernity and globalisation. Rootlessness is the central theme of Síghjórn Skåden’s poem Skomakernes konge [King of Cobblers], which was published in Norwegian in 2007. The poem, which resonates with the mythical story of the Wandering Jew, is about a young Sámi man, Jusup, who returns to northern Norway after having worked in southern Norway and travelled in Europe. The book is illustrated with black and white photographs that suggest that the time period is the interwar years. Jusup feels homeless when he is away and like a stranger when he returns, which may be related to the issue of Sámi identity formation and the challenges facing young Sámi people when they are confronted by majority society. However, this is also a typical element of narratives about modernity, about leaving sparsely populated areas, working in urban areas and foreign travel. A major theme in the Bildungsroman is that the protagonist changes during the journey, that the person who returns to the place called home has accumulated transformative experiences (see Moretti 2000). With this in mind, the person who returns is not the same as the one who left. Feelings of rootlessness may be related to a social context with hierarchies between ethnic groups, but also to narratives about breaking up and travelling in a cartography shaped by modernity’s disruptions of traditional lifestyles.

Summary

The making of Sápmi as an experienced geography in Valkeapää’s literary production is linked to the nomadic concept of home, as reflected in the North Sámi title of his early book Ruokto Váimmus, which means ‘the home in the heart’ (translated as Trekways of the Wind). This notion of place also forms the basis of Linnea Axelsson’s depiction of land and identity loss in Aednan, as well as the work of contemporary artists such as Katarina Pirak Sikku and Anders Sunna, and musicians such as Sofia Jannok. This concept of home is related to the North Sámi reindeer herding culture. Valkeapää’s uses of the concept exemplify how elements from traditional culture are utilized in shaping an experienced geography associated with reindeer herding. In real life, reindeer husbandry is an industry, but it also represents an important part of Sámi culture and way of life (see Solbakk 2006, 151 ff.). The many photographs in the Sámi original of The Sun, My Father show Sámi people from diverse groups, not only reindeer-herding North Sámi. However, in Valkeapää’s creation of a Sámi experienced geography, the reindeer herders’ traditional nomadic way of life plays a central role in ideas about home and belonging. Valkeapää connects the notion of ruokto váimmus with temporal strata that represent a precolonial period of harmony when moving reindeer herds from northern Finland to the northern coast of Norway was unproblematic, and with the period of colonization and formation of national borders that interrupted the traditional way of life, and with contemporary Sámi protest and cultural mobilization in which the concept of Sápmi plays a central role. In the Sámi original of Valkeapää’s The Sun, My Father, multiple perspectives are introduced through photographs from international collections. In these, the gaze of visitors in Sápmi represents how the people and the land were viewed in various temporal strata. The lyrical monologue of the noaidi, on the
other hand, represents a Sámi gaze, one that is also from various temporal strata because the noaidi can travel through time. This oscillation between temporal strata functions as a means for representing precolonial space, colonized space, and contemporary reactions to land loss.

Linnea Axelsson’s Aednan also highlights interconnections between the flux of time and representations of space through the focus on three generations’ relationship to the land. As in Valkkepää’s poetry books, the reindeer-herding North Sámi’s idea of the home in the heart, and of their belonging on the traditional North Calotte land that has been used for generations, represent a culture of the past that was interrupted by colonialism. Both Valkkepää and Axelsson emphasize land loss and contemporary attempts to reclaim land and culture. Colonisation and conflicts with the state are also themes in Lars Wilhelm Svonni’s Överskrida gränsen. This novel has affinities with dystopian fiction, in the respect that it represents a possible future, or at least a fictional reaction that is motivated by the experience of injustice.

The Sámi authors and artists discussed here who are Swedish citizens represent the areas of Sweden in which Sámi people lived as part of Sápmi prior to colonialism. All of them create an experienced geography that is linked to land loss, loss of a sense of belonging and identity. In this narrative of loss, the concept of Sápmi represents a reaction that aims to reclaim language, culture and control of the land. The ILO Convention supports these actions, but it has not been ratified by Sweden and Finland. This is a backdrop to the protests by Sofia Jannok. Like Valkkepää before her, Jannok and other authors and artists refer to an indigenous ontology, in which humans are seen as living in symbiosis with nature and the cosmos. This narrative thread in the construction of Sápmi as an alternative place is related to the creation of a binary between modern Western societies, on the one hand, and indigenous alternative spaces on the other.

There is some tension between attempts to reclaim a lost culture and trends associated with postmodernism, migration and globalization, which emphasize cultural exchange, hybridity and the emergence of new cultural constellations. In a Swedish context, Ann-Helén Laestadius has approached this issue in her books for young adults. One important theme that she explores is whether you can be Sámi if you have a mixed background and live in the Stockholm area. The protagonist, Agnes, comes to realize that she is a “city Sámi,” who experiences a sense of belonging, both in the area of Sápmi that her mother’s family comes from and where she was brought up, in Solna, near Stockholm. This brings a new twist to

The theme of exchange between traditional Sámi culture and global culture is emphasized in the Sámi artist Markku Laakso’s paintings, which combine clichés about Sáminess and the elements used to depict Lapland with representations of Elvis Presley, the rock and roll icon. Above: Coffee Break, 2010.
III
PLACE-MAKING IN THE BORDERLANDS:
THE TORNE VALLEY AND MEÄNMAA
The border between Sweden and Finland was established in 1809. Prior to this, the Torne Valley and all of Finland belonged to Sweden. In Swedish nation-building after the loss of Finland, the multiethnic, multilingual border area has had an ambivalent status. When Finland became a Russian Grand Duchy, after Sweden lost the territory, there were fears of a ‘Finnish threat’ (Åselius 1994, Rodell 2009, see also Niemi & Eriksen 1981). Later, when the concept of the People’s Home was launched in a radio speech by the politician Per Albin Hansson in 1928, the Tornealian Finnish population in Sweden did not fit into this vision of a modern, progressive nation (Mebius 1999).

According to Hettne, Sörlin and Østergård, the People’s Home was a national system based on ethnicity: “The Swedish People’s Home in Per Albin’s classic version was no doubt meant for ethnic Swedes, even if this was never pointed out, or regarded as necessary to point out” (Hettne, Sörlin & Østergård 2006, 400). The Torne Valley and Meänmaa are the places that are in focus when discussing the Tornealian texts below. As the brief historical backdrop indicates, the status of this area has been ambivalent in a Swedish context.

The texts and various forms of material practices that are analysed in this section constitute a text corpus in a broad sense, contributing to the idea that there is an area now called Meänmaa that has a common culture and language. The concept of Meänmaa, literally ‘our land’ in the local language of Meänkieli, was launched by the author Bengt Pohjanen (b. 1944), who was born in a small village on the Swedish side of the border. In Pohjanen’s writings in various genres, and his performances in diverse media, Meänmaa is not a distinct area. The cover of a Tornedalian Finnish literary history that was co-authored by Pohjanen displays a map of Meänmaa, showing an area with blurred borders extending beyond the Torne Valley.

The website of the Meänmaa Association states that Meänmaa consists of five municipalities in Sweden and six in Finland, and mentions that Meänmaa is also a joint project between the municipalities of Pajala, in Sweden, and Kolari, in Finland. Meänmaa is described as a common cultural region: “Meänmaa tarkottaa yhtenäistä kulttuuraliaetta” [Meänmaa signifies a common cultural region]. This cultural region is said to exist worldwide, wherever Meänkieli is spoken. The Torne Valley, including Lannanmaa, is said to be the old name for Meänmaa. The concept of Meänmaa will be problematized through a discussion of the authors proposed by Pohjanen as representatives of a Tornedalian Finnish literary history, in their capacity as authors from Meänmaa. Several of these authors are established in a Finnish context and some are included in the Finnish literary canon.

Mikael Niemi (b. 1959) and Tove Alsterdal (b. 1960) have both written crime fiction set in the Torne Valley, in the area that Pohjanen has proposed as the heart of Meänmaa. This consists of the villages in the Torne Valley that are located close to the border. These authors’ depiction of this setting is compared with that of Pohjanen. The material also includes poetry and prose by contemporary authors from a younger generation, who use the Torne Valley in both a narrow sense and in the extended sense suggested by the abovementioned map with blurred borders.

David Vikgren (b. 1975) uses the concept of the Torne Valley as a geographical referent, and classical texts depicting the Torne Valley from various periods of time as intertexts. This is discussed as a contrast to texts by Pohjanen. Vikgren’s use of rhizomatic writing, related to the idea of smooth space, is based on postmodernist philosophy that highlights the profusion of signs that do not constitute a coherent totality. Similarities between work by Vikgren and the Finnish-Swedish poet Ralf Andtbacka are discussed to propose another relevant approach to Vikgren’s collections in addition to the analysis of specifically Tornedalian place-making. Two novels published in Swedish in 2019 are also discussed, Nina Wähä’s Testament [Legacy] and Pia Mariana Raattamaa Viisėns Där rinner en ålv genom Savomuotka by [A River Runs Through Savomuotka Village]. Both use a small village in the Torne Valley as a setting: one is on the Swedish side of the border and the other on the Finnish side.
Representations of Meänmaa and the Torne Valley from the Swedish side of the border are evolving against the backdrop of Swedish nation-building in diverse temporal strata. Texts and performative statements in various media and genres play a central role in proposals for counter-narratives that target a homogenizing nationalism. Özkirimli proposes that nationalism may be regarded as a discourse that makes three sets of claims: identity claims, temporal claims and spatial claims (Özkirimli 2010). Identity claims are based on the assumption that the people who constitute the nation have a common, shared culture. The idea of a shared history is captured by the concept of temporal claims, while spatial claims are linked to the notion of a shared territory, a homeland. Meänmaa denotes a transnational Tornedalian cultural region, located on both sides of the border rivers between Sweden and Finland. Prokkola and Ridanpää discuss Bengt Pohjanen’s construction of Meänmaa, claiming that: “This language [Meänkieli] along with the local cultural traditions form the thematic basis on which Pohjanen constructs a narration of a harmonious, coherent and shared borderland...” (Prokkola & Ridanpää 2011, 775, see also Ridanpää 2017, 63).

One element of Pohjanen’s contemporary cultural production is the creative use of language, as manifested in the use of an unconventional style when writing non-fiction, for example. This raises questions about the status of Pohjanen’s construction of a shared borderland, as commented upon by Prokkola and Ridanpää. They say that it has been possible to “acquire citizenship of the ‘symbolic country of Meänmaa’ by buying a Meänmaa Passport” (Prokkola & Ridanpää 2011, 785). Prokkola and Ridanpää’s comments on this so-called passport demonstrate that the document in question is not actually a passport, but a piece of paper with the title ‘passport’. This document is called a passport on the website of the Meänmaa Association. Under the heading “Citizens of Meänmaa”, it says: “You can become a citizen of Meänmaa by buying a Meänmaa passport for 70 Swedish kronor/7 euros.” This is one example of Pohjanen’s creative use of language. Far from being a passport in any conventional sense, Pohjanen’s use of the term involves a parodic dimension whereby an official discourse is made fun of. The launching of this ‘passport’ is a form of carnivalesque performance, which implies that it functions as an element of popular humour which challenges and/or makes fun of conventions.

Carnivalisation in literature and cultural production is associated with the production of counter-narratives from below, whereby a dominant, often official, culture is challenged. Elements of this are found also in the grammar books (see Heith 2007b, 237) and literary history co-authored by Pohjanen. Meänmaa is the name of a cultural region that is proposed by Bengt Pohjanen and depicted as an experienced geography in fiction and non-fiction. It is also the name of an association and magazine (see Heith 2018). The Meänmaa magazine was started by Bengt Pohjanen in 2009.
The Making of Cultural Heritage: ‘The First Tornedalian Author of Imaginative Writing’

Laurajane Smith emphasizes how the making of cultural heritage is related to processes in the present, whereby heritage is produced in response to important contemporary issues (Smith 2006). This notion forms the backdrop to this chapter’s analysis of the activation of the forgotten author Hilja Kallioniemi-Byström (1908–1993) in the making of Meänmaa as a place with a culture, mentality and history of its own. In the summer of 2008, the centenary of her birth, 18 April 1908, was celebrated with the musical performance, Sånger från Matojärvi [Songs from Matojärvi], with lyrics by Bengt Pohjanen and music by the Finnish composer Kaj Chydenius. The anniversary and performance marked the starting point for the proposal that Hilja Kallioniemi-Byström is a Tornedalian literary pioneer.

In Den tornedalsfinska litteraturen: Från Kalkkimaa till Hilja Byström [Tornedalian Finnish literature: From Kalkkimaa to Hilja Byström] from 2009, Pohjanen describes Byström’s authorship in a chapter entitled “Den tornedalsfinska litteraturen föds” [The birth of Tornedalian Finnish literature]. Bengt Pohjanen’s contribution concludes with the performative statement: “18 April shall hereafter be the day of Tornedalian literature” (Pohjanen 2009, 41). The literary history by Pohjanen and Johansson exemplifies historiography by local actors in a local context. None of the contributors are affiliated to academic institutions (see Heith 2008, 2012). Bengt Pohjanen is an author and publisher, and Kirsti Johansson is a translator. Bearing in mind Bourdieu’s theory of the literary field, the legitimacy of this local Tornedalian literary history is problematic; it is not produced by established professionals with an adequate habitus and symbolic capital in the literary field related to the writing of literary history. One consequence of this is that there are considerable differences between these literary histories and more conventional examples of the genre. However, there are alternative ways of viewing legitimacy, as proposed in postcolonial studies, ethnicity studies and indigenous studies (see Heith 2012, 82). Although they are outsiders in an academic context, the authors of the Tornedalian literary history are insiders as regards affiliation with the Tornedalian Finnish minority. The emphasis on the importance and relevance of insider stories produced by minorities and historically disadvantaged groups is highlighted by third wave ecocriticism, postcolonial studies and environmental humanism. However, it is potentially problematic if individuals who are members of a relatively small minority group propose subjective narratives that are not supported by other members of the group; these subjective narratives may not be accepted by a majority of the group’s members (see Appendix A).

It is also problematic when their style and composition are considerably different to the genre of literary history. Although genre conventions are not static or uniform, there are certain generic traits that authors familiar with the genre consider, as the function of these traits is to help readers who expect to obtain relevant information about literary history (see Fowler 1982). As the title of the chapter in the abovementioned Tornedalian Finnish literary history indicates, Hilja Byström is presented as a pioneering Tornedalian author. Since the event in 2008, The Hilja Byström Day has been celebrated annually on 18 April in Övertorneå in the Torne Valley (see Appendix B). Information about the celebration uses the epithet “the first author of Tornedalian imaginative writing” [Tornedalens första skönlitterära författare] about Hilja Byström. She has thus been awarded a prominent role in a Tornedalian literary tradition – but who was she?

Her maiden name was Kallioniemi and she was born in the village of Matojärvi. She trained as a junior school teacher and made her debut as a writer in 1932, with a collection of stories, Ett år i Järvi [A Year in Järvi]. Järvi is a Finnish word that means lake. In the book it is the name of the village where the stories are set. The Finnish name indicates that this is a Tornedalian Finnish village. Throughout the stories, local Tornedalian Finnish words are used as distinguishing markers, characterizing the place and people as different to Swedish majority society. The villagers have Finnish names, and so do local places. Tornedalian Finnish words are used to designate family relationships, local food, etc. Naming and language help to describe the villagers and the Torne Valley as a place
with people who are ethnically, linguistically and culturally different to Swedish majority society. In this context, ethnicity, language, and local culture function as distinguishing markers, which play a vital role in the establishment of ethnic groups (cf. Barth 1998).

In 1935, Hilja Kallioniemi married a widowed vicar with five children, Engelbert Byström. After the marriage a trilogy based on the stories in the debut book was published: Byn [The Village] (1940), Ungfolk [Young Folks] (1941), and Bondförl [Peasants] (1943). In association with the 20th century, a new edition of Byn was published by Barents Publisher, a Tornealian publishing house run by Bengt Pohjanen. As well as her debut collection and the trilogy, Hilja Byström wrote a couple more books, but these have not gained much contemporary interest.69 Nor has Hilja Byström found fame at a national or international level, but her books about Tornealian village life, its mentality, traditions, and the language situation in the 1930s and 1940s are now highlighted as a significant cultural heritage by some local actors. Bengt Pohjanen is one of these and the Meänmaa Association that he co-founded functions as a platform for this (see Heith 2018b).

However, it is significant that there are varied factions in the Tornealian Finnish cultural field and they do not have a shared agenda. Hilja Byström is particularly emphasized by Bengt Pohjanen and the Meänmaa Association, which implies that place-making intersects with identity formation and the creation of the Torne Valley as an experienced geography in performances by the local agent Bengt Pohjanen and the Meänmaa Association (cf. Pierce, Martin & Murphy 2010, 54). The writing of literary history and performative proposals for forerunners and pioneers exemplify processes whereby people iteratively create the experienced geographies in which they live (see ibid.). However, as this is place-making and cultural heritage in the making, it remains to be seen whether a majority, or at least a substantial number, of Tornealians embrace Meänmaa, and ‘literary pioneer Hilja Byström’, as adequate expressions of local culture.67 As Laurajane Smith points out, the making of cultural heritage evolves through negotiations, activities and performances by groups with diverse agendas, preferences and interests (Smith 2006).

As mentioned above, one prominent local actor, Bengt Pohjanen, has been committed to making Hilja Byström visible in the present – although this visibility is restricted to a local Tornealian context and the activities of one of the local associations, particularly the Hilja Byström Day on 18 April. Hilja Byström, which is the name she used after her marriage, wrote in Swedish, but her mother tongue was Tornealian Finnish. The time she wrote about was a period of transition: agriculture was changing due to the introduction of new machines and methods, the Laestadian faith of the older generation was losing ground, some villagers had migrated to America, and some of the young people moved south to study or work. While Finnish used to be the only language, the younger generation was increasingly learning Swedish.

The village life Byström describes is dynamic and full of conflicts between old and new. Her depictions of Tornealian village life are quite ambivalent and multifaceted in the sense that they include both nostalgia and enthusiasm for progress. Rantatalo, a farmer in Ett år i Järvi, is depicted as an ideal, rooted in local culture but intent on improving living conditions.68 He has been to America and, back on his homestead in Järvi, he starts improving farming methods through modernization. He also wants to improve the conditions of the villagers by arranging to sell milk to a dairy and bringing in an income for the farmers. The village depicted in her debut book consists mainly of self-sufficient farms, but this is changing under the pressure of modernity. Rantatalo represents renewal and progress in the context of the village. However, there are other ‘modernities’ that are viewed less favourably. Yarn spun at factories, for example, is said to be poor, not comparable with home spun yarn. Thus the novel presents multiple feelings and opinions about modernity.

In the time depicted in this book, the villagers have not been assimilated into the Swedish majority society. Many do not know the Swedish language and they do not regard themselves as Swedes. Rantatalo, the progressive farmer, ruminates upon the situation without coming to a solution. He strongly favours Swedification, in the sense that he feels local people should see themselves as Swedes, but he also acknowledges that this may imply a break with their identity and culture: “How could this occur [that Tornealians regard themselves as Swedes], without a break with that which was deepest in their nature, and that they could not afford to lose?” (Kallioniemi 1932, 38).64 On the one hand, Rantatalo sees Swedification as a positive thing, on the other he fears that its cost, in the shape of identity loss, might be too great.

In the writings of Hilja Byström, traditional village culture, prior to societal modernization, plays a significant role in the making of identity. This is a place that is experienced as different to the Swedish majority society. This theme is explored in her debut book, but it suggests no solutions for how Swedification...
could be combined with the preservation of local culture. One version of this theme is the depiction of a young woman, Maju, who comes back to Järvi after having worked in Stockholm. During her time in Stockholm, Maju concealed her Tornedalian background: “It was also difficult to be taken for a Finnish or Lappish woman – she felt so ashamed of it!” (ibid., 99). Maju changes her Tornedalian Finnish first name to Margot, struggles to speak in a way that hides her Tornedalian Finnish background, and a friend of hers emphasizes that she should not speak about anything back home.

The theme of the story about Maju is Bildung. Once Maju has returned home, she finds that she misses the traditional old home and the simple homemade things “that would so cruelly be taken away from her” (ibid., 94). Maju’s development implies that she gradually starts to see her Tornedalian home and self-sufficiency as positive contrasts to modern Stockholm. She has been taught by her friend that the Tornedalian village and its traditional lifestyle are not good enough. The dilemma that arises is shown by the narrative voice: “Deep down inside they [the Tornedalian home and its homemade things] had been the treasure of her heart; she would never have endured in Stockholm if she had known that they were gone, although this had not been entirely clear to her until now.” (ibid., 94).

Through Maju’s story, Byström depicts a traditional Tornedalian village of the 1930s as an experienced geography, which Maju learns is shameful during her time in Stockholm. This shame is linked to ethnicity, speaking a minority language, and having been born and grown up in a rural periphery. By the end of the story, Maju has realized that the background she has been trying to conceal in Stockholm is nevertheless part of her in a positive sense (“the treasure of her heart”). This storyline is a counterpart to the previous one featuring Rantatalo’s thoughts on the conflict between assimilation and the preservation of a cultural identity that is an intrinsic part of one’s self. This conflict remains a theme in later Tornedalian literature and is also important for place-making, as the making of Meänmaa and the acknowledgement of Meänkieli as a language are based on a positive evaluation of local culture and history, which contrasts with assimilationist policies and the generation of shame.

The novel Byn depicts the urban experience and the disruption of a traditional lifestyle as negative for Maju. A similar experience is depicted in Gunnar Kie ri’s novels about a young Tornedalian man who moves to Stockholm, set in a time characterized by societal transformation in which the city becomes the dominant societal form. In a British context, this kind of transformation is a theme discussed by Raymond Williams (Williams 1973, 154). In a Tornedalian context, writers like Bengt Pohjanen and Mikael Niemi continue to depict declining job opportunities and migration from small Tornedalian villages, resulting in depopulation and the demise of traditional village life. When Williams discusses the theme of the city as an emerging dominant societal form, he suggests that one effect was that the village as a “knowable community” was opposed to the city, resulting in a “fiction of the country” as essentially transparent, while the city is conceived of as opaque: “in changes like these any assumptions of a knowable community – a whole community, wholly knowable – became harder and harder to sustain” (ibid., 165). Tally Jr. proposes that this analysis is connected with the emergence of “the perpetual nostalgia for a simpler time, just over the horizon behind us” (Tally Jr. 2013, 89). This kind of nostalgic attitude colours Byström’s depiction of Tornedalian village life in the 1930s, as well as present-day enthusiasm for a simple life in a ‘knowable community’.
There are a number of Swedish Tornedalian literary depictions from the 1970s that deal with negative attitudes from institutions, such as compulsory schools, and from people who assert the superiority of majority culture. Bengt Pohjanen’s poem “Jag är född utan språk” [I was born without language] was first published in 1973 in the ecumenical magazine Vår lös, and captures the currents of the 1970s. The theme of the poem is identity loss as due to assimilationist policies and the generation of feelings of inferiority and shame. Compulsory school is particularly emphasized as an institution that has inflicted pain upon Tornedalian children. The fourth stanza reads: “I am whipped at school / to language, conscientiousness / nationality / I am whipped to contempt / for that which was mine / the lack of language / and the border.”

The same theme is in focus in the young adult’s book Som om jag inte fanns [As if I W asn’t There], by Kerstin Johansson i Backe, published in 1978. Its main theme is the conflict between a Tornedalian girl, Elina, and her teacher from the south of Sweden. Elina is a local child from a Tornedalian Finnish home. The film, Elina, som om jag inte fanns [Elena: As If I Wasn’t There], directed by Finnish-Swedish Klaus Härdö, premiered in 2003. The setting of both the book and the film is a Tornedalian village in the 1930s. In spite of there being considerable differences between the book and the film, both depict a conflict between Elina and her teacher. The language situation is the same as that described by Hilja Byström in her debut book: children do not know Swedish when they start school (see Heith 2017b). Like Pohjanen’s poem, the book and film about Elina present a negative image of compulsory school as an institution which, in its nationalizing efforts, deprives children of their self-esteem. In a study of the Celtic fringes in Great Britain, Michael Hechter calls this kind of pedagogy a “socialization in to a culture of poverty” and the process it is part of “internal colonialism” (Hechter 1975). In Pohjanen’s poem from 1973, as well as in Johansson’s book about Elina, this form of internal colonialism and socialization are seen from a critical vantage point. The theme of both is how ethnicity can become a stigma.

The cultural oppression of the Tornedalian Finnish population in Sweden is also a theme in books by Tornedalian Gunnar Kieri (b. 1928). The novel Av dig blir det ingenting [You Will Come to Nothing] is the first volume of a series that aims to depicting the conditions for working people and migration in the 1940s and 1950s (Kieri 1976). The protagonist is a Tornedalian Finnish boy, Lars, who eventually moves south. In the last book in the series, Är han inte svensk? [Isn’t He Swedish?], Lars has moved to Stockholm. He is working as a furniture remover and one day a customer, an old lady, starts questioning his nationality: “Isn’t he Swedish,’ she asks and looks almost frightened. ‘Why are they sending foreigners here? I asked for two strong men and they send foreigners who don’t know anything” (Kieri 1985, 14). While Byström’s story about Maju in Ett år i Järvi touches upon the theme of discrimination, this theme is treated explicitly in Kieri’s novel. In Byström’s debut collection, Rantatalo ruminates upon a possible future in which young Tornedalians will feel that they belong to the Swedish nation, that they are Swedes. Kieri’s treatment of the theme is more sombre, drawing attention to the ignorance and prejudiced attitudes towards the Tornedalians among majority Swedes. This theme is highlighted in Kieri’s presentation of his authorship in the second volume of Pohjanen and Johansson’s Tornedalian Finnish literary history (Kieri 2007).

Mikael Niemi is another Tornedalian author who has contributed to critical depictions of compulsory schooling, focusing on the marginalization of Tornedalian Finnish culture and the socialization of children that caused a lack of self-esteem and feelings of inferiority. In the successful novel Popularmusik från Vittula (Niemi 2000a), translated into English as Popular Music (2003), the narrator depicts the Torne Valley of the 1960s as a place in which traditional jobs are becoming automated, forcing men to leave in order to find work:

We watched family farms die, and fields give way to undergrowth. We watched the last logs float down the River Torne when the ice melted, before it was banned; we saw forty muscular lumber jacks replaced by one diesel-oozing snow-mobile; we
watched our fathers hang up their heavy-duty gloves and go off to spend their working week in the far-distant Kiruna mines. (Niemi 2000b, 71).

The adult narrator comments on the linguistic situation when he looks back upon his childhood: “We spoke with a Finnish accent without being Finns, and we spoke with a Swedish accent without being Swedes.” He concludes: “[w]e were nothing” (ibid., 71). These reflections are found in a chapter about what the Tornedalian children learnt at school. Mikael Niemi depicts how the children are socialized into a culture of poverty by being taught that their Tornedalian Finnish culture is of no significance. The narrator emphasizes how the Torne Valley is made invisible by the curriculum taught to the children, while the geography, flora and fauna of southern Sweden are highlighted as representing the real Sweden (see Heith 2016).

The same theme is emphasized in the first volume of Bengt Pohjanen and Kirsti Johansson’s Tornedalian Finnish literary history, Den tornedalsfinska litteraturen: Från Kexi till Liksom (Pohjanen & Johansson 2007). In the first chapter, “Litteraturen i Meänmaa” [The literature of Meänmaa], Bengt Pohjanen targets Selma Lagerlöf’s role in Swedish nation-building by criticizing her book The Wonderful Adventures of Nils. This book was commissioned by the Swedish Elementary Schoolteachers Association’s textbook committee and was published as two volumes in 1906–1907. Lagerlöf’s book aimed to describe Sweden through a story about a boy, Nils, who is shrunk to the size of an elf, allowing him to ride on the back of a goose from the south to the north of Sweden. According to Pohjanen, Lagerlöf contributes to the marginalization of the Torne Valley and its people by not including them in the book:

Niemi’s novel and Pohjanen’s criticism of Selma Lagerlöf are coloured by an anti-colonial awareness implying that internal colonialism, in the sense described by Hechter (see Hechter 1975), is viewed as concomitant with the marginalisation and discrimination of the Tornedalian Finnish population in Sweden. As the quote above shows, Pohjanen proposes that Tornedalians have a temporal claim on Meänmaa because they were there first. The idea of being the first inhabitants of a place motivates the claims of ownership expressed through the phrase ‘our own country’. However, there is also a Sámi presence in the region called Meänmaa, as well as Sámi claims that it is Sámi land.

The theme of colonialism is explicitly mentioned in Niemi’s novel Koka björn [Boiling Bear] (Niemi 2017, see also Heith 2018, 220–223). The protagonist of the novel, the Sámi-Tornedalian revitalist preacher Lars Levi Laestadius, thinks about visitors who are captivated by the exoticism and grandeur of the north:

For them, Norrland is an India. They come here to accomplish heroic deeds, see the end of the world at North Cape’s black rock precipices, paint dramatic scenes to be exhibited in London or Paris, make astonishing scientific discoveries, preferably under harsh physical conditions. For them, Norrland is an unnamed country. It didn’t really exist before they came here. The people here are not human, not as human as them. (Niemi 2017, 358)39

The setting of Niemi’s novel is Kengis, in the Torne Valley, where Laestadius worked before he moved to Pajala. Both Pohjanen and Niemi criticize the idea of Norrland as a terra nullius, a wasteland, free to explore and exploit, by drawing attention to the presence of Sámi and Tornedalian Finns. There is a correspondence between Niemi’s characterization of the ideas entertained by visitors and the Maori researcher Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s description of a spatial vocabulary of colonialism. As Smith points out, the rationale behind the establishment of distinctions between a centre and its outside, the empty land that is free for exploitation, is that it legitimizes colonization (Smith 2008, 52–53).

The above quote from Koka björn illustrates a prominent element of colonialism, namely the Western hierarchization of species that distinguishes between human, non-human, and the animalistic: “European justification of invasion and colonization proceed from this basis, understanding non-European lands and the people and animals that inhabited them as ‘spaces,’ ‘unused, underused or empty’” (Huggan & Tiffin 2010, 5, see also Plumwood 2001, 8, Plumwood 2003, 53). In the novel, the focalizer thinks about how Norrland and Kengis, where he is, have been perceived by the scientists, explorers, and artists who came north. The statement that “The people here are not human, not as human as them” reflects a form
of speciesism, implying that postcolonial criticism colours this representation, as the past is viewed using perspectives from postcolonial studies.

While awareness of ethnic discrimination is reflected in contemporary Tornealian fiction, there is more ambivalence in Hilja Kallioniemi-Byström’s books, which date from an earlier period. In *Byn*, the young woman Britta delivers a speech in favour of assimilation, emphasizing how monolingual homes where only Finnish is spoken are a disaster:

"We [young Tornealians] are definitely bilingual and can use them both [Finnish and Swedish]. We have two cultures open to us. Oh, Kajsa, we are so fortunate! But if our children were to have only Finnish mothers, the whole river valley would soon descend into misery, where nobody knows any language properly – just as it was when our parents were children (Byström 2008, 101)."

Although Britta’s views are coloured by her disapproval of the marriage plans of a local farmer and a Finnish maid, they reflect attitudes about the language situation in the 1940s. *Ungfolk*, which depicts a later period, when Britta is married, mentions that she and her husband only speak Swedish with their little son (Byström 1941, 102).

The views expressed by Britta in *Byn* are balanced by others. When he thinks about the language situation and the future, Rantatalo in *Ett år i Järvi* is positive to the spread of language skills in Swedish in the Torne Valley, but he also predicts that assimilation and Swedification might cause identity loss (Kallioniemi 1932, 37–38). Opinions about Finnish women marrying Tornealian men are not unanimous, and Britta’s criticism represents an extreme point of view. There are also comments about the positive contributions made by the Finnish women, who are hard-working and without whom some of the farms would not prosper. Finnish women are described as less picky than Swedish ones, who do not want to dirty themselves by working in the cowsheds. Thus, the indication is that Finnish women play a central role in the survival of the traditional smallholding, that depends on the physical labour of housewives.

Another problem is highlighted in *Ett år i Järvi*’s narrative about Maju and her move to Stockholm. This story provides a much more sombre illustration of the possibility to access two cultures, through the description of Maju’s shame about her Tornealian Finnish background in Stockholm and her attempts to hide it (ibid., 88–94). As a counterpart to Britta’s vision of young Tornealians having access to two cultures and languages in *Byn*, the narrative about Maju depicts the creation of shame, which leads to the denial of one’s background in order to pass as a majority Swede. This implies that the potential to access two cultures is complicated by fears of exclusion and discrimination.

The vision expressed by Britta exemplifies one strategy that members of non-dominant minority groups can take vis-à-vis a dominant larger society (cf. Berry et al. 2013, 338). The issue of how minority groups cope with being a minority is complex. Members of minority groups can use four strategies in their encounters with a dominant majority society: assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization (ibid., 321). The strategies used depend on whether the individuals wish to become part of, or distance themselves from, the majority culture, and to what extent they wish to adhere to their cultural background. Integration is a strategy used when individuals approach the majority culture, while also preserving an affiliation with their cultural background. Assimilation, on the other hand, implies the adoption of a majority culture without the intention to preserve the culture they have grown up with. Separation, thirdly, may be described as a strategy whereby their own culture is preserved while the majority culture is rejected. Marginalisation, finally, occurs when “there is little possibility or a lack of interest in cultural maintenance (often for reasons of enforced cultural loss), as well as little interest in having relations with others (often for reasons of exclusion or discrimination)” (ibid., 321). However, it must be kept in mind that the strategies are not static, as they can change depending on situational factors (ibid.).

According to Berry et al., there are also four strategies that a society can use vis-à-vis minority groups: assimilation, segregation, exclusion and integration. Generally, there is a power asymmetry that influences the effect of individual strategy choices. While Britta in *Byn* expresses an individual vision of successful integration with access to two cultures, the story about Maju highlights a power asymmetry in which she risks exclusion if she does not accept assimilation. Marginalisation, in the sense of losing both cultures, is a risk for individuals in Maju’s situation. The issue of encounters between Tornealian minority culture and Swedish majority culture is complex, as illustrated by the examples from *Ett år i Järvi* and *Byn*. Given that Hilja Byström depicts the use of Tornealian Finnish as a problem, she is not an obvious candidate for promotion as a pioneer for a local Tornealian Finnish literary tradition. Her appeal seems to lie in the depictions of village life as it was before societal modernization disrupted
the traditional, cyclic way of life in small rural villages. The connection between Hilja Byström’s depictions of Tornedalian villages and life before modernity is highlighted in an essay about Byström, published in the collection *Gränsens tredje rum* [The Third Space of the Border] by Pohjanen, in which the description of Byström’s literary landscape is coloured by nostalgia (Pohjanen 2006, 217–219).

### Tornedalian Ecological Fiction

Unlike Nils-Aslak Valkeapää’s *Trekways of the Wind, The Sun, My Father and The Earth, My Mother*, the theme of an alternative ontology related to ethnicity is not prominent in Tornedalian texts. But ecological sustainability is a theme found in Byström’s *Byn*, Pohjanen’s *Kamos i hjärtat av vintern* [Kamos in the Heart of Winter] and *Dödens ängar* [Meadows of Death] (Pohjanen 1986, Pohjanen 1995), as well as Mikael Niemi’s novel *Fallvatten* [Falling Water] (Niemi 2012). In Byström’s novel, a farmer called Johansson is aware he has exploited the land unsustainably, to make a profit so he can pay for his children’s education (Byström 2008, 126). The thoughts he expresses are reminiscent of indigenous ontologies in which the Earth is a mother who must be looked after: “The Earth is not for one generation. She is eternal. She is the mother of all generations” (ibid., 126).

Of course, ideas about the interconnection of humans and nature are not exclusive to traditional indigenous worldviews, but are also found in environmental movements, as well as common-sense knowledge founded on long experience of agriculture. In Byström’s novel, the exploitation conducted by Johansson conflicts with his experiences of farming in a small Tornedalian village. Indirectly, this provides a negative aspect to the depiction of modernization. Johansson’s children have left the village to pursue higher education and, to pay for this, Johansson exploits the land and goes against his farming knowledge of sustainability. The consequences of modernity and breaking up are thus presented as a threat to ‘Mother Earth’, when the continuity of sustainable land use is interrupted.

Another version of the theme of exploitation is presented in Pohjanen’s col-
lecion of poetry *Kamos i hjärtat av vintern* [Kamos in the Heart of Winter] (see Heith 2018, 168–170). In one section, the damming of rivers and construction of hydroelectric power plants is described as the death of water, in a manner reminiscent of an indigenous ontology’s notion of water as a sentient being: “Water wants to move in its own way. But there is also dead water. Like that which is led through turbines and then the northern lights will play a requiem to the angel of the river” (Pohjanen 1986, 105).24

Yet another version of the theme of unsustainability and endangered nature is found in Pohjanen’s book for young adults *Dödens ängar* [Meadows of Death] (see Heith 2018, 167). The setting is a Tornedalian community in the 1990s. Unemployment, depopulation and clearfelling testify to the decline being experienced by the community. In this situation, plans come down from above to store nuclear waste locally. A girl, Hanna, protests the plans. While unemployment and depopulation are connected with modernity and the disappearance of small-scale agriculture, forestry, log driving on the river, and clearfelling bear witness to a large-scale exploitation of resources. This kind of exploitation is characteristic of the colonization of the north, which was seen as a provider of raw materials (see Eriksson 2010).

The narrative of *Dödens ängar* combines realism with supernatural elements. The protests against the storage of nuclear waste are intertwined with a legend about the Holy Grail, which is believed to be hidden inside a mountain. The youngsters who discover the legend imagine that the holy blood will be mingled with atomic waste (Pohjanen 1995, 55). The threat is that this sacred and sentient natural world will be contaminated by human intervention. The protagonists, these youngsters, experience the dissolution of the western binary between human and nature when they encounter a character resembling a noaidi, a Sámi shaman, who is chanting words out of rocks (ibid., 18–19). The theme of the chanting is the awakening of powers that are sleeping and buried beneath the rocks. The nature that officials want to use to store nuclear waste is presented as both holy and alive, implying that storage would be both disrespectful and abusive towards the living, holy mountain. While there are resonances of folklore and fantasy in Pohjanen’s depiction of an ontology that lacks stable borders between humans and nature, there are also correspondences with an indigenous ontology. One backdrop to this is the ancient Sámi presence in the Torne Valley, and how this has shaped local lore and beliefs. This is a motif found in the novel *Himalalots* [Heavenly Pilot], for example, in which one of the characters in a contemporary Tornedalian setting refers to a noaidi, whom he regards as a wise man (ibid., 225–226, see also Heith 2018, 208–212).

*Dödens ängar* includes criticism of the spatial vocabulary of colonialism (see Smith 2008, 53), in which there is a binary relationship between the colonial centre and its outside. When an official from the south of Sweden refers to the isolation of people in the north, a local character protests: “We have never been isolated,’ he said and smiled. ‘Instead it is the people of the Mälar Valley who have been isolated, as our multicultural contacts have always reached both Micklagård and Scotland’” (Pohjanen 1995, 114).25 The dialogue reveals the ignorance of the southerner who does not know whether Överkalix is in Finland or in Sweden. The ignorance of the person from the south alludes to the kind of homogenizing nation-building that has constructed Norrland as a periphery and a hinterland. This is the same kind of history that Mikael Niemi alludes to in *Popular Music*, when the narrator enumerates what the children were taught at school, namely that the Tornedalin Finns had in no way contributed to Swedish history and culture, and that they were subsequently of no significance (Niemi 2000a).

The Sámi presence in northern Sweden is also highlighted in Mikael Niemi’s novel *Fallvatten*, in which several characters are Sámi and references are made to specific Sámi food and cultural traditions. Niemi found fame as a Tornedalian author with the publication of *Popular Music*. However, he has emphasized his mixed background, how he also has Sámi family ties as well. In his 2012 novel, *Fallvatten*, climate change is the backdrop to a disaster related to the damming of rivers and the construction of huge reservoirs. Rain has caused massive pressure on the dams, which eventually break, causing the flooding of large areas downstream. Water levels in dams can be regulated, but releasing water when there is no imminent risk of flooding reduces profitability. This is an aspect that is commented upon several times in Niemi’s novel by characters who are aware of the economics behind power production. There are some parallels between Niemi’s novel and Svonni’s *Överskrida gränser* from 2005, which is mentioned by Niemi in the postscript. One major difference is that while Svonni’s novel is about a deliberate attack that causes the collapse of dams along the Lule River, Niemi’s novel is about a disaster caused by extreme weather conditions and inadequate measures to prevent water from rising to a dangerous level in the reservoirs.

As mentioned in the above discussion of Valkapää’s Sámi texts and Axelson’s *Aednan*, river regulation is a recurring theme in critical depictions of the colonization of Sámi lands. Niemi’s novel is not set in the Torne Valley, as the riv-
er is Stora Luleälven in northern Norrland, in the County of Norrbotten. Sámi place names are mentioned, emphasizing how the setting is old Sámi land. Sámi terms for specific objects are used. *Sjuohpan*, a Sámi word referring to the kind of lasso used by reindeer herders plays a central role in the story.

A couple of the central characters are Sámi. One of them, Adolf Pavval, has left his life as a reindeer herder and, at the time of the narrative, Adolf Pavval is a great enthusiast for a special Saab car, of which he owns a model. He is driving his car when the flood wave occurs, and is trying to escape the water when he realizes what has happened. Another Sámi character is a workman who becomes involved with a young woman who wants to borrow his phone to alert people to the impending catastrophe. Initially, he does not believe her, but he soon becomes aware that the dam he is working beside is collapsing. The novel depicts individuals and groups of people who are facing this disaster; what they all have in common is that they are taken by surprise. Some manage to escape, while others are caught by the violent waters. It turns out that even dams that have been considered safe are collapsing and once it has started, the ever-increasing water volumes destroy dams downriver on the way to the Gulf of Bothnia. A central theme is that humans cannot control what is happening and that the scale of the disaster is related to manmade impact on nature.

Niemi’s *Fallvatten* does not contribute to the making of Meänmaa specifically, but the setting is part of Sápmi. It is a specimen of Norrlandic ecological fiction that depicts the consequences of humanity’s transformations of nature as catastrophic. The novel has three epigraphs: a quote from the Bible about the great flood, another is an excerpt from Swedish musician Peps Persson’s critical lyrics about consumerism and a materialistic lifestyle, and the third is a quote from Keksi’s famous poem about the flooding of the Torne Valley in 1677. One contrast to Keksi’s poem is that while it depicts flooding due to the ice breaking in the spring, Niemi’s novel depicts a disaster that is directly linked to humanity’s impact on nature through industrialisation. While the flooding in Keksi’s poem causes destruction, the catastrophe is not of the same magnitude as the effects of the flooding depicted by Niemi, which are exacerbated as the water flows to the sea, destroying more reservoirs on its way.

Material Aspects of Place-Making: Meänmaa – a Registered Trademark

Meänmaa is not only an imagined community, or a place shaped by various intertexts and historical layers, or a proposed geographical place with a referent in the real world. It is also a registered trademark and, as such, it is a type of immaterial asset. Registration provides protection, the aim of which is to prevent others from using the owner’s idea or concept. The document that states it is a trademark is reproduced on the website of the Meänmaa Association. Usually, the idea of owning a trademark is that it will generate rights and money. While this is rational in business and commerce, it is potentially problematic in the context of minority politics and place-making. While the concept of Meänmaa may function as a positive spatial distinguishing marker in identity formation for Tornedalians on both sides of the border, the registration of the concept as a trademark risks compromising the relevance of the concept in Tornedalian cultural mobilization. The registration of a concept that denotes a place tied to a communal minority culture based on ethnicity, language, and a shared history, leads to a blending of fields in which actors have diverse agendas.

What Makes a Narrative Relevant and Legitimate?: Habitus and Capital in the Cultural Field

Bengt Pohjanen has a long career as an author published by Norstedts, Sweden’s oldest publishing house (Heith 2018, 119 ff). In association with the publication of *Lyykeri* in 1985, Pohjanen established the Kaamos publishing house for the purpose of publishing in Meänkieli (ibid., 163 ff). It is now run by Sven-
Pohjanen’s Meänmaa does not possess material aspects of place-making: meänmaa – a registered trademark for Meänkieli texts and texts with local appeal. While Norstedts is a commercial publishing house that is part of the literary process (see Furuland 2012, 38–39), Barents Publisher is a local enterprise that relies on subsidies, implying that the material conditions for publishing vary widely between Norstedts and Barents Publisher. It also means that the dynamics of the literary field as described by Bourdieu do not apply to a local, subsidy-dependent publisher. According to Bourdieu, an autonomous literary field relies on mechanisms of consecration. The term ‘consecration’ is used to denote the assignment of value to cultural products, which involves the collective action of organizational and individual agents of institutions in the cultural field. Consecration may be achieved through literary critics, the most respected publishers, literary historians and academies (see Broady 1998). These means of consecration are not found in a local Tornealian context and, as a consequence, the Tornealian literary field has a low level of autonomy. In a brief discussion of Pohjanen’s “Meänmaa project”, Ridanpää highlights another factor, namely that “Pohjanen’s Meänmaa does not possess an established role in the (administrative) national regional systems” (Ridanpää 2017, 192). Svenska Tornealingars Riksförbund – Torneolaakoslaiset, on the other hand, is an organisation that does have such a position, as it functions as a referral body for the Swedish Government on matters related to Tornealians in Sweden.

While Pohjanen has cultural capital as a writer published by the prestigious Norstedts, and being reviewed in major Swedish media, his position as a local publisher and writer of books published with the aid of subsidies does not necessarily provide him with cultural capital that grants him a position in the literary field of non-fiction. Meänkieli literature and Meänkieli publishers are evolving in an emerging field that has competition and diversity. These characteristics are not unfamiliar in any cultural field in which cultural producers compete for visibility and success, but they may be more challenging in a small and evolving field if the purpose is to mobilize a minority group that has historically been marginalized. A lack of consecration, along with financing via subsidies, has major consequences for publishing. One effect is that an individual may control the various stages of the publication process without the approval, that is consecration, of professionals with adequate cultural capital. This does not imply that projects that are subsidized are not scrutinized and evaluated, but that this is not done by people with specific skills, such as proficiency in a minority language and familiarity with a minority culture.

When describing the literary process, Lars Furuland discerns various stages: production, distribution and consumption (Furuland 2012, 38–39). Each stage is divided into subcategories. When it comes to production, it is important whether a publishing house is commercial or subsidized. One means of receiving support for literature relating to national minorities in Sweden is to apply for funding from the Swedish Arts Council, Statens kulturråd. This institution aims to promote diversity by funding publishing in minority languages in Sweden. Information on approved funding on the Swedish Arts Council’s website shows that Bengt Pohjanen’s Barents Publisher has received financial support. The Swedish Arts Council has funded a number of Bengt Pohjanen’s publications, which have mainly been distributed locally, in the Torne Valley, but also to institutions, such as libraries, that support national minority cultures in Sweden. One such publication is the Meänmaa magazine, which has close links to the Meänmaa Association. Funding is also awarded in a Swedish regional context. Region Norrbotten (the county administration of Norrbotten) has launched a plan for culture, which explicitly states that strengthening minority cultures in the north is a priority, for example by funding publishing. The implications for Barents Publisher is that publishing can receive funding in the context of the promotion of a national Swedish minority, or in regional politics as a means of supporting cultural production in Region Norrbotten.

To some degree, the mixing of roles and blurring of boundaries between various stages in the literary process may be difficult to avoid, as there may not be people locally with adequate expertise. For Pohjanen’s books that were published by Barents Publisher, there is a blurring of roles, as Pohjanen is the publisher, author, and editor all in one person. This is potentially problematic, not least in relation to non-fiction, such as literary history and grammar books, which require an author to possess a specific intellectual capital and habitus in the shape of genre competence, professional experience, networks and professional contacts, giving these books legitimacy through consecration in the sense described by Bourdieu.
Tornedalian Finnish Literary History
and Place-Making

Pohjanen’s proposal that there is a linguistic and cultural Tornedalian minority on both sides of the Swedish-Finnish border is supported by his writings in various genres. One example is the Tornedalian Finnish literary history in two volumes, which he has co-authored. A map of Meänmaa is reproduced on the cover of both volumes (Pohjanen & Johansson 2007, Pohjanen & Johansson 2009). The area shown as Meänmaa does not have fixed boundaries. The original map was drawn in 1912 by the Finnish linguist Martti Airila, when he was studying the dialect of Tornio (Prokkola & Ridanpää 2011, 781). The name ‘Meänmaa’ is written in bold letters at the top of the page. The Meänmaa flag is placed at the centre of the map and the birthplaces of the authors are marked.

One function of the Tornedalian Finnish literary history is that it contributes to identity formation by suggesting that Tornedalians have a literature of their own. Literary history, map, flag and naming represent material and symbolic resources that are activated in identity formation and the making of an experienced geography, distinct from other places. The two volumes, Den tornedalsfinska litteraturen: Från Kexi till Liksom (Pohjanen & Johansson 2007) and Den tornedalsfinska litteraturen: Från Kalkkimaa till Hilja Byström (Pohjanen & Johansson 2009), are published in Swedish by Barents Publisher and both have a photograph of Bengt Pohjanen on the front cover. The photo on the first volume shows Pohjanen standing in a wintry landscape, looking at the border river – the prime natural monument in the construction of a specifically Tornedalian culture and identity. On the cover photo for the second volume, Pohjanen is also standing by the river, this time in a summer landscape. Four small portraits are inset in each cover photo, with portraits of authors featured in each volume: Rosa Liksom, Oiva Arvola, Timo K. Mukka, and Bengt Kostenius for the first volume, and the Vicar of Kalkkimaa, Väinö Kataja, William Snell, and Hilja Byström for the second.
Pohjanen and Johansson’s Literary History: Presentation and Choice of Authors

In *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Hayden White emphasizes that historiography is a form of narrative that depicts periods of time and highlights elements such as continuity and change (White 1973). There are considerable differences between academic historiography and the production of popular histories by non-academics. This is connected with issues related to the production of volumes based on previous research and contributions to the field of literary historiography, as well as familiarity with the genre (see Fowler 1982). Like other forms of historiography, there is a tradition of writing literary histories chronologically. If this is not done, this is usually discussed and motivated. The principle of organizing the subject matter chronologically is largely followed in the first volume of Pohjanen and Johansson’s literary history; this starts with a presentation of the seventeenth-century poet Antti Keksi and concludes with a discussion of contemporary author Rosa Liksom. However, the concept of chronological presentation is abandoned in the second volume, which presents writers in various genres from different periods. It is not clear why the first volume spans over a period from the seventeenth century to the present day, and why the title of the second volume draws attention to a period from when the Vicar of Kalkkimaa (1810–1885) was active, to Hilja Byström (1908–1993). Rosa Liksom, who is discussed in the first volume, exemplifies an experimental contemporary author, while Byström’s books from the 1930s and 1940s are written in a style that now seems old-fashioned. The choice of authors and their inclusion in the volumes is not discussed or motivated. References to Meänmaa and the image of the map on the cover indicate that place is an organizing principle and that the major principle for selection is the authors’ ties to their birthplaces. Only authors who were born in the area that Pohjanen calls Meänmaa are discussed.

Literary history is a genre that has been extensively discussed in recent decades, with the need to rethink the genre being highlighted (Hutcheon 2002, Jay 2010, Heith 2008, Heith 2013). One prominent theme of postcolonial studies that is also found in the third wave of ecocriticism and environmental humanities, and which colours Pohjanen and Johansson’s contribution, is a focus on the need to produce counter-histories to narratives that have contributed to colonialism and the marginalization of minorities. In comparison with the major Swedish literary histories used in academic studies in Sweden, the two volumes on Tornedalian Finnish literary history from 2007 and 2009 represent counter-histories. They also represent a trend being discussed in the contemporary debate on historiography, in that they do not relate Tornedalian Finnish literature to a Swedish or Finnish nation-state context, but instead to the experienced geography of Meänmaa. As stated above, the website of the Meänmaa Association characterizes Meänmaa as a cultural region with a common culture and language. One theme evoked by this is that the nation-state is not seen as the framework for cultural production, instead it is ethnicity, language and the proposal of a common experienced geography, Meänmaa. Pohjanen and Johansson’s contribution to the field of literary historiography is hardly based on a careful re-reading of the Finnish and Swedish canon; instead, a number of Finnish authors are appropriated from the Finnish literary field and put in a new context.

As to the issue of ethnicity, Tornedalians on the Finnish side of the border have a different situation from Swedish Tornedalians, as they are not seen as a minority in Finland. Neither is Meänkieli, previously called Tornedalian Finnish, seen as a language of its own in Finland, but rather as a Finnish dialect. This implies that although there is a Tornedalian culture and history that is to some extent shared, there are also differences that are related to being a Swedish or Finnish citizen. Nor is the area on the Swedish side of the border homogeneous, as it is questionable whether people in Kiruna and Gällivare see themselves as Tornedalians, or their language as Tornedalian Finnish.

The subtitle of the first volume, “From Kexi to Liksom,” foregrounds Antti Keksi (1622–1705) as the first major poet of the Torne Valley. Keksi, who was born in Övertorneå, is known for a poem in the Kalevala meter about the breaking of ice in the Torne River. Before Keksi was highlighted as a Tornedalian Finnish poet who represented Meänmaa, he was proposed as the poet of the county of Norrbotten in northern Sweden. In the village of Korva, north of Övertorneå, there is a stone monument commemorating Keksi. The 1955 inauguration of this monument is the theme of an article by school inspector William Snell, published in the local newspaper, *Haparandabladet*, on 9 August 1955. The article is reproduced in the section about Keksi (Snell 1955, reproduced in Pohjanen & Johansson 2007, 39–44). Snell argues for the preservation and cultivation of local traditions and history, to which he sees the Keksi monument as contributing. He draws particular attention to the importance of preserving Tornedalian culture and traditions for coming generations, thus embedding Keksi in a more local context than that of the geographically extensive Norrbotten. Snell’s article,
written before Meänkieli became an official minority language in Sweden, refers to the local language as a "Finnish dialect" (Snell 1955, 44). The Finnish language is described as "the 'voice' of our ancestors' spirit in the world" (ibid., 43). This discrepancy in terminology draws attention to that Meänkieli and Meänmaa are fairly recent concepts, ones that did not exist at the time Snell wrote his article, and certainly not at the time when Keksi composed his poem. This implies that Pohjanen and Johansson use historical resources for the purpose of promoting the idea of an ancient Tornedalian Finnish literary tradition and culture, of which contemporary Meänkieli culture and local Meänmaa culture are a continuation.

The stone commemorating Keksi is mentioned as a tourist attraction on the Heart of Lapland website. Keksi is also included among the authors from Norrbotten who features on the website "Norrbottensförfattare", which aims to present Norrbottenian authors (see also Leif-Lundgren & Linné 1993). However, Keksi has also been categorized as a Finnish poet because he used the Finnish language and the traditional Finnish Kalevala meter. Depending on whether categorization is based upon a geographical or linguistic affiliation, Keksi has thus been labelled a Norrbottenian poet or a Finnish poet. Pohjanen and Johansson’s literary history embeds him in another context, namely the experienced geography and cultural region of Meänmaa. As Meänmaa is situated on both sides of the border river, the flooding of which is the main theme of Keksi’s famous seventeenth century poem, there is a strong connection between the poet Keksi and the Torne River.

Pohjanen and Johansson’s embedding of Keksi in a new context points to the contingency of using historical elements in the present. However, this does not imply that there is not a connection between Keksi and the Torne River, which has a strong symbolic function in Tornedalian culture. Instead, it implies that well-known historical resources, such as Keksi and his poem, are used in proposing an experienced geography and cultural region that were launched much later.

Contingency in the embedding of an author in a specific geographical context is also manifest in the emphasis on Rosa Liksom in the title of Pohjanen and Johansson’s Tornedalian Finnish literary history. Rosa Liksom, born Anni Ylävaara, in Ylitornio, Finland, in 1958, is known as a Finnish author and artist. She moved from northern Finland at a young age, and has lived abroad for periods. Although the north is frequently the setting for her books, her depictions of the northern landscape and its people are different to those of other authors presented in the Tornedalian Finnish literary history. Since her debut in 1985 with a collection of short stories *Yhden yön pysäkki* [One Night Stands], Liksom has also been categorized as a Norrbottenian poet and a Finnish poet.
Liksom’s first novel, Hyytä nro 6 (English title: Compartment No. 6, 2016). The title refers to a train compartment shared by a young Finnish female archaeology student, and a coarse, middle-aged Soviet working man, on the way from Moscow to Ulaanbaatar.

When Rosa Liksom was launched as a Tornedalian Finnish author in Pohjanne and Johansson’s literary history, she already had a solid reputation as a Finnish author (see Tarkka 1990, 91, Laitinen 1988, 413). While one critic proposes that Liksom writes in a northern Finnish dialect, according to Dana “the Lapland Finnish dialect ‘meän kieli’”, in her debut novel Kreisland (Dana 1998, 171), one Finnish literary scholar suggests that Liksom is one of the contemporary Finnish authors who “vivifies a new orality in fiction” (Kirstinä 2012, 14). Kirstinä describes this style as “a creation that mimics campfire speech” (ibid.). Another Finnish researcher sees Liksom as a postmodernist author who represents contemporary Finnish postmodernism’s constructivist approach to representation, identity, and history (Hallilla 2012, 44). Hallilla points out that this trend represents a counterweight to realism in contemporary novels (ibid.). The choice of a constructivist, or realistic approach, has great consequences for the use of the theme of history. A central element of the “poetics of postmodernism”, disseminated by Linda Hutcheon’s influential book A Poetics of Postmodernism. History, Theory, Fiction, is the use of parody and intertextuality in postmodernist historical novels (Hutcheon 1988).

Finland’s and Finnish Lapland’s twentieth century history are central themes in Liksom’s first novel, Kreisland. Kirstinä points out that the novel is a parody, not only of Elias Lönnrodt’s Kalevala (1849), but also of the whole genre of national epics (Kirstinä 2012, 13). Kreisland (1996) is a novel about breaking up, relocating and remaking oneself. The name of the main character, Impi Agafiina, signals that this is not a realistic novel. It is structured like a picaresque novel, with a protagonist from a low social class who experiences adventures. A characteristic trait of this genre is that the pícaro, the main character, is an outsider who moves freely between social hierarchies and settings. The combination of comedy and satire is another characteristic of the picaresque found in Kreisland. Satire as a mode of discourse is characterized by a critical, satiric, outlook. The pícaro as a focalizer and narrator provides a critical view of society. In Kreisland, this mode of discourse colours the narrative of Impi Agafiina’s encounters with ideologies that have shaped Finnish twentieth-century history: fascism, nationalism, communism, and capitalism.

Impi Agafiina, born into a poor family in Finnish Lapland, is abruptly uprooted from her birthplace and home when a shipping magnate abducts her and makes her part of his family in a wealthy upper-class home. This is the first break that transforms Impi Agafiina’s life. As a response to her new environment, she develops sympathies for right-wing politics and the ideas of a Great Finland that were adopted in the 1930s by the Lapua Movement, an anti-communist and anti-democratic movement responsible for an attempted coup in 1932. Impi Agafiina fights in the war and kills numerous Russians. After the war, ideological currents shift and she is accused of having committed war crimes. Her stepfather, who has profited from the war, reveals she is not his biological child but that she was brought to the Wallenius family home from poor circumstances.

On returning to her birthplace, Impi Agafiina discovers that her birth family were uneducated people who lived far from civilization. This is made clear at the novel’s outset, as it starts with a depiction of the creation of Kreisland, which has the biblical Book of Genesis as an intertext. Impi Agafiina’s parents, Ristiina and Ransu, are introduced with the epithet “the wolf couple.” Ristiina is described as having a large head and short legs and Ransu as being indecisive, lazy and sloppy with a heart as black as tar. Their home is described as a ramshackle dwelling, with a foul smell that comes from the remains of fish, rancid reindeer intestines, and the rotten stomach of a bull dangling above the stair. They and their farm are contrasted with the beautiful and bountiful scenery, in a manner that parodies Castrén’s depiction of the well-kept, orderly homesteads of Finnish settlers in Lapland in Boken om vårt land.

Impi Agafiina’s return to her birthplace contributes to her next move, ideologically and geographically. She has the idea of making the world better for people from the social class she was born into: “I would raise my ancestors and their way of life from uncivilized grime to civilization and spiritual cultivation” (Liksom 1996, 190). From having been ignorant and uneducated to becoming a member of an upper-class family and believer in a right-wing utopia, Impi Agafiina becomes a believer in socialism. She is curious about the Soviet Union and the building of a modern society. She succeeds in entering the country illegally. Eventually she starts contributing to building this new society by working in a steel factory and shipyard in Moscow, and at a collective farm in the countryside. Similarly to the
war against the Russians, she has a leading role and thinks that she has changed from being a Finnish fascist to becoming a communist. She encounters inefficiency, described in a satirical mode. Eventually she realizes that her dream of a socialist utopia will not come true.

After a woman whom she admires dies, Impi Agafiina decides to leave in order to fulfil her promise to bury the woman in her native country, the US. She manages to get a plane ticket from the black market and leaves for America with her friend’s ashes in an urn. She stays with an acquaintance of her deceased friend, more or less parked in front of a TV, consuming pills and watching commercials and popular entertainment. Her fascination with America comes to an end when she learns that the Soviet Union has successfully sent a rocket into space. She starts questioning the superiority of the American way of life and decides to go back to Finland. On her journey back she realizes that she is pregnant. This realization is narrated by herself in the first person. She claims to be a virgin, thus suggesting she experienced an immaculate conception. However, she is hardly a reliable narrator. She returns to her birthplace in Finnish Lapland, gives birth to a son, who she names Elvis, motivating it with that being the only memory from America that she wanted to keep. Towards the end of the novel she starts a relationship with the novel’s other main character, a local man called Juho Gabriel.

The novel concludes with Impi Agafiina, Juho Gabriel and Elvis living together and working hard on his farm. The grand narratives that previously captured Impi Agafiina’s mind and motivated her picaresque journey have now been dismissed. The novel ends with a depiction of a postmodern condition, characterized by a collapse of the major ideologies of the twentieth century.

Impi Agafiina’s son being called Elvis is interpreted by Leena Kirstinä as an image of Finland in the 1950s as it opened up to globalization (Kirstinä 2007,134–135). Considering Impi Agafiina’s extensive consumption of American popular culture before the birth of Elvis, neo-colonization is another relevant backdrop to the arrival of Elvis in Finnish Lapland, where Elvis has contributed to the shaping of self-images and youth culture, as in other places. This is a theme highlighted in paintings by artist Markku Laakso, who was born and raised in the Finnish part of Northern Lapland. In the early twenty-first century, Laakso made a number of paintings of Elvis with women in traditional Sámi costumes, who were engaged in activities that both connote and parody images of a traditional lifestyle. Like Liksom, Laakso blends elements from diverse cultural traditions to create new experienced geographies that are related to globalization.
Rosa Liksom destabilizes traditional representations of a Tornedalian Finnish cultural identity through her postmodernist poetics, as used in *Kreisland* and *Burka*. The leitmotif of the photographs in the latter book is the burka, which is embedded in settings that have become clichés in representations of northern Scandinavia. The women dressed in burkas destabilize the narrative of a homogeneous, secluded place, and ideas of a people rooted in this part of the world since ancient times.

While the young Tornedalian Finnish woman Britta, in Hilja Byström’s novel *Byn*, envisions how young Tornedalians are at home in both Swedish and Finnish culture, this idea is contradicted by the depiction of Maju’s experiences in Stockholm, where she hides her Tornedalian Finnish background in order to pass as a majority Swede. Rosa Liksom’s *Burka* depicts a northern Scandinavian cultural landscape shaped by migration, globalization and hybridity, giving rise to possible new Tornedalian identities and their concomitant spaces, such as migrant cartographies (cf. Ponzanesi & Merolla 2005). Liksom’s *Burka* is literally a deconstruction of the image of the north as a homogeneous periphery. Her construction of place provides a commentary on Edward Said’s analysis of place-making in his famous study *Orientalism*, focusing on literary and visual constructions of the Orient (Said 1978). In Liksom’s images, the Orient is in the Big North. An open question is whether the images depict a chasm between people (the women in burkas) and place (the Big North), suggesting that the people do not belong in the place, or represent the place, or whether the images point to emerging migrant cartographies in a globalized world with new cultural constellations that combine elements from various traditions, ones seen as incompatible in the kind of Orientalism analyzed by Said. The fact that the women do not seem to be lost in the Big North, instead engaging in traditional everyday...
activities in the wintry North, such as using a kick-sled, suggests that they are not necessarily displaced, or lost, in the sense that they are disconnected from their surroundings.

While Liksom’s contribution to place-making in Burka highlights input from a spiritual and cultural geography that has not traditionally been included in depictions of northern Scandinavia, Pohjanen and Johansson’s focus on birthplace as an important factor in shaping the creation of a Tornealian Finnish identity and culture represents the opposite of displacement and contingency for experiencing geographies and creating cultural regions. Rosa Liksom’s Burka was published seven years after the volume of Pohjanen and Johansson’s Tornealian Finnish literary history that highlights Liksom in its subtitle. The title of the chapter about Liksom is “Rosa Liksom – ny och annorlunda” [Rosa Liksom – new and different] (Johansson 2007, 96–106). Compared with the other authors who are presented, Liksom is different, but this does not mean that she is equally ‘different’ when embedded in other narratives about literature. In an article from 1987, Finnish author and literary critic Pekka Tarkka characterizes Rosa Liksom as one of the most promising short story writers in Finnish literature for many years, highlighting the similarities between her and the classic Finnish short story writer Maria Jotuni (1880–1943). He describes both as “closely bound to the European currents of their time” (Tarkka 1987).

Liksom’s difference in Pohjanen and Johansson’s narrative is related to her literary style and subject matter. Johansson draws attention to the themes of violence, abuse, child neglect, and lack of emotional intelligence in Liksom’s writing, and her laconic style. She is critical of how offenders are not portrayed as dy

The various chapters in the first volume of Pohjanen and Johansson’s literary history have shifting characters. One common denominator is that the style is subjective, different to the non-fiction style generally found in historiography. Frequently, the authors refer to their subjective responses to various texts and the impressions they made upon them. In a chapter that emphasizes Bengt Pohjanen’s importance in the development of a written form of Meänkieli, Johansson compares him to Mikael Agricola, the founder of a written form of Finnish, and Elias Lönnrot, famed for collecting the poems that constitute the Finnish national epic The Kalevala (Johansson 2007, 86). Pohjanen’s importance is highlighted through the extensive use of exclamation marks and the suggestion that Pohjanen is the author of the national epic of Meänmaa. The second volume also includes a chapter on Bengt Pohjanen’s authorship by Kirsti Johansson. No reason is given for why the presentation about him is divided between the two volumes, nor is there any discussion about the fact that Johansson is writing about her co-author and co-editor, as well as the owner of Barents Publisher.

The other authors featured in portraits on the cover of the first volume are Oiva Arvola, Timo K. Mukka and Bengt Kostenius. Arvola (b. 1935) is a versatile author whose ‘sagas’ have been translated to several languages. In 2009, his entire saga production was released as recordings, comprising 20 hours of recitals. Arvola has received several prizes for his work in Finland and is included in Finnish literary histories as well as in “Who’s who in contemporary Finland” (Korhonen & Rantala 2004, Paavilainen 2015). Arvola is also a member of several Finnish authors’ associations. He writes in Finnish. Arvola thus has an established position in the Finnish literary field. Naturally, this does not preclude his potential relevance as a Tornealian Finnish author, one born in the Torn River Valley and writing in Finnish. However, as the Tornealian Finnish literary history is published in Swedish, this raises questions about its intended readership.
Another well-known author on the Finnish literary scene is Timo K. Mukka (1944–1973). Mukka was born in Bollnäs, Sweden, where his family had been evacuated during the war. He spent his childhood in the village of Orajärvi in the Torne Valley, on the Finnish side of the border. Pohjanen’s presentation of Mukka emphasizes Mukka’s bonds to Finno-Ugric culture which he sees as an instance of the ‘Urplite’, a term he has coined (Heith 2018b). The chapter consists of an account of Pohjanen’s encounter with Mukka’s debut novel, *Maa on syntinen laulu* [The Earth is a Sinful Song] from 1964, and the impact it had upon him: “The book burnt my fingers. Timo K. Mukka, the boy from the neighbouring village, whom I, as I recall, never had met, walked into my life so strongly and powerfully, that he even now visits me in my dreams, a couple of times every year.” (Pohjanen 2007, 69–70). The setting of Mukka’s debut novel is a small Tornealian village in Finland, where poor farmers struggle to survive in harsh conditions.

While Pohjanen’s narrative about Mukka is subjective, evoking some kind of Finno-Ugric essence, there are other narratives of Mukka emphasizing his connections with the Finnish literary movement of “spontaneous-confessional fiction” which emerged in the 1960s (see Laitinen 1988, 410, Laitinen 1997, 584). The two most prominent representatives of the movement, which was heavily influenced by the writings of Henry Miller, are the controversial poet and translator Pentti Saarikoski and author Hannu Salama. There are several academic studies of Mukka’s authorship in Finnish, suggesting that Mukka is an important author in the Finnish literary field. This, however, is not a theme considered by Pohjanen, who proposes that Mukka’s use of geographical setting, an occasionally lyrical style resembling that of the Kalevala and folk poetry, and mysticism, in his depictions of the tension between man’s connectedness with Earth and heaven, a tension between the body and spirit, are compatible with a Tornealian Finnish mode of experiencing and contribute to the making of Meänmaa (Heith 2018b). Rather surprisingly, Pohjanen claims that Mukka was a marginalized author, not seen as a relevant object of study at the Department of Finno-Ugric Languages at Uppsala University, where Pohjanen studied, nor at the Department of Finnish at Stockholm University, which he contacted because he wanted to write about Mukka (Pohjanen 2007, 71). He realizes that: “This is the margin of the margins.” (ibid.). The effect is that Mukka is presented as a marginalized author whom Pohjanen himself ‘discovers’ and promotes by embedding his authorship in Tornealian Finnish literary history as a significant contributor to the making of Meänmaa. However, this narrative is contradicted by the fact that Mukka was a much discussed, and controversial, author from the very outset. The film based on his debut novel caused debate in Finland, with many reviewers finding it shocking. Since then, Mukka has undergone a canonization process in a Finnish national context and is now regarded as an important author.

In the very brief foreword to the second volume, Pohjanen comments on the inadequate finances available for the book’s production, which probably explains the inconsistencies in its presentation. However, the volume does contribute to the presentation of Tornealian Finnish literature by drawing attention to texts and writers associated with a local Tornealian Finnish context. In some cases, the highlighted individuals are known from the local Tornealian cultural landscape, not necessarily as literary pioneers or as contributors to Meänkieli literature. Kalkkimaa, who is highlighted in the subtitle of the second volume, is known from narratives of local lunacy, or village idiocy (see Rantal 2014). In her thesis, Rantala discusses “The Preacher of Kalkkimaa,” whose real name was Pietari Heräjärvi (1830–1884) and whom she characterizes as “a village idiot,” “local fool,” or “local character” from Tornio, from the vantage point of texts, stories and images produced about him in over the last 150 years (ibid.). Pietari Heräjärvi, who was born out of wedlock, lived as a vagabond, making satirical songs about people who offended him.

Kalkkimaa has attracted recent interest, being examined as a performance artist and stand-up comedian before these art forms came into fashion (Rantal 2013). He was known to dress in women’s clothes and pull a Bible on a string along the ground. He is also known to have consumed large amounts of alcohol. The reason for his nickname, “The Preacher of Kalkkimaa,” is that he had an exceptional memory and was able to memorize the local vicar’s sermons, which he later performed in a ridiculing manner. Kalkkimaa is the name of the village where he was born. Rantala raises the question of why a society needs a “village idiot”, emphasizing how Kalkkimaa was an ambiguous and versatile character. His role in Pohjanen and Johansson’s literary history is largely that of a representative of local history and cultural tradition, but also that of a critic of society, defender of the poor, a bohemian and individual thinker. This is in line with Rantala’s study. However, one difference is that Pohjanen and Johansson propose that Kalkkimaa’s poems are an important element of a specific Tornealian Finnish literary tradition.

Both the first and second volume include a chapter in which authors’ write
about their own work. In the first volume, Bengt Kostenius (b. 1945) writes about his experiences of writing a book in Meänkieli before any grammar books were available, and the spelling choices he faced (Kostenius 2007). Kostenius is one of the few presented authors who actually writes in Meänkieli, and who highlights his choice of literary language. The second volume also contains a chapter by an author called Gunnar Kieri, which focuses on his Tornedalian Finnish background and how we writes in Swedish, a language he had struggled to learn as a child (Kieri 2007).

Some of the included texts are literature excerpts. Keksi’s best-known poem about the breaking of ice and flooding of the Torne River in 1677 is reproduced in Finnish, Meänkieli and Swedish. Several of the chapters are articles that have been previously published, as well as presentations by Bengt Pohjanen. In a short preface to the first volume, Kirsti Johansson mentions that it aims to briefly introduce literature that has been written in Meänkieli. However, the authors do not take readers’ knowledge of Meänkieli for granted, as the first volume, and the second one from 2009, is published in Swedish. This choice of language indicates that the intended reader is familiar with Swedish, but not necessarily with Finnish or Meänkieli. This is not an obvious choice in the context of the making of Meänmaa, which consists of municipalities on both sides of the border. In the preface, Johansson emphasizes that the book is about authors from both sides of the border who have written in Meänkieli (Johansson 2007, 7). This ambition has been abandoned in the second volume, Den tornedalsfinska litteraturen: Från Kallkiumaa till Hilja Byström (Pohjanen & Johansson 2009). Hilja Byström, highlighted as a literary pioneer, wrote all her books in Swedish.

Another author, who is featured as a “newly discovered classic”, Väinö Kataja, wrote numerous books in Finnish about life in the Torne Valley on the Finnish side of the border. Kataja’s native district is called Peräpohjola. This name is in use in Finland, which explains why people on the Finnish side of the border prefer it to Meänmaa. Kataja was a successful author in Finland but, as one of the articles in Pohjanen and Johansson’s literary history mentions, his fame and popularity diminished during his lifetime, causing bitterness and a tendency to withdraw (Lassinantti 2007, 116). Ragnar Lassinantti (1915–1985), who wrote the article about Kataja, was a Social Democratic politician and member of the Swedish Parliament, born in Neistenkangas in the Torne Valley. There was a renewed interest in Kataja with the publication of Nälkätalvena: Katouuden kuvau (“The hunger winter/The winter of hunger: Depiction of a failed harvest year”) in 2014 after a lost manuscript was found. This is now considered to be his most important work. Kataja was popular during his lifetime, not least because some of his stories about lumberjacks finding romance in northern Finland were made into films.

The second volume of Pohjanen and Johansson’s literary history includes a chapter called “Meänkieliklassiker” [Meänkieli classics], which presents two writers: Johan Lanto (1885–1960) and William Snell. It is unclear why these pioneers in the field of Meänkieli writing are not presented in the first volume. The preface explicitly mentions that authors writing in Meänkieli will be presented but, considering that the term Meänkieli came into more widespread use in the 1980s, its use to denominate the language used by authors writing before the idea of Meänkieli as a distinct language is not self-evident. This anachronistic use is related to present-day constructions of a heritage and history that function as temporal claims to support the idea of a people with their own history and language. Lanto is now known as a documenter of farming life in a Tornedalian village, not as a writer of imaginative fiction. Unlike Hilja Byström, William Snell was in favour of bilingualism and writing in Meänkieli (Gröndahl, Hellberg & Ojani 2002, 148). Snell is also the author of the first book published in Meänkieli, Kamaripirttät: Muisteluksia Tornion murtheela [Stories from Kamaripirtti: Recollections in Tornedalian] (1944). Gröndahl states that this book had a huge impact on the ethnic renaissance in the 1980s, and that it is a predecessor of later fiction published in Meänkieli (Gröndahl 2003–2006, 598). She also emphasizes how Snell is the author of another Tornedalian literary classic, namely “Tornedalsängen” [The Song of the Torne Valley], now promoted as the national anthem of the Torne Valley (ibid.). While Pohjanen and Johansson’s literary history mentions Snell’s contributions as Meänkieli classics, Snell is not singled out in the same manner as Keksi, or even Pohjanen himself.
Crime and Place-Making: Smuggling and Contemporary Crime Fiction

The river is both an external factor in the environment specific to the Torne Valley and a catalyst for customs, stories and lore related to smuggling. Väylä is a Tornedalian word used to denominate ‘river’. It is also the name of a cultural festival that celebrates Tornedalian culture. The theme of changes over time is central to Mikael Niemi’s poem “Och detta är Tornedalen” [And this is the Torne Valley] from his debut poetry collection (Niemi 1988). The poem depicts the contrast between the old generation of men and women who preserve old customs, and the young generation of hard rock fans who drive American cars. It evokes identity markers from the past, as well as new elements that shape local culture, identity and place-making. The river is highlighted as an ancient environmental factor that continues to shape life, identity and culture: “a river which knows many stories about smuggling” (ibid., 16).

Stories about smuggling are part of local lore, songs and narratives activated in the construction of a Tornedalian cultural heritage (see Peura & Peura 2005). The activity is directly related to the river, which marked the new border between Sweden and Finland in 1809. As Niemi does in his poem, Bengt Pohjanen highlights narratives that are generated in association with smuggling as a vital element in the shaping of Meänmaa. The local word väylä is central to Smugglaroperan/Joppariooppera [The Smugglers’ Opera] from 2004, a piece of musical theatre with lyrics by Pohjanen and music by the Finnish composer Kaj Chydenius. This was followed by Laestadiusoperan/Laestadiusooppera [The Laestadius Opera] in 2007, and Krigsoperan/Sotaooppera [The War Opera] in 2008 (see Heith 2018, 217). A great number of amateurs from both sides of the Swedish-Finnish border participated in the performances. All three librettos are multilingual: in Smugglaroperan/Joppariooppera Swedish, Finnish and Meänkieli are used, and Sámi is also used in Laestadiusoperan/Laestadiusooppera. The theme of the trilogy is local history, exemplifying cultural events which chart the history of the Torne Valley and echoing a sense of place from the perspective of insider status and local ancestry. Although the term opera is used in the titles, these are not conventional operas but popular musical theatre. There is an intertextual link between the librettos by Pohjanen and music by Kaj Chydenius, to an earlier musical performance with text by Arvo Salo and music by Kaj Chydenius (Salo 1966). Called Lapualaisooppera in Finnish [the Opera of the Lapua Movement], it had its debut in 1966. It consists of 34 songs and the music is inspired by the protest song tradition. The title refers to the Lapua Movement in Finland which attracted followers who had visions of a Greater Finland in the 1930s. This subject matter is also used extensively by Bengt Pohjanen, both in fiction and popular history.

The main theme of Smugglaroperan/Joppariooppera is smuggling and its impact on culture and mentality. In one interview, Pohjanen mentions that his own grandfather and father were smugglers and that, aged seven, he was once shot at by customs officers when accompanying his father on a smuggling trip (Vallgårda 2005). Pohjanen has highlighted this family history in numerous texts. The first volume of his autobiography, from 2007, is called Smugglarkungens son [Son of the Smuggler King]. Smuggling is also emphasized as a significant element of local culture on Tornedalens museum’s website; this is a joint museum for Haparanda and Tornio, located in Tornio on the Finnish side of the border. It is promoted as a tourist attraction that exhibits the cultural heritage of the Swedish-Finnish borderland in the Torne Valley. While smuggling was viewed as a crime by customs officers and representatives of state power, it has gained a new meaning in the contemporary making of a Tornedalian cultural heritage as an important factor in local culture. This implies that narratives of smuggling, and the songs, sayings, and lore it has given rise to, are significant elements in the shaping of cultural identity and the present-day making of Meänmaa and the Torne Valley. This testifies to the fact that the meaning of cultural elements is negotiable. While crime may erode attachment to place (see Livingston et al. 2008), it may also be used as an element in place-making that is associated with insider status and popular culture.

In connection with the performance of Smugglaroperan/Joppariooppera, the
libretto was published as a bilingual book: *Rajatuuli. Sanoja – laluja – loruja* / *Väylänvarren joppauksesta/Gränsvind: Ord – visor – ramsor om smugglingen i Torneånlen* [Border Wind: Words – Songs – Rhymes about Smuggling in the Torne Valley] (Pohjanen 2004). The libretto recirculates stories and narrative elements found in Pohjanen’s prose. This is a technique he has used throughout his authorship, in texts where smuggling incidents are narrated. There are references to perjurers, perjury and a court case (ibid., 105ff, 113), which are also central motifs in the novel *Kasaland* (Pohjanen 1984) and the book *Menedarma* [The Perjurers], which is the fifth book in the series *Tornedalska öden och äventyr* [Tornedalian Destinies and Adventures] published by Barents Publisher (Pohjanen 2018). The libretto starts with the story of how the border was established in 1809 and ends with the statements “the river has always existed” and “The gate [i.e. the gate through which border crossings are made] is removed” (Pohjanen 2004, 145). Even in the very first scene it says that the river does not divide, but brings together, and that this is not altered through human acts like the drawing of the border, “the red line of the emperor” or “the black band of the king” (ibid., 7). The idea that the border is not legitimate colours opinions about smuggling held by people on both sides of the river who have used it to transport goods since ancient times. This communal view of the local people is expressed by a chorus consisting of everybody (“alla”): “There is not a smell of sin / in any smuggling / – smuggling for friendship / – family smuggling / – professional smuggling: / everything is forgiven along all roads.” (ibid., 121). Like other texts by Pohjanen, the narration of smuggling in the Torne Valley includes an element of popular protest.

Mikael Niemi’s crime novel *Koka björn* [Boiling Bear] from 2017 is an example of contemporary crime fiction in the shape of historiographic metafiction. The novel is set in Kengis, where an ironworks was founded in the seventeenth century. This is also where the vicar and popular revivalist preacher Lars Levi Laestadius lived until he moved to Pajala with his family in 1854. Kengis is a significant place in the cultural landscape of the Torne Valley, both as a community that grew around an ironworks, and as a place where Laestadius worked for a period. This is also where Pohjanen’s *Laestadiusoperan/Laestadiusooppera* was performed in 2007. Kengis is a place shaped by narratives of the colonization of the north and popular protest, as represented by the preachings of Laestadius. His role as an opponent of the establishment is highlighted in Niemi’s novel, which largely uses elements from Laestadius’ biography. However, Niemi has added purely fictional elements to the plot about the murder of a shepherdess, and the characterization of Laestadius and his helper, a Sámi boy called Jussi, who bear a striking resemblance to the characters of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. The use of allusions, resemblances and anachronisms makes Niemi’s narrative quite playful. This is not a realistic depiction of a crime committed in the summer of 1852, but a play with narrative elements from various genres and time periods. The sense of place conveyed by the history of Kengis is important, although the narrative undermines realist and referential pretences through its metafictional devices.

Tove Alsterdal (b. 1960) is another contemporary author who has used Tornedalian history in crime fiction. The history of Tornedalians who left for the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s is used in her 2012 novel *I tystnaden begravd* [Buried in Silence]. Stalinism is also a motif in Pohjanen’s *Smugglaroperan/Joppariooper*, where one of the songs mentions the death of Stalin and the sorrow it caused (Pohjanen 2007, 79). The historical backdrop of Tornedalians being captivated by Stalinism is a primary theme in Tove Alsterdal’s crime novel about a murder, a historical love story between a woman and a man who leaves for the Soviet Union, and the return of the emigrant’s son, who plans to hide in the small Tornedalian village where his father grew up. However, his time in the village ends when he has to escape because the Russian mafia discovers where he is. The setting is a small fictional village with the typical Tornedalian Finnish name of Kivikangas.

Several of Bengt Pohjanen’s works highlights the history of people from northern Sweden who emigrated to the Soviet Union in the 1930s. These people are frequently referred to as Kirunavenskararna, the Kiruna Swedes. This is also the title of the second book in Pohjanen’s series *Tornedalska öden och äventyr* (Pohjanen 2016). In reality, people from other parts of Sweden also travelled eastward to build a socialist society (see Eneberg 2000, Eneberg 2003). One theme highlighted by Eneberg is that, in the Soviet Union, numerous workers from Sweden were treated with suspicion and executed as enemies of the state. This is also a feature of Alsterdal’s depiction of the Tornedalians’ lives and fates in the Soviet Union in her novel. Another theme that is highlighted by Eneberg and reflected in the title of one of her books, *Tvingade till tystnad* [Forced into Silence], is that people who managed to return to Sweden were put under pressure by the Communists and left-wing parties, as well as the authorities, not to reveal anything about their experiences. Eneberg says that, unlike emigration to
America and Australia, the emigration to the Soviet Union in the 1930s has been silenced. This silenced history has now been activated in the writings of Bengt Pohjanen and in Tove Alsterdal’s crime novel as an element of Tornevaldian cultural heritage.

While Bengt Pohjanen and Mikael Niemi are successful authors with strong ties to the Torne Valley (both were born there and still live there), Tove Alsterdal was not specifically branded as a writer with family ties in the Torne Valley prior to the publication of her 2012 novel. Her debut novel, *Kvinnorna på stranden* (2009), revised and translated into English as *The Forgotten Dead* in 2017, deals with the fates of migrants. Some drown in the Mediterranean, others are exploited as slave labourers in Europe. The novel, which was a great success and translated into 19 languages, depicts a contemporary migrant cartography in which refugees coming to Europe face severe hardship in their search for a safe place. Alsterdal’s second novel, *I tystnaden begravd*, was also a success, nominated as crime novel of the year in Sweden, the Netherlands, and France. The Tornevaldian setting and historical backdrop, as well as Alsterdal’s Tornevaldian family ties, are highlighted in the marketing of the novel, suggesting that she is not an outsider writing about the Torne Valley. In a postscript, Alsterdal says that one of the Tornevaldians who disappeared in the Soviet Union was a relative. She also mentions that she has spoken with her relatives and with other Tornevaldians who have provided information about the historical, cultural and linguistic backdrop. This novel also depicts a migrant cartography through the subject of emigration to the Soviet Union in the 1930s, and the return – and subsequent escape – of an emigrant’s son in the twenty-first century. While Niemi’s novel *Koka björn* uses the genre of crime fiction in an example of historiographic metafiction, blending elements from various genres and time periods, Alsterdal’s 2012 novel highlights migrant cartographies. In the texts by Pohjanen, Niemi and Alsterdal discussed above, the Torne Valley is depicted as an experienced geography that is shaped by local narratives, family histories, and memories.

Pohjanen’s use of the theme of smuggling, Niemi’s novel which uses elements from Laestadius’ life story, and Alsterdal’s use of the story about emigration to the Soviet Union provide a multifocalized representation of the Torne Valley, establishing a sense of place through the use of historical subject matter from varying temporal strata. Other significant historical subject matter used in contemporary fiction include the story about the Korpela movement, a radical revivalist movement in the 1930s, which plays an important role in Pohjanen’s novel *Dagning; röd!* [Daylight; red!] from 1988 (Heith 2018a, 172–185), and the story of the evacuation of German troops from Finland during World War II, which has a central role in *Land i lågor* [Land in Flames], Pohjanen’s book for young adults published in 1992 (ibid., 166–167). The title refers to the burning of houses on the Finnish side of the border that occurred as German soldiers passed through the Torne Valley on their way to Norway. *Dagning; röd!* is one of Pohjanen’s most experimental novels, and is an example of the genre of postmodernist metafiction which was in vogue in the 1980s (ibid., 172ff). Like *Ropandes röst* [Crying Voice], from 1981, its central theme is a quest for truth. In *Dagning; röd!* this is about the Korpela movement, and in *Ropandes röst* it is about the popular revivalist Lars Levi Laestadius (ibid., 134 ff).
While the Meänmaa Association promotes the idea of a transnational linguistic and cultural space on both sides of the Swedish-Finnish border, the National Association of Swedish Tornedalians, Svenska Tornedalingars Riksförbund, Torniolaaksolaiset, STR-T, is an interest organization for Tornedalians in Sweden. It was founded in 1981 and, according to its website, it is for those who feel kinship with Meänkieli and the culture and history of the original linguistic area. The association aims to be the mouthpiece for “an original, domestic linguistic and cultural minority which has had the status of a national minority since 2000” (website of STR-T). One of its functions is to be a referral body for Government proposals on issues related to the minority. A central issue in the founding of STR-T was that Swedish Tornedalians constitute a domestic linguistic and cultural minority. Rohdin emphasizes that the national affiliation of Swedish Tornedalians has always been Sweden, never Finland (Rohdin, 3, Rohdin, 1).

While the Meänmaa Association, and Bengt Pohjanen, propose that Meänkieli is a place with a common culture and language on both sides of the border, this is not an issue for STR-T. Several of the articles in the jubilee publication Kyllä se kännetsee [Yes, it matters] emphasize that Meänkieli is a language of its own, one older than modern Finnish, which dates from the mid-nineteenth century (Johansson, 4). Describing the work leading up to the Government decision to make Meänkieli an official minority language in Sweden, Henning Johansson highlights claims that Meänkieli is not a language of its own, but a poor version of Finnish (ibid.). However, the notion that Meänkieli is a separate language was accepted and thus it became an official national minority language in Sweden.
David Vikgren's Hybrid Cartography: Using Keksi's Poem in a Permuting Narrative about the Torne Valley

Keksi’s poem about the ice breaking on the Torne River is the first poem in a textual lineage that emphasizes the importance of the river in Tornedalian culture. Today the river is the external factor in the environment (see Wände 2005, 106) that shapes the cultural identity of Tornedalians. Keksi’s poem is activated as a major cultural symbol in the first volume of Pohjanen and Johansson’s Tornedalian Finnish literary history from 2007, which includes a presentation of Keksi, as well as the poem in Finnish, Meänkieli and Swedish. This poem is singled out as the starting point for the Tornedalian Finnish literary tradition (Pohjanen & Johansson 2007). It has played a central role in place-making, with the help of resources like language (the local Tornedalian Finnish dialect), artefacts like local architecture and references to local customs, and through the poem’s focus on the landscape and the river. In a Tornedalian context, Keksi’s poem is attributed a special status as the first known literary work to ‘make’ the Torne Valley, in the sense that it brings the valley, its nature and people to life through its depiction of the annual flooding and the movement of the water through the valley.

Keksi’s seventeenth-century poem about the breaking of ice in the Torne River also has a central role in David Vikgren’s (b. 1975) literary production. His texts have been translated into several languages. He grew up in Övertorneå and Luleå in northern Sweden. The specific character of David Vikgren’s poetry collections may be related to Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of rhizomatic writing (Deleuze & Guattari [1980] 2008). This has a bearing on Vikgren’s aesthetics and on his contribution to place-making. Vikgren uses the method called assemblage, foregrounded by Deleuze and Guattari, which implies that he combines elements in semiotic chains that cannot be reduced to a single, homogeneous meaning or origin. This implies that Vikgren’s texts produce meaning in a very different mode to texts that focus on genealogy, origins, and one overarching meaning. While the metaphor of a tree and its roots suggests genealogy and a self-contained unit, that of the rhizome, with its diversity of threads moving in multiple directions, sometimes becoming entangled and starting to spread in new, unpredictable directions, points to another mode of producing meaning and texts. One term connected with rhizomatic writing is that of ‘smooth space,’ which connotes a heterogeneous space without a centre (ibid., 409). According to Deleuze and Guattari, this denotes a transforming field that can be extended in multiple directions.

In the postscript to Anttikeksiskväde: Översättning, dikt [Anttikeksi’s poem [sic]: Translation, poem], Vikgren highlights how the idiom of his childhood and adolescence was strongly influenced by Tornedalian Finnish and his home village Övertorneå’s closeness to Finland, as well as geographically distant places, such as the Ganges with the Brahmaputra (Vikgren 2010, 56). Vikgren’s focus on proximity to Finland, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra is typical of his non-naturalist, non-essentialist, non-homogenizing approach to the making of the Torne Valley. In the postscript, he particularly emphasizes how the border area can be distinguished from both Sweden and Finland on linguistic grounds: “The Torne Valley is neither Sweden nor Finland. It is distinctive country with a language of its own.” (ibid., 56)

David Vikgren made his debut in 2002, with the poetry collection För en framtid: antropologisk forskning [For Future Anthropological Research]. One theme of the collection is what others saw in the area where Vikgren was raised in Övertorneå: “The last station. Sweden’s easternmost outpost at the height of the Arctic Circle.” (Jonsson, undated article in Versopolis). The collection includes quotes from an issue of Tornedalica, a series that publishes texts relevant to the cultural history of the Torne Valley. This historical voice contrasts with that of the autobiographically coloured lyrical I of the monologue. Like Vikgren, the narrator was born in 1975, and spent his childhood and adolescence in Övertorneå in an area with blocks of flats. In one of the first stanzas, Vikgren
uses Tornedalian place names in order to create a sense of place; Aavasaksa and Isovaara are mentioned in a stanza titled "Lex Luthor" (Vikgren 2002, 8). These are the names of mountains that straddle the border between Sweden and Finland. The subsequent stanza "Motstånd" [Resistance], mentions Hotell Kievari, a dance palace in Ylitornio, Finland. The use of names, and mention of a local building linked to local activities, contribute to the creation of a sense of place, as do references to a northern climate with dark winters and a frozen crust on the snow. However, Vikgren does not solely allude to classical representations of the Torne Valley and widely-circulated images of the north, as the collection also includes references and quotes from other sources. It opens with a quote from a 1972 translation into Swedish of Tarzan of the Apes, about Tarzan's attempts to interpret a written text that he senses is a riddle he might solve. The themes of interpretation, inaccessibility, and solving the riddle of the written text, are thus introduced at the outset. However, the quote from Tarzan does not claim that the writing has a specific meaning. Instead, the final sentence reads: "He had a feeling that the lines of curious insects [i.e. letters] had a specific meaning." (ibid., 5).

In his poetry collection Ordning [Order], Vikgren uses the term "the rhizome" (Vikgren 2004, 95) and the expression "double-exposed artefacts" (ibid., 137). The term 'rhizome' is central to Deleuze and Guattari's A Thousand Plateaus, in its description of a poetics that allows for multiple, non-hierarchical entry and exit points in representation and interpretation. The concept of rhizomatic writing refers to a resistance to referentiality (Deleuze & Guattari 1980 2008, 26). The idea that the book imitates the world is rejected, instead presenting the notion that there are multiple, lateral systems of ramification: "A rhizome as subterranean stem is absolutely different from roots and radicles" (ibid., 7). Instead of the production of meaning that is captured by the tree metaphor, implying a direct link to the roots, "which plots a point, fixes an order" (ibid., 7), Deleuze and Guattari prefer the metaphor of the rhizome and semiotic chains: "semiotic chains of every nature are connected to very diverse modes of coding (biological, political, economic, etc.) that bring into play not only different regimes of signs but also states of things of different status" (ibid.). These semiotic chains are described with the term 'assemblage' (ibid., 7–9).

There are a couple of references to semiotics in Ordning, highlighting the theme of the production of meaning. The collection is a flow of diverse stylistic registers, themes, references to geographical places and segments in different languages. In this respect, it is an assemblage in the sense described by Deleuze and Guattari. "Tornedalen" is among the places mentioned, and there are a couple of phrases in Finnish that are translated at the end of the volume. There are also references to snow, cold, autobiography, God, and apartment blocks. The Torne Valley is presented as an element in a rhizomatic flow. Although there is a resistance to the concept of the linear narrative, a sense of place is produced through the use of the place name of the Torne Valley, phrases in Finnish, references to a wintery climate, religion and apartment blocks. However, this place is evoked through one of the rhizomatic threads.

Vikgren’s poetry combines referentiality and plays on words, expressions, and language structure, resulting in a textual mosaic. His collection Inomhuslektionen [The Indoor Lesson] from 2008 combines various narrative threads, place names from diverse continents and cultural spheres, and time frames, in a flow of words in which phrases, names, and words are recirculated and transformed into sometimes unexpected new forms, occasionally alluding to proverbs and well-known sayings. References are made to the Bible, colonialism, the extraction of raw materials from Norrland, narrative and places in the Torne Valley. While textualisation of the Torne Valley is a theme that is evoked, there are also suggestions that this is a text without a single, stable centre, but one whose repetitions, variations and modifications of linguistic signs fork into new directions. Roots are mentioned, as well as memories and the narratives of forefathers; these are elements also found in comments about and allusions to texts that have been generated before. Barthélemy Lauvergne, an artist who was a member of the French La Recherche Expedition 1838–1840, is mentioned several times in the poem. Lauvergne's images now constitute an earlier period's documentation of northern Scandinavia and the Torne Valley. The Frenchmen's ignorance of the way of life in this part of the world is commented upon. Hybrid expressions used by the documenters in Vikgren's text, mixing Swedish and French, provide a playful mixture of linguistically incompatible elements: "le kalksten, le pulka, le kronohemman" [le limestone, le kick sled, le crown farm] (Vikgren 2008, 151).

Vikgren repeatedly returns to the Torne Valley and its linguistic and cultural diversity as a theme, as well as to various narratives of Norrland. He has a distinctively discursive approach to place, which he depicts as complex and permuting in, and through, discourse. Inomhuslektionen contributes to the making of the Torne Valley as a place shaped by diverse representations in various genres from different periods of time. Juxtaposed to markers for this specific geographical...
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and experienced space, there are markers for other places and other narratives, such as that of the Algerian resistance. The Torne River is mentioned and so is the Mediterranean. Oran is mentioned several times, as is Övertorneå, as well as the place name Matarengi, which denotes the old part of Övertorneå. There is an allusion to Keksi’s famous poem about the flooding of the Torne River, through a contemporary flood that is compared to that in Keksi’s poem. In this context, the expression “en ny keksin tulva” [a new keksi’s flood], which combines Swedish and Finnish, is used. The word tulva is a Finnish word for ‘flood’, and ‘keksin’ is a Finnish genitive form of Keksi. Although Vikgren’s poem is not strictly and exclusively referential, there are elements of referentiality that situate it in a Tornedalian cultural landscape, forming one section of the poem’s mosaic of words that evokes transformative places and linguistic elements. The theme of movement and change is also suggested by images about how to fold a removal box that are scattered throughout the volume, as well as by the theme of burning fires.

While Keksi’s poem is the point of departure for Vikgren’s Antikeksiskvāde: Översättning, dikt, the original poem is thoroughly transformed in the four translations, which are actually adaptions, in Vikgren’s book. Keksi’s poem is reproduced in Finnish at the end of the volume. Preceding this there is a section in which Vikgren describes his practice as a translator of the poem (Vikgren 2010, 59–60). The first ‘translation’, called the “antonymversionen” [antonym version] is a negation of Björn Colliander’s 1955 translation of the poem into Swedish. Apart from place names and Keksi, the words of the poem have been translated into their antonyms. The concept of the second version, the “homofonversionen” [homophone version] is that Vikgren has transcribed a recording of the text in Finnish into writing in Swedish. The third version, the “anagramversionen” [anagram version], has been made using the Arrak oy software, which has translated Finnish stanzas into Swedish ones.

Finally, the fourth version, “kollektivversionen” [collective version] is a translation by 26 people (including Vikgren). The contributors had responded to a request from Vikgren and translated a section of the poem from Finnish to Swedish. All the contributors are mentioned in Vikgren’s description of the translation process (ibid., 60). Their names are found on a map of a bifurcating river on the back cover of the volume, providing an intertextual allusion to the map on the cover of Pohjanen and Johansson’s literary history, where the birthplaces of the authors are marked. While one map suggests that roots and origin are important, the other points to the themes of multiple interpretations, process and transformation. These different conceptual frameworks contribute to the making of different versions of the Torne Valley. As in Vikgren’s first collection of poems, the organist Johan Portin is quoted in the variations on Keksi’s poem. Antikekksiskvāde: Översättning, dikt opens with a quote from Portin’s description of the parish of Övertorneå. While Vikgren’s variations represent contemporary adaptions made from specific perspectives, giving the ‘translations’ their specific character, Keksi’s poem has the role of an urtext. Portin’s description of Övertorneå, on the other hand, represents a historical narrative from a specific temporal stratum that contributes to place-making.

The theme of multiple narratives making a place that shifts is achieved through juxtaposing narrative elements from varied discourses and contexts. This technique is prominent in the Folkmun [Popular parlance] collection from 2011. It highlights the exploitation of nature and the Sámi in the making of Nor-
rland as a tourist destination, as well as the use of nostalgic narratives of the past in the present: “everybody helps to collect water in the river chop wood / fire in the burner” Everybody helps to cook the food / over open fire using traditional recipes in / the light of candles” (Vikgren 2011, 18). Rather than depicting Norrland as an idyll where time has stood still, Vikgren’s focus on uses of nostalgia and idyll in the making of a contemporary tourist destination deconstructs uses of nostalgia that are both naïve and commercially oriented, as well as their concomitant celebrations of a northern landscape with farms beautifully situated by mountain lakes and surrounded by mountains and billowing birch forests: “a cottage made of / logs cut with a broad axe, nails forged by hand, / thatched roof and walls that are plugged with moss” (ibid., 19).

Vikgren repeatedly highlights discourses about Norrland, such as that of colonization, the extraction of raw materials, and modern clichés about the people and the nature, as well as the making of Norrland into a tourist attraction. In his 2013 collection, skogen, malmen, vattenkraften [The Forest, the Ore, the Hydropower], the words “forest,” “ore,” and “hydropower,” which refer to the most important natural resources extracted from Norrland that have contributed to Swedish wealth creation, are repeated in various combinations. There is a long tradition of extracting ore from mines in Norrland. The industrial revolution increased the demand for ore, and other natural resources like wood and hydropower, and large-scale exploitation began. Sámi communities and environmentalists are now protesting, highlighting the negative consequences for the environment. The protests against Beowulf Mining’s plans to start a mine at Gållok/Kallak in the municipality of Jokkmokk, are one example of resistance. In August 2013, test blasting was conducted at the site of a Sámi village that uses the land for reindeer husbandry. The protests were massive, involving the artist Anders Sunna, among others. Vikgren’s repetitions and combinations of the terms “forest,” “ore,” and “hydropower” are highly topical, alluding to a history of exploitation and also to contemporary protest.

In the poetry book Antti Keksiskväden: Översättning, dikt II [Antti Keksi’s poem: Translation, poem II], Vikgren returns to using Keksi’s seventeenth-century poem as a starting point for the creation of multidirectional experimental poetry (Vikgren 2016). In a postscript, he mentions that he has used Keksi’s poem about the breaking of ice in the Torne River in 1677 as a model for the first part called “Om oss” [About us], and Keksi’s second poem (“kväde”) for the second part “I Andra” [In others]. The stanzas in the two sections are numbered sequentially, but the pages are not. While some stanzas, expressions and words seem to refer to Keksi’s poetry and the effects of the flooding as water overflows the riverbanks, others contain references to words, language, and narratives. There are also elements that introduce strangeness, hybridity and randomness. The word for monkey recurs in several stanzas. The poem is preceded by a dedication that draws attention to place and Keksi’s seminal contribution to Torndalian identity formation and place-making: “For the miserable kids of Matarenki, now to Keksi / now I make up.” Matarenki is the name of the old part of Övertorneå. Vikgren uses it repeatedly in his poetry, indicating the importance of a specific place. The second part of the dedication is not really translatable as it plays on the meaning of the Finnish word “keksiä,” in the imperative “keksi,” which means to make something up. As the word is written with a capital, it also refers to the name ‘Keksi.’ In the heading to the postscript, Vikgren draws attention to this play with meaning: “Keksiä = Poiesis.”

While Bengt Pohjanen has a solid reputation as a cultural mobilizer through his activities as a publisher, writer, and activist, Vikgren belongs to a younger generation of experimental poets and uses subject matter associated with his childhood and adolescence in the Torne Valley. One major difference between Pohjanen’s and Vikgren’s making of the Torne Valley is that Pohjanen frequently uses the village as a setting and symbol for a specific Tornedalian Finnish lifestyle. This is not the case for Vikgren, whose childhood Torne Valley was shaped by growing up in a block of flats. Using Keksi’s classical Torndalian Finnish poem, which has become a symbol of a specific Torndalian place that is shaped by the river, Vikgren disconnects it from its traditional embedding via his permuting ‘translations’. Vikgren inscribes himself as a Torndalian place-maker, destabilizing the established connections between place and linguistic representation, by using Keksi’s poem. If places may be seen as centres of felt value, as suggested by Tuan (Tuan 2011), Vikgren’s translations of Keksi’s poem indicate that the felt values that are activated are related to contingency, contradiction, and combinations of linguistic elements that do not produce a narrative with a single thread.

One theme that is consistently foregrounded in Vikgren’s collections is that places are shaped by narratives. Through his play with words, meanings are destabilized and transformed. A typical example from Fölkmun is when the word “hembygd” [native district] is transformed into “hemskbygd” [ghastly district]. The poetry collection highlights the use of language in narratives that defend the colonization of Norrland, but also in popular protests against exploitation.
There are numerous references to the use of Finnish and Meänkieli, to assimilationist policies and the generation of shame, but also to popular protest. The Torne Valley is mentioned among other places with a history of colonization. Present day narratives of the Torne Valley and Norrbotten that are alluded to consist of marketing and political jargon, but also protests and summons to eradicate disempowering images (Vikgren 2011, 197). One theme evoked by the focus on diverse, contradictory uses of narrative and representation, is that language is a site for struggle, in which diverse depictions of reality compete. This theme is commented on by Vikgren in the postscript to Anttikukatiskväde: Översättning, dikti, where he highlights how language and narrative have been used for oppressive purposes, but also as tools for liberation (Vikgren 2010, 53–54).

One of the theorists central to the development of the spatial turn, Michel Foucault, predicted that the present epoch might be, above all, the “epoch of space.” There are considerable affinities between his description of this epoch and the structure of Vikgren’s poetry:

“We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed. We are at a moment, I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein.” (Foucault 1986, 22)

Foucault highlights how places are connected with human experiences, and suggests that the character of these experiences has changed in comparison with earlier epochs. This transformation is manifest in Vikgren’s poetry, in the use he makes of semiotic chains, juxtapositions, assemblages, and rhizomatic writing. This transformation is in line with the proliferation of narratives and perspectives that have emerged in the wake of the postmodern condition and the ‘death of grand narratives’. In this respect, Vikgren’s poetry represents the spatial turn in literature as described by Westphal and Tally Jr. (Westphal 2011a, 12–13, Tally Jr 2013, 1ff). There are some interesting parallels between David Vikgren and the Finland Swedish poet Ralph Andtbacka’s poetic practice and thematization of bonds to a relatively sparsely populated area in northern Scandinavia. Andtbacka is from Österbotten, on the north-west coast of Finland, which is reflected in poems that mention place names, local cultural features, local history, and his auto-biography. While Vikgren’s poems reflect multilingualism in the Tornevaldian Swedish-Finnish borderlands, Andtbacka’s reflect the life world and history of the Swedish-speaking minority in Österbotten in Finland. One of the poems in his Wunderkammer collection is called “12 assemblage (Svalbard)” (Andtbacka 2008, 138). The collection has numerous metatextual references, with the word ‘assemblage’ pointing in the same direction as Vikgren’s use of the term. The title, Wunderkammer, is German for cabinet of curiosities, literally a ‘wonder room’, indicating that compilation is a central theme. Using playful, ungrammatical language, Andtbacka suggests that this compilation lacks order, that it is random (ibid.) – a way of composing that is characteristic of rhizomatic writing.” Like Vikgren, Andtbacka uses language in a way that is often unpredictable, using chains of associations and the method of assemblage.

Both Andtbacka and Andtbacka belong to a contemporary generation of poets whose writings reflect the influence of digitalization and the history of shifting media technologies. In this media landscape, the use of permutations, flows of associations, and repetitions with, or without, variations may be seen as a mirroring of programming activities. Other flows connected with the human psyche are also evoked. Rhizomatic writing, as described by Deleuze and Guattari, is not modelled on the programming of a machine, but on the use of semiotic chains which resist the idea of a fixed, homogeneous origin and order. A fascination with the unexpected and random is also characteristic of Dadaism and surrealism, both mentioned in Wunderkammer. In his collection, Andtbacka returns to the flea market as a place where items may be collected, and later displayed in a personal Wunderkammer. In Andtbacka’s Österbotten, the lyrical I has his own cabinet of curiosities that contains plastic crocodiles, snapshots from a stranger’s journey to Italy, and old, poor quality records and tapes, suggesting that the collection is a compilation of trash as much as it is a room of wonders. Considering this, the title is somewhat ironic, drawing attention to the fluctuating character of the ‘wondrous’, from a past when the objects in cabinets of curiosities connoted magic and enchantment, to the present era with a surplus of objects that are not necessarily valuable. The nature of things is commented upon by the lyrical I at the beginning of the collection, in the poem “Ting” [Things]: “junk, rubbish and remnants” (ibid., 12).

Another contemporary poet who has highlighted local history, mentality and language is David Väyrynen (b. 1983) from the village of Hakkas in the municipality of Gallivare, Norrbotten. Gallivare and Kiruna are located in an area
making of a Norrbottian place, which overlaps with Meänmaa as suggested by Bengt Pohjanen.

“Norland” is mentioned repeatedly in Väyrynen’s book. One of its stanzas comments on the size of Norland; it is a large area that consists of the provinces of Gästrikland, Hälsingland, Härjedalen, Jämtland, Medelpad, Ångermanland, Västerbotten, Norrbotten and Lappland. This area conflates with parts of Sápmi, the Torne Valley and Meänmaa. The Norrland that connotes belonging in Väyrynen’s Marken is the northern landscapes, with the mining areas and small villages. The title implies a relationship to place similar to that of Linnea Axelson’s Aednan, which is a Sámi synonym for the Swedish word “marken” [the land]. The various sections of Väyrynen’s text have different focalizers that express their place-related experiences. One is a young man who has moved to Stockholm for the job opportunities. He experiences a love affair but never feels at home; he has a feeling of being looked down upon because of his background. These are subjects that are familiar from narratives about people moving south, for example in Gunnar Kier’s books. One difference is that while Kier links being an outsider in Stockholm with Tornedalian ethnicity, Väyrynen highlights poor origins in a small village in northern Sweden as factors that distinguish the migrant. There is also a focus on ethnicity in Väyrynen’s book. The naming of people and places is used to connote Sáminess and Finnishness. Poems with a utopian theme envision a future in which Sámi and Meänkieli are used as languages at school. At the end of the book, there is a list of intertexts Väyrynen has used, with the heading “Den litterära marken” – the literary ground – which indicates the influences alluded to in the poems. Among these are texts related to Laestadianism, the cultural history of Norrbotten and the Finnish and Sámi presence, and Mao Zedong. Influences from socialist thinkers have shaped individual poems with a utopian theme, envisioning village communities where work is organized and planned so that everybody contributes according to ability. In the book as a whole, consumerism, waste, luxury, and affluence are presented as negative opposites of a simple life, resonating with ideas from socialism, as well as from Laestadianism and ecocriticism, and other approaches that emphasize the negative consequences of consumerism.

The poem “Hemvändarvisan” [The Song of the Homecomer] is written as e-mails from a young man who has moved to Stockholm, sent to a friend back in Norrbotten. The young man comments on his girlfriend and her friends, how they talk too much, consume too much, and that the girlfriend spends too much
time changing outfits and thinking about how she looks. These aspects of life in Stockholm are seen by him as negative, distinguishing it from the simple life of a small village in the north. It is obvious that he does not feel at home in Stockholm, that the northern part of Norrbotten is the home he misses. This is one version of a migrant cartography linked to migration from poor areas in the Arctic to the Stockholm area, and its concomitant clashes between the values associated with modern consumer culture and the ideal of a simple life of hard work.

Place-Making in Contemporary Novels

Bengt Pohjanen is a pioneer among contemporary Swedish authors who use the Torne Valley as a setting in fiction. This use of setting is being continued by a younger generation of authors who, like Pohjanen, are published by the most prestigious publishers in the Swedish literary field, Norstedts and Bonniers. One of these authors is Nina Wåhå.

Boundlessnes, Darkness, and Evil: Nina Wåhå’s Testamente

Nina Wåhå was born in 1979 in Stockholm. Testamente [Legacy] was published in 2019 and is her third novel. It is about a Tornedalian family in a small village on the Finnish side of the border, the Toimi family. The novel starts with the oldest living sibling of fourteen, the pregnant Annie, coming to the family home in Aapajärvi from Stockholm where she lives. She has been summoned because of an accident that has left one of her brothers severely wounded. The time is the early 1980s.

In the final chapter, Annie leaves the village after the burial of her father, but before this she has given birth to a daughter. The novel consists of chapters portraying the father, mother and children. The mother’s life has been shaped by her birth in a small village in Karelia, in a poor family who had to leave their home because of the war. In the 1940s, she meets a soldier, Pentti Toimi. When he is sent home after having been wounded, she marries him, aged fourteen, and accompanies him to his home in the Torne Valley. Before that, she has experienced life as a refugee in Finland. The journey to the Torne Valley is full of ominous
Siri’s development is paralleled by that of the children. The older ones are eager to start to have a life of her own. She buys a house and moves away from Aapajärvi. She struggles to survive; only when she divorces Pentti at the age of fifty-five does she evolve unchecked.

The catalyst for evil is the father, Pentti. His wife Siri is hard-working and sees her place in life through hard work. She is a good Christian, rather than what she feels that Pentti’s father is. Pentti is described as having a darkness inside him. As the intertextual reference to Joseph Conrad’s novel Heart of Darkness indicates, a central theme is what people may turn into when they are not checked by civilization. In this respect, Pentti Toimi may be seen as parallel to the character of Kurtz, who creates horror when the restraints of civilization are removed. Pentti beats his children, rapes his wife – almost strangling her during the act – and has sexual intercourse with cows in the cowshed. He is described as antisocial and mentally imbalanced. As the reference to Conrad’s novel suggests, human nature is a subject of Wäähä’s novel, how human nature and temperament are shaped by the environment. In Kurtz’ case, this is related to his distance from European civilization, allowing the development of habits and moods that are unchecked by codes of civilized behaviour. On the very first page of Testamente, the narrator says: “Mostly we will be in the wilderness. In the Finnish Torne Valley to be more precise” (ibid., 7). Annie Toimi, who lives in Stockholm, thinks of Aapajärvi as a “backwater” (ibid., 16), and her friends in Stockholm think of where she grew up as being in “the middle of nowhere” (ibid., 43). Through the description of the dysfunctional Toimi family, whose problems are linked to the sadism and unpredictability of the father, Pentti, the novel depicts the Finnish Torne Valley and its secluded small villages as a place where madness, darkness, cruelty, and boundless behaviour can evolve unchecked.

The catalyst for evil is the father, Pentti. His wife Siri is hard-working and struggles to survive; only when she divorces Pentti at the age of fifty-five does she start to have a life of her own. She buys a house and moves away from Aapajärvi. Siri’s development is paralleled by that of the children. The older ones are eager to leave home. Some, like Annie, feel that they need to leave the sparsely popu-

lated Torne Valley, which is experienced as a place where people are subdued and forced to conform or accept being bullied. One brother, Lauri, who is homosexual, feels that he must leave as soon as he can, after being bullied at school for years. For him, like Annie, Stockholm is a positive contrast to the Torne Valley. Another brother, Tarmo, stands out in the Torne Valley because of his intelligence and sensitivity. He has the opportunity to move to Helsinki to study, giving him the chance to realize his potential. He gains friends with cultural interests with whom he can have intellectual discussions. Testamente uses these storylines to portray Aapajärvi as a place of conformity and bullying. Intellectual and cultural interests, as well as homosexuality, are looked down upon by the farmers and their families.

For the children in the Toimi family, the situation is made worse by the absence of parental care and guidance. The mother Siri, who was herself a child when she married, is subdued and lacking knowledge and skills about how to create a healthy environment for her children. The father, Pentti, is depicted as a psychopath, completely unreliable and destructive. One of the family secrets which is revealed is that Pentti and his favourite son, Voitto, encouraged one of the younger sons, Valo, to set fire to the garage to claim the insurance money. When the building burns down, Pentti is unconcerned that another son, who is in the building, is almost killed by the fire. Pentti’s lack of boundaries, antisocial temperament and mental imbalance are mirrored in the children. Voitto is described as a sadistic young man who enjoys torturing and killing animals, Valo as a pyromaniac, with an unhealthy interest in lighting fires.

Another son, Hirvo, who spends most of his time in the woods, is described as being able to communicate with animals. When his father abuses the cows in the cowshed, he can hear the tortured animals and feels miserable for not daring to put an end to it. He is seen by others as different, as not quite human: “His family saw clearly that there was something different about him […], human but somehow not human, unable to play according to their rules, and increasingly they let him be, lived their parallel lives. (ibid., 181).” A central theme is how the range of precarious mental states found in the Toimi family evolve in an isolated environment controlled by a dysfunctional patriarch, and shaped by grim family histories, thus highlighting the theme of interconnectedness between predestination and unavoidable circumstances, on the one hand, and the possibility to free oneself, on the other. The story of the Toimi family in Aapajärvi in the Finnish Torne Valley exemplifies the making of a place that can be described with the

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epithet the “heart of darkness”, as a negative contrast to civilized Stockholm and Helsinki. The contrast between civilized southern Stockholm and Helsinki, and the uncivilized Tornedalian village is a version of the kind of dichotomization between north and south that is discussed by Ridanpää from a Finnish perspective (Ridanpää 2007, 911–912).

The story of the Toimi family is connected with various temporal strata, with significant incidents and places that continue to affect the family in the novel’s present, the 1980s. The mother Siri’s birthplace, the village of Soanlahti in Karelia, is such a place, as well as the sombre, Laestadian home of Pentti’s father in the Torne Valley. Major events affecting the storyline include the war, the Karelians becoming refugees, and the presence of Finnish soldiers in Karelia. This is the backdrop to Pentti and Siri meeting one another. Migration and upheaval are thus central elements of the family history. However, the Torne Valley to which Siri moves with her husband does not turn out to be a safe place. Even at the outset she feels that she is not accepted by Pentti’s family, that she is seen as different. It is not until she divorces Pentti, buys a house of her own, and meets a new man whose company she appreciates, that she feels content. When Pentti dies in a fire which burns down the old family home she feels safe.

The topos of a dysfunctional Tornedalian family in a small village is found also in Ester Cullblom’s novel Berta och Byn: En kvinnas liv i Tornedalen [Berta and the Village: A Woman’s Life in the Torne Valley] (Cullblom 2007). The novel offers a sombre depiction of life in a Tornedalian village from the early 1960s onwards. The protagonist, Berta, moves from Stockholm to the village when she marries a farmer, Gunnar. Berta’s outsider perspective provides a critical view of customs and attitudes in the Tornevaldian setting (Heith 2009). There are several correspondences with Wåhå’s Testamente. In both, Laestadianism and its preachers represent the oppression of women and an unsound influence on people’s mental wellbeing. Both highlight patriarchal gender structures, bullying, coarseness, grim family secrets and antisocial behaviour. Berta’s brother-in-law, Johan, rapes her on the evening of her father’s wake. When Berta tells her family about it, they decide it should be kept as a family secret. There is no rational explanation for Johan’s behaviour; he motivates the rape as his due, as he considers himself disadvantaged because Gunnar was favoured by their father’s will. In the world of the novel, conflicts of this kind are not solved rationally or peacefully. Eventually, Berta stabs Johan to death, which is in accordance with the novel’s focus on lawlessness, brutality and an existence outside the confines of an ordered, rational society. Berta’s life changes from being ordered to becoming chaotic when she moves from Stockholm to the village where her husband’s family lives. When Johan boasts about the paternity of the child that results from the rape, embarrassing Berta, her husband, and their two children, Berta sharpens a knife which she then uses to stab her brother-in-law. Like Testamente, the novel provides a literary representation of a family home and village that are untouched by civilization, law and order. One difference is that while the novel about Berta is narrated in a tragic mode, there is humour, irony and distance in Testamente, explicitly drawing attention to questions about the relationship between mental and physical environment, socialization, determinism, and opportunities to break free of a destructive background and family history.

In Testamente, the solution for individuals who do not feel at home in this negative environment is to move. Once the oldest surviving daughter, Annie, has moved to Stockholm she has no wish to go back. She only does this reluctantly, when one of her brothers is hurt in an accident and her father has died in a fire. This representation of the Tornevaldian family home and village contrast with other contemporary representations. One example is Annika Korpi’s novel Hevosken Häst, where the title is the word for ‘horse’ in Finnish and Swedish (Korpi [2003] 2005). The protagonist is a girl who is sent to her paternal grandmother in the Torne Valley, because her mother is in a mental hospital and her father is absent (Heith 2009). While Stockholm is depicted as a place where authorities control and disrupt families, the Torne Valley is characterized as a place with responsible, caring adults, where people who are different are not confined to institutional care. One character is a former clergyman who “has done something embarrassing on the Finnish side of the border” (Korpi [2003] 2005, 88). He has left his job and started to preach in a hunting tower in the woods. The girl, Eila, experiences the Torne Valley as a safe, orderly and exciting place where there is acceptance for people who are different; even the Laestadians are regarded as interesting. The idea of the Torne Valley as a positive contrast to Stockholm is also found in David Väyrynen’s Marken. Migration, feeling dislocated in Stockholm and longing for Norrland are themes that contribute to Väyrynen’s making of the Torne Valley and northern Norrland as a home associated with belonging and cherished roots, as opposed to Wåhå’s representation of a Tornedalian family home and village in Testamente. Small villages in the Torne Valley are thus depicted as places from where people must move in order to thrive and become safe, but also as places of belonging, with a culture, mentality and language that
place-making in contemporary novels

The Village of Saivomuotka in Various Temporal Strata: Pia Mariana Raattamaa Visén’s Där rinner en ålv genom Saivomuotka by

Like Nina Wähä’s Testament, Pia Maria Raattamaa Visén’s novel Där rinner en ålv genom Saivomuotka by [A River Runs Through Saivomuotka Village] depicts several generations of one family in a small village in the Tornedalen Valley (Raattamaa Visén 2019). The novel highlights the transformations of place linked to various temporal strata. Each chapter, except the short introduction with the title ”Platsen” [The Place] starts with a year, beginning in 1895 and ending in 2015. Before the introductory chapter, there is a reproduction of an old map of “Saivomuotka by” [Saivomuotka village], showing its location between the lake called Sajvo-järvi and the Muonio River. The chapter for 1895 introduces a young man, Israel Raattamaa, walking home to Saivomuotka after completing military service in Luleå. He thinks of Luleå as “the city in the south” (ibid., 10)\(^{126}\), and feels joy at the thought of returning to his village in the north. Markers for northern fauna and flora and life in a small, poor village are mentioned early on; Israel reflects upon the cloudberries growing on bogs that he will pick with his younger sister Matilda, and on the dried reindeer meat prepared by his father. He is eager to go home and help with planting turnips and potatoes, bringing in hay and collecting leaves for the cow, and bog hay from Pingisjärvi. The names of people and places and the dialogue show that this is an environment where the Finnish language is used.

The village of Saivomuotko is on the Swedish side of the border. Its origins are related to the loss of Finland, when the river came to mark the new border. When the meadows on the other side of the river became part of Russia, Israel’s grandfather wrote to the king to ask for new land. The request was granted, and two families founded the village. Israel is shaped by the stories his grandfather has told him about “a small village, hard work, a barren river valley, starvation, and belief in God” (ibid., 17).\(^{127}\) The place is shaped by the hard-working people, and the people are shaped by the place. Religion is explicitly highlighted by the narrator as a positive element in the family’s life, providing comfort and making them strive for a better life (ibid., 187). Later, the house built by the first settler is made into a museum, to celebrate previous generations.

The grandfather, Juhani, who is introduced at the outset, is a preacher. In the chapter about Israel’s walk home, he senses his grandfather’s blue eyes telling him that life is good: “He has so many sermons that make people want to love and work hard and live just a bit longer and more.” (ibid., 11).\(^{124}\) The men of the Raattamaa family are described as calm and trustworthy, and the family as loving and caring. The word “love” is used to describe the way Israel’s wife Maija treats her children. Maija, who is considerably younger than Israel, is of mixed background. She speaks both Tornedalian Finnish and Sámi, but not Swedish. The family is poor, but hard-working and enjoys simple things like a cup of coffee, dried reindeer meat, Maija’s home-baked bread, and bathing in the sauna. Life changes, but the positive bonds between the family members remain. The novel highlights elements of local history that transform life. When Israel’s and Maija’s children start school, they are taught by their teacher that they must use Swedish. If they use Finnish they are punished. This is an element of Tornedalian history that is highlighted in numerous narratives about Tornedalian Finnish children in school. Towards the end of the novel, the characters comment on the contemporary situation, when Meänkieli is an official minority language in Sweden, and children are encouraged to learn it. The 1996 chapter comments upon changes in attitudes towards Tornedalian Finnish ethnicity and culture:

So much to swallow and choke on. Shame about origins and poverty, shame about blood and a language which must be denied, which is mixed, shame which blurs, anger and happiness which may only be taken in small, small portions. Swedes, but not Swedish. Not Sámi with exotic dress. Finnish-speaking, but not Finns. Not really Finnish. (ibid., 208)\(^{128}\)

In this chapter, Maija’s children talk about things that have been silenced through the years, such as Maija’s Sámi ethnicity, the feelings of shame connected with Tornedalian Finnish ethnicity and the race biological examinations of Tornedalian Finnish children, which have all left wounds that have been suppressed. Israel and Maija’s oldest son, Erik, takes a particular interest in family history, and in uncovering stories that have been silenced. The narrator explicitly relates...
this to time: “And they have never talked like this before. Perhaps the new times are what make it possible.” (ibid., 207). The novel explicitly links the theme of changing narratives to time which, in turn, transforms the making of place in representation, as new themes are introduced which shed new light upon the people and the place.

Nina Wähä’s Testamente and Pia Mariana Raattamaa Visén’s Där rinner en älv genom Saivomuotka by were both published in Swedish in 2019, by the prestigious publisher Bonnier in Stockholm. Both novels are set in small Torndalian villages, Aapajärvi and Saivomuotka respectively, situated by a lake close to the border river. Mixed background is a motif in both. Testamente has numerous comments about the differences between the Karelian mother, Siri, and Torndalian father, Pentti, who are portrayed as opposites that represent light and darkness. There are suggestions that Pentti has Sámi and Walloon ancestors, as well as comments about inbreeding that contribute to the novel’s emphasis on boundlessness and antisocial and illegal practices as part of a secret family history. The Sámi cultural elements in the Raattamaa family are mentioned at the start of Raattamaa Visén’s novel, but it is not until the later part of the novel that Maija’s mixed background is explicitly commented upon. In Wähä’s novel, religion – in the shape of Laestadianism – contributes to Pentti’s darkness. He is not religious, but his father is a Laestadian preacher and his brothers are Laestadians. Their religion is consistently associated with darkness and abuse. On one occasion, when one of Pentti and Siri’s sons helps one of Pentti’s brothers with the animals when his wife is in hospital, the religious uncle rapes the boy.

While the socio-economic setting of Där rinner en älv genom Saivomuotka by resembles that of Testamente, the similarities end there. The children’s education is a motif in both novels, but there are considerable differences in how this is depicted, because Saivomuotka is in Sweden at the time of the narrative and Aapujärvi is in Finland. In Raattamaa Visén’s novel, the chapter called “1926” describes Erik’s encounter with the Swedish school: “At school, you are supposed to speak Swedish. They [Erik and his cousin Gustav] know that. They try, but the words are wrong in the mouth, have no hold in the heart, no expression in the body. No one at home speaks Swedish.” (ibid., 53). Like other Torndalian fiction set in Sweden, Raattamaa Visén uses the theme of assimilationist policies and the motif of children at school being forced to speak Swedish.

Saivomuotka is depicted as a village that radically transforms over the temporal strata of the various chapters. However, love and care are constants in the Raattamaa family. When Maija is old and sick, one of her sons lives with her and cares for her. Throughout the novel there are comments about gifts from the children to the mother, and vice versa, given as tokens of love. In Testamente, Pentti regards his children as labour, necessary for performing all the chores. Work is also a theme of Där rinner en älv genom Saivomuotka by, but it is depicted as a necessity, instrumental for survival, something that the children are aware of and so they do their bit for the survival of the family. There is solidarity in the Raattamaa family, while relations between father and children in the Toimi family are characterized by abuse and exploitation. Saivomuotka is depicted as a safe place, the home of a loving, caring family. Aapajärvi, on the other hand, is depicted as a threatening place where the bullying father terrorizes his family.

As in Väyrynen’s Marken, a longing for home, back to a small village, is a theme in Raattamaa Visén’s novel. The oldest son, Erik, moves back after working in the Stockholm area, as he misses home. His siblings who live in the south visit Saivomuotka for holidays. Saivomuotka is depicted as a home that Israel and Maija’s children and grandchildren long for, where they go to experience the place by fishing in the river, taking saunas, picking cloudberries, and eating traditional food. In Wähä’s novel, on the other hand, Aapajärvi is a place of horror, with a mentally unstable father, subdued mother, and traumatized children. The difference is captured in the novels’ depictions of the deaths of Pentti in Testamente, and Maija in Där rinner en älv genom Saivomuotka by. When Maija dies, at an old age, her children, grandchildren and the whole neighbourhood mourn. The church is filled with people. As a contrast, there are hints that Pentti is murdered by some of his children. The oldest daughter tries to find out, as she doubts that her father died accidentally in a fire. Nobody tells her what happened, but she strongly suspects that her siblings lit the fire. The theme of murder is highlighted in the first sentence of the novel: “This is nothing other than a murder story,” drawing attention to the themes of crime and anti-social behaviour which shape the making of place in the novel (Wähä 2019, 5).
Summary

There is a nostalgic element to Bengt Pohjanen’s writings about Hilja Byström and her depictions of traditional village life, before it was changed by the modernization of agriculture, urbanization, and rural depopulation. However, Pohjanen also depicts tensions between the global and the local as traditional lifestyles are disrupted. Several of his novels include characters who leave their native village in order to study or work. The protagonist of his debut novel, for example, leaves his native village and attempts to erase all signs of Torneaness as he wishes to assimilate with Swedish mainstream culture (Pohjanen 1979). Pohjanen has also written about Laestadian preachers leaving for the USA, and a book on local history about the Kiruna Swedes. The depiction of the small Tornean village of the past as an ideal experienced geography, suggested by Pohjanen’s enthusiasm for Hilja Byström’s novel *Byn*, is not univocal, as the same setting is associated with feelings of shame in the story about Kurt Göran Polemalm in Pohjanen’s debut novel *Och fiskarna svarar Guds frid* [And the Fish Respond the Peace of God]. One difference is that Polemalm’s experiences are connected with a different period of time to Byström’s novel. The theme of shame that is present in Byström’s novel through the character of Maju, and the theme of assimilation that is touched upon in the dialogue, are at the heart of Pohjanen’s debut novel, published in 1979. This implies that the Torne Valley as an experienced geography in Pohjanen’s writings is connected with both pride in local culture in the present, as in the two-volume Tornean Finnish literary history, and with feelings of shame, as in his debut novel. This is related to the representation of shifting attitudes linked to different perspectives, as well as flux connected to diverse temporal strata. In the making of Meänmaa, small-scale farming and village life, before modernity disrupted the traditional way of life, play a significant role in the creation of an experienced geography. This theme is reflected in Hilja Byström’s narratives of village life that feature elements of local history and culture. In Vikgren’s and Liksom’s texts, the colouring of the Tornean experienced geography is different, in that hybridity and the use of parody deconstruct nostalgic depictions of place.

While the Sámi texts discussed here exemplify ecological fiction linked to a Sámi ontology, the theme of ecological sustainability is treated differently in Tornean texts. In Hilja Byström’s novel *Byn*, one of the characters, a farmer called Johansson, expresses that the land is the mother of all generations. He feels that he has acted wrongly in pressuring it too hard and forcing it to yield future harvests (Byström 2008, 126). This belief is not related to ideas of the Earth as a sentient being, to which humans are connected in a symbiotic relationship, but to traditional wisdom about sustainable agriculture that is passed down from one generation of farmers to another. Byström’s novel depicts a temporal stratum in which traditional village life based on small-scale farming prevailed. However, times are changing. A central theme of the novel, and of Bengt Pohjanen’s stories set in the Torne Valley, is the changes associated with the modernization of society. Although the small-scale farming of the past hardly exists today, it continues to influence the re-presentations of the Torne Valley in the present, constituting a historical layer that remains productive in place-making – as do the narratives of Laestadianism, which highlight the revivalist movement’s impact on Tornean mentality and culture.

The theme of the exploitation of nature is found in Pohjanen’s poetry collection *Kamos i hjärtat av vintern* [Kamos in the Heart of Winter] which depicts the damming of rivers as causing the death of water. In his book for young adults, *Dödens ängar* [Meadows of Death], plans to store nuclear waste in a mountain are implied to be an abuse of the living, holy mountain. The depiction of the mountain as a sacred, sentient being corresponds with an indigenous ontology’s view of nature as being alive. The theme of river regulation is also central to Mikael Niemi’s novel *Fallvatten* [Falling Water]. Its emphasis on abnormal periods of rain that causes rising water levels in Vattenfall’s dams along the Lule River, relates to the theme of climate change. Extreme weather conditions, combined with human failure to foresee consequences and properly estimate the solidity of the dams, result in disaster. Niemi’s novel highlights the risks to human life...
caused by the transformation of nature, using the regulation of the Lule River as an example. From a geocritical perspective, these narratives of disasters contribute to the representation of a mobile, heterogeneous space, establishing intertextual connections with the genre of ecocritical dystopia.

There is a consensus among Sámi that Sápmi is a relevant concept, that it captures a notion shared by the Sámi, namely that there is a transnational territory that constitutes a geographical place used by the Sámi people since ancient times. The concept of Meänmaa, however, is controversial among Tornedalians (Appendix A, Prokkola & Ridanpää 2011, 787–788). In the examined material, the concept of Meänmaa is primarily used in texts produced by Pohjanen, while the Torne Valley is the more widely-used denomination. A grass-roots orientation and perspective that are characteristic of a small and evolving literary field are reflected in the grammar books by Bengt Pohjanen and Matti Kenttä (Pohjanen & Kenttä 1996) and Bengt Pohjanen and Eeva Muli (Pohjanen & Muli 2005). Like the two-volume Tornedalian Finnish literary history by Pohjanen and Kirsti Johansson, they are subjective and anecdotal, very different to traditional non-fiction (see Heith 2012a, 82, Heith 2012b, 93–94). In Den tornedalsfinska litteraturen: Från Kexi till Liksom [Tornedalian Finnish literature. From Kexi to Liksom], the spelling Kexi is alternated with Keksi, which is the correct Finnish spelling (Pohjanen & Johansson 2007). This indicates that attention to detail and coherence are not a major concern for the authors. Considering that Bengt Pohjanen is co-author of the volume and that his publishing house Barents Publisher has published it, it is unconventional for his co-author to present him as a major figure in the history of Tornedalian Finnish literature, on a par with Agricola, who laid the foundation of the Finnish written language in the sixteenth century (Johansson 2007, 85, see also Heith 2015b, 171).

Another unconventional element is the eclectic selection of authors that are presented. Mikael Niemi, for example, a very successful author who introduced readers in a number of countries to the Torne Valley thanks to his successful debut novel Popular Music, is not mentioned at all. Helja Byström, on the other hand, is highlighted as a significant author despite the fact that she has largely been forgotten. Her promotion as the first Tornedalian author of imaginative fiction is rather surprising, considering that she wrote in Swedish and seemed to have quite ambivalent feelings about Tornedalian culture. According to Gröndahl, Hellberg and Ojanen, she was not in favour of bilingualism, but thought that Swedish was the language of the future (Gröndahl, Hellberg & Ojanen 2002, 148). Neither Byström nor Niemi use the concept of Meänmaa.

Pohjanen holds a high opinion of Hilja Byström, which is reflected in an essay from 2006 in which he describes her as “the Dostoevsky of the Torne Valley”, depicting the Torne Valley as a Russian landscape with a redemptive beauty (Pohjanen 2006, 218, see also Heith 2007b, 236). While the quote indicates that Pohjanen regards the Russian presence in Tornedalian culture as connected with Orthodox spirituality and a premodern lifestyle, Rosa Liksom’s writings evoke another kind of Russia. Villaesma Gagarin (Liksom 1987), Station Gagarin, and Go Moskova go [Go Moscow Go] (Liksom & Uotila 1988), with text by Rosa Liksom and black and white photographs by Jukka Uotila, are based on journeys in contemporary Russia. In the first volume, surreal stories are based on her travels in the footsteps of nineteenth-century Finnish ethnographers, while the 1988 book consists of interviews and portraits of people. These depictions are very far from the kind of life of redeeming beauty that Pohjanen highlights as characteristic of Byström’s prose. Liksom’s texts highlight young single mothers, prostitutes, aspiring artists, and drug addicts. One of Uotila’s photos is a triptych with an image of Christ with a torn wreath in the middle, flanked by pornographic images of nude women (ibid.).

The depiction of contemporary Russia as a country of irrationality, paradoxes, unpredictability, and danger permeates Rosa Liksom’s novel Compartment Number 6. The man who shares the compartment alluded to in the title with a young Finnish woman spends most of the time drinking vodka and talking about his life. The young woman listens reluctantly to the man’s ghastly, and often crude, stories. On several occasions he makes sexual advances and insults her, but apologizes afterwards. During the journey she thinks that she hates him and unsuccessfully tries to get another compartment. At the end of the novel, when the man and young woman have parted, she eventually contacts him. Her reason for travelling to Ulaanbaatar is that she wants to see some ancient rock paintings. After she has arrived, her guide informs her that this is impossible, as foreigners are not allowed to leave the city. The man from the train arranges a car trip to the rock paintings and a stay in a Mongolian camp. Ironically, he turns out to be a helper so she can achieve what she came to Ulaanbaatar to do. On the journey to Ulaanbaatar, the man talked about his father living in the Stalinist era, in a world where the tavern was a church and the labour camp was a monastery. The Soviet Union crossed by the train is characterized by the narrator as complex, with a million peasants who have died of famine, with city dwellers and workers...
of whom a million are in prison, loyal citizens who have succumbed to hunger and cold in labour camps and at workplaces, informers, the tyranny of the party, millions of people killed in useless wars, and so on. There are comments on industrialized cities where the soil has been killed by heavy industry. The wood of Khabarovsky is characterized as polluted and sick. Russia, of course, can be described in a multitude of ways. Pohjanen alludes to a tradition of describing it as a land of spirituality and redemptive beauty when writing about Hilja Byström’s prose, while Liksom’s depictions evoke modern life, the Soviet Union’s turbulent and cruel history, pollution, paradoxes, and irrationality. In Pohjanen’s construction of an experienced geography and cultural region called Meänmaa, elements of Orthodox Christian spirituality function as distinguishing markers in the proposal that Meänmaa is a positive contrast to modern, secular society (Heith 2010). Liksom also alludes to Russian Orthodox Christianity, but not as a dominant element of contemporary Russian culture that has remained uncontaminated by the ideological currents and social transformations of the twentieth century.

Liksom’s Kreisland is a postmodernist picaresque that depicts how place-making interconnects with the ideologies of fascism, nationalism, communism and capitalism. Impi Agafiina’s birthplace in the Lappish wilderness is viewed through various optics that emphasize its uncivilized nature and remoteness. The conclusion of the novel describes Impi Agafiina’s homecoming and acceptance of a hard-working life, a reevaluation based on the death of grand narratives. In this postmodern condition, disillusion has been replaced by a stoic insight that life must go on. Throughout the novel, chapters about Impi Agafiina’s exploits in Finland, the Soviet Union, and the US, are interspersed with chapters about Juho Gabriel’s life of contentment and hard work on his farm. While Impi Agafiina’s life before her return to her birthplace at the end of the novel turns out to be ephemeral and a source of disillusion, her life in Lappland with Juho Gabriel and Elvis is coloured by the acceptance that this is what life has to offer.

Liksom’s Barka represents a migrant cartography, which deconstructs the idea of roots and a place with essential characteristics. Kirstinä’s description of contemporary Finnish prose emphasizes Liksom’s constructivist approach, as well as her postmodernist orientation. While the narratives of nineteenth and twentieth century anthropologists function as a catalyst for decolonizing counter-narratives in contemporary art and literature, there are also metatextually oriented uses of the theme of anthropological research. This is found in Liksom’s use of the narrative technique of an interviewer who records the life stories of local people, as they talk unchecked in their own dialect. It is also found in Vikgren’s references to anthropological research. In both cases, metatextual connections are established with an anthropological discourse through the use of parody. Parody may be linked to mocking, or making fun, of a previous text, but the emphasis may also be on imitation (see Rose 1993). Depending upon the emphasis, parodies may alternate between the comical and the serious.

Rosa Liksom, who is highlighted in the title of the first volume of Pohjanen and Johansson’s literary history, is a successful author in the Finnish literary field. She is a postmodernist writer who blends elements from diverse traditions, in a manner distinct from the realism of writers like Hilja Byström. Her use of parody and metatextuality have consequences for place-making. As Kirstinä points out, Liksom’s debut novel, Kreisland, parodies the genre of Finnish national epics (Kirstinä 2012, 13), as well as a Finnish scientific discourse that has created a binary in which southern “Culture-Finland” is contrasted with northern “Nature-Finland” (see Ridanpää 2007, 912). Castrén’s description of Finnish settlers and their homesteads in Boken om vårt land [The book about our country] emphasizes the contrast between Finnish civilization, on the one hand, and Sámi primitiveness and nature’s hostility, on the other. Liksom’s Kreisland provides a counter-image, in which the exaggeration of the uncivilized character of Impi Agafiina’s parents, early years and birthplace is parodic. The parents are described as a couple of wolves. The word “sucking-pig” is used to denominate the newly born baby girl. Her first six months are spent lying swept in a tight cloth in the warmth of her own excrement. The focalizer for the sections that describe the setting and people is an outsider who sees their primitiveness. Intertwined with these are sections in which local people narrate in the first person. Kirstinä points out that these sections represent imitations of spoken language (Kirstinä 2012, 14). Far from representing attempts at literary realism, the third and first-person narrations parody a discourse that has othered people from small rural villages in Lapland. As indicated by the title, place is a central theme of Kreisland. While the titles of its translations into other languages, Crazeland, point in one direction, the Finnish title is more ambiguous, alluding both to craziness and Elvis’ Graceland. Kreisland’s narrative of the Finnish Torne Valley does not correspond with the experienced geography that shapes Pohjanen’s Meänmaa. Instead, it is a parody of the Finnish national canon and the scientific discourse that has marginalized Finnish Lapland.
Depictions of space that radically weaken the connection between literary representation and geographical referents have been linked to the postmodern condition: "Without fixed roots, we have all become wanderers with the harlequin’s spirit, taking and mixing with the spirits of the places we passed, for good or evil" (Serres 1996, 64). This condition is reflected in Rosa Liksom’s images in *Burka*, in the sense that the women in burkas in a northern landscape connote uprootedness, movement in space, and interaction with new spaces. However, it must be remembered that movements in space have diverse connotations, ranging from narratives of joyful nomadism to those of refugees escaping terrible circumstances and seeking new homes in often hostile environments (see Heith 2018c).

Like Liksom, Pohjanen also uses Finnish nationalist epics as intertexts in the creation of an imagined community of Tornedalians with roots in Meänmaa, but without the intention to parody. He often refers to the *Kalevala* in fiction and non-fiction. In a collection of essays one of the chapters is called “Sju flickor, sju pojkar” [*Seven girls, seven boys*], a reference to Aleksis Kivi’s novel *Seitsemän veljestä* [*Seven Brothers*], first published in Finnish in 1870. Kivi’s novel is one of the cornerstones of Finnish literary history. In Pohjanen’s essay, seven women and men are singled out as significant characters in a Tornedalian Finnish setting. One of them is Hilja Byström, characterized as the Dostoevsky of the Torne Valley and in whose fiction Bengt Pohjanen’s Torn Valley appears “in all its beauty, moving transformations, and the inner struggle of souls and heavenly longing for home” (Pohjanen 2006, 217). Here, Pohjanen explicitly acknowledges a subjective dimension of place-making when he refers to ‘mitt Tornedalen’ – ‘my Torne Valley’ (ibid.). As in Mukka’s texts, Pohjanen discerns an element of mysticism in Byström’s fiction, which functions as a positive distinguishing marker. However, as Ridanpää states, “feelings of mysteriousness” have also been used as an element of stereotypical descriptions of northern Finland (Ridanpää 2007, 916–917). Ridanpää claims that Timo K. Mukka was the “first northern novelist who was able to publish works without exotism, stereotypes and literary conventions typical of northern literature” (ibid., 916). Despite this, he makes the point that Mukka’s works are still characterized by stereotypical descriptions “such as a ‘feeling of mysteriousness’” (ibid.). This element of mysteriousness that Ridanpää connects with stereotypical descriptions of northern Finland, is given the role of a positive distinguishing marker for a Tornedalian Finnish identity and culture in Pohjanen’s chapter on Mukka in *Den tornedalsfinska litteraturen* (2007). In this chapter, the concept of *l’Ugritude* is used to denominate a Finno-Ugric mental temperament (Pohjanen 2007, 67 ff).

Through the activation of historical subject matter, starting with a presentation of the seventeenth-century poet Antti Keksi, naming, and the use of the symbolic map and flag in the Tornedalian Finnish literary history, Pohjanen and Johansson present identity, temporal, and spatial claims to suggest that there are people who share a literary history, culture and territory which they call Meänmaa. However, not all Tornedalians necessarily agree that Meänmaa is a relevant concept (Appendix A, see also Prokkola & Ridanpää 2011, Ridanpää 2017). Ridanpää states that this map is not useful in administrative systems because of its blurred boundaries (Ridanpää 2017b, 192). The question is what claims the map makes? This study proposes that it functions as a representation of an experienced geography that is connected to people’s feelings of belonging and sense of historical and cultural attachment, but that it does not aspire to represent a space officially legitimized by a national administration. This view is supported by the characterization of Meänmaa as a cultural region on the Meänmaa Association’s website.

Meänmaa is a fairly recent concept, launched by Bengt Pohjanen and the Meänmaa Association. This implies that the making of Meänmaa is the contemporary concern of a number of Tornedalian locals. Historical resources are used in this endeavour and, as, the titles of the literary history indicates, this culture is named “Tornedalian Finnish”. Here, the use of the element ‘Finnish’ indicates that the relevant language and culture are primarily related to the Finnish cultural sphere. There has also been a Sámi presence in the Torn Valley since ancient times, but constructions of a Tornedalian Finnish culture and the place named Meänmaa reveal that it is the family relationship with Finnish culture that is relevant. This theme is emphasized by an illustration in Kenttä and Pohjanen’s 1996 Meänkieli grammar, called “Sukulaisveli”, which means ‘relatives’ in Finnish. The illustration, reproduced on the following page, which aims to show the kinship between Finno-Uralic languages, places the Meänkieli language on an equal footing to the Finnish language (see Heith 2012, 99). A number of languages are named as relatives of Meänkieli and Finnish, but Sámi is not among them.

The second volume of Pohjanen and Johansson’s literary history draws attention to Kalkkinmaa and Hilja Byström in the subtitle. While Kalkkinmaa was a rather tragic character in reality, who struggled with his mental health, alcoholism and a social vulnerability, Pohjanen and Johansson’s emphasis on his role
in the development of a Tornedalian Finnish literary history is based on interpretations of his contribution that are coloured by recent proposals that he was a pioneer in the field of stand up-comedy and performance art (see Rantala 2013). There is an element of carnivalisation in the portrayal of Kalkkimaa as a person who destabilized the social order and struck at people above him in the social order. The carnivalesque also forms the backdrop to Pohjanen’s discussion of Laestadian prayer meetings as interactive performances (Pohjanen 2007, 134 ff ).

Pohjanen’s familiarity with Bakhtin’s theory of carnivalisation colours his discussion of Kalkkimaa and the prayer meetings of his youth, which contributes to his depiction of an experienced Tornedalian geography that is characterized by popular resistance and protest against authorities and the higher social classes.

Of the writers presented in Pohjanen and Johansson’s Tornedalian Finnish literary history, Johan Lantto, William Snell, ‘the Vicar of Kalkkimaa’, Hilja Byström, Gunnar Kieri, Bengt Kostenius and Bengt Pohjanen are not presented in Finnish literary histories. This is because Lantto, Snell and Kalkkimaa were not primarily authors.19 Lantto wrote non-fiction about life on a farm in a Tornedalian village, while Snell advocated the use of Tornedalian Finnish in writing. He also wrote a book of stories from a Tornedalian village in Tornedalian Finnish. Kalkkimaa is mainly known as a local Tornedalian character who was a village idiot, but who also composed some satirical poems. Hilja Byström and Gunnar Kieri both write in Swedish.

The Finnish literary historian Kai Laitinen embeds Antti Keksi, who is named as a forerunner in the field of Tornedalian Finnish literature by Pohjanen and Johansson, in a chapter about Finnish peasant poets (Laitinen 1988, 71ff). It says that Keksi was active during the Swedish period, when Finland was part of Sweden. According to Laitinen, the peasant poets peaked in popularity in the first half of the nineteenth century until the end of World War II (ibid., 220). In a chapter about the “country-side in transition”, Laitinen mentions Oiva Arvola’s “pithy” depictions of people in northern Finland (ibid., 409). In another chapter about “individual paths”, Timo K. Mukka is presented among other authors inspired by Henry Miller’s prose (ibid., 410–411). Finally, Rosa Liksom is mentioned as one of the authors who broke through in the 1980s (ibid., 412–413).

Laitinen, whose book is called Finlands litteratur [The Literature of Finland], sees the authors as part of a Finnish literary field and groups them together with other authors that are typical of the relevant currents and transformations. In contrast to Pohjanen and Johansson, Laitinen highlights transformations over time. While he presents Keksi as a Finnish peasant poet who used the Kalevala meter and whose popularity was at its height in the first half of the nineteenth century, Pohjanen and Johansson present him as the ‘father of Tornedalian Finnish literature’. This implies that Keksi is activated in the twenty-first century as a reaction to cultural homogenization and assimilationist policies in Sweden. However, as the situation in the Finnish context is different, there has been no need for Tornedalians in Finland to mobilize against identity and language loss. But, as Ridanpää emphasizes, there is a discourse about a nature-culture divide in Finland, which has marginalized the northern part of the nation (Ridanpää 2007). Although the linguistic situation in Finland differs from that in Sweden, there have been tensions between standard Finnish and local language, which has been regarded as uneducated and coarse (Kirstinä 2012). This is highlighted by Kirstinä in association with a discussion of Liksom’s use of mock orality.

The status of the Torne Valley, and Meänmaa, in Pohjanen’s writings is not quite clear. There are suggestions that Meänmaa is a place that is neither Sweden, nor Finland, such as the announcement of a flag and a national anthem, and
references to Meänmaa as “our land, to which Swedes migrated long after us” (see Pohjanen 2007, 11). How serious this proposal is remains unclear, not least considering Pohjanen’s preference for the carnivalesque (see ibid., 134 ff). Above all, Meänmaa is represented as a shifting experienced geography. Meänmaa does not have any official status as a separate administrative unit with fixed borders, but this does not preclude it being conceived of as an experienced geography with a specific cultural tradition. Pohjanen and Johansson’s Tornedalian Finnish literary history exemplifies a significant, contemporary, re-presentation of Meänmaa. However, there is ambivalence in the statements about its scope. In the first volume, the preface says that authors writing in Meänkieli will be discussed. In the preface to the second volume, this has been modified to “authors who have Meänkieli as their mother-tongue” (Pohjanen 2009, 7). The role attributed to Meänkieli is somewhat unclear, as some of the authors discussed write in Finnish or Swedish, and some in both. Of course, a language may function as a symbol of a common culture and heritage, even if not all the group’s members know the language (see Edwards 2009). While this symbolic function implicitly colours Pohjanen and Johansson’s narrative about Tornedalian Finnish culture, history and identity associated with the experienced geography of Meänmaa, their narrative does not consider alternative ideas of cultural identity that emphasize double, or multiple, identities and belongings. Neither Pohjanen nor Johansson comment on the symbolic function of language. The Meänmaa Association’s website and the Tornedalian Finnish literary history both emphasize how authors writing in Meänkieli are vital to the culture of the proposed Meänmaa region. However, few of the authors discussed use Meänkieli. One problem facing the project is that Meänkieli is a threatened minority language in Sweden, and that the number of young people who know Meänkieli has declined. Another problem is related to the issue of genre; the subjectivity, unconventional nature, inconsistencies, and carnivalesque elements of the literary history raises questions about its status as a work of non-fiction.

Vikgren’s contribution to place-making differs greatly from Pohjanen’s, in that his collections of poetry present metatextual explorations of language and discourse in the shape of permuting story-lines and the use of hybridity. There are elements of referentiality and autobiography in the representation of the Torne Valley as an experienced geography, with a language, history and culture of its own, shaped by the Torne River and historical ties to Finland. However, these elements are not activated to propose a homogenous culture, place or identity, but are mixed with elements from other geographies, genres, and time frames in assemblages of semiotic chains. Vikgren has returned to Keksi’s seventeenth-century poem about the ice breaking on the Torne River and the flooding, as one semiotic chain. Keksi’s poem is launched as a Tornedalian urtext in Pohjanen and Johansson’s Tornedalian Finnish literary history. While the poem represents a kind of root, or foundation, in the shaping of a Tornedalian Finnish literary tradition, Vikgren has chosen to generate a semiotic flow in which the river text participates in a shifting map, where elements are activated in new constellations that are arranged on various principles and resist forming a homogeneous, linear narrative.

David Vikgren’s treatment of time and space follows a different logic to that of realistic modes of writing. This may be linked to “the first premise of geocritical theory” as described by Westphal: “geocritical theory states that time and space have a common plan, subject to an entirely oscillatory logic whereby the fragmentary ceases to be oriented to a coherent whole” (Westphal 2011a, 37). Pohjanen, Niemi and Alsterdal represent space as dynamic and heterogeneous, though their representations are consistent in the respect that they do not question the stability of the geographical referent. When they represent the Torne Valley in literature, the real-world geographical referent is evoked, even if the space itself transforms and multiplies through multifocalized narratives. Westphal suggests that “so called real space is polyphonic” and that “geocritical analysis involves the confrontation of several optics” (ibid., 113). As the discussion of the above representations suggests, analyses of individual representations of Sápmi and Meänmaa, also called the Torne Valley, from diverse temporal strata implies confronting several different optics. According to Westphal, this method produces a geocritical representation characterized by variety (ibid.).

Vikgren’s poetry, while evoking movement and interaction with new spaces, is more connected with isotropy than with representations informed by realism: “Isotropy characterizes a space of movement and tensions with higher order and is not subject to hierarchy” (ibid., 37). This may be related to the second principle of geocriticism, as described by Westphal:

The relation between the representation of space and real space is indeterminate. Rather than considering a spatial or spatiotemporal representation as not “real,” we view every representation (whether literary, iconographic, etc.) as referring to a broadly imagined reality that, in and through its extreme extension, is subject to a weak ontology. (ibid., 37)
Deleuze and Guattari use the term ‘smooth space’ to denote a space that unfolds between points which can be connected by as many lines as one chooses. Smooth space, heterogenous space and nomadic space are connected with isotropy. Deleuze and Guattari highlight the connection; according to them smooth space:

has no homogeneity, except between infinitely proximate points, and the linking of proximities is effected independently of any determined path. […] A field, a heterogeneous smooth space, is wedded to a very particular type of multiplicity: nonmetric, acentered, rhizomatic multiplicities that occupy space […] They do not meet the visual condition of being observable from a point in space external to them […].

(Deleuze & Guattari [1980]2008, 409)

There are affinities with ‘smooth space’ in Vikgren’s assemblages of heterogeneous cultural, geographical and temporal ‘points’ but, in my reading, when he writes about the Torne Valley the geographical referent to a place in the real world does not disappear. Nor do real world geographical referents vanish when various places in different parts of the world become part of Vikgren’s associative flows. This can be related to Lefebvre’s discussion of space as composite, and his distinctions between ‘global, or conceived, space’ and ‘fragmented, or lived, space’ (Lefebvre 1991, 355–356). According to Lefebvre, ‘space is’ whole and broken, global and fragmented, at one and the same time. Just as it is at once conceived, perceived, and directly lived” (ibid.). One way of describing Vikgren’s literary representation of space is that it combines elements that represent conceived, perceived and lived space, resulting in a representation of space as both broken and whole, with elements pointing to the geographical referents of the Torne River and the Torne Valley. Vikgren’s own life story, as well as representations from diverse mimetic media and different temporal strata in a number of places, some of which do not literally represent ‘lived space’. Depictions of places the author can only access via representations in various discourses and media from diverse temporal strata, are conceived and perceived and, one might say in a sense, lived, albeit not through physical encounters.

The poetry of David Vikgren highlights the theme of ‘not relating absolutely to place’ through representations of discursive permutations that evoke hybrid cartographies, in which Keksi’s seventeenth-century poem has permuted to include concrete and deserts (Vikgren 2010). A comparison between Pohjanen’s and Vikgren’s makings of the Torne Valley testifies that there is no homogeneous rural periphery in literary writing. In promoting Hilja Byström as a forerunner and important author in a Tornedalian Finnish literary tradition, Pohjanen and Johansson contribute to the proposal that the village is a significant setting and lifestyle in Tornedalian Finnish culture, one with a genealogy of its own. This is manifest in the annual celebration of Hilja Byström on the Hilja Byström Day, 18 April, in Övertorneå, and in Barents Publisher’s publication of her novel Byn [The Village]. Vikgren, on the other hand, who grew up in a block of flats in Övertorneå, represents another thread in the making of the Torne Valley. Jons­son suggests that the Torne Valley of Vikgren’s childhood includes an element of distance to a place dominated by churches and homesteads, and that this has influenced Vikgren’s interest in not relating absolutely to place (Jonsson).

Smuggling is a theme that is highlighted as typical of the culture and history of the contemporary Swedish-Finnish borderscape. It is also a prominent theme in Bengt Pohjanen’s texts, which portray smuggling as an intrinsic part of local history. Like other elements in his writing, smuggling tends to be portrayed as an element of carnivalesque popular protest against laws imposed from above, which disrupt ancient customs such as the transportation of goods across the Torne River. While Pohjanen depicts smuggling as part of local customs, Mikael Niemi’s Koka björn [Boiling Bear] and Tove Alsterdal’s I tystnaden begravd [Buried in Silence] exemplify crime fiction using historical Torndalian subject matter, such as the life story of Lars Levi Laestadius and the history of emigration to the Soviet Union in the 1930s respectively. The shifting character of the texts that deal with the theme of crime indicate the heterogeneity of place-making. Multiple perspectives, diverse temporal strata, different genres, etc., contribute to place-making in the spirit of geocriticism as described by Westphal (Westphal 2011a, Westphal 2011b). Westphal emphasizes that “space only exists in its temporal strata” and that space evolves over time (Westphal 2011a, 122). One effect of analyzing multifocalization in a body of texts that represent a geographical place is that variations between temporal strata appear, as well as differences between the authors’ perceptions of space. The place depicted in Hilja Byström’s novel Byn from 1940 is associated with a temporal stratum of the past, a place considerably different to the Torne Valley of 2009, which is when Bengt Pohjanen and Kirsti Johansson’s Tornedalian Finnish literary history, Den tornedalsfinska litteraturen: Från Kallkimmna till Hilja Byström, was published.

Bengt Pohjanen is a pioneer in the making of Meänmaa and in the promotion
of Meänkieli as a literary language. Vikgren, who belongs to a younger generation, is not associated with the Meänmaa Association, and neither is Rosa Liksom, who features in Pohjanen and Johansson’s Tornedalian Finnish literary history. The writings of Pohjanen, on the one hand, and Vikgren and Liksom, on the other, display different aesthetic preferences and modes of writing. The making of Meänmaa, and the Torne Valley, in literary writing is a diverse process that results in texts about roots and about rhizomatic routes in various directions. Vikgren’s mode of making place is related to one of the currents in postmodernist theories about place-making, described by Massey as ‘all is global flow’ (Massey 2012, xiii). This current is related to the writing of nomadic, or rhizomatic texts (see Deleuze & Guattari [1980] 2008, 25–26).

Final Remarks

The Sámi have been characterized as a nation without a state, constituting an imagined community with a traditional homeland called Sápmi, located across different nation-states. This traditional homeland has an official status, as it is acknowledged by institutions such as the Sámi Parliament. The governments of Norway, Sweden and Finland have granted the Sámi some rights, while denying them others. As mentioned previously, there are also Sámi in north-west Russia. Sápmi is now an established concept, after decades of cultural and political mobilization on the part of the Sámi. Nils-Aslak Valkeapää became visible on the cultural and political scene in the 1970s, and both he and Johan Turi have been characterized as Sámi national poets. Valkeapää played a prominent role in the emergence of modern Sámi literature, the establishment of an infrastructure for the publishing and dissemination of Sámi literature, in making transnational contacts with indigenous peoples on other continents, and in developing multimedia texts. Valkeapää and subsequent Sámi authors and artists have been influenced by the theoretical approaches highlighted in part one of this book. Postcolonial ecocriticism and environmental humanism highlight reactions to planetary changes and the exploitation of humans and nature. These responses to the transformation of traditional lifestyles and nature are found in the Sámi texts that have been discussed. The focus on temporal strata, characteristic of geocriticism and space studies in general, is also manifest in the studied material as references to a precolonial past, when people lived in harmony and symbiosis with a pluriverse in which humans, nature, and the cosmos are interconnect-
ed. The dimension of the future is evoked by literary texts and art through the themes of activism, ethics, resilience and retribution.

Concern about ecology is an orientation found in Valkeapää’s *Trekways of the Wind, The Sun, My Father and The Earth, My Mother*, Jannok’s lyrics in *ORDA – This is my land*, and Axelsson’s epic poem *Aednan*. It contributes to the representation of a place where humanity used to live in harmony with nature and the cosmos, prior to colonisation. One oral genre to which Valkeapää returns is that of *yoik*. The abovementioned books include references to, and adaptions in writing of, the ancient oral genre of *yoik*, which is now used as a distinguishing marker for Sámi culture and place-making. Like other indigenous peoples, the Sámi have myths about the sun, or sky, being a father figure, and the Earth a mother (Griffin-Pierce 1995, Majid 2010). This mythical subject matter is part of an oral tradition, and to some it represents an indigenous ecological wisdom, but it may also function as subject matter that is activated in present day cultural mobilization and the retrieval of intangible cultural heritage. Like other indigenous writers, Valkeapää uses oral knowledge in the form of stories and *yoiks* that have been passed down from one generation to the next. Walls suggests that this kind of oral material can be understood as a kind of ‘archive’, allowing people to express their own understanding of ecosystem connections (Walls 2009, 212, see also Adamson & Monani 2017, 9).

Valkeapää’s books, Jannok’s lyrics and Axelsson’s poem reclaim an indigenous ontology, which has vital consequences for human interaction with nature. In his analysis of American Indian texts, Dean Rader refers to the activation of ancient indigenous cosmovisions in contemporary cultural production as a form of “engaged resistance” against “colonial assimilation and erasure” (Rader 2011, 1). This kind of engaged resistance is found in Valkeapää’s *Trekways of the Wind, The Sun, My Father and The Earth, My Mother*, which activate a Sámi cosmovision with complex multispecies entanglements, challenging a Western ontology based on a division between nature-culture and human-animal. The pre-colonial place depicted in the Sámi texts discussed here is a cosmos without Western binaries. This is a setting for present-day indigenous texts that explore multispecies relations, where “the personhood of other beings and their ecocultural entanglements with human lives come into explicit focus” (Adamson & Monani 2017, 12).

While literary representations of a traditional Sámi territory contribute to the making of spatial claims connected with land use, there are also Sámi texts in which mobility, in the shape of transfers and journeys, is a central theme. The history of the compulsory relocation of Sámi villages is used as a theme in contemporary literature as an element in narratives of dislocation and loss. This is true for Linnea Axelsson’s poem *Aednan* and artworks by Katarina Pirak Sikku. Both Axelsson and Pirak Sikku evoke temporal strata that continue to influence present-day perceptions of space associated with the loss of land and identity. The historical backdrop alluded to is that of the compulsory resettlement of Sámi, due to rivers being dammed to create water reservoirs.

Migration from Sápmi to escape from an environment in which Sámi ethnicity is a stigma is a theme of both fiction and contemporary film. The lack of job opportunities is another backdrop to southward migration, though whether individuals are depicted as being dislocated because of this is related to whether they have been able to relocate or not. Ann-Helén Laestadius’ books about Agnes give a new twist to relocation as a theme related to her mother’s move south. Agnes succeeds in forming a Sámi identity that she did not previously have, embracing the notion that she is at home in both Sápmi, where her mother’s family comes from, and in the Stockholm area where she has grown up. This gives a new twist to the notion of *ruokto váimmus*, the ‘home in the heart’ that is cherished by North Sámi nomadic reindeer herders, and used by Valkeapää in his poetry in order to highlight a specifically Sámi way of relating to belonging and home. Agnes’ development involves becoming able to embrace both Sápmi and the Stockholm area as ‘homes in her heart’, a semantic change to *ruokto váimmus* associated with the transformation of peoples’ lives as a consequence of migration from Sápmi, the establishment of new homes, and journeys back.

Although Sápmi is now an established concept, this study shows that awareness of the existence of a traditional Sámi territory is not found everywhere. As indicated by the references to the Girjas court case on Sofia Jannok’s album *ORDA – This is my land*, there are representatives of the Swedish state who do not acknowledge the existence of a traditional Sámi territory. This proves that the production of narratives that create specific places occurs in a contested field where diverse, sometimes contradictory, narratives compete for recognition, approval and legitimacy. Unlike Sápmi, Meänmaa is a concept which is not used in official political contexts. While Valkeapää’s poetry collections, as discussed in part two of this book, contribute to the creation of an imagined community of Sámi people in a transnational area that consists of parts of Northern Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia’s Kola Peninsula, constituting a traditional homeland, the question of whether the Tornedalians are an imagined community in
the sense described by Benedict Anderson (Anderson 1983) is more problematic. A central hypothesis in this study is that ethnic and linguistic minority status are decisive elements in Bengt Pohjanen’s proposed region of Meänmaa. As stated in part one, ethnicity is an important category in theoretical approaches that have emerged over recent decades. However, the meaning of ethnic affiliations varies. In Sweden, both Finns and Tornedalians are recognized as historical minorities. In Finland, however, Tornedalians are not distinguished from the majority population by ethnicity. The term ‘Tornedalian’ may be used to denote ethnic and/or geographical attachment in Sweden, while it is not used to denote ethnicity in Finland. The term ‘Tornedalian Finn’ was once used in Sweden to emphasize the Finnish connection, but this was changed so as not to single out the Tornedalians as ‘alien’ in a Swedish context. While ethnic and linguistic minority status is a prominent theme that shapes the experiences, memories and narratives of Tornedalians in Sweden, this is not true of literature from the Finnish side of the border. However, language is a theme in depictions from the Finnish side of the border. Kirstinä states that dialects were not associated with “civilized speech manners” in Finland and that, when used in literature, they were not rendered as oral transcription. She claims that Rosa Liksom’s use of orality in her prose changed this: “Liksom delivered dialect from purism’s oppression, and later on, dialects have also been approved in serious poetry” (Kirstinä 2012, 14). Thus, while the language issue in Sweden is associated with minority status, in Finland it is a question of accepting representations of the speech of people who have low socio-economic status.

There are depictions of a common past, followed by a period of Swedification in narratives that present the Swedish Torne Valley as an experienced geography. Now that Meänkieli is a threatened minority language in Sweden (see Pietikäinen et al. 2010), the notion that there is a common language which may form the basis for a literary tradition is problematic. As Pohjanen and Johansson’s Tornedalian Finnish literary histories show, this is not a notion that determines the choice of featured authors. As mentioned previously, only a minority of them have been published in Meänkieli. There is an ambivalence about the intended readers of the works; although they are published in Swedish, quite a few of these authors write in Finnish and a considerable number of their books have not been translated to Swedish. For example, Rosa Liksom’s debut novel Kreišland, discussed above, has not been translated.

As opposed to Prokkolä’s and Ridanpää’s analyses of Pohjanen’s construct-
on the Swedish and Finnish sides of the border do not share a central element in the shaping of an experienced geography, namely minority status connected to ethnicity and language. However, the theme of poor, “uncivilized” people living in the backwaters of modern society is found in narratives about Tornedalians in both Sweden and Finland. In a Finnish context, Mukka’s *Maa on syntinen laulu* [The Earth is a Sinful Song] exemplifies this theme, and so does Nina Wähi’s *Testamente* [Legacy], published in Sweden in 2019. As mentioned in part one, ethnicity is a central theme of postcolonial ecocriticism, environmental humanism, geocriticism and space studies in general. Ethnicity is also a theme in Finnish texts that deal with Sáminess. Furthermore, postcolonial theory has been used in studies of literature and art from northern Finland. Tensions between the local and the global, and transcultural phenomena – both highlighted in environmental humanism (Robin 2017) – are themes foregrounded by Rosa Liksom and the artist Markku Laakso in their blending of elements from diverse cultural traditions.

While Pohjanen’s use of the past in the construction of Meänmaa implies the use of Tornedalian subject matter from both sides of the border, and elements of Finnish history that have had a direct impact on the Torne Valley, Rosa Liksom relates to a Finnish context. The consequence of this is that different imagined communities are evoked; in Pohjanen’s case that of Tornedalian Finns, and in Liksom’s that of Finns in general. This use of history is exemplified in her novel *Kreisland*, which presents an overview of Finnish twentieth-century history and ironically depicts the abandonment of the image of history as a progressive movement towards greater freedom and enlightenment. The chapters depicting Impi Agafiina’s enthusiasm for nationalism, fascism, communism and capitalism, respectively, include the exhortation “forward, forward”. These ideologies are associated with various geographical referents throughout the protagonist’s journey: Finland, the Soviet Union and the US. The geographical location of Finnish Lapland, where Impi Agafiina was born and where she ends up at the end of the novel, is not connected with any of these ideologies. At the start of the novel, Lapland is described as a place beyond civilization through the depiction of the extreme squalor of the small farm where Impi Agafiina’s “uncivilized” biological parents live. The conclusion presents another image of Lapland, through its description of Juha Gabriel’s tidy, well-managed farm where life is organized around work. At this stage, Impi Agafiina has lost interest in ideologies, devoting her life to work on the farm. The historical phase being depicted is that of the postmodern condition, a theme related to Finland’s turbulent and dramatic twentieth-century history.

David Vikgren’s use of rhizomatic writing highlights another aspect of postmodernism, emphasising the complex, extensive and ungraspable circulation of signs in contemporary society. As the discussion of Vikgren’s collections of poetry indicates, this is linked to the notion that a comprehensive view is impossible. This also has a bearing on place-making, in the sense that places are also represented by signs that circulate in various directions. This way of representing places contrasts with representations of “knowable communities” which may be understood in their totality.

Westphal highlights how the connections between referent and representation are multifaceted and complex (Westphal 2011a, 152). Not only are there fluctuating relationships between referential space and fictional texts, representations are also influenced by the author’s inner landscape. Both Sápmi and Meänmaa have a territorial history, however, the naming as well as definition of the referential spaces have fluctuated. While Pohjanen’s writing and projects largely represent subjective performances, with elements of carnivalisation, Meän akateemi – *Academia Tornedaliensis* represents traditional scholarly work. The Institute for Language and Folklore is the Swedish government agency responsible for language policy and planning. A linguist responsible for issues related to the Meänkieli language has been employed at the institute since 2018.160 This does not mean that subjective, popular, carnivalesque narratives have no function in local cultural production, nor that an author of fiction is not free to describe settings subjectively. Both Pohjanen and Meän akateemi – *Academia Tornedaliensis* have contributed re-presentations of Meänmaa and the Torne Valley, respectively, that are connected to different contexts and genres. This contributes to a heterogeneous and mobile representation of place. The discussion of the texts analysed in this study highlights the constructedness of place, and how places do not “arise organically out of the soil”, to use Massey’s phrase (Massey 2012, xiii). As these analyses of Sámi and Tornedalian texts show, places are dynamic and subject to negotiation, as place-making is an ongoing process associated with negotiations about the identity of a community, the economic realm, societal relations, genres and aesthetic preferences and, not least, with diverse temporal strata.
Notes

1. In 2008 the concept of Meänmaa was used in the municipalities of Pajala and Kolari as part of a project that aimed to strengthen cooperation. At the time, there was a belief that a mine would be established on both sides of the border. In a newspaper article, Huhtaniska emphasizes that this project was a failure and that the concept of Meänmaa is no longer used in municipal activities. Anna Kumpula Koster, who is active in municipal politics in Pajala, mentions that the municipality’s use of the concept was not linked to the Meänmaa Association, but that it was a trend at the time to use “meän” (which means ‘our’) in various composites (Huhtaniska 2017a).

2. “Meänmaa kattaa viis kuntaa Ruottin puolella (Haaparanta, Matærangi, Pajala, Kiruna ja Jellivaara), kuus kuntaa Suomen puolella (Tornio, Ylitornio, Oello, Kolari, Muonio ja Enontekiö), Meänmaa on kans Pajalan ja Kolarin kunnitten yhteistyöprojekti. Meänmaa tarkotta yhtenäistä kulttuurialuetta, joka on koko maailmassa, missä meänkiletä puh utan” [Meänmaa consists of five municipalities on the Swedish side (Haparanda, Matarengi, Pajala, Kiruna and Gallivare) and six municipalities on the Finnish side (Tornio, Ylitornio, Oello, Kolari, Muonio and Enontekiö), Meänmaa is also the joint project of the municipalities of Pajala and Kolari. Meänmaa signifies a common cultural region, which exists worldwide where Meänkieli is spoken]. www.meänmaa.net, accessed 27 July 2019.

3. In a discussion of the construction of a north-south binary in a Finnish national context, Ridanpää claims that “the marginalized party”, referring to people in the north, has a “status as a cultural minority” (Ridanpää 2007, 913). It is not quite clear in what respect people in northern Finland are “a minority” as their marginalization is linked to low socio-economic status, poverty and lack of formal education.

4. One chapter of Westphal’s Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Spaces deals with the theme of “reading spaces” (Westphal 2011a, 149 ff.).

5. Unless otherwise noted, all translations from Swedish are my own. I have used an edition of Vårt land published in 1937, which is available on the Internet as part of Project Runeberg: http://runeberg.org/tzbokland/.

6. “Lappen är kortvuxen, har låg panna, utstående kinder och små ögon. Till lyxnet är han trög, tungsint och trumpen.” (Topelius 1875, section 61)


9. The Torne river plays a prominent role in Bengt Pohjanen’s authorship, for example in his use of the theme of smuggling across the river, such as in his autobiographical book Smugglarkungens son [Son of the Smuggler King] from 2007. The river plays a central role in local history, in Pohjanen’s young adult book Land i lågor [Land in Flames] from 1992, about the burning of buildings on the Finnish side of the border as German troops retreat from Finland during World War II. Like Pohjanen, the poet David Vikgren uses elements from local history. His Anttikeksiivesque: Översättning, dikter [Anttikeksi’s poem: Translation, poem] from 2011, a reworking inspired by Antti Keksi’s 17th century poem, is a seminal text in Tornealalian literary history.


11. In this context, Westphal quotes Serres: “we are no longer moving toward a universe, but toward the multiplicity of possible worlds” (Serres 1996, 64; quoted in Westphal 2011a, 75).

12. Jebens discusses the shifting legal regulation of land ownership in the geographical context of Finnmark, northern Norway (Jebens 2010, see also Markussen 2013).

13. Jarlsson Wikström discusses Svonni’s novel Överskrida gränser [Jarlsson Wikström 2018] (Crossing Borders), but without integrating perspectives from a specific form of ecocriticism, one that highlights ideas of an indigenous ontology which challenges the Western nature-culture binary (see Adamson & Monani 2017).

14. The Swedish Peoples’ Home, Folkhemmet, is a concept that was launched by Prime Minister Per Albin Hansson in a speech in 1918. It is associated with a Social Democratic vision of society and connected with social reform implemented by the State, with the aim of guaranteeing social and economic security for the people. These ideas are frequently referred to as “the Swedish model” (den svenska modellen).

15. The issue of Tornealalian identity has inspired debate and conflict. Well-known author Mikael Niemi has highlighted improved self-confidence, as well as divisions and power struggles, as consequences of the acknowledgement that Tornealians are a historical minority in Sweden. Niemi is critical of the way the Meänmaa flag was launched by a “goup of old men in Haparanda”, with no discussion among the people it concerned. He also criticizes the lack of cooperation that resulted in the production of two competing dictionaries, which he sees as a tragic waste of resources (Huhtaniska 2017b). The theme of conflict and competition is also commented on by Maja Niemi, the National Association of Swedish Tornealians (STR-T). In 2013, the Swedish Academy withdrew its decision to approve 15 July as an official flag day for the Torne Valley. The application had come from the Meänmaa Association, which Bengt Pohjanen chaired. The withdrawal was because the National Association of Swedish Tornealians already has a special day for Tornealians, 21 September (Huhtaniska 2017a; see also Sveriges Radio Norrbotten 2013).

16. In a survey, a Finnish respondent states her belief that the term Meänkieli is used to denominate the local language spoken in Sweden, while the local dialect is called
Peräpohjolan murre or Tornion murre in Finland (Appendix A).

17. Prokkola and Riidanpää conducted interviews with Torndalsians and found that not all their respondents were sympathetic to Pohjanen’s idea of Meänmaa having its own flag (see Prokkola & Riidanpää 2011, 787–788). This demonstrates how place-making and the making of cultural heritage is conflictual and that one group can contain varying opinions.

18. Huhtaniska states that the flag was designed by Herbert Wirlöf, one of the co-founders of the Meänmaa Association, and that it was first used in 2006 (Huhtaniska 2017a).

19. In this context, Robin is referring to Jerome Kagan’s description of three cultures of knowledge, in particular “the focus of the humanities on the ‘meanings’ humans impose on experience” (Robin 2017, 3).

20. Here, Robin refers to an argument made by Boulton (Boulton 2016, 777).

21. Vikgren frequently uses unconventional language. One example is writing Antriekteksväde as one word.

22. In a presentation of Sami literature, Vuokko Hirvonen mentions that the book was written by Turi in collaboration with Emilie Demant Hatt (Hirvonen 2005, 206). Harald Gaski, however, says that Demant Hatt translated the book into Danish, and that she encouraged Turi to write the book (Gaski 1998, 24).

23. Áillohaš is Nils-Aslak Valkapää’s Sámi name.

24. The issue of the ownership of land traditionally used for reindeer husbandry is discussed by Otto Jebens in a study of property rights in Inner Finnmark in northern Norway. This area was once part of a common territory, claimed by both Sweden and Norway until 1751 (Jebens 2010). A border treaty was signed in 1751, making the common territories subject to ecclesiastical and secular sovereignty (Markussen 2013, 2–3, Jebens 2010).

25. Hirvonen states that in the generation of Sámi women writers she calls “the grandmothers”, many writers were “imbued with Christianity”. In a questionnaire, they say that they write “because they wish to convey to their descendants the spiritual and cultural heritage with which they have grown up.” (Hirvonen 2008, 226). These writers do not necessarily propose yoiking and other pre-Christian elements of traditional culture as a heritage suitable for activation in the formation of a positive Sámi cultural identity.

26. The translation from 1987 was by Mia Berner. A translation by John Erling Utsi was published in 1996.

27. An early version of the speech that is often referred to was published in 1887: http://www.washington.edu/~wuirred/outreach/cspn/Website/Classroom%20Materials/Reading%20in%20Region/Texts%20by%20and%20about%20Natives/Texts/7.html. However, there are also sources disputing that a speech was delivered by Chief Seattle in 1854: http://www.halcyon.com/arborhts/chiefsea.html.

28. Markussen proposes that the state of mind depicted here “is almost pre-Oedipal” (Markussen 2013, 13). For the purpose of this book, indigenous notions of a holistic pluriverse and an ontology without a nature-culture split are a more relevant frame for interpretation than Western psychoanalytical theory.


30. Another indigenous writer, Leslie Marmon Silko, wrote her version of a family album with a focus on her family history and the Laguna reservation and its surroundings. Silko’s Storyteller from 1981 is an experimental book, combining elements from oral tradition in short fiction and poetry interspersed with photographs.

31. The story is included in Solskatten [Treasure of the Sun], which is a collection of Sámi stories and lore retold by Daga Nyberg (Nyberg 1986).

32. There are no references to the gender of the lyrical I. Occasionally the pronoun ‘we’ is used when referring to indigenous peoples.

33. According to the presentation of Lars Wilhelm Svonni on the website “Norrbotensförfattare”, “Goåtho eadnan” is the most often played Sámi melody ever (https://www.bibblo.se/norrbottens%5E%C3%B6rfattare%5EB%25726bed%25E58054%25A3%25C3%25A9%5Elars-wilhelm-svonni, accessed 17 October 2018).


37. “Vatten från Luleälvens källor, jag ger dig friheten efter alla dessa år i fångenskap.” (Jebens 2010). (sic)

38. “Vare det en signal från de samiska gudarna att hon skulle göra sig av med skärutrustningen? Kanske har vi protesterat tillräckligt mot stornsamhällets förryck av oss? Kanske skall de få respir på fem till tio år för att bereda plats åt det samiska folket i Sverige? Har de höga herrarna överhuvudtaget förstått att de måste utforma en anständig samepolitik? Måste vi verkligen spränga alla dammar inom rensoðselom-
There are various Sámi groups with different lifestyles. John Trygve "Det svenska folkhemmet i Vinden pratade länge / med kåtaduken" (Axelsson 2018, 56).


"Hjordens kropp / blev våra kroppar // vår familj" (Axelsson 2018, 47).

"Öh hon undrade / vilka de var" (Axelsson 2018, 70).

"Småjordbrukare och samer fick sina marker förstörda i och med industrialiseringen av älvar" (Axelsson 2018, 30).


The reason why the Meänmaa Association was founded, as mentioned in an interview with Pohjanen, is that it is borderless and is based on the acknowledgement of a larger cultural region than that of the Swedish Torne Valley (Labbä 2015).

After the trilogy, the following books by Hilja Byström were published: Prästgårdfönstret: Berättelser och skisser [The Vicarage Window: Stories and Sketches] (1945), Bära eller brista: Roman [Make or Break: A Novel] (1949), Varandras bődor: Några bilder [Each Other's Burdens: Some Images] (1962), and Såsom du bar sagt [As You Have Said] (1964).

Juha Ridanpää says that, when asked about Meänmaa, a number of Tornedalian respondents to a questionnaire emphasized "the artificial nature of it (as an invention of Pohjanen)" (e-mail correspondence with Juha Ridanpää 22 April 2018, see also Prokkola & Ridanpää 2011).

Ett år i Järvi was published before Hilja Kallioniemi-Bystrom’s marriage, which explains why the name of the author in catalogues is ‘Kallioniemi.’

"Hur skulle det ske, utan att där blev en brytning med det som djupast inne var deras natur, och vad de inte hade råd att offra?” (Kallioniemi 1932, 94).


"Jag är piskad i skolan / till språk, redlighet / nationalitet / Jag är piskad till hån / för det som var mitt / språklösheten / gränsen" (Pohjanen 2005, 5).

"– Är han inte svensk, frågar hon och ser nästan rådd ut. Varför skickar dom utlännningar hit? Jag bad att få två starka karlar och så skickar dom utlännningar som ingenting kan" (Kieri 1985, 14).

"Nils Holgersson såg aldrig oss. Författarinnan missade ett stort område av landet: necessarily prefers the concept of Meänmaa to that of the Torne Valley. In one questionnaire, a Finnish respondent says that she prefers the name the Torne Valley because it includes a reference to the Torne River (Appendix A)."


75. " – Isolerade har vi aldrig varit, sade han och log, det är nog mälardalingarna som har åker snart hela ålvatnan ner i eländet, att ingen behärskar något språk ordentligt – precis som det var, när våra föräldrar var barn." (Byström 2008, 101).


77. After the Hilja Byström Day on 18 April 2019, I asked a Finnish respondent about her attitude to the concept of Meänmaa and, in the context of a lecture in Umeå on 20 February 2019, I presented a voluntary questionnaire. Prokkola and Ridanpää’s group discussions with a fairly small number of Törnedalians suggest that not all of them regard Meänmaa as a relevant concept (Prokkola & Ridanpää 2011). Some participating Törnedalians emphasized the "artificial nature of it (as an invention of Pohjanen)" (e-mail correspondence with Juha Ridanpää, 22 April 2018). Ridanpää did not ask about the concept of Meänmaa per se, but the expression of this opinion was a side-effect of his investigation. The responses to my questionnaire do not mention Pohjanen, but an overwhelming majority of those who answered the question of whether they use the name Meänmaa answered "no" (Appendix A).

78. Sámi literature is also published using subsidies to promote diversity. The most prominent Sámi publishers DAT and Davvi Girji are located in northern Norway. While the material aspect of publishing is also important in this case, the context of the launch of the Meänmaa concept is more complex, given that it is a registered trademark. This risks making it a matter that is more for the trademark owner than for the Törnedalian minority as a whole.

79. The lack of people and institutions with adequate competence to stimulate and improve literary production in a small literary field is not only a problem in the Torne Valley. Langgård discusses this theme from a Greenlandic perspective highlighting, for example, the lack of literary criticism as an institution and the need to engage the young generation (Langgård 2011, 170).


81. This information is provided in the magazine in Finnish: ”©Meänmaa 2017/ Valtion kulttuuriraita tukemaa” (Meänmaa 3-4 2017).

82. There are also other contexts for funding, such as EU grants. I will not cover this in more detail, as my aim is not to examine various forms of funding, but to illustrate how the activities of Barents Publisher are financed by subsidies. As shown by the examples of the Swedish Arts Council and Region Norrbotten, these activities are associated with Swedish minority politics and regional politics.

83. Ridanpää emphasizes how the area designated as Meänmaa does not have fixed boundaries, hampering attempts to institutionalize it. He highlights how fixed boundaries are “a prerequisite for common institutionalized regions such as the provinces of nation-states” (Ridanpää 2017, 192).

84. Fowler highlights the function of genres, proposing that they guide both authors and readers. Authors should let the conventions of a genre guide the writing of a book. He states that reading is guided by genre expectations, based on familiarity with genre conventions (Fowler 1982). As regards the genre of literary history, it is significant that it is non-fiction, which places certain requirements on style and composition.

85. This was pointed out by a Finnish respondent to a questionnaire (Appendix A).

86. The correct spelling, Keksi, is occasionally used by Pohjanen. At the Hilja Byström Day in Övertorneå on 18 April 2018, when he was asked about it, he said that he finds the spelling Kexi “more fun”.


88. The English title One Night Stands is not a literal translation of the Finnish title, which literally means ‘stop for a night’ or ‘one night’s stop’.

89. Sandbacka claims that this “kidnapping” is a clear reference to abductions and forcible expulsions performed by right-wing extremists in Finland in the 1930s (Sandbacka 2015, 195).

90. Sandbacka points out that the name “Impi” translates as ‘maiden’ or ‘virgin’ (Sandbacka 2016, 200).


95. This was mentioned by a Finnish respondent to a questionnaire (Appendix A).

96. Lassinantti’s article was first published in the Norrlandska Socialdemokraten newspaper, 31 October 1954.


98. The theme of Peura and Peura’s book is smuggling in the Torne Valley in the postwar period (Peura & Peura 2005). It is published by the Tornedalian publisher Pohjan Väylä Oy on the Finnish side of the border.


100. “Det finns ingen doft av synder/i någon smuggel/- vänkapssmuggle/- familjesmuggle/- yrkessmuggel/- allt förlåtet längs alla vägar” (Pohjanen 2004, 121).

101. The term historiographic metafiction was coined by Linda Hutcheon in the 1980s. It refers to fiction which combines metafiction with historical fiction (see Hutcheon 1988).

102. In the postscript, Alsterdal mentions the sources she used when depicting the departure of Tornedalians to the Soviet Union and what happened to them when they arrived there. A number of sources are provided, among them Carl Uno Hanno, who founded an archive in Luleå. Hanno interviewed Soviet migrants who returned and ensured that their narratives were preserved. She also mentions two books written by the journalist Kaa Eneberg: 

103. “STR-T är ett riksförbund för de som känner samhörighet med meänkieli och det ursprungliga språkområdets kultur och historia.” (Svenska Tornedalingars Riksförbund, Torniolakksolaiset, STR-T’s website).

104. This is highlighted on STR-T’s website, for example in articles in a jubilee publication, Kyllä se kannatte, that celebrated the association’s first thirty years.

105. Tore Hjorth, chair of STR-T 2007–2015, mentions that many Tornedalians do not consider the Tornedalian Finnish language spoken in the Swedish Torne Valley to be a separate language of its own, rather a Finnish dialect (Hjorth, 4, accessed 20 April 2018).

106. The work of the institute is described on its website: https://www.sprakochfolkminnen.se/om-oss/verksamhet/about-the-institute.html.

107. According to the website of the Meänmaa Association the language council was founded by Bengt Pohjanen and Matti Kenttä in 1988. It is now run by the association (see “Meänmaan Kieliräati: http://www.meanmaa.net/index_mmkr.htm, accessed 2 August 2019).
is a side-track, and not a main theme as Ingvarsson proposes. Hertzberg sees collecting as the central theme (see Hertzberg 2008).

120. “skrot, skräp och rester” (Andtbacka 2008, 13).


126. “staden i söder” (Raattamaa Visén 2019, 10).

127. ”en liten by, hårt arbete, en karg älvdal, svält och gudstro” (Raattamaa Visén 2019, 17).

128. ”Han som har så många predikord som får människorna att vilja älska och arbeta hårt och att leva ännu mer och mer tills inom ett lite vilse.” (Raattamaa Visén 2019, 11).


132. At a meeting of the Meänmaa Association I attended in Övertorneå, 18 April 2018, in association with the Hilja Byström Day, Bengt Pohjanen said that he used the spelling ‘Kexi’ because he thought it looks smarter than Keksi. At the meeting he proposed Kexi as the name of a new authors’ association.

133. The media has reported on the tension between Bengt Pohjanen and Mikael Niemi, who claims that the Tornedalian identity must be disconnected from language. In an interview, he expresses the viewpoint that it is not necessary to know Meänkieli in order to be a Tornedalian, highlighting how the young generation has not been taught Finnish or Meänkieli (Huhtaniska 2017b).

134. This linguist was a speaker at the Hilja Byström Day in Övertorneå, 18 April 2018 (see Appendix B).
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Appendix A

Background: In order to investigate attitudes to the name Meänmaa, a questionnaire was presented to one person involved with Meänkieli culture from the Finnish side of the border, and to a group of Torndalians in Sweden. I met the Finnish respondent at the Hilja Byström Day in Överkalix, on 18 April 2018, where I was invited to give a lecture (see Appendix B), and I met the Swedish Torndalians at a lecture I presented at the local section of Svenska Torndalingars Riksförbund – Tornolaaksolaiset [the Association of Swedish Torndalians], in Umeå on 20 February 2019. The Finnish respondent answered a questionnaire which was sent by e-mail, and the Swedish Torndalians who wished to answer the questions were given a questionnaire after the lecture. It was answered anonymously by 15 people. Twelve people stated that they were Torndalians, 11 from Sweden and one from Finland, and one did not answer this question. Only the answers of those who stated that they are Torndalians have been considered.

Results: The Finnish respondent replied that she does not use the name Meänmaa and she prefers the name the Torne Valley, as it emphasizes the river. Of the respondents in Umeå, Sweden, five people stated that they do not find the name Meänmaa adequate or useful, one did not answer the question, one answered with a question mark, and one stated that the concept is adequate and useful.

Conclusion: It must be kept in mind that few people answered the questionnaire and that it is not possible to draw any general conclusions from so few responses. However, the results strongly suggest that Meänmaa is not a name that is used, or considered adequate, by many Torndalians.

Questions to the Finnish respondent, presented in Swedish:

Begreppen Tornedalen och Meänmaa – vad lägger du in i dem? Finns det behov av båda begreppen? Varför/varför inte?


Tornedalens och/eller Meänmaas litteratur historia: Är det viktigt att det finns en lokal litteraturhistoria? Finns det någon sådan idag som används i skolor? Skan man ställa några speciella krav på en litteraturhistoria?

Meänkieli-grammatik: Finns någon adekvat grammatikbok som används i skolor idag?


Apropå Hilja Byström-dagen: Är Hilja Byström en författare som blir läst? Är det en uppskattad författare? Hur ser skolungdomar på henne?

 Aktörer på det kulturella fältet i Tornedalen: Hur skulle du beskriva aktörerna på det kulturella fältet? Finns det flera tungvante grupper och/eller personer? Finns det olika agendor, eller har man en gemensam linje?

Samarbete/samverkan: Hur fungerar samarbetet mellan olika aktörer på det kulturella fältet?

Onskemål: Har du några önskemål angående samverkan med olika aktörer i Tornedalen?

Finska, respektive svenska, Tornedalen: Är det viktigt att svenska tornedalingar samverkar med tornedalingar på finska sidan av gränsen? Varför/varför inte?

Övrigt

Questions to the Swedish Tornedalians, presented in Swedish:

1. Är du tornedaling? — ja/nej
2. Är du: — man/kvinna
3. Hur gammal är du? — ___ år
4. Talar du meänkieli? — ja/något/nej
5. Talar du finska? — ja/något/nej

6. Begreppen Tornedalen och Meänmaa: Vad lägger du in i dem?

7. Är kultur och litteratur från Tornedalen och/eller Meänmaa viktigt?

8. Vilka författare är viktiga utifrån ett historiskt perspektiv?

9. Vilka nu levande författare är betydelsefulla?

10. Vilken typ av författare skulle vara önskvärda utifrån ett framtidsperspektiv?

11. Meänkieli-grammatik: Finns någon adekvat grammatikbok som används i skolor idag?

12. Finska, respektive svenska, Tornedalen: Är det viktigt att svenska tornedalingar samverkar med tornedalingar på finska sidan av gränsen?
13. I skolan/skolundervisningen:
Utifrån din uppfattning: Är Meänmaa ett begrepp som används av lärare och elever?
   ○ ja   ○ nej

Utifrån din uppfattning: Hur många elever lär sig meänkieli?
Ca (ange uppskattat antal)______________   ○ vet ej

Utifrån din uppfattning: Används meänkieli som hemspråk idag?
○ ja   ○ nej

Utifrån din uppfattning: Vilka tornedalska författare läser eleverna?

Utifrån din uppfattning: Vilka tornedalska författare lyfts fram av lärarna?

14. Apropå Hilja Byström-dagen:
Är Hilja Byström en författare som blir läst?
   ○ ja   ○ nej

Är det en uppskattad författare?
   ○ ja   ○ nej   ○ till viss del   ○ vet ej

Utifrån din uppfattning: Hur ser skolungdomar på henne?

15. Aktörer på det kulturella fältet i Tornedalen:
Hur skulle du beskriva aktörerna på det kulturella fältet?
Finns det flera tongivande grupper och/eller personer?
Finns det olika agendor, eller har man en gemensam linje?

16. Samarbete/samverkan:
Hur fungerar samarbetet mellan olika aktörer på det kulturella fältet?

17. Önskemål:
Har du några önskemål angående samverkan med olika aktörer i Tornedalen?

18. Finska, respektive svenska, Tornedalen:
Är det viktigt att svenska tornedalingar samverkar med tornedalingar på finska sidan av gränsen?
   ○ ja   ○ nej   ○ till viss del

Varför/varför inte?

18. Övrigt?
Hilja Byströmin päivä
Hilja Byströmdagen
Meänmaan kirjalisuuen päivä/
Meänkielilitteraturens dag

Pohjoiskalotin Kulttuuri- ja Tutkimuskeskus/
Nordkalottens Forsknings- och Kulturcenter
Övertorneå/Matarinki
18 huhtikuuta/april 2018
kl 13.00 – 17.00

TEEMA: Kieli, kirja ja kielenhuolto
JUONTAJA: Marita Mattsson Barsk

Ohjelma
13.00  Oi, terve kaunis Meän maa
13.10  Hilja Byströmin teksti (110-vuotispäivä)
13.15  Kielenhuoltoa – minkä takia?
  Elina Kangas
13.45  ’Kielikysymys kirjalisuessa. Hilja Byströmistä Bengt Pohjasheen’,
  Anne Heith
14.30  Kahveeraama
14.50  Miksis ministeri soitti Snellin Williamille?
  Bengt Pohjanen
15.20  Vaimonpuoli Hilja Byströmin kirjalisuessa,
  Marita Mattsson Barsk
16.00  KEXI – Meän kirjailijat

Tietoja: info@sirillus.se
070 567 75 29
(+46 70 567 75 29)

Tulkaa fühljyyyn Meänmaan ja KEXIN jäseneksi!
Kotisivu: www.meanmaa.net
TEMA: Språk och litteratur
MODERATOR: Marita Mattsson Barsk

Program
13.00  Oi terve kaunis Meänmaa
13.10  Text av Hilja Byström (110 – årsdagen)
13.15  Språkvård – varför?
   Elina Kangas
13.45  'Språkfrågan i litteraturen. Från Hilja Byström till Bengt Pohjanen'
   Anne Heith
14.30  Fika
14.50  Varför ringde ministern till William Snell?
   Bengt Pohjanen
15.20  Kvinnan i Tornedalen i Hilja Byströms litteratur,
   Marita Mattsson Barsk
16.00  KEXI – Meän kirjailiat

Förfrågningar: info@sirillus.se
070 567 75 29
(+46 70 567 75 29)

Välkommen som medlem i Meanmaa och KEXI!
Hemsida: www.meanmaa.net
List of illustrations

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