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# Journalism and Colonialism in the Deatnu River Case

A study of Sámi viewpoints

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## Abstract

In this thesis I am looking at the relationship between Finnish journalism and colonialism; and more specifically at journalism regarding the new fishing agreement in the Deatnu river. The empirical material consists of semi-structured interviews with Sámi who have been interviewed by Finnish journalists. The thesis looks at the consequences of this agreement for the local Sámi, and more importantly, on the Sámi views on the Finnish media coverage of the issue.

My aim is to hear the voices of local Sámi people. Thus I use an indigenous approach and perspectives. In this research it means a respectful standpoint and a commitment to reciprocity that guarantees that the research could be helpful for the indigenous community.

On the whole, the Sámi interviewed for this thesis felt that Finnish journalists did not have enough knowledge of Sámis living in Deatnu nor sufficient information about Sámi rights to take them into account in their stories. A lack of understanding of the land and connectedness with nature meant that the importance of the relationship Sámi have with the Deatnu was missing in their reporting. Traditional knowledge (*árbediehtu* in northern Sámi) has not been acknowledged in the decision-making of the fishing agreement, nor have the media shown any interest in it; even though it would have been important for the Sámi. Any direct colonialism of the news is difficult to detect in the interviewees' responses but mainly news and stories are seen as repeating usual patterns and views from the point of view of the majority population. Moreover interviewees felt that the decision-making process of the fishing agreement, as well as its practice had been colonialist.

Finnish journalists should gain more knowledge about the Sámi and indigenous rights. It could be useful to create a guide concerning Sámi people for Finnish journalists that would at least lessen the misunderstandings and increase awareness among journalists.

**Key words:** indigenous research, journalism, colonialism, indigenous methodologies, traditional knowledge, Deatnu, fishing agreement, Finnish media, Sámi people, indigenous Sámi, traditional fishing

## Čoahkkáigeassu

Dán dutkamušas geahčadan oktavuoda gaskal Suoma journalistihka ja kolonialismma; dárkileappot čilgejuvvon journalistihka Deanu ođđa guolástansoahpamuša birra. Dutkanávdnasat leat semi-strukturerejuvvon jearahallamat sápmelaččaiguin geaid Suoma journalisttat leat jearahallan. Dutkamušas guorahalan ođđa soahpamuša váikkuhusaid báikkálaš sápmelaččaide, ja vel deháleappot, sápmelačča oainnu dasa mo Suoma mediat leat gokčan dán ášši.

Mu mihttomearri lea guldalit báikkálaš sámi álbmoga jiena. Danne geavahan álgoálbmot lahkoneami ja perspektiivvaid. Dán dutkamušas mearkaša dat atnit árvvus álgoálbmogiid, ja vuostevurolašvuolta mii dáhkida ahte dutkamuša sáhtta boahpteáiggis leat ávkin álgoálbmot servošii.

Oppalaččat dovdet sámit geaid Suoma journalisttat leat jearahallan, ahte journalisttain ii lean doarvái máhttu sápmelaččaid birra geat ellet Deanus, iige doarvái diehtu sámiid vuoigatvuodain nu ahte máhtášedje váldit dáid áššiin vuhtii iežaset ođasáššiin. Váilevaš áddejupmi eatnamis ja oktavuodas lundui mielddisbuvttii ahte sápmelaččaid oktavuolta Detnui váilui sin raporteremis. Árbediehtu ii leat vuhtiiváldon guolástansoahpamuša mearrádusaid dahkamis, eaige mediat leat beroštan das. Lea váttis vuohit njuolga kolonialismma ođđasiin jearahallan olbmuid vástádusain, muhto sii oaivvildit ovddimusat ahte ođđasat ja mitalusat geardduhit dábálaš minstariid ja oainnuid válđoálbmoga geahččanguovllus. Dasa lassin jearahallan olbmot dovde ahte guolástansoahpamuša mearridanproseassa ja čađaheapmi lei leamaš kolonialisttalaš.

Suoma journalisttat galggašedje oččodit eanet máhtu sápmelaččaid ja álgoálbmot vuoigatvuodaid birra. Livččii ávkkálaš ráhkadit láiddesteaddji sámi álbmoga birra Suoma journalisttaid várás mat sáhtášedje geahpidit Suoma journalisttaid boasttuáddejumi ja lasihit sin didolašvuoda.

Čoavddasámit: Álgoálbmot dutkan, journalistihkka, kolonialisma, álgoálbmot metodologiijat, árbediehtu, Deatnu, guolástansoahpamuš, Suoma media, Sámi álbmot, álgoálbmot sápmelaš, árbevirolaš guolásteapmi.

## Abstrakti

Tutkielma tarkastelee suomalaisen journalismin ja kolonialismin suhdetta Tenojoki-uutisoinnissa. Tapauksena on Tenon uusi kalastussopimus. Tutkielman aineistona on haastateltu saamelaisia, joita suomalaiset toimittajat ovat haastatelleet juttuihinsa. Metodina on käytetty puolistrukturoituja haastatteluja. Tutkielmassa selvitetään kalastussopimuksen seurauksia paikallisille saamelaisille ja erityisesti saamelaisten näkökulmia siitä, kuinka suomalainen media uutisoi aiheesta.

Tavoitteenani on antaa ääni paikallisille saamelaisille. Sen vuoksi käytän työssäni alkuperäiskansatutkimuksen näkökulmia ja perusteita. Tässä tapauksessa se tarkoittaa alkuperäiskansaa kunnioittavaa lähtökohtaa ja vastavuoroisuutta, jotta tutkimus olisi hyödyllinen alkuperäiskansalle.

Tutkimuksessa havaitaan, että haastateltujen saamelaisten mukaan suomalaisilla toimittajilla ei ole tarpeeksi tietoa Tenojoen asuvista saamelaisista tai yleistietoa saamelaisten oikeuksista, minkä voisi havaita aiheesta julkaistuista jutuista. Ymmärrys saamelaisten luontosuhteesta ja yhteydestä maahan on puutteellinen, eikä kokonaisvaltainen kuva saamelaisten suhteesta Tenoon välity tiedotusvälineissä. Perinnetietoa (árbediehtu pohjoissaameksi) ei ole otettu huomioon kalastussopimuksen päätöksenteossa. Myöskään media ei osoittanut kiinnostusta aiheeseen, vaikka se olisi saamelaisten mielestä ollut tärkeää. Haastateltavien vastausten perusteella on vaikeaa nähdä suoraa yhteyttä kolonialismin ja journalismin välillä, mutta pääasiassa uutisoinnin voidaan nähdä toistavan tavanomaista kaavaa sekä käsityksiä pääväestön näkökulmasta. Kuitenkin kalastussopimuksen päätöksentekoprosessi sekä sen toimeenpano ovat olleet kolonialistisia haastateltavien mielestä.

Suomalaisilla journalisteilla tulisi olla enemmän tietoa saamelaisista ja alkuperäiskansaoikeuksista. Toimittajille suunnattu opas saamelaisista voisi olla hyödyllinen. Ainakin se voisi vähentää väärinymmärryksiä ja lisätä tietoisuutta saamelaisista sekä heidän oikeuksiaan kohtaan.

**Avainsanat:** alkuperäiskansatutkimus, journalismi, media, kolonialismi, alkuperäiskansatutkimuksen metodit, perinnetieto, Teno, kalastussopimus, suomalainen media, saamelaiset, saamelainen alkuperäiskansa, perinnekalastus

# 1. Introduction

«It's the kind of thing you can't be without. Without it there's no life. And as it's getting more and more restricted and basically taken away, it's not really meaningful to be and live in this world anymore.» (interviewee 1)

*«Se on semmonen nautinto, josta ei voi olla poissa. Ilman sitä nautintoa ei ole elämää ja kun tää nautinto on kavennettu ja periaatteessa alkaa olla jo viety pois niin ei tunnukaan mielekkäältä olla ja elää maailmassa.»* (interviewee 1)

This is how one of my interviewees expressed his feelings about the river Deatnu, his home, and how the new fishing agreement is affecting his life. Somehow I was not so surprised to hear that, even though it is a devastating thing to express. For me, it provides a reason and rationale for this research: high level decisions such as restricting fishing rights in the river Deatnu might have such a significant impact on the life of individuals, even if one might think it is «just about fishing». Of course this is only one opinion among others. Still, it opens up a pathway for exploring the consequences that decisions made by the majority might have.

Colonialism is a topic that is not very popular to talk about in Finland. It is a contested concept, and some Finnish scholars argue that there has never been colonialism in Finland (e.g. Enbuske 2008). Many indigenous scholars again claim that from an indigenous perspective, institutional centres remain the locus for the reproduction of colonial relationships (e.g. Kovach 2009.) The existence and consequences of colonialism is one of the issues that will be explored in this thesis.

In many discussions I have personally had with Sámi people they have said that colonialism is deeply rooted in the state structures of Finland. Therefore societal change should start from those structures. This point of view has made me think more about the system or society we live in. The system I am part of as a Finnish citizen, and the system that has educated me, has included basically no information of the Sámi people's history and culture. In Finland we do not use the word colonialism because, as implied above, the general sentiment is that 'it has not happened here'. Finns are raised with the idea that colonisation happened elsewhere, in the big world. When being taught that the Nordic countries were innocent bystanders in relation to colonialism it is easy to accept that as truth.

Finnish scholar Pia Mikander (2016) has studied westerners and the others in Finnish school textbooks, and found that colonizers are portrayed as heroes and western thinking had a superior position. In an interview with the Finnish National Public Broadcasting company, Yle, Mikander



states that Western domination in textbooks suggests that the consequences of colonialism are not seen as a general problem (Yle 10.11.2016).

Hearing about Mikander's research, I understood better how the idea of western superiority had influenced my own view of the world. It was time to start questioning it. After living in Sápmi and becoming familiar with the consequences that colonialism has left here, I have realized how colonialism still has an effect in our society today. And not only affecting the Sámi, but also the majority population, as part of the same system. So although I understand that people have different perceptions of colonialism, in this thesis I start from the perspective that colonialism is real.

As a journalist I am interested in the media's impact on society. Media has the power to support or question existing structures and influence the opinions of individuals. So the other issue I am exploring in this thesis is how journalism may or may not be linked to colonialism, particularly in the case of the new fishing agreement in Deatnu. I pursue these issues through interviewing local Sámi people who have had interaction with Finnish journalists, in order to hear their voice and viewpoints.

If colonialism is not mentioned when talking about indigenous Sámi people, I think there is something that needs to be done to change it. Finns need to learn all aspects of their history. John Mohawk (as cited in Denzin, Lincoln & Smith 2008, 310) emphasizes that imperialism and colonialism are processes, where people who were dispossessed from their land, are still happening now, today, not only decades ago. As professor Rauna Kuokkanen states, the first step of decolonization is to acknowledge that colonialism exists (Kuokkanen, 2017). I adhere to this view.

## **1.1 What is the study about?**

This study is looking at the relationship between Finnish journalism and colonialism. It is a case study that I in this thesis will call the «Deatnu case». The Deatnu is a river in Sápmi located on what today constitutes the border between Finland and Norway. The Deatnu's salmon have been significantly important for the Sámi living in the river valley. The first mention of this in the literature can be found at the end of 1500's (see in Helander and Markkula 2011, 32). At the time, salmon was good to trade and in the past it has been paid as taxes to the state. The water catchment area of Deatnu covers 16 389 square meters, one third of which is on the Finnish side of the border. The salmon of the Deatnu (*luossa* in northern Sámi, *Salmo Salar* in latin) breed wildly. There are also other important fish in the Deatnu, such as grayling (*soavvil*) and sea trout (Čuonžá). (ibid.) I will return to the Deatnu in chapter 2 below.

In 2017, new regulations for fishing in the river were agreed upon between the states of

Norway and Finland. This thesis looks at the consequences of this agreement for the local Sámi, and more importantly, on the Finnish media coverage of the issue. Since this thesis looks at the relationship between journalism and colonialism, I have interviewed Sámi people who have been interviewed by Finnish journalists on the Deatnu case. I wanted to hear their voices on how mainstream media has represented the Deatnu, its people and the fishing regulations. I also wanted to find out if Finnish journalists could be seen as using ‘colonial lenses’ in their reporting on the issue.

## **1.2 My own position as a non-indigenous journalist and researcher**

*«There is, after all, a profound difference between the will to understand for purposes of co-existence and humanistic enlargement of horizons, and the will to dominate for the purposes of control and external dominion.»*

*Edward W. Said (2003)*

Research is a powerful intervention; even when carrying it out from a distance. It has traditionally benefited mainly the researcher and the knowledge base of the dominant group in society. (Smith 2012, 178.) Smith (ibid., 178) states that it is critical for the researcher to recognize the power dynamic that is rooted in the relationship with the subjects. She underlines the importance of appreciating the access to privileged information you have as a researcher. Interpretation is not only led by a theoretical framework but also in terms of a covert ideological framework. It is important to remember the power relations within which the colonizer/colonized are situated, and that both are consciously or unconsciously guided by assumptions about the other (Smith 2012 and Chilisa 2012).

*«They [researchers] have the power to distort, to make invisible, to overlook, to exaggerate and to draw conclusions, based not on factual data, but on assumptions, hidden value judgements, and often downright misunderstandings. They have potential to extend knowledge or to perpetuate ignorance.»* (Smith 2012, 178)

As this research is about power relations between Sámi people and Finnish people, I as the researcher need to position myself among the contending groups. I was ‘brought here by the train’ (*junantuoma*), as the Finnish saying goes; of people who come from southern Finland to northern parts. I was born in Tallinn, Estonia so I am half-Finnish, half Estonian. However I was raised in Finland, in the southern part as people in the north would say, the eastern part as I would say. So to make it clear I am not Sámi but Finnish, and I am a journalist. Being a non-indigenous journalist and researcher, I put myself in a position where I really need to be aware when studying a community I do not belong to. It means reflecting on my personal, journalistic and research values during the whole research process. I need to keep my eyes open to see what kind of lenses I am looking at the issue through. As Henry and Tator (2002,

239) state, it is important for journalists and editors and publishers to understand how their own social identities, histories, and frames of reference affect their work. Chilisa (2012, 190) argues that there are four questions that researchers need to ask from themselves:

1. *Whose side am I on?*
2. *Do I challenge and resist dominant discourses that marginalize those who suffer oppression?*
3. *Who am I writing about? Self or Other/s or both?*
4. *What needs to be rewritten?*

Using the indigenous approach and perspectives and being critical of dominant Western ways of thinking I think I can successfully be a non-indigenous researcher researching indigenous issues. I think in my study it means to follow Husband's idea of the right to be understood.

*The right to be understood places upon us all a duty to seek comprehension of the other. It is a rejection of, and condemnation of, egocentric and ethnocentric routines of engaging with the communicative acts of others, both in-group and out-group.* (Husband 1996, 209)

Nevertheless, I have to remember to make sure to follow the guidance of the three R's outlined by Steinhauer (cited in Wilson 2008, 58): *Respect, Reciprocity and Relationality*. [More of indigenous research in chapter 3.4. where I also discuss the Euro-Western based paradigm, and how to have an indigenous approach in academia that is approached through the lenses of eurocentrism.]

I think my strength in doing this research is my background in being a Finnish journalist, so I know that part of my study very well. As I have been working in different Finnish media since 2004 I understand the routines journalists have in their work in mainstream media; and the standpoint they are coming from – usually as products of the Finnish education system. As a journalist, I have also written stories about the Sámi. This has required a greater need to focus critically on my standpoint, a special approach to gain trust and, as a result, some added pressure to publish the story accurately while also remembering the demands of the media. It is a complex task once one starts to reflect upon it.

### **1.3 Relevance of the topic**

Finnish journalists are regularly reporting on Sámi people and issues related to them. Being an outsider of the community creates many challenges related to communication, understanding and knowledge e.g. about indigenous cultures and rights. Not only the interaction between the journalist and interviewee but the published story itself might have an impact on the image of the Sámi in general, and has the potential to either diffuse or increase misunderstandings. Also

unintentionally journalists might have colonial aspects hidden between the lines. The Deatnu case is a relevant and current topic for opening up how Sámi feel about their representation in mainstream media. By mainstream media, I mean different forms of mass media that can reach a large number of a population. I do not include alternative media, which might have smaller, specific audiences and particular viewpoints to their journalism; for example, more divergent thoughts compared to the prevailing perspectives that mainstream journalism and its journalists have.

*«Power relations and having an understanding of the history of assimilation and its manifestations in current affairs between Finland's nation-state and indigenous people are of utmost importance in understanding the Sámi and Indigenous perspectives (not only in Finland but globally, as the case of Standing Rock in the United States has shown), but it is not taught for Finnish and Western journalists. Rather, taking this perspective in mainstream journalism seems, according to my interviewees' comments and my own experiences as well, to be considered biased.» (Leukumaavaara 2017, 94)*

In her thesis, Leukumaavaara has studied the problems that may occur in the interaction between Finnish journalists and Sámi interviewees. She comes to the conclusion that the Finnish journalists have often a dominant role, choosing the topic and perspective of the story while the Sámi interviewees may find themselves in a more submissive role answering questions on identity, culture etc. She found that journalism's desire to tell conflict-oriented, individual, extraordinary, outspoken stories might be totally contradictory to the Sámi way of communicating. Also there are differences in communicative repertoires that are creating tensions in the encounters between Finnish journalists and Sámi interviewees. In addition, mainstream journalism does not consider Sámi issues to be very interesting for the Finnish public. (Leukumaavaara 2017, 92–93.)

Leukumaavaara's finding follows the same pattern that most indigenous scholars are warning about, namely the superior Western position towards the Other: the colonizer's attitude towards the colonized (e.g. Smith 2012).

I had similar observations while looking more closely at how Finnish journalists were reporting on the Deatnu case in the summer and autumn of 2017. (See in chapter 2.3) The stories mostly created a conflict between Finnish tourists and/or local landowners and Sámis. Within this conflict, journalists were creating the image of Sámi complaining about the new law of fishing regulation; but not going much deeper into why eg. traditional fishing is so important to Sámi. The fact that the journalists chose not to interview any Sámis from the Norwegian side of the Deatnu implies to me a certain colonial perspective on the part of the journalists. [The experiences of interviewed Sámi can be read from the analysis in chapter 5.]

I too wrote an article of «the Deatnu case» during that summer for a Finnish newspaper. Sámi people I interviewed were saying that the new fishing regulations represented a straight continuum of colonialism. This made me think deeper about the issue and about my own role as a journalist as being responsible for things I would have not have been thinking about before. Was I also a part of the machinery of colonialism and if yes, how was this affecting my work?

Rauna Kuokkanen (2007, 142) states that there is only very little research done about the effects of colonialism, let alone of how practises of colonialism are still going on in society today. She also adds that it would be important to apply a postcolonial critique to bring forth the multi-threaded and often invisible consequences that colonialism has caused. Being aware of these impacts is the inevitable first step to deconstruct the colonial heritage; which does not mean going back to the past, but to heal and make it possible to build the future (for example self-determination).

I hope that my thesis may be part of answering this need. The research questions that this thesis sets out to answer are the following:

1) What is the role of journalism in presenting / representing the Sámi in the Deatnu case? 2) What is the relationship between colonialism and journalism and how does it show? 3) Do Sámi interviewees feel that (Finnish) journalists understand the relationship that the Sámis have with nature, their homeland and more specifically in this case the Deatnu river?

Since colonialism is not a topic generally discussed in the Finnish public sphere, I hope my thesis would at least start a conversation in the field of journalism. Since media is constructed by culture and society; journalists' work and their products in the mainstream media is a good place to start if questioning larger societal structures such as colonialism. Also it is relevant to study the case now when it is still fresh and ongoing.

## **1.4 Key concepts**

In this thesis there are few key concepts that I use and first I want to explain what I mean by them, and where I position my views in relation to these concepts.

One can find many views about colonialism and some even say that it is a questionable concept. In this study, I lean mostly on indigenous scholars who agree that colonialism is real. I discuss here about some of the views they are expressing in their studies.

*«Indigenous peoples as an international group have had to challenge, understand and have a shared language for talking about the history, the sociology, the psychology and the politics of imperialism and colonialism as an epic story telling of huge devastation, painful struggle and persistent survival.» (Smith 2012, 20)*

Linda Tuhiwai Smith is a Maori scholar and in her book, *Decolonizing Methodologies* argues widely about her understanding of how the influence and power of the West and Western research has exploited indigenous peoples; and how these colonized eyes should be replaced with indigenous methodologies claiming control over indigenous ways of knowing and being. She is determined to show the skewed world order that is still existing in the way that power relations between colonized and colonizers are still remaining. Smith argues how a *post-colonial* world is not real from an indigenous perspective, as colonizers have not left. She adds, «even when they have left formally, the institutions and legacy of colonialism have remained.» (Smith 2012, 101.) I agree with Smith, and think this can be seen everywhere as our minds are colonized even though we would not realize it. Lehtonen and Löytty (2007) state that we are still consuming the ways of thinking and presenting that are born in colonial times; whilst Rauna Kuokkanen (2007, 144) says that indigenous peoples continue to be subjects to internal colonization processes inside the states.

Marie Battiste adds that indigenous people all over the world are still undergoing trauma and stress from genocide and the destruction of their lives by colonization. Their stories are often silenced and many indigenous peoples have been unable to share their stories, despite their efforts. (Battiste, 2000.) Sákéj Henderson (2000, 13) examines the continuation of colonization by looking at the strategies, techniques, and competing components that constitute the system of colonialism. «The theory of universality and the strategy of difference that underpin Eurocentric thought serve colonial domination by universalizing negative caricatures of Indigenous Peoples to justify aggression, control and domination.» (ibid., 13) In my opinion, Battiste's and Henderson's claims are right, since continuing to ignore, belittle and control, for example, the Sámi people in Finland, by the state, as well as at the individual level, ensures that both attitudes and structures may remain the same.

Research regarding colonialism and the Sámi clarifies how the Sámi had to give up their language, change basic values of their culture and change their national identity (Minde 2016, 19). Although a large proportion of the research concerns the Sámi in Norway, the effects are the same in the Finnish context too, as Keskitalo et al. (2014, 18) explain:

*«In the countries Sámi inhabited, Sámi were in some way subjected to forced assimilation through education. They had to give up their mother tongue in part and use state-dominated languages. At the same time, they had to change the values and lifestyles of the Sámi culture. Many of the Sámi's cultural features were at risk of being destroyed due to the school and housing institution arrangements. Many Sámi children grew out from their own culture, language, and tradition of their costumes.»*

Nowadays the consequences of history appear as problems with identity and self-esteem (Minde 2016) and being ashamed of being Sámi (Puuronen 2014, 332). Sámi people are also facing racism (ibid. 335–336). Besides structural racism, Sámi encounter day-to-day racism in Finnish society. This can mean e.g. racist jokes, a disrespectful commercialization of Sámi traditional gákti and as an exclusion from society. At its most serious, racism can lead to violence or a threat thereof. (Puuronen 2014, 335–336.)

Overall my starting point is that colonialism still has its roots in Finnish society. It consists of different phases and layers. Sometimes those roots are invisible but also there appear to be processes in operation that sustain its vitality.. Viewing this context through the concept of hegemony, the consciousness of contemporary Sámi is significantly shaped by majority Finnish values, views and ways of understanding that many Sámis might have internalized, mostly unconsciously: colonial and colonized attitudes and values about themselves and their culture (Kuokkanen 2007, 149–150). Although there is actual evidence regarding the causes of colonialism, Kuokkanen (ibid., 147) states that the history of Sámi colonization has so far been examined very little, especially in the light of the many effects that remain on Sámi society. I think both the historical impacts and present ongoing processes in the majority society should be researched to find ways to continue the process of their decolonisation. .

Decolonisation refers to a process that seeks to reveal and dissolve various forms of colonial power. These include direct and indirect economic control and the impact of eurocentric cultural models in society (Kuokkanen 2007, 146). I will be talking more about decolonialism in the following chapters.

## **2. Theme and background**

### **2.1 Fishing in Deatnu**

People living in the Deatnu valley have fished for thousands of years and they have used their traditional knowledge for ages to take care of salmon (*luossa* in northern Sámi) in the Deatnu.

As Aslak Holmberg (2018, 1) explains the meaning of salmon for Sámi in the Deatnu valley:

*«Salmon is a core element of the Saami culture in the Deatnu valley, and salmon is such a central part in people's lives that in the summer it is more common to ask «Have you caught any fish?» than it is to ask «How are you doing?»*

The Deatnu is a border river between the states of Norway and Finland, mainstream history tells us. In 1809, Finland became a Grand Duchy under the Russian Tsar. In the same year, the

border between Finland and Norway was established along the watercourse of the Deatnu. However, neither that nor the separation of Norway from Denmark in 1814, and its union with Sweden, had any obvious impacts on the salmon fishing carried out by the predominant Sámi population of the Deatnu valley. (Pedersen 2009, 4.)

More great changes were to come for the Deatnu and its people. When the Siida structure of the Sámi society was slowly dismantled, a more centralised governance system and outside authority increased its influence. The border of Finland and Norway was closed in 1852, complicating reindeer herding and increasing a static way of life. Christianisation also impacted the world views of the Sámi living in the area. But one of the most influential changes was the building of roads, which meant that the Deatnu was not the main means of travel anymore. And finally, in 1957, the road to Ohcejohka was built, enabling tourist fishers easy access to the Deatnu. (see in Holmberg 2018, 40–41.)

Despite the borders, the Deatnu has always united people. As Kuokkanen (2007a) defines it, the Deatnu is rather a bond that connects the families who live on its banks. She describes the history considering the Deatnu in an almost poetic way:

*«Before roads were built along both its banks, the Deatnu was the main johtolat – a Sámi word signifying passage, way, route, channel, connection – for people, news, provisions, mail, building materials, and so on. During the summer, people travelled by boat. In the winter, the river’s thick ice served as a road for horses and oxen and later for cars. In short, everyone and everything moved along the river, except during short periods in the spring and fall when the ice was too thin to carry weight or too broken to allow boat traffic. Besides being a significant salmon river, the Deatnu has been a source of physical and spiritual sustenance for generations.» (Kuokkanen 2007)*

As mentioned, fishing in the Deatnu has significant meaning for its people. Fishing has never been just a hobby but a livelihood and tradition for the Sámi in the area. Nor has it ever been taken for granted that there will be any fish. Holmberg (2018, 44) explains how salmon is asked to be caught, not taken from river:

*«Bivdit is the North Saami word meaning both hunting and fishing. Bivdit also means ‘to ask for something’, which reflects the Saami worldview: by hunting or fishing a Saami does not go and ‘take’ something from nature, but asks for something, and gets it if it is given. Nature has to be willing to share with you; the salmon has to be willing to get caught.»*

Most likely tourists are not asking permission from the salmon, as they come to fish to the Deatnu at the time that suits them. Solveig Joks (2017, 155) talks about «allowing the salmon



to swim in peace». It means that in a traditional Sámi way, caring for the river and the fish is partly being quiet. And with tourists there is not a similar peace: there is a saying in northern Sámi that «the river is black» meaning full of tourists fishers. Tourists can't rest, they fish whatever the weather or other conditions are like. (Joks and Law 2017, 155.)

## **2.2 The fishing agreement and its history in the Deatnu river.**

As «the case of the Deatnu river» is at the centre of this thesis, we will first look more closely at the regulation of the Deatnu river; the process leading to the newest regulation agreement and the effects it has had on fishing rights.

Apart from the Sámi's bond to the river and Sámi traditional knowledge of salmon, the salmon population of the Deatnu has been protected and controlled since 1873 by the states of Finland and Norway. In total, fishing laws and regulations have been updated and revised eight times, namely in 1920, 1938, 1953, 1960, 1972, 1979, 1982 and 1989 (Suomen kalakirjasto).

Fishing rights in the Deatnu are attached to private ownership of land and are dependent on where a person lives. The status of the water areas that are not under private ownership is unclear on both sides of the state border, as the collective rights of Sámi Siida's to waters in the Deatnu remain unresolved. While this is the case, the two states practice full authority over the governance of fishing in the Deatnu. (Holmberg 2018, 26–27.)

Negotiations of the new fishing agreement started originally in 1998 but were paused in 2001. Norway sought to start them again in 2010 and finally negotiations began in 2011 (HE 239/2016). The newest regulation between Norway and Finland was agreed on in 2016.

According to the government proposal for the subsequent law, the aim of the fishing agreement is to promote the sustainable use and management of fish stocks in the Deatnu river area based on the best available information. In the conservation, exploitation and management of fish stocks, attention must be paid to different fishing benefits, particularly fishing based on local cultural traditions. (HE 239/2016.) Holmberg (2018, 66–67) adds that «the agreement is of a more general nature and sets the overall ground for regulating fishing in the Deatnu, while the fishing regulations are more detailed, restricting fishing time and equipment.»

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Finland and The Ministry of Climate and Environment in Norway are the responsible governance bodies of the agreement. When preparing the agreement and the regulations, both ministries nominated negotiating groups. These groups consisted on the Finnish side of four representatives from state bodies and four Sámi representatives. On the Norwegian side, the Act on Tana (Deatnu in Norwegian) states in Article 6 that the negotiations must be conducted in consultation with *Deanučázádaga Guolás-*

*tushálddahus* (the local fishery administration) and the Sámi Parliament of Norway. (Holmberg 2018, 66–67, LOV-2014-06-20-51 2014.)

The delegations of Finland and Norway had seven bilateral negotiations. In addition, the Finnish delegation had 28 negotiations on its own. The last bilateral negotiation was in Svanhovd Norway in May 2016 where no agreement was reached. (HE 239/2016.)

The local members of the Finnish negotiation team heard in the meetings what the public servants had decided (Heinämäki et al. 2017, 74). Esko Aikio, a Sámi representative from the Finnish negotiating team, has said that in some meetings the Sámi representatives were not allowed to participate in the negotiations but had to wait in the hallway while the state representatives were negotiating (see Holmberg 2018, 67).

During the negotiations, Sámi representatives were strongly opposing the draft agreement (Saamelaiskäräjät 2016, 8), and the Sámi representatives on the Finnish negotiating team voted against it. However, with the double vote of the chair appointed by the Finnish Ministry, the agreement was passed (Holmberg 2018, 67). So when a solution acceptable to the state representatives was reached between the delegations in June 2016 (HE 239/2016), with the double vote of the chair, the agreement was passed against the explicit will of the Sámi (see in Holmberg 2018, 67).

The Sámi Parliament on the Finnish side criticized this, claiming that the agreement was an agreement between the chairmen, not the delegations. They also sent an official complaint statement to The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (Saamelaiskäräjät 2016, 1): The Sámi Parliament sees that according to §9 of the Act on the Sámi Parliament, The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry should have negotiated with the Sámi Parliament while the fishing agreement was negotiated so that the Sámi Parliament would have had a real chance to negotiate the content of the agreement (Heinämäki et al. 2017, 75). In Finland, the Act on the Sámi Parliament, §9, is about the obligation to negotiate. «The authorities shall negotiate with the Sámi Parliament in all far-reaching and important measures which may directly and in a specific way affect the status of the Sámi as an indigenous people and [...] the Sámi homeland. -- In order to fulfil its obligation to negotiate, the relevant authority shall provide the Sámi Parliament with the opportunity to be heard and discuss matters.» (Act on the Sámi Parliament). Regarding the fishing agreement these negotiations with the Sámi Parliament were organised only after the agreement was already made (Holmberg 2018, 67). Heinämäki & al. state (2017, 75–76) that according to their research, the legislator has been well aware that the negotiations must be timely and that the Sámi Parliament ought to have had a real opportunity to influence the outcome of the negotiations.

The new contract reduces the possibilities to engage in traditional Sámi net fishing up to 80 per cent, by cutting the times that you are allowed to do it. However, the traditional ways of fishing are time-consuming and require setting up constructions that you cannot set up and dismantle for short periods of time only. Rights to traditional fishing by the Sámi who have moved away, who traditionally have had this inherited right, was cut altogether. For other groups, such as tourists and part-time residents, restrictions were not as severe. In fact, according to the government proposal, one aim was to improve the position of non-local people by keeping their rights intact, while still allowing for traditional fishing for the local population. (Heinämäki et al., 2017, 74.)

The agreement has been criticised harshly on both sides of the river. The Finnish Chancellor of Justice pointed out that the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry had not followed valid law. Regardless, the Constitutional Law Committee of the Finnish parliament adopted the government's draft law in February 2017, despite stating that the procedure had been problematic both in relation to constitutional law and the law of the Sámi parliament, as mentioned before. Also, the Committee stated that the impact assessment of Sámi people's rights had been inadequate. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry noted the comments made by the Constitutional Law, but concluded that the draft law could not be changed. In March 2017, the law was adopted by the Finnish parliament. (Markelin 2017, 52–53.)

In the agreement paper it is said how the government of the state of Finland and the government of the Norwegian kingdom recognize indigenous rights of Sámi, local peoples' rights and the meaning of natural resources for Sámi as an indigenous people to maintain their culture (valtiosopimus 42/2017). In the legislative proposal, they even refer to similar case in Aotearoa, New Zealand considering the system of fishing quotas (CCPR/C/70/D/547/1993). The case was called *Apirana Mahuika et al v. New Zealand* and it was submitted in December 1992 (MacKay 2001). The case was one of the most important cases in public policy terms to be filed against New Zealand. The Finnish legislative proposal mentions that «before the decision there had been thorough negotiation process with Maori and Maori opinions had influenced the final content of agreement» and «the traditionally remarkable fishing methods have been taken care of». The Finnish legislative proposal is very keen to bring up the involvement of Maori in the process. However, in the Deatnu fishing agreement the Finnish Sámi Parliament was heard only after the decision had been made (HE 239/2016 vp).

From the Sámi perspective, curtailing the possibilities to fish is not the only problem with the new agreement. As fishing times are controlled, it means that traditional, time-consuming fishing methods are reduced. Moreover, it is now illegal for children to be on a boat because everybody on a boat needs to have a fishing permit. The danger of this is that traditions and knowledge won't pass to the next generations as it used to. (Markelin 2017, 52, Heinämäki et al. 2017, 74.)

Also one of the most problematic issues are the rights of cabin owners, who have bought land in the Deatnu valley, with fishing rights attached to the properties. The new agreement gives them a possibility to buy cheap daily luring licences, depending on the proportion of fishing rights attached to their properties. With these daily licenses, they are authorized to fish any time of the day, like locals (Holmberg 2018, 71). In the previous agreement, fishing was allowed also for locals who do not live permanently in Ohcejohka as an inherited right (Länsman 2012, 22–23). It was seen as justified to preserve and secure the old traditions and cultural heritage as young people are moving due to work or studies (ibid., 21). In the new fishing agreement, however, this group of locals living away from Ohcejohka was merged together with the cabin owners. This means that local Saami who have inherited their fishing rights, but have moved away, are no longer able to practice the traditional net fishing methods. Instead they need to buy cheaper luring licenses (Holmberg 2018, 72). Holmberg (2018, 73) argues:

*This priority must have been purely political. Since with the new agreement, non-local Saami, who had inherited their fishing rights, lost their right to take part in traditional fishing. The protection of Saami right to culture was not given similar priority as the strengthening of the rights of cabin owners – whose rights were not violated in the first place.*

It should be mentioned that the fishing rights in Norway are quite different compared to the Finnish system. Fishing rights on the Norwegian side are not based on owning areas of water because the Norwegian state owns the waters on the Norwegian side of the Deatnu river. On the Finnish side of the river, however, over 70 percent of the water is privately owned. This regulation is based on a similar law from the year 1888 and is meant to secure fishing rights for the local people. In Norway, the right to fish is given to farm owners living in a farm situated a maximum of two kilometres from the shoreline of the river and is producing a minimum of 2000 kilos of hay or similar product. Thus, people living in Tana or Karasjohka on the Norwegian side have the right to free fishing from the land or the boat and they can buy a cheap fishing card. Reindeer herders living elsewhere have the same right. (HE 239/2016 vp, 5–6 & LOV-2014-06-20-51)

Traditionally, control and use of land is an important element of indigenous peoples' collective rights. Also in the Sámi communities the use of natural resources are guided by collective rights. Collective rights instruct the traditional use of land, regulate the principles of usufruct rights and guide the use of natural resources in a sustainable way, according to the Sámi concept of justice. (Saamelaiskäräjät artikla 8.) Collective rights mean rights that consist of legal or obligatory behaviour; practices and concepts that are so central and integral to the social and economic system that they are treated as if they were laws (see Heinämäki et al., 2017, 58).

Collective rights in fishing means that certain families have their own lakes, bays and parts of the rivers to fish. Everyone knows their own areas and stay in their own usufruct area (nautinta-alue). In the bad fish years people could have gone to fish also to other siidas. The Sámi value system and communality are leading the common law (ibid., 56–57.)

In the summer of 2017, a local protester and activist group called Ellos Deatnu started to oppose the new regulations, and on the third week of June, the group occupied Cearretsuolu island on the Deatnu and called a moratorium against fishing restrictions imposed by the state. The group is also calling for Sámi self-determination and local governmental autonomy in the Deatnu valley. Another Moratorium was called in Dalvadas in the same river. Later in the summer, a few fishermen in a side river to the Deatnu denounced themselves to the authorities, in order to get the case tried in court. Four Sámi are now being prosecuted by the Fishing Government for illegal fishing and their trial started in February 2019 (Yle Sápmi 14.2.2019).

Thus, it can be seen that the case of fishing rights in the Deatnu river has been a focus for a major source of friction between the state governments of Norway and Finland and the Sámi people who have exercised traditional fishing rights there. As review above presents a case study of the marginalization of Sámi interest and states' selective interpretation of their legal obligations to the Sámi peoples. For these reasons, this conflict provides a potent focus for examining the role of journalism in reporting issues impacting upon Sámi interests.

### **2.3 Mainstream media discourses of Indigenous peoples**

The media has a crucial role in the public representation of unequal social relations and the play of cultural power (Cottle 2000, 2).

*«Under-representation and stereotypical characterization within entertainment genres and negative problem-oriented portrayal within factuality and news forms, and a tendency to ignore structural inequalities and lived racism experienced by ethnic minorities in both, are recurring research findings.» (Cottle 2000, 8)*

Previous studies have shown how mainstream news media often frame indigenous peoples as people who have problems or create problems. Media also have a tendency to focus on the conflictual and confrontational aspects rather than trying to see the connection of historical and social context, which may explain why things are like they are now. (see in: Henry & Tator 2002, 204) Therefore indigenous media has an important role as an «Indigenous peoples' media strategy in their attempt to break out of the stereotypical portrayal by the mainstream and to create a space where they can tell their own stories in their own ways» (see in Hanusch 2013, 84).

Alia and Bull (2005, 91) say that mass media have the power to give minorities a voice, although that power is rarely exercised. *«Even when it is exercised it is frequently with a view to deflecting responsibility away from dominant culture. We believe that mass media can speak for the subalterns if they borrow their voices. Perhaps the subaltern minority is too heterogeneous for simple portrayals to be adequate or balanced; but to deny the subaltern even that much, is to be complicit in the colonial enterprise that created the imbalance of power in the first place.»* (ibid., 91)

Likewise Leukumaavaara (2017, 88c) suggested in her master's thesis that Finnish media has plenty of power regarding Sámi issues and the Sámi community. The Sámi she interviewed found media both as a companion and a potential threat for the community. However, the image mainstream media presents of Sámi is mainly negative, they felt.

Roosvall and Tegelberg have studied relations between media and climate change. In their research they have found out that «indigenous peoples are «used» in media reporting to highlight the urgency of climate change, while their political perspectives are largely ignored. «Concurrently, indigenous knowledge about nature is represented as likeable but wrong when compared to western science. There is finally a specific injustice connected to indigenous peoples: as transnational groups, they are misframed in nationally oriented media reporting and in the summit area. This pattern may prove fatal; especially given concerns about the impact climate change is having on the colonized lands indigenous peoples inhabit» (see in Roosvall & Tegelberg 2015, 44.)

McCallum (2012, 8) states in the context of Australia that media reporting amplifies an already problematic relationship between indigenous peoples in Australia and their governments. Also he found that Indigenous voices are difficult to be heard in the policy making process; but indigenous policy advocates utilise media practices to keep alive the intractability of indigenous policy issues and influence government policy outcomes.

*«Viewed through a wide-angled lens, media production is shaped by prevailing state policies and socio-political responses to ethnic minorities, as comparative studies of different multicultural nations demonstrate. Political ideas of assimilation, integration, pluralism, multiculturalism and/or anti-racism can all variously inform the regulatory frameworks and cultural climates in which mainstream and minority production can either flourish or flounder.»* (See in Cottle 2000, 17)

Overall, Lisa Wallin (2012, 55) tries to explain why it may be difficult to include indigenous voices into account:

*«Journalists reported number of barriers to getting remote indigenous voices in their reports. These include large costs associated with travel; a clash of newsgathering rituals and indigenous cultural practices; journalists lacking cultural competence and newsroom racism.» (Wallin 2012, 55)*

## **2.4. The Deatnu case in the Finnish media**

Henry and Tator (2002, 204, 216–224) have studied how media, and especially the editorials published, had covered the case considering Mi'kmaq peoples' fishing rights at Burnt Church in Canada. They found in their discourse analysis that the editorials portrayed First Nations communities as people who posed a threat to law and order. There was misinformation and misrepresentations in the narratives even though the paper strongly denied any form of bias.

Even though the case is very different from, for example, the case of the Deatnu river and the fishing rights of Sámi people, similarities to mainstream media's attitude and how they are reporting on the case could be found. The activist group *Ellos Deatnu* made a point of networking and got quite a lot of publicity in the media in Finland. I followed the case pretty closely during the summer and autumn of 2017 and made one article myself to the Helsinki-based newspaper *Kansan Uutiset* (*Kansan Uutiset* 2017) as a freelancer. In the article, I tried to bring out the Sámi perspective.

There were 19 stories written by Finnish journalists during June to September 2017 that I found and used to find interviewees for this study (more about the selection process in chapter 4). Based on this sample, one could say that the news during this time were often constructed as a conflict between Sami and Finnish people, and the main focus was on how tourism in the area will collapse because of the regulations, or on how tourists would get better access to fishing after the new law. I think the media did not dig deep enough to gain more understanding of why local Sami got so «rebellious» and were protesting so strongly about the new law, with some fishermen even fishing illegally and going public about it.

So, for a mainstream audience, meaning non-Sámi Finnish people, the case seemed to be yet another one of those where Sámi are demanding (their) rights to (their) land. Still articles and interviews published seem to leave it quite unclear as to why they do so. At least this is the impression you get as a reader and listener, even though I have not included content analysis of stories in this research. However, I would believe that if asking Finnish mainstream media about how they are reporting about the Deatnu river case they would appeal to objectivity and principles of journalism.

Pietikäinen has studied representations of Sámi in Finnish mainstream media. She says that media's representations of the Sámi are minor and bipolar. Firstly, the Sámi were presented as

an indigenous people with specific rights secured by international conventions. Finnish people were regarded as supporters and givers of rights. Secondly, Sámi were presented also as non-indigenous people without being entitled to the rights of indigenous people, particularly in relation to land ownership. In such representation, ethnic Finns were portrayed as limiters and deniers of the rights of the Sámi. (Pietikäinen 2001, 652.) However, a central aspect was invisibility:

*«The relative absence of the Sámi in mainstream media coverage weakens their position and participation in the society in many ways. By not having access to mainstream media, the Sámi are left out of one of the most influential arenas for public discussion and decision-making. As a result, it is much harder for the Sámi to present their agenda and points of view to a larger audience and thus participate in the public discussion. Easily, then, the Sámi and their issues are left unpublished, forgotten and ignored.» (Pietikäinen 2001, 653)*

As in the political sphere, where the Sámi are often left out of the negotiations, or their opinion are not given value, it seems that the media does the same; leaving important things unpublished and ignoring their messages. The media might be interested while the conflict is on, like in the Deatnu river case, but then forgetting to follow the issue later. In the following summer (2018), after fishing regulations were implemented, there were not many articles about the Deatnu case anymore, as it was «done» from a Finnish point of view.

### **3. Previous research and theoretical perspectives**

There is plenty of literature and research on colonialism, experiences of it, decolonisation indigenous relationship with nature, land issues among indigenous peoples, and also studies of the Deatnu itself and Sámi living around the Deatnu. For example, Law & Joks (2017) have studied state policy's interaction with indigenous knowledges and practices where indigenous knowledges are treated as 'beliefs' and techno-science qualifies as «knowledge» or truth. Their study is more closely about «a controversy in northern Norway and Finland between biological modellers and policymakers on the one hand, and Sámi fisher-people on the other.» Understanding the salmon fishing so differently from indigenous and biological point of views will lead to the conflict. Also, Aslak Holmberg (2018) has studied *Sámi Traditional Knowledge on Salmon and the Deatnu River in Research and Decision-making* in his thesis.

So far, I haven't seen any studies in this field related to journalism so I think it will be a fresh angle for research. I am hoping to lean on research made about the themes mentioned above and I will open them up a bit more in following chapters.



However, in order to understand the meaning of the Deatnu river case, the strong reactions of the local Sámi population, and why the coverage of the issue is of central importance to the way Sáminess in Finland is understood, I will here explore some central theoretical aspects. These include indigenous understandings of land and nature, the meaning of collective rights and lands and colonial perspectives in the context of the land and fishing.

### **3.1. Relationship with the nature and the land**

I try to find out in this study if there are differences between Sámi and Finnish people regarding the relationship with the nature. More closely I want to find out if it could affect journalists work when they are reporting about the Deatnu case. Is it possible to understand the other way of being if their own worldview and connections to the land are different?

In my pilot study a Sámi from Deatnu area, who had been interviewed by a Finnish journalist, described his relationship with the nature in this way:

*«(smirks) You are failing instantly when trying to describe what the Deatnu or its side-rivers mean, or I don't know what I could say, without them I would be nothing and I wouldn't be without them.»*

This person also refers the relationship with the Deatnu using expressions like *«source of inspiration»*, *«I'm as a drop of water, part of everything»*, *«no doubt where I am from»*, *«the most important metaphor»*, *«it has been always clear to me»*. This can be seen like Hanna Mattila's (2014) explanation of being «people of the nature» when nature is filled by cultural meanings and has a crucial condition for a person. The interviewee's answer states the indescribable relationship he has with his homeland and the power it has that effects on all the aspects of himself.

Similarly Nils-Aslak Valkeapää has described his relationship with the nature as a base of existence. He is saying,

*«It [nature] means very much to me. I would be nothing without the nature. For me the human is further than the nature so I don't even know the human that well. I know better things related to nature.»* (as cited in Mattila 2014)

Hanna Mattila (2014) has used postcolonial ecocriticism in her study in literature. She points out that the idea of being «people of the nature» means that nature is not subsidiary to the culture, but filled by cultural meanings and a vital condition. For the Sámi being «people of the nature» is both defining indigeneity and an ethnopolitical resource.

Mattila (2014) states that the same mind-set can be seen in Valkeapää's poetry where the disease of «white man» is making the nature, and the nation living with it, sick. This conflict between the Sámi and the nature-alienated Western way of thinking creates a gap that Valkeapää's poetry is growing from; and forming the basis of an ethnopolitical symbolism where environmentally aware, ethical and decolonial aims meet (ibid.). And this kind of gulf between the Sámi and the Finnish can be seen also in the Deatnu river case.

Every Sámi is certainly an individual and has their own personal relationship to the Deatnu or the land broadly and I cannot say that everyone living in the Deatnu valley, or from the area, has identical or even a similar bond to the land. But in general indigenous scholars are referring to indigenous relations with the environment/land in a similar way. It is inseparable and unexplainable but also one of the most important thing to «describe» indigenous peoples because all cosmos is related. Also, Finnish Sámi politics has underlined and started to build Sámi «nature people identity»; saying that the Sámis are «people of nature» having a special relationship with the land (quoted in Valkonen 2009, 180). Østmo and Law (2017, 7) state that relations that are woven throughout Sápmi bind people and other beings together within long-term ties, respectfully, negotiable, and they cannot be twisted apart.

Taking it to more universal level Lewis (quoted in Wilson 2008, 88) explains the relationship starting from the word itself:

*«Indigenous -- in its original Latin it means, «born of the land» or «springs from the land.» We also can take that in another way as well, as that born of its context, born of that environment. So therefore when you create something from an Indigenous perspective, you are creating it from that environment, from that land that it sits in. Now with Indigenous peoples and their traditions and customs, they are shaped by the environment, the land, their relationship; their spiritual, emotional and physical relationship to that land. It speaks to them; it gives them their responsibility for stewardship.»*

Also the Sámi, among all indigenous peoples in the world, have been and are still struggling with land issues because western thinking sees the land differently. Eriksen states that the relationship with indigenous peoples and the state is always a potential conflict; and the most common form of that conflict are rights related to the land (quoted in Valkonen 2009, 182). Valkonen (ibid., 185) argues that along with the rights it is also about terms of the Sámi nations surviving.

*«Indigenous struggles against capitalist imperialism are best understood as struggles oriented around the question of land – struggles not only for land, but deeply informed by what the land as a mode of reciprocal relationship (which itself informed by place-*

*based practices and associated form of knowledge) ought to teach us about living our lives in relation to one another and our surroundings in a respectful, nondominating and nonexploitative way.» (Coulthard 2014, 60)*

As the late Lakota philosopher Vine Deloria Jr. (quoted in Coulthard 2014, 60) explains the position that land provides an ontological framework for understanding relationships. Coulthard (2014, 60–61) continues it is a fundamental misunderstanding to think of the land only as a place or some material object for Indigenous cultures; but instead should it should be understood as a «*relationships of things to each other*». Opening it up even more he explains that place is a way of knowing, of experiencing and relating to the world and the others. And ethically this unity means that humans hold obligations to other people as to land, animals, plants and lakes.

Also Battiste (2013, 121) explains how relationships with nature and with the energies within the ecosystem creates awareness, and a worldview, in which one can look to the whole to see the patterns that develop. And over time the knowledge that has developed throughout those relationships manifests itself in many other social forms and processes; like stories, technologies, ways of being, traditions and ceremonies etc. (Battiste 2013, 121.)

And to sum up:

*«The expression of the indigenous culture is found not only in the land traditionally occupied by indigenous peoples, but also in their specific knowledge of the use of the land and its resources, in their medicinal and spiritual knowledge, and in the traditional art, beliefs and values that have been passed down from generation to generation. Knowledge and traditional resources are central to the maintenance of identity for indigenous peoples and cannot clearly be distinguished from one another.» (as cited in Heinämäki 2010, 5)*

To understand that strong relationship that includes everything, is challenging for the person who has not been raised in the indigenous culture. I It is not that long ago that the Finnish people were also more attached to the land; but after urbanization and capitalism the land has mainly lost its meaning to the new generations. This ontological relationship to land and place, as a sacred and deeply meaningful relationship, that as Coulthard and Wilson argue unites people with everything that you can see and cannot see, that has past and is in the future, must be given great respect while researching any indigenous community.

### 3.2. Land rights in indigenous context

<i>71. eanan</i>	<i>71. the land</i>
<i>lea earálágán</i>	<i>is different</i>
<i>go das lea orron</i>	<i>when you have lived there</i>
<i>vánddardan</i>	<i>wandered</i>
<i>bivástuvvon</i>	<i>sweated</i>
<i>šuvččagan</i>	<i>frozen</i>
<i>oaidnán beaivvi</i>	<i>seen the sun</i>
<i>luoitime loktaneame</i>	<i>set rise</i>
<i>láhppome ihtime</i>	<i>disappear return</i>
<i>eanan lea earálágán</i>	<i>the land is different</i>
<i>go diehtá</i>	<i>when you know</i>
<i>dáppe</i>	<i>here are</i>
<i>máttut</i>	<i>roots</i>
<i>máddagat</i>	<i>ancestors</i>

(Nils-Aslak Valkeapää: *Beaivi áhčážán* 1988 / *The Sun, My father* 1997. English translation by Ralph Salisbury, Lars Norström and Harald Gaski.)

An indigenous person is born into a group and the group forms an integral part of the identity of its members. Although seeing oneself as part of a whole, indigenous rights also exist in indigenous cultures. Control and use of land is an important element of indigenous peoples' collective rights. (see in chapter 2.4) Land is not only the mere basis of economic existence but much more. The relationship with the land is not only based on the use of its natural resources, but is also a precondition for the spiritual well-being of the group, and thus is central to their physical and cultural survival. (as cited in Heinämäki 2010, 5.)

*«This explains the great importance indigenous peoples attach to the issue of land rights. It also explains the call for rights to natural resources and the knowledge connected with these resources.»* (as cited in Heinämäki 2010, 5)

The right to cultural integrity of indigenous peoples is guaranteed in international human rights law. The right to a traditional way of life, as part of culture, is an environmental right that has a special significance for indigenous peoples, due to their special relationship with nature (Heinämäki 2010, 32). The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR) is one of the major instruments recognizing the right of members belonging to mi-

norities. Article 27 requires ‘effective participation’ or meaningful consultation’ with indigenous peoples in cases relating to the enjoyment of their culture (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights). As Heinämäki states any kind of development projects on their lands, as well as other kinds of environmental interference that may threaten the traditional livelihoods of indigenous peoples, may possibly amount to violations of Article 27 (2010, 32). Although she points out how it is not clear what ‘effective participation’ or meaningful consultation’ with indigenous peoples means under Article 27.

*«It does not seem to signify a veto right of indigenous peoples in decisions affecting their right to culture.» (Heinämäki 2010, 33)*

While talking about indigenous rights, one of the most important is ILO Convention No. 169 Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (1989). ILO Convention No. 169 has played a big role in the development of the legal status of indigenous peoples as peoples in international law. The aim of ILO 169 was to establish the conditions for self-management of indigenous and tribal peoples. In the other words, the purpose is that indigenous peoples should have the opportunity and a real possibility to manage and control their lives and decide their own future (ILO: ‘ILO Convention on indigenous and tribal peoples, 1989 (No. 169) a manual’)

*«ILO Convention No. 169 requires states to make good faith efforts to reach agreement with indigenous peoples’ own ‘representative institutions’ – that is, institutions chosen by indigenous peoples themselves rather than by the states – before taking actions that affect these peoples.» (as cited in Heinämäki 2010, 43)*

Finland has not ratified ILO Convention No. 169. The Finnish Sámi parliament has been pushing for the ratification for more than two decades and it has been on the agenda of many Finnish governments. Those who are against ratification are afraid that rights of the others will be narrowed down and land in Finnish Lapland (as it the region is called in Finland) will be taken over by Sámi. Even though the fear is mostly baseless (Markelin 2017, 37–38). Norway was the first country to ratify the ILO 169 in 1990.

### **3.3 The meaning of colonialism in relationship to the land**

*«A Lapp doesn’t log the tree under which his/her ancestors have worshipped their Gods. The settler is a pioneer in both farming and destruction. In his excitement to farm the land he can burn down huge forest lands without any thoughts to Lappish people’s rights, or that he will damage the land for them forever...» (Letinen 2016, 171) -- original Jakob Fellman in 1825 & 1830 - teoksessa Fellman 1906*

*Originally in Finnish: «Lappalainen ei hakkaa puuta, jonka alla hänen esi-isänsä ovat*

*palvelleet jumaliaan. Uudisasukas on pioneeri paitsi viljelyssä niin myös tuhoamises-  
sa ja voi viljelyinnossaan ja välinpitämättömyyttään polttaa suuria metsäaloja,  
tuhlaamatta ajatustakaan lappalaisten oikeuksille ja sille, että pilaa alueen tämän  
kannalta ikuisiksi ajoiksi...»*

Linda Tuhiwai Smith states that in the West space can be defined and measured. For some indigenous languages the language makes no clear or absolute distinction between those two processes. (Smith 2012, 52–53)

*«For the Indigenous world, Western conceptions of space, of arrangement and display, of the relationship between people and the landscape, of culture as an object of study have meant that not only has the indigenous world been represented in particular ways back to the West, but the indigenous world view, the land and the people, have been radically transformed in the spatial image of the West. In other words, indigenous space has been colonized. Land, for example, was viewed as something to be tamed and brought under control. -- Renaming the land was probably as powerful ideologically as changing the land. (Smith 2012, 53).*

When Smith talks about disciplining the Colonized she has many different meanings and variety of ways to show how it worked. As an example she takes the forms of discipline through exclusion, marginalization and denial: whereby , for example, indigenous ways of knowing were excluded and marginalized. (Smith 2012, 71.)

*«This happened to indigenous views about the land, for example, through the forced imposition of individualized title, through taking land away for ‘act of rebellion’, and through redefining land as ‘waste land’ or ‘empty land’ and then taking it away.» (Smith 2012, 71)*

This shows how different worldviews of thinking of the land can make a conflict – the other says this is wilderness, nothing is here I can take it; and for the other it is an uninterrupted chain of ancestors having it as a home land.

As Battiste (2013) says, the Indigenous world view is founded upon an understanding of how humanity fits with nature. She states that indigenous science is a living process of watching, listening, connecting, responding and renewing. Consequently *«indigenous science embodies a holistic view of the world in which all human, animal, and plant life are perceived being connected, related and interdependent»*. And given the Eurocentric influence over government and institutions, Indigenous peoples’ science has weakened enormously. Battiste pieces together the biggest gap between Indigenous knowledge and Eurocentric science: it is found in the differences in their traditions of privilege, prestige and power. (Battiste 2013, 121–123).

### 3.4 Postcolonialism and Decolonisation

*«Colonialism should have been dead at the end of World War II in 1945. While the world decolonization process is almost complete, it has not begun for Indigenous peoples.» (Yazzie 2000, 39)*

Postcolonialism is a controversial concept and many scholars have different views. Many indigenous people think that the concept of postcolonialism is problematic and misleading. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) argues that from an indigenous perspective, describing the world as «postcolonial» is to say that colonialism is finished. Kovach (2009, 76) agrees, saying that: *«there is nothing post about it. It has simply shape-shifted to fit the contemporary context.»* And because colonial interruptions are still harassing indigenous cultures there has to be a looking back and considering these relations while addressing indigenous research frameworks (ibid., 76).

Emma LaRocque argues that postcolonialism should not be taken as a clear ending of colonialism but rather the *post* refers to the radical rupture in history created by the colonial moment (quoted in Simpson & Smith 2014, 14). Simpson and Smith continue that in this case a postcolonial analysis is playing an important role in the development of Native studies for the reason that it indicates the «(im)possibilities of preserving tradition after the radical transformation in Native communities and Native peoples created by the colonial moment.» (ibid., 14). Following this line or argument, I think postcolonial theory has its place when it is needed to understand the phase of colonialism, and the conditions under which it became «post».

Kuokkanen (2007, 145) reminds us that postcolonial movements pursue equality in society and an end to discrimination based to race and culture, separation and inequality in education, working life, decision-making and the legal system.

Lehtola observes the problem of postcolonialist critique is that its «cognitive map» of colonialism is built upon a bipolar mode of colonialist thinking. Relationships of colonialism are seen to include the faraway «other» (Sámi) elsewhere and mainstream «here», «with us». Colonialism is often represented to happen as a faceless process, like somebody from «here» conquers and oppresses someone who is «elsewhere» and starts to dictate from upon above how things are going to be. (Lehtola 2005, 48.) I agree with Lehtola, as I have noticed there is no discussion in Finland that colonialism even happened; so the whole issue is somehow silenced. That is why it is easy for us Finns to have that distance, that «those Sámis are somewhere in the North;» and we do not actually know what has happened. That is why I believe it is crucial to embrace discussions of colonialism in general, and it is also why I saw it as central to my research topic.

And as Rauna Kuokkanen (2017) puts it: «*The first step of decolonizing is to start to discuss that colonialism exists. Also today. Because colonialism is not only past but as theorists have convincingly stated that it is still ongoing structure in the society.*»

Decolonisation is one of the postcolonial activities and it refers to the process that tries to reveal and to dismantle various forms of colonial power (Kuokkanen 2007, 146).

When it comes to academia, many scholars have strong recommendations about how it is the time to decolonize the Western viewpoint of research. Chilisa (2015, 39) argues that «the current dominant methodologies should be decolonized to legitimize and enable the inclusion of knowledge production processes that accommodate shared knowledge and wisdoms of those suffering from the oppressive colonial research tradition.» So as Budd Hall (cited in Kovach 2009, 79) points universities are holding the monopoly on what counts and what doesn't, to be counted as knowledge. Kovach (ibid., 79) adds that there is a critical need to question that kind of monopolistic knowledge enterprise, and applying a decolonizing lens prompts this action, thus becoming a quality of Indigenous research methodology.

Both in research and performance decolonization is about the process of valuing, reclaiming, and foregrounding indigenous voices and epistemologies (Denzin & al. 2008, 22).

*The decolonizing research should be owned by, and done for, indigenous persons. It should be evaluated in terms of indigenous, not Western, epistemological and political criteria. It should avoid simplistic dichotomies and either/or binaries. It should foreground indigenous narratives and traditions. -- So conceived, decolonizing methodologies embody «activist agendas working toward social justice, sovereignty, self-determination, and emancipatory goals.» (cited in Denzel & al. 2008, 23)*

I see postcolonial and decolonizing research can walk together hand in hand. They have the same purpose and are seeking to make a change. I do not want to divide these concepts by denigrating postcolonial analyses: but I am trying to utilize both in the ways they will help me the most in my study. I agree with Kuortti & al. (2007, 15) who state that postcolonial criticism does not only reveal the methods of oppression, but it is related to the thought of making the change.

*Postcolonial theory is against political, societal and cultural dominance. It does not only examine issues in former colonies but attention is also focused upon how colonial processes and decolonizing processes have impact on colonial states. (Kuortti et al. 2007, 15)*



Bhabha's (see Kuortti 2007, 69) aspect of colonialism is interesting as he studies colonialism from a post-structuralist point of view. He is criticising what it means to be modern and what is modernity. He says that our understanding of modernity needs to be viewed from the perspective of the colonized. And as modernity has been pressing colonial roots out of sight, there is a need to make the rejected material visible again. It can be seen also as decolonization.

Wilson and Little Bird (2005, 192-193) continue:

*«Decolonization, which necessarily requires an overturning of the institutions and systems that continue to subjugate and exploit Indigenous Peoples and our resources, must occur at the individual, collective, and structural levels. Individuals rights develop a critical consciousness from which they can call into question the colonizing institutions and begin a program of meaningful resistance to the colonizing forces affecting everyone's daily lives, but true decolonization cannot exist only at the individual level, nor can it occur only among the colonized.»*

And these processes are not only highly important to indigenous peoples, but also colonizers, to finally stop seeing the world through Western views but to understand their history and accept the change that is needed.

### **3.4.1 Decolonizing journalism**

*«Decolonizing media is more than simply hiring Indigenous reporters. Decolonizing in media challenges us to reform media and to challenge the replication of domination in the field: Who gets to speak, the stories that are told, those stories that get picked up and generated, and those stories, too, that are silenced.»* Shauneen Pete (cited in Elliott 2016)

Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission's commissioners have noted that *«The media's role and responsibility in the reconciliation process require journalists to be well informed about the history of Aboriginal peoples and the issues that affect their lives.»* (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015, 295.) As media coverage of indigenous peoples in Canada has been disparaging and neglectful for over a century, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's call for a long-overdue process of decolonizing the media is the best starting point states Elliott (2016).

The Anglo-American model is dominant in the field of journalism/media/communication studies and it is evident at the conceptual/theoretical level, but also at the curricula level as defining the role and values of the journalism profession as seen fit in western societies (Papoutsaki 2007, 4).

*«The dominant western news values are constantly thrown at audiences around the world shaping perceptions as to what is the acceptable way to practice journalism» (ibid., 5)*

As Papoutsaki (2007, 13) argues, there is a need to move away from generic models and journalism curricula need to embrace local perspectives. Additionally, Botha & de Beer (cited in Papoutsaki 2007, 13) suggest:

*«it entails an academic shift towards local achievements, needs, ways of acquiring the knowledge as well as a 'decolonizing of the mind' and the questioning of the existing Western journalistic world view.»*

Also in Australia, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody has suggested that journalism educators should ensure that the courses would contain a significant component relating to Aboriginal affairs and consider the creation of specific units of study dedicated to Aboriginal affairs. However in the study among the universities teaching journalism there were no institutions except one where Aboriginal issues had featured as a separate unit within a journalism degree. (Hartley & McKee 2007, 325.) Studying Indigenous journalism makes me feel very privileged to be able to learn and gain information of indigenous issues and the problems in the media, and use that knowledge afterwards in my work. At the moment there is basically no education about the Sámi in the ethnic majority state elementary schools, not to mention journalism education in Finland. During my bachelor and master studies in journalism in Finland, there were even not a discussion on how to report on minorities. There is an urgent need to start to include those themes in different levels of education.

How stories are told, by whom, for what purpose, to what effect, and for whose benefit - these are the main problems arising in the reporting of Indigenous issues in the mainstream Australian media (Hartley & McKee 2007, 11). And as the same problems there are found also all over the indigenous world, also in Scandinavia, it should be an aim for, for example, Finnish media organizations, journalists, journalism educators, media researchers, and everybody to get together to think through what could be done to decolonize the media industry, as the first steps had been taken in many countries already.

### **3.5. Colonialism in Finland**

*«Indigenous peoples, colonized peoples, oppressed peoples share a common heritage of living with their histories, being suppressed and overwhelmed by it, and having to struggle to overcome the burdens of the past.» (Coates 2004, 279)*

Although indigenous people share similar colonial history, yet the term colonialism is not often used in the context of injustices against the Sámi in Finland. As Finland never had overseas colonies so when discussing colonialism, Finns commonly refer to other European states (see in Lehtola 2015, 23).

*«It seems that denying colonialism is based on a similar generalization and exaggerated conclusions--. In public and also among the researchers, there occur a stereotypical understandings of the concept of colonialism.» (Lehtola 2015, 31.)*

It is true that the colonization of Sápmi was different compared to the colonization of other indigenous communities but it started earlier and proceeded slowly and unevenly. However Sámi faced policies combining various forms of discrimination and forced cultural assimilation. (Minnerup & Solberg 2011, 5–7.) Although already in 1842 an important fennophile Elias Lönnrot criticised Finnish authorities for their oppressive actions towards the Sámi. He thought it was inappropriate behaviour for the nation that was itself having a minority position under the mighty Russian Empire. (Lehtola 2015, 28.)

Since the First World War, Finnish culture entered a progressive era and it had an effect on the attitude towards the Sámi people. This belief in progress had built into it a cultural superiority towards cultures that had a livelihood based on nature: that are at a «primitive level». (Lettinen 2016, 125.) Lettinen (ibid., 137) explains how settlers took over fishing and hunting lands in Petsamo which led to the situation that Skolt Sámi families could not carry out their annual cycle (*vuotuiskierto*); and families became poor, and because of that the Finnish settlers' disparaging attitude towards Skolt Sámi became stronger.

Nyysönen (2011, 84) states that early Finnish policy towards the Sámi can be best characterized as ruthlessly egalitarian. Meaning that Sámis were considered as equal but the state did not recognize any ethnic rights: not even reindeer herding which remained open to non-indigenous people in Finland (in comparison in Norway and Sweden where only Sámi can herd the reindeer). Likewise The Lapland Committee stated in 1935 that «..there is no need to put the Sámi in an exceptional position in economic and social development.» The Sámis were part of democratic society but regarded as Finns, not as indigenous peoples.

The term colonialism was used by the Sámi Council already in 1959 (see in Lehtola 2015, 23). (The Saami Council is a voluntary Sámi organization (a non-governmental organization), with Sámi member organizations in Finland, Russia, Norway and Sweden.) The rise of the Finnish Sámi movement in the mid 1970s was influenced by other indigenous movements at that time, and many similarities between other Indigenous peoples and their own history became visible and active: also in the research field.

However, some Finnish scholars have argued that the Sámis did not suffer any major injustice compared to the rest of the population. Matti Enbuske (2008) concluded that: *«there was no reason to talk about Lapland's conquest or colonialism, because colonization of Finns and the Sámi happened peacefully and in coexistence.»* Enbuske has even questioned colonization itself. (Enbuske 2008.) He has also criticised an unhistorical and overly theoretical perspectives in postcolonial and indigenous research on Sámi issues:

*«Theories of European colonial power were transferred to Lapland and used for creating perspectives on the past of the victimized population, which did not necessarily have anything to do with the actual historical development of Lapland, however. Theoretical scrutiny began to produce its own history.»* (cited in Lehtola 2015, 26)

Also historian Jouko Vahtola denies colonialism in Finland. He argues that there is nothing wrong that *«the South conquered the North»* as it was consistent with current ideologies. (see Kuokkanen 2007, 146). He views the takeover of Lapland in these terms : *«Sámi people could not eg. stay in the 1600s isolated land of shamanic drums, hunting culture and shoes with hay, that is now easy to idealize and romanticize.»* (see *ibid.*, 146).

Nevertheless the structures of colonial power and oppression seem to be very similar everywhere (Lehtola 2015, 26) and indigenous peoples proved to be obstacles to colonizing powers in a number of parts in the world (Coates 2004, 171).

In addition, the change of original lifestyle based on seasonal migration into settlement is fully consistent with the characteristics of colonialism (cited in Lehtola 2015, 25). This change was clearly directed from the authorities who argued that the change was *«for the good»* of the Lapps. For example, speaking Sámi languages was not officially prohibited in Finland, as in Norway: nevertheless, in practice Finns did dictate in a colonial and fatherly manner what was good for the Sámi (Lehtola 2015, 25, 29). Also Lettinen (2016, 140) explains how the conflict of two different cultures, the way of thinking, world view and motivations culminates when the other nation has gotten so poor that they can be placed to the same position than poorest people of their own culture. Then it is natural to have a disgrace attitude and thinking other people are inferior and stupid. Nation that has been thrown off from their livelihood often are driven to the state of decline. And when settler is taking the livelihood, the land, fishing and hunting lands it crashes the self-esteem and mental culture also creating social problems. And finally Sámis can be pointed and the culmination of this sequence of events is that the Sámis can be argued to be not capable of deciding of their own affairs. (*ibid.*, 140.)

### 3.5.1 Politics playing a role in colonialism

Nyyssönen (2013) writes about impossibility of the idea of Finland as a colonizing power in a greater Finnish narrative. . That narrative has at least two components: increasing prosperity through industrial and post-industrial development, and the survival of the welfare state. And within those components there is *«the deepening impossibility of the idea of Finland as a colonizing power»*

*«Concerning the narrative of Finnish colonialism, its «geography» is everywhere else than in the alleged imperial capital, Helsinki. The geography of colonial Finland is in the Sápmi mindscapes and the global indigenous networks, which is one of its places of origin. The narrative is grounded in human experiences as well as in political practices that suffer from low legitimacy, or are just unknown in the Finnish public sphere. The element of explicit force and violence is missing, and by recognizing that, the problem seemingly disappears; the alternative narratives and histories of colonization are abandoned, which has also had consequences in the non-ratification of ILO Convention 169. The tolerance for multivocality appears low as well. In the case of Finland, theorizing about the end of state-bound geography and political spatiality appears premature.» (Nyyssönen 2013)*

In comparison to Nordic countries where Sápmi is located (among Kola peninsula in Russia) the first apology to the Sámi was presented by King Harald V of Norway in 1997 (Aikio 2001, 97) and later on by the Norwegian state in 2004 (Lehtola 2015, 22). Also a Swedish minister apologized for the injustices against the Sámi on behalf of the state in 1998 (Aikio 2001, 97). As Finns have considered themselves pioneers in minority politics it was instructive that when Sweden's minister made his apology for the Sámi, a Finnish colleague of his, Minister of Justice Jussi Järvenpää stated: *«There are currently no issues that would require an apology.»* (Turun Sanomat 14.8.1998) (Lehtola 2015, 22–23.) Also Northern media considered the state's reaction to be accurate and supposed that *«it cannot be even known who are Sámi and do they exist at all, so who should we apologize to anyway»* (Aikio 2001, 98). As Aikio (2001, 98) states: that denying any reasons for an apology is a very typical Finnish pig-headed condition..

In particular Finns think that their policy towards the Sámi in Finland has never been as strict and intolerant as in Norway and Sweden (Lehtola 2015, 27). According to Jukka Nyyssönen it is hard to describe Finnish Sámi politics because it is so variable and at times even invisible to some extent. He says that the Sámi mostly encountered political ambivalence, at worst leading to policies of neglect. Nyyssönen mentions the Finnish school system as the most important assimilating institution in Finnicization, reaching almost an entire generation. (Nyyssönen 2009, 82, 105).

In conclusion *Finnish colonialism was not a history of apparent repression or subjugation; it was a governing practice based on silencing* (as cited in Lehtola 2015, 29).

Furthermore to discover the present rights and position of Indigenous peoples, for example while comparing the situation in Australia, the Sámi have gained significant cultural rights and elected representations, yet there has been little progress in dealing with the key issues of rights as Indigenous people over land, water and natural resources. There are no parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland or Russia, which are «Indigenous-owned». (Minnerup & Solberg 2011, 15.)

Today the starting-point between the Sámi and the Finnish state is still deeply asymmetrical and rights of the Sámi are submitted from above: restricted in advance. So far the Sámi's strong position in the Finnish constitution has not been reflected in practical policy according to Nyssönen (2011, 90.)

Also when we look at the current situation considering the Sámi Parliament and the Finnish state, it seems that there is a lack of respect from the state toward the Sámi Parliament. A good example of this is the new fishing law in Deatnu; but the same situation exists also in relation to many other questions. (Markelin 2017, 53–54).

As Markelin (2017, 64) states one of the chokepoints is the Finnish Parliament. It is now 20 years since the Sámi people were recognized as indigenous peoples and the Sámi Parliament got its position. Yet still it is the case that the Finnish Parliament do not give the Sámi Parliament the position that it should have according to law. And when the state is not respecting the insights and opinions of the Sámi Parliament, the Finnish Parliament is questioning their legitimacy.

### **3.6 Fishing in a colonial aspect – Fishing and the caring of fish in two different dimensions**

Webbs of politics have caught local fishermen in Sápmi. Liv Østmo and John Law say that *«nations from the south have pursued their national and colonial projects by settling, extracting, trading and defining their territorial boundaries in ways that usually made no sense to those already living there. These projects were often directly or indirectly repressive.»* (Law & Østmo 2017) This also applies to the Deatnu river case.

Law and Østmo (2017) argue that Sámi understandings of the environment and traditional ecological knowledge are not included in management schemes basically at all. Their harsh conclusion is that in Sápmi the situation in important respects is still colonial rather than post-colonial. (ibid.)

Joks and Law (2017a) bring an interesting perspective of «care» into their article. The intention of care seems to be very different from Sámi and biologists. Most likely both scientists and local ecological experts care of salmon in the Deatnu river very much, but how they care and what they care about varies a lot. Firstly what or whom to care for, secondly how that caring is done and thirdly who is it that does the caring. As Joks and Law conclude, «care from one point of view may look like and be domination from another.»

So there are two different worlds. Politics try to limit fishing and local people's ability to fish in their own ways are being imposed. In the other world, including that of the Sámi and other locals, it is normal that salmon numbers go up and down.

To understand these different perspectives Joks and Law give a good example of what fishing is. To catch the fish is something about being given, something that is outside the power of people. This means that fishing is partly about asking and asking respectfully and the salmon may accept the request or not. And when it comes to care, in the Sámi perspective it is about knowing the limits and entering into a relation with the river and its salmon. Local experts care for the river, for the salmon stocks, for the fishing but also for local social relations. (Joks & Law 2017a, 150–157, 166.)

Also Law and Østmo (2017) add the problematic of «care»:

*«So caring for the lake makes for a healthy lake. But caring is multivalent and it rami-fies in ways that do not necessarily make sense to outsiders. Indeed, in ways that are not necessarily visible to outsiders.»*

They argue that the continuous squeeze on Sámi practises for caring for eg. for lakes and rivers, is in the process of suffocating the form of ecological knowledge that has worked at least a millenium sustainably in a fragile environment. Therefore in present global circumstances not to take into consideration local perspectives seems unwise. (Law and Østmo 2017.)

*«This means that the misunderstanding is not – or not simply – epistemological, an argument about the best way of knowing reality. It is also ontological, about what there is in the world. In the realities of technoscience there is no space for the lively actors that inhabit the Sámi world. They are denied. They are not possible. The first and most important task is therefore simultaneously political, epistemological, and ontological. It is to cultivate practical ways of recognizing that these worlds are not the same. It is to acknowledge that land and water are actually different. That the Sámi world is indeed a lively world. Only when this has been achieved will it become possible to look for ways of getting on better together in difference.»*

Also Aslak Holmberg (2018) states that an underlying argument in the policy discourse in the Deatnu fishing regulations is that Sámi rights and protecting salmon are seen as being in opposition, and cannot be achieved simultaneously. Nor has Sámi knowledge a place in the policy discourse.

## 4. Methodology

This is a qualitative research based on semi-structured interviews. I chose the qualitative research method as I try to find out people's experiences and feelings of the research topic. It is the hope of nuanced understanding rather than a quantitative measurement that is the ambition here.

In my thesis, I follow an indigenous perspective and I am using indigenous methodologies. In my study, it means adopting a respectful standpoint and pursuing reciprocity that guarantees that the research could be helpful for the indigenous community. As Wilson (2008, 34) says «What is ethical to do in order to gain this knowledge, and what will this knowledge be used for?» I have been examining my position as a journalist and non-indigenous researcher earlier (see chapter 1.2). I think it is important also to be transparent in making the study ethical.

*The main aim of indigenous methodologies is to ensure that research on indigenous issues can be carried out in a more respectful, ethical, correct, sympathetic, useful and beneficial fashion, seen from the point of view of indigenous peoples. (Porsanger, 2004, 107)*

In my study, I hope to follow Porsanger's prescription, as I think it embraces many important issues that should be borne in mind.

Indigenous people have been excluded from knowledge construction as defined by Western thought because there has not been an appreciation of Indigenous ways of knowing (Kovach 2009, 77-78). Porsanger (2004, 107) adds how the process of decolonisation of theories, developing indigenous methodologies and using indigenous epistemology, allows indigenous research to break free from the frames of Western epistemologies. Western worldviews are in most cases very different compared to indigenous epistemologies and foreign to indigenous ways of thinking (ibid., 107). Critical indigenous inquiry begins with the concerns of indigenous peoples and the researcher must consider how the research both benefits and promotes self-determination for research participants (Denzin, Lincoln & Smith 2008, 2).

Chilisa (2012, 33) says that «*the purpose of interpretive research is to understand people's*



*experiences. The research takes place in a natural setting where the participants make their living. The purpose of study expresses the assumptions of the interpretivist to understand human experiences. Assumptions on the multiplicity of realities also inform the research process.»*

Reciprocity has an important meaning in indigenous research. It means the necessary relationship between the scholar and the community studied (Olsen 2016, 40). «*When the scholar gets something from the community to be able produce a scholarly work, she has to give something back to the community»* (ibid., 40–41). I think it would be ideal to include this aspect in every research where people are involved but especially in indigenous research as [indigenous] people are used to seeing researchers come into their communities, do whatever it is they do and leave, never to be heard from again (Wilson 2008, 15). Also due to the unbalanced power relations it is important to show respect and give back to the indigenous community. Markiewicz (2012, 24) outlines how to exercise reciprocity when studying indigenous communities with four points: 1) ensure that the consequences of questions asked are fully considered in order to ‘do no harm’ 2) operate in an ethically appropriate manner using informed consent processes 3) consider appropriate benefits for participants through direct reciprocity and/or dissemination of evaluation findings 4) ensure that evaluation is capable of producing findings that can inform future program design and social policy wherever this is possible and achievable.

My goal is to gain knowledge of this relatively unstudied topic and share it among my colleagues and also the Sámi community. I hope this research can give perspectives that can be processed to provide better understanding, and thus to more sensitive and appropriate journalism from the Sámi point of view.

#### **4.1 Research questions**

As mentioned above my research questions are:

- 1) What is the role of journalism in presenting / representing the Sámi in Deatnu river case?
- 2) What is the relationship between colonialism and journalism and how does it show?
- 3) Do Sámi interviewees feel that (Finnish) journalists understand the relationship that the Sámis have with nature, their homeland and more specifically in this case the Deatnu river?

As Varadharajan is states, indigenous peoples’ worldviews are firmly rooted in a particular place (2000, 142). The meaning of the land of ancestors, and of belonging to this land, can be difficult to understand for non-indigenous peoples. And because of that it would be extremely important for media to open up these different views to the mainstream public in order that, for example, this discussion of Deatnu fishing rights and what they mean to the Sámi would be more understandable for everybody. As noted above, in this Deatnu river case it can be seen

how the state did even not listen to the Sámis while making decisions about the new law and regulations.

## 4.2 Method and empirical material

Method can be understood as «the way to a goal», following the original Greek meaning. (Brinkmann & Kvale 2015, 70). I like the expression as it crystallizes the idea of method that can be sometimes difficult to approach.

My empirical material consists of six interviews with Sámi people. All the interviewees had been interviewed by Finnish mainstream media during the summer and autumn of 2017. Some of them were interviewed for several articles, some only once. Altogether I found 19 stories published on the topic of the Deatnu river between June and September 2017. The articles were all published on the Internet, so it is possible that some additional stories might have been found in printed archives. However, since it is not the texts themselves that are in focus, I did my search mainly in order to find enough interviewees. In total, there were 12 Sámi men and 2 Sámi women interviewed in the 19 stories that I used. The news stories were mainly published in Lapin Kansa, the regional newspaper for northern Finland. Yle (The Finnish Broadcasting Company) published a number of stories, but Yle's news were mainly made by Sámi journalists (for Yle Sápmi) and then translated to Finnish so I did not include them. However, other articles published in Finnish media (Turun Sanomat, Iltalehti, Suomen Kuvalehti, Maaseudun Tulevaisuus) were made by journalists from Finland. Quite many of the articles were originally produced by the Finnish News Agency (Suomen Tietotoimisto - STT) as newspapers use their material often. For example, one story was published in three different newspapers, only edited slightly to fit the paper's format. This makes the number of stories even fewer.

I have done the interviews in October and November in 2018. All interviewees are from the Finnish municipality of Ohcejohka (in Finnish *Utsjoki*). The intention was to interview 7-9 people who would be representing different positions (politician, fisherman, activist etc.). However, only six interviews became possible: mainly because of the challenges to reach them or fit the schedule together, as potential interviewees were so busy with other work. There were people who said yes\ but who were unreachable later for reasons I do not know. Also, scheduling was very different from my usual practise, as I could set up only one interview beforehand: others happened when I contacted people again while I was in Ohcejohka. While I did my interviews in Ohcejohka there were ongoing reindeer separations and the moose hunting season which eliminated some of the interviewees. During my visit, I managed to do five interviews and later I did one by telephone. It was different to do one via phone, as there were no possibility to see the reactions of the interviewee. However, on the whole, all six interviews were successful. All interviews lasted approximately one hour.

As some of interviewees wanted to keep their anonymity I decided to anonymize them all to respect those who did not want to give their names. Nevertheless, although all the interviewees have been promised anonymity it is relevant to say something about their backgrounds. I cannot reveal too much but just to give the picture as their different roles affect their way of approaching things. Many of them fish and some have only the role of fisherman. The sample includes an activist, entrepreneur of tourism, some politicians, some artists and few who have been participating in the negotiations of the fishing agreement. So the issue under discussion was not unknown to them: and it might be said that there was high proportion with some commitment in this area. Some interviewees had many roles. So even though I have small amount of interviewees, I believe that my interviewees cover a broad range of viewpoints and expertise, and I tried my best to cover all perspectives. I haven't been able to interview all the Sámi that were in mainstream media in relation to the Deatnu river case but these persons interviewed provide a good variety considering the problems I had to get interviews.

It should be mentioned that all interviewees are men. There were only two women interviewed in the stories made by mainstream media, and I can only speculate as to why this is so. Are there fewer women who fish or was it a conscious selection? Alia and Bull (2005, 23) have indicated that Maori women are often invisible in media representations. This could be an interesting field to study more also among Sámi media representations. However, Sámi media interviewed some women, but there too they were fewer than the men. I hoped very much to get the two women involved in my study, but unfortunately one did not agree and with the other one I was unable to schedule the interview.

All the interviews were conducted in Finnish. The language was chosen as I and the interviewees speak fluent Finnish. Unfortunately, my northern Sámi is not so good yet that I could have interviewed in northern Sámi, even though it would have been the best since it is all interviewees' mother tongue. Afterwards I transcribed the interviews in Finnish. I also translated some parts to English, as can be seen in the Analysis chapter.

### **4.3 Semi-structured interviews and processing and analyzing the data**

For the interviews, I used a semi-structured model. As Eskola & al. (2018, 28) state the research interview is a form of discussion where the researcher tries to find out things related to the study from the interviewees. It comes close to an everyday conversation but as it is a professional interview, it has purpose, and a specific approach and technique (Brinkmann & Kvale 2015, 31). The structuration of interviews means how strictly questions are formed beforehand and how much the interviewer is in charge of the interview (ibid., 29). In semi-structured interviews, all questions are the same for interviewees and the interviewee can answer in his/her own words (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 87): thus it is neither an open everyday discussion nor a closed questionnaire (Brinkmann & Kvale 2015, 31). Although the interview guide

has the same questions for all, it allows for unexpected questions or follow-up. My questions were not worded to everyone in the exact same way during the actual interview, but the same themes were used across the sample.

I think semi-structured interviews fit very well to my research as I have certain themes and questions to which I require answers. As a semi-structured interview seeks to understand themes from the subjects' own perspectives (ibid., 31) it gives a chance to have their voices heard. Brinkmann and Kvale are talking about the life world – the world that interviewees live everyday. «*Life world is the world as it is encountered in everyday life and given a direct and immediate experience, independent of and prior to explanations.*» With this they explain how qualitative interview is a research method that gives a privileged access to people's basic experience of the lived world (Brinkmann & Kvale 2015, 32.)

I did six interviews during autumn 2018 and I felt everyone involved was happy to share their thoughts. When asking about their opinion of the stories made by Finnish journalists, I showed the stories that the interviewee had been involved in. This helped some better recall the situation and the result, and how they felt about the story afterwards.

After interviewing people, I have transcribed all interviews fully. I have read the interviews through several times. As Eskola & Suoranta (1998, 152) say, it is important to know your data thoroughly and it should be read many times in the beginning for an initial exploration. They refer to thematic interviews but also in my case it fits well to my analysis method: earlier research can be utilized for structuring the thematic interview guide (ibid., 153). After being sure about the material I have, I started processing the data. When processing data into the themes it is possible to get a selection of different answers or results to the questions. Thematizing the data provides initial relationship between the data and theory (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 180).

Chilisa states that organizing data starts with open coding which means data is processed into themes, patterns and concepts. These are developed as researchers read through the data and ask critical questions. (Chilisa 2012, 214.) I started to thematize my data using concept maps. Concept maps are a valid method when a researcher wants to explore the main concepts of the subjects' thinking, and the relevant ways in which this thinking is interlinked (Åhlberg 2018, 57). From concept maps, I found the main themes and topics that I started to analyse.

As I want to give my interviewees a voice, I use lot of citations in my analysis. In indigenous methodologies, it is important to hear what the indigenous individuals themselves are thinking. Retaining the original quotes in Finnish, as all interviews were conducted in Finnish, gives a possibility to see the authentic answers for those who know the language. Even though

the translations are trying to keep the same content as the original quotes, you always lose something when translating.

#### **4.4 Decolonizing the interview method**

Bagele Chilisa (2012) introduces in her book *Indigenous Research Methodologies* other ways to conduct interviews including postcolonial indigenous worldviews and perspectives. I'll open up what she has meant by that kind of point of view and this chapter draws upon chapter 7 in her book; called «Decolonizing the interview method» where she gives alternative strategies that give voice to marginalized communities (ibid. 203-224).

As the usual interview method leans towards individualistic, Westernized assumptions and theories that ignore postcolonial indigenous value systems, the indigenous way to interview is leaning on an indigenous perspectives. Those methods privilege relational ways of knowing that value respect for relations people have with each other and with the environment. (204–206.)

Chilisa argues that if participants give their permission it is valuable to use their names in the research. She suggests that this ensures that the researcher is accountable to the participants; and that also participants are accountable to their communities. From a postcolonial indigenous perspective, that Chilisa is advocating, stories that participants have told lose their power if the storyteller is not known.

Although I understand Chilisa's viewpoint and see why it is important, I could not follow it in my study. As I mentioned earlier I had promised anonymity for all my interviewees as it was requested by some of them. Also I think that in some cases it might be more preferable not to give interviewees names if the case is sensitive, or there are other reasons for securing people's identities. However, such a decision of course needs to be situation-based.

Also I think it is important to base the interview questions on theories, concepts, and terms that come from postcolonial indigenous worldviews (ibid., 216); and theories made by indigenous scholars have been one of my main sources while I created my interview guide.

*«The interview questions and the data analysis and interpretation further illustrate how postcolonial indigenous worldviews can be used as frameworks with their own language, vocabulary, concepts, terms, and theories, used either alone or to complement Euro-Western academic discipline frameworks.» (Chilisa 2012, 217)*

As my background and education is from a Euro-Western school system and academia, I cannot describe myself as an indigenous researcher, not being indigenous and not having traditional knowledge. However, as there is a possibility, and recommendation, to use indigenous

worldviews in my research and combine them with Western academic frames as little or much as is needed, it gives me a new path to follow that I am glad to take.

## 5. Results of analyses

### 5.1. Western knowledge is considered above traditional knowledge (árbediehtu)

There seems to be two different perspectives concerning how to protect the salmon in the Deatnu river. The Sámi interviewees' perspectives are framed by ancestral roots and traditional knowledge where living with the river and being part of the whole ecosystem gives the wisdom to protect the river and its people. Similarly Liv Østmo's and John Law's (2017) study shows that the colonial perspective is still strong as Sámi understandings of the environment and traditional ecological knowledge are not included in management schemes. This applies also to the fishing agreement in Deatnu as traditional knowledge was not taken into consideration in decision-making. A report of how environmental decision making is taking Sámi traditional knowledge into account states that at the moment, decision makers do not have enough knowledge or understanding about Sámi people, their culture and traditional knowledge (Olsén et al. 2017, 10).

Almost all interviewees brought out the fact that the Sámis have been inhabiting the Deatnu valley for thousands of years and yet there is still fish in the river. This argues against the explanations that states are presenting for the reasons to protect the salmon; explanations that are based on the non-Sámi researchers' information of the salmon population. On the Finnish side it is the Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) that produces the research and monitors the information used for decision-making processes. Agreements of fishing restrictions are thereby based on the information provided by Luke. That the nature management sector has a strong natural science-oriented tradition, without much openness for other types of knowledge (see Riseth 2011, 151) was demonstrated in the Deatnu case. Traditional knowledge was not taken into account as part of decision-making. In the interviews, Sámi individuals show their frustration and anger towards the system that does not take their knowledge of the river and fish seriously.

*In a way, they totally discarded the whole issue. We brought things to their attention, based on traditional knowledge, but there was no willingness to use this as part of the basis for negotiations. (interviewee 3)*

*Siinä tavallaan käveltiin yli siitä, mitä me niinku tuotiin esille niitä asioita, ei niitä otettu riittävän vakavasti. Juuri tästä perinnetiedostakin, ei sitä haluttu mitenkään ottaa neuvotteluihin lähtökohdaksi. (interviewee 3)*

Similarly Riseth (2011, 151) has suggested that: «Public bureaucracies have their own logic, where laws, regulations and management practices exercise a hegemony and presumably use both model power and co-optation, maybe without reflecting on the fact that they may completely override the local population and their interests.» If this is so, then it is not surprising that the researchers' conclusion of how to protect the salmon does not get support from the local population. In their words, relying on the numbers of fish caught does not tell the truth regarding the condition of the salmon population of the river.

One interviewee explains how difficult it has been to try to negotiate the inclusion of traditional knowledge into the agreement process. The problem is that traditional knowledge is shared orally. In many indigenous communities, oral tradition is the main way to share and pass knowledge of the society to the next generations. In western culture, however, this oral-based knowledge is seldom valid as written information is necessary in order to be taken seriously.

*It's been really hard to get the knowledge that these locals and fishermen have of the salmon and its movements included into this research base that they use. The explanation given by public officials was always that the information published by the RKTL and nowadays Luke, and their statistics, was the only documented information available. So that's the information they use. The craziest thing is that they talk of number of fish caught. This tells you nothing about how many fish there actually are in the river, only how many fish that got fished out of there. (interviewee 3)*

*Ja näitä näkemyksiä, mitä paikallisilla ja pyytäjillä on tästä lohesta ja lohen liikkumisesta, niin niitä on hyvin vaikea ollu saaha menemään siellä tutkijaportaassa. Ja se, että virkamiesporras perusteli aina meille sen niin, että tuo on ainoa olemassaolevaa tutkittua tietoa, mitä on kirjoitettu ja kun niistä löytyy käppyröitä ja on entisen RKTL:n ja nykyisen Luken tilastot, niin niitten mukaan pelataan. Kaikista hulluinta on aina ollu meiän mielestä se, että puhutaan saalistilastosta. Sehän ei kerro mitään että paljonko tuolla joessa on kalaa, sehän kertoo vaan paljonko sieltä on nostettu kalaa. (interviewee 3)*

The salmon populations are followed by the Tana Monitoring and Research Group (TRG) that was formally appointed in 2017 (Falkegård 2018, 12). Holmberg (2018, 48) criticises situation where traditional Sámi net fishing gets the blame for causing the reduction in the salmon populations because the only fishing group whose proportion has remarkably increased is tourist fishers based on the data of the TRG.

Another interviewee agrees that the data that researchers produce might not be entirely valid information.

*No no, the local knowledge is in no way recognised. Now there's been a bit of an awakening here too that local knowledge should be as important and valuable as that of a researcher. Because researchers are really quite one-sided. (interviewee 2)*

*Ei ei, sitä paikallista tietoa ei oteta mitenkään huomioon. Nyt on täälläkin herätty siihen, että paikallinen tieto pitäisi olla ihan yhtä tärkeä kuin tutkijoiden. Koska tutkijathan on aika ykssilmäisiä. (interviewee 2)*

Traditional knowledge is in Northern Sámi called árbediehtu. Árbediehtu means a specific Sámi knowledge that has developed over generations, is often closely related to the local natural environment that has been observed and lived for ages, and embraces the knowledge of how the land and natural resources can be used sustainably (Henriksen 2011, 79, Olsen et al. 2017, 10). One of the foundational aspects of árbediehtu is awareness that resources are limited and one must not take more than is needed (Holmberg 2018, 43). As indicated by the quote above, the official level considers only written knowledge of the salmon as the knowledge that can be used as a source to make decisions. However, even though locals do not really appreciate the negligent attitude of the state, and that the traditional knowledge has been ignored, there is a bit of hope for árbediehtu being noticed in the future. As the following interviewee mentions:

*Yeah, one thing that has changed, I am not sure where it came from, but maybe from the international arenas, the [concept of] árbediehtu or traditional knowledge. So what we said over three years ago, that Sámi have this traditional knowledge of nature, fishing, everything that; is transferred from generations to generations— now the state has stated that a section of traditional knowledge will be included for the treatment plan of Deatnu. But then we come to this ridiculous part, that of course there is no written material, so who will start to write? We will not do it without getting paid, we have done enough voluntary work. Have some decency. The Ministry could hire for example an employee or employees; who could start writing down traditional knowledge. It is just unbelievable. Before this was always seen as nonsense. (interviewee 4)*

*Joo, yks asia mikä on muuttunut, en tiiä mistä, onko se kansainvälisillä areenoilla tullu tämä árbediehtu eli perinnetieto. Vielä kolme vuotta sitten mitä me sanoimme, kun saamelaisillahan kertoman mukaan siirtyy perimätietona se perinnetieto luonnosta ja kalastuksesta, kaikesta. Niin nyt on valtio sanonut, että esimerkiksi Tenon hoitosuunnitelmaan tulee perinnetietoon oma osio. Mutta sitten tullaan tähän naurettavuuteen, että ei oo aineistoa, kuka alkaa kirjottaa? [...] ei me ei aleta kirjottaa ilman lompakkoa. Me ollaan ihan tarpeeksi tehty talkoita. Että jotakin rotia. Ministeriöhän voi palkata siihen vaikkapa työntekijöitä tai työntekijän, mikä alkaa tekemään perinnetiedosta*



*semmosta kirjallista muotoa. Aivan kuule uskomatonta. Ku yleensä pidetty ihan höpöhöpöjuttuna. (interviewee 4)*

Berkes (see in Olsén et al. 2017, 24) states that traditional knowledge completes often imperfect academic knowledge. Local communities also have often significantly more precise ecological knowledge than scientific communities. Still there seems to be a big leap to take before that idea would be acknowledged. Many studies inevitably suggest that understanding and supporting biodiversity requires understanding of the knowledge and worldview of indigenous peoples (see in Helander-Renvall & Markkula 2011, 41).

The use of traditional knowledge raises the question of ownership. How can traditional knowledge be used and simultaneously be properly protected? Henriksen (2011, 87–88) discusses the establishment of databases for árbediehtu. He states that árbediehtu can be a very local matter or it can relate to the entire Sámi people as a collective knowledge. Therefore mapping, archiving and use of Sámi traditional knowledge must be decided in each specific case and the owners of the heritage must be determined in accordance with indigenous peoples' own customs, laws and practices. To push the indigenous knowledge to the western-like mode of analysis can also be a challenging and complex task.

Among the interviewees, there were a lot of comments about other species of fish too. The Deatnu river is well-known for its salmon, but salmon itself is just a tiny part of the rivers' ecological system. The multiple fauna living in the river has an enormous effect also on the salmon population. Many interviewees talked about how different species are related one to another. One of them stated that the ecosystem is so complex that nobody can really understand what would happen if there would be something taken out from it. By something, he means the human, who is also a part of the system as everything else. This is also confirmed by Battiste (2013) who states how indigenous worldviews and science have a holistic view of the world where all beings are connected. Regrettably, due to the Eurocentric influence the position of Indigenous knowledge has been weakened; as discussed in previous chapters (3.4).

*There has been salmon fishing in this river for thousands and thousands of years. And other fish too. So if one part is suddenly taken away, it will have effects that nobody can foresee, effects that cannot be measured. --- And if one thing is taken away from there; then something else will take its place, after that something else and then something will disappear, one cannot know. (interviewee 5)*

*Täällä on pyydetty lohta siis tuhansia tuhansia vuosia. Ja muutakin kalaa. Niin jos sitten yhtäkkiä otetaankin tuommonen osa pois, niin sillä on semmosia vaikutuksia mistä kukaan ei tiedä mitään, sitä ei voi arvioida. [...] ja sitten jos ottaa yhden asian*

*sieltä pois, niin sitten jotain tulee lisää ja sitten tulee taas jotain lisää ja sitten jotain häviää ja sitä ei tiää. (interviewee 5)*

That interviewees' worry about the future can be heard also in other interviewees' answers. Giddens (see in Helander-Renvall & Markkula 2011, 36) states that the integrity of a certain tradition does not only lie in the temporal preservation of the tradition, but also in its continuous interpretative work, where the joining of threads from now to the past are recognized.

One interviewee states how climate change has already affected the arctic nature. But if building your perception of the situation, eg on what you see in the media, there are no other factors mentioned that could be a threat to the salmon other than people fishing.

*The only issue talked about in this Deatnu thing has been salmon, salmon, salmon. Not about the whole river system, with all its fish and predators – now even [Minister of Foreign Affairs Timo] Soini has talked about climate change, though he does not admit it. My parents have been saying that the nature has changed – and I too have noticed that, for example, Deatnu is not freezing properly anymore. It might freeze over only towards the end of December, and this is a very recent change. Climatologists say that this area, the subarctic, is where [the climate] changes the fastest; here the change can be even five degrees [celcius]. And it has already changed. The Kevo research station has been there since 1957, and since then, winters have gotten shorter by a month. Similarly the water systems change and have changed. This has been forgotten totally, there's only been talk about the salmon. But not the whole ecosystem is mentioned, only as an aside. (interviewee 4)*

*Semmonen seikka tässä Teno asiassa ollu se, että on puhuttu vain lohesta, lohesta, lohesta. Ei siitä koko vesistöalueesta ja niistä kaloista ja predaattoreista. Nyt toitottaa jopa Soinikin siitä ilmastonmuutoksesta, vaan ei myönnä sitä. Mutta minun vanhemmat on puhunut, että luonto muuttuu, ja on muuttunu, ja minä oon kyllä kans sen huomannu, ei esimerkiksi Teno edes jäädy kunnolla. Juuri joulukuun lopussa jos jäätyy, ja se on muuttunut ihan tässä [...] ilmastotieteilijät sanoo, että tämä on se alue, missä kaikista nopeiten ja radikaaleimmin [ilmasto] muuttuu subarktisella alueella, täällä se voi jopa olla viis astetta, jos muualla puhutaan asteesta, kahesta asteesta. Ja se on jo muuttunutkin, Kevon tutkimusasema on ollut olemassa vuodesta -57. Kuu-kaudella on lyhentynyt talvi. Niin tuo vesistökin on muuttunu ja muuttuu. Niin on unohtettu kokonaan, puhutaan vaan siitä lohesta eikä koko siitä ekojärjestelmästä, oikeestaan vaan sivulauseessa. (interviewee 4)*

Joks and Law point out that the Sámi perspective of care is the relationship with the river but also about knowing the wider implications. «*Local experts care for the river, for the salmon stocks, for the fishing but also for local social relations*». (Joks & Law 2017a, 150–157, 166.) As the interviewee states, fishing and being on the river is much more than catching a fish, it is also creating the bond and maintaining the relationships with the others.

*[I]t means a lot just to get down there, to the river, even if you don't get a single fish. Like this summer I was rowing on the river for quite a few days without catching any fish. But the thing is to just be able to go there and enjoy it, make a fire at the beach and then chat and talk with the other fishermen, it's like a social happening. Same as when the first drift-net fishing [in Finnish: kulkutus] takes place in the spring, and you see all these like-minded people who you haven't met for a long time. It's kind of a big event, a social event. (interviewee 3)*

*[...] sillä on iso merkitys, että sie pääset tuonne joelle, vaikka sie et sais kalaakaan. Niinku tänäkin kesänä soutelin tuolla joella aika monta vuorokautta ettei tullu kalan kalaa. Mutta se, että sinne saa mennä ja siellä saa olla ja nauttia siitä, tehdä tulet sinne rantaan ja sitten toisten kalastajien kanssa puhua ja keskustella. Se on semmonen sosiaalinen tapahtuma, sama ku ensimmäiset kulkutukset silloin keväällä. Siellä kun näet niitä samanhenkisiä, joita et ole tavannut pitkään, niin kyllä se on semmonen iso tapahtuma, sosiaalinen tapahtuma. (interviewee 3)*

As discussed before (see chapter 2.4) the Deatnu's significant meaning as a source of salmon has also been complemented by its importance as a source of physical and spiritual sustenance for generations (Kuokkanen 2007). As a previous quote from interviewee noted, the local Sámi do not only see themselves as taking care care of the river but also as an inseparable part of the river, themselves.

## **5.2 Colonial aspects of the fishing agreement - Taking fishing rights from the Sámi, giving more to Finns**

Sámi fishers employ traditional netfishing (*lohipato, buodđu*), standing net (*seisova verkko, njáŋggofierbmi*), and seine (*nuotta, nuohti*) and drift net (*kulkuttaminen, golgadat*). Netfishing in the Deatnu river is connected with many cultural meanings. (Helander-Renvall & Markkula 2011, 33.) These meanings do not seem to be recognized at a state level.

According to the interviewees, there are many elements of colonialism in the process of the fishing agreement of the Deatnu, and how it was put into practice. Joks and Law (2017a) conclude that care may seem and look like domination from another person's perspective. As mentioned before, the river Sámis feel that as their point of view and knowledge was not good

enough for decision makers. A sense of frustration and bitterness could be detected in interviewees' answers. These two interviewees describe the power relations well:

*It's like God, it is like placing yourself in the position of God.* (interviewee 5)

*Se on niinku jumalana, se on niinku jumalaksi ittensä asettamista tuommonen.* (interviewee 5)

The interviewee points out how in his perspective the Finnish decision makers have placed themselves even above nature. Another feels that old Sámi traditions are disregarded on purpose.

*One wants to shoot down our old traditions on purpose.* (interviewee 1)

*Sitä tahallaan halutaan teilata meidän vanha käytäntö.* (interviewee 1)

Lehtola (2015) talks of «unequal relationships» and «the fundamental decisions affecting lives of the colonized people are made and implemented by the colonial rulers.» As Finnish authorities assume power over Sámi affairs, it reflected as a reaction of the oppressed: who perceive that 'they are doing this on purpose'.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains how the Western space can be defined and measured. Indigenous space has therefore been colonized, for example by land seen as something to be controlled and tamed (Smith 2012, 52–53). One could say that this is what happened in Deatnu where Finnish and Norwegian states started to regulate fishing a long time ago: since 1873. (Tenojoen kalastussäännöt, Suomen Kalakirjasto).

Similarly, interviewees say how unfair and unbelievable it feels that Finnish hobby fishers or tourist fishers were given more possibilities to fish while Sámi traditional fishing was curtailed. They often use the word 'equal' (*yhdenvertaisuus*) meaning that Finnish landowners have been given similar rights to the Sámi, thus disregarding indigenous rights.

*This is how we feel it, that they have come here to share our food, to our fishing kettle. And with this legislation the Finnish state has made them equal with the Sámi, which has led to the indigenous Sámi people being eliminated by legislation.* (interviewee 6)

*Näin me koemme, että ne on tulleet jakamaan tänne meidän ruokaa, kalakattilalle. He ja Suomen valtio ovat lainsäädännöllä tehneet heidät yhdenvertaisiksi näiden saamelaiden kanssa ja näin se on johtanut siihen, että saamelainen alkuperäiskansa on eliminoitu lainsäädännöllä.* (interviewee 6)

From a Sámi perspective, the central problem is the general incompatibility between the welfare state ideology and the rights of indigenous peoples (see in Kuokkanen 2007, 148). The Nordic welfare state system is based on the principles of equality and social cohesion, but on the other hand on individualism and the application of universal, Western, principles. These principles are often in conflict with indigenous collective concepts of justice. So as the Nordic welfare states have offered individual Sámis equal standards of living with the majority population, at the same time the welfare state system has weakened the meaning and practise of Sámi collective rights. As individualism and social equality have been highlighted in the welfare state system, however, the role of the Sámi as a separate nation, whose members have indigenous collective rights in addition to individual rights, has been ignored. Kuokkanen says that it seems like a seemingly (and also to some extent in real) favourable system which seeks to provide high quality social services to all citizens; but which has simultaneously acted as an insidious tool for effectively integrating Sámis into the mainstream society. (Kuokkanen 2007, 148.)

Seija Tuulentie studied in her dissertation «Our minorities» (2001) discussions about legislation concerning the Sámi in the 1990s. She writes about how the majority population often sees that minorities' collective rights are taking away rights from majority (ibid., 219). This can create a conflict as everybody is considered being equal in a welfare state. Sámi rights to fish seem to be difficult to accept for the majority population but at the same time the Sámi feel that Finnish are stepping over them and treating Sámi disrespectfully.

One interviewee's response to my question if there can be any colonialist characteristics noted in the fishing agreement in Deatnu was clear and direct:

*Yes, yes, yes.*

*How?*

*Well you can see it in the issue of property owners living elsewhere, there it really shines through. First, one ignited this fear that the salmon of Deatnu is endangered, but then the other hand created this new group of fishermen and gave it fishing rights. While those who had fishing rights and who legally own most of the Deatnu's waters on the Finnish side, they were forced to give up 80 percent of their rights, claiming this was 'taking responsibility for the environment'. Of course it's colonialism. (interviewee 4)*

*Kyllä, kyllä, kyllä.*

*Millä tavalla?*

*No nämä muualla asuvat kiinteistönomistajat, niin siellä se paistaa. Ensin on peloteltu, että Tenon lohi on uhanalainen, mutta kumminkin toinen käsi loi uuden kalastusryhmän ja antoi sille kalastusoikeuden ja keillä on kalastusoikeus ja juridisesti omistaa suurimman osan Tenojoen Suomen puolisista vesistöistä, niiltä leikattiin 80 prosenttia ja vedottiin vastuuseen ympäristöstä. Niin onhan se kolonialismia. (interviewee 4)*

The different understanding of ownership noted between the Sámi and Finnish communities is one of the issues creating tensions between nations. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples state in its article 26.2 that «*Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use...*» Likewise, the ILO convention 169's article 14 reads: «*The rights of ownership and possession of the peoples concerned over the lands which they traditionally occupy shall be recognised.*» Regardless of these international declarations, however, the 'mainstream' Finnish people are considered to hold the power over the land: demonstrated, for example, by the fact that on the Finnish side of the river, fishing rights are basically tied to the ownership of the land.

One interviewee explains the situation of the new ownership that has been pushed by the colonial state:

*What colonialism has done here, is it has orchestrated a new kind of understanding of ownership to this area, private ownership. So in case someone is under financial strain and sells the land and a Finnish person buys it – of course it's understandable that this person can find it weird, like how come I don't have equal rights with the locals? But we have... how should I say it, it's of course related to the fact that for locals, ownership has included the waters, not only the land, but also that this idea that one person can buy or sell land is not compatible with indigenous ways of thinking. Because land doesn't belong to only one individual. So there's a bit of a divide-and-conquer feeling about this as well. (interviewee 5)*

*Mitä se kolonialismi on saanu täällä aikaseksi, niin se on masinoinu tänne semmosen ihan uuden käsityksen omistajuudesta, privatista omistajuudesta, jolloinka hädänalaiset yksilöt sitten myy näitä maitaan ja sitten joku suomalainen ostaa. Ja tavallaan ymmärrän senkin, että se voi äkkiä näyttäytyä oudolta, että miksi mulla ei ole tasaveritaiset oikeudet paikallisten kanssa, mutta kun meillä on aivan niin.. se että niinku miten mie nyt sen sanoisin, siihen liittyy tietenkin se, että paikallisilla omistajuus on kosken myös niitä vesiä, ei pelkästään maata. Mutta myöskin se, että se ei kohtaa semmosta*

*alkuperäiskansalle ominaista oikeusajattelua, että yksi henkilö voi myydä maata, kun se ei ole sen yhden henkilön. Että sekin on vähän semmoista hajoita ja hallitse meininkiä. (interviewee 5)*

That the interviewee refers to «divide and conquer» -politics indicates a significant lack of trust in the current system. Interviewees often expressed how they feel that they are losing their land piece by piece. Or like the previous comment explains; the ownership of the land does not belong to one person only but how it is «owned» collectively. In the Deatnu case, they appeal both to the old usufructuary right and to indigenous rights. The scene is set for conflict. One interviewee gets a bit heated while talking about usufructuary rights that the (Finnish) Forest Administration (*Metsähallitus*) is now selling to outsiders to the siderivers of Deatnu.

*And for example there are a few tributaries (side rivers) here that Sámi people have had old usufruct rights to, and the farms have special rights to the whole river. So I've often been thinking to myself, that what damned right does the Forest Administration (*Metsähallitus*) have to sell these rights off without any kind of permission? Because these are rights that belong to specific families and specific farms, old farmstead rights. (interviewee 3)*

*Ja sitten esimerkiksi tässä on muutama sivujoki, joihin on saamelaisilla ollu vanhat nautinnot ja tiloilla on erityisperusteisia oikeuksia koko jokeen, niin sitä on monesti kelannu mielessä, että millä helvetin oikeudella Metsähallitus, valtio, myy siihen yhtään mitään lupaa, kun se kuuluu näille suvuille ja näille vanhoille tiloille. (interviewee 3)*

Sámis have their own collective rights that relate to biodiversity. Those collective rights direct the traditional use of land (see more in chapter 2.2). Collective rights in fishing have traditionally accepted that certain families have their own lakes, bays and parts of the rivers. Everyone knows their own areas and stay in their own usufruct area (*nautinta-alue*). In the bad fish years people could have gone to fish also to other siidas. The Sámi value system and communality are framing the common law (ibid., 56–57.) As Finnish decision makers are not considering this traditional system it creates anger from the Sámi side, as could be seen from the answers. Some Sámis resisted new the fishing agreement in the Deatnu river territory by creating a resistance camp on the island Čearretsuolu in Deatnu and declared the area as a moratorium. They insisted that fishing in the area is only allowed with the permission of the families having common law in the area. I also visited the camp and received information of their point of views to the situation.

Also the goals of environmental policies are taking their shape in environmental discourse. Environmental issues are influenced most by interests that have the most environmental discursive power; and who can use it. Rarely indigenous peoples have political or environmental discursive possibilities to influence, protect or manage their own natural environment. (Helander-Renvall & Markkula 2011, 30–31.)

The following quotation exemplifies the confusion that Sámis feel because, as they see it, their rights have been given to Finnish people.

*How did we end up in a situation where they have more rights than us? This seems to bother people the most. Especially Sámi who don't have a property or rights or own land, from them everything was taken away. Now they need to buy this permission for 150 euros. This seems to be a hard pill to swallow – and I'm not surprised. So far, it's been kind of this tribal right, no-one would check whether or not you own any land. You're able to fish because you are part of the family, and families have rights. It's been considered an internal issue for the family to decide, who's out there fishing. (interviewee 3)*

*Miten tässä nyt näin pääsi käymään, että näillä on paremmat oikeudet ku meillä. Niin se tuntuu hiertävän sellasia saamelaisia, jotka ei omista kiinteistöjä, ei ole maata eikä ole oikeuksia, niin niiltä vietiin kaikki. Ja sitten 150 euron lupa pittää ostaa, niin se tuntuu olevan niinkö semmonen aika kova paukku, enkä ihmettele. Tähän asti se on tavallaan heimoon kuuluva oikeus ollu, että ei sitä ole katottu onko sulla maata vai ei, saat kalastaa, olethan jonkun suvun jäsen ja suvulla on oikeuksia. Ja sitä on pietty että se on niinku suvun sisäinen juttu, että kuka siellä pyytää ja kalastaa. (interviewee 3)*

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012, 71) talks about disciplining the colonized and how indigenous ways of knowing were excluded and marginalized and how this happened to indigenous views about land for example «through taking land away for ‘acts of rebellion’, and through redefining land as ‘waste land’ or ‘empty land’ and then taking it away.»

Losing rights, and the ignorance the non-Indigenous, grows into irritation and sadness with no hope seen for the next generations. As this interviewee expresses in his feelings about the process and decision regarding the fishing situation in Deatnu:

*I can tell you that when the negotiations of the Deatnu case was at a stand-still, it kept me up at nights. And going to bed I couldn't sleep, thinking about how bad it could get. Sometimes it feels like it's a curse to be born a Sámi and a fisherman of Deatnu. And to own a house whose rights are taken, nullified and eaten away at. I've said that it is*



*like a clean-cut bone, these river Sámi peoples' farms and houses. It's an embarrassment to give your children this so-called property that has no value anymore. (interviewee 1)*

*No voin sanoa, että kun oli käymistilassa Tenojoen asia, niin kyllä se yöt valvotutti ja aina kun meni nukkumaan ajatteli asiaa mitenpäin ja kuinka pahaksi tämä herkeytyy. Tuntu välillä, että se on kirottua, että piti syntyä saamelaiseksi ja Tenon kalastajaksi. Ja omistaa talo, joitten oikeuksia koko ajan ryöstetään ja mitätöidään ja syödään. Mä oon sanonu, että se on niin kuin puhtaaksi kaluttu luu, tämä meidän vedenranta, saamelaisten tila ja talo. Se on häpeä antaa lapsilleen tämmösen niin sanotun omaisuuden, millä ei ole enää mitään arvoa. (interviewee 1)*

As discussed in previous chapters, colonialism is often experienced as the taking of power until finally all rights seem to be gone. Coulthard (2014, 6–7) says that «*colonialism can be thought of as a form of structured dispossession and in settler-colonial relationships there can be found a certain form of domination of power that continues to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority.*»

## **5.2 Fishing agreement seen as a colonial act**

Even though this study is about journalism, and more specifically about the Sámi experiences of stories and news made about the fishing agreement in mainstream media, interviewees often started to talk about the fishing agreement itself. Whatever the question was, the whole process came up and gave rise to lots of impassioned talks with strong opinions. I therefore feel it is important to let these voices be heard because otherwise they would be silenced, again.

The fishing agreement of Deatnu was pushed through basically without listening to Sámi viewpoints (see discussion above). One interviewee refers to it as bullying and another one says that it can be seen as racism towards Sámi.

*It is bullying, that's what it is. They can give nice speeches, but still we won't have the right to decide anything about anything. (interviewee 4)*

*Koulukiusaamista, se on sitä. Siis kyllähän sitä puhutaan juhlapuheissa, mutta ei meillä kumminkaan sitä päätäntävaltaa oo mihinkään. (interviewee 4)*

*I would say that it was quite racist, this whole negotiation process. (interviewee 2)*

*Mie sanon, että se oli hyvin sellanen rasistinen koko tämä toiminta tässä näissä neuvotteluissa. (interviewee 2)*

There are interviewees in this study who have been part of the negotiating process as well. Experiences they talk about are painful and frustrating. According to the Finnish Constitutional Law Committee, the negotiations of the Deatnu fishing agreement did not involve Sámi parties properly and the impact assessment (*vaikutustenarviointi*) on Sámi rights was inadequate (PeVL 5/2017 vp— HE 239/2016 vp). One interviewee explains his experience of the negotiation process.

*Once in Inari there was a meeting, and they drove me away from that meeting, the negotiating meeting. I guess they didn't like it if someone disagreed with them. At the beginning of the meeting they said what are you doing here, even though I was selected to be there as an expert by the government. (interviewee 2)*

*Kerranhan tuossa Inarissa oli tuo kokous, niin ajoivat minut pois sieltä neuvottelukokouksesta. Kaipa ne ei tykännyt, jos on eri mieltä heidän kanssaan. Kun kokouksen alussa sanotaan, että mitä sie täällä teet, vaikka minut on valtioneuvosto valinnut sinne asiantuntijaksi. (interviewee 2)*

When I asked the interviewees if they thought that the fishing agreement had colonial aspects they all agreed. One of interviewees thought that colonialism was quite a harsh word to use but he explained how some colonialist features could be seen in the process for sure. Another interviewee instead responded right away:

*It [the fishing agreement] is based entirely to that [i.e. colonialism]. Just the fact that two states are making these decisions – even if the Sámi people had been appropriately involved in these negotiations. Just the fact that the Norwegian and Finnish states are deciding how people should be fishing here, that is colonialism automatically. (interviewee 5)*

*Sehän pohjautuu siihen ihan täysin. Ylipäätään se että kaks tämmöstä valtiota päättää jostain, siis siinäkin tilanteessa, jossa saamelaiset ois ollu asianmukaisesti mukana niissä neuvotteluissa, niin ylipäätään se että Norjan ja Suomen valtiot on päättämässä täällä miten kalastetaan, niin se on kolonialismia ihan automaattisesti. (interviewee 5)*

Kuokkanen (2007, 144) states how indigenous people are still the targets of colonialist processes happening inside states.

One interviewee explained how colonialism has many forms and how in the last and present centuries Sámi have been eliminated by the Finnish state. I asked if he feels that colonialism has a place in the current Finnish state system.

*Well in terms of the legal basis this [process of colonialism] has been successfully concluded. The only thing that remains is this clause that Sámi rights should not be weakened. But that too has become a paper tiger. As it hasn't worked for this agreement on Deatnu, it didn't work for the fishing law, it didn't work for the law on the forest administration, for the real estate law, or for the law on reindeer herding, you have to say that Finnish colonialism will soon be completed. (interviewee 6)*

*No se on niinkuin lainsäädännöllisesti loppuun viety. Ainoa mikä siellä viittaa siihen enää on saamelaisten oikeudellisen aseman heikentäminen, niin siellä on heikentämiskielto, mutta sekin on enää vain sanoja paperilla, että se on jäänyt niinkuin viimeiseksi. Nyt kun se heikentämiskielto ei ole enää toiminut tässä Tenon sopimuksessa eikä kalastuslain eikä metsähallituslain eikä kiinteistömuodostuslain eikä poronhoitolain osalta niin täytyy sanoa että suomalainen kolonialismi on kohta täydellisesti loppuun saatettu. (interviewee 6)*

Many interviewees were referring to how there is a long-term plan to take over Sápmi, Sámi-land. As Sámi people and Sápmi have been experiencing many kind of changes, as majority societies have spread their values, practices and system, and the taking over their traditional land, has meant that Sámi values, practices and system were ceded. Overall colonisation in its different forms has changed Sámi life, the way of living and sought to assimilate them into the majority population. (Valkonen 2009, 20–21.)

*It's a long-term plan of Norway and Finland, a plan where researchers are taking part as well, of how to take away Sámi rights with the least amount of ruckus. And then subject us to the authorities of Helsinki and Oslo, or like now take over this river. Free it of us so that it can be used by tourists instead. (interviewee 1)*

*No siis sehän on pitkän ajan suunnitelma Norjan ja Suomen taholta, ja siinä on myöskin tutkijat mukana, että miten viedään kohtuuhälinällä pois saamelaisten oikeudet. Ja alistetaan Helsingin ja Oslon käskyvaltaan ja muutenkin valloitetaan tämä Tenojoki, joka halutaan nyt meistä rauhoittaa turistikäyttöön. (interviewee 1)*

At the end of 1970s and the beginning of 1980s, the Sámi (and others, such as environmentalists) fight over Alta river was one of the most significant turning points in Sámi cultural-political history. It created a visibility for a Sámi nation, national movement and a national awakening. The case of the Alta dam also made clear and visible the colonial relationship and the existence of colonialist structures in Sápmi. (Valkonen 2009, 80–83.) Since that realization, the Sámi have been more aware that colonialism has not disappeared but is still whittling away their culture and land.

Another interviewee talked about the process of the fishing agreement and how it continues the same tendency as the state has had to silence Sámi.

*About the process.. Well that's a joke. But it's only the part of this, it has to be seen as a part of this policy which the state practices with Sámi. That by inches, how can I put this into words, that little by little they take the Sámi out of the conversations in which the vitality of their culture is being determined. This way they numb bit by bit, I see that, that we are kind of being conditioned, that they decide over the use of our land and what we can say about it. [...] the more they numb the locals, the more they get access to the natural resources and get to use these terrains financially. (interviewee 6)*

*Prosessista.. no eihän se oo mistään kotoisin. Mutta se on vaan osa tätä, se on nähtävä osana tämmöstä linjaa, mitä valtion johto harjoittaa saamelaisasioissa. Että pikkuhiljaa, miten mie nyt pukisin tämän sanoiksi, että otetaan, vähä vähältä otetaan saamelaisia pois keskusteluista, joissa määritellään heidän kulttuurin elinvoimaisuutta tulevaisuudessa. Sillä tavalla turrutetaan pikkuhiljaa, sen minä näen, että tavallaan ehdollistetaan siihen, että meidän maiden käytöstä päätetään ilman että meillä on siihen mitään sanottavaa. [...] mitä enemmän saadaan paikallisia turrutettua, niin sitä enemmän päästään käsiksi luonnon resursseihin ja hyödynnettyä näitä seutuja taloudellisesti. (interviewee 5)*

Finally, one interviewee opens up and reveals his sadness and hopelessness about the situation.

*I have to say that I have lost the lust for living. I feel like all that robbing from us, stealing our culture and property. It feels like I don't want to live anymore, I want to get away from Finland. For the pride of 100 years old Finland, all this. I think it is shameful for Finland and Norway. (interviewee 1)*

*Ja sitten kyllä se täytyy sanoa, että mulla on mennyt elämisen halu. Tuntuu siltä, että tämän kaiken meiltä ryöstämisen, meidän kulttuurin ja omaisuuden ryöstämisen. Tuntuu siltä että en minä halua enää elää, minä haluan lähteä täältä Suomesta pois. Satavuotisen Suomen kunniaksi, kaikki tämä. Minusta se on häpeällistä Suomelle ja Norjalle. (interviewee 1)*

### 5.3 The Position of journalism in the Deatnu-case

Since media products are visible, followed, and considered, their representations always form a part of the power, culture and history of its time. At the same time, those representations are part of building power relations. (Pietikäinen & Leppänen 2007, 185.) Kunelius (1998, 169) states how media repeats a version of the myth that is telling us who we are, and what is our relationship towards the others (Moring, I. 2000). In mainstream publicity, at a national level in particular, representations of the Sámi are quite rare. The typical way of covering Sámi rights is to present the issue as a conflict where official Finland and a homogenous Sámi community are against each other. (Pietikäinen & Leppänen 2007, 185.)

In this study, interviewees had their doubts about whether journalism could have a role in highlighting Sámi voices in the Deatnu river case. Many had very strong opinions regarding how the media did not show enough, or at all, of how Sámi were sidelined: both during the process and in its outcome. Interviewees also criticize how only the same certain Sámi were interviewed and how the media were also creating conflict among the Sámi: as we shall see below.

The interviewees did think that their encounters with the Finnish journalists had been mainly pleasant, although they felt the journalists were lacking basic information: for example, in relation to indigenous rights.

Most of the interviewees agreed that journalists have their own agenda, at least sometimes, and that mainstream media and the Sámi people have different goals. However, many were happy to have at least some visibility in the media.

Firstly, journalists were divided into southern and northern journalists and mainly northern journalists were seen as having a vested interest. One interviewee explained why especially northern journalists are biased.

*Well yeah, they see that we are major competitors for the same rights..*

*So when one comes further away, it's kind of more equal..*

*Yeah, they take a matter as is, instead of seeing it as part of this Lappish issue. (interviewee 2)*

*No joo, ne näkkee että me ollaan heille suuria kilpailijoita ja samoista oikeuksista..*

*Ai ku tulee kauempaa niin on tavallaan sillai tasavertaisempi..*

*Niin niin, ottavat asian asiana eikä tämmösenä lappalaiskysymyksenä. (interviewee 2)*

Fairclough (cited in Sara 2007, 45) thinks that media texts are more likely creating their own visions of reality as they are based on the status, benefits and goals of the journalists who are making them. This is also clearly seen in the answers from my interviewees as they see mainstream journalists having their own goals while reporting.

One interviewee talked about brainwashing and how Finnish journalists are also victims of Finnicisation (cf. Norwegianisation). Colonialism echoes in his answer, when I asked if journalists are aware of not to take indigenous rights issues into the discussion, or if they just don't know about them. He said:

*It is not about being unaware or being stupid, but it's a kind of unconscious lack of knowledge of the issues and maybe a bit like people are brainwashed to the certain system here in Finland. Justice here is that everyone has the same rights and if they don't, they need to be taken away from those who have them. And here in these three northern-most municipalities this mentality of stripping down rights [in the name of equality] has been the most significant policy of state.*

*So the journalist are kind of that system's..*

*..victims, yeah, right. (interviewee 6)*

*Ei se tietoista eikä tyhmyyttä mutta se on semmosta tietämättömyyttä asioista ja ehkä vähä semmosta, että ihmisethän on aivopesty täällä Suomessa tiettyyn järjestelmään ja oikeudenmukaisuus täällä on vähän semmonen että kaikilla on samat oikeudet ja jos ei ole niin niiltä ne joilla ne on niin ne kuuluu ottaa pois. Ja tämä oikeuksien riisumis mentaliteetti on täällä kolmen pohjoisen kunnan alueella ollu merkittävin valtionhallinnollinen toimintatapa.*

*Eli nää toimittajatkin on sen järjestelmän ikään kuin..*

*..uhreja, kyllä, joo. (interviewee 6)*

Tuulentie (2001) states that Sámi people are often framed inside the frame of the nation state as a national richness of Finland and «our minority». In her dissertation, she pointed out how images and threats from local and regional discussions were transferred to parliamentary talk, creating a fear of losing rights at the local (Finnish) level. Tuulentie pictured the sophisticated rhetorics that helped to create threats beside the positive visions. In this perspective the minority is always a minority that cannot be given special rights as the nation state is always the priority (ibid.)

Kuokkanen (2007, 149) talks about hegemony that refers to the different policies of the majority population and the forms of power used to convince other parts of the population and groups that the interests of those in power are in the interests of everybody. Such power is not based on the use of force but on the subtle management of economic structures, the educational system and the media.

If the state system is prioritizing majority interests, it certainly creates imbalance and unfairness among the nations. The problem of universality has been studied widely (see Markelin 2007, 20–23). Liberal Western democracies consider equality through the concept of universal citizenship. «By awarding everyone within a state the same citizenship rights regardless of ethnic, religious, gender or other differences, so the liberal ideal has maintained, all citizens are equal before the law and thus in a position of equal possibilities within the state» (ibid., 21.) Especially in the welfare state the main fallacy has been the belief that the state can be neutral in terms of culture, rights or values. This equalising ideal works for the majority ethnic and state-holding people but is problematic towards minorities and indigenous people. The ideal of universal rights has been criticised among many scholars because it is concentrating on individual rights but not taking into account the problem of institutional bias or to its collective element. In cases that have more than one nation or language «*individuals that are in some ways disadvantaged on the basis of their collective identity, culture or language, end up having to either operate on majority terms in order to enjoy substantial citizenship rights, or argue for their individual rights on the basis of majority perceptions of equality. Citizenship, it has been observed, has thus tended to act more as a homogenising rather than truly equalising force.*» (ibid., 20–24.)

The previous and the following quotes are both concerned with the effects that the Finnish system creates. In the next quote the interviewee explains how he sees that journalists act.

*There is only one journalist familiar with the subject and who approaches the subject as something that really exists. But then there are journalists who have kind of already turned the issue in a way that suits the majority population, and our thoughts and our truths are less important. And if someone has criticized something that the majority population has done against us, then that is easily belittled or forgotten. (interviewee 1)*

*Siellä on ainoastaan yksi toimittaja on asiaan perehtynyt, ja suhtautunut sillä tavalla kun se asia on olemassa. Mutta sitten on toimittajia, jotka ovat jo asennoituneet sillä tavalla, että ne on päässänsä tehneet valmiiksi sen asian sillä tavalla kun se sopii pääväestölle, ja se mitkä me täällä annetaan omia ajatuksia ja niitä meikäläisten totuuksia niin ne on vähempiarvoisia ja toisaalta jos on tällainen arvostellut asiaa jota pääväestö on tehnyt meitä kohtaan niin se sitten vähätellään tai unohdetaan. (interviewee 1)*

As discussed in chapter 2.3, the mainstream media tends to frame indigenous people as people with problems or who create problems. The media's focus is often on the conflictual aspects, but not seeing the historical and social context framing why things may be as they are now (see Henry and Tator 2002, 204.) Likewise, Pietikäinen (2001, 653) states that the Sámi and their issues are easily left unpublished, forgotten and ignored. The previous interviewee seems to feel that his opinions are less valid, and that journalists have their attitudes based on majority populations' views; and on what is demanded of him/her when reporting to them. This creates a gap between the two societies or viewpoints and gives a picture that is narrowed down, not trying to see the relationship between cause and consequence.

The fact that the Sámi and the Sámi parliament often are against different processes or phenomena may seem like 'the Sámi are always complaining'. The media, which is happy to highlight conflicts, contribute to this view. However, the reasons why the Sámi are against all these things rarely come up. (Markelin 2017, 56.) One interviewee is worried about the confrontation that media likes to create among the Sámi.

*If we are talking about media, I see it as a big problem if the majority population is reading these newspapers and the news and getting the impression that there is a confrontation, an ongoing war even, because that's not true. People are friendly and they want tourists and they want traditional fishing, but media makes it into like... (interviewee 3)*

*Jos puhutaan mediasta, niin minä näen sen isona ongelmana, jos valtaväestö lukee näitä lehtiä ja näitä uutisia, niin siitä saa hyvin helposti semmosen kuvan vastakkainasettelusta, että tässä on tällöinen sota käynnissä, vaikka ei se täällä oikeasti ole. Että ihmiset on ystävällisiä ja haluaa, että on matkailijoita. Ja halutaan että on perinneyntiä, mutta se uutisoidaan sillä että.. (interviewee 3)*

As a journalist I know pretty well the mechanisms behind the news and I can understand the frustration from the Sámi side about not to being heard as they would like to be and represented as they see themselves. The mainstream media is mainly reporting majority population's issues as many of the journalists are Finnish and they might be uncomfortable or unable to grasp the complexity of a subject that is not known to them. The media also think that mainstream topics interest their readers, since the readers inevitably will consist mostly of the majority, minorities being fewer in numbers.

As Pietikäinen (2006, 221) states, majority publicity is defined by relatively well established journalistic work practices, often based on sources and materials that are quickly available and easily and effortlessly accessible. And when ethnic groups usually do not belong to the



key policymakers or form a significant part of consumers or the public, something special must happen, something worthy of the news, for the story to be written (ibid.). There is no one generally accepted news criteria as they vary and change. However, Galtung and Ruge have studied news values in the 1960s and still nowadays their findings of how events become news is valid (see Harcup & Deirdre 2001). They have defined 12 news factors and among them there are four criteria that are related to culture and have a meaning at least when forming western news. 1. Reference to elite nations – The actions of elite nations are seen as more significant than the actions of other nations. 2. Reference to elite people – The more the news relate to elite people, the more likely there will be news. Also, readers may identify with them. 3. Reference to persons – News has a tendency to present events as the actions of named people rather than a result of social forces. (Western society boosts individualism and individuals are easy to identify with) 4. Reference to something negative – Negative news could be seen as unambiguous and consensual, generally more likely to be unexpected and to occur over a shorter period of time than positive news. (ibid., 3.) These are also relevant in Finnish news in 2019. And in this case elite can be seen as the Finnish majority, not high class people. As discussed before, Papoutsaki (2007) states that the dominant western news values are constantly thrown at audiences around the world, shaping perceptions as to what is the acceptable way to practice journalism. Cottle (2000, 21) problematizes the extent to which news values figure in a disproportionate number of stories about ethnic minorities framed in terms of conflict, drama, controversy, violence and deviance.

One interviewee also claimed that there are no stories made if there is negative perspectives towards majority population. They are not writing or filming the kind of right thing if it affects the main population negatively.

*They won't write or talk about or film the truth if it reflects badly on the majority population.*

*So you mean that by selecting one can..*

*By selection one can ignore our issues. What has happened here in Deatnu by the states of Norway and Finland, for example, is presented to the majority population either as that they do it in order to protect the nature and the fauna and salmon, or as that the actions are acceptable. Like if they say that merguses are eating lots of smolts in the estuary, and the seals are eating the ascending salmon, they just say that this is part of nature – as if we wouldn't be part of this nature too. And we don't need protection, in order to have a chance to live here on our own terms. (interviewee 1)*

*Ne ei kirjoita tai puhu tai filmaa semmoista asian oikeaa laittaa tuo esille, jos se kohdistuu pääväestöön negatiivisesti.*

*Eli valikoinnilla pystytään..*

*Valikoinnilla pystytään tämä meidän asia pitämään pimennossa. Sillä tavalla, että ne teot mitä Tenolla on tapahtunut Norjan ja Suomen valtioiden taholla, niin ne halutaan pysyttää pääväestön silmissä, että sillä joko suojellaan luontoa ja eläin- ja lohikantaa tai että toimenpiteet jotka on tehty, ne on niinkun hyväksyttäviä. Jos sanotaan, että vaikka koskelot syövät paljon Tenon suulla smoltteja, ja hylkeet nousevaa lohta niin sanotaan vaan, että nehän kuuluu luontoon, niinkuin me ei kuuluttaisi täällä luontoon. Ja meitä ei tarvitse suojella, että meillä on mahdollisuus elää täällä omilla ehdoilla.*  
(interviewee 1)

This can be found in Pietikäinen's (2001) previous study of Sámi representations as shown above, as she states how it is more difficult for the Sámi to present their agenda and viewpoints to a larger audience. Which in turn means that it is hard for them to participate in the public discussion, and the Sámi and their issues are easily left unpublished, forgotten and ignored.

Interviewees also discussed how the media were significantly late in reporting on the issue. Especially concerning how long the process was in total.

*Well it's actually interesting – the process lasted for five years, but only once the actual proposal was out for comments did the media start to become enthusiastic. And usually by then it's already too late (laughs)...* (interviewee 4)

*No oikeastaan niin, se on mielenkiintoista kun se prosessi kesti viisi vuotta niin silloinhan sitä vasta alettiin kunnolla mediassa revittelemään kun tuli lausunnolle ehdotus, mikä yleensä on jo myöhäistä (nauraa).* (interviewee 4)

Another interviewee was saying that; what's the point to write about it if the rules are already made.

#### **5.4 Finnish journalists interviewing Sámi people from Deatnu**

Interviewing someone not part of your culture is always challenging. As Jenni Leuku-  
maavaara (2017, 76–78) has found in her master thesis, Sámi people interviewed by media feel that they have a responsibility to explain their culture. One of the main problems within the Deatnu case is also that Sámi people feel that they haven't been understood fully when they have been interviewed. Although mostly interviewees felt that journalists have done good work, or the best work they could have done with their knowledge.

One of my interviewees thought that the difference in worldview makes it difficult, even when the experiences with journalists may have been mainly positive.

*Of course if a Finnish person interviews a Sámi who has lived here by the riverside, the worldview is a bit different. Sometimes it feels that you need to really spell things out. But the positive thing is of course to have been able to bring up this issue, and air our viewpoints. But the problem has been that the stories are edited a lot, so everything you wanted to express isn't there. But otherwise yes.*

*Do you mean that when you give an interview for an hour there is only one sentence of it in the text, is this what you mean?*

Yes, yes. (interviewee 3)

*Tietenkin jos suomalainen haastattelee saamelaista, joka on asunut täällä jokivarressa, niin ajatusmaailma on vähän erilainen. Joskus tuntuu, että joutuu rautalangasta vääntämään asioita. Mutta siinä mielessä on ollu ihan positiivista, että sitä asiaa on saanu tuua eteen ja julki, mitä se on meidän näkökanta tässä. Mutta se mikä siinä on ongelma ollu, niin siinä on aika paljon leikataan juttuja, ei tuu kaikkea mitä haluais esille, mutta muuten kyllä.*

*Eli kun sää annat tunnin haastattelun niin siellä on yksi lause, tätäkö tarkoitat sillä leikkaamisella?*

Kyllä kyllä. (interviewee 3)

He continues speaking about giving more value to certain fishing styles and focusing on them over traditional fishing:

*It's like the sports fishing, such as lure fishing and fly-fishing and those things, they are the ones they want to bring up. But at the same time one doesn't understand what it means if Sámi are banned from traditional fishing.*

*When you have been given interviews, has the result been that you have felt understood?*

*Well not always, and exactly this, let's say the sport fishing journalists and such, they take a small part of my interview and then there is someone like Jasper Pääkkönen [famous Finnish actor who is passionate fisherman] or someone who's made a big*

*thing out of it, and s/he has been interviewed for a whole page with arguments for this and that and whatnot. But my arguments are left very flimsy because they are not included. (interviewee 3)*

*Niin kyllä se on että se urheilukalastus elikkä viehe/perhokalastus ja nämä ne haluttais nostaa, mutta ei ymmärretä samalla, mitä ne tarkoittaa jos saamelaisilta kielletään se oma perinteinen pyynti.*

*Kun sä oot antanu haastatteluja, niin onko se lopputulos ollu sinun mielestä että on ymmärretty?*

*No ei aina, ja juuri tämä tämä, sanotaanko nämä urheilukalastuspuolen toimittajat ja tämmöset, niin siinä on pieni pätkä otettu siitä meikäläisen haastattelusta, sitten voi olla joku Jasper Pääkkönen tai joku joka on tehny ison jutun, sitä on haastateltu koko sivun verran ja sillä on perusteluita, jos vaikka mihin suuntaan, mutta meikäläisten perustelut jää hyvin köykäisiksi kun niitä ei laiteta. (interviewee 3)*

Obviously, he feels that the important things he had been saying were left out in the editing room. All other interviewees agreed that the most important thing was basically left out in the media – i.e. the relationship that locals have with the Deatnu. As the mainstream media was mainly focusing on Finnish tourists and tourism business in Deatnu, the significance of the Deatnu river was ignored, as was the issue of Indigenous rights, as some interviewee commented.

Magne Ove Varsi (see Markelin 2003, 6–7) states that from mainstream media, Sámi see, listen or read representation of themselves that others have created. According to Varsi these are ethnocentric representations that are reflecting the world through majority glasses and with the interest of the majority group in mind. As Markelin refers to other writers, «*they have demonstrated how the Sámi voice tends to become marginal, if not missing, in news or debates about Sámi issues. This seems to happen particularly where majority interests are seen as under threat.*» (Markelin 2003, 6-7.) The same can be heard in the following quote:

*The thing that one was worried about the most [in the media] was the tourism business and Finnish fishing tourists; and then as a side plot, of course, some journalists in some instances then got back to the actual point, namely fishing rights. (interviewee 4)*

*Eniten oltiin huolissaan matkailuelinkeinoista ja suomalaisista kalastusmatkailijoista ja sitten sivujuonteena, joissain asianhaaroissa, jotkut toimittajat, sitten palattiin siihen itse asiaan, kalastusoikeuksiin. (interviewee 4)*

Markelin (2003, 5–7) has summarised mainstream media’s representations of the Sámi. In news *«immigration as well as rights claims by Indigenous or minority groups are often presented as a problem, without presenting background information about such ‘problems’.* There is a tendency to give more voice to majority than minority representatives, even when the issue concerns the minority directly.» (ibid., 5.) In the Deatnu river case, it seems what was missing in the media was information of the ‘problem’ of losing the rights to fish, and what it would mean to the Sámi in the bigger picture. The Sámi were given a voice, but also as the issue is threatening the whole Sámi culture, and media was lacking the ability to see fishing rights as an indigenous issue; more than an issue for Finnish tourist fishermen, as the previous citation presents.

The journalist’s awareness of the situation in Deatnu has also been seen as being problematic among interviewees. Many of them have had similar opinions on how inadequate was the information reporters have had.

*Well very few has, I have used to say, done his/her homework, gotten familiar with the issue he/she is interviewing about.* (interviewee 4)

*No hyvin harva on, mie on ruukannu sanoa, läksynsä lukenut, perehtyny asiaan, mistä haastattelee.* (interviewee 4)

As mentioned, the interviewees made the separation between «northern» and «southern» journalists, as southern Finland has a bit different lifestyle than the northern part. Also, southern journalists come only briefly for their interview or just call to get the information for the article.

Without knowledge it is hard to ask the right questions. Still one interviewee brought out how messy things can end up getting if one does not have any understanding of the issue. Often it also might seem that the journalist understands and gets what the interviewee is saying, but the result still reveals that there was no comprehension at all:

*Of course the less a journalist knows about the issue s/he is making the story about, the stranger are the questions. And the harder it is to explain things to the journalist, of how we want the issue to be presented. And when the journalist nods, the interviewee thinks that the journalist has understood him/her. But actually it is the selfsame when a person comes here from the South who has never been here and not knowing anything, she/he needs to do things, make decisions as an official or preparatory work for an issue that s/he knows nothing about – it’s the same as if I would go to Helsinki to install traffic lights, it would be a total catastrophe.* (interviewee 1)

*Tietenkin mitä vähemmän toimittaja tietää asiasta, mistä hän tekee juttua niin sen omittuisemmat on kysymykset ja toisaalta myöskin sitä vaikeampi on selittää toimittajalle asiaa, miten me asiaa haluamme tuoda esille. Ja sitten toimittaja kun nyökkää, niin haastateltava olettaa että toimittaja on ymmärtänyt, mutta kyllähän se on niin että se on aivan sama, kun etelästä tulee tänne ihminen, eikä ole koskaan käynytkään tai joutuu virkamiehenä tekemään päätöksiä tai asianvalmisteluja sillä tavalla ettei asiasta tiedä mitään, niin se on aivan sama kuin meikäläinen menisi Helsinkiin asentamaan liikennevaloja niin siitä tulisi täyskatakstrofi. (interviewee 1)*

According to the interviewee, it is difficult try to explain the situation to the journalist, specially to one coming from outside. It means that journalists will ask «stupid questions». Also he brings out how being interviewed you trust that the journalist will get your point, but it won't always go as planned. He also refers to how journalists cannot be honest in their work as there is a pressure coming from their bosses:

*One journalist said to me that s/he wrote an article about the Deatnu issue, but the editor in chief or someone at the higher level removed some things from it. And this I think is alarming. (interviewee 1)*

*Siellä on esimerkiksi joku toimittaja mulle sanonut, että hän kirjoitti tästä Tenon asiasta artikkelin, mutta toimituspäällikkö tai johto poisti sieltä asioita ja minusta se on hälyttävää. (interviewee 1)*

Finland is awarded for freedom of the press but for sure, there are decisions and selections made behind the curtains all the time. Every story is full of choices: who is talking and who is not. But if there is censorship coming from editors as the interviewee here claims, is it a tactic to avoid not getting too much into the matter? Or is there an aim to silence the Sámi? Moreover, where it can lead if some things are not allowed?

Another interviewee describes how the media do not want to highlight the issues that the Sámi themselves think would have been important. For him it feels that there is no point to do interviews because nothing changes anyway. That is because there are no common goals for the media and the Sámi people:

*One can bring up whatever problems in the media, but it won't lead to anything. It has no consequences at all for the state administration. So in a way it feel useless to give any kind of interview.*

*As you brought up those problems, have they been understood in the media the way you would've like to?*

*Well, making the story happens in a different motive than we try to message us being treated. The purpose of the media is to sell the paper and get there something interesting what you help one to sell that information forward, was it a newspaper or other media but as I understand it, we do not have common goals with media. (interviewee 6)*

*Mediassahan voi vaikka mitä ongelmia tuoda esille, mutta ei ne saa liikettä missään. Valtiohallintoelimissä sillä ei oo mitään merkitystä, että jotenkin tuntuu välillä turhulta antaa minkäänlaista haastattelua.*

*Mites kun sanoit noista ongelmista, niin ymmärretäänkö siellä mediassa niitä ongelmia sillä lailla että ne jutut on tehty niinkuin haluaisitte?*

*No se jutun tekeminenhän tapahtuu eri perusteella mitä me annamme ymmärtää meitä kohdellun. Median tarkoitus on tietysti myydä sitä lehteä ja saada sinne jotain semmosta mielenkiintoista millä saisi myytyä niitä tietoja eteenpäin, oli ne sitten lehdissä tai sitten muissa viestimissä, mutta se on se, että minkä minä ymmärrän oikein hyvin, että ne eivät kohtaa ne, meillä ei ole niinkuin median kanssa yhteisiä semmosia tavoitteita siinä. (interviewee 6)*

However, one interviewee thought the opposite. In the Deatnu case, he felt that there was a common understanding to be seen, something that the media and Sámi people shared. I think this is because it was publicly recognized how the Ministry did not obey the law (Markelin 2017, 52-53) and this was also broadly in the news. And as Finnish people trust the constitution and that officials follow the law it was confusing that in this case it did not happen.

*I don't know, maybe it's related to the fact that in many issues we so strongly disagree, and in those cases there are usually two viewpoints where the Sámi represent the minority perspective. Whereas in this case, where parliament members as well as the Ministry said that this Deatnu agreement was a bad agreement – they said it outright and still they signed it. So maybe there was a kind of a common understanding that this was f\_cked up. Of course we didn't all agree on where it went wrong. But maybe there was more of a shared understanding this time, that this was not good. (interviewee 5)*

*Mie en oikein tiää, johtuisko se semmosesta, esimerkiksi siitä että siinä missä monista asioista ollaan niin vahvasti eri mieltä ja on kahdenlaista näkökulmaa ja ehkä vielä usein saamelaiset monesti niinku heihin liittyvissä asioissa edustaa sitä niinku vähemmistönäkökulmaa, tarkoitan sitä näkökulmaa, joka on vähemmistössä niinku verrattuna siihen niinku toiseen näkökulmaan. Niin tässä ehkä ku tässä ihan niinku eduskunnan jäsenet ja ministeriötä myöten todettiin että tää on huono sopimus, tää Tenon sopimus,*

*ne sano sen ihan kärkeen siellä ja silti sen allekirjoittivat. Niin ehkä siinä oli enemmän sellanen yhteisymmärrys siitä, että tää homma meni vituiksi. Vaikka ei tämäkään tietenkään, kaikki ei ollu yhtä mieltä siitä, että miten se meni huonosti. Mutta oli ehkä enemmänkin semmonen että oltiin samoilla linjoilla että ei tää hyvä ollu kyllä. (interviewee 5)*

One of Leukumaavaara's (2017, 78) interviewees describe how media has changed over time, from ethnosensitive towards more aggressive, and that journalists have taken roles to question Sámi identity and culture. It can lead to having certain attitudes already before the interview. In this case, the journalist might do the interview just to fill the empty spots and asks the questions s/he wants answers to.

*There is that too, that they might want to promote a certain issue and ask the question in such a way [that they get it]. It's rare, journalists who see the whole picture, rather than leading it in a certain direction. (interviewee 4)*

*Kyllä siinä semmostakin on että ne haluaa tiettyä asiaa ajaa ja kysyvät sillä lailla, niin onhan sekin.. kyllä se on hyvin harva semmonen toimittaja mikä katoo sitä kokonaisuutta, että se ei ole tiettyä asiaa johdattelemassa.. (interviewee 4)*

## **5.5 The importance of relationship with the Deatnu missing from the media pieces**

Indigenous peoples' inseparable connection to nature can be hard to understand from the outside. It is not only about living from the nature but also being part of it. The Sámi worldview does not make separation between nature and culture (Bunikowski 2016, 76). There is no wilderness in Sápmi, the land is always someones' homeland, the place where ancestors have been for thousands of years.

Even though it might be hard to verbalize, I asked Sámi people living in Deatnu what the meaning of the river is to them. In short, Deatnu is described for example as a stream of life (elämänvirta), worldview (maailmakuva), living room and kitchen (olohuone ja keittiö), everything (kaikki). The words interviewees choose differed, but it feels that they had a hard time expressing what they meant. The following interviewee expresses what the river means to him:

*(Laughs) World view. Exactly everything. My understanding of the world. It is actually what I believe, like where I base my philosophy. (interviewee 5)*



*(nauraa) Maailmankuva. Ihan kaikkea. Minun ymmärrystä maailmasta. Se on oikeastaan minun semmonen, mihin mie uskon niinku mihin mie pohjaan minun elämäkatsomukseni. (interviewee 5)*

This kind of question about the relationship with Deatnu has very rarely if at all asked by the media, according to the interviewees. All interviewees except one felt that it would have been important to ask.

*Did the relationship between the locals and the river come up somehow in the stories? No, it wasn't as issue they cared about really. It was only that it [i.e. fishing] must be restricted.*

*Well, would it be important?*

*Well yes of course it would have been important. (interviewee 2)*

*Tuliko tämmönen paikallisten suhde siihen jokeen niissä jutuissa?*

*Ei siinä välitetty kyllä siitä. Siinä oli että sitä [kalastusta] pitää rajoittaa.*

*No oisko se ollu tärkeää?*

*No kyllähän se ois ollu tietenkin tärkeää. (interviewee 2)*

Another interviewee emphasized other issues that were silenced, while economic benefits took all the media space.

*Yes, I think so. And exactly that should be said and be brought up, that it's not only the financial income that matters, but the importance of accessing the river, even if you don't get a single fish. (interviewee 3)*

*No kyllä se minusta, ja juuri sekin pitäis sanoa ja tuoda enemmän esille semmonen asia, että ei se rahallinen tulo, mikä tuosta tulee, se ei ole se kaikki vaan sillä on iso merkitys sillä että sie pääset tuonne joelle, vaikka sie et sais kalaakaan. (interviewee 3)*

How come the media manage to overlook the full meaning of the Deatnu? One answer can be found from the relationship with nature. If Finnish people as well as Finnish journalists do not share a similar relationship with the land and surroundings it can be hard to ask that kind of question. Or if the holistic meaning of the river is brought out by the interviewee, his/her point might be easily ignored as the mainstream journalist is not able to see its importance to the topic. Certainly, Sámi people and Finnish people share many of the same values when it comes to the nature. Still, however, many Sámi have an uninteruptible connection and under-

standing of the land as indigenous peoples in general, while commonly western people mainly see land as a source of natural resources, as discussed above.

Bruno Latour (2011) thinks that western thinking has established the idea of a contradiction between culture and nature, which is preventing modern societies from seeing that societies are still living from the land. Easily it can lead to misunderstandings or ignoring the theme. It might also lead to conflicts regarding land use, as of course has been seen in many contexts.

The interviewees had a similar comprehension of 'feeling the land', access to the river, spiritual connection. The following interviewee describes the connectedness to the land and wonders about the difference that there is between the Finnish and the Sámi when it comes to the relationship with the nature.

*It just has such a different effect, knowing that you live somewhere where your ancestors have lived, one can't even comprehend it. It brings kind of a, what would be the word, kind of a spiritual feeling, spiritual relationship with the nature. I don't know to what extent Finnish or Finnish communities have that kind of spiritual involvement with nature. (interviewee 5)*

*Se vaan vaikuttaa niin eri tavalla, tai omalla tavallaan se että asut jossain missä tiedät sun esi-isien asuneen, ei sitä voi edes käsittää. Se tuo vähän semmosen henkisen tunteen, henkisen suhteen siihen luontoon ja sitä mie en tiä että missä määrin sitä on enää samalla tavalla henkistä suhdetta luontoon suomalaisilla tai suomalaisilla yhteisöillä. (interviewee 5)*

All the interviewees agree that relationship with nature differs between Finnish and Sámi people. The next quote illustrates more of what could be the reason for different thinking:

*I think that Finnish people don't know what kind of concept of nature we have. As it is really strong, one can't ruin, modify or spoil the nature. So, well, I think that the concept of nature and the protection of the fish is there... But there is still unfortunately kind of weird legends that we fish terrible amounts of salmon with nets. We fish what we need for ourselves, to eat, just as before. And there's so few of us, we are not more than this- Utsjoki has always had around thousand inhabitants.*

*So people have made you into robbers..?*

*Yes, that is the stereotype, drunk, lazy and even robbers.*

*So it is still alive?*

*Yes it is.*

*How does that relationship with the nature differ, as you started to talk about it?*

*Well, that history is here, here are still so many people who live from nature so Finnish say that it has been 'forested' or one sees that kind of things in nature that a person who lives in the concrete jungle doesn't see. Of course the appreciation of nature, the use of nature, how a human lives and acts in that kind of environment is very different (view), you appreciate and behave differently. It is not a landscape for us. Tourists always say that it's such a beautiful landscape. But it's not a landscape for us. (interviewee 4)*

*Mie luulen ettei suomalaiset tiää minkälainen luontokäsitys meillä on. Sehän on erittäin vahva, eihän sitä luontoa saa turmella, eikä muokata eikä pilata. Niin tuota, kyllä mie luulen, että se luontokäsitys ja se kalansuojelu on, mutta siellä on vaan valitettavasti sellasia ihmeellisiä legendoja liikkuu että me pyydämme verkoilla hirveät määrät lohta. Me pyydämme sen mitä itse tarvitsemme ja syömme niinkun ennenkin. Eikä meitä ole kuin pieni, eihän tällä alueella ole, oikeastaan ollut tätä enempää, kautta aikoja Utsjoella on ollut noin tuhat asukasta.*

*Eli on tehty sellasia rosvoja..*

*Kyllä se on se stereotypia, juoppoja, laiskoja ja vielä rosvoja*

*Että se elää yhä*

*Kyllä se vaan elää..*

*No millä tavalla, kun otit tuon luontosuhteen, niin millä lailla se eroaa*

*No, se historiahan on, täällä on vielä niin paljon ihmisiä, jotka elää luonnosta. Niin ne suomalaiset sanovat että se on metsittynyt. Saamelaiset näkee siinä luonnossa semmoisia asioita, joita betonihelvetissä asuva ei näe. Onhan se ihan selvä, että se luonnon arvostaminen, luonnon käyttäminen ja se siinä ympäristössä asuvalla ja toimivalla ihmisellä on aivan erilainen, se näkee ja se toimii aivan eri lailla. Se ei oo meille maisema, mitä aina sanovat turistit että on hieno maisema. Ei se ole meille maisema. (interviewee 4)*

Valkonen (2016) discusses ideas of nature and concepts of nature. He separates 'nature' to be information and 'concepts of the nature' being values. Separating those two has been a prevalent way to view the phenomena of the politics of nature. Thus 'concepts of the nature' are mixed with values, beliefs, politics and culture. Haila and Lähde (2003, 21) say that 'nature' and 'concepts of the nature' are involved in dynamical interaction meaning that both have an influence on another. They think that it is impossible to solve in advance, what kind of relationship 'nature' and 'concept of nature' have in certain situations. The closer the nature is to the human the more difficult it is to make the separation (Valkonen 2016). The idea can be seen in the way interviewees think. They do not separate themselves from the nature, as they are more likely part of it. They have nature and concepts of the nature in the same package and there is no need even to name them. And like the previous quote brings up, nature for the Sámi is not a landscape such as outsiders see it when they come to visit. For such tourists it is more an object that you can take a picture of and present in social media, but doesn't play a bigger role in your life.

Views varied if the message got through whatever was written in the media pieces. One interviewee thinks that it is a hard job because of the dissimilar connectedness with the land but still he is not blaming journalists for the bad job.

*Often when it comes to communicating and talking, like when we try to talk through the media to Finnish folks for example in Helsinki, to someone who has been born there, how could we show? the importance of this to the people who don't have that kind of roots in the land. And who don't have connection with the land and in that way an automatic need for protecting it when it is threatened. Someone who has no experience of that, someone for whom that is a totally strange world. So how could we communicate this to him/her. So in this sense we got through to the media quite well. At least it was not because of the journalists. (interviewee 5)*

*Monesti kommunikoimisessa ja puhumisessa on se, että kun me vaikka jonkun median kautta puhutaan suomalaiselle väestölle jossakin Helsingissä, mahdollisesti jollekin joka on kasvanu siellä. Niin miten me saadaan tämä asian tärkeys välitettyä ihmisille, joilla ei oo semmosia juuria jossain niinku maassa. Ja jolla ei oo maayhteyttä ja sitä kautta semmosta automaattista tarvetta tän maan ollessa uhattuna suojella sitä. Ja jolla ei oo mitään kokemuksia tämmösestä, jolle tuo on ihan vieras maailma. Niin miten semmoselle saa tämän välitettyä. Niin mun mielestä me saatiin se sinne median tasolle ihan hyvin. Että ainakaan se ei jäänyt niistä toimittajista kiinni. (interviewee 5)*

This interviewee's description has also an equivalent expression in academic world: «*In the Sámi worldview, the human being is not an agent who manipulates or exploits nature; rather,*

*the relation entails a deeper awareness of, belonging to and obligation towards a place.»*  
(Helander-Renvall 2013, 132–134).

## **5.6 The Difference between Sámi media and mainstream media**

While my study is concentrating on Finnish mainstream media, I also asked interviewees how they have seen the Sámi media's position and content on reporting about the Deatnu fishing agreement. The answers varied, mainly interviewees were satisfied that the Sámi media had followed the Deatnu case carefully, and were having a Sámi perspective in their stories. But there was some quite harsh critique too. According to these two interviewees, the Sámi media did not totally live up to their expectations.

*Well I have to say that there had been a difference in Sámi news, but not necessarily in a positive way. (interviewee 1)*

*No täytyy sanoa että se saamelainen uutisointi on toisaalta eronnut, mutta ei nyt niin kovin edukseen. (interviewee 1)*

*The Sámi media wasn't homogenous in this. On the Finnish side they wrote a lot, I mean Yle Sápmi, and did a pretty good job too. But then on the Norwegian side NRK Sápmi didn't write much at all at first: and when they started to write about it that was a huge disappointment to me. I did lose my faith in them quite a bit. (interviewee 5)*

*Ei saamelaismediakaan ollu mitenkään yhteneväinen. Suomen puolella ne kirjoitti tosi paljon, siis Yle Sápmi, ja aika hyvin. Mutta sitten taas Norjan puolella NRK Sapmi ei aluks kirjottanu yhtään ja sit kun alko kirjottaa niin oli suunnaton pettymys ja kyllä mulla meni luottoa niihin aika paljon. (interviewee 5)*

However, some of the others felt that the Norwegian Sámi media was better at the coverage than the Sámi media on the Finnish side. The Norwegian Sámi media was defined as sharper and their quality better. Sara (2007, 73) has interviewed journalists in both NRK and Yle Sápmi. She found that journalists working in Yle Sápmi see Yle Sápmi as a news agency that tells Sámi news from a Sámi perspective. NRK Sápmi's journalists in addition think that their media is also working as a forum for debate, society's watchdog and bringing out conflicts. So, it seems that NRK Sápmi might have a wider perspective for addressing the task of the Sámi media.

One tried to think why he considers NRK Sápmi to be better:

*It might be a budget issue, or a policy issue, or that they don't want to be a nuisance. And it is actually a hell-of-a skill when one starts to think about it. You should be*

*brave and think objectively, and that won't please everybody. But it is the easiest when you read news from newspapers.... (interviewee 4)*

*Se voi olla määrärahoja, se voi olla linjausta ja sitä, ettei haluta härnätä. Ja sehän on oikeestaan pirun taitolaji ku alakaa miettimään, pitäis olla rohkea ja objektiivisesti ajatella, niin sehän ei sitten miellytä kaikkia. Mutta se on helpoin ku lukee sanomalehdestä uutisia.. (interviewee 4)*

Not every Sámi is of course familiar with the river Sámi and their traditions. One interviewees criticized that the Sámi journalists don't know much about Deatnu and that this affects their job. He also says that Yle and NRK Sápmi are under the control of the headquarters of their organization. Meaning they both are part of national broadcasting companies, being their regional offices and having their own agenda e.g. for language. Some suggested that as media organisations they are not free or independent from the powers that be.

*Well there too you have journalists who don't know more about traditional fishing in Deatnu than what they have heard or read from somewhere, and they haven't seen Deatnu but from the shore at the most. So they know but they don't know it in-depth. The other thing I've noticed in the Sámi media, that they too are subjected to the power structures, let's say Sámi radio, television, the power/authority is in Helsinki or Oslo, where the frameworks of operations are laid out. And well if you don't act accordingly, especially you have to be careful not to offend the image of the majority population, then you will have problems in the journalistic office and elsewhere. You must whistle to the tune that is set in Helsinki or Oslo. (interviewee 1)*

*No sielläkin on hyvin pitkälti toimittajat, jotka ei tiedä Tenon perinnekalastuksesta muuta kuin ovat kuulleet ja lukeneet jostakin, ja Tenoa ei ole nähty kuin rannalta korkeintaan. Niin kyllähän ne tietää, mutta ne ei tiedä syvällisesti. Ja toinen se että mitä olen huomannut Saamen tiedotusvälineissä, niin kun ne on alistettu kanssa, sanotaan saamelaisradion, -television, määräysvalta on Helsingissä Oslossa, missä raamit tehdään ja miten pitää toimia. Ja jos ei toimi sen mukaan, varsinkin toimittajien pitää olla tarkkana ettei pääväestön imagoa loukkaa, silloin tulee vaikeuksia toimituksessa ja muutoinkin. Sitä pitää laulaa sitä virttä, mitä Helsinki tai Oslo määrää. (interviewee 1)*

Sara (2007, 40) states that the aim of the Sámi media is to give Sámi people the possibility to take an active role in media and to wonder if Sámi news are about Sámi people; and if the perspective is Sámi. Another good question could be to ask if the Sámi are seen from a different perspective than that which the mainstream media is using.. At least one interviewee has experienced how media can push an interviewee to a specific position. The interviewee sees also

that it creates a juxtaposition when the media gives specific roles to their interviewees and keeps them there, regardless of what they have to say:

*The Sámi media is guilty of the same thing, that if you talk about fishing tourism and then I talk about how you would need to develop fishing tourism and what would be the procedures to do it, well they leave those stories out, and then you get only the image that I only promote the interests of the small tourism businesses and fishing tourists. But that I speak more broadly about the issue and also talk about the need to preserve traditional fishing, that's left out. It's not brought up. Instead they take a traditional fisher, maybe a pensioner who fishes only at the dam or traditional forms like that, and doesn't get any income from fishing or from tourism, and make a conflict or juxtaposition from this, the businessman vs the local Sámi traditional fisher. And still we're both Sámi. That's a bit strange to me. (interviewee 3)*

*Saamelaismedia syyllistyy samaan, että jos puhutaan matkailukalastuksesta ja sitten meikäläinen puhuu että miten pitäisi matkailukalastusta kehittää ja mitkä ois ne toimenpiteet niin jätetään ne jutut pois. Ja sitten tulee vain se mielikuva siitä, että minä ajan vain matkailijayrittäjien ja matkailukalastajien etuja, mutta jätetään pois kuitenkin se, että minä puhun laajemminkin ja kerron myös siitä perinteisestäkin pyytämisestä ja haluan, että se säilyy. Mutta sitä ei tuua [esille]. Ja sitten toinen puoli otetaan, että joku perinnepyyttäjä, joku eläkeläismies joka ei pyydä kuin padolla tai tämmöstä, eikä kalasta eikä matkailusta saa tuloja, niin se nostetaan sitten, niinku tehdään semmoinen vastakkainasettelu siitä yrittäjästä ja siitä paikallisesta saamelaisesta perinnepyyttäjästä. Ja saamelaisia ollaan molemmat, mutta se on minusta hassua. (interviewee 3)*

Narrowing the roles of interviewees also in the Sámi media might be ignoring the wholeness of the issue by using certain interviewees only to push them to say what they are expected to say from the journalist's position.

Mainstream journalists consider the Sámi media and the Sámi journalists' way to approach issues to be against journalistic ethics and objectivity. This is because the Sámi media has a strong Sámi perspective as it is the main focus and natural way to see things when being a Sámi journalist (Sara 2007, 73.) Sámi journalists instead think that mainstream journalists are working the same way, but with the interest of the majority in focus. Everybody leans on their background and sees things through their own cultural lenses. It is harsh, according to Sara (2007, 74), to say that Sámi journalists would not be following journalistic ethics as, for example, the Sámi radio is the one of the only media available to the Sámis that is able, in general, to bring out Sámi perspectives and Sámi issues in a positive way.

## 6. Summary and Conclusions

The aim of this thesis was to explore the following research questions:

- 1) What is the role of journalism in presenting / representing the Sámi in the Deatnu river case?
- 2) What is the relationship between colonialism and journalism and how does it show?
- 3) Do Sámi interviewees feel that (Finnish) journalists understand the relationship that the Sámi have with nature, their homeland and more specifically in this case, the Deatnu river?

On the whole, it seems that mainstream news coverage does not reflect the Sámi relationship with nature, at least not in a way that could help the majority population's better understanding of the issue. According to interviewees in this thesis, the Sámi relationship with nature is different from that of the majority population, and especially its overall significance for the river Sámi who cannot be understood by others. The life of river Sámi from Deatnu is intertwined around the river in all its dimensions and the Deatnu is not only a place for fishing. Interviewees thought that it would have been important for them that mainstream media would at least mention the wholeness and the holistic relationship that Sámi people, and they themselves individually, have with Deatnu river. As one interviewee said, the media did not care about the meaning of the river and the stories were made only from the point of view that fishing must be restricted. The consequences for Finnish tourist fishers interested the majority media, but not what traditional fishing and its restrictions can mean to the Sámi. Mainstream media focused also on what the new restrictions may cause to the tourism business, and that created some disagreeable feelings among interviewees. They felt that journalists did not have enough information about Sámi rights to take them into account in their stories. Naturally, representations in mainstream media may vary, depending, for example, on the location of the media (local/national) and the background of the individual journalist. However, on the basis of these interviews, the Sámi interviewees feel that Finnish journalists do not succeed in bringing their views out adequately.

One of the biggest themes in my study became the Sámi's relationship with nature. I did not expect that beforehand, but after the interviews, I realized how it relates almost to everything. My third research question thus gained unexpected importance. Most of the interviewees thought that it is difficult for outsiders to understand the Sámi's relationship with nature. Specifically they referred to people from the South, meaning Finns living in Southern Finland. And as their relationship with nature is not the same, it is also harder for Finnish journalists to create a story of the themes that are so connected to each other. That was also one of the explanations given for why journalists were so inadequate in failing to notice the larger picture framing the case. According to these interviewees, the indigenous bond with nature and ancestors that have lived on the same land for centuries is real: as it has been discussed in many



studies before (see chapter 3.1.). There have been discussions on whether or not Sámi nowadays have any special relation to nature in the same way as before, since they live in the cities and the majority do not get their main income from their traditional livelihoods. Valkeapää (2011, 47) discusses the potential current insignificance of Sámis' relationship with nature. She says that the relationship with nature is not a trouble-free criteria defining Sámi culture; and suggests that language, handicraft or yoik are better ones as they are not related to time or place (ibid.). However, in my study, the relationship with nature validates the difference between the majority population and the local Sámi, and interviewees define their belonging and Sáminess through nature. So at least for these Sámi living in the Deatnu valley, the bond with nature is strong and inseparable.

Also, the Sámi were given certain roles that the media used them for, and not everyone was pleased with this narrow point of view. The interviewees perceived that the mainstream media likes to create a conflict between the Sámi, and show them as though they would be against each other. In Finland 'who can be a Sámi' has been an ongoing debate (see eg. Lehtola 2015, 61) and the media too has often covered to the topic. «*The Sámi cannot even themselves decide who is Sámi so how should they be given collective rights*» is quite a typical argument used when the topic is related to the ILO 169 -agreement or basically any indigenous rights. As we have seen, the media likes to maintain that idea of irresolution among the Sámi and use it sometimes even when it is not relevant. Sámi rights are typically presented as a dispute between the official Finland and a homogenous Sámi population (see in Valkonen 2009, 121). The one-sidedness of these representations can strengthen and perpetuate the cultural colonization of Sáminess. From the Sámi perspective the majority society's stereotypically defined and presented Sáminess appears as a repetition of stereotypes and cultural colonialism, and the majority's limited views of Sámi. (ibid., 121.) Unfortunately, it seems that also news of the Deatnu-case has followed this same pattern. I think that the mainstream media's way – and apparently the Sámi media's way too to some extent – to place, for example, the Sámi who are using traditional fishing methods and the Sámi who have tourism businesses into different sides gives an incorrect and one-sided picture of the fishing agreement issue.

Although this study is about mainstream media and its reporting, I asked interviewees about their views of the Sámi media as well. Mainly interviewees were satisfied with the work although the Sámi media were seen as repeating similar deficiencies as the mainstream media. The interviewed Sámi were put into boxes where they had only one role. There was also speculation that the broadcasting companies NRK Sápmi and YLE Sápmi are led by the main office in Oslo and Pasila. That created some scepticism regarding the freedom of journalistic practice in the Sámi media because it would be regulated from the head office of Yle and NRK. In addition it was not clear if even Sámi journalists could report on local Sámi community issues in the way they would prefer to.

Traditional knowledge (árbediehtu in northern Sámi) has not been acknowledged in the decision-making of the fishing agreement, nor have the media shown any interest in it. Almost all interviewees brought up thousands of years of coexistence with the river and the symbiotic life associated with it, along with salmon, other fish, animals and the entire ecosystem. This connection was also ignored in the stories, and experts in salmon conservation were researchers whose information was based on western knowledge.

The matter of traditional knowledge was raised among interviewees in different contexts. Many interviewees were worried that the Deatnu river was not being regarded as a whole, and what the consequences would be of not being aware of all the elements. Also as Sámi are strongly positioning themselves as part of the ecosystem they were worried, and also angry, about what it might cause their culture and nation, if there will be instability in nature caused by human actions. The Sámi feel that they are similarly part of their land and they should be also taken into account when making decisions considering the surroundings they belong to.

Equality was one of the themes that aroused lot of feelings among interviewees and it was a topic that interviewees brought up. It was interesting, as I would not have thought of that kind of aspect myself. Interviewees emphasized how unfairly the term equality (*yhdenvertaisuus*) had been used, kind of opposite from its meaning for the Sámi. As mentioned earlier, the concept of universal citizenship (see chapter 5.4) creates problems by giving everybody the same citizenship rights, which can be harmful for indigenous rights. The Finnish welfare state guarantees every citizens equality but it can be problematic as one interviewee clarifies:

*Through legislation indigenous rights have been made equal for all, they now belong also to Finns who have bought land here for leisure purposes. So now they have the same rights as Sámi to this livelihood and to indigenous rights. That feels a bit strange. (interviewee 6)*

*Lainsäädännöllä ollaan yhdenvertaistettu alkuperäiskansaoikeudet, että ne kuuluu myös suomalaisille maan ostajille, jotka ovat ostaneet täältä maata huvittelutarkoituksessa. Että niillä on sitten yhdenvertainen asema saamelaisten elannon hankkimisen, alkuperäiskansaoikeuden suhteen. Se tuntuu vähän oudolta. (interviewee 6)*

Many Sámi interviewees bring out collective rights that are, for example, guiding their fishing in the Deatnu river. Those rights are based on the community's own system where every family has their usufruct areas. As Sámi understanding of the land is different compared to western private understanding of the land, so is the use of the land, which does not mean taking from the land but more likely asking from it to take what is needed. Interviewees thought that there was not a similar respect for the land from Finnish people; and thus some of them see the majority populations coming to Deatnu as invading.

The direct colonialism of the news is difficult to detect in the interviewees' responses; but typically news and stories are repeating the usual pattern and views from the point of view of the majority population. The voice of the Sámi is weak and because the Finnish journalists do not have a grip on the life of the Sámi in Deatnu, their voices also remain minor. Maurice Squires (quoted in Kovach 2009, 75) states:

*«All problems must be solved within the context of the culture – otherwise you are just creating another form of assimilation.»*

If the indigenous aspect is pushed away and not taken seriously in decision making or in the media it can be, as Squires puts it, a different way of not letting indigenous people fulfil their own culture, own customs and own rights. As my interviewees said, the decision-making process on the fishing agreement, as well its practice has been colonialist. One even says it is the last step to take as «Colonialism that Finland practices is soon perfectly completed.»

Was there a relationship between journalism and colonialism proved to be a more complex question. Colonialism as a whole, however, became a more central topic than expected. Before conducting the interviews, I was worried how I can find answers concerning colonialism, if it is maybe too complex and difficult an issue to try to dig in to. But interviewees did not have any problem to talk about it; and it came naturally from the answers even if not asked for. It was maybe a bit surprising for me as I was worried if it is too strong a theme to talk about casually. I still kept in mind how experiences of colonialism and oppression can vary widely: for some, being Sámi might be an ongoing history of suffering, whereas others might not have any personal experience about oppression (Valkonen 2009, 20). So I tried not to push the questions as if it would be the same for everyone. Still, colonialism came up very strongly in most of the interviews.

While starting my thesis I was expecting that there is a gap between the Sámi interviewees and Finnish journalists. As the power relations are visible in Finnish society and the whole fishing agreement process again showed who has the power to decide, I thought it must be seen somehow also in journalism. When thinking of myself as a journalist, I know the position journalists get all the time – reporting on things they do not know much about. Specially in cases when one writes a story including people from different cultures, it can be a very demanding task especially when there is a pressure to be fast. Finnish people in general do not have much knowledge of the Sámi people, and journalists are no exception. So I assumed that, not to belittle journalists workmanship but knowing the rush and the limits of their work, journalists would report on the fishing agreement only at a general level and from a Finnish perspective. Also, I thought that mainstream media journalists would not be able to understand the world views that the Sámi have, for example, when it comes to the relationship and meaning of the land, nor to include them to their stories.

During this research process, it transpired that interviewees felt that many mainstream journalists had their own agenda when doing stories. Especially this concerned journalists from the north. Interviewees explained how northern journalists are living in the same places as the Sámi and thus they have their interest to the same land and rights. Southern journalists instead are seen more innocent as they are not aware of the issues and do not have their own ambition concerning the land. One interviewee stated how journalists are victims of the system, meaning colonization, and that is why they are also blind to see things clearly. They see the issues through western lenses and are making stories suitable for the mainstream population as they are the readers and listeners of the news. Also interviewees felt that the media was too late to report on the Deatnu case; because the news started to be published when the decision had already been made. It had created frustration among interviewees as at that time these reports could have had an effect on the actual fishing agreement.

Kuokkanen (2007, 152) has the following powerful statement:

*«When the majority population does not have much information of the Sámi, the decisions concerning the Sámi and the public discussion of Sámi rights is possible to manipulate the way that Sámi are seen, represented and understood in accordance with the interest of the power society, while the Sámi themselves have little chance of influencing the matter. If the Sámi are not understood as an indigenous people and their current situation is not viewed in the perspective of colonial history, they are also not considered as a separate nation with rights in the public debate or in the consciousness of the majority. In such a situation, ignorance and indifference towards history by Finnish politicians and decision-makers as well as ordinary citizens maintain a situation where the rights of the Sámi are not recognized. In this way, asymmetric power relations continue and renew themselves in Finnish society.»*

To the list of Finnish politicians, policy-makers and regular people one could add Finnish media as well. I think her words are very fitting to journalism, since if there is not enough information among journalists they can manipulate or at least have the control of public discussion and opinion of the Sámi. When journalists are not aware of Sámi rights or consider them as indigenous peoples they are seen as similar to, or the same as, Finnish people; which is harming the full recognition of Sámi rights. Likewise, when the bigger picture of colonialist history in Finland is being ignored or unnoticed it creates a faulty bubble that is forwarding the image of a fair welfare state where everyone has equal rights. The media has power and it should be used wisely and fairly.

## **6.1 Reflections**

I have been working with this thesis more than a year. The long period of time gives a possibility to subconsciously think about the topic. However, during this process, there have been longer pauses when I haven't been able to forward the research at all – and after every break it is harder to get into, as the distance to the project has become so long. So for the next similar project I would recommend myself to work more intensively without any pauses to maintain the rhythm and management of time.

The whole process during the studies in the Sámi Allaskuvla has been a big personal journey. As this thesis has been with me more than a half of the time, I have learned a great deal. I have a background of western academic education; and now learning to see differently has been an eye-opener. This study has given me a new perspective to do the research, hear the voices that are not often heard, and to do it respectfully, not to continue an exploitative way of researching indigenous peoples. It has required lots of reflection, and positioning myself in the field of indigenous research. It has not been always easy but during this whole process, I have been encouraged, and it has brought me closer to issues I want to explore and understand even better.

It has been challenging to write in English as it is not my first language. Often there have been frustrating moments when it is just very hard to express yourself, as you would like to. Another challenge was to get the interviews; but I am happy with the ones I have and the interviewees welcomed me and did not have any doubt concerning my project.

I also faced some problems with access to the literature. As I lived some distance away from Guovdageaidnu I couldn't have easy access to the academic literature. However, spite of that I think I managed well in accessing a wide and varied source of literature.

When I started this process, I didn't expect to get this deep into the topic. I was happy to find so many concepts and aspects around the topic and how they linked together. All the concepts were new to me and helped me to understand the issue more and more. And that was my goal for myself: to get understanding, information and inspiration. All of this I got and I am very grateful for that.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

As in the beginning, I hoped that this thesis would contribute to the discussion in the field of journalism, journalist's work and production in the mainstream media. To get back to Papoutsaki's (2007) critique of dominant western news values and their way to shape an acceptable way to practise journalism – I think it is the right time to bring the matter to the agenda: to recognise the existing and ruling western world view that the media has; but to also question that and try to make changes .

At first, Finnish journalists should have a wider perspective in mind when they start to plan to make a story of Sámi people. It is not just about grabbing the comments from the source that has been planned before to fill the empty space. There also needs to be time for the background search, or as one interviewee said «homework,» so interviewees that the journalists will interview do not need to tell everything from the beginning. As part of a dominant culture, it is not easy to see how it is to be «the other,» and how huge an impact reportage can have on an individual, or at a community level. That is why I think it is significant to give the voice to those who are in that position so it could lead to changing the structures. But that needs understanding of the past and how it effects the present.

For further research would be interesting to find out; for example, why journalists and editors overlook issues that the Sámi and other indigenous peoples find important. What is the process of a story when reporting on Sámi issues? At the beginning of my research process, I wanted to also interview the Finnish journalists who had interviewed the Sámi in the Deatnu river case. This could have brought out a dialogue and the situation from their point of view. However, as this is only a Master's thesis I could not include journalists' interviews into this project due to time and resource constraints, but it would be interesting research to do in the future.

In the bigger picture, it could be useful to create a guide of Sámi people for Finnish journalists. I mean basic information of the Sámi culture, indigenous rights, traditional knowledge, et cetera, and what it all means in the context of the media. What are the main representations of Sámi and why is it important to avoid stereotypes, and how can it be done? Duncan McCue, who is Anishinaabe and an experienced journalist with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, has created RIIC - Reporting in Indigenous Communities which is an online guide that offers useful ideas and practical methods for finding and developing news stories in «Indian Country». It is intended to help reporters who are planning to produce news stories about indigenous peoples (Riic.ca). I think a similar guideline concerning Sámi people would at least lessen the misunderstandings and increase awareness among journalists. Also, there would be more time to ask questions concerning the topic if there would not be a need for journalists to first find out who the Sámi are.

Even though this study was not about Sámi media and I am not a Sámi journalist, I only hope the findings how the Sámi media represented the Deatnu case are noticed. Only open discussion, critique and feedback inside the community helps Sámi journalists to maintain Sámi medias' goals to be the best media for the Sámi people; and not to stumble on the same missteps as mainstream media.

I hope there will be more open discussion and healthy feedback including criticism and also

positive responses. It can be the way to improve Finnish journalists' work with Sámi-related issues and also to gain trust from the Sámi community. I will feed back my results to the interviewees giving them a copy of my work: and as I left all the quotes in Finnish, they can read what they have originally said. My original plan was to get interviewees together and have a focus group/talking circle to give them a chance to reflect on the data and results I have produced. As it was already challenging to get hold of individual interviewees, I gave up on that idea. Also due to the schedule that aspiration proved not to be viable..

I hope that this study gains attention and I will continue the discussion. I will pursue the possibility of continuing working with this issue more in the future. I hope that in the long run the co-operation between Finnish journalists and the Sámi people would be more open and fruitful, so that both sides would understand each other better. At least this study has taught me a lot, and I will certainly have this knowledge and use it in my work as a journalist and as a private person as well. This is what I can give back to the Sámi community.

In terms of the state level, there is a lot to do to break down damaging structures and attitudes. The first step is to recognize the past and admit the Sámi as indigenous peoples, not just on paper. The truth and reconciliation process that has begun in Finland is a move in the right direction.

One interviewee said:

*As clowns, we Sámi are accepted by Norway and Finland. But if we think, talk and behave like the Sámi we are, then we are bad citizens. But if we talk, behave and do things like Finnish people, then we are good Sámis. (interviewee 1)*

*kyllä me saamelaiset kelpaamme Norjaan ja Suomeen pelleinä, mutta jos me ajatlemme, puhumme ja käyttäydymme niinkuin me saamelaiset olemme, niin me olemme huonoja kansalaisia. Mutta jos me puhumme ja käyttäydymme ja teemme asioita niinkuin suomalaiset, niin me olemme hyviä saamelaisia. (interviewee 1)*

Hopefully increasing awareness and tolerance will not allow that kind of statement to be uttered anymore in the near future.

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# Appendix

## Interview guide

1. Voisitko kertoa omin sanoin millaisia kokemuksia sinulla on ollut kun suomalaiset toimittajat ovat haastatelleet sinua Tenon kalastussopimukseen liittyen?
2. Kuinka hyvin toimittaja oli perehtynyt ja valmistautunut haastatteluun?
  - Tuntuuko sinusta, että suomalaisilla journalisteilla on toisinaan oma agenda tehdessä juttua? Millä tavalla? Voisitko laajentaa?
  - Onko toimittajilla yleisesti ottaen tietoutta saamelaisen oikeuksista?
3. Tuntuuko sinusta että kun toimittaja jututti sinua, niin ymmärsikö hän sinun pointtisi ja jos ei miten se on tullut ilmi?
  - (voitko antaa esimerkin)?
4. Miten haastattelu sujui, Mitä olisit halunnut toimittajan kysyvän tai tekevän haastattelutilantessa?
5. Oliko jotain mitä olisi voinut jättää kysymättä, oliko jotain tyhmää tai epämiellyttävää?
6. Minkä luulet olevan mielestäsi kaikkein vaikeinta ymmärtää suomalaiselle journalistille, jos puhutaan Tenon tapauksesta?  
  
(Jutun esille ottaminen)
7. Mitä ajattelit, kun näit(/kuulit) jutun, jonka toimittaja oli tehnyt haastatteluusi pohjautuen?
  - käsittelikö se asiaa reilulla tavalla?
8. Miten saamelaisnäkökulma oli huomioitu jutussa?
9. Osaatko sanoa kuinka paikallinen saamelaisyhteisö on reagoanut näihin suomalaisiin valtavirta uutisiin Tenon tapauksesta?
10. Erosiko saamelaisen median uutisointi suomalaisesta?
  - Seuraatko yleensä mitä saamelaiset mediat uutisoivat?
11. Mitä mieltä olet koko Tenon sopimusprosessista?

12. Mitä tämä Tenon tapaus kertoo mielestä saamelaisten ja Suomen valtion välisestä suhteesta?
13. Onko saamelaisilla ja suomalaisilla eri käsitys siitä, miten lohja pitäisi suojella?  
– Jos kyllä: miten ne eroaa?
14. Median kautta saa aika helposti kuvan, että tässä Tenon tapauksessa on suomalaiset tai Suomen valtio vastaan saamelaiset pitääkö tämä sinun mielestäsi paikkansa?  
– Vai onko mukana muitakin osapuolia/intressejä?
15. Voisitko kertoa jotain siitä, mitä Teno ja sen lohi sinulle merkitsee?
16. Puhuttiinko juttua tehdessä omasta suhteestasi Tenoon? Millä tavalla tai olisitko halunnut nostaa se esille?
17. Onko Tenon koko merkitys tullut medioissa esille?
18. Eroaako saamelaisten luontosuhde suomalaisten luontosuhteesta?
19. Olen miettinyt Tenon tilannetta kolonialismin näkökulmasta, ja haluaisin kuulla mielipiteesi, mitä ajattelet asiasta?  
– Voiko Tenon kalastussopimuksen laatimiseen ja käyttöönotossa nähdä kolonialismia?  
– Millaisia piirteitä?
20. Oliko jotain tärkeää, mitä olisit halunnut vielä sanoa?



