

Article II

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Art-Based Knowing with Sámi Reindeer Herders: A step Towards Resilience

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This chapter covers a visually focused substudy of Korinna Korsström-Magga's art-based research project concerning Sámi reindeer herders' daily lives. The project is an on-going research conducted in reindeer herder cooperatives around Lake Inari in Finnish Lapland, where most reindeer herders are of Sámi ethnicity. The Sámis are the Indigenous people of the northernmost areas (called Sápmi) of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Russian Kola Peninsula. The reindeer herders strive to deal with social and climatic changes currently affecting their livelihood (Tyler et al., 2007).

The Arctic environment and its cultures are changing rapidly. People are moving to the North, bringing in new ways, needs, and demands. Sápmi is an interesting place for many stakeholders and it is providing humanity with unexplored mining areas, forestry, and wildlife tourism. The impact of Western civilization is getting stronger, and old traditions are giving way and blending into a new world (Ford et al., 2020; Freeman, 2000; Nuttall, 2000; Rees et al., 2007). In the field of art education, Indigenous issues have been addressed by Manifold et al. (2019). In the Sámi region of Finland, Hiltunen (2009) has developed methods of community-based art education, and Keskitalo (2010) has pointed out the need for culturally sensitive education reform for Sápmi.

The preservation of minority and Indigenous cultures is a constant and urgent issue. In some regions of Sápmi, it has been possible to retain a strong Sámi cultural and language identity, but in other areas Sámi people have melted into the majority culture. During the history of colonisation of the Arctic, there has been unfortunate oppression against the Indigenous peoples. Today, the understanding and relationship between the Western world and the traditional Sámi cultures has improved a great deal, but according to Lehtola (2015) and Valkonen (2009) considerable gaps in knowledge and understanding about the Sámis remain.

This project presents the contemporary reindeer herders' daily lives visually from their own perspectives. Korsström-Magga's research is conducted using Art-Based Action Research (ABAR) methodologies (Jokela, 2019) by utilizing the *photovoice* research methods used in social sciences (Wang & Burris, 1997) that has similarities with visual

ethnography (Pink, 2013). Korsström-Magga involved five reindeer herder families in capturing photos during their daily lives. Both the Northern Sámi and the Inari Sámi cultures are represented by the families. She instructed them to take snapshots of ordinary daily moments. The photographing task did not seek for beautiful sceneries and pictures of people in their best suits. The aim of the photography was to capture describing moments of their daily life, culture and livelihood. About 1000 photos were taken by the families during one year following their daily chores. The families showed their photographs, with Korsström-Magga's assistance, in a joint exhibition at Siida Sámi Museum in Inari.

The first cycle of Korsström-Magga's ABAR project was completed as a photo exhibition in the Siida Sámi Museum in Autumn 2017 with installations built using items and tools belonging to the reindeer herders' everyday working surroundings. The exhibition was called *Boazoeallin* (in the Northern Sámi language), which means *Reindeer Life* in English. The exhibition process was documented, and reflected on by Korsström-Magga (2019a, 2019b). The exhibition served as a way for reindeer herders to express themselves and explain their reality. The reindeer herders wanted the exhibition to be both informative and enlightening.

In this chapter, the authors discuss how the reindeer herders embraced the photovoice task in their daily lives and how they highlighted particular issues via their photographs and displays.

Conceptual Framework

Arctic Indigenous cultures are acknowledged as being vulnerable as a result of long-term colonialism and oppression by colonising cultures (Axelsson & Sköld, 2006). They are also deemed resilient people, as they have survived and managed to preserve their vivid cultures, including traditions and languages, in spite of oppression and climate change (Ford et al., 2020). These two perspectives stand behind this project and determine the research action to aim for decolonisation and invite the participants to attend as equal co-researchers in their lives.

We use Tim Ingold's (1993) concept of *taskscape* as our framework for examining the photo-installations in the exhibition, expressing the reindeer herder families' everyday lives and culture. In this chapter, the *taskscape* refers to the working environment of the Sámi reindeer herders. Ingold compares the terms landscape and *taskscape*. Both environments are at many levels connected to human involvement, but Ingold stresses that

the landscape is a purely visual experience, whereas the *taskscape* is also connected to other senses, like sounds and movement. For example, the noise of human actions in the environment can be understood as a *taskscape*. The *taskscape* embraces a deeper and wider concept than landscape. Moreover, the *taskscape* is temporary and always changes and is connected to human activities (Ingold, 1993).

Posthumanism sits alongside *taskscape* in our conceptual frame. According to Lummaa and Rojola (2014) is a fundamental idea of posthumanism to stop thinking of ourselves as self-absorbed superiors and accept that we are only one part of a diverse planet. The Sámi worldview and ancient Sámi Indigenous religion includes features that are equal to this idea. Despite the Christianizing of the Sámi people during the 19th century (Lehtola, 2015) the contours of the Indigenous animistic belief remains. According to Helander-Renvall (2010) the Sámi people see themselves as an integral part of nature where the non-humans, e.g. the animals, rocks and plants, possess a soul and are cognizant of their surroundings. She stresses that the dialogue between e.g. the Sámi reindeer herder and their environment, is known to be of benefit to human beings in their daily lives.

Posthumanism raises issues of co-knowing or “knowing with” in the discussion on reform of research methodologies (Braidotti, 2013; Ulmer, 2017). In the North and the Arctic, “knowing with” could be associated with the Indigenous Knowledge System (Kuokkanen, 2000; Smith, 2021). The concept of co-knowing refers in research in an Arctic context not only to the shared knowledge between participating people of the North and the researcher but also to the participating people’s knowledge of and with their environment (Degai & Petrov, 2021; Porsanger & Guttorm, 2011). “Knowing with” (as a posthumanist view) is about the ability to know together with the non-human.

The Sámi reindeer herders are a valuable resource in Arctic research, as they have the knowledge and skills to interpret nature and the reindeer. Stammer and Takamura (2020) describe the reindeer herder’s connection to the reindeer as a concept of symbiotic domesticity that sees humans and animals as equal partners shaping their mutual environment. Porsanger and Guttorm (2011) encountered this in the Sámi Indigenous knowledge (in Northern Sámi called *árbediehtu*). They define *árbediehtu* as inherited collective wisdom and skills gained over centuries that the Sámi people used to enhance their livelihoods.

Features of the Indigenous knowledge system have similarities to the broader category Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and both are passed on by oral traditions such as songs and tales. Berkes (2018) describes the nature of traditional knowledge as qualitative, holistic, intuitive, spiritual and moral. According to Valkonen and Valkonen

(2019) it is community knowledge that is often limited to a specific area, which is why the term local knowledge is also used. They imply that traditional knowledge is dynamic and continually related to time and place, in dialogue, and is affected by other ways of knowing, including the Western scientific model. Today, Sámi Indigenous knowledge is crucial in research about climate change in the Arctic, as it raises specific long-term data of a specific area (Lehtola, 2015; Riseth et al., 2010; Reindeer Herding, 2022).

The Art Education discipline in University of Lapland has long developed place specificity (Jokela et al., 2019), community involvement (Hiltunen, 2010), and support for local cultural awareness and sustainability (Härkönen, 2021). This has in the context of the Arctic Sustainable Arts and Design (ASAD) network contributed to the implementation of the principles of culturally sensitive practices in the context of the European Arctic.

Korsström-Magga's ABAR project is also linked with the current discussion on *Arctic art*. By proposing the concept, Arctic art, Jokela and Huhmarniemi have pointed out how sociocultural activities can reflect and renew Northern and Arctic cultural heritage or create new artistic forms of expression based on nature, culture, and current debates on posthumanism and new materialism (Huhmarniemi & Jokela, 2020; Jokela et al., 2019).

Art-Based Research from the Perspective of Co-knowing

Korsström-Magga's research project is based on the (ABAR) methodology, which is one of many approaches under the Art-Based Research (ABR) umbrella. Art education at the University of Lapland has used the ABAR strategy since 1995 to develop participatory working methods in visual art that enable the participants to express themselves and make their own opinions visible (Jokela, 2019; Huhmarniemi & Jokela, 2020). The ABAR approach has increased the interest in using art as a multidisciplinary research method and is currently a strong and long-term part of education for visual art scholars at the University of Lapland (Jokela et al., 2015). In addition, aspects of how contemporary arts-based methods may contribute to decolonising participatory research in the Arctic have generated great interest (Jokela et al., 2015; Seppälä et al., 2021).

Korsström-Magga decided at a very early stage of the research project to use the photovoice method (Hurworth, 2003; Pink, 2013; Wang & Burris, 1997) as a participatory tool to produce data based on the reindeer herders' daily lives. It is a useful and practical way to get close to the families' daily lives and to visualise a culture and a livelihood that not many people are familiar with. Also, the fact that the families involved are

multilingual (Sámi- and Finnish-speaking) called for the visual approach. Indeed, some practical situations are better explained with the help of photographs.

Photovoice is a research method developed and promoted by Wang and Burris since 1992 and was initially used in health and social work research. Today, it is well adapted among other fields and often used within participatory art-based action research. The cameras are not entrusted to researchers or professional photographers but are instead given to the subjects themselves in order to entice them to represent day-to-day events via the photos. Wang and Burris (1997) describe the three main goals for photovoice as enabling the community to reflect on their strengths and concerns, to promote critical discussions and knowledge about the community's concerns, and to reach policymakers.

Korsström-Magga uses active participant observation to observe and collect research data. She married a reindeer herder in a small village in Inari County where she has lived for almost 30 years, so she shares the same experiences as the five reindeer families that volunteered for the project. This kind of "knowing with" in the research project helps her focus on the research project, understand cultural and professional terms, and interpret silent knowhow. Korsström-Magga designs, shapes, and facilitates the research process, but the collaboration with the families moulds the research to a mutual process, where every participant is a co-researcher sharing knowledge. In this photovoice project, they act together as a research team, and consent is continually obtained from all of the members of the public contributing to the research data.

Taskscapes of Sámi Reindeer Herder's Contemporary Culture

Korsström-Magga planned the exhibition in the Siida Sámi Museum in 2017 in collaboration with the five reindeer herder families. Each family presented their photographs combined with items and tools that belonged to the reindeer herders' everyday working surroundings. The combination formed exhibits that had a specific emphasis and represented the families' familiar *taskscapes* of their daily lives. The reindeer was the mutual and driving theme in the families' exhibits, which confirms the strong and special cultural bond between this animal and humans in this environment (Müller-Wille et al., 2006; Stammer & Takamura, 2020). The reindeer were not always presented in the photographs, but the photographs all showed a daily life that was basically connected in some way to a life (and "knowing") with reindeer.

The photographs that each family had taken, all from their own perspectives, had similarities and followed the Sámi calendar, which divides the year into eight seasons. The winter separations and the early summer earmarking of the small calves were carefully

observed in the families' photographs. Other topics also presented by each family and connected to the Sámi culture, included slaughter of reindeer for meat, hands-on work in the wilderness, and disasters caused by predators. It was obvious that the families shared the same kinds of daily realities and had mutual concerns about their daily lives.

Next, we will discuss the installations in the exhibition and the *taskscape*s that they represent more closely.

The Fence as an Archetype of a Reindeer Herders' *Taskscape*

Two of the families showed photographs at the exhibition, combined with fences. One family's fence was about 20 m (65 ft) long and 2 m high that had been in use at a reindeer herder's yard. About 300 photographs of the family hang on the fence, as a timeline showing their daily chores along the year (Figure 1). The other family also showed their (approx.) 500 photographs combined with a fence. This fence was part of a separation fence, where the photographs were displayed on a gate where the reindeer were taken in and out from a coral. The visitor could sit on a small sleigh on a reindeer hide and watch the show. White drapery followed the fence for visualising snow, as the separation time is during the winter season (Figure 2).

The other family also showed their (approx.) 500 photographs combined with a fence. This fence was part of a separation fence, where the photographs were displayed on a gate where the reindeer were taken in and out from a coral. The visitor could sit on a small sleigh on a reindeer hide and watch the show. White drapery followed the fence for visualising snow, as the separation time is during the winter season (Figure 2).

The fence has become a mutual *taskscape* for the contemporary reindeer herders in North-Finland, and different kinds of fences could be spotted in many of the families' photographs. The reindeer herder area in Finland is divided by fences into large districts, which the state authorities required reindeer owners to establish from 1898 (Reindeer Herding, 2022). In these large districts the reindeer are grazing free and the reindeer herders are operating together as a kind of cooperative. In addition to the large district fences, there are several separation fences inside each district and additionally, there are fences at home yards where reindeer that need extra care or attention are kept. There are also temporary fences that are built up and used only for a couple of months. A great deal of the contemporary herding work is about building fences and tearing them down. For the herders, especially the separation fence has a great social meaning. Both in winter separation time and also during the calf earmarking in summertime the whole family is

Figure 1. The fence along with the about 300 framed photographs turned into an installation at the exhibition.
Photograph: Korinna Korsström-Magga, 2017.



Figure 2. The photographs were displayed as dias at the gap of the door to the coral. The visitor enjoyed the show sitting on a small snowmobile sledge, that is daily in use for transporting goods.
Photograph: Korinna Korsström-Magga, 2017.



gathering by the fence, including elderly people and small children. Indeed, fences have also a great social meaning in reindeer herders' society. Therefore, the fence is always a part of the daily scenery in some way, and it has great significance as a *taskscape*.

The first family's almost 300 photographs describe their daily lives living in a small village in the middle of Lemmenjoki National Park. Their Sámi culture is vivid and strong, and they have managed to preserve their traditional culture and reindeer herder's knowledge. There are only a few families in the village, and their work with their reindeer is intense. Their reindeer wander free in the area of the national park. The reindeer cows come to the village area in springtime to calf. This unique event can be followed by the villagers from their living room windows. The long-term partnership with the reindeer derives from their early history as Sámi nomads. As Stammler and Takamura (2020) also imply, the reindeer provide not only meat for the herders. The symbiosis of the reindeer and the people living together in their environment is beneficial for both animals and humans. Their pictures showed not only the work with the animals, but also the Sámi's respect for the reindeer as a provider of necessities of life. The Sámi traditional way of respecting life is to honour the animal after its slaughter by using most of it. This family showed proof of their *árbediehtu* (Porsanger & Guttorm, 2011) by showing the best that a reindeer offers, by preparing hides, making shoes and reindeer handicrafts, and wearing hides and other clothing in their daily lives.

The other family that showed their (approx.) 500 photos on the separation fence enlightened the visitor of the contemporary hands-on reindeer herder's work. The main photographer of this family was a young reindeer herder stepping into the adult world. She had the opportunity to capture snapshots of moments in real action in the forest, as well as in the slaughterhouse, and to present the actual daily work of a contemporary reindeer herder at the most hectic moments. The photos also showed how modern techniques complement old ways and traditions in the livelihood of a reindeer herder. The photographic view was realistic and energetic, with great optimism for the future.

The Lávvu – a Cultural *Taskscape*

A mother of one of the families wished that her (approx.) 200 photographs should be shown in a *lávvu* (Figure 3).

A *lávvu* is a traditional teepee-shaped tent that serves as a shelter, a resting place, and a place to eat and sleep during contemporary reindeer herding in the wilderness. The visitor at the exhibition was able to enter the dwelling and sit down on a reindeer hide. Soft music and songs in Sámi language in the background embraced the family's photographs, which were shown as slides projected onto a mosquito blanket (Figure 4).



Figure 3. *The lávvu, which had been recently in use, spread a pleasant scent of smoke in the exhibition hall. Photograph: Korinna Korsström-Magga, 2017.*

Figure 4. *The interior of the lávvu was furnished with typical tools and items that are in use in a lávvu. Photograph: Korinna Korsström-Magga, 2017.*

The theme of the photographs showed the reindeer herders' community working together and the children learning from elders. The photographs show the daily life of a contemporary reindeer herder's home with school-aged children.

The lávvu is a well-known symbol and dwelling in the Sámi reindeer herders' nomadic culture. Tourism in the North has turned the lávvu into a romantic fireplace with a Sámi label, which, according to Valkonen (2009), may lead to prejudice and place the Sámi reindeer herders into a cultural trap.

The lávvu remains an important dwelling for the reindeer herders, and it had an important role in the exhibition in correcting misunderstandings. Moreover, its use in a contemporary reindeer herder's life was properly explained. The nomadic way of life ended when the northern Scandinavian country borders were closed beginning in the middle of the 19th century. The lávvus are today mostly used during the earmarking (of reindeer) periods when they are needed as shelter and rest during the many days of work outside in the wilderness. During these moments, the whole family gathers together at the fireplace, eating, talking, and sharing time. To sleep in a lávvu listening to the sounds of nature outside is considered a special treat.

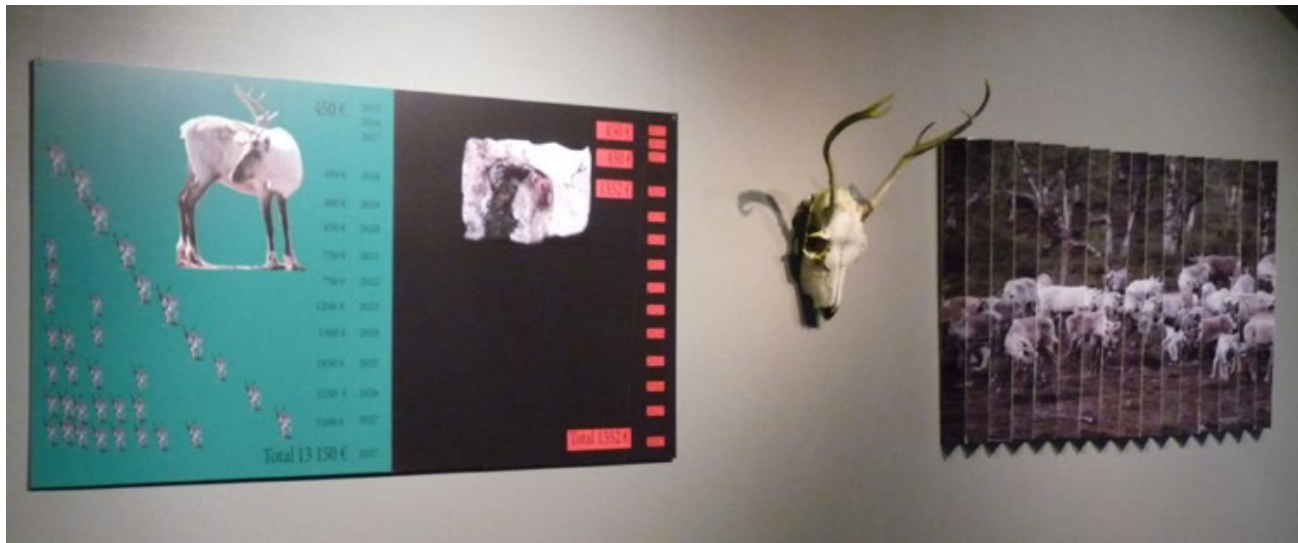


Figure 5. The installation focuses on the debate of predators and reindeer herding.
 Photograph: Korinna Korsström-Magga, 2017.

Taskscapes of Confrontation with the World

The art exhibition also contained two exhibits describing the *taskscape*s of confrontations with other stakeholders. The first installation described the issue of predators. (Figure 5). In the middle was a reindeer skull with antlers. On the left side of the skull was a poster that the family had designed by themselves. It is a graphic view of the economic loss when a reindeer is killed by a predator.

On the other side of the skull was an *agamograph* (a picture made as an optical illusion) that Korsström-Magga had designed of the family's two photographs: one of a living herd with calves and another of a reindeer that is mauled and killed by a predator. The picture of the living herd changed to the killed reindeer when a visitor walked past it (Figure 6).

The exhibit had a severe but true message. The family involved had experienced significant predation by a lynx on their own reindeer herd. This led to painful discussions with defenders of the predators and authorities responsible for wildlife conservation. Thus, the exhibition turned into a political platform.

The second exhibit presented a family's photographs in combination with a sleigh used in reindeer safaris. In the sleigh were typical scenes representing tourism, including



Figure 6. An agamograph (Photograph: Korinna Korsström-Magga, 2017) of a picture of a reindeer herd (Photograph: Petri Mattus, 2016) that turns into a picture of a reindeer killed by a predator (Photograph: Petri Mattus, 2017).

cosy restaurants, reindeer sledge tours, and beautiful views. On the wall behind were photographs of the reindeer herders' daily routines, such as reindeer feeding, repairing of motors and sledges, short moments with family, reindeer slaughter, and meat processing. The installation wanted to enlighten the complex reality of the Sámi culture in tourism, where the reindeer is in a prominent position. The same livelihood looks very different from these two angles (Figure 7).

The reindeer herders meet other people and stakeholders in situations where they find themselves in situations of conflict or where they are trapped in their Sámi cultural history (see Lehtola, 2015; Valkonen, 2009). The most contradictory situations are with the defenders of wildlife predators and the tourism business. The traditional Sámi livelihoods are reindeer herding, fishing, and hunting. The Sámi reindeer herders are considered skilled and competent hunters and foresters who do not hesitate to defend their herd. According to Stämmler and Takamura (2020), among others, the reindeer herders have a practical and respectful view of using natural resources. People living remotely from nature have raised posthumanist (Braidotti, 2013) interests and discussions of animal rights, with the aim of equality for the human and the non-human, and the living and the non-living. The confrontation develops because of people's ignorance of nature and its life cycles.

The tourism industry is a major stakeholder in Lapland. The second exhibit highlighted the complex use of Sámi culture in tourism. The Sámi people and reindeer herders

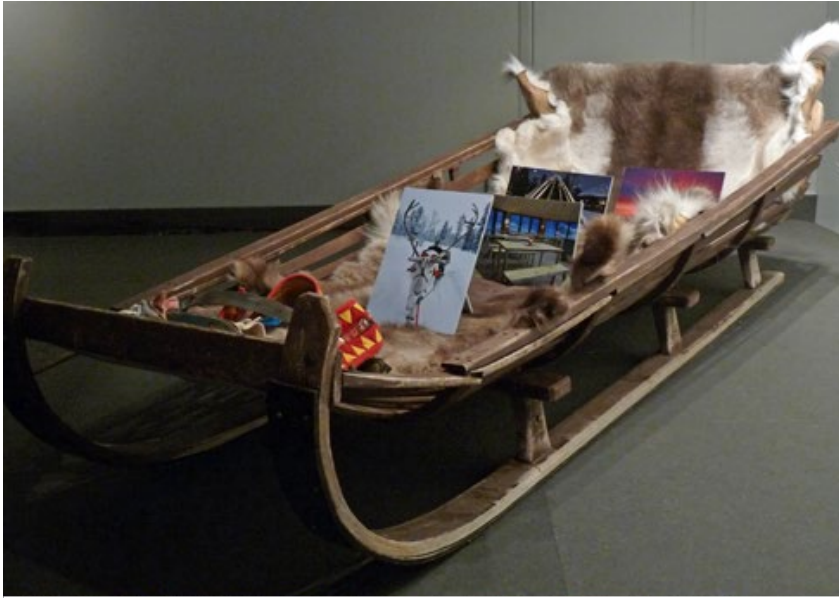


Figure 7. Behind the pleasure that the tourism business provides their customers is a daily life. Photographs of the sledge: Korinna Korsström-Magga, 2017. Photographs below the sledge: Jouni Lukkari, 2017.



have long been used to promoting tourism in Lapland. This has tainted the picture of the Sámi culture in many ways over the years and has also led to preconceptions and incomplete information that has led to misunderstandings. Today, many Sámi reindeer herders participate as stakeholders in the tourism industry themselves. These people show the resilience of their culture, spreading their knowledge about their own livelihood.

These two representations of daily *taskscape*s describe situations that reindeer herders experience with other stakeholders in reindeer grazing areas. These situations have relevance in the discussion of the vulnerability and resilience of minority cultures.

Discussion on Vulnerability, Resilience, and Art-based Activity

Our critical discussion of the exhibition proved that reindeer herder families were able to convey various aspects of their own lives and *taskscape*s to other people with the help of art-based practices, photographs, and exhibits. The results show enthusiasm and concern for sharing information about their reality in their daily lives in order to avoid misunderstandings.

Indigenous peoples in the Arctic are often described as vulnerable and resilient as a result of long-term colonialism and oppression (Axelsson & Sköld, 2006). For reindeer herders, however, the defence of their grazing lands will become more difficult, since the impact of climate change and increasing population of the North is decreasing the size of the reindeer pastures. The big challenge is to cooperate and stand up to other people who do not know about the Sámi culture and contemporary reindeer herding, as Aikio and Hyvärinen (2004) and Freeman (2000) have highlighted. The cultural and economic environment for reindeer herding as a livelihood can, in this perspective, be seen as vulnerable in the present world.

A common definition of vulnerable is a person that easily can be physically or mentally hurt or influenced. Even if the reindeer herders involved have met with misunderstanding and ignorance about their livelihood and culture, they have a great trust in their culture, livelihood, and future. This Art based action research does not define the *individuals* of reindeer herder families as vulnerable. A deeper examination of the photographs and exhibits confirmed that the members of the families were, with the help of the art-based process, able to express how they saw themselves during changing working environments and livelihoods. Rather than vulnerability, resilience could describe their case. As people living with nature, they have shown the skills and knowledge to tackle natural challenges in their working environment.

Ford et al. (2020) claim that the terms resilience and vulnerability of Indigenous peoples to environmental change are socially constructed and closely linked to issues of sovereignty, power, social justice, development, and history. Vulnerability and resilience are terms that have been criticised in the academic world. For instance, Reid (2019) criticises the term 'Indigenous resilience' as a kind of implicit racism that is in compliance with neoliberal colonialism. Haalboom and Natcher (2012) stress that the term 'vulnerable' to describe Indigenous communities is also an agreed label, generated by the West who are not familiar with local cultures. The label has the potential, in turn, to shape Indigenous peoples' identities and how they see themselves (Haalboom & Natcher, 2012).

Sámi reindeer herders have shown proof of great resilience, which is understood to be a positive adaptation to unpleasant changes that will in the end be even empowering. The daily work changes, and the reindeer herders subsequently adapt new ways and apply them to their ancient Indigenous livelihood. According to Ford et al. (2020), this change and modernisation in reindeer herding are necessary in terms of maintaining their livelihoods as a compatible source of income in the North.

Another important dimension that we want to discuss is the educational dimension of art-based and photovoice research methods. Most of the members of the families took the photography task as an easy and convenient way to catch moments of their days that they wanted to convey to other people. Thanks to social media, photovoice seems to be an easily approachable research tool for the participating co-researchers. Almost everyone who owns a cell phone, photographs things in their daily lives. Some families were eager photographers who at the end of the year had made a visual diary, while some only photographed occasionally. Today, photography has become an everyday tool of social media and it is not automatically an artistic activity, but when it is used as a visual method of self-expression (as it appears to be using the photovoice method), it can be defined as an arts-based method (Seppälä et al., 2021).

This project aims to reveal and clarify the contemporary reindeer herding to other people by using different visual ways of expression. Five reindeer herder families volunteered for the project. The function of the photograph task was at first to entice the families to convey aspects of their daily lives and for the photos to be used as inspiration in the exhibition about reindeer herding. The families valued their privacy and had not, at this point, the intention to show their photos in public, but gave their consent of using the photographs as research data. While the photographs were examined together, it appeared that the photography action had multilevel values both as research data as well as community art. The fact that they had made self-expressing design choices with the

camera, both consciously with care and by direct snapshots, turned their photographing action into an art-based action. The participants faced creativity and made an art-based visual story about their daily lives. At the point when the exhibition was to be built the families agreed and also gave their consent to exhibit their photographs in the exhibition at Siida Sámi museum in 2017. They thought it was the most explicit way to show their daily life as reindeer herders for the audience. They chose the photographs for the exhibition themselves and planned the installations for the performance.

Controversy surrounds whether the photovoice method is a reliable research method because of its subjective emphasis and the difficulties of interpreting the visual data in an unequivocal way. There is critique of the imprecise outcome that has more of an artistic expression. Korsström-Magga's research shows that certain types of data are easier to capture by arts-based methods, as Barone and Eisner (2012) and Leavy (2015) have pointed out. However, it is clear that if data (in this case, photographs) is art, even if it is produced by art-based research methods, it is more difficult to define unambiguously. There is always room for reinterpretation in the final results, including in this case.

The installations of *taskscape*s that the reindeer herder families built up, with the assistance of Korsström-Magga, fit also well the permanent ethnographic exhibition in Siida Sámi Museum, that is presenting Sámi culture by combining photographs and objects to undoubtedly serve as an educational inspiration.

The connection of the *taskscape*-exhibits to Sámi contemporary art is interesting, as the Sámi Art section of the Venice Biennale 2022 offers very similar solutions (Office for Contemporary Art Norway, 2022). The Sámi artist Joar Nango also used a similar way of conveying a message with the help of objects in his exhibition section *Sámi Library* in Helsinki Contemporary Art Centre Kiasma 2022 (Yle Sámi, 2022). The reindeer herder families' photography process and the installations in the exhibition reflected similarities with the forms of Sámi contemporary art, which strive to utilise the culture's own material and cultural ways of expression (Grini, 2017; Hansen, 2019; Lundström et al., 2015). As the result of Korsström-Magga's exhibition project reflecting and renewing cultural heritage and creating new arts-based form of expression based on nature, culture and current debates on posthumanism, it can be seen as Arctic art (Huhmarniemi & Jokela, 2020; Jokela et al. 2019; Huhmarniemi 2019). Arctic art can be seen as a Northern contribution in the international discussion on Arctic art as art education for sustainability (Härkönen, 2021; Wagner et.al., 2021).

Conclusion

This participatory art-based action project using the photovoice method facilitated in this exhibition is still going on in this reindeer herders' society. The visual way of acknowledging their livelihood seems to be useful and the reindeer herding families are continuing the spreading of the visual information. The photos, exhibits, and the exhibition entity embrace the silent ecocultural knowledge, referred in this chapter to the Sámi Indigenous knowledge, and the new insights of changes that the Sámi reindeer herders experience in their daily lives and want to show to the outside audience. The participatory art-based activity shares information and opens possibilities to revitalise the reindeer herders' livelihood to a meaningful profession, also in the counterparts' eyes. The exhibition highlights the most important issues in contemporary reindeer herders' daily lives, where the "knowing with" the working surroundings with the reindeer has a great role. Exposing their reality by taking photographs has an empowering impact on reindeer herders' society, which also gives them possibilities for resilience to cope with the changes in their daily environment.

The reindeer herder families are still active in this project, and they are currently planning to publish a book about their livelihood based on their own photographs. In this case the art-based action research method has shown qualities that bring forward knowledge about human societies and cultures. Participating in creative and visual action is an approachable way for the participants to open their views and opinions. The process opens the value of co-knowing that may offer help in and for a rapidly changing world.

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