Like Sámis do

A postcolonial and intersectional analysis of the contemporary film representations and self-representations of the Sámi people

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Abstract
The film representation of the Sámi people has evolved during the last century from the ethnographic portrayals that reproduce a romantic stereotype of the good savages, to feature and documentary films that discuss the Sámi identity and its colonial history. In recent years a new generation of Sámi and Swedish documentary directors have focused their work on analysing the impact that multiple structures of power actually have in the production of the Sámi identity and culture. In this research I explore the intersections of such structures in the documentary road movies Sámi Daughter Yoik (2007) by the Sámi-Swedish director Liselotte Wajstedt, and The Only Image of My Father (2004) by the Swedish director Kine Boman. The main purpose of the research is to examine the discussions of identity that these films propose and to analyse the strategies with which the directors question the simplistic representation of the Sámi people. Based on the postcolonial and intersectional perspectives, the text offers a critique of the discourses of authenticity that confine the Sámi identity into the frame of ethnicity. The study gives special attention to the different layers that the directors' identities involve and their role in the construction of alternative representations of the Sámi people. A relevant finding is that the directors have succeeded in representing the Sámi people as complex and heterogeneous, helped by their choices on genre, authorship and their own approach to identity as a performative, multidimensional and dynamic process.

Keywords
Sámi, Swedish, documentary, road movies, postcolonial, intersectional, identity, representation, ethnicity, gender, class, nationality.
1. Introduction

The film representation of the Sámi people in Sweden has historically involved a colonial
and stereotypical discourse where Sáminess is constructed in opposition to Swedishness. In
such process, an extremely limited selection of identity markers is persistently used to
represent the Sámi people as a whole. Their complexity as a collective is obscured by the
discourse of ethnic authenticity, and regardless of their diversity, the Sámi societies are
constantly depicted as determined by nature, tradition and the rejection of modern
progress. The landscape and the climatic conditions in which only some communities live
are used as the explanation of such imagination. The reindeer husbandry is described as the
main economic activity although many people have no participation in it and there are
other principal activities as fishing, hunting and logging. The women are represented as
strong and powerful, and the men as wild and stagnant. The Sámi language is referred as
one dialect when, in fact, it can be divided in three categories and nine dialects.¹

During the last decades such imaginary has been contested through more complex
representations where the Sámi identity and colonial history are discussed. Often related to
the use of the Sámi languages and the cast of Sámi people, the improvement in the
representation of the Sámi identity is understood as the result of self-representations. For
the Sámi Information Centre -the national platform of the Sámi Parliament to produce
and distribute information about the Sámi culture and people- this shift draws a decisive
line in the classification of films about them. According to this agency, the filmic
representation of the Sámi people is divided in two categories: films created by Sámi
people and films created by non-Sámi people.² In the same line, Anne-Kari Skarðhamar
addresses the films written, directed and produced by the Sámi-Norwegian director Nils
Gaup as good examples of such radical shift. Skarðhamar’s main argument is that Gaup’s

¹ Öberg, Thomas, ed. The Sámi. People of the Sun and the Wind, English translation: Thomas Rutschman,
² Sápmi, Sámi Information Centre official website. Retrieved on December 16, 2015 from
http://www.samer.se/2122
films are free of colonial ambivalence and stereotypes and do not represent the Sámi people as the “Others” because of their director’s ethnicity and perspective.³

Included in a complex debate about indigenous film and media, in which opening space for indigenous filmmakers is considered as a key aspect for decolonization, Skarðhamar’s argument clearly points out to the potential critical power of self-representations.⁴ However, in this argument an implicit and extremely problematic claim that the director’s ethnicity has essentially a radical function can be located. Although the representation of the Sámi people is clearly related to discussions of ethnicity, the focus on this aspect perpetuates a simplified and monolithic vision of them. It obscures what Lina Gaski, Lia Markelin, Charles Husband, Sari Pietikäinen and Madeleine Eriksson explain about the representation of the Sámi people: it involves an intricate and contradictory dynamic, in which discussions of nationality, gender, class, sexuality, migration, among other, intertwine.⁵

In this sense, and following the postcolonial and intersectional perspectives, I propose that the analysis and representation of the Sámi identity makes necessary to analyse the interactions of all dimensions of power participating in its construction. From this perspective, my main objective in this research is to discuss the simplified focus on ethnicity as an independent and leading dimension in the representation of the Sámi identity. This study focuses on the documentary road movies Sámi Daughter Yoik (Sámi Nieida Jojk) by Sámi and Swedish director Liselotte Wajstedt (2007) and The Only Image of My Father (Enda bilden av pappa) by Swedish director Kine Boman (2004). The analysis emphasises the strategies that both directors have developed to discuss the discursive oppositions that intersect in the construction of the Sámi identity and considers them as

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⁴ A brief reference to this debate is included in the last section of this work. However, this issue has not a central role in the analysis since the purpose is precisely to move the focus from the discussion of ethnicity to other dimensions.
good examples of non-stereotypical representations of the Sámi people. Some of the most relevant questions are 1) how have the directors contested the hegemonic representations of the Sámi people, and, 2) how does the dynamic between self-identification and colonial definition intertwine in such representations.

By exploring these questions, the analysis offers a critique of the discourse of authenticity and the binary definition of the Sámi identity. It suggests that Sámi stereotypical representation has been constructed through the process of colonial identification, and, paradoxically, reinforced in the negotiations between the indigenous struggle for self-determination and the colonial rule. While the Sámi identity works as the counter-part for the definition of national identities in the colonial discourses, the use of dichotomies, essentialism and stereotypes has a simultaneous and strategic function for the differentiation and negotiation with the colonial rules. The discourse of authenticity is used from both perspectives to delineate the limits between subject and power positions. This proposal has in no way the intention to criticize the legitimacy or authenticity of the Sámi discourse. On the contrary, it follows Lina Gaski’s claim that despite essentialist representations are also possible from the Sámi perspective it is crucial to be aware of the variable and contextual meanings that they have depending on the power and ethnical boundaries in which they act. Tightly connected to this idea, the opposition between immigrants and ethnic-Swedes as the only subject positions shaping the ethnical boundaries in Swedish film is implicitly challenged in the research.

The documentaries in which the analysis is focused share an interest of exploring the Sámi identity as a performative and dynamic process. Both constructed as road movies, the films produce a sense of evolution that, rather than teleological progress, suggests mobility and transformation. Approaching the question of what is to be Sámi as an open discussion for which there are no clear answers, the films give light to the definition of the Sámi identity as a multidimensional and contradictory process. This aspect is constantly emphasised by the directors, who propose questions about realism, performativity, authorship and representation through their more or less explicit intervention in the films.

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Far from the discourses of accuracy and realism, the critique of stereotypical representations of the Sámi people is conducted in these films through their narrative structure and theoretical approaches to identity. Their similarities suggest a collective movement to a shared imagination about Sáminess where the colonial discourses are challenged and substituted by a more updated and flexible self-representation. In a parallel move, the films' distinguishing lines point out to the discussion of essentialism and ethnic authenticity at the core of the Sámi collective. Based on these findings, the general conclusion of this research is that presenting the Sámi identity as a question and as a process of voluntary identification has effectively challenged the colonial binary thinking and opened new spaces for discussion.

1.1 Purpose and research questions

My main purpose in this study is to explore the strategies that the Sámi and Swedish directors Liselotte Wajstedt and Kine Boman have used to challenge the colonial and stereotypical representation of the Sámi people in the documentary road films *Sámi Daughter Yoik* and *The Only Image of My Father*. The research is conducted by the discussion of concepts as identity, authenticity, performativity, representation, self-representation, strategic essentialism, stereotype, nationality, migration, gender, class and generation, among other structures of power operating at the core of the Sámi identity.

Other relevant research questions are: what do stereotypical representations about the Sámi people entail; how have hegemonic discourses about their culture and identity been constructed; which strategies do *Sámi Daughter Yoik* and *The Only Image of My Father* propose to contest those stereotypes; how have their directors' identities affected the process of representation of the films; and, to what extent is membership necessary to produce a non-stereotypical image of a collective.
1.2 Relevance of the study

After decades of omission in both the official and the counterhegemonic debate about the cultural clash in Sweden, the discussion about the impact of colonialism among the Sámi people has radically increased in the recent years. Thanks to the efforts of the new generations of Sámi and Swedish filmmakers, this hidden part of the Swedish history has become more visible and motivated interesting debates about film discourses, authorship and representation politics. In this context, to study Liselotte Wajstedt’s and Kine Boman’s work has the enormous potential of making the efforts to contest oppressive representations visible, and, eventually, to contribute to the decolonization of cinematographic discourses. Focusing this research on their work is part of a postcolonial feminist strategy of highlighting the potential of those discourses produced by social agents that occupy minority positions.

Although the critique of the Nordic national identities and the impact of cultural diversification have gain more and more attention in the analysis of the Nordic cinemas, the film representation of the Sámi people in Nordic films has been scarcely addressed in academic studies. The significance of this project is also located in its potential to contribute to the integration of this discussion in the academic debate.

1.3 Dissertation outline

The analysis is organized in four main sections. The initial pages are devoted to defining general aspects of the study as the theory, methodology, materials and ethics. In the first section I refer to the recent research about the representation of the Sámi people in the Nordic and Sámi media and film. The section includes a discussion about the imagination about Sámi women and the centrality attributed to ethnicity in previous representations.

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The second section offers an analysis of Wajstedt’s and Boman’s films with emphasis on the discussions of identity, colonialism, diversity, class, gender and migration, among other aspects, that both documentaries propose. The subtitles of this section refer to selected themes that conduct the films. Their titles are inspired by phrases and questions posed by the protagonists through the documentaries.

The third and last section focuses on the strategies that the directors use to contest the stereotypes and hegemonic discourses about the Sámi identity, which include a brief analysis about genre, authorship and performativity.

Some final lines are devoted to summarize the main findings.
2. Theory, methodology and ethics

2.1 Postcolonial Studies

Postcolonialism is usually defined as the academic discipline concerned with the study of the history and legacy of European colonialism and imperialism.\(^8\) Though, as Ania Loomba highlights, the term postcolonial and the definition of its limits are the subject of an ongoing debate.\(^9\) Like Loomba, other scholars have questioned the use of the prefix 'post' as it may reinforce the teleological and dichotomized way of reasoning of Western colonial discourses.\(^10\) Anne McClintock, for instance, claims that despite postcolonial theory has sought to challenge western historicism and its use of binaries, the term postcolonialism re-orient the discussion to the binary opposition colonial/post-colonial, re-centres global history around European time and, points out to the end of colonialism.\(^11\) Moreover, the author warns about other contradictions within postcolonial theory as the lack of attention to questions of gender, among others, as well as the reduction of the different experiences of colonization to the frames of the European and British colonial empires.\(^12\)

For Loomba, the term postcolonial cannot only be understood as coming literally after colonialism but as the contestation of colonial domination and its legacies.\(^13\) Following her perspective, as the representative of a more productive and flexible reading of the term, I understand postcolonialism as the study of the tensions produced in those spaces created by colonialism. The idea of the postcolonial space is fundamental for me to analyse the identity processes in which this work focuses. Drawing a common arena of clash and negotiation where both colonizers and colonized intertwine and create particular and novel identities, the postcolonial or third space -as Bhabha proposes- makes possible

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\(^10\) *Ibid*, p. 7-16.
\(^12\) *Ibid*, p. 85-87.
\(^13\) Loomba, Ania, p. 16.
to think about identities in-between that exist beyond the limits of the colonial dichotomies.¹⁴

### 2.1.1 Power/knowledge

The postcolonial critique is closely connected to the discussions of power/knowledge developed by Michel Foucault.¹⁵ As Stuart Hall describes, in Foucault's work knowledge is always a form of power: it has the authority of creating truth, it entails constraint, regulation and discipline, and, consequently, creates power relations. Power, on the other hand, is implicated in the questions of whether and in what circumstances knowledge is to be applied or not.¹⁶

Created into the frames of knowledge and its discursive formations, regulatory and disciplinary practices are condensed in what Foucault designate regimes of truth. Truth is then presented as a discursive production of hegemonic discourses that establish the temporal and arbitrary limits of normativity for a given context.¹⁷ As it is visible in the work of representative postcolonial scholars like Gayatri Spivak, Ania Loomba, Homi Bhabha and Dipesh Chakrabarty, this notion of knowledge is inseparable of power. From the postcolonial perspective, the conception of truth as an artificial discursive construction is also fundamental to discuss colonial relations, discourses and practices. Colonial knowledge is explored in its condition of an artificial hegemonic discourse: its universality is challenged and the ideological content of its normativity is evidenced as relative and provincial.

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¹⁴ Bhabha refers to this notion in the essays "The other question: Stereotype, discrimination and the discourse of colonialism", "The postcolonial and the postmodern: the questions of agency" and "How newness enters the world: postmodern space, postcolonial times and the trials of cultural translation" included in the volume *The location of culture*. Routledge Classics, 1994.

¹⁵ Michel Foucault refers to this discussion in several works. "The Subject and Power", "The History of Sexuality", "The Archaeology of Knowledge", "Power/Knowledge" and "The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences" are some of the most relevant texts in which the discussion is addressed.


2.1.2 Representation/Self-representation

Representation is an extremely broad concept that refers to diverse processes and meanings. In this research it is primarily understood as the relationship between the production of knowledge and meaning through discourse. Moving from previous theories that conceived the subject as the centre of representation, both Foucault and Hall point out to the power that discourse has as the place where knowledge is produced.\(^\text{18}\) The authors propose a broad notion of discourse as the frame in which subjects and subject-positions are created: on one hand, as the figures that personify particular forms of knowledge, and, on the other, as the places for the subjects to make sense of themselves.\(^\text{19}\) As Hall claims, subjects are constrained to the limits established by the discursive formations and the regimes of truth in which they act. Regardless of their characteristics, subjects are not able to take meaning until they have identified with the positions that discourse constructs: they become the subjects of discourse's power/knowledge.\(^\text{20}\)

Another relevant perspective is the sense of political representation that Gayatri Spivak describes as the action of taking the place or speaking in the name of an individual or a collective. Also related to questions of power and knowledge, this perspective is concerned with the tendencies of material and symbolic objectification and marginalization for the creation and reinforcement of colonial systems of subordination. In this context, representation plays a fundamental role in the asymmetrical constitution of the colonial subject as Other and self-representation appears as the act through which the subaltern speaks outside the margins of the official institutional structures of representation.\(^\text{21}\)

Like Spivak, Stuart Hall and bell hooks explore the possibilities for challenging, contesting and transforming the dominant regimes of representation. While Hall proposes reversing stereotypes, substituting negative imagery with positive images and exploiting the ambivalence of representations to introduce new contents; hooks locates spectatorship as a

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\(^{19}\) Hall, Stuart, "The work of representation", p. 40.


position of agency to critically interrogate oppressive representations of black femaleness. Despite of pointing to the traditionally defined opposites of representational processes, both proposals are based on a shared idea of self-representation as connected to agency and sovereignty.

2.1.3 Identity
The concept of imagined communities that Benedict Anderson developed in the 1980's triggered a crucial debate about national identities as social constructions. Critical theory about nationalism, identity politics and representation has been produced as a part of this debate. Despite several scholars have explored the notion from the postcolonial and other perspectives, in this work I refer to the ideas about identity that Stuart Hall and Judith Butler have proposed to define the concept. Based on Butler's discussion of identity politics, on one hand, and on Hall's discussion of cultural identity, on the other, I understand identity as a never completed process constituted within representation and discursive practices.

A central idea in Butler's work is the connection between identity processes and regulatory practices. As the author explains, always constraint to normativity, identities are constituted by the rules of cultural intelligibility, which is based on hegemonic discourses about the different axes that constitute a person's identity. Here, the use of artificial and asymmetrical oppositions as "feminine" and "masculine" has the function of covering the condition of univocality and dominance of such discourses. Thus, to become intelligible, identities require the exclusion of certain identities that contradict the hegemonic normativity. Their constitution is, as Butler concludes, a performative process in which the "person" is defined through binary restrictions, but it is also the arena where the limits and regulatory aims that domain intelligibility are negotiated.

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Stuart Hall, in a similar line, defines 'cultural identity' as a production determined by practices of representation. Like he explains, 'cultural identity' has at least two definitions. On one hand, it refers to ideas of a collectively shared culture linked to discourses of authenticity, history and ancestry; and, on the other hand, it proclaims the possibility of transformation as it is "subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power". In this second definition, cultural identities work as the different positions that we occupy within the narratives of the past. Rather than essence, cultural identities involve positioning: they are the unstable points of identification made by history and culture. Inspired by Anderson, Hall concludes that identity is a historically ambivalent process to be distinguished not by its falsity/genuineness but by the style in which it is imagined.

2.1.4 Race, ethnicity and hybridity
As a part of their critique of colonial knowledge, postcolonial scholars have exhaustively discussed the notions of race and ethnicity. Having a crucial role for colonial discourses to produce and reproduce the hierarchical oppositions in which they are sustained, these concepts are charged of polarized and contradictory meanings.

The notion of race is a constructed social category that was originally produced in the context of biological classification of human beings and usually aimed to develop and extend cultural and ideological asymmetries. As Charles Husband argues, the notion acquires its power from the dynamics of social categorization and the taken-for-granted legitimacy of their classification. A good example of this is the set of scientific practices of biological taxonomy through which race was produced as a social fact. Like Loomba claims, being traditionally used to trace the limits of social formations as nations and castes, race is usually associated to authenticity, purity and social belonging. Its meanings, however, are relational: they are produced through the comparison of social groups and in connection to other hierarchies such as gender or class.

28 Loomba, Ania, pp. 100-105.
Being as problematic as a concept can be, race is often substituted by the notion of ethnicity, though their meanings and historical charge are not equivalent. Also referring to social constructions or identities historically produced, ethnicity has arisen as a more credible and positive system of categorization. According to Husband, ethnicity can be understood both as a property of self-identification and as a collective phenomenon grounded in the political action of the ethnic group: rather than a stable property of an individual implanted at birth, it is a continuous process of identity construction in which individuals define and valorise their group identity collectively. As the author claims, a fundamental basis of ethnicity is the active negotiation within and outside the limits of group identities. This means that, as race, ethnicity is situational: it is always defined in relation to the context and the diverse elements that interact in any identity formation, as language and national identity. But, despite questioning to some extent the scientific values attached to the notion of race, ethnicity is connected to a very similar hierarchal structure of domination and binary construction.

Tightly connected to this contradiction, the notion of hybridity has been introduced by scholars as Stuart Hall, Gayatri Spivak, Paul Gilroy, Ania Loomba and Homi Bhabha. For Bhabha, this concept is the paradigm of the anxiety within colonial discourse: by strategically highlighting the ambivalence of the colonial text, it demonstrates the impossibility of essentialism, purity and authenticity within colonial identities. Connected to the ideas of mixed identity and mimicry in Bhabha's proposal, hybridity works as a counter-narrative to challenge the authority and bipolarity of colonialist thinking. It helps to acknowledge the complexity and multidimensionality of social identities.

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29 Husband, Charles, p. 12.
2.1.5 Stereotype and Otherness

As a part of the big debate that Edward Said opened a long ago with *Orientalism*, postcolonial scholars have discussed the mechanisms and discursive strategies with which the Western culture has created its identity by misrepresenting and distorting its *others*.\(^{33}\)

Some of the most relevant notions developed from this debate are the stereotype and Otherness. The stereotype is defined, according to Stuart Hall, as a discursive strategy that involves the use of adjectives and an exaggerated simplification to describe a subject or a place.\(^{34}\) In the Western system of representation, the stereotype implies a dualism that works as a split into two opposing elements where “the Other” is defined and defines the features of the West. It operates with other strategies as the idealization, the projection of fantasies of desire and degradation, the failure to recognize and respect difference, and the tendency to impose European categories and norms to see the difference through the modes of perception and representation of the West.\(^{35}\) It also implies the reduction of collectives into the essence and the poles of the “good” and the “bad”. The World is then divided and simplified symbolically into two through the notion of Otherness.\(^{36}\)

Clearly identified as an ambivalent mode of knowledge, power and identification, the stereotype is defined by Homi Bhabha as a major discursive strategy for the ideological elaboration of otherness. As the author suggests, the stereotype is based on the colonial ideas of fixity, fantasy, fetishism, unity, essentiality and origin. It is always in excess of what is possible to prove empirically. It is not only used to oppress or misinterpret the colonised, but it is also the base for the self-representation and recognition of the colonizers and the delimitation of their power: it flows between the projection, introjection, displacement, overdetermination, to construct both the identity of the colonised as of the coloniser.\(^{37}\)

As it is visible here, Bhabha follows Said in underlining the role of stereotypes in the discursive and political practices of racial and cultural hierarchization. Though, in

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opposition to the Saidian aim, Bhabha proposes a shift from the identification of positive and negative images to the analysis of the processes of subjectification produced by the stereotypical discourse. In other words, what the author suggests is to change the object of analysis from the veracity of the stereotype to the modes of representation of the others. Thus, the focus is the deconstruction of the power structures behind the stereotypical representations, their effects and the ethnocentrism that crosses them. This idea is emphasised by Ella Shohat and Robert Stam as they propose to explore the Eurocentric ideological and political uses of stereotypical discourses instead of their veracity.

From a similar perspective Ania Loomba questions Said and criticizes the denial of the self-representations of the colonised and the reduction of the discourse as an exclusive weapon of the coloniser to occult the “truth” in his work. In her perspective, the stereotype involves a reduction of images to a simple form that, rather than imply just ignorance or lack of knowledge, is a method of processing information that perpetuates an artificial sense of difference between the self and the other. For Loomba, the colonial relations have also room for the colonised to negotiate, resist and change.

2.2 Intersectional Studies

Engaged with the postcolonial project of deconstructing and criticizing colonial discourses, Chandra Talpade Mohanty introduced in 1984 the discussion about the connections between feminist scholarship and the structural domination and suppression of heterogeneity implied in colonization. The discussion aimed to bring attention to the similar effects of the textual strategies used to codify both Otherness and Womanhood as cultural and ideological constructions of representational colonial discourses. In this context, Mohanty criticizes the oppression of "third world woman" as the result of a hierarchical structure of privilege and ethnocentric universality produced by Western

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38 Bhabha, Homi. “The Other Question”, pp. 18-23.
40 Loomba, Ania, p. 47.
41 Ibid, p. 55.
feminist political practices. Like Mohanty, feminist scholars as Mari J. Matsuda, Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Leslie McCall, Sylvia Walby, Jo Armstrong, Sofia Strid, Trinh T. Minh-Ha, Jennifer Nash, Philomena Essed, Julie Bettie, Donna Haraway, Jorun Eikjok, Rauna Kuokkanen, Nina Lykke and Nira Yuval-Davis, among many other, have developed this perspective, identified as intersectionality, as proposed by Kimberlé Crenshaw.

Intersectionality focuses on the tensions between the multiple dimensions of social relations and subject formations—as gender, race, class and sexuality—, with the aim of visibilizing the inequalities produced in their interaction and mutual shape. As Crenshaw argues, the purpose of focusing on the intersections of race and gender, for instance, is to highlight the need to account for multiple grounds of identity when considering how the social world is constructed. The notion, as Diana Mulinari, Salla Touri, Suvi Keskinen and Sari Irni add, was created with the purpose of making it possible to explore the connections between distinct axes of power, as well as to expand earlier analyses in which gender was the only focus. From this perspective Mari Matsuda suggests, for example, to move beyond race as a separate dimension, in order to create coalitions of subordinated groups that can effectively fight the power. Her proposal focuses on the notion of overlapping identities, with which she underlines the multiple dimensions in which individuals experience subordination.

Despite of being focused on process of juxtaposition, interconnection and multiplicity, intersectional theory is usually accused of reproducing the binary divisions imposed by colonialism, for instance, between structure and culture. Also, like Devon Carbado highlights, the perspective is frequently questioned by working as an identitarian framework

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46 Crenshaw, Kimberlé, p. 1245.
that, focusing too much on gender and race, fails on capturing the dynamic and contingent processes of identity formation.\textsuperscript{50} The critique is connected to what Matsuda recognizes as a ranking of oppression, where a competition between different levels of exclusion takes place, or, as Nira Yuval-Davis describes as stratification or reified forms of identity politics.\textsuperscript{51}

2.3 Authorship\textsuperscript{52}

After Roland Barthes questioned the definition of the text as a line of words releasing the 'message' of the Author-God,\textsuperscript{53} the centrality of the problem of who is speaking in the discussions of authorship was substituted by the debate of what difference does it make who is speaking.\textsuperscript{54} As Michel Foucault proposes with the notion of author-function, the author can be better understood as an ideological figure or a certain functional principle with which the production and circulation of meaning are regulated.\textsuperscript{55} However, rather than giving an irrelevant role to authorship, the debate initiated with "the death of the author" points out to the multiple places, functions and agency that subjects can have as a part of discourse and the production of meaning. In Foucault's words, it is a matter of depriving the subject of its role as originator and of analyzing it as a variable and complex function of discourse.\textsuperscript{56}

Following this debate, Janet Staiger proposes the approach of authorship-as-technique-of-the-self in which the author is reconceptualised as having the ability to consciously analyse the functionality of its acts and to produce itself from the repetition of performative statements.\textsuperscript{57} From this perspective, authorship creates and recreates the individual as an acting, potent subject within history that produces meaning, precisely because it acts within a discursive structure that believes that this is possible. In this

\textsuperscript{50} Carbado, Devon W. "Colorblind Intersectionality" in \textit{Signs} 38, no. 4, 2013, p 812.

\textsuperscript{51} Matsuda, Mari, p. 1191; and Yuval-Davis, p. 201.

\textsuperscript{52} I thank my fellow student Daniela Dahl for her valuable suggestions about the sources and perspective for this discussion.


\textsuperscript{55} \textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{56} \textit{Ibid}, p. 221.

\textsuperscript{57} Staiger, Janet. \textit{Authorship and Film}, Routledge, 2003, p. 49.
context, the message is not a direct expression of the author as origin with presence, personality or preoccupations. Instead, it is the product of the performative statement that enacts that which it names.

As Staiger explains for film theory, the agency in authorship resides then in the power that directorial choices have as performative statements made by individuals having the authority to make an authoring statement.\textsuperscript{58} In other words, authoring acts are performative statements that take their authority from the specific given conditions in which they are produced: they only work if they fit within the boundaries of the norms in which they are involved.\textsuperscript{59} From this perspective and, going back to Foucault's proposal, rather than looking for the directors as originators of meaning, in this research I focus on their function as authors and on the agency they take from this role.

\textbf{2.4 Documentary mode}

Usually considered as the opposite pole of fictional films, documentaries are recurrently evaluated in association to the notions of reality, authenticity and truth. Like Bill Nichols explains, the documentary tradition relies heavily on being able to convey to us the impression of authenticity.\textsuperscript{60} However, as Nichols notes, documentary directors have developed several strategies that challenge the binary opposition of fictional/non-fictional films and the reductive approach to documentary filmmaking as a homogenous practice.\textsuperscript{61} From this perspective, Nichols' proposes a classification of documentary modes in six categories: poetic, expository, observational, participatory, reflexive and performative, with the aim of distinguishing documentaries from other types of film and establishing a framework of affiliation, conventions and expectations in which individuals work.\textsuperscript{62}

According to Nichols' definition, the performative documentary mode is defined by its emphasis in the subjective or expressive aspect of the filmmaker’s own engagement with the subject. It rejects notions of objectivity in favour of evocation and affect, and puts

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{59} Staiger, Janet, p. 51.
\textsuperscript{60} Nichols, Bill. \textit{Introduction to documentary}, Indiana University Press, 2010, p. xiii.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid, pp. 20-21.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid, pp. 33 & 99.
strong emphasis on discussing experience, memory, emotional involvement and knowledge.\textsuperscript{63} The performative mode shares some features with the reflexive mode as both focus on the processes of negotiation between the filmmaker and the viewer. Like the reflexive documentary, the performative challenges notions of reality and realism, as well as the assumptions and expectations about the documentary form in itself.\textsuperscript{64}

Taking Nichols' proposal as a general framework, in this research I refer to the notion of performative documentary mode, considering the relevance that the implied discussions of authenticity, reality, truth and performativity have for the analysis of Wajstedt's and Boman's films. Although the films are approached in connection to this mode, it is important for me to highlight that my aim is not to enclose them into a rigid frame. As Nichols himself warns, the tendency of the modes to overlap and intermingle is implicit.\textsuperscript{65} The use of the classification is only related to stress the documentaries action and diversity.

\textbf{2.5 Methodology}

The methodology that I follow in this research connects the perspectives of the postcolonial, intersectional, cultural and visual studies to analyse the discourses and oppositions of power that sustain the representation of the Sámi identity. Based on the postcolonial and intersectional perspectives I have directed the analysis of the films to trace and deconstruct the binary structure of hegemonic colonial discourses, and look for the connections between all possible dimensions of power working in the construction of the identities in question.

The ideas of visual studies and visual anthropology have also had a fundamental role for the selection of material and the methodology design. Following the perspective of the Visual Studies, I have focused the discussion on the interactions produced by and around the films.\textsuperscript{66} Beyond evaluating the films formally or aesthetically, my aim has been

\begin{small}
\textsuperscript{63} Nichols, Bill, pp. 130-137.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid, pp. 125-130.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid, p. 34.
\end{small}
to analyse their life as agents producing knowledge and theoretical discussions about the Sámi identity. This approach is mainly based on Alfred Gell’s proposal that the art process is constituted by the interactions occurring through the artistic object. In this approach the art object is understood as a device or as an agent under permanent redefinition that activates and changes meanings continuously. Always determined by the network of social relations in which it is immersed, the artistic object does not have social agency in itself: the process of agency occurs only in relation to specific human associations. However, it is thanks to the object that social relations are made visible and that social agency takes place in the artistic event. Following this perspective, the films in which this research is centred are addressed as agents that, rather than containing a static meaning determined by their author’s, have the power to produce and reproduce discourses depending on the social relations in which they are immerse.

2.5 Description of materials

The main sources of this research are the documentary road movies Sámi Daughter Yoik (Sámi Nieida Jojk) by Liselotte Wajstedt (2007) and The Only Image of My Father (Enda bilden av pappa) by Kine Boman (2004). The films were produced by the independent Swedish production companies Little Big Productions and Sirel Peensaar-Miell, in the first case, and Filmateljén, in the second, and co-produced by Filmpool Nord, the regional centre for film and TV production in Norrbotten (Northern Sweden), in both cases. While Sámi Daughter Yoik received the support of the Swedish Film Institute, The Artists Council and SVT; The Only Image of My Father was produced with the support of the European Union Structure Fund, the regional resource centre for film in Halland, the Sámi Parliament Sametinget and the Swedish governmental department for information about the Sámi people and culture. Both films were released in the Swedish television public channel TV2 Sverige in their original length of 58 minutes and colour system

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(colour). *Sámi Daughter Yoik* has been distributed in Sweden in DVD format and worldwide in other formats, and *The Only Image of My Father* was released in the Internet based public channel SVT Play. Sámi Daughter Yoik has competed in festivals as Films from the North, TIFF (2008), Nordic Panorama (2007), and Riddu Riddu Festival (2007) in which it won the Shared Audience Prize. *The Only Image of My Father* had its premiere at the Gothenburg International Film Festival in 2004 and has been showed in other festivals online.

Despite there are diverse Sámi film productions that discuss the Sámi identity and culture I selected these documentaries as the central material of the research considering their genre, format, theme, and production conditions. Feature films by other directors as Daniel Alfredson, Alexander Rogozhkin and, specifically Nils Gaup, are strategically considered in the research as the counter-part of the central material in terms of genre, authorship practices and narrative. Other documentaries by Peter Magnusson, Paul Anders Simma, Maja Hagerman, Maj-Lis Skaltje, Hannu Hyvönen, Anette Niaa and Kine Boman, as well as the seven short films compiled under the title 7 sámi stories, were excluded from the discussion due to their assorted thematic focus and narrative strategies. However, all these films were fundamental to create a broad picture of the cinematographic landscape in which *Sámi Daughter Yoik* and *The Only Image of My Father* are inserted.

Other fundamental sources for this research are the interviews with the film directors Liselotte Wajstedt and Oskar Östergren. The interview with Liselotte Wajstedt was sustained in the format of electronic correspondence in English and Swedish during March 2016. The commentaries that I have included from this interview were translated by me from Swedish to English. The interview with Oskar Östergren was sustained in Stockholm in November 2015 in the context of the Sápmi Indigenous Film and Art Festival Dellie Maa, organized by himself.

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Finally, relevant sources of information for the research were the informal conversations, lectures and printed material that I retrieved in a visit to the Sámi Camp in Jukkasjärvi in December 2015 and to the Winter Market in Jokkmokk in February 2016.

2.6 Ethics

Besides the previously addressed theoretical and methodological perspectives, questions of ethics in research about media and ethnic minorities have had a crucial role in the definition, design and development of this study.

First of all, the definition of media as a key site in the public representation of unequal social relations and the play of cultural power was relevant for me to define the corpus of the study and to conduct its analysis.\textsuperscript{73} According to this, and as I have explained before in this text, film representations are approached here as political processes in which discursive and regulatory frameworks, social identities and power relations take place.\textsuperscript{74}

Second, concerning the study of ethnic minorities it is very important for me to underline that this research does not pretend to define or evaluate the political and identitarian structures of the Sámi people in terms of correctness or realism. Rather than aiming to define what the Sámi identity really is or how should it be represented, my purpose has been to detect how has it been represented and with what purposes and effects. Being aware of the historical charge that the position of the researcher has had in the Sámi history, I want to emphatically manifest my objectives and limits as an external researcher.

Third, the attention given to the notion of self-representation is connected to the premise that a better understanding of any social identity or group needs to consider the discourses produced by them. Despite the definition of the limit between representations and self-representations is part of an enormous ongoing debate, I have established a temporary frame that considers as self-representations those films that Sámi people have produced and promoted.


\textsuperscript{74} \textit{Ibid.}
Fourth, a fundamental perspective that conducts this analysis is the discussion of whiteness as an ethnical and racialized position produced in contrast to its others.\textsuperscript{75} In this sense, the representation of the Sámi people and culture is not only addressed as the place where the Sámi identity is produced, but also, as a part of the discursive process where the Swedish and the other Nordic and Russian identities are defined. This issue is related to my own identity as a non-white immigrant in Sweden, which has had a certain role in the definition of the research's approach and perspective.

Finally, selecting films produced, directed and performed by women is part of a feminist political practice of giving attention to the multiple examples of complex and fascinating discussions that women are proposing in film.

3. Background and overview of recent researches

In this section I aim to establish the background and research space in which the present work has been developed. First of all, I briefly refer to the historical background in which the analysed films are located. In the consecutive sections I explore four main discussions that I considered to be of major relevance to approach my research questions: the representation of the Sámi people in the Nordic media, the self-representation of the Sámi people in their own media, the representation of the Sámi women, and, finally, the film representation of the Sámi people.

Despite my concern in this thesis is the Swedish context I have included literature from the other Nordic national contexts based on two considerations. First, though the research certainly tends to be limited to the authors’ national contexts, the comparison and reference to the other experiences is common. This connection not only highlights the blurriness in the arbitrary limits between the Sámi communities after their division in four national territories. It also makes evident that the representation politics in each country have been influenced by the history and social dynamics in the region as a whole. Second, the analysis of the different Nordic contexts makes evident that other categories besides ethnicity and nationality have an essential though variable role in the representation of the Sámi people. For instance, while the representation of the Sámi as rural, working-class people is a common aspect for all contexts, the asymmetries that this image carries are more notorious in the Swedish and Norwegian contexts that in the historically imagined as harsh and rural Finnish context.

A determinant aspect for the selection of the assessed material has been the language in which it has been written or translated to. Despite a considerable amount of literature about the topic is written in Norwegian, Finnish, Russian, and particularly in the different Sámi languages, I limited my research to texts in English and Swedish, to which I have direct access.
3.1 A brief historical background

The Sámi are the Indigenous people of Northern Europe who, as a result of the colonization of their territory, live divided by the nation-states of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Although there is not certainty about the total number of people identified as Sámi, the official estimations count between 80,000 and 100,000 people. According to the Sámi Information Centre, about 50,000 to 65,000 people live in Norway, around 20,000 to 40,000 in Sweden, almost 8,000 in Finland and approximately 2,000 in Russia.\(^{76}\)

The division of the Sámi territory have had multiple consequences for the Sámi identity, history and lifestyle. Historically misrepresented as primitive, uncivilized, under-developed and untrustworthy, the relation between the Sámi people and the Nordic countries and Russia has been crossed by the epistemic and material violence against the Sámi populations.\(^{77}\) Their oppression has implied a broad range of symbolic and material aggressions like xenophobic scientific research, massive sterilization campaigns, dispossession of their territories, humiliations and the prohibition of their religion and other cultural manifestations. Considered as an inferior race by all of the Nordic countries and Russia in the course of their colonial history, the Sámi people have experienced the discrimination, shame and the sense of inferiority that most ethnic and racial minority groups face. In this context, the definition of their identity has been an extremely complicated and sensitive discussion. First of all, the already entangled mix of languages, traditions and cultures that intertwine in the Sámi identity became more convoluted with the dispersion of the population and the introduction of the colonial and Western social structures. As the Sámi Information Centre states, the definition of who is and who is not Sámi depends, on one hand, on the individuals' choice of recognizing their roots and perceiving themselves as such; and, on the other hand, on the conditions imposed by the national institutions. Besides involving the complexities that any self-identification implies, the Sámi identity is also determined by the possibility of having dual identities and the

\(^{76}\) Sápmi. Retrieved April 10, 2016 from http://www.samer.se/1536

legislation of the Nordic countries and Russia. The ultimate example of this dynamic is the introduction of a legal definition of the Sámi people in connection to reindeer herding. As many of the assessed sources in this research claim, such definition has implied the exclusion of a considerable part of the Sámi population who is involved in different activities than the reindeer herding.

Considering these tensions, and as a result of the struggle for self-determination, the Sámi people have also created an official frame to define their identity. As established in the Sámi Parliament Act of 1992, to be considered as Sámi, besides their self-identification, all individuals have to speak one of the Sámi languages, have parents or grandparents with such ability, or have a parent registered on the Sámi electoral register for the Sámi Parliament. Though this definition seems to be wide and flexible, it has also created certain contradictions, for example, in relation to the question of the language. Being a minority in most of the places where they live, the Sámi have been forced to speak two or more languages in order to communicate with the national majority authorities. Additionally, during the ninetieth century the Sámi languages were marginalized and, therefore, the number of people speaking Sámi had dramatically decreased. Nowadays it is estimated that only 40 to 45% of the Sámi population is able to speak one or more of the nine Sámi languages. Albeit there are not official statistics, the Sámi authorities calculate that about 17,000 people speak Northern Sámi, around 800 people speak Lule Sámi, almost 700 speak South Sámi, approximately 500 people speak the languages from the Skolt Sámi group, and other 500 people speak the languages included in the Inari Sámi group. According to the Sari Pietikäinen, about 70 to 80% of the Sámi people speak the

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78 Like Lia Markelin and Charles Husband explain the processes of national development and changes in the legal status and economic viability of traditional Sámi communities have created a tension between the internal claims of ethnic authenticity and autonomy and external national and international political and economic forces. Markelin, Lia and Charles Husband, "Contemporary Dynamics of Sámi Media in the Nordic States" in Media International Australia, no. 149, November 2013, p. 71.
79 The issue is discussed in Ledman, Anna-Lill, Gaski, Lina, and Sápmi. Retrieved April 10, 2016 from http://www.samer.se/1147. The interview with Oskar Östergren provided an important perspective for this discussion.
80 Markelin, Lia and Charles Husband, p. 71.
81 Öberg, Thomas, ed., p. 52.
dominant Northern Sámi language and there is a significant number of people who hardly speak any of these languages.\textsuperscript{83}

The nation-states have had a significant impact on the Sámi livelihoods and way of life. Following Lia Markelin and Charles Husband, besides the division of their population, the modern national borders have implied severe transformations for the Sámi people as, for instance, the obstruction of the traditional migratory patterns of reindeer herders. The adoption of different policies by the emerging national states towards the Sámi people produced new tensions and divisions among their populations that, until today, have great impact for their organization.\textsuperscript{84} While Norway adopted strong policies of assimilation that included the illegalization of the Sámi languages, and Sweden accepted the Sámi as a people in its constitution until 2010, a Sámi Parliament was founded in Finland in the 1970’s. Although this comparison may suggest a better policy in the Finnish context, this has not necessarily implied any effective implementation of the Sámi policies or a less problematic situation than in any of the other countries.\textsuperscript{85}

A good example of the irregular policies of the Nordic countries towards the Sámi people is that despite all voted in favour of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007, Norway is the only of the three countries that have ratified the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries Convention ILO 169.\textsuperscript{86} The ratification of this convention, which would imply the recognition of a distinctive identity of the Sámi as an indigenous people, has a crucial role for their political organization and struggle for self-determination. As John Downing and Charles Husband explain, the different ways in which the national states have formally recognize the status of the Sámi as indigenous people has, for instance, determined the different degrees of self-government and the creation of a politic environment in which their media can be developed.\textsuperscript{87} This idea is discussed later in this research in connection to the analysis of the Sámi media.

\textsuperscript{84} Markelin, Lia and Charles Husband, p. 71.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid, p. 72.
\textsuperscript{86} Downing, John DH, and Charles Husband, p. 126.
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid, p. 142.
However, the Sámi identity has not only been determined by the Nordic countries agendas and action. Within their own frameworks and methods, the Sámi people have succeeded in creating a shared identity despite being a transnational, multilingual and pluricultural group. Representing themselves as one people with identity symbols as a national anthem and flag, the Sámi have established a common Council, national Parliaments and cultural institutions like the Sámi University College in Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino, Norway.\(^{88}\) As stated by Markelin and Husband, the creation of a transnational collective identity has been of great relevance for the Sámi people to achieve recognition and equitable treatment within the countries in which they live. In order to pursue their claims and rights, the Sámi politicians and spokespersons have negotiated with the sometimes essentialist discourses that places them as indigenous peoples, while defending their internal differences and particular identities.\(^{89}\) It is precisely in light of this discussion that in the following section I reflect on the negotiations between the representation and self-representation of the Sámi people in both the Nordic and the Sámi media.

### 3.2 The Sámi people in the Nordic media

Nordic researchers and journalists have increasingly discussed the representation of the Sámi people during the last two decades. The question of how has the image of the Sámi people been constructed within the national media discourses in Norway, Finland and Sweden is the one that connects all the assessed analyses.

The first aspect that became evident from the evaluation of this research is that the representation of the Sámi people is tightly connected to the self-imagination about the countries and the regions where they live. As Madeleine Eriksson and Stine Sand Eira show, the image of the Sámi as a rural, working class, traditional, and stagnant people is clearly associated to the discourses about Northern Sweden and Northern Norway.\(^{90}\) The geographical imagination and the processes of national self-construction have a

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\(^{88}\) Markelin, Lia and Charles Husband, p. 72.

\(^{89}\) Ibid.

fundamental role in the construction of a stereotyped, homogeneous and colonial depiction of the Sámi people and other minorities. While the Sámi women are represented as resourceful actors trying to become part of the urban middle class by migrating, the men appear as obsolescent members of the working class. As Eriksson suggests, the image of the women from Northern Sweden, which mostly refers to the Sámi women, is based on the stereotype of the harsh, strong and traditional woman and constructed in opposition to the 'modern' Swedish woman. Like both Eriksson and Sand Eira argue, the contrast between the imaginary 'centre' and 'periphery' in Sweden and Norway also helps to reinforce the discourses about class and gender that support the auto-celebratory image of modern and progressive Nordic nations.

A second aspect that is visible in these analyses is the reproduction of a bipolar representation of the Sámi people as variably included and excluded from the Nordic nations. Charles Peterson, Sari Pietikäinen, Anna-Lill Ledman and Julia Mårak Leffler agree that the recurrent exclusion, distortion and exotification of the Sámi people in the Nordic media and educational system helps to perpetuate the division between the modern 'we' and the traditional 'them'. But, as Pietikäinen and Mårak Leffler argue, such representation is also crossed by a contradictory discourse that in certain circumstances excludes them as an ethnical minority and, in others, includes them as citizens of the Swedish and the Finnish nations. Markelin and Husband explain this mechanism by adding that the Sámi and their culture are still linked to a specific idea of 'otherness' and a romanticized traditional past that, in some instances, seems to be a mythical element of the national history. Peterson, Pietikäinen and Ledman also claim that the colonial

91 Eriksson, Madeleine, pp. 6-10.
92 Ibid, p. 16.
95 Markelin, Lia and Charles Husband, p. 137.
representation of the Sámi as the ‘others’ is also reinforced by the lack of spaces to contest the stereotypes and to produce more heterogeneous and alternative images.\textsuperscript{96}

To summarize, the representation of the Sámi people in the Nordic media is related to processes of identification in which essentialist discourses and binary oppositions that involve notions of authenticity, tradition and modernity are used. Following Husband’s analysis, three issues about the representation of the Sámi are remarkable: one, as other indigenous people, they are subjected to extensive misrepresentation in the Nordic majority media; two, their representation is connected to the image of the "noble savage" which has an historical function of justifying the colonial practices of identification and control over the territory; and three, the Sámi people’s claims for self-government rights are presented in opposition and as a threat for the majority ethnic interests.\textsuperscript{97}

3.3 The Sámi people in the Sámi media

During the last two decades several Sámi and Nordic journalists and scholars have addressed the question of how the Sámi media landscape has been shaped in Finland, Norway and Sweden. The challenges that the Sámi media and their professionals have faced in the creation of a general but complex representation of the Sámi people are some of the most relevant aspects that the assessed analyses discuss. Concerning the development of the Sámi media, Sari Pietikäinen, Kati Dlaske, Lia Markelin and Charles Husband have identified two determinant factors: the linguistic, national and cultural internal diversity of the Sámi people and the national political and economic frameworks with which the Sámi media professionals must negotiate.\textsuperscript{98} On one hand, Pietikäinen and Dlaske describe a transnational and dynamic multilingual space in which half of the Sámi speak the language with varying skills, no monolingual Sámi speakers remain, an estimated of 70% of the Sámi people living in urban areas, and all the Sámi languages are endangered or nearly extinct.\textsuperscript{99} In this context, the Sámi


\textsuperscript{97} Markelin, Lia and Charles Husband, p. 142.


\textsuperscript{99} Pietikäinen, Sari and Kati Dlaske, pp. 88-89.
media play a fundamental role as the public voice of the multilingual and multicultural Sámi nation. It is considered as a communal and linguistic resource for the reinforcement of the Sámi language and nation building among the different Sámi communities. Like Pietikäinen describes, the issue is connected to the official ideological positions about the language: being supposed to capture the essence of Sáminess, the language's survival and vitality is related to the existence of the Sámi identity and community. As the author recalls, the use of the Sámi language is also related to the legal definition of the Sámi identity and the consequent entitlement of indigenous rights in the Nordic countries. Thus, the already intricate multilingual terrain, in which language endangerment and revitalisation intertwine with other languages and a multicultural audience, appears as even more complex as questions of political struggle and negotiation are added.

On the other hand, Markelin and Husband refer to the challenges that the Sámi media and the Sámi media professionals must face in their negotiation with the national Nordic frameworks. As the authors explain, the contemporary structure of the Sámi media is mostly dependent on the programming and production policies of the public service radio and television system of the Nordic states. And, alongside with the language and the national structures moreover, the diversity inside the Sámi collective is associated to other aspects like generation, gender, class, and religion. In this context, the Sámi media professionals work in unique nationally defined environments where they have to deal with the fragmentation of their potential audiences and of their own national, ethnic and individual identities. With an implied responsibility of constructing, promoting and sustaining their culture and languages, they are confronted to the dualities and tensions at the core of the Sámi society. And, having to create an intelligible identity discourse for a highly fragmented collective, they have to negotiate with the homogenization and reduction of their culture.

The disjunctive between portraying a heterogeneous Sámi society and the strategic rhetoric of a traditional and genuine common culture is deeply analysed by Lina Gaski. In her

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102 This is also stressed in Pietikäinen, Sari and Kati Dlaske, and Ledman, Anna-Lill.
103 Markelin, Lia and Charles Husband, pp. 70-77.
study about the Sámi politicians' public discourses Gaski identifies the strategies by which a certain idea of nationhood and a shared Sámi self-imagination have been constructed. The strategies that she detects are: 1) the naturalization of the connection between territory and identity by constantly referring to the relationship between the Sámi culture and the nature; 2) the comparison between the present debates and certain historical events to construct the Sámi history as a struggle between the Sámi as victims of oppression and the Nordic others as the assailters; 3) the connection between the public discourse about the Sámi territory and the global discourses on indigeneity; and 4) the use of the concepts of culture and tradition. According to Gaski, such rhetoric is closely related to the creation of subject positions and the question of legitimacy. Operating on the base of a normative and hegemonic narrative of Sáminess, it conducts to the exclusion of the oppositional voices and any expression of diversity within their own collective. Consequently, as Gaski concludes, the Sámi people are forced to choose between their exclusion from the public discourse or their inclusion in an essentialist and dichotomized vocabulary.

Having emphasized the contradictions in the use of essentialist discourses in the Sámi public rhetoric, Gaski presents reflects on the different roles that such discourses might have depending on the context. As she points out, in a context of political struggle where sustaining and legitimizing the Sámi nation is precisely the politicians' mission, the Sámi self-reification should not be easily condemned. Even if the rhetoric of the Sámi politicians and media professionals can be considered stereotypical and essentialist, it has a different meaning and effect than the reductive image of the Sámi in the Nordic majority media. But, far from suggesting a solution for the tension, Gaski poses two crucial questions for the Sámi media and for this research: "How to create nationhood and demarcate a Sámi political community without essentializing? Is it possible to create a Sami nationhood without dichotomizing and without alluding to the ever-present underlying assumption about traditionalism and purity?"

104 Gaski, Lina, pp. 224-228.
105 Ibid, pp. 231-234.
3.4 The representation of the Sámi women

As I have argued in the previous sections, the representation of the Sámi people in both the Sámi and the Nordic majority media is crossed by discourses of authenticity and homogeneity. Despite these representations point out to different processes and effects, there are similar grounds in the logic with which they work. The representation of the Sámi women is, for instance, constructed through a shared simplistic understanding of categories as woman and man, Sáminess and indigeneity. According to the Sámi feminist scholars Jorunn Eikjok and Rauna Kuokkanen, the reproduction of the essentialist representation of the Sámi women as matriarchal, strong and traditional are some consequences of the introduction of colonial and patriarchal discourses into the Sámi societies. In a similar line, Anna-Lill Ledman describes a process of construction of the "typical" Sámi woman as the counterpart of the "normal" Swedish woman.

Focused on the Norwegian context, Eikjok describes the impact of the introduction of the colonial and patriarchal structures in the Sámi gender-based division of labour. According to her, the integration of the Sámi agriculture and reindeer herding in the Norwegian management regimes provoked serious changes in the Sámi gender relations. Communicating only with the Sámi men, the Norwegian state excluded the Sámi women from the new notions of farmers and concession holders in reindeer husbandry. Men were thus assigned the role as economic head, and women were relegated to the position of the "housewife". Based upon western norms, this system is still present in the contemporary Sámi dynamics, where the formal legal rights to industry and economic activity are now connected to men; and discourses of resource management, defence of Indigenous peoples' landscapes and the use of nature and the environment are profoundly masculinized. The process also created a gap between generations, since the identity and lifestyle of the elderly are no longer suitable for the rest.

From a similar perspective, Rauna Kuokkanen describes a process in which the Nordic colonial structures have created or intensified the contradictions and social conflicts

related to gender within the Sámi societies. However, as the author explains, the Sámi people fall behind in critically examining the effects that the colonial and assimilation policies have had for the Sámi women.\textsuperscript{110} Considered as dividing the already oppressed indigenous people for no reason, the feminist claims are usually denied and the Sámi women become doubly misrepresented. In this context, the myths of the "strong Sámi matriarchs" and the idea of the Sámi society as having traditional equal relations between men and women are used to ignore the demands in the feminist Sámi agenda.\textsuperscript{111} As Eikjok adds, the image of the Sámi women as strong and powerful is usually presented in comparison to the urban Nordic women, and used to promote a positive image of the Sámi society, associated to romantic ideas of the Indigenous people.\textsuperscript{112}

On the other hand, Anna-Lill Ledman describes a process of mutual shape between discourses of gender and ethnicity, where the definition of the Sámi woman is based on the essentialization of the Sámi identity and viceversa. While the Sámi ethnic perspective uses stereotypes and characteristics of a defined "Sáminess" related to a certain idea of authenticity, the Swedish perspective emphasises the non-Swedishness of the Sámi women as the counterpart of the "normal", "familiar" Swedish woman.\textsuperscript{113} As Ledman explains, some consequences of this mechanism are, on one hand, the exclusion and lack of media coverage of those located outside such idea of authenticity and, on the other hand, the labelling of the Sámi woman as the "non-normal", "non-familiar" other. Here, the operating idea of authenticity is used to establish different degrees of “Sáminess”, linked to the image of the nomadic reindeer herder formed by the nation state, where the traditional is regarded as genuine. In a similar fashion, reduced notions of "feminine" and "masculine" work as the base of a normative definition of the “typical” Sámi woman.\textsuperscript{114} Thus, the discourses of gender and ethnicity work together in such mutual determination that it is impossible to separate them from each other as different categories.\textsuperscript{115} A good example that the author

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{110} Kuokkanen, Rauna. "Myths and realities of Sami women: A post-colonial feminist analysis for the decolonization and transformation of Sami society" in Green, Joyce, ed. Making space for Indigenous feminism, Fernwood Publishing Company, 2007, p. 72.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{111} Ibid, pp. 73-82.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{112} Eikjok, Jorunn, p. 113.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{113} Ledman, Anna-Lill, pp. 223-224.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{114} Ibid, pp. 223-225.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{115} Ibid, pp. 223-224.}
proposes to this respect is the contrast between the role of gender discourse in both contexts: while the concept of “Swedishness” is associated to the idea of gender equality, the Sámi people is commonly accused of not recognising and dealing with questions of gender. As Ledman explains, to presume that the Swedish dominant gender discourse appeals from the Sámi perspective conducts to an oversimplified discussion of the Sámi society. Though, appealing to the concept of strategic essentialism, Ledman highlights the complexity of the Sámi identity and the possibilities that the Sámi women have to emphasise or conceal with the multiple layers of their identities depending on the context and the situation.

3.5 The film representation of the Sámi people

The question about the film representation of the Sámi people has been scarcely discussed in the academic debate. Besides the peripheral discussion that Rochelle Wright proposes in her analysis of the representation of Jewish and other ethnic minorities in Swedish films, the most relevant study about this theme is the study by the Norwegian scholar Anne-Kari Skarðhamar. As Wright, Skarðhamar discusses the changes in the film representations of the Sámi culture and identity. The author focuses on the analysis of the two versions of the film Lajla (1929 and 1937), and of the films Same-Jakki (1957), Same-Æellin (1972), Pathfinder (Vägvisaren, 1987) and The Kautokeino Rebellion (Kautokeino-opprøret, 2008). Her main argument is that a gradual process of representational shifting of the Sámi culture and identity has evolved from the colonialist discourse of the early films that reproduced stereotypical images of the good savages to a more complex anti-colonial image in the two later films, both written and directed by the Sámi director Nils Gaup. According to her, the films are crossed by the ambivalence between romantic fascinations for the aboriginal and unspoilt and the discriminating of what is conceived as

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underdeveloped and inferior. Following Bhabha, Skarðhamar describes this ambivalence as a major colonialist discursive strategy to justify the Norwegian colonialist supremacy.\(^{119}\)

Between the film *Same-Jakki* and its modernised version of 1972, *Same-Æellin*, Skarðhamar detects a first movement to the representational shift from the extremely romanticised image of the happy, exotic and ingenious savage in *Lajla*. While *Same-Jakki* presents a romantic admiration of a nomadic culture on the point of disappearing, with emphasis on the primitivism, wilderness and happiness of the savages; *Same-Æellin* shows a more critical perspective that condemns the Norwegian colonisation and encourages a demarginalization of the Sámi culture. However, the radical change in the representation of the Sámi culture is really located by the author in the films *Pathfinder* and *The Kautokeino Rebellion*. Skarðhamar's main argument is that these films have undermined stereotypical conceptions of primitivism and marginality, and contributed to strengthening Sámi consciousness. Considering their director's ethnicity and the use of Sámi languages, *Pathfinder* and *The Kautokeino Rebellion* are Sámi films that challenge the representation of the Sámi culture as romantic and inferior: their narratives and perspectives are free of the colonial ambivalence and stereotypes; they break with the old oppressive colonial discourse of ethnicity.\(^{120}\)

Skarðhamar's argumentation is part of a complex debate about ethnographic and indigenous film and media where the ideas of membership and the agency of the filmmaker are stressed as a political strategy.\(^{121}\) However, the implicit suggestion that the director's ethnicity is enough to avoid the colonial ambivalence in the film representation of the Sámi people is extremely controversial for me.

The first problem that I find in these arguments is that the Sámi identity is not stable. As I underlined before in this text, the Sámi people do not have clear lines to define


\(^{120}\) Ibid. pp. 297-302.

who is Sámi and who is not. Moreover, the Sámi history and the debate about the essentialist discourses about the Sámi identity let us see, the construction of the Sámi identity is not exclusively related to ethnicity. As Gaup’s own identity, the thematic focus, political discourses and production processes of his films are also determined by national, gender, class and language structures, as by questions of authorship and genre. In this sense, I suggest that the capacity to produce critical and complex representations about the Sámi is open for multiple agents that, without necessarily fulfilling the criteria to be considered as Sámi, might share this identity or some crucial experiences with them.

A second problem is that, even though Gaup’s films display a discursive progressiveness and rich allegorical content, their aesthetical and narrative strategies do not produce a very different representation from the stereotypical image of the Sámi people. At this point it is worth saying that the films represent a big step forward in terms of recognising the colonial oppression and giving space for the creation of the Sámi history. However, the films can also be interpreted as accentuating the picture of an exotic ethnic group by their emphatic use of the Sámi ethnic markers and the magical and ritual aspects of their culture, as well as situating the Sámi people in the past. In both films the Sámi societies are presented as a homogeneous community that has to defend itself from other groups or individuals. *Pathfinder* tells the story of a Sámi community that is threatened by another indigenous group. A boy gets into the community after watching the murder of all his family by the same enemy. First received as a stranger and a threat, the boy becomes the saviour of the community and its next spiritual leader. Based on the historical narrations of the 19-century rebellion in the Norwegian village of Kautokeino, *The Kautokeino Rebellion* portrays the story of the Sámi social movement against the colonial oppression. The film emphasises the integrity and social strength of the Sámi people against the imposition of certain doctrines of the Christian religion and alcoholism. The Western world is openly addressed as a menace for the Sámi society and in strong connection to greed and violence. Though, some Norwegian and Swedish individuals and institutions are also portrayed as the defenders.

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Despite in both films some elements make visible the positive effects of the representational turn described by Skarðhamar, I consider that the Sámi societies are still presented as determined by the nature and the Sámi culture is portrayed as exotic, isolated and almost in state of “purity”. In *The Kautokeino Rebellion* the Sámi characters represent good values and the bright side of humanity and a strong matriarch conducts the action. In *Pathfinder* the narrative and the aesthetics put special emphasis on the connection to the landscape and the magical elements of their culture. Once again the image of the Sámi people is crossed by the stereotype of the good native and the strong Sámi woman mostly determined by the mystical forces of nature.

At this point, one might argue that a realistic depiction of the Sámi would necessarily consider these elements, which actually have a fundamental role in the Sámi culture. However, as Bhabha proposes, the object in the analysis of stereotypical representations is not the veracity, but the deconstruction of the power structures behind them, their effects and the ethnocentrism that crosses them. Following Shohat and Stam, I would add that what is on stake is not the realism but the “surplus of symbolic value”: the allegorical meaning of the representations and their effects on the subjects represented. Since the accuracy of the representation is never assured (and it is not the central issue of the analysis), self-representations do not need to be evaluated for their authenticity or correctness.

In this sense, despite Gaup’s films can be considered as realistic representations of the Sámi people, they do not necessarily produce a significantly distant image from the classical stereotypical exotic images about them. By putting the focus on the ethnicity and the traditional aspects of their culture, the films perpetuate the essentialist depiction of the Sámi as a homogeneous group that has the position of the exotic other. In other words, the focus on ethnicity in both films and Skarðhamar’s analysis, reinforce the simplified image of the Sámi as a unidimensional group. From the intersectional perspective it is clear that the analysis of a marginalised people as the Sámi makes necessary to take into account the

multidimensionality of their identity and understand the context in which they live. From this proposal, I claim that the creation of a complex and non-stereotypical representation of the Sámi people would require the analysis of other structures of power crossing their experience.

As I aimed to demonstrate in the previous sections, discussions of nationality, gender, class and migration, among others, have also a fundamental role in the construction and representation of the Sámi identity. This idea has been clearly recognized and developed by the new generations of Sámi filmmakers, which has became visible to me through the analysis of contemporary feature and documentary films produced, directed and performed by Sámi people that were mentioned before in this work. Despite I have found a diversity of representations of the Sámi identity that address these discussions, the work of the directors Liselotte Wajstedt and Kine Boman are for me the most relevant examples of alternative representations in which the complexity of the Sámi identity and people is the focus.
4. In the road to Sáminess: Sámi Daughter Yoik and The Only Image of My Father

4.1 Performing Sáminess in Sámi Daughter Yoik

*Sámi Daughter Yoik* is a 58 minute long documentary road movie in which Sámi-Swedish director Liselotte Wajstedt portraits her process of recovering her Sámi identity. Motivated by that purpose and two specific goals -learning the Sámi language and getting her own traditional Sámi costume known in Sweden as *kolt*-, Wajstedt takes a train from Stockholm to Kiruna to start a road trip up north.

Following the classic narrative structure of road movies, the documentary is divided episodically in one prologue, nine episodes and one epilogue, in which the director’s exploration over a period of approximately two years is depicted. Each episode is dedicated to a particular event in which Wajstedt moves from one location to another and faces different challenges to get into the Sámi culture and to explore the contradictions of living ‘in between’ the Swedish and the Sámi world. Studying Sámi in Kautokeino, participating in different kinds of festivities, and discussing her goals and viewpoints with her family, are some of the situations in which the director engages during her trip.

With a mix of visual and sound resources, Wajstedt’s autobiographical reflection is presented as a sort of palimpsest in which different strategies and techniques intertwine in an experimental and dynamic fashion. Family photographic archives are intervened and juxtaposed to drawings and other illustrations to create animated collages that, as the genre, suggest mobility and change. External music, voices and ambient sounds are used to produce a movement from a nostalgic atmosphere connected to the director’s sense of identity lost and disconnection, to a state of intimacy and self-reflection. The camera’s function changes from the omniscient and transparent eye that follows the action, to a very present medium with which Wajstedt shares her analysis and emotional insights. In a similar way, the director plays with her own role, moving from the position of the film’s guiding voice over, and the interviewer who poses the questions behind the camera, to a character that performs in front of it or talks directly to us.

By constantly drawing attention to her own presence as a protagonist, narrator and director, Wajstedt shows her awareness of the tensions within her personal identity.
exploration, and reminds us that the documentary in itself is a construction that involves intervention and authorship. Through that movement, the director challenges the idea of the documentary as an illustration of a given reality, which is also applied for the notion of identity that she appeals to. Far from a linear narration with the goal of recovering her Sámi identity as the final point, the director opens a space for her artistic and identity transformation. Being Sámi is then presented not as a genetic or a given ethnical condition, but as a choice and a performative process: to really adopt her Sámi identity she has to learn how real Sámis talk, think, dress and move. With this, Wajstedt opens space for the understanding of the Sámi identity as a flexible, unstable and dynamic process. In the following lines I explore such discussions divided in four major thematic issues: the colonial history, the language, the identity markers represented in the kolt and the internal oppositions of the Sámi identity.

4.1.1 Do you think they wanted to lose their Sámi identity?

Early on in the film’s prologue Wajstedt describes her travel as an attempt to recover a part of her identity that has been neglected to her since her childhood. Clearly presented in relation to her mother’s decision to not teach her culture to her children, the conflict around the director’s identity opens space for the discussion of the colonial relation between the Sámi people and Sweden.

As it has previously been explained in this text, the interaction between the Nordic modern nations and the Sámi people has been historically crossed by material brutality and epistemic violence. In a context of poverty, political powerlessness, lack of knowledge about their own history and feelings of inferiority, being Sámi was regarded as a burden.\footnote{Ledman, Anna-Lill, p. 220.} It is precisely in this context that the decision of not teaching the Sámi culture and language to the next generations was grounded and a drastic distance between grandparents, parents and children was produced. As Eikjok, Ledman and Gaski point out, despite the Sámi society has become more confident and self-determined during the last decades, the division of its people between those who posses knowledge traditionally connected to being
Sámi and those who does not, is still latent and harmful. It has created a significant distance in which the use of language, generation and social mobility intertwine.

The conflict is richly explored in the film through the director's analysis of the linguistic barrier between her and her mother. 'What was your reason for not teaching me Sámi?', 'Why couldn’t she teach me some phrases in Sámi?', 'What could I know about my mother if I would’ve understood Sámi?', Wajstedt asks directly or indirectly to her mother, to us and to herself. But as she reflects on these issues, an empathic conclusion appears: in a context where being Sámi carried constant humiliations and exclusion, her mother must have thought that losing her identity was the right thing to do.

Through her exploration, Wajstedt discusses the Sámi people's colonial history and points out to their process of healing, empowerment and self-recognition. The director's experience at the Kiruna Festival is a crucial moment in the film where this issue arises. During this episode a dialogue between Wajstedt and an anonymous man takes place and, while the man seems to find very hard to understand why would someone want to take back something as the Sámi identity, Wajstedt describes the context of oppression that motivated her mother to deny her culture. As the dialogue turns into a heated argumentation – in which the anger is even emphasised through animated illustrations and sound- the director takes a radical position to defend her family and her people. The man, on the other hand, makes visible the continuity of an essentialist colonial mentality by not only accusing Wajstedt of not wanting to be Swedish but also of wanting to segregate the Swedish society. With phrases like ‘Your grandfathers are crying over the fact that you don’t want to be Swedish’, ‘You and your mother and your children want to segregate us’, ‘We don’t segregate you’ or ‘What do you want to take from us?’ he reveals his view of the Sámi identity as a threat for the Swedish society and draws a line between the Sámi and the Swedish people. Using the classic mechanism of identification based on the binary opposition Us/Them, the man also points out to Wajstedt's position in-between two apparently contradictory worlds. This are addressed further in this text in relation to the use of identity markers in the representation of the Sámi culture.

Gaski, Lina, p. 222; and Ledman, Anna-Lill, p. 225.
4.1.2 I can’t wait to understand what is said!

Another key aspect that conducts Wajstedt’s exploration is the process of getting into the Sámi culture through the language. As I have argued in the previous section, the relevance that the language has in the documentary is not only connected to the director’s ambition to get into the Sámi identity. It is also a requirement for really connecting to her family. From the reflection of what would she know about her mother if she would understand Sámi, to the strangeness provoked by learning that her mother actually thinks in this language, a distance between Wajstedt and her family is established. As the director describes in the film, the desire of speaking and understanding Sámi has been related to a sense of exclusion since her childhood. Then, more than a natural process of recovering something lost, learning Sámi is a challenge charged by the desire of getting closer to her mother and becoming part of a community.

The question of the language involves a series of complex discussions related to the definition of the Sámi identity. Being considered as a fundamental aspect for someone to be recognized as Sámi, the use of the language is usually connected to discourses of authenticity and social belonging. It is precisely on relation to this that many of the episodes of anxiety and desperation that Wajstedt experiences and depicts through the film are presented. The most iconic situation is the Summer Camp that she joins to learn Sámi. Organized by the Sámi University as a full time internship, the course is presented as a demanding and intense experience. As the days pass, Wajstedt’s frustration grows: the visually emphasised excitement provoked by the feeling of the words in her lips, turns into a sensation of failure and the impulse to give up. As she reflects for the camera, the deep emotions connected to this issue become more and more evident.

4.1.3 Am I dressed up or just dressed?

Described by Wajstedt as the red line of the film, the process of getting and wearing a kolt is one of the most crucial steps for her to become Sámi. Through the richest audio-visual experimentation in the film, the director creates a sense of evolution in her narration in relation to this aspect. But, rather than pointing out to a final goal or destination, this

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evolution refers to her transformation and growth. Experimenting with sounds and movement in her own depiction while wearing the kolt, Wajstedt suggests a connection to her expectations of becoming something different: using the kolt helps her to understand and recover her Sámi roots and with that, to transform her identity.

The question of getting and using the kolt also conducts a subtle exploration about the Sámi conventions, social and gender roles. It also points out to the processes of cultural loss and appropriation inside Wajstedt's family and the Sámi societies. The director's lack of knowledge about the characteristics and meanings carried by the kolt is firstly addressed in relation to her decision of having a different colour than the Karesuando's traditional light blue. Following the advice of the saleswoman at the fabric store, Wajstedt choses to have a white kolt. As her aunt firmly disapproves such election for not following the tradition, she learns that the colours and designs are meaningful identity markers. Here, the contradiction between the aunt's traditionalism and the saleswoman's less orthodox position highlights the mobility and heterogeneity within the Sámi culture. And, recalling Eikjok’s reflection, it makes visible that the traditional and the modern exist side by side within the Sámi community, and that the Sámi people are bound to this tension depending upon education, occupation and generation.128

Helped by her aunt, Wajstedt accomplishes her goal of wearing her own kolt and realizes that, like the fabric's colour, other accessories, as the shoes, buttons, ribbons, belt, scarf, brooch and earrings are relevant. They reveal the user's gender, civil status, the region of origin, and once again, the person's understanding and belonging to the Sámi culture.

128 Eikjok, Jorunn, p. 110.
At this point a line between being Sámi or not being appears not only in relation of *having* but also of *knowing*. While both the director and her non-Sámi father try to tight up the shoes without success, the Sámi aunt, who incarnates all the wisdom about the Sámi culture and traditions in the film, takes control over the situation and teach them how to do it. The director's struggle in the process of acquiring such knowledge is later stressed when her difficulties to tight up her Sámi shoes appear as the preamble for the worst explosion of frustration and sadness of not belonging to the Sámi world.

'Why do you need a kolt?' Wajstedt's aunt asks with curiosity while testing the first light blue *kolt*. As the director rushes into a banal answer ('I think it looks good'), the anxiety provoked by the issue comes to the surface: 'I feel stupid. Here I am pretending to be Sámi. But it's not true. I really want to say that I want to wear the kolt cause it might make me feel more Sámi and I would really want that', Wajstedt explains with regret through voice over. The feeling of being left out, of being an outsider, is materialized in the lack of a *kolt*: 'everybody is dressed like a Sámi but me', she says with disappointment. But while the director asks herself how would it feel to wear the kolt, if she should wear it in Stockholm, or how comfortable would this be, the possibility of finally getting into the Sámi culture comes with the tension of also having a Swedish identity. According to her, the increasing importance of having a *kolt* was related for her to the desire of showing that she was part of the Sámi collective. As she explains, it shows whom she is, where she and her family come from; it makes the Sámi people feel connected to each other.¹²⁹

Like the director states here, and as she gradually gets more comfortable wearing her *kolt* through the film, it is clear that her feelings about being part of the Sámi culture have changed. By the end of the documentary, Wajstedt offers a strategic conclusion that creates a sense of evolution from the initial sensation of impossibility and incompleteness to a bright reflection about identity mobility and complexity: despite wearing the kolt in Stockholm seems impossible, having it in certain situations may help her to feel more Sámi.

Finally, this discussion helps Wajstedt to explore her family process of cultural loss. As she asks to her mother and aunt about their own use of the *kolt* and the reasons behind

¹²⁹ Electronic correspondence with Liselotte Wajstedt, March 2016.
denying their Sámi roots, the director invites them and the rest of her family to confront their own trauma and to reconnect with a part of their identity that was also lost for them. As we learn in the epilogue that the director’s mother has started using her kolt again and her siblings ask for their own kolt, a sense of success is presented in relation to this issue: what started as a crazy adventure against the advice of her family, became a process of collective acceptance and proud of being Sámi.

4.1.4 Am I one of them?

As Wajstedt establishes from the beginning of the film, a strong difference between her and her family is her double identity as a Swedish and Sámi person. Having been raised in Kiruna, far from the Sámi practices and customs, the director’s identity is crossed by the oppositions that divide the Sámi community. As the director questions herself whether she can be included in the Sámi collective or not, she exposes the contradictions and tensions within the Sámi identity. Through the constant emphasis of her lack of knowledge about the Sámi traditions and social life, the director underlines that being Sámi can be more complex than expected. As she tries to get closer to the reindeer herding and the Sámi mythology, as well as to explore the meaning of the landscape and the yoik, she makes visible the variable meanings and relevance that the Sámi identity have.

The Sámi identity is represented as diverse and divided by several oppositions. A first opposition that is discussed in the film is the relation to the urban and the rural life and, specifically, to the professional and economical culture. From the opening in Stockholm’s subway, Wajstedt emphasises her identity as an urbanized person. Despite her family story has been determined by the reindeer herding, her disconnection to the reindeers and the culture around them is constantly made clear. Here, the line between her and the life style that the reindeers represent is suggested more as a result of her connection to the urban modern life than as an ethnic marker: while we see her non-Sámi father drying reindeer meat, the director explains that it was her favourite until she became a vegetarian. Another significant movement to this respect is the fear and unfamiliarity that Wajstedt expresses in relation to the reindeers. By underlining the contrast between the reindeer and the city lifestyle, the director points out to the multiple possibilities of being
Sámi. As some members of her family explain to her, working with the reindeers is like making film: it is a profession and a craft that one must learn and practice.

A second opposition that is discussed in the film is the generational distance among the Sámi people. The issue is clearly described through the imaginary line that divides three generations in Wajstedt's family: from the grandmother, the Sámi healer living in a cot, to the mother, who migrated from a Sámi village to Kiruna, and, finally, to the granddaughter, living in Stockholm and not being able to speak any Sámi. The gap between generations is also addressed in relation to the yoik. Here, the poles of the discussion are represented by the new generations of Sámi musicians and artists who have recovered and integrated the practice of yoiking, on one hand, and the older generations of Sámi people that considered it as a forbidden practice by the Christian norms, on the other. After exploring the meaning of the practice of yoiking in the film, Wajstedt refers to it as an extension of the language that can be used to remember someone in a personal, subjective and circular way. But, as her aunt points out, yoiking was considered as a sin for Christian Sámis and associated to alcoholism. It was not well seen among the old generations of Sámi people.

Besides the distance between generations, the previous discussion also makes visible the introjection of the colonial normativity and the consequent contradictory reinterpretations of the Sámi culture. In this context, while the director's decision of looking for her Sámi identity seems to be obvious and "natural" for some Sámi people, for others seems like a crazy and weird project. A good example of this tension is the strong reaction of Wajstedt's mother when she learns about her daughter's plans about travelling to Kautokeino and finding the family's sacred place. Here, a paradoxical attitude towards the Sámi traditions and mythology becomes visible: despite questioning the narratives behind Wajstedt's interest in such place, her mother firmly insists that she can't touch anything cause she could get cursed.

As it is visible in the previous lines, Sámi Daughter Yoik proposes a rich exploration of the Sámi identity. Like Ledman reflects, through the search of her personal identity, Wajstedt has challenged the ideal of authenticity at the core of the essentialist definitions of
Sáminess. And, as Liselotte Wajstedt expected, far from a romantic portrayal of the Sámi culture, the film works as a deep exploration of a conflictive identity where no real answers about its essence are offered.

4.2 Becoming Sámi: The Only Image of My Father

In *The Only Image of My Father* Kine Boman portraits the story of Monika Isaksson, a middle-aged Swedish woman that is looking for her father and her Sámi roots. Raised by her mother in a Swedish city, Monika has never met her father or lived in the Sámi society. The only clue that she has about her father’s identity is a postal stamp in which he was depicted as a representative of the Swedish workers. Motivated by the desire of knowing more about her father and her origins, Monika starts a road trip that confronts her to the question of what makes someone a real Sámi.

As Liselotte Wajstedt, Kine Boman proposes a complex exploration of the Sámi identity and presents an alternative portrayal of the Sámi people as heterogeneous and multidimensional. Following Monika in her personal exploration, Boman remarks the contradictory discourses that cross the representation of the Sámi people. While Monika begins her trip with the expectations created by the image of a strong and energetic man that is printed in the post stamp, by the end of the film she learns about the dark events that shaped her father’s temperament and decisions. And, as a consequence, she discovers the connections between her own story and one of the most dramatic and shameful episodes of the Swedish history.

The documentary has also the classic narrative structure of a road movie. During 58 minutes we follow the protagonist’s journeys from Varberg to Jokkmokk, in which an emotional and intense process of tracking her father down is depicted. The narration is divided episodically in the different stages of her two journeys from the West Coast to the North of Sweden. During a first trip Monika explores her identity and gets closer to the Sámi life with the help of her father’s relatives and the Sámi institutions in Jokkmokk. Back to Varberg after this first journey, she succeeds in finding the location of her father in

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131 Electronic correspondence with Liselotte Wajstedt, March 2016.
a small village in Sápmi. Having a first contact with him on the phone, Monika starts a second trip, in which she finally reaches her goal of meeting her father in person. However, Monika’s excitement and satisfaction for accomplishing her objective deflates as an unexpected distance between them is produced by their different conceptions of life.

As the narrative structure, the documentary uses quite traditional visual and sound resources. With an almost always fix camera and the predominant use of mid shots and medium close-ups, the action is presented through direct narration and focused on the protagonist’s action and perspective. The camera mainly works as an invisible witness, although it becomes sporadically present when the protagonist addresses the director and the viewer. Mostly diegetic, the sound creates an atmosphere that emphasises both the intimacy of the dialogs and the vitality of the forest.

Like Wajstedt, Boman makes her presence on the film evident as she poses questions behind the camera and includes herself in the protagonist’s performative exploration. As a result, the film works a space of negotiation and change, in which the identities of both protagonist and director intertwine and are inevitably transformed.

The film is conducted by questions about the Sámi identity, the colonial history and the diversity of the Sámi people, which are addressed on the following three sections.

4.2.1 Am I a Sámi?

Monika lives and works as a blacksmith in Varberg, a small town in Sweden’s West Coast. Moved by the desire of finding her father, she travels to Jokkmokk to look through the genealogical archives at the Sámi library. Assisted by the librarian she finds some information about her father’s family and gets to meet her cousin Sven, who will help her to get a general view of how is the Sámi life and who is her father. From their first dialogue, Monika learns that Filip Mickelsson-Hatta, her father, had a restless life: moving continuously from one to another place, it was hard to find him even for his closest relatives.

Monika’s journey continues at the Sámi museum, one of the key institutions created by the Sámi collective for the reinforcement of their identity, history and memory. After being guided through the museum’s exhibition, she gets the opportunity to pose one
of the most crucial questions that conducts her exploration and the film: "Am I a Sámi?" Monika asks to the museum guide. The sequence in which Monika exposes this and other questions about being Sámi is not only relevant for she gets to reveal a fundamental motor of her search. It also makes visible how subject positions have been created through the process of constructing a discourse about the Sámi identity. While Monika works as the representative of the hybrid Sámi who, divided between the Swedish and the Sámi world, goes through the anxiety of social belonging and acceptance; the museum's guide, representing the Sámi institutions, works as the authority who posses the knowledge and the power to determine who is Sámi and who is not.

But, rather than taking the authority position to propose easy and essentialist answers to Monika, the guide suggests in this dialogue that, 1) there are not clear answers for the question about what makes someone Sámi, 2) to take the Sámi identity is of course related to family roots but it also depends on one's own feelings, 3) there are expectations about what to know, how to behave, what to wear, and what language to speak, and, 4) taking the Sámi identity comes with a sense of belonging to a family and a bigger collective. Besides offering a general vision of the most relevant aspects that are usually connected to the Sámi identity as, for instance, the language and the clothing, the guide's answer makes visible the core contradiction about being Sámi: though it is related to discourses of origins and genealogy, it is also a decision and a performative process.

4.2.2 It wasn't good to be a Sámi

"I was called a Lapp bastard in school, some very strange things were said about the Sámi people", says Monika while reflecting on her experience of having Sámi roots as a child. With the map of Sweden as background, she reflects on the connection between the search of her father and the worries that being Sámi has brought to her: "Sámis weren't mentioned in the history books at all. This was only three or four years ago. I thought it was disgraceful. They weren't mentioned once. Sweden's original inhabitants were not in the textbooks. I thought it was time to find out a few things." Here, by discussing Sweden's colonial history in relation to her own identity, Monika makes visible the vitality of the Sámi history and the contemporaneity of the discussion.
The protagonist goes deeper into this reflection during her visit to the area where her family used to live. Guided by her cousin Sven and other relatives, Monika visits her grandfather’s cot. This encounter becomes the opportunity for her cousins to narrate the dramatic events that marked their family’s history. As Sven recalls his childhood living in the cot, the role of the nature and the climatic conditions are described as a part of a healthy lifestyle that the Sámi people used to have only some years ago. As other persons join the conversation, the experiences of older generations put into discussion dramatic themes as the prohibition of the language and the resulting decrease of Sámi speakers, as well as the shame that surrounded the Sámi identity. As the cousin Ola states that "there was a time when all the Sámis concealed their identity", Sven explains how his father changed his Sámi last name to a more Swedish one. The use of legal strategies to favour the forestry companies, destroy the Sámi villages and take the land from them is another fundamental discussion that is addressed later on the film.

The discussion continues while we watch both Monika and Sven walking in the forest and getting closer to the reindeers. In this sequence, we listen to Sven's voice as he recalls other iconic aspects of their colonial history like the forced introduction of Christianity through religious persecution, and the torture of those who resisted working in the mines. By the end of his narration, Sven relates this part of the Swedish history to the colonial oppression of other indigenous people and suggest that language is a fundamental aspect for social integration and identification as it is, for instance, constantly remarked in relation to the immigrants in Sweden. Through Sven discourse, two fundamental ideas of the Sámi official discourse become visible: one, the Sámi history is regarded as a part of a global process of colonial oppression, and two, the language is considered as having a vital role in their constitution as a social group. This last idea is stressed by immediately depicting the only dialogue in the film that is spoken in Sámi.

The last sequence in the film in which the story of the Sámi people has the focus is precisely the first encounter between Monika and Filip. Removed from his family at a very early age, he lived at a children’s home at Gällivare and took as a slave in the mines since he was seven years old. By the end of his childhood, he escaped, left school, started working with the reindeers, and afterwards, on the boat that would become the scenario of
the image that guided Monika to him. As Filip claims, the stamp was created in a context where the Social Democrats meant to represent the perfect worker using the image of the coarse, powerful and energetic Sámi man. But, besides the recount of the painful events in his life, Filip's narration reveals important aspects of the Sámi people's history. It refers, for instance, to the regular division of the Sámi families and the following allocation of the children into special homes and subjection to slavery. In this context, the restless and almost nomadic life with which Filip is previously related in the film becomes a consequence of the violence inflicted by the Swedish society to the Sámi people. The fact is also stressed when Monika discusses the family's history with her aunt Greta, who had a lonely and odd life after being separated from her family as a child. Furthermore, the representation of the Sámi people is suggested as contradictory and determined by the changes in the Swedish mentality. On one hand, working with reindeers is presented not as a given condition but as one of the many options of labour. On the other, it is suggested that the characteristics that were once used to justify the exclusion and persecution of the Sámi people, were the same that would later motivate their celebration as exemplar citizens.

4.2.3 A little of two worlds

Implicit in her search, Monika's position in between the Sámi and the Swedish world works as the red line that connects the different episodes of the film. From her first approach to her family to the end of her journey, she is confronted to the contradictory experience of having a dual identity. Although in some situations getting closer to the Sámi world comes with the opportunity of finding herself and satisfying her curiosity, other experiences are marked by the confusion and anxiety of not belonging to a place and a culture to which she should be "naturally" connected. This contradiction is firstly emphasised in her visit to her grandfather's cot: while her relatives warmly welcome her home, her immediate reaction is to stress that she has never been there before. Her identity is then presented as crossed by the tension between having been born and becoming Sámi. This side of the discussion is also visible in her first approach to the reindeer herding: while her cousins show dexterity and experience, Monika makes visible the insecurity and
confusion that the situation awakens in her. With a landscape full of snowed mountains and forests as the background, we listen to Monika’s voice over wondering how would have been to live there, which live would she have had, and how her culture would have been.

The highlight of this tension is, ironically, the moment in which Monika finally gets to meet her father: instead of feeling familiarity and trust, her sense of distance and uncertainty increases as she gets closer to him. During their first encounter, the reflection about the conditions in which both of them live turns into a tense discussion about the conflict between the urban and the rural life. While Monika describes to the camera his living conditions as primitive and unpractical, Filip questions her opinions and criticizes the city lifestyle. The discussion points to a process of mutual and contradictory praise and reduction that, following Gaski, is related to the question of legitimacy. The issue is underlined by the effect that the presence of the film director has during the discussion: as Filip's gaze is emphatically directed to her, Boman's phantasmagorical persona is revealed as a source of authority to evaluate his critique, though paradoxically being addressed by it.

Despite the attention given to these tensions, Monika's encounter with her father is portrayed as the peak of a successful process of personal transformation and healing. "It is not easy to acquire a father at the age of 46. These things take time", Monika reflects and introduce her not least relevant perspective as a daughter and as a person. As it is visible in Wajstedt's film, Boman points out to the multiple discussions and hierarchical relations that intersect in the protagonist's identity search. In the next and final section, the effect that this strategy has for the development of a non-stereotypical representation of the Sámi people is discussed in relation to notions of genre, performativity, authorship, and identity, among other questions that the films propose.

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5. Strategies for a non-stereotypical representation

As I have underlined through the previous sections, a central hypothesis of this study is that a complex, non-stereotypical representation of the Sámi identity makes necessary to consider all the dimensions that participate in its construction. From this perspective, I have focused the analysis of Sámi Daughter Yoik and The Only Image of My Father on locating the multiple oppositions of power that shape the Sámi identity as they are discussed in the films. This section focuses on the strategies that both films display to challenge essentialist discourses about the Sámi identity and explores questions of genre, documentary mode, authorship, identity and other dimensions as class, nationality and gender.

5.1 Road movies, identity crisis and evolution

A first aspect connecting these films and creating the conditions for their above-mentioned efficiency is their genre. Both constructed with the basic narrative structure of a journey, Sámi Daughter Yoik and The Only Image of My Father take some of the most classical characteristics of road movies to stress mobility and change.133

Like film director Walter Salles claims, road movies are about experiencing: they are about the journey and about what can be learned from those who are different.134 In Salles own words, "in terms of film grammar, the road movie is limited to accompany the transformations undergone by its main characters as they confront a new reality".135 As Steven Cohan and Ina Rae Hark explain concerning the classic American road movie, this genre has the potential of portraying the tensions and crisis of the culture and the historical moment in which they are produced.136 As the authors suggest, Wajstedt's and Boman's road documentaries put enormous attention on the identity crisis and internal transformation of their main characters. From the initial points of their trips, in which both protagonists are moved by the desire of exploring and completing their identities, to

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135 Ibid.
the final sequences in which such desire is fulfilled, the films provide an implicit sense of evolution. The mobility that is suggested through the protagonists' identity exploration is also used to emphasise the contradictions and tensions at the core of the Sámi identity. Rather than proposing a definitive explanation of what is to be Sámi, the films follow the struggles implied in having a minority and hybrid identity. And, simultaneously, they point to a very specific context in which discussing the Swedish colonial history has become possible.

According to Ron Eyerman and Orvar Löfgren, road movies are usually constituted around nostalgia for a sensed loss of freedom or missed opportunity. For them, it is actually this mental landscape what stands behind the way the journey is organized from start to finish. In a similar line, Cohan and Hark describe the location of the road protagonists at the margins of mainstream culture as the trigger of their transformative experiences. In this process the road has the function of the alternative space for isolation and eventual reintegration of the travellers into the dominant culture. In Wajstedt's and Boman's films the road has the function of creating a sense of progress and change. Tightly connected to the landscape, the road also produces an atmosphere of nostalgia, marginality and isolation, and it helps to emphasise the sense of identity transformation of their main characters. While in Boman's film the forest and the mountains are literally related to the questions of what has been lost or what could have been, in Wajstedt's film the highway is depicted as a map of veins in which the fluent blood traces the director's search for her lost identity.

The juxtaposition of contrasting landscapes is also an important strategy for Boman to portray the gap between Monika and her father, and for Wajstedt to stress her position between the Swedish and the Sámi world. As we see in the movement from the modern buildings in central Stockholm to the lakes in Kautokeino in Wajstedt's film, and from Monika’s urbanized neighbourhood in Varberg to the rural village in which her father lives, the landscape becomes a key agent to approach the duality and mobility of the protagonists' identities. This discussion is related to one of the most relevant findings

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137 Eyerman, Ron and Orvar Löfgren, pp. 67-68.
138 Cohan, Steven, and Ina Rae Hark, p. 5.
derived from the analysis of these films: to challenge the stereotypical representation of the Sámi identity is not necessary to avoid the use of traditional identity markers like the landscape. Despite it is often used to depict the Sámi people as traditional, primitive and rough, the landscape acquires the potential of emphasising mobility and change as it is inserted in the genre of road movies.

**5.2 Documentary mode, artificiality, authenticity and performativity**

As I argued above, a key feature of *Sámi Daughter Yoik* and *The Only Image of My Father* is their evocation of the emotional aspects and the affects involved in the protagonists' explorations. While in *Sámi Daughter Yoik* this is evident as Liselotte Wajstedt addresses us directly to share her excitement and frustration, in *The Only Image of My Father* the focus on Monika's emotional insights and identity transformation creates a similar sense of intimacy and transparency. The strategy, that is certainly more obvious in *Sámi Daughter Yoik* but also latent in *The Only Image of My Father*, works as a fundamental tool to question the notion of objectivity and distance with the subjects of representation in the films. In a similar way, the directors' explicit or implicit presence functions as a reminder of the artificiality and constructedness of the films.

These mechanisms suggest a clear connection to Nichols' notions of the performative documentary mode, which was discussed in the description of theory in this text. But, far from trying to define these films under Nichols' frame, my purpose in suggesting such connection is exploring the effect of performativity in the representation of the Sámi identity. Stella Bruzzi's critique of Nichols' canonical description of documentary modes offers a very productive perspective to this concern. As she claims, by questioning authenticity, the aim of performative films is not to break with the factual filmmaking tradition. Instead, their purpose is to extend the tradition's aims of representing reality, with the only distinction of being more aware of the inevitable falsification or subjectification that representation entails.  

By prioritizing moments of interaction between the filmmaker, the camera and the subjects, performative documentaries proclaim a different notion of documentary truth that acknowledges its artificiality and

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performativity. Rather than slices of ‘authentic’ life, non-fictional films are thus revealed in their condition of performatively negotiated relationships between the filmmaker and her reality.

Instead of pointing to realistic representations in terms of accuracy or objectivity, Wajstedt and Boman depict the Sámi identity as an open question and an ongoing process. Specifically created to follow the protagonists’ process of recovering or looking for their lost identities, their films function as the arena for identity production. Once again, the directors’ strategies remind of Bruzzi’s arguments. For her, an essential feature of the performative documentary mode is the subjects’ involvement in performative events that are simultaneously a description and an enactment of their lives and lifestyles. In Wajstedt’s film, the audio-visual experimentation around the confection and use of the kolt is a perfect example of a performative act with which the director conducts her identity exploration. In Boman’s film, Monika engages in performative events as she tests her Sáminess by experiencing the work with the reindeers or asking for the museum guide’s confirmation of whether she is Sámi or not.

As Nichols and Bruzzi emphasise, performative documentaries often embrace a social form of subjective response. They have a corrective tendency of producing a distinct mode of representation through auto-ethnography that requires an entirely different form of engagement, knowledge and understanding than that in ethnographic films. In Sámi Daughter Yoik, this is expressively stressed from the beginning to the end of the film, for instance, as the director describes her film in the film itself as a yoik: a yoik without a song aimed to express her desire, as she would later describe in our electronic correspondence. This aspect is also present in The Only Image of My Father. Closing the film with a note about the ILO Convention and the struggle of the Sámi people for their rights to the land, Boman makes evident her political connection and concern with the Sámi culture, which is in turn related to her own identity. In the next section I come back to this aspect, as it is central for the discussion of the directors’ ethnicity and authorship.

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140 Bruzzi, Stella, pp. 154-159.
143 Nichols, Bill, pp. 133-134.
144 Electronic correspondence with Liselotte Wajstedt, March 2016.
Besides revealing important features and strategies that the documentaries display, the objective of this discussion has been to emphasise the effects that representing the Sámi identity in connection to the notion of performativity might entail. A fundamental finding from this point is that, by transparently referring to the protagonists' identities as something that can be recover or re-enacted, the documentaries suggest that, as any identititarian construction, the Sámi identity is a performative process. Following Bruzzi’s proposal for the filmmaking tradition as a whole, I conclude that the use of performativity and the emphasis on artificiality in Wajstedt's and Boman's documentaries do not create a special position for the Sámi identity. By offering a critical view of the Sámi identity as a construction and a process, the films do not point out to its rupture with other kind of identity processes. Instead, they contest its reification and include it in the general dynamics of identity construction.

5.3 Authorship, legitimacy and ethnicity
As I argued in the previous lines, the mechanisms that Liselotte Wajstedt and Kine Boman have developed to discuss the Sámi identity in their films are connected to the notions of performativity and realism. The directors' visible participation as performers or conductors of their films is, for instance, a strategic tool for them to question the authenticity of the reality they portrait. Continuously showing their presence within or outside the camera frames, the directors' highlight the role that the films have in the protagonists' exploration. Furthermore, they point out to the constructedness of the Sámi identity.

The awareness that the directors' presence raises about artificiality, authenticity and truth is, paradoxically, complemented by the legitimacy they acquire as authors to create a critical yet convincing representation of the Sámi people. Following Janet Staiger's approach of authorship-as-a-technique-of-the-self, I propose that Wajstedt and Boman have taken good advantage of their role as film authors, as one of their several subject positions, to legitimize the explorations in their films. What I aim to stress here is that, inserted in the frameworks of filmmaking, the directors have gained from their position of authorship the authority to establish the critical frames to analyse, discuss and even
perform the Sámi identity. In other words, their condition as filmmakers is precisely what legitimates their films as valuable representations of the Sámi people and identity.

In Wajstedt's case, her ethnical background has also a strong role on reinforcing such legitimacy. Like the previous research and the Sámi official classification of cinematographic representations show, the film directors' ethnicity is usually considered as a crucial aspect for the reliable representation of the Sámi people.\textsuperscript{145} As Wajstedt explains, the Sámi film institute recognizes the relevance that increasing the space for self-representations has had for a better representation of the people they represent. And, as she learned from her own experience, the role of the Sámi film consultants has been crucial to define and improve the way in which the Sámi people is represented.\textsuperscript{146} At this point, it is important to recall what Gaski and Ledman suggest about the use of essentialist discourses in the official representation of the Sámi people. Far from condemning the strategic administration and control of representations by the Sámi politicians and artists, it is important to reflect on their action from the perspective of power and the political struggle for decolonization in which they act.

Nevertheless, as it is visible in \textit{Sámi Daughter Yoik}, the strategic uses of ethnicity and authorship do not necessarily entail an essentialist discourse. Far from standing for the Sámi people, Wajstedt uses her documentary to explore her belonging to this identity and underline her awareness of her variable location between the Sámi and the Swedish world. But, despite the director problematizes the essentialist discourses of Sáminess in her film, the role that her ethnical identification has for the evaluation of her work is not completely under her control. Like she points out in relation to her often forced incorporation within the label of "contemporary Sámi artists", her ethnicity can also conduct to reductive, and perhaps romanticized, interpretations of her work.\textsuperscript{147}

The function of the author's ethnicity is less emphatic in Boman's case, as she is not as explicitly involved in the performance and her identity is not the red line of the film. However, being ethnicity an unavoidably dimension for any individual, Boman's ethnical position is also a significant aspect for the analysis of her film. Moreover, her ethnicity is a

\textsuperscript{145} This issue has been discussed before in this text in relation to the film representation of the Sámi people.

\textsuperscript{146} Electronic correspondence with Liselotte Wajstedt, March 2016.

\textsuperscript{147} Ibid.
productive aspect for this analysis since her interest in the Sámi culture was a result of her belief of sharing the Sámi background with the subjects of her films. In spite of not being genetically connected to the Sámi people, her identification with them poses the question of the relevance that authenticity has to define identity and ethnicity, and also, for the legitimacy of the films.

Is the ethnicity of the directors crucial to contest the stereotypical representations of the Sámi people? Is the representation of the Sámi identity more valuable in Wajstedt's than in Boman's film due to their ethnicity? Are only members of a community entitled to represent it? Despite these questions are connected to an extremely complex and broad discussion that could be richly explored in relation to Wajstedt's and Boman's films, in this study I do not go deeper on it since it deviates us from the focus of the analysis. Instead, I briefly refer to the opposition between outsiders and insiders that the debate and the films propose.

In her analysis of the tensions between indigenous film and video and ethnographical film, Faye Ginsburg underlines a central aspect of indigenous media: it has been historically developed to break the classic paradigm of ethnographic film of "us" always filming "them". However, as Ginsburg points out, despite the media produced by indigenous people has provoked an increasing awareness of the politics of representation among them, it still does not guarantee an untroubled relationship with the subject of representation. In a similar line, Staiger argues that to assume that membership in a particular minority-self grouping ensures a certain political position is based on the idea that one aspect of an individual is all of which the individual speaks for.

Markelin and Husband also discuss this tension in relation to the challenges that Sámi media

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149 I thank my fellow student Erik Rosshagen for suggesting the connection to this debate.
151 Ibid, p. 68.
152 Ibid, p. 51.
professionals face as their identities involve conflictive subject positions, for instance, of nationality and gender.153

The discussion points to some of the major findings of this research. First, what the films and the director’s identity make evident is that being an insider is a more complex process than fulfilling the essentialist criteria or normative frameworks to be defined as such. A good example of this is that, regardless of Boman's ethnicity, her film has been promoted and supported by the Sámi institutions as representative of the Sámi contemporary films. Second, as it is expressed inside and outside the films, the directors' and protagonists' identities are produced by the interaction and negotiation between multiple subject positions and power dimensions. Consequently, the definition of ethnicity as a given condition is substituted by a more complex dynamic where several dimensions of power constantly interact and mutually shape. This point is the focus of the following and final discussion.

5.4 The other dimensions of being Sámi
The constant interrogation of what is to be Sámi and what tensions does it entail plays a vital role in the films to depict the protagonists' construction of identity as a complex and dynamic process. Through their voice and interaction with other characters the intersections of ethnicity with questions of nationality, gender, religion and class, for instance, arise as determinant aspects of the Sámi identity.

The tension between ethnicity and nationality is one of the oppositions that produce the richest explorations in these films. Confronted with the privileges and contradictions in their simultaneous position as Sámi and Swedish women, the experiences of Liselotte Wajstedt and Monika Isaksson put into question the notions of hybridity, authenticity, and strategic essentialism. Despite their identity exploration is constantly pointing to their position in between two worlds, rather than creating a sense of division, their journey conducts to the conclusion that hybridity might also imply expansion and growth. As Wajstedt eloquently points out, instead of having an identity divided in two,

what she gained through her film was the possibility to also identify as Sámi. A similar conclusion is stressed in Boman's film as the protagonist refers to the new relationship with her father as a potential space for her to acquire a new culture.

The reflection about nationality and hybridity in these films is also connected to the notion of strategic essentialism. Initially charged with feelings of anxiety and exclusion, the protagonists' hybrid identities become a sign of mobility and agency as they take their space in both the Sámi and the Swedish world. A perfect example of this transformation is the strategic and variable role that the kolt has for Wajstedt: while in the mainstream Swedish context seems to be unthinkable for her to wear it, in the Sámi context works as a fundamental tool for her to feel connected and integrated. In Boman's film, the protagonist's decision of continuing living in the city despite founding her Sámi father and roots, makes evident that ethnicity is not a determinant fact. Through these gestures the films point out to some of the general contradictions and negotiations that shape the Sámi identity. Like Gaski explains, while many Sámi people consider themselves to be "mixed" and often describe themselves in what could be considered ethnically neutral terms in some situations, other call themselves "bastards" and thereby challenge what could be considered the demand for purity in the discourse of ethnicity.

Tightly connected to the tension between ethnicity and nationality, the question of migration is discussed in both films through the story of Wajstedt's mother and Monika's father. Addressed as a direct result of the Swedish colonial history, the movement from the rural to the urban spaces is present in the protagonist's family stories as creating strong contradictions and division. In Wajstedt's film this tension is frequently present in the dialogues with the aunt Sigrid, which point to the opposition between the traditional and the modern, and the gap between generations. In Boman's film, the gap between the rural and the urban life in the Sámi collective is present as one of the major contradictions between daughter and father. And, as a part of Filip's story, the characteristic restless or nomadic life attributed to him and the Sámi collective is questioned in its condition of a tradition, as its connection with the colonial dynamics gets visible.

154 Electronic correspondence with Liselotte Wajstedt, March 2016.
155 Ibid.
156 Gaski, Lina, p. 222.
The distance between generations brings attention to the question of internal diversity among the Sámi people, for instance, in terms of language use. Despite the language's role as one of the most relevant identity markers for the Sámi people is highlighted in both films, its condition as an essential requisite for someone to be Sámi is constantly challenged through the protagonists' journeys. In *Sámi Daughter Yoik*, the question of whether speaking Sámi is necessary for someone to be included or excluded of the Sámi collective arises as Wajstedt fails in her purpose of learning the language. In *The Only Image of My Father*, the reflection on the colonial linguistic policies and the resultant impossibility for most of the Sámi people of speaking Sámi, makes evident that both the use and the loss of the language can work as shared points of identification. Though, the films' conclusion is not focused on the critique of the language's relevance. Instead what they underline is that, as Gaski describes, the linguistic and cultural diversity among the Sámi people creates a blurry ethnic border where the image of the Sámi nation is not very obvious and, therefore, the identity is both contested and ambiguous.\(^{\text{157}}\)

The question of diversity among the Sámi collective is also approached in relation to the opposition between tradition and modernity. The discussions about lifestyle and the variable meaning of identity markers as the *kolt* and the yoik help the directors to emphasise that the traditional and the modern coexist within the Sámi community. And, moreover, that the question of tradition is extremely problematic as it points out to an ambivalent process of colonial assimilation. In Boman's film, the discussion about the urban and the rural lifestyles is a good example where this tension becomes visible. In Wajstedt's film the meaning of yoiking is a key discussion in which the issue is problematized: what for some generations was considered a marginal and wicked practice connected to alcoholism and paganism, for the new generations is described as a sign of cultural resistance and identification. The tension reminds to Eikjok's warn about the origins and effects of the traditions in which the Sámi community is based: it is important to remain critical of their transformation after Christian, patriarchal, liberal or New Age

\(^{\text{157}}\) Gaski, Lina, p. 222.
reinventions.\textsuperscript{158} As it is visible in Eikjok’s argument and in the films, religion has had a central role in the construction of the Sámi identity.

Closely related to the discussions of tradition, the question of gender is addressed in these films as a central opposition crossing the protagonists' identity construction. Both conducted by the story of a female character looking for her place in the Sámi collective, the films problematize, more or less explicitly, the traditional definition of the Sámi women. As I explained before in this text, the social codes, expectations and traditional regulations for Sámi women are literally discussed in Wajstedt's film in relation to the \textit{kolt}. Despite in Boman's documentary the issue does not receive as much attention as in the previous case, the protagonists' simultaneous identification as Sámi and Swedish women in both films points out to the strategic mechanism of differentiation between Sámi and Swedish womanhood. As Ledman proposes, a direct consequence of this mechanism is that the image of the Sámi woman gets tightly connected to ideas of authenticity and traditionalism.\textsuperscript{159}

As Kuokkanen and Eikjok explain, the strategic depiction of the Sámi societies as having traditional equal gender relations, present in both the Sámi and the national hegemonic discourses, works as a source of new contradictions and oppression for the Sámi women, and for the collective as a whole.\textsuperscript{160} Like Eijkjo argues, the analysis of such discourse and the social roles it entails must also be explored as a part of the effects that colonization has had in the regulations of gender in indigenous societies. Though it is clear that patriarchal structures already existed among the Sámi people, the introduction of a particular modern, masculine power has created different levels of oppression inside the Sámi collective, giving the women the lower status.\textsuperscript{161} The issue reminds to what Julie Bettie explains concerning the intersections of gender and class: the failure on perceiving racial/ethnic subjects as gendered has provoked a simplistic reading of their identity and the inadequate explanation of the way they experience gender.\textsuperscript{162}

\textsuperscript{158} Kuokkanen, Rauna, p. 82.
\textsuperscript{159} Ledman, Anna-Lill, pp. 177-199.
\textsuperscript{160} Eikjok, Jorunn, p. 114; and Kuokkanen, Rauna, p. 86.
\textsuperscript{161} Eikjok, Jorunn, pp. 112-116.
Following this discussion, a very similar process can be located concerning the question of class. Strongly connected to the colonial structures and the imposition of the normative frames of the Nordic nations, the reduction of the Sámi identity to the image of the nomadic reindeer herder is constructed through a mechanism of assimilation and opposition. In this process, the class and the ethnic subject positions are often melded together and the “authentic” Sámi is imagined as rural, exotic, wild and male, in contrast to the urban, normal, rational and gender equal and progressive Swede. However, as it is clearly represented in the films, this image is only a simplified identity description of the Sámi people that do not reflect the complexity of their life. Despite the image of the reindeer herder is present in both films, the reductive idea that all Sámi people is connected to this activity is contradicted by the focus on the diversity of professions and occupations in which the characters are involved. In a similar line, the diverse experiences that the protagonists’ and their relatives represent puts into question the imaginary association of Northern Sweden with out-migration, unemployment and lack of entrepreneurs that Eriksson describes. As a consequence, the stereotypically imagined male-dominated, stagnant and underdeveloped Sámi society is challenged by the image of a dynamic collective that moves between the rural and the urban, the traditional and the modern, the Sámi and the Swedish identity.

This does not imply a complete discontinuity from the representation of the films and the stereotypical images about the Sámi people. While in *The Only Image of My Father*, the stereotype of the Sámi man as rough, strong and powerful is reinforced by the story of the post stamp that guided Monika to Filip; in *Sámi Daughter Yoik*, the director's mother fits precisely into the stereotypical image of the Sámi woman that migrated to the city and became part of the urbanized middle class. But, as I proposed before in relation to the landscape, the use of stereotypical identity images or markers does not necessarily entail a stereotypical depiction. Like Wajstedt claims, rather than removing the identity markers that work as the Sámi culture's foundation, to challenge its stereotypical depiction is a

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163 Eriksson, Madeleine, p. 10.
164 Eriksson refers to these stereotypes as key images produced by the hegemonic discourse about Norrland and its inhabitants. *Ibid*, pp. 9-10.
matter of expanding its image and opening space for all the possible ways of identification.\textsuperscript{165}

From this analysis I propose that the directors’ success in contesting the stereotypical image of the Sámi people is a result of the attention they have put on the intersections of different dimensions and oppositions of power. To this concern, it is important to point out that the absence of other questions as sexuality or mental health also affects the representation that the films propose. Despite the lack of attention to such discussions in both documentaries is certainly connected to the process of selection and that any film representation implies, their absence might conduct to a reductive image of the Sámi people, for example, as sexually homogeneous. Moreover, it opens the question of why have these dimensions been omitted and what are the effects of their omission.\textsuperscript{166} But, in spite of all the possible contradictions that the films might involve, it is evident for me that the essentialist discourses about the Sámi people have certainly been challenged in a deep and complex way. Traveling from the experience of bipolar identity division to a third space of hybridity and agency, the protagonists’ journey confirm that the processes of privilege and oppression are complex, multivalent and simultaneous.\textsuperscript{167} In the end, it becomes clear that the Sámi identity is in now way reduced to the discussion of ethnicity, but rather connected to all possible dimensions that operate in any identity construction.

\textsuperscript{165} Electronic correspondence with Liselotte Wajstedt, March 2016.

\textsuperscript{166} These questions are the subject of an interesting debate that Sámi artists and activist are exploring right now. The exhibitions Queering Sámi and Vahák are good examples of this. Retrieved on May 18, 2016, from: http://www.qubforlag.se/ and http://www.ogonblicksteatern.se/repertoar/forestallningar/vahak/

6. Summary of main findings

In this analysis of the documentary road movies *Sámi Daughter Yoik* and *The Only Image of My Father* I have discussed some of the cinematographic strategies that their directors developed to represent the Sámi identity in a complex, non-stereotypical way. From that perspective I have proposed that representing the protagonists' explorations as conflictive and contradictory journeys has been crucial for them to create a critical sense of mobility and change. In that process, the use of performativity in the construction of the documentaries has helped them to criticize the essentialist discourses about Sámi authenticity. Authorship has been approached as a key tool for the directors' to legitimize such critique. And, finally, it has been stated that, alongside ethnicity, other subject positions take part in the construction of the Sámi identity. Other general findings are:

1) The stereotypical representation of the Sámi people involves contradictory and reductive images as the nomadic male reindeer herder and the strong matriarchs.

2) Such essentialist discourses have not only been produced and reproduced by the hegemonic rhetoric, but also by the Sámi official discourse. The meaning of such discourses differs depending on the power relations and structures in which they act.

3) The definition of Sáminess is not clear or definitive. The Sámi is a highly diverse and fragmented collective, which limits have been constantly moving as a part of its colonial history and the interaction of the different subject positions it involves.

4) The Sámi identity has been constructed as a part of the process of definition of the colonial national identities. The representation of the Sámi people is connected to the Swedish self-imagination and rhetoric of national construction.

5) As any other identitarian formation, the Sámi identity is a performative process composed by the intersection and mutual shape of multiple dimensions of power. It necessarily entails hybridity, which can indicate expansion and growth, instead of division of loss. Among other aspects, non-stereotypical representations of the Sámi identity need to approach the intersections of such dimensions.

6) Challenging stereotypical representations is not a matter of accuracy or realism, but of complexity and openness. To represent the Sámi identity in a non-stereotypical way it is not necessary to avoid the use of traditional identity markers, but to expand their meaning.
7. Resources

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- Herdswoman (Hjordeliv, Kine Boman, 2008)
- Hur gör man för att rädda ett folk? (Maja Hagerman, 2015)
- Jojk (Juoigan, Maj-Lis Skaltje, 2014)
- Last Yoik in Saami Forests? (Hannu Hyvönen, 2006)
- The Only Image of My Father (Enda bilden av papa, Kine Boman, 2004)
- Sámi Daughter Yoik (Sámi Nieida Jojk, Liselotte Wajstedt (Sweden, 2007)
- Trackback (Anette Niaa, 2000)

Short films
- 7 sámi stories (Elle Sofe Henriksen, Marja Bål Nango, Per Josef Idivuoma, Elle Márjá Eira, Ann Holmgren, Silja Somby, Edill Pedersen, 2015)