

**Cultivating a Sense of Belonging –  
The Orthodox Church as a Part of the Collective Memory of Skolt Sámi in Finland**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

I am originally from Ivalo, a small village located in Northern Lapland in Inari municipality. Inari municipality is the only municipality in Finland, which has four official languages; Finnish, Northern Sámi, Inari Sámi and Skolt Sámi. Indeed, multiculturalism or interculturality in Finland usually conjures up images of southern Finland but it is often forgotten that interculturality likewise exists in most northern parts of Finland, where the co-existence between three different indigenous Sámi groups and Finns has embroidered the culture of Lapland for centuries. Even though I am born and bred in Ivalo and have always been in touch with Sámi cultures, it has not been until recently that I have become more acquainted with the smallest of the Sámi groups, the Skolt Sámi.

Skolt Sámi are an indigenous Sámi group, living in northern Scandinavia and Kola Peninsula. Historically Skolts have lived in the northwest parts of Kola Peninsula in current Russia. Nowadays, Skolt Sámi are scattered between three states, Finland, Russia and Norway. Depending on how one defines them, there are about 600-700 Skolt Sámi living in Finland, half of them living in Skolt area in the villages of Sevettijärvi, Nellim and Keväjärvi.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the other Sámi groups in Finland, Skolt Sámi represent a strong eastern cultural heritage, rising from the Byzantine-Russian influence. This influence has had an effect on their history, religious life, language, oral and material traditions and on the whole lifestyle. Additionally, Skolt Sámi are distinguished from other Sámis due to their eastern cultural influence. The majority of Skolt Sámi in Finland belong to the Orthodox Church of Finland. This makes them a religious minority in relation to the majority of Finns, but also in relation to other Sámi people. Moreover, the Orthodox Church is present in many Skolt Sámi cultural events, even though they are not primarily religious by nature.

Skolt Sami religion and religiosity have been studied for many decades. Skolt Sámi Orthodoxy, however, has received less attention in the academic field - especially studies concerning Skolt Sámi Orthodoxy in the late 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> century are practically non-existent. In this sense the academic literature is outdated, since during the past two decades the Skolt Sámi community has undergone major changes, which have had an effect on religion as well. The importance of my study rises from this "gap" in the research history.

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<sup>1</sup> Jeffremoff 2010, 160: Saa'imi Nu'ett 2015 (Skolt Sámi Cultural Foundation)

My theoretical focus and the overall approach towards the topic takes influence from the field of sociology of religion. This kind of sociological focus in the research of Skolt Sámi religion has also been less addressed but I feel the approach offers a good opportunity to study the societal development behind the religious change and also the influence of group relations in religion.

My research questions are:

1. What kind of role does the Orthodox Church have in the Skolt Sámi culture?
2. In which ways has the role been constructed?
3. How does the role diverge between different Skolt generations?

The Orthodox tradition is reflected in many elements of Skolt Sámi culture and the Skolt Sámi have for a large part maintained the membership of the Church from generation to generation. Additionally, the respondents highlighted remembering the past – many of the respondents could for example trace down their family line to the Pechenga times, some even further. Thus I approach the role of the Orthodox Church from the viewpoint of a collective memory theory. In my analysis I am going to observe how the Orthodoxy is affectively experienced in the collective memory of Skolt Sámi through the following elements: the role of symbols, narratives and rituals, the landscape and feeling of belonging and through relationships with others. These elements are associated with the construction of ethnic identity as well and hence I have included that concept in my analysis as well. However, the role of the Church is not the same for all Skolts – the idea of emblematic Skolt Sámi identity where the Orthodox Church has a strong role is also problematic (for example the role of the Lutheran Church is observed in chapter 5.4.2) Furthermore, the intergenerational aspect of collective memory is one focus point in my study and thus the disparities between different Skolt Sámi generations are being reflected in the last analysis chapter.

Ultimately there are no identical ways to construct identities and the role of the religion might be different for each individual. This applies to Skolt Sámi culture, too. The objective presented is ambitious since it means untangling numerous intractable theoretical terms – identity, ethnicity, conception of culture, just to name a few. Hence I have to bring forward that when I write about Skolt Sámi Orthodoxy or Skolt Sámi culture, I present a generalization that does not apply with similar accuracy to all my respondents.

Skolt Sámi are the smallest Sámi minority in Finland. Already in the interview situations I felt that respondents took the interview situation as a chance to pass on knowledge of their culture and also as an opportunity to break long-lasting stereotypes regarding Skolt Sámi. The themes presented are diverse but so are the people and subjects studied. Skolt Sámi religiosity cannot be adequately described by one case study, but with my study I hope to bring forward the modern religious life of Skolt Sámi and the unique characteristic of their religious habits. All in all, I hope that my study works as an opening move for further studies concerning the modern status of religion among indigenous peoples and offers an overall view of the current role of the Orthodox Church among Skolt Sámi.

I would like to thank all the respondents, who let me inside their houses and work places and offered their opinions and insights to me. Without your input this thesis would have never seen the daylight. Conjointly I thank everyone in Lapland and in Helsinki, who helped me to build up the bibliography for my thesis – especially I want to thank Suvi Kivelä from Sámi Archives and Sophie Alix Capdeville from University of Jyväskylä, with whom I discussed the themes of my study. And lastly, this work was aided financially by a grant from the Finnish Cultural Foundation's Lapland regional fund and to them I need to express my gratitude for ensuring the field trips to Lapland.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

My theoretical approach is sociological since the focus is firmly on the social aspect of religion.<sup>2</sup> The relationship between ethnicity and religion and religious socialization are standard themes in the field of sociology and more precisely, in sociology of religion (e.g. Hammond & Warner 1993, Cadena 1995).

Before enlarging on theoretical framework, though, I shall start by presenting the previous research on Skolt Sámi religiosity. In addition to the context of comparative religion, my study utilises an interdisciplinary framework of Sámi studies. I shall reflect the development of that research history as well. After I have introduced the context of previous research, I will proceed to presenting the most central key concepts for this study. As for theoretical concepts, this research process combines the collective memory theory

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<sup>2</sup> Beckford & Demerath 2007, 2.

to the concept of ethnicity and identity. This is done to examine the research problem from a wider approach in order to establish a greater degree of validity. I also chose this approach to guarantee the balance between the richness of the respondents' accounts and my desire as a researcher to present something theoretically relevant. I see the roles of collective memory and ethnicity as interwoven – collective memory is very much an ethno-cultural tool. Furthermore, I think the perspective of ethnic identity adds some insight to the collective memory theory and relates it to handle more thoroughly the diverse role of Skolt Sámi identity.

## **2.1. Previous research on Skolt Sámi**

There has been and still is a great interest in the spiritual heritage of indigenous peoples. Regarding the previous research tradition Juha Pentikäinen sees it problematic that the image of indigenous cultures is so deeply rooted in how the majority populations have represented them. Sámi perceptions of their own religion are almost always mediated by the representative of the dominant culture, often from the perspective of Christianity, and at the same time also interpreted by them. This has set some kind problems related to source criticism in research. The earlier Sámi studies, referred as Lappology, regarded Sámi as a disappearing people, who had to be saved and on the other hand as a representatives of the romantic “North”. Pentikäinen points out that these kinds of representations are problematic, since the Sámi tradition is alive and evolving. The tradition is multi-layered and regionally variable and from this entity the religious sphere is often difficult to isolate. The concepts and characteristics, which in the academic context would be regarded as religious, for Sámi often are an inseparable part of their way of experiencing the world. The modern Sámi studies have gained new information about Sámi through modern field work along with fresh perspectives provided by Sámi scholars.<sup>3</sup>

For a long time, scholars perceived Sámi as a homogenous group, all living in fells and herding reindeer. In the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century research has begun to acknowledge the differences between different Sámi groups and that Sámi have been interacting with different cultural groups for centuries. Moreover, the emphasis has moved towards perspectives that lie within the culture itself. Among the field of comparative religion, the change happened between the 1970s and 1980s when the research started to examine the

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<sup>3</sup> Pentikäinen 1995, 348-349.

religion from the perspective of Sámi themselves. Scholars have also rejected the old term Lappology and have replaced it with a new concept of multidisciplinary Sámi studies.<sup>4</sup>

In the Nordic countries Sámi pre-Christian worldviews have been studied in the field of religion ethnography and religion phenomenology. In Finland, especially Juha Pentikäinen and Risto Pulkkinen are specialists in Sámi religion. Pentikäinen (1995) has written an overall presentation about the pre-Christian religion of Sámis and Pulkkinen has contributed to the field for example as one of the editors of Sámi cultural encyclopedia (2005)<sup>5</sup>. The focus has additionally been in the relationship between the Lutheran Church and the Sámi. For example Ritva Kylli's doctoral dissertation *Kirkon ja saamelaisten kohtaaminen Utsjoella ja Inarissa 1742-1886* (2012) examined the encounters between the church and Sámi people in Utsjoki and Inari area. Even though Kylli's perspective is historical and deals only with the Evangelic Lutheran church and West Sámi groups, she manages to offer information about the encounters, which took place in Northern Finland between the church administrative and local Sámi people.<sup>6</sup>

During the last decade the interest in the Eastern Sámi group has grown among the scholars of indigenous religion.<sup>7</sup> The examination of the Skolt Sami Orthodoxy has, however, received less attention. Studies are often historical and the selected time period extends at the most to the 1970s, including Nils Storå's study on Skolt Sámi burial customs, *Burial customs of the Skolt Lapps* (1971). One of the Finnish pioneers on Kola and Skolt Sámi culture and history was linguist Leif Rantala. He for example worked as an editor for the publication *Dokument om de ryska samerna och Kolahalvön* (2006). Also anthropologist Erkki Asp (1982) has done field research among Skolts in the early 1980s and Päivi Holsti (1990) has written about the Suonjel Skolts and their resettlement period. Since the demarcation of the time period is limited, the description of religion's current status is also scant. Perhaps one pioneer in the Skolt Sámi religion is Jelena Porsanger (née Sergejeva<sup>8</sup>), who currently works as the head of the Sámi University College in Kautokeino, Norway, and has studied the Eastern Sámi traditions, religion and history, indigenous methodologies, traditional knowledge and indigenous epistemologies (see Sergejeva 1997, 2000 and Porsanger 2004).

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<sup>4</sup> Kulonen & Seurujärvi-Kari & Pulkkinen 2005, 5; Kylli 2012, 14;22.

<sup>5</sup> Pentikäinen 1995: Kulonen, Seurujärvi-Kari, Pulkkinen 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Kylli 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Sergejeva 2000, 5.

<sup>8</sup> I have used both names, depending which name she has used in her publications.

However, it should be noted that even though previous research on Skolt Sámi Orthodoxy is limited, the interest has increased. The Skolt Sámi Orthodoxy was of simultaneous interest for other scholars as well, since Elina Vuola conducted interviews partly at the same time as me for the Finnish Academy's research project *Embodied religion. Changing Meanings of Body and Gender in Contemporary Forms of Religious Identity in Finland* (Faculty of Theology, University of Helsinki). In her field work, Vuola concentrated on Orthodox Skolt women and their relationship and perceptions of the Virgin Mary. As such the focus on her study is more on Marian veneration but in her interviews the role of the Orthodox Church appeared as well.<sup>9</sup> I have shortly discussed my study with Vuola, and also used her interview in a local Inari-based newspaper as reference in my own study. In terms of Karelian Orthodoxy, Helena Kupari, also a member of Vuola's project, has studied the religion of Karelian Orthodox women. Her new dissertation thesis *Sense of religion – the lifelong religious practice of the evacuee Karelian Orthodox Women in Finland* (2015) studies the lifelong religious practice of the evacuee Karelian Orthodox women from the perspective of embodied religion.

Moreover, the Skolt Sámi have been studied more widely by other disciplines, especially by historians and ethnographers. Samuli Paulaharju, a self-taught folklore collector traveled a lot in the Sámi areas, along with writing narratives about Skolt Sámi (see Paulaharju 1921). However, these narratives are more literary than scientific. Pertti J. Pelto's anthropological doctoral dissertation '*Individualism in Skolt Lapp society*' (1962) offered useful insight about the attitudes and ideas from that period of time. Pelto did his fieldwork mainly in Sevettijärvi village, though, and during time when there was no road connection to the village. A more recent study was written by Panu Itkonen whose social and cultural anthropology doctoral dissertation *Skolt Sami Cooperation: Forms of Reciprocity in Work Situations of the Sevettijärvi Reindeer Herding Community at the Beginning of the 21st Century and Actions of State Administration* (2012) studies the Skolt Sámi community of reindeer herders and its relations to the state administration. Anni Linkola has studied Skolt Sámi community from socio-linguistic point of view in her Master's Thesis *Koltansaamen nykytilanne vähemmistökielenä Suomessa* (1996).

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<sup>9</sup> Vuola 2014, 12.

Nowadays, the emic point of view in research has increased. For example Irja Jefremoff has contributed to studying Skolt Sámi communities (see Jefremoff 2005, 2010). Also the previously mentioned Jelena Porsanger is an ethnic Skolt Sámi. In addition to these, some Master's Theses from different disciplines have been written by Skolt Sámi themselves (see for example Sanila 2007).

## 2.2. Key concepts

*Ethnicity.* The term ethnicity is a highly contextual concept and definitions have varied across different disciplines. Historian Sven Tägil states that the term *ethnic* has been employed to describe a social group with common descent, language and culture. However, he says there is a lack of agreement over which background variable should be a determinant in defining ethnicity. Are they innate or acquired characteristics which matter? These are of course theoretical considerations. Even if it's normal for human beings to be born into a group with a cultural heritage, it's possible to move into another group and become acculturated as well.<sup>10</sup> What is significant, though, is that an ethnic group does not exist because it differs from other groups on the basis of measurable and distinctive differences, but because people both inside and outside recognize it as a group of its own. The boundaries between ethnic groups are a central criterion for their existence. The definition of ethnic groups involves politics and decision-making.<sup>11</sup>

Definitions of the ethnic can be based on both subjective and objective criteria – on both what the actors themselves perceive their specific qualities to be (inner aspect) and on what the outside world can distinguish (external aspect).<sup>12</sup> In the case of Skolt Sámi, Sergejeva suggests that the inner aspect of ethnic identity would include for example the command of one's own language, knowledge of one's ancestry, cultural heritage (e.g. folklore and beliefs), traditions (national costumes, food tradition, traditional activities) and religious affiliation. External aspects would include for example opinions expressed by both inside and outside the ethnic group.<sup>13</sup> Sociolinguist Joshua Fishman says that ethnic identity is only one of the many kinds of identities individuals may display and be aware of - ethnic

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<sup>10</sup> Tägil 1995, 13.

<sup>11</sup> Kulonen & Seurujärvi-Kari & Pulkkinen 2005, 101.

<sup>12</sup> Jaago 1999, 117.

<sup>13</sup> Sergejeva 2000, 28.

identity is not an either-or-situation. Most Skolt Sámi identify themselves situationally.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, identification with an ethnic group can be based on different criteria. Some emphasize the language, some for example the descent.<sup>15</sup>

*Culture.* The term culture is central in this study since it was used in the interview accounts quite frequently. Moreover, the dynamics of the culture concept and the ways it is transmitted depicts the collective memory theory.<sup>16</sup> According to Richard Shweder, culture is the part of world view which is inherited from the past. In this sense, Shweder's view represents the concept of "original culture".<sup>17</sup> The modern culture analysis increasingly concentrates on meanings and definitions given by individuals themselves instead of visible signs and structures. In this way it is emphasized what the individual knows about his culture and how he identifies himself with it. Knowing one's own cultural background and growing into it, also known as enculturation, requires the individual to conceive the ensemble and notice the differences between one's "own" and "outside" world. This is the starting point in my own research as well. My respondents described the visible and structural phenomenon of their cultures similar to how for example Vermeersch (1977) has understood the concept and these are the tools by which an individual can understand both his own culture and the culture of others.<sup>18</sup> For the purpose of this study, the term 'culture' here will be defined as "a network of stories that hang together in order to create a cosmos of meaning for the members of a society".<sup>19</sup> This term highlights the lived experience of Skolt Sámi more correspondingly than more technical terms but I would also add here the social and generational aspect of culture. For example Adamson Hoebel (1961) has said that culture can live and maintain itself only through learning and passing on the knowledge.<sup>20</sup>

*Religion.* What do I mean when I speak of religion in this study? A very standard version for defining religion is through three concepts; the notions of transcendence, sacredness and ultimacy.<sup>21</sup> However, when dealing with indigenous peoples, the standard and often very Western way of defining religion can be problematic. Juha Pentikäinen, for example

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<sup>14</sup> Cadena 1995, 51; Fishman 2010, xxvii-xxix.

<sup>15</sup> Liebkind 1990, 23.

<sup>16</sup> Rodriguez & Fortier 2007, 10.

<sup>17</sup> Liebkind 1990, 21-22, quoting Shweder 1990.

<sup>18</sup> Vermeersch 1977, 14-15; 26- 53. See also Saressalo 1996, 51-52.

<sup>19</sup> Abalos 1995, 144.

<sup>20</sup> Hoebel 1965, 8.

<sup>21</sup> Porsanger 2004, 108, quoting Moyser 1991, 9.

prefers to speak of “life philosophy” or “a Northern state of mind” in the case of Sámi people. This kind of *ethnic religion* is an undefined part of the human mind - a way of living and feeling both as an individual but also as a member of a community. According to Pentikäinen, ethnic religion has existed in the human mind even though people have not been aware of it or it has not been named. It consists of traditional knowledge, maintained from generation to generation through oral or written folklore.<sup>22</sup>

However, since the Middle Ages and missionary history the word ‘religion’ in its official meaning has meant the Christianity in the Sámi area - and same goes for present day Sámi.<sup>23</sup> That being said, the ethnic elements of indigenous mythology and worldview are present in this study, since I think they are present in the minds of Skolt Sámi today – in a similar fashion like Pentikäinen described above. In this study I have chosen to use the term indigenous Sámi religion when speaking about the religious life of Skolt Sámi prior to Christianity but the main emphasis of the study is on the Eastern Orthodox Church among Sámi area and thus, on church-oriented religiosity. Furthermore, I am going to focus on the functional side of religion. According to Edvin Hernández the functional definitions of religion emphasize what religion does for the individual or a group with less emphasis on the actual content and character of religious belief. Hernández implies that one the most influential functional definitions of religion has been that of Clifford Geertz (1966) who said that religion is:

(1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.<sup>24</sup>

In my chosen definition religion is understood as a cultural force, which affects social groups and individuals and as such, the focus of investigation is also on the direction of cultural analysis. The benefit of the functional definition of religions is that it allows contemplating the cross-cultural and changing aspects of religion in a more comprehensive way.<sup>25</sup>

*The Orthodox Church.* Within the religious sphere the main emphasis in this study is the impact of the Orthodox Church to the culture of Skolt Sámi. The Orthodox Church of

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<sup>22</sup> Pentikäinen 1995, 30-31; Porsanger 2004, 107

<sup>23</sup> Pentikäinen 1995, 30.

<sup>24</sup> Hernández 1995, 64, quoting Geertz 1966, 4.

<sup>25</sup> Hernández 1995, 63. See also McGuire 1992, 13-14.

Finland is the second national church in Finland, alongside the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Church was previously called Greek Catholic Church and it became a national church from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, making a clean break with its Russian past and joining the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople as an autonomous archdiocese. There were 60 006 church members (at the end of 2014) in 24 parishes, scattered inside three dioceses.<sup>26</sup> The Parish of Lapland had 1 143 members at the beginning of 2014.<sup>27</sup>

*Sámi*. The question of ethnonym, the name applied to a certain group is vital when speaking of indigenous groups.<sup>28</sup> “Sámi” or *sápmi* is the concept the modern Sámi want to be used of themselves and nowadays this term has replaced the old-fashioned term *Lapp*, which many Sámi regarded as foreign. Moreover, Skolt Sámi call themselves in their own language *sää’mm*, meaning ‘Sámi’.<sup>29</sup> When referring to Skolt Sámi in this study, I have chosen to use the term Skolt Sámi or the shorter version Skolt. The definition of Sámi people is historically influenced by external factors, like laws and regulations. In the Nordic countries the Sámi definition is based both on subjective and objective criterions. In addition to self-identification of the person in question, the current act on the Sámi Parliament (974/1995) defines Sámi as follows:

- (1) That he himself or at least one of his parents or grandparents has learnt Sámi as his first language;
- (2) That he is a descendent of a person who has been entered in a land, taxation or population register as a mountain, forest or fishing Lapp; or
- (3) That at least one of his parents has or could have been registered as an elector for an election to the Sámi Delegation or the Sámi Parliament.<sup>30</sup>

It should be noted though, that during the last two decades the Sámi definition has been under discussion and criteria vary inside the Sámi communities as well. Regarding my study, however, the official definitions of Skolt Sámi are not relevant and I have not asked or emphasized this element when choosing the respondents. All my respondents have identified themselves as Skolt Sámi and this self-identification has been the most important criteria for me as a researcher.

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<sup>26</sup> Arvola & Kallonen 2010, 6; 32.

<sup>27</sup> Orthodox Church of Finland 2015

<sup>28</sup> Saressalo 1996, 208.

<sup>29</sup> Pentikäinen 1995, 22; Sergejeva 2000, 28.

<sup>30</sup> Act on the Sámi Parliament 1995

### 2.3. Aspects of collective memory

I have chosen to approach the role of Orthodoxy for Skolt Sámi from the point of view of collective memory theory. Among indigenous peoples the collective memory, or collective identity, idea of belonging to a chain of earlier generations, is a vital part of the indigenous cultures. Collective memory of culture in social theory emphasizes *anamnesis* – a Greek word, meaning “non-amnesia” the ability of not forgetting and thus it is a socio-psychological process that regenerates cultural present from its historical sources.<sup>31</sup> The public expression of the collective memory is the commemoration of “remembering together”, but the concept itself has a broader meaning. The basic parameters for the actual collective memory theory has been performed by Maurice Halbwachs in his work, *The Social Frameworks of Memory* (1925), translated into English in 1992. Halbwachs, a follower of Émile Durkheim, argued that memory was a social phenomenon, organized in light of “collective frameworks.” According to the collective memory theory, the reality of the past and the interpretations of the present create collective memory. However, there are different opinions on how much the past events influence the present collective memory.<sup>32</sup> In my study, the concept of what might be true and what really happened in the past are not relevant. Instead, I concentrate on the theme of the present significance of the past to the Skolt Sámi, and moreover how the remembering affects role of the Orthodoxy in the lives of Skolt Sámi.

The way we remember the past has an impact on the present moment, on the things we do and on the ways we live. According to Bruce Privratsky, the collective memory is a processing mechanism, which helps people to reach into their past. The idea of collective memory is that the past can be both idealized and criticized and in this way individuals can articulate their present and future.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, the nature of collective memory is not to preserve the past, but to reconstruct it. In my study a special emphasis is on the collective memory of culture and the social aspect of it. The collective memory, preserved by culture, is being negotiated and reprocessed by individuals, each in their own ways, throughout the lifetime of the individuals.<sup>34</sup> It should be noted though that a careful theory of collective memory observes individuals, not groups or societies. There can be no “Skolt Sámi religion”, only the religion of Skolt Sámi individuals, even when a term is used as

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<sup>31</sup> Privratsky 2001, 20; 247.

<sup>32</sup> Privratsky 2001, 19; Ritzer 2005, 116-117.

<sup>33</sup> Privratsky 2001, 19.

<sup>34</sup> Halbwachs 1992, 119; Privratsky 2001, 250.

shorthand manner to mean a representation. In this study I have quoted statements from Skolt Sámi respondents as examples, not as definitive.<sup>35</sup> However, while the personal memory is the cornerstone for collective memory, the memory cannot be interpreted apart from its social context. The way we remember is largely social. Religion, class and different social affiliations help to construct the manner in which memory is interpreted.<sup>36</sup>

The theory has many alternative terms in the literature, many of them used as synonyms for collective memory. Pentikäinen used the term generational memory when speaking about the inter-generational memory of Sámi people (1995). According to him the experience of generational memory is always both individual but also mutual with those, who share the memory, along with common experience and culture. Daniele Hervieu-Léger (2000) refers to cultural memory when she argues that it is a more extensive than the memory of any particular group.<sup>37</sup> All in all, the terms are overlapping and are also used simultaneously when speaking of a social memory of an individual and a group.

### **2.3.1. Collective memory and religion – a belief in belonging**

Frameworks for remembrance are provided by social institutions like religion, or family.<sup>38</sup> The concept of memory emphasizes religion's ability to establish connections and constitute identity.<sup>39</sup> The religion itself has a natural orientation for the past, for example Christianity essentially commemorates events of the life of Christ. At the source of religious belief is a belief in continuity of lineage.<sup>40</sup>

I also approach the concept of collective memory through the research of Danièle Hervieu-Léger (2000), whose work follows in the footsteps of Halbwachs but is more concentrated on the sociology of religion. According to Hervieu-Léger, the religious belief is built around the idea of a chain of memories, where a group of believers are connected together by past, present and future. By reinforcing the reference to a chain of memories, the individual consciously positions himself or herself within a community.<sup>41</sup> This remark

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<sup>35</sup> Privratsky 2001, 250.

<sup>36</sup> Rodriguez & Fortier 2007, 7-8.

<sup>37</sup> Pentikäinen 1995, 25.

<sup>38</sup> Coser 1992, 24.

<sup>39</sup> Assmann 2006, 31.

<sup>40</sup> Halbwachs 1992, 88; Hervieu-Léger 2000, 125.

<sup>41</sup> Hervieu-Léger 2000, 81-82; Davie 2000, vii; Kupari 2015, 181

confirms for example the argumentation of Abby Day who has said that in modern West one central form of believing is "belief in belonging", in other words belief in social communities. This is established for example through the act of claiming a particular ethnic or religious identity. This kind of ethno-religion is established, for example, with many Scandinavian countries with their relationship with Lutheran Church. Hervieu-Léger also remarks that chains of religious memory are often, to some extent, constructed. This means that memories are not, as such, about actual continuum but about symbolic lineages. This means that the connection to the so called childhood religion can be maintained even though the religious customs have gone through major changes.<sup>42</sup>

Hervieu-Léger points out that tradition has an obvious link with memory of religion. They both have the perception of shared understanding, mediated by a group of individuals. The tradition and collective memory similarly have the ability to become the basis of a community's existence and they both convey transcendent authority from the past.<sup>43</sup> According to Hervieu-Léger, tradition describes the images, behavior and attitudes which a group accepts in order to maintain continuity between the past and the present.<sup>44</sup>

Moreover, Hervieu-Léger extends the argument to also touch secularization theories<sup>45</sup>. She argues that modern European societies are not less religious because of increased rationality, but because they are less and less capable of maintaining the chain of religious memories. One of the chief characteristics of modern societies is indeed that they are no longer societies of inherited, reproduced memory.<sup>46</sup> I will analyse this concept more thoroughly in the analysis chapter 5.5.2 and link it to the context of Skolt Sámi.

### **2.3.2. Ethnicity and religion – a link to the chain of memories**

Religion can act as maintenance of ethnic identity and religious sentiments can be called upon to commemorate a sense of continuity.<sup>47</sup> Religion has the power to both unite and divide and for this reason religions are important tools in the constructions of both ethnic

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<sup>42</sup> Hervieu-Léger 2000, 81; Day 2011, 48-55, 156-158, 167-169, quoted in Kupari 2015, 181.

<sup>43</sup> Davie 2000, ix; Hervieu-Léger 2000, 86.

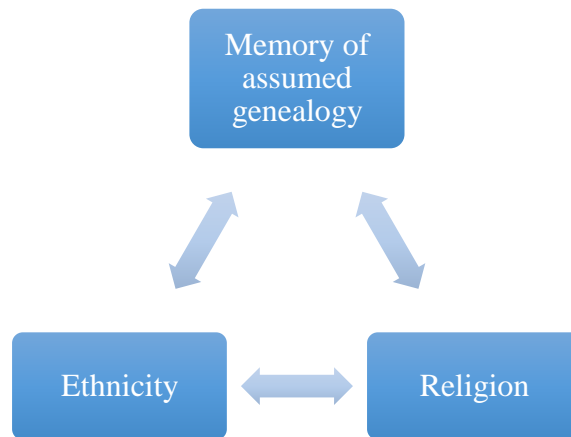
<sup>44</sup> Hervieu-Léger 2000, 87.

<sup>45</sup> In most cases, secularization has been regarded as a process, where the role of religions diminishes as a consequence for modernization. However, the development during the last half of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has challenged this view, since the role of the religions is on rise. Read more Ketola 2003, 87.

<sup>46</sup> Davie 2000, ix; Hervieu-Léger 2000, 123; 127; 129-130.

<sup>47</sup> Rutledge 1985, 67.

and cultural selves and in establishing boundaries between different groups.<sup>48</sup> When conducting the interviews and also later, when deciding the categories for the analysis I have partly used ethnic identifiers. Also for this reason the concept of ethnicity is integrated into my theoretical part of the study and analysis. According to Hervieu-Léger, ethnicity and religion establish a social bond on the basis of assumed genealogy (see the diagram below).<sup>49</sup>



This bond is based, on the other hand on naturalized genealogy (family relationship), and symbolized genealogy, which are constituted through symbols and narratives. These two genealogical systems overlap closely and reinforce each other. According to Hervieu-Léger, the process of affirmation of identity works best when both the ethnic and religious dimensions are activated.<sup>50</sup> Combining the methods of sociology of religion and ethnicity has many advantages, since they have overlapping qualities, to the point to even converging every now and then. According to Hervieu-Léger, they both offer the same sort of emotional response to the demand for meaning and both have an ability to re-establish a sense of 'we' and 'us'. Religion has the potential to play with development of ethnic identity.<sup>51</sup> Various studies also show that religion has an important role in the preservation an ethnic identity for example among immigrants in the United States (see for example Paul Rutledge 1985). Moreover, the parallel occurrence of ethnic and religious revival offers an interesting opportunity to study those two phenomena together, something I will scope out in the last analysis chapter.

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<sup>48</sup> Siikala & Klein & Mathisen 2004, 7-9.

<sup>49</sup> Hervieu-Léger 2000, 157.

<sup>50</sup> Hervieu-Léger 2000, 157.

<sup>51</sup> Hervieu-Léger 2000, 158.

There are different types of relationships between ethnicity and religion, depending on how big of a role religion has in defining the ethnic group and how tight their relationship is (See for example Harald Abramson 1980, Hammond & Warner 1993). Like with all typologies, however, they are static in nature and historically variable.<sup>52</sup> Two interesting types of definitions in regard to Skolt Sámi by Hammond and Warner are ‘ethnic religion’ and ‘religious ethnicity’. The former is perceived to be inheritable, the latter not.<sup>53</sup> Skolt Sámi have maintained the membership of the Church for many generations, and this would indicate that Orthodoxy is manifested in the style of ethnic religion for Skolts. However, religion is not necessarily always an ethnic marker and generational continuity of ethnic consciousness does not carry with religious consciousness.<sup>54</sup> In the case of Skolt Sámi for example it must be emphasized that not all Skolt Sámi focus their lives or identities on Orthodoxy. Religious group boundaries and ethnic group boundaries can overlap each other.<sup>55</sup> Hammond and Warner have depicted that assimilation and secularization have had an important effect on the relationship between ethnicity and religion during the last century by advancing individualism in societies - religion increasingly becomes a matter of individual choice and hence ethnicity will have a declining effect on determining religious identity.<sup>56</sup> This matter will be further analyzed in the analysis chapters.

### **3. RESEARCH CONTEXT**

In this chapter I will introduce the research context for my study. I will start by presenting a short look on the Skolt Sámi history. Since Skolt Sámi are a minority group, not necessarily that well known in Finland, I shall also briefly present cultural and religious background of the people in question.

#### **3.1. A short history of Skolt Sámi**

Skolt Sámi historically belonged to a larger Kola Sámi group living in the mainland of Kola Peninsula (see map). The traditional residential area covered Neiden<sup>57</sup> (Finn. Näättämö, in Skolt Sámi *Njauddâm*) and Pechenga district in the western part of the Kola

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<sup>52</sup> Kivisto 2007, 493-495.

<sup>53</sup> Hammond & Warner 1993, 66.

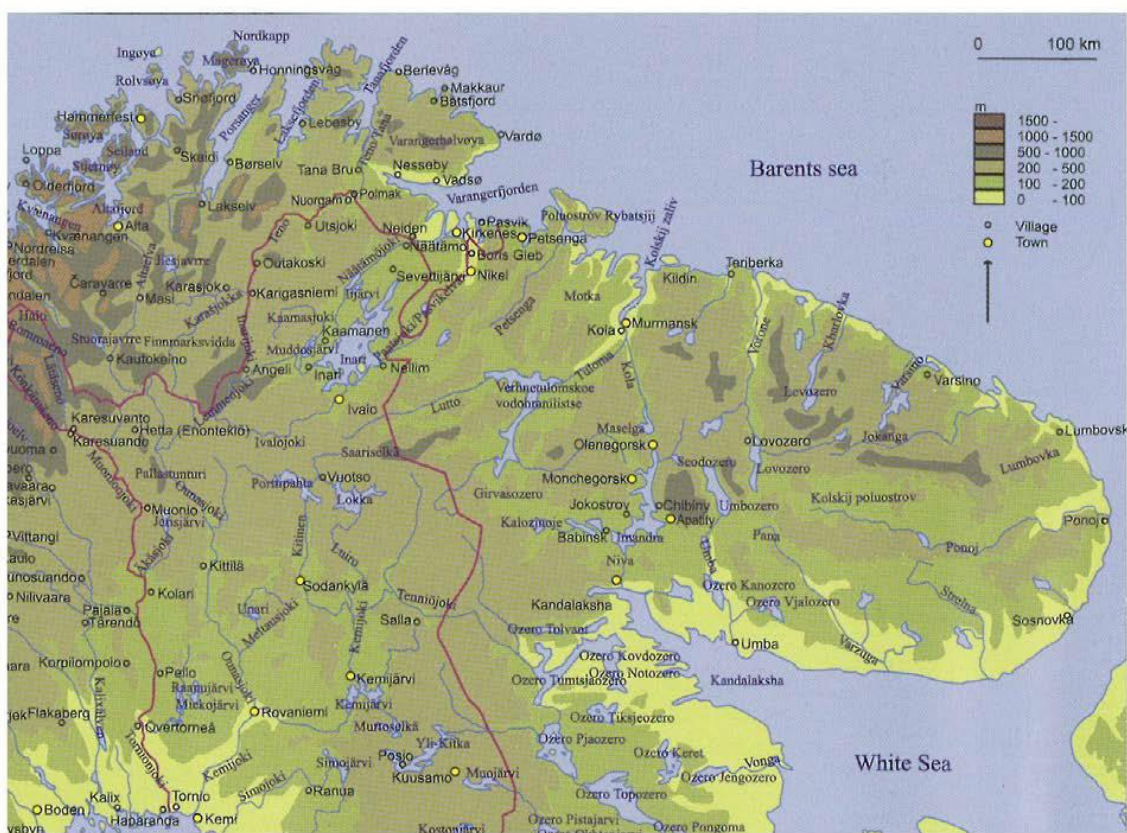
<sup>54</sup> McNamara 1995, 29.

<sup>55</sup> Kivisto 2007, 492.

<sup>56</sup> Hammond & Warner 1993, 66.

<sup>57</sup> I have used English versions of the place names whenever it was possible. Finnish name versions are marked as Finn., Skolt Sámi or other name versions are written with cursive.

Peninsula, in addition to Tuloma's Lapland. Due to the different national borders crossing over the area, the Skolt Sámi living in different parts of the Skolt land have been influenced by different nationalities. This has created regional differences in Skolt Sámi culture. The old Skolt land is divided between Norway, Finland and Russia, although the Norwegian Skolt community, based in the Neiden (Näätämö) village, is almost totally integrated into a Norwegian lifestyle. Conjointly, formerly vivid Skolt center, Pechenga no longer has any Skolt residents. In Russia, Skolts have mostly been moved to the inner land of Kola Peninsula.<sup>58</sup>



Map 1: The Kola Peninsula. © Kulonen, Seurujärvi-Kari & Pulkkinen, 2005.

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, new state borders were drawn between Russia, Sweden-Finland and Denmark-Norway, which divided the Eastern Sámi into territories of different states.<sup>59</sup> Most western Skolt Sámi became Norwegian citizens in the 1820's and the majority of the remaining population became Finnish citizens during years 1917 - 1940. In 1920 Soviet Russia ceded the area of Pechenga (Finn. Petsamo) to Finland as a

<sup>58</sup> Linkola & Linkola 2000, 158; Jefremoff 2010, 160.

<sup>59</sup> Aikio 2000, 42.

part of the Treaty of Tartu. On Moscow Armistice 1944 Finland lost Pechenga and Skolts were divided between three states, Finland, Norway and the Soviet Union. The villages of Muotka, Nuortijärvi, Hirvas and a small part of Suonjel stayed in the Soviet Union, whereas *siidas* of Paatsjoki, Pechenga and Suenjel were subsumed to Finland. Suonjel Skolts were forced to leave their traditional winter village for the eastern side of the border. New nation borders even separated families from each other – 35 Suonjel Skolts decided to stay in their traditional lands on the eastern side of border and they became Soviet citizens.<sup>60</sup>

The Skolts have been evacuated several times due to war, the first time during the Winter War in 1939 to the southern parts of Lapland and for the second time at the end of Continuation War in 1944 to central Ostrobothnia in western Finland. The Sámi evacuee process in 1944-45, a topic not that widely covered in academic studies, was a crucial historical landmark for the construction of the whole Sami identity. According to Veli-Pekka Lehtola, one cannot understand the modern Sámi culture without an understanding of the effect of the evacuee times on it.<sup>61</sup> The traditional way of life of Skolt Sámi had already begun to break down earlier but a definitive death blow came when Skolt Sámi settled to live among central Ostrobothnians, in the middle of the Finnish culture. The evacuee time was a step after which the change in Skolt Sámi community accelerated.<sup>62</sup> After the war a small generation gap emerged; younger Skolts were already integrated into the Finnish lifestyle and wanted to stay in Finland, whereas the older generation still longed for their old home. In order to keep the Skolt community harmonious, older generation agreed to stay in Finland.<sup>63</sup>

In the new environment in Finland the Skolt Sámi culture and language came under pressure of the dominant Finnish language and culture. Before their settlement to new areas to Finland, the Skolts have already been Finnish citizens and been in contact with Finnish people. However, the situation in new areas was different, since the connection to the traditional home area was lost. The Skolt Sámi had relatively few ways to preserve their culture. The Finnish government wanted to integrate minorities quickly and efficiently into the dominant society, and even though the intention was good, the

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<sup>60</sup> Linkola & Sammallahti 1995, 39-52; Lumisalmi 1996, 126; Linkola & Linkola 2000, 162; Kulonen & Seurujärvi-Kari & Pulkkinen 2005, 89.

<sup>61</sup> Lehtola 1994, 5.

<sup>62</sup> Pentikäinen 1995, 24-25.

<sup>63</sup> Lehtola 1994, 34; Linkola & Sammallahti 1995, 52; Linkola & Linkola 2000, 164; 174.

assimilation resulted in many cases in rootlessness. One example of this phenomenon comes from education, where the Sámi did not have a right to study and learn their own mother tongue.<sup>64</sup> The Finnish state provided Skolts with small estates and houses. According to special “Skolt law”<sup>65</sup>, established in 1955, these houses were to be assigned to Skolts only. The estates were about three hectares by size. Skolt lifestyle changed radically after the war. The traditional nomad lifestyle and winter village culture was no longer possible to maintain. Many Skolts had to abandon their traditional sources of livelihood and adapt to dominant culture livelihoods.<sup>66</sup> The biggest scars were left to the generation, which was born in the 50s and 60s. They lived in strain between the disparagement towards Skolts and older generations longing for Pechenga times.<sup>67</sup>

### 3.2. Skolt Sámi people and culture

The whole Sámi population was historically divided into social areas, called *sijdd* (siida). These entities, consisting of certain families and kin, can be defined as areas where Sámi practiced their livelihoods through specific councils. According to the needs of their way of living, the Sámi lived in different places at different times of the year. During the wintertime Skolts lived in common winter villages, and when the summer came, families moved into specific hunting and- fishing grounds. This traditional way of living remained in Suonjel the longest.<sup>68</sup>

Winter villages were social centers, where village meetings (*sijdsobbar* or *siidsååbbar* or *norraz*), took place and likewise priests and state officials conducted their tasks there – Suonjel had its own *chasovnya* (Finn. rukoushuone or tsasouna). In Kolttaköngas, Paatsjoki had its own priest and parsonage. Moreover, a winter village even had its schooling place for children.<sup>69</sup> Skolts have traditionally used a village administration model, where they choose a village representative, or Elder, for all Skolt Sámi for three years. This model is still in use. The village meeting, a common discussion forum and supervisor for things concerning Skolt Sámi, are held at least once a year. Meetings do not

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<sup>64</sup> Linkola 1996, 70; Kulonen & Seurujärvi-Kari & Pulkkinen 2005, 25.

<sup>65</sup> Finnish state enacted special laws to deal with things relating to Skolt Sámi.

<sup>66</sup> Linkola & Linkola 2000, 166.

<sup>67</sup> Semenoja 1995, 84; Linkola & Linkola 2000, 256.

<sup>68</sup> Nickul 1970, 20; Linkola & Linkola 2000, 163; Kulonen & Seurujärvi-Kari & Pulkkinen 2005, 90.

<sup>69</sup> Paulaharju 1921, 141; Tanner 1929, 140; 345; Nickul 1970, 37-42; Korhonen & Linkola, 1985, 159-160; Linkola & Linkola 2000, 163.

have any juridical power any longer, but they prepare statements and proposals for officials.<sup>70</sup>

Skolt Sámi belong linguistically and culturally to an Eastern Sámi group. Linguistically, other Eastern Sámi language groups are Akkala, Kildin, Ter Sámi and depending on the source, also Inari Sámi. The present languages fall into two sub-categories: the mainland group (Inari, Skolt and Akkala), and peninsula group (Kildin and Ter). The speakers of Skolt Sámi and those of Akkala Sámi could understand each other, while the speakers of Skolt Sámi and of Kildin Sámi could not. In terms of religion, language and customs and costumes, Skolts have more in common with Akkala and Kildin Sámis than with their western counterparts.<sup>71</sup> The influence of Russian on the Eastern Sámi languages became strong with Orthodox missionaries from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Parish schools teachers taught in Russian and on top of that church services were held in Russian. This along with the continual dealing with Russian-speaking population had a lasting effect on the syntax of eastern Sámi language and there was a great influx of loan words from Russian into Skolt as well.<sup>72</sup> For example the Skolt Sámi term for village council *siidsååbbar* has Russian origins since the word *sååbbar* developed from the Russian word *sobor* ('meeting').<sup>73</sup>

Until the beginning of the 1980s, the eastern Sámi languages were mainly spoken at home. In school legislation the teaching of the Skolt language was made possible from the 1980's onwards, before that all Skolt children were taught only in Finnish. The Skolt Sámi generation born in the 1930s and 1940s experienced great pressure from the dominant culture, both in Finland and in Russia, and this resulted in some Skolts refusing to acknowledge their Sámi background. Skolt Sámi in Finland wanted their children to speak Finnish in order to survive in the society. There are still about 250-300 Skolt Sámi speakers in Finland, and recent language revitalization projects are bringing more light on the situation. All those Skolts, who speak the Skolt language, are bilingual – in addition to Finnish and Skolt Sámi language, some can even master for example Russian.<sup>74</sup> Recently Sámi culture in Finland has had a really big boost, which has reached minority Sámi

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<sup>70</sup> Linkola & Linkola 2000, 447; Sergejeva 2000, 10.

<sup>71</sup> Linkola & Sammallahti 1995, 3; Linkola & Linkola 2000, 160.

<sup>72</sup> Kulonen & Seurujärvi-Kari & Pulkkinen 2005, Sergejeva 2000, 14.

<sup>73</sup> Sergejeva 2000, 10.

<sup>74</sup> Linkola 1996, 3

groups, too.<sup>75</sup> In 1993, during the International Year for the World's Indigenous People, the Finnish state provided funds for the Sevettijärvi language nest experiment. The language nest aims at keeping children in a totally Skolt language environment. These experiments have proved to be very successful. Along the language revitalization project, the Skolt identity has strengthened among younger generation Skolts.<sup>76</sup>

### 3.3. Introduction of Skolt Sámi religiosity

Before Orthodoxy came to the Skolt Sámi areas, the Skolts had their own religious traditions, where especially nature played an important part.<sup>77</sup> Nature phenomena were interpreted as actions of higher forces, and hunting-and fishing luck depended on the approval of that place's spirit. Every family had their own sacred places. *Seitas*, a word known in every Sámi culture, meaning a sacred place or a place of worship, were central in Sámi pre-Christian religion.<sup>78</sup>

During the Middle Ages Skolts started to get strong influence from other cultures and this influence revised their own culture as well. Even though Skolt Sámi retained their old beliefs and cult traditions until a very late period – in Suonikylä even until the Second World War – came Christianity in its Orthodox form to the Skolt Sámi area already at the beginning of the 14th century along with conventer Mitrofan, later known as Trifon. Also referred as the Enlightener of Skolt Sámi, Trifon did conversion work among the Skolts until his death in 1583. He established the Pechenga monastery in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. I will discuss the role of Trifon more in chapter 5.2.1 and the role of Pechenga monastery in chapter 5.3.3.

The missionary activities among eastern Sámi were brought up by Russian state politics together with the Russian Orthodox Church. The interests of those two institutions were bound together – the aim was to prevent the spread of non-Orthodox faith to the eastern Sámi land. In this way the Russian north-west border became a religious border as well. Most likely Skolts were in contact with Christian Karelians first, since many Skolt words for Christianity have similarities with Karelian. These words are for example *vierr*

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<sup>75</sup> Semenoja 1995, 83;

<sup>76</sup> Linkola & Linkola 2000, 254.

<sup>77</sup> Sergejeva 1995, 71.

<sup>78</sup> Törnqvist 1998, 79; Sergejeva 1997, 96-97.

(religion, in Karelian *viero*) and *kiirek* (church, Karelian *kirikko*, later *tserkov*).<sup>79</sup> In this way the grounds for spreading Christianity had already been prepared. Furthermore, the Russian language influenced the religious terminology due to Russian teaching and predominant culture in Kola Peninsula. Several monks who did missionary work settled down among the Sámi and learned their language. In addition to preaching about Christianity, the monks as representatives of monasteries used to promise protection for Skolt Sámi against attacks from the neighbours from the west, as well as help in cases of famine or other hardships. According to Jelena Porsanger, who has studied both Sámi narratives and Russian hagiographic literature, those Sámis who did not want to renounce their traditional religion, opposed Trifon's christening work. It is important to notice, that livelihood, the place of living, gender and other corresponding factors contributed a lot to how the Sámi adopted Christianity and how they viewed religion in general.<sup>80</sup>

The existence of "pagan" belief most likely helped the church to execute their mission in the early stage of missionary work, since the Sámi people were already tolerant to some kind of religious beliefs. Sámi people believed that all religions and gods were equally real. The church used this aspect as their advantage by explaining the new faith with the help of the old one. Russian church history uses the term "double religion" (*dvojeverije*) when describing the early years of spreading Christianity.<sup>81</sup> This was time for syncretic dichotomy. One reason for this was that ethnic religion passed on through its own language and folklore, whereas official religion presented itself through foreign language. This attitude changed when the church grew more powerful. Sámis needed to adopt the new faith more firmly and leave their old habits behind. Gradually the basics of Christian moral and Christian values became established side by side with Sámi cultural values and Christian notions gradually merged with Sámi beliefs, sometimes complementing them, sometimes changing them. This relationship is being discussed more thoroughly in chapter 5.2.2, where I am going to analyze the Orthodox funeral ceremonies in Skolt districts.<sup>82</sup>

In many Sámi villages there was no permanent church life. The priest visited the villages a couple times a year, received confessions, delivered Holy Communion and administered

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<sup>79</sup> To read more about the influence of Karelian culture in Skolt Sámi religious and secular matter, see for example Nils Storå (1971).

<sup>80</sup> Kylli 2012, 15.

<sup>81</sup> The syncretic co-existence and confluence of Christian and indigenous beliefs has been a great academic interest among scholars of Comparative Religion. Read more Pentikäinen 1995, 31.

<sup>82</sup> Panteleimon 1990, 5-6; Lumisalmi 1996, 129; Sergejeva 1997, 12-13; 18-19; 34-36; Sergejeva 2000, 23.

marriages and baptisms. Priests were not always received with a friendly attitude, since they often meant extra items of expenditures for families. Especially during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, church functioned as a tool for Russification, along as a progressive force, since it was the first educator in the far north. The mobility of Kola Peninsula population was extensive until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This meant that only a handful of people were in the church's daily orbit. The state and church together started to build more churches to Kola Peninsula to increase their authority in the area. Moreover, the rebuilding of Pechenga monastery started in the 1870-1880s. The same place also served as the location of Trifon's grave, which was a popular pilgrimage spot. It was said that every devout Sámi should go and bow to the relics of Trifon.<sup>83</sup>

In the Treaty of Tartu parts of Paatsjoki, Pechenga and Suonikylä Skolt Sámi population became Finnish citizens. Noteworthy is that Finnish Skolt Sámis could continue pursuing their religious affiliation, whereas in the Soviet Union religion was mainly practiced at homes only. In practice, though, things were not easy in Finland, either. When the area of Pechenga was given to the Soviet Union after the war, the connection with the Pechenga monastery was lost. Additionally, the Orthodox parish of Pechenga was disbanded, so Skolts were left with no place to have regular services. Before the wars, Skolt Sámi were part of the bishopric of Vyborg (Viipuri), and after the war they belonged to the bishopric of Helsinki. It was not until 1950 when the Orthodox Parish of Lapland was established, and even then the center for the Parish was in Oulu, which was not situated in traditional Skolt Sámi area. Building prayer houses took time and religious life faced hard times. Despite the hardships the Orthodoxy went through in post-war Finland it still remained as a factor, which reminded the Skolt Sámi of their roots and it was one of the few ways how Skolts were able to preserve their culture, for example their traditional way of living could not function as it did before. The Orthodox Church made it possible for them to meet regularly, when liturgies were held at private homes and it made them feel both religious and ethnic affiliation.<sup>84</sup> Jelena Porsanger states that the Orthodox religion appeared to be an own tradition for Skolt Sámi, which followed them to the new land after immigration.<sup>85</sup>

In post-war Finland, the greatest cultural riff in the religious field was between the evacuated Orthodox and the Lutheran locals. The general atmosphere of the nation

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<sup>83</sup> Sergejeva 1997, 100.

<sup>84</sup> Sergejeva 1997, 38; Sergejeva 2000, 26.

<sup>85</sup> Porsanger 2004, 119.

emphasized homogeneity and the Orthodox religion was often regarded as something Russian. In the 1960's the public image of the Orthodox Church grew better due to growing contacts with different cultures and the overall disintegration of homogenous national culture.<sup>86</sup> Gradually, the Finnish Orthodox Church made also some improvements to Lapland's situation. In 1969 the deputy bishop of the Finnish Orthodox Church, bishop Johannes was awarded with a title, "the bishop of Lapland" in order to remind of importance of Skolt people as a part of the Finnish orthodox community. A new Oulu bishopric was established in 1979, whose leader, metropolit Leo has contributed to deepening the religious life of Skolt Sámi. Nowadays Skolts have a prayer book and the Gospel of John has been translated into their own language. Moreover, an itinerant priest (Finn. *matkapapisto*) is situated in Ivalo, which covers the whole Skolt Sámi area and the northern Orthodox Lapland. Services are administrated in Ivalo and Sevetijärvi Church and in the church of Nellim (see picture 1 below), which honors the memory of Pechenga monastery and its founder, Trifon the Pechenga as well as Holy Trinity.<sup>87</sup>



Picture 1: Nellim church. Picture taken by author.

Sevetijärvi Church, first used as a prayer house and built in 1950, was consecrated as church in 1992. It was somewhat symbolic that the first Orthodox Church built in Lapland was not situated in the municipality center to Ivalo village but in the wilderness, in

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<sup>86</sup> Laitila 2009, 341-347. See also Kupari 2015, 84.

<sup>87</sup> Panteleimon 1990, 93-94.

Sevettijärvi, where the ethnically most unified Skolt Sámi group lived, those originally from Suonjel.<sup>88</sup> Sevettijärvi Church is dedicated to the Saint Trifon. Nellim Church was built in 1987 and it was consecrated in 1988. Ivalo Church was first built as a prayer house in 1960 and it was consecrated in 1994.<sup>89</sup>

Between 1983- 2014 the clergy had a Skolt cantor who contributed a lot to improving the Skolt Sámi language in religious life. In addition to Ivalo, both Sevettijärvi and Nellim also have their own graveyards. The size and incoherence of the parish are often a challenge for the itinerant priest. Annually the parish of Lapland celebrates the pilgrimage celebration of Trifon at the end of August in Nellim, Sevettijärvi and Neiden. The actual Commemoration Day of Trifon is celebrated on December 15<sup>th</sup>.<sup>90</sup>

Above, I have described the historical context of Skolt Sámi culture, their religious landscape and especially the trajectory of Skolt Sámi Orthodox community. This background information is necessary to understand the current state of Skolt Sámi culture and also the Skolt Sámi Orthodox community. The current life of Skolt Sámi is a product of history and the current status of collective memory a product of past experiences. Having introduced the social and cultural context of Skolt Sámi, I shall turn to the methodological part of my study.

## **4. METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION**

This study connects sociology of religion to the more traditional religion ethnography. The theoretical approach is based on the theories of the sociology of religion, but the methodological approach takes influence from the traditional religion ethnography. In this chapter I will present the research data and two central methodological concepts, the method used for data collecting and the interpretative method. A more thorough analysis on how the method is applied to the data is presented at the beginning of the analysis.

### **4.1. Research data and its credibility**

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<sup>88</sup> Kälkäjä 2002, 123.

<sup>89</sup> Kälkäjä 2002, 121-122.

<sup>90</sup> Linkola & Linkola 2000, 233.

The primary data for my study consists of ten half-structured thematic interviews, which were conducted during two periods of field work in Lapland. Each respondent was interviewed once. All the respondents gave their oral consent to do the interview. The first six in-depth interviews were undertaken over a period of three weeks at the end of May and beginning of June 2013 with respondents residing in villages of Ivalo, Keväjärvi, Nellim and Sevettijärvi. I interviewed five women and one man. The other parts of the interviews were conducted in late September and early October in 2013. During that time I interviewed five respondents, all men. During this second round I concentrated on getting more male respondents. I disregarded one interview from the original data, since it was rather short and did not contribute any further information in terms of the topic. Also initially I was supposed to interview one more respondent, but due to scheduling problems we could not find a suitable interview time for both of us.

When choosing the respondents, the level of religious affiliation of the persons was not a factor but all respondents are members of the Orthodox Church of Finland. Initially, I also had one Lutheran Skolt respondent, but decided to leave out the answers from my analysis, since I felt one Lutheran respondent would not be adequate to represent the Lutheran point of view in my study. For future research, the Lutheran perspective offers interesting baselines, though. The interviews lasted from 20 minutes to one and half hours. All the interviews were conducted and transcribed in their entirety in Finnish<sup>91</sup>, and those parts used in the research are translated into English. I have tried my best to ensure an understandable translation from Finnish to English, but at times it has been challenging to translate idiomatic expressions and culture-specific references correctly. Already when doing the transcriptions in Finnish, I chose not to include pauses and speech sounds. Moreover, the transcription is based on meanings. Sometimes in translation quotes I have used the letters M and R, to separate the interviewer (M) from the respondent (R).

When choosing the interviewees, I partly used the so called “snowball sampling”, which means that I discussed firstly with persons who were acquainted with the topic (key-informants) and asked them to recommend other persons to be interviewed. This kind of collecting is especially common among folkloristic field work in utilizing the in-group

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<sup>91</sup> The use of Finnish was a natural choice, since especially for the majority of younger respondents, Finnish was the mother tongue. Those respondents, who had learned Skolt Sámi as their first language, were still bilingual.

knowledge of the persons.<sup>92</sup> I also contacted people from my own initiative. My benefit was that I am originally from Lapland, so I already had some kind of knowledge of the Skolt Sámi people living there. The Skolt Sámi community is not a homogenous population and to guarantee I had a valid overall sample from the community, I chose respondents evenly from different villages, representing many different age groups. Respondents were almost all Orthodox Skolt Sámi residing in villages of Ivalo, Keväjärvi, Nellim and Sevettijärvi. Besides ethnic Skolt Sámi I interviewed Finnish people who were closely associated with Skolts and offered useful insight into the subject. The respondents were from various age groups, youngest being 26 years and oldest over 80 years old. (see the table presenting the age groups of the respondents below). Respondents' background varied. Some were well acquainted with Skolt Sámi culture and could be considered as cultural specialist, some on the other hand represented a more grass-root level stance on Skolt culture.

Table 1: Ages of the respondents

25-34 years	4
35-45 years	
45-54 years	1
55-64 years	2
65-74 years	2
75-84 years	
84-95 years	1
TOTAL	10

Respondents also represented evenly both genders; I interviewed five women and five men. Village-wise I have three respondents originating from Nellim, three from Sevettijärvi and three from Keväjärvi. Since the Skolt Sámi community is rather small

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<sup>92</sup> Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001, 59-60.

(according to *Saa'imi Nue'tt*, a Skolt Sámi Culture Association, there are about 600 Skolts in Finland, and 400 of those are living in the Skolt areas<sup>93</sup>) and people know each other well, I have chosen not to portray my respondents too thoroughly in order to secure their anonymity. In interview extracts I refer to the respondents with pseudonyms. I have tried to get as wide a representation of Skolt Sámi generations as possible but naturally my sample does not provide a realistic picture of the overall variety of Skolt Sámi religiousness. However, the present research produces only a partial account, a case study, of the role of the Orthodox Church among Skolt Sámi.

## 4.2. Researcher's position

Special emphasis in this study is on the research position and my own reflections on this matter. I'm a student of cultural and religious studies myself, whose roots lie in Ivalo. Already at the beginning of my university studies I was interested in the indigenous religion of Sámi, maybe because I wanted to get to know the cultural history of my home region better. I'm not a Skolt Sámi myself and not a member of the Orthodox Church, and hence as a researcher and as a representative of the majority I must be aware of my position, my personal biases and status. Questions of spirituality, religion and faith are emotionally loaded and they evoke feelings in people. When the object of research are the indigenous people, one must be extra sensitive. That being said, I hope my study helps to better understand the spirituality among Skolt Sámis and above all, gives recognition to Skolt Sámi themselves and to their vivid culture. All in all, I felt that all the respondents took the interview situation as a chance to pass on the knowledge of their own culture or inform the outside world about their small minority group. Indeed, many mentioned that Finns have defective knowledge about Sámi and especially about the smallest Sámi groups. In general, Skolt Sámi are historically a widely studied community, and couple of respondents mentioned this in the interviews.

I think the fact that I am not Skolt Sámi myself, was both an advantage and a disadvantage in the interview situation. On one hand, I was culturally – and to some degree, living currently in Helsinki, also geographically – distant enough from the Skolt Sámi culture to examine it objectively but on the other hand I also had some kind of “home field”

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<sup>93</sup> Saa'imi Nue'tt 2014a

advantage, being originally from Ivalo. Some themes might have been easier to speak for a non-Skolt than for someone coming inside the cultural group. The actual interview situations were quite easy for me to conduct, since I was familiar with place names and dialect words which occurred during the interviews, but at the same time I was also quite aware of my own status as a Finn, a non-Skolt, who was not an Orthodox either. Naturally, also my ethnicity plays a role in this research – a couple of times when conducting the interviews I got the feeling that some questions were found exciting by some respondents. Moreover, this situation put me in an interesting in-between position, since to some I was not entirely “foreign” but not totally local either. Some older respondents for example knew my parents or grandparents, but on the other hand especially to the younger respondents I was more an “other”.

### **4.3. Tool for collecting the data - thematic interview**

As a method, the definite benefit of interviews is the flexibility. It allows the researcher to deeper the information she is given by asking amplifying questions. Especially in thematic interviews the nature of the interview process allows the respondent to amplify her sayings according to how the phenomenon in question becomes concrete in her thinking. Thus the answers vary a lot depending on the respondent and her conditions. According to Hirsjärvi and Hurme, an interview is a good method when the research topic is multifaceted and there is not much previous research done on the subject. This is the case in my topic as well. Moreover, subjects displayed in the interview process can be easily positioned in a larger context. Within my research, the aim of the interviews can also be seen as an empowering method; the objects of the study become subjects, and they actively create meanings.<sup>94</sup>

According to Hirsjärvi and Hurme, a thematic interview is based on certain themes, not on specifically detailed questions. Such open questions will help in creating a versatile concept of the phenomenon and thus the interview situation is open to new perspectives. In my interviews I decided to concentrate on four themes: 1) Skolt Sámi culture, 2) Orthodox religion, 3) the meaning of Orthodoxy to Skolt Sámi and 4) the attitudes Skolts have faced from other Sámis and Finns (see the interview frame in the attachments). When forming the themes, I had a preliminary idea that Orthodoxy has a profound role in Skolt Sámi culture but I just needed to know how the role is being constructed and in which ways the

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<sup>94</sup> Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001, 35, 66-67.

Skolt Sámi themselves see the role in their lives. In this sense, I already began the analysis when deciding the interview themes. The respondents were asked about the role and significance of the Orthodox Church and religion, how Orthodoxy has been present in their lives, perceptions of Skolt Sámi culture and the role of Orthodoxy in it, as well as how they felt the role of Orthodoxy had changed over the years in Skolt Sámi community. Through these four themes I got to see how Skolts defined their ethnic and religious identity, how they saw the relationship between Orthodoxy and Skolt Sámi and how they perceived other people's attitudes towards them both as a representative of a religious and ethnic minority. I usually proceeded in a chronological order, starting from childhood memories and continuing to adulthood.

The focus of the thematic interviews is on the constructions and meanings the respondent create to the themes in question. At the same time it should be noted that during the interview situation new and collective meanings are being created. The thematic interview is also called a semi-structured method, meaning that the basic idea of the thematic interview is that the themes of the interview are the same for all respondents. Therefore, the significance of the interviewer is vital in the interview situation. Even though I had preliminary themes and questions in mind before each interview, the actual interviews always went beyond these original thoughts. I also adapted my questions according to the respondent in question and in the interview situation the question frame worked mostly as a checklist to keep track of the themes. Sometimes I skipped some questions and constructed new ones on the spot. Conjointly, with some of the respondents certain themes were more emphasized than others and I usually let the respondent lead the conversation.<sup>95</sup>

The interviews were conducted either at the respondents' homes or at their work places. In an interview situation it has to be noted though that whenever we deal with subjective aspects of identity, all information about the consciousness of other people - even if it is in the form of self-reports - is indirect and must be interpreted through inference.<sup>96</sup> Respondents can give socially acceptable answers as well and some topics or experiences can be sensitive ones, which are not wished to be spoken about to outside researcher. Moreover, it should be noted that since Skolt Sámi are a very widely researched people, this has an effect on the present research situations; the respondents can to some degree

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<sup>95</sup> Hirsijärvi & Hurme 2001, 34, 41, 48-49.

<sup>96</sup> Lange 1981, 187.

describe themselves in the light of previous ethnographic literature instead of in the light of their own religious experiences.<sup>97</sup>

#### **4.4. Method for data analysis - qualitative content analysis**

Besides a theoretical and methodological approach, all scientific inquiry requires an interpretative perspective as well. Data does not speak for itself, but the researcher constructs it.<sup>98</sup> I have chosen qualitative content analysis as a method for analyzing my research material because I am particularly interested in meanings and symbolic qualities in the narration of Skolt Sámi when they express their opinions of the Orthodox Church and faith as a part of their lives. Qualitative content analysis is also a good method to do exploratory work on multifaceted and often unknown phenomena.<sup>99</sup> According to Margit Schreier qualitative content analysis (QCA) describes the meaning of qualitative material systemically by adapting parts of research data to the categories of the coding frame. In other words, the method cuts across data and searches similar patterns and themes.<sup>100</sup>

Qualitative content analysis developed originally from quantitative content analysis, which was used for example in communication studies.<sup>101</sup> Whereas the quantitative content analysis focused on counting words or codes – in other words, literal meanings - the qualitative version developed more towards sociology and focused on latent perceptions. However, it has been only quite recently that QCA has been described as a distinct method, especially in the Anglo-American literature (see for example Elo & Kyngäs 2008; Hsie & Shannon 2005). Before that the QCA was usually used as a synonym for a wider umbrella term, content analysis. In Europe, the method has been better acknowledged but within the context of qualitative research, content analysis is still a more widely used concept in literature.<sup>102</sup> Qualitative content analysis shares many characteristics with quantitative content analysis. It for example offers a possibility to find a theme based on the frequency of its occurrence. However, it should be noted that some aspects of meaning may appear only once, but they still hold an importance for the whole analysis and especially in relation to the research questions.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Privratsky 2001, 10.

<sup>98</sup> Hernández 1995, 71; Schreier 2012, 1-2.

<sup>99</sup> Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas 2013, 399-400.

<sup>100</sup> Schreier 2012, 1; Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas 2013, 398.

<sup>101</sup> Schreier 2012, 18.

<sup>102</sup> Schreier 2012, 14-15.

<sup>103</sup> Schreier 2012, 13; Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas 2013, 399; 403.

There are different variations of QCA, but all different styles share the systematic nature of data interpreting. All the material is examined, but the researcher decides on which parts the coding frame is used. In literature QCA is often characterized as a descriptive analysis method, but depending on disciplinary, there are also opinions, which acknowledge the interpretative nature of QCA as well (see for example Krippendorff 2004). Regarding my own material I have used the QCA in a descriptive way in order to know what is being said about the different themes and to conceptualize these notions. The interpretative part came later on in analysis, when I utilized the theoretical framework in my analysis but also the theory is adapted to the material in question, hence the QCA guarantees the data-driven nature of analysis.<sup>104</sup>

Tuomi and Sarajärvi describe the content analysis as a process, where the gained data is being cut into smaller pieces, after which it is conceptualized and re-assembled to a logic ensemble. The research results are an outcome of the researcher's own interpretation and reasoning.<sup>105</sup> The first step of qualitative content analysis is to carefully read through the material and produce a coding frame, which is usually data-driven. The coding frame is dependent on the context and research questions define the focus point in the material. The main categories, also called 'dimensions' of the coding frame, are the aspects on which the analysis is focused. The material is then classified according to coding frame. The advantage of the QCA is that it reduces the data, limiting the focus only on those aspects, which are relevant regarding the research questions. Noteworthy is that the coding frame can be tailored and reshaped at any stage of the analysis. This guarantees the flexibility of the analysis method but also the validity of the data.<sup>106</sup>

However, there are parts where my use of QCA differs from the standard style and moves more into the direction of a thematic analysis.<sup>107</sup> Usually in QCA, peer-coding is recommended in order to guarantee the consistency of interpretations. For this kind of reliability checking I did not have any resources. Instead, I needed to trust my individual understanding of the phenomenon, something which is also worth of consideration in

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<sup>104</sup> Schreier 2012, 3-8.

<sup>105</sup> Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 108;112.

<sup>106</sup> Schreier 2012, 1-9; 35; 59;61.

<sup>107</sup> Boundaries between these two approaches are not always clearly specified and they are often used interchangeably. To read more about differences and similarities between content analysis and thematic analysis, read Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas 2013.

QCA. Also, in the later parts of the analysis, my coding frames were partly concept-driven, utilising the theoretical framework of collective memory. This can also be called hypothesis testing, since theory validates the concept-drive parts of the coding frame.<sup>108</sup>

In the next section I move forward to the analysis part. I will start the analysis by explaining how the current analysis categories were formed – in other words, how the qualitative content analysis actually worked in action.

## **5. ANALYSIS: THE ORTHODOX CHURCH AS A PART OF THE COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF SKOLT SÁMI**

The analysis process of my research data has partly started when deciding the interview themes (see the chapter on thematic interview). Already then I have brought forward my previous knowledge of the research context and constructed a perception of the phenomenon. Content analysis gives tools for researcher to make conclusions based on the relationship between the research data and the research context and this was the case also with my data.<sup>109</sup> I had some preliminary theoretical assumptions and hypotheses in my mind when conducting the interviews. From previous literature I had read that the Orthodox Church has historically had an important role among Skolt Sámi and therefore I was interested in the relationship of ethnic identity and religion. As such, my research method was not entirely inductive. However, like often in interview situations, some of these hypotheses were confirmed, some not.

At the beginning of the interview process my ideas concerning the research were not totally formulated. I was interested in how the Skolt Sámi see the role of Orthodoxy in their Sámi identity but the approach was still unclear to me. After collecting the empiric data, my analysis proceeded to forming a coding frame. After finishing the Finnish transcriptions I reduced the collected data by creating English summaries of each interview. While doing this I also separated different themes from each interview. Even though the questions were asked according to specific themes, in interview situations the discussion does not follow a logic order. Therefore in content analysis analyzing interview

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<sup>108</sup> Schreier 2012, 6; 16.

<sup>109</sup> Schreier 2012,

material requires careful reading.<sup>110</sup> After reduction, I clustered the data - the meaning of clustering is to create a structure for the research.<sup>111</sup> The way I did this was by printing out all the English transcriptions, separating all distinctive themes and placing similar themes in their own groups. The working method was laborious but visual. Forming the categories is considered to be the most critical phase of the analysis. In this phase the researcher decides how the relevant data is being formed in a way that they answer the research questions in the best possible way. It can be said that the clustering starts the *abstraction* - the phase where the researcher moves from the original expressions used in the data to theoretical concepts and conclusions.<sup>112</sup>

Carefully reading the transcripts and utilizing the previous conceptualization on the material, I translated all the meanings in my material into categories of a coding frame. The coding frame consisted of three thematic main categories: 1) the Skolt Sámi culture, 2) Orthodox faith and 3) Skolts' relationship with others and also of smaller sub-categories, like the differences between the past and the present, locality, narrations, symbols etc. (a list of code structures, in different stages is presented in Attachment 3). Secondly, I classified all the similar parts of material according to the categories. For example, when I asked how Orthodoxy was visible in respondents' childhood, I collected similar characteristics under the same category, looking for similar themes. This way I reduced the material by focusing only on specific characteristics.

When forming my analysis, I have used both inductive and deductive approaches. In the first steps of analysis the inductive approach came quite naturally, since I had used the thematic interview method when conducting the interviews and hence the themes formed a natural baseline for the coding structure as well. However, in the later parts, the approach took a more deductive nature when I applied the theoretical framework in my material. As a result, the coding frame took a new form (see the last diagram from attachments). The choice of theoretical framework rose from the material and guaranteed a more detailed analysis. Even though my respondents did not use the term 'remember' actively in their interview accounts, the ways they told about the role of Orthodoxy was in many ways similar to anamnestic culture characteristic for collective memory. Orthodoxy was remembered not just through words (narrations) but through a socialization process,

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<sup>110</sup> Eskola 2001, 143.

<sup>111</sup> Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 110.

<sup>112</sup> Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 111.

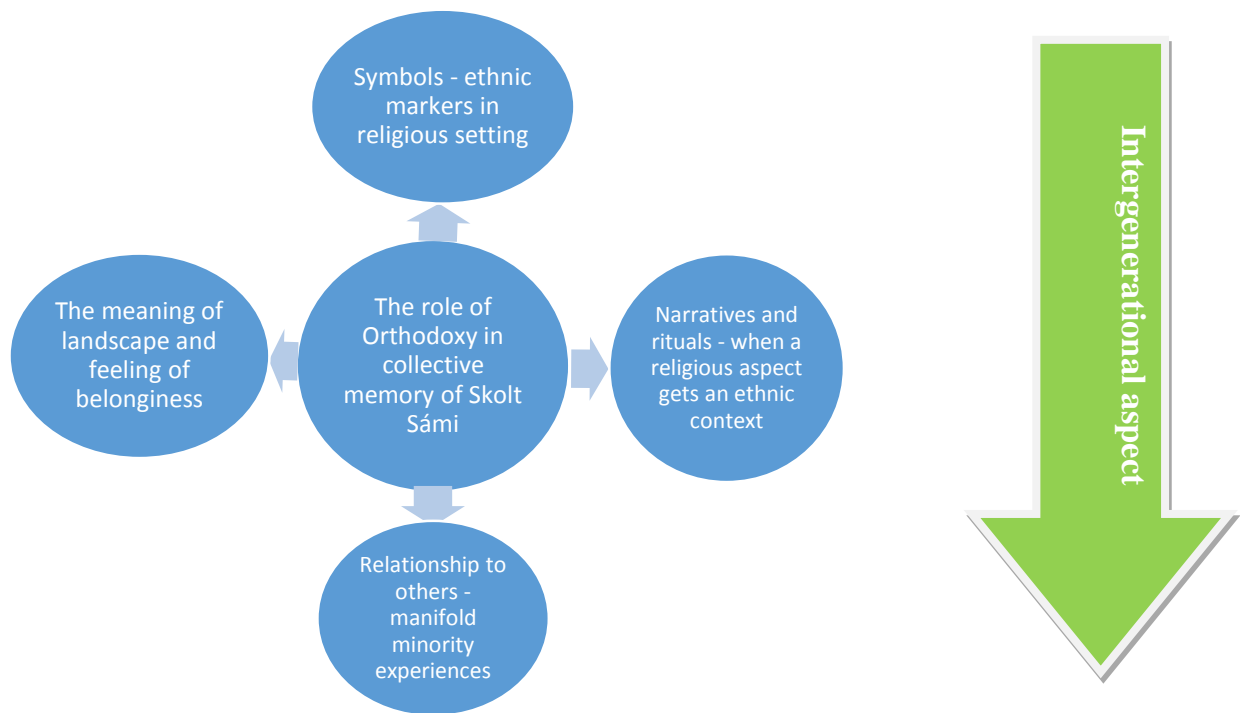
symbols, language, acts of worship and also in constructing a Skolt minority position to different groups. Hence, my study is theory related in a sense that theory affected how I interpret the themes but themes did not straight-forwardly rise from the theory or are based on the theory.<sup>113</sup>

My intension with the research data was to form a profound analysis, which would describe the diversity of the phenomenon. In my analysis I present one interpretation for the construction of Orthodox collective memory of Skolt Sámi Orthodoxy. The analysis is presented from four angles; from the perspective of symbols, rituals and narrative, from the point of view of landscape and feeling of belonging and also from the minority point of view, highlighting the relationship of Skolt Sámi with other groups and studying the many minority positions of Skolt Sámi. The first two analysis categories study how the collective memory of Orthodoxy is interwoven to the concept of ethnicity and cultural heritage and they present two point of views on how to contemplate this: first analyzing how ethnic symbols are being brought to the religious sphere (chapter 5.1.) and on the other hand, how the religious aspect gets an ethnic context (chapter 5.2.). In chapter 5.3 I examine the concept of locality and belongingness in the construction of collective memory. Furthermore, the collective memory is always founded in relation to other groups. With Skolt Sámi their various minority positions present many angles for analysis, which are reflected in chapter 5.4. Finally, a cross-sectional point of view in all these aspects is the chronological role of collective memory and the differences between different Skolt generations who have been living in Finland since their settlement after the Second World War. This genealogical aspect is studied in the last analysis chapter.

*Graphic: How the role of Orthodoxy in the collective memory of Skolt Sámi is constructed.*

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<sup>113</sup> Eskola 2001, 136-137.



## 5.1. Symbols – ethnic markers in religious sphere

Symbols are important in representing religious and ethnic identity, particularly in post-modern age.<sup>114</sup> Usually religion is made visible through some external symbols, like having icons at home, wearing crosses or sometimes doing the sign of the cross. These concepts contain the idea of continuity. Naturally symbols have a different meaning to different people. To older Sámi generations these symbols might resemble the past time in Kola Peninsula, whereas younger people do not anymore have memories of those times but instead they build new meanings to symbols.

Erik H. Cohen describes how a loss of traditional homeland and language, intermarriage, and changes in daily life may all survive if an individual is able to communicate with one another through a set of mutually understandable symbols expressing its sense of belonging, history and place.<sup>115</sup> This applies to Skolt Sámi as well. Even though Skolt Sámi nowadays might have a different place of residence, a level of knowledge of the language and they may present their ethnicity in different ways, some cultural expressions are accepted as common identity symbols.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, these can be called inner ethnicity symbols, which form a clear minority lore, a characteristic for minority groups

<sup>114</sup> Cohen 1978, 387.

<sup>115</sup> Cohen 2008, 294.

<sup>116</sup> Siikala, Klein & Mathisen 2004, 8.

when describing their cultural disparity.<sup>117</sup> Moreover, like Cohen points out, recent generations have had more opportunities to choose how to live and think about their identity than were available in the past, although the level of freedom varies from place to place.<sup>118</sup>

At the same time, when discussing symbols in the context of collective memory, it is important to acknowledge that collective memory is primarily affective and secondarily cognitive. The religious memory in particular can be quite non-specific and the symbols only weakly specified in cognitive terms.<sup>119</sup> Furthermore, the Orthodox religion, like the whole Skolt culture, has been traditionally learnt at home and seldom verbalized. Elina Vuola mentioned that “when the religion is part of the culture, which is learnt and internalized, it doesn’t have to be or even ought to be explained”.<sup>120</sup> The answers of my respondents supported this view. “I cannot explain it”, was the answer many times when asked about religious or Skolt Sámi culture traditions. The culture is everyday reality for them, thus it is difficult for them to step outside and observe their position from an outsider’s point of view. Furthermore, the fact that they could not find words for describing the visibility of their culture was a finding. Additionally, speaking of religion and other abstract elements is challenging and this I also noticed in my own field work. It was clear that for some talking about religion was more uncomfortable than for others. Some respondents gave lengthy narratives and some answered just with a couple of sentences. Additionally, I noticed that especially the elder respondents, who most likely have been interviewed by previous researchers as well, were somewhat familiar with the interview situation. They also were more eager to speak outside the interview frame. Also, it became clear in the interview situation that some themes were not totally clear for the respondents - the questions might have been spoken in an unclear academic language or some questions were defined in an unsatisfactory way.

Despite the challenges of verbalizing the manifestation of Orthodoxy in Skolt Sámi culture, I was able to pinpoint some artifacts that have a culturally symbolic value for Skolt Sámi. In the first chapter as primary factors I have chosen to analyze a set of religious based cultural identifiers, symbols that manifest descent. These are, on one hand, visible artifacts like wearing the traditional dress in liturgies, in addition to religious elements in

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<sup>117</sup> Saressalo 1996, 331.

<sup>118</sup> Cohen 2008, 299.

<sup>119</sup> Privratsky 2001, 21.

<sup>120</sup> Vuola 2014, 12.

traditional dresses, but on the other hand abstract symbols like language as a part of the liturgy. The following symbols, presented in the following chapter, are not in an enumerated hierarchy but instead they represent the inventory of cultural value represented by local voices. Furthermore, they were not the only symbols distinguished from the interview accounts, but something which were frequently mentioned.

### 5.1.1. Visible signs – example of Skolt Sámi traditional dress

Both ethnic affiliation and other forms of membership are expressed in signs, which are distinctive from one another.<sup>121</sup> Religious artifacts, like icon corners in households, *grobus*<sup>122</sup> have a strong eastern influence and thus they remind Skolt Sámi of their past and history.



Picture 2: *Grobu*, a small decorative tomb in Nellim graveyard. Picture taken by author.

One of the most typical external symbols is clothing. The traditional Skolt dress is a distinctive ethnic marker, which states both individual and group identity. As maybe one of the most visible and most well-known part of Skolt Sámi culture, the dress has a long history and functions as an important tradition carrier. The dress identifies the person wearing it as a member of the community.<sup>123</sup> When asked which elements represent the Skolt Sámi culture, the traditional Skolt Sámi dresses were one of the most frequently

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<sup>121</sup> Kulonen & Seurujärvi-Kari & Pulkkinen 2005, 101-102.

<sup>122</sup> *Grobus* are small memorial huts of rounded logs, which are built over the grave for the deceased's soul to stay in graveyards. See picture 2.

<sup>123</sup> The Sámi Parliament 2010

answered responses. The dress is also visible in the religious sphere.<sup>124</sup> When respondents recalled their childhood memories from church liturgies, spontaneously the answer often was that people had their finest outfits in the church:

### **Quote 1**

I don't remember how often we visited the church...But every time we went there, especially the elder people had their finest clothes on them, the best scarves and so on. For them it was a special occasion.

**Jussi**

Going to church meant using "a special Sunday suit", the best costume from the wardrobe. For Skolt Sámi women it meant having the best dress and for wives it meant wearing their headgear. Nowadays, the Skolt dress is used mostly during festivities, most of them family celebrations, like weddings or baptisms.

### **Quote 2**

R: All the festivities were something, one had to dress differently. The wives were always wearing the headgear, but in terms of clothes there was a separate festivity dress, both children and wives. It was important.

M: What was the most important piece of clothing in festivities?

R: Well, it was a dress, you had to wear that. It was a sign that now we are leaving to church.

**Kerttu**

Additionally, the Skolt Sámi dress is a boundary marker in relation to other Sámis, since it differs from other Sámi dresses. The Skolt dresses are traditionally decorated with beads, which are not common among other Sámi groups in Finland. A Skolt woman outfit consists of a dress (*kå'htt*) similar to Russian peasant *sarafan*, a blouse (*kuurta*) and a belt (*pe'sserpuä*), decorated with beads. In addition women have a horned hat, possibly the most distinctive element in the Skolt traditional outfit. According to Jukka Pennanen, the headgear of Skolt women contains elements of Karelia, Russia, Komi and even Nenets elements can be found. Headgears indicates the marital status of the woman.<sup>125</sup> A hat for an unmarried woman, *pee'rvesk*, has a red felt and has only the brow part but married women and widows wear a headgear, which covers the whole top of the head.<sup>126</sup> A wife's

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<sup>124</sup> However, it must be emphasized that the use of traditional Skolt dress does not limit to religious sphere only - naturally I have included to this analysis only those spheres relevant to my study. Nowadays the Skolt dress is being used for example in different conferences, meetings and cultural events, where the dress carrier represents Skolt Sámi people. Read more Sámi Duodji 2015b.

<sup>125</sup> Pennanen 2003, 82.

<sup>126</sup> Kulonen & Seurujärvi-Kari & Pulkkinen 2005.

headgear, *šaamšik* (see picture 3 below) is made of red cloth and decorated with different-coloured pearl embroidery.



Picture 3: A married woman's headgear, *šaamšik*. Picture taken by author.

The headgear has a “horn” standing up above the woman's forehead. The widow's headgear, *poo'vdnek* (picture 4 below), is darker in color and has none of the decorative elements of the married woman's headgear.<sup>127</sup>



Picture 4: A widow's headgear, *poo'vdnek*. Picture taken by author.

Furthermore, the beading figures on women's headgear have some influence from the Orthodox Church on them for example in the form of crosses. Different Skolt families used to have their own styles for beading, but recently the models have also been mixed and

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<sup>127</sup> Itkonen 1958, 401; 544; Storå 1971, 246.

unified standard models have been emerging.<sup>128</sup> Kerttu told about the headgear figures as follows:

### **Quote 3**

M: Is there some kind of meaning behind these figures?

R: Yes there is. Quite many of these are related to Orthodoxy. And it is so, that married women's hair are supposed to be hidden, so therefore we have the scarf. Except it is not the scarf which covers the hair but this headgear.

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M: Do you recognize specific villages from the headgear models?

R: I would say that there are some differences between the villages.

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R: I have took some influence from my mother's headgear, so it represents more the Pechenga model. So there are many different kinds of models. Each village has a bit of a different style....someone does it like this and someone else a bit differently. But all the models are old Orthodox ones.

**Kerttu**

It is not known to which historical period the Christian symbols of the headgears date back but the headgear is certainly another way how the Skolt Sámi cultural tradition and influence of the Orthodox Church are interwoven.

Kerttu also mentioned covering the head. This theme was brought up by another respondent as well, who was told by an old craft maker that the reason for covering the head is that the expensive "married hair" can be admired by the husband only.

Traditionally the married women's headgear is worn with a scarf, even though this tradition has been changing recently. The Skolt Sámi dress, just like other Sámi dresses, have unwritten norms related to them and wearing the scarf has been one of these. Hence, the choice to wear or not to wear scarf has raised some discussion among the Skolt community.<sup>129</sup> In terms of church sphere, the use of a scarf is similar to Karelian tradition and resembles also the Russian churchgoing culture:

### **Quote 4**

Well, I only know that some elder people have some strict rules regarding the use of a scarf. I think this restricts the use so that younger people do not wear it at all, since they feel they make mistakes. I'd like that there would be some relaxation about this. Otherwise, the scarf thing might come from Russia, where the use of a scarf is still in use, unlike in Finland or Greece, or among the Middle-East Orthodox, or in Romania. The Russians almost require that women cover their head in church. So for them it is a taboo, in Russian monasteries they have scarves at the monastery gates.

**Matti**

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<sup>128</sup> Sámi Duodji Ry 2015 (Association for Sámi handicraft)

<sup>129</sup> Sámi Parliament 2010; Saa'mi Nue'tt 2015b

The use of Skolt Sámi dresses has changed quite radically since post-war times. The wardrobe used previously as an everyday costume is today usually worn only in special festivities. Especially during the evacuee times, the use of the Sámi dress changed radically – many Sámi used Western clothes for the first time during that period. Due to the lack of available materials, the use of Western clothes continued also after the evacuee period in Lapland. In post-war Lapland, also the school system and boarding houses affected how Skolt Sámi would dress themselves. Since most of the Sámi children lived in boarding houses, away from their family and traditional culture, the contact with the Sámi culture was broken.<sup>130</sup> However, especially in Sevettijärvi, remotest of the Skolt villages, the Skolt dress has still been in daily use quite recently. Jussi, recalled that in his childhood in the early 1980s especially elder women still wore the Skolt dress as an everyday costume:

### **Quote 5**

For the elder women, the Skolt dress was an everyday dress. So when you went to the store or something there were these, mostly grandmother-aged, wearing Skolt dresses [...] Especially if there was a special occasion, then everybody wore their best dresses. So, I guess that is the thing which has struck me most from childhood.

**Jussi**

Clothing has power to maintain cultural identity. By using the traditional dress, Skolt Sámi represent their own family, area and people. One of the spheres where traditional Skolt dresses are present today are the biggest family or Church celebrations, like in weddings or funerals. Thus, the Church can be considered a performative arena for Skolt ethnic identity through the use of the traditional costume. At the liturgies the costume distinguishes Skolt Sámi from the Finnish Orthodox and in other spheres also from other Sámi. The role of the dress is even more emphasized in today's society, where the normal everyday clothing of Skolt Sámi does not differ from the average Finnish one. However, it is the special occasions, where the dress is used. Attending church ceremonies in traditional dresses could be seen as an identity statement and through the use of dresses, Skolts state their respect both for the event and for their own culture. Simultaneously, by using the dress the Skolt Sámi actively perform the collective memory of Skolt Sámi culture in an Orthodox environment.

### **5.1.2. Abstract symbols – example of Skolt Sámi language**

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<sup>130</sup> Sámi Duodji 2015b

One example of a cultural feature, which stores collective memory, is language, which conjointly strongly determines, represents and maintains ethnic affiliation.<sup>131</sup> There are elements in the phases of the liturgy service, which are specifically designed to interrelate the Skolt Sámi culture and Orthodox belief system. The most significant would be the use of the Skolt language as a part of the liturgy. At the church, the liturgies have mainly been conducted in Finnish, but the priests have occasionally used Skolt Sámi. In the Orthodox Church the meaning for services held in Skolt Sámi language is to preserve the community and its traditions and, as such, they enunciate that enduring presence. In the style as with the traditional Skolt Sámi dress, the use of Skolt Sámi language makes the church also a performative arena for Skolt Sámi identity; the group is identified with both Skolt Sámi and Orthodoxy.<sup>132</sup>

The memory has the power to transmit emotional messages and feelings through language.<sup>133</sup> Before the Skolt Sámi language was used in liturgies the official religion most likely was experienced more alien because it had been related to the dominant majority culture.<sup>134</sup> In Pechenga the traditional language for liturgies was Church Slavonic.<sup>135</sup> Mirjam Kälkäjä mentions how the discussion about using Skolt Sámi in liturgies had been ongoing already in Pechenga. The longtime priest both in Pechenga and later in the Finnish Lapland, Yrjö Räme had his doubts about translating the whole liturgy into Skolt Sámi. He understood the fact that translating Church texts required generating whole new Skolt Sámi terms, which were unfamiliar in the context of original Skolt language.<sup>136</sup>

The religious Skolt language vocabulary has evolved in time, and has a lot of influence from Russian.<sup>137</sup> For example in vocabulary related to funerals, to say goodbye in Skolt Sámi is *prá ššjõđttâd*.<sup>138</sup> In Russian *proščánije* (прощание) means goodbye. The influence of the Russian language came up in the interviews in several ways. Especially the older Skolts who were born in Pechenga, usually have a good knowledge of Russian. For one of my respondent, Kerttu, Russian was the second home language. It is also common that the Russian language is mastered by the Orthodox Church's officials. These

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<sup>131</sup> Kulonen & Seurujärvi-Kari & Pulkinen 2005, 101-102.

<sup>132</sup> Rutledge 1985, 65.

<sup>133</sup> Rodriguez & Fortier 2007, 10.

<sup>134</sup> Pentikäinen 1995, 30.

<sup>135</sup> Kälkäjä 2002, 69.

<sup>136</sup> Kälkäjä 2002, 69.

<sup>137</sup> Sergejeva 2000, 24-25.

<sup>138</sup> Mosnikoff & Sammallahti 1988.

examples show that the effect of the Russian language on Skolt Sámi collective memory reaches the religious sphere and commemorates the Eastern heritage of the Skolt Sámi culture.

Indeed the developmental work with a written Skolt language has a relatively short history - the official orthography of the language was published at the beginning of the 1970s and the first grammar in the 1980s.<sup>139</sup> After that the church has also established some working groups to develop the religious use of the language. In 1981 the General Assembly of the Orthodox Church of Finland instructed Metropolitan Leo to take initiative in launching song books for choirs in Skolt language. The song book, *Risttoummi mo'lidvaķe'rjj*, was first taken in use in church services in 1983. First the church songs were established, then the Gospel of John, *Evvan evanķe'lium* was published in 1988 and the liturgy text of St. John Chrysostom, *Pââ'ss E'ččen Evvan Krysostomoozz* in 2001. During this time there has been a working group doing the translation work.<sup>140</sup> In the present church life the language had been more used by a Skolt Sámi-speaking cantor and the church choir. Liturgies and hymns have also been recorded in Skolt Sámi.<sup>141</sup>

The use of the Skolt Sámi language in liturgies has improved the position of the endangered language. Many respondents saw this as one way how the Church supports the culture:

#### **Quote 6**

But it [church] does support [the culture]....And it has also developed the language. And is involved in the language work. People hear Skolt language at church.

**Maija**

Indeed, the Orthodox Church has actively been involved in the language preservation work and the Orthodox Synod has supported and contributed to the translation of church literature into Skolt Sámi. In this sense, the use of Skolt language in liturgies effects how Skolt Sámi *perceive* the Church and as such, how the Orthodoxy's role in Skolt Sámi collective memory is constructed.

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<sup>139</sup> Saa'mi Nu'ett 2015c.

<sup>140</sup> Jefremoff 2010, 169.

<sup>141</sup> Council of Europe 2006, 76.

Still, a major problem is that fewer and fewer Skolts recognize the religious Skolt vocabulary anymore or do not know the Skolt Sámi well enough to thoroughly follow the liturgies. The following two quotes highlight two viewpoints on the matter; Lauri as an elder Skolt worries for the future of religious Skolt vocabulary and a young generation Skolt Jussi tells how he felt a bit of an outsider in a Skolt language liturgy as a child:

### **Quote 7**

Back then it felt...it somehow felt like it was more active. And it was. It was shown more in everyday life. For example now, when we have the Orthodox vocabulary in Skolt language, the generation younger than me does not know it anymore [...] People are more passive, also more secularized. That is one reason.

**Lauri**

### **Quote 8**

For me...I did not learn Skolt language at home [...] and in Sevetijärvi the services were held in Skolt language, so I did not really understand that much of what was going on there.

**Jussi**

The quotes above indicate a break in the chain of memories. When a new generation learns the native language less than the previous generation, the past is already remembered differently.<sup>142</sup> Sámi themselves think that adopting the Sámi culture in early age through language holds an important role in constructing the Sámi identity. This is the so-called "cultural mother tongue".<sup>143</sup> In general the younger Skolts, however, have a rather passive knowledge of the language. The young post-war generation Skolt Sámi had no opportunity to study their own language and it was forbidden to speak the language in schools. Thus, during the recent decade the amount of people learning Skolt Sámi as their mother tongue has decreased. Those Skolts who speak Skolt Sámi are bilingual, and speak also fluent Finnish, some master even more than two languages (for example Russian). However, there is a new wave of enthusiasm for learning the Skolt language, and the amount of people learning Skolt Sámi as their mother tongue is increasing.<sup>144</sup>

Just like the traditional Skolt Sámi costume, also the Skolt language emphasizes the group identity. In this sense, liturgies held in Skolt language connect Skolt Sámi tighter into the chain of previous generations. Language expresses affectivity but also the religious

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<sup>142</sup> Padden 1990, 191; Privratsky 2001, 23; Joseph 2004, 208.

<sup>143</sup> Sergejeva 1997, 16.

<sup>144</sup> Sergejeva 2000, 14 -15; Jefremoff 2010, 169.

affectivity powers the collective memory of the mother tongue. Overall, noticeable with these symbols mentioned above is that the ethnic factor in symbols puts the religious factor in use by assimilating the symbols, simultaneously taking a religious function each time it allows this. However, the convergence of ethnic and religious is a dual movement and thus also difficult to separate.<sup>145</sup>

All in all, this chapter has highlighted that the language and symbols are embedded in a multi-layered network of cultural memories. What at first sight appears to be just a decoration highlighting one idea, upon closer look narrates a past relevant to the present, thus representing more than one dimension.<sup>146</sup> The findings in this chapter also suggest that religion can also be practised more intentionally, to reinforce identity and furthermore, the collective memory.

## **5.2 Narratives and rituals– bringing religion to ethnic sphere**

Furthermore, in the Skolt Sámi culture the collective memory of Orthodoxy is organized symbolically through religious narratives and in ritual ceremonies. These contexts also involve both what Simon Price calls ‘inscribed memory’, meaning texts and ‘embodied memory’, referring to rituals and other formalized behavior.<sup>147</sup> The following examples of narratives and rituals show how Orthodox practices or traditions install an awareness of Skolt Sámi past. If in the previous chapter, the ethnic element had reached a religious stage, in the next chapter the religious element gets a role in constructing a descent and ethnicity, which is strongly based on a common eastern heritage.

### **5.2.1 Narratives of Trifon the Pechenga**

Memory and narratives are deeply connected. The cultures organize its understanding of the past and present through narratives.<sup>148</sup> For Orthodox Skolt Sámi the central figure in folklore relates to the spiritual legacy of Pechenga and especially Saint Trifon of Pechenga, or *Pââ'ss Treeffan* as Skolt Sámi refer him. The position of Trifon is strong among the

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<sup>145</sup> Hervieu-Léger 2000, 161.

<sup>146</sup> Dignas & Smith 2012, 3.

<sup>147</sup> Price 2012, 17.

<sup>148</sup> Hinchman & Hinchman 1997, 1.

Skolt Sámi even today and thus it is an example of the persistence of Skolt Sámi collective memory of Orthodoxy:

### **Quote 9**

And then the biggest we have is Tryphon [...] And normally when there is a Tryphon celebration in Sevettijärvi, the school also has some kind of celebration and they perform some shows and so on [...]

**Ritva**

A remembered past always holds strong emotional overtones, otherwise it could not exert a powerful influence in the present. According to Assman, the past is also powerfully personalized.<sup>149</sup> In the literature Trifon is referred to as 'a instructor' or the 'an enlightener' of the Sámi<sup>150</sup> and many respondents considered the legacies of Trifon as a crucial part of Skolt Sámi culture and history. He is the person, who brought Orthodoxy to Skolts but moreover, to many Skolts he also holds a deep personal importance. This tendency becomes more marked as Trifon is considered a 'protector' by Kerttu:

### **Quote 10**

R: Well Trifon the Pechenga is really important. He is important to me.

M: Was he important for the Pechenga people?

R: Yes he was. He was my so called protector, has always been.

M: How is the Trifon visible in Skolts' life?

R: In many ways. Starting from Trifon icons and so on. He was the one who brought this religion to Skolts.

**Kerttu**

This highlights how religious narratives connect personal consciousness of an individual with the larger importance of a community.<sup>151</sup>

Trifon was canonized at the beginning of the mid-17th century.<sup>152</sup> One hundred years after the canonization was published a *Biography of Trifon's life in Pechenga* (in Russian *zhitie*), which included stories about baptizing the Sámi, establishing the monastery in Pechenga, the death of Trifon and the destruction of the monastery after Trifon's death. Trifon's silver sarcophagus with reliefs about his life on the sides was positioned inside the monastery. The writers of the memoir completed their work by adding tales about Trifon

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<sup>149</sup> Assman 2006, 181.

<sup>150</sup> Porsanger 2004, 110.

<sup>151</sup> Rodriguez & Fortier 2007, 8.

<sup>152</sup> There are different opinions among the Russian Church historians concerning the time when Trifon was canonized. See Porsanger 2004.

having performed miracles both during his life and after death. Also a liturgy in honor of him was formulated. His grave was declared as a holy place where believers gathered to worship. This was the start of the Trifon cult. The tale of the destruction of Pechenga monastery used to find its way among Skolt Sámi through oral folklore even until the 1990s, when it was written down for the first time.<sup>153</sup>

The Orthodox tradition tells that Trifon died on December 15th, 1583 and nowadays December 15th is his commemoration day among the Eastern Orthodox Church. For the Skolt Sámi this is a special celebration and usually churches are full on those days. Traditionally December 15<sup>th</sup> is celebrated in Sevettijärvi schools as well.<sup>154</sup> Furthermore, the whole Orthodox Parish of Lapland values the tradition of Trifon by acknowledging the annual pilgrimage celebration of Trifon in August. This festivity usually takes place in Sevettijärvi and Näätämö. Attendees include Skolts but also other parishioners and groups from different sides of the country and sometimes abroad as well.<sup>155</sup> However, the attendance of Skolt Sámi has diminished notably during recent decades. One of the respondents described the activity in the 1970s as follows:

#### **Quote 11**

In the 70s I was going almost every year with Nellim people on a bus, we had a bus full of people from Nellim, Keväjärvi and Tsarmijärvi. And I mean, of course if you think about the people from Sevettijärvi, of course they are actively organizing it there, food service and all, and it does tie down a lot of people and there is a lot of village program, but the attending to the actual event, that one is quite low.

**Raija**

The Skolt Sámi culture is characteristically oral in nature and the legends of Trifon declare in a lyrical way the canonical nature of Orthodoxy.<sup>156</sup> In other words, in Trifon legends the Church capitalized the traditional Skolt Sámi oral forms of communication.<sup>157</sup> Trifon narratives have many elements of legends in them, the miracle works as an example. As a historical source the tales should be considered critically. However, in terms of memory and in retelling the narrative the distinction between fact and fiction is not important. This is in fact the major difference between history and memory. The main significance of the legend stories lies in the ways it has been interpreted. This is also the reason for its

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<sup>153</sup> Panteleimon 1990, 14; 93-94; Sergejeva 1997, 33; Sergejeva 2000, 22.

<sup>154</sup> Metropoliitta Leo 1995, 61.

<sup>155</sup> Metropoliitta Leo 1995, 61.

<sup>156</sup> Anastasio 2012, 215.

<sup>157</sup> Porsanger 2004, 122.

circulation.<sup>158</sup> The tales of Trifon are most likely not historically correct but they have defined a memory horizon of a society and have put their stamp on its particular character.<sup>159</sup>

One key role narratives possess is to provide people with a history and thus function as a trace of past events.<sup>160</sup> Trifon was kept persistently in people's memory, which can be interpreted to signal the continuation of Orthodoxy in Skolt Sàmi collective memory. Furthermore, the Trifon narratives tell about the religious history of Skolt Sámi, when Christianity was spread to Kola Peninsula. Since Trifon is a valued saint outside Lapland as well, the narrative and ritual tradition of Trifon commemoration provides means to link the locally-anchored historical theme to a wider-scale cultural history.

### **5.2.2 Rituals – example of funeral preparations**

By participating - even to some extent –in church ceremonies people create communality and customs. Moreover, religious rituals are the oldest and most fundamental medium of bonding memory.<sup>161</sup> The Orthodox Church values a long tradition of biblical interpretation and they also place emphasis on religious services. In the Orthodox Church the concrete practice, acts of worship, is seen as an important part of religious way of life.<sup>162</sup> For Skolt Sámi, church services are also place for social gatherings. Just like the mass in a Catholic context, additionally in Orthodoxy the liturgy plays important role.

In addition to the meditative influence of the church and a chance to relax properly, the communality and possibility to meet people were mentioned as one of the most important things in participating in the liturgies. This dates back to the time when Skolt Sámi first settled to Finland: there were no churches built yet, so people gathered in each other's houses. The gatherings were very much like the old winter village system the Sámis used to have when they were still practicing active nomad lifestyle. In this sense the Skolts were able to maintain some of their old cultural models in a new environment. Many respondents recalled that usually the whole village was present in gatherings:

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<sup>158</sup> Anttonen 2004, 196.

<sup>159</sup> Assman 2006, 179.

<sup>160</sup> Siikala 2004, 149.

<sup>161</sup> Assman 2006, 11.

<sup>162</sup> Kupari 2015, 165, quoting Ware 1964, 271; Conomos 2011, 243.

## **Quote 12**

I think that back then all the encounters and situations where I have been present, the church was full of people. If something was organized somewhere – in Nellim there was not even a church back then but people organized ceremonies at home – then the neighbors and even children came. You can see from old photos that the whole village was present, from the youngest to the oldest, if the priest dropped by to visit. So yes, the people back then encountered the church in a different way [...]

**Raija**

However, it needs to be said that acting religious practices is not primarily about a conscious decision to perform particular religious tradition.<sup>163</sup> Also, participating in a ceremony is not necessarily a conscious act to perform ethnic affiliation - on the base of the interview materials I cannot claim that respondents actively perform their Skolt Sámi identity while attending the church ceremonies. Furthermore, in the case of Skolt Sámi it must be pointed out that when they participate in liturgies they do not necessarily think about all the past events but concentrate more on the present moment, in liturgy for example on the sacred moment of the sacrament. However, this aspect might have become operative as a part of the collective memory of Skolt Sámi. Halbwachs argues, for example, that even in a situation like this, the individual is aware of the contemporary presentations of the situation: the location, the ceremony of the cult, the officiating priests and those who participate in the ceremony with them.<sup>164</sup>

One key ritual among Orthodox and Skolt Sámi alike are the funerals. Orthodox funeral traditions fluctuate and they take different forms in different areas.<sup>165</sup> It became evident during the interviews that funeral preparations and reminiscing the deceased are also the areas where local Skolt Sámi habits and elements of ethnic religion are most vibrant.

Thus, I argue that burial preparations recall a convergence of religious meaning and cultural identity.<sup>166</sup> However, the interview account suggest that most of the distinctive elements in the funeral protocol refer to the preparative part of the burial ceremony. Judging from the interview accounts, the official liturgy part is usually pretty standard and most of the respondents' comments referred only to the way a body or a grave were prepared.

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<sup>163</sup> Kupari 2015, 108.

<sup>164</sup> Halbwachs 1992, 99-100.

<sup>165</sup> Iitola 1998, 5.

<sup>166</sup> Goris 1995, 138.

Moreover, it should be noted though, that when I speak of Skolt Sámi burial customs, I mean Skolt Sámi variations of customs, which form a fairly common part of the beliefs and codes concerning death.<sup>167</sup> Indeed, Nils Storå concluded in his book *Burial customs of the Skolt Lapps* (1971) that there are few things, which are so much bound up with old traditions as burial customs. This area is important not only to Skolt Sámi but also to Karelians and Setos. According to Storå, the younger layer of the burial custom tradition can be regarded as a product of Orthodox teaching, which have certainly some elements from the Karelia. However, like with other Sámi groups, with Skolt Sámi as well, it is difficult to distinguish between Christian and pre-Christian influence – the line between these two is a fluid one.<sup>168</sup> Christian and indigenous elements from different ages may appear side by side, not excluding each other.<sup>169</sup> Furthermore, Storå assumed that Old Believers<sup>170</sup>, which had an impact on both Karelians and areas inhabited by Skolts, contributed to the burial customs and to the spread process. The Old Believers, remained true to many old practices, also regarding burial customs.<sup>171</sup>

The special preparation routines for the deceased body are typical for Skolt Sámi funerals. The body is for example dressed in its own clothes and traditionally this procedure involved for example cutting off some seams. Storå had similar observations concerning ”breaking” the clothes or tearing the garments in a special way when the corpse was dressed. Storå made an indication that this was a matter of preventing others from taking and using the dead person’s belongings and also avoiding that animism could have entered the corpse. Additionally, the habit is common in Karelia. Storå also points out that it was not just a question of *weakening* a garment but an examination shows that clothes had to be *made looser*.<sup>172</sup>

Furthermore, my respondents told me that if the deceased wears fur shoes, the tip of the shoe was cut off. Storå had made similar observations – if the toes were not cut off, the seams were severed. Similar practices are to be found for example among the Samoyeds. Storå suggests that by cutting off the toes it was possible to prevent the dead person from

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<sup>167</sup> Storå 1971, 215.

<sup>168</sup> Storå 1971, 86.

<sup>169</sup> Pentikäinen 1995, 215.

<sup>170</sup> As a result of a schism within Russian church in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a sect called Old Believers, or *Strarovarians*, separated from the Church. Their teachings reached also the Karelian area. Read more Storå 1971, 283.

<sup>171</sup> Storå 1971, 152; 185.

<sup>172</sup> Storå 1971, 181; 225.

returning from the dead to haunt the living.<sup>173</sup> Also one respondent, Matti, told that he has heard that when the cross is placed in the neck, one can't bind the strings. Storå mentions this as well and says that all clothes had to be free of knots. In the Finnish part of the Karelia it was believed that each knot would cause a burn on the dead man.<sup>174</sup>

Judging from the interview accounts, one essential part of the burial ceremony is the farewell for the deceased. A common habit in Orthodox funerals is to leave the coffin open in funeral ceremony, this way the deceased is present and people can say their farewells. When people visit the deceased one, they can bless the deceased with a sign of the cross and kiss the icon laid on the chest of the deceased. According to Raija, in Sevetijärvi, where the funeral traditions are most pronounced, people might kiss, stroke and touch the deceased and sprinkle incense gum around the body:

#### **Quote 14**

And then in Sevetijärvi, a couple of times I have been to funerals in Sevetijärvi, there they treat the deceased even more closely, they kiss and stroke and touch the dead and buy this – I don't even know what it contains and what the idea behind it is - but they buy incense gum and sprinkle it around the dead.

**Raija**

Jukka described how Skolts might leave tools like axes or shovels in the grave when the grave place is being dug the day before the funerals. Jukka thought this is most likely done to protect it from evil spirits:

R: As far as I have understood, no one else besides Skolts in Finland - or even here in Lapland – leave tools in the grave when the hole is being dug the day before the funerals.

M: Do you know what the reason for this is?

R: I don't know, I guess this way they guarantee that the grave place is occupied so evil spirits can't enter the grave [...] something like this there was behind it. They usually leave axes, shovels and so on, and they pull them up with a string on the day of the funerals.

**Jukka**

Storå confirms the habit of leaving tools to grave after the digging process. However, Storå thought that the practice of leaving the tools used for making the grave could probably be regarded as a way of getting rid of anything to do with the dead.<sup>175</sup> Storå also points out

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<sup>173</sup> Storå 1971, 214; 226.

<sup>174</sup> Juvas & Reponen 1939, 285; Storå 1971, 231.

<sup>175</sup> Storå 1971, 178.

that the habit of leaving tools in a grave was common among the Russian Sámi and those Russians living along the White Sea coast, as well as among Karelians and neighbouring people. In many cases the tools were left as gifts for the dead person or they belonged to the deceased one. The right of ownership was often emphasized.<sup>176</sup>

Rituals and narratives have a power to express multitude of ideas. Rituals join social groups but also recreate and establish them in practiced ceremonies. As performative acts, these performances are a part of regular practices that produce social categories and norms of membership.<sup>177</sup> In addition to creating social cohesion, the material suggests that Skolt Sámi have rather distinctive ways of preparing the body and the grave for funerals, diverging in some parts from the generic Orthodox funeral protocol. In this sense they resemble ethnic religions, where groups and individuals have a bigger room for manoeuvres, compared to canonical, dogmatically clearly defined religions.<sup>178</sup> All this suggests that the funeral customs create a sense of common heritage and a feeling of memory, when Skolts commemorate the funeral protocols. Furthermore, the funeral preparations also share similarities with Karelians and for example Samoyedic habits, linking Skolts more firmly to the Eastern culture tradition.

The Trifon narratives and funeral ceremonies are fundamentally religious by nature. However, I argue that within the years they have become a part of the collective memory of Orthodox Skolt Sámi in ways that transcend the boundary of religion. They have become a part of the heritage, cultural folklore, which is seen as something worth preserving from generation to generation. Trifon narratives and old burial customs link Skolt Sámi to their eastern heritage and thus function as identity constructors.

### **5.3 Landscape and feeling of belongingness**

Places can also act as vehicles of collective memory. They represent the common past of the group, a tradition. This does not necessarily have the same meaning on the present day as it had before, but it still has the power to construct a feeling of continuity.<sup>179</sup> Land is a strong symbol for identity and landscapes evoke and reshape memories. Architecture has a

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<sup>176</sup> Storå 1971, 178-179.

<sup>177</sup> Fortier 1999, 43.

<sup>178</sup> Pentikäinen 1995, 31.

<sup>179</sup> Siikala 2004, 150.

potential to vivify the landscape and with it the religious memory.<sup>180</sup> In Anna-Marie Fortier's article *Re-membering Places and the Performance of Belonging(s)* (1999) she discusses the formation of an Italian émigré culture within different forms of representation of Italian presence in Britain. She says that imagining a community is both something, which is created through common history and experience, and about how the imagined community is attached to places. According to Fortier, some of "the feelings of belongings" are physical places, like Italian churches in Britain.<sup>181</sup> I argue that in the case of Orthodox Skolt Sámi as well, landscape and places hold an important role in the collective memory. Especially the role of Pechenga monastery has an important role for those Skolt Sámi families whose relatives used to live nearby the monastery. Even nowadays the Nellim Orthodox Church in Inari municipality architecturally follows the model of Pechenga monastery and as such also honors the memory of its founder, Trifon the Pechenga. In this chapter I am going to observe in which ways the landscape and places of belonging construct the collective memory of Orthodoxy for Skolt Sámi. First I am going to describe the meaning of locality in religious life, after which I will highlight the differences between different Skolt villages and finally I will discuss the role of Pechenga monastery in the collective memory of Skolt Sámi.

### **5.3.1 Meaning of locality in religious life**

What is being persisted in Skolt Sámi collective memory of Orthodoxy can be revealed by comparison with the experience of Skolt Sámi living outside of Sámi area. Quite a few of my respondents lived outside the Sámi area, either for work or study purpose and they reflected a lot how the role of both the Skolt Sámi culture and the Orthodox Church has changed or reformed for them while living there. Raija assumed that the Orthodox Church would be a thing, which in many cases connects them to being Skolt Sámi:

#### **Quote 15**

I do believe it [religion] has been something, which has given strength to people. And in a way, when you have grown into it, it shows in many people, who have moved elsewhere [...] The thing related to identity to many of these kind of people is the Orthodox church. It seems that when you live elsewhere [outside the Sámi area], this is the thing, which connects them to being Skolt Sámi.

**Raija**

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<sup>180</sup> Privratsky 2001, 22-23, quoting Halbwachs 1992, 191-235; Coser 1992, 10; Schama 1995.

<sup>181</sup> Fortier 1999, 41-42.

Additionally, for some respondents the church events offered a chance to support cultural cause in Southern Finland. Noticeable is that the respondent would not have wanted to visit the liturgy for religious reasons, but for the case of supporting a cultural event. Overall, I consider this also a performative act for the support of a minority culture:

### **Quote 16**

M: When you were living in Southern Finland, did you visit the church services there?

R: I guess I did not...the only event I was supposed to attend was when there was the liturgy in Skolt language held. But I was out of town on that day. So that was an event, I would have wanted to attend...I wouldn't have wanted to go there in order to just visit the service, but because there was that kind of special event you wanted to go to support that.

**Jussi**

One particularly interesting observation was the answer given by one respondent, who had lived her childhood outside the Sámi area. According to her religion was visible in Lapland in a different way it was in Southern Finland:

### **Quote 17**

Well, we had icons at home but otherwise the Orthodox culture was not that visible [...] That was like at home [in Southern Finland], but when I visited my grandparents or uncles here in Lapland, here it was more visible [...] It's funny, like for my father, Orthodoxy is visible in a different way here than in Southern Finland. There [in Southern Finland] it is less visible because on my mother's side everyone is Lutheran.

**Ritva**

The respondent's Skolt father was an Orthodox but her Finnish mother Lutheran so this might be one reason for the difference – living near the Lutheran relatives rather than Orthodox relatives has certainly affected the way how the respondent has perceived her religious surrounding.<sup>182</sup> The respondent's answer seems to confirm the thought that Skolt Sámi living in the Sámi area maintain a somewhat fuller living memory of Orthodoxy.<sup>183</sup>

My respondents described their local Skolt Sámi community as small and tight, where everyone takes care of each other. The same words were used when describing the local Orthodox community. When asked if there was a difference in Orthodox lifestyles between Southern Finland and Sámi area, many said that there was some. Some differences mentioned were obvious, for instance the size of the parishes. In Southern Finland the Orthodox parishes usually have a different framework and more resources; the churches

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<sup>182</sup> The Lutheran/Orthodox-family relations are being discussed more thoroughly in chapter 5.4.2.

<sup>183</sup> Anastasio 2012, 216.

have, for example bigger attendance in ceremonies and bigger church choirs. As such the atmosphere in the churches can be rather impressive. On the other hand, one respondent had regarded the bigger crowd as faceless and unfamiliar:

### **Quote 18**

R: Well one difference is that there are less people here, who are involved in these things. In Southern Finland there are much more people involved.

M: How does the amount of people affect the character of the occasion?

R: The church choir is smaller \*laughs\* If here there are three persons in the choir and in southern Finland about twenty, the atmosphere is totally different. In that way and then also in South the atmosphere is a bit faceless. Just like being in a massive crowd event, whereas here the atmosphere is homely and warm. But of course for me it might feel like that because the place here is familiar.

- **Maija**

The communal nature of attending the liturgies was an overall experience for most of the respondents. Moreover, in Southern Finland the atmosphere was sometimes perceived as stiffer in relation to the more laid-back feeling of the Skolt Sámi culture.

However, there were also opinions among respondents where they did not see that the local Skolt Sámi culture had influenced the local church life. Some also answered it was hard to specify, since one is so accustomed to the tradition and to the protocol of how an Orthodox ceremony proceeds. Some thought that there are no fundamental differences in terms of liturgy protocol for example. This notion is most likely true. Like already mentioned in chapter 5.2.2 the distinctive Skolt Sámi elements in rituals are to be found in the preparative part, not that much in actual liturgy.

All in all, locality perspective increases community-based memories. Furthermore, when living in an environment where one cannot hear the language and have the community around one another, Orthodox faith might feel like something, which can be maintained and have a connection to its own people. The Church also has a strong locally anchored historical theme and as such, it constructs the Skolt Sámi heritage. Nostalgic and communal feeling of a home parish creates a feeling of belonging and is an essential part of the collective memory of Skolt Sámi.

### **5.3.2. Differences between villages**

Locality is pursued through several ways - differences between villages is one of them. In the interviews I could sense a minor juxtaposition between Skolt villages, especially between Nellim and Sevettijärvi. There are differences in the dialect and dresses:

### **Quote 19**

R: Well there is a little “schism” from both sides. Because we are from Pechenga and they are from Suonjel. This has been since forever. But I think now it is time to work together for a common goal.

M: How the juxtaposition between people from Pechenga and Suonjel came through then?

R: Well it came through in many fronts, in dance groups and so on. Even the language differs. In Petchanga the language is very soft and the Sevettijärvi language is a little bit rougher and stronger, I would say. So that is one. But all the books and all are written in Sevettijärvi dialect.<sup>184</sup> So in that sense we have been trampled over. The dialect of Petchanga is not there. But we are coming! We are not giving up!

- **Kerttu**

The differences between villages are highlighted in the level of maintaining religious traditions as well. In Finland, Sevettijärvi village is traditionally considered the cradle of Finnish Skolt Sámi culture. Sevettijärvi was inhabited after the Second World War by Suonjel (Suonikylä) *siida* members from Kola Peninsula. Suonjel, like Sevettijärvi, was considered at the time the epitome of traditional Skolt Sámi culture. Traditions, unique cultural habits are extremely lively there due the fact that the people in Suonjel used to live in the wilderness, far away from the roads, where the Finnish influence was not that visible. The reason for this was that the village has historically been isolated from other population groups. Other Skolt Sámi villages traditionally had some links to Norwegians, Finns, Karelians and Russians.<sup>185</sup> Suonjel is situated in the middle of the wilderness and for this reason, the old religious habits and customs remained untouched longer in Suonjel than in other Skolt villages. When Suonjel Skolts were relocated to Sevettijärvi, an isolated village as well, the same pattern continued. All the respondents thought the Skolt habit are the strongest in Sevettijärvi and the village is still considered the driving force for Skolt Sámi culture. Some respondents even mentioned that they maintained their culture by staying in a close contact with Sevettijärvi:

### **Quote 20**

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<sup>184</sup> When the orthography of Skolt Sámi language was formed in 1970s, the standard language was based on Suonjel dialect, since it was most widely spoken dialect among Finnish Skolt community. Source: Saa’mi Nu’ett 2015c.

<sup>185</sup> Linkola & Sammallahhti 1995, 49; Linkola & Linkola 2000, 160.

Well the Skolt habit are the strongest in Sevettijärvi, they have remained the best there since it is its own community and they adopt the traditions well...yes, Sevettijärvi is the driving force for Skolts.

**Jukka**

Also the use of Skolt language has been vibrant and more common in Sevettijärvi than in any other Skolt village. Like one respondents put it:

### **Quote 21**

Even nowadays if you go to a bar in Sevettijärvi and people gather there, Skolt language is spoken in almost every table.

**Jussi**

In Sevettijärvi, especially the role of Sevettijärvi primary school has been enormous. Ever since the primary school system was first established in Lapland in 1972, Sevettijärvi primary school taught Skolt Sámi language.<sup>186</sup>

Nellim village, on the other hand, has always been more heterogeneous. It has traditionally been inhabited by three different groups; Finns and both Inari and Skolt Sámis. Unlike in Sevettijärvi, the Finnish influence is stronger there as well, so their culture is more mixed. The Skolt community in Nellim was described as rather small in size, Maija recalled that currently there were about five people who can speak the language. On the other hand, those Skolts, who had settled in Nellim, meaning the Pechenga villagers, had lived next to the monastery and they had been almost in daily contact with it and were more acquainted with the Orthodox Church. It could be stated that among Nellim Orthodox Skolt Sámi the role of the Pechenga monastery is the strongest:

### **Quote 22**

But then the Nellim villagers. Those Skolts, who were settled in Nellim, meaning the Petchanga villagers, had lived next to the monastery and they had been almost in daily contact with it and many things were clear to them. For example my father-in-law knew many Slavic church songs and often sang those.

**Raija**

Furthermore, Matti told me that the attendance at church services is smaller in Nellim since there are only about 25 Orthodox members, under one fifth of the number in Sevettijärvi. The community is also not that visible, at least compared to Sevettijärvi.

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<sup>186</sup> Saa'mi Nu'ett 2015c.

### **Quote 23**

Partly the differences between villages are explained by external factors. The biggest service attendance is in Sevettijärvi. In Nellim the attendance is smaller, but there are only about 25 orthodox members, that is under one fifth of the number in Sevettijärvi. Ivalo has the biggest number of orthodox members, but here the attendance to the services is also smallest. So it seems that the village community and the connections inside the village...but it is still exciting that in the Ivalo village center has about same number of orthodox and Sevettijärvi is spread on a wider area but still there the connections are working better because there are so much more other people in Ivalo.

**Matti**

In Ivalo the attendees for liturgies are manifold, the biggest group is the Finns, but also ethnic Russians have a high percentage among parish members. Ivalo has the biggest number of Orthodox members but there the attendance at services is also the smallest. Compared with Sevettijärvi, which has the biggest service attendance and is also spread on a wider area, the difference is clear. In Sevettijärvi the connections work better since the community is more homogenous. Also the village community and the connections inside the village have a key role in maintaining the religious activity in Sevettijärvi.

The factors mentioned above have highlighted the fact that historically Skolt Sámi identified themselves geographically by their home villages while they were living in their traditional areas in Kola Peninsula. This kind of local identification is not that common anymore as it used to be in Kola Peninsula, where the borders between Skolt Sámi villages were traditionally strict. One was not allowed to wander in the area of neighboring *sijdd* if a special agreement did not exist between the *sijdds*.<sup>187</sup> Still, I argue that to some degree similar identifications are made through current Finnish Skolt villages. Furthermore, the differences of villages explain partly the differences of how church membership is maintained village-wise. In Sevettijärvi, the village is more homogenous and despite the long distances inside the village and its sparsely populated nature, Sevettijärvi has maintained a strong cultural position among Skolt Sámi. This position has long historical reasons, which also reach the church level and maintain a strong will for the church membership. In Nellim, in a more heterogeneous environment, maintaining a strong role of church membership is harder.

### **5.3.3 Role of the Pechenga monastery**

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<sup>187</sup> Sergejeva 2000, 10.

For Skolt Sámi, the loss of Pechenga denoted losing two essential parts of the Skolt identity; the traditional home area and also the established way of living - the changing borderlines made it difficult for Skolts to live in their traditional winter and summer places. The role of Skolt Sámi in the adaptation process of borderlines is even more conflicting, because the territorial identity of indigenous peoples is based more on knowledge and common heritage, not on legal concepts. Therefore the territorial identity of indigenous peoples is often not recognized by the states. Furthermore, indigenous peoples have a cultural and spiritual relationship to land and water.<sup>188</sup> After the war, when this relationship was lost, the longing for lost homes was manifested in many ways - by reminiscing the previous life and by telling other people about the past times. Also *leu'dds*, the Skolt Sámi traditional way of singing, was a typical way to remember the past.<sup>189</sup>

Furthermore, also the connection to the Pechenga monastery, a religious centre, was lost. In the interviews, the role of the Pechenga monastery was also mentioned several times. Pechenga monastery is an example of a historically meaningful religious place. The monastery was established in the 16<sup>th</sup> century in the place, where Pechenga River flows into the Barents Sea by Trifon the Pechenga and it became the centre of Orthodox religiosity in Pechenga Bay area. The monastery functioned until the Winter War in 1939, in some parts even until 1944, as an important religious center, where villagers gathered to celebrate *Teophany* (the baptism of Jesus), and the commemoration day of Trifon.<sup>190</sup>

When Skolts lived in Kola Peninsula, the church activity was quite low, the exception being those who lived in the direct orbit of Pechenga monastery. Those Skolt Sámi were later settled in Nellim area and for them the Pechenga monastery had – and still has - an important role. People would gather there during the feast days of Teofania or on the day of St. Trifon on December 15<sup>th</sup>.<sup>191</sup> One respondent who still remembers the times in Pechenga, described the monastery routines, the people working there and how children were offered porridge after the mass:

#### **Quote 24**

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<sup>188</sup> Dahl 1996, 17; 22

<sup>189</sup> Jefremoff 2010, 166.

<sup>190</sup> Sergejeva 1997; 73; Törnqvist 1998, 80; Linkola & Linkola 2000, 416; Porsanger 2004, 108; 110;112; Jefremoff 2010, 162.

<sup>191</sup> Sergejeva 2000, 26.

R: In my home religion was present much stronger in our lives, because of the Russian monastery.

M: How often were there services?

R: Many times a day. In the morning the first one was at 4am, I think, and then there were others during the day. Since we lived a bit too far away, we did not attend the services that often, but every time my mother went there, we went with her. At least the night service was something, we attended.

[...]

R: There were a lot of us there, people working in the field and with kettle and horses.

M: People were employed by the monastery?

R: Yes, they were. Many worked at the fields. There was a working room as well. My grandfather worked there. And then there was a canteen.

M: Did the monastery have big grounds there?

R: Yes, it had. There was a big field. On the other side of the river there were also hayfields.

[...]

R: And yes they had long tables in the canteen of the monastery and there were many of us children and we all got some porridge in a large bowl.

M: Was this during the service?

R: Yes it was! After the service. We never ate it before the Holy Communion.

M: So is it something similar to this “church café tradition”?

R: Yes, and always the person responsible for cooking, circulated around and said in Russian that “eat, children, eat” and there we ate.

**Kerttu**

Even though the monastery was eventually destroyed, it did not disappear from the collective memory of Skolt Sámi. The narratives of Trifon especially kept the memory of Pechenga monastery in the minds of Skolt Sámi. When the borders were re-opened to Russia, many Skolts got a chance to visit the monastery again. Kerttu, who had been able to visit the Pechenga after the borders were re-opened, described the feelings as follows:

### **Quote 25**

M: Have you visited the monastery since?

R: I have, many times. When there still was the little monastery, that one has burned down now. I have visited the ruins of my home cottage. I have done my keenings<sup>192</sup> so to speak. After that I felt...alright again.

**Kerttu**

In addition to the Pechenga monastery, the whole area of Pechenga holds importance for Skolt Sámi. One respondent even mentioned that instead of the Skolt Sámi lifestyle the fact that the family comes from Pechenga is more visible in his life:

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<sup>192</sup> One habit, which nowadays is almost lost among Skolt Sámi, is the tradition of laments or ritual keening aloud. Laments are improvised folksongs that express sorrow and other strong emotions. See Aleksandra Stepanova 1995.

### **Quote 26**

R: As such, the Skolt Sámi lifestyle is not that visible, but the fact that the family is from Pechenga, is....

M: In which ways?

R: Well, they lived more in the coast [...] in the coast of Pechenga Bay. So for this reason boats have always been a close thing and when they have moved here Lake Inari has been important to them and they have gone there a lot.

**Jukka**

Jukka's response highlights how the open water, was it either the Arctic Ocean or the great Inari Lake, is an important element in Skolt Sámi culture. This is especially the case for those Skolts, whose families originate from coastal areas of the Pechenga Bay.

Even though most of the respondents valued the legacy of the Pechenga monastery, some respondents were more critical towards the positive image of monastery. Pertti remarks how the monastery of Pechenga had economic reasons to keep a close relationship with Skolt Sámi.

### **Quote 27**

M: You mentioned that the relationship between Skolts and church has not always been so good. Do you have any examples?

R1: Well our fine Trifon the Pechenga...I don't have any facts to give, these are just rumours, but about how the monastery came and took all the best fishing grounds and so on. That the people were kind of forced to do it. And the church has been a tax authority there. I don't know how the life would have been without the church, most likely it has taught people to read and such as well.

**Pertti**

All in all, the places provide materials for experiencing the continuity of the group's culture. Anna-Maria Fortier discussed how identity can be attached to a geographically bounded locality. According to her, some of these "feelings of belongings" are physical places.<sup>193</sup> The Pechenga area, and especially the monastery there, functioned in many ways as a place of belonging for Skolt Sámi. The power of a place to stimulate both sacred and ethnic values and memories is evident there.<sup>194</sup> Since the Skolt Sámi have known Orthodoxy in many ways through Pechenga monastery it has become one of the cornerstones of their culture. Above all this was the case for the older Skolt Sámi, who

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<sup>193</sup> Fortier 1999, 41-42.

<sup>194</sup> Privratsky 2001, 57.

were born there but were forced to leave their home areas after the war.<sup>195</sup> Furthermore, the whole concept of home area – currently the so called ‘Sámi land’ - holds an utmost importance for Skolt Sámi. The home area holds different levels, and can be separated for example into different village units. All in all, the religious life is considered stronger in Sámi area and the connection to the home is also in a key role in constructing the collective memory. On the other hand, Orthodoxy was considered as an element, which has a power to maintain the connection to the Skolt Sámi culture and identity even outside the Sámi area.

In the next chapter I move on to study the different relationships Skolts have with other groups. The focus is on how the relationships are reflected in different Skolt Sámi minority positions and also on how this affects the construction of collective memory of Skolts Sámi.

#### **5.4 Manifold minority experiences in the heart of memories – relationship with others**

Orthodox Skolt Sámi hold multiple minority positions, both ethnically and religion-wise. Firstly, they are an ethnic minority inside a Finnish minority church, the Orthodox Church of Finland. Secondly, they are a religious minority in relation to other Sámi groups and also in relation to Lutheran Finns. The historical encounter of the Skolt Sámi with neighboring peoples, with other Sámi groups and Finns, in addition to Russians and Karelians, has come to define the external boundary of Skolt Sámi ethnic identity in the collective memory.<sup>196</sup>

Due to their manifold minority positions, Skolt Sámi have experienced different kind of perceptions towards their religion and ethnicity on many levels. Thus it is important to categorize their minority position and relationship of “us” and “them” on a variety of levels as well. The treatment of Skolt Sámi in the past is part of the common memory. According to Jan Assman, the more monstrous the memory is, the greater is the inevitability with which it finds its way into symbols and into the public sphere.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Privratsky 2001, 248.

<sup>196</sup> See also Privratsky 2001, 52.

<sup>197</sup> Assman 2006, 178.

Consequently, if the memory of a relationship is considered positive, it has become good in the minds of the individuals as well.

Furthermore, as a result of the Orthodox Skolt Sámi's manifold minority status, they have developed a heightened reflexivity concerning encounters between themselves and other Sámi groups, dominant Finnish Lutherans and also towards their own Orthodox Church as representatives of the smallest minority group inside the Orthodox Church. The results of this reflexivity are observed in the following chapter.

#### **5.4.1. Minority inside a minority church – Skolt Sámi and their view on the Orthodox Church**

In this chapter I am going to focus on the role of Skolt Sámi as an ethnic minority inside a minority church. The perspective is mostly of Skolt Sámi experiences and how they see their role inside the Orthodox Church of Finland.

For most of the respondents the viewpoint towards the Church was positive. The majority of respondents felt that the Orthodox Church had been supportive towards Skolts' own religious habits, like *leudd's* and ritual keenings. In most accounts the church was described as a supportive element for the Skolt Sámi culture, which has lived side by side with the Skolt Sámi culture and respected it, supporting also the minority status of Skolt Sámi.<sup>198</sup> Also some priests, like Yrjö Räme<sup>199</sup>, a longtime priest in the times of Pechenga, were mentioned as supporters of Skolt Sámi culture:

#### **Quote 28**

Well...During the time of Yrjö Räme [a former priest], he followed the lives of the Skolts already in the times of Suonjel and Pechenga, and he has been working in Sevetijärvi and has contributed a lot. And there have been many other persons as well who have helped...

**Liisa**

Especially to some older respondents, the church's supportive role was emphasized. It can be argued that when Skolt Sámi settled in the new villages in Finland in the aftermaths of the Second World War, Orthodoxy became a powerful cultural force, a depository of

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<sup>198</sup> However, also an idea that the Orthodox Church was not necessarily tolerant towards the so called pagan habits in Karelia, Seto area and Kola Peninsula was presented in the interviews. The question has had more to do with incapacity to interfere with those things and a lack of resource for the Church's part.

<sup>199</sup> Räme worked in Lapland until the 1970s. Read more Kälkäjä 2002.

identity against the assimilation of Finns and other Sámi groups.<sup>200</sup> In a new environment, the Skolt language and their traditions were under pressure of the dominant Finnish majority culture. There were few opportunities to maintain their traditional livelihood but what they could still do was to practice their faith. Hence, Orthodoxy remained in an accessible and useable form in the Skolt Sámi collective memory. As such, it can be concluded that Orthodoxy could be seen as preserver of culture and also for elder Skolt Sámi a thing, which penetrated several aspects of life.

However, it was not only the elder respondents, who regarded the church as an important cultural force. Even the youngest respondent Maija described the church as follows:

### **Quote 29**

R: Because at the end of the day it is part of the culture.

M: So do you see it as part of the culture?

R: Well it kind of is. For example before you eat you bless the food and so on. So it is an old habit, which has been around for a long time.

**Maija**

Maija's account emphasizes the continuum established through Orthodox tradition, referring to "an old habit, which has been around for a long time". Ritva also mentioned that the Orthodox influence is visible in many things related to Skolt Sámi culture, even in contexts, which are not religious in nature. She sees the role of Orthodoxy an inseparable part of the culture as well:

### **Quote 30**

And in a way I feel that the Orthodox influence is visible in many culture things, even though you are not active in the church [...] It's like something built-in.

**Ritva**

Some Skolts are seemingly disturbed by the fact that Skolt Sámi and Orthodoxy are always connected and that for example priests are brought to Skolt events. Maija described her friend's irritability as follows:

### **Quote 31**

I don't know if this is common among youth anymore, or if the youth even cares for it. I have heard more of this from older people, middle-aged or so, who really don't like it. But yes, also from young people. But I don't remember when I was younger that someone would have opposed it. I only have one friend, who complains about this....[...] The thing

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<sup>200</sup> Pennanen 2003, 150. See also Jelena Sergejeva (1997).

that disturbs my friend is that when some kind of [Skolt] events are organized, they always forcibly drag Orthodoxy there and they bring the priests and so on.

**Maija**

The religion has indeed permeated into the culture in many ways, to the extent that it irritates some. The same kind of generalization has happened for example with the reindeer herding culture, which is regarded as a symbol of the Sámi culture in the minds of many, even if only one portion of the Sámi exercised this economic adaptation. This phenomenon might have happened with Orthodox faith and Skolt Sámi as well - gradually, religion has gained also a cultural import. This can be seen in daily customs, where religious characteristics are incorporated.

However, many respondents also mentioned and brought up the plurality of roles the Church has for Skolt Sámi. The respondents reminded of the fact that there are active Skolt Sámi who are not religious or active in the church. For them the Church does not play any significant personal role. Thus, Orthodoxy is only seen as one part of the Skolt Sámi culture and the supportive role of the Church applies only to some Skolt Sámi:

### **Quote 32**

M: Does the Orthodox faith support being a Skolt Sámi?

R: Sometimes it does, sometimes not. It depends on the person. There are active Skolt Sámi who do not care for the church at all [...] Yes, it is only one part of culture [...] One cannot say that it is precisely Orthodoxy and being a Skolt Sámi, which go hand in hand. It is not like that. But the church supports the culture nevertheless.

**Lauri**

Pertti saw that especially among younger generation Skolts the church membership is not considered as an important thing anymore. He considers the religious identity a separate part of ethnic identity and for him these two identities do not emerge or reinforce each other:

### **Quote 33**

M: What do you think, can one draw the equality sign between Orthodoxy and Skolt Sámi?

R: Well no. No you can't. There are quite few Skolts in my generation who belong to the Orthodox church [...] I see this Sámi identity and religion as two separate things. Like they don't integrate in any way, or support each other, quite the contrary.

**Pertti**

Pertti's answer highlights that the idea of emblematic Skolt Sámi identity where the Orthodox Church has a strong role is also problematic. Generalization is regarded dangerous and ignorant since not all Skolts belong to the Orthodox Church.<sup>201</sup> Moreover, these views acknowledge identities as fluid and overlapping. The answers also accentuated a critical and to some degree an individualistic approach to religion. Pertti for example spoke about the early history of Church and Skolt Sámi traditional religion as follows:

#### **Quote 34**

R: Well, I see that church has mistreated both Skolts and other Sámi quite much. In many ways. Okay, in these days many people associate Skolt Sámi with the Orthodox church, but the history of these two hasn't been so long and bright....okay, everybody can interpret things as they wish, but....I just mean, well I still am a member of the Church, but just as well I could not be.

[...]

M: What do you think about that, when people say that church has been supporting the Skolt Sámi culture?

R: Well, today it might be a slightly different thing. And of course, what is the church's interest - I don't know. But I am a little skeptic about these things.

**Pertti**

Furthermore, one interesting approach for Skolt minority position inside the church is the Skolts' relationship to other Orthodox minority groups. Karelians, to whom Skolts have traditionally had vivid cultural connections, were often regarded as "tribe people".<sup>202</sup> For future research, inspection of Orthodox background immigrants, mainly Russians that reside in Ivalo, can offer a new approach to study the diverse role of Skolt minority position inside the Orthodox Church.

All in all, the majority of respondents felt the Skolt Sámi culture and Orthodoxy were intertwined. This was evident for example in responses where the term 'tradition' or 'culture' were connected to Orthodoxy. These answers emphasized the strong role of Orthodoxy in the collective memory of Skolt Sámi. The role was created through positive feeling of the Church as a supporter of Skolt Sámi culture. However, an increased criticism was also associated with the Church and also the supportive role was sometimes challenged. I connect this to the increased individualism, which in turn has an effect on the chain of memories. Also the nature of collective memory has changed. It can be argued that nowadays the minority status inside the Orthodox Church concerns "belonging" for

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<sup>201</sup> Unfortunately I was not able to find any numeric data about the percentage of Orthodox Church members among Skolt Sámi. One respondent estimated that about ¼ of Skolts are Lutherans nowadays, so this would indicate that the majority of Skolts are still members of the Orthodox Church.

<sup>202</sup> Pentikäinen 1995, 327.

Skolt Sámi, more than for example “believing”. This resembles religiosity in a similar fashion with the whole Nordic region.<sup>203</sup>

Moreover, even though the role of church is considered important, it is not a defining character in the construction of ethnic identity. Skolts have never regarded someone as a “less Skolt” if they are not Orthodox.<sup>204</sup> If something, the religion has a role in the construction of *cultural identity*. These two terms are separated in the field of anthropology and sociology, even though they are often used as synonyms. Culture identity refers to a communal feeling between a cultural group, which shares a common language, history and tradition. Ethnic identity, however, refers more to an *ethnic consciousness*, identification with a specific ethnic group.<sup>205</sup>

#### 5.4.2. The Lutheran effect

Table 1: The ethnic family affiliations of the respondents (only Skolt Sámi respondents presented)

	Finnish father	Finnish mother	Skolt father	Skolt mother
Pertti		x	x	
Maija		x	x	
Lauri			x	<b>x</b>
Liisa			x	<b>x</b>
Jussi	x			<b>x</b>
Ritva		x	x	
Jukka		x	x	
Kerttu			x	<b>x</b>

<sup>203</sup> Sakaranaho 2012, 93.

<sup>204</sup> Pelto 1962, 183.

<sup>205</sup> Liebkind 1990, 22.

Table 2: The religious family affiliations of the respondents (only Skolt Sámi respondents presented)

	Lutheran father	Lutheran mother	Orthodox father	Orthodox mother
Pertti		x	x	
Maija	x (father Skolt Sámi)			x (mother ethnic Finn, converted)
Lauri			x	<b>x</b>
Liisa			x	<b>x</b>
Jussi	x			<b>x</b>
Ritva		x	x	
Jukka			x	x, ethnic Finn, converted
Kerttu			x	<b>x</b>

Regarding religious adherence, Kati Niemelä has said that Finland is one of the most Lutheran countries in the world<sup>206</sup>, since in 2013 around 75, 2 per cent of Finns belonged to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.<sup>207</sup> In relation to Lutheran Finns, the Orthodox Skolt Sámi form a double minority position, an ethnic and religious one. The interview accounts described the relationship between Lutheran Finns and Skolt Sámi usually in quite neutral tone – however, the fact that I as an interviewer am a Lutheran Finn myself might have affected how the answers were formed. Usually respondents just noted that the knowledge of Skolt Sámi is quite low outside Lapland, but the general stance towards Skolts is positive. Pertti thought the attitude might be more open-minded outside the Sámi area:

### **Quote 35**

<sup>206</sup> Niemelä 2003, 125.

<sup>207</sup> Kirkon tilastollinen Vuosikirja 2013.

Well, many kinds of attitudes. But nowadays it is not that big of a deal, people are more like “oh, what is this thing”. In general, Finns know so little about Sámi. So little [...] In a way, they have this one kind of stereotype about Sámi people, and the impression is very constricted....[...] But yes, people are interested. But they are a bit prisoners of their own prejudices. Maybe, I would feel that people coming outside this Sámi area, are maybe a bit more....open-minded towards this thing. Of course there are many things related to this, tensions and such, which are simmering here.<sup>208</sup> Finns-Sámi people arrangement. And in places, where this arrangement is not that close, you can relate to it in a more relaxed way”

**Pertti**

Jussi noted that historically Skolts have encountered Finns only, when they have done research on Skolts. He also criticized the information that school books offer about Sámi people:

### **Quote 36**

The Finns were, even during my youth, usually there when there was some interviewer or camera crew asking all kinds of questions [...] otherwise it felt like, if they didn't want to do some kind of story of us, we were left alone [...] so were really just encountered with those Finns, who lived there. So it is different, if you would go to Helsinki [...] In Helsinki I noticed how little the young people actually knew about Sámi. And actually I noticed that already in upper secondary school here in Ivalo, when the history teacher couldn't explain why our history books didn't tell anything about the Sámis....

**Jussi**

Moreover, the relationship between Skolt Sámi and Lutheran church is interesting, because there is a large number of Skolt Sámi who are members of the Evangelic Lutheran Church – one respondent estimated that about ¼ of Skolts are Lutherans. This is an important point but overlooked in literature. One older respondents recalled that for example in the 1940s and 1950s, almost all the villagers in Nellim were Orthodox, so the situation has started to change in the 1960s. According to Teuvo Laitila, in the first decades in post-war Finland the majority of those, who resigned the Orthodox Church joined the Lutheran Church. However, afterwards the flow took an opposite direction. Reasons for conversion might include feelings of detachment and harmonization pressure from the surrounding environment. Also the uniform majority culture imposed by the Finnish school system considered it a good thing to become as Finnish as possible and this extended to religion as well.<sup>209</sup> The Lutheranization process worried some respondents, but some have the feeling that Skolts do not easily leave the church because of the powerful social connections inside the families:

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<sup>208</sup> I interpreted that the tensions to which Pertti referred meant the current dispute over the land rights and signing of International Labor Organization's convention no. 169, which has in some degree caused tensions between Finns and Sámi.

<sup>209</sup> Laitila 2009, 334; Jefremoff 2010, 163.

Well, I don't have any facts how much it has happened [Skolts converting to the Lutheran church]. Rather my gut feeling is that Skolts do not easily leave the church. The family connection is quite strong.

**Matti**

The fact that the amount of Lutheran Skolts has risen, has caused a problem considering the compliance of the Sámi Language Act.<sup>210</sup> The action's section 30 contains provisions on the application of the Act to ecclesiastical authorities – the Evangelical Lutheran parishes of Enontekiö, Inari, Utsjoki and Sodankylä, and also the Orthodox parish of Lapland.<sup>211</sup> According to Lauri, though, the Lutheran Church applies the Sámi Language Act only on Northern and Inari Sámis but not on Lutheran Skolt Sámis:

### **Quote 37**

When the new language law was established, I noticed that the Lutheran Church did not apply it to Lutheran Skolt Sámis. They just apply it to Northern and Inari Sámis. They do not translate anything into Skolt Sámi, for example while reading the banns of marriage. They just think that being a Skolt Sámi is the same as being an Orthodox. We are not all Orthodox. We have a lot of Lutheran Skolts. But the Lutheran Church does not take care of Skolts.

**Lauri**

This remark is a valid one since it points out that even the official authorities categorize Skolt Sámi as mainly Orthodox and leave the implementation and the realization of the linguistic rights of the Skolt Sámi to the Orthodox Church only. Also the report on the implementation of the Sámi Language Act in 2004–2006, which assessed the realization of the linguistic rights of the Sámi in the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Orthodox Church of Finland, wrote that the Evangelical Lutheran parishes in Utsjoki and Inari serve Sámi people in Inari and North Sámi, and the Orthodox Church in Skolt Sámi.<sup>212</sup> The question remains which bodies or authorities are also responsible to guarantee the linguistic rights of the Lutheran Skolts.

The question of intermarriages emerged in the answers of my respondents as well. It can be argued that the religious border between the West and the East has for a long time governed the marriage fields and has indirectly also influenced absorbing and abandoning

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<sup>210</sup> The purpose of the Act, established originally in 1992 and revised in 2003, is to ensure, for its part, the constitutional right of the Sámi to maintain and develop their own language and culture. The act guarantees that Sámi people have a right to use their native language with different authorities. Source: Sámi Language Act 1086/2003

<sup>211</sup> Sámi Language Act 1086/2003

<sup>212</sup> The Sámi Parliament 2008, 210-221.

many cultural characteristics. For example Pelto noticed in his field work that marriages with non-Skolts were not always regarded positively.<sup>213</sup> However the World War II had a deep effect on the frequency of intermarriages. According to Voitto Huotari's dissertation findings (1975), a great majority of Orthodox Finns married outside their denomination, into the Lutheran one after World War II. Furthermore, especially during the first decades after the war, most children born into Orthodox-Lutheran families were baptized into the dominant Lutheran faith.<sup>214</sup> The same kind of development has happened among the Skolt Sámi. Already in 1985 over half of the Skolt marriages were mixed marriages.<sup>215</sup>

Five respondents all in all, came from a family where one parent was a Skolt and one a Finn (see table number 1 in the beginning of chapter). All these five respondents were young Skolts. Four had a Skolt father and a Finnish mother, one had a Skolt mother and a Finnish father. In three cases my respondents had parents representing both religious affiliations (see table number 2). The most common intermarriage combination was an Orthodox mother and a Lutheran father. Two of those Finnish mothers were converted to the Orthodox Church from the Lutheran one. Some of the respondents were baptized first to Evangelic Lutheran Church and later on converted to Orthodoxy, either as adults or earlier on their parents' initiative. It is also noticeable that not all respondents' Skolt fathers are Orthodox. One respondent had a Lutheran Skolt father but she still joined the Orthodox Church at the age of five, together with her Finnish mother.

Furthermore, Ritva, who had an Orthodox Skolt father and a Lutheran Finnish mother, described that she has felt like living between two religions her whole life and had followed habits of both church affiliations:

### **Quote 38**

I have always lived between two religions, depending on which relatives I have been visiting, I have followed certain habits.

**Ritva**

The quote highlights the constant navigation between Lutheranism and Orthodoxy. This manifests that in many cases the family members have to take into account the dual

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<sup>213</sup> Pelto 1962,196; Pentikäinen 1995, 325.

<sup>214</sup> Huotari 1975,10-1; Laitila 2009, 334; Kupari 2014, 143.

<sup>215</sup> Korhonen & Linkola 1985, 161.

religious orientation of the family in everyday life and during special occasions.<sup>216</sup>

Moreover, Ritva had converted to Orthodoxy as an adult. She described the relationship with Orthodoxy as something, which feels closer than Lutheranism and is based more on voluntarism:

### **Quote 39**

I've tried to be a Lutheran, but this is much nicer. In some way this is a much closer thing for me. In Orthodoxy it is somehow based on voluntariness on a whole different level. People do not look askance at you if you are a bit late from the ceremony or.....because in a way nobody forces you to be there [...] It is much more based on voluntarism.

**Ritva**

All the respondents felt that the choice of church in intermarriage cases was a personal one, but for example one of my respondents said her new son-in-law had converted to Orthodoxy after marrying her daughter, which in her opinion outlined the importance of Orthodoxy for Skolt Sámi:

### **Quote 40**

M: Do you see the Orthodox religion as a supporter for the culture?

R: Yes. Yes, it supports.

M: In which ways?

R: It is such a big power, which supports and carries it. For example, when my son-in-law got married to my daughter, he converted to Orthodoxy.

**Liisa**

The conversion from Lutheranism to Orthodoxy as an act of support for the Skolt Sámi culture was mentioned in other answers as well. In one case the respondent's mother had also converted to Orthodoxy even though the father (a Lutheran Skolt) had not. When I asked the respondent, if she feels that the Orthodox Church is important to her as a Skolt, she replied:

### **Quote 41**

A little bit yes. I think that was the idea, when we joined the church with my mother. And then.....it is a part of the culture in some ways. Partly. If you think about Trifon the Pechenga, he has been really important to Skolts, it is being discussed greatly and there are their own fairytales and everything about him. So he is linked essentially to the Skolt culture. And history...

**Maija**

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<sup>216</sup> Kupari 2014, 140-414

The respondent's Finnish mother had seemingly regarded the Orthodoxy as something, which is closely related to the Skolt Sámi culture and wanted to maintain that part in her daughter's life. In this case I interpret the conversion to Orthodoxy as an indication of a supportive act for the sake of the Skolt Sámi culture.

Despite the emerged conversion cases, most of the respondents do not see any competitive situation between Churches - even though there is a general wish that Orthodox traditions would stay strong in the community. In many answers the personal choice was emphasized and quite a few mentioned that the choice of religious affiliation is considered a private matter and a bigger priority than the possible wishes of the community. For example Jukka answered as follows:

#### **Quote 42**

It is only natural. It is not...I mean we don't have any competitive situation here. It is each person's own decision what they do. Of course it is always the wish that...as many as possible would be Orthodox, and in the community in general so the traditions would remain strong, but....if someone chooses differently, it is always a personal choice.

**Jukka**

The Lutheran effect has had a heterogenic influence on Skolt Sámi community and also on Skolt Sámi collective memory – the increased number of Lutheran Skolt Sámi means that Orthodoxy is no longer the only religious affiliation among Skolts. However, even though the Skolt Sámi community itself acknowledges this fact, the outside society has not yet followed the example. For example ecclesiastical authorities still regard most Skolts as Orthodox. On the other hand, practicing Orthodoxy amongst Lutheran groups – both Sámi and Finns – has had an effect on how Skolt Sámi see their own role as a minority. The ethnic identity is constructed in relation to outside groups, and thus it can be stated that the role of Orthodoxy also was emphasized among majority Lutherans. The conversions to Orthodoxy as supportive acts for Skolt Sámi culture are a demonstration of this.

#### **5.4.3. Religious minority inside an ethnic minority– religion as a factor in inter-Sámi relationships**

One interview question in my interviews was how Skolt Sámi differ from other Sámi groups. There are three different Sámi groups in Finland; Northern Sámis, Inari Sámis and Skolt Sámis. Northern Sámi is the biggest Sámi group. Distinctions between Sámi groups are established also through used ethnonyms; Northern Sámi refer to Skolt Sámi as

*nuortalaš* ”those living in the east” whereas Skolt Sámi call Northern Sámi as *vuá’rjjelsä’mmilaz*, ”west-north-west Sámi”.<sup>217</sup>

Some respondents regarded the differences mainly as external things, like language and dresses. One respondent even mentioned that it was almost easier to find similarities than differences. These answers highlighted the common Sámi identity of different Sámi groups. The most visible statement of the shared Sámi identity was expressed in 1986 in a Sámi conference in Åre, Sweden when the common Sámi flag was used for the first time.<sup>218</sup> The Sámi political program says “We Sámi, are one people, united in our own culture, language and history, living in areas, which since the time immemorial and up to historical times, we alone inhabited and utilized.”<sup>219</sup> The construction of ethnic awareness is also a part of a larger movement of indigenous peoples, born in 1970s, which places the Skolt Sámi in context with other groups living in same kind of ecological and societal circumstances.<sup>220</sup>

However, some differences appeared in the interview accounts. Eastern influence, Orthodoxy included, was mentioned by many as something which separates the Skolts from other Sámi:

### **Quote 43**

M: You mentioned that the Skolt culture is different to the other Sámi cultures. In which ways?

R: Well there are a lot of eastern features....a lot of Karelian features, since we have the same kind of dress....and then we are Orthodox....and the food culture is different as well. Of course we eat fish and reindeer, but tea drinking and those kinds of things are different. And the language is also very different. It differs a lot from Northern Sámi, Inari Sámi is a bit more similar. And Skolt Sámi has a lot of loanwords from Russian and it is connected to the Russian language.

**Maija**

The degree how much Orthodoxy was emphasized as a divisional factor in relation to other Sámi, varied between respondents. Especially the younger respondents thought Orthodoxy should not be emphasized that much, since there are also many Lutheran Skolts. However, almost everyone listed the Orthodoxy as one element, which stands out the Skolt Sámi

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<sup>217</sup> Sergejeva 2000, 16-17-;20.

<sup>218</sup> Pentikäinen 1995, 329.

<sup>219</sup> Saami Political Program 1986 /Saami Council Statements

<sup>220</sup> To read more about global indigenous movement, see Pentikäinen 1995, 26- 27.

culture from other Sámi cultures. This supports the view that Orthodoxy is still one of the noticeable and frequently mentioned indicator of Skoltness between Skolts and non-Skolts – even though the criticism towards this kind of categorization has also grown recently.

Many respondents were also aware that when the Skolts first came to the Inari area, there were some prejudices, which were partly emerging because some Sámi felt that the Skolt Sámi had come to their fishing grounds and partly because the Skolt Sámi had a dissident language, dresses and also religion:

#### **Quote 44**

If I think about the years [in the early 1970s], I travelled to Inari and Utsjoki and then among Skolt Sámis, I did hear all kinds of things. For example in Utsjoki, they sometimes talked a bit harshly about Skolts, and many times it was related to the fact that they had a different language and religion. About the religion they might say that they worship wooden gods [icons].... And then there were these quite ugly names given, people spoke about “Russkie<sup>221</sup>’s gifts” and so on. It didn’t sound particularly nice.

**Raija**

#### **Quote 45**

I guess they were those old things. That we [Skolts] suddenly moved to here, to other people’s area and.... We were so different than other Sámis. We had such a different culture. It was kind of Russian. And back then, they called many Skolts as *russkie*....because we were Orthodox and we had different clothes and all.....But they don’t do that anymore. That was back then.

**Maija**

In general, the Finnish national-political way of thinking composed the starting point in stances towards Orthodox especially at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century and to some degree this meant also opposition towards Russian cultural influences.<sup>222</sup> However, in regards to Skolt Sámi, the early stage of opposition was mainly economical, not cultural or religious.

Overall, the evaluations concerning the treatments of Orthodox Skolt Sámi ranged. Some felt it has been neutral all the way. Most of the younger generation Skolts though have not encountered anything negative, but they have heard of the experiences of their parents in the 1960s and 1970s:

#### **Quote 46**

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<sup>221</sup> A derogatory term, referring to a Russian.

<sup>222</sup> This kind of polarization, where Lutheranism represented Finnishness and Orthodoxy Russianism lost ground only at the turn of 1960s and 1970s, when the interest towards socialism and Soviet Union grew bigger. Read more Laitila 2009, 335.

Well...I have not encountered anything, I have always been myself and people have either accepted me or not, but I have never felt it as a thing, but there are also...for example my father's worst bullies in school were other Sámis. So maybe Skolts were the lowest caste among the Sámis. Maybe because their numbers and also because they were slightly different, came from a different place and their language sounded different, so...maybe it has affected.

**Pertti**

One respondent pointed out that the name-calling was reciprocal:

#### **Quote 47**

It didn't mean that they didn't respond to the name-calling, I do know that if the Skolt was used as a word of abuse, then equally Skolt Sámi youngsters could say Lapp. They seldom said Fell Sámi or Inari Sámi, but they called others as Lapps.

**Raija**

Especially the relationship between Skolt Sámi and Northern Sámi youth was tense, even close to unfriendly. Among other, the Skolt Sámi were not considered to be a "genuine" Sámi group.<sup>223</sup> Additionally, the respondents mentioned especially Northern Sámi as an example of Sámi who had prejudices towards Skolts. Furthermore, some territorial differences exist. Judging by the answers, I noticed that those who lived in Sevettijärvi or Nellim usually had not encountered anything negative, since they were not so much in contact with Northern Sámis. The situation usually changed in high school, which is situated in Ivalo. Two younger respondents described their experiences as follows:

#### **Quote 48**

I haven't really encountered anything in Sevettijärvi while I was growing up there [...] I think first time I experienced some negativity was in high school, when some Northern Sámis had some Skolt jokes [...] Yeah, but that was just, they were really just normal people once you got to know them. It was just in the beginning you know, the older people have been saying those same things you know....

**Jussi**

But I do not know, I think it is not that common anymore [...] It was before. When my father was young, and also when I was young, I think this existed. Especially the Northern Sámi had quite an...attitude.

M: How did you feel about this?

R2: For me it was not that visible, since I was in Nellim all the time...but sometimes...sometimes it came through, and maybe later in school I also encountered that some Northern Sámi had some prejudices towards Skolts.

**Maija**

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<sup>223</sup> Sergejeva 2000, 30.

Lauri had felt that in Inari, where the population is manifold and the amount of Orthodox people quite high, he had not felt any prejudices but in a more homogeneous places, like in Lemmenjoki or Enontekiö the situation can be different:

#### **Quote 49**

M: How did the other Sámis treat Skolts since they were Orthodox?

R: Well I do not know....In Inari municipality, as you know, Inari municipality is more tolerant but if we go to somewhere like Utsjoki....or not Utsjoki necessarily, but to Enontekiö or Lemmenjoki, there the attitude is a bit different, but well. The Orthodox organize their own services and Lutherans organize their own, but it is visible during the Church Days. That they do look a bit askance at us. Yes, but...one should not care about that [...] But nowadays the tolerance is much better than in the 1960s and 1970s

**Lauri**

Everybody agreed that nowadays the tolerance is much better than in the 1960s and 1970s and Skolts are treated in the same way as other Sámis.

When asked how the church activities were organized, mainly everyone felt that the Orthodox and Lutherans organize their own liturgies and the level of co-operation is low. Some felt that in the ecumenical Sámi Church Days, Skolt Sámi might get looked down on and the ecumenical co-operation could be better. A couple of respondents mentioned especially the Nordic Sámi Church Days in Ivalo, where the Orthodox liturgy was not included in the main program:

#### **Quote 50**

But I would have expected that the Orthodox service would have been included in the main program, not so that there is some main program and then we are away from there in a another place [...] but I do not understand that if it's ecumenism in question then the whole program should have included also the Orthodox parts. And in the same way comes the feeling that when there is an ecumenical service, we always go to the Lutheran church but nobody ever comes to ours. I see living ecumenism as doing things together...In Rovaniemi there is a cross procession<sup>224</sup> between churches, where the procession goes from the Orthodox Church to the Lutheran one. Something like that, where both parts are involved and there are a lot of these kinds of events all around Finland but here it is a bit stiff.

**Raija**

It could be argued that the juxtaposition between the Skolt Sámi and other Finnish Sámi groups tended to place the Sámi closer to their eastern cultural heritage or Kola Sámis,

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<sup>224</sup> Ecumenical cross procession, specifically a Finnish tradition, is a product of global Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Read more Orthodox Parish of Helsinki 2015.

while the Skolt Sámi ethnicity came to represent what was considered *eastern*.<sup>225</sup> Skolts are part of the eastern Sámi group and nowadays also in close contact with the Kola Sámis in Russia. Shared culture, religion and similar language are connecting factors between Skolts and Kola Sámi. The respondents also acknowledged this fact and mentioned that Skolt Sámis may have a lot more in common with for example Kildini Sámi than with Sámis in Finland:

### **Quote 51**

If we look at the east, the Skolt Sámis have a lot more in common with Kildini Sámi than with Sámis in Finland

**Jussi**

Besides Kola Sámi, Orthodox indigenous groups in Alaska were mentioned as possible targets for co-operation.

### **Quote 52**

Besides the language, in terms of supporting the [Skolt] identity, comes the ecumenical connection between Skolts and other Sámis, in the religious context primarily. Then also pairing off other indigenous groups with Skolts, the target being in Alaska, where are 5 Orthodox faith indigenous groups

**Matti**

The co-operation was considered to be a supportive element for Skolt identity and a tool in revitalization movement – a shared concern over the situation of their people has brought the Eastern Sámi closer together.<sup>226</sup>

The oppositional context required for the persistence of ethnic identity (see Barth 1969) has been a factor in formation of Orthodox identity. Skolt Sámi are a religious and linguistic minority inside a minority group. They stood apart from other Sámis in terms of language, dress, customs and religion.<sup>227</sup> In post-war Finland, Skolt dresses were different, their religion was considered foreign to some and also their customs were not that familiar. The centuries-long presence of Orthodoxy in the Skolt Sámi collective memory consolidated them as components of a broader Eastern Sámi social framework in relation to western Sámi groups.

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<sup>225</sup> Same goes for the whole Orthodox Church in Finland, for the Protestant majority the Orthodoxy was for a long time synonymous with Russian identity even though the Orthodox church of Finland, along with its Estonian counterpart, is the only “historical” local church that can be regarded as culturally belonging to Western Europe. See Arvola & Kallonen 2010, 14; 94.

<sup>226</sup> Sergejeva 1997, 80; Sergejeva 2000, 32.

<sup>227</sup> Jefremoff 2010, 169.

The several minority positions that Skolt Sámi possess are transferred from generation to generation. However, the society surrounding the Skolt Sámi has undergone major changes and these are reflected on the Skolts as well. The specifics of this evolution become clear in the chapter below, where the differences between generations are studied.

## **5.5. Intergenerational aspect of collective memory**

Collective memory is not biologically inherited, so it has to be preserved across generations through different cultural activities. In this last analysis chapter I am contemplating the intergenerational aspect of collective memory and studying the differences between different Skolt generations. In this way I get a closer look how collective memory has changed for example after the Skolts were first settled in Finland and furthermore how the role of the Orthodox Church has changed among Skolt Sámi. Since family is the major social element in our lives, I will start the examination of the intergenerational element from there, presenting then a general analysis of generational differences and finally having a look at the future, illuminating the role of religion in revitalization movement of Skolt Sámi.

### **5.5.1. The meaning of family**

According to Halbwachs, our kin is the one who first inform us about people and things. Furthermore, religion as a memory is never experienced by an individual only, since memory rises to the surface in a social context, when it is being reasserted by others. Thus, the collective memory of Orthodoxy depends on the social memory of family and kin.<sup>228</sup>

Judging from the interview accounts the respondent are well acquainted with their family backgrounds. Skolts, like other Sámis as well, value the family and kin relationships. The knowledge of the historical background of one's community has an important role in the identity construction of an individual. This kind of genealogical knowledge is part of the formation of ethnic identity. Knowledge of the family system indicates that the

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<sup>228</sup> Halbwachs 1992, 61; 98; Privratsky 2001, 149.

respondents have both the knowledge and the will to untangle the backgrounds of their genealogical line and this could be seen as an indicator for ethnic commitment.<sup>229</sup>

The importance of a family unit in the passing of religious behavior and attitudes from one generation to another is vital– if there are active parish members in the family, this also encourages the children to participate. Liisa has noticed that in the Skolt Sámi context family members have an important role in maintaining and passing on the knowledge of rituals from generation to generation:

### **Quote 53**

R: There are not so many differences between present or past, because at christenings, funerals and weddings the younger generation asks advice of the older – what should be done in certain parts etc. Everybody passes on the knowledge. Everybody thinks, for example at funerals, that is this done right, do Skolt do it this way, have they done it in this and this way and so on. So also the youth follows traditions.

M: So it passes on from generation to generation?

R: Yes, it passes on from generation to generation all the time. And I believe, this will happen also in the future [...] And then children visit the church from an early age and it continues in school and so on....

**Liisa**

When asked about the importance of Orthodoxy, many respondents answered that the reason they feel Orthodoxy is so important is because they have been socialized into it – the Orthodox culture has been a part of their upbringing:

### **Quote 54**

Of course the role of the Orthodox faith is important, since we have grown into it. Starting from the early childhood, from nearby the monastery and also elsewhere. Home is the place where everything starts. Orthodoxy has a big role. Starting from the childhood.

**Kerttu**

The socialization process to Orthodoxy from an early age was especially evident in the accounts of older respondents, but also younger ones mentioned this. Moreover, the experiences of the continuum of tradition, even nostalgic feelings, were present in many of the memories the church visits awakened. Going to church was a something familiar and safe, and thus a nice feeling for many. This also emphasizes that the chain of memory can be an individual experience as well, presenting a continuum from childhood to adulthood.

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<sup>229</sup> Saressalo 1996, 206.

Many respondents also mentioned that personally they feel it as an important thing to pass on Orthodox traditions to their children. In the following quote Liisa was seemingly satisfied in her children's and grandchildren's interest in both the Skolt Sámi and the Orthodox culture. Passing on tradition feels important, since it carries the culture – and simultaneously the continuum of collective memory. Liisa also emphasizes that the socialization process comes naturally to her:

#### **Quote 55**

My children and grandchildren are interested in the way I've been dressing myself in Skolt Sámi dresses, I have danced the Skolt *kadri*<sup>230</sup>, I've visited church and they have grown into the culture. That is the natural way for me that I am a Skolt Sámi and I carry along the culture. I don't do that forcefully, I don't seek it, but it grows alongside me. It lives.

**Liisa**

Interview accounts indicated that the church membership of Skolt Sámi seems to be linked to a strong family connection. A couple of younger respondents mentioned that they had been thinking about leaving the church, but have not yet left the church because their parents might feel negatively about their decision.

#### **Quote 56**

I haven't left because my parents still belong to church, and maybe they would think that it is like, I don't know...how they would feel it.

**Pertti**

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#### **Quote 57**

R: At some point I did think about leaving the church.

M: Why did you not do it?

R: Well I do not know. I can't remember, I might have said something about it to my mother at some point, and she was really negative about the idea...so also because of that and then...I just did not do it, it might have been easy but...no, then I thought that there is no point to it, and then if you want to get married it would be nice to do it in a church...and there are not that many disadvantages in belonging to the church, so I just didn't feel like doing it.

**Maija**

In general, the modernization period of the Finnish society in the 1950s weakened the role of family. The development of the affluent society meant that family was not the only support system and hence it was not regarded as unquestionably as before. Also the strong

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<sup>230</sup> A special Skolt Sámi dance.

social pressure from the majority culture, mixed marriages and general societal change increased the resigning process from church.<sup>231</sup> However, it seems that in this sense the Skolt Sámi differ from the majority society since the Skolts have maintained strong family connections even in post-war Finland and also through that the membership to the church.

However, Skolts, like other indigenous peoples in general, are not an inseparable part of the society. The surrounding societal changes do have an effect on Skolts as well. This can be seen for example in how many elder respondents complained that the connection between home and church has weakened. In the case of the elderly respondents, the religious education was gained either at home or at the church. For the younger respondents, though, the educational institute in religion was the school and the link between home and church was loose or even nonexistent. Therefore my material suggests that the place for religious education has moved from homes to schools. For example in Sevettijärvi, the school participates actively in church events:

#### **Quote 58**

In childhood you kind of went with the rest of the group. In Sevettijärvi every time when there was a church event on a week day, we went there with the whole school. So then the attendance to the church events was active, but not so much anymore. My grandmother has tried to get me to go to church on Sundays every now and then, though.

**Jussi**

The loosened connection between home and church is most likely one reason for the different inspection of religion between different Skolt generations. Furthermore, this supports the view of Hervieu-Léger, who said that the weakened role of a traditional family as a religious educator probably counts as one of the central factors in the disintegration of imagined continuity and furthermore as one of the main reasons for the modern crisis of religion.<sup>232</sup> Additionally, also the reasons mentioned earlier, the retreat of traditional family-centered value model is also behind this phenomenon.

For those respondents, who had received religious education at home as well, the person responsible for the education was in most cases either a mother or a grandmother. Especially to many older respondents the educator was a grandmother. An interesting finding was also that in some cases the person responsible for cultural upbringing did not even have to be a Skolt herself. For a couple of the respondents an active tradition carrier

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<sup>231</sup> Ketola 2003, 47.

<sup>232</sup> Hervieu-Léger 2000, 133.

was a non-Skolt mother, an ethnic Finn. One respondent described her Finnish mother as an enthusiastic for the Skolt Sámi culture, who had dressed her in Skolt Sámi clothes and prepared traditional food:

### **Quote 59**

But then my mother was really interested in the culture, even though she was not from here. And she brought it forward, starting when I was really little [...] she was eager to prepare traditional foods, since she was studying the subject back then and then she dressed me in Skolt clothes and everything...of course she could not speak the language, but she tried to tell about different things.

**Maija**

Traditionally, Skolt women have a strong role in carrying and passing on the culture and this was established in the interviews as well - many respondents mentioned the important role of family women as cultural educator.<sup>233</sup> Furthermore, mothers and grandmothers were usually those who had raised the children as well. Historically Sámi women have been responsible for taking care of the home and the children while the men represented the family in the outside world, in different village meetings and gatherings. One respondent pointed out that even though the active “doers”, for example voluntary workers are men, women visit the actual religious services more. The respondent thought that his can be an inherited cultural thinking:

### **Quote 60**

If the mother goes to the church, it is usually the sister who goes along. The boys stay home and warm up the sauna with the fathers, for example.

**Jussi**

Even though nowadays these kind of strict family roles are no longer in use, mothers and tradition carriers create a sense of continuity by representing an importance of tradition for the next generation.<sup>234</sup> The intergenerational transmission of Orthodoxy as a part of the Skolt Sámi culture has survived even through times when the surrounding culture has undergone major changes – some of which have also enormously affected the Skolt Sámi community. These changes have also created differences between divergent Skolt generations. This phenomenon is inspected more closely in the next chapter.

## **5.5.2. Differences between generations**

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<sup>233</sup> See Kupari 2014 & 2015 to read more about the role of women as Orthodox tradition carriers.

<sup>234</sup> See also Siikala 2004, 149-150.

When the differences between generations are studied, some reflections seem in order: where the Orthodox identity is concerned, today's Skolt Sámi young differ from previous generation Skolts. Furthermore, it was evident that the eldest and youngest of the respondents had been socialized into the Orthodox Church under very different circumstances. Thus, one reason for the generational differences in the relationship with religion is also the position Skolt Sámi have had in the Finnish society in relation to other Sámis and the Finnish majority. In other words, variations in Orthodox religiosity and the status of Skolt Sámi identity between generations might overlap.

When analyzed from the historic perspective, it turns out that there are changes in the discursive field that are made relevant in different periods of time. In the course of lives of post-war Skolt Sámi, the society surrounding them had gone through radical changes. Quite a few of the interview accounts explicitly described this societal development, like secularization and its effect on religion. For example Maija reflected the change as follows:

#### **Quote 61**

I guess the religion does not mean as much to people anymore, like it used to do. Or at least I would imagine that most of those evacuees attended church, or at least judging by the pictures there was a massive amount of people there. But nowadays not so much.

**Maija**

There are currently three different generations of Skolts living in Finland: those who have experienced the life in Pechenga and the evacuee process during the war; the second generation born to the post-war Finland and the third generation, who has partly lost the language, and has had to build their Skolt Sámi identity from different pieces available.

The first generation Skolt Sámi lived in a traditional way in Kola Peninsula and for them the relationship with the Church was natural and a part of everyday life, along with the Skolt Sámi culture. The use of the traditional Skolt dress was daily and memories from Pechenga were still fresh. However, after the war the old cultural connections to Pechenga were lost, and suddenly this first generation of Skolts found themselves living among a Lutheran majority. When they wished to preserve themselves as an ethnically integral group, they looked for support in the Church. This confirms the statement of both Paul Rutledge, who concluded that different religious elements may offer a form of security during resettlement, and Hammond & Warner who said that if the group is a target of

marginalization and discriminatory exclusion, the pace of assimilation and secularization is slowed down.<sup>235</sup> Orthodoxy distinguished Skolt Sámi from Lutheran Finns, as well as from Lutheran Sámi groups, and thus served as a catalyst for ethnic self-identification and had a key role in the adaptation process. Like Sergejeva puts it, Orthodoxy was not just a religion for this Skolt Sámi generation but also a way to preserve their own roots in an alien environment.<sup>236</sup>

The representatives of second generation Skolt Sámi living in Finland are the ones who experienced the acculturation process of the Skolt culture. In post-war Finland, in an alien environment, the Skolt Sámi culture altered, and took influence from the surrounding majority culture. Since the old communal gatherings lost ground in the community, the traditional Skolts Sámi games and songs slowly became forgotten.<sup>237</sup> The previous research suggests that the acculturation process reaches the level of religion as well. For example Hannu Kilpeläinen's research of Karelian Orthodox traditions proposes that when Karelian Orthodoxy took influence from the surrounding majority culture, this meant a shift from an ethnic religion towards a more church-oriented religiosity.<sup>238</sup> Most likely this happened also in the case of Skolt Sámi. For example a fact, that the ritual keenings are no longer practiced is a sign that elements of the ethnic religion have disappeared during recent decades. Also Pelto (1962) did similar observations in Sevetijärvi at the end of the 1960s regarding wedding rituals. According to his respondents, the old ritual parts have been left out and the ritual is more reduced to basic, Orthodox elements.<sup>239</sup>

Furthermore, the post-war Finland as a whole experienced a major and quick development of modernization, an expansion of the service sector and a technical revolution, which had an influence on Skolt Sámi as well.<sup>240</sup> Snowmobiles began to replace reindeer and younger Skolts moved to bigger cities in hope of work places. Furthermore, the compulsory education reached also the most remote parts of Lapland in the 1950s, which meant that also those Sámi children were put to school, who had not yet been there.<sup>241</sup> Since the road connections were still in poor shape and distances long, most of the children were forced to live in dormitories. Wanting "the best" for their children, the first

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<sup>235</sup> Rutledge 1985, 53; Hammond & Warner 1993, 56-57.

<sup>236</sup> Sergejeva 2000, 26.

<sup>237</sup> Kilpeläinen 1975, 123; Lehtola 1994, 182-183.

<sup>238</sup> Kilpeläinen 1975, 128.

<sup>239</sup> Pelto 1962, 172.

<sup>240</sup> Jokinen & Saaristo 2006, 83-88.

<sup>241</sup> Etusivu, 2009 (an online magazine of Ministry of Education and Culture)

generation Skolt Sámi parents wanted their children to speak Finnish with an intention that their children would survive in the majority society.<sup>242</sup> During the school years, the second generation Skolt Sámi children were under the influence of their Finnish schools instead of the socializing process of the Sámi society. Children were alienated from their own cultural heritage.<sup>243</sup> As a result many of their children, the third generation Skolt Sámi never learned the Skolt language as their first language. The acculturation effect appears in the religious sphere as well, since joining the Lutheran church became more and more popular, usually as a result of mixed marriages.

Furthermore, the Western lifestyle and emerging secularism gained more ground among Skolt Sámi as well. When the Finnish society modernized, the economic security and general wellbeing of people increased and this had an effect on the general values. Ideas of societal authorities were re-evaluated, also the position of Church. In the name of liberalism, pluralistic values, rise of the individualism and progress, also the church was criticized for being old-fashioned.<sup>244</sup> All in all, the third generation Skolt Sámi, the youngest one of my respondents, were born to a very different Skolt community than their grandparents. The current Skolt community is more heterogeneous, since Orthodoxy is no longer the only religious affiliation. The amount of Skolt Sámi speaking Finnish as their mother tongue has also increased.

This development reflected also on how Orthodoxy was perceived. For older respondent the relationship with the church was considered vivid and important. For them, religion was not a separate thing from the culture. They felt the Orthodox religion is an essential part of their Skolt identity and talking about the religion as something, which is a separate thing seemed difficult for them. The younger respondents, on the other hand, were much more critical towards the church. The current information society and available information even emphasized this fact:

### **Quote 62**

And nowadays we have televisions and Internet, and before those didn't exist that much. So they had their own Orthodox faith, but nowadays if kids and young people want to know something, they go to Wikipedia or Google. It doesn't make us any

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<sup>242</sup> If observed from the perspective of evolution of ethnic identity, this stage can also be described either as conformity or dissonance stage. Read more Liebkind 1990, 27.

<sup>243</sup> Rutledge 1985, 23; Semenoja 1995; Sergejeva 2000, 30; Porsanger 2004, 119.

<sup>244</sup> Ketola 2003, 49.

more civilized, but it is just easier for us to find the same information. So maybe we nowadays also question things more.

**Jussi**

The ever increasing mass of available information is challenging for the collective memory since it needs to be more and more able to achieve explanatory links for the new information. According to Hervieu-Ledger, the modernization has influenced the collective memory in enervating way. The memory of modern societies is scattered and it has become more and more difficult for communities to see themselves a part of the chain of generations. The fragmentation and homogenization of collective memory means that the younger generation does not necessarily organize the mass of new information by relating it to lineage to which they see belonging.<sup>245</sup> Instead they seek alternative ways to confirm the information and these might be inconsistent with the traditional knowledge. Also the previously mentioned change in value systems has its effect on this phenomenon. Many respondents mentioned that the content of faith has changed, becoming “poorer”, even though the membership of the Church has remained from generation to generation.<sup>246</sup> The overall decline of religiosity and priorities in favor of secular pastime diverted people’s time and left less time for the church.

Many young people described that they have not attended the ceremonies as diligently as their grandparents or parents would have wished. The grandparents’ religion represents something into which the young Skolt generation has not been fully socialized.<sup>247</sup> Younger respondents mostly mentioned visiting the church only during bigger events, like Easter mass, which gathers attendance especially in Sevettijärvi. However, judging from the interview accounts the attendance at the services has dropped among all age groups in the Skolt community. Indeed, it has been precisely the institutional participation, which has been on a lower level. In terms of church affiliation, however, Skolt Sámi have always tended to define their religion by home-centered practices rather than by church attendance.

The material suggest that for the young Skolts the collective religious practicing was not that common anymore and the religion was not usually emphasized in families.

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<sup>245</sup> Davie 2000, ix; Hervieu-Léger 2000, 123; 127; 128-130.

<sup>246</sup> Helena Kupari observed similar behavior models among evacuee Karelian Orthodox women (2015). According to Kupari, these two aspects religion practice (habitual and intentional) are traced to the childhood religious socialization and on the other hand to social trajectories as minority religious practitioners in Finnish society.

<sup>247</sup> Kupari 2015, 180.

Furthermore, young Skolts view Orthodoxy with a more individualistic approach. For example Pertti's answer indicates that the churchgoing is seen as an individual choice, not a result of group pressure.

### **Quote 63**

Well, maybe it was visible in ways like...well, Easter and such were festivities, when we made for example *pasha*. But well, my father and mother were somewhat religious, but religion never was something emphasized in our family. Sometimes we went to church, but that was totally voluntarily, nobody forced us to do so.

**Pertti**

Judging from the material young Skolts share what Hammond (1992) calls "individual expressive" identity rather than a more traditional "collective-expressive" identity. Individual expressive identity is characterized by a high sense of personal autonomy, which in turn is usually linked with a low church involvement. Young Skolt Sámi do not necessarily look for support first in the church or other institutions, but in themselves and in the family and local community. This emphasizes how nowadays people find their cultural anchors in different ways. They can be inherited traditions, new reconstructions of cultural habits or religious faiths and practices.<sup>248</sup> These observations verify the thoughts of Hammond and Warner about ethnicity and religion (see chapter 3.1.2), who concluded that in the future the connection between religion and ethnicity will weaken since religion becomes a matter of individual choice, not a character of ethnic identity.<sup>249</sup>

Generally speaking the Orthodox identity of the older respondents has remained the most unquestioned in nature. Many respondents recalled that older Skolts followed for example fasting times diligently. Noteworthy is that in the following quote, Raija does not refer to herself, but to a generation older than her – meaning most probably a generation born in Pechenga.

### **Quote 64**

If I think about the old people I knew, they did not just visit the ceremonies diligently, they also followed the fasting times at home [...] It was somehow so clear to them, this church calendar, that now starts the fasting. And Skolts, they still lived in the time of two calendars, so they lived according to both the Julian calendar and said that now it's the old Ivana day and now it's the old Ilja day and also according to this calendar we use in Finland.

**Raija**

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<sup>248</sup> Hammond 1992; McNamara 1995, 30; Siikala, Klein & Mathisen 2004, 12.

<sup>249</sup> Hammond & Warner 1993, 66.

This confirms the findings of previous research. For example Kaija Heikkinen and Helena Kupari made similar observations about Karelian evacuees: the older evacuees commonly preserved their pre-war customs in post-war Finland more than the younger ones.<sup>250</sup>

Furthermore, the finding presented in this chapter support the view of previous research. For example, Elina Vuola also noticed in her interviews among Skolt Sámi women that the relationship with the church is partly a generational thing, and partly it reflects the contradictory attitude towards the Orthodox church in general; one doesn't want to leave the church, since Orthodoxy is considered an essential part of identity, but in practice the meaning of church is diminishing and at the same time the knowledge of the Orthodoxy's role in the disposal of Sámi cultures has strengthened. Vuola mentioned though that the secularisation is not necessarily a right term to describe the process which especially younger Skolts are going through.<sup>251</sup>

According to Hervieu-Léger, the question of secularization takes a new form in the case of religious memory. As already mentioned, the constant change, resulted from modernization, has concluded that groups are no longer so prone to project a lineage of belief. According to Herviu-Léger, already the fact that we can distinguish between for example family memory, a national memory and religious memory is proof of having left the pure world of tradition, where the collective memory is total. Hervieu-Léger argues, however, that when the group is able to recognize itself as a link in a chain of memories, it can also extend that chain into the future. With Skolt Sámi, the fact that they have been able to maintain their Orthodox affiliation for so long and maintained the church membership from generation to generation, speaks for that the restructure collective memory of the Orthodox Church has remained strong among Skolts.

Culture is a strong supporter for a collective ethnic identity. However, culture is not a stable and unchangeable concept, in a similar way that ethnic groups are not unchangeable either.<sup>252</sup> What the analysis in this chapter suggests is that the Skolt Sámi culture has undergone major changes in post-war Finland and this has also an effect on the role of Orthodoxy. Furthermore, the emphasis on the stability of Orthodoxy through different

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<sup>250</sup> Heikkinen 1989, 326-336; Kupari 2015, 117; 204.

<sup>251</sup> Vuola 2014, 12.

<sup>252</sup> Liebkind 1990, 22.

Skolt Sámi generations appears to be, partially, a performative strategy, which consolidates the theories of Hervieu-Léger.<sup>253</sup> However, even though intergenerational church membership has remained strong, the role of the church is different for the modern Skolt Sámi generation. Also the nature of the religion has changed and the fact that there are also Lutheran Skolts indicates that some changes have happened in the collective memory. This is natural, since change is inevitable and the social changes, which have caused redistributions taking place in the sphere of believing are complex. In the course of the analysis, the material suggests that this change in the nature of the religion means that it has become possible to “belong without believing” or more precisely to believe into the continuity of the group.<sup>254</sup> Kääriäinen, Niemelä and Ketola have suggested that religious tradition with its basic essence can stay immutable even during large changes in society but at the same time in the lives of the religious individual the role and meaning of the religion might have changed radically. The values given to the religious tradition might be different than those of the previous generation. In other words, the relationship with *religion* as an institution stays the same, but the level of the *religiosity*, is in constant flux.<sup>255</sup>

Furthermore, Hervieu-Léger points out that the advance of scientific rationality can also produce a reverse response, a reaction against the official orthodoxy of modernity and an appeal to memory.<sup>256</sup> The culture revitalization movement and its effect on religion have signs of this phenomenon. The third generation Skolts are greatly influenced by the present revitalization movement and thus their relationship with the Orthodox Church might be reaffirming. This development I am going to study in more detail in the next chapter.

### **5.5.3. A look into the future: the role of Orthodox collective memory in the Skolt Sámi revitalization movement**

All in all I felt that the general undertone among the respondents was positive towards the future of both the Skolt Sámi and the Orthodox culture. Quite a few mentioned how the amount of the Skolt Sámi speakers has increased and how especially young Skolts are

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<sup>253</sup> Hervieu-Léger 2000, 81.

<sup>254</sup> Davie 2000, ix; Hervieu-Léger 2000, 123; 127;162; 129-130.

<sup>255</sup> Kääriäinen, Niemelä & Ketola 2003, 14.

<sup>256</sup> Hervieu-Léger 2000, 132.

more and more interested in their cultural roots. Some speculated that the effect of Skolt Sámi revitalization move might have an effect on religion as well.

The Skolt Sámi culture began to revive little by little in the 1980s.<sup>257</sup> Simultaneously with the ethnic self-awareness of the Sámi also the Finnish state's tolerance towards and knowledge of minority cultures have grown and these factors together have improved the status of all Sámi people.<sup>258</sup> However, the progress and its reach to the grass root level has taken some time. For example still in 1996 when Anni Linkola interviewed Skolt Sámi speakers for her Master's Thesis, she noted that most of the respondents regarded Skolt language as a disappearing language.<sup>259</sup> Currently the Skolt Sámi culture is in great flux and experiencing a revitalization process on many levels. The use of language and traditional dresses has grown and young people are more and more interested in their roots. Also the academic world has started to offer possibilities to study in Skolt language at the university level - the Giellagas Institute at University of Oulu, for example, has since January 2015 offered a basic module studies for the Skolt Sámi language.<sup>260</sup>

The revitalization movement of the indigenous culture places the different elements of the culture into new contexts. Those who have a positive stance towards their own culture might feel positively of the religion too, like Raija points out:

#### **Quote 65**

But I don't know if you think about the future....if you think about the young Skolts today [...] if they interact with other Sámis they do bring up the fact that they are Skolt Sámi [...] many kinds of things interest people here and especially those, who have been the "lost generation", who were forced to deny it in order to maintain their own self-esteem. They might have thought that if they would be as Finnish as possible, they would be able to live a dignified life. But today there is no need to think that way, people can freely say, with glad and high spirit that they belong to the Skolt family. And maybe the fact that there are more and more people learning Skolt language, the strength of that fact might have its effect on future generations and it might affect the religion as well.

**Raija**

This supports the view of Privratsky, who said that revitalization movement and the intensification of ethnicity has a seedbed for religious revivalism.<sup>261</sup> Also Fentress and Wickham have stated that the role of religion in ethnic self-identity is also for some a form

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<sup>257</sup> Sergejeva 2000, 32.

<sup>258</sup> Pentikäinen 1995, 356.

<sup>259</sup> Linkola 1996, 116.

<sup>260</sup> Giellagas Institute 2015

<sup>261</sup> Privratsky 2001, 8; 10.

of revitalization of traditional culture. When people reach into their past, they do it in order to articulate the present and also the future.<sup>262</sup> In terms of the theory of collective memory, culture is constituted as shared symbols and meanings, but also through constructing new contexts for new generations. Thus the collective memory functions as a mediator for cultural persistence.<sup>263</sup> This suggests that the religious reconstruction of memory comes into play with the current ethnic revival of Skolt Sámi.

For example Ritva has already noticed a spark of more active church attendance among the young Skolts:

### **Quote 66**

I think there is a future. Because now there are a lot of young people, who have started to attend church ceremonies [...] we have decided that we try to arrange "church cafes", since the church ceremonies are held only every third week [...] so it would maybe attract those coming from afar. Sevettijärvi is a long village and distances are long, so the cafes would be a way to actually sit down and talk to each other -- So there certainly were people, even though less and less, but still there are. More in the festivities, in the bigger celebrations.

**Ritva**

Jussi felt that especially the generation, which is currently approaching their thirties and having children, has started to reflect what being a Skolt Sámi means to them. For those baptizing the children to the Orthodox Church feels natural in that sense:

### **Quote 67**

If you look at the my generation, then yes Skolt Sámi have been lutheranized but if you look at the generation from the perspective, that they are approaching their thirties and having kids, and quite a few start to think about what being a Skolt Sámi means to them so.....it just, well like I said, it is a part of the religion that mothers want their children to become Orthodox. So if the father is a Lutheran, but doesn't really have an opinion on the church, then it is easier to make a compromise. So looking from that point of view....I feel that at the moment in Sevettijärvi most of the small kids are Orthodox.

**Jussi**

Naturally this is a general phenomenon for all people in this age, regardless of religion or ethnicity, but young Skolts are nevertheless in a crucial position as future tradition carriers.

However, the growing interest towards Orthodoxy is also a wider phenomenon in Finnish society. Overall in Finland, during the past twelve years, the increase in the amount of Orthodox Church members has been positive. In 2014 there were more people joining the

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<sup>262</sup> Fentress & Wickham 1992, 25.

<sup>263</sup> Privratsky 2001, 252.

church than leaving.<sup>264</sup> Since the 1990's the Orthodox population has increased in Finland and the number of converts has grown. In 2014 there were 1009 persons who joined the church as a convert. At the end of the year 2014 the Church had 61 0006 members.<sup>265</sup> One reason for the new interest in Orthodoxy might be the general positive image of the Orthodox Church in the media after the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>266</sup> Like Raija mentioned, there are many who are fascinated by the Orthodox Church and its special characters:

### **Quote 68**

If one thinks about the whole Finland, then just recently I read from Paimen Sanomat<sup>267</sup>, that the amount of Orthodox members is rising in Finland, has been for the last years, but there are many things attached to it. People in modern city communities are perhaps looking for peace and relaxation and the Orthodox Church might possess those kinds of characters so it has fascinated people. They come to have a look, then they visit more often and might join the church. There are also those, who join the church at an older age. But then if I look at these northern areas, it might be that the same kind of phenomenon is not going to happen here. We have small villages and nature is close and all, so people might not think that way.

**Raija**

Like Raija pointed out, especially in urban cities the relaxation that Orthodox ceremonies provide attracts city dwellers.

Like Hervieu-Léger has pointed out, the uncertainty of modernization appears in particular in the search for identity. The revitalization movement of the Skolt Sámi culture shows a search of ethnic identities for Skolt Sámi and thus also a search for the collective memory of a community. Hervieu-Ledger argues that religion has a power to become an alternative way to construct identities in a new way.<sup>268</sup> When the ethnic identity is reinforced, the role of religion can be also emphasized. Young people reach back to cultural symbols, wearing the traditional dress and learning the Skolt Sámi language. This same support for own culture might wake an interest for the Orthodoxy as well.<sup>269</sup> Although this is not a primary strategy for the Orthodox Church's religious agenda, supporting the local culture also consolidates the traditional foundation of religion for Skolt Sámi.

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<sup>264</sup> On the other hand, year 2014 was the second year in a row, when the overall amount of members decreased. Source: Orthodox Church of Finland 2015

<sup>265</sup> Orthodox Church of Finland 2015

<sup>266</sup> Nguyen 2010, 15.

<sup>267</sup> A magazine for the members of Oulu Diosece.

<sup>268</sup> Hervieu-Léger 2000, 73-75, 127-130, 165-165; Rodriguez & Fortier 2007, 10.

<sup>269</sup> Sergejeva 2000, 32.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzes Skolt Sámi's belonging to the Eastern Orthodox Church in the municipality of Inari, Finland. Due to the historical and geographical reasons, Skolt Sámi culture has a lot of eastern influence in it. This influence is both a distinctive element for Skolts, separating them from other Sámi groups in Finland, as well as an identity constructor. One essential eastern element in the Skolt Sámi culture is the Eastern Orthodox Church, which has traditionally been considered an important part of the Skolt Sámi culture – for example Orthodox priests are present in many Skolt Sámi cultural events and liturgies are carried as a part of these events. My ultimate research aim was to find out *what kind of a role* the Orthodox Church has in the Skolt Sámi culture. Additional questions to this were; in *which ways* the role has been constructed and *how* the role diverges between different Skolt generations.

When doing the field work I became acquainted with the fact that the Orthodox Church had an important role in constructing the identities of Skolt Sámi: Orthodox affiliation is something, which resembles Skolt Sámi in terms of their Eastern heritage and has been to some degree experienced as an ethnic marker in Finland against other Sámi groups. Moreover, when doing the field work I noticed that the respondents' answers handled the themes of *remembering* the past – the elder respondents linked Orthodoxy to their childhood and family and younger respondents considered it a part of their heritage - a term, which also relates to the concept of past. Ultimately, to study why the Orthodox Church has had such stability over time among Skolts, my analysis became to form an account of Orthodoxy as a part of the collective memory of the Skolt Sámi. I argue that intergenerational transmission of Orthodoxy has made the Orthodox affiliation an important part of the Skolt Sámi culture. Through Orthodox practices, Skolts cultivated their sense of belonging – to a community, to the shared past and also to the Skolt Sámi area. This belonging had its base in their “childhood religion” and Orthodox roots. Constructing a continuum of religious memory was a way also for Skolt Sámi to claim membership in a particular community. I have shown how church membership maintains the identification process with a historic community, culture and symbols, in a similar style to how for example Hervie-Léger has indicated in her own work.<sup>270</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Hervie-Léger 2000, 160.

Memory can act as a survival mechanism when it becomes a way of forming a group identity. This was the case for the Skolt Sámi generation, who were born in Pechenga but were forced to leave their home area due to World War II. Generational issues were one concentration point in my study. In my data it can be analyzed that the three Skolt generations have different relationships with the church and that the religious life has changed throughout the century the Skolts have been living in Finland. For the generation born in Pechenga, Orthodoxy used to be more a part of normal everyday life and religious education was gained from home. However, the social context in which the interwar and post-war generation Skolts practised their religion was characterized by the surrounding social changes. The role of the religion changed, when the assimilation of the Skolt Sámi culture into the dominant Finnish culture began in the 1950s. Many Skolts converted to the Lutheran Church. Thus the current Skolt community is more heterogeneous by nature and this is reflected to the way Orthodoxy is perceived. Religion in general is approached in a more individualistic and critical approach. The Orthodoxy was still actively remembered as a part of the collective memory but not as much connected to the ethnicity.

Nowadays the church is considered both a supporter but also as a remnant of the past. Many respondents saw the role of the Orthodox Church essential, but also emphasized that it is not that to all Skolt Sámi. The Skolt Sàmis have maintained the membership of the Church from generation to generation, but many agreed that the content has changed. Some described it has become poorer and this is articulated for example in the lack of churchgoers. Gradually, the attendance at the services has dropped among Skolts. Nowadays only bigger festivities, like Easter, gather people to the churches. My material suggests that in the modern Skolt Sámi culture the proportion of religious element in the ethnic identity has diminished and the role of Orthodoxy is now manifested in many ways as *recalling* the past. Moreover, the current trend of modernization has its effect on re-evaluating the role of the religion in an individual's life. Also, the Lutheran effect has had a deep impact on the religious memory of Skolt Sámi.

In my analysis I have presented a preliminary presentation of the formation of the Skolt Sámi collective memory. However, these are just a few examples of how collective memory can be constructed and it is used to present the findings of the interview accounts. From the analysis it is possible to draw the conclusions that collective memory of Orthodoxy is made visible by symbols and rituals, narratives, places and also in relation to other groups. Symbols are particularly prevalent in value systems such as religion and

social ideologies, and they hold a strong position in building different ethnic identities. Many of the cultural markers are met within the religious spaces as well and religion can be an ideal strategy for developing and maintaining ethnic identity. Moreover, in my analysis the symbols construct the collective memory by bringing the ethnic element to a religious sphere, whereas rituals and narrative bring the religious element to the ethnic. By participating - even to some extent – in church ceremonies people create communality and customs, in addition to retelling the narratives, like the tales of Trifon. Also language, for example, which has its own symbolic value, strongly constructs and transmits the common memory.

The external boundary of ethnic identity in collective memory is defined by the relationship with others. Since Skolt culture differs from both the dominant Finnish culture and the western Sámi culture, Skolt Sámi have thus faced discrimination especially in the early years of their settlement in Finland. After World War II Skolts experienced many economic, social and cultural problems in their new residential areas in Finland. Religion was not the main reason for aroused conflicts between people but it played a part in the representative of the eastern influence, “the Other”. The Church held a strong locally anchored historical theme and as such, constructed the Skolt Sámi heritage. This cultural separation combined with a long geographical isolation has also preserved the Skolt Sámi culture.<sup>271</sup> It can be concluded that the Orthodox Church had profound influence on how Skolt Sámi saw their ethnic identity in post-war times.

Many respondents mentioned that the religious activity used to be more active in the past. In general, I noticed a slight tendency of balancing between the past and present in some of the interview accounts but the general feeling nevertheless remained future-oriented. I did not feel that any of the respondents distanced themselves from the present and sided themselves to the past – quite the contrary. Even though the chain of memories had been established, it created a future, not a past, for Skolt Sámi.

Studying the topic has been extremely interesting but also challenging. Identity and its different sides are fluid concepts and hence the themes in question are also challenging for the researcher. All in all, the identity is ambivalent and the interviews emphasized the plurality of roles people give to the Orthodox Church. The material provided an updated

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<sup>271</sup> Pennanen 2000, 220. See also Jelena Sergejeva (1997).

view of Skolt Sámi religiosity. Orthodoxy is not necessarily anymore considered to be the only typical Skolt Sámi religion - all the respondents mentioned that not being an Orthodox does not diminish one's "Skoltness". Many respondents also pointed out that not all Skolt Sámi are Orthodox nowadays. Many consider the Skolt Sámi identity totally detached from the Orthodox identity and some are even irritated by how Orthodoxy and Skolt Sámi culture are linked together in many occasions. In other words, when studying the religious life of modern Skolt Sámi, it must be emphasized that not all Skolt Sámi think the same way about religion or have the same opinions of the Church. At the same time many of my respondents seemingly saw the role of Orthodoxy as an important part of the culture of Skolt Sámi.

The culture of the Skolt Sámi is in great flux at the moment. Even though many changes have occurred, many still feel confident that the cultural traditions are being carried on by younger generations, who ask their parents and grandparents for advice. Furthermore, even though the Skolt Sámi youth appears to be "less religious" on the surface, I noted a revival of interest in religion among the Orthodox Skolt Sámi youth. More and more Skolt Sámi in their early thirties have become more active in the Church. Also, when asked about the future of the Orthodox lifestyle among Skolt Sámi, the answers were mainly optimistic. Many respondents felt that Orthodoxy will stay as a part of Skolt Sámi culture. Furthermore, I argue that the new wave of the Skolt Sámi culture revivalism, which extends especially to young generation Skolts, is the reason for the continuance of Orthodoxy in the Skolt Sámi collective memory.

The more I researched my topic, the more I became aware of how wide the research gap concerning Skolt Sámi contemporary religion was. Previous research was from the 1970s, from an era, when there were no road connections to the village of Sevetijärvi, for example. I felt that the modern academic literature was not updated on the current challenges Skolt Sámi are facing – the life between two religious affiliations, Lutheran and Orthodox, the migration movement to Southern Finland and the role of Sámi revitalization movement, just to name a few. As such, this study offers only a brief glance on the various themes related to the role of religion among a small indigenous group. I see many possibilities for further research themes. One interesting topic would be to study the role of Orthodoxy for Skolts living outside the Sámi area. Skolt Sámi living outside the traditional Sámi area nowadays might experience the role of the Orthodox Church differently in the construction of their Skolt Sámi identity than those living near other Skolt Sámis. I had

some respondents who had been living outside the Sámi area but this theme was only briefly covered in the interviews. An ethnography of the religious life of the Skolt Sámi youth, with both urban and rural groups, would provide valuable information about the role of religion for indigenous groups living outside their traditional home areas.

Also, one interesting topic for further studies would be to interview more Lutheran Skolts and compare their perspectives of the role of the religion in construction of collective memory of Skolt Sámi. Now I have delimited my research focus on Orthodox respondents but in order to fully grasp the development of Skolt Sámi religious memory as its entirety, a more thorough study on Lutheranization of Skolt Sámi is needed. For example it would be educational to interview those Skolt born between the 1950s and 1960s who converted to the Lutheran Church. Also the gender perspective of Skolt Sámi collective memory was a theme I was not able to fully observe in my thesis, but further studies concerning the Skolt women's religiosity would certainly offer interesting perspectives. Furthermore, the relationship of the Sámi revitalization movement and religion is a new topic in the academic world, which deserves closer attention.

My study aims to be a new discussion opener when studying the current state of religiosity among Skolt Sámi. I understand that this research can offer just a scant overlook on a diverse community and my goal was not to produce a comprehensive look on the respondents' religion. Nevertheless, I hope this research has managed to grasp the richness of the Skolt Sámi religiosity. Moreover, I hope this thesis finds its way to the people it touches the most: the Skolt Sámi themselves. Throughout the thesis process I have followed the undertakings of the Skolt Sámi community from different sources and what I have seen brings me great joy. The smallest Sámi minority is experiencing an unpararrell cultural boost, which resonates on multiple leveles. Even though there is a lot of work to be done, the energy and stamina of the community is infectious and hopefully has a longlasting effect on the new Skolt Sámi generations as well.

## **ABBRIATIONS**

Finn. Finnish  
Russ. Russian  
Skolt. Skolt Sámi

## SOURCES

Interview with Ritva 21.5.2013 conducted by the author. The interview is in author's possession.

Interview with Maija 23.5.2013 conducted by the author. The interview is in author's possession.

Interview with Raija 24.5.2013 conducted by the author. The interview is in author's possession.

Interview with Lauri 27.5.2013 conducted by the author. The interview is in author's possession.

Interview with Liisa 28.5.2013 conducted by the author. The interview is in author's possession.

Interview with Kerttu 8.6.2013 conducted by the author. The interview is in author's possession.

Interview with Pertti 1.10.2013 conducted by the author. The interview is in author's possession.

Interview with Jussi 1.10.2013 conducted by the author. The interview is in author's possession.

Interview with Matti 3.10.2013 conducted by the author. The interview is in author's possession.

Interview with Jukka 3.10.2013 conducted by the author. The interview is in author's possession.

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## ATTACHMENTS

### Attachment 1: The interview frame

The following interview frame is a translation of the basic questions I presented to my respondents. Some questions were left out on some interview accounts, and on the other hand, some new questions were presented to some respondents. Hence, the following frame is only approximate.

#### 1. Basic information checklist

- Name
- Place of residence

#### 2. The Skolt Sámi culture and identity

- How was Skolt Sámi culture present in
  - \*childhood? How was the Skolt Sámi culture present in your family? How was it present in the home village?

- \* adult life? Family? Home village?
- Are there any differences between
  - \* festivities?
  - \* everyday life?

### **3. Orthodoxy**

- How was Orthodox life present in
  - \*childhood? Family, home village?
  - \*adult life? Family, home village?
  - \*in festivities?
  - \*in everyday life?

### **4. Relationship to other groups**

- As a Skolt Sámi what kind of attitudes have you encountered
  - \* from majority Finns?
  - \*from other Sámi groups?
- As an Orthodox, what kind of attitudes have you encountered
  - \*from majority Finns?
  - \*from other Sámi groups?

### **5. The meaning of Orthodoxy to Skolt Sámi**

- What kind of role Orthodoxy has in the lives of Skolt Sámi in your opinion?

### **ATTACHMENT 2: The code structure for analysis**

The following list and diagram illustrates the code structure that was the result of clustering the data. The list and diagrams do not reflect the final analysis chapters, since I have left out some of the themes due to lack of space. First diagram presents the first version of code structure with all three main themes and the second diagram presents a more detailed version of one specific sector, in this case the Orthodoxy. The final diagram is the result of deductive analysis, when the theory of collective memory is applied to the coding process.

#### **ORTHODOX FAITH**

- Religion in childhood / the past

- Clergy
- Tryphon
- Religion in adulthood
  - Current situation
  - Future / challenges
- Local religious tradition

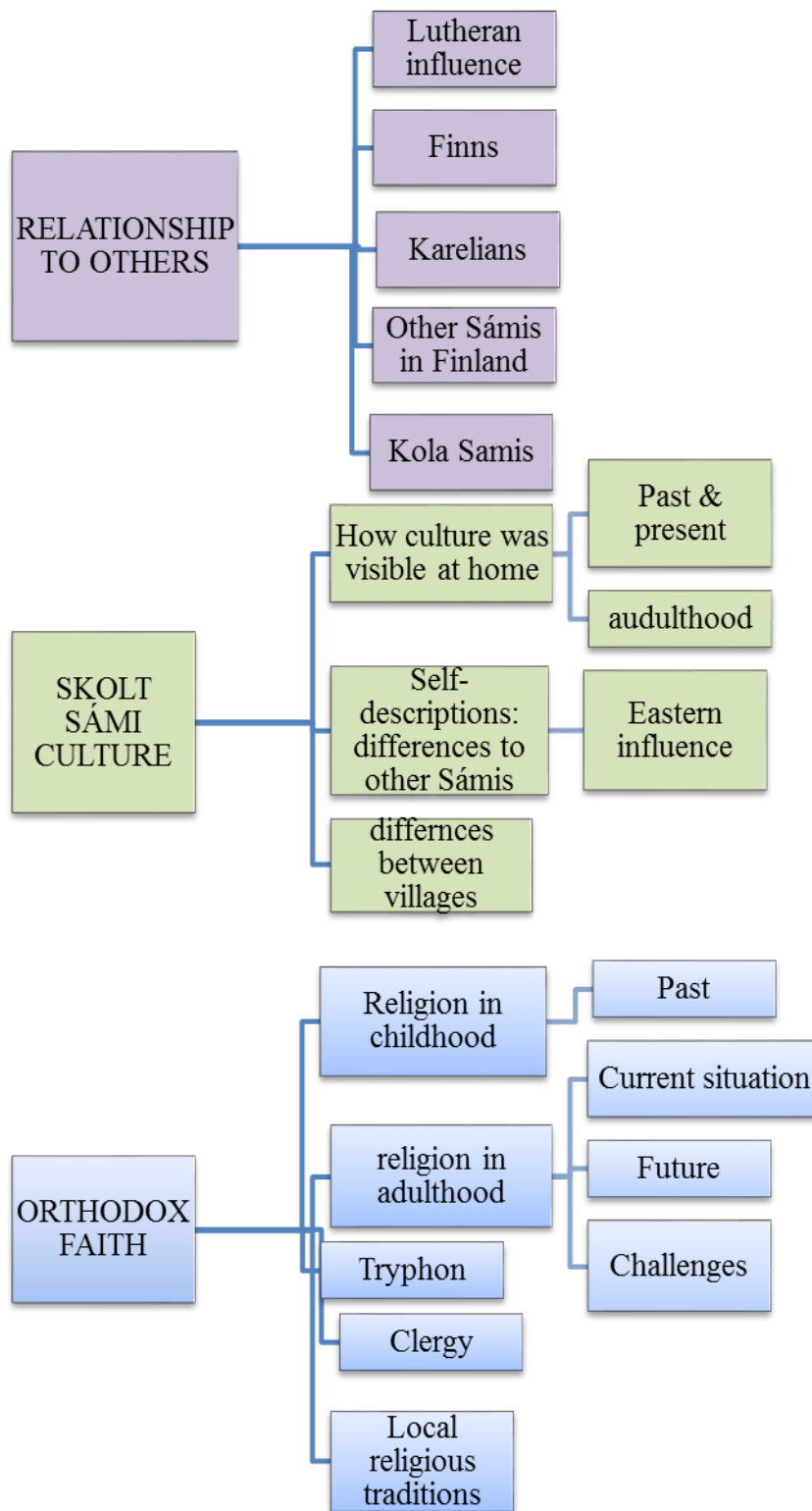
#### SKOLT SÀMI CULTURE

- How culture was visible at home
  - Adulthood
  - Past & present
- Differences between villages
- Self-descriptions: differences to other Sámi
  - Eastern influence

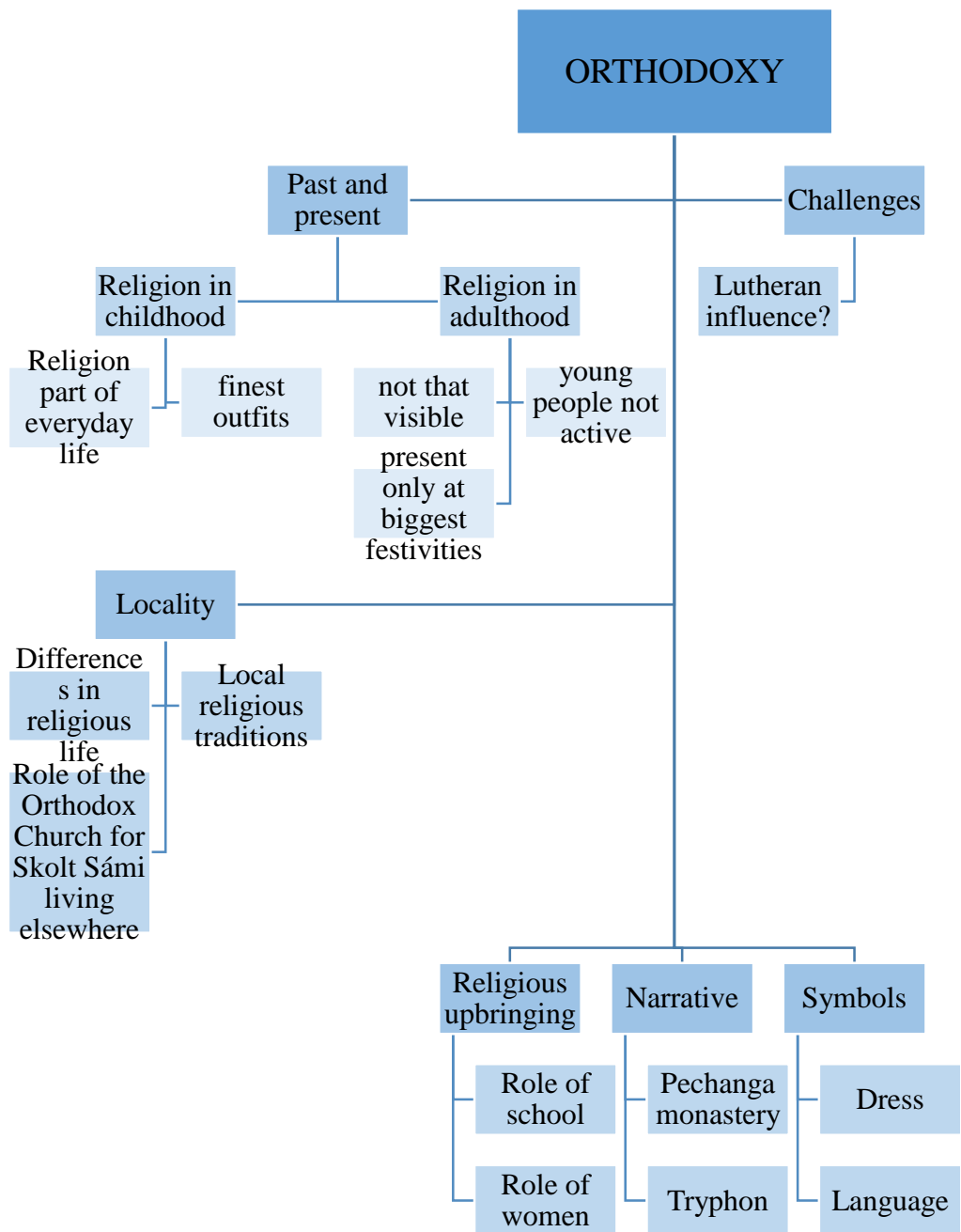
#### RELATIONSHIP TO OTHERS

- Kola Sámis
- Karelians
- Other Sámi in Finland
- Finns
- Lutheran influence

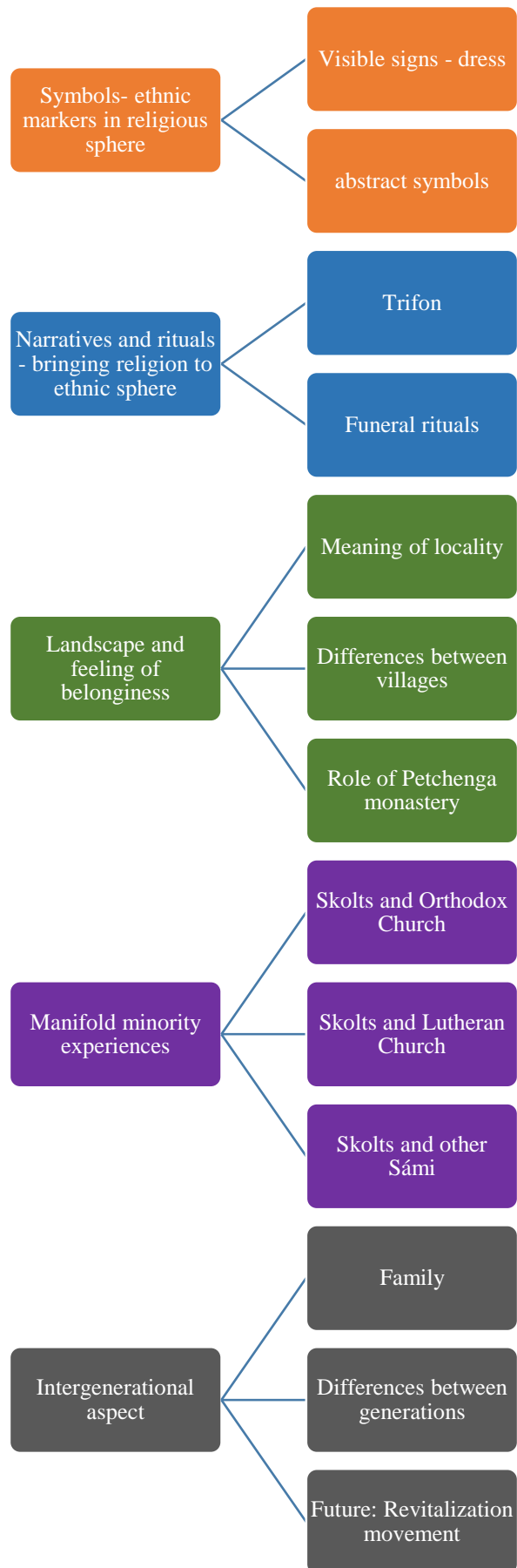
**Diagram 1: First stage code structure, representing all three main themes.**



**Graphic 1: First stage code structure, representing all three main themes.**



**Graphic 2: Example of a more detailed code structure, segment of Orthodoxy**



### **Diagram 3: Final stage of coding. Theoretical interpretation included.**

**ATTACHMENT 4:** Original Finnish versions of the interview quotes. Presented in order of appearance.

#### **Quote 1**

...mä en muista, että käytiinkö me kuinka usein. Mutta että siellä oli kans tämä sama, että sinne kun meni, etenkin tämä vanhempi porukka, niin siellä taas kirkkoon meni, niin niillä oli hienot vaatteet ja ne hienoimmat huivit ja muut. Että heille se oli tavallaan niinku juhlatilaisuus.

**Jussi**

#### **Quote 2**

R: Juhlahan oli aina semmoinen, että silloin pukeudutaan erillä lailla. Vaimon lakkihan se tietenkin oli aina päässä, mutta siis vaatetuksessa oli aina se juhlapuku erikseen, niin lapsilla kuin emännilläkin. Se oli kyllä tärkeää.

M: Mikä oli tärkein juhlavaate?

R: No mekko, semmoinen mikä piti päälle laittaa. Se oli merkki siitä, että nyt lähdetään luostariin kirkkoon.

**Kerttu**

#### **Quote 3**

M: Joo. Onko näillä aina joku merkitys näillä kuvioilla?

R : Kyllä näissä on. Tässä hyvin paljon liittyy tuohon ortodoksisuuteen. Ja tämä on sillä lailla, että vihityn vaimon hiukset ei saa näkyä, niin sillä se on ihan tästä näin huivi siinä. Vaikka huivi ei kyllä peitä hiuksia, mutta tämä päähine.

.....

M: onko teillä sitten semmoisia omia malleja, että näkee mistä päin on kotoisin?

R: No nämä on juuri semmoisia, että...sanoisinko nyt niin, että joka kylän, kylien välissä aina pikkuisen muuttuu mallit.

.....

R: No tässä on niin sanottu, ku minulla on hyvin paljon äitin päähineestä otettu mallia, niin se on enemmän tuolta Petsamon puolelta mallia. Eli näissäkin päähineissä on oikein paljon erilaisia malleja. Koska joka kylässä on pikkuisen aina...toinen tekkee näin, niin minäpä teen siihen vielä pikkusen muuta ja. Mutta kaikki on näitä vanhoja ortodoksisia malleja.

**Kerttu**

#### **Quote 4**

En minä oo sitä, minä tiän sen, että siellä on niinku joillakin iäkkäämmillä ihmisillä on niinku hyvin tarkkoja sääntöjä siitä, ja tää sitten minun mielestä rajoittaa sitä, että sitten nuoremmat päättää, että he ei laita ollenkaan, että jos se menee väärin tai jos se ei nyt oo oikein ja niin pois päin, että...siinä niinkö haluaisin, että tulis vähän väljennystä. Muutenhan se huivijuttu voi tulla Venäjältä, jossa tuota siis, on vielä se tapa, toisin kuin Suomessa tai Kreikassa, tai Lähi-idän ortodokseilla, tai Romaniassa, että venäläiset suunnilleen edellyttää että naiset peittää päänsä kirkossa. Että niillä on tabuna, venäläisissä luostareissa huiveja on siellä portilla, että ne pitää panna sitten päähän

**Matti**

### **Quote 5**

Nuo vanhemmat naiset, niin niillähän oli kolttapuku oli se arkiasusu. Että sitten kun meni kauppaan tai johonkin, niin siellähän oli aina näitä, lähinnä näitä mummoikäisiä naishenkilöitä, joilla oli kolttapuku päällä [...] etenkin kun oli tämmönen juhlatilaisuus, niin siellä sitten näkyi vielä hienommin, kaikki laittoi ne parhaat päälle. Että ne varmaan on, mikä eniten on jäänyt mieleen.

**Jussi**

### **Quote 6**

Mut kyllä se silleen tukee...tukee se myös. Ja onhan se kehittänyt kieltäkin paljon. Ja on mukana siinä kielityössä ja. Ihmiset kuulee koltankieltä kirkoissa.

**Maija**

### **Quote 7**

Esimerkiksi nytten niin, on mielenkiintoista, ku ortodoksinen sanasto koltaksi, niin ei tämä minua nuorempi sukupolvi tahdo tietää [...] Ihmiset ovat passivisempia, maallistuneempia. Siitäkin se johtuu.

**Lauri**

### **Quote 8**

Itellä tietenkin kun se oli...minä en ole oppinut koltankieltä kotona [...] sitten Sevetissä on, tuota, koltankieliset jumalanpalveluksia, niin ei siitä papistakaan sitten hirveästi ymmärtänyt.

**Jussi**

### **Quote 9**

Meillähän suurin on just se Triifo [...] Ja sitte ku yleensä aina niinku, ku Sevetissäki on ne Triifon-juhlat, niin on sitten toi...koululla on aina joku juhla, ja ne esittää ja esiintyy siellä.

**Ritva**

### **Quote 10**

R: No Triifon Petsamolainen on hyvin tärkeä. On toki. Elikkä pyhittäjäisä Triifon. Se on mulle tärkeä.

M: Oliko se petsamolaisille jotenkin erityisen tärkeä?

R: Oli oli. Se on niin sanottu minun varjelija, pyhittäjäisä Triifon, minulle aina ollut.

M: Miten se näkyi siellä kolttien elämässä muuten?

R: Kyllä kolttien elämässä näkyi hyvin paljon tämä pyhittäjäisiä Triifon. Niin Triifonin ikonista lähtien ja siitä kokonaan. Sehän se liitti kolttiä tähän uskontoon.

**Kerttu**

#### **Quote 11**

70-luvulla olin mukana melkein joka vuosi nellimiläisten kanssa mentiin linja-autolla, oli linja-autollinen väkeä Nellimistä ja Keväjärveltä, Tsarmijärjerveltä ja Keväjärveltä ja mentiin linja-autolla Sevettijärvelle tähän juhlaan, eikä siinä, siis ihan samalla lailla jos ajattelee sevettijärveläisiä, tietysti siis he ovat aktiivisesti siellä järjestämässä siellä ruokapalvelua tai tämmöistä, niin kyllähän se niin kuin sitoo aika tavalla väkeä, ja sitten on niinku kyläohjelma, jota tarjotaan siellä, että kyllä sitä sillä tavalla on, mutta se osallistuminen siihen itse tapahtumaan, niin se on kyllä todella vähäistä.

**Raija**

#### **Quote 12**

Minusta tuntuu että silloin, siis joka tapauksessa nekin kaikki kohtaamiset ja kaikki missä olen itse ollut mukana, niin kirkkohan oli siihen aikaan täynnä ihmisiä. Jos jossain järjestettiin, tai jos järjestettiin, Nellimissä ei edes ollut kirkkoa, mut että järjestettiin kotona palveluksia, niin sinne tuli naapurit ja lapsetkin oli mukana että näkee niin kuin valokuvistakin, että koko kylän väki pienimmistä ihan vanhimpiin tuli jos pappi tuli käymään, niin tulivat tällasiin palveluksiin. Että kyllä tota niin, sen aikaisiin nuoriin ihmisiin niin kuin...että he kyllä kohtasivat sen kirkon toisella tavalla kuin tänä päivänä.

**Raija**

#### **Quote 14**

Ja sitten niinku Sevetissä, muutamia kertoja kun olen ollut Sevetissä hautajaisissa, niin vielä sillä tavalla läheisemmin he suhtautuvat, he suukottelevat ja silittelevät ja koskettavat vainajaa ja ostavat semmoista – en oikein edes tarkasti tiedä ja tunne, että mitä siinä oikein ajatellaan, mutta he ostavat suitsutuspihkaa ja sitten he ripottelevat sitä niin kuin vainajan ympärille

**Raija**

#### **Quote 15**

Joo kyllä minä ihan uskosin, että se on ollut jotenkin sellanen, joka on antanut semmosta voimaa ihmisille [...]Ja sitten se, että tavallaan on kasvanut siihen, niin se näkyy aika monilla niillä, jotka sitten ovat muuttaneet muualle [...]että identiteettiin voimakkaasti vaikuttava asia näitten kohdalla onkin ortodoksinen kirkko, että tuntuu, että se on se joku, kun asutaan muualla, niin kytkee heidät myös kolttasaamelaisuuteen.

**Raija**

#### **Quote 16**

M: Aivan. No tuota, siellä etelässä ollessas, niin kävitkö sä ikinä siellä missään jumalanpalveluksissa tai missään?

R: Öö, eempä tainnu...että, ainut mihin minun piti mennä, oli silloin kun Helsingissä järjestettiin ekan kerran se koltankielinen liturgia. Mutta minun just silloin piti olla poissa paikkakunnalta. Että se olis ollu tämmönen, mihin olisin...emminä sinnekään niin olis menny sen takia, että tuota, minä olisin välttämättä halunnut mennä kirkkoon, vaan sen takia, että jos järjestetään tuommonen, sitä halus olla tukemassa.

**Jussi**

### **Quote 17**

Siis näky se sillai, että meillä oli tota niin... ikonit on ollu aina mutta muuten se on ollu aika vähissä [...] Kotonakotona. Mutta sitte ku tuli tänne, mummolaan tai setien tykönä, niin niissä se on näkyny sitten enemmän [...] se on jännä, ku tavallan sitte kuitenkin, niinko isälläki, me ollaan täällä, niin se näkyy ihan eri lailla, se ortodoksisuus ku että sitte ku ollaan etelässä, niin siellä vähemmän. Mutta toki tietenki vähemmän ku kaikki sukulaiset ja muut äitinki puolelta on ev.lutteja... niin enemmän on juhlia, rippijuhlia ja muita vastaavia sitten.

**Ritva**

### **Quote 18**

R: No varmaan ainaki siinä mielessä, että että... täällä on tosi vähän ihmisiä, jotka niissä on mukana. Niissä jutuissa. Etelässä on paljon enemmän.

M: Miten se tuota, muuttaako se sitä tilaisuuden luonnetta sitten?

R: On sellainen pieni kirkkokuoro **naurahtaa**. Jos täällä on jotain kolme henkeä, niin etelässä on toistakymmentä, niin on se ihan erilainen tunnelma siellä kirkossakin. Sillä tavalla ja sitten kun on kauheasti ihmisiä siinä mielessä, niin sitten jos etelässä käy niin siellä on vähän semmonen kasvoton tunnelma. Että ihanko olis jossain isossa hirveässä yleisötapahtumassa, ku taas täällä se on sellanen kauhean kotoisa ja lämmin tunnelma. Mutta ehkä tietenki minun mielestä se voi olla kotoisaa senkin takia, että ne on niin tuttuja paikkoja.

**Maija**

### **Quote 19**

R: No sanoisinko nyt näin, että pikkuisen on aina sitä hampaan puremista, puolin ja toisin. Koska me olemme petsamolaisia ja he on suonikyläläisiä. Niin tämä on ollut kautta aikojen. Vaikka sanoisin näin, että nyt olis aika puhaltaa samaan hiileen. Ei missään nimessä syrjimisestä, että ”minä olen petsamolainen, sinä olet suonikyläläinen”. Ei semmosta.”

M: Millä tavalla se tuli sitten esiin se petsamolaisten ja suonikyläläisten vastakkainasettelu?

R: No se tuli esiin vähän joka puolella, tanssiryhmissä ja kaikissa. Ja muutenkin, kokonaan elämisessä. Kielikin on erilainen. Meillä Petsamon kieli on hyvin pehmeää ja Sevetin kieli on vähän karkeampaa ja voimakkaampaa, sanoisin. Että sekin on yksi. Mutta Sevetin kielen murteellahan nämä kaikki kirjat ja muut on kirjoitettu. Meitä on siinä suhteessa pois tallattu. Petsamon murretta ei siinä näy, se on ihan Sevetin murteella. Mutta perässä tulemme! Emme anna periksi!

**Kerttu**

### **Quote 20**

No ne kolttatavat mitä on, niin nehän on kaikkein vahvimmat Sevetissä, ne pysyy siellä parhaiten, koska se on niinku se oma yhteisö, ne lapset näkee niinkö ne tavat... useammin ja tuolleen, ja ne niinku... sisäistää ne ja... että kyllä se on, Sevetti on se kantava voima kuitenkin... koltilla.

**Jukka**

### **Quote 21**

Ja kyllähän Sevetissä vielä nykyäänkin kun on Sevetin baari, ja baariin kun menee, niin siellä kun porukka kokoontuu, niin kyllä siellä melkein kaikissa pöydissä se on koltansaame, se millä puhutaan.

**Jussi**

### **Quote 22**

Ja joku, minunkin appiukko, niin hän osasi niitä slaavinkielisiä kirkkolauluja vaikka kuinka paljon, että monesti saattoi laulaakin ihan.

**Raija**

### **Quote 23**

No osittain tietenkin kylien väliset erot selittyy siis tälläsillä ulkoisilla tekijöillä, että nyt tuota Sevettijärvellä käy eniten jumalanpalveluksissa. Siellähän on siis, niinkö sanoin, siinä vaikutuspiirissä 160 ihmistä. Nellimissä käy vähemmän, mutta eihän siellä ole kuin 25 ortodoksia, että se on kuitenkin alle viidesosa siitä mitä Sevetissä, ja se suhde ei oo kuitenkaan niin että Sevetissä kävis viisinkertainen määrä. Ivalo, jossa on eniten, niin tuota, täällä käy kaikista vähiten. Että ilmeisesti se on se sellainen kyläyhteisö ja sellainen, joka sitten, ja ne yhteydet siinä kylän sisällä, mutta että siis silleen jännä, että Ivalossa on kirkonkylällä saman verran kuin siinä Sevettijärven suunnalla, eli ne on vielä laajemmalla alueella siellä Sevettijärven suunnalla, mut se yhteydenpito silti on aktiivisempaa siellä ihmisten kesken kuin Ivalossa, koska Ivalossa on niin paljon muita ihmisiä.

**Matti**

### **Quote 24**

R:....niin kyllä siellä oli hirviän voimakkaampi, oli, koska siellä oli se venäläinen luostari.

M: Kuinkas usein siellä oli jumalanpalveluksia siellä luostarissa?

R: Niillähän oli monet kerrat, monta kertaa aina päivässä. Aamulla alkoi muistaakseni neljältä ja pitkin päivää oli aina. Mehän emme tietenkään, kerta sen verta kaukana asuttiin, niin sillä lailla tiheään kuljettu, mutta aina äitin mukana olimme. Ainakin yöpalvelus oli semmoinen, että silloin olimme.

[...]

R: Hyvin paljon olivat ihmiset kesällä heinätyössä. Ja sittenhän siellä oli semmoinen työtupa. Minun kummisetä oli siinä sitten töissä. Ja sitten ruokala siinä oli.

M: Oliko luostarilla sitten ilmeisesti isot maat?

R: Oli. Siinä oli se kenttä, iso kenttä. Joen toisellakin puolella oli heinäpeltoja

[...]

Noh puuroa syömäsä... niin heillähän oli luostarissa isot pöydät ruokalassa ja meitä monta lasta, semmonen pyöreä puurokippo ja 3-4 lusikkaa siihen ja met kaikki siitä saimme.

M: Että he tarjosivat sitten! Oliko se aina jumalanpalveluksen aikaan?

R: Kyllä! Ja oli. Sitten kun jumalanpalvelus loppu, niin sen jälkeen. Ei koskaan syöty ennen ehtoollista. Eikä sitä tehä kyllä nykysinkään. Mutta sitten sen jälkeen.

M: Eli se on vähän niin kuin semmoset kirkkokahvit.

R: Joo. Ja sitten siinä aina se, joka laittoi ne ruuat, niin se kävi aina, kiersi ja sanoi aina venäjäksi, että syökää syökää hopusti ja me lapsukaiset pistelimme puuroa.

## **Kerttu**

### **Quote 25**

M: ootteko te käyneet nyt siellä luostarissa jälkeinpäin?

R: Olen käynyt useamman kerran. Silloin vielä ku se pikkuluostari oli, sehän paloi sen jälkeen. Olen käynyt ihan kotimökin raunoilla asti. Olen käynyt niin sanotusti itkuni itkemässä jokirannalla. Sen jälkeen on ollut...sanoisinko hyvä.

**Kerttu**

### **Quote 26**

R: Kolttasaamelaisuus ei ehkä niin kauhean paljon näy, mutta se niinku, se Petsamosta lähtösin olo....

M: Millä tavalla se näky?

R: Se on niinku...Eliikkä ne on niinku enemmän ollu siellä rannikolla, eliikkä ne ei oo näitä...näitä näitä....

M: Luostarin? Suonikylän?

R: Niin, eikä näitä Suonikylän...niin aivan, ne on nimenomaan ollu siinä Petsamonvuonon rannalla. Eliikkä siellä on tullu tämmönen...paljon...no venehommat on ollu läheisiä ja sitten kun ne on tänne muuttanu niin Inarinjärvi on ollu sitte niille läheinen ja ne on paljon kulkenu siellä ja.....

**Jukka**

### **Quote 27**

M: sanoit, ettei se aina ole ollut ihan semmoinen, niinku ruusuinen se yhteistyö kirkon ja saamelaisten välillä, niin onko sulla antaa kolttasaamelaisten osalta jotain esimerkkejä?

R: No tämä meidän hieno pyhittäjä Triifon Petsamolainen, no eihän mulla mitään faktaa ole esittää, nämä on ihan huhupuhetta, mutta miten luostari on tullu ja ottanut parhaat kalavedet käyttöön ja näin, että, näkis jos ihmiset on siellä eläneet ja näin, niin on vähän niinku pakotettu siihen. Ja onhan se kirkko ollut siellä myös verottajana siellä ja muuta tällaista. En tiedä sitten, millaista se elämä olis ilman sitä kirkkoa, kirkko on varmaan jonkin verran opettanut ihmisiä myös lukemaan ja tämmöistä.

**Pertti**

### **Quote 28**

Yrjö Rämeen aikana jo, hänhän on sieltä asti seurannut jo kolttasaamelaisia, Suonikylän ajoilta, Petsamon ajalta, ja ollut Sevettijärvellä, ja hän on vienyt kyllä eteenpäin. Ja on ollut paljon muitkain....

**Liisa**

### **Quote 29**

R: Ku se kumminkin kuuluu kulttuuriin.

M: eli se sun mielestä kuuluu siihen?

R: No kyllä se tavallaan kuuluu, että esimerkiksi ennen syömistä vaikka siunataan ruoka ja sillä tavalla. Että on se semmoinen vanha tapa, joka on ollu pitkään.

**Ritva**

### **Quote 30**

Ja sitte tavallaan musta tuntuu et jotenki monessa kulttuuriasiassa se tulee, vaikka et olis aktiivinen kirkossa, niin se tulee tavallaan kuitenkin. [...] Se on niin kuin sisäänrakennettua.

**Ritva**

### **Quote 31**

Mutta en minä muista että ainakaan silloin ku ite oisin ollu nuori, että kukaan hirveästi silloin ois vastustanu. Ei mullakaan oo ku yks kaveri, joka siitä valittaa [...] sitä minun ystävää häiritsee se, että kun järjestetään jotakin tapahtumia tai sellasia, niin siihen aina jotenkin väkisin otetaan mukaan myös ortodoksisuus ja tuodaan pappi sinne paikalle ja muuta.

**Maija**

### **Quote 32**

M: No tukeeko se ortodoksisuus kolttasaamelaisena olemista?

R: Joskus tukee, joskus ei. Sehän riippuu myös itsestä. On kolttasaamelaisia aktiiveja, jotka eivät välitä kirkosta vähääkään [...]se on vain yksi osa-alue [...]Ei voi aivan sanoa, että se on juuri se ortodoksisuus ja kolttasaamelaisuus, jotka kulkevat käsi kädessä. Ei se nyt aivan näin ole. Mutta kirkko kuitenkin tukee.

**Lauri**

### **Quote 33**

M: Voiko sun mielestä enää vetää yhtäläisyysmerkkiä ortodoksisuuden ja kolttasaamelaisuuden välille?

R: No ei. Ei voi. Minun sukupolven koltista aika harva kuuluu ortodoksisen kirkkoon. [...]Näen ehkä enemmänkin tämän saamelaisen identiteetin ja tämän uskonnon kahtena erilaisena asiana. Että niinku ne ei missään vaiheessa sulaudu toisiinsa ja tue toisiaan, päinvastoin

**Pertti**

### **Quote 34**

R: Noo, mie nään, että kirkko, niin koltille kuin muillekin saamelaisille, niin tota, on tehny aika paljon hallaa. Monessakin suhteessa. Okei, no tänä päivänä liitetään kolttasaamelaisuus ja kirkko, mutta eihän se historia kuitenkaan näillä kahdella niin pitkä ja valoisa ole ollut, että...okei, jokainen saa omalla tavalla tulkita asioita, mutta...mä nyt lähinnä, noh ite vielä kuulun kirkkoon tällä hetkellä, mutta voisin olla myös kuulumatta.

M: No mitä mieltä sä oot siitä, kun aina sanotaan, että ortodoksinen kirkko tukee vahvasti kolttasaamelaista kulttuuria?

R: Niino, tänä päivänä se tietenkin voi olla vähän erilainen se asetelma, ja tietenki, mikä kirkolla on intressi, sitä minä en tiedä. Vähän varauksella suhtaudun tämmösiin asioihin.

**Pertti**

### **Quote 35**

Noo, hyvin monenlaista asennetta on kyllä tullut. Mutta ehkä se nykypäivänä ei ole enää niin iso juttu, että enemmän ihmiset on että ”oho, mikäs juttu tämä on” tai ylipäättänsä suomalaisethan tietää aika vähän saamelaisista. Todella vähän. [...]Niin no, tavallaan, heillä on se tietynlainen stereotypia saamelaisista, ja sitten aika rajoittunut monella ihmisellä se näkemys [...]Ehkä, kokisin, että muualla kuin täällä varsinaisella Saamelaisalueella, ihmiset on ehkä enemmän niinku...avarammin suhtautuu siihen asiaan.

Täällä tietenkin liittyy monia asioita tähän, jännitteitä ja muuta, mitkä kytee täällä. Suomi-saame-asetelma. Ja siellä, missä se ei ole niin lähellä se asia, niin siellä siihen voi sitten suhtautua rennommin

**Pertti**

### **Quote 36**

Jännä, että suomalaiset oli, minunkin aikana, vielä lähinnä että kun ne tuli jotaki, niin se oli joku haastattelija tai kameraporukka ilmestyi kyselemään vaikka mitä. Että sellaista. Että muuten tuntui välillä, että jos ne ei halua jotakin juttua tehdä, niin sitten saamme olla. Että ei sitä nyt tuolleen...että ei sitä ite ollu tekemisissä ku näiden suomalaisten kanssa, jotka asu siellä. Ja se on sitte eri asia, ku että jos Helsinkiin menis.

**Jussi**

### **Quote 37**

Silloin kun tuli saamenkielilaki voimaan, että te ette noudatakaan saamenkielilakia teidän luterilaisten kolttasaamelaisten osalta. Te vaan noudatatte pohjoissaamelaisten ja inarinsaamelaisten osalta. Koltansaameksi ette mitään käännä, esim. silloin kun pitäis tehdä kuulutuksia. Hän sanoi vain ”hys, hoitakaa te tämä”. Miten me voimme hoitaa luterilaisten kolttasaamelaisten puolesta, kyllähän se heidän kirkon pitäis. Niin sillä mie sanoinkin, että no se on meille annettu vain vastuu. Että ajatellaan, että kolttasaamelaisuus on yhtä kuin ortodoksisuus. Ei ne kaikki ole. Niitä on aika paljon myös luterilaisia. Mutta luterilainen kirkko ei kyllä pidä huolta kolttasaamelaisista, siis heidän väestään.

**Lauri**

### **Quote 38**

Siis mä oon aina eläny niinku kahen uskonnon välissä. Ja tavallaan riippuen et kenen sukulaisten tykönä on, niin tietyt tavat on voimissaan naurua

**Ritva**

### **Quote 39**

Ihan kivaa on ollu, että kun on kokeillut ev.luttina olemista, niin tää on paljon mukavampaa. Tää on tavallaan niinku, enemmän semmonen niinku läheisempi kuitenkin. Ja tavallaan justiin niinku, se on jotenki...perustuu enemmän vapaaehtoisuuteen.

**Ritva**

### **Quote 40**

M: Joo. Näetkö sitten, että sillä on sillä ortodoksisuudella semmoista kulttuuria tukevaa vaikutusta?

R: Kyllä. On.

M: millä tavoin se tukee sun mielestä?

R: Se on semmoinen iso voima, joka tukee ja kantaa sitä. Tässä voi mainita yks esimerkki...minun vävykoikani, kun tyttäreni kanssa vihittiin, niin hän muutti ortodoksisuuskuntoon.

**Liisa**

### **Quote 41**

M: Koetsä ite, että ortodoksisuus on sulle niinku kolttana tärkeää?

R: No kyllä vähän tietenkkin. Sitä se äiti varmaan ajatteli silloin, kun me liityttiin kirkkoon. Ja sitten...onhan siitä...on se silleen omaa kulttuuria kuitenkin vähän. Osaksi. Jos ajattelee jotain Triifon Petsamolaistaki, nii sitä..sehän on kyllä tosi tärkeä koltille, siitähän puhutaan hirveesti ja siitä on omia satuja ja kaikkea. Et sehän liittyy hirveän oleellisesti kaikkeen kolttakulttuuriin. Ja historiaan.

**Maija**

#### **Quote 42**

Sehän on vaan luonnollista. Ei se...Ku eihän tässä sen kummempaa kilpailutilannetta ole kuitenkaan. Se on jokaisen oma valinta kuitenkin, että miten tekee. Oishan se tietysti aina toiveena, että...mahollisimman paljon olis ortodokseja, ja niinku yhteisössä muutenkin, että pysyis vahvana ne perinteiset tavat, mutta että...jos joku valitsee toisin, niin se on tietysti hänen asiansa.

**Jukka**

#### **Quote 43**

M: Niin sä puhuit siitä, että on erilainen toi kolttakulttuuri ku muilla saamelaisilla, niin millä tavalla se sun mielestä tulee esiin?

R: No, siinä on niin paljon niitä itäisiä piirteitä, tai niitä sellasia....että on paljon karjalaistyyppisiä piirteitä, ku on samanlainen kansallispukukin ja...sitten, kun on ortodoksinen ja sitten semmonen ruokakulttuuri on ihan erilainen...aikalaila erilainen. Tietenkin kalaa ja poroa syyään ja silleen, mut teejutut ja sellaset. Ja kieliki on tosi erilainen. Että eroaa pohjoissaamesta paljon, inarinsaame on vähän samantyylistä mutta. Mutta. Ja on paljon niitä venäjän lainasanoja ja kaikkea sellaista. Tosi paljon venäjään yhteydessä.

**Maija**

#### **Quote 44**

Jos ajattelee, että mä sen vuoden aikana kuljin Inarissa ja Utsjoella ja sitten kolttsaamelaisien parissa, niin kyllä mä kuulin aika monenlaista. Utsjoellakin, niin aika karusti puhuttiin kolttsaamelaisista, ja monesti liittyivät siihen että on erilainen kieli, erilainen uskonto ja uskonnosta, että tällasia saatettiin sanoa, että palvelevat puujumalia [ikoneita] [...]Ja sitten myöskin tällaisia aika rumia nimityksiä, että puhuttiin ”ryssän lahja” ja tämmösiä

**Raija**

#### **Quote 45**

No, ne oli varmaan niitä vanhoja asioita, mitä silloin oli. Että oltiin muutettu yhtäkkiä tänne, toisten alueelle ja..jaja. Oltiin niin erilaisia ku muut saamelaiset. Että oli niin erilainen kulttuuri. Ja...oli semmonen venäläinen. Ja, silloin paljon sanottiin ryssiksi aina kolttia...kun oli ortodokseja ja sitten oli erilaiset vaatteet ja kaikki että...Mutta, ei sellaista enää tehdä. Ehkä se on ollu silloin, aikoinaan.

**Maija**

#### **Quote 46**

No...ite minä en ole kokenut sitä asiaa mitenkään, että olen ollut oma itseni ja ihmiset on hyväksyny tai ollu hyväksymättä, mutta en oo kokenu sitä niinku asiana mutta, mutta on myös...esimerkiksi oman isäni kouluaikoina pahimpia koulukiusaajia olivat muut

saamelaiset, että koltat on ehkä olleet siellä saamelaisten joukossa se alin kasti. Ehkä lukumäärän ja sitten senkin mukaan, että ne on ollu vähän erilaisia, eri paikoista tulleet tänne, ja kieli on ollut niin erilaisen kuuloista, että.....on ehkä vaikuttanut siihen.

**Pertti**

#### **Quote 47**

Ei se sitä sitten tarkoittanut, etteikö siihen olis vastattu myöskin, että kyllä sitten tiedän jos sanottiin rumasti, niin kuin koltta-sanaa käytettiin sillä tavalla haukkumasanana, niin yhtäläillä sitten kolttasaamelaiset nuoret saattoivat sanoa lappalainen, et harvoin he sanoivat tunturisaamelainen tai inarinsaamelainen, vaan sitten heiltä tuli myös se lappalainen.

**Raija**

#### **Quote 48**

Ei nyt Sevetissä hirveesti, tietty sitku sitä iteki kasvo, niin ei me hirveesti....sillälailla ei ollut tekemisissä muiden saamelaisten kanssa. Kyllä sitä itelle varmaan eka kertaa tuli tämä, kun....[vuosi] 2000 se tais olla kun minä menin lukioon.....niin siellä oli sitten muutama tällainen pohjoissamelainen, joilla oli näitä stereotyyppioita ja joilla oli omia vitsejä koltista [...] nekin oli ihan normaaleja ihmisiä, sitten kun meki tutustuimme. Se oli vaan aluksi, ku tietenkin, mitä vanhemmat ihmiset on puhunu, niitä samoja juttuja.

**Jussi**

Kyllä se ennen tietenkin oli. Silloin joskus ku isä on ollu nuori, ja kyllä sitte silloinki ku minä olin vielä pieni, niin minun mielestä oli. Etenkin ehkä pohjoissaamelaisilla aika paljon sellaista...semmosta suhtautumista.

M: Oliko se sun mielestä epäreilua tai miten se sai sut tuntemaan?

R: No ei se silleen konkreettisesti mulla onneksi kauheesti näkyny, ku minä olin koko ajan Nellimissä....et sitte joskus...joskus tuli vaan ilmi, ja joskus myöhemmin ehkä koulussa kans törmäsin sellaseen, että joillakin pohjoissaamelaisilla oli ennakkoluuloja koltia kohtaan.

**Maija**

#### **Quote 49**

No Inarin kunnassa, kuten itsekin tiedät inarin kuntalaisena, Inarin kunta on semmoinen suvaitsevaisempi, mutta jos me mennään jonnekin Utsjoelle....tai ei se vielä Utsjoki ole, mutta jos mennään Enontekiölle, tai Lemmenjoelle, siellä jo vähän eri tavalla suhtaudutaan, mutta noh. Ortodoksit kuitenkin toimittavat ortodoksisia palveluksia ja luterilaiset taas omiaan, mutta kyllä se näkyy kun on kirkkopäivät. Että kyllä he vähän niin kuin katsovat alta lipan. Kyllä, mutta....ei sitä kannata välittää [...]Mutta kyllä ne sitten, ihan nyt suvaitaan paljon paremmin kuin joskus 60-70-luvulla.

**Lauri**

#### **Quote 50**

Mutta tota niin, mä olisin jotenkin odottanut ja olettanut, että siinä pääohjelmassa olis ollu se ortodoksinenkin palvelus mukana, ettei niin että siellä on meneillään joku pääohjelma ja sitten sieltä ollaan pois, ja ollaan niin kuin toisessa paikassa ja samoin tää, että tänne on ohjattu pieni ryhmä tänne Keväjärvelle - se oli ihan mukava se tapaaminen niitten kuolansaamelaisten kanssa ja kyllä sitte tuonne Ivalon kirkolle tuli jopa Norjan kirkosta

joku piispa piispa Panteleimonin vieraaksi ja kutsusta mukaan sinne Ivalon palvelukseen muutama ihminen - mutta mä en niinku ymmärrä, että jos on ekumeniasta kysymys, niin silloin se pitäisi olla niin, että se koko ohjelma olisi pitänyt sisällään myöskin ne ortodoksiset osuudet. Ja samoin monta kertaa tulee semmoinen tunne, että on joku ekumeeninen palvelus ja sitten me menemme tuonne luterilaiseen kirkkoon, mutta koskaan kukaan ei tule päinvastoin. Minusta elävä ekumenia on jotain yhdessä tekemistä, että onhan näitä...Rovaniemellä nyt on sellainen ristisaatto kirkkojen välillä, missä sitten kuljetaan ortodoksikirkosta luterilaiseen kirkkoon, joitakin tällaisia tapahtumia, joihin osallistuu molempia, ja onhan näitä sitten paljon ympäri Suomea tällaisia, mutta jotenkin täällä se on aika jähmeää.

**Raija**

### **Quote 51**

Jos aletaan katsoa tuonne itäänpäin, niin sittenhän kolttasaamelaisilla on paljon enemmän yhteistä kildininsaamelaisten kanssa, mitä näiden muiden Suomen saamelaisten kanssa.

**Jussi**

### **Quote 52**

Sitten myöskin saattaa yhteen muita alkuperäiskansoja kolttien kanssa ja tässä on kohteena Alaska, jonka alkuperäisheimoista 5 on pääasiassa ortodoksisia.

**Matti**

### **Quote 53**

Ei se hirveästi, koska tuota...ristiäisten, hautajaisten, häiden ja muissa tämmösissä tapahtumissa ne nuoret aina kysyy vanhemmilta ihmisiltä, että miten ne niinku tapahtuu ja mitä tehdään silloin ja silloin. Jokainen siirtää niitä vanhoja tapoja eteenpäin. Että kaikki menis niinku...kaikilla on aina mielessä, mie oon monet hautajaiset järjestäny, että menehän se sitten ihan oikeesti näin, että oliko koltilla tämmönen tapa ja onko ne tehny niin ja onko ne tehny näin ja. Että kyllä ne noudattaa, nuoretkin, hyvin pitkälle niitä tapoja.

**Liisa**

### **Quote 54**

No onhan se tietenkin tärkeä, ku me olemme siihen kasvaneet. Ihan pikkulapsesta. Ihan tuolta luostarin läheltä, ja muutenkin. Kotihan se on se, mistä lähtee tämä kaikki. Kyllä ortodoksisuus on hyvin tärkeä. Ihan pikkuisesta asti.

**Kerttu**

### **Quote 55**

Minun lapset ja lapsenlapset on kaikki kiinnostuneita siitä, että minä oon aina itse pukeutunu kolttasaamelaisiin vaatteisiin, olen tanssinut kolttakatrillia, olen käyny kirkossa ja he ovat kasvaneet tähän kulttuuriin mukaan ja se on minulle ihan luonnollinen asia, että minä olen kolttasaamelainen ja kulttuuria viedään eteenpäin. Minä en sitä niin kuin väkisin hae, enkä yritä ettiä enkä viedä sitä, mutta minun matkassani se kasvaa. Elää.

**Liisa**

### **Quote 56**

En ole eronnut sen takia, että kun vanhemmat kuuluu, ja ehkä heidän mielestään se on niinku, emmä tiä onko...kokeeko he sitä kuinka, tai siis miten he sen kokisi.

**Pertti**

### **Quote 57**

R: Joo, kyllä minä jossain vaiheessa ajattelin sitä, että eroaisin kirkosta kokonaan.

M: Mm. Miksi et tehnyt sitä?

R: No en minä sitten. En muista, saatoin sanoa siitä äitilleki jossain vaiheessa ja se oli...\*nauraa\* ihan kielteinen sitä kohtaan ja...en sitten senkään takia ja sitten...en minä saanu aikaseksi, oishan se varmaan ollu tosi helppoa, mutta...ei, sitte minä ajattelin, että ei siitä ole mitään hyötyä ja sitte jos haluaa mennä naimisiin, niin ois kiva mennä kirkossa naimisiin ja...eikä siitä nyt niin paljon haittaakaan oo, että kuuluu kirkkoon, niin en viittiny alkaan eroon.

**Maija**

### **Quote 58**

No se oli siinä mielessä, että lapsuudessa oli, niin sitä...kun sitä käskettiin, niin sitä meni, ja sitten meillähän oli aina kun Sevetissä oli joku tällainen kirkkotapahtuma, joka sattuu viikolle, niin mehän mentiin koko koulu, niin silloin tuli käytyä, mutta ei tällä hetkellä nyt...vaikka mummo on välillä yrittäny, niin sitä sunnuntaina ei, ei sinne kirkkoon tulementyä.

**Jussi**

### **Quote 59**

Mutta sitten äiti hirveän kiinnostunu, vaikka ei ollutkaan täältä...niin kolttakulttuurista ja se sitten sillä tavalla paljon toi sitä, ihan pienestä asti mulle. [...]

No, äiti teki aika innokkaasti kaikkia perinneruokia silloin...ko se tutki sitä aihetta silloin...ja sitten....

M: Ahaa, okei!

R: Se...myös...se laitto kolttavaatteita mulle päälle ja...kaikkea sellaista, ei...mutta ei tietenkään pystyny puhumaan...et sillä tavalla ei, mutta...yritti kuitenkin aina kertoa.

**Maija**

### **Quote 60**

Että se on varmaan siitä, että itselläki oli pienenä, kun sitä ei halunnut kirkkoon, niin pikkusisko lähti äitin kanssa joulukirkkoon. Itse jäi enemmän kotia, lämmittämään saunaa isän kanssa tai jotaki.

**Jussi**

### **Quote 61**

Mutta ehkä sillä uskonnolla ei nyt enää ole niin paljon merkitystä ku aikasemmin. Tai ainaki aikasemmin tuntu, että suurin osa silloin evakon jälkeen vois kuvitella käyneen kirkossa, tai ainaki kuvista päätellen niissä on ollu kauheasti porukkaa, niin nykyään ei enää käydä.

**Maija**

### **Quote 62**

niin nykyään on televisiot ja internetit, ettäkö ennen ei hirveästi ole ollut tätä, että se on ollu se oma ortodoksiuskonto, ja se on ollu niinkö se, mutta nykyään lapset ja nuoret haluaa jotakin, niin me mennään Wikipediaan tai Googleen ja kirjoitetaan se ja sieltä saa lukea vaikka mitä. Se ei tee meistä sivistyneempiä, mutta meidän on vain helpompi löytää se sama tietoa. Niin sitten ehkä jotku kyseenalaistaa enemmän.

**Jussi**

### **Quote 63**

No ehkä se näkyi sillä tavalla, että...noh, jotku pääsiäiset ja tämmöset oli semmoisia juhlia, jolloin tehtiin vaikka pashaa. Mutta tuota, isä ja äiti on jonkun verran uskonnollisia, äiti nyt on luterilainen mutta tuota, ei se niinku ole missään vaiheessa semmonen **korostettu** asia, minun mielestä ole kuitenkaan ollu meidän perheessä, että joskus on käytö jossain kirkossa, mutta sekin on täysin vapaaehtoista, että kukaan ei ole siihen pakottanut.

**Pertti**

### **Quote 64**

Jos mä mietin vielä ja palaan vielä tonne vanhempaan aikaan, jonnekin 70- ja 80-luvulle, niin jos mietin niitä vanhoja ihmisiä, joita olen tuntenut niin, paitsi että he kävivät ahkerasti palveluksissa silloin kun niitä oli, sitten kotona noudattivat paastoajoja, ilman että siihen liittyi mitään trendikästä. Heille oli siihen aikaan jotenkin selvä tällainen kirkollinen kalenteri, että nyt alkaa paasto. Vieläpä kolttasaamelaiset, he elivät vielä kahden kalenterin aikaa, et he elivät vielä sitä juliaanista kalenteria ja sanoivat, että nyt on vanha Iivanan päivä ja nyt on vanha Iljan päivä sekä tämä mitä Suomessa eletään

**Raija**

### **Quote 65**

Niin monenlaiset asiat tällä tavalla kiinnostaa täällä olevia ihmisiä ja erityisesti niitä, jotka jotakin menettivät, se kadotettu sukupolvi siellä välissä, jotka joutuvat kieltämään sen, säilyttääkseen sen oman identiteetin ja semmosen oman elämän....miksi sitä sanois....semmosen....noh, omanarvontunnon tai muuta, niin jotenkin ajattelivat ehkä silloin, että ollessaan mahdollisimman suomalaisia, ja käyttäytyäkseen suomalaisittain ja pukeutuakseen suomalaisittain ja näin edelleen, niin he voisivat viettää ihmisarvoisempaa elämää. Mutta tota, tänä päivänä ei sellaista tarvi ajatella enää, että ihmiset voivat aika vapaasti sanoa, ja iloisesti ja reippaasti sanoa kuuluvansa kolttasukuun. Että ehkä kuitenkin tulee sellaista vahvuutta sieltä, joka voi jotenkin näkyä, että jos tulee kymmenen uutta koltankielen puhujaa, jotka osaa puhua ja kirjoittaa, niin sillä voi olla vaikutusta, sellainen kerrannaisvaikutus eteenpäin ja ehkä se koskettaa sitten uskontoakin.

**Raija**

### **Quote 66**

R: Kyllä mä luulen. Koska nyt on paljon nuoria, jotka on ruvennu käymään kuitenkin..

M: Okei.

R: Ja...et, siellä on nuoriaki Sevetissä ja me ollaan päätetty et ku se on oikeesti vaan kolmen viikon välein, niin me pyrittäis siihen et me saatais aina aikaseksi noi kirkkokahvit.

M: Joo.

R: Et olis tavallaan se semmonen niinku...ja tavallaan...se on tietyllä tavalla semmonen, että josko se auttais vaikka houkuttelemaan vähän kauempaakin tulevia. Et ku Sevetti on kuitenkin aika piiiitkä kylä, siellä on pitkät välimatkat, niin tavallaan se...se on semmonen...semmonen...et sen jälkeen niinku saa oikeesti aikaa istua ja jutella, et mitä kuuluu. Ja sit tosiaan, jotain kahvia ja teetä, niin se saattaa olla kuitenkin kivempi, et jos on joku 50 kilometriäki matkaa, niin...niin niin. En tiää, kyllä siellä varmasti on, vaikka vähenemässä määrin tuolla sitä porukkaa käy, mut et tuota...on siellä kuitenkin...no juhlissa sitten enemmänki, isommissa juhlissa.

**Ritva**

### **Quote 67**

Ku siinä on kuitenkin, että jos katsoo tuota minun sukupolvea, niin kolttasaamelaiset on luterilaistunut, mutta sitten kun katsotaan näitä...minun sukupolvea siltä kantilta, että nyt kun he itse ovat tällasia kolmenkymppin paikkeilla ja saavat lapsia, niin aika monella on, että tässä vaiheessa ovat alkaneet miettiä, että mitä se kolttasaamelaisuus merkitsee ja näin, niin sitten sitä...se vain...no niin kuin minä sanoin, se kuuluu siihen uskontoon, että äidit haluaa että lapset on ortodokseja. Että jos se on sitten toisaalta se, että jos vaikka isä on luterilainen, mutta jos sille isälle ei hirveesti merkitse se kirkko, niin on helpompi tehdä se kompromissi. Että siltä kantilta katsottuna, että eikähän se nyt ole...minusta tuntuu, että tällä hetkelläkin Sevetissä suurin osa näistä pienistä lapsista taitaa olla ortodokseja.

**Jussi**

### **Quote 68**

Jos ihan ajatellaan koko Suomen mittakaavassa, nyt oli hiljan kun tuli tuo Paimen Sanomat, niin siinä kerrottiin että Suomessa ortodoksien määrä on kasvanut ja on kasvussa, ollut nyt viimeiset vuodet, mutta siihen liittyy monenlaisia asioita. Ihmiset ehkä nykypäivänä kaupungistuneissa yhteisöissä ja yhdyskunnissa hakevat ehkä jotakin sellaista rauhaa ja rauhoittumista ja ortodoksikirkossa voi olla sellaisia piirteitä, että se viehättää ja ihmiset tulee mielellään sellaiseen, ensin katsomaan ja käyvät useamman kerran ja saattavat sitten liittyäkin kirkkoon ja sellaisiakin on, jotka aikuisena liittyvät. Mutta sitten jos mä ajattelen tällaisia pohjoisia alueita, niin ehkä täällä ei semmonen samantyyppinen ilmiö ei täällä tule olemaan. Kuitenkin nää on pieniä kyliä ja täällä on luonto lähellä ja muu tällanen, niin ei ehkä sillä tavalla ajatella

**Raija**