

## **Prologue**

Writing my thesis has been a long journey, in a very literal sense on the road, in the field, and even up in the air, as well as in a more abstract sense, into new ideas and experiences. The literal journey can be measured in kilometres, of which I have amassed about 14,000 during four years in Lapland. Measuring in the abstract is more difficult, but my journey here consists of various phases during which I have acquired information on sometimes even surprising issues. On occasion, I have not only learned that which I set out to look for. Some people have travelled with me all the way, others for a longer or shorter while. I want to thank them all.

My journey was financially supported by the Culture and Interaction Graduate School of the University of Oulu, the Finnish Concordia Fund, the Oulu University Scholarship Foundation, the multidisciplinary environmental graduate net school EnviroNet, and the *Human-Animal Relationships among the Finnish Sámi 1000–1800 AD. DNA and stable isotope analyses of bones found at worship sites* project funded by the Academy of Finland. This project was shared between Archaeology and Biology at the University of Oulu initially aimed to study the origins of domesticated reindeer and sheep and their significance for early Sámi communities and as a means of subsistence in the light of bone material found at offering places. However, we can never determine the results of archaeological excavations in advance. We found no sheep bones, but instead, interesting questions arose during the project related to the diversity of human activities in sacred places and to ritual activities that leave no archaeologically discernible traces. Furthermore, the chronological limit indicated in the project's name had to be extended closer to modern times; Sámi sacred places did not by any means fall out of use after the 19th century. I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Milton Núñez not only for including me in the study of offering places, but also for allowing me to follow the paths that opened up before me as the project progressed and for not curbing my enthusiasm even when confronted with questions quite foreign to traditional archaeology.

I am grateful to my supervisor, university lecturer Jari Okkonen, who also worked in the project, for letting me know about the research project at hand even while I was travelling on the other side of the world. I could call him from the field even on Sunday if the equipment was malfunctioning, and the conversations in his office covered everything from my thesis to the state of archaeology today. My other supervisor, Dr Petri Halinen, joined my journey slightly later, when I needed someone with a fresh viewpoint to read my work. Thank you, Petri, for the many times you read and commented on the text.

Cooperation with biologists taught me plenty about doing multidisciplinary research, but I learned other things as well: success at work is worth celebrating and eating well is possible even out in the field! Thanks for these lessons are due to Dr Jouni Aspi, Dr Minna Ruokonen, doctoral student Matti Heino, and research technician Jari Ylönen. I would also like to thank Klemetti Näkkäljärvi, the chair of the Finnish Sámi Parliament, for conversations and support related to the project's fieldwork. Cooperation with Metsähallitus has also been a valuable addition to my research. Dr Pirjo Rautiainen from Lapland Natural Heritage Services has provided great assistance by arranging both vehicles and accommodation for my travels and by discussing questions related to sieidis by e-mail. The staff of the Giellagas Institute of the University of Oulu helped me to obtain a more diverse view of Sámi culture. I participated in their lectures as both student and lecturer, and I also helped to organize a multidisciplinary conference of Sámi studies,

*Máttut - máddagat – The Roots of Saami ethnicities, societies and spaces / places.* For new viewpoints and stimuli, I would especially like to thank Professor Veli-Pekka Lehtola, but also the entire staff of the Giellagas Institute and the students participating in discussions at my lectures.

I am also grateful to everybody who read and commented on my thesis. I would especially like to mention the examiners of my work, Professor Håkan Rydving and Dr Antti Lahelma, as well as Dr Irmeli Pääkkönen and everybody who commented on my work at seminar sessions. You have all helped me to further develop my work.

The furthest point of my journey was the Archaeological Computing Laboratory of the University of Sydney, where I travelled to hone my skills in the use of GIS, but where I also gained new ideas about the cooperation of indigenous peoples and archaeologists, as well as about the archaeology of modernity. In Sydney, I would like to thank the entire staff of the ACL, especially Director Ian Johnson, who welcomed me to his workplace and home, Andrew Wilson, who guided me tirelessly, Martin King, who took care of all practical arrangements, and Till Sonnemann, who provided excellent company both at work and at leisure.

My work was stimulated also by the many discussions carried out at international conferences and seminars as well as in the university cafeteria. There is unfortunately no room in this preface to thank everybody involved in these conference and seminar discussions, but I would especially like to thank Tim Insoll, John Schofield, Carl-Gösta Ojala, and Tönno Jonuks. Of all my colleagues at the University of Oulu, I am particularly grateful to Anna-Kaisa Salmi, who has been an excellent field osteologist and a good friend. Additionally, many other doctoral students and researchers have provided me with not only rewarding conversations but also their friendship as the work progressed. Without you, writing my thesis would not have been as much fun. Particularly with the members of the archaeological theory group I have shared ideas, received insights, and discussed many things other than theory.

My work could not have been done without the people I was allowed to interview and the students who joined me in fieldwork through both snowstorms and – more rarely – heat waves. I thank everybody who participated in the fieldwork and especially those who joined me time after time.

Finally, I would like to thank my friends and family for all their support. My parents have encouraged me to follow the line of work for which I feel a calling, and to trust in myself. My husband Anssi Malinen has been my staunchest supporter and critic according to my needs, and has also agreed to plan our canoeing and hiking trips to include possible sieidi sites. Thank you for all the kilometres we have travelled together and for all those that are still waiting for us.

For Sámi words, my thesis uses Northern Sámi orthography, unless otherwise stated. In direct quotes, however, the words are spelled in the format used by the original writer. Sacred places are referred to by the name in the register over ancient sites. Appendix I also includes Sámi names when they are known. The number indicated after sacred places in the text corresponds to the running number in Appendix I. Datings in the text are presented in calibrated format to make them easier to compare with historical sources and events. Uncalibrated datings can be found in Appendix III. All translations of citations, if not otherwise mentioned, are by Sarianna Silvonen.

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