

From Jojk to Rock & Jojk: Some Remarks on the Process of Change and of the Socially Constructed Meaning of Sami Music

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Abstract: The paper gives an overview of the standing and socio-cultural importance of the jojk-tradition among the Sami (Laplanders), show different stylistic traits between the Southern and Northern jojk dialects and discuss the socio-historical implications and reasons for these different styles. The influence and impact of the massmedia from the 1950s and the socio-economical changes within Sweden, Norway and Finland leading to new developments within the musical culture of the Sami will be the topic of the second part of the paper. It will be shown how different administrative traditions within the majority peoples have influenced the possibilities for a new kind of musical tradition within the Sami. The different stylistic blend of jojk and contemporary forms of popular music, as well as the functions and use of these new forms of modern Sami music will be discussed.

Keywords: popular music, jojk, Sami, Laplanders, socio-historical-musical analysis

Historical and cultural background

The Sami, the oldest known population group in Scandinavia, today represent a small population (ca 70 000 in Sweden, Norway and Finland and ca 1 500 in Russia) and a linguistic minority (a finno-ugric language). In everyday life Samish is usually spoken by just a minority of the Sami in the Northern parts of Norway, Sweden and Finland. Their prehistory has long been disputed. Some researchers have asserted that the Sami are a tribe which immigrated from the east, others suggest that they are a mixture of representatives of diverse cultures in the vast Sami territory. Phebe Fjellström (1985) argues persuasively that the Sami consists of two different groups, an older southern/western group, which earlier on lived along the Norwegian Atlantic coast, and a later group which came in from the east in ca 2.000 B. C. and later fused with the first group. The oldest group assumably had a proto-Sami language, which gradually was abandoned as they took over the later group's Finno-Ugric language.

It is in the writings of the Roman historian Tacitus (*Germania*, 98) we find the first mention of a people that could be the Sami. He spoke about a people in the North called *fenni*. Up to the 20th century the Sami were often called *finner* by the Norwegians, while in Sweden they were referred to as *lappar*, after the Finn *lap-palainen* (cf. Eng. Laplanders or Lapps). Today, however, they are usually referred to as Sami after *sabmelaš*.

While the Finns earlier on were swidden farmers and hunters, the Swedes and Norwegians were primarily farmers and even fishermen along the coasts, the Sami lived for a long time in the older subsistence way: hunting, fishing and gathering. In one of the first reliable historical sources on the Sami, the Northern Norse chief Ottar's narrative from the 9th century, it is mentioned that the Sami hunted and fished, but he also mentions that they had a special decoy reindeer, that were used in hunting wild reindeer.

When the Swedish (Sweden-Finland), the Danish (Denmark-Norway) and Russian kingdoms became interested in the Sami regions during the Middle Ages and later, the Sami could not maintain themselves without surrendering to these powers. Norwegians also settled farther North along the coast and pushed the Sami further inwards. From the 16th century on, more and more Swedes settled themselves in the Sami inland territories. Churches were build along the coast line in Norway and in the inland of Sweden and Finland.

The Sami eventually began to tame reindeer, but it was not until about the 17th century that they specialized more and more in reindeer breeding. Access to reindeer pasturage, the distance between grazing sites and other factors regulated the size of the herds. Different ways of living developed; the mountain nomads transmigrated long distances with large herds, the forest nomads moved within smaller regions with smaller herds, the sea Sami (along the Northern Atlantic coast and around big lakes in Finland) fished and hunted.

Early writings about the jojk

The objects of this article are: a) to give a short introduction to the place of jojk in earlier, traditional Sami society, b) to give an overview of the socio-cultural changes that led to the development of Sami popular music, c) to describe its stylistic scope, and d) to conclude with a study of a special case to lend insight as to how the "Samishness" of the music is created.

The first reliable information about the Sami's song, jojk, a Swedish rendering of the Sami verb *jouigat*, dates from the 17th century. As a rule, this information originates from priests or missionaries. To jojk implies the performance and production of a traditional Sami melody in a particular Sami manner of singing. A

jojk with or performed with just syllables is called in the Southern Sami areas *vuolle* and the Northern areas *luohti*.

The earliest informants seldom differentiated between profane and religious jojk. The Sami's pre-Christian religion was closely associated with the earlier Sami way of living and has clear parallels with other North-Eastern peoples' religions. A central figure was the *noaidi*, a shaman who among other things, was a mediator between the normal and the supernatural world. The jojk was an important part in rites which the *noaide* performed. The *noaide* often used a drum decorated with different pictures and symbols. The drum's main function was as an instrument of prophecy, but it also functioned as an instrument that provoked ecstasy. On such occasions it was one of the factors that could put the *noaide* into a state of trance. As one source from the eighteenth century describes it:

The *noaide* comes, takes his drum, joiks in the strongest fashion, which the other men and women present also join in with [...] he eventually becomes as though crazed. Running on his knees with the drum [...] until he falls down as though he were dead (Skanke, 1731).

From the early accounts it is not clear whether the drumming had a rhythmic-musical relationship to the jojks. As far as we know, the procedures also varied among different regions. Certain jojks were probably performed by the *noaide* and his possible assistants. Others were probably more generally known. It is however, often mentioned that the *noaide* jojked loudly. When both men and women were present, it is always stated that the men jojked with 'high' and the women with 'low' voices. This probably implies that they sang in unison (in the same pitch range).

In the 17th and 18th centuries the authorities used all of their forces to convert the Sami. The drums were claimed and collected and the activities of the *noaide* forbidden. There is, however, occasional evidence of the use of the drum in the nineteenth century, and in the beginning of the 20th century, the folklore researcher Samuli Paulaharju (1922) even recorded a story which bears a striking resemblance to the oldest preserved story (early 13th century) about the use of the drum.

The jojk in the bear rites

The bear was an object of great reverence and respect among the Sami as well as other North-eastern peoples. Bear rites among the Sami are reported in many sources from the seventeenth century and later. Different jojks would be performed before and after the killing of the bear, on the return trip, at the homecoming, when the bear was skinned, pieces of meat cooked, eaten, etc.. One even sang jojks of thanksgiving to the bear. Again the procedures varied from region to regi-

on. In one anonymous 17th source it was explained that as the men carried the bear they sang: “Here come the men from Sweden, Poland, England and France!” This, if correct, could mean, that the Sami tried to escape the bear’s revenge, putting the place elsewhere. Neither any reliable preserved chronicles nor recordings from this tremendously jojk-rich ceremony exist, although as I will later come back to, the collector Karl Tirén at the beginning of the 20th c. believed he had found — and transcribed — two ritual bear jorks.

The jojk as a resounding symbol

Up to the late nineteenth century most Sami grew up with nature’s sounds. The Sami way of life and culture, as well as the soundscape were things that influenced the jojk’s function, form, and contents. One jorked most often alone, young or old, man or woman. There has since the 18th century existed unanimous evidence to show that the most fundamental significant element in the jojk was the melody/rhythm. On the bases of culturally traditional values one could (as well as one can today) express internal, external sound qualities, concrete and abstract phenomena, as well as places and things. According to one source “the tune is the main thing. It expresses everything” (Sjulsson, 1918). Mixtures of words and syllables seem to have been the most common, but longer epic jojk texts are recorded as early as the seventeenth century, but few have survived. Another element used in order to strengthen the symbolic and communicative function of the jojk was to employ both mime and gestures as one jorked. By means of the jojk, one can thus recreate and experience one’s feelings anew and strengthen them. Just as the memory of someone or something is reinforced when one jorked, the opposite could also be the case: when one thought about someone or something, one would be inclined to jork him/her/it.

The jorks are directed to different phenomena in nature: to mountains, lakes, animals, and most of the time in the northern areas to people themselves. Formerly most Sami had their own jojk personifying them. One jorked the person rather than jorked to the person. Today personal-jorks are the most common motif, and especially so in the Northern Sami areas.

Northern jojk

The jojk tradition is strongest in the northern parts of Scandinavia. Most jorks are held in the anhemitonic pentatonic scale. The rhythmic pulse is as a rule steady (in transcriptions you will a rule find that time divisions like 4/8 and 3/8 predominat). The melody is constructed of one or several motives (i.e. forms like abab or abcd). The length of a jojk is not fixed but depends on the inspirati-

on and competence of the performer. The ambitus is often an octave or more. Intervals such as a fifth, sixth or octave are frequent. There are few long notes, instead a quick flow prevails. One often jojks with a tense voice and alone.

In 1984, most people interested in winter sports probably heard at least one jojk, the one performed by the most well known Samish artist, Nils-Aslak Valkeapää at the inauguration of the Olympic winter games in Lillehammer, Norway. He came forward skiing and jojking the games. The jojk has since been released on a CD containing traditional jojks. On the cover of the CD you will see a smiling artist and the name of the record, *Wintergames* (both in English and Samish). Diagonally in the right corner you will read “and Olympic Welcome Yoik” (*Example 1*).



Example 1: Olympic Welcome jojk (Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, 1994)

Another typical, and even among the Swedes and Norwegians today well known jojk is Máze Nieidat (The Girls from Masi, *Example 2*). Since this is a traditional jojk it was included and appended to a newly composed pop song, ‘Same-land’, that was the Norwegian entry for the 1980 Eurovision Song Contest. More than 600 million viewers saw and heard this song from the final in The Hague:



Example 2: Máze Nieidat (Mattis Heatta, 1980)

Southern jojk

The bifurcation of the Sami culture that Fjellström (cf. above) as well as many other scholars have observed is to some extent found even in the structural parameters of the jojk (The difference between the Samish dialects in the South and in the North is also rather substantial). While the functions of the jojk, the social settings in which jojk can be performed and the importance of jojk as a

communicative and symbolic sounding means, and the basic way of jojking are the same, the musical structure of the Southern jojk is different from the Northern jojk. The tonal material is seldom pentatonic (that is anhemitonic). The melodic structure is sometimes constructed around a few main pitches. In comparison to the Northern jojk-dialect the melodic structures are more varied, and there are often different and more pronounced types of gliding tones leading to or away from the more stable pitches (*Examples 3 and 4*). The form – usually build up by two to four motifs – is more flexible and loosely combined than in the Northern dialect. Both jojks with a fast pulse and jojks with a more flowing or free pulse occur (quasi parlando). The ambitus is often rather narrow. Probably due to the fact that the Southern Sami groups were in closer contact with their Swedish and Norwegian neighbours some Southern jojks seem to have been influenced by Scandinavian folk music of the minor-modal type and also by dance melodies and songs in the major.¹



Example 3: Jojk to a sister (Margaretha Winka – recorded in 1952)



Example 4: A jojk about Lars Nilsson Ruong (Anna Lasko – recorded in 1912)

In the Eastern areas in Finland and Russia we find also jojks that stylistically have been influenced by Finnish and Russian folk music.

From jojk to rock & jojk

The intensified Christianisation of the Sami, the growing numbers of settlers in the nineteenth century as well as mining activities and forestry, and in the 20th century, modern industrial society have made heavy inroads into the reindeer pastures and other traditional territories of the Sami. At the same time

¹ Cf. Stölen (2001) who hold these structures to be the result of an internal structural development.

their traditional ways of living have changed. In Sweden large groups of Sami were relocated by force from the 1920s. For a long time Sami children were given a schooling inferior to that received by Swedish and Norwegian children. Up to at least the middle of the 20th century, Darwinist social theories, implying that the Sami as nomads were more backward than the Swedes, Norwegians etc, made themselves increasingly felt in practical terms.

Today only a small part of the Sami (ca 10%) live by reindeer herding. The large majority still live in traditionally Samish areas, and work in the same professions as the Swedes, Norwegians, Finns etc in these areas do. But the development also means that in Sweden more Sami, ca 2000, live in the capital Stockholm than in Arjeplog (an old Samish community in Norrbotten, Sweden).

At the time I finished my dissertation (1977) about the jojk tradition up the 1950s, the first Samish LP with popular Samish music, or Samish modern music, had already been released (1968). Due to the development of mass media, the Samish musical world in the 1960s thus became a part of the international world of European, American and Afro-American youth music. In the 1970s many recordings were released and since then about 70 LPs and CDs have been released, featuring jojk, various types and mixes of jojk, popular music as well as Western art music. Most of these records are published in Norway, some in Finland, and a few in Sweden.

Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, already in 1968 jojked or jojk-sang on the first LP containing a mix of jojk and popular music. He was accompanied on the record by Finnish musicians playing drums, bass and guitar. Valkeapää had discovered like many other Sami teenagers, that the “three chords” he heard from the guitars of so many English/American popular artists, could very well be used with the Northern pentatonic jojks. One popular jojk/song was the traditional “Early in the morning” (*Example 5*). The lyrics starts, “early in the morning he proposed in Karasjok, and at dawn he jojked in Kautokeino...”.

Example 5: 'Early in the morning' (Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, 1968)

Among the younger generations then, one started to use jojk and modern popular music as tools for their experiences of being a minority people. As well as using traditional jojk one composed new songs with lyrics dealing with the con-

temporary situation for the Sami. They tried out almost all possible musical styles. As a rule the earlier pattern of intonation when joking gradually disappeared as they tried to blend with the well-tempered keyboards or adjust to the fixed pitches on the guitars. Some melodies sounded as folk-pop & jojk, some as rock & jojk, latin & jojk or as ordinary Country & Western songs, as blues or what have you.² The words though, reflected the thoughts, frustration and experiences of being a minority people traditionally looked down upon by the majority peoples.

Many among the older generations had a hard time accepting the modern Sami music. A debate about the Samishness in the music started. Adversaries among the older generation also argued that many of these records were made by sheer commercialism, while another camp saw nothing wrong in the jojk developing and mingling with different idioms. To the younger generations, on the other hand, the modern popular Sami music was *their* own music. They heard it on the radio, used it as dance music, they knew the lyrics and could sing the melodies performed by their artists and bands. Their music took on new functions at the same time as it changed stylistically. To them, this music as a rule was modern Sami music, as jojk was old Sami music.

There were, of course, always limits to what the great majority among the Sami could accept as *Sami* popular music. To give two problematic cases: In the 1980s the Norwegian teacher Per Løberg for some years worked in the North of Norway. He was also a skilful accordionist with a special predilection for Norwegian-style old-time dance music: waltzes, polkas etc. Together with some local Sami girls he recorded two LPs. On the second LP (*Máze Nieidat II*, 1978) all melodies were composed by Løberg, and were, with few exceptions, all held in old-time dance music styles. In some melodies, however, the words convey a completely different message. In the slightly pop-like melody 'Haerva' for instance, the lyrics by the Sami Isak Samuel Heatta told how although the Norwegian claimed that the interest of the Sami were well provided for, they regarded the Sami as ornaments, something beautiful to look at.

Even a traditional jojk could arguably give you the impression that it had left Sápmi ('Sameland'). In 1980, thus, the Sami Mattis Heatta and the Norwegian Sverre Kjelsberg followed up their contribution to the European Song Contest with a record called in Norwegian 'Låla' in time for the Christmas rush. The many jorks on this record were given a variety of accompaniments. One was turned into a pop ballad, another performed in Latin American style. Still another traditional jojk, 'Ovlaš Ovla', evoked a mood reminiscent of the German Hit Parade of the 1970s. This was partly derived from the military

² Cf. my record, *Samisk musik i förvandling* (1988 / Caprice, CAP 1351/) on the transformation of Samish music up to the late 1980s.

afterbeat, the tuba-like synthesizer effect, not least in the solo part, and the general briskness and major tonality of the arrangement. Moreover, there is no denying the somewhat mechanical impression made by Heatta's jojking and his use of traditional syllables. To many Sami there was little to remind them of the essence of jojk, while another large body of opinion saw nothing wrong in these arrangements. To what extent this jojk still retained a feeling of Samishness, thus, is an open question.

If we, however, return to Nils-Aslak Valkeapää and take his career as an example, he continued to explore new paths, most of the time well *within* the Sami soundscape. In the 1970s he started to work with Finnish jazz musicians, among them the tenor saxophonist Seppo Paakunainen. The music reflects this collaboration: pentatonic jojks were used as a basic element of improvisation in jazz-rock arrangements. In the 80s African ethnic instruments like *mbira*, gongs and drums were giving the jojk-arrangements an afro feeling. In other records the sounds of nature itself provided an important dimension. In still other productions he embedded his jojks in contemporary electronic compositions flavoured by a natural Sami soundscape.

Valkeapää among other things, also wrote poems, produced a book about the cultural heritage, staged a multi-media performance that made a great impact both among Samish and Non-samish audiences, made concerts in Scandinavia as well as in most parts of the world. The stature of Valkeapää steadily rose among the Sami as among the neighbouring peoples. He can be considered as one of the most influential Samish personalities. He received the Nordic Councils prestigious literary award in 1991, and, as mentioned, performed at the inauguration of the Olympic winter games in 1994.³

The variety of musical styles connected with Valkeapää does not stop here. Already in the 80s he inspired his collaborator, Paakunainen, who studied at the Sibelius conservatory in Helsinki to compose a symphony based on jojks. In the sleeve notes to the recording of the symphony in 1989 Paakunainen explains:

Back in 1980 Ailu (Valkeapää) was listening to Dvorák's New World Symphony and asked me if I would agree to create something similar on the basis of Sami yoiks. I listened to Dvorák too, thought about it for a while and answered yes. The first performance in Pitea on Jan 31st 1982 was commissioned by the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation. (CD *Sámi Luondo, Gollerisku* /Sami Nature, and the Golden Brooch/, 1989)

³ There was a emotional debate in the Northern Norwegian press before the inauguration between on the one hand Laestadianists and conservative Christians condemning the coming performance, and on the other various Sami authors and politicians welcoming it. (Cf *Finnmarks dagblad* Feb. 24, 1993 and *Nordlys*, April 21 1993)

Since Valkeapää and Paakunainen worked together for such a long time, Paakunainen is also well known among Sami listeners. There should then be no doubt in the minds of the record buyers that they are buying a Samish record. Thus, the authenticity of the symphony as a Samish work is in a way guaranteed from the start. Moreover, the first theme in the symphony, had been recorded by Valkeapää in 1977 (on *Vuoi, Biret-Maaret, vuoi!*, AILP-1, 1977). He suddenly passed away in November 2001.

Whereas Valkeapää's name has been associated with jojk, fusion & jojk, symphony & jojk, the career of the other Samish »superstar» Mari Boine Persen started with pure rock and ballads. She released her first LP *Jaskatvuooa manná* [Eng. After Stillness] in 1985. Her parents belonged to the orthodox Christian sect Laestadianists, who among other things consider jojk a sin.⁴ Instead, Laestadianists sing a lot of Lutheran hymns and of course in school their children sing ordinary European school songs. Even as she started at a teacher training college she mostly tried to disassociate herself from her Samish background. It was not until she had a son and married a teacher colleague, that questions of identity became more important. She also started to write lyrics. Her music became a means for her Samish awakening. She developed into a rock singer and took part in the Northern Rock contest from 1982–85. The third time she won the contest she got a lot of publicity. A Samish rock star!

Most of the songs on the record, "After Stillness" are her own. The first tune was a deliberate kick at the Norwegian government. The lyrics start:

Dear sirs, high in rank far away at Oslo – do you have some time for us – we watch TV every night – but we never hear Samish, our own language – Dear sir, far away at Oslo – do you have some time for us.

This was sung to a melody composed by A. Strals, at the time an unknown composer to me. It took ten years until I learned at an international conference in Canberra, Australia, that the melody had been a hit in Australia in the 70s. There it was performed by a catholic nun, Sister Mead. The lyrics were familiar enough. Instead of 'fathers in Oslo' it told about: "Our father who art in heaven..."[sic!] (*Example 6*).

⁴ The Christian revivalist movement Laestadianism – characterized by strong, old church style, biblical morals, and negative attitude towards all Sami traditions, that go back to pre-Christian times – has since its beginning in the early 19th century had a strong negative effect on the preservation of jojk. The movement spread primarily in the Northern Samish areas. Simultaneously the movement attacked alcohol abuse and other social evils, it thus condemned Sami cultural traditions. Many believers in this sect still look on jojk and the performance of jojk as a sin.

Our Fa-ther who art in heav-en, Hal-low-ed be Thy name,

Thy King-dom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in

Example 6

From rock to world music

Mari Boine Person made a name for herself in all Norway even if the lyrics were very critical towards the Norwegian attitude towards the Sami. She was invited to the famous rock festival at Roskilde in Denmark and made a great success. Since then the snowball has rolled on ... She toured in Samish parts of Sweden together with other musicians and traditional Jojk-singers. She tried singing to her own accompaniment of an African drum and wanted to learn to jojk.

In 1989 she released the record *Gula Gula* [Listen, listen]. Her lyrics were still highly political but her music had changed. No doubt this also had to do with the musicians taking part in the recording, among them the Swedish all round folk musician Ale Möller and the Peruvian Carlos Zamata Quispe. In an interview she agreed that her songs on this record could be labelled as “World music”, but that she did not care much about labels. Mari Boine Persen’s type of World music could be described as a mixture of rock with quasi-West-African rhythms, with short phrases sung in a kind of Sami/Native North-American technique and with rather few harmonies or drone-like harmonies. There are some improvised solos by the musicians. The forms are simple. Instead of common electric guitars and rock percussion we hear the musicians playing “ethnic” instruments as the West African drums, *Mbira*, Grec *Bouzuki* etc.. In her lyrics she often describes her ne-

gative experiences within Norwegian society as well as personal experiences of love and despair.

This record has since been followed up by several rather similar productions in the 90s. During these years she has more and more developed a special “ethnic” voice technique of her own. It reminds Samish listeners in part of traditional jojk technique and convinces European listeners that it is. Her singing style now exerts an influence on the younger Samish generations. To them she truly is a Samish mega-star. To the Scandinavian and more and more Europeans Mari Boine is the first truly international artist of Sami origin. In March 1994 the influential newspaper *The European* wrote:

Her latest album *Goaskinviellja/Eagle Brother* (Verve World) reaches a wider public. A warm, sonorous voice soars above a remarkable fusion of folk, jazz and rock. The sparse arrangements have a receptive audience among those whose taste tend towards the ambient and ethereal (25–31 March 1994).⁵

A case study

We have briefly followed the musical footpaths of Valkeapää and Persen, two leading Samish artists, who probably have contributed more than anyone else to the consolidation and stylistical expansion of Sami jojk/music. We have briefly also seen that the ‘Samishness’ of some modern Sami music was a matter of opinion within the Sami community. When this musical development started in the 60s, the status of jojk was as a rule not very high. As stated, it was considered a sin by the Laestadianists. Many Sami in the 20th century had also taken on the belief held by their Nordic neighbours that jojk was of little value and sounded peculiar. Since then and because of socio-economic processes of change, the expansion of mass media as well as the international development of popular music almost every kind of mix between jojk and pop/rock/latin/electronic/classic etc. has been tried out. In the international scene Mari Boine’s voice and music are known to many World music fans as Sami music. Today also, and to a large extent thanks to the influence of Valkeapää, the jojk-tradition is stronger than before.

In the shadow of these Samish artists there are, of course, many other Sami jojk-singers, artists and musicians. Coming from very different backgrounds they will use traditional jojks as inspiration, or compose new songs and tunes. The ways these songs/tunes will be constructed as Samish and at the same time accepted as Samish by the Sami themselves and also among the neighbouring peoples are complex and varied. I will conclude this article with a case history – the music of a Sami musician – that to me is especially fascinating.

⁵ Thanks to Karl Neuenfeldt for this information. Cf. also his writings about the socio-political importance of Mari Boine (1991).

The Bear and The Bear hunt

The melody we will discuss exists in two different versions recorded by the same musician/group, Frode Fjellheim and his band. The first version is called “The Bear”, and the second version “The Bear hunt”.

My aim with the following account of the music is to present an overview of the course of the music. The overall form of the first version: 0:00 – 0:01 (seconds and minutes refer to the time of the CD): It starts with the sound of wind as a short anacrusis; 0:01 – 0:26. Different rhythms on various drums/percussion, and to that, a few melodic ideas and sustained notes on flute. The rhythms consist of four units that are chained together and repeated, i.e. 4+2+3+4, 4+2+4+3, 4+2+4+3, 4+2+3+4, each unit consisting of 13 beats; 0:26 – 0:51. A melody, a theme, is played on soprano saxophone as the rhythms, the rhythmical pattern continues (*Example 7*):



Example 7: 'The theme'

0:51–1:26 The rhythmic pattern continues as before. Common synthesizer sounds are heard in the high register. Short melodic ideas are imitated in two melody parts. 1:26 – 2:04 The theme is repeated once again. At the end of the theme synthesizer sounds are added. These sounds, rather complicated chords are in long note values; 2:04 – 2:22 Round 2:04 the rhythms develop into 4/4-time. A long crescendo leads up to; 2:22 The theme is stated once more. There is no rhythmic accompaniment – just some sparse sounds of rattles until 2:40 (the end).

The second version is more than twice as long (5:33) and is, by and large, more complex and the solo-parts more important. Thus, in the second version the stylistic traits of jazz & fusion are more evident. The musicians are very accomplished and show a high improvisatory skill. The arrangements are not very sophisticated, but totally in accordance with stylistic rules in standard jazz from the 1950s, the second arrangement, though, being more varied. The overall complexity of the music places it outside the boundaries of most pop and rock music. Neither of the versions is suitable as dance music. The pentatonic theme has a central role in both versions, even if the soloists depart from this material in their improvisations. Apart from one explicit figure (a blues ‘lick’ in the soprano saxophone in the first version), there is little that suggests a direct association African-American styles as jazz or blues.

Origins – complications

The first version, “The Bear” comes from the CD “Frode Fjellheim – Sangen vi glemte – Mijen vuelieh” [The Songs we forgot] (1991), and the second version, “The Bear hunt”, on the CD “Frode Fjellheim – Frode Fjellheim Jazz Joik Ensemble – Saajve Dans” (1994). Both are released on a small Sami label.

When Fjellheim (born 1959) was seven year old, he moved from the Southern Sami area with his Sami father and Norwegian mother to the present heartland of the Sami in the north of Norway. His father did not jojk, and even if Frode Fjellheim heard jojk in the community, he himself did not become a bearer of this tradition. After high school he started at the Conservatory in Trondheim. The other musicians on the CD are Norwegians and also graduates from the same conservatory.⁶ As Fjellheim became interested in his Samish musical heritage he took part of the transcriptions published by the Swedish stationmaster and amateur musician Karl Tirén (1942). Tirén made his phonograph recordings and most of his field transcriptions in the 1910s. Many Nordic composers have used these transcriptions as melodic material, among them well known composers as Wilhelm Peterson-Berger (the symphony *Same Ätnam*, 1915) and Erland von Koch (*Lappland-metarmoforsen*, 1957). Fjellheim also used Tiréns transcriptions as themes and inspiration for most of his tunes on the CDs. Thus it is written on the sleeve notes that the jojk he used as melodic material for “The Bear”/ “The Bear hunt” was performed by the Samis Magdalena Jonsson and Bengt Olofsson in 1913.

When reading Tirén’s account (published in German) of the origin of this jojk, many doubts about the authenticity of the jojk arise. In his book (1942) Tirén describes how late one autumn evening he visited an old Sami woman (born in 1840) at her camp in the Southern part of Sápmi (‘Saameland’). He had been told that she knew some very old jojks that were used in connections with the bear rite. Yes, that was so, she told him, but she wanted to be certain that he was worthy enough to hear these jojks. She would jojk for him only on condition that he would go back to his base camp and then return to her camp the next morning, she would jojk for him. Sleeping just a few hours he spent the night walking, and upon his return was considered to be the right one.

As he had passed the test she started to jojk for him. After some common jojks, she started to talk about a bear hunt in the 1880s, at which occasion she had learned some Bear-jojks. Thirty-three years, Tirén emphasizes, after she had jojked these melodies she could gradually remember them while he wrote them down (1942: 64). She jojked, thus, two old jojks from the North, that in still earlier days were said to have been used in the bear rite. Tirén writes that he associated one of

⁶ The instruments the eight musicians play on the CD are percussion, bass, electric guitar, flute, recorder, oboe, bassoon, and harp.

these jojks, “Rite song of the men” (‘Das Rituslied der Männer’, compare, below), with ritual songs from the Orient and Aryan troll drum songs. He felt that these two jojks were the most valuable he had collected (1942: 63f).

Later on, he goes on, he had the possibility to jojk these old jojks for some Sami in the neighbourhood, but only one of them, Bengt Olofsson (born in 1864) had some recollection of these jojks. Thanks to him, Tirén writes, the authentic conception of the Sami intonation and pitch could be confirmed. Bengt Olofsson who had some school education, Tirén goes on to say, could in his understanding reproduce the vague notes in such a clear way that Tirén could without further delay transcribe the jojk (1942: 64). The full section in German reads:

Am Illkallhügel verhörte ich später natürlich die Lappen. Von allen, die dort wohnten, war er bloss Bengt Olofsson (geb. 1864) jetzt tot, der sich an den Unisono-Gesang der Männer erinnerte. Aber er begann sich auch auf der unisonen Gruss der Frauen, als ich ihm denselben verführte. Durch Bengt, der jünger als Magdalena war, bekam ich die Gelegenheit, gewisse Töne zu fixieren, die in Magdalenas Vortrag vage und unbestimmt bezüglich der Tonhöhe waren. Durch diese Kontrolle konnte ich die echten lappischen Auffassung von Tonhöhen näher kommen, da Bengt Olofsson, der einige Schulbildung besass, die vagen Töne nach seiner Auffassung so rein wiederzugeben schien, dass ich sie ohne weiteres auf Notenlinien aufzeichnen konnte.

As we know, Tirén’s book was published almost 30 years later. At that time his book was reviewed by the ethnomusicologist Ernst Emsheimer (1942). He pointed out Tirén’s many mistakes, and described the way Tirén had collected these jojks as a classic case of how one should *not* act as a field collector.

Tirén’s transcription of ‘The rite song of the women’ is the one Frode Fjellheim used for his compositions. If you compare it (*Example 8*) to my transcription of Fjellheim’s version (Ex. 7) you will, taking the different ways of notation in consideration, find them very similar (Fjellheim repeats only the three first bars and adds some notes in the final bar):

MAGDALENA JONSSON und BENGT OLOFSSON, Oviksfjäll 1913.

Je je je ja-a, bâteh buorist, je je je ja-a mätkan dälal. Je je je ja-a je ja je ja.
 Je je je ja-a, willkommen, je je je ja-a, der Bärenisch (eigentl.: Holzbrett, auf dem das Bärenfleisch vorgesetzt wird).

Example 8

Reading the information on the second CD: “The Bear hunt was jojked by Magdalena Jonsson and Bengt Olofsson” we now know that they did not jojk it together. In fact Olofsson did not at first jojk it at all, but was helpful to Tirén in re-

constructing the jojks Tirén himself helped Magdalena Jonsson to remember, and partly word by word (1942:64).

This reconstruction of a reconstruction of a jojk, thus, is the melodic material Fjellheim uses for his two Bear tunes. Fjellheim's object, however, it is said on the sleeve notes, was not to reconstruct the music Tirén heard, but to bring to light "the cultural heritage we can all take pleasure in, and to give a new life to the songs we forgot." When recording the second CD Fjellheim wanted to connect more narrowly to the traditional sound and authentic expression of the jojk tradition. His aim was as before to create new and contemporary music with jojk as inspiration, and not like so many other Sami artists/musicians to accompany traditional jojk in a new way (telephone interview May, 16, 1996).

Referring to my interview with Fjellheim, it seems that he, like so many other contemporary musicians, wanted to create his own music, one he strongly believes in, and that he at the same time wanted to connect to his Sami background, though having no personal knowledge of jojk and none of the history of "The Bear". As his potential Sami audience presumably had no idea of the special background of this jojk it could be interesting to discuss the Samishness of this jojk and of the whole of Fjellheim's music. Was his music understood as Samish by his audience, and if so, how did this come about?

The dizzying complexity

Forty years ago, jojk (jojk without accompaniment) was *the* Sami "music". Today, as we have seen, the situation is much different. Formerly jojk was, moreover, a tradition that the neighbouring peoples did not share and even looked down upon. Forty years ago, the economic and social situation of the Sami was more exposed than today. In those days, the Sami were the "Others" in the North, a 'backward' people that lived by reindeer herding. Today this is no longer so; less than 10 percent of the population are involved in herding. The symbolic importance of reindeer herding among both Sami and the majority peoples is still great, however.

Today the great majority of the Sami have a life that is similar to the Swedes, Norwegians and the Finns. In the last ten years though, the Sami in Sweden and Norway have been given a political body, a thing that has given them a restricted home rule. At the same time, the Sami have won few victories in the Swedish or Norwegian courts; their time-honoured privileges to land and herding have been not approved of. These legal battles will go on. During the last forty years, moreover, they have found themselves to be just one of many "Others". In Scandinavia this goes most for Sweden, in which immigrant and refugee groups (Hungarian, Yugoslavian, Turkish, Chilean, Kurdish immigrant and refugee groups) now amount to some 10% of the total population. The Sami, then, are to many Swedes

becoming one of our many immigrant groups, while in fact the Samish groups/tribes inhabited Scandinavia before Swedish/Norwegian/Finnish groups/tribes.

During the same time the development in communication and of mass media have made it possible for more people than before to meet and/or can take part in and borrow from foreign cultures. Cultural encounters are part of everyday life. The complexity of the Sami musical culture should thus be seen in the light of the outlined changes within the Scandinavian societies.

Musical knowledge is socially constructed. The object (music/jojk) does not itself create or mediate this knowledge. Hearing a traditional jojk with lyrics in a Sami context, a Sami with a good knowledge of his/her language can easily get some semantic information regarding the subject of the jojk or the song, and of course, more so if s/he is familiar with the musical tradition. In contrast to jojk with lyrics, Fjellheim's music is instrumental music (the voices in the CDs are used as instruments).

As stated above, we have found small evidence of Samishness in Fjellheims recordings, at least if we take only the musical structure as our starting point. We know of course that most of his tunes are built around jojk themes, but as we have seen, in the case of the Bear melodies, this jojk in all probability never sounded anything like Tirén's transcription. On the other hand, this does not stop the social construction of reality. Frode Fjellheim is Sami. His music *is* presented as Sami, both in the live situation and in the sleeve notes of the CD:s. He and his band plays at Sami gatherings, and they are reviewed in both Sami and Swedish/Norwegian newspapers/periodicals as Sami. Some quotes from an article in the leading Sami periodical in Sweden, *Samefolket*, illustrate this.

In the article, Bengt-Oula Andersson, by way of introduction describes the general setting of the concert with Fjellheim & his band. He also tells us that he during the concert spoke with one man in Fjellheims touring crew, a German. As is true of most young Sami from the Southern part of Sweden/Norway, Andersson does not speak Sami:

Here I was talking German like another native "Fritz", while my mother tongue of my parents to me is as foreign to me as Greek. (*Samefolket* nr 1, 1995)

Then Andersson describes the music. He mentions that the different melodies now as before take old jojks as their point of departure, and that every melody develops to a web of notes woven together by the different instruments. He also comments on "The Bear hunt" (and we will see again some familiar names):

Even my great grandmother's father Bengt Olovsson and Magdalena Jonsson are there in the same jojk as in the first CD. It is the jojk "The Bear" that on the record has been transformed into "The Bear hunt". The difference between these two versions is typical of the development of the band. It has gone from the delicate and

somewhat introvert to a more open, straight forward expression, that has much to offer on the eve of the coming tour. (ibid.)

If someone doubted the Samishness of “The Bear hunt”, he or she is now fully reassured of its genuineness; in referring to his family bonds with Bengt Olofsson he has reconfirmed the authentic basis of Fjellheim’s tune. This is because Sami family bonds are still very strong and important, and so, moreover, because of the axiom: the older the bond – here understood as the authenticity of the joik – the better and more genuine it is.

It could of course be argued that the musical surface of Fjellheim’s music will repel many Sami listeners. This is probably most true for many elderly Sami, but we can put forward the hypothesis that since most Sami are longing for a living Samish culture of their own based or grounded on joik, this seemingly jazz-rock-surface is brittle, and thus possible to penetrate. Fjellheim’s music has the potential to be listened to in a more direct way and with greater naturalness and less prejudice in Sami contexts, than had otherwise been the case. Thus, Fjellheim’s music will inversely find many cracks in the shields of musical prejudice that some hold up against this music; Fjellheim’s music will be absorbed and accommodated into the musical bodies of Sami people, old and young, even if they are not, *per se* fusion/jazz-rock fans. The pervasive Samish context in which many will encounter this music will make them listen to precisely that music they believe they will hear, and want to listen to, i.e. contemporary Samish music. As a consequence we could put forward a second but, alas so far, non-testable hypothesis: most people in a “general Swedish audience” would have closed their ears before listening, at least if they had known that the band was going to offer them Sami fusion/jazz-rock based on joik.

Even if there is no text and no Sami words at all on the second CD (and no one of musicians can speak Sami), I believe the voices here add some unspoken traits of authenticity to the music. In using voices Fjellheim hoped to make the general atmosphere more archaic. If some of the melodies had had Sami lyrics, the Samishness of the music would have increased to a great extent (compare, for example, the impact of Mari Boine Persen’s lyrics).

At the end

There is also a third CD with Frode Fjellheim & his band, which was released on a Swedish record label (Warner Music Sweden) in 1997. The overtly descriptive title of the record: “Transjoik, throat joik, shaman frame-drums, ambient sonics”, reveals only too well what to expect. The indigenous Sami familiar with contemporary popular Sami music would probably have few problems in identifying the music as Saami. Most Scandinavians, could possibly

come to the same conclusion, that is, if they registered the word “jojk”. The CD notes are in English, and contain no information whatsoever on jojk or Sami culture. In fact the only telling information is contained in the last paragraph where it is stated that the resources for the recording comes from “samisk kulturråd och norsk kasettavgiftsfond, Norway” [Sami Cultural Advisory Board, Norway and The Norwegian Cassette Fund]. On the other hand, the music, stylistically speaking, bears an uncanny resemblance to music by a well-known contemporary Swedish folk music group Hedningarna. In the 1990:s, this group collaborated with a Saami jojker, Wimme Saari, and also recorded some melodies that use jojk as an inspiration and thematic material on two CDs (cf the record *Trä*, track 9/from 1994/ and *Hippjokk*, tracks 2 and 5 /from 1996/).

Could a ‘search’ for the roots of folk music in different countries and various blends of World music lead to similar forms of fusion of musics that the listeners experience as old authentic global *folk-world* music with a contemporary beat. Sami, Scandinavian, Celtic or Inuit? Who knows?

Indeed, listening to “Transjojk” one enters into an archaic, and at the same time, a modern soundscape, where you hear deep male voices emulating what one takes to be short excerpts of what would be identified as shamanistic jojk. There is often an incessant rhythmic pulse on various drums and percussion instruments. Now and then some esoteric and ethereal chords from a synthesizer are heard interspersed with sparse melodic figures from bass clarinet in the lowest register. All arrangements/compositions are either inspired by a Southern Sami jojk or are derived from a particular jojk. In some compositions a part of the original recording of the jojk is sampled and integrated in the arrangement. The listener familiar with the sounds of the earlier records by Fjellheim thus recognizes the ambience and stylistic modus operandi. It is a mix of world music, fusion, jojk, jazz, ambient etc. Somehow this peculiar concoction has become identified as music that could be experienced as contemporary archaic Sami music, or, as mentioned, just as Folk-World music of a general kind.

*

The overview I have outlined is complex. It is, in an article such as this, and in the midst of the journey, not possible than to do more than focus on one area, and then, finding it rather hard to take in the situation, change focus to another area, in the hope of finding it possible to sketch some contours of the ongoing change. The socially constructed meaning of music, as I have hoped to demonstrate, is as fascinating a study to undertake as it is difficult.

What it means to study objects you like to read/look at/ listen to etc. is an old question. It is not very hard for me to understand or admit that I personally find Frode Fjellheim's music attractive; I am a) an classically trained musician, b) have played a lot of jazz, and c) have probably listened to as much or more jojk than most Sami. But I see no other way or better way than to study what you enjoy. As Pierre Bourdieu (1996) has persuasively demonstrated, it is possible to combine a socially grounded understanding of how art functions and means to people in everyday life, with a love for the object, i.e. to reconcile the old antinomy between the intelligible and the sensible:

This is why scientific analysis, when it is able to uncover what makes the work of art *necessary*, that is to say, its informing formula, its generative principle, its *raison d'être*, also furnishes artistic experience, and the pleasure which accompanies it, with the best justification, its richest nourishment. Through it, sensible love of the work can fulfil itself in a sort of *amor intellectualis rei*, the assimilation of the object to the subject and the immersion of the subject in the object, the active surrender to the singular necessity of the literary object (which, more often than not, is itself the product of a similar submission). (ibid. xvii).

This leaves us with the problem of time: Edward T. Cone somewhere writes that in analyses we must always accept the necessity of a substantial time lag. There is much to speak for his warning; it is likely that the special case we have studied will, if not totally be clarified, be still easier to study in the near future. We will also have an answer, a *facit*, and it will, in all likelihood be much easier to substantiate our analysis with empirical facts. On the other hand, ten, fifteen years from now a younger generation of Sami musicians will have created new musical structures that hopefully will interest me as much as Fjellheim's music does today. So, singing against Cone's advice, I will all the time have a hard but wonderful time.

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