

Custodial reindeer and custodial goats - part of reindeer herding and animal husbandry

Bjørge Evjen

Centre for Sami studies, University of Tromsø, N-9037 Tromsø, Norway (bjorg.evjen@sami.uit.no).

Abstract: The Sami husbandry has traditionally incorporated reindeer, which did not belong to the nomadic household. According to the national census from 1875, this system was found in many parts of Norway. Among the counties, Nordland stood out having the highest number of households owing custodial reindeer. Most of the households were non-Sami, and most of them having less than ten reindeer. Especially in Nordland and Troms, a system with custodial goats also served as the transaction. There were eventually, with an exception of Finnmark, rules in place trying to prevent settled people from keeping reindeer, only followed in part. The system went on till after the Second World War, mainly because it was an important part of the household economy of the settled people. The great changes and rationalization within the agricultural sector, the growth of industrial society, and the modernisation of society in general undermined the use of reindeer as a part of the household livestock.

Key words: domestic animals, livestock, national census, *Ovis aries*, pig, *Rangifer tarandus*, reindeer husbandry, Sami, *Sus domesticus*, verdde.

Rangifer, 27 (2): 79-91

Introduction

The Sami husbandry of domesticated reindeer has traditionally incorporated reindeer which did not belong to the nomadic household. These reindeer were called “custodial reindeer” (*sytingsrein*) or according to Historical Lexicon (2001): “Custodial reindeer or breeding reindeer [*alrein*], as they were also called, was the term for reindeer which belonged to Sea Sami or farmers, but which were tended by Mountain Sami”. In some areas the term farm reindeer (*gårdsrein*) was used, other places used the designation “*akterein*” (akte = take care of). Common to all these expressions was the fact that it involved a small number of reindeer, which were owned by the settled people but were tended by the nomadic Sami. How extensive was the husbandry of custodial reindeer in the north and the south of Norway? What other

relations emerged from this practice and when and why did it come to an end? These are the factors, which I want to shed light on in this article.

Previous research on the topic

No researcher from the Norwegian part of Sápmi¹ has focused solely on the institution of keeping custodial reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus tarandus*). In her investigation dealing with the island Senja in Troms County in northern Norway (toponymes in Fig. 1), Dikka Storm (1990:152) demonstrated that reindeer herding Sami from Jukkasjärvi in Sweden tended custodial reindeer belonging to settled people in both outlying field and coastal settlements. Bård A. Berg (1999) only briefly dealt with the custodial reindeer system

¹ The areas where the Sami people live; a trans-national region covering the Kola peninsula in Russia, and the northern parts of Finland, Norway and Sweden.



Fig. 1. Map with the place names (toponymes) used in the article.

in his dissertation on reindeer herding in Helgeland in Nordland County. In his master thesis on the history of the “markasámi” (a group of settled Sami) Thomas Ole Andersen (2005) discusses the institution in a smaller area of Troms County going deeper into one or two local examples. In an article, Lars Ivar Hansen (2005) addressed reindeer herding as it was combined with other livelihoods in the 1600s and 1700s. He concluded that any analysis needs flexible concepts that can encompass transitional arrangements and intermediate stages from subsistence to nomadic reindeer herding. He considered that reindeer husbandry could be part of multiple subsistence households in the southern part of Troms County.

During a previous study in Tysfjord municipality in Nordland County, I also adopted this understanding with reference to conditions in the 1900s. Reindeer could, without any problem, graze together with goats (*Capra hircus*), cows (*Bos taurus*), and sheep (*Ovis aries*) (Fig. 2), but this was the exception. As a rule, the reindeer were to be found in the herds of the nomadic Sami, a practice that is also the basis for my understanding of the custodial reindeer system from 1875 onwards.

This practice involved relations and exchange of services between settled and nomadic peoples. Some Norwegian researchers have analyzed the so-called “*verdde*-system,” a system of mutual exchange of goods



Fig. 2. Semi-domesticated reindeer (*Rangifer t. tarandus*) and domestic sheep (*Ovis aries*) grazing together in Kvaløy/Sállir, Troms County, northern Norway. Photographer: Terje D. Josefsen. 8th Oct. 2005.

and services, which existed between the nomadic reindeer herding families and settled people. This especially occurred in conjunction with the seasonal migrations, an exchange involving, among other things, the custodial reindeer system (Fig. 3). Harald Eidheim (1971) demonstrated inter alia how changes in the post-WW II migrations led to the collapse of parts of the *verdde*-system. However, this special relationship between the nomadic and settled people is still referred to in more recent research from present-day Finnmark County (Andersen, 2005). The settled people could be Sami or not.

The system of custodial reindeer was found both within reindeer herding that involved movement along established routes on Norwegian territory – that is, coastal reindeer herding – and within herding which moved to and fro across the border between Sweden and Norway – that is, the cross-border reindeer herding. On the basis of available sources, it is difficult to distinguish between the custodial reindeer practices in the two types of herding; neither do earlier works provide any basis for such a distinction (Kalstad, 1982; Vorren, 1986; Berg, 1999). If nothing else is indicated, the following account will treat the two as one entity.

On the Swedish side, Åsa Nordin (2002) has examined the custodial reindeer institution at the beginning of the 1900s in Gällivare parish. She analyzes how the institution changed over time, with reference to changes in the legal environment and modernization. Nordin's examination will provide an important basis of comparison for my work.

Agricultural and national censuses

Agricultural and national censuses are two major sources for documenting the extent of the custodial reindeer practice. In the national censuses from 1865 and 1875 the livestock is registered for each household. The published statistics, however, give the number of reindeer for a geographical area as a whole, for example a municipality. We are not able to ascertain how many kept reindeer in addition to other livestock. Reindeer herders, whose livelihood was based solely on the reindeer were listed in the censuses as “nomads,” “reindeer Lapps,” et al., and thus can be identified. However, given these sources, we have no way of knowing if two or ten households had custodial reindeer among the overall number of reindeer listed in any one municipality.

In the agricultural censuses, starting from 1907 on, there are great statistical variations in the treatment of reindeer husbandry from one census to the next. For example, there were four of them between 1907 and 1939. In both of the agricultural censuses of 1918 and 1939 reindeer were not placed in the category of domesticated animals. However in 1907 and 1929 they were included in this category but only in terms of the overall number for a municipality or district. Another source that could have brought additional information is the so-called Migration lists in Sweden, where the reindeer herding Sami crossing the boarder and their livestock are registered. As these lists are not in an electronically form, it will take too long a time to get such information as on the Norwegian side of the boarder. It will be a research project in its own.



Fig. 3. Saltfjellet mountains, Lønsdal, Nordland County, in the early 1900 (probably around 1920). The female reindeer, “simle”, is milked. The milk gave a delicious cheese which was a part of the traditional co-operative trade in the *verdde*-system between nomadic and settled people. Photo: Salten Museum, Saltdal.

To find the extent of custodial reindeer holding I have turned to one of the original national censuses to find information on household level.

The extent of the system in 1875

In 1875, the information was recorded as data on the individual level though the information about individuals and about agriculture was recorded on two different lists. In my database they are combined in such a way that it is possible to determine the number of reindeer in particular households.² As a major source criticism, it is not easy to determine if this involves the same individuals in the two records. The manner in which names were written was not or had not been fully standardized, so that Peder Hans Oluffsen, born 1850, in the one source and Hans Olufsen, born in 1849, in the other one could be the same individual. This cannot be determined as a matter of course. That would have required a detailed examination of a particular individual in order to leave a clear record for later analysis. The number which can be specified in both sources is, however, sufficiently large to make it possible to use this material to sketch the main features of the custodial reindeer system. Another commentary must be attached to the ethnic identification of the household. The database links the livestock of the household to the main individual of each unit. Thus, if the male head of the household is “Norwegian” and the wife “Lapp”, this household

will be considered Norwegian. That brings us to the question: considered by whom? From recent research we know that the registrations were based upon instructions given by the national authorities, and done by census takers. Several uncertainties lead to an under-registration of the Sami. It seems fair to conclude that the statistical numbers thus arrived at cannot indicate the total size of the Sami population (Evjen & Hansen, submitted).

It is no accident that the 1875 census is conducted in this way. Earlier investigations of the livestock of households in a local and regional area have concluded that the agricultural census of 1875 is the most reliable census with regard to accurate entry of the various categories of livestock (Jernsletten, 2003:170). Thus it seems reasonable that this census can be consulted as a useful approach to my theme. I will therefore more closely examine the conditions in 1875 in order to explore more fully the size and possible geographic variations of the custodial reindeer system.

Here I will use the term custodial reindeer about reindeer, which in the sources have been entered as livestock belonging to settled Sami in addition to other kinds of livestock in the household. The custodial reindeer had their own distinctive earmarks that indicated ownership. As mentioned above, there may have been cases where the reindeer of the farm household grazed together with goats and sheep, or lacked identifying earmarks; but these cases were exceptions.

² Done by Marianne Erikstad at *Registreringscentralen for historiske data* (The registration central for historic data), RHD, University of Tromsø.

Table 1. Number of households owing reindeer as part of their livestock in 1875. (Source: National census 1875, digitalized edition, *Registreringsentralen for historiske data-RHD*).

Area	Households with reindeer and others	% non-Sami*	\bar{x} reindeer per household
South Norway	13	100	2
Trøndelag	30	100	12
Helgeland	129	98	8
Salten	114	81	21
Ofoten	108	55	11
Lofoten/Vesterålen	10	80	49
South Troms	163	43	12
North Troms	43	79	7
West Finnmark	52	50	21
East Finnmark	117	70	18

* Proportion of households with custodial reindeer but not counted as Sami.

Custodial reindeer counted in 1875

Table 1 shows the regional differences in the number of households and proportion of households having reindeer as part of their livestock. There were considerable variations between the various areas. The lowest number of households was found in the north-western region of Nordland County, Lofoten and Vesterålen. It was indeed these districts that at the same time had the highest average number of reindeer ($\bar{x}=49$). Among the counties, Nordland stood out with roughly 350 households who owned custodial reindeer, with a clear preponderance in the southern and mid regions, Helgeland, Salten and Ofoten. With ca. 200 hundred households, Troms County placed second among the counties. Livelihood based on reindeer was most important in Finnmark County, where there was a preponderance of households which made their living from keeping reindeer without other kinds of domestic animals (360 households) West Finnmark district reported the highest number (320 households) (Evjen, 2007:100). Around 170 households in Finnmark had reindeer in addition to other domestic animals.

Most had fewer than ten reindeer

A mean number of reindeer can, however, hide considerable internal variations. One household in Saltdal municipality in Nordland County indicated that they had four reindeer in addition to one cow, four sheep and eleven goats. Another family farther north in Hamarøy (Salten district) reported 150 reindeer in addition to two horses, four cows, two calves, 22 sheep, and 16 goats. In West Finnmark, there also emerged a particular pattern due to the fact that 93 households

with reindeer actually declared that the number involved was less than ten. This probably involved custodial reindeer in households deriving their incomes from a livelihood other than agriculture, such as fishing. The reindeer were kept in the herds of the nomadic Sami, with no need for care on local small-scale farms. They were fed up in the mountains and brought to the owners fully butchered.

I will therefore take a closer look at the number of reindeer in individual households, distributed in groups according to the number of reindeer (see Table 2). One comment should be made on the uncertainty of the numbers. If a larger number of reindeer had a negative consequence to the owners due to laws, regulations, tax paying and so on, of course the numbers given were too low. The numbers in this article must thus be considered as an estimate and not as exact numbers.

It is worth noting that a minority of the Agriculture Committee at the Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget) during the treatment of the Supplementary Reindeer Husbandry Law of 1897 proposed that the very number of 200 animals was the absolute maximum of custodial reindeer that a settled Sami could own (Berg, 1999:203). Even if this mandate was issued twenty years after the national census, which is used as the statistical basis for this article, this number must be based on actual experience deriving from the custodial reindeer system. Was that a result of the fact that most had around 200 custodial reindeer? A closer analysis of the number demonstrates something quite different.

In all the areas in question, the clear majority of households had fewer than ten reindeer with only a small proportion having more than 200.

Table 2. Proportion (%) of households with reindeer as part of livestock in 1875 distributed after number of reindeer. (Source: Agricultural Census and National Census, 1875, RHD).

Area	≤ 10	11-50	51-100	101-200	≥ 201
South-Norway	100				
Trøndelag	63	33	3		
Helgeland	84	16			
Salten	79	15	3	1	2
Ofoten	71	28		1	
Lofoten/V.ålen	60	10		30	
South Troms	70	28	2		
North Troms	86	12			2
West Finnmark	53	43	2	2	
East Finnmark	71	21	5	3	
Norway average	71	21	2	4	0.4

In his master thesis T. O. Andersen (2005) came to the same conclusion among the reindeer herders in a small part of Troms. Andersen's result was based upon numbers given in the migration list on the Swedish side, containing the herders that crossed the boarder and stayed in Sweden for the winter. The custodial reindeer they held belonged to the settled people on the Norwegian side. Andersen's conclusion is based upon a smaller geographical area than mine, but it supports the reading in table 2. Most households had way below 200 custodial reindeer.

The minority proposal of 200 animals (which was subsequently passed by the Storting in 1897) could not have been grounded in tradition with such a high number of custodial reindeer. Another explanation could be that the number of animals increased rapidly in the years between 1875 and 1897; in other words, the demand for reindeer milk and meat rose dramatically in those years. It is, however, not very likely that such great changes occurred at the time when the production of meat and milk from animal husbandry in general increased considerably. Furthermore, leading up to the law, an investigation in Helgeland district, showed that an unknown number of settled Sami owned altogether 195 custodial reindeer; others among settled people owned a total number of 485 (Berg, 1999:203). Herds with more than 200 custodial reindeer were by no means normal.

On the basis of the latter information, it seems that the proposal rather was meant to create the conditions for the continued practice of keeping custodial reindeer.

The authorities in Sweden also wanted to regulate the system. Settled people could apply for keeping up to twenty custodial reindeer with herding Sami; the

number could be increased to fifty in special cases. It would seem that the Swedish authorities based their decisions to a greater degree on the usual number of custodial reindeer and thus were more inclined to reduce the number than was the case on the Norwegian side (Nordin, 2002:92).

It is however, necessary to point out another limitation, which was executed in Norway. The law of 1897 in accordance with the proposal of the Lapp Commission of 1889 stated a general prohibition against settled people having reindeer but settled Sami could be exempted if the reindeer were kept in "recognized Lapp areas" (Berg, 1999:203). In other words, the attempt was made to tie the practice of keeping custodial reindeer to ethnicity.

Most owners were non-Sami

In this section I will take a closer look at registered ethnic identity in 1875 and examine more closely how successful the new legislation of 1889 was. In the definition of custodial reindeer given above, both farmers and Sea Sami owned such reindeer. Sea Sami were settled Sami, a group that was the first to be Norwegianized in terms of language and dress. They were usually registered as "Norwegian" in the national censuses toward the end of the 1800s. However, research has shown that many kept their ethnic identity, in spite of it not being revealed in the written sources (Evjen & Hansen, submitted). Thus, it is difficult to determine the individual identity of Sea Sami and farmers respectively in the census material. This limitation in the statistical material must be kept in mind when considering the numerical material that follows.

Table 1 shows that the proportion of reindeer owners not registered as Sami varied from barely



Fig. 4. Reindeer herd in Tjalanes, near Sulitjelma, Nordland County, 1906. After it had become illegal to move custodial reindeer across the border, people from Saltdal bought up a small herd in the autumn, which they themselves butchered some distance away from the settled area. Photo: From Evjen, 2004.

50% to 100%. In the area south of Nordland County, 100% of the registered households which had reindeer as part of their livestock were registered as “Norwegian”; and the Helgeland region followed with 98%. Further north the proportion varied, being the lowest in South Troms (43%) and the highest in Salten (81%). But as was mentioned above, a large proportion of Sea Sami ownership may be hidden.

Most other households with reindeer as part of their livestock were registered under the category Lapp. Kven, one of the old national minorities in Norway, were also among the owners, most in Finnmark and Troms Counties, some also in Nordland County as far south as Salten.

Even though, as pointed out, the authorities apparently made it possible for the institution of keeping custodial reindeer to continue; it is clear that, over time, this cooperative arrangement was not viewed altogether favourably by the authorities. They wanted to limit the practice, which was apparent for example in the negotiations and the recommendations of the Lapp Commissions of 1889 and 1892.

Laws, which were not followed

In the supplementary Lapp legislation from 1897 that pertained to areas outside Finnmark, there were rules in place to try to prevent settled people from

keeping reindeer (clauses 1 & 2); “...anyone who has received the reindeer of permanently settled individuals for custodial care will be subject to punishment when such reindeer are found to be grazing as indicated” (Law containing Supplementary Statute Concerning the Lapps etc., south of Finnmark County, 1897:388). The law stated that only settled Sami could be given such permission after applying (Berg, 1999:203). An argument for offering this as a possible option was the fact that many reindeer herders with small herds would lose their livelihoods without a needed complement of custodial reindeer. In any event, the practice was no longer unregulated, but the custodial reindeer continued grazing in the herds of the reindeer herding Sami.

The cross-border herding was regulated by the Common Lapp Law of 1883, superseded by the reindeer grazing convention of 1919. The latter statute left no room for the practice of using custodial reindeer. This legislation specified, among other things, that moving custodial reindeer across the border was not permitted. However, an exception was made for Finnmark with regard to using custodial reindeer, an exception that was in force as late as the time of the Reindeer Herding Act of 1978.

The new guidelines were, however, only followed in part. The well-established practice of cooperation of mutual advantage to both parties could not be

terminated as a matter of course. It was also a matter of the authorities allowing these statutes to become “dormant.”

In a number of municipalities in the Salten region, it is not difficult to find cases where the owners of custodial reindeer could not be considered former nomads, as for example, the parish pastor in Tysfjord, the sheriffs both in Fauske and Tysfjord, and merchants in Hamarøy, Tysfjord and Fauske. Ørnulv Vorren also found that in 1900 there were people in Helgeland belonging to different ethnic categories who kept custodial reindeer with reindeer herding Sami. “There were farmers in the area where grazing by migrating reindeer took place, and there were people from local communities and towns. Among other things, one also finds names from well-known merchant families, there is one entry for nine animals listed as ‘missionary reindeer,’ and Velfjord municipality is listed with twenty animals” (Vorren, 1986:29).

Social significance

A main argument against the custodial reindeer practice was the growing size of the herds which thus needed larger pastures than only the animals belonging to the herders. This gave rise to a conflict with agriculture in Hamarøy reindeer herding district, a winter pasture area. The subsequent events demonstrate a linkage between settled and reindeer herding Sami, which is not unique to this area but of a more general character.

In 1931 the Lapp bailiff had a case on his desk from Hamarøy involving disagreements about the ear-marking of custodial reindeer (Evjen, 1998). Lapp bailiff Havik meant it was a violation of law for Sami to keep custodial reindeer for settled people and more aggravating if permission from landowners had not been granted. Thus, the original problem with the marking of custodial reindeer was a non-issue.

The Sami had no such permission in Hamarøy where the landowners had even tried to put an end to reindeer grazing in the area. In the fall of 1931, the matter had come to a head and the County governor summoned a “town meeting” in the neighbouring municipality of Tysfjord. From the authorities, the meeting was attended by the County governor, mayors, sheriffs, the Lapp bailiff and Lapp inspectors, in addition to reindeer herding Sami and farmers.

The Hamarøy farmers presented their complaints, but their fellow farmers in the neighbouring municipalities made common cause with the herders and claimed that the accusing parties were not very sympathetic to a livelihood that benefited people in several municipalities. The assertion was also made that the

custodial reindeer system was a matter of “rather great significance for rural people.” The Lapp bailiff could confirm the fact that individuals in both private and public positions owned custodial reindeer, even though it was a violation of law. It was emphasized that this was a traditional cooperative practice of long standing.

The meeting concluded with a decision that Hamarøy was still to be a winter grazing area, but in order to minimize the impact of excessive grazing, reindeer herding families were to be moved farther north. This did occur three years later.

The result of the meeting was that the tradition of keeping custodial reindeer was to continue. In its support, the County authorities emphasized especially the economic side of the issue insofar as the custodial reindeer system was an important part of the household economy of the settled people.

An investigation of reindeer herding in Troms County and Torne Lapp district in Sweden showed that custodial reindeer must have been of vital economic importance for Jukkasjärvi Sami—and especially for small scale herders—in addition to fashioning strong bonds between the nomadic and settled people. For some, keeping custodial reindeer may have made reindeer herding economically feasible; not until custodial reindeer were added to one’s own reindeer did herding become economically profitable. Some of the yield, such as calves, could go to the custodian (Andresen, 1991:158). It was probably not only in this area that the system was economically important for those involved in the cross-border reindeer herding; both the settled and the nomadic profited from the institution (Fig. 3).

In 1933 new regulations were decided (Law of Reindeer Husbandry, 1933), this time emphasizing that only nomadic Sami had permission to herd reindeer. However, law and practice were still at odds. In Troms and Torne Lapp district the number of reindeer went down after the new regulations were issued. Through many generations merchant families in Salt-dal municipality in Nordland County had maintained close contact with reindeer herding Sami, both with regard to the purchase of meat and the custodial reindeer practice on the Swedish side. In the 1930s, after it had become illegal to move custodial reindeer across the border, rural people pooled their resources to buy up reindeer in numbers (Evjen, 2007) (Fig. 4).

We do not know to what degree the system may have changed in other areas; the system did not, however, disappear. The conflict between theory and practice is confirmed in the “Protocol for reindeer markings 1909-1936” in Nordland County. One of the newly arrived teachers in Tysfjord had his own reindeer marking registered as late as 1936. He was



Fig. 5. Fall in the industrial town of Sulitjelma, Nordland County, from around 1950. The Steggo family is ready to hand over their goats to custody for the winter before leaving for Mavas Luokta, Norrbotten County, Sweden. Photo: From Evjen, 2004.

definitely not a Sami. As a matter of fact, the last marking for custodial reindeer in Hellemo grazing district in Tysfjord was entered in the Lapp bailiff's protocol for reindeer markings in 1959 (The reindeer herding agronomist archives, Nordland). Anders Nilsen Kurak and his wife Inga in Leirelv, Tysfjord, were the last family to keep custodial reindeer; they gave it up in 1965. Ethnographer Johan Albert Kalstad from Tysfjord in a personal comment remembers the last custodial reindeer in Tysfjord. He said it was a light coloured reindeer, which he helped butcher in 1965. In that part of the country, this marked the end of the collaboration between the nomadic and settled people through the custodial reindeer institution. We will now continue – and look upon some other aspects of the collaborative *verdde* institution.

Custodial goats as part of reindeer husbandry

In Tysfjord people also were familiar with the practice of keeping custodial goats, that is to say, goats owned by reindeer herders but tended by settled people through the winter. The reindeer Sami themselves milked the

goats in the summer and left them behind when moving to their winter land. The reindeer herders returned the favour by keeping custodial reindeer in their herds, but there could be other means of exchange, as this example from Tysfjord demonstrates:

“The going rate for having Swedish goats over the winter was 10-14 kroner (Norwegian currency). Of course, we kept the milk we got before they came to fetch the goats in the spring. The Swedes milked both the reindeer and the goats, grandmother would get reindeer cheese from the Swedish Sami, the reindeer cheese had a nice flavour” (Evjen, 1998:122).

That system of exchange was probably the result of changes within reindeer husbandry. As the industry became a more extensive operation with a greater focus on the production of meat, the reindeer no longer met the needs of the Sami for milk and cheese. Conveniently, the goat did meet this demand. However, it had to be fed through the winter (Fig. 5) and again, the *verdde*-system had a role to play. The goats stayed over the winter on regular sized and small-scale farms in the whole area where reindeer were also kept. This was in function both in the coastal reindeer husbandry on the Norwegian

side, and the cross-border reindeer herding and forest herding on the Swedish side (Beach, 1981:127, Andresen, 1991:79).

We do not come across the term custodial goat (*sytingsgeit*) in the source material but the goat was, of course, a well-known domestic animal from days of old. In conjunction with the general changes within agriculture, with its focus on a higher production of meat and cow's milk, the government encouraged greater investment in sheep and cattle breeding. The goat did not fit in as part of this change. Thus, for example, the number of goats decreased in the whole of Nordland between 1890 and 1900, with Evenes municipality, north of Ofoten, being the only exception (Helland, 1907 and 1908). But in spite of the decline, keeping goats held its own.

The extent of the custodial care of goats

It is difficult, in any event, to find exact information about an exchange of services that included custodial goats as part of the transaction. It is possible to arrive at a rough estimate by looking at the number of households, which included a small number of both reindeer and goats. Again we turn to the census of 1875 when the practice of keeping custodial goats was already in place (Andresen, 1991:79).

The practice of keeping both reindeer and goats varied greatly from one part of the country to another with only one household in East Finnmark and Trøndelag and two in the South-Norwegian counties Hedmark-Oppland compared to the regions South Troms and Salten with respectively 102 and 100 households. As usual, the national census was registered in the winter when any custodial goats would have been kept by settled people. We cannot know with certainty which of these households just kept their own goats and which also kept custodial goats.

We will get a somewhat better view of the overall tendency by looking at Sami registered households that had both reindeer and goats. In East and West Finnmark there were no registered households at all that owned both reindeer and goats as part of their livestock in 1875, nor in Trøndelag or the counties farther south. In the two remaining counties, Troms and Nordland, the regions of South Troms and Ofoten had the highest number with 52 and 41 households respectively, followed by Salten with 22. In the remaining areas, the number was only one or two households. On the basis of these numbers, we can see that the practice of keeping custodial goats towards the end of the 1800s was mainly confined to Nordland and Troms, more precisely to the area between Balsfjord municipality in Troms and the Saltfjellet mountains in Nordland.

The pig in Sami animal husbandry

In addition to fishing, the most important parts of the economy of North Norway have been the agricultural production of grass, and keeping cows, sheep and goats. The pig (*Sus domesticus*) has been of secondary importance [Latin names of domestic animals (Gentry *et al.*, 2004)]. In a general account of the history of the pig in Norway, it says with reference to keeping pigs in Nordland County that the pig "has not been a common domestic animal"; in Troms the practice of keeping pigs "was modest" and in Finnmark the pig "was a comparatively rare animal in earlier times" (Jensen, 1997:119f). In his local history of Balsfjord and Malangen in Troms County, Ole Anders Hauglid (1991) examined a possible link between ethnicity and keeping pigs and found that pigs were not kept among the Sami at the end of 1800s. The pig was a newcomer to the household livestock and also needed more space compared to, for example, sheep and goat. The absence of the pig in the Sami household was the result of both resistance to the new and the fact that it was seen as "part of upper class culture and urban life" (Hauglid, 1991:123).

What about the combination of reindeer and pigs? In 1875, this combination was unknown only in Finnmark. In areas farther south, the combination was not common, but there was a growing trend to raise pigs when reindeer also were included in the household livestock. This held true in one of two households in South Norway whereas the ratio was one to five in Troms.

However, if we consider registered Sami ethnicity in addition to household livestock with both reindeer and pigs, we will find only seven such households in the whole of Norway, two in Salten and North Troms and three in South Troms. This is a low number which confirms the findings from Balsfjord and Malangen. At the end of the 1800s, Sami households had only to a limited degree the pig as part of their household livestock. In this context, custodial reindeer and raising pigs represented different versions of agriculture—the traditional and the modern respectively. The two were rarely combined.

Towards the end of the custodial system

The reciprocal aid system involving the use of custodial reindeer has probably been in existence as long as there have been Sami people who have made their living in different ways. With regard to the Swedish side, it has been determined that when settlers began to colonize the inland Sami areas of Västerbotten and Norrbotten, they were invited to participate in a system that was already in place in the area. The good relationship between the settled people and reindeer

herders seems to have been imbued with the recognition that both parties had a stake in favourable conditions for reindeer husbandry. There were, of course, exceptions, both when the system was exploited to make custodial reindeer owners the most prosperous in the area and when the relationship between the settled people and the herders for various reasons was far from ideal (Nordin, 2002:155f). But for the most part the practice was conducive to favourable interactions between the settled and nomadic people.

As shown above, the first prohibition came as early as the end of the 1800s, a prohibition which in spite of the lack of enforcement over time led to the termination of the system. The legislation was, however, not the only factor that pulled the process in that direction. Åsa Nordin has discussed several factors which affected the custodial reindeer system in Gällivare in the northernmost of Sweden and which also could be relevant to an understanding of the conditions on the Norwegian side. In addition to legislation, modernization certainly played a significant role. Industrialization meant relocating to new environments where the social structure, way of life, and value norms differed from those of traditional society and where it no longer was essential to be part of agricultural society; you simply no longer needed to own custodial reindeer in order to ensure enough meat for the family. Nordin claims that this in turn was detrimental to the understanding and cooperation between settled and nomadic people; they became alienated from one another (Nordin, 2002:182). Recent research from Tornedalen has shown how the system of concession reindeer herding had laws of its own which all the way up till today included the custodial reindeer system. This was an exception from the pattern elsewhere in Sweden. (Jernsletten, 2007:136)

An in-depth study as that of Nordin has not been done on the Norwegian side, where the focus of research has primarily been on the concessions made to industry for access to areas that were a part of the reindeer pasture lands. However, this did not generate a great deal of protest. Some cooperation with the herders did continue but this did not involve the custodial reindeer system (Evjen, 2007).

As mentioned above, the general prohibition against keeping custodial reindeer applied to areas south of Finnmark. In Finnmark the system was in force until the Law of Reindeer Husbandry in 1978. An article from 1999 (Bjørklund & Eidheim) discusses this change in the relationship between customary practice and legal requirement. The analysis is based on the fact that the custodial reindeer institution is part of a traditional *verdde*-system, whereas Norwegian law relates to traditional Norwegian

practices and institutions. This results in a culture clash where Norwegian law: "...in the way it is practiced with regard to 'the issue of custodial reindeer' –produces legally binding judgments which in their consequence *rip apart the foundation on which traditional Sami institutions rest...* (and which furthermore also is) in violation of the ILO convention and international law," (cited from Bjørklund & Eidheim, 1999:156).

The arguments could also have been made with regard to restrictions farther south in earlier times. At that time, it was, however, largely irrelevant. The powerful state was a fact; both at the end of the 1800s and in the 1970s, but the possibilities of local control were significantly greater in the latter period. Otherwise, a diachronic comparison like this reflects great social change. Nordin (2002) concludes her dissertation by showing that the custodial reindeer institution could not survive in the new and constantly changing society of the 1900s. The basis for the relations of exchange disappeared.

As this brief discussion of the custodial system has demonstrated, this is also the main conclusion that can be drawn for the Norwegian side of the border. For a long time tradition resisted restrictions by governmental authorities. But the great changes and rationalization within the agricultural sector, growth of industrial society, and constraints imposed by government, undermined the use of the reindeer as part of the household livestock. Concern for the claim on resources probably also played a role, even though this article has not considered this as an essential explanatory factor. Further research will have to show whether the custodial reindeer system functioned and disappeared in the same manner for instance in Finland and Russia. In any event, extensive interaction between nomadic and settled people on the Norwegian side was reduced and in part disappeared. Still, in 2007, the system probably still existed, albeit on a much smaller scale and within the confines of Sami society. From this year, the new Reindeer Herding Act (2007) again allows persons related to reindeer herding Sami to own custodial reindeer.

Acknowledgements

Article translated by Ellen Marie Jensen, Minneapolis, MN, USA.

References

- Andersen, S. 2003. Samisk tilhørighet i kyst- og fjordområder (Sami ethnic affiliation in coastal and fiord areas). – In: Bjerkli, B. & Selle, P. (eds.). *Samer, makt og*

- demokrati. *Sametinget og den nye samiske offentligheten (Sami, power and democracy. The Sami parliament and the new Sami public)*. Gyldendal, Oslo. 461pp. (In Norwegian).
- Andersen, T. O.** 2005. *Markasamiske kombinasjonsnæringer. En undersøkelse på mikronivå 1860-1920. (Field Sami's combination industry. An investigation on micro level 1860-1920)*. Master thesis in history, University of Tromsø. 113pp. (Monography written in Norwegian).
- Andresen, A.** 1991. *Omstillingstid. Nomadisk reindrift i Torne Lappmark og Troms 1840-1920 (A period of transition. Nomadic reindeer husbandry in Torne Lappmark and Troms 1840-1920.)* Dr. thesis in history. University of Tromsø. 291pp. (Monography written in Norwegian).
- Beach, H.** 1981. *Reindeer-herd management in transition: the case of Tuorpon Saameby in Northern Sweden*. Uppsala studies in cultural anthropology, vol 3, Almqvist & Wiksell, Uppsala, pp. 511-526.
- Berg, B. A.** 1999. *Mot en korporativ reindrift. Samisk reindrift i Norge i den 20. århundre – eksemplifisert gjennom studier av reindriften på Helgeland (Towards corporative management of reindeer. Sami reindeer herding in Norway in the 20th century – exemplified through research on reindeer herding in Helgeland)*. Dr. thesis in History, University of Tromsø. 454pp. (Monography written in Norwegian). Reprinted in – *Diedut* No. 3, 2000.
- Bjørklund, I. & Eidheim, H.** 1999. Om reinmerker – kulturelle sammenhenger og norsk jus i Sapmi (About reindeer markings—cultural connotations and Norwegian law in Sapmi). – In: Bjørklund, I. (ed.). *Norsk ressursforvaltning og samiske rettighetsforhold i Sapmi. (Norwegian resource management and issues of Sami rights in Sapmi)*. Gyldendal, Oslo, pp. 143-157. (In Norwegian).
- Eidheim, H.** 1971. *Aspects of the Lappish minority situation*. Universitetsforlaget, Oslo. 85pp.
- Ejven, B.** 1998. *Et sammensatt fellesskap, Tysfjord kommune 1869-1950 (A complex community, Tysfjord municipality 1869-1950)*. Tysfjord kommune, Kjøpsvik, Norway. 320pp. (Local history written in Norwegian).
- Ejven, B.** 2004. *Fra kobbereventyr til marmorby, Fauske kommune 1905-2005 (From copper adventure to marble town, Fauske municipality 1905-2005)*. Fauske kommune, Fauske, Norway. 477pp. (Local history written in Norwegian).
- Ejven, B.** 2007. Samarbeid og kontakt med de bofaste på norsk side (Co-operation and collaboration with the settled people on the Norwegian side of the Swedish/Norwegian border). – In: Broderstad, E. G. et al. (eds.). *Grenseoverskridende reindrift før og etter 1905 (Reindeer herding across the Swedish/Norwegian border before and after 1905)*. Centre for Sami Studies, University of Tromsø. 186pp. (In Norwegian).
- Ejven, B. & Hansen, L. I.** (submitted). *One people – many names*. 22pp.
- Gentry, A., Clutton-Brock, J. & Groves, C. P.** 2004. The naming of wild animal species and their domestic derivatives. – *Journal of Archaeological Science* 31: 645-651.
- Hansen, L. I.** 2005. Spesialisert reindrift eller kombinasjonsnæring. Reinhold i Sør-Troms på 1600- og 1700-tallet (Specialized reindeer herding or as part of a combination of livelihoods. Reindeer herding in South Troms in the 1600s and 1700s). – In: Andersen, O. (ed.). *Fra villreinjakt til reindrift (The change from wild reindeer hunting to reindeer herding)*. – *Skriftserie* nr.1: 165-183. Árran lulesamisk senter (Publication series number 1, Árran Lule Sami Centre), Drag, Norway. (In Norwegian).
- Hauglid, A. O.** 1991. *Balsfjorden og Malangens historie 1830-1920, bind 2. (The history of the municipalities in the fjords of Balsfjord and Malangen 1830-1920, volume 2)*. Balsfjord kommune, Storsteines, Norway. 560pp. (Local history written in Norwegian).
- Helland, A.** 1907 and 1908. *Norges land og folk, Nordland amt, bd 3 og 4, (The land and people of Norway, Nordland County, vol. 3 and 4)*. Aschehough, Kristiania (Oslo). 608pp and 1002pp. (In Norwegian).
- Historisk leksikon (Historical Lexicon)** 2001. Cappelen, Oslo. 520pp. (In Norwegian).
- Jensen, A.** 1997. *Med krøll på halen, glimt fra grisens historie (With a curl of its tail, glimpses from the history of the pig)*. Idé trykk, Hamar. 151pp. (In Norwegian).
- Jernsletten, J.-L.** 2007. "Med rett til å gjete...". Utfordringer og muligheter i Liehittjä konsesjonsameby. ("With a license to herd...") Challenges and opportunities in Liehittjä concession Sami village). – *Dissertations in cultural anthropology, DICA* 9. 359pp. Institutionen för kulturanthropologi och etnologi, Uppsala Universitet. Sweden. (Dr. philos. thesis in social anthropology. Monography written in Norwegian).
- Jernsletten, R. (Mákká Regnor)** 2003. *1800-logu oapme-doallu boares Deanu sundegottis: Deanu. Bearralvági ja Gángaviikka gielddat (Livestock holdings in the Tana Region 1800-1875)*. In Sami with summary in English, pp. 175-193). – *Skriftserie* nr. 14, Senter for samiske studier (Publication series number 14, Centre for Sami Studies), University of Tromsø. 256pp.
- Kalstad, J. A.** (1982): Kystsamisk reindrift (The reindeer husbandry of the coastal Sami). – In: Kystsamisk bosetting (Coastal Sami Settlements). – *Ottar* No. 137 (4-1982). Tromsø Museum, University of Tromsø. (In Norwegian).
- Nordin, Å.** 2002. *Relationer i ett samiskt samhälle. En studie av skötersystemet i Gällivare socken under första hälften av 1900-talet (Relations in a Sami community. A study of the custodial reindeer system in Gällivare parish in the first half of the twentieth century)*. Dr. thesis in History. Department of archaeology and Sami studies, Umeå University. Sami Studies 2. 225pp. (Monography written in Swedish with summary in English).
- Storm, D.** 1990. *Kystsamisk bosetting i Sør-Troms. Etablering av en markebygd og ressursutnyttning i området. En undersøkelse i Gressmyrskogen på Senja (Coastal Sami settlement in South Troms. Establishment of an outlying field settlement*

and resource exploitation in the area. An investigation of the Grass marshland forest on Senja). Cand. philol. thesis in geography. University of Bergen. 150pp. (Monography written in Norwegian).

Vorren, Ø. 1986. *Reindrift og nomadisme i Helgeland (Reindeer herding and nomadism in Helgeland)*. Novus, Oslo. 39pp. (In Norwegian).

Law and commissions

1883. Fælleslappeloven (Common Lapp Law)
1889. Lappekomisjonen av 1889. (Lapp commission of 1889).
1892. Lappekomisjonen av 1892. (Lapp commission of 1892).
1897. Lov indeh. Tilægsbest. Ang. Lapperne m.v. sønden- for Finnmarkens amt, 1897 (Law with Additional

Statute(s) concerning the Lapps etc. south of Finnmark County).

1919. Convention between Sweden and Norway about the rights of reindeer grazing.

1933. Reindriftsloven (Law of Reindeer Husbandry).

1978. Reindriftsloven (Law of Reindeer Husbandry).

Unpublished sources

Jordbruks- og folketellingen 1875 (Agricultural and national census, 1875).

Protokoll for reinmerker. Reindriftsagronomens arkiv i Nordland (Protocol for reindeer markings. The Reindeer herding agronomist's archives in Nordland Reindeer Herding Area).

*Manuscript received 13 September, 2007
accepted 27 October, 2007*

Sytingsrein og sytingsgeiter, del av det samme husdyrholdet

Abstract in Norwegian / Sammendrag: Systemet med sytingsrein har trolig foregått så lenge det har eksistert reindrift, det vil si at en del av reinflokkene har bestått av dyr som tilhørte de bofaste, men som ble passet på av reindriftssamer. Kilder viser at systemet fantes over hele Norge der det ble drevet reindrift, men i størst utstrekning i Troms og Nordland. Sytingsgeiter kunne være en gjenytelse der reindriftssamenes geiter ble passet av de bofaste gjennom vinteren. Fra myndighetenes side ble det fra ca. 1900, med unntak av for Finnmarks del, satt inn restriksjoner for å begrense sytingsreinholdet. Det ble ikke uten videre fulgt, da systemet hadde stor betydning for både nomader og de bosatte. Moderniseringen av samfunnet etter andre verdenskrig førte imidlertid til at dette utbyttet mistet sin betydning, og sytingsreininstitusjonen ble tilsynelatende borte, men er nå delvis lovlig igjen fra 2007.

