

**Sámi researcher, parliamentarians,  
activist and community member  
delegation visit to Washington DC  
June 2<sup>nd</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> 2015**

**Participation at NAISA, Native American and  
Indigenous Studies Association annual meeting  
and other scheduled activities.**

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**TECHNOSCIENCE  
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**Uppsam**  
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**CENTRE FOR  
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CROSSROADS OF KNOWLEDGE

Sámi researcher, parliamentarians, activist and community member delegation visit to Washington DC June 2<sup>nd</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> 2015, NAISA annual meeting and other events. Initiated by Dr. May-Britt Öhman, Technoscience research group, Centre for Gender Research, Uppsala University.

**May-Britt Öhman, PhD,  
Researcher, Leader of the  
Technoscience research group, Centre  
for  
Gender  
Research,  
Uppsala  
University,  
Chair of  
UPPSAM, the  
association of  
Sámi related  
research in  
Uppsala.**



May-Britt Öhman is Lule/Forest Sámi of the Jokkmokk – Lule River/Julevädno region, the Swedish side of Sábmme, land of Sámi. She is member of board of the Sámi cultural association Silbonah Samesijdda, member of board of the National Association of Swedish Saami (SSR, 2011-2015) and also a deputy member of the Swedish Sámi Parliament. Member of the editorial board of NAIS, Native American and Indigenous Studies Journal. May-Britt is chair of UPPSAM, the association for Sámi related research in Uppsala. May-Britt holds a PhD in History of Science and Technology, from the Division of History of Science and Technology, KTH, 2007.

May-Britt is affiliated to the Centre for Gender Research, Uppsala university, since December 2008 financed solely through successful research project of which the latest is “Rivers, Resistance, Resilience: Sustainable futures in Sápmi and in other Indigenous Peoples’ territories” (FORMAS, 2012-2015).

May-Britt has set up a Feminist “Technoscience research group”, with specific focus on Indigenous/Sámi perspectives and methodologies. The research group does supradisciplinary collaborations academia-ex-academia, involving scholars, activists, artists, film makers, reindeer herders. Collaboration

includes scholars/Indigenous scholars/activists/artists from Sápmi, Scandinavia, Greenland, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, India, Chile, Morocco, Peru, Chile, the US and Canada.

May-Britt’s specific focus is on large scale technical systems, hydropower, energy production/consumption, water resources, environmental issues, decolonization and healing from traumas of colonization – mainly focusing on Sábmme/Sápmi, land of the Sámi and also comparative studies and exchanges.

Websites: [www.gender.uu.se](http://www.gender.uu.se)  
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Email: [may-britt.ohman@gender.uu.se](mailto:may-britt.ohman@gender.uu.se)

NAISA presentation:  
**Thursday June 4 2:00 to 3:45 pm, Hyatt  
Regency: Sequoia**

**Working from within the belly of the colonial academic beast: Sámi feminist technoscience in Sweden**

I had reached the age of 42 when I was informed about my Sámi heritage by a close relative. In my dissertation I had focused on a river far from home, in East Africa. Whereas I earlier never had intended to study the Sámi people or territory, this specific moment took place at the same time as I initiated my first research project on my own home region along the Lule River, in the Lule Sámi area of Sweden. Learning about my family’s hidden history I have also come to read the silences as signs of trauma caused by an aggressive colonization by the Swedish state towards my people, my culture, our lands, waters, memories and bodies. In the paper I turn to the Sámi tradition of yoiking to narrate, remember, empower and heal. I set out for a quest for my own voice as a Sámi, feminist, in academia,

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struggling in an aggressive natural resource exploiting colonial system which is a constant threat to Sámi culture, tradition, health, wellbeing and long term survival. I describe some of my methods for creating a space for an Indigenous feminist technoscience version of the production of history and for decolonization. Being “inside the belly of the colonial academic beast”, in a nation state where colonization against the Sámi still is not recognized as such, makes it both difficult and often painful. I will provide examples of how I work and experiences of both successful healing as well as of painful moments.

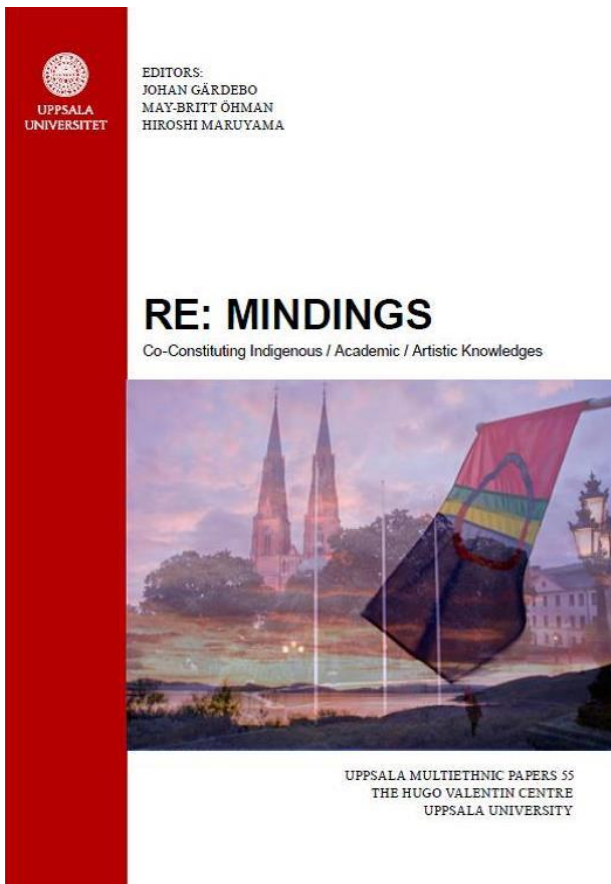


**Inge Frisk,**  
**Stockholm Sámi**  
**Association,**  
**member of**  
**Technoscience**  
**Research Group,**  
**Centre for**  
**Gender**  
**Research,**  
**Uppsala**  
**University**

Since 2003 I have been engaged in the Board of Stockholm Sámi Association in various capacities as Treasurer, General member of board and now vice President. As the association lacks Operational staff it means the Board members are assigned Operational tasks. I am responsible for the Member’s registrar, external and internal communications through the web site and Facebook.

*Urban Sámi Identity* As responsible for the membership applications process I began to collect and analyze the experience on how aspiring members approached their new found Urban Sami Identities. Encouraged by Dr. May-Britt Öhman I contributed with a speech “Genealogy as enabler of Sámi identity and promoting Sámi in your professional context” on my observations and thoughts at the Uppsala 3rd Supradisciplinary Feminist Technoscience Symposium, October 14–18, 2013, Uppsala. The first part of that speech has now been further developed and submitted as a paper, “Urban Sámi identities – the Stockholm Sámi Association and the right to become a full member” to NAISA Annual Conference 2015.

*Promoting Sámi in your professional context* In my work life at Hewlett Packard Corporation I gave much thoughts to how traditional Sámi knowledge can come at play in my daily chores and interactions with my colleagues. Practitioners of traditional Sámi trades find



RE: Mindings: co-constituting indigenous / academic / artistic knowledges, eds Gärdebo, Johan; May-Britt Öhman & Hiroshi Maruyama, 41-53. Uppsala: Hugo Valentin Centre

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very natural opportunities to bring up Sámi topics in their everyday small talk. How could I go about to create the Sámi small talk in a company where the corridors and coffee corners have more or less become extinct in international virtual team teleconferences? And, how could I infuse Sámi leadership style? Also, the inspiration went the other way, how to use corporate practices and models to present Sámi issues and problems. For this area I maintain a set of presentations "Promoting Sámi in your professional context" planned to be shared as inspirations for indigenous people working in corporations.

*Early Retirement* In October 2014 I volunteered to accept Hewlett Packard's Early Retirement Program. Since then I am employed in my own business where I am now offering services in my old profession as well as public lecture services on Sámi culture and Genealogy using computers and Internet.

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NAISA presentation, Saturday June 6, 4:00 to 5:45 pm *Hyatt Regency: Congressional D* :

### **Urban Sámi identities – the Stockholm Sámi Association and the right to become a full member**

This paper discusses urban Sámi identity, as discussed within the Stockholm Sámi Association, in the Swedish side of Sábmme – the land of Sámi people in Fennoscandia (Scandinavia). Established by Sámi who migrated from traditional Sámi territory in the 1950s, to the capital of the Swedish (colonial) state, the association was, and still is, mainly organizing cultural events and also responding to a number of government and municipality queries. With 400 members, the association is the largest in Sweden. There are no economic or ownership benefits for the members and the majority of the activities are open and inclusive also to non-members. There are two kinds of

memberships, one full membership open to anyone, and one support membership open only to Sámi. As Swedish state colonization starting from the 16th century of the Sámi territory was paralleled with a cultural genocide leading to severe traumas, questions of identity is still of importance. Earlier on, there was no transparent way for candidates to know on what grounds they would be allowed in as full members. From 2012, the criterion was changed into being the same as for registering as a voter to the Sámi parliament, which means stating "I am Sámi" and also having had one Sámi language in the family, spoken at least four generations earlier. Based on ten years' experience of dealing with membership applications, the author of this paper analyses the discussions, debates, and differing views in this regard and its impacts on urban Sámi identities.

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**Stefan Mikaelsson, President of the Sámi Parliament in Sweden, member of Technoscience Research Group, Centre for Gender Research, Uppsala University**

Born in 1957. From Rödningsträsk. Owns reindeer, organised within the Udtja forest Sami village (Udtja Sameby) – Rödningsträskgruppen. Active as full time reindeer herder between 1977-1995. Working within Sami politics since 1986 as I wanted to contribute to the Sami community with my knowledge and experiences. My heart beats for Sábmme/Sápmi, and in particular for the

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forest lands of the Sámi. Member of board of the Sámi parliament party the Forest Sámi – Vuovdega between 1993 and 2012. Since 2013 member of board of the Sami parliament party Nya Min Geaidnu, Mijá Gájno, Mijjen Geajjnoe(MG). 2005 to 2009 I was vice president of the Sami Parliament General Assembly. In 2009 I was elected President of the Sámi Parliament General Assembly (2009-2013). In the elections of 2013 I became member of the Sámi Parliament for MG. I was then re-elected as President of the Sámi Parliament General Assembly for a second term (2013-2017).

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NAISA presentation, **Saturday June 6, 4:00 to 5:45 pm Hyatt Regency: Congressional D :**

**Nail polish, stockings and Sámi rights: Combining my female and male identities with the struggle for Sámi rights to land and waters and survival**

This presentation is about how I, as a Sámi man, combine my work for Sámi rights to survival and my desire to show both the masculine and feminine sides of myself. The Sámi Parliament on the Swedish side was established in 1993 to work for land, cultural and human rights for the indigenous Sámi people. I was elected the chair of the Sámi Parliament General Assembly in 2009. My first term took place within a politically chaotic period. I witnessed how the important parliamentary work was falling apart along with my efforts to contribute to a positive change. At this point I was 52 and somewhere from within a desire to start using nail polish emerged. I followed my impulse. Being a Sámi man, a reindeer owner, in a macho Sámi society, this made a huge resonance within the Sámi society. Since then the desire of displaying my feminine side has gone further, step by step. I take photos and post them on social

media; I wear my feminine outfits at various occasions. From being very nervous at the start, eventually the combining of my female and male identities have come to make me feel strong and proud of myself. It also strengthens me in my struggle for our Sámi rights, as it draws strong attention to me as a person with numerous interviews and media coverage. Furthermore, I have also been well received within the Sámi society and was re-elected as chair for the second term in 2013. \*\*\*



**Gunilla Larsson, PhD, Technoscience Research Group, Centre for Gender Research, Uppsala University,**

**member of board of UPPSAM, the association of Sámi related research in Uppsala.**

Gunilla Larsson, is PhD in Archaeology, and is currently affiliated to the Technoscience Research Group, Centre for Gender Research, Uppsala university and also runs the consultancy company “Revita Archaeology and History. Gunilla Larsson is a trained and experienced archaeologist and ethnologist with a specific focus on Sámi cultural heritage. She is also of Forest Sámi background from the Lule River Valley region. She published her PhD thesis in 2007; *Ship and Society. Maritime Ideology in Late Iron Age Sweden*. Aun 37. Dept. of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala University. Uppsala. In her her PhD thesis Gunilla analysed the historical distribution of Sámi boatbuilding in Scandinavia and documented finds of Sámi boats from central Sweden and northwards in the

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Viking Age, sewn with the very typical Sámi sewing technique, indications of interaction between Swedish and Sámi groups.

Gunilla has worked in her capacity as archaeologist since 1988 in several research projects regarding Sámi cultural heritage, in collaboration with renowned researchers and practitioners and linked to important institutions working with Sámi culture. Gunilla's work has both been within field studies, investigations and also teaching. Gunilla is currently working within the research project led by Dr. May-Britt Öhman "Rivers, Resistance, Resilience" investigating Forest Sámi remains in the Lule River valley. Gunilla is also member of the Stockholm Sámi association, and member of board of UPPSAM, the association for Sámi related research in Uppsala.

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**Lecture at the National Museum of Natural History, Thursday June 4<sup>th</sup>, 12.00-1.00 pm**

Kirby room, entrance Constitution avenue  
Smithsonian Institution  
Department of Anthropology  
National Museum of Natural History

### **A Threatened Cultural Heritage: Sámi Archaeology in Sweden**

The history of Sámi in general is absent in the schoolbooks and within historical narratives. Within the archaeology discipline people have for a long time been hesitant to speak about Sámi ancient monuments. Few scholars neither have knowledge about Sámi cultural heritage nor about the specific methodologies developed to discover them. One of the

consequences is that Sámi heritage in general, and Forest Sámi in particular, is a void in archeological studies. Currently limited archeological studies are made only in view of coming industrial exploitations that ultimately destroy the remains in the ground. Thus the Sámi heritage and the possibility to tell our history is destroyed because of an ongoing aggressive industrial colonization. I will present a study of Forest Sámi culture, based on both archaeological and historical sources in two areas; the area of my own ancestors, Jokkmokk in the Lule river valley. The other is located in the middle of Sweden where most Forest Sámi were forced to leave in the 18th century, Forsa and Hälsingtuna parishes, Hälsingland. There was an ethnic cleansing unknown for most Swedes and Sámi.

This presentation highlights how colonization changed the status and position of women in Forest Sámi society. This research is a personal journey to discover my own identity, to reveal what has been hidden by earlier generations because of a sense of inferiority and shame.



*Gunilla Larsson taking C14-samples from a geological survey stick.*



**Lis-Mari Hjortfors, PhD candidate, Umeå University, Sámi studies, Department of language studies. Vaartoe-**

### **CeSam/Centre for Sami Research.**

Lis-Mari Hjortfors is Lule Sámi from Porjus-Lule river, Julevädno. Lis-Mari is an ethnologist and archaeologist and has been working in Sámi museums and Sámi projects for more than 25 years. She has been working with research, documentation, interviews, documentary, photography, archaeological excavations and exhibitions. Lis-Mari is affiliated to VaartoeCeSam/Centre for Sami Research and to ARCUM-Artic Research Centre at Umeå University. She is furthermore a member of NorrSam- is a northern network/ association for graduate students, "young" researchers and students with an interest in Sami issues.

Lis-Mari focuses on Sámi culture and history, traditional knowledge, Sámi religion, Laestadianism (a religious movement), eugenics (racial biology) and decolonization.

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Webb:

<http://www.cesam.umu.se/om-cesam/>

NAISA presentation, Thursday June 4 2:00 to 3:45 pm, Hyatt Regency: Sequoia:

### **Studying Laestadianism: Religious revivalism as space for preserving Sami identities, language and tradition in the Lule Sami area**

This paper presents a recently initiated PhD project, located at the Centre for Sami

Research at the Umeå University in Sweden, regarding the Laestadian religious revivalist movement focusing on the Lule Sami area. Laestadianism was a Lutheran revivalist movement which had a huge importance for Sami livelihood. As forced Christianization was paralleled with Swedification and Norwegianisation politics of colonization onto the Sami by the nation states, I argue that there was a space created within the Laestadian movement to preserve Sami culture, identity, religiosity and language. I intend to explore the possibility that the revivalist movement grew out of a situation of crisis for the Sami. The Lule Sami area is located within the current nation states of Norway and Sweden, from the Gulf of Bothnia coast to the Atlantic coast. The Laestadian revivalist religious movement was established in the 1840s by Lars Levi Laestadius, who lived 1800-1861. Being Lule Sami myself, working within a Swedish university setting, I wish to discuss useful methods and ways to work from a critical Indigenous studies perspective within the ethnological tradition. Focus is on the front figures L.L. Laestadius, his follower Johan Raattamaa and the Westlaestadian part of the movement. I work with interviews, participatory observations and archival studies.\*\*\*

### **Margaretha Uttjek, PhD in Social Work, Umeå University.**

Margaretha is Ume Sámi. She was born and grew up close by and within the mountain areas in the County of Västerbotten in the North of Sweden.



She published her doctoral thesis in 2006, and is employed as Senior Lecturer at the

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Department of Social Work, Umeå University in Umeå. She also have a university degree of Social Work and Science since 1979, and have been working as a social worker for many years. She is now working with a research project about preventive and acute actions against violence addressed at Sámis.

Furthermore she is member of Ammarnäs and Sáhkie Umeå Sámi Associations respectively, and working in NGO's with revitalization of the Ume Sámi language, and with Sámi women's issues.

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NAISA presentation, **Saturday June 6, 4:00 to 5:45 pm Hyatt Regency: Congressional D :**

**“They want us to be gone”- Definitions of violence addressed at Sámi women and children, and survival strategies**

Knowledge about how to define violence addressed at Sámi women and children is scarce, and in Sweden measures to support these women and children are lacking, which is not in accordance with indigenous rights. In this paper I present definitions of violence addressed at Sámi women and children in Sweden, survival strategies and suggested actions against the violence. Prevalence of domestic violence like psychological, sexual and physical violence was stated. However, women and children were also facing violence addressed like: resistance with respect to Sámis' indigenous rights regarding culture, language, identity and land; hurting Sámi children in school like it was legitimate games; questioning their existence; or wanting all Sámis to be gone. Facing such violence was mostly about surviving various situations, and sometimes giving up on indigenous rights. My conclusions are that violence as defined in this paper are ongoing processes, addressed at Sámi women, children and men, effecting Sámis' rights as indigenous people. Various actions with Sámi self-

governance, against such violence, like women's shelter house, and increased knowledge about Sámis, especially in Swedish school and elderly care system, are suggested. This paper draws on qualitative interviews during 2013 and 2014, with a group of adult Sámi women and men. Thus violence addressed at children are retrospective pictures. With a perspective from within I give privilege the informants' own words. I use a decolonizing theoretical framework and oral traditional Sámi knowledge. Ethical guidelines for indigenous research are followed. The study is approved by the Regional Ethical Review Board, Umeå University.

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**Kaisa Huuva, adviser in Sámi issues at the Central Church office, Church of Sweden.**

Kaisa Huuva has her background from a small reindeer herding village called Gabna in the northern part of the Sámi area in Sweden. The survival and future of the village is currently threatened by the expanding mining industry. Right now she lives in Stockholm.

Kaisa holds a Master's degree in Social Anthropology. In her thesis she has analysed Sámi identity management in



relation to the Sámi political movement and the Swedish state policy towards the Sámi people.

Kaisa has a long experience of Sámi political activism from different organisations. She has furthermore worked as a curator at the Sámi National Museum in Karasjok, Norway, and also worked at the Sámi Parliament as director of culture-, language-, and information. She was involved in the work of promoting to Sámi cultural rights, for instance the repatriation of Sámi human remains. She is currently working as an adviser in Sámi issues at the Central Church office at Church of Sweden.

Kaisa focuses on the rights to self-determination for Sámi people, issues of healing of memories, healing of the Sámi collective historical traumas and finding ways to move forward as well as decolonization.

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NAISA presentation, Thursday June 4 2:00 to 3:45 pm, Hyatt Regency: Sequoia:

### **Reconciliation between the Sámi people and the Church of Sweden: The case of the boarding schools for the children of the nomadic Sámi**

Between the years 1915 until 1962, in Sweden, special boarding schools were set up for the Sámi children of the reindeer herding Sámis. These boarding schools were called "Nomadic schools". The schools were from the start set up by the Church of Sweden.

During the same time racist ideologies were predominant within the Swedish state and racial biology categorizations of the population was a policy promoted by the Swedish parliament and government. The Swedish policy towards the Sámi has been named "lap-shall-remain-lap", and was the ideology which governed the education

system for the Sámi children. The aim was twofold; to assimilate the children by forcing them to only speak Swedish and to segregate them by separating them from the Swedes.

Since 2012 the Church of Sweden has worked on a project of documenting what happened at the nomadic schools. We have interviewed thirty elderly persons who have told their stories and experiences from the nomadic schools. This is the first time a systematic study has been conducted on the subject. This paper presents our project which is still in process and part of our findings which later on will be published in a book.

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**PROGRAM:**

**Dr. Gunilla Larsson Lecture, National Museum of Natural History, Thursday June 4<sup>th</sup>, 12.00-1.00 pm**

Kirby room, entrance Constitution avenue Smithsonian Institution, Department of Anthropology.

[www.naisa.org](http://www.naisa.org)

**NAISA Panel 1. Thursday June 4 2:00 to 3:45 pm, Hyatt Regency: Sequoia**

**Sámi - Colonial state relationships: Hiding, challenging, finding new spaces and working from "inside the belly of the beast"**

**Session organizer: May-Britt Öhman, Technoscience Research group, Centre for Gender Research, Uppsala University**

**email: [may-britt.ohman@gender.uu.se](mailto:may-britt.ohman@gender.uu.se)**

**Chair: Dr. Gunilla Larsson, Technoscience Research group, Centre for Gender Research, Uppsala University**

**Email: [vittfaren@gmail.com](mailto:vittfaren@gmail.com)**

**Panel abstract:**

This panel comprises papers of Sámi persons, both inside and outside academia, working with relationships between the Sámi and the colonial nation states of Sweden and Norway. The papers discuss alternative religious movements as space for maintaining Sámi tradition and culture, hiding traditional knowledge as a means to preserve traditional knowledge, the attempts at reconciliation between the Sámi and the State church and finally attempts by a Sámi feminist to challenge the Swedish academic system from within. The traditional Sámi territory stretches over four nation states – Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia and is generally divided into four language and cultural

areas; South Sámi, Lule Sámi, North Sámi and East Sámi.

In Sweden, the field of indigenous studies, and in relation to Sápmi, Sábmme, Saepmie (the land of Sámi in North Sámi, Lule Sámi, South Sámi language respectively) and Sámi in particular surprisingly under-theorized. This becomes even more obvious when compared to recent developments in Norway, the US, Canada and Australia. In Sweden there is currently very little critical indigenous studies available as there are so far no institutional platforms for such work. Thus the work presented in this panel is at the forefront of critical Indigenous studies in Sweden, and likewise regarding Sámi studies. By presenting at NAISA we wish to find a much needed arena for receiving important comments from Indigenous and Indigenous allied scholars and activists who may have similar experiences from other parts of the world.

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**NAISA Panel 2. Saturday June 6, 4:00 to 5:45 pm Hyatt Regency: Congressional D**

**Sámi identities, reclaiming, survival, healing & struggle through membership, feminine/masculine identities & combatting violence**

**Session organizer: Mr. Inge Frisk, Member of Board, Stockholm Sámi Association email: [inge.frisk@biegga.com](mailto:inge.frisk@biegga.com)**

**Chair: Dr. Gunilla Larsson, Technoscience Research Group, Centre for Gender Research, Uppsala University**  
**Email: [vittfaren@gmail.com](mailto:vittfaren@gmail.com)**

**Commentator/discussant:**

Kim TallBear, PhD, Associate Professor  
Email: [kim.tallbear@austin.utexas.edu]  
Affiliation: Dept of Anthropology at the University of Texas at Austin

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**Panel abstract:**

This panel brings together Sámi scholars and activists from the Swedish side of Sábmme, the land of Sámi in Fennoscandia. The presenters are all Sámi themselves, working with aspects on reclaiming Sámi identities and the struggle for the Sámi right to survival, wellbeing and mental wellbeing in relationship to a racist and colonial Swedish state as well as definitions of violence addressed at Sámi women and children, survival strategies and the right to speak for themselves. Due to the marginalization of Sámi and Indigenous critical studies within Sweden there is currently a void of spaces for these voices to be heard. The work of the activists are made in collaboration with a Sámi scholar at the Uppsala University, as a way to bring in Sámi activists' and individuals' voices into academic work and scholarly education

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For the visit to Washington DC, apart from attending the NAISA meeting the following activities are scheduled:

- Meeting with US State Department's Special Representative for the Arctic Admiral Robert J. Papp
- Reception at the Swedish Embassy, invitation by the Swedish ambassador to the US, Mr Björn Lyrvall
- Lecture on Sámi Archaeology at National Museum of Natural History (G. Larsson)
- Meeting and exchange of information workshop with Baltimore American Indian Center

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**Photos:**

Private collections; May-Britt Öhman; Tor Lundberg Tuorda; Min Geaidnu

**Funding:** Each participant has their own research funding, from research projects and university institutions, including using own money and time. Research funds and travel

grants have been provided from different sources, amongst other:

Rivers, resistance, resilience: Sustainable futures in Sápmi and in other Indigenous peoples' territories", FORMAS, Öhman, 2012-2015

“Åvdåsvásstádus : Responsibility, decolonization, healing. Racial biology, racism, photogr aphed Sámi, Sámi human remains and paths to restoration and self confidence” financed by the Sámi Parliament and the Council for Equal Opportunities at Uppsala University, both led by Dr. Öhman.



Please see video recording from January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015, at <http://media.medfarm.uu.se/play/kanal/237>

Travel grant from Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation.



*The University goatje at Kallak – Gállok, July 2013.*

Please also see video recorded presentation by Dr. May-Britt Öhman: “Supradisciplinary conversations on security, safety and resilience in the river valleys of Sábmme – land of the Sámi”. UCI symposium on Arctic Governance. Jan. 31. 2015, UC Irvine, Los Angeles, California, USA. Video available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZsLK6Avr0FY>



Sámediggi  
Sámedigge  
Saemiedigkie  
Sametinget

**SILBONAH  
SÁMESIJDDA**



**Vaartoe -  
Centrum för Samisk forskning**

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