Skille, E. Å. (2012). Ethno-politics and state sport policy : the case of how the Sámi Sport Association-Norway challenged the Norwegian confederation of sport's monopoly for state subsidies to sport. *Scandinavian Sport Studies Forum, 3*, 143-165.

SCANDINAVIAN SPORT STUDIES FORUM ISSN 2000-088X
VOLUME THREE, 2012, 143–165

WWW.SPORTSTUDIES.ORG

Ethno-politics and state sport policy

The case of how the Sámi Sport Association–Norway challenged the Norwegian confederation of sport's monopoly for state subsidies to sport

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Abstract

This paper investigates how the Sámi Sport Association of Norway (SVL-N), with the support of the Sámi Parliament in Norway, challenged the Norwegian confederation of sport's (NIF) monopoly to state funding to sport. Through document analysis of correspondence between the Ministry of Culture and the Sámi Parliament, the Sámi sport Association (SVL-N) and the Norwegian confederation of sports, it was revealed how the Ministry of Culture changed its opinion from wanting to keep NIF's monopoly to willingly support also SVL-N with state subsidies to sport. Applying the theoretical perspective of Bourdieu, it is pointed out how the mode of heterodoxy which is needed to create change in a political and organizational field, such as the Norwegian field of sport policy and organization which has traditionally been based on the relationship between the Ministry of Culture and NIF, was developed. Employing the perspective of Brubaker, it is pointed out how this heterodoxy was achieved by the utilization of ethno-political entrepreneurs such as the president of the Sámi parliament.

Key words: Ethno-political entrepreneurs, Sámi sport organization, Norwegian sport policy, Bourdieu, heterodoxy, document analysis

Introduction

In many countries there is only one national umbrella organization for sport (Bergsgard et al., 2007; Houlihan, 1997; Slack & Parent, 2006, 2007; Skille & Skirstad, 2007). In Norway, there has been one dominant sport organization since 1946 when two former organizations merged into the Norwegian Confederation of Sports (NIF)[1] with roots back to 1861 and the establishment of the first umbrella sport organization in Norway. A reason for the possibility for one sport organization to survive in an otherwise segregated world with continually new organizational arrangements is its relationship to the state which was established in 1863 when organized sport first received state subsidies. There has been a mutual dependency where the state has needed the voluntary sport organization to implement its sport policy while the sport organization has had a monopoly of state funding into sport (Bergsgard, 2005; Goksøyr, 2008; Mangset & Rommetvedt, 2002). Until recently, there have been few or no threats to NIF's monopoly in the Norwegian field of sport.

Since 1990, there has been a Sámi sport association for Norway, *Sámi valastallanlihttu-Norga* (SVL-N).[2] Sámi is the indigenous people of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, and is a minority living mainly in the north of these four countries (see 'Context' below). During the period 1991–1995, SVL-N received financial support from the Sámi parliament, but the amounts were small compared to both NIF's support from the state and what the Swedish and Finnish counterparts (SVL-Sweden and SVL-Finland) received in their countries (Pedersen, 2011). Since 1996 the SVL-N has been attempting to persuade the Sámi parliament to be included as a permanent budget post. 'It also asked the Sámi Parliament to push for the Norwegian state to grant earmarked funds from the gaming revenues that are allocated to sport in Norway' (Pedersen, 2011, pp. 67–68). In this paper, I pick up on that story and provide more details on the process ending in 2005, when 'Sámi sport received a share of the Norwegian state's gaming revenues for the first time, … [it was] allocated NOK 300,000 to be distributed by the Sámi Parliament' (Pedersen, 2011, p. 68).

The aim of this paper is to explore and analyze the process in which the Sámi sport association changed the monopoly of NIF in relation to

1 I use the Norwegian abbreviation, NIF (Norges Idrettsforbund) throughout the paper.
2 I use the Sámi abbreviation throughout the paper.

state funding. In order to understand the organization and state relationship of the SVL-N, the discussion in the next section is framed within the broader sport historical context. The sport political arrangement in Norway will be sketched, the focal organizations NIF and SVL-N will be presented, and it will be shown how NIF traditionally has had a monopolistic position in relation to state funding. In the theory section, the concepts of ethno-political entrepreneurs will be outlined as this will be the point of gravitation during the subsequent analysis. In the methods section, a description of the procedures of analyzing documents will be given. Results focus upon the relationship between the SVL-N, NIF, and the Ministry of Culture to which the state's Department of Sport Policy is assigned. Concluding discussion sums up the paper.

Context

Historically and organizationally, modern Norwegian sport can be said to have commenced in 1861 with the establishment of The Central Federation for the Promotion of Bodily Exercise and Weapon Use, the first national umbrella organization for sport in Norway. From 1863 the government subsidized sport, thereby initiating a cooperation which has held to this day. In 1924 The Workers' Sports Association was established as a counterpart to the bourgeois profile of the National Sports Federation, which was a successor of the federation of 1861 (Goksøyr, 1992, 2008; Olstad, 1987; Tønnesson, 1986). During the period 1946–1948 three interdependent incidents occurred, which were to influence all sport organization and sport policy in Norway. Firstly, the two sport federations merged into the Norwegian Confederation of Sports. Secondly, the merger of organizations took place under government pressure, and should be seen in relation to the establishment of a State Sport Office in 1946. The establishment of the Office was initiated by the voluntary sport organization(s). The state's involvement in sport is characterized by the provision of facilities and financial support to the voluntary sport organization. Thirdly, to finance the state involvement in sport, a national gambling agency was established. The sport budget is handled directly by the Ministry of Culture, and is not negotiated in the parliament.

The history of the organization of Norwegian sport as a history of organizational fusions has continued, and can be empirically evidenced by the merger between the Norwegian Confederation of Sports with the

Norwegian Olympic Committee in 1996, and the inclusion of the Paralympic Committee in 2008. NIF includes 54 special sport federations, on the whole one for each sport. The sport–state relationship can be characterized as a mutual dependency, which has developed into a stable arrangement over many years (Bergsgard & Rommetvedt 2007; Enjolras & Waldahl, 2006; Skille & Säfvenbom, 2011). The Ministry of Culture administers the essential financial resources while NIF has the practical capacity to implement sport. Enjolras (2003) puts Norway into the liberalist model of relations between the government and sport (European Community, 1999), implying that organized sport is an initiative of the free citizen and is considered to have its private leadership, independent of public sector authority.[3] From the end of the Second World War until the 1990s, NIF's autonomy and monopoly was hardly ever debated with a few exceptions in the 1950s when the government encouraged mass sport for different target groups (Goksøyr et al., 1996, Ch. 5; Tønnesson, 1986, Ch. 7).

In 1979, the Nordic Sámi Sport Association (SVL)[4] was established. In 1990, there was a reorganization leading to the establishment of regional (national) sport organizations. SVL-N is one of three regional sport organizations of the SVL. The two others are SVL-Sweden and SVL-Finland. In addition, and at the same level of the organization as the regional organizations, is the Sámi Football Association (SFA) established in 2003 (SVL-N, 2004). That means that the Sámi national team comprises players from all three countries (Pedersen, 2011; see Fig. 1).[5] SVL-N is the main topic of this paper.

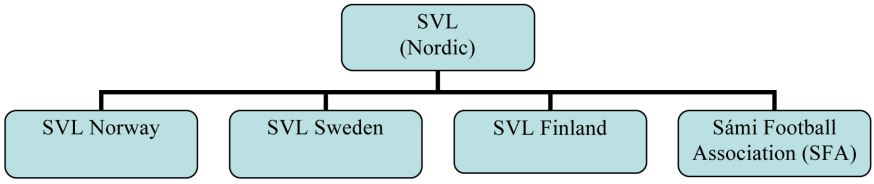

Figure 1 *The organization of SVL.*

3 The counterpart is the interventionist model, where the state is more directly active (European Community, 1999).
4 Again I use the original Sámi abbreviation.
5 In addition to Norway, Sweden and Finland, Russia has a Sámi population, but they have not organized a Sámi sport organization (at least not under the SVL system).

The SVL-N is organized with a general assembly, a board, an administration (together called 'SVL-N central' in Figure 2), three committees, and the sport clubs. The general assembly is held biannually. The clubs send delegates to the general assembly where the number of delegates from each club depends on the number of registered members (SVL-N, 2008). The board comprises a leader, a deputy leader, and three members. The latter are leaders of each of the committees (see Figure 2), each made up of two members and two deputy representatives elected at the general assembly. Two of the committees are directly related to sport – the Summer and Winter Committee, and the Reindeer Racing Committee. These are responsible for facilitating sport activity through the organization of training camps, the provision of competitions, and functioning as the education and advisory organ for the clubs. Sport activities are both ordinary modern sports such as football and cross country skiing, and specific activities based on Sámi traditions such as reindeer racing and lassoing. The Committee of Competence, Development and Culture is responsible for revising the handbook and the bylaws, and to develop competence and provide courses and seminars for SVL-N representatives.[6] In addition, the committee shall 'promote and visualize Sámi culture at various events'. The role of the clubs is to 'conduct and organize Sámi sport in accordance with SVL-N's purpose and bylaws' (SVL-N, 2008, p. 5).

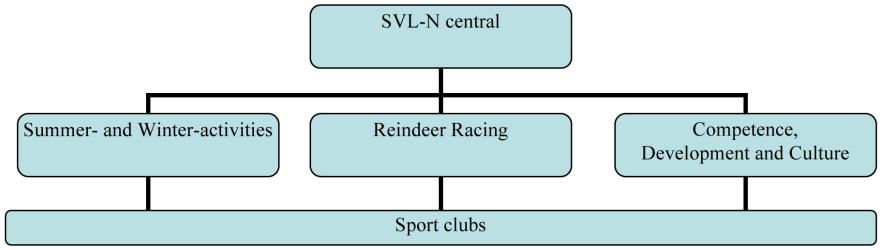

Figure 2 *The organization of SVL-N*

Twenty-seven sport clubs are members of SVL-N, with a total of 4,300 members (SVL-N, 2011). The clubs can be categorized into three groups: original general Sámi organizations (*Sámi Searvi*), sport clubs that are

6 For example, this research is a result of cooperation with the leader of the Committee for Competence, Development and Culture, based on the statement that the committee is responsible for 'seeking partners and financing for research into Sámi sport' (SVL-N, 2008c, p. 5).

also members of the Norwegian sport organization NIF, and pure Sámi sport clubs. To be a member of the SVL-N the sport club has to conform to the SVL-N bylaws and adhere to the aim of the SVL-N which is 'to promote Sámi sport through Sámi traditions, cultural intercourse and good friendship. Sámi sport shall build on traditional Sámi culture, where activities shall take traditional Sámi working activities, such as reindeer husbandry and wilderness work' as the point of departure (SVL-N, 2008, p. 1).[7] Briefly, the aim of the SVL-N is to promote and preserve Sámi culture and tradition – not only within sport but more generally. These were important arguments when the state determined to subsidize the SVL-N from the gambling revenues, money which since 1863 had been monopolized by the NIF.

Theory

SVL-N's challenge of NIF's monopoly within the Norwegian sporting field is analyzed by combining two sets of theories: (i) field theory, including neo-institutionalism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Meyer & Rowan 1991) and Bourdieu (1991, 1998); and (ii) social anthropological perspectives on ethno-political entrepreneurship (Barth, 1994; Brubaker, 2004). According to Bourdieu (1991), symbolic power is about having the definition rights, in this case the legitimate authority to define sport in Norway. As outlined above, the Norwegian sporting field's structure – including that of hegemony – is based on a mutual dependency between the Ministry of Culture and NIF. This relationship has had a mode of *doxa*: it is taken for granted and uncontested, and the structure is perceived as given by nature, despite being a social construction with historical and cultural origins. This taken-for-granted pattern defines acceptable behavior within a field, which leads to homogenization of practice within that field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Meyer & Rowan, 1991). NIF owns a *sociodicy* (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 43), a theoretical justification for a privileged position in society based on the symbolic power which

7 This is achieved by (a) the provision of Sámi sport in Norway, (b) gathering all Sámi athletes in the SVL-N, (c) motivating the clubs to work actively with Sámi sport for children, youth and disabled, (d) promoting traditional Sámi sports, (e) being an encouraging and advisory organ for the building of Sámi sport facilities, (f) providing Sámi sports outside the Sámi core areas, (g) getting Sámi sport in schools and kindergartens, (h) working with attitudes within sport, health and intoxication, and (i) promoting the Nordic cooperation within Sámi sport (SVL-N, 2008).

confers the right to define the concept of, and administrate the activities defined as, sport.

Barth 'recommend[s] that we model the processes separately on a micro, a median and a macro level' (1994, p. 20). At the micro level, processes related to ethnic identity of individuals are analyzed. For example, the influence of social relationship on ethnic identity formation, in family and peer groups or in a context of sport, may be scrutinized. The micro level is not empirically treated in this paper, although some implications for this level may be an outcome of the analysis of the other levels. At the median level collectivities, for example sport associations or other organizations, are analyzed. 'This is the field of entrepreneurship, leadership and rhetoric; here stereotypes are established and collectivities set in motion' (Barth, 1994, p. 21). At the macro level, state policies are analyzed. At this level 'control and manipulation of public information and discourse is an extremely important part' (Barth, 1994, p. 21).

The subsequent analysis treats the interplay between actors of the median level (the SVL-N and the NIF) and the macro level (the state represented by the Ministry of Culture). It takes as a point of departure the theoretical proposition that within a field there will always be a struggle about a silent reproduction (doxa), articulated change – heterodoxy, and preservation after the fight – orthodoxy (Bourdieu, 1991). For heterodoxy to occur, two criteria have to be met. First, some kind of power-base needs to be found outside the dominant and established power relations. Second, someone has to articulate this power. This could be so-called ethno-political entrepreneurs (Brubaker, 2004). Ethno-political entrepreneurs are people who underscore the "groupness" of an ethnic category, and who reify the focal group in order to gain political objectives – in rhetoric – on behalf of the members of the group. These are people who live off as well as for ethnicity, and who act in a performative manner (Bourdieu, 1991; Brubaker, 2004).

Methodology

In order to explore the process of how Sámi sport started to acquire subsidies from the Norwegian state, a document analysis was conducted. Two sets of documentary sources were investigated. First, to develop an overall background for the main analysis of this paper, official documents such as White Papers were analyzed to get an overview of the public

policy on the Sámi sport and related topics. These consisted of White Papers on culture (St. meld. nr. 8, 1973-1974; St. meld. nr. 52, 1973-1974; St. meld. nr. 23, 1981-1982; St. meld. nr. 27, 1983-1984), on sport in particular (St. meld. nr. 41, 1991-1992; St. meld. nr. 14, 1999-2000), on the state's relationship to voluntary organizations (St. meld. nr. 39, 2006-2007), and a White Paper on the Norwegian state's Sámi policy (St. meld. nr. 41, 1996-1997).

Second, in order to develop an understanding of the Ministry of Culture's treatment of the case of state funding to Sámi sport, correspondence with the Ministry of Culture and related parties (NIF, SVL-N and the Sámi parliament) in the period 2001–2005 were analyzed, totaling 16 letters: one from NIF to the Ministry of Culture, three from SVL-N to the Ministry of Culture, three from the Ministry of Culture to SVL-N, seven from the Sámi parliament to the Ministry of Culture and two letters from the Ministry of Culture to the Sámi parliament (see Table 1 and Figure 3 in Results section). The documents were accessed by requesting the documentation unit of the Ministry of Culture for all the files in their archives related to the topic of interest for this study. These were received on May 20th, 2010. In addition, information has been collected from the respective parties' internet sites (such as the Ministry of Culture's distribution of gambling revenues and the Sámi parliament's budget on sport), while available minutes of meetings and to some extent media coverage on these meetings add a contribution to the total picture of the process put under scrutiny here. More precisely, the actual meetings were between SVL-N and NIF's regional organization in Finnmark, the northernmost county in Norway which covers most of the core Sámi areas.

What the present data is not able to answer is what took place outside the formal correspondence with the Ministry of Culture. The Norwegian history of sport indicates that there are many personal connections between representatives of the Ministry of Culture and NIF (Goksøyr, 2008). Moreover, the Sámi society is rather small and Sámi culture is very verbal (Hætta, 2002). Thus, it is reasonable to surmise that there were many personal communications between representatives of the Sámi parliament and representatives of SVL-N. It should be underscored that the present analysis is based on documents representing organizations, and that the individual agents of the process only will be identified and presented only when they can be related to the analyzed documents.

Thus, it is the formal role rather than the personal characteristics that are emphasized.

The analysis of the documents focused upon the elements related to allocation of gambling revenues to sport, and left out most other aspects of sport policies, voluntary policies and Sámi policies in the documents (see Pedersen, 2011 for a more general introduction to Sámi sport politics). I aimed at piecing together the chronological story of how the first initiative from the SVL-N led to the decision at the state level which actuated the arrangement of state subsidies to SVL-N as from 2005. Moreover, I searched for elements of power that may have contributed to a change of Norwegian sport policy with regard to SVL-N. Using Bourdieu's (1991) terms, there must have been a phase of doxa which was – at least for some time – replaced by heterodoxy, and ended up in the contemporary situation of orthodoxy. The point is that in order to enter a heterodoxic mode, some power source must have been visible and must have been used. Those using it are often referred to as ethnic entrepreneurs (Brubaker, 2004)

Results

As indicated above, SVL-N's relationship to the state must be seen in relation to the NIF's symbiotic and monopolistic relationship to the state. During the 1970s and the 1980s, sport policy was included in White Papers on culture (St. meld. nr. 8, 1973-1974; St. meld. nr. 52, 1973-1974; St. meld. nr. 23, 1981-1982; St. meld. nr. 27, 1983-1984). Sámi culture was mentioned, but not Sámi sport, despite the fact that Norwegian sport was treated as culture in these documents. Sport has been defined as culture since the delivery of the first White Paper on culture in 1973 (St. meld. nr. 8, 1973-1974). Sámi culture in these four documents referred to literature, theatre, music (*joik*), handicraft (*duodji*), and arts. Sámi sport was not part of a national policy of the state of Norway, although there had been a Sámi sport association at the Nordic level (SVL) since 1979. It wasn't until the establishment of SVL-N in 1990 that a request for state subsidies to the Sámi sport organization was launched. Through the documentary analysis it was possible to identify two waves of meetings and correspondence between the parties; the first was the mentioned one in the 1990s, the second ended in 2005 with arrangements for state funding to Sámi sport.

Phase one – 1990s without results

When the government delivered the first White Paper devoted solely to sport (St. meld. nr. 41, 1991-1992), it was suggested that SVL-N should find a solution for cooperation with NIF. In a White Paper on the state Sámi policy, which was delivered five years later (St. meld. nr. 41, 1996-1997), the established system of using the channels of NIF was – again – underscored. In so doing, the White Paper on Sámi policy cited the White Paper on sport (St. meld. nr. 41, 1991-1992):

> [The White Paper on sport] suggests that the Sámi sport association of Norway finds a solution of cooperation with NIF which can gain common interests in Sámi sport and other sport and the further development of Sámi sport in Norway. For this work it was allocated 100.000 NOK from the Ministry of Culture to the SVL-N. So far, these two organizations have not found a common future solution. SVL-N has since 1994 received an annual grant of 100,000 NOK from the Sámi parliament. It is the comprehension of the Ministry of Culture that eventual future allocations of gambling revenues as a whole should go through the Norwegian Confederation of Sports. It is the view of the Ministry of Culture that future communication, application and reporting shall go through the channels and routines that are established between the Norwegian Confederation of Sports and the Ministry of Culture (St. meld. nr. 41, 1996-1997, Ch. 12.12).

This extract indicates that at least until the mid-1990s, the government followed the historical lines of encouraging cooperation and even mergers between sport organizations. This had occurred in the 1930s when the workers' and the bourgeois sport federations were supported by the state in order to merge. The merger took place in 1946, and is still in place (Goksøyr, 2008). Since then, there has developed a doxic (Bourdieu, 1991) understanding of what sport is in Norway, namely a mutual dependency between the state and NIF where the latter holds a monopoly for the distribution of state funding to sport.

Nevertheless, at the same time there occurred some signs of heterodoxy. In 1996–1997 a series of meetings were held involving the SVL-N and the NIF. One of these took the form of a seminar with participants from both parties. In a press release following the seminar it was stated that 'SVL-N's work is not solely focused on competitive sport, but to the promotion of Sámi culture generally. Therefore SVL-N is a cultural element in itself, and an important bearer of culture in the Sámi community' (SVL-N, 1996, p. 3). It was at least clearly stated from the Sámi side

that Sámi sport was about much more than sport as a physical activity. However, cooperation was still on the agenda, and the outcome of the seminar was to continue discussions concerning a partnership with NIF.

The result of the seminar was subsequently then considered by the general assembly of the SVL-N and the (Nordic) SVL. Three proposals were formulated with regard to a potential SVL-N partnership with NIF (SVL-N, 1997, p. 3-4). The first alternative was "intention", where SVL-N would be considered as an autonomous organization. In practical terms, this was to suggest status quo. The second alternative was "cooperation", where SVL-N and NIF were seen as equal parties. An obvious challenge related to the issue of equality was the fact that NIF had almost two million members, while the SVL-N had between 2000 and 3000 members. The third alternative was called "membership" where SVL-N applies for membership as a separate special sport federation under the NIF umbrella. Then the SVL-N would, for example, be equivalent to the Norwegian football association and the Norwegian ski association. In this form of cooperation, NIF would be the superior umbrella confederation and thus the superior party.

The result of the discussion during the following SVL-N general assembly was clear: 'The board's proposal for cooperation between SVL-N and NIF point 1 is approved'. Point 2 is approved with the additional comment that 'SVL-N's board shall approve the agreement to collaborate' (SVL-N, 1997, p. 2). In other words, this would demand many and detailed written agreements. It was made clear by the SVL and the SVL-N that autonomy weighs heavier than membership in NIF despite the advantages that could be gained from NIF membership. The goods were related to the symbolic and economic importance of being receiver of state funding to sport. The latter refers to acquiring a share of the gambling revenues.

In the second last White Paper on sport (St. meld. nr. 14, 1999-2000), Sámi sport is not mentioned at all. However, the White Paper launched the idea of supporting other organizations than NIF in order to implement the state's sport policy. These facts can be interpreted in several ways. On the one hand, it may seem like the doxic understanding of NIF as the only sport organization in Norway was confirmed by silence. On the other hand, the process of the 1990s, which at first glance had no impact on changing the system, may have added a contribution to the change that took place about ten years later. According to Bourdieu (1991), the reestablished status quo, the orthodoxy, is never as strong as

the original and taken-for-granted doxa. The orthodoxy requires an offensive from those actors threatened by the heterodoxy, to push back the challenged limits (Bourdieu, 1991). In that respect, the negotiations that took place during the 1990s may have cracked some of the fundament that – until then – NIF usually built on in their debates in the Norwegian sport political field.

Phase two – the change in 2005

Based on the theoretical framework of Bourdieu's (1991) symbolic power, it could be hypothesized that new power elements were introduced into the debate in order to make the heterodoxy stronger than it was during the first effort in the 1990s. Using Brubaker's (2004) vocabulary, stronger or more effective ethno-political entrepreneurs might have entered the scene. In 2001, a new sequence of meetings commenced between representatives of the Ministry of Culture, NIF and SVL-N. It started after an initiative by the President of the Sámi parliament, who sent a letter to the Minister of Culture, dated January, 8th 2001 (Table 1, Doc. 1). In the letter, it was stressed that the SVL-N was an important bearer of Sámi culture. It was further referred to the White Papers on sport (St. meld. nr. 41, 1991-1992; St. meld. nr. 14, 1999-2000) and the correspondence, which had taken place in 1996. Regarding the former, it was stated by the Sámi parliament president that the Norwegian state has a responsibility for supporting all forms of sport and physical activity.

Regarding the correspondence of 1996, the main argument against membership of SVL-N in NIF was emphasized: if SVL-N should adhere to NIF's law, two unintended and undesired consequences would follow. First, non-Sámi people could be Sámi champions (because under NIF bylaws, everybody with a Norwegian citizenship can become winners of a competition organized by NIF).[8] Secondly, Sámi people from other countries with a Sámi population (Sweden, Finland and Russia) would be excluded from this opportunity. 'Direct membership in NIF is not possible according to SVL bylaw' (Doc. 1, p. 2). The Sámi parliament president concluded the letter by listing three elements that should be treated by the Ministry: (i) SVL-N's relationship to the NIF, (ii) access to financial resources for SVL, and more precisely (iii) allocation of future gambling revenues and procedures.

8 Sámi people in Norway have Norwegian citizenship and passport.

Table 1 *Overview of correspondence (SP = Sámi Parliament, MC = Ministry of Culture, NIF = Norwegian Confederation of Sports, SVL-N = Sámi Sport Association – Norway).*[9]

Doc. No.	Date	From	To	Content – short description
1	January 8th 2001	SP	MC	Information on Sámi sport, organization and economy. Claimed need for subsidies, independent of NIF.
2	March 16th 2001	NIF	MC	NIF's view on Sámi sport. Request of MC's view on Sámi sport.
3	April 17th 2001	MC	SVL-N	Request for information on Sámi sport. Request of SVL-N's view on NIF's view on Sámi sport.
4	May 16th 2001	SVL-N	MC	Reply to NIF's views, focus on uniqueness of Sámi sport compared to NIF's sports, and on aim of independence.
5	June 21st 2001	SP	MC	Resume from meeting. Status quo: MC wants SVL-N to cooperate with NIF, SVL-N wants independence.
6	October 30th 2001	SVL-N	MC	Suggestions of specific amount for support, based on uniqueness of Sámi sport.
7	April 16th 2002	MC	SVL-N	Principal discussion of the possibility to support SVL-N with gambling revenues. Negative conclusion.
8	February 25th 2003	SVL-N	MC	Application for economic support from MC to SVL-N, due to uniqueness of Sámi sport. Not asked specifically for gambling revenues.
9	July 10th 2003	MC	SVL-N	Reply to application. Negative answer.
10	December 12th 2003	SP	MC	On the negative response to the application. Reference to the constitution and the Norwegian state's responsibility for Sámi culture
11	March 23rd 2004	SP	MC	Specific suggestion on the amount of support from gambling revenues
12	November 12th 2004	SP	MC	Note on Sámi culture. Sport defined as a separate topic to be treated in separate document

9 The various documents in this table will be referred to within parentheses in the text as "Doc. 1", "Doc. 2", etc.

13	November 13th 2004	SP	MC	Note on Sámi sport. Reference to White Paper on sport and its statement on the possibilities outside NIF. Enclosed is a report on the uniqueness of Sámi sports
14	February 1st 2005	MC	SP	Request for more information on Sámi sport. SP misses information on some topics (see below)
15	March 14th 2005	SP	MC	Reply to request. Enclosed is an additional document on Sámi sport, with information on distribution, organization and costs related to Sámi sports, as well as reflections on future development of the Sámi sports
16	May 11th 2005	MC	SP	Assignment letter of gambling revenues. NOK 300,000 allocated to SVL-N via SP.

On February 28th 2001, there was a meeting between SVL-N and the regional organization of NIF. In line with the argument of the president of the Sámi parliament, the head of the regional organization of NIF (the regional organization of Finnmark, responsible for the northernmost county of Norway, which overlaps significantly with the core Sámi areas), emphasized the problems of different bylaws in the two organizations which could lead to complications during any future cooperation. Moreover, it is clear that the preferred SVL-N outcome of the ongoing process would be to remain an autonomous organization with its own allocation of the gambling revenues from the Ministry of Culture. As indicated in the methodology section, one can speculate as to how the personal relationships between representatives of the various organizations have worked in this process. What can be documented is that there was a meeting between NIF and the Ministry of Culture March 8th 2001, on the topic of Sámi sport.

In a letter dated March 16th 2001 (Doc. 2), from NIF to the Ministry of Culture, NIF presented various aspects regarding the relationship to SVL-N. In a critical remark, NIF wanted the Ministry's view of the fact that NIF is open for everybody while the SVL-N is exclusively for Sámi people. Nevertheless, other elements in this letter may be considered as representing a turning point in the ongoing process, leading it more in the direction of the goals of the SVL-N. It was stated that 'SVL wants to be an independent organization and not a member of NIF'. The letter cited the last White Paper on sport which, while not mentioning Sámi

sport, nevertheless opened up for support to other organizations than NIF. In that respect, NIF came closer to acknowledging that SVL-N could – and perhaps they felt that SVL-N would independently of the NIF's view – soon receive state subsidies from the gambling revenues. NIF sketches three possibilities for state funding to SVL-N: (i) via the Sámi parliament, (ii) directly to the SVL-N, or (iii) via NIF. Option number two, alternatively number three, was considered most apt by NIF (Doc. 2).

In a letter dated April 17th 2001 (Doc. 3), from the Ministry of Culture to SVL-N, the Ministry of Culture asks for clarification by the SVL-N regarding issues treated in the letter from NIF to the Ministry of Culture (Doc. 2). SVL-N responded in a letter of May 16th 2001 (Doc. 4). To the most critical points about SVL-N's exclusivity it was made clear that 'SVL-N cannot by any means be compared to NIF [regarding purposes]. SVL-N is something completely different for the Sámi population than NIF is for the Norwegian population. … [It is] SVL-N's absolute aim to be an independent Sámi organization'. Specifically, regarding the point that NIF made via the Ministry of Culture, that NIF competitions are open for all, SVL-N replied that SVL-N events are open for all Sámi. Regarding the three options sketched above, SVL-N considered options one or two as the only possibilities. After that a rather quiet period followed, at least in terms of documentary correspondence.

The first document discussing principals regarding the opportunity for SVL-N to receive gambling revenues was a letter sent from the Ministry of Culture to SVL-N on April 16th 2003 (Doc. 7). The Ministry held that 'SVL-N's work is of an amount and character (oriented towards Sámi culture) that makes the organization not entitled to gambling revenues'. Nevertheless, the next move from the SVL-N was to apply for funding from the state (Doc. 8). It was not, however, specifically formulated as a request for gambling revenues. The argument made by SVL-N was that sports such as lasso throwing and reindeer racing are organized by SVL-N clubs only, and SVL-N could therefore not be seen as a competitor to other sport organizations (NIF) receiving state funding. The reply from the Ministry of Culture was negative (Doc. 9). The Ministry repeated that it did not see SVL-N as entitled to receive funding on an autonomous basis. Again it was suggested that cooperation should be sought with NIF. Up until this point it seems like the Ministry of Culture had sustained its monopolistic relationship to NIF. The field of sport in Norway, and its power relations, seemed to have sustained its myths.

On December 12th 2003, the Sámi parliament sent a letter to the Ministry of Culture (Doc. 10) as a reply to the negative outcome of the application for state funding. Two points related to this letter are emphasized here. They both stand for some kind of power which may be seen as the basis for the heterodoxy that led to change. One is about the sender and one about the content. First, the sender of the letter was the president of the Sámi parliament, and not the leadership of the Sámi sport association. Second, the letter referred to the Norwegian constitution and its formulations about Sámi as the indigenous people of Norway. It was underscored that according to the Norwegian constitution (§ 110a) the Norwegian state is obliged to ensure that the Sámi population can sustain and develop its language, its culture and its society. (Although it was not expressed explicitly, there was another argument between the lines, an ace of trumps so to speak, namely that the Norwegian state has ratified Article 169 of the ILO Convention, the Indigenous Peoples and Tribes Convention. This commits Norway to take care of their indigenous peoples, i.e. the Sámi. See Concluding diskussion.)

This seems to be the start of considerable correspondence (see Figure 3 and Table 1, documents 10–13, 15) which in turn led to a change in the Norwegian state's policy towards SVL-N. It included a proposal for a specific amount of funding, a note on Sámi culture and a note on Sámi sport. Attached to the note on Sámi sport (Doc. 13) was a report describing Sámi sport activities as documentation of the uniqueness of Sámi sport (SVL-N, 2004). The Ministry of Culture wanted more information about Sámi sport, on distribution, organization, costs and reflections about future development (Doc. 14). The reply was sent a few months later (Doc. 15), and contained a document with relatively detailed information about the organization of Sámi sport, the roles and functions of each sub-organization/council of SVL-N, the distribution of sport clubs affiliated to the SVL-N, and a budget for the organization. It also included some reflections on future development of the Sámi sports, especially in relation to recruitment to the traditional activities as lassoing and reindeer racing.

On May 11th 2005, the historical assignment letter (Doc. 16) was sent from the Ministry of Culture of the Norwegian government to the Sámi parliament of Norway. It stated that the Sámi sport association will receive support from the gambling revenues, and that it should be administrated by the Sámi parliament. In the White Paper on the relationship between the state and voluntary organizations (St. meld. nr.

39, 2006-2007), the reason for this new arrangement was made explicit: 'The purpose of the grant is to support maintenance and development of the unique Sámi sport activities which are part of traditional Sámi culture' (p. 113-114), because 'Sámi sport has an identity-creating effect…' (p. 114). Apparently, the arguments of uniqueness, tradition and identity that the Sámi sport association and Sámi politicians had used since the beginning of the negotiations in the 1990s were finally adopted by the representatives of the Norwegian state. Since 2005, SVL-N has received state subsidies from the gambling revenues via the Sámi parliament. The increase in the grant between 2005 and 2009 is given in Table 2 including subsidies from the Ministry of Culture and the Sámi parliament (which is in addition to the gambling revenues from the state).

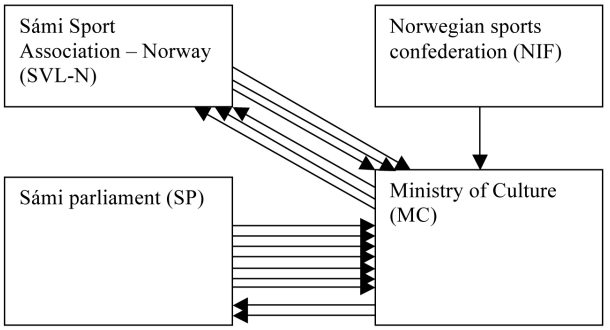

Figure 3 *Actors and correspondence*

Table 2 *Subsidies to Sámi sport, from the Ministry of Culture (MC) and Sámi Parliament (SP) (NOK)*[10]

	From MC to SVL-N	From SP to SVL-N	From SP to SFA	From SP to AWG***	From SP to Sámi sport
2005	300,000	650,000	*	*	*
2006	300,000	750,000	*	*	*
2007	500,000	925,000	300,000	150,000	1,375,000
2008	600,000	965,000	313,000	800,000	2,078,000
2009	600,000	1,004,000	325,000	150,000	1,497,000
2010	600,000	929,000	487,000	800,000	2,416,000**
2011	600,000	1,003,000	487,000	150,000	1,847,000**

10 Table 2 is constructed on the basis of data on the distribution of sport subsidies from the Ministry of Culture (2005- 2011) and the budget of the Sámi parliament (2007-2011). * No data; ** Since 2010, the Sámi parliament has also granted the Sámi Reindeer-Race Federation NOK 200,000 each year (The Sami Reindeer Race Federation is independent of SVL-N, and a competitor to the Reindeer Racing Committee of SVL-N.; *** AWG = Arctic Winter Games, which is a international sport festival for indigenous people. The Sámi Parliament gives earmarked subsidies to SVL-N to participate in AWG

In retrospect, the Ministry of Culture defends its decision on the state subsidies to Sámi sport in the latest White Paper on sport (Meld. St. 26, 2011-2012): 'It is the Ministry's opinion that the arguments for the establishment of a specific grant to sustain and develop unique Sámi sport activities are still valid. Therefore, the arrangement continues' (p. 96).

Concluding discussion

There were two phases of correspondence between the Sámi side and the Norwegian side where I have focused on the latter in the empirical presentation above. Consequently, there must have been some important differences between phase one and phase two which eventually made change possible. It should be remembered that a complete picture of how the apparently rapid changes in attitude go together with a rather slow alteration process couldn't be fully given with the present data. However, a theoretically oriented analysis is conducted here in order to explain the mechanisms of how the SVL-N changed NIF's monopoly to state funding of sport. In other words, how did the sport field with a doxic (Bourdieu, 1991) or mythic (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Meyer and Rowan, 1991) pattern based on the mutual dependency between the state and NIF come into a heterodox mode? During the whole of phase one and until the letter of December 12th, 2003 (Doc. 10) sent in phase two, any argument from the Sámi side seems to be overruled by traditional understandings of the Norwegian sport field's sociodicy (Bourdieu, 1988): it was NIF, with the blessing of the Ministry of Culture, which had the right to define and administrate sport in Norway.

As indicated above, two criteria have to be met for heterodoxy to emerge (Bourdieu, 1991): first, a power base must exist, and second, this power has to be articulated. The power base is made explicit in the letter of December 12th, 2003 (Doc. 10). In the letter, the president of the Sámi parliament referred to the Norwegian constitution where it is stated that the Norwegian state is under obligation to support the Sámi people with respect to the development of language, prevailing of traditions and facilitating Sámi cultural practices. Moreover, although it was not mentioned explicitly in this letter or in any other correspondence with the Ministry of Culture, two other legal points lie between the lines in the argumentation. First, there is a separate Sámi Act in Norway manifesting the rights of Sámi as indigenous people of Norway (FAD, 1987). Second,

Norway's ratification of Article 169 of the ILO Conventions (the Indigenous Peoples and Tribes Convention), underscores the nation state's responsibility to facilitate and support the indigenous peoples within its borders. This includes the prevalence of traditions and development of culture such as sports activities and organizations. In sum, there were legal justifications both nationally and internationally which the Ministry of Culture could not overlook when considering the last application from the Sámi on subsidies from the Norwegian state to Sámi sport. Of course, the Sámi Act and the ILO convention can be conceived as only two out of a number of elements that may have influenced the Minister of Culture in this case. They are not mutually exclusive to other – more informal – elements, but they are two identifiable elements that cannot be overlooked in this analysis. Thus, they are conceived as highly significant for explaining the changed attitude in the Ministry.

However, the Ministry of Culture seems not to have realized the constitutional aspects before the power basis (the indigenous people's legal rights in Norway) was expressed by somebody. This refers to the second criteria for enabling heterodoxy (Bourdieu, 1991). The claim for the legal orientation was expressed by the president of the Sámi parliament. The Sámi parliament has no formal authority to change any procedures of the administration of the Norwegian state. It is an advisory organ in Sámi-political issues. Nevertheless, the Sámi parliament carries some symbolic power because it represents the indigenous people of Norway (for details, see for example Pedersen, 2011). The most visible and important move of the Norwegian state is the establishment of the Sámi parliament. In that respect, the "Sámi president" as ethnic entrepreneur, through his emphasis on the Norwegian constitution and the Norwegian state's responsibility for Sámi culture, may serve as the change-making difference in the 2001-2005 process compared to the process during the 1990s. The Sámi parliament president represents the "groupness" of an entire ethnic category (Brubaker, 2004) and not only a sport organization with a few thousand members.

In other words, the president represents the whole Sámi group in order to gain political objectives on behalf of only some members of the group (SVL-N) (Brubaker, 2004). Thus, this case is an example of how ethno-political entrepreneurs may be small in numbers, but still may be able to wield a tremendous symbolic power because they may represent an ethnic mobilization which 'evokes a whole population' (Barth, 1994, p. 25). The president of the Sámi parliament represents all Sámi peo-

ple in Norway, estimated to number between 40,000 and 65,000, while the Sámi Sport Association – Norway represents only their 4,300 members (SVL-N, 2008c, 2011). The Sámi people are also small in numbers. Therefore the democratic argument cannot have carried much weight in the debate. However, the symbolic power of representing an indigenous people cannot be underestimated. The move to invoke the Sámi parliament so strongly can thus be viewed as a move of a 'performative character' because it is then not only a relatively small organization with limited interest which is the actor, but the symbol of the fourth nation of a people. Linking ethnicity to nationalism (Brubaker, 2004) and international arguments (ILO 169) gives the relatively small ethnic group and the even smaller sport organization a symbolic value (Bourdieu, 1991).

How and why did the Sámi parliament president gain so much symbolic power that he could shake and stir the Norwegian field of sport policy which has been embedded and undisturbed in its organizational and political arrangements for 150 years? In order to understand this, one has to look at the history of the Sámi movement more generally as well as look at the process of increased acknowledgement of indigenous people internationally (Pedersen, 2011). That will not be taken into consideration here. However, a relevant question to pose after the discussion above is whether the funding to SVL-N really can be seen as a breaking of NIF's monopoly of state funding to sport. The sum that SVL-N receives is relatively small compared to the sum that NIF receives. Moreover, it is too early to tell if the state representatives see this only as an occasional indulgence to a troublesome organisation. To some degree, one can interpret the continuing silence or calmness of which has been bought with the organizational and financial arrangements as a confirmation of the old situation. Time and further research will tell.

* * *

This paper has shown how the SVL-N received state funding to sport from the gambling revenues which historically have served NIF on a monopolistic basis. In that respect, the establishment of the Sámi sport association, SVL-N, is part of a broader institutionalization of Sámi identity work. The paper has added a contribution to the field of sport policy by presenting an example of good practice in order to change the structure

in favor of the small, disadvantaged sport organization and by utilizing the case of the SVL-N to show how external forces, such as ideas of nationalism and international agreements can influence the field of sport policy and disturb its doxic structures. In that respect, future research should consider similar questions in other countries, first and foremost Sweden, Finland and Russia, for comparison of Sámi sport associations in different nation states. The same could be valid for other countries with indigenous people.

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