Preface

In this special issue of *Nordic Museology* we present a range of articles that give us unprecedented insights into the development and changes of museum representations of Sámi culture. The articles offer a thorough investigation of how Sámi culture has been an object of knowledge for museums and how this knowledge production has been entangled with representations of the Sámi in Nordic museums and society. Sámi culture is specific to Scandinavia and Russia, and Sámi museology is an important topic for which our journal ought to be a central hub. And indeed, this has also been the case in the latter years.

In 2015 *Nordic Museology* made the special issue “Rethinking Sámi cultures in museums”, where a range of authors discussed contemporary Sámi displays and heritage work. Some articles also delved into the history of collecting and collections of Sámi artefacts. However, that issue dealt mostly with contemporary collecting and display. The present issue, we believe, can work very well as a sequel where more attention is given to historical transformations – as stated in the title for the issue – from Lappology to Sámi museology.

In the introductory article to the 2015 issue, anthropologist Christina Kreps claimed that much attention had been given to collaboration and changes in the relations between indigenous communities and museums in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. However, she claimed, less is known “about the current status of relationships between indigenous populations, such as the Sámi, and the Nordic museums. Similarly, the literature on indigenous peoples’ museums and cultural centers has expanded greatly in recent years but includes limited contributions about Sámi museums” (Kreps 2015, 4).

This new issue will not rectify the lack of attention to contemporary Sámi museums and cultural centres, but it gives us insights into how the changes in representation of and knowledge production about Sámi cultures have been interconnected with changes in the societal discourses about the Sámi. This historical perspective, moving from the 19th century to the present, gives a unique comparative understanding of Nordic institutional research on and representation of Sámi culture. We hope this will provide yet another stone to step on in establishing Sámi museology as a thriving field.

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LITERATURE

Kreps, Christina 2015. “Appropriate museology and the ‘new museum ethics’”.

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Tomas Collbengtson: Sami Culture.