



Natureculture in a Stallo tale: Harmonious dwelling or troubling postequilibrium?

The picturebook *Sølvmånen* by Sissel Horndal (2015)

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Abstract

This article examines a retelling of a traditional Sami tale in the picturebook *Sølvmånen* [Silver Moon] by Sissel Horndal (2015). The book tells the story of a girl who is abducted by the Stallo, an Ogre well known in Sami lore. The fairy tale is placed in a contemporary setting, with a complex interplay between pictures and verbal text. The analysis uses perspectives drawn from ecocritical studies to discuss how nature is presented in the book. Using the concept of natureculture developed by Donna Haraway (2003), the article investigates the book's portrayal of landscapes, climate/seasons, vegetation, animals and humans. The article asks whether the indigenous natureculture portrayed in *Sølvmånen* can be seen primarily as a harmonious dwelling, or as a more nuanced and troubling postequilibrium (Garrard, 2012). One of the aspects discussed in the article is the role of the Stallo figure as a threatening force within natureculture, or as an external threat.

Keywords

Sami oral tales, the Stallo figure, ecocritical theory, natureculture, postequilibrium

Oral storytelling has played an important role in Sami culture in Fenno-Scandinavia for centuries, and is still a living tradition. The collection and publication of Sami fairy tales and legends in the latter half of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th has also contributed to the preservation of a rich corpus of oral stories in writing. In recent decades these narratives have been rewritten and put into play in picturebooks, theatre performances, poems, films and novels. This article will analyse and discuss one of the recreated versions published in Norway, the picturebook *Sølvmånen* [The Silver Moon]

by Sissel Horndal (2015). The book will be examined using perspectives from ecocritical literary theory, an interdisciplinary field of research that examines the relationship between literature, culture and the environment. *Sølvmånen*'s use of Sami oral tradition and its emphasis on nature make the book interesting to analyse, as it touches upon some of the key issues in ecocritical theory regarding perceptions of both nature and indigenous cultures in literature.

From the book's very first spread, the reader is introduced to Nordic natural scenery at night, shown by the outlines of bare

trees and a starry sky with a full moon. A sombre tone is set both by the dark tree branches and by the narrator's voice telling us that this will be the story not only of the ordinary moon, but of a disturbing and threatening moon, shining like silver. In the following pages it turns out that this 'other' moon is linked to the return of the *Stallo*, a mythical figure well known in Sami lore (Friis, 1871a; Turi, 1910/2012; Qvigstad, 1927-29).

This article will investigate how landscapes, climate and seasons, vegetation, animals and humans are presented in *Sølvmånen*. The relationships between these aspects of nature can also be described as the book's *natureculture*. This is a concept developed by Donna Haraway (2003; 2008) that challenges a traditional understanding of nature and (human) culture as separate and/or opposing categories. The research question guiding our analysis is whether the natureculture portrayed in *Sølvmånen* can be seen primarily as a harmonious *dwelling*, or as a more nuanced and troubling *postequilibrium* (Garrard, 2012). The article will also discuss the role of the *Stallo* figure as a threatening force within natureculture or as an external threat. The concept of natureculture will be explained further below, as will the notions of dwelling and *postequilibrium*, following a general presentation of the book.

The picturebook *Sølvmånen*

The *Sølvmånen* version of the *Stallo* story was first performed as a play in 2007 and later published as an audio recording by Horndal and Edvardsen in 2010. The verbal text is inspired by several *Stallo* tales (e.g. Qvigstad, 1929, p. 539-540; Friis, 1871a, p. 85-90). The ending of the tale can be characterised as a variant of the tale type 'tales of the stupid Ogre' (ATU no. 1000-1199 in Üther, 2004). The pictures in *Sølvmånen* are collages made by digitally manipulated photographs and realistic drawings, as well as nonfigurative drawings and stylised silhouettes or figure outlines. The book is published in Norwegian and three Sami languages: Lule Sami, Northern and Southern Sami, respectively titled *Silbbamáanno*, *Silbamánnu* and *Silpeaska*. It is the version written in Norwegian that will be examined in this article.

In the soft, warm light from an open fire, the heroine of this fairy tale is spinning linen with an old spindle, a precious gift from her dead grandmother (fig. 1). The edges of the spread are adorned with patterned shapes in the form of leaves, and in the light from the fire it is possible to discern a figure in the ground resembling a stone carving or the drawings of a shaman drum. In this first depiction of the protagonist, the girl's

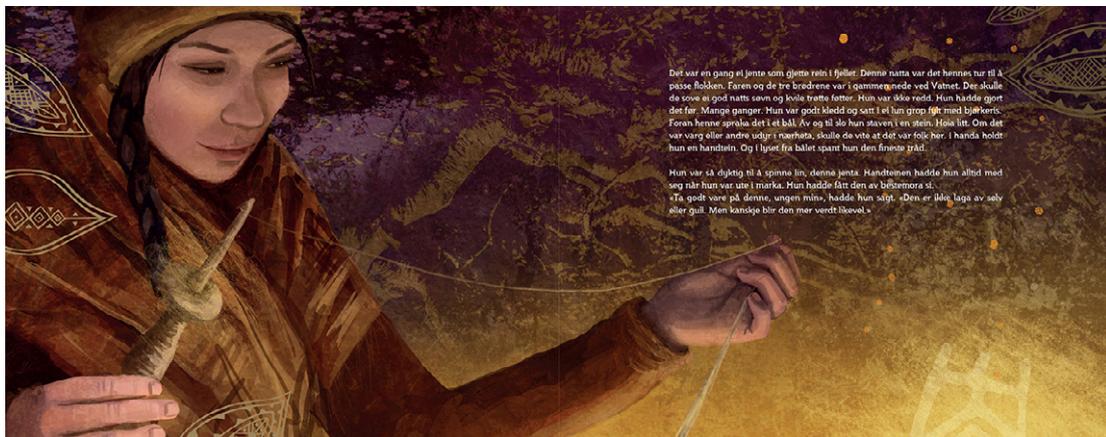


Figure 1.

Sissel Horndal. *Sølvmånen* (2015), p. 4-5. Rendered with permission.

dark hair, softly glowing skin tone and high cheekbones create an associative link to indigenous peoples in other parts of the world, thus indicating from the outset that the story is to be understood as belonging to a tradition of indigenous literatures.

The complex interplay between pictures and verbal text transforms *Sølvmånen* into a crossover story typical of contemporary picturebooks (Beckett, 2002; 2012) intended for both young and older readers. This interplay can be characterised as the book's *iconotext*, a term used by picturebook scholars (Hallberg, 1982; Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006) to emphasise that words and pictures should be perceived as a whole. Although the narrator of the verbal text in *Sølvmånen* places the story in a remote past, by the third spread the pictures call this into question as we see the contours of an all-terrain motorised vehicle the Sami girl uses to herd her flock (fig. 2). The pictures tell of a contemporary Sami girl, wearing both a traditional Sami belt and military track trousers. Her iPhone lies broken in the grass as a clue for her father and brother to find after the gruesome *Stallo* abducts her. However, the new technological devices are of no help in her encounter with the Ogre. To outsmart the *Stallos* (there is a whole family – husband, wife and sons), a spindle thread, clues on the bark of the trees, traditional weapons (axe, bow), and the cun-

ning use of fire are what is needed. The tale comes to a happy ending: the father and brother kill off the male *Stallos*, while the girl overcomes the *Stallo's* wife *Luttak*. (For a further discussion of the relationship between images and verbal text of *Sølvmånen*, see Karlsen, 2019.)

Ecocritical analysis and indigenous literature

In ecocritical literary theory, the *pastoral*, *wilderness* and *dwelling* have been discussed and analysed as genres, but have also been used as concepts; as analytical tools for understanding how nature is represented in literature. In his exploration and critique of these tropes, Greg Garrard (2012) highlights that all three imply an idealised view of nature and human beings' role in nature, although in somewhat different ways. The pastoral may be characterised as a nostalgic, rather sentimental depiction of rural, domesticated life, in contrast to wilderness, which is designated as «a place apart from, and opposed to, human culture» (2012, p. 67).¹ In Garrard's view, both pastoral and wilderness are created by the gaze of an external onlooker: the aesthetic tourist. The dwelling is characterised by humans living in nature in a more authentic, exemplary way, but Garrard goes on to criticise this too, at the same time casting indigenous dwelling



Figure 2.

Sissel Horndal. *Sølvmånen* (2015), p. 6-7. Rendered with permission.

as one of its prototypes. The depictions of dwelling are, according to Garrard, often based on an idealised image of the «Ecological Indian», which he characterises as a «myth of a non-European ‘other’» (2012, p. 129-137). On the other hand, as Garrard’s (2012) and Joni Adamson’s (2014) analyses show, this image used in indigenous literature may be interpreted as more nuanced and diverse. Adamson (2014, p. 187) argues that the trope of the Ecological Indian as an ideological construct is used in many different ways in indigenous literature and that it is less of a tactical political device than it might at first seem.

A useful concept for an analysis of indigenous literature might be the notion of natureculture developed by Haraway (2003; 2008). In its essence, this notion questions the traditional dichotomy of nature and culture, claiming that it is possible to radically redefine our understanding of both nature and human culture. In her animal studies, Haraway highlights companionship and kinship between species (2008; 2016) and the importance of «becoming with» one another, although this does not entail that our relationships are, or ever will be, innocent or frictionless. Haraway (2016) uses the phrase «Staying with the Trouble» when describing the challenges of making interspecies kinship. Although she fundamentally questions the need for categorisation, it is also important to note that she does not think that earthlings (one of her many words for ‘beings/becomings’) are one: «I believe that all ethical relating, within or between species, is knit from the silk-long thread of ongoing alertness of otherness-in-relation. We are not one, and being depends on getting on together» (Haraway, 2003, p. 50).

Garrard (2012) has also criticised the conventional duality between nature and culture, and likewise a belief in the supposed balance of ideal, ‘undisturbed’ ecosystems. A postequilibrium position, as Garrard has defined it (2012, p. 64-65), is aware of the continual changes in nature. It acknowledges

nature’s enduring conflicts and the impossibility – maybe even the undesirability – of attaining a stable, undisturbed, harmonious state that is commonly associated with the pastoral, wilderness or dwelling.

The following analysis of *Sølvmånen* will look for both harmonious and troubling elements in the depiction of the natureculture in the book, starting with the more harmonious aspects.

Harmonious indigenous natureculture

Firstly, it is important to emphasise that the book *Sølvmånen* eludes a simple classification. Various aspects of the genres and concepts mentioned above may be seen as relevant for understanding the book. On the one hand, it could be stated that the picturebook contains pastoral idyllic presentations of vast landscapes (Garrard, 2012, p. 44-49), with herders harmoniously immersed in nature together with their reindeer (e.g. in the last spread of the book). On the other hand, the nature as we experience it in the book is not the domesticated, agrarian idyll often found in the pastoral. One might argue that it also contains elements of the wilderness trope (Garrard, 2012, p. 66 ff.), as the wild, untamed aspects of nature are highlighted in several of the spreads (e.g. spread no. 12 with forceful stormy winds and wolves howling). However, the universe of the book is an *inhabited* wilderness, not a wilderness visited sporadically by male explorers/onlookers, as in many of the classic wilderness tales. The Sami’s traditional nomadic rearing of reindeer takes place in the middle of the otherwise wild and untamed arctic highlands. *Sølvmånen* also firmly establishes this wild nature as a place for a woman. The protagonist is a brave, smart girl, and both she and her family find it perfectly natural for her to be herding reindeer alone at night, although she might have to face Stallos, wolves and bandits (mentioned as possible threats in the second spread).

However, as the book seems to present humans and animals that are able to dwell



Figure 3.

Sissel Horndal. *Sølvmånen* (2015), detail from p. 16. Rendered with permission.

in nature in a harmonious working relationship, the concept of *exemplary dwelling* (Garrard, 2012, p. 129-145) may also aptly describe the book's universe. Several features in this book indicate that the Sami live in a special form of unity and harmony with nature. The first feature worthy of comment

is the depiction of the trees' leaves. (See fig. 3, a detail of the spread in fig. 6.) Many of the leaves in the book have natural-looking veins, but in some of them, the veins are replaced by patterns resembling traditional Sami handicraft (duodji).

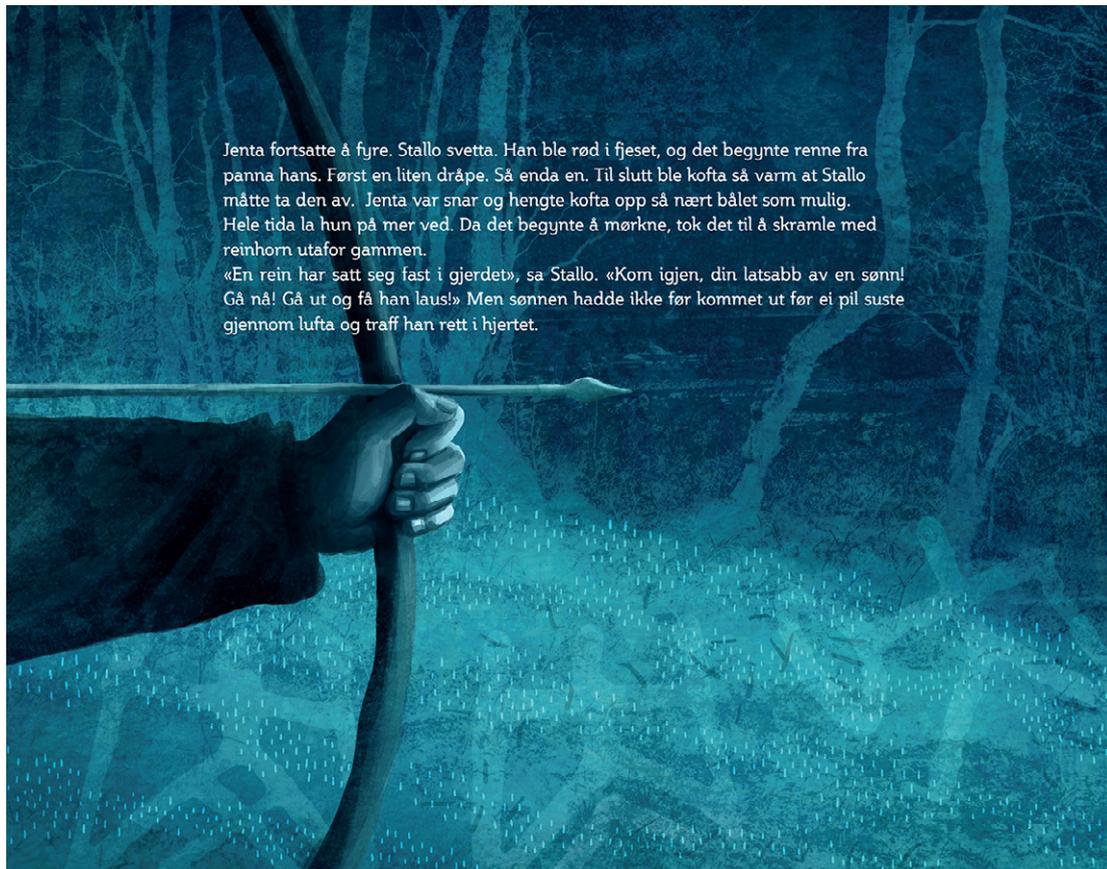


Figure 4.

Sissel Horndal. *Sølvmånen* (2015), p. 33. Rendered with permission.

A possible interpretation of these patterned leaves, which appear in different shapes throughout the story, is that they are a visual representation of Sami human life and culture as a part of nature. The patterns of natural leaves and the patterns of Sami handicraft are presented together – they are not alike, but at the same time one is part of the other. As previously stated, the idea of natureculture (Haraway, 2003; 2008) questions the traditional dual understanding of nature and culture, and the patterned leaves in this story may be interpreted as a palpable illustration of this concept.

Sami spirituality is also presented as an integral part of nature in the book. On one of the first spreads (fig. 1), we noticed the presence of a drawn figure in the left corner. Later on, as the protagonist's brother fights to liberate his sister, this figure reappears, now in the company of two similar drawings (fig. 4, second half of spread no. 16). A reader familiar with Sami religion will probably recognise the Sami goddesses: Juksáhkká, Sáráhká and Uksáhkká, daughters of Máttaráhká, the Mother Earth goddess. Towards the end of the book (fig. 5), one of the goddesses appears in the dramatic final battle, where the Stallo wife Luttak is blown to shreds.

The simplistic drawings of the goddesses are most likely intertextual references to the drawings used on old shaman drums

(e.g. a drum from 1837, cf. Hætta, 1994, p. 16-17.) These goddesses were held in high esteem by the Sami according to Jens A. Friis, linguist and ethnographic researcher in the late 19th century. He writes that especially Sáráhká were one of the deities most dear to the Sami and whom the Sami «with the utmost confidence and sincerity, trusted in all their actions» (Friis, 1871b, p. 90, my translation). Sáráhká appears in several Sami fairy tales as a helper and guide (p. 93).

In *Sølvmånen*, the goddesses can be interpreted as helper figures; religious forces providing supernatural help for the main characters at crucial moments. Their placing close to the ground and close to the fire² implies that they are forces inherent in or deeply connected to the earth, part of nature itself. According to both Garrard (2012) and Adamson (2014), the connection between goddess worship and a vision of earth as a nurturing mother is one that is also shared by some ecocritical feminists. Garrard is highly sceptical of the use of Mother Earth in feminist deep ecology, which he characterises as «a poetics of authenticity» guided by essentialism and pantheist spirituality (p. 26-30, 79). Adamson (2014), on the other hand, has a more positive interpretation of the use of the Mother Earth trope, and regards Garrard's (and others') take on this notion as simplistic. She highlights its implication that nature is a complex cosmos, a



Figure 5.

Sissel Horndal. *Sølvmånen* (2015), p. 36-37. Rendered with permission.

‘superorganism’, «in which multiple biological and organic systems are constantly responding to stimuli, but not in deterministic ways» (Adamson, p. 184).

Regardless of the view one might have on how to interpret expressions of indigenous spirituality and indigenous cultures as ingrained in nature, it is worth mentioning that in *Sølvmånen* these traits are presented quietly, almost concealed. The goddesses are never mentioned in the verbal text; they are only present in the pictures. They are drawn with the same colour as the background, only with a slightly different shading, thus visible only to a highly observant reader. The same can be said about the patterned leaves.³ As they are placed at the edges of the pictures, they may easily be overlooked. Thus, these traits are presented with a subdued voice. Their meaning is also primarily only accessible to readers who are familiar with Sami culture, leaving a simpler story to unfold for the uninformed. This can be seen as part of a long dual Sami literary tradition (Cocq, 2008; Gaski, 1997; 2011), where subversive elements are elaborately hidden away.

This duality can be understood in light of a long history of political oppression. This history is subtly referred to in one of the pictures, where father and son are tiptoeing silently under the high-voltage powerline (fig. 6). The image touches upon the many conflicts between Sami and Norwegians regarding the use of natural resources, evoking political issues of both ethnic and environmental justice (hydroelectric power plants from dam projects have resulted in the devastation of important herding areas for the Sami on several occasions).⁴

Another spread refers to another ecological issue: the presence and reintroduction of wolves. The father and son walk into a storm, and soon they hear a sound of howling. (The reader understands from the pictures that it is wolves howling). «Are you afraid?» asked the father. ‘A bit,’ the boy answered. ‘You have more to worry about where we are going,’ said the father» (Horndal, 2015, spread no.

12, my translation). Here the father seems to be telling the son that although both the storm and the wolves might be dangerous and present a challenge, they are a natural part of life. The Stallo they are about to meet will be infinitely more dangerous. This conversation about the wolves does not necessarily refer to conflicts between Sami and Norwegians, as this controversy is often understood as a conflict between those who see the wolf as a threat to livestock versus the more environmentally oriented livestock holders and people living in urbanised areas.⁵ The narrator in *Sølvmånen* seems to take a stand for an environmentalist view of the wolves’ presence, making the Sami father speak on behalf of nature. The father’s view here is in accordance with Johan Turi’s portrayal of the experienced Sami wolf hunter in his renowned account of Sami life and traditions: «He knows that the wolf is just doing that which is its lot in life» (Turi, 1910/2012, p. 102). The narrator of *Sølvmånen* thus seems to indicate that the Sami have an environmentally friendly attitude towards wolves. At the same time, the book’s pictures do not conceal the fact that their herding is performed by modern means such as energy-consuming ATVs, and thus do not present reindeer herding as a nostalgic occupation untouched by new technology.

A more nuanced or troubling postequilibrium view of natureculture

So far, the interpretation of *Sølvmånen* has emphasised the harmonious relationship between animals, plants and humans (Sami) in the story. On the other hand, this interpretation can be questioned. In the pictures, the animals and plants are foregrounded and portrayed as silent, present watchers. In alignment with a harmonious natureculture interpretation, it is tempting for a human interpreter to understand the role of the animals and plants as silently suffering with, or in some way even helping the humans in the story, thus underlining their unity. However, it is important to note that in the *Sølvmånen*

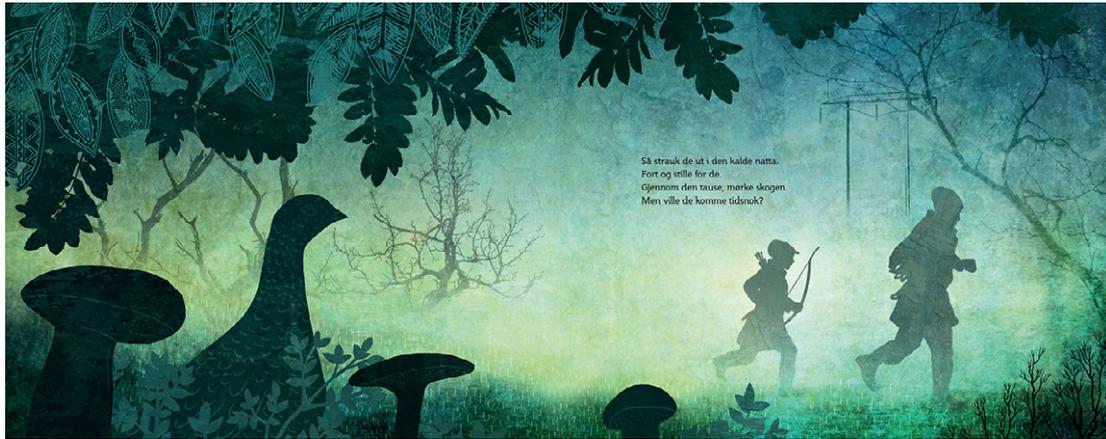


Figure 6.

Sissel Horndal. *Sølvmånen* (2015), p. 16-17. Rendered with permission.

story the animals or plants are not anthropomorphised. The animals are not ascribed voices or human agency. Quite on the contrary; they are present, but do not actively partake in the plot in any way.

Anthropomorphism can be used in intelligent and enlightening ways, but in literature intended for children and youth we often find crudely anthropomorphised animals. An example of this can be found in another picturebook version of a Stallo tale, *Stallo og nordlysets sønn* [The Stallo and the son of the Northern Lights] by Annstein Mikkelsen, Anja Flåten and Edith Flåten (1998). In this story, the animals think, speak and act as if they are human beings – to help the son of the northern lights outsmart the Stallo. An intelligent willow grouse, among other helpers, plays a crucial role in the downfall of the Stallo. It is interesting to note that *Sølvmånen* does not resort to a simplistic use of this device.

Garrard (2012, p. 167) speaks of the difficulty of *allomorphic* representation of animals, representing the animal as Other, as different from humans, but not in a pejorative sense. One can argue that this is what pictorial representation of animals allows for in *Sølvmånen* and this might be true both of the grouse (in fig. 6) and the bird flying above the human's heads (in fig. 7). They are depicted as onlookers, but no fixed clues are given as to how they experience the world or

see the humans. This applies also to the gaze of the reindeer on the third spread (fig. 2). Furthermore, the animals are not in any way described verbally, with one exception. The reindeer are described as *uneasy* in spread no. 6, and we interpret this as the reindeer's response to the approaching Stallo. Distinguishing the crude from the critical form of anthropomorphism is important, according to Garrard (2012, p. 169). This description of the reindeer might be seen as an example of the latter.

Haraway (2008, p. 19-27) often studies animals with a long history of close relationships with humans. She discusses embodied communication between animals and humans and highlights the importance of respective inviting gazes. She emphasises that animals and humans are interactive becomings who are able to communicate about our relationship. In this particular case, however, it is not possible to deduce from the information given in the iconotext of *Sølvmånen* that the onlooking grouse, the bird flying above the human's heads, or the gazing reindeer experience interactive communication with the humans in the story.

It is also worth mentioning that the nature in most of the spreads is represented by two different Sami seasons. Several of the pictures consist of two-layered photos or drawings in which the artist has juxtaposed two different

seasons in the same landscape. Fig. 6 is typical in this regard. In the outer parts of the picture we see the abundant, giving early autumn, with rich fungi for the reindeer to eat. But as our gaze moves inward to the centre of the spread, the leaves are gone, the trees are bare, and we are approaching a cold, more challenging and austere 'autumn-winter'.⁶ This duality in the way nature is presented in the pictures contributes towards questioning a romanticised view of Sami natureculture.

If we compare this picturebook version of the Stallo tales with the recorded oral tales at the turn of the 20th century, we are struck by the difference. The tales are short, plot-driven and almost without descriptions, whether of scenery, climate, vegetation, plants or humans. (See e.g. tales published by Turi, 1910/2012⁷ and Qvigstad, 1927-29). *Sølvmånen's* pictures situates the narrative in a vast, richly detailed landscape with animals, plants, skies with wind, Northern lights, stars, moon and sun.⁸

The silent presence and materiality of the Nordic landscapes, strongly emphasise the animals and plants as they are given a large percentage of the spreads' surface, leaving limited space for the humans. The humans are often strategically placed where the reader's gaze will usually wander, but one cannot but wonder why the nature is given such a large share of the spreads. I am

tempted to ask whether the landscape, the animals and plants primarily are present in the story in their own right. Maybe the landscape, the foregrounded and stylistically enlarged plants and animals can just as well be said to *question* the human struggles and plots by their silence – thus inverting the usual roles often played by animals, plants and humans in traditional fairy tales.

The Stallo as a threatening or destructive force within natureculture
The Stallo's plans and actions in this story might shed further light on the presentation of nature in *Sølvmånen*. How is this character to be understood? The Stallo is in many of the oral narratives portrayed as a human, only bigger and stronger, most of all characterised by his evil and ludicrous nature. On the other hand, he is presented also as 'Other' (Cocq, 2008, p. 214). Contrary to many other supernatural beings in Sami oral narratives, the Stallo is definitely not someone to befriend. One of his characteristics is that he feeds on human flesh, as he does in this story, and his wife Luttak has artificial iron eyes and uses an iron tube to suck human blood. In other narratives, the Stallo can change into other forms and may come alive again after being killed. Humans can also sometimes be transformed into Stallos, often with the help of supernatural or religious forces.

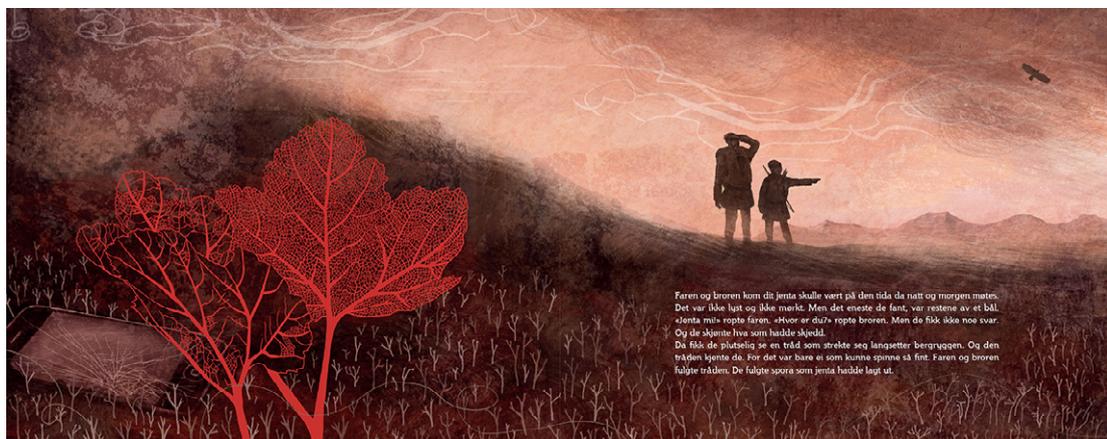


Figure 7.

Sissel Horndal. *Sølvmånen* (2015), p. 22-23. Rendered with permission.

There has been some discussion whether the Stallo is to be understood as a Sami or not; some see him as a foreigner, a non-Sami.⁹ JoAnne Conrad (2000) questions these interpretations, which often «typify and reduce the figure of Stallo to the embodiment of foreign evil, a threat directed at the representatives of good – the Sami, and as such, the categories of good and evil have also become ethnic markers» (p. 111).¹⁰ In her view, the Stallo is «a complex, contradictory and enigmatic figure that defies definition» (p. 108). In *Sølvmånen*, as in several other Stallo tales, the Stallos live in a «gamme», just like ordinary Sami families used to. The narrator mentions that he wears the Sami traditional costume, which we can also see from his silhouette in one of the spreads. In this story, he is thus clearly linked to the Sami realm. However, he abducts both the reindeer and the girl, and therefore represents a threat. The verbal text in this story states him to be «not an ordinary human» (spread no. 6, my translation). Copp lie Cocq (2005, p. 281) emphasises the Stallo's role as that of an enemy and suggests that the Stallo represents nature's threatening aspects. Humans, and especially children, are vulnerable and can get lost and die if they wander astray in the harsh northern climate. The Stallo figure might have been used in oral tales to warn children of the dangers of nature.

The Stallo in *Sølvmånen* is also presented as an embodiment of a threatening silver moon. This might point to an understanding of the Stallo as 'nature gone wrong', or as a destructiveness within nature itself. The Stallo can also be understood as destructive forces within human parts of nature. The girl is warned by the Stallo wife Luttak that her sons want «to feel the taste of your sweet blood and squeeze your soft heart between their fingers» (Horndal, 2015, spread no. 15, my translation). Here, Luttak is referring to the Stallo cannibalistic practices, but for an adult reader this description could just as well carry the overtones of sexual abuse.

This more nuanced reading of the Stallos is supported by a Freudian understand-

ing of the split character motif. In *Sølvmånen* there are two sets of splits linked to the Stallos. One split is the father and boy – who respect nature and fight for the girl and the reindeer – versus the destructive male Stallo and his sons. The other is a female split: the girl's dead grandmother and the Sami goddesses versus the evil Stallo wife. The female split is highlighted by placing Luttak and one of the goddesses in opposing corners of the spread depicting the conclusive battle (fig. 5). In Freudian literary theory the use of binary splits represents different aspects of the same character, good and evil divided into two figures (e.g. Bettelheim 1975/1991, p. 67-70). I will not go into the various psychological interpretations this might suggest, only underline the implication that the 'otherness' of the evil character is understood not as a threat from outside, but as a threat from within.

If the Stallos are understood as part of the Sami world, not foreign or outside enemies, we see that the Sami world also contains forces that are not harmonious. In our view, the picturebook *Sølvmånen* thus evades a simplistic presentation of the ecological indigenous inhabitant who lives in «an improbable Eden untouched by ignorance, stupidity or greed» (Garrard, 2012, p. 145). This book's universe is not an exemplary dwelling; troubling or destructive forces within natureculture – be they human or non-human – are there and have to be faced. This adheres to a postequilibrium view of natureculture where there is no past «golden age», where the ever-shifting character of nature and the relationships within it is emphasised. Nature does not stand still; it is complex and continually changing.

Concluding remarks

Retold fairy tales are able to combine tradition and innovation in fascinating ways, according to Sandra Beckett (2002, p. xx), and *Sølvmånen* can be seen as an example of this. Coupling tradition with renewal, the book's iconotext touches upon complex issues regarding the role of plants, animals and

humans in nature. It does not evade controversial political issues, but presents them in nuanced and intriguing ways, disclosing a postequilibrium view of natureculture where there is room for both harmony and discord, continuity and change. Another consequence of this analysis is that although *Sølvmånen* draws heavily on Sami oral tradition and examines questions regarding indigenous peoples and Sami natureculture, it is also a tale about interspecies coexistence and life

on Earth. The complexity of natureculture is emphasised in the interplay between words and pictures, and the human's pivotal role in traditional fairy tales is questioned and maybe even implicitly reversed by the pictures. *Sølvmånen* is an example of a book that literary critics such as Siri Gaski (2013) have called for: literature extending beyond a Sami context – innovative literature, fitting for a new era.

Notes

- 1 The pastoral and wilderness have been understood in different ways. Note Gifford's (2014, p. 17ff) clarification of their history and of how the genres have transformed into concepts in ecocritical theory.
- 2 Sáráhká is also connected to fire and is said to live in/under the fireplace in the «gamme» (Hætta, 1994, p.16).
- 3 This also applies to traditional Sami clothing worn by the characters, often merely shown by a detail or from a silhouette. Note that in fig. 6, the contours of the hats indicate Lule Sami or South Sami origin, suggesting that the characters belong to the smaller Sami groups most threatened by extinction.
- 4 At this point, I would like to mention my somewhat problematic role as an ethnic Norwegian interpreter and researcher. The renowned Sami professor Harald Gaski has welcomed non-indigenous/outside voices to interpret Sami literature (1997, p. 211-212), although he questions the possibility of «neutral» or «correct» interpretation both from outside as well as from inside Sami culture. I invite fellow researchers of Sami origin to offer their interpretations of *Sølvmånen*, as this would probably enlighten our mutual understanding.
- 5 For a broader understanding of the sociological aspects of wolf conflicts, see e.g. Ketil Skogen, Olve Krange and Helene Figari (2017).
- 6 The traditional Sami calendar is divided into eight seasons; early autumn is called autumn-summer (Aug- Sept., then there is autumn (Oct-Nov.) and autumn - winter (Nov. -Des.)
- 7 In his multimodal account, Turi does not illustrate the Stallo narratives, although some of his drawings, e.g. of reindeer, resemble drawings found in *Sølvmånen*. Sami literature has a long tradition of multimodal texts according to Gaski (2011), and *Sølvmånen* might be seen as taking part in this tradition.
- 8 This applies to the old recorded tales as they appear in the collector's renditions, but we must not forget the context in which these stories were told. The narrators might have thought descriptions of nature superfluous, as it existed as a given, always-present context surrounding the storytellers.
- 9 See Conrad, 2020.
- 10 Conrad (2000) notes that a few of the tales refer to the Stallos as coming from foreign territories, but argues that many more of the tales place them in a Sami context. According to Conrad, a common fallacy in folklore research is to build arguments from smaller and not very representative cases, not taking into account the general trends. In my view it is necessary to study the variety of narratives in folklore, bearing in mind that some narrators adjust tales to meet political ends (see e.g. Bengt Holbek, 1987). In *Sølvmånen*, the Stallos are presented as belonging to the Sami world.

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