Developing the tourism product

Koli’s cultural Heritage: An Ethnographic perspective

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2003

Dissertation submitted in part-fulfilment of the Requirements for the BA Honours degree of the University of Exeter, England.

THE COLLEGE OF ST MARK AND ST JOHN
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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the ways in which the community of Koli, in Eastern Finland has developed the education of their cultural heritage for visitors to the area, and how this has become a successful tourism product.

The literature review will focus on the historical role that artists played in the late 19th century in the development of tourism to Koli, and how it became a source of National pride and identity. The paper will then examine how Koli’s cultural heritage is being reinterpreted to increase tourism today. This paper builds on primary research collected during a fieldwork placement that was undertaken in November 2002. Anthropological methods were used during this fieldwork these included unstructured interviews, participant observation and Metla’s official literature.

The paper analyses the fieldwork and the ways in which the people of Koli are working together and using their cultural heritage, to produce cultural projects that will inform and educate the tourist on the diversity of Koli’s landscape and culture.

The paper concludes the value of cultural heritage as a form of a tourist attraction.

Keywords: Cultural heritage, tourism product, history, tourism development.
1. INTRODUCTION

This study will examine the key aspects of Koli’s cultural heritage and how these aspects today are being developed to create a variety of tourism products. The researcher will take a personnel interest in the topic after undertaking the undergraduate studies in Finnish culture. This in turn prompted the researcher to develop contacts with the Park Director for Koli National Park. Through developing a contact with the Park Director, a four-week period in November 2002 was negotiated for the researcher to conduct fieldwork in Koli National Park.

The study took an ethnographic perspective, which is supported by a literature review. The advantage to taking this approach enabled the researcher to gather current information unavailable in British libraries. To collect the data the researcher used anthropological methods of participant observation, unstructured interviews and official literature from the Finnish Forest Research Institute (METLA) and Joensuu University. One of the difficulties of taking this approach was accessing the relevance of the material available to the researcher in the field. An important point about the ethnographic approach is that when the researcher entered the field of study, every detail was important.

Before providing the reader with an outline of content for each chapter, a brief ethnographic context of where the fieldwork was carried out, will be given to set the scene for the reader of where in Finland the research was conducted.
1.1. Brief ethnographic context of this study

Koli National Park is located in Eastern Finland ninety minutes north east of the town of Joensuu (see map below). Koli National Park is situated on the western shore of Lake Pielinen in northern Karelia. The lake is the fifth largest lake in Finland and is located on the eastern side of Finland close to the Russian border. Koli National Park covers over 3000 hectares, with Ukko-Koli being the highest point in southern Finland. The village of Koli is just outside the park (see map pg 6).
1.2. Chapter review

Chapter two provides a review of current literature, discussing the importance of Koli’s history. The review identifies the key aspects that have created Koli’s cultural heritage. These include the significant role the landscape artists of the nineteenth century played, in the formation of Koli as a national landscape and tourist attraction. Secondly how the rural community used the agricultural method of Swidden cultivation was used by significant role and how this affected the landscapes of Koli.

Chapter three explores the differences between quantitative and qualitative research, and outlines why qualitative research was chosen for this study. It will discuss the anthropological methods used to collect the data, these include participant observation and unstructured interviews.

Chapter four presents an analysis of the data collected from the four-week fieldwork placement undertaken in Koli National Park. It will begin with an introduction of the key informants interviewed. This is then followed by an introduction of the cultural products being developed in Koli, combined with the key informants views and future recommendations for these products.

Chapter five draws the study together by evaluating what was learnt from the fieldwork. For this study the researcher has explored how Koli is developing tourism products today, by examining the number of ways Koli is reapplying its cultural heritage in order to educate visitors on the important role Koli has played in the history of Finland. The researcher concludes that it is essential to educate visitors on Koli’s cultural heritage. This enables the visitor gain an understanding and insight into the value of Koli.
2. CURRENT LITERATURE REVIEW

The review begins with an evaluation of the importance of the history of Koli. It is important to explore the history, as it will enable the researcher to understand how the cultural heritage reviewed in this chapter forms a back-cloth to the formation of what has become a successful tourism product. Lovén (2001:7) states “Today, man has a great responsibility in taking care of the life and sustenance of cultural landscapes as well as for the life and cultural heritage of local populations”.

A critical review of the literature will be shown to identify how certain aspects create the cultural history of Koli. These include the landscape artists of the 19th century, and how they played a significant role in the formation of Koli as a national landscape and tourist destination. Secondly, the cultural difference the rural and well educated within Finnish society, and thirdly how the agricultural method of Swidden cultivation has had an impact on the landscape.

2.1. The History of Koli

Koli’s National landscape has been an inspiration to tourists for three centuries, with the earliest settlement in the 15th century. Previous to this time it was feared and thought to be a ‘frightening place suitable for sacrificial rituals’ (Finnish Forest Research Institute 1995). Myths tell of witches and wizards who were said to have gathered together on the hills of Koli to hold their ceremonies. Many felt it was a sacred place and travelled to the hills to place gifts for the witches and wizards hoping that in return they would receive good fortune in areas such as hunting and fishing.

Midway through the 18th century, Koli became permanently settled and the area’s central landmark was the trade route between the Gulf of Bothnia and Lake Ladoga for the Karelians (www.metla.fi/koli/index-en.htm Accessed 11/10/2002).

This paper focuses on the cultural history of Koli, therefore it was important to establish the foundations that enabled Koli to develop cultural tourism products. One of the main building blocks was the distinguished collector Elias Lönnrot, famous for the creation of the Kalevala, which gained the status of national epic. He journeyed to the northern and eastern parts of Karelia in the early 1800’s in search of folk poetry. As a result he compiled a collection of his work, and formed the Kalevala ‘the sacred book of the ‘Finns’, that was originally published in 1835 (Karvonen-Kannas et.al. 2001:21). Today the whole Kalevala has been translated in poetic form into 35 languages and in abbreviated form in 11 languages. Each year the 28th of February has been designated as Kalevala day, as this was the day that the first edition was published.

The Kalevala had a profound influence on the socio political, economic and cultural life in Finland. Sihvo (1999) stated the collection of folk poetry ‘constitutes a mythical history of the Finns and Karelians’ (Sihvo 1999:186) Yrjö Blomstedt stated:
It is upon this epic and historical idealism that the future of our nation is based. The Kalevala, the heritage of its hero Väinämöinen, is the cornerstone on which the national independence of Finland and the future development of her culture must rest (Kivimäki et.al. 1994:4).

The Kalevala inspired many to visit the area such as other folklorists, ethnographers, geographers, and naturalists to study the environment, life and culture of the Karelian region. Such people that have studied the Karelian region published pieces of work and Karelia began to be seen “as the last refuge of the ‘Kalevala’ culture and milieu was generally adopted” (Kivimäki & Karolainen 1994:4).

In 1883 the suggestion of publishing an illustrated version of Lönnrot’s Kalevala was addressed to the head of the Finnish Fine Arts Association. The association met to discuss ideas for celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the Kalevala. A competition was announced with the objective of creating illustrations to depict the words of the Kalevala. The winner succeeded in completing this objective, although it was not until the late 19th century that Europe and Karelia both played a role in changing the direction towards realism in the representations of the characters of the Kalevala. It was this period as Kivimäki et.al. (1994) identified how “an interest in the primitive and the authentic arose in European art. The underlying concept of ‘Karelianism’ thus came to Finland via Paris” (Kivimäki & Karolainen 1994:6). An example can be seen in how the British searched for Celtic origins, and this is similar to ‘Karelianism’ as it formed a get away from ‘urban culture’ to the foundations of ‘National mythologies’. Kivimäki et.al. (1994) recognised ‘Karelianism’ as “an original expression of this international trend, blending racial mysticism, the discovery and creative application of the richness of folk art, artistic tourism wandering and above all the discovery of the world of the Kalevala” (Kivimäki & Karolainen 1994:6).

The second Kalevala illustration competition in 1890 began to display real ‘Kalevala, realism’. It was won by two individuals that had both travelled to Karelia. In October 1890 a Helsinki newspaper published an article on ‘the significance of Karelia for the arts and literature of Finland’. It stated “one can imagine the success of works of art whose themes would be from the places where the Kalevala was sung…What a national task it would be for both to bring forth treasures from that wilderness and its people! What a fortunate field it would be for art and literature to work hand in hand” (Kivimäki & Karolainen 1994:6). This was yet another form of motivation for the artists and writers to discover Karelia.

The Kalevala epic inspired the national romanticism period that began in the 1890’s. This period saw the beginning of a tradition of artists, writers and composers retreating to find inspiration in the untouched wilderness regions of Karelia. This connected landscape painting with national romanticism and its aim in ‘promoting national self-esteem.’ Untouched nature developed into the most significant national symbol and became Finland’s most important asset and resource. (Karvonen-Kannas et.al. 2001:11) This will be clarified in chapter four as to this day Finland markets itself internationally through their landscapes.
The term ‘Karelianism’ is an important aspect of the cultural history of Finland. It refers to “a phenomenon of ideology and style that emerged at the close of the nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth century, finding its inspiration in the Kalevala epic and the regions of Karelia” (Kivimäki & Karolainen 1994:4). ‘Karelianism’ was the term adopted when a core group of artists and writers known as the Karelians were the first to carry out expeditions to Karelia, for the intention as Kivimäki et.al. (1994:12) termed it “the travels of the Karelians were above all journeys undertaken by young gifted men for the purpose of gaining experiences”. Eero Järnefelt described the period of ‘Karelianism’ as follows:

*In that time of great inspiration we young artists set forth like explorers, inspired by French realism, to seek themes for our paintings in our own people and landscapes. Typically, we too thought that we had rediscovered the Finnish people and its landscapes, and the Kalevala, and the Kanteletar. For us they were like an uncleared wilderness set in a mystical light.* (Karvonen-Kannas et.al 2001:18)

The Karalianists were all of a similar age and had studied the Kalevala at school. They were journeying to discover for themselves the areas in which it had originated, to find the same form of inspiration they had received from reading the folk poetry of the Kalevala (Kivimäki & Karolainen 1994:8). The Karalianists made cultural trips to Karelia to find inspiration for visual arts, music and literature.

The first expedition to the untouched wilderness regions of eastern Finland took place in 1890 by the first famous artist, Axel Gallén-Kallela and his young wife Mary. They travelled to Karelia for their honeymoon and were soon joined on their travels by fellow artist Louis Sparre. During this trip observations were made and materials were gathered, which were to be displayed in Gallén’s later work. His work compiled of a powerful collection of paintings based on the tales of the Kalevala that were painted during the national romanticism period. Two very well known pieces included ‘The Great Black Wood Pecker’ painted in 1892 (see painting 1 pg 11). This painting was originally known as Erämaa (Wilderness) it succeeds in portraying the Karelianist ideal of pristine Karelian nature. The black woodpecker grips on to the standing dead trees. The gentle evening sky glowing above the dark, distant hills in the background create an image of the ideal peace of the wilderness (The North Karelian Museum). The Shepard Boy (see painting 2 pg 12) was also painted in 1892. Both these paintings are from his private collection.

Karvonen-Kannas et.al. (2001) put forward that main objective of national romantic art, to “uncover the original and authentic essence of the land and the people”. For this to be accomplished direct observation and identification with the subject was the key. This therefore enabled the painter to ‘construct a romantic image of the past, of a Kalevala folk living in harmony with nature. (Karvonen-Kannas et.al. 2001:11)
The Great Black Wood Pecker
Painting 1 - Axel Gallén-Kallela, 1892
The Shepard Boy
Painting 2 - Axel Gallén-Kallela, 1892
Axel Gallén-Kallela was soon followed by two artist couples, Eero and Saimi Järnefelt and Venny Soldan-Brofeldt and Juhani Aho travelled to the fell scenery of Koli in 1892 for their honeymoons. On arrival the two couples became ‘enraptured’ by the natural beauty of Koli. Juhani Aho (1892) writes:

*But is only from Koli itself that its real beauty can be estimated. It takes time to climb up there, perhaps a kilometre from the highest farm to the so-called “crack”. But there before us is a table laid with the wonders of nature.*

(Kivimäki & Karolainen 1994:16)

Juhani Aho was so amazed by the ‘duality’ of the landscape, to the east his view was of a ragged, rocky and wilderness landscape and in contrast the view to the west was ‘green and luscious’, Aho writes “The lyricism, sweetness and happy contentedness of Finnish nature all appealed to one there.” (Kivimäki & Karolainen 1994:8). Karvonen-Kannas (2001) identified “the landscape of national romanticism as a wild and often geographically recognizable scene of untouched wilderness rendered in stylised forms of colours” (Karvonen-Kannas et.al. 2001:12).

Juhani Aho’s novel *Panu* was written in 1897. It reflected the ‘typically karelianist idea that there had been a uniform Kalevala culture.” (Karvonen-Kannas et.al. 2001:19) Aho uses the setting of Northern Karelia, Lake Pielinen and Koli in his novel. The sacrificial mountain in Panu may well have been modelled after Koli, the sacred site in ancient folklore. Juhani Aho used the myths of the witches and wizards of Koli as the models for his characters.

Aho’s wife Venny Soldan-Brofeldt was a visual artist who looked at her travels in 1892 in a different light. It was almost a dull view compared to the men’s romantic outbursts, she concentrated on the places they stayed, the clothing and attitudes of the local people and folklorist characteristics. In 1892 she wrote “It was beautiful like a fairy tale: meadows, pastures, smoke from the cow-fires in the evening sun with the fells in the background” (Karvonen-Kannas et.al. 2001:23).

Eero Järnefelt returned to Koli on several occasions after this visit; it is said that he was the most deeply effected by Koli’s scenery. This has been conveyed through his more than 50 Koli themed paintings. The cultural trips made to Koli by these artists were not just significant to them, but also to the promotion of Koli’s landscape. When the author Juhani Aho returned home in 1892 he wrote several articles on his experiences to two national newspapers, and consequently the word about the magnificent landscape of Koli spread’ (Muhonen 1997:1)

Karvonen-Kannas et.al. (2001) stated “The national imagery of landscapes was to be found above all in eastern and inland regions of Finland” (Karvonen-Kannas, K et.al. 2001:21). It was the period of ‘Karelianism’ that brought national recognition to Koli’s landscape, and as Karvonen-Kannas et.al. (2001) identified the term ‘Finnishness’ “was constructed above all within the context of the landscape”. It was at this time that Koli began to be identified, as the national landscape for Finland and therefore Koli became a
source of national pride and identity. This represented the link between the emergence of landscape painting and the search for national identity.

During this period Koli started to take its first steps at becoming a new tourist destination (www.metla.fi/koli/index-en.htm Accessed 10/10/2002). A steamboat service was set up on Lake Pelisjärvi, and in 1896 the first tourist cabin was built on the hill of Ukko-Koli.

During the late 19th century, Finland began to market its tourism industry using images of nature and wilderness landscapes. With the link between landscape painting and the search for national identity, artists painting the landscapes of Koli began to play a major role in creating material for promoting tourism.

In 1892 Finland’s national composer Jean Sibelius also travelled to Karelia for a romantic honeymoon with his wife Aino. He observed Koli for the first time from Lieksa on the other side of Lake Pielinen. It was not until 17 years later, in 1909 that he visited Koli again. He journeyed there to join his brother in law Eero Järnefelt, after his last symphony had been a critical failure. This period of Sibelius’s life was known as the ‘dark era’. He was troubled with health problems; doctors had prohibited him from his pastimes of drinking and the smoking of cigars. He was also deeply in debt, which he was constantly trying to repay by taking out additional loans. (Oinonen-Edén 2002:67).

Sibelius began to compose his Fourth Symphony while in Koli, which he found to be a painstaking process. He journeyed up to the ‘crack’ on the mountain to look over Lake Pielinen to see the place where he had spent his honeymoon. As Oinonen-Edén (2002) stated “he literally saw his own life in a long perspective”. His journey up to the mountain whether he knew it or not was as Oinonen Edén (2002) identified ‘the symbol of his entire journey through life’. His Fourth Symphony was finally completed in 1911. Many experts are convinced “that Koli and its landscape had served Sibelius as a source of inspiration and creativity which led to the finalisation of the symphony” (Muhonen 1997:2). Experts considered the symphony a masterpiece and ‘his most inward and psychological work’. (Oinonen-Edén 2002:67)

Throughout the period of ‘Karelianism’ there were many examples of interaction between the arts. Not only did artists and writers travel to Karelia for inspiration but architects also. One example of this interaction is the inspiration Blomstedt received to travel to Karelia from reading accounts of journeys undertaken by his friend Wikström who travelled to Karelia in 1894. Blomstedt writes, “with his excellent and inspiring accounts, instilled an irresistible desire to travel to the lands of Karelia to study and collect architectural and ornamental themes” (Kivistö & Karolainen 1994:30)

2.2. Cultural Differences

The cultural differences between the well educated and the rural population living in Karelia was vast. The dependence on nature between the two societies was entirely different. The rural community depended on the land; it was an integral part of their lives, through farming, hunting, gathering and fishing and generally spending time outdoors
among nature. Lovén (2001:7) stated the “Cultural landscape is a living landscape, were human activities are in interaction but also in harmony with the life of the nature” The rural population believed the forest contained ‘sacred elements’ such as spiritualization and the worship of nature, in which both had their ‘roots in the shamanistic and Kalevala-based patheism and folk beliefs.’

In contrast the educated classes who saw travelling to Karelia as a pastime, related to nature on the basis “of an explicit ideological, philosophical or aesthetic principle” (Karvonen-Kannas et.al. 2001:7). On arrival to Karelia the educated classes were welcomed by rural Finns. They found them to be friendly and helpful, in fulfilling their tasks of finding inspiration for their work. During the mid 19th century the landscape form found in the visual arts began to reflect in varied ways the relationship with nature of ‘Finland’s upper classes and its new urban bourgeoisie’ (Karvonen-Kannas et.al. 2001:6).

The rural folk felt the educated did not understand the elements of sacredness in which the land was held, although these elements began to emerge in Finnish landscape art during the national romantic period. The artists portrayed through their visual art how the rural community lived their lives and “the Finnish commoner or peasant became an important cultural element, the mystical and lyrical representative of the soul of the people.” (Karvonen-Kannas et.al. 2001:7)

2.3. Swidden Cultivation

The rural population in Koli and throughout Karelia have used various forms of traditional agricultural methods since the 18th century, these have included Swidden cultivation, pasturing and fellings. Swidden cultivation also known as burn clearing and slash and burn took place in Finland as far back as 400 years ago. The painting by Eero Järnefelt (1893) clearly depicts how the rural community used the agricultural method Swidden cultivation (see painting 3 Pg 16).

The method of Swidden cultivation involved the cutting and burning of the overlying trees within a chosen area. The rural community saw fire as the most powerful clearer of land. The main reason for using this technique was the chemical and biological changes that occurred when burning the forest to ashes. When burnt to ash the nutrients contained within the wood provided an excellent foundation for cultivating crops. The topsoil of ash would then be tilled by a harrow in order to promote seed germination for the three traditional Swidden crop plants, barley, rye and Swidden turnip. The Swidden area would then serve as pastureland for the farmer. Swidden cultivation provided the basis for people’s nourishment. It also offered the background to the tools used, the clothes worn and the expressions used in daily life. (www.metla.fi/koli/index-en.htm Accessed 10/10/2002)

Swidden cultivation in the 18th century came up against a barrier as the forest developed a greater value as a raw material source for saw mills. Following this the 19th century saw the designation of land in order to control the burning. During the late 19th and early 20th century Swidden cultivation dominated Finland’s landscape it is estimated that this form of agriculture affected 4,000,000 hectares of land.
Throughout the ‘Karelianism’ period artists began to see the effects Swidden cultivation was having on Koli’s landscape, the burn-cleared fields in the forests lay with just stumps and roots present. The state of the forests began to be depicted through visual art. The photographer and author Into Konrad Inha pictured the forests in the 1890’s and they clearly show the clear-felled areas and the growth of broad-leaved forests. Axel Gallén-Kallela painted The Black Wood Pecker in 1892 this too clearly portrays the use of Swidden cultivation.

A fellow artist Pekka Halonen visited Koli in 1895 to experience the wilderness and mystic landscape that he had heard so much about. On his arrival he found the forests to be neglected and the feeling of wilderness had disappeared, what he in fact saw were the ravages made by man. He writes, “The atmosphere is the same as if one is forced to listen to an organ grinder in the middle of an artistic musical performance. The picture is unavoidable spoilt. This is modern robbery of national heritage on the stony slopes of the north. We can see that the shores of Pieinen will not give us what we came to look for.” (Pekka Halonen 1895 quoted in Muhonen 1997) Pekka Halonen returned to Koli in the spring of 1914 this time the experience formed a positive view, he found the inspiration he had been looking for and as a result he created a number of pictures and sketches. (Muhonen 1997)
2.4. Tourism in Koli

The Finnish landscape of untouched wilderness became the subject to fundamental change during the late 19th century and early 20th century as the forestry industry began to emerge. The wilderness had to give way to economic progress and extensive felling took place. With the combination of Swidden cultivation and felling the forests suffered immensely. It wasn’t until 1907 that the government took action to save Koli’s forests natural beauty, and in turn the tourism industry that depended on it. The state purchased the core area of Koli that totalled 1000 hectares in order to protect its forest landscape. In the same year, the state joined in the Koli tourist business and began to restore the first cottage, and built several others. In 1920 the state rented out the cottages to the Finnish Tourist Association that had been established in 1887.

The first management to govern Koli was the Forest and Park Service and in 1924 the Finnish Forest Research Institute (METLA) took over. (Muhonen 1997:251)

The development of tourism in Koli was slow. While it had the scenic values required for a successful tourism industry, it had yet to develop the services needed to accommodate tourists. The Finnish Tourist Association kept a travel handbook in Koli that recorded comments from tourists. In 1925 a tourist described Koli as:

"The road to the hill is very steep and difficult, so far it can only be ascended by foot. A road fit for cows up the hill is being planned, which of course would be desirable especially nowadays since a large number of tourists arrive by car. The road from Joensuu to Koli is very good, except for the last 12 km, which consists of winding village track. The most convenient way to reach Koli is from the railway station at Vuonislahti, where a tourist association boat meets every train."

(The North Karelian Museum)

Over time the significance and value of tourism in Koli began to be acknowledged, new roads were built and additional buildings were erected.

In 1991 the state announced the founding of Koli National Park it is administered by the Finnish Forest Research Institute (METLA) and covers 3000 hectares of land. The national park “serves in protecting the heritage landscape of Koli, the highlighted rocky hills, old growth forests, the environment and plant associations created by Swiddening, and it promotes environmental research and education” (www.metla.fi/koli/index-en.htm Accessed 10/10/2002) In 1991 the government renovated a building in the village of Koli now known as Kolin Ryynänen. This provided accommodation for artists travelling to Koli in the search for inspiration. The government also funded the building of the Heritage Centre Ukko, and provided funds to renovate the Hotel Koli.

The historical record of the ancient wilderness of Karelia was documented by the well-educated and wealthy upper classes of Finland. The ‘Karelianism’ period recorded an unforgettable image of the history, tradition and culture of Karelia. It was also the cultural link between Finland and Europe. “At its most profound, Karelianism was part of a
universal myth, an ideal of the harmony of man and nature, to which we are again returning to at the close of the millennium” (Kivimäki & Karolainen 1994:34).

This literature review has outlined the areas which have been researched in the fieldwork. The research collected will be examined in chapter four. Also the review has explored the history of Koli, summarising the key aspects of the cultural Heritage. These key aspects combined are being reapplied to develop cultural tourism products today.
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The study will build on primary research undertaken during a fieldwork placement in Koli National Park. Before commencing on the fieldwork placement the researcher identified the most effective research methods in order to obtain reliable knowledge and achieve the objectives of the study. There are two research methods available to use when undertaking fieldwork these are quantitative and qualitative research. When these methods are used and presented in the right way they can both provide an effective means for presenting findings.

Quantitative research enables the researcher to gather and measure numerical data, enabling the researcher to draw conclusions and analyse the findings. (Heider 2001:84) This form of research works very well as results are usually in the form of various statistical tables, graphs and charts. The design of these tables and charts will enable the researcher to present key points and at the same time draw attention to possible areas of further research. The results shown will more or less speak for themselves. (Denscombe 1999:) This concept will not be adopted in this study.

Qualitative research involves the researcher being placed in a social situation in order to discover what people think and feel about a subject. Creswell (1994) points out qualitative research is based on an inquiry process, building a more complex picture of a human or social problem. Anthropologists have identified six main research methods that form qualitative research these are focus groups, ethnography, sociometry, unobtrusive measures, historiography and interviews. Ethnography is the method that has been chosen for this study.

3.1. Ethnography in Koli National Park

Anthropological fieldwork was carried out for this study that took place over a period of four weeks. Therefore ethnography was selected, as it would collect the most consistent and valid results. Ethnography would be carried out using the following methods of participant observation and unstructured interviews as the main forms of data collection. Social anthropologists used ethnography as an early research strategy. Their original objective was to provide a detailed account of the lives and cultures of isolated tribes. They felt these investigations necessary as these tribes may alter or even wither away to extinction when coming in to contact with the ‘industrial world’. This early approach to ethnography has set the scene for ‘much of what is undertaken as ethnography today’ (Dencombe 1999:68).

Ethnography requires the researcher to spend a period time in a naturally occurring setting among the people whose lives and culture are being studied. The main aim of ethnography is to understand another way of life from the native point of view, this is supported by Malinowski’s (1922:25) definition of the goal of ethnography which is “to grasp the natives point of view, his relation to life, to realise his vision of his world”
(quoted in Denscombe 1999:69). The ethnographer’s task is to learn from the people rather than study them, the ethnographer must become a student in order to discover the hidden principles of another way of life (Spradley 1980:3).

Brewer (2000) identifies fieldwork as qualitative research which involves “the study of real life situations. Field researchers therefore observe people in the settings in which they live, and participate in their day-to-day activities. The methods that can be used in these studies are unstructured, flexible and open-ended. (Brewer 2000:18)

The researcher travelled to Koli National Park to conduct fieldwork from the 11\textsuperscript{th} November 2002 to 10\textsuperscript{th} December 2002. The park is situated on the western shore of Lake Pielinen in Northern Karelia, eastern Finland. The researcher stayed in accommodation located on the outskirts of Koli Village, which is owned by the Finnish Forest Research Institute (see photograph 1 pg 21).

The researchers main objective was to find out how Koli’s cultural heritage is being reapplied today to educate tourists and therefore creating a successful tourism product. The ways in which this objective was met was by exploring what cultural projects already exist within Koli and whether there were any plans for future projects. To compile this information the researcher needed to enquire who would be the most suitable contacts. The researcher was fortunate in that the National Park Director Lasse Lovén worked in the same vicinity. This enabled the researcher to gather information and arrange interviews within Koli village and at The University of Joensuu.

Due to the position of the accommodation it enabled the researcher to explore areas of the national park and to easily access the village or the hotel and heritage centre. To do this several forms of transport were used, travelling by foot, snowshoe or car from an occasional lift by employees of Metla. The fieldwork was conducted when Finland was experiencing a very cold winter with temperatures as low as –40c and 1 metre of snow. During the winter period there is limited daylight and this constricted the researchers ability to explore. A number of research tools were used to collect evidence for achieving the objective of the fieldwork. These tools included a Dictaphone for interviews and the taking of field notes and photographs on a daily basis.
Photograph: 1

The Research Centre
3.2. Undertaking participant observation in Koli National Park

The researcher chose to travel to Koli National Park as it was an unfamiliar location and therefore enabled the researcher to enter social situations as a stranger, which resulted in the researcher learning and understanding as much as possible about the whole situation. Social situations are places in which the researcher is able to observe and participate in social interaction. The researcher was able to gather information by participating in the daily lives of informants in their natural settings. The researcher achieved this either by watching and observing or talking to informants in Koli such as the employees from the local shops, the heritage centre, the hotel or Metla. By carrying out these actions the researcher naturally fell into the roll of the participant observer.

The researchers task over the period of four weeks was to as Denscombe (1999:150) identifies “to gain trust, to establish rapport and foster insights, insights that are the trademark of participant observation as a research method”.

The researcher carried out participant observations in a number of different settings. These observations were made over a period of four weeks during the light period of the day, which was from 8.00am to 3.30pm. The main areas of observation were in the village of Koli where the researcher attended meetings that were held in the village hall, also inside the Koli Ryynänen café where cultural exhibitions and events were held. The second area of observation was at the Heritage Centre Ukko where educational programmes were run for visitors and students (see photograph 2 pg 23). The third area for participant observation was at the Hotelli Koli where a number of cultural evenings were held (see photograph 3 pg 23).

For this study the researcher has closely examined the work conducted by Spradley (1980). Spradley indicated two types of participant. The ordinary participant, which is the role most humans take on in everyday life and the participant observer who as Spradley (1980:54) identifies as having six major differences compared to the ordinary participant.

The first difference is, the participant observer will visit the research area with a ‘dual purpose’. Firstly the observer is “to engage’ with activities appropriate to the situation and (2) to observe the activities, people, and physical aspects of the situation” (Spradley 1980:54). This approach is in Comparison to the ordinary participant who would take the ‘single minded approach’. Secondly the participant observer will develop the role of becoming explicitly aware by increasing their awareness, therefore cataloguing and remembering every detail of a research area. Thirdly the participant observer will approach a research area with a ‘wide angled lens’ taking in a much broader range of information. In taking this approach the researcher will gather some of the most important information for the study. Fourthly the participant observer will simultaneously experience being an insider and an outsider. At times during this study the researcher became a full participant in an activity with out recording any observations. At other times the researcher took on the main role of observing the activity. For the fifth type of participant observer the researcher will need to increase their introspectiveness when in new situations. By using introspection as a research tool, the researcher can ask themselves what feelings they had when involved in a new situation. This tool will enable
Photograph: 2
Heritage Centre Ukko

Photograph: 3
Hotelli Koli
the researcher to gain skills and understand how to follow the cultural rules when researching in unfamiliar locations such as Koli. The final task of the participant observer is to keep a detailed record on daily basis of the research undertaken.

Spradley (1980:58) has developed a series of five different types of participation these are in on a scale from complete, active, moderate, passive and non-participation. Each type has a different level of involvement. During this study the researcher developed the role of a moderate to active participant. Moderate participation for example involved the researcher recording detailed field notes when observing how snowshoeing was carried out. The researcher would then attempt to snowshoe carrying out the same actions of someone who is experienced at snowshoeing. As the researcher only carried out moderate participation in this activity it meant that they would never achieve the same skill and status as a regular.

Active participation involves the observing of an activity, then over time the understanding of the activity grows enough for the researcher to get involved and carry out the activity for themselves. An example of how the researcher conducted active participation was through observing and documenting an employee of Metla making traditional Finnish pastries. Through learning and understanding the technique the researcher carried out the same method. (Spradley 1980)

### 3.3. Undertaking unstructured interviews in Koli National Park

For this study unstructured interviews were chosen as a form of data collection. The Park Director set out a list of suitable candidates to interviews in order for the researcher to obtain personal responses to the studies area of research. Over the four weeks of fieldwork five separate interviews were conducted. Each interview was held in a different location, three of them were conducted in Koli and the remaining two in Joensuu. All Interviews were arranged via email or phone and were conducted during the light period of the day, between 8.00am and 3.30pm.

A number of the interviewees did not speak or understand English therefore due to the barrier of language the Park Director identified a number of local people who would be suitable as a translator. The researcher approached a lady who lived locally who spoke excellent English, she volunteered to help and act as a translator.

The main reason the researcher chose unstructured interview’s was due to the barrier of language. Brewer (2000) identifies why unstructured interview’s are a useful research method to use, due to “the absence of formal structure gives greater freedom for respondents to answer accurately and in depth”.

Before the interviews took place the researcher chose a number of themes and developed a number of questions that applied to this study. The themes and questions were created with the language barrier in mind therefore they needed to be clear for the informants to understand and were prepared so that the translator had a brief outline of the areas the researcher needed a response. The researcher was able to introduce the topic or questions
and then let the interviewee develop their own thoughts and ideas in their own words. Denscombe (1999:113) describes how “allowing interviewees to speak their minds is a better way of discovering things about complex issues”. Unstructured interviews enabled the researcher to be as unobtrusive as possible. When introducing topics the researcher could prompt the interviewee and ask further questions on the subject as necessary. This study used the one to one interview on the informants that understood and spoke English. This technique was used purely because each informant interviewed was chosen for his or her knowledge of a particular subject. Denscombe (1999:114) identifies the advantages of using the one to one interview first of all they are relatively easy to arrange. Secondly the views and opinions expressed in the interview have only stemmed from the input of the researcher. Finally when interviewing just one person it is relatively easy to guide the interviewee through the topics.

The unstructured interview were an extremely valuable research method for this study as they were a success and produced deep and rich sources of data for the areas related to the study, these sources of data will be discussed in chapter four.

3.4. Writing the Ethnographic Record

With any form of ethnography an ethnographic record must be kept. Spradley (1980) indicates an ethnographic record “consists of field notes, tape recordings, pictures, artefacts and anything else that documents the social situation under study” (Spradley 1980). For this study an ethnographic record was created over the period of four weeks. It was mainly made up from written field notes and photographs. These were taken on a daily basis.

The written field notes and photographs were taken in a variety of different settings. These ranged from the surrounding wilderness areas of Koli National Park to the art and Cultural Museum in Joensuu. For example the written field notes consisted of the activities experienced and conversations that were held with local people. The field notes were recorded when in a social situation or in the same evening. The Dictaphone was used for all of the interviews conducted.

In addition to these field notes the researcher kept a fieldwork journal that contained a record of experiences, fears, ideas, mistakes, breakthroughs, confusions and problems that arose during the field work placement (Spradley 1980:71). Malinowski (cited in Kuper 1983) says that he “saw the personnel diary of the fieldworker as a safety valve a means of challenging the personal cares and emotions of the ethnographer away from the scientific notes”. The journal for this study was kept alongside the written field notes with each entry made, dated. The journal represented the researchers personal side of the fieldwork. Over the period of four weeks the researchers reactions to the interviews and experiences were contained in the entries of the journal. Along side this the reactions and impressions from others in regards to the researcher were also recorded.
3.5. Analysis of data

The key aspects of Koli’s cultural heritage focused on in chapter two outlined the main areas that were researched. The research methods discussed in this chapter enabled the researcher to collect data when conducting fieldwork in The Koli National Park. The findings collected will be analysed and presented from an ethnographic perspective in chapter four.

3.6. Secondary research

The literature gathered throughout the fieldwork is presented and discussed in the current literature review in chapter two. Its aim was to give the reader an insight into the history of Koli and to understand the key aspects that emerged over several centuries to create Koli’s cultural heritage.

This chapter has discussed the methods that have enabled the researcher to gather the data for this study. Before conducting the fieldwork placement the researcher was made aware of the limitations that could occur when gathering research.
4. TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL HERITAGE: AN ETHNOGRAPHY

Introduction

This study has provided a view of current literature in chapter two, which gives the reader a context in which to see the ethnography. Chapter three then briefly outlined the methodology that was used during the fieldwork to collect the data that will be discussed in this chapter.

The researcher has acknowledged the criticisms of previous short dissertations that have relied on secondary research and limited research in the field. To counter this criticism, the researcher sought the views of a range of key informants these included: The National Park Director, an employee of The Finnish Forest Research Institute (METLA), The Manager of the Heritage Centre Ukko, The Educational Project leader at The Heritage Centre Ukko, The Project Manager of The cultural project of Koli, The Professor of Tourism at Joensuu University, The project leader of ‘Locality as a Tourism Product’ at Joensuu University, a local myth and story teller and a local retired Karelian Farmer.

Views from the key informants are complemented in this chapter by the participant observation and unstructured interviews that were conducted in a number of social situations (Spradley 1980).

The aim of the fieldwork was to provide an ethnography of the development of a cultural tourism product in Koli. Each key informant helped the researcher learn and understand the key aspects of Koli’s cultural heritage, and how these aspects are being reapplied today to create a successful tourism product. There were a number of common themes raised in the interviews, that enable the researcher to create an overall picture of how the cultural projects have developed and been accepted by the local community. Throughout this chapter the views of the key informants will be discussed to enable the reader to develop an insight into the cultural tourism product being developed in Koli.

4.1. An introduction to the key informants

For this study the researcher feels it is necessary to create in the mind of the reader a visual image of the key informants, to enable the reader to gain an understanding of how they assisted the researcher in collecting valuable data. The following key informants spoke very good English therefore the researcher was able to gain a much clearer insight into their character.

The National Park Director Lasse Lovén was the first point of contact when preparing to travel to Finland to conduct fieldwork. He agreed for the researcher to undertake fieldwork in Koli and to stay in the research centre owned by The Finnish Forest Research Institute (METLA). The researchers first impression of Lasse was his dedication towards his work and his willingness to help in answering any questions or obtain any
Throughout the fieldwork Lasse Lovén acted as a continuity for the researcher.

The employee of Metla, mr. Pekka Äänismaa also working at the research centre was the second person the researcher came into contact with. He was helping Lasse to produce a book on how Swidden cultivation has been reapplied in Koli. Through speaking excellent English he provided the researcher with an in depth insight into the agricultural process Swidden cultivation.

The Manager, Merja Lindroos and the Educational Project Leader, Kirsi Sihvonen of The Heritage Centre Ukko, (see photograph 4 pg 29) were both very lively characters, dedicated to educating visitors of all ages, of the importance of Koli’s culture and nature. They were both extremely helpful in explaining the history of Koli and the importance of creating programmes to educate visitors.

The Project Manager of The Cultural Project of Koli, Elli Oinonen-Edén was an extremely important source of information. As she had studied Koli for over twenty years, she felt very strongly about keeping Koli’s cultural heritage alive. She fought extremely hard against the people wanting to develop Koli as she considered it would be a great shame to detriment such great beauty in the name of money. She was a great inspiration to the researcher as she strived for what she believed in.

The Professor of Tourism at Joensuu University, Raija Komppula was extremely knowledgeable and created an impression of power and vibrancy. She provided the researcher with information and guidance to appropriate sources and informants in the University.

The project leader Tarja Kupiainen also at Joensuu University, was working on the project ‘Locality as a tourism product’. She was a very enthusiastic lady who was extremely willing to help and explain her views on what Koli could achieve in terms of cultural tourism in the future.

The following two key informants did not speak or understand English, therefore the researcher found a local member of the community Minna Saarelainen that spoke excellent English and was happy to help by taking on the role of translator.

The local retired Karalian Farmer, Unto Korhonen and the local myth and storyteller Ilmari Martikainen provided the researcher with an insight into their experience of Koli’s history over the last 60 years, as both informants were born in the surrounding area of Koli. They both discussed the key aspects of Koli’s cultural heritage, and made future recommendations for further developments of Koli’s cultural heritage product.
Photograph: 4

Merja Lindroos, Kirsi Silvonen and Janine Lyon-Williams

The Heritage Centre Ukko
4.2. The informants views and ideas on the key aspects of Koli’s cultural Heritage

The key aspects of Koli’s cultural heritage were highlighted in the current literature review. These were firstly the importance of the untouched wilderness landscape of Koli during the 19th and 20th century, in establishing the National Finnish identity and creating such an inspiration for so many. Secondly the cultural differences between the well educated and the rural population and thirdly the traditional agricultural methods used on the landscapes during the 19th and 20th century. These main aspects were raised during each interview with the key informants; this provided the researcher with an insight into how Koli are reapplying their cultural heritage to develop cultural products today.

The Finnish landscape has served as an inspiration for music, visual arts and literature for several centuries. Eero Järnefelt’s ‘Landscape of Koli’ painted in the summer of 1924 represents the inspiration found within the landscape (see painting 4 pg 31). The researcher experienced how the landscape provided such an inspiration. This is shown from the several photographs taken from the view at Ukko Koli (see photograph 5 pg 32 photograph 6 pg 33, photograph 7 pg 33).

Today Finland markets itself abroad as a country of outstanding natural beauty, with an alternating blue and green band of calm lakes and forests during the spring, summer, and autumn months and a winter wonderland during the winter months. What makes Koli so unique is the diversity of the landscape offered to visitors all year round, and the traditional farming culture. Cultural projects are being developed to educate visitors on the importance of Koli’s Cultural Heritage and therefore motivating people to visit.

4.3. ‘The Cultural Project of Koli’

The researcher travelled to Joensuu and met Elli Oinonen-Edén in ‘Carelicum’- The North Karelian Museum. On meeting Oinonen-Edén her feelings of admiration for Koli shone through, as from an early age she had made several trips to Koli with her family and school. Oinonen-Edén believed that visiting Koli was something every Finnish person had to experience, and feels that Koli inspired her to do what she does today. Oinonen-Edén explained how powerful the view at Ukko Koli is to her, as “it purifies her, all the unnecessary things in her life fall away and the most important things are brought to the surface”. Oinonen-Edén believes Koli provides the perfect place when trying to find your inner self. She explained the uniqueness of Koli’s cultural history “as it has inspired so many and created what is known as the ‘Finnish identity’, she felt “these aspects of cultural heritage should never be lost”.

Painting 4 ‘Landscape of Koli’
Eero Järnefelt, 1924
Photograph: 5, Ukko Koli
Photograph: 6
The view from Ukko Koli by day

Photograph: 7
The view from Ukko Koli by night
This belief was nearly lost in 1972 when a discussion started about extensively developing the ski slopes and creating a holiday village around the hill region in Koli. The plan would create over 700 jobs but would significantly damage the natural beauty of Koli, fortunately this development never surfaced. In 1973 The Advisory Council of Nature Conservation was formed and three years later, a committee of National Parks proposed the establishment of Koli National Park. In 1990 further tourism developments were announced, this is when the community went into conflict with some agreeing and others disagreeing the plans. Oinonen-Edén strongly disagreed and began a petition in order to protect the cultural environment of Koli. Oinonen-Edén collected over 87,000 names in favour of establishing Koli National Park, and presented the petition to the Minister of Environment, and finally in April 1991 Koli National Park was founded (Muhonen 1997).

In 1999 Oinonen-Edén began the ‘Cultural Project of Koli’ with the help of funding from the European Union project ‘Developing and marketing the culture and cultural tourism of Koli’ (Oinonen-Edén 2001). The main objective of this project as she states is “to revive the cultural fame of Koli and to get more visitors and thereby more tourist income”, also stating that “as Koli is now Nationally known that any events planned must be as big as Koli and have a significant connection to Koli’s History”.

The first event organised by Oinonen-Edén, was a modern art exhibition ‘Reconciliation’ held on the downhill skiing slopes in the summer of 2000. This event was held to heal the scars of the disagreements that have arisen over the last 30 years over the development plans for Koli. The exhibition signified the coming together of man with nature and culture. ‘1000 flags of peace’ were created by two architects and was the main piece of artwork. Each flag was positioned on the downhill slope, where also the artwork of six other artists were displayed. The exhibition as Oinonen-Edén states “was a success as the local community came together forgetting past differences”.

For the summer of 2001 a more traditional approach was taken for the second event. A theatre performance on the hill of Koli, was produced to educate visitors on the Karelianist period. The theatre performance ‘The Return of Sibelius’ told of the life of the Finnish composer, Jean Sibelius and his journey to Koli to find inspiration for his compositions. Since the summer of 2001 ‘Cultural Project of Koli’ organised three more events that were held at Hotelli Koli over the winter months of 2002. The theatre performance ‘The Return of Sibelius’ is planned to return in the summer of 2003 with the idea of introducing a boat that will play the music composed by Sibelius when transporting visitors from Lieska to Koli. Also during the summer of 2003, a classical music concert will be performed in Koli’s church. A number of exhibitions of different arts are planned to be held in The Heritage Centre Ukko and Kolin Ryynänen.

When the researcher asked for the views of other key informants on the theme of developing cultural projects in Koli, there was a satisfied response with further recommendations for future projects. Ilmari Martikainen supported Oinonen-Edén on the fight against the development of more slopes and holiday homes on the hills of Koli. He feels “Koli is a very holy and spiritual place and that any development to the landscape would ruin the visitor experiencing these same feelings”.

He believes “the cultural projects have successfully motivated visitors to Koli, and this form of tourism has had a substantial influence on Koli’s economy”. Martikainen suggests that “the cultural projects should include and educate visitors more on the spiritual aspects of the landscape, so by educating the visitors he feels it will make them more aware and take a greater responsibility towards the area”. Martikainen regards Koli as “a place where you can escape from reality to relax and recharge your batteries, and feels this aspect of Koli should be highlighted more when marketing Koli to International countries”. Martikainen is concerned that if “modern technology like fast food restaurants and computer stores are introduced to Koli, for the visitor’s convenience it would have damaging effects on Koli’s unique selling points”. He would see the announcement of wanting to develop such facilities as “a reason for battle in the fight against modern technology in order to maintain Koli’s cultural and natural settings”.

Unto Korhonen is also very happy with the work done so far by the ‘Cultural Project of Koli’. He suggested a proposal for a future cultural project for an aspect not yet ‘touched on’, which was traditional Finnish food. He recommended “developing a project to celebrate the ‘Midsummer Eve’. He thought it could promote traditional Finnish food, like the Karelian pastries which are a speciality to the region. There are a variety of traditional pastries available in Koli, Pirogs are very popular they are made from rice, milk and eggs, the main two types of salty Pirogs known as ‘Vatruska’ and ‘Sultsina’. While on fieldwork the researcher took the opportunity to try a number of Finland’s traditional foods.

Korhonen also suggested that ‘Mattila’ (see photograph: 8 pg 37) an old run down house owned by the National Park be restored and converted into a gallery and artists residence. Since interviewing Korhonen it has been announced by the National Park that they have got funding for planning the restoration work on ‘Mattila’.

During the researchers fieldwork, Lasse Lovén was constantly thinking of new ideas to educate visitors on Koli’s cultural heritage. He began to work on plans to renovate Koli’s harbour. He felt it was necessary to educate visitors on the cultural importance of the harbour, so the forming of an exhibition began. The exhibition is planned for summer 2003. It will be held in an unused building in the village and will display photographs and paintings of the harbour 100 years ago.

4.4. The re-introduction of Swidden cultivation

Ilmari Martikainen stated that “Swidden cultivation was a traditional way of life for Koli’s rural communities up until 1930’s”. In Finland Koli is known as the last area to use the agricultural method. This method is a key aspect of Koli’s cultural heritage, so Martikainen felt “it was extremely important that Swidden cultivation is being reapplied to controlled areas in the National Park”. The Finnish Forest Research Institute (Metla) announced in 1994 that they were going to re-establish swidden cultivation to one hectar every year. Äänismaa states “this was to restore the culture and areas of heritage landscape from Koli’s past”. Around six hectors have been traditionally burned and
cultivated as practised by rural communities from past centuries (see painting: 5 pg 37). Swidden cultivation is very important to maintain diversity as the burnt trees form a habitat essential for a variety of species which have nearly died out. Martikainen believes “that the rest of Finland has lost this culture and many are unaware of this method”, Minna Saarelainen who helped the researcher translate interviews admitted that “before arriving in Koli she had never heard of Swidden cultivation”. Martikainen says “that for these reasons alone it is important that Koli continues Swidden cultivation while constantly researching the method”. Lasse Lovén explained how “the local community were happy with Metla reintroducing Swidden cultivation and in the past local volunteers and visitors have been invited to help with the burning”. Unto Korhonen, being a retired farmer himself is very interested in the method, he feels “that one hectare a year is not large enough to make much of a difference, and should be increased to over two hectares in order to have a substantial impact on the land”. Korhonen informed the researcher “that behind the Research Centre is an area of land where the trees are only 60-70 years old due to it being one of the last places that Swidden cultivation was used”.

4.5. Educating visitors of the importance of Koli’s nature and cultural heritage

The education of visitors to the area is classed as extremely important by all of the key informants the researcher spoke to. Unto Korhonen feels “that by educating visitors on the importance of Koli’s cultural heritage, they will then appreciate and understand their surroundings more”. Through educating the visitors Ilmari Martikainen “hopes they will find the spiritual and cultural impact that the landscapes of Koli hold”. There are several main areas where visitors can receive educational programmes and information on the importance of Koli’s landscapes and cultural heritage.

The ‘Carelicum’- The North Karelian Museum in Joensuu houses two exhibitions the first is a permanent exhibit that displays information on local histories and folk traditions, and the second is a changing exhibit that display local or international issues. The exhibitions present Karelia as a broad cultural-historical and geographical concept. From observations made the museum enables the visitor to step back in time, the exhibitions bring the past to life through the collection of objects and audio-visual effects.

A small cultural heritage museum is found in Koli village behind Kolin Ryynänen, and displays historical artefacts such as photos and paintings collected during the Karelianism period. The researcher was unable to visit the exhibition as it was closed over the winter period. As well as being a museum and café Kolin Ryynänen is also an artist residents which is maintained by the Koli Culture Association and North Karelia art committee. Many artists from around the world have visited Koli and stayed in these residents.
The main information centre for tourists in Koli is the Heritage Centre Ukko built in 1999, and is located on the Ukko Koli hill, the highest point in southern Finland situated next to the Hotelli Koli. The word “Ukko in Finnish means old wise man or old high and sacred spirit, which refers to mysticism, myths and cultural heritage of Finns” (http://www.metla.fi/koli/kolikp-en.htm ). An association called Friends of Ukko-Koli assist Metla in the running of the centre. The role of the heritage staff is to forward Koli...
National Park in the direction of undertaking more “research, environmental education and nature and congress tourism”. The heritage centre was built to educate and inform visitors on the importance of Koli National Park’s natural and cultural heritage. The members of staff carry this out by directing visitors to familiarise themselves with “the nature, landscapes, heritage environments and cultural history of the locality” (http://www.metla.fi/koli/kolikp-en.htm). The heritage centre houses an information centre, library, combined café and nature shop (see photographs 9 and 10 pg 39), permanent exhibition (see photographs 11 and 12 pg 40) and auditorium that runs a ‘multi-vision’ programme on Koli’s nature and culture. The combined café and nature shop are a significant part of the heritage centre. The main items for sale in the nature shop are locally made handicrafts such as soap stone candle holders, bee wax candles, wooden sculptures and knit wear. The café offers a selection of locally baked pastries and organic tea. From observing the café and nature shop it made the researcher realise how important the selling of local produce was to the heritage centre.

From observations made, the heritage centre enables the visitor to interact with the core theme of nature and culture. On entering the heritage centre the researcher was greeted by members of staff wearing traditional clothes. This created an impact on the researcher as it emphasised the key aspect Koli is working to preserve.

The manager of the heritage centre, Merja Lindroos is employed by the Finnish Forest Research Institute, she takes care of the communication, website, exhibitions and conferences within the heritage centre. Alongside Merja Lindroos works Kirsi Sihvonen who plans environmental educational programmes for school children. Her main aim “is to develop programmes that allow children to experience nature as something exciting, she wants the children to see themselves as part of nature by running through fields and lakes they can learn to use nature without consuming it”.

Sihvonen feels “that the nature and culture programmes are an important tool in environmental education”. In May 2003 the Heritage centre are expecting over 500 school children to participate in ‘nature trails’. The trails will enable the children to discover and learn to identify plants and animals in Koli National Park.

Sihvonen’s role at the heritage centre also involves educating guides about these trails. At the moment the heritage centre has four guides who are all private entrepreneurs. Martikainen is one of the guides, this involves as he explains taking parties around the National Park to educate the visitors on the sacred and spiritual value of the nature and culture within the park.
Photograph: 9

Combined Café and Nature shop

Photograph: 10

Combined Café and Nature shop
Photograph: 11

Heritage centre’s permanent exhibition

Photograph: 12

Heritage centre’s permanent exhibition
There are a number of walks that can be taken depending on the time schedule, the two hour guided walk enables the visitors to walk to the two observation platforms Akko Koli and Ukko Koli (map 3 shows the two platforms pg 42) and to the Pirunkirkko (Devils church). The devils church is shaped like the letter z and as the wind passes through it creates an eerie echo. The name Pirunkirkko comes from the belief that the devil had his own church in the cave. Myths tell of elves and goblins who were said to have lived in the cave, it was also said that local witches and wizards gathered near the cave to hold their ceremonies. The surrounding area of the cave was known as a sacred place and many travelled to place gifts for the witches and wizards.

4.6. Art culture in Koli

From observations made during the fieldwork art and craft were a strong theme throughout Koli. The Hotelli Koli and The Heritage Centre Ukko both displayed artwork sculptured by the late Eva and Paavo Ryynänen. Each individual piece of artwork is crafted from one piece of wood. Inspired by the Kalevala the main themes of these pieces of artwork were nature, animals and children. A number of the key informants felt the sculptures represented the Finnish way of life.

A small shop in the village sold a variety of handicrafts although its main focus was on landscape paintings of the different Finnish seasons. The researcher was invited to a straw exhibition held at Kolin Ryynänen. The display was themed around the Nativity it demonstrated the different ways in which straw could be used to form decorations. Since then the project has been awarded funding, this will allow the creators of the project to develop a number of activities based around the straw collected from Swidden cultivation sites. The heritage centre suggested they could create a three hour program for school children. This would involve the children visiting a Swidden cultivation site and then creating a straw decoration of their own.

The exhibition gave the researcher an insight into why constantly developing programmes to educate visitors is so important in keeping Koli’s cultural heritage alive.
4.7. Fieldwork in different social settings

Through using ethnography it necessitated the researcher to make a selection process of the different social situations in which the researcher was involved. This was important in order to provide the reader with an overall view of how the key cultural aspects are being reapplied into Koli’s cultural tourism today.

The social situation’s chosen by the researcher all correspond to Spradley’s (1980) concept in which each ‘social situation’ contains three common elements, place, actors and activities. In order to make sense of a social situation these key elements are to be identified. Spradley (1980) has created a basic diagram to help in the understanding of a ‘social situation’.

![Diagram: 1](Spradley 1980:40)

The first key element the researcher was aware of was the place or ‘social situation’. After choosing the place of observation the researcher was then aware of the second key element, ‘actors’ the people within the ‘social situation’. Depending on the social situation each person would become an actor and take on a role these included a tourist/visitor, student or employee. Through observing, the researcher noted down certain aspects such as their behaviour, their clothing and the way in which they are talking. The third key element that the researcher was aware of was the activities that took place. As the researcher repeated their observations in each social situation, each individual activity formed patterns of social behaviour that could be recognised (Spradley 1980:39).

Spradley’s concept was applied to the ‘social situations’ the researcher selected as the key areas of interaction. The key areas of interaction were selected to gain further insight and to substantiate what the key informants have said.

During the fieldwork the researcher was invited by members of the community and employees from The Heritage Centre Ukko to participate in a number of activities. This allowed the researcher to understand the importance of keeping the cultural heritage alive and how the educational programmes being developed by the heritage centre are proving to be a success.
Meetings attended

When the researcher arrived in Koli, the Park Director Lasse Lovén invited the researcher to attend a number of important meetings concerning the development of Koli itself and the National Park. Each of the meetings were held in different ‘social settings’. The meetings were extremely informative and gave the researcher a factual insight into the management of the park, and the communication approach taken between the local community and the National Park. The first meeting was held in the local village hall and was attended by 10 of the 300 people living in the local community. The main issue discussed was the ‘Ten year Masterplan’- the future plans of the National Park over the next 10 years. The meeting was held in the interests of the local community, it is a meeting that enables the community to have their say and discuss any changes they wish to make. This meeting was discussed in Finnish, with Lasse Lovén translating the main issues that were being talked about. Several areas were looked at, these include the advantages the ‘Masterplan’ will have on the village such as the increase of visitors which in turn will increase jobs within the local community. Lovén states that “The National Park on average has over 100,000 visitors to the park each year, plus another 20,000 visiting the Koli region outside the park.

The meeting also highlighted the visitor numbers are twenty times higher in July than other months, there is a noticeable decline in visitor numbers for the months of April, May, September and October. A number of ideas to encourage visitors to Koli during the winter and autumn period were discussed. Lovén said he is “looking at trying to promote scientific conferences in the heritage centre and combining this visit with the Hotel. Also promoting the fact that the hotel is available for family celebrations and trying to incorporate this with a nature experience”.

Another issue mentioned was the improvements that need to be completed before the next theatre performance of ‘Sibelius Returns’. Lovén said “the ten day summer theatre may draw over 5000 visitors to Koli”. The main area of concern were the roads leading up to the theatre performance, they needed to be repaired and widened and to allow two way traffic.

The researcher attended a second meeting with Lasse Lovén, this time it was to present the ’Ten year Masterplan’ to the North Karelian Regional Council to discuss funding. The third meeting attended involved a selection of private entrepreneurs, National Park management and local environmental and cultural societies. The aim of the meeting was to present a number of presentations including the ‘Ten year Masterplan’ and discuss issues that arose from the presentations. The main issues included the development of a new waste recycling system and the environmental attitudes of local enterprises in Koli.
Educating Latvian students

The researcher was invited to help with an educational programme planned for twenty Latvian students aged between 7 and 15 years old. The Latvian students were invited to Koli to share their cultural heritage with the community and in return Merja Lindroos and Kirsi Sihvonen would educate them on the cultural heritage of Koli. When the researcher met the Latvian students, they illustrated straight away how proud they were of their cultural heritage as they were all dressed in traditional clothing. Merja Lindroos and Kirsi Sihvonen planned the educational activities for the day, the researcher participated by helping take care of the students. As the Latvian students were unable to speak Finnish all communication was in English. The Latvian students travelled by mini-bus to the local school, which is extremely small, with only two teachers, one cook and 28 pupils.

The local pupils greeted the Latvian students and showed them a short film on Koli and the way they live in Finland. The local pupils then performed their ‘Independence Day’ dance to the Latvian students. In return the Latvian students performed a number of traditional Latvian folk songs and dances, and invited the local pupils to join in and use the traditional instruments they provided. The Latvian students read out a story about the giant Latvian mitten (see photograph 13 pg 46) and presented each local pupil with a handmade knitted gift. All pupils then ate traditional Finnish pasta made of meat, milk and eggs followed by traditional Christmas pastries. The Latvian students travelled up to the heritage centre to visit the permanent exhibition and watch a multi-vision programme on Koli in the auditorium.

The following day in honour of opening the Latvian mitten exhibition (see photograph 14 pg 46) in the heritage centre, a performance of both Finnish and Latvian cultures was performed. These included a selection of traditional Finnish folk songs performed by a local accordion player and a performance of traditional Latvian songs and dances from the Latvian students. The heritage centre presented gifts to each Latvian student and Lasse Lovén congratulated them on their wonderful exhibition and thanked them for all their hard work.

The researcher found this experience to be extremely rewarding, as by participating in the activities, the researcher took on the role of a visitor and experienced how the education of cultural heritage is implemented.
Fieldwork

Janine Lyon-Williams

Photograph: 13

Latvian mitten story

Photograph: 14

Latvian mitten exhibition in Heritage Centre Ukko
Experiencing the traditional smoked sauna

The researcher was invited by Liisa Tommila, who was on that time running the café Kolin Ryynänen, to experience her traditional family smoked sauna (see photograph 15 pg 48). Saunas have been used for several centuries in Finland and are a traditional way of life for the majority of Finnish people. Most families in Finland today have electric saunas built into the family home. Liisa’s family are one of the few families left in Koli that still use a traditional smoked sauna. On a Wednesday evening Liisa’s family offer invitations to the local community to come and use the facility of the sauna. The researcher was invited in the second week of fieldwork along with Kirsi Sihvonen to experience the sauna. There are separate sessions for male and females due to privacy, as the traditional way to experience a sauna ‘is in the nude’. Kirsi Sihvonen informed the researcher that during the winter period the customary way to use a sauna is to spend ten minutes in the sauna and then venture outside to submerge yourself in the ice cold lake (see photograph 16 pg 48), before heading back into the sauna. The experience was truly enlightening, as never before had the researcher used a smoked sauna. This experience gave the researcher an insight into how saunas are valued within society and are seen as normal routine in the Finnish way of life.

The key aspects of the cultural heritage raised in chapter two have been explored extensively throughout the fieldwork, which have been outlined in this chapter. The key informants interviewed were an important contributing factor, as they created an overall diverse outlook.
Photograph: 15

Traditional Finnish smoked sauna

Photograph: 16

'The ice cold lake'
5. CONCLUSION

This dissertation builds on previous work undertaken in Koli by explaining the development of the tourism product using as a resource the cultural heritage of Finnish Karelia. When the researcher conducted fieldwork over the duration of a four-week period it enabled the researcher to collect data from various sources and key informants.

Through conducting fieldwork and collecting data, the researcher has experienced how the cultural products have evolved. This has been achieved by examining the focal points of Koli’s cultural heritage, of which are used to develop cultural products to educate visitors on the important role that Koli’s landscape has played in the history of Finland.

A previous unpublished study, was subject to a number of criticisms because the fieldwork conducted did not draw on the range of key informants needed to compile a study of this kind. The researcher overcame this problem, by compiling a list of key informants to enable the researcher to have an extended view, of the cultural products as a whole. Enabling the findings to be of extreme variation resulting in a more in depth study. The researcher feels that the time and care put towards the research, especially the fieldwork, has created a stronger sense of understanding and learning of the subject undertaken in this study.

From the researchers personnel experience of travelling to Koli and interacting within a diverse culture, a clearer understanding and insight into the key aspects of Koli’s cultural heritage has been obtained. The experience of being immersed in such a diverse culture had several negative impacts on the researcher, from an emotional point of view. These included the continual challenge of the language barrier, culture shock, and the isolation and loneliness due to the extreme remoteness of the location in which the study was conducted. In spite of the above points the researcher developed coping mechanisms in order to continue the research.

Through the process of conducting extensive fieldwork the researcher has learnt that the education of visitors to the area is of extreme importance. Not only to keep the cultural heritage alive but to deliver a key understanding to the visitor, regarding the value of the significant role the landscape artists of the 19th century played, in the formation of the national landscape. The quality and diversity of the landscape is being retained by the re-implementation of the agricultural method, Swidden cultivation, by using this method value is added to the landscape. The key aspects all result in the formation of a cultural product delivered as a tourist attraction.
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**References for Maps, Paintings and diagram**


Picture Postcard from The Heritage Centre Ukko – Koli National Park.
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