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Positioning Alternative Voices in Audiovisual Europe: the case of Catalonian, Galician, Basque and Sámi language policies

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Abstract
One of the hypotheses on which this article is based is that the normalisation of subtitling in the audiovisual field, particularly in non-hegemonic languages, contributes to facilitating and consolidating dialogued communication and intercultural acceptance in instances as diverse as the Catalonian, Galician, Basque and Sámi cases. Simultaneously, and as the Sámi case study towards the end of the chapter suggests, these mechanisms for inclusion and diversity can also have an adverse effect and further strengthen modes of exclusion and the hegemonic normality of dominant languages where, furthermore, power is wielded through the use of subtitling and linguistic policies in dominant languages (and not only English).

Keywords
Minoritised languages, cultural diversity, cinema, Europe, audiovisual subtitling.audiovisual content.

Resum
Una de les hipòtesis en què es basa aquest article és que la normalització de la subtitulació en el camp audiovisual, particularment en llengües no hegemòniques, contribueix a fer més fluida i consolidar la comunicació dialogada i l'acceptació intercultural, en casos tan variats com el català, el gallec, el basc o el sami. Al mateix temps, com suggereix l'estudi del cas sami al final del capítol, aquests mecanismes per a la inclusió i la diversitat també poden tenir un efecte advers i continuar reforçant formes d'exclusió i la normalitat hegemònica de les llengües dominants, en què, a més, el poder s'exerceix mitjançant una política lingüística i de subtitulació en les llengües dominants (i no només en anglès).

Paraules clau
Llengües minoritzades, diversitat cultural, cinema, Europa, subtitulació audiovisual.

Introduction: "Minority" or "Minoritised" Languages?

The definition of "Minority Language" and "Minoritised Language" requires an initial clarification albeit only lexical:

- The use of the concept "Minority Language" is clearly quantitative and descriptive (almost statistical) linked to the number of speakers of a specific language within a given territory as well as their relationship with other dominant languages.
- The use of the concept "Minoritised Language" is clearly qualitative and critical (almost activist) linked to a language that (regardless of its number of speakers) has seen its use restricted, frequently due to political or social reasons.[1] With the expression "Minoritised Languages", we refer to languages that are marginalised, even in danger of extinction, compared to other hegemonic languages whose use is prevalent (Williams & Williams 2016).

One of the hypotheses on which this article is founded (as well as the research project on which it is based) is that the normalisation of subtitling in the audiovisual field, particularly in non-hegemonic languages, contributes to facilitating and

consolidating dialogued communication and intercultural acceptance, at least in the long term (Baker 2018: 453-467). Although in this article (as well as the research project from which it comes) we will confine our study to the European environment, the initial cultural situation we cover could be extrapolated to a more globalised level (with due geo-cultural nuances) when considering subtitling as a palliative element for linguistic minorities. Since audiovisual subtitling respects the linguistic integrity of the original artistic work, it is possible to consider this type of non-invasive translation as an unequivocally cultural fact and for this reason as a systematic form of production and transmission of meanings between differentiated cultures (Cómitre 2015: 1).

In addition to its unequivocal cultural relevance, there are also many social effects derived from the use of audiovisual subtitling (Ogea 2020), which can be analysed at various levels:

1. *Educational level*, due to its proven effectiveness as a foreign language immersion tool.
2. *Psychosocial level*, as an inclusive social tool for groups with sensory disabilities.
3. *Cultural-identity level*, as a tool for prioritising cultural events (especially audiovisual ones) that could better define a specific society.
4. *Material-textual level*, as a tool for preserving the integrity of the original content of the work.

However, we recognise the existence of multiple difficulties (professional, ideological, political and social) in this attempt to extend the cultural potential of subtitling to the entire audiovisual universe. Without wishing to fully identify these difficulties, it is worth focusing on some forms of electronic entertainment on the rise, such as those coming from the videogame industry, where subtitling is conceived as a disruptive element with respect to diegetic becoming and to the operational management of any game (Amato et al. 2019). This is not a minor matter: we are talking about a sector whose total turnover was €133.67 billion in 2019 worldwide according to the figures of the Spanish Association of Videogames (2019: 47). In 2019, 45% of the total turnover (€60.18 billion) came from videogames installed on mobile phones or tablets.

In addition to recognising the socio-cultural role of videogames as one of the main exponents of digital culture (Aevi 2019: 12), their linguistic characteristics make them a particularly interesting object of analysis:

> Los videojuegos no son solo la primera opción de ocio audiovisual en España. También se han convertido en un espectáculo de masas. Es muy destacable el auge de los e-sports, tanto en audiencias como en ingresos. Los contenidos producidos y consumidos en lengua española y las grandes competiciones internacionales auguran un esperanzador futuro (AEVI 2019: 12).
>
> [Videogames are not only the first choice for audiovisual leisure in Spain. They have also become mass entertainment. The rise of e-sports, both in terms of audiences and revenue, is highly significant. The content produced and consumed in Spanish and the major international competitions augur a promising future] (AEVI 2019: 12).

We are therefore in a market dominated by dubbing dynamics in hegemonic languages and extreme reluctance to use subtitles. This is why in audiovisual translation studies, specialists consider dubbers of better quality (perhaps as a lesser evil), although not the practice of dubbing itself:

> Lo cierto es que en el sector de los videojuegos es posible encontrarse con grandes obras en las que participan profesionales del mundo del doblaje que realizan un trabajo digno de las mejores películas de Hollywood, pero también con obras en las que la inversión en doblaje es mínima y se lanzan al mercado trabajos de tan baja calidad como el de *Age of Pirates: Caribbean Tales* (2006), en el que los actores no actúan, se limitan a leer con prisa y sin sentimientos los diálogos, sin preocuparse tan siquiera por la sincronía labial (Méndez 2015: 74).
>
> [The fact is that in the videogame industry there are great productions in which professional voiceover artists do a job worthy of the best Hollywood films, but also ones in which the investment in dubbing is minimal and productions of such poor quality as *Age of Pirates: Caribbean Tales* (2006), in which the actors do not act but rather just read the dialogue in a hurry and without feeling, without even worrying about lip-sync, are released on the market] (Méndez 2015: 74).

In any case, other academic or cultural interests with regard to videogames are lacking, other than the functional positions that identify videogames with entertainment without major pretensions and for that reason choose interlinguistic practices with more immediate and affordable access, regardless of the conception of the original work.[2]

Mindful of the importance of subtitling as a cultural fact, we propose to emphasise the need to give priority to audiovisual subtitling over other tools (mainly dubbing) in order to normalise the social uses of a non-hegemonic language, thus favouring its transition from "language of communication" to "language of culture" (Hakmon 2019). From this point of view, we underline our distance from the statement by Grève and Van Passel (1971: 173) according to which linguistic teaching itself ipso facto contains cultural teaching, since in essence language represents one of the main aspects of the culture of a community. For our part, we consider that it is necessary to overcome apriorism (also in cultural terms) to consider the context. Therefore:

- According to the *Linguistics of Communication*, we consider that command of the language implies something more than the control of a certain linguistic code (Pudelko & Tenzer 2019).

- Aspects directly related to the particular communicative act must be taken into account.

Only from these premises is it possible to assess the capacity of subtitling to transmit (without altering the original fact of the cinematographic or audiovisual work) the social, psychic, cultural, artistic and stylistic aspects of a precise socio-cultural context: in other words, subtitling guarantees the meanings of utterances and speech acts in context (Sánchez 2004. 9-17).

In fact, the proposal of "communicative competence" developed by Canale and Swain (1980: 1-47) which implied the mastery of four competences or sub-competences (linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursive and strategic) was later completed with another competence, namely socio-cultural. As Robles (2003: 720) warns, in the development of communicative competence in a certain language it is necessary to teach a whole series of social practices and cultural values that are so closely linked to the language and its uses that it is impossible to do without them.

In this respect, the media space, due to its oversizing and polarising capacity, would far exceed the capacity of regulated education to act as a decisive factor in determining linguistic options among the younger population strata (Giralt; Nagore 2019). According to the argumentation of Seosamh Ó Murchú:

> Children learn a whole new "language" from television which they bring with them into formal learning situations which they use among themselves to express feelings and emotions which comply to what are often "set-piece" experiences portrayed on television. (Ó Murchú 1991: 89-90)

The incorporation of certain audiovisual codes into the social relationship is a fact that Seosamh Ó Murchú (1991) places as occurring during childhood. This assertion has unpredictable consequences, since it is the age range that embodies the promise of the durability of a language, a question that is especially difficult in the case of non-hegemonic languages.[3] Thus, and as a corollary to what is stated in this section, we could conclude with Arndt (2018) that the evolution from "language of communication" to "language of culture" is based on the combination of two concepts: linguistic normalisation and geo-cultural belonging.

To showcase these challenges, the complex dynamics and politics that arise in the context of Sámi film culture highlight how the use of subtitled dominant languages (whether English or nationally-hegemonic languages like Finnish or Norwegian) as a 'universal' language tool can also re-enact some of these power dispersions and contribute to the marginalisation of a minority within a minority – that is, the Sámi as part of Norwegian or Finnish media culture. This is a notion further reinforced by the fact that normalisation of the hegemonic language is so pervasive that the younger generations of the Sámi may not be fluent in their own Sámi dialect. As the Sámi case study towards the end of this chapter suggests, these mechanisms for inclusion and diversity can also have an adverse effect and further strengthen modes of exclusion and hegemonic normality of dominant languages where, furthermore, power is wielded through the use of subtitling in dominant languages (and not only English).

Cultural diversity in the European debate and political praxis

It is surprising that the recognition of subtitling as a matter of debate within EU political praxis is very recent. Like many other vindictive cultural facts, this recognition depended on the social awareness of a certain threat: the push of some hegemonic cultures that have repeatedly demonstrated an aggressive intrusive potential, frequently justified with the subterfuge of unstoppable globalisation (Shiyi 2020).

Over time, those "attacked" nations rushed to develop joint strategies for the promotion and protection of their respective cultures, first in the cultural and economic spheres and finally in the generation of specific case law based on protectionist regulations.[4]

In the last two decades, we would highlight the promulgation in 2003 of the "Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage", whose precedent lies in 1989 with UNESCO's "Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore". Both regulations announce the serious risks of certain dynamics of globalisation and social transformation: deterioration, partial destruction or even total disappearance of intangible cultural heritage.[5]

In October 2005, UNESCO adopted at its General Conference "The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions"[6] as a continuation and extension of the "Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity"[7] which was approved by the same institution in 2001. The 2005 Convention is a pioneer in international law due to its promotion and protectionist commitment to the cultural and linguistic heritage of countries with respect to hostile actions by third countries (Keating 2018).

Thus, the 2005 Convention placed the cultural and creative industries among the fastest growing sectors globally: with an impact of 6.1% per year on the world economy, they represented a global contribution of $4.3 billion. Likewise, the 2005 Convention identified cultural and creative industries as a primary pillar of "Inclusive Economic Growth" and therefore contributing to the objectives of the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".[8]

There are three important recognitions in order to consider this convention as a "historic milestone":

1) The worldwide recognition of the twofold nature (cultural and economic) of any contemporary cultural expression.
2) The recognition of the sovereignty of states (but also of their citizens) in the adoption, maintenance or cancellation of protectionist policies and as promoters of cultural diversity.

3) As a consequence of the two previous recognitions, the 2005 Convention promotes participatory governance by citizens with respect to the management of their tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

In 2007, the European Union ratified the 2005 Convention while emphasising the defence of European culture seen as a diverse reality. The Council of Europe thereafter incorporated a strict protocol regarding the promotion and safeguarding of culture in all EU trade agreements (Rabinovych 2020). The new measures involved:

- A true spur for the consolidation of EU trade policy (at an inclusive and expansive level), reorienting its positioning strategy on a planetary scale.
- A challenge to US hegemony in the first instance, as well as the semi-hegemonic positioning of some emerging countries through bilateral alliances.

However, this proliferation of declarations defending a Europe united in its diversity hides a certain contradiction or paradox depending on the point of view (Sekulić 2020). It is undeniable that, with the ratification of the 2005 Convention, the member states of the European Union jointly promoted a foreign policy (intensive and expansive) to defend their culture.

So why were certain community spaces (recognised in their diverse identity, with an official or co-official language and territorially located in European confines) impelled to promulgate their own regulations (more or less successful, more or less effective) in order to protect the distribution and exhibition of audiovisual productions in their respective vernacular languages and with such different results (Pérez Pereiro; Deogracias Horrillo 2021)? To be specific, this is the case, on the one hand, of Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country in the Iberian Peninsula, and on the other also of the Scandinavian Peninsula among many other possible examples.

Starting our succinct account in Galicia, it is possible to find two regulations that are practically contemporary with European ratification: firstly, Act 4/2008 of 23 May creating the Galician Agency for Cultural Industries, and secondly Act 9/2011 of 9 November on public broadcasting media in Galicia:

a) With respect to the first law, it is an instrumental regulation aimed at the organisation and development of the business community in the Galician cultural market. Act 4/2008 specifies that the development of the Galician cultural market is based on protection of and contribution to the consolidation of Galician cultural industries.[9]
b) With regard to the second law, it is a regulation of management in the provision of the public broadcasting services over which the autonomous community of Galicia has jurisdiction. Act 9/2011 specifies two inspiring principles of management in the provision of public broadcasting services: first, the promotion and dissemination of Galician culture and language as well as the defence of the identity of Galicia; second, but by no means less important, the promotion of local audiovisual production and broadcasts that contribute to the projection of Galicia abroad and of information to Galician communities abroad.[10]

Continuing our journey in Catalonia, we find several fundamental regulations which include an active recasting of the regulations that govern the operation of the Catalan Radio and Television Corporation, created in 1983, in adaptation to a changing context:

a) Act 11/2007 of 11 October on the Catalan Broadcasting Corporation.[11] In this legal text, key points include the association of the public service function to the dissemination and promotion of the Catalan language together with (among the general principles of programming) the designation of Catalan as the institutional language of provision of the public broadcasting services of the Catalan Broadcasting Corporation.[12]
b) Decree Act 2/2010 of 30 March, which amends Act 11/2007.
c) Act 20/2010 of 7 July on films, which is oriented towards the development of the cinematographic offer in Catalan, whether in its original, dubbed or subtitled version.[13]
d) Act 2/2012 of 22 February, which amends several laws on audiovisual issues.
e) General Instruction of the Catalan Audiovisual Council amending the General Instruction on the presence of Catalan and Aranese language and culture in the audiovisual media, published on 12 September 2018.[14]

To finish off our brief legal tour, we will look at the Basque case where we find two fundamental decrees:

a) Decree 231/2011 of 8 November on broadcasting, which includes the conditions for reserving licences for broadcasts entirely in Basque.[15]
b) Decree 179/2019 of 19 November on the normalisation of the institutional and administrative use of official languages in local institutions in the Basque Country.[16] However, subtitling in Basque of films that are shown in commercial theatres has been banished from the screens of the Basque Country (Barambones 2011: 10).

As can be seen, in all the cases analysed there is a proliferation of regulations with a common denominator:

1. They are rules and regulations that arise as a territorial adaptation of other international proclamations.
2. They are rules and regulations that have a general scope and do not include the explicit development of certain resources (technological, cultural, language, social, educational, etc.) such as subtitling.
3. They are rules and regulations that, inexplicably, elude the explicit definition of what could be considered a Galician, Catalan or Basque audiovisual work.

Thus, we come to the heart of the question of this article: is it feasible to set criteria for the inclusion and exclusion of an audiovisual work in order to establish its origin? Or more clearly: is it possible to establish the nationality of a certain audiovisual work (and, by extrapolation, of any cultural work) considering the wide range of transnational influences that underpin most contemporary audio-visual cultural production (Kulyk 2020)?

Indeed, it is not a local and current problem (limited to the cases analysed), but rather one whose limits reach historical and world levels: the geo-cultural origin of an audiovisual work seems doomed to be diluted. On a historical level:

- Starting with the joint ventures promoted in Europe by the major US firms after World War II with their famous "blind-booking" and "block-booking" commercial actions (Biltereyst et al. 2019).
- Continuing with the European reaction (late, partial and inconsistent) in the form of co-productions, which would reach its extreme in what is called the "Euro-pudding" production formula (Hammett-Jamart et al. 2018).

On a global level, the overwhelming mainstream logic, based on the elaboration of easily digestible content designed for the lowest common denominator of broadcasting, is clear: the more "local" and "identity" the audiovisual content is, the more alien it is from the "Reader's Encyclopaedia" (Eco 1979) and it will look strange, unfamiliar.

It is not surprising, moreover, that we find the same problem in the European audiovisual space. Thus, within the framework of institutional programmes for financial support for audiovisual industries, the European nationality of audiovisual work is lost in the intricacies of the following regulations:

- Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Creative Europe programme (2014-2020).
- Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Creative Europe programme (2021 to 2027) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013 COM / 2018/366 final - 2018 / 0190 (COD).

Only in Article 14 of the second regulation (about the definition of eligible entities) do we find a reference to the recognition of companies as European, but not of the audiovisual works they produce. The MEDIA sub-programme affords the status of "European" to all companies based on Community soil and owned by citizens residing in EU Member States, countries of the European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA) and other countries participating in the MEDIA sub-programme (De Turégano 2018). This is not a minor issue, since the recognition of a company as "European" opens up the possibility of applying for the grants envisaged in the MEDIA sub-programme.[17]

In conclusion, the "made in Europe" stamp on a certain audio-visual work depends on a true "Sudoku" of tangible percentages of territorial settlement (which involves among its variables the capital that finances the production and the team that makes it possible), but excludes other tangible (and equally relevant) factors such as the original linguistic options of the audiovisual work and, therefore, its own cultural integrity (Betz 2001).

It is true that in some cases where European framework regulations are included in Member State law it is possible to find a few remote references to this problem. Thus, if we take into consideration the grant and aid systems for films managed by Spain, there are some preferential criteria for works which opt for co-official non-hegemonic languages in their audiovisual production (Fernández-Blanco & Gil 2018).

However, it must be emphasised that these are "preferential criteria" and not decisive, so they do not require that the original linguistic option of the audiovisual production be maintained (or that, at least, it is complemented by careful subtitling) during the subsequent distribution and exhibition process.

Positioning Sámi media: Language and Cultural Policy

To expand on the implications of the establishment of 'preferential criteria' for minority languages in film cultural contexts where the politics of language continues to play out in complex ways, this part of the paper – effectively, a case study of power and politics in minority language cinema – explores the role of minority languages and audiovisual media in the Nordic countries. Our focus is on Sámi media and the ways it contributes to uncovering some of the power imbalances between hegemonic practices and minority film cultures, even in contexts that are considered marginalised or minority in themselves. The Nordic countries point to a much wider notion of minority and marginality than a national film cultural framework facilitates and how relations of power in the international film industry might operate. The starting point for us is that the five Nordic national film cultures (Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland) are in themselves small and marginalised film cultures and industries largely predicated on domestic production and financing infrastructure and catering for often small domestic (or regional) audiences with their respective language and diversity policies (see Gustafsson & Kaapa 2015).[18] However, our focus goes beyond this 'marginality' and addresses Sámi film – a minority within a minority. The Sámi are an ethnic minority indigenous to the Sápmi region (the Sámi population is estimated at 164,000 globally, of whom 133,000 are resident in Sapmi), an expanse stretching across the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia's Kola Peninsula. Consequently, their political and economic livelihoods are heavily embedded in the legal systems of these much larger and hence more powerful nation states. The following analysis draws on some of the research we have conducted on the practices of Sámi filmmakers and the policies designed by the hegemonic constitution of state authorities (see also Kaapa 2014: 2017) and provides an encapsulation of their development in the past ten years.

Film and media are important vehicles for articulating the

Sámi people's rights and interests in their own language and are key outlets for expressing indigenous concerns over sovereignty, cultural erasure and misrepresentation. This has not always been the case: the autonomy of this emerging media industry is particularly significant because the Nordic countries have a long history of using media policies to re-appropriate indigenous imagery and voices in ways that commodify the Sámi. Several initiatives have helped to overcome this longstanding process of assimilation. Providing context on the historical development of Sámi media, DuBois (2020: 34-48) discusses the revitalisation of Sámi culture following a wave of protests against environmental violations in the late 1970s and 1980s Norway. Films and media culture emerged as part of this revolution to re-establish the role and influence of Sámi image-making from an indigenous perspective. Despite this, however, Sámi cinema has developed relatively independently in each of the aforementioned Nordic countries. In Sweden and Finland, and to a lesser extent Russia, Sámi film production has remained marginal with limited support from national cultural institutions. However, Sámi film and media culture has steadily grown into a more discernible industry, with Mecsei (2015) noting how Sámi in Norway have developed a foothold as global pioneers in establishing indigenous media as a recognised enterprise with a growing list of global media partnerships and collaborations with indigenous and non-indigenous actors alike.

The Norway-based International Sámi Film Institute (ISFI) in 2007 was the first push to establish Sámi media as an industry – although it effectively remains a subsidiary of the Norwegian cultural institutions, as we shall discuss here. Preceding this, the first Sámi feature film, Nils Gaup's Academy Award-nominated *Ofelaš*/*Pathfinder* (1987), initiated a rich and diverse film and media landscape helmed by Sámi filmmakers and producers from across the region. The ISFI is part of a reform to build a collective Sámi identity, one only previously reflected onscreen. Since then, the ISFI has developed rapidly with developments in new media production – trailing scalable streaming enterprises and platforms. Language plays an increasingly visible and complex role in shaping the development of these strategies and approaches, balancing the conventions of representational politics and themes such as spirituality with the shifting demands of new audiences (see Christensen 2013 and Fonneland & Kraft 2013).

Sámi film histories in context

To illustrate how these power discrepancies develop in film culture, in 2012, the Finnish Film Foundation (FFF) established a funding initiative devoted to developing Sámi film production, a move marking a significant development acknowledging the marginal status of Sámi cinema within the Nordic countries. While the fund was conceptualised as part of an explicit diversity and inclusion drive by the FFF to focus on developing marginal film production practices and themes, it also reinforces many of the unbalances it seeks to address. There are several layers to these practices that need critical analysis, ranging from matters of representation to concerns over equality of access to film production funding and infrastructure.

To start with, the infrastructural inequalities are both a cause and consequence of unequal representation of the Sámi by their dominant 'host' populations. The majority of these depictions emerge from Finland and Norway (see Mecsei 2015 for more on Norwegian film production). For example, Finnish producers have depicted the Sámi as villains or mystical forces of nature in films such as *The Curse of the Witch* (*Noidan kirot*, Teuvo Puro, 1927) and *The White Reindeer* (*Valkoinen Peura*, Erik Blomberg, 1952), respectively. In both these cases, the focus has been on conceptualising the Sápmi as an untamed territory in typically exploitative, colonialist terms that needs taming by white masculine heroes.

In contrast to this long history of exotic depictions of the 'mythical' Sámi, documentary and fiction films by Sámi directors such as Katja Gauriloff, Ellen-Astri Lundby, Nils Gaup and Paul-Anders Simma focus on indigenous rights and the complexities of coexistence within nation-state structures. This attention is qualified, however, as both the films and their directors have been considered as distinct 'others' in relation to the dominant national cultures. To illustrate, discussion of Gaup's films, especially of internationally distributed historical epics such as *Pathfinder* (*Ofelaš*, Norway, 1987) and *The Kautokeino Rebellion* (*Kautokeino opprøret*, Norway, 2008), have generated considerable discussion around Sámi culture and politics with interpretations positioning them as important contributions to Norwegian cinema (Iversen 2005) or as Scandinavian, politically-engaged genre productions (Nestingen 2008). These perspectives demonstrate that Gaup's films are not only 'Sámi films', but have also been incorporated into various 'canons'. Domestically, they are seen as both minority and heritage cinema, with their domestic reception and award recognition enacting incorporation into a multicultural constitution of Norwegian cinema. Despite recognition of the Sámi cause, this continues the sense of othering that has seen the Sámi caricatured as an other throughout the history of Nordic film culture.[19]

And indeed, these concerns extend to film policy and production. Finland's Ministry for Education and Culture established a programme in 2012 designed to revitalise the Sámi language and make the status of the Sámi more equal in Finland. According to the Constitution, it is the right of indigenous minorities to uphold and develop their native language. Consequently, it is the role of the state to facilitate this, especially as the role of the language is minor and faces the problem of migration away from the Sápmi (Opetus- ja Kulttuuriministeriö 2012). This policy initiative is revealing in its 'handout politics' practised by the institutions of dominant nations in emphasising the importance of indigenous rights. In this conundrum, the Sámi are granted special status as a threatened species of sorts. It is also clear that their cultural

expression and activity require support from 'above' to facilitate ongoing development.

Here, Sámi films and filmmakers, including their engagement with linguistic sovereignty, take part in what Charles Taylor has referred to as the "politics of recognition" (Taylor 2011), which concerns the constant striving of minority populations to claim cultural and political sovereignty from dominant populations while acknowledging the constitutive role these hegemonic majorities continue to play even in the self-determinacy of the minority – simply put, the Sámi would not be seen as a minority were it not for the acts of historical marginalisation enacted by hegemonic powers.[20]

Elina Kivihalme, the commissioner in charge of the establishment of the Finnish Film Foundation Sámi fund, highlights the more problematic aspects of the politics of recognition. According to her, the oral tradition in particular poses clear difficulties, as the traditional, often cyclic, modes of storytelling are difficult to transcribe into competitive scripts. Yet this level of difference makes the films interesting and relevant as part of the multicultural mosaic, while also categorising them as too different to be able to compete with other productions on an equal scale. While Kivihalme emphasises that outside this initiative, Sámi producers do not occupy a special status in attaining funding but have to offer quality projects that meet FFF standards, the notion of 'positive discrimination' remains a substantial concern. Accordingly, Sámi funds are considered earmarked funds that may be given to other disadvantaged or marginalised groups in other years, including ones engaged in much more hegemonic politics of representation and recognition, such as children or youth in Finnish cinema.

Certainly, from the perspective of the Sámi, more resources and increased recognition are beneficial. Realistically, the only way to achieve this is to adopt some of the conventions of the dominant cultural sphere, mirroring Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's strategic essentialism (Spivak 1988). This indicates an approach that seeks to play out the key constituents of Sámi identity when they are necessary, but also with the sort of critical distance that enables reflexivity. In some ways, the politics of Sámi films act as the type of rewriting of national narratives that another well-known theorist of the postcolonial, Homi Bhabha (Bhabha 1994), uncovers in many works by immigrant writers. The difference here is that the Sámi do not so much unravel dominant national narratives as pose, at the very least, parallel narratives, or even fundamental objections to most of the practices pertaining to such narratives.

The Sámi cinema production infrastructure in Finland both supports and challenges rhetorical sovereignty, a fact which filters into the international exhibition of these films. Venues such as the 'indigenous cinema' festivals Skabmagovat and the Arctic Film Festival devote their catalogues to this impression of otherness. Put simply, when many of these films are screened in such egalitarian venues, they are shown as Sámi or indigenous films, a label that creates normative assumptions about content and their expected level of participation in festival discussion. Yet such festivals would not exist without recourse to both strategic essentialism and a chance of rewriting historical narratives, supported as they are by funds from cultural authorities such as the Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland.

In a somewhat similar way, when the 2012 Sámi film funds were announced by the FFF, many of the usual suspects received funding, including Simma and Gauriloff, for projects focusing on representing Sámi politics. Through this, it seems as if Sámi cinema, at least in Finland, has been able to gain increased support and presence, but infrastructurally, many of the restrictions, not least on the level of its official state perception, remain.

A minority within a minority: the Sámi in the EU

At the same time, the relationship of Sámi filmmakers and cultural institutes with the EU is complex. A report commissioned by the Saami Council following the Arctic Stakeholder Forum in 2017 highlights how the Sámi lack both general representation and direct negotiating positions in Brussels. As we show below, Sámi media culture is caught in the same bureaucratic systems both domestically and in the context of European cultural policy. From an EU perspective, Sámi film culture has received indirect support from projects like INDIGEE 2, funded by the European Commission. The project was designed to foster entrepreneurism and economic independence in the Sapmi region and Sámi film producers like Odd Levi Paulsen have used the funding to develop their own media ventures (2015). However, the Saami Council highlights the ongoing need for EU investment in both language training and increased support for "a Saami Film Fund that contributes to increase Saami film production" (2017: 7). The complexity of EU funding schemes is a fundamental barrier to the Sámi media industry's development. The same report claims the EU's large-scale budget frameworks are difficult to reconcile with the needs of a small-scale media enterprise like the ISFI (page 8). The Council also states how "the reporting system is also very resource demanding, and often not included in the funding" (2017: 8). Consequently, the Sámi face a labour-intensive struggle to navigate the bureaucracy of EU cultural policy because of their 'marginal' position.

Simultaneously, a report commissioned by the European Audiovisual Observatory in 2019 states "there are no quotas or other binding measures related to diversity (based on ethnic, social or religious origin) in film and audio-visual funds in the EU28" (2019: 58). In the Sámi case, national cultural institutes have taken charge of these quotas. Domestically, countries like Norway provide considerable financial support for organisations like The International Sámi Film Institute (ISFI, est. 2007), which stands as the cornerstone of northern Europe's indigenous cultural industry. But it is also increasingly evident that support for Sámi film production also plays into the diversity and inclusion mandates of their 'majority partners'.

These include Norgesfilm, dedicated to developing VOD services for the Norwegian film industry, lauding the launch of Sapmifilm.com by suggesting that it "confirms once again that Norgesfilm is a preferred partner for any Nordic film institute - this time with a global range" (2021). Here again, gains made in increasing the visibility and viability of a minority film industry are incorporated into the promotional activities of a majority partner, who uses them to espouse their own cultural credentials. Simultaneously, we have seen recognition of the Sámi cause with their incorporation into very mainstream film culture with *Frozen II* (Disney 2019), which not only addresses the Sámi on the narrative level but has also been dubbed into the Sámi language for this small but culturally vital market.

Yet despite these indications of a global reach, the incentives designed to develop and protect Sámi culture in Sweden, Norway and Finland tend to be insular, that is, Sámi media production is subsidised by respective state budgets for public broadcasting largely for domestic audiences, or in a best case scenario throughout the Nordic region. However, as most digital broadcasting rights are region- or country-specific, these do not extend outside of these very limited confines. To compound the problem, from a regional perspective, indigenous media culture is not supported by a specific or uniform mandate. These concerns also apply to subtitling as English continues to be the main language used to distribute Sámi media content transnationally (or alternatively, subtitles are provided in the respective hegemonic national language such as Norwegian or Finnish).

At the same time, the domestic broadcasters, the Norwegian NRK, Finnish YLE and Swedish SVT, do not provide Sámi subtitles to any Sámi-speaking programmes, and nor do they provide subtitling in the different Sámi languages for programmes in Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish. While there is a strong push to address these issues – particularly when it comes to reflecting the diversity of the Sámi languages in subtitling – there has been resistance from all Nordic states to supporting a transnational or regionally centralised indigenous media industry despite the ISFI's efforts to expand outside Norway. Even as they continue to collaborate with media professionals from these different countries, the organisation has struggled to establish links in Sweden and Finland. Arguably, these issues are exaggerated by the fragmented relationship the Sámi have with EU policy.

Conclusions and recommendations

Universities are often accused of living in an 'ivory tower' that, oblivious to the madding crowd, launches recommendations left and right without taking into account an audiovisual sector in permanent crisis. Everywhere and endlessly, it is often said that it is easy from a university to pontificate about maintaining the original identity of the work, but it is not so easy for European filmmakers or distributors who want their audiovisual works to achieve the greatest possible global impact.

It may be sufficient to explore the immediate history of the European audiovisual industry to realise the fallacy of such diatribes. Europe must break away from this imposed game in which it has played the role of a recipient consumer since the middle of the 20th century while other hegemonic markets continue to wield substantial power as distributors and producers. But simultaneously, we must be mindful of the power imbalances that exist within Europe and the ways they can enact a similar politics of displacement and marginalisation, or of hegemony and alterity, where minority populations are excluded through language use policies. Here, notions like original language or the use of subtitling can reinforce a sense of internal marginality where, for example, the Sámi are 'overwritten' by the language policies of their host nations or by the demands of a marketplace predicated on hegemonic English.

In this respect, the conclusions that are pointed out, as the end of this paper, are intended to be respectful recommendations that contribute to a change in current European audiovisual dynamics.

1. We point to the urgent need, in the political context of the EU, for a redefinition of the nationality of audiovisual work and further consideration of post- or pre-national cultural identities like those of the Sámi.
2. Based on the above definition, it will be possible to activate a protection system for current European audiovisual heritage anchored in the establishment of solid inclusion and exclusion criteria for each audiovisual work.
3. In this protection, it will be essential to link the original linguistic choice of each audiovisual work, from its ideation and production process, in order to be eligible to apply for European audiovisual funding.
4. A redefinition of these explicit conditions for the use of non-hegemonic languages in origin and their preservation through distribution and dissemination, or screening and consumption, either in original version or subtitled, is essential and urgent.
5. It is essential and urgent to recognise in audiovisual work an unequivocal heritage value for European culture as a whole as well as its particular forms as evidence of the cultural identity of each audiovisual work.
6. Debates on Sámi language representation open up a whole legacy of colonisation. Generations of Sámi have been excluded from the language as a result of enforced assimilation policies and still experience the repercussions. Film and media can rectify these losses but it is important to understand how language has become deeply political in this context. Language revitalisation is a key target set by Nordic cultural institutions, including the respective national film bodies. However, elsewhere scholars highlight how these investments reflect a broader cultural agenda on enhancing diversity and inclusion (Moffat 2017). In one sense, while these are positive developments, the national

film bodies benefit from this arrangement as recognised investors in 'marginal or minority cultures'. However, under the current funding arrangements, creative freedom and enterprise within the Sámi media industry are subject to regulatory and appraisal processes that arguably reproduce these marginal conditions (Moffat 2020: 2017).[21]

7. Language also plays a central role in access to these resources. It is both essential to the survival of Sámi culture, but also a deeply ideological part of a cultural policing used to classify or emphasise who belongs within Sámi culture and who benefits from state funding. Contemporary investment in language also contributes to a loss of historical context around the erasure of Sámi language through colonial practices. Investment in culture through language also absolves and displaces other economic and political matters. It is perhaps ironic that those without the language have more to say on the subject precisely because their lack of voice reflects the realities of colonialism past and present, especially as the Sámi continue to lack a voice literally and figuratively in EU political forums.
8. Film and media culture are essential tools for keeping languages alive. They also provide ways of challenging harmful tropes about the Sámi that continue to prevail in popular culture. However, going forward, we must establish what kind of access non-speakers have to film and media funding – how can the Sámi express themselves and their position on the margins of different cultural agendas? We must ask how the current institutions on all sides can adequately capture and reflect these exclusions in ways that hold the authorities accountable, especially when discrimination against the Sámi remains prevalent throughout the region. By being marginalised on a variety of platforms – whether these be cultural or political, economic or industrial – Sámi filmmakers navigate the boundaries and challenges of an EU media landscape that does not provide them with sufficient recognition, even as they are frequently held up as examples of positive developments in their domestic majority national film cultures, often to the benefit of these majority cultures at the expense of the Sámi's original cultural or political agendas. Here, while the Sámi are given funding, their production modes or attempts at pooling together industrial resources are rarely protected by any kind of transregional/transnational policy – especially ones that would force Nordic cultural institutes to commit to ongoing support. This is especially visible as an imbalance when organisations like The Nordic Film Fund operate precisely for the purpose of protecting and highlighting the five Nordic film cultures in a transnational marketplace through co-production and promotional funding (in addition, of course, to the majority support received from the domestic film institutes). In comparison, any scraps that fall into the funding infrastructure for Sámi film and media are minor and piecemeal at best. These perspectives reinforce our argument that investment in Sámi language media is part of a public diplomacy strategy where funding, in this instance, is another means of control rather than empowerment.

Notes

1. FundéuRAE: https://www.fundeu.es/recomendacion/lenguas-minoritarias-y-lenguas-minorizadas-52/
2. The consequences of these trends have been analysed by some scholars of audiovisual translation, such as Panayiotis (2020), who warn that the videogame market outperforms the film industry and the music industry in gross income in addition to its undeniable penetration in First World households, especially among the younger consumer target. However, it is clear that there is a prevalence of videogames as the first option for audiovisual entertainment: if this prevalence does not involve deep (and free) thinking about videogames' cultural and social impact, it will be the companies who will make all the decisions, both about their production and marketing chain and also on reducing a cultural fact (omnipresent among the youngest age ranges) to a mere fact of consumption, located on the margins of the most substantial culture.
3. As indicated by O'Connell: "The production and translation of written and/or audiovisual material for children is central to the development of the younger generation's linguistic skills and is, therefore, of crucial importance to the survival of the minority language into the future." (O'Connell 2003: 61)
4. Although this is a matter that goes beyond the objectives outlined for this article, it would also be possible to analyse what type of resources have been developed by other European nations that, since they are not recognised as states, lack the regulatory capacity to protect their respective cultural identities: this is the case of the "Stateless Nation" in Schlesinger's definition (2000: 19-20).
5. For decades, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, better known by its acronym UNESCO (https://en.unesco.org/), has been calling for help from the international community in order to encourage a sense of heritage in culture. Currently, UNESCO programmes are aligned with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in the 2030 Agenda, as agreed upon at the UN General Assembly in 2015..
6. https://en.unesco.org/creativity/convention/texts
7. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000124687.page=67
8. https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda
9. https://www.parlamentodegalicia.es/sitios/web/BibliotecaLeisdeGalicia/Lei_4_2008.pdf
10. http://www.parlamentodegalicia.es/sitios/web/BiliotecaLeisdeGalicia/Lei9_2011.pdf
11. https://www.cac.cat/sites/default/files/2020-06/llei_11_2007.pdf
12. https://www.parlament.cat/document/nom/TL65_ES.pdf

13. https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/2010/BOE-A-2010-12709-consolidado.pdf
14. https://www.cac.cat/sites/default/files/2018-09/I.G%20CAC_modificaci%C3%B3%20I.G%20llengua%20i%20cultura%20catalanes%20i%20aran%C3%A8s.pdf
15. https://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/normativa_mcs/es_araudia/Decreto%20comunicaci%C3%B3n%20audiovisual.pdf
16. https://www.iberley.es/legislacion/decreto-179-2019-19-nov-c-p-vasco-normalizacion-uso-lenguas-oficiales-instituciones-locales-26430171
17. Linked to the aforementioned regulations, the consideration of "European audiovisual content" has been granted depending on the location and origin of the owners of the companies that are candidates for obtaining European funds, as well as the technical and artistic audiovisual production team: two factors that (regardless of other factors, such as the theme or the original language) have become the ultimate determinants of the nationality of the audiovisual work.
18. These film industries are premised on minority languages (such as Finnish and to a lesser extent the Scandinavian languages) which are protected by domestic legislation and film policy. There is, then, a clear set of considerations in place for these five national film industries to be considered as small (see Hjort & Petrie 2007) or even marginal – especially if we consider the role of Finnish films in the Nordic 'constellation', seen as culturally and linguistically different from its Scandinavian counterparts.
19. This is a real Catch-22 situation that structures most of the contemporary Sámi production, positioning the Sámi in a problematic role characterised by alterity and difference, a position that the very act of evoking one's historical and sovereign identity reinforces. These contradictions are reflected at all levels of Sámi film culture. Thematically, the politics of contemporary Sámi cinema evokes transitory identities and contrasting lifestyles. Aesthetically and narratively, Sámi films combine observational and activist filmmaking practices with the type of explicit political messages that pertain to postcolonial cinema. In this, they maintain a conflicted status: their themes take issue with historical injustice and the importance of cultural and political Sámi sovereignty, but as film productions, they largely rely on the funding and distribution mechanisms of the host state, despite their small budgets and digital form.
20. The politics of "giving and withholding recognition" (Taylor 2011: 36) adopted by the democratic states of these Nordic countries structures much of the production infrastructure and thematic scope of Sámi cinema produced. But simultaneously, a politics of diversity requires that the Sámi are able to enunciate their own perspectives, though the scope and effectiveness of these strategies remain topics of debate.
21. Indeed, the funding dynamics underpinning the Sámi media industry are piecemeal, where organisations like the ISFI have to reapply for funding annually. Consequently, the Sámi film industries are not supported by a long-term funding mechanism, especially one that would protect them and enhance their visibility on a transnational or even regional level like the EU.

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