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A NORTHERNER'S VIEW ON ROCK ART. ASPECTS ON MOBILITY AND MATERIALITY ON THE SCANDINAVIAN ROCK ART

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The intention of this session is to shed light on Scandinavian rock art regardless of regions, tradition, time and space. There has been a tendency within rock art research to merely focus on either the Northern Rock Art Tradition (NT) or the Southern Tradition (ST). There exists some general similarities in terms of the location of rock art, narratives, chronology and formats used in time and space between these traditions but also obvious differences.

Thus, the objective with this session is to stimulate different perspectives and themes that highlights the intersection between these two rock art traditions in Scandinavia.

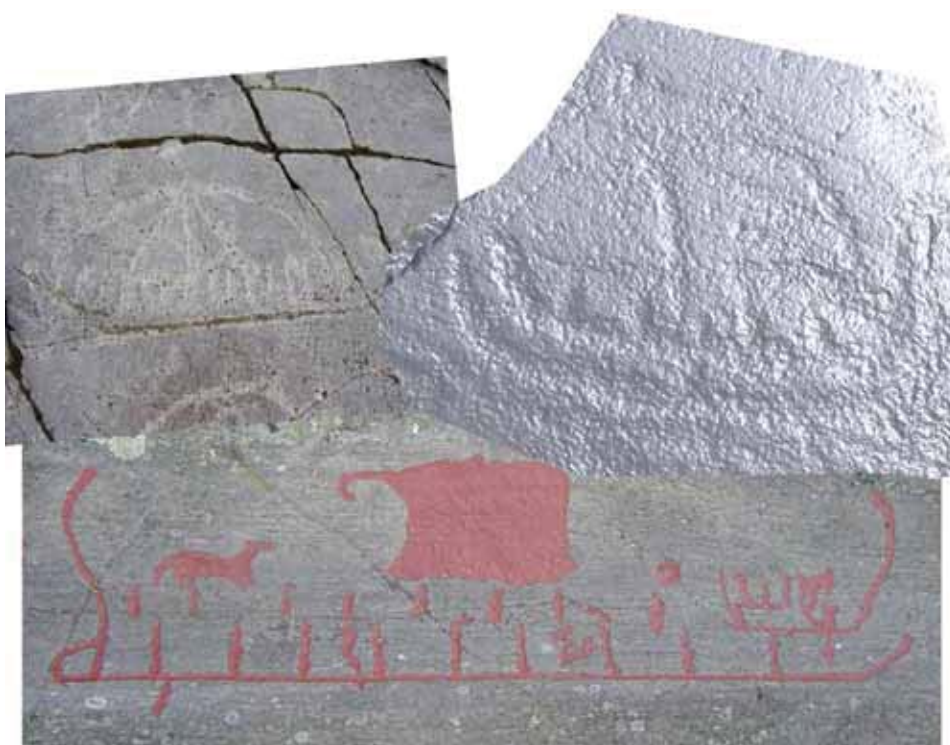
Sailing rock art boats. The introduction of the sail in the North

The Scandinavian rock art conveys important information about the early development of the sail in the region, potentially pushing its use here back by almost 2000 years! In conjunction with experimental sail trials and comparisons with early use of sails in other parts of the world, the rock art suggests that the sail became increasingly important as a complement to paddling in response to an increase in the need to transport people and goods over short, medium and long distances. The regular use of the sail as a complement to paddling, can be linked to the early development of the Scandinavian chiefdoms around 1600 BC, significantly increasing the range and intensity of regular communication in Bronze Age of Scandinavia and beyond. This research allows us to better understand the dynamics of seafaring during the period and the level of communication across the region.

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Keywords: Bronze Age seafaring, development of the sail, prehistoric seafaring, sailing, navigation



Nämforsen - a Northern Rock Art metropolis with Southern pretenses - part II

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Keywords: Nämforsen, rock carvings, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, settlements, pitfalls, burial cairns, Northern Tradition, Southern Tradition, bronze casting, Ananino bronze axe, Bell Beaker arrow-head

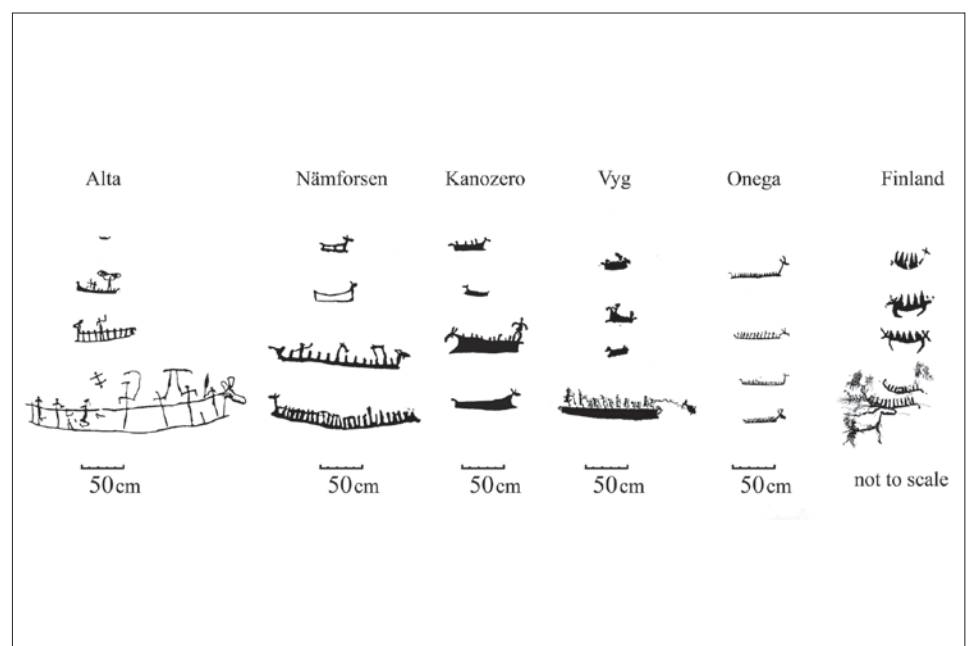
This paper, focuses on the rock carvings at Nämforsen, and their comprehensive study over the past half century. Hallstöm initially argued that the Northern tradition's masterpiece carvings were heavily influenced by the Southern tradition, a view he later modified. Despite limited research pointing to similarities with the Southern tradition, the notion that the carvings belong to the Stone Age and solely characterized by Northern cultures has become firmly established. Contradicting this argument are the two neighbouring Bronze Age settlements of Ställverket and Råinget and their links to the carvings. In addition, the lack of elk bones and presence of fish bones, indicates that the animals consumed were more frequently depicted. The numerous coastal burial cairns from the Bronze Age are included in the analysis as there are links to the settlements and possibly the carvings. A special type of manned ship is highlighted that appears carved at "strategic" locations on the rocks. Moreover, the bronze casting at Råinget was possible linked to the advancing Bell Beaker culture that also left its mark in the form of a typical flint arrowhead found in Ställverket. This points to a growing trade and exchange network during the Bronze Age in this area.

A northerner's view on rock art - revisiting a century of "Scandinavian rock art traditions"

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Keywords: rock art, Scandinavia, Fennoscandia, Northern Tradition, Southern Tradition, boats

The research history of rock art in Scandinavia has a clear division between the Northern Rock Art Tradition (NT) and the Southern Tradition (ST). This divide was established in the early 1900's in Scandinavia and has been projected through the 20th century as a clear opposition. The division is problematic since most rock art research merely focuses on one of these «traditions». This division has not been established in the rest of Fennoscandia (Finland and NW-Russia) even though the material record has its clear counterparts to the NT and ST. An unparalleled discovery of Stone Age rock art in northernmost Europe during the last decades has contradicted the strict divisions based on economy, geography and time. Hence, revisiting some of the previous dichotomies is advocated and the study applies examples from some of the large rock art concentrations such as Alta in Northern Norway, Onega and Vyg in NW-Russia and Nämforsen in northern Sweden. This paper has its origins in the research of the Stone Age boat depictions in northernmost Europe and is an attempt to nuance this strict north-south division between the NT and the ST in rock art studies.



Shamans and Sun Horses - Otherworldly Passage in North European Folklore and Rock Art

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Keywords: sun, boat, horse,
elk, religion, ethnography,
mythology, folklore,
shamanism, comparison

Scandinavian rock art traditions are typically viewed as the products of two distinct cultural spheres, and interpretations of their semantic content tend to use different analogies. The southern agricultural/maritime tradition draws upon Indo-European and Mediterranean religions, while the northern forager tradition is seen in the light of Uralic and Siberian ethnography. As a result of this divergence, the interpretations are sometimes more different than the material itself. Yet some motifs display striking similarities between north and south, such as the relationship between boats and elks or horses. While boats and horses are taken to be solar helpers in southern Bronze Age iconography, boats and elks are viewed in the light of shamanic institutions in the north. This paper will compare and examine the symbolism of the two traditions with the folklore and mythology of Eurasia, particularly northern Europe, and aim to show a deep relationship between the cosmologies produced in the rock art.

Rock carvings of Kanozero: new methods of documentation and the new findings

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Keywords: cup-marks,
anthropomorphic images,
Kanozero, Bronze Age,
Neolithic

The petroglyphs on the rocky islands of Kanozero (Kola Peninsula, Russia) were discovered in 1997 and they currently number around 1,300 engravings. In the summer of 2017, more rock engravings were discovered here. These include cup-marks, anthropomorphic and zoomorphic images. Among these important findings are two groups of petroglyphs on Kamenniy Island: one on the lowest point of the rock- near the water level and another at the highest point: on the top of the island. At the lowest point were revealed only a series of cup-marks but in the newly discovered group on top of the island were anthropomorphic figures and no cup marks. In other known groups on the islands of the Kanozero, cup-marks often coexist with anthropomorphic figures. In this report, the author analyzes the characteristics of the cup-marks engravings among Kanozero petroglyphs and the context of their possible relationship with anthropomorphic figures. In Northern Europe, the distribution of cup-mark carvings often dated to the Bronze Age, but at Kanozero we have a rare case of the coexistence of cup-marks with other images which researchers used to relate with the Northern Neolithic tradition. Among the Kanozero petroglyphs, more than 100 cup-marks have been identified and their number increases.



Contextualizing Honnhammar

Taking as a starting point the large assembly of painted rock art at Honnhammar in Middle Norway an attempt is made to try to establish links between Honnhammar and other rock art sites in Fennoscandia. At Honnhammar about 120 figures are known from 25 sites. The motifs are comprised of geometrical figures, cervids, fishes, whales, boats (carved) other (non-cervid) animals and at least one human figure. Exploring the figures and the themes depicted are one side of the analysis. Other factors as well, such as possible anthropomorphic and zoomorphic features in the rock, the relation between the rock art and the microlandscape (i.e. the rock as canvas) and between rock art and the macro landscape could also be explored. The aim is to try to contextualize Honnhammar within the broader rock art tradition of Fennoscandia and thus seek a better understanding of what kind of site Honnhammar is.

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Keywords: rock paintings,
fennoscandia, landscape



Disarticulated Anthropomorphs and Defleshed Animals

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**Keywords: Mesolithic,
skeletons, disarticulation,
deflesh, mortuary practices**

The paper seeks to explore the structuring of imagery at Northern Tradition rock art sites of Norway and expressed relations between human skeletons, disarticulated skeletons and both fleshed and defleshed animals. It will be argued that the rock art contains essential information about former rituals and death treatment, which provides a much deeper understanding of past mortuary practices. Burials from the Mesolithic (and the Neolithic) are generally missing in the archaeological record of Norway, which to some extent might have, and still is, caused by acidic soil conditions, but could also be the result of death practices which left little remains and few intact bodies or skeletons. The paper also discusses Mesolithic concepts of life and death on the background of seemingly vital and possibly moving animals and human skeletons organised as potential narratives at many rock art panels of the Northern Tradition.

Hunting Stories in Scandinavian Rock Art

Since the beginning of rock art research, Scandinavian petroglyphs have given rise to vivid interpretations, related to stories and myths found in Saami ethnography, Old Norse religion, and Indo-European mythology. However, we still do not know if, and how, these images are really telling stories. In this paper we will discuss a narratological approach to petroglyphs. In particular, we shall analyze the ways Scandinavian Northern and Southern traditions depict hunting scenes. We compare images of wild boar hunting found in the South with hunting scenes, mainly of deer, in Northern material. A preliminary observation is that the scenes differ in ways that reflect not only different hunting traditions, but also different usages of the pictures, i.e. putting emphasis on different aspects of the hunting process itself. While the Northern tradition includes several phases, such as tracking, killing, and the anatomical inner details of the hunted species, the Southern tradition is more focused on the killing, or confrontational, aspect of the hunt. With respect to narrativity, the Northern hunting scenes thus seem to rely more on interrelated images, while the Southern tradition more on showing minimal narratives in single images.

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Keywords: petroglyphs, Scandinavia, narratology



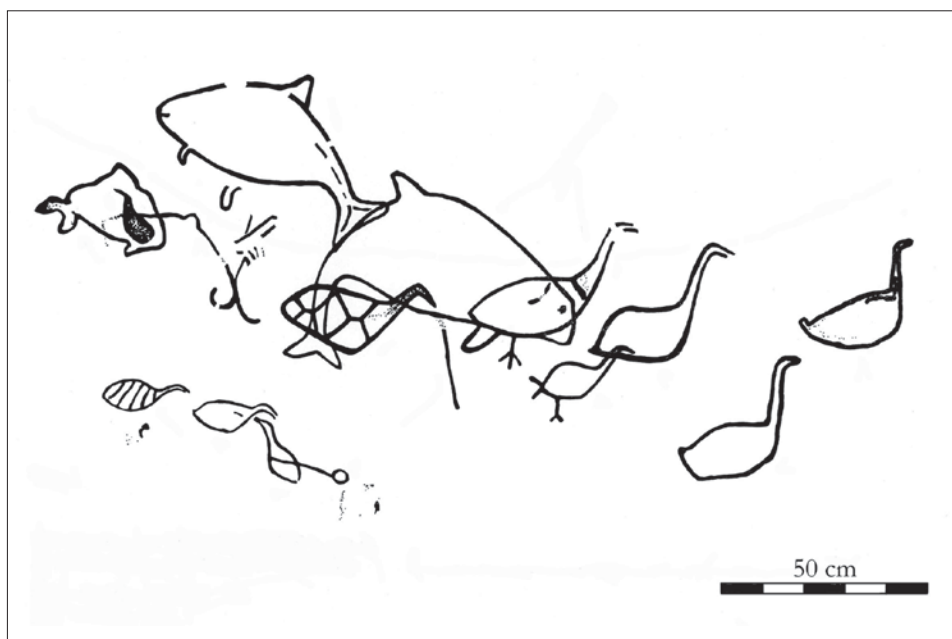
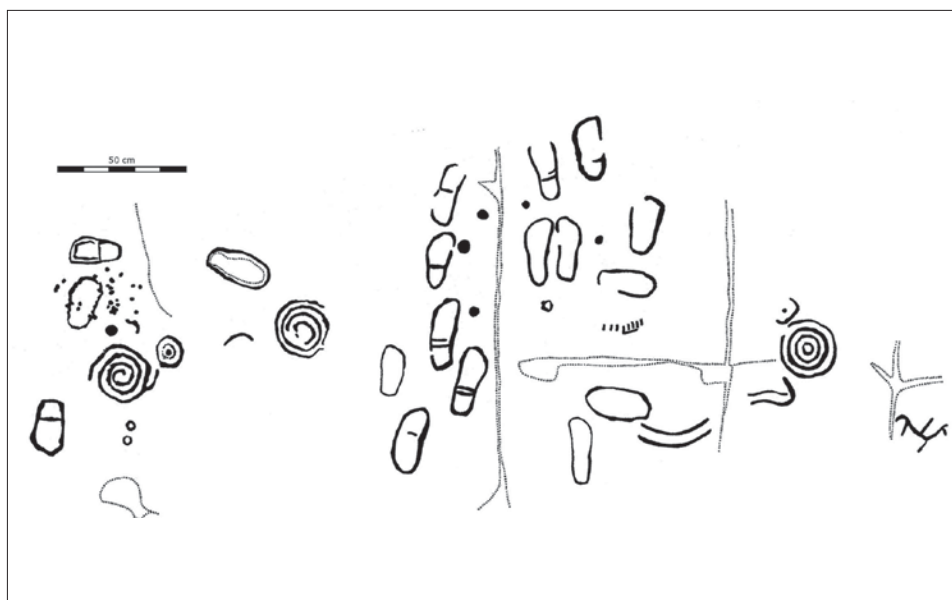
Rock art in Scandinavia: one, two, or more traditions

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Keywords: motifs, constructions, dissimilarities, contacts, local traditions

A century ago rock art in Scandinavia was sorted into two traditions; a Stone Age 'hunter-gatherer' tradition and a Bronze Age 'agrarian' tradition. The relevance of this division may be questioned. In general rock art belonging to these traditions is found at separate locations but occasionally occurring at the same sites and panels. The Stone Age tradition is dominated by zoomorphs, especially cervids, but also marine animals and birds. Ships and cup-marks dominate the Bronze Age tradition, but include footprints and horses.

The author has conducted detailed studies of the main motifs belonging to both traditions in Central Norway, where they are well represented. These studies demonstrate local differences within both traditions regarding the choice of motifs and their representations. This holds especially true for the Stone Age sites, where style varies between sites. Some basic similarities in image form can be identified but dissimilarities are more dominant. During the Bronze Age it is evident that different motifs were preferred in different panels. Thus, the homogeneity of both traditions, may be questioned. While local differences dominate between Stone Age sites, Bronze Age motifs are more standardised. However, panels and sites are dominated by different motifs, which indicate that local sub-traditions may have existed.



A meeting between elements

In this presentation I wish to focus on the different elements that seem to collide and meet at the different rock art panels, with focus on the region of Central Norway. In many ways the panels are often located at places where there is a presence of different elements, as for example waterfalls, streams, seas/lakes or rivers near the rock art panels. These locations seem to be important, but the rock art panels also seem to be mirroring this dichotomy of water elements meeting the land elements. In both traditions (the Northern and Southern rock art tradition) we can see rock art panels where the figures seem to create contrasts of elements. Land animals meet sea elements, and only a few rock art sites consist of only one motif. The dichotomy seems to be an important part of the narrative of the rock art. In between this contrast of land and sea elements we find the human element, either as anthropomorphic figures or boat motifs. How can we interpret this dichotomy? Can we interpret the dichotomy as being the main narrative throughout the Northern and Southern tradition? Or can we see that traces of certain elements were added later, thus changing the narrative?

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Keywords: elements, land, sea, dichotomy, landscape

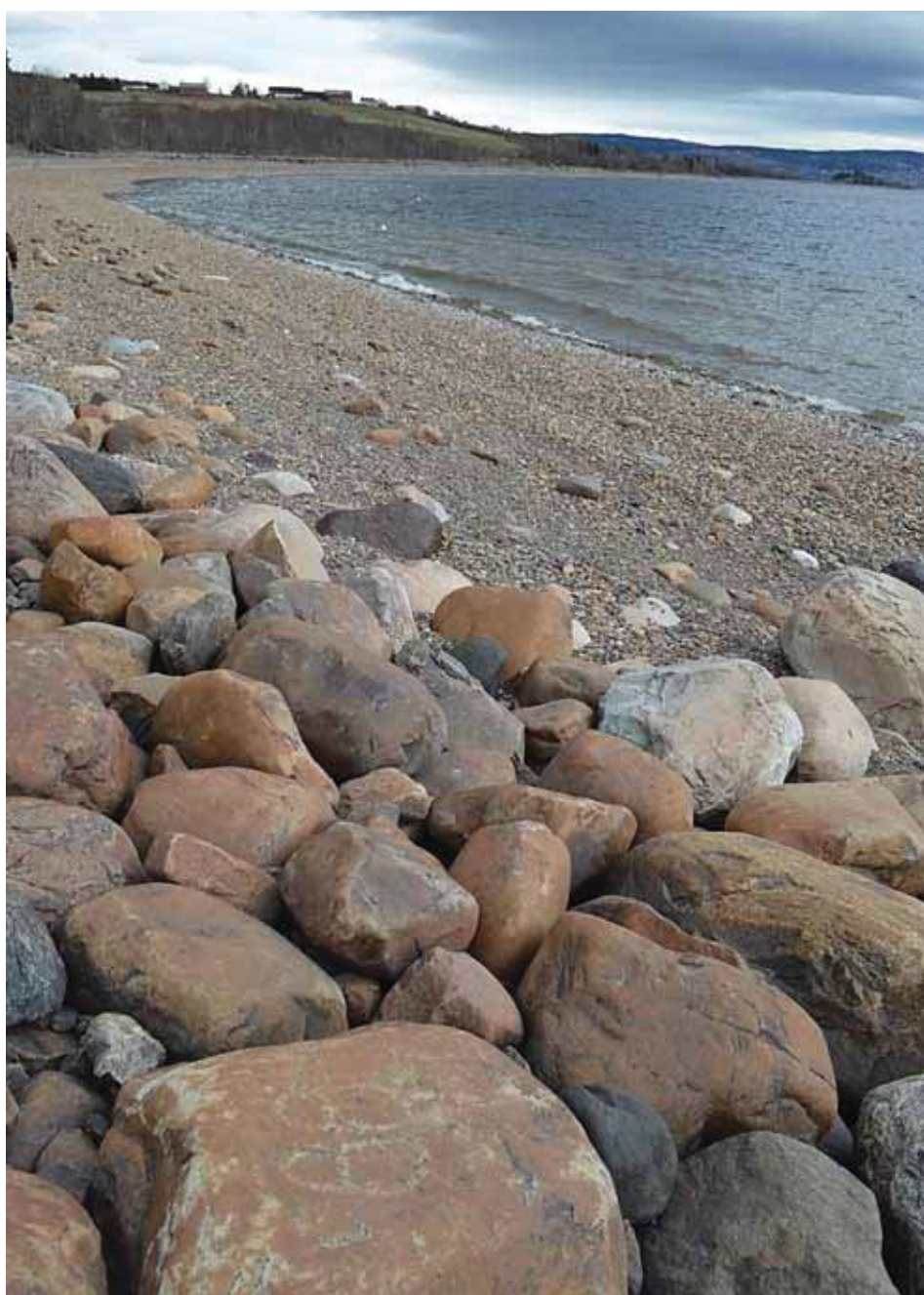


Fig.1 - Footprints at Selbusjøen. (photo Heidrun Steberglokken, NTNU University museum)

Red rocks and rock carvings in Alta, Northern Norway

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Keywords: Alta, rock carvings, color, geochemical processes, seashore, aesthetics

Scandinavian rock carvings are often painted red, to make them more visible to the observer, and it is a widespread notion among people that this was what they looked like in their heyday - red carvings on grey bedrock. I propose that it in fact was the other way around with major parts of the UNESCO World Heritage rock art of Alta in Northern Norway - that bright and clearly visible rock carvings were produced on strikingly red-coated sandstone in the seashore zone, and that the contemporary seashore at the Hjemmeluft site can serve as an illustration of how the environment may have looked like when the rock art was made. By examining the rock surfaces at the Hjemmeluft site and the corresponding current seashore zone, using field observations and geochemical analysis, and comparing with the Kåfjord site, I suggest that the bedrock in Hjemmeluft and Kåfjord displayed aesthetic similarities previously not noted, namely the red color on the rock surfaces, confined within the borders of distinct geological formation layers.



Fig. 1 - Rocks on the seashore in Hjemmeluft, Alta. (photo © Karin Tanssem)