

BAIKI

the Home that Lives in the Heart

Issue 8

Summer 1993

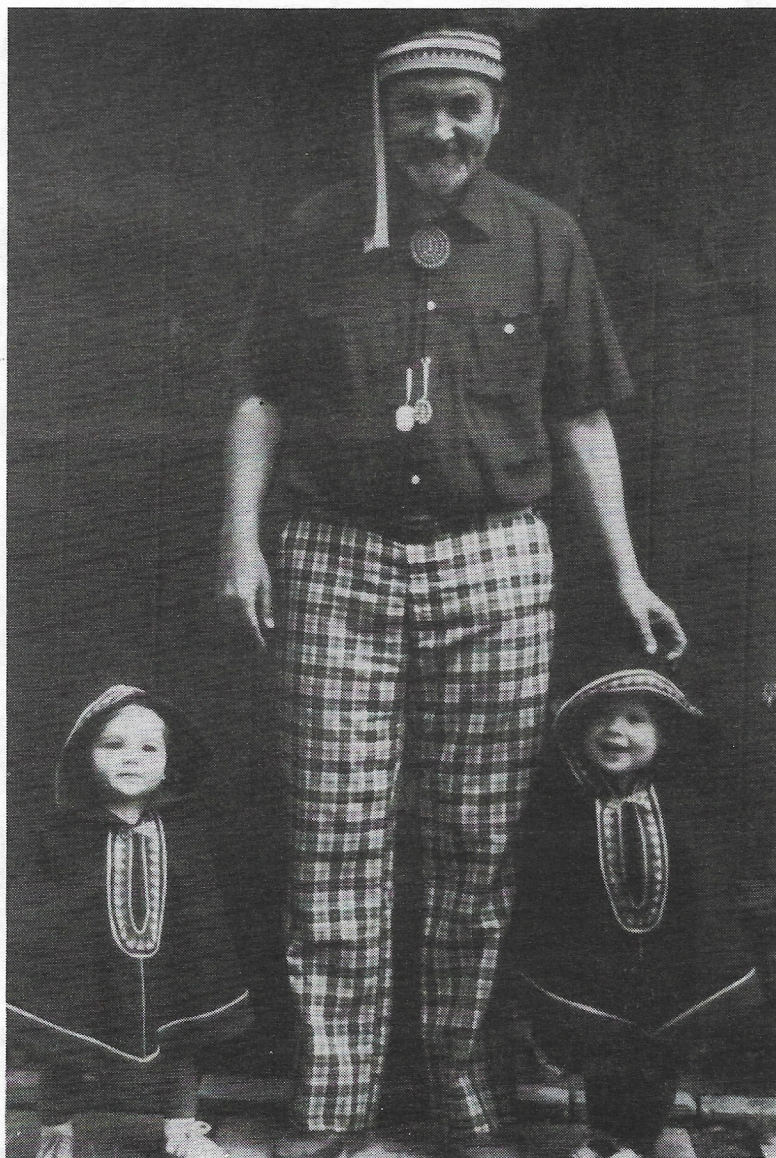


photo: Penny Seaberg

the North American Journal of Sami Living



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ON THE COVER

Artist Albin Seaberg whose recent exhibit with son Kurt Seaberg at the Swedish Museum in Chicago, "From Father to Son," featured Sami themes in paintings, lithographs and drawings. He stands with his two two-year-old grandchildren, Alexis Economus of Highland Park, Illinois, and Anna Seaberg of Madison, Wisconsin.



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This issue is produced with the help of D'Arcy Allison-Teasley, Gerry Luoma Henkel, Sue Myers, Donna Palomaki, Kurt Seaberg, Debra Sund, and Barbara Tan.

LEON KERÄNEN

1939-1993

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Leon Keränen who passed away in New York Mills, Minnesota on June 18. Leon Keränen wholeheartedly embraced his Sami heritage. "You know," he said to me one day over the phone, "we have always been told that we are superior to Nature, when the truth is that we are really related to Nature. Isn't that what this indigenous Sami thing is all about?" Leon Keränen was an integral part of our community, a "Baiker" who was present at the first two public Sami-American gatherings in New York Mills and Sebeka, who helped put together the first SIIDA meeting at Finn Creek and who played gracious host to the visiting Sami joiker Ingor-Antte Ailu Gaup. Leon was a hit at Finnfest USA '92 in Duluth when he got up and told - as part of our Sami presentation - the story of his reindeer-herding ancestor Royu Elli, who slew a bear with an axe handle. I remember his wonderful joyous laughter, his undying enthusiasm for new and off-beat ideas and his proud and loving dedication to his family. Leon, I'm so glad that I knew you, and Leon, I miss you a lot.

Faith Fjeld, *Baiki* editor.



Issue 8

Summer 1993

IN THIS ISSUE

3

THE DRUM
Mel Olsen

7

THE RUSSIAN SAMI
Niilas Somby, Sergei Dyakin

8

**SAMI TRADITIONS AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**
Elina Helander

10

SAMI ROOTS

12

THROUGH SAAMI EYES
D'Arcy Allison-Teasley

14

SAMI ARTIST: JOHN SAVIO

15

EDITORIAL: FAITH FJELD

16

**BAIKI NORTH AMERICAN
ADVISORY COUNCIL**

17

ENDURING SAMI VALUES
Kurt Seaberg

19

**HOW THE SKOLT WOMAN
GOT THE TOES OF A BEAR**
Donna Palomaki, Kurt Seaberg

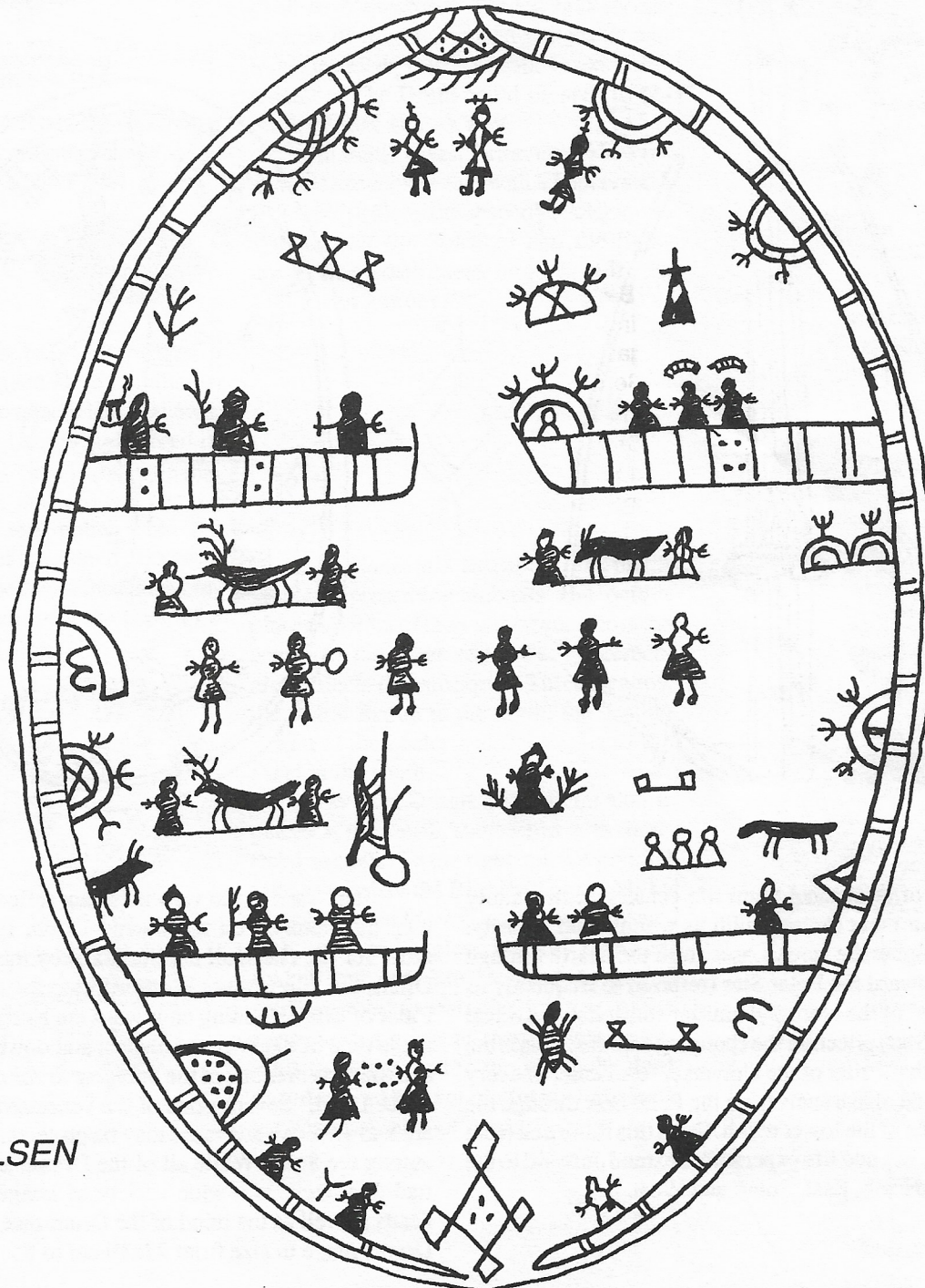
20

**THE SAMI OF
THE KOLA PENINSULA**
Sergei Dyakin, Ljubov Vatonena

22-23

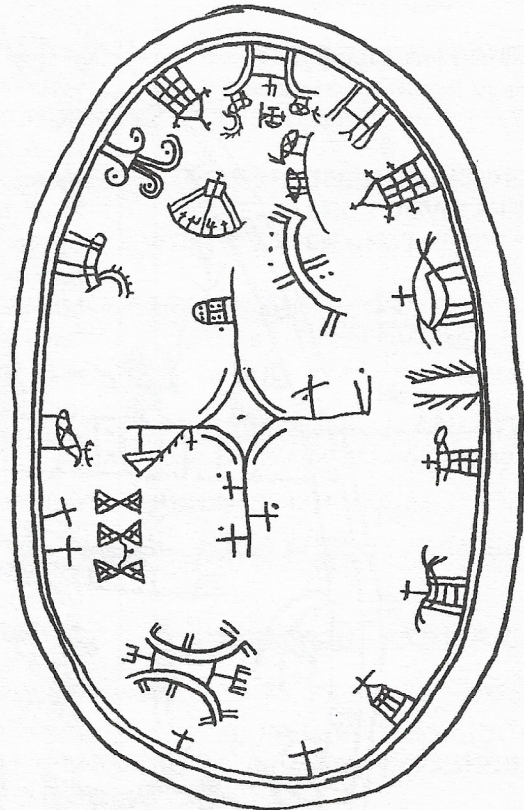
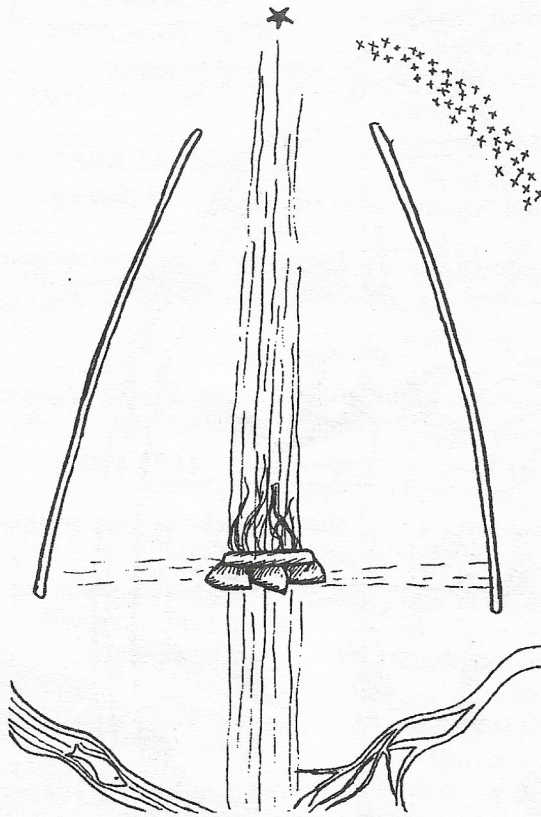
**BAIKERS EXCHANGE
TEE SHIRTS
SUBSCRIPTIONS**

the Drum



MEL OLSEN

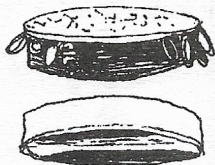
**WHAT IS THE MEANING OF OUR EXISTENCE AND HOW DO WE FIND OUR WAY?
THE SAMI PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE IS INTRINSICALLY CONNECTED TO
THE SEASONS, TO PLANT AND ANIMAL LIFE AND TO A UNIQUE SOCIAL STRUCTURE.**



The core of traditional Sami life centers on the family hearth and the Sami tent (*lavuu*) with its warmth and security. On dark winter nights the smoke rises from the hearth through the opening up toward the Polar Star (referred to frequently as the "Nail" or "Pin" of the North). Familiar constellations rotate around the Polar Star reflecting the changing seasons. This is the "Pillar of Life," the "Pillar of the Universe," the center of every Sami dwelling that also travels from the Polar Star through the *lavuu* to the depths of the lower realm. From this Pillar and from the family hearth, life and life experiences extend outward to the Four Directions, North, East, South and West.

The Sami world view is further reflected in the cognitive map diagrammed on the Sacred Drum, illustrating Nature's order for the clans, all held in place by the Polar Star. On the Drum, the Sun (*Peive*) is often located at the center, with the Pillar of Life extending up toward the North and the Polar Star at the time of the Winter Solstice, and down towards the South and the lower realms of the universe to *Jabmeaivo*, the "Realm of the Dead." Seventy-one of the venerated old Sacred Drums are known today and more may be protected by secret societies among the Sami. While all of the Drums are based on ancient tradition, there is a wide variety of images that reflect local needs as well as the mind of the Drum-maker. Existing Sacred Drums range in size from 22x19 cm to 85x35 cm.

There are two basic forms of construction. The older form is the more common "sieve Drum," or *Gievre*, an oval form of wood fitted on the underside with a handle.

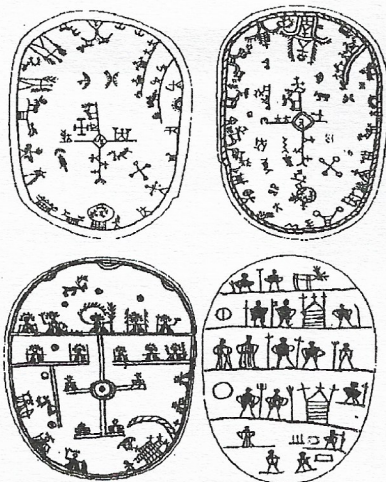


The second form, the *Kobdes* or "bull-roarer" is bowl-shaped with slots on the bottom for a hand grip.



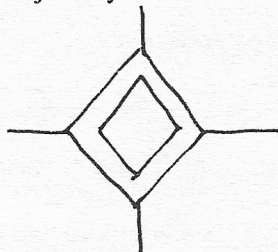
There are a few examples of a third, cylinder-shaped Drum, similar to common European musical instruments.

All sacred Drums are formed of wood from "trees that grow with the sun," as it's said, and the ink for the Drum images is red, either from the boiled inner bark of the alder tree or from reindeer blood. The Drum face is a membrane of skin taken from the fawn of a one-year-old doe.



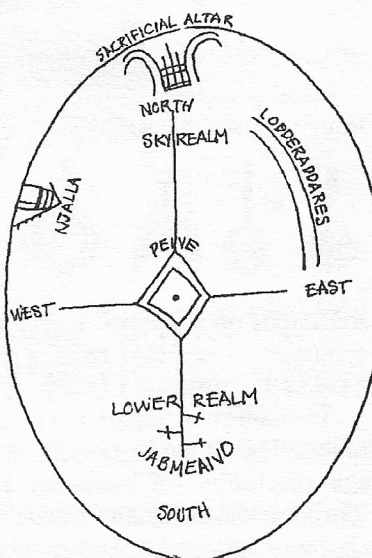
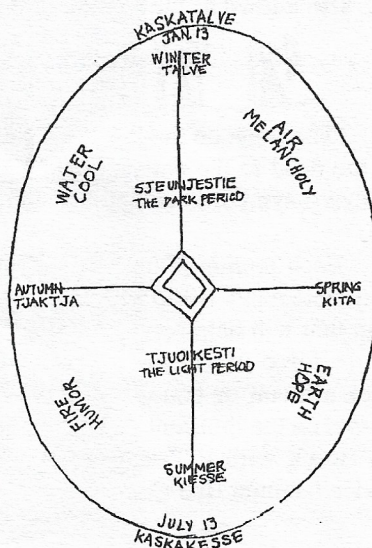
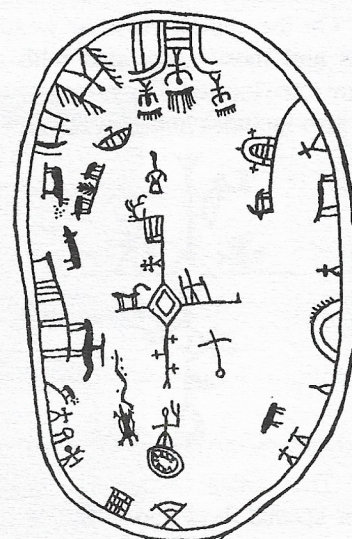
The images on the Drums vary in style, some naturalistic, and some abstract, arranged systematically around the Peive and the Pillar of Life. The oval shape reflects the cyclical nature of life. It is divided into four quadrants for the four seasons and the Four Directions. Around the edge of the oval, each quarter is divided into shorter periods of time by spaced images or patterns, thirteen periods of four weeks being common. The Drum could be used to express current time as well.

In many cases, Drum motifs are organized around the Sun which appears as a rhomboid or diamond-shaped parallelogram symbolizing the Solstices and the Equinoxes, with a dark center through which the noaide can journey.



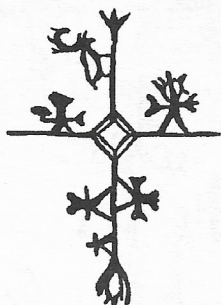
Around this rhomboid are pictographs representing animals and deities placed in order of their importance from the center to the outer edge. The placement also reflects the concept of Three Realms; the Astral Realm to the north, the Earthly Realm at the center and the Realm of the Dead at the south.

On most Drums a sacrificial altar is placed at the north, sometimes with sacrificial animals. To the right, curved parallel lines symbolize the Bird Path or the Milky Way (*Lodderaddares*), a journeying route. Fish, wolves, eagles, beaver, reindeer, snakes and bear are included as sacred spirits (*Saivo*) to assist the journey. In the upper area a crescent-shaped boat represents the Moon and to the left in the third quadrant, a *Njalla* or platform symbolizes the winter storage of foods.



continued overleaf

On the central crossbar weather deities and those associated with the hunt are often located. The vertical above Peive also includes hunt symbols.



The vertical below includes deities for special days and in the second quadrant are the three Goddesses of Destiny, also known as the *Norns*.

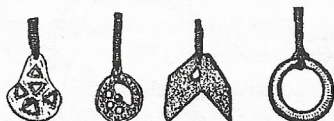


The route on the lower right carries the dead to the nether world and a graveyard symbol is sometimes shown here.

Each *noaide* [Sami shaman] has an intimate relationship with the special Drum that will help serve to strengthen the life force of the clan. The *noaide* places a metal or bone ring (*Arpa* or *Vuorbe*) on the Sun center. The Drum is then struck with a T-shaped antler or wooden hammer (the *Coarve-Vaever*).



Metal ornaments hanging around the Drum jingle and the *Arpa* jumps with



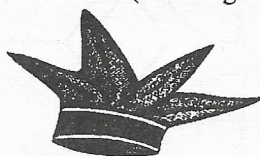
life and settles on a symbol. It will not move further. A repeated inquiry will bring the same result

Shamanism in Sapmi is a family institution. The Drum is passed along through generations of honorable service. On occasion, the Drums themselves have become famous for their phenomenal powers. *Noaide* were considered specialists and were called upon in situations of desperation, to heal, to journey

for a soul or to issue revenge. Many ordinary people had household drums which they used for everyday information and for decision-making.

Numerous sources mention the taboo of women and the Drum, with women being forbidden to touch, see or cross its path. There are also a number of accounts of powerful female *noaide*. These women were from *noaide* lineage, inherited their Drums and lived up to their responsibilities with phenomenal works. The Pastor Lars Levi Laestadius wrote in "*Fragmenter i Lappska Mythologien*" several accounts of women using the Drum that clearly impressed him and there are many records of a male *noaide* using a female to assist in the return from journeying.

Missionaries, purging Samiland of Sacred Drums, as well as Sacred Wands and "Four Winds" hats (that originally were



only worn by *noaide*), imposed an order that was clearly patriarchal. The "male-

ness" of the Drum and the stud reindeer as *noaide* alter-ego may be manipulated legends. Or they may also reference a clan custom or a regional phenomena.

Somewhere on the Drum face there is the Man with a Bow.



The Man with the Bow is preparing to shoot down the Polar Star at the proper time, bringing the Universe to an end. Whereas the Pillar of the Universe is the beginning of life, this man with the bow will bring the end. Many old Sacred Drums also have images and runes on the underside of the membrane. Here are located powerful secrets accumulated by the *noaide* as part of the tradition that serves the clan in their attempt to live in harmony and balance as a family and with Nature.

Mel Olsen is a weaver and a professor of art and art history at the University of Wisconsin. He is a regular contributor to Baiki.

the Drum

QUICK-REFERENCE GLOSSARY

- ARPA: metal or bone ring
- BEAVVI: the Sun
- COARVE-VAEVER: T-shaped hammer
- GIEVRE: sieve Drum
- GOBDA: the Sun
- JABMEANO: Realm of the Dead
- KOBDAS: bowl-shaped Drum
- KOTA: Sami tent
- LAPPTRUMMA: Sami Drum
- LAVUU: Sami tent
- LODDERADDARES: the Milky Way
- NORNS: the Three Goddesses of Destiny
- NJALLA: raised hut for food storage
- NOIADE: Sami shaman
- PEIVE: the Sun
- SAIVO: sacred spirits
- VUORBE: metal or bone ring

[Editor's note: The above word list is to facilitate the reading of the Drum article. Baiki is in the process of preparing a thorough glossary of Sami sacred words, with accompanying bibliography and references to the different Sámi dialects.]

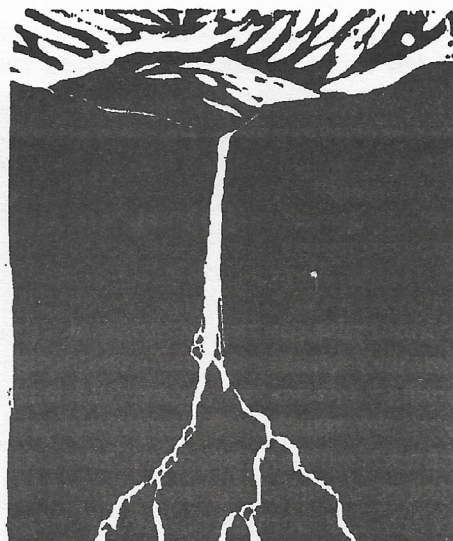


NIILAS A. SOMBY, Sámi Aigi:
"Two Russian Sami Women with a Swedish Sami Man"

THE SAMI OF THE KOLA PENINSULA

SERGEI DYAKIN

In this issue Sergei Dyakin continues his chronicle of the Lopari (Sami) people in Russian Lapland. In Baiki Issue #7 we learned that the Sami economy was dealt an economic blow in the 1930's by a process called "collectivization", the conversion of private farms into state collective farms, or "kolhozi" by the Communist regime. There's more. Please turn to page 20 for part two.



"The Waterfall"

*"The fact that we breathe, eat and drink
is so obvious that we never need to
think about it until we lack it.
The Waterfall is a symbol
of strength, purity and beauty.
I hope it will continue to be.
In the rustle of the water
I hear if I listen:
"Long Live the Flowing River
and the Fresh Air!"
and echoing from Nature around:
"Long Live Peace and Brotherhood
Among the Nations of the Earth!"*

Elle Hansa (Hans Ragnar Mathisen)

SAMI TRADITION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARCTIC

Elina Helander, Ph.D.

The Sami population in the Nordic countries today is estimated at about 50,000 to 70,000, the vast majority (40,000 to 45,000) living in Norway. The greatest concentration of Samis is found in Finnmark, where they number about 25,000. The Sami people were originally fishermen and hunters but they have since adopted other livelihoods and today are engaged in most of the occupations of modern society.

In Norway less than 10% of the Sami people are reindeer herders, and in Sweden, where the total Sami population is estimated at around 17,000, some 2,700 are involved in the reindeer industry. The Finnish-Sami population numbers approximately 5,700 of whom 3,800 live in the Sami territory; half of the Finnish Sami are involved in the reindeer business.

The Sami people and their political organizations have a coordinating body in the Nordic Sami Council, which was established in Karasjok in 1956. A democratically elected body called the Sami Parliament or the *Sámediggi* has recently been set up in Norway. Sweden and Russia have no similar bodies to represent the Sami People.

The founding of the Nordic Sami Institute in Kautokeino in 1973 provided an important impetus for Sami research into the needs and values of Sami society.

THE SAMI CONCEPT OF TRADITION

There are widespread fears that the change of pace in modern society represents a serious threat to tradition, especially where the identity of an ethnic minority [like the Sami] is closely linked to it. "Tradition" may be defined as consisting of those cultural elements

that are handed down from one generation to another. It may derive from past times and from distant locations and can be adapted to the actual shape of a culture. Tradition lends continuity to a culture, but in order to do this, it must be constantly reproduced.

Every culture has a reserve of "idle" traditions that are not in continuous or habitual use. Among these traditions one will often find elements that run counter to the mainstream values in the society concerned.

DEFINING SAMI IDENTITY

The preservation of tradition is not a goal in itself. Instead one must concentrate on the dynamics of tradition and on the role of tradition in providing an ethnic group with its identity, its distinctive life-style, its economic system, etc. One of the key strategies adopted by the Sami people in their own struggle for cultural survival has been to clearly define their identity.

An important milestone was the 7th Nordic Sami Conference at Gällivare, Sweden in 1971, where the following statements were laid down:

1. We, the Samis, are one people and the borders of nations shall not divide the community of our people.
2. We have our own history, our own traditions, our own culture and language. We have inherited the right to land and water from our forefathers and our right to conduct our own forms of trade.
3. It is our inalienable right to manage and develop our forms of industry and communities according to our common terms and we, together, will manage our lands, natural resources and national heritage for the coming generations.

THE SAMI CONCEPT OF ENVIRONMENT

The Sami concept of environment consists of several different components, including the natural environment, the cultural environment, the social environment and the linguistic environment. These elements go together to make up a whole that must always be viewed as a single entity. If one of the elements changes, there will necessarily be change in the other elements as well.

The Sami environment is very sensitive. Our society is being subjected to constant influence which is transforming our pattern of life and our relationship with nature. Piece by piece other nations have taken our land and our water from us. Their relationship to nature is impoverishing the environment of Sami.

We are part of the ecosystem. Our cultural manifestations are adapted to ecological balance between what nature can give and what we can utilize in relation to nature's productive capacity.

Ours is a living culture, always enabling us to adapt to various natural conditions, always acquiring new knowledge which will enable us to survive. Our language expresses the way in which we perceive the environment. It is also a necessary vehicle for the transmission of knowledge from one generation to another. Language has an important part to play in expressing our responsibility for maintaining the ecological balance of nature. The social environment can easily respond to changes both in the natural environment and in the various cultural elements.

SAMILAND MARGINALIZED

One of the cornerstones of Sami identity is the principle of solidarity which says that the Sami are one people who are not divided but united by the national borders that run between them. Conscious efforts are now under way to develop a uniform policy that applies to all Sami people on all sides of the national borders.

Nonetheless, the fact remains that the Sami people live in four different countries and therefore live under different systems of public administration, which means that in turn they are affected by different political decisions. The countries concerned have

somewhat different policies on minorities, even though there are some attempts at harmonization now.

In all countries political power is exercised by the central government and even quite recently we have seen decisions made in Oslo and other capitols that have directly affected the Sami people but have been made without listening to local opinion. A good example is provided by the decision of the Norwegian government to open the grouse hunting season in mid-September, against the Sami proposal that it should start two weeks later. Other similar decisions have been made with regard to fishing, duck-hunting, etc.

Ideological power lies in the hands of the schools and the mass media. Sami schools and the Sami media are still fairly undeveloped today and their function remains limited.

In Norway the affairs of the Sami people are governed by the Sami Parliament (the Sámediggi) which started work in 1990 after the first democratic elections in 1989. The debates have so far concentrated on the status and authority of this body.

The Sámediggi's administrative functions are restricted to granting funds to certain Sami organizations and bodies in accordance with guidelines issued by the Norwegian Ministry. The long-term goal is to increase the powers of the Sámediggi but for the time being it has merely an advisory position. Recently there have been calls to the effect that the Sámediggi should be given decision-making authority on the use of land, an issue which is of crucial importance to the survival of the people.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Almost all of the land traditionally inhabited by the Sami people is owned by the State, for example, in the province of Finnmark the state owns about 90% of the land. In the Sami regions there are vast natural resources such as fish, crude oil, and gas that are all being exploited by outsiders. The Sami people have no say in setting the price of these commodities nor do they get any share of the profits.

One of the key strategies to resolve the employment problem in the north is tourism, but again the problem remains that a large share of the profits are pocketed by companies from the south.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The present trends in economic and environmental development are not sustainable. The concept was coined in the Brundtland Report of 1987 which defined "sustainable development" as the effort to satisfy present needs without jeopardizing the survival needs of future generations. However, the concept of "development" is not necessarily compatible with the notion of "sustainable." Development is always the result of intentional activity within a given society. The term has been used to cover up negative effects, such as pollution. It seems impossible to have a universal model of sustainable development that could be applied to the whole world. Instead, we need to stress the importance of local control, local action and local solutions. What and how are we going to sustain? What are we going to develop and how?

FROM PERIPHERY TO CENTER

The following measures are suggested for sustainable development from the point of view of the Sami People:

1. Sami areas must be recognized as having an independent value of their own rather than being regarded simply as a source of raw materials for other [countries].

2. Sami political organs must be given responsibility and control over the area's natural resources.

3. All planning and decision-making that affects the Sami People must be based on Sami participation.

4. The knowledge of the Sami People as well as their social and economic systems must be respected.

5. The natural resources in the Sami areas must not be destroyed.

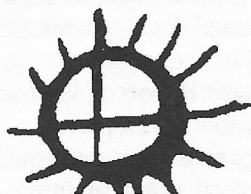
6. Sami researchers must be given more resources to do their work.

7. Economic life should be based on more local activities, local labor and local decision making.

8. The Sami concept of the environment must be respected.

Elina Holander was for many years Director of the Nordic Sami Institute in Kautokeino. Her dissertation was on "Bi-lingualism Among the Sami." She is a Research Fellow and a leader of the indigenous women's movement.

SOME THOUGHTS ON SAMI-AMERICAN SPIRITUALITY



These days, many of us are sensing that buried deep underneath the popular American society is a more ancient, more meaningful culture. We speak of a thread of connectedness, a tribal notion that was shared by most ancient Peoples, a rootedness in the land, a connection to the animals and to each other, an organized and unified model of the universe. We believe that we are not just observers, but that we take part in the making of reality and the world through our beliefs and the intentions of our actions. We reject the schism between subjective and objective, between the sacred and the mundane. Many Sami-Americans have found and respected these elements in traditional Native American spirituality. Much is known and shared of these traditions, and much of it feels so right. But Sami Americans, as well as most descendants of Northern European cultures, don't need to look outside their own traditions for their sacred sensibility. We only need to look back far enough. It's back there, for us to rediscover, and if necessary, to recreate. The stars and the seasons, the caves and the fields are everywhere with lessons for everyone. The wolves and the bears, the deer and the ravens belong to many tribes from many lands. Let us find the crown of the World Tree through our individual roots, however diverse and tangled they may be. And when we get there, may we find all the tribes there, all the individual leaves turned upwards towards the Sun we share.

D'Arcy Allison-Teasley
667 200th Ave.
Somerset, WI 54025

THE RE-EMERGING SAMI NATION

A major Conference on International Indigenous Politics and Self-government is being held in Norway Nov. 8-10 at the Center for Sami Studies, U. of Tromsø. All groups involved with Sami issues will send representatives, including indigenous political leaders, social scientists and others with special experience in the field of Sami politics. The aim is to present issues of Sami self-government in Norway and the other Nordic countries within an international perspective, focusing on two major themes: "International Indigenous Peoples" and "Indigenous Self-Government." Indigenous leaders from Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Switzerland will also attend. Contact: Else Grete Broderstad or Janne Hansen, Center for Sami Studies, U. of Tromsø, Breivika, N-9037, Tromsø, Norway, tel: 47-83-45 751/45 535/ 45 536, or fax: 47-83-76 672.

Harald Gaski
Center for Sami Studies
N-9037, Tromsø
Norway

AILO GAUP WORKSHOPS

Workshops on "Shamanism of the European North" will be conducted by Ailo Gaup, a Norwegian Sami who has studied with Michael Harner. The dates and contacts are: Oct. 16-17, Albuquerque, NM: Susan Mroczynski, (505) 877-5272. Oct. 30-31, San Francisco Bay Area, CA: Christina Berteau, (415) 856-3536. Nov. 6-7, Honolulu, HI: Robin Wurtzel, (808) 595-6402. Nov. 13-14, Detroit, MI: Jayne Hamilton, (313) 335-0021. Nov. 19-21, Portland, OR: J'aime Schelz, (503) 234-2224.

Lynn Gray
Foundation for Shamanic Studies
P.O. Box 670
Norwalk, CT 06852

"SAMI MAGIC"

Some months ago my cousin who lives in Duluth sent me a copy of **Baiki**. I almost cried at the reference to "Sami Magic." I have experienced times of incredible intuition and was told that it runs in the family. My son also has this gift. My grandmother told me stories of her relatives "the Reindeer People." She showed me pictures of her home in northern Sweden and sang little songs about children at play [which] I am teaching to my own grand daughters now. I would like to subscribe to your journal and perhaps you can tell me how to join a group in my area whose members may also be descendants of these Sami people.

Sara-ann Kasner
2920 Idaho Ave. No.
Crystal, MN 55427

Baiki: You're in luck. There are many people of Sami ancestry living in the Twin Cities and we will put you in touch with them. Several Sami exhibits are also being planned in your area which we will publicize.

SAMI INFORMATION

In four weeks I will guide a group of 30-40 people on a study/travel program in Norway. Can you suggest where I may obtain informative materials about the Sami culture in Norway, and the Norwegian American Sami culture?

Anne K. Crosman
16A Bellamy Rd.
Dover, NH 03820

Baiki: There is an ever-increasing demand for information about the Sami culture. Baiki is currently applying for grants in order to produce good educational materials in English. Xeroxed information is available until this happens. Requests should be accompanied by \$2.50 for postage and handling.

NO BORDERS

I have wondered about the various individuals coming forth with Sami material. I say forget about the Finn Creek SIIDA [the Sami Immigrants' Descendants' Association discussed at Finn Creek near New York Mills, MN]. Try to assemble all the individuals into one organization. We must all hang together. Why separate our activities? The study and promotion of Sami culture isn't for individual glory or to merely teach it in schools. It should be available to all in order to make ours a strong community. You are trying to reach individuals through *Baiki* and the response has been great. Thank you! It should not be broken into Finnish Samis, Norwegian Samis, Swedish Samis, etc. The Samis freely cross these national borders so why should we put up borders here in the U.S.? Maybe I feel this because I am a hodge podge of these nationalities.

Alyce Ruikka

Rte. 3 Box 128
New York Mills, MN 56567

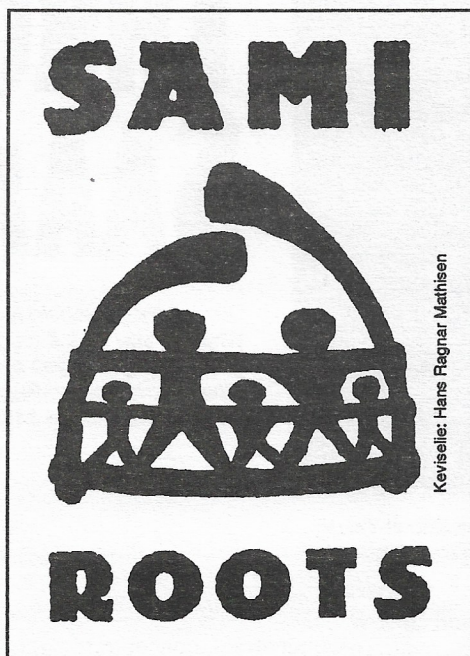
IS IT "SAMI" OR IS IT "SAAMI"?

I am looking for some information on Lapland. I was adopted as a baby and I'm just now finding my roots. Both of my great grandparents were born in Sweden. I was given your address by the American Swedish Institute and told that you might be able to point me in the right direction. Is "Sami" the right way to spell what we call ourselves? I have seen different spellings.

Martha Yelland

520 Upton Ave. So.
Minneapolis, MN 55410

Baiki: In Sweden and Finland, it's "Saami," in Norway it's "Sami." The diacritical is used when writing "Sámi" in the Sami language. At Baiki we use the English spelling employed by the Nordic Sami Institute and the Sami Education Council. All are correct.



ASSOCIAZIONE PER I POPOLI MINACCIATI

We are the newly-born Italian branch of the German-based Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker (Endangered Peoples Documentation Center). I am in touch with Dr. Elina Helander and she advised me to read *Baiki*. Arctic cultures are my field of interest. I hope you can send me some samples of the magazine and I will send you a booklet dealing with indigenous peoples (Aborigines, Sami, People of Siberia and Tuareg) which is conceived for use as a tool for the International Year of Indigenous Peoples. I thank you in advance. I can't wait to read *Baiki*!

Alessandro Michelucci

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12-50132 Firenze, Italy
fax: 579918

Baiki: Congratulations! Your earlier letter, published in our fall 1992 issue, announced your desire to establish this center, and now, one year later, it has been accomplished.

SAMI CONNECTIONS

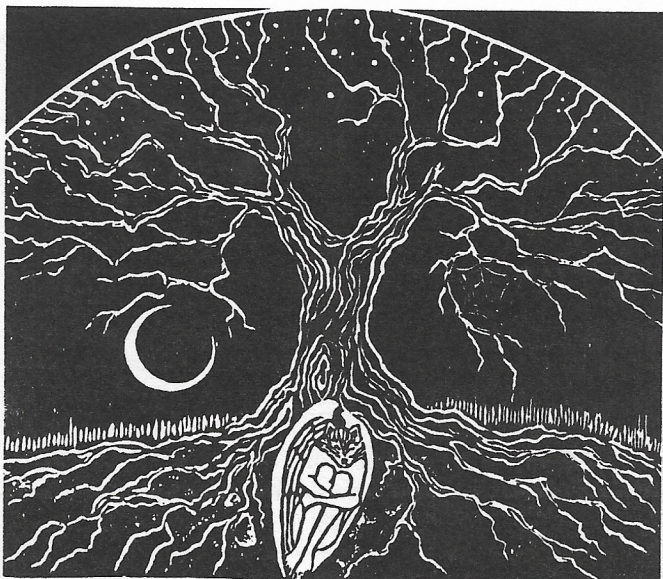
Thanks for such a wonderful publication that deals with part of my heritage that I know so little about. I am particularly interested in learning about Sami shamanic practices as on my Grandmother's side there is a line of women who know things. I have received training from the Shamanic Institute founded by Michael Harner. I wish to learn more and there is no one near me to learn from or talk to.

Anita Burbeck-Gould

210 South 11 St.
Moorhead, MN 56560

The editor replies: Thanks for writing. There are "Sami connections" in your area with whom we will put you in contact. Some of your Grandmothers may have been midwives who are said to have brought Sami cultural traditions to America. Today these traditions are often called "The Nature Religion" in English. This is a freely-shared community-based way of life that emphasizes equality and respect among people and a reciprocal relationship with Nature which is learned through real-life survival situations. Much of the "Sami shamanism" that is being taught in expensive commercial workshops is an intellectual pursuit based on a hierarchy of masters and apprentices. This may be helpful to some, but there seems to be no community base. My personal belief is that the rebirth of Sami spiritual tradition is a cultural process that is taking place through art, poetry, the joik, theater and storytelling and through "Sami connections:" through interrelating with each other.

We appreciate your letters. We try to answer all Baiki correspondence. We have limited time and limited help, so there may be a delay in our response. Please send your ideas and comments to "Sami Roots," Baiki, 3548 14th Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55407.



D'Arcy Allison-Teasley:
"Winged Wolf" 1979

CONCENTRATION CAMP

Concentrate, concentrate...
Which lover, what needle?
Who-what-when-where?
No
Concentrate on the only
Important question-Why.

A gaunt face with a lean hungry look
Haunted eyes in a body disarmed & defenseless
Looking through the fence
That is invisible
The gateless fence
That forever divides the future
From the past and the present.

Concentrate, concentrate
Could this be an ancient curse
Awakened by those who in their weakness
Crossed that fine line
Between right and wrong
Between good and bad...
Could this be a paternal god's wrath?
Aroused by an act of love, or a moment of passion
To pass final judgement
And dole out a capital punishment
That is cruel
And unusual.

Concentrate, concentrate
Or could this be just a random mutation
Of some primeval plague
That has lurked in our blood, always
Planted by that capricious goddess, Mother Nature
Just another original design in that natural order
Meant to balance the chaos
Wrought by the crush of humanity?

THROUGH SAAMI EYES

Our poetry centerfold is back. We'd like to see how you look at the world. Whether you look through eyes that are "Saami," as poet-artist D'Arcy Allison-Teasley or whether your eyes are "Sami," or "Sámi," or not "Sami" at all, we welcome your artwork and poetry. Floppy disks should be Macintosh-compatible. Send to Baiki, 3548 14th Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55407.

THE IDIOT JOURNEY

Every day
We ride the black serpent,
Following its length
There and back
There and back...
The idiot journey
Rubber on asphalt
In an unholy communion,
Generating profane energy
Like a great negative battle

Concentrate, concentrate
What is this slow holocaust?
With no six-pointed star, no symbol of hope
No allies poised to mount a heroic liberation?
There is only a horrified world
Looking on with distaste
Quietly thanking their god
For finally cleaning house.

Concentrate, concentrate
What are the choices?
To live a short life of long pain
A prisoner in a house of glass
Surrounded by mobs with stones in hand
Considering who among them is without sin,
Without regrets...
What are the choices?
To die a slow death, wasting away ever lighter
Till even the soul evaporates
Leaving only an insect-like shell...

Perhaps the only choice
Is to embrace the brink and be swallowed whole
By the edge
Rushing down and down
To greet the sacred ground
In a final crushing kiss...

Concentrate, concentrate.

D'Arcy and her husband Anthony live on sixty acres of field and forest near Somerset, Wisconsin along with three German Shepherds, two cats and an iguana. She is an artist working in advertising and he is an urban forester. There is a spoken history of "Lapp" ancestry on the maternal (Swedish) side of D'Arcy's family and she considers this heritage a gift from her mother that inspires and nourishes her soul.



I want to walk
The sacred labyrinth
Where the path is the destiny
Where energy is raised
And directed and grounded
As it has always been done
The body like an antennae
Capturing ancient subtle signals
And the feet embracing the earth
In a holy communion.

THE SHAMAN'S SOUL

PART 1

The shaman's sickness
Distills and purifies the soul.
It brings the body to the brink of death
To instruct the flesh
About the dangers of
The realm of the hungry ghost.

The shaman's sickness
Arrives on a dark wing
And descends into the flesh,
Landing like a raven- graceful & abrupt
To strip the carcass bare.

The raven leaves only a skeleton-
Pure, polished and white
The delicate yet durable machine of man
The symbol of the material
In its most eternal form.

What is the purpose of this package?
The lesson of the flesh?
What is the function of the body
And the meaning of its inevitable death?

And when the raven is finished
Where is the shaman's soul?

PART 2

In the life of the body
Where does the soul reside?
Is it cradled in the nest of the skull?
Or does it languish in the heart
Imprisoned by the cage of ribs?

Does it flow through the hollow places
Where the marrow lies,
Whistling soft and low like a flute
As it courses along?

And at the moment of death
Does the soul sprout from sharp shoulder blades
And grow into great soft wings
To bear the spirit body out of this world
And into the next?

Where is the shaman's soul?

COULDN'T STOP IF WE WANTED

The full pink moon
Is setting...
We just passed something
On the highway- a flash of tan
As we roared by at 70 miles an hour.
Only caught a glimpse
Looked like a big piece of dirty paper,
Flapping in the current of air
Generated by the waves of cars.

But it wasn't.
It was a dog- crouched down
By the barrels of sand
Hidden in the concrete meridian.
Barking, head raised-
Was he hurt or just frightened
By the sudden rush of early morning traffic?
He couldn't cross the highway if he wanted...

We couldn't stop to help if we wanted-
The steady flow of traffic carried us away
Like the current of a mighty river
Intent only on some faraway destination,
Without a care for what happens
Along its ravaged banks.

We couldn't stop if we wanted,
We could only whisper a prayer
To the god of the river of metal & fumes
To please grant that poor creature
Safe passage.



PHOTO: DAIN LYNSTAD



Franz Richter: "Sami Doll," drawing

A Survey of SAMI AMERICAN ARTISTS

Sami American artists are invited to submit work to *Baiki* which will become part of an Arts Registry to be used in a number of ways: in grant writing for possible art exhibits, in assessing artistic resources for future publications, and in presentations to the public about Sami American culture. Please send up to 10 plastic or cardboard mounted slides or up to 10 color or black and white prints of visual art work in any medium including painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, metal, prints, photography, crafts, or mixed media. Slides are preferred. Label the slides or prints with your name, address, dimensions, and media. Also please send a resume or biographical information. A brief statement about your work will also be valuable.

SEND TO:

Baiki Artists Survey
attention: Marlene Wisuri
5263 North Shore Drive
Duluth, MN 55804-2991

SAMI ART IN AMERICA: SAVIO EXHIBIT



John Savio: "To the Mountaintops"

JOHN ANDREAS SAVIO "The Sami Artist of Norway"

John Savio (1902-1938), considered to be one of the leading Sami artists in the Arctic, was born in Bugoyfjord in northern Norway, a small picturesque fishing village bounded by fjords and valleys. Orphaned at two, he was raised by his grandfather, one of the wealthiest reindeer herders in the district.

He enrolled in the National Art School in Oslo, but his delicate health forced him to return north to Kirkenes before graduating. During the 30's he painted in Paris, earning critical praise. But burdened by poverty and ill health he returned to Oslo where he sold his woodcuts on the streets for whatever they would bring. His last years were marked by poverty and melancholy. He died of tuberculosis when he was only 36.

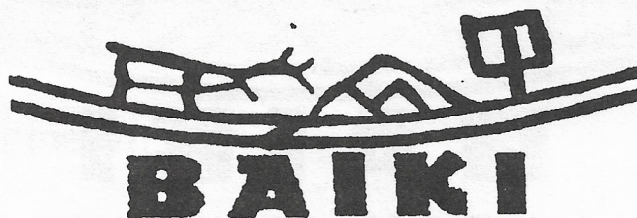
The Nordic Heritage Museum exhibit consists of 51 of his works, mainly woodcuts. They reflect the

Sami life of his time, and now, 55 years after Savio's death, have become collectors' items - especially since many of his works were destroyed in the heavy bombing of Kirkenes during World War II.



John Savio: "Reindeer Sleigh."

June 22-September 19
Nordic Heritage Museum
3014 NW 67th St.
Seattle, WA (206) 789-5707



TWO YEARS OLD AND JUST GETTING STARTED

I recently attended my 40th high school class reunion. A few weeks prior to this event we who made up the Murray High School, St. Paul, Class of 1953 received a questionnaire that asked: "What are your retirement plans?" " 'Retirement plans' ?" I exclaimed, "I'm just getting started!" At the end of two years, *Baiki* also is just getting started.

Before *Baiki*, I really was thinking about retiring. This newsletter came into being when I unexpectedly inherited a portion of my Uncle Alvin Simerson's farm near Belmond, Iowa and sold it to my cousins Sandra and Sarah. After I received the money from this sale I made some basic decisions about my personal priorities and how I was going to approach the rest of my life. I decided it was more important for me to do something meaningful than it was for me to "retire." And so I have spent my inheritance funding *Baiki's* first two years.

Before *Baiki*, *National Geographic* was the major definer of Sami identity in America. Somehow I could not connect their portrayals of colorful "Lapp Reindeer People" with my own strait-laced Norwegian Lutheran grandparents, yet I was forced to evoke these exotic images in order to explain my cultural background.

Before *Baiki*, Sapmi, the homeland of my grandparents, the indigenous nation-without-borders that is *peacefully regaining its sovereignty in the 20th century*, was being represented at ethnic fairs by cute little dolls and vendors in ersatz "Lapp" costumes.

Baiki's first issue came out in the fall of 1991. It began as an esoteric eight-page pamphlet that Maija Hanf, Rudy, Sally and Arden Johnson and I mailed out to our friends and relatives. It has grown - in just two years - to a twenty-four page authoritative quarterly read and recognized around the world. *Baiki* has generated the reawakening of Sami culture in North America and opened up communications between the descendants of the Sami people who left the Arctic and the descendants of the Sami people who did not.

There's a story behind how each one of us has become connected with *Baiki*. For most of us, *Baiki* found a need and has filled it. For this I say "thanks" to my Uncle Alvin and to my cousins.

I also say thanks to all of the people *all over the world* who have contributed to our first two years of growth. Thanks to those who have worked at the ethnic fairs handing out

copies of "Who Are the Sami People and What is Baiki?", selling "Saami Spirit" tee shirts to raise gas money.

Thanks to the ones who have made the first Sami-American gakti ever worn, who have produced the Sami flags we fly *over here*, who have created *stateside* Sami jewelry, and *domestic* Sami poetry, literature and art. Yes, thanks to the visionaries who have made *Baiki* interesting and beautiful.

Thanks to the "Baikers" whose names appear on the masthead of each issue, and thanks to the *Baiki* Advisory Council, whose voices have become so familiar on the phone, whose letters and faxes mean so much and who treat all this Sami stuff with respect.

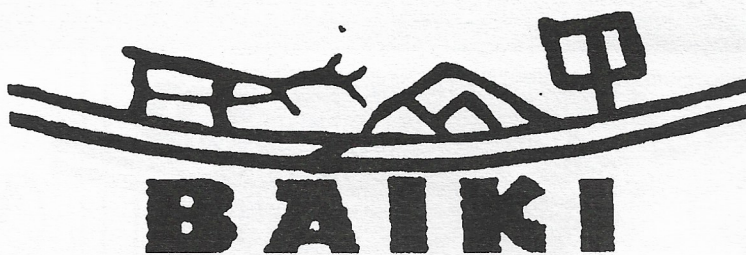
And *Baiki* says "*giitu*" to the sponsors whose sensitivity and generosity has often made the difference as to whether we could publish an issue or not. Finally, thanks to all you who have faith enough in what *Baiki* is doing to renew your subscriptions for *another* two years!

So now, at age two, "the Home That Lives in the Heart" has reached critical mass. We at *Baiki* are "chomping at the bit," full of ideas that need seed money. We are anxious to sit down and record the stories of our oldest relatives while they are still alive. We are scheming on ways to increase our circulation so that the editor and the staff can finally get paid for their work. We are eager to begin the creation of "Voices of the Forgotten Elders" so that we can use our talents to express our cultural heritage for the world to see. We can hardly wait to put together Sami curriculum for the public schools that is relevant for the kids of today. So I believe that now the grants will come.

Many years after graduating from Murray High School, and St. Olaf College as well, I began post-graduate work at San Francisco State University. Turning my back on the Department of Anthropology, I designed and completed the very first Masters Degree program in American Indian Studies in the history of S.F. State. I told my thesis advisors that I wanted to *learn from* the Native American faculty there, rather than *study* the Native Americans. " 'American Indian Studies' ? " asked one advisor, "there's no future in it!" I looked at him and said, "There's no future without it."

And that's the way I feel about *Baiki* and what we have started. So happy birthday, *Baiki*, and many happy returns of the day!

Faith Fjeld, publisher and editor



NORTH AMERICAN ADVISORY COUNCIL

The following persons have agreed to serve as members of
the Baiki North American Advisory Council
When we need advice and guidance, we can draw from their expertise.
We are very grateful for this support.

Liv Dahl, administrative director
Heritage Programs
Sons of Norway Foundation
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Else Berit Eikeland, vice consul
Royal Norwegian Consulate General
San Francisco, California

Jean Anderson Graves, Indigenous Peoples consultant
Alaska Yukon Library
Anchorage, Alaska

Ken Jackson/Grey Eagle, Ph.D. professor emeritus
University of Washington
Director, Sacred Circle Story Tellers
Seattle, Washington

Ernst Jensen, director
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president, Elco Technology
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Rudolph Johnson, library director (ret.)
University of Minnesota, Duluth
Duluth, Minnesota

Niilo Koponen, representative (ret.)
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Immigration History Research Center
St. Paul, Minnesota

Alyce Ruikka, genealogy specialist
Finnish and Sami Immigration
New York Mills, Minnesota

Marvin Salo, oral historian, traditional craftsman
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Paul Schultz, executive director
Bay Area Native American Ministry
Oakland, California

Roland Thorstensson, Ph.D. professor
Department of Scandinavian Studies
Gustavus Adolphus College
St. Peter, Minnesota

Seppo Valppu, cultural anthropologist, research scientist
University of Minnesota, Duluth and
Fond du Lac Community College
Duluth, Minnesota

Marlene Wisuri, director
Carlton County Historical Society
Cloquet, Minnesota

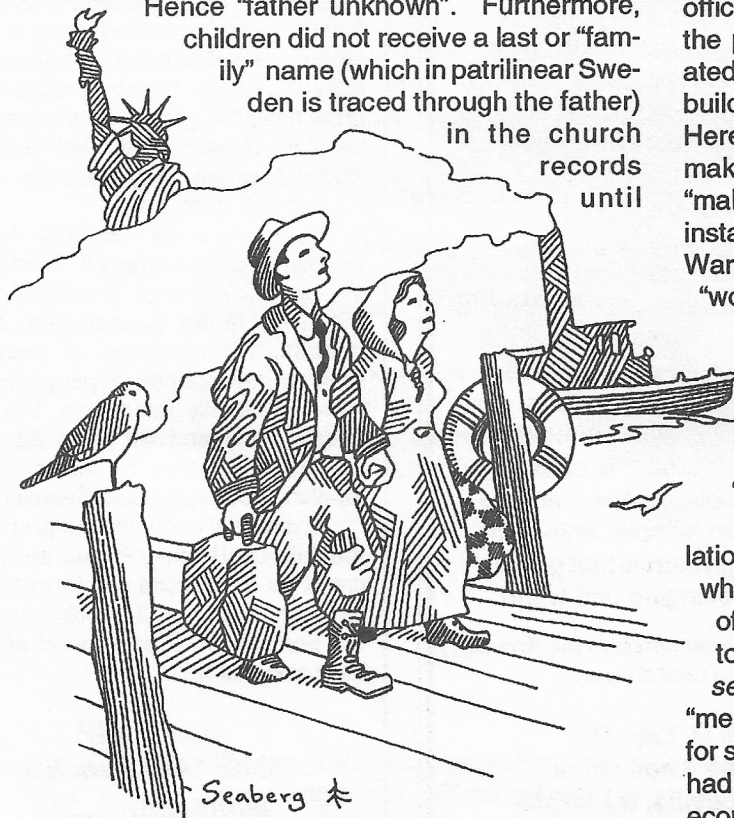
ENDURING SAMI VALUES

SOME NOTES ON THE QUESTION OF IDENTITY

Kurt Seaberg

In the last issue of BAIKI, Faith Fjeld pointed out the difficulty of tracing our Sami identity using "conventional methods" (census and church records), because the political persecution and hostility towards the Sami in Scandinavia and Russia caused our ancestors to suppress their indigenous identity behind the mask of a national identity. My own search for a Sami connection in Sweden has been a frustrating experience as I dig through old church records looking for lost ancestors, but find them peppered with blank spaces, "oakta" ("illegitimate" children) and "father unknown". Were my male forbears just a bunch of irresponsible louts who abandoned their love interests when fatherhood became imminent or was something else occurring? My suspicion is that the state (Lutheran) church in Sweden refused to recognize anyone who would not assimilate into Swedish society (those stubborn Lapps!) and expunged them from the records.

Hence "father unknown". Furthermore, children did not receive a last or "family" name (which in patrilineal Sweden is traced through the father) in the church records until



My grandparents arriving in America 1913.

their mothers married "legitimate" (i.e. Swedish-Lutheran) men. I know who all of my step-fathers were; I know very few fathers.

This process of assimilation became even more acute when our ancestors, succumbing to pressures at home, began emigrating to North America in droves in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. They could not be admitted into this country unless they identified themselves as citizens of "legitimate" political entities (i.e. Norway, Sweden, Finland or Russia). As far as I know, no one ever wrote "Samiland" as their country of origin at Ellis Island. Thus, in an eerie way, the U.S. government replaced the churches of Europe as the arbiter of identity, as government bureaucrats, acting like priests, admitted and re-christened newly-arrived immigrants in the shadow of the Statue of Liberty, often giving them a *new family name*. (How many of our forbears, with names unpronounceable to immigrant officials, became "Johnson" in America?) Thus began the process of cultural dismemberment that accelerated as our grandfathers and grandmothers began building new lives- and *new identities*- in America. Here they were continually pressured, as we all are, to make compromises- to sell their souls- in order to "make it" in America: join the Army, which made you an instant citizen (my grandfather did this during World War I), join a party or union (careful here- the IWW "wobblies" were "traitorous reds," "bomb-throwing anarchists," and, worst of all, "foreign agitators"!); send your children to "ethnically-cleansed" American schools ("I pledge allegiance, to the flag..."), and so on. This made them more "American" and erased the stigma of being a "foreigner".

The popular metaphor at that time for assimilation into American society was "the melting pot," which described, with this graphic image, the process of stripping away old loyalties, family ties, allegiances to foreign states and other *ways of identifying oneself* and forging new ones. But what came out of this "melting pot"- the new *American* identity- is a subject for serious debate. In my opinion, being an "American" had and still has more to do with issues of race, class, economics and political power than anything else. Place cannot become very prominent in forging an

identity when one is constantly moving to another city, county or state to be "where the jobs are". But this is the very thing around which an *indigenous identity* constellates: marriage to a *place*. This is why we "feel" our Sami ancestry, because it has to do, quite literally, with matters of the heart - with myth, story, family-kinship and place.

National identity, on the other hand- that which we find emblazoned on our birth certificates, passports and driver's licenses- is obsessed with boundaries and possessions, titles and hierarchies. Its catch-words are "progress" and "development," which it always uses to justify itself (the "developed" countries have progressed, the "undeveloped" ones have not) and economics (formerly "wealth and prosperity," now just plain old *jobs*) is always the bottom line.

Consider, for example, the current debate over what to do with America's last remaining virgin forests (our childrens' heritage), home to thousands of indigenous plants and animals, soon to be sacrificed on the altar of corporate profit so that a handful of jobs can be preserved for a few more years.

This is why I consider the whole issue of national vs. indigenous identity to be extremely important and relevant and why the readers of *Baiki* should be part of this debate. I issue a challenge to all of you to start thinking hard and writing letters around this theme: what does it mean to be Sami-American? To be Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, Russian, Danish, etc., -American? Why the hyphen, which indicates a marriage between worlds? What does it mean to be in this new place (which is still very new to those of us of European ancestry)? What does it mean to have lost the language, the culture, the myths and

stories, the familiar places and burial grounds of our ancestors and, more importantly, how can these things be recovered?

When we ponder the question of who we are do we think about our jobs, our loyalties to the state, the flag, or the companies for which we work, or does something deeper emerge, like family or community ties- our tribal memory- or a profound connection to the land and living things?

When we hear stories about thousand-year-old trees being cut down and sold to the highest bidder, or of ancient Native burial mounds being bulldozed to make way for a Wal-Mart parking lot do we shrug and say "that's progress" or do we feel that a profound, sacred trust is being violated? Where does this feeling come from?

And what sort of stories have the power to heal when our families come together and we've all listened, with bored expressions, to everyone talk about their jobs at Company X and the old men reminisce, for the hundredth time, about their exploits in World War II - the stories that would make Uncle Joe who went to Vietnam and who has been sitting silently in the corner with a dark brooding face and a vacant, thousand-yard stare - what sort of stories would make him feel like playing with the children again?

In these turbulent times we need something *solid* to hold on to- a sense of place, a sense of family. We need stories that give us more than simple entertainment. We need stories that give us a sense of belonging and worth.

*We appreciate your letters to this forum.
Please send them to:*

**Mark B. Lapping
15 Pine Knoll Drive
Lawrenceville, NJ 06848**

NORTH AMERICAN SAMI ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

DO YOU HAVE SAMI ANCESTORS?

We at *Baiki* are beginning an oral history project (OHP) in order to record the stories brought by Sami people ("Lapps") who came to North America as "Finns," "Norwegians," "Russians," and "Swedes." This is a chance to record your family stories.

It is very difficult to apply recognized methods of immigration history research to this project. Sami people were often assigned non-Sami names by the church and by the immigration authorities. Both kept records using these names. Our ancestors often relocated several times within Norway, Sweden and Finland prior to emigrating, therefore place names and points of departure do not necessarily prove or disprove Sami background. And since the Sami language was forbidden by the national governments, the language spoken by our immigrant grandparents is not a reliable indicator either.

The Baiki OHP is an effort to find new ways to seek out Sami identity. We hope to make the stories of our grandparents and great grandparents real so that they can be passed along to future generations. We therefore hope to publish our findings. Scholarly research will grow from the grass roots information we piece together and relatives here in North America may become reconnected with each other.

Please help us with this historic project! We welcome all "leads" and stories from every geographic location. We need family genealogies, photographs, photocopies of research projects, newspaper clippings and cassettes of family interviews. We need seed money and we need people to volunteer to serve as interpreters in Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish.

All material becomes the property of the Baiki Oral History Project and proper credit for all sources of information will be given. Nothing will be published without permission. Please send all pertinent material to:

**Baiki OHP
3548 14th Ave. So.
Minneapolis, MN
55407**

Guest storyteller: Donna Palomaki
Artist: Kurt Seaberg

Transformations back and forth between human and animal form are common in both Scandinavian and Sami legends and folklore. The difference is that in Scandinavian legend, the people transforming back and forth are usually called Finns or Lapps. The Sami storytellers, however, tell these stories about themselves. Note the matter-of-fact tone of the narrative.
From Lentonoidan poika (Son of the Flying Shaman) by Annukka and Samuli Aikio.
Translation by Donna Palomaki.

HOW THE SKOLT WOMAN GOT THE TOES OF A BEAR

There was once a frugal old Skolt man, who had a wife and sons. The old man thought it was a big waste of food to eat during the winter time, and therefore he and his wife transformed into bears for the season. They resumed life as human beings in the summer, when it was easy to catch fish. Winter came and the old man and woman slept their winter sleep as bears, snug in their den. But it so happened that their sons came on their rounds precisely to the old man and woman's den. When the old man noticed, what was going to happen, he advised his wife: "Be very quiet until after I am killed, flayed, and the pelt is spread in the yard.

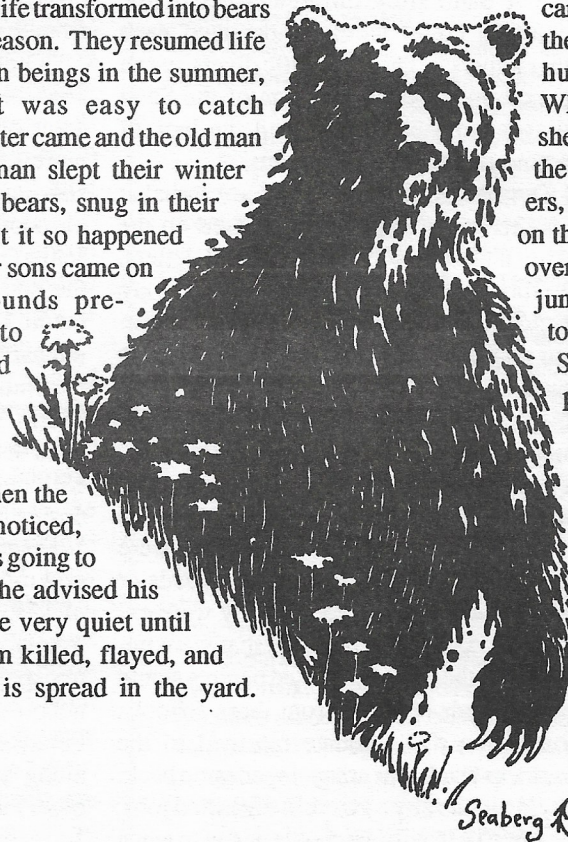
Then you must jump over the pelt, and you will become a human being again."

The male bear climbed out of the den and into the jaws of death, and there was

carried into the yard. But the old woman did as her husband had ordered.

When night came she in she-bear form followed the footprints of the hunters, saw the skin spread out on the ground, and jumped over it. But she couldn't jump high enough; her toes dragged on the pelt.

So one foot remained the paw of a bear. When the old woman went home to the cabin, the boys began to wonder why she had the claws of a bear in place of toes on one foot. Then their mother had to explain what had happened.



We are grateful to Donna Palomaki for being our guest storyteller. In Issue #9, Grey Eagle will tell the story of "How Joy and Beauty Came to the Sami People," illustrated and designed by D'Arcy Allison-Teasley.

THE SAMI OF THE KOLA PENINSULA

SERGEI DYAKIN

PART TWO

The collectivization of the private Sami reindeer herds in the 1930's was a long and painful process, not always voluntary. Many families were forced to join the collective farms, or *kolhozi*. The Sami were more cautious than the neighboring Komi and Nenets people and did not actively participate at first. The first *kolhozi* were not very stable and existed only for a short period of time. Former private reindeer owners preferred to herd their own reindeer when they had a chance.

Nevertheless collectivization continued. Many *kolhozi* socialized not only reindeer but also fishing and farming equipment as well. Komi and Sami people were prosecuted if they hired laborers to generate private wealth and sometimes hard-working herders were prosecuted merely due to personal dislike.

Large herds suffered big losses when they became collectivized. They were herded by people who were paid a fixed salary and were not interested in the safety or the productivity of the herd. There was no private ownership and therefore no personal interest. All the reindeer a family had were collectivized and many of the herders in the collectives were paid less than those who worked at other jobs.

The new Soviet regime brought a new administration to the Kola Peninsula. Almost all of the administrative and communist party positions were held by Komi or Russians. The indigenous Sami people did not have a fair share in the administration of their own lands. This situation continues in the Murmansk region today and contributes to the ongoing dislike between the Komi "newcomers" and the native Sami.

Collectivization ended the traditional Sami "free" method of reindeer herding. Organized herding became dominant. The positive side of collectivization and the "cultural revolution" that followed was that there was a relatively equal distribution of wealth, and poverty disappeared among the

Sami. Health care improved along with education and living conditions.

During this same period linguists at the Institute of the Peoples of the North in Leningrad began working on the creation of a Sami alphabet. They encountered many obstacles. The main one was the existence of four different dialects of the Sami language on the Kola Peninsula. Each of these dialects had a few sub-dialects. Every Sami village had its own dialect and vocabulary so that Sami from different parts of the peninsula could hardly understand each other's speech. This linguistic diversity can be explained by the isolation of the Sami villages from each other and the lack of communication between them.

Despite the difficulties, a Sami alphabet was created in 1933. It was based on the Latin alphabet and contained 38 letters. Textbooks in the Sami language were printed in 1934 and 1936 and Sami literature appeared. Efforts were made to train teachers for Sami public schools where children could study in their native language both in Leningrad and Murmansk.

For many of the young Sami men and women who were sent to these schools, the city environment was a shock. They were not used to sleeping in dormitory beds or using saunas once a week. Many were exposed to contagious diseases that were unknown on the tundra. Worried parents would remove their children from these schools. Some who did graduate returned to the tundra to teach, but many never came back, staying in the city to work at unskilled jobs.

After 1936 public schools began to teach the children only in the Russian language. So the attempt to create Sami education and literature came to nothing. The alphabet, created from a combination of different Sami dialects, was barely understandable for Sami people. At the same time, Sami people were literate in Russian, especially the children. Russian was the official and business language in the area, and was the

language of communication between Sami people and their Komi and Russian neighbors. Sami people spoke their native language only at home. Moreover, there was no way to translate literature and periodicals from Russian into Sami.

Then a new form of school appeared on the tundra, the boarding school. This allowed the parents who were away herding for weeks at a time to leave their children for long periods. The negative affect was that the children never learned herding skills from their parents.

Gradually, due to collective farming, boarding schools and efforts of government officials, the Russian Sami became more settled. In 1937 the number of Russian Sami was 1,841. Children, women and old people began to live in permanent houses settled in villages all year round. This was the end of the traditional Sami semi-nomadic life-style and the beginning of more intensive Russianization.

Many Sami men were drafted to fight in World War II. In 1939 the farming collectives of the Kola Peninsula gave 210 sledges with 662 reindeer to the Red Army for use during the Winter War with Finland. In November 1941 the first three reindeer transport military units were formed with a staff of 154, which included 77 herders. Later, four more were formed. They were used for transporting military supplies and personnel on the Karelian front. Sami of the Kola Peninsula made up a large part of the units along with Komi, Nenets, Karelians and other indigenous people of northern Russia and Siberia. Sami women took the place of men as herders on the collective farms. They also supplied the army with winter boots made from reindeer skins.

After World War II social and economic development of the Sami nation in Russia was characterized by a state monopoly of the reindeer economy. The numerous collective farms were swallowed by a giant collective farm called "Tundra" in Lovozero.

Tundra became a state farm in 1971. There was a lack of herders for the state herds as many young men had left their villages for the cities or stayed on after serving compulsory military service.

Some ancient Sami villages were eliminated and the inhabitants were moved to bigger settlements in the region. The reindeer economy became totally centralized and the traditional Sami way of reindeer herding became history. By the 1980's only two state reindeer farms remained on the Kola Peninsula, "Tundra," and "Pamyati Lenina" with a total of 70,000 livestock.

Industrial development, especially mining, created serious environmental problems in the fragile arctic tundra.

In the 1970's linguists at the Leningrad Pedagogical Institute and the Karelian branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR resumed work with the Sami alphabet that had been started in the 1930's. A new Sami alphabet was developed in 1982 based on Cyrillic, and in 1983 the local radio station in Lovozero began to broadcast part of its programs in the Sami language. Textbooks began to be printed in Sami for school children to study in their native language.

In 1985 a Russian-Sami dictionary with 8000 words was published. It was based on the Kildin dialect, which the majority of Sami in the Lovozero district spoke.

Modern Sami literature is represented by poets Askold Bazhanov, Oktyabrina Voronova, and Ekaterina Korkina. In 1980 a collection of 170 Sami fairy tales was published from material collected in the 19th and 20th centuries in the Kola Peninsula. In 1986 another collection of Sami fairy tales for children was also published.

There are several Sami choirs and folk groups in the Murmansk region, including the internationally-known Lovozero Sami Choir, the Luyavr Sami folk song and dance ensemble, and the folk art ensemble Oiyar.

Sami people of the Kola Peninsula are trying to preserve their culture, language, traditions and ethnic identity, but despite these efforts, rapid assimilation continues. According to the 1989 Soviet census the Sami population in the Soviet Union was 1,890 and only 42% of them spoke their native language. *[Editor's note: This population figure is almost identical with that of 1939, sixty years earlier.]*

Sergei Dyakin is a native of Murmansk and a student under the U. of Minnesota/Duluth-Petrozavodsk Exchange Program.

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MY PEOPLE?

This interview was published in the Russian paper Lovozerskaja Pravda, June 23, 1992, translated from Russian to Swedish by Leif Rantala and published in Samfolk, nr. 9, 1992, translated from Swedish into English for Baiki by Arden Johnson. Ljubov Vatonena, the leader of the Lovozero section of the Kola Sami Association speaks out on Sami rights in Russia. She is the director of the corporation Valt Jall which hopes to instill new life into indigenous handicrafts. She was born in Lovozero and went to boarding school. She has attended the Institute for Soviet Business in Novosibirsk and has worked in the county statistical office for ten years.

A lot of information comes through the statistical office where I work. I was able to analyze data on death rates in Lovozero County. I was shaken by how many die between 20 and 30 years of age. Most of these deaths are tragedies: murder, suicide, "froze to death on the tundra," and alcohol poisoning. Ethnicity is almost always the same: Sami. This raised a question which has given me no peace: what's happening to my People? For other Peoples, one sees positive demographics, their populations are increasing. But the number of Sami stays the same. I decided to find out why. The first reason is a high death rate. The other is that parents of mixed ethnicity register their children as anything BUT Sami.

My mother is Sami and my Father is Finn. I don't speak Finnish and don't know about the Finnish culture, I was born and raised among Sami. It has never occurred to me that I was Finnish. I feel like a small part of the Sami People.

As we moved into a market economy, the Sami were the first to be fired in Lovozero. In the collective there were many who only worked seasonally. They couldn't even get odd jobs. In a way it is typical here for people who belong to a small minority to be regarded as second class citizens. This isn't because the bosses belong to a different people or because the Samis are incompetent or even because of nationalism. The reasons lie deeper.

When I worked for the local government I was consistently treated with condescension. No matter how intelligent you are, you always get looked down on. "Sami, is that anything to bother with!" they say. If the person next to you is not from the north [the Sami area], he can even "not know how to tie his shoelaces" and he still gets the promotion. You are Sami and for you there is a "ceiling" for what positions you get.

An example: it was suggested that I present myself as candidate for mayor. I warned [them] that I wouldn't be elected because I was Sami. I was not elected, even as a city councilor, because it was only Sami who voted for me. Lovozero is only 20% Sami. People of other nationalities are upset at the thought of being led by a Sami. The general feeling here is that we should submit and only work where they tell us to work.

I am convinced that all of our People's despair and need can only be understood by one of our own blood. To have a position of power in our community, it isn't enough to be a good person. It is also extremely important to have your own ideas and support them. I established the corporation Valt Free (Free Life) to give our unemployed real possibilities for making a living. We have a lot of drinkers who are lost to society. They have no work discipline. They are Sami who have had an unexcused absence from work for a few days and have been legally fired. In principle this is correct but the laws are designed for people with an entirely different psychology, another behavior, another way of thinking.

I understand that it isn't easy to work with such people and that one might need to give them extra support. In the beginning I knew the problems seemed overwhelming. We have alcoholic women, also children. I want them to return to a normal life and normal work. They can't work in the collective where they can take off and drink in protest against the system. They need work on their own team, where they can't get away with showing off by acting tough.

We started by setting up a workshop for souvenirs and we plan to organize a tourist company. There are also many unemployed men. In the beginning it won't be easy for us- the economic projections show that. The first three years we can't expect much profit, but again I emphasize that our people will be employed.

"No matter how intelligent you are, you always get looked down on. You are Sami, and for you there is a 'ceiling' for what positions you can get."

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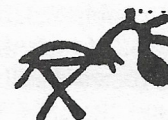
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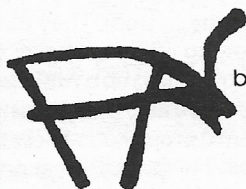
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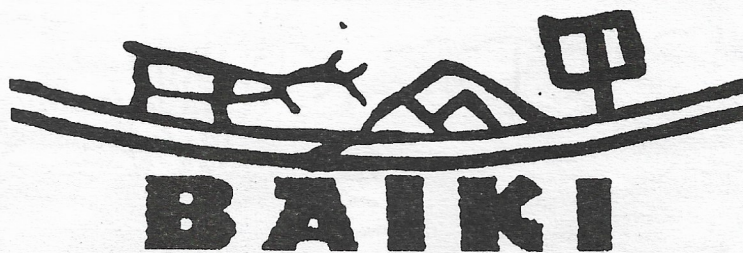
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them!



Haven't you heard?
Marvin Salo is up in the mountains
picking cloudberries with Kari and Allu.
They took Einar with them.
They say grandma and grandpa
went along too. And Maija Hanf has been
seen in Finland, and I hear she's been to
Russia! I hope she's okay.



Hey, you guys, don't worry. They'll all be
back in the fall!



BACK ISSUES

There is an increasing demand for back issues of *Baiki* as new subscribers seek to read and complete our two-year series on "Who We Are: Sapmi." To meet this need, *Baiki* is preparing an anthology of the major articles and editorials that have been published in our first two years. Bibliographies, glossaries, and additional educational material will be included. When this book is available, announcements and ordering information will be posted in *Baiki* as well as in other Scandinavian and Finnish periodicals.

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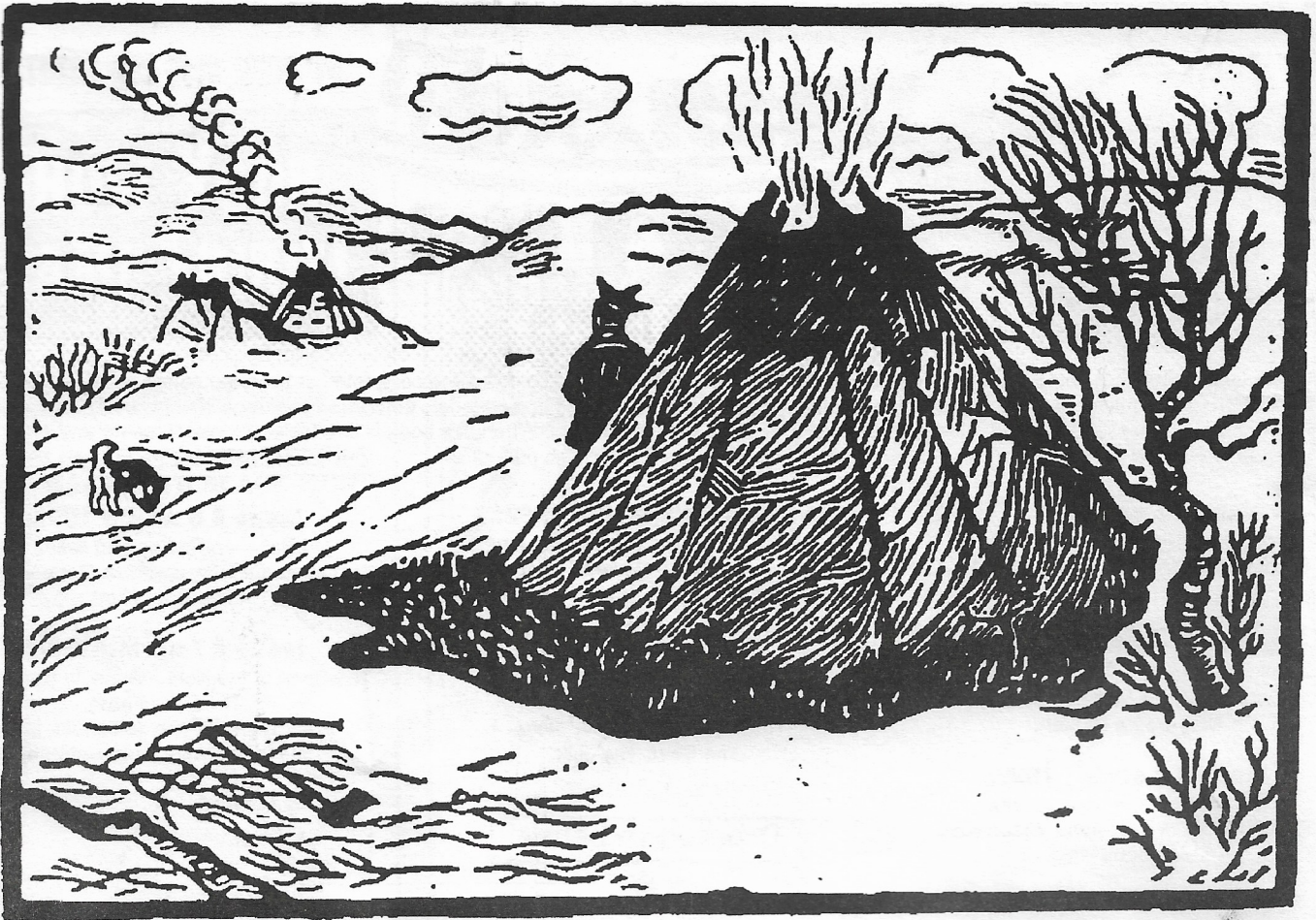
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