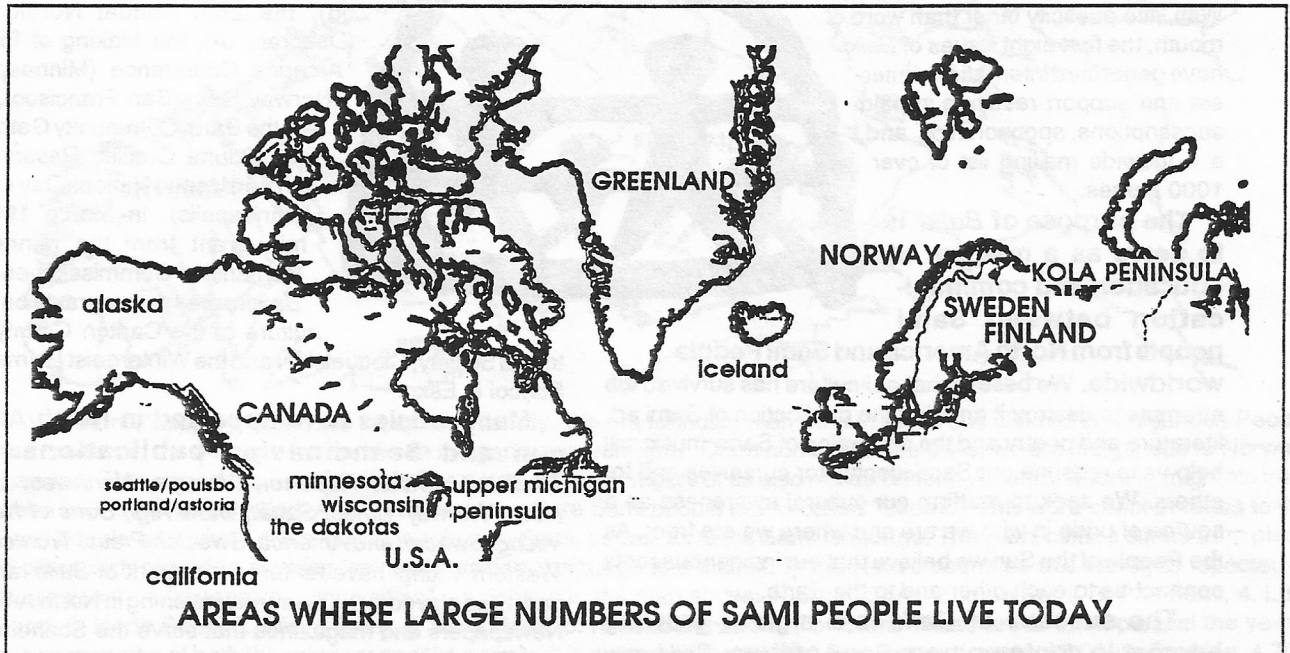


# BAIKI

*the Home that Lives in the Heart*

*the North American Sami Journal Introductory Edition*



## WHY IS IT SO QUIET?

WHY IS IT SO QUIET?  
NO ONE WILL EVER TALK ABOUT IT.  
WHY IS IT SO SILENT?  
NO ONE WANTS TO ADMIT  
THAT AT ONE TIME THERE WERE MANY WHO  
SPOKE SAMI EVERY DAY.  
TODAY IT'S NOT HAPPENING.  
IT'S DYING. IT'S DYING.

IS IT SO BAD TO BRING IT UP.  
OR TALK ABOUT IT OPENLY?  
IS IT SO DANGEROUS TO MENTION IT?  
DOES IT HURT TO TEAR IT OUT INTO THE OPEN?

IT IS DYING BECAUSE WE ARE SILENT.  
WE KILL IT WITH CLOSED MOUTHS.  
WE ALL BECOME NORWEGIANS,  
AS NORWEGIAN AS POSSIBLE. SILENTLY, QUIETLY.  
MUST IT BE THAT WAY?  
IS THAT THE ONLY WAY?

WHY IS IT SO SILENT?  
NO ONE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT IT.  
WHY IS IT SO QUIET?  
NO ONE WILL EVER BRING IT UP.

YES, WE ALWAYS HEAR, ALL THE TIME,  
WHAT DO THEY WANT,  
THOSE PROTESTORS FOR SAMI EQUALITY  
AND ALL THAT STUFF?  
WHAT IS THE ANSWER?  
WHAT CAN WE ANSWER?

WE WANT A BETTER SOCIETY.  
WE WANT IT TO BE MORE OPEN,  
SO THAT NO ONE HAS TO PRETEND TO BE  
SOMETHING THAT THEY'RE NOT.

MARI BOINE, (SAMI)

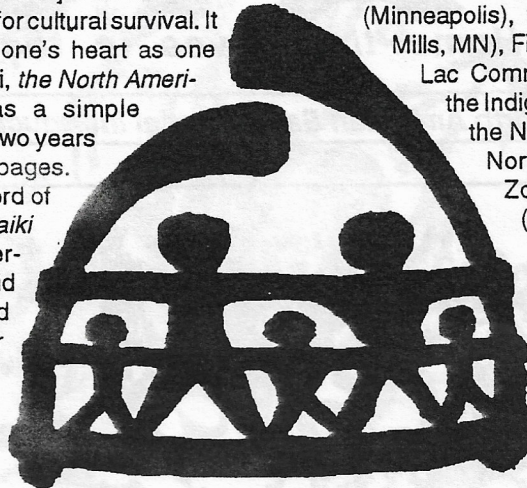


## WHAT IS "BAIKI"?

**Baiki** is the name of the quarterly journal that has grown out of the North American search for Sami identity. "Baiki" ["bah-ee-kee"] is the nomadic reindeer-herding society's word for cultural survival. It means the home that lives in one's heart as one travels from place to place. *Baiki, the North American Sami Journal*, began as a simple eight-page publication which in two years has expanded to twenty-four pages. With little publicity other than word of mouth, the first eight issues of *Baiki* have generated international interest and support resulting in paid subscriptions, sponsorships and a worldwide mailing list of over 1000 names.

The purpose of *Baiki* is to serve as a medium of education and communication between Sami people from North America and Sami People worldwide. We believe that our culture has survived the attempts to destroy it and that the publication of Sami art, literature and poetry and the promotion of Sami music will help us to redefine our Sami identity for ourselves and for others. We seek to reaffirm our cultural awareness as a source of pride in who we are and where we are from. As the People of the Sun we believe that our indigenous roots connect us to each other and to the Earth.

The success of *Baiki* is a sign of growing interest in contemporary Sami culture. *Baiki* now serves as the major source of information and communication in North America for anyone interested in the Sami culture. It is read by members of the academic community as well as by those who are seeking their Sami roots. Speaking engagements and group presentations by *Baiki* staff members often include the showing of the award-winning feature-length Samifilm "The Pathfinder" (directed by Nils Gaup) and the 35-minute video documentary "Sapmi" (produced by the Norwegian Cultural Ministry) as well as demonstrations of Sami arts and crafts.



During its first two years *Baiki* has made many presentations. These include the XII Conference on American Culture (UMD Duluth, MN), Festival of Nations (Minneapolis), the Finn Creek Festival (New York Mills, MN), Finnfest USA '92 (Duluth, MN), Font du Lac Community College, Hjemkomst (Fargo), the Indigenous Voices Conference (Chicago), the Nordhust Fest (Minot, ND), the Sons of Norway Reindeer Festival (Minnesota Zoo), the 26th Annual Nordic Fest (Decorah, IA), the Making of Finnish America Conference (Minneapolis), Norway Day, (San Francisco), Protect the Earth Community Gathering (Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation, WI) and United Nations Day (North Minneapolis). In March 1993, a mini-grant from the Minnesota Humanities Commission enabled *Baiki* to present programs on Sami culture at the Carlton County Historical Society, Cloquet, MN and the Winterquist Elementary School in Esko.

Many articles have appeared in North American and Scandinavian publications. The *Finnish-American Reporter*, *Nordlys*, *Northwest Ethnic News*, *Norway Times*, *Sagat*, *Sámi Áigi*, *Sons of Norway Viking*, *Sweden and America*, *Swedish Press*, *Tromsø* and *Western Viking* have featured the work of *Baiki* and the part it has played in the Sami reawakening in North America. Newspapers and magazines that serve the Scandinavian and Finnish American communities have featured articles on Sami culture after reading *Baiki*.

In the fall of 1993, *Baiki* received a grant from the Cultural Council of the Sami Parliament of Norway that allowed editor Faith Fjeld to represent the Sami-American community at the International Indigenous Conference on Politics and Self-Government in Tromsø, Norway.



### ANYONE IS SAMI WHO:

1. has Sami as the first language, or whose mother, father or grandparents spoke Sami as the first language.
2. considers himself a Sami and lives entirely according to the rules of Sami society, and who is recognized by the representative Sami body as a Sami.
3. has a father or mother who satisfies the above-mentioned conditions.

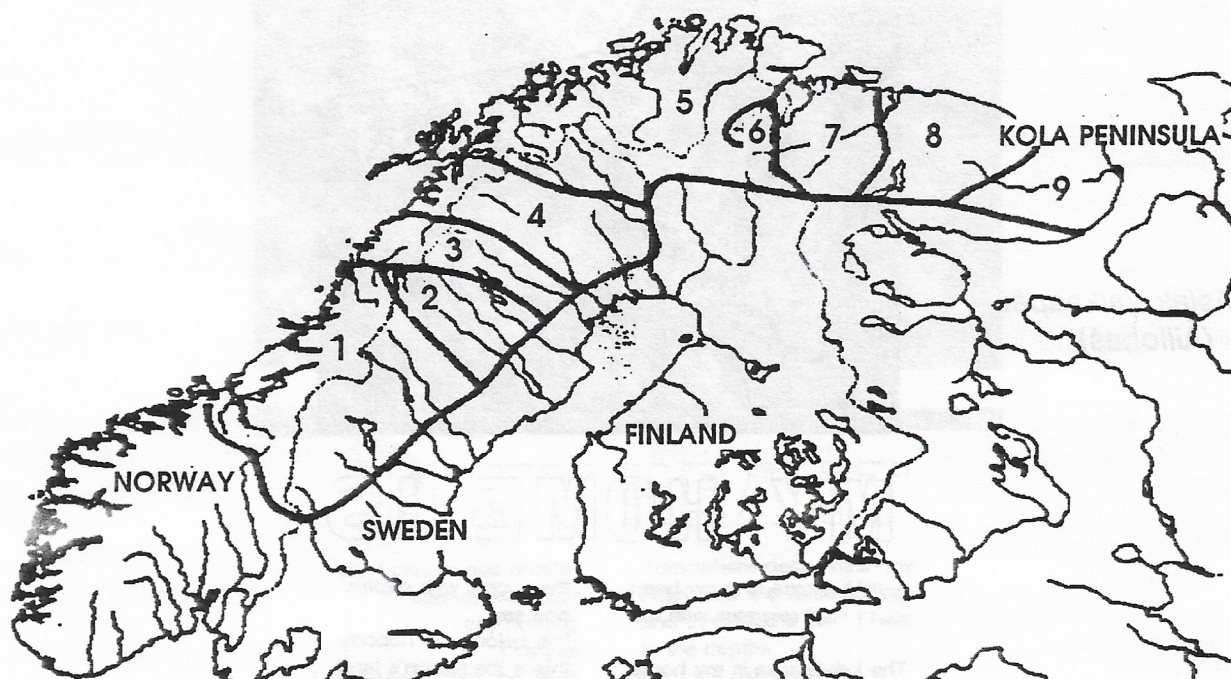
*This official definition of "Sami" was adopted in 1980 at the Nordic Sami Conference in Tromsø, Norway.*

### YOU MAY BE SAMI IF YOU'VE BEEN TOLD:

1. that your family is "100% Norwegian" or "100% Swede."
2. that your ancestors were Laestadians or your family is Apostolic Lutheran.
3. that your family were "Finlanders" or "Highland Finns."
4. that your immigrant relatives were "flat-faced Norwegians" or "Black Norwegians."
5. that they were "Brown Swedes" or ironed-out Swedes."
6. that there were no "Lapps" where your relatives came from.
7. that your people came from way up north, that they were short and very dark.
8. that you are definitely NOT a "Lapp!"



## WHO ARE THE SAMI PEOPLE?



We Sami ("Lapp") people, are an ethnic minority. We are founding members of the World Council of Indigenous People and leaders in the struggle for worldwide indigenous sovereignty. Often nomadic in life-style, we are indigenous to Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Russian Kola Peninsula. Large numbers of us also reside in North America where immigrants from these countries have settled. A geographic area where Sami people live is called "Sapmi." This word-concept refers to the Sami people as a whole or an individual who is a Sami, as well as to the Sami language. The Sami culture differs from place to place with regard to clothing, spiritual tradition, language and dialect. In the Nordic countries this variety is reflected in "bioregions" or "extensive communities" as defined in the map above: 1. South Sami, 2. Ume Sami, 3. Pite Sami, 4. Lule Sami, 5. North Sami, 6. Enare Sami, 7. Skolt Sami, 8. Kildin Sami and 9. Tor Sami. These areas often parallel the yearly migratory paths of both the reindeer and the people. It is estimated that 40,000 Sami live in Norway, 17,000 in Sweden, 4,700 in Finland and 2,000 in the Kola Peninsula. A conservative estimate of the number of Sami people who live in North America is 30,000. This figure is based on population figures from the peak period of emigration, 1850-1920. It should be noted, however, that a disproportionate number of Sami people may have emigrated, however, since that period was the time of heaviest cultural oppression by the Church and by the State.

## WHAT YOU'LL READ ABOUT IN BAIKI

### HOME:

Harald Gaski, Issue #1: "Referring to the name "Baiki," I suppose that a Sami word can create in the minds of Sami Americans the feeling of a lost language and a culture that was never allowed to emerge. Sami people understand the meaning of "home" as a place where there is room for more than just the nuclear family. No more thoughts of being lost or of not really belonging anywhere."

### COLONIZATION:

Niillas A. Somby, Issue #1: "The Sami society was based on siidas which used the land collectively. Our traditional religion states that nature is sacred and is to be used with respect and honor. With the appearance of the colonizers the siida system was destroyed. Many Sami who had the indigenous religion in their hearts were terrified by the way the strangers treated nature. In some places mines were established on sacred grounds."

### SAMI IDENTITY: IN A WORD, MAGIC:

Maija Hanf, Issue #1: "What is 'it,' this Sami magic? People call it psychic power, others, intuition. I would call it connection. I think I can best describe it by describing grandmother and father. They were happiest when they were a part of nature, out in the woods hunting deer, or silently sitting in a boat fishing in the middle of a lake. They had a deep understanding of how life works that was learned as they intimately observed nature and her ways."

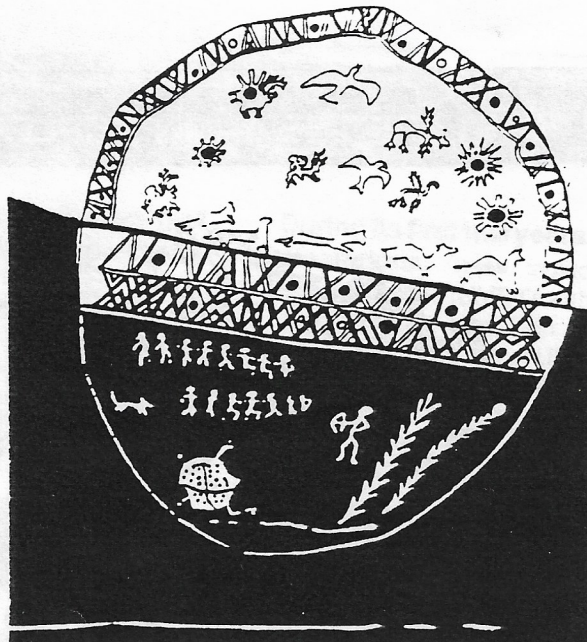
### REINDEER SAMIS IN ALASKA:

Samuel Balto, Issue #3: "We came to Alaska July 27, 1898. We travelled upriver and up to the time when we started building houses we received food, according to the U.S. government contract. In November the superintendent began to sell our provisions to the Inuit, and he put the money in his own pocket. For us Sami there was less and less each month. Finally there was hunger among us and many came down with scurvy."

(continued on page 6)



Nils-Aslak Valkeapää  
(Áillohaš)



## MY HOME IS

My home is in my heart  
it migrates with me

The joik is alive in my home  
the happiness of children is heard there  
herd-bells sound there  
dogs bark  
the lasso hums  
In my home  
the fluttering edges of coats  
the leggings of the Sami girls  
warm smiles  
My home is my heart  
it migrates with me

You know it brother  
you understand sister  
but what do I say to strangers  
who spread out everywhere  
how shall I answer their questions  
that come from a different world

How can I explain  
that one can not live in just one place  
and still live  
among all these fjelds  
You are standing in my bed  
my privy is behind the bushes  
the sun is my lamp  
the lake my wash bowl

How can I explain  
that my heart is my home  
that it moves with me  
How can I explain  
that others live there too  
my brothers and sisters  
What shall I say brother  
what shall I say sister

They come  
and ask where is your home

they come with papers  
and say  
this belongs to nobody  
this is the Nation's land  
everything belongs to the State  
They bring out fat dirty books  
and say  
this is the law  
it applies to you too

What shall I say sister  
What shall I say brother  
You know brother  
you understand sister

But when they ask where is your home  
do you then answer them all this  
On Skuolfedievvá we pitched our lavvu\*  
during the summer migrations  
Čáppavuopmi is where we built our goathi\* during rut  
Our summer camp is at Ittunjárga  
and during the winter our reindeer are in Dáivadas

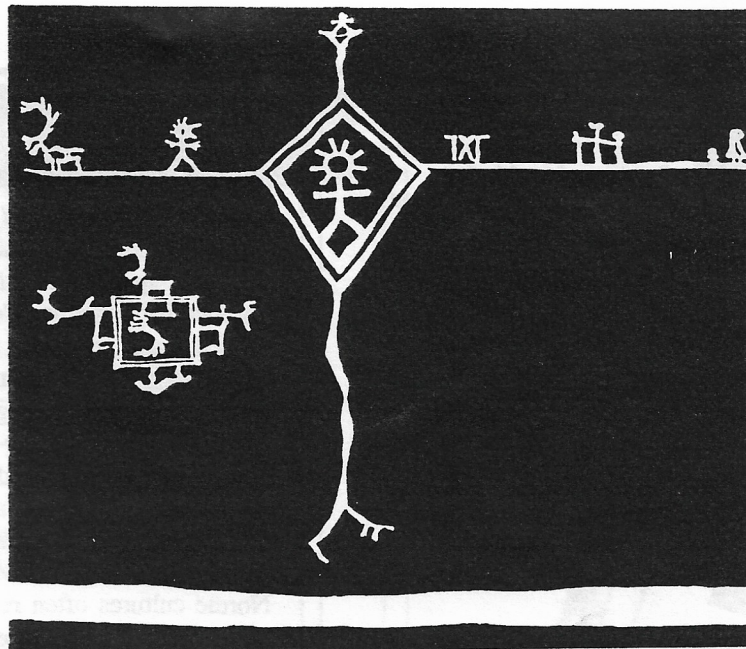
You know it sister  
you understand brother

Our ancestors have kept fires on Allaorda  
On Stuorajeaggis' tufts  
on Viiddesčearru  
Grandfather drowned on the fjord while fishing  
Grandmother cut her shoe grass in Šelgesrohtu  
Father was born in Finjubákti in burning cold

And still they ask  
where is your home

They come to me  
and show books  
Law books  
that they have written themselves  
This is the law and it applies to you too  
See here





## IN MY HEART

But I cannot see brother  
I cannot see sister  
I say nothing  
I cannot  
I only show them the fjelds

I see our fjelds  
the places we live  
and hear my heart beat  
all of this is my home  
and I carry it  
within me  
in my heart

I can hear it  
when I close my eyes  
I can hear it

I hear somewhere  
deep within me  
I hear the ground thunder  
from thousands of hooves  
I hear the reindeer herd running  
or is it the noaidi\* drum  
and the sacred rock  
I discover somewhere within me  
I hear it whisper sound shout call  
with the thunder still echoing  
in my breast

And I can hear it  
even when I open my eyes  
I can hear it

Somewhere deep within me  
I can hear it a voice calling  
and the blood's joik\* I hear  
In the depths  
from the dawn of life  
to the dusk of life

All of this is my home  
these fjords rivers lakes  
the cold the sunlight the storms  
The night and day of the fjelds  
happiness and sorrow  
sisters and brothers  
All of this is my home

Of course I recognize you  
even if you are among others  
you are my brother  
you are my sister

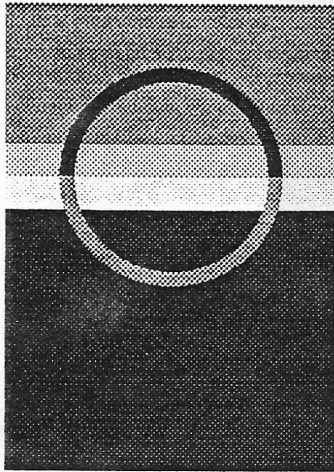
Of course I recognize you  
even if you are not wearing Sami dress  
You are my brother  
You are my sister

Even though we have never met  
I recognize you  
and if you wanted to hide  
something would still move in your heart

You are my brother  
you are my sister  
I love you

Editor's note: The words home and heart are interchangeable in the original Sami language. *Lawvu* is a tepee, *goathi* is a hut, *noaidi* is a shaman, *joik* is a traditional singing chant. This is an excerpt from the forthcoming English translation of Valkeapää's first book. The translators Lars Nordstrom and Ralph Salisbury have granted permission to use this portion. The drawings are reproduced by permission of Valkeapää.





#### THE SAMI FLAG

The flag of the indigenous Sami People is a flag of the 20th century; the design was adopted in 1986. It does not stand for colonial domination or ownership of territory. Instead the Sami flag symbolizes a People's relationship to Nature. The background colors symbolize the Sun (red) and the Moon (blue). The colors of the stripes (green and yellow) and the circle (blue and red) come from the gakti, the traditional Sami clothing, which also reminds the Sami people that they are the sons and daughters of Nature.

### WHAT YOU'LL READ ABOUT IN BAIKI

(continued from page 3)

#### TRADITIONAL LIFE-STYLE VS. ASSIMILATION:

Nils Jernsletten, Issue #5: "When the family fished the lakes and rivers, picked cloudberries, and sewed moccasins and mittens for sale, their income was substantially more than if they 'worked'."

#### ENDURING SAMI VALUES:

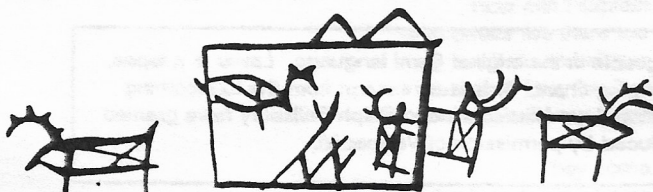
Mark Lapping, Issue #7: "First, the Sami have understood the necessity to live in harmony with nature. Second, cooperative relationships which nurtured strong sense of community defined much of Sami life. Third, gender was a far less divisive element than in non-Sami cultures."

#### THE SAMI TENT:

Mel Olsen, Issue #8: "The core of traditional Sami life centers on the family hearth and the Sami tent. On dark winter nights the smoke rises from the hearth through the opening up toward the Polar Star. This is the "Pillar of Life," the center of every Sami dwelling. From this Pillar and from the family hearth, life and life experiences extend outward to the Four Directions."

#### WHAT DO THE SAMIS WANT?

Elna Helander, Issue #8: "The preservation of tradition is not a goal in itself. One of the key strategies in the Sami struggle for cultural survival has been to clearly define our identity. In 1971, the following statements were laid down: 1. We, the Samis, are one people and the borders of nations shall not divide our communities. 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 own 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."



## EDITORIAL

FAITH FJELD (reprinted from issue #1)

It is my hope that *Baiki* will represent the reawakening of the Sami spirit in North America, a spirit that has been dormant for many decades. I believe that the appearance of this journal is proof that indigenous roots and spiritual connections survive the attempts to destroy them.

The clandestine immigration of thousands of our ancestors to North America under the guise of being "Norwegian," "Swedish," "Finnish," and "Russian" has created generations of descendants whose Sami identity has either been totally lost, or treated like an amusing family joke to be disclaimed whenever it surfaced. Museums and festivals that feature Nordic cultures often relegate us to the status of colorful mascots. Supposedly well-researched books and scholarly papers on Scandinavian and Finnish immigration ignore us completely. By now our numbers must have at least tripled, and yet census figures fail to record the Sami presence in America and Canada! Nils-Aslak Valkeapää has called us "Europe's Forgotten People," but we are North America's forgotten people too.

Not knowing who I am and where I am from, it has been difficult for me to "fit in." I am influenced by Indian America, but I am not American Indian. I am attracted to the black and Latino cultures but I am not from Africa or Latin America. I have heard that Sami origins are in Asia but I am far from the keepers of oral tradition who could tell me if this is true. And so I have sat amongst the Norwegian Americans eating their holiday *lutefisk* and singing their Lutheran hymns - feeling like a sojourner. I have personified the word "Lapp." I have allowed myself to be an "outcast" while longing to connect with the Sápmi of my "Norwegian" grandparents and the Sápmi of my own "American" self.

To believe that my indigenous roots died when they were pulled up and transplanted is to ignore the fact that indigenous Peoples have always been in the process of migration. Mobility and flexibility are integral to the Indigenous Way of Life. To believe that my spiritual connections are limited by time and space is to forget that relationships are circular, as Indigenous People have always known, not linear as the assimilated would lead us to believe. To think that I can cease to be Sami is to deny the emotion and yearning in my Sami-American heart!

So *Baiki* will celebrate the survival of Sami roots and Sami connections. This journal will provide a medium wherein we can define the Sami Way of Life in the 1990's. We will look at the world and declare: "This is who we are, and this is where we are from!" We will provide an opportunity for artists, poets and writers to express themselves about indigenous values. We will offer a place where the artists, poets and writers of Sápmi can communicate with each other. Together we will come to a new understanding of the Sami word *madii*. *Madii* is an overgrown path that leaves a trace waiting to be uncovered. I believe that we Sami are about to uncover this path.



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## Issues 1-8 for \$20

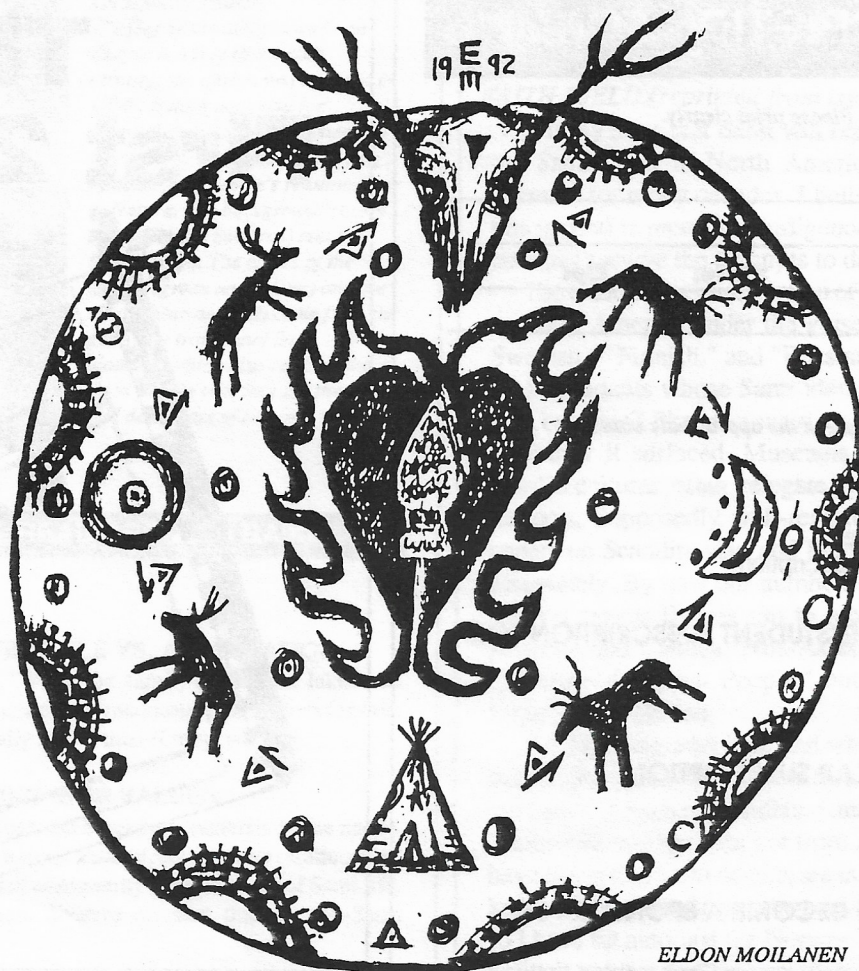
The First Two Years of Baiki, Faith Fjeld, editor. This compilation grew out of the ever-increasing demand for back copies of this popular newsletter. All eight issues are here in a spiral-bound publication with a clear acrylic cover. A real collector's item as well as a great gift to libraries and a wonderful surprise for your friends who think they might be Sami. Available for \$20 postage paid.

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ELDON MOILANEN

## *"The Heartbeat of the Sami People"*

It was long, long ago, before things were as they are now. The Son of the Sun and the Daughter of the Sun had come to the Earth in the far north, where the Sami People were to live. The Daughter of the Sun returned to her Father and obtained reindeer, which she brought to the Earth on Sun beams. These special animals were to sustain the Sami People. The heart of a two-year-old female reindeer calf was buried in a sacred place. This was to provide an identity for the Sami people and a spiritual connection to the Earth where they lived. When the Sami People were established in the area visited by the Daughter of the Sun, they were strengthened and guided by that beat-

ing reindeer heart. When in the proper spiritual state, a Sami could put an ear to the ground and hear it. The heart-beat was echoed by Sami drumming and joiking. The shaman or noaid could obtain direction and guidance by beating a sacred drum and watching the movement of a reindeer bone marker. The Sami know that as long as some can hear the beating of the heart of the reindeer calf, and echo the sacred sound with drumming and joiking, there will be a Sami people. But if or when this beating rhythm of life is silenced, the Sami People will be no more. And some say that when the heart stops beating it will signal the end of the world.

GREY EAGLE (KEN JACKSON)