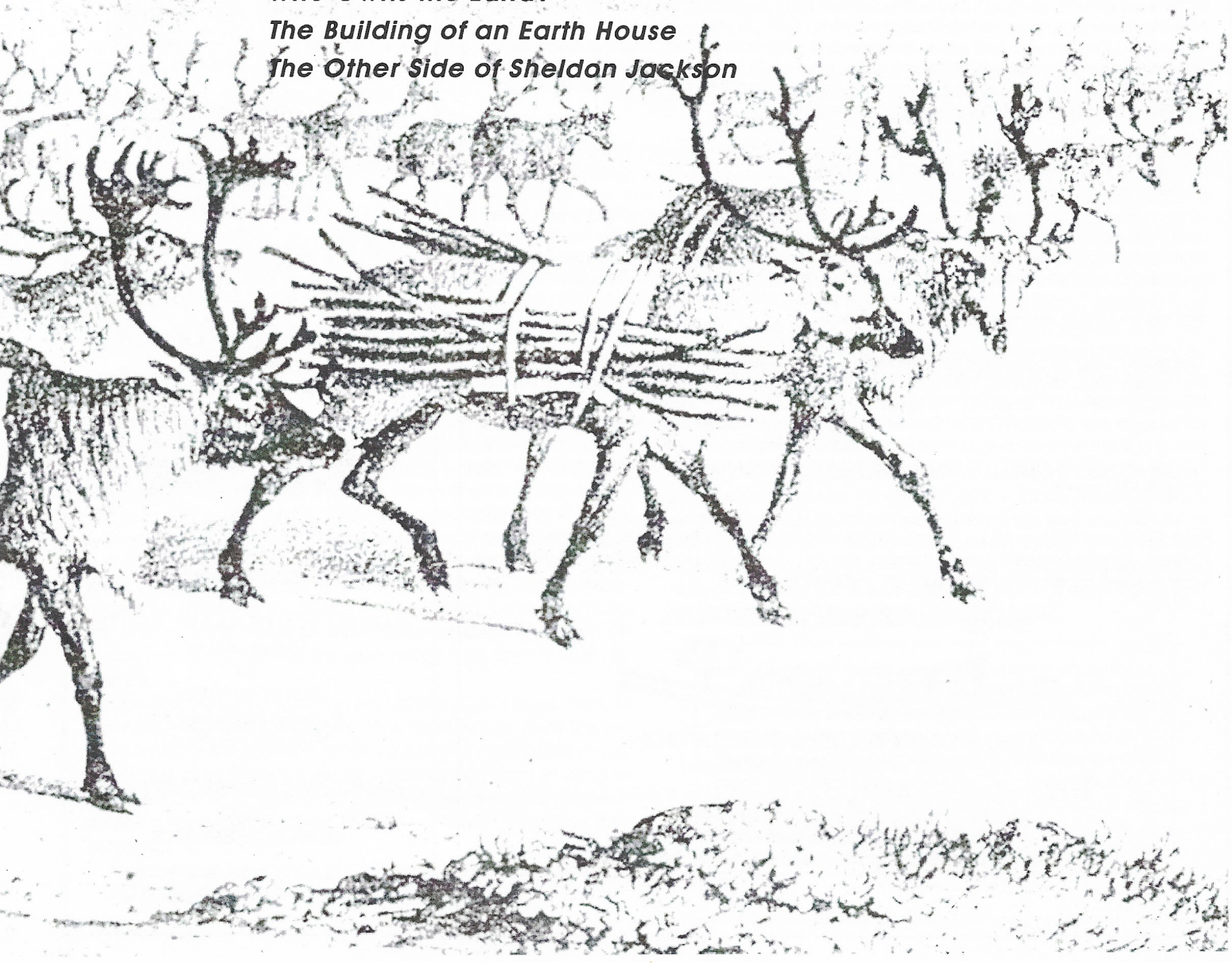
BAIKI

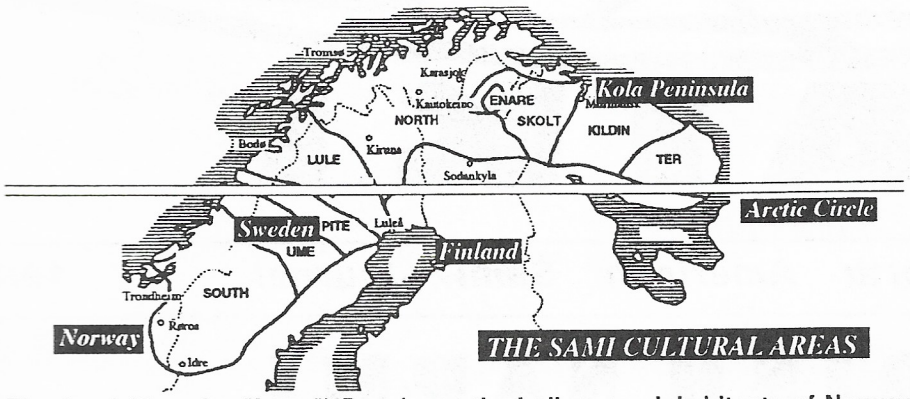
Issue #20 *The North American Sami Journal* 1999

SWEDISH SAPMI

Karl Linnaeus' Notes on Swedish Lapland
The Cultural Struggle Over Reindeer Winter Grazing
Who Owns the Land?
The Building of an Earth House
The Other Side of Sheldan Jackson



WHO ARE THE SAMI PEOPLE AND WHAT IS "BÁIKI?



The Sami (Saami or"Lapp") People are the Indigenous inhabitants of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Russian Kola Peninsula. About 100,000 Sami people live in the Nordic countries today, half of them in Norway. The map shows the nine cultural areas where nine versions of the Sami [Finno-Ugric] language are spoken. The North Sami word for the Sami nation is *Sápmi* and the South Sami word is *Saemien Eatneme*.

Báiki is the international quarterly cultural magazine that grew out of the North American search for Sami roots. We estimate that at least 30,000 people of Sami ancestry live in North America. They are the descendants of Sami people who, due to cultural genocide and the closing of the borders in their areas, emigrated to the United States and Canada as Norwegians, Swedes, Finns and Russians. Until the publication of *Báiki: the North American Sami Journal,* their story has been left out of immigration history. The descendants of these immigrant nomads are now seeking to reconnect with their culture in a meaningful way.

"*Báiki*" ["ba-hee-kee"] is the nomadic reindeer-herding society's word for cultural survival. It means "the home that lives in the heart" as one travels from place to place, the invisible bond that transcends linear time and physical space. *Báiki* was begun in 1991 as a simple eight - page publication. Today *Báiki* has expanded to a twenty-eight page magazine. With little publicity other than word of mouth, our first seventeen issues generated a worldwide readership of over 2000, and a loyal circle of creative support. The success of this magazine is a sign of growing interest in Sami history and culture. *Báiki* is recognized as a major source of Sami information in North America. It is read and quoted by members of the academic community as well as by those who are seeking to reconnect with their Sami roots.

The *Báiki* logo was designed by Faith Fjeld. A "báiki" is the basic traditional Sami survival unit, the reindeer nomad's cultural connection that migrates with them from place to place. Nils-Aslak Valkeapää referred to a báiki as "the home that lives in the heart." The symbols in the *Báiki* logo are pictographs from Sami Drums: The reindeer symbolizes physical support. It faces east toward *lavvus* or Sami tents which symbolize home. These are located at the base of a mountain which symbolizes spiritual support. All are connected to a *njalla* or storage shed which symbolizes group and cultural survival.

Faith Fjeld and Nathan Muus are co-editors of *Báiki*. Grecia Bate, Eric Carlson, Sarah Holmes, Jennifer Hyypiö, Jolene Jacobs, Marilyn Jackson, Clay Kark-French and Alvin Scott worked together to help produce and mail this issue.

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ISSUE #20, 1999

BÁIKI

SWEDISH SÁPMI

THE COVER:
"Lapparnas höstflyttning mot skogslandet." Lithograph. D. Dighton and W. Westall, 1825.

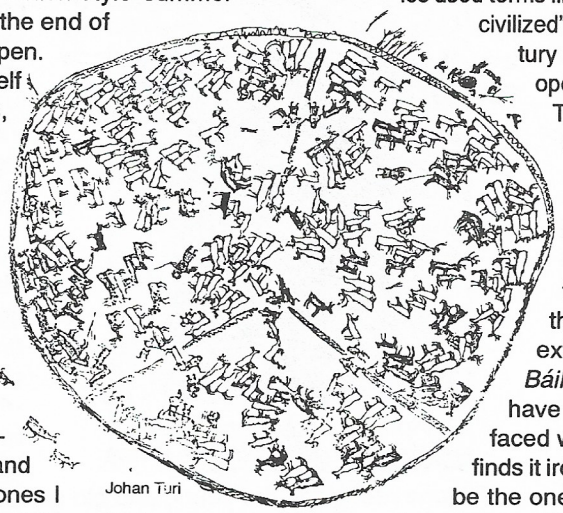
Báiki is published by
The New Fillmore Publishing Co.

THE CIRCLE

"We Saami call the circle the 'Smart Symbol.' It stands for everything in Nature."

Elina Helander

A few years ago I paid a visit to a friend of mine, Dr. Elina Helander, who lives on the outskirts of Utsjoki, Finland. To get to her place I had to turn off the main highway and go down a gravel road which wound past the simple cottage of her elderly Laestadian parents and the formal Finnish-style summer house of her brother from Helsinki. At the end of the road, I came to a gate standing open. Crossing that threshold, I found myself on a point of land filled with birch trees, medicine plants and magical stones. In the middle of this woodsy sanctuary nestled the little home she had built for herself.



Johan Turi

From her kitchen window you could see through the treetops the underside of the modern bridge that crosses the Tana River and connects the Norwegian side with the Finnish side of Sápmi. We would sit there at her table, looking out at the Tana, drinking coffee, listening to joik cassettes and discussing the symbolism on some stones I had found on her land. Looking at one of these that was round, she said, "This is a circle. We Saami call the circle 'the Smart Symbol,' that's why it's on the Saami flag. It stands for everything in Nature."

She told me that when Saami families no longer lived in circles (meaning in *goahttis* and *lavvus)*, and moved into square houses with separate rooms, family members became isolated from each other. The encroachment of "civilization" not only changed the structures in which the people lived, but it also turned reindeer herding as a way of life into what is sarcastically referred to in Sápmi as "the meat business." This change in the relationship to reindeer is symptomatic of what is happening on a larger level.

Two of the features in this issue are about the confrontation between South Saami reindeer breeders and Swedish land owners. It is a *cultural* struggle between two opposing ways of life, one based on living in balance with Nature and the other based on controlling it. The Saami have extended nomadic reindeer herding beyond merely making a living. The reindeer is not only a source of meat, but is also a means of transportation that doesn't pollute and that feeds itself along the way. The animal parts that are wasted by the slaughterhouses are utilized by the Saami, so that clothing, bedding, containers, implements and tools all come from the animal. Moreover, migration prevents overuse of the environment, both by people and by animals.

Consider the problem-solving possibilities for the future, then, in Nils-Aslak Valkeapää's statement: "The nomadic way of life has become a part of Nature and maintains a peaceful coexistance with it. Surely that gives every ground for regarding this mode of living as advanced." He adds: "Nomadism is a life of freedom where new landscapes and new perspectives liberate the mind." [*Greetings from Lappland*].

Unfortunately, the division of labor and the compartmentalization of people into specific jobs, one of the building blocks of Western civilization, has already destroyed much of the Nature-based culture of Swedish Lapland and in many instances replaced it with nothing. [Hugh Beach, *A Year in Lapland*.] Earlier colonizers and missionaries used terms like "heathen" and "savage" to describe "uncivilized" Peoples like the Saami, who in this century are more often referred to as "undeveloped," or dismissed as a "vanishing culture." The Swedish belief in the inevitabile extinction of reindeer nomads has prevailed for over 200 years. Mark Lapping quotes a Swedish supreme court justice as saying in 1804: "...those [Saami] unwilling to give up nomadic life must make way for more civilized settled groups and in the end grow smaller until they become extinct." ["Between Swede and Sami," *Báiki* #6, 1992.] While the South Saami have not become extinct, today they are still faced with threats. For example, Hugh Beach finds it ironic that a People close to Nature would be the ones to receive the fallout from Russia, a nuclear power. ["Chernobyl Disaster: Swedish Lapland Eight Years Later," *Báiki* #10, 1994.] It has been said that if you get rid of the reindeer you get rid of the Saami. So I dedicate this and future issues to an awareness of what is happening to the People of Nature.

The David-and-Goliath struggle between Indigenous people and super powers is not only taking place in central Sweden. It is taking place all over the world as we enter the 21st century. This life and death situation is allegorized in *The Pathfinder*, a film that is based on a 1000 year-old Saami legend of an extended-family *siida* being tracked by a group of greedy Tschudes who chase them from one camp to another, killing them and stealing their possessions. Although the Tschudes have superior weapons, the Saami win because they *outsmart* them. In the end, it is the Tschudes who become extinct.

This *Báiki* is the last issue of the 20th century. Our little magazine has reawakened the Saami spirit in North America. Since our appearance, Saami-related gatherings and exhibits have taken place all over North America and family members that have been isolated from each other for generations are reconnecting. Together we are beginning to live in a circle again and this is profound.

Faith Fjeld

Saturday, October 23: a program on the Sami culture at **Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington**. Featured speaker will be Johan Mikkel Sara of the *Sámediggi*, the Norwegian Sami Parliament. During the month of December: a Sami cultural exhibit at **Union Square in Washington, DC**, in cooperation with the Norwegian Embassy and the Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum (Decorah, Iowa); also an exhibit from the University of Tromsø on the Northern Lights.

Kurt Seaberg

REINDEER OWNERSHIP IN ALASKA: AN UPDATE

Thank you for the extra copies of the latest *Baiki*. This issue should be especially interesting to our members because of the excellent article on "Following the Reindeer." This is a great summary of the history of reindeer in Alaska.

As a follow up to the 1997 court ruling that non-Native Alaskans could own reindeer in Alaska, I received the following information from Don Tomlin, reindeer specialist with the US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs. From now on there will be two classes of reindeer in Alaska: "Alaskan," those owned by Native Alaskans, and "imported," those owned by non-natives. There are supposedly no restrictions on reindeer bought from non-natives.

However, if you buy reindeer from native herders, you still need a permit from Don's office and you then have thirty days to ship them out of Alaska. These deer and their descendants can never be brought back to Alaska. Doesn't make much sense to me, but then, most politics don't.

Gordon Poest,
corresponding secretary
Reindeer Owners & Breeders
3626 80th Ave.
Zeeland, MI 49464
<gpoest@novagate.com>

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NEWS FROM SÁPMI IN ENGLISH & EN ESPAÑOL!

My name is Ole Isak Mienna and I am project leader for the Norwegian and Swedish Sami Radio on-line project "Saamiweb." Here you can read or listen to Sami news in Samiland.

Spread this address to Samis and others in North America:

http://www.saamiweb.org

Our web site is in 6 languages: English, Norwegian, Swedish, Spanish, Finnish, and of course, in Sámigiella.

Báze dearvan,

Ole Isak Mienna
<ole.isak.mienna@vbtn.sr.se>

MALMBERGET ANCESTRY

Anyone recognize the young and old portraits of this man? They were taken in northern Sweden at Malmberget near Gallivare. The name of the photography studio "Melander" is on the back of both photos, and the number "8267" is on the back of the portrait on the right.

This man was my great grandfather and his name may have been Carl Johnson. He had a seafaring and railroad background. He had 10 children. Barney, John, Carl and Gus came to the area around Anaconda, Montana, USA in the early 20th century. Some of the girls in the family went to Kalundborg and Korsør in Denmark. Otherwise the family lived in southern Sweden (Blekinge).

Eric Carlson, 414 Alameda de las Pulgas, San Mateo, CA 94402

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ELISE A. BELDO AND BASI RELATIVES SOUGHT

I received the following letter regarding finding some relatives in or near Seattle. The article in the last *Báiki* titled "Sami Family in Puget Sound" sounds like he may be related to the individuals mentioned (i.e., Beldo vs. Balto, Anders Johannessen, etc.) Let me know if you have any leads that may be useful for him.

Chris Peskiluoma
<cpesklo@hotmail.com>

Mr. Johannessen writes: I saw your address on the web site for Lappmark (Sami) Lag. Could you please help me with some information about a relative who emigrated to America in 1905? Her name was Elise A. Beldo, born in 1882 in Talvik, in Finnmark. She was my grandmother's sister. She emigrated from Trondheim on the 20th of December, 1905, together with her daughter, Solveig Kornelia Beldo, born in 1902. Their destination was Portland, Oregon and they traveled in a steamship named *Spero*.

I have seen her name typed incorrectly as "Belso," but her correct name is Beldo. We have no further information about them after they entered the USA.

Is it possible to find out if they came to Portland, Oregon? I know that she had some relatives there. Their surname was Basi and they came from the same small community that she did. If you could bring any information about her and her children I will be thankful. I would like to contact these people.

Henrik Johannessen
Blokkebaerveien
9514 Alta, Norway

CONNECTIONS

MORE ON NUNAVUT

Re your reference to the new Inuit nation: The original proposal for the Nunavut Legislature called for two representatives from each "riding" (election district) — one man and one woman. It was finally rejected as being too revolutionary, but maybe some of the men were afraid of powerful women, such as Nellie Cornei and others who had served in the Northwest Territories (NWT) Legislature. But they'll probably be elected anyway.

The northern governments have had many joint activities. For example we sponsor the Arctic Winter Games with teams from small villages and towns in Alaska and the Yukon (who began the whole thing with the Northern Games in the late '50's), northern Alberta, northern BC, Manitoba, Quebec (Ungava), Greenland and the Chuckchi Peninsula, etc, with "InterParliamentary" visits between Alaska , the Yukon and the NWT. I presume that Nunavut will now be added.

I met Nellie Cornei in Yellow Knife, capital of NWT, where she was serving in the legislature. They had a nonpartisan "all-party" government and she was one of the ministers. I presume "Cornei" was her married name. I got the idea that her father was one of the Norwegian reindeer herders (and therefore possibly Sami), but I did not ask.

There is also the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, basically Inupiaq, but with Sami/Yupik/Chukchi/Greenlandic and other delegates. I attended the conference in Sisimiut, Greenland a few years ago when I was in the Alaska State Legislature, while my youngest daughter Heather (Kanerva) who spent five years in Greenland (and built the only Finnish sauna there) has attended several more. At Sisimiut there were seven different languages on the simultaneous translations system.

Niilo Koponen
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<akdsa@mosquitonet.com>

POETRY TO HONOR THE ANCESTORS

HOMEWARD BOUND

My trip to Saamiland, Finland and Norway was greater than I could have possibly imagined. I expect to return next year. The countries are beautiful, the people are warm, the *fuolki* are overjoyed with the visit from [me] Lemmo Mahtte's grand daughter and great-grand daughter.

Seed planted in Poulsbo
at *Manitoba* reunion,
strengthened by having visitors
from Finnmark,
idea being Papa's possibly
last chance
having my own experience
giving my daughter hers
country tremendously beautiful
and much like Alaska
fuolki very warm and enthused
about visitors,
specifically
Lemmo Mahte's descendants,
from America
much *fuolki* visiting
much touring of the homeland,
related special places,
in Finland and Norway,
(i.e., Sápmi and Finnmark)
visiting
Saami-specific businesses
meeting
Saami artisans / craftsmen
closure was marking
my great-grandmother's grave
and being blessed the next day
with white reindeer
crossing path.

Sandra Nilluka
<nilluka@centauri.Tymnet.COM>

IN MEMORIUM

ALYCE RUIKKA and KARL NILSEN

Two of our Elders have passed away. Alyce Ruikka, New York Mills, MN, facilitated the first gatherings of Finnish people with Sami ancestry in her area, "The Finnish Triangle."

Karl Nilsen, Poulsbo, WA, was a member of the Balto and Biti families from Finnmark. He and his wife Irene hosted a gathering for the Sami Family Reunion there last year. We extend our condolences to the families of these two beloved people.

MIXED BLOOD REVIEW

I was working with a weaver who asked me "how much Sami" I was. So in answer I extemporaized with a poem. She published it in the newsletter *Palouse Hills Weavers*, Pullman, Washington, but I thought *Báiki* might like it as well.

Slender thread
Seek out the light of day.
Slim thread of my ancestors
Find the light of day
Through my sensient eyes.
View the world of now
through me.
Stream on through our DNA
Slip across time and space.
Slender, strong thread.

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Blue River, OR 97413
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FINNISH REINDEER IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

I am really happy to get a copy of your journal. A coincidence that I want to share with you: Today I ran across a journal of my mother Lillian Mattson Lampi. I quote:

"Before 1903 in Nanaimo, BC, the hospital had the first car. We kids viewed it from Thorn Hill. It was quite a distance away so we didn't get a clear picture of it, but we saw it move without horses! We were really excited. I remember a boy that was in the group. Oberg was his name. His dad was the publisher of a Finn weekly newspaper *Aika* .

"It seems I remember an Oberg of BC who went to Finland and brought back with him a herd of reindeer. So it could be this boy who played with us at the beginning of the century. I just wonder where he is...." I thought this memory might interest you.

Leona Lampi Hassen
PO Box 46
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83816

[Saami Connections cont'd on page 24]

Linnaeus sitting and making observational notes, from *Flora Lapponica*, Karl Linnaeus, published in 1737.

Karl Linnaeus with Sámi paraphernalia. He owned an original Noaide Drum and persisted in wearing a Swedish Sami woman's hat.

This article began ten years ago with a search for the recorded herbal applications of the Sami People. There were bits and pieces here and there, many referring to Linnaeus' documentation based on his observations. Iter Lapponica, *one of two volumes, had recently been published in paperback, but the key volume,* Lachesis Lapponica, *was extremely rare — existing in a few libraries in the US but not available on loan.*

The day after agreeing to write on Linnaeus for Báiki, *I received a note from a Swedish antique dealer saying he had a copy in his personal collection that he was willing to part with. I immediately e-mailed him; he responded saying that the rare volume was already in the mail. In fact, the package included both the initial printing of* Lachesis Lapponica *and* Iter Lapponica, *hand printed on handmade paper with original woodcuts based on Linneaus' drawings.*

Typical of notations on the Sami commonly found in the literature of Linnaeus' time is this quote from Pinkerton's Voyages, *volume 1: "In Lapland the people are dirty, flat-headed, wide-mouthed and small; they huddle around the fire frying themselves fish, croaking and shrieking." Linnaeus' journey alone was daring. His frontier spirit found a people he came to admire.*

Born in 1707, the son of a Lutheran pastor in southern Sweden, Karl Linnaeus read medicine at Lund and Uppsala Universities. He had gained the favor of Swedish naturalists Rudbeckia and Celsius and with their support, received a small grant from the Royal Society of Science to survey the three natural kingdoms of Lapland: fauna, flora and mineral. His personal interest in the wilderness was connected to his personal desire to assemble an inventory with enough material to fulfill his vision of a workable classification system.

KARL LINNAEUS' NOTES ON SWEDISH LAPLAND

part 1

by Mel Olsen

I left Uppsala on Friday 12 May 1732 at 11 o'clock. I was twenty years old...Oh Being of Beings have pity on me! I took leave of Umeå, my plan being to visit Lycksele, Lapmark.

It rained the whole day — the way was slow and tedious and I felt very alone. Upon arriving in Jamtboht I asked about supper and they set before me a bird which had been shot last year. I didn't expect it to be so delicious. After the breast is plucked and cleaned they cut gashes on each side of the bone so that the inside is laid open. The flesh is salted for several days, floured, then put in an oven to dry for several more days. Then the meat hangs up in the roof until needed — even for two or three years.

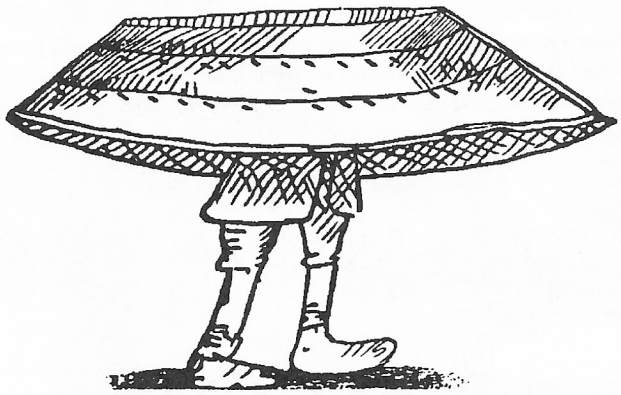
[continued overleaf]

I slept that night on pillows stuffed with reindeer hair and under the sheet was soft reindeer hide.

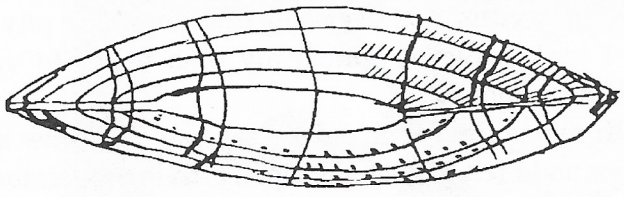
On my way again the next day, the rain continued. Locals fashioned broad horizontal collars of birch bark to wear against the rain and I noticed women washing their houses with brushes made of fir twigs which they also fastened to their right feet and scrubbed their floors, backwards and forwards.

From Teksnas the only way was by boat and I arrived in Genom in time for prayers. One of the peasants had shot a small beaver but I found the boiled meat insipid. I departed early the next morning by boat with my Lapp guide. He checked his pike net sets and then we proceeded toward Lycksele.

At Tuken we encountered a waterfall. My companion, after committing all my possessions to my care, laid his knapsack on his back, turned the boat bottom upside down and placed the oars longitudinally across the seats.



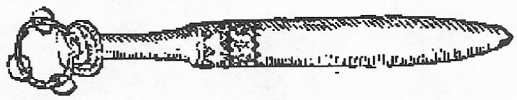
These rested on his arms as he carried the boat over his head and thus he scampered away over the hills and valleys so that the devil himself could not have kept up with him. The boat was twelve feet long, two feet deep and five feet wide, made of four planks sewn together on each side with cord.



On arriving in Lycksele I was advised to stay until the next prayer day because the Lapps on my route might fire on strangers without some advance warning.

I watched the Laplanders make cheese from reindeer milk. They gather a large quantity of sorrel leaves which they boil in a copper pot adding one-third water. More leaves are added as it cooks, stirring constantly, until it is like syrup. It is then cooled and mixed with the milk either in bags made from reindeer stomachs, or in wooden vessels, and placed in mountain caves or in pits in the ground, always protected against mice.

Here I draw the stick used by Laplanders to drive the reindeer. It is two and a half feet long and three inches thick, with a twisted iron ring that holds other twisted iron rings. The jangling of the rings when the staff hits the ground encourages the reindeer to pick up their pace.



In Lycksele I purchased a Laplander's horn snuffbox and I also met a woman who believed she had a brood of frogs living in her stomach, caused by drinking water containing frog spawn. She was certain there were three frogs, and the problem was only alleviated by drinking brandy.

After church services I left Lycksele for Sorsele. The wealth of the Lapps is determined by the number of reindeer they have, and by the grazing area. The poorest have from 50 to 200, and the wealthy may possess 1000. In this district of Sweden, fish are also important and on Whitsuntide [the seventh Sunday after Easter in the spring] no Laplander was at church. They were up in the mountains fishing.

We journeyed with difficulty all night long. There were large tracts of fine timber. We inquired from hut to hut [Sámi word:*goahtti]* for a Lapp guide. The goahttis here were formed of double timbers lying one upon another to make a six-sided building. I saw reindeer antlers lying around neglected and half-eaten by squirrels.

The next evening we came upon fishermen from Granoen. They had about sixteen pounds of pike and char that they had hung in a smokehouse. The fish fat and intestines were fermented to produce oil for greasing shoes. The scales and fins were boiled together to produce a thick substance for painting on nets to make them more durable. The spawn was dried and used in bread, dumplings and gruel.

In Lapmark crawfish and fleas are unknown. The Lapps here are subject to colic, for which they use soot, snuff, salt and other remedies. They also are afflicted with asthma, epilepsy, pleurisy and rheumatic complaints of the back, hips and legs.

We continued up the Umeå River. The natives here no longer use bows and arrows, but rifles — with bullets rather than shot. They don't wear stockings. Their breeches, made of coarse woolen cloth, taper gradually down to their feet and are tied with bandages [woven

shoe bands] to keep the snow out of their half boots.

I came to a goahtti that consisted of 18 posts covered with coarse cloth 10 feet long and 8 feet wide. It was in an area consisting chiefly of marshes, called *stygx*. A divine could never describe a place of punishment more horrible than this country! We now directed our steps towards the desert of Lapmark, not knowing where we went.

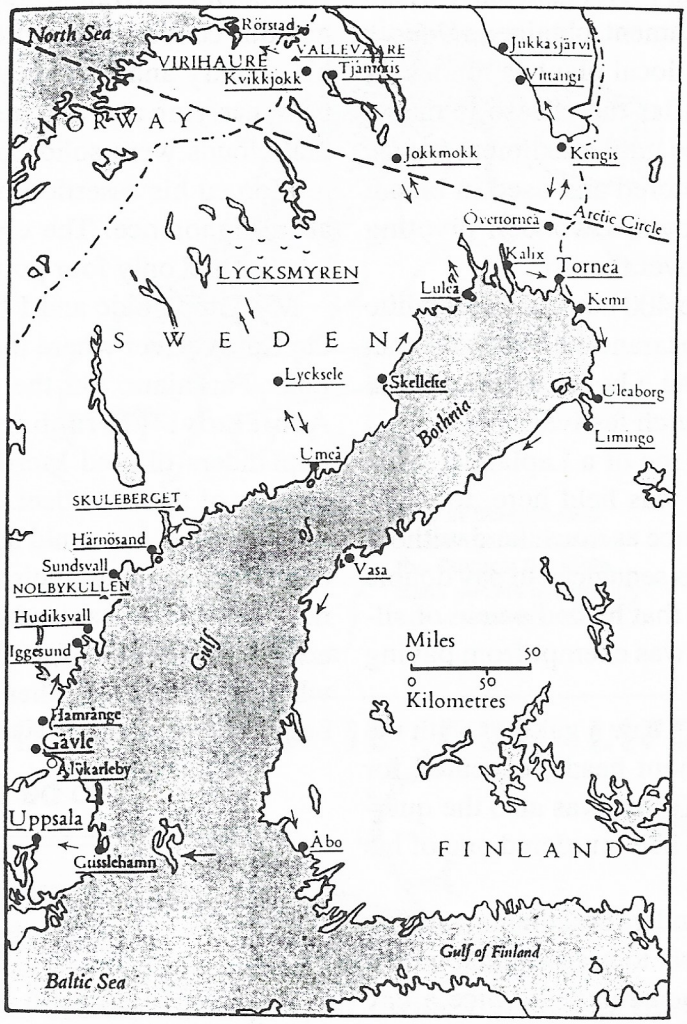
I wondered how these poor people could exist entirely on fish, sometimes boiled fresh, sometimes dried and then either boiled or roasted on a wooden spit. They know no other soup than the water in which their fish has been boiled. The Laplanders never eat but twice a day, often only once, more towards evening.

At midsummer they begin to milk the reindeer and survive on the milk until autumn when they kill some of these valuable animals. By various contrivances they get a scanty supply of food through the winter.

The young children sleep in oblong leather cradles lined with reindeer hair, enveloped in dried sphagnum moss. In this soft and warm nest they are secured against even the most intense cold.

The winter huts are capable of being moved from place to place. They consist of four large curved poles, two and two together, supported by four other straight poles to form an arch. The structure is covered with coarse cloth, except at the very top which is left open for a chimney. When finished it is four feet high.

The poor Laplanders find the church festivals very burdensome and oppressive in the spring of the year as they must cross the river at the risk of their lives. Frequently it is necessary to wade up to their arms and they are half dead with cold and fatigue by the time they get to church. They must either undergo this hardship or be fined ten silver dollars and do penance for three Sundays, which is surely too severe.



I wondered why the Laplanders hereabouts had not built small houses, high enough to be entered in an upright position, since they have an abundance of wood. To this they answered, "In the summer we are in one place, but in the winter we are in another, twenty miles from here where we can find moss for our reindeer." I asked why they didn't collect moss in the summer to have during the winter. They answered that they gave their whole attention to fishing then, far from the places where moss abounds.

These people eat a great deal of fresh meat. A family of four consumes at least one reindeer every week outside of the fishing season. Whenever possible, squirrels, martins or beaver are killed. Anything except foxes and wolves. Three reindeer are equal to an ox. Consuming about 30 reindeer in the course of the winter is the equivalent of consuming 10 oxen, whereas a single ox is sufficient for a Swedish peasant.

The Laplanders dye their wool red with bloodroot. Red color is given to leather by means of fir bark. The men wear a kind of trouser which reaches down to their feet and are tied around their half boots so as to keep out water. They don't wear shirts or stockings and the waistbands are fastened by thongs, not buttons.

The colonists that settled in Lapmark planted a lot of turnips, which do very well. The native Laplanders are so fond of them that they often exchange a whole cheese for one turnip, and nothing can be more foolish.

Early in the morning I left Granoen and by evening reached Stocknasmark. The Laplanders here had set traps to catch squirrels and in the huts I saw the tails of the great female wood grouse suspended over the tables in pairs, spread out to make handsome circular fans.

In the morning I set out again. The women here feed their infants by means of a horn, and they do not go to the trouble of boiling the milk, so it is no wonder the

[continued overleaf]

children have worms. I was astonished that these peasants do not nurse their children. Throughout Lycksele Lapland there are no domestic animals except for reindeer and dogs. The latter are of a hoary gray color and are medium sized.

At about four o'clock in the afternoon I found myself once more in the town of Umeå. I left again early in the morning and stopping for refreshment, obtained *sätmiolk* or *tätmiolk* made from using a local plant as rennet. In another preparation of milk, after the cheese is made, the whey is boiled and skimmed until a sediment forms. Called *mesosmör*, it is dried, stored and used in bread. And Laplanders use an improvised wooden pivoting beam to hang a boiling kettle over the fire.

In Sunanaen I counted 350 to 400 houses. Their white chimneys gave a cheerful appearance. I was told that every peasant in the district had a house of his own in town for family use during church festivals.

At Skellefrea the Dean told me of a Laplander who, when the last court of justice was held here, took his neighbor to court for having twice as much land without paying more taxes. The man was sentenced to pay double taxes, upon which he revealed that he had a vein of silver on his land, and so by law, was exempt from paying taxes altogether.

Later, reaching Old Pithoea, I saw a gallows with the bodies of two Finlanders without heads, executed for highway robbery and murder. There was also the quartered body of a Laplander who had murdered one of his relatives.

In Luleå Lapmark, the Laplanders boil their meat very thoroughly and treat their guests to grease eaten with a spoon as a treat. They milk their reindeer twice a day which gives no more than a half-pint each time.

The natives here tan their leather with birch bark. After being plunged into warm water the hides are put in an out-of-the-way corner of the hut until the hair begins to separate. Then it is scraped off with a round knife [a hide scraper]. The inner bark of the birch tree is cut into pieces and boiled and the skin is immersed in this liquor. Over the next two days the skin is removed, the liquid is reheated and the skin is placed back in it several times. Then it is dried in the shade. This leather is much softer than that made by the colonists in the same area.

People here dread the *Eldmarke*, a birthmark resembling a burn. To prevent it, when the umbilical cord is cut, some of the blood is rubbed on the face, breast and hands of the infant.

In the morning we traveled to Storbacken and then walked on to Pajarim where we slept all night in a smoky hut.

Later, in Jockmock, the clergyman-schoolmaster and the curate tormented me with consummate and pernicious ignorance. I could not but wonder how so much pride and ambition could exist in their professions along with such incorrigible stupidity. The learnéd curate began our conversation with remarks about the clouds in his country and how they strike the mountains as they pass, carrying away stones, trees and cattle. He told me that clouds were solid bodies. On my denying this he reinforced his assertion by quoting scripture, laughing at my ignorance. The church here was small and the teacher had only four pupils.

My Lapp guide and I finally arrived at Purkijau and the Karax River where there is a pearl fishery, and then Lake Parkajaur. On the opposite shore stood Mount Achiekoivi [Torneberget] upon whose summit Laplanders offered sacrifices in ancient times for the success of their reindeer.

From here, we could see a range of mountains ten to twenty miles away, their summits reaching the clouds. I now beheld the Lapland Alps. This spectacle I considered to be not one of the least of Nature's miracles, for what inhabitant of other countries would not wish to behold it? Oh Lord, how wonderful are thy works!

to be continued

KARL LINNAEUS' NOTES ON SWEDISH LAPLAND
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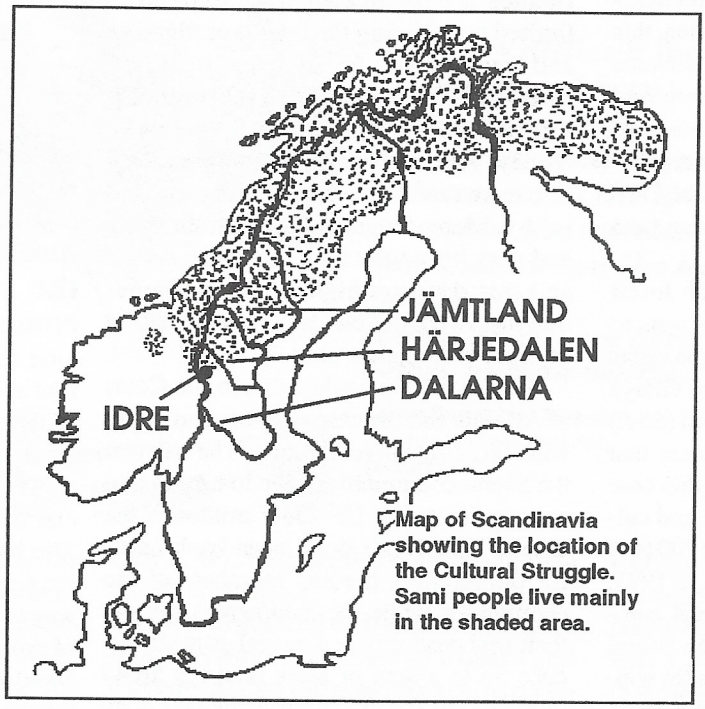
Mel Olsen is a weaver and Professor of Art and Art History at the University of Wisconsin, Superior. He is founding editor of Árran: the Newsletter of the North American Sami Siiddat *and his work frequently appears in* Báiki.

THE CULTURAL STRUGGLE OVER REINDEER WINTER GRAZING IN SOUTH SAPMI



Map of Scandinavia showing the location of the Cultural Struggle. Sami people live mainly in the shaded area.

OUR LAND IS OUR LIFE

by Anneli Jonsson

"If the Swedish land owners get what they want it will mean the end of the Saami culture in the southernmost part of the Saami area in Sweden." The so-called "Cultural Struggle" in Sweden is an old conflict between the reindeer herding Saami people in the counties of Jämtland and the northern part of Dalarna and Swedish landowners. The Swedish government has been and still is, surprisingly passive in this case.

Indigenous Peoples often say, "Our land is our life." These words reflect the situation of the Saami People. Our land and our way of life is seriously threatened because the Saami people and the Swedish government are fighting a destructive political and judicial war. As the aggressor, the Swedish nation-state controls the judicial terms, the content of the agenda and the level of the conflict.

According to the Worldwatch Institute's "State of the World Report for 1993," there were 4000 to 5000 Indigenous cultures in the world. Indigenous Peoples make up over three hundred million individuals across the globe. As a Saami I am one of

[continued overleaf]

these. Many of us are on the verge of extinction and the southern Saami culture is likewise in great danger.

In the northern part of Sweden, all land includes the right to reindeer winter breeding. This means that reindeer breeders have the right to use the land in traditional ways and practice subsistence farming and hunting. But in the southern part of Sweden, this has been a source of intense conflict between the reindeer herding Saami and private land owners in the reindeer breeding areas of Jämtland and Dalarna. It should be emphasized that the land owners arrived only 100 to 150 years ago, which is not a long time compared to my ancestors!

At the beginning of 1990, some forest companies and private land owners went to court claiming that the Saamies had no rights for winter grazing beyond the Saami village borders. The Swedish Saami Council (SSR) stated in a petition to the government that same year, "The mere opening of this case means a threat to Saami industries and culture in the area." The plaintiffs were 700 land owners and three forest companies. In 1993, however, the Saamies and the forest companies reached a compromise. The Saami were allowed to use company lands for winter grazing if they reduced the reindeer herds, which they did. But the private land owners continued the lawsuit.

A KIND OF LEGAL ETHNIC CLEANSING

Saamies are by tradition not a People who document their activities. On February 21, 1996, the District Court of Sveg ruled that the Saamies had no customary rights to reindeer winter grazing. The verdict was a surprise, not only to the Saamies but also to the general public. In the trial, the submission of evidence was reversed. Although the land owners were the plaintiffs, they did not have the burden of proof. Instead it was the Saamies who had to prove that reindeer winter grazing indeed had been carried on continuously since the beginning of the 19th century. They do not leave many traces. How can you prove the existence of reindeer tracks in the snow in the winter grazing areas from then until today? The private land owners have large resources to finance their lawsuit. They can get their legal expenses covered by real estate insurance.

On the other hand, the economy of the affected Saami villages is a completely different story. Their economic assets to finance a case like this are extremely limited considering the total investigative and legal costs so far are over 10 million Swedish kronor [about US $1.29 million]. The Saami villages do not have the money. This is a form of economic warfare from the Swedish establishment, sad to say. Many Saamies have traditionally had very little trust in the Swedish courts and this decision highlighted the belief that the Swedish State is practicing a kind of legal ethnic cleansing.

The Saami have taken this to the Court of Appeals and the case will most probably wind up in the Supreme Court. The risk that the Saami communities have to take is trial costs estimated at US $3.47 million if the case is lost. This would mean bankruptcy for the reindeer herding members of the community, while the landowners can get their trial costs covered by real estate insurance up to a sum of more than US $6.44 million. So the "Cultural Struggle" is an uneven fight both judicially and financially.

The Saami communities have three alternatives. The first is to sign a treaty with the land owners, something that might be a possibility in Härjedalen, but only on the terms of the land owners, and the land owners are not prepared to make long-term agreements. The Saami would have to accept the terms of the district court or take the case to a higher court.

The second is to keep a low profile and consider agreeing to what the land owners are putting forward. This would mean that customary winter grazing rights would not be upheld and that the land owners could call the Swedish law enforcement authorities to get the reindeer off their grounds.

The third option is that the Saami communities continue to fight to win in the courts, either fully or in part.

If the Saami communities lose, the issue might force the Swedish government to defend the fact that the customary rights have been lost because of unclear legislation. This might raise the issue that the government has to fulfill its human rights and national obligations toward the Saamies.

INDIGENOUS VERSUS WESTERN USE OF LAND

The grim situation now is that the culture of the southern Saamies is threatened by total disaster if the land owners and the reindeer breeders cannot come to a reconciliation. On the long term the Saami communities have to find a solution to financing the possible loss of the court case. The situation has forced us to start fund-raising activities.

The lawsuit is not only a legal and financial matter, it is also a political question. The issue highlights the conflicts between the traditional use of land and the western way of land management, as well as the lack of protection for Indigenous Saami rights in Sweden. Such violations are taking place even though the Swedish government clearly interprets the Swedish Constitutional Act as guaranteeing the rights of the Saami as an ethnic minority, referring to Article 27. It is stated that the Saami reindeer herding has been taken into consideration in the cultural context.

To summarize the problems that have occurred in conjunction with the "Cultural Struggle" in Jämtland and northern Dalarna, we can conclude that the Swedish government is not fulfilling its obligation according to national and international laws. We have for many years urged the Swedish government to mediate seriously between Swedish land owners and the Saami villages. The Swedish government has been passive in this matter. We are now forced to make the world aware of our situation. Hopefully the global community will put pressure on the Swedish government to fulfill its obligations.

To support the SSR and obtain updates, e-mail the Swedish Saami Organization at:

⟨ssr sapmi.se⟩

Anneli Jonsson is a reindeer owner from Indre Saami. Lars Anders Baer, chair of the Swedish Saami Council (SSR) assisted her in writing this article, which first appeared in Indigenous Affairs magazine, June-July 1998.

WHO OWNS THE LAND?

AN INTERVIEW WITH EDVIN RENSBERG, SWEDISH SAMI REINDEER BREEDER

"It is very difficult for me to understand how someone can in fact own the land...if anyone is the owner of the land, it must be the reindeer; they should own the land on which they roam....they were here before human beings."

Edvin Rensberg, Swedish Saami reindeer breeder, pictured left

Härjedalen and Dalerna in the southernmost part of Sápmi, have been the scene of violent struggles between Sámi reindeer breeders and [Swedish] landowners in the last few years. The conflict has resulted in a decision by the Common Law Court in Sveg that rejected the traditional reindeer grazing rights of the Sámi People.

Claus Oreskov, International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs [IWGIA], interviewed Edvin Rensberg, president of the village of Tännäs, one of the five Sámi villages in the area that is involved in the situation. Edvin is active in the movement for Sámi rights and is a member of the Swedish Sámi Parliament. This interview is reprinted from IWGIA's Indigenous Affairs *magazine, May-June 1997 with their kind permission*

Claus Oreskov (CO): Tell about "penning" reindeer.
Edvin Rensberg (ER): Hundreds of reindeer are brought together into a large pen where the desired group is selected and herded into a smaller pen [corral]. From this smaller herd we choose the animals that are to be slaughtered, and sort out the reindeer that belong to the other Sámi villages.

CO: How is reindeer breeding organized in the Sámi villages?
ER: It is organized on the basis of legislation. The work is directed by a board and a president and the reindeer are bred collectively. [In Tännäs] we have nine "production units" — nine families that make their living exclusively from reindeer breeding.

CO: Are the production units the same every year?
ER: They change when the parents retire and the young people take over.

CO: How do you use grazing lands?
ER: Reindeer breeding is related to their source of food so we use large geographical expanses. The reindeer graze in a northwest-southeast pattern; the summer grazing lands reach to the Norwegian border, and in the winter they move 100 kilometers east to the forest lands of the Oesterdak River, as far down as Dalerna.

CO: Do you use the same grazing lands every year?
ER: Yes, but different parts are used depending on the time of the year. In the summer we are high up in the mountains because that is where they calve and the forest is too warm for the reindeer. In the autumn we begin our downward migration.

CO: Are the grazing lands you use now the same as your ancestors used or are they a different size?
ER: Changes have taken place as [Swedish] society developed. When I began to raise reindeer, we had well-defined grazing grounds, but these cannot be used anymore because of tourism.

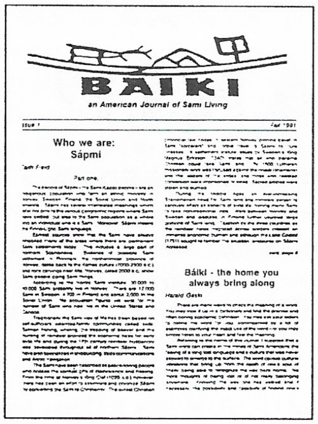
CO: Do you mean you have lost part of your grazing ground?
ER: Yes, it has been reduced.

CO: Would it be possible to expand reindeer breeding again here in Härjedalen?
ER: No. Grazing grounds will become so small we will have to reduce the number of reindeer. This means that there will be fewer people making a living this way.

CO: Is reindeer breeding a full-time job or a seasonal job?
ER: Here in Tännäs nine of us work full time raising reindeer. Other family members have other jobs to supplement incomes.

CO: Was that a reindeer slaughterhouse I passed on my way here?

[Rensberg continued on p. 16]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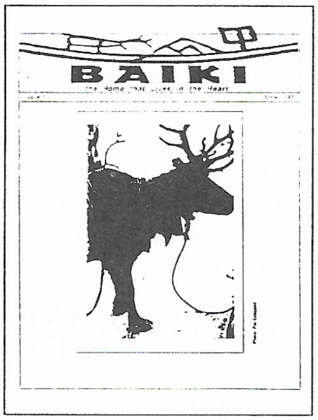
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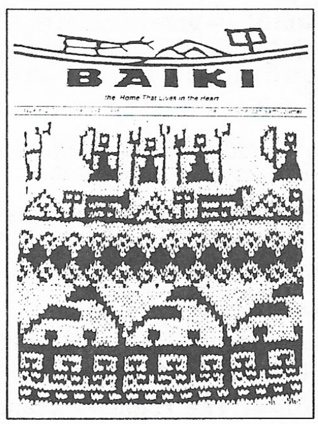
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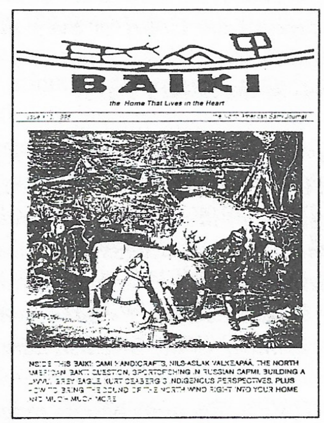
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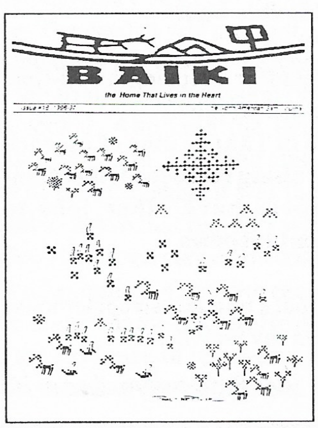
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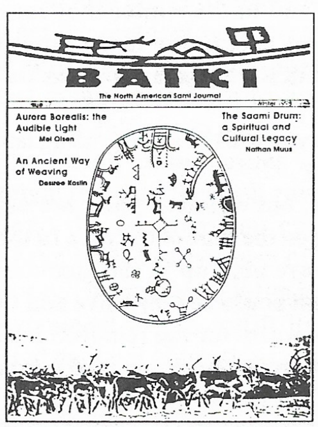
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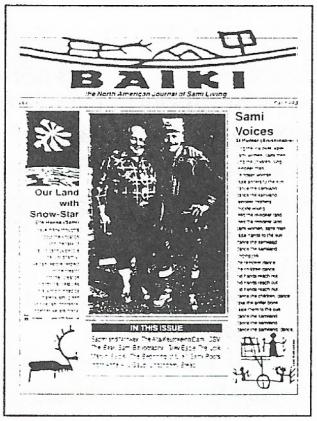
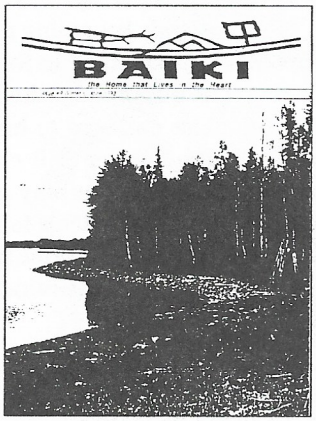
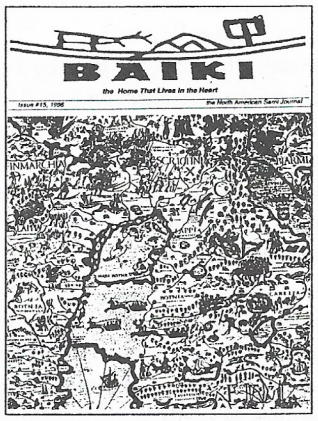
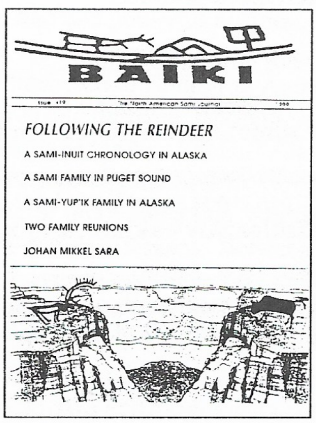
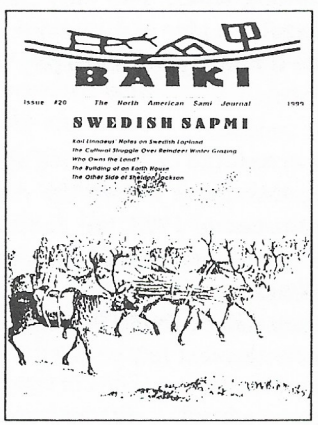
INDIGENOUS IDENTITY











GIITU

Here they are, the twenty *Báikis* of the 20th century (left to right, top to bottom). To our sponsors and subscribers, and to all who have helped us to stay alive in so many beautiful ways, and to all who have written articles, composed poetry, taken photographs, produced art and allowed us to publish your work, we thank and honor you. Together we've reawakened the Sámi culture in North America.

faith fjeld

Nathan Muus

[Rensberg continued from p. 13]

ER: Yes, it was an old slaughterhouse, but the regulations of the European Union for the handling of food have made it unacceptable. Now we have to take our reindeer to another slaughterhouse approved by the EU, 300 kilometers from here.

CO: What is the significance of reindeer breeding to the identity and culture of the Sámi People of the south?
ER: Sámi culture is based on the reindeer and without them it will disappear.

CO: Are hunting and fishing important?
ER: Yes, [but] as a supplement to reindeer breeding.

CO: I would like to talk about the conflict between the Sámi reindeer breeders and the landowners here in Härjedalen.
ER: The landowners have brought legal action against us through the First Instance Court in Sveg, stating that the Sámis have no legal grazing rights on private property.

CO: How does the conflict effect your everyday life?
ER: It is very difficult to present legal proof for the period in time when no written documents were kept, so the problem is to prove that reindeer breeding is an historical fact. [We must] present documents which do not exist, so it is very difficult to prove we have grazing rights in court. Moreover because we lost the case in court and we have been obliged to pay the costs: both ours and the plaintiff's. The total amount owed to the court is 10 million Swedish crowns. We obtained a loan of 8 million crowns to pay our costs and we also had to take out a loan of 4 million crowns to pay the landowners' costs. How are we going to pay this back?

CO: Were there any Sámi villages that lost winter grazing grounds as a result of the court decision?
ER: If the decision is upheld, it means that all the Sámi villages in Härjedalen will lose their winter grazing grounds.

CO: Is it true that the case is now in the Regional Court?
ER: It has been appealed there. If we lose, we will have to pay for "damages" [using the grazing grounds] from February 1996 when the sentence at Sveg was passed.

CO: If you cannot raise the money you need, will the Sámi villages in Härjedalen be liable for the sum?
ER: The Sámi villages would probably have to declare themselves bankrupt if we can find no other way to finance that amount. At present we are trying to obtain other financing, but we are not sure if we will get it.

CO: Is there a political solution to the conflict?
ER: A political solution is very difficult to implement while the appeal is going on. The Swedish government could have implemented a political solution before the trial in Sveg, but the presupposition was that the grazing rights existed and that there was no need for a political solution.

CO: You are members of the SSR [the Swedish Sami Council]. What does this mean to the Sámi villagers?
ER: Through the SSR we get the support of the other Sámi villages in Sweden, and we have the possibility of international publicity. In this way it may be possible to obtain international solidarity to put on pressure for a political solution if we lose our case.

CO: Can the Sámi Parliament of Sweden {the *Saametinget*] help you in this?
ER: They can put pressure on the government, but it is difficult for the Swedish government to get involved because it means taking sides. The only help the Saametinget can give at this moment is to find some financing source to pay for the court costs.

CO: When will the case be tried again?
ER: The case came before the regional court at the end of 1998, but another 3-4 years will go by before it reaches the Supreme Court.
CO: So you will be living in a state of uncertainty for the next few years?
ER: Yes, I think we will be living in that state for the next ten years until the case has been settled by the Supreme Court. If we lose the case, we will be obliged to take it to an International Court.

CO: What does this mean to young people? Will they continue breeding reindeer?
ER: As parents, it is difficult to encourage our children to breed reindeer when the future is so uncertain. The risk is that if you have a son of 20 who is going to choose his life's profession, are you to support his becoming a reindeer breeder, or to make it in Swedish industry? The question is whether one dares to advise children to breed reindeer when the answer will come in 10 or 15 years, and one may give the wrong advice. It is difficult to live in this uncertainty yet at the same time one lives with the hope that reindeer breeding will survive.

CO: Is there anything you would like to say that I have not mentioned?
ER: It is very difficult for me to understand how in fact someone can own the land. Seen from the point of view of reindeer breeding, if anyone is the owner of the land it must be the reindeer; they should own the land on which they roam, and they were here before human beings.

CO: Those who say they own the land, have they gotten a mistaken idea about nature?
RE: Yes, I think it is a mistake to consider nature this way, but everyone says that "civilization" has arrived, so I think that civilization behaves in a very uncivilized manner.

For more information:

Samefolket website
<www.samefolket.se/index.html>

Swedish Saami Parliament website:
<http://www.sametinget.se/english/earkiv/eakjakt.html>

Norwegian/Swedish Saami website:
<http://www.saamiweb.org/english/magazine/culture/174105.html>

The *Other* Side of Sheldon Jackson

DOG-EATERS.

"Dog Eaters, " illustration from Sheldon Jackson's *Alaska and Missions on the North Pacific Coast*, p.277

by Nathan Muus with Faith Fjeld

The Reverend Doctor Sheldon Jackson is best remembered as the driving force behind the US government Reindeer Projects including the Kjellman Expedition of 1894 and the Manitoba Expedition of 1898 that brought Sami ("Lapp") reindeer and herders from Lapland to the Inuit ("Eskimo") Peoples of Alaska [See *Báiki* Issue #19, "Following the Reindeer," and related articles.]

When Jackson was made director of the Reindeer Project, he already had one powerful position, General Agent of Education in Alaska. He soon had another, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America. Thus he represented both the church and the state. His endless speeches on Alaska also made him famous as the best known "Alaska expert" of his time, at least in non-Native circles. And he campaigned vigorously against the epidemic of alcoholism that was ruining the lives of both Native and non-Native Alaskans. Between 1891 and 1908 he also wrote 13 Congressional "Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska" reports that were published by the US Government Printing Office.

So there is little doubt that Sheldon Jackson had influence on the development of Alaska after its "purchase" from Russia in 1867. Many historians and biographers portray him as a benevolent missionary and educator whose only goals were the betterment of the Alaska Natives and the founding of a"modern" Alaska. But, on taking a second look at Sheldon Jackson today, some historians paint a much different picture. [Apologies to Postell, Vorren and Lazell, among others, who have written important works that praise Jackson's accomplishments.]

By the time Sheldon Jackson had lived three years in Alaska, he had written a book called *Alaska and Missions on the North Pacific Coast,* published in 1880 by Dodd, Meade and Company. This book is perhaps understandably absent from most Jackson bibliographies. The first half of the book extolls the virtues of Alaska and the commercial possibilities of this new American frontier; he refers to the success of the Alaska Commercial Company that had already made a fortune hunting and marketing seals and other game, providing river ferry service to miners, and maintaining stores where supplies for these activites were sold. The company had outposts throughout Alaska and rented various islands from the US government, including Bering Island, where they first imported and bred reindeer from Siberia in 1880. 1

This set a precedent which enabled Jackson to dream of his own entrepreneurship. Peter Rinaldo in his book *The Great Reindeer Caper - The Missionary and the Miners* (1997) makes the argument that Jackson had intentions of importing reindeer — and the Sami herders to manage them — for reasons other than helping starving miners, whalers or Inuits. Rinaldo makes it clear that the government and others knew well ahead of time that the "crisis of the starving miners" on the Yukon River in 1897-98, the rationale for the Reindeer Project from Finnmark, Norway [the *Manitoba* Expedition], was an exaggeration. 2

The following excerpt from a letter Jackson wrote to the Secretary of War in March, 1898, gives an indication of his vision of the future based on bringing Sami herders and reindeer to Alaska:

> *Permit me to congratulate you that you had the foresight to recognize the importance of bringing over this herd and attendant colony of Lapps. In my estimation, next to the discovery of gold, the most important event commercially, in the history of Alaska during this year, will be the importation of this colony of Lapps. Experience is rapidly demonstrating that the only possible efficient transportation service in Alaska must be through expert drivers of reindeer found among the partially civilized Lapps and Finns. Their success will naturally attract others of their people and render permanent the establishment of the reindeer industry in Alaska."* 3

In the second half of his book Jackson describes the "perversities" of the unchristianized Alaska Natives. Jane Jacob, author of *A Schoolteacher in Old Alaska* (1995), reports:

> *He portrayed the natives as almost subhuman demons from hell: frenzied men who ate dogs alive* [see illustration]*; cannibals who tore into raw corpses with their teeth; killers of babies; sexual abusers of little girls; polygamists; evil sorcerers; sinister witch doctors; women universally prostituted; nude men parading themselves like proud horses; torturers; mutilators; enslavers; murderers; etc. Their very funeral rites of yells, whoops, chants and rattles were an offense against the civilized ear.....he conveys no respect for the lives that unchristianized native people created for themselves, and much that continues to be damned."* 4

Probably the most contradictory aspect of Jackson's requirements for the apprentice Inuit herders of the Reindeer Project was that

[Muus continued on p. 20]

"The main idea seemed to be that this was a seasonal shelter for a few people to stay in when they fished in the area."

The Building of an Earth House

In April of 1998 I was able to visit my friend, Jan Ove Gaare, in Lakselv, Norway. Lakselv is south of the Porsanger coast, at the southern tip of Lakselvsfjord, in an interesting part of the country that borders on Finland and Russia. If a person had a bit of knowledge of *Sámigiella*, Norwegian, Finnish, or Russian you could talk with just about anyone.

Jan Ove is half Sami and our knowledge of the culture, current political and social topics fueled our conversations. We had a great many other things in common as well.

Karen Hilja Anderson and Jan Ove Gaare in Lakselv, 1998

He brought me to visit his Uncle Oddvar, who lives northeast of the town of Lakselv about an hour's drive by bus along the fjord. Oddvar spends much of his time near his home fishing or fixing his friends' snowmobiles to make some money when he needs it. I met him in the bright morning sun in front of his shed, where he was checking out the latest snowmobile over cups of coffee from the thermos and cigarettes. There was a group of local men shooting the breeze in their snowmobile suits and sunglasses. I was greeted by broad, curious smiles and *"Buores, buores!" "God dag!* " and "What language do you speak, girl?"

Oddvar lives with his brother and elderly mother on land connected to an area that was explained to me as national forest. I also heard it called "the Sami Rez." The three of us set out one morning on snowmobiles, the great arctic tools that they are, into the Sami Rez.

After a long ride we came to their family's earthen house — I heard them called *"goahte,"* among other names. This goahte was our base camp for ice fishing. It was beautiful and I wanted to learn everything about it. I started asking questions and drawing pictures of it in the hope that one day I would build one of my own.

The earth house appeared to be a natural hill with snow on top of it. It was 5-10 years old. The earth on the outside had melted together and grown moss, causing the overall appearance to suggest that the house was an object occurring naturally in the landscape, like a tree or rock. To go inside you stepped down the side of the hill that was dug out so that the house could set into it. I had to bend double to get through the four foot-tall door. Once inside, there was a stove to my left, with a stove pipe coming out of the wall, a table in the middle of the room and three beds along the remaining available wall space. The ceiling was just tall enough for me to stand upright and I am 5' 6".

From the inside I could see the geometrical skeleton of the structure. It had eight sides. Seven of them had equal dimensions roughly 4 feet tall by 5 to 6 feet wide. The door and the stove pipe were located on one of these walls and the eighth wall was vertical to a height of five feet. On this wall there was a large window with its top flush with the roof.

The main idea seemed to be that this was a seasonal shelter for a few people to stay in when they fished in the area — not "perfect," but sufficient and sturdily built. I asked about the building materials and Jan Ove said you start the octagonal framework with birch poles aged at least two years. Then you fix the eight roof poles at the joining corners of each of the walls. The walls and ceiling are made by placing two-by-fours over the frame, and then a covering of tarpaper is stapled over the entire structure.

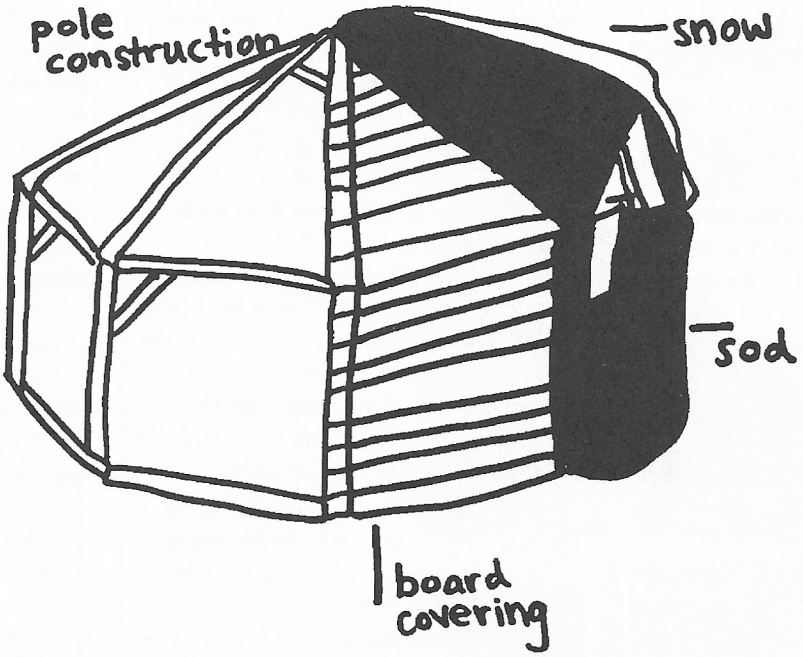
In the case of Jan Ove and Oddvar there is a peat bog nearby from which they took the earth to cover the house. They harvested and transported large, dense, moist peat moss bricks and packed them up tightly to the walls of the house. Then they shoveled loose dirt over the roof about a foot deep so that what once had had a hard octagonal shape now appeared round like a hill.

For the first year the house looked a bit rough. The soil was still in pieces and was not growing yet, but with some time and weather, the earth became one solid mass; insulating, absorbing, and finally growing with vegetation.

There isn't a peat bog near my home that I know of, but there are some birch poles, two-by-fours, tar paper and dense, moist earth. Coupled with my observations near Lakselv and help from Jan Ove and Oddvar, I think you or I could build one of these beautiful and useful structures for ourselves without too much trouble.

Karen Hilja Anderson is an artist and a farmer. She lives in a tiny cabin in the woods of western Wisconsin with her fiance Elliot, and her cat Annabelle. She welcomes correspondence with Báiki *readers. Write her at W7897 830th Ave., River Falls, WI 54022.*

"The earth house from the outside appeared to be a natural hill with snow on top of it."



" I think you or I could build one of these beautiful and useful structures for ourselves without too much trouble."

[Muus continued from p. 17]

they were not to slaughter any of the reindeer for their personal use — this even though the Inuit are a hunting culture with meat needed for food, and hides, bones and antler needed for clothing and implements. So, while on the one hand, reindeer were intended to substitute for the dwindling supply of fish and game, on the other hand, the Inuit were forbidden to use the reindeer as they saw fit; they first had to ask the permission of the missionaries, who controlled reindeer distribution and use. [Note: At the same time, similar efforts were being made to make farmers out of the Indigenous American Indian buffalo hunters of the Great Plains using the same means of control.]

So when one Inuit man was found to have slaughtered a reindeer without permission, he was severely punished on Jackson's orders. This is the account — in Jackson's words — from his 1895 annual report to Congress:

> *"Three animals were stolen by the Eskimos. I was successful in capturing only one of these thieves, an Eskimo by the name of Axsegroak, from Nook (Teller). During my absence he shot one of our deer. But no one knew — or was willing to know — who the thief was, the Eskimos being, as a class, great cowards* [sic]." 5

Jackson soon uncovered Axsegroak, who confessed he had been starving and that he had shared the meat with his neighbors, who were also hungry.

Jackson was about to put him in handcuffs when Axsegroak sat down, pulled out a knife and placed it before his breast motioning Jackson to kill him on the spot. Instead, Jackson used this first "confessed thief" as an example, and indicated to Axsegroak that his death was not what he wanted. Reverend Tollef Brevig, one of the missionaries, then intervened, explaining to Jackson that in cases like this, the men were usually put in jail and punished. So the final verdict (Jackson being the judge) was that the nine Inuit who had eaten the meat had to pay fines in the form of fox skins — a heavy penalty considering their impoverishment at the time.

In another case in 1897, it was discovered that several Inuits had killed reindeer near Kotzebue. Jackson contacted Captain Francis Tuttle of the US Marines Bering Sea Patrol vessel *Bear* [ironically, the ship that in 1891 had taken domesticated reindeer from Siberia to Alaska to help out the Inuit] and ordered him to put the men in irons:

> *"...keep them awhile on board, giving them as much as a scare as possible. We must do something to cause them to leave the reindeer alone." 6*

This reflects the paternalistic attitude toward Indigenous People that surfaced earlier in Jackson's life. In 1858, while still a young man, he got a job teaching older students at Spencer's School for Choctaws in Spencer, Oklahoma. Jackson wrote to his family:

> *"My boys are mostly large and give a great deal of trouble. Our surest mode of discipline is whipping....It is strange how you can calm them down. One of them doubled up his fist to intimidate me, but the only effect was to secure a severe whipping."* 7

As Director of Education, Jackson's ideas about how to "educate" Native Alaskan children included dividing them up among various Protestant denominations and keeping them at the boarding schools year round. Five-year contracts were made with the parents and any contact between the children and their families during that time was discouraged. Jackson wrote:

> *The brighter the girl the greater her danger; for as she improved in the school, she began to dress more neatly, and keep her person more cleanly; the dull stolid cast of countenance gave way to the light of intelligence, and she began to be more attractive and consequently in greater demand. To save these girls necessitated the establishment of a home into which they could be gathered and taken out from under control of their mothers."* 8

This, despite pleas from families to allow the children to return home for visits. That Native languages were forbidden in the mission schools in Alaska further separated families, who could no longer speak with their children in their Mother Tongue. Julia Sara Hansen (Yupik-Sami) recalls:

> *"Speaking Yupik or Sami was forbidden. Only English was allowed by the Moravians in my boarding school in Akiak, Alaska when I was growing up."* 9

Jackson's book *Alaska and Missions on the North Pacific Coast* was intended to help raise funds for his Alaska activities, which it did. But it is testimony to his belief that Indigenous Peoples were to be pitied as "heathens" until Christianized, and then praising those who converted. After a public performance of traditional Inuit dances, Jackson quotes a Tlingit elder as supposedly saying:

> *"Dear brothers, this is how we used to [dance] before white men came. We don't know who taught us these dances. But we liked them. Now, may God pity us, we were so blind. All this we do long ago, but now it is past. God's word is never past. Now you see with your own eyes how blind we were. God don't like these things, and we put them away. Now we know better, and use them for the last time. God pity us....White men knew it first. They pity us and tell us. Now you come to see us and we are very happy."* 10

As conversion spread, the "civilized" were encouraged to break up with their families. According to Jackson, the following scene took place in a Native village when someone asked:

> *" 'Will anyone stand out in the midst of the scoffing heathen and declare themselves Christians?' First there came two or three trembling, and said they were willing to go anywhere and to give up all for the blessed Savior's sake. Others were then encouraged and that day fifty stood forth, and gathered together such things as they needed, put them into their canoes, and away they went. On that day every tie was broken; children were separated from their parents, husbands from wives, brothers from sisters; houses, land, and all things were left- such was the power at work in their minds."* 11

The spiritual conversion of the Inuits made their assimilation into the dominant society possible and set the stage for the commercial exploitation and abuse of Nature in Alaska. Jackson indicates that he fully understood the implications of this shift when he wrote:

> *"It is as important to teach the natives just emerging from barbarism how to earn an independent support as it is to give them book learning. The industrial pursuit which nature seems to have mapped out for the native population of arctic and subarctic Alaska is the breeding and herding of reindeer and the use of the deer as a means of transportation and communication."* 12

The Inuit call white people *nilcaugamiut*, "people who know nothing." The writings

[Muus continued overleaf]

of Sheldon Jackson reflect this; he assumed that Indigenous Peoples would abandon their spiritually-based extended family way of life forever:

"Under the influence of Christianity the Indians are abandoning their large houses, which are the common abode of several families, and building separate houses for each family....and the old houses are fast disappearing with other remnants of their old civilization." 13

What Sheldon Jackson failed to foresee was that in the late 20th-century, the global environmental crisis caused by the departure from Indigenous values would necessitate the need for a return to that lifestyle and that this reawakening of Indigenous consciousness would take place in Alaska as well as the rest of world.

Nathan Muus and Faith Fjeld are co-editors of Báiki.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ray, Dorothy Jean, "Sheldon Jackson and the Reindeer Industry of Alaska,"*Journal of Presbyterian History*, Vol. 43, No. 2, June 1965, p.74. (Note: Ray says Bering Island, east of Kamchatka, was rented from Russia by the Alaska Commercial Company).
2. Rinaldo, Peter, *The Great Reindeer Caper, The Missionary and the Miners*, 1997, Dor Pete Press, NY
3. Rinaldo, ibid., p.90
4. Jacob, Jean, *A Schoolteacher in Old Alaska*, Random House, Canada, Toronto, 1995, p. 90
5. Jackson, Sheldon, *Report on the Introduction of Domestic Reindeer into Alaska, 1895*, U.S. Bureau of Education, Washington D.C., p. 57
6. *Kotzebue Basin Alaska Geographic*, vol.8, no.3, 1981, "The Rise And Fall of Reindeering," p.141
7. Rinaldo, ibid., p.56
8. Jacob, ibid., p.201
9. Interview with Julia Sara Hansen, April 1999. [See also *Báiki* Issue #19, "A Sami - Yupik Family in Alaska: Julia Hansen's Story."]
10. Jackson, Sheldon, *Alaska, and Missions on the North Pacific Coast,* 1880, Dodd, Meade & Co., NY., p.114
11. Jackson, ibid., p.289
12. Jackson, ibid., p.312
13. Rinaldo, ibid., p.55

BÁIKI REVIEWS

HANS RAGNAR MATHISEN, ELLE HÁNSA, KEVISELIE

"Art for art's own sake is not enough for me. Life, and Art needs purpose, as I see it. Mine is to inspire others. Survival. Born a twin there are two of us: The one I am — whatever that means — and the one who I wish to become. Thus in my art twins become one." ***Hans Ragnar Mathisen***

[left] self portrait, 1983; [above] logo for the International Festival of Indigenous Culture, Tromsø, Sápmi 1997; [below] "Sieidsuol," 1991

***Hans Ragnar Mathisen, Elle Hánsa, Keviselie,* Kautokeino, Norway: DAT OS, 1998, ISBN 82 90625 33 2**

Reviewed by Solveig Arneng Johnson Sami-American artist.

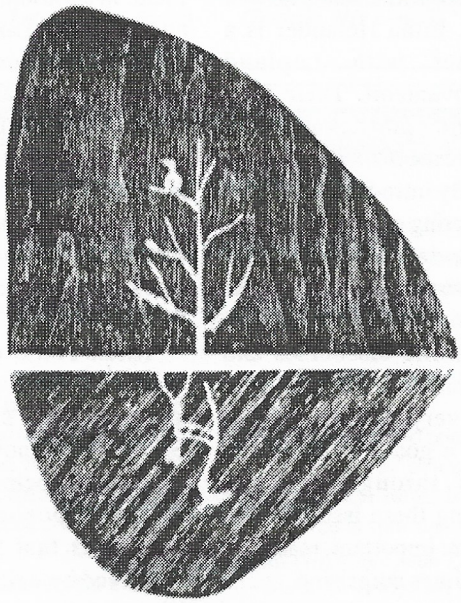
This is an interesting new book about Hans Ragnar Mathisen, who is also called Elle Hánsa and Keviselie. It is the first book published about a living Sami artist and much of his work is reproduced here.

Written first in the Sámi language, it was translated into Norwegian and English by Harald Gaski.

I would think that Sami Americans would like to see his work and to read this book, the better to understand their Sami heritage.

Hans Ragnar is a family friend. We have know him for a long time and I personally think that no one knows or understands the mountains and the seas of Northern Norway like our artist friend.

The book can be ordered from DAT o.s., PB 31, N-9520, Kautokeino, Norway.



[BÁIKI REVIEWS continued overleaf]

NO BEGINNING, NO END — THE SAMI SPEAK UP

***No Beginning, No End — The Sami Speak Up*, compiled and edited by Elina Helander and Kaarina Kailo, Canadian Circumpolar Institute Press. ISBN:1-896445-09-1, $25. softcover cover, ISBN 1-896445-10-1, $35. hardcover**

Reviewed by Jürgen Kremer

The Canadian Circumpolar Institute Press, in cooperation with the Nordic Sami Institute, recently published a reader containing important statements about Sami issues by Sami people themselves. The discussions in the book are lively and stimulating, even when some of the book's objectives may lead one to assume otherwise. The editors are especially concerned with Sami issues in relation to appropriative Eurocentric maps used by laypeople and scientists. One of the editors, Elina Helander, practices an "epistemology of suspicion and disturbance" in order to facilitate cross-cultural exchanges and collaboration which is less marred by projections and stereotyping.

The book succeeds in doing just that. Kaarina Kailo, of Finnish descent, was until recently professor at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute at Concordia University in Montreal Canada; since the publication of this book she has returned to Finland, and teaches now at Oulu University. Elina Helander is a Sami researcher with Lapland University in Rovaniemi. Their joint introduction and the concluding conversation frame the book and explain their objective: "By introducing readers to Indigenous ordering of reality, and the Sami ways of knowing, this book hopes to provoke a debate about the norms and assumptions of the dominant Eurocentric scientific discourses and knowledge systems."

This sounds very theoretical and philosophical as a goal, however, the book succeeds through its nine interviews to bring these issue to life. The discussions are important, readable, lively, and oftentimes surprising.

The differences among the artists interviewed and the disagreements their answers indicate, help to dispel stereotypes and generalizations. They encourage the reader to engage with the lived richness of Sami knowledge systems.

The editors chose a conversational format to provide "open-ended and process-oriented glimpses of contemporary Sami society." They interviewed nine "well-known cultural workers who have established themselves on the Sami cultural scene." These conversations give information about the contemporary no-beginning-no-end-process of Sami society that is otherwise difficult to obtain, particularly for non-Sami speaking readers. The book complements such useful recent publications as Elina Helanders *Awakening Voice* (Nordic Sami Institute) and Harald Gaski's *Sami Culture in a New Era* and *In the Shadow of the Midnight Sun* (both published Davvi Girji/University of Washington Press).

Examples of the artist's work (except in the case of the yoiker and *Baiki*'s Faith Fjeld) follow each interview. This makes the book very rich as each artist gets to "speak" unencumbered by the questions of the editors. The writers and multiartists interviewed are Kirsti Paltto, Kerttu Vuolab, Eino Guttorm, Inger-Mari Aikio, Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, Rauni Magga Lukkari, and Faith Fjeld. In addition, the yoiker Inga Juuso, and artisan Petteri Laiti, whose masterful *duodji* pieces are captured in the photos following the interview text, are interviewed. The discussions of the artist's work, politics, racism, colonization, Christianity, nature, language, and feminism are among the themes that form scarlet threads between the interviews, and it is instructive to read and note the differing answers in each of these areas.

Kirsti Paltto discusses her story "The Two Headed Woman" as "a short story about a woman's life between two cultures. She does not know whether she is Sami or a Finn. She is being pulled by the two forces in two opposite directions." Later she comments that Sami literature could be improved by writers studying "the old Sami life and religion more and they should dare to write about themselves and how efforts were made to destroy them."

The Kertu Vuolab interview illustrates the difficulties of cross-cultural communications, since she oftentimes answers Kaarina Kailo's questions with something like "I cannot think of things in such a way." She talks extensively about the importance storytelling had during her childhood and gender differences. She objects to homogenizing definitions of Sami art. The questions about Sami-ness are turned around by pointing out that "the mainstream asks us [Samis] questions, on a daily basis. Very few are being asked among ordinary Finns what is it about your life that makes you into a Finn?"

Nils-Aslak Valkeapää comments that "if a culture is to live, then it must change constantly, bring with it new material and customs and utilize them in a manner suitable for everyday use." He reminisces about his times of growing up, when "the traditional woman-centered culture was dominant." His book *The Sun, My Father* expresses his beliefs regarding shamanism, and he emphasizes that multiple readings and interpretations are possible and intended by him.

Rauna Magga Lukkari's poem "Mother's University" is an example of the affirmation of traditional Sami knowledge: "Among the mountains/ amongst the wavecrests/alongside riverbeds/on hills and moors/on the innermost part of the marsh/she ran her school." This interview ends on a poignant note as Lukkari asks Helander: "Do you remember Elina how much people used to laugh in Utsjoki in the old days? Where did the laughter go? If I could tell even one story so that people would start to laugh, I would be satisfied."

Petteri Laiti discusses and complains about the ways in which the tax system, bureaucracy, and other factors interfere with his work as master artisan. He talks about the ways in which he learned to create *duodji*, and how the school system interferes with the acquisition of tradi-

[continued overleaf]

tional knowledge: "We have started to believe that it is more important to give children school knowledge and to make a herd of sheep out of them."

These are just a few of the things that struck me while reading these informative interviews. The final discussion between Kaarina Kailo and Elina Helander revolves around issues of appropriation and spiritual theft, and may be of particular interest to people in the US and Canada. At one point Helander turns to Kailo asking: "I wonder if you have not in fact repressed interest in your own culture." While Kailo has explored the older layers of her Finnish roots in other publications, it might have been informative to bring them more to the fore in these discussions. I guess that is spice I had wished for.

No Beginning, No End - The Sami Speak Up manages to remind us that "Sami knowledge is immediate in the sense that living as they do within the cyclical nomadic circle of life, the Sami occasionally land in situations where they can free their thoughts and open themselves to reality without observing it consciously. A person can become part of reality without having to construct it first." The different answers and lifestories of the artists interviewed may just do that by busting our stereotype, and making us pay attention to individual lives and how they are woven into a complex matrix of nature and culture - each unique, yet distinctly Sami, each from a circle of life that reaches beyond what our assumptions and concepts can grasp quickly.

To order, fax: (780) 492 1153; or email: <canadian.circumpolar.institute@ualberta.ca>

Jürgen Kremer is an executive editor of the journal ReVision, *he teaches at Saybrook Institute, and lives in Santa Rosa, CA.*

Correction to Jürgen Kremer's review of *The Sun, My Father*, by Nils-Aslak Valkeapää in the last issue of *Báiki*: At the beginning of the final paragraph, the review states that the book "contains a wealth of medicinal information." This is not so. The reviewer is referring to the medicine, the healing power of the book, as a rich resource for a traditional and contemporary view on Sami spirituality and shamanism (and not to herbal or other medicinal knowledge). Báiki regrets this error.

NEW PROJECTS

NEW SOUTH SAAMI CULTURAL CENTER IN SWEDEN

GAALTIJE

by Reino Jillker

Gaaltije, the South Saami Culture and Information Center has been established in Östersund, Sweden. The aim of the Center is to preserve and develop the culture, language and history of *Aarjelsaemieh*, the south part of Sápmi.

"Gaaltije" is a word from the South Saami language that means a spring where water comes up. The founders of Gaaltije chose that name because the Center is being thought of as a well for the South Saami culture. And for the founders it is an old dream come true.

The plans for this cultural center started more than ten years ago when the Minister of the Swedish Department of Education was asked for financial support to establish a center for the South Saami. But the economic situation didn´t allow at that time.

In 1996, the founders tried again to find financial support. It wasn´t easy, but two years later, Ingwar Åhrén, former president of the *Saametinget* [the Swedish Saami Parliament], started, as project manager, to build up the center with help from the EU [the European Union] and in September of this year, Gaaltije moved into their new facilities in Östersund.

Today five persons work for Gaaltije on different projects. One of the projects is the documenting of old Saami settlements from antiquity in both Sweden and Norway.

Another project is to set up a virtual information center on the Internet, with Gaaltije working in cooperation with the Saami magazine *Samefolket* and the South Saami Cultural Center *Saemien Sijte*, in Snåsa, Norway. This hopefully will place the South Saami people on the map, even internationally, which means increasing knowledge about the Saami among the Swedes and Norwegians.

And that isn´t all. In January 1999, a library bus had its maiden voyage, bringing 4500 books, videos, music cassettes, magazines and courses in the Saami language to the inhabitants of areas in both Sweden and Norway.

Gaaltije is also responsible for a course educating tourist guides about South Saami history as well as contemporary conditions. Fifteen persons from both Sweden and Norway are taking this course and hopefully they will be ready to go to work by next summer.

The Center will also create ways to promote Saami art, which will include developing a network between Saami artists and the community. There will also be a meeting place for discussions regarding fishing, hunting, and environmental issues, and a marketplace for film, literature, and arts and crafts.

We hope to forge links with the Norwegian Sami on all issues concerning our Saami way of life. An information brochure has been produced, and several seminars have been held, as Gaaltije establishes its presence in the community.

Reino Jillker is information expert for Gaaltije. His e-mail: "reino@same.net".

IS PRESERVING A CULTURE WORTH THE TROUBLE?

NILS-ASLAK VALKEAPÄÄ:

"I am asked, 'Is it worthwhile to preserve the Sami culture?' but in the same breath they state, 'Keeping it going is just a waste of money. It's dying gradually if it isn't dead already.'

If a culture dies out, it's proof that that culture has not succeeded in finding a viable form at the time in question. This is not dependant on how big it is, but rather on its capacity to adapt to new situations and find its own forms of expression which are in step with the times.

"When I hear talk of conserving the culture, I see an investigator of folklore...cataloguing a dead culture. There's little point in establishing a sort of living museum...where one stops a clock at a particular time. Samis are expected to stand still at a certain stage of development and everything new is marked sinful or counterfeit. Many Samis have this attitude themselves.

"Is it important to conserve cultural forms? The answer is 'yes' as long as it's a question of a dying cultural form. But don't kill a living culture. That is spiritual murder."

From *Greetings from Lappland: The Sami — Europe's Forgotten People*, Nils-Aslak Valkepaää, London: Zed Press, 1978, p. 103.

[*Saami Connections* cont'd from page 5]

BÁIKI REVIEWS

RAISING REINDEER FOR PLEASURE AND PROFIT

***Raising Reindeer for Pleasure and Profit*, Gordon Post, Morris Publishing (800-650-7888) 1998. ISBN:1-57502-893-X.**

Reviewed by Lloyd Binder

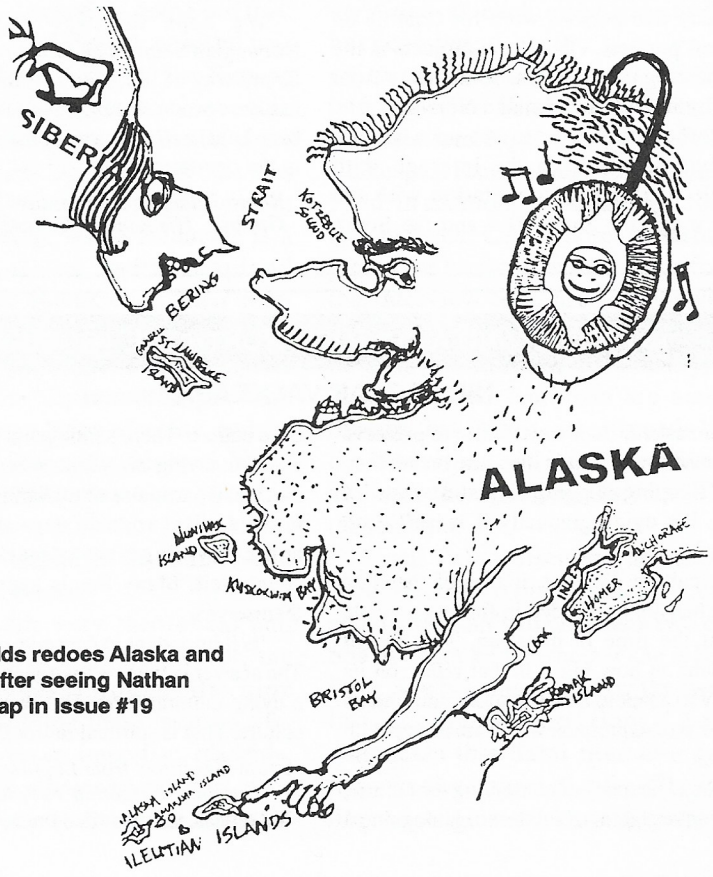
This is a 92-page soft-cover book which you should read if you want a good general overview of reindeer in all aspects. From origins to physical characteristics, antler growth and antler-related behaviors and features, to business or pleasure, this book is packed with all of the basics you would need to know to consider the possibility of owning and raising reindeer.

This book is well organized. References are given for each chapter and there is a good bibliography for those who wish to read more on reindeer biology and diet, health and handling, even about the Sami culture, one origin of the reindeer herding and husbandry livelihood. An index, too rare even these days, completes this information-packed book. As a basic resource, it is hard to beat for value. It is a primary start for those who will be doing extensive research and will give you a long leg up in finding almost all of the reindeer-related information you might want.

Easy to read, this book will allow you to be able to talk somewhat knowledgeably about reindeer to your friends and neighbors. Pictures are well chosen and give some very good visual relief.

Never condescending but not overly technical, with easy to find sources for prescriptions, because of good descriptions, value-per-page is excellent. For those who will want to do further research, you should buy Gordon Poest's well-written book and save yourself hours if not days of work. It will easily pay for itself and more.

Lloyd N. Binder is a Sami/Inuit businessman with a family history of reindeer breeding in Norway, Alaska and northern Canada



Bill Shields redoes Alaska and Siberia after seeing Nathan Muus' map in Issue #19

REINDEER PEOPLE CONNECTIONS

A friend sent me a copy of Nathan Muus' article "The Sami Drum" in the winter 1998 Issue of *Báiki.* I very much enjoyed it and was interested in the comment that Sápmi is a circumpolar tribal nation, "Eurasian in location and world view," and linguistically and culturally related to the other Indigenous Arctic peoples who hunt reindeer, live in conical tents and have a special relationship to the bear.

Several years ago I saw a documentary series, "Nomads of the Taiga," at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco which had footage of reindeer-herding nomads in Mongolia. They were quite different from yak-herding nomads, as to physical appearance, size and customs. Unfortunately, nothing was said about their language, but they live in conical tents and their clothing, similar to that of the yak-herding people, also mirrors the Sami clothing — belted tunic trousers, soft-looking boots, cone-like hats. They are small-boned, delicate featured, short in stature, small enough to ride their reindeer and even to have reindeer races. (They wager on the outcome, but at the end the losers get their money back!) It appears to be a very egalitarian society with men and women performing the same tasks and affection expressed freely among all.

They seemed to be much more private about their spiritual lives than the yak-herding people. Unlike the footage of the yak-herding people, we did not see a shaman or any drums, although the film-maker tried with no success to get the reindeer-herding people to talk about shamans, living or dead.

We know that the bear was and still is the great ancestor spirit of many people of Asia including the Ainu and the people near sacred Lake Baikal. It would be so wonderful if the Sami and the Mongolian herders could discover common ancestry. An infusion of ancestor energy would give them strength and courage.

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Issue #20

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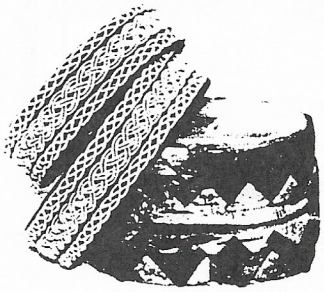

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