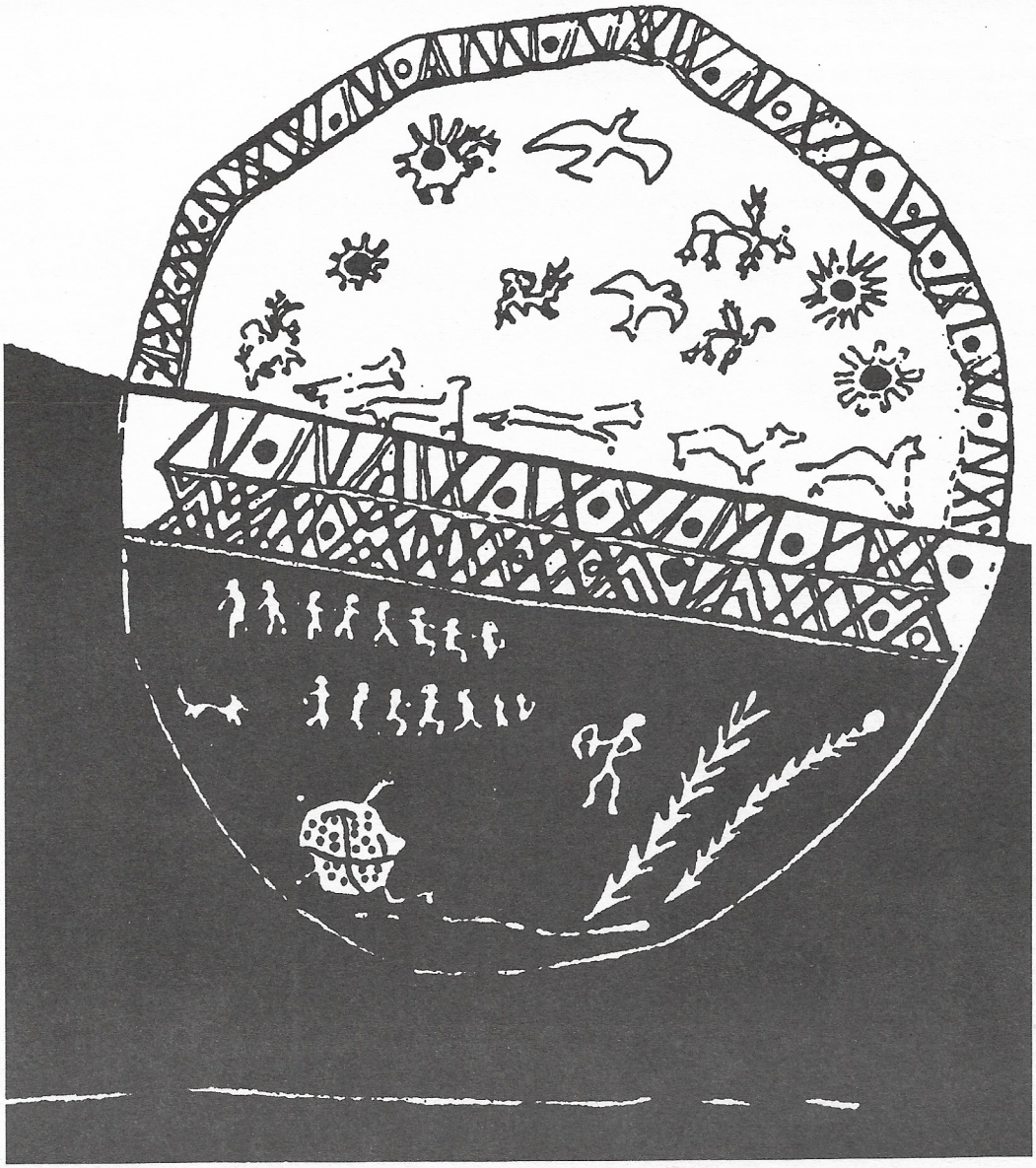
BAIKI

ISSUE # 24 THE NORTH AMERICAN SAMI JOURNAL 2002

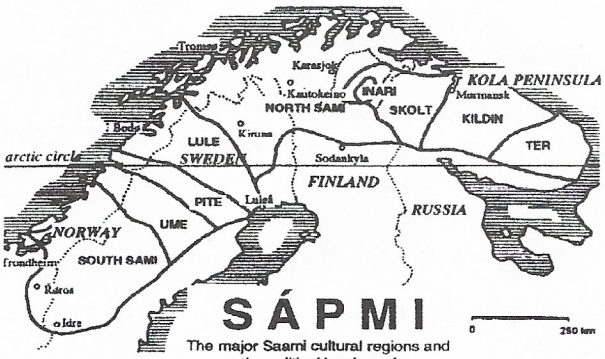
DEDICATED TO THE HEALING POWER OF PLANTS AND TREES

Hans Ragnar Mathisen's epic poem "LULEJU" part two
Martiga Lohn: The New SÁMEDIGGI Building • Interview with SVEN-ROALD NYSTØ
"THE SAMI: REINDEER PEOPLE OF ALASKA" exhibit, and much, much more



drawing: Nils-Aslak Valkeapää

WHO ARE THE SAMI PEOPLE AND WHAT IS "BÁIKI?



The major Saami cultural regions and the political borders of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia.

The Sami (also spelled Saami and Sámi) People are the Indigenous People of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Russian Kola Peninsula. About 100,000 Sami live in the Nordic countries today, half of them in Norway. The map shows the nine cultural areas where the Sami (Finno-Ugric) languages are spoken. Sami history parallels that of most of the world's other Indigenous Peoples who have undergone colonization, forced assimilation and relocation during the last 500 years. In the Nordic countries the Sami areas were taken over by outsiders who attacked their Nature Religion and their extended-family siida system and forcibly removed their children to boarding schools where they were forbidden to speak the Sami languages and taught to think and act like Norwegians and Swedes. This set the stage for the ongoing abuse of their natural resources. Today the Sami in the Nordic countries are taking steps to regain their self-sufficiency by working with their national governments and in the United Nations to do so. They are one of the first Indigenous groups to have their own elected Parliaments.

***Báiki: the North American Sami Journal* is the English language periodical that grew out of a search for Sami roots.** Its founding editor is Faith Fjeld and Nathan Muus is its co-editor and archivist. The appearance of *Báiki* in 1991 raised consciousness about the Sami presence in North America, a fact that had largely been ignored. It is now estimated that there are 30,000 people in the U. S. and Canada who have Sami ancestry. Some are the descendants of Sami who came to Alaska as reindeer herders and others are the descendants of Sami who emigrated as "Norwegians," "Swedes," and "Finns."

"Báiki" ["bah-hee-kee"] is the nomadic reindeer-herding society's word for the cultural connection — "the home that lives in the heart" — that travels with them as they migrate. The *Báiki* logo was designed by Faith Fjeld using pictographs from Sami Drums. The reindeer symbolizes physical support. It faces east toward *lavvus* [Sami tents] that symbolize home. They are located at the base of a mountain which symbolizes spiritual support. All are connected to a *njalla* [Sami storage shed] which symbolizes community survival.

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ISSUE #24 2002

BÁIKI
THE NORTH AMERICAN SAAMI JOURNAL

COVER

The drawing is by the late Nils-Aslak Valkeapää. Permission to reproduce it has been granted us by Per Boine, DAT. The drawing first appeared in Issue #1 of Báiki as an illustration for an excerpt from Valkeapää's epic poem "My Home is in My Heart."

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THE SAMI: REINDEER PEOPLE OF ALASKA

HISTORIC EXHIBIT WILL COMPLETE ONE CIRCLE AND BEGIN ANOTHER

"Oh, you're Sami! You brought reindeer to our village and taught my grandfather how to work with them when we were starving! I've always wanted to thank you! Margaret Andrews, Alaska Native Heritage Center, Anchorage, September 2002

We are pleased to announce that the Yupiit Piciyarait Museum, Bethel, AK and the Saami Báiki Foundation are preparing a travelling exhibit called "The Sami: Reindeer People of Alaska" to commemorate the history and contributions of the Sami ("Lapp") herders who came to Alaska as part of the Reindeer Project. The goal of the exhibit is to bring to life the realities of the reindeer-based subsistence lifestyle as brought to Alaska by the Sami herders.

The exhibit project has just received a planning grant from the Alaska Humanities Forum.

"THE LAST OF THE LAPPS"

Outside of the herding families, most Alaskans do not know about this chapter in their history. Little has been published about the Alaska Sami and the coming of reindeer to Alaska from the Sami point of view. Articles in the media carry such headings as "The Last of the Lapps" and portray the Sami as exotic people who represented a vanishing reindeer-based lifestyle.

ARCTIC SURVIVAL

The story of reindeer-based subsistence in Alaska involves Indigenous Peoples from opposite sides of the Arctic Circle. In 1894 and 1898, 126 Sami reindeer herders and their families were hired by the U.S. government to teach herding skills to the Yup'iks and Inupiaq whose subsistence had been severely impacted by commercial trapping, fishing, whaling and the introduction of the rifle.

On the first trip a small group of Sami worked with reindeer that had earlier been brought from Siberia, and on the second trip a much larger group brought several hundred reindeer with them from Norway. At the end of their three-year tours of duty, 26 of the Sami stayed on to establish homes, usually marrying into Native families and losing contact with their relatives back in Norway. From then on, the Eskimo and the Sami families worked to build up the large reindeer herds that provided food, clothing and transportation for Alaskans from the Gold Rush into the 1920s and 30s.

In 1937, the U.S. Reindeer Act transferred the ownership of all reindeer to Natives and the Sami were forced to sell their herds at a loss. Some of the families moved south to Kitsap County, WA and some stayed on in Alaska and found other work. Most felt they had been betrayed.

photo copy by James H. Barker

Clemet Sara (center) took this 1920 picture at a reindeer camp in Alaska by pulling a string attached to his camera. Standing with him are Matthew Spein (left) and his father Per (right). Clemet's daughter Marita Snodgrass, his son Nils Sara and Matthew's daughter Lucy Murphy are among the many descendants who are helping to plan the Alaska Sami exhibit.

REINDEER PROJECT DESCENDANTS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES

Research and preparation for the exhibit is involving the collaboration of Elders who have Reindeer Project ancestry with other Alaskans who have lived and worked with the herders. Household items, tools and other equipment are being gathered from the descendants of the Reindeer Project, from the archives of *Báiki*, and from other sources that document the history of the Sami reindeer herders in Alaska. These will be borrowed for various segments of the exhibit.

Photographs, family stories and films are also being collected and a video of the project is being made.

EXHIBIT TO TRAVEL

The "Sami: Reindeer People of Alaska" will open in Bethel during the Yup'ik Camae Dance Festival, spring 2004, the centennial of the coming of reindeer herding families into that area. Programs on the Sami culture by guest artists and crafters and workshops on Sami reindeer subsistence techniques are being scheduled at the Museum and in the local schools.

From Bethel the exhibit will travel to other villages and Native centers in Alaska. Programs at the Kawerak Native Herders Association in Nome and at the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage are already being planned.

The Nordic Heritage Museum (Seattle, WA) and the Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum (Decorah, IA) have expressed an interest in hosting the exhibit when it leaves Alaska.

Future plans also include Kautokeino and Karasjok, Norway, two of the villages where the Sami herders came from. In this way a giant circle that was begun 100 years ago will be completed and families will be reunited.

HOW YOU CAN BECOME INVOLVED

Many of our readers have Alaska Sami connections. To become involved see this issue pages 26 and 27.

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

BÁIKI'S ALASKA SAMI CHRONOLOGY

Thank you for creating and publishing the Alaska Sami Chronology on your website. I would like to make some comments on the chronology as it appears there and in *Báiki* Issue #19. Some of my comments are for the purpose of correcting errors of statement; others are to point out that there is a fair amount of editorializing about some of the events of Alaska's history that do not reflect commonly held views of its own residents.

18th and 19th Centuries: Indigenous Alaskan people are not endangered nor are we on the verge of extinction. This viewpoint promulgates the depiction of indigenous people as victims, and therefore inferior and weak. We are neither. *Báiki* should not repeat this very western attitude toward Alaska's indigenous peoples who have robust and continually evolving cultures.

1823: Indigenous peoples of 1823 could not have viewed the Russian-American Pacific Ocean treaty as a first step in dividing Alaska's resources because they were not even aware of the treaty at that time. Perhaps some later indigenous people now view the treaty in that light, with the advantage of more than a century of hindsight and a broader view of what constitutes Alaskan resources. The term "alien powers" is a 20th century construct.

1824 and 1867: Putting the words "claims Alaska" and "purchased" in quotation marks places an editorial spin on historical events that occurred as fact. Alaskans are proud of their history, and accept both these events as part of that history. Whether either nation had the authority to claim, buy or sell Alaska is extraneous to the fact that the U.S. expanded its territory by buying out Russian interests in Alaska, and 57 years later, made indigenous Alaskans citizens of the United States.

1897: The statement that the "water level in the Yukon was decreased dramatically due to mining operations" is not true. There was no mining in the Yukon River; it is a major river before it even reaches Alaska, too large a river to mine. By the time the Yukon reaches Pilot Station in western Alaska, its volume is between 300,000 to 600,000 cubic feet per second during ice-free months.

Historic placer mining did not consume water; process water used to wash gravels went right back into the streams. It certainly added more sediment to an already muddy river, but it did not reduce the Yukon's volume.

River volume in northern regions is controlled by precipitation and snowmelt. Water levels were low all year in 1897, which hampered river transportation on the Yukon, and the barges that did arrive in Dawson carried supplies for the saloons, not needed food supplies.

1900: Per Spein married Ellen Maria Sara. The name Kvamme should be deleted from the sentence. Kvamme became Ellen Maria Sara's last name after her later second marriage to Jens Anderson Kvamme. At the time of her marriage to Per Spein, she was a child of 17 years and used her family name.

1928: Indigenous caribou were extinct on Nunivak Island by the time the Lomens brought reindeer to the island. The Lomens and the U.S. Biological Survey had a cooperative agreement to conduct reindeer-caribou crossbreeding experiments there. The indigenous Cup'ik residents of Nunivak protested the Lomens' uninvited presence on their island homeland. (Stern, R.O., et al., 1980, *Eskimos, Reindeer and Land, School of Agriculture and Land Resources Management Bulletin*. 59, UAF).

I hope these comments will provide an Alaskan perspective about the people and events it describes.

Sincerely,

June McAtee
Anchorage, AK
Alaskan Saami descendent

Báiki *replies: We are very grateful for your comments and will make the appropriate corrections on www.baiki.org.*

THE SPIRIT OF ROJU-ELLI

I am doing my Finnish and Sami genealogy and would like to contact anyone who is a descendant of Roju-Elli.

Donna Matson
Whittier, CA
<dmvortex@yahoo.com>

Báiki *replies:* The New York Mills (MN) Centennial History *(Parta Printers, 1984) has a whole section on Roju-Elli who lived life to the fullest! See pp 96-97.*

A FAN LETTER

The 10th Anniversary Issue of *Báiki* is outstanding from cover to cover! I have rejoiced in reading each fascinating section and can hardly wait to read them all....and then re-read. I'm going to have to call Carol Staats and tell her I was having problems getting back to sleep in the middle of last night and so I sat up reading and re-reading her poetry which I truly love.

It was also good to find Ken Jackson's retelling of "The Water Folk." I first met Grey Eagle through a mutual friend in Seattle and haven't seen him since the Peace and the Planet Conference in Eugene, Oregon some years ago. Thank you for all your good efforts.

Jean Anderson Graves
Alaska Yukon Library
Anchorage, AK

WE SAY "LAVVU" AND YOU SAY "NOMENCLATURE"

I thought *Báiki* would appreciate this letter from Christer Storgaards in Finland (<tic@dlc.fi>) to Northern Lavvu: "I happened to stumble over your site, when searching for sunforger canvas. Although you use Lavvu as a trade name, so you probably can't change it, I'd like to straighten out your nomenclature. A laavu (notice the spelling) is a simple lean-to shelter, reminiscent of the primitive ones that re-enacting longhunters and buck-skinners use over there. The original ones were covered with fir branches, but a modern version is made with a single tarp. It is still used by trekkers that don't bother to carry a tent, as you just need some rope and a tarp to make it (the stakes can be cut on site). A kota is the teepee-like construction that was covered with reindeer skins (later with tarps) typical for the Saame. It is nowadays used mostly by tourists."

Northern Lavvu responds: Thank you for your thoughtful email. When I first set up my website back in 1996, there were few websites that described anything Sami. I used "lavvu" because anything about Sami in printed form spelled it that way, both in English and in Norwegian — even the Sami Parliament. The Elders who taught me

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

drawings: Nathan Muus

the lavvu craft also spelled it "lavvu." I also discovered some time afterward that there were other spellings: "lavvo" (Sweden), laavo and laavu (Finland). Among the North American Sami community it is exclusively known as "lavvu." This is not to say that you were incorrect, just that there are several ways to spell it.

Yes, lavvus can be very simple with just a tarp and rope, but I use a combination of three lavvu "styles" that come from several families in Inari, Finland and Kautokeino, Norway, plus an unspecific "pan-Sami" design. The lavvu is as strong a cultural symbol over here as it is in Sápmi. I try to give it the respect it deserves by using natural instead of manufactured materials.

My website reflects a Sami/North American immigrant legacy, something that we have to deal with apart from our relatives in Sapmi.

Chris Pesklo
Minneapolis, MN
<northernlavvu@hotmail.com>

Báiki *replies: To order a Northern Lavvu of your own, see the advertisement on page 31 of this issue. The* Báiki *lavvu in West Oakland (a Northern Lavvu by the way) is a frequent setting for Bay Area Sami and American Indian community gatherings, and several years ago on Mother's Day it was the place where a little girl named Ursa Nakai was born.*

THOUSAND OAKS OR BUST

We just returned from the Scandinavian Festival in Thousand Oaks and were very disappointed that there was no Sami representation. We went specifically to find a Sami hat.

In the past, someone had given me a webaddress which had patterns for making a hat. I'd be happy to find either a website for a Sami museum or someone producing a range of hats. Your help is most appreciated.

Sue Ellen Picker
<bookbinder@earthlink.net>

Báiki *replies: You're in luck! There will once again be a Sami Camp at the Scandinavian Festival in Thousand Oaks this coming year, April 5 and 6, 2003. There are several books in the* Báiki *library that have hat patterns with instructions in Norwegian, Swedish or Finnish and if you specified the hat you want we could Xerox something for you. But then again you might find just what you're looking for at our camp next spring.*

SPEAKING OF LAVVUS

Is there a fixed number of poles in a traditional Sami lavvu?

Mea McNeil
<mea@onthefarm.com>

Nathan Muus replies: You must have three forked poles that interlock at the top. Then the more poles you place on those three poles going around the circle, the rounder and more spacious your tent will be. I like to use 20 poles as a minimum, but in heavy weather any number will do for shelter.

MOUTHPEACE SONGS

I'm a fiddle player/singer-songwriter from Fayetteville, AR. My mother's side are Steirna; both my grandparents were Minnesota farmers and spoke fluent Finnish. Lately I've become very interested in learning about my Finnish ancestors. My uncle, a genealogist, says that our relative Niila (Antinpoika) Aikasarria (born in 1630) was one of the Sami who fought against religious persecution. I was saddened to learn about the disaster in Chernobyl. I wrote a song that my partner and I perform during our program "Mouthpeace Songs of Social and Environmental Issues." Here are the lyrics:

REINDEER SONG

Following the herd 'neath the midnight sun,
like my grandfather's grandfather's fathers had done
they ate the meat, made tools from the bones
reindeer pulled the sled, from fur they made clothes
since the dawn of time, Saami have survived
now they're vanishing

Manna Dearvan means "Go in Peace"
peaceful like the senna grass that grows along the streams
fjords and fjell, northern lights, tundra of snow, frozen ice
this is the home, where the reindeer once roamed
now they're vanishing

Beat the drum, ancient one
the reindeer die
Sami they cry...beat the drum
"where does the poison come from?"

When the chilling winds blew, they did not understand
the explosion in Chernoybl had poisoned their land
the future holds nothing, if we only help ourselves consumed with power, greed and wealth
if the reindeer die, it's a warning to mankind
we're all vanishing!

Beat the drum, ancient one
the reindeer die, Sami they cry..
beat the drum...
where does the poison come from?

Sincerely,

Donna Henschell
<Stillkellydonna@aol.com>

GRETE KVAAL'S NEW BOOK

Norwegian photographer Grete Kvaal's long-awaited book *Karen Anna and Her Siida*, her photos and stories of Sami women who herd reindeer, is now available (text is in Sámigiella, Norwegian and English). Grete will be interviewed and her book will be reviewed by Lloyd Binder in our forthcoming Issue #25.

Valdres Trykkeri, Valdres, Norway, is the publisher and copies can be ordered through the internet bookstore www.bokkilden.no, or e-mail:

<jens.jore@bokkilden.no>

KIDLINK: SAAMI INTERNET FOR YOUTH

Youth clubs in Karasjok, Lakselv and Kautokeino in northern Norway want to help Saami youth make contacts with peers in other countries through the Internet. Called Kidlink, it is a global organization of volunteers that is supported by the Saami Council.

Many young Saami persons do not always find it easy to answer questions about who they are and where they live.

The youth clubs want to put the Saami language and culture on the agenda. The young people will communicate in Saami with other Saami-speaking youth living in Europe, and in Norwegian, English, or other languages elsewhere.

For more information visit: http://www.kidlink.org/english/general/press/index.html. Yours sincerely,

Odd de Presno
Kidlink Executive Director
http://www.kidlink.org/kie/odd.html

Thanks to Jean Anderson Graves for forwarding this information.

(SAAMI CONNECTIONS cont'd on page 26)

THE HEALING POWER OF PLANTS AND TREES: SÁPMI

SAMI HEALING STARTS WITH LOVED ONES

By Elina Helander

The reawakening of Indigenous Peoples has led to an increased interest among these groups in their own knowledge and traditions. The traditional plant knowledge of the Sami is based on experience, practice, observation and experimentation. Traditionally, Sami healing activities start in an integrated manner with the family and the tribe. The learning takes place there. Through personal illnesses as well as those of loved ones, one develops a relationship with healing and plant knowledge. The use of each plant that results in a cure tells us something about which ingredients in the plant are most active. Such beneficial plant knowledge and experimentation is first shared within the family circle and the people who use natural medicine, herbs, etc, are in fact taking personal responsibility for their own well-being as well as for the well-being of their families and others.

Sami people have always depended on plants as part of their sustenance. In the past all the food that was eaten was healthy, and included many kinds of fresh berries and natural plants and an abundance of fresh water to drink. Sami families had their own nature-based medical health care system and in every family there was at least one person who knew about the medicinal plants of their area. When sicknesses were severe the Sami *noaidi* (shaman) was contacted and he or she used the Drum in order to receive information from the Spirits of Healing. When Karl Linnaeus traveled to Swedish Lapland in the 1700s he wrote that he did not meet any Sami who were sick.

The Sami belief in natural healing has always been strong and Sami medicine is magical and sacred rather than drug-based. Today there are Sami healers and herbalists who still can contact the Spirits of Sickness and communicate with the Forces of Healing. But we have to be aware of the present reality: there are many Sami who do not cherish their own traditions. Much of the old knowledge is lost.

THE BALANCE OF NATURE

The people using plant medicine learn to understand the qualities and secrets of each plant's inner being — the healing and damaging qualities and the ordinary and sacred aspects. The Sami do not scientifically analyze the contents of the food and plants they use. Every detail of each plant is important and certain herbs can have both healing and harmful effects. For example, the so-called Icelandic lichen is used for many ailments. When boiled two times, the second boiling liquid is used for coughs. This procedure takes away the ingredients that are not good for the cough. But if you want to cure a stomach ailment, then you pour boiling water over the lichen only once so that the bitter compounds are left in the tea; these have a stimulating effect on the stomach and the intestines. Another example is that juniper berries are not good for people with kidney problems and for pregnant women because they irritate the kidneys and the uterus, but on the other hand, they are good, when boiled, for urinary tract infections.

While western medicine can cure many sicknesses, it does not necessarily heal people or affect then on the personal, psychological and spiritual levels. Even when Sami medicine focuses on healing one specific ailment, the whole person and the surrounding environment is taken into account as well. We try to keep everything

Illustrated by Helen Berman

in balance, including nature and the local culture; and the spirits and cosmic powers are honored. The plants are picked with respect, and their connection to the overall pattern of life is acknowledged. Especially in old times, the spiritual interconnectedness of all species was embraced. The Sami Drum pictures bear witness to this.

Earlier there was enough of everything in nature and the people were very strong. In the Sami areas today the abundance of nature is being threatened and the number of plant species is decreasing. People are becoming more and more dependent on western food and chemical medicines and many are sick in soul and body.

NO HARM TO THE ECOSYSTEM

Plants are picked in such a way that no harm is caused and so that the Spirits who live in and take care of the area where the plants grow are not disturbed. This is a teaching people learn from their parents and other elders. Both of my parents knew about the plants in our local area, Utsjoki, Finland, and they had favourite herbs that they used. I practice what I was told, and I have some special plants that I am close to. These are the roots of Angelica Archangelica (*olbmo-borran-rassi*), birch fungus (*catna*), willow (*seadga*), and blueberries (*sarrit*). We have a kind of guest-friend reciprocal relationship that is called "*verddevuohta*" in the Sami language.

THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF WOOD AND TREES

According to Carl Jung, archetypes are latent structural elements of the psyche that come from the unconscious — old universal symbols that emerge from a primordial reality. Trees are such symbols — rich in meaning. They are vehicles that can take us to our original wisdom. Sometimes these archetypal images come through dreaming, meditation and visualization, or during a time of crisis and change. For example, one Sea Sami woman, Vigdis Siri, had a dream encounter with a mythical Eagle that was carved in Wood. A Human Being was carved on the eagle. In the dream there was also a Sun made of Wood. This is interesting because Sami shamanism has a connection to the east and to Siberian shamanism. According to the Siberian myths concerning the origin of shamans, the mythical Eagle created and gave teachings to the first shaman who was a woman sleeping under a Birch Tree. So Vigdis Siri's dream contained archetypal and culture-based images of an Eagle, the Sun and a Tree.

That the Eagle is a sacred being is one of the things that Sami either do not talk about or they have forgotten it. These things are not revealed to outsiders because the Sami seldom share spiritual knowledge and wisdom even when talking among themselves about certain animals and in the context of certain rites such as the Bear Hunt. They camouflage the sacred by using substitute terminology. For example, my own mother did not use the word "moose" during the Moose Hunt. Instead she called it "big meat," "huge reindeer." etc. So she would ask questions such as: "Do you know if Aslak has already killed 'a huge reindeer'?"

We have a similar respect for trees. They are sacred just as the forests where they live are sacred. In old times it was important for Sami to embrace trees and if one had to cut one down, a short "Tree Cutting Ceremony" (*muora-cuohppan meanut*) took place. We connect the Alder tree to the Hunting Spirit *Leibolmmai* (Alder Man), and the bear. The red juice of alder bark is used in ceremonies and today it is also used among the Sami to color things red.

TREES AND PLANTS AS MEDICINE

The general rule concerning the preparing of medicine is that roots and other "hard" ingredients are boiled and leaves are steeped.

BIRCH

(Sami, **soahki**; Latin, *Betula)*

In addition to being a cosmic tree in northern shamanism, the birch is Sáráhkka's tree, Sáráhkka being one of the Grandmother Spirits who lives in the *lavvu* (Sami tent). The birch is placed near Sáráhkka's *lavvu* on traditional shaman Drums. The whiteness of the birch bark resonates with birth. Sáráhkka creates a body around a child's soul and helps women give birth.

Traditionally, Sami have name-giving ceremonies and one such ceremony was held in Sáráhkka's honor. Two birch twigs were put in the ceremonial water to symbolize fertility, health and strength. Women and Sáráhkka had a central role in the Name-giving Ceremonies and later on, if the child became sick or uncomfortable with the name, a new naming ceremony was arranged.

Now, some words about the healing effects of birch: Sometimes it is difficult to know if something is used as medicine or as food or both. My father used to take me every July to certain birch trees and show me how to extract medicine from them. I learned from my parents that birch enhances health. Fresh birch leaves are used to dress wounds. Birch leaves are put in boiled water to make tea for the treatment of arthritis. You can also make a bed of fresh birch leaves on a reindeer skin and lie on them if you have arthritis, rheumatism or overall ache. The sap can also be collected and eaten as such or cooked to make a syrup.

Many ailments are cured with the aid of ashes and warm birch ashes put in a bag can help prevent tooth ache and other painful conditions. Itching is cured with ash and birch bark boiled in water can be used to cure diarrhoea and stomach pain.

BIRCH FUNGUS

(Sami, **catna**; Latin, *Fomes fomentarius)*

In the Sami language there is a phrase "*nivssaha boaldit*," meaning "to burn tinder." Some people talk about "*duovlut*," meaning "to give someone a tinder cure." The tinder is prepared as follows: First the fungus is boiled in lye ashes. Then the outer layer is taken away and the fungus is dried.

A small dried piece of the fungus tinder is put in a small ring made of twigs or metal. This ring with the fungus in it is placed on the spot that is aching and is burned on the skin. Although I use tinder, I think that burning on stones, in a fireplace, etc. has a similar effect. In addition to being a pain-killer, burned tinder also has a slightly mind-altering effect when burnt on a stone or in a cup. I also warm the dried birch fungus in the oven and use it to draw away ache. You can also burn it symbolically to strenghten healing and the spiritual effects of spells and prayers and to cleanse people of bad luck.

THE NUMBERS 9 AND 3

The number 9 is important in the context of tree medicine. Sometimes medicinal tea is brewed from the ingredients of nine different trees including birch and willow. A long time ago, during

[HELANDER continued overleaf]

the Bear Hunting Ceremonies, hunters would wash themselves with water in which the ashes from nine birch fungi were mixed.

The number 3 is also important because healing procedures are sometimes made three times and the words or formulae are uttered three times.

WILLOW

(Sami, **seadga**; Latin, *Salix)*

Willow bark is used as medicine by boiling it in water and drinking it to cure lung ailments and coughs. The inner bark is also made into a tea to cure diarrhoea. And willow tea, made either of leaves or bark, can be used as a pain-killer like aspirin.

During the summer the healer takes fresh twigs or stems and uses them as fans to touch or stroke the patient. The healer reads a spell or formula that is not revealed to outsiders. The treatment has spiritual significance and gives immediate relief from aches in the arms, shoulders and back. This healing ceremony takes place where the willow grows.

Willow bark is also used by handicrafters because it gives a beautiful red-brown color. I have painted symbols on one of my Drums with color from the willow.

And both willow and alder are used to smoke reindeer meat and fish.

JUNIPER

(Sami, **reatka**; Latin, *Juniper communis)*

Juniper berries are a popular medicine. When made into a tea they are good for colds, coughs, asthma, lung disease, chest ailments, stomach pain and headaches. Juniper tea also works as a laxative and is inhaled to cure bad colds. The berries can also be placed between the teeth to provide cure for a tooth ache. My mother used to burn juniper twigs to cleanse and purify our house after guests who were sick had visited.

When the scalp and hair are washed in a concoction of juniper twigs and berries, hair loss can be prevented and the hair is strengthened. My father often did this.

ANGELICA ARCHANGELICA

(Sami, **olbmo-borran-rassi**)

Angelica is one of the first plants that can be used in early summer. Rananieida, the Female Spirit of greenness and a representative of the Sun, is connected to Angelica. Rananieida symbolizes the time between the Spring and Summer — the beginning and birth of something new, healthy and fresh. Traditionally, in the spring and fall, offerings were given to her so that she would give green grass, leaves and fresh plants to the reindeer and reindeer calves to eat. The spring time is a critical time for reindeer, because they are weak and calves are born. Other animals such as bear, sheep, and cows are also fond of Angelica.

The Sami are careful with Angelica and leave plants for reindeer and other animals when they gather it. They also give the second year or "older" plants time to produce seeds. I myself gather only 1-4 roots per year. But I like to visit and hang around the areas where Angelica grows. Sometimes I just watch them in wonderment, feeling the soil and inhaling the aroma. In my parents' home we talked a lot about Angelica in the same way that people today talk about popular TV programs.

Angelica is used for many things. The stalks and leaves of the first year plant are tasty. Angelica leaves can be boiled to make herbal tea. (Note that one does not need to cook the leaves. To make a tea, it is enough to steep them 10-20 minutes in boiled water.) Angelica stalks can be eaten raw or used in puddings and other desserts. Angelica stalks, rhubarb, strawberries and cloudberries go well together. The stem boiled in milk cures stomach ailments and the stalks can also be dried or put in the freezer to be enjoyed as snacks during the winter or eaten with fish oil.

Angelica was once used widely to get rid of pests. Paracelsus observed this as far back as 1510. Even today the Sami use Angelica to prevent contagious diseases and in olden times, they would chew Angelica root to prevent themselves from becoming sick after contact with non-Sami. Dried Angelica root is also used when catching cold and having throat problems or you can light the root and inhale the smoke. Tea made from the Angelica root and drunk before going to bed results in a restful sleep.

The Sami word for a plant that is more than one year old is "*bosku,*" a very old word that also means "to gather Angelica" ("*boskit*") and shows that Sami people have been using this plant for a very long time. And in Utsjoki, when we talk about "*rassi*" ("plant"), or "*olbmo-borran-rassi*" ("a plant eaten by humans"), we mean Angelica.

CRANBERRY

(Sami, **jokna**; Latin, *Vaccinium vitis-idaea)*

In our area the cranberries ripen in September. Cranberry jam (raw berries mixed with sugar) is eaten with reindeer and moose meat. Cranberries, and tea made from cranberries, provide relief from colds. The leaves can also be boiled and the juice used for coughs. If there is inflammation of the gums, fresh cranberries can be eaten without sugar to provide relief.

BLUEBERRY

(Sami, **sarri**; Latin, *Vaccinium myrtillus)*

Blueberries are very healthy. Sometimes tea is made from the leaves, which gives relief when catching cold. And the berries are eaten to help digestion. If you have diarrhoea, chew the dried berries. Berries can be cooked and made into a soup that will enhance overall well-being. Blueberries are also good medicine to improve eyesight.

YARROW

(Sami, **haisorassi** or **biehtarrassi;** Latin, *Achillea millefolium)*

Yarrow flowers and stems are used as medicines. In some cases the entire plant is boiled. Yarrow flowers and leaves can be boiled in cream and used to dress wounds. Yarrow leaves also stop bleeding. Tea made from the flowers and leaves relieves coughing and chest ailments, as well as kidney and stomach problems, angina pectoris, and diarrhoea. In addition, yarrow stimulates the appetite.

LABRADOR TEA PLANT

(Sami, **guohcarassi**; Latin, *Ledum palustre)*

The stems and leaves are used for making tea and during the summer time the flowers are picked and also made into tea, which is a good medicine for coughs, high blood pressure, bladder

[HELANDER continued on page 22]

THE HEALING POWER OF PLANTS AND TREES: NATIVE AMERICA

WITHOUT THE PLANT PEOPLE WE COULD NOT EXIST

by Karyn Sanders

PLANT SPIRIT MEDICINE

Using plants for medicine has always been an integral part of life for Native American Peoples. Plants are considered to be people and the oldest beings on earth. Therefore, they are respected as Elders who are considered to hold the most knowledge. Plant medicine is used in every part of our lives as food, in ceremony, for curing sickness, for clothing and to give us knowledge and teachings. Without the plant people we could not exist.

Plant medicine has had a continuous usage among Native Peoples for thousands of years — as long as we have been on this earth. However, because of the genocide of Indigenous people in North and South America, a large part of the plant knowledge has been lost. With the continued colonization of this country more and more is lost as our Elders pass. In spite of this harsh reality, usage of plant medicine has survived and continues.

There is no one Native American way to use plants. Every nation and tribe uses plants in their particular way. However there are some basic similarities in how the medicine is collected and used. Plants transmit their knowledge through dreams, visions, through our observation of how the animals use them and through direct usage.

The look and shape of a plant is often one indication of how it will be used. For example, the base leaves of Mullein are shaped like a lung and are covered with tiny hairs like cilia and Mullein is used for respiratory problems.

Plants are both female and male and hold different energies and medicines. Some are only to be handled by women, and others, only by men. For example, when the sap of the Balsam Fir tree is used for burns , the female tree is used for women and the male tree is used for men.

Using plant medicine means having a relationship with plants. You treat the plants with the same respect as you would any person. It is a give and take relationship. Most of the time more is given by the plant, as plants often have to give their lives in order for us to receive their medicine. Plant medicine is therefore considered to be very sacred and is passed down through generations by intensive formal training.

Before European contact, holders of plant medicine knew six to nine hundred plants intimately and many knew more. Contrary to western belief, plants were not just harvested from the wild. A large number of tribes cultivated herbs and had large thriving herbal gardens. Herbs were also exchanged and traded among the many tribes. For example, herbs that grew on the west coast would become part of the medicine for east coast tribes through trade, and because of their importance, herbs were highly valued for barter.

HARVESTING THE PLANTS

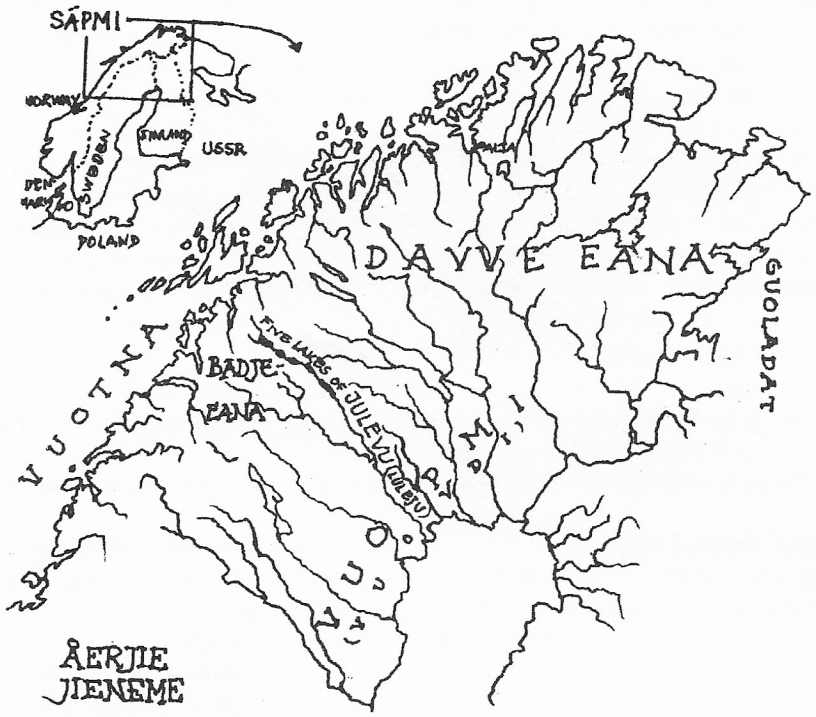
The harvesting and the preparation of medicine is often considered to be the most sacred aspect of herbalism. Plant medicine has many forms, some to be shared freely and some to be held only by those trained as medicine people. Incorrect practices can harm the plant and the person. This is why the knowledge of how to harvest plants and prepare medicine requires at least nine to ten years of training and some knowledge is kept from the untrained.

Harvesting is always done with respect to the land and you never take more than is needed at the time. The Spirits that live around the plants are honored and prayer and fasting take place both before and during the gathering and preparation of the herbs. Offerings such as tobacco, blood (used as an offering when sap is used) and food are given during these stages. Seeds and roots are replanted after harvesting to insure the continuation of the plants.

Each plant has a special song or prayer that belongs to it. And the temperature of a plant (hot, cold, warm, cool, neutral) plays a part in when it's harvested and how it's used. The plants have colors that go with their energies, so, for example, cool plants are often associated with the colors white or blue, and this knowledge is included in how each plant is prepared and used.

*[**SANDERS** continued on page 23]*

Illustrated by Helen Berman



LULEJU

THE STORY OF A SAMI SIIDA AND A RIVER.

BY ELLE-HAN'SA (KEVISELIE)

Elle Hán'sa (Hans Ragnar Mathisen) wrote "Luleju" as an epitaph for a string of five lakes that were destroyed when the Swedish government built a dam on the Luleju River northwest of Jokkmokk. He took the photos where the events took place. This is the second of two installments; the first was published in Báiki *Issue #23. A glossary of the Sami words that appear in italics follows on page 15 at the end of the poem.*

A few years ago a dam was built on the Luleju River causing the destruction of five small lakes, Ruocajávri, Luoktanjárgajávri, Ráivojávri, Vuoksajávri and Suorvajávri. The lakes were the home of a Sámi siida. *As the water rose, the people and their dwellings were relocated several times before their way of life was finally destroyed by the dam's big lake. The last holdout was* áhkku, *the oldest* siida *Elder.*

xiii

As a result of the small lakes
being swallowed by a big one
the *siida* has split into
smaller pieces.
The other *goahtis*
are already drowned.
Their families found it too hard
and moved with their herds
to other poorer parts of
old Sámiland,
or they have, as the *daza* would
say, "gotten a job" to keep
the Swedish society
floating on top of the hopes
of others so that they may have
something to look up to.

xiv

Áhkku sits alone outside her
goahtti, trustfully watching
the ancient land of her race.
The look of a drowning landscape
and the unnatural appearance
of an artificial lake
cannot bring forth in her soul
any vibration of happiness or joy.
She lifts her eyes up to the
mountains,
rugged rocks and mighty cliffs.
When shall you, too, fall?
Her eyes meet the horizon
where land and sky
kiss and depart,
beyond the lovely plains
of her childhood,
she is thinking
of the beautiful past.

And as she pauses for a moment
in her work with her handloom
she wonders when
her youngest grandson will come
so that she can give him
the shoe-bands and the pair of neat
little *gápmagat* she is making
for his unborn child.

He is married to a *rivgu* but
the baby will be
her great grandchild, no one
can deny that.
So she *yoiks* an old *luohhti*
to accompany her old trembling
hands as they weave
the brightly-colored woollen
threads with great care and love
and hope:

You heavy and slow
pregnant of spring
now is the time to move
with a jog and trot
valla ne ne na na na ne ne ne...
set off at a trot
to the tree-clad valley
and the lichen on the stones
*ve velle na.**

She *yoiks* the pregnant female
reindeer to come to the tree-clad
valleys of the now-drowning
Luoktanjárgajávri.
They are ready to give birth
to a new generation of
hopeful beings.
How long will they be able
to bear their young ones
as a thanksgiving gift
to the land that is
their own mother and who once
helped them grow
from childhood to become
sacrifices to
the Creator of Life?

Next spring perhaps
the forest will be gone
and the flood
will force the mothers
to move further away
above the timberline
where there is no forest
to protect them
and their tender, shaking calves
from the ice cold winds and the
attacking beasts of
the unprotected nakedness
of the mountains.

Suddenly she hears
a humming that sounds like
a huge buzzing horsefly.
Her old eyes can barely see
something that is approaching
in the distance,
a black spot skimming
over the lake's surface,
like an alien overgrown insect.
She almost goes inside the
goahti for shelter.
Oh, it is them!
The voice of her grandson
can be heard through the buzz.
It is them!
As the motor boat comes closer
shouts of joy
from the young ones
greet their old grandmother.

After a meal and many a smile
they talk of days gone by,
and then she comes
with the present
for the unborn child,
a beautiful pair of *gálluhat*,
Sámi moccasins,
of whitest reindeer fur
and handwoven bands
to tie them to the baby's
lovely little feet.
May they be its comfort
for the first steps in its life.
Those steps are
the most important.

Oh thank you, says the father-to-
be, that's too much of a gift.

Not at all, says *áhkku*,
I'm the grandmother, and soon
I'll become the great one,
she laughs. When
do you expect it to come?

In less than a month,
says her grandson, thinking:
I wonder, once my baby is born,
what kind of a world it will be.
It certainly will not behold
the birch forest
of our lovely valley,
or the once so lovely waters
of its lively lakes.
Certainly not,
and the young ones
now are in school
most of the year,
where they learn
the customs of their masters.
And their parents go to work
in the mines
or in the power stations.
Who would think that possible
when in the past

we so strongly protested?
But it is like this dam of theirs,
the dam of development.
That is a word they often use.
Like magic it makes those
who are accustomed to
and content with old traditions
overflow with new demands.
Who can stop it,
once development gets
its feet on our land
a stone from the sacred *arran*
is stolen, the center of the *siida*,
its circle, is broken.
Soon the whole *siida*
will be gone.

These thoughts
he doesn't dare to air —
his *rivgo* wife is there —
they fall like leaves
to the bottom of the lake.
She smiles at the gift
from *áhkku*,
is just about to put it away
when her husband
takes a last look at it.
"What use will these be
to you, my baby,
in the halls of the Swedish cities
where the floors
are colder than ice
and harder than stone.
Will you ever even see a *goahti*,
or run with soft-dressed feet
blessed by the eager care
of *áhkku*, free like a joyous
little reindeer calf
over the sunny mountains
of our land,
or will you rush through the
slippery streets of Stockholm?"
He has tears in his eyes.
Let's go, says his wife,
but *áhkku* doesn't hear them.
She gazes with longing eyes
at the beautiful plateaus
where she used to tend her herd
against foes and angry beasts.
Her grandson
is just about to tell her
that they'll have to move
the *goahti* once more,
but hestitates when he hears
the beauty and the sorrow in her
timid trembling voice
evoking many a memory.
Once again she's *áhkku*, the one
and only wise one:

I would yoik
while I tended the reindeer
I yoiked on the slopes
where I watched.
Vele velev velev velev vele velev...
I would yoik...

velev vele velev...
nenne nanna...

xv

Electricity does not last forever
the greedy growth of industry,
the increasing turmoil of
superfluous things,
depend on the direct
exploitation of resources
that always have to be new.
But say, my friends,
what will you do
when all the batteries
are gone?

In royal Stockholm ?' is decided
that a film shall be made
about the land of the lost lakes
before it has all changed and
it is too late for the camera,
a record for History
to consider the rights
and wrongs
of humanity. If they can.
A camera crew is
flown up to film the land
on ribbons of remembrance.
The leader of the crew
is young, yet for his age
he has gone through a lot.
Married to his best friend's wife,
then divorced
and married again to his art:
the making of films, not love.
On this last segment
of their trip, however,
the batteries don't work.

They have to wait
for new ones hurriedly
sent from Stockholm,
because up here no electricity
can be charged in its sleep.
And how in the world
do they survive up here
without batteries,
or anything else,
is the comment.
It is cool now, too.
A snowstorm
in the Arctic summer.
Don't be bothered about
such petty worries, just
keep them waiting inside
with time to think.

The leader
has made up his mind,
doesn't want to
give in to a storm!
He wants to make that film.
What he never got in excitement
with his daring dance with life
as took from others
their women,
he now tries to catch on film.
The lasting joy
of capturing happiness
and nostalgic dreams
in a fantasy land.

When the storm is over and
the stage is clear
he gets down to work.
And he's clever.
Clever enough to avoid
the worst destruction by the dam.
Or else it would be
a theater of death.
He leaves the half scene
content. In future years
they will show his film on tv
and perhaps say:
"How hard they worked
to preserve that valley
for History.
Europe's last wilderness
on film for the coming
generations.
The world should be grateful
for that!" Isn't it?

xvi

This is the story of the life
and death of five
of our mother's children.
When will it end, or
will it go on forever?
Is the justifying of such
an injustice
tolerated in eternity too?

There is a new nameless lake
in old *Sápmi*,
the land of our ancestors,
who named every part of it,
because they
were close relatives.
But this one is a foreigner,
not even a lake,
although *Dáza* has given a
name to his contrivance:
Áhkajaure is the artifical name,
after the mountain nearby
as if from now on
the selection would suffice.
That lake — no, not a lake —
that *thing* that it is
has already begun to act
according to its education
killing and swallowing reindeer,
even people
on its deadly surface
of ice.
The water under this
tricky decoration is needed
now and then by
the name masters.
So they empty it
a bit at a time
when industry needs
more power
from the generators
it is meant to serve.
And the snow-covered
surface cracks unexpectedly
and breaks,
swallowing whatever is on it.
No sign of warning,
no protective fence.
Requests for compensation
are not honored at all
as if it was meant as a joke.

Ageless *Áhkavárri* has to
witness it all,
but wishes to turn away
in shame on behalf of
who has caused it:
the merciless flood
completes its destiny,
licks the walls
of the last *goahti*,
which one in succession
it does not know,
mountains seldom can count.
The hungry waves
attack the walls,
proud of their powerless prey.
They extinguish the fire
on its hearth,
applauding its funeral pyre.

Áhkku is sent to an institution
for the aged,
an old peoples' home
in a town miles away,
according to the wishes
of her relatives
who had to give in
to strong pressure.
The fourth and last move
of her *goahti*
became too much
even for youth's high spirits.
The newspapers called her
stubborn and stupid
for resisting victorious progress.
They placed her in a bed.

Robbed of her homeland
she had no more power to resist.

The room is as dark
as the sun is bright,
as cramped as the sky is wide.
The air is thick as a lake,
no breeze in her nose
no sun on her cheek
to tell her that spring has come.

xvii

Dull days of darkness inside
out of reach
of the blessings and beauty
of a bright and shining
Midnight Sun.

Into her room comes instead
an expert from the
Department of Hydroelectric Power.
The film is finished, he tells her,
but don't waste explanations
on her, she won't understand
them anyway, he thinks.
He has brought her
a color photograph of the dam
and the big lake.
Seeing it she sighs,
and says sadly:
Vuoi, my lakes,
where have you gone,
my sisters,
where have you gone
to sleep?
Tell me, where is my *Ruohcajávri*,
where is *Luoktanjárga-javri* now?
What happened to *Ráivo-javri*
once so rich and full of *rávdo* fish?
Where is proud *Vuoksa-jávri*, has
someone swallowed Lake *Suorva*?
Even if I went far away,
up to *Ultevis* mountain
I would not see them,
oh what would I see?"

"*Áhkajávri*!" He points to the photograph, unable to understand her words.
But as he sees he does not succeed
in cheering her up,
he goes on.
"Here's something for you,
(poor old thing)," and he pulls
an envelope full of money
out of his pocket
and puts it in her hand.
"Finally we came through
with a better message for you
than the previous ones:
this is the sum
granted you by the
Department of Hydroelectric Power.
Yes, the project is well under way
investing a lot of money in the land
and power for the growth of industry
after this immense investment.
Now this is

a kind of compensation
for you, the last to live here;
of course we have
had to take away some taxes.
But since the project
has been such a success
and now every initiative prospers
in the area, I, too, have earned
a lot from it and would like to
contribute a sum," he says
and pulling out a second portion
places it in her hands.
Unable to grasp it,
she lets it fall to the floor,
he picks it up again
and places it on
the little table by her bed.
"I take the gift with thanks,
not for my own sake
but for my relatives,
who now have been made to rely
not on my small amount of wisdom
but on my large piles of money.
Where is my *goahti*,
priceless shelter for old and young,
where is my land
full of unlimited love for our lives?
You can take the taxes ten times
but you can take nothing
from me,
because I have all I need,
more is not for me.
You can't enrich me
even if you brought into this room
all the money in the world.
I have found a treasure
that is above life and death."

"What do you mean?" asks the embarrassed expert in amazement.

"If you were as poor as me
and yet as incredibly rich,
hopefully you would understand."

"Oh yes, you're lucky. Goodbye.
I almost envy you all that money!"
he says.

She looks far into the future
and back into the ancestral past.
Silently, almost humbly,
he moves towards the door,
then hears her voice again:
"I want to ask you something."
He goes to her bed again.
Is it love he sees in her eyes
although they flow with tears?
He holds his breath
as she now bears forth
her last
most heavy sacrifice.
"Can you forgive me
for my bitterness
against you
and your people?
Please say 'Yes'!"
Bewildered by this
uncommon question he
is in no condition
to even give her a nod.
After a tremulous pause
she concludes,
"I have forgiven you.
I have lost my hate,"
smiling.

"N-n-now is the time
for me to leave,"
he finally stutters
and in closing the door
to her room, confused,
rushing down the corridor,
he says these words
loudly to himself,
and behind him
are millions more:
"She belongs to the past,
not the future.
My goodness, 'forgive me'?
After all I have done for them!
A clean bed
in a sterilized room,
what more can
a grandmother want,
and all that money, too!
After all,
I have done what I could,
according to how I was taught."
Yet a little thought,
a faint feeling
runs through his brain
like a flash,
a funny feeling that, after all,
she is completely right,
he himself on the wrong track,
running like the slave of some
mysterious Monster
that calls itself "devilopment"
but no one he knows can even
define it,
only, like himself,
wrap themselves
in excuses.

But he doesn't dare let
this little spark of enlightenment
light the flame
of his conscience.
Too much not completed yet.
"I'll wait til later,"
and thus he disappears
among the numbers of those
who don't dare
to do what is right.
Another brick
in the terrible wall
rising up between Mankind
and the Last Day.
He leaves the place
with the illusion that
he has understood it all.
But the people of
eternal modernization
have no time
even for understanding
simple truths.
So how then
could they apply them?

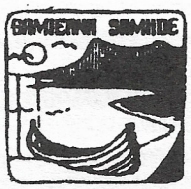
xviii

But what is this,
she can feel a sudden and
slow dissolving of Time.
Breezes of spring
touch her body,
the pains disappear and
her tear-filled eyes
that were stopped by the wall
can see through it,
the mysterious mists
of sorrow and suffering
seem to lift and melt away.
Has she finally reached
the destination
of her travels that
she has longed for
all of her life?
Beautiful meadows
with grass and flowers blessed
by beautiful rivers and lakes
where the smiling snowcaps
of the mountains
are reflected in the mirror
of their waters.
Is this the *Sáivu*
sometimes mentioned by
the old ones
during the long nights
of winter?
Everything is green and fruitful —
this land of plenty
that the *Sámi* people
have migrated towards
since the first beginning of life.
She can see
thousands of people with
beautiful faces and
loving looks.

We have lived and longed for
this lovely land,
at last we faithful
have found it,

we have won,
the lost land of *Sáivu* is ours!
She tries to lift herself up,
but is lifted,
everything is done
for her already.
She hears
words and songs
including *yoiks*
she never heard before,
still she fully
understands them all.
The feeling is everywhere
soft and life-giving breath
surrounds her and
fills her whole being,
whispers of joy and
overwhelming love
surround her,
then she suddenly sees
a Wonderful One so full of glory
it must be the King,
and the voices sing
loud and clear
inspired by the Everlasting Power.
Surprised and in wonder
she sees him
with a crown like a rainbow
coming towards her.

In a voice relieved
from the damnations
of the world,
renewed in body and soul
with soft lips
she says his sacred name
embracing and embraced,
forgiven,
her Friend and Master
the Prince of Peace.
As she whispers his name
again and again,
lifted up and away
in perfect affection
moved by the bliss
of her last *lihkahus*
in eternal ecstatic joy,
someone knocks on the door.



xix

"Can we come in?"
Three times but no answer
they knock
on the door to her room.
No reply,
so her relatives
open the door,
loaded with presents
they will give her,
bought in town —
some even ordered
from Stockholm, expensive.
With joyful voices they shout:
"See what we
have bought for you, *áhkku*!"
But she doesn't see,
nor does she hear them.
They realize she has gone
to the other side.
She is dead.
They inherit her money,
but they have lost
a far greater treasure,
victims of a wealthy and
overflowing society.
They fought the wolves
in the past and won,
but have surrendered
to *Stállu*.
They put their presents
down and cry;
they' ve lost her,
her Spirits,
their link to the future.

xx

While tourists buy tickets
for a tour in a motorboat
and throw chocolate wrappers
in the lake,
the oldest of the *siida*
is carried by her relatives
to be buried near a
tiny little wilderness chapel.
The funeral songs
may not reach far
as they have to compete
with the roar
of the motorboats.

But at least they go
up to the clouds
and from there fall down
as heavy weeping rain
baptizing the grave of *áhkku*
for a hopeful future —
but interrupting the tour
of complaining tourists
who have to turn back.
In a rage they curse the rain
even when they get back
their money.
The drops fall softly now
making rings on
the shining surface
as if to discover
what is also there:
the buried and
forgotten happiness
of one of the many *siidas*
in *Sápmi*.

Thou lake of unnamed sufferings,
when shall thy curse be broken?

The Dam, with a demonic grin,
stops the stream of life,
and consumes according
to its own needs — this
Triumphal Arch of Devilopment,
this gateway to the flood
of Styx and sin
that unjustly drowned
our hopes and keeps
the happy times
locked behind bars forever!
From the depths of
your wet grave
the stems of dead birch trees
like the fingers of a skeleton
force their way up
from the depth of misery
to grasp something in the air,
demanding a Day of Judgement.

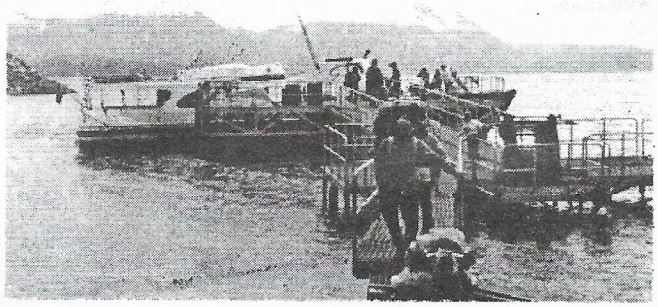
The Dam is too high
for a hare to jump over
and if it dared
it would land in the clean,
dry death bed of
a once powerful river. Look!
What is more depressing
to the human spirit
than this sterilized debris
cleansed for all its life,
although it has already earned
the name of "One of
the Many Forms of Progress."
Self-appointed experts
who only see through test tubes
have touched and fumbled
with the secret threads of
Natural Balance,
disturbing and destroying
the Laws of the Earth,
putting its circulation system
out of order.
Your own children
will curse you one day
for this!

The Circle of Creation,
when broken,
becomes a bewitched
Spiral of Evil:
further and further
following downwards.
Yes, you can call it "devilopment."

The Creator of the Rainbow
has seen the pain of Creation
caused by this,
has heard from the depths
of five drowned lakes
what each of the stones
has shouted in pain,
suffering souls that
the world has forgotten.

xxi

And as if this was not enough
the exploitation
still goes on.
Foreigners — *Dáza* —
not content with
the wealth earned from
the destruction of the land,
the land cultivated by
the hands and the hearts
of my People
since ancient times,
now are starting
to conquer our
spirits and our souls,
exploiting us
by sowing seeds
of hate and bitterness
in the tear-wet ashes
of our *siida*.
My People, wake up,
beware this brew!
The world — our Family —
deserves better!
Wake up and look around.
There is still peace in
some forgotten corner
in some sacred grove
of our forests.
There still are winds



that can be trusted
coming from
the lofty snow-covered mountains
bathed in the soft light
of the evening sun.
Not all the lakes
are cursed with dams,
not all the birds
have ceased to sing,
the stars are still there
smiling from above.
When the snowflakes
dance like stars
through the Universe
descending with good news,
there is hope
in this world of ours
if we just take the time
to listen!
Listen with your heart,
see with your eyes
the growth of little
green hope in the Spring:
what power a plant has got!
Right through the icy snow
bravely it lifts
a beautiful flower upwards
blessed by lifegiving
light from above.

Do not build a dam,
but open your hearts to
the tiny little brook
the Creator has made
of your soul,
let it run and grow
to bless the thirsty
and hungry
and they in turn will bless you!

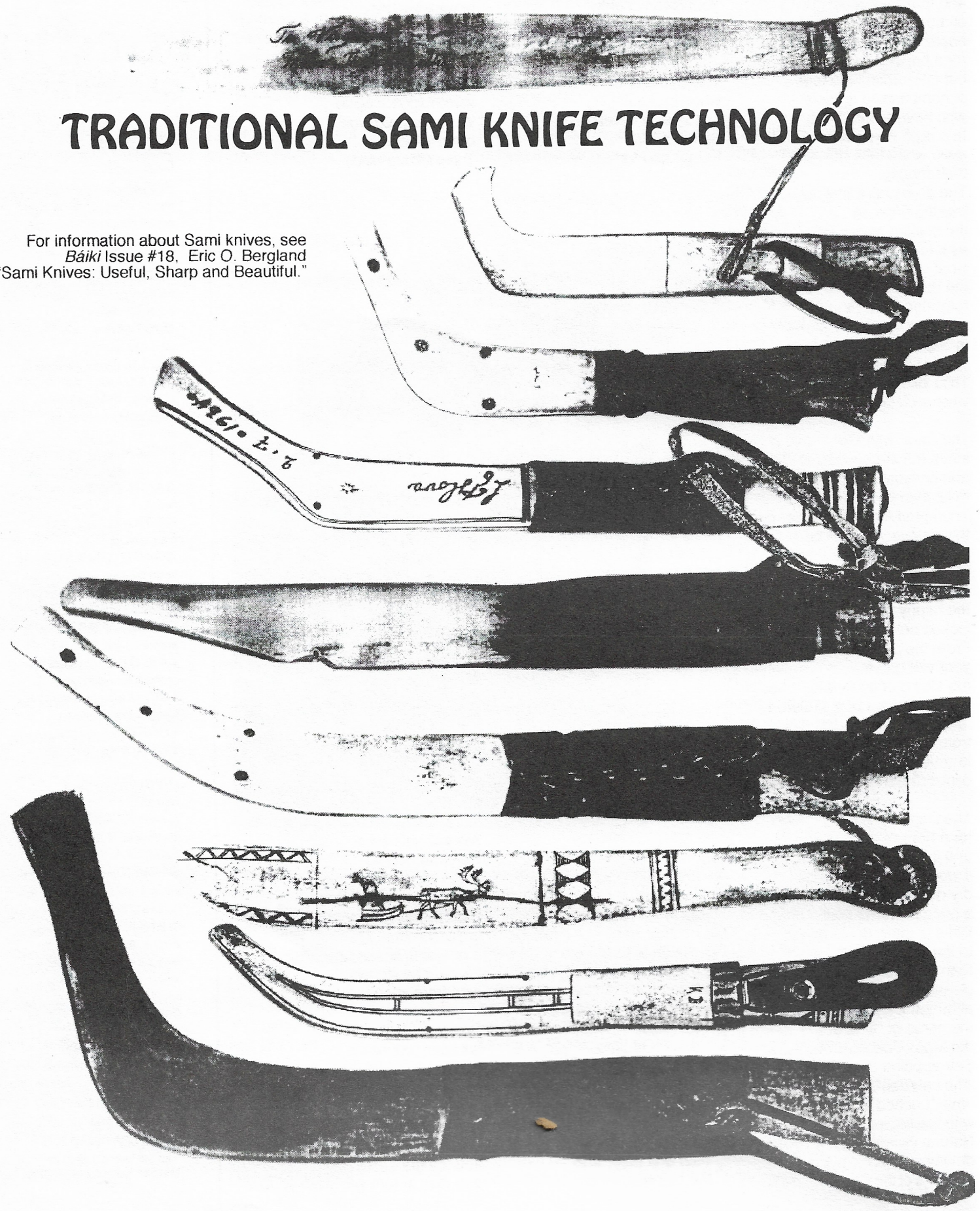
LULEJU GLOSSARY

ÁHCCI: father
ÁHKKU: grandmother or female elder
ARRAN: fireplace in the middle of a goahhti, with its center directly on the earth and stones in a circle around it
DAZA: a non-Sami, or ordinary person, usually a Scandinavian
DUOTTAR: a bare mountain plateau
EALLU: reindeer herd (from ***EALLIN*** or "life")
GAMA - GÁPMAGAT: Sami shoes worn in the summer
GIELLA: a snare used to catch ptarmigans
GÁRDI: a reindeer fence or corral
GIETKA: a Sami cradleboard
GOAHTI: a Sami turf hut or earth cottage
GUKSI: wooden drinking cup made from a birch burl
GUOVSSAHASAT: *aurora borealis*
LÁVLOT: to sing in an ordinary non-Sami way
LAVVU: a tent used by herders, not families
LUOHTI: a Sami joik
ORDA: timberline or forest line
RIVGU: a non-Sami woman
SÁMI (SAAMI, SAMI): the People of Sápmi
SAMIENA: Samiland
SÁPMI (SÁBMI): the ancient and correct name of Lappland in the language of its inhabitants
SIIDA: a family or a few families together and the area they use and share together; a "village"
SIIDA-ISIT: village elder or leader
SUOHPAN: a lasso
TUNDRA: frozen barren arctic land
YOIK (JOIK): Sami vocable chanting

*an old luohtti yoiked by Mathias Kuoljok (1897-1965)

TRADITIONAL SAMI KNIFE TECHNOLOGY

For information about Sami knives, see *Báiki* Issue #18, Eric O. Bergland "Sami Knives: Useful, Sharp and Beautiful."



knife with herder in Kautokeino *gakti*, reindeer and north Sami embellishment by Per Haetta (northern Norway), 1950 -60

SHARP AND BEAUTIFUL AFTER YEARS OF USE

knife with South Sami embellishment on case and handle (central Norway-Sweden)

knife with skier, two dogs, two pine trees and a lavvu (northern Sweden), 1923; knife reconstructed by Eric O. Bergland, 2001

knife with dog and male and female reindeer by L. E. Hova (northern Finland), 1934

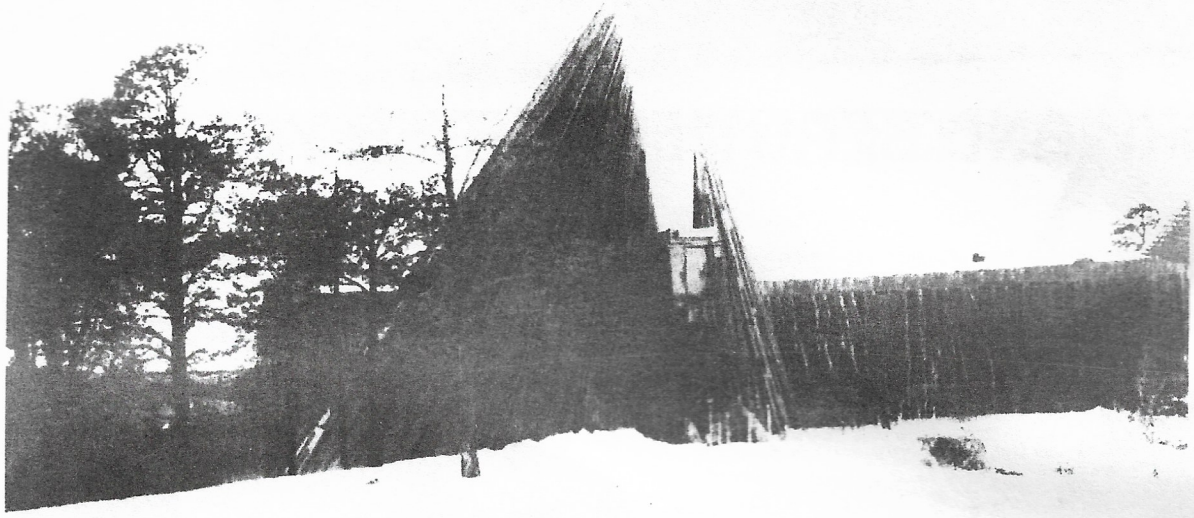
knife with South Sami embellishment on case and handle (central Norway-Sweden)

knife with South Sami embellishment on case and three hearts on handle (central Sweden), early 20th century

knife with man on *pulka* being pulled by a reindeer (Norway), found in Labrador, 1907

knife from Västerbotten for doing scrimshaw (Sweden), "K.B." unknown

knife with *goahtti*, pine tree, shrubs and reindeer (northern Sweden),



"The Sami Parliament building (above) has been built in a way that has connections and roots in the traditional Sami architecture. You have to have roots in the history among your ancestors, but the policy development cannot only look back. It must be designed for the future." **Sven-Roald Nystø**

THE NEW SÁMEDIGGI BUILDING

photos, text and Báiki interview by Martiga Lohn

Driving into Karasjok from the north on Highway E6, you see the pointed roof of the Sámediggi building suddenly jut through the trees. It looks like a larger version of the lavvus you've seen in yards along the highway from Lakselv. It's a dramatic, permanent symbol of progress in the Sami struggle for political power in Norway. One Sami elected official, Johan Mikkel Sara, said that the Sámediggi is the first public building owned by the Sami as a People. He was there when Norwegian King Harald V opened the building on Nov. 2, 2000.

"When the Minister of Local Affairs gave the key to the president she said that this is your own building," Sara said. "When you come in there, like me who's been there all the way from the beginning (of the Sámediggi in 1989), it's kind of a special feeling when you come inside. Like you feel you're home now."

The 5,300-square-meter building is the seat of the 13 year-old Norwegian Sami Parliament (the Sámediggi). It also houses the Special Sami Library, 40 administrative and political party offices, five seminar rooms, a cafeteria and lots of artwork.

Its most striking feature is the plenary chamber, the part of the building that looks like a lavvu, or tent. Built of untreated Siberian larch, the chamber rises to a point. Inside is a fully equipped parliamentary chamber, complete with digital interpretation rooms and facilities to broadcast plenary sessions on radio and television.

A brilliant blue painting called "Luottat" (or "Tracks") by Hild Shanke Pedersen, a Sami artist from Hammerfest, hangs at the front of the plenary chamber. It reflects the tracks made by thousands of years of Sami people living in Finnmark, said Randi Romsdal Balto, head of the Sámediggi's library and information department. In the middle of the painting, the tracks form a circle, resembling a stones set around the fire in the middle of a lavvu.

The Special Sami Library spreads out before visitors as they enter the building. The library, which has 35,000 to 40,000 items, includes almost everything written in Sami or about Samis in other languages — and not just books. There are also videotapes, audio tapes, music recordings, microfilms, language courses, newspapers, journals (including *Báiki*), Internet terminals, video and music rooms and a children's room.

On the walls hang a reindeer skin signed by the late Norwegian King Olav V on the inauguration of the Sámediggi on Oct. 9, 1989, and a fish skin signed by Harald V when the building opened. There are also Sami sayings in metal cursive writing, including one that Balto translated as "Don't drink fresh milk or you will forget your girlfriend."

Sámediggi President Sven-Roald Nystø said the building looks to the past — and — the future, setting the right tone for the Sámediggi's work.

*[**Sámediggi** continued on page 20]*

Báiki Interviews Sven-Roald Nystø, President of the Sámediggi

On April 25, 2002, the presidents of the Norwegian, Finnish and Swedish Sami Parliaments signed a historic cooperative agreement in Karasjok, incorporating the Swedish Sami into the Sami Parliamentary Council for cross-border cooperation and a unified voice in international affairs. Russian Sami observers from the Kola Peninsula were also there. Norwegian Sámediggi President Sven-Roald Nystø signed the document for the Sámediggi. Nystø said he knew from an early age that the Sami were one people, despite national boundaries imposed on Sápmi by Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia starting in 1751.

Nystø, who was born in 1956 into a family of fishers and farmers in a village between Bodø and Narvik, was inspired by his uncle, Mikal Urheim, who fought for Sami rights in the 1960s and today is retired. Nystø started his political involvement as a teenager. He's been elected to the Sámediggi in all four elections since the parliament was founded in 1989.

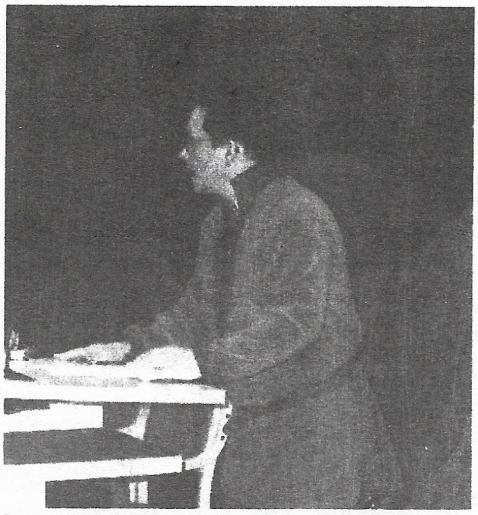
"To build upon your own culture, your own language, on the work that your ancestors had done — that would be the right decision for me and the right direction for my people," Nystø said in an interview with *Báiki*'s Martiga Lohn on April 24.

Báiki: What's your background?

Nystø: I grew up with one foot in a small fishing boat and with one foot in a farm. My mother tongue is Sami. I learned to speak Norwegian when I was 5 years old.

Báiki: How did you become involved in Sami politics?

Nystø: When I grew up during the 60s, Samis were under strong pressure because of the state's policy where they tried to make Norwegians of the Samis for 100 years. Every day I felt injustice. We did not learn about the Samis in school, about our history, about our language, and so on. I had this feeling that to be a Sami is a shame and (that) my ethnicity and cultural background and language prevents me from growing up and developing as a citizen in Norway. A feeling and understanding was growing inside me, this understanding of the necessity to take responsibility, to educate myself into positions in the society that gave me the possibility to influence the government, and also to correct the local government's policy and to help make change for the Samis.



Sven-Roald Nystø presiding over the Saami Parliamentary meeting when they signed the historic cooperation agreement bringing the Swedish Sami Parliament into the council.

Báiki: Did you have other interests?

Nystø: I believed that I would work with issues related to nature. But I changed my mind. I became more and more interested in how society functions, about the connection and relationship between the Sami as a nation and other peoples. I was more and more aware that the Samis are a nation, one people. We face the same kind of challenges all over the Sami territory.

Báiki: The Sámediggi and the Norwegian government have a unique relationship. Can it be compared to any other Indigenous people's relationship with their national governments?

Nystø: It's very difficult to compare. The Sami Parliament annually proposes a budget to the Norwegian state. The Sami Parliament's annual review is done by the Norwegian government and the Norwegian Parliament. We are struggling to have better contact. I am not satisfied with the current situation. We have to deal with each ministry and each minister from an issue-by-issue approach. That doesn't bring us far enough forward from a more comprehensive point of view. I think that Norway has to develop a more comprehensive policy on Sami affairs.

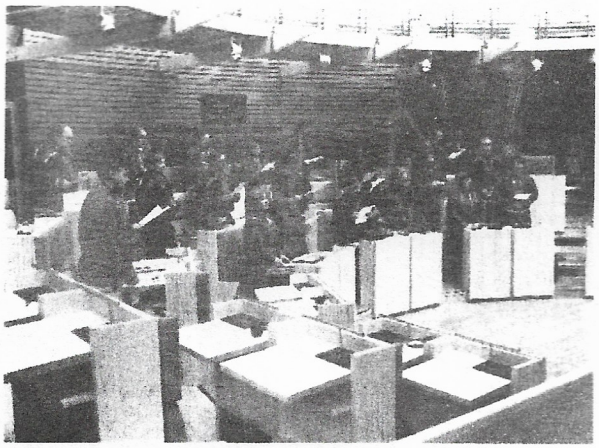
Báiki: What is currently the most critical issue facing the Sámediggi?

Nystø: One is the Sami rights to land and water. Do the land, do the resources and such belong to the Samis or to the state? It's very uncertain. We are facing big problems because we have a lot of multinational companies who want to explore and develop mineral resources in Sami areas. There is a particular place where the Norwegian military here in Finnmark has a big exercise field. Norwegian defense has used that field also for bombing, but now the plans are to extend this to a larger field and use it by NATO airplanes and also as a missile field for NATO navy training courses with missiles. This field is in the middle of the Sami heartland, so there are a lot of challenges connected to the Sami land rights question.

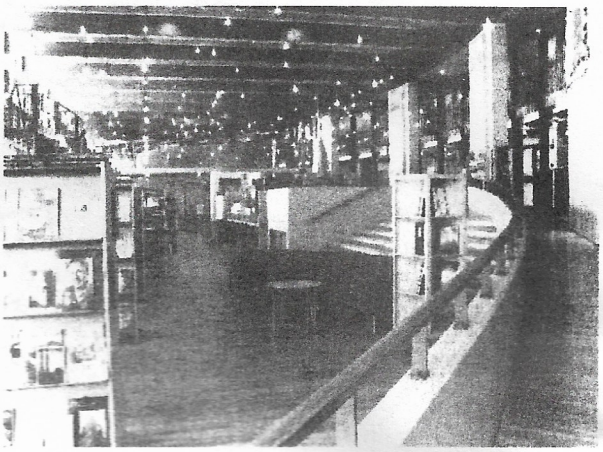
We are facing challenges with education and with the Sami language. In some areas and among some Samis; fewer and fewer Samis speak the language. Of course we have the Sami Language Act (which established certain rights for the use of the Sami language in public affairs), but it's in

(Nystø continued page 21)

THE NEW SÁMEDIGGI BUILDING *(continued)*



Representatives of the Sami Parliaments from Norway, Sweden and Finland, with Russian observors, meet as the Sami Parliamentary Council in late April.



The interior of the Special Sami Library in the Samediggi building. It's open to the public and contains almost everything published in Sami and about the Sami people in other languages.

"The Sami Parliament building has been built in a way that has connections and roots in the traditional Sami architecture," Nystø said. "You have to have roots in the history among your ancestors, but the policy development cannot only look back. It must be designed for the future. It's reminding me every day that your own policy development and your own work in your office must be in accordance with that."

Oslo architects Stein Halvorsen and Christian Sundby designed the NOK 128.7 million ($15.6 million) building, winning a competition to design the facility in 1996. Their design brought them the Norwegian prize for architectural design in 2001.

The Sámediggi's 39 elected representatives meet in plenary session four times a year. Their total 2002 budget is NOK 189.9 million ($23 million). The money, which comes from the Norwegian government, is for cultural programs and protection, livelihood, language, education, environmental protection, international work, health and social programs and library services.

Outside the plenary chamber hang Astrid Aasen's paintings of Sami leaders who met in the first Sami-wide meeting on Feb. 6, 1917 in Trondheim. The pictures provide a visual link to the beginning of the modern movement for Sami political rights.

"It's a quite fantastic building and this shows also the difference between the three countries," said Lars Anders Bær, president of the Swedish Sami Parliament. "Today Norway is maybe the easiest country to live in as a Sami. The Sami culture and language are in many circumstances most accepted here. We have more difficulties in Sweden and also in Finland and Russia, of course."

About 10,000 Sami voters are registered in Norway, though the country has up to 70,000 Sami people. The registry has grown since the Sámediggi was founded, Balto said, but many Norwegian Samis still don't register as Sami voters.

"It's a difficult process when you have tried to hide your Sami identity to get back to be a Sami," Balto said. "When you register then you have to declare that you feel like a Sami and then you have to declare that one of your grandparents (or parents or great-grandparents) had Sami as their home language. In the beginning there were many people who didn't want a Sami Parliament, including Samis, and they worked against the Sámediggi. Now we don't hear things like that. They have accepted the Sámediggi, even if the Sámediggi doesn't have much power." Still, it's a sign of the Sámediggi's growing political responsibilities that the building may already be too small within four to five years, Nystø said.

For more information, visit the Sámediggi's web site at <www.samediggi.no>.

Martiga Lohn visited the Sámediggi and interviewed parliamentary leaders with the support of the Robert Bosch Foundation in Germany.

Báiki interview *(continued)*

force only in six municipalities. The area is so small. There are a lot of non-Sami politicians, but also Samis, who oppose the Sami Language Act and the obligations for the government. Some municipal governments oppose it strongly because they do not like 'the Sami-fization of our municipality.' The regional governments (in northern Norway) are not so open to Sami issues as the state government is. The capital of Norway is more in favor of Sami issues and Sami politics and Sami development than the capital regions here in the North.

Báiki: Is it difficult to go from being part of a movement to being part of a government?

Nystø: That's very challenging. To be a part of a movement, you are producing demands to others. But when the government allows you to have some kind of self-rule, if it's small or more comprehensive, then you are in a position to be some kind of government yourself. And you have to take responsibility in a quite different way. We have in Norway now in the Sami societies a huge debate going on about how we use the money provided for language development. The Sami Parliament is providing money for the municipalities who have obligations under the Language Act and the Samis are not satisfied with the municipalities. Sometimes there are statements that the municipality does not use this language money to develop the Sami language, (that) they are using it to cover their own spending.

Báiki: How much are the Sami Parliaments in Norway, Sweden and Finland currently working together?

Nystø: After the Sami Parliament's election last fall in Sweden, the Swedish Sami Parliament decided that they will be a member of the Sami Parliamentary Council. We (will) start to work as a more united people, dealing with issues common for the Samis across national borders. We have to focus on three or four issues that are of crucial importance for the Samis — the Sami language issue, education and Sami women's issues. The second purpose of the Sami Parliamentary Council is to have a common voice on the international scene. The United Nations Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples will be given priority. Ole Henrik Magga (former Sámediggi President and current Sámediggi member) is now running to be the leader of that forum. We are going to give him the strongest support that we can.

Báiki: The situation for Russian Sami people is more desperate than for the Sami in Scandinavia, isn't it?

Nystø: That is quite true. When we are talking about the living standard, the Russian border that separates them from Norway, Finland and Sweden must be the biggest gap from one state to another in the world. We are very eager from the Norwegian Sami Parliament's point of view in our work to help the Samis and the Indigenous peoples on the Russian side, especially those on the Kola Peninsula. The Norwegian Sami Parliament has decided we will open an office in Murmansk this year. We have seen that if we are going to deal with the situation among the Samis and other Indigenous peoples in Russia, we have to be there on the Russian side of the border. We do not have a chance to fully understand their situation without being there.

Báiki: Are there official cultural exchanges happening between the Sami and other Arctic peoples?

Nystø: That's happening more unofficially. What we have achieved so far is in the Barents region - the region for the Sami and the Nenets on the Russian side and other Russian Indigenous peoples - to have more and closer contact among these groups. The establishment of the Arctic Council (a high-level intergovernmental forum established in 1996 involving Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States, with the Saami Council and other Indigenous organizations involved as permanent participants) put in place better possibilities to establish more official contacts between the Samis and other Indigenous groups in North America, Greenland and Russia. But we have a long way to go. There have been suggestions in the Sami Parliament, why can't the Sami Parliament appoint a cultural ambassador in North America? We have discussed this issue also with the Norwegian government. It's under consideration.

Báiki: Do you have any questions of or advice for the North American Sami movement?

Nystø: It's wise for the Samis in the United States or in North America to organize themselves and give priority to identity-developing issues. But I think that a closer cooperation with Scandinavia would be fine. We would like to have feedback from the North American Samis. What are their perspectives on our situation? In which way do they want a closer contact and to be given information on how the Sami societies are developing in Scandinavia? We need to have cultural ambassadors in North America. Can't we use one of the Samis who have grown up there and who knows North America as a cultural ambassador and try to expand this cooperation that way? Maybe that could be the first step.

Martiga Lohn is a journalist who has spent the last year living in Berlin, Germany. She is from Minnesota and has been exploring her Sami roots since she found out about Báiki *in a community ed class in the mid-1990s.*

[HELANDER continued from page 8]

inflammation and colds. Inhaling the steam of the tea will open the nasal passages and a steam bath made from the Labrador Tea plant will result in relief from arthritus.

REINDEER LICHEN

(Sami, jeagil; Latin, *Cladina)*

Many plants in the north are used both by humans and animals. Lichen is one of these plants. The upper part of light grey lichen is boiled in water or milk and used to cure inner sicknesses, such as stomach and chest pain. The steam produced when this mixture is boiled is good when you are catching a cold and for eye ailments, and menstrual problems.

WRITTEN SOURCES ON SAMI MEDICINE

The best written source on Sami traditional medicine is *Lappische Heilkunde* by J. Qvigstad, 1932, Oslo. Also see *Samenes Folkemedisin*, Adolf Steen,1961, Oslo, and *The Healing Methods of the Lapps*, and *Papers in Folkmedicine*, both by Åke Hultkrantz, 1961. Read also my own articles "Sami Medical Concepts and Healing Methods," published in Issue #12, *Báiki: the North American Sami Journal*, 1995, and "Saamelaiset noidat ja parantajat - ennen ja nyt" ("Sami Shamans and Healers - Earlier and Today"), published in *Siiddastallan*, journal of the SIIDA Museum in Finland, 2000.

In Swedish there is a publication *Samisk Etnobiologi*, Bokforlaget Nya Doxa, 2000, with articles about Sami medicine by Ingvar Svanberg and Håkan Tunon. Also old written sources, such as *Lapponia* by Johannes Schefferus, 1674, give some information about the use of plants among the Sami people.

Elina Helander, Ph.D, lives in Utsjoki, Finland and works for the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi. She is an internationally known scientist and lecturer on Sami traditions and cultural ways including healing, world view, mythology, and social science-based issues such as resource use and customary rules. She also conducts Drum circles and paints her dreams. Dr. Helander can be reached via e-mail at <elina.helander@urova.fi> or via mobile phone: 358 40 527 1907.

Máderáhkká, the Earth Mother

Helen Berman's drawings of Sápmi were used to illustrate the articles on the healing power of plants

An Israeli artist visits Sápmi

by Helen Berman

The following story brings me back to the Netherlands of about fifty years ago. A book being read by my teacher fascinated the seventh grade high school student that I was. The book was *Enchanted Forests* by Robert Crottet, a Swiss anthropologist who lived for quite a while in Northern Finland. During this time, he wrote down stories told by Kaissa, a Skolt Sami woman.

Later, a newspaper announced a lecture by Dr. Crottet in a neighboring town. I went to hear it and bought the already-mentioned work on the spot as a birthday present from my mother, also attending. This is how it all began. From then on, I collected everything Crottet wrote and wanted to know more about the Skolts and about all Samis. Already developing an eye for esthetics, the pantheistic outlook of their beautiful tales attracted me.

As a young World War II survivor, my view of life was a somber one. Without exaggeration I can say that those stories have helped me, little by little, to overcome my pessimism.

Twenty years later I had a dream. My concert pianist husband and I were in the house of Kaissa, nine persons being present. The following day he got an invitation to give a number of concerts with a Dutch flutist throughout Sweden, the last one being planned for Kiruna in the very north. Immediately I decided to travel with the two of them.

Thus it happened. From Kiruna, my husband and I continued by car into Finnish Samiland. In spite of a heat wave and the mosquitoes, we enjoyed our trip, staying in huts for the night. In the vast and wild landscape, I felt at home and we found reindeer antlers in a tree, which I kept.

From Kaamanen north of Inari, a gravel road led us to Sevettijärvi where we saw a Skolt wedding at the Orthodox church. Continuing our journey, we reached the Arctic Ocean and then followed the Norwegian side of Tana River, returned to Inari and arrived at Ivalo. In the town library we bought the photo album Crottet made with Henrique Mendez. Our copy had been signed, interestingly enough, by Crottet and by Kaissa's relatives.

Our next destination was Kaissa's home at Mustola, a tiny village to the east. We parked near the road and went on a wooden footpath over a marsh. Dogs barked as we approached the house and — still in stocking feet — out came Kaissa! I think she said, "Bures, bures!" She invited us in for a cup of tea and some crackers and her grandson Kosti Gavriloff volunteered to translate our words. Just as in my dream there were exactly nine people in her room!

Thirty years have passed since then during which we immigrated to Israel. Recently I found out about *Báiki* on the Internet. I became its first and only subscriber in Israel. I'm happy to read it and to stay informed about the Sami people in their various countries. I hope to return to Samiland soon!

*[**SANDERS** continued from page 9]*

While genocide has taken its toll, much knowledge continues to thrive and is held in a good way. And the plants continue to give us their ways even though the huge numbers of plants that were once present and thriving on this continent have disappeared since European contact. Plants have been over-harvested and wiped out in the face of "development" and Native American Peoples have been prevented from taking care of the land and tending the plants. This has obviously had an impact on plant medicine and since each plant holds its own special medicine, this loss is enormous. Many plants needed for very particular medicines and ceremonies no longer exist.

Often a specific combination of plants was needed for a certain medicine as one plant would activate the medicine of another. So the loss of plant species has affected the growth of the remaining species because plants thrive only in community with one another. If they don't have their family and companion plants around them, they do not and cannot thrive and their medicine is not as strong. To put this into a human perspective, it would be the equivalent of being raised without a family or community around you.

PLANTS AND ANIMAL SPIRITS

Plants contain the Animal Spirits around them. For example, some plants contain Elk Medicine, Wolf Medicine or Butterfly Medicine. The Spirit Medicine of the plant opens you to the spirit of that animal and its medicine. A plant like True Solomon's Seal is considered to be Wolf Medicine. It is often used for showing you your territory or boundaries. Wolf Medicine lets you see what is really your territory and not what someone else has defined for you, so Wolf Medicine plants are used for diseases that have an invasive or attacking quality from within (e.g., auto-immune illness, anorexia, wasting syndromes, etc.). Wolf Medicine also opens you up to teachings and learning — the possibility of input and output.

TREATING THE WHOLE PERSON

The physical healing abilities of plants, while profound, are not the strongest medicine. The strongest medicine the plants carry is their Spirit Medicine, which western medicine leaves out. The spirit qualities of the plant are where the deepest medicine is held. Most Native cultures see illness as being out of balance. Each person contains the emotional, the spiritual and the physical bodies. Outside of the person is a circle that starts with family, then community and then the Great Mystery (everything that is and is in everything). All of these elements have to be in balance in order for the person to be healthy. If one of them is out of balance, it must be addressed and set right in order for the person to be healthy again. Plant medicine addresses all of these elements.

And while plant medicine treats the whole person, pharmaceuticals just address the physical. The only attempt pharmaceuticals make to address the emotions are drugs that take emotions away so you do not feel them. They do not address why you feel the way you do, or what is going on in your life to create the illness or imbalance. There are Plant Medicines to deal with every aspect of life.

MAKING USE OF PLANTS

There are many different ways to use plants. You can make tea and drink small amounts, you can make tinctures (plant extracts in alcohol) and take 1 - 5 drops once or twice daily, you can burn the plants and waft the smoke over you (called "smudging"), you can take a bath with the plants in the water, or make a tea and pour this in the bath water, or you can carry pieces of the plant with you in a small pouch. With the world wide colonization of Indigenous lands and Peoples, plant medicine has been stolen and outlawed. Now in the United States, herbalism is making a come-back in mainstream western culture but with this rise, I believe that Native American plant knowledge is being co-opted once again.

ANGELICA *(Latin: Archangelica)*

Helps with self-esteem by giving confidence, helpful against negative energy, gives stamina (if carried on the body or rubbed on yourself), lets you see the spirits / little people around you.

BLACK COHOSH *(Latin: Cimicifuga racemosa)*

Eases difficult patterns, helps you accept spiritual change when your ego tries to reject it, helps you understand patterns in your life, helps you to understand the emotional in the physical body.

BLUE FLAG *(Latin: Iris versicolor)*

Draws attention to yourself and makes people pay attention to you

HAWTHORNE *(Latin: Crataegus)*

Helps you to understand how to manifest the Creator in your life and attunes you to choices; helps you to let go of fears and learn to trust.

VALERIAN *(Latin: Valeriana)*

Protects you from negative or threatening energy.

YARROW *(Achillia millefolium)*

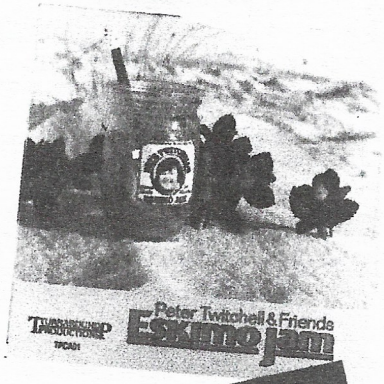
A wish can be made on the first yarrow blossom of the season. It sets very distinct boundaries for those who have problems with knowing where they start and end and where someone else begins.

Karyn Sanders is a full-time herbalist and teacher of herbal medicine. She is half Choctaw and half Hungarian Jewish and was trained in traditional plant medicine by her Choctaw grandmother, other Native herbalists and a Mexican Curandera. *Karyn produces and hosts a Bay Area weekly radio show, "The Herbal Highway." She lives in Yreka, CA. For more information on Karyn Sanders and her classes, visit her website at www.karynsanders.com.*

***NATIVE PLANTS NATIVE HEALING*, Tis Mal Crow, Summertown, TN: Native Voices, 2001, 144 pages. $12.95**

Tis Mal Crow (Cherokee, Hitchiti), the root doctor featured in "Tis Mal Crow in Swedish Sápmi," *Báiki* Issue #21, has published a comprehensive guidebook on North American plants and traditional healing practices. He was taught to read the "signatures of plants" by observing their shapes, colors, textures, leaves, stems and root systems, their smell, taste and the climate and location where they grow. His book contains detailed instructions for recognizing and harvesting plants and making medicines. Two indexes list names of plants and symptoms of illness. Order from 1-888-260-8458 or visit www.bookpubco.com.

BÁIKI REVIEWS



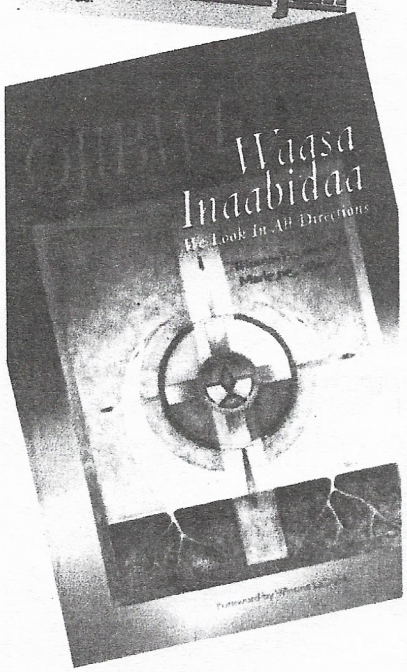
ESKIMO JAM, Peter Twitchell & Friends, Turnaround Productions

reviewed by Nathan Muus

Peter Twitchell's family is related by marriage to the Sami herding families who settled in Bethel. Half the lyrics on this gentle blues-flavored country music CD are in the Yup'ik Eskimo language. The music of this Alaska Native artist combines some things that the popular music of today often lacks: excellent lyrics and memorable melodies. Peter has a good strong singing voice and tells a good story, relates it to his family and community and comes off as a true original. The acoustic and electric guitars on this CD — by himself and with other friends from Bethel — are superb! The only complaint one might have is the lack of a drummer.

The set is full of radio play favorites across today's Arctic radio stations. I particularly enjoy the wry humor of "Smokers Shuffle" which admonishes smokers to: "Take care of your butts, cuz nobody's gonna take care of your butt but you!" Other songs tell of being in jail, family happiness, being Native and going hunting. The mellow "Joys," was inspired by his four children and two grand daughters.

The label of *Eskimo Jam* says it's "wholesome & satisfying, homemade in Alaska," and the disk looks like a piece of Pilot Bread. What more could you ask for? Order from: The Moravian Bookstore, P.O. Box 327, Bethel, AK, 98559, (907) 543-2474. The CD is $25., the cassette is $15. including postage.



This beautiful book focuses on the Ojibwe area where a large number of our Sami, Scandinavian and Finnish ancestors settled as immigrants. Co-author Marlene Wisuri, a frequent contributor to Báiki, *is of Finnish Sami background.*

WAASA INAABIDAA — WE LOOK IN ALL DIRECTIONS, Thomas Peacock & Marlene Wisuri, Afton, MN: Afton Historical Society Press, 2002, 159 pages

reviewed by Anne M. Dunn

The first thing one encounters with Tom Peacock's new book is the extraordinary cover art by Ojibwe artist Joe Geschick. His "Circle of Life" image attempts to cover all directions by including several symbols vital to the spiritual well being of first nation cultures. I have long admired Geschick's work and this "Circle of Life" is no exception.

Jim Dumont's opening words express the responsibility first nation peoples of today have toward those who are coming, the future generations who will arrive to bless or curse us. Dumont is a member of the Fish Clan, Shawanaga First Nation.

Winona LaDuke's foreword admonishes first nation peoples to be true to who we are. Adopting a biblical tone she warns us that the ecological situation of today is "the handwriting on the wall." Clearly we live in an era of endangerment and, as LaDuke tells us, it's time to step from the linear perception of an industrial society and close the circle around what remains. As she suggests, first nation peoples had been warned of this destructive age. But our prophets looked beyond and saw transformation as well. My elders called it restoration. They said it would rise out of chaos.

Peacock's introduction is great with expectation but it's his words about words that make this book a potential friend. At this point I must confess that the first thing I did when this book arrived was open it for a quick survey of the photos. Photo editor Marlene Wisuri had accepted the formidable task of reviewing thousands of available images for this project. Then she carefully or prayerfully selected those that reach our humanity and touch us in immediate and intimate ways. Wisuri's photographs have been exhibited internationally; she has served as photographer or photo editor for a number of books and is currently director of the Carlton County Historical Society, Cloquet, Minnesota.

Ojibwe artist Carl Gawboy's "Storyteller" sits front and center to open the story that Peacock endeavors to tell. As Gawboy's teller speaks, those who listen look into the same fire. Does each one see a different image in the flames? Each one hears the same words but sifted through the perception of age, gender and present circumstances they may hear different stories.

Peacock begins by writing of the *Wallum Olum* record that ended abruptly in 1638 with the words, " Who are they?" These three ominous words refer, of course, to the European newcomers. My own elders, who were not scholars or historians, spoke of the migrations in a manner similar to Peacock's. It was a long journey they would say. The people went to and fro. Along the way there were those who refused to move on when the time came, so they remained to birth new nations. The question of alliance is raised and explored in these pages. Where are our personal loyalties? How will we endure a fractured sense of nationhood? Will we continue to accept the labels imposed on us by the newcomers?

Peacock leads us to the sacred hoop, opens our eyes, and says, "Look, it has been shattered!" Then word-by-word and line-by-line he restores our vision of a good tomorrow.

"Share yourself," he seems to say. "Young people are hungry for heroes and mentors. Open the gift of Self and give of your personal strength, your traditional knowledge and your unique wisdom."

I put the book aside several times when Peacock brought me to tears by his accurate portrayal of the pain and humiliation my people have suffered and the unspoken grief my elders were forced to endure. He uses personal experience to enhance the history and adds liberal sprinkles of humor to relieve the almost unbearable tension. Peacock recognizes that traditional Indigenous people view many leaders as unworthy of their trust or their respect respect. We were moved from moral to political leadership but the traditional Indian community has not

BÁIKI REVIEWS

accepted such leaders.

Although there are a few leaders who enjoy national recognition many unpaid leaders live quiet, unassuming lives. They are raising their children or grandchildren; they are helping their neighbors, and their communities. They are recognized locally as reliable, knowledgeable and trustworthy. They are the unsung heroes of our time and quite often they are our elders.

When Peacock recites his economic hardship I can almost hear my weary elders sigh. I, too, remember those dog-tired days spent poling a rice boat back and forth through the rice. I recall the hard work of the sugar bush and setting fishnets.

Peacock explores our poverty and our oppression. He speaks of racism, exploitation and casinos. He leaves no stone unturned in his effort to share his message with his audience. Skillfully he guides us through the dark chapters of our past with the sure step of a man who knows the terrain under his feet.

"Come this way," he urges. "I want to show you how our people lived. Come this way for healing. Walk in balance. Live in harmony. Learn from the elders. We are healing together. Ho-wah!"

Sometimes it seems this is more a diary than a history. For we learn a lot about Peacock from these pages. But what moves me most profoundly is that we know ourselves better, too. There is no arrogance in Peacock's tone, no effort to negate the reader. Those who open this book will be graciously invited to discover more than a people's history, on these few pages they will see a living culture.

Anne M. Dunn (Anishinabe/ Ojibwe) is a well-known storyteller, creative writer, poet, playwright, essayist and free-lance journalist. Anne has been part of Sami gatherings in the Midwest since she attended the First Reindeer Festival and Siiddastallen in Minneapolis in 1993. She is a frequent participant in international Indigenous, environmental and ecumenical conferences. Her first book, When Beaver Was Very Great, *familiar to many* Báiki *readers, was nominated for the 1996 Minnesota Book Award. She was recently inducted into the Northwest Minnesota Women's Hall of Fame.*

THE SAMI LANGUAGES: AN INTRODUCTION, Pekka Sammallahti, Kárásjohka, Sápmi: Davvi Girji, 1998, 268 pages

by Mark Iddings

This book provides a detailed description of the Sami languages, focusing mainly on the Northern Sami dialect. The book is the first of its depth to be available in English. It gives an analytical grammatical overview of Northern Sami and also the historical background to trace the origin of the language through its grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary, going back to Proto-Finnish.

Professor Sammallahti's book also provides the reader with examples of each of the Sami dialects, complete with translation and glossary. There is a list of 100 common words in the Sami language given in six different dialects in comparison and a glossary of the 845 most common words in Northern Sami, complete with etymological explanation.

This book is meant for anybody studying the Sami language on a scholarly or practical level, as well as for those more casually interested. It is the first time such an all-encompassing book has appeared in English and is an extremely welcome tome for those curious about the Sami language who might not be able to read other Scandinavian languages or German.

THE SAMI OF NORTHERN EUROPE, Deborah B. Robinson, Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 2002, 48 pages

by Faith Fjeld

This book is part of Lerner Publication's "First Peoples Series" textbooks on Indigenous cultures for teenage readers. The author is a research fellow from Dartmouth College's Institute of Arctic Studies.

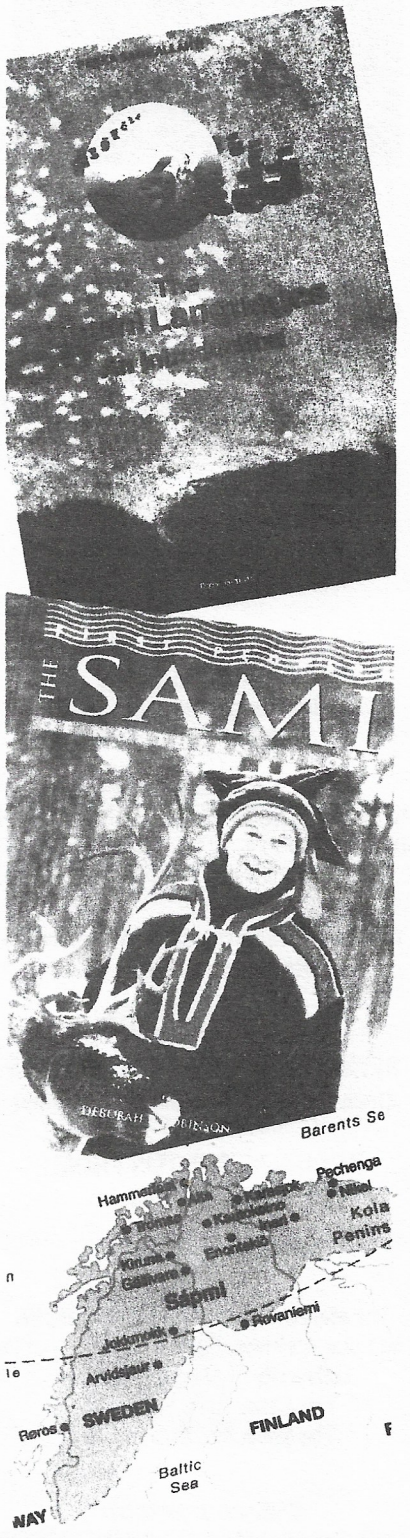
When *Báiki* was asked to proof this book prior to publication, we were able to catch numerous errors which included an illustration of the Sami flag with the colors reversed. The author's use of the past tense when writing about the Sami of today and her use of objectionable terms (such as "costumes" for *gakti)* were also corrected. We deleted the adjective "magic," (which suggests sorcery and the occult) that was used to describe the Drum and incorrect statements, one being: "The Sami established their own towns in the United States."

However we were not given the "Map of Sápmi" (see below right) to proof nor were we given the chance to proof the captions.

At the beginning of the chapter called "Nature's Spirits," a misnomer becomes a contradiction in terms when the caption beside a photo of a *siedde* (a sacred rock) reads, "A stalo is a sacred rock." In fact, Stallo and sacred rocks are antagonists. Stallo (an accepted spelling) is a mythical evil giant who comes in many forms to steal good things from the Sami and replace them with bad. It is prayers and offerings to sacred rocks that can prevent these bad things from happening.

From all this it is obvious that the Sami should speak for themselves. The question "Who are the Sami?" that the author poses on the first page of the text has already been answered in many recently published books written in English by Sami authors and illustrated by Sami artists and graphic designers.

One such, *Sami History* by Sunna Kuoljok, Linnéa Brun and Annica Andersson, published by The Swedish Sami Parliament in 1996, will be reviewed in our next issue.



A D-minus in "Sami Geography 101: *The Sami of Northern Europe*'s "Map of Sápmi" places Kautokeino (Norway) in Finland, and Karasjok (Norway) and Inari (Finland) in Russia.

Thanks to the following people who have already sent us information and offered to loan us items:

The Family of Anna Spein Twitchell, Kodiak, AK:
CRADLEBOARD
(now housed in the Anchorage Museum)

Nils Sara, Bethel, AK
"CLEMET SARA'S REINDEER HISTORY"
(pages from his father's diary)

Alan Stover, Kodiak, AK:
REINDEER HARNESS PER SPEIN'S BUTTER BOX

Gary Sambo, Wasilla, AK:
LAPSTRAKE BOAT
(technique taught his grandfather by herder Andrew Bangs)

Gus O. Linya, Lake Linden, MI
PHOTO OF 5 COPPER COUNTY FINNS
SOTKA, LAMPELA, WUORI, KARBUM, LAHTI
(who joined the Reindeer Project in Alaska)

The Sheldon Jackson Museum, Haines, AK
REINDEER PULKA

Eva Bryant, Eek, AK:
REINDEER STOCK CERTIFICATES
(from the sale of reindeer to her family)

ARCHIVAL PHOTOS FROM:
The Anchorage Museum
Margaret Andrews
James H. Barker
The Lopp Family
The Moravian Archives, Bethlehem, PA
The Polar Archives, Rasmuson Library at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks
The Saami Baiki Foundation
The Spein and Sara families

Please contact:
THE SAAMI BÁIKI FOUNDATION
1430 32nd Street #2
Oakland, CA, 94608
or e-mail:
saamibaiki@sinewave.com

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

(cont'd from page 5)

SAMI CAMP AT SCANDINAVIAN FESTIVAL THOUSAND OAKS TO FEATURE SAMI CRAFTER

On the weekend of April 5 and 6, 2003, the annual Scandinavian Festival will take place on the campus of California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks. Celebrating Nordic and Baltic cultures, it is the largest gathering of Scandinavians in the state of California with more than 10,000 people in attendance .

A Sami Camp will once again be part of the festival. Kerstin Utsi from Arjeplog, Sweden will be the featured Sami crafter and joiker. Plans also include the erection of a *lavvu* and *goahttis* (Sami tents), arts and crafts displays, video screenings, joiking and the sale of Sami items, including Eric Bergland's knives. It will be a place for people with an interest in the Sami culture to hang out, meet each other, learn things and network.

Donna Matson, a film maker from Whittier, CA, is the coordinator for the Sami Camp. She is working with The Saami Báiki Foundation and Howard Rockstad of the Scandinavian American Cultural and Historical Foundation.

To become involved call Donna at (562) 945-6289 or e-mail her at:
<dmvortex@yahoo.com>

"CIRCUMPOLAR WORLDS: INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ON TWO CONTINENTS" IN SAN FRANCISCO

On Sunday, June 8, 2003, from 10 am to 5:30 pm, a symposium at the Cowell Theater at Fort Mason, San Francisco will bring together lecturers and exhibits on the subject of circumpolar Indigenous identity in the 21st century. Harald Gaski from Norway, Pekka Sammallahti from Finland (both Sami) and Marie Battiste from Saskatchewan (Mi'kmaq) —all leaders in the reawakening of Indigenous language and culture — will make presentations. A Sami joiker is scheduled to appear and Rosemarie Huuva (Sami), an artist from Sweden, will present slide images of contemporary arts and crafts from the Ajtte Sami Museum in Jokkmokk. The moderator will be Faith Fjeld, co-editor of *Báiki*.

The symposium is sponsored by the Humanities West Foundation in collaboration with the Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish Consulates in San Francisco and The Saami Báiki Foundation, which will lend its collection of traditional Sami crafts for display.

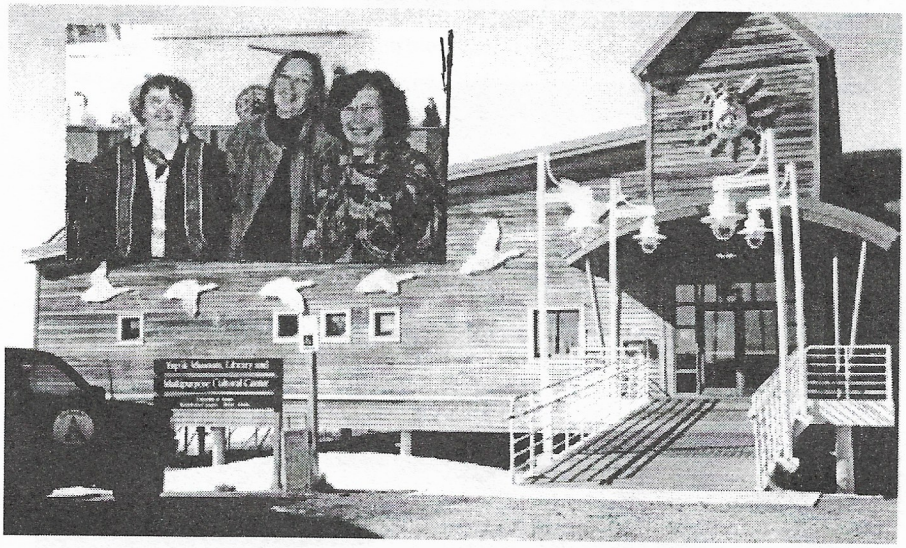
For more information call the Báiki House at 510-547-8279, or e-mail:
<saamibaiki@sinewave.com>

SAAMI CORRECTIONS

This photo was taken in Akiak, Alaska in the living room of the Alfred Anderson home in the 1930s and published in *Báiki* Issue#19 as part of the article "A Yup'ik-Sami Family in Alaska." The cutline, taken from *Saami, Reindeer, Gold in Alaska* by Ørnulv Vorren, contained errors that have been corrected by Elders Berntina and Elias Venes of Bethel, Alaska who knew these people. Front row: (l-r) Per Spein, Ole Pulk (also known as Olepulk), Per Anti, Peter Sara and his wife Kristina Anti. Back row: (l-r) Alfred Anderson, his brother Matt Anderson from Naknek, Kristina's nephew Lars Nelson, Ed McCann and Mikkel ("Mike") Sara.

*(**SAAMI CONNECTIONS** cont'd on page 28)*

THE SAMI: REINDEER PEOPLE OF ALASKA *(cont'd from page 3)*



The setting for The Sami: Reindeer People of Alaska" exhibit is the Yupiit Piciyarait Museum and Cultural Center, Bethel, Alaska, pictured above. Inset photo (l-r) shows Lois Stover and Faith Fjeld meeting with Joan.Hamilton, Director and Curator of the Museum. Joan is the Sami exhibit's Project Director.

The first planning session for the exhibit was held September 10, 2002 in the Howard Rock Library at the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage. Fifteen people attended the three-hour meeting, including the Center's Lalla Williams, Cindy Pennington and Shari Hart. Shown here (l-r) are Jean Anderson Graves (director of the Alaska Yukon Library); Eva Bryant (descendant of Native herders from Eek, AK); Marita Snodgrass (daughter of Sami herder Clemet Sara); Lois Stover (daughter of Sami herder Anna Spein) who videotaped the meeting; June McAtee (granddaughter of Ellen Sara Kvamme) who will be the project's evaluator; Eileen Johansen (representing Norwegian Consul Anton Meyer); Nathan Muus (the Saami Báiki Foundation archivist); and Dr. Walter Johnson who served as the family physician for many of the Bethel reindeer herders.

The exhibit's second planning session was held September 12, 2002 at the home of Elders Berntina and Elias Venes in Bethel, Alaska. They are shown here (l-r) with Nils Sara (the son Clemet Sara). Also present at the meeting were Lucy Murphy (the grand daughter of Per Spein), Lois Stover and Faith Fjeld.

We need your help!
We are looking for anybody and anything connected with the Alaska Reindeer Project. This includes:

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1430 32nd Street #2
Oakland, CA, 94608
or e-mail:
saamibaiki@sinewave.com

THIS SOUTHERN CROSS

by David Salmela

This Southern Cross
is so distant from the peg of
heaven,
so distant from the winter stars
in the familiar sky.

The drumming of hooves on frozen
earth
is nothing like the warm waves
lapping
the sides of this vessel.

This humid night, so hot like blood
is nothing like the mouth vapors
rising from the standing herd.

The rise and fall of reindeer
flanks
is nothing like the rise and fall
of these gentle swells on the far
horizon.

This beating heart
joiks a steady drum song...
far from home,
far from herds,
far from north,
far below this
Southern Cross.

Editor's note: *David Salmela, 42, is the author of* Karhun Otsa *(poems with Finnish American themes),* The Sauna *(a children's book),* o finland *(a collection of stories, poems, illustrations), and currently at the printers is* Saunas, *a collection of works with the theme of the sauna. His poetry has frequently appeared in* Báiki *[see Issue #10, 1994].*

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

(cont'd from page 26)

Colored pencil mandela: "Sun Weaving," Gladys Koski-Holmes

"SUN WEAVING" AND SAMINESS

Last April, Gladys Koski-Holmes, Angora, Minnesota artist, poet and frequent contributor to *Báiki*, received the George Morrison Artist Award from the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council (ARAC) in a ceremony at the Tweed Museum in Duluth. The award was presented in recognition of her work as a visual artist and for the strong body of work she has produced while living on the Iron Range in Northeastern Minnesota. The ARAC described her paintings as representing a mixture of the realistic and the symbolic.

Gladys, a Sami American with Finnish ancestry, says that her work has always been drawn out of her roots and her culture. She wrote *Báiki*: "The realization that I am suddenly lonely for my Sami family struck me today. Perhaps it was triggered by the article about Nils-Aslak Valkeapää and his death in *New World Finn*." She went on to say, "I think about Saminess and what it means to have that blood circulating in the veins. From time to time, a very powerful reminder in the form of an unmistakable emotional constriction is delivered to the heart that has to do with the strong connection to rocks, trees, land, river, sky."

Her work is in collections throughout the Midwest.

EARL JUNTUNEN & WILLARD STAATS

Earl Juntunen, Esko, Minnesota, passed away this spring. His sunny farm home, filled with tropical plants, musical instruments and comfy places to sit, reflected his love of nature and people and his flare for life. Earl's place often served as the setting for lively weekend dances that drew people from as far away as Duluth, we've been told. It also served as a quiet woodsy shelter for those who needed a safe haven.

He was a charter subscriber to *Báiki* and frequently attended our northern Minnesota Sami gatherings, bringing to them his wonderful smile, infectious laugh and delicious casseroles. Thank you, Earl for the happy memories!

Willard Staats, Wasilla, Alaska, passed away this summer. *Báiki* Issue #23 featured the poetry of his wife Carol and their daughter Lillian.

Willard was a flax farmer who played classical guitar, a heavy equipment operator who wrote haiku for his mother, a gourmet cook who hung the laundry over the stove. He left his children the priceless legacy of patience and self-sufficiency. Lillian said: "He taught me organic farming, wind power, solar power, how to live in the woods, how to mine for gold, and how to fish."

Willard, you are one of the Real People I will never forget!

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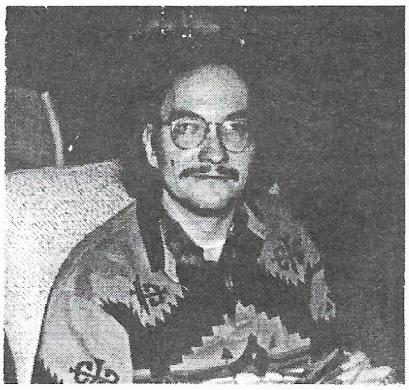

(Clockwise from the top) **ANNE DUNN**, Cass Lake, MN; **NATHAN MUUS**, West Oakland, CA; **ELINA HELANDER**, Utsjoki, Finland; **KARYN SANDERS**, Yreka, CA; **SVEN-ROALD NYSTØ**, Karasjok, Norway; **MARTIGA LOHN**, Duluth, MN; **ELLE HAN'SA**, Tromsø, Norway.

Báiki: the North American Sami Journal is a labor of love created and maintained by volunteers. Thank you so much for keeping us alive. Your financial support is gratefully appreciated.

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San Jose, CA

DORIS AND BOB HENDRICKSON
Pleasant Hill, CA

DONNA HENSCHELL
Fayetteville, AR

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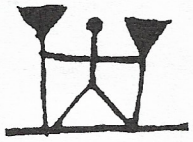
We welcome manuscripts and ideas. To become a Báiki sponsor, see page 30.

ORDER THE BACK ISSUES

Báiki back issues #1 - #9 and #10 - #18 are now available in two xeroxed spiral-bound volumes of nine issues each for $37.50 or $75.00 for both, postpaid. Reprints of individual articles are $.50 per page. Issues #19 and #20 are still available for $7.50 each.



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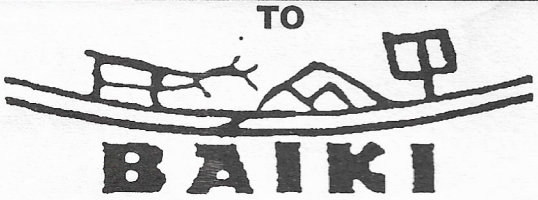

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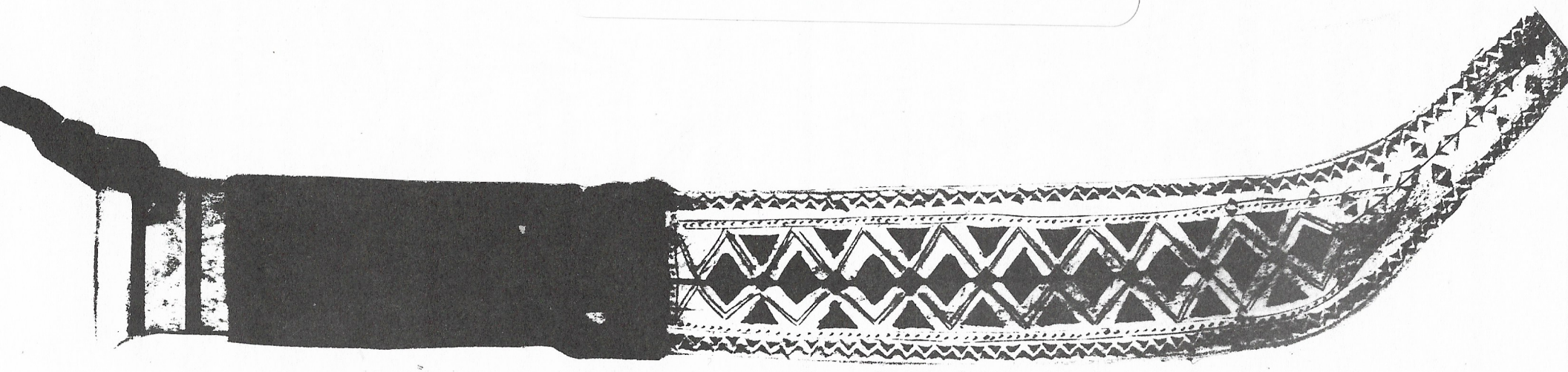

19th century North Norwegian Sami sheath restored by Eric Bergland, knife made by Eric Bergland in traditional style