

# WHO ARE THE SÁMI?

## NATHAN MUUS



Keviselle, *Sápmi: Homeland of Sámi People Within Four Countries*. Patterns and designs that customarily embellish Sámi clothing and household implements frame the Scandinavian Peninsula. Corner vignettes further adorn this extraordinary map: To the north, a blazing white and yellow sun bears sacred symbols of the four directions and hand-written poetry; to the east, a life-like rendering of the moon reflects the colors of the sun; to the south, a red and yellow woven textile band forms a circle around a mini-map of the Arctic Circle, *Stella Polaris*, at the center; and to the west, a *nahppi*, a birchwood reindeer-milking bowl, waits to receive the outpourings of the land. The 500 place names are inscribed in *Sámigiella*, the Sámi language, a reminder that Scandinavia had Sámi names long before Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, and Russian names, and the land area has no borders. Keviselle is a poet-artist. Besides this professional name (bestowed on him by the indigenous Asian nation of Nagaland), his Norwegian name is Hans Ragnar Mathisen and his Sámi name is Elle- Hånsa. In the late 1960s, his poetry and art began to focus on the revival of Sámi cultural pride. "The map was controversial," he explains. "It caused a sensation in 1975. Sámi place names had not been printed like this before. I made some people angry. They would see the moon in the corner and say to me, 'I suppose you Sámi claim the moon now too!' Others, however, consider it to be my best map."

Artwork courtesy of the artist. Used with permission.





South Sámi family, early twentieth century. From the collection of Báiki, the International Sámi Journal. Used with permission.

When Norway hosted the winter Olympics in 1994, a young Sámi man named Nils Aslak Valkeapää opened the games with a *yoik* (traditional native singing). He came out on skis and was accompanied by reindeer pulling wooden snow sleds called *pulka*. How symbolic that the indigenous people of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula of Russia opened these games, as it is commonly said that the Sámi invented skis. The earliest remains of skis have been found in Høting, Sweden, in a peat bog and date back 2500 to 4500 BCE.<sup>1</sup>

The Sámi—also commonly spelled Sami, Saami, or Same, and pronounced with a broad “a,” like Saw-me—have lived in *Sápmi*, the Sámi homeland, for thousands of years. The area is sometimes referred to in English as Sámiland. It covers at least 232,000 square miles. Some scholars tie the Sámi to the Komsa culture in present north Norway through petroglyphs in Alta, which go back from 4000 to 8000 BCE.<sup>2</sup> While this is not definitive, the petroglyphs do show arctic people engaged in arctic activities. In Sweden, traces of a settlement in Norrland, near Arjeplog, go back 9,800 years, which some scholars believe relates to the Sámi.<sup>3</sup> The exact origins of the Sámi are still not agreed upon—though the Sámi refer to themselves as “People of the Sun,” *Sámit*, or *Sápmelash* (Sámi People).

Outsiders from as far back as the classical writer Tacitus (98 CE) referred to the Sámi as *Fenni/Phinnoi*. Norwegians locally have long called the Sámi “Finns,” though Finnish-speaking residents of Norway are called *Kvens*. The terms “Lapp” and “Laplander,” commonly used in Fenno-Scandinavia and worldwide, are today considered offensive, having derived perhaps from the old Scandinavian *lapp*, meaning “patchwork piece clothing,” or the Finnish *lape*, meaning “from the wilderness.” In any case, early references to the Sámi tried to distinguish between different groups: Fish-Fennians (coastal),

Lap-Fennians (forest), and Scrifinia (ski Finns), for example, and such is still the case today.

There are some 100,000 Sámi living in the Nordic countries, with perhaps 60,000 in Norway, approximately 20,000 in Sweden, 10,000 in Finland, and 2,000 in Russia. The nine living Sámi languages (North, Lule, Kildin, Inari, Skolt, South, Ter, Ume, and Pite Sámi) are part of the Finno-Ugric language group, hence related to Finnish (Suomi) and Hungarian. They are also related to the Samoyedic (Nenet), Uralic, and Altaic language groups in Russia. Today there may be 20,000 people who speak a Sámi language in the home as a first language. Perhaps 85 percent of all Sámi speakers speak North Sámi. Most Russian Sámi speak the Kildan Sámi language. Often writers simply divide the Sámi into North, South, and Eastern (Russian) Sámi. The actual number of people who have some Sámi ancestry, but are not now connected to contemporary Sámi culture may be much higher.

Some divide the Sámi into occupational regions, such as the coastal fishing “Sea Sámi,” the reindeer herding “Mountain Sámi” (North to South Sápmi), the “Forest Sámi,” “Lake (Inari) Sámi,” “River Sámi,” and “Eastern (Skolt) Sámi.” I have heard jokes about being classified and overly studied—someone may call themselves an “Office Sámi,” for instance.

In Norway alone, as of 2005, some 12,538 people were registered to vote in the Sámi Parliament elections. One may be considered Sámi in Norway based upon a parent, grandparent, or great-grandparent who spoke Sámi language; self-identification as Sámi; and community identification as Sámi.<sup>4</sup> The majority of the Sámi people in Norway live in the provinces of Finnmark and North Troms, though South Troms, Nordland, and Trøndelag have a strong Sámi presence. Oslo has a large and thriving Sámi community, as do other larger Scandinavian cities, like Stockholm and Helsinki.

### The Sea Sámi

The Sea Sámi, inhabiting the North Norwegian coast, are the largest group, and have an interesting history of fishing, small farming, cattle and sheep raising, trapping, weaving, and trading. Upon the arrival of the Black Death in 1349, the Norwegians who lived on the outer islands and fjord farms were affected far more than the Sámi, who tended to live away from the European trade routes. Also, most plague deaths were due to an infected flea that was transported in wooden barrels holding rye and wheat, grains not yet common in the Sámi diet. Sixty to seventy-six percent of the Norwegian farms were abandoned and the Sámi moved into the abandoned farm areas.<sup>5</sup>

Because of this, the North Norwegian fishing industry in areas like the Lofoten and Vesterålen Islands was severely challenged and the Sámi became a much bigger part of this economy. The Nordland boat fishing culture, which stretched from Trondheim to Tromsø and beyond, has in great part a mixed Sámi and Norwegian history. Some suggest that the Sámi originated the use of a lapstrake layer on top of a wood layer in boat construction—except that the Sámi originally used sinew to “sew” the boat layers together.<sup>6</sup> There are also references of Sámi assisting Vikings in boatbuilding.

### The Mountain Sámi and Reindeer Herding

The Mountain Sámi today are the best-known group of Sámi because of their association with reindeer herding. Though





| Milking reindeer, early twentieth century. From the collection of Báiki, the *International Sámi Journal*. Used with permission.

others, such as the “Forest Sámi” in Sweden, also have reindeer, the nomadic vista of reindeer on the move is often what people have heard of or seen in postcards. Of course, today the snowmobile and helicopter have changed that.

Today, less than 10 percent of all Sámi draw their livelihood from the reindeer. Reindeer herding cooperatives are often composed of a small group of extended family called a *siida*. Originally, the Mountain Sámi hunted wild reindeer, but around 1500 CE they began slowly herding groups of animals into what became a semi-domestication. Today the herding has a yearly cycle that begins after spring Easter celebrations, family reunions, and marriages. One can find at least some reindeer in every area of Sámiland depending on the time of year.

The reindeer are organized and herded in mass groups, headed towards the coast in Norway, or the mountains of Sweden, for instance. The animals want to move to find cooler weather and escape summer heat and bugs. A system of mutual exchange and trading called *verdavuohhta* developed long ago between the coastal and reindeer Sámi, and the exchange of fish for reindeer products was common.<sup>7</sup>

Reindeer calves are born on the journey and begin walking in minutes. When fall is approaching, the reindeer are herded back inland to winter settlements and towns. Fall marks the

gathering of reindeer into corrals for the annual slaughter of older animals, and the entire animal is harvested: meat, thick pelts, and bones for making crafts and for food. Even the blood and intestines are used, nothing is left to waste. Younger reindeer are marked by cutting small designs on their ears to identify who they belong to. Individual *siida*-group reindeer herding routes are maintained as a living tradition.

Today, only Sámi can legally practice reindeer herding in Norway and Sweden, and this is highly regulated. One must be descended of Sámi family from a certain town or district. In northern districts of Finland, there are some non-Sámi herding families who have been doing so for a long time, and today reindeer herding cooperatives are classified as corporations, not restricted by ethnicity.

Russian Sámi have had a difficult time under various governments. During the Communist era, large reindeer cooperatives were imposed upon the people. Some villages were forcefully removed, and many Sámi were relocated to the town of Lovozero/Lujavri. The Russian government relocated many Komi tribal reindeer people into the Kola Peninsula. On the bright side, the Komi got along well with the Sámi and there were many marriages and good relations. All across northern Russia you will find reindeer-herding tribal people who live in conical tents and



Reindeer were so central to Sámi life that they were incorporated as an artistic motif in their everyday objects. This knife has a broad, sharp, handmade blade set into a bone handle wrapped with five sinew bands. The sheath, which consists of two sections of bone held together by a sewn leather collar, is finely incised with reindeer motifs. Date, 1860. Length of sheath and knife, 12.25 inches. Vesterheim 1967.002.017—Gift of Mrs. Henry Hanson.



hunt and fish, living traditionally, but who are being challenged by nontraditional ways imposed upon their lifestyle.

From about 1600 until 1751, when the present border of Norway and Sweden was agreed upon, the northern mountain Sámi often paid unfair taxes (frequently in the form of fish and animal products) to three monarchies simultaneously. A “Lapp Codicil” in the 1751 treaty gave Sámi the right to continue seasonal migrations between the two states. Unfortunately, the agreement ended upon the independence of Norway in 1905. The present Swedish/Finnish border was determined in 1809.

Northern Sweden saw the development of mining as a source of revenue for the kingdom, but it came at the expense of the Sámi. In 1634, silver was discovered on Nasa Mountain between Norway and Sweden. Until about 1810, the Sámi were forced to use reindeer to run silver from the mines to the coast at Bothnia. Some Sámi fled to Norway. Iron ore was first mined about 1645 near Kengis/Pajala, Sweden, and later was discovered near Kiruna and Gällivare, Sweden.<sup>8</sup> Entire mountains were destroyed, and the iron ore used by Germany in World War II came mostly from this area, which still produces iron today. (Interestingly, much of the iron ore for the Allied effort came from the Minnesota Iron Range, settled in part by Finnish Sámi immigrants.)

### Traditional Sámi Religion

The Sámi traditional culture is part of a larger arctic pattern of shamanism. This includes: reverence of the bear (in most arctic cultures) and bear ceremonies (the bear is perhaps

the most human-like animal); healing ceremonies for the sick and distressed; use of drums and singing of sacred songs; a special reverence of the ancestors; a special regard for elders and children (closest to God); a recognition of the Creator and of spirits present in all life forms; a policy of using an entire animal when one is slaughtered—and thanking the animal for sustenance of life.

The Sun, *Beaivi*, is the Father/Mother of life. In particular, the Sámi revere the Grandmother Spirit, *Mattarahkka*, and her three children, who guide family life: *Sarahkka* (who lives under the fire, and helps during birth); *Juksahkka* (who instructs young boys); and *Uksahkka* (who helps newborn children).<sup>9</sup> These ancestor spirits are often inappropriately called “gods.” Such older practices never completely went away, but were severely challenged by the influx of Christianity.

Roman Catholic missionaries impacted the Sámi from the thirteenth century and, after that, the Protestant Reformation from the sixteenth century. Efforts to ban some Sámi traditional practices became more persistent. The “Apostle of the Sámi,” Thomas Von Westen, for example, converted people by force to Christianity in the 1720s, and anyone found to possess a Sámi drum would at a minimum be interrogated and the drum confiscated or burned. At worst, such possessions led to documented cases of death by fire. Sadly, authorities of the day confused traditional Sámi practices with western European “witchcraft.” For some time, Sámi practiced a dual belief system and went to church while still practicing traditional Sámi ceremonies elsewhere. This practice somewhat persists in the naming of children with both a western name, and a Sámi name given at home. Many Sámi today are involved in their local Lutheran parishes, as that is where many community activities happen.

Occasionally one hears of New-Age practitioners claiming to be Sámi shamans. They are quite questionable. However, some elements of the old beliefs and practices never went away—as in the traditional *joik* singing, languages, expert craftsmanship, and drum-making. It is not uncommon in Sámi land to hear of certain “wise people” who recite Bible verses and chant healing songs to sooth the sick. Sámi shamans are mentioned in the Viking sagas and had abilities to change into animals, travel great distances through the air, find anything lost, be several places at once, and calm fierce storms at sea. And there are contemporary stories about individuals who seemingly have done unexplainable shamanistic feats.

### Modern Sámi History

The Kautokeino/Guovdageaidnu Rebellion, a political and religious uprising inspired by the Laestadian Lutheran movement, occurred in 1852 in northern Norway. It was a



Norwegian Sámi John Andersön Sare, left, and Russian Sámi Meran Jefinivitch, right, late nineteenth century. Vesterheim Archives.



rare instance of violent Sámi reaction to discrimination and colonization. A riot in the town killed the sheriff and a town merchant (who sold liquor) and roughed up the state-church pastor. Two Sámi were also killed and two Sámi were later beheaded for their role in the riot. Other Sámi were imprisoned for life. At the time, the Russians had closed the border of nearby Finland to Sámi and their reindeer, further adding to the already tense situation. A major movie about this event was made in 2008, titled in English *The Kautokeino Rebellion*.

After this time, a harsh governmental assimilation policy of so called “Norwegianization” (1879-1940) affected the Norwegian Sámi, though similar policies were happening to Swedish and Finnish Sámi as well. This policy was rough on the Finnish-speaking Kvens of northern Norway, too. The idea was to make proper Norwegians of the Sámi by any means necessary. This was the age of Social Darwinism, and there also was a fear at the time that Russia might try to grab part of northern Norway.

Use of Sámi language was discouraged in every possible way. Sámi who could not read and write in Norwegian were not allowed to conduct certain kinds of business or own property. This led to a long period of direct and indirect discrimination towards the Sámi culture, languages, and people. In 1902, for instance, a law was passed in Norway that assigned only Norwegian names to properties, and these names were then passed on as family surnames.<sup>10</sup>

In Sweden, there was a policy of segregation. A law from 1908 separated Reindeer Sámi from non-reindeer owning Sámi. It allowed Reindeer Sámi north of a certain line to keep herding and maintain some semblance of their culture, as if frozen in time. But children were taken away from their families and placed in so called “nomad boarding schools” set up by the government. South of that line, Sámi who did not own reindeer became officially “non-Sámi” against their will.<sup>11</sup> This was a particularly devastating blow to the South Sámi, many of whom lived in central Sweden. In Sweden and Norway, this constituted a pattern of land theft throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in which the government declared entire areas, such as the county of Finnmark, as “noninhabited” and appropriated the land as state owned—and available to non-Sámi settlers.<sup>12</sup>

In 1903 the first local Sámi organization was founded in Norway to publish the Sámi newspaper *Ságai Muittalaegje* (1904-1911), edited by Anders Larsen. The year 1917 saw the birth of the first National Sámi Meeting in Trondheim, Norway, organized by Elsa Laula, a strong Swedish South Sámi woman.

World War II brought devastation to northern Norway (Finnmark and North Troms) and northern Finland. Nearly anything built of wood was burned as the Nazis exited and there were evacuation and refugee issues. War was a great equalizer and a new respect was given to the Sámi. They became even more integrated into Norwegian and Scandinavian society, and the sharp edge of racism began to dull a little as the north was rebuilt. Finally, in the 1950s, Sámi languages were beginning to be taught in the schools and heard in public places again. Near the end of World War II, a good chunk of northeast Finland was forcibly taken by the Russians. Most Skolt or Eastern Sámi moved into Finland, and a few moved into Norway.

The Sámi Council was founded in 1956 and promotes Sámi membership organizations from across the four national

countries. Some of the issues they deal with are environmental change in the arctic, reindeer herding, land use, fishing rights, language, civil rights, and cultural activities. North-American Sámi have attended meetings several times and have given presentations as guests.

A major cultural and ecological struggle erupted over the building of a hydroelectric dam on the Alta-Kautokeino River in Norway in 1979-1980. Part of the historic Sámi reindeer area, including the town of Máze/Masi, was to be underwater, but this was averted. Commonly called “The Alta Conflict,” this event sparked the largest nonviolent civil disobedience against police authorities in post-war Scandinavia. Also, a group of 12 hunger strikers and Sámi activists set up a Sámi tent camp on the Norwegian Parliament grounds in Oslo while meeting with governmental officials.

Though the dam was eventually built, the real impact of these events was that they galvanized contemporary Sámi culture across boundaries and forged a unified modern Sámi identity. Democratically elected Sámi Parliaments were formed that serve and represent the Sámi, first in Finland in 1973, then in Norway in 1989, and in Sweden in 1993. These parliaments promote self-determination, advise the national states, and uphold cultural autonomy. Russia has Sámi associations, but no parliament so far.

The Sámi flag, an adaptation of earlier flags used in the movement, was approved in 1986, and has the four primary colors used in traditional *gakti* (Sámi wool clothing). The colors are: deep blue, red, golden yellow, and green. The blue stands for the “dark time” of winter, when the sun does not rise; the red for the “midnight sun” of summer, when the sun never sets. The circle is a universal symbol and also stands for the sun, as well as the moon, and the unity of the Sámi people across borders. A Sámi National Day (February 6, date of the first Sámi congress held in 1917) and National Song, *Song of the Sámi People*, were both adopted in 1986.



Sámi Council meeting, Røros, Norway, 2006.  
Photo courtesy of the author.



In April 1986, the Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster struck. A poisonous radioactive cloud drifted to the west over central Norway and Sweden, affecting the South Sámi. This radioactivity hid in plants, like the lichens that the reindeer eat. In Sweden alone, some 30,000 reindeer had to be put down. This was a serious blow to the local reindeer industry. Sadly, the water, fish, and other domestic livestock in the entire region were also affected—not to mention humans. The level of radioactive contamination decreases slowly each year.

In 1995, the Norwegian Parliament passed the “Finnmark Act,” which transferred 96 percent of the territory, formerly nationally held, to local citizens. Early versions of the bill did not guarantee the Sámi a voice in the law governing this territory, but eventually the Norwegian Sámi Parliament (*Sámidiggi*) gained three seats in the governing agency administering the county. The Finnmark County Council also gained three seats in the governing agency, one or more of which might possibly be filled by a Sámi representative. Issues addressed by the agency include collective and individual rights in the province, as well as Sámi land and water rights.

The Sámi have been leaders in the pan-indigenous tribal people’s movement worldwide. In 1976, the World Council of Indigenous Peoples was formed at a historic meeting in Port Alberni, Canada. A Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples has been established at the United Nations. The Sámi have been instrumental in these successful steps.

Racism and discrimination still exist in various forms and differ from country to country. Some of the problems involve: counterfeit Sámi crafts being marketed and sold as Sámi, non-Sámi people dressing as Sámi and doing tourist and Christmas-related events for profit, racism directed at the Sámi community, and not so subtle TV and media programming with an anti-Sámi edge—not to mention, in one country, a nearly total non-Native bias prohibiting Sámi from fishing, hunting, and other rights in their own land. These rights are still an issue in all of Sámiland.

The challenges of “environmental warming” affect the entire arctic. Sámi are united with the Inuit and other indigenous people to confront these challenges.

### Sámi in North America

How many Sámi are there in North America? When did they come here and where are they today? The first Sámi in North America may well have been members of the “New Sweden” Colony on the Delaware River (1638-1713), as some of their descendents claim. Sámi were part of the massive immigration to North America between 1850 and 1925. Sámi could be counted among the 700,000 immigrants from Norway; the 1,100,000 from Sweden; and the 334,000 from Finland, not to mention emigrants from the Kola Peninsula of Russia. If we take the Sámi population from that time period in the Nordic countries and factor that percentage into the total immigrant number, then about 9,300 might have come. If we consider that this immigrant population has tripled in number since 1910, we arrive at the figure of nearly 30,000 people with some Sámi ancestry, and we might be looking at an even greater number.<sup>13</sup>

Some Sámi came to North America with proud Sámi identity, but many others shed layers of culture as they immigrated. Being Sámi in the eyes of the dominant culture of

this period was to be classified as from a lower class. Many Sámi or people with mixed Sámi heritage were relieved to blend in with fellow Nordic immigrant communities when starting a new life in America. Where are they today? Wherever Norwegian, Swedish, and Finnish American communities exist. Families downplayed their Sámi heritage in favor of the dominant national identity they held. Most of them came from “Lutheran” backgrounds. (Some Finnish and Russian Sámi are from Russian Orthodox traditions).

It is easier to trace Sámi-American heritage in the Finnish community because they have held onto their language and emphasized their genealogy more than the Swedes and Norwegians. A huge number of Finns moved to North Norway during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They were a big part of the immigration from North Norway to North America. They maintained their language and their Finnish (more than their Norwegian) identity.<sup>14</sup> Their bloodline is what today is commonly called “the Finnmark mix” (Sámi, Finnish, and Norwegian). Many of this group were also “Laestadian,” or “Apostolic Lutherans,” a revivalist religious movement started by a Swedish Sámi pastor, Lars Levi Laestadius, in the 1840s, which profoundly influenced the Sámi. Laestadius preached about living pious lives and against alcohol use, and he used the Sámi and Finnish languages in church.

In fact, if we visit the Houghton/Hancock area in Michigan today, we will find that there are at least five branches of the Apostolic Lutheran church there. Northern Minnesota towns with Finnish Sámi history include Esko and Cloquet. Thunder Bay in Ontario, Canada, has a historic district called “Lappi,” which reflects its immigration history, because that is also the name of a northern Finnish province.

The Alaska Sámi immigrant groups from 1894 and 1898, who were mostly Norwegian Sámi from Finnmark County, and related Sámi families who immigrated in 1932 to Inuvik, Northwest Territories, are perhaps the only Sámi who went to North America with a very strong Sámi self-identity as reindeer herders.



Sámi Americans visiting Kautokeino/Guovdageaidu, Norway, Sápmi (Sámiland), March 2008. Many are descendents of the Alaska Sámi families. Photo courtesy of the author.





Ellen Inga Hætta, Director of the Norwegian Reindeer Husbandry Administration, in Kautokeino/Guovdageaidu, 2008. Photo courtesy of the author.

Otherwise, North American Sámi have, as a rule, tried to blend into the larger Scandinavian-American community. Norwegian and Swedish immigrants often left by boat from Bergen and Trondheim, Norway. Some families today trace back to these places, and not much further, though they could through local parish records and online sites such as the national Norwegian online genealogy site, which also has a Sámi component.

Editor Faith Fjeld started publishing *Báiki, the International Sámi Journal* in 1992, with great support from elder Rudy Johnson, who had been chief librarian at the University of Minnesota, Duluth. *Báiki* means “the home you carry with you in your heart,” or your “hometown.” The journal helped spark a revival of interest in the Sámi in North America and in the latent Sámi-American community that continues to this day. Sámi Americans started to become part of Scandinavian and Finnish festivals, particularly in the Midwest and West Coast, on a regular basis, with “Sámi Camps” of *lavvu* (traditional Sámi tipi-like tents) and reindeer.

A second publication, *Árran* (meaning the hearth or fire), first published in 1996 by Mel Olsen and Arden Johnson, further strengthened the Sámi-American community’s self-identity. Both publications continue today and have extensive websites and ties to Sámi in Sámiiland.

Several attempts at forming a formal North-American Sámi organization have failed to materialize. This direction will change in the near future. There is certainly an active Sámi community in such places as the Poulsbo/Seattle area, Washington (older Alaska Sámi families); Anchorage, Alaska; Inuvik, Northwest Territories, Canada; Oakland/San Francisco, California; and Minneapolis and Duluth, Minnesota, for instance. Events around the two Sámi-American publications and cultural festivals have been catalysts for Sámi-American visibility. Different names, like “Sámi Báiki” and “Sámi Siida of North America,” have been given to this same community.

Sámi North Americans of historical note include Nils Paul Xavier (Tornensis), the founder of Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington (1890), originally from Kautokeino/Guovdageaidnu, Norway; B.J. Muus, founder of St. Olaf

College (1874), Northfield, Minnesota, of mixed Norwegian and Sámi family from Snåsa/Snåase, Norway; and Andrew Bahr, “The Arctic Moses,” who brought a herd of 3,000 reindeer from western Alaska to the Mackenzie Delta, Canada, over a five-year journey starting in 1929 for the benefit of local natives. (This herd continues today.)

Contemporary Canadian-born singer Joni Mitchell is of mixed Finnish-Sámi heritage. Award-winning actress Renee Zellweger is of Norwegian, Sámi, and Swiss descent. Jaco Pastorius was a Finnish-Sámi-American jazz bass player extraordinaire with such groups as Weather Report.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> “Skiing,” article from Wikipedia Encyclopedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skiing>.
- <sup>2</sup> Odd Mathis Hætta, *The Sami, An Indigenous People of the Arctic* (Karasjok, Norway: Davvi Girji, 1996), 14-15.
- <sup>3</sup> Sami Parliament, *The Sami — An Indigenous People in Sweden*, (Vasterås, Sweden: Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs, 2005), 12-13.
- <sup>4</sup> Norwegian Sámi Parliament web pages in English, <http://www.samediggi.no/artikkel.aspx?Aid=884&Mid1=270>.
- <sup>5</sup> Przemyslaw Urbanczyk, *Medieval Arctic Norway*, Institute of the History of Material Culture, Polish Academy of Sciences (Warsaw: Semper, 1992).
- <sup>6</sup> Mel Olsen, “The Sami Boat,” *Árran*, #40 Fall 2005, <http://home.earthlink.net/~arran2/archive/sami-boat.htm>.
- <sup>7</sup> Edmund Gronmo, “Verddevuohta—The Sámi Survival System,” *Báiki, the International Sámi Journal*, Issue #12, Fall-Winter 1994-95, 18-19.
- <sup>8</sup> Sunna Kuolijok, *Sámi History* (Kiruna, Sweden: The Sámi Parliament, 1996), 32-33.
- <sup>9</sup> Elina Helander-Renvall, *Silde: Sámi Mythic Texts and Stories*, (Oulu, Finland: Nelita Oy, 2004), 10-11.
- <sup>10</sup> Elina Helander-Renvall, *The Sámi People*, Sámi Institute (Karasjok, Norway: Davvi Girji, 1990), 121-130.
- <sup>11</sup> *The Sami—An Indigenous People in Sweden*, 14-15.
- <sup>12</sup> Lars Norberg, *The Political Rationale for the Colonization of the Sámi Homeland, The Land Grab*, L’Image du Sámi, Humanistic Studies at Örebro University, (Örebro, Sweden: Örebro University, 2008), 30-33.
- <sup>13</sup> Kjell O. Lundholm, *North Scandinavian History* (Lulea, Sweden: I-Tryck/Graafiska Hiset, 1996), 74-75.
- <sup>14</sup> Mary Oberg Hanf, “Mother’s Hidden Treasure,” *Sons of Norway Viking*, April 1994, 11.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nathan Muus is the coeditor of *Báiki, the International Sami Journal*. He is also the co-curator with Faith Fjeld of the traveling exhibition *The Sami, Reindeer People of Alaska*. Since the late 1600s, members of the Muus family have frequently served as pastors with the South Sami people throughout central Norway and Sweden. The church in Snåsa/Snåase, Norway, is the mother church, and the town is a cultural center. Nathan’s paternal grandmother’s family was involved in Nordland boat fishing and trading, traveling between Trondheim and the Lofoten Islands annually. Nathan is currently working on a book of family stories. He is also a musician and *yoiker*, and maintains an online music website.