The Saami – A Cultural Encyclopaedia

The following information about the The Saami – A Cultural Encyclopaedia has been collected from several sources, including the publisher’s website. (See http://kirjat.finlit.fi/index.php?showitem=1764).

Some basic facts:

Publisher: The Finnish Literary Society (SKS Kirjat), Helsinki
Editors: Ulla-Maija Kulonen, Irja Seurujärvi-Kari, Risto Pulkkinen
Publication Date: 2005
Pages: 498 pp.
Price: 52,00 €
Number of entries: 469
Number of authors: 51

This is a reference work about the Saami, a northern indigenous people living in four states – Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. This title presents the national character of the Saami and its manifestations from a point of view located within the Saami culture itself. It is illustrated with photographs and maps.

The Encyclopaedia of Saami Culture is a result of an international project based at the Department of Finno-Ugrian Studies at the University of Helsinki. Presenting the publication here is complicated by the fact that the published book merely contains a fraction of the entries compiled (or still to be compiled) in the project. This can be seen on the project’s website at http://www.helsinki.fi/~sugl_smi/senc/english/index_eng.htm. The following overview primarily focuses on the published book version of the encyclopedia.

Why use the The Saami – A Cultural Encyclopaedia as an example for our project?

The Encyclopaedia of Saami Culture covers many topics of great relevance for the Barents Encyclopedia. Furthermore, the format of the published book version of the encyclopedia can serve as a model for our publication.

Contents of this overview of the The Saami – A Cultural Encyclopaedia

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3. Copies of three double spreads in the printed version of the book to show lay-out, etc.
4. Appendix: An list of entry categories (with live links to entry texts) found on the Saami encyclopedia project’s website at the University of Helsinki.
1. The Publisher’s Presentation of the Book

The Saami
A Cultural Encyclopaedia
Ed. by Ulla-Maija Kulonen, Irja Seurujärvi-Kari, Risto Pulkkinen
Translator: McAlester, Gerard

The Saami – A Cultural Encyclopaedia is a modern reference work about the Saami, a northern indigenous people living in four states – Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. It is the outcome of a project launched and coordinated by the Saami Studies Work Group of the University of Helsinki. The work presents the national character of the Saami and its manifestations from a point of view located within the Saami culture itself. It is thus part of the great change in scholarship about the Saami which began in the 1970s: the shift from Lappology to Saami Studies.

In general and specialised articles, the encyclopaedia presents not only the languages, history, mythology, folklore, music, economy, livelihoods and media of the Saami but also the indigenous peoples’ movement, human rights questions, education, art, social conditions, and so on. The nature and environment of Sápmi (Saamiland) are also dealt with as important background factors. Cultural words and concepts that are characteristic of Saami culture are defined, and there are etymological articles about many Saami words. The work is illustrated with numerous photographs and maps.

Particular emphasis has been given to information about minority groups within the Saami people, such as the Saamis of the Kola Peninsula and the Inari and Skolt Saamis, who have hitherto been largely ignored by mainstream Saami Studies, and it has been the committee's concern to ensure that the voices of the different Saami groups themselves are heard.

Paperback. 498 p.
ISBN 951-746-506-8
Published: 2005
Price: 52,00 €

2. The Editors’ Introduction

Introduction

The Encyclopaedia of Saami Culture focuses on the indigenous culture of the Saami, and the task is approached from a multidisciplinary research perspective, with all the opportunities and challenges it offers. Research on ethnic minorities such as the Saami cannot be limited to a single discipline or branch of learning; in most cases it is multidisciplinary by virtue of its starting point alone. Research on ethnic minorities is associated with the traditions and perspectives of politics, culture, the theology, history, society, the economy, mentalities and language. As is customary, this project understands a multidisciplinary approach to mean cooperation between different fields of research. It has the benefit of scientific polyphony and the asset of combining different approaches of scholarship. Multidisciplinarity is an essential requirement for a discussion of identity, ethnicity and culture.

From the close of the seventeenth to the end of the twentieth century, the older discipline of Lappology, the study of the Saami and their culture, described Saami culture from an external perspective. Research on the Saami in the last decades of the twentieth century moved towards perspectives that lay within the culture itself. Scholars have preferred to reject the term Lappology and to replace it with the new concept of multidisciplinary Saami Studies. This intra-cultural perspective implies a significant contribution from the Saami to research concerning themselves.

The Saami, living in the northern parts of Scandinavia and Finland and in the Kola Peninsula, are the only indigenous people in the EU to have their own language, culture, means of livelihood and identity. The history of the Saami in the areas occupied by them dates far back to before the formation of the present states in the region. Sapmi, the present area settled by the Saami, extends from central Norway and Sweden through the northernmost parts of Finland and Norway to the Kola Peninsula in the Russian Federation. This region is approximately 300,000–400,000 square kilometres in area. At present, a survey carried out by the Saami Parliament of Finland estimates that over 45,000 Saami live in Norway, some 20,000 in Sweden, 2000 in Russia, and approximately 8000 in Finland. The Norwegian Saami population may in fact be considerably larger than 45,000. The total Saami population is calculated at present to be between 75,000 and 100,000. The estimates, however, vary greatly since no official estimates of the population have been made in the various states.

The starting point and inspiration of The Encyclopaedia of Saami Culture project is the distinctive culture of the Saami and the interest in them that has emerged in different parts of the world. The contributors of the articles in the encyclopaedia seek to revise and overturn old stereotypes and to present the results of recent research on the Saami. Since early times, scholars in various fields, travellers and clergymen have been interested in the Saami, whose culture has been regarded as the most exotic of all among the peoples of Europe.

The project got under way in connection with a study module launched in 1993 at the University of Helsinki as the responsibility of a working group in which several departments of the university were represented. The project has been carried out in the Department of Finno-Ugrian Studies of the University of Helsinki in conjunction with the Department of Saami Studies of the Department of Archaeology and Saami Studies of the University of Umea in Sweden, the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Tromsø in Norway, the Algu project (an etymological data bank of the Saami languages) of the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland and the Finnish Literature Society. The Saami Culture Encyclopaedia Editorial Board was formed from the university’s Saami Research Working Group, with Nordic associates and partners as added members. The members of the editorial board and their areas of responsibility are:

- Christian Carpelan (University of Helsinki): archaeology, history, ethnography
- Ull-Maija Kulonen (University of Helsinki): Saami language
- Risto Pulkkinen (University of Helsinki): religion, mythology and lappoloty
Irja Seurujärvi-Kari (University of Helsinki), Project manager: education and literature, social conditions, modern culture, occupations, environment

Jelena Porsanger (University of Tromsø): mythology, traditions

Olavi Korhonen (University of Umeå): Swedish Saami affairs, place names and regions.

The objective is to chart and systematize information about the culture of the Saami, an indigenous people living across international frontiers. In an integrating Europe there is cause to place particular weight on the preservation of the cultures of indigenous peoples, and on the broad distribution of research information about them. The project also involves the goal of strengthening the identity and cultural awareness of the Saami. In today’s changing world this is one of the best ways of preventing the social and cultural marginalization of small peoples living in difficult conditions. A further objective is to present information about minorities within the Saami people, such as the Russian Saami, who until now have remained peripheral even in research on Saami culture.

No previous encyclopaedia containing a wide range of information about Saami culture has been published. Encyclopaedic works on other cultures have recently appeared, such as the Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia (1994), Finland, a Cultural Encyclopedia (1997) and Norrlands uppslagsbok: ett uppslagsverk på vetenskaplig grund om den norrländska regionen (1993-1996), works which can be regarded as significant cultural achievements.

The basic articles in the present encyclopaedia deal with the Saami languages, history, folklore, literature, music, the economy, the natural environment and occupations, the media, legal matters, education, art, social conditions, and so on. The most important aspects of each area are dealt with in extensive articles. There are also articles dealing with notable persons who have influenced and helped to create Saami culture, and there are definitions of words and concepts that are characteristic of it. The encyclopaedia also contains 49 articles on the etymologies of words (italicized) that are significantly connected with the culture of the Saami people.

The editorial board takes the term culture in its broadest sense, entailing both material and non-material aspects. Language is the main characteristic of culture. The natural environment is regarded as the material basis of Saami culture and is discussed in the articles on landscape, nature, flora and fauna. Non-material culture is presented in the articles on identity, ways of life, traditions and customs and social and societal life, focussing not only the present but also on the past.

On behalf of the editorial board we wish to express our warmest gratitude to all the writers who have contributed to the present encyclopaedia with articles from various areas of expertise, and to the English language experts, especially Gerard McAlester, who has had the main responsibility for the English translations of the articles. The project would not have been possible without material support and funding from several institutions: the European Commission, The Finnish Cultural Foundation, the Finnish Ministry of Education, the Alfred Kordelin Foundation, the Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation, the Niilo Helander Foundation and the Finnish Literature Society.

Helsinki, May 2005

Ulla-Maija Kulonen Irja Seurujarvi-Kari Risto Pulkkinen

An extensive presentation of the Saami Cultural Encyclopaedia can be found on the projects website at http://www.helsinki.fi/~sugl_smi/senc/english/presentation.htm
3. Copies of Three Double Spreads in the Book to Show Layout, etc.

without believing in any particular god of thunder. In the evolutionary theory of religion, it was assumed that animism was a phenomenon that explained the origins of religion, and that it preceded animism in the evolution of religion. RIP.

Animism. This term is used in two different meanings: on the one hand in a general sense to mean a belief that creatures (humans, beings, animals) and even plants and inanimate objects possess personal souls that are independent of their physical existences, and on the other hand in connection with evolutionism to refer to an original or very early stage in human religion. – Animism, RIP.

Antti Pieti: The famous name of Pia- tii Antti Piatikapalapa Notti (1872–1945), a Saami/Landastian painter (– Saami- diasain) and sculptor. He worked in Karavas, Sweden, in Norway. Antti Pieti had his religious awakening in Landastian confirmation class in 1894, after which Landastian made him a counselor and a lay teacher. He is thought to have been the first person to have brought the re- vivalist movement to Norway when he went to Tyggen in 1898. He made missionary excursions to Valses in the 1890s. His view of Christianity was relatively broad, but he was known for his exceptionally long sermons. Antti Pieti died on a journey to Oslo in 1945, where, as an important representative of the early Landastian movement, he had been invited to speak at the meeting that had taken place within it. He held his own funeral before the church, after having a dream that convinced him that he would die on the journey. RIP.

Anter handicrafts. Reindeer antler (cursor) is important raw material in Sami handicrafts. The antlers of both the bull and the cow are used, but most artists prefer the antlers from five-year-old bulls as they are bigger and stronger. On the other hand, some old artifacts such as large knife sheaths show that smaller antlers were often considered good enough. These big sheaths are made of two antlers joined together in order to create a sheath of sufficient breadth. The big knife is widely used not only for making utensils but also for general utilitarian tasks. As with other artifacts, the shape of the sheath and the knife handle have been developed over the centuries. Older knives show some local differences in shape and decoration. The sheaths come in three basic forms: square, curved and sharp curved. These local differences have nowadays lost some of their significance with the teaching of handicrafts at school.

Some modern Saami knife-makers not only earn their living by this craft but have also become well-known throughout the world for their skills. Moreover, collectors have long been interested in antler sheaths and knives, and the Saami knife has become a collector's item. This has naturally led to the knife-makers producing knives to satisfy the demands of the market. The scenario is similar to another culture with long traditions. The need for new weapons ensured when the Saami started to eat the kind of food that required a spear. The reason for the spear is taken from the front part of the antler, or the lowest part of the antler. There the antler is twisted and wide enough for about a spear. The special shape of the Saami spear can be traced back through time. Scholars have found that the shape of the Saami spear is found in other parts of the world as well, which indicates that Saami knife-makers were influenced by other cultures. The basic shape of the Saami spear has remained the same throughout history. It has a straight handle and a wide bowl. Once again the spear's shape and decoration differ according to the area the spear-maker comes from. Some spoons are richly decorated. The Saami began quite early on to use other spoons, using their own antler spoons as models. Reindeer antler spoons are usually smaller than other spoons made.

There are today numerous Saami artists who work with antler, using it to create a variety of objects. Among them we can mention: Piatikapalapa, from Notti on finishing, young, boys from Kungsbacka, Harald Ljung, from Leuan, and Arvid Hans, all from the Norwegians part of Saami, and Randi Matland, born in Norway, and Per Sverre and Per Ivar from Meråker in Sweden. (Gün.

Archaeological culture. It is possible to distinguish geographical and chronologically defined distributions of types of archaeological materials, which are called archaeological cultures. There is no general agreement about what an archaeological culture represents or is a via the reality of the past. On one hand, it is claimed that an archaeological culture is merely an artificial unit for dealing with archaeological material in a constructed system of classification. On the other, it is considered that an archaeological culture is distinguished in the material just because a historical community with a common tradition and a common system of communication to support it was behind a characteristic distribution of types of ar- cheological material and a semantic system of signs. This is the basis for research into the organization and roots of an ethnic group (such as the Saamis) and its culture. Ethnological identification, – Ceramics Culture, CCR.
The traces left by human activity are ancient monuments and other relics. They consist of artifacts, ecofacts, and geofacts, which are the vestiges of past structures, separate objects or parts thereof, traces of people's occupations and land use, and of human presence, which has produced various kinds of artifacts. Because of the material nature of its evidence, archaeology is directly connected to the natural sciences, especially bio- and geosciences, whose methods it employs. Since human communities operate under conditions created by the natural environment, a knowledge of this environment helps us to understand the nature of the communities. Although the source material of archaeology belongs to the natural sciences, its problems with respect to economic, social, ideological and historical questions belongs to the humanities.

Archaeological remains are studied in terms of their typology, chronology and > chronology. The typological aspect involves the description, categorization, and analysis of the material. In its chronological aspect, archaeology is a form of (subdiscipline) geography. The chronological aspect links archaeology with history.

Collections of this division, the spatially and temporally limited typological distributions of archaeological material are classified into so-called > archaeological cultures. CCc

Archaeology: Saami. This term is used to refer to the study of archaeological material which is considered or assumed to represent the Saami. It raises the question of what an archaeological relic can be regarded as Saami, and it thus implies the problem of defining the Saami and their > national identity. In that this term stimulates ideas, it exhibits a prejudicial, external and directive influence on research. As we never wish to use the term Saami archaeology, we must limit it geographically to northern > Fennoscandia.

There is common agreement that it was there at any rate where "real" Saami lived. Moreover, types of prehistoric relics have been found there which are not found in eastern Fennoscandia (although this may be the result of deficient investigation). The ethnohistorical "Lapp problem" will therefore be excluded from this pragmatically defined delimitation as pertaining to eastern Fennoscandia. In addition to the geographical delimitation, there must also be a chronological one. In historical terms, the Saami identity represents a particular cultural expression. If we go back in time, we come to a point when this cultural expression becomes so different that it can no longer be considered a Saami one, although it does represent the ancestors of the Saami of the Historical Age. The shift from the Early Iron Age to the Middle Iron Age may indicate a shift from a period of a "proto-Saami identity" to a period of an "early Saami identity", although the latter was still far removed in its cultural expression from the historically identified "full Saami identity". > Ethnic identity: stages > Saami studies. CCt

Archives. The archiving of Saami artifacts and Saami traditions is carried out by municipal and regional museums and archives in northern Sweden. Some archives also have nationwide archiving responsibility. The northernmost traditional state archive in Sweden is > NADM (Diakon-, ornamens- och folkminnesarkivet i Umeå). The Institute for Diachronics, Oeconomics and Folklore Research (in Umeå) at > AIr, the Mountain and Saami Museum in Jokkmokk, a special Saami archive, called > Aja, is being developed. OCS

Arctic. The concept of the "Arctic" as a geographical area bears a resemblance to another concept, the "circumpolar area", with the difference that the latter applies to both poles. A circumpolar area is defined in Webster's Dictionary as an area "around or near one of the poles of the earth". This definition represents an inclusive definition of a physical space, and it also avoids any clear-cut demarcation of the southern or northern borders of the polar areas. Even though this approach can be used in defining the Arctic, many have tried to define the southern boundary of the "Arctic". A fine-grained definition is that made by ecologists, who divide the region into three zones on the basis of climate and the presence of certain flora and fauna: the High Arctic, the Low Arctic and the SubArctic. Another criterion for defining the southern limit of the Arctic is the importance of the industries and the influence of the native cultures, i.e., the southern border to which the average temperature in the warmest month of the year is below 10°C. The tree-line criterion i.e. the southern limit above which trees cannot grow, and the Arctic Circle (66°33'N), an area which approximately to the southern boundary of the midsummer sun, have also been used as a basis for defining the southern limit of the Arctic.

It seems obvious that no clear-cut definition of the southern boundary of the Arctic can be found on the basis of natural science definitions. So what about political processes? Can states agree on what constitutes the southern boundary of the Arctic? Arctic cooperation was launched in 1977 in Murmansk by former Soviet Secretary-General Mikhail Gorbachev. The Soviet leader proposed that the Arctic states should initiate cooperation in various fields, one of these being protection of the Arctic environment. This idea was partly made concrete when Finland convened a conference of the eight Arctic states, which led to the signing of the 1991 Environmental Declaration, in which the states also adopted the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy. This so-called "Rovaniemi Process" concentrated mainly on protecting the fragile environment of the Arctic, but nowhere in the documents was the concept of the Arctic defined, the terms 'Arctic' and...
### Arctic Council

The initial idea leading eventually to the establishment of the Arctic Council was launched in 1987 in Murmansk, by former Soviet Secretary General Mikhail Gorbachev. The Soviet leader proposed that the Arctic states should mature cooperation in various fields, one of these being protection of the Arctic environment. This idea was partly given concrete form when Finland convened a conference of the eight Arctic states – Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Soviet Union and the United States – in Rovaniemi in 1989 to discuss the issue of protecting the Arctic environment. After two additional preparatory meetings in Yellowknife, Canada, and Kiruna, Sweden, the eight Arctic states, as well as other interested actors (especially the organizations of Arctic indigenous peoples) met again in Rovaniemi in 1993 to sign the Rovaniemi Declaration, in which they adopted the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AESP). Due to the place where the cooperation started, Arctic-wide cooperation before the establishment of the Arctic Council is called the Rovaniemi Process.

The Rovaniemi Declaration provides a general obligation to ensure AESP cooperation. The forms of this environmental cooperation are specified in the Strategy. Section 16, paragraph 5, enumerates the means of AESP cooperation, providing the cooperation process with a broad mandate for protecting the Arctic environment. Paragraphs 3 and 4 provide for the participation of other Arctic states. The three international organizations that have been accredited to participate as permanent participants in the Arctic Council.

The strategy analysis, the southern boundary of the Arctic cannot be absolutely defined in a clear-cut manner, but in fact, be defined in a little manner to that which the circumpolar areas are defined above, i.e., the area around and near the North Pole. Functionally, the Arctic can then be defined in a way that best suits the goals and purposes of environmental management and other political processes within these areas.

The main decision-making process is not made explicit in the Strategy; the parties only agreed that the Topic and venue of the next meeting will be agreed upon at the preceding meeting.

It was agreed that the first ministerial-level follow-up meeting would be held in 1995 in Nuuk, Greenland, where a Declaration on Environment and Development was signed by the representatives of the eight Arctic states. The institutional structure which was laid down in the AESP document was extended somewhat at the Nuuk meeting with the establishment of new environmental protection working groups. Other institutional developments at Nuuk included the meetings of the Senior Arctic Affairs Officers (SAAO).

The second follow-up meeting of AESP cooperation took place in Inukjuak, Canada, in March 1996, where the Inukjuak Declaration was adopted. The Declaration signed there was adopted at a time when the negotiations on the establishment of the Arctic Council were under way. It was important from the viewpoint of the Arctic indigenous peoples that Denmark was willing to establish a secretariat in order to enable the indigenous peoples to participate in the activities of the working groups.

The Canadian Arctic Council was established in September 1996 in Ottawa, Canada. The Arctic states signed an instrument called the Declaration Establishing the Arctic Council (hereinafter the ‘constitutive instrument’) and issued a joint communiqué to explain the newly created body. The establishment of the Arctic Council extended the forms of AESP cooperation, which were previously based on the AESP document. The constitutive instrument of the Arctic Council substantially extends the terms of reference of Arctic cooperation. Paragraph 20 states:

In order to facilitate the participation of Arctic indigenous peoples the following organizations will be invited to observe the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, the Nordic Saint Council and the U.S.S.R. Association of Small Peoples of the North.

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4. **Appendix:**

**Main Entry Categories in the Encyclopaedia of Saami Culture**

On the project’s website entries in the *Encyclopaedia of Saami Culture* have been grouped into seventeen main categories. It is possible to access the entries under these categories via the website at the University of Helsinki. Note, however, that the number of entries listed on the project’s website is vastly larger than the number actually published in the book. The book version of the encyclopedia contains 469 entries (plus 41 entries that merely “points” to other entries), while the alphabetical index of entries found on the project’s website includes more than 2,500 entries. (However, only a fraction of the listed entries actually contains any text.)

**The Encyclopaedia of Saami Culture – Contents**

Numbers in parentheses refer to the number of entries listed under each category found on the project’s website at [http://www.helsinki.fi/~sugl_smi/senc/english/contents.htm](http://www.helsinki.fi/~sugl_smi/senc/english/contents.htm).

Note that the total number of entries listed under the seventeen categories amounts to 942, while, as noted above, more than 2,500 entries are listed in the alphabetical index found on the website. Note also that not all of the entries listed under the various categories contain any text.

1. **Areas and geography** (63)
2. **Archaeology** (81)
3. **Biographical articles** (147)
4. **Demography, ethnicity and physical anthropology** (0)
5. **Languages and naming** (42)
6. **Living and household, clothing etc.** (54)
7. **Education** (29)
8. **Christianity and eccleastical work** (18)
9. **Nature** (68)
10. **Media** (3)
11. **Saami Pre-Christian world view, mythology and folklore** (86)
12. **Politics and organizations** (99)
13. **Arts** (30)
14. **Means of livelyhood and transport** (67)
15. **Folk habits and customs, national character** (10)
16. **History** (94)
17. **Research, research history, institutions and museums** (51)