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Connecting and correcting : a case study of Sami healers in Porsanger

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Citation

Miller, B. H. (2007, June 20). *Connecting and correcting : a case study of Sami healers in Porsanger*. CNWS/LDS Publications. CNWS Publicaties, Leiden. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/12088>

Version: Corrected Publisher's Version

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Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

TWELVE STATEMENTS

1. To say that a Sami healer is a shaman would not be appropriate in the Christian context of modern Sami culture.
2. A similarity found in the worldview of Laestadianism (revivalist Lutheran movement) and shamanism is that a special relationship with the spiritual realm can be passed on, including that the inheritance of that relationship is a decision made by the spirit.
3. Continuity in the Sami healing tradition is demonstrated in the expectation that the inheritance is passed on.
4. A structural feature of Sami healing is the marginal position of the healer, expressed in the codes of silence. This marginal position is not necessarily an indication of imminent decline.
5. In Hultkrantz's definition of the shaman anti-social undertakings are excluded from the domain of the shaman. He interprets the pre-Christian *noaidi* as a shaman. Unfortunately excluding anti-social undertakings from the domain of the Sami *noaidi* is not warranted.
6. Defining the activity of the Sami shaman/*noaidi* in terms of 'free-soul' provides no insight into the Sami understanding of *noaidut* (verb).
7. The notion of helping spirit remains largely implicit in the discourse of present day Coastal Sami healers. Notions such as gift and inheritance take precedence.
8. The Coastal Sami have experienced cultural loss over several centuries. The markers of Coastal Sami identity have also changed over several centuries. Presently the Sami language is no longer a criterion of Coastal Sami identity.
9. Fishing still constitutes an important part of Coastal Sami identity in the Porsanger Municipality and the Coastal Sami feel this dimension of their culture is not sufficiently acknowledged by the Norwegian State.

10. Tradition and the handing down of tradition is dynamic, change is an integral feature of traditions.
11. It would be a mistake to identify Sami culture with the past and to assume that in the future it will be assimilated by Norwegian culture. Sami culture (as does any culture) is reshaping itself all the time and the healing traditions testify to its dynamics and creativity.
12. Connections between shamanism and Arctic hysteria, hallucinations and trance provide deeper insights in categories of Western thought but shed no light on Arctic societies.