

Study on cultural marks in threes in the Norwegian part of the Pasvik valley

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- What is cultural modified trees (CMT)?
- What is not
- Where?
- Result?
- Used for? /what can it tell us

-What is cultural modified trees?



What is cultural modified trees (CMT)?

- A way of scarification a tree (mostly pine) for a human purpose without killing the tree.
- Different purposes: Food, tools, religious reasons, reindeer sinew (senetråd in Norwegian)-threads-storing, compass trees
- In this presentation not including no-Sami markings as Norwegian/Finnish CMTs including signs from early time forestry.
- Trees holy for the Sami, while Norway and Finns cut the trees down, the Sami left 3 inches on both side making the tree survive and recover.
- Known from the Nordic countries, probably Russia and few places in USA.
- In Norway protected by law (Sami cultural act) including a 5 m radius round the tree.

- Due to lack of written history, pressure from Norwegian forest - authorities and perhaps also since Norwegian and Finns used inner - bark only in starvation times, it was totally forgotten among the Sami and the Sami cultural institutions as museums.
- Forest-biologists in Sweden (and Norway) also interested in forest-history (fire-dynamics, virgin-forests and logging-history) began studying the subject.
- Most written material from Sweden.
- In Norway Written paper exist from Nordland (Grane, Hattjelldal and Saltdal), Troms (Målselv) and Finnmark (Karasjok, Sør-Varanger).

Food-source

- Several thousand old tradition that died out in Norway 1870-1900. Survived to around 1930 in Inari, Finland.
- Inner-bark of pine have a high level of C-vitamins, fibers and Carbohydrates, making them an essential food source for everyday life. Avoiding cancer (fiber), scurvy (skjørbruk in Norwegian) (C-vitamins) and giving necessary carbohydrates to a very protein/fat dominated food.
- Not food in time of starvation as it normally was for Norwegians, Finns and Swedes.
- Also a tradegoods with coastal living Sami.
- Dried on tree-coal, smoke dried, cooked etc.





Reindeer-sinew storing

- Threads of reindeer was essential for making clothes.
- Gets dry fast and one need to store.
- Pine-bark are antiseptic and store the seen in a perfect condition for later use.



Tools

- Little knowledge about witch purposes.
- Also Norwegians/Finns, but mostly (?) used birch.
- So far only known from Norway (found in Anarjohka and Pasvik).



Signs and writings

- Both old and newer (and also no-Sami)
- Pre-cristian signs (sun/eye-marks), holy-trees (scarrifications), bear-trees, tooth-ake trees etc.
- «Bumerker»/personal signs marking “this is belonging to me”.
- Modern writings







Other

- Compass-trees
- Border-trees
- Path-trees



What is not CMTs?



Where does exist Sami CMTs?

- In in Norway: Nordland, Troms and Finnmark (+Høylandet Nord-Trøndelag)
- In Finnmark known from pineforests in Alta (very few). Porsanger (2), Øvre Anarjohka in Karasjok (abundant in old pine forests) and Pasvik in Sør-Varanger (partly abundant in old pine forests).
- Sweden: Väster- and Norrbotten
- Finland: Little information known, but probably from historic Sami rangearea where still old pine forests exist.
- Russland: No information but exist in old-pine forests in historic Sami rangearea.

CMTs in Pasvik

- «All over» where old pine forests still exists.
- Concentration in areas with low intensive fire history.
- Concentrated in curtain areas. Often close to rivers and creeks.