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## **Multiple Cognitive Signs of the Shaman Drums as Sami's Worldview, Identity, and Cultural Heritage**

Sami religion tells that the world is inhabited by spirits which possess magical powers, protecting creatures in nature. And all life has dualism on the spiritual and physical levels; in the spiritual world, dead ancestors continue their life. This animistic, polytheistic view influenced Sami traditions towards harmony with nature and the need for the shaman.

As a traditional healer, the shaman keeps the multiple codes and expresses meanings verbally, musically, artistically, and in dance. He knows their community culture and acts to be understood by audience with trust. To communicate with the spirits on behalf of the community, the shaman's mediation is illustrated by his objects and symbols: a drum is one of these communications.

Two types of the drum are based on their physical construction, but their common symbolic signs reveal the Sami cosmology in three levels: the upper for gods; the middle of humans; the lower of the underworld. Despite difficulties of reading their meanings, caused by the Church's eradicating the majority of drums (18 C), constant emergences of god, human, and animal signs on surviving 71 drums suggest their central roles in Sami tradition.

This questions how the appearance, location, and relationship of gods-humans-animals on the drums took place: Are they connected each other or isolated? If connected, which shape and form? What is to do with the shaman's cognitive mind, Sami identity, and culture? As the shaman drum is a key to the Sami cosmology, symbolic signs on his drum were a cognitive map for ego-soul travels between the three worlds, collectively observed and publicly interpreted to his audience.

My paper discusses these questions by assessing representative drums chosen from the 71, in order to seek, understand, and interpret the meanings of these three signs. It challenges to cognitive semiotics, which defines as "characterized as an emerging interdisciplinary matrix of disciplines and methods, focused on the multifaceted phenomenon of meaning".

The finding shows that they are fairly distributed on the drum, but connected in variations. Consequently, Sami shamans seem to hold flexible cosmology in shifting seasons of nature, explaining their identity and cultural heritage in particular.