

Editorial Note

The Donner Institute for Research in Religious and Cultural History organized a symposium in Åbo (Turku), Finland on August 19–20, 1988. The title of the symposium was The Saami Shaman Drum. Like the symposium on Encounters between Religions in Old Nordic Times and Cultic Place Names on August 19–21, 1987, it was planned as a continuation to the inventory of Nordic research into old religions in Scandinavia and Finland which began with the Donner Institute's symposium on Saami (Lapp) religion on August 16–18, 1984.

The symposium on The Saami Shaman Drum was planned as a symposium for experts in the field appealing to a limited circle. Invitations to participate in the symposium were sent to representatives of a number of different disciplines that might have an interest in the topic; these included archaeology, anthropology, ethnology, history, art, religion and missionary work, musicology and the history of religion. The purpose of the symposium was to cast light on the Saami drum from as broad a perspective as possible. In the call for papers, drawn up by the organising committee of Rolf Kjellström, Håkan Rydving and Tore Ahlbäck, it was pointed out that there were a number of different ways that the Saami drum might be approached, e.g. an analysis of drum illustrations or individual drums, categorisation by region and/or type of Saami drums, the role of the drum in Saami society and religion, the significance of drum music for the shaman's ritual ecstasy, drum illustrations as a source of information on the Saami world-view compared with drums and drum illustrations among other Arctic peoples, etc.

It was further noted that the approx. 70 drums that have been preserved constitute an extremely important source of data for the study of Saami culture and religion; however, their interpretation remains an area that still awaits research.

In the present volume of *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis* eight Nordic scholars present the latest research into different aspects of

the Saami drum The editors hope that the work will serve the Donner Institute's aim in arranging the symposium: to stimulate Nordic research into the Saami drum and to contribute to giving this research international publicity

The translation and language checking for this volume has been carried out by John Skinner (University of Turku)

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