

Sjiele, offering

We found a sacrificial site at Lillselet in the Pärälven valley.

i.a. a silver ring.

There are a few records of sacrificial offering from the early 20th century. There are sacrifice in connection with reindeer herdings, especially in crisis situations.

The reindeer to be sacrificed was marked out by having the horns decorated with silver, sometimes with a silver leaf from the collar. It could also happen that silver was hung in the horns that were left at the sacrifice site. At such sites, the amount of silver objects could increase year by year. There was no risk of anyone stealing this silver. It was too sacred.

Alongside animal sacrifices, 20th century records contain accounts of another type of sacrifice, simpler and quicker than sacrificing an entire reindeer. When on reindeer migrations you passed sacred places such as rocks or *sejte*, you could offer brass rings from the sheath of knives, silver, merles from the collar and coins. It was a hasty offering, thrown on the spot in passing without much ceremony.

A central concept in Sami belief is *sjiele*, linked to birth, marriage and death. The word has many meanings. It can mean sacrifice or to sacrifice. It can also be a gift, from the groom to the bride's parents or to a newborn child. It can be a gift in connection with death to ward off evil spirits. It can mean jewelry or sacrificial jewelry. It can also be the name of a ring that one wears when dealing with a dead person. The meaning as amulet or protection is coated all over Sápmi. The *sjiele* was always an object but could be of different materials: silver, brass, metal, horn or bone.