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"Mis/translation, Colonialism, and Environmental Conflict"

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This article describes a colonial encounter in north Norway between Sámi practices for fishing and knowing the natural world, and the conservation policies of state policy makers. In Sámi practices the world is populated by powerful and morally lively human and nonhuman actors. In caring for the land and its lakes in practical ways it is important to sustain respectful relations with those actors. Norwegian environmental policy works differently by distinguishing between nature and culture and seeking to protect landscapes from what it takes to be human interference, so that natural forces can operate unimpeded. The article first explores these two different worldviews and shows how environmental policy imposes restrictions on fishing practices that make it difficult or impossible for Sámi fisherpeople to care for and sustain respectful relations with their lakes. It then reflects on the significance of translation and mistranslation for this encounter, noting that important environmentally relevant Sámi words translate poorly into Norwegian or English, and that the practices that these index are ignored or misunderstood in those translations. In particular, it focuses on the notion of *jávredikšun,* a key term for Sámi people who fish on inland lakes, and shows that the word indexes environmental actions and realities that translate only with difficulty into English. Finally, it considers the potential political and analytical significance of refusing translations of this and other important environmentally relevant indigenous words. (Text from authors' abstract)

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