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Lisa-Marlene Edelsward

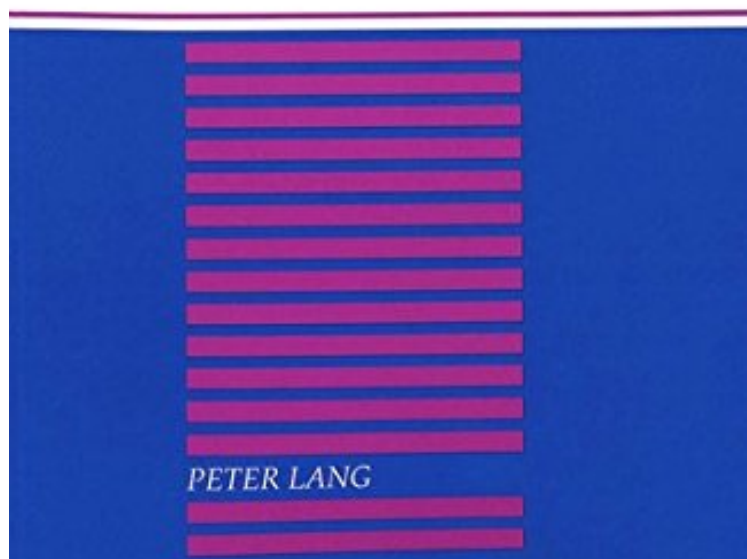
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Lisa-Marlene Edelsward : Sauna as Symbol: Society and Culture in Finland (American University Studies) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sauna as Symbol: Society and Culture in Finland (American University Studies):

Every culture has a secret ingredient, and for Finnish culture and society it is the sauna. The sauna is an actual bath and bathhouse which in practical life brings people together in ways otherwise impossible. And the sauna as symbol brings together and integrates the many contradictory ideals and realities of Finnish society and culture. Through the sauna, nature and culture, the individual and society, the person and the polity, may be woven into an integral whole.

Lisa Edelsward has approached the topic of sauna, sacred to the Finns, with the objectivity of an outsider yet with the sensitivity of an insider. As a Finn and a scholar, I find her analysis thorough and delightful, an excellent example of symbolic anthropology. (Raija Warkentin, McGill University) Dr. Edelsward has done for a European society what has hitherto seemed more usual for more exotic cultures: she has taken a central symbol of collective identity and explored its ramifications in the development of ideals and practices related to that identity in its various forms. This work makes an important contribution to the ethnology of Europe, and especially to the analysis of symbolism in national discourse. (Michael Herzfeld, Harvard University) About the Author The Author: Lisa-Marlene Edelsward is a Canadian of Finnish and Swedish ancestry. After completing her undergraduate degree at the University of British Columbia in Anthropology and Linguistics, she continued with graduate studies in anthropology at McGill University. She has lived for three years in Finland and eight months in Africa (Cameroon). She is currently engaged in ethnographic field research in highland Sardinia, Italy.