

Culture Contact in Evenki Land

A Cybernetic Anthropology of the Baikal Region

TATIANA SAFONOVA & ISTVÁN SÁNTHA

Evenki are modern hunter-gatherers who live in Central and Eastern Siberia, Russian Federation. They are known to scholarship for their animistic worldview, and because the word 'shaman' has been borrowed from their language. Despite such recognition contemporary Evenki everyday life rarely appears as a subject for anthropological monographs, mainly because access to Evenki communities for the purpose of extended fieldwork has only recently become possible. In this original study of the Evenki the authors describe a variety of events and situations they observed during fieldwork, and through these experiences document different strategies that Evenki use to retain their ethos as hunter-gatherers even in circumstances when hunting is prohibited. The authors adopt the vocabulary of cybernetics, proposed by anthropologist Gregory Bateson, in order to underline the circuit logic of events that happen in Evenki land. *Culture Contact in Evenki Land*, therefore, will be welcomed by social anthropologists in general and specialists of Siberian and Inner Asian studies (Manchu-Tungus peoples) and hunter-gatherer peoples in particular, as well as those interested in the cybernetic approach.

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ISBN 978 90 04 23306 5



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