



*"Bruce Grant has brought to completion an English edition of a monument of Russian ethnography. His Afterword is graphic and heartbreaking, and the interviews, apart from the information they contain, present moving impressions of the vivacity of his interlocutors. I am glad that these too are recorded for posterity."*

Rodney Needham

In 1905, the eminent dean of American anthropology, Franz Boas, commissioned a monograph on the lives of Sakhalin Island peoples from the young Russian "exile ethnographer," Lev Shternberg. Shternberg's *The Social Organization of the Gilyak* was to be the last ethnography of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, exploring the origins of Amerindian peoples along both the Russian and American north Pacific rims.

The unpublished English version of this ethnographic masterwork, published twice in Russian in the Soviet Union in the 1930s, languished for decades in the archives of the American Museum of Natural History and was thus lost to most English readers.

Hailed by Claude Lévi-Strauss as "a work of exceptional value and insight," *The Social Organization of the Gilyak* offers a rare portrait of a little documented part of the world and the belief systems of a people prior to the dramatic cultural re-education programs introduced under the Soviets. A striking illustration of the fortunes of political ideology, the book demonstrates how early Marxist kinship studies took a Pacific people and made them a hallmark of primitive communist life in the Russian imperial imagination.

In this first English edition, anthropologist Bruce Grant builds a fresh analysis of Shternberg's classic study, by adding a Foreword examining Shternberg's work and life, new glossaries, a Shternberg time line, maps, expository footnotes, archival notes, and an interview with one of Shternberg's former students. To create the book's central innovation, the compelling Afterword, Grant traveled to Sakhalin Island in 1995, one hundred years after Shternberg's first field studies, where contemporary Gilyaks (Nivkhi) offered their own reflections on being among the foremost subjects of Russian ethnographic literature.

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