



Many Nations of the Russian Federation

Exploring the lives of Indigenous peoples on Russia's Pacific Coast

This talk will offer you a short trip into the Russian North with its diverse and unique indigenous cultures. There are 41 Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East federally recognized in Russia. They share similar traditional activities, sustainable lifestyles, holistic world view and problems that have arrived after the contact with Russian culture.

Traditionally indigenous peoples of the North lived and continue to live on the 60% of Russia's territory and comprise less than 1% of the total population of Russia. The discussion will focus around the term indigenous in the Russian context, what it implies and how is it understood by the government. I will also talk about what it means to be indigenous in Russia from the emic perspective, which issues indigenous peoples face and how Russian indigenous nations are solving those issues. I will finish with an example of Itelmen – people who live in Kamchatka at the Pacific Coast of Russia.

Presentation by Tatiana Degai

PhD Candidate, University of Arizona &
member of the Council of Itelmens

Tatiana's dissertation research (in American Indian Studies and Linguistics) is focused on the revitalization possibilities of her ancestral Itelmen language in Kamchatka, Russia. Being a member of the Council of Itelmens "Tkhsanom", Tatiana is actively involved with various projects on culture and language development of Itelmens. She has a Master on Arts at the University of Alaska Fairbanks in Anthropology and a teaching degree in foreign languages from Kamchatka State University. Her research borders with indigenous education, sociolinguistics, ethnography, indigenous activism and revitalization.

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