

## 13. Contemporary Issues among Hunter-Fishers across the North Pacific

### 16221 - Animistic subversions versus assimilation politics in Alaska and Kamchatka

Presentation type: Oral presentation

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This paper is a comparative study on contemporary developments of animism in the context of environmental and political transformations in both northern Alaska (United States) and Kamchatka (Russia). On each side of the Bering Strait, indigenous assimilation politics have grown in symmetrically opposed ways. The focus on Nature in its dual form (protection of the environment/exploitation of the resources) in Alaska led to a disappearance of visual cultural diversity among indigenous societies. To the contrary on the Soviet side, the socialist unification of the territory was promoted by enhancing folkloric diversity among indigenous cultures. After examining the historical context in which American and Soviet governments built up their respective assimilation politics, we will explore how some minority groups of hunters and fishers pertaining to Gwich'in (northeast Alaska) and Even (Central Kamchatka) societies are answering to the political institution ruling them with a subversive animistic style, drawing its power from the ongoing state of instability and uncertainties at play in subarctic environments nowadays.

## **16192 - A Geography of Respect: Cultural and Cosmological Factors in Huna Tlingit Responses to Cruise Ship Tourism in Glacier Bay, Alaska**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

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Within Northwest Coast Native societies, land and resource use has been fundamentally mediated by traditional concepts of “respect.” Such respect is expressed through the balance of material and immaterial exchanges that occur within multiple arenas: between tribes, villages, clans, and classes, but also between human communities and specific communities of other-than-human species, sacred places, or spiritual beings. Demonstrations of respect beget successful outcomes (such as first fish ceremonies ensuring abundant future harvests and reaffirming interspecific obligations) while disrespect exposes individuals and communities to misfortune (such as resident spirits prompting natural disasters when individuals behave recklessly at sacred sites). These considerations variously shape engagement and enhancement strategies, as well as spiritual practice. The introduction of non-Native visitors into a sacred place often creates tensions and renders familiar places “dangerous,” and Native communities perceive and seek to ameliorate destabilizing threats to longstanding balances with resident species, places, and spiritual entities – threats that are understood to be potentially harmful to both Native and non-Native communities alike. Summarizing the outcomes of a five-year ethnographic study, we highlight the experiences of Huna Tlingit, whose core homeland in Glacier Bay has become a centerpiece of the Alaska cruise ship industry. We find that many of the concerns expressed by Huna Tlingit regarding modern cruise ship tourism can be understood only with reference to a geography of respect. Moreover, contemporary Tlingit efforts to offset tourist impacts has involved efforts to instill respect, as it is traditionally understood, in non-Native visitors through public education and other mechanisms, echoing pre-contact conventions regarding the relationship between resident “hosts” and their guests.

## **16153 - The Inverse Relationship between Salmon Biodiversity and Indigenous Peoples' Political Standing Directionally across the North Pacific**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

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Along with the many parallels and concordances across the reaches of the North Pacific, this paper identifies a significant “double movement,” provoking debate about how best to deploy the finding for policy purposes. This finding involves the inverse relationship between salmon biodiversity and Indigenous peoples’ political standing directionally across the North Pacific. In the richly biodiverse areas of the Kamchatka Peninsula, Indigenous peoples find themselves to be virtually powerless spectators to local- and global-scale extractive industries: commercial fishing, roe poaching, gold and platinum mining, and oil and natural gas development. Yet in these biodiverse areas salmon represent a significant portion of the Indigenous diet, provide ecosystem services as an important keystone species, and have drawn global attention as a “stronghold” for ecological preservation. Indigenous nations in Canada and the United States, though they have limited ability to exercise full sovereignty over their natural and cultural resources, have a stronger legal standing within their host nations from which to undertake that effort, even as they may be the only witnesses to the decline of salmon biodiversity in their own territories. Thus, in neither the Pacific West nor East do enmeshment in twenty-first century economic exchange systems, Indigenous rights movements, or global environmentalism provide simple solutions.

## **16124 - Indigenous Rights, Customary Tenure, & Boundary Conflicts**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

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Under Canadian law Indigenous rights - referred to local as Aboriginal Rights and Title- have been tied to a concept of exclusive use and occupancy. Canadian law has prioritized a notion of frozen territorial extent. However, the process of colonial disruption and transformation has added complexity to the how one conceptualizes the territorial extent of an aboriginal right or title. Popular media accounts speak to 120% of British Columbia being 'claimed' by local First Nations. Here the implication is that Indigenous communities are stretching (figuratively and literally) the truth of their territorial extent. In litigation between First Nations legal, historical, geographical, and anthropological experts are lined up to buttress the territorial claims of their clients while undermining the claims of the opponents. Government experts enter the fray deploying many of the same approaches as demonstrated by the proponents of the conflicted First Nations. This paper examines the issues of territorial overlap and attempts to extricate an approach that maintains a fidelity with historical realism and allows for the continuation of Indigenous rights to use and occupy territory within the contemporary context. This paper focusses upon a case study of the north coast of British Columbia, Canada.

## **16101 - The life stories of Itelmen ¿ diverse trajectories in the diminishing use of a language**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

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Language shift and language revitalization are major issues in the North Pacific region as the number of conversational speakers in many local languages dwindles. One of the unusual facts of language loss, or language shift in a community is the range of distinct trajectories by which a particular linguistic code is maintained or falls into disuse. In the early 1990s there were over 50 speakers of the Itelmen language on Kamchatka peninsula, in the Russian Far East. Now there are just four active speakers who learned it as a first language. There were of course common reasons for Itelmens to shift from their native tongue to Russian, the most common being punishment in school for using Itelmen. The reasons, however, that some members of a community ended up being speakers and others did not arise from remarkably diverse circumstances, even within families. This paper presents the stories of Itelmen elders' relations to the language as it gradually was replaced in daily conversation.

## **16041 - Activities to (re)acquire Sovereign Rights of Salmon Resource Management by Indigenous Societies along the Yukon River**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** *Inoue, Toshiaki (Josai International University, Inzai, Japan)*

Chinook salmon of the North Pacific is a unique marine resource which has been used not only by coastal societies but also by inland societies on the tributaries of spawning rivers. The Yukon River is one of the spawning rivers for Chinook. Indigenous societies along the Yukon watershed traditionally use salmon species that run up the river. Most of them use Chinook salmon for their traditional/subsistence needs, and some societies at the river mouth catch salmon also for commercial products. In this presentation, I will report on typical indigenous ways of using Chinook salmon among Gwich'in society of the middle of the Yukon in their modern life, especially focusing on the importance of Chinook salmon as their social resources. They maintain social relationships inside their rural communities as well as their group identity by sharing salmon.

There are several levels of conflicts over the use/management of the salmon resource of the Yukon. Firstly, the United States and Canada had been under international negotiation over the management of salmon resources for a long time. In this international negotiation, indigenous societies could not be given enough opportunities to build up a framework of resource management. Secondly, there is a gap between indigenous traditional paradigms and scientific paradigms. Indigenous fishermen use their traditional methods to evaluate condition of salmon run. This is completely different from scientific methods which have been adopted by State and Federal governments for salmon resource management. Thirdly, there is potential opposition between indigenous societies at the river mouth and those along the middle of the river. Because the salmon goes upstream, in other words they move to one direction, commercial fishing at the mouth may have an impact on the quantity and quality of salmon at the upper part of the river. Inland indigenous fishermen are often dissatisfied at overfishing at the river mouth. Under Alaska's subsistence statute, subsistence fisheries have a preference over other uses of the stock. State and Federal government adopt regulations that provide reasonable opportunities for these subsistence uses to take place. They assign more severe regulations on fishing activities at the mouth of the river, which may result in dissatisfaction for indigenous society there. This situation may cause mutual distrust between indigenous societies in different areas. I also will examine the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council's role in establishing a network of cooperation among indigenous societies from the river mouth to headwater, in order to coordinate the interests and (re)acquire sovereign rights for management of salmon resources. In their activities, we can find their efforts crossing three different barriers which I mentioned above.

## **16040 - Urban hunter-fisher-gatherers on Sakhalin Island: drivers, patterns and socio-ecological processes of semi-subsistence in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** *Graybill, Jessica (Colgate University, Hamilton, USA)*

Hunters, fishers and gatherers in the North Pacific are commonly imagined as people living in traditional, rural settings. But, in the Russian Far East and North, many people who hunt, fish or gather live in city or urban-like settings. I ask if the drivers, patterns and processes of collecting, preparing and sharing foodstuffs is different for urban indigenous and local residents than might be traditionally imagined if these people were leading what might be considered a more traditional (non-urban) lifestyle. In this paper, I explore the results of a cognitive mapping exercise that revealed the understandings and personal uses of resource-rich spaces by residents of the capital city of Sakhalin Island, Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. Using the results of this participatory mapping exercise, I describe an urban system of hunting-fishing-gathering for this region. By asking how urban residents perceive Sakhalin's resource-rich places and how they use specific locations for hunting-fishing-gathering, I show that the city is a driver of specific patterns and processes of resource use on Sakhalin. I conclude with questions important to future research into the urban dimensions of socio-ecological processes in the Russian North.