TITLE: SIBERIA'S FIRST NATIONS

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SIBERIA'S FIRST NATIONS

Gail Fondhl

Executive Summary

Siberia comprises 75% of Russia. Rich in fossil fuels, minerals, timber, hydropower potential, and furs, it contains only 22% of Russia's population. Some three dozen peoples make up Siberian First Nations, numbering from a few hundred individuals to several hundreds of thousands, they constitute a mere 4% of the total population of Siberia.

The combination of great wealth of resources and small numbers of indigenous peoples fuels national tensions in Siberia. Most First Nations enjoy nominal autonomy, in the form of autonomous districts and provinces, but limited control over the development of their homelands. Resources flow west from their lands to the center, with little benefit or remuneration. Environmental degradation undercuts the basis of their traditional economic activities. Services provided by the State, such as universal education develop aspirations for a "more civilized" way of life while providing few opportunities for upward mobility in either "traditional" or newer professions. Indigenous Siberians are weighing the gains from membership in a powerful empire against the losses in terms of cultural vitality.

This paper reviews the history of First Nation-Russian contacts, prior to and during the Soviet period, and summarizes key political events in the post-Soviet period. It emphasizes that few of the First Nations desire political separation from the Russian Federation at present, but several are struggling for greater levels of economic autonomy, in order to benefit from the riches of their homelands. Reforms for those nations without titular republics have been minimal, as the Russian and local legislation granting improved rights is internally contradictory.

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SIBERIA'S FIRST NATIONS

Gail A. Fondahl

Siberia, the land beyond the Urals and north of Kazakhstan, comprises 75% of Russia. Rich in fossil fuels, minerals, timber, hydropower potential, and furs, it is relatively sparsely populated. But while it is people-poor, with only 22% of Russia’s population, it is peoples-rich. Over three dozen peoples, numbering from a few hundred to several hundreds of thousands, claim part of Siberia as their homeland (see Map 1 page 35, and Table 1 pages 36-37), and essentially all of the Commonwealth’s other nationalities can be found here. Over half a millennia of Russian colonization has left its mark on the demographic makeup of this vast area: First Nations peoples currently constitute a mere 5% of the total population of Siberia.

It is this combination of great wealth of resources and small numbers of indigenous peoples which fuels national tensions in Siberia. Most First Nations enjoy nominal autonomy, in the form of autonomous districts and provinces, but limited control over the development of their homelands. Resources flow west from their lands to the center, with little benefit or remuneration. They see the environmental degradation that accompanies the exploitation of these resources undercutting the basis of their traditional economic activities — reindeer, sheep and cattle pastoralism, hunting and trapping, fishing and sea-mammal harvesting. They question the benefits of services provided by the State, such as universal education, which develops aspirations for a “more civilized” way of life while providing few opportunities for upward mobility in either “traditional” or newer professions. With heightened expectations, and greater contacts with the outside world, indigenous Siberians are weighing the gains from membership in a powerful empire against the losses in terms of cultural vitality. Here, as elsewhere in the former USSR, the myth of fraternal relations has unraveled, to be replaced by accusations of internal colonialism. As Siberian First Nations attempt to regain control over their lands and its resources, they increasingly propound a separation of indigenous and non-indigenous geographies.

In Siberia prishlie — “newcomers” (mainly Russians, but including Ukrainians, Tatars, Jews, and individuals from essentially every other nation of the former USSR) — dominate numerically (see Table 2 page 38). Indeed, Russians have outnumbered First Nations peoples for about three centuries. The percentage of indigenous representation varies by area, but in almost all political-administrative divisions above the rayon level indigenous persons constitute less than one-quarter of the population (see Table 3 page 39). Only in the Tuva Republic and the Aga Buryat Autonomous Okrug do the indigenous populations (Tuvans, Buryats) exceed that of the non-indigenous population. Where rapid industrial development and concomitant
large-scale immigration of laborers has occurred, such as that experienced in the West Siberian oil fields, the First Nations’ representation has dropped most precipitously: the Khants and Mansi at the last census (1989) made up only 1.4% of their titular territory’s population, a mere one-tenth of their relative representation in 1959.

Simple characterization of relations between the First Nations and newcomers poses an impossible task. At various times and in various regions they have evidenced hostility, friendship, awe, disdain, trust, distrust, exploitation and charitable aid. Instances can be pointed to where individuals of each group viewed members of the other as saviors or destroyers.

Further exacerbating the problem is the fact that throughout the whole history of Russia and the USSR we have very few sources which give us the uninterpreted, unedited, uncensored First Nation view of such relations. Accounts of “historical” relations between the indigenous and immigrant population of Siberia are reconstructed largely, if not exclusively, from the writings of non-indigenous observers. Indeed only in the last several decades, with the creation of literary languages by the Soviets, have most of the Siberian First Nations been able to write, and thus record their observations and feelings, their histories. And only much more recently have they been allowed to openly express in the press any opinions which are critical of relations between the Russians and themselves. There is also a dearth of information on relations among the various First Nations of Siberia within the Soviet-period literature, with that available mainly limited to statistics on intermarriage.

For the purposes of this paper the Siberian First Nations lend themselves to classification in five groups: the “Peoples of the North”, the Southern Siberian Turkic peoples, the Buryats, the Sakha and the Tuvans. The paper considers the Peoples of the North in greatest detail, then draws parallels and contrasts with developments in inter-ethnic relations which characterize the other peoples of Siberia.

**The Peoples of the North**

Over two-dozen numerically small nations (under 50,000 persons each) inhabit the tayga and tundra zones of Siberia (see Table 1 pp. 36-37). Linguistically represented are the Ugrian (Khant, Mansi) and Samoedian (Nenets, Enets, Nganasan, Sel’kup) branches of the Uralic family of languages; the Turkic (Dolgan, Tofalar) and Tungus/Manchu (Evenk, Even, Nanay, Negidal, Orochi, Oroki, Udegey, Ulchi) branches of the Altaian family of languages, the Kett language group (Kets), the Eskimo-Aleut language group (Eskimo, Aleut), and the Paleoasiatic grouping of little internal coherence (Chukchi, Chuvan, Koryak, Itelmen, Yukagir, Nivkhi). Economically, these peoples depended on reindeer pastoralism, hunting and trapping, sea mammal hunting, or fishing, or most commonly a combination of these activities. Land use
thus was based on harvesting locally available, renewable resources. Because of the environmental conditions, the Peoples of the North required large territories to support small populations.

As early as 1918 the Soviet state categorized these linguistically, racially, and economically differentiated peoples as a group to be handled with one set of policies. Peoples from the Arctic littoral to the Amur Basin, those living on the eastern flanks of the Urals and those of the western rim of the Pacific were all designated "small peoples of the North" [*malie narody Severa*]. Uniformity in the State's policy towards these peoples has evoked similarities in development of their national consciousness. Of course differences also are evident, in part stemming from varied geographies, histories and economies. Northern First Nations themselves now employ this grouping in order to demand increased rights and recognition of their distinct cultures.

*Historical Background: Interethnic Relations in the Pre-Soviet Period*

In 1581, with Yermak's crossing of the Urals to attack Kuchum's Siberian khanate, the Russian state officially began its conquest of Siberia. However for almost five hundred years prior to this historical watershed, Nentsy, Khants and Mansi had conducted trade across the northern Urals, exchanging fur, walrus ivory, and other products of the northwestern Siberian forests and Arctic littoral for western goods from Novgorod and then Muscovy. In fact, while a desire for more furs stimulated the Russian expansion into Siberia, one impetus for opening a *southerly* route was the increasing hostility of the Nentsy to Russian incursions across the northern Urals at the turn of the 15th-16th century.

The more southerly route brought Russians first into Khant and Mansi lands. These peoples, who already paid tribute to the khan of Sibir, responded to initial attempts at levying further taxes on them with fierce resistance. Using superior military technology (firearms), but also promises of release from payments to the khan, Russian forces soon prevailed. Throughout the taiga and tundra zones of Siberia this would be the model for conquest: a show of strength was often enough to achieve compliance of the indigenous population to the imposition of *yasak* — the fur tribute required by the Tsar, especially when accompanied by offers of aid against other perceived oppressors. Russians had firearms; First Nations peoples didn't. Indigenous groups soon saw Russians as possible — and powerful — allies in their battles against each other and joined these well-armed forces to crush long-standing opponents. Russians quickly learned to exploit the intertribal animosities to their own advantage. Historian George Lantzef, in a review of the seventeenth century literature, found Khants and Russians fighting Nentsy, Khants and Russians allied against Mansi, Yukagirs battling Chukchi with the
help of Russians, and Evenks joining Russians in subjugating Buryats. Within nations, the 
Russians exploited inter-clan hostilities as well, to conquer recalcitrant groups. 8

Russians moved rapidly across Siberia. By 1650 most of the northern First Nations paid 
yasak to the Tsar's coffers. *Ostrogs* raised alongside indigenous settlements, at the confluences 
of rivers and at portage termini, acted as collection points for the fur tribute as well as foci for 
trade and retreats during times of rebellion. For First Nations compliance with the demands of 
yasak and other burdens imposed by the Tsarist state was neither unanimous nor continuous. 
When dealt with unfairly, an all too frequent occurrence, indigenous peoples rebelled. An 
attempt to raise the yasak in 1606 caused Nentsy in the region of Mangazeya, and Khants along 
the Ket River to revolt. In 1609-1610 Khants tried to evict Russians who had occupied their 
homelands. 9 Further to the east the Evenks and Evens revolted in 1662. The Chukchi most 
effectively resisted Russian domination, and continued to function as a semi-independent nation 
well into the 19th century.

Indigenous responses to the conquest and imposition of tribute were not limited to armed 
revolts. When provincial officials increased yasak rates or demanded other services, the hunters 
often petitioned Moscow to rule against local corruption. A second line of recourse was simple 
refusal to pay yasak. To avoid the inevitable confrontation in which this resulted some First 
Nations groups migrated deeper into the taiga, temporarily escaping their economic tormentors. 
More drastic measures involved assassinations of Russians, and in at least one case a mass 
suicides in protest. 10

Moscow's, then St. Petersburg's, greatest interest in Siberia, and more specifically, in its 
First Nations, was in ensuring an uninterrupted flow of furs from the hinterland to the 
center. 11 To achieve this Tsarist governments repeatedly issued decrees denouncing 
exploitative practices. In the initial stages of conquest, yasak paid to the Tsar was to be no 
higher than that levied by former powers (khans); later the yasak collectors were strictly 
prohibited from adding levies for their own profits. Unregulated trade was prohibited in 
order to protect the indigenous population. However, stories abound of highly usurious 
practices, the most common being unfair trading deals, especially those involving Russians 
attempting to get traders drunk before negotiating. Deceit was not a Russian monopoly, 
however. Fur trappers, for instance, rubbed sable pelts with coal in order to garner the higher 
prices paid for the more valuable, darker species. 12

The preceding depiction of First Nation-Russian contact in the Siberian North draws a 
picture of conflict and animosity. As the immigrant population of Siberia grew First Nations 
people and Russians increasingly lived in relatively close proximity and dealt with each other in 
realms other than trade. While laws expressly prohibited many contacts, including unregulated
trade, land leasing by Russians from First Nations, and the cohabitation of indigenous persons and common Russians in the same village, these laws were difficult to enforce. First Nation and Russian villages were often separate but adjacent. Intermarriage became increasingly common, and Russians employed indigenous persons to fish, herd deer, cut hay, gather firewood and berries, and carry out innumerable other tasks. First Nations people adopted some items of Russian dress, domestic implements and tools, and other elements of material culture, and an increasing number learned to speak Russian. At the same time, Russians adopted much indigenous technology for surviving in the severe Siberian environment: clothing, transport and hunting equipment, foodstuffs and preparation techniques, etc. Some Russians learned to speak the local languages; most often the terminology of work incorporated many words from the indigenous languages.

Unlike many other parts of the world, the State enacted no large-scale policy of genocide; in fact, as mentioned, tsars repeatedly issued protective measures, in order to ensure that First Nations people would be able to continue to provide the State with furs. However, local officials rarely implemented these decrees, and the indigenous northerners met oppressors both in government agents and private traders and colonizers. Officials overlooked crimes against indigenous persons by immigrants, and themselves frequently ignored state decrees on humane treatment. They mistreated hostages (whom they were officially allowed to keep to ensure continued yasak payments by fellow clansmen), even starving them at times, and condoned the use of alcohol in trading. Military campaigns against indigenous settlements involved rape, murder, kidnapping and pillaging. The conquest and colonization of northern Siberia severely impacted the First Nations population. Introduced diseases to which there was no immunity caused phenomenal death rates. Moreover the demand for fur tribute in areas where there had been none before meant a restructuring of the indigenous economy away from purely subsistence concerns, and a decrease in food production. When and where this contributed to declining nutritional status, the depredations of disease were even more greatly felt. Finally, cultural anomic in the face of foreign incursion and subjugation undoubtedly further undermined peoples' resistance to the new diseases. Populations of a number of the peoples (Khants, Mansi, Evenks, Nanay) by the Revolution had declined by as much as 30 to 40%.

The Soviet Period: Inter-ethnic Relations

Before the Revolution, we might surmise that many First Nations had little reason to distinguish between state official and private trader or colonist in terms of the treatment they could expect to receive. Any initial impressions of the Tsarist government as ally or protector would have faded quickly. This view of government changed, if briefly, after the Revolution.
During the early years of Soviet power, First Nations did invest some hopes in the new government as a better ruler and even as a protector of their interests. Many First Nations people still see the 1920s (prior to collectivization) as a period of great cultural development, which the new Soviet state supported. To these early decades date the creation of literary languages, the establishment of educational institutions (at first nomadic), universal suffrage, and many other institutions which many First Nations persons view positively. In 1924 the Russian Government created a special "Committee of the North" to protect the interests and oversee the development of First Nations. This dedicated group of scholars helped institute the State's policy of *korennizatsiya* ('indigenization') in Siberia, encouraging indigenous political participation in the new governmental structures (the *soviets*). It played a role in defining the identity of many of these peoples as nations, both in the eyes of the state and among the peoples themselves. A culminating step was the establishment of national *okrugy* for a number of the Peoples of the North in 1930 (see Map 2, page 40).

If paternalistic, early Russian Federation policy attempted to provide some degree of protection to the northern First Nations. The Committee for the North espoused what is now referred to as "internationalization" (*internatsionalizatsiya*), a process which in theory combined the best specific, national (*natsionalno-osobennoe*) traits of these "primitive" cultures with the universal (*internatsionalno-obshchee*) traits of the more advanced (Russian) culture. Internationalization would hypothetically avoid both extremes, of complete assimilation or complete isolation. To achieve it, national traits had to be nurtured, not obliterated.

First Nations people initially looked to the Committee and to the new Bolshevik government to resolve some of their conflicts with the growing Russian population. Paramount in the list of protestations in the early 20th century were the issues of Russian encroachment on indigenous homelands and of hunting competition and habitat destruction. For instance, delegates to a 1926 meeting in the Turukhansk region complained that "Russians, invading the tayga, ravage the graves of our ancestors, rob indigenous caches, steal foxes from Tungus [Evenk] traps. Hunting dogs of the Russians chase the easily frightened Tungus reindeer through the taiga....And there have been cases where Russians have killed domestic reindeer." At this meeting and others elsewhere, First Nations persons appealed to the State to exclude Russians (and also Buryats) from hunting, and to protect the forest from burning by the *prishlie*. Soviet officials responded by assigning clans specific hunting areas (allegedly the most valuable), and prohibiting access to these by Russians. However, enforcement of the prohibition was nigh impossible. Russians continued to encroach upon indigenous hunting areas, complaining that it was unfair that the First Nations had special areas set aside, but could also hunt on "free lands" (i.e. the ones open to the Russians) and that they began hunting prior
to the official commencement of hunting season. When indigenous persons pleaded with Soviet officials to totally halt colonization by Russians, governmental officials flatly condemned this attitude. The only answer left appeared to be self-imposed isolation, a retreat beyond the borders of Russian settlement. In some instances First Nations groups assumed a "scorched earth" policy, burning winter hunting grounds to stop the advance of Russian hunters and stabilize the boundaries of their shrinking territory.

The creation of nine national okrugy for eight of the Peoples of the North must have seemed a promising step in terms of gaining a degree of autonomy. However, the majority of Peoples of the North received no such titular administrative unit. Those who did gained little. As immigrants continued to pour into Siberia, the population of the national okrugy became increasingly non-indigenous. First Nations peoples usually received figurehead posts in the okrug government and party apparatus, but exercised minimal power over decisions on the development of resources and allocation of lands to the various state ministries and their enterprises.

By the mid-1930s any hopes of indigenous northerners must have faded, with State pursuance of policies of collectivization and sedentarization in the North. It also became clear that the State not only did not intend to limit Russian colonization, but indeed encouraged it. Local control over local affairs increasingly eroded. Two autonomous okrugy were abolished. Moreover, cooptation replaced integration as the State's policy toward a number of the Peoples of the North. Central authorities deemed several nations too small to deserve their own literary language and halted the development of these, closing, or simply failing to support indigenous language presses. Some peoples (e.g. the Chuvans, Ents, and Oroks) actually lost official recognition as distinct nationalities, as witnessed by their disappearance from the censuses (Table 1, pp. 36-37). On the other hand, the Peoples of the North continued to receive a number of benefits from the State, such as affirmative action policies for admittance to universities and free travel to medical care facilities. These benefits have served to encourage First Nations individuals (including children of mixed marriages) to identify themselves as such, at least officially, and may have played a role in keeping alive the identity of the peoples not recognized by the state.

Indigenous northerners identify the 1960s and 1970s as especially damaging periods for their cultural vitality. During these decades the pace of industrial development of Siberia greatly increased, and with it the degradation of their homelands. Other State-initiated practices also are condemned. The conversion from collective to state farms throughout the North meant the consolidation of small single-nation villages into larger multinational ones; in the 1960s the number of farms decreased by 60%. With increasing rarity did indigenous persons hold
leadership positions on the larger farms. Removed from their birthplace, torn from the resource base upon which they depended, large numbers were alienated from employment in traditional activities, and from participation in subsidiary activities such as wild-food gathering. State officials increasingly effectively enforced the compulsory education policy, which meant that more and more First Nations children ended up in boarding schools, often far removed from their parents. Northerners condemn this system as nurturing a culture of dependency on the dominant nation; indeed by the late 1950s, First Nations often passively accepted harmful state policies.

Interference proceeded hand in hand with neglect: while forcing sedentarization and compulsory education, the State failed to provide the needed infrastructure in terms of housing, medical care facilities, transport, etc. Living conditions in Siberia’s rural areas, where most (74%) of the indigenous population lives, are among the worst in Russia. First Nations have routinely suffered un- and underemployment, with trivial compensation for low-skilled work. Interethnic conflict is exacerbated where job discrimination favors prishlie, especially in "traditional" activities: for instance, in the northern Chita Oblast, qualified Evenks greatly resented the loss of well-paid positions as state hunters to Russians. The disorientation that accompanies current conditions in the North increasingly finds its expression in high rates of alcohol usage, violence, homicide and suicide. Life expectancy for Siberian First Nations runs 16-18 years lower than the average for the RSFSR, largely due to alcohol-related accidents and violent deaths.

Besides the malaise caused directly by State policies, northern First Nations now also openly condemn that caused by the prishlie themselves. In areas where non-indigenous immigration has been greatest and resource exploitation activities most dramatic, tensions are most severe, fueled by violent and other criminal activities of the prishlie against First Nations persons. Evenki living near the Baikal-Amur (BAM) railroad protest the widespread poaching of both deer and the game and fur animals on which they depend by Bamovtsy, workers on the railroad. Evenk women further south complain of increased rates of sexual assault by gold workers. Infrastructure may be limited, but the existing roads allow kommersanty to ply liquor among, and prey on, the indigenous population. To date most published accounts concentrate on non-indigenous attacks on First Nations persons, and fail to indicate widespread retaliation, as has occurred between the Sakha and Russians and the Tuvans and Russians (see below). Yet numerous anecdotes of violent attacks by indigenous persons on prishlie suggest two-way traffic.
The Post-Soviet Period: Tentative Reforms, Few Gains

Glasnost allowed the open discussion of problems, and facilitated the formation of an "Association of the Numerically Small Peoples of the North" to lobby for improved rights and improved implementation of existing rights of the northern First Nations. Here we see not contention among "non-titular" groups, but rather cooperation for a common goal. With only advisory powers, the Association, formed in 1989, nevertheless successfully attained high visibility in policy circles. It put forward a platform of juridical guarantees of traditional land use and control of all resources, surface and subsurface, for the indigenous population of the North. It also lobbied for USSR, then Russian, ratification of Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization, which upholds indigenous peoples' rights to control their "economic, social and cultural development", and requires the state government to "guarantee effective protection of their rights of ownership and possession" of their land and resources. Republican, provincial, regional and village associations of numerically small peoples complete a hierarchy of organization attempting to promote First Nation rights.

First Nations groups continue to stress the primacy of control over land and resources to their cultural survival, Russian Federation legislation has responded in part to some First Nations demands, granting increased rights in terms of access to and control over renewable resources. However existing legislation is internally contradictory, and open to great variability in interpretation and thus implementation. Moreover, legislation at both the federal and regional level awaits the passage of a federal "Law on the Legal Status of Indigenous Numerically Small Peoples", as called for in other RF legislation. This proposed law has experienced an erosion of powers granted to First Nations in its successive drafts.

While new legislation offers specific, if limited, protection of rights, the general process of democratization ironically has reduced First Nations political power base, due to the large numbers of immigrants and the current integration of indigenous and non-indigenous spheres of activity. With free elections, First Nations can no longer hope to achieve a majority of votes even in most village administrations, let alone at the rayon level. Both the absolute and relative number of elected representatives of the northern First Nations decreased in the 1989 and 1990 elections, most markedly at the lower (rayon and settlement) levels of government. In less than 43% of all settlements registered as "national" do First Nations comprise more than 50% of the population. Moreover, many of these settlements were until recently considered "futureless" (neperspektivnye) by the government, and were slated for closing. If the government reversed its position on this issue, and has even called for the consideration of re-establishing liquidated villages, there are no monies to do so.
Indeed, as elsewhere in the former USSR, problems of cultural survival have been exacerbated by the financial collapse of the region. Attempts in the early 1990s to create more culturally-sensitive educational curricula, to provide better housing, social and medical services to First Nations, have faltered due to lack of funds. The situation in the North is exacerbated in that this region was heavily subsidized by the government, and much of those subsidies have been withdrawn.

The new Russian government has not yet formulated a coherent policy toward First Nations peoples nor toward regional development in the North. Leading scholars on the Siberian First Nations suggest a policy based on the concept of "neotraditionalism". Neotraditionalism propounds a move away from the policies of modernization/assimilation, pursued from the 1930s onward, toward one of genuine indigenous self-government at the lowest level (i.e. of indigenous villages), state protection of 'traditional' activities (reindeer herding, hunting, etc.), and emphasis on meeting internal needs of indigenous communities over state procurements or market demands. It criticizes the recent emphasis on devolution of power to autonomous okrugs as not benefiting the indigenous nations themselves, due to the demographic realities discussed above. It holds that the "severe economic conditions in the North" demand a "genuine revival" of 'traditional' northern economic activities simply to survive the current economic crisis, that the "rebirth of traditionalism" in herding, hunting, etc., is a "grim reality with no alternative" given the financial collapse of the government. This analysis, if bleak, concurs with bioregionalist approaches proposed by First Nations themselves, which argue that self-government, including control over local resources, is the only path to ensuring both environmentally and culturally sustainable development of Russia's northern expanses.

Relations to the International Circumpolar Community

The Association of the Peoples of the North has forged ties with several international indigenous groups (World Council of Indigenous Peoples, Inuit Circumpolar Council, Sami Council) which work for Fourth World rights. First Nations persons are familiarizing themselves with the benefits and drawbacks of land claims settlements and other political agreements negotiated by foreign First Nations of the Arctic and Subarctic with their respective states. Increasingly connections are forged at lower levels, via First Nations exchange cultural programs, attendance at economic conferences, etc. Perhaps most attention has been paid to the Siberian Eskimos, whose population straddles the international border. Cut off from communications with their relatives across the international border only in 1948, the Russian Eskimos have now re-establishing ties with the American Yupik population on St. Lawrence.
with a great potential for politicized common agendas. With much publicity, relatives were allowed once again to visit each other in 1988. Since its formation in 1977 the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) invited the Russian Eskimos to participate at its tri-yearly meetings: they were finally able to do so in 1989.

The Eskimos, and neighboring Chukchi, also have begun to participate in the plans to establish an international park straddling land on both sides of the Bering Sea (Chukotka and Alaska). However, park planning has failed to incorporate in any systematic or comprehensive way, the input of the people who live within or near the proposed park territory. International projects, such as this one, however well-intentioned, may hinder future self-determination efforts of First Nations peoples in Siberia.

The Southern Siberian Turkic Peoples: Altays, Khakassy, Shors

As in Northern Siberia, the indigenous peoples of southwest Siberia identify the most significant threat to their continued cultural viability as stemming from incursions of an industrialization program over which they have had no control, and the concomitant loss of land and degradation of the environment which has threatened "traditional" activities. Southwestern Siberia, an area of high mountains alternating with undulating plains, is home to nomadic pastoralists of Turkic linguistic stock, who traditionally herded sheep, cattle, and horses. Over the last century and a half, immigrants streamed into the area, both as agricultural colonists and in association with the development of mining centers and metalworks. Most recently, prishlie came to mine ores which utilize in their processing the coal of the nearby Kuznetsk Basin (Kuzbas). As with the northern First Nations, the numerical inferiority, ever increasing, of the South Siberian Turkic peoples holds little promise for real political autonomy based on the present titular administrative units.

The identities of these peoples as Shors, Altays, and Khakassy were forged, fairly successfully, during the Soviet period. Here, as elsewhere in the USSR, the creation of one literary language for each of these peoples contributed to the internal unification of a number of related groups as self-conscious nations. Prior to the October Revolution none of these three (groups of) peoples identified themselves with a single, encompassing name. The Altays and Khakassy were divided into a number of tribes and territorial groups, and the Shors identified themselves primarily by clan, one of the more numerous of these being the eponymous clan. This didn't however, preclude pan-nationalist aspirations before the Revolution. The national histories of these peoples are similar enough to consider together; in fact nationalist aspirations have coalesced in both the earlier part of this century and more recently.
The Altays actually consist of two groups with distinct languages, a northern group comprising the Tubulars, Chelkans and Kumandas, and a southern group comprising the Telengits, Telesy, Teleuts, and Altays. These various groups fell under Western Mongol (Oirot) rule from the 15th to the 18th century. The defeat of Dzungaria by China signified a change in rulership. Then, in the mid-19th century the Russian Empire wrested this area from China, and the Altays became subjects of the Tsar. Venerating their Mongol connections, nationalists of the early 20th century would borrow "Oirot", the term initially also used by the State to identify the peoples now known collectively as the Altays.

With the establishment of Russian power, Russian peasant immigrants, attracted by the rich pasture lands, soon began to flow into the area. Land reform in 1899 stipulated a redistribution of land based on needs for subsistence family farming (18 desyatins, or approximately 20 hectares per family). This of course greatly eroded the land base of the semi-nomadic indigenous herders, who needed extensive tracts of pasture, and who did not recognize private ownership in any event.

The Khakass nation included the Kacha, Sagay, Bel’tir, Kyzyl and Koybal ‘tribes’. Their union with the Russian empire dated to the early 1600s, when the various tribes pledged allegiance to the Tsar in return for protection from multiple tribute payments (to Mongols and Kirghiz as well as Russians).

Nationalist movements developed among the Altay and Khakass intelligentsia in the late 19th and early 20th century. Among the Altays, the movement was tied to a messianic religious movement, Burkhanism, which acknowledged the visitation of Oirot Khan to an Altay shepherd. This Khan preached a doctrine that was both anti-Christian and anti-Russian. The movement among the Khakass apparently did not have the same religious character, though the choice of the name, Khakass, for the fledgling nation evoked a history of great depth, referring to the Khyagasy of Chinese chronicles. In the early 20th century, with the Tsarist regime weakened by the 1905 revolution, Khakass nationalists attempted to free themselves from Tsarist control by a transfer of land and administration to clan organizations. However, Tsarist officials refused to recognize the indigenous reforms.

During the tumultuous months following the October Revolution, Altay and Khakass nationalists joined to consider the creation of an independent Turkic peoples’ republic, which would have included these two groups as well as perhaps the Tuvans or the Kazakhs. While the new Bolshevik government forbade the formation of such an independent unit, the People’s Commissariat for Nationalities initially accepted the concept of an Oirot-Khakass autonomous territorial unit within Russia. However, in the early 1920s the State established two separate
administrative units, the Oirot Autonomous Oblast and the Khakass Uezd. The latter was given national okrug status in 1925, then elevated to an autonomous oblast in 1930.

The Soviet state also established a Shor National Okrug, Gornaya Shoriya, in 1929. In all three areas the indigenous populations may have been a majority at the time of creation of the national administrative units. Rapid influx of Russian and other immigrants during the early years of the Soviet industrialization drive quickly changed this situation. By the end of World War II the Khakassy constituted less than 20% of the population of their designated homeland; prior to the war (1938), Shors had decreased to 13% of Gornaya Shoriya’s inhabitants. This national okrug was disbanded in 1939, and the land became part of the Kemerovo Oblast. Here we have a situation analogous to that of the Even-Okhotsk National Okrug: Gornaya Shoriya’s existence may have been seen as an impediment to the development of the rich coal deposits of the Kuzbas as well as the associated iron deposits of the okrug itself, and the titular population considered small enough to disenfranchise without consequence to the State.

The consequences to the Shors, though, were significant. In simple demographic terms the growth of the Shor population was almost three percentage points below that of the RSFSR average between 1959 and 1970 (7.98% vs. 10.7%), and between 1970 and 1979 the Shor population actually declined by almost 3%. Besides the abolishment of their autonomous territory, the Shors faced the closing of predominantly Shor farms and of Shor villages. Forced emigration from rural areas increased the number of Shors working in the mines of the region. Social malaise of the indigenous population was expressed as it was further north: suicide rates and fatal accidents grew, especially in the wake of increased alcohol and drug abuse.

The Altay suffered a less dramatic, but nonetheless telling fate. Too obviously an echo of lingering aspirations, the designation “Oirot” was changed to “Altay”, and “Gorno Altay” substituted for “Oirot” in the autonomous oblast’s name in 1948. Altay nationalists had apparently continued to nurture the idea of a sovereign Oirota, and remained in contact with “Oirots” in Sinkiang. By renaming this nation, the State sought to sever psychological as well as tangible connections to related peoples beyond the boundaries of the USSR.

The end of the 1980s witnessed both divisive and unifying movements among these South Siberian peoples. On one hand, the Soviet policy of consolidating various tribes or territorial groups into cohesive nations did not fully succeed: the Teleuts, for instance continued to request recognition as a nation distinct from the Altays. On the other hand, the various South Siberian peoples cooperated in creating a Siberian Cultural Center (SCC, based in St. Petersburg) as a union of national activists from Khakassy, Altay and Shors. The SCC lobbied for increased national autonomy of the South Siberian peoples, an improvement in the
situation of native languages, and protection from degradation caused by industrialization. Within the SCC, founded in 1989 by Khakass intellectuals, "an increasing consensus about the necessity of restoring the historical unity of these three nationalities, separated from each other by centuries of Russian colonial administration" prevailed.65

SCC membership spanned the political spectrum from radical separatists to more conservative "sovereignists". Some dreamt of an independent South Siberia Turkic republic, reminiscent of the vision of Oirotia earlier in this century. Pragmatists point to basic demographic problems inherent in establishing such a republic — the indigenous peoples are now minorities throughout their homelands. A less radical component of this movement proposed establishing indigenous administration over an archipelago of rural areas which do still have a indigenous majority.

Khakassia declared its status as a republic of the Russian Federation, separate from the Krasnoyarsk Kray, in 1990, a move which the Russian parliament confirmed in 1991. Khakassy comprised only 11% of the population. Since they are geographically concentrated, the regional association of indigenous peoples, "Tun", called for the establishment of an autonomous region within the republic. It also lobbied for a bicameral republican government, with at least half the seats in one of the two chambers, the Council of Nationalities, dedicated to Khakassy, and a prerequisite of Khakass nationality applied to the positions of prime minister, parliamentary chair and minister of culture. Such platforms incurred the wrath of Russian and Cossack factions, who accused the association of separatist tendencies. While some of its radical members do espouse separation, the organization has not, rather working to ensure avenues for Khakass participation in the republican government, and thus the Russian Federation.66

Khakassia's relations remain tense with the Krasnoyarsk Kray, from which it separated. The Khakass government banned the export of most goods produced in the republic to the neighboring kray; allegedly in retaliation, the Krasnoyarsk Kray constructed the first customs post between the two political-administrative entities.67 Again, the extent to which we can consider Khakassia's decision a result of "ethnic" politics is cloudy, given the demographics of the republic.

The Gorno-Altay autonomous oblast also declared sovereignty, first as an ASSR, then as a republic (1992). Breaking away from the Altay Kray it removed itself from one "matrioshka" of administrative nesting. In its sovereignty decree, the republic claimed exclusive rights to its natural resources,68 a position upheld by the Federal Treaty of 1992 for republics. Some 30% of the population of the Altay Republic is Altay. Discussion of secession from the RF has been minimal.69
The Buryats

The Buryats, living to the west and east of southern Lake Baykal, and north of the border with Mongolia, are one of two Mongol peoples of the Russian Federation (the Kalmyks being the other). Traditionally pastoral nomads, raising sheep, horses and some cattle, they adopted agriculture in increasing numbers during the 19th century. Russians most heavily influenced the Buryats living to the west of Lake Baykal, many of whom converted to Eastern Orthodoxy. The Buryats differ little ethnically from the Mongols across the international border: anthropologist Caroline Humphrey describes them as "those northern Mongol tribes which decided they wished to remain in the Tsarist Russian Empire" in the 18th century.70 This choice stemmed from lower taxes and greater freedom of movement under the Tsar than under the Khalka Mongol leadership.

While Russians began to penetrate Buryat homelands as early as the 17th century, contact between the two peoples remained minimal. Russians settled in villages, Buryats continued to nomadize. This difference in lifeways, which limited interaction between the two peoples, would become the basis for tensions between them, for the Buryat economy depended on the extensive use of land for grazing livestock.

Interethnic conflicts began by the late 18th century, as increasing numbers of (mainly Russian) immigrants moved into the Buryat homelands, and gradually dispossessed the Buryat of their ancestral territory. Disputes reached a critical level in the early twentieth century, when the Tsarist government proposed a land reform, similar to that proposed for the Altay region, which granted equal territory to each household, regardless of ethnic identity or economic activity. The area to be allocated, as in the case of the Altay, was calculated to meet the needs of peasant farmers (15 desyatins, or roughly 17 hectares, per male) not transhumant pastoralists, and would be owned individually, not collectively.71 Under this reform Buryat communities would lose up to half of their lands, which would threaten their nomadic way of life. Tsarist reforms also eliminated an administrative system which guaranteed Buryat governance of predominantly Buryat areas.72

In response to these reforms, to continued Russian immigration, and especially to the land tenure issues, a vital Buryat nationalist movement developed around the turn of the century.73 Members of the Buryat intelligentsia in vain petitioned St. Petersburg to regain local self-government. They condemned the Tsarist government for its land policies and unwillingness to limit Russian colonization. Within the intelligentsia grew increasingly schismatic factions. One supported a separate Mongolian state, essentially a re-creation of the Mongol Empire.74 Another worked for greater political and cultural autonomy within the Russian state. The latter
held greatest power at the time of the Revolution, with most Buryat leaders subscribing to socialism, but not Bolshevism.\(^{75}\)

As a first step towards territorial autonomy, the new regime (Bolsheviks) in 1918 granted the Buryats *aimaks* — their own administrative areas, equivalent to *rayons*, scattered among the Russian villages. Two years later, with the formation of the Far Eastern Republic, the Buryat nation was temporarily split politically. In 1921 the constitution of the Far Eastern Republic created an "Autonomous Buryat-Mongol Oblast"; the following year the Soviet government established a Buryat-Mongol Autonomous Republic. These two were merged to form one single Buryat-Mongol ASSR in 1923. From the very beginning, Russians outnumbered Buryats in the ASSR (Table 3, p. 39).\(^{76}\)

It was not the demographics, however, but rather retribution for supposed nationalist and even pan-Mongolist "deviations" that in 1937 caused the reduction of Buryat titular territory. Most of the members of the Buryat intelligentsia, who had played a critical role in shaping the early policy of the Buryat-Mongol ASSR, were denounced as Japanese spies and purged. The ASSR was carved up into three titular units (Map 2, p. 40), with 12% of its former territory given to the Chita and Irkutsk Oblasts.\(^{77}\) This lost land constituted some of the richer agricultural and pastoral areas of the republic. During 1937 the State also instituted a number of new privileges for settlers in the Eastern reaches of the country, which increased the flow of Russians into Buryatia.\(^{78}\) By 1959 Buryats only accounted for 20% of the ASSR’s population, though since then the indigenous population has grown faster than the Russian population. The two groups tend to remain separate, living in different villages or different sections of Buryatia’s villages and towns.

*Glasnost* evoked a resurgence in nationalist activity in Buryatia. More radical nationalist lobbied for the return of the original name, from which "Mongol" was dropped in 1958.\(^{79}\) They also demanded re-consolidation of the Buryat homeland to its pre-1937 borders. The Buryat Republic government called for a "legal and political evaluation" of the 1937 decree (1991), but in 1993 officially recognized the constitutional status of the Aga and Ust-Orda Buryat Autonomous Okrugs, simply stating the "necessity" of increasing cultural and economic ties.\(^{80}\) Buryats apparently supported the 1990 declaration of sovereignty put forward by the republic’s Supreme Soviet, which upgraded the republic to SSR status, and claimed control over all natural resources,\(^{81}\) and the subsequent move to 'sovereign' status as a republic within the Russian Federation. Legal code now guarantees equal status of the Buryat and Russian languages.\(^{82}\) A new legislative body, the People’s Khural, evokes the title of pre-Soviet, Mongol-influenced institutions, in form if not content. Nationalist debate took an interesting turn in the spring and summer of 1994, during campaigning for the first presidential election in
Buryatia, mainly between Leonid Potapov, a Russian who espoused "gradualism" in economic policy and Alexander Ivanov, a Buryat and a "reformer". While political leanings of the Republic's population determined the outcome, Potapov's case was helped by the fact that he, the Russian, spoke Buryat, and Ivanov didn't, a fact the press gave much play. Potapov resoundingly defeated Ivanov with 72% of the votes in the second round of voting. The post-election mood was bittersweet, as many Buryats felt that it should be a Buryat who served as the first president of the Republic, but, apart from economic leanings, considered Ivanov's ties to Buryat culture disputable.

The Buryat Nation is experiencing a significant renaissance in culture, if its potential is sapped by the critical financial situation of the whole Russian Federation. Buddhism enjoys a vibrant revival. Daily radio and TV broadcasting include Buryat language programming. Environmental causes are promoted in the name of preserving the Buryat homeland. The government recently publicly condemned the "limiting of the public function of the Buryat language", the "practical liquidation of folk trades and handicrafts, the ecological traditions of the peoples of Buryatia, and the persecution", and the "victimization of the traditional religions of the peoples" under Stalin's and others' rule. Separatist tendencies are minimal, but among the intelligentsia, the possibility of recreating a larger, pre-1937 Buryatia still occasionally lends spice to late-night conversations, if as a remote dream.

Interethnic relations: Buryats and the 'Peoples of the North' (Evenki)

Buryatia's northern rayony embrace homelands of the Evenk Nation, and the republic has addressed this fact by establishing a number of national (Evenk) rural administrations (former selsovery) and one Evenk national rayon (Baunt). Another rayon (Kurumkan) in the republic is currently considering pursuing status as a national region. Supposed to improve federal funding opportunities, Evenki in the Baunt Evenk National Region feel that, to date, the status has not in any way helped their situation. At the same time, ethnic hostility between the Evenk and Buryat appears minimal; rather, as elsewhere, both groups focus on the problems introduced by an immigrant population which has no intention of long-term residence in the republic. Legislation mentioned above which condemned repression of Buryat culture also condemned, specifically, similar repression of Evenk culture, language and religion within the republic.

Buryat Links with Mongolia and Beyond

The relationship between Buryats and Khalka Mongols has often been one of uneasy alliance, relying on cultural ties to overcome political hostilities. At the turn of the century pan-
Mongolists on both sides of the border sought the creation of a separate Mongol state. Meanwhile, both the Tsarist and the Soviet government attempted to make use of the Buryats’ close linguistic and cultural affinity to Mongolians to draw Outer Mongolia into an ever closer dependency relationship. As the Mongolian People’s Republic had little of its own educated elite, the Soviets sent Buryats to staff major positions. Members of the Buryat intelligentsia straddled the divide, sometimes to advance their own nationalist political agendas, trying to “extract favorable treatment for Buryats at home in return for political work carried on in Outer Mongolia”. While some Buryats probably felt their role as brokers and intermediaries between the Russian and Mongolian cultures to be a positive one, promoting progress while buffering against cultural anomie, Mongols allegedly resented the dominance of a westernized, modernized leadership, and considered the Buryats traitors to true Mongolian culture.

Today Buryats again travel in greater numbers to Mongolia, but as cultural emissaries of the Buryat, not Soviet, Republic. The “more backward” Mongolia serves as a repository for oral traditions, songs, folkways, material culture that Buryats feel they have lost during the Soviet regime. Mongolia also serves as reserve for spheres of Buryat ecological knowledge and adaptation destroyed during Soviet years: for instance scientists have recently initiated a program to re-introduce sheep breeds formerly raised on the steppe of this region and well adapted to the harsh climate, but displaced by Soviet planners due to lower productivity indices. The breeds still predominate in Mongolian husbandry.

Of greater visibility are the international ties being forged with Buddhists from other parts of the world. The Dalai Lama, and several slightly less renowned figures of world Buddhism, have visited the Buryat Republic, speaking to “sell-out” crowds. Literature on Buddhism is ubiquitous, in both city and remote village. Cultural, religious and ecological revival seem imminently intertwined for the Buryat Nation, the division between these spheres a western one that makes little sense to ‘reborn’ Buddhists.

The Sakha

The Republic of Sakha (formerly the Yakut ASSR) is one of Russia’s most richly endowed regions in terms of natural resources. From this republic come essentially all of the Russia’s diamonds and much of its gold, as well as coal, timber and other resources. In 1989 the titular nation, the Sakha (Yakuts), comprise about 33% of the population; various Peoples of the North another 2%. Turkic in origin, the Sakha migrated from the southwest to their current home with horses and cattle, and retained transhumant pastoralism, substituting reindeer in the northernmost regions of Yakutia, where the other animals failed to thrive. They both fought and intermarried with the local population (Chukchi, Evenks, Evens and Yukagirs).
Russian penetration of this area began in the early 1600s. The Sakha initially welcomed the newcomers, but due to repressive governmental actions soon began to clash with them. A major revolt against Russian occupation occurred in 1642, and the town of Yakutsk was burned in 1681. Eventually, though, the Sakha began to work for the government as tribute collectors and in other official positions. Increased contact between the two peoples led to assimilation, but this did not always mean Russification: Russian colonists were often "Yakutisized", adopting the native language and economic activities.

By the early 20th century, a Sakha intelligentsia preached a strongly nationalist doctrine. The Yakut Union, founded in 1906, demanded the return of all lands which had been expropriated by the State, by monasteries, and by other Russian groups. Subsequent Tsarist repression of the Union’s leaders only further fueled interest in revolutionary ideas. During the prolonged Civil War in Yakutia, Sakha participated on both sides, hoping that the new order which each side promised would bring greater self-determination.

In 1921, in the midst of the Civil War, Sakha founded a cultural organization, "Sakha Omuk" to promote their interests. Members of this organization spanned the political spectrum, the most "radical" preaching pan-Turkism. The organization survived until the late 1920s, when the State initiated an anti-nationalist campaign. Many members of the Sakha intelligentsia were purged over the course of the next decade. This, and the collectivization drive met with much resistance in Yakutia.

The Yakut ASSR was established in 1922. In 1924, with the discovery of gold in its southerly region (the Aldan), Russians began to immigrate in large numbers. From the 1930s on, convict labor increased the numbers of immigrants substantially. While in 1926 the Sakha still comprised the vast majority (82%) of their titular republic’s population, by 1959 their share had dropped to less than half (Table 3, p. 39). Once again, it is this demographic situation, and the feeling that Russian industry is ruining the Sakha environment for Russian profit, which has fueled the resurgence of overt nationalism in the last decade. Sakha feel that they have benefitted little from the mineral wealth of their republic. Indices of living conditions fall well below the Soviet average. Major mining areas have been deemed ecological disaster zones, unfit for the pursuance of traditional activities. Conversely, Russians resent the affirmative action programs which benefit the Sakha (and other indigenous nations) in both higher education and job placement.

Records of severe interethnic clashes in Yakutia date to 1979. A Ukrainian human rights activist, who was exiled to Yakutia, recounted incidents of ethnic hostility between Sakha and Russians, such as beatings and attacks, as well as rancorous graffiti. Racial incidents, including mass brawling and large demonstrations, continued to occur throughout the 1980s in
The capital city of Yakutsk. The demonstrations mainly involved young Sakha protesting police inaction over the interethnic clashes. In the last few years, the contours of conflict have shifted, to lie increasingly between the prishlie and the Sakha cum old-timer Russians. The latter two groups generally find much common ground in their positions on environmental destruction and resource exportation (from the republic) which little benefits locals.

The year 1990 saw the revitalization of "Sakha Omuk" as an organization for preserving and reviving Sakha culture. In the autumn of the same year, the Yakut Supreme Soviet upgraded the status of the ASSR, and renamed it the Yakut-Sakha SSR. Even though non-Sakha constituted a majority of the population, Sakha dominated the political positions of the ASSR; thus this pronouncement certainly was interpreted to be as much a nationalist move as a regionalist move. However, the Sakha government has made it clear that its major concern is economic, not political, autonomy.

Sakha Republic’s constitution, adopted in 1992, declared exclusive ownership of land, minerals, and other resources of Sakha (Article 5), and the Supreme Soviet transferred all enterprises to republican ownership. In the same year the Russian and Sakha governments signed an economic accord that granted Sakha 20% of the resource rents from diamonds and 11.5% of the resource rents for gold. However, Sakha’s exclusive claims over land and natural resources contradict the Russian constitution and the Federal Treaty of 1992. One of Sakha’s most pressing political concerns is the refusal of the Russian Government to accept its constitution.

While economic conditions have not improved in the republic under President Nikolaev’s rule, rates of decline at least compare favorably with neighboring regions of Siberia, which in combination with a relatively stable government, has led to lower out-migration from the republic. The Sakha Republic Government participates in the Northern Forum, a non-profit international organization of regional governments, which was founded in 1991 to enhance opportunities for northern leaders to exchange ideas on economic, environmental, cultural and social issues. Sakha has been able to attract a number of foreign investors, including firms from the U.S., Austria, Japan, South Korea, South Africa and Canada, both for resource and infrastructure development. The government has paid special attention to developing local expertise for addressing the "transition to market relations" investing heavily in post-secondary education. (A faculty of Economics was recently opened at Yakutsk State University, and in toto the Sakha government spent 18 billion rubles on the university in 1993). Some see this as nationalist policy, as 70% of those enrolled at the university are indigenous persons.
Interethnic relations: Sakha and the 'Peoples of the North'

"For minorities in the Yakut republic, assimilation is complicated and perhaps less advanced because the surrounding dominant population is not Russian but Yakut". The little information available on "titular—non-titular" relations in the Sakha Republic suggests that Sakha indeed have 'dominated' the numerically smaller First Nations. When in 1930 a number of the 'Peoples of the North' received national okrugs, 15 national rayony were set up within the Yakut ASSR, for the Evenks, Evens, Yukagirs and Chukchi. Five national rayony for the Evenks alone covered one-third of the Yakut ASSR's territory. However, in 1933 Sakha persons held the highest administrative position in ten of the fifteen rayony. The Peoples of the North have been increasingly Yakutisized: the number of Evenks who speak Evenk, for instance, continues to decrease, but it is Sakha which is often adopted, not Russian.

To protect their cultures and reassert self-determination, numerically smaller First Nations have demanded greater political and cultural rights from the republican government, including legal protection of their political and cultural rights. The republic's new constitution has met this challenge at least partially, in principle: it guarantees these First Nations inalienable rights to "management and use of land", and to "defense against any form of forceful assimilation or ethnocide, or encroachment on ethnic distinctiveness". It also allows the creation of self-governing national administrative-territorial formations (regions, villages, councils, etc.) for the 'Peoples of the North'. Well before the constitution had been drafted, the government created a new titular unit for the Even people, the Even-Bytantaisk rayon. Top leadership positions in this rayon have gone to Evens.

While such moves indicate progress for the 'Peoples of the North living within the Sakha Republic, other developments suggest a deterioration of status. No further national regions have been formed. The clan-family communes, which have been created, and which serve both as economic units and self-governing entities at the level of the former rural councils, experience severe problems of 'self-financing.' As northern subsidies falter here as elsewhere in Russia, transport becomes unaffordable, and "traditional" economic activities insupportable. Indicators of social malaise, already high rates of alcoholism and (often-associated) suicide and homicide among the 'Peoples of the North' climbed further in the early 1990s.

At the republican level, structural changes in governmental organization, paralleling those at the RF level, may have made the collective voice of the "Peoples of the North" less audible. Formerly the Sakha government included a ministry of the 'Peoples of the North', but the ministry was demoted to a mere department within a newly formed ministry for all national groups in the republic. Numerically small First Nations (Evenks, Evens, Yukagirs) viewed this re-organization as a step in the wrong direction, an erosion of their ability to effectively put...
forward their specific demands. Still, some detect a "new solidarity" developing among some Sakha and "peoples of the North", based on "both a sense of shared roots but also shared responsibility for the fate of minorities who have in the past suffered from Yakutization as well as a Rusification." \(^{111}\)

**The Tuvans**

The Tuvans are primarily pastoralists, herding sheep and cattle and horses in isolated highland pastures of this alpine republic. Linguistically turkified Mongols, with some Turkic, Samoyed and Ket ancestry, many subscribe to the Buddhist faith.

Tuva presents a special case in the study of national relations in Siberia and indeed in Russia. Firstly, nominally independent from 1921 until 1944, Tuvans remember a recent past of greater sovereignty. Secondly, of all the autonomous units (above rayon level) in Siberia, only in Tuva does the titular nationality predominate. Indeed, Tuvans form a substantial majority (64%) of the republic’s population. Thirdly, recent interethnic conflicts, specifically those between Tuvans and Russians, took a particularly violent flavor, stimulating a massive exodus of Russians from the republic.

These unique characteristics don’t negate the fact that the same tensions which fuel interethnic discord in other areas of Siberia are also at work here. Tuvans have watched their traditional way of life erode under policies of collectivization of the pastoral economy, attempted annihilation of the Buddhist faith, and denial of Mongolian elements of their culture. The area, like the rest of Siberia, has experienced large-scale immigration. Receipts from the extraction of mineral resources, a major source of the area’s wealth, have not profited the indigenous population, which experiences high unemployment and one of the lowest standards of living in Russia.

While most of Siberia has been under Russian rule since the 17th century, Russia never conquered Tuva. Wedged between Russia, China and Mongolia, and separated from them by lofty mountains of the Sayan, Altay and Tannu-Ola ranges, Tuva enjoyed periods of relative independence from external subjugation. In its worst years its population fell victim to taxation by the both Russian and Chinese empires.

Russian settlement of Tuva accelerated in the early 19th century, as peasants, traders and miners were drawn to the area. Manchu China considered Tuva a natural extension of Mongolia, over which it exerted control, and tried to restrain Russian penetration into the area. The Treaty of Peking (1860) allowed Russians to trade in Uryankhai, as Tuva was then known, as well as throughout Mongolia, but forbade permanent Russian settlements. However, China was unable to enforce such restrictions. Meanwhile, the loss of land to Russian settlers
increased tensions between the indigenous and immigrant population. Moreover, Russian merchants employed exploitative practices similar to those used elsewhere in Siberia. Tuvans implored the local governmental officials to limit this exploitation, and then began to protest more vehemently, at times resorting to violence. In turn, Russians called for Tsarist military protection against "native attacks and revolts." Eventually (1885) the Tsar decreed that a Russian frontier okrug with a Russian administration be set up to deal with issues of Russian trade in Tuva.

Gold mines attracted Russians as early as the 1830s, and by the 1870s drew large numbers of immigrants. Permanent settlements could now be established if limited to 200 Russians. Tuvans provided the mines with foodstuffs, and occasionally hired on as miners. While increasingly tied economically to Russia, Tuvans still looked south to their cultural roots. Many aspired to a united Tuva and Mongolia. With the onset of the Chinese Revolution, Tuva provided forces to fight for Western Mongolia's independence. The question of its own fate arose. Tuvan leaders turned to Moscow to ask that Tuva be included in Russia, and in 1914 the Tsarist government proclaimed a protectorate over Tuva. This appears to have encouraged Russian settlement, for the Russian population grew from 2,100 to 8,200 between 1910 and 1916.

During the years immediately prior to and after the October Revolution the political status of Tuva was unclear. Shortly after the February Revolution Russians in Tuva held a congress to support the Provisional government. Meanwhile, at least some members of the Tuvan elite looked elsewhere for leadership, entering into relations with both Mongolia and China. Others sought independence:

"the Uryankhai people declare that from now on they are free from the Russian government, that they will govern themselves in full independence and consider themselves a free people, dependent on no one." Shortly after the Revolution Soviet power was declared, and the new Soviet government proposed that Tuva join the Russian Federated Republic as a national territory. Relations with Russians however deteriorated during the course of the Civil War, when both Red and White forces confiscated Tuvan livestock for food and transport. Tuvans retaliated by destroying Russian settlements. Meanwhile both Chinese and Mongols used the breakdown of order to increase their presence in Tuva, and to put forward claims to the region.

In 1921 the Uryankhai Kray Soviet allowed the Tuvan people to democratically decide their future: they voted for the establishment of an independent government. Thus a nominally independent Tannu-Tuva (The Tuva People's Republic) was established, under Soviet supervision, and viewed by both the USSR and China as a buffer state. Russians living in Tuva
were given the status of privileged foreigners, rather than granted full citizenship. The first political leader of the Tuvan’s People Republic, Prime Minister Donduk, was a confirmed pan-Mongolist and Buddhist. His government declared Lamaism the state religion, required religious training for young Tuvans, and argued for reunification with Mongolia. Buryat and Kalmyk church leaders supported this revivalist movement, and played an active role in its propagation. Fearful of a pan-Mongolism allying the Tuvans with the Khalka Mongols, Buryats and Kalmyks, the Soviet government decided to act. It encouraged the substitution of Tuvan geographic names for Mongol ones, and emphasized the Turkic ancestry of the Tuvans, by introducing a literary language based not on a Mongol, but on a "neo-Turkic latinized alphabet". In 1929 a Soviet-orchestrated purge replaced Donduk with Solchak Toka, a Moscow-trained, dependable communist. The USSR also successfully encouraged the granting of full citizenship to the Russian inhabitants.

In 1944 the Little Khural, a body of 30 persons parallel to the USSR’s Central Committee, petitioned the latter body for Tuva’s admission into the USSR. Tuva was incorporated as an autonomous oblast in the RSFSR. It was elevated to ASSR status in 1961. Kolarz, analyzing the reasons for the Soviet take-over, suggested that the economic resources the region offered, and the strategic position it held vis-à-vis some of the Soviet Union’s other resources ("a fortress guarding the approaches to the Kuzbass") were not the only reasons prompting absorption. He noted that the Tuvan communists, following the Soviet policy of stressing the Turkic elements of Tuvan culture, emphasized their ethnic links to the Altay and Khakassy when lobbying for a merger with the USSR. Kolarz surmised that the Altay and Khakass might similarly stress these links in arguing an opposite movement:

"From the point of view of Oirot nationalists in particular, there was no reason why these peoples should belong to the Russian Empire instead of uniting with the Tuvinians in an independent State. As long as there was an independent Tuva, there was always the possibility that Oirots and Khakassians might gravitate towards that country."

The absorption of Tuva into the USSR stimulated a large influx of Russians: by 1959 they constituted 40% of Tuva’s population. Since then, with strong population growth among the indigenous population, the Russian share has decreased. At the beginning of the 1990s, the relative Tuvan majority grew even faster, as Russians left the republic. The exodus was provoked by increasingly numerous and violent attacks by Tuvans. While malicious actions toward Russians by Tuvans have been dated to the 1970s by an article in Literaturnaya Rossiya (August 3, 1990), conditions worsened in the last years of Soviet power: the Soviet press attributed 88 deaths in the first months of 1990 to interethnic hostility. During the first half
of 1990 about 3000 Russians left Tuva.127 Ethnic antagonism continues to simmer, and some Russian inhabitants have supported Zhirinovsky’s call for the abolition of nationality-based administrative-territorial units.128

A Tuvan Popular Front formed in 1989, with members spanning much of the political spectrum. More radical Front members questioned the validity of Tuva’s absorption into the USSR. The Popular Front and another nationalist party, the People’s Party of Sovereign Tuva, lobbied for a referendum on secession from the Russian Federation in 1992. However, Tuva’s Supreme Hural voted overwhelmingly (92%) to not hold such a referendum. Deputies noted that over 90% of the republic budget comes from Moscow in the form of subsidies. Nevertheless, the newly adopted republican constitution allows for secession, and President Yeltsin has apparently taken heed, suggesting increased RF subsidies to Tuva.129

Conclusion

Walker Connor has suggested that "ethnonationalism appears to feed on adversity and denial", but "also appears to feed on concessions."130 Confronted with the overwhelming physical and cultural degradation which the last several decades of Soviet power has wrought in their homelands, but recently freed from a fear-imposed silence to protest, First Nations groups across Siberia now seek the power to reverse these processes of decline. In a bioregionalist analysis, they identify the foundations for the environmental and cultural destruction in the alienation from these lands from their guardianship. Without intimate ties to the land, prishlie have violated it, threatening long-term sustainability. With severed ties, indigenous peoples have suffered a disorientation strong enough to threaten cultural survival. National movements seek to restore First Nations control over land and resources, and in doing so, to regain command of their cultural, social and economic environments as well as their physical one.

Siberian First Nations do not necessarily refute the process of internationalization, but seek to realize its first stage, that of the full "flowering" of national identity. This, they feel, is requisite to true multiculturalism, as distinct from assimilation or acculturation. Currently, to partially withdraw from the external State is to draw on internal cultural strengths -- and hopefully to develop these. Nationalists also look outward, past State boundaries, to forge alliances, cultural and political, with sororal nations, in their quest for self-determination.

Siberian First Nations do not seek full sovereignty. Given the demographic makeup of Siberia, such a quest would indeed prove futile. Rather, First Nations accept that they will remain part of Russian-dominated territorial units, whether these continue to answer to the Russian government, or another political entity. They do pursue increased voice in determining the future of the activities which most essentially define their cultures, and the lands which
support these activities. To date, advancement toward this goal has been limited, except in the case of the Sakha Republic, where the titular nation commands key posts in the government, and the economic base of the republic is solid. Other peoples (Tuvans, Buryats) have fared less well, and those nations without republics, unable to pass any distinct legal code to improve rights, must depend on the RF to do so. Legal reform in Russian has begun to address First Nations concerns, but much progress is needed before Siberian First Nations are assured genuine self-determination of their futures.
ENDNOTES

1. Research for this paper was supported in part by grants from the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) and the National Council for Soviet and East European Research, with funds provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the United States Information Agency, and the US Department of State (*Soviet-Eastern European Research and Training Act of 1983, Public Law 98-164, Title VIII, 97 Stat.1047-50*). None of these organizations is responsible for the contents or views expressed.


3. I.e. the North or regions "equated with the North" due to climatic and demographic-economic characteristics. For the definition of the Soviet "North", see S.V. Slavin, *The Soviet North. Present Development and Prospects.* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972). A.I. Pika and B.B. Prokhorov (*Neotraditsionalizm na rossiyskom Sever*, Moscow 1994, pp.11-12), note changes in time over the regions included in both the "North" and the "regions inhabited by peoples of the North), two distinct if overlapping, geographical entities with policy implications.

The Soviet government recognized 26 "numerically small" Northern peoples, including the Sami (Lapps), who live on the Kola Peninsula, in the European North of the RSFSR. (This number dipped to 22 peoples for the 1959 census, and 23 for the 1970 and 1979 censuses.) Others (e.g. Kereks, Soyots), consider themselves distinct peoples but were not recognized as such by the Soviet government.

4. During the Tsarist period they had also been lumped together for policy purposes, but with other peoples as well.

5. Later simply ‘Peoples of the North” (narody Severa), as distinguished from the more numerous ‘Peoples of Siberia” (narody Sibiri), including the Altays, Buryats, Khakassy, Tuvans, and Sakha. Most recently the former have adopted the term "Small-numbered peoples of the North” (malochislennie narody Severa); some persons also have begun to use the terminology, widespread in Canada for indigenous peoples, of pervye natsii, First Nations.


7. Huttenbach, p. 78.


10. Ibid.

11. Though Russians hunted furs, most of Siberia’s “soft gold” was taken by indigenous peoples and turned over to the State as tribute or traded for Russian commodities.


17. The issue of national consciousness among the Peoples of the North is not well studied. Available Soviet sources which hold that these peoples had no national consciousness, but identified only with the clan, are suspect due to their adherence to a strict Morganian social evolutionary bias (e.g. Levin and Potapov 1964). However, if a national consciousness did exist prior to the Revolution among some or all of these peoples, it was nonetheless much strengthened by the creation of a literary language (a single one, in more than one case, for groups speaking a large number of dialects), a national elite, and the designation of official homelands for a number of the peoples. Slezkine (1992:345-6) discusses the terminology commonly used (narodnosti instead of narod or natsii) by ethnographers regarding the northern peoples.


22. TsGAOR, f.3977, op. 1, d.300, l. 100.


24. One of the okrugs, the Nenets National Okrug, is located in the European North. The Russian government created over 20 national rayony for several peoples, including those who lived beyond the boundaries of their eponymous national okrugs (see Forsyth, pp. 283, 285 (map), 327; and Slezkine, pp. 269-272, especially about the lack of awareness about these at top levels of government). These rayony soon lost designation as specifically "national" territories.

25. The Vitimo-Olekma (Evenk) and the Okhotsk-Even National Okrugs were abolished less than a decade after their formation, in 1937-8. The remaining national okrugs were renamed autonomous okrugs in 1977.


34. Author’s fieldnotes, May, June, 1994. See also Aipin 1989, which tells of immigrant workers in the oil rich areas of Western Siberia stealing sleds and winter clothing, poaching domesticated reindeer, and desecrating Khant burial grounds.

35. Materialy Sezda Malochislennykh Narodov Severa, (Moscow, 1990.), This document has been translated, with preface, in Indigenous Peoples of the Soviet North, IWGIA Document 67, Copenhagen, July 1990.


37. See especially: Ukaz Prezidenta Rossiiyskoy Federatsii N°397, "O neotlozhnykh merakh po zashchite mest prozhivaniya i khozyaystvennoy deyatelnosti malochislennykh narodov Severa," 22 April 92; Articles 4 and 42 of the Russian law on subsurface resources (nedr) also provides limited advantages to the northern First Nations (Zakon Rossiiyskoy Federatsii N°2395-1, "O nedrakh", 21 April 92)

38. The author is currently analyzing regional implementation of RF legislation regarding First Nations rights to land and resources. If interested please contact for more information, forthcoming reports and publications.

39. Proekt Zakona Rossiiyskoy Federatsii "O garantiyakh svobodnogo razvitiya korennykh malochislennykh narodov RSFSR" (typescript, nd); Proekt Zakona Rossiiyskoy Federatsii "Osnovy Zakonodatelstva Rossiiyskoy Federatsii o pravovom statuse korennykh malochislennykh narodov", (typescript, 18 June 93).


41. Ibid, p.15.


43. Pika and Prokhorov, 1994, pp. 3-4.

44. Of the so-called Trevozhnyy Sever group of Moscow-St.Petersburg. See Ibid.

45. A number of autonomous okrugs elevated their status to ASSR in 1990. These moves were not necessarily backed by the indigenous population of the okrugs, nor did they ameliorate rights or political power of the First Nations. To assume that the upgrading of the status of autonomous territories (okrugs, oblasts, and ASSRs) is
in all cases a move in favor of greater sovereignty for First Nations peoples is to ignore the ethnic composition of the territories and their leadership. What Bremmer refers to as "matrioshka nationalism" is nowhere more evident than in the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug. Inhabitants of this region claimed rights to the gas and oil over which the Tyumen Oblast, RF (and formerly the USSR) each also assert ownership. Yet it is the prishlie, not the Nentsy and other indigenous peoples of the Okrug, who rallied to upgrade the autonomy of, and therefore their control over, the okrug and its hard-currency generating resources.

46. For example indigenous Siberians participated in an international symposium on reindeer husbandry, held in Norway in 1993.

47. The Sami of the Kola Peninsula, one of the People of the North (but not of Siberia), have contacts across the border with Sami of Fennoscandia, and have participated in several pan-Sami conferences in recent years.

48. A non-governmental organization of Inuit and Yupik (Eskimos) from Alaska, Canada and Greenland, with NGO status at the UN.


54. Ibid., p.370.

55. Kolarz, pp.173, 175.

56. Though barely — see Table 2 for 1926 figures.


58. See Endnote 25, above.

59. Most other Turkic peoples of the RSFSR were growing at rates between 15 and 25% during this period.


61. Ibid., p.32.


65. Ibid., p.59.

66. Vera Tolz, "Regionalism in Russia; the case of Siberia," *RFE/RL Research Report* 2(9), 26 Feb 93.

67. *Segodnya* 1 Sept 94; see translation in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* XLVI 35:19.
68. The Soviet of the Gorno-Altay ASSR also declared the establishment of an "ecological economic zone", and indicated its plans to attract foreign investment in this zone to develop such relatively low-impact commercial activities as medicinal plant collection and tourism. (FBIS-SOV-90-212).

69. Tolz, p.4


73. Rupen, p.385.

74. Ibid., p.384. The Japanese sponsored a pan-Mongol congress in Chita in 1919, attended by Buryats, which promoted a Greater Mongol State and called for the expulsion of Russian colonists living east of Lake Baykal (Kolarz 1954:119).

75. Humphrey, p.31.

76. Kolarz, p.123.


78. Kolarz, p.123.


84. Information on the presidential elections and recent situation in Buryatia, especially regarding cultural revitalization and Evenk/Buryat relations (see main text below) is based on casual conversations and 'participant observation' conducted in the republic. April-August 1994, and on newspaper, radio and television reporting during this period.


87. Kolarz, p.116. The Soviet government also early on encouraged contact between the Buryats, Khalka Mongols, and the other Mongol people of the USSR, the Kalmyks. For instance, in 1931 Moscow hosted a conference for these three nations, the topic of which was language reforms, including the adoption of a Latin alphabet for all three groups (Kolarz 1954:115, nft).

88. Rupen, p.388.

89. Ibid., p.392, esp. nft.24; p.394.

90. S.B. Pomishin of the Baykal Institute of Rationale Resource Management, Ulan-Ude has spearheaded this effort.

91. This section is based in part on information from an interview with political scientist Greg Poelzer. Poelzer worked in Sakha in 1992 and 1993 and visited again in Autumn 1994. I thank him for also loaning me a number of documents.

92. Goskomstat RSFSR, Natsional'nyy Sostav Naseleniya RSFSR po dannym vsesoyuznoy perepisi naselenie 1989 g. (Moscow: Respublikanskiy informatsionno-izdatelskiy tsentr, 1990), p.152. The Sakha population has been increasing in proportion, due to higher relative birth rates more than outmigration of non-Sakha.


94. Ibid.

95. Kolarz, p.103.

96. The Sakha population dropped between 1926 and 1959 (Table 1). This is attributed primarily to severe losses during the collectivization drive (Wixman, p.220).


98. Marjorie M. Balzer, "Yakut," Encyclopedia of World Cultures, Volume VI. Russia and Eurasia/China, eds. Paul Friedich and Norma Diamond ( Boston:G.K. Hall & Co., 1994), p.404-407. Less dramatic but telling events also evidenced the interethnic tensions. Izvestiya published an article in 1987 about a number of Sakha teachers who had been allegedly fired for incompetency, but claimed that their dismissal was due to their nationality. Complaints against one centered around her grading Russian students more harshly than Sakha students; her response was that Russian teachers did the same to Sakha. Sakha teachers were also accused of "preaching nationalism". Izvestiya, July 22, 1987; excerpted in Current Digest of the Soviet Press XXXIX(29):20.

99. Balzer mentions the discussed, if unlikely, division of Sakha along North-South lines, proposed by Slavics who resent what they perceive as excessive Sakha sovereignty movements (Balzer forthcoming; Balzer 1994, p.83). She also notes the difficult position of persons of mixed ethnic background who "feel they are asked to choose, both officially and unofficially, one dominant ethnic loyalty..." (Balzer forthcoming). This seems uncomfortably analogous to the situation many Yugoslavians (of mixed backgrounds) have found themselves in over the last few years.

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102. People who have left have tended to keep their houses, as a contingency, which has only exacerbated the extreme housing shortage in urban areas, and fueled further discontent regarding prishlie on the part of both the Sakha and the Russian old-timers.


107. Konstitutsiya...Sakha, Article 42.

108. Ibid., Article 43.

109. Sovetskaya Rossiya, August 19,1989. National rayons were abolished in the 1930s; this is the first instance of this level of national territorial recognition being granted since then.

110. Evens also proposed the establishment of two national okrugs, but with no success to date. A.I. Pika and B.B. Prokhorov, eds., Neotraditsionalism na Rossiskom Severu (Moscow: 1994), p.78. Pika and Prokhorov note that the share of Evens in the two proposed okrugs would be 3% and 4%.


113. Rupen, 1975, p.150.

114. Chichlo, pp.380-381.


116. Chichlo, p.381.

117. Ibid.

118. Kolarz, p.156.


120. Aranchyn, p.167. The alphabet was changed to Cyrillic in 1941.


125. The rate of growth among the Tuvan population between 1959 and 1970 appeared low, though during this period, Tuvan population grew from 57 to 59% of the Republic’s population. Anderson and Silver suggest that one explanation for the apparent low rate of growth is permeable border with Mongolia which has allowed emigration during this period. This might have been one way which Tuvans dealt with threats to their cultural integrity in the past. See Barbara Anderson and Brian D. Silver, "Some factors in the linguistic and ethnic russification of Soviet nationalities: is everyone becoming Russian?" in L. Hajda and M. Beissinger, eds., *The Nationalities Factor in Soviet Politics and Society*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p.118.


127. Ann Sheehy, "Russians the target of interethnic violence in Tuva," Report on the USSR, September 14, 1990, p.16. Sheehy also notes that Tuvans have condemned the accounts of events in their republic in Russian newspapers as highly biased, portraying the Tuvans very unfavorably.


First Nations of Siberia
Table 1  Population of First Nations of Siberia, 1926-1989

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<td>65</td>
<td>69</td>
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<td>Tuvans (000s)</td>
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<td>165</td>
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<td>Shors (000s)</td>
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<td>17</td>
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Peoples of the North (1989 Census List)

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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>1535</td>
<td>1583</td>
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<td>1173</td>
<td>1359</td>
<td>1400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nanay</td>
<td>5860</td>
<td>8026</td>
<td>1000</td>
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<td>1444</td>
<td>1469</td>
<td>1551</td>
<td>2011</td>
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<td>1792</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>1888</td>
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<td>Eskimos</td>
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<td>1308</td>
<td>1510</td>
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<td>620</td>
<td>763</td>
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<td>Oroks</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>na</td>
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Other Peoples of the North†

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<td>300</td>
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<td>Taz</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Page 36
Chulimtsy
Todzha

*The Saami live to the west of the Ural, mainly on the Kola Peninsula; many Nentsy live in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, also to the west of the Ural. Thus both are "Peoples of the North", but the Sami (and part of the Nentsy) are not Siberians. † These peoples were not included in previous censuses but are now being considered for inclusion. The Shors and Teleuts (see text) may also join the official list of "numerically small peoples of the North", as may a number of the European North.

Chauncy Harris, 1993, A geographic analysis of non-Russian minorities in Russia and its ethnic homelands," Post-Soviet Geography XXXIV (9), Table 4;
"List of Indigenous Peoples of the North", (unofficial) from the Russian Federation Ministry of Nationalities and Regional Affairs, provided to the author by Gail Osherenko
### Table 2  Population of Siberia, Total and Indigenous

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population (000s)</th>
<th>First Nations Population (000s)</th>
<th>% First Nations</th>
<th>% increase in non-indigenous population from previous census</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c.1700</td>
<td>-50</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>934.3</td>
<td>303.4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>5730.0</td>
<td>861.9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>9366.3</td>
<td>1064.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>12309.0</td>
<td>788.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>16674.0</td>
<td>816.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>22559.0</td>
<td>957.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>1970</td>
<td>25353.4</td>
<td>1205.9</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>28615.0</td>
<td>1378.6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>1989</td>
<td>32099.0</td>
<td>1617.9</td>
<td>5</td>
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Source: Forsyth 1992:100, 190,405; last column calculated from Forsyth 1992:405
Table 3. Percent of population belonging to titular nation in titular administrative unit, 1926-1989
(AO = Autonomous Okrug)

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<td>Taymyr (Dolgan-Nenets) AO</td>
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<td>Yamalo-Nenets AO</td>
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<td>Khanty-Mansi AO</td>
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<td>Evenki AO</td>
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*Autonomous Okrugs were created in 1930. †Dolgans did not appear in 1959 census

Sources: see Table 1; Chauncy Harris, 1993, "A geographic analysis of non-Russian minorities in Russia and its ethnic homelands,"
Post-Soviet Geography XXXIV (9), Table 4.