



УДК 801(5)(063)

DOI <https://doi.org/10.26516/2222-9124.2018.25.139>

Round-Table Discussion «Indigenous Peoples in Baikal Siberia (Russia) and Hokkaido (Japan): Language Policy and Everyday Practices»

Hirofumi Kato

Hokkaido University, Sapporo

Y. V. Elokhina

Irkutsk State University, Irkutsk

Abstract. The article presents key themes raised within the round-table discussion that took place at ISU. Professors and master-degree students of Irkutsk State University and Hokkaido University considered the problems of studying indigenous peoples and the way the Russian and Japanese governments elaborate policies aimed at preserving indigenous peoples' languages and cultural and economical practices.

Keywords: indigenous peoples, language policy, everyday practices, Baikal Siberia, Japan.

For citation: Kato Hirofumi, Elokhina Y.V. Round-Table Discussion «Indigenous Peoples in Baikal Siberia (Russia) and Hokkaido (Japan): Language Policy and Everyday Practices». *The Bulletin of Irkutsk State University. Series History*, 2018, vol. 25, pp. 139-142. <https://doi.org/10.26516/2222-9124.2018.25.139> (in Russian)

The round-table discussion on such a crucial issue as the state policy toward indigenous peoples took place on 2 July 2018. The round-table was initiated and conducted under the RJE3 program that is implemented by Hokkaido University in collaboration with five Russian Universities: Irkutsk State University, Far Eastern Federal University, North-Eastern Federal University, Pacific National University and Sakhalin State University. The RJE3 Program is targeted at master and PhD students of Russian and Japanese Universities who can contribute to developing contacts between Russian and Japan as well as solving problems crucial for sustainable development of the Russian Far East and Japan. The RJE3 Program offers a wide range of special courses to students as well as round-table discussions and workshops to analyze the urgent issues relevant for both Russian and Japanese societies.

The discussion was moderated by Prof. Hirofumi Kato (Hokkaido University) and Prof. Sergey Kuznetsov (Irkutsk State University). The impulse-report was delivered by Vasilina Bogomolova, master-degree student of Irkutsk State University. In her report Ms. Bogomolova presented a brief history of various groups of indigenous peoples lived within the territory of Baikal Siberia. She made a special emphasis upon their everyday economical practices, as well as tried to trace the life style changing throughout the times.

Vasilina Bogomolova: Baikal region is the territory that has been developed and explored for many centuries. Newcomers influenced indigenous peoples' life, in some cases they had a conflict, in some cases newcomers made them migrate to new territories, and in some cases they managed to co-exist. At present, there is a new wave of interest to indigenous peoples, their everyday culture, home-made cloth, traditional songs and economical activities. But the elaborating of effective policy toward preserving indigenous peoples' language and cultural heritage requires analyzing experience of other territories and countries.

The report raised a number of questions that are supposed to be crucial for studying indigenous peoples' development both in Baikal Siberia and Hokkaido.

One of the important questions touches upon the language policy conducted by the state toward minorities and indigenous people. Ekaterina Fedosova, ISU master degree student, presented some outcomes of her research project that is focused on the studying of language policy in Japan.

Ekaterina Fedosova: The language policy is an extremely important component of both domestic and foreign policy of Japan. For more than 150 years, language policy has been an integral part of the overall political course of the country and serves to achieve the goals of the government in various spheres of life. Japanese language under the influence of reforms has transformed into a modern, flexible, universal language that meets the current needs of the society. Japan traditionally has the image of a monolingualistic and mono-national state. However, my study shows that this illusion is very far from reality. The language situation in Japan remains very complicated: in various regions of the country, alongside the standard language, local dialects are preserved, which in recent years are experiencing a revival and becoming popular; in the north and south there are groups of indigenous peoples, whose languages are not widespread after the years of assimilation. Despite the fact that there are still a lot of problems both with regard to the Japanese language itself and with regard to the languages of national minorities, over the past two decades, Japan has been moving confidently towards an optimal balance between the policy of assimilation and unification and the promotion of linguistic diversity (Gottlieb, 2001; Fedosova, 2016).

In their turn, Hokkaido University students mentioned that the problem of preserving, for instance, Ainu language is still quite urgent. There are many Ainu people who speak their native dialect as a second language after Japanese and do not use it in their everyday life. To spread the Ainu language, teachers and teaching aids are needed.

The participants of the discussion paid attention to the fact that it is quite interesting to study the process when indigenous peoples realize themselves as a group that can have "special" rights. Hokkaido University representatives told about the struggle of the Ainu for their rights.

Miku Maeda: In Japan a broad activist movement for the rights of the Ainu was launched in 1980s, and the results of this movement' activity can be called successful. It can be explained by the fact that Ainu activists launched lobbying policies both in the UN and in Japan itself. The activists managed to attract the attention of the international community to the problems of the Ainu, to achieve

official recognition of the fundamental status of the Ainu people by the government and the establishment of a special organization for the development and dissemination of the Ainu culture. The Ainu representatives attended various venues for discussing human rights, for example, the annual sessions of the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples. There they made contacts with representatives of other indigenous peoples of the world and attracted international attention to their problems. The Japanese government recognized that the Ainu had their own religion, language and culture.

The discussion also revealed such a significant problem as the system of education for indigenous peoples. In the twentieth century both in Russia (in the USSR) and in Japan there were made efforts to work out the curriculum that, on the one hand, could encourage indigenous peoples to speak their native language and, on the other hand, could help them in integrating into the society as a whole. For instance, in the USSR the system of boarding schools was organized for the children of indigenous peoples lived in remote areas. This system has its positive and negative sides. One of the disadvantages of boarding school system was that being far from homes prevented children from adopting those everyday practices relevant for their parents and grandparents. Thus, some cultural and economical practices were lost or became forgotten.

The other significant issue touches upon the methodological problem of studying indigenous peoples and their practices. Prof. Hirofumi Kato presented his personal experience and the experience of his colleagues from Centre for Ainu and Indigenous Studies (Hokkaido University) in the implementation of projects aimed at analyzing cultural heritage of indigenous peoples. Particularly, he emphasized the various communication problems that arise between archaeologists and representatives of modern Ainu during excavations and exploration of findings. (Kato, 2014; Kato, 2017)

The discussion revealed that there can be found different approaches toward preserving language, culture and everyday practices of indigenous peoples. Not all the approaches can be successful, but discussing and analyzing the experience is of great importance for understanding what the next step should be.

Reference

1. *Gottlieb N.* Language planning and policy in Japan // Language planning and language policy: East Asian perspectives / ed. by N. Gottlieb and P. Chen. Richmond, Curzon Press, 2001, pp. 21-48.
2. *Kato H.* Archaeological heritage and Hokkaido Ainu: ethnicity and research ethics // Archaeologies of «Us» and «Them»: debating history, heritage and indigeneity / ed. by C. Hilderdal, A. Karlstrom, C.-G. Ojala. Routledge, 2017, pp. 217-234.
3. *Kato H.* Indigenous heritage and community-based archaeology // Indigenous heritage and tourism : theories and practices on utilizing the Ainu heritage / ed. by M. Okada, H. Kato. Sapporo, Hokkaido University Center for Ainu and Indigenous Studies, 2014, pp. 17-32.
4. *Fedosova E.* Japanese government policy toward Ainu people // Materiały XII Międzynarodowej naukowo-praktycznej konferencji «Wykształcenie i nauka bez granic-2016», Vol. 12, Prawo. Historia. Filozofia. Politologia. Przemysł, Nauka i studia, 2016, pp. 28-35.

Круглый стол «Коренные народы Байкальской Сибири (Россия) и Хоккайдо (Япония): языковая политика и повседневные практики»

Хирофуми Като

Университет Хоккайдо, г. Саппоро

Ю. В. Елохина

Иркутский государственный университет, г. Иркутск

Аннотация. Представлены ключевые темы, вынесенные на обсуждение в рамках круглого стола, состоявшегося в Иркутском государственном университете. В дискуссии приняли участие профессор и студенты-магистранты Иркутского государственного университета и Университета Хоккайдо. В ходе обсуждения рассмотрены вопросы изучения коренных народов и выработки государственной политики, направленной на сохранение языка, культурных и экономических практик коренных народов в России и Японии.

Ключевые слова: коренные народы, языковая политика, повседневные практики, Байкальская Сибирь, Япония.

Для цитирования: Хирофуми Като, Елохина Ю. В. Круглый стол «Коренные народы Байкальской Сибири (Россия) и Хоккайдо (Япония): языковая политика и повседневные практики» // Известия Иркутского государственного университета. Серия История. 2018. Т. 25. С. 139–142. <https://doi.org/10.26516/2222-9124.2018.25.139>

Като Хирофуми

профессор

*Университет Хоккайдо (Япония),
Япония, 060809, Саппоро, Кита-9, Нусу-7,
Кита-ку*

*профессор Университета Оксфорд
(Великобритания)*

тел.: 81 (011)706-40-50

e-mail: h-kato@let.hokudai.ac.jp

Kato Hirofumi

Professor

*Hokkaido University (Japan)
7 Nisi, 9 Kita, Kita-ku Ward, Sapporo City,
060809, Japan*

Professor of Oxford University (Great Britain)

tel.: 81 (011)706-40-50

e-mail: h-kato@let.hokudai.ac.jp

Елохина Юлия Валерьевна

*кандидат исторических наук, доцент,
кафедра мировой истории
и международных отношений*

*Иркутский государственный университет
Россия, 664003, г. Иркутск, ул. К. Маркса, 1
тел.: 8(3952)52-19-75*

e-mail: head_id@admin.isu.ru

Elokhina Yulia Valerievna

*Candidate of Sciences (History), Associate
Professor of Department of World History and
International Relations*

*Irkutsk State University
1, K. Marx st., Irkutsk, 664003,
Russian Federation*

tel.: 8(3952)52-19-75

e-mail: head_id@admin.isu.ru