

Education of children of the nomadic population in NAO (Nenets autonomous area) and YaNAO (Yamal-Nenets autonomous area), NW Russia: the possession of indigenous knowledge and skills by the Tundra Nenets.

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Abstract:

This is a comparative study, based on field-work materials, collected using methods of participant observation, in-depth-interviews with elders and questionnaires for adolescent Nenets pupils in boarding school. Geographically, the territory of the research is limited to the European Nenets nomadic population, living in NAO (the territory of European Nenets) and one of the Siberian groups of the Tundra Nenets, living in the YaNAO. Children of reindeer herders in both regions are receiving their formal education based on the same standardised curriculum, structure and delivered in a boarding school system. Consequently, Nenets children leave their families on the Tundra for more than eight months of the year whilst they attend boarding school. The research data accumulated in this study indicates that the possession of indigenous traditional knowledge, language and skills is declining amongst younger generations of the European Nenets. The objective of this academic investigation is to explore the reasons behind the erosion of traditional nomadic Nenets culture and lifestyles, and if, and how, they can be preserved.