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Winter destination: peculiarity of tourism in the Arctic

*Liudmila Zamorshchikova, Irena Khokholova
M.K.Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University*



Introduction

- ▶ The key touristic attraction in the eastern part of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) is the pole of cold Oymyakon, due to the popularity of this cold region which became a brand of its own among the Russian and international tourists.
- ▶ The northern regions of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) attract tourists who wish to visit the undiscovered, remote and ecologically clean places of the region. Given the extreme natural and climatic conditions together with the unique and vulnerable ecosystem as well as the unique traditional culture of indigenous peoples, it is necessary to study the possibilities of developing the tourism in northern regions of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia).
- ▶ Today the various types of tourism are being promoted and financed by the republic government in the Oymyakon region: 1) Event tourism; 2) Ethnographic tourism: learning about the reindeer herders' way of life and crafts; 3) Active tourism; and 4) Extreme tourism.



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Oymyakon, the pole of cold



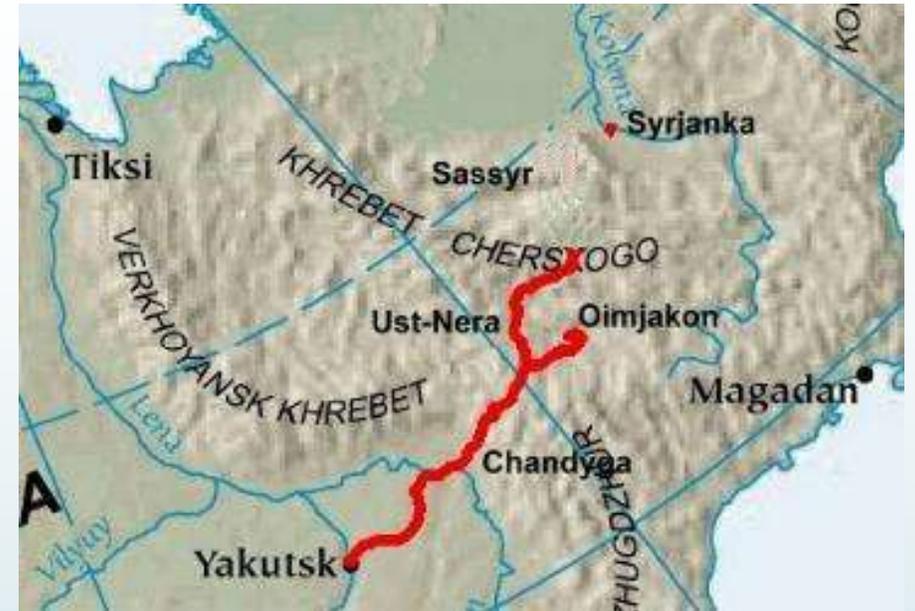


Material and methods

- ▶ The promotion of tourism in the arctic region of Yakutia is based on development of winter destination, and oriented toward the extreme tourism related to severe climate and the peculiarities to survival strategies in its.
- ▶ The winter tourists have a very high interest in real experience in the cold world, but also to understand in situ the lifestyle of local communities, their modus vivendi to appropriate the extreme cold.
- ▶ The methodology used to study the peculiarities of winter destination in the northern region of Yakutia is based on the situation analysis, to investigate the tourist destination in winter: various types, different goals, growth perspectives. In this context, it is very important to note a change in attitude and representation of the cold not only as negative factor, but as advantage.



- **Oymyakon** is considered as the Pole of cold of the Northern hemisphere. The Oymyakon village is located below the Polar Circle, in the mountain hollow, in which, during the nighttime the cold air condensates; this explains its territorial location in the Pole of Cold of the Northern hemisphere, regardless the fact that it has not been recognized as such up to date.
- **Oymyakon region** is situated in the north-eastern part of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) covering an area of 92.2 sq. km making it the 14th largest territory of the republic. The Oymyakonsky district is located in the heart of mountain ranges and peaks.
- In 1924, the Russian scholar and geologist, **Sergey Obruchev** recorded the lowest temperature in the northern hemisphere, as low as **-71.2 °C**.





Results

- ▶ In our opinion, the development of tourism in Oymyakon based on the climate peculiarity should be enriched by the humanitarian component like the tradition and culture of local communities, their lifestyle and knowledge, and also by the history of place and its memory.
- ▶ One of the potentially tourist-attractive trends could be the history of development of the northern territories, the adaptive strategies of the local population and indigenous knowledge. Also the tragic history of Gulag. There were many talented people among the political exiles: artists, writers, painters, etc. The Russian writer Varlam Shalamov spent last two years in the Kolyma (1952-1953). From Gulag he corresponded with Boris Pasternak.
- ▶ In the Oymyakon region (village Tomtor) there is a unique museum of memory of the victims of the Gulag in the village of Tomtor.
- ▶ The cultural and landscape phenomena can be studied from the point of view of with a close-up look at the cultural heritage as a factor of the territorial development and attractiveness. Today, the fiction literature potential as a tool for expressing the landscape image is not used in tourism development of the territories due to the fact that the geographical properties of the landscape depicted in the fiction literature are insufficiently studied.



Russian writer V. Shalamov





Discussion

Presently, the key factors limiting the development of tourism in the Oymyakon region coincide with those that the tourism experts are facing in Russia in general:

- 1) an insufficiently developed tourist infrastructure;
- 2) no modern hotel infrastructure;
- 3) no advertisements displaying the touristic possibilities of the region outside of the republic;
- 4) no convenient conditions for investments into the tourist accommodation and touristic infrastructures.
- The most fruitful touristic season in the internal and external tourism markets in the Oymyakon region is the wintertime; this is due to the fact that the event of event tourism are launched during this season, the tourists are attracted by the Pole of Cold as a strong trademark concept.
- There is a planning to implement a concept of touristic cluster in the Oymyakon village by government, to create new social spaces, to build urban facilities for residents and tourists, including a multifunctional complex with a hotel, restaurant, museum, and a thematic part area with an alley by the water shore with a wooden floor cover and warm areas and observation areas.



Chyskhaan: symbol of the cold



Conclusion

- Thus, the winter destination in development of tourism in the northern and arctic territories of Yakutia plays an important role and is a factor of its uniqueness.
- Oymyakonsky districts have a power potential for the development of tourism, which is not yet fully realized by local communities. Therefore, in conditions of insufficient funds for the development of infrastructure, the natural conditions and resources can allow the development of ethnic, cultural, and extreme tourism, sports hunting, fishing and cruises. One of the most popular tourist routes is the Pole of cold festival.
- Tourism promotes redistribution revenue, with a significant portion remaining in local budget and is used to develop the infrastructure in situ improving local living standards population. Despite existing problems for tourism in the Arctic great future. unlike mining fossil and industry investment the volumes in tourism can be significantly lower as well economic effect can be obtained much-up faster. In this context it is very important to develop the public policy of preservation of fragile balance human-nature in the arctic ecosystem.
- The new touristic products and routes are needed and it is also necessary to develop leading and innovative strategies in the sphere of tourism. The culture of indigenous peoples, as well as the history of these places are considered as a huge potential for the development of new tourist destinations and as main factor of sustainable tourism in the Arctic.

Thank you!

