

## Appendix A

### Interview guideline

**Master thesis topic:** *‘Nothing about us without us’ - Decolonization of Russia from the perspective of activists from the indigenous republics of Buryatia and Sakha*

**Research Question:** *“How do indigenous communities, such as the Buryats and Sakha, perceive the issue of decolonization in Russia?”*

**Type:** Semi-structured expert interviews

**Language:** English or Russian (up to interviewees)

**Amount:** 6

**Estimated time for each interview:** approx. 1.5 hours or 90 minutes

#### Structure:

- Introduction of the interviewer, the topic, the aim of the research, and the format
- Ethical considerations, the issue of confidentiality if needed, and voluntary nature of the interview

#### Questions:

##### 1. Indigenous identity

- Who can be considered as indigenous peoples of Russia?
- What are your thoughts on the government’s classification of indigenouness, “korennyye narody”?
- Over the centuries, people in Russia have lived together and interacted. How has it shaped identities in the region?
- How do you identify yourself?
- How do you think forced Russification in the Tsarist Empire shaped the identities of your community?
- And how did Forced Sovietization shape the identities of your communities during Soviet Russia?

##### 2. Russia and the colonial approach

- What does colonialism in Russia mean to you?
- How would you describe the life of your community during the Tsarist Empire?
- During Soviet Russia?
- And the Russian Federation?

- How has it changed?

### **3. Decolonization**

- What is decolonization for you?
- How do you think this concept applies to contemporary Russia?
- What role do you think violence plays in decolonization?
- Would you agree with the argument that decolonization is a violent phenomenon?
- What lessons do you think can be learned from other decolonization experiences around the world?
- How do you think the colonial mindset of Russian society can be changed?
- How much do you think decolonization is talked about among the youth in your community?
- What challenges do you anticipate in the decolonization of Russia?
- How do you think they can be overcome?

### **4. Activists' experiences**

- Do you think that indigenous knowledge is being represented in discussions about decolonization in Russia?
- What has been done by indigenous activists to be included in decision-making and fight against injustices?
- Could you talk about how Spivak's idea about the subaltern not being able to speak relates to your work as an indigenous community activist in Russia?

(Note: Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?" where the inability to speak refers to the fact that the dominant power structure does not allow or have the desire to hear the voices of subalterns)

### **5. Implications**

- What are some of the key political implications of decolonization in Russia for your community? Russia? and the region in general?
- How do you see the war in Ukraine affecting indigenous public opinion toward self-determination? Sovereignty? And decolonization?
- In your opinion, what are the opportunities for the Russian government to promote positive changes for indigenous communities?

### **6. End of interview:**

- Further queries, additional information, thanks