

Russian Studies Workshop: Spring 2020 Lectures

Exceptions to Authoritarianism: Cultural Heritage Politics and Corporate Statecraft in the Altai Republic

Gertjan Plets, Utrecht University (Netherlands)



RSW Visiting scholar Gertjan Plets will discuss the governance of cultural heritage and nationalism in Russia, as seen in his anthropological examination of cultural life and politics in the Altai Republic. Plets has found that, far from uniform, the Kremlin's strategies of government have been characterized by exceptions and diffuse sovereignty, revealing nuances to the conception that memory and culture at large are increasingly instrumentalized by

the Kremlin for regime legitimation and the maintenance of the so-called power vertical in an age of decreasing oil income. By analyzing how Gazprom enables the blossoming of indigenous cultural institutions, Plets shows that various agendas, interests, and power dynamics influence the culture-political fields of practice in authoritarian states.

Gertjan Plets is a cultural anthropologist specializing in corporate heritage funding and indigenous Siberian cultural politics. He has been working in the Altai Republic since 2009, where he has been tracing the impact of Gazprom's corporate social responsibility programs on local cultural politics and cultural heritage preservation initiatives.

4:30pm - 6pm

Wednesday, Jan. 29

**Global and International
Studies Building—GA 2134**



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