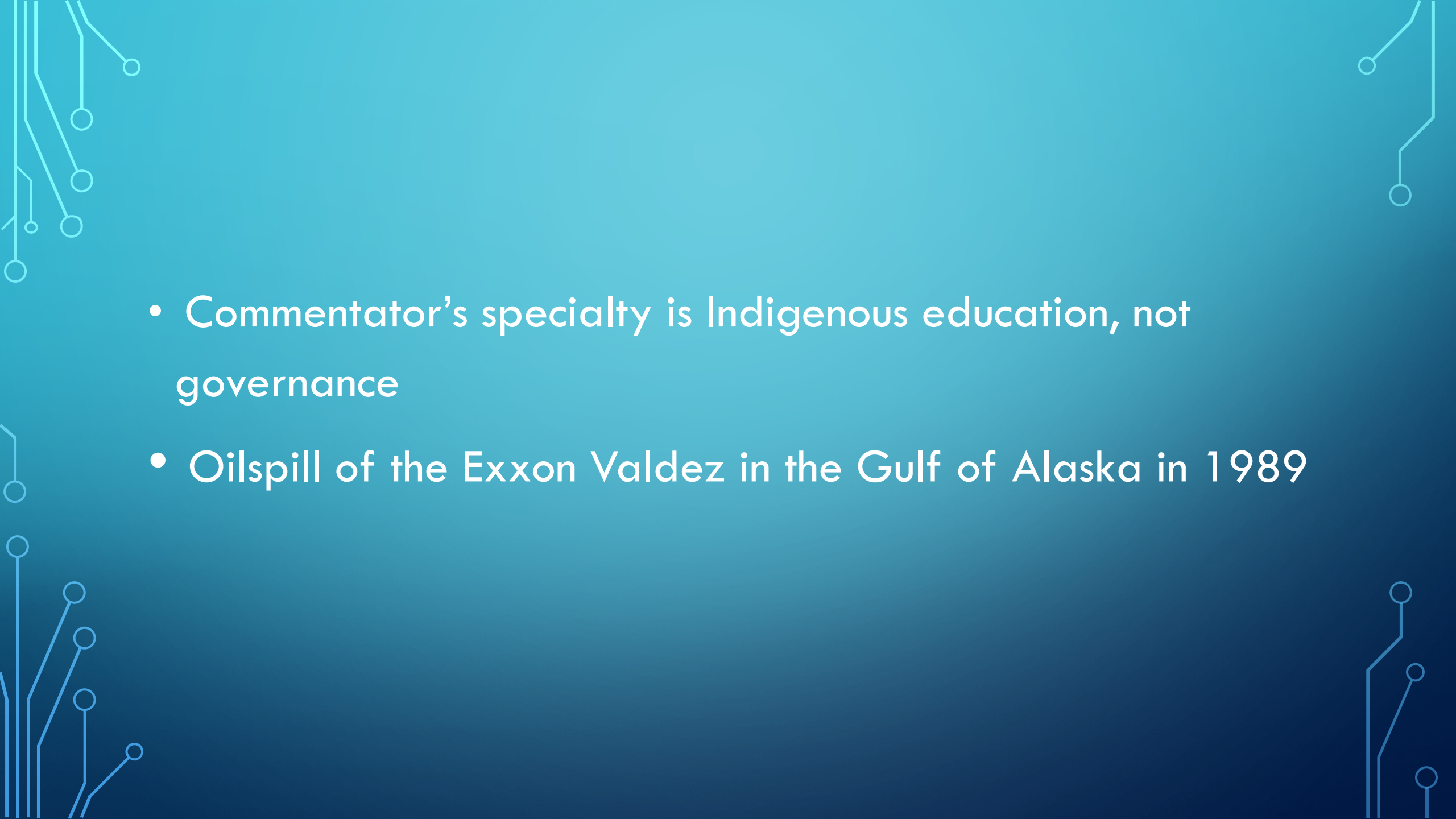




# COMMENTS ON THE SPEECH OF VYACHESLAV SHADRIN

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- 
- The background is a solid teal color. In the four corners, there are decorative white line-art patterns resembling circuit traces or neural network connections. These patterns consist of straight lines of varying lengths and angles, ending in small white circles.
- Commentator's specialty is Indigenous education, not governance
  - Oilspill of the Exxon Valdez in the Gulf of Alaska in 1989

# ABOUT THE AINU PEOPLE

- Indigenous people of northern Japan and Eastern Russia
- Current population estimated at approximately 25,000
- Traditionally resided in the northern section of the mainland of Honshu, the island of Hokkaido, as well as the southern half of the island of Sakhalin, throughout the Kurile Archipelago (present Sakhalin Oblast), and on the southern tip of the Kamchatka Peninsula in what is now the Russian Federation.



# AINU ECOLOGICAL VALUES

- Natural environment is forest, windswept grasslands, marine
- Ainu traditional lifestyles did not disrupt natural environmental balance.
- Sustainable lifestyle was upheld through values of moderation grounded in a foundation of spirituality.
- Maintained through oral tradition and social practices
- A unique system of Ainu Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

# AINU PRACTICES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

- Edible plant resources maintained by never harvesting more than one third
- Salmon population maintained by only taking as many fish as necessary at any one time
- Ainu maintained peaceful relations with *horeukamuy*, or the Ezo wolf, which was a predator of the deer and functioned to cull deer overpopulation which is now threatening forest resources in Hokkaido

- Willow trees were replenished by grafting 1~2 willow branches into the ground whenever Ainu harvested willow trees
- This contributed to the maintenance of riverine environments which were suited to the inhabitation of local fish, and so on.
- Ainu maintained values of moderation in their relations with these environs through **rituals and ceremonies** which involved communication, and communion, with the spirit-deities of these flora and fauna.



# WAJIN DEVELOPMENT AND INCURSION

- Wajin settlers from the south have seriously altered the natural landscape of Hokkaido:
- Transforming of monocrop agricultural land and forest
- Decimation of local fisheries resources such as the population of herring,
- Reckless harvesting of trees → increased flooding
- Poisoning the land with fertilizers and pest killers.

- AINU were **forced into slave labor** in the salmon and herring fishing camps
- Later **estranged from their lands** and **prohibited from their traditional harvesting practices** through legislation by the Japanese State and Hokkaido Prefectural government.



# AINU CULTURAL REVITALIZATION

- Today **very few Ainu remain** who practice traditional hunting or fishing of fish and game
- Although some fervently desire to inherit the ways and values of their ancestors:
  - Making efforts to learn from Elders
  - Taking hunting licenses
  - Advocacy for rights to hunt and fish
  - Litigation against Japanese State and Hokkaido Prefectural government for salmon harvesting rights (may develop into a class-action suit)

# AINU ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM

- The Nibutani Dam Case (1997)
  - recognized Ainu Indigeneity
  - mandated social impact assessments on branches of the dammed Saru River
- Pollution control agreement
  - Construction of an industrial waste-disposal site on the Mopetsu River

- 
- Coalitions of researchers, environmentalists and citizens' groups, moral support from foreign Indigenous groups in the United States, for
    - Advocacy to regain forestry management and salmon harvesting rights.
  - Current legislation is assimilatory in philosophy and grants the government authority to strictly regulate such activities.



# THE FUTURE

- Possible trans-village/regional management of ecological resources
- Plans for construction of a pipeline for oil or natural gas from Sakhalin to southern Japan?

## IN CONCLUSION

- “Governments must recognize and duly support Indigenous people’s identity, culture and interests, facilitating their effective contribution to sustainable development”
- Impassioned Ainu seek to regain their rights
- Indigenous environmental rights recovery movements have huge symbolic value in terms of larger national, regional, and global environmental concerns.