

Around the Mission: from the Log-Journal of an Alaskan Orthodox Missionary

by Priest Tikhon Shalamov (Kodiak Parish)

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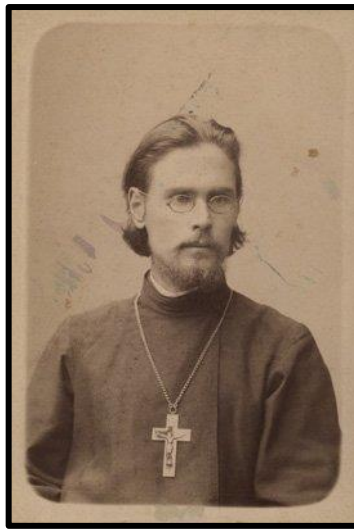


Figure 1: Father Tikhon Shalamov in 1905

Introduction to Part IIIa

The villages of Aiaktalik and Akhiok are not only among the oldest settlements¹ on Kodiak Island, but Native people living in these villages are also

¹ Villages of Kasukuak (later changed to Akhiok and relocated across Alitak Bay) and Angyahtalek (later changed to Aiaktalik) are marked on the map by Mark Matson "Alutiiq Place Names and Archaeological Sites (8000 B.C. – A.D. 1760)" in Aron L. Crowell, Amy F. Steffan, and Gordon L. Pullar, ed., *Looking Both Ways: Heritage and Identity of the Alutiiq People* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2001), 32-33. Also, both Akhiok and Aiaktalik are marked as "Alutiiq Villages" on the map by Mark Matson "Selected Alutiiq, Russian, and Creole settlements in about 1850" (Crowell, *Looking*, 57).

among the first Natives with whom Russians (and Spanish²) made contact. In fact, Kodiak Island place name “Russian Harbor” (an elongated tidal lagoon located right across from Aiaktalik Island) reflects this history.³ Both villages had churches: Aiaktalik had St. Andrew Chapel and Akhiok had Holy Trinity Chapel,⁴ later rebuilt (after the fire) as Protection of the Theotokos Chapel. Aiaktalik was abandoned after WWII,⁵ while Akhiok’s population doubled after people from the village of Kaguyak moved there after their village was destroyed during the tsunami of 1964. Over the years, four different canneries, at least, operated at Alitak cannery site near the village of Akhiok: Alaska Packers Association, Alitak Packing Company, Far North Packing and Shipping Company, and, currently, Ocean Beauty (under Trident Seafoods). At the time of Shalamov, it was Alaska Packers Association.⁶

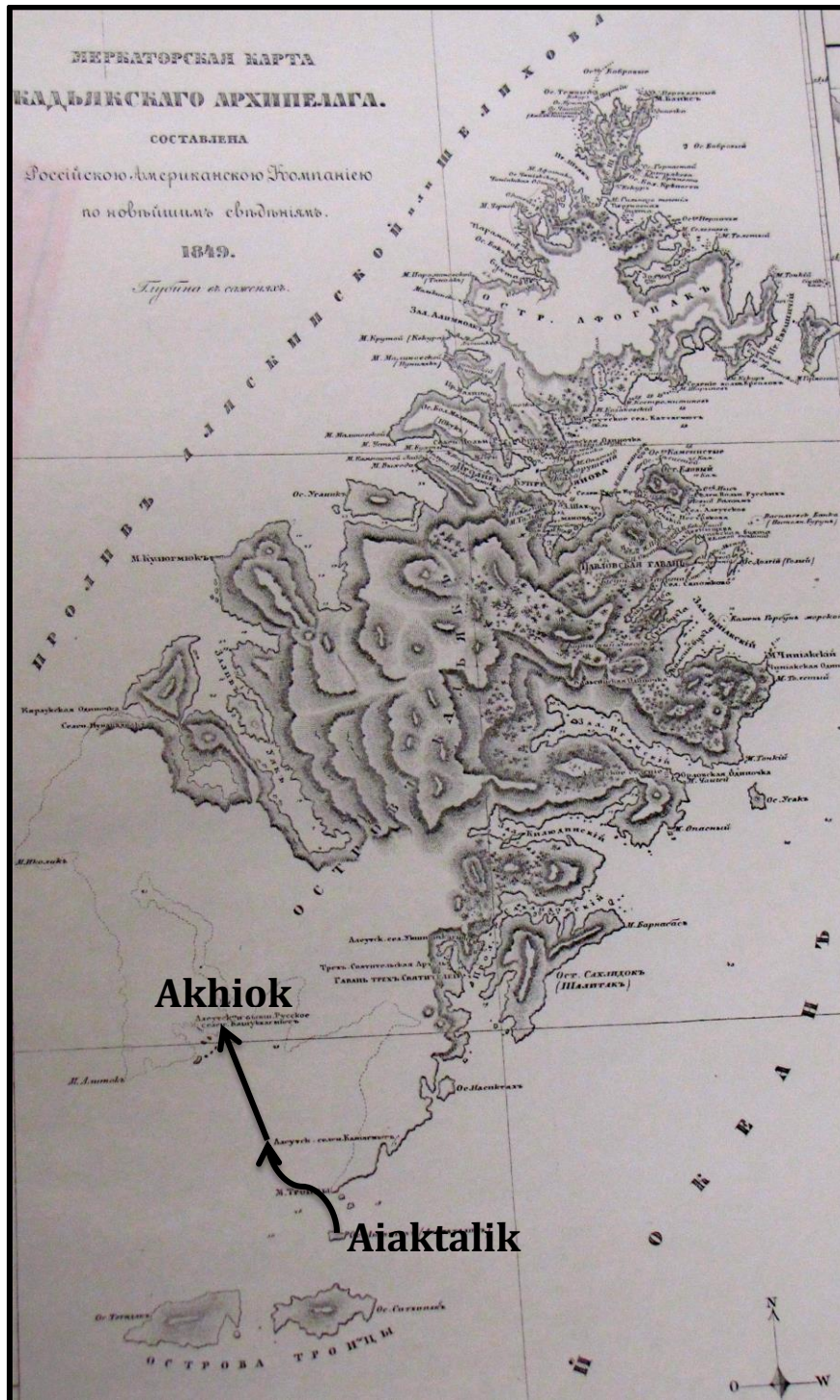
² The Spaniards arrived at Aiaktalik in 1788, June 30th (Wallace M. Olson, *Through Spanish Eyes: Spanish Voyages to Alaska, 1774-1792*, (Auke Bay, Alaska: Wallace M. Olson, dba Heritage Research, 2002), 211, 215, 543. The story of Aiaktalik Native, Arsentí Aminak, also refers to a visit of a three-masted Spanish ship that sent out a boat to Aiaktalik (“The Story of the Old Man Arsentí Aminak” in Heinrich Johan Holmberg, *Holmberg’s Ethnographic Sketches*, Fairbanks: The University of Alaska Press, 1985, vol. 1, Rasmuson Library Historical Translation Series, 57-59).

³ Lydia T. Black, “The Russian Conquest of Kodiak,” *Anthropological Papers of the University of Alaska*, 24, nos. 1-2 (1992): 166-168.

⁴ Shalkop, *Inventory*, 116.

⁵ Luermann, *Villages*, 56.

⁶ For more details, see Roppel, *Salmon From Kodiak*, 27, 31, 66.



Shalamov's sloop's route "Aiaktalik to Akhiok"
On the 1849 Map of Kodiak Island by the Russian American Company
 (Map obtained through the Courtesy of the Baranov Museum, Kodiak, AK)

Part IIIa

[Aiaktalik to Akhiok]

Aiaktalik, the richest settlement in the past, is now completely impoverished. None of the villagers at all had either a handful of flour, a spoonful of tea, a lump of sugar, or a drop of kerosene.... Many were barefoot and naked.... The only reason they do not sleep on bare earth is because there are still fish in the rivers and in the ocean, and it is this fish that support the flickering life.... Where are you, millionaires and billionaires, satiated with life and earthly pleasures? Those of you who have precious sea otter and fox fur coats and collars? Look at the demise of those who caught these valuable adornments for you. Come ye here, help [the suffering], here is your salvation, receive it.⁷

“But the satiated are to goodness deaf...”⁸ Meanwhile, people die of starvation, thus appearing before the Throne of God as witnesses to the cruelty of their fellow human beings. However, the satiated princes of this world will not hear them. Only in Russia the quiet moaning of the Aleuts was heard and an ever-helpful hand was extended across seas and oceans: the Moscow Missionary Society, from its sparse resources, sent 100 rubles to Aiaktalik.

Tikhon and I give away to everybody tea, sugar, flour, lengths of calico cotton for dresses and shirts. Thus, for today the needs of the poor are met but who will help them tomorrow?

⁷ Priest Tikhon Shalamov was well known for his charitable works: he organized and supervised the work of orphanages both in Alaska and in Russia, started the “Alaskan Temperance Society”, as well as the St. Mary of Egypt’s Society of Mutual Aid (Archimandrite Augustin (Nikitin) “Missionary Activity of Priest Tikhon Shalamov on Kodiak Island, 1893-1904 (from the pages of the *American Orthodox Messenger*),” in *The Proceedings of the Russian North in the History of Russian-American Relationships: Materials of an International Scholarly Conference Dedicated to the Two Hundred Years of Diplomatic Relations Between Russia and the USA Held in Vologda, Russia 6-7 October 2010*, ed. V.N. Pleshkov (Vologda, Russia: Drevnosti Severa, 2011), 94.

⁸ Shalamov quotes a famous poem “Thoughts at a Vestibule” by a 19th century Russian poet, Nikolai Nekrasov, whose major theme was the suffering of Russia’s lower classes.

July 3. We got up at 6 [AM]. Chrystmated the babies⁹ and served *panikhida* for the deceased.¹⁰ Almost all the deceased are the victims of the insatiable consumption bacillus. Habitual malnutrition, damp, severe climate, pathological addiction to tobacco, and, previously, unrestrained drunkenness, quickly exhaust and weaken the lungs of the Aleuts.

The image shows four pages of a Metrical Record (Metriceskaya knizhka) from the village of Kaguyak. The pages are numbered 12, 13, 14, and 15. Each page contains a table with columns for the date, names of the parents, the name of the child, and the names of the godparents. The text is written in Russian and Aleut. The pages are bound together, and the handwriting is in cursive.

Дата крещения	Имя крестного отца	Имя крестной матери	Имя ребенка	Имя родителей
12. 24. 1893	Алесь	Алесь	Алесь	Алесь Алесь
13. 11. 1893	Алесь	Алесь	Алесь	Алесь Алесь
14. 11. 1893	Алесь	Алесь	Алесь	Алесь Алесь
15. 12. 1893	Алесь	Алесь	Алесь	Алесь Алесь

Four baptismal entries from the village of Kaguyak

⁹ The Metrical Record from Aiaktalik identifies chrystmated babies as Pelagia (daughter of the Aleut Roman Nangiak and his lawfully wedded wife Stephanida, both Orthodox), Paraskeva (daughter of the Aleut Stephan Naplygnyk and his lawfully wedded wife Elizaveta, both Orthodox), Evgenia (daughter of the Aleut Damian Kanchaun and his lawfully wedded wife Anna, both Orthodox), Leontii (son of the Aleut Porfirii Nanykhtak and he lawfully wedded wife Anna, both Orthodox), Marina (daughter of the Aleut Simeon Kashkak and his lawfully wedded wife Evgeniia, both Orthodox), Paraskeva (daughter of the Aleut Peter Anakhkvak and his lawfully wedded wife Evgenia, both Orthodox), Alexandra (daughter of the Aleut Mikhail Adunuga and his lawfully wedded wife Khionia, both Orthodox) (Kodiak Parish Vital Statistics, Box 9, Folder 6, Part I: Births, folio 7, 8).

¹⁰ The Metrical Record from Aiaktalik identifies the deceased as Efrosinia (wife of Savva Kaumashkak – died of stomach ache at the age of 35), the Aleut Roman Nangiak (died of throat disease at the age of 49), baby Pelagia (daughter of Roman Nangiik – died of a cold at the age of one and a half years), the Aleut Varnava (son of Tarasii Iakunak – died of cold at the age of 20) (Kodiak Parish Vital Statistics Records, Part III: Deaths, Box 9, Folder 6, folio 30).

1903 Kodiak Parish Metrical Records Journal, Part I: The Newly Born

Kodiak Parish Vital Statistics Records, Box 9, Folder 6, p. 8

(Courtesy of the Alaskan Diocesan Archive at St. Herman's Theological Seminary)

During the daytime [I] gave a talk about the wonderful Elder Seraphim¹¹, his feats, prayers, miracles, visions, and his blessed, angelic life. With great interest the Aleuts listened to the holy story. At the conclusion of the talk, Tikhon showed them an image of a righteous Elder from a wonderful book by E. Poselianin, *Ascetics of the 19th Century*.

In the evening [I received] confessions. [I] asked them to tell the truth and the whole truth and also remember that they confess not for the priest but for the joy and peace of their own souls, before their Creator and that those willing to lie or conceal the truth, should not even approach this mystery, so that they do not add one more sin to their sins.

July 4. The weather is gloomy, looks like rain... [I was] really tired after a whole day of taking confessions: my body is tired and aching; my brain has slowed down; I feel torn and ashamed – the spiritual condition of the village is not yet healthy. The drunkenness decreased after ten years of relentless appeal to sobriety. However, lechery, this untamable beast afflicting humans, has been destroying the lives of the Aleuts by distancing them, and even blocking them from the entrance to God's heavenly palace.

In order to improve the religious and spiritual life of the Aleuts, we need the authorized catechizers and church schools for the growing generations. Only under these conditions can one expect their full recovery and healing. The ground for this undertaking is promising: Aleuts are receptive and religious by nature.

July 5. Matins at 6 [A.M.] and then liturgy. Before communion I testified about the necessity to receive communion with an awareness of our unworthiness and sinfulness. I also briefly explained the meaning of Communion as a remembrance for the atoning death of our Lord Jesus and also as a blessed and mysterious means to

¹¹ Shalamov refers to a Russian contemporary of Saint Herman, Saint Seraphim of Sarov, who was canonized in 1903.

connect with Him. There were 117¹² communicants. After the liturgy, a talk [followed] about the Gospels' message concerning the Last Judgment. Then, [I gave] an appeal to abstain from licentious living. After the talk, the Aleuts, joyful and content, peacefully left for home.



**People from the Village of Aiaktalik
Picture taken by Tikhon Shalamov during his 1903 trip.**

American Orthodox Messenger, Vol. VIII, #8, (New York, NY, April 1904): 151.

(Courtesy of the Alaskan Diocesan Archive at St. Herman's Theological Seminary)

Having rested a little, [we] wedded two couples, both in second marriages¹³ – it seems that nowhere in the world are there so many remarriages due to the premature death of a spouse. Few female Aleuts have had one husband and even

¹² The numbers of those who confessed and of those who communed were, as a rule, listed in another journal kept by the priest. Racial composition and social statuses were acknowledged.

¹³ Metrical record indicates that Shalamov, in fact, performed three, not two weddings in Aiaktalik: he married the Kaguyak Aleut, Nikita Sidulia (second marriage) and the Aiaktalik Aleut, Anna Anakalak (second marriage, widow), the Aiaktalik Aleut Carp Aminak (second marriage) and the Aiaktalik Aleut Irina Kijook (second marriage, widow), the Akhiok Aleut Iakov Aiakusha (third marriage) and the Aiaktalik Aleut Stephanida Nangiak (second marriage, widow) (Kodiak Parish Vital Statistics Records, Part II: Marriages, Box 9, Folder 6, folios 18, 19).

fewer male Aleuts have had one wife. In general, chaste widowhood and virginity is not really valued by the Aleuts:¹⁴ There has never been a single monk [among male Aleuts], nor a single nun among the female Aleuts.¹⁵ – After getting married, while yet a girl (Aleuts consider the first menses to be the sign of complete sexual maturity), an Aleut female quickly perishes from births imposed on a weak and underdeveloped body.

It is unknown why the first missionaries, even Hierarch Innocent,¹⁶ allowed female Aleuts to wed starting at age 13, while even at the age of 16 and 17 she still looks girlish. This erroneous¹⁷ dispensation has significantly sped up the sad process of the physical degeneration of the Aleuts – because of the early, premature marriage a female Aleut looks aged already at the age of 20. She stops blooming before she even blossomed. A lack of brides pushes Aleuts to early marriages. However, we, seeing great danger in this, need to decline sanctioning such marriages and to rebel firmly against such senseless undermining of the rudimentary foundations of life.

All the people piously stood and prayed during the ceremonial mystery [of marriage]: no one was fidgeting or stalling. Involuntarily, with a bitter sense of shame, I remembered marriages in the towns of far-away Russia, in which the so-called wedding attendees change seats, stand with their backs facing the altar, laugh, whisper, elbow each other, deliver vulgar jokes and, in general, behave in a

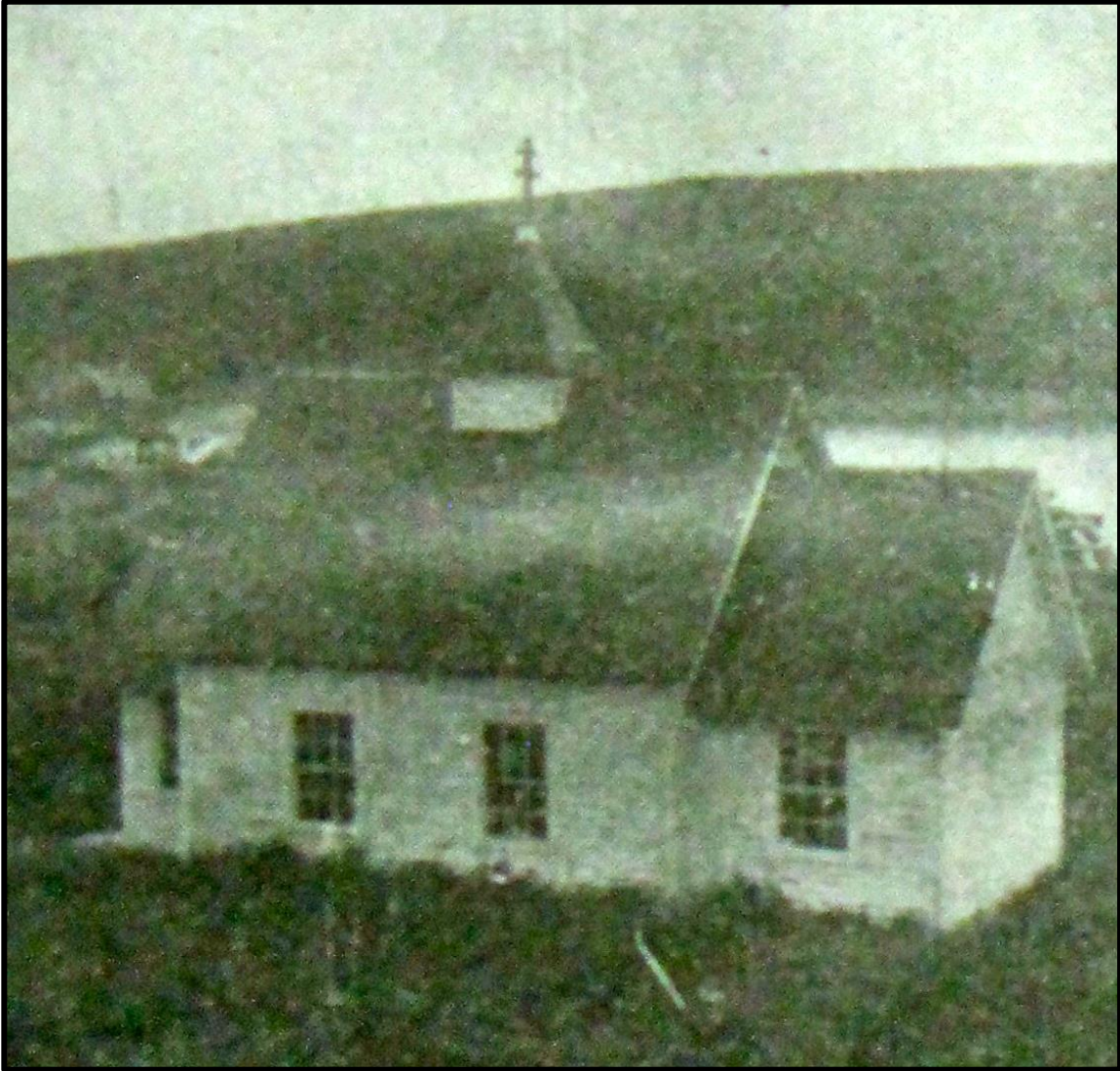
¹⁴ G.I. Davydov, a Russian lieutenant in the Navy, who served in Alaska from 1802 to 1807, described premarital virginity among Native girls “as virtually unheard of.” More than that, he states that “love between males and females begins here very early; when the girls are ten or eleven they already show affection for boys of the same age.” (“More On the Habits and Customs of the Koniagas,” chap. in *Two Voyages To Russian America, 1802-1807*, ed. Richard A. Pierce, trans. C. Bearne, Materials for the Study of Alaska History, no. 10, (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1977), 165).

¹⁵ Shalamov does not mention a community started by St. Herman on Spruce Island: at least Sophia Vlasova and some other students appear to have led a celibate life after settling there, although they were not nuns.

¹⁶ Saint Innocent of Alaska (Ioann Veniaminov/Popov) (1797-1879) was a missionary priest in Unalaska, Alaska from 1824 till 1834, in Sitka from 1834 till 1838, and Bishop of Alaska from 1840-1867. (Afonsky, Gregory [Bishop], 47-71).

¹⁷ Before 1830 it was common (and legal) for Russian women to get married at an early age (13-16). After 1830 the Church raised the age bar to 16. However, peasants and burgers could usually appeal for various reasons. (For more details, see Zav’ialov, Aleksei, Ober-Secretary of the Holy Synod, “Marriage,” in *Православная Богословская Энциклопедия (Orthodox Theological Encyclopedia)*, Vol. II (Petrograd: Supplement to a spiritual journal *Странник (Wanderer)*, 1901).

more outrageous way than during regular public meetings, such as court, theater, lectures, etc. It is time to put a quick and decisive end to such shameless and sacrilegious excesses by appealing to the sense of orderliness and propriety of those misbehaving and disrespectful Christians.



Chapel in the Village of Aiaktalik

Picture taken by Tikhon Shalamov during his 1903 trip.

American Orthodox Messenger, Vol. VIII, #7, (New York, NY, April-May 1904): 133.

(Courtesy of the Alaskan Diocesan Archive at St. Herman's Theological Seminary)

After the wedding, in a joint communal and unanimous prayer with the people [we] performed the service of the Lesser Sanctification of the Waters¹⁸ and asked the Lord for the cleansing of body and spirit and for “every useful purpose.”

In the evening we checked the Church’s accounting books: instead of the previously regular two or three hundred dollars, there was only \$8.50. This is a sure sign that the means of the Aleuts are diminishing.

In the evening, due to a calm, we thought about starting on a long journey, but the contrary current prevented us from doing this, and so we are staying until morning. – At seven in the evening [we] served a Vigil service, after which I delivered a short appeal to the Aleuts asking them to keep us in their prayers and kind memories.

July 6. We got up early with the sunrise. A fresh following wind was blowing and we, having put our things into *toion*¹⁹ Nikita’s small sloop, characteristically called *Ookhidak*²⁰ (sea shell), set out on our way to Akhiok under full sail. Because of the current, the waves were crashing and were violently hurling themselves onto us. The sloop dove, screeched, shook, stumbled but, in the desperation of despair, resolutely plunged ahead. It was impossible to stay in the hold (obviously, there were no cabins) because of the tossing and the stench of rancid blubber; I felt sick, my head was “spinning,” and so I had to stay on deck. The course, however, was impeded by the huge, monster-like, sea swells waiting in ambush.²¹ Closer to Akhiok²² the agitation subsided, and we continued at a steady, calm pace. Thousands of seagulls circled overhead, dove, and mewed desperately; sometimes the ocean was literally white with them. Fish-shaped animals – whales, were spouting everywhere from their tremendous spouts. They, as well as others, were gathered at a common dinner table – [provided with] small sea fish. – Soon we entered the narrow Akhiok strait and approached the village.

¹⁸ The Service of the Lesser Sanctification of the Waters can be, unlike the Service of the Greater Sanctification of the Waters, performed on any day of the year.

¹⁹ *Toion* is a Siberian word for village chiefs, also used with the same meaning in Alaska.

²⁰ *Ookhidak* is Alutiiq for chiton, a sloop-shaped marine mollusk abundant around Kodiak.

²¹ Cape Trinity forms a sort of a bottleneck and is thus infamous for its dangerous swells.

²² “Ахиокъ” in Cyrillic.

People, as always, joyously greeted us and met us with all their children and household members at the *laida*.



Village of Akhiok

Picture taken by Tikhon Shalamov during his 1903 trip.

American Orthodox Messenger, Vol. VIII, #7, (New York, NY, April 1904): 133.

(Courtesy of the Alaskan Diocesan Archive at St. Herman's Theological Seminary)

Flags fluttered on houses; the only church bell was pealing joyously; greeting gunshots reverberated loudly from the mountains. The village, the most populous in our parish, is located in a homey [Akhiok] bay, protected by islands from southern ocean winds, and protected from the north by a range of tall mountains. People are relatively well-to-do: the cannery and, partially, the fur trade give enough means, though the work at the cannery is paid rather meagerly. – The workday that lasts from 4 in the morning till 6 in the evening is compensated by only fifty cents instead of Alaska's usual two or one and a half dollars. This, of course, comes with meals provided, that, on the other hand, do not differ in any way from a regular Aleut meal: fish, fish, and more fish.... Besides this, one should not forget that for this very meager pay Aleuts have to suffer various humiliations, mocking, and physical abuses from unenlightened rude "fishermen."²³

²³ Here Shalamov transliterates into Cyrillic an English word "fishermen" (not present in the Russian language) to specifically indicate the American origin of the officials (local and imported) running the cannery.

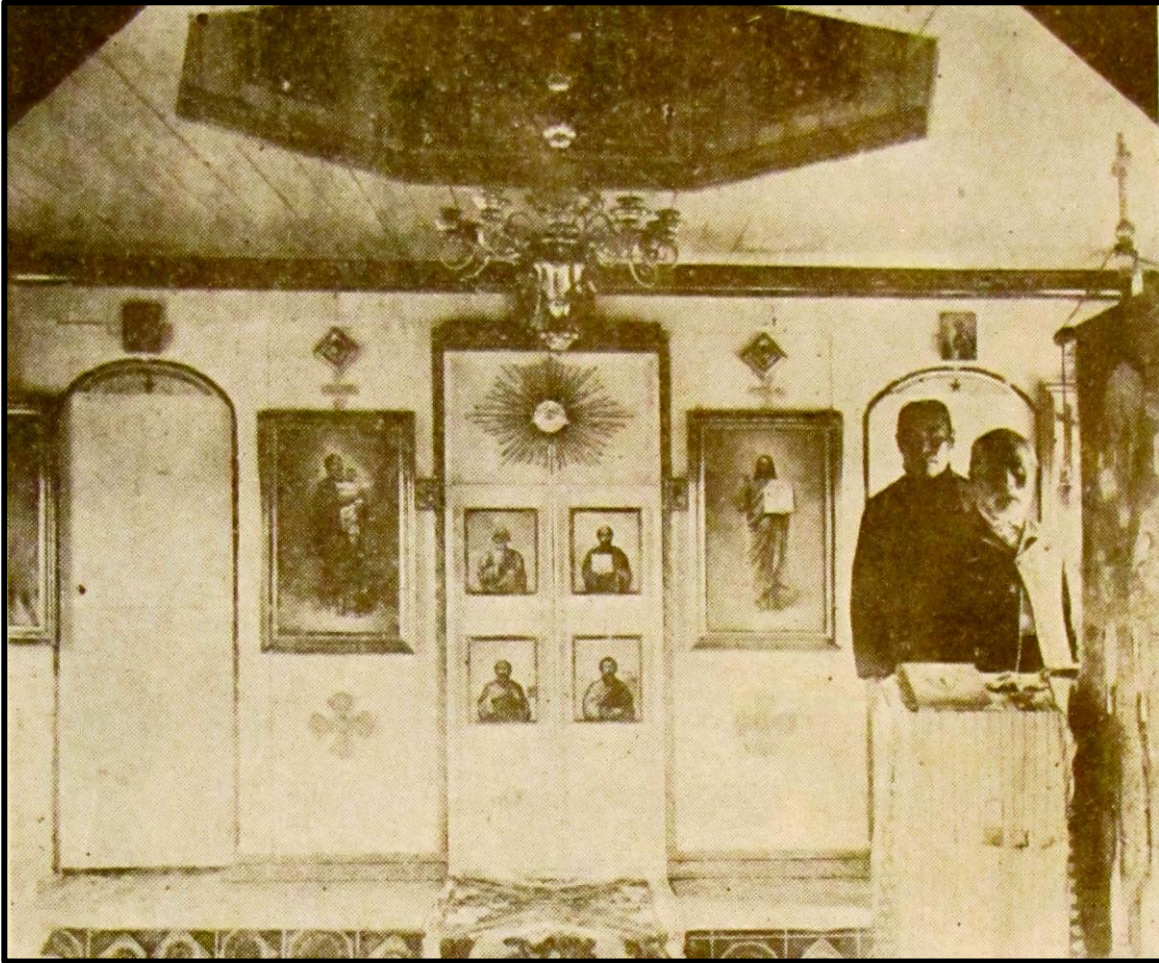
All Aleuts here live in houses; *barabaras* are used as kitchens or guest-huts.²⁴ More affluent [Aleuts], former otter hunters, have good furniture, expensive stoves, carpets, mirrors, paintings, violins, guitars, and even gramophones. – On the wall you see the Tsar’s portraits, our dear hierarchs – [St.] Innocent [of Alaska], [Bishop] Nikolai,²⁵ and [Saint] Tikhon [of Moscow].²⁶ Many understand and speak Russian, even though they do not meet Russians. Russian influence is still alive and active. Also, the children of a Finn, married to a Creole, M. Fogelstream [Fogelstrom, “Fogel Strim” in Shalamov’s spelling] speak Russian and do not understand American.

Having rested a little from the tossing, we went to the [Holy Trinity] Chapel.... It stands at the edge of the village, separately from the houses.... Good icons, lampadas, cleanliness, orderliness, light – in general, a very pleasant impression. It is obvious, that people [here] like to decorate their House of the Lord, the center of all sorrows and joys of our earthly life.

²⁴ The word *поварня* (“povarnia”) can mean either “kitchen” and “guest-hut,” depending on the Russian region in which it is used.

²⁵ Bishop Nikolai (Ziorov) (1851-1915) was Bishop of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska from 1891 to 1898. (Afonsky, Gregory [Bishop], 84).

²⁶ Saint Tikhon of Moscow (1865-1925) was Bishop of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska from 1898 to 1907. The name of the Diocese was changed to “Aleutian Islands and North America” in 1900. (Afonsky, Gregory [Bishop], 88).



Chapel in the Village of Akhiok

Picture taken by Tikhon Shalamov during his 1903 trip.

American Orthodox Messenger, Vol. VIII, #9, (New York, NY, May 1904): 169.

(Courtesy of the Alaskan Diocesan Archive at St. Herman's Theological Seminary)

Mothers brought children and we started the mysteries of Chrismation²⁷ and sacramental churching.²⁸ The weeping and the cries of children annoyed those

²⁷ Metrical records indicate that Priest Tikhon Shalamov and Reader Tikhon Sheratin chrismated seven children: Panteleimon (son of the American citizen Fogel Streem [Fogelstrom] and his lawful wife Matrona), Maria (daughter of Andrei Agishka and his lawful wife Ekaterina), Alexei (son of Nikandr Kichook and his lawful wife Marina), Alexandra (daughter of Polikarpii Aliugli and his lawful wife Ekaterina), Matrona (daughter of Tikhon Azhooiiak and his lawful wife Natalia), Anton (the son of Savva Nankook and his lawful wife Pelagia), and Anna (daughter of Aleut Kharlampii Iakshak and his lawful wife Irina) (Kodiak Parish Vital Statistics Records, Part I: Births, Box 9, Folder 6, folio 8, 9, 10).

²⁸ For more details about the sacrament of Baptism, followed by the sacrament of Chrismation, and then by a ritual of Churching, please, see footnotes in Part II [Kaguyak].

praying and confused the soul. Especially agitated was one girl: she cried, screamed, kicked, while throwing a tantrum.

July 7.²⁹ [Heard] confessions in the morning. Here, [in Akhiok], the understanding of the fundamentals of Christian life is broader and deeper: there is no drinking, no lewdness – the latter being, as we may call it, a characteristic Aleut vice.³⁰ The children abused tobacco a lot. But here it [tobacco abuse] was the general example of parents and adults of both genders. Among Aleuts, I do not know of one who would abstain or could even temporarily stop the consumption of “the nicotine plant” in this or that form. Even women, except for the rarest of all rare cases, are incurably addicted to this unhealthy and imprudent habit. The cause: a savage inherent passion for drugs.³¹ The manager of the Alaskan Commercial Company, our old friend, Mr. Woche,³² used to tell me that he felt sorry for Kaguyak Aleuts in the winter, when they ran out of tobacco: they walked around with sad faces, languid and melancholic. In order to suppress and satisfy the urge and thus somehow trick

²⁹ For some reason, Tikhon Shalamov forgets to mention a panikhida service for eight people that he, together with Tikhon Sheratin, served in the village of Akhiok on July 6: the Aleut Arsenii Kanchaon (63 years old, died of a stroke), the Aleut Sophia, wife of Boris Kaf'iuk (39 years old, TB), Nikolai, son of the Aleut Nikandr Kichook (19 years, cough), the Aleut Grigorii Anchaak (35 years, pneumonia), the Aleut Ioann Aliugli (58 years, TB), the Aleut Matrona, wife of Iakov Aiakusha (25 years, stomach sickness), the Aleut Boris Kaf'iuk (49 years, TB), the Aleut Vasilii Aleook (54 years, pneumonia) (Kodiak Parish Vital Statistics Records, Part III: Deaths, Box 9, Folder 6, folio 31).

³⁰ Naturally, Shalamov would critically view Native customs, still largely, at the time, influenced by traditional pre-Christian ways. Traditionally, in pre-colonial times, Native people practiced polygamy. According to Russian sources, Alutiiq women could have two husbands each: the first was the actual husband and the second one played the role of the servant, unless the first husband was absent. In addition to this practice, having multiple lovers was viewed as a source of pride – mothers even encouraged their daughters in this behavior. (For more details, see Davydov, *Voyages*, 166). Gregorii I. Shelikhov noted, in *A Voyage to America, 1783-1786*, that Alutiiq men could have two wives as well (Translated by Marina Ramsay, edited by R.A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario: Limestone Press, 1981), 56).

³¹ The 18th-19th century Russian ethnographer, Il'ia Voznesensky, who wrote about Native dances, reported Natives burning (valeriana) incense. (For more details, see Roza G. Liapunova, “Festivals of the Eskimos of Kodiak” in *Folklore and Ethnographic Reality* (St. Petersburg: Nauka, 1992, 81); Stacy Studebaker, “Capped Valerian” in *Wildflowers and Other Plant Life of the Kodiak Archipelago: a Field Guide for the Flora of Kodiak and Southcentral Alaska* (Kodiak, Alaska: Sense of Place Press, 2010, 145); Beverly Gray, *The Boreal Herbal: Wild Food and Medicine Plants of the North* (White Horse, Yukon, Canada: Aroma Borealis Press and CCI Press, Canadian Circumpolar Institute, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, 2011, 174-176).

³² About Mr. Woche, see footnote to Part I.

themselves, they smoked old pipes, chewed dirty tobacco bags³³ and other unsavory things.³⁴

The same passion is behind the insatiable thirst and love of Aleuts for strong black tea. In the village of Orlov³⁵ *starosta* [church warden] Trofim told us that when he heard that we were having tea, his head began to ache and “spin.”

The weather is clearing up: the clouds are dispersing and the red rays of the blessed sun are shining down.

The *zakazchik*³⁶ prepared a *banya*³⁷ for us and, gratefully, we hurried to wash our dirty bodies and change our linens.

The *banya* is tiny – one can neither stand nor lie down there – but clean: soap, loofahs, basins, cold and hot water – in one word, all the cultural conveniences. The firing up and heating of the *banya* is remarkable: they bring rocks heated in a *barabara* and create a stove³⁸ without coals or fire. For this reason, Aleut *banyas* never have smoke or toxic gases that cause so much trouble and anxiety in Russian *black banyas*.³⁹ After the *banya* we felt good and as if a weight had been lifted off our shoulders: our souls cheered up in our renewed bodies.

In the evening, I talked with the Aleuts about the difference between Orthodoxy and Catholicism despite their ritualistic and dogmatic similarities. The talk was needed because of the contacts the Aleuts had at the cannery with the fishermen who were Italian Catholics. In my talk I pointed out that the Western

³³ In 1788, the Spanish anchoring at Cape Trinity, not far from Kaguyak and Aiaktalik, reported Natives having “small boxes of real tobacco to which they were greatly addicted” (“The Journal of Estevan Mondofia” in *Through Spanish Eyes*, 231).

³⁴ It must be noted, that these very Kaguyak Aleuts worked for this very Mr. Woche during the summer and, in fact, it was the trading companies that supplied them with tobacco.

³⁵ The village of Orlov or Orlovskoe (known in English as Eagle Harbor) is across the bay from Pasagshak, at the end of Kodiak road system.

³⁶ “Заказчик” (*zakazchik*), with the same meaning as *prikazchik* (see *Толковый словарь живого великорусского языка Владимира Даля* (*Explanatory Dictionary of the Living Great Russian Language by Vladimir Dahl* (St. Petersburg and Moscow: O.M. Vol’f, 1880-1883), is a local managing agent who is hired by a major trade company (in this case, ACC - the Alaskan Commercial Company) to oversee its business affairs in a particular settlement.

³⁷ *Banya* is Russian for a bathhouse. It melded with the preexisting Alutiiq word for “steamhouse” and, in Kodiak, began to be called, “*banya*.”

³⁸ Usually, in a *banya*, there is a stove lined with hot rocks.

³⁹ “Black *banya*” is a *banya* with a stove venting inside. Over a period of time, the soot covers the walls, hence the name “black.”

Catholic Church is a sister of our Eastern [Orthodox] Church, but a sister estranged from the familial love because she repudiated [the family] 800 years ago⁴⁰ by desiring that her Eastern Orthodox sister conjoin into her Western sister's marriage to her husband, the Pope of Rome. However, the law-abiding Eastern sister was not willing to enter such an unlawful union and thus, by decisively rejecting the uncanonical Papal husband, separated herself from her treacherous sister.

In Aleut houses, on the walls, I noticed Catholic images: "The Sacred Heart of Jesus," "Santa Maria," "The Sacred Tomb of the Blessed Redeemer" and others, with the characteristically American note on the margins, "Agents wanted." When questioned as to the origin of the images, the Aleuts replied that they got them from passing Greek "peddlers."⁴¹

July 8. Early in the morning communed a sick woman. Again this horrible syphilis. The stench of the rotting body, white gaping sores, husky weak voice. Such a stern warning from God against filthy vice! – [I heard] confessions during daytime.

During the day the weather got much better. It is light, joyful, quiet, and warm. Caressing wind from the ocean carries coolness for the body and soul. Merry birds, occasional swallows, that Aleuts like so much to take in and give shelter, dash back and forth, filling the air with happy chirping. Involuntarily, during such a day, one forgets all the troubles and the grief of life. The Lord quietly envelopes the soul with His grace.

Having finished the confession, we went to sanctify and bless new houses that the Aleuts built from the boards of the old cannery.

In the evening served the Vigil. The church was filled with people. The choir sang pretty harmoniously. [Reader] Tikhon's tenor voice joyfully hit the high notes.

⁴⁰ Shalamov refers to the East-West Schism between what are now the Eastern Orthodox Church and Roman Catholic Church. It happened in 1054 with the points of contention being the use of leavened versus unleavened bread, the issue of the Filioque – the source of the Holy Spirit, the issue of the Pope's universal jurisdiction, and the status of Constantinople in relation to the other four major episcopal sees of the time – Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria. The tension culminated in a break in communion and a reciprocal excommunication.

⁴¹ Shalamov transliterates the word "peddlers" into Cyrillic to, perhaps, distance the Orthodox Aleuts from the petty business of travelling peddlers. The Greek origin of the peddlers, however, cannot be definitely confirmed. What can be confirmed, however, is the presence of Italians at Alitak cannery (Luerhman, *Alutiiq Villages*, 52).

The Aleut, Yakov Ayakuma, distinctly and expressively, like a true assistant deacon read the six Psalms.⁴² A peaceful, blessed summer night followed.

July 9. [Started] Liturgy at 6 [A.M.]. Those who confessed partook of the Holy Mysteries [communion]. During the homily⁴³ [I] talked about the parable of the rich and Lazarus,⁴⁴ about help for the poor, patience in sorrow, necessity to hasten reformation [of one's flaws] during one's lifetime, about obedience to the Lord's commandments. After the Prayers of Thanksgiving for the gift of Holy Communion, [I], for the betterment of Aleut religious and moral life, advised the Aleuts to elect a parish council with the *toion* as its head. Before the arrival of a priest, this council would be able to judge the lawbreakers and would denounce them either one on one, in front of two or three witnesses or in front of all the people. Following this blessed and joyful hour of communication with God, people dispersed within the [adjoining] graveyard to greet their ancestors resting in eternal sleep. What a wonderful and noble custom!

⁴² In the Orthodox services, a set of select Psalms is read during each service. Thus, during the Vigil service, the Six Psalms or, in Greek, *Hexapsalmia*, which consists of Psalms 3, 37, 62, 87, 102, and 142, are read in order as one liturgical whole.

⁴³ *Homily* and *sermon* are mostly synonymous terms for a religious presentation based on Scripture.

⁴⁴ Luke 16: 19-31



**People from the Village of Akhiok
Picture taken by Tikhon Shalamov during his 1903 trip.**

American Orthodox Messenger, Vol. VIII, #8, (New York, NY, April 1904): 151.

(Courtesy of the Alaskan Diocesan Archive at St. Herman's Theological Seminary)

After dinner all Aleuts met in our apartment and their Elder, Ivan Agshika, gave a speech, in which he, on behalf of the whole village and the Aleuts, thanked me for the many years of work dedicated to the sobriety of [his] people and, in general, to the betterment of their lives. "We have become new people, we saw the light of Christ," he concluded. I responded [by saying] that, while teaching them, I myself learned great virtues from them – humility and whole-hearted obedience to the will of God. [I also told them that] while directing them towards a sober and moral life, I only fulfilled my pastoral duty. [Finally], I wished them to keep their Orthodox faith steadfastly and eternally, from generation to generation, [and do it] by loving all people and by helping everybody, and by living in constant readiness to appear at the Lord's Final Judgment. After the meeting we again went to church. [We] wedded

4 couples.⁴⁵ The people, as always, helped [Reader] Tikhon to sing, while piously praying for the familial happiness and peace of the newlyweds. After serving the needs, [we] checked the church monetary fund, in which there was \$23.45.

Poverty is experienced here as well, despite better conditions and cannery earnings. In previous years this very fund yielded up to \$300.

The day changed drastically. Yesterday evening the caressing sun was still shining in the halo of golden tsar-like rays, but today, the wet, cold fog drew a leaden curtain across the blue sky. Nature barely had time to fully breathe in the poetry and joy of the summer day before it was swallowed by the gloom of the autumnal and inclement rainy weather. The severe Alaskan climate does not spoil its children, raising them to be accustomed to a harsh life.

Tomorrow, according to the Aleuts – who are knowledgeable astronomers – we were to be threatened by a squall, and so we hurried to the portage⁴⁶ at the end of the bay from where we could travel through [the pass in] the mountains to Three Saints village.

⁴⁵ Metrical Records indicate that Priest Tikhon Shalamov and Reader Tikhon Sherotin married the Akhiok Aleut Khariton Kooliaoodzhi (first marriage) and the Akhiok Aleut Khionia, adopted daughter of Leontii Azhoogiiak (first marriage); the Akhiok Aleut Mikhail Chimliamliu (first marriage) and the Akhiok Aleut Maria, adopted daughter of Iuvenalii Aminak (first marriage); the Aiaktalik Aleut Simeon Naoioia (second marriage) and the Pokrovskoe Aleut, widow Matrona Kamlook (second marriage); the Aiaktalik Aleut Alexander Sidoolia (second marriage) and the Aiaktalik Aleut, widow Anastasia Adoonooga (third marriage) (Kodiak Parish Vital Statistics Records, Part II: Marriages, Box 9, Folder 6, folios 19, 20).

⁴⁶ The narrowest part at the top of Aliulik Peninsula has been used for centuries as a portage from Portage Bay to Kiavak Bay, from where you can cross Kaiugnak Bay directly to Three Saints Bay. It should be noted that there are at least two Portage Bays in Kodiak area.