

Creole Policy and Practice in Russian America

Iakov Egorovich Netsvetov

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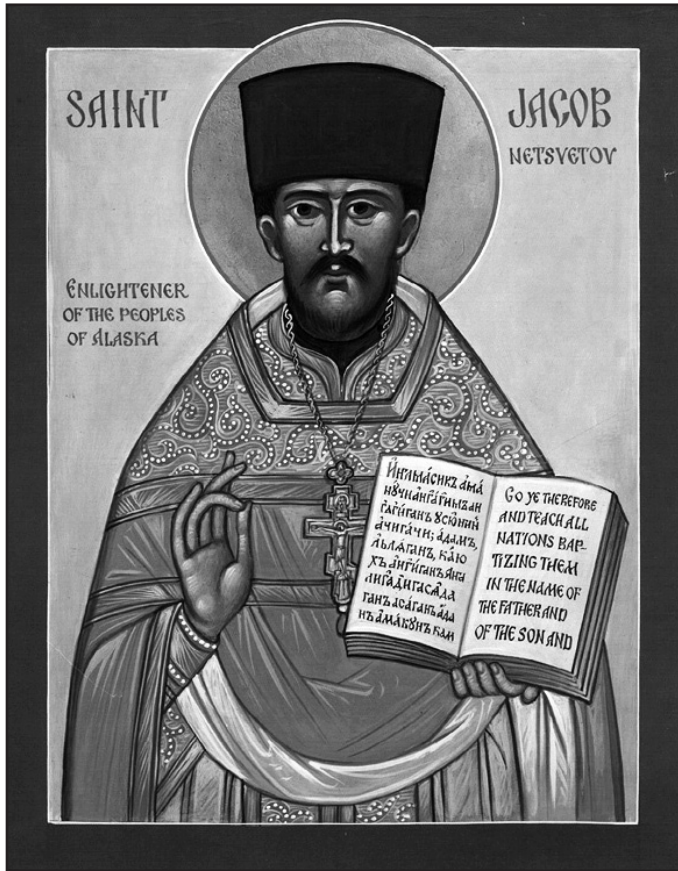
Russian America was imperial Russia's only overseas colonial enterprise, governed at great distance from state power and with a thin Russian population on-site. In order for the few to incorporate the many in Alaska, colonial officials lit upon the strategy of fostering and co-opting a hybrid colonial population, by which Native Alaskans could be transformed into the active agents of their own colonization. From its formation in the late 18th century, the Russian American Company (RAC) discouraged Russians from settling in Alaska, but permitted (and sometimes encouraged) their temporary employees to have children with Native Alaskans. The rapid growth of a mixed-heritage population, from some 200 people in 1818 to nearly 2,000 in 1863, was of considerable interest to RAC officials, who were struggling to recruit enough Russians for company work.¹ The immobility of Russian serfs, the remoteness of the Alaskan colony, and poor working conditions there meant that the supply of skilled Russian laborers was unstable at best. Native Alaskans, required for the highly specialized sea otter hunt, could not replace skilled Russian labor, and their numbers were, in any case, steadily dwindling. Children of mixed heritage, with the proper education and training, could ease the costs and difficulties associated with recruiting a Russian workforce.² Extraction of profits was only part of the RAC's charge, however. In concert with government officials and Russian Orthodox clergy, the RAC was also directed to spread Russian values and the Russian way of life. The Creoles, as those of mixed Russian and Native Alaskan heritage were officially called from 1821,³ became a key component of the RAC, the imperial government, and the Russian Orthodox Church's plans for maintaining and expanding Russian civilization in America.

To meet Russia's commercial and cultural goals, the company's second (1821) charter granted Creoles privileges that generally were not available to Native Alaskans, or even Russians of a lower social rank. Among these privileges was membership in an officially recognized, special social estate (*osoboe soslovie*) exclusive to Russian America, comparable to the town-dwelling category (*meshchantsvo*).⁴ Creoles were not subject to state taxes or obligations, including mil-

itary service, and their property rights were protected. In keeping with the RAC's need for skilled labor, Creoles could pursue a company-financed education in Russia (later, in RAC schools). After reaching adulthood, all Creoles were guaranteed employment with the RAC and compelled to serve only if they had received an education financed by the RAC (most had). If the service was distinguished, they could earn the same salaries, ranks, and honors as their Russian counterparts.⁵

These privileges could mean wider opportunities for individual social advancement. By the end of the Russian period, Creoles represented the majority of the skilled, middle-ranking workforce in Alaska, in service to the RAC, the Orthodox Church, and the imperial state. But the Creole estate was far from uniform. Many Creoles worked as unskilled laborers; those few who rose to important positions did so largely by virtue of their high-ranking Russian fathers.⁶ On the whole, Creoles were paid less than Russians who performed the same jobs, and they frequently fell into debt. As a group, their success as cultural intermediaries was patchy at best. Creoles might face hostility from their Russian counterparts, who were not exempt from taxes and lacked the same level of education, or from higher-ranking Russians who viewed them through an increasingly racialized lens. The Creoles' Russian education and lifestyle could distance them from Native societies, too. These economic, cultural, and social ambiguities affected Creoles of every rank.

There is a growing body of scholarship on the legal origins and status of Russian American Creoles within the empire, their ascribed role as cultural mediators, and their many positive contributions to the Alaskan colony.⁷ It has been difficult for historians to reveal in detail how Russian policies and attitudes toward Creoles played out in practice, in part because there are so few primary accounts written by Creoles. Hence the evidentiary importance of one of the most visible and influential Creoles, Father Iakov Egorovich Netsvetov of the Russian Orthodox Church. In 1829, Netsvetov began an official journal of his daily parish activities. The complete collection of journals contains near-daily en-



For his deep piety, missionary success, and devotion to the people of Alaska, Iakov Egorovich Netsvetov was glorified as Saint Iakov, Enlightener of Alaska, in 1994. (Courtesy of Orthodox Church in America)

tries over a span of 35 years, describing religious activity in two completely different Alaskan regions.⁸

As an elite Creole born to a company family and educated in Russia, Netsvetov was considered by church superiors to be ideally suited as an agent of empire and central to the accomplishment of colonial goals.⁹ First as parish priest and then as missionary, Netsvetov was intended to be the nexus in which the diverse interests of the Orthodox Church, the Russian state, the Russian American Company, Native communities, and even the unforgiving Alaskan environment converged. His long and wide-ranging career is hardly typical of the diverse Creole class as a whole; his exceptional independent education, orchestrated by an extraordinary father, along with his personal qualities of intelligence, humility, patience, and adaptability, set him on an unusual life trajectory. Still, Netsvetov's example demonstrates the potential for Creoles, as defined and regulated in Russian America, to negotiate the complex interactions of multiple colonial groups, institutions, and conditions. It shows, in other words, that the hopes of colonial and imperial officials for the Creoles could and did materialize at ground

level, at least in exceptional cases.

Beyond the identity assigned to them by company, church, or state, however, Creoles also had to construct a cultural space of meaning and value for themselves, and to live and work daily in that space. Netsvetov's life offers rare glimpses of how colonial policies shaped the identities of the Creoles themselves. His success brought him considerable praise and status in the colony, as well as evident spiritual and personal satisfaction. But Netsvetov's biography also hints at the burdens of Creoles' status: tacit restrictions, heavy responsibility, conflicting loyalties, frustrated ambitions, and chronic self-doubt. His case study challenges and complicates our understanding of imperial Russia's cultural, ethnic, and social hierarchies by suggesting how an objectively very successful Creole understood and managed the diverse expectations placed on him.

Iakov Netsvetov was born in 1804 to Egor Vasil'evich Netsvetov, originally a teamster in Tobolsk and by 1818 the local RAC manager of Saint George Island, and Mariia Alekseeva, an Unangan Aleut probably born on Atka Island. The elder Netsvetov taught his four children to read and write in Russian. Netsvetov's siblings included Osip (born 1806), who studied at the Kronstadt Naval Academy in Saint Petersburg in 1822 and became a master shipwright; Elena (born 1811), who married the Creole RAC clerk Grigorii Klimovich Terent'ev; and Anton, also educated in Saint Petersburg, who became a captain for the RAC.¹⁰ Iakov Netsvetov entered company service at the age of 15 and served about four years. But Egor Vasil'evich intended his eldest son for the priesthood and hoped to avoid RAC service obligations by independently financing his education.

The priesthood was a hereditary estate in imperial Russia. Orthodox priests, or "white clergy," typically married; monks, or "black clergy," did not, and only the latter could rise to the higher level of ecclesiastical administration. It was unusual for a young man of another social estate to train for the clergy, in part because the move was likely to be from a taxed estate (the town dwellers and peasantry, who made up the majority of the imperial population) to one exempt from taxes (the clergy, along with the nobility and merchants). Creoles, however, were specifically exempted from taxation. Because of this privilege and the desperate need for priests in Russian America, Netsvetov was given permission to study for the priesthood.¹¹

In 1824, the Netsvetov family moved across the Pacific to Irkutsk, in order for young Iakov to audit courses at the Irkutsk Theological Seminary. Egor Netsvetov was careful to document his son's identity and independence from company obligation by obtaining a certificate attesting to his legitimacy and good service record (*Atkha*, 264). In 1825,

Bishop Mikhail of Irkutsk assented to the course of study, so long as Netsvetov “planned to serve in his native land.”¹² The strategy to utilize talented Creoles in the colonization process was already apparent in his response. Certainly few Russian priests volunteered for service in such a remote location; Netsvetov’s place-specific Creole status meant he was not eligible to serve in Siberia.

The Irkutsk seminary was an important center for training Siberian clergy. Like his contemporary and mentor, Ioann Evseevich Veniaminov (Popov), later Bishop Innokentii, Netsvetov undertook a curriculum that fed a missionary philosophy based on the Siberian colonization experience, other European colonial efforts, and contemporary rationalist methods of cultural study.¹³ The missionary was urged to learn the local vernacular, in order to better understand his target audience. Conversion required a long and patient conversation, in which the missionary was not to condemn or eradicate traditional Native religious practices at once or wholesale, but gradually and slowly, by means of persuasion. Conversion must be voluntary, and the missionary must be mindful of local conditions that might preclude strict Orthodox religious observance.¹⁴ Netsvetov graduated from the Irkutsk seminary in 1826 and was elevated to the priesthood in 1828. The Irkutsk bishopric and the RAC negotiated a position for him on Atka Island that would represent the interests of both institutions. In fact he was the only candidate recommended by Bishop Mikhail to serve the new parish, suggesting that he was groomed specifically for the position (*Atkha*, 1, xix).

Netsvetov, along with his new Russian (perhaps Siberian mixed-heritage) wife,¹⁵ Anna Simeonovna, his father, and his sister, returned to the Aleutians to take up his assignment in 1829. In all of his work, Netsvetov attempted to implement the unique curriculum he ingested in Irkutsk. He also assisted the Russian American Company in carrying out its business, or at least tried to avoid interfering with its operations, and began to document the particulars of his new parish for state, church, and company officials in Alaska and in Russia.

The functions of state, church, and company in Russian America were intertwined. The state was directly involved in RAC operations from the beginning: the company’s three charters (1799, 1821, and 1844) determined its administrative apparatus, including the location of the RAC’s main office in Saint Petersburg and its numerous linkages with government agencies; high-ranking imperial officials made up the majority of RAC shareholders; and state officials maintained close supervision of all RAC activities. After 1818, all governors of Russian America were well-educated, high-ranking naval officers. The Orthodox Church, too, served important state interests, and it was assigned numerous re-

sponsibilities in Russian America.¹⁶ As was the case in many colonial settings, the relationship between the Orthodox Church and the RAC was tense, alternately cooperative and competitive. The imperial state demanded not only the extraction of profit from Alaska, but also the cultural integration of Alaska Natives into the Russian Empire. When the first missionary monks arrived on Kodiak Island in 1794, on order of Catherine II, they found that Russian laymen associated with early fur-trading companies had already baptized many Aleuts and Koniags (the church permitted lay baptism when priests were unavailable). Baptism, and its associated godparenthood, had the practical aim of creating closer relationships with prominent Native families. The fur traders also formed more intimate attachments with Native women, without benefit of official marriages. The missionaries were shocked by such arrangements, as well as by the Russians’ violent mistreatment of the Natives. The Russian American Company, granted a monopoly charter in 1799 and under the leadership of Alexander Baranov (who himself formed a 30-year union with a Native woman, which produced two children), seemed to view the mission as an irritant and impediment to company operations and day-to-day life. The monks reported that instead of supporting their missionary efforts, Baranov was abusive of them and tried to isolate them from the Natives altogether. Nor did Baranov support the mission in material ways. The monks faced severe food and firewood shortages, but Baranov refused to help. The deepening quarrel resulted in three official inquiries between 1804 and 1817, but no changes were implemented in that period. The mission withered due to lack of support.¹⁷

Growing government involvement in the colony soon rectified company neglect of the church. These changes were codified in the RAC’s imperial charter of 1821. The RAC was now required to “see to it that the colonies under its jurisdiction have an adequate number of priests and clergy” and that “the priests have everything they need to live decently.”¹⁸ Netsvetov’s own appointment was the result of this directive. At the time of his arrival in Alaska, there were only two other priests in Russian America, Aleksei Solokov at Novo-Arkhangelsk (present-day Sitka) and Ioann Veniaminov at Unalaska. Though the situation of the church improved with the 1821 charter, tensions between commercial and spiritual interests persisted.

Netsvetov met the RAC governor Piotr Egorovich Chistiakov in 1829 upon his arrival in Novo-Arkhangelsk, the headquarters of the Russian American Company. Chistiakov was not predisposed to like the young Creole priest; unlike most company administrators, he had repeatedly expressed concerns, both financial and biological, about the dangers of Russian-Native marriages.¹⁹ Chistiakov also grumbled about the financial burden the church imposed

on the company and about clerical independence and high-mindedness.²⁰ Neither Chistiakov nor Netsvetov described their first meeting in detail, but evidently Chistiakov was not swayed in his views. He immediately sent instructions to the RAC district manager to oversee Atka church funds and to route all church correspondence through RAC offices.²¹ Though Netsvetov could accept gifts from parishioners, he was to turn over all furs to the company. Chistiakov also instructed Netsvetov to compile statistics on the residents of his parish for the company's use.²² In exchange, the Netsvetovs settled into a "smallish Company-owned" house in the town of Atka (*Atkha*, 12). Construction on the church had barely begun, evidently because the company had not sent the requisite lumber (*ibid.*, 14).

Netsvetov's new parish stretched nearly two thousand miles, from Atka to the Kuril Islands, though Netsvetov reported a sparse total district population of eight hundred people, consisting of Russians, Creoles, and Aleuts (Unangans). All the Russians and Creoles were employed by the company, but only some of the Aleuts (called dependent) were. The "free and independent" Aleuts were concentrated primarily on Amlia and Amchitka Islands and traded their furs with company agents directly.²³ The Amlia Aleuts were led by their own leader (*toion*), Nikolai Vasil'evich Dediukhin (*Atkha*, 14). Netsvetov found that Dediukhin was literate, a skill "most fortuitous and beneficial" for Netsvetov's relationship with his parishioners (*ibid.*, 15). Most of the population was already baptized, the majority by laymen, and Netsvetov needed only to confirm them. (In the Orthodox Church, the latter sacrament is called chrismation.) To serve this population, Netsvetov erected travel prayer tents until the church could be finished (*ibid.*, 12-14). He also chose a young Creole, Vasilii Dmitrievich Shishkin, to serve as his reader, the second highest of the minor orders of clergy (*ibid.*, 109).

In autumn 1829, Netsvetov set out to visit villages across the parish. His primary activity was investigating marriages. Because most couples lacked access to priests, they were married according to the custom of the country, without regard to church regulations. Since the late 18th century, however, only church weddings were recognized in Russian law. Netsvetov noted marriages he deemed illegitimate for reasons of blood relation and bigamy.²⁴ Legitimization of marriages and the resulting children was particularly important for Russian-Native families, because the Creoles' special legal status was patrilineal—and thus of direct interest to the couple, the company, and the government, in addition to the church.²⁵ Netsvetov's investigations stirred up tensions between the church and the company, as when Netsvetov scolded company officials for allowing Russian employees to keep "an illegitimate spouse until such time as they return to their places of origin," which was "harmful as

an example affecting the aboriginal population, who take much notice of the [actual] behavior of these people who come here from the enlightened lands."²⁶ At each site, Netsvetov performed priestly services and kept careful vital records. Often he was called upon to act as mediator in local disputes that had nothing to do with the church. For instance, Eric Anders Ingstrom, captain of the local company ship, and the Atka manager signed oaths at Netsvetov's urging to put their mutual hostilities aside (*Atkha*, 27-28).

When he could, Netsvetov traveled by company ship; if RAC officials did not accommodate him, he was quick to report their dereliction of duty (*Atkha*, 139). As necessary, he traveled by baidarka; these harrowing trips might consist of hundreds of miles of open sea travel, in hazardous weather. Still, Netsvetov enjoyed the trips, taking time to study the flora and fauna of his native landscape with a scientific eye. In July, he joined a sea otter hunting party, in which he detailed the admirable skills of the Aleut hunters. "During my entire life," he marveled, "I have never seen a live sea otter; I have never even seen a dead sea otter—only pelts, which are hereabouts, of course, no rarity" (*ibid.*, 43). Throughout his tenure at Atka, he collected plant and animal specimens to be shipped to natural history collections in Saint Petersburg and Moscow.²⁷

The church in Atka was finally completed in 1830, and Netsvetov set out to reorganize the languishing company school. Assisted by Ivan Konstantinovich Galaktionov, a Creole medical student, he began bilingual classes with 20 Aleut and Creole students (*Atkha*, 68). He taught the students catechism, ethics, and biblical studies; Galaktionov instructed them in reading.²⁸ Netsvetov encouraged the students to support themselves in new ways, such as growing root vegetables in a communal garden. By 1841, the RAC had ceased to fund the school, and it became a parish school financed entirely by the Atka students' own families. Among its graduates were the Creole Lavrentii Salamatov, who followed Netsvetov as parish priest of Atka in 1844, and the Aleut Innokentii Kas'ianovich Shaiashnikov, parish priest at Unalaska beginning in 1848 (*Atkha*, xxi, 157). In 1842, Netsvetov also began a Sunday school for children, in order "that the children of both sexes from infancy be carefully educated in Christian piety and taught their duties, in accordance with their age, that their hearts and minds be trained as demanded by the Truth of Christianity" (*ibid.*, 250). The RAC governor F. P. Wrangell sent Netsvetov a letter of appreciation in 1833, commending his "exemplary zeal for the school," which was "in highly good order, solely due to your efforts."²⁹

Netsvetov's interest in education and in languages had much to do with the profound influence of Ioann Veniaminov, first mentioned in the journal in 1830.³⁰ Like Netsve-

tov, Veniaminov was a graduate of the Irkutsk Theological Seminary. Ordained in 1820, Veniaminov became parish priest of Unalaska in 1824. Once there, he studied the Unangan Aleut language and constructed churches and schools. Most significant, with the Aleut toion Ivan Gavrilovich Pan'kov, he devised a script for the Unangan language, using the Fox, or Eastern, dialect of his parish, and translated key religious texts.³¹

Between 1837 and 1842, Netsvetov was also translating religious texts (such as the first chapter of Luke and two chapters of the Deeds of the Apostles) into the Atkan dialect of Unangan. The two priests began a correspondence dedicated to translations that would serve both the Atkan and Fox dialects. Veniaminov called on Netsvetov, “who knows both languages [Russian and Unangan] perfectly, . . . to attest to the accuracy of both my translations and his notes by signing them in his own hand.”³² Netsvetov annotated Veniaminov’s translation of the Gospel of Saint Matthew for Atkan speakers; this was published in 1840. In his introduction to an Atkan catechism the two copublished the same year, Netsvetov wrote,

I have done this for one particular reason: a separate translation [of the holy texts] for the Easterners and for you would have separated what really should not have been separated. Not now [but in the future] you will read the same text in one tongue and using one [system of] writing would help to create a unified language for you. Now your speeches are different, but they will be unified. You are now like brothers through your common origin, but I say that you may become the brothers through the teachings of the Gospel, through the mind [the Spirit].³³

Netsvetov established the linguistic relationship of the two Unangan dialects, Atkan and Fox, with the goal of creating a unified Aleut language, and perhaps an indigenized Christian consciousness. In practice, such linguistic work allowed as much for the Russianization of Native identity as it did the preservation of Native heritage.³⁴ Netsvetov also compiled a grammar in Atkan and an extensive thematic dictionary of the Unangan language.³⁵ By 1842, he conducted church services using his own translations (*Atkha*, 237).

Netsvetov also collaborated with Veniaminov in the composition of *Notes on the Islands of the Unalashka District*, ultimately published in 1840. *Notes* acted as a kind of booster literature for the colonial effort as the company sought its third charter. Veniaminov presented a vision in which the RAC and the Orthodox Church could develop cooperatively: the conversion of Natives could serve as a precursor to their integration as loyal imperial subjects. “With better guidance and education,” he thought, “the Aleuts can very easily (far easier than others) become good followers of the Christian law.”³⁶ The implication was that Natives might become good followers of secular law, too. In his *Journals* (1825), Veniaminov admonished that Natives

Крѣвль	Алѣмъ Калѣмѣ
Курѣтнѣкъ	Кѣрѣтѣсѣ Дѣѣ
Свѣтѣлнѣкъ	Смѣлнѣсѣ Дѣѣ
Скѣтнѣкъ	Дѣѣсѣ Дѣѣ
19. Отнасяющиеся къ Чтенію	
Чтеніе	Алѣмѣсѣ
Алѣмѣ	Алѣмѣсѣ
Книга	Алѣмѣсѣ
Читаніе	Алѣмѣсѣ
Бумага	Алѣмѣсѣ
Столикъ Бумажн.	Алѣмѣсѣ Мѣсѣ
Дѣлѣ Бумажн.	Алѣмѣсѣ Дѣѣсѣ
Листъ —	Алѣмѣсѣ Дѣѣсѣ
Перо	Алѣмѣсѣ, Алѣмѣсѣ
Чернила	Алѣмѣсѣ
Свѣтѣлнѣкъ	Алѣмѣсѣ Дѣѣсѣ
Перочиннѣкъ	Алѣмѣсѣ Дѣѣсѣ
Писаніе	Алѣмѣсѣ (Дѣѣсѣ Дѣѣсѣ)
Писмо	Алѣмѣсѣ
Вѣстникъ	Алѣмѣсѣ
Печатаніе	Алѣмѣсѣ
Сурочѣ	Алѣмѣсѣ
Карандѣшъ	Алѣмѣсѣ Дѣѣсѣ
Шершѣкъ	Алѣмѣсѣ
Линѣйка	Алѣмѣсѣ

Above is a page from the Russian-Aleut dictionary Netsvetov wrote circa 1835-43. (Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of America, Diocese of Alaska records, 1733-1938, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress [LOC], Washington, D.C.)

should “obey without a grumble any superior that has been placed over us—no matter what he is like—and should fulfill his legitimate commands.”³⁷ Lest the church seem too involved in commercial and secular matters, Veniaminov insisted that priests should not accept gifts of fur from their parishioners; these properly belonged to the secular institutions. Further, priests must “assist the Company, which provides for their subsistence.”³⁸ With such inducements, Veniaminov did much to present the Russian Orthodox Church to the company and the imperial state as a willing and ready partner in colonization, thereby allaying some of the generations-long tensions between the three agents of empire. Both he and Netsvetov honored the terms of such a three-way partnership throughout their careers in Russian America.

Veniaminov added a separate appendix on Atkan Aleuts to



With Ioann Veniaminov's consecration as Bishop Innokentii in 1840 came substantial reform of the Russian Orthodox Church in Alaska. (Prints and Photographs Division, LOC, LC-USZ62-132144)

the *Notes*, based on ethnographic data supplied by Netsvetov. It can be difficult to determine whether it is Veniaminov's or Netsvetov's views that are expressed in the text of the Atkan appendix. Only in one place does Netsvetov's voice appear directly. On Atkan religious masks, Netsvetov "says that, as a rule, they are hideous and depict some animal in a distorted fashion."³⁹ Russian missionaries commonly described Native ritual articles as ugly or misshapen, and Netsvetov's eye was no less critical.⁴⁰ As in the main text of the book, Veniaminov singled out aspects of Atkan life that seemed compatible with Christian and Russian virtues, such as industry, honesty, and respect for elders and benefactors, as observed and noted by Netsvetov.⁴¹ Veniaminov indicted the Atkan shamans as manipulators, who recklessly drew on the credulity of the Atkans to the latter's detriment. Though the Atkans prohibited the creation of idols, there was, "naturally, . . . always someone among the shamans willing to make one."⁴² Veniaminov approvingly noted, however, the ritual ablutions of the shamans, which, "even though their religious rituals are absurd," all "wild peoples" tended to endorse.⁴³ The Atkans, Veniaminov continued, upon first meeting Russians, assumed them to be demons.

"In this opinion," added Veniaminov, "they were in part confirmed by the Russians themselves, through their brutal and forceful treatment of the Aleuts."⁴⁴ With time, however, the Russian presence produced positive benefits. Intertribal warfare, reported the Atkans, was ended by "the constant sojourn of the Russians among them," and Christianization "renewed their fraternal bond, binding them in love greater than before."⁴⁵ The appendix ended with three Atkan folkloristic texts, presented in the Aleut script devised by the two priests.⁴⁶

Netsvetov's keen observations were rooted in deep concern for his Atkan parishioners. Netsvetov was sympathetic to traditional subsistence patterns, even when they interrupted religious ceremonial duties. "Such absences are imperative and necessary. . . . I decided that it was right to permit a number of men to omit [the rite] during Lent" (*Atkha*, 131). He worried about the Atkans' health as well as their diet and spent considerable time persuading the Atkans to submit to smallpox vaccinations. He nursed their ailments himself when his medical knowledge and small cache of Russian medicines allowed (*ibid.*, 164).

Of greatest concern to Netsvetov, of course, was the spiritual health of his flock. The Amlia toion Nikolai Dediukhin reported to Netsvetov his discovery of a woman who "perverted the Evangelical faith and true teaching of the Church" and, driven by the devil, "led astray others of her sex." After "severely exposing" the error to the women and assigning them penance, he confronted the source of the heresy (*Atkha*, 216). The woman, awakened from a catatonic state by Netsvetov's exorcism, claimed no memory of her mistakes. Even after she asked for public forgiveness and showed every sign of repentance and obedience, Netsvetov insisted on taking her home to Atka, where he "could continue to work with her and test her" and help her to start "a totally new life" (*ibid.*, 219). Netsvetov could not tolerate spiritual backsliding, as he saw it, however sympathetic he was to the Native lifestyle in other ways. The balance between Russianization and indigenization was not always easily achieved.

Concern sometimes gave way to frustration, and Netsvetov castigated his parishioners for "their self-willed laziness" (*Atkha*, 92). On a visit to the Kurils in 1838, on the other hand, he discovered "heathen customs and superstitions" among the Natives, which he attributed not to moral deficiency but to their lack of access to priests and abuse by local Russian officials (*ibid.*, 168). The dislocated Aleuts on Urup Island, Netsvetov found, were not part of his own parish, and thus his RAC ship was not authorized to stop there. He fumed,

This neglect of the above mentioned settlers is inconsistent with the [general] measures and care taken by the Company in the matter of salvation. . . . The work of salvation should proceed without any kind

of limitations or worldly aims and be extended to all [peoples] in general without any exceptions whatsoever. (Ibid., 169)

These Aleuts were particularly vulnerable to religious backsliding, because “in respect to their spiritual rebirth, they are still in infancy and have not yet reached that age in which men are ready to strive for perfection and be prepared for every godly deed” (ibid., 170).

Netsvetov’s evident satisfaction with his activities on Atka was clouded by personal tragedy, beginning in 1836 when his wife died of uterine cancer in Novo-Arkhangelsk (*Atkha*, 137). His father died soon after. Finally, a new house that Netsvetov had built for the family, “where once I, within the circle of my family, was content and at times found happiness, in spite of all the lack, poverty and meagerness which is *Atkha*,” burned to the ground (ibid., 140). In June 1837, the grieving Netsvetov requested permission to enter monastic orders in Irkutsk. Such permission, he was informed two years later, “cannot be forthcoming until another priest is appointed to this post as my replacement” (ibid., 184). No replacement arrived until Netsvetov himself was reassigned in 1844. Creoles were meant to serve colonial goals in Alaska, not pursue personal, even spiritual, ends in Russia.⁴⁷

Netsvetov’s misery was allayed somewhat by the arrival of his sister Elena and her husband, Grigorii Klimovich Terent’ev, another accomplished Creole who had been appointed manager at Atka. Netsvetov was also pleased to welcome the new RAC governor, Arvid Adolf Etholen, with whom he had been friendly for years. Finally, Ioann Veniaminov, upon the death of his wife in 1839, had become a monk and in 1840 was consecrated Bishop Innokentii, to serve the new diocese of Kamchatka, the Kurils, and the Aleutians.

Innokentii’s appointment meant substantial reform of the Orthodox Church in Alaska. Given the past uneasiness and even hostility between the state, the church, and the company, Innokentii was determined to improve cooperation and communication, and with his new see in Novo-Arkhangelsk he had the wherewithal to actualize his plans: new funds and personnel, a seminary for the training of Native clergy, better communications and record keeping, and, above all, the backing of the authorities in Russia. In creating the new diocese, the Russian state plainly intended that the company would administer, transport, supply, and, to some degree, finance the clergy, who would then spread Russian culture. Innokentii had plans for Netsvetov, too, the “best and most experienced” missionary in the diocese, in fulfilling the church’s side of the bargain.⁴⁸ Upon Innokentii’s recommendation, Netsvetov was awarded the honorary ritual skullcap in 1835 and the thigh shield and the pectoral cross (twice!) in 1843 for outstanding service and achieve-

ment (*Atkha*, 267). Monastic retreat was no longer an option for Netsvetov, if it ever had been.

In 1842, Innokentii invited Netsvetov to join him on a trip across his diocese. On the voyage, Innokentii convinced Netsvetov to take up a new, “more important” missionary post on the Yukon, where his long experience, self-reliance, and single status would serve the remote region well (*Yukon*, xv). Veniaminov promised Netsvetov wide and independent discretion in his activities there. By December 1844, a reenergized Netsvetov was on his way to create the Kvikhpak (Yukon) mission in the Yupik village of Ikogmiut (near present-day Russian Mission, on the Yukon River). He was accompanied by three other Creoles: his deacon and former student, Innokentii Kas’ianovich Shaiashnikov (later priest at Unalaska); his nephew, Vasilii Osipovich Netsvetov; and his subdeacon (the second highest of the lower orders of clergy, who assists the priest in the liturgy), Konstantin Semenovich Lukin. After numerous stops along the way, they arrived in Ikogmiut on September 9, 1845.

Life in the interior was entirely different from what Netsvetov was accustomed to in the Aleutians; his bicultural capacities as a Creole were of little use there. The decline of furbearing animals in the Aleutians and the Gulf of Alaska had led the RAC to found three redoubts farther north, between Norton Sound and Bristol Bay: Alexandrovskii, on the Nushugak River (in 1819); Mikhailovskii, on Norton Sound (in 1833); and Kolmakovskii, on the Kuskokwim River (in 1832) (*Yukon*, 467-68). The three outposts were limited to trading rather than hunting. Instead of securing a Native workforce and controlling trade, as in the Aleutians, here the RAC had to fit into a preexisting trade network between the Athabaskan and Yupik peoples of Alaska and the Natives of Siberia.

There was no RAC redoubt at Ikogmiut and no permanent RAC personnel, though a small trading post (*odinochka*), soon dismantled, had existed there since 1835. The Kvikhpak mission would be maintained on church funds alone. The company could not guarantee the mission’s safety or supplies, though it was obliged to transport clergy and goods when conditions allowed. If conditions did not allow, the church plainly expected the mission to rely on the labor of the local Native population. The Kvikhpak mission was enormous, including not only the lower and middle Yukon valley but the Kuskokwim River and its tributaries. The climate was severe year round, making travel dangerous. Construction of housing for the clergy was imperative, but the region’s Natives were highly migratory and few were available to help with construction. This last fact seemed to take Netsvetov by surprise; in his experience, the local Native population was essential for the church’s basic labor needs. Netsvetov endured his first winter in a hastily dug, partially

subterranean shelter (*Yukon*, 14).

Markedly unlike at Atka, most of Netsvetov's potential parishioners had limited or no familiarity with Christianity. Innokentii had traveled to Alexandrovskii redoubt in 1829 and proposed the foundation of a mission; his son-in-law, Il'ia Ivanovich Petelin, served as the redoubt's first missionary. The Unalaska priest Grigorii Ivanovich Golovin visited in 1843 and 1844, and reported to Innokentii some three hundred baptized Christians. Nonetheless, upon Netsvetov's arrival in 1845, there was no resident cleric in the Kuskokwim-Yukon region, and religious services were usually conducted by RAC laymen.

Bishop Innokentii drew up a list of instructions for Netsvetov, which were given to all missionaries henceforth.⁴⁹ Like those written by Bishop Mikhail twenty-odd years before, the new guidelines emphasized developing local lay leadership and Native clergy. An 1841 ukase issued by the Holy Synod read, "Steps must be taken to prepare the aborigines for missionary posts in the future, as such native priests, knowing the local languages, can teach their parishioners without interpreters and consequently will be more efficient than Russians. . . . Besides, the native priests will be less inclined to leave the colonies." Native clergy were expected to learn and record Native languages and translate religious texts, construct churches and schools, and be patient and noncoercive as they worked to convert the Native population.⁵⁰ The missionary must present himself as a simple "wanderer and well-wisher." The adornment of church facilities was important, because it, along with the elaborate ritualism of the church, would draw the curious and impress upon them the beauty and majesty of the faith.⁵¹ Medicine and healing were also important demonstrations of the power of Russian civilization. The missionary should cultivate traditional Native leaders and children first, as an entrée into Native communities. Those Native customs not in direct conflict with the Christian sacraments were to be tolerated in the short term; Orthodox religious observances were to be interpreted liberally. Innokentii also required the missionary to keep extensive records, including parish journals, charts of vital statistics, detailed financial logs, personnel records and actions, and even ongoing reports of weather and game patterns.⁵² Innokentii's instructions were the functional means by which Native peoples could be brought to God and into the Russian Empire.

Innokentii's directive was consistent with Nicholas I's Official Nationality doctrine, in that adoption of Russian civilization must be genuine, even if paternalistically guided from above. Clergy, like all loyal subjects, must personally serve the interests of empire in a didactic pastoral role; they must also serve an administrative function at the local level, where state institutions could not yet reach. The Siberian

reorganization project under Mikhail Speranskii in the 1820s, although it did not directly apply to Russian America, also assumed that Natives could be guided to become Russians gradually and voluntarily.⁵³ The RAC charter of 1844 reflected this colonial consensus. There would be no compulsion in bringing Native Alaskans to Russian Orthodoxy; those who refused to convert could practice their traditional religions freely.

Although the 1844 charter emphasized the training of indigenous clergy, many Russian clerics privately viewed their Creole counterparts with some anxiety as only half-civilized; perhaps the Creoles' interpretation of the faith would also be indigenized. Even Innokentii uncharacteristically shared this suspicion of Creoles: he wrote in an 1852 letter, "*Sub altero* they can be useful, but they are not capable of work as leaders."⁵⁴ Evidently Netsvetov was an exception, given Innokentii's oft-repeated praise in public and private. Innokentii's guidelines emphasized the gradual paternalism that would bring Alaska Natives to the company, the empire, and the church. Netsvetov's actions in Ikogmiut showed his understanding and endorsement of this strategy.

Over the next 17 years, Netsvetov attempted to implement all the complex strategies and requirements formulated by Innokentii in 1845, as much as the remote and challenging human and natural landscapes would permit. At first Netsvetov conducted religious services in his field tent, because building materials were scarce. By 1846, he had completed construction on his own house; in 1851, the church at Ikogmiut was finished (*Yukon*, 24). Most of the labor was provided by Aleut workmen whom Innokentii authorized Netsvetov to import, headed by the Creole Nikolai Vasil'evich Bel'kov of Saint Paul. The Bel'kovs became an important element of the mission's success, especially in stewardship of the mission while Netsvetov was away (*ibid.*, 353). The family's five sons also provided some of Netsvetov's most promising students. With the help of the Bel'kovs, the most rudimentary means of survival, such as a fish weir and a stove of beaten clay, were completed in 1847 (*ibid.*, 51, 57). Russian dependence on Native labor was evident at Ikogmiut, as it was throughout Russian America.

Netsvetov was in the thick of the building action, whether supervising or physically taking part, as his health allowed. He drew the plans for the church himself, which Innokentii approved in 1849.⁵⁵ Netsvetov painted icons, carved and decorated the iconostasis, and sculpted church vessels and chandeliers out of walrus ivory. He sewed altar cloths and repaired clerical vestments as necessary.⁵⁶ Like Innokentii, Netsvetov saw these decorations as important: "The celebration of the service in the church apparently attracts the natives. Attendance at the services convinces them, through the beauty and order of the services" (*Yukon*, 297).



In September 1845, Netsvetov arrived in Ikogmiut, depicted above by Frederick Whymper in 1867. Bishop Innokentii believed Netsvetov’s experience, self-reliance, and single status would serve the remote region well. (Image courtesy of Wayfarer’s Bookshop)

Netsvetov traveled as regularly as he could between the redoubts, visiting settlements and collecting supplies left for him by RAC ships. Sometimes he spent a whole season away from Ikogmiut. He tried to take advantage of the Natives’ own travel patterns for religious instruction and services, especially when they were gathered at the redoubts for trade (*Yukon*, 233). For river or coastal trips, Netsvetov and his imported laborers built Aleut-style *baidaras* (large, open skin boats) and baidarkas; in winter, he hired dogsleds and Native guides to drive them, or traveled by snowshoe. He relied heavily on his Creole subdeacon Konstantin Lukin, who served as guide, oarsman, navigator, and interpreter. Finding local men to assist in his travel could be difficult, even though Netsvetov paid them wages out of his own austere budget (*ibid.*, 108, 141, 143, 304). He preferred to travel with RAC employees when he could; in 1851, for example, Netsvetov reported that Semen Lukin “at this time puts at my disposal all the means for the journey” to Kolmakovskii, and Netsvetov thanked him “profusely for his care of me during our journey” (*ibid.*, 229 [1st qtn.], 230 [last qtn.]). When such help was impossible to obtain, Netsvetov traveled with his own clerical household alone, often oaring a baidarka or driving a dog team himself (*ibid.*, 44, 147). Netsvetov locked the Ikogmiut mission buildings and left them in the care of “faithful natives,” under the stewardship of the Bel’kovs (*ibid.*, 91).

Travel in winter was miserable and dangerous, owing to the terrible cold, poor trails, and Netsvetov’s increasingly poor health (*Yukon*, 73). From his arrival at Ikogmiut, Netsvetov

suffered a near-constant series of afflictions, ranging from colds and fevers to digestive and circulatory problems. “Difficult and burdensome circumstances [conditions] exist in this region everywhere, but especially so in winter. Many improvements and means for necessary action need to be instituted in order to spread and confirm the Christian faith among the peoples inhabiting these regions!” (*ibid.*, 78). In 1850, the Native guides had to harness themselves to the sleds because it was so cold that the dogs could no longer walk; Netsvetov proceeded on foot. Frequently the cold scarcely allowed Netsvetov to get through services (*ibid.*, 182, 187). “Most of all,” wrote Netsvetov in January 1853, “I am afraid of the cold, which I cannot tolerate” (*ibid.*, 334).

Netsvetov’s mission included Yupiks and Athabaskans of the southwest Alaskan interior: Ingalik, Lower Koyukon, and Kolchane (Upper Ahtna). His visits to the Native settlements consisted of religious dialogues and instruction, baptisms, administration of the sacraments, medical treatments, and resolution of local disputes. Already within two days of his arrival at Ikogmiut, Netsvetov began preaching to the “wild ones” (*Yukon*, 4). As Innokentii recommended, he was careful to approach Native toions first, believing that the rest of each community would follow its leader’s example (*ibid.*, 5, 46-47). Sometimes Netsvetov’s overtures met resistance; at Kalikagmiut in November 1845, for example, the toion also happened to be the village shaman. “Answering for all,” Netsvetov reported, “he contradicted and at first resisted with exceptional strength, but later on, through clear, logical arguments and disproof of his false opinions,

he became convinced" (ibid., 9). In response to the Natives' "petty and unimportant reasons" for resisting conversion, Netsvetov followed Innokentii's direction, and "arguments against those doubts were presented and clarified" (ibid., 44 [1st qtn.], 12 [last qtn.]). Netsvetov insisted that the behavior of the toions would determine the amount of obedience and respect they received from their people and cautioned them on "how to counter false teachings" when they came across them (ibid., 68 [qtn.], 69). The toions also became important links in the chain of administrative communication demanded by Innokentii, reporting on vital statistics in their communities; when they failed in this, he was quick to remind them about "proper obedience and attention to authority" (ibid., 77, 132 [qtn.]). The importance of the toions to Netsvetov's mission led him to intervene in changes of Native leadership. In 1848, he pressed for a particular candidate as toion's assistant "because of his intelligence and devotion to the Christian religion" (ibid., 132). Those who were especially loyal were singled out for praise and occasionally awarded a ceremonial red shirt (ibid., 19, 21, 218, 298). Prominent Natives could also serve Netsvetov as interpreters when Konstantin Lukin did not know the language (ibid., 102-103, 348).

Logical arguments and personal example were not always conclusive, however, in encouraging Natives to convert; frequently, the Natives "postponed" their baptism until a more convenient time in their annual subsistence cycle, listened "with obvious reluctance," or simply ignored Netsvetov outright: "We did not know God before, and now have no wish to know him" (*Yukon*, 17 [1st qtn.], 22 [2d qtn.], 44 [last qtn.]). Netsvetov refused to baptize anyone except at their express wish (ibid., 145, 349). But in February 1848, he scolded an old man who spoke against Christianity.

I told him that he will be subject to strict action, because if only he himself does not wish to convert or has no inclination to accept Christianity, it is his own business, and no one would compel him or even bother him with talk about it; it behooves him then, in turn, to leave his brethren who have turned to the Christian faith in peace, and so on. (Ibid., 81)

The power of the faith could work both ways, Netsvetov discovered. In one spectacular case, a Yupik man suffering from insanity, brought on by a curse, was cured by baptism. Contrarily, a "possessed" woman attributed her illness to Christian baptism (ibid., 31, 51 [qtn.]).

Netsvetov realized that apparent conversions could be weak or insincere. In January 1846, he discovered in Ikogmiut "superstitions among the newly baptized" (*Yukon*, 12). The following year, he observed the villagers arranging a "divvy-ing up" feast, much like a potlatch (ibid., 55). The toion told Netsvetov that such hospitality was "imperative" (ibid., 54). Though he saw the feast activities as "idle festivities," Nets-

vetov allowed postponement of the Natives' preparations for communion (ibid., 56). But on Sunday, no one attended church services. The Natives invited Netsvetov to the feast, but he declined. He asked how he "could go and visit them when they opposed me and disobeyed me and did not come when I invited them to communal prayer this very day."⁵⁷ He might hold the mass in his prayer tent (always pitched in the same locations, marked by a cross) or in his own home if conditions demanded it, but he would not bring Christian practice to traditional sites of Native worship.⁵⁸ The Ikogmiut residents undertook a commemoration of the dead ceremony in September 1847, followed by a festival and dance. Netsvetov did not interfere directly, but was displeased:

This custom is, of course, contrary to Christianity, as it is based on superstition and it ought to be abandoned, however there are still many heathen here and very few Christians. In a great assembly, as is here now, the latter humor the former, willy-nilly, and observe what is demanded of them as of old. . . . Later on one must take strict measures against such superstition on their part, as just reasoning and my words have little effect. . . . Inconstant is this folk! (Ibid., 57)

At first, Netsvetov was content when the parishioners could attend to the liturgy "without expressions of boredom" or enjoyed ringing the bells (ibid., 87 [qtn.], 89). It could be tiring to officiate at the mass, "especially during the initial conversion of the wild ones to Christianity because they required attention and instruction like veritable children" (ibid., 50). Netsvetov frequently infantilized his Native flock; such paternalism was characteristic of Russian (and many other Christian) missionaries of the period.⁵⁹

Over time, Netsvetov noted with satisfaction the increasing number of converts and the apparent ability of the faith to transcend old rivalries. In May 1853, he reported,

As it was then Sunday, I then held a service to God, in the open field. . . . One must imagine the joy in my heart at the sight of so many souls gathered in one place (there were more than 300), praying to God, people of various nations [raznoplemennye narody], formerly living in strife with each other, enemies, now united as Christ's Church's flock, offering prayers to the true God. (*Yukon*, 350)

As in his Atkan linguistic efforts, Netsvetov was genuinely moved by the prospect of universal peace and ethnic unity, brought about by the Orthodox Church. People from outlying regions began to travel to Ikogmiut for baptism or to intercept Netsvetov on his travels (ibid., 144). Each new baptism brought "inner satisfaction"; the Easter service, "observed by many natives for the first time with wonder," always brought, wrote Netsvetov, "great joy within me and in my heart" (ibid., 87 [1st qtn.], 88 [2d, last qtns.]). Soon Netsvetov's congregation stood respectfully throughout the service, despite frost in the church or the near constant dripping of the roof: "One may say they came with zeal, and

accepted everything with understanding which was expressed in their faces. This, this is what makes me joyful!” (ibid., 135). By 1851, with the conversions of two old women who had seemed unlikely to join the Christians before their deaths and over whom Netsvetov had “grieved greatly,” Kvikhpak had a populous home congregation (ibid., 236).

I cannot express the spiritual joy I experienced when I christened the above named people, in spite of all my infirmities and ailments. This joy is given me from above, and is the greater because now in the local settlement all residents (except one woman who is to be baptized later) are now Christened and none remain heathen. (Ibid.)

In a special document signed by Innokentii, Netsvetov was said to have converted 1,516 people between 1845 and 1852 alone.⁶⁰

Netsvetov spent nearly as much time fighting perennial famine and disease as he did proselytizing, in the context of his own worsening health. “My Aleut workers are suffering privation, but I must say they perceive this as a privation being new to this locality,” Netsvetov wrote in 1850. “Here such lack is an ordinary occurrence” (*Yukon*, 187). The life-line of the Kvikhpak mission was the RAC ship, expected every summer at the Mikhailovskii redoubt, bringing vital food, medicine, and news. Awaiting the supply ship, which was often late, caused Netsvetov “boredom and irritation” (ibid., 151). An extended delay was even more frustrating:

Our circumstances here, while we await the ship, are growing rather difficult. It is difficult to obtain provisions, stores, mostly there is scarcity of food for support of my people; time passes uselessly, while the propitious time for our return journey goes by, as well as for putting up the necessary provisions for the coming winter and attending to matters at our own locality. What to do? (Ibid., 153)

Sometimes the ship arrived with supplies far below the mission’s usual allotment. Netsvetov managed the shortfall by calling on the aid of the local RAC redoubts. In response to Netsvetov’s request that the Mikhailovskii redoubt “assist in meeting this Mission’s needs,” the missionary reported that he received “everything I asked for”: tea, sugar, and flour (ibid., 370 [1st qtn.], 371 [last qtn.]). In these cases, the company met its responsibilities for provisioning the church. Still, Netsvetov worried. “What is to be done? We shall manage somehow with all the shortages. I am used to such deprivation; this is not the first time—it is my fate in this remote region” (ibid., 385).

The clerics supplemented their lean supplies through hunting and fishing. Netsvetov repeatedly attempted to plant a vegetable garden, but the fierce weather prevented it from flourishing. When the clerics could not supply the mission from their own subsistence activities, they traded with local Native groups for food, especially fish (*Yukon*, 109, 142, 372). The Creole clerics, in other words, adapted to local

ways to meet their needs, which, after all, was what Russians expected them to do. When even this was unsuccessful, the mission and its employees went without. In April 1858, Netsvetov worried about postponing his return to Ikogmiut from Kolmakovskii, even though trail conditions were far from ideal. “I could not decide on this step, because it would have meant leaving my people and the Mission for a very long time in uncertainty and when the conditions for obtaining food are difficult” (ibid., 374).

While the mission experienced privations, Native peoples sometimes faced outright starvation. The years 1848, 1849, 1858, and 1859, for example, saw terrible food scarcity for Natives in Ikogmiut and far beyond, with “mass mortality” (*Yukon*, 126, 180, 376 [qtn.], 387). The year 1860 was even worse, because the spring fish runs failed to materialize:

Even the local residents are despairing that the fish will come, saying that in the past there were some years when no *chavycha* appeared in the Kvikhpak for the entire summer and that the same happened along the Kuskokwim. This caused horrible [seasons of] starvation and death from hunger. Remembering this, they were saying and wondering if this year the same won’t happen again? For this reason, telling them that one must pray to God, I myself appealed to God with prayer in this matter, in full assurance in accordance with his word, that human beings are better than birds whom the Heavenly Father nourishes! (Ibid., 406)

Food shortages caused the local Natives to travel constantly for subsistence. The RAC managers were generous when they could be, but “the local manager finds himself in a rather difficult position in the matter of supplies for his employees, especially near the spring season. Whatever will the Lord send in the future?” (ibid., 185). Netsvetov understood that such dire straits prevented many of his parishioners from attending to their religious responsibilities (ibid., 198).

Disease was not far behind, for all inhabitants of the region.⁶¹ In 1847, Netsvetov noted that even in normal years the Native peoples around Ikogmiut suffered from intestinal illness, scrofula, and respiratory disorders.⁶² Throughout the 1840s, Netsvetov reported an influenza-like “coughing sickness” that affected many, inside and outside the Russian settlements. “My co-servitors . . . are restless, cough, and have lost their voices, but worst of all is my Vasia [Vasilii Netsvetov, his beloved nephew]—at times his breath seems to stop, he chokes coughing, and there is nothing to help” (*Yukon*, 99 [qtns.], 268). (Vasilii died in 1856 of tuberculosis.) Another “epidemic” bout of “cough, headache, and aching throat” commenced in late winter 1849, recurring throughout the next two decades. “What is yet to happen before spring?” Netsvetov worried (ibid., 132). In 1851, he recorded yet another respiratory ailment associated with a rash (probably measles) that raged from spring to early

winter, causing Natives to avoid contact with Russians altogether. Those Natives Netsvetov could find to serve as oarsmen in his travels could scarcely breathe (*ibid.*, 265).

Netsvetov could hardly maintain a supply of medicines; the Natives, he wrote, “ceaselessly come running to me asking for aid and treatment” (*Yukon*, 240). Netsvetov and Konstantin Lukin also visited the sick frequently (*ibid.*, 191, 230). Evidently medical demonstrations led to an increase in conversions, as Innokentii had foretold. As one woman reported, “I pray here for our Priest, because he helped me when I was not too long ago very ill. He gave me medicine and I recovered. For this reason I [come] here and pray for him to God” (*ibid.*, 82). Many of the sick, however, were beyond Netsvetov’s medical reach. “What to do? How to help? I cannot even help myself or my own people” (*ibid.*, 265-66).

The climate seemed to worsen Netsvetov’s own chronic health problems, such that on many days he was unable to perform his priestly duties. This June 18, 1849, entry was typical:

Today I was unable to do anything, because of severe illness. In the days past, though I felt ill, I could keep to my feet and attended to necessary business. Today I was unable to walk, spent the entire day lying down. Internal pain and hemorrhoids brought me to such a state of weakness in all limbs, even my entire body, that I was unable even to take nourishment. (*Yukon*, 149)

Sometimes his illness was so severe that Netsvetov feared for his life: “Being in this state of illness I even began to think that the Lord is angry with me and that the end of my being in this world approaches” (*ibid.*, 84). Netsvetov’s physical activities resulted in serious injuries as well, as when in 1850 he fell from a roof. He cut his leg with a chisel, rendering him unable to walk, in 1851; in 1859, he slipped on the ice and dislocated his wrist (*ibid.*, 221, 274, 397). In 1863, Netsvetov suffered a paralytic leg illness, diagnosed by the Mikhailovskii medic as scurvy. Worst of all, beginning in April 1861, Netsvetov suffered from an ongoing eye ailment that left him half-blind (*ibid.*, 422).

The unforgiving environment meant that the RAC employees at the redoubts relied on Netsvetov, just as he relied on them. His relations with RAC officials were generally cordial, and they were particularly warm with Semen Lukin. Lukin was himself a Creole, raised and educated in Governor Baranov’s household. He was an early company explorer of the Kuskokwim region, fluent in many Native languages. He became manager of the newly established Kolmakovskii redoubt in 1839 and over the next 16 years built the redoubt’s chapel, opened a school for local children, vaccinated the surrounding population, and physically defended his redoubt against the same Native attack

that destroyed the Ikogmiut outpost in 1839. As an RAC official, he was respected by his superiors and by the Natives who traded with him. Lukin shared supplies with the Kvikh-pak mission in times of scarcity, lent assistance and materials for Netsvetov’s travels, and brought the missionary news. He provided the mission with a second generation of loyal service in his sons. Konstantin was of direct help to the mission, as sacristan (responsible for the care of the church) and interpreter, and in countless unofficial capacities; Ivan followed his father as manager at Kolmakovskii and served the RAC until the company sold its Alaskan holdings in 1867 (*Yukon*, 469-70).

However close Netsvetov became with the Lukin family, Kolmakovskii redoubt could do little to actively protect the mission at Ikogmiut, which was vulnerable to attack from Native peoples, particularly in years of famine and disease. In 1849, “unidentified savages” attempted to enter the Ikogmiut villagers’ homes. Netsvetov appointed a night watch and served sentry duty himself (*Yukon*, 160). A few years later, a deadly attack occurred at the RAC outpost at Nulato. Semen Lukin warned Netsvetov to “be on guard and in a state of preparedness” (*ibid.*, 238). Similarly, rumors surfaced in 1853 that unidentified Natives, who had been “prowling around” the mission, intended to murder Netsvetov in particular (*ibid.*, 361).

Attacks from hostile or simply starving Natives were not the only violent incidents in which Netsvetov had to intervene. In April 1860, the Kolmakovskii employees mutinied against the manager, Ivan Lukin, due to the shortage of food rations. In response to Lukin’s plea for help, Netsvetov sent a letter to the mutineers, “reasoning and persuading them.” A week later, Netsvetov reported, the mutineers “acknowledged their transgression against the superior authority . . . and took to heart my admonitions and in the future will be obedient in respect to higher authority.” Netsvetov “accepted their petition with joy,” but warned that he would keep an eye on them (*Yukon*, 402).

In April 1861, a disaffected RAC employee at Nulato murdered another Russian employee and then fled. Netsvetov was ordered to arrest him should he appear at Ikogmiut and deliver him to Mikhailovskii “under strong guard” (*Yukon*, 421). Netsvetov worried,

This circumstance bodes danger even for my mission, because this same Kolesov, having joined the savages, may be urging them, even taking the lead, in nefarious enterprises, such as attacks on other localities. Especially in summer time, when all the people have to be absent, travelling to the Mikhailovskii redoubt, my mission is vulnerable. (*Ibid.*, 421)

Netsvetov visited the fugitive upon his capture in July 1861, but refused him communion, “leaving the matter for proper

investigation” (ibid., 427).

Locating a missing person posed serious challenges, and Netsvetov always cooperated in search efforts. A search party was formed quickly, whether it was Netsvetov missing or someone else, often incorporating mission and company personnel. A missing Russian employee from the Andreevskaia outpost, for example, led both Lukin and Netsvetov to dispatch men for the search, though the latter could scarcely afford it (*Yukon*, 308, 311).

Without immediate church, state, or company judicial authority, Netsvetov sometimes assumed an investigatory role. In July 1851, for instance, Netsvetov received a note that Ivan Lukin’s wife had been killed when a musket accidentally discharged. Netsvetov “gave the manager of the K[almakovskii] redoubt, S. Lukin, an official written letter, No. 240, charging him, upon his return to the redoubt, to thoroughly investigate the circumstances of this event and then report to me” (*Yukon*, 264). In this way, the RAC redoubts and the Kvikhpak mission usually administered the interior region in concert. But tensions arose if Netsvetov suspected RAC officials of undermining his missionary efforts. In 1861, he fell out with the Kolmakovskii redoubt’s new manager:

The manager of the Kolmakovskii redoubt, the Russian Iakov Repnikov, acts contrary to Christian faith and piety. . . . He encourages the heathen customs and superstitions, permitting even in his presence shamanistic seances. . . . Such ungodly . . . and malignant temptations, interfering with the spread of the Christian faith and piety among the newly christened and the heathen, I immediately reported in writing. (Ibid., 428)

Interdependence of the church and the RAC did not imply, to Netsvetov, relinquishing moral and administrative authority to unworthy company men.

Native people turned to Netsvetov for resolution of their disputes, too. A Native elder (*starshina*) at Kanigmut consulted Netsvetov about an intertribal dispute. Although the exact nature of the incident is unclear, apparently an unnamed person hired some of the villagers to attack another village. The elder insisted that his people agreed “only in jest.” Some must have taken the job seriously, however; because of the attack, the victimized village was left leaderless. Netsvetov warned that “even talking about such evil was bad” and that such behavior caused “suspicion not only in the eyes of the authorities but also in the eyes of their own brethren.” The Native elder agreed and explained that he had held up the village’s travel explicitly to intercept Netsvetov and obtain his blessing. The whole village accepted conversion as a result (*Yukon*, 145).

All was not trouble and travail at Kvikhpak. When his travel

schedule and health allowed, Netsvetov continued his scholarly pursuits. He maintained an extensive private library and borrowed books from the Novo-Arkhangelsk library.⁶³ He began lessons for children upon his arrival at Ikogmiut, and the Sunday school continued throughout his tenure there.⁶⁴ The church servitors, too, received regular lessons on Sundays and feast days (*Yukon*, 24-25). Netsvetov continued editing Innokentii’s translations and began his own study of the Yupik and Athabaskan languages. He was committed to bilingual or even trilingual religious services; already in 1848 he offered a service in Russian and two Native languages (likely through interpreters, at least for the Athabaskan languages). Ultimately, with the assistance of his student Zakhar Nikolaevich Bel’kov (Netsvetov’s eventual successor at Kvikhpak mission), Netsvetov created a Yupik script and taught local students in their own language.⁶⁵ These activities were exactly what church officials hoped that missionary priests would do.

Bishop Innokentii visited Ikogmiut in July 1848 and was welcomed with as much fanfare as Netsvetov could muster. The bishop elevated Netsvetov to protopresbyter, released Shaiashnikov to his new post as priest at Unalaska, and confirmed Netsvetov’s other assistants in the clerical estate. He also distributed honorary red shirts and silver crosses to noteworthy Native Christians (*Yukon*, 104). A look around the tidy mission settlement must have confirmed his confidence in Netsvetov. Now Innokentii had new instructions, however. By the 1840s, the bishop had made important alliances with imperial officials in Russia. Accordingly, he encouraged Netsvetov to emphasize to the Natives their new place as subjects of the empire. Netsvetov complied. For instance, in 1847, he reported,

I took the occasion to offer a special sermon about how we, as Christians, had the duty to pray for the health and well-being of the Lord Emperor and his entire Royal Family, explained what was the meaning of the Imperial Authority and what was the proper behavior toward Him [Emperor] of them, his subjects. . . . After the service, I invited the toion and starshina for a visit with me, and talked to them in greater detail about the Imperial Authority under whose protection they live nowadays safely and so on. (Ibid., 49)

Netsvetov regularly announced imperial decrees, and he honored special events in the lives of the royal family with thanksgiving prayers. His parishioners had to be ready to assume a role as Russian imperial subjects as well as Christians.

Innokentii also insisted on new administrative practices. For Netsvetov such record keeping “consumes a considerable amount of time, and interferes with my work on the church” (*Yukon*, 237). In addition to maintaining his service journal, confessional records, and compilations of vital statistics, Netsvetov drafted special reports and regularly kept

accounts of the mission's supplies and finances. Clerical personnel promotions, demotions, evaluations, and assignments fell to him as well (ibid., 408). His summer stays at Mikhailovskii were a frenzy of administrative activity, preparing documents for the supply ship to carry to Novo-Arkhangelsk, or reading, organizing, and registering correspondence and orders sent to him on the same ship (ibid., 148, 208-209). Netsvetov did not enjoy such work, but he clearly understood its importance in organizing and governing the Alaska colony.

Netsvetov's responsibilities weighed heavier as the years wore on. Time and the privations of life on the Yukon weakened his body and, occasionally, his resolve. Russian missionaries frequently drew biblical metaphors about their ministries: the Arctic, like the biblical desert, was a spiritual testing ground.⁶⁶ In September 1852, forced by weather conditions to spend the feast day of his church on a muddy riverbank, Netsvetov wrote,

A pious and God-fearing person will understand and know perhaps what were my inner feelings and what pain of the heart I suffered this day. . . . How sorry [I felt] that the circumstances forced me to be on this day away from my church and the pleasure of celebrating the Divine service in the Temple of the Feast. What can one do? In accordance with my sins and unworthiness, the Lord so ruled. (*Yukon*, 319)

Such despair inspired Netsvetov, in 1852, to send Innokentii the first of several requests for a transfer.

I entered service in this land already afflicted with physical handicaps, which in the first years I could endure with effort. . . . But during my seven years in this severe and cold climate, my illnesses and attacks have increased so much that now I find myself unable to serve in this part of the country. . . . Therefore, I dare most respectfully to ask Your Grace to relieve me from an extended stay here and to permit me to depart.⁶⁷

Innokentii, using an apostolic metaphor, responded,

There have been no examples of Apostles who requested and received release to retire or rest, and you are a true Apostle; therefore I do not dare to take upon myself to discharge you from the Apostolate and by so doing—among other things—to deprive you of the crown for your labor and your illnesses; it is through them that you will carry on your task, and you must carry on so as to proclaim Christ. In the meantime God will send you helpers.⁶⁸

Netsvetov would not receive a transfer to monastic life as many of his Russian colleagues had. Cultivated specifically for work in his native Alaska (though Atka, the Yukon, and Novo-Arkhangelsk were vastly different places), the church intended for him to stay there. Innokentii was not unsympathetic. In an 1848 letter, he had written of Netsvetov:

This missionary acts, one may say, just like the apostles: untiringly, patiently, entirely unselfishly, prudently, and meekly. Ignoring his

ailments and sicknesses, he travels in winter on foot, such that I, reading one entry in his journal and seeing his hardly comfortable work and his illness, must say: with your illness and toil, truly thou hast labored like them in the Gospel of Christ.⁶⁹

Though he would not agree to transfer Netsvetov, Innokentii petitioned the Holy Synod for additional personnel who might eventually take on parts of Netsvetov's territory.⁷⁰

The four clerical "helpers" Innokentii sent caused Netsvetov even more distress. In 1849, Hieromonk Filaret arrived at the Kvikhpak mission (*Yukon*, 153). Filaret proved to be of unsound mind: "Today Father Filaret displayed strangeness [in behavior], for me unfathomable and which shocked me. [I wonder] if it is temptation offered us, or if this is insanity and melancholy" (ibid., 156). A few days later, Filaret threatened Netsvetov's life (ibid., 161). Though Netsvetov moved into the village to avoid his assistant, the latter's "anger [rage, *zloba*] against me only increases" (ibid., 162). While locked in the mission storeroom, Filaret started a fire and "boasts that he will do even worse" (ibid., 163). Netsvetov ordered Filaret to serve in the chapel at Mikhailovskii. He even sent Konstantin Lukin along, to temporarily serve as sacristan and interpreter (ibid., 164-65). In January 1850, Lukin reported that Filaret's mental health continued to decline. "What is to be done?" worried Netsvetov. "Does the Lord let me suffer this as a temptation, or as punishment for my sins? His Holy Will be done! Now I am myself in a state of mental disorder, inner turmoil, and bodily incapacity" (ibid., 182). Ultimately, Filaret was removed from office and returned to monastic life in Russia, the spiritual rest denied Netsvetov. Filaret accomplished nothing in his official capacity (ibid., 208, 482).

Netsvetov sent Hieromonk Gavriil, who arrived in 1853, almost directly to Mikhailovskii (*Yukon*, 358-59). Gavriil was incoherent, paranoid, and sometimes violent; he, too, had to be restrained and incarcerated in his quarters. In 1855 or 1856, Gavriil sent a report to Novo-Arkhangelsk accusing Konstantin Lukin of murdering local Natives, with Netsvetov's collusion. The consistory stripped Gavriil of his clerical status and ordered him to return to Novo-Arkhangelsk. He refused to do so and remained at the Mikhailovskii redoubt, destitute but for sharing Netsvetov's own food rations (which he believed to be poisoned), until his death in 1860.⁷¹

The third assistant, Hieromonk Theoktist, arrived at Mikhailovskii in 1858 (*Yukon*, 379-80). Theoktist was equally unsuitable, but for different reasons. Theoktist had a checkered past in Russia, marked with repeated dismissals and censure; perhaps his superiors at home posted him to Alaska simply to be rid of him. True to form, Theoktist's Alaska journals were filled with bitter complaints about the Creole employees of the RAC and about Netsvetov (ibid., 483-84).

Indeed, his most ferocious attacks were directed at Netsvetov. Perhaps he resented Netsvetov's status; in 1858, Netsvetov was elevated to the rank of mitred archpriest and admitted to the Imperial Order of Saint Anne.⁷² In any case, Theoktist refused to report on his activities to Netsvetov (ibid., 420). Worse, Theoktist reinforced the accusations Gavriil had made against Lukin and Netsvetov in 1856, calling Lukin "Netsvetov's co-conspirator in crimes" (ibid., 483). He got along no better with the RAC officials at Mikhailovskii, leaving his post often, without permission, to stay at the Andreevskaiia outpost (ibid., 403, 405, 407). The RAC manager at Mikhailovskii and Theoktist wrote separately to Netsvetov in December, "both documents containing nothing but unpleasantness, having to do with a poor relationship between the [authors]" (ibid., 397). Theoktist's "feelings of resentment" toward Creoles meant that Netsvetov was "not able to assign to him any of my clerics, or anyone else, no more than I can force anyone to go with him. No one agrees to accompany him voluntarily" (ibid., 394 [1st qtn.], 417 [last qtn.]). In 1861, Theoktist was recalled to Novo-Arkhangelsk to answer charges of harassing a resident Aleut's wife. Netsvetov took part in the hearings, and in the end, Theoktist was ordered to return to Russia (ibid., 429, 483-84).

But in 1861, Gavriil's accusations, supported by Theoktist, also had consequences. Three years earlier, in 1858, the diocese had been divided, and Netsvetov was now under the supervision of a new bishop, Petr. The new bishop, unfamiliar with Alaskan conditions and personnel, ordered an investigation into Lukin's activities. Netsvetov was not invited to take part. Petr traveled to Ikogmiut with yet another new assistant, Hieromonk Illarion, who was charged specifically with investigating the matter (*Yukon*, 428, 480). Although Illarion's investigation did not substantiate the murder charge, it did uncover Lukin's 10-year relationship with an already married Ikogmiut woman. Netsvetov had apparently tolerated the illegal union for years, for reasons that Illarion was unable to discover (ibid., 431, 437). Lukin died, perhaps by suicide, in Novo-Arkhangelsk in June 1862, and Netsvetov was released from his 17-year position in favor of Hieromonk Illarion (ibid., 473-75, 448).

Having given over the mission records and packed his possessions for the move to Novo-Arkhangelsk by the end of September 1862, the perennially busy Netsvetov felt at a loss. "I am residing here for nothing [*darom*], as I am not receiving support any more, living, in the meantime, at the expense of Father Illarion and the cleric Bel'kov" (*Yukon*, 448). Finally allowed to leave in November for Mikhailovskii to await the RAC ship, Netsvetov had only two sled dogs and few provisions for the journey. His parishioners made up the difference and sent an escort along with him.⁷³ At

Mikhailovskii, Netsvetov felt keenly the loss of responsibility. He wrote to Bishop Petr in December, "describing the difficulties I have in maintaining myself without occupying any official status" (ibid., 453). Finally, in July 1862, the RAC ship arrived to take Netsvetov to Novo-Arkhangelsk, though he still had no official orders (ibid., 463). The ship did bring a query from the consistory about his travel reimbursement requests. Netsvetov had to explain that his travel had always required the hire of Native men, each of whom was entitled to salary and provisions. He requested that these excess costs be taken out of his salary.⁷⁴

Netsvetov was assigned to serve as priest at the Tlingit Church of the Holy Trinity in Novo-Arkhangelsk in 1862, though his strength was nearly spent. He died on July 26, 1864, leaving a debt of 6,573 rubles. All of his personal property except books (which were kept in the consistory or given to other clergy) was auctioned.⁷⁵ Innokentii paid the remainder of the debt from the church treasury.⁷⁶ Netsvetov was buried at the entrance to the Tlingit chapel, not far from the grave of his wife.⁷⁷ For his deep piety, missionary success, and devotion to the people of Alaska, he was glorified as Saint Iakov, Enlightener of Alaska, in 1994.⁷⁸

The institutions of Russian America allowed upward social mobility and status for Creoles of talent like Netsvetov, in exchange for their essential role in balancing the multiple interests and needs of the colony. Accustomed to the diverse human and physical landscapes of his birth, but fundamentally Russian and Orthodox in his worldview, Netsvetov negotiated the interests of the church, the empire, the company, and his Native parishioners in ways that were humane, practical, and effective. Such successes, however, were accompanied by challenges: to Netsvetov's health and his sense of well-being, to his professional desires and ambitions, and to his personal and institutional loyalties. His life and career thus offer a useful window into the opportunities and limitations of Creole policy in Russian America.

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1. Ilya Vinkovetsky, *Russian America: An Overseas Colony of a Continental Empire* (New York, 2011), 143. See also Svetlana G. Fedorova, *The Russian Population in Alaska and California, Late 18th Century–1867*, trans. Richard A. Pierce and Alton S. Donnelly (Kingston, Ont., 1973), 275-81.
2. Fedorova, 206-13; James R. Gibson, "Russian Dependence on the Natives of Alaska," in *Russia's American Colony*, ed. S. Frederick Starr (Durham, N.C., 1987), 77-104; Susan Smith-Peter, "Creating a Creole Estate in Early Nineteenth-Century Russian America," *Cahiers du monde Russe*, Vol. 51 (April/September 2010), 441-59; Vinkovetsky, 142-49.
3. The term *Creole* was borrowed from the Spanish, but accorded different meaning. Its first recorded use was in 1805, though apparently it was in common usage in the colony some years prior. Vinkovetsky, 40; Lydia Black, *Russians in Alaska, 1732-1867* (Fairbanks, Alaska, 2004), 215.
4. Imperial Russia was organized into legally defined social estates, each with particular rights and tax obligations: the peasantry, the town dwellers (*meschane*), the clergy, the merchants, and the nobility. Estate affiliation was usually based on birth, and passed from father to son, with women assuming the estate affiliation of their fathers and husbands. See Gregory L. Freeze, "The *Soslovie* (Estate) Paradigm and Russian Social History," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 91 (February 1986), 11-36; and Alison K. Smith, *For the Common Good and Their Own Well-Being: Social Estates in Imperial Russia* (New York, 2014), 1-13. On the *meschane*, see Elise Kimerling Wirtschafter, *Social Identity in Imperial Russia* (DeKalb, Ill., 1997), 134.
5. The text of the second charter may be found in Basil Dmytryshyn, E. A. P. Crownhart-Vaughn, and Thomas Vaughn, eds., *To Siberia and Russian America: Three Centuries of Russian Eastward Expansion*, Vol. 3: *The Russian American Colonies, 1798-1867* (Portland, Oreg., 1989), 353-66.
6. On the social status of Creoles, see A. V. Grinev, "Spetsifika vertikal'noi sotsial'noi mobil'nosti kreol'skogo naseleniia Russkoi Ameriki," *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie*, no. 2 (2011), 74-89; and Susan Smith-Peter, "'A Class of People Admitted to the Better Ranks': The First Generation of Creoles in Russian America, 1810s-1820s," *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 60 (Summer 2013), 363-84.
7. See, for example, Roxanne Easley, "Demographic Borderlands: People of Mixed Heritage in the Russian American Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870," *PNQ*, Vol. 99 (Spring 2008), 73-89; Michael J. Oleksa, "The Creoles and Their Contributions to the Development of Alaska," in *Russian America: The Forgotten Frontier*, ed. Barbara Sweetland Smith and Redmond J. Barnett (Tacoma, Wash., 1990), 185-96; Black, 209-20; Susan Smith-Peter, "Creating a Creole Estate"; and Vinkovetsky, 142-49.
8. The journal follows the ritual cycles of the Orthodox Church and the Julian calendar. Journals for the years 1843 and 1844, September 1853 through July 20, 1857, and August 1 through December 31, 1858, are missing. Lydia Black compiled, translated, and annotated the journals in two volumes: *The Journals of Iakov Netsvetov: The Atkha Years, 1828-1844* (Kingston, 1980), and *The Journals of Iakov Netsvetov: The Yukon Years, 1845-1863* (Kingston, 1984). Hereafter cited as *Atkha* and *Yukon*, respectively.
9. On the history of the Russian Orthodox Church in Alaska, see Black, *Russians in Alaska*, 223-53; Sergei Kan, *Memory Eternal: Tlingit Culture and Russian Orthodox Christianity through Two Centuries* (Seattle, 1999); Mitropolit Kliment (Kapalin), *Russkaia pravoslavnaia tserkov' na Aliaske do 1917 goda* (Moscow, 2009); Michael Oleksa, ed., *Alaskan Missionary Spirituality* (New York, 1987); idem, *Orthodox Alaska: A Theology of Mission* (Crestwood, N.Y., 1992); and Antoinette Shalkop, "The Russian Orthodox Church in America," in Starr, *Russia's American Colony*, 196-217.
10. *Atkha*, xvi-xvii. Netsvetov's biographical details drawn from Oleksa, *Orthodox Alaska*, 134-42.
11. On the limitations for entry into the clerical estate, see Gregory L. Freeze, *The Parish Clergy in Nineteenth-Century Russia: Crisis, Reform, Counter-Reform* (Princeton, N.J., 1983), 146-49.
12. Shalkop, 213.
13. Kan, 90-91.
14. *Ibid.*, 91-92.
15. Legitimate children of mixed Russian and Siberian indigenous heritage were classified as Russians, a reminder of the singularity of the Russian American Creole designation. Vinkovetsky, 142.
16. See Basil Dmytryshyn, "The Administrative Apparatus of the Russian-American Company, 1798-1867," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, Vol. 28, no. 1 (1994), 1-52.
17. On the early history of the Russian Orthodox Church in Alaska, see Black, *Russians in Alaska*, 223-53, and Vinkovetsky, 163-68.
18. Dmytryshyn, Crownhart-Vaughn, and Vaughn, 3:359.
19. Chistiakov himself had a Creole mistress, with whom he had two children. They did not accompany him when he left Russian America in 1830. Richard A. Pierce, *Russian America: A Biographical Dictionary* (Kingston, 1999), 89-91.
20. Netsvetov received an annual salary of 1,200 rubles, and 850 rubles' worth of provisions. Shalkop, 203.
21. *Atkha*, xx. See also Oleksa, *Orthodox Alaska*, 135.
22. Kliment, 193.
23. Oleksa, *Orthodox Alaska*, 136.
24. For examples of Netsvetov's matrimonial investigations, see Priests in Charge: Netsvetov, Iakov, Salamatov, Lavrentii, and Shishkin, Vasilii V., 1840-1899, Matrimony Petitions/Investigations, reel 62, Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of America, Diocese of Alaska Records, 1733-1938, microfilm, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as Diocese of Alaska microfilm).
25. Oleksa, *Orthodox Alaska*, 136.
26. *Atkha*, 175. All bracketed clarifications are in the original quotations.
27. A. V. Grinev, *Kto est' kto v istorii Russkoi Ameriki* (Moscow, 2009), 375.
28. *Atkha*, 68; Oleksa, *Orthodox Alaska*, 137.
29. Wrangell quoted in Kliment, 194.
30. *Atkha*, 51. On Veniaminov's biography, see David Norlander, "Innokentii Veniaminov and the Expansion of Orthodoxy in Russian America," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 64 (February 1995), 19-36; and Ilya Vinkovetsky, "Building a Diocese Overseas: The Orthodox Church in Partnership with the Russian-American Company in Alaska," *Ab Imperio*, no. 3 (2010), 152-94.
31. Ivan Veniaminov, *Notes on the Islands of the Unalashka District*, trans. Lydia T. Black and R. H. Geoghegan, ed. Richard A. Pierce (Fairbanks, 1984), vii-viii.
32. Ioann E. Veniaminov, *Journals of the Priest Ioann Veniaminov in Alaska, 1823 to 1836*, trans. Jerome Kisslinger (Fairbanks, 1993), 210.
33. Netsvetov quoted in Vyacheslav Ivanov, *The Russian Orthodox Church of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands and Its Relation to Native American Traditions: An Attempt at a Multicultural Society* (Washington, D.C., 1997), 8.
34. There is a vast body of scholarship devoted to Russianization and indigenization. For a good introduction, see Vinkovetsky, *Russian America*, 95-97.
35. *Ibid.*, 8, 11-13, 24.
36. Veniaminov, *Notes*, 187.
37. Veniaminov, *Journals*, 23.
38. Veniaminov quoted in Vinkovetsky, *Russian America*, 168.
39. Netsvetov quoted in Veniaminov, *Notes*, 366.
40. Andrei A. Znamenski, *Shamanism and Christianity: Native Encounters with Russian Orthodox Missions in Siberia and Alaska, 1820-1917* (Westport, Conn., 1999), 78.
41. Veniaminov, *Notes*, 371-72.
42. *Ibid.*, 366.
43. *Ibid.*, 367.
44. *Ibid.*, 373.
45. *Ibid.*, 371 (1st qtn.), 372 (last qtn.).
46. *Ibid.*, 375-79.
47. Shalkop, 212.
48. Innokentii quoted in Barbara Sweetland Smith, *Orthodoxy and Native Americans: The Alaskan Mission* (Crestwood, 1980), 100.
49. An 1845 manuscript version of the "Instructions," addressed to Netsvetov, was found in a Finnish monastery. The "Instructions" were printed in 1881 and reprinted in 1886 and used by missionaries throughout Russia. See Panu Hallamaa, "Father Ioann Veniaminov—A Self-Taught Scholar from the Aleutian Islands," *Studia Orientalia*, Vol. 97 (2003), 34. See Smith, *Orthodoxy*, 28-30, for translated excerpts.

- The same principles were condensed into the missionary oath instituted by Innokentii. See Oleksa, *Alaskan Missionary Spirituality*, 139.
50. Alaska History Research Project, *Documents Relative to the History of Alaska*, 15 vols. (College, Alaska, 1936-38), 1:134. Microfilm available in Alaska Polar Regions Collections and Archives, Elmer E. Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks.
51. Znamenski, 69.
52. Vinkovetsky, "Building a Diocese Overseas," 157.
53. Kan, 33. On changing 19th-century notions of Russia's non-Orthodox subjects, see Vinkovetsky, *Russian America*, 156-60; Znamenski, 95-137; and Freeze, *Parish Clergy*, 1-7.
54. I. Barsukov, ed., *Pis'ma Innokentiiia, mitropolita moskovskogo i kolomenskogo, 1828-1878*, 2 vols. (Saint Petersburg, 1897), 1:383. My translation.
55. See Black, *Russians in Alaska*, figs. 76, 78.
56. *Ibid.*, 247; *Yukon*, 61-62, 65, 343.
57. *Yukon*, 56. By 1859, Netsvetov attended the potlatch and even took his share. *Yukon*, 397.
58. S. A. Mousalimas, *The Transition from Shamanism to Orthodoxy in Alaska* (Providence, R.I., 1995), 102.
59. Znamenski, 74-75.
60. Ivanov, 31; Rewards, 1850-51, Sitka—Clergy Miscellaneous, reel 216, Diocese of Alaska microfilm.
61. See Robert Fortune, *Chills and Fever: Health and Disease in the Early History of Alaska* (Fairbanks, 1989), esp. chap. 12.
62. *Documents*, 1:369.
63. Ivanov, 39n17; clergy dossier of Iakov Netsvetov, 1864, reel 21, Diocese of Alaska microfilm.
64. *Yukon*, 11. The schools were less successful at Ikogmiut than elsewhere, probably because of the subsistence patterns of the local population.
65. *Yukon*, 75; Ivanov, 18, 29.
66. Znamenski, 48-49.
67. Shalkop, 214.
68. *Ibid.*
69. Barsukov, 1:204.
70. *Yukon*, 482-84. Innokentii's request may be found in Kliment, 216n857.
71. *Yukon*, 482-83; Oleksa, *Orthodox Alaska*, 140.
72. The latter conferred hereditary nobility and the title "Cavalier." *Documents*, 1:368-69.
73. Oleksa, *Orthodox Alaska*, 140-41; *Yukon*, 451-53.
74. Shalkop, 214.
75. Ivanov, 39n17.
76. Shalkop, 215.
77. Oleksa, *Orthodox Alaska*, 141.
78. Black, *Russians in Alaska*, 252n51.

***Pacific Northwest Quarterly* gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the following donors for 2016-17.**

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