



Interethnic Marriages and Relationships of the Tlingits in the Russian–American Period and Their Significance

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Abstract

This article deals with relationships and marriages of the Tlingit with immigrants from the Russian Empire as well as with representatives of other European and non-European peoples during the period when Alaska belonged to the Russian Empire. Matrimonial relations existed in two variants: legal, sanctified by the church, and in the form of permanent extramarital cohabitation or casual relationships. The latter variant absolutely predominated. With this, there was a sharply reflected gender imbalance, since men absolutely predominated among the immigrants, and therefore Tlingit women emerged in the role of marriage partners in the overwhelming majority of cases. A directly opposite pattern was observed in Tlingit contacts with the Athapaskans and to some extent with the Eyak. Matrimonial connections exerted influence on the workings of the Russian colonization, stimulated growth in mixed populations, and facilitated gradual acculturation of the Tlingit, along with contributing to the expansion of their ethnic territory.

Keywords Tlingits · Interethnic matrimonial relations · Russian America · Creoles · Russian–American Company · Alaskan natives

Introduction

The theme of interethnic marriages and relationships in the native population of the Russian colonies in Alaska (1784–1867), has been repeatedly raised in the works of specialists in connection with the formation there of the rather substantial stratum of the population of mixed racial and ethnic origin. In Russian America such people were designated by the Spanish term “Creole” (Vinkovetsky 2011: 40, 46, 142), and

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all the descendants of these peoples in whatever combination that might occur in a future racial-ethnic mix were also considered Creoles. It is worth noting here that up to now most investigations have been dedicated either to the Creoles without regard to their ethnic origin, or their most numerous group, which was formed on the large Kodiak Island and its vicinity, where in 1784 the first permanent Russian settlement in America was founded (Black 1990: 142–155; Piterskaya 2007: 94–104; Easley 2008: 73–91; Miller 2010; Grinëv 2011: 21–38; Smith-Peter 2013: 363–384). At the same time, much less attention has been allotted up to now to the specific Creole group that emerged as a result of relationships and marriages of representatives of the most numerous Indian ethnoses in Alaska—the Tlingit—and the immigrants from Europe and Siberia in the 18th–mid-19th century.

Proceeding to analysis of the topic, it must be stated that available sources on it are very scarce. In the published native legends (see Swanton 1909; De Laguna 1972: 209–292; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1987) known to the author, relationships and marriages of the Tlingit with representatives of different peoples who visited the country of the Tlingit or who settled there after the finding of Southeast Alaska and the Aleutian Islands by the V. I. Bering-A. I. Chirikov expedition in 1741 are rarely mentioned. It is obvious that this problem seemed to the keepers of native legends completely insignificant in comparison with the stories of mythic heroes, discovery of totems and clan territories, with stories of military clashes between clans, and subjects like this.

The situation is also similar in Russian written sources (archival and published), especially official ones. The intimate sides of human relationships were usually treated with silence, as in traditional Orthodox ethics, in which everything connected with sexual contact were seen as “sinful,” and as a consequence of the influence of the period of Enlightenment, when boasting of intimate relations was a sign of bad taste. In addition, from the point of view of the colonial authorities in Alaska only officially concluded marriages, sanctified by the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), deserved mention. At the same time, simple cohabitation and fleeting relationships in most cases were ignored and often were covered up because of fear of church censure and punishment, and therefore were very poorly reflected in the written sources, though they undoubtedly exceeded by many times the legal marriages between the immigrant population and the natives of Alaska, including the Tlingit.

In Tlingit society itself, marriage and marital relations were regulated by strict rules of clan exogamy and matrilineal calculation of kinship, as a result of which husband and wife always belonged to different clans of two different phratries—Raven and Wolf/Eagle. Also characteristic was avunculocal marriage, when the groom, after working in the bride’s household and giving gifts to her relatives, took after the wedding the young wife to the household of his uncle in the maternal line, whose heir he was. Marriage was viewed by the Indians not so much as a connection of two individuals as an alliance between clans. Wealthy Tlingits could afford to have several wives (often these were related sisters), but there were cases when the new bride demanded monogamy and the groom refused to part with the old wife or wives, thus upsetting the matchmaking (Khlebnikov 1985: 80–81; Emmons 1991: 27–30; De Laguna 1972: 488–492). From this it follows that a woman in Tlingit society possessed certain freedom and independence in personal life.

In spite of the fact that a man was considered head of the family, the position of the Tlingit woman was relatively high: she was completely entrusted with the household and bringing up the children. Archimandrite Anatolii (Kamenskii), who studied the Tlingit at the end of the 19th century, wrote on this subject:

In family life women enjoy relatively greater rights and freedom. The wife of an Indian is not a slave for her husband and is not just a work force, as this often is among savages. She is more the mistress of her husband. In the home, in the family she is more the master than her husband. Whereas the husband occupies himself with community affairs and hunting away from his barabara [dwelling]—his wife manages the home and the family completely unrestricted. All the property is under her management, all the supplies, though unpretentious, of the Indian household. At her disposal also comes everything that the head of the family procures (Anatolii 1906: 54).

To this same attested the German traveler Friedrich Heinrich von Kittlitz, who visited Russian America at the end of the 1820s, and other researchers (von Kittlitz 1858: 220; Emmons 1991: 56, 165; Kan 1996: 614–616).

Besides significant influence on the economic life of the family, the status of the woman in traditional Tlingit society was invisibly supported by her relatives, who with necessity could always come to her defense. Moreover, according to the observations of the British mariner George Vancouver and his traveling companions, who encountered the Tlingit during the mapping of Southeast Alaska in 1793–1794, some of the women of noble families even managed large boats filled with native warriors (Vancouver 1830. Bk. 4, p. 206; 1833. Bk. 5, p. 474). Nevertheless, the social status of women was on the whole lower than that of men, which was manifested, for example, in payments of compensation in case of murder. In this case, the rank of the murderer and his victim were of great significance, since Tlingit society was deeply differentiated: along with ordinary community members, there existed among the Tlingit a clan aristocracy (*aanay-adi*) and disenfranchised hereditary slaves (*gookh*) (De Laguna 1972: 462; Oberg 1967: 209–222; Grinëv 2005b: 55–61).

As among all other peoples of the world, besides legitimate marital relations, casual sexual contacts and cohabitation took place among the Tlingit. Marital infidelity of a man could, in the worst case, lead to divorce at the demand of his wife. Adultery by a woman was punished more severely: in the best case she was sent home to her parents along with the children with the demand of return of wedding gifts. In the worst case—the offended husband could kill her and her lover (Khlebnikov 1985: 80–81). Illegitimate children (bastards) usually were despised and fell to the very bottom of Tlingit society, finding themselves only slightly above slaves in their status. According to the report of the American ethnographer R. L. Olson, the special term “*nichkakaku*” (Olson 1967: 48) (*nichkakwaawu*, *nichkayaddi*)—“creature/child of the bay/shore”—served as a designation of them, which symbolically reflects, as S. Kan points out, the marginal status of persons of such origin (Kan 1989: 92–93).

Similar views on illegitimate children were also observed in traditional Russian society, though in Siberia, after its accession to the Moscow Kingdom in the

16th–17th centuries, the attitude toward marriage and illegitimate children was somewhat different. The Cossacks, who first opened up the new territories, often used captive native women and girls as concubines. Moreover, as Academician G. F. Müller noted, polygamy was a widespread vice in Siberia, especially among the Cossacks, who adopted the custom from the Tatars and Turks (Müller 2000: 84–85). A few local clergy tried to fight this evil, but their efforts and influence were at first clearly not enough. Concerning children of mixed origin born out of wedlock: after baptism they were considered rightful Russian subjects and were treated almost as full-fledged Russians, especially if they entered Russian service, becoming a Cossack or interpreter.

Russian Penetration into Alaska and the First Contacts with the Tlingit

These Siberian traditions were partially brought to America after the discovery of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands by the Second Kamchatka Expedition of V. I. Bering-A. I. Chirikov. In the course of the expedition the first contact took place between the Tlingit and Russian mariners when the packet boat *Sv. Pavel* commanded by Captain Chirikov approached the islands of the central part of the Alexander Archipelago in mid-July 1741. Two dinghies were sent to the shore five days apart, in which were 15 men led by fleet master Avraam Dement'ev. But none of them returned to the ship in spite of signals and cannon fire. Two days after dispatch of the second dinghy two canoes with several Indians appeared from the bay. The canoes stopped, not approaching the packet boat, and those sitting in them twice shouted “Agai! Agai!” and immediately paddled back toward shore. From the behavior of the natives Chirikov drew the disappointing conclusion “that the people we sent to the shore were received with hostility: they either killed or detained them” (*Plavanie...* 1951: 51–60, 232; Divin et al. 1979: 224–225; *Russkie ekspeditsii... v pervoi polovine XVIII v.* 1984: 226). After waiting a couple of days to no avail, Chirikov made the difficult decision to return to Kamchatka.

The fate of Captain Chirikov's people who were left on the American shore has for many years excited the imagination of historians (Fëdorova 1971: 79–89; Barratt 1992: 265–275; Grinëv 2005a: 1–8; Douglass 2013: 99–106). Some scholars suggest that both boats from the packet boat *Sv. Pavel* perished together with the people, wrecked on coastal rocks or sunk in whirlpools during strong tidal movements that prevail in the area (Emmons 1991: 324; Haycox et al. 1997: 5; Engstrom 2006: 11–15). However, the most popular version in the scholarly literature remains the loss of the “Chirikov men” at the hands of militant natives (Alekseev 1975: 34; Gibson 1992: 12; Korsun 1994: 220, 222; Black 2004: 41; Hunt 2010: 26).

More convincing in our view is the version of the fate of the “Chirikov men” set out in Tlingit legends and told by ethnographer Mark Jacobs, Jr. According to this version, the Russian sailors (according to the legend—eight men), who landed in search of fresh water on the shore of Kruzof Island, simply did not want to return to their ship because of the severity and oppression reigning on board. In addition, their decision was influenced by fear of the dangerous waters of the North Pacific

in which they were afraid of dying in case they continued the voyage. The fugitives were received amicably by the local Tlingit and married Indian women. However, afterward, fearing that sooner or later a Russian ship would arrive here again and they would be subjected to reprisals as deserters, the Russian sailors, loading canoes and putting in them their families, set off to the south. Their descendants became the heads of the most eminent families in the village of Klawock on Prince of Wales Island (Jacobs 1990: 2–3). It is possible that they or their descendants resettled even farther south—to the northern Queen Charlotte Islands, settling among the Haida Indians. The Spanish, as the first Europeans to visit there in 1774, noted in their log books that they saw among the Haida small metal items, a piece of a Russian bayonet, and a knife made from the blade of a sword. The Spanish captain supposed, and not without basis, that these were traces of the arrival there of the people of Captain Chirikov. In addition, some of the Indians who came to meet the Spanish had blue eyes, uncharacteristic of the native residents of America (Olson 2002: 21–23).

It seems obvious that desertion was the reason why the “Chirikov men” and their descendants did not flaunt their origin upon contacts with subsequent European travelers who visited the Northwest Coast of America. It must also be taken into account that at this time many of the “Chirikov men” had probably died of old age or perished from deprivation and in conflicts with the natives. At the moment of appearance in this region of the first Spanish and English expeditions the descendants of the Russian sailors would apparently have been completely adapted to native society, especially since the calculation of kinship and heritage among the Tlingit and Haida passed through the maternal line, not the paternal. Considering all the above, it is not surprising that the search for the “Chirikov men” or their direct descendants was not successful in the 18th or 19th centuries, though in 1817–1821 attempts to organize a search for them took on political meaning in connection with the territorial claims of Russia on the Northwest Coast of America (Fëdorova 1971: 83–88; Bolkhovitinov 1975: 147–151; Barratt 1992: 270–275). To conclude this subject, it is possible to add that if the native version of the fate of the missing “Chirikov men” is correct, then their children were probably the first Creoles of Alaska. But now it is very difficult to establish the historical truth of this, even with the use of genetic analysis and large-scale archaeological investigations.

The second meeting of the Russians with the Tlingit occurred in 1788 when the expedition of G. G. Izmailov-D. I. Bocharov was dispatched from Kodiak. They visited in the galiot *Tri Svyatitelya* Yakutat and Lituya Bays, the shores of which were occupied by the northern Tlingit. The Russians called them “Koloshi” (“Kolyuzhi”), and the contacts with the Indians bore a peaceful character: both sides conducted negotiations, exchanged gifts, and successfully traded: the Russian were interested in the valuable furs and the Tlingit in various European items (Shelikhov 1971: 88–100). The peaceful connections that were formed were interrupted in the summer of 1792 when a war party of Tlingit from Yakutat, with the support of allied Eyak Indians, suddenly attacked a temporary camp of Russians in Prince William Sound. Nevertheless, this did not prevent the resumption of peaceful relations in 1794, though not without some serious problems. In the following year the manager of the Russian settlements on Kodiak, Alexander Baranov, personally visited

Yakutat and left a small group of Russian promyshlenniki¹ and Kodiak Alutiiq (Eskimos) to winter over among the local natives. A year later Baranov founded a fort in the region of Yakutat Bay and the first Russian settlement in the lands of the Tlingit (Grinëv 1997: 3–5). Its ethnic composition was rather diverse: besides Russians (including several women and children), permanently or temporarily living there were Alaskan natives subjected by the Russians—Aleuts and Kodiak people, Chugach Eskimos, and Tanaina (Denaina, Dana'ina) Indians, who hunted as part of the baidarka flotillas sea otters, whose fur was highly valued in China and Russia.

It is natural that with several dozen newcomers residing in the Yakutat fort and village, among whom young men predominated, there could not help but be relationships and marriages with local Tlingit, which led to the appearance of a small stratum of Russian–Yakutat Creoles. With this, some native women not only lived with Russians, but also served them as interpreters (translators). Thus, at the end of the summer of 1796 two interpreters—Anyushka² Yakutatskaya and Anyushka Sitkinskaya (that is, individuals who came from the Tlingit communities of Yakutat and Sitka)—set off in the galiot *Tri Ierarkha* from Yakutat to Kodiak, but en route the ship was wrecked and one of the interpreters—Anyushka Yakutatskaya—drowned ([Kashevarov, F. A.] 1986: 97). The second interpreter then served Baranov as a translator and intermediary in negotiations with the Tlingit when he founded a new Russian settlement on her native Sitkha (Baranof) Island in the summer of 1799. It was called the Mikhailovskaya (Arkhangel'skaya) fortress and was built just as the monopolistic fur-trading Russian–American Company (RAC) was being formed, to which the tsarist government entrusted its possessions in the New World. In 1802, at the request of management of the company, Baranov became chief director (governor) of Russian America, but it was in this year that the Tlingit seized and burned the Mikhailovskaya fortress, as well as annihilating two RAC hunting parties. One of the reasons for the Indian attack, in the words of naval officer G. I. Davydov who visited in 1802–1803 in Russian America, was the provoking behavior of the Russian promyshlenniki, who took the women and girls from the local people (in spite of Baranov's instructions) (Davydov 1812: 110). The same is also reported in native legends told by modern Tlingit (Dauenhauer et al. 2008: 115, 158). Thus, together with voluntary interethnic cohabitation, forced violent alliances could also take place in relationships between the immigrants and Tlingit. On the other hand, even before the destruction of the Mikhailovskaya fortress the Indian women (one of them has already mentioned—Anyushka Sitkhinskaya) who lived with the Russians warned the manager, Vasilii Medvednikov, about the plans of their fellow tribesmen, but their warnings were ignored (*K istorii...* 1957: 121).

In the course of seizing the Mikhailovskaya fort, according to data from contemporary Tlingit informants, one of the Russians (identified as Abrosim Plotnikov) was saved because he was married to a local native. In addition, one of the Indian women

¹ Hunters, who hunted fur-bearing animals in Siberia, were called promyshlenniki. Later, in Russian America this name ("promyshlennye") was widespread even to the ordinary salaried workers of the Russian–American Company, though they did not have a direct relation to hunting for furs.

² Anyushka is a Russian form of the name "Annie."

took from the ruins of the fort two abandoned children (probably, Russian–Eskimo Creoles), who were then adopted by her and brought up among the Tlingit. Their descendants still live in Alaska (Dauenhauer et al. 2008: 409–411).

Baranov, who was in Kodiak at the time of the attack on the Mikhailovskaya fortress, directly after learning of its destruction and the loss of the people, began to gather forces for a punitive expedition. It ended only after 2 years with the capture of the Tlingit village and fort on the western shore of Sitkha Island and the founding there of Novo-Arkhangel'sk—the future capital of Russian America (Grinëv 2005b: 116–139). The new settlement was often designated “Sitkha” or “Sitka” based on the Tlingit name of the island Sheet'-ká X'áat'l, where it was located.

Russian–Tlingit Relations and Sexual Contacts After the Foundation of Novo-Arkhangelsk

After conclusion of peace between Baranov and the Tlingit in 1805, some of their women again returned to the Russians in their new settlement (including the wife of Abrosim Plotnikov) (Dauenhauer et al. 2008: 405–407), and one local woman lived with the governor as his temporary “companion.” In this same year the unofficial head of the RAC, Chamberlain Nikolai Rezanov, who arrived in Novo-Arkhangel'sk on an inspection visit, talked to her not without success (in his words) about the dangers of alcohol, trying to wean her and her compatriots from the consumption of vodka. In addition, Rezanov ordered Baranov to ensure that the native women taken for maintenance by the Russian promyshlenniki be treated well and not offended: “I find it necessary to make a strict rule that the people who take American women for their maintenance treat them kindly, and not at all dare punish them, and even less to maim these innocent people, sometimes through foolishness or ignorance of the rules of cohabitation” (Sekretnye instruktsii... 1806).

The German doctor Georg von Langsdorff, who arrived with Rezanov, reported in his notes about the daughter of the Tlingit chief Diketin,³ who before this had lived with the Russians in the Mikhailovskaya fortress, and now again returned to them in Novo-Arkhangel'sk. Together with her and his American friend skipper John D'Wolf, Langsdorff made a visit to the Sitka people in their fortified village on the eastern shore of the island, where they had been forced to move after the fight with the Russians in 1804 (von Langsdorff 1812: 100). Besides the reconnaissance goals of Langsdorff's mission it had another aspect. In the avoidance of repetition of events of 1802 and for the easing of strained Russian–Tlingit relations, Baranov and Rezanov decided to strengthen connections of the Russians with the Tlingit, and with this goal they passed through Langsdorff the request that new “girls” be sent to Novo-Arkhangel'sk, to which the Tlingit refused (Arkhib vneshnei politiki... 1802, d. 1, papka No. 33, l. 25 ob.). Their memory was probably still too traumatized by recent losses as a result of the fight with the Russians and loss of many

³ Some researchers suppose that she was the wife of Abrosim Plotnikov with the name Diksetin or Ieldzhin (Kan 1996: 617).

relatives from cold and hunger (especially the old people and children) during the flight through the forested thickets and mountains to the eastern side of Sitkha Island (Zorin 2004: 11–26).

In August 1805 the Russian colonies suffered another heavy blow: the natives seized and destroyed the Yakutat fort and settlement. During this tragic incident a large part of the Russian colonists and dependent Eskimos living with them were killed or taken captive. The remaining part fled to the northwest, toward the Eyak, and then reached a fortified Russian trading post in Prince William Sound (Grinëv 2005b: 141–144). After the seizure of the Yakutat settlement, the fate of the local Creoles was unenviable. Thus, in Tlingit legends a young Russian (in fact, evidently a Russian–Tlingit origin) from Yakutat by the name Jivak is mentioned, who for a long time was kept as a slave in the community of Kootznahoo, and then fled to the Russians, seeking their patronage, where they baptized him and he married a Tlingit woman from the Kiksadi clan (Olson 2002: 55, 116). It is possible, of course, that Jivak was a slave originally, if his mother was a slave: in such case, he simply inherited her status.

Among those who escaped the attack on the Russian fort in Yakutat was the local wife of the leader Stepan Larionov, who after seizure of the fort went to live with her relatives together with her Creole children—Dmitrii and his sister Pelageya. Besides these children, Larionov had two more Creole sons—Ivan and Andrei—from a previous marriage with a Kodiak Alutiiq woman. In 1817 or 1818 the step-brother of Pelageya, Ivan, being with an RAC hunting party in the region of Yakutat Bay, was able after long negotiations to rescue her from actual captivity among the natives and take her to Novo-Arkhangeli'sk. Growing up among the Tlingit, the Creole woman Pelageya Larionova later married the baptized chief Mikhail Kukhkan of the Kiksadi clan, who was the main ally of the Russians among the Tlingit living outside the city walls at the community of Sitka. The brother of Pelageya, Creole Dmitrii Larionov, also managed to flee to Novo-Arkhangeli'sk, where he went into RAC service. First, he was a sailor on company ships, then he worked many years as an interpreter in negotiations with the Tlingit, since he knew their language well. In 1826 Dmitrii Larionov married in Novo-Arkhangeli'sk the Creole woman Anna Likhachëva, who was the daughter of the boatswain Stepan Likhachëv and the baptized Tlingit woman Domna Sergeeva. The latter was mentioned in documents as “Koloshenka Domna” and worked as a translator for the RAC in the 1810s. Captain Lieutenant Leontii von Hagemeister, who replaced Baranov in 1818 as governor, set a salary for her of 60 banknote rubles [1 banknote ruble equaled ~1/3 silver ruble] per year and small rations from the company for her good service (Grinëv 2009: 158, 292, 294–295).

Koloshenka Domna was one of the very few Tlingit women who lived in Novo-Arkhangeli'sk during the kind of “cold war” that ensued in Russian–Tlingit relations after the “reconquista” of Sitkha and the attack on Yakutat. The conclusion of formal marriages with Tlingit women was complicated by the circumstance that their relatives were in fact independent from the administration of the Russian colonies (which was codified in §§ 57 and 58 of the RAC “Rules” of 1821) (Polnoe sobranie zakonov... p. 852) and were well equipped with firearms owing to American maritime traders who visited the waters of Southeast Alaska for the purchase of furs.

Normalization of relations between the Russians and the Tlingit occurred only in 1821, when the new governor of the colonies, Captain Lieutenant Matvei Murav'ëv, permitted the Sitka people to settle by the walls of Novo-Arkhangel'sk. The prominent mariner Fëdor Litke, who visited the capital of Russian America in 1828, wrote on that occasion:

Governor M. I. Murav'ëv, having calculated that having their wives and children and all property under his cannons, making it much easier to keep them in check and learn all their plans, has allowed them to establish a large settlement by the side of the fort. The assumption was completely justified. The Koloshi have become much more courteous since that time, and moreover, connections of their women with the Russians make it possible to learn everything that goes on among them. And plans of the Koloshi have already been previously discovered through the women, and many Russians saved by them from hostile actions (Litke 1834: 92).

Thus, Tlingit women, having relations with or who lived with Russians in Novo-Arkhangel'sk, very often acted as informants about conspiracies and in general about all the affairs in the Indian settlement located at the walls of the fort. A completely similar situation was in Kamchatka a hundred years before (Sgibnev 1869: 78). However, information also flowed in the opposite direction, though sometimes in distorted form. This was not a secret for the colonial administration. It is not by chance that in a letter to the head of the Dionisievskaia Redoubt—a fortified trading post founded in 1833 near the mouth of the Stikine River—the governor of Russian America, Baron Ferdinand von Wrangell, ordered: "... Under no circumstances take Koloshi women into the Redoubt to live, because a multitude of displeasure and harmful consequences for the Company can occur from them: everything they hear about they tell their countrymen and in addition spread rumors that can often upset good accord" (NARS. RG 261. RRAC. Roll. 36, pp. 308–309). Wrangell's fears were confirmed later when in winter 1852 the Tlingit wanted to seize Novo-Arkhangel'sk at night, but the Russian administration learned of the conspiracy in time from one of the baptized chiefs. In subsequent negotiations, the natives stated that rumors received from the Tlingit women who lived with the Russians in Novo-Arkhangel'sk encouraged them, forcing them to attack. The Indian women told their relatives that the garrison of the fort allegedly intended to kill all Tlingit people, and therefore, they resolved to attack the city first, in order to be a step ahead of the Russians (who, of course, had no such intentions) (*Rossiisko-Amerikanskaya kompaniya...* 2010: 234). Nevertheless, in 1855 a large clash occurred between the local Tlingit and the Novo-Arkhangel'sk garrison, in which, according to contemporary oral legends of the natives, the bad treatment of Tlingit women by the Russians and Aleuts played the main role (Kan 1996: 622).

In the opinion of the Canadian scholar Ilya Vinkovetsky, the Russian–American Company encouraged interethnic marriages—this tradition was rooted in the practice of opening up Siberia by the Russians, easing its conquest (Vinkovetsky 2011: 40). It is possible to agree with this assertion only partially. In fact, in the first stages of colonization, when it was necessary to establish peaceful relations with the indigenous people, marital connections were a very effective method. Thus,

the well-known merchant Grigorii Shelikhov recommended to Baranov as early as 1794 to try “to marry the now single settlers to good American girls” in the future settlement at Yakutat (*Russkie ekspeditsii... vo vtoroi polovine XVIII v.* 1989: 326). However, with time there occurred a certain departure from this practice. The fact is that ordinary employees of the RAC, having married in the colonies and acquired large families, often turned into a burden for the company. With relatively small salary they often simply did not have enough means to maintain a family and fell into irredeemable debt, which in the long run placed a burden on the RAC budget, especially in the case of disability or death of the breadwinner of the family. The government auditor S. A. Kostlivtsov wrote on this occasion at the beginning of the 1860s: “Many are hardly out of Russia to Sitkha when they ask to marry, and meanwhile do not always receive permission [of the colonial leadership], because maintenance of married workers in Sitkha is extremely difficult and inconvenient” (Doklad... 1863: 41).

Together with this, the colonial leadership tried not to allow serious complications with the Tlingit over uncontrolled relationships of their women with the Russians. The latter at times enticed from the natives their wives and daughters, and such offences the Tlingit, of course, did not forget, about which the governor of Russian America, Wrangell, especially warned the garrison of the Dionisievskaia Redoubt in 1834, forbidding Tlingit women to reside in the trading post:

For your personal safety I most strictly forbid having any interaction with the natural inhabitants without telling the baidarshchik [head of the redoubt] about your need; in no way offend the men [Tlingit] by taking wives and daughters from them, or inducing the women in other ways to leave their kinsmen, who never forget such an offence and will certainly publicly unite to kill you (NARS. RG 261. RRAC. Roll. 36, pp. 308 о6.–309).

However, real life turned out stronger than bureaucratic instructions, and by the time of Wrangell's successor, Captain of 1st Rank I. A. Kupreyanov, several Tlingit women, baptized in the Orthodox faith, resided in the Dionisievskaia Redoubt. One of them was probably “Koloshenka Evdokiya”—wife of the brick master Efim Abyshov who worked there, with whom Efim had Creole children: Irina (b. 1837), Aleksandr, and Pelageya (b. 1840) (Grin'ev 2009: 15). The governor was forced to accept the inevitable, though he tried to regulate extramarital relationships of the Russian promyshlenniki with the local people. In a letter to the head of the Dionisievskaia Redoubt, Ignatii Andreyanov, Kupreyanov outlined rules in 1838 that the administration of the colonies had already adhered to for many years:

In the solution you requested: how to deal with Koloshenski girls, both baptized in our faith and those living with Employees of the Company, I order you in this regard to observe exactly the same rules by which those in Novo-Arkhangelsk are guided, that is, that baptized Koloshenki, though not united with Russians by legal marriage, be treated as if already being separated from the other Koloshi, their relatives, who should have no right or influence over them while they live with the Russians, nor over children begotten by Russians with Baptized Koloshenki, who were baptized and treated completely as

already separated from the Koloshi—all these things they and their relatives should know beforehand (NARS. RG 261. RRAC. Roll. 40, pp. 161–161 о6.).

Consequently, the RAC administration tried to strengthen its own right to control the fate of the Russian–Tlingit Creoles, even if they were born outside wedlock. Such practice had also existed in Siberia in the first stages of its colonization.

Not being able to completely control the intimate life of its employees and that of the virtually independent Tlingit, the colonial administration was forced to tolerate and turn a blind eye to the numerous extramarital relations of the male part of the inhabitants of Novo-Arkhangelsk with the indigenous women. The chronic shortage of women in the capital of Russian America contributed to such relations in no small degree. Extramarital relations were casual or relatively permanent and led to the appearance among the native women of prostitution and to the spread of venereal diseases. In addition, the wealthy Tlingit did a good business if they possessed young female slaves. “Many of them bring their *kalgi* [slaves], girls, and invite the Russians to use them,” attested Kirill Khlebnikov, head of the RAC’s Novo-Arkhangelsk office.

Anything that the girl receives is taken away by the master; and this new branch of their business delivers everything the *promyshlenniki* are able to give them. In addition, mixed in these relations are officials of the company and many visitors of the colonies on ships from Europe. It is known that many *promyshlenniki* have gone broke dressing their nefarious mistresses; others attempted to run to them and generally spread illness [syphilis] to a great extent. This is also evil; but necessary evil, because otherwise unnatural crimes [homosexuality] are unavoidable, which with a lack of women were also noticed (Khlebnikov 1985: 139).

F. P. Litke was more delicate when he touched upon relationships of the inhabitants of Novo-Arkhangelsk with the local women: “The Koloshenski *odalyki* [concubines] are no less skilled than European dancers at ruining their admirers, and examples are not rare, that *promyshlenniki* squander everything on the toilette of their beauties, despite the efforts of the Leaders to stop these disorders...” (Litke 1834: 109).

The occupation of prostitution was probably practiced primarily by female slaves who, based on their ethnic origin, were far from always being Tlingit. A substantial part of Tlingit slaves consisted of Indians who belonged to the Kwakiutl and some other tribes who lived primarily to the south of Alaska. Two such slave girls were taken by three deserters from Novo-Arkhangelsk—Nikita Karaulov, Nikolai Ivanov, and the Creole Ippolion Saltanov—when in April 1838 they attempted to flee to British possessions in the south in a canoe stolen from the Tlingit; one of the Tlingit slave girls who was with them offered to be a guide. The deserters wandered for almost 2 months among the thickly forest-covered islands and straits of the Alexander Archipelago, occupied with robbery and plundering, killing eleven Tlingits (including women and children), and taking by force two more Indian women captive. Finally, in June the deserters entered into a skirmish with seven Tlingit from the community of Kek, during which their chief was killed and the others fled (most

of the Kek people were wounded). The deserters also were all injured and one of them soon died. As a result, the other two were forced to go to the Dionisievskii Redoubt, where on 18 June they surrendered to its manager, who then sent them to Novo-Arkhangel'sk (NARS. RRAC. Roll. 41. Pp. 84–85; Roll. 42. P. 224), probably along with the slave girls, who were ultimately returned to their former masters.

Extramarital relations with native women were a common phenomenon among sailors, laborers, and soldiers, who served in Novo-Arkhangel'sk up to the sale of the Russian colonies to the United States in 1867. Thus, at the beginning of the 1860s the government auditor of RAC activity, Captain Lieutenant P. N. Golovin, noted: "Some of the laborers and soldiers, fearing infection [syphilis], purchase from the Toëny [chiefs] women-kalgi [slave girls] and keep them at their own expense; but in addition, such relations are persecuted by the clergy, imposing penance on the guilty—the cost of keeping Koloshenki is comparatively rather high, from 25 to 30 banknote rubles per month—and this is not available to everyone" (Golovin 1863b: 379). In fact, far from all could permit themselves to have such a temporary wife with the average salary of the laborer at 350 banknote rubles per year.

Legal and illegal relationships of Europeans with Tlingit women led to the growth of the mixed population. "Many of the Russians," the governor of Russian America, P. E. Chistyakov, wrote in his report to St. Petersburg in 1828, "married Koloshenki or maintaining them, begot children..." (NARS. RG 261. RRAC. Roll. 31, p. 62). Litke added, concerning Russian–Tlingit Creoles: "Alliances of the Russians with Koloshenki and the new generation from them is a daily increasing reason for rapprochement of both sides" (Litke 1834: 114). By the mid-1840s the persons of mixed origin made up a significant part of the Sitka people, to which the RAC steward Aleksandr Markov attested:

Among the Kalyuzhi there are many children of illegitimate birth from Russians; the fathers try to bring them up in the Christian faith, prohibit disfiguring [painting] themselves, accustom them to their way of life, and supply them with clothing; the countrymen [Tlingit] of the illegitimate born do not take offence at this, through which are established closer and closer relations between the Russians and Kalyuzhi... (Markov 1856: 87).

By virtue of matrilineal calculation of kinship the children of mixed origin were included rather harmoniously in Tlingit society and not subjected to discrimination by pure-blood Tlingit (as long as their mothers were not slaves). Midshipman G. A. Bartoshevich, who was in Novo-Arkhangel'sk in 1864, while strolling through a Tlingit village noted a small white-skinned girl with large blue eyes and light hair who sat on the knees of a local woman. Interested, Bartoshevich approached the woman and asked who her husband was. Then followed a dialogue:

"A Russian soldier," she answered in Russian.

"And this is your child?"

"Mine," she answered, patting the girl on the head.

"And where is your husband now?"

"He left."

"And do you feel sorry for him?"

"I feel sorry for him," she said, sighing and clutching the baby to her chest. Such manifestation of warm feelings in a savage woman, of course, merits attention" (Bartoshevich 1866: 40).

Legal Marriages Between Newcomers and Tlingits: Problem of Creoles—Tlingit Marriages with Other Natives of Alaska

Along with illegitimate cohabitation, legal marriages between residents of Novo-Arkhangel'sk and native women also took place: such possibility occurred only after the arrival in 1816 in Novo-Arkhangel'sk of a priest for service in the local parish. At the beginning of the 1820s, according to information of the commander of the naval sloop *Ladoga*, Captain Lieutenant A. P. Lazarev, who visited the capital of the colonies, several Tlingit women were married to Russian promyshlenniki (Lazarev 1832: 166–167). Generally, it was possible to conclude a church wedding only when the Tlingit woman had been baptized and through mediation of the women Christianity gradually penetrated native society; the motives that guided the women entering into the bosom of Orthodoxy often differed from those that encouraged Tlingit men to take such step (Kan 1996: 614, 619). On their side, Russians concluding a church marriage with an indigenous woman took completely on themselves the responsibility for their wife's life and welfare. For example, Ivan Molchanov, who worked in the Novo-Arkhangel'sk port as a boat master from the 1810s to the 1830s, officially married the baptized Tlingit woman Avdot'ya (Evdokiya) with whom he had Creole children (four sons and two daughters). After Molchanov's death his widow was sent by the colonial leadership to her relatives of the Kagwantan clan to avoid additional costs, whereas the Creole sons remained among the Russians. Thus, Lev Ivanovich Molchanov went as a sailor on RAC ships in the second half of the 1820s, and his brother Emel'yan, after finishing school in Novo-Arkhangel'sk in 1837, became a church sexton, then served as a clerk in the Novo-Arkhangel'sk office of the RAC, and in 1841 was sent in service to the Nushagak mission. In the mid-1840s he returned to Novo-Arkhangel'sk for service in the local diocese, was married there in April 1846 to the Creole woman Evdokiya Maksimovna Panshina, and in 1847 became sexton and then deacon of the St. Michael Cathedral. However, his further ecclesiastical career was hindered by bad behavior and drunkenness (Kan 1999: 130–131). But Emel'yan Molchanov's example was not characteristic for most Russian–Tlingit Creoles. On the contrary, based on observations of the remarkable Orthodox missionary I.E. Veniaminov, hard work, diligence, and integrity were more inherent for them, and the naval officers P. N. Golovin and G. A. Bartoshevich, who visited the colonies in the 1860s, especially emphasized the physical beauty of the Russian–Tlingit Creoles in comparison with Creoles of other origin (Veniaminov 1840: 120–121; [Golovin, P. N.] 1863a: 277; Bartoshevich 1866: 40).

On the whole, the number of Russian–Tlingit families officially registered by the church and recognized by the colonial administration was not great. Distinguishing them based on RAC and colonial administration documents is rather difficult since the ethnic origin of the native wives was far from always indicated. Thus, in a statistical survey of the Russian colonies, F. P. von Wrangell wrote that among

the Alaskan natives who resided in Novo-Arkhangel'sk in the mid-1830s there were Koloshenki and their children, but in the general list of the population they were not noted (Wrangell 1835: 111–112). Evidently Wrangell ranked them with the dependent native population of the city, which in the documents was usually designated as “Aleuts” regardless of ethnic origin.

Based on I.E. Veniaminov's information, the Tlingit women who officially married Russians on the whole showed themselves as faithful wives and respectable women who maintained their families well, in distinction from Aleut and Eskimo women (Veniaminov 1840: 119). Some Indian women repeatedly married Russians. Thus, the baptized Tlingit woman Ul'yana first married the Tomsk townsman Vasilii Zhukov and bore him three children, and then after the death of her spouse, remarried the Petrozavodsk townsman Ivan Chernogolovov and bore him the son Egor (Grinëv 2009: 176, 585). Sometimes widows went back to their countrymen, as Mariya Kabachakova did, who after the death of her husband in 1823 married a Tlingit from the Kagwantan clan, but continued to work part time as an interpreter for the RAC up to the 1850s (Grinëv 2009: 204). Occasionally Tlingit women married Creoles, Yakuts, and representatives of other peoples who lived in Novo-Arkhangel'sk. For example, in 1845 the Aleut (evidently a Kodiak Alutiiq) Semën Kashkak asked for “permission” to marry “the girl betrothed to him Koloshenka Anna Kakot” (NARS. RG 261. RRAC. Roll. 49, pp. 16–16 об.), and in the summer of 1853 the Yakut Pëtr Burtsev married in Novo-Arkhangel'sk the baptized “Koloshenka Mariya,” with whom he then went to continue service at the Mikhailovskii Redoubt [Fort St. Michael] on the shore of Norton Sound (NARS. RG 261. RRAC. Roll. 59, p. 150).

Since the greatest part of the Russians, Finns, Yakuts, and representatives of other peoples of the Russian Empire came to Alaska on temporary contracts with the RAC, sooner or later they were obligated to return to their homeland. They evidently took with them to Russia the families they acquired in the colonies, or left them in Alaska in the care of the company; however, finding information on this question in the documents is rather problematic. There were, of course, a small number of RAC employees who had Tlingit or Russian–Tlingit Creole wives, who, after fulfilling their contract according to the agreement with the colonial administration, remained permanently in Alaska with their families as colonial citizens. Among them can be named the native of Finland sail master Carl Henrik Dahlström, the Tyumen peasant Epifan Nekrasov, and the Yakut Vasilii Pavlov.

On its side, the Russian–American Company tried to prevent the departure of Creoles to permanent residence in Russia since this created a deficit in the work force. This to some degree also concerned Creole women, a part of whom received primary education at the expense of the company. It was with the Creole women (including of Tlingit origin) that representatives of the European community of Novo-Arkhangel'sk preferred to conclude official marriages. Thus, for example, all three daughters of the RAC employee Matvei Kabachakov and the baptized Tlingit woman Mariya—Irina, Natal'ya, and Matrëna—married, respectively, Ivan Prokof'ev (1836), Carl Dahlström (1838), and Prokopii Lari-onov (1839) (NARS. RG 261. RRAC. Roll. 38, pp. 354 об.–355; Roll. 41, pp. 48–48 об.; RRAC. Roll. 42, pp. 312 об.–313). It is curious to note that some

Creole women at times left their legitimate husbands and went to live with the countrymen of their mothers, as Matrëna Larionova (Kabachakova) did in 1843. However, she nevertheless later married the California Creole (according to other data—an Indian) Rodion Zakharov in 1850 and bore him four daughters (Grinëv 2009: 183). At the end of the 1840s—beginning of the 1850s two governors of Russian America—M. D. Teben'kov and N. Ya. Rozenberg—communicated in their reports to St. Petersburg about the unhappy fate of an employee of the company, peasant of the Yaroslavl Province, Pavel Semënov. His wife, the Russian-Tlingit Creole woman Avdot'ya Ignat'eva (daughter of the cooper Polikarp Ignat'ev and the christened “Koloshenka Makrida”), ran away from him to the Tlingit and, finding among them a patron, left the vicinity of Novo-Arkhangel'sk. The deceived husband could not even gain the return of his fugitive wife with the help of the colonial administration (NARS. RG 261. RRAC. Roll. 56, pp. 145 об., 373 об.—374).

Concerning Tlingit men: they extremely rarely concluded formal church marriages with representatives of other peoples. For this, it was necessary that the Tlingit himself have been baptized in Orthodoxy, was a believer, and was in the service of the RAC. Two Tlingit interpreters with the same last name of “Gedeonov” can serve as an example here. They obtained their names at the beginning of the 19th century on Kodiak Island from their godfather—Hieromonk Gedeon (see Zapiski ieromonakha Gedeona... 1994: 27–121). They both were the closest relatives of Yakutat chiefs and were taken to Kodiak as security hostages. There they adopted Orthodoxy and underwent training in the local school. The older, with the name L'kaina, upon being baptized received the name “Kalistrat,” and the younger—Tygike—“Niktopoleon.” They both served the RAC zealously as interpreters in Novo-Arkhangel'sk and on company ships, the first of them being awarded a salary of 450 banknote rubles (100 rubles more than a Russian promyshlennik received) to the end of life, and the latter was even given in 1848 a silver medal “Za userdie” [“For Diligence”] on a ribbon of the Order of Saint Anna. Kalistrat and Niktopoleon were married in Novo-Arkhangel'sk. Kalistrat probably married a local Creole woman, since three of his daughters were mentioned in RAC documents as “Creole women.” They all, in their turn, married Creoles: Ekaterina Gedeonova married M. F. Svin'in, Natal'ya—P. Kh. Benzeman, and Mariya—I. D. Rasskazov. Niktopoleon Gedeonov, known in Novo-Arkhangel'sk as “interpreter Gedeon,” married the baptized Kodiak Alutiiq Mariya and had children with her—daughters Vera, Ekaterina, and Ul'yana, and a son Ivan who sailed many years on RAC ships as a cabin boy, sailor, and finally, first mate. Concerning the daughters of Niktopoleon, Vera Gedeonova first married the Creole S. F. Rysev, and after his death in September 1840, remarried the Finn Karl Gustavson in Novo-Arkhangel'sk in January 1841. Her sister Ekaterina married the Kodiak Alutiiq Kashpak and after a few years was widowed; then, rejecting the Creole M. G. Potorochin, she married the son of one of the elders of the Kodiak Alutiiq, Mikhail Kavchignak in March 1840 and went with him to Kodiak, where they had a daughter and three sons. Finally, Niktopoleon Gedeonov's daughter Ul'yana married the RAC employee Tyumen peasant Aleksandr Kukhterin in Novo-Arkhangel'sk in June 1840, with whom she had the Creole daughters Akulina (b. 1843) and Agripina (b. 1844) (Grinëv 2009: 120–121). From

this example it is evident how mixed interethnic marriages were in the capital of Russian America in the mid-19th century.

Besides Russian immigrants and Creoles, sailors from English and American ships also entered into cohabitation and temporary marriages with the Tlingit. The crews of these ships sometimes traded for several years in the straits of the Alexander Archipelago, wintering over near Tlingit villages. In addition, fugitive sailors found refuge among the natives. Thus, in 1793 the British mariner George Vancouver encountered a young man in a blue camisole and pantaloons among the Tlingit of the Stikine community, who smoked cigars offered to him in a Spanish way and was very fond of tobacco, from which Vancouver concluded that he was a deserter from a Spanish ship (Vancouver 1830: 5: 306–307). And in 1823 the governor of Russian America, M. I. Murav'ëv, reported to St. Petersburg that living among the Tlingit were several “Boston men,” as they in Russian America called representatives of the United States at the beginning of the 19th century (*Vneshnyaya politika...* 1982: 87). Later, marriages and relationships of indigenous women became more frequent with employees of the British Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), which leased from the RAC Dionisievskii Redoubt and all the mainland coast of Southeast Alaska since 1839. Soon after the transfer of the Dionisievskii Redoubt to HBC control, more than half of the employees of the trading post asked one of the directors of the company, George Simpson, for permission for them to marry Tlingit women, consent for which they obtained (Simpson 1847: 231). Almost two decades later British prospectors and smugglers from Canada, who began to settle illegally in the southern part of the Alexander Archipelago and on the adjacent coast of the mainland, also concluded temporary alliances or permanent marriages with local women of the Tlingit and Kaigani Haida tribes. In this way they tried to solidify their influence and trade with local residents. The last governor of Russian America, Prince Dmitrii Maksutov, reported to St. Petersburg in November 1865: “There is no possibility of pursuing these traders and catching them since they all have Koloshenski women with them and associate with the Koloshi as if kindred. The Koloshi, considering them their relatives, take their side, store up their wares, and deliver them to other [Indian] villages...” (NARS. RG 261. RRAC. Roll. 65, pp. 108 o6.–109).

Besides marital connections with Europeans, Creoles, Eskimos, and representatives of Siberian peoples, marriages and relationships of the Tlingit with Athapaskan and Eyak Indians became more frequent in the 19th century as a result of intensification of inter-tribal exchange stimulated by development of the fur trade. In order to gather large numbers of furs, some Tlingit not only organized distant trade expeditions to the interior regions of the mainland, but also remained among the Athapaskans over the course of 2 or 3 years. In such cases, the trade contacts were often strengthened by marital connections, though the Tlingit traders might already have a wife in their home village on the coast. This was one of the methods by which a man could obtain many furs for his home (Olson 1936: 214). Marital connections of the Tlingit were especially intensified with the Eyak, who are called “Ugalentsy” in Russian sources. In this regard, K. T. Khlebnikov wrote in his notes: “Many Ugalentsy have Koloshenski girls, and the Koloshi, conversely, Ugalentsy ones, and through this affinity they are close in their relations. The Yakutat toen [chief] Klemuk settled among the Ugalentsy in 1826” (Khlebnikov 1979: 52). As a

result of trade, cultural, and marital expansion, a significant part of the ancient Eyak population northwest of Yakutat was entirely assimilated by the Tlingit by the end of the 19th century. In a similar way, two modern groups of interior mainland Tlingit were formed—the Atlin and the Teslin—owing to migrations, relationships, and marriages of the Tlingit with the local Athapaskans (McClellan 1975: 1–2). Thus, marriages of the Tlingit with the Eyak and Athapaskans led to their quick cultural and linguistic assimilation and expansion of the Tlingit ethnic territory.

Conclusions

The contacts as interethnic relationships and marriages of the Tlingit with the Russians and other peoples of the Russian Empire, as well as with American and British peoples, created contradictory processes and trends. They stimulated in substantial degree the convergence of sides and contributed to the prevention of potential conflicts, though occasionally could provoke them. At the same time, interethnic marital connections created fertile ground for successful acculturation of the Tlingit population by Europeans. With this, the specificity and intensity of interethnic relationships and marriages were determined by various factors of both objective and subjective (personal) character. In particular, the perception of members of a different ethnic group took into account previous relationships (peaceful or militant), social status, cultural differences, physical parameters, and so on. In relationships and marriages of the Tlingit with immigrants a sharply reflected sexual imbalance was observed, since among the latter men absolutely predominated, and therefore Tlingit women emerged in the role of marriage partners in the overwhelming majority of cases. A directly opposite picture was observed regarding contacts of the Tlingit with Athapaskans and to some degree with the Eyak.

On the whole, matrimonial relations between the subjects of the Russian Empire and the Tlingit existed in two variants. In the first case, it was the matter of legal marital relations consecrated by the Russian Orthodox Church. In the second variant, it was about extramarital casual relationships or permanent cohabitation, which were not recognized by the church, and sometimes even by native communities in the case of their short duration (or the slave status of the woman). Officially formed marriages between representatives of the various Tlingit communities and immigrants were relatively few—much fewer than between Russians (and other immigrants from Russia) and Aleut or Eskimo women of Kodiak Island. This was determined in substantial degree by the independence of the Tlingit and strained relationships between them and the Russians at the beginning of the 19th century. As a result, the number of Creoles who had Tlingit roots was many times smaller than the number of Creoles of Aleut or Eskimo origin, but nevertheless, by the end of existence of Russian America there were no few of them among the Tlingit living at the walls of Novo-Arkhangel'sk. It is possible to distinguish two categories of them. The first was made up of the persons of mixed origin, who were brought up among the relatives of their mothers and therefore were almost no different (with the exception of some physical parameters) from the bulk of the Tlingit population. Into the second category fell those of them who lived in Russian settlements and were

brought up and taught the Russian language, culture, and ultimately entered the service of the RAC or Russian Orthodox Church, usually rather successfully adapting to colonial society. Thus, Russian–Tlingit Creole women usually married other Creoles or Russians (sometimes Finns, Yakuts, or Eskimos), and Creole men served as sailors, laborers, master craftsmen, interpreters, and junior church attendants. Further integration of Russian–Tlingit Creoles, like the Tlingit themselves, into colonial society of Russian America was interrupted by its sale to the United States in 1867.

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