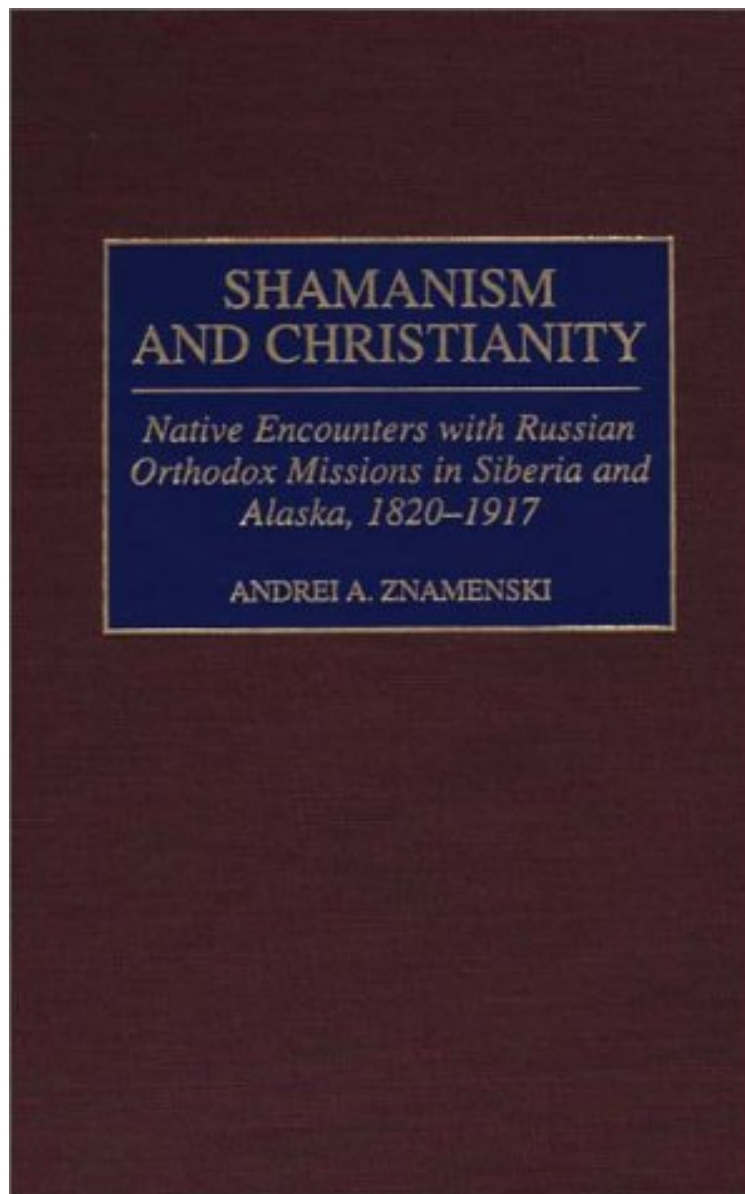


(Free) Shamanism and Christianity: Native Encounters with Russian Orthodox Missions in Siberia and Alaska, 1820-1917

## **Shamanism and Christianity: Native Encounters with Russian Orthodox Missions in Siberia and Alaska, 1820-1917**

*Andrei A. Znamenski*

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**Andrei A. Znamenski : Shamanism and Christianity: Native Encounters with Russian Orthodox Missions in Siberia and Alaska, 1820-1917** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shamanism and Christianity: Native Encounters with Russian Orthodox Missions in Siberia and Alaska,

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The interaction of 19th-century Russian missionaries with three indigenous groups, the Chukchi and Altaians in Siberia and the Dena'ina Indians in Alaska, resulted in widely different outcomes. The Chukchi disregarded the missionary message, the Dena'ina embraced Christianity, and the Altaians responded by selectively borrowing from Orthodox religion. Znamenski in the first work of its kind in English argues that the relationships between indigenous shamanism and Orthodox missionaries in Siberia and Alaska were essentially a dialogue about spiritual, political, and ideological power, and challenges both the widespread conviction that Christian missionaries always acted as agents of colonial oppression among tribal peoples and the notion that native peoples maintained their pristine traditional cultures despite years of interaction with Western society. Znamenski asserts that Russian missionary policy toward indigenous peoples was, at best, ambivalent and cannot be described as either Russification or a broad tolerance of native cultures. After two broad introductory chapters, he deals with each indigenous people in a separate section, illustrating the ways in which native Siberians and Alaskans acted as active players, welcoming, adopting, rejecting, or reinterpreting elements of Christianity depending upon surrounding circumstances and individual cultural stances.

"Znamenski has provided a useful analysis of the social, political, and economic circumstances which surrounded missionary-native interactions. This is a volume tailor-made for students of Orthodoxy, Late Imperial Russian history and culture, and the anthropology of northern native peoples. Andrei Znamenski should be congratulated for his accomplishment in an ambitious, balanced, and worthwhile project."-Modern Greek Studies Yearbook..."splendid example of good ethnohistory, well grounded in anthropological literature."-Pacific Northwest Quarterly"Shamanism and Christianity is an accessible, engaging, and authoritative contribution to the historical and ethnographic literature of imperial Russia's Siberian and North American territories. It can be recommended to specialists and students of religion and nationality issues, past and present."-Slavic "Znamenski's strength is the rich detail of his historical profiles. He has yielded the gold of missionary and indigenous voices, bringing shamans, native and mixed blood priests, teachers, and translators to life. This book is an excellent contribution to the history and historiography of Siberia and Alaska."-American Historical ...splendid example of good ethnohistory, well grounded in anthropological literature.-Pacific Northwest Quarterly?Shamanism and Christianity is an accessible, engaging, and authoritative contribution to the historical and ethnographic literature of imperial Russia's Siberian and North American territories. It can be recommended to specialists and students of religion and nationality issues, past and present.-Slavic ?Znamenski's strength is the rich detail of his historical profiles. He has yielded the gold of missionary and indigenous voices, bringing shamans, native and mixed blood priests, teachers, and translators to life. This book is an excellent contribution to the history and historiography of Siberia and Alaska.-American Historical ?Znamenski has provided a useful analysis of the social, political, and economic circumstances which surrounded missionary-native interactions. This is a volume tailor-made for students of Orthodoxy, Late Imperial Russian history and culture, and the anthropology of northern native peoples. Andrei Znamenski should be congratulated for his accomplishment in an ambitious, balanced, and worthwhile project.-Modern Greek Studies Yearbook., "splendid example of good ethnohistory, well grounded in anthropological literature."-Pacific Northwest Quarterly

About the Author ANDREI A. ZNAMENSKI is Assistant Professor of History in the Department of Humanities at Alabama State University. His current research focuses on the history of native peoples of Siberia and Alaska. His publications include articles in Alaska History, American Indian Culture and Research Journal, Russian , European Studies Journal, Social Sciences, and ITINERARIO.