

An exploration of historical Alutiiq language texts

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For the past five years, the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository has been documenting intricacies of the Alutiiq language with the help of Elder speakers and a grant from the National Science Foundation (#1360839). The project's primary focus has been recording vocabulary, grammar, and ways of speaking for this threatened Native Alaskan language. However, historical texts also offer insight into Alutiiq speech. In the late 1700s, foreigners began writing words and phrases in Alutiiq, creating rare records of the language as spoken in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. Staff members have been searching archival texts for archaic Alutiiq vocabulary to bring awareness of it to community members. Archives in Berkeley, California; Washington, DC; and St. Petersburg, Russia, have provided valuable linguistic information for addition to the corpus of Alutiiq language documentation. The project is breathing new life into ancestral vocabulary by sharing it with the last generation of first-language Alutiiq speakers for pronunciation and interpretation. It is also allowing students of Alutiiq to learn aspects of the language that have not been used in living memory.

1. The Alutiiq/Sugpiaq people and language The Alutiiq language, called *Sugt'stun* or *Alutiit'stun*, is spoken by the Alutiiq people who inhabit four geographic areas of Southcentral Alaska: Prince William Sound, the Kenai Peninsula, the Alaska Peninsula, and the Kodiak Archipelago (Crowell et al. 2001: 4). Alutiit'stun is part of the Unanga-Yupik-Inuit language family, which includes the Indigenous languages spoken from the Gulf of Alaska to Greenland and Siberia. Alutiit'stun is most closely related to Central Alaskan Yup'ik, or *Yugtun*, the language of southwestern Alaska. There are two major regional dialects of the Alutiiq/Sugpiaq language. Chugach Sugt'stun is spoken in Prince William Sound and on the Kenai Peninsula, while Koniag Alutiiq is the dialect of the Alaska Peninsula and in the Kodiak Archipelago. Within each of these dialects, there are numerous subdialects and speaking styles (Hegna 2004: 3). Native people have lived in the Kodiak Archipelago (which includes Kodiak Island, Afognak Island, Shuyak Island, Sitkalidak Island, and various smaller islands) for at least 7,500 years. Some of the oldest evidence of habitation comes from the Tanginak Spring site on *Salliitaaq* (Sitkalidak Island) (Fitzhugh 2003) and suggests the Alutiiq Ancestors came from the Alaska mainland to the West. Researchers believe that today's Alutiiq people are descended from Kodiak's first settlers based on a rich archaeological record that shows continuous occupation and cultural evolution over the millennia. By the time Russian traders arrived in the

region, Kodiak was home to a large, socially and politically complex, and artistically sophisticated Native society (Steffian et al. 2016).

Many terms have been applied to the Indigenous people of the region. It is important to understand the difference between these ethnonyms: Sugpiaq, Alutiiq, and Aleut. *Sugpiaq* (pl. *Sugpiat*) is akin to the names of related peoples Yup'ik/Yupik, Cup'ik/Cup'ig, and Iñupiaq. In their respective languages, these words literally mean 'real person.' Sugpiaq is generally regarded as the oldest of the three ethnonyms. *Aleut* is a colonial term applied to numerous distinct cultural groups in Alaska, including the Sugpiaq, by Russian fur traders. After widespread use during the Russian and ensuing American colonial periods, people adopted 'Aleut' into colloquial use. The term *Alutiiq* (pl. *Alutiit*) is the localized form of the word *Aleut*, based on the phonological and morphological rules of Kodiak's Indigenous language. All three of these ethnonyms are used by cultural members with varying preferences, with 'Alutiiq' and 'Sugpiaq' being the most popular today, and 'Aleut' still occasionally used by Elders (Leer, in Crowell et al. 2001: 31). Other terms used in academia to refer to the Alutiiq people include *Koniag*, *Pacific Eskimo*, and *Pacific Yup'ik*. However, it is important to note that Native people generally do not use these terms. This article uses the term *Sugpiaq* when referring to the precontact Indigenous population and *Alutiiq* for the modern Indigenous population on Kodiak. The terms *Sugt'stun* and *Alutiit'stun* are used to refer to the Indigenous language of the Indigenous people of Kodiak Island in a similar manner. *Alutiiq/Sugpiaq* is also used when referring to the greater Alutiiq/Sugpiaq Nation (i.e., the Indigenous people of Kodiak Island, Prince William Sound, and the Alaska Peninsula together).

2. The Alutiiq language in historical texts Since the establishment of the first foreign settlement on Kodiak Island in 1784 (Black 2004), the use of *Sugt'stun* has declined. Archaeologists estimate that there were perhaps more than 8,000 Sugpiaq people living in the Kodiak region prior to 1786 (Clark 1998). All would have spoken *Sugt'stun*. Today, there are about 1,800 Alutiiq people in the archipelago, and according to the Alutiiq Museum's Alutiiq/Sugpiaq Speakers Database,¹ fewer than thirty (0.2%) speak the Kodiak Island subdialect of the Alutiiq language fluently. For the past seventeen years, Elder Alutiiq speakers, community members, tribal organizations, and the Alutiiq Museum have worked to document and reawaken the Alutiiq language (Steffian & Counciller 2020: 61). This sustained effort has led to the development of an Alutiiq language archive and helped identify areas for additional research. Most recently, the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository (AMAR) has taken steps to increase awareness of and engagement with Alutiiq language materials. These include audio recordings created as early as the 1960s and texts created between the late 1700s and early 1900s. As part of this effort, AMAR staff members have been studying historical documents to cull vocabulary, grammatical information, and cultural practices from the notes they contain on the Alutiiq language. This paper analyzes four texts and shares examples of the linguistic

¹ This is an internal document held at the Alutiiq Museum. Because it contains speakers' personal information, it is not available to the public.

knowledge from each. This is not a complete review of findings, but rather an example of how the linguistic information preserved in written works can strengthen and reawaken knowledge of languages threatened by hegemony.

In a community with fewer than thirty fluent speakers, historical documents offer an abundance of valuable information, from archaic words and forgotten post-bases – suffixes that can be attached to root words – to insights on the grammatical system and the worldview of Alutiiq people. This paper examines four historical documents for their contributions to knowledge on the Alutiiq language and demonstrates the importance of documenting Indigenous languages with every tool available. Two of the documents are the *Alphonse Louis Pinart Papers* and the *Alaska Papers* (ca. 1871–1877), written and compiled by French linguist Alphonse Pinart and housed at the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley. The third historical reference with Alutiiq language information is the vocabularies documented by William J. Fisher in 1880 for J. W. Powell’s *Introduction to the Study of Indian Languages: With Words, Phrases, and Sentences to be Collected*. This publication contains information on Alutiiq language used for subsistence practices in the late nineteenth century. This document is part of the National Anthropological Archives in Washington, DC. Finally, the *Dictionary of Unalaska, Kodiak, Kenai, Tlingit, Eyak, and Chugach Languages*, compiled by Russian statesman Nikolai Rezanov in 1805, documents Alutiiq vocabulary.

3. Alphonse Louis Pinart Papers and Alaska Papers (ca. 1871–1877) (Alphonse Pinart) Alphonse Pinart was a gifted linguist born in France. The son of a wealthy industrialist, Pinart was just nineteen years old when he made his first voyage to Alaska (Laronde, in Haakanson & Steffian 2009). Pinart visited the Kodiak Archipelago from 1871 to 1872, where he collected artifacts; documented Koniag cultural activities such as dance, spiritual beliefs, and stories; and recorded aspects of the Alutiiq language (Bland 2013). Upon his return to northern France, Pinart donated most of his artifact collection to the museum near his hometown, known today as the Musée Boulogne-sur-Mer. In contrast, his notes and photographs largely went to the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley.

One of the unique challenges in translating Pinart’s papers is that he was a polyglot. He wrote his notes in multiple languages – French, Russian, German, Spanish, and English (Bland 2013: 75). Even his notes on Alutiit’stun are recorded with varying orthographies. Sometimes he wrote Alutiit’stun words in this manner: “Kayak, one hole: *kai’anguaq*” (Pinart 1871–1877: Microfilm Reel 2), and other times he wrote the language in this manner: “Гора: *Инг,икъ*” (Mountain: *Ing’ik*) (Pinart 1871–1877: Microfilm Reel 2). In 2008, the AMAR commissioned a professional translation of the Kodiak sections of the *Alaska Papers*, which were written chiefly in French. However, as the translator was not familiar with the Alutiiq language and therefore unable to translate or transliterate the Russian and Cyrillic Alutiiq words, they omitted much of the Alutiiq vocabulary and passages. This includes entire sections (e.g., “[Four pages in Alutiiq]”). In other instances, the translator attempted to transliterate Cyrillic Alutiiq words, for example writing “*M&ramiamd* (mask)” (Wallace 2007: 49) in place of Pinart’s “*Шугащамъ* (mask)” (Pinart 1871–1877:

Microfilm Reel 1), but it was ultimately not a useful transliteration for individuals trying to read the Alutiiq words. To remedy this situation, the AMAR has been working with a Russian language scholar to translate 101 pages of the *Alaska Papers* from Russian into English and transliterate the Cyrillic Alutiiq words into Roman characters. This work is ongoing.

During his time in the Kodiak Archipelago, Pinart wrote over a hundred pages on Alutiit'stun vocabulary and grammar. Speakers and learners of the Alutiiq language can learn a great deal from his linguistic documentation of place names, historical village names, general vocabulary, and much more. In many cases, the information embedded in the terms Pinart recorded can also provide insight into the worldview of Alutiiq people. For example, Pinart provides the word for “labrets put in the middle of an infant’s lip” as *Ingalarpak*, which literally translates to ‘the Great Eye.’ This is a reference to a concentric circle motif commonly represented in Alutiiq art known today as *Llam Ingalaa*, or ‘the Eye of the Universe’ (Figure 1). *Llam Ingalaa*, or *Ingalarpak*, represents the multilayered Alutiiq universe as well as a portal between the physical realm in which people reside and the spiritual realm in which nonhuman beings live (Steffian & Counciller et al. 2015: 182).



Figure 1. Slate labret from Uganik Bay featuring concentric circle design. Courtesy of the US Fish & Wildlife Service, Nowak Collection, UA78-394.1. Photograph by Pam Foreman.

Pinart’s notes also provide Alutiit'stun learners with insight into the grammatical and semantic properties of Alutiiq morphemes. For instance, many Alutiit'stun learners are familiar with the word *qaugcin* or *qaugcinek*, which translates to ‘how many.’ *Qaugcin* is used in contemporary expressions such as *Qaugcin suuget maani et'at?* (‘How many people are here?’). However, Pinart records the form *Qaugci-yuci?* (‘How many are you?’), with the stem *qaugci-* (‘how many’) combined with the second-person intransitive verb ending *+(g)/tuci* (‘you (pl.) are’), indicating that *qaugci-* can function as a verb root. This unveils that *qaugci-* could be polycategorical (Mithun 2017); rather than belonging to a specific lexical category, it can be combined with verbal morphology and other derivational morphology to function in different ways. Pinart’s record of *qaugci-* is also of practical, conversational use to

Alutiit'stun learners since it offers a more concise form of a common phrase.

Additionally, Pinart's writings preserve land-based knowledge like place names. When Pinart traveled around *Ag'waneq* (Afognak Island) and *Suyaraq* (Shuyak Island), he recorded the names of thirty-one bays, points, and other geographic features provided by his Alutiiq companions (see Table 1). Thirteen of these names align with names shared by the late John Pestrikoff with linguist Jeff Leer, although, in some cases, the geographic locations do not align perfectly. There are also two cases where a single place was reported by Pestrikoff and Pinart to have different names. The remaining sixteen place names were not reported by Pestrikoff and Leer and have unclear translations (marked by the authors of this article with italics). Where possible, we provide our best hypothesis about what those sixteen names could mean. Table 1 summarizes the place names recorded by Pinart. Figure 2 provides the locations of those places.

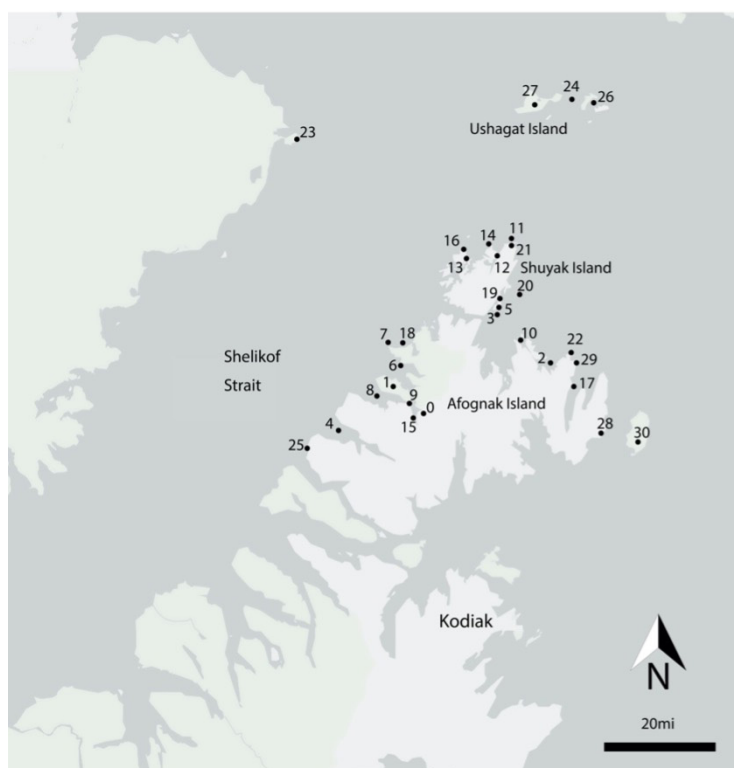


Figure 2. Locations of thirty-one place names recorded by Pinart during his trip around Afognak Island, courtesy of Lydia Black for translating Pinart's unpublished manuscript on file at the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository

Table 1. Place names of Afognak and Shuyak Islands documented by Alphonse Pinart

Name Reported by Pinart	Alutiiq Name from Pestrikoff & Leer	Current Name	Notes and Translations	Map No. (See Fig. 2)
<i>Shagiiak</i>	–	–	Possibly from sagiq ('halibut'), unknown	00
<i>Chugak</i>	Ar'urnaq	Ban Island	Pinart: Likely cuuqaq ('protrusion') NVA: 'Resembles a whale'	01
<i>Tulaxalik</i>	Tulagalek	Seal Bay	'Place with a landing site'	02
<i>Kan^shuak</i>	Kangsuaq	Perenosa Bay	From kangeq ('head of bay')	03
<i>Alimawak</i>	Animawak	Malina Bay	Possibly from alimaq ('dog salmon'; 'chum'), unknown	04
<i>Kiluiukak</i>	Aterwik	Big Fort Island	NVA: 'A place to drift out to sea'	05
<i>Alak</i>	Aalek	Foul Bay	Unknown	06
<i>Uiguk</i>	Wiiguq	Black Cape	'It's spinning around.'	07
<i>Nanouak</i>	Nunaq	Paramanof Bay	Land, village	08
<i>An^alagmiut</i>	–	–	Unknown	09
<i>Maishuk</i>	Misuuk	–	Bag	10
<i>Kakhshumaut</i>	Ek'arsuumarwik	Perevalnie Island	A place to fall into something	11
<i>Kainkhat</i>	–	–	Possibly kangret (sources; heads of bays), unknown	12
<i>Agaiak</i>	–	Skiff Passage	Unknown	13
<i>Chidimngaq</i>	–	–	Possibly from ciiluku ('to smash it'), unknown	14
<i>Koulluk; Kulluk</i>	–	–	Unknown	15
<i>Amixkaxtouluk</i>	–	–	Possibly amirkartuliq ([Place that has] a lot of dehaired seal skins), unknown	16

<i>Agouik</i>	–	–	Possibly from agluni ('to go'), unknown	17
<i>Kigiak</i>	–	–	Possibly qikiyaq (island-like), unknown	18
<i>Illouaxtoulik</i>	–	Andreon Bay?	Possibly Iluwartuliq (a place with a lot of ways to come in), unknown	19
<i>Illouaxkoulik</i>	–	Ermine Island or Little Fort Island	Possibly Iluwartuliq (a place with a lot of ways to come in), unknown	20
<i>Ougnahak</i>	–	–	Possibly Ugnaraq ('mouse') or from Wek ('grass'), unknown	21
<i>Anakhshaxtulik</i>	–	Cape Tolstoi	Possibly from anarluni ('to defecate') or from anagluni ('to exit'), unknown	22
<i>Iguak</i>	Igwat	Cape Douglas	Mirages	23
<i>Uzhuinat</i>	Usu'unat	Barren Islands	Unknown	24
<i>Nabangouiak</i>	–	–	Possibly from napar- ('to stand on end'), unknown	25
<i>Amatulik</i>	–	Amatuli Island	Possibly from amaq ('amber'); possibly amartuliq (has an abundance of amber), unknown	26
<i>Usagat</i>	–	Ushagat Island	Unknown	27
<i>Chiniguxluk</i>	Cingigurluq	Tonki Cape	Weathered point	28
<i>Azhuinak</i>	Asunaq	–	Resembles a pot	29
<i>Nailig^ak</i>	Nailiraq	Marmot Island	Unknown	30

Note. NVA = Native Village of Afognak, Afognak Placenames project (<https://www.afognak.org/data-recovery/afognak-placenames/>).

Learning about Kodiak Alutiiq place names increases community members' access to both linguistic and cultural knowledge. Knowledge of Kodiak Alutiiq place names is incredibly scarce, with few Elders remembering the Alutiiq names for places

around Kodiak Island (Schmidt-Chya 2020). Nevertheless, place names can provide insight on obsolete and archaic word forms not used in other aspects of the language:

[T]he problematic ones are primarily ancient terms whose meaning was lost as the language went through a natural process of change. Today they no longer carry the meaning that people gave them in the past. They are now simply place names. (Collignon 2006: 103)

An Alutiit'stun example of this process is the place name *Tulagalek*, which comes from the obsolete root *tulag-* ('to land [on a beach, bank, etc.]'). Pinart's notes also preserve names that have no known translation, such as *Nailiraq* (Marmot Island) and *Usu'umat* (Barren Islands). The place names follow a basic structure of Alutiit'stun vocabulary. The sounds are all present in the phonology, and the basic morphology is consistent with contemporary Alutiit'stun as well (e.g., singular nouns predominantly ending with /q/ and plural nouns ending with /t/), but the meanings have been obscured over time.

While place names with meanings that are not clear to current speakers are an important way of identifying and preserving archaic language, some place names *are* understood by current speakers, and so provide direct insight into cultural knowledge, worldview, history, and information about Indigenous relationships with the environment. These insights include resource utilization areas (i.e., hunting, fishing, and fauna harvesting spots), mythological and/or cultural history, and descriptions about the environmental conditions of a particular place (Yarborough 1977). Alutiit'stun examples from around the Kodiak Archipelago include *Isuwilek* (Kazakof Bay, lit. 'one with seals'), *Awa'uq* (site of Refuge Rock Massacre in MacDonald's Lagoon, lit. 'it's numb'), and *Carwanesinaq* (Whale Passage, lit. 'large current') (Schmidt-Chya 2020). Since the land and its resources were – and are – vital to the survival of Indigenous people, this fact is reflected in Indigenous toponymy (Basso 1996).

4. MS 305 Ugashachmiut and Kageagemiuut Words, Phrases, and Sentences (William J. Fisher) In addition to containing information about geography, historical texts reveal knowledge about Alutiiq subsistence practices through tool names. One such example is from William J. Fisher's work. Fisher was a tidal observer who collected for the Smithsonian Institution during his travels around the Kodiak Archipelago and neighboring regions of the Alaska mainland. He obtained cultural materials from the Alaska Peninsula and Kodiak Island between 1879 and 1885 (Crowell 1992). Using the 'Schedules' template for documenting languages from Powell's *Introduction to the Study of Indian Languages* (Powell & Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology 1880), Fisher also collected a variety of Alutiit'stun/Sugt'stun words and phrases from the communities of *Kangiyaq* (Kaguyak) on Kodiak Island and *Ugaasaq* (Ugashik) in Bristol Bay. Much of this manuscript is available on the Alaska Native Language Archive (ANLA) website (<https://uaf.edu/anla/record.php?identifier=SUK882F1882>), and the original document is archived in the National Anthropological Archives in Washington, DC (MS 305, Smithsonian In-

stitution). Similar to that of the Pinart papers, the information within the Fisher manuscript, especially its focus on tool names, has great significance for Alutiit'stun learners and speakers. Fisher's most considerable contribution to Alutiiq language studies is his focus on tool names in the manuscript.

As new technologies and practices were introduced into the Kodiak Archipelago, activities like hunting and gathering changed as people adopted new tools, from metal knives to row boats. The tools once used for subsistence activities, and likewise, the words for these objects, have declined. Today, hunters use *nutget* ('guns') rather than *panat* ('spears') and *ayaqut* ('harpoons'), and people put their berries in *wiit'Ruut* ('buckets') rather than *inartat* ('baskets'). Language documentation over the past 250 years indicates that there were different names in Alutiit'stun for each type of spear and spear point used by hunters – the same way there are different names for every caliber of rifle in English. Alutiiq speakers today do not remember many of the words for the wide variety of hunting tools used by Ancestors. Fisher's manuscript provides some insight into the names of tools that were in use at the time of his work (see Table 2).

Another useful outcome of analyzing a historical text such as this one is the cross-analysis of the modern language and other historical texts. For instance, Fisher provides a word for 'paint' that is not used today. Speakers today use the word *kRaaskaq*, which comes from a Russian term. However, Alutiiq people used paint before Western contact. Archaeological sites have yielded a variety of ancestral objects decorated with paint (Steffian & Counceller et al. 2015: 258–259), and historical sources confirm the production and use of paint. In 1786, Grigorii I. Shelikhov reported:

When mourning the dead they cut the hair on their heads and paint their faces with black paint [...] they greet their guests in red paint and dressed in their best finery [...] some don various and strange masks made from wood painted in various colors. (Shelikhov & Pierce 1981: 54–55)

Carl Heinrich Merck in 1790 even detailed how Alutiiq people made paint, stating:

They use a red paint, called *Ktak*, it is derived from a rust-red bolus [...] they also use a white paint, *kutkhliaoak*, made from a limestone [...] [t]hey also use a blackish copper paint, *akhsak*, which they grind to powder on a rock. (Merck & Pierce 1980: 103–104, emphasis mine)

Table 2. Alutiit'stun tool names from Fisher's (1882) notes (MS 305, Smithsonian Institution)

Powell's English Entry	Fisher's Alutiiq Orthography	Modern Kodiak Alutiiq Orthography ²	Alutiiq Word in Use
Bow of wood	Kit-chūik	Qitguyaq	Qitguyaq
Bowstring	Klūn	Kelun ^L	Kelugkaq (any thread)
Sinew on back of bow	Tūch ^L -kák	Qetullqaq ^L	–
Arrow	Mān-gū-lik	–	Ruuwaq
Notch in end of arrow for bowstring	D ^a ūgug	–	–
Notch in end of arrow arrowhead	Ūn-gā-lūk	Ungaluq ^L	–
Arrowhead chipper (made of horn)	Kū-guch ^L -wōk	Kukeglugaq ^L	–
Arrow feathers	Tshū-lūch-wū	Culuguaq ^L	Culuk
Quiver	Kā-lū-shi-nāk	Qalusnguaq ^L	Ruuwauteq
War-spear	Pān-nā	Panaq ^L	Ayaquq
Fish-spear	Pauch-lūd ⁿ ká	–	Ayaquq
Sling	Plū-gūngā	Pelluquq	Pelluquq
Canoe	Kai-āk	Qayaq	Qayaq
Canteen made of a bladder	Tānga-shūtkā	Taangartesuun ^L	Puti'ilkaa (canteen/bottle)
Fishline	Nome-ge-ánka	Nemeryaq ^L	Kelugkaq
Fishnet	Kūch-shéaka	Kugsiq	Kugsiq, Kugyasiq
Fishhook	Ik-shāk	Iqsak	Iqsak
Net for catching fish (dip net)	Ka-lūga	Qaluq ^L	Kugsiq, Kugyasiq

² Current Alutiit'stun orthography for obsolete words in Fisher's documentation provided by Leer et al.'s (n.d.) unpublished manuscript, marked with L.

Pipe	Poi-chō-dāk	–	Paipaq
Drum	Tshāu-wē-ākā	Cauyaq	Cauyaq
Fish knife (of stone)	Ū-lū-ka-ka	Ulukaq	Ulukaq
Handle of above	Dūdleh-chā	Tuulleq ^L	Agaq
Meat tray	Kütschük	–	Qantaq
Bowl	Ā-lō-dāch-ang-tshik	Alutangcuk	Alutaq, Qantaq
Mortar wood	Pā-shūd-kā	Pasin, pasisuun ^L	Miiliwik, Ciisuun
Fire drill	Tū-diugāk	–	–
Adze	Tshig-chloudka	Caki'un ^L	TupuRuuq
Hoe	Āng-ād-kā	–	KRapihuaq
Knife	Kish-ā-gēgā	–	Nuusik
Borer	īch-ndkā	Iguun ^L	Mingqun
Awl of bone	Duch-ka or mīn-gūn	Tugkaq ^L or Mingqun	Mingqun
Berry basket	ī-nach-dak or īnachdāgā	Inartaq	Inartaq
Trinket basket	Chau-gē-gā	Raakiq ^L	Inartaq
Large water jug (for holding water in lodge)	Flāā-gag	Flaakaq ^L	Puti'ilkaaq
Pot – iron	Āshūk ər	Asuq	Asuq
Little pot	Ā-shūng-tshūk	Asungcuk	Asungcuk
Large pot	Ā-shū-shī-nāk	Asusinaq	Asusinaq
Grease jar	Kā-lā-dāk	–	Stakaanaq
Large bowl – wooden	K'ch-dāk	–	Qantaq
Small bowl – wooden	Nāk-ch'l-chā	–	Qantaq
Cup (drinking)	Kā-lūd-kā	Qalun ^L	Caskaq
Long bottle of wood made of two hollowed out pieces of wood put together	Tüg-mük	Tuqmik ^L , Turmik ^L	–

Merck's records also allow for cross-analysis of the archaic Alutiit'stun word for 'paint.' He writes the word for 'red paint' as *ktak*. Fisher's documentation corroborates this term, stating that paint is called *gda-mak*. Leer et al. (n.d.) provide the word in the current orthography: *qetaq* (cf. Merck & Pierce 1980), while *qetamek* (cf. Fisher 1882) is the partitive form of the same word. Fisher also contributes the names for 'black paint' (gdak tan-ish-kak^F/qetaq tan'esqaq^L), 'red paint' (gdak kau-ish-kak^F/qetaq kawisqaq^L), and 'yellow paint' (gdak ka-gech-enech-kak^F/qetaq qakirngasqaq^L),³ which provides further evidence of the old word.

5. Dictionary of Unalaska, Kodiak, Kenai, Tlingit, Eyak, and Chugach Languages (Nikolai Rezanov) Another document that provides a much broader opportunity for cross-analysis is the multilingual dictionary compiled by Nikolai Rezanov in 1805. Rezanov was a Russian statesman and explorer who arrived in Alaska in 1805 (Pierce 1990: 419). Historians report that he cared deeply about improving educational opportunities for Indigenous people in Russian America. He worked to reform Kodiak's Russian school and make it available to people of all ethnicities (Postnikov & Falk 2015: 243). In 1805, he compiled a dictionary in Sitka, Alaska, of various Alaska Native languages: Unangam Tunuu, Koniag Alutiit'stun/Sugt'stun, Dena'ina Athabascan, Tlingit, Eyak, and Chugach Sugt'stun. There are numerous copies of this document available on ANLA's website. Fortunately, the Russian words were translated into English by the late Michael Krauss and uploaded to ANLA's website under identifier EY805R1805. There are additional copies under identifier CE805R1805⁴ that contain the Alutiit'stun translations. This is an incredibly extensive Alutiit'stun dictionary, and likely the earliest of its kind, having been compiled only twenty-one years after the first permanent Russian settlement in Alaska was established. Table 3 provides terms from the first two pages of the dictionary in English, Alutiit'stun in Cyrillic script (as written by Rezanov) as well as in modern Latin script, and Alutiit'stun as used by current speakers.

³ F = Fisher's orthography; L = Leer's orthography

⁴ <https://www.uaf.edu/anla/record.php?identifier=CE805R1805> (Accessed 2022-03-07.)

Table 3. Select Alutiit'stun terms preserved in Rezanov's (1805) dictionary

English	Cyrillic Alutiit'stun	Contemporary Alutiit'stun Orthography	Alutiit Word in Use
Grandmother	Маака	Emaaqa	Emaa
Midwife	Амахолюкноокю	–	Paapuskaaq
Bidar	Ангнякъ	Angyaq	Angyaq
Bidarka	Каякъ	Qayaq	Qayaq
Drum	Чаоякъ	Cauyaq	Cauyaq
Shore	Коти	Qutii	Quta, Quteq
Shin	Княака	–	–
Beads	Чунгавузтъ	Cunga'ugyaq ^L	Pinguaq
To hit	Ахтоха	Allturaa	Tenglugaa, Piqeraa
Near	Кантокъ	Qantuq ^L	Ukaqsigtuq, Yaqsiiuq
Flea	Кумитхакъ	Kumitgaq	Kumitgaq
Sea otter	Ахна	Arhnaq	Arhnaq
God	Агаимъ	Agayun	Agayun
Side	Чаннекака	Caniqaq	Caniqaq
Rich	Кашкаокъ	Qasqeq ^L	Akirtuliq
Sick	Кнаокъ	Qena'uq	Qena'uq
Swamp	Мичунгокъ	Mecak ^L	Maraq
Painful	Анкхато	Angq'rtuq	Angq'rtuq
Bigger	Амелвшканика	–	Angenqa
Big	Ангок	Ang'uq	Ang'uq
Beard	Угнить	Ungat	Ungaq
Point of beard	Тавлюка	Tamluqa	Tamluq
Wart	Утв-гыкъ	Utnguq	Utnguq
Cask	Калюкакъ	Kalukaq ^L	Puckaaq
Brother	Аннегака	Aningaqa	Aningaqa, Anngaqa

Quarrel	Кумутта	Kum'utaa	Kum'utaa
Eyebrows	Кагулюнга	Qauglunka	Qauglut
Throw	Зххта	Egtaa	Egtaa
Throw!	Зйшу	Egesgu	Egesgu
Paunch	Акшахка	Aqsaq	Aqsaq
Pregnant	Акшалюкь	Aqsaliyuq ^l	Imanguq, Qumirtuq
To run	Кунгиток	Kuingtuq	Qecenguq
Poor	Наклихнахтли	Nakllegnartuq	Nakllegnartuq
White	Кагахтокь	Qatertuq	Qatertuq, Qat'rtuq
Egg white	Кагахлк	Qaterli ^l	–
Paper	Каллиикакь	Kalikaq	Kalikaq
Bore (drill)	Ихьунь	Iguun ^l	Siilaq
Beads, drizzle	Шугудаха	–	Pinguaq
Wave, breaker	Кангиокь	Qangyuk	Qangyuk
Shoes	Китнитули	Kitngituli ^l	Pasmakiik
Bull	Ангутькитакь- колюва	Angut'qiitak kuluwaq ('male cow')	Angut'qiitak
Steelyard	Ушпаготать	–	–
Red bilberry	Кнкхтокь	Kenegtaq	Kenegtaq
Storm	Тляккок	Llaq'uq	Llaq'uq, Kayunguq

Since Rezanov's dictionary was compiled relatively early in the colonial period, it contains archaic words that are seldom used by speakers today. One example is the word for 'rope.' Today, speakers prefer the word *iRagkuq* or *aRafkuq*, from the Russian word веревка/verevka. Rezanov, however, documented the term *атмутаць/atmuutak'* (*atmuutaq*), which literally translates as 'something to use for packing.' Given the utility of rope as a pulling tool, *atmuutaq* would be an accurate description. In fact, a similar word, *atmautaq*, is used today by speakers to refer to a backpack. It is also possible that how the rope was used dictated the word used to define it. A rope used for lashing might not have been called *atmuutaq*, for instance, but instead something like *nemeriuatq* ('something to use for lashing').

Another archaic term in Rezanov's dictionary is the word for 'mask.' Speakers today prefer the term *giinaruaq*, literally translating to 'a pretend face' or 'kind of

like a face.’ Other common words are *maas’kaa*q (from English *mask*, or perhaps from Russian *маскировать/maskirovat’*) and *giinaquq* (lit. ‘one which resembles a face’). The word Rezanov documented is *ангалюк/angaluk*. This apparently has the same root as the Alaska Peninsula Alutii’tstun term *angallkuq*, meaning ‘shaman’ (Leer et al. n.d.: 329), and is further corroborated by the Yugtun term *angalkuq* of the same meaning. *Angaluk* is also a place name reported by the late John Pestrikoff, an esteemed Elder and Alutii’tstun speaker from Afognak and Port Lions. Angaluk is a cove just north of King Cove on Afognak Island. Pestrikoff (1997) reports that a shaman lives at Angaluk and continues to protect his hunting grounds there even beyond death. While Pestrikoff does not provide a clear translation of the name Angaluk, its etymology seems to relate to the spiritual power of shamans and/or masks. Analyzing historical texts allows a glimpse into how Alutii’tstun has changed (or how it has not) over the years. Indeed, historical texts are the oldest examples of documented language. By analyzing historical texts, learners have the opportunity to *revive* ‘old words’ in addition to adopting words from foreign languages. In the next section, the authors will explain the history of word creation and revitalization in Kodiak Alutii’tstun.

6. Old words or new words While the rediscovery of archaic words is an exciting benefit of studying linguistic sources, the idea of replacing more recent adoptions with old words remains controversial among today’s speakers and learners alike. There are many arguments about whether to incorporate archaic words into the contemporary language or not. In one respect, the evolution of language often involves changes in vocabulary and the replacement and addition of new terms. This is a common practice in English. Words like *filet*, *kindergarten*, and *tortilla* all have well recognized non-English etymologies yet are considered by English speakers to be English words. The same could be said about *tRupaq* (‘stovepipe’), *fanaRuq* (‘lantern’), and *miskiiRaq* (‘spider’) in Alutii’tstun. While the etymologies are visibly Russian, these words are still Alutii’tstun because they have been adopted into common use by Alutii’tstun speakers. Moreover, these words have been altered to fit Alutiiq language phonology and morphology. Indeed, the use of words with potentially foreign etymologies in Alutii’tstun is not unique to Western languages; there are many examples of cognates shared across different Alaska Native languages. Alutii’tstun and other related languages share many words, such as the word for ‘seal’ – *isuwiq* in Alutii’tstun, *issuriq* in Yugtun, and *isuḡix* in Unangam Tunuu. The adoption of words from another language for new technologies is at times necessary, though borrowing from “dominant languages” can be considered unfavorable by speakers (Blair and Freedden, in Counciller 2010: 75).

On the other hand, Indigenous cultures are often expected to maintain linguistic sovereignty by refusing to use foreign words. Speakers of some Native languages go so far as to advocate for creating new words rather than using foreign cognates. This creates a double bind. If Indigenous communities use loanwords, they may be criticized for speaking a supposedly inauthentic version of their language. On the other hand, if Indigenous communities create new words, they may be criticized as overly purist or as ‘inventing’ Indigenous culture (Counciller 2012).

There is no easy solution to this situation, and many individuals do not fall firmly on either side. Rather than a dichotomy, individual attitudes toward integrating foreign words or reviving archaic words fall along a spectrum. This argument extends to issues surrounding the creation of Indigenous names for newly introduced technologies. While some favor creating new terms for new technologies, others suggest allowing Alutiit'stun to evolve and use words of foreign etymologies. Both methods have been used by the Kodiak Alutiiq New Words Council (NWC), a group of speakers and learners who meet to consider the development of new terms for the Alutiiq language. This includes assigning words to modern technologies.

The NWC formed in 2007 with mentorship from the Hawaiian Lexicon Committee (Counciller 2010: 26). The goal of the NWC is to offset the loss of Alutiit'stun words with the creation of new words: "Alutiiq words were being forgotten, but no new words were occurring" (25). The need for the NWC became apparent when Elders speakers visited classrooms and the students asked for words like *stapler* or *computer* in Alutiiq. According to Counciller (2010), "rather than creating new words [for these items], fluent speakers report that they would typically substitute an English word without any Nativization," resulting in phrases like "*radio kwaresgu* – 'Turn on the Radio'" (25).

The NWC made the first official attempt at creating Alutiiq words for newer technologies, like *masinaklitaq* ('motorcycle') (Counciller 2010: 216) and *cuucuuruaq* ('train') (218). In addition to new technologies, the NWC also works to create words for specific objects in cases where those words have been lost, such as *cirunertuliq* ('elk,' lit. 'one with a lot of antler') or *tunturpak* ('moose,' lit. 'a great deer') (212). There are multiple methods used for the attribution of such words. In some cases, speakers create a brand-new term based on Alutiit'stun's morphological rules. Another common method is to borrow from a neighboring dialect (chiefly, Chugach Sugt'stun). If no neighboring term exists, or if the Elders are not satisfied with the term used in that dialect, they often 'Alutiicize' a Russian word due to the history of Russian influence on the Alutiiq language. If there is still no term speakers find satisfactory, they will then Alutiicize an English word.

Although the NWC focuses on the creation of new words, its members also seek to revive old words in certain cases. Namely, if an archaic term comes from a trusted, recognized source, such as one of *their* Elders, the speakers would often approve the use of the archaic term in modern speech. Additionally, the NWC assists in publishing numerous archaic words for prehistoric tools and implements in a book titled *Kal'unek from Karluk: Kodiak Alutiiq History and the Archaeology of the Karluk One Village Site* (Steffian & Leist et al. 2015). In the book's Alutiiq glossary, the historical terms are marked as such. A symbol following the word alerts readers that it is an older term that is not in common use today. *Kal'unek* also identifies words in common modern usage and those created by the NWC.

Reconnecting archaic terms with their associated objects is of utmost significance because it allows communities to demonstrate their linguistic sovereignty by reclaiming their languages from the colonial binds that have hindered them for hundreds of years. Indeed, establishing Indigenous linguistic and cultural presence in the face of hegemony presents as a political act (Clifford 2004: 9) and one Indigenous

people need to take for the sake of preserving their heritage and their living culture. While it is true that languages evolve and incorporate foreign terms, the rate of language change in Indigenous communities is happening much faster due to colonial oppression. In the case of Alutiiit'stun, the use of borrowed colonial terms was not due to cultural influence, but to sheer necessity resulting from forced assimilation and language suppression. With that in mind, short of learning the Indigenous language in question, one of the most important steps toward preserving Indigenous languages is to document them in every capacity possible.

7. Language documentation and preservation While we have focused on the importance of analyzing texts, the importance of audio recordings must also be noted. Alutiiit'stun texts began accumulating in the late 1700s, and researching those texts has been a recent priority. The introduction of audio documentation came much later. The earliest known recordings of Kodiak Alutiiit'stun are from the early 1960s by Irene Reed, a former professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Since then, there have been a number of audio recordings created by researchers, including Jeff Leer (AM218,⁵ AMAR), Linda Yarborough (AM504, AMAR), Laurie Mulcahy (AM214, AMAR), and many others. Audio recordings of Alutiiit'stun have an important distinction from text documentations – the removal of self-directed interpretation of the speakers' words. Text documentation is incredibly subjective due to the irregular methods of writing the language and the unfamiliarity of foreign ethnographers with the Indigenous language. For example, it is difficult to decipher the documentation made by Alphonse Pinart, a non-Indigenous linguist, in 1871 and 1872 due to the lack of a ubiquitous Alutiiit'stun orthography at that time. The lack of an official orthography (compounded with, in all likelihood, a lack of expertise in the language) resulted in inconsistencies in whether and how Pinart differentiated between certain phonemes, including <q> (/q/), <k> (/k/), <r> (/ɣ/ and /ʁ/), and <g> (/x/ and /ɣ/). While the information contained in text documents is undeniably valuable, audio recordings, especially for oral languages, provide listeners the opportunity to hear the words as said by older speakers. They alleviate many of the inherent issues with text documentation, such as personal error in transcribing words.

Audio recordings provide a much more consistent foundation for Indigenous language documentation than text documentation. One such application of this research method is documentation of place names. Considering there are so few Kodiak Alutiiit'stun speakers, fewer than a handful of them remember Alutiiq place names around the Kodiak Archipelago. The lack of knowledge of place names is largely due to the fact that Alutiiq place names have not widely been used over the last fifty years. However, audio recordings provide today's learners the opportunity to hear ancestral speakers pronounce place names and tell the history behind places around the Kodiak Archipelago. Not only does accessing these recordings allow the community to remember the place names themselves, but it also gives insight into the knowledge surrounding those places (Schmidt-Chya 2020).

⁵ AM here refers to the collection code used for archaeological and archival objects in the Alutiiq Museum's collection.

Beyond place names and land-based knowledge, audio recordings can also assist learners in identifying other lexical terms that may not be used by today's speakers. One example is the word *uniinaq* ('breast of a whale') (Pestrikoff & Pestrikoff 1986: 00:40:40), provided by John Pestrikoff. As whale hunting in the Kodiak Archipelago declined, the use of Alutiit'stun words surrounding the practice has declined as well. Today, speakers might just use the general term *amaaq* ('breast') to refer to a whale breast.

For the sake of preserving Indigenous languages, Holton (2012) touches on the importance of language archives for the general community – not just for linguists. The AMAR follows suit and highly prioritizes Alutiiq language documentation and preservation. The museum has taken multiple approaches to advance this objective. In 2013, the AMAR created, and continues to expand, a digital language archive, *Naken-Natmen* ('From Where, to Where') (languagearchive.alutiiqmuseum.org), which improves "research and community access to Alutiiq language research sources within local and state archives."⁶ As of May 2020, the archive hosts 261 audio recordings and 13 video recordings of Alutiiq language speakers and learners. The AMAR also hosts meetings with fluent Alutiit'stun speakers to continually document the language to increase awareness of, engagement with, and access to Alutiiq language materials through the digital language archive. Another way the AMAR facilitates Alutiit'stun language preservation is through partnered management of the two Alutiiq language online dictionaries, alutiiqlanguage.org and wiinaq.org. These dictionaries provide Alutiit'stun learners with tools to increase their lexical and morphological understanding of the language, advancing fluency at both levels. Additionally, the AMAR hosts a variety of Alutiit'stun language materials in its Koniag Cultural Library, including scans of Alphonse Pinart's papers from 1871 to 1872, scans of William Fisher's vocabulary list from 1890, and much more.

The AMAR is not the only organization that prioritizes preserving Alutiiq language material. The Native Village of Afognak's Oral History Archive contains recordings, text documents, and other digital files pertaining to Alutiiq language and culture (afognak.org/oral-history-archive), especially information from and pertaining to the northern regions of Kodiak Island (i.e., the villages Karluk, Larsen Bay, Ouzinkie, Afognak, and Port Lions and their surrounding areas). The ANLA at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (www.uaf.edu/anla) operates under the sole purpose of preserving Alaska Native language materials. There are thousands of resources representing many Alaska Native languages in ANLA's collections – not just Alutiit'stun. In addition to these three Alutiiq language archives, there are, of course, Alutiiq language materials located in libraries and archives worldwide. The same can be said for countless other Indigenous languages. As we have illustrated, the diaspora of Indigenous language documentation spreads farther and wider than speakers of their respective language could have imagined. Providing Indigenous language learners with access to these text and audio materials, whether locally or digitally, introduces more language acquisition opportunities for those learners.

Researchers are only just beginning to learn the whereabouts of some of these

⁶ <http://languagearchive.alutiiqmuseum.org/> (Accessed 2022-03-07.)

resources, which is why projects such as *Naken-Natmen* are important – they allow for the repatriation of knowledge taken from Indigenous people. The authors urge readers to create and maintain accurate records of Indigenous languages to support and reinvigorate language revitalization. It is necessary to collaborate with the respective Indigenous community, as Indigenous communities each have their own conventions, protocols, and preferences regarding the documentation and sharing of their language. Documenting language in this way provides access to the language, thereby simplifying and increasing engagement with it. For endangered Indigenous languages to thrive, learners need to be able to access it whenever they desire. This is especially true as the diaspora of Indigenous people expands. Even as Indigenous people move beyond their home communities, they remain a vital cog in the language revitalization process. While Indigenous people within their communities might be able to interact with speakers face-to-face, those who live elsewhere do not typically have that privilege. Digital archives such as *Naken-Natmen* allow learners to hear the Indigenous language being spoken firsthand no matter where they live. Digital language archives allow the issue of language revitalization to grow from a locally resolved issue to a globally addressed issue, and they increase engagement and exposure by removing geographic boundaries. Archives increase access on all fronts: Language materials in collections worldwide are made more accessible, and people throughout the world can engage with these materials, even at a distance from their home community.

8. Conclusion Indigenous language oppression remains an issue that countless Indigenous communities face. To save Native languages threatened by ongoing colonialism, it is imperative that Indigenous communities utilize all tools available. In the Kodiak Alutiiq community, the AMAR and its partners have taken numerous steps to document and preserve Alutiit’stun, the most recent of which has been the achievements of the *Naken-Natmen* project as funded by the National Science Foundation. This project alone has allowed for the preservation of the language in multiple ways. First, the project allowed the AMAR to compile historical audio recordings into an online digital archive (languagearchive.alutiiqmuseum.org). Secondly, the project provided funding to work directly with fluent Alutiit’stun speakers during weekly sessions to learn and discuss the language. Finally, most recently, it has allowed the AMAR to research and compile historical Alutiit’stun text documents from archives around the United States to maximize the learning potential of the language. Language revitalization requires a multifaceted approach to learning; no option must go unexplored. Text documentation from foreign explorers has value in spite of inconsistent spelling and cultural bias; study of archaic language has value even if community members are divided on whether or not to use obsolete language. Studying these parts of a language (and therefore, documenting this language as a researcher so others may study it) creates a larger foundation to build from as a language learner, providing yet another tool to help one along their language-learning journey.

Each of the four text documents studied provided unique learning opportunities that had been overlooked in the past. First, the *Alaska Papers* and *Alphonse Louis*

Pinart Papers by Alphonse Pinart provide invaluable information on Alutiit'stun place names and obsolete language. The manuscript by William Fisher provides exceptional material on Alutiit'stun tool names. Lastly, the dictionary of Alaska Native languages by Nikolai Rezanov allows crucial cross-analysis of archaic and obsolete language that has been replaced with foreign words. Researching these documents has proven to be a valuable aspect of Alutiit'stun revitalization. As we continue to document Alutiit'stun, we urge other communities to do the same: learn from historical texts and keep documenting Indigenous languages in every way possible.

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