

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Alyawarr

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): aly

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): Northern Territory of Queensland, Sandover and Tennant Creek areas. 23/143 degrees

1.4 Brief history:

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

1.6 Ecology (natural environment): bordered by the Coral Sea and the Pacific Ocean, [4]

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: about 500 per village, population 1,450 [1]

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): bunya nuts, yams, fruits, vegetables, seeds [4]

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: small game, seafood [4]

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: stone core hammers, knives, scrapers, axe heads, spears, digging sticks, vessels

2.4 Food storage: had storage vessels [4]

2.5 Sexual division of production: men went out and hunted, women and children gathered things and dug using digging sticks to get most of what they all ate [4]

2.6 Land tenure: had tribal territories [4]

2.7 Ceramics: No evidence.

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: everyone shares equally what they bring in that day [4]

2.9 Food taboos: Put in place only if someone dies. [4]

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? Canoes

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f): 10-12

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): varies depending on age of marriage [4]

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): Old men took young adolescents as their wives. [4]

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: Divorce not seen.

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: polygyny common [3]

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: Men give gifts to their future wife's parents. [4]

4.9 Inheritance patterns: children inherit parent's land based on the birth order [4]

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: Children were largely attached to their mothers for the first years of their lives, and were the center of the camp, raised by the whole village. [4]

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): exogamy [4]

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized? Women were impregnated by a spirit child that was released by the particular ancestor of whatever place she was at the time. [4]

4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows") The location at which a woman realized she was pregnant became the child's totem that they were a part of and associated with [4]

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)? No.

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: Possibly, since the men chose their wives and could have very young wives along with multiple women for their own. [4]

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin) From another tribe. [4]

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? Women enjoyed the company of the husband's other wives, young wives often had younger second husbands later in life, older husbands and having children gave women more power and prestige. Never outmatched by men. [4]

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: yes. Some men had more than one wife with multiple children. [4]

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? The mother's sisters raise the children if the mother dies. [4]

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females

4.22 Evidence for couvades: No evidence.

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older): No distinctions. [4]

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? Very respectful. They had to give gifts to every member of their family whenever they saw them and were constantly making things or looking for possible gifts to give like feathers and bones and such [4]

4.24 Joking relationships? No evidence of this. [4]

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations patrilineal [4]

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Yes [4]

- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? They are named by their parents, but the child's totem also becomes their name as well. It is not unusual to be called by their totem instead of their name. [4]
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?) Men bring women from outside their community to live with them. [4]
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Men arranged marriages. [4]
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: kinship decided whom you could and could not marry. [4]

Warfare/homicide

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: Less than half a dozen in populations of 500 [4]
- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: not much ingroup violent death. Outgroup deaths were also small, but caused by adultery, marriage arrangements, ceremonial difficulties, and sorcery. [4]
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:
- 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): Knew of neighbors but did not associate with them very much. Outside tribes besides immediate neighbors were seen as strange and enemies. Conflicts came from adultery, marriage arrangements, ceremonial difficulties, and sorcery. [4]
- 4.18 Cannibalism? Only exocannibalism when blood vengeance was being sought [6]

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: 500 [4]
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): Nomadic most of the year, coming together once a year for trading, ceremonies, and etc. [4]
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): kinships. Leadership was given to those who had proven their intelligence and commitment to the continuity of the group. [4] Egalitarian diffusion of power among a dozen men. [4]
- 5.4 Post marital residence:
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): no active defense needed because they all believed that their ancestors had given them specific boundaries and were very loyal to it, not desiring to take another tribe's land ever [4]
- 5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): Older men had more power and prestige, and women could also have power in their later years.
- 5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: no evidence.
- 5.8 Village and house organization: villages are based on large groups of people all considered family [4]
- 5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):
- 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?
- 5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: kinships
- 5.12 Trade: Traded with other tribes once a year at a specified time [4]
- 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? No but they had elders and tribe leaders. [4]

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

- 6.0 Time allocation to RCR: Played a part in every day life. All important. [4] People are taught the oral and religious traditions from when they are 10 to when they are middle aged. [4]
- 6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): people were shamans and other times sorcerers. They could heal and practice good magic or sorcerers could also cause bad magic. [6]
- 6.2 Stimulants: no evidence.
- 6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): When someone dies, the people practice "forgetting" which includes memory and name suppression, crying, and ritualized grieving such as self-harm, disposing of personal belongings, and changing residences. These are called "sorry business". [2] At the age of 6, boys were taken by other men to learn the art and ways of hunting. [4] At the onset of puberty at 10 to 12, children were taught the oral history and initiated because pain was to be endured and new things were experienced. [4]
- 6.4 Other rituals: "sorry business" rituals also apply to social death, when someone does not physically die but circumstances make them socially "dead". [2]
- 6.5 Myths (Creation): a long time ago, sleeping beings who were human and animal, woke up and breathed life into humans and the earth, bringing the sun, wind, and rain. There is a sacred Rainbow Snake that brings rain, spirit children, and fertility [4]
- 6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): Games to teach children important things like how to hunt, had music and lots of ceremonial dances and things like that. [4]
- 6.7 Sex differences in RCR: Rituals were often only able to be carried out by men because they were deemed too dangerous for women. [4] Women had their own ceremonies dealing with fertility that men were not allowed to attend. [4]
- 6.8 Missionary effect: No missionary effect noted. [4]
- 6.9 RCR revival: Never revived, never lost it's strength. Everyone lived the way their parents lived and the way their ancestors lived. [4]
- 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: It is believed that the spirits of the dead still inhabit their home country [3] The ancestors were the rocks, trees, and waterholes that they had formed [4] When one dies, the spirit goes back to the source of their sacred totem to become a part of the eternal stream of the one life force and the Dreaming.[4]
- 6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? When someone died you were not allowed to speak their name ever again. [4]
- 6.12 Is there teknonymy? No teknonymy noted.
- 6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.) Ancestor and totem worship. Where your mother became impregnated with you became your totem and you had to go back each year and perform ceremonies to ensure fertility. They

believed that ancestors created them and lived on as part of the earth. [4] Despised sorcery and would use it against people who were thought to have used it on them. [4]

7. Adornment

- 7.1 Body paint: used for religious ceremonies. [5]
- 7.2 Piercings: no significant or special ones [5]
- 7.3 Haircut: no special or significant haircut [5]
- 7.4 Scarification: none. [5]
- 7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): feathers [5]
- 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: painting of the body [5]
- 7.7 Sex differences in adornment: women less flashy and brightly colored than men [5]
- 7.8 Missionary effect: no evidence.
- 7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: not seen.

8. Kinship systems

- 8.1 Sibling classification system: Everyone in the tribes was thought to be related. They had a complicated system of what you could call everyone, such as mother, father, aunt, uncle, sister, etc. [4]
- 8.2 Sororate, levirate: None.
- 8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): none.

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

- Taboo of name suppression [2]
- They believed that the stories of the movements of their ancestors caused fixed boundaries of their homelands, and therefore they had no desire to lust over other territory. [4]
- Everyone was thought to be related in the tribe, so you would call everyone mother, uncle, aunt, etc. Children's mother's sisters were also their mothers, and so on. [4]
- When a grievance took place, when all had cooled down, the elders would supervise and the injured party was allowed to throw spears at the offender, then a dance would take place after and everything would be fixed. [4]

Numbered references

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6. The Tribe, and Intertribal Relations in Australia by Gerald C. Wheeler