

1. Description

- 1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Malak Malak Tribe; Mullukmulluk, Malagmalag, Malak-Malak, Ngolak-Wongo, or Nguluwongga; Daly language family (1)
- 1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): mpb (1)
- 1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): Northern Territory of Australia, Daly River area. (2) Coordinates: 130°35' E x 13°35' S (10)
- 1.4 Brief history: People first inhabited Australia about 50 to 60 thousand years ago. (11) There is much evidence that the Mullukmulluk were the known owners of the area near the Daly River before Europeans set foot on Australia and it was more than enough to make a very strong argument for a land claim, although it was not until the early 1980s (nearly 50 years later) before anyone to paid it any notice. Jesuit missionaries also arrived in 1886. Even though that only lasted about 5 years, other Roman Catholic missions would be established as the years went by. In the early 20th century, the Mullukmulluk merged with the Mdengele tribe as a result of decreasing populations, and both are known collectively now as Mullukmulluk. (5)
- 1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: Jesuit missionaries arrived in 1886 and Roman Catholic mission work continues to this day. Agriculture programs have been sponsored by the Commonwealth Government since 1911 but has found little success with agriculture due to the environment. Most children grow up speaking Kriol. (2) Mission schools responsible for teaching children English as well as getting rid of traditional beliefs and superstitions. (4)
- 1.6 Ecology (natural environment): The average temperatures during the summer are between 23.0 and 34.6°C and during the winter are between 13.2 and 31.4°C. The average annual rainfall is 1484 mm. (2) There are monsoonal rains during the summer months (December to February) and the occasional destructive tropical cyclone. The soil type is mainly sesquioxidic, meaning it contains many clay formations. Eucalypts are the most common tree and the environment is mostly woodlands and some open forests. (3)
- 1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: 9 living speakers as of 1988 (1)

2. Economy

- 2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): water lily (flowers, seeds, stems, and roots), wild rice, and water chestnuts (10)
- 2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: Barramundi, crocodiles, and sharks from the river as well as pigs. (4) Turtles were also a source of food. (5)
- 2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: fish spears (4), spears and spear throwers (6)
- 2.4 Food storage:
- 2.5 Sexual division of production: lots of emphasis is placed on women being nurturers, which translated into gathering food (6), while the men hunted, but most food is obtained by fishing in the river (9)
- 2.6 Land tenure: land is inherited collectively by the group (5)
- 2.7 Ceramics:
- 2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:
- 2.9 Food taboos: certain foods are considered ritually dangerous to initiates at puberty and men and women at certain periods of their lives, although this never applies to "White foods". (6)
- 2.10 Canoes/watercraft?: canoes, used in river for travelling/fishing (4)

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):
- 4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):
- 4.3 Completed family size (m and f):
- 4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):
- 4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):
- 4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:
- 4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:
- 4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:
- 4.9 Inheritance patterns:
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): marriage between close language groups is common and slightly encouraged, but neither endogamy nor exogamy is the rule. (9)
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?
- 4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")
- 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females

- 4.22 Evidence for couvades
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?: between brothers and sisters as well as with in-laws. (6)
- 4.24 Joking relationships?
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: tribal and language affiliation is usually patrilineal, even though the vast majority of aborigines in the Daly River area are bilingual or multilingual and are sometimes affiliated to even two languages. (5)
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules: boys do not directly refer to their sisters once their sisters reach puberty and there are very strict avoidance rules between siblings of opposite genders. (6)
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Yes, though it is less ritualized than initiation at puberty. (9)
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? names are given at birth, but are rarely used for direct address, so nicknames are often used much more freely and are given by an individual's kin or friends based on a personal experience or attribute. Many also take on Western names since there is no taboo in using those as they do not carry the same sacred weight as their names in their native language. (6)
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?) outside community (9)
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Members of the men's and women's cults. (9)
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: Since the men and women have separate cults and since both have different interests and an equal say in arranging marriages, there can be some conflict. This also happens because marriages are often arranged to strengthen alliances with other tribes or as a peace-keeping force between rival groups, so the decision is often one that needs to be strategic in nature. (9)

Warfare/homicide

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:
- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: women's knowledge of secret terms of address of men who have been initiated into the cult as well as other secret knowledge of the men's cult can be punished by death. (6)
- 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): close ceremonial and economic ties with the Madnegele people in part due to a shared enmity with the Brinkens and Moils. The two tribes essentially merged in the last century due to their shared land and history and diminishing populations. (5)
- 4.18 Cannibalism?: no evidence of cannibalism

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): fairly sedentary (7)
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): The "old men" and "old women", considered the wisest, form their own cults that make most of the group's decisions, including arranging marriages. Men's cults and women's cults have their own separate knowledge bases and so make their decisions based on their own particular knowledge. (9)
- 5.4 Post marital residence:
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): boundaries are loosely defined and, although there is enmity with certain other tribes, there is little evidence that they were very warlike or that there was a huge need to actively defend their territory (prior to the arrival of Europeans). (5)
- 5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): After puberty, interactions between brothers and sisters are very formal and very few. Brothers also do not use their sisters' actual names but will refer to them using kinship terms when needed. In-laws names are also never spoken and interaction is also very formal when it happens. Interactions are also very tense and formal between men whose relationship is wife's brother – sister's husband. (6)
- 5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: special lifelong friendship between those who share the same name once the younger once reaches the prescribed age and a gift-giving ritual has taken place. It is also common to hear Mullukmulluk men to verbally abuse each other in a joking manner by calling out to each other using terms such as *Munbur ayoi!* (O, pain in my belly!) or *mudam e!* (O, sore leg!). (6)
- 5.8 Village and house organization:
- 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: Moieties exist and are generally patrilineal. (7) Tribal affiliation, and people can have multiple affiliations due to the frequency of inter-tribal marriage, is also a form of social organization as well as a way to distinguish people since personal names are rarely used. (6)
- 5.12 Trade: Close ties, including trade, with the Madnegele, who merged with the Mullukmulluk in the 20th century. (5)
- 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?: yes, mostly based on age status (6)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

- 6.0 Time allocation to RCR:
- 6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):
- 6.2 Stimulants:

- 6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): The biggest emphasis is placed on puberty and the initiation rites associated with it, although it is less elaborate for girls than it is for boys. There are also no extensive rituals for birth or marriage. The initiation for boys at puberty is marked by four stages (a) a period of isolation, (b) followed by 2-3 days for circumcision, (c) followed by a week to heal and to undergo the ritual washing, (d) and finally a period to reenter their “normal” life. (9) Men in the final stage are referred to as *yunuana*. There is also a simple ritual of gift-giving that happens when a child shares the same name with someone else who is typically older, but only once the child has grown old enough. Prior to this ceremony, the namesakes and their families never directly address each other. After the ceremony the namesakes are supposed to form a close, lifelong bond and friendship. Puberty and marriage also mark a change in social status as well as age status which are different, but closely tied together. There are certain terms for addressing people in different age statuses and social statuses, such as *pulit* or “old man” which is considered an honorary term. (6)
- 6.4 Other rituals:
- 6.5 Myths (Creation): the Dreamtime/Dreaming is seen as the formative period. Some important ancestral beings that are common with other tribes in the area are Yingarna and Ngalyod the Rainbow Serpents, the Wagilag Sisters, the Djang’Kawu, and Barama and Lany’tjung. Many of these ancestral beings are seen as timeless through relics (see below). (7)
- 6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): Painting on the bark of Eucalypts is common. Paintings are generally figurative in nature and are also characterized by X-ray like figures where the skeletons and internal organs of a figure are shown. Red and yellow ochre, black charcoal, and white kaolin or pipeclay are generally used for painting. The red represents the blood of ancestor-beings and white typically represents mourning. Paintings are generally not meant to last and more emphasis is placed on the process of painting rather than the final product. Moiety also determines the artist’s right to use certain designs and patterns. (7) The art is almost always utilitarian and art is seen as something inescapable that comes to people in the form of dreams. (8)
- 6.7 Sex differences in RCR: Men and women have their own separate cults that they are initiated into, and knowledge pertaining to those cults is kept secret from members of the opposite gender. (6) There is also emphasis placed on women as being nurturers of people, land, and relationships and in charge of maintaining harmony in society. (9)
- 6.8 Missionary effect: Many of the traditional rituals have all but disappeared, with the important distinction of rituals at the start of puberty, due to the establishment of the Roman Catholic mission in the area. Much of the population retains much of the Christian theology that they were taught by the missionaries. (9)
- 6.9 RCR revival:
- 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: Most members of the Mullukmulluk tribe have several different names, some which are used more than others. Once a person dies, their name cannot be uttered, and people sharing one of the deceased’s names cannot use that name for an extended period of time which can sometimes be years. (6)
- 6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?
- 6.12 Is there teknonymy?
- 6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.): religion revolves around the idea of the “Dreamtime” and “Dreamings”. Totems are used to represent the ancient Dreamtime and aspects of it. The Dreaming or Dreamtime can be defined as a formative past that is timeless, because the power of the heroic beings that characterized that time still resides in their shades. Shades are generally relics such as paintings, engravings, stones, and various other objects that are passed down. (8) Cults for men and women are also an important part of religious life as well as initiation into them. Men and women are entrusted separately and have distinct responsibilities in passing down knowledge of the Dreamtime in the form of songs, sacred boards, and paint designs among other things. (9) There is a distinction between good magic, such as the image of a pregnant woman to promote fertility, and bad magic or sorcery which is used for retribution and vengeful behavior. (7)

7. Adornment

- 7.1 Body paint: red and yellow ochre as well as white kaolin are used as body paint for different rites and ceremonies. (7)
- 7.2 Piercings:
- 7.3 Haircut:
- 7.4 Scarification: Some evidence for scarification on the chest (5)
- 7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):
- 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:
- 7.7 Sex differences in adornment:
- 7.8 Missionary effect:
- 7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

8. Kinship systems

- 8.1 Sibling classification system:
- 8.2 Sororate, levirate: no evidence of either
- 8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

- most people are multilingual due to intermarriage and lots of interaction between different language groups (3)

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