

for these people to make significant gains in the twin goals of political sovereignty and economic self-sufficiency.

## Aleut

See Alutiiq; Unangan

## Alutiiq

The word Alutiiq (A 'lu t ē k) means "a Pacific Eskimo person"; the plural form is Alutiit. The Alutiiq were a maritime people. The people are also known as Pacific Eskimos, Pacific Yup'ik, South Alaska Inuit, Yuit (with the Yup'ik), or Aleut; however, Aleut is easily confused with the culturally and linguistically separate native people of the Aleutian Islands. The word "Aleut" is of Russian origin.

The self-designation of the Alutiiq people is *Sugpiaq* ("real person"). The three traditional subgroups are Chugachmiut (Prince William Sound), Unegkurmiut (lower Kenai Peninsula), and Qikertarmiut, or Koniagmiut (Kodiak Island). There are many similarities to Unangan culture.

**LOCATION** Alutiit lived and continue to live along coastal southern Alaska, between Prince William Sound and Bristol Bay. Kodiak Island was one of the most densely populated places north of Mexico.

**POPULATION** The aboriginal (mid- to late eighteenth century) population was between 10,000 and 20,000 people. There were about 2,000 Alutiit in 1850 and roughly 5,000 in the 1990s.

**LANGUAGE** Alutiit spoke the Sugcestun, or Suk, dialect of the Pacific Gulf Yup'ik branch of Eskimo, an Eskaleut language.

## Historical Information

**HISTORY** The Alutiiq people had been living in their historic territory for at least 2,000 and perhaps as many as 7,000 years when the Dane Vitus Bering, working for Russia, arrived in 1741. Although he may not have actually encountered any people, contact became regular in the 1760s and 1770s. It was generally resisted by the Alutiiq. The first permanent Russian settlement was established in 1784, on Kodiak Island. By that time British and Spanish seamen had also visited the area.

In part by keeping their children as hostages, Russians soon forced the natives to hunt sea otter pelts and do other work for them. Disease and general oppression soon cut the Alutiiq population dramatically. Many people were acculturated to the Russian religion and customs when the United States gained political control of Alaska in 1867.

At that time there began a renewed push for acculturation in another direction. Children were soon

sent to mission and Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding schools, where they were forced on pain of punishment to accommodate to the U.S. model. Economically, canneries and commercial fishing dominated the region from the late nineteenth century on.

Séveral Alutiiq villages suffered a devastating earthquake and tsunami in 1964. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA, 1971) had a profound influence on the people. The act established 14 formal culture areas, of which 3 fell in Alutiiq territory. In 1989 the *Exxon Valdez* ran aground and spilled nearly 11 million gallons of crude oil in Alutiiq territory, resulting in a tremendous loss of sea life, among other things.

**RELIGION** The people recognized one or several chief deities as well as numerous supernatural beings. Success in hunting required a positive relationship with the spirits of game animals. Human spirits were reincarnated through birth and naming. Trances, as well as certain masks and dolls, allowed contact with the supernatural.

A large variety of dances, ceremonies, and rituals, including masked performances, songs, and feasts, began in early winter. Specific ceremonies included a memorial feast, a ritual to increase the animal population, the Messenger's Feast (a potlatchlike affair that took place between two closely related villages), life-cycle events, the selection of chiefs, and preparation for the whale hunt. Wise men (Kodiak Island) were in charge of most religious ceremonies, although a dance leader might direct ceremonies and instruct children in dances.

Male and female shamans forecast weather and other events, and they cured disease. Berdaches were often shamans as well. Women also acted as healers through bloodletting and herbal cures.

**GOVERNMENT** Despite the existence of 50 or more villages or local groups, there was no strong central government. Most important decisions were taken by consensus agreement of a council. Village leaders were chosen on the basis of merit, although there was a hereditary component. They were expected to earn respect and retained their offices by giving gifts and advice. Some controlled more than one village. Their primary responsibilities were to lead in war and guide subsistence activities. From the nineteenth century on, chiefs (*toyuq*) and secondary chiefs (*sukashiq*) were appointed by a consensus of elders.

**CUSTOMS** Descent was weakly matrilineal. Women generally had relatively high status, although they did not participate in formal governing structures such as councils. Society was divided into ranked classes: noble, commoner, and slave. Slaves

might be acquired through trade or war, especially among the Chugach and the Koniag. High-stakes gambling was a favorite pastime.

Women were secluded in special huts during their menstrual periods and at the birth or death of a child. Seclusion during the initial menstrual period could extend for several months or more. Women's chins were tattooed when they reached puberty. Male transvestites were esteemed and performed the woman's role for life. Some girls were also raised as boys and performed male roles.

Marriage was formalized when gifts were accepted and the man went to live, temporarily, with his wife's family. A woman might have two husbands, although the second would have very low status. Men might also have multiple wives. Divorce and remarriage were possible. Babies' heads were flattened in the cradle, perhaps intentionally for aesthetic purposes. Children were generally raised gently, with no corporal punishment, but toughened with icy plunges.

Corpses were wrapped in seal or sea lion skin and kept in a special death house. High-status people were mummified. Slaves were sometimes killed and buried with a person of high rank. Mourners blackened their faces, cut their hair, and removed themselves from society. Graveside ceremonies went on for a month or more. Pieces of the corpse of a great whale hunter were sometimes cut up and rubbed on arrow points or used as talismans on hunting boats.

**DWELLINGS** Houses were semisubterranean, with planked walls and sod and straw-covered roofs. A common main room also served as kitchen and workshop. Side sleeping rooms, heated with hot rocks, were also used by both sexes for ritual and recreational sweats. Up to 20 people (several families) lived in each house. Winter villages were composed of up to ten or so houses. Some villages had large ceremonial halls (*kashims*). In fishing and other temporary camps, people lived in bark shelters or even under skin boats.

**DIET** Salmon was a staple, although other fish, such as herring, halibut, cod, and eulachon, were also important. Sea mammals, such as whales, porpoises, sea lions, sea otters, and seals, were also key. Seals were hunted in part by the use of decoys and calls. Dead whales were not pulled ashore but were allowed to drift in the hope that they would come back to camp. Whale darts may have been poisoned.

The people also ate sea birds. There was some gathering of shellfish and seaweed as well as greens, roots, and berries. Land mammals, such as caribou, moose, squirrel, mountain goat, and hare, also played a part in the diet.

**KEY TECHNOLOGY** A foot-long slate dart on a five-foot-long shaft, possibly poisoned, was used for

killing whales. A bow and arrow as well as several kinds of darts, spears, clubs, and harpoons sufficed to kill other marine and land mammals. Some land mammals were also snared or trapped. Seals and sea birds were also netted.

Fishing gear included hooks, weirs, harpoons, and rakes. Lines were made of certain algae and/or of sinew. Women wove spruce-root baskets and hats and sewed bags and clothing. Other tools were made of stone and wood. Some iron, probably acquired from shipwrecks, was also used. Lamps burned whale oil and grass. Bladders stretched over hoops served as drums.

**TRADE** The Alutiiq acquired dentalia and slaves from the Northwest Coast. They exported caribou, mountain goats, and marmot parts. Messenger Feasts/potlatches also involved trade.

**NOTABLE ARTS** Woven spruce-root baskets were decorated with grass and fern embroidery. Men carved and painted wooden dance masks.

**TRANSPORTATION** Two-hatch skin kayaks were the main vehicle for transportation, whaling, and sealing. They were made of sealskin stretched over branches. The people also used some dugout canoes, umiaks, and plank toboggans pulled by dogs.

**DRESS** Alutiiq people wore long parkas of fur (squirrel or sea lion) and bird skin, sewn eagle-skin or -intestine rain parkas, and sea lion-, salmon-, or bear-skin boots in cold weather. Men's conical bentwood or woven spruce-root hats, worn at sea, may reflect a Tlingit influence. Men also wore Unangan-style wooden visors.

Women wore labrets and nose pins. Men also wore ornaments, such as sea lion whiskers, in their ears and noses. Other types of ornaments included coral, shell, and bone. Men braided their long hair, whereas women wore it tied up on their heads.

**WAR AND WEAPONS** There was some fighting among Alutiiq groups and between Alutiit and nearby Indian tribes, particularly the Tlingit and Tanaina. Slave raiding was part of that activity. Men were generally killed or tortured, whereas women and children might be taken prisoner as slaves. Surprise attack was the preferred method of fighting. Weapons included slat armor, bow and arrow, and quivers.

#### Contemporary Information

**GOVERNMENT/RESERVATIONS** Five villages, all located on the south shore of the Alaskan Peninsula, fall under the purview of the Bristol Bay Native Corporation. Chignik Bay, 103 native residents, is governed by seven elected representatives to the Chignik Bay Village Council as well as seven elected members of the city council. Chignik Lagoon, 46 native residents, is governed by eight elected representative to

the Chignik Lagoon Village Council. Chignik Lake, 122 native residents, is governed by seven elected representatives to the Chignik Lake Village Council. Ivanof Bay, 33 native residents, is governed by five elected representatives to the Ivanof Bay Village Council. Perryville, 114 native residents, is governed by five representatives to the native village of Perryville Village Tribal Council (Indian Reorganization Act [IRA]). The first four villages are also members of the Lake and Peninsula Borough. Some of these villages also have Unangan residents. Population figures are as of the early 1990s.

Other villages include Afognak, Akhiok, Kaguyak, Karluk, Larsen Bay, Old Harbor, Ouzinkie, and Port Lions (Kodiak Island) and English Bay, Port Graham, and Tatiulek (Kenai Peninsula). Villages are governed by elected tribal councils, some IRA-derived and some structured according to tradition. Towns, or communities within urban centers, are located in Anchorage, Cordova, Kodiak, Seward, and Valdez.

**ECONOMY** The most important sources of income are commercial and subsistence salmon fishing and payments from the Alaska Native Land Fund.

**LEGAL STATUS** Under ANCSA, the Alutiiq people are represented by the Chugach Alaska Corporation, Koniag, Inc., and the Bristol Bay Native Corporation. The many village governments have government-to-government relationships with the United States. Tribal consortia representing village governments contract with the United States for health, education, and social services. These include the Bristol Bay Native Association, Chugachmiut (formerly North Pacific Rim), and the Kodiak Area Native Association.

**DAILY LIFE** Many villages are only accessibly by air or water. Most people are Russian Orthodox, many older people speak Russian (along with English and Alutiiq), and there are considerable other Russian influences. Most village social activities are church related.

Some Alutiit are more identified with the ANCSA corporate entities than as Alutiit. Village concerns include protecting the local fisheries, road construction, and the construction of a boat harbor. Efforts to preserve the native culture include the formation of the Kodiak Alutiiq Dancers, language classes, oral histories, and craft (woodworking and kayak making) projects.

### **Eskimo, Bering Strait**

See Inupiat

### **Eskimo, Kotzebue Sound**

See Inupiat

### **Eskimo, Nunivak**

See Yup'ik

### **Eskimo, Pacific**

See Alutiiq

### **Eskimo, South Alaska**

See Yup'ik

### **Eskimo, Southwest Alaska**

See Yup'ik

### **Eskimo, St. Lawrence Island**

See Yup'ik

### **Eskimo, West Alaska**

See Yup'ik

### **Iglulik**

Iglulik (I 'gl ū lik), a name derived (with their main settlement, Igloodik) from the custom of living in snow houses, or igloos. See also Inuit, Baffinland.

**LOCATION** Traditional Iglulik territory is north of Hudson Bay, including northern Baffin Island, the Melville Peninsula, Southhampton Island, and part of Roes Welcome Sound. It lies within the central Arctic, or Kitikmeot.

**POPULATION** Estimated at 500 in the early nineteenth century, the 1990 Iglulik population was about 2,400.

**LANGUAGE** Igluliks speak a dialect of Inuit-Inupiaq (Inuktitut), a member of the Eskaleut language family.

### **Historical Information**

**HISTORY** The people encountered Scottish whalers early in the nineteenth century. Eventually, Scottish celebrations came to supplant traditional ones in part. By the time American whalers arrived in the 1860s, the Iglulik had acquired whaleboats, guns, iron items, tea, and tobacco. Later in the century, the people became involved with fox trapping and musk ox hunting. They also intermarried with non-natives and acquired high rates of alcoholism and venereal disease.

Regular contact with other Inuit, such as the Netsilik, was established at local trading posts and missions. These arrived in the early twentieth century, as did a permanent presence of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Improved medical care followed these inroads of non-native influence.

The far north took on strategic importance during the Cold War, about the same time that vast mineral reserves became known and technologically

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