

1. Description

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

Society: Javanese

Language: Javanese

Language Family: Austronesia (1)

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): JAV(1)

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

Located on the island of Java, Indonesia. (6-9 degrees South, 105-115 degrees East) (1,2)

1.4 Brief history:

Colonial settlements could have come as early as 3000 B.C. Numerous tribes were formed and engaged in frequent acts of warfare. In the 15th century members of the Muslim faith took control of Java's ports, increasing the Islam faith's reach. The island was conquered by the Dutch in the 1830s and lasted until 1949, after Japanese control throughout World War II and 4 more years of revolutionary war. (2,3)

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

A small portion of the population is Roman Catholic, most probably coming from missionary influences. The island of Java is part of the country of Indonesia. The population is separated into two of people-the laborers and the government. The government workers live in the cities, and the laborers live either in the city working industrial jobs or in rural communities primarily farming crops or fishing for daily income. Multiple sources indicate a growing number of poverty stricken citizens within the country, many of which are former landowners. (2,3)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

Java is a tropical environment, with numerous mountains and plateaus. The island has a 2 season weather pattern. (3)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density

The Javanese are primarily located on the island of Java, but have small groups in Papua, Sulawesi, Maluku, Kalimantan, and Sumatra. (1)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

Staple carbohydrate: Rice (2)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

Javanese primarily eat fish as a source of protein but also eat soybeans and shrimp. Other food sources include vegetables, peanut sauce and sambel, a sauce derived from chili. (2)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

2.4 Food storage:

Info not available on storage, but according to a source (2), prepared meals are available for purchase by vendors who travel around the village, and may take part in a "lesehan" (late night dining) on mats outside vendors.

2.5 Sexual division of production:

Information on the subject is limited, but source 3 describes inter-communal markets being operated by women of different villages.

2.6 Land tenure:

In tradition land was owned by the community, but in modern times it is owned by the village, national government or private citizens (plantation owners). Village land is made available for public services such as roads, schools, etc. (3)

2.7 Ceramics:

Not specified

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

Not specified

2.9 Food taboos:

Not specified.

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?:

Although no information is presented outright, it can be safely presumed that fishing vessels are used based upon their patterns of fishing in coastal regions (3)

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):

No information presented, although a traditional meal called the slametan is held in honor of the girl's first menstruation.

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

No information available

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

No information available

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

- No information available.*
- 4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):
No information available.
- 4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:
Divorce rates are high in villages, and are performed by Muslim custom. (2,3)
- 4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:
Percentage unavailable, but polygyny does exist in the aristocratic society and in some lower class situations (3)
- 4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:
A formal gift is given from the groom to the bride's family. (3)
- 4.9 Inheritance patterns:
"Dwellings and their surrounding garden land are inherited by a married daughter or granddaughter after a period of coresidence. Fruit trees, domestic animals, and cultivable land are inherited equally by all the children, while heirlooms are usually inherited by a son." (3)
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:
Mothers are the primary caregivers-fathers become distant to offspring at an early age. Parents are to correct offspring as much as possible, but it is never permissible to reverse roles. (2)
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:
No information on homosexuality was presented.
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):
Marriage is frowned upon between members of the same immediate family, first and/or second cousins. Marriage within a village, however, is strongly encouraged. (3)
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?
No evidence of paternity partible was presented.
- 4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")
No evidence found.
- 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?
No information available.
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape
No information available.
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)
See 4.12.
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?
No evidence of sexual freedoms observed.
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring
No information available.
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?
Although no information is presented on paternity in the event of the mother's death, it is noted that older siblings are often in charge of giving care to the younger siblings. (3)
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females
Not specified
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades
No evidence presented.
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)
No information found.
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?
See 4.10
- 4.24 Joking relationships?
Confrontations between individuals are avoided as much as possible. A large emphasis is placed on being solemn and reserved when interacting with others (2)
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations
"Descent is bilateral and the basic kin group is the nuclear family (kulawarga). Two kindredlike groups are recognized by the Javanese. One is the golongan, an informal bilateral group whose members usually reside in the same village and who participate together in various ceremonies and celebrations. The alur waris, the second kindredlike group, is a more formal unit involved in caring for the graves of ancestors." (3)
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules
There are no rules per se, but it is frowned upon within the society. However, individuals wishing to circumvent this can perform certain rituals to protect the marriage. (3)
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?
The formal marriage is performed according to Islamic custom. There is also a festive dance and dinner, and a formal 5 day "honeymooning" period where the groom is allowed to take the bride away. An interesting custom is that the family of the bride visits the graves of relatives to seek approval of the marriage. (2,3)
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?

No information on name changing, although when addressing one another there is no surname. Individuals are addressed by a single name. (2)

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)

Marriage is preferentially kept within the village or close communities.

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?

Arranged marriages, although rare, do still occur, and are arranged by parents. (2)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

No evidence seen over conflicts of interest.

Warfare/homicide

Author's note: Javanese societies are known for their suppression of feelings and tolerance of others. Direct confrontations are avoided, and a contrary practice of shunning (3) is accepted instead. Their suppression of emotions is quite impressive. (2,3,4)

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

No statistics available.

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

No information available.

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

No information available.

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):

No information available.

4.18 Cannibalism?

No evidence of cannibalism.

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

Three quarters of the residents live in a rural setting, typically small towns and villages. However, no information on average village size was available.

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

There is no evidence suggesting that villages moved based on seasonality, given it is a wet/dry season nation.

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):

"Indonesia is an independent republic and the head of state is President Suharto. The capital of Indonesia is Jakarta and the ministries of the national government are located there. The ministries have branches at various levels from which they administer services. There are three provinces (propinsi) in Java. In addition, the Special Region of Jogjakarta, or Daerah Istimewa Jogjakarta, has provincial status. There are five residencies (karésidènen) in each province. Each residency contains four or five districts (kawédanan) and each district has four or five subdistricts (katjamatan). There are ten to twenty village complexes (kalurahan in Javanese, desa in Indonesian) in each subdistrict. The smallest unit of administration is the dukuhan and each kalurahan contains two to ten of them. Some dukuhan contain a number of smaller villages or hamlets also called desa. The kalurahan or desa is headed by an official called a lurah and the dukuhan is headed by a kamitua." (3-Political Organization)

5.4 Post marital residence:

After marriage, the couple will preferably take residence in their own home. However, if circumstances are such that this is impossible, the couple will take shelter with the parents of the wife. (2)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

Javanese are now a part of Indonesia, and their territories are defined by the country's government.

5.6 Social interaction divisions? (age and sex):

Though not age or sex specific, the Javanese social interactions are based upon social status. You have two different forms of speaking to someone depending upon how they compare to you in rank. If you are of equal or greater standing than your conversation partner, you speak in a form known as Nikko. When speaking to an elder or someone of greater social stature, you speak to them in Kromo. You also speak in Kromo if you do not know the status of the individual you are speaking to. (2)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

No information available.

5.8 Village and house organization:

Houses in villages are typically made of bamboo. They are large, single roomed houses that are divided into rooms by removable partitions. The roofs are made of palm leaves or roofing tiles. Floors are earthen. (2) In the city, houses are typically made of brick, often with the higher ranking individuals having an open pavilion. (3)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

No indication of specialized structures, however see 2.6 for details on community land.

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

No information available.

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:

Modern classes consist of the peasants and the government officials, but in their history nobility such as princes and kings ruled over villages and cities. In this time there were merchants in coastal towns as well. During colonization, new classes emerged there were also non-peasant workers and a new class called the prijaji, which were white collar government positions. (3)

5.12 Trade:

Limited information available. Intervillage markets are present, as well as small a small industry including silverwork, weaving, and native cigarettes. Much of the international trade is handled by foreigners of Asian descent. (3)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

There is a traditional hierarchy: the kings, individuals in the religious community referred to as the 'brahmana' who also teach traditions to the youth of the village, the 'satrya' who provide a governing body and protection of the village/city, the traders and then the artisans. Each group is viewed as distinct and not necessarily higher or lower than one another, but it is generally viewed as inappropriate for a satrya to act as though he were an artisan, etc. (4)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

The Javanese celebrate Islamic holidays such as Ramadan and the Islamic New Year and the birthday of Mohammad. Javanese are primarily Muslim, but the Islamic tradition is blended with (or supplemental to) their traditional religions. (2,4)

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

Doctors are present in urban settings, but in villages healing is reserved to the Dunkun, a magic healer. The dunkun are an important part of Javanese tradition. (3)

6.2 Stimulants:

Dunkuns use magic spells and herbs to cure disease and infections (3), some of which very well could be natural stimulants and/or narcotics. Documented uses were not available.

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

Birth is celebrated after 35 days with a special meal with the family. Males age 6-12 are subject to traditional circumcision, and as noted in 4.1, after the first menstruation by a female a special dinner is held. After death, the body is buried quickly with a small procession consisting of family members. Children of the deceased hold slametans are held on the third, seventh, fortieth, one hundredth and one thousandth day after the passing. Family members maintain a spiritual connection with the dead long after they are deceased. (2,3)

6.4 Other rituals:

6.5 Myths (Creation):

There are traditional myths that are still passed down from generation to generation about the war between the Kurawa and the Pendawa clans that were the ancestors of the Javanese kings. The story is still told today by storytellers and shadow puppets described below. (4)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

Traditional music and dance is still active throughout the country, but much of the country prefers pop culture for entertainment. Traditional entertainment includes shadow puppets, where small puppets are used to perform scenes from a story in front of a backdrop with a light shining, creating shadow images behind the puppets. Stories about moral dilemmas facing ancient characters are popular stories, such as someone acting out of their class or thinking out of their class, or killing their father-in-law to save a marriage in the eyes of tradition. (2,3,4)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

No information available

6.8 Missionary effect:

Javanese children are sent to Catholic schools for the advanced education, as a way to advance within their own culture. Western education is highly valued, and the catholic schools provide this service. It is permissible with the understanding that the children will not be converted to Catholicism. (4)

6.9 RCR revival:

No information available.

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

Afterlife beliefs most likely follow the Islamic belief, but no other information was present as far as traditional views are concerned.

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

No information available.

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

No information available.

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)

Modern Javanese is primarily Islamic with small sects of traditionalists and Christians. However, Islam and Christianity are adopted to the Javanese way of life. Certain Islamic customs are not adhered to, as well as Christian customs. The Javanese simply absorb the best of the present religions and blend them with their traditional mythology. It was noted that they may not agree with Islam or Christianity, but they do see some truth to the teachings. (4)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

Not specified

7.2 Piercings:

Not specified

7.3 Haircut:

Not specified

7.4 Scarification:

Not specified

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):

Not specified

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

“Ceremonial clothing for men includes a sarong, high-collared shirt, jacket, and a blangkon, a head cloth wrapped to resemble a skullcap. Women wear the sarong, kebaya (long-sleeved blouse), and selendang (sash over the shoulder). The woman's hairstyle is called sanggul (long hair in a thick, flat bun at the back—now achieved with a wig addition). Handbags are always worn. Traditional dance costumes and wedding attire leave the chest bare for men and the shoulders bare for women.” (2-Clothing)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

Both men and women will wear a sarong. (2)

7.8 Missionary effect:

No effects were present in any sources of altered adornments

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

Not specified

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

Not specified

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

Not specified

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

A great amount of emphasis in this society is placed on being very somber, very reserved when dealing with others. As an individual you are taught to keep your emotions at bay and not “blurt out” anything that may be offensive or to revealing. In the culture, they identify themselves as a culture that is learned, not inherited. It is especially evident when they speak of their young as “not yet Javanese.” It is very striking how important to this culture it is to be civil in personal affairs. It seems that they are a very peaceful, very quiet culture. They are also quite tolerant of other beliefs, such as the Christian citizens living amongst a very Islamic dominated landscape. (4)

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