

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family: Classic Taino, Arawak

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

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): Hispaniola and eastern Cuba, Puerto Rico (3,4)

1.4 Brief history: the ancestry of the Classic Tainos can be traced back into prehistory through a Chican Ostionoid subseries p.34. They emerged late in the first millennium A.D. and reached maturity around 1200. They were the first group to meet Columbus and were still evolving when he arrived. By 1524 they had ceased to be a separate population because of the effects of Columbus and missionaries.

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: Mixed with the Spaniards. Although the Tainos are extinct their biology still lives on in many Puerto Rican, Dominicans, and Cubans (2)

1.6 Ecology: their area was ruled by nature. A place that was almost completely a rain forest from shore to shore. Filled with yagrumos, alélis, ceibas, orchids, wild mushrooms - some over 6 feet wide, over 100 species of palm trees, bamboo, elephant ear leaves of the yautía, giant philodendron, giant ferns, mamey and guava trees. A place where wildlife such as cangrejos, manatees, giant sea turtles, iguanas, cotorras, and carpinteros lived undisturbed by man. (4)

Agriculture: conuco-heaped up mounds of earth in permanent fields to cultivate root crops in the soft soil. They were three feet high and about nine feet round, arranged in rows. (2,3)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home ranges size, density: population 100, 000 to more than 1,000,000 (p.7), mean village size: 1,500 people, 35 houses (3)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): cassava and sweet potato (3,2)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: hutia (small rodent), iguana, lizards, fish, turtles, manatees, and dogs (2,3)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns? throwing spears/ atlatl, javelin, clubs (3)

2.4 Food storage: used baskets that would hang from walls or roofs (3)

2.5 Sexual division of production: men planted the cassava and the women harvested

2.6 Land tenure: women heap up mounds (Conucos) (3)

2.7 Ceramics: white on red pottery (3)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

2.9 Food taboos:

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? Large canoes made from cedar cottonwood. Chief had largest canoe that was painted. (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):

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: Only the chiefs (1,2)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry? temporarily serve his prospective bride's family to compensate for her loss. A chief could make payments of goods instead (3,4)

4.9 Inheritance patterns: matrilineal (1,3)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: mentions of sodomy and lechery (2)

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

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: no

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin): cross cousin (1)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? Sexual liberation before marriage and it ceased for women after (2,1)

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?

4.24 Joking relationships?

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: traced lineage through the female line because of the Taino myth of an immortal being who has a mother with five names and a maternal uncle (1,2)

- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules: yes
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Yes, in the dance courts (3)
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?): obtained wives in or near own village, unless for political purpose (3)
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Chiefs sometimes arranged long-distance marriages for political purposes (4)
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

Warfare/homicide

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:
- 4.15 Out-group vs. in-group cause of violent death: in-group fights to avenge murders, resolve disputes over hunting and fishing rights, and to force a chief to deliver the woman after receiving the bride dowry. (2) Out-group fighting with Island-Caribe raids (3,4)
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: Territory (3)
- 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): Different Taínos and the Caribs. Mixed with the Spaniards around 1500 (2,3,4)
- 4.18 Cannibalism?

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: 35 houses, 1,500 people (3)
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): no permanent villages (3)
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): chiefs (cacique) loosely organized into district chiefdoms. Each village was ruled a district chief and the district chiefdoms were in turn grouped into regional chiefdoms, which was headed by the most prominent district chief (3)
- 5.4 Post marital residence: Mother's brother's village, shift from matrilocal to avunculocal residence patterns because of internal warfare. (1)
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): yes (1)
- 5.6 Social interaction divisions? (age and sex):
- 5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:
- 5.8 Village and house organization: irregularly arranged around a central plaza. Chief's home was better than the rest and on the plaza
- 5.9 Specialized village structures (men's' houses): Dance courts-structures of embankments of earth and or stone slabs decorated with engravings of zemis (3)
Ball courts (batey)-rectangular court (3,4)
- 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? Hammocks made of corgage, but some chiefs slept on wooden platforms (3)
- 5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc.: social structure was as follows: Nitaínos were the noblemen and were the warriors, craftsmen & artisans. Naborias were the laborers and were the lower class. Caciques (chiefs) were inherited positions and came from the Nitaíno class. Bohikes (shamans) were from a lineage of bohikes. The social structure was matrilineal - the mother carried the lineage. It is not clear if Nitaínos were born into or earned their social class. The Nitaínos ruled over the naborias. The Naborias were like serfs. Naborias fished, hunted, and worked the conucos, and generally did the hard labor. (4)
- 5.12 Trade: yes: Daily visits between Classic Tainos of Puerto Rico and Hispaniola, South American trade-guanín (ornaments made of a copper and old alloy) (3)
- 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? Villagers divided into two classes nitaíno and naboria (nobility and commoners) (3)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

- 6 Time allocation to RCR: Allocated a lot of time to rituals and cleaning. This is one of the reason the Spaniards thought they were lazy (2).
- 6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): bohuti (shamans)-cured sick on demand by communicating with his zemis to discover the disease of the other (3)
- 6.2 Stimulants: tobacco was smoked for pleasure (3), cohoba (snuff) made from crushing seeds of the piptadenia tree p.14
- 6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): Death ritual of a chief-when a chief would die one or two of this wives would be buried with him as well as his most prized possessions (3,4,2)
Seasonal ritual: whole village paid homage to the chief's zemis once a year-the ceremony began with a procession of villager wearing ornaments, carrying baskets of cassava bread and sing songs about the zemis. Men would purify themselves my vomiting and then the woman brought the bread. Dancing and singing by all to praise the zemis, former chiefs and offer prayers of prosperity. At the end the priest would break the bread into pieces to give to the head of each family. They were preserved all year for protection p.14 p. 455
- 6.4 Other rituals: flatten the forehead by binding a hard object against it in childhood for fashion purposes (2,3)
Before communication with their zemis: purification by fasting or by inserting a stick in their throat to cause vomiting. Then took cohoba (snuff) in front of the zemi by inhaling it through a fork tube. It would cause hallucinations, which is how the zemi made know his or her will (2, 3)
- 6.5 Myths (Creation): yes (3)
- 6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): had local artist-woodworkers, potters, weavers: of cotton, bone, stone, and shell carvings (3)
- 6.7 Sex differences in RCR: They normally had different roles in ceremonies. (See above)
- 6.8 Missionary effect:

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: Used bones or other pieces of the dead to create zemis that were thought to have power and would be passed down to generations (3)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.): Centered on the worship of deities known as zemis. Zemis were representations of the lineage's ancestors that were passed through the female line. p.618 Yúcahu the lord of cassava and the sea and Atabey, his mother, the goddess of fresh water and human fertility were the two supreme deities. Also, had lesser zemis of ancestor spirits and spirits that live in the landscape (3). People had up to ten zemis. They communicated with the zemis by purification and hallucination from taking snuff in front of the zemis. (2)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: red before ceremonies or men going to war (3,4)

7.2 Piercings: ears and nasal septa pierced for the insertion of feathers, plugs (3,4)

7.3 Haircut: truffs-hair the middle of the head was shaved (3)

7.4 Scarification: no

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): Chiefs wore guaníns, headdresses, guaízas (pendants in the form of carved human masks)(3). All has waists and necks decorated with belts and necklaces (3)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: yes

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: yes

7.8 Missionary effect: Began to mix with the Spaniards, assimilate into Spanish culture-a cause of extinction (2,3).

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: revival of art, Bernardo Vega-Neo-Taino art (2)

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

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

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

English terms that originated among the Tainos: barbecue, cannibal, hurricane and savanna

Men and women could be chiefs (2)

Tribes we naked accept married women who wore short skirts called naguas (2)

Tainos believed that a beautiful person had a backwardly inclining forehead. To create this every mother compressed the head of her child between two tablets of wood or her own hands (2,3)

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* The Taino tribes are split up into different regions and have different traits, I focused only on the Classic Tainos that lived in Hispaniola, Puerto Rico and in a bit of Eastern Cuba