

1. Description Bobangi

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: also known as Bayansi, Bubangi, Dzama, Lobobangi, Rebu; Bantu language family

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): ISO 639-3: bni

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): Latitude : -4.189, Longitude : 15.439 (2, googlemaps.com)

1.4 Brief history: Trade was important; upriver, they “traded ivory, slaves, camwood, fish, and pottery.” Downriver, they traded “cloth, brass wire, guns, powder, salt and crockery”. The Bobangi were very involved in the slave and ivory trades. (1)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: The Bobangi were very powerful due their involvement in the slave trade. If anyone was influencing anyone, the Bobangi were influencing others. (1) Missionaries did come in and attempt to shut down the slave trade, which the Bobangi were power-houses in. (4)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment): Wet lowlands which cause the area to be swampy. They live on the river.(4)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: As of the nineteenth century, the Bobangi are very spread out along the Ubangi and Zaire rivers. (4)

2. Economy: The Bobangi, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, took advantage of the slave trade and became major exporters. They seized opportunity when Europeans began coming in and became major traders with them. (4)

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): Cassava. (4)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: A great number of fish is eaten. (4)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: The ethnographies made mention only of the Bobangi using ‘modern’ technology, such as guns. (1, 2, 4)

2.4 Food storage: Cavassa, when ripe, “can be left in the field for over a year without spoiling”, so Bobangi harvest according to demand. Cavassa was also but in baskets for storage, or dried and soaked in water later to consume. (4)

2.5 Sexual division of production: Women take care of the cultivation and preparation of the cavassa into bread. “the role of men varied according to the demands of the environment.” Women also sold any surplus from their farming. Also, while men fish, women would cultivate salt. (4)

2.6 Land tenure: The land was owned by small farmers. “Women were the primary cultivators” (4)

2.7 Ceramics: A pottery style, called mpoto li Bobangi, came from the Bobangi. The women made the pottery. (2)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: The Bobangi sell as much food as they can when they have excess after feeding their families (4)

2.9 Food taboos: Nothing was mentioned in any of the sources. N/A

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? Because the Bobangi live on the river and in swampy areas, canoes are very important. (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): There are many wives (one example gave 8 wives) and a few kids (the same example had 7 kids). (1)

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): Long spaces between births. There are very few children born. Partly due to women-slaves not wanting to have their owner's children. (2)

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: There was no mention of divorce, only of marrying more wives (4)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: Polygynous. An example man has 30 wives. (2)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: There is bridewealth among the Bobangi for the purpose of "allocating rights over children" (4, 177)

4.9 Inheritance patterns: Through the father (4)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: Children were considered a form of wealth. Control over them was fought over. While the father was responsible for them, the wife's family could try to gain

control over them. (4)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: There was no mention of homosexual activities. N/A

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): Marriage often exogamous to promote trading network (2)

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized? There was no mention of partible paternity in any of the ethnographies N/A

4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows") receptacle in which the fetus grows (4)

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)? There was no mention of this conception, so it must not be thought of. N/A

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: There are slave women who are forced into marriage with men from all ranks (including slaves) (4)

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin): Marriages are based on wealth and how much you can gain from marrying a specific person (4)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? There are slave women who are forced into marriage with men from all ranks (including slaves) (4)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: If a man wanted a woman to marry him, he would give her and her family gifts to convince her to marry him. (4)

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? Since the marriages are polygynous, the other wives help raise the children. Children are generally the responsibility of the father, though there are cases where the wife's family takes control of the children (4)

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females: $162/222 = 0.7297$ (4)

4.22 Evidence for couvades? There was no mention of this in any of the sources. N/A

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older): There is never a direct statement, but it is generally understood from the readings that children are only seen as having one father. (4)

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? Close kin is respected. There was mention of not even knowing who one's grandparents are. (4)

4.24 Joking relationships? There was no mention of joking relationships in any of the ethnographies N/A

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations:

4.26 Incest avoidance rules? Marriage generally occurs outside of a village. (4)

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? There is a lot of gift-giving and present bequeathing leading up to a marriage. (4)

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?) : Marriage is usually outside of a village since villages are kin-based. (4)

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Often times, female slaves are forced into marriage. (4)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: None of the ethnographies mention anything about this. N/A

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: Traders not associated with the Bobangi trading network could be killed. (2)

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: Intrusion of traders not associated with the Bobangi trading network (2)

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): Through blood ties and trading ties, many outside groups were considered friends (2)

4.18 Cannibalism? There was no mention of cannibalism in any of the sources. N/A

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: Very small. The Bobangi are very low in numbers (2) and there are multiple villages. (4)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): The Bobangi are farmers, and generally stay rather sedentary. (4)

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): The Bobangi had chiefs for each of their clans. (4) There were also status classes that included slaves. Going from one class to another was often and easily done. (4)

5.4 Post marital residence: "Each young person had a broad choice of where to live when he reached adulthood: his mother's village, his father's village, his uncles' villages, with other relatives, with a

patron in a strange village, or in a new village of his own" (4, 119)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): Military defence of territory (2)

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): Men and women have very different jobs to do during the day. (4)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: There are circumstances where outsiders can become a 'Bobangi' by getting in on the slave trading business. (4)

5.8 Village and house organization: Villages consist of "a core group of brothers, their children, and various affiliated members such as nieces, nephews, in-laws, slaves, and clients who had attached themselves to the core group for one reason or another" (4, p119) There is community style housing. (1)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses): There was no mention of specific

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: The Bobangi organise themselves into different kin-based villages (4)

5.12 Trade: Huge involvement in the trade industry. Upriver, they "traded ivory, slaves, camwood, fish, and pottery." Downriver, they traded "cloth, brass wire, guns, powder, salt and crockery". The Bobangi were very involved in the slave and ivory trades. (1)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? There were status classes that included slaves. Going from one class to another was often and easily done. (4)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR: Not a lot. The Bobangi spend most time and effort in the slave trade. (4)

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

6.2 Stimulants: There is brief mention of tobacco use (4)

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): Funerals of high status individuals often included the burial of slaves. (4)

6.4 Other rituals: Tooth chipping comes along with a ritual. (1)

6.5 Myths (Creation): Common myths among the Bobangi include "Two Brothers", "Pelepele and the Tortoise, and Mompana and His Four Wives."

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): There are several games that the Bobangi play; they include imitative games, athletic games, guessing games, and chance games.(1)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

6.8 Missionary effect: The missionaries brought some traditions, but influence was minimal (4)

6.9 RCR revival: N/A

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

6.12 Is there teknonymy? There was no mention of this, so probably not. N/A

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

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: None (1)

7.2 Piercings: Ear piercings (1)

7.3 Haircut: Men have short hair cuts, women longer (1)

7.4 Scarification: on the forehead (1)

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): Women wear heavy neck rings (1)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: No mention in any of the ethnographies N/A

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: Men often have hook-shaped teeth due to chipping. (1)

7.8 Missionary effect: Missionaries seem only to have effected slave trade (1, 2, 4)

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: There seems to be no mention of this. N/A

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: Siblings from the same father are counted as siblings (4)

8.2 Sororate, levirate: This may be the case if he wishes to marry sisters. There are no levirate tendencies. (4)

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

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Numbered references

1. Starr, Fredrick. "Google Books." Google Books. Printed for the Author by the Lakeside Press, 1912, 7 July 2007. Web. 27 Feb. 2012. <<http://books.google.com/books?hl=en>>.

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3. Maho, Jouni F. "The Bantu Bibliography Suppliment." 16 Oct. 2011. Web. 2 Feb. 2012.

4. Harms, Robert W. River of Wealth, River of Sorrow: The Central Zaire Basin in the Era of the Slave and Ivory Trade, 1500-1891. New Haven: Yale UP, 1981. Print.