

## 1. Description

- 1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Baloi, Loi (or Baato, Boloi, Rebu), Democratic Republic of Congo (1)
- 1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): ISO 639-3: biz (1)
- 1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): .50° S, 17.90° E
- 1.4 Brief history: The Loi people had begun to live by the Congo River around the tenth century, bringing with them some Indonesian crops to the rainforest area of the Congo, which previously had little naturally growing crops (3p183). In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, European explorers came to the area and the Belgians colonized the Loi people as well as the other tribes in the area (6p11). “The Belgian government estimated that during the Congo conquest between 1889 and 1908 roughly half the African population had been killed, either by force of arms or through starvation and malnutrition” (3p350-351).
- 1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: From 1840-72 “Scottish explorer David Livingstone [explored] the Congo River and surrounding area” (7). In 1878 “King Leopold II of Belgium [made] plans for colonization of Congo. He [commissioned] former journalist Henry Morton Stanley to ink treaties with local chiefs” (7). Due to the influence of the Belgium empire, the language of the Democratic Republic of Congo is French, including the area where the Baloi people live (8). The Belgians also changed the system of chiefs as rulers with a council of elders to one of direct power from the Belgian government (6p21). When the Arabs journeyed to central Africa, they brought yams and bananas to the area, which are now very important crops in Africa (4p222).
- 1.6 Ecology (natural environment): The Loi people live in the part the Ngiri Reserve in Equateur which contains the Congo River and the Ngiri River. “The reserve is mostly covered by swamp forest, and contains many streams and rivers” and it also contains “marshy grassland-savanna” (9).
- 1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: The population size is roughly 20,000 people (1). “The Equatorial Bantu reside in compact settlements consisting of two rows of rectangular houses along either side of a village street or... of a single row along the shore” (4p281).

## 2. Economy

- 2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): Yams, corn, rice, plantains, bananas, tubers, cassava, and sorghum (5).
- 2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: Peanuts (5) and fish (4p281).
- 2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: “In 1556 an English ship captain wrote of the fine iron work... listing ‘spears, fish-hooks, farming tools, and swords’” (3p152).
- 2.4 Food storage: Not found.
- 2.5 Sexual division of production: “Men hunt, but women commonly do some of the fishing... Men clear the land, but leave all other agricultural work to the women” (4p281).
- 2.6 Land tenure: Not found.
- 2.7 Ceramics: They “were producing sculptures in bronze and clay. Surviving sculptures from this pre-European period portray spiritual themes” (3p152).
- 2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: Not found.
- 2.9 Food taboos: Not found.
- 2.10 Canoes/watercraft? Fishing was important in Loi society. “Fishing and boat trade rival agriculture... in the economies of most tribes living along the larger rivers” (4p281).

## 3. Anthropometry

- 3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): “Tall, broad-shouldered, finely built men” (2p28).
- 3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): Not found.

## 4. Life History, mating, marriage

- 4.1 Age at menarche (f): Not found.
- 4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): Not found.
- 4.3 Completed family size (m and f): Not found.
- 4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): Not found.
- 4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): Not found.
- 4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: The exact proportion was not found but “matrimonial cases are settled before a court” (2p263).
- 4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: A percentage wasn’t found but polygyny is practiced amongst the Loi (4p282).
- 4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: “Bride-price constitutes the prevailing mode of obtaining a wife” (4p282).
- 4.9 Inheritance patterns: “Descent, inheritance, and succession follow the patrilineal principle” (4p282).
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: Not found.
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: Not found.
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): “Exogamous patrisibs are divided into lineages, without exhibiting a truly segmentary structure, and are localized as clan-communities” (4p282).
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized? Not found.
- 4.14 What is the belief of the mother’s role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”): Not found.
- 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)? Not found.
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: All people suspected of a crime must go before a court and if they plead innocent must pass a injury-inflicting test without being harmed to prove their innocence (2p265).

- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin): Spouses must be from a different clan, intermarriage between cousins is not allowed (4p282).
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? The females do not enjoy sexual freedoms, they must remain faithful to their spouses (4p282). Adultery is “a capital crime” and “the wife is frequently let off with a warning the first time, but for a second offense is either killed or divorced and sent back to her relatives, who in such a case must return whatever present was made at the marriage” (2p265).
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: Not found.
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? Not found.
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females: Not found.
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades: Not found.
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older): Not found.
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? Not found.
- 4.24 Joking relationships? Not found.
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: “Descent, inheritance, and succession follow the patrilineal principle” (4p282).
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules: The Loi “forbid unions with any first cousins and insist upon local exogamy” (4p282).
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Before a couple gets married, the woman has to go and train to become a wife. She must learn how to cook, make medicines, keep house, and farm. They usually knew how to do it beforehand but it’s symbolical (2p126).
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? Not found.
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?) Since it’s a patrilocal community, the males get wives from outside of the clan to avoid incest (4p282).
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Clans “often arrange marriages by exchanging sisters” (4p282).
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: Not found, marriages are usually arranged to avoid conflict (4p282).

### **Warfare/homicide**

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: There was not much warfare, the Loi people tended to be docile traders and farmers (3p152).
- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: Not found.
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: In-group killing only occurred when a person was found guilty of a severe crime (2p265). Out-group killing was not found.
- 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): The Loi people would often trade with neighboring societies to get other resources that they needed in exchange for fishing tools, boats, and crops (3p152).
- 4.18 Cannibalism? “Human flesh replaces animal meat, for the sources specifically report the eating of slain and captive enemies” (4p281).

### **5. Socio-Political organization and interaction**

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: Not found. However extended families did tend to live together under one roof.
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): The Loi stay in one place due to their ties to the land with fishing and agriculture (4p281).
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): There is not much of “an elaborate political structure... and observe no significant caste or class distinctions except for slavery” (4p282).
- 5.4 Post marital residence: “The household tends to be... a large extended family” (4p282).
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): The Loi people were not known for their physicality. There are many rivers nearby that act as borders to people that do not have the means to cross them.
- 5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): Not found.
- 5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: Not found.
- 5.8 Village and house organization: The village consists of two rows of rectangular houses along either side of a village street or ... of a single row along the shore... most villages have at least one men’s house, located in the middle of the street or at one end, and in some cases there is one at each end” (4p281).
- 5.9 Specialized village structures (mens’ houses): “Most villages have at least one men’s house, located in the middle of the street or at one end, and in some cases there is one at each end” (4p281).
- 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? Not found.
- 5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: The elders are respected amongst the group, the Loi people are patrilineal so they trade women with other clans to ensure non-incestual offspring in the clans (4p282).
- 5.12 Trade: There was “fishing and boat trade” (4p280).
- 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? They “observe no significant caste or clas distinctions except slavery” (4p282).

### **6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)**

- 6.0 Time allocation to RCR: Not found.
- 6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): One type of medicine amongst the Loi was “to make a cut and rub in juice of a herb, or some other form of ‘medicine’” (2p39).
- 6.2 Stimulants: Not found.
- 6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): Circumcision is practiced upon birth of a boy (4p282).
- 6.4 Other rituals: Not found.
- 6.5 Myths (Creation): There is one supreme creator recognized in their religion (3p152).

- 6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): “Professional actors and musicians would travel from town to town performing plays based on popular moral and religious themes” (2p154).
- 6.7 Sex differences in RCR: not found.
- 6.8 Missionary effect: “Brer Rabbit and other tales that were born by slaves from the rain forests... were gradually added to the folk literature” (2p154). The clan also ended up wearing simple clothers, but moreso than they previously had after the European conquistadors came to Africa (2p45). Witch-craft was also banned after the missionaries came over, people would be publicly killed for practicing it (2p266).
- 6.9 RCR revival: Not found.
- 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: The spirits of the dead ancestors would be worshipped and shrines were made in their honor (3p152).
- 6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? Not found.
- 6.12 Is there teknonymy? Not found.
- 6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.) The religion “recognized a supreme being as creator and worshiped through the spirits of deceased ancestors and the spirits of nature. The latter were charged with responsibility for regulating winds, rains, crops, river flows, fire, and other natural phenomena. Shrines at which offerings and sacrifices could be made were common... Typically the ancestor shrines were adorned with wood or stone sculptures that symbolized the ancestor’s spirit” (3p152).

## 7. Adornment

- 7.1 Body paint: : Sometimes they use a “dark blue colour, which blends in with the skin, and is produced by rubbing in charcoal or wood-ash, and sometimes gunpowder” (2p39).
- 7.2 Piercings: “Both sexes have the ears bored” (2p41).
- 7.3 Haircut: Not found.
- 7.4 Scarification: Scarification is practiced, “the operator sometimes assists nature by pinching the lips of the cut away from each other” and these scars can “[indicate] the tribe to which a person belonged” (2p38-9).
- 7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): Some people have “what looks like a red wig of beads” that are coral colored and are braided into one’s hair (2p44).
- 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: “The knocking out of the teeth is of the nature of a solemn ceremony, without which no young person can be considered grown up” (2p43).
- 7.7 Sex differences in adornment: Women would have facial piercings that evolved as they aged (2p41) while men must go through tooth-chipping (2p43).
- 7.8 Missionary effect: Once the missionaries came, they put a stop to any self-harming adornment or scarification (6p219).
- 7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: Not found.

## 8. Kinship systems

- 8.1 Sibling classification system: Not found.
- 8.2 Sororate, levirate: The Loi “favor secondary marriages with a deceased wife’s sister and the widow of a father or brother” (4p282).
- 8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): “The sources report cousin terminology of the Hawaiian type” (4p282).

## 9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

- The tribe did not believe in holding people prisoner, people paid for their crimes monetarily or physically (2p267).
- Without the help of Asian plants, it’s unlikely that the Loi could have survived off of the wildlife found in the forests (4p222).
- The Loi people are situated in a province called The Yam Belt (4p222).
- In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Europeans traveled to West Africa and regarded the people as “comparatively civilized, well-developed people” but when they returned during Europe’s quest for colonies they became less than the Europeans (3p151).

## Numbered references

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