

## Ngongo

### **1. Description**

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

- Ngongo (and Bungongo), Ngongo, Bantu<sup>1,2,3</sup>

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

- noq<sup>1</sup>

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- (-5.80/ 18.10)

1.4 Brief history:

- The name Ngongo refers to the unique ethnic group Ngongo with their language of the same name; the group is considered to be located in the Bandundu Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo. There is an Ngongo group that is a sub-group of the Nkutu (another Bantu language), which is a larger group, and their location is in Northern Kasai oriental Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo. There is also another sub-group called Ngongo among the Bushoong, which is a neighboring group to the Nkutu. Most Ngongo are considered to be bilingual with Kituba (Bantu-language), the trade language. The main body of the Ngongo is to the northwest of the Nkutu people, so it is easy to envision that the Ngongo were a larger people who were surrounded by other language groups, which caused small groups of Ngongo to migrate in small distances away from the larger group and begin their own language and ethnic streams in the other groups.<sup>4</sup>

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

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

- they live in the forest, where they clean out small areas for their basic living.<sup>4,5</sup>

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

- Population 5,000 – only counting ethnic group<sup>1</sup>
- Population 130,482 – as a sub-group of the Nkutu<sup>3</sup>
- The population of Ngongo as a sub-group of Bushoong is unknown<sup>4</sup>

### **2. Economy**

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- network of rivers make it ideal for small-scale farming, such as rice, coffee, potatoes, etc. The forest dweller who did not farm lived in close trading relationships with farmers and riverine villages.<sup>5</sup>
- “Adaptations of species of bananas enabled the forest dwellers to grow in numbers and to differentiate their growing communities”<sup>5</sup>

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- the rivers makes it possible for fishing<sup>5</sup>
- trading using the Kituba language allows cattle and chickens to also be a source of protein<sup>5</sup>

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

- “...fishing with nets and weirs...as well as for defense or, in at least some cases, also aggression...”<sup>5</sup>

2.4 Food storage:

2.5 Sexual division of production:

2.6 Land tenure:

2.7 Ceramics:

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

2.9 Food taboos:

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

- From their dugout canoes and other local technology that was adapted...<sup>5</sup>

### **3. Anthropometry**

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

- “The still-earlier inhabitants whom they encountered in the heavily forested parts of the region became known abroad for their diminutive stature as pygmies”<sup>5</sup>

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

- See previous answer

### **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:

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:

- 4.9 Inheritance patterns:
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:
- 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
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?
- 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
  - “the languages spoken in them [trading networks], and to a political culture that linked the matrilineal communities of the region”<sup>5</sup>
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?
- 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?)
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

### **Warfare/homicide**

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:
- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:
- 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):
- 4.18 Cannibalism?

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

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):
  - “local community leaders...termed big men, or chiefs”<sup>5</sup>
- 5.4 Post marital residence:
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):
- 5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):
- 5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:
- 5.8 Village and house organization:
- 5.9 Specialized village structures (mens’ houses):
- 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?
- 5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:
- 5.12 Trade:
  - Please see 2.1, 2.2 and 4.25
- 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?
  - “In these elite groups, ambitious newcomers paid heavily to advance through the ranks, and the top-ranking senior members invested the income in whatever ceremonies or improvements they considered to promote the welfare of the community as a whole.”<sup>5</sup>

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

- 6.0 Time allocation to RCR:
- 6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):
- 6.2 Stimulants:
- 6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):
- 6.4 Other rituals:
- 6.5 Myths (Creation):
- 6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):
- 6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

#### 6.8 Missionary effect:

- The religion of the ethnic group Ngongo is Christianity (98%) – Roman Catholicism (64%), evangelical believers (12%), and Protestant (20%). They are also known to practice some ethnic religion as well (2%).<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>
- The Nkutu are described as having “traditional religion,” with an unknown effect on the Ngongo sub-group. The Bushoong, and the sub-group Ngongo, are described as having a mixed traditional and Christianity.<sup>1,2</sup>

#### 6.9 RCR revival:

#### 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

#### 6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

#### 6.12 Is there teknonymy?

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

### 7. Adornment

#### 7.1 Body paint:

#### 7.2 Piercings:

#### 7.3 Haircut:

#### 7.4 Scarification:

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

#### 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

#### 7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

#### 7.8 Missionary effect:

#### 7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

### 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):

### Numbered references

1. Ngongo. “A language of Democratic Republic of the Congo” <ethnologue.com>
2. Ngongo of Democratic Republic of Congo. <joshuaproject.net>
3. Ngongo. <Peoplegroups.org>
4. The Ngongo People of the Democratic Republic of Congo. <<http://orvillejenkins.com/profiles/ngongo.html>>
5. Middleton, E. and Miller, J. “Democratic Republic of the Congo” *New Encyclopedia of Africa*. Charles Scribner’s Sons. Detroit. 1:494-505.

\*Note: Professor Walker mentioned that I should write a brief note stating that this was the best that I could do with the very limited resources available on the Ngongo.