

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family: Penutian language family. Chinookan. Wasco-Wishram society

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

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): North central Oregon, south central Washington

1.4 Brief history: A Chinookan tribe formerly living on the south side of Columbia river, in the neighborhood of The Dalles, in Wasco County, Oregon. This tribe, with the Wishram (also known as Tlakluit and Echeloot), on the north side of the river, were the easternmost branches of the Chinookan family. These two tribes were practically identical in language and culture, though they have been removed to different reservations. On the north east, and south they bordered on Shahaptian tribes, on the west on closely related Chinookan tribes.

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: Trade with neighbors was common but other information on outside influence was not found.

1.6 Ecology: unknown

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: 69 according to the 1990 census. However their language shifting to English and is therefore endangered and in fact, nearly extinct.

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): roots, bulbs (especially camas), wild onions, wild potatoes, acorns, and various nuts and berries.

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: The Wasco were a sedentary people, depending for their subsistence mainly upon fish (several varieties of salmon, suckers, sturgeon, eels), to a less extent upon edible root berries, and, least important of all, game. Salmon were caught in the spring and fall, partly with dip-nets, partly by spearing; smaller fish were obtained with hook and line or by means of basket traps. Definitely located fishing stations were a well-recognized form of personal property; Pounded salmon flesh also formed an important article of trade with neighboring tribes.

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: unknown

2.4 Food storage: Stored pounded salmon flash and dried berries were often stored for use in winter.

2.5 Sexual division of production: Men hunted game to supplement the diet and the women gathered the roots and berries. In addition to nets, weirs, traps, and spears for fishing, men made a variety of carved wood tools and utensils. Women made twined baskets and bags decorated with geometric figures.

2.6 Land tenure: Washing/Oregon

2.7 Ceramics: The most notable of their industries were work in wood (bowls, spoons), horn (spoons, cups), and twined basketry bags, various fortes of stiff baskets). Coiled basketry has been learned since closer contact with the Klikitat; the chief materials used in twining are cedar roots and various grasses, of late also trader's cord and yarn. Realistic figures are carved in wood and horn; while the basket designs are partly geometrical, recalling the basketry art of north California, and, as in that area, hearing conventional pattern names, partly realistic, though crudely so (angular figures of men, eagles, and deer are characteristic of the basketry art of the lower Columbia). The latter designs may be plausibly explained as an adaptation of forms familiar from woodcarving to twined basketry with its straight line and angular patterns. The original Wasco costume consisted of blanket robes (the pelts of bear, deer, wolf, coyote, raccoon, and mountain goat in summer), sleeveless shirts of raccoon or coyote skin,

breechcloths of raccoon skin, and moccasins of deerskin; bats and gloves were made of coyote skin.

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: unknown

2.9 Food taboos: unknown

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? Men built and traded for dugout canoes and snowshoes

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): unknown

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): unknown

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f): unknown

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): unknown

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): unknown

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): unknown

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): unknown

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: unknown

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

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

4.9 Inheritance patterns: With such strict social classes, you were born into the social class of your parents and stayed within that same social class for your lifespan.

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

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Marriage was formalized by an exchange of gifts and family visits.

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? As regards naming, the most interesting fact is perhaps the absolute impossibility of translating a single Wasco name, the Chinookan dialects differing in this respect from the vast majority of American languages.

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?) Marriages were preferred to be within the community and usually within the same social class.

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Infants were occasionally betrothed for purposes of creating or cementing family alliances.

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: Remarriage to the dead spouse's sibling was common.

Not much information was found on the relationships between family members or husband and wife.

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?

In the early to mid-nineteenth century, the Wishram and Wasco fought Northern Paiutes, Bannocks, and Northern Shoshones. No other records of warfare.

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: Approximately 35 per village.

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): This tribe is not known to be mobile. They are stationary groups.

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): Three classes of society were recognized: chiefs (the chieftainship was hereditary), common folk, and slaves (obtained by capture). There was no clan or totem organization, the guardian spirits referred to being strictly personal in character; the village was the main social unit.

5.4 Post marital residence:

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): division of social class. Children of different social classes were not allowed to play with one another.

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: No specification.

5.8 Village and house organization:

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? Two types of house were in use-the partly underground winter house, roofed with cedar bark and having board platforms about the walls for beds,

and the summer house with frame of fir poles and covering of tules or cedar bark; the latter type might have several fireplaces, accommodating three or four families. Sweat-houses were frequently used and were of quasi-supernatural significance.

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: see political system

5.12 Trade: The Dalles, or Five Mile Rapids, in Wishram territory was the most important trading location in the Northwest; several thousand Northwest Coast and Plateau Indians traded there during various trade fairs. Wishram and Wasco people acted as intermediaries in the trade of a huge amount and variety of items, including blankets, shells, slaves, canoes, fish and animal products, dried roots, bear grass, and, later, horses. Trade connections stretched from Canada to Mexico and from the Rocky Mountains west to the ocean.

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? They had defined social classes that you were born into and traditionally did not move from.

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR: unknown

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): Shamans' guardian spirits, usually several animals, helped them cure the sick.

6.2 Stimulants: unknown

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): In childhood the head was flattened by pressure on the forehead, and the ears were punctured with five holes in each ear; adults whose heads were not flattened were derided as no better than slaves. Puberty ceremonies were observed in the case of both girls and boys; the former were subject to the usual taboos, after the fulfillment of which a menstrual dance was held, while the latter "trained" for the acquirement of strength and one or several guardian spirits. Burial was on boards put away in "dead people's houses"; slaves were sometimes buried alive to accompany a chief to the next world. Corpses were wrapped in buckskin and interred in plank burial houses.

6.4 Other rituals: the capture of the first salmon of the season was accompanied with a ceremony intended to give that particular fishing station a good season's catch.

6.5 Myths (Creation): The most striking fact in the mythology of the tribe is the great role that Coyote plays as culture-hero and transformer. There are many myths involving characters such as Coyote, Eagle, and Bear to explain stories of how the constellations appeared and how death occurred.

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): unknown

6.7 Sex differences in RCR: Only sex differences in reference to ritual are the rituals that take place at the time of puberty for the child.

6.8 Missionary effect: unknown

6.9 RCR revival: unknown

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: There are many myths involving a Coyote with an Eagle or Bears. It just so happens that their beliefs about death come from a myth where the Coyote and Eagle want to bring their loved ones who have passed on to the afterlife back to the land of the living. They were told that their dead would come back to life in the spring just like the leaves of autumn die in the fall and return in the spring. However, Coyote and Eagle did not feel like waiting so they made a journey to the land of the spirits to bring back their loved ones. After they managed to capture the spirits and get them halfway across the way to the land of the living, their spirits were becoming alive and began making the bag they

were traveling in too heavy to carry. When the bag was put down, the spirits escaped and returned to the land of the spirits. Defeated, Coyote and Eagle return to the land of the living and broke the way the spirits could come back in the spring. That is why the dead cannot return to the land of the living.

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? none

6.12 Is there teknonymy? no.

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.): Adolescent boys sought guardian spirits by fasting and performing feats of skill or daring associated with remote places. Important ceremonies included first salmon rites as well as midwinter guardian spirit dances.

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: painted faces often

7.2 Piercings: Piercings were given to every child at an extremely young age. The piercings were in the child's ear.

7.3 Haircut: None

7.4 Scarification: None

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): wore dentalium shell ornaments

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: Wore jewelry and painted faces

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: None

7.8 Missionary effect: unknown

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: unknown

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. http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=wac

2. <http://multitree.org/codes/wac>

3. <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/tribes/chinook/wascoindianhist.htm>

4. <http://www.native-languages.org/wasco-wishram.htm>

5. <http://what-when-how.com/native-americans/wishram-native-americans-of-the-plateau/>