

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, language family: Paumari Indians, Pamoari, Arauan

1.2 ISO code: pad

1.3 Location: Amazonias, Purus River (1)

1.4 Brief history: Little is known about the Paumari before 1845; however, “in contrast to other indigenous peoples who were grievously affected by the conflicts surrounding the rubber booms of Brazil, the Paumari survived relatively unscathed.” (4) They are supposedly descended from the Purupuru, a group “who occupied a region from the mouth of the Purus to that of the Ituxi in the Eighteenth Century, but who do not exist any more.” (2)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/govts/powerful neighbors: “The Urucu and Jurua gas fields pose a considerable threat to the Paumari way of life.” They commonly use Portuguese as well as Pamoari, “resulting in a unique sort of linguistic 'Creole' that excludes the syntax of both languages while retaining common vocabulary.” (4)

1.6 Ecology: “The Paumari are notorious for their aquatic orientation. . .” They prefer to live near flood plains, rivers, and lakes. However, due to recent culture change due to outside influences, some permanent settlements have been established on the terra firme islands in the várzeas. (2) “The predominant forms of vegetation in these habitats are dense ombrophyllous alluvial forests of the plateaus and the periodically inundated floodplains.” (2)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: 1,559 individuals in 2010. (2) Most are “scattered throughout the Rio Purus region.” (4) Some sources say that there are four villages, but other researchers have located ten in only one part of the Paumari lands. (2) “Every village was composed by 8 to 15 houses with one or two families in each one.” The largest village known has more than 170 inhabitants. (2)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): Manioc is the main staple, but other plants such as sweet cassava, yam, and maize are cultivated as well. (2)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: Fish, but turtles as well. (2)

2.3 Weapons: “The Paumari are not notorious for being good hunters. . .they hunt sporadically and spontaneously, especially in the cases of coming across some animal when they go fishing.” (2)

2.4 Food storage: No information, however, they are characterized as nomadic, which may play a role.

2.5 Sexual division of production: No info

2.6 Land tenure: No info

2.7 Ceramics: “Their pottery is described as being clumsy and without painting, which various authors explain as a result of 'nomadic life'.” (2)

2.8 Specified sharing patterns: No info

2.9 Food taboos: No info

2.10 Canoes/watercraft: Traditional canoes were carved out of a single piece of wood, and were from 3.5 to 4.5 meters long. They were “smoothly cut on the prow and with vertical flanks. The oar blades were oval-shaped and pointed.” Modern day canoes and oars maintain these features. Rafts with similar house types as on land (except without stilts) are used. These “stay moored at

the lake sides for a long time, only going along with the changes in water levels.” (2)

3. Anthropometry

3.1: Mean adult height: No info

3.2 Mean adult weight: No info

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche: No info

4.2 Age at first birth: No info

4.3 Completed family size: No info

4.4 Inter-birth interval: No info

4.5 Age first marriage: No info

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: No info

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: No info

4.8 Bride purchase, bride service, dowry: “. . . sons-in-law render services to their fathers-in-law even before marriage.” (2)

4.9: Inheritance patterns: No info

4.10 Pattern-offspring interactions/conflict: No info

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitude towards homosexuals: No info

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): No info

4.13 Belief of male role in conception (partible paternity): No info

4.14 Belief of mother's role in conception: No info

4.15 Conception an incremental process: No info

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: No info

4.17 Preferential category for spouse: “There were traditional marriage preferences with cross-cousins. . .” (2)

4.18 Females enjoy sexual freedoms: No info

4.19 Gifts to extramarital partner/offspring: No info

4.20 If mother dies, who raises children: “Young persons with only one parent alive generally live with him or her.” (2)

4.21 Adult sex ratio: No info

4.22 Evidence for couvades: No info

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers: No info

4.24 Joking relationships: No info

4.25 Patterns of descent for rights, names, etc: No info

4.26 Incest avoidance rules: No info

4.27 Formal marriage ceremony: No info

4.28 Obtain or change name: No info

4.29 Marriage usually inside/outside community: No info

4.30 Marriages arranged? Who arranges?: No info

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: No info

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Perfect adult male deaths due to warfare: No info

4.15 Out-group vs in-group cause of violent death: No info

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: No info

4.17 Number, diversity, relationship with neighboring societies: They share some areas with a few other indigenous groups: the Apurina, Jamamadi, and Katukina. There is some hostility with the Apurina over territoriality. (2) Another source states that they lived in fear of the Hypurinas, their northern neighbors. (3)

4.18 Cannibalism: No info

5. Socio-political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local village group size: Not specifically noted, just that villages usually contain 8 to 15 houses with one to two families living in each, and that “the size of local groups can vary from isolated houses to villages with more than 20 houses.” (2)

5.2 Mobility pattern (seasonality): During the dry season they live on the riverbanks in their straw huts. During the high water season, they live on the lakes, building their huts on top of rafts which are “anchored in the middle of the lakes for escaping from insects.” (2)

5.3 Political system: They had no formal leadership in the past – there was “a kind of informal leadership assumed by the eldest of the married men.” Local power is hard to retain because of the constant dissolution and rearrangement of their people. (2)

5.4 Post marital residence:

Post-nuptial residence rules are complicated: in the first month, with the wife's family (uxorilocal), then with the man's family (virilocal) for another month and later on constant alternations between the two families of parents-in-law in intervals which can last up till two years until the birth of the first child. These residential changes can continue until the birth of the second or third child, when the couple generally decides to build a residence of its own (neolocality). In these years, the couple is not obliged to live in the house of its fathers-in-law, but can build its own next to it. If one part of the married couple is orphan from the father's side, the mother's side or both sides, post-nuptial residence rules are still more complicated. (2)

5.5 Territoriality?: No info

5.6 Social interaction divisions: No info

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: No info

5.8 Village and house organization: Houses can have one or two rooms-- if there are two, one is used as a bedroom/living room, and the other as a kitchen. “This kind of house is more used in the high water season when there is need to take care of the gardens, while it is possible to find a lot of these houses unoccupied in the dry season.” Houses on the riverbanks are semicircular. (2)

5.9 Specialized village structures: “With their first menstruation, [girls] are obliged to retire to a small seclusion hut built beside their family's house or inside it. In the latter case, the hut is only made by a large straw mat rolled up to form a conical tent.” (2)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks/ground/etc: They create simple mats, which they, themselves, call “the Indian's bed”-- they never produced hammocks in the past. (2)

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: “The residential groups are either nuclear families or extended family groups (married couples, children, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law and grandchildren), sometimes also including the children one part of the parents had from a former marriage.” Unmarried people usually live with one of their brothers' family. There is a high degree of family mobility. (2) They belonged to several clans, each with a different name. These include: the Otter people, the Alligator people, the Vulture people, and the Peccary people. (3)

5.12 Trade: The Paumari often trade with the “dominant society,” exchanging their goods for

industry products. However, they are often exploited by merchants-- restrictions have been put in place by various government agencies to decrease this. (2)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies: Many communities today still do not have any real chiefs. (2) Overall, they seem to be fairly egalitarian.

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): "Shamanism continues to be practiced in many villages, generally disguised, but people do not talk much about it. In the past, however, shamans were highly respected in their communities." (2)

6.2 Stimulants: Snuff is used by shamans during special occasions, like healing and rituals. "Snuff was traditionally inhaled with a pair of hollow bones fixed side by side with a cotton thread. Their ends were equally smoothed with wax to facilitate adapting it to the nostrils. Nowadays, there are also used tubes from ballpoint pens after removing the ink." (2)

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): Girls must live in a small seclusion hut with their first menstruation-- they stay here for seven to twelve months, being helped by their mothers or other family members. This seclusion phase ends with a large feast for the whole village that may last several days. There is no rite of passage for boys. (2)

6.4 Other rituals: Healing ritual: The shaman starts by "sucking some part of the patient's body. After this, they entered the forest, provoked vomits and then returned to the village with some small animals or objects, alleging they had pulled these out of the patient's body by the healing act." (2)

6.5 Myths: They have a story in which their tribe, during one particularly rainy season where the land flooded, went up into the trees to live. All died from starvation or drowning except two, which are said to be the ancestors of the current group. (2)

6.6 Cultural material: They have several songs (canoe song, song of the turtle), and make pipes out of reeds and simple trumpets with earthenware. (3) They create artwork which they sell in towns or to merchants. (2)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR: Unlike the men, the woman do not inhale snuff, but instead make a numbing tea from the root bark, which they ferment in water. (2)

6.8 Missionary effect: Due to being under current missionary influence, their ethnic religion is starting to disappear. (2)

6.9 RCR revival: No info

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: No info

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people: No info

6.12 Is there teknonymy?: No info

6.13 Briefly describe religion: Nothing mentioned-- "The ethnic religion is one of the least known aspects of Paumari culture." (2)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: It is said that they use more paint than the other tribes in their area. They cover their bodies (sometimes including the entirety of their faces) with large horizontal stripes. (3)

7.2 Piercings: They pierce the lip and septum. (3)

7.3 Haircut: "The hair is cut square across the forehead and allowed to hang down the neck." (3, pg 389)

7.4 Scarification: No info

7.5 Adornment: For their piercings, they insert plugs of wood, or tusks of animals on feast days.

When drinking, they press the plugs in tightly so they don't lose any of it. (3) Today they wear necklaces and bracelets, which they also make to sell commercially.

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: No info

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: They used to wear small aprons, with the women's being slightly larger. (3) “In the past, the men only used a waistband to fix their penis, completed by some threads for hiding it, while the women used cotton tangas.” (2)

7.8 Missionary effect: No info

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: No info

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: No info

8.2 Sororate, levirate: No info

8.3 Other notable kinship typology: No info

9. Other interesting cultural features

- There have not been any other languages discovered that are closely related to their language family. (2)

- Almost all Paumari are bilingual-- often times they go back and forth between Portuguese and Pamoari, sometimes within the same sentence. (2)

- In the past, many were said to be marked with a skin disease that created large white spots on the hands and feet, and dark gray ones on the rest of the body. (3)

- The average height of several men measured was 5' 2.5". (3)

- They are (or were at some point) extremely good at catching turtles, being able to dive down to the bottom of a river and capture them right there. (3)

Works Cited

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