

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family:

-Sáliba , Sáliba , Salivan

-All Sáliba Indians for the most part, understand the Sáliba language, but it is only preserved among the elderly woman of the tribe. (2) However, other sources claim the language is still used on a daily basis, and that Spanish is spoken only when dealing with outsiders. (1)

-“In the Orocué area the language is only conserved to a high degree among elderly women; others understand Sáliba but no longer express themselves in the language.” (2)

-“Most are bilingual in Saliva and Spanish, using their own language in daily life and speaking Spanish only to outsiders.” (1)

-The Sáliba Indians are often referred to as the Saliva as well, and both names shall be used throughout this questionnaire.

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

-slc

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

-The Saliva tribe is found in Columbia near the Meta and Casanare rivers, as well as in Venezuela. (2)

1.4 Brief history:

-The Saliva Indians were quick to succumb to Jesuit missionary influence in the early 1700's. The Indians moved to Jesuit controlled areas mainly in order to escape Carib raids and attacks. However, the Saliva Indians have been able to keep their culture very traditional even with the great influence of Spanish outsiders and missionaries over the last couple hundred years. (1) (3)

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

-The Saliva Indians were greatly impacted by the Jesuit missionaries. Upon contact, a large percentage of the Saliva peoples moved onto Jesuit missionary land in order to evade Carib attacks. (3)

-“The Saliva appear not to have originally inhabited the region of Orocué; their presence there clearly dates from the establishment of the first Jesuit missions. Several sites in the region, among them San Regis de Guanapalo, Purisima Concepcion de Cravo, Trinidad de Duyas, and others, were founded in the early 18th century and consisted primarily of refugees fleeing from the attacks of the Carib. Saliva migrating from the Orinoco area were formed into several missions, the most important of which was San Miguel de Macuco, founded in approximately 1730. This became one of the most important and permanent historic Saliva sites...” (3)

1.6 Ecology:

-The Saliva Indians come from the Llanos area. This region is a characterized by a savanna landscape and has distinct wet and dry seasons that allows for farming, fishing, and hunting. (1)

-“The Saliva habitat is the Llanos, a vast savanna region of eastern Colombia and western Venezuela. There are pronounced wet and dry seasons; in the rainy season the plains are flooded. Early observers reported an abundance of game as well as fish and amphibians.” (1)

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

-A total population size of 1,550 peoples comprises this indigenous tribe, 1,300 of which live in Columbia. (2)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

-No single carbohydrate appears to be the staple source for the Saliva Indians, but both sweet and bitter manioc, along with maize, are grown, dispersed, and traded by the group. (1)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

-The Saliva Indians are mainly agriculturalists, but they also hunt, fish, and collect turtle eggs as sources of protein. Animals such as deer, tapier, armadillos, anteaters, tortoises, and iguanas are all actively hunted and eaten as protein-lipid sources. The oil from turtle eggs are also used for cooking, paint bases, and for trading. (1)

-“Hunting and fishing were important secondary activities. Game included deer, peccaries, tapir, armadillos, anteaters, tortoises, and iguanas. Iguanas were a favorite food, and so abundant it was reported that hundreds could be captured in a single hour...Collecting turtle eggs was an important seasonal activity, as hundreds of thousands of turtles laid their eggs on the beaches of the Orinoco and its tributaries. The Saliva extracted oil from the eggs that they used in cooking, as a base for body paint, and as an article of trade.” (1)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

-Bows and arrows are used in a particular fishing technique in order to catch fruit eating fish. Two men work together; one man drops a piece of fruit into the water while the other man readies himself and shoots the fish that comes to the surface with his bow and arrow. (1)

-“Two fishermen would cooperate, one dropping a piece of fruit into the water. When a fish rose to the bait, the other fisherman was ready with bow and arrow.” (1)

2.4 Food storage: No Data Found

2.5 Sexual division of production:

-Among the Saliva, there is a strong sense of sexual division of production and labor. Women produce ceramics, weave cotton cloth, apply body paints, agricultural work, and process manioc while men produce baskets, clear plots of land for farming, and hunt and fish. (1)

-“Fields were cleared in the gallery forest, generally by male work groups...Except for clearing and burning, women did most of the agricultural work.” (1)

-“Women spun cotton and used a primitive loom. Basketry was the exclusive work of men, whereas only women made pottery. Women also processed manioc tubers and made manioc bread.” (1)

-“...the women spent a great deal of time grooming and applying body paint to their husbands and other male family members.” (1)

2.6 Land tenure:

-The Saliva Indians can be identified primarily as agriculturalists. They cultivate sweet and bitter manioc, maize, different types of fruits, sugar cane, rice, and other plant products. Raised mounds were constructed to grow manioc on and large tracks of the forest were cleared for other plants. Surprisingly, the Saliva did not maintain their cleared farming lands though. No weeding was performed, so once an area became overrun with weeds, a new field would be cleared. (1)

-“The Saliva grew maize, sweet and bitter manioc, and a number of different fruits, especially pineapples and papayas. They probably grew such introduced crops as sugarcane and rice since early colonial times. Chili peppers were their preferred condiment. Among nonfood crops were tobacco, cotton, *carguate* (a kind of agave) for fiber, gourds, and various dye plants...For better drainage, manioc was planted in raised mounds; other crops were simply planted among the charred tree trunks and stumps...The Saliva did little weeding; when a field became choked with weeds, they abandoned it and opened a new one.” (1)

2.7 Ceramics:

-Woman, specifically, produced any ceramic ware. (1)

-“...only women made pottery.” (1)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: No data found

2.9 Food taboos:

-Some food taboos are followed when men and woman go through the couvade process. More information concerning the couvades can be found under section 4.22 below.

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

-The Saliva produced large canoes that could hold up to twelve people each. (1)

-“The Saliva were expert makers of dugout canoes, and some were large enough to carry ten or twelve people.” (1)

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): No data found

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): No data found

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f): No data found

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): No data found

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): No data found

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): No data found

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): No data found

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

-No quantitative information was found regarding divorce prevalence, only that it was frequent. The Saliva Indians often intermarried and traded with the neighboring Carib Indians, but raids between the two groups were still common. This continued tension with a neighboring tribe, which was intermarried into the Saliva tribe, could help account for the presence of divorce. (1) The practice of ‘trial marriages’ also makes a divorce rate hard to obtain because many ‘trial marriages’ disband and are never formalized. (3)

-“Polygyny was common and divorce frequent.” (1)

-“Trial arrangements may be brief, and even the birth of child does not ensure a stable union; therefore it is not surprising that a substantial number of the adult population have been participants in several unions of varying durations. The frequency and complexity of these factors make it extremely difficult to obtain adequate or reliable data on the dissolution of the unions.” (3)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

-No quantitative information was found regarding polygyny either, only that it was common. (1) However, another source states that monogamy is practiced tribe-wide with only a few cases of polygyny being acceptable in the past. (3)

-“Polygyny was common and divorce frequent.” (1)

-“Monogamy is universal, although a few informants stated that polygyny is permissible and recalled some past cases.” (3)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: No data found

4.9 Inheritance patterns: No data found

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: No data found

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: No data found

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

-No information was clear that marriages were always exogamous, but the Saliva do appear to seek out marriages with neighboring Carib and Achagua tribes. (1)

-“There is ample evidence that the Saliva often intermarried with the Achagua and with Carib groups.” (1)

- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized? No data found
- 4.14 What is the belief of the mother’s role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”) No data found
- 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)? No data found
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape No data found
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)
- There is no preferred spouse category among the Saliva. However, blood relative relations are deemed incestual and marriages are often exogamous with Carib or other neighbors. (1) (3)
 - “There is ample evidence that the Saliva often intermarried with the Achagua and with Carib groups.” (1)
 - “There are no specified preferential mates, and incest and marriage prohibitions extend to all near consanguineal relatives, including second cousins.” (3)
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? No data found
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: No data found
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? No data found
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females: No data found
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades
- Both men and woman participate in a couvade surrounding the birth of their children. This often includes fasting, limited activity, and other customs. (1)
 - “The Saliva practiced the couvade, which imposed a period of inactivity and fasting on both parents of a newborn child.” (1)
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older): No data found
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? No data found
- 4.24 Joking relationships? No data found
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: No data found
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules
- A relationship with any blood related relatives, including second cousins, are considered incestual. (3)
 - “There are no specified preferential mates, and incest and marriage prohibitions extend to all near consanguineal relatives, including second cousins.” (3)
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?
- The Saliva tribe performs trial marriages. These trial marriages entail that a new couple lives with the wife’s family for a specified period of time. If the marriage is deemed successful upon completion, which is usually determined by the birth of a child, then a formal marriage ceremony is performed, modernly in a church, and the married couple leaves the wife’s house to form their own residence. (1) (3)
 - “They practice trial marriage: a young couple first lives with the wife's family and only if the trial is concluded successfully (usually with the birth of a child) do they have a church marriage and form an independent household.” (1)
 - “According to informants, the traditional Saliva “trial marriage” is still in existence, although marriages are now formalized later by a church ceremony.” (3)
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? No data found
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?) No data found
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? No data found
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: No data found

Warfare/homicide

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: No data found
- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: No data found
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: No data found
- 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):
- The Saliva group is a close neighbor to the fierce Carib Indians. Although they traded and often intermarried with this group, raids were still prevalent between the two neighbors. (1)
 - “...the warlike Caribs with whom the Saliva maintained an ambiguous relationship—they traded with them and even intermarried, although they were often the victims of Carib raids.” (1)
- 4.18 Cannibalism? No data found

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: No data found
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): No data found
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):
- The Saliva Indians most likely had headman over seeing each independent village. This leader gained this position through a combination of lineage and personal attributes. (1)
 - “Communities were probably independent, and local headmen gained their position through a combination of personal qualities and patrilineal descent.” (1)
- 5.4 Post marital residence:

-The Saliva tribe performs trial marriages. These trial marriages include a married couple living with the wife's family for a period of time and if the marriage is deemed successful upon completion, then a formal marriage ceremony is performed and the married couple leave the wife's house to form their own residence. (1)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): No data found

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): No data found

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: No data found

5.8 Village and house organization:

-Traditionally: The native Saliva Indians lived in large communal houses but began living in smaller groupings with the pressure from increased raiding by their Carib neighbors. (1)

-“Originally they lived in large communal houses, but later, as Carib raids increased, dwellings were dispersed to facilitate flight.” (1)

-Modernly:

-The Saliva today arranges their residences into family homesteads, which are a part of a larger neighborhood. These homesteads usually only consist of one married pair and their offspring, but other instances of related individuals living together can occur. (3)

-“Today the Saliva occupy dispersed family homestead which form nine principal neighborhoods of population concentration in the region of Orocué. These neighborhoods are situated along major streams and their tributaries and derive their names from the adjacent waterways... The settlement pattern [is] of dispersed family homesteads forming ill-defined, amorphous neighborhoods... In the majority of cases the Saliva homestead is occupied by an independent nuclear family consisting of a married pair and their unmarried offspring; however, minimal extended or stem families composed of two related families of procreation or small extended families of one individual in the senior generation and two or more within the next generation are not unusual and reflect marriage patterns and alternate residence choices.” (3)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses): No data found

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? No data found

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: No data found

5.12 Trade:

-The Saliva Indians have traditionally traded animal teeth, shell money, manioc graters, body paints, and turtle eggs, specifically that of the eggs' oil. The Saliva today, also trade excess agricultural products as a means of additional income. (1)

-“On ceremonial occasions both sexes wore necklaces and pendants of animal teeth and shell money obtained through trade. Saliva participated actively in the trade networks of the Llanos, even after contact. They manufactured manioc graters and made paints and dyes for body decoration, specifically for trade.” (1)

-“The Saliva extracted oil from the eggs that they used in cooking, as a base for body paint, and as an article of trade.” (1)

-“They are [modernly] subsistence farmers, selling their surplus crops to buy necessities.” (1)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

-Although it appears that local headmen oversaw individual villages (1), I did not find any other information as evidence of any other form of social stratification or special privileges being given to the headman.

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR: No data found

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): No data found

-“The shaman is still the principal religious specialist, and Saliva shamans are renowned for their knowledge of medicinal herbs.” (1)

6.2 Stimulants:

-Saliva Shamans use hallucinogenic drugs in a religious context to make contact with spirits. (1)

-“Shamans were the religious specialists who fasted and used hallucinogenic drugs to make contact with the spirits.” (1)

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

-Thought to be a ritual concerned with puberty initiation ceremonies, young men are expected to endure periods of flagellation. (1)

-“Young men were frequently submitted to flagellation rituals, perhaps as part of an initiation ceremony.” (1)

6.4 Other rituals:

-See Section 9 below concerning other interesting cultural features of the Saliva tribe to learn about modern politically motivated shows of ceremony and rituals.

6.5 Myths (Creation):

-Little is known about the Saliva cosmology. It is documented that Puru was the creator of the world and lived in heaven with his son. Puru sent his son to earth in order to kill a great serpent, and upon the serpents' death, worms appeared. These 'worms' were considered to be the feared and hated Carib neighbors to the Saliva Indians. (1)

-“Puru was the creator, living in heaven with his son. When a great serpent devastated the Orinoco region, Puru sent his son to kill it. From the serpent's decomposed body emerged worms, which turned into the feared and hated Carib peoples.” (1)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): No data found

6.7 Sex differences in RCR: No data found

6.8 Missionary effect: No data found

6.9 RCR revival: No data found

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

-The Saliva Indians bury their dead in elaborate manners and secondary reburials of the dead were often observed. (1)

-“Funerals were elaborate, and secondary burial was practiced.” (1)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? No data found

6.12 Is there teknonymy? No data found

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

-Little is known about the Saliva religion, but one creation myth, concerning the god Puru, is briefly described under section 6.5 above.

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

-The Saliva Indians produce body paint using the oil from turtle eggs as a base. Women spend long periods of time applying paint to their husbands and other male relatives. Body paint is also produced in excess for trade. (1)

-“The Saliva extracted oil from the eggs that they used in cooking, as a base for body paint, and as an article of trade.” (1)

-“...the women spent a great deal of time grooming and applying body paint to their husbands and other male family members.” (1)

-“They manufactured manioc graters and made paints and dyes for body decoration, specifically for trade.” (1)

7.2 Piercings: No data found

7.3 Haircut: No data found

7.4 Scarification: No data found

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): No data found

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

-Both men and woman of the Saliva tribe adorn themselves with necklaces made out of animal teeth and shell money during certain ceremonies. (1)

-On ceremonial occasions both sexes wore necklaces and pendants of animal teeth and shell money obtained through trade.” (1)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: No data found

7.8 Missionary effect: No data found

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: No data found

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: No data found

8.2 Sororate, levirate: No data found

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): No data found

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Modern Festivals/Ceremonies:

-Once a year, a festival called Candelaria is held in Orocué. The Saliva Indians are given food and drink from the government and in return they must ‘put on a show’ of their ethnic and cultural heritage. This festival causes conflicted feelings within the Saliva tribe. It is not a traditional practice and has come about because of modern influences. (3)

-“An annual event...is the fiesta of Candelaria, held in Orocué during the last week in January and the first week in February. During this event, the Saliva receive varying amounts of food and drink from the local government and prominent local Columbians, in return for which they are required to ostentatiously display their tribal ethnicity in the form of dancing, singing, and “electing their chief” for the benefit of local dignitaries and visitors. This event is both valued and resented by the Saliva and emphasizes their unique position as a people.” (3)

Numbered references

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3. Morey, Robert V. Notes on the Saliva of Eastern Columbia. *Current Anthropology*. Vol. 13, No. 1 (Feb, 1972), p 144-147.