

1. Description

1.1 Name of Society, Language, Language Family: Barasana, Tukanoan and Makú

1.2 Location: 70 to 71 degrees west, Northwest Amazon. Along the borders of Brazil and Colombia. Near the Pirá-paraná river and its tributaries. Lies within the Brazillian administrative district of the Comisaria Vaupes.

1.3 Brief History: First mention of the group dates in the mid-eighteenth century. Most reports came from missionary outposts in the 1960's and beyond. The influence of the rubber trade was detrimental to the people, especially during WWII. There were many invasions by rubber gatherers to capture more workers. The Indians fled to headwaters and concealed their longhouses during this time. The rubber trade contributed to reduced population along with new disease that didn't help. Missionaries complemented the rubber workers by wanting to "civilize" the Indians.

1.4 Influence of Missionaries, Governments, Schools, Powerful Neighbors: first missionary post established in 1965. Summer Institutes of Linguistics post and Catholic mission post soon followed. The Indians are well aware of Christianity and have lost many traditions to white influence.

1.5 Ecology: Land lies around 700 feet, with isolated hills and mountains standing above the surrounding forest. Few open sandy areas with tough and sparse vegetation, some swampy areas.

2. Economy

2.1 Carbohydrate Staples: Manioc

2.2 Protein-Lipid Source: Riverine

2.3 Weapons: Blow-darts, Machete, knives, and shotguns

2.4 Food Storage:

2.5 Sexual Division of Production: Men hunt, cultivate "drugs", take part in large-scale harvesting, do building and all wooden goods, use high above-ground resources, fish, cultivate tree fruit and other wild food for ritual exchange. Females plant harvest, and prepare manioc, cook, cultivate "food" and no "drugs", cultivate low-growing food. Small-scale gathering, prepare food for consumption, manufacture pottery, use underground resources, manufacture paint for ritual use.

2.6 Land Tenure: manioc gardens

2.7 Ceramics: used still, even though manufactured goods are common.

2.8 Prescribed or Proscribed Sharing Patterns:

2.9 Food Taboos: Shamans should not eat hot foods because it is associated with procreation (women and children are considered "illnesses" to the shamans)

2.10 Canoes/Watercraft: canoes

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean Adult Weight (M and F):

3.2 Mean Adult Height (M and F):

4. Life, History, Marriage, and Mating / Warfare and Homicide

4.1 Age at Menarche:

4.2 Age at First Birth (M and F):

- 4.3 Completed Family Size (M and F):
- 4.4 Inter-Birth-Interval: 3 or more years. Husband and wife are not allowed to have sex until the child is weaned, and having children close in age is considered a bad thing.
- 4.5 Age at First Marriage (M and F):
- 4.6 Proportion of Marriages Ending in Divorce:
- 4.7 Percent Marriages Polygynous, Percent Males Married Polygynously: Chiefs marry many wives, but the number of wives has decreased over the years.
- 4.8 Arranged Marriage, Bride Purchase/Service, Dowry: Mother of potential wife gives daughter some necessary possessions to start a household upon her departure to her potential husband's village.
- 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: Men are REQUIRED to find a wife from beyond the area occupied by his own linguistic group.
- 4.13 Belief of the Role of Males in Conception/ Partible Paternity/ Fathers Recognized? :
- 4.14 Mother's Role in Procreation:
- 4.15 Conception an Incremental Process: Yes, one father must repeatedly "fill" the mother with a live fetus. Girl babies are made of their mother's blood, and male babies are made of their father's semen. Bones are also made of father's semen. It is said that male babies resemble the father and female babies resemble the mother.
- 4.16 Occurrence of Sexual Coercion/Rape: Women have reported sexual harassment from local rubber gatherers.
- 4.17 Preferential Category of Spouse: exogamous "sister-exchange" within one's own generation
- 4.18 Female Sexual Freedoms: husband has exclusive rights to his wife's sexuality, but casual sexual relationships do occur, although these generally lead to marriage.
- 4.19 Gift Giving to Extramarital Partners and Offspring:
- 4.20 Who Raises Children if Mother Dies: husband's brother and his family
- 4.21 Adult Sex Ratio:
- 4.22 Couvades: husband secludes himself and rests with mother and child.
- 4.23 Distinctions of Potential Fathers:
- 4.24 Kin Avoidance, Respect, and Joking Relationships:
- 4.25 Patterns of Decent of Certain Names, Rights, Associations:
- 4.26 Incest Avoidance Rules: Endogamous marriages are considered incestuous, classificatory siblings of the opposite sex to ego are prohibited in marriage, cross-cousins are marriage potential. Endogamous marriages only rarely happen between servants, who are considered sub-human. Marriage across generations is prohibited.
- 4.27 Formal Marriage Ceremony? : No, there is no exact time in which marriage happens, it just eventually implied.

4.28 Receive, Change, or Add Name: name terms are used to identify mother and siblings. Names are given at birth, and are changed upon menarche, initiation, and birth of first child.

4.29 Marriage Preferred Within or Outside of Community: outside

4.14 Percent Adult Male Warfare Deaths:

4.15 Outgroup vs. Ingroup Cause of Violent Death:

4.16 Causes of Ingroup/Outgroup Killings: Rubber gatherers killed some people and captured able-bodied men to work. Ingroup killings do to evil shamanism, dispute over women, desire for ritual goods and land. Young men take part in clubbing duels. Outgroup violence can also be brought on by failed marriage arrangements.

4.17 Number, Diversity, and Relationship with Neighboring Societies:

5. Socio-Political Organization and Interaction

5.1 Mean Village Size:

5.2 Mobility Patterns (Seasonality): location is determined by manioc growing.

5.3 Political Systems:

5.4 Post-Marital Residence: If husband dies wife usually lives within his descent group and usually establishes a marital role with husband's brother.

5.5 Territoriality: overlapping descent group territories, there is never a pattern of continuous, exclusive territories at one time.

5.6 Social Interaction Divisions: Chief, Dancer/Chanter, Warrior, Shaman, and Servant.

5.7 Special Friendships/ Joking Relationships: joking occurs when there is a lull in chanting.

5.8 Village and House Organization: Longhouse communities are in a constant state of flux, longhouse groups contain a local descent groups, while other residents live in smaller houses that are not made for rituals to be held in. Longhouses and other structures built close to river, the closer you live to the river, the higher authority you have.

5.9 Specialized Village Structure: Longhouses

5.10 Sleep Hammocks, Ground, Elsewhere: Hammocks

5.11 Social Organizations: Exogamous Patrilineal Language Grouping. Use body of Anaconda to describe their social hierarchy.

5.12 Trade:

5.13 Social Hierarchies: Sibs – First born, next born, ..., last born. First Born=Chief, Next Born=dancer/chanter, Next Born= Warrior, Next Born= Shaman, and Last born= Servant. Other social hierarchy includes, childhood, initiation, youth, procreation, and parenthood, with parenthood being the highest and childhood being the lowest.

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion/Adornment

6.0 Time Allocation RCR:

6.1 Specialization (Shamans and Medicine): Shamans and Dancer/Chanters recognized.

6.2 Stimulants: Coca, beer, tobacco, other unknown drugs

6.3 Passage Rituals: Ritual to distinguish shamans the “see” ancestors between the ones that actual go to the sky. Males considered in the “female domain” until passed through initiation. Girls initiated upon menarche

6.4 Other Rituals: shamans release game animals from their homes in the forest to be hunted. Also able to allow passage to the sky to visit ancestors there. Shamanism associated with weather. Greeting, food giving, and marriage rituals. Birth ritual, involve new family restricting diet and painting themselves red to represent the blood lost during childbirth. Menstration and initiation rituals.

6.5 Myths: ancestral anaconda journey up river. Shaman power derived from the Sun’s tobacco snuff. Wood Ibises bring ritual gifts of ants to their mother-in-law and are killed by a pouncing jaguar upon entering the house.

6.6 Cultural Materials: cigars and fire

6.7 Sex Differences in RCR: Upon death men are buried with ritual adornment and women are buried with a basket of their persona belongings.

6.8 Missionary Effect:

6.9 RCR Revival:

6.10 Death and Afterlife Beliefs: soul goes to sky when you die.

6.11 Taboo of Naming Dead People:

6.12 Teknynomy: YES!

7. Adornment

7.1 Body Paint: used and applied by shaman. Warriors intending to kill paint themselves red.

7.2 Piercings:

7.3 Haircut:

7.4 Sacrifice:

7.5 Adornment: used

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual Adornment: used and applied by shaman

7.7 Sex Differences in Adornment:

7.8 Missionary Effect:

7.9 Cultural Revival in Adornment:

8. Kinship Systems

8.1 Sibling Classification System: Patrilineal, exogamous

8.2 Sororate, Levirate:

8.3 Other Notable Kinship Typology: Patrilineal Language Inheritance: Wife tends to totally switch to her husbands language unless hers is well understood within the tribe. Children only learn husband’s language as their first language.

9. Other Interesting Cultural Features

-Husbands and wives always have different first languages, and up to 4 different languages can be represented within one household.

-Population estimated to be over 10,000.

-Cook and use Coca

-practice metonymy

-If a child is born before a marriage status is determined, it is killed at birth.

-infanticide occurs in the cases of illegitimate children, when there are several children of the same sex (especially female) born consecutively, and if relations with the father are strained. Many babies are buried alive.

Numbered References

From the Milk River: Spatial and Temporal Processes in Northwest Amazonia

Christine Hugh-Jones

Research Fellow, New Hall, Cambridge

Cambridge University Press

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