

## 1. Description

### 1.1 Name of society, language, and language family:

Name of society: Cubeo

Language: Cubeo

Language family: Cubeo is a branch of the Tucanoan family.

([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cubeo\\_language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cubeo_language))

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

CUB

### 1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

They are located in Colombian Vaupés.

1°12'N 70°10'W

### 1.4 Brief history:

Throughout their history, the Cubeo tend to keep to themselves. Frequently, other Indians have tried to raid them, but there isn't much evidence that they were the ones who did any raiding. Even when the Europeans came over, they mostly kept quiet and did not resist too much. Now a day they still reside within the same boundaries as the past, but are more modernize. There is now a school and a hospital in their village, and for the most part they've quit believing in their old beliefs, but nevertheless they still practice their rituals for traditions sake.

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

The missionaries had a lot of influence on this society. The most important thing was that they converted them away from their traditional belief system. As a result they no longer believe in their ancestors as gods, and they no longer perform infanticide.

### 1.6 Ecology:

The Cubeo live next to a major river, making the river extremely important to them. Most of their daily lives are spent down by the rivers, and even when the men go hunt, they only travel along the river. As a result of living next to this river, they live on extremely fertile land, which helps tremendously with farming.

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

Each village has about 30-35 residents, while the current estimate of the overall population size is around 3,000-5,000. (Goldman, 59)

## 2. Economy

### 2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

Bitter manioc, tubers, fruit. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Economy.html>)

### 2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

Fish and Tapirs. (Goldman 51)

### 2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

They had a bow and arrow, which was used more for fishing than warfare. (Goldman 55)

### 2.4 Food storage:

### 2.5 Sexual division of production:

Yes, there was a sexual division of production present in this society. Males' role was to tend to the fields, making sure it was maintained for farming plants. Their job was also to hunt, fish, and build houses and canoes. Females roles were to make pottery, preparing food, taking care of children, and other domestic work. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Economy.html>)

### 2.6 Land tenure:

Yes, there was land tenure. Possession of land was secured when a family would begin farming on it. Farmland was passed down through the family lineages, and when a family didn't possess any land, they had to go to the elders for permission. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Economy.html>)

### 2.7 Ceramics:

Yes, they were very skilled at making pottery and other items out of calabash tree and from tree bark.

(<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Economy.html>)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

Yes, they had some sort of specified sharing patterns. Whenever a family had a surplus of agriculture or hunting goods, then they were expected to share with their relatives of the same clan. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Economy.html>)

2.9 Food taboos:

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

Yes, they had canoes. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Economy.html>)

### 3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

### 4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

“Officially” the girl reaches their menstruation at the age of 8 when one of the elders uses their hand to stretch out their vagina. Though a girl doesn’t actually go through menstruation until a couple years later. (Goldman 180)

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):

A girl gets married right after she menstruates. (Goldman 181)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

There is a pretty high divorce rate in this society. The most common cause of a divorce is the inability in producing offspring. When a couple cannot have children, they almost always separate. Another common cause is frequent infidelity with either partner. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Marriage-and-Family.html>)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

Polygyny was somewhat frequent in this society, but so was polyandry. (Goldman 2, 66)

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

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

Items that were used exclusively by the man are passed down to his sons, and items that were used exclusively by the woman were passed down to her daughters. For the larger items, such as farmland, it was passed down father to son.

(<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Marriage-and-Family.html>)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

True homosexuality is rare, though homosexual activities in young children are prevalent. Boys would partake in mutual masturbation while the girls would touch each other. These activities are public and no shame is brought upon the children. (Goldman 181)

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

They had a pattern of exogamy. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Kinship.html>)

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)?

Yes, they believe that the more times a couple has sex the more fetuses will develop in the womb. A pregnant woman will stop having sex in fear that her belly would explode from too many children developing within her. (Goldman 166)

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)

The people in this society prefer for cross cousins as their marriage partners. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Marriage-and-Family.html>)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

Yes, females enjoy sexual freedoms; they are very forward about it. (Goldman 182)

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?

Yes, the males joke and jest with each other, though they don't joke around with females as much. (Goldman 34)

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations

They had a patrilineal pattern of descent. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Kinship.html>)

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

The Cubeo has very strict rules on not allowing incest. (Goldman 3, 9)

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

Yes there was a formal marriage ritual. The man would abduct the girl he wants to marry. The girl would shout for help, and her clan would rush to her aid, beating the man. However, the man's clan would help him and the two clans would fight. If the man got to the canoe with the girl, then the two would be married. For the most part this was just a ritual, and the two clans would pretend to fight. (Goldman 142)

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?

Personal names come from the genealogy of the clan. These personal names are sacred and only intimate people know of a person's name. (Goldman, 19)

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)

Multiple clans made up this society as a whole, and marriages were preferred to be outside of the person's clan. (Goldman 2, 30)

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?

Yes there is a sister swap. (Goldman, 75)

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?

No, they did not practice cannibalism.

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

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

30-35 people (Goldman, 59)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

This society is pretty sedentary.

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):

The political system was typically dominated by the men. This society was made up of clans, which encompassed one or several families. Each clan was led by one male, and each of these males formed a council of elders, which they made collective decisions. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Sociopolitical-Organization.html>)

5.4 Post marital residence:

This society has a virilocal pattern after marriage. (Goldman, 10)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

Yes, there was definitely defined borders with this group. They were cautious about crossing them. (Goldman 3, 4)

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

Yes, usually the young children would help the woman with her duties. Once the males reach puberty then they would help their fathers. (Goldman, 148)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

5.8 Village and house organization:

Each village is comprised of multiple houses that each homes an individual nuclear family. These houses are arranged around the fields. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Settlements.html>)

#### 5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

In every village there was a maloca, which was a large communal residence center. In the old days this was actually used as a residential area for people of that community, but now a days, it's just a center where rituals take place.

(<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Settlements.html>)

#### 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

They sleep in hammocks. (Goldman 41)

#### 5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:

The society was organized into clans, which consisted of one or several families. Each family in a clan descended from a common ancestor, making everybody related. (Goldman 2, 34)

#### 5.12 Trade:

They have three types of trade partnerships. One type is with the whites where they trade commercial goods. Another type is more intertribal where only specialty items are traded, and the last type is intratribal where the trading consists of less economic goods and more in the spirit of doing social exchanges. (Goldman 69)

#### 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

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

#### 6 Time allocation to RCR:

##### 6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

Yes, there were shamans. Shamans were extremely important in this society because they were their contact to the spiritual world. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>)

##### 6.2 Stimulants:

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

Birth – women would give birth in the manioc fields. (Goldman 30)

Yurupari- This was the male initiation ceremony, but it is no longer being practiced.

(<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>)

Death – The death ceremony, like all other rituals, is no longer being practiced like it did in the past. In the past it was a complex ritual that lasted a long time, but now they do a simple burial, where they bury the deceased body in the center of the house. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>)

##### 6.4 Other rituals:

Most rituals that take place are just reenactments of traditional rituals. They do this more for traditional sake than for their belief systems.

(<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>)

##### 6.5 Myths (Creation):

They believe that the universe was created by the Kuwaiwa brothers, who were their oldest ancestors. They also believe that the brothers left them flutes and trumpets.

(<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>)

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

They had a lot of musical instruments, which includes panpipes, animal shells, stamping tubes, maracas, and rattles of dried fruit seeds.

##### 6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

##### 6.8 Missionary effect:

Due to missionary influence, the Cubeo no longer make ornaments and ritual paraphernalia, such as the ancestral flutes and trumpets left by the Kawaiwa brothers.

(<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Economy.html>)

##### 6.9 RCR revival:

##### 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

The believe that when a person's dies their body will disintegrate, but their souls move to the clan's ancestral houses.

(<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

No there is no taboo. They believe that the deceased spirit reincarnates every four generations, and to emphasize this, they give that offspring who is four generations the same name of that deceased person.

(<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>)

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

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

Their religion is mostly ancestor worshipping.

## 7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

Yes, they sometimes paint themselves in vegetable dye; this mostly occurs during rituals. (<http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>)

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):

Infanticide is very common in this society. If a woman doesn't want to give up having sex, they will easily abort the child. However, if the child is born, but still unwanted, the parents would bury the child alive at the same spot it was born. (Goldman 166)

## Numbered references

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3. [www.everyculture.com](http://www.everyculture.com)
  - <http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Cubeo-Religion-and-Expressive-Culture.html>
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4. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cubeo\\_language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cubeo_language)
5. Goldman, Irving. (3) *Reflections of Nature in Vaupés Cultures*. 2nd ed. Vol. 8. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000. Print.