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Subject: Emerillon Questionnaire

Aleah Kennedy
Ethnographies of South America
Emerillon Questionnaire

1. Description

- 1.1 Name of society, language, and language family: Emerillon, Tupi, Tupi-Guarani
- 1.2 Location: French Guyana, South America
- 1.3 Brief history: In 1767, the Emerillon were visited by Patris (a French explorer) who estimated their number at 350-400 and noted that the Emerillon were more nomadic than neighboring tribes. A report of Bagot, a pioneer trader who was very attached to the Emerillon, observed a dramatic decrease in population due to epidemics of colds and chest inflammation. In 1888, the Emerillon of the Sai (a tributary of the Inini) numbering 100, were visited by the explorer Coudreau. He noted the close symbioses of this tribe with Creole prospectors, and already marked deterioration of customs and social life (Hurault and Frenay). Presently there are 100 Emerillon living in French Guyana.
- 1.4 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: Creole and Cayenne prospectors traded with the Emerillon and women often left to marry the Creole prospectors, never to return back to the tribe (Hurault and Frenay).
- 1.5 Ecology: Remaining Emerillon live in settlements in French Guiana on the Camopi, a tributary of the Oiapoque River, and on the Tampok, a tributary of the Maroni (Flowers).

2. Economy

- 2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): Manioc, sweet potatoes, yams, maize (red, yellow and white), sugarcane, bananas (Flowers).
- 2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: hunting and fishing for agoutis, armadillos, anteaters (for their hides, mainly), peccaries, deer, manatees, monkeys, otters, sloths, tapir and capybaras (Flowers).
- 2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: Bow and arrow (1-2 meters in length, occasionally poisoned), spears, shields, clubs and, more recently, rifles. Bows and arrows, spears, harpoons, and traps were also used for hunting (Flowers).
- 2.4 Food storage: woven baskets (Flowers).
- 2.5 Sexual division of production: Men clear fields, and women harvest the fields (Flowers).
- 2.6 Land tenure:
- 2.7 Ceramics:
- 2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:
- 2.9 Food taboos: some ritual food taboos observed by pubescent girls awaiting marriage (Flowers).
- 2.10 Canoes/watercraft? Canoes are made of tree trunks hollowed out by fire (Flowers).

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):
- 4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): Maximum fertility age is 23 years and average age of mothers at birth of children is 27 years old.
- 4.3 Completed family size (m and f):
- 4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):
- 4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): Puberty rituals signaled impending marriage for boys and girls (Flowers). Emerillon are open to marriage at anytime between older men marrying younger women or older women marrying younger men (Hurault and Frenay).

- 4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: Despite a growing disorder of mores and the recent emergence of prostitution, Emerillon remain opposed to divorce. They prefer to close their eyes to the misconduct of their wives (*implies prudence?*) (Hurault and Frenay).
- 4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: Polygamy exists with Emerillon and remains today. Marriages between partners of very different ages, not only between young girls and old men, but among young men and old women (Hurault and Frenay).
- 4.8 Arranged marriage, bride purchase/service, dowry:
- 4.9 Inheritance patterns: Emerillon attach great importance to the patrilineal succession of leaders (Hurault).
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):
- For a generation, there appeared to be intertribal marriages, with the Oayana and the Oyampi. In 1961 there were six of these households. These exogamous exchanges are unfavorable to the Emerillon because they lose more women than they gain, and it's possible that eh movement goes increasing until disappearance of the group (Hurault and Frenay).
 - Exogamy has been common due to low numbers of Emerillon tribe and Creole influence marrying women of Emerillon (Flowers).
- 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): preferred spouse is cross-cousin (Hurault and Frenay).
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? Females apparently enjoy sexual freedom by having affairs with Creoles and when they do have affairs, their husbands prefer to look the other way and not get divorced because of adultery (Hurault and Frenay).
- 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: Couvade is still observed. Male refrains from heavy labor for eight days after the birth of his child (Flowers).
- 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: Matrilineal and patrilineal descent used to trace lineage but patrilineal descent used for leader succession (Hurault and Frenay).
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? Family surname is chosen by ordinal marking of birth of child:

| Order of birth | Male name | Female name |
|----------------|-----------|-------------|
| First born | Poonam | Koudya |
| Second born | Pia | Koudyatan |
| Third born | Kounouni | Ta'i |
| Fourth born | Tyin | Ambo |
| Fifth born | Bo | |

This custom is not completely lost, but it is applied by some households (Hurault and Frenay).

- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?): Marriage is preferred within the community (Flowers).

Warfare/homicide

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:
- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: Intertribal warfare was fairly common (Flowers).

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: Emerillon went to war to exact revenge for past attacks and raids and to acquire captives and slaves; captive men often wed their captors' daughters. The Emerillon practiced cannibalism as a means of revenge (Flowers).

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: 30-40 people (Flowers).

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): Villages were moved frequently, owing to things like soil exhaustion, warfare, necessities of trade and other things (like death of an inhabitant) (Flowers).

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): Headman was leader, and, rarely, a council. Leader now receive salaries from the French government, but the leader has little prestige (Flowers).

5.4 Post marital residence: Son principally established with his step-father. Traditionally matrilocal marriage, presently Ambilocal post-residential patterns (Hurault and Frenay).

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): Villages were located at a distance from rivers for protection from raids (Flowers).

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

5.8 Village and house organization: Traditionally built Beehive type housing but currently the houses are rectangular, open on three sides, with a sloping palm-leaf roof and floor raised 1-2 meters above the ground with a ladder made of a tree trunk used to enter. Furniture consists of benches, hammocks, and store-bought mosquito nets (Flowers).

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? Hammocks woven from tree bark (Flowers).

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: Emerillon attaches great importance to the patrilineal succession of leaders (Hurault and Frenay).

5.12 Trade: Manioc graters, manioc flour cotton, tobacco (Flowers) and dried fish in exchange for rifles, cloth and alcohol (Hurault and Frenay). Emerillon traditionally kept dogs and now breed them for trade, exchanging them with the Wayana for beads (Flowers).

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR:

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): Shamans present (Flowers).

6.2 Stimulants:

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): Men observe couvades by refraining from heavy labor for eight days after their child is born. Puberty rituals signaled impending marriage. Boys were subjected to work ordeals, and girls were secluded and required to observe food taboos. The dead are wrapped in their hammocks and also placed in wooden coffins, are buried with their personal possessions (Flowers).

6.4 Other rituals:

6.5 Myths (Creation):

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

6.8 Missionary effect:

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

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.):
[Cross-cousin spouse preferred \(Flowers\)](#).

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Numbered references

1. Hurault, Jean, and P. Frenay. Les Indiens Emerillon de la Guyane Francaise. Vol. 52. 1963. 133-156. Web.
2. Flowers, Nancy M. "Countries and Their Cultures: Emerillon." Advameg, Inc. 2010. <http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Emerillon.html>. 14 March 2010.