

1. Description

1.1 Name of group/ language family: Guajá, Tupi-Guarani

1.2 Location: Western Maranhão, Brazil, South of Amazon

1.3 Brief History: Traditional foraging, Nomadic. Originated in the lower Tocantins River, then migrated eastward with colonization. Migration is most likely a result of disease, warfare, or Portuguese enslavement. These events also could explain the shift from horticulture to foraging. The Guajá were almost completely isolated until the mid-1970s. Since then, many of the same factors in their early history have affected them, such as loss of territory, disease, and conflict with neo-Brazilians and other Amerindian groups.

1.4 Outside Influences: generally nomadic but have become more settled in the past 20 years. About 1/3 of population have not had contact with non-indian people. This is rapidly changing due to construction of Carajá's railroad in 1985. This has brought illegal invasion, development, and disease. Recently, the introduction of television has introduced violence to children.

1.5 **Ecology:** Insects (tarantulas, scorpions, locusts, biting centipede, cockroaches, gnats, mosquitos, small black ants) Neo-tropical.

2. Economy

2.1 Main Carbohydrate Staple: diet lacks carbohydrates, tribe relies on Babassu palm, and recently manioc.

2.2 Main Protein-Lipid Source: Monkeys contribute anywhere from 3-36 percent of a lowland South American groups diet. The key game animal for the Guajá are Howler Monkeys (*Alouatta belzebul*) in the wet season, and fish in the dry season, while white-lipped peccary plays an important role in both seasons.

2.3 Weapons: Bow and Arrow, have recently acquired guns.

2.4 Food Storage:

2.5 Sexual Division of Production: Husbands control women's labor to control their sexual relationships with men besides themselves.

2.6: Land Tenure:

2.7: Ceramics:

2.8 Food sharing is obligatory. People go from hut to hut and ask for food, either food that is being prepared or from a bowl someone is already eating from, and it is always given to them.

2.9 Food Taboos: There are three kinds of food taboos: food no one can eat, food that interferes with fertility, and food that children avoid. Mammals that are not allowed to be eaten by anyone are the capybara, large opossum, and rabbit. Birds that are not allowed to be eaten by anyone are vultures and Harpy eagles. Reptiles that are avoided by all include most snakes, except the anaconda,

bushmaster, and boa constrictor, which can be eaten by everyone except young women and nulliparous women. Mammals that must be avoided by young and nulliparous women are jaguar, tayra, bats, mice, small opossum, river otter, squirrel, two-toed sloth, anteater, coatimundi, kinkajou, bamboo rat, and the porcupine is only avoided by nulliparous women. Birds avoided by only young and nulliparous women include eagles, hawks, kingfisher, crested guan, toucans, parrots, owls, swift, woodpecker, and ibis. Reptiles that must be avoided by young a nulliparous women are all snakes, large tortoises, frogs and toads, turtles and lizards. Small tortoises and caiman are only avoided by nulliparous women. Fish that must be avoided by young and nulliparous women are large catfish sting ray, and several other unidentified fish. All women must avoid bats, and two-toed sloth. Young men must avoid jaguar, tow-toed sloth, owls, turtle, lizards, and most fish.

2.10 Conoes/Watercraft: Canoes

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean Adult Height:

3.2 Mean Adult Weight: Female – 50.4 KG

4. Life Histroy, Mating, Marriage

4.1 Age At First Menarche:

4.2 Age At First Birth:

4.3 Completed Family Size:

4.4 Inter-Birth-Interval:

4.5 Marriage Age: Girls marry at age 6 or 7, husbands generally are much older.

4.6 Proportion of Marriages Ending In Divorce: Marriage arrangements change often, divorce is generally a gradual separation, and wives can be traded.

4.7 Percent Marriages Polygamous, Percent Males Married Polygamously: Many men married to mothers and daughters of the mother that they did not father. Men also marry granddaughters of their wives. Both men and women can have several spouses. Women tend to have husbands sequentially, while men can more often have wives simultaneously. There are differences in “true wives” and “classificatory wives”.

4.8 Arranged Marriage, Bride purchase/service, dowry: Marriage arrangements are made between a bride’s father and potential husband. Husband gives his young bride fish, “to help her grow strong and become comfortable enough to live with her husband.”

4.9 Inheritance Patterns:

4.10 Parent-Offspring Interactions and Conflict: the role of “father” is weak and serves as a generic classification.

4.11 Homosexual Activities, Social Attitudes Toward Homosexuality:

4.12 Pattern of Exogamy/Endogamy: 6 of 55 identified marriages were to out-group members

4.13 Believe “Partible Paternity”, more than one biological father recognized. It takes about 3 sexual partners just prior to or during pregnancy to make a baby. All fathers are recognized in “sets”. Some fathers claim to be only “partial” fathers.

4.14 Mother’s Role in Procreation: A vessel to contain the build up of semen, nothing more

4.15 Conception an incremental process? More than one “father” is necessary to reproduce, it is believed that semen builds up over time to make a baby.

4.16 Occurrence of Sexual Coercion/Rape:

4.17 Preferential Category of Spouse: each wife tends to be related to each other (mother, daughters, sisters)

4.18 Do Females Enjoy Sexual Freedoms? Women and men mate with numerous partners because they believe it is the only way to reproduce. Men do not directly have a say in female sexual freedoms, but husbands tend to try to distract women by increasing or changing the location of their work load to prevent them from having sex with partners they do not approve of.

4.19 Gift Giving to Extramarital Partners or Extramarital Offspring:

4.20 If Mother Dies, Who Raises Children?

4.21 Adult Sex Ration:

4.22 Couvades:

4.23 Different Distinctions For Potential Fathers: all fathers recognized

4.24 use joking and teasing to resolve conflict.

4.25 Patterns of Deceit For Certain Rights, Names, or Associations:

4.26 Incest Avoidance Rules:

4.27 Formal Marriage Ceremony? Lack formal marriage ceremony.

4.28 In What Ways Does One Get a Name, Change Their Name, or Receive Another Name? Each Guajá is named for a plant, animal, or object with which the individual had a special spiritual connection.

4.29 Marriage Preferred Within or Outside Community (M/F Difference):

Warfare/Homicide

4.14 Percent Adult Deaths Due To Warfare:

4.15 Outgroup invasion by non-indians. They come to hunt and fish illegally and Guajá have killed a few of these trespassers.

4.16 Reported Causes of In-Group and Out-Group Killing: Out-Group Killing due to trespassing reported.

4.17 External Relations (Number, Diversity, Relationship): non-Indian groups, Brazilians (FUNAI). Brazilian fisher-farmers are considered non-kin and have a somewhat hostile relationship with the Guajá

5. Socio-Political Organization and Interaction

5.1 Mean Village/Group Size: 108 people at this specific village

5.2 Mobility Pattern (Seasonal): recently become foragers, less seasonal movement

5.3 Political System:

5.4 Post-Marital Residence: A widowed woman will often move or marry into a household with many of her female relatives, such as her mother, daughters, or sisters.

5.5 Territoriality: Yes, defend resources (no unauthorized hunting or fishing can be done by out-group)

5.6 Social Interaction Divisions:

5.7 Special Friendships/Joking Relationships

5.8 108 village members, 10 huts, 90 monkeys kept as pets. Neolocal, households can contain families connected through siblings. New households are formed as new couples separate from parents. Siblings tend to move in together as they become married.

5.9 specialized Village Structures:

5.10 Sleep in hammocks

5.11 Social Organizations (Clans, Moieties, Lineages, etc.):

5.12 Trade: trading takes place with local out-groups (ex. Yanomamö)for agriculture products.

5.13 Indications of Social Hierarchy? Terms of reference generally refer to the amount of respect one is entitled to receive more so than family relationships.

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion

6.1 Medicinal plants have strong odor. They bathe in their solution to ward off cannibal ghosts, which they believe cause illness. Many animals are associated with the divinities The divinity has special control over this specific animal. Also practice "cannibalism" during certain ceremonies. They dress themselves to be fed to the divinities.

6.2 Stimulants:

6.3 Passage Rituals (Birth, Death, Seasonal, Puberty)

6.4 Other Rituals: The early dry season is a time for ritual where the people dance at night several times each week. They also sing and come into contact with the divinities and ancestors who live in the sky home, *iwa*. There is also a ritual preformed to remember family members, dead and alive.

6.5 Myths (Creation): most game animals have human origins, although some involve transition from plant to landscape features The Creation of Humans: The creator divinity had a large erection and a strong sexual desire and came upon a tree with large breasts and female genitalia. He cut the tree down to human size and ate its fruit through both his penis and mouth. He then had sex with the tree and blew on her and sang to her to make her human. She became pregnant with twin boys. One day the father of the boys went walking in the forest to find wood to make a bow. His wife followed after him but she did not know the forest. The still fetal male twins told her the way and she followed after him. A large jaguar with human-like features came up and devoured her, but not her twins. When the father discovered this, he was very afraid of the jaguar and left earth forever and went to *iwa*. The jaguar raised the twins and taught them how to eat and prepare traditional foods and crack open palm fruit and to hunt and eat game animals.

6.6 Cultural Material (Music, Art, Games):

6.7 Sex Differences in RCR: Women and children to not go to *iwa*, or become possessed by spirits.

6.10 Death and Afterlife Beliefs: All death is homicide due to the belief in the involvement of some type of malignant human agency.

6.11 Taboo of Naming Dead People?

6.12 Teknonymy?

7. Adornment

7.1 Body Paint:

7.2 Piercings:

7.3 Haircut:

7.4 Sacrificion:

7.5 Adornment (Beads, Feathers, Lip Plates, etc.): Hawk and Toucan Feathers

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual Adornment: Feathers

7.7 Sex Differences In Adornment:

7.8 Missionary Effect:

8. Kinship Systems

8.1 Sibling Classification System: Animism and Totemism: plants, animals, and objects are considered spirit siblings. The Forest and Sky siblings include plants, animals, and people that are alive and dead.

8.2 Sororate, Levirate: There are no real rules for marriage in time of death of a spouse, but men often marry mothers, daughters, and sisters, along with women marrying brothers.

8.3 Other Kinship Typology: Use Dravidian kinship typology, also known as the two-line prescriptive system. Practice Avunculate marriage

9. Other Interesting Cultural Features

The Guajá suffer from “genealogical amnesia”, making the reconstruction of their lineages difficult.

Give gifts to pets, and associate their well-being with female fertility.

Hanama – pets kept including monkeys, agoutis, pecas, peccaries, coatimundis, sloths, jaguar kittens, birds, opossum, mice, armadillos, caimans, lizards, tortoises, grasshoppers, and ants.

Numbered Reference

Kinship With Monkeys

Loretta A. Cormier

Columbia University Press

New York, Chichester, West Sussex

Copyright 2003