

## 1. Description

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

Guarani (formerly Carijo); Guarani; Tupi-Guarani

### 1.2 Location: Lowland South America; Mostly Brazil and Paraguay

**1.3 Brief history:** They left the Amazon Basin and conquered the Parana Plateau and the mouth of the Amazon. They were bounded by the Paraguay river. They were in conflict with the tribes of the land they were exploring, the Chaco in particular.

**1.4 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:** They had a large population (1 million) before the Spanish came in. They are the usual case of many deaths from disease and slavery. Their land is important to bad guys because it has timber, oil, and yerba mate. The group split in 2 after the missionaries came – those who were Christian, who Metraux refers to as “Guarani”, and those who evaded conversion, called “Caingua” or Forest Dwellers. By 1912, their population was down to 3000. They have a history of hiding in the forest and avoiding white colonists.

**1.5 Ecology:** They live in the forest; they are known as the “forest people.”

## 2. Economy

**2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):** Corn and manioc. They make them into cakes, flour, beer, and other dishes.

**2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:** Peccary, tatu, monkey.

**2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:** Use bow and arrow. Bows are made out of wood, arrows are made out of wood, a monkey bone, a barb, and decorated with feathers. They use bamboo traps for animals.

**2.4 Food storage:** They make baskets and nets, but also have borrowed skin bags from other cultures in the area.

**2.5 Sexual division of production:** Yes. Men hunt and gather. Women take care of domestic things like cooking, getting water, and processing food. Men clear space for the gardens, hunt and gather. Women maintain the garden plots.

**2.6 Land tenure:** They are primarily farmers. They grow manioc, corn, sweet potatoes, beans, etc. They rotate gardens every three years. They also hunt and gather. They do these things around their houses. Garden plots are split up between families, and no assignments are permanent.

**2.7 Ceramics:** They do use ceramics, but importing of iron pots has made them less popular.

**2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:** Since they live in groups made up of family units, linked by kinship, when one house makes something they often share it with the others in the group.

**2.9 Food taboos:** Men are not allowed to eat monkey meat when they have a new baby because after they are shot they still hang from their tails. After the baby is born, the biggest thing they are not allowed is tatu; they also have to avoid fat, pork, manioc, and corn.

During first menarche, girls are allowed only “light meat” which means fish and birds, along with yams and manioc. They believe other meats with cause craziness, seizures, and heavy bleeding. Salt causes tooth loss.

Boys are not allowed to eat certain meats once their voices change, because of bad spirits.

**2.10 Canoes/watercraft?** Because they are so spread out, some live near larger rivers than others. They all use canoes, but ones further from large rivers use them less frequently. The Cayua, however, have to use canoes a lot and they can be as long as 8-12 feet.

**3. Anthropometry:** They hate being measured, because they feel it will bring them bad luck. They are only comfortable with measurements of dead people. They are often mistaken for Japanese.

**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):** 14-17

**4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):** 15; 18

**4.3 Completed family size (m and f):** There is the mom, dad, brother, children, son-in-laws, and grandchildren. Women have about 10-12 children over their lifetime, and half make it to adulthood.

**4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):** 3 years.

**4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):** 14-17 for females (after second or third menarche) and 16-18 for males; boy parents talk to girl parents

**4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:** Unknown.

**4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:** It is considered bad (Mbora'u) to be married to more than one person.

**4.8 Arranged marriage, bride purchase/service, dowry:** Son-in-law works for the daughter's father after marriage. Marriage is cemented with a house, garden plot, and children.

**4.9 Inheritance patterns:** They don't have property to inherit; new families build their own house and establish a new garden plot.

**4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:** Children are given a lot of freedom, and are left alone when their parents go hunt and gather. They think that kids are unteachable and are born the way they are; if they are strong willed, they don't correct them, because that's just how they are. They are reincarnated, and have the same personality as the person they are believed to be. They are included in all discussions. There are a lot of superstitions to ensure children grow strong, such as mixing animal parts with forest barks.

**4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:** Unknown.

**4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):** Marriage outside their family group, but within the community.

**4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?** The father will dream about a child, and will tell his wife about it; she will then become pregnant. If it is a boy, it is only made out of him. The child's soul had been wandering around and looking for somewhere to go. It is not always necessary to have intercourse. Sometimes if a child has died it can come back without the parents having intercourse.

**4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")** She is mostly just the carrier, but sometimes if the baby is a girl then it is made of her. If a woman passes by a certain plant, she can become pregnant. She prefers to have male children and no twins or sick children.

**4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?**  
No.

**4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape:** Unknown.

**4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)** Cross cousin or uncle and niece.

**4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?** No evidence.

**4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring.** No evidence.

**4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?** Her parents, the child's grandparents.

**4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females:** Unknown.

**4.22 Evidence for couvades:** Men are not allowed to work, especially with iron tools until the cord falls off. They can't walk in the forest because of dangers. Food taboos. Sexual prohibition.

**4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older):** Unknown.

**4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?** Unknown.

**4.24 Joking relationships?** Unknown.

**4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations:** There is emphasis on the grandparents, but since it is both the grandmother and grandfather, it is bilateral descent.

**4.26 Incest avoidance rules:** If they marry someone related to them, they get Mboru'u, or bad omens. It is prohibited.

**4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?** No ceremony.

**4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?** Babies are named during the corn harvest. They are named after the Land Without Evil and its inhabitants; i.e. the person they are thought to be. They are reincarnated people. If they become sick, they receive a new name; they also do when they mature.

**4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)** They prefer for them to marry within the group, but the times are changing and inter-group marriages are more common. They prefer within community marriages because they know the ways of their religion.

## **Warfare/homicide**

**4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:** Unknown.

**4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:** They rarely have open battles.

**4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:** Unknown.

**4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):** They are sometimes at odds with the Chaco tribe, and other Tupi tribes.

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

**5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:** 10-25 households

**5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):** They are fairly sedentary. They live near their family plots and get other food from the area. There is evidence in the past of tribes migrating towards the East, in search of the Land Without Evil.

**5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):** They have a chief. They have large kin ties and a lot of religious knowledge. He is not a leader per se; he gives advice.

**5.4 Post marital residence:** Uxorilocal

**5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):** After the government established Indian agencies, they recognize ownership of land. They previously did not.

**5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):** Both parents are responsible for the children.

**5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:** Unknown.

**5.8 Village and house organization:** In the past, one big group house (up to 100 families). They are now one family houses, probably the result of missionaries. They still build their single houses in family groups though.

**5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):** Nuclear families live together with their house next to the mother's family.

**5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?** They used to exclusively sleep in hammocks, but in modern times children sleep in them and adults only sit on them, now preferring a bed with wooden boards.

**5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:** They are bilineal.

**5.12 Trade:** Trade in the past with the Inca. They now trade for manufactured items (salt, weapons, clothes, food). They trade their forest items. They also sell them for cash.

**5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?** No; everything is decided by kinship, not class. The chief usually has the largest kin group.

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

**6 Time allocation to RCR:** During times like droughts, dances and festivities start at dusk and last several hours.

**6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):** The chief is a religious leader. The men use medicine, but the chief knows how to combine medicine with supernatural powers and is a better healer.

**6.2 Stimulants:** Tobacco.

**Drugs:** A bird who imitates other bird calls (gaturamo) is ground up, mixed with tobacco, and chewed so they can learn white people's language. They gargle with a tree bark (Schaden didn't know what) to sing better.

**6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):** When someone dies, they leave them on a pyre for a year and then put them into a ceramic pot afterward. Almost all modern tribes bury their dead – sometimes in a hole in the ground in the fetal position, sometimes in the floor of a hut they then abandon, and sometimes in a hollow tree trunk.

Boys have their bottom lip pierced to protect against death, and afterward only eat corn mush. They also use more adult phrases, such as an adult version of “yes” rather than a child's. They are also expected to behave during long trips and be kind to their future wives and others in the community. Since they are not allowed to do any work, they have to have a woman who is sexually abstinent cook for them, because otherwise they will not eat good food. If he doesn't have his lip pierced, a wild animal will eat him and he won't get married.

Girls are secluded from the rest of the village and can only eat certain foods, all vegetables. They have to be lukewarm. She has a number of things she isn't allowed to do – look up from the ground, blow on a fire, laugh, or talk to anyone. She has to cut her hair and work for an older woman for the time it takes for her hair to grow back. During this time she learns about being a mother and wife.

**6.4 Other rituals:** You can get power from chants while you are sleeping. Rituals are often done at night in the leader's home.

**6.5 Myths (Creation):** They believe the sun rises in the Land Without Evil, walks across the sky, and settles in the West at night. They think that the world has been destroyed and recreated, and will be again in the future. There is a male god, and a female goddess. They are known as the grandfather and grandmother. The grandfather got tired of earth after creating it, and almost destroyed it, but the grandmother stopped him by singing and banging a bamboo instrument.

Their son and his wife divided up the tribes into different areas, and gave people fire and tobacco. His wife had twins. The twins take care of the sun and the moon. Also, they took vengeance on the jaguar people for killing their mother, but spared a pregnant one, so there are still jaguar people in the world. There are a lot of animal myths.

**6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):** They sing and dance with a cross. They use gourds and bamboo sticks as instruments. They don't play games really; they imitate the adults, like pretending to hunt. They play with bamboo traps. They play with bows and arrows that are half the size of the adult ones. Children's bows and arrows are sold to tourists.

**6.7 Sex differences in RCR:** Women use an instrument made out of bamboo called a "takuapu" and men use an flute called a "mimby apyka". Women are not allowed to take part in the male initiation except for cooking.

**6.8 Missionary effect:** They've taken to using a cross, and sometimes wear ponchos that resemble a priest's robes.

**6.9 RCR revival:** The main thing holding them back from complete cultural destruction is their religion. The missionaries have yet to extinguish their beliefs.

**6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:** They follow the Milky Way to the afterlife, called the "Tapir's Path." It is difficult to reach the Land Without Evil, because bad spirits will try to block the newly deceased, or they might have been so upset and frustrated with their death that they haunt their old village until they are reincarnated. All souls are reincarnated into new babies. Children's souls are the only ones who reach the afterlife quickly.

**6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?** Since children are reincarnated souls, they are given the name they had in a previous life, and change it once they mature.

**6.12 Is there teknonymy?** No.

## 7. Adornment

**7.1 Body paint:** They do use body paint, and it is usually a dot and line pattern. They use charcoal, honey, wax, and other plants to make the dye.

**7.2 Piercings:** Lip plugs made out of resin for boys, sometimes they had pretty rocks or bones. They are t-shaped. They are becoming less common.

**7.3 Haircut:** Women have longer, shoulder length hair. Men have the traditional bowl cut (that looks like a crown) or more modern styles.

**7.4 Scarification:** No evidence.

**7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):** Rich men would wear copper or silver circles on a necklace, while other men would just wear shells. Women wear shell earrings. They were mostly naked, but the women sometimes wore loincloths or dresses. Men sometimes wear loincloths, cloaks, or ponchos.

**7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:** Feathers are really important. In the past they made feather-covered cloaks, and they no longer do, but still use feathers in a variety of items like headdresses, bracelets, necklaces, and belts. Women and children wore necklaces made out of almost anything, including fish bones, carved bones, gourds, animal skin, wood, or seeds. They even make rings out of iguana tails.

**7.7 Sex differences in adornment:** Some tribes use human hair as decoration, and only men are allowed to wear a belt made out of it.

**7.8 Missionary effect:** Women wear cotton dresses. People who do not have Western style clothing are ashamed when white visitors come to their village, and will stay in their huts. In modern times their favorite gift from white visitors is cloth or clothing.

**7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:** The changing times and gradual acculturation have left them embarrassed of their traditional adornment, and traditional piercings, jewelry, and clothing are hidden from visitors if they continue to wear them. Women often have their ears pierced, which has been borrowed from Brazilian culture.

## **8. Kinship systems**

**8.1 Sibling classification system:** Everyone your age has your siblings name. Same sex “siblings” are defined by age (older or younger) while opposite sex “siblings” all have the same name. Then, aunts and uncles names are defined by your parents' names.

**8.2 Sororate, levirate:** No evidence.

**8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):**Unknown.

## **9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):**

Missionaries used to use Guarani as their go-to language for Tupi tribes in South America. They practiced cannibalism like the Tupinamba – they would capture a guy, give him a wife, feed him well, and then bludgeon and eat him. It was said children would be encouraged to hit him in the head with an ax and rub his blood on their hands.

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