

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family:

- Nez Perce (nez-PURSE or nay-per-SAY) or alternatively Nimiipu, which stands for the real people or we the people.
- The Nez Perce speak a Sahaptian dialect of the Penutian language family which includes two languages: the upper (upriver) and lower (downriver) Nez Perce. The languages used by the Nez Perce belong to one of the oldest known language stocks in North America. Their languages are closely related languages spoken by other Plateau tribes such as the Walla Walla and Yakima. (2,3,4)

1.2 ISO code:

- NEZ (1)

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- At the beginning of the 19th century, Nez Perce land covered about 69,000 square kilometers in parts of what is now Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and Montana between latitudes of 45°N and 47°N. Their current tribal lands are only 3,100 square kilometers on a reservation in Idaho at 46°18'N and 116°24'W. (2)

1.4 Brief History:

- Prior to the Nez Perce acquiring horses in the early 1700s, they allocated most of their time to fishing, hunting, or gathering wild plants for food. The acquisition of the horse drastically changed their lifestyle, facilitating trade with neighboring tribes and increasing the efficiency of hunting buffalo. The first contact between the Nez Perce and non-native people occurred in 1805 during Lewis and Clark's expedition. The Nez Perce were predominantly friendly, establishing strong relations with the French, Canadian, and American traders, missionaries and settlers. They avoided many of the conflicts and plagues that affected other native tribes. Eventually they signed a treaty with the U.S. government in which they exchanged most of their land for money. Circumstances arose that would continue to diminish the land of the Nez Perce until they were consigned to the Idaho reservation. (2,3)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/government/powerful neighbors:

- The Nez Perce, for the most part maintained peaceful relationships with the majority of the other tribes in the plateau area. These groups included the Walla Walla, Yakima, Palouse and Cayuse. These tribes and many others were part of a large trading network, which helped to keep relations peaceful. The relationship with the U.S. government was less peaceful, however. The Nez Perce had land disputes with the U.S. cavalry and ended up selling most of their land to the U.S. government. Missionaries had a great influence over the Nez Perce introducing the Christian faith and they even built gristmills, sawmills, and schools for the tribe. The increased interest by the Nez Perce in western religion prompted a reverend by the name of Spalding to learn the language of the Nez Perce in order to translate a number of religious texts into their language. (2,4,5)

1.6 Ecology:

-The Clearwater River Subbasin of traditional Nez Perce land is primarily made up of evergreen forests, however, due to the elevation change of almost 9,000 feet, a variety of ecosystems exist. Across the subbasin, annual rainfall varies from only 12 inches in some regions to 85 inches in others. (6)

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

-The traditional land of the Nez Perce spans over 17,000,000 acres ranging from north central Idaho to northeastern Oregon. At the time of first contact, over 100 permanent villages of 50-600 people were present in Nez Perce territory. The total population is estimated to have been around 12,000 people; however, the 2010 census counted only 3,499 Nez Perce. (2,7)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

-In the spring Nez Perce women would use digging tools to uproot roots called kouse. The Kouse root was either boiled into soup or formed into biscuits and stored for future consumptions. The camas lily's bulb was another important plant food. The Nez Perce also gathered wild onions, carrots, bitterroots, blackberries, huckleberries, and nuts. (2)

2.2 Main protein-lipid source:

-Fishing for salmon along with hunting elk, deer, mountain sheep, and buffalo provided the Nez Perce with most of their proteins and lipids. (2)

2.3 Weapons:

-The Nez Perce used the following weapons for hunting: spears, weighted nets, small brush traps, atlatls, bows and arrows. Spear tips were made most often of stone that was shaped by careful chipping. They were fastened onto spear and arrow shafts with moistened sinew. Spears were often about 8 feet long. Arrowheads were made more lethal by being dipped in rattlesnake venom. The Nez Perce had two varieties of war club, one with a double-edged stone head and the other a boulder wrapped in hide. Both were attached to an 18 inch rod. They had shields measuring 14 inches made of elk hide stretched over hoop-like frames and dried. It is speculated that some of the shields were merely ornamental in nature. (2,5)

2.4 Food Storage:

-When game animals were brought back to a village after a hunting trip, the meat was processed by being stripped off of the bone, boiled, broiled, sun-dried, or smoked. Bones were used in broths or tool- and weapon-making. Willow, alder, bear willow, and thornbush were the woods used in the smoking of fish and other meats. Camas, Kouse, and other roots were roasted by putting them in a pit of heated stones, grass, water, and dry earth for one to three days. They were then crushed with a mortar and pestle and formed into loaves for storage. (2,4)

2.5 Sexual Division of Production:

-Men were primarily responsible for hunting, fishing, and played a part in food preparation. Women did a majority of food preparation including gutting and drying the animals brought back by the men. Women also collected plants for food and medicine and dug up roots and tubers.

2.6 Land Tenure:

-When the Nez Perce were discovered by Americans they held 17,000,000 acres of land. They eventually sold 13,000,000 acres to the U.S. government with the stipulation that the remaining land would become a reservation for the Nez Perce in the Walla Walla council of 1865. (3)

2.7 Ceramics:

-The Nez Perce did not use ceramics or pottery, rather they weaved baskets for storage and other uses. (3)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

-According to Caroline James, a contemporary Nez Perce woman said "Indians were a really close knit family. Everybody helped each other then. I can remember when living by the river... people would come by our place... They would stop and visit for a while and mom would say 'go out there a pick some cherries for them' ... Whatever we had, and we would give it to them. Giving was a strong part of our culture." (5)

2.9 Food Taboos:

-Women were generally secluded during pregnancy in a menstrual lodge, during which time they were required to cook their own meals and could not eat food that another person touched. (2,3)

2.10 Canoes/Watercraft:

-The Nez Perce had the Mackinaw, which was used heavily for fishing, fur trading with Americans and Canadians, and other transportation. The Mackinaw was about 18-24 feet long. They also had other canoes of a similar design. These canoes were constructed from a single tree trunk in which the shape of the canoe was shaped and dug out of the trunk. The tree was usually a red fir. Their canoes generally had flat bottoms and vertical sides with a slight upward bend toward the bow and stern. Their dimensions were normally two feet wide by 15-40 feet. (2)

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean Adult Height (m and f):

-“The average height of 71 men of Sahaptian stock was, according to Boas, 169.7 cm.” (2)

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

-Many nuclear families joined together in the same longhouse with their extended families such as grandparents, unmarried children, cousins, etc. The number of people in one longhouse varied according to how many families and which parts of their families decided to stay there. (5)

4.5 Age at first marriage:

-Males generally married at around the age of 14 and females married even earlier. (2)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

-Separation was very uncommon and formal divorces did not exist. In the

- case of separation, however, the husband became the owner of all the property. (2)
- 4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:
-Often a male in the Nez Perce had between one and four wives. Polygamy was much more common than monogamy in this tribe. Those with power, such as chiefs did not take advantage of their status in this regard, instead they usually had only one or two wives. In general, however, a man took more or fewer wives depending on various personal characteristics such as attractiveness, wealth, and his actions. (2)
- 4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry:
-The parents of the male paid a price in blankets and/or horses to the father of the bride. (2)
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:
-Grandparents of newborns spent a great deal of time helping the parents take care of them. As they grew up, children learned to be reserved, obedient, and quiet. They were treated with respect and almost never required punishment by their caretakers. When they reached the proper age to be able to learn and understand the Nez Perce myths and stories, the men of the tribe would pass them down to the children.
-Twins were considered to bring luck to both the twins themselves and to the family of the twins. (2,3)
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):
-Kin relationships of any kind were avoided even between third or fourth cousins. (3)
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these other fathers recognized?
-If a child were born out of wedlock the child is a disgrace to the woman's family, but if the father is discovered he is expected to take care of the child and marry the mother. (2)
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape:
-The punishments for rape were either death or forced marriage.
-If a man does not want his wife anymore, he could give her to group of his friends. (2)
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g. cross cousin):
-Not related (2)
- 4.24 Kin Avoidance and Respect?
-In order to bypass the social ostracism associated with intra-kin marriage, some group members engage in avoidance relationships in which they respectfully refuse to associate directly with those people to whom marriage is not allowed. (8)
- 4.24 Joking Relationships?
-Traditionally among the Nez Perce marriage is supposed to be between two non-consanguineal people. However, relatives are known to marry each other on occasion. In such cases, the group lightly criticizes, ridicules, or jokes about the relationship. Despite the criticism intra-kin marriage still occurs. Although people within the group accept that intra-kin marriage

- inevitably will happen in the group, they often forego the traditional marriage ceremonies. (8)
- 4.25 Patterns of descent:
-Bilateral (2)
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules:
-Marriages are always between unrelated people. (2,3)
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?
-Yes, the bride would dress in her best clothing and go to the groom's home. A feast was enjoyed and large gift exchange took place in which relatives of the groom would give horses, hunting and fishing equipment while the bride's relatives would give baskets, root bags, digging tools, and beaded bags. A month or so after the marriage, the bride's family would hold a feast in return. Her family would give gifts to the guests. (2)
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain their name?
-A formal naming ceremony is held when a child reaches adolescence. The child's name was chosen from a collection of names which were used in the family for many generations and were reserved for the children. Only one living person was allowed to possess a single name. If a family wanted to name their child a name that was not among their own family collection, they could purchase a name from another family's name reserve. Nicknames were frequently assigned by the Nez Perce according to an individual's skills, attributes, and feats. Sometimes a name was officially changed from the original name to the nickname publicly through a gift to the tribe. (2,3,4)
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference):
-Marriages are normally between people of different villages and even cross-tribal marriages were common. (2)
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (parents, close kin)?
-Marriages were usually arranged by the parents of the male and female. An older male from the male's family arranged the time of the wedding and the price for the bride with the bride's family. In the relatively uncommon situations in which a marriage was not arranged, a man picked a woman he wanted as his wife. An older female in the male's family consulted the female's family. The female chosen as a wife would then be observed by an older relative of the male to decide if she was worthy of the marriage. The couple would live together for a time to determine compatibility and they then decided whether or not to marry. (2)
- 4.31 Evidence of conflict of interest over who marries who:
-When a married person wanted to separate, a formal divorce did not occur. Instead the solution to this problem was elopement. In this case or in the case of adultery the husband could kill both his former wife and the man she ran away with. Due to this severe penalty, elopement usually occurred when the husband was weak or otherwise unable to take his revenge. (2)

Warfare/Homicide

- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

-Within the Nez Perce if a person murdered another member of his own tribe, it was deemed acceptable for the family of the man who was killed to exact revenge by killing the murderer.

-The Nez Perce were sometimes hostile with various surrounding tribes such as the Shoshonean to the south, the Flathead tribes to the north, the Blackfeet, and Crows. The battles and wars between them were the main outgroup causes of death.

-They also engaged in horse stealing raids in which violence and death sometimes occurred. (2)

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

-Death in the Nez Perce by members of another group are almost always the result of battles and wars, although it is also true that the Nez Perce are generally a peaceful group and do not engage in as much conflict as other tribes. (2)

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

-War is very important to the tribes of the Sahaptian stock. The Nez Perce were largely a superpower in terms of war and peace because they controlled the valleys of the Clearwater and Wallawa rivers. This territory provided many game options such as fish and deer as well as vegetables in great abundance. War primarily raged with the Shoshonean tribes while the Nez Perce were aided by the Walla Walla, Yakima, and Cayouse. There were also intermittent hostilities with the flathead tribe to the north. The periods of conflict were punctuated by friendly periods in which they hunted together. (2,4)

4.18 Cannibalism:

-The Nez Perce appear not to have engaged in any cannibalism. (2)

5. Socio-Political Organization and Interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

-Villages were made up of 50-600 people. (3,5,7)

5.2 Mobility Pattern (seasonality):

-The Nez Perce practiced a seasonal subsistence cycle in which they lived in permanent winter villages near rivers throughout the colder months. When spring arrived, the food saved in the storage pits had been completely consumed. Women began to dig roots and tubers while the men went to the nearby rivers and streams to catch salmon. During the summer all the people moved from the winter villages to the mountainous regions/higher altitudes in which they used temporary camps while hunting, fishing, and digging up roots. This cycle repeats every year. (4)

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

-In order to become chief one must be elected by the Nez Perce people. It was not unusually for chiefs to be succeeded by their sons; however, this was not a dynastic inheritance of the position, rather the son gained popularity due to the work of his father. There were two types of chiefs: the chief of peace and of war. Each village had a chief of peace who could remain in the

position for as long as he performed his duties to the liking of the people. The chief of war only wielded influence during times of war, however, he was respected at all times. Chiefs were always male and only elected by males. A village council comprised of chiefs and older male members of the community helped administer justice. A tribal council oversaw issues of war and peace. Intertribal councils were meetings of chiefs between friendly or warring tribes to discuss war and treaties. (2)

5.4 Post-Marital Residence:

-Most commonly the wife would go to live with the husband and his family, but in certain circumstances the husband could go to live with his wife and her family. (2)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

-When invaders from the plains infringed upon Nez Perce lands, the villages would unite and a war chief and stave off the invading group. This group of villages is called a composite band. (2,5)

5.8 Village and House Organization:

-The Nez Perce lived in tule mat covered, double lean-to long, houses which were inhabited by several extended families. The lengths of the houses varied, but were often over 100 feet long. There were several hearths in the middle of the house that the families used. During the warmer months they would sleep in temporary tipis constructed in higher elevations and return to the permanent villages with the longhouses during the winter. They also used a sturdier and less mobile form of tipi called a wickiup that was made similarly but had an extra layer of bark on the outside for protection and insulation. During the spring, a central tipi or lodge was sometimes constructed for the council and concentric circles of housing was constructed around that structure for the families. Each circle belonged to a family or set of families. (4,5)

5.9 Specialized village structures (men's houses):

-Sometimes underground rooms were dug out to be used alongside the longhouses to accommodate single men and single women.

-The Nez Perce women used a lodge called the menstrual lodge during their period and before and after childbirth. Men were certainly not allowed inside and were supposed to stay away from them especially when in use. A dozen women could all occupy a single at the same time.

-Similarly, there was what was known as the sudatory lodge in which only men were allowed. It was typically used during the winter months by boys aged 14 and up and unmarried men. A fireplace outside was used to heat stones and then they were brought inside and water was poured over them. This created steam and thus created a sweat lodge. Up to 15 men could occupy a lodge at one time.

-Tipis were constructed and used as temporary structures during the spring and summer months as the Nez Perce left their permanent winter villages to move to the mountains to hunt, fish, dig, and gather food. (2,4)

5.12 Trade:

-Since the Nez Perce was friendly with most of the tribes in the surrounding

regions, such as the Walla Walla, Yakima, Cayuse, and Palouse, a large system of trading was formed among them. They traded raw materials and other goods that were easier for certain tribes to acquire. (2,3)

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

-The whole tribe of the Nez Perce was separated into bands or villages geographically. Each village had a chief, a place to fish, and designated land alongside a local river. There were not very close relationships between these distinct villages except in times of war when they united to defend themselves against outsiders.

-The Nez Perce are considered to be (and to have been) an egalitarian tribe. People had different roles and responsibilities, but nobody was seen as better or more deserving than anybody else. (2,5)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies:

-The power to discipline was held by heads of families, chiefs, and council members. There were no police forces in any social situations to enforce decisions made by those people. Household disputes were decided by husbands/fathers. Chiefs only had power and influence within their own village and their influence faded in other chiefs' jurisdictions. Inter-village disputes were often settled by councils, but people were mostly free to do whatever they wanted and the chief's power rarely entered into personal matters. (2)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

-In Nez Perce society the shaman position was very influential. Both men and women could become shamans with no distinctions between their abilities or influence. Shamans were selected based on their heredity and the guardian spirit they possessed. The guardian spirits of shamans were the ones that lived most closely to the heavens, in other words the sun, cloud, eagle, and fish-hawk. Old shamans would select their successors from the candidates with the appropriate guardian spirits and educated them via songs and phrases. Typically, illnesses in Nez Perce society were treated by vapor baths by the shamans. The patient would be enclosed in a small lodge (sweating house) where he/she would be subjected to steam produced by water poured over red hot stones. This process would continue until the patient nearly passed out. This was followed by the patient diving into cold water. Herbal medications were also used. A combination of medicinal roots pounded into dust was often used on cuts, gashes and sprains. Splints were used to hold fractures in place. (2,3)

6.3 Passage Rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

-A Nez Perce acquires a personal spirit called a wyakin at the beginning of puberty when they leave their natal village and travel to an isolated place until a wyakin reveals itself to the person.

-Another passage ritual occurred when a child was about six or seven years of age. At that point the children often begin hunting and gathering. When a boy makes his first catch of a fish or game animal or a girl digs up her first

root, a ceremony is held honoring the child. At the ceremony, it is considered lucky if a prominent or skilled hunter-gatherer eats the child's offering. (2,3,4)

6.4 Other Rituals:

-One of the most important ceremonies to the Nez Perce was the Guardian Spirit Dance or "Dance of the Dream Faith". This ritual sometimes occurred between tribes, but not to the extent that other activities did. The dance was a vehicle for their religious expression. Both men and women participated would sing songs that they inherited from their family. Musical instruments were not played during this particular ceremony.

-Shamans of the Nez Perce often sang particular songs for the purposes of bringing warm weather and increasing the abundance of game animals to help the hunter catch more food.

-The Iwel'wetset dance otherwise known as the scalp dance was an intertribal ceremony performed in celebration of victory in war. It was a dance based on trophies collected from the tribes that they defeated in battle. A desirable trophy was the scalps of Blackfeet and Shoshonean tribes people. (2)

6.5 Myths (creation):

-The Nez Perce have no creation myth about the Earth/universe. In their eyes the world has always existed. (2)

6.6 Cultural Material (art, music, games):

-The music of the Nez Perce was performed either for celebration or for ritual. It was a combination of musical instruments, singing, animal sounds, moans, and yelps. Their musical instruments consisted of flutes made from elderberry stems.

-The hand game or "lopmix" is a game played by the Nez Perce and many of their neighboring tribes. The game utilized plain and marked deer leg bones in which some players held the bones in their hands and other players guessed which hands contained which bones. They sang music and played a simple beat by tapping a log with a stick. (2)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR

-For the most part men and women participated equally in RCR; however, in one particular ceremony there is a distinct difference. The war dance, or "Paxam" was performed just prior to engaging in war with another tribe. Only the men participated in this ceremony. Women also did not drum during ceremonies of any kind – that was the responsibility of the men. (2)

6.8 Missionary Effect:

-During the mid to late 1800s, the white Christian missionaries became a source of division among the Nez Perce. This led to prophetic movements whose goal was to return to their traditional religion and bring the influence of whites to a halt. (3)

6.9 RCR Revival:

-Over time, the Seven Drums Religion evolved from these prophetic

movements (refer to 6.8) and became a more traditional. It included vision quests in which one would seek his/her personal spirit, although it did include some Christian ideas. (2,3)

6.10 Death and Afterlife Beliefs:

-It is believed that the ghosts of the dead wear the ornaments they were buried with. Also a horse is sometimes sacrificed over a person's grave and it is believed that the ghost rides that horse. The house of the deceased is torn down and moved to a new location. A shaman is paid to lay the ghost at the new house. The shaman performs a ritual of blowing smoke into the corners of the new house. This is called Pasapukitse or blowing the ghost away. This was done to stop the ghost from moving into the new home which was believed to cause madness in the new inhabitants. (2,3,4)

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

-The Nez Perce do not practice teknonymy. (2)

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

-The Nez Perce's myths are related to the Earth and nature. They believed that all living things and all of nature are related to each other and to people. Every member of the Nez Perce had a personal spirit (wyakin). A person's wyakin protected and guided him/her. The Nez Perce also prayed to their wyakins for assistance in war or when performing a difficult task. (2,3)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body Paint:

-Face painting was pervasive among the Nez Perce. Both men and women painted their faces. The paintings did not have to have any particular significance but in some cases the face and body paintings were related to the spirit animal of the individual. Red paint was used in the hair and the exposed scalp between the parted hair. (2)

7.2 Piercings:

-Although Nez Perce means pierced nose, piercings were uncommon among the people. (2)

7.3 Haircut:

-Both men and women wore long hair, parted in the middle. In many instances the hair was braided twice, once on each side. Men's hair is usually cut in the front to make bangs. Men's hair was adorned with animal fur and other items could be interwoven with the braids of hair. Also, after the death of their husbands, widows would cut their hair very short so that it was cropped above the neck and could not marry again until it had grown to the bottom of the shoulder blades. Men also cut their hair off upon the death of their wives, but were not restricted from another marriage. The clipped hair from the surviving spouse was burned in a fire. (2)

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):

-Adornments for men consisted of beads, porcupine quills, and paint. Adornments for women consisted of beads, shells, and elk teeth. Adornments were commonly attached to clothing. (2,5)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual Adornment:

-When a person dies they are dressed in fine clothing and buried with necklaces, elk teeth, bear claws, and other such ornaments. Before burial the face was painted and the body wrapped in deer skin. (2)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

-The Nez Perce men typically wore moccasins, leggings, breechclout, shirt, and blanket. Certain items could be removed during sufficiently warm weather. The clothing was made from a variety of animal skins such as buffalo, elk, and deer. Women typically wore moccasins, a long dress, and a cap. The women could sometimes wear leggings similar to those of the men. (2)

7.8 Missionary Effect:

-Missionaries took advantage of the nonviolent and hospitable nature of the Nez Perce and set up near their territory. Although most Nez Perce did not convert to Christian faiths at first, they did trade goods and clothing. (5)

8. Kinship Systems

8.2 Sororate, Levirate:

-The Nez Perce had rules about marriage in the event of the death of a husband or wife. If a Nez Perce woman's husband died in certain circumstances she would marry her deceased husband's brother, known as levirate. Likewise, if a man's wife died he would sometimes marry the sister of his wife, called sororate. It is uncertain how common this practice was, but it did occur. (5)

9. Other Interesting Cultural Features:

-According to Nez Perce calendars, they had a twelve-month year, but it remains unclear what the order of the months was or which months began and ended the year. The months are as follows: Wilu'pup, had ties to cold weather. Alatama'l was the month of swelling buds. Lati'tal was the month of flowers. Kakital' was the month of the Kakit, a root similar to the Kouse. The month of the kouse bread was known as Apaal'. Hil'lal was the month of the first run of the salmon. The month of the eels was called Hasoal and Qoiiktsal, the month of the blue backed salmon were two names for the same month. Taiyaal, whose meaning is unclear, may have been linked to Taiyam, which means summer. Wauwama aiakal was the month of the salmon spawning at the heads of creeks. Aiakal Pikun'me was the month of the spawning salmon on snake river. The month when tamarack trees lose their needles was called Hoplal. Saxliwali was the beginning of cold weather or time of the fall deer hunt. (2)

-The Nez Perce measured distances by the number of bends of a river or the number of days required to travel from a given location to another location.

-Lewis and Clark, in journals they wrote about the Nez Perce, said that they were impressed by the hospitality of the tribe and by the fact that they did not torture people as other tribes had done. (2)

-During pregnancy, a few interesting customs were observed. For example, deformed humans and other animals were not to be criticized because it was thought that doing so would cause those deformities in the baby. Also, knots were not to be tied as it was symbolic of tying the umbilical. Immediately upon birth, the baby's head and feet are formed and molded into the desired shape. Finally, the umbilical cord was cut and sown to the inside of a sack made of animal hide and then adhered to the baby's cradle for good luck. (3)

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