

Kinship



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Kinship System -- Yanomamo Culture The tropical forest Indians, typically known as the Yanomamo, consist in tribesmen of scattered small villages who, by the strength of an intact system of kinships, continue to exist with their complex ethnic way of life in the isolated region of Amazonia along the border between Venezuela and Brazil (Chagnon, 1983). By anthropological research, the Yanomamo have established a mode of living which is traditionally spent on gardening, hunting games, gathering wild foods and firewood, making handicrafts, and paying each other regular visits to mingle and gossip (Chagnon). Though no material evidence suggests literacy with writing and reading, they can facilitate daily communication with composite form of language (Chagnon). Since the horticulture-inclined Yanomamo have become accustomed to waging village warfare, it is a normal tendency to form political allies and functions which, by the systematic principles of kinship, decide for the village people in the aspects of shelter, tribal relationships and other social issues, as well as the manner of adjusting with the environment. The Yanomamo, due to arranged violent encounters, have in a way manage to shape their culture by following certain behavior acquired in response to the sensitive call for survival (Chagnon). Through the system of kinships that constitute their living, social and familial ties are further enhanced as Yanomamo natives conduct frequent and periodic occasions of feasting and trading (Kittelson & Stafford). Arranged intermarriages via the kinship ruling are based upon the fighting skillfulness of a male relative after each combat with triumphant results. Cousins brought to tie the knot are considered to be an ideal or preferable arrangement (Kittelson) and these situations are altogether governed by the headman (Chagnon) or the tribe's chief with highly commendable origins and

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who is capable enough to settle disputes among warring villages or small bands and negotiate matters of battle that require fierce degree of courage and measures. Additionally, the intricate source of religious conviction mirrors how the kinship system and the society it affects possess equivalent parallels in another dimension which the Yanomamo believe to be composed of four distinct layers (Kittelson). They acknowledge herein the order of beings according to nature and the topmost level they admittedly find impossible to reach as it only permits dwelling of pure creatures and things. In my society, kinships partly offer an influence in the way I perceive things and my response thereafter. Having constant interactions with people I am connected by blood and affinity through the years have enabled me to discover potentials that are either strengthened or weakened depending on the nature of my continuing relations and how I specifically deal with the struggles associated with them. References Kittelson, Adam & Stafford A. "Yanomamo." Retrieved from <http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/cultural/southamerica/yonomamo.html>. on 15 Feb 2011. Chagnon, N. A (1983). "The Yanomamo People." Retrieved from http://206.204.3.133/dir_nii/nii_dat_yanoma.html on 16 Feb 2011.