

## 24./46. Hunter-gatherer affluence: Social and material perspectives

### 16181 - "Interpenetration of Self" in the Baka's Social Interaction

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** Daiji, Kimura (*Center for African Area Studies, Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan*)

Following my presentations in CHAGS8, 9, and 10, I will show the characteristics of Baka's social interaction. I will use data of (1) contents, and (2) style of their conversation. First, analysis of the turn construction in their conversation shows that clear "adjacency pair" structure is not confirmed in certain phases. In such situations, they do not dialogue, but rather chorus, in talking. Their utterances interpenetrate each other. Second, daily fluctuations in the level of "background utterances" in a Baka village is analyzed, in comparison with Bantu farmer's data. Baka people highly synchronized their frequency of utterance, i.e. the village was filled with lively long-distance conversation in some nights, but was quite calm in other nights. These features of "interpenetrating self" among the Baka is an important example to reconsider the "affluence in co-presence" of human beings.

## 16158 - "Clean to Eat": Utility, Taste and Purity in Woods Cree Dietary Practice

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** *Brightman, Robert (Reed College, Chicago, IL, USA)*

Woods Cree dietary practice exemplifies three values organizing edibility and ranking of bush meats. Rather than siting these values across earlier theoretical divides, each is each better conceived as of irreducibly hybrid material-semiotic character. (1) "Utility" concerns conditions of production. Variables of labor effort, yield (+/- "too small to bother with"), and reliability connect with currencies modeled in optimal diet theories. Crees note interspecies differences and failure of any species simultaneously to maximize all variables. The other two values concern consumption. (2) Sensory qualities (flavor, aroma, texture) of meat, sometimes manipulated by culinary technique, are dominated by the value of "fat taste," usually coincident with "soft" texture. Crees link fat meat to energy; discourses on energetic and nutritional properties are important desiderata. (3) Piikisitoowin 'purity' inheres in botanicals and transfers up the food chain to herbivores and carnivores. Wiithipisiwin, purity's opposite, begins in insects whence it moves to amphibians, rodents, and some carnivores (not dispreferred per se). The wages of dietary impurity are exemplified by a lethal case of "skunk sickness" incurred by consuming a frog-eating skunk: "That old man must have been crazy eating that skunk, na?" Species may become inedible as icons of impure prototypes: Mule deer are rejected when likened to "a dog head that jumps." Distinct modes of individual dietary exclusion proceed from consubstantiality with the species of a dream-guardian being. The three values converge to include most large herbivores and exclude small resources: Utility (size) and purity together exclude species with average weights under 40 grams. But values also produce divergent rankings of identical resources. Flesh of carnivores trapped for fur is edible qua utility but can be inedible by other criteria. These harmonious and dialectical alignments suggest that each value may exert equivalent influences on dietary order. A larger question concerns relations this order contracts with foodways of contiguous peoples. Ithinatomiiciwin 'Cree food' is objectified via explicit opposition to wiimistikoosimiiciwin 'Whiteman food'. The first has in some degree "tactically" indigenized the second, as with extension of purity values to meats introduced as commodities in the 1950s. Crees recognize non-Native devaluation of bush diet and organ meats, and heartily reciprocate with their own critiques: "Boy, funny White people. They eat [impure] pigs!" This notwithstanding, and with notable exceptions above described, Whiteman food has increasingly displaced bush food, a process one sardonic consultant saw as attesting utility values attaching to least effort and to reliability. Within planetary-scale processes of conjunctive cultural homogenization and differentiation, bush food emerges as a Cree identity diacritic precisely because of this displacement.

## **16108 - People with Disabilities Crossing the Boundary between Hunter Gatherer and Agricultural Societies**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** *Toda, Mikako (National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan)*

The mass media has painted picture of an “uncaring Africa” in which the most vulnerable members (individuals with disabilities) of society are stigmatized, hidden from the public, and left to fend for themselves. In stark contrast to this image, the individuals with disabilities that I met in Cameroonian villages participated in “ordinary” daily activities such as agricultural work and child rearing. For example, I met a paraplegic women who uses a machete to perform farm work and a sight-impaired man who walks through the forest using a cane. In this presentation, I explore why the experiences of these individuals with disabilities differs so dramatically from that portrayed in the media.

Employing an ecological anthropology approach, I analyze the everyday lives of these individuals by first designating their work to acquire resources as “subsistence activities (livelihood activities)” and then examining the reciprocal acts of “care” that enable this work.

What emerges from this analysis is an image of individuals with disabilities who require the help of others but who, because of this need, form close relationships with the people around them and exhibit a high degree of sociality.

The Baka hunter-gatherer and nearby agricultural groups form interdependent economic relationships in which labor is exchanged for agricultural products. While previous research has pointed out that the interdependent relationship between the Baka and neighboring agricultural groups is often accompanied by tension, I found that individuals with disabilities formed even closer relationships with individuals in other ethnic groups than their non-disabled counterparts through the giving and receiving of care (help) in all aspects of daily life.

Both the Baka and farmers with disabilities aspire to an equality that goes beyond the intergroup dynamics prescribed by existing ethnic boundaries. In their daily livelihood activities, these individuals with disabilities reach across the ambivalent ethnic boundary that exists between the Baka people and agricultural groups, thereby attaining an even greater degree of sociality. The image of such individuals carrying out livelihood activities as full-fledged members of society while weaving diverse social relations through care left a deep impression on me.

This true image of individuals living and participating in society and forming diverse relationships with the people around them represents the true sociality of individuals with disabilities in Cameroon, which stands in stark contrast to the “hidden disabled” portrayed in the media.

## **15918 - Lithic technology and consumption practices between hunter-gatherer societies from Isla Grande de Tierra del Fuego (South America).**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** *Alvarez, Myrian (CONICET, Ushuaia, Argentina / Argentinien); Briz i Godino, Ivan (CONICET- U. of York, Ushuaia, Argentina / Argentinien)*

The aim of this presentation is to explore the consumption practices of hunter-gatherer societies from Tierra del Fuego (Argentina) through lithic technology analysis. Traditionally, lithic research has been focused on identifying production processes, techniques, raw material variability or variations in assemblage compositions. The study of consumption strategies embedded in raw materials exploitation, in labor inversion and in tool usage has not been deeply explored in Archaeology of hunter-gatherer societies; nevertheless, it has a central role to understand innovations, continuities and changes in human societies.

Consequently, we propose to discuss these topics taking into account lithic assemblages produced by Tierra del Fuego societies. Tierra del Fuego located on the southernmost part of South America constitutes the highest latitude landmass in the Southern Hemisphere populated by hunter-gatherer groups during the Early Holocene who developed a long-lasting social organization without contact with cultivating and pastoral groups until the moment of arrival of industrial society (in XVII Century). The archaeological database of this area combined with the insularity conditions provide an ideal venue to explore the dynamic of consumption innovations to the extent that any change in their social trajectory can be assessed by internal development variables. The final goal is to assess the role of consumptions in social transformations.