

Amazonians: Ticuna Tribe

By: Julia Nielsen





Origin and Culture

Origins

The Ticuna people believed they were created by their God Yo'i who fished them out of a river.¹ The Ticuna people have many different tribes, but mostly live in Amazon, with a few tribes in Peru and Colombia.

¹"Guarani and Ticuna – The Largest Indigenous Tribes in Brazil", Adventure Do Brasil, May 30, 2022
<https://www.aventuradobrasil.com/blog/guarani-and-ticuna--the-largest-indigeno-us-tribes-in-brazil/>

Multiple names include: Tikuna, Ticuna, Tukuna, Tuncuna

The Ticuna people speak the language Ticuna which is a considered a very isolated language with little influence from the other languages around it.

Many historians think it is surprising that the Ticuna people survived in the harsh conditions. The water didn't have many types of fish and the soil was too sandy for most crops and most plants are toxic unless they are prepared correctly. Despite all of this, the Ticuna thrived and are still alive today.²

²Moran, Emilio F. "Human Adaptive Strategies in Amazonian Blackwater Ecosystems." *American Anthropologist* 93, no. 2 (1991): 361–82.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/681300>.

European Contact

Christianity

Like, most places the Europeans encountered, they tried to convert the Native people to Christianity. Despite push back from Europeans, the Ticuna tribes combined many of their rituals with those of Christianity.³ This 'new religion' was called Hallelujah and it helped stop major battles between different tribes as everyone had very similar beliefs.



Ticuna

How did Europeans interact with the Ticuna people.

Stereotypes

Many Europeans used stereotypes to make the Indigenous people seem other or different. This led to many leaders losing their place to European colonizers.⁴

Politics

Like the mountain in Alaska⁵, many aspects of Ticuna politics were changed or misinterpreted by Europeans. Many Europeans wanted a to be take over local governments.⁶

³Brown, Michael F. "Beyond Resistance: A Comparative Study of Utopian Renewal in Amazonia." *Ethnohistory* 38, no. 4 (1991): 388–413. <https://doi.org/10.2307/482479>.

⁴Brown, Michael F. "Facing the State, Facing the World: Amazonia's Native Leaders and the New Politics of Identity." *L'Homme* 33, no. 126/128 (1993): 307–26.

⁵James W. Loewen, "Lies Across America", The New York Press, 2019.

⁶Brown, Michael F. "Facing the State, Facing the World: Amazonia's Native Leaders and the New Politics of Identity." *L'Homme* 33, no. 126/128 (1993): 307–26. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40589898>.

Introspection: Connecting Settlement Stories

1

Food/Agriculture

In the hundreds of years the Ticuna tribe has been around, they survived off of foraging a specialized fishing techniques that were created to for the limited fishing access.⁷

3

Pottery

The Ticuna people use art to tell stories and imitate the world around them. These pots also serve a practical function of caring water. For example this pot has imagery of a jaguar and alligator both found in the same region as the Ticuna people.



2

Food/Agriculture

In modern day United States, we have large industrial farms which produce and ship produce to grocery stores.

4

Pottery

When I throw pottery I use an electric powered wheel to form the clay into cups and bowls. I also use simple glazing techniques that don't have an in depth meaning behind the glazes or patterns I create.

⁷Moran, Emilio F. "Human Adaptive Strategies in Amazonian Blackwater Ecosystems." *American Anthropologist* 93, no. 2 (1991): 361–82. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/681300>.

Modern Day Ticuna



"Baile Ticunas", Youtube, March 5, 2009,
<https://youtu.be/4bBIQu2Ujgg?si=uROHrW0q2aHBblqr>



Baile Ticunas

The video on the left is an example of how rituals and dances have adapted to the modern era.



We'e'ena Tikuna

Maracanande: This song is an example of modern day Ticuna people representing their culture.

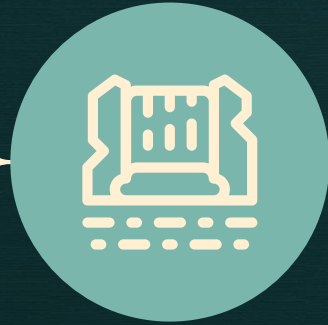
Why it matters to me

Preserving History

A topic I am very interested in is preserving history. When learning about the Ticuna culture I learned how easy it is for artifacts and history to be lost to time. I learned about a museum that burned down and lost a significant amount of their artifacts that showed the Ticuna way of life.

Art

Art is something I think is paramount in life. I loved to find the different ways the Ticuna tribes found to express themselves and tell stories through song, dance, and designs.



Language

English is a language that was created as a combination of many different languages such as, French, Dutch, and Latin and is spoken by millions of people all over the globe. Ticuna couldn't be more different from English as it is considered a language isolate and is only spoken by 50,000 people⁸. A language isolate, "is a language that has no known historical or linguistic relationship to any other language"⁹. Linguistic mean a lot to mean me as they help shape our world. It was very interesting to learn about how another culture communicates.

⁸ Skilton, Amalia, "Ticuna (tca) language documentation: A guide to materials in the California Language Archive", University of Hawaii Press, 2021-23, <https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/items/dcded90e-aff9-46f3-8603-119f018f8b19>

⁹ "Language Isolates", MustGo Travel, 2014, <https://www.mustgo.com/worldlanguages/language-isolates/>

Annotated Bibliography

Link to my annotated
bibliography

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