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Demographic data and two texts

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Grupo étnico: Bora

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Datos sobre la distribución de clanes, en el año 1952; un texto sobre la fabricación de manguarés y otro sobre la construcción de casas.

4 pp.

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Bora Word List

Introduction:

This group of Indians called Bora both in English and in Spanish are thought to be related to the Witoto. Often in the literature they are included as a tribe in the Witoto family and elements of the Bora culture are described in discussions of the Witoto tribe, some of which appear to be peculiar to the Bora. This perhaps is because the Bora have not assimilated so much of the Spanish culture and retain more of the original culture patterns. For example Murdock¹ in his popular article on the Witoto mentions the signal drums as a Witoto culture item, but today in our area the Witoto do not use them. However they say that their ancestors did. Today they use sounding boards placed over holes made in the dirt floor. These are limited in their usefulness because their carrying distance is less and they together have only two tones while the signal drums together have four. They do not appear to be used very much while in the social life of the Bora the big drums still play a major role. There is also a similarity in the languages which is apparent on the morphological level.

The Bora call themselves "maRamuna?" meaning as far as we can discover only "our people". They do not have a name for their language but refer to it as "meithu?" literally translated "our mouth". According to the chief of the Inche E clan living near Puerto Amogn on the Yaguasyacu River in Peru, there are approximately 400 Bora in that area² and more than this in Colombia, but no one seems to know exact numbers. The chief says he remembers how, when he was a small boy his father and others were beaten and piled on firewood and burned to death by the White man. At that time there were many Bora but now there are only a few. Their original home was along the Putumayo River. A few apparently still live there but the majority have moved either into Peru or farther into Colombia away from the border.

About fifty per cent of the people with whom we have come into contact know a little Spanish. A few of them know enough Spanish to get along quite well but the majority are very limited in their ability to speak or understand it. There are a number of Ocaina and Witoto Indians living near by. Some men of each tribe know a little of each of the other languages but Spanish is the accepted trade language. These three tribes just recently had a big fiesta sponsored by the Bora tribe, showing a very friendly relationship among the tribes.

This word list was obtained chiefly from the chief of the Inche E clan³ with some help from his daughter-in-law. There is a slight difference in dialect among the various clans. The difference apparently is in the amount of palatalization of consonants following i and a. This is significant because it shows that the palatalization is conditioned much of the time although it is not predictable in all cases.

The phonetic system used is that of Dr. Pike of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. This list is submitted by Wesley Thiesen, S.I.L. Oct. '52.

1. Murdock, Our Primitive Contemporaries, Macmillan 1945.
2. See map.
3. Ibid.

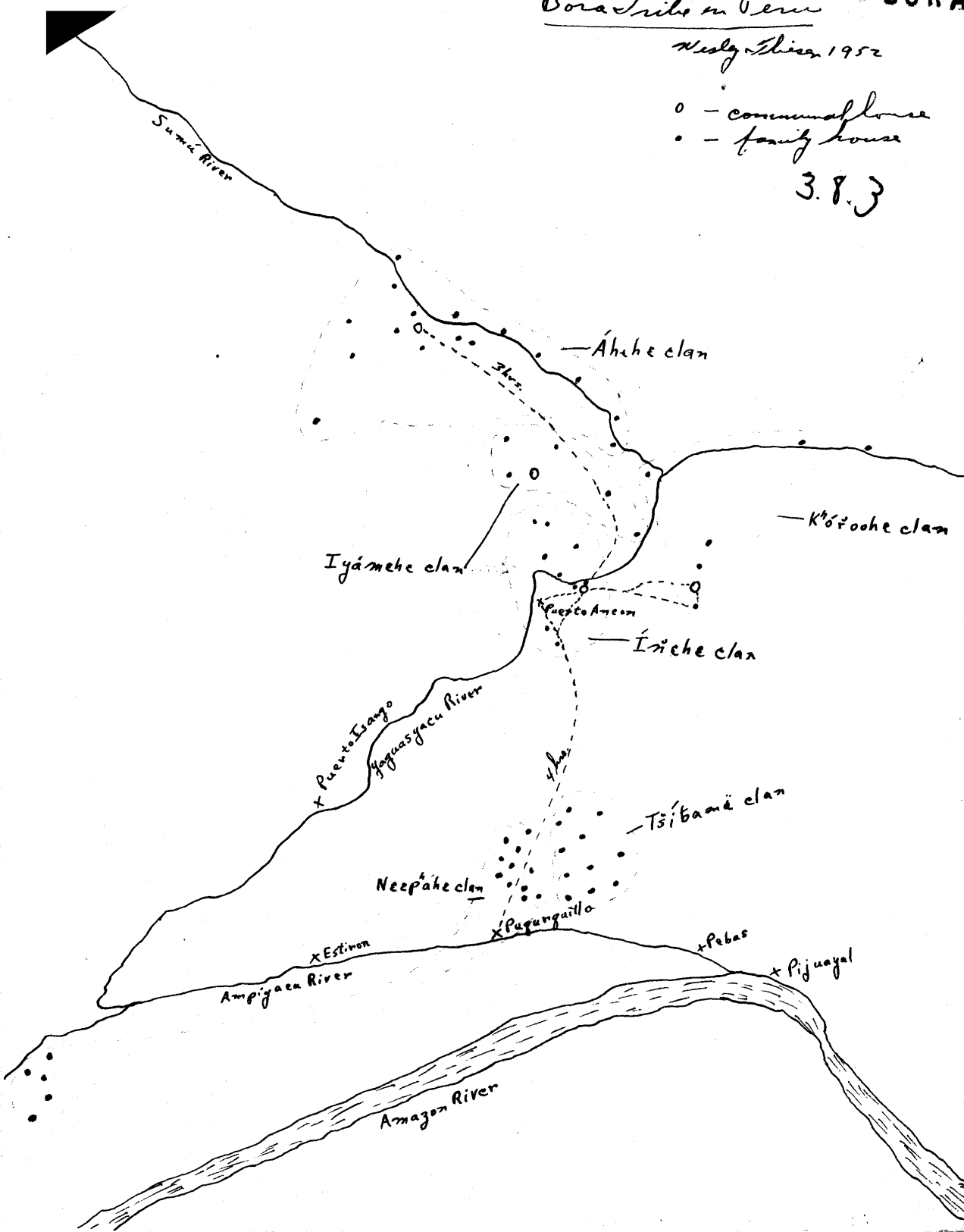
Bora Tribe in Peru

BORA

Nedley Thies 1952

- o - communal house
- - family house

3.8.3



Making Bora Drums — Bob

Tajkémú néhooóbe eummu iújouki.
 first hunt he drum he-to-get-for
 First he hunts to get a drum.

Néhooóbe úmáhe wáanaha.
 hunts-he tree-tree waana-tree
 He hunts for a waana tree.

Áhállau tsájtýesbe íájíimake.
 that-there-to takes- he his-friend-pl.-obj.
 He takes his friends to that place.

eummu íjeyafie. Átsihóurójuso
 drum is-cont.-compl. that-placc-likeonly
 there will be a drum.

újcúma. íájíimáhe íhábéscrí íhbúma. Áame tsiváma
 get-they get-when tree-qual.-qual- carry-they The-thing bring-they

íkyemúma. Áanébone íayámu újcújéme. íwájtsétséne
 2nd big-drum that-thing-it-small-drum get-they 3rd arrive back post

májcháme. dóóme íyáábake. Áame áááme. "Áyu."
 eat-they eat(meat)-they animal-qual-obj. then drink-they Ready
 ok.

neáme íájíimáhe íayvéjétséke. "tsuúma muha íma
 say-they get-when not-chief (the obj.) Already we you-with

we íájíimáhe. újcújéme. wákinéi. íwájtsétséne. dóbajtsé.
 we get now you only now work we drum rap! blow.

Working in Rubber — Kijtya

Átyáájt wákinéi bajúpafie. Ámútsu wákinéifítye
 my-nate-male works jungle-in chicle work-will-he
 my husband works in the jungle He works in chicle in order

dáíídséke íújouki. Áábe ájyábari bajúpafie.
 money-obj. he-get-our-oss that-he hunger-in jungle-in
 to get money. He is hungry in the jungle.

Áábake Ááhtu o pábabo. Téhcure díitye téénu
 that-he-obj. home-from I help that-like-only and.-he that-place
 I help him at home. also while he's there

ô wakimel ihjyê mûâbe nijtyu. lânéri
I work talk teach wash that-thing-I
I am working, talking, teaching, washing.

dibyeke ô tohâ dibyeta ô wajyânama.
3rd.-acc.-obj. I wait 3rd.-acc.-obj. I love-comed.-main
I am waiting for him. I love him.

iwajtsatu tsâibye âyââj. iwajtsatu
his-return-from his-return-from
his return from his return from.

wakimelîtye âhârojuno mûâbe avyêjûboma.
work-will-be alone-only-hav our chief-with
after his return he will work at home with our chief.

âhârojûnâjpi îcyôôca mahju mûjtsô iwajtsatu
gun-people-masc. 3rd. this-male our-speech imitates he-know-purpose
The white man imitates our language so that he may know
us with his talk-purpose. Our speech in poor we 1st.pl.-say-wi
how to talk with us in our language. We are saying our language badly

mûhâ ihjyu iwajtsatu mûjtsô mûhâ mûnâjpi mûjtsô
our words he-know-purpose who-3rd.pl. people-sg. wait
so he can learn it. That people is he from continually

îjcyâ mûhâ ihjyu mûhâ ihjyu iwajtsatu
is our words our words 3rd.-know-comp.
imitating our language. Imitating our language

ihjyê mûhâke tôhure umbâllîtyûbe. mûjtsô
3rd.-poss-words 3rd.-obj. that-like-only tell-will-not-be 3rd.-pl.
he will not tell us his language

ihjyu muuha mawâjâcûmama jâvari îhjuvaki îjcyâbe.
words us we-know-them-with-not 6-in 3rd.-tell-our-acc is-is
He is not here to talk to us in language with us.

mûhâ mûnâjpi. mûjtsô mawâjâcûmama jâvari îhjuvaki îjcyâbe.
who-they people-sg. name eats farifa jungle-in
That people is he from. mûjtsô eats farifa in the jungle.

lânê ôuvêtu mawâjâcûmama jâvari îhjuvaki îjcyâbe.
that-thing full-from eats-he -tree-chonta -tree-chonta
Then when he's full of farifa he eats chonta.

lânê tâjpi dibye bajûpâbe wakimelîtye mûjtsatu.
then reason 3rd.-he jungle-in work-will-be chick.
Then for that reason he will work chick in the jungle.

îdâtsô tôcuubère wakimelîtye dââdâke îhjuvaki.
poor rotting-he-obj work-will-be money-obj. 3rd.-get-purpose
The poor rotting any one will work in order to get money.

îdâtsô tôcuubère wakimelîtye dââdâke îhjuvaki.
poor rotting-he-obj work-will-be money-obj. 3rd.-get-purpose
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