

The Future of a Tribe on a Girl's Shoulders

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Picture found on Google images courtesy from Carl Thomas

The tribe has waited for 4-12 weeks, you can breath the anxiety of people, and impatience is getting stronger; all waiting for the new girl to come out. As she comes out everyone stares no one talking, just staring. Father, mother, and grandmother all watch the girl stumbling, thinking that they could not have done any better. As she stumbles blind by the red macaw feathers, everyone follows. She arrives, to the center of the town, she takes off the feathers and her eyes are open to the new world, she sees the world now as fully-grown woman.

The coming-of-age ritual propionates a safe passage to womanhood. The ritual scares the Noo (The demon) so she could from now on be able to do the obligations of women in the tribe. Everything that is done in this ritual has a meaning and it has some ritual items which mean a lot of things, the girl will be painted three times and she would also be removed from her hair so she has nothing left from childhood that can affect her in her future life as a woman. After been for 4-12 weeks in the Turi, they come out and dance and eat; but the ceremony its not yet completed until she had a bath, this means that after all of this she is pure and now is ready to be part of the tribe and be a woman.

When the girl is in the chamber, she has only contact with the mother and the parental aunt, because she needs to concentrate only in what will come and the risks of being a woman and to fight against the Noo (the demon). The Tikuanas think puberty is a dangerous period because in the time of a woman's life where they could be influenced by evil spirits. The tribe has a relation with Gods that if they do what they asked they would have what they ask like for example crops



<http://www.ibahia.com/a/blogs/memoriasdabahia/page/4> in goggle images

In this particular ritual “Festa Das Mocas Novas” the petition is shown in a different matter. People in Tukuna don’t pray to pass the girl safely to womanhood. People here in this Amazon region in Brazil communicate with the demon while the girl is inside the room. When they finally interact with the evil demon of the Tukuna religion that’s where the part of the dances and arts come in when the family of the girl where’s masks to illustrate the demon and pass safely through womanhood

The ceremony is taking place in the underworld where they are exposed in danger of the demon “The Noo”. The ceremony is take place in a small chambers constructed by the family of the teenager that is passing through womanhood. The first day is were they put the girl inside the “tent” they start a initiation the initiation introducing her into the room painting her with 3 types of paint 3 for each day. Ends up into days she stays there with no protection from the “Noo”. Then, the third day the family will surround her and she will be guide to the joyful ceremony. Which also guides the girl to the dancing until noon of the third day. When the dancing will stop the initiation sends a firebrand (accumulated pieces of wood throwing them to the floor to create a big fire) in this tiny period of time the damaging powers of the “Noo” are broken and this is where the girl is entering to womanhood safely.



<http://www.adeptus.xpg.com.br/ritosestranhos.html> from Goggle images.

The girls of the ritual “Festa Da Mocas Novas” are painted with a black paint called *crajiru*. The girl waits in the *Turi*. The family and the guests arrive and are painted with *pajuaru* which is a liquor made from fermented, sour cassava. When it is time for the girl to leave the *turi*, the family comes and dances with a mask called the *curaca*. It is a mask that represents the community. It is almost always an animal face. Red Macaw feathers are very important to the community. The members of this community believe that the feathers represent the sun and have super natural powers that protect the girl as she becomes a woman. During the ceremony the girl wears a crown made of Red Macaw feathers. The girl wears this crown because it shields her eyes so she can't see what members of the tribe are around her. She also wears a necklace made with the same feathers, but this is only to adorn and represent that she is a part of the Tribe. After the girl has been painted black she is then covered with a sticky substance. The members of the tribe then adhere red and blue feathers to her skin.

They dress half-naked. In part of the dressing the girl wears a crown of red macaw feathers. The crown is made out of fiber that is. Differently, the necklace the girl wears on her neck just an ornament while the feathers have a deeper meaning that represent “*nutupa*” that stands for food for the *Tukuna* people. So when the first painting is applied the family places the red feathers that will be pasted with a blue and red adhesive substance.



*Mask used by family members during the ritual
Taken by Jamie Frater in 28th of December of 2009 .*

“The mystery rituals were instituted in order to protect the marvels of the commonplace from those who would devalue them.”

— Peter Redgrove, *The Black Goddess and the Unseen Real: How it is to coming of age*

[-http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/ritual](http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/ritual)