

What makes Cannibalism exist for such a long time?

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Cannibalism was widespread in the past among human-beings in many parts of the world, continuing into the 19th century in some sporadic South Pacific cultures, and to the

present day in parts of equatorial Africa. In a few cases in island Melanesia, native flesh-markets are still existed. (Bruce M. Knauff, 1999) "Fiji used to be known as the 'Cannibal Isles'. Cannibalism has been well documented around the world, from Fiji to the Amazon Basin to the Congo to Māori New Zealand. Neanderthals are believed to have practiced cannibalism, and they may have been eaten by modern humans." (Gibbons, 1997)

The practice of human cannibalism is highly variable and can be defined in a number of ways: (1) Endocannibalism is the consumption of deceased individuals who live within the group, such as relative and friends. (This costume was common in New Guinea as an act of worship.) (2) Exocannibalism is the consumption of outsiders as an act to gain strength or corroborate power over the vanquished, who had usually been murdered. (3) Starvation or survival cannibalism is the consumption during real or perceived starvation. (4) Gastronomic cannibalism is nonfunerary, nonstarvation cannibalism which is a routine cannibalism for food. (5) Medicinal cannibalism is the consumption of human organs such as blood, bone, or dried tissue for medicinal purposes. (6) Sadistic cannibalism is the killing and eating of individuals out of disservice or psychopathological motives. In exocannibalism, gastronomic cannibalism, and sadistic cannibalism, the victims are murdered before being eaten; in endocannibalism, starvation cannibalism, and medicinal cannibalism, they are not. (Ed. Solomon H. Katz , 2003) There is another cannibalism behaviour called necro-cannibalism- A separate ethical distinction can be made between killing a human for food (homicidal cannibalism) and eating the flesh of a person who was already dead.

Nowadays, a storm of conflict has arisen over new evidence for cannibalism in Anasazi populations of the southwestern United States during 900 and 1200 C.E. White (1992) and the Turners (1999) have found skeleton remains from a number of populations that lived in the Four Corners area that show cl distinct clue of continual and regular cannibalism (White, 1992; Turner and Turner, 1999). The controversy has been fueled by the old view of these peoples were peaceful and non -violent and the belief that, if cannibalism really did exist, it resulted from cyclic famine and hunger, which must have commonly struck prehistory peoples of the arid Southwest. Under the purported cultural influence of Mesoamerican traditions of violence from the south, a new image of t hese peoples, is sacrifice of human, cannibalism, and social pathologyuite different from the earlier view.

Some of the best-documented examples of cannibalism have been based on the situations that take place during famines and on accounts of ship sunken , unaccompanied, or stranded groups of people who have gone for long periods without food. Two of the

best-documented of many cases are the pioneer Donner party's isolation in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the winter, and the crash of the Uruguayan rugby team in the Chilean Andes in October 1972. In these and other well-documented cases, it is undeniable that the food acquired by means of cannibalism enabled some individuals to survive rather than starving to death.

A more incontestable issue is whether regular cannibalism in groups of people makes the difference between adequate and inadequate dietary intake. The Aztecs of Mexico practiced regular costume sacrifice of captives and consumed the victims. Michael Harner (1977) and Marvin Harris (1977) argued that: "this food provided a protein-rich source of nutrients to a large Aztec population that was suffering from limited protein intake due to the absence of Native American domestic animals during pre-Hispanic times." This argument has been countered on the grounds that population density was somewhat lower than reckon and protein sources were available from a various kinds of plants and wild animal food which provided an adequate protein intake for most of the people.

Cannibalism has recently been both practiced and vehement guilty in several wars, especially in Liberia and Congo. Today, the Korowai are one of very few tribes which still believed to eat human flesh as a cultural practice. It is also still known to be practiced as a ritual and in war in many Melanesian tribes. Historically, accusation of cannibalism were used by the colonial powers to maintain the enslavement of what were seen as noncivilized peoples; cannibalism has been said to test the extremity of cultural relativism as it challenges anthropologists "to define what is or is not beyond the pale of acceptable human behavior". (David F. Salisbury, August, 2001) Anthropophagy is an uncommon act that is not illegal in most US states nor in most countries. People who eat human flesh are usually charged with crimes not relating to anthropophagy, such as murder or desecration of a body.

Cannibalism has been occasionally practiced as a last resort by people suffering from famine. Occasionally it has occurred in modern times. As mentioned before, a typical example is the crash of Uruguayan Air Force Flight 571, after which some survivors ate the bodies of dead passengers. Also, some mentally ill individuals obsess about eating others and actually do so, such as Jeffrey Dahmer and Albert Fish. There is a resistance to formally labelling cannibalism as a mental disorder. (Cecil Adams, 2010)

The reasons for cannibalism include the following:

- Sanction by a cultural norm
- Occasionally practiced as a last resort by people suffering from famine.

- Necessity in extreme situations of famine
- Natural selection
- Mental illness - self-cannibalism is a form of major self-injury usually as a result of major mental illness.

- Insanity or social deviancy - "Cannibalism is not mentioned in the formal index of mental disorders, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders . The medical literature on the topic is likewise sparse. "(Cecil Adams, 2010)

Joseph Jordania recently suggested that removing the dead bodies through ritual cannibalism might have had a utility of assaulter control in hominids and early humans, aiming to destroy predators' and scavengers' access to hominid (and human) bodies.(Jordania, Joseph. 2011)

In 2003 a publication in Science received a large amount of press attention when it suggested that early humans may have practiced comprehensive cannibalism. According to this research, genetic markers commonly found in modern humans worldwide suggest that today many people carry a gene that evolved as protection against the brain diseases that can be spread by consuming human brain tissue. A 2006 reanalysis of the data questioned this hypothesis, as it claimed to have found a data collection prejudice, which led to an incorrect conclusion. This claimed prejudice came from incidents of cannibalism used in the analysis not being due to local cultures, but having been carried out by seafarers, stranded explorers or escaped convicts. The original authors published a subsequent paper in 2008 defending their conclusions.

During starvation, cannibalism are more easy to occur. There are many documented shows people would eat others when suffering famine. For example, "in colonial Jamestown, colonists resorted to cannibalism during a period known as the Starving Time, from 1609–1610. After food supplies were diminished, some colonists began to dig up corpses for food. During this time period, one man was tortured until he confessed to having killed, salted, and eaten his pregnant wife before he was burned alive as punishment." (Dennis Montgomery, 2007)

There are many claims that cannibalism was widespread during the famine of Ukraine in the 1930s, during the Siege of Leningrad in World War II, and during the Chinese Civil War and the Great Chinese Famine (1958–1961), following the Great Leap Forward in the People's Republic of China.

A more recent example is of leaked stories from "North Korean refugees of cannibalism practiced during and after a famine that occurred sometime between 1995 and 1997. " (*The Washington Post*, 2003)

Some behaviours play an obvious role in evolution. For example, the ability to find food, avoid enemy, and defend one's young obviously increase an animal's ability to pass on its genes to future generations.

Human meat is thought to be unsafe if eaten, especially if the human being eaten has any kind of disease or infection that could be passed on through consumption, so the cannibalism is also related to disease.

A typical case is The Fore tribe of the highlands of Papua New Guinea, which was investigated at length beginning in 1957 by D. Carleton Gajdusek, who won a Nobel prize in 1976 for his study of the neurological-degenerative disease kuru, which he determined was caused by human contact with infected human brain tissue. Kuru, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, and bovine spongiform neurological disorder are all transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE) and were formerly believed to be caused by a slow virus infection; recent evidence indicates that they are sent by proteins called prions. Among the Fore, the principal pattern of contact with infected human tissue was during the mortuary preparation associated with endocannibalistic consumption of dead kin. In 1979 William Arens challenged Gajdusek's explanation for the spread of kuru on the grounds that there were no direct observations of cannibalism in the Fore people.

Within the field of psychology there is a debate on what factors lead a person to practice criminal cannibalism. In an article by Sally Talwani titled Experts Debate What Forces Create A Cannibal, Dr. Clancy McKenzie, a psychology professor at Capital University in Washington, D.C. believes that cannibalism is a result of trauma, especially that experienced in childhood. He states that a child, following weaning from the breast, experiences separation anxiety and fantasizes about devouring the mother. A person who has experienced this may regress back to this stage in adulthood due to stress or trauma and lead the individual to seek out the fulfillment he has been denied by resorting to cannibalism. (Rachael Bell, 2011)

In Western culture people view cannibalism as wrong because it's part of OUR culture. We are raised to believe that cannibalism is gross and morally opposable. This probably stems from Christian roots. Christianity says cannibalism is wrong and Christian morals have permeated Western cultures. In fact, the influence of Christian missionaries caused many cultures throughout the world to denounce cannibalism. By no means is it the case that cannibalism has universally across history been judged unacceptable. It is true that cannibalism is dying out in cultures around the world. However, this is mostly due to the influence of Western culture on these places. Nevertheless, there are still cultures that engage in cannibalism and there have been numerous cultures in the past that did so.

Most cultures that engaged in cannibalism did it for one of three reasons: 1.) cannibalism was seen as a way to ensure that a loved one's spirit did not perish with death, 2.) cannibalism was seen as a way to gain power from dead people (as in, if you eat a dead wise man you will become wiser), 3.) cannibalism was seen as the ultimate punishment for enemies. In these cultures, cannibalism was not thought to be weird or wrong, it was simply a part of their lives.

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Name: Tingjun Ye (Kevin)

Topic: Cannibalism

Title Question: What causes cannibalism

Paragraph contents

1. Introduction

2. Definitions of cannibalism

3-7. Cannibalism cases and examples

- what cause cannibalism

- who does cannibalism

8. Reasons causes cannibalism

9-10. Evidence of early-human cannibalism

11-13. Starvation and famine

- when most cannibalism happens

- famous cases and examples

14-16. Cannibalism and disease

- typical case (paragraph 16)

17. Psychology related

18. Conclusion