

Questionnaire (put reference #:page # after each entry)

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family:

Cameroon (as well as Nigeria), Psikye (Kamsiki, Kapsiki, Higi), Afro-Asiatic (1)

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com):

kvj

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

10.5, 13

1.4 Brief history:

Set in the mountains of Cameroon and Nigeria, two similar villages of Kapsiki and Higi speakers reside in the Mandara Hills. Once the two groups formed one village, but in 1953, two men's dispute over a woman divided the village into two permanent entities. The division caused half of the village, the Kapsiki, to reside in Cameroon, while the other half, the Higi, relocated to Nigeria. (2)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

The Moslem empire slave raids highly influenced the Kapsiki. They learned that life is short and unpredictable; a woman could be taken at any point and married off to a man from Sudan, so one must reproduce as quickly as possible before being captured into slavery.

"The building of a road from Mokolo to Garoua, just before World War II, running straight through the center of Kapsiki territory, changed matters. From the Nigerian side a road brought all traffic to Kamalé, at the foot of the plateau, which is largely in the Cameroons. [...] Markets brought European goods along: clothes, finery, shoes, Utensils and implements, later to be supplemented by torches, oil lamps and now transistor radios, which were still an exception in the 1970's." (2)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

The climate is semi-arid. The mountains from the Mandara Hills surround the village, and the landscape is composed of low, thorny shrubs and trees. (2)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density

150,000 total in Cameroon and Nigeria, 1,000 to 4,000 habitants and each village is divided into a series of territorial subgroupings or wards, the number of wards depends on the size of the village, density: 40,000 km² (1) (2)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

Their primary carbohydrates are sorghum, millet, and maize. (1)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

Their primary protein-lipid sources are groundnuts, sesame seeds, and sweet potatoes. (1)

"On the few low-lying places where water is more abundant, cassava and yam are grown which serve as alternatives to sorghum mush. Sesame, beans, sorrel, couch, hibiscus and cucumbers are cultivated for use in the sauce. Tobacco is grown near the houses and used as snuff." (2)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

They use carved knives, spears, and poison arrows from the local trees. (1)

2.4 Food storage:

Spare food is given to carriers who collect it in drums. Fruit and plants for drying are taken back to the village to be preserved and eaten later. (1)

2.5 Sexual division of production:

There is a sexual division of labor between men and women, and within the men, there is another division of labor. The males are typically divided into two groups: blacksmiths and non-blacksmiths. The blacksmiths produce iron, perform burials, make pottery, produce and distribute medicine, and assist with rituals, while the non-blacksmiths deal with food cultivation, plaiting straw, brewing beer, herding cattle, hunting, war, building, and performance of rituals. In general though, the men deal with construction of huts, cutting and plaiting of straw, brewing red beer, hunting, herding cattle, and war, whereas the women deal with cooking, woodcutting, cleaning, fetching water, and brewing white beer. (1) (2)

2.6 Land tenure:

The men perform labor in groups, often using homemade scaffolding and other tools to tend to the trees and agriculture. (1)
“Most fields are situated on the mountain slopes; in former days this not only provided protection against surprise attacks but had an additional advantage. The mountainsides are easier to clear, as fewer weeds grow on them. The numerous stones must be cleared away and are arranged in little contour terraces. Once that has been done, the little patches of cultivable land can be used without too much trouble. Another advantage is water supply; rains and water supply are more dependable and stable in the mountains than in the lower-lying Nigerian plain. These advantages are crucial for a culture with a fully subsistent economy.” (2)

2.7 Ceramics:

The women of the village are highly skilled potters and produce a majority of the ceramics. (1)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

The man is the head of the household and provides food, whereas women tend to childcare and household necessities. The women have their own money and are not dependent on their husbands to provide for the family.

2.9 Food taboos:

Some think the baked contacts that the women make are taboo because the females are believed to have mysterious powers, attributed to their superior medicinal knowledge. Thus, many members feel the pottery is made by hands with magical prowess. (1)

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? N/A

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): N/A

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): N/A

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f): N/A

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): N/A

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): N/A

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): N/A

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

Kapsiki teenagers generally marry in between the ages of 13-17. (2)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

Though there is no specific number given, only 4% of marriages are ended by the death of a spouse. Divorce rates are very high as a result of the women's mobility to pursue better-fit husbands at any given point. They may look outside their own village if they so choose, and the husbands may marry multiple women in order to ensure they have offspring. Approximately 16% of Kapsiki men are single. After 12 months, 50% of marriages will end. (1) (2)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

No specific number given, but definitely a majority of marriages are polygynous as the males find multiple wives with which to have children, and women are always searching for new mates. (1)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:

"A woman is considered married to the man in whose hut she resides signifying past or future payment of a bride-price and, if possible, offspring. Whenever a woman runs away to a new spouse, she is considered his wife the moment she enters the entrance in the wall surrounding his castle-like compound. [...] Bride price is equally vital to residence in defining a marriage. When a daughter or sister resides with her husband, the father or brother can claim the bride price."(2)

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

"Many fields are loaned on a semi-permanent basis. Several people have inherited far more land than they can ever cultivate and about 50% of all Kapsiki cultivate on loaned fields. Close patrilineal kin can cultivate each other's fields without any compensation, but borrowers from other lineages or clans "pay" for the transaction with a jar of beer or with counter-service such as herding goats or cattle for the owner. This loan relationship implies no dependency or inequality and loans often occur between friends. Loans are inherited and may last for generations, resulting in great uncertainty as to actual ownership." (2)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

The children see their fathers quite a bit because of the mother's mobility. Once a mother finds a new husband, the children then stay with their father, so long as they are weaned. (1)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: N/A

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

Kapsiki define endogamy by specifying from which type of man one can or cannot steal a wife. Approximately 80% of first marriages occur within the village, and 76% of second marriages occur outside the village. (1) (2)

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?

Men provide the seed and support for the children, and when the mother finds another husband, the children are typically left with the father. Therefore, there is no concept of "other fathers" as the children generally stay with the father. (1)

4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")

The mother births the child, cares for the child, and is responsible for it until it is weaned. (1)

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: N/A

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)

The women base their preferences endogamically. (1)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

Yes, females often pursue other males within and outside the village, enjoying high sexual mobility. (1)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: N/A

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

Father. (1)

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females: N/A

4.22 Evidence for couvades: N/A

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

The kin is highly valued and respected. They reside in the same hut, near relatives of the father. Also, it is common for a kin to participate in rituals together as a village example. (1)

4.24 Joking relationships?

“The warp of inevitable kinship ties is cross-cut by the woof of informal, chosen relations of one individual with another; i.e., friendship. One has, on the one hand, kinsmen and in-laws, and, on the other, one's friends. These categories seldom overlap. Friendship in Kapsiki society crosses boundaries that the formal structures of the society impose. Friends are often people from other clans and phratries; friendship extends across the caste-like barrier of non-smith vs. blacksmith, and may even cross ethnic boundaries.” (2)

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: N/A

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

“Exogamy rules prohibit marriage between lineage members or second cousins. In fact this limited rule does not present much of a restriction on the marriage market, because special ritual regulations exist for unions between close kin.” (2)

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

Yes, marriages occur right before harvest, signifying the hope for a plentiful and bountiful relationship. (1)

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? N/A

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)

Marriage is preferred within the community. When a woman seeks a man that is outside the community, it is viewed as a betrayal and creates great tension among the men, so much so that the men will travel to other tribes to seek retribution for the women's disloyalty. (1)

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?

Marriages are not arranged. Marriages are chosen based on attraction, and which man the woman believes can best provide for her children. (1)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: N/A

Conflict of interest generally does not occur until a woman seeks out a different husband. Government has even tried implementing laws to curb infidelity and divorce, but it has little to no effect on women's choices and freedom.

Warfare/homicide

4.31 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

4.32 Out-group vs. in-group cause of violent death:

Fighting over women in between village is a very common form of out-group cause of violent death. Men often risk being beaten or tortured for disputes over women.

“Two consecutive husbands of the same woman are enemies by definition. Battle is at hand when they meet. They should not belong to the same village, but if they do, the relationship may be disturbed for years.” (1) (2)

4.33 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

When killing someone within the group, there is a graded system of extremity that determines the brutality of the killing. Essentially, it ranges on a scale of one to four, one being the least brutal, four being the most horrific.

“When two men come to blows, the type of battle depends on their relationship. If they are members of different clans, both clans may join battle or their respective wards may join in, depending on the men present. If men of both wards happen to be

present, a fight between both wards may follow, but more often both clans fight corporately. In battles within the village, kinship relations dominate relations; in inter-village war the reverse is true.” (1) (2)

4.34 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): N/A

4.35 Cannibalism? N/A

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: 1,000 – 4,000 members

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): N/A

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):

Chiefs are the head of the village. A local clan selects them, and the elders within the village then determine for how long that chief is suitable to reign. They may remove a chief at any time if he no longer fulfills his duties. The chief carries out important religious functions; however, his authority is restricted to how well respected and admired he is among the village members.

The village is also split up into clans that resemble neighborhoods of a modern definition. (1)

5.4 Post marital residence:

The wife and husband live together, have children, and care for those children under the same hut. The male is the head of the household, but often remarries other women to ensure he has children. (1)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

The village consists of a number of huts inside a large stone wall, built very tall to surround the village and provide privacy. (1)

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): N/A

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

“The warp of inevitable kinship ties is cross-cut by the woof of informal, chosen relations of one individual with another; i.e., friendship. One has, on the one hand, kinsmen and in-laws, and, on the other, one's friends. These categories seldom overlap. Friendship in Kapsiki society crosses boundaries that the formal structures of the society impose. Friends are often people from other clans and phratries; friendship extends across the caste-like barrier of non-smith vs. blacksmith, and may even cross ethnic boundaries.” (2)

5.8 Village and house organization:

Sever clans and wards are within the actual village, and within those clans are where the individual huts reside. Each clan is its own community. (1)

5.9 Specialized village structures (men's' houses):

The men manage huts. (1)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? N/A

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc.:

The social organization is highly patrilineal. Self-governed clans within the village are also separated into wards. The clans are “virilocal” and self-governed, based at or near each father's family. The chief oversees the entire village's operation and religious practices. (1)

5.12 Trade:

“Many fields are loaned on a semi-permanent basis. Several people have inherited far more land than they can ever cultivate and about 50% of all Kapsiki cultivate on loaned fields. Close patrilineal kin can cultivate each other's fields without any

compensation, but borrowers from other lineages or clans "pay" for the transaction with a jar of beer or with counter-service such as herding goats or cattle for the owner. This loan relationship implies no dependency or inequality and loans often occur between friends. Loans are inherited and may last for generations, resulting in great uncertainty as to actual ownership." (2)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

The chief is at the top.

"His political tasks, also called *kahi meleme*, rely for their effectiveness upon the authority the chief has as a religious mediator. In other words, the chief has no access to political sanctions to arrange matters in his village. He is respected, not obeyed." (2)

Below him, the village is run in a caste structure, with the major division being blacksmiths and non-blacksmiths. Blacksmiths are the lowest on the scale, comprising only six percent of the population, and only a small minority within the blacksmiths actually forge iron. Other wise, blacksmiths perform special masonry tasks. The women have a special power. While they are lower on the caste scale, they know how to use their sexuality and medicinal knowledge to their advantage, often intimidating others with their magical prowess. (1)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

Seasonal initiation coincides with the rainy season, and the village festival happens just before harvest. (1)

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

The women specialize in medicine. They use various plants to heal, and claim to have a supernatural power as well. (1)

6.2 Stimulants:

Sacrifice is the primary stimulant. They are performed by request of non-blacksmiths. Sometimes, an entire kin may perform a sacrifice in front of the village. Sacrifices can be private or public, and secret or non-secret. Non-Kapsiki members are not allowed.

"Divination is the most direct way of communicating with this world. Sacrifice is the common act which relates both sides of one's existence to each other." (1) (2)

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

Ceremonies and feasts are held for a variety of reasons. A girl's first marriage occurs during the rainy season. Marriage ceremonies are large, elaborate, semi-private, and held right before harvest. A second burial is conducted for those who have passed away in the village one month into the dry season. All those who have died in the past year are honored and put to their final rest. (1)

6.4 Other rituals: N/A

6.5 Myths (Creation):

"Of prime importance is the Kapsiki belief in *shala*— god or God. *Shala* is a key concept; *a shala menete*, 'God has done it,' is often heard in conversations. [...] Inside the family the father has his *shala* and so does each of his wives and children. When asked about these many *shala* the Kapsiki state that, in essence, they are not different, but on and the same." (2)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

Non-blacksmiths can specialize in art and music. Often, the religious ceremonies and rituals include music and dancing. (1)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

"Men emphatically state that women tend to follow the second course: that of action, "Because they are like children; they

cannot bear their sorrow." This active course, in reality by no means restricted to women, encompasses divination and sacrifice, which together form the core of Kapsiki ritual." (2)

6.8 Missionary effect: N/A

6.9 RCR revival: N/A

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

"In speaking with us, no one *systematized* the Kapsiki cosmology stating, for example, that at death, *shala* dies, his respondent in the nether world dies too, thus resulting in an infinite column of living beings descending stages as disembodied spirits. Kapsiki are only intensely interested in their own direct *shala* and somewhat less interested in the 'people in the ground.'" (2)

6.11 Taboo

"Taboo regulations are numerous and the willing or unknowing infraction of one of them is only to be expected. They range from whistling in a millet field, entering a compound where a sacrifice is being performed, killing a pregnant goat, cutting firewood on a sacred place, to having one's rooster crow on top of the granary. If none of these taboos has been broken, the erring person has probably taken an oath somewhere and broken it. *Shala* punishes oath-breakers. The Kapsiki happen to be consummate oath-takers, swearing frequently to convince fellow men or women, 'If this is not true, let the thunderbolt hit me, let the epidemic kill me, let *shala* take me.'" (2)

6.12 Is there teknonymy? N/A

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)

"Things become even more complicated when animals are considered to have their own *shala*; even some special places are called *shala*. In that instance, the place *shala* has its own *shala* again, *shala ta shala*. All *shala* are in heaven, a place just like here, doing things as people do. They are in fact also called *mbeli pelE rhweme*, or "people up high." They are followed closely in word and action, our world being a carbon copy of theirs." (2)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: N/A

7.2 Piercings: N/A

7.3 Haircut: N/A

7.4 Scarification: N/A

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): N/A

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: N/A

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: N/A

7.8 Missionary effect: N/A

7.9 Types of clothing: N/A

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: N/A

8.2 Sororate, levirate: N/A

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): N/A

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

The area that the Kapsiki reside in the Mandara Hills was highly subject to slave raids for the Moslem empire in Sudan. At the raids' height, slaves could be captured in any amount and taken at any time. (2)

Numbered references

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2. 1987. The Kapsiki of the Mandara Hills. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press. [Pp. 32-64: patrilineal kin groups; 80-137: marriage and affinity; 138-153: kjin relations.]

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