

1. Description

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

- Afro-Asiatic → Chadic → Biu-Mandara → A → A.3 → *Psikye/Kapsiki*

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

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- In Cameroon: 10.5°,13.6°

- In Nigeria: 10.7°,13.5°

1.4 Brief history:

- There is a long history of slavery in the Mandara Mountains that the Kapsiki call home. However, the mountains made it difficult for colonizers and slave raiders to reach the Kapsiki, so they were not influenced until the 1800s. There are also many Neolithic remains in the Mandara Mountains, which indicate they were inhabited long before outsiders discovered them. War has been a constant presence throughout Kapsiki history – both internal village warfare and war against slave raiders, and it has defined their sociopolitical organization.

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

- The Sokoto Muslim polity most affected the Kapsiki. They were an expansionist empire resulting from a jihad, and were slave-hungry raiders.

- The most feared and influential slave hunter in all of Kapsiki history was Hamman Yaji, the Fulbe chief of Madagali.

“...depicting him larger than life, feared but also admired, ruthless but himself without fear, whose profession was raiding, whose coin was captive slaves, and whose trade was unmitigated violence...Never before—and hopefully never afterwards—have these mountains seen such an intensive slave raiding, such fierce wars, and so much human suffering.” (4p31)

- Pacification wasn't achieved until the 1930s when the Germans arrived in the area. Inter-village fights between the Kapsiki lasted until the 1950s.

“Despite continuing fascination with fighting, pacification was viewed well by the Kapsiki and their neighbors. The Europeans....brought peace and safety, and their presence and contribution were much appreciated.” (4p41)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

- The Kapsiki live in the Mandara Mountains. Steep, rocky, old volcanic slopes characterize the area and the center of their territory is a small plateau (2p9). The environment is “mountain savannah” and the climate is dominated by the rhythm of rainy and dry seasons.

“Rains may fall from June until September; the total precipitation seldom exceeds 900 mm. Heavy rainstorms normally mark the beginning of the cultivating season, although at the start of the wet season the rains occasionally may be so infrequent as to endanger the sprouting seed...The dry season, from October through May starts hot, cools in December and January and grows very hot in April and May. In the valleys and on the Nigerian plain, the temperature can rise above 40° C. The mountain ridges and the plateau are cooler; shrub and low, thorny bushes form most of the vegetation.” (2p11)

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

- 40,500 speakers of Psikye/Kapsiki live in Northern Cameroon and 12,000 live in Nigeria. Village size varies from 1000 to 4000. Population density is approximately 40/km² and it is not increasing in the Mandara Mountain region of Cameroon.

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- Sorghum is the most important food source and is usually consumed as a mush called *dafa*. It is also used to make beer, which forms an important part of the Kapsiki diet.
- When food is scarce they turn to the maize crop as a staple.

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- Chicken is more important as a protein source than beef or goat meat.
- Game from hunting does not serve much importance in the diet.

“Traditional oral history tells about elephants, leopards and buffaloes, but the present Kapsiki hunter encounters only small game like rabbits, guinea fowl, rats, mice and an occasional small antelope. In January and February of each year collective hunts are organized, but the yield is low. These hunting parties actually fulfill a ritual function rather than an economic one.” (2p16)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

- Different weapons are used for different types of conflict.
 - Kin conflict: wooden clubs used to pound on the other's head
 - Conflict between two wards, clans, or phratry: Iron weapons are allowed (knives, swords, and spears)

- Full-scale war between unrelated villages: all available weapons used, bow and arrows tipped with poison

2.4 Food storage:

- Granaries are used to store sorghum, millet, corn, groundnuts, couch and sorrel.

2.5 Sexual division of production:

- In agriculture, men and women have separate tasks. The main exceptions are during the cultivation of the sorghum and millet crop since they are important staples. Sorghum is considered the “husband’s” crop, but the wives fully share the workload.

“Men clear the fields, arrange and repair stone terraces, grow maize, tobacco, garlic and onions while women tend such crops as peanuts, couch, red sorrel, beans and ground nuts. Sesame is a crop for young boys, associated with initiation...Threshing is the woman's chore.” (2p17)

2.6 Land tenure:

- Since almost all of the land has been claimed that can be cultivated, the Kapsiki farmers today are working in fields that they have either inherited or borrowed. Once the owner dies, the land is divided between his brothers and sons. Borrowers pay for land with a jar of beer or by giving a service such as herding cattle for the owner. (2p13)

2.7 Ceramics:

- Pottery is made exclusively by women of the blacksmith caste, and they make both functional and ritual pottery. They do not use a wheel.

“The potter spirals a worm of clay into a circular shape, using a hollowed-out trunk as a mold. In some villages where a drier clay is found, bowls are formed by heating a lump of clay into the desired shape. The techniques are simple enough to enable all smith women to produce pottery.” (2p25)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

- There is a ritual where the father of a “normal” child (not twins) and the midwife share a sacrificial chicken in order to stress his relationship with the new baby. “In that ritual he is linked with the midwife through the chicken sacrificed over the place where the placenta and the umbilical cord are buried.” (4p179)

2.9 Food taboos:

- Non-smith Kapsiki will not eat horsemeat, donkey, monkey, tortoise, snake or lizard. However, blacksmith Kapsiki consider these animals edible.

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

- None. No large bodies of water, only watering holes and bore holes made on the plateau for water access.

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): Not found

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): Not found, but no indication of extreme weights

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

- Between 14-16 years old

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): No age found, but there are accounts of births within a few years of a *makwa* marriage.

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

- No specific numbers, but “each husband strives for as many wives and children as he can get and keep in his compound.” (8p59) Infant mortality rate is very high, so number of children living in a family compound varies.

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

- The first month after a birth is when the Kapsiki consider a woman most fertile, but conception is not necessarily common during that period just because of that belief. No specific facts found for inter-birth-interval.

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

- Men typically have their first *makwa* (first-time bride) wedding between the ages of 20-27. They may try for a *kwatewume* (what a woman becomes after leaving her first husband for a new man) when they are younger, but typically are unsuccessful.

- Females typically marry between the ages of 14-16, and, if possible, shortly after menarche.

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

- The Kapsiki have “an exceptionally high divorce rate.” (2p4) And “average marriage-expectancy is about 4 years.” (7p33) Out of 100 marriages, 50% end after a year. However, “No divorce procedure exists; a new marriage implies the rupture of the former marital union.” (2p84) About 16% of the male population is single.

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

- No concrete percentage found, but polygyny is the ideal for males.

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

- Traditionally, bride price was determined in terms of goats. Sheep were considered equal to goats, and cows are equal to 10-25 goats. Now, cash is replacing livestock for payment of the bride price.
- For a girl’s first marriage, the bride price extends over her entire reproductive career and is paid to “claim the

children.”

- Since women are so mobile it sometimes forces father-in-laws to refund the bride price to a former son-in-law.

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

- Land is inherited in a patrilineal pattern. Also, the youngest son is expected to remain at his father's compound and to inherit it after he dies. Girls may inherit the *livu* skirt from her mother that is worn in marriage and funeral rituals.

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

- When there are twins in a family and they are not treated equally, or do not get what they want, they become angry and they may intentionally harm their parents, especially the father.

“They are not easy to live with...Quick to take offence, and especially quick to take a liking to some beautiful object, they get angry on the spot, and then become dangerous...If they do not have their way, the Kapsiki say they will go into a trance and faint, or in Kapsiki parlance, “die”; in doing so they head curses upon the unhappy owner of the object.” (6p167)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: Not found

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

- The blacksmith caste is strictly endogamous within itself.

- The non-smith Kapsiki follow entrenched social rules of village endogamy for a *makwa* marriage, and strict rules of village exogamy for any secondary marriages. For the *makwa* marriage though, marriage between lineage members and second cousins is prohibited. (2p105)

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

- Not found to be a belief in partible paternity. A male is seen as the sole father.

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

- The connection between mother and child while she is pregnant is considered very important, especially with respect to the umbilical cord and the placenta. Also, special slings are made after birth so that the mother can carry her child close to her and maintain a connection.

“During the birth, the placenta and umbilical cord get almost as much attention as the baby itself, and both are buried carefully at the mother's washing place and are closely watched in case anyone ritually misuses them. They signify the bond between mother and child, but mainly the mortal, fragile side of this bond, the separation between the two having defined a new human being.” (4p179)

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

- Not necessarily, but two things must happen in order for a child to be conceived. “Conception is only possible when a dead *shala** from above enters a woman's vagina. However, this can happen only after the vagina has been opened during sexual intercourse.” (4p104)

**described later in the religion section*

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

- Not found to be any evidence of this, but a man may attempt to steal another man's wife before the marriage rites have been fulfilled.

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

- For a first marriage, a spouse must be from within the same village, but from a different lineage. For any second marriages, the husband must be from a different village.

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

- Yes; in the sense that they are continually leaving their husbands to go live with a man in a different village.

“The difference between marriage and adultery is often questionable.” (2p83) Women are incredibly independent in society.

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

- None found

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

- Mothers who are moving around a lot and leaving their husbands also leave their children behind to be raised at their father's compound. So, if the biological mother dies, typically a paternal grandparent living in the father's compound will help care for the children, or if the father has married a new wife she will also care for them.

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females: Not found

4.22 Evidence for couvades: Not found to be evidence of couvades

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

- Women leave their husbands in order to find a new one, “lured by the idea of finding someone new who will provide the riches of life: children, food and sex.” (2p81)

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

- Most sons choose not to live close to their father's or brothers compounds. There is especially tension between half-brothers.

- Women typically have strong relationships with their male kinsmen: her fathers, her brothers, and later her sons
- 4.24 Joking relationships? Not found
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations
 - In order for a man to be a village chief, he must be directly descended from the original founding lineage of the village. Also, "Social identity, ceremonial positions and stereotypical characteristics are tied to lineage membership." (2p50)
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules
 - Yes
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?
 - Yes, and there is a different type of marriage ceremony for *makwa* and *kwatewume* marriages.
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?
 - Children are named based on birth order (with the exception of twins; they get different names following the instructions of a crab diviner). After nine pregnancies, the names start over with an affix. Males and females will have different names, and each name tends to have an associated characteristic. (4p302)
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)
 - Marriages are preferred to be within the same village for a woman's first marriage. However, if a woman is leaving her husband she may have to go to another village to find a new husband so she doesn't marry someone within her residence.
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?
 - Daughters may be wooed from the time of their birth. Parents arrange the marriage with another family within the village, but only for the first marriage.
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:
 - In the second type of marriage *kwatewume* (where the woman has left her first husband and enters the hut of another man, effectively becoming his wife) the second husband should avoid marrying the wife of:
 - A mother's brother, a father's mother's brother, a ward member, a clan member, a man from one's matrilineal kin, a friend, a clan member of his grandparents, family-in-law, a ritual ally.
 - "This whole gamut of rules usually implies that one should avoid marrying a co-villager's wife. Especially in small villages, women must go to another village; no one in their resident village will be able to marry them. Even another villages, a runaway woman has to look carefully, as her former husband's in-laws and matrilineal kin may be dispersed widely over the whole ethnic territory." (2p107)*

Warfare/homicide

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:
 - Would not be a high percentage (if any) today since the last battles between the Kapsiki and neighboring villages or tribes occurred in the 1950s. A description of the battle between the Kapsiki of Mogode and the Sirakouti indicated that only one man was fatally wounded after an entire day of battle, and once he was wounded the battle ceased. (2p2)
 - 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:
 - No numbers for this, but fighting was carried out differently between the ingroup and outgroup.
 - "The Kapsiki had a graded system of fighting, ranging from fist and club fighting between clan members, the use of knives and spears in fights with members of the other phratry inside the village to fighting with poisoned arrows in wars with other villages." (7p34)*
 - 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:
 - Reported causes of conflict (that could result in warfare) were often "trivial" such as "hunting on foreign territory, insulting someone on the road, and – of course – disputes over women. Husbands went to the village their wives had run to and risked being tortured or beaten, which in turn provoked war." (7p34)
 - 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):
 - Relations with neighboring societies are mostly confined to trade as fighting has died down since the 1950s when the last full scale battle took place between the Kapsiki and Sirakouti in 1953. However, there was one attack made by the Kapsiki people of Kortchi on the neighboring village of Vindé Gawar in the early 1970s. "With a party of some twenty men they ambushed a group from Gawar going into the fields, killed one man and abducted a woman." (2p54)
 - 4.18 Cannibalism?
 - No reports of cannibalism
- ### **5. Socio-Political organization and interaction**
- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:
 - Clan size is typically thirty to fifty families.
 - 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

- The Kapsiki are not a mobile group since they are mainly agriculturalists.

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

- There are village chiefs, but they do not hold much power over villagers other than for religious purposes.

“his authority never transcends the strictly personal respect his fellow Kapsiki have for him. He holds no law court and has no economic privileges. Chiefs are chosen from a certain local clan and can be replaced when the village elders consider his performance inadequate.” (7p32)

- An important and interesting feature about Kapsiki society is its caste system. The blacksmiths (about 5% of the total population) are the lower caste and are separated from the non-blacksmiths. Blacksmiths specialize in several areas: melt/forge iron and cast bronze, act as undertakers, musicians, diviners and medicine men.

“Their wives make pottery and have their own medical specialties. They are feared by the common Kapsiki for their magical prowess, but at the same time despised for their polluting contacts with the dead. They keep mostly to themselves and heed strictly to the rule of endogamy, having a distinct set of marriage preferences...Anyone who needs the services of a blacksmith can find in his immediate vicinity a smith compound to serve him. The blacksmiths function as mediators between this world and the realm of the supernatural. They perform sacrifices on behalf of non-smiths if so requested.” (7p32)

5.4 Post marital residence:

- After menopause, women will go stay with one of their sons. Once a man has grown old (typically over 50) and does not have a wife he may go live with his son at his complex.

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

- Even among the Kapsiki villages territorial behavior is strong. For example, each compound is typically surrounded by a stone wall as tall as a man.

5.6 Social interaction divisions? (age and sex):

- Age is not held in high regard in Kapsiki society as it commonly is in other areas. Social hierarchy, in other words, is not based on seniority. In fact, old age is seen more as a burden.

“they value the industrious, independent strong adult, who needs nobody, works hard and feeds himself and many others. Old age brings dependency, unproductivity and poverty, hence loss of status. Thus, old men gradually lose their wives, while old women are wholly dependent on their sons for livelihood...In village politics...the rich and strong are heard...those who have their compounds full of dependent people.” (8p60)

- On a daily basis the sexes are separated because men communicate with men, and women with women. Husband and wife rarely communicate during the day

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

- Friendships are very important in Kapsiki society. Since there are so many rules governing who can marry who, and there are many kinship obligations, a friend “crosses boundaries that the formal structures of the society impose.” Friends can be people from other clans, wards, castes, and even other ethnicities. Activities friends engage in with each other differ between men and women.

“A man often visits his friend’s compound to chat or to drink a little beer if his wife has brewed some. Together they walk the village paths, greeting other strollers, exchanging a few puns with a passing woman or perhaps taking a few strands of rope from a mother’s brother’s compound. The two of them dress up for market and assist in drinking down any beer given to them, in selling the tidbits of their commerce or in pleading with a woman to marry one of them. Problems of the household can in fact only be confided to a friend, and in conflicts with other Kapsiki it is the friend that one runs to first of all.

...

A woman often joins her friend in cutting firewood, fetching water and any other outdoor task. Women tend each others’ babies, and they help in plaiting sacs or in selling peanuts on the market. After brewing, small gifts of beer find their way to the friend’s hut. If their daughters marry they are inseparable for days, working together at the many kinds of ceremonial food needed for the festivities.” (2p148-149)

- There is also a “special” kind of friend that a person may have, “the *mcE kwatla pela*, the friend who cuts your fingernails (which is done with the big two-edged Kapsiki knives, and indeed does take some trust).” (2p149)

5.8 Village and house organization:

- Kapsiki life is structured around how villages are organized; territorially and by kinship.

“Villages...are clearly recognizable units defined by a demarcated territory, a name, a set of specific patrilineal kinship with their migratory histories, and religiopolitical organization...In all cases the boundaries of wards and especially the villages are always clearly marked by boulders, social rock formations, or dry riverbeds...the village is the most important level of social aggregation and identity. Internally it is divided into wards, clans, and lineages, the descent groups usually being scattered over various wards...The smallest social unit, the compound, inhabited by a monogamous or polygynous family, with the man’s parents sometimes living in, is crucial in daily life, bolstered by a pervading sense of privacy

and individual autonomy, even if situated inside larger kin groups.” (4p51)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

- In each compound there are multiple huts, and the compound is separated into men's and women's huts. The man's hut is surrounded by granaries, and a brewery is built into the rear of a male house. Women's huts each have an adjoining granary and kitchen.

- Granaries are specialized according to sex.

“Men stow their supply of sorghum, millet and corn in cone-shaped structures made of mud or woven straw. There is an opening on top covered by a big straw cap. The granaries of women may resemble the male types or may be slimmer ...A woman's harvest consists of a number of different crops, including sesame, beans, sorrel and couch, each with a low total yield.” (2p36)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

- Sleep in huts surrounded by an outer wall. (6p176)

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

- “Within the village, kinship groups bind individuals together; patrilineal clans and lineages are the most important.” (2p5) The clan is the largest social unit:

“a group of males and females who observe the same totems and taboos, worship the gods of the particular clans to which they belong, and who claim to be the descendants, through approximately eight to ten generations, of a common putative male ancestor.” (9p23)

5.12 Trade:

- Both men and women sell their own goods at the market. A woman typically handles her own trade, and she has full control of her income. Women sell pepper, sesame, couch, hibiscus, peanut, beer and chicken. Men mostly sell goats, sheep, tobacco and carpentry.

- There is also a fast-developing tourist trade.

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

- Those within the blacksmith caste are definitely considered to have a lower social position in the village than the non-blacksmiths.

- Even though they are a minority with a low social position, the smiths are considered very clever and are highly regarded by the other Kapsiki for their cunning.

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

- Rituals fill a central role in Kapsiki society. They spend more time thinking about marriage than any other part of their social lives.

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

- Blacksmiths perform the most important ritual task of burial. They also specialize in divination, and the non-smith Kapsiki come to them for consultation. The blacksmiths also perform medicine, and the male and female smiths specialize in different areas.

- Divination performed by the blacksmiths is done using freshwater crabs that live in small pools on the Kapsiki Plateau. The smith has a bowl filled with sand and other paraphernalia that is used for crab divination.

“He pours lukewarm water into the large pot, puts straws upright in the sand along its rim in small bundles with a calabash marker in front of them...In the middle of the pot he buries a small round kwakweme fruit...places five round and six oblong pieces of calabash on the wet sand...Holding the crab in his hand he explains to it the matter at hand and what is expected. The crab is put in the pot with the lid on top...After a quarter of an hour the smith looks to see how the crab has rearranged the loose pieces of calabash, interprets this as a first answer, then asks a more precise question, puts the pieces back in the original order, and positions the crab for another go.” (4p68)

6.2 Stimulants:

- None found except for production of poison for tipping arrows.

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

- The three major ritual areas of the Kapsiki are funerals, weddings and sacrifices.

Funerals: These are the most spectacular rituals of the Kapsiki and are performed by the blacksmiths since they are the people of the dead. The blacksmiths hold center stage for these ceremonies, and it takes 15-16 days before the whole process is concluded.

Brief overview:

day 1: death, limited mourning, announcement of death

day 2: body decorated for the first time, village mourning

day 3: body decorated for the second time, big dance, digging of grave, burial proper

day 4: sacrifice on the burial mound, joint meal; widow's sacrifice, termination of burial mound first phase

day 6: final sacrifice on mound, second phase of mound

day 15/16: libation on mound, settling debts, final phase of mound (11p138)

Van Beek describes his experience during a funeral ritual:

"I walked behind the smith who was carrying the corpse on his shoulders through the throng of dancing people, with the drums going full blast and the shrill sounds of the shila flutes just audible above the din of mourning masses and their songs of war... My first memory, thinking back, is the smell, that unmistakable sweetish smell of death, and I remember thinking that I could almost follow smith and corpse with my eyes closed." (4p281)

Weddings: weddings are of central importance to Kapsiki life since so much time is dedicated to obtaining a *makwa* marriage and for husbands to keep their wives from leaving for a *kwaterume* marriage to another man. The rituals for the two types of weddings are different.

- *Makwa* marriages have long and elaborate preparations with complex ritual, bride price is paid in advance, they all happen in the month of April each year, the husband is from the same village, there are few restraints on partner choice, and the father-in-law and son-in-law relationship is very important. *Kwaterume* marriages have a short preparation, little ritualization, bride price is paid later, there are restrictions on husband choice, and the relationship between the two consecutive husbands is very important. (2p83)

- In order to test the virginity of a *makwa* "A chicken, slaughtered by the old men of the ward, is cleaned and then sewn tight with bean fibers and thus left to dry. If its belly splits open during the day, the *makwa* has not been faithful to her husband-to-be... When all is well and the seam stays tight, the chicken is shown to the bride's mother's sister and the father." (2p95)

- There are several parts to *makwa* wedding rituals: beer is spit over the bride, she wears a cache *sexe* and *livu*, she brings gifts to her husband's family after the wedding day, she crosses a stream and is pulled by the *gwela* boys toward her husband's compound by her cache *sexe*.

Sacrifices: These are performed with respect to how the crab divination requires it to be carried out in each individual situation.

- Sacrifice of a bull is made for a wedding and it is cut up and given to members of both families in the wedding.

6.4 Other rituals:

- Beer is central in rituals. There are two kinds of beer that dominate Kapsiki brewing; red beer that is used in ritual and is traditionally a man's brew, and white beer brewed by women that has no ritual significance. (10p479)

- Boys and girls also go through initiation rituals. The ritual for the boys is called *gwela* and they are initiated into manhood, symbolically dressed and trained as warriors with boys and arrows, clubs and knives. (4p25) For girls, their initiation is their *makwa* wedding.

6.5 Myths (Creation):

- Each village has its own myth regarding how their ancestors came to the area and started their village. The myths center around the migration histories of clan ancestors and their heroic deeds, struggles and quests. (2p47-48)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

- Blacksmiths are the only people with musical knowledge in Kapsiki society. Today, no festivals are held without a blacksmith to play music.

- *Gwela* initiates have to play an old board game.

- *Makwa* girls have to sing, and good singers are highly praised

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

- Different initiation rituals for girls and boys. *Makwa* wedding for girls and *gwela* initiation for boys.

6.8 Missionary effect:

- A majority of the Kapsiki are now Christian or Muslim. However, Islam is no longer expanding in the area and "some Fulanized Kapsiki have reconverted to Christianity, gone back to their traditional religion, or chosen some kind of modernized nonreligion that seems to be on the rise." (4p45)

6.9 RCR revival: None found

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

- The traditional Kapsiki religion focuses mainly on the living, with not much attention to the "shadowy afterlife" that people go do. "Though the lineage should continue, the deceased's own individuality does not stretch into future generations." (4p278)

- Kapsiki cosmology is somewhat supernatural, and their model of "the other side" is completely different from the classic heaven/earth distinction.

"One of them compared the relationship between this world and the 'other' as two sides of a piece of paper: one can see only one side, but the other side is always there. But seeing both sides at the same

time is impossible, even if sometimes the print on the other side vaguely shines through.” (4p102-103)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? No

6.12 Is there teknonymy? No

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

- The villages of the Kapsiki each serve as their own religious unit. For example, the village of Mogode:

“The main founding myth of the village is one of common descent of an ancestor who came into the area, settled, and undertook heroic exploits...Each village has its own history, sacred place, and chiefly lineage, its own smiths and smith chief.” (4p52)

- The concept of a *shala* (personal god) is central to Kapsiki belief. Each compound, ward, lineage, clan or village also has its own *shala*. The *shala* is “the personal god who directs from above, whose acts one follows and who can be considered as a supernatural alter ego.” (10p491)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: Not found

7.2 Piercings: Not found

7.3 Haircut:

- For her *makwa* wedding, girls go to a smith where they get their heads shaved into a “helmet-like cover.” (4p198)

- During *gwela* initiation rituals, boys get their heads shaved except for a tuft at the crown, like the chief.

7.4 Scarification:

- During the same custom where newlywed girls get their heads shaved, they also get two (or four) vertical incisions on their left lower belly; these incisions must turn into scars that are shown proudly to her husband and kinsmen.

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

- Initiated boys wear feathers, bracelets, bronze rings, and pendants to lead the main dance during the five-day village festival at the end of the rainy season.

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- The most important type of ritual adornment is that of the corpse during funeral ceremonies performed by the blacksmiths. The corpse is first dressed in many layers of colorful bands of cloth, sashes, towels and blankets. Decorating the head is the most important symbolic adornment.

“A red felt cap...adorns Zra’s head...Because Zra was a young man, Gwarda gives him a pair of glasses: Zra has to be able to see!...Quills are stuck in various places: on the head, often in a row, and in a triangle on the chest with sashes wrapped around them...A cow’s tail is attached to the back of his head, with its hair waving just in front of his face. On his chest two crossed arrow shafts sport the black feathers of a rooster..All the decorations should be strictly symmetrical on every corpse.” (4p254-255)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

- Girls wear a cache *sexe* called the *rhuli* that is made from a bundle of bean fibers during her *makwa* wedding that transforms her from a girl into a woman. Women also wear a *livu*: an iron skirt. It must have an even number of small iron shields since even is for women and odd is for men. The *livu* is worn during marriage and funeral ceremonies.

7.8 Missionary effect:

- There is a large influence from Christian and Muslim missionaries, and many Kapsiki have converted to these religions.

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: Not found

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: Not found

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

- If a woman has not had any children and her husband dies, then she will be pressed into levirate by her deceased husband’s brothers.

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): Not found

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

- The blacksmith infant mortality rate is about half of the general Kapsiki population, and their marriages last 50% longer than non-smith marriages.

- If there is more than one wife living with a man, those women tend to become friends or confidants. However, if they do not get along one will most likely leave the husband for another.

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