

## **1. Description**

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family: Chambri, Tchambuli, Tshamberi/ Tok Pisin/ Papua New Guinea

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

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): East Sepik Province, marsh dwellers east and north of Sepik Hill area, southeast shore and island in Chambri Lake. 4 villages.

1.4 Brief history: When the Chambri first came together, though isolated, they located communities nearby that made it possible for cultural interaction and growth. A neighboring society, the Iatmul, and the Chambri began trading goods so that each could progress and aid one another. The Chambri have been, and continue to be a large fishing community. The fish Chambri caught were in turn traded with the Iatmul to receive sago. For shell valuables the Chambri traded their hand-made tools and products. In later years as the introduction of European tools began appearing within the culture, the Iatmul no longer needed the Chambri's tools and goods. This left the Chambri vulnerable and eventually led to the Chambri society leaving their island to protect their community from the rising Iatmul military. They returned in 1927 once peace had been restored in their area. Historically known as headhunters and a volatile group, the Chambri abandoned these tendencies once Papua New Guinea came under independent government. Culturally their society had changed due to European influences, however the personal interactions and customs within the Chambri had not. New neighboring societies were formed, trade and growth continued throughout the years as anthropologists such as Margaret Mead, Deborah Gewertz and Frederick Errington visited this tribal location and reported on their findings. .(Gewertz)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: The influence of the European settlers drastically changed their culture. Some of what I read suggested that the Chambri people were headhunters until the influx of the Europeans. Their increased trade led them into a very Europeanized society. .(Gewertz)

1.6 Ecology:

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density 1,700 (1991)

## **2. Economy**

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): The Chambri Subsist on Sago, a carbohydrate produced from the pith of the sago palm, *Metroxylum rumphii*. Chambri women acquire sago at barter markets in the Sepik Hills, where they exchange one fish for one small chunk of sago. (Herdt)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: Although Chambri Lake is shallow, ranging in depth from 3 to 20 feet, it contains many fish. This is the main source of food for the Chambri (Herdt)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: Originally the Chambri acquired fish using spears since European contact they use more conventional tools such as rods and bait. (Herdt)

2.4 Food storage: The Chambri catch the amount of fish they need for their next meal so a cultural storage isn't needed if there is a shortage of fish a supply of sago is usually collected. (Herdt)

2.5 Sexual division of production: Men do all the fishing while women collect Sago by trading fish that the men catch 1 for 1. (Herdt)

2.6 Land tenure: The Chambri people are extremely dependent on the lake that they live around considering fish is essential to their survival. (Herdt)

2.7 Ceramics: No clear evidence was found for cultural relative ceramics.

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: Food is shared among the family the whole Chambri tribe is very family oriented they are close and work with each other to live the most efficient life. .(Gewertz)

2.9 Food taboos: No food taboos were found their diet basically consist of only two things

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? Fishing was typically done from the bank or wading depth with spears where canoes and watercraft were not needed however I found some evidence of canoes strictly for transportation purposes.(Gewertz)

### **3. Anthropometry**

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

### **4. Life History, mating, marriage**

4.1 Age at menarche (f): Girls live with their parents until marriage age of around 15. (Herdt)

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): The first birth is elaborately ritualized and celebrated; the next three births are also celebrated, but in more truncated fashion. Male and Female both take place around 7-10 years of age. (Herdt)

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): The average size Chambri family typically has 6 members. (Herdt)

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): Around 15

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: Despite occasional discord and philandering, especially in the early years of marriage, divorce is rare; from middle age onward, its unthinkable. (Herdt)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

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

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: I found that there is a lot of homosexual activities but it is a very touchy subject. The activities are not forced, but it does coincide with some of the rituals that happen with the iniation of a man that basically decided the fate of the boy's sexuality. (Herdt)

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): the rate of village endogamy is high around 70-80%(Herdt)

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

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

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

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

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

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

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

4.22 Evidence for couvades

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

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

4.24 Joking relationships?

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

4.26 Incest avoidance rules: marriage in the mother's clan is common this but the clan isn't particularly associated with the mother's blood family. (Herdt)

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? There is a marriage ceremony gifts are exchanged between the families the blood families that is, because the female moves out of blood family into a different social clan at age of first birth witch is around 7-10(Herdt)

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

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

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? The Chambri believe that a man should marry into his mother's clan and that a woman should return in marriage to her mother's clan in repayment for her mother. In no case is marriage either the biological mother's brother; daughter or the father's sister's daughter permitted or practiced, for it is believed that if a man marries a woman who shares his blood their children will not survive. 30% of the people do find mates in their mother's brother's clan, while only 2% marry a member of their father's sister's husband's clan. (Herdt)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

## **Warfare/homicide**

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: There was no evidence of violent deaths the only info I could really find at all about the influence of warfare or death in the tribe was the use of head hunting until the change to independent government. (Herdt)

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: Until Papua New Guinea came under independent government the Chambri were head hunters like a lot of surrounding groups in New Guinea. (Herdt)

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):

4.18 Cannibalism? There is no evidence of cannibalism.

## **5. Socio-Political organization and interaction**

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: Of the approx 1000 tribe members there were 4 different groups so the villiage size is about 250 the family size is approx 6 members. (Herdt)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): The Chambri don't move with the season they stay in the same basic area and fish from the same lake year around the only real movement is when the women go to trade fish for sago. They often have to travel long distances to meet with other tribes or European villagers. (Herdt)

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): No distint social cast system is established in the Chambri people there isn't a chief or system of hierarchy.

5.4 Post marital residence:

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

5.8 Village and house organization:

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: Families stick together as a group until the girl reaches first birth age (7-10) where she influxes with a different clan. Clans consist of 30-50 members typically. (Herdt)

5.12 Trade: Trade is major aspect of Chambri culture and needed for their survival. They trade the fish they catch for sago fish and sago are the Chambri's life source. (Herdt)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

## **6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)**

6 Time allocation to RCR:

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

6.2 Stimulants:

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): The Chambri boys go through a 4 stage process to become a man. This process consist of learning the task of a adult male of the tribe. The boys are each given an adult instructor who teaches things such food preparation the art of fishing they smoke cigarettes and learn to be a man before iniation is complete. The mothers' brothers typically lead the boys in learning the art of warfare eventhough they tend to shy from warfare. (Herdt)

6.4 Other rituals:

6.5 Myths (Creation):

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): The only evidence of art or music I could find is that during the second stage of the boy's iniation to manhood is that a flute was played during one of their learnings. (Herdt)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

6.8 Missionary effect: The influx of Europeans didn't really change the ways of the Chambri people however with their influence on the area the Chambri capitalized on there appearance by trading with them extensively they traded fish for everything mainly sago. This further shows how essential is to their survival. (Herdt)

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

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

## **7. Adornment**

7.1 Body paint: Body paint is only applied during the tribes ceremonies such as the end of a stage in a boy's quest into manhood or marriage. (Herdt)

7.2 Piercings:

7.3 Haircut: The Chambri have short curly dark hair. (Herdt)

7.4 Scarification: Scarification is part of the first phase of Chambri initiation into manhood. (Herdt)

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

- 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:
- 7.7 Sex differences in adornment:
- 7.8 Missionary effect:
- 7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

## **8. Kinship systems**

- 8.1 Sibling classification system:
- 8.2 Sororate, levirate:
- 8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

## **9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):**

### **Numbered references**

1. Herdt, Gilbert. *Rituals of Manhood, Male Initiation in Papua New Guinea*. Brunswick New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1998. eBook.
2. Gewertz, D. (1977). The Politics of Affinal Exchange: Chambri as a Client Market. *Ethnology*, 16(3), 285-298. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/>