

**-References used are next to each category.**

**1. Description -#6**

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family: Nez Perce

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

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): 46.4050° N, 116.8039° W

1.4 Brief history: The Nez Perce gave assistance to Lewis and Clark when the famous American explorers were near starvation in 1805—yet, the Nez Percé are perhaps best known for their battles with the U.S. Army during the Nez Percé War of 1877.

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: Nez Percé War of 1877

1.6 Ecology: the Nez Perce region provides for a wide variety of biota ranging from aquatic to terrestrial. River gorges, being the main source of water, account for much of the biodiversity in the area, while another major area providing suitable habitat is the mountainous terrain.

1.7 Population size: 39, 543 - mean village size: 30-200 - density: 70 villages.

**2. Economy -#6,#5**

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): camas bulb, bitterroot, khouse, and wild carrot and potato.

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: elk, moose, bear, mountain sheep, and goats.

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: Nez Percé used a variety of methods to catch fish, including spears, hand-held and weighted nets, small brush traps, and large enclosures. They also used bows and arrows to hunt elk, deer, and mountain sheep, although hunting was often difficult on the hot, open plateaus of their homeland.

2.4 Food storage: Surplus food was stored for winter use.

2.5 Sexual division of production: Nez Percé women used sharp digging sticks to turn up cornlike roots called *kouse*, and gather other fruits/roots.

2.6 Land tenure: Following their surrender to the U.S. cavalry, the Wallowa band of Nez Percé was sent to reservations in Oklahoma and Kansas before finally settling on the Colville reservation near Nespelem, Washington. The remainder of the Joseph band members and other Nez Percé live on the Nez Percé reservation in north-central Idaho. Many also live in various urban areas where better employment opportunities exist. On the Idaho reservation, most of the Nez Percé live in the principal communities of Lapwai, Kamiah, Cottonwood, Nez Percé, Orofino, Culdesac, and Winchester. Some descendants of the Joseph band remained in Oklahoma and others live in Canada.

2.7 Ceramics: With the absence of a pottery tradition, baskets were used for numerous tasks, including food storage and even cooking, which was accomplished by placing heated stones in a basket full of water to boil foods.

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: The Nez Percé were traditionally part of a large trading network, trading directly with other Columbia River basin tribes to the west, and native groups to the east in western Montana, and even onto the Great Plains. A variety of raw materials and goods passed through this network.

2.9 Food taboos: n/a

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? The tribe provided assistance to the members of the Lewis and Clark expedition by helping the explorers build boats.

**3. Anthropometry -#4**

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): male : 6'4"

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): male: 199, female: 162

**4. Life History, mating, marriage -#2,#4,#6**

4.1 Age at menarche (f):11-13 years old

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): male- 32, female- 21.8

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): no statistics on this topic.

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): no statistics on this topic.

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): male- 25.86 years old, female- 16.12 years old.

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: no statistics on this topic.

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: very rare.

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: In cases where marriage was not arranged, when a male found a female he wanted as a wife, an older female relative of the male initiated negotiations with the female's family. The woman might be observed by the elder relative over a period of time to determine if she was acceptable. The couple might then live together for a while to determine compatibility. Once the couple decided to marry, a ceremony and somewhat competitive gift exchange was held. Relatives of the groom might give horses, equipment for hunting and fishing, and skins. The bride's relatives would give baskets, root bags, digging sticks, and beaded bags. When two prestigious families were involved in an exchange ceremony, many people participated. After a second exchange ceremony, the wedding was considered complete.

4.9 Inheritance patterns: unsure.

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: Children were cared for and taught the ways of the land and spirits. The men took to hunting with their fathers and the ladies were taught the ways of women with their grandmothers and aunts.

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: no statistics on this topic.

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): The Nez Perce took a pessimistic view of matrimonial alliances with their Plains neighbors

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)? To then be the baby's father. Paternity is not partible.

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: High rape rate.

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin): If no one else could be found, it was not uncommon to find wedded brothers and sisters from the same family

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? Yes, but much more limited than in other parts of the United States.

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: No extramarital partners/offspring.

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? Grandmothers, aunts, fathers, and other members of the tribal village depending on how old the child is at the time of the mother's death.

4.21 Adult sex ratio: no statistics on this topic.

- 4.22 Evidence for couvades: Research suggests that babies were delivered in small separate houses with the help of midwives and female relatives, there is no description of the father in this event which leaves room for potential evidence for couvades.
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older): No, only one father.
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? Yes, grandmothers taught a lot of the teachings and there seems to be slight evidence of kin avoidance.
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: both matrilineal and bilateral.
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules? Kin relationships, even distant ones, were avoided; on the other hand, commonly several sons and daughters of two families might marry.
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Once the couple decided to marry, a ceremony and somewhat competitive gift exchange was held.
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? The *wyakins* often gave light to potential nicknames due to the energies of the spirit, such as “five ears.”
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?) Usually preferred to be within community because of shared beliefs.
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges? Heads of families often arranged marriages in traditional Nez Percé society, sometimes during childhood.
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: Yes, however, the relative prestige of both families is weighed in making selections.

#### **Warfare/homicide -#4,#6**

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: 150 casualties during the Nez Perce War.
- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: Ingroup: none, Outgroup: territorial conflicts.
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: Ingroup & Outgroup: alcohol
- 4.17 Relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): Maintained friendly relations with most tribes of the Plateau area, including the Walla Walla, Yakima, Palouse, and Cayuse as well as other tribes to their north.
- 4.18 Cannibalism? No.

#### **5. Socio-Political organization and interaction -#6**

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: 20-300
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): Following their surrender to the U.S. cavalry, the Wallowa band of Nez Percé was sent to reservations in Oklahoma and Kansas before finally settling on the Colville reservation near Nespelem, Washington. The remainder of the Joseph band members and other Nez Percé live on the Nez Percé reservation in north-central Idaho. Many also live in various urban areas where better employment opportunities exist.
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): Under the constitution, Tribal Executive Committee, whose members are elected at large, governs the tribe. The committee oversees the tribe's economic development, including the use of natural resources and the investment of tribal income. Each autonomous village or band had a headman who could speak only for his own followers. When a major decision needed to be made, the headmen of the various bands, along with respected shamans, elders, and hunting and war leaders, would meet in a combined council and attempt to reach a consensus.
- 5.4 Post marital residence: different village more likely to stay within tribe.
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): almost 4,000 descendants of the tribe live within defined boundaries on the Nez Percé reservation near Lapwai, Idaho.
- 5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): After puberty girls were no longer allowed to play with boys and stayed with their grandmothers who taught them the ways of women
- 5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: They had special friendships with their *wyakin*, and leaned on them during times of hardships.
- 5.8 Village and house organization: the Nez Percé lacked an overall tribal organization, living instead in bands composed of families and extended kinship groups.
- 5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses): no.
- 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? hide-covered tepees and pit-tepees.
- 5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: no.
- 5.12 Trade: The trade network allowed for the flow of valued decorative items such as dentalia, cowry and clam shells from the west. Buffalo robes, dried meat, and pipestone came from the Plains in the east. Baskets, berries, salt, herbs, dried salmon, furs, hides, roots, stone for tool making, and later, horses were moved freely through this vast network
- 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? Yes, but very subtle tiers; There are leaders and chiefs, but everyone else seems to be equal.

#### **6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR) - #1,#2,#3**

- 6 Time allocation to RCR: The Nez Perce allocated lots of time to RCR because they believed in the spirits of their homeland, and passed on traditions.
- 6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): shamans, who were believed to have miraculous powers and able to cure the sick by singing sacred songs and prescribing herbal remedies.
- 6.2 Stimulants: Whiskey
- 6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): After deaths, the shaman would perform rituals to prevent the deceased ghost from returning, and individuals who had tended to the body ritually purified themselves. Following burial, a feast was held and the remaining items of the deceased disbursed. For the following year, the surviving spouse cut his or her hair short, wore old clothes, did not smile in public, and was prohibited from remarrying. At the end of the yearlong mourning period, relatives supplied a new set of clothes, and a new spouse if a brother or sister of the deceased spouse was available.
- 6.4 Other rituals: Around the onset of puberty, a young Nez Percé would leave the village in hopes of acquiring a *wyakin* through a sacred experience. The youth traveled alone to an isolated place, often at a high mountain or along a river, without food or weapons, and sat upon a pile of stones and waited for the *wyakin* to reveal itself. The *wyakin* might appear as something material, such as an elk illuminated in a flash of lightning, or as a hallucination or dream. After returning to the village, the young person did not tell others of the experience but interpreted the power of the *wyakin* privately.
- 6.5 Myths (Creation): The Nez Perce believe that a monster, Coyote, created human beings.
- 6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): Western dances, a fun run, arts and crafts, and baseball tournament.
- 6.7 Sex differences in RCR: n/a, besides that each *wyakin* grants different (superior/inferior) powers.

- 6.8 Missionary effect: the Nez Percé established friendly relations with French Canadian and American fur traders, missionaries, and settlers. At the request of the Nez Percé, a Methodist minister named Henry Spalding established a mission near Lapwai in 1836. Three years later, Asa Smith established another mission at Kamiah. The Nez Percé consulted these ministers for the special powers they seemingly held.
- 6.9 RCR revival: As with many Native American groups in the United States, the Nez Percé began an era of cultural revitalization in the 1960s involving religion, dance, and arts and crafts.
- 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: Like most Native American tribes, they believed that the souls of the dead passed into a spirit world and became part of the spiritual forces that influenced every aspect of their lives. Many tribes believed in two souls: one that died when the body died and one that might wander on and eventually die.
- 6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? No.
- 6.12 Is there teknonymy? In a sense; All the first names are given at age 7 or 8 by The Spirit of the Wind, and in later generations, the boy is called after the father's people and the girl after the mother's people.
- 6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.): The Nez Perce believed mainly in spirits, which is why rites among Native Americans tended to focus on aiding the deceased in their afterlife; Some leave food, sacrificed wives, slaves, and a favorite horse of a dead warrior.

## 7. Adornment -#6

- 7.1 Body paint: Red paint was applied to the part in a warrior's hair and across his forehead, while other colors were applied to his body in special, individual patterns.
- 7.2 Piercings: No.
- 7.3 Haircut: No, most of the Nez Perce Indians had very long hair.
- 7.4 Scarification: No. 7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): By the early 1700s, the Nez Percé began wearing tailored skin garments decorated with shells, elk teeth, feathers, and beads.
- 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: As they prepared to make war, Nez Percé men wore only breechcloths and moccasins and applied brightly colored paint to their faces and bodies.
- 7.7 Sex differences in adornment: The male warriors adorned themselves with animal feathers, fur, teeth, and claws representing their connection to their guardian spirits. Elaborate adornments for the horses are characteristic of Nez Percé society, including brightly colored beaded collars and saddlebags, appliquéd with brass tacks and bells added for decorative purposes. Women's dresses were often decorated with elk teeth, beads, and dyes.
- 7.8 Missionary effect: the Nez Percé established friendly relations with French Canadian and American fur traders, missionaries, and settlers. At the request of the Nez Percé, a Methodist minister named Henry Spalding established a mission near Lapwai in 1836. Three years later, Asa Smith established another mission at Kamiah. The Nez Percé consulted these ministers for the special powers they seemingly held.
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## 8. Kinship systems -#5

- 8.1 Sibling classification system: general honorifics were used.
- 8.2 Sororate, levirate: Yes, after a year of heavy mourning, the widow is gifted with the sibling of the deceased, if available.
- 8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): Omaha Kinship

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