



THE CHAM

A collection of ethnographic and historical data from fieldwork 1989-1993

Series

Ethnographic and Historical Profiles of the Peoples of the Muri Mountains
- The Northern Groups

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ISBN 978-1-906168-16-2

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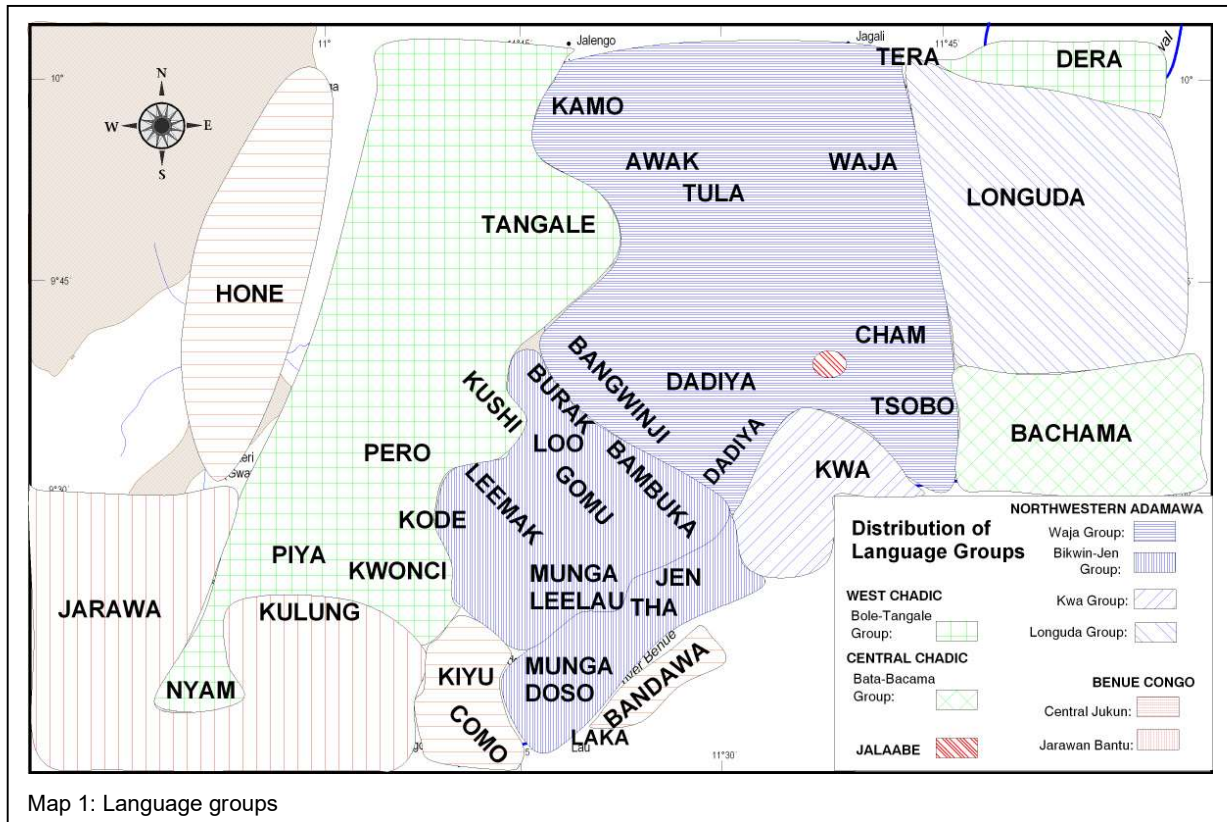
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Introduction

Ethnographic field research was undertaken within the framework of the interdisciplinary research project "Cultural Development and Language History in the Environment of the West African Savannah" (SFB 268) in the years 1989 to 1993. The information provided below reflects the situation at that time.¹

Linguistically the Cham [cfa] are part of the Waja group², a sub-group of the North-Western Adamawa languages of the Niger-Congo phylum. Other members of the Waja group are Bangwinji [bsj], Dadiya [dbd], Tula [tul], Tsobo [ldp] and Waja [wja].



Map 1: Language groups

First mention is made by the German traveller Eduard Flegel who explored the river Benue on board the steamer *Henry Venn* in 1879 and reports that Mana (Mona) and Tscham (Cham) are localities to the east of Muri.³

¹ I am grateful to the Chief of Cham James Chachi, Auduga, Dan Fulo Numan, Dreva Kwalim, Enan Garba, Fitila, Garagara, Kwataga, Maisamari, Musa Chachi and Yaakware Usmanu for their cooperation during my research. My special thanks go to Nicholson Husaini for his untiring and invaluable assistance. I am grateful to Pete Eccles for correcting my English.

² Cf. Kleinewillinghöfer 2014. In square brackets are the ISO 639 names of the languages. Chika Kennedy Ajede (2022, 2023) is studying the language of the Dijim (Kindiyo) section of the Cham.

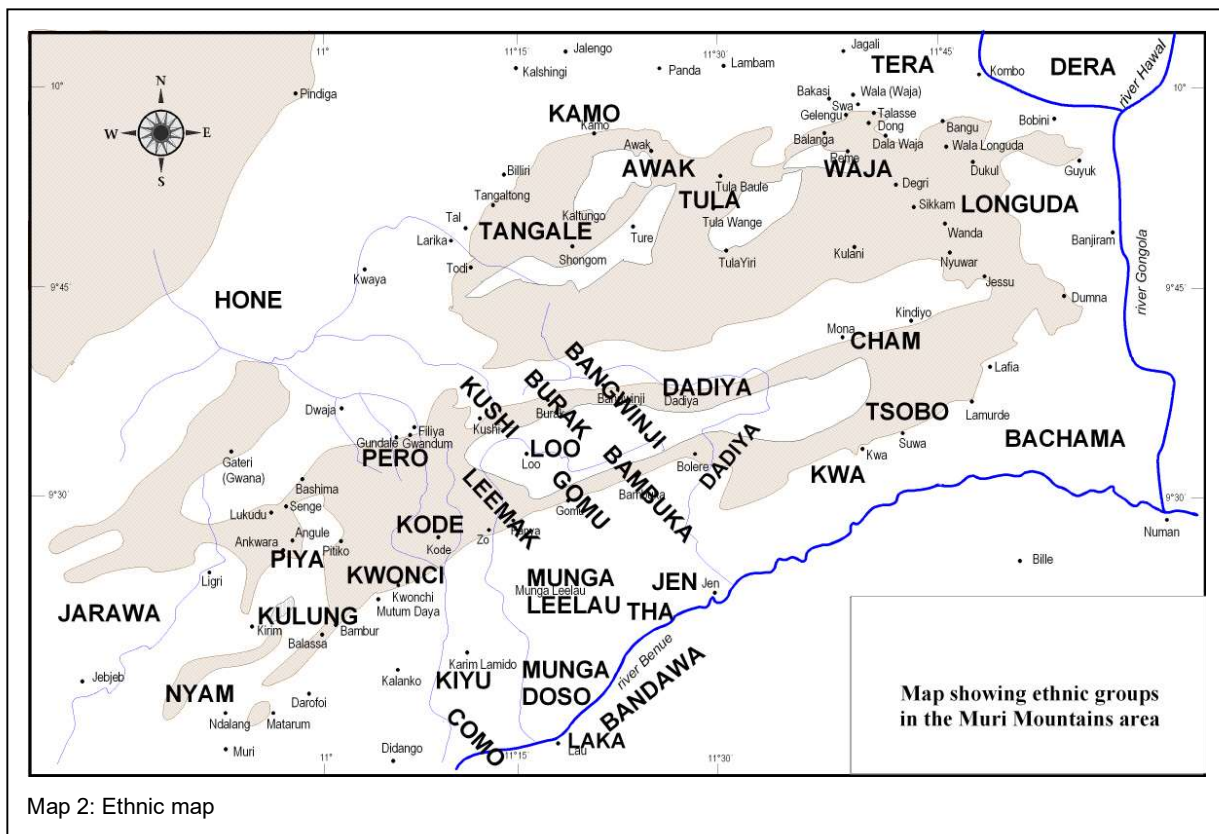
³ E. Flegel 1880a: 227 and K. Flegel 1890: 23. For an overview of Flegel's explorations see Adelberger 2000.

Settlement area and demography

The Cham live in the northeastern part of the Muri Mountains, according to the census of 1963 they counted 15,573 persons, of which 6,355 were in Kindiyo and 9,218 in Mwona; a more recent figure - from the early 1990s – comes from the Bauchi State Development Levy and states a projected population of 30,212.

The Cham are subdivided into three sections: the Mona (or Bwylim), the Kindiyo (or Dijim) and the Looja (Jaabe or Jalabe). The Jalabe are called Centum by the Kindiyo.

Mona and Kindiyo are territorial groupings and the various clans of the Cham are distributed across these sections.

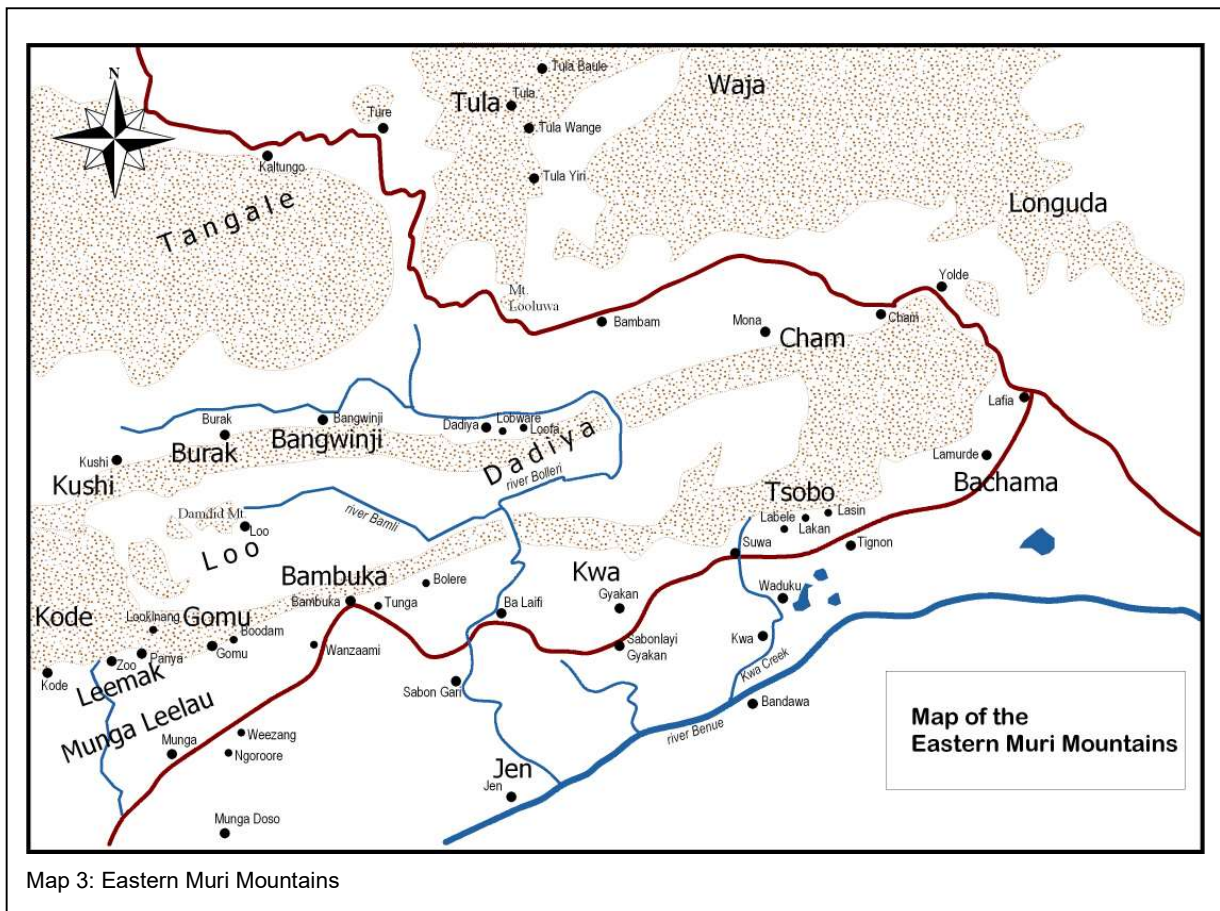


Interethnic relations

Their neighbours to the west are the Dadiya, to the north-east the Longuda [Inu], to the south the Tsobo, and to the south-east the Bachama [bcy].

The Cham call the Tsobo 'Kittam' and regard them as close associates. They say that they have a joking relationship with the following groups: the Jen, Chamba, Awak, Kamo, Bura, and Bachama of Dubunga. On a sectional level, the Looja have a joking relationship with the Dadiya. The existence of a joking relationship is considered to be the result of a victory in interethnic fighting. It is said that a Baobab tree was planted at Dubunga as a boundary marker after fighting with the Bachama.

After a fight with the Bachama of Lamurde, the Cham brought back fig trees (*kumong*) and planted them in their locality.



History

Pre-colonial migrations and movement of settlements since the beginning of the colonial period

The main body of the Cham, (which later separated into Kindiyo and Mona), is said to have originally come from Jingum, a site in the valley of the river Gongola near the town of Shani. Still today one may find Cham people there. The reasons stated for leaving Jingum are over-population, bad soil and low yields.

From Jingum they moved to Nyuwar and then onwards to Fitolai, (or Kuntur as it is called by the Waja), on the southern edge of the Longuda plateau.

At the end of the 19th century, they were driven out from Fitolai by invading Waja and moved to their present settlement area in the Muri Mountains (NAK SNP 17-9150, S. W. Walker, 1929), separating into the regional sections Mona and Kindiyo.

A slightly different version is given by the author of the book "Cham - the seat of Chugoteh"⁴ who relates that starting from Yemen, the Cham migrated via Ngazargamu, Kukawa and Dikwa to Shani and Wanda, then to Dukul where there occurred a quarrel with the Waja in 1883 and therefore the Cham moved further to Fitolai where they divided into Dijim/Kindiyo (upper Fitolai) and Bwilim/Mona (lower Fitolai).

In the Muri Mountains they came across the Jalaabe already settling at Looja. The clans Tiksir and Kwasir are also mentioned as being autochthonous to the area (Jisimah, n.d.: 15-16).

The Jalaabe formerly occupied a much larger area in the uplands of the eastern Muri Mountains. Their former settlement area, called Jiiwodu, consisted of a number of hamlets. The present Bige clan claims to have first lived at Baalabe, a bit further to the south of their present area. Baalabe is said to be identical with Kwa Dutse and may be the same settlement as Yibong referred to by the Kwa as their old settlement site. Kleinewillinghöfer was able to document the remains of a language among the Jalaabe that cannot be classified into any of the existing language phyla and it exemplifies one of the few language isolates discovered in Africa (see Blench 2006: 171-2). The Jalaa language, in our view, represents an old linguistic substratum and is a language of the autochthonous population.

In their own traditions the Jalaabe say that their ancestors emerged from the ground from a tunnel with water situated in one of their old settlements (Kleinewillinghöfer n.d.: 2). Still today they are considered as custodians and owners of the ground and they maintain several ritual sites (Jisimah, n.d.: 15).

Among the neighbouring Dadiya and the Burak further west we also find population elements tracing their ancestry to an autochthonous group called Jaabe, who are closely related to, or even identical with, the Jalaabe.

Relations with Fulani emirates⁵

As far as oral, archival or published sources can tell, the Cham were never conquered by the Fulani.

The military strategy of the Fulani emirates was largely based on their cavalry, with noble horsemen leading the attacks (Marjomaa 1998:218–19, 232–34, 254–56; Smaldone 1977:29–32).

Mounted warriors could employ their military tactics to great effect on the undulating plains of the Northern Nigerian savannah, but could not exploit their superiority in the craggy and hilly landscape of the Muri Mountains area nor in other mountainous regions. The inhabitants of the plains surrounding the hills, especially in the Tula area, built defensive stone walls and thorn hedges, which were successfully used to check attacks by horsemen. As a protective measure, the villages were strategically well-placed in the steep and rocky hills. Usually, they were protected by

⁴ Jisimah, n.d.: 12-15. I am grateful to Ulrich Kleinewillinghöfer for providing me with a copy of that study.

⁵ The following is largely taken from Adelberger 2009.

stone walls and could only be reached through narrow, winding paths, partly obstructed by gateways. These could be well defended against emirate raiders, even if they approached armed with rifles.

Firearms were part of the weaponry of the emirate forces, especially since the middle of the 19th century, but since they were of the front-loader musket type and, compared with contemporaneous European standards, few in numbers, their effect was mostly psychological inducing fear through their loud discharge. The arms of the mountain dwellers consisted of spears with varying, often quite vicious, tips, bows and arrows, the latter often poisoned, daggers, short swords and clubs. For protection, shields made of buffalo hide and elephant ears were used.

Thus, although the different emirates exercised considerable pressure by undertaking frequent raids on the population groups of the wider Muri Mountains area and adjacent regions, their control of the area was rather loose and varied over time. Supported by a suitable terrain, the mountain dwellers could successfully defend themselves or were able to withdraw into even more inaccessible regions. The acephalous nature of their societies and the existence of a multitude of factions on the one hand made it difficult to form alliances for more successful defence, on the other hand the subjugation of a single community did not entail the conquest of any wider political network.



Photo 1: Cham warrior in his traditional attire

In the northern Muri Mountains, the Emirs of Gombe and Misau attacked the Tangale of Shongom in about 1886, but were repelled by the combined forces of the Shongom, Kaltungo, Ture and Tula Wange. The Emir of Misau, Sale, was killed in the battle. In another attack on Awak the emirate raiders were also defeated.

Defence in the lowland areas was more difficult and these areas were often incorporated into the Emirate structure. In the Gombe region, the Plains Waja and the Western Tangale were given as fiefs to Sarkin Yaki and Galadima Gombe respectively. They paid tribute in exchange for immunity from attacks by Fulani (Low 1972:150 ff). Still, Buba Yero – first Emir of Gombe - and his successors inflicted numerous raids on the settlements of Waja and Tangale and the

Jukun of Pindiga. The payment of tribute or the conversion to Islam did not necessarily mean that a community was exempt from being the target of slave raids (see Yakubu 1992:146,150). Buba Yero visited Waja from Dukku or Gombe, attacked the plains villages and was repulsed by Gelengu. On his way back he took his revenge on the Tera towns of Kwooll and Hinna for their expulsion of the Fulani. Yerima Suli, the son of Buba Yero, attacked and burnt Gelengu. His

brother Koiranga attacked the Waja several times, and he undertook raids against the Tangale, Tula and Awak, assisted by the Emirs of Misau and Katagum. It is said that Koiranga fought seven wars with the Waja, capturing the settlement of Bakasi, then Balanga, Kube Gasi, Gelengu, Talasse and Swa. On his last raid, the Emir fought Dong, whose inhabitants fled to the Degri hills and were able to drive back the Fulani. Koiranga, reinforced by the Emir of Misau and his troops, returned and attacked Reme and Degri simultaneously. There was heavy fighting with losses on both sides. Later Mallam Jibril Gaini also attacked the Waja village of Lambam and destroyed it. Mountain dwellers, such as the Awak, Cham, Dadiya or Pero, were able to retain their independence against the Fulani (Temple 1922:34, 87, 88, 365).

In later years the Gombe Emirate's control over the Waja and Tangale fiefs weakened further still.

Colonial encounters

From November 1910 until January 1911 an extensive patrol under Assistant Resident Carlyle and Captain Wolseley traversed the territories of Waja, Tula and Tangale and marched through hitherto untouched areas in the north-eastern parts of the Muri Mountains. In addition, Longuda country, which had only been marginally touched by the patrols in 1904 and 1906, was further explored. Fighting broke out with the previously unvisited Kindiyo (Cham) and Bangwinji, which left one Kindiyo and 12 Bangwinji dead, several wounded and the obligatory burnt compounds. The so-called 'pacification' of local conflicts in the Tangale settlement of Tal led to the destruction of a village and the death of one man.⁶

Assistant Resident Carlyle left Deba Habe on 17th November 1910 and went via Panda, Ture and Kaltungo to Tangaltong, where he arrived on 20th November and built his camp at Tal. The objectives of his patrol were to settle friction in the Tangaltong area, to enquire into disturbances in the Waja area and to arrange the boundary with Yola Province.

Carlyle found out that the friction between Ture and Tangaltong was the result of the killing of seven Ture by Tangaltong, (a matter which could not be settled by Captain Lonsdale's patrol in August); further there was an affray between the Kulkwinji section and the Kwaiya section of Banganje, which had not been settled, and which so far had left two persons of both parties killed and eight wounded. There was a clash between the Tal and the Tangalam in which three men had been killed. All three cases were dealt with by paying fines as compensation.

A faction fight in Kamo, in which one man was killed, was also settled by Carlyle through the payment of compensation. As the military escort had not yet arrived, Carlyle accomplished his tasks in Tangale country without military support.

⁶ NAK SNP 7 - 5401/1910, Waja District, Escort to Tangale Patrol:

- Report of November 26, 1910 by Assistant Resident Carlyle, Assistant Resident Deba Habe to the Resident Gombe. The Tangaltong group of Tangale
- Assistant Resident Carlyle to Resident Gombe. Waja - Tangale Patrol
- Tangale - Waja - Longuda Patrol by Capt. E. J. Wolseley.

NAK SNP 7 - 1881/1911, Bauchi Province Annual Report 1910.

NAK SNP 7 - 952/1911, Bauchi Province Quarterly Report ending December 1910.

On 3rd December Carlyle arrived at the Waja town of Gelengu where he was joined a day later by a force of 41 rank and file and a Maxim gun under the command of Captain Wolseley and accompanied by the Medical Officer from Nafada, Dr. Lobb.

Arrests were made at Gelengu in connection with a recent attack on the District Headman and the quarters of the guilty persons were destroyed.

The patrol started towards Cham country on 7th December, visiting Degri on the way and then Sikkam, which they left on 9th December 1910, then proceeding via Nyuwar to Kindiyo, which is one of the main settlements of the Cham. Here they stayed until 11th December. Carlyle observed that the plain between the Muri Mountains range and Tangale country was full of elephant and big game and a portion was infested with tse-tse fly. He stated that the Cham had been driven out of Degri by the Fulani. This, however, is doubtful, as all evidence suggests that the Cham were pushed to their current territory by the Waja.⁷ According to Carlyle, Kindiyo was once visited by officers from Yola Province in 1906; Mona and Dadiya, however, had never been visited by British officers before.

Then the patrol marched along the foot of the mountain range to Mona.

The Cham people had been told to clear the road to Mona, but at Kindiyo the inhabitants of a small hamlet consisting of four compounds refused and even stopped other Cham from doing it. Carlyle had one compound burnt as a warning. This made the Kindiyo men pick up their arms, one arrow was shot and as the result the archer was killed. Then the rest of the compounds were then burnt.

The patrol stayed at Mona and went to Dadiya on 12th December where they were welcomed. On 14th December they proceeded to Bangwinji (or Kwim, as it is called in the report, Kwim being the Dadiya name for Bangwinji), where they camped at the foot of the hills. Title holders from Dadiya, they being Sarkin Dadiya and Galadiman Dadiya, accompanied the patrol. As the inhabitants of Bangwinji refused to come down from their mountain settlements, the patrol climbed up the hill and warned the Bangwinji people to show no resistance. At 2.30pm they advanced on the village at the summit of the hill, where two attempts were made to stop the patrol; these were answered by gunfire leaving 12 Bangwinji dead and three wounded. Again, the violence may have been aggravated by local interests as the relationship between the Dadiya and the Bangwinji was strained. The chief of Dadiya served the patrol as guide and interpreter at Bangwinji, thus it is quite likely that he manipulated the situation to have the Bangwinji punished. Evidence from oral traditions supports this interpretation.

From January to April 1913 Assistant Resident Carlyle undertook another extensive patrol through the southern region of Gombe Division and he left a trail of destruction. A skirmish with the Pero at Gwandum resulted in 16 Pero being killed and four wounded and the destruction of

⁷ Cf. Kleinewillinghöfer 2001: p. 242; NAK SNP 17 - 9150, Cham Tribe, Ethnological Notes on, by S. W. Walker, DO Gombe Division, 1929; NAK Bau Prof 231B, Pagan Administration, Gombe Emirate: Pagan Administration by Mr. Drummond-Hay, DO Gombe Division, 1934.

the settlement; Kindiyo was again destroyed, as was the Waja settlement of Wala and a part of Ture.⁸

The patrol, consisting of 30 soldiers under the command of Lieutenant Geoghegan, left Nafada on 21st January 1913 and marched via Tongo, Deba Fulani and Deba Habe to Panda, where they arrived on 26th January. They then went to Awak and Kamo and on the 30th back to Awak. Next day they proceeded to Ture, where they stayed until 2nd February. On 3rd February they continued to Kaltungo and on 6th to Tal. A local fight which had occurred at the village of Larika in October 1912 had left two Tangale dead, thus a fine of 75 shields and 300 spears was imposed. Kalmei was fined 30 shields and 100 spears for an attack at Banganje.

On 11th February the patrol went to Filiya and Carlyle observed that no road clearing had been done. The chief of Filiya came in to meet him but the chief of Gwandum refused.

Thus, on the next day Carlyle, Lieutenant Geoghegan and 23 soldiers marched to Gwandum and climbed Gwandum hill. Carlyle estimated its population at 2,323 with 829 male adults. As the Gwandum people came close, the soldiers started shooting and a skirmish ensued. The patrol fired their way up to the top and destroyed the town. In the evening the chief of Gwandum came in and reported that 16 of his men were killed and four wounded.

The force returned to Filiya where they stayed until 17th February and ordered the road to be cleared as far as Bangwinji. On 18th they marched to Kushi, on 20th to Banwinji and then to Dadiya. On 3rd March they continued to Mona and on 8th to Kindiyo. A part of Kindiyo was destroyed on 12th March because of an antagonistic attitude towards the British. Two days later they went to Jessu, then visited Nyuwar on 16th, Sikkam on 17th and Kulani on 19th March. On 21st they arrived at Degri and on the 22nd at the town of Wala, which was destroyed without opposition. Next day they went to Jalengo and on 25th March to Tula Wange. On 26th the patrol went by night to Ture in order to arrest some offenders. On 28th March a part of Ture was destroyed. The patrol returned to Panda and marched via Deba Habe, Deba Fulani, Tongo and Bage to Nafada, where they arrived on 2nd April 1913.

At the end of 1913 Assistant Resident Carlyle, who obviously believed in bringing in the taxes by force of a patrol, again made a tour through Waja, Cham and Longuda country. As a result of refusing to pay its tax, Kindiyo (Cham) was involved in a clash and eight Kindiyo men were killed. At Jessu the headman's compound was burnt. With the help of 2,000 Waja and 1,000 Tula who were asked to gather, Kindiyo was then forced to bring in their tax.⁹

Carlyle arrived at Nyuwar on October 29th 1913. The taxes from Dadiya, Tula and Tangale had been paid, and Nyuwar paid on the spot. He camped at Jessu and found that here no tax was

⁸ NAK SNP 10 - 263P/1913, Central Province - Gombe Division, Pagan tribes, Report by Mr. T. F. Carlyle on his visit to:

-South Gombe Pagan Patrol, January–April 1913, Diary of Itinerary by Lt. J. R. Geoghegan,
-To the Resident Central Province re Your 236/A and subsequent correspondence by AR Gombe T. F. Carlyle.

⁹ NAK SNP 10 - 745P/1913, Military Escort for Mr. T. F. Carlyle: From 3rd class Resident I/C Gombe Division to the Resident Central Province, Naraguta (by T. F. Carlyle).

paid. The Galadima was left to collect the tax and Carlyle proceeded to Kindiyo on 31st October, where he arrived on 1st November, which happened to be market day and therefore the efforts to collect money met with little success. He estimated Kindiyo to have 3,187 inhabitants. Tension started and in the night the inhabitants came and fired arrows. Next day Carlyle went to Mona. Mona paid their tax and Jessu also sent their tax to Mona. Carlyle sent for 12 soldiers and stayed in Dadiya on 4th to 5th November. The next eight days were spent preparing the road from Dadiya to Filiya, assisted by the Dadiya and Tula Wange. He arrived at Kushi on 12th November and collected the tax from Pero. On 14th October Carlyle was joined by Haughton, Assistant Resident Lau Division Muri Province, and engaged in boundary demarcation from 15th to 21st November, which brought them to Lo and Bolere. On 18th November at Lo they were joined by 11 WAFF (West African Frontier Force) soldiers from Nafada. At Bolere they also met Mr. Ryan, 3rd Resident Numan Division Yola Province, who was there because the trade road to Lau via Bolere had been closed due to some incidents. Carlyle learnt that all the Pero and Cham, apart from the Kindiyo, had paid their tax. He left Bolere on 24th November passing through the Tsobo towns of Suwa (or Wobongil) and arrived at Kindiyo on 25th November. He found the town deserted, all inhabitants had gone into hiding. He tried to locate the most truculent and found them hidden among rocks on a hill north of the town on 27th November. A fight broke out which left eight Cham dead and one wounded. He returned to the town and next day the headman came in and told him that he was trying to persuade the men to surrender. Carlyle moved to Jessu, where he stayed from 29th to 30th November and appointed the Galadima as the new chief, (the ex-headman was hiding, and his compound was therefore destroyed). On 1st December he returned to Kindiyo where the situation was unchanged, but when the various chiefs of Waja arrived with 2,000 men, all came in from their farms and paid their taxes. The Waja left on 3rd December when 1,000 Tula arrived and befriended the Cham people. In Carlyle's opinion their refusal to pay tax was sparked by the unadministered state of the Tsobo towns which paid no tax. The military escort left for Nafada on 5th December.

Social structure

Clans

The clans are named, patrilineal descent units. Filiation into a lineage or clan is patrilineal.

In the following table an overview is given of the various clans and in which section they can be found, as well as their place of origin. It is open to further research to fill in the lacunae.

Table 1: Cham clans

Clan	Section	Origin	Comments
Bige	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Baalabe	Bige were 2 nd to move from Kuntor to Fitilai (Jisimah MS)
Burang	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	
Dààbá	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	
Fay	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	
Jange	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	
Jijo	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	
Jirongi	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	
Kani	?	?	
Kunong	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	?	
Kuntur	Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	
Kutar	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	?	
Kwam	Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	Kwam were 3 rd to move from Kuntor to Fitilai (Jisimah MS)
Kwaasir	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	connected with water and rain, are rainmakers. Autochthonous like Jaabe (Jisimah MS)
Laaku	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	
Larinyang (Fai)	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	
Saalang	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	
Siong	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	
Sugi/Yusugi	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	Yusugi were 1 st to move from Kuntor to Fitilai (Jisimah MS)
Tiksir	?	?	autochthonous like Kwasir & Jaabe (Jisimah MS)
Tiriidu	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	do not kill hyena
Womi	Looja/Mona/Kindiyo	Jingum	

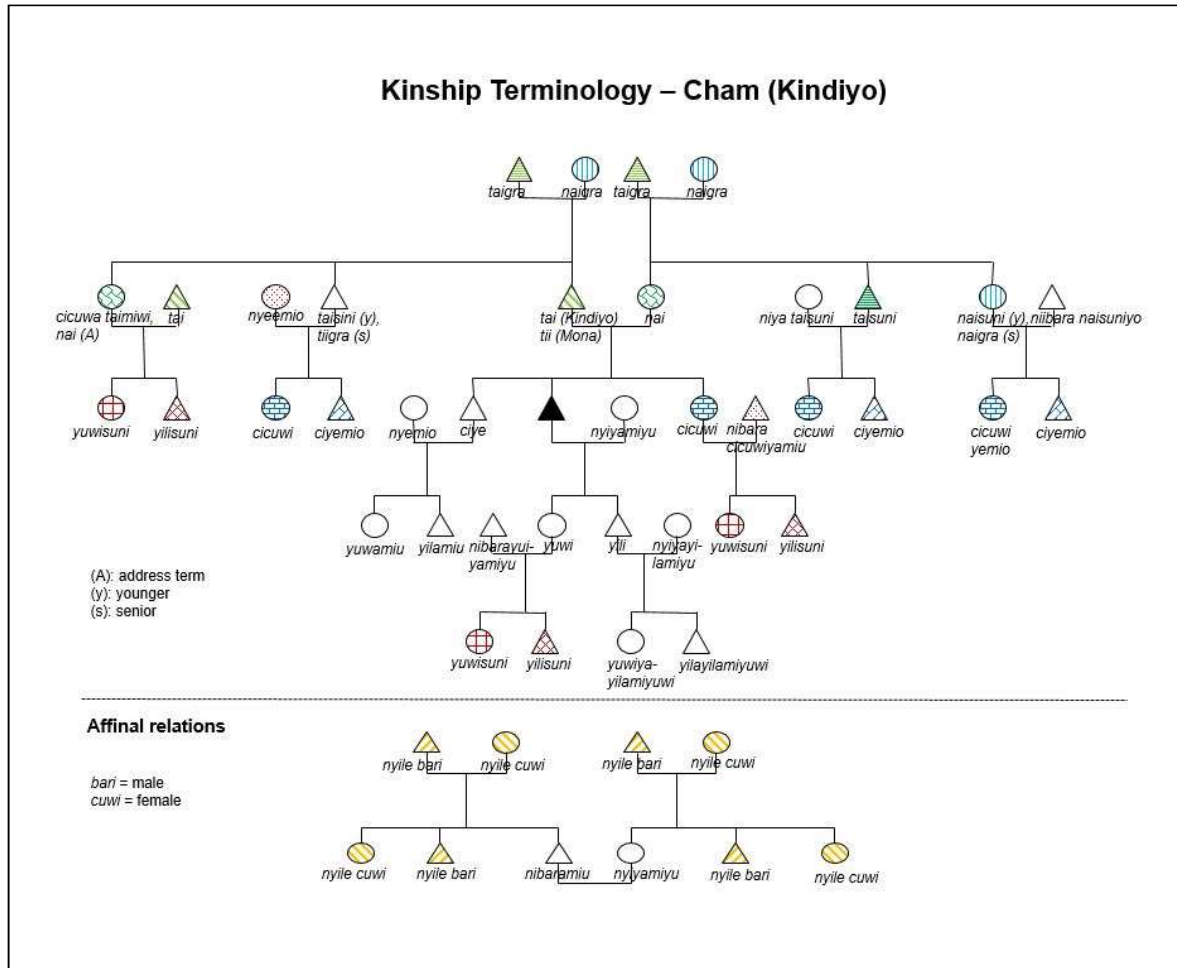
The Bige are considered to be wise and good farmers.

The Kwasir are rain-makers, they have a shrine for this purpose at Kisilang. The Bige may also act in this respect and may deputise for the Kwasir.

The clans Laaku and Burang are associated, the same applies to the Jange and the Jijo.

Kinship terminology

The kinship terminology of the Cham has features of the Hawaii system, where in ego's generation cousins are merged with brothers and sisters, and only differentiated by gender: however, the terms for FaSiChi differ from those of the other cousins.



In the first ascending generation, the terminology is bifurcate collateral.

Family

If a man dies and his children are still young, his brother will take care of them.

A husband will have to pay fines attracted by misdeeds of his wife.

Traditionally, inheritance was matrilineal: after the death of a man, his sister's children inherit property. This is also reported by Government Anthropologist Walker in 1929 (NAK SNP 17-9150). At the time of research, the general rule was that his sister's children would get his farms, movable property, animals, corn etc.; his own sons inherit his house and weapons. This guideline may be overruled by a last will leaving a bigger share or even everything to his sons. If a woman dies, her brother or - in the case where there is no brother – her sister will inherit her property. It seems that the patrilineal inheritance was introduced as a result of the influence of world religions, (Islam and Christianity), because matrilineal inheritance is now only observed by adherents of the traditional religion, and I would assume that a change is taking place: at the time of research an intermediate stage was encountered, between a matrilineal towards a patrilineal rule of inheritance.

Marriage

One may not marry a woman belonging to the clans of one's parents (neither father's nor mother's), a woman from the clans of one's grandparents is, however, allowed. A second wife may not be taken from the same clan as the first wife. This applies not only in the case of polygyny, but also after a divorce or the death of one's wife.

After a divorce, the divorced wife will be shunned by men from her ex-husband's clan, i.e. she will not be married by a man of the same clan as her ex-husband. The husband's brother will also try not to marry a wife from the same clan as the divorced wife of his brother.

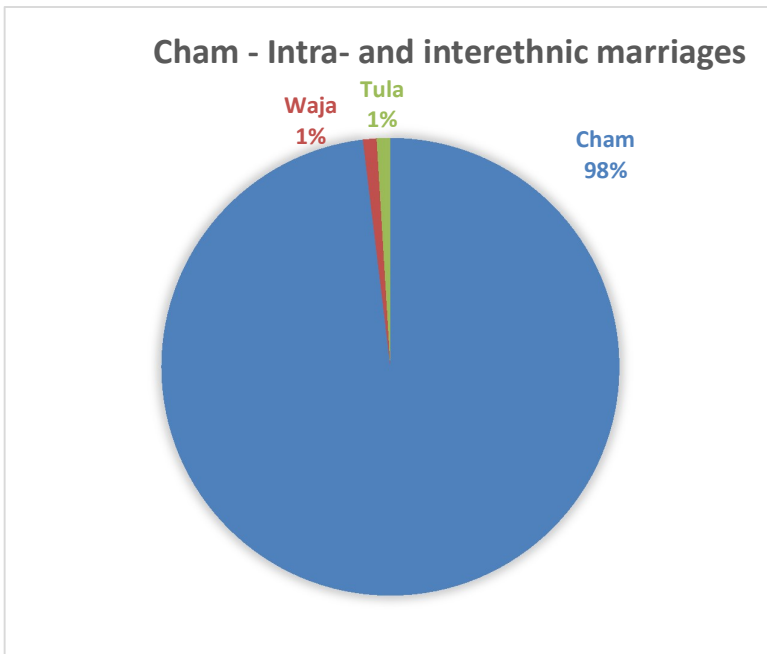
Levirate is practised: if a man dies, his brother will take over his wife/wives. There is no sororate. Residence rule is viri-patrilocal.

The brideprice is mainly paid by the father of the prospective husband, his mother will also make a contribution: A newly-wed husband will have to do 7 years of brideservice. For a period of 4 years, (these are called 1. *Jigo te*, 2. *Duurong*, 3. *Duurong*, 4. *Aina'aina*), the parents of the bride will be given corn and other agricultural products.

All births take place in the hamlet of the husband.

Some statistics

In a sample of 36 married men, there were 102 wives from Cham, 1 wife from Waja and 1 wife from Tula.



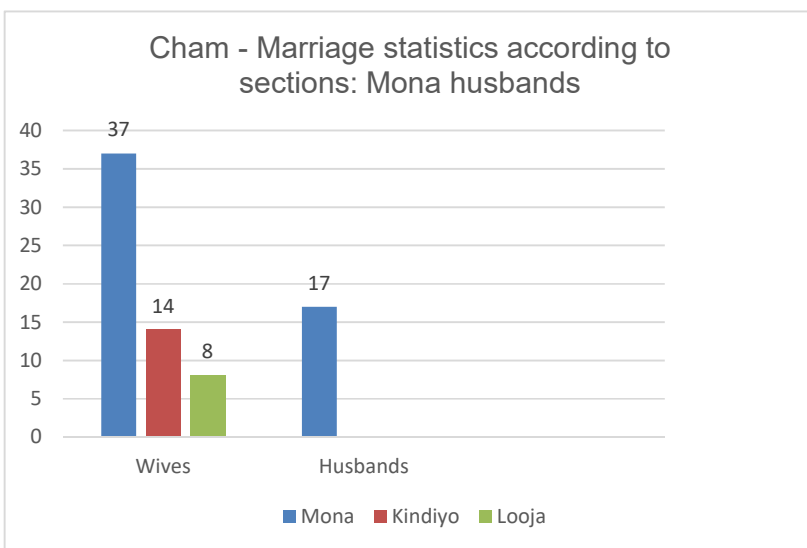
The polygamy rate with concurrent wives (i.e. wives who were divorced or deceased were not counted) was 2.4.

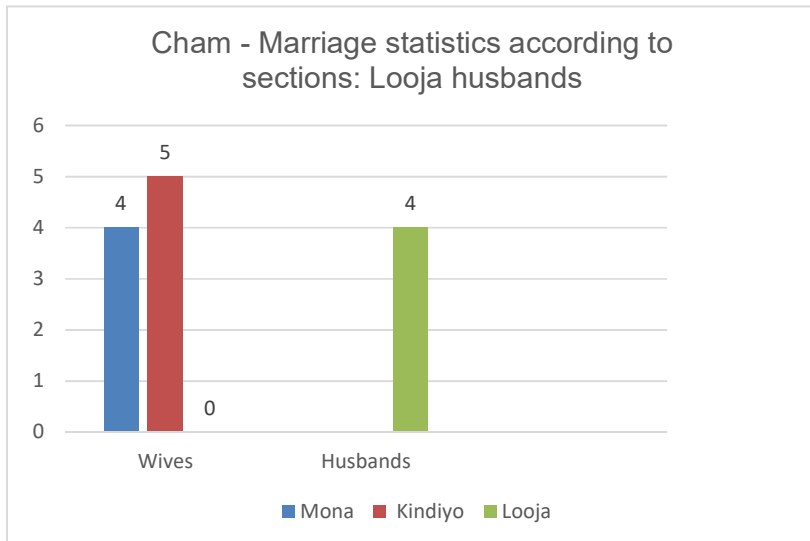
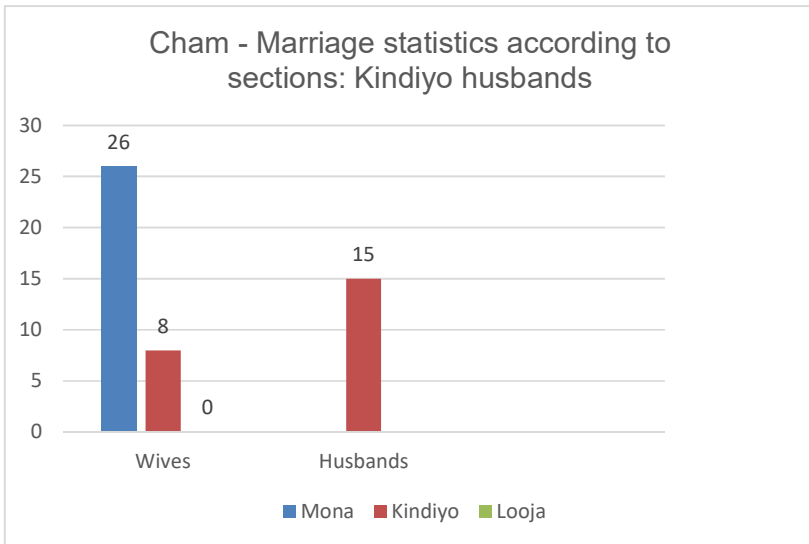
Marriages within the same section (Mona, Kindiyo or Looja) are prevalent.

Marriage within the same section: 65.7 %

Marriage with a wife from a different section: 34.3%

Marriage outside the ethnic group: 2.0 %





Granaries

Women have their own farms and granaries. The granary is built for them by the husband. First the food for the household is taken from the granary of the wife, then from the granary of the husband. The husband or his eldest son takes out the corn from his granary.



Photo 2: A *ruute* for storing corn

After harvest, the corn is first collected in a communal, enwalled space called *ruute*. These are places enclosed by more-than-man-high circular dry-stone walls where the yield is put after harvest. Each lineage or clan has one or more *ruute*, the bigger ones are separated inside according to lineages.



Illustration 1: Types of granaries for men and women, drawn by Nicholson Husaini

From the *ruute*, the corn is moved into the individual granaries. The intermediate storing of corn in the *ruute* serves as a kind of balancing and re-distribution of the yields of the different farmers, whereby poorer households get a bigger share than they put into the *ruute*.



Photo 3: Typical Cham granary without cover



Photo 4: Cham granaries with covers and signs of ritual sprinkling with flour mixture

Economic activities

Division of labour

Table 2: Gender specific division of labour among the Cham (m: male, f: female)

Activity	Gender
clearing	m
sowing	m & f
weeding	m & f
harvesting	m & f
irrigating	m
threshing	m
preparing threshing ground	m
winning	f
build house walls	m
build house roof	m
prepare house floor	f
cut wooden poles	m
cut firewood	f
collect firewood	f
build well	m
build terraces	m
build fence	m
weave food cover	f
weave mats	f
weave baskets	m
make ropes	m
fetch water	f
pounding	f
grinding	f
cooking	f
brewing beer	f
clean house	f
make pots	m & f
weaving cotton	m
spinning	f
tailoring	m
blacksmithing	m
wood carving	m
butchering	m
hunting	m
collect honey	m
produce salt	f

Agriculture

The rain mostly comes from an easterly direction, partly from the north, however, in September it comes from southwest.



Photo 5: Tobacco garden

The Cham practise the building of terraces on sloping farms to prevent soil erosion.

They successfully cultivate tobacco in fields near the compounds.

The land where the water reservoir is located, was bought by the government from the previous



Photo 6: A view of the Cham dam and reservoir

owners of the land. The area directly behind the dam¹⁰ belongs to the government which rents it out to farmers. The chief of Cham has three farms in the irrigation area which he bought from the previous owners.

¹⁰ For a geological study of Cham dam see Tabwassah et al. 2013.

Animal husbandry

Table 3: Domestic animals and their uses (m: male, f: female)

animal	kept by	uses	comments
cattle	m&f	milk, meat, leather	only men do milking, women do not drink milk
dwarf cattle (<i>tinga</i>)	m	meat, leather	kept only in the past, in Fitilai
horse	m	riding	
pony	-	-	only the Tula had ponies
donkey	m	beast of burden	no donkeys in the past
goat	m&f	meat, milk, leather	see under "cattle"
sheep	m&f	meat, leather	
pig	m&f	meat	no pigs in the past
dog	m&f	meat, assists in hunting, for protection	only men eat the meat, outside the village
chicken	m&f	eggs, meat	women of child-bearing age do not eat eggs
duck	m&f	eggs, meat	see under "chicken"
guinea fowl	m&f	meat	
pigeon	m	meat	
cat	m	for protection against rats	

Pottery

In the Muri Mountains, the tradition of moulding anthropomorphic (and zoomorphic) figurines for ritual purposes is most elaborated among the Cham, and becomes much less elaborated among their western and southern neighbours (e.g. Dadiya, Tsobo, Kwa, Bambuka).¹¹ The figurines of the Cham serve in healing rituals. Specific diseases are treated with differently shaped clay figures. The traditional healer drives out the disease by visualising in his imagination how the disease looks and then producing a clay image (*iti nate*) of it. Therefore, while the potter refers to a certain canon of forms, he is still free to express his individual imagination. Accordingly, there is a certain degree of variation in the shape of pots for the same disease. This becomes apparent when comparing vessels depicted below with specimens shown in Hare (1983). The Cham in the Muri Mountains are the westernmost representatives of this elaborated tradition, which is also prominent among more easterly groups like the Longuda, Waja and - in a modified form - Yungur peoples still further east (see Berns 1986, 1989 u. 1990). Anthropomorphic ritual clay vessels can further be found among the Bata/Bachama and the Jen to the south of the mountains.

The healer looks at the patient and tries to diagnose the disease, he then takes a piece of clay and blows over it at the patient, saying the name of the disease he suspects, finally he is asking the god to accept this as a cure.

If a child is suffering from fever, the healer also rubs the child's head with leaves of the *waanakute* plant, the body's front and back and under the arms. Then he rubs red ochre (*jongi*) on its fontanella.

¹¹ For more information on Cham ritual pottery, see Hare 1983 and 2015: 57-58, also Slye 1969 and 1977, and for a regional perspective on such vessels Berns 2011a and 2011b.

Examples of ritual pottery of the Cham¹²

gutote: used for healing chest problems of women. Vitalised/activated by sacrificing a red cock.



Photo 7: *gutote* clay object



Photo 8: *toowe* clay object

toowe: against fever and alchor of children. Vitalised/activated by sacrificing a billy goat.



Photo 9: *sukjang* clay object

sukjang/sukwayang: helps against tuberculosis and other diseases of the respiratory tract; placed in the granary or hung on the ceiling of one's room.

¹² The ritual clay objects depicted here were made by Yaakware Usmanu.

multe: if someone cannot walk very well as a result of being knock-kneed. Placed under the granary.



Photo 10: *multe* clay object



Photo 11: *kalagur* clay objects



Photo 12: *kalagur* clay objects - side view

kalagur: against headache caused by the sun's heat. Placed in a room or at the door.



Photo 13: *kwã* clay object

kwã: in case children twitch a lot when sleeping, this helps and makes them calmer. Hung from the ceiling. The actual bird, which is the model for the figurine, is called *hangkaka* (in Hausa, black-and-white-shouldered or pied crow, *Corvus scapulatus*), the clay figurine will be coloured like the real bird.

tungma: shaped like a basket, *wongen*: in the shape of a disc; both objects help against barrenness of women and are placed in the room. Vitalised/activated by sacrificing a red cock.



Photo 14: *tungma* and *wongen* clay objects (left to right)

nyingaani: when a child loses weight and becomes weak, has “no blood” any more. Also when there is something wrong with the body of a child while his face looks normal. Placed in the



Photo 15: *jinirianti* and *nyingaani* clay objects (left to right)

room of the child. Vitalised/activated by sacrificing a billy goat.

jinirianti: against cough, chest pain or breathing difficulties of children. Placed in the room of the child. Vitalised/activated by sacrificing a billy goat.

buulang: against pains of the shoulder or hip. Placed in the room.

jikangkange: against pains in the bones of the extremities. Placed in the room.



Photo 16: *jikangkange* and *buulang* clay objects (left to right)



Photo 17: *gurgo*, *furu* and two *jinicucugi* clay objects (left to right)

gùrgó: against wounds on the head/skin of the head of children. Placed in the room inside a clay pot.

furu: a bit larger than *gùrgó*, serving the same purpose.

jìnicúcúgí: against fissures in the skin of the feet. For the treatment, a hole is dug deep in the bush, at a place where no one will usually visit. The feet are placed in the hole, blood of a dog and beer is poured over the feet as well as the *jìnicúcúgí*. The pot is left in the hole and the hole is covered with earth.

jinedindiyu: against fever of children. Placed in the room inside a clay pot.



cetebaate: against mucus-ridden/slimy eyes. Placed under the granary.



nimtile: against diarrhoea with blood/dysentery. Placed under the granary or inside a pot.



Photo 20: *nimtile* clay object

kulokulok, also called *səŋsəŋle*: against back pain/lumbago. The vessel is filled with pepper seeds.



Photo 22: *kulokulok* and *koolong* clay objects (left to right)

kòlóng: male counterpart to *kulokulok*, placed inside a pot.

jiribwε yilyu: used for pregnant women to ensure a good birth, that the child will be healthy and has an anus. Vitalised/activated by sacrificing a billy goat.

bugarte: looks like a scrotum and is made when twins are born in order to protect their father, otherwise he will become blind. Further it prevents him from being harmed during his farming activities.

taali protects from headache and fever.

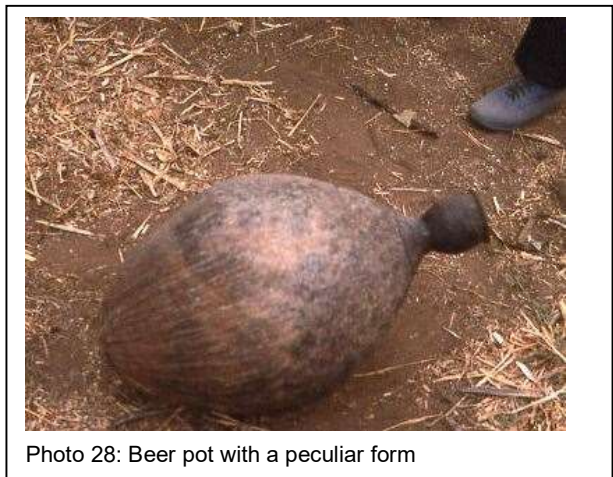


Photo 23: Ritual clay objects - name and purpose has yet to be clarified



Photo 24: Ritual clay object - name and purpose has yet to be clarified

Samples of everyday pottery:



Material culture



Photo 29: Cham bow and quiver

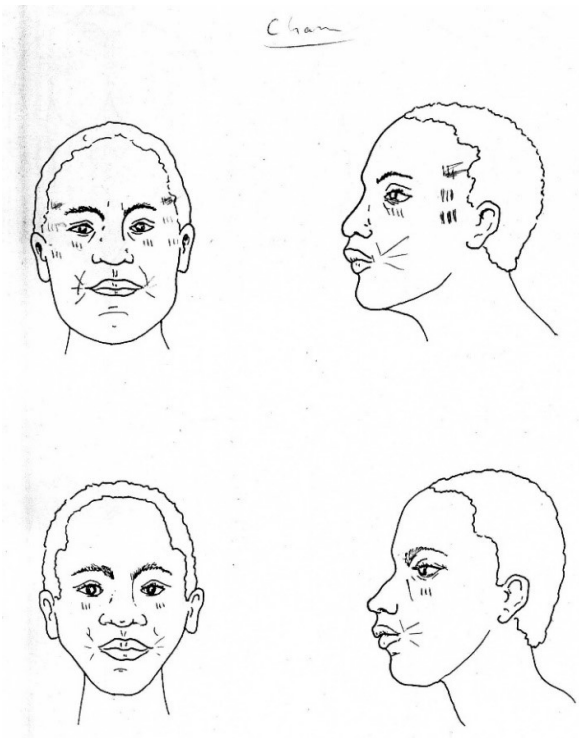


Photo 30: Slingshot

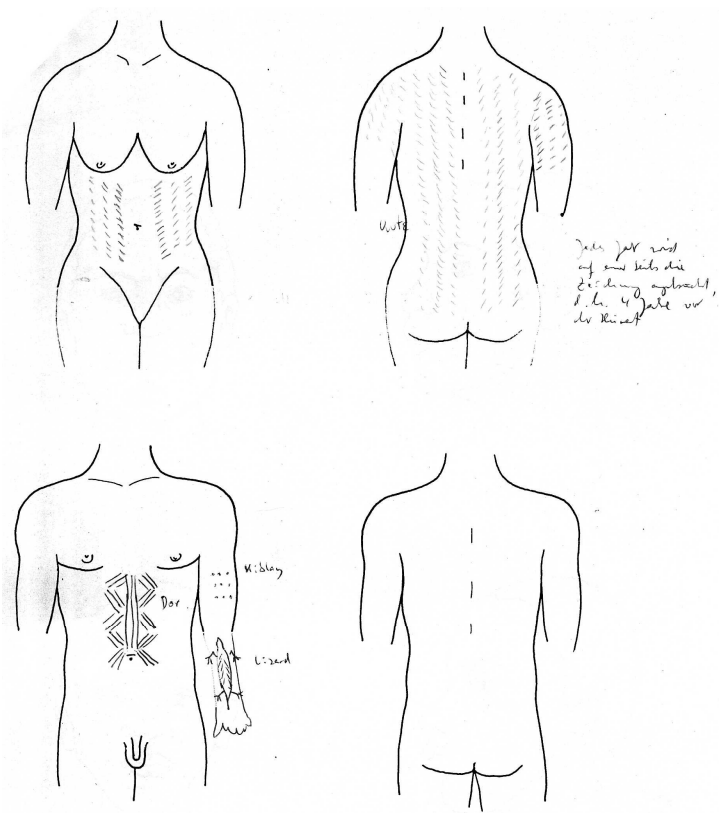


Photo 31: Close-up of the way the slingshot is held

Cicatrization, bodily ornamentation



The lozenge-shaped pattern on the chest of males is called *dor*, the dots on the arm *kiblarj*. Often, males have also a lizard tattooed on the forearm. The rows of scarifications on the body of females are called *kute*, a row is completed each year before marriage.



Ritual and religion

Table 4: Religious concepts and their material expression

Concept	Name	Manifestation / Comments
high god	<i>taaju, mangla</i>	
ancestors	<i>nebecirem</i>	
water spirit	<i>weenahiyu</i>	
bush spirit	<i>weenesi</i>	
protecting spirit	<i>weenakayu, riyang</i>	Live in the homestead, there are special ritual pots (<i>jibariyange</i>) associated with them. Children are wearing a rattle on the leg to inform spirits not to attack them. <i>Riyang</i> is a black stone.
material expression:		
<i>gunki</i> (wooden idol, fetish)	-	
<i>dodo</i> (masked dancer, masquerade)	<i>juabe</i>	Secret society disciplining deviant behaviour.
drum	<i>lingting</i>	
clay figure	<i>jinibwayi, itinate</i>	

Spirits of the bush

There are water spirits (*weenahiyu*) which can make a person become obsessed. There is a ritual expert *nitak hiyasiyu* who may help in such cases.

In Looja there is a water source called Nang; its water can become red in colour. If this is the case, a black goat has to be sacrificed, then the water becomes clear again. As long as the water is red, women may not come close to the source. The source is in the custody of the Bige clan, but anyone is allowed to fetch water from it. Inside the source lives a water spirit (*weenahiyu*) which is represented as a snake with a golden horn.

Ritual places and their owners

The Cham are noted for their extensive dry-stone structures serving ritual purposes.



Photo 32: A *ciri* stone shrine



Photo 33: A *ciri* stone shrine

The Kwasir clan has shrines at Kisilang for rain-making.

There are massive rectangular structures serving as shrines called *ciri*. They look similar to the shrine structures of the Bangwinji.



Photo 34: A *ciri* shrine for war



Photo 35: A *ciri* shrine for war

ciri: after a successful hunt for larger mammals like bushpig, leopard or lion rituals take place. The hunter will sit on the shrine and the head of the hunted animal is placed on the shrine.

Similarly, after a fight with other ethnic groups, the head of the slain enemy is placed on a *ciri*



Photo 36: Inside of a *waami* ritual stone structure



Photo 37: A *waami* ritual stone structure

shrine, the spirits of the enemies will go there.

waami: the souls of the ancestors live there. Before a group of Cham goes to war, water is put into a stone trough. A ritual expert, either *niyawaa miu* or *niigra rukuni* (*sarkin yaaki*, H.), looks at the water to foresee the outcome of the fight. When he sees heads of his own people in the water, then they will not go for war. But if he sees heads of the enemies in the water, the fight will be successful for the Cham.

kuli: a wall for communal festivities where the Cham sit together and drink beer.



Photo 38: A *kuli* wall



Photo 39: A *kuli* wall



Photo 40: Ritual place with pots



Photo 41: Collective tomb

The figtree (*kumong*) is connected with the souls of the ancestors; the Cham used to hang the skulls of slain enemies on a figtree. After a fight with the Bachama of Lamurde, the Cham brought back figtrees and planted them in their area.

Ritual calendar

The **Cugote** festival takes place annually around April. On this occasion the initiation into the age-group for men as well as women takes place; friendships are made on the basis of the same age.

Cham Annual festivities

Name of festivity	Jan.	Feb.	March	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<i>Cugote</i>				—								
<i>Duurong</i>						—						
<i>Betilawuyi</i>									—			
<i>Juangi</i>										—		
<i>Cuwataatimi</i>											—	

Betilawuyi takes place after harvest of the red Guinea Corn (*gomna* (Kindiyo), *baata* (Mona)).

Juangi marks the end of the rainy season and is also for the prevention of damage to the crops through continuing rain.

Cuwataatimi takes place at end of the farming season, it is meant to provide good growth of plants as well as a first thanksgiving for yields already harvested. Further it is to ask for forgiveness for doing wrong, for instance having killed a harmless animal with one's hoe during farmwork.

Taboos

The Cham have no prohibition against killing a lion.

A certain small harmless snake (*somula*; in Kushi it is called *tewosh*) is never killed or eaten.

A menstruating woman is not allowed to fetch water or prepare food.

Traditionally, after a man or a woman has died, it was only the age mates or persons who had a joking relationship with the deceased who may call his/her name (see also Kleinwillinghöfer 1995).

Women are only allowed to eat poultry when they are in their menopause. It is believed that otherwise they would eat all the poultry when their husband is away.

Glossary

Cham

<i>betilawuyi</i>	festivity after the harvest of red G/Corn
<i>ciri</i>	ritual stone structure
<i>cugote</i>	festivity in April, has to do with age groups
<i>cuwataatimi</i>	kind of thanksgiving
<i>dor</i>	scarification pattern on chest of males
<i>duurong</i>	period of 4 years during which a husband has to give corn and other agricultural produce to the parents of his wife: 1. <i>Jigote</i> , 2. <i>Duurong</i> , 3. <i>Duurong</i> , 4. <i>Aina'aina</i>
<i>itinate</i>	ritual clay object in general
<i>jibariyange</i>	clay pot in which a protecting spirit lives
<i>jinibwaye</i>	ritual clay object in general
<i>juabe</i>	secret society
<i>juangi</i>	festivity at end of rainy season
<i>kiblan</i>	scarification pattern on arm of males
<i>kuli</i>	stone structure for communal purposes, made of dry stone walling
<i>kute</i>	scarification pattern on body of females
<i>lingting</i>	sp. drum
<i>mangla</i>	high god
<i>nebecirem</i>	ancestors
<i>nitak hiyasiyu</i>	sp. healer, who helps against spirit possession
<i>niigra rukuni</i>	ritual expert
<i>niyawaa miu</i>	ritual expert
<i>riyang</i>	protecting spirit in form of a black stone
<i>ruute</i>	communal corn store made of dry stone walling
<i>somula</i>	sp. snake
<i>taajiu</i>	high god
<i>waami</i>	ritual stone enclosure
<i>weenahiyu</i>	water spirit
<i>weenakayu</i>	protecting spirit
<i>weenesi</i>	bush spirit
<i>ying</i>	mountain

Plants

Cham	Hausa	English	scientific name	comments
<i>baata</i>	<i>jigari (sheka'?)</i>	guinea-corn	<i>Sorghum spp.</i>	red dark corn; Mo-na dialect, see also <i>gomna</i>
<i>betariti</i>	<i>mangwaro</i>	mango	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	
<i>bwitali/ mungkam</i>	<i>masaraa</i>	maize	<i>Zea mays</i>	
<i>cilinte</i>	<i>kabeewaa</i>	pumpkin	<i>Cucurbita maxima</i>	
<i>fukte</i>	<i>farin bayeri</i>	guinea-corn	<i>Sorghum bicolor</i>	white corn
<i>gomna</i>	<i>jigari (sheka'?)</i>	guinea-corn	<i>Sorghum spp.</i>	red dark corn; Kindiyo dialect, see also <i>baata</i>
<i>gulum</i>	<i>gyadaa</i>	groundnut	<i>Arachis hypogaea</i>	
<i>gungoji</i>	<i>gujiyaa</i>	Bambara nut	<i>Vigna subterranea</i>	
<i>kawulte</i>	<i>agushii</i>	egusi melon seeds	<i>Colocynthis citrullus</i>	
<i>kilangi / migari</i>	<i>waakee</i>	beans		
<i>kumong</i>	<i>ceediyaa</i>	fig tree	<i>Ficus thonningii</i>	
<i>kurgote</i>	<i>kubeewaa</i>	okra	<i>Abelmoschus esculentus</i>	
<i>kusunte</i>	<i>gautaa</i>	garden-egg	<i>Solanum incanum</i>	
<i>kwai / jam</i>	<i>daawaa</i>	guinea-corn	<i>Sorghum bicolor</i>	
<i>kwaibalam / kwaibilatitiyim</i>	<i>shinkaafar</i>	rice	<i>Oryza sp.</i>	
<i>kwaikitam</i>	<i>maiwaa</i>	pearl millet	<i>Pennisetum glaucum</i>	
<i>kwaisim</i>	<i>kaura</i>	guinea-corn	<i>Sorghum bicolor</i>	
<i>kwarkitam</i>	<i>geeroo</i>	pearl millet	<i>Pennisetum glaucum</i>	
<i>landir / maurin</i>	<i>audugaa</i>	cotton	<i>Gossypium sp.</i>	
<i>mbai</i>	<i>roogoo</i>	cassava	<i>Manihot esculenta</i>	
<i>mungkam / bwitali</i>	<i>masaraa</i>	maize	<i>Zea mays</i>	
<i>wasaa</i>	<i>barkoonoo</i>	pepper	<i>Capsicum sp.</i>	
<i>wurang / wurte</i>	<i>taabaa</i>	tobacco	<i>Nicotiana rustica; N. tabacum</i>	
<i>yundo</i>	<i>bayeri</i>	guinea-corn	<i>Sorghum spp.</i>	light reddish-whitish corn
<i>yute / gurgante</i>	<i>dooya</i>	yam	<i>Dioscorea spp.</i>	

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