

## 1. Description

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

- Name of society: Mortlock
- Language: Mortlockese
- Language Family: Micronesian Family of Oceanic Austronesian languages

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

- mrl

### 1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- 5° N 153°E in the Caroline Islands of the Federated States of Micronesia

### 1.4 Brief history:

- The island was settled more than 2000 years ago. Where the people came from that settled there was unknown. During the first period of their history, the islands were seen as political equals with the Europeans. It was not until 1899 that the islands lost their hold on their land to the Germans. During this time, the Germans instituted coconut-planting schemes, corvée labor (unfree labor that is often times unpaid), and a system of land tenure that gave each adult male title to a plot of land. The chiefs were deprived of their most prized possession, their power of claim to the land. In 1914, the Japanese succeeded the Germans and began to develop the islands into plantations. During this time, many of the men received a Japanese education and learned some semiskilled trades. Preceding WWII, the United States took control and began to redevelop the economy. In the early 1950's an islandwide legislature was passed to begin the process of education for self-government. After the decision in 1963 to bind Micronesia with the US, the administration insisted with a program of social, political, and economic changes be made. This included large expenditures on public health, education, and public works. In 1975 a constitutional convention was held, where the draft of a constitution was made. In 1979 a group of small islands such as Ponape, Yap, Truk, and Kosrae joined the Federated States of Micronesia, where Ponape was deemed the capital. The islanders now elect their own members into office.

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

- Between the 1905 and 1906 the missionaries began to arrive causing an uprising of a nativistic movement that involved dance and shamanism. Shamanism is a term used for the practice of communicating with the spiritual world.

### 1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

- The Mortlock people tend to build their settlements on the lagoon side of the island to protect their dwellings from destruction due to the ocean. They don't always build their homes in the same fashion however. Some of the people build their homes more discretely with more land between them and their closest neighbors, while others build more contiguously leaving less space. The traditional dwells usually have cleared courtyards that are used for sleeping quarters. Large breadfruit planks are raised off the ground and tied together to create suitable sleeping conditions. Today, however, houses have now changed to a more "European" style and are made of corrugated metal, which is the metal that has the ridges to look like smooth waves.

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

- The population size fluctuates consistently. In 1968 the population was apx 6000. This included both the official residents that dwelled on the island, but also the official residents that were living away from their home island.

## 2. Economy

### 2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- The main carb staple is Taro. Taro is a perennial, tropical plant that is grown as a root vegetable. It is eaten for its starch corm, the bulb of the root that resembles the look of a potato, and as a leaf vegetable.

### 2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- Main lipid and protein sources are fish, both canned and fresh, shellfish, octopuses, turtles, wild fowls, chickens, and pigs.

### 2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

### 2.4 Food storage:

### 2.5 Sexual division of production

- In their culture, men generally fish and do the gardening while women do the cooking. Women rarely go out and help with the gathering of food. Usually the men will do all the work and bring the food into the women to be prepared.

### 2.6 Land tenure:

- Land was formally held in full title by the siblings, but in the 1930's, individual ownership was instituted.

### 2.7 Ceramics:

### 2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

### 2.9 Food taboos:

### 2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

- The islanders tend to build canoes used for fishing, crossing the water, and other similar activities.

## 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):

### 4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

- 4.3 Completed family size (m and f):
- 4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):
- 4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):
- 4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:
- 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:
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):
- Beyond the blood siblings, the family has a set of formal friends, also known as *pwiipwii*, who are nonkin. The regulations of the incest and exogamy marriages extends to these individuals as well as their children.
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized?
- Other fathers are not 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)
- Bilateral cross-cousin marriage and sibling-set marriage is the ideal.
- 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?
- If the mother is to die, the lineage off of her matrilineal line steps up and acts as the mother to the 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
- Households are more matrilineal in means that the dwelling consists of the matrilineal woman, her children, and her resident husband. The household is run by the husband of the oldest woman within the matrilineal line. Within the matrilineal line, there are lineages, including matrisibs. The matrisibs are right below the matrilineal group in their line of power. It used to be that the lineages were the property owners within the families, but now they serve more as the support group which includes caring for the children, economic activities, warfare, litigation, ect. (1) After the mothers death, it is the duty of the daughters to set up their own matrilocal family as soon as possible. (2)
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?
- 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?)
- Marriages tend to be preferred within the community to some point. They are not quite as picky to the point that they must marry someone within their group, but they prefer marriages to stay within the same culture. There are a group of islands (Truk, Nomoi, Pohape, and Losap) that are all similar that the people marry between.
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?
- Marriages tend to be arranged by the couples parents.
- 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:
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:
- 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):
- 4.18 Cannibalism?

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

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):
- At the beginning of the civilization, the islands consisted of a few chiefdoms that controlled the entire population of the islands. After a strain of political struggles that occurred pre and post contact period, the islands switched to five chiefdoms, which is what they still have today. Each chiefdom consists of fifteen to twenty-five sections with a population of twenty-five to one hundred within them.
- 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:

- Depending on the family, or lineage, that you belong to will determine how your village and house are set up. Some of the families have large groups of houses within a condensed area, while others tend to be more distant and live among themselves. Within the houses there is usually a matrilineage with the oldest woman's husband in charge. Each person within the house shares a cook house and sometimes will consist of adopted members from other villages or lineages.

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:

- The people are ranked mainly on their initial arrival to the islands. Beyond that, they are ranked into lineages based on the matrilineal lines that they belong to.

5.12 Trade:

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

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

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

6.2 Stimulants:

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

6.4 Other rituals:

6.5 Myths (Creation):

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

6.8 Missionary effect:

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:

7.2 Piercings:

7.3 Haircut:

7.4 Scarification:

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. "Nomoi." *Every Culture*. 2012. Web. <everyculture.com>.
2. Peterse, Glenn. "PONAPE'S BODY POLITIC: ISLAND AND NATIO." Untitled Document. Web. 20 Feb. 2012. <<https://ojs.lib.byu.edu>>.