

1. Description

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

Tikopia, Tikopia

Linguistic lineage: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Central-Eastern, Eastern Malayo-Polynesian, Oceanic, Central-Eastern Oceanic, Remote Oceanic, Central Pacific, East Fijian-Polynesian, Polynesian, Nuclear, Samoic-Outlier, Futunic

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

tkp

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

Tikopia island: South Solomon Islands

Latitude -12 19min .12 sec

Longitude 168 49min 1.2 sec

1.4 Brief history:

Tikopia was colonized by canoe travelers from other islands. Tikopia has links to Samoa, Tonga, Uvea, Futuna, and Vaitupu as well as some Melanesian islands. Missionaries came to the island by at least the early 19 hundreds and the island was incorporated into the Solomon islands and its government at some point. (4:158-159)

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

Missionaries had a large impact on the society and Christianity has become the main religion on the island. There is no polygamy now and abortion, infanticide are gone. Many rituals and ceremonies associated with the old religion are no longer performed or are done in different ways. The island is technically the belonging of the Solomon islands but the government has next to zero influence on the islanders.

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

Small tropical atoll with an inland lake of brackish water. Island is surrounded by fringing reef and inland is forested.

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

3,324 as of 1999, but traditionally around 1000, Home range size is 2 sq miles with around 500 people per sq mile.

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

Taro

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

Fish (1:13)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?

Bow and arrow, fishing spears, clubs

2.4 Food storage:

Not really. Taro will keep in the ground so it is not used if there is another food source like breadfruit or bananas around which will go bad after being left out.

2.5 Sexual division of production:

Men do the fishing outside the reef and also do much of the gardening and cooking with the women. They also are in charge of felling trees, building the house and thatching it. Women weave baskets and mats, sweep out the home, and fill the water bottles/jugs. (1:123-124)

2.6 Land tenure:

Families inherit their land and they own the land even if there is a chief who oversees the village. The families still have control over their property this is in the case of land within or near to villages such as a plot for a house. (1:63)

2.7 Ceramics:

No

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

Work is shared amongst family groups when doing tasks like building houses or sheds and dragging canoes (1:60) Men must help the family of their wife prepare ceremonial food. The men are the cooks and they bring fire-wood and food with them. (1:259)

2.9 Food taboos:

There are food taboos based on family totems but they are usually plants or animals that would not really be eaten anyways. During initiation of boys and girls into adulthood there are sometimes food taboos they must follow (1:428) Turtles and pigeons are Totomic to some (1:46)

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

Canoes, some with outriggers

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

The average height for men is around 5 feet 9 inches and women are a couple inches shorter. (1:12)

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

couldn't find

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

didn't find

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

didn't find

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

Completed family sizes can be quite large, but because the island can only produce so much food, parents will often limit how many children they have if there are food shortages. Family size depends on how much food is present on the island. (1:373)

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

Not found

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

didn't find

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

Very low. Most marriages are monogamous and last until death. There is no legal way to become divorced but the woman can leave and go back to her home but this is very rare. (1:119)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

Polygynous marriage is present especially for chiefs and high status men. (1:68)

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

The husband's family, after abducting a woman, must give gifts to the woman's father. The gifts are usually a wooden bowl with a certain amount of string or cord and maybe a fishing hook if the woman was of a higher rank. (1:447)

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

Inheritance goes to the son mostly, while the daughters are also taken into account and provided for on a smaller scale (1:300) Land is inherited only through the male line. (1:348)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

Father and mother both care for the children and teach them how to work.

Parents ignore their children to a certain extent and do not pay attention to the love lives of their children. (1:438-439) Conflict sometimes arises if the parents choose a wife for their son or if their daughter is captured and leaves. (1:479)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

Did not find info but pretty sure it would be strongly discouraged. People found practicing homosexual acts would probably be forced to commit suicide.

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

Neither one is the rule across the island, but different clans or regions of the island may feel strongly that exogamy outside the clan is proper and that endogamy is wrong. Others hold the belief that anyone should be able to marry anyone that they choose. It comes down to being an individual choice as both endogamy and exogamy are allowed legally. (1:292-293)

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

Paternity is not partible

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

Did not find a particular belief, but they seem to have a decent understanding of procreation.

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

No

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

After a man captures his wife and they have made the oven of joining together, he will try to sleep with her that night. If the woman is not willing to sleep with him, he with the help of his male relatives will rape her. (1:450)

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

No preferential category for spouse, but people must marry outside of their immediate family. It seems that anyone can marry anyone and that cousin marriages are seen as a little too close but are allowed. (1:292-293)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

Women have sexual freedom until they become married. Women do not always choose their husbands though because they are sometimes captured by a man that they did not know was going to capture her. (1:434,436)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

Gifts are given to extramarital partners. (1:121)

4.20 If mother dies, who raises children?

The father, who will probably be assisted by his female relatives. (1:61)

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

1.396 the numbers used were very rough estimates (1:369)

4.22 Evidence for couvades

Did not find

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

No

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

Husbands tend to avoid their affinal relatives. They seem to have a semi strained relationship with their father and mother in laws, but the relationship is one of respect. (1:277)

4.24 Joking relationships?

No

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

Patrilineal (1:299)

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

There are no set laws to avoid incest but there is a rule that says close kin should not marry. The rule does not define what close kin are, but Brother and sister must not have sexual relations and parents should not have sexual relations with their children. These are the common rules, but different groups or families may have different or more extensive incest avoidance rules.

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

Marriage by "capture" is practiced by the Tikopia. The man's family forms a group of men together who go over to a woman's house and steal her at night and take her back to the husband to be's house. The woman and her family are supposed to fight back. They are really fake fighting though and the woman's family will eventually let the man and his family win. This fake battle is equivalent to the marriage ceremony and when the woman goes to live with the man, she is considered his wife. (1:435-441) after the capture, the man's family must give a gift to the woman's family and they must crawl to the girl's father through a gauntlet while they are beaten. (1:448) Later an oven called the oven of joining is made before the first consummation of the marriage. (1:450) There is then a large feast where both families come together (1:456) many gifts are also exchanged between both sides of the family. (1:460-461)

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

Patrilineal descent so they take their fathers name. didn't really find any info

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

Neither is preferred by everyone on the island, but marriage between close relatives is looked down on while others would say that it is good to marry someone who is a more distant relative. It depends on the family.

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?

Marriages are not arranged. The man just chooses who he wants to marry by himself. If he is of a higher rank, he will sometimes ask his parents for advice about who he should marry. Most of the time the man and woman both like each other and the woman knows that he is going to capture her. (1:436-439) Sometimes a man's family will decide to capture a woman to be his wife and they will not tell him. In this case his family is picking his wife. (1:446)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

Tikopia men do not typically want to get married because they lose freedoms that they enjoyed as single, but the girls do want to get married because it gives them a home of their own and they no longer must act as “servants” in their parent’s home. Not so much a conflict between who marries who. (1:434)

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

No number given but it would be low. In the early times of tikopia Tongans would occasionally come and try to take over or would steal people. There were battles then, but it seems warfare was pretty unusual. (4:114-115)

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

In-group is main cause of violent death because when warfare happens, it is usually within the group when the population has exceeded the lands limits. A clan may force another clan to leave the island. (1:374)

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

Very little in-group killing but could result during a capture of a wife. The family may fight back too hard and cause harm or death to the capturing party. Most deaths in Tikopia are from drowning, accidents like falling from a tree, or infant mal nutrition. Abortion and infanticide also kill some. Suicide and voyaging are other causes of death. (1:372) In old times brothers would occasionally kill each other so that they might inherit the land from their father. (1:330)

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

All neighbors are extremely far away and there is little interaction with them. The Tikopia are very isolated. The nearest neighboring island is Anuta, which is 70 miles away. In the past many people traveled between the islands to visit each other and intermarriage also occurred. The relationship is peaceful and the people from both islands are slightly related (1:313)

4.18 Cannibalism?

It was never mentioned. The Tikopians accused the Tongans of being Cannibals. (4:114-115)

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

Did not find any numbers. Density on the island is high so the villages would probably have a lot of people in them.

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

No

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

Chiefs that are over clans. (1:366)

5.4 Post marital residence:

The husband and wife have a new house built that they will live in. They usually have their house built near to the husband’s father’s house. (1:435)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

The sea is the defined boundary of the land because the island is so small. In villages the different plots owned by various owners sometimes have boundaries made up of a row of bushes, paths, or stones. (60)
No active defenses

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

Young children are not allowed into certain ceremonies. Young girls are not supposed to be near to men’s meetings. Women can’t be priests or shamans.

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

No

5.8 Village and house organization:

Villages are usually composed of groups of families or clans that are all related and then with a few families living in the village who are not related to most of the people already there. Most of the houses are not very close together. Houses are made from palm branches wood and palm thatch. Each house usually has a cooking house near to it and also a canoe house. (1:57-59)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

A large house may also be used as a temple or a disused canoe shed may be used to house sacred objects. There are also men's houses for the younger men. (4:114)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

On palm mats inside of palm and wood houses raised off of the ground.

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

Clans each with a chief

5.12 Trade:

Very little. All neighbors are very far away. The nearest island is 70 miles away. They mainly went to visit because some of them were related. It was also very dangerous to cross the open ocean and many men die from making ocean voyages.

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

The chiefs and their relatives are of a higher rank than the other people living around them.

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

A lot of time is spent on RCR because most activities such as planting, harvesting, fishing, building houses, building canoes, marriage, death, initiation etc involve rituals or ceremonies. (2:22)

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

There are specialized spirit mediums and priests. These people also have other jobs in the community and do not make a living from being a priest or medium. Chiefs were often times the priest for the clan and women could not be mediums or priests. (2:31-35)

6.2 Stimulants:

Betel nut is chewed (1:15)

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

When boys are initiated into adulthood, they must go through a "circumcision" ordeal. (1:428)

6.4 Other rituals:

A small ceremony is held whenever a boy or girl goes out on a torch lit night fishing trip. They are covered in the Turmeric and family members come and wail around them. (1:378-379)

6.5 Myths (Creation):

There is no official creation myth but there is a short creation story where a god pulls the islands up out of the sea. The god's name is metikitiki and he left the island Tikopia for a brief time and when he returned, there were two people on the island. One was a female god and the other was a male god. These two gods became two of the main Tikopian gods. (4:26-27)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

Wrestling, story telling, throwing dart like things, dancing, conversation, weaving palm frond mats, shaping wooden bowls or betel mashing bowls (1:54-55)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

Only men can be priests or shamans, but women can still perform acts during certain rituals and ceremonies.

6.8 Missionary effect:

Christian missionaries have discouraged polygamous marriage, the loose rules on sex before marriage, and the practice of abortion and infanticide. (1:374-376)

6.9 RCR revival:

No. if anything there is a continual loss of traditional religion as Christianity increases.

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

When someone dies, they go to the realm of spirits. There they will spend their time dancing with the spirits. (1:288-289)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

Did not find one

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

Couldn't find information.

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

There is a mix between worshipping ancestors as well as many different gods. Rituals and ceremonies were carried out for both, but the priests and shamans were the only middlemen between the people and the gods. (2:25)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

Color themselves with turmeric which stains their skin yellow. (1:12)

7.2 Piercings:

The ears are pierced and the septum of the nose is pierced when a child is still young. Rings of turtle shell or leaves are sometimes put in the holes for special occasions. (1:378)

7.3 Haircut:

Men keep their hair long and bushy they grow it out and it looks like a mane (1:12)

7.4 Scarification:

Did not find anything about it. Tattooing is present though as seen in a picture. (3:97)

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

Flowers from different trees and plants. Necklaces

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

The turmeric dye will be put on a person if they have been through certain ceremonies. Flowers, earrings, and leaves are worn during some ceremonies and rituals (1:378)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

Very little difference. They both wear similar garments and adornment.

7.8 Missionary effect:

Women wear more clothing. They now will cover their top. Children also begin to wear clothing at an earlier age now. (1:378)

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

No

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

Didn't find info

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

No

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

No

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Suicide (people swimming out from shore or rowing away in canoes)

Population control (controlling who can mate, infanticide, abortion, warfare)

Controlling what crops are eaten depending on scarcity and calling closed seasons on certain foods

Numbered references

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