

# Maranao

## 1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Austronesian → Malayo-Polynesian → Maranao or Maranaw

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

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): Lake Sultan Alonto (formerly Lake Lanao), Marawi, Philippines, 08°0'N 127°0'E

1.4 Brief history: The Maranao people carry out an existence far away from the industrialized cities. *Maranao* translates to mean people of the lake. The Maranao are the largest cultural minority in the Philippines. The Maranaos are of Malay-Arabic descent and so have developed their own kind of Filipino culture since occupying the island.

The Spanish made an expedition to Marawi in 1891 in an attempt to conquer and colonize the Maranao people, and again in 1895. Both instances were futile seeing as the Spanish were driven away by the aggression and severe weapons of the Maranao. The original name of the land, Dansalan, was meant to be made an official city in the mid-1940s but was abandoned during World War II, and so the name remained Marawi City. In 1959, the Lanao Lake area was divided into two provinces Republic Act No. 2228 and a capital city was established: Iligan City.

The Lanao Lake region is divided into two provinces Lanao del norte (North) and Lanao del Sur (South). Marawi City, the capital of the province, is located in Lanao del Sur. The northern province is predominantly Christian, and the South, Muslim. 90% of the Maranao population lives in Lanao del Sur.

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: The area is predominantly Muslim, and works to maintain isolation from outside influences. The Muslim influence arrived with Arab traders coming from Indonesia and other parts of Southern Asia. The Muslim religion among the Maranao was reinforced by the arrival of Islamic missionaries. The Maranao established their society before the Spaniards came to colonize the Philippines, causing them to resist Christian influences from the Spanish.

1.6 Ecology (natural environment) Maritime climate. Lanao del Sur: 66% forest land, 34% disposable land. The physical features of the area consists deep canyons, extinct volcanic peaks, and turbulent streams. Bukidnon-Lanao Plateau is where Lake Sultan Alonto is located, and it the countries 2<sup>nd</sup> largest lake. The abundant water sources play a large role in the daily lives and customs of the Maranao. The greatest natural resources of the area are the rich volcanic soil and fish. Abundant minerals include nickel, manganese, copper, limestone, and coal, the area also has plentiful offshore deposits of petroleum.

1.6 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density:

-1,142,000 is the current population size of the Maranao

- 660 people per sq mi

-Growth rate of 2.36 percent (2001)

## 2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

-maize/rice, corn

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

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-fishing is a huge part of the exports and diet of the Maranao people, seeing as they have access to both the lake and the ocean

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: The Punyal, a shorter sword-type weapon with no finger guard, a thrusting blade, used for utility and weapon

- Gunong, also a utility knife, half size of a sword, kept in a man's sash

- kampilán, a much larger sword with sleek, sharp blade, meant for warfare → the hilt is designed to look like a represent an animal's open mouth, the animal envisioned was commonly mythical

2.4 Food storage:

-Common for several families to live in one house with equal food sharing relationships

2.5 Sexual division of production: Men are the primary fishers/ hunters and in charge of agriculture, women are responsible for gathering, home care and textiles: Clothweaving and matweaving. Farming is split between men and women, men digs and plow and the land while women collect the crops.

2.6 Land tenure: Each clan, made up of 3-4 families within a single household, own their own land. The clan leader is typically the oldest male

2.7 Ceramics: metalwork in brass, silver, and gold

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: Food and resources are shared between the families in a single communal

2.9 Food taboos: None recorded

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? The awang, a dugout boat, unique to the Maranaos

## **3. Anthropometry**

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): Female: 153.92cm, Male: 167.01cm

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): Female: 145 lbs, Male 160 lbs

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

4.1 Age at menarche (f): Approximately 13

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): Approximately 1-2 years after marriage.

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): 10+

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): 1 year to 16 months

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): Female 18-19, Male early 20s

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: Divorce occurs, but is very rare. 97% of marriages sustain in the Maranao communities. 2% end in divorce, 1% are due to a death.

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: Polygamy is common in the Maranao community and so can lead to large amounts of children per man, although only 2-4% of men have reported having children from other sexual unions.

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- 4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: Yes, very important in wedding/marriage process. Size depends on the rank/occupation of the bride's family in society.
- 4.9 Inheritance patterns: Inheritance comes from both mother's and father's side. A man marries into the rank of his bride, and the child inherits the rank of the mother. If a divorce occurs, the husband automatically gains custody of the children. Inheritance is primarily patrilineal.
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: Mother's are the primary caregivers to the children and teach them how to operate in society until puberty, men have the majority of the custody of the children and are responsible for providing for them and teaching them a trade/skill.
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: Homosexual is not approved by the Philippine government, as well as unaccepted by the Islam faith. The Maranao are a very religious and conservative people who stick to traditionally man and woman marriages and aggressively oppose outside views.
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): Both patterns are practiced. Exogamy is used to for political and social status purposes, while endogamy spurs from convenience and the desire to strengthen kinship ties.
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized? No records found.
- 4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows"): Traditionally the woman is primarily the carrier and caregiver of the children.
- 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)? No records found.
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: Any act against a young woman in the Maranao community can result in severe consequences and even violent disputes between families and villages.
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin): Cross cousin is typical and favored, or another indirect kin relative.
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? No, they are solely dedicated to serving husbands and children, few independent rights of their own.
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: No records found.
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? No records found.
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females: The ratio of reproductive females to males is approximately 1:1 in Philippines.
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades: No records found.
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older): No records found.
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? Strong ties of loyalty and respect amongst kin.
- 4.24 Joking relationships? No records found.

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

4.26 Incest avoidance rules: Incest is a taboo subject amongst the Maranao people.

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Kagkawing is the title for the official marriage ceremony. It involves a week long celebration before the day of. The groom shows up in a colorful arrangement. An Inman conducts the ceremony and holds the thumb of the husband with the thumb of the wife and lays a white handkerchief over the top. The groom must once again ask for the approval of the bride's parent, kisses or touches the forehead of the bride, and the marriage is sealed.

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? The woman accepts the name of the man.

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)  
Marriages are generally expected to remain within the community but can occur between villages seeing as most individuals can claim almost everyone in their village as kin. Outsiders, such as Cebuanos or non-Maranao are not accepted. Cross-cousin or inter-village is preferred.

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Arranged marriages are very common in the Maranao community, for reason such as politics, social status, or strengthening friendships and ties. Arrangements can also occur if a young man and woman are simply at 'marrying age' and available. The parents of both parties generally have control over the spouse selection.

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: A common element male's look for is the size of the bride dowry the parents of the woman can provide for him. Since men marry into and live with the family of woman, they generally look to marry into a family which possesses a higher rank than they themselves were born into.

## **Warfare/homicide**

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: Many violent outbreak from the Maranaos towards both the Philippine government and the Cebuano Christian tribes have occurred and led to occasional deaths on both side. Last death toll due to violent outbreak was 5,500 from 1930 to 2005.

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: *Rido* is Maranao word which indicates feuding between families or clans, but can also refer to disputes with outside authorities. The feuds can result in numerous casualties and cause property destruction, as well as last generations. Triggers can include petty theft, to damaged honor and shame, to more violent crimes such as murder.

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: Triggers can include petty theft, to damaged honor and shame, to more violent crimes such as murder. Can also include land disputes and political disagreements; lack of law enforcement places a big factor.

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): Somewhat hostile and occasionally violent relationships with the Cebuano Christian natives, lots of prejudice and name-calling.

4.18 Cannibalism? None

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

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: Villages are made up of 3-4 households, approximately 25-30 people.

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- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): The Maranao remain in the Lanao del sur province year round.
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): Sultans reign at the top of the social standing. Status is traditionally based on lineage, but can be altered due to impressive personality traits and displays of ambition and strength.
- 5.4 Post marital residence: With the woman's family after the dowry is paid.
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): A lot of Maranao values revolve around hospitality, centered around kinship relationships which are usually quite extensive. Amongst Maranao people, boundaries and defensive attitudes are minimally unless a serious offense has been made. In regards to outside forces pressing on the Maranao people, the Maranao are very sensitive to criticism of their practices and lifestyle, which cause considerable tension and occasionally violent outbreaks. Strong sense of community and willingness to assist within the villages.
- 5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): At the age of six, around when schooling begins, males and females are separated from physical interaction. Around the age of puberty, 16 or so, men are prohibited from approaching a girl who is along.
- 5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: No records found.
- 5.8 Village and house organization: Villages consists of 3-4 households, each of which have large families of 10 or more.
- 5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses): Not typical.
- 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? Families have their own sleeping area within the home separated by aisles down the middle. Mattresses on the ground of their homes, typically made of straw and have a mosquito net surrounding it.
- 5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: Lineage plays one of the most important roles of the society seeing as how tightly interwoven the community is. Social organization is based both on kinship, as well as individual personality traits and skill. Positive attributes of an individual can result in honor and high status, as well as determine his line of work. Women usually maintain the subordinate role of the household, helping with gathering of food, weaving and artistic work, as well as caring for the children. Members of one village can be a member of another village because of how interwoven the kinship relationships are, a village consists of those who share a descent group rather than common spatial territories.
- 5.12 Trade: The Maranao primarily concern themselves with agriculture and fishing. Their largest staples are fish and rice. The Maranao have extensive trading networks all around the Philippines, although disputes with the government can hinder trade.
- 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? The top of the social class is the sultans, below sultans lie the remainder of the people who make up the working class and are divided by occupation. Each family adopts an occupation and it is practiced as a family. Hierarchy is primarily based on genealogy. Those who have high status and role power are considered to be direct descendants of Sarip Kabongsoan, who was considered to be one of the brothers who discovered the Lanao lake area.

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

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6.0 Time allocation to RCR: No records found

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): The Maranao generally keep to themselves in regards to medical practices and have individuals in their social system dedicated to healing, but are willing to utilize modern medicine opportunities in Mawari City if needed.

6.2 Stimulants: No typical drugs other than chewing and smoking tobacco

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): Special occasions, such as marriages, births, and graduations. Burials consist of cleaning the corpse and wrapping it in a white cloth and buried, and because of the belief is possible resurrection/incarnation, the top is not cemented but merely covered with soil.

Pag-tamma is the ceremony which recognizes a boys intellectual maturity, or their finishing of reading and studying the Qur'an. Most all ceremony and rituals involve bright and exotic colors, festive decorations, lots of music, games, family, and dancing.

6.4 Other rituals: Another ritual practiced by the Mandanao is the coronation of a new Sultan, but is more of a celebration, called *kalilang*.

6.5 Myths (Creation): The Maranao people generally advocate and follow the Islamic views of creation: Heaven and Earth was created as a unit by the hand of Allah, and all the planets and sun formed into a system. The Qur'an states that Allah created the remainder of the world in six days such as the animals, plants, water, and land.

In regards to the creation of the Lanao lake region, the Maranao people believe that a tribe of angels under the leadership of Archangel Gabriel picked up a piece of land originally connected to Asia and transported it and the people on it to what is now Mindanao. The angels removed the area to prevent world destruction and sin. A hole sat in the middle of the land, which is thought to have been directly atop the center of the Earth. The angels then filled this hole with water: Lake Lanao.

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): More, or Muslim Maranao, literature embraces the whole range of oral and written expression of the Islam faith, including religious and ritual literature, folk literature such as legends, myths, epics and folktales, and the symbolic speech of courtship, proverbs, and riddles. Poems, songs, and ballads are also included. Music and dancing plays a large role in the lives of the Maranao.

Ritual music generally consists of vocal music with no instruments. Ceremonial music involves instruments such as *Kulintang* (brass gongs), *kagandang* (war drums) and *kambaioka* (singers or chanters of improvised poetic compositions). The *gabbang* is similar to a xylophone, and the *suling* and *saunay* are wind instruments. The *biyula* is a string instrument, and the *kulintangan* is an arrangement of gongs and drums. Maranao customs do not allow men and women to dance together. *Singkil* is a dance done solely by women. Most dances have the purpose of telling a story, typically one from Pre-Islamic history.

A now rare event, the *kalilang* is a festival, which celebrates the coronation of a new sultan. The celebration can last several days and include a parade, fireworks, dancing, games, and a feast. Games played are horse racing, pantinero, and kicking a rattan ball around. Each families within a village specializes in some sort of occupation, some of which are very artistic, like woodcarving, tapestry weaving, brass-making and the fine art of silver and gold-smithing. The Maranao have been claimed as being some of the most unique and intricate of the Philippine cultures. One specialty of the Maranao is the *Okir*, an indigenous flowering and branching. The *Sarimanok* is a legendary bird of the Maranao that has become a significant symbol of their art, legends, and myths.

6.7 Sex differences in RCR: No records found.

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- 6.8 Missionary effect: Negative, sometimes violent. Islamic traders and missionaries sought out the Maranao people and were successful in their attempts to make the Maranaos Muslim. Aside from Islamic influences, all other attempts and communicating with and converting the Maranao people has generally been a failure and occasionally lead to violent disputes.
- 6.9 RCR revival: No recorded occurrences.
- 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: Islamic doctrine states that human existence continues after the death of the body. Islamic text indicates that life after death reflects how life on Earth was lived; punishments and rewards will be administered accordingly.
- 6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? No records found.
- 6.12 Is there teknonymy? No records found.
- 6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.): The Maranao are dominantly Islamic. The spread of Islam around the Mindanao area lead to the majority of the Maranao people to adopt the Islam faith called the Moros, while those who did not are called the Lumad. The Maranao also advocate many Pre-Islamic beliefs and rituals, such as the cycles of nature and the spirit world, which mostly pertains to agriculture. Islam creates a cross between secular life and religious life, as is considered a lifestyle more so than just a religion. The Qur'an is the religious text that holds the ideals and beliefs of the Islamic faith. There is one God, Allah, and he placed prophets on Earth to help guide individuals on their way to Allah and positive life after death.

## 7. Adornment

- 7.1 Body paint: Not typical
- 7.2 Piercings: Not typical
- 7.3 Haircut: No records found.
- 7.4 Scarification: Not typical
- 7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): The Maranao exquisitely decorate almost everything they use, musical instruments, turbines, clothing, their kris-blades and handles, and other household items. Decorations include cocunut rings, brass bells, and intricate paint designs of animals and other nature scenes. An adorned garment for men is the *barong tagalog*, an embroidered outer shirt, worn untucked. The garment consists of long sleeves and mid-thigh horizontal hemline with side slits. The shirt is made from pina, pineapple fibers, jusi raw silk, or ramie, grass fibers. Women wear the heavily starched, butterfly-sleeved terno and a matching long skirt on formal occasions.
- 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: *Kasingkil* is a special dance done by women who use ankle bells, fans, and scarves to perform by women of royal blood. When a birth occurs, part of the baptism process is to dye the head of the child. A burial ceremony involves a white cloth to wrap the body in. A wedding ceremony involves about a week of celebration before the actual act of commitment. The celebration consists of music, decorations, and games. ON the day of the wedding ceremony, the groom arrives in colorful attire, and a white handkerchief is used to visually emphasize the joining of the man and woman.
- 7.7 Sex differences in adornment: The a high status woman wears a blouse of velvet cloth made with a V-neck and three quarter length sleeves decorated with gold coins and gold buttons, in addition to rings, bracelets and

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earrings of gold. Traditional women wrap their heads in a turban-like *Kombong* made of colored muslin (white if they had been to Mecca) over which lace is draped.

Traditional head wear for men is a multi-colored turban, a *tobao*, it is made of embroidered or tie-and-dye material.

7.8 Missionary effect: None

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: None

## 8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: Kinships is bilateral, kinship in many villages is normal. Membership in a village is based on kinship instead of residency. Kinship is expansive, including direct relatives and indirect relatives as a part of ones genealogy. Kinship comes from both mother's and father's side.

8.2 Sororate, levirate: Not typical.

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): No records found.

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

- largest cultural linguistic group in the Philippines
- The Sarimanok, the legendary bird of the Maranao, is said to be a sign of good fortune
- Food is eaten on the floor with bare hands. People will sit on colorful mats for feasts during celebrations

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