

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Manyika, Shona people of Zimbabwe

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

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): Eastern Zimbabwe 7° 50' S, 31° 03' E, some parts of Mozambique

1.4 Brief history:

The kingdom of Manyika was divided between the two administrative districts of Umtali and Inyanga; much of its land was alienated to white farmers, and the administration was determined to advance a minimal definition of Manyikahood. "Umtassa's country and people are called Manyika", wrote Native Commissioner Umtali in January 1904. "They do not speak the same dialect as the other Mashonas". The desire to separate Mutasa from neighbouring peoples can be seen in early district reports from Umtali, in which Native Commissioner Hulley contended that the three chiefs in the district (Mutasa, Maranke and Zimunya) had distinct origins (even if there was a popular tendency to refer to his district as "Manicaland"). As far as the administrative district of Makoni was concerned, the Native Department emphasized the distinction between its people and the Manyika. In 1910 there was a boundary dispute between the Native Commissioners of Makoni and Inyanga districts. Native Commissioner Inyanga wrote Superintendent of Natives Umtali to explain why he was collecting tax from Africans on farms which lay just within the western border of Makoni district:

There are no Makoni (Shonga) natives on any of these farms. I have always acted on your suggestion—that is I have dealt with Manyikas only...[Let] the Native Commissioner Rusapi deal with Makoni natives and I with Manyika...No dispute should arise.—Inyanga, NAZ NUA 3/2/1 Native Commissioner Inyanga to Superintendent of Natives Umtali, 2 April 1910

The matter was decided; the Chief Native Commissioner determined that "the N.C., Inyanga deal with all Manyika natives and the N.C., Rusapi with all the Makoni". The Native Department politically and culturally separated the Ungwe of Makoni from the Manyika. In 1915, a debate arose within the Native Department about the significance of the term mayiaini in relation to Manyika marriage customs. Llewellyn Meredith (who had been Native Commissioner in both Melsetter and Makoni districts, whose inhabitants were considered Manyika) expressed his opinion about "Manica customs and language", but was scorned by the Manyika specialists. Superintendent of Natives Umtali mocked Meredith's "18 years experience of Manyika customs gathered in other districts" and invoked the authority of Archdeacon Etheridge (the leading missionary expert on Mutasa's chiefdom). "I do not of course know", wrote Etheridge, "what word may be used in Chindau, or Chirungwe, the dialects spoken in Melsetter and Rusape [Makoni] districts, but as regards Chimanyika there is no question at all".

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: In the nineteenth century, the Shona were disturbed by Nguni migrations from the south, particularly by the Ndebele who, possessing superior military techniques, settled in and dominated the southeast of what is now Zimbabwe. Colonial settlement came at the end of the century. An uprising against the settlers was defeated. Independence came after further wars in Rhodesia and Mozambique in the 1960s and 1970s.

From the nineteenth century onward, the Shona have migrated to work in the mines of South Africa. After the colonial settlement of southern Rhodesia, employment became available within the country, on farms and mines, and particularly in the growing industrial cities. Some groups were moved off their land to make way for settlers who wanted to farm it.

Widespread education was introduced by various groups of missionaries, who also established hospitals and diverse forms of technical training, including training in improved agriculture. These services were subsequently taken over and expanded by government. Plow agriculture is now prevalent (8)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

Tropical; moderated by altitude; rainy season (November to March)

Terrain: mostly high plateau with higher central plateau (high veld); mountains in east

Natural resources: coal, chromium ore, asbestos, gold, nickel, copper, iron ore, vanadium, lithium, tin, platinum group metals (4)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: 1,066,00 (all countries) (5)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): corn/mairze (6)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: cattle (6)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: bow and arrow, historically a knife or sword was carried by men at all times for self defense of hunting (11)

2.4 Food storage: No records found

2.5 Sexual division of production: Women may supplement their income by selling pottery and handwoven baskets that serve primarily as utilitarian objects. Men may work as blacksmiths or carvers by commission. Although cows are milked, they are most often used for bride price. Cows are considered taboo for women, so men must do all of the milking and herding. Men also do some hunting and fishing, but neither contribute greatly to the food supply. Men and women both participate in farming. (7)

2.6 Land tenure: Now there is a scarcity of agricultural land in most communities, and land rights are carefully guarded and inherited. Land has acquired a commercial value. Grazing land, however, remains communal and, except in freehold commercial-farming areas, is habitually overused. (8)

2.7 Ceramics: metalworking, woodcarving (8)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: Traditionally, every adult man was given land by his father or village headman. Land could not be bought or sold; it was returned to the community for redistribution when no longer in use. (8)

2.9 Food taboos: A few food taboos with serious health consequences are still widely practiced. Traditionally eggs, were believed to cause infertility in women and therefore were avoided, but they are now widely consumed. The meat of one's clan totem was traditionally avoided; even today animals representing totems are rarely eaten. (8)

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? No records found

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): No records found

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): No records found

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f): No records found

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): No records found

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): family size is considered very vast because non-living ancestors are considered a part of the current family (15)

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): long between first and second births, and then shorter (16)

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): early 20s for both (12)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: Very rare (8)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: Polygyny was traditionally preferred, but the cost of living, and especially of education, has made monogamy more common. In a polygynous marriage, the domestic unit was usually a wife and her children. Such a unit was usually allocated its own fields for subsistence purposes. A nuclear family is now the most common domestic unit. (8)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: a payment is made to the father of the bride, usually consisting of both money and cattle (12)

4.9 Inheritance patterns: patrilineal societies in which descent is through the male line and after marriage a woman moves into her husband's home, In customary marriages, all property rights during marriage or after divorce or death belong to the man. (8)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: No records found

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: Highly frowned upon, elders and traditional Manyika people believe homosexuality was brought to their land "from the White Man" (10)

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): No records found

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") No records found

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: Rare and dealt with very seriously when it did occur, Serious crimes, such as incest and homicide, in the control of the guardian spirits, through their mediums. All other offenses were dealt with by a hierarchy of courts from the village level to the chiefly level (8)

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin): No records found

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? Traditionally, the sexual activities of women were strictly controlled, and girls were inspected for virginity at marriage (8)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: If a wife is incapable of producing offspring, the family of the wife must give the husband another daughter as a substitute but only for reproductive purposes (12)

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: No records found

4.22 Evidence for couvades: None

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older): No records found

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?: Kin ties within a totem are very loyal and tight, considered blood related whether biological or not (3)

4.24 Joking relationships? No records found

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: patrilineal societies in which descent is through the male line and after marriage a woman moves into her husband's home, In customary marriages, all property rights during marriage or after divorce or death belong to the man. (8)

4.26 Incest avoidance rules: The offence of incest has two applications amongst the Shona. The first, mentioned earlier, is that no man within the clan may have relations with a woman born of the same totem. This is a serious offence against the mhondoro. Therefore in order to propitiate the tribal or tutelary spirit, an ox (mombe) must be paid as a fine to the chief who is the hereditary representative of the clan. This beast must be sacrificed at the Dare (men's meeting place or court of the Chief) of the chief. (14)

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Not necessarily amongst the community, but a feast takes place between the bride and groom's family, usually involving some of the meat given to the bride's family in the bridal payment (12)

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? The name is acquired from the male lineage during marriage, and passed on to the offspring of the couple (3)

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?) Marriage is intended to be outside of one's totem, but inside the community of Manyika (3)

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Family of husband chooses a wife for their son but permission must go through the family of the girl to be married before a marriage can commence (12)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: The greatest honor is to marry the daughter of the chief or an elder of the village, otherwise (12)

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: No records

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: No records found

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: No records found

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): Warfare between the scattered Shona chiefdoms was rare. A number of Shona groups suffered from raids by Ndebele armies during the nineteenth century. Tensions between the Shona and the Ndebele have not yet been totally resolved. (8)

4.18 Cannibalism? None (8)

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: 12-25 people (12)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): Remain stable in one place (8)

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): Traditionally, Shona peoples lived in dispersed settlements, usually consisting of one or more elder men and their extended families. Most decisions were made within the family, although organized political states were recognized as a source of centralized power (7)

5.4 Post marital residence: In practice, chiefs have the right to allocate usufruct (rights to use the land) to married adult men; women have access to land only through their husbands. Land is designated to the husband/married couple after marriage (8)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): Traditionally, every adult man was given land by his father or village headman. Land could not be bought or sold; it was returned to the community for redistribution when no longer in use. (8)

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): No records found

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: No records found

5.8 Village and house organization: In practice, chiefs have the right to allocate usufruct (rights to use the land) to married adult men; women have access to land only through their husbands. There were some large stockaded villages prior to colonial settlement, but in some areas people lived in scattered family hamlets. The dominant settlement pattern is one of villages with homesteads spread out in lines next to agricultural land. The traditional homestead included a number of round, pole- and-mud huts with conical thatched roofs. These huts have largely been replaced by brick houses, roofed with zinc, sometimes in the traditional style of round huts. (8)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses): No records found

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? No records found

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: headed by a paramount chief who inherited his position and power in the divine manner of a king. He usually resided in a centralized location and was accompanied by his court who advised him about most important decisions. The head chief often received substantial payment in the form of tributes from his constituency. (7) Authority is vested in men, and wisdom is vested in age. After marrying, a man assumes domestic authority as the household head, but in wider family affairs the elders are more influential. A woman also gains authority and respect with age, and newly married daughters-in-law take over much of the housework and help in the fields. Assistance continues after a daughter-in-law has established her own house nearby. (8)

5.12 Trade: Although there is a long history of trade both between Shona groups and with outsiders, there were traditionally no markets in Shona settlements. These are now well established in cities, towns, and many rural centers of administration and trade. Even the remotest areas have access to some stores in which basic consumer goods are sold. (8)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? headed by a paramount chief who inherited his position and power in the divine manner of a king. He usually resided in a centralized location and was accompanied by his court who advised him about most important decisions. The head chief often received substantial payment in the form of tributes from his constituency. (7)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR: No records found

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): When a spirit becomes angry, it communicates through a medium, or a diviner diagnoses the anger and cause, and appeasement follows. Families seeking to avenge a death or enforce debt payment may consult diviner-healers (*n'anga*). Witches are thought to have the power to raise angry spirits, and the anger of a spirit may or may not be justified in the view of the affected family. A diviner may be consulted to determine the cause of death and prescribe a ritual action; this is followed by ceremonies to settle the spirit and mark the end of mourning. treatment for a serious illness may include a consultation with a *n'anga*. Herbal remedies continue to be used widely for minor ailments, and *n'anga* are respected for their counseling skills, especially in treating psychological and psychiatric problems. (8)

6.2 Stimulants: The most popular preventive medicine for spiritually influenced chronic illnesses and diseases is a type of plant known as *chifumuro* (exposer), Although *chifumuro* is limited to a specific disease, it acts as a safeguard against illness in children. (9)

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): Most important ceremonies involve offerings of millet beer to the spirits concerned. Small libations are poured, and the remainder is consumed by the gathering, amid singing and dancing. Sacrifices may occasionally be offered to ancestors and territorial spirits but are regularly offered to Mwari. Spirits may also be honored with gifts of cloth or money, handed over to the medium (8)

6.4 Other rituals: The Shona religion is very much part of the agricultural and natural life of the people. Before vegetable leaves are eaten at the beginning of the rainy season thanks must be given to the spirits of the land, the *mhondoro* and ancestors. This ceremony of *mishashe* is followed a few months later in April by that of thanksgiving to the tribal spirits for the harvest of *zvio*, the traditional millet of the Shona, from which alone beer can be prepared for religious ceremonies. Until this ritual has taken place no millet can be eaten. Then sometime between September and January the spirits of the land are prayed to again for good soaking rains and for the crops to be

blessed. (15) Roasted and stewed meat is the food of celebrations; an ox, cow, or goat may be slaughtered in the rural areas, depending on the significance of the event, and may be accompanied by rice. Beer made from millet usually is prepared by women, and roasted groundnuts are served on special occasions. (8)

6.5 Myths (Creation): First, the spiritual world consists of God (Mwari).²⁵ The Shona believe that Mwari created the world and all in it. Mwari is regarded as the Great Spirit whose voice people used to hear at Matopo hills.²⁶ As the Great Spirit Mwari is sometimes referred to as mudzimumukuru (great ancestral spirit). So most Shona people believe that nature is a product of ancestral spirits, probably with Mwari at the top of the hierarchy. This belief is found in the Shona myth of creation.

The Shona myth of creation traces the origin of life and existence of nature to a great pool (dzivaguru). The myth begins with Mwari making the first human called Mwedzi (moon). This is at the bottom of the pool (dziva). Mwari gave Mwedzi a medicine horn (gona). Mwedzi asked to go out to the dry land. Mwari gave him a wife called Masasi to accompany him. The two lived in a cave. They gave birth to grass, bushes and trees. After this Masasi went back to the pool. Mwari gave Mwedzi another wife called Morongo. Morongo gave birth to all kinds of animals. Eventually she bore boys and girls. Because the children had grown up Morongo refused to continue sleeping with Mwedzi. She asked him to sleep with his daughters. As a result he became chief (mambo) of a great people. Masasi chose to sleep with a snake that she hid under her bed. One day Mwedzi forced Masasi to sleep with him and the snake bit him. Mwedzi fell ill and there was drought. The children consulted a diviner about the persistent drought. They were told to send the sick chief back to the pool. After this they chose another man to be their king (13)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): best known for their beautifully adorned wooden headrests. Most of the art associated with Shona is either personal or utilitarian. Although they produce no figurative sculpture, they do have a rich tradition of metalworking and woodcarving (7) The themes are derived largely from African folklore and transformed into figurative, semiabstract, and minimalist works that use a variety of stone, including black serpentine. (8)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR: No records found

6.8 Missionary effect: European culture and values indelibly shaped the urban and rural landscapes, particularly in terms of the use of space, and the structure and practice of government. Black Zimbabweans have assimilated more white Zimbabwean culture than vice versa.

6.9 RCR revival: No records found

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: In traditional religion, the spirit of a deceased person returns to the community and the deceased heads of extended families (the ancestors), have a powerful influence on family life. The spirit ancestors are usually only two or three generations back from the living generation and are the people who passed on the custom of honoring their ancestors and the traditions of the community. After one year a final ceremony is held at which the spirit becomes a spirit guardian of the family. These ceremonies generally combine traditional and Christian practices (8)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? None

6.12 Is there teknonymy? None

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.): believe in two types of spirits. Shave spirits are most often considered to be outside or wandering spirits, and vadzimu are ancestor spirits. Shave spirits are associated with populations living outside of Shona territory and may be connected to neighboring peoples, Europeans, or even animals. These spirits may be either malevolent or benevolent. Bad spirits are associated with witchcraft, while good spirits may inspire individual talents associated with healing, music, or artistic ability. Vadzimu represent all that is ideal and moral about a Shona way of life and are usually associated with recent ancestors or with more remote culture heroes whose exact genealogy has been forgotten. They serve to protect society, but may withdraw this protection if Shona moral ideals are not respected.

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: No records found

7.2 Piercings: No records found

7.3 Haircut: No specifics

7.4 Scarification: None

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): best known for their beautifully adorned wooden headrests. Most of the art associated with Shona is either personal or utilitarian. Although they produce no figurative sculpture, they do have a rich tradition of metalworking and woodcarving. (7) Almost everyone wears a charm either around their neck, on their wrist or in their pocket

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: No records found

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: No records found

7.8 Missionary effect: Missionaries were held as outsiders when it came to traditional Manyika culture aspects, but some of the traditions of the white man and the Manyika people have morphed together in recent years (15)

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: No records found

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: No records found

8.2 Sororate, levirate: In Zimbabwe Levirate marriage is traditionally practiced by the Shona and it is commonly known as "Kugara nhaka". Under the practice, the younger brother is the one who can "inherit" the wife of the elder brother. The elder brother is not allowed to "inherit" the wife of the younger brother. Just like the rest of the world, the practice is now being discouraged due to the epidemic of HIV and AIDS. (3)

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): Relationships with maternal kin are important; although contact may be infrequent, the relationship is normally a close one. Therefore, the wider kin group

of an extended family can be very extensive. Patrilineal kin are classified according to sex, generation, and seniority by age. Parallel matrilineal kin are accorded the same terms as patrilineal kin. Other matrilineal kin are classified simply by sex. (8)

People of the same clan use a common set of totems. Totems are usually animals and body parts. Examples include Shiri/Hungwe-Fish Eagle, Mbizi/Tembo - Zebra, Shumba- Lion, Tsoko- Monkey, Nzou-Elephant or Gumbo (leg) Moyo (heart) Bepe lung, dziva- Hippo etc. These were further broken down into gender related names. For example Zebra group would break into Madhve for the females and Dhuve or Mazvimbakupa for the males. People of the same totem are the descendants of one common ancestor (the founder of that totem) and thus are not allowed to marry or have an intimate relationship. The totems cross regional groupings and therefore provide a wall for development of ethnicism among the Shona groups.

This identification by totem has very important ramifications at traditional ceremonies such as the burial ceremony. A person with a different totem cannot initiate burial of the deceased. A person of the same totem, even when coming from a different tribe, can initiate burial of the deceased. For example a Ndebele of the Mpofu totem can initiate burial of a Shona of the Mhofu totem and that is perfectly acceptable in Shona tradition. But a Shona of a different totem cannot perform the ritual functions required to initiate burial of the deceased.

If a person initiates the burial of a person of a different totem, he runs the risk of being asked to pay a fine to the family of the deceased. Such fines traditionally were paid with cattle or goats but nowadays substantial amounts of money can be asked for.

Similarly Shona chiefs are required to be able to recite the history of their totem group right from the initial founder before they can be sworn in as chiefs. (3)

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

The most important practitioners are spirit mediums, men or women who have been chosen by particular spirits to be their hosts. From time to time, a medium becomes possessed by the spirit, and the spirit is believed to act and speak through the host. Hosts may have relatively unimportant spirits and have little function other than providing entertainment at possession dances. They may have healing spirits and thus be primarily concerned with divination and healing, or they may have ancestral spirits or politically important territorial spirits. (8)

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