

1. Description

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

- **MÒORÉ (also goes by Mole, Moose, More, Moshi, Mossi)**
- **The main country that speaks Mossi is Burkina Faso where over 40% of the population is part of the Mossi ethnic group(cia.gov).**
- **The size of the population that speaks Mossi is about 5,000,000 people.**
- **Mossi is also spoken in Mali and Togo.**
- **It is a member of the Niger-Congo language family. (ethnologue.com)**

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

- **639-3**

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- **13.00 N, 2.00 W (cia.gov)**

1.4 Brief history:

- **Burkina Faso won its independence from France in 1960. Throughout the next 20 years there was political and military unrest with multiple military coups. Since 1987 President Blaise Compaore has held office. (cia.gov) Although the Mossi people live under the Burkina Faso government they also have their own leader called the Moro Naba (Emperor) who resides in the ancient capital city of Ouagadougou who retains a small amount of political power. The Mossi formed in 1500 A.D and conquered several other peoples in the surrounding area, becoming a major military and political force in the region until they were conquered by the French in 1879. (uiowa.edu)**

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

- **Burkina Faso has border disputes with Niger and Benin.**
- **Used to be under the control of the French which is why Burkina Faso's official language is still French. (cia.gov)**

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

- **Burkina Faso is a savannah with a tropical climate (Wet & hot summers with dry winters). It is mostly flat with a few hills. The country is not much larger than the state of Colorado. (cia.gov)**

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

- **There is a population size of 17,275,115 in Burkina Faso(July 2012). (cia.gov)**
- **The Northern Central Plateau has high population densities that usually surpass 100 persons/km² as of 2005 (West: 367)**
- **Mean village size of 1,396 as of 2006 (ifpri.org)**

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- **Millet**
- **Sorghum**
- **Maize (uiowa.edu)**

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- **Beef/cattle (West: 369)**

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

- **Historically the Mossi were horsemen and a powerful military force.**

- **Rawhide Shields**
- **Bows & poison iron tipped arrows**
- **Spears**
- **Swords**
- **Clubs**
- **Some warriors had guns that were traded for.**
(1996 Mack-Williams: 27)

2.4 Food storage:

- **Food is stored either in household ceramics (uiowa.edu) or in communal granaries (West: 366)**

2.5 Sexual division of production:

- **Both men and woman work the fields and produce pottery. (uiowa.edu and West)**
- **There is no mention of women working the forges only men.**

2.6 Land tenure:

- **Land is owned by the head of a lineage who then divides the land into communal and private plots for the different nuclear families within a lineage. (West)**

2.7 Ceramics:

- **The Mossi may use one of three different forming techniques: direct pull, coiling, and molding with concave or convex molds to produce their earthenware or brownware pottery. (uiowa.edu)**

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

- **Pugkênga (From the communal field) grain is prescribed for communal sharing.**
- **Beolga (From the nuclear family field) grain is typically used only for the individual nuclear family. (West: 366)**
- **There is a national currency as well.**

2.9 Food taboos: **N/A**

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

- **The Mossi live in a landlocked savannah so there is no need for canoes/watercraft, they used to be horsemen in ancient times (uiowa.edu)**

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

- **Mean adult female height is 161.6 cm as of 2003**
- **N/A for adult male height.**
(ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): **N/A**

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f): **N/A**

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): **N/A**

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): **N/A**

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): **N/A**

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

- **Female – 17 (fao.org)**
- **Male – N/A**

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: **N/A**

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

- **There is mention of polygyny occurring but no statistics on the exact percent of the population that practice.**

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

- **The Mossi have a small bride price. (fao.org)**

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

- **Land is transferred to the oldest male that is also head of a nuclear family that has male members that are old enough to work the land. (West: 366)**

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: **N/A**

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: **N/A**

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

- **They practice exogamy at the level of the lineage segment (West: 366)**

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized? **N/A**

4.14 What is the belief of the mother’s role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”) **N/A**

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

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape **N/A**

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

- **Outside of the family lineage (West)**

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? **N/A**

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring **N/A**

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? **N/A**

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females **N/A**

4.22 Evidence for couvades **N/A**

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

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? **N/A**

4.24 Joking relationships? **N/A**

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

- **Patrilineal (West: 366)**

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

- **Since the Mossi practice exogamy they do have incest avoidance.**

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? **N/A**

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

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

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

- **Some marriages are arranged by parents and some are not. (Fao.org)**

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: **N/A**

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: **N/A**

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: **N/A**

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: **N/A**

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): **N/A**

4.18 Cannibalism? **N/A**

- **The Mossi are primarily an agricultural society; not focused on warfare (although historically they were warriors).**

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

- **1,396 as of 2006 (ifpri.org)**

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

- **The Mossi live in a sedentary lifestyle. They live in villages and cities or doing agriculture. (uiowa.edu)**

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

- **The Mossi were historically ruled by the Moro Naba (Emperor) who ruled through a hierarchy system where the nakomse (ruling class) was composed of chiefs who gave direction to local officials in their different regions. The chiefs would gather taxes and raise armies through the local officials for the Moro Naba. (uiowa.edu)**

5.4 Post marital residence:

- **Patrilocal residence (West: 366)**

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

- **Historically the Mossi conquered their neighbors but now they are governed under the Burkina Faso government who has border disputes with Niger and Benin. (uiowa.edu & cia.gov)**

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

- **The Male Elders are in charge. (West)**

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: **N/A**

5.8 Village and house organization:

- **Women marry and move into their husband's father's household. Only once their offspring is matured to the point of being able to work the land does the ownership of the land transfer from the husband's father to the son and only if he is the eldest son who is head of his nuclear family. If he is not the eldest son he and his family may move elsewhere. (West: 366)**

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses): **N/A**

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

- **The Mossi number in the millions, some live on farms, some in villages, and some in cities. The population is too vast to say where the majority of them sleep.**

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

- **The Mossi agricultural society is organized by lineages. The Oldest males are in charge. (West)**

5.12 Trade:

- **Sesame, Peanuts, and Indigo (uiowa.edu)**
- **Gold, Cotton, and Livestock (Cia.gov)**

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

- **Moro Naba (Emperor), Mogho Namanse (Paramount chiefs), provincial chiefs, Namanse (village chiefs), everyone else (in order from most powerful to least) (West: 366)**

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR: **N/A**

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): **N/A**

6.2 Stimulants: **N/A**

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

6.4 Other rituals: **N/A**

6.5 Myths (Creation): **N/A**

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

- **The Mossi are known for their elaborate masks that are used for ritual purposes of honoring the dead (ancestor worship). (uiowa.edu)**

6.7 Sex differences in RCR: N/A

6.8 Missionary effect:

- **30% of the population has a nontraditional religion. (uiowa.edu)**

6.9 RCR revival: N/A

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

- **They believe after death the soul or “sigha” stays part of the family and will punish or reward the different behaviors that a family member may do. (uiowa.edu)**

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

- **No**

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

- **Never any mention of it.**

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

- **70% practice the traditional animist religion.**
- **“Wennam” or “Wendé” is the sun god and the main deity.**
- **Annual ritual sacrifice of large quantities of ram (millet beer) is made to honor their ancestors.**
- **Descendants of the Nyonyose worship nature spirits that provide them with supernatural powers to control the forces of nature.**
- **The nature spirits are represented by masks in rituals.**
- **Totemic ancestral masks**
- **Each lineage has a totem associated with them where each member of that lineage is believed to have a spirit animal that relates to that totem. If the spirit animal is killed the person is killed as well.**
- **25% are Muslim.**
- **5% are Christian. (uiowa.edu)**

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: N/A

7.2 Piercings: N/A

7.3 Haircut: N/A

7.4 Scarification: N/A

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

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- **During rituals the Mossi will wear the ceremonial masks and dance in them or drink ram through them. (uiowa.edu)**

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: N/A

7.8 Missionary effect: N/A

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: N/A

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: N/A

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

- **Levirate (fao.org)**

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

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Numbered references

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