

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Vatswa, Tswa/Kitshwa,Sheetshwa, Shitshwa, Tshwa, Xitshwa, Niger-Congo

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): [ISO 639-3: tsc](#)

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):Mozambique 35 degrees E, 22 degrees S

1.4 Brief history:

“It is believed that ancestors of the Tswa, who now primarily inhabit an area in southern Mozambique, originated farther north nearer the more central part of Africa. As these people moved into the southern area of Africa, they settled in places where they could carry on their traditional farming and pastoral way of life. Various clans made up the overall Tswa people group. This social structure began to undergo changes as the influence of Portuguese colonialism increased. Portugal became a dominant power along the eastern coast of Africa in the late 1490s. Portugal established several colonies in the territory now known as Mozambique. Actual Portuguese presence was limited, but in 1951, Portugal combined all its colonies in southeastern Africa into one huge colony named Mozambique. Some sources give the date of Portugal's claim to the area as 1752. [One source](#), however, puts the date when Portugal established Mozambique as a colony as 1505, becoming an overseas province of Portugal in 1951. The territory was originally and formally known as *Portuguese East Africa*. The Portuguese government allowed the local kings/rulers to continue ruling their respective peoples, but under the overarching authority of Portugal. This more or less continued until Mozambique gained independence. In 1962, Mozambican nationalists had formed the Mozambican Liberation Front (FRELIMO) to try and negotiate independence. Eventually, under the leadership of Dr. Eduardo Mondlane, FRELIMO began an armed liberation struggle in 1964. Samora Machel assumed leadership of FRELIMO in 1969 after the assassination of Dr. Mondlane. In 1974 the fascist Portuguese regime was overthrown and Mozambique became independent on June 25, 1975. An opposition group known as RENAMO, with its own revolutionary army, continued to oppose FRELIMO for many years. Peace was attained in 1992 after the FRELIMO government took a significant change of direction in national economic policy.” (2)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: Missionaries from Portugal have had heavy influence in religion, medicine and education. The Portuguese were actually the elites of Mozambique at one point, while rural people (Tswa) were lower class. (#)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment): “The terrain ranges from rain forests and swamps to mountains, grasslands, sand dunes, and beaches.” (3)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: 1,180,000, 1,160,000 in Mozambique (1)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):Corn, cassava (introduced by portugese) (3)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: peanuts, cashews (introduced by Portuguese) (3)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

2.4 Food storage:

2.5 Sexual division of production: In towns and cities women are confined to the home, while in rural areas women play an important role in farming along with the men. (3)

2.6 Land tenure: “There is no tradition of private land ownership. Land belongs to the community rather than to any individual.” – (3)

2.7 Ceramics:

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

2.9 Food taboos:

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): I found quite a few things that talked about pygmy groups of Tswa, but I couldn't find anything more than just saying that they existed.

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):

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: Can't find percentages, but until recently polygamy was widely accepted and still occurs at times. (3)

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

- 4.9 Inheritance patterns: Patrilineal (3)
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” 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)
- 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?
- 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
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? There are feasts and celebrations for marriages (3)
- 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?)
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?
- 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): status classes, everyone in Mozambique (primary country with which Tswa is spoken) who isn’t in the cities are pretty much equal and seen as the lowest class. (3)
- 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: Houses hold a few generations of a family (3)
- 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:
- 5.12 Trade: Machinery, petroleum and other industrial goods are imported into their country, while they export cashews, peanuts, and cassava.
- 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.)

Native religion is animism, Arab traders have brought Islam, the Portugese brought Christianity.

Catholic and Protestant beliefs conflicted with animism but they offered health care and education. 20-30 percent is now Christian, , 10 percent Islam. Common to practice Animism paired with either one of those. Around 2/3 of the population follow animist rituals.

High importance on connection with your ancestors and the spirit world. There are sorceres, wise men and women, witch doctors, and traditional healers who can communciate with spirits.(3)

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):

Pygmy groups that I could only find being mentioned very briefly and then not spoken about again. They were compared to two other groups of pygmies and said that two of them were not below 150cm which is apparently pygmy height qualifications.

The Tswa was said to not really be pygmies. (4)

Numbered references

1. http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=tsc
2. <http://strategyleader.org/profiles/tswa.html>
3. <http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Mozambique.html>
4. [http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/ehrafe/fullContext.do?method=fullContext&forward=searchFullContext&col=collection\('/eHRAF/ethnography/Africa/FO04'\)&docId=fo04-000&page=fo04-000-00027-001&offsetId=fo04-000-00037&tocOffsetId=tofo0400000036&resultSelect=2](http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/ehrafe/fullContext.do?method=fullContext&forward=searchFullContext&col=collection('/eHRAF/ethnography/Africa/FO04')&docId=fo04-000&page=fo04-000-00027-001&offsetId=fo04-000-00037&tocOffsetId=tofo0400000036&resultSelect=2)