

1. Description

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

- Maore (Mahore, Wamaore, Comoro, Comores Swahili, Comorian, Komoro, Maore Comorian, Shimaore) (1)
- Niger-Congo, Narrow Bantu (1)
- “Mahorans speak *Shimaore*, a form of Comorian that is similar to *Shindzuani*, which is spoken on the next island. More than a third of the population speaks *Shibushi* or Mahoran Malagasy, which is similar to the *Sakalava* spoken on Madagascar. These two languages have influenced each other, principally through borrowings. French is the language of public services, education, and foreign exchange, but sixty percent of the population does not speak it.” (2)

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

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): -12.8, 44.2

1.4 Brief history:

- “Inhabited in the eighth century and organized into chieftainships and then a sultanate that often was threatened by Nzwani, Mayotte became a French possession in 1841, after a period of Malagasy raids and the violent seizure of power by a succession of usurpers. At the outset a sugar colony and then the administrative center of the archipelago, Mayotte lost that distinction in 1958, when the capital was moved to Moroni (Ngazidja). When the Comoros gained independence in 1975, Mayotte chose to remain French to benefit from French development funds, which residents feared it would no longer receive.” (2)

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

- In 1841, Mayotte was ceded to France. “Early colonial policy was governed by two aims, the abolition of indigenous slavery and the creation of a supply of cheap labor for the newly established sugarcane plantations...regulations were created requiring a period of service on the plantations from all sectors of the indigenous population, and there was an extensive importation of manpower, especially from Africa and the other islands in the archipelago [...] the early French policies had far-reaching effects on the local social structure. Part of the land originally alienated from the population was put on sale to the old and new inhabitants, thus weakening the traditional system of stratification. The initial aim of this procedure seems to have been the consolidation of the population in known localities where they could be more easily controlled and called upon when their labor was desired.” (3, p15)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

- Mahore is “geologically the oldest of the Comoros, is 24 miles (39 km) long and 13 miles (22 km) wide [...] its highest point is Mount Benara at 2,165 feet (660 m) above sea level. Because of the volcanic rock, the soil is relatively rich in some areas. A wide fringing coral reef encircling the islands ensures protection for ships and a habitat for fish. The climate is tropical, with a hot and humid, rainy season during the northeastern monsoon season (November to May); the dry season (May to November) is cooler. The area is prone to cyclones during the rainy season. The terrain is generally undulating, with deep ravines and ancient volcanic peaks. The territory of Mayotte encompasses the largest coral lagoon in the world, more than 1,000 square kilometers in size.” (7)

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

- “Mayotte, with an area of 144 square miles (374 square kilometers), is the easternmost island in the Comoros off the coast of southwestern Africa, and geologically the oldest.” (2)
- 92,800 in Mayotte (1)
- “Mahore’s population density went from 179 persons per square kilometers in 1985 to 251 per square kilometer in 1991.” (8, p171)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- “The food of the common people is similar throughout the Comorian Islands, with rice the staple of the daily diet, along with manioc and other root vegetables, plantains, fresh and dried fish, and milk from grated coconuts.” (2)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- Fish, poultry, shellfish (8, p16)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns:

- Iron war spears (3, p156)

2.4 Food storage:

- Comorian fisherman dry and salt fish for preservation. (5, p22)

2.5 Sexual division of production:

- “Each nuclear family household is responsible for its own production of subsistence crops. Husband and wife generally share the labor involved.” (3, p20)
- “There has been a lot of incorrect commentary about matriarchy in Mayotte because of the activity of women in the inner circle of the Mahoran People’s Party, which politicians have exploited to the greatest extent possible. As in Comoros, important and normative public roles are held by men. Women are active groups within the family and in social networks.” (2)

2.6 Land tenure:

- “Any nonregistered land is supposed to be in the public domain. This is the case with many personal and family fields that are held jointly. As in the Comoros, common knowledge or an Islamic property act often takes the place of modern property registration, which is subject to tax. The local administration is conducting a cadastral survey of the island.” (2)

2.7 Ceramics:

- “Traditional pottery has become scarce, but painting has begun to appear, practiced by wazungu artists and Mahoran youth.” (2)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

- "...the members of a village are linked into a single exchange system such that each has rights and obligations to every other based on their common membership in the village. In particular, each member has the right and duty to participate in rituals planned by the village as a whole and performed for the common good." (3, p19)

2.9 Food taboos:

- None.

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

- The most unique feature of the rewa (type of spirit) was that after their ceremonies were finished, the spirits left the bodies of their hosts permanently. A small-scale, toy-sized model one trooped down to the beach, where the canoe, filled with bits of all kinds of food the spirit like to eat, was put out to sea, sending the rewa home." (3, p186)

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

- No average height given.

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

- No average weight measured.

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

- Early teenage years.

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

- After marriage, sometimes as early as 15 years old.

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

- Parents, a few children.

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

- Not specified.

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

- Women are expected to be virgins when they marry. Some girls marry as young as fifteen years old. "The immediate consequence of legitimate defloration (i.e., by her husband, after he has legally contracted the marriage with her parents or sponsors and not before the time set by the astrologer consulted by the parents) is a girl's freedom henceforward to engage in sexual activity." (3, p140)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

- "Separation and remarriage are common." (2)
- "...the divorce rate is high ... separation is frequently initiated by women. In the absence of contest, a marriage is terminated with little formality, mere physical separation and the discontinuation of support." (3, p23)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

- Polygynous marriages are "infrequent and unstable." (3, p22)

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

- "As in the other Comoros, a house is given to a woman by her family at the time of her first marriage." (2)
- "The groom gives the bride's parents a large sum of money, which they then use to carry out the requirements of the groom's shungu, that is, they take over responsibility for feasting his age group." (3, p22)
- "For the bride's part, in return for her own role and contribution- the preservation of her virginity until marriage and the submission to defloration by the groom- she is supplied with a house and furnishings by her family and with a suitcase full of clothing, jewelry, and other gifts by the groom." (3, p23)

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

- "Inheritance is not as exclusively matrilineal [...] Family land is handed down to the children either as a whole or after division, and a field is set aside for girls who need one. Houses and jewels are handed down to girls." (2)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

- "Maternal parents have a strong presence in the domestic unit." (2)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

- Not specified.

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

- "...village endogamy is in itself neither prescribed nor preferred... both men and women prefer to reside within their own villages for the social and economic advantages such residence offers. In general, because women receive houses from their fathers, a couple's initial place of residence is likely to be the village of the wife's father or the village in which she was reared. In village exogamous marriages, this pattern is likely to interfere with the husband's access to his own land. A number of couples reside duolocally, particularly the men engaged in polygynous marriages." (3, p22)

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. No other fathers recognized. "One could argue that the union of bride and groom makes a statement about both the future fertility of the marriage and the genitor of potential offspring. Defloration indicates that the bride is not already pregnant and that, their fertility permitting, neither partner is incapable of procreation." (4, p277)
- A man can demonstrate his sexual status by paternity. (4, p277)

- 4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")
- Not specified.
- 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?
- There is no hard evidence of this. However, "The defloration of the bride is immediately celebrated by the women in licentious dancing, and the couple then begin a week-long period during which they must stay inside the new house that the bride's father has built and furnished." (3, p143)
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape
- "In general, people in Mayotte feel that a young woman would have the strength to fight off an attacker of the sense to call for help. Men who do attempt rape are despised, but women rarely offer rape as an explanation for loss of virginity. To do so would be, in effect, to acknowledge women as passive victims of male sexuality, to deny women's control over their own bodies." (4, p273)
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)
- "Although cross-cousin marriage does occur and is sometimes arranged deliberately, it is not prescribed. The general opinion states that cross-cousin marriage is dangerous because marital conflict can quickly spread tension within the mraba, particularly between the siblings of the ascending generation, that is, between the parents of the bride and groom." (3, p22)
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?
- "A woman should remain a virgin until her first marriage, and indeed it is in her best interests to do so, but from this point she has as much control over her sexuality as a man has over his. The wedding is a celebration of the bride's emergence into womanhood as much as it is anything else, and ease of divorce means that women are not pawns in an exchange controlled by men but can act as independent agents on their own behalf." (3, p23)
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring
- Not specified.
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?
- "...on the death of a parent of one or more of the children of that sex take on the parental role toward the rest of the siblings. Thus, a man or woman may address or refer to a (generally older) sister as 'mother' and likewise call a brother 'father.'" (3, p21)
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females
- Fairly even.
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades
- None.
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)
- Not specified.
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?
- "Kinship ties are recognized bilaterally, and an individual's kin network is likely to spread across several villages... fluid and overlapping groups or clusters of kin who share common economic, ceremonial, and political interests on a regular basis are known as mraba and may be identified by an apical ancestor or prominent contemporary. Ties of affinity and fictive kinship are in practice significant in mraba maintenance as well." (3, p20)
- 4.24 Joking relationships
- "Siblings frequently rear one another's children. The mother's brother and father's sister fulfill similar functions, but they are called by special terms and may also engage in joking relations (obishy) with the children (if they themselves are not rearing them)." (3, p21)
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations
- "Filiation is bilateral, but as in the Comoros, because the family lives in the mother's house, there is a strong maternal bond. Mahorans pride themselves on having a far-reaching parental affiliation, which remarriages encourage, and maintain those bonds by visiting relatives in other villages." (2)
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules
- Not specified, cross-cousins are allowed.
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?
- "The Great Wedding ceremony *arusi* is a festival [...] these events reveal the degree to which Mahorans want to preserve their ancient social values and affirm their social position in a way that is specific to the local culture. These ceremonies also provide an opportunity for entertainment (music and dance), as well as social interaction." (2)
 - "The wedding of a virgin bride is the longest, most expensive, and most complex kinship ritual found in Mayotte. It entails a week of feasting, organized around the establishment of the bride and groom in the former's new house. However, the major exchanges are carried out not so much between the affinal parties as through them." (3, p22)
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?
- "Following Islamic tradition, most Comorian men's names consist of two parts: a given name followed by one's father's name (patronymic); occasionally a grandfather's name is also added. In referring to an individual, one uses the given name alone or the given plus the patronymic names together. The patronymic is never used alone, as a last name, and would be misleading. (5, pix)
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)
- Marriage is preferred to be within a community. "The position of people who have married into the village from the outside depends on how long they have been present, whether or not they have kin [...] and the degree to which they choose to

participate in village activity. Generally, the shorter the length of time they have been present, the less happy their position. Both sexes are sensitive to slight, may suspect villagers of initiating affairs with their spouses, and may feel themselves to be the objects of sorcery. Such people are referred to as mugyen 'strangers' or 'outsiders,' and this epithet remains applicable at least in theory, forever." (3, p18)

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

- "The groom is, in fact, little more than the instrument contracted by the parents of the bride to perform upon their daughter the operation for which they hold responsibility." (4, p278)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

- Not specified.

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

- Not specified.

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

- Not specified.

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

- Not specified.

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

- "Relations with Madagascar have always been stormy. Beginning in 1793 and lasting at least until 1820, war-canoes from the north of Madagascar raided the Comoros in search of slaves." (5, p53)
- "Mahorans, who have family ties to the inhabitants of the other Comorian islands, especially Ndzuanani and the northeastern part of Madagascar, are faced with immigration from the neighboring islands, where the standard of living is lower. Ngazidja men come to marry Mahoran women to obtain French citizenship and gain the right to enter France. Poor farmers from Nzwani arrive clandestinely. Despite this migratory pressure, violent social reactions are rare." (7)

4.18 Cannibalism?

- No.

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

- "The named nucleated villages form the most significant units of Mayotte society. The census of 1974 lists seventy such settlements, ranging in size from 25 to 2250 inhabitants." (3, p17)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

- "From Ngazidja, men come to marry Mahoran women to obtain French citizenship and gain the right to enter France. Poor farmers from Nzwani arrive clandestinely. Despite this migratory pressure, violent social reactions are rare." (2)

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

- "Mayotte, as a territorial collectivity of France, has an administrative organization based on the French *département* with a legislative unicameral General Council, consisting of nineteen seats. Its members are elected by popular vote to serve three-year terms. Mayotte elects one member to the French Senate. The executive power is vested in the prefect, who represents the French government." (2)
- "The Mahoran People's Party, the historical defender of the nationals link to France, is opposed by political groups organized by a younger generation of leaders. The proposal to integrate Mahore with France dominates the political agenda. The village population remains far removed from the political strategies of the local elite." (2)

5.4 Post-marital residence:

- "The typical two-room house is built of cob (earth mixed with rice straw), coconut fronds, or raffia. A program of social housing put in place in 1975 encourages the construction of houses made of earthen bricks and cement painted in bright colors: Sixty-five percent of the population lives in houses made out of solid materials and 75 percent of houses have electricity. Televisions are more numerous than refrigerators." (2)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

- "Mahore, or Mayotte, the easternmost of the archipelago's four main islands, including Njazidja, Mwali, and Nzwani, remains under French administration, a majority of its voters having chosen to remain tied to France in referendums held in 1974 and 1976." (8, p145)
- "France garrisons a regiment of the Foreign Legion in Mayotte, as well as a naval detachment. Local volunteers may obtain professional training through a program known as *le Service Militaire Adapté*." (2)

5.6 Social interaction divisions? (age and sex):

- "The shungu is a formal debt or obligation that every member of a designated group must perform for all the other members of the group. Shungu groups may form for the express purpose of reciprocal feast giving. Most of the age groups into which a village is divided will also have their own shungu. That is, each member of the age group (shikao) must provide a feast of rigidly specified proportions for the other members." (3, p19)
- "In addition, the village itself forms a single shungu group with a series of obligations that it expects every member, owner or not, to perform during his or her lifetime for the village as a whole... the entire village participates, organized by age group. Not all members of a village are able to meet their obligations, but they must in order to maintain self-respect and earn the full respect of their fellows." (3, p19)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

- “In Mayotte, sexuality is openly valued. Within certain constraints of propriety, sex is a subject of joking, good humor, and a little horseplay. Mother’s brothers or grandfathers attempt to squeeze affectionately the emerging breasts of young women, and the girls may fondle the men as well.” (4, p271)
- “As one man explained his friendship with his wife’s spirit: “We are both married to the same woman.” Spirit and spouse are not considered co-spouses so much as ‘siblings.’” (3, p80)

5.8 Village and house organization:

- “The named nucleated villages form the most significant units of Mayotte society [...] Mayotte villages are generally neatly patterned, with the houses oriented in roughly parallel rows along the contours and a mosque in the center.” (3, p137)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens’ houses):

- “The dwellings of bachelors (*banga*), built and occupied by themselves, are decorated with painted murals done by adolescents.” (2)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

- Mats. (3, p163)

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

- “Villages are landholding, ceremonial, and jural corporation. The degree of individual incorporation into the village is based on rights of inheritance, place of residence during maturation, immediate residence, and participation in the ceremonial cycles of exchange. The residents of a village may be divided into three classes according to their rights of ownership: owners (*tompin*), affiliates, and strangers (*mugyen*). Full owners comprise the purchasers of the property on which the village is constructed and their descendants. Descent and inheritance are bilateral, and anyone, male or female, whose claims to such descent are accepted has the right to build a home in the village and participate in its affairs.” (3, p17)
- “The *tompin* have the final say on all matters concerning the village as a whole. Non-*tompin* elders may participate in deliberations, but they do not normally officiate or pronounce judgment, although they may be given the prerogative to do so. The actual power wielded by the *tompin* depends in good part upon the social composition of the particular village.” (3, p18)

5.12 Trade:

- “Mayotte imports food and building materials, primarily from France. Exports items, especially to France, include *ylang-ylang* (perfume extract), coffee, cinnamon, copra, coconuts, and vanilla.” (2)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

- “The primary basis of social distinction is a person’s level of education and wealth. The French make up the leisure class, along with local elected officials (among them a number of Creoles descended from planters), merchants, and salaried workers. The older families in villages enjoy the respect of their fellow citizens, as do religious officials (imams and heads of brotherhoods). Indian merchants have a network of relations that are based as much on family ties as on business.” (2)
- “The services provided by the state have to a large extent replaced the social control that used to be exercised at the village level. The individualization of social relationships and the pressure to consume are indicative of the transformation of moral values. Strain on the fabric of the family, has made social regulation difficult.” (2)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

- “The majority of children attend a Koranic school to learn Koranic text.” (2)
- “French as well as Muslim holidays are celebrated.” (2)

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

- “Intervention by traditional practitioners and rituals of possession by spirits remain the preferred way of dealing with personal or relationship problems that may result in illness.” (2)

6.2 Stimulants:

- Not mentioned.

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

- “The village *shungu* are normally carried out in the context of feasts associated with life-crisis rites, primarily at a daughter’s first wedding, a son’s circumcision, or a commemoration for deceased kinsmen.” (3, p19)
- “The rite of passage of the spirit cure concerns primarily the change in relationship between host and spirit, the creation of a new identity relationship between them [...] rites of passage unfold in three phases: separation, margin, and aggregation [...] In the possession ritual, separation from society, or from the patient’s old position within it, occurs with either the first luminary medication the patient may receive. Aggregating occurs with the successful completion of the public feasts. In between these moments lies the period in which the patient is neither free of the spirits nor totally subjugated by it, not yet in a steady relationship with it. This is a period of transition, during which, by her own actions in seeking a curer, communicating through him with the spirit, amassing the goods needed for the ceremonies and producing the ceremonies the patient is actively engaged in changing her condition. She is thus engaged in moving from an identity as an ill and possibly burdensome individual to one whose relationship of reciprocity with a spirit makes her free from the concerns of illness and cure and less dependent on her kinsmen.” (3, p116)

6.4 Other rituals:

- “Islam is practiced in mosques. Worship of spirits takes place in holy places (*ziara*): on sites where houses once stood, in the ruins of former mosques, and at the tombs of *sheikhs*. There, spirits of the earth or of ancestors are summoned and partially Islamized rituals are performed.” (2)

6.5 Myths (Creation):

- According to Mayotte cosmology, the universe is composed of two realms, *dunyan* and *kyama* ‘this world’ and ‘the other world’ or *etu* and *ain* ‘here’ and way-over-there.’ *Dunyan* is the world that we experience, interact in, and learn about through our sense. *Kiyama* cannot be experienced by the living and it cannot be described or located... Humans cannot do everything that spirits do, but comprehend the actions of spirits and, if conditions are right, perceive them through the use of the senses.” (3, p26)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

- “Local television broadcasts their special events, such as the *deba* or the *wadaha* . The *deba* is a Muslim prayer that is sung and danced with the head and hands by veiled young girls covered in gold and flowers. The *wadaha*, the dance of the pestles, is an exercise in manual dexterity and seduction, conducted to a vigorous musical rhythm.” (2)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

- “The view that Islam and possession are conflicting systems is a male perspective. In Mayotte participation in possession activities by women is not so much an expression of opposition toward Islam as freedom from it.” (3, p20)

6.8 Missionary effect:

- “No missionaries appear to have served from Mayotte and no foreign missionaries have been assigned. Infrequent visits from missionaries serving in the Madagascar Antananarivo Mission may occur.” (6)

6.9 RCR revival:

- “Sunni Islam of the Chafeite rite is the major religious affiliation, accompanied for part of the population by a cult of possession of Mahoran spirits known as *patros* and Malagasy ones known as *trumba*.” (2)

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

- “Each person has a *rohu*, a kind of ‘life force’ or ‘essence’ that expresses his existence and that, while he is alive, is referred to as the seat of deep feelings [...] when speaking of his *rohu* a person may point to the soft spot just above the center of the breastbone at the base of the neck. The *rohu* is breathed into the embryo by God during the third month of pregnancy; it is at this moment that the mother first feels the baby move within her. The *rohu* leaves the body at death. Toward the end of a funeral, water is poured over the newly filled grave. The water is said to trickle rapidly through the soil until it touches the corpse. At this moment, the *rohu* returns to the body and the deceased revives to face temptation by the envoys of the Devil (*Ibilisa*) and questioning by the angels concerning his faith and his conduct in life. After three days of questioning, the *rohu* again leaves the body and goes to some unknowable place beyond *dunyan* in order to await the end of the world and the eventual reunification with the flesh.” (3, p28)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

- No.

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

- No.

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

- “In spirit possession as it is practiced in Mayotte, the intentional, or curing, aspect of the activity is the most explicit. The larger feasts and ceremonies are held with the express intent of effecting cures in individuals afflicted by spirits. Possession cures belong to a large class of activities and performances labeled *asa*. This includes individual life-crisis rites, ritual feasting, and all intravillage and intervillage religious and political gatherings of a special nature.” (3, p9)
- “Possession is an autonomous, culturally constituted system. It is not the product of a few deviant individuals, nor necessarily the symptom of a deeply divided society. Virtually every member of Mayotte society comes into contact regularly with spirits, either by direct possession or by interaction with the spirits when they possess friends, neighbors, curers, or kin. The relationships formed by an individual in trance have a social reality; they mesh with the ties of kinship, alliance, and locality to form a single whole.” (3, p69)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

- No.

7.2 Piercings:

- No.

7.3 Haircut:

- Not specified.

7.4 Scarification:

- No.

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

- Earrings are made of light wood and overlaid with small, delicate feathers. (5, p65)
- Shell beads (5, p15)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- “The *deba* is a Muslim prayer that is sung and danced with the head and hands by veiled young girls covered in gold and flowers.” (7)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

- A veil for the head is part of a well-dressed woman's attire, worn with a dress or the local wrapped garment.” (2)

7.8 Missionary effect:

- “Missionary-oriented Christian groups have a tiny presence in Mayotte and have not achieved noticeable, sustainable growth due to challenges developing a missionary approach tailored to the religious and cultural background of the indigenous population.” (6)

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

- “Mahorans dress in both the European style and the Comorian fashion, combining in different ways the business suit, the Muslim robe (*kandzu*), and the embroidered cap (*kofia*). (2)

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

- “Thus, a man or woman may address or refer to a generally older sister as “mother” and likewise call a brother “father.” The use of these terms is optional and far from universal, but it expresses the underlying ideal of siblings as kin (Havana) of the closest degree, a denial of segmentation. Married siblings maintain separate households from one another but are the ones to turn to in need.” (3, p21)

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

- Not specified.

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

- Filiation is bilateral. (2)

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

- “The coat of arms that was adopted in 1982 shows a crescent moon representing Islam and two ylang-ylang flowers, the island's principal agricultural product, against a blue, white, and red background that represents the French flag; the border stands for the coral reef. Two seahorses recall the shape of the island, reposing on the motto *Ra hachiri* (“We are vigilant”).” (2)
- “Western education encourages individualism, while Comorian education favors obedience and conformity to the group. Children thus are torn between two languages and two cultural systems. Despite spectacular progress in school and preschool facilities, half the students fail when entering high school, cannot find an occupation, and lose their competence in French. Some ten thousand youths are members of sports clubs, most of them boys. Girls are sheltered. Pregnancy outside of marriage is always considered dishonorable even though abortion is legal. The mother gladly keeps the child if the father agrees to marry her quickly.” (2)
- “The Comoros are the world’s leading producer of the essence of ylang-ylang, widely used in the perfume industry.” (5, p3)

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