

# Yapese

Data source: eHRAF

Secondary source

Entered by Emily Pitek, Human Relations Area Files

*\* Data Source entry, prepared based on data sourced from an external project.*

*\* Secondary Source entry, prepared from a literature review by a Ph.D. RA*

Entry tags: Micronesia, Religious Group, Oceanic Religions

The Yapese are native to the island of Yap, which is now a part of the Federated States of Micronesia. The Yapese had contact with Europeans beginning in the early sixteenth century, but the island was not officially colonized by Spain and Germany until 1885. Germany soon gained sovereignty over the island, and held power until 1914, at which time Japan took control. Yap Island was later occupied by the United States from 1944-1951, and the US Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands was formed. In 1979 the Federated States of Micronesia (including Yap Island) was established, and gained full independence in 1991. This entry focuses on Yap Island, around the time of 1910. Although Christian missionaries were present, their effects were not very successful, and the Yap religion still consisted of native beliefs and practices. These native beliefs included a present but otiose supreme being, and (more importantly) various spirits and deities. Religious practitioners/specialists are present, and lead communal ceremonies. Religion is bound up with the functioning of society as a whole, so this entry considers the religious group to be coterminous with the society at large.



Date Range: 1885 CE - 1910 CE

Region: Yap Island, Federated States of Micronesia

Region tags: Oceania, Micronesia, Micronesia  
(Federated State of)

Yap Island, circa 1910

## Status of Participants:

✓ Elite    ✓ Religious Specialists    ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

## Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

— Source 1: Tuden, A. & Marshall, C. (Oct., 1972). Political organization: Cross-cultural codes 4. *Ethnology*, 11(4), 436-464.

— Source 2: Divale, W. 2004. Codebook of Variables for the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample. *World Cultures: The Journal of Cross-Cultural and Comparative Research*.

Online sources for understanding this subject:

— Source 1 URL: <https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=or22-005>

— Source 1 Description: Senfft, A. (1903). Ethnographic Contributions Concerning The Caroline Islands Of Yap. Doktor A. Petermann'S Mitteilungen Aus Justus Perthes' Geographischer Anstalt, 49, HRAF ms: 1-39 [original: 49-60, 83-87 ].

- Source 2 URL: <https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=or22-013>
- Source 2 Description: Senfft, A. (1907). Legal Customs Of The Yap Natives. Globus, 91, HRAF ms: 1, 39 leaves [original: 139-143, 149-153, 171-175 ].
- Source 1 URL: <https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=or22-006>
- Source 1 Description: Müller, W. (1917). Yap. Hamburgische Wissenschaftliche Stiftung, Ergebnisse Der Südsee-Expedition 1908-1910, li. Hamburg: L. Friederichsen & Co.
- Source 2 URL: <https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=or22-021>
- Source 2 Description: Walleser, S. (1913). Religious Views And Customs Of The Inhabitants Of Yap (German South Seas). Anthropos, 8, HRAF ms: 1, 69 leaves [original: 607-629, 1044-1068 ].
- Source 3 URL: <https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=or22-002>
- Source 3 Description: Salesius, F. (1906). Carolines Island Yap. Berlin: Wilhelm Süsserot.

## General Variables

### Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

– Yes

Notes: "Although this small island has been opened to intercourse with the outside world more than any others of the island group of the Carolines, nevertheless one may maintain with an easy conscience that modern culture with its blessings has remained a hidden paradise for the inhabitants of Jap [Yap]. The little people of Jap, in their views and customs, have essentially retained the old ones; any influence of European culture has bounced off without effect" (Walleser, 1913:2).



Is there violent conflict (within sample region):

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 1649, Frequency of Internal Warfare (Resolved Rating), indicates that internal warfare seems to be between absent or rare, and occurring once every 3-10 years (original code 1.25). Additionally, SCCS Variable 1654, Pacification, indicates that there is ambiguous or contradictory information. Source of information: Ember and Ember, 1992; Retrieved from Divale, 2004.



Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 1650, Frequency of External Warfare (Resolved Rating), indicates that external warfare seems to be absent or rare (original code 1). Additionally, SCCS Variable 1654, Pacification, indicates that there is ambiguous or contradictory information. Source of information: Ember and Ember, 1992; Retrieved from Divale, 2004.

Does the religious group have a general process/system for assigning religious affiliation:

– No

Notes: Aside from being born into a family lineage, there is no system for assigning religious affiliation

among the Yapese.

## Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

– Estimated population, numeric: 6187

Notes: "According to the official statistics of the Imperial Colonial Office, in 1902 there were 7,464 persons, in 1903 only 7,156, and in 1911 there were only 6,187" (Müller, 1917:14).

Are there recognized leaders in the religious group:

– I don't know

Notes: "The most striking feature of the religious life on Yap is the lack of any kind of religious cult in the true sense. Sacrifices are unknown, and therefore there are no actual priests. Those who are passed off as such are only conjurers of spirits. They do not form a special caste, as has been maintained; each one conjures his own spirits on Yap, but there are individual persons who have the reputation of being able to exorcise even the most stubborn spirits, and they are the sorcerers  $\kappa\alpha\epsilon\rho'\xi\omicron\chi\gamma$ , to whom one goes only in case of difficult problems, on important occasions, or if his own conjuration has proved too weak" (Salesius, 1906:134). "There is no actual title for priest; he is usually called *vatāliū*, which refers to all those who are entitled to enter the taboo places. The high priest is usually called *gainīnī*, whose primary meaning is 'rain-sorcerer'; his assistant is called *mātieg*, a word which in Nimegil refers to a fishing-sorcerer. The latter is, in a manner of speaking, the minister of the former. If a request is to be made to the *gainīnī*, the wish is transmitted to him by the *mātieg*. Not even the local chief turns to him directly" (Müller, 1917:529, note: some accents omitted from native words).

## Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also "oral scriptures" (e.g. the Vedas of India).

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of scripture among the Yapese.

## Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

– No

Notes: "Accordingly, temples, too, are unknown, and likewise rites of common worship; not even images of deities exist" (Salesius, 1906:134).

Are there specific sites dedicated to sacred practice or considered sacred:

– Yes

Notes: "Two places bear the name talíu [sacred]: the burial places (talíu ko yám'), and the groves in which the national kan are worshiped (talíu ko kân)" (Walleser, 1913:29).



Are sacred site oriented to environmental features:

"Environmental features" refers to features in the landscape, mountains, rivers, cardinal directions etc...

– Yes

Notes: "The talíu ko kân, which are to be discussed here, are overgrown groves that lie outside the villages, in part on the tēd (uninhabited interior) in a little valley gorge..." (Walleser, 1913:29).

## Beliefs

---

### Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer "no" only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body. Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

– Yes

Notes: "At death the soul (ya'ai), this invisible human form, separates from the body and becomes a kân (spirit)" (Walleser, 1913:7).



Spirit-mind is conceived of as non-material, ontologically distinct from body:

– Yes

Notes: "Concerning the views of the Jap man with regard to the nature of the soul (ya'ál), in his eyes the latter is an invisible body dwelling within the visible body and with the exact shape of the latter. The soul is a faithful image of the body" (Walleser, 1913:6).

Belief in afterlife:

– Yes

Notes: "After the separation has been accomplished, the soul still remains in the vicinity of the body. Not until the body has decayed does it have the lightness necessary in order to be able to float heavenward" (Walleser, 1913:8).



Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: "The Jap man imagines heaven...very realistically. He thinks of it as constituted exactly like his beloved Jap. Of course, he can scarcely imagine anything better. An island washed all around by the sea, which generously fills the fish requirements of the inhabitants of heaven, who go out fishing in canoes and rafts—that is the land of the blessed. This island is covered with all kinds of strange trees and shrubs. But the fruit trees familiar to the Jap man are not

lacking either, as well as great fields of taro, do'óg, and d'ál. According to legend, most of these crops were transplanted from heaven to earth" (Walleser, 1913:9).

↳ Afterlife in vaguely defined "above" space:

– Yes

Notes: (Walleser, 1913:8)

Reincarnation in this world:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of reincarnation.

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

– Yes

Notes: "When a common person dies, he is taken out of the house and buried after a few hours in the greatest possible haste by the nearest male relatives, after the women have held a brief lamentation for the dead" (Müller, 1917:447).

↳ Cremation:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of cremation. Corpses are buried (Müller, 1917:447).

↳ Mummification:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of mummification. Corpses are buried (Müller, 1917:447).

↳ Interment:

– Yes

Notes: "The grave is very shallow, often laid out only half a meter deep, and, after the lowering of the corpse, is filled with earth and covered with many stones, so that the site is somewhat mounded above the surface of the ground. The corpse is buried in either a lying or a sitting position, according to the wishes of the relatives. In the latter case, the arms are twisted around the knees, which are drawn up close to the body. The head is bent so far forward that the chin touches the chest" (Born, 1903b:1).

↳ Corpse is flexed (legs are bent or body is crouched):

– Yes

Notes: Born, 1903b:1

↳ Corpse is extended (lying flat on front or back):

– Yes

Notes: Born, 1903b:1

↳ Corpse is upright (where body is interred in standing position):

– No

↳ Cannibalism:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of cannibalism. Corpses are buried (Müller, 1917:447).

↳ Exposure to elements (e.g. air drying):

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of exposing corpses to the elements. Corpses are buried (Müller, 1917:447).

↳ Feeding to animals:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of feeding corpses to animals. Corpses are buried (Müller, 1917:447).

↳ Secondary burial:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 1850, Secondary Bone/Body Treatment (original scale), indicates that secondary bone/body treatment is absent (Schroeder, 2001; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of co-sacrifices in tomb/burial.

Are grave goods present:

– Yes

Notes: "On the day of burial just before the body is carried away, four pieces of shell money are placed on the chest. Two of these are buried with the body; the corpse-bearers take the other two as payment" (Müller, 1917:451).

↳ Valuable items:

– Yes

↳ Other grave goods:

– Yes

Notes: "In Gāgil the deceased is buried with his hand-basket, but in Nimegil, according to a letter from Fr. Paulinus, it is hung up in the yard. To bury a ripe coconut and a drinking nut with the body as traveling provisions, besides the shell money, which Fr. Irenäus, op. cit., observed, is not generally customary. A sprouting nut is usually placed at the head end of the completed grave mound" (Müller, 1917:454).

Are formal burials present:

– Yes

Notes: "The bier is carried by four to eight men from the family of the deceased to the burial place, which usually lies in barren mountain country, far from the dwelling places. The grave is very shallow, often laid out only half a meter deep, and, after the lowering of the corpse, is filled with earth and covered with many stones, so that the site is somewhat mounded above the surface of the ground. The corpse is buried in either a lying or a sitting position, according to the wishes of the relatives. In the latter case, the arms are twisted around the knees, which are drawn up close to the body. The head is bent so far forward that the chin touches the chest. After the interment, which takes place silently, the relatives return to their village and must now stay for the next nine days in a house especially built and set aside for this, which they may not leave. After this time they can again return to the house of mourning, but must spend another nine days in seclusion there. Only after this time do they again take up their ordinary lives. The period of seclusion varies somewhat, in that every individual community here has its particular customs and usages" (Born, 1903b:1).

↳ In cemetery:

– Yes

Notes: "They [the deceased] therefore lie together in cemeteries as far as possible from the villages of the free, in the most remote places on the grassy steppe covering the inland hills..." (Müller, 1917:447).

↳ Domestic (individuals interred beneath house, or in areas used for normal domestic activities):

– No

Notes: Müller (1917:447) emphasizes that the Yapese wish to be as far away from the dead as possible, so it is extremely unlikely that individuals would be interred beneath the house.

## Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

– Yes

Notes: A supreme high god is present, as well as the spirits of humans, and non-human supernatural beings. See questions below for more details.

↳ A supreme high god is present:

– Yes

Notes: The Yapese's "...sacred doctrine clings firmly to a supreme being that in and of itself is benevolent but disinterested; in other words, a kind of deism" (Salesius, 1906:131).

↳ The supreme high god is fused with the monarch (king=high god):

– No

Notes: The Yapese do not have a monarchy.

↳ The monarch is seen as a manifestation or emanation of the high god:

– No

Notes: The Yapese do not have a monarchy.

↳ The supreme high god has knowledge of this world:

– I don't know

Notes: The supreme high god is described as otiose and disinterested in humanity (see Salesius, 1906:131). It is not clear whether the supreme high god has knowledge of this world or not.

↳ The supreme high god has deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

– I don't know

↳ The supreme high god has indirect causal efficacy in the world:

– I don't know

↳ The supreme high god exhibits positive emotion:

– I don't know

↳ The supreme high god exhibits negative emotion:

– I don't know

↳ The supreme high god communicates with the living:

– No

Notes: Because the supreme high god is described as disinterested in humanity (see Salesius, 1906:131), it can be assumed that this being does not communicate with the living.

↳ Previously human spirits are present:

– Yes



Notes: After death, the souls of the deceased remain near the body, but eventually ascend to heaven (see Walleser, 1913:8). Previously human spirits occasionally come to earth, but they are not described in substantial detail. "The souls of the departed sometimes return to the place of their pilgrimage on earth and stay invisibly in the house, or they appear in the form of a mouse or a starling (gopelū). A soul that has returned is called āgi. A pious man gives the āgi of his ancestors a few morsels from his meal every day, at which time he addresses them with a few murmured words" (Müller, 1917:524, note: some accents omitted from native words).

↳ Human spirits can be seen:  
– I don't know

↳ Human spirits can be physically felt:  
– I don't know

↳ Previously human spirits have knowledge of this world:  
– I don't know

↳ Human spirits have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:  
– I don't know

↳ Human spirits have indirect causal efficacy in the world:  
– I don't know

↳ Human spirits have memory of life:  
– Field doesn't know

Notes: "No uniform view prevails as to what changes happen to the soul because of its violent separation from the body. Some think that the soul loses clear thought and becomes similar to an idiot or mad person. They thus without further ado apply to the departed soul what they observe in the dying. Others believe that the spirit (an'i) comes to life again after death. It is a general opinion that the spirit does not gain in its capabilities after death. The mental ability of each soul corresponds exactly to what it possessed in life. Thus the spirit of the undeveloped human being, the child, remains undeveloped after death as well" (Walleser, 1913:8).

↳ Human spirits exhibit positive emotion:  
– I don't know

↳ Human spirits exhibit negative emotion:  
– I don't know

↳ Human spirits communicate with the living:

– I don't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings are present:

– Yes

Notes: "Interfering in the fate of human beings, there are first the many lower deities or spirits who are viewed by the Yapese as partly good, partly evil. Such deities are legion. Lug, for instance, is the god of illness and death; Lug-e-Ling, the god of the seafarer; Kan-e-Pai, the god of the dance; Wagadamang, the god of war; Madai, the god of the ocean; D'rra, the god of thunder and earthquakes. Every village and valley, every brook and hill, every path and bush has its genius loci. Thunder and lightning, storm and wind, sun and rain, war and festivities, good and bad harvests, good fortune and misfortune, in short, all the major and minor events in nature and life have their particular spirit-originator" (Salesius, 1906:131).

↳ These supernatural beings can be physically felt:

– I don't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

– Yes

Notes: "It is forbidden to cut wood in these groves [the sacred groves]. The kān [spirit] inflicts severe punishment if there is any violation of this...Similarly, the ordinary mortal is forbidden to set foot in one of these groves. Anyone who acts contrary to this order is killed by the kān, it is said. A Jap man who is thoroughly acquainted with the regulations pertaining to this matter will never scoop his water supply from a brook that during the rainy season flows down the slope of a mountain on which a talíu lies. He will not even wash in it, for even on this account one may expect punishment from the kān" (Walleser, 1913:29).

↳ These supernatural beings can punish:

– Yes

Notes: Walleser, 1913:29

↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

– Yes

Notes: "Now for each of these seven kān [spirits] a successor was appointed, who is tāmero<sup>o</sup> ni ga' (priest of sacrifices) at the talíu [sacred place]. They accept the offerings that the people bring for those earlier kān. The latter (the kān), however, give the fruit trees (gálowog) and increase the fish in the sea. But they also give the storm and the rain and the drought and misinipíg [sicknesses]" (Walleser, 1913:24).

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit negative emotion:

– Yes

Notes: "The native does not know any spirits which are only favorably disposed toward human beings. In his opinion, not a single kân is to be trusted completely. Even the best of them are extremely presumptuous; they would rather take than give" (Walleser, 1913:13).

↳ These supernatural beings possess hunger:

– I don't know

↳ Does the religious group possess a variety of supernatural beings:

– Yes

Notes: "The heavenly spirits, which have already been mentioned, are divided into different classes by the various persons who are better informed in this obscure area. To by far the most people, however, this classification is unknown, which is not surprising in view of the general disinterest in matters pertaining to heaven...The Jap man pays more attention to the spirits who do mischief on earth. Individual groups of them bear names according to their principal abodes" (Walleser, 1913:54).

↳ Other organization for pantheon:

– Yes [specify]: By abode

Notes: "Individual groups of [earthly spirits] bear names according to their principal abodes. Thus, the spirits of the ocean depths are named madai. Mârilá°n is the name of the spirits who dwell in the trees and in the bush; ma°ner°nér, those who live in the earth; kân e tēd, those who wander around the uninhabited interior of the country; kân e wináu, those who do their mischief in the villages. Then there are special kân for war, the dance, etc. If one wanted to enumerate the names of all the many spirits mentioned in the legends, there would be no end" (Walleser, 1913:54).

## Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

– No

Notes: Mischievous kân spirits are described as causing supernatural punishment (see Walleser, 1913:12, 26), but not in regards to social norms or norm violations. See questions below for more detail on supernatural punishment.

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more information on supernatural punishment.

↳ Is the cause or agent of supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

Notes: Kān spirits are described as the agents of supernatural punishment. See questions below for more details.

↳ Done only by high god:

– No

Notes: The Yapese high god is present but otiose, and not described as the agent of supernatural punishment. The Yapese's "...sacred doctrine clings firmly to a supreme being that in and of itself is benevolent but disinterested; in other words, a kind of deism" (Salesius, 1906:131).

↳ Done by many supernatural beings:

– Yes

Notes: "If one kills an animal in which a kān actually dwells or which is really a kān, one at the same time also kills the kān concerned. Punishment for such an act, however, is not lacking. An illness or some misfortune, if not death, overtakes the perpetrator" (Walleser, 1913:12).

↳ Done through impersonal cause-effect principle:

– Yes

Notes: "When the festive month appointed for one of these kān arrives, then the people in the affiliated villages may not work, and they are forbidden to give anything to people from another village. If, however, someone does give something to people from another village (which is designated as towowó'), misfortune will come upon him in the course of the following year" (Walleser, 1913:26).

↳ Is the reason for supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

↳ Other [specify]

– Yes

Notes: "It is forbidden to cut wood in these [sacred] groves. The kān inflicts severe punishment if there is any violation of this" (Walleser, 1913:29).

– Yes

Notes: "If one kills an animal in which a kān actually dwells or which is really a kān, one at the same time also kills the kān concerned. Punishment for such an act, however, is not lacking. An illness or some misfortune, if not death, overtakes the perpetrator" (Walleser, 1913:12).

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in the afterlife:

– I don't know

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for supernatural punishment occurring in the afterlife.

Further, Walleser (1913:9) indicates that "the Jap man transfers the dead to heaven...without any distinction as to whether good or bad."

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in this lifetime:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more details on supernatural punishment in this lifetime.

↳ Supernatural punishments in this life are highly emphasized by the religious group:

– No

Notes: Supernatural punishment is not described in great detail in the ethnographic record, and does not appear to be a major concern for the Yapese throughout daily life.

↳ Punishment in this life consists of crop failure or bad weather:

– I don't know

↳ Punishment in this life consists of mild sensory displeasure:

– I don't know

↳ Punishment in this life consists of extreme sensory displeasure:

– I don't know

↳ Punishment in this life consists of sickness or illness:

– Yes

Notes: "If one kills an animal in which a kān actually dwells or which is really a kān, one at the same time also kills the kān concerned. Punishment for such an act, however, is not lacking. An illness or some misfortune, if not death, overtakes the perpetrator" (Walleser, 1913:12).

↳ Other [specify]

– Yes

Notes: "If one kills an animal in which a kān actually dwells or which is really a kān, one at the same time also kills the kān concerned. Punishment for such an act, however, is not lacking. An illness or some misfortune, if not death, overtakes the perpetrator" (Walleser, 1913:12).

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for supernatural beings bestowing rewards.

## Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of messianic beliefs.

Is an eschatology present:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of an eschatology.

## Practices

### Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require castration:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of required castration.

Does membership in this religious group require fasting:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of required fasting.

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):

– Yes

Notes: "Certain foods are forbidden for certain persons or communities for a time or always, that is, are declared 'taboo' for them (Salesius, 1906:137).

Does membership in this religious group require painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of required painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds.

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:

"Adults" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of human sacrifice.

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:

"Children" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that different in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of human sacrifice.

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of human sacrifice.

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:

i.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale "ceremonies" and "festivals."

– Yes

Notes: "A religious festival is called mǎdānom. (This name has come to be used also for our Sunday.) A gathering at which food is distributed, but is to be consumed in the clubhouse or in the dwelling only after the gathering breaks up, is called togūmog. The togūmog so predominantly takes place with a pronounced reference to religion that I am inclined to regard this as its true and original meaning" (Müller, 1917:528, note: some accents omitted from native words).

## Society and Institutions

### Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

– A chiefdom

Notes: "Politically, Yap is divided into larger districts, which are under a chief, and into separate villages, which are under a village chief. In addition, there is the special position of the chief of Gatschapar, who is at the same time the suzerain of a large number of islands lying to the east of Yap, and finally there is a twofold association of villages, which was in force only in time of war...These [districts of the chiefs] are completely independent of one another and have no supreme chief uniting them, although they vary in rank and political influence" (Salesius, 1906:86). The Yapese have one level of jurisdictional hierarchy beyond the local community, which is indicative of a chiefdom (Ethnographic Atlas column 33 [note: equivalent to SCCS variable 237], Murdock, 1967; retrieved from Divale, 2004).

### Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence indicating the presence of formal education among the Yapese.

Is formal education available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than

the religious group:

– I don't know

Notes: There is ethnographic evidence for the presence of a mission school on the island of Yap (Müller, 1917:ii), but insufficient descriptions of who this education is available to, and at what cost (if any).

## Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 20, Food Storage, indicates that no food storage is present (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Is public food storage provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 20, Food Storage, indicates that no food storage is present (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 14, Routes of Land Transport, indicates that among the Yapese, routes of land transport included unimproved trails (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004). Based off this information, it can be assumed that transportation infrastructure is not present.

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 14, Routes of Land Transport, indicates that among the Yapese, routes of land transport included unimproved trails (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004). Based off this information, it can be assumed that transportation infrastructure is not present.

## Taxation

Does the religious group in question levy taxes or tithes:

– No

Notes: "The state [region] does not raise taxes regularly; on occasions when common expenses arise, for example, during festivals, the individual communities contribute jar, fã, and food. But that very seldom occurs, because the state as such hardly ever appears, but only the state head, inasmuch as "L'état c'est moi" is appropriate for him. But he is entitled to receive from his subjects tribute from their catches of fish, field produce, and the like, and he has the right of pre-emption over gau and tortoises" (Senfft, 1907:34).



## Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

– No

Notes: "Police functions are not specialized or institutionalized at any level of political integration, the maintenance of law and order being left exclusively to informal mechanisms of social control, to private retaliation, or to sorcery" (Column 10: Police; Tuden and Marshall, 1972).

## Written Language

Does the religious group in question possess its own distinct written language:

– No

Notes: "...the Yapese cannot read or write, apart from those natives who have acquired this ability in the mission school..." (Snefft, 1903:30).

Is a non-religion-specific written language available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: "...the Yapese cannot read or write, apart from those natives who have acquired this ability in the mission school..." (Snefft, 1903:30).

## Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

– Yes

Notes: The Yapese rely primarily on agriculture (horticulture) for subsistence, with a secondary dependence on fishing. Animal husbandry supplements the diet. Source of information: Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock, 1962-1971), retrieved from Divale, 2004; Variables 203-207, 232.



Please characterize the forms/level of food production [choose all that apply]:

– Fishing

– Pastoralism

– Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards

Notes: The Yapese rely primarily on agriculture (horticulture) for subsistence, with a secondary dependence on fishing. Animal husbandry supplements the diet. Source of information: Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock, 1962-1971), retrieved from Divale, 2004; Variables 203-207, 232.