

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family:

- * Society- Cora
- *Language- Cora
- *Language family- Uto-aztecan

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

- *639-3:crn

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- *(21 48'N/105 12' W)
- * The Cora live in the Sierra Madre Occidental mountains in the Mexican states of Jalisco and Nayarit (7)

1.4 Brief history:

*The Cora have proven more resistant to acculturation than many of their neighbors. The first European contact occurred in 1531 when Nunu de Guzman's expedition reached the area. In the following two centuries, Cora and Spanish culture intermingled, introducing European and Spanish elements into the Cora's lives, such as European domestic plants and animals.(7)

*In 1722, Spanish troops reached the area. Franciscan monks set up missionaries and began influencing the native population. Modern Cora culture took form in the 18th century and has been resistant to change since. (7)

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

*The Cora religion is still mostly indigenous, mixed with elements of Catholicism like saints and baptism. The Cora were heavily influenced by the Spanish.

1.6 Ecology:

*A very small number of wild species are exploited by the Cora, such as the rattlesnake, the boa and the iguana. The iguana and the rattlesnake are both eaten and the boa is used for its skin. The rattlesnake's hide is also used. (4)

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

- *Population size is 2000-3000 (4)
- * Most live in settlements of 200-300 individuals (4)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- *Maize and maize products (tortillas) (7)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- *Deer, peccary and iguana are all hunted for food, as are fish. (7)
- *Cheese and milk. (7)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

*Now, hunting is done almost exclusively with rifles. Fishing is done with hooks, hand nets and wooden tipped spears. (7)

2.4 Food storage:

*Maize is stored in sacks and can be brought out and ground into powder for the making of other foods (such as tortillas) throughout the year. (7)

2.5 Sexual division of production:

*Within the household, males produce and store most of the food and the females prepare it. The males care for range animals and females for barnyard ones. Females fashion clothing from the fiber and cloth that males provide. Females are responsible for weaving, embroidery and the preparation of ground maize. Other than these differences though, much overlap occurs in performing tasks. (7)

*Children begin to be trusted with chores around the age of five and all members of a household help with all phases of agriculture except for slashing and burning fields and plowing. (7)

2.6 Land tenure:

*Land is communal and may not be bought. An individual has use rights to land as long as he works it. If he abandons it, it reverts back to belonging to the community. (7)

2.7 Ceramics:

*Cora women make heavy, unpainted bowls and cooking pots. (7)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

* Families farm and prepare mostly their own food however, a specific field is planted and tended to by the community and the resulting food is used to feed participants in rituals. (7)

2.9 Food taboos:

*The head and tail of rattlesnakes are not to be eaten because they are thought to contain venom. (4)

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

*No evidence of them in the literature.

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

* Average stature for males- 164.1 cm (5)

* Average stature for females- 152.2 cm (5)

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

*Not listed.

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

*Not discussed in the literature

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

*Not discussed in the literature

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

*Not discussed in the literature

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

*Not discussed in the literature

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

*Males marry between the ages of 15 and 24.(7)

*Females marry between the ages of 12 and 18. (7)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

*Unknown

- 4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:
*Less than 5% of Cora marriages are polygynous.(7)
- 4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:
*Not mentioned in the literature.
- 4.9 Inheritance patterns:
*Inheritance is recognized with orchards. (7)
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:
*Not mentioned in the literature.
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):
*Marriage with relatives in paternal and maternal lines or relatives with the same surnames are considered taboo and are discouraged. Also, marriage is forbidden between a child and the family of their godfather. (7)
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized?
*Not discussed in the literature, however no indication is given that “other fathers” are mentioned.
- 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)?
*Not discussed in the literature.
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape
*Not discussed in the literature.
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)
*Not cousins or people sharing the same last name. (7) Other than that, the topic is not discussed in the literature.
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?
*Not discussed in the literature.
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring
*Not discussed in the literature.
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?
*Not discussed in the literature.
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females
*Not discussed in the literature.
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades
*None mentioned in the literature.
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)
*None in the literature.
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?
*Respect is always given to elders. (7)

4.24 Joking relationships?

*None mentioned in the literature.

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

*Paternal and maternal lines are recognized. (7)

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

*Marriage with relatives in paternal and maternal lines or relatives with the same surnames are considered taboo and are discouraged. Also, marriage is forbidden between a child and the family of their godfather. (7)

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

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

*Indian names are given five days after birth, during the naming ceremony. (7)

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

*Cora usually frown upon the marrying of anyone who isn't also Cora. (7)

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

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

*Not discussed in the literature

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

*Not discussed in the literature.

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

*Not discussed in the literature.

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

*Not discussed in the literature.

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

*The Cora usually keep to themselves, however they have been known to occasionally marry members of the Huichol people, though this practice is discouraged in the community. (5)

4.18 Cannibalism?

*Ceremonial (3)

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

*Communities are generally anywhere between 200 and 300 people. (4)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

*Some Cora have wet and dry season homes but most stay in the same place for a couple years before moving. (7)

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

*Elders appear to be the leaders of the community. The Cora have a dislike for external shows of wealth and therefore their society doesn't seem to have classes. However, the El Nayar Cora have barrios, which one is born into. This is the only community associated with something like a class system however. (7)

5.4 Post marital residence:

*Residence is decided based on convenience and economic consideration but patrilocal is slightly more predominate. (7)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

*All land is communal and rights of use are gained by the person working the land. Once they stop, it reverts back to belonging to the community. (7)

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

*Not discussed in the literature

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

*Not discussed in the literature.

5.8 Village and house organization:

*One to twelve related houses in a loose cluster near a spring make up a 'ranch'. (7) These ranches are rarely closer than a fifteen minute walk and are sometimes a two days walk from the community center, which has buildings used for community events and by the community. The communities are separated by natural boundaries such as rivers or mountains and other difficult to traverse landscapes. (7)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

*Each house has the house, a maize crib and usually an animal corral. (7)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

*They sleep on the floor on mats or hides or sometimes on beds made of rawhide strips. (7)

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

*Ranches of related houses making up communities. (7)

5.12 Trade:

*Buyer initiated selling of maize and sometimes also of cattle. (7)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

*Each ranch is headed by an elder who is to be respected. The community is led by the elders and shaman. (7)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR:

*Not mentioned in the literature.

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

*Shamans lead most ceremonies and can perform curing rituals. (7)

6.2 Stimulants:

*Shamans use peyote to commune with the spirits. (7)

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

* 5 major ceremonies are celebrated every year. These celebrate the cleaning of coamil (slash-and-burn) plots, the burning of the coamil plots, planting, rains and finally the harvest. (3)

*Additionally, the Cora also practice a naming ceremony five days after the birth of a child and ritual. (7)

6.4 Other rituals:

*Rituals to cure sickness, neutralize sorcery, bring rain and to celebrate peyote pilgrimages are

also practiced. (7)

6.5 Myths (Creation):

*The Cora believe that in a previous world there was a massive flood and only the five tallest peaks remained above water. These peaks were the ancient ancestors of the Cora. After the sea dried, a snake carved out the canyons and rivers of the Cora homeland. (1)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

*Cora music is largely confined to ceremonies. The playing of the guitars, violins, drums and dancing on the tarima occur. Conversation is usually the main form of entertainment and playing games is rare. (7)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

*Shamans are only men and they perform the rituals and ceremonies. (7)

6.8 Missionary effect:

*Missionaries have had a small influence on the Cora, but much of their religion has remained relatively constant. (7)

6.9 RCR revival:

*No.

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

*The Cora believe in an afterlife and they pray to and make offerings to please them. (7)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

*No.

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

*None mentioned in the literature.

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

*Cora religion has many deities who are referred to with kinship terms. They believe that illnesses or bad luck may be sent by deities or deceased family members and they offer food and drink to please them. Cora religion also describes the animal spirits which explains the flora and fauna. (7)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

*None

7.2 Piercings:

*None

7.3 Haircut:

*Cora men wear their hair short and women keep theirs long, either free or in a single braid down their back. (7)

7.4 Scarification:

*None

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

*None discussed in literature.

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

*None discussed in the literature.

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

*None discussed in the literature.

7.8 Missionary effect:

*Unknown because very little information exists on what Cora rituals were like before the arrival of European missionaries.

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

*None mentioned in literature.

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

*Male siblings and cousins are referred to as 'brothers' and female siblings and cousins are 'sisters'. (7)

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

*Not mentioned in literature.

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

*The Cora use the Hawaiian kinship. Cora cousin terminology is reckoned based on seniority, the relative ages of the siblings from whom a cousin pair descended, not the age of the cousin himself. (7)

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

*Before contact with Europeans, the Cora practiced human sacrifice. (1)

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