

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family:

Tepecano. The southern Tepehuan were historically referred to as the Tepecano, which is the language they speak. It is part of the Uto-Aztecan Tepiman family (6 pg. 2). Tepecano is a Mesoamerican language. They refer to themselves as the Hu-mä-kam or Hu-mät-kam, which means “the ones” or “the people.” They never go by Tepecano, but actually do respond to Tepehuan or Tepehuano (Schaefer 50). They are usually clumped together with the southern Tepehuan of Durango. The population is now extinct. There have been no native speakers since 1972. After that time, most Tepecanos learned exclusively Spanish. Very little was studied of the Tepecano and there is a scarcity of information about them. Aside from religious beliefs, most is usually assumed to be identical to the Southern Tepecano of Durango, who the Tepecano identified themselves with (3).

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): tep (2)

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): A small village called Azqueltan in northwest Jalisco near Bolaños and Durango. They were considered mountain folk and moved from southern Arizona to northwest Mexico. (3)



1.4 Brief history: The Tepecano tell the story of their migration. Their ancestors came from the north and from the Rio Colorado. They were the same people as the Barbaros, which means barbarians. They were called such because they lived off of wild foods and hunting rather than agriculture. (3)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: Influenced by the Spanish language and eventually some Christianity which was then incorporated into some of the religious ceremonies. (3)

1.6 Ecology: unknown

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: Unknown, quite small. The Tepecano language is now extinct.

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): corns, beans and two kinds of squash most common for all Tepiman groups (6). Roots, wild tubors, fruits, greens, mushrooms and fungus during the rainy season. Bananas, plums, avocados (6 pg. 3)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: some keep a few chicken, cattle otherwise they hunt for wild game such as deer as well as fish. Squirrels, bears (which are now extinct in this area), wild birds, reptiles, insects, crustaceans. (6 pg. 4)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: Some own firearms though most can not afford it (3)

2.4 Food storage: Unknown

2.5 Sexual division of production: Men gather and hunt. Women tend to the house and children. (5)

2.6 Land tenure: “Sociopolitical organization is complicated by the presence of sometimes conflicting forms of land tenure and systems introduced at different times by the Spaniards and Mexicans that crosscut traditional organization. There are two forms of communal land tenure present in the region. The comunidad is an older, indigenous form, in which land is held patrilineally and inherited by sons or widows. The ejido is a form of communal land-tenure system provided for in the constitution of 1917, following the Mexican Revolution. It allocated communal lands to applicants—whether Indian, mestizo, or together—to be held as long as the land is used economically. Under the ejidal system, land is not officially or legally inheritable, but actual practice often violates this proviso. An elected body of officials governs the ejido and its economic business. Residential units found within ejidos and comunidades include towns and rancherías” (5)

2.7 Ceramics: Yes

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: Food may only be passed down within extended families through the patrilineal side only (5)

2.9 Food taboos: see specified sharing patterns

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? Yes

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): Unknown

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): Unknown

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f): Unknown

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): Unknown

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): Unknown

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): Unknown

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): both m and f before 20 (5). Usually at around age 18 (7)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: Unknown

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: 0%

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: “A bride service is made by the groom. Formerly, the newly married husband went to work for his wife's relatives for five months. After this, the couple either went to live with his family or set up their own household. (5)”

4.9 Inheritance patterns: Homes and private land and possessions passed down from father to son. (5)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: Sometimes living together as a large patrilineal family. (5)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: Unknown

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): Unknown

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized? The husband is recognized as the father and cares for the child in his own home (5)

4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”): bears the children and tends to them after birth. (3)

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

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: Unknown

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin): “Few, if any, marriage restrictions have been recorded. (5)

- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? Unknown
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: Unknown
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? Supposedly the other women of the patrilineal family? (5)
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females: Unknown
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades: Unknown
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older): Supposedly, there are more fathers after the age of 18, after one is married? (5)
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? Respect (5) (3)
- 4.24 Joking relationships? Unknown
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: all rights of name and property go down the patrilineal line of descent. Houses and privately owned land are passed down from father to son. (5)
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules: Unknown
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Yes,
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? “The *apellido* group alliances, which crosscut village boundaries. These are associations (sometimes three or four in a village) of individuals sharing the same Spanish surname. Children of the same parents often have different surnames. Apellido groups may be the remaining shells of nonlocalized patrilineal clans of antiquity.” (5)
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?): They are both arranged within the community (5) (7)
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Arranged by parents. “Marriages are usually arranged by the parents of the couple and take place before either the bride or the groom reaches the age of 20 and, often, at a younger age. The parents of the prospective groom pay ceremonial visits to the family of the chosen bride for five consecutive nights, and on the fifth night the girl's parents decide whether to accept or reject the offer of marriage.” (5)
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: Unknown

Warfare/homicide

- 4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: Unknown
- 4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: Unknown
- 4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: Unknown
- 4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): Strong similarity, considered almost identical to the Southern Tepehuan in culture aside from religious practices (3)
- 4.18 Cannibalism? Unknown

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: Unknown
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): Supposedly stationary? (3)
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): Wealth determined by number of possessions. In particular livestock (5)
- 5.4 Post marital residence: The patrilineal household (7)
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): Unknown

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): Unknown

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: Unknown

5.8 Village and house organization: Unknown

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses): None, families lived together (7)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? Unknown

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

5.12 Trade: Yes, with the Hoichuls for hemo and cannibis (3)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? Supposedly yes (5) (3) (7)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR: Unknown for certain but presumably often (7)

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): Shamans and the use of cannibis (3)

6.2 Stimulants: They trade with the Hoichuls for hemp and cannibis (3)

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): (7)

6.4 Other rituals: Peyote is the most important of Tepecano religions. Peyote is the god who protects them as well as brings rain. A peyote festival is common. Peyote water is sprinkled upon participants. A very similar ceremony was held for hunters. They would pray facing the east and were given payments as well as peyote for protection. (3) (7)

6.5 Myths (Creation): Unknown

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): Art in the form of ceramics and ceremonial wear (3)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR: Unknown, aside from in marriage (7)

6.8 Missionary effect: Spread some Christianity. Influenced some prayers (3)

6.9 RCR revival: Unknown

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: Unknown

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? Unknown

6.12 Is there teknonymy? No

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.): Belief in a number of different Gods whom they worship; the most prominent of those being the Sun God, whom they referred to as Father. They have only a few female deities but the most prevalent of those bears a lunar association. She is the wife of the Sun God. The Tepecano also worship the mountains that surround them. They believe each mountain is it's own deity. (Schaefer 52)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: Yes

7.2 Piercings: No

7.3 Haircut: Long hair

7.4 Scarification: No

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): Beaded and feathered head dresses as well as some masks

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: Shields, chimalli, covered in white wool by spiraling yarn across crossed sticks. Also, prayer sticks. Rosaries of Peyote buttons are worn at ceremonies. (3)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: Very similar to one another. Both wearing elaborate outfits and head dresses.

7.8 Missionary effect: Supposedly some influence within their prayers by Christianity (3)

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: Tepecano still hold ceremonies in such adornment to this date (3)

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: Siblings may all have different surnames from one another (5)

8.2 Sororate, levirate: Unknown

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): none

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

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