

Panare Tribe

1. Description

- 1.1 Name of society, language, and language family: This society is known by the names Panare, Eñepa, Panari, Abira, and Eye. The Panare are monolingual and belong to the Carib language family (1).
- 1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com):639-3 PBH (6)
- 1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): The Panare live in the Amazon Basin in what is today Venezuela. Their territory is best described as South of the Orinoco Basin, by the Cuchivero River (1). They're stationed at lat. 7° N., long. 66° W. (Koch-Grunberg, 1922, p. 235). on the Mato River(3).
- 1.4 Brief history: The Panare are focused on their cultural preservation, and effect this through a variety of means, one being the restriction of women to speaking only the Carib language rather than Spanish another being traditional garb (1). The root word "Pana" means ear (2).
- 1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: In 1969 a Catholic Mission came into their territory and tried to convert them. As described by Dumont, this marked the "systematic destruction of their culture" but the Panare have held to their cultural heritage more firmly than hardly any other tribe of the Amazon. The indigenous council apparently was ineffectual in protecting the Panare from lumber men and other whites (2). Later, Christian missionaries mistranslated sections of the new testament to portray the Panare as killers of Christ, using guilt to form loyalties (2).
- 1.6 Ecology: "Tropical forest and mountain slopes" (1). The forest is said to start right at the foot of the mountains (2). November to April is the dry season, October to May is the wet season, and the Panare must act in accordance with seasonality (2).
- 1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: 1200 individuals scattered across twenty villages (1).

2. Economy: Hunter/gatherers with some emphasis on horticulture (1). They also perform slash and burn (2).

- 2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): Palm fruit, manioc (2). Bananas and sugar cane are collected by women (2). Peanuts, melons, and chili peppers are also quite common (4). Pumpkins (5).
- 2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: Hunting/fishing (2). Fishing is done either on an individual basis, or with a dam performed by a group who use bows or machetes to increase the catch (2). Tapirs and peccaries are most commonly hunted (2).
- 2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: Blowguns (for monkeys and birds), lances, and harpoons (for alligators) (2). The Panare make their own curare poison, and occasionally trade for blowguns (4).
- 2.4 Food storage: They are master basket weavers (1).
- 2.5 Sexual division of production: The women dye cloth and also weave cloth while the men are distinguished basket-makers. Their necklaces are famous, typically made with bone, seed, beads, and now, Venezuelan currency (1). Children collect palm fruit throughout the year, adults only during the rainy season. Women usually harvest other fruits like bananas (2). Also, hunting is "exclusively" performed by men. They are typically done in a group in the wet season (2).
- 2.6 Land tenure: All men must cultivate their father's share of land equally, but will receive no land until (or not until) marriage (2). When land "reverted back to swidden" property rights to the land were lost (5).
- 2.7 Ceramics: There is proof that they once had ceramics, but now all ceramics are gone. They've been replaced by Western metal bowls (4).
- 2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: Meat is split from the hunt/fishing if work is collaborative, but manioc is only for nuclear families (2).
- 2.9 Food taboos:
- 2.10 Canoes/watercraft? Yes, they hollow out canoes (4).

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): Mostly the nuclear families live together. Women are said to share processed manioc when “la nourriture carne est rare” (2) at which point the husband joins his family.

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): Men are allowed to marry at 18, women marry two to three years following menarche.

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: Very rare, but when a man takes another wife, the first relationship is said to “diminish in significance” (5).

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: Common (5).

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: A man will come to his wife’s house and “supply her and her family with food” (5).

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: A married couple with a child arranges their “nuclear family” in the long hut based off the orientation of their hammocks. The hammocks are angled in to form a triangle with the child in the center (2).

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): Endogamous (5)

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): Cross cousins (2). High degree of sibling-intergroup marriage (5). Incest is to a degree, tolerated, for example, “marriages of men with their “real” daughter's daughter have been reliably recorded” (5).

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? Women are more restricted in several ways, one being that women cannot learn Spanish and must speak through a man as an interpreter. This works to maintain traditional cultural practices, heritage, and language (1). Still, women are treated as equally contributing members in a relationship, but the sense of sexual liberty could be described as culturally prude (5).

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: After the birth of his child, cannot hunt or fish for many days (2).

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? There is a sense of “reciprocity” within marriage, making it acceptable for “distantly related” individuals to marry based off past obligations (5). Bachelors sleep alone in the center of the village in a separate hut (5).

4.24 Joking relationships?

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: Alternating generations have the same name (2). It is a bilateral kinship system where family is slightly an ambiguous term (5).

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? No, there is no ritual, but the break is clear. The man moves to his wife’s hut, the relationship is later reinforced with kids (5).

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? Children are referred to as “namca” and receive “a provisional name” until the boys turn ten and the girls reach menstruation (at which point they are isolated from the community for a time) (2). There are six adult names for boys and four adult names for girls to choose from (5).

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

Bilateral/Cross cousin marriage is highly preferred (2).

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Parents largely arrange marriages (5).

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: There is “a lack of marriageable women” as described by Dumont,

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: Negligible (5).

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: Mostly non-violent though the Panare have a distant history of warfare, “physical violence is abhorred” and children never receive physical punishment (5).

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: Negligible (5). The Panare are essentially “the Denmark of the Amazon.”

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): Good neighbors. Traded with the Hoti (5).

4.18 Cannibalism? N/A

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: About 20-40 individuals (5).

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): There is a chief for each village (1). Each village regards itself as “autonomous” (5).

5.4 Post marital residence: uxori-local initially, but once children are introduced, typically neolocal. Sometimes the neolocal residence pattern is nothing more than starting a new hearth in the same longhouse (5).

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): Not terribly, their self-designated name means “ally or friend” from neighboring tribes (5).

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): Difference in age between marriage partners is significant (5). Often women marry up a generation.

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

5.8 Village and house organization: Long, rectangular palm houses with multiple nuclear families. But the maker and user of tools *owns* those tools (4). Property and space are clearly allotted.

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses): Yes, bachelors sleep separately in the center of the village (2,5).

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? Hammocks. The women spin these from cotton (2).

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: Highly egalitarian society, however, gender-wise, men often serve as mediators between women and the Western world (5). “Social deviance” is primarily punished with social pressure to conform to norms, using shunning and gossip to maintain the status quo (5).

5.12 Trade: Yes, there is trading of blowguns from neighboring tribes (4). That being said, “a sense of property is very clear” in the Panare tribe, a couple must both give consent before trading begins if the object belongs to one over the other (4). The Piaroa tribe also used to trade with the Panare (5).

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR: Mostly spent in the dry season, when manioc beer is drunk and there are numerous festivals and parties.

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): Yes, Shamans were common. They had no special ranking, were mostly self-taught, and useful only in healing and leading in singing/ceremonial events. They had to prove that they could work with a “Jaguar familiar” before achieving said status (5).

6.2 Stimulants: Drugs were not mentioned in any of the references except in terms of medicine. Emetics are commonly used, but Shamans also “suck the poison” of invisible darts sent by evil spirits in ritual/social display (5).

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): Girls are taken and isolated when menarche hits, an event celebrated only by immediate female relatives (5). Boys are seen as “men” at their loincloth ceremony at the age of ten (5).

6.4 Other rituals: Churuatas, the rectangular houses covered with palms, are burnt when the village chief dies (2).

- 6.5 Myths (Creation): Mareoka started the world in Arewa and all souls return to him, if funerary rites are performed correctly. More than anything, the living perform funerary rites with the fear that the dead will otherwise “pester” them (5).
- 6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): Men play long “trumpets (2).”
- 6.7 Sex differences in RCR: Gender divide is “accentuated” from birth (5).
- 6.8 Missionary effect: Used guilt to force conversions, also, “evangelized communities” have been forced to give up their manioc beer and sugar cane alcohol (5).
- 6.9 RCR revival: flat baskets made by men, known as Wapas, have “geometric animal patterns” which are meant to transfer magic or potential power (1).
- 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: Mourning is uniquely done. When men die, women “wail” and the village openly grieves. Women and children are grieved more “discretely” (2). When an individual dies, everything is buried with them that they owned. Pets are also killed and interred with them (5).
- 6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?
- 6.12 Is there teknonymy?
- 6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.) Mareoka was thought to be their creator who initially lived in Arewa in the Cuchivero or Orinoco. Mareoka created people first, some of which he turned to animals. The Panare actively avoid contact with spirits and the supernatural because most spirits in their faith are unpleasant and harbingers of grief (5).

7. Adornment

- 7.1 Body paint: Used for ceremonial purposes, mostly in dancing and chanting (5).
- 7.2 Piercings:
- 7.3 Haircut:
- 7.4 Scarification:
- 7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): Men wear beads on their upper arms and below their knees and ankles; women instead wear enormous necklaces and bracelets as well as anklets. The beads are blue and white (1).
- 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: Men will wear “Capuchin monkey incisors” (French translation) for ceremonies (2).
- 7.7 Sex differences in adornment: Red loin cloths are worn by men, stained by onto berries, while women wear cloth draped as skirts (1). The color and location of beads also is gender-determined (1).
- 7.8 Missionary effect:
- 7.9 Cultural revival in adornment: Baskets and jewelry are sold to make money to tourists (5).

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):

- Men work two days out of three and it is acceptable. This is not so for women (4).
- Division of labor is extreme. Only men plant and only women harvest (4).

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