

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family:

Arara Pano: also known as the Arara do Acre, Katukina – Panoan, Shawadawa, Shawanawa, Sharahua?, Chaua-nau, Ararapina, Ararawa, Araranás, Ararauás and Tachinauás (1,2)

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

knt-ars (1)

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

The Arara live right on the border of Peru and Brazil in the Western most part of the Amazonas region near Porto Valter. Their land is in the 86,700 hectare Humaitá Igarapé indigenous area enclosed by the Riozinho Cruzeiro do Vale river (also called the Humaitá, Leonel or Amahuacas igarapé), the Upper Jurua river, and the Valparaíso river. Porto Valter, the closest city, is at coordinates 8.27 degrees S, 72.74 degrees W. This city of Porto Valter is about 340 miles east of Peru's capital city, Lima. (2,5,6)

1.4 Brief history:

Just about nothing is known about the Arara-Shawadawa before the rubber industry came into their area in the 1800s. The Arara live in a vast, still immensely wild area that is home to some of the most rare plants in the world and is one of the most bio-diverse areas in the world. The current Arara land had been the territory of the Pano and Aruak groups since the pre-Cabral period, but since the mid-19th century, explorers and traders have been coming from Belem, Manaus and other cities along the Solimoes river. The Upper Jurua region was just explored and documented in the last two decades of the 19th century, after several clashes with local indigenous groups. During this period, the region was populated mainly by migrants from the northeast of Brazil, fleeing from the drought of 1877, who established rubber plantations and collection trails in order to extract latex from the Hevea Brasiliensis tree. By the end of the 1990s, the Upper Jurua was inhabited by Brazilians. Peruvian "Caucheiros" or collectors of rubber and other forest products occupied the region for a short time, but by the beginning of the 20th century the occupation by northeastern Brazilians was massive and lasting. The Arara were contacted in 1905, while they were living with the Rununawa Indians under the leadership of Tescon, who was married to the daughter of an Arara chief. Máximo Linhares, who worked for the Indian Protection Service and Localization of National Workers agency (SPILTN), travelled through the valleys of the Juruá and Tarauacá rivers and found the Arara, Ararapinas, Contanauás, Caxinauás, Jaminauás and Tuxinauás along the Humaitá river, a tributary of the Upper Muru. In 1914, according to Arara-Shawadawa memory, Tecson beat his wife (an Arara chief's daughter) leading to his murder and the dispersal of the Arara-Shawadawa people. Then, Tecson followers sought revenge on Arara, leading to several wars, then Arara migrations ending in the 1920s put them in the rubber plantations Cruzeiro do Vale and Humaita. The migrations caused wars with other groups in the areas who were already living there. Even after the 1920s, the group kept migrating along the Valparaíso, Riozinho Cruzeiro do Vale, Riozinho da Liberdade and Bagé rivers. After many inter-tribal wars, the Arara became workers on the rubber plantations. They were under the rule of the Rubber 'bosses,' and were until 1985, when they were finally able to organize and get recognition of and access to the delimited 27.700 hectares Arara do Igarapé Humaitá Indigenous Area. Families scattered by the rubber industry then began to reunite, but were living outside the indigenous area, which they got enlarged in 2000. (2)

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

The Arara Shawadawa were badly affected by the rubber industry. People came in and took land, forced them into slavery and used their labor for profit. The rubber industry and slave trade in the 19th and even 20th century pushed them into warfare with other tribes as they tried to escape the Portuguese. They also suffered from disease brought by the rubber industry's intrusion into their territories. Even their basic living arrangements were changed. After various years of contact between the Arara and the agents of the rubber trade, the group's former type of habitation in large "malocas" or communal huts was changed to several houses occupied by small domestic groups. (2)

1.6 Ecology:

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

Population size at 369 as of 2004. There are three village within the indigenous area, which is 87,000 hectares. 126 people live in the Raimundo do Vale village, another 108 are in the Foz do Nilo village, and there are 41 people in the Boa Vista village. The villages have low density because the houses are spread out along the banks of the rivers. The rest of the population is married into the population or lives in nearby, surrounding towns. (2)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

The Arara Shawadawa farm several sorts of manioc, maize, banana, mamão, sugarcane, sweet potatoes, yams, beans, rice, pepper, tobacco and others are planted. More recently they started cultivating of pupunha, and on a smaller scale, guaraná. The basic carbohydrate staple is manioc flour. (2)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

They farm chickens and pigs but the main source of protein is hunted game from their vast wildlife preserve and fish from the rivers that are next to their homes. (2)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

They used to hunt and fish with bows and arrows and traditional lines and nets. As they were contacted and affected by the rubber industry in the 19th and 20th centuries, they switched over to more modern weapons. "In hunting, the bow and arrow was replaced with firearms, in fishing they used rods, nylon lines and nets, and in their cultivation of the land, they began to use iron tools, like spades, axes, knives and others." The Arara still practice their traditional method of fishing, called "Marisco" in the Nilo an Grande igarapés, as they did on a large scale in the period before the rubber trade arrived in the region. During the "Mariscos," which almost always happen in the Amazon summer, they fish with plants such as plassacú, timbó, awaka, purá, chatá and others that paralyze the fish. Now they also use fishhooks, harpoons, spears and diving with bullets, knives and casting nets. The most popular method involves fishhooks and tingui poison. (2)

2.4 Food storage:

2.5 Sexual division of production:

2.6 Land tenure:

2.7 Ceramics:

The Arara had a large scale production of items before the rubber industry came in. They produced domestic utensils, adornments, and hunting and fishing weapons. Contact with the surrounding society had led to a big reduction in this activity. Now the Arara make graters, brooms, baskets and earthenware pots. These are not destined for trade, unlike others.

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

2.9 Food taboos:

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

They live on rivers and use canoes. (2)

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):

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

Marriage is encouraged between young couples in the 13 to 16 years old age group, which favours population growth. (2)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

The Arara have only one wife, and there is no ritual to consolidate the union. The few who have gone through a marriage ritual did so in the Catholic church. (2)

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

In order to marry, a man needs only a rifle for hunting and a planted field to sustain his wife. He must also build a house, and until this is ready the wife lives in the house of the husband's father. (2)

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

The Arara have carried out a rearrangement of the group's kinship, altering the patrilinear model which is characteristic of Pano groups in order to recognise as Arara, descendants of these "ancient ones" the issue of, for example, the union between a Duwadawa man and a Shawanawa (Arara) woman. (2)

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)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

Marriages seem to be monogamous, and beating women actually was a cause of war in 1914, so it seems unlikely that beating women is tolerated in Arara society or was tolerated historically. (2)

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

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

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

4.24 Joking relationships?

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

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

There is no formal marriage ceremony, but the man must meet basic property ownership requirements of having a house and land to farm or the couple lives in the husband's father's house. Today, at least, if marriages have a formal ceremony, they are performed in a local Catholic church. (2)

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

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

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

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

4.15 Out-group vs. in-group cause of violent death/4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing

After 1912, the French priest Constantino Tastevin visited the Upper Juruá and reported constant intertribal wars fought by the Arara at the beginning of the 20th century. He also noted differences between the Arara of Tauari and Forquilha, showing the Arara were divided into more than one group, or in different villages of the same group. He also described the migrations undertaken by the Arara along the Tejo, Bagé, Liberdade and Amahuaca (Riozinho Cruzeiro do Vale) rivers and described the clash that resulted in the death of the great Arara leader Tescon during a conflict with other Arara... I take from this that the Arara had in-group violence due to competition for resources and migrations that affected access to game, fish and farming land as well as river access. In 1914, there were in-group wars caused by their leader, Tecson, beating his wife (an Arara chief's daughter). It seems that beating women is both violence as well as a cause of violence and war, and was not tolerated in Arara society. (2)

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

4.18 Cannibalism?

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

“There is no information about linear halves, groups of houses, ideal marriage, extended and nuclear families, models of behavior, the terminology of kinship, and other aspects referring to social organisation and to the kinship of Arara in the period before the occupation of the Upper Juruá by the expansion of the rubber trade.”

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

“There are only three villages, one of 126 people, another of 108 people and a third of 41 people. So the mean would be about 92 people, but there is a lot of variance. It can therefore be inferred that the Arara possess a rule of patrilocal residence combined with neolocality.” (2)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

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

5.4 Post marital residence:

In order to marry, a man needs only a rifle for hunting and a planted field to sustain his wife. He must also build a house, and until this is ready the wife lives in the house of the husband's father. (2)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

The Arara live in the 86,700 hectare Humaitá Igarapé indigenous area with limits “defined by the rivers Riozinho Cruzeiro do Vale (also called the Humaitá, Leonel or Amahuacas igarapé), a tributary on the righthand bank of the Upper Juruá; the Nilo igarapé, a tributary on the righthand bank of the Riozinho Cruzeiro do Vale; and the Grande igarapé, which forms the Valparaíso river.” (2)

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

“The cultivation of a clearing is basically a masculine activity, but during the harvest the women help the men. From the manioc they plant the Arara make flour, which is also a masculine activity, as game and flour are the basis of the Arara diet. The women are in charge of household activities, looking after the house, the children and some domestic animals, like chickens and pigs. Other animals which have been captured young during hunting expeditions and domesticated are also in their care. The women do not go hunting. Children, growing up in the midst of a nuclear family, learn from an early age about the division of labour according to sex, and to carry out the activities that are appropriate to them.” (2)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

5.8 Village and house organization:

After years of contact between the Arara and agents of the rubber trade, the group changed its living style from "malocas" or communal huts to several houses occupied by small domestic groups. Today, the villages are very spread out, with families living in houses along the rivers in such a way as to capitalize on fishing. The two biggest villages, Raimundo do Vale and Foz do Nilo, were founded in the 1980s, while the other village, Boa Vista, was put together in the 1990s. (2)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

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

Instead of a chief for each 'maloca' there is now a chief for each of the three villages. There are members of the main extended families (the Pereira, the Cazuza and the Varela) in each village.

5.12 Trade:

“The Arara breed animals for their own consumption or for sale, including chickens, ducks, pigs and sheep. Pigs are the most traded, being sold in Porto Valter. The money from the sale is used to buy salt, sugar, medicines, gunpowder, shot and fuses.” After the decline of rubber in the 1980s, manioc flour became one of their main trading products. The Arara families usually cultivate more than one plot, and some of them have a flourmill nearby, where the manioc is processed. The Arara also plant fruit, medicinal plants, spices, and other plants in their yards or gardens. They also make rings and necklaces, or woven bags which Cruzeiro do Sul and sold at the headquarters of CIMI, which then passes on to the Arara the money obtained from sales. (2)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR:

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

6.2 Stimulants:

Before they began to work in the rubber plantations the Arara partook of Sinbu on a regular basis, sometimes as a cure, when the shaman took the drink and sought to remove the ills from the patient and bring him back to health. They also drink Ayahuasca (*uni*), a very powerful hallucinogenic plant mix as a shamanistic medicine. They also use Campo frog poison and snuff in rituals and medicinally. To make the snuff, "The person scrapes the powder from the bone of a deer, or a pig, from the shinbone of the deer and from the pig you scrape the bone of the thigh, you gather the powder, then you scrape the frog's milk as well, put it on a board, then you scrape the mixture, and roast it with a little tobacco. So you make the snuff. Taking the snuff like that is better than taking the injection. You sniff it." (Chico Cazusa, 17/02/2000, Raimundo do Vale). They also smoke Tipi (hair from pigs and deer) to improve hunting skills for people and for their dog's. (2,3)

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

6.4 Other rituals:

The rituals of Mariri, the "injection of the frog" and Sinbu (ritual drinking of ayahuasca) are still practiced. The Miriri is a series of playful, metaphorical dances and chants also found amongst other Pano groups. Some people, mostly adult men, drink ayahuasca (*uni*) during the Miriri ritual. The injection of the frog is used to recover the luck of the hunter. When the hunter is out of luck, the Arara prepare the ritual of the "injection of the frog" to recover the essential qualities of the hunter: aim, vision, hearing and luck. They catch a campo frog and with a hook, extract the "milk" which covers its body- the milk which comes out of the frog's head is only used for the snuff which is applied to the hunter's dog. Then they burn two or three small circular points in the hunter's skin with a cigarette, or with a braca, to introduce the frog's milk. A small amount of milk is enough to produce vomits and evacuation, which is also stimulated by the largescale consumption of caissuma, a drink made from fermented manioc, before the injection. The next day, the hunter returns to hunting with much greater skill and efficiency. Now, these traditions are mainly practiced as a means of maintaining the cohesion of the group, emphasizing the Arara identity. (2)

6.5 Myths (Creation):

The creation myth has changed over time as it has been passed down from generation to generation, but the basic elements remain the same – and even are similar across different Pano groups. In the myth, there is a village with several children, and near the cultivated land there is a Sumaúma tree in which lives a hawk. Almost every day this hawk goes out to hunt and bring food for its chick. When the hunting gets scarce he begins to catch the Indian children. He eats all of them except for one. Then a man from the village decides to kill the hawk before he finishes off the Indians. After a lot of trouble and work, he manages to kill the bird, building a ladder to reach the nest, and he puts the feathers inside a basket. One night this basket begins to make a noise, which the Caboclo (man who killed the hawk) thinks is cockroaches eating the feathers. The next day he opens the basket, and there are no cockroaches, only feathers. Several nights pass where he hears the noise, checks the basket in the morning and can't find what can be making the noise. One day, when the noise is repeated all the Pano tribes emerge from the basket singing with happiness, each of them saying their name, Shawādawa, Yawanawa, Kaxinawa, Xaranawa, Duwanawa, Poyanawa and others.

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

6.8 Missionary effect:

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

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

The Arara have been influenced towards Christianity by Catholic missionaries. They traditionally are Shamanistic, with a degree of reverence for and worship of their ancestors. Today, there is a big split among people who use the ayahuasca as a traditional, shamanistic healing mechanism and the people who use it in a hybrid Arara-Catholic religion called at the Santo Daime church. (2)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

7.2 Piercings:

7.3 Haircut:

7.4 Scarification:

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

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:



7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

7.8 Missionary effect:

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

8. Kinship systems

There is information that the Arara stopped speaking their language and adopted Portuguese because people laughed at them. As a result, not only the terminology for their kinship disappeared, but also the possible social division in halves, and in four sections (a characteristic of other Pano groups). Today, the unity of the group is better understood by descendance from the "ancient ones" those Arara who were the first to have contact with the agents of the rubber trade. (2)

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):

Numbered references

1. http://www.ethnologue.com/%5C/15/show_language.asp?code=knt
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