

## 1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family: Sharanahua "Good People" ETHNONYMS: Saranahua, Sharánahua<sup>1</sup>, Acre Arara,<sup>3</sup> They call themselves the Onicoín<sup>8</sup>. Their language belongs to the Central Branch of the Panoan Family<sup>1</sup> There are different dialects, Marinahua (Marinawa), Chandinahua, Mastanahua. Similar to Yaminahua [yaa] Chitonahua dialect, Yora [mts], language classification: Panoan, South-Central, Yaminahua-Sharanahua<sup>2</sup>

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): mcd<sup>2</sup>

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): WALS(World Atlas of Language Structures) coordinates: 11° S, 70° W<sup>5</sup>

1.4 Brief history: The Sharanahua lived in the upper Rio Taruacá region, to the north, at the time of contact. Fleeing a Peruvian attack, they migrated to the Rio Curanja in about 1935. They left the Curanja after a measles epidemic and reached their present location in the 1940s, where they fought the Jamináwa. In the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, the Sharanahua fell victim to epidemics of flu, whooping cough, and measles, which cut their population in half; they believe that these epidemics were caused by Peruvian bombs. Today the Sharanahua tribe includes the remaining populations of Mastanawa, Chandinahua, and perhaps some Jamináwa people. Many authorities consider the Marinahua to be also a part of the Sharanahua tribe. The population of this mixture of culturally similar and intermarrying peoples has been estimated at 1,350 to 1,850<sup>1</sup>

Around 1900, the Sharanahua left their tribal homeland near the headwaters of the Taruaca River because they were being crowded by other Indian tribes fleeing the rubber gatherers in Brazil. They reached the Upper Purus region in the 1940s. Those were difficult years for the tribe. Between 1925 and 1950 half their populations was lost due to epidemics of whooping cough and measles. In the 1960s, they adopted canoes and fish nets to improve their fishing production and began to dress like other Peruvians. Their population today exceeds 1,500 people and is slowly expanding. Although some work as migrant laborers in the neo-Peruvian economy the tribe maintains a strong sense of identity.<sup>8</sup>

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: missionaries have given them medicines and have generally caused larger settled communities to form where they settle. As of the 1960's missionaries hadn't managed to convert them to Christianity.<sup>7</sup>

1.6 Ecology:

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: population 650 in 2006<sup>4</sup> population-90 in 1973 live in the area of the upper reaches of the Río Purus, primarily in Peru, but there are some in Brazil as well<sup>1</sup>

Population 450 in Peru (2000 SIL). 70% monolinguals, Population in Brazil 3<sup>2</sup>

1993 census population 438, mean village size 62<sup>11</sup>

## 2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): Until the 1940s or 1950s, all Sharanahua gardening was done in upland gardens. In the spring, in the floodplain gardens, women raise fast-maturing maize, watermelons, and peanuts and harvest these crops before the fall rains raise the river's water level. Men, on the other hand, grow slow-maturing manioc in soils that never flood and bananas, plantains, and sugarcane in lands that flood intermittently. Gardens produce approximately 60 percent of Sharanahua food.<sup>1</sup> They plant maize, manioc, peanuts, bananas, and plantains in small plots<sup>8</sup>

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: Hunting traditionally provided the majority of the meat while fishing was secondary, as they are becoming more settled fish is becoming more important.<sup>7</sup> Women gather vegetables, fruits, and fungi from the forest and take shrimp and small fish living in waterlogged bamboo from the river. Using shotguns, men hunt for the most desirable game (deer, tapir, peccaries, capybaras, and pacas), but sometimes may end up with only a less desirable bird, monkey, turtle, or armadillo. Hunting is considered the chief occupation of older boys and young and middle-aged men and provides approximately 30 percent of the food eaten. When the dry season comes, the Sharanahua use poison to stun the fish in the shallow river, and then men use spears to catch the larger fish from canoes while women catch smaller fish floating on the surface and remove fish from the spears. A fish belongs to the person who first sees it, not to the one who catches it.<sup>1</sup> They are primarily an interfluvial people who settle along small streams and depend on fishing and hunting for their protein. In the 1960s, they adopted canoes and fish nets to improve their fishing production.<sup>8</sup>

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?: spears, and today guns<sup>1</sup> bow and arrows<sup>7</sup>

2.4 Food storage:

2.5 Sexual division of production: see 2.2 and 2.1

2.6 Land tenure:

2.7 Ceramics:

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: couple's daughter's husband's family of origin supplies the couple with meat after a hunt.<sup>1</sup> The son-in-law contributes meat to his wife's kin<sup>6</sup>

2.9 Food taboos:

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? Strangers to living on a river until the 1940s, the Sharanahua did not acquire the technology to make canoes and fishing nets until the 1960s<sup>1</sup>

## 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): Siskind says, "prepubescent girls, many of whom are already married..." and "young girls, six to ten, married or not..." so the girls at least marry quite young while the guys are generally older, they have to be able to win over the girls with good hunting skills, etc.<sup>7</sup>

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: a lot, young girls in their prime, marry often several times within one year<sup>7</sup>

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: The statement "a man who is known to be a good hunter has a better chance of gaining wives or mistresses" implies that polygyny occurs<sup>7</sup>

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: guys have to be able to win over the women/girls they wish to marry, it is normal for pubescent girls to sleep with or marry men in their 20's to 40's

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):

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized? "additional relatives are sometimes added by calling any man *upa* (father), who "helped" conceive a child by making love to it's mother during pregnancy" <sup>7</sup>

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)? See 4.13

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin): Sister exchange is often practiced, and descent groups often have other descent groups with whom they customarily intermarry<sup>1</sup> There is a lineage exogamy rule, by which an individual must marry a woman outside his own patrilineage. The ideal model of marriage is the direct exchange of sisters between two men of different descent groups, preferably marriage with a person considered a cousin (cross cousin)<sup>11</sup>

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? Yes, women have lovers and will sometimes together goad the men into hunting when they feel there is not enough meat to eat, besides teasing the men about not being men because there is no meat to eat the special hunt essentially involves a sex for meat exchange: "neither husbands nor wives are supposed to be jealous of the love affairs involved in the special hunt. In general, jealousy is considered to be a bad trait in a wife or a husband, and I have heard both men and women complain that they are unlucky to have a jealous spouse"<sup>6,7</sup>

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring: see above

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females: 0.8846 (115/130), sex ratio for total population, 0.93 (211/227)<sup>11</sup>

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: Some personal names are customarily associated with each patrilineage<sup>1</sup>

4.26 Incest avoidance rules: There is a myth which warns against sibling incest- "In the darkness Moon made love to his sister. It was evening and he kept making love to her. She wondered who her lover was, so in the darkness she painted half of his face with black genipa. The next day she watched the men going along the path. Suddenly she saw the man. "No, it cannot be, it is my older brother who has genipa on one side of his face!" she said. "May a foreigner (*nawa*) kill you!" He ran from his angry sister, crying..."<sup>7</sup> There is also a lineage exogamy rule, by which an individual must marry a woman outside his own patrilineage.<sup>11</sup>

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? No, marriage consists of a man moving his few possessions to the girl's house and tying his hammock and mosquetero next to hers. When marriages break up or, as the Sharanahua say, one "throws away" one's spouse, the man unties his hammock takes his possessions, and leaves.<sup>7</sup>

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? personal names tend to descend patrilineally, a child is usually named after its father's father or father's father's brothers or sisters.

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?). Marriage is generally within the community although there are marriages outside of the community as well

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Not arranged

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

**Warfare/homicide**

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

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

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): traditionally raiding used to provide an additional source of wives, the continuous raiding and warfare of the past could be reason for the construction of the maloca's walls<sup>7</sup>

#### 4.18 Cannibalism?

### **5. Socio-Political organization and interaction**

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: 62 (there are 7 communities)<sup>11</sup> in the past there were maloca's that housed 60 to 90 people (one per village)<sup>7</sup>

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

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

5.4 Post marital residence: Traditionally, post-marital residence was patrilocal, although there are now also matrilocality cases,<sup>11</sup> other sources say matrilocality<sup>1,6</sup>

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): There isn't much division based on age or sex, any differences in social interactions seem to be between someone who is considered cousin (therefore fair game as a partner) versus one who is considered sibling<sup>7</sup>

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

5.8 Village and house organization: Traditionally villages contained a large maloca that housed everyone<sup>7</sup>, today the Sharanahua village is small, usually well under 200 people, and is laid out in two parallel lines of houses. Houses are large versions of the style of house used by Peruvians living in the jungle; they sit 1.2 to 1.8 meters above the ground on posts, have thatched roofs and, often, bark walls. Their elevation from the ground protects them from surface water during the rainy season and presents a barrier to the nocturnal entrance of domestic dogs and chickens. There is also a separate cook house. The area around the house is cleared of vegetation to prevent it from harboring mice, insects, and snakes.<sup>1</sup>

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? Men sleep in a woven hammock and women sleep in a string hammock, this is because women have babies sleep with them (less messy)<sup>7</sup>

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: patrilineal descent<sup>1</sup>

5.12 Trade:

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

### **6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)**

6 Time allocation to RCR:

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): they have shamans<sup>7</sup>

6.2 Stimulants: they use a hallucinogenic drink for medicinal and social purposes called "Ayahuasca," is prepared from Banisteriopsis Caapi stems and Psychotria sp. Leaves<sup>10</sup> another hallucinogenic drink mentioned is shori<sup>7</sup>

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

6.4 Other rituals: from Siskind "for a Sharanahua girl it was her father's sister who tattooed the permanent blue line on her face, the line that identifies her as a Sharanahua"<sup>7</sup>

6.5 Myths (Creation): One of their creation myths is, a large basket opened, and all the groups of the world came out. Each group wore its own hats. The Sharanahua wore ocelot hats, other Indians wore feathers, and the Peruvians wore straw. There were great numbers of Peruvians, a few Sharanahua, and numerous groups of other Indians.<sup>7</sup> This myth seems to be modified to fit the times when it was told, when there were many Europeans.

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: people fear the spirit of their kin for the few weeks while it is still angry at leaving this life and lingers near the house, trying to kill a kinsman to accompany it. A few weeks after death, a spirit flies back to the land of its birth where it resides forever or according to some, it eventually leaves its birthplace for a land in the sky. They say one should burn all of the property of the dead, including the house, so the spirit will not desire to stay.<sup>7</sup>

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? There is a fear of the spirits of the dead and their names should not be mentioned<sup>7</sup>

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

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

### **7. Adornment**

7.1 Body paint: men, women and children paint their faces, usually with geometric designs. The paint is either red achiote or black genipa

7.2 Piercings: men and women have their noses and lower lips pierced<sup>7</sup>

7.3 Haircut: traditionally men had long hair

7.4 Scarification:

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): women collect bead necklaces, wearing as many as possible and decorate their arms and ankles with beads<sup>7</sup>

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: women danced in hats of brilliant yellow and red toucan and macaw feathers or wore circlets of white or black tufts<sup>7</sup>

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: women sometimes blacken their teeth for beauty and all women remove their eyebrows and any body hair<sup>7</sup>

7.8 Missionary effect:

### 7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

### 8. Kinship systems

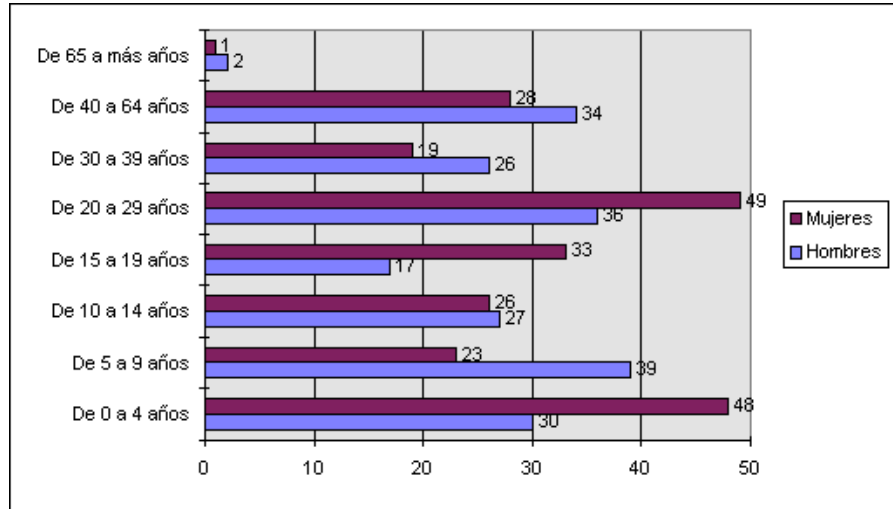
8.1 Sibling classification system: patrilineal decent, all fathers brothers children are siblings (there are only two descent groups)

### 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):

\*spirits of foreign people, animals, fish or rainbows are always menacing. They lie in wait, hungering for human blood, human fat, human meat. Even a brave man starts at an inexplicable noise at night.



### POBLACIÓN CENSADA 1993

TOTAL	HOMBRES	MUJERES
438	211	227

Indice de masculinidad : 93 males to 100 females

Número de comunidades : 7

### Numbered references

1. <http://www.everyculture.com/South-America/Sharanahua.html>
2. [www.ethnologue.com](http://www.ethnologue.com)
3. <http://globalrecordings.net/en/language/3211>
4. <http://www.peoplegroups.org/Detail.aspx?PID=17590>
5. [http://wals.info/languoid/lect/wals\\_code\\_shh](http://wals.info/languoid/lect/wals_code_shh)
6. <http://artsci.wustl.edu/~anthro/courses/361/Knight%20on%20Siskind.pdf>
7. Siskind, Janet. 1973. *To Hunt in the Morning*. New York: Oxford University Press
8. The Indians of Central and South America: an ethnohistorical dictionary By James Stuart Olson
9. Belanunde, Luisa E. *The Strength of Thoughts, the Stench of Blood: Amazonina Hematology and Gender*. Tipiti: Journal of the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America. Volume 4, Issue 1, Article 7. (p.129-152)
10. Rivier, Laurent and Jan-Erik Lindgren. "Ayahuasca," *the South American hallucinogenic drink: An ethnobotanical and chemical investigation*. Economic Botany. Volume 26, Number 2, (p. 101-129)
11. [http://www.peruecologico.com.pe/etnias\\_sharanahua.htm](http://www.peruecologico.com.pe/etnias_sharanahua.htm)