

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family: Arara Do Para [1], Ajujure [2], Carib

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): aap [2]

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): “In geographical terms, the indigenous peoples of this Arara sub-family occupied an intermediary geographical position in relation to the larger demographic concentrations of Carib language speakers found in the massif of the Guyanas and the headwaters of the upper Xingu river “[1] Para, northern Brazil [2]

1.4 Brief history: “Thought to be extinct at the turn of the 1940s, when news of their movements through the region became scarce, the Indians known as 'Arara' in the valley of the middle Xingu returned to prominence with the construction of the Transamazonian highway at the start of the 1970s.” [1]

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: “The section of Transamazonian Highway which today links the towns of Altamira and Itaituba in Pará State passed within a few kilometres of one of the large villages where various Arara subgroups came together during the dry season. The road cut through swiddens, trails and hunt camps traditionally used by the Indians. What had already been a small population was separated by the "road for national integration:" its main carriageway, borders, crossings, access trails and clearings formed barriers impeding the passage of the Indians through the forest and imposing limits on the traditional interaction between their subgroups, which, living dispersed across the territory, used to be conjoined via a cohesive intercommunity network.” [1]

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: Several subgroups of the Arara joined together after being divided by the highway to combat the non-indigenous intrusion. [1] The total Arara population in 1998 was 195 individuals. [1]

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): manioc

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: hunting (during the dry season) [1]

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

2.4 Food storage:

2.5 Sexual division of production: “a necessity is a reasonable number of adult men, working together in the collective tasks that the groups aim to fulfil (hunting during the dry season, the clearing of a collective swidden, etc.)” [1]

2.6 Land tenure: “There are two areas legally defined for the Arara, with different juridical and geographical situations: the Arara Indigenous Territory and the Cachoeira Seca do Iriri Indigenous Territory. The first is associated with the subgroups contacted between 1981 and 1983, while the second to the subgroup finally contacted in 1987.” [1]

2.7 Ceramics:

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

2.9 Food taboos: “Among the symbolic conditions of the hunt, there is a rite reserved for the shamans who, deep in the forest, direct magic formulas at the metaphysical entities that control the animal species (the *oto*) in order to request offspring to be raised by humans. The capture of animals to be raised is thus thought to be a product of a shaman's intercession with the *oto* who control that particular species. On the other hand, the request for offspring to raise as pets prohibits the hunting of animals of that species for the man involved in the magical rite. However, the prohibition assumed by one shaman is not extended to any other man: as they travel through the forest, others may kill the animals without qualms.” [1]

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

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):

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: generally practiced [1]

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: bride service is rendered to the in-laws [1]

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): “Marriages are defined on the minimum basis of birth group exogamy.” [1]

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?

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?

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?) generally between members of several groups of the Arana family [1]

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 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):

4.18 Cannibalism?

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

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

5.4 Post marital residence: “Uxorilocal residence, almost compulsory for a man's first marriage (the Arara are generally polygynous) is an important principle of recruitment, but one which competes with individual options for choosing which are always subject to variations (prestige and personal affinities, pacts of solidarity and cooperation between people, etc).” [1]

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): “Traditionally, an intercommunal network of multiple exchanges established the relations between the various subgroups and defined the basic principles of social life: political autonomy and economic independence were conjoined with collaboration for the ritual cycles; matrimonial alliances, on the other hand, given the residential principle followed by the Arara, scattered men and their ties throughout various of the subgroups belonging to the intercommunal network. The possibility for these traditional patterns of Arara social life (dispersion and independence, conjoining and alliance) to become effective in practice obviously depended on each subgroup's capacity to form relations with the others.” [1]

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: “relations of consanguinity and 'formal friendship' which the Arara recognize (hunt partnerships and war partnerships) imply another form of co-operation, less tense and more amicable” [1]

5.8 Village and house organization: “The Arara have no specific term for 'village,' the assembly of houses within a common space. The lack of distinction between house and village also highlights the fact that, as in the fairly recent past, a single house may comprise the entire settlement of a local group; without the recognition of a 'village' properly speaking, a space where different dwellings are conjoined, the Arara see house and village as co-extensive.” [1]

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:

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): “As an institution, Arara shamanism is dispersed, diffused and generalized among the men. Acting as healers and agents for mediating with powerful metaphysical beings, all the men are initiated and practice at least some part of the shamanic techniques and arts. They are also responsible - or at least those who enjoy a slightly greater prestige - for ensuring, in liaison with metaphysical beings, the conditions for the hunts and rites that in turn ensure the circulation of game meat and drinks among the various subgroups.” [1] domestication of certain animals [1]

6.2 Stimulants: fermented drink [1]

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): the dead aren't buried, but instead placed on raised platforms in houses specially built for the purpose [1] "the prominent rites associated with the collective hunting trips are also an efficient mechanism through which ethical and moral values become manifest, concretized and serve toward constituting a native idea of their collectivity. An intricate network of values and principles of interaction related to good conduct, kindness, solidarity and generosity finds its primary medium of expression in the rites." [1]

6.4 Other rituals: "Although the explicit preference is for manioc, almost everything the Arara additionally plant - potato, yam, maize and fruits such as pineapple, banana, etc. - serves towards fabrication of a fermented drink, taken to be the necessary counter-gift for the game from hunts taking place as soon as the rains cease and the forest is once again sufficiently dry for the hunters to follow the animal trails and prints. The exchange of game meat for fermented drinks always demands elaborate ritual preparation, in which the residential groups express their collective character: one group hunts, the other fabricates drink as a return for the meat it will receive. This pattern is observable throughout the entire dry season in the Laranjal village: one group leaving on a long hunting trip, another busy harvesting its swiddens for everything that can be transformed into drink." [1]

6.5 Myths (Creation): "Originating in a celestial cataclysm caused by an enormous fight between kin, the terrestrial world was the setting for a political accord between those who, being those responsible for the inaugural tragedy, were condemned to live on the ground. The division into small subgroups - independent and autonomous, but integrated by a network of intercommunity exchanges, above all during the hunt and festival seasons - was established as a kind of pact to ensure that the conflicts that brought about terrestrial life were never repeated. The ethnonym used by the people also relates to the origin myth: *Ukarāngmā* - almost literally 'people of the red macaws' - is their name for themselves, in a reference to the participation of these parrots soon after the tragedy that gave rise to the terrestrial world. In the myth, it was the red macaws who tried to carry back many of those who had fallen from the skies." [1]

"Arara mythic narratives indicate the right shores of the Xingu as the place where everything began: the formation of the current world, the generation of the Arara people, the dispersion of subgroups and the beginning of the conflicts with 'traditional enemies. Historical data confirm the Arara's movement between the two shores of the middle Xingu river as far as the fixation on its left shore, close to the Iriri river, after crossing the Xingu somewhat below the 'Big Bend,' around the middle of the 19th century. Both historical information - such as the references to conflicts with hunters and public works employees - and the memory of older Arara people indicate the region near to Altamira, somewhat below the mouth of the Iriri river, as the area with the highest concentration of Arara subgroup settlements in the past." [1]

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): "The long trumpets perform melodic pieces renowned for their relationship with the main hunted animal species. Played in groups or formal partnerships, the trumpets announce the death of the animals to their spiritual protectors while at the same time they serve as a pretext for the hunters' return to the village, after their almost invariably lengthy sojourn in the forest. It is through the sequence of music played in the village that the hunters accompany the progress of the ritual stages preparing their arrival, where they almost always simulate an aggressive invasion of the village, dissolved by the offer of *piktu* to the hunters who entered in a wild raid. The ritual series of music then continues, no longer with the musical instruments associated with the relations with animals and their guardians, but with sets of vocal music, which are true ceremonial dialogues sung to establish relations between human beings, between those who hunted and those responsible for offering drink to those bringing game." [1]

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

6.8 Missionary effect:

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: "In general, the Arara do not bury their dead, but reserve a platform in the forest for them, inside a small funeral house built especially for each occasion. Raised above the earth, the deceased must gradually dry out, losing whatever remained of the body's vital substances to the set of metaphysical beings which lurk around corpses, feeding themselves on the elements which previously gave life to the deceased. The Arara funeral is thus a kind of devolution of the vital substances that the humans extracted from the world; an eschatological exchange or reciprocity with the world's other beings." [1]

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.): “From the point of view of the symbolism associated with the economic rhythms, meat and drink make up an integral part of a system whose main axis is the native doctrine concerning the circulation of a vital substance called *ekuru*. Passing from the blood of killed animals to the earth, and from here to the liquids that nourish and stimulate the growth of plants, this vital substance is the main object of desire - not only of human beings, but also all the beings who inhabit the world: in effect, the object of a generalized predation in the world. Humans seek to acquire the vital substance *ekuru* through the death of animals during the hunt and the transformation of plants into a fermented drink called *piktu* - a primordial source for acquiring these vital substances for humans.” [1]

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

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):

9.1 there is an occurrence of *ludlings* or “play languages” that elderly Arara people from Laranjal know and sometimes use in talking to pets. These are formed by distorting the base language in ways specific to the animal species they speak to. [3]

Numbered references

1. Povos Indigenas no Brasil: <http://pib.socioambiental.org/en/povo/arara/print> (cites multiple sources in the bibliography with no footnotes, so most of the information found here would originally come from other specific authors)
2. Ethnologue.com
3. Souza, Isaac. “A Phonological Description of “Pet Talk” in Arara. Thesis, University of North Dakota.