

# Ethnicity

IN ANCIENT AMAZONIA

*Reconstructing Past Identities from Archaeology, Linguistics, and Ethnohistory*

Alf Hornborg and Jonathan D. Hill



## **ETHNICITY IN ANCIENT AMAZONIA**



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*Reconstructing Past Identities from Archaeology, Linguistics, and Ethnohistory*

edited by  
**Alf Hornborg and Jonathan D. Hill**

U N I V E R S I T Y P R E S S O F C O L O R A D O

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## Preface

This volume builds on three conferences on past processes of ethnic identity formation in Amazonia.

The first meeting, *Mapping Culture: Geographical Information Systems in the Human Sciences*, was held at Lund University, November 27–29, 2006. It addressed questions on how digital cartography can help us reconstruct the expansion and decline of cultural identities over time. Participants included David Andersson, Östen Dahl, Love Eriksen, Rafael Gassón, Chris Gillam, Jonathan Hill, Alf Hornborg, Dirse Kern, and Alberta Zucchi.

The second meeting, *Long-term Patterns of Ethnogenesis in Indigenous Amazonia*, was a session at the 106th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, in Washington DC, on November 30, 2007. The panel was organized and chaired by Alf Hornborg and Jonathan Hill. Additional participants included William Balée, Warren DeBoer, Meredith Dudley, Michael Heckenberger, Eduardo Neves, Fernando Santos-Granero, Kay and Franz Scaramelli, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, and Neil Whitehead.

*Preface*

The third meeting, Amazonian Ethno-Linguistics, was held at Lund University, June 2–4, 2008. It focused on linguistic aspects of ethnogenesis in Amazonia. Papers were presented by, among others, Ellen Basso, Eithne Carlin, Swintha Danielsen, Sidney da Silva Facundes, Jonathan Hill, Pieter Muysken, Wany Sampaio, Chris Sinha, Pirjo Virtanen, and Hein van der Voort.

The editors thank all the participants in these meetings for their contributions and constructive discussions. Alf Hornborg gratefully acknowledges financial support for the meetings from Gyllenstiernska Krupperupstiftelsen, the Erik Philip-Sörensen Foundation, the Royal Society of Letters at Lund, the Elisabeth Rausing Memorial Foundation, and the Linnaeus-Palme Exchange Programme. He is also grateful to the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation for supporting his work in coediting this volume.

ALF HORNBORG AND JONATHAN D. HILL

## **ETHNICITY IN ANCIENT AMAZONIA**



## Introduction: Ethnicity in Ancient Amazonia

*Alf Hornborg and Jonathan D. Hill*

By endowing nations, societies, or cultures with the qualities of internally homogeneous and externally distinctive and bounded objects, we create a model of the world as a global pool hall in which the entities spin off each other like so many hard and round billiard balls.

—ERIC R. WOLF, *EUROPE AND THE PEOPLE WITHOUT HISTORY* (1982:6)

### **STEPS TOWARD AN ANTI-ESSENTIALIST ANTHROPOLOGY OF AMAZONIA**

Attempts to explain the distribution of indigenous languages and ethnic groups in Amazonia since the time of European contact, whether by historians, linguists, or archaeologists, have generally been founded on an essentialist conception of ethnolinguistic groups as more or less bounded, genetically distinct populations that have reached their recent territories through migration. This perception of ethnolinguistic diversity is a phenomenon that itself deserves explanation, as it appears to draw on a Eurocentric experience of nation-building that historically has

struggled to integrate territory, language, identity, and biology (cf. Jones 1997). On closer examination, the evidence in Amazonia suggests a much more fluid relation among geography, language use, ethnic identity, and genetics (Hornborg 2005). Correlations of data on the physical geography, linguistics, archaeology, and ethnohistory of Amazonia indicate that ethnolinguistic identities and boundaries have been continuously generated and transformed by shifting conditions such as economic specialization, trade routes, warfare, political alliances, and demography. To understand the emergence, expansion, and decline of cultural identities over the centuries, we thus need to consider the roles of diverse conditioning factors such as ecological diversity, migration, trade, epidemics, conquest, language shifts, marriage patterns, and cultural creativity.

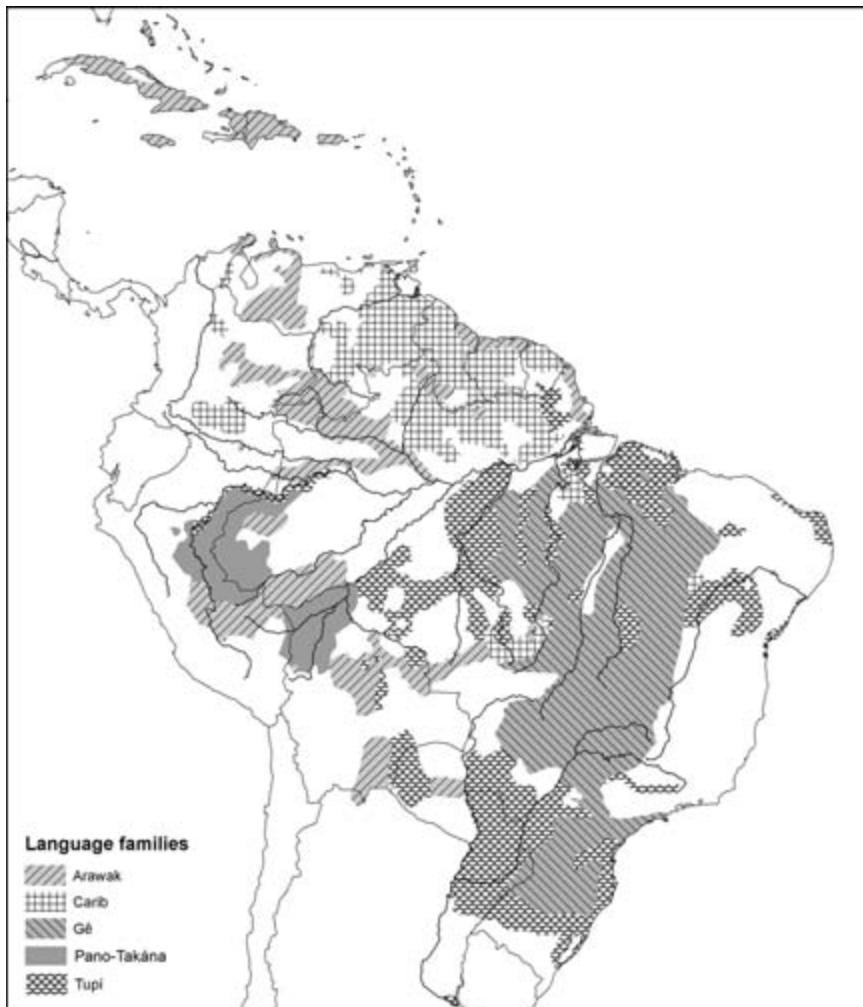
The concept of “ethnicity” that we apply to long-term processes of collective identity formation in Amazonia draws on mainstream definitions within social and cultural anthropology (Barth 1969; Cohen 1978) but may be less familiar to some archaeologists, linguists, and historians. The entry “Ethnicity” in the *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology* (Barnard and Spencer 1996) distinguishes three competing approaches: primordialist, instrumentalist, and constructivist. To simplify a complex and voluminous discussion over the past four decades, we could say that a primordialist approach posits an objective (biological or cultural) essence as fundamental to ethnic identity, while an instrumentalist approach emphasizes ethnicity as a creation of cultural elites in strategic pursuit of power, and a constructivist approach views ethnicity more generally as a form of social organization maintained by contextual, intergroup boundary mechanisms (Sokolovskii and Tishkov 1996). Ethnicity in the last sense is negotiated in the continuous, fluid dialectic between objective sociocultural features and subjective experiences of identity. The three approaches need not be mutually exclusive, Sokolovskii and Tishkov suggest, but the constructivist approach offers the most promising core of an emergent, coherent theory of ethnicity (*ibid.*). This conclusion would no doubt be endorsed by a majority of cultural anthropologists today. What is novel about the present volume, however, is the ambition to allow this perspective from cultural anthropology and ethnography to fertilize studies of the archaeology and historical linguistics of Amazonia. Although the contributors to *Ethnicity in Ancient Amazonia* represent several disciplines and may employ slightly different definitions of ethnicity (e.g., DeBoer, this volume; Scaramelli and Scaramelli, this volume), they all make serious efforts toward this end.

If ethnicity is understood as a means of communicating a group’s distinctness, we need to explore criteria for recognizing expressions of identity in the past use of language, material culture, and other ethnic markers, acknowledging also that such use may be context-specific, and to trace the specific ways in which Amazonian experiences of distinctness and difference have been shaped by spatially distributed circumstances largely defined by the macro-scale logic of economic and political

structures. Rather than treat human history in the area as explicable in terms of biogeography, this approach to the archaeology, linguistics, and ethnohistory of ancient Amazonia seeks explanations in social and cultural processes.

Although indigenous Amazonia is one of the linguistically most diverse regions of the world, and home to several large language families (Map 1.1) and numerous isolates, many of the chapters in this book discuss the special significance of the Arawak language family. The Arawakan languages of South America at the time of Columbus represented the most widely dispersed linguistic family on the continent, ranging from Cuba to Paraguay. The processes by which this family expanded in prehistory are probably an important factor in understanding the long-term trajectories of several other linguistic groups in Amazonia (see Hornborg and Eriksen, this volume). The expansion of Arawakan languages has generally been attributed to riverine migrations of prehistoric populations through Amazonia and was explained by the archaeologist Donald Lathrap (1970) as a consequence of these populations' adoption of manioc horticulture, which would have provided a demographic advantage in territorial competition with non-horticulturalists. However, this basically biogeographical model of the Arawak expansion in terms of simple demographic displacement does not consider what social and cultural theory might have to suggest on the matter. An anthropologically informed account would need to consider sociocultural factors such as language shifts, multilingualism, intermarriage, politics, prestige, and the strategic construction of cultural identity (ethnogenesis), particularly along the major rivers that have been posited as corridors of migration but that were more obviously trade routes conspicuously often dominated by Arawak-speaking traders. The Arawakan "migrations" definitely involved some movement of people, but probably in a smaller-scale and different way than previously postulated. Several kinds of theoretical and empirical arguments converge in suggesting that the widely dispersed Arawakan dialects encountered by Europeans may be testimony not so much to prehistoric population movements as to the integration of a regional trade network spanning most of the Amazon basin and linking it to the Andes and to the Caribbean. In fact, ritual chants and oral history among current-day Arawak speakers in the northwest Amazon preserve much of the ancient cartographic knowledge that this long-distance trade must have entailed (Hill, this volume).

The Tupían language family was also widely dispersed (Noelli 2008), and its dispersal in central and western Amazonia after AD 1000 may largely have followed routes established by the preexisting, Arawak-dominated trade network. The extent to which this widespread language shift signified displacement of biological populations or their cultural assimilation is unclear, but there are ethnohistorical indications of both kinds of processes (cf. Brochado 1984:402–403; Santos-Granero, this volume). The question remains whether the resemblance between polychrome pottery styles from the far eastern and far western margins of Amazonia, noted by



MAP 1.1. *The approximate distribution of five major linguistic families in Amazonia at the time of European contact. (Map compiled by Love Eriksen)*

Lowie and Kroeber in the 1940s (DeBoer, this volume), should be taken as indicative primarily of demic migration or long-distance communication. This question is very much the same as that regarding resemblances, identified decades earlier by Nordenskiöld, between pottery styles from the far northern and far southern extremes of tropical lowland South America. These far-flung resemblances inspired Lathrap (1970) to propose his famous model resorting to demic migration, which in various versions continues to dominate the field, but which the current authors find

less convincing than processes of ethnogenesis and long-distance communication.

To reconceptualize the culture history of Amazonia along these lines, there are at least two pervasive biases to overcome. One has already been mentioned, that is, the inclination to think of “peoples” as coherent, bounded populations with a common language, culture, and identity. Another and equally crippling bias is the assumption that the indigenous societies of Amazonia have always been few, small, and simple. Both these biases are products of world history: the first a reflection of European experiences of nationalism, the second of the state of Amazonian societies when studied by Europeans since the seventeenth century. Although the very earliest reports of European explorers of Amazonia (e.g., Carvajal 1934 [1542]) describe dense and extensive indigenous settlements along the riverbanks, the first undisputedly reliable accounts date from a period preceded by more than a century of devastating epidemics and slave-raiding, when the aboriginal population had been reduced to a small fraction (perhaps only 5 percent) of its former size and its social organization disintegrated into isolated villages of refugees pushed into marginal habitats. These circumstances, although a result of the historical encounter with Europeans, were interpreted by Europeans as determined by the oppressive climate and poor soils of the tropical rainforest.

Both these biases (cultural essentialism and environmental determinism) are very obvious in the influential *Handbook of South American Indians* compiled by the anthropologist Julian H. Steward (1950) in the mid-twentieth century (Steward and Faron 1959). Not only do Steward’s maps suggest more or less neatly bounded ethnolinguistic categories plotted onto geographical space, but his categories of “culture types” in Amazonia are explicitly defined as simple, fragmented, and irreducibly constrained by the tropical rainforest environment. This interpretation of the native cultures of Amazonia has been particularly entrenched through the publications of archaeologist Betty J. Meggers (e.g., 1971). The mainstream assumption that climate and ecology represented an absolute limitation on aboriginal cultural development in Amazonia has been persuasively challenged by several anthropologists (e.g., Carneiro 1995; Balée 1998) and archaeologists (e.g., Roosevelt 1994; Heckenberger, Petersen, and Neves 1999) but continues to retard reconceptualizations of prehistoric social processes in the area that posit large sedentary settlements, hierarchical political structures, long-distance trade, and intensive cultivation.

Although the second of the above-mentioned biases now appears to be increasingly transcended by archaeological discoveries, notably of extensive and deep deposits of dark, anthropogenic soils (Lehmann et al. 2003; Glaser and Woods 2004; Woods et al. 2009), the first continues to pose a formidable obstacle. Thus, even researchers determined to rewrite the culture history of Amazonia in terms of hierarchical polities and regional interaction tend to treat ethnolinguistic categories such as “Arawak” as denoting a genealogically definable “people” whose ancient movements over the continent can be traced by arrows on maps. While such cartographic

exercises are no doubt valid for the dispersal of languages, it is important to distinguish between linguistic diffusion and demic migration. Whether the homeland of proto-Arawakan can be identified as the northwest or the southwest Amazon, the subsequent dispersal of Arawakan dialects to the Caribbean, the mouth of the Amazon, and the Andes requires a more sophisticated explanation than the notion that Arawak-speaking peoples simply moved across the landscape.

There are several reasons to question such a simple notion of migration. The Arawak speakers were not expanding into empty space, like their Palaeoindian ancestors moving into the New World from Siberia or the first hominids leaving Africa. They were generally surrounded on all sides by other ethnolinguistic groups, some of whom had been living in Amazonia for thousands of years. Rather than assuming that these neighbors were displaced or annihilated by the Arawak expansion, we should consider it more likely that they were largely assimilated. Multilingualism and language shifts have been extensively documented over much of Amazonia in recent centuries (Schmidt 1917:19–21; Sorensen 1974 [1967]; Jackson 1983; Campbell 1997:23; Aikhenvald 1999, 2002), and we have no reason to think that they were not equally common in pre-Columbian times. Arawak-speaking groups studied by ethnographers show a conspicuous interest in forging marital and other alliances with neighboring groups along the rivers (cf. Gow 1991; Hill 1993, 1996), generating far-flung networks of amicably interconnected communities united by kinship, trade, and an elaborate ceremonial life. This inclination toward regional integration was the pivotal innovation of proto-Arawakan traders, which set in motion a contagious process of communication and unification echoing similar processes that on other continents have been called “the Neolithic revolution.” Here as elsewhere, regional integration and trade stimulated local stratification, settlement growth, intensified production, and ethnicity, but the most obvious medium of integration is rarely recognized as such: a common, prestigious language serving as a mark of identity.

By the end of the first millennium AD, dialects of Arawak languages were spoken along most of the major rivers from the mouth of the Orinoco and Amazon to the headwaters of the Purús and Madeira. This distribution pattern suggests not so much that Arawakan “peoples” were able to displace all other groups along these ancient communication routes, as conventional migration theory would have it, but that a proto-Arawakan language once may have served as a lingua franca from the Caribbean to Bolivia. To date, there has been no genetic research suggesting that Arawak speakers in Colombia are biologically more closely related to Arawak speakers in Bolivia than to their non-Arawak (e.g., Tukano-speaking) neighbors (cf. Cavalli-Sforza, Menozzi, and Piazza 1994:341). Considering the preference for linguistic exogamy in the northwest Amazon (Sorensen 1974 [1967]; Jackson 1983), the very idea seems highly unlikely. On the other hand, there has been linguistic research showing that Arawakan languages often show greater structural similarities

to their non-Arawak neighbors (e.g., Tukano, Pano) than to each other (Aikhenvald and Dixon 1998). All this adds up to something quite different from “migration” in any conventional sense.

Intriguingly, the German anthropologist Max Schmidt (1917) already in the early twentieth century seems to have understood that the Arawakan expansion was not so much a matter of demic migration as a process of ethnic identity construction that did not generally rely on the movements of substantial populations. He made several observations on indigenous language shifts (e.g., among the Kaua and Chané) and explicitly noted that Arawak served as a trade language in the northwest Amazon. Schmidt emphasized the role of elite gift exchange and male exogamy, suggesting that the outward movement of small groups of prestigious, Arawak-speaking men would have sufficed to account for the diffusion of an Arawakan identity (*ibid.*, 36–61). This early, non-essentialist understanding of linguistic dispersal in Amazonia, however, was soon to be replaced by the blunter analytical tools of Julian Steward’s cultural ecology.

### **TRANSDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO ANCIENT ETHNICITY: THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS**

The reconceptualization of Arawakan “migrations” that we have sketched here has emerged not only from a reconsideration of the various kinds of data mentioned above but more fundamentally from modern anthropological theory on the kinds of social processes underlying the construction and maintenance of ethnic boundaries. The point of departure for such theory is usually the seminal contribution of the Norwegian anthropologist Fredrik Barth (1969). Archaeologists and historical linguists would have much to gain in their attempts to account for past processes of ethnolinguistic diversification from acquainting themselves with Barth’s framework. Following Barth, the general understanding of ethnicity now prevalent in anthropology is that a population’s experience of cultural distinctness is generated by its position within a larger field of interacting socioecological niches. Specialized production of certain kinds of foodstuffs, utensils, or other trade goods, often congruent with a particular ecological habitat, thus contributes to the demarcation of a specific ethnic identity. This identity does not exist on its own but always in relation to those of other ethnolinguistic groups with which it remains in continuous interaction. Ethnic identity is thus simultaneously externally attributed, internally experienced, and above all *communicated*.

One of the central ideas that generated this book is that ethnicity, as defined above, must have been an important factor in generating cultural and linguistic diversity in Amazonia long before the arrival of Europeans. This is not a universally accepted assumption, however. John and Jean Comaroff (1992), for instance, have proposed that “ethnicity” is an exclusively post-contact phenomenon resulting

from colonial domination, whereas pre-contact identities should be described in terms of “totemism” expressing equivalent and complementary identities arranged in non-hierarchical and symmetrical relations between structurally similar social groups. We do not believe that this is a useful approach to pre-contact culture history. Pre-Columbian South America experienced a long series of conquests, expansions, hierarchies, and repressive relations prior to the European invasion (see Santos-Granero 2009a, this volume), and there is no reason to assume that the formation of ethnic boundaries in pre-colonial times operated according to a cultural logic that was significantly different from the pattern documented through historical and ethnographic research. Recent archaeological research in Amazonia suggests that prehistoric discontinuities in the material record, such as the replacement of Incised-modeled by Polychrome pottery in the central Amazon around AD 1000 (Neves, this volume), may be accounted for in similar ways as the more well-known historical ruptures of European colonialism. For millennia, conquests and expansions have generated new constellations of ethnic boundaries as well as new incentives for creatively transcending or manipulating such boundaries through ethnogenesis.

Explanations of the discontinuities that can be detected in the histories and prehistories of Amazonian societies have tended to assume that cultural identities have corresponded to discrete human populations that migrated in various directions because they had tangible environmental reasons for doing so, for example climate change (Meggers 1979) or the adoption of a successful and competitive cultivar that prompted them to exploit new territories (Lathrap 1970; Dixon and Aikhenvald 1999:17; cf. Renfrew 1987; Bellwood 2001). As argued above, an alternative and previously neglected kind of explanation would focus on the internal logic of regional political economy and transformations in networks of long-distance exchange (Hornborg 2005; Hornborg and Eriksen, this volume). Rather than viewing archaeological cultures as representing biologically distinct populations engaged in demic migration prompted by environmental factors, the latter would approach them as products of continuous and fluid processes of identity construction, spurred by the specific cultural logic of regional shifts in dominance and cosmological orientation. This difference of perspective continues to divide the research field and is evident within the pages of this book. We would like to emphasize, however, that a determination to account for social and cultural forms in terms of social and cultural theory (rather than biogeography or Darwinian selection) in no way implies a “postmodern” disregard for facts or laxity of analysis.

Transdisciplinary collaboration tends to highlight the differences between disciplines, and this volume is no exception. Archaeologists are generally not very keen ethnographers or linguists, while ethnohistorians tend to have a limited grasp of archaeology and linguistics. Every reader will thus find him- or herself more at home with some chapters than with others. Hopefully, readers from all the relevant

disciplines will find significant new theoretical and methodological perspectives for the study of ethnic identity construction in the past. A major divide distinguishes chapters that focus on hermeneutic, “inside” views of specific cultural phenomena (which tend to characterize ethnography) from those that prioritize systematic comparison and macro-scale distribution (as in linguistics and archaeology). Both kinds of perspectives are, of course, important but need to maintain a continuous dialogue. Any attempt to grasp processes of ethnogenesis at a regional level needs to be founded on an ethnographic understanding of the local, experiential dimensions of identity construction. Ethnography, on the other hand, needs to acknowledge the extent to which local experience is shaped by macro-scale contexts such as history, politics, trade, and regional geography.

In bringing these diverse chapters together to illuminate ethnogenetic processes in ancient Amazonia, we hope to dispel some of the mutual distrust that so often impedes transdisciplinary collaboration. Whereas several of the contributors are pioneers in building bridges between archaeology and ethnohistory (DeBoer, this volume; Heckenberger, this volume; Whitehead, this volume), the often highly technical nature of linguistic research has tended to exclude readers curious to know what historical linguistics has to say about ancient identities. We are thus happy to have engaged several linguists in this discussion, and we hope that their contributions will encourage colleagues in historical linguistics to demonstrate the relevance of their research for the reconstruction of ethnogenetic processes in the past.

This collection of chapters has emerged from a series of meetings (two in Lund, one in Washington, DC) addressing various aspects of long-term ethnogenesis in Amazonia. We are fortunate to have been able to include some of the most accomplished scholars in Amazonian archaeology, linguistics, and ethnohistory. It is very gratifying to note how much of the discussion on ethnolinguistic distribution patterns in Amazonia in recent years has shifted from a preoccupation with migrating “peoples” carrying various cultural luggage across the Amazon basin to concerns with ethnogenetic processes within regional systems of exchange. Although clearly more interested in cultural diffusion than cultural evolution (cf. Isbell 2008 on this polarity), such a “neo-diffusionism” would differ in many respects from earlier versions, for example, by being firmly grounded in social science understandings of political economy, world systems, interaction spheres, and, not least, the dynamics of ethnicity. Rather than postulating migrating invaders conveying coherent packages of genes, language, pottery style, settlement layout, and agricultural practices, this approach acknowledges that such different aspects of identity can move separately and in different directions within regional exchange networks. Different cultural features will often be derived from different neighbors in a continuous process of emulation and creative reconstruction, in which every semblance of ethnic essence is provisional. Yet, specific constellations of ethnic markers sometimes

maintain long-term continuities that warrant collaboration among ethnographers, historians, archaeologists, and historical linguists.

The specific and characteristic cultural repertoires associated with groups of people who identify with an Arawak ethnolinguistic identity have demonstrated a remarkable coherence and persistence over time (Hill and Santos-Granero 2002; Heckenberger, this volume). The pervasive “hydrocentricity” of Arawakan lifestyles (Hill, this volume) represents a deeply entrenched and indissoluble connection to riverine and wetland environments that strongly evokes Barth’s (1969) use of the concept of an ethnic “niche,” and that may even be possible to predict using GIS software for “ecocultural niche modeling” (see Dahl et al., this volume, as well as Hornborg and Eriksen, this volume, Map 6.1). As Barth observed, the ecological and societal aspects of such an ethnic niche are mutually reinforcing. Having specialized in the occupation and exploitation of a riverine socioecological niche, people identifying with the cultural traditions of Arawak-speaking societies were well positioned to control the emergent long-distance trade networks that began to integrate much of Amazonia during the first millennium BC. This position continued to reinforce their inclination toward intensive horticulture, sedentary and centripetal settlement, social stratification, regional integration, and an elaborate ceremonial life. To account for the expansion and dominance of Arawak speakers over much of Amazonia in this way is not the same as merely saying that the adoption of manioc horticulture gave them a competitive edge (Lathrap 1970).

A significant dimension of Arawakan niche construction is its implications for historical ecology. In various parts of greater Amazonia, Arawak-related societies have “domesticated” their landscapes through earthmoving activities such as the construction of raised fields, mounds, causeways, ditches, and fish weirs (Denevan and Zucchi 1978; Brochado 1984:339–341; Parsons 1985:161; Roosevelt 1991; Myers 1992:87, 91; Denevan 2001; Renard-Casevitz 2002:140–141; Pärssinen et al. 2003; Erickson 2006; Walker 2008; Rostain 2008; Heckenberger 2005, this volume; Hill, this volume; Virtanen, this volume). Such investments in what Erickson (2006) calls “domesticated landscapes” and local population growth are mutually reinforcing, not necessarily in an absolute sense but always relative to other areas. The centripetal growth of settlements prompted by social, ethnic, and ceremonial incentives would encourage labor investments in productive infrastructure, and the assets thus accumulated (sometimes referred to as *landesque capital*) would encourage further nucleation of population for defensive purposes. Similar processes may have been responsible for “Neolithic revolutions” elsewhere in the world.

Given adequate understanding of socioecological processes such as these, historical linguistics could potentially provide very important information on ethnic identity formation in the past. It is gratifying, for instance, to find tentative agreement between anthropological and linguistic reconstructions of Arawakan proto-

history (Danielsen et al., this volume).<sup>1</sup> Without adequate theory of regional systems of exchange, however, linguistic reconstructions risk leading us seriously astray. For instance, a “punctuated-equilibrium model of language development” (Dixon and Aikhenvald 1999:16–19) proposes that linguistic diversity in an area is likely to reflect relative confinement and isolation of the various linguistic groups, whereas anthropological theory as well as Amazonian ethnography would often suggest the opposite. Ethnolinguistic diversity—for example, in the upper Xingú, eastern Bolivia, and the northwest Amazon—may well be a consequence of intensive interaction within regional systems of exchange, where different ethnic groups specialize in particular products and maintain their own cultural specificity precisely through the contrasts generated by such interaction. Linguistic models that do not take such anthropological observations into consideration might interpret linguistic diversity in western Amazonia as an indication of a relative paucity of interaction in the past, whereas archaeological and historical evidence from the area points in a diametrically opposite direction (DeBoer, this volume; Dudley, this volume; Hornborg and Eriksen, this volume).

This is not to deny, of course, that areal contact often can have a homogenizing effect on cultural diversity. Linguists are currently looking closely at processes of language shift and areal diffusion in Amazonia, often with a focus on Arawakan languages (Aikhenvald 2002). The loanwords between Arawakan and Arawá languages can be viewed as indications of past regional interaction for which no other evidence can currently be provided (Facundes and Brandão, this volume; Hornborg and Eriksen, this volume). The significance of multilingualism and regional lingua francas such as the Tupí-based trade language Nheengatú (Jensen 1999:129–131) should not be underestimated in reconstructing the historical linguistics of Amazonia. Which particular language emerges as a lingua franca varies from region to region according to historical circumstances. For instance, in the southern border area between Guyana and Surinam, the most expansive language family is currently Carib rather than Arawak or Tupí (Carlin, this volume).

An important message of this book is that verbal as well as material culture may have served as markers of ethnic identity in the past. At specific points in time and place, ethnic markers such as language and pottery style may coincide. There thus appear to be good reasons to postulate connections, around AD 1000, between Arawakan languages and Barrancoid/Incised-modeled ceramics, between Tupí languages and Amazonian Polychrome ceramics, and between Carib languages and Arauquinoid/Incised-punctated ceramics (Neves, this volume; Heckenberger, this volume). As DeBoer writes (this volume, p. 95), “language affiliation and material culture tend to stick together, not because there is any sticky glue involved but because both are transmitted over similar channels.” This does not imply a general, one-to-one correspondence among specific ethnicities, languages, and material cultures, but it does encourage both archaeologists and historical linguists to renew

their interpretations in light of what anthropology can suggest about ethnicity and ethnogenesis.

In doing so, it is also crucial to consider the extent to which Amazonian societies have been composed of different social and ethnolinguistic strata, whether as a result of marriage practices, captive-taking, military conquest, or voluntary submission. Ethnohistorical and ethnographic evidence from various parts of Amazonia indicates that hierarchical relations between ethnic groups were common, as between the Taíno and Naborey of the Antilles, the Tukano and Makú of the Vaupés, and the Chiriguáná and Chané of southeastern Bolivia (Santos-Granero 2009b, this volume). The role of Arawak speakers in such hierarchies appears to have varied from place to place and time to time, as exemplified by the contrast between the dominance of the Taíno over the Naborey and the subjugation of the Chané by the Tupí-speaking Chiriguáná. As argued above, we have no *a priori* reason to believe that relations between distinct communities of pottery makers in the Orinoco region were decisively less hierarchical (and the groups less “ethnic”) in pre-colonial than in colonial times (see Scaramelli and Scaramelli, this volume). Such asymmetric relations between the dominant and the subordinate have influenced, in specific and unpredictable ways, the diffusion of loanwords, languages, cultivars, and material culture, including ceramic styles (DeBoer, this volume; Facundes and Brandão, this volume). They have frequently been based on gender, whether the asymmetric relations were established through violent bride capture or through the conventional operation of norms regarding post-marital residence. Ethnographers are in a privileged position to study in detail the nuances of micro-level negotiations of such asymmetries, as in the close scrutiny of genres of ritual (including non-verbal) communication variously shared by different ethnolinguistic groups (Basso, this volume). Basso’s contribution illustrates how trade, marriage alliances, and ritual are not distinct forms of interaction between communities but inextricably intertwined and embedded in each other.

Ethnohistorical and ethnographical evidence makes it abundantly clear that the political economy of ancient Amazonia to a significant extent hinged on flows of prestige goods as much as on flows of people (cf. Santos-Granero 2009a). Most of these objects were made of perishable materials such as bird feathers (see Basso, this volume) and have left no traces in the archaeological record. As DeBoer (this volume) observes, most items of material culture used as ethnic markers in the past will thus be inaccessible for research. This is one reason why ethnographical documentation of the use of such culture-specific items of political economy (Basso, this volume) is so invaluable in the reconstruction of ancient interaction among communities. Given the long-term continuities suggested by several of the contributors (e.g., Heckenberger, this volume), such documentation can at least help us to surmise the nature of such interaction. In some cases, moreover, the geographical distribution of specific kinds of prestige goods can to some extent be reconstructed,

for instance, ornaments in shell or stone and some musical instruments (Eriksen 2011).

The consolidation of an Arawak-mediated regional exchange system integrating much of greater Amazonia by the early centuries AD was no doubt stimulated by exchange relations extending even beyond this vast area, including the Andes and the Caribbean. In the reconstruction of such long-distance connections, it is particularly interesting to trace ethnolinguistic processes at the margins of Amazonia, especially along the Andean slopes. As many Andeanists have suggested over the past century, much of the cultural history of the Andean highlands may have its roots in Amazonia (cf. Isbell 2008:1146–1148). For centuries, perhaps even millennia, Arawak-speaking groups have dominated an intensive sphere of interaction along the eastern Andean slopes of Peru and Bolivia, but the colonial boundaries separating highlands and lowlands left this intermediate zone marginalized and largely unrecognized (Dudley, this volume; Hornborg and Eriksen, this volume).

If proto-Arawak may have served as a lingua franca in much of the Amazonian lowlands, its counterpart in the Andean highlands was obviously proto-Quechua. Much as Arawakan languages show influences from neighboring languages in Amazonia (Aikhenvald and Dixon 1998; Facundes and Brandão, this volume), different Quechua languages and dialects emerged in the eastern foothills of the Andean Cordillera, reflecting long-term relations of political expansion and trade between Quechua speakers and speakers of various Amazonian languages. In the altiplano of Bolivia, for example, the Kallawaya language joined together a lexicon that was mainly from Puquina, an “Arawak affiliate,” with Quechua syntax, and the variety of Quechua spoken in the town of Apolo, or “Northern Bolivian Quechua,” reflects Inca expansionism into predominantly Arawak-speaking areas in the mid-fifteenth century (see Dudley, this volume). In eastern Peru, Quechua influences on Amuesha similarly reflect Quechua-Arawak interaction in both pre-Inca and Inca times (Danielsen et al., this volume). In lowland Ecuador, Quechua spread as a trade language before the expansion of the Inca Empire, and Ecuadorian Quechua appears to have been influenced by the Barbacoan and Jivaroan languages with which it came into contact in this region (Muysken, this volume). In the Canelos region of the tropical Andean foothills of Ecuador, a version of Quechua known as Canelos Quichua has become a marker of Runa ethnic identity, closely connected to Jivaroan and Zaparoan neighbors (Whitten, this volume). The region was crucial for highland-lowland trade predating the Inca, and it is interesting to note that the Canelos Quichua language may have originated further south, in the Marañon basin, which has been a major trade route into the Amazonian lowlands since time immemorial (Lathrap 1971; Church and von Hagen 2008; Burger 1992, 2008). Judging from archaeological evidence of early mound complexes along the Upano River, populations in the eastern foothills of the Ecuadorian Andes have also been engaged in highland-lowland trade since several centuries BC (Salazar 2008). Like

the many earthworks in the Llanos de Mojos and in Acre (Virtanen, this volume), they clearly indicate that, for at least two millennia before European arrival, prehistoric inhabitants of the western margin of Amazonia had established sedentary, densely populated settlements that were economically and culturally connected to societies of the Andean slopes and highlands.

### **AN ARAWAKAN ETHOS: SEDENTISM, MOBILITY, AND ELEMENTS OF ETHNIC SPECIFICITY**

The sedentary settlement patterns associated with Arawak-speaking peoples in various regions of lowland South America need to be understood as region-wide phenomena, since local communities or sites may shift from place to place within a region without there being a break in the continuity of a group's control of an entire region. In the archaeological record, this kind of regional settlement pattern can be seen in the juxtaposing of large mainstream sites having deep levels of ceramic phases persisting over many centuries of human occupation, with numerous smaller settlements in interfluvial uplands showing evidence of frequent interruptions and site abandonments (see Neves and Petersen 2005; Heckenberger, this volume; Neves, this volume). The ethnography of lowland South America includes many examples of dual settlement patterns, or seasonal alternations between periods of sedentary social life in communities formed around a ritual center (e.g., male initiation or "bachelors'" huts among Gê-speaking peoples or flute houses among Tupí-speaking groups) and periods of migratory movements, whether in search of game animals or the utopian Land-without-Evil. Even among the more sedentary Arawak-speaking peoples of the upper Río Negro region, we find frequent movements into remote uninhabited headwaters of small rivers and streams to exploit richer fish and game resources or to take refuge from oppressive economic and political conditions in more accessible mainstream sites (Wright 1981; Hill 1996).

Moreover, it is precisely because these Arawak-speaking peoples have established such deep historical ties to specific regions (see Heckenberger, this volume; Hill, this volume; Virtanen, this volume) that they are able to travel across great expanses of geographic space and return to the centers of ritual power and mythic creation.<sup>2</sup> As Leal Xavier has written about the Baniwa, an Arawak-speaking group of the Isana river basin in Brazil, "The Baniwa are in the first place great travellers, just like their founding [mythic] heroes" (2008:10, our translation). The history of these regional and long-distance journeys is commemorated in petroglyphs throughout the upper Río Negro region (González Náñez 1980; Leal Xavier 2008), in highly elaborate mythic narratives about the opening up of an expanding world of peoples and places (Wright 1998; ACIRA/FOIRN 1999; Hill 2009b), and in ritually powerful chants that read this history onto the individual life histories of male and female initiates undergoing passage to adulthood (Hill 1993, this volume).

This mythic process of expansion, described in narratives as the result of groups of men and women playing sacred flutes and trumpets in various downstream and upstream regions, outlines a series of journeys away from and back to the mythic center, or place of ancestral emergence. This indigenous, mythic vision of history as a process of journeying and opening up political-economic relations of exchange with other peoples across a vast stretch of riverine territories, always departing from and returning to a mythic center, is entirely consistent with one of the central arguments of this book: that the expansion and dispersal of Arawak-speaking peoples across lowland South America are better understood as a complex process of ethno-genesis based on regional and long-distance travel and trade than as a simple movement of Arawak-speaking peoples across an empty landscape.

Long-distance travel and trade depend on the existence of a shared sense of civil order among local groups who collectively control access to mainstream riverine territories and those who wish to visit, exchange, or simply pass through the region. This situation is exactly how Wakuénai (Curripaco) people living along the Guainía River of Colombia and Venezuela explain their political economy of ranked, localized, named, exogamous phratries. Outsiders are allowed to pass through or visit and are to be treated with great respect. Ritual advice given to male and female initiates after the performance of *malikái* chants to bless their first meal (*kalidzamai*) as adults makes this semiotic ideology of sharing with and welcoming visitors very clear:

*Apáda nawíki nahliúkawa panáku, pikápawátsa phiúmi nawíki  
Pikápawátsa phiúmi yárinanáitsaka, wanéwe wéyma nápekúriko!  
Pikápawátsa phiúmi nawíki!*

When other people arrive at your house, you share with all people,  
You share with white people, we live together with all of them!  
You share with all people!

However, if outsiders begin to make gardens, fish traps, or otherwise exploit natural resources on a long-term basis without asking for and receiving permission from local people, the entire set of patrisibs can unite as a defensive force to evict the intruders.

Ideologies of a shared civil order that are put on full public display in major rituals and ceremonies are grounded in a multitude of little rituals that pervade everyday social life. Registers of affinal civility, for example, show how ideologies of civil order are continually being constructed at the most intimate level of domestic, interpersonal relations and, through extension beyond households, to social networks and trading partnerships that cut across households, communities, and even entire language groups (see Basso, this volume). In multilingual areas such as the upper Xingú and northwest Amazon, the prevalence of such registers of affinal civility found among speakers of widely diverse languages—Arawak, Carib, Tupí,

Tukano, and so forth—suggests that they work in tandem with large public rituals and a variety of non-verbal metacommunicative activities, such as music, dance, and gesture, in enabling and promoting communication across language barriers.

Although the hydrographical and physical geography of major rivers and tributaries has undoubtedly shaped most long-distance travel in the Amazon and Orinoco basins since the advent of watercraft, it is important to note the frequent use of interfluvial pathways, or shortcuts, that connect major river systems, such as the Cuyarí River and small streams that connect the Isana and Guainía drainage areas, or the portage between Maroa on the Guainía River and the Temi-Atacavi Rivers, allowing travel via the Atabapo River to the middle and upper Orinoco and all its vast network of tributaries (Cataniapo, Cunucunuma, Ventuari, Casiquiare, Siapa, Guaviare, Inirida, Meta, etc.).<sup>3</sup> In a similar manner, an extensive network of forest trails connects the “Southern Tier” of Arawak-speaking peoples living in headwater regions of the Xingú, Purús, Madre de Díos, and other southern tributaries of the Amazon River (see Heckenberger 2002, this volume). Such interfluvial shortcuts may help explain the very early stylistic connections between the upper Amazon and the Orinoco (cf. Lathrap 1970), apparently without the mediation of the middle Amazon and Río Negro, where no related ceramics of similar age have been found (cf. Hornborg and Eriksen, this volume).<sup>4</sup>

When understood in broad, pan-semiotic terms as verbally transmitted cultures and associated non-verbal communicative practices—body ornamentation, dance, music, visual imagery, and so forth—languages play a central role in the construction of civil-political orders that allow people to travel and trade across geographic distances and social boundaries. The frequency and intensity of multilingualism, cross-linguistic ties, and the development of transethnic identities are found in many widely separate regions of lowland South America where Arawak-speaking people have resided over long periods of time in close proximity to or interaction with other peoples who are linguistically different: for example, with Eastern Tukano-speakers in northwestern Amazonia (Aikhenvald 2002, 2003), with Carib speakers in the Antilles (Santos-Granero 2002; Whitehead 2002; Carlin, this volume), and with Pano speakers in eastern Peru (Santos-Granero 2002; DeBoer, this volume; Hornborg and Eriksen, this volume). “That these linguistic processes have taken place in such diverse situations of interethnic contact strongly suggests they are intrinsic to Arawakan constructions of social identity” (Hill and Santos-Granero 2002:17). Such “creolizations” of languages and ethnic identities are the result of intensive regional and interregional exchanges over many centuries of contact and in turn form the communicative basis for allowing the expansion and persistence of long-distance trade over time.<sup>5</sup> In many areas, intercommunal relations of respect and reciprocity are also constructed through non-verbal ceremonial practices, such as collective singing of vocables (non- or semilexical sounds), percussion, and dancing and the playing of flutes, trumpets, and other wind instruments. A strong associ-

ation between Arawak speakers and the making and playing of an elaborate array of wind instruments is found throughout northwestern Amazonia, the upper Xingú, and across most of the Southern Tier of Arawak-speaking communities (Izikowitz 1935:227, 235, 242; Hornborg and Eriksen, this volume, Map 6.1; Eriksen 2011; Piedade 2011) but is noticeably absent among Arawak speakers of eastern Peru (e.g., Machiguenga, Ashaninka, and Piro).<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, it is worth hypothesizing that collective music making and dancing played a central role in the expansion and dispersal of Arawak-speaking peoples across lowland South America, given the centrality of these musical instruments and performances in the ritual practices and associated mythic narratives among so many contemporary Arawak-speaking peoples.<sup>7</sup>

Ritual hierarchy figures prominently as a source of asymmetrical social formations among many Arawak-speaking peoples. Such hierarchies are based on centralized knowledge of and ability to perform ritually powerful ways of speaking—narrating, orating, chanting, and singing—and collective enactments of such ritual power, usually by groups of men led by ritual specialists in the making and playing of sacred wind instruments. Among many Arawak-speaking peoples, the integration of sacred instrumental music with shamanic powers is so complete that we can refer to these collective performances as “shamanic musical configurations,” or analytical units in which shamanic and musical spheres are systematically linked together (Hill and Chaumeil 2011). Similar instrumental performances and wind ensembles are also widespread among Tupí, Carib, Sáliva, Tukano, and Yagua speakers of lowland South America. What appears to distinguish Arawak-speaking peoples’ from these other linguistic groups’ uses of ritual wind instruments is the degree to which they are put to use as direct expressions, or collective amplifications, of the hierarchical ritual powers of shamans and other specialists (Hill 2009a; Cruz Mello 2011; Piedade 2011). These shamanic musical configurations are ways of putting into practice a very powerful hierarchical concept: the ideal of perfect transmission of linguistic and cultural forms across many generations, between mythic ancestors and human descendants, both living and dead. Although such ideals are most clearly illustrated today among Arawak-speaking peoples of northwestern Amazonia (Baniwa, Wakuénai-Curripaco, Guarequena, and Piapoco), the Southern Tier (Enawenê-nawê), and upper Xingú (Waurá, Mehináku, and Yawalapiti), similar practices of ancestor veneration are also found among neighboring Eastern Tukano speakers of the Vaupés basin (Hugh-Jones 2009). Among Carib-speaking peoples of the Guyana Shield region, leaders of the Alleluia religion have developed a genre of memory verses (*maiýin*) that are believed to be the only words that will still exist after the end of time; these verbal forms will persist even after their contemporary meanings have long since disappeared (Hill and Staats 2002). The ongoing construction of ritual hierarchies such as these are central to the ways in which many Arawak-speaking peoples and some other indigenous Amazonian peoples have established deep historical ties to specific places and regions.

All these indigenous cultural forms of verbal-cultural creativity are unfolding today in contexts of the globalizing nation-states of Latin America and through the historical processes of expanding colonial and national states as well as the associated catastrophic losses of life, autonomy, land, and other resources for indigenous peoples of lowland South America. In the waning years of the twentieth century and first decade of the twenty-first, indigenous Amazonian peoples have shown a remarkable ability to embrace new technologies and to create new forms of political organization for representing their interests among themselves and at state, regional, national, and global levels. Rapid intergenerational shifts are unfolding in villages, towns, and cities across Amazonia and adjacent regions as indigenous peoples move from oral traditions to literacy and from word-of-mouth to the Internet in a matter of years. Researching these contemporary transformations and the emergence of new forms of identity politics has become a rich field of study for ethnologists and historians (see, e.g., Ramos 1988, 1998; Hill 1994, 2009c; Jackson 1995, 1999; Briggs 1996; Whitten 1996; Graham 2002; Turner 2002; Warren and Jackson 2002; Rosengren 2003; Wright 2005, 2009; Cepek 2009; Virtanen 2010; Hutchins and Wilson 2010; Alemán 2011; Ruedas 2011). Because of their concern for documenting ethnogenesis and other long-term historical processes, including not only socio-cultural and historical but also linguistic and archaeological lines of inquiry, the chapters making up *Ethnicity in Ancient Amazonia* are directly relevant to the rapidly changing cultural politics of indigeneity in Amazonia. The past lives on in the present in a diversity of ways, and the struggles of today's indigenous peoples to create new political and cultural spaces for persisting within the globalizing nation-states of South America both are shaped by and give new form and meaning to cultural transformations that have been under way in Amazonia for at least two millennia.

As wrong as it would be to ignore the momentous historical events and forces of colonial and national state expansions in South America while trying to understand contemporary indigenous forms of creativity and identity, it would be just as incorrect to assert that these contemporary practices have little or no relevance for understanding long-term processes that have been unfolding in lowland South America for at least two millennia and that "pre-contact" Amazonian peoples lived in some pristine, "prehistoric" state of nature. The concept of ethnogenesis, first used in an Amazonian context by Norman Whitten in *Sacha Runa* (1976) and later developed in *History, Power, and Identity* (Hill 1996) and other works (e.g., Clifford 2004), offers a way out of the essentializing of "peoples without history," whether in past or present times. This approach is rooted in Fredrik Barth's pioneering approach (1969) to social differentiation as a process of ethnic boundary-marking and also builds on Edward Spicer's concept of "persistent identity systems" (1982) that have endured across centuries of colonial domination. More recently, James Clifford has drawn upon ethnogenesis and related concepts to argue that emerging indigenous American identities are better understood as a creative process

of “authentically remaking” rather than “a wholly new genesis, a made-up identity, a postmodernist ‘simulacrum,’ or the rather narrowly political ‘invention of tradition’ analyzed by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), with its contrast of lived custom and artificial tradition” (2004:20). *Ethnicity in Ancient Amazonia* expands on Clifford’s characterization of ethnogenesis as a process of “authentically remaking” new social identities through creatively rediscovering and refashioning components of “tradition,” such as oral narratives, written texts, and material artifacts. We can see this ethnogenetic process of authentically remaking identities at work not only in the efforts of contemporary Native American peoples struggling to refashion identities through their ancestors’ material artifacts, which are now stored in heritage museums (Clifford 2004), and in the ongoing constructions of ritual power and deep history among Arawak-speaking peoples living in the upper Xingú, other regions of southern Brazil (see Heckenberger, this volume; Virtanen, this volume), and northwestern Amazonia (see Hill, this volume), but even in the continuous reconstruction of ceremonial and burial mounds built from Amazonian dark earth mixed with contemporaneous and earlier ceramics over a 1,300-year period in the central Amazon basin (see Neves, this volume).<sup>8</sup>

The concept of ethnogenesis, broadly defined as “a concept encompassing peoples’ simultaneously cultural and political struggles to create enduring identities in general contexts of radical change and discontinuity” (Hill 1996:1), when combined with a concern for long-term historical change and long-distance travel and trade across widely separate geographic regions, allows for an integrated historical, linguistic, and archaeological approach to studies of pre- and post-contact transformations of indigenous Amazonian social identities and human landscapes. While acknowledging the profound changes brought about by European colonization and the rise of independent nation-states, we must also avoid essentializing approaches that categorize pre-contact indigenous Americans as “peoples without history” or post-contact indigenous identities as merely artificial “reinventions” of past cultures. The constructivist approach advocated in this book rejects naively primordialist as well as purely instrumentalist perspectives on ethnicity. As recently argued by Alexiades (2009:28), an increased awareness of the contingency, dynamism, and fluidity of indigenous societies in Amazonia in no way undermines the legitimacy of their struggles to safeguard the profound connections that they have established with the land.

## NOTES

1. This tentative agreement is reached even when the issue of linguistic expansion is addressed in terms of directions and recency of migration (Danielsen et al., this volume). As the authors observe, “the fact that many Arawakan languages were in intense contact with their neighbors further complicates the classification.” This should hold true whether these

neighbors were speakers of Arawak or non-Arawak languages. Hopefully future research in historical linguistics will be able to illuminate not only directions and recency of linguistic flows but relative densities of interaction within ancient exchange networks.

2. One measure of the strength of these attachments between social groups and geographic places is the fact that a small group of Baniwa elders from the Hohódeni phratry returned to their lands along the upper Aiari River in the early nineteenth century after a period of captivity and forced labor in Brazilian plantations along the lower Amazon (Wright 1981). Upon their return, the Hohódeni rekindled relations of ceremonial exchange and affinal alliance with members of the Waríperídakéna phratry. In addition, the Hohódeni negotiated an agreement for regular access to Waríperídakéna fishing grounds along the lower Aiari in exchange for permission for the latter to cut gardens in Hohódeni lands along the upper Aiari (*ibid.*, 18).

3. We are grateful to John Hemming (personal communication, 2007) for sharing historical anecdotes that heightened our interest in these overland routes.

4. Also, similar pathways connected Carib-speaking peoples across the Essequibo basin in Guyana and the southern tributaries of the Orinoco (Caroní, Baura), allowing trade relations from the Ye'kuana in the upper Orinoco basin into the lower Orinoco and coastal and inland areas to the east. When these networks were disrupted in the late colonial period by Spanish (Capuchin) missions on the Caroní and the building of forts and missions along the lower Orinoco (Angostura) and upper Orinoco (Esmeralda, San Fernando de Atabapo), the Ye'kuana led a multiethnic uprising in 1776 that drove the Spanish out of the upper Orinoco region for the next 150 years. To reach Dutch trading posts in Guyana after 1776, the Ye'kuana went south through their Arawak-speaking allies' territories along the Casiquire and Río Negro and then north via the Río Branco, where they could cross by land to the headwaters of the Essequibo (Civrieux 1980; Guss 1986).

5. It is instructive to note that the Xinguano cultural synthesis of Tupí, Carib, and Arawak speakers (see Heckenberger, this volume; Basso, this volume) does not display high rates of multilingualism or the emergence of such "creolized" or hybrid languages. Rather, each individual Xinguano community maintains its own distinct language. This illustrates how intensive interaction can contribute to, rather than reduce, ethnolinguistic diversity. A counter-example is the linguistic situation on the southern border between Guyana and Surinam, where the Carib-speaking Waiwai appear to have absorbed several other ethnolinguistic groups (Carlin, this volume).

6. The Yanesha appear to be the only exception to this absence of wind instruments among sub-Andean Arawak-speaking peoples, since they make and play an elaborate array of panpipes and end-blown flutes (Santos-Granero, personal communication, 2009).

7. The process of musically opening up the world is collectively performed in Baniwa and Wakuénai (Curripaco) male initiation rituals along the Isana and Guainía Rivers. At the very end of these rituals, groups of men send the primordial human being of myth (Kuwái) back to the forests and rivers by playing sacred flutes as they embark in a canoe. The sound of these flutes fading slowly into the distance, or the movement of mythic ancestral power across geographic space, replicates on a micro-social scale the series of place-names and movements that are verbally performed in the long series of *malikái* chants and songs for the initiates' sacred food (see Hill, this volume). Readers can listen to all these ritual chants, musical performances, and mythic narratives online at the website of the Archives of Indigenous

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Languages of Latin America (AILLA) ([www.ailla.utexas.org](http://www.ailla.utexas.org)) by navigating to the Kurripaco collection (KPC002). A recording of the final performance at the end of a male initiation held in March 1985 is located at KPC002R002I019, 00'14"-09'55".

8. These mounds were built with large amounts of Amazonian dark earth (ADE) mixed with "sherds from all three ceramic complexes of the site" and display "horizontal, parallel placement" of many large sherds within several mounds (Neves and Petersen 2005:296). They are thus not only concrete manifestations of the recursivity among environmental history, high-intensity landscape management, and hierarchical political economies but also illustrative of ethnogenesis as a process of authentically remaking new social identities through creatively rediscovering and refashioning components of "tradition," such as oral narratives, written texts, and material artifacts.

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P A R T I

**ARCHAEOLOGY**



Archaeological Cultures and Past Identities  
in the Pre-colonial Central Amazon

*Eduardo Góes Neves*

## INTRODUCTION

Archaeologists are well aware that a simple association between patterns in the archaeological record and ethnographic or ethnohistorical patterns is highly problematic. The ethnographic literature on lowland South America is full of examples of multilingual regional systems where different language groups share, for instance, the use of the same pottery, occupy villages with similar spatial layout, and even produce and consume the same basic foodstuffs. Such examples show that there is no simple correlation between the dynamic functioning of social systems and the static dimension of the archaeological record. In the particular case of Amazonia and northern South America the ethnographic and ethnohistorical literature is full of evidence that in the sixteenth century AD, and in some areas up until the present, local indigenous groups were regionally integrated in multiethnic networks including specialized production and exchange of goods, mobilization for warfare, and a periodic condensation into hierarchical, chiefdom-like social formations. These social formations were multilingualistic, with a patterning in material culture generated by



**FIGURE 2.1.** *View of typical floodplain setting. A floodplain (várzea) lake with the Solimões River in the background seen from a high bluff in the central Amazon. Floodplain settings, especially along white-water rivers, provide myriad food resources that sustained sedentary life in the first millennium AD in the central Amazon. (Photo by Eduardo Neves)*

exchange networks, although they sometimes developed lingua francas or pidgins. It is likely that many of the Amazonian social formations in the 500 years that preceded the European conquest had this general structural pattern (Neves 2008).

Since at least the 1960s, there have been many case studies demonstrating that there is no universal correlation between language and material culture. Such studies have indeed generated some of the major theoretical changes experienced by Anglo-American archaeology in the period, for example, the development of the processual and post-processual approaches. Cautionary examples are very common and not restricted to lowland South America alone. Because of this, starting in the 1960s, many archaeologists distanced themselves from the ambition to establish reconstructions of ethnic boundaries in the past based on the archaeological record. The underlying premise in such avoidance is the notion that cultural behavior varies under a much finer resolution than what can be visible from the normally coarser dimensions of the archaeological record.



In lowland South America, the association between patterns of language distribution and the expansion of ethnic groups in the past was initially proposed, almost 100 years ago, by Max Schmidt. Erland Nordenskiöld, in his brief but insightful synthesis of Amazonian archaeology, took that correlation further, proposing an association between early Arawak expansions and the wide distribution of Incised-modeled ceramics decorated with bird heads, found in distant places such as Trinidad, the Antilles, the lower Amazon, and the delta of the Paraná River (Nordenskiöld 1930). For Nordenskiöld, this wide distribution reflected the fact that, in lowland South America, the three major river basins—Orinoco, Amazon, and Paraná—are all geographically integrated.

Donald Lathrap's "cardiac model" (1970, 1977) and the hypotheses generated by it (Brochado 1984; Oliver 1989) constitute one of the most creative sets of hypotheses proposed for lowland South American archaeology since World War II. Building on earlier ideas proposed by Max Schmidt, Erland Nordenskiöld, Julio C. Tello, and Carl Sauer, Lathrap's model derived its theoretical power from a balanced combination of insights from cultural geography, cultural anthropology, linguistics, and archaeology. At a time when archaeology was being overwhelmed by processualism, the cardiac model, through its recycling of some cherished principles of

the culture historical approach such as the correlation of languages and ceramic complexes, provided archaeologists working in the lowlands with a hypothetical way of tracing the expansion of languages and ethnic groups in the past. More than that, it offered archaeology as a powerful tool for understanding the long-term history of indigenous peoples of the lowlands. Lathrap elegantly formulated a series of hypotheses proposing an association between patterns of distribution of languages from the Arawak and Tupí-Guaraní families and agricultural expansions in the past. Together with his former graduate students José Brochado and José Oliver, Lathrap proposed that the central Amazon was an early center of population dispersal affecting the whole South American continent (Lathrap 1970, 1977; Brochado 1984; Oliver 1989). For these authors such dispersals were the result of processes of population growth and agricultural colonization of the fertile floodplains of the Amazon basin, leading eventually to the occupation of other alluvial and non-alluvial settings further away in South America. Perhaps the greatest merit of this “cardiac hypothesis” was that it proposed an actual mechanism for diffusion. In this case, diffusionism was not employed as an obscure explanatory device but as something to be explained. The expansion of people, languages, and ceramic styles was seen as the result of population growth in well-adapted agricultural groups colonizing contiguous areas in alluvial settings. Lathrap’s brand of diffusionism was in many ways similar to the demic diffusion hypothesis proposed by Ammerman and Cavalli-Sforza to explain the distributions of languages and genetic frequencies in the European Neolithic (Ammermann and Cavalli-Sforza 1984).

A brief restatement of Lathrap’s hypothesis can be summarized as follows. An area located in the central Amazon, between the mouth of the Negro and Madeira Rivers, was the center of long-term and continuous occupations going back to the early Holocene. The archaeological record of these occupations is characterized by the production of early polychrome ceramics with dates going back to ca. 6000 years BP (Lathrap and Oliver 1987). Even earlier ceramics, related to the Barrancoid series at the mouth of the Orinoco, but with earlier dates (Rouse 1985), were to be found in this core area. Such early ceramic complexes would represent the occupation of speakers of proto-Tupí and proto-Arawak languages. The successful adaptation of these early groups to floodplain settings would have led to their demographic expansion through demic diffusion to the adjacent floodplains of the upper and lower Amazon, as well as up the Río Negro and the Madeira. This process would eventually have brought speakers of Tupí-Guaraní and Arawak languages to areas very distant from the central Amazon, including the Caribbean islands, the Atlantic shore of what is now Brazil, the Andean foothills, and the Chaco.

Lathrap’s work focused on the dispersal of peoples that spoke languages from the Tupí-Guaraní, Arawak, and Pano linguistic families. For him, such population and language dispersals would have been correlated with the expansion of ceramics of the Polychrome tradition in the case of Tupí-Guaraní speakers, of Barrancoid or

Incised-rim ceramics in the case of Arawak speakers, and of the Cumancaya tradition in the case of the Panoans.

However, work done in the central Amazon after the publication of Lathrap's original hypothesis showed that the archaeological record did not match his expectations (Heckenberger 1998; Neves 2008). One might thus expect that the search for indications of ethnic or linguistic expansions in the archaeological record of lowland South America would be in vain. On one hand, the ethnographic literature confirms the clear methodological problems of such attempts. On the other hand, efforts in that direction, such as Lathrap's, were not matched by the archaeological record.

Do these problems suggest that one should abandon the search for such correlations? I will argue in this chapter that correlations of this kind can and need to be done if one is willing to integrate archaeology and cultural anthropology in understanding the long-term history of occupation of lowland South America. To do so, one needs to turn to the archaeological literature to examine how this methodological problem is being dealt with in other contexts across the world. Such examination can give us powerful conceptual tools with which to readdress that same old question. The good news is that lowland South American archaeology has been going through considerable advances in the last ten or fifteen years. Such advances have been freeing the discipline from an exclusive reliance on the traditional, ceramic-based typological approach as the major source of information about the past. Today we have much more data on other dimensions of variation in the archaeological record, such as site size and shape, settlement patterns, regional chronologies, and so forth. Such data, employed with new methodological tools, show that there are indeed consistent ways in which, for instance, changes in ceramic style and technology covaried in regional sequences with changes in settlement layout or settlement patterns. Such differences can be interpreted as the material imprint of different ethnic groups or regional systems in the past.

### **THE FARMING-LANGUAGE DISPERSAL HYPOTHESIS IN LOWLAND SOUTH AMERICA**

If the search for past ethnic boundaries in the archaeological record were a methodological dead end, it should at this point have been altogether abandoned by the discipline. However, this is far from the truth. In different parts of the world, but notably in Europe and the Pacific, archaeologists have been postulating hypotheses that correlate population expansion in the past with current patterns of distribution of archaeological sites, contemporary languages, and human population genetics (Kirch 2000; Renfrew 2000; Bellwood and Renfrew 2002; Anthony 2007). One particular manifestation of this perspective is the "farming-language dispersal hypothesis." This hypothesis proposes that the distribution of some of the

most widespread language families reflects demographic dispersals resulting from the adoption of farming by different populations of the world. For example, the dispersal of the Lapita complex of objects, including stamp-decorated ceramics, in Melanesia and western Polynesia is postulated to correlate with the early expansion of Austronesian speakers in the area. In the same way, the expansion of linear band ceramics in western Europe would correlate with the expansion of farmers speaking ancient Indo-European languages ultimately deriving from Anatolia, and so forth with Bantu languages in sub-Saharan Africa and Arawakan languages (correlated with the spread of Saladoid ceramics) in the insular Caribbean. These cases demonstrate that the farming-language dispersal hypothesis (FLDH) remains a powerful paradigm in archaeology today, recycling some of the cherished themes of cultural-historical archaeology that were almost abandoned by the discipline, such as the use of diffusionism as an explanatory device and the correlation between the distributions of languages and artifacts (Bellwood and Renfrew 2002).

For several reasons, the archaeology of lowland South America could provide a good testing ground for FLDH. Such an attempt, however, has never been made. Among the reasons to do so is the fact that the area has one of the widest distributions of linguistic families in the world. For instance, while most contemporary European languages belong to a single language family, the Indo-European, there are in lowland South America at least four large families with continental-scale distributions—Arawak, Tupí-Guaraní, Carib, and Gê—together with several other families with extensive regional distributions, such as Pano and Tukanoan, and several isolated languages with no established connection to other languages or language families in the area (see Maps 1.1, 10.1, 10.3, and 10.4). Another reason to test the strength of FLDH in lowland South America is that there have never been large state-like social formations in the area. It is known that such social formations can have a skewing effect on the distribution of languages on a continental scale, such as happened with Quechua in Andean South America and Latin in Europe. So, whichever were the means for language dispersal in lowland South America, the development of the state was not one of them.

To test the FLDH a series of assumptions has to be made. First, one needs to be willing to accept that there is, to some measure, a positive correlation between language variability and variability in the archaeological record. In other words, since languages cannot be excavated and since there were no writing systems known in pre-colonial Amazonia, the variability in the archaeological record can be used as a proxy for language variability in the past. Such an assumption, however, although necessary to address the questions raised here, is extremely complex.

How, then, can archaeologists working in the lowland South American tropics, where ceramic artifacts and their distribution patterns are the primary archaeological record, establish a long-term history of indigenous peoples before the arrival of the Europeans? First they need to look for other dimensions of variability beyond

the study of pottery alone. In the words of Anthony (2007:131), who has studied the question of early Indo-European expansion, “what makes an archaeological culture interesting, and meaningful, is the co-occurrence of many similar customs, crafts, and dwelling styles across a region, including, in addition to ceramics, grave types, house types, settlement types (the arrangement of houses in the typical settlement), tool types, and ritual symbols.” Such an approach mirrors in many ways Gordon Childe’s early definition of archaeological culture, proposed almost sixty years ago.

Archaeologists must, moreover, aim to identify the historical contexts where correlations between languages and variability in the archaeological record can be stronger. This is an important point because it frees one from the rigid opposition between those who accept and those who do not accept the possibility of establishing such correlations. In other words, the question becomes not so much whether this can or cannot be done but rather one of defining the contexts in which it can be done.

Which contexts could these be? First, there are the cases of rapid colonization of previously empty areas (Renfrew 2000). This was, for instance, what happened in western Polynesia, where an association between the Lapita complex, identified by patterns in the archaeological record including rock-stamped pottery, and a branch of the Austronesian language family was established (Kirch 2000). Other potential contexts for such correlation could be the initial decades or centuries of occupation of a previously settled area by external populations arriving with a new technology or a different political, religious, or ideological system (Renfrew 2000). This is what happened in the insular Caribbean when the early Arawak-speaking colonizers brought with them Saladoid pottery and settled in ring-shaped villages dating back to ca. 500 BC (Rouse 1992; Petersen 1996). This was also the case in the colonization of the Atlantic shore of eastern and southern Brazil by the Tupinambá and Guarani Indians, who spoke languages of the Tupí-Guarani family and are associated with sites yielding a distinctive pottery with polychrome decoration. The Tupinambá, who arrived in the area around the beginning of the Christian era or even earlier, completely replaced the shell-mound builders who had lived there for millennia. In both these New World cases, the replacement can be explained by the fact that the newcomers brought with them a different technology. In the particular context of the Tupinambá, the colonizers also brought a political system based on warfare, captive-taking, and cannibalism that was clearly associated with the expansion of these groups (Gaspar et al. 2008; Noelli 2008).

Turning back to the Amazon, would it, in light of the previous discussion, be possible to identify a historical context where a stronger correlation between ancient languages and patterns in the archaeological record could be established? The answer is probably positive. In much of the Amazon, such a context developed around the beginning of the Christian era. This was the time when a true cultural explosion occurred in the area, marked by the replacement in some areas of long-established lifestyles going back to the early Holocene by a different, general pattern

of economic and social organization that prevailed until the arrival of the Europeans and in some cases until today. In accordance with FLDH, these changes may have been initiated by the expansion of agricultural-based societies over areas previously occupied by societies with economies based on a wide range of resources, including the cultivation of domesticated plants but also fishing, foraging, and agroforestry.

Agricultural-based societies, in this reasoning, are those groups who rely on agriculture to provide for most of their foodstuffs. I am here following the principle that plant domestication and agriculture are distinct processes: although the former was a prerequisite for the latter, there is no universal rule that establishes that plant domestication will inevitably and eventually lead to the emergence of agriculture (Rindos 1984). Accordingly, there are recurrent cases in Amazonia of typical hunter-gatherers, such as the Nukak, who have domesticated plants as part of their food base (Politis 1996), or of groups, mostly Tupí-Guaraní speakers, who alternate over time between being agriculturalists and hunter-gatherers (Fausto 2001). Instead of merely being answers to the pressures exerted by current national occupations of the area, this was probably a recurrent pattern in pre-colonial Amazonia, as will be shown below.

However, contrary to what was the case in Europe, Polynesia, or sub-Saharan Africa, we do not find in tropical lowland South America a prevalence of a single language expansion over wide expanses. Rather, there is a mosaic-like pattern with several language families and many small families or isolated languages distributed on a continental scale. This is probably explained by a number of factors. First, there is the widespread absence of domestic animals as sources of food or work in the lowlands. It is known that the presence of domestic animals in productive systems can provide an abundant and predictable supply of protein and fat, obviating the need for access to wild resources (Harris 2002:33). Such changes, in turn, provide the conditions for population growth, leading eventually to demographic expansion. Productive systems based on the exploitation of wild animals, even where they are abundant, such as the case of the alluvial settings of the Amazon, normally bind hunter-gatherers to their territories and do not lead to large-scale population dispersals (Harris 2002:32). In the Amazon, animals were not domesticated because they were so abundant, mostly along alluvial settings. In other words, there has been little selective pressure for animal domestication, given the wide availability of fish and aquatic mammals. In terrestrial settings, on the other hand, there are few potentially “domesticable” animals: most terrestrial mammals are solitary and nocturnal; indeed, a lot of the biomass in the rainforest does not live on the ground but in the canopy. The strongest candidate for a domesticated land mammal is the peccary, which lives in packs. Its behavior, however, is too unpredictable and aggressive to allow for domestication.

Another factor that may account for the great linguistic diversity in the tropical lowlands of South America is that no single agricultural system developed into

predominance there in pre-colonial times (Denevan 2001). If this observation is correct, it is possible that the strong reliance on manioc cultivation, which defines the tropical forest culture pattern, may have been a historical consequence of the onset of European colonization (Denevan 2001; Perry 2005). This is not to deny that manioc was an important crop in pre-colonial agricultural or agroforestry systems of the Amazon, but rather to observe that it was but a component of more diversified systems. Interestingly enough, however, there is so far little, if any, direct evidence of pre-colonial manioc cultivation in the Amazon. The study of chipped stones from griddles of the upper Orinoco area of Venezuela has merely shown that these artifacts were used for the grating and processing of a number of roots and tubers, including *Dioscorea* (Perry 2005). In the central Amazon, despite good conditions of preservation, so far no evidence of manioc cultivation has been found from a record of 2,000 years of human occupation. Moreover, in areas such as Marajó Island, at the mouth of the Amazon, no evidence whatsoever of agriculture has been found so far, despite the presence of artificial earth mounds and elaborated pottery (Roosevelt 1991; Schaan 2008).

Such observations, when put together, suggest that although plant domestication may have been very ancient in the tropical lowlands, the advent of predominantly agricultural-based economies was much more recent. The data also show that even in these latter cases it was likely that agriculture was primarily an opportunistic activity based on intense and sophisticated management (with stone axes and fire) of gardens and forest in different stages of ecological succession, rather than the pattern of extensive cultivation (using metal axes and chain saws) of large manioc gardens known today (Denevan 2001).

Summing up the argument, lowland South America has a remarkable linguistic diversity. There is no single linguistic family that dominates the area at a large scale in the same way as Indo-European in Europe or Bantu in sub-Saharan Africa. Such diversity probably resulted from a conjunction of the opportunistic and variable nature of the agroforestry systems that developed in the area, without the prevalence of one system over the other, and the fact that no social formation associated with a particular language was strong enough to politically expand on a large scale. The result is the pattern of great linguistic and cultural diversity seen in the Amazon today. The expectation is that such diversity would be mirrored in the archaeological record by distinct archaeological cultures. This was indeed the case in the central Amazon, as will be shown here.

## **THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD OF THE CENTRAL AMAZON**

Regional surveys and excavations in a research area comprising ca. 900 km<sup>2</sup> located at the confluence of the Negro and Solimões (Amazon) Rivers have identified more than 100 sites and the stratigraphic excavation and mapping of 12 of these

(Heckenberger, Petersen, and Neves 1999; Petersen, Neves, and Heckenberger 2001; Neves et al. 2003, 2004; Lima, Neves, and Petersen 2006; Neves and Petersen 2006). As mentioned above, Lathrap, Rouse, Brochado, and Oliver proposed that this was a region of long, cumulative, and continuous human occupation from the early Holocene onward, culminating in large population aggregates by the early sixteenth century AD (Lathrap 1970; Oliver 2001). However, no consistent archaeological testing of this hypothesis was undertaken, despite previous preliminary work having been done there (Hilbert 1968; Simões 1974; Simões and Kalkmann 1987).

The identified sites are open-air and covered by garden plots, pasture, fallows of different sizes, or high forest. Most of the sites are quite large and multicomponential. The superimposition of different strata with different ceramic complexes, together with several dozen radiocarbon dates, allowed for the establishment of a chronology that spans ca. 2,000 years, from ca. 500 BC to AD 1500. Some of the sites were cross-dated based on the ceramic remains identified. Early Holocene pre-ceramic occupations were also found in the area, but they will not be discussed here.

A summarized and schematic cultural chronology of the central Amazon is presented in Table 2.1.

The earliest dates found so far for ceramic production in the area go back to the fourth century BC. Data on site size and composition indicate that the process of population growth in the central Amazon was not continuous: although there is a noticeable trend toward increase in site size and density during the second half of the first millennium AD, this trend is abruptly interrupted around the twelfth century AD, when most of the area became occupied with sites with ceramics from the Polychrome tradition.

In the central Amazon, from the seventh to the thirteenth centuries AD, there is an association between ring-shaped sites and ceramics belonging to the

**TABLE 2.1.** Summarized cultural chronology of the central Amazon, including ceramic and contextual data.

<i>Local phase</i>	<i>Tradition</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Site shape</i>	<i>Site size and density</i>
Açutuba	Incised-modeled	400 BC–AD 400	Unidentified	Small, shallow, without visible soil changes
Manacapuru	Incised-modeled	AD 500–900	Ring	Large, deep, associated with <i>terrás pretas</i>
Paredão	?	AD 700–1200	Ring or horseshoe	Large, deep, associated with <i>terrás pretas</i>
Guarita	Polychrome	AD 900–1500	Linear	Small, shallow, sometimes associated with <i>terrás pretas</i>



**FIGURE 2.2.** Composite view of artificial mound associated with occupation of the Paredão phase, Laguinho site. (Photo by Eduardo Neves)

Manacapuru and Paredão phases (Donatti 2003; Moraes 2006). Ring villages in South America are normally associated with the Gê-speaking peoples from the central Brazilian plateau (Wüst and Barreto 1999) or with the first Arawak speakers in the Caribbean (Petersen 1996; Heckenberger 2005), but they were not previously known along the Amazon floodplain (Myers 1973). These villages were occupied over long periods of time, sometimes for centuries, and are archaeologically associated with the construction of small artificial mounds, deep anthropogenic *terra preta* soils, dense ceramic deposits, ample organic remains, and cemeteries with direct or urn burials. Based on this evidence, it is proposed that those ring villages were associated with the establishment of a regional system of interaction in the central Amazon, inferred, for instance, from the evidence of trade of Manacapuru ware in contemporary Paredão sites and vice versa (Donatti 2003; Moraes 2006). This hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that Paredão and Manacapuru occupations were contemporary, but that there is no sign of conflict between them. A contemporary ethnographic parallel to such a regional system may be the upper Xingú area of the southern Amazon.

In the beginning of the second millennium AD, significant changes are clearly visible in the archaeological record of the central Amazon. These changes include the replacement of sites of the Incised-modeled and other local traditions by sites of the Polychrome tradition, and also by the rapid expansion of the Polychrome tradition over a vast area, from the lower Amazon almost to the Andean piedmont in Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. Contrary to the predictions of the cardiac model, such replacement was not a local process of change within the central Amazon. Rather, it was associated with the local establishment there of groups that originated elsewhere in Amazonia. The construction of defensive structures in at least two Paredão phase sites, one of them dating to the eleventh century, shows that this process of replacement may not have been a peaceful one (Neves 2009).

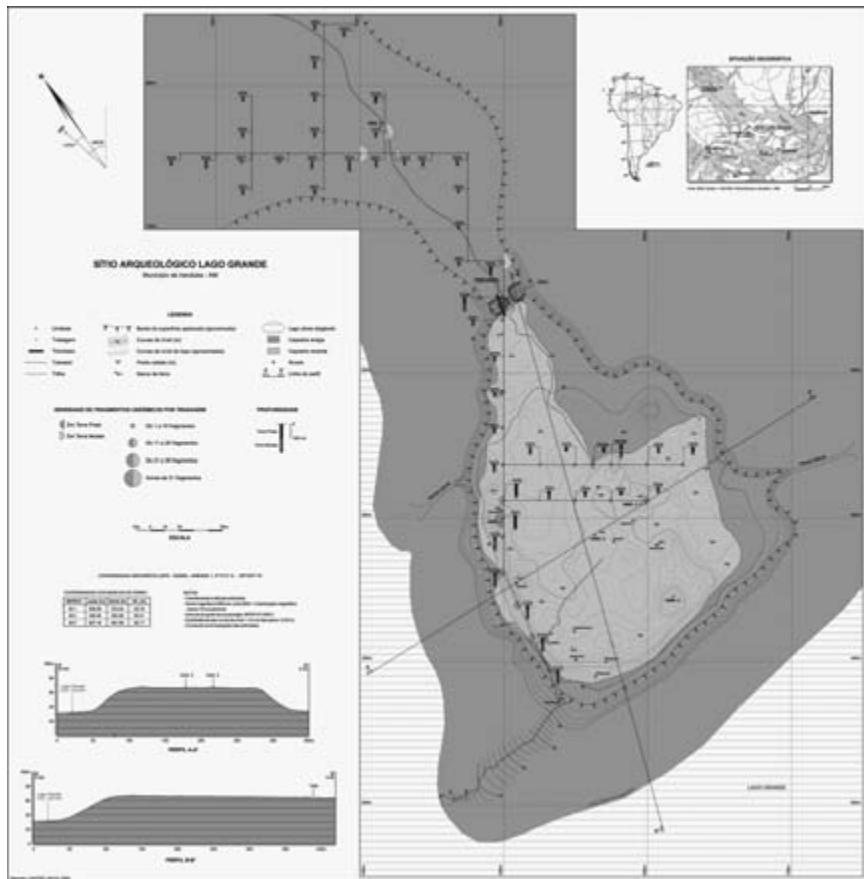


**FIGURE 2-3.** View of Manacapuru funerary urns ready to be removed in boxes from excavation. Also noticeable are two circular pits in the foreground. These features are full of faunal, plant, and ceramic remains, from the Hatahara site. (Photo by Val Moraes)

The cultural chronology of the central Amazon largely converges with what is known about other regional chronologies in the Amazon basin. From the beginning of the Christian era, a widespread and conspicuous pattern of population growth, site aggregation, and anthropogenic landscape changes can be traced throughout the area (Petersen, Neves, and Heckenberger 2001; Neves and Petersen 2006). These changes are matched by the sudden appearance, at different times and places, of large sites with deep stratified ceramic deposits associated with anthropogenic dark soils (Petersen, Neves, and Heckenberger 2001; Kern et al. 2003; Neves et al. 2003, 2004); artificial earthworks (Pärssinen, Schaan, and Ranzi 2009); raised fields and causeways (Denevan 1966; Erickson 2000); large villages surrounded by moats and connected by road networks (Heckenberger et al. 2003; Heckenberger 2005); artificial residential and funerary mounds associated with elaborate pottery (Meggers and Evans 1957; Roosevelt 1991, 1996; Schaan 2001b, 2004); quasi-urban settlement systems also associated with elaborated pottery, polished stone statuettes, and long-ranging trade networks (Roosevelt 1999; Gomes 2002; Nimuendajú 2004); and the construction of circular megalithic structures (Nimuendajú 2004; Cabral and Saldanha 2008). These changes visible in the archaeological record from the beginning of the first millennium AD onward cannot be connected to any single ceramic tradition or cultural group. Indeed, during most of the first millennium AD



**FIGURE 2.4.** Group of circular pits of the Paredão phase exposed prior to excavation, Laguinho site. Dozens of features like this have been mapped and excavated at this site. Their presence is interpreted as an indicator of sedentary occupations there. (Photo by Eduardo Neves)



**FIGURE 2.5.** Plan of Lago Grande site. Lago Grande is a typical ring village of the Paredão phase occupied from the seventh to the eleventh centuries AD. Houses are associated with mounds placed around a central plaza. Toward the end of occupation, in the eleventh century AD, a moat was built on the isthmus connecting the peninsula to the mainland. Soon afterward the site was abandoned only to be briefly reoccupied by a small Guarita phase village. (Drawing by Marcos Castro)

the ceramic remains throughout Amazonia suggest a marked cultural diversity reflected in the simultaneous development of several distinct phases or traditions in different places. The image of cultural diversity expressed in Curt Nimuendajú's ethnohistorical map underscores this impression. If correct, this means that the birth of the "ethnographic present" in lowland South America may date to 2,000 years ago. This assertion does not mean to imply that indigenous societies have not changed in all this time: the archaeological record of the central Amazon is full of

evidence of change all the way to the sixteenth century AD. However, the available data show that the first of the agricultural-based lifestyles that were subsequently formalized into the “tropical forest” pattern date from this period. Indigenous Amazonian societies in the mid-Holocene were likely more mobile and reliant on economies dependent on fishing and foraging, even though plant domestication started in the early Holocene (Neves 2006).

### **INCISED-MODELED AND POLYCHROME CERAMICS AND THEIR RELATION TO ARAWAK AND TUPÍ SPEAKERS**

Barrancoid sites in the lower Orinoco are consistently older than Incised-modeled sites along the Amazon floodplain (Hilbert 1968; Barse 2000; Boomert 2000; Gassón 2002; Lima, Neves, and Petersen 2006), but the similarities between Barrancoid and Incised-modeled ceramics are strong enough not to be overlooked (Evans and Meggers 1968; Hilbert 1968; Boomert 2000). Perhaps the best way to account for this is, on one hand, to accept Lathrap’s hypothesis about a connection between Barrancoid and Incised-modeled ceramics, while rejecting his historical hypothesis about a central Amazonian origin, and, on the other hand, to accept Meggers’s (1997) hypothesis that early Amazonian and lower Orinocan complexes derive from an initial center of production in northern Colombia. Heckenberger (2002) presents a model correlating the expansion of Arawak speakers with the expansion of ring villages, sedentary lifestyles, and Incised-modeled ceramics. The archaeological record of the second half of the first millennium AD in the central Amazon features some of these traits, allowing for the hypothesis that this area was occupied by an Arawak-based regional system. Pushing this hypothesis further, it can be proposed that an earlier center for Arawak expansion was located in what is today northern Colombia. At any rate, it is safe to affirm that the central Amazon was not the place of early Arawak dispersal, although during the first millennium it was most likely occupied by Arawak speakers.

The ethnic and political processes underlying the Polychrome expansion are not clear but have been a focus of research since the 1950s. Initially it was proposed that it had an Andean or circum-Caribbean origin (Meggers and Evans 1957; Evans and Meggers 1968). As better chronologies became available the hypothesis of an external origin was abandoned and a central Amazonian origin was proposed (Lathrap 1970; Brochado 1984; Lathrap and Oliver 1987; Oliver 1989). Nor is the hypothesis of a central Amazonian origin for the Polychrome tradition supported by the available chronologies (Hilbert 1968; Heckenberger, Neves, and Petersen 1998). Along the main channel of the Amazon, the earlier Polychrome sites are related to the Marajoara phase, with dates going back to the fifth century AD (Meggers and Danon 1988:248; Roosevelt 1991:313–314; Schaan 2001a:157), but it is only after AD 750 that dates are more frequent and display a smaller standard

deviation (Boomert 2004:259). In the upper Madeira basin, near the current border between Bolivia and Brazil, Polychrome occupations related to the Jatuarana and Jamari phases have been reported, with dates going back to ca. 700 BC (Miller et al. 1992:41–44, 55). These data show that the production of Polychrome ware started earlier in the upper Madeira basin than at Marajó Island, at the mouth of the Amazon.

By the twelfth and thirteenth centuries AD, most of the floodplains of the Amazon/Solimões and their tributaries were occupied by villages of different size where Polychrome ware was produced. The available data show a clear pattern in the dates: oldest in the upper Madeira, fairly old on Marajó Island, and consistently more recent as one moves upstream from the lower to the upper Amazon (Evans and Meggers 1968; Hilbert 1968; Simões 1974; Herrera, Bray, and McEwan 1980–1981; Brochado and Lathrap 1982; Meggers and Evans 1983; Simões and Kalkmann 1987; Simões and Lopes 1987; Heckenberger, Neves, and Petersen 1998; Schaan 2001a, 2004; Neves and Petersen 2006). Can the Polychrome expansion along the floodplain of the Amazon be correlated with Tupí-Guaraní speakers as proposed by Lathrap, Brochado, and Oliver? There is no single answer. It is likely that by the late 1400s, Amazonian social formations were multiethnic (Whitehead 1994; Hornborg 2005), but it may very well be that the early Polychrome expansion in the central Amazon was associated with a Tupí-Guaraní-related expansion toward the upper Amazon. The foundations for this hypothesis are, first, the fast pace of the Polychrome expansion toward the upper Amazon, similar to the pattern found in the Tupinambá expansion along the Atlantic coast; second, the apparent association of that expansion with warfare, which is also verified among Tupinambá groups on the coast; third, the fact that most Polychrome sites are shallow and not very large, indicating a brief occupation span, which again resonates with Tupinambá archaeology; fourth, the fact that the upper Amazon was occupied in the sixteenth century AD by speakers of Tupí-Guaraní languages, such as the Omagua; and, finally, the fact that the earliest known Polychrome ceramics are found in the upper Madeira, which is also the putative center for the Tupí expansion.<sup>1</sup>

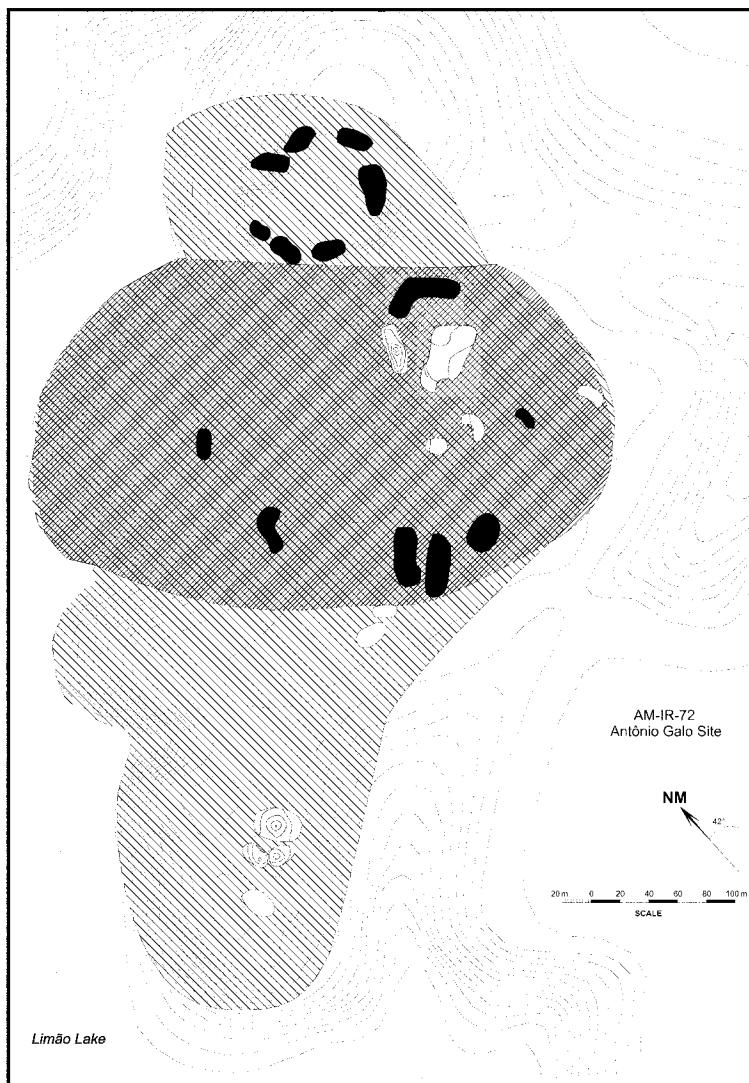
The acceptance of a southwestern, upper Madeira basin origin for the Polychrome tradition may also help us understand an unresolved puzzle of Amazonian archaeology: the fact that there are no signs of Polychrome sites on the lower Tapajós, the Nhamundá, or the Trombetas Rivers, an area where most of the known sites have ceramics that belong to the Incised-punctated tradition (Kondurí and Tapajós). The inception of the Incised-punctated tradition dates from the end of the first millennium AD (Gomes 2002:131), later than the earliest Polychrome sites elsewhere in the Amazon (Roosevelt 1999). The closest similarities with the Incised-punctated tradition are found in the ceramics of the Arauquinoïd series of the middle Orinoco (Zucchi 1985; Navarrete 1999:41), coastal Suriname and coastal French Guyana (Rostain 1994:84; Rostain and Versteeg 2004:239), and in

deposits dating from AD 400 to 1400 (Zucchi 1985). In the Guianese coastal plain, the dates are a little late, starting around AD 600 and going to AD 1600 (Rostain and Versteeg 2004). The Santarém area, the middle Orinoco, and the coastal plain of Suriname and French Guyana lie roughly at the same radial distance from the Guyana plateau, a region predominantly occupied by Carib-speaking groups today, suggesting that both the Arauquinoid series and the Incised-punctated tradition are local manifestations, from the late first millennium AD onward, of a radial Carib expansion toward the Guyanese coast, the middle Orinoco, and the lower Amazon (Brochado and Lathrap 1982; Zucchi 1985).

Summing up this argument, it is likely that by ca. AD 1000 there were some regions in the Amazon that had good matches between patterns of language distribution and patterns in the archaeological record: (1) the association between Panoan speakers and sites with Cumancaya ceramics on the Ucayali River, (2) the association of Tupí-Guaraní speakers and the wave of expansion of the Polychrome tradition from the central Amazon to upper Amazon, (3) the association of Carib speakers and sites with Kondurí and Tapajó ceramics in the Santarém area, and (4) the association between sites with Incised-modeled ceramics with Arawak occupations in places such as the upper Xingú and earlier in the central Amazon. Such strong matches likely disappeared over time, as demographic expansions coalesced and local population densities increased, giving place to the development *in situ* of multiethnic and multilingual regional systems.

## CONCLUSIONS

The data from the central Amazon presented here help us understand the general history of Amazonia during the 1,500 years that preceded the beginning of European colonization. They show that conspicuous differences in ceramic technology and decoration are matched by other dimensions of variability in the archaeological record, including general site layout, length of occupation, and structures such as cemeteries and artificial mounds. These differences are here taken to indicate a record of the establishment of different ethnic groups or multiethnic regional systems. Thus, Manacapurú- and Paredão-related occupations featuring ring villages or ring-shaped structures, deep anthropogenic *terra preta* soils, and artificial residential mounds that were inhabited from the seventh to the twelfth centuries AD are interpreted as the manifestation of an Arawak-based regional system not unlike others described in the literature. The sudden changes in the archaeological record of the area, associated with the replacement of Paredão by Guarita and with modifications in settlement patterns, are interpreted as indicating the arrival in the area of another ethnic group with origins in southwestern Amazonia, the upper Madeira basin. The descendants of these newcomers were the people who settled along the Solimões floodplains just prior to the arrival of the Europeans in the sixteenth century AD.



mounds



Guarita phase occupation



ring village mounds



Paredão phase occupation

**FIGURE 2.6.** *Sítio Antônio Galo. View of Antonio Galo site with ring concentration of mounds on the north side. Paredão phase occupation covered the whole area of the site and is associated with mounds. The Guarita occupation was smaller and covered only the central part of the site. (Drawing by Claude Moraes).*



**FIGURE 2.7.** Typical vessel of the Guarita phase, showing characteristic excised decoration on mesial flange. (Photo by Maurício de Paiva)

The archaeological sequence of the central Amazon is quite long, going back to the early Holocene (Costa 2009). However, evidence of sedentary occupations becomes visible only with Açu tuba phase occupations, dated to the centuries prior to the beginning of the Christian era (Lima, Neves, and Petersen 2006). The same pattern can be seen elsewhere in much of Amazonia, where early evidence of sedentary occupations is also dated to around the beginning of the Christian era (Neves 2006, 2008). Such apparently drastic and sudden changes can be seen as the manifestation in the archaeological record of strong “ethnogenetic” processes working throughout lowland South America during the first millennium AD. It remains to be understood why such changes happened at that time, after almost 10,000 years of human occupation. In the absence of strong palaeo-botanical data, despite advances in recent years it can be proposed that these changes are associated with a stronger reliance on plant cultivation as the major source of food production. However, since plant domestication began several millennia earlier, it is still unclear why it took such a long time until plant cultivation became a major source of food production (Neves 2006, 2009). This suggests a very different scenario from the Near East, where the beginning of agriculture was soon followed by the establishment of sedentary and urban life.

As research on plant domestication, cultivation, and management advances, it is likely that we will be in a better position to understand which different agro-ecological systems prevailed in pre-colonial Amazonia. The strong reliance on manioc cultivation described in the ethnographic literature may be a historical consequence of European colonization in the same way that the potato became a major staple in western Europe after the seventeenth century AD. The wide agro-ecological diversity of the region, which in many ways mirrors the natural biodiversity of the Amazon, can thus partially explain why so many different indigenous languages are spoken in Amazonia today. A better understanding of the cultural, social, and ecological dynamics of the middle Holocene, prior to the beginning of the Christian era, will help us understand how these processes began.

The Amazon basin is a hot spot of natural diversity today and it was a cradle of cultural diversity in the past. Archaeology and cultural anthropology show us that these forms of diversity are intertwined. Nature has been transformed by human action over the millennia in the same way that some patterns of appropriation of nature, such as the “evolutionary choice” of not domesticating animals, can also be related to the natural conditions of ecological diversity and protein abundance of the Amazon. Given such a general background of cultural diversity, it is reasonable that diverse forms of management of nature flourished in the past. This was a recurrent and continuous pattern that tended to reinforce cultural diversity over the millennia.

In this chapter I have tried to show that past cultural variability in the Amazon can be assessed by archaeology if one takes a contextual approach that goes beyond the study of ceramics and includes data on settlement size, shape and length of occupation, the comparison of regional chronologies, and so forth. By following this approach one overcomes the rigid debate on the possibility, or not, of using archaeological data as markers of cultural and linguistic variability and works toward identifying the contexts where such correlations could be established. The truth, once more, may be in the middle. Is there something more Amazonian than this?

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## NOTE

1. The earliest dates for Polychrome sites come from the upper Madeira basin, the same area that, based on genetic evidence, has been proposed as the center for the earliest domestication of manioc, *Manihot esculenta* (Olsen and Schaal 1999), and peach palm, *Bactris gasipaes* (Clement 1999). In fact, these early Polychrome sites of the upper Madeira are earlier than any *terra preta* sites known today in Amazonia (Miller et al. 1992). If *terrás pretas* are formed in contexts of sedentary occupation, thus being markers of specific social and economic conditions, and since the earliest *terrás pretas* are also found in the upper Madeira, together with Polychrome ware, it can be posited that early Polychrome expansion is also correlated with the expansion of manioc and peach-palm farming among Tupí-speaking populations from the upper Madeira basin beginning 2,500 years ago.

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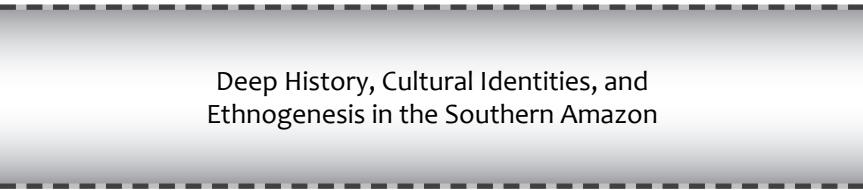
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## Deep History, Cultural Identities, and Ethnogenesis in the Southern Amazon

*Michael Heckenberger*

Ethnogenesis is a widely discussed aspect of cultural change in indigenous Amazonia, generally taken to mean the emergence of a discrete “ethnos” through the mixing of two or more distinctive cultural groups, particularly within the context of European colonialism (Hill 1996). However, little is known in most cases about the actual processes of change, particularly over the long term, including different perspectives on change and continuity operating at multiple scales. Processes of cultural transformation, including major changes within societies and across regional systems, as well as cultural pluralism, are particularly poorly understood for pre-Columbian periods. This is due to a lack of well-documented long-term trajectories of socio-historical change in discrete regions, especially such that can be linked to specific ethnographic cultural groups.

This chapter discusses the southern Amazon periphery and, particularly, the upper Xingú region of the southern Amazon. The Xinguano regional culture has long been known as one of the best cases of ethnogenesis in Amazonia, since peer communities in this regional society speak diverse languages, including Arawak,

Carib, and Tupían languages, yet share the same basic cultural pattern.<sup>1</sup> Recent research demonstrates that, while post-contact changes, particularly during the period from 1700 to 1800, were critical in the genesis of the plural society known today (composed of Arawak, Tupí-Guaraní, or closely related Tupían- and Carib-speaking peoples), pluralism has been part and parcel of Xinguano society and culture throughout much of its long history. This culture history, which extends from before ca. AD 500–800 to present times, is discussed in relation to several major periods, each of which can be seen as representing different aspects of “ethnogenesis”: (1) the early emergence of settled, hierarchical, and regional social formations and the spread of these cultural features, related specifically to ancestors of Arawak and related ethnolinguistic groups, in the lowlands and, particularly, southern Amazon periphery; (2) colonization by early Arawak agriculturalists, ca. AD 500 to 800 or before; (3) development of the regional social formation, characterized by the integration of small territorial polities within a regional peer-polity, by ca. 1250; and (4) post-contact development of the multilingual Xinguano society documented ethnographically, particularly after 1650–1750.

### THE ARAWAK DIASPORA

The dispersal of major language families, notably Arawak, Tupí-Guaraní, and Carib, across tropical lowland South America is a topic that has long interested culture historians. Max Schmidt (1917) was the first to grapple with the question of Arawak distributions and their implications, which historical linguistics and archaeology suggested represented an early dispersal of agriculturalists across the lowlands (Lathrap 1970). The Arawak language family, subdivided into ten major branches, was the most widely distributed language family in 1492, extending from the northern Caribbean, perhaps as far north as Florida, to the southern Amazon and upper Paraguay River and from the western montaña (eastern Andes) to the mouth of the Amazon (Aikhenvald 1999).<sup>2</sup>

Across the Arawak diaspora, certain features are common and suggested to be characteristic of proto-Arawak peoples: a techno-economic system focused on root-crop agriculture and related ceramic artifacts, settled circular plaza village organization and associated plaza ritual, hereditary social hierarchies, and integration within regional societies (Heckenberger 2002, 2005; Hill and Santos-Granero 2002). The Arawak and other linguistic diaspora involved more than a simple “wave of advance” across the lowlands—that is to say, site diffusion through expansion of a single language family—but involved complex patterns of migration, cultural sharing and trait diffusion, and pluralism. This included the development, in late prehistoric times if not before, of regional trade languages, such as in the southern Caribbean and Orinoco (Arawak/Carib), along the Amazon (Kokama and later Nheengatú), and the multiethnic regional system of the Llanos de Mojos (Renard-

Casevitz 2002), as well as complex systems of regional sociopolitical interaction, including elite exchange (Hornborg 2005). In this sense, the choice of the term “diaspora” draws attention to the diversified cultural processes involved, including the historically specific conditions of intersocietal interaction, rather than a simple dispersal or radiation of a singular cultural pattern or bounded, genetically discrete populations.<sup>3</sup>

The early diaspora (ca. 2500–2000 BP) likely involved substantial expansion of actual Arawak speakers across the lowlands. The best and earliest case for this expansion of Arawak-speaking groups, with characteristic ceramics (Saladoid/Barrancoid) and circular plaza communities, is from the Lesser Antilles, based on early dates on the ring village site of Trants on Montserrat by ca. 500 BC, as well as other early examples of circular villages in the Caribbean (Petersen 1996). This site and others of early (Cedrosan) Saladoid in the southern Caribbean suggest an early migration or series of migrations from mainland South America (lower Orinoco), and these people then entered into diverse relations with existing pre-ceramic or early ceramic populations and, in some cases, pluralistic relations with Carib speakers in the southern Lesser Antilles (Wilson 2007).

In the Orinoco, evidence of settlement form associated with earliest Saladoid/Barrancoid peoples is scant, but later groups show the characteristic central plaza orientation. Notably in the Barinas region a sequence of occupations from ca. AD 300 to 1200 are assumed to be ancestral to historically known Arawak speakers in the region, specifically Achagua and Caquetío (Spencer and Redmond 1992; Gassón 2002). In the upper Orinoco and Negro Rivers, Arawak speakers were widely spread if not dominant across the broad northwest Amazon region and were apparently present for several millennia (Zucchi 2002). The central Amazon was also dominated by Arawak speakers historically, with evidence of related circular village and Amazonian Barrancoid (Incised-rim) ceramics at the Osvaldo and Açutuba sites, 200 BC or earlier (Neves 2006; Moraes 2007). Lathrap’s (1970) reconstruction of culture history in the upper Amazon represents another case of early plaza-based settlements with Amazonian Barrancoid ceramics, associated with early Arawak speakers (the Hupa-iya complex, ca. 200 BC), followed by a complex history of cultural interaction.

The southern Amazon has a well-known cluster of Arawak-speaking peoples, the southern branch of the family. Steward and Faron (1959) called these societies “theocratic chiefdoms,” although, unlike Schmidt’s (1917) idea of an Arawak “high culture,” they attributed highland-lowland diffusion as the major impetus for cultural development of chiefdoms throughout the lowlands. They compared these societies, distributed across the borderlands between the Chaco, central Brazil, and the southern Amazonian forests, with sub-Andean areas in northwestern South America and the circum-Caribbean area, notably coastal areas from Guyana to Amapá, occupied by Arawak-speaking Lokono, Palikur, and related peoples and the

western llanos of Venezuela, dominated by Arawak-speaking Caquetio, Achagua, and related peoples.

### THE SOUTHERN AMAZON PERIPHERY

The southern Amazon transitional forest region extends from the upper Xingú headwaters in the east to the Guaporé in the west. It is a complex ecological transition between the high evergreen forests of Amazonia and the wooded savannas and open forests of the central Brazilian highlands (*cerrado*).<sup>4</sup> The overall topography can be characterized by pockets of flat, low-lying, and tropical forested areas, corresponding to the headwater basins of the major rivers (erosional basin formed on the northern flanks of the central Brazilian plateau, 300–600 meters above sea level, which is predominantly *cerrado*, or wooded savanna and scrub forest, vegetation) historically dominated by Arawak-speaking peoples. These basins are separated by rolling topography and more open *cerrado* forests in highland interfluves between the headwater basins, dominated by Tupían- and Gê-speaking and other peoples.

The southern branch of the Arawak family can be subdivided into two principal groups, one composed of western and southern languages, notably including Bauré, Mojo (Ignaciano and Trinitario), Terena/Guana, and likely Chané and Apolista, and the Paresí-Xingú subgroup, composed of Paresí/Arití, Salumá /Enawenê-nawé, Saraveka, and upper Xingú languages (Waurá/Mehináku and Yawalapiti) (Aikhenvald 1999). The historical relationships among these languages are not well understood, although preliminary studies suggest significant divergence and, hence, long-term separation, particularly between the two groups (Payne 1991). The Paresí-Xingú subgroup, the focus here, clearly reflects a closely related group of societies, both linguistically and culturally.

Features such as settled agricultural and fishing economies, plaza village organization, and ritual complex, among other things, are shared with other groups in the broad region but are notable as typical of all Arawak groups. This distribution must be considered against the backdrop of European colonialism, decimating many societies and obscuring patterns relative to earlier periods, which includes different strategies and histories relating to Spanish and Portuguese colonial interests, as well as the history of independent nation-states in more recent times, notably the recognition and protection of indigenous groups in the southern Amazon from the 1920s to 1960s. Nonetheless, the distribution of Arawak-speaking peoples and headwater basins is fairly clear, notably in the Xingú (Xinguano), Tapajós (Paresí and Salumá / Enawenê-nawé), middle Guaporé (Saraveka, Pauneca, Bauré), as well as upper Paraguay (Terena/Guana), associated with the critical importance of their agricultural and fishing economies.

In the southern Amazon in Brazil, four primary groups can be noted: the Arawak, Carib, macro-Tupí, and Macro-Gê. Of particular interest here are the

related groups historically glossed as Paresí (e.g., Paresí/Arití, Salumá/Enawenê-nawé, and Saraveka) and upper Xingú peoples, with three primary subgroups, the so-called Paresí subgroup of southern Arawak. These two groups were so close in many respects that Schmidt (1917) referred to Xinguano as a subgroup of what Pires de Campos (1862) had referred to as the “Paresí nation,” which forms a nearly continuous distribution in low-lying riverine areas from the upper Xingú to the upper Paraguay and eastern Bolivian lowlands.

Various authors have noted the similarity of cultural features among diverse groups across this broad region as reflecting a common history (Schmidt 1914, 1917; Métraux 1942; Oberg 1949, 1953; Denevan 1966; Oliveira 1968). In the southern Amazon, the best evidence for this is ethnological, a core of shared cultural elements, but archaeology in these areas also reveals common features. Each of these areas is culturally diverse, but Arawak groups show notable similarities in terms of subsistence and technology, social organization, house and settlement form, and ritual. The southern Arawak and related groups are a fascinating example of how related groups expand into areas with select ecological conditions (forested bottomlands) and diverge over time as they orient themselves to distinctive social, ecological, and historical conditions (Heckenberger 1996, 2002, 2005). These characteristics are shared with other languages in the southern Amazon but are far more variable.<sup>5</sup>

In the southern Amazon, early ethnohistoric accounts (1600–1750) describe the Bauré peoples of the middle Guaporé, the Paresí, of the Tapajós River headwaters, and the Terena/Guana peoples of the upper Paraguay River as large, densely settled populations, with complicated settlement patterns, developed agriculture, and regional sociopolitical organization. Settled agricultural economies were supplemented primarily by fishing, as the principal source of animal protein. Fish weirs and traps, dunk baskets, and poisoning are features shared by several groups. In two ethnographic cases least impacted by outside influence, Xinguano and Enawenê-nawé, hunting was extremely limited and fishing provided the almost sole source of animal protein. Of particular interest in these two groups is that the construction of large community fish weirs, also reported archaeologically in the Bauré region of eastern Bolivia (Erickson 2000), was a strictly male activity accompanied by sacred flutes that are not allowed to be seen by women.

Bitter manioc was the primary staple crop among Xinguano and Enawenê-nawé, whose traditional subsistence is better known because of its isolation from Western influences, but this also seems to apply to the Paresí (Campos 1862) and Terena (Oberg 1949). The Paresí are noted to process manioc in a manner similar to that used by Xinguanos, unique in Amazonia today, notably using large, low pots and flat mats, and processed manioc was stored in hardened disks, made from the fine-grained sediment in the base of processing vessels, a technique that is also known among Xinguano peoples, who pulverize these disks and store them in bas-

kets and silos within houses (Schmidt 1917; Dole 1978). The Enawenê-nawê use an hourglass-shaped wooden manioc grater with palm-fiber teeth very similar in form and construction to those of Xinguanos. The twined hammocks made on frames of the Paresí and Xinguanos are likewise almost identical. Notably, basic features of basketry and cordage spin/twist show clear correlations to language group, which is important since these features (especially cordage spin/twist) relate to basic motor habits rather than material practices that are discussed by craftspersons (Petersen, Heckenberger, and Wolford 2001).<sup>6</sup>

Equally telling as general subsistence, as settled agricultural fisherpeoples, settlement patterns are also widely shared across the southern periphery, notably circular plaza villages with central ceremonial structures documented ethnohistorically for the Moxos and Bauré (Block 1994) and Paresí (Campos 1862), and ethnographically among the Enawenê-nawê and Xinguanos. This appears to be a feature of early Arawak proto-culture, as known from earliest plaza villages associated with Saladoid in the Caribbean (Trants) and Amazonian Barrancoid in the central Amazon (Osvaldo) and upper Amazon (Hupa-iya), 500–200 BC. Associated with the central plaza organization, these groups share a plaza ritual complex, referred to by Steward and Faron (1959) as a “temple-idol-priest” complex characteristic of the “theocratic chiefdoms” of the southern Amazon region.

The central ceremonial structure (“temple”) is another feature that links these groups. While a central structure or “men’s house” is common among other circular plaza groups in the southern Amazon periphery, the nature of the house, as a repository for masks/flutes (“idols”), is more exclusive to Arawak groups, which is the basis for exclusion of women, who are not permitted to see certain flutes. The ball game is a commonly shared feature of the Arawak groups, but not widely shared among other circular plaza communities in the southern Amazon. Roads and integration of networks of communities are known archaeologically among Bauré and Xinguano ancestors and ethnohistorically among the Paresí (1720s). The Arawak societies, in general, show clear hereditary rank distinctions between chiefs or nobles (“priests”) and commoners, with achieved prominence based on warfare, shamanism, and ritual specialization, and a subaltern or even incipient “slave” class, often composed of foreigners. Persons of chiefly rank are marked with special houses; body adornments, including the yellow feathered sun diadems made with harpy eagle feathers, shell and stone valuables, special wooden objects, and other things, as well as bodily dispositions in ritual and domestic spaces.

Pires de Campos’s (1862:443–444) description of the “kingdom of the Paresí” in the 1720s is particularly revealing:

These people exist in such vast quantity, that it is not possible to count their settlements or villages, many times in one day’s march one passes ten or twelve villages, and in each one there are ten to thirty houses, and in these houses

there are some that are thirty to forty paces across . . . agriculture is based on manioc . . . their weapons are bows and arrows . . . [they] also have idols [that] have a separate house with many figures of varied forms, in which only men are allowed to enter . . . even their roads they make very straight and wide, and they keep them so clean that one will not even find a fallen leaf . . . [they] make objects of stone like jasper in the form of the Malta cross, an insignia only used by chiefs.

Campos goes on to note that the “kingdom is so large and extensive that we know not where it ends; it is very full of people and very fertile due to the richness of its lands.” What he describes is a large nation of related peoples who were settled across the bottomlands of the Tapajós River headwaters. His description refers to a time when peoples across the southern periphery had already witnessed significant depopulation from disease, and slaving, missions, and colonization had further decimated regional populations (Denevan 1966, 1992).

Linguistic data suggest a fairly ancient split between eastern and western groups of the southern branch of the Arawak family, while relationships within each group are closer, particularly between Paresí and related languages (Enawenê-nawê and Saraveka) and Xinguano languages (Payne 1991; Aikhenvald 1999; Facundes 2002). In the upper Xingú, extant Arawak speakers represent the remnants of diverse dialects but can be divided into a southern (Mehináku/Waurá) and northern (Yawalapiti) language. The Xinguano regional cultural tradition shares basic characteristics with other Arawak-speaking populations in the southern Amazon, notably Paresí, Bauré, Terena, and related groups, which suggests that the earliest ancestors of the contemporary plural society were Arawak groups who colonized the region from the west.

### **DEEP HISTORY IN THE UPPER XINGÚ, CA. AD 800 TO 1650**

The upper Xingú is the farthest eastern extent of the Arawak speakers in the southern Amazon. It preserves a sequence of occupations from early agricultural Arawak-speaking groups who colonized the region before AD 500–800 to contemporary Xinguano peoples (Heckenberger 2005; Fausto, Franchetto, and Heckenberger 2008). The upper Xingú is perhaps the best context in Amazonia to apply direct historical comparisons that span from prehistory to the present, as Xinguano peoples preserve traditional subsistence, settlement, and land-use patterns; socio-political institutions; and ideology, and it is one of the best-known examples of pre-Columbian complex societies in the broad region.

Archaeological studies (1992–2005) have concentrated on the traditional territory of the Kuikuro Amerindian community, an area that covers some 1,200 km<sup>2</sup> (see Heckenberger 2005; Heckenberger et al. 2008). The three primary Kuikuro villages form part of the larger Xinguano society, today composed of nine subgroups

(three Arawak-, four Carib-, and two Tupí-speaking groups), living in fourteen villages of almost 2,500 people, within the Parque Indígena do Xingú (PIX). Based on these studies, the cultural sequence can be broken into four distinctive periods, representing an evolving regional cultural tradition: (1) early occupations by Arawak agriculturalists, who colonized the region from the west (likely the broad Paresí area) by ca. AD 500–800 or before; (2) a “galactic period,” from ca. 1250 to 1650 or soon thereafter, marked by networked clusters of villages and towns, representing small territorial polities;<sup>7</sup> (3) a proto-historical period, dominated by adaptation to the indirect and direct effects of Western expansion, from ca. 1650 to 1884, and the development of the pluri-lingual Xinguano society; and (4) the ethnographic period, from 1884.

The formation of the plural Xinguano society has interested ethnologists since Karl von den Steinen’s expeditions in the 1880s, but there is general agreement from archaeology, ethnohistory, and oral history that progenitors of the regional culture were Arawak (see Heckenberger 2005:152–162; Fausto, Franchetto, and Heckenberger 2008), including, as noted above, the marked similarities with Paresí and related groups. It is unclear when exactly early ancestors of the Xinguano cultural tradition colonized the region, although radiocarbon dates from intact occupational deposits document that by AD 500–800, early plaza settlements had been established in the study area, near the eastern boundary of the tradition.<sup>8</sup> It is unclear whether these colonizing populations entered the area when Carib populations were already present or whether the Carib entered the area after the Arawak groups, but by AD 1500 both were present in the upper Xingú basin and enmeshed in an integrated cultural system into which later Tupían immigrants were integrated.

In the study area, these earlier occupations underlie major earthworks constructed ca. 1200 to 1300. This represents a major reconstitution of the overall regional settlement system, including earlier earthworks, whereby settlements were formally linked into galactic patterns of nodes and roads across the area through the construction and/or elaboration of linear village earthworks. The galactic period is characterized by integration of regional social clusters into small polities, organized and planned within small, well-defined territories and within a regional peer-polity that encompasses the majority of the forested upper Xingú basin. The regional society was minimally spread over an area of 20,000 km<sup>2</sup> in late prehistory based on known archaeological distributions.

Twenty-four residential sites have been identified in the Kuikuro territory. Most or all of these were occupied and interconnected in late prehistoric times (AD 1250–1650) and were organized into two integrated and ranked clusters of multiple (eight to twelve) settlements. The establishment of discrete regional polities in a late prehistoric peer-polity system marked another era of ethnogenesis, as formerly more autonomous groups became integrated in territorial polities. The

actual planning that went into these regional constructions is well-known from the Xingú. There are large walled towns, 15–50 ha, small non-walled villages (less than 15 ha), as well as short-term hamlets. In galactic clusters, both internal and external relations were hierarchical. Internally, the plaza ritual complex is a nested hierarchy of plazas and, by extension, the living descendants of elite ancestors. In other words, the ancestors buried at small (non-walled) communities were encompassed by medium and large communities, and all were subordinate to the ritual political centers of each cluster, the “theater capitals” of these small polities.

In prehistoric times, “polity” rather than “society” may be the appropriate term, since it was not a confederation of peer villages but instead a confederation of peer clusters. Roads and settlement nodes, marked by large ceremonial plazas surrounded by residential areas, are archaeologically visible as linear earthworks in the form of curbs and ditches. Settlement hierarchies were defined by an exemplary center and four major satellites and smaller peripheral plaza settlements and hamlets within territories of approximately 250 km<sup>2</sup> or more. My educated guess is that clusters ranged from under 1,000 to over 2,500 persons. There were at least fifteen, and likely more, over the territory of the Xinguano nation in 1492.

The domesticated landscapes of the upper Xingú basin provide a particularly striking example of the self-organized built environments of the southern borderlands. Descendant Xinguano populations, well described since the 1880s, continue to practice basic cultural patterns documented from prehistoric times, notably in terms of techno-economy, house and village spatial organization, and general settlement locations (Heckenberger 2005; Fausto, Franchetto, and Heckenberger 2008). The galactic clusters apparently continued well after initial European contact in South America, but archaeological evidence from Nokugu and oral history suggest that significant change occurred between ca. 1600 and 1700, which suggests abandonment of major earthworks or settlements at about this time. Of note, Pires de Campos’s description of Paresí settlement patterns in the 1720s does not mention palisade walls and indicates settlements much smaller than those associated with late prehistoric (galactic period) settlements in the Xingú. In fact, it would make sense as a description of declining populations between galactic period polities and the heavily depopulated settlement patterns described in the upper Xingú in the late 1800s.

In late prehistoric times, several sites at the eastern boundaries of the two galactic clusters date to the 1500s and 1600s and relate to the Carib-speaking groups who occupied the area in historical times, as described in oral history from the distant past (Franchetto 1992; Basso 1995). What is unclear is whether these Carib groups were the autochthones of the Xingú basin, at least in the eastern areas, when the Arawak-speaking groups colonized the core area of the basin, or whether they moved into the area afterward. In other words, Arawak/Carib pluralism may well have been characteristic of the late pre-Columbian peer polity, with individual

polities composed of both diverse Arawak and Carib dialect groups. By the mid-1700s, these groups expanded west into areas formerly occupied by Arawak groups. At about this time, the Tupí-Guaraní-speaking Kamayurá appeared in the region, first in the eastern headwaters of the Suia Missu River, near the eastern headwaters of Lake Tafununo, and later at the mouth of the river at Diauarum, an area formerly occupied by large ditched villages with ceramics quite similar to those found in early Xinguano deposits.

## CONSTRUCTING PLURALISM

Early proto-historic (1650–1750) occupations are only vaguely remembered in oral traditions, which describe walled communities, but do not situate galactic clusters or the major walled towns in local histories, except as very ancient settlements viewed as components of “dawn time” villages, before or at about the same time as human groups, including Xinguano peoples, were born. Oral tradition recounts several major subgroups: Mehináku, Waurá, and Carib groups (four primary dialects), referring to the autochthonous headwater groups, and the Yawalapiti, who represent a northern complex that moved from their original homeland in the upper Xingú River proper. Later immigrant groups, notably Tupían peoples (ancestral to Kamayurá and Auetí), arrived before 1750. Post-Columbian changes, including depopulation and reduced territory due to outside encroachment, were driven by the expanding colonial frontier beginning in the late 1600s. By the mid-1700s, Xinguano peoples became more concentrated in the central portions of the basin, roughly from the confluence of the Xingú River and just south to the southern boundaries of the PIX, which represents a substantial reduction of occupied areas to the north (below the confluence, formerly occupied by ancestors of Yawalapiti) and south among Carib-speaking Xinguanos, as well as western areas.

Regional ethnohistory shows diverse migrations and episodes of ethnogenesis as new groups entered the basin in response to Western frontier expansion over five centuries, which helped fill the gap of declining population, but by 1950 the regional population was a mere 500, perhaps less than 5 percent of its pre-Columbian size (Franchetto and Heckenberger 2001). Population collapse resulted in a process of landscape “fallowing,” as settlement after settlement was merged and whole areas were abandoned. It is an exemplary case of what a large, settled pre-Columbian polity looks like after five centuries of decline, but remarkably many basic cultural patterns have been resilient through the time, such as the circular plaza village form and general landscape orientations.

In regional systems, the upper Xingú was an enclave, which, although subject to several early *bandeirante* expeditions in the eighteenth century (Franchetto 1992), remained isolated from colonial activities. In part, this was due to the presence of fairly bellicose peoples surrounding the basin, including Gê-speaking groups to

the east and south and northern Tupí-Guaraní groups. This notably included the southern Kayapó and Xavante on the margins of the Brazilian *cerrado*, the route of primary access by *bandeiras*. Not surprisingly, the area was a refuge for diverse populations during the period from 1700 to 1900.

Arawak populations descended from the galactic clusters retained essential characteristics of Xinguano culture, including settled agricultural lifeways, fishing, plaza ritual complex, and regional social organization, which newcomer groups adopted as they became integrated in the regional society. Proto-historic (ca. 1650–1884) occupations are poorly known but can be considered transitional between the well-established galactic clusters and the reconstituted Xinguano society known from 1884 onward, which had lost the tightly integrated and highly planned aspects of earlier regional clusters and entered a period of major depopulation, geographic compression, and ethnogenesis. In early late Xinguano times, coincident with the historical period, the movements of people into the Xingú are well-known, including Tupían groups, most notably the Kamayurá, Auetí, and others, as well as Carib-speaking (non-Xinguano) Bakairí (early 1800s), Suyá (mid-1800s), Trumai (mid–late 1800s), and other, later groups.

Roughly 250–300 years seems to be the historical “cutoff” for full integration into the regional society, which relates to sponsoring chiefly mortuary feasts and maintaining certain cultural values, bodily dispositions and treatment, and technologies (such as flutes and masks) (see Basso 1995, this volume). The critical component of Xinguano identity is adherence to the plaza ritual complex and associated political economy, but basic subsistence patterns (fishing, manioc, and *pequi*), domestic architecture and social organization, and general animistic beliefs are also important elements of regional cultural identity. Intergroup interaction is choreographed against the built environment of major ritual, including ritual participation in other political groups, as well as distinctions of minor ritual within individual communities.

Today, daughter communities, which have split over the past decade or so as regional population has rebounded, celebrate the primary mortuary feasts (*kuarup*) in parent communities, but over time these often develop, or at least can develop, into independent ritual entities. However, chiefly discourses, including chiefs’ lists and shared names and places that bridge to present communities, referring to locations occupied no later than the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, express continuity between the galactic clusters and groups of people present in the historic period Xingú. Population compression continued through the mid-twentieth century, but more recent subgroups, which moved into the area after 1800, later moved out of the area (Bakairí, Trumai, Suyá, among others).

Hostilities between established and newcomer groups were not uncommon, as described in oral histories (e.g., Basso 1995), but ultimately accommodation of diverse groups was achieved, supporting Schmidt’s observations regarding acculturation of

foreign groups by Arawak groups generally. In the upper Xingú case, in contrast to Schmidt's general model of cultural conquest, it was cultural choice rather than conquest or incorporation of captives that lay at the root of cultural pluralism. In the southern Amazon, the relationship between Arawak and other groups is complex and ancient but appears, at least in the case of the Bakairí and upper Xingú Carib, to have been one of symbiosis rather than acculturation until after 1492 in most cases.

In the regional system, this was characterized by the centripetal force created by large-scale depopulation in the Xingú and the centrifugal force created by colonial centers, pushing indigenous groups into isolated refuge areas. This resulted in greater social and cultural sharing and, ultimately, incorporation in the regional cultural system, which was further impelled by population loss in individual villages. Three conditions prevailed throughout the colonial period: (1) the dominant "Xinguano" cultural pattern established during the preceding prehistoric period; (2) the presence of foreign, "wild Indian" (non-Xinguano) groups, geographically and socially peripheral to the Xinguano groups, perched at the margins of the basin; and (3) territorial compression across the region and depopulation in the Xingú, progressively drawing groups into the existing Xinguano society (these groups include the pre-1500 incorporation of the ancestors of Xinguano Carib-speaking groups and the post-1700 incorporation of Kamayurá and Auetí and the partial incorporation of Trumai, Bakairí, Suyá, Yaruma, and other groups).

Incorporation of outsiders into the Xinguano system involved more than acceptance of outsider groups as social kin or affines through social interaction, or as a subaltern class of persons, as suggested by Schmidt (1917). In the upper Xingú, immigrant groups retained their cultural identities as distinctive language groups, which is the primary distinguishing characteristic of Xinguano subgroups today. Newcomers became Xinguano but also had to be accepted as "us" by Xinguano communities. Sustained interaction, exchange, intermarriage, and visitation provide entrée into the regional system, but what distinguishes Xinguanos from non-Xinguanos is not the degree of exchange but the degree to which groups share underlying systems of meanings, values, and practices (such as nonaggression, generosity, diet of fish and manioc, fixed circular plaza villages, and associated plaza rituals, among other things).

In fact, precisely because Xinguano society is necessarily regional in nature, this meant that established communities suffering from severe depopulation may have been especially willing to assimilate newcomers. The centrifugal forces created by Luso-Brazilian colonialism, including the demographic vacuum created by catastrophic depopulation, combined with the centripetal acculturative forces of Xinguano society—a force that Max Schmidt long ago noted was common among Arawakan-speaking peoples—created conditions for the ethnogenesis of the pluri-ethnic pattern documented ethnographically in the upper Xingú.

## DISCUSSION

The upper Xingú provides unique insights into ethnicity in Amazonia, both past and present. It bespeaks that different approaches to deep history and the intersection of archaeological, linguistic, and ethnological datasets reveal different patterns, or identities, relative to different temporal and spatial scales. It also shows the interplay of phylogenetic and reticulate phenomena. Rather than a simple either/or contrast between an essentialist and anti-essentialist or constructivist view, the present case suggests long-term identities and essential differences at varied scales of analysis. In other words, rather than one essentialist perspective, different types of essentialism are deployed relative to different spatial and temporal scales, such that Amazonian peoples, language groups, culture areas or smaller regions, communities, and persons are seen to share certain basic features. To this we might add the application of analogies from the present, which are seen to apply, based on historical or uniformitarian principles, to the past, which is indeed another form of essentialism. The task, therefore, is not to determine whether one or another perspective is essentialist, usually for the purpose of general critique rather than a nuanced engagement with specific contextualized cases, but instead to see how commonalities and essential differences are apparent at one scale or another, how these perspectives relate to one another, and how these, in turn, reflect views on multiscalar and dimensional sociohistorical entities or identities.

At the broadest level of abstraction, Amazonia as a distinctive culture area is often characterized in terms of an essential difference between Amazonian and Andean peoples or perspectives or, more generally, according to the classic distinction between “cold” and “hot,” “primitive” and historical societies. Thus, basic patterns and properties from one region or time period are applied to others, within the broadly defined context of “tropical forest culture.” These differences represent cultural and sociohistorical outcomes and alternatives, rather than strict ecological or evolutionary imperatives, but obviously gloss over substantial variation at smaller scales of analysis, which can in discrete subregions be viewed as essential differences along diverse ecological, social, political, and symbolic dimensions, the most notable of which is the dichotomy between floodplains and uplands. It should be noted that such differences can be recognized within smaller regions and social formations, and indeed, some aspects of these differences can be linked to distinctive strategies of communities and persons.

Within Amazonia we can note a difference between settled and regional social formations, some of which were organized in hierarchical political organizations, and more mobile, egalitarian or heterarchical, and autonomous social formations. To some degree this difference between settled riverine agriculturalists and upland societies correlates crudely with essential differences between different sociohistorical macro-groups, that is, language groups and culture areas. The basic premise is

that early proto-Arawak and proto-Tupí-Guaraní (and likely proto-Carib) represent distinctive cultural systems—a difference between settled agriculturalists oriented to rivers, associated with the former, and the more mobile, less focused on agriculture and fishing, and upland in orientation, related to the latter. These groups began spreading sometime in the third millennium before present and expanded rapidly across the lowlands. The Arawak diaspora, in particular, may have reached its near-maximal extent already by 2000 BP, during and particularly after which cultural groups in discrete regions developed into plural and sometimes multilingual systems, as characterized many areas in historic times. This dichotomy obviously glosses over substantial variation and the unique social and ecological conditions of individual regions.

In the southern Amazon periphery, this pattern of settled riverine Arawak in headwater basins, one of the last prongs of the diaspora, surrounded by upland macro-Tupí and Macro-Gê peoples, is particularly clear. In this sense, the history of the Xingú extends deep into the roots of Amazonian prehistory, tied to large-scale historical entities and processes associated with the lowlands' major linguistic diaspora and essential cultural differences between them, including regimes of dwelling, sociality, and worldviews. Paresí and Xinguano Arawak and closely related populations of the southern Amazonian periphery settled the riverine bottomlands of the Xingú and Tapajós headwater basins, in the low-lying Paresí plateau, as well as those of the upper Paraguay (Terena/Guana) and Llanos de Mojos (Bauré, Mojos, Chané). Diverse processes were involved, but the cohesion of Arawak speakers in this area suggests actual population movements and development of regional language clusters, glossed as the Paresí and Xinguano nations. These groups entered into diverse social relations with surrounding groups and witnessed substantial internal transformation, such as the rise of the late prehistoric peer polities of the upper Xingú.

This can be characterized as an essential difference between Xinguano peoples as a group and outsiders, but also between settled territorial, hierarchical polities in late prehistoric to early proto-historic times and more mobile upland groups. In the Xingú itself, the essential difference is between aboriginal Xinguano peoples, who in prehistory appear to have been a relatively homogenous Arawak group but with relations to peripheral groups, notably Carib speakers (upper Xingú Carib, Bakairí), and diverse later (post-1700s) others. A similar pattern can be noted among the Paresí, who formed an internally diverse but linguistically coherent group of Arawak speakers, with diverse relations with groups on the peripheries (Bakairí, Umotina, Bororo, Erikpatsa, Nambiquara, among others). The upper Xingú, in particular, provides one of the clearest historical cases of ethnogenesis, highlighting the fact that identity is not fixed but constructed through social interaction. What is perhaps even more remarkable, however, is that during various episodes of “ethnogenesis,” including early colonization and cultural mixing, late prehistoric

peer-polity formation, and post-contact cultural amalgamation and pluralism, basic elements of the Xinguano cultural pattern have persisted for over a millennium in the area, some of which preserve traces of patterns broadly shared across the southern periphery and Arawak diaspora.

## NOTES

1. In contemporary Xinguano society, major subdivisions are based on linguistic distinctiveness, including language family (Arawak, Carib, Tupí-Guarani) and dialect differences within languages, with each major dialect group forming a politically autonomous or “peer” community within the broader Xinguano society. Several dialect groups are composed of two or more villages, such as the Kuikuro (upper Xingú Carib), with whom the author has lived for over two years over the period 1992–2007, although there is one politically dominant community. Of particular note, linguistic distinctiveness is the primary means of differentiating subgroups, although over time there has been a “creolization” of cultural practices (see Basso, this volume)

2. Here I follow the suggestion of an Arawak language family with uncertain supra-family affiliations (Aikhenvald 1999) rather than the idea of an Arawak trunk or stock, broken into Arawakan and Maipuran families. Arawak in this sense corresponds to the Maipuran family (Payne 1991), and Aruán, Guahibo, and other languages are not grouped with Arawak/Maipuran into a supra-family group. Proto-Arawak here refers to early members of the Arawak language family. The origin region of proto-Arawak is not well established, although three primary areas have been suggested: the southwestern Amazon, the western Amazon, and the northwest Amazon.

3. The use of the term “diaspora” diverges from widespread use of the term, ultimately derived from Greek for dispersion, such as Clifford’s (1994) definition as “expatriate minority communities.” It follows usage in other world contexts for the early dispersions of linguistically related groups, such as Austronesian and Bantu languages in tropical regions (e.g., Simanjuntok, Pojoh, and Hisyan 2006). It is important to emphasize that the idea of an Arawak dispersal or “diaspora,” as I have proposed it, does not envision ethnolinguistic groups as bounded, genetically distinct populations or that migration was the only factor involved in the widespread sharing of cultural patterns, including words and gestures, or technologies of the body, although diverse aspects of migration were critical, particularly in early diaspora times, roughly 2500–2000 BP (Heckenberger 1996, 2002, 2005:48–49).

4. The Pantanal, Llanos de Mojos, and Chaco are low-lying seasonally inundated wooded savanna in western and southwestern portions of the region.

5. Notably, the macro-Tupí and Macro-Gê groups that most obviously share these cultural features are precisely those that live in areas adjacent to the Arawak speakers, such as Mundurucú, Tapirapé, Kayapó, Karajá, and Bororo, which may represent trait diffusion from Arawak groups to these others through diverse processes of cultural interaction.

6. Cordage spin/twist is divided into S-spin/twist, or slanted down to the right, which is typical of Arawak-speaking peoples, and Z-spin/twist, or slanted down to the left, which is common among Tupí-, Carib-, and Gê-speaking peoples (Petersen, Heckenberger, and Wolford 2001).

7. As described in more detail elsewhere (Heckenberger 2005; Heckenberger et al. 2008), galactic clusters refer to integrated regional networks of settlements that “orbit” around an exemplary plaza settlement, four major nodes (30–50 ha) positioned roughly equidistant to the north-south and east-west of the exemplary center, which defines the core area of a territorial polity with peripheries defined by smaller plaza settlements (less than 10 ha).

8. Several radiocarbon dates from disturbed contexts suggest even earlier occupations, but the cultural affiliation of these is unknown.

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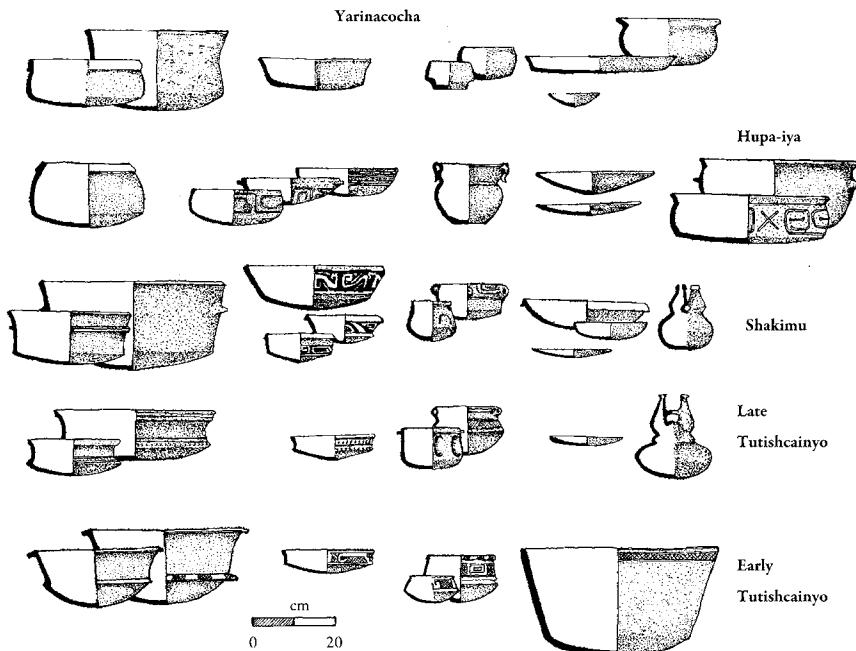


## Deep Time, Big Space: An Archaeologist Skirts the Topic at Hand

*Warren DeBoer*

Polarities are falsehoods that focus debate. At the risk of losing focus, this chapter scouts a middle ground between so-called primordialist and instrumentalist views of ethnic groups. The primordialist argues for deep-seated continuity of the kind implied by the continental terms *Bauplan* and *Volksgeist*, the *longue durée*, and those enduring dispositions of *habitus* and *hesis*—an argot referring to what Latour (2007) dubs the ethers of social science. In contrast, instrumentalists (many of whom unknowingly employ a primordialist vocabulary) emphasize the mercurial and fleeting character of ethnic identities as they are asserted, resisted, or otherwise strategically reworked by social agents. Running against primordial fixity and the shackling burden of history, the instrumentalist party probably would win in an election and would certainly carry the vote of the American academy. The actual world of ethnic phenomena ranges between these opposing caricatures.

Dealing with palpable traces of both process and event, archaeology ought to play a role in this discussion, albeit in the idiom of material culture. Certainly the archaeologist is accustomed to enduring traditions. It is such continuity that makes



**FIGURE 4.1.** Major vessel forms of the Tutishcainyo tradition, beginning with the Early Tutishcainyo phase, and of the intrusive Hupa-iya phase. (Vessels redrawn from DeBoer 1974 and Lathrap 1962, 1970)

culture history possible. We begin as primordialists by identifying some long-term and large-scale patterns that are then tracked to the momentary and often localized phenomena studied in ethnography. Our first case focuses on pottery assemblages that span the last four millennia in the Ucayali basin of the Peruvian Amazon. These assemblages, defined in terms of characteristic vessel forms, sort into two distinct and sequent traditions, each of which encompasses gradual change or, to use Darwin's felicitous phrase, "descent with modification." The earlier tradition, called Tutishcainyo, persisted for roughly 1,500 years, interrupted only by the short-lived intrusion of Hupa-iya pottery, a ceramic style that Lathrap (1970) allied with the Barrancoid materials found over a large area of greater Amazonia. Tutishcainyo tradition and Hupa-iya vessel forms are illustrated in Figure 4.1. Note the carinated and flanged profiles and the double-spout-and-bridge bottles that are hallmarks of the Tutishcainyo tradition and that serve to distinguish it from later pottery.

This second and sequent tradition, named Pacacocha by Myers (1970) or Cumancaya by Raymond, DeBoer, and Roe (1975), was characterized by the entirely new roster of vessel forms illustrated in Figure 4.2. Arrayed from left to right, vessel forms include plain or corrugated cooking vessels that tend to come in

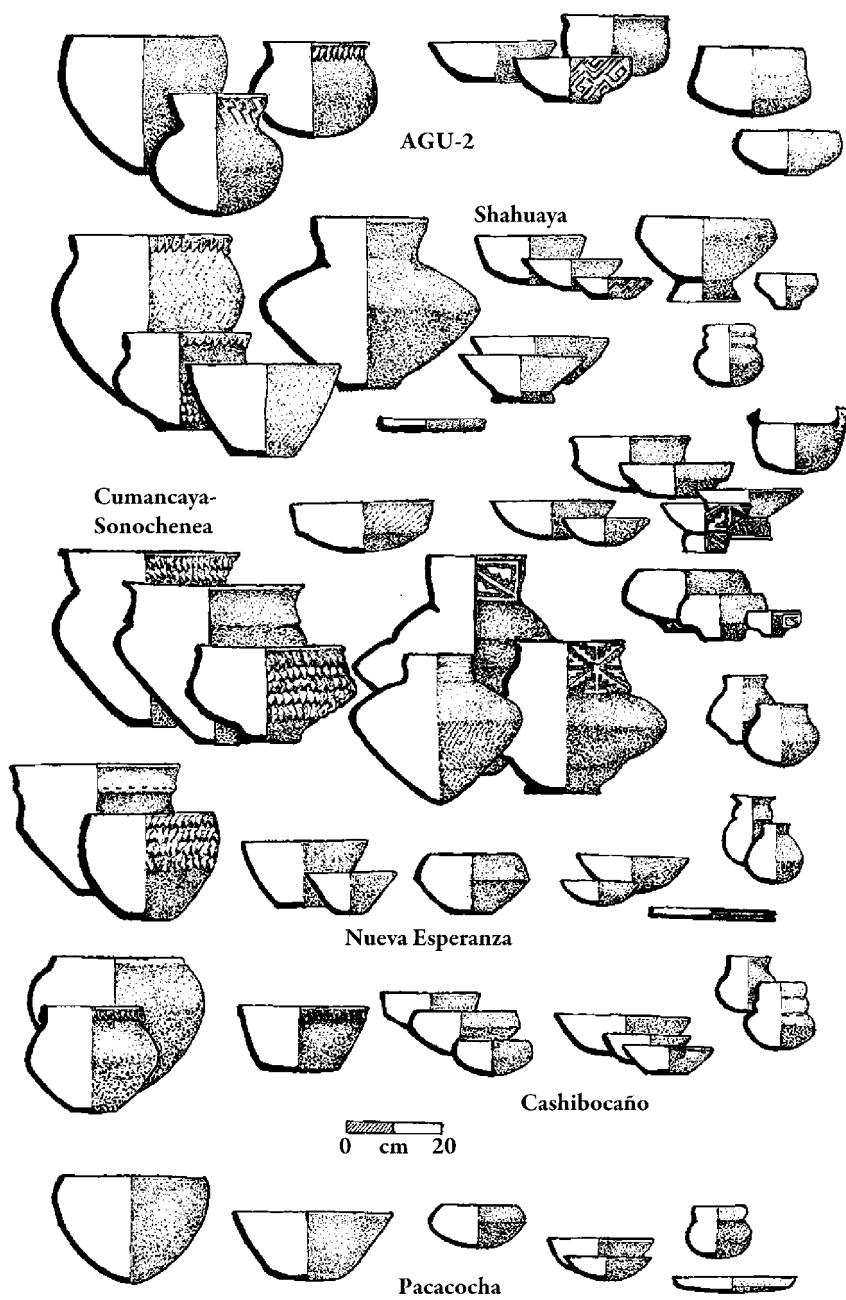


FIGURE 4.2. Major vessel forms of the Pacacocha (Cumancaya) tradition. (Vessels redrawn from Myers 1970, 1974; DeBoer 1971; and Raymond, DeBoer, and Roe 1975)

two or three size modes; jars with incised and painted necks that appeared first in Cumancaya and Sonochenea assemblages and continued as relatively rare forms in later phases; open bowls that often have red-slipped exteriors and, less commonly, smudged interiors; and typically white-slipped, closed bowls that come in three sizes and that are occasionally elaborated by the addition of a rattle base. Precisely the same aspects of color, form, and size that distinguished open from closed bowls in the Pacacocha-Cumancaya tradition serve to distinguish food bowls from drinking vessels in recent Panoan ceramic assemblages (DeBoer and Lathrap 1979; DeBoer 2003). In fact, virtually all the various pottery assemblages produced by recent Panoan speakers of the Ucayali basin can be traced to Pacacocha-Cumancaya antecedents (Lathrap 1970; also see DeBoer 1990: fig. 9.2). This bridge stretching from prehistory to ethnography is also evinced by highly specific ceramic forms and artifacts that are associated with the Shipibo-Conibo *ani shéati*, or girl's puberty rite (Roe 1973; DeBoer 2001).

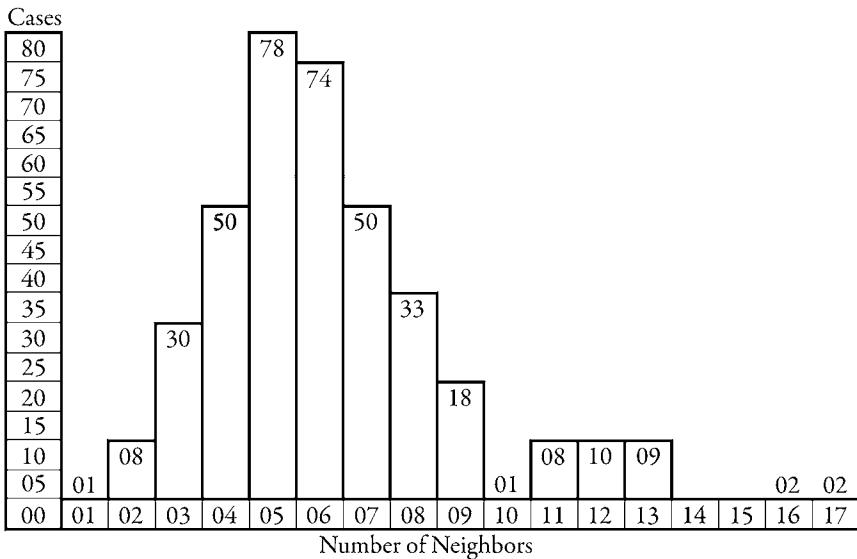
Table 4.1 underscores the complete discontinuity separating Tutishcainyo and Pacacocha vessel forms. As pottery vessels hug the social jugular by conditioning food preparation and cuisine, the composition of eating groups, the protocols of meals, and the size and frequency of intergroup drinking bouts, it is unlikely that these mega-blocks of ceramic culture are insensitive to social boundaries of some kind, ethnic or otherwise. Whatever entities they might be tracking, they are not of the transitory and fuzzy kind.

Language distributions are also history-laden and capable of bridging archaeological and historical scales of analysis. Languages can also be effective ethnic markers, a point encapsulated in the hybrid term "ethnolinguistic." The seven or so million square kilometers of greater Amazonia harbor an extraordinary diversity of languages, including a large number of linguistic isolates. Mace and Pagel (1995) have shown that much of this diversity, like the diversity of biological species, is strongly conditioned by latitude. At the eastern base of the Andes, however, there is a north-to-south band of linguistic isolates that crosscuts latitude. Nichols (1992) points out that the piling up of distinct languages at the foot of major cordillera is a global pattern. The following exercises further explore language distributions to shed light on ethnic phenomena. We start with a look at the language families (*sensu* Campbell 1997:8) of Amazonia as plotted on John Rowe's 1973 base map of South American ethnolinguistic groups at the time of initial European contact.

Figure 4.3 tabulates the number of neighbors bordering the ethnolinguistic groups mapped by Rowe. The mode of 5.0 and the mean of 6.2 neighbors per group approximate nicely the numbers that would be expected of a hexagonal lattice truncated by coastlines or cut by major rivers. This result is an unremarkable mega-pattern that hovers well above human agency. Table 4.2 compares the linguistic affinity of neighbors bordering members of major Amazonian language families. Two sets of results are listed. The lefthand set in Table 4.2 pertains to the Peruvian

**TABLE 4.1.** Interphase comparison based on the vessel form composition of ceramic assemblages. Brainerd-Robinson coefficients range from 0 (no similarity) to 200 (maximum similarity). Note the complete separation between the Turišcainyo tradition (1–3, 5), intrusive Hupa-iyá phase (4), and Pacacocha tradition (6–12). S-C refers to Shipibo-Conibo. Other abbreviations are obvious derivations from the named phases given in Figures 4.1 and 4.2.

	ET	LT	SHK	YAR	HUP	PAC	CAS	NE	CUM	SON	SHY	AGU	S-C
1. ET		182	172	118	2	2	3	1	1	1	1	0	0
2. LT	182		190	135	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
3. SHK	172	190		143	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	0
5. YAR	118	135	145		24	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
4. HUP	2	2	2	24		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. PAC	2	1	1	0	0		83	61	69	61	87	91	52
7. CAS	3	1	2	0	0	83		135	158	150	179	149	128
8. NE	1	1	1	0	0	61	135		134	132	131	117	127
9. CUM	1	1	1	0	0	69	158	134		164	169	149	153
10. SON	1	1	1	0	0	61	150	132	164		159	113	130
11. SHY	1	1	1	2	0	87	179	131	169	159		150	125
12. AGU	0	0	0	0	0	91	149	117	149	113	150		142
13. S-C	0	0	0	0	0	52	128	126	153	130	125	142	
TOTAL	483	515	516	422	30	508	988	839	999	912	1005	911	857



**FIGURE 4.3.** Histogram showing the number of neighbors bordering Amazonian ethnolinguistic groups as mapped by Rowe (1973).

Amazon as mapped in Figure 4.4, while the righthand set covers all of Amazonia. Thus, to give an example, the table tells us that 56 percent of groups bordering Panoans in the Peruvian Amazon are themselves Panoan; this percentage rises to 70 percent for all Panoan languages in Peru, Brazil, and Bolivia. These are high figures and contrast significantly with the corresponding 20 percent and 40 percent for the Arawakan family, or 13 percent and 39 percent for Tupían. This wide variation in the linguistic affiliation of neighbors reflects the relative dispersal and fragmentation of each family and can be expressed in terms of a compaction index. This index is calculated by summing the areas occupied by individual members of a language family and dividing that sum by the area of the minimal polygon that encompasses all the dispersed members of that family. As listed in Table 4.2, Gê, Panoan, and Tukanoan families with compact distributions rank high on this index while the widely scattered Tupían and Arawakan families rank low.

These large-scale patterns have local implications. For example, several authors have noted that endo-warfare characterized both the Panoans (Erikson 1999:45) and Jivaroans (Taylor 2007:137) of western Amazonia, while such warfare tended to be avoided by Arawakans. The latter, nonetheless, enthusiastically waged exo-war against non-Arawaks (Santos-Granero 2002:48). From sheer propinquity alone, however, the preceding analysis shows that Panoan neighbors are likely to be other Panoans. In comparison, Arawakan groups border a considerably more diverse

**TABLE 4.2.** Characteristics of Amazonian language families within the Peruvian Amazon (left) and greater Amazonia (right). Chart specifies number of neighbors that belong to the same or different families for each N. Compaction indices for selected families occur at the far right (see text).

Language Family	N	Linguistic Affiliation of Neighbors, Peruvian Montaña			Linguistic Affiliation of Neighbors, Greater Amazonia				
		Same Family	Different Family	% Same	N	Same Family	Different Family	% Same	Compaction Index
Gê	0	—	—	—	30	97	82	54	0.76
Cariban	0	—	—	—	64	166	160	51	0.29
Panoan	12	36	28	56	30	114	48	70	0.63
Witotoan	4	6	14	30	5	14	22	39	
Zaparoan	4	4	30	13	4	6	16	27	
Arawakan	4	4	20	20	64	143	207	41	0.18
Tupían	3	4	32	13	62	120	187	39	0.19
Cahupapan	2	2	16	11	3	6	11	35	
Peban	2	0	16	00	2	0	11	00	
Tukanoan	2	0	18	00	15	36	32	53	0.70
Total	33	56	174	24	279	702	776	47	

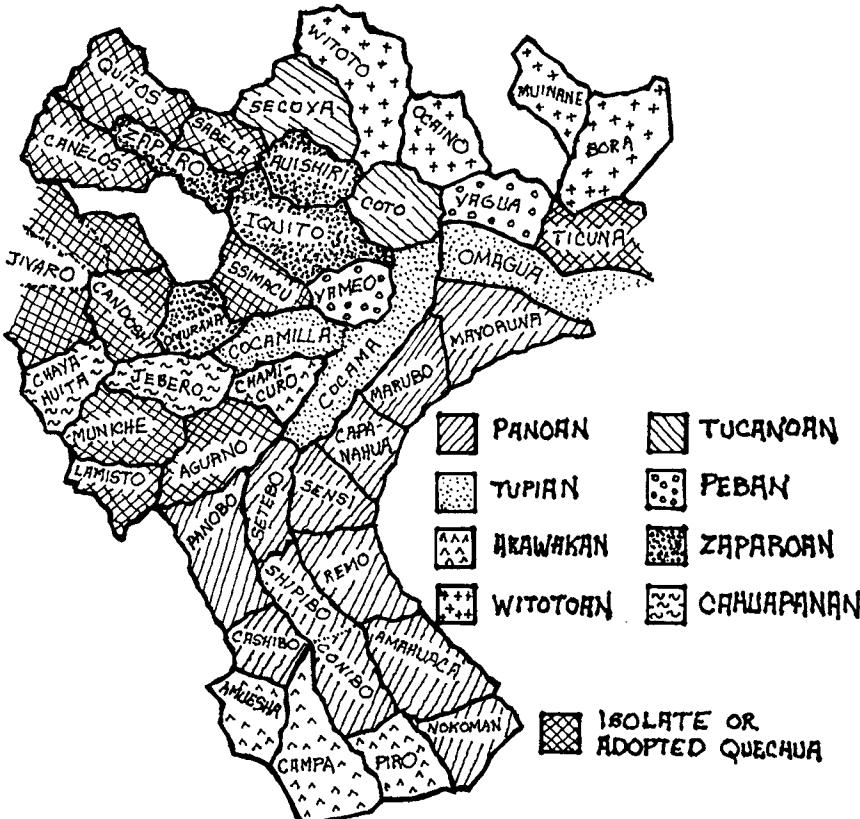


FIGURE 4.4. Tessmann's (1930) Peruvian Amazon. The linguistic attributions are updated.

cast of non-Arawakan neighbors. It is possible that these concordances were built entirely from the bottom up, with groups situating themselves to have the right kind of neighbors to fight (cf. Hornborg 2005). It is equally likely that warfare patterns developed in response to social landscapes generated by independent processes (see Robb 1991 for a parallel example).

#### ARTIFACTS WITH AND WITHOUT BORDERS

Zoom down from a global perspective and isotropic planes break into irregular terrain, the even spacing of mega-structure gives way to vacant buffer zones, neat boundary lines become a stubble of fences and bridges, and all the variability of locality comes into focus. In this case, the locality of choice is western Amazonia, a region nestled at the eastern base of the Andes and bisected south to north by

the Ucayali River, a major southern tributary of the Amazon. The ethnographic literature for this area includes the monumental material culture survey carried out by Günter Tessmann (1999 [1930]) during the early twentieth century. Covering over forty groups, Tessmann's observations varied in detail and reliability, reflected the ethnological biases of his era, and were collected in ways that would not meet the Human Subjects standards of today's university. Yet, with respect to the description and mapping of material culture, his study has not been surpassed in subsequent research. Tessmann's valuable and now irreplaceable data are worthy of resurrection.

Tables 4.3 and 4.4 are based on Tessmann's data. These data were selected to meet two specifications. First, information on chosen traits had to be relatively complete with a minimum of "missing cases." Second, gender-linked traits were given preference—a choice that will be explained shortly. Of course, the notion of gender-linked traits is a problematic one. How is such linkage defined? Is it to be found in the marshalling of raw materials, in the manufacturing process that welds raw materials into cultural form, or in the use of finished artifact? For the traits itemized in Table 4.3, I have placed weight on manufacture. For example, pottery manufacture was primarily a female activity in all groups described by Tessmann, and women dominated cooking and other aspects of food preparation and serving. Thus, pottery and cuisine are assigned a female linkage even though men, women, and children all ate and drank from ceramic vessels. In a few cases, however, other factors take precedence over manufacture. For example, men tended to be the carvers and thus made the wooden mortars, pestles, and other mealng implements. These implements, however, were used almost exclusively by women and are accordingly classified as female-linked. The same classificatory fuzziness often applies to the functional attributions given in Table 4.3. Nonetheless, these simplified functional glosses will earn their keep later in this chapter.

In addition to engendered traits, Table 4.3 partitions Tessmann's evidence according to the two major ecological zones of mainstream and what, for contrastive purposes, can be called sidestream. (I use the single word rather than "side stream" as demanded by spell-check.) The former zone encompasses the Marañón, lower Huallaga, and Ucayali floodplains, home to the Cocama-Cocamilla and Omagua, usually assigned to the Tupían family (but see Cabral 1995; Urban 1996); the Panoan threesome of Setebo, Shipibo, and Conibo; and the Arawakan Piro (the ethnonyms are those used by Tessmann). The more numerous sidestream groups occupied the tributaries and interfluvies of these major waterways. Mainstream and sidestream played their connotative roles in Lathrap's 1970 treatment of Ucayali prehistory, and the two zones sort readily in terms of material distributions. Group I traits, shown at the top of Table 4.3, are equally common in both mainstream and sidestream zones, while group II traits, given at the bottom, eschew the mainstream.

**TABLE 4.3.** Male-linked (left) and female-linked (right) traits as described by Tessmann (1930). Group I traits (top) occur in both mainstream and sidestream zones, while Group II traits (below) predominate on the mainstream alone.

Male Trait Group I	Main-stream	Side-stream	Female Trait Group I	Main-stream	Side-stream
Atlatl fishing (W)*	7	1	Biconical whorl (U)	8	5
Atlatl fighting (W)	3	1	Horizontal loom (U)	8	8
Bow fighting (W)	5	9	Resting hammock (U)	5	4
Club 1 (W)	3	3	Seating mat (U)	5	12
Blowgun 1 (W)	4	5	Sleeping mat (U)	7	6
Blowgun 4 (W)	2	1	Legged stool (U)	2	2
Legged stool (U)	7	11	Skirt (C)	7	6
Cushma 1 (C)	5	2	Nose disk (O)	3	3
Nose disk (O)	4	3	Calf ligature (O)	5	8
Wrist ligature (O)	4	9	Ankle ligature (O)	6	9
Labret 1 (O)	3	1	Labret 1 (O)	4	4
Filed teeth (S)	2	2	Ear pendant (O)	3	10
10–12 tube panpipe (M)	6	8	Head-flattening 1 (S)	4	1
Musical bow (M)	7	7	Ladle (E)	7	8
Total Male, Group I	62	63	Men eat first (E)	4	0
Lance 1 (W)	0	6	Stone pestle (U)	5	12
Lance 2 (W)	0	8	Resined interior (E)	8	5
2–5 tube panpipe (M)	0	9	W/R food bowl (E)	6	4
Tied genitals (S)	0	8	B+R/W mug (E)	8	5
Upper arm ligature (O)	1	7	Total Female, Group I	105	112
Club 2 (W)	1	10	Disk whorl (U)	0	16
Blowgun 2 (W)	0	6	Vertical loom (U)	0	2
Blowgun 3 (W)	0	3	Sleeping hammock (U)	0	5
Log seat (U)	0	11	Platform bed (U)	3	11
Cushma 2 (C)	0	8	Wood pestle 1 (U)	0	5
Loincloth (C)	1	4	Wood pestle 2 (U)	1	7
Labret 2 (O)	0	2	Wood pestle 3 (U)	0	8
Skirt (C)	0	5	Apron (C)	0	4
Ear plug (O)	0	7	Ear plug (O)	0	4
Ear pendant (O)	0	10	Nose plug (O)	0	4
Nose splint (O)	0	5	Upper arm ligature (O)	1	2
Nose plug (O)	0	5	Elbow ligature (O)	0	4
Ankle ligature (O)	1	3	Wrist ligature (O)	0	11
Total Male, Group II	4	117	Head-flattening 2 (S)	0	4
* (W) Weapon, (U) General Utility, (C) Clothing, (O) Ornament, (S) Somatic Modification, (M) Musical Instrument, (E) Eating					
Total Female, Group II					
10 123					

\* (W) Weapon, (U) General Utility, (C) Clothing,  
(O) Ornament, (S) Somatic Modification, (M)  
Musical Instrument, (E) Eating

**TABLE 4.4.** Traits shared/total traits with adjacent or non-adjacent groups of the same language family (above) and of different language families (below). M and F indicate male- and female-linked traits, respectively.

	Adjacent, Same Language		Second Tier, Same Language		Third+ Tier, Same Language		Total, Same Language	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Panoan n = 12	156/36 4.33	184/30 6.13	102/34 3.00	92/26 3.54	126/62 2.03	76/52 1.46	382/132 2.88	352/108 3.24
Witotoan n = 4	38/6 6.33	12/6 2.00	24/4 6.00	8/4 2.00	18/2 9.00	26/2 13.00	6/6 0.83	46/12 3.58
Zaparoan n = 4	4/4 1.00	10/4 2.50	6/6 1.00	16/6 2.67	0/2 0.00	6/2 3.00	10/12 0.83	32/12 2.67
Arawakan n = 4	6/4 1.50	6/2 3.00	2/2 1.00	0/0 0.00	4/6 0.67	4/6 0.67	12/12 1.00	10/8 1.00
Tupian n = 3	12/4 3.00	36/4 9.00	6/2 3.00	12/2 6.00	0/0 0.00	0/0 0.00	18/6 3.00	48/6 8.00
Cahupá-nan n = 2	8/2 4.00	18/2 9.00	0/0 0.00	0/0 0.00	0/0 0.00	0/0 0.00	8/2 4.00	18/2 9.00
Peban n = 2	0/0 0.00	0/0 0.00	0/0 0.00	0/0 0.00	0/2 2.00	4/2 2.00	0/2 0.00	4/2 2.00
Tukanoan n = 2	0/0 0.00	0/0 2.00	4/2 5.00	10/2 5.00	0/0 0.00	0/0 0.00	4/2 2.00	10/2 5.00
Total n = 33	224/56 4.00	266/48 4.75	144/50 2.88	138/40 3.45	156/74 2.11	116/64 1.81	514/180 2.86	520/152 3.42

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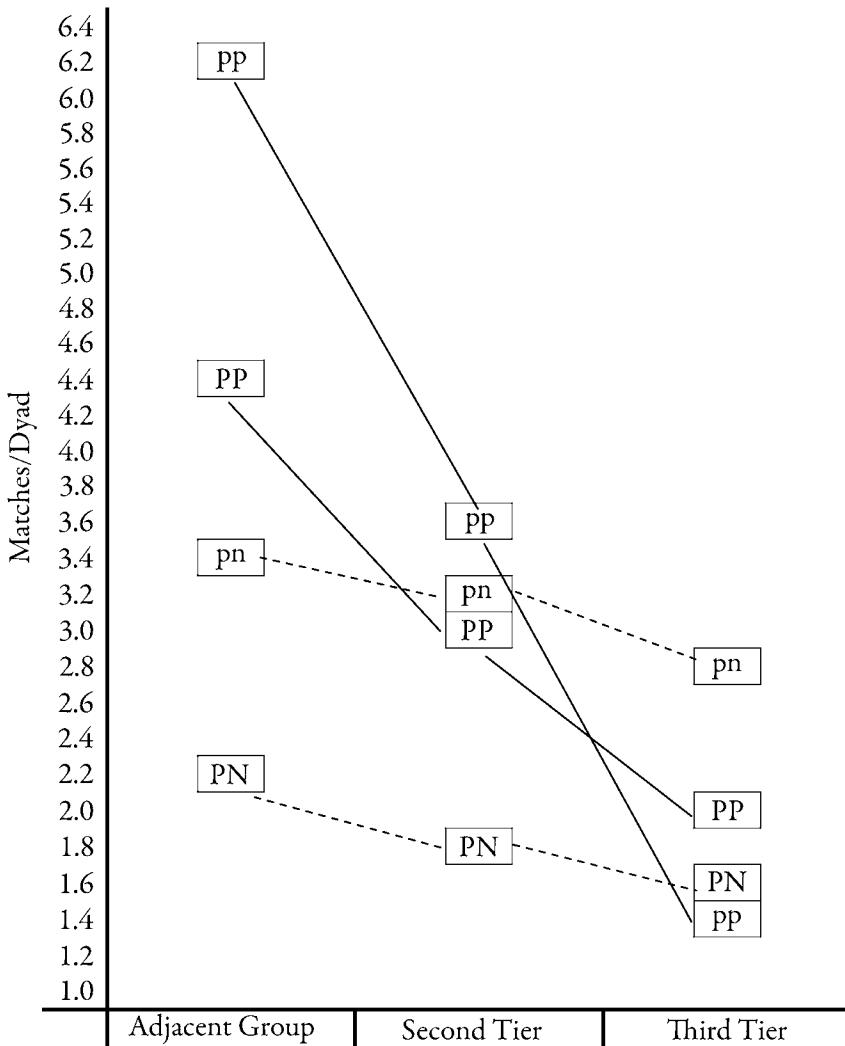
TABLE 4.4—continued

	Adjacent, Different Language		Second Tier, Different Language		Third+ Tier, Different Language		Total, Different Language	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Panoan n = 12	64/28 2.29	66/20 3.30	156/84 1.86	208/68 3.06	342/236 1.45	584/250 2.34	562/348 1.61	858/338 2.54
Witotoan n = 4	28/14 2.00	20/14 1.43	36/30 1.20	58/30 1.93	118/116 1.02	130/108 1.20	182/160 1.14	208/152 1.37
Zapatoan n = 4	48/30 1.30	62/30 2.07	74/56 1.23	52/60 2.70	42/74 0.57	122/66 1.85	164/160 1.03	336/156 2.15
Arawakan n = 4	48/20 2.40	64/18 3.56	84/34 1.91	142/28 3.23	10/82 0.12	82/78 1.05	142/136 1.04	288/124 2.32
Tupian n = 3	68/32 2.13	96/28 3.00	118/64 1.84	204/54 3.78	34/24 1.42	92/36 2.56	220/120 1.83	392/118 3.32
Cahuapa-nan n = 2	40/16 2.56	84/16 5.25	60/24 2.31	140/26 5.38	74/40 1.85	94/38 2.47	174/80 2.18	318/80 3.90
Peban n = 2	24/16 1.50	52/16 3.25	54/32 1.69	68/30 2.27	28/22 1.27	44/34 1.38	104/70 1.30	164/80 2.05
Tukanoan n = 2	46/18 2.56	30/18 1.67	44/22 1.91	28/22 1.27	46/40 1.15	62/38 1.63	136/80 1.70	120/78 1.54
Isolated n = 10	22/10 2.20	40/12 3.33	82/62 1.32	170/62 2.74	364/232 1.57	626/284 2.34	468/304 1.45	834/358 2.33
Total n = 43	388/184 2.13	514/172 2.99	708/408 1.74	1,168/380 3.07	1,058/866 1.22	1,836/932 1.97	2,152/1,458 1.48	3,518/1,484 2.37

Table 4.4 draws upon a similarity matrix for forty-three ethnolinguistic groups. A  $43 \times 43$  matrix containing 1,806 dyadic comparisons can be unwieldy, and the table is streamlined to focus on two matters of interest. The first is the relationship between intergroup similarity as measured by number of shared traits and distance, where distance is measured on an ordinal scale ranging from adjacency, through once-removed (second tier in Table 4.4), to groups separated by two or more intervening groups (third tier). The second matter of interest is the never-say-die issue of language-culture connections. To address this issue, the top and bottom panels of Table 4.4 give similarity measures within versus between language families, respectively.

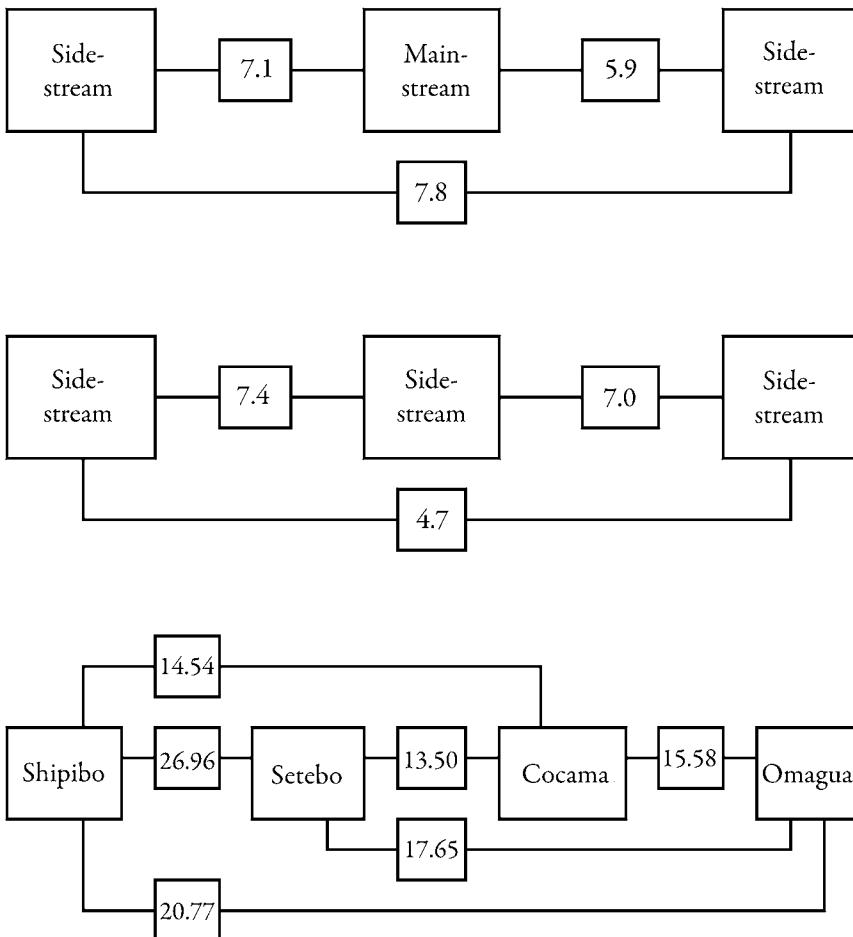
Now that relevant data are on hand, these machinations in geography, gender, and language are put to work in Figure 4.5 with Panoan-speaking groups serving as a point of reference. Each Panoan group is compared with other Panoan groups in terms of shared male-linked (PP) or female-linked (pp) traits. The same comparison is then made between Panoans and non-Panoans (PN, pn), resulting in a total of four plots. Although proximity may not breed respect, the graph shows that it results in similarity. All four plots are rather ordinary versions of the distance-decay type in which probability of interaction and concomitant trait diffusion are governed by distance-based accessibility. Individual agents, each with a modicum of choice and creativity, are replaced by a mass of largely uninspired copycats. This finding, however, may be misleading when it is recalled that the graph treats groups and traits indiscriminately to generate a composite result. When broken down into mainstream and sidestream zones, the different picture shown in Figure 4.6 emerges. The top panel displays the average number of traits shared in all transects uniting a pair of sidestream groups separated by a mainstream group. The results show that both sidestream groups are more similar to each other than either is to an intervening mainstream group. The bottom panel plots shared traits among mainstream groups of the Ucayali. Again, distance is a poor predictor of the results, with the Cocama, in particular, departing from expectations. As Lowie (1948) emphasized in his perspicacious diagnosis of tropical forest culture, major rivers were highways that tended to unite a cosmopolitan network of societies whose members had more in common with each other than with their rustic backwoods neighbors. Lowie's point was seconded by Kroeber (1949), who remarked on the striking resemblance between the design style of prehistoric Marajoara pottery from the mouth of the Amazon and that of the Shipibo and Conibo of the Ucayali antipodes. The "aberrant" behavior of our mainstream examples is consonant with these early views. In contrast, all transects spanning sidestream triads produce the expected distance-sensitive plot given in the middle panel of Figure 4.6. As sidestream groups dominate the sample 35 to 8, they effectively swamp mainstream exceptions.

Other variability among the plots is worthy of note. With distance held constant, Panoans are more similar to Panoans than to non-Panoans. That is, language



**FIGURE 4.5.** Similarity measured in terms of number of matches per dyadic comparison plotted against ordinal distance. Capitals indicate male traits, lowercase female traits. PP and pp indicate Panoan to Panoan comparisons, respectively; PN and pn, Panoan to non-Panoan comparisons, respectively.

affiliation appears to promote the sharing of material traits *in this Panoan case*. The italics stress the local nature of this claim. It would seem to me that the extent to which language and other aspects of culture march around holding hands or, alternatively, go their separate ways is a variable rather than a principle (cf. Lyon 1991).



**FIGURE 4.6.** Mean number of shared traits (small boxes) between sidestream groups separated by a mainstream group (upper panel), between sidestream groups (middle panel), and between mainstream groups of the Ucayali River (lower panel).

Yet other unexpected results lurk in Figure 4.5. As intergroup relations are often assumed to be male-dominated, it is particularly notable that female-linked traits cross group boundaries with greater facility than their male counterparts. One might look to post-marital residence rules for an explanation of this seeming anomaly, but the pervasive patrilocality that would be required to shunt wives across western Amazonian landscapes is lacking. Matrilocality, whether as a permanent or temporary post-marital arrangement, is, in fact, common in the Tessmann sample and would seemingly work against the dissemination of female-linked traits.

**TABLE 4.5.** Raider and raided based on historical accounts summarized by DeBoer (2008). Numbers in parentheses indicate raids against distant groups defined as those groups separated from raiders by at least two intervening groups.

	<i>Arawakan Group Raided</i>	<i>Panoan Group Raided</i>	<i>Total Raids</i>
Arawakan Raider	6 (0)	7 (1)	13 (1)
Panoan Raider	11 (3)	49 (6)	60 (9)
Total Raids	17 (3)	56 (7)	73 (10)

A more satisfying explanation may reside in practices that often fall outside ethnographic accounts. The Conibo of the Ucayali mainstream furnish a case in point. Missionary reports of the seventeenth century depict the Conibo as inveterate raiders, pillaging other Panoan groups such as the Remo, Amahuaca, and Cashibo for booty and captives, especially females whose fate in captivity ranged from drudge laborer to wife (DeBoer 1986, 2008). The available information indicates that such abducted women, obtained from *outside* the kinship “systems” and marriage “rules” codified by anthropologists, accounted for a significant number of wives. Captive-taking continued into recent years. According to genealogies for Campa and Conibo living at Shahuaya during the 1960s, fully 30 percent of all individuals could trace descent to captives taken within the last three generations (Bodley 1967), while an estimated half of all wives among the Panoan Matsés have captive pedigrees (Fields and Merrifield 1980; Erikson 1994:8–9). Nor were non-Panoans immune. Santos-Granero (1998) details the Amuesha (Arawak) use of toponyms, landmarks, and oral traditions to record past depredations committed by Conibo raiding expeditions. For the non-Panoan Candoshi, wife capture continues to be a masculine ideal, a way to obtain an affine without the burden of affinity (Surrallés 2007:332, 342). Table 4.5 identifies perpetrators and victims in historically documented raids and dramatizes the Panoan penchant for raiding other Panoans, typically their immediate neighbors. These raids were in full swing over four centuries and, even if amplified during European occupation, undoubtedly rested upon indigenous foundations.

The well-documented chronicle of Panoan raiding suggests that flows of female flesh could well account for the generous distribution of female-linked traits. This explanation, however, runs into complications. For example, Table 4.4 demonstrates that female-linked traits are more common across the full spectrum of western Amazonian societies. Thus, their predominance is not a Panoan monopoly. Either wife abduction was a general practice throughout the region or some other

factor or set of factors remains to be disclosed. A second complication is the unexamined extent to which body snatching guarantees the transmission of cultural baggage. Santos-Granero and Barclay (1994:xxviii) describe a deeply ingrained Panoan penchant for the incorporation of others, not through gustatory channels but via a history-erasing program of total transculturation. For example, captives were (re)tattooed in the style of the captor's group (Erikson 1994), a form of ethnic branding. The Conibo regarded captive-taking to be a Pygmalion-like project in which wretches were being weaned from a life of savagery. This process is well illustrated in the story of Bolivar Odicio. Born a Cashibo and raised a captive among the Shipibo, Bolivar came to spearhead a program for "civilizing" his natal kin. He introduced Shipibo art, architectural styles, and other trappings, while simultaneously advancing his own position as a powerful patron among the Cashibo (Gray 1953; Frank 1990). My own work among the Shipibo-Conibo confirms Lathrap's initial impression that potters with captive backgrounds produce perfectly proficient but rarely creative decoration (DeBoer 1990). For captives, attention-getting novelty is avoided and artifacts are put to work to obscure captive pedigree. One might even go so far as to claim that captives from foreign groups are central to the high-fidelity transmission of Shipibo-Conibo culture.

### ARTIFACTS OF MEANING

In the first Spanish ascent of the Ucayali in 1557, the Juan de Salinas expedition passed numerous large villages whose inhabitants sported an assortment of gold and silver ornaments including nose pendants, earrings, and labrets. Elaborately bedecked Indians were also observed by Franciscans and Jesuits vying for missionary dominion over the Ucayali in the late 1680s. As noted elsewhere (DeBoer n.d.), nose ornaments were particularly highlighted in these missionary reports. Chipeo (Shipibo) and Amahuaca men wore half-moon pieces of gold suspended from their nasal septa, while circular pendants of gold or shell dangled from the nostrils of Camarinigua and Comabo (the latter two groups dropping out from subsequent ethnonymy). As if to exhaust the combination of shape and medium, the Piro made half-moons of shell. Although the emphasis on gold was probably propaganda (not one fleck has yet been recovered archaeologically), these early descriptions indicate that ornaments played a role as ethnic markers. Such a role continued in the time of Tessmann's survey and is evident today among Panoan speakers and others.

Built from the inventory itemized in Table 4.3, Table 4.6 addresses the spatial behavior of ornaments as well as other various functionally distinct artifact categories. Categories such as clothing, the musical instruments made and played by males, somatic modifications including head-flattening and the filing of teeth, and female-dominated culinary arts are represented by small and inconclusive samples. Analytical weight is therefore placed on the better-represented categories of utility-

**TABLE 4.6.** Aspects of spatial patterning in traits classified by gender and function. Arrows call attention to significantly high ( $\uparrow$ ) or low ( $\downarrow$ ) values.

	<i>Clothing</i>	<i>Musical Instruments</i>	<i>Eating, Serving Food</i>	<i>Utility and Weapons</i>	<i>Ornaments</i>	<i>Somatic Modification</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male							
traits	4	3	—	12	11	2	32
clusters	5	11	—	26	33	6	81
cases	18	37	—	117	62	12	246
clusters/trait	1.25	3.67	—	↓2.17	3.00 $\uparrow$	3.00	2.53
cases/cluster	3.60	3.36	—	4.50 $\uparrow$	↓1.88	2.00	3.04
cases/trait	4.50	12.33	—	9.75 $\uparrow$	↓5.64	6.00	7.69
Female							
traits	2	—	9	14	11	2	38
clusters	6	—	30	30	36	3	105
cases	19	—	98	144	80	9	350
clusters/trait	3.00	—	3.33	↓2.14	3.27 $\uparrow$	1.50	2.76
cases/cluster	3.17	—	3.27	4.80 $\uparrow$	↓2.22	3.00	3.33
cases/trait	4.50	—	10.89	10.29 $\uparrow$	↓7.27	↓4.50	9.21
Total							
clusters/trait	1.83	3.67	3.33	↓2.15	3.14 $\uparrow$	2.25	2.66
cases/cluster	3.17	3.36	3.27	4.66 $\uparrow$	↓2.06	2.33	3.18
cases/trait	6.17	12.33	10.89	10.04 $\uparrow$	↓6.45	5.25	8.44

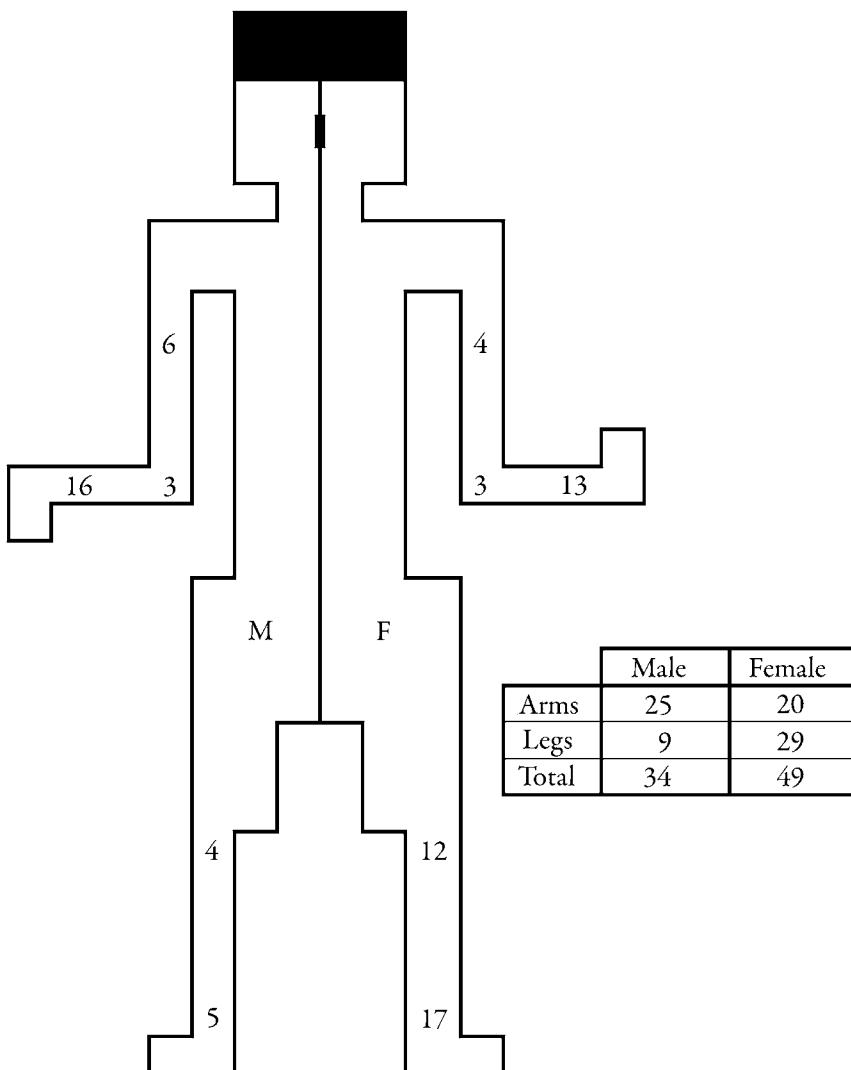
weapons and ornaments. The awkward category utility and weapons combines artifacts associated with the female-dominated activities of food preparation and weaving with male-dominated weaponry used in hunting, fishing, and warfare. As seen in Table 4.6, the two categories utility and weapons, and ornaments exhibit very different spatial distributions. First consider the matter of clustering. On average, there are 2.15 clusters per trait in the case of utility and weapons. The corresponding figure for ornaments rises to 3.14 clusters per trait. With respect to the number of cases per cluster, utility and weapons exceeds ornaments 4.66 to 2.06. Traits involving the basic tasks of food preparation, weaving, and killing are found in more groups (10.04 cases per trait) than are ornamental traits (6.45 cases per trait). Taken together, these three indices give contrasting signatures for artifacts dealing with the basics of subsistence and shelter versus artifacts dealing with the diacritics of vanity and social identity. While utility and weapons diffuse contagiously to neighbors, resulting in large clusters that are fewer in number, ornaments tend to have a hopscotch distribution with a larger number of small clusters. The small and disjunct clusters typifying ornaments maximize differences between neighbors. Such differences create borders.

In addition to demarcating ethnic space, ornaments engender. According to the Ucayali chronicles of 1686, adult males favored nose ornaments while ear and lip ornaments, when mentioned at all, were preferred by women. Tessmann's data collected over two centuries later intimate the same pattern. Nose ornaments were more common among males (seventeen groups) than among females (ten groups). For earrings and labrets, however, the difference is less clear, females leading males by only twenty-seven to twenty-three groups.

The distribution of ligatures is more telling. Often made from bands of iguana skin tightly bound around the limbs, ligatures follow the anatomical plan sketched in Figure 4.7. For ligatures placed at wrist, elbow, and upper arm, males outnumber females by the slim margin of twenty-five to twenty. In contrast, as far as ligatures are concerned, legs are female country. Although seemingly a rather specific finding restricted to western Amazonia, the association of males and the celestial with the upper body and females and the chthonic with the lower body is, in fact, a widespread pattern that can be traced across lowland South America (Roe 1990; cf. Turner 1993) and the rest of the Americas (see summary in DeBoer 2005). The pattern casts an even larger net. From the Pythagoreans to the structuralists, right-left, up-down, hard-soft, and male-female oppositions have been forwarded as the archetypal somatogram.

### THE LONG AND SHORT RUNS

Shifting scales of analysis is instructive in that it forces a brief vacation from familiar terrain and from the tyranny of expertise, thereby enabling us to see in new ways.



**FIGURE 4.7.** Placement of ligatures on males and females according to Tessmann. The somatogram tells us, for example, that females of thirteen groups and males of sixteen groups wear wrist ligatures.

Ground-level research problems may be reframed or even dissolved when viewed from a “celestial” perspective. Essentializing claims about the rarity of Arawakan endo-warfare, or its prevalence among the Panoans, may now be recast in the context of large-scale geographical patterns of propinquity and dispersal and the vari-

able processes, directed or random, that produce them. Without such shifting of perspectives, much local effort can be spent solving what are stochastically generated non-problems at another level.

Problem definition is scale sensitive. The archaeological record is rarely suited for writing palaeo-ethnographies, and the dance of mutating ethnicities that charms today's ethnographer cannot be easily mapped onto the hand-me-down material culture represented by the Pacacocha ceramic tradition, which for well over a millennium ramified into the various pottery assemblages of recent Panoan speakers. Nor is there any particular reason to privilege the instrumentalist claim of protean and transitory ethnicities over the enduring body of artifacts that make up the niche of human evolution. As in the case of language distributions, Brownian motion at a macro level can be construed as agency at microscopic resolution, just as perduring structure always has a nudging role in the cultural creation of the moment. The present case study also suggests that language affiliation and material culture tend to stick together, not because there is any sticky glue involved but because both are transmitted over similar channels. Depending on circumstances, this "null" condition may be reinforced, actively resisted, or casually ignored.

Tessmann's data on artifact distributions confirm the notion that, other things being equal, similarity among artifact assemblages is strongly conditioned by distance. The making of finer distinctions, however, takes us beyond this commonplace of an asocial "artifact physics." In the Amazonian case just reviewed, for instance, female-linked traits more readily cross group boundaries than their male-linked counterparts. This differential permeability of group membranes on the basis of gender is a bit mysterious if one accepts the notion that men dominate external politics, warfare, and trade and if one notes the dearth of compelling evidence for systematic patrilocality coupled with intergroup marriage. Raiding—in which the abduction of foreign females, some destined to become wives—was common practice in western Amazonia and appears to be a more plausible mechanism for explaining the dissemination of female-linked material culture. "Wife-capture," long dismissed as a titillating fantasy of Victorian gentlemen, should be readmitted to the interpretive roster of anthropologists. In fact, there is ample sign that such reinstatement is under way (e.g., Cameron 2008), although much research sensitive to cross-cultural variability remains to be done. For example, knowledge of the developmental schedule by which various sorts of cultural knowledge are acquired is limited. Likewise, the effects of trauma, both at demographic and personal levels, on cultural transmission and acquisition are poorly understood, as is the human capacity to "unlearn" old and learn new cultural information at various life stages. The complexity of the matter is well illustrated by the Shipibo-Conibo case, in which captives, usually young women or children, were submitted to a program designed to erase "savage" roots and customs. At least in the domain of pottery making, this program of reculturation was successful. The cultural edifice occupied

by the Shipibo-Conibo lasts in the face of, or should we say depends on, continual foreign influx.

Looking beneath the mass behavior of artifacts in abstract space, yet other scale-contingent phenomena emerge. Overarching distance-decay relationships break down along major waterways and at mainstream-sidestream interfaces. Artifact collectivities fracture along technological, social, and ideological dimensions. Quotidian and utilitarian artifacts readily diffuse to neighbors, resulting in a large cluster of contiguous groups sharing the trait. In contrast to this contagious pattern, ornaments tend to hopscotch across groups as if striving to maximize perimeters of difference. Such ornaments, including perishable hairdos and body painting, are rare in the archaeological record but are likely to be the most telling carriers for group identity.

If nothing else, the cross-scalar comparison attempted in this chapter should expose matters of shared ignorance and point toward those chiasmic connections between little and large, moments and millennia, that are likely to reward study.

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Generic Pots and Generic Indians:  
The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis in the Middle Orinoco

*Kay Tarble de Scaramelli and Franz Scaramelli*

Epidemic disease, slave raiding, and the displacement and relocation of indigenous groups under the colonial mission regime resulted in dramatic transformations in the ethnic conformation of the middle Orinoco area, as in other parts of America. Nonetheless, after the expulsion of the missionaries following the war of independence, native societies had the opportunity to redefine themselves vis-à-vis the fledgling Republics of Colombia and Venezuela. This process involved the coalition of small, remnant groups into viable multiethnic communities and the appearance of new ethnic identities. At the same time, a non-indigenous Criollo/Llanero (creole/ranger or cowboy) identity was evolving out of the combination of escaped slaves, former mission Indians, poor mestizos, mulattos, and *blancos de orilla* (whites from the periphery), who joined forces to exploit the abundant feral cattle in the savannahs, but who eventually were forced to enter the workforce as peons and cowhands on the privately owned ranches in the area. As a part of this post-colonial process, ethnic, racial, and class lines were redrawn. A supra-ethnic identity, the generic Indio, emerged for indigenous peoples, as opposed to the generic Criollo or

Racional, a gloss for Spanish-speaking sectors formerly divided into multiple *castas* during the colonial period. The colonial *casta* distinctions were largely abandoned as indigenous and non-indigenous sectors became increasingly polarized.

The archaeological record sheds light on this relatively undocumented process of ethnogenesis and ethnocide. Lowland archaeologists working in the pre-contact period have frequently used distinctive ceramic styles to characterize different “peoples” and, while recognizing that the direct association between linguistic groups and ceramic styles must be carefully evaluated, have argued with some confidence that identity may be expressed and maintained through material goods, including ceramics. In the middle Orinoco, a variety of distinctive ceramic styles are present for the late pre-contact period that reflects the cultural diversity described by the early chroniclers. Nevertheless, the ceramic sequence developed for the post-contact period reveals a marked reduction of stylistic distinction through time that suggests (1) the prohibition of decorative elements by missionaries who feared that they were expressions of pagan beliefs; (2) massive population decline and displacement, with grave consequences for the transmission of decorative techniques and motifs; (3) a change in the scale at which pottery was used to express social identity; and (4) the eventual commoditization of pottery production. Indigenous potters began to produce cooking and storage wares to cover the needs of Racionales and Indios alike. At the same time, imported, decorated tableware replaced the local serving wares, which in earlier periods had been invested with the distinctive decorative styles that had served to distinguish ethnic differences. It appears, then, that as an overarching identity as Indios arose, locally made pottery was decreasingly invested with emblematic style.

In this chapter we examine the processes associated with differential survival, consciousness building, and identity formation, as these evolved following European conquest in the middle Orinoco region. Following constructivist and instrumentalist approaches to ethnicity, much of the recent research (Thomas 1991; Dietler 1995; Miller 1995; Lightfoot, Martinez, and Schiff 1998; Lyons and Papadopoulos 2002; Senatore 2003; Voss 2005) has called attention to the notion that identity is “construed in relation to social others and articulated through relations with particular people, places, and material goods” (Miller et al. 1998:24). In the case at hand, archaeology provides evidence that can illuminate these developments as they affected the sectors involved in the Jesuit missionary project in the middle Orinoco and later, following the war of independence, as the national society evolved. The study is guided by recent constructivist and practice-based studies that stress the transformation of indigenous life through the day-to-day actions in the mission and other institutional contexts (Comaroff 1985; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1992a, 1997; Lightfoot 2004; Silliman 2004; Voss 2008). Through military force, religious indoctrination, and the abolition of many native practices, the missionaries attempted to mold their often-reluctant neophytes into fully “rational”

beings and subjects. The concomitant imposition of new notions of labor and agricultural practice, health and disease, education, marriage practice, and a system of political hierarchy became the means by which the ideology of the colonial system was at least partially established in the Orinoco. The analysis of these arenas of cultural control is crucial to understanding the budding consciousness of identity and construction of ethnicity resulting from struggle and conflict in the face of domination (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992b:54; Cardoso de Oliveira 2007).

As in other parts of the world, in the Orinoco, ethnic groups did not develop in isolation but rather emerged through association and contrast with others. Following European conquest, the situation of contact (Turner 1988) provided the framework for the formation of a larger system of relationships in which each group, including the indigenes, European colonizers, and peoples of African and mestizo origin, responded through strategies and actions that involved material culture, symbolic systems, social relations, and mechanisms of cultural control (Bonfil Batalla 1978). It should, nonetheless, be stressed that the definition of identity through relation was in practice played out on an unbalanced field, in which the interaction was, more often than not, conflictive and modeled on a structure of domination/subordination (Cardoso de Oliveira 2007:116). In this context, the imposition, adoption, or rejection of certain foreign items and practices, and the modification or the maintenance of traditional lifeways and productive modes, became essential elements in the redefinition of native forms of interaction and identities in which the colonizing Other became a necessary condition for the definition of new forms of Us.

Native societies in the Orinoco area were exposed to a systematic and aggressive “civilizing” process oriented toward decontextualizing and homogenizing preexisting forms of alterity that in some cases resulted in the emergence of new identities or ethnogenesis. These new identities coincided with a shift in the scale of mutual differentiation and are expressed even today in the form of local dichotomies, introduced by the Jesuits, but still very common in the Orinoco: the diacritical and discriminatory categories of the Criollo or Racional and the Indio. These broad categories of reference were created and reproduced on the ground through commonplace things, such as the style of house construction, clothing and adornments, culinary practice and accoutrements, the adoption or rejection of domestic animals and cultigens, ritual instruments, and other visible forms of distinction, as well as through less tangible elements such as language, religious beliefs, and musical forms. It is in the material manifestations of the historical configuration of cultural diversity that the archaeologist is able to explore processes that only rarely are available in the textual sources. This chapter attempts to document, through ceramic evidence, the process through which new ethnic identities emerged in the context of the contact situation leading to the nascent Republic of Venezuela.

## **ETHNICITY, IDENTITY, AND ETHNOGENESIS**

We hope to contribute to the discussion of ethnogenesis in indigenous Amazonia by focusing on processes that took place in the Orinoco region following European conquest. Hill's definition of ethnogenesis as "a concept encompassing peoples' simultaneously cultural and political struggles to create enduring identities in general contexts of radical change and discontinuity" (Hill 1996:1) is particularly relevant to this discussion, given the violence and conflict involved in the imposition of the colonial regime. While agreeing with the editors of this volume that ethnogenesis is a process that has occurred both prior to and following European contact throughout South America, we propose to make a heuristic distinction between the ethnic formations and ethnogenesis that characterized pre-colonial and post-colonial processes in our study area. Following the Comaroffs' distinction between "totemism"<sup>1</sup> and "ethnicity," we argue that it is useful to distinguish between the patterns of differentiation obtaining in pre-colonial times in the Orinoco region and those that emerge with the advent of European intervention (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992b). Cardoso de Oliveira proposes a similar distinction with respect to the analysis of the interethnic systems that arose following contact with national society in the Brazilian Amazon (Cardoso de Oliveira 1968, 2006, 2007). These authors have questioned the very notion of ethnicity or interethnic relations as valid concepts for dealing with the non-hierarchical arrangements characteristic of many regions in the pre-capitalistic world, arguing, for example, that "ethnicity" as we know it today arises only as a reaction to threats against the integrity and self-determination of any given community, commonly as a consequence of projects of domination (Cardoso de Oliveira 2007:113). The Comaroffs argue that "ethnicity always has its genesis in specific historical forces, forces which are simultaneously structural and cultural" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992b:50). In their argument, a distinction must be made between those "symmetrical relations between structurally similar social groupings," such as those commonly described in the ethnographic literature for many parts of Amazonia, which they refer to as "totemism," and the "asymmetric incorporation of structurally dissimilar groupings into a single political economy," which they define as "ethnicity" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992b:54). Cardoso de Oliveira distinguishes between "intertribal" and "interethnic" relations to differentiate between relations that obtained among indigenous groups, in the first case, and between indigenous groups and segments of the national society, in the second, arguing that "interethnic relations" are always asymmetrical (Cardoso de Oliveira 2007:113).

In the case of "totemism," identities are constructed through opposition to one another in a system of meaningful forms of communal consciousness, where "autonomous groupings enter into relations of equivalence or complementary interdependence and, in so doing, fashion their collective identities by contrast to one

another” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992b:54–55). These are the types of distinctions we would expect to find operating in the pre-Columbian tropical lowlands of South America, an example of which would be the SORI (System of Orinoco Regional Interdependence) as defined by Arvelo and Biord (1994). A recent discussion of evidence of “totemic” divisions among the Wayana of eastern Guayana presented by Chapuis (2006) is another example of this type of identity construction obtaining in traditional Carib-speaking societies. Under these circumstances, the particular content of the identities will depend on the type of interaction that occurs among the different groups and will result in spatially distributed circumstances largely defined by the logic of economic, social, and political structures at the macro scale, in which interaction, both positive and negative, through trade, warfare, political alliances, ritual cycles, and marital arrangements may play a part. These identities may or may not be visible archaeologically, depending on the nature of the diacritical criteria and their maintenance or transformation through time. DeBoer (1986, 1990) has illustrated the difficulties inherent in the use of any one criterion, such as language group or ceramic style, to distinguish this type of identity because of the fluidity of boundaries and the ease of diffusion and emulation of stylistic elements.

The asymmetric collective identities defined by the Comaroffs as “ethnic” are more appropriate for the analysis of the complex and hierarchical structuring of inequality that occurs in colonial and post-colonial times or where state formations and colonial expansion appeared prior to European contact, such as in the Andean region or in Mesoamerica. This is not to deny the co-occurrence of both “totemic” and “ethnic” identities in the post-conquest period, a theme we will take up later in this chapter. But it opens up the discussion to the appearance of multi-leveled structures of inequality that are grounded in the expanding world system and that contribute to the global division of labor characteristic of colonial situations of domination. This nested hierarchy of ethnic identities, termed “segmentary ethnicity” (Cohen 1978:387, in Comaroff and Comaroff 1992b:58), accounts for differences at local, national, and transnational levels. These “culturally marked and politically salient” identities are increasingly gaining voice in Latin America as *etnias* (ethnic groups or ethnies) fighting for territorial rights, as *pueblos indígenas* (indigenous peoples) struggling for recognition vis-à-vis European Americans or African Americans, and as *naciones* (nations), such as in the indigenous political movements in Bolivia or Mexico. The archaeological referents for the emergence of these novel types of identity must be sought on the frontiers, conceptualized as “zones of cross-cutting social networks” where new material and cultural innovations arise and where group identities are constructed, negotiated, and transformed (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995:474). It is in these frontier situations that processes of both ethnogenesis and creolization take place, through the “creation, transformation and syncretization of new cultural constructs” (Lightfoot and Martinez

1995:474). Creolization, then, is a process of ethnogenesis that is peculiar to situations of interaction and exchange between colonizers and local populations. The identities forged on these frontiers, as “ethnic” identities, will reflect the negotiation between asymmetrical sectors and the manipulation of material goods and symbols by members of these different sectors seeking to enhance their prestige and influence in the colonial system.

### **THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF ETHNOGENESIS**

Archaeology is in a privileged position to study the relation of identity construction to macro-scale conditions, such as ecological diversity, trade routes, and conquests. Broad patterns of adaptation, migration, and diffusion are the focus of many studies dealing with the prehistoric period in the Venezuelan Guayana and its relation with both the Amazon and the Antilles (Meggers and Evans 1961, 1983; Lathrap 1970, 1973; Rouse 1978, 1986; Vargas Arenas 1981; Sanoja and Vargas Arenas 1983, 1999; Tarble and Zucchi 1984; Zucchi and Tarble 1984; Tarble 1985; Lathrap and Oliver 1987; Barse 1989; Oliver 1989; Roosevelt, Housley et al. 1991; Zucchi 1991, 1992, 1993; Roosevelt, de Costa et al. 1996). These reconstructions have been criticized for their bounded and essentialized notions of ethnic identity, especially evident in the attempt to correlate language and ceramic style (Whitehead 1996). They have served, nonetheless, to paint broad pictures of pan-regional interaction, migration, and diffusion that are infrequent in the ethnographic literature centered on small-scale accounts of individual societies. They have also served to establish the antiquity of lowland occupations and have contributed to a more dynamic appreciation of the relation between highland and lowland developments (Hornborg 1990). As the scope of the investigation narrows, it should be possible to refine the archaeological referents for identity and move beyond simplistic correlations to more nuanced analyses that include a broader range of archaeological evidence, such as settlement layout, earthworks, burials and funerary treatment, rock art, and ceramic and lithic artifacts.

At the same time, archaeology can offer specific contexts for the microanalysis of interaction, where processes of ethnogenesis may occur. In the post-contact period, sites such as missions, trading posts, and military outposts provide excellent opportunities for the analysis of the interplay among the different sectors involved: Europeans, mestizos, indigenous, and Afro-descendants. In small-scale analyses carried out at specific settlements, it is possible to explore the incorporation of new technology, foodstuffs, items of dress, and so forth across ethnic lines and how these contribute to the creative construction of new identities (Deagan 1983, 2004; Lightfoot, Martinez, and Schiff 1998; Lightfoot 2004, 2005; Voss 2005, 2008). Although ethnogenesis is often associated with the emergence of subaltern identities in situations of domination or repression, Voss (2008) has documented the

surfacing of new colonial identities, forged from various polyracial communities that are “used to assert power over others and to consolidate institutional forms of domination.” The ethnogenesis of the Californio, the Gaucho, and the Llanero are examples of this latter phenomenon, located on the frontiers of the empire, where non-elite and racially mixed populations forge myths, rituals, literature, cuisines, and productive modes that they use to set themselves apart from the indigenous populations that retain more traditional lifeways.

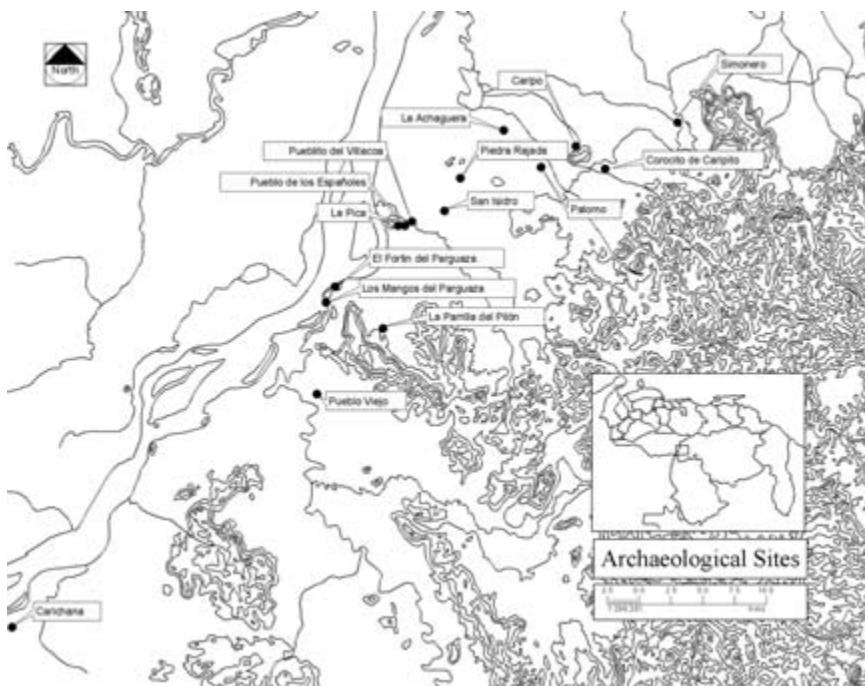
### **ETHNOGENESIS IN THE MIDDLE ORINOCO IN THE COLONIAL PERIOD**

For the archaeologist, the documentation of ethnogenesis poses certain challenges. First and foremost, the question of material archaeological correlates for ethnicity or “totemism” must be resolved. And second, the identification of ethnogenesis, as opposed to, say, migration, diffusion, or evolution of populations in one’s area of study, must be addressed. In the first case, a great deal of discussion has evolved around the archaeological correlates for ethnic identity, and much has been pessimistic (Dietler and Herbich 1998; Stahl 1991; Stark 1998). Any definition of ethnicity in post-Barthian times necessarily involves communal self-definition in relation to others. No intrinsic or “essential” markers of ethnicity have been found to prevail universally; neither immaterial criteria (language, religion) nor material criteria (skin color, clothing, housing, foodways) are necessarily diacritical elements. These will vary according to the specific circumstances and are likely to vary significantly through time (Stahl 1991:251). This being said, perhaps we should turn the question around. What do the differences in material assemblages found archaeologically mean in social terms? And even if we cannot speak about “ethnic” identity, does that mean we cannot infer any type of identity?

In the following sections, we will discuss partial results of a long-term archaeological project aimed at exploring the articulation of the European and indigenous sectors involved in the colonial contact situation that developed in the middle Orinoco region of Venezuela during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Map 5.1). We will focus on ceramic evidence, examined in the light of historical documents and oral tradition, so as to illuminate its role in both the maintenance and the construction of identity in the contexts of Spanish colonial intervention and the later incorporation into the Republic of Venezuela.

### **EARLY COLONIAL PERIOD**

The early colonial period (1680–1767) is defined by the presence of Jesuit missions as the principal colonial agents in the area. In the context of the mission settlements, the priests attempted to impose a highly directed system with strict rules concerning religious instruction, daily schedules, division of labor, exchange, and



MAP 5.1. Archaeological sites in the middle Orinoco area.

travel outside of the mission. Under this regime, the proportion of Europeans to Native Americans was very low and mixed marriages were rare. Indigenous members of the community were recruited from different areas, and the turnover was high because of disease and desertion. The material remains of the mission of Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles de Pararuma, located near the mouth of the Villacoa River, include European-style constructions built with local materials, associated with specific activity areas dedicated to imported technologies, such as a forge and blacksmith shop (Scaramelli 2005; Scaramelli and Tarble de Scaramelli 2005). In neighboring regions, Jesuits, Capuchins, and other missionary orders were successful in establishing a series of industries in which the Indians were incorporated as laborers: cattle ranches, tanneries, textile production, mining and smelting, brick and tile factories, and sugarcane plantations with associated stills for the production of *aguardiente* (cane liquor) (Samudio A. 1992; Sanoja, Bencomo, and Aguilera 1995; Sanoja 1998; Scaramelli and Tarble 2003; Scaramelli and Tarble de Scaramelli 2005). Undoubtedly, the missionaries in the middle Orinoco aspired to the success of the neighboring enterprises, although they were thwarted in their attempts by disease, attacks from hostile indigenous groups, and precarious supplies and funding (Alvarado 1966).

The ceramic remains associated with early colonial sites in our study area include a variety of local ceramic production styles that overwhelmingly outnumber the imported wares (Scaramelli 2006). We have interpreted the presence of these different styles as representative of the multiethnic composition of the mission sites. Rather than attempt to eradicate “totemic” identity, the missionaries exploited rivalries to a certain degree and fostered a spirit of competition among the different indigenous groups present in the missions to achieve their ultimate goals: conversion to Catholicism and the imposition of Spanish rule in the Orinoco. In this context, ceramic production styles, as well as other distinctive markers, such as house style, hunting and fishing techniques, hairstyle, and food taboos, served to preserve and reinforce “totemic” identity in the colonial setting.

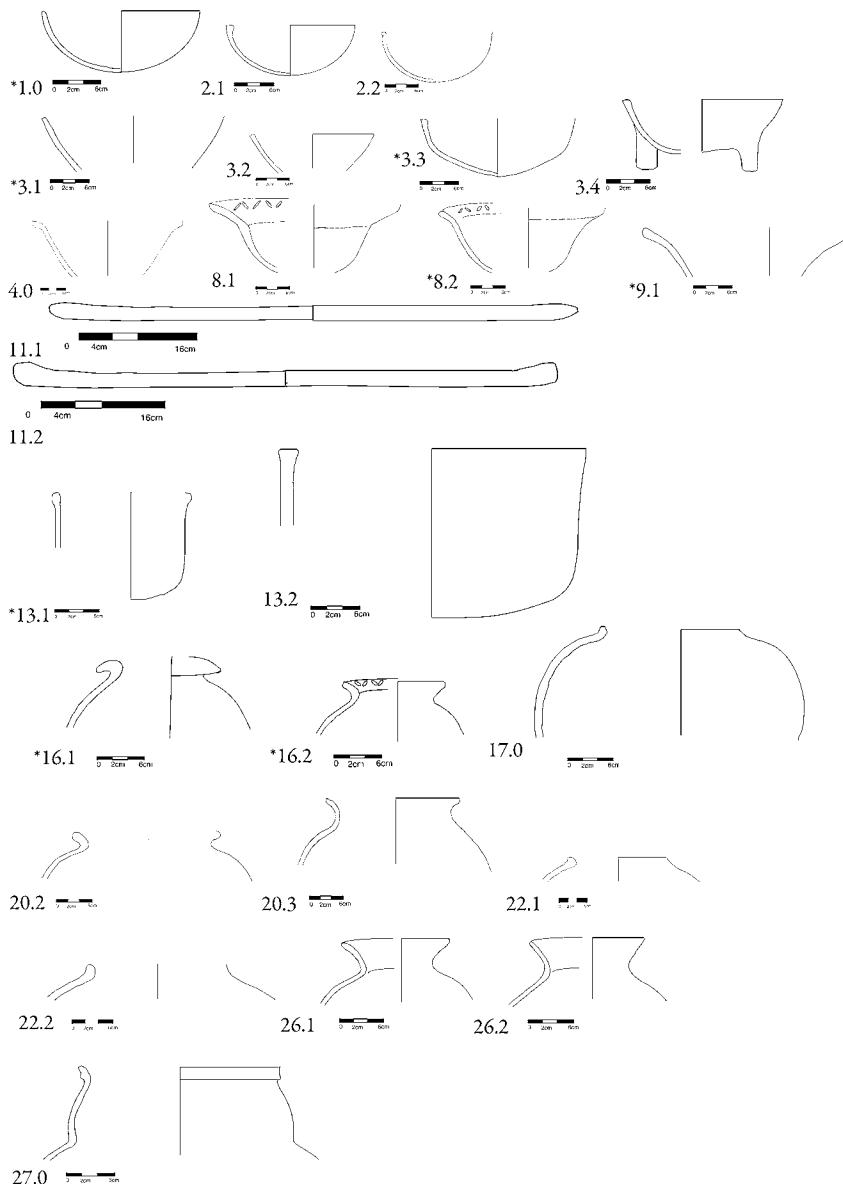
The ceramic evidence for the early colonial period shows a variety of local ceramic production styles that we have identified as San Isidro style, Valloid style, and Early Caraipé style (Table 5.1). These styles are present in similar proportions in the four sites for which we have the most complete evidence: San Isidro (BO-111), Piedra Rajada (BO-112), Pueblo de los Españoles (BO-119), and El Fortín del Parguaza (BO-31-E). The styles are easily distinguished from one another and differ in tempering material, color of the paste, vessel form, and decorative technique and motifs. This leads us to propose that they were produced by different ceramic-making communities, who followed distinctive technological traditions, and are not just variations of a single ceramic style destined for different functions.<sup>2</sup>

Documentary evidence tends to uphold this proposition. During the Jesuit occupation of our study area (1731–1767), there are numerous references to the distinctive ceramic products made by different ethnic groups in the Orinoco region. For example, the Güipunaves claimed: “[O]nly we make beautifully painted plates, only we make graters to make bread from manioc. So say the Güipunaves, and in the same way, all the Orinocan nations make it a point of honor to claim the things which they alone know” (Gilij 1987, 2:148). Pottery was one of the items that varied according to ethnic group, and certain groups were renowned for distinctive aspects of their wares. The Guamo, for instance, were famous for their double-spouted water jugs (Gilij 1987, 2:257) and the use of soil from termite hills for tempering material (Gilij 1987, 1:236), while the Otomaco specialized in the flat-bottomed bowls, popular for their utility in the extraction of turtle oil (Gilij 1987, 2:257–258). Carib pottery was distinctive for its glossy surface, obtained through polishing with round pebbles. Pots varied in thickness among groups: the Tamanaco prided themselves on the thinness of the walls of even the largest pots, while the Otomaco pots were as thick as an index finger. Color was also distinctive; Otomaco pots were black, and some Tamanaco and Güipunave pots were whitish, while most were reddish because of the application of a yellow slip that turned

**TABLE 5.1.** Frequency of ceramic styles through time.

Period	Site	Style										Total
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Republican	<b>La Achaguera</b>									133	100.0	133
		Piedra Rajada (2)								571	97.8	13
		Caripito								358	99.2	3
		Corocito del Caripito		4	0.7	6	1.1	9	1.6	534	96.6	553
Late	<b>Colonial</b>	Palomo		1	3.5	2	6.9	6	20.7	20	69.0	29
		Pueblo Viejo		357	6.8	3,068	58.3	1,417	26.9	417	7.9	3
		La Pica		35	54.7	3	4.7	6	9.4	20	31.3	64
		Fortín del Parguaza		34	17.0	37	18.5	124	62.0		5	2.5
Early	<b>Colonial</b>	Carichana		1	4.4	22	95.7					23
		Carichana		278	6.7	182	4.4	3,670	88.5			15
		San Isidro		255	6.7	475	12.4	3,094	80.9			2
		Piedra Rajada (1)		119	5.8	189	9.2	1,746	84.9			3
Pre-Contact	<b>Los Mangos</b>	Pueblo de Los Espanoles		2,662	74.6	905	25.4					3,567
		Total		2,662	12.4	1,591	7.4	884	4.1	9,053	42.2	3,079
										14.4	1,438	6.7
										2,033	9.5	44
										0.2	21,438	

*Generic Pots and Generic Indians*



**FIGURE 5.1.** Vessel forms of the San Isidro style. Asterisks indicate the more popular forms.

red upon firing (Gilij 1987, 2:259). These examples support the inference that distinctive ceramic styles can still be correlated with different “totemic” groups in the Orinoco region during the early colonial period.



FIGURE 5.2. *San Isidro pottery with characteristic incised decoration on rim flanges.*

According to documentary evidence, the ethnic composition of the early colonial settlements in the study area included Sáliva, Mapoye (Mapoyo), and Guamo (Alvarado 1966; Vega 1974; Hernández 1994). The Sáliva were the predominant group, both at the Fortín de San Francisco Javier de Marimarota and at the Mission of Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles de Pararuma. At the same time, Vega mentions his attempts to attract Mapoye and his visits to the nearby villages where they resided (Vega 1974). It could be suggested that the spicule-tempered ceramics of the San Isidro style (Figures 5.1 and 5.2) correspond to the Sáliva occupation of these sites, since the San Isidro-style ceramics are the most frequent of the locally made wares at all of the early colonial period sites (see Table 5.1). This proposition is supported by the fact that San Isidro-style ceramics are quite different from the Arauquinoid ceramics common to the area prior to European contact. The Sáliva were relocated at the mission and fort from what are today the Colombian and Venezuelan llanos on the western side of the Orinoco.<sup>3</sup>

The Valloid-style materials (Figure 5.3) most likely correspond to groups that traditionally inhabited the study area, since this style has antecedents in the pre-contact period. In the past, Tarble and Zucchi (1984) suggested that Carib-speaking groups, such as the Mapoyo, might have produced this pottery (Tarble and Zucchi 1984). Nonetheless, it should be stressed that Valloid materials had an ample distribution far beyond the limits of any one ethnic group and there is no rea-

### Generic Pots and Generic Indians

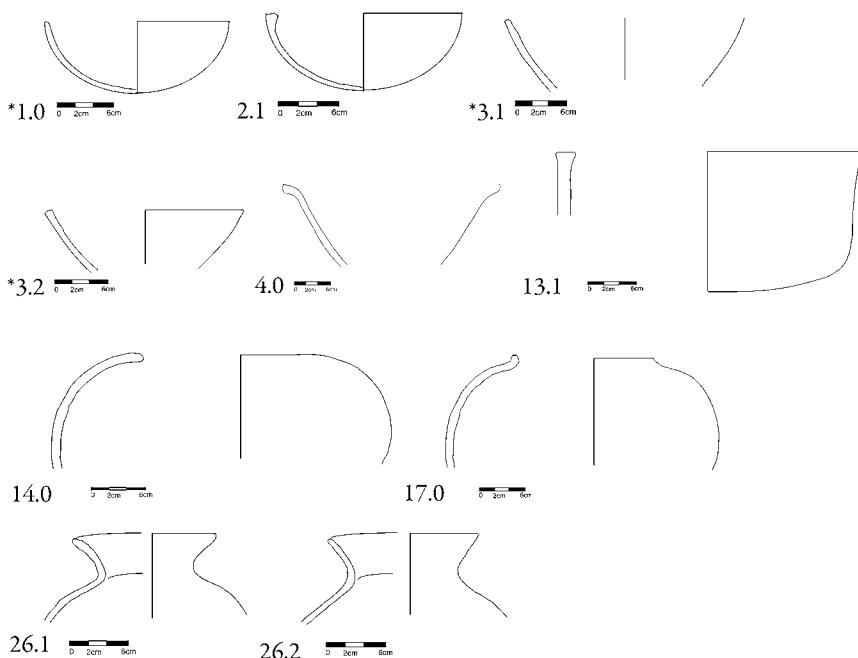
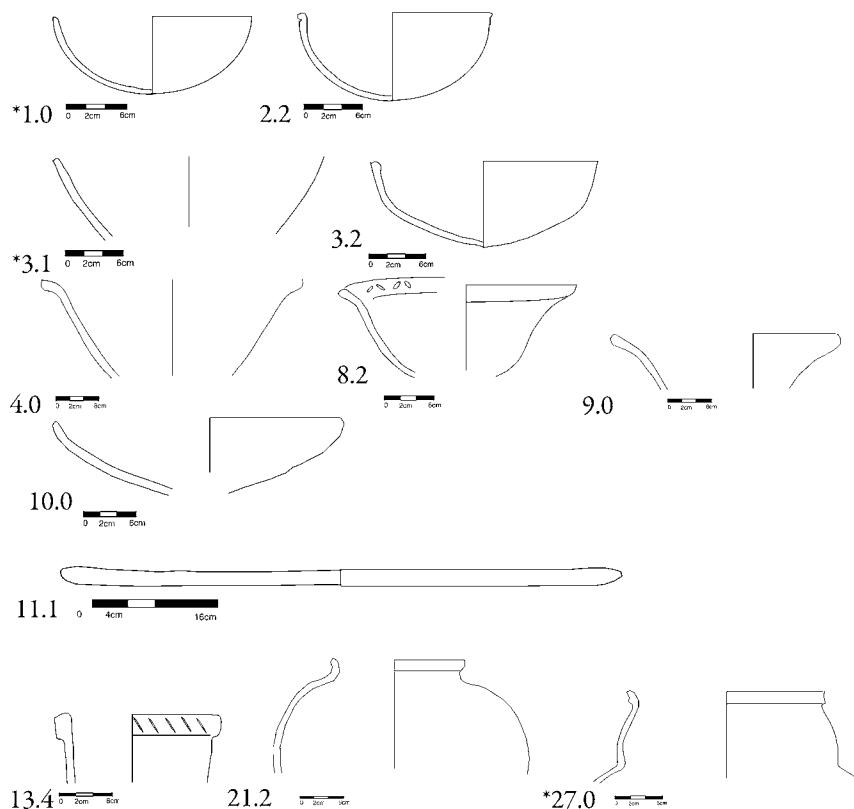


FIGURE 5.3. Vessel forms of the Valloid style. Asterisks indicate the more popular forms.

son to believe that this style was necessarily related to any specific language stock. The Early Caraipé<sup>4</sup> style is even more problematic (Figure 5.4). Caraipé-tempered materials are rare in the pre-contact period in the study area, although they are frequent in the upper Orinoco and Río Negro regions (Evans, Meggers, and Cauxent 1958; Zucchi 1991, 1992, 1993, 2000). Zucchi has correlated these materials with the Maipure Arawak expansion. Caraipé tempering may be associated with other Arawak-related populations on the Xingú (Ipavu), Río Negro (Guarita), and Maracá (Mazagão) (Hornborg, personal communication, 2009). Nonetheless, there are no references to Arawak-speaking inhabitants at the *fortín* or at the mission of Pararuma, although Güipunave and other ethnies from the upper Orinoco, such as the Cabre and Maipure, were relocated to La Urbana, Cabruta, and La Encaramada missions (Alvarado 1966). It is possible that the Early Caraipé-style ceramics represent trade wares and not a locally produced pottery. This is a minor ware at all of the sites.

At the same time, we have proposed that “European” identity was expressed and maintained through the restricted use of imported ceramic tableware. Although locally made pottery was predominant in all contexts in the mission period sites, imported tablewares were significantly more frequent in the Mission of Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles, especially in the more central areas of this site. We argue then



**FIGURE 5.4.** Vessel forms of the Early Caraipé style. Asterisks indicate the more popular forms.

that imported ceramics, as well as other highly visible items including construction materials, clothing, weapons, and adornments, played a key role in the construction of a new social hierarchy in the area.

#### LATE COLONIAL PERIOD

The tendency toward secularization following the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767, inspired by the Bourbon reforms, resulted in a new colonial strategy characteristic of our late colonial period (1768–1829). Secular towns oriented toward agricultural exploitation were founded with the relocation of European and mestizo settlers, who exploited the indigenes as laborers, domestic workers, guides, and rowers (Lucena Giraldo 1991; Lucena Giraldo 1998). This strategy was designed to curtail

the power of the different missionary orders that had heretofore monopolized the indigenous labor, commerce, and land. The attempt to attract colonial settlers to the area was, nonetheless, relatively unsuccessful. The towns did not flourish, and agricultural production remained primarily in the hands of the native population.

The ceramic evidence for the late colonial period is limited but suggestive. On the one hand, locally made pottery continues to predominate on these sites (Figure 5.5). Although decoration is practically nonexistent, formal and technological modes show close resemblance to the styles of the earlier period, suggesting some continuity; the different ceramic wares show distinctive production technology and characteristic modes of temper, color, thickness, and form. Because there is continuity in several styles, carried over from the early colonial period, we propose that part of the predominantly indigenous population of the Pueblo Viejo and La Pica sites had an ethnic makeup similar to that of the earlier period. The former mission Indians may have relocated to the late colonial sites, where they likely served as agricultural laborers and in other services to the resident European/Criollo/mestizo population.

The European ceramics found at these late colonial sites undoubtedly indicate the presence of resident Euro-descendant or mestizo colonists in the area, especially since they are concentrated in the area of the site where rectangular house platforms testify to Western construction technique, distributed around a central plaza, and associated with other imported artifacts. There is some evidence that points to the development of a local Criollo ware during the late colonial period, resulting in the Parguaza style that is characterized by distinctive vessel forms (small to medium-sized, deep, cooking pots) (Figures 5.6 and 5.7). This could indicate a shift in culinary practice to stewed or boiled foods, typical of Venezuelan cuisine today. We are tempted to consider that this style corresponds to a local Criollo ware, possibly made and used by a mestizo population made up of the descendants of free blacks, slaves, and Indians, in a context in which imported goods, including metal cooking pots, were infrequent. Similar low-fired, undecorated utility wares are described throughout the Caribbean and have been interpreted as pottery made by African American communities (Hauser and DeCorse 2003); nonetheless, very few systematic classifications have been made of these materials.

The marked decline in the variety of decorative techniques and designs in the colonial period wares, as compared with earlier styles that were common in the late pre-contact period, could be attributed in part to a radical population decline and the relocation of communities under mission rule. It is also probable that the missionaries forbade the use of certain kinds of decorative techniques and types of ceramic artifacts, such as figurines and other implements used in non-Christian rituals, such as roller stamps and musical instruments, as these are not found at the mission site. It is also possible that production for commercial exchange contributed to the simplification of decorative style in the colonial context.

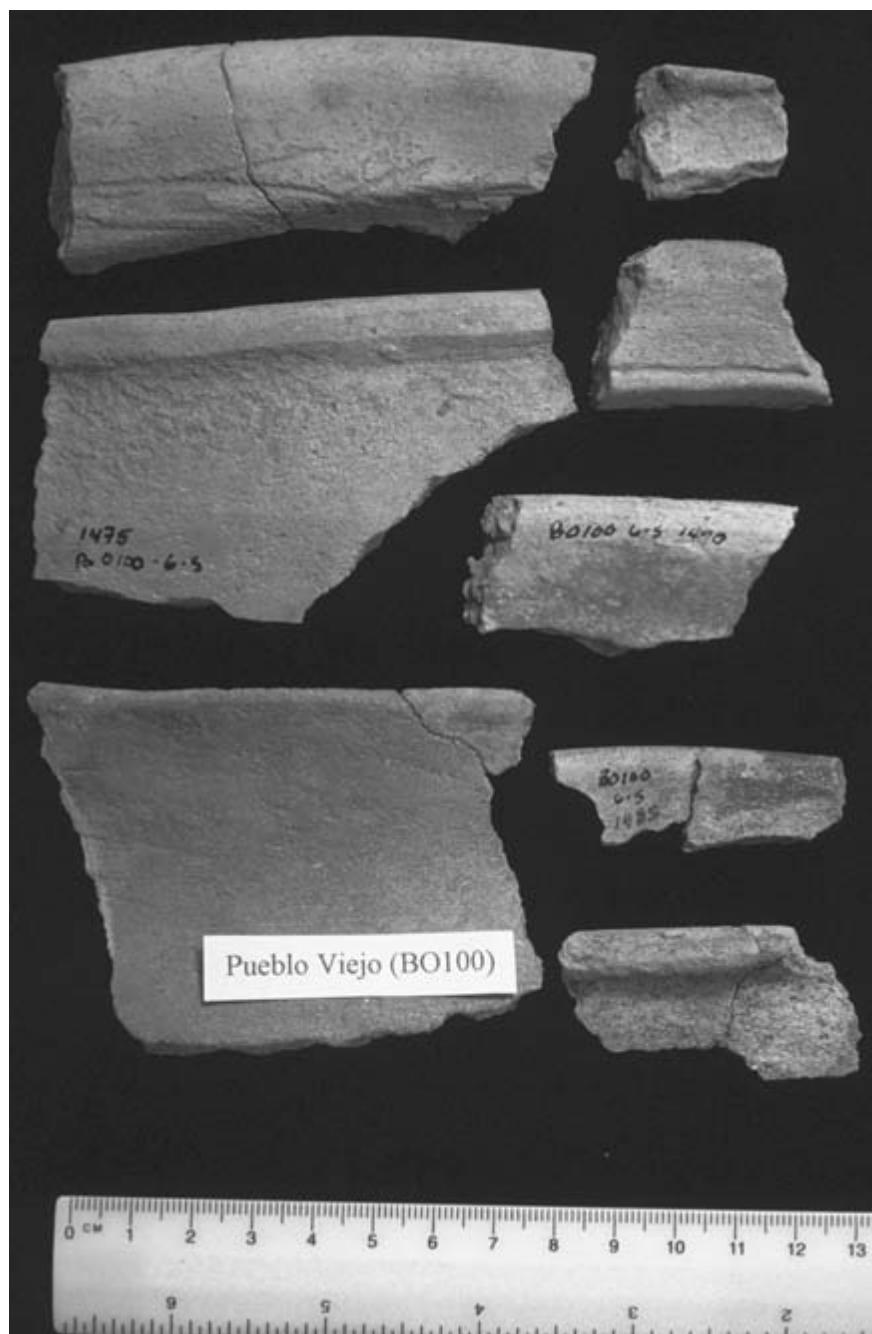
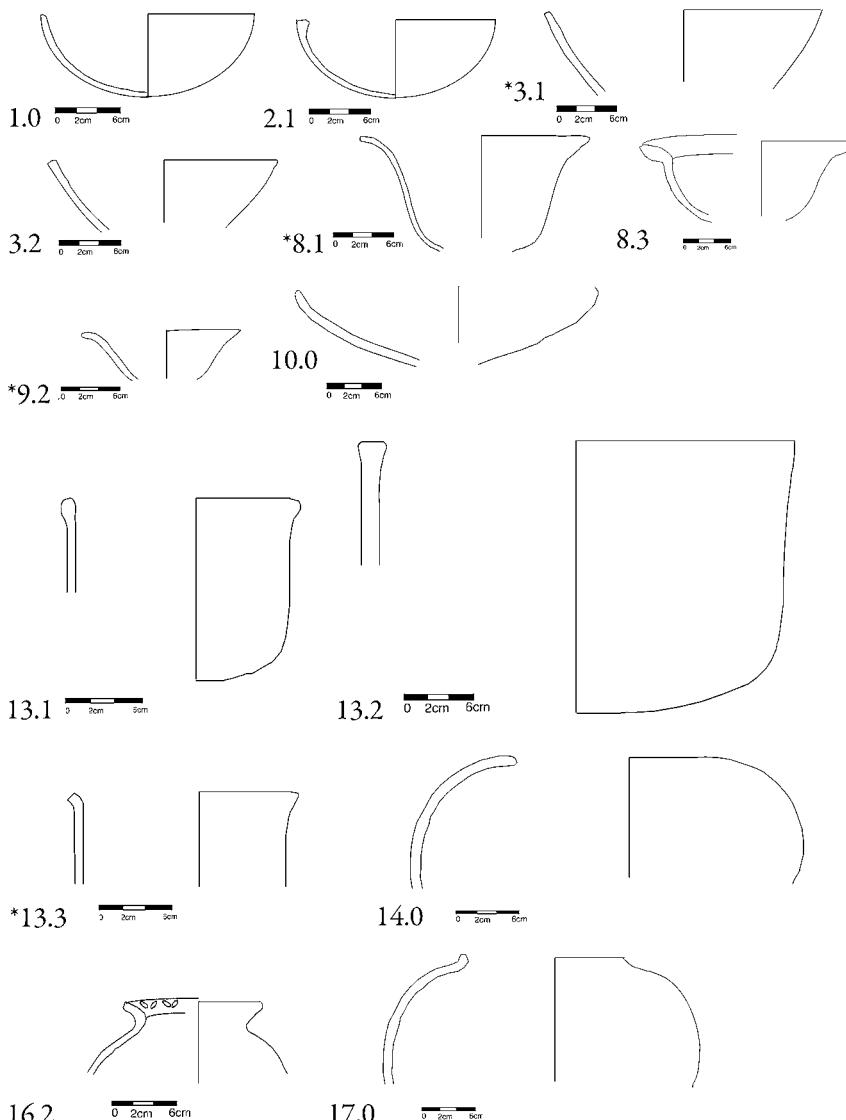


FIGURE 5.5. Late colonial ceramics from the Pueblo Viejo site.

*Generic Pots and Generic Indians*



**FIGURE 5.6.** Vessel forms of the Parguaza style. Asterisks indicate the more popular forms.

Although ceramic decoration declines notably, vessel form and production technique show considerable stability throughout the sequence in the purportedly indigenous wares. This suggests that pottery production continued to be a small-scale, domestic activity, oriented primarily to the satisfaction of the needs of each



FIGURE 5.7. *Parguaza*-style cooking pot.

household, with some surplus designated for sale or trade. Hand-molded, locally made pottery is dominant at all sites in the early and late colonial periods.

### THE REPUBLICAN PERIOD

The war of independence brought the colonial period to an end but did not alter to any significant degree the asymmetrical relations that mediated the dominant and local sectors of the population. With the advent of the Republican period (1830–1920), new strategies emerged on the Orinoco frontier. In this case, cattle ranching, commerce, and the supervision of specialized extractive activities took the place of agriculture in the dominant sector, while the communities that maintained an indigenous identity continued their traditional agricultural endeavors, with the production of surplus to sell to the Criollo population, in addition to collecting rubber, *sarrapia* (tonka bean, *Dipteryx odorata*), and other forest products during the dry season. These strategies correspond to the cosmopolitan frontier model as opposed to the insular model characteristic of the agricultural projects of the earlier periods (Rice 1998). Neo-colonial agents were more interested in commerce than in settlement, and their presence tended to be sporadic, as in the case of the entrepreneurs in charge of buying the seasonal *sarrapia* yield or of negotiating the sale of surplus

*casabe* (manioc cakes) with the indigenous producers. In the llanos, the cattle barons often lived in the cities located far to the north and delegated the supervision of their ranch to an overseer. These strategies resulted in the abandonment of many of the towns in the middle Orinoco that had been settled in the earlier periods and a gradual resettlement of portions of the area by indigenous groups who had receded to the highlands and forested headwaters during the colonial period, such as the Panare (Eñepá) and Piaroa (Wothuha) (Henley 1988; Mansutti-Rodríguez 1990). Some sectors of the Mapoyo and other small groups were partially absorbed by the northerly expansion of the Piaroa. The Mapoyo abandoned the Parguaza river basin in the second half of the twentieth century and regrouped in the area between the Suapure and Villacoa Rivers, where they gradually began to recover demographically (Henley 1983). To the west, on the plains, cattle ranching displaced or absorbed most of the indigenous population, and a distinctive non-indigenous Llanero identity was evolving out of the combination of escaped slaves, former mission Indians, and poor mestizos and whites who joined forces to exploit the abundant feral cattle in the savannahs. Under these circumstances, a supra-ethnic identity of Racional, in contrast to Indio, was coming to be accepted as a valid distinction in the region.<sup>5</sup> This case of ethnogenesis corresponds to a new level in the nested hierarchy of ethnicity that characterized the period, in which major divisions subsumed regional or local identities, both indigenous and Criollo.

Archaeological sites corresponding to the Republican period in the study area are dispersed and shallow, indicating a low population density (Scaramelli 2005). Imported pottery is ubiquitous at all sites, along with many manufactured items that indicate an increased involvement with the market (Scaramelli 2006). Locally made pottery is still present, but the variety of styles notably declines; virtually all of the local pottery is made with *caraipé* temper in a limited range of undecorated, utilitarian vessel forms, such as griddles, bowls, and jugs, which we have defined as the Caripito style (Figure 5.8).

We are uncertain as to the origins of the Caripito style. This pottery appears suddenly and predominates nearly exclusively in the Republican period at indigenous sites. *Caraipé*-tempered pottery in this tradition is manufactured today by members of the Mapoyo community who are of Sáliva descent, by indigenous groups in the llanos to the west of our study area, such as the Yaruro (Pume) (Mitrani 1988:177) and Guahibo (Hiwi) (Metzger and Morey 1983:152), and is frequent in the upper Orinoco as well. It is also found in archaeological contexts corresponding to the Republican period on the Caura River (Blanco 2004). The plain, *caraipé*-tempered ware replaced the earlier *cauixí-* (freshwater sponge spicule), sherd-, and sand-tempered wares throughout the region, forming a fairly uniform horizon. This suggests that pottery lost its role as a distinctive marker of ethnicity (in the “totemic” sense) in the Republican period. It would seem in this case that we are in the presence of a process of ethnogenesis, defined in the terms of the Comaroffs’ use of “ethnicity,” where

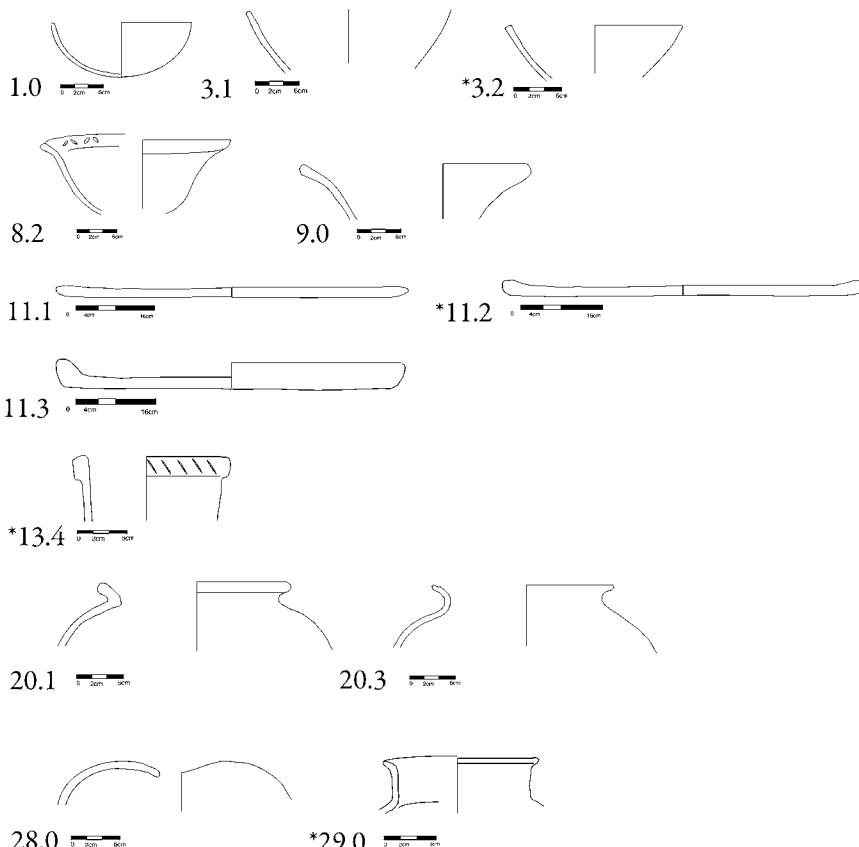


FIGURE 5.8. Vessel forms of the Caripito style. Asterisks indicate the more popular forms.

“culturally marked and politically salient” sectors emerge in hierarchical structures of inequality (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992b:58). In this case, we seem to be witnessing the emergence of a generic Indio that subsumes “totemic” distinctions in contrast to the generic Racional or Criollo (see also Cardoso de Oliveira 2006).

While we have argued that ceramic style served to define and reinforce “totemic” distinctions in the multicultural societies characteristic of the early and late colonial periods, in the Republican period the situation is quite different. Although “totemic” identity is made visible today in other material spheres among indigenous groups that maintain more traditional lifeways, such as in style of basketry, house construction, and distinctive forms of ritual, dress, and adornment, ceramic production declined with the introduction of imported substitutes and has tended to lose its former function as an icon of identity. In its place, we



FIGURE 5.9. *Carapé* temper griddle used to bake *casabe* (manioc cakes) from the Mapoyo community of Caripito.

can identify a transethnic consumption style for Republican period pottery that includes both local and imported wares, each of which served different functions in both indigenous and Criollo settlements. Locally made wares are preferred for water storage, cooking, and the baking of *casabe* cakes (Figure 5.9), while imported whiteware plates, cups, and bowls prevail in the context of commensality (Figure



FIGURE 5.10. Imported decorated whitewares of the Republican period frequently found on both indigenous and non-indigenous sites.

5.10). Because the middle Orinoco was so far from the major colonial supply centers, local pottery continued to be an important item in the emerging Llanero culture, especially in the arena of culinary practice, where indigenous and imported cultivars and meats come together in the development of a local cuisine.<sup>6</sup>

### FINAL REMARKS

The ethnic relations that surface in the Republican period are clearly the result of the asymmetric integration of indigenous and mestizo sectors into wider orders of political and economic relations, dominated by a largely Euro-descendant oligarchy located in the urban northern part of Venezuela. While “totemic” distinctions continue to prevail at one level, especially among indigenous groups who have managed to maintain territorial control and an “indigenous” cultural identity, a new level of supra-tribal identity, of Indio as opposed to Racional, Criollo, or Llanero, comes into play. At this level, a certain division of labor in the regional political economy can be defined, where the Indio supplies agricultural surplus, especially in the form of *casabe* and other staples, as well as the products of “professional gathering” such as rubber, *sarrapia*, hides, resins, palm thatch, and hardwoods. On the

other hand, the Llanero, even while derived from the mixture of indigenous, sub-Saharan African, and other sectors, assumes the dominant national identity with the Spanish language and Catholic religion, adopts the ranching mode of life, and purports superiority in regard to the indigenous population in the area.<sup>7</sup> This process is similar to that described by Cardoso de Oliveira as “caboclismo,” in which some Indians assume the same prejudiced attitudes toward other “less civilized” Indians but, at the same time, take up the pejorative name of “caboclo” (Cardoso de Oliveira 2006).

Material culture plays a somewhat ambiguous role in the definition of these identities because of the massive interchange of knowledge among the different sectors involved in the colonial situation in the realms of agricultural products, foodstuffs, culinary techniques, construction materials, medicinal knowledge, and hunting and fishing practices. Goods crossed boundaries just as people did, especially in the form of interethnic marriage. Nonetheless, it could be argued that in the emerging hierarchical social order, some activities were stigmatized as lower status, including farming, the making of *casabe*, and collecting—often construed as “feminine”—while other activities, especially those associated with the distinctively “masculine” role in cattle ranching, were elevated in status and valued in the construction of the national Venezuelan identity (see Skurski 1994). In this new order, language, religion, dress, and productive mode are often manipulated as the diacritical elements structuring ethnic identity, while “generic” material goods (pottery, firearms, construction materials, cultivars) have lost their definitive character and increasingly permeate the boundaries between the different sectors.

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## NOTES

1. The use of the word “totemism” does not seem the most adequate, especially in the context of the Amazon lowlands, where this is neither a universal phenomenon nor necessarily the basis for the structural division of historically significant cultural groups. But, aside from the term chosen, the argument does seem valid for distinguishing among types of organizing principles as defined by the Comaroffs.

2. A more thorough discussion of the ceramic styles defined for the area can be found in Scaramelli 2006.

3. This suggestion needs to be pursued in further archaeological investigations on the Colombian side of the Orinoco, where very little archaeological work has been done.

4. *Caraipé* is a term used to refer to a highly siliceous bark that is burnt and ground to use as temper.

5. This process parallels the transition from a “pluralistic constellation of colonial racial monikers to a unified regional identity” in Alta California, as described by Barbara Voss (2005), where the colonial residents began to describe themselves as “*gente de razón*” and, eventually, as “*Californios*” or “*Californianos*,” rejecting earlier distinctions such as *pardo*, *zambo*, *mestiza*, and other *casta* status denominations. As Voss argues, “this transition . . . is no less than *ethnogenesis*, the creation of a new ethnicity forged through the experiences of colonization and culture contact” (Voss 2005:465, her emphasis).

6. The cuisine incorporates plantain, maize, *casabe*, various roots, chili pepper, stewed meat with vegetables (*sancocho*), and, on special occasions, barbecued beef, as well as fish and local game. Coffee is the ubiquitous drink, along with *aguardiente* distilled from sugarcane.

7. There is a long history of ethnic violence in the llanos region, especially aimed at the remnant indigenous groups, such as the Pumé and Guahibo (Hiwi), who have been forced off the more productive lands to the interfluvial regions of the llanos.

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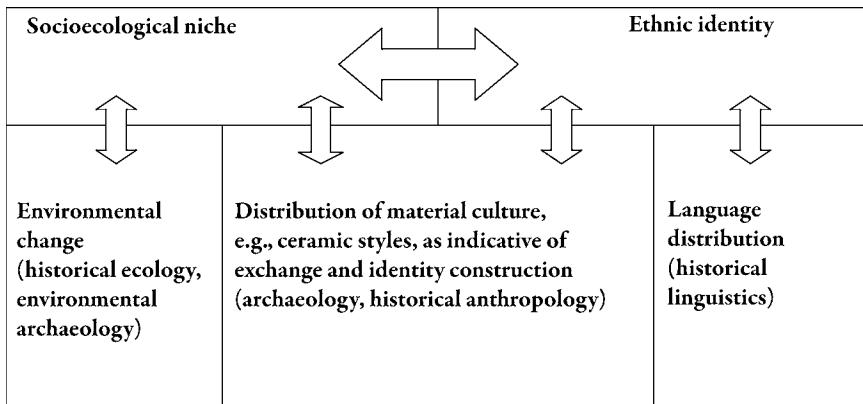
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An Attempt to Understand Panoan Ethnogenesis in  
Relation to Long-Term Patterns and Transformations  
of Regional Interaction in Western Amazonia

*Alf Hornborg and Love Eriksen*

This chapter will explore the regional context and reproduction of the Panoan ethnolinguistic family in western Amazonia. The argument is a specific case within a more general project<sup>1</sup> aiming to build a database for correlating the geography, linguistics, material culture (e.g., ceramic styles, rock-art styles, horticultural systems, etc.), trade routes, and political projects of indigenous Amazonia over time (Eriksen 2011). We believe that correlations thus established can be used to test or at least illuminate various hypotheses on the emergence and history of specific ethnolinguistic groups. The Panoan language family provides an appropriate illustration of this more general perspective. In the area occupied by these groups, archaeological, linguistic, historical, and ethnological data jointly suggest that the sharp ethnic contrast between highland Quechua speakers and lowland Panoans for a very long time has been mediated by Arawakan groups occupying the Andean foothills and western margins of Amazonia. These sub-Andean Arawak speakers, we argue, represent the western reaches of a pan-Amazonian network of long-distance trade that once used a proto-Arawakan language as a lingua franca.<sup>2</sup>

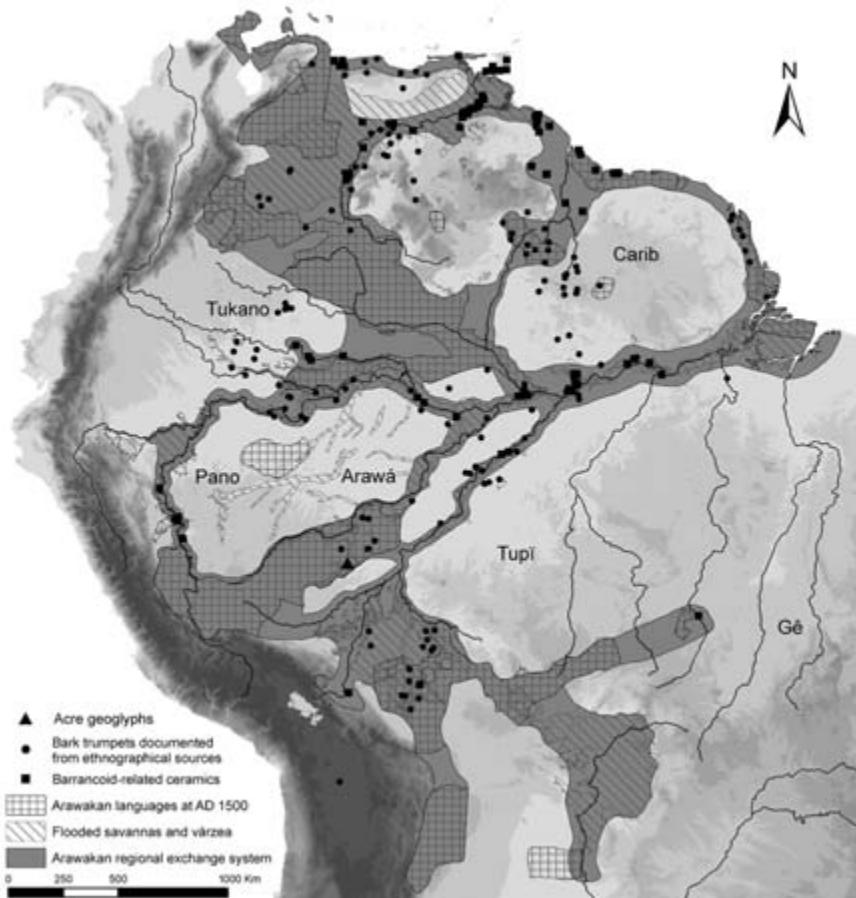


**FIGURE 6.1.** Model of the recursive relation between socioecological niche and ethnic identity construction, indicating the main categories of traces left by such processes in pre-history and the different academic fields required to recover them.

### RETHINKING “MIGRATION” IN TERMS OF ETHNOGENESIS

The boundaries between ethnic groups generally have little to do with genes and biology, as is obvious from the widespread occurrence of intermarriage and even exogamy. There is thus a constant flow of persons and genes across ethnic boundaries, and the cultural distinctions are reproduced by social mechanisms quite separate from biological reproduction. These social mechanisms nevertheless leave tangible traces in the distribution of material culture and languages, both of which are used as markers of ethnic identity, and in environmental changes related to the specialized economic activities of particular groups (Figure 6.1). Within this theoretical framework it is thus possible to account for very disparate phenomena such as the distribution of pottery styles, linguistic diversification, and environmental change. It is in this context, rather than essentialist accounts of migration, that it is interesting to trace correlations among, for instance, Barrancoid ceramics, Arawakan languages, and agricultural systems such as the raised fields (*camellones*) discovered in wetland areas from the Caribbean to Bolivia (Map 6.1).

The challenge for a more nuanced understanding of migration that takes account of relevant social and cultural theory is to acknowledge the indeterminate relations among genes, languages, and material culture in human history and pre-history. Ever since the human species colonized the furthest reaches of the major continents more than 10,000 years ago, the movements of human populations have been determined by the complex contours of a *social* landscape shaped by ethnic boundaries, competition, warfare, and trade. We must thus acknowledge two quite different varieties of human migration: first, the kind of demic dispersal into unoccupied territories that can be studied with basically the same models that are used to



**MAP 6.1.** Hypothetical reconstruction of the approximate extent of an Arawakan regional exchange system around AD 900, based on the distribution of Arawakan languages at time of contact, aspects of material culture such as Barrancoid ceramics and bark trumpets, and physical geography (Eriksen 2011). Note the correlation between Arawakan languages and wetland environments, which could lend itself to “ecocultural niche modelling” (Dahl et al., *this volume*).

understand the dispersal of other species (cf. Dahl et al., *this volume*), but with the important addendum that even these landscapes were perceived through cultural lenses, for instance, with regard to food preferences, sacred places, or even aesthetics; and second, a form of expansion patterned as much by social maneuvering as by geographical maneuvering. To be sure, human movements in the landscape have always been distinct from those of other animals, simply because human landscapes

have always had a symbolic dimension, but to navigate in already inhabited landscapes adds yet another level of complexity to the cultural processes at work. The expansion of Arawakan languages along the riverine trade routes of Amazonia during the first millennium AD should not be understood as the growth and movement of a bounded biological population but as a continuous sociocultural process of interethnic negotiation, incorporation, and emulation focused on the establishment and reproduction of a common regional identity.

### **ETHNOGENESIS OF THE PANOAN LANGUAGE FAMILY**

In applying this general understanding of the Arawakan expansion to the ethno-genetic dynamics of the western Amazon basin, we need to rethink the emergence and history of the Panoan language family (Map 6.2). Linguists and archaeologists have offered various interpretations, providing clues on the wider affiliations, antiquity, and geographical origins of this ethnolinguistic category. Historical sources can shed some light on the extent to which contemporary cultural and social-structural features of Panoan speakers can be traced backward in time. Features of material culture that have been attributed to and perceived as essential to Panoan identity include, for instance, their intricately decorated polychrome ceramics. At the level of social structure, a distinguishing characteristic is the inclination toward four-section, alternate-generation kinship terminologies. The objective here is to attempt a reconstruction of the emergence of a Panoan ethnolinguistic identity by focusing on the historical relations between Panoan speakers and other ethnolinguistic groups. How should elements of material culture be understood not only as potential trade goods but as emergent emblems of ethnic distinctness within multiethnic networks of exchange and communication (cf. DeBoer 1990)? How can kinship terminologies reflect modes of participation or non-participation in such networks (Hornborg 1993)? How have processes of Panoan ethnogenesis been related to the division of labor between different ecological zones and to centuries of riverine trade along the Ucayali, the Purús, and the Madeira? How have experiences of colonial missions and slave traders influenced these processes by transforming relations with Tupí- and Arawak-speaking neighbors?

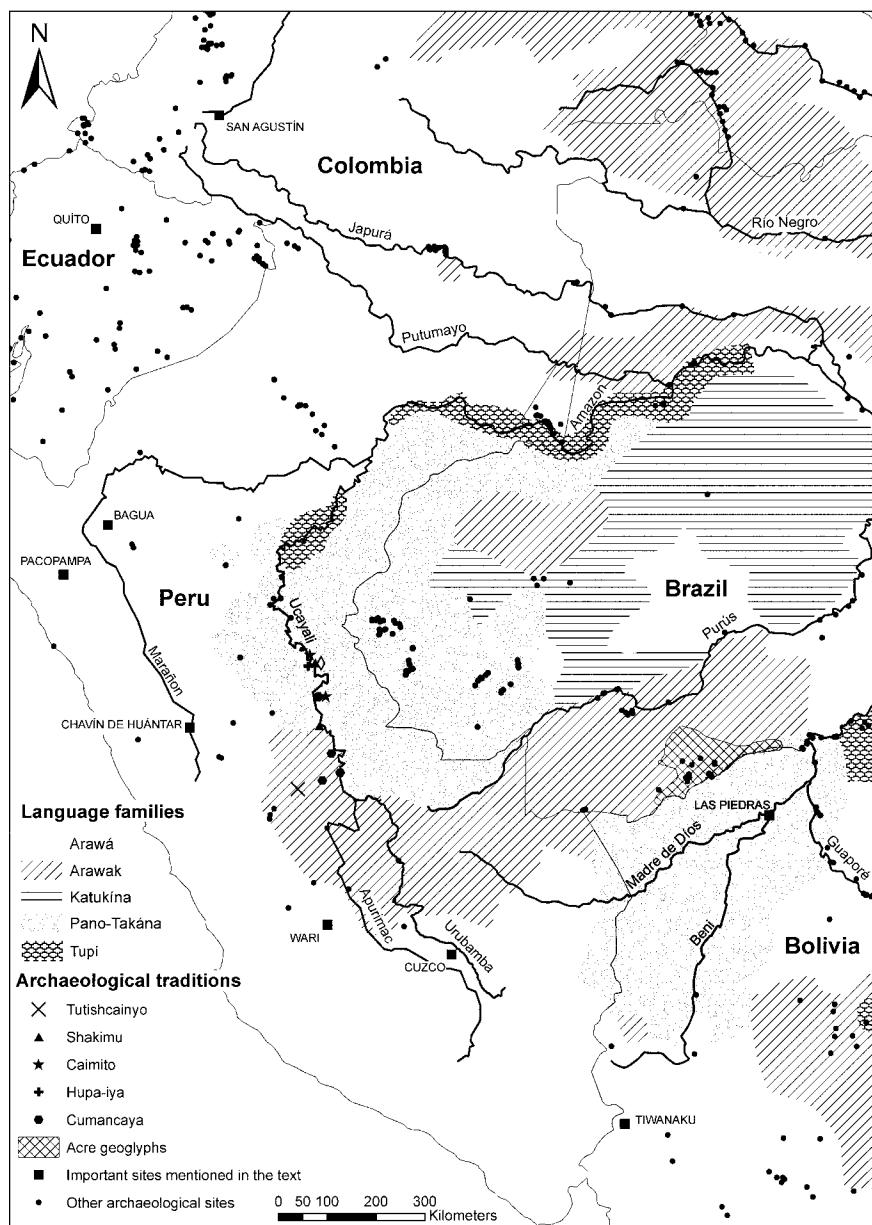
To reconstruct the regional context within which the historical emergence of Panoan identities can be understood, we need to assemble several different kinds of data, including linguistic classification, archaeology, physical geography, and history. The quite practical difficulty facing synthesizing work of this kind is keeping such distinct factors in view simultaneously so as to provide a multidimensional space-time framework for correlation of data and creative application of relevant social and cultural theory. The methodology chosen in the present project is Geographical Information Systems (GIS; see Dahl et al., this volume), which makes it possible to construct a multilayered database covering the spatial and temporal distributions of

distinct data such as languages, ceramic styles, ecology, and trade routes. It is when looking at such complex maps of socioecological contexts that it becomes possible for us to transcend the technical details of, for instance, comparative phonology, tempering techniques, soil composition, and archival studies. The result, of course, will be speculative, but at some point it should be justifiable to offer hypotheses for the more detailed studies to modify or reject. Rather than delegate to computers the task of drawing conclusions from geographical distribution patterns, this inductive way of using GIS is basically only a means of keeping multiple dimensions in view simultaneously, so as to facilitate complex, non-essentialist interpretations based on anthropologically solid understandings of the relations among ecology, exchange, identity, and language.

### **HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS VERSUS BIOLOGICAL ANCESTRY**

The ethnolinguistic category “Panoan” covers the indigenous populations of an extensive section of the western Amazon basin, roughly delineated by the Amazon and Ucayali Rivers to the north and west and the Madeira-Guaporé River and moist savannas of the Llanos de Mojos to the south and east (Map 6.2). In terms of cultural and linguistic boundaries, this compact and more or less contiguous population of Pano speakers appears, at the time of contact, to have been circumscribed primarily by large blocks of Quechua, Arawak, and Tupí speakers to the west and south, by Catukína speakers to the east, and by a more diversified zone of Jivaroan, Zaparoan, Cahuapana, and Peba/Yagua/Witoto speakers to the north (Kaufman 2007). Tupían languages only expanded along the upper Amazon and Ucayali in the last few centuries before Columbus. Studies in historical linguistics suggest that the Tupían languages probably emerged in Rondônia, east of the Madeira (Dixon and Aikhenvald 1999), and then expanded down the Madeira and up the main Amazon, Ucayali, and Napo, where speakers of these languages were encountered by the first Europeans. The antiquity of the so-called sub-Andean Arawaks of Peru (Campa and Yanesha) suggests a very early presence of Arawak speakers in the area.<sup>3</sup> The same can be said of the Panoan languages, as there are good reasons to believe that this is the area in which the Panoan language family originated. Historically, Panoan speakers such as the Cashibo have expanded toward the southwest, bringing them into hostile contact with sub-Andean Arawaks like the Yanesha and pushing them further up the eastern slopes of the Andes (Santos-Granero 1998).

At this point, we would like to reiterate what we mean when we say that a language or language family has expanded geographically. In pre-colonial Amazonia, this should seldom be assumed to reflect the demic migration of a bounded, biological population from one area to another, mechanically displacing other populations in the process. Most of the Amazon basin had been inhabited by a diversity of cultures for millennia even when the Arawak speakers began to expand along



MAP 6.2. *The approximate distribution of linguistic families in western Amazonia at the time of European contact and the location of various archaeological sites and ceramic traditions in the region.*

its rivers. The spread of some proto-Arawakan language at that time no doubt reflects the integration of a vast network of riverine trade routes, along which proto-Arawak served as a *lingua franca* (Map 6.1). Many people originally speaking other languages must have acquired this language as a means of communicating with the riverine traders and perhaps also as an emblem with which to express a more prestigious identity. The sub-Andean Arawakan languages in Peru and Bolivia represented an economic and cultural zone mediating between the Quechua and Aymara speakers of the Andean highlands and the Pano speakers of the tropical rainforests in the lowlands.

In terms of biological ancestry, however, the differences in genetic constitution between Arawak and Pano speakers in western Amazonia are in all likelihood negligible. Their long history together has been characterized by extensive intermarriage, trade, language shifts, and other forms of interaction. It is thus important to keep in mind that categories like “Panoans” and “Arawaks” do not refer to bounded and essentialized biological populations but to cultural distinctions with highly permeable boundaries (cf. Steward and Métraux 1963 [1948]:535, 556, 557; Métraux 1963c [1948]:657–658). There have also been significant linguistic influences between Panoan and Arawakan languages (Aikhenvald and Dixon 1998:251–252). The ancestors of what are now known as riverine Panoans (e.g., the Shipibo and Conibo) appear to have emulated the lifestyle and organization of Arawak-speaking communities on the Ucayali, whereas the Arawak-speaking Piro have obviously been influenced by their long history of interaction with Pano speakers (Santos-Granero 2002:31–32). An example of the many cultural convergences between Panoans and Arawaks is the practice of tooth blackening, characteristic of most Panoans but also of the Arawak-speaking Piro, to whom it conferred the name Chontaqiro (Steward and Métraux 1963 [1948]:539, 574).

If the ancestors of modern Pano speakers at one point can be assumed to have been as homogeneous in culture and social organization as they still are linguistically (Erikson 1993; Loos 1999), it is reasonable to suggest that the conspicuous differences between riverine and interfluvial Panoans were generated by their different positions in the regional trade system. The Ucayali River appears to have been a major trade route linking imperial highland centers like Wari (along the Apurímac) and Cuzco (along the Urubamba) to the tropical lowlands. Even though much of this trade was handled by Arawak speakers such as the Piro (Taylor 1999:199), Pano-speaking communities along the riverbanks were also unavoidably drawn into these expansive social networks. Interfluvial Pano speakers like the Amahuaca and Yaminahua (the “wild Indians” contemptuously referred to by the river-dwellers) should thus not be viewed as refugees from the rivers but perhaps as more representative of proto-Panoan culture and social organization at a time when highland-lowland trade had not yet assumed the proportions that can be inferred for the Ucayali since what Andeanists call the Middle Horizon (AD 600–1000). The

Mayoruna, whose material culture was conspicuously simple, have similarly been presented as “proto-Panoan” (Steward and Métraux 1963 [1948]:551).

As noted above, the Panoan cluster of languages is often observed to feature a remarkable degree of homogeneity and mutual intelligibility from one end to another, which has led some linguists to suggest that it represents “a fairly shallow time-depth and recent expansion and split” (Loos 1999:227). Yet this homogeneous cluster of languages is divided by two major rifts, one (sociocultural) between the riverine and interfluvial groups mentioned above, the other (geographical) between the main group of Pano speakers in eastern Peru and western Brazil, on one hand, and a smaller cluster of Panoan and (probably related) Tacanan languages along the Madre de Díos and the Beni River in Bolivia (Map 6.2), on the other. The first of these divisions can probably be accounted for in terms of different degrees of involvement in riverine trade, as suggested above, but the second requires an explanation of the intrusion of Arawakan languages along the Purús River. It is obvious that this corridor of Arawakan languages (Apuriná, the now-extinct Canamari, Piro) at some point created a wedge through what was previously a compact Panoan territory (Erikson 1993:55). It is not entirely impossible that the Purús has been an “Arawak corridor” during two separate periods in prehistory, interrupted by a period of Panoan dominance in the centuries after AD 400. If this was indeed the case, the Panoan block at one time represented a wedge across what was previously a coherent Arawak territory, separating the Purús Arawak from the sub-Andean Arawak, but as the Arawak presence was reestablished, the roles were later reversed.

More puzzling, in reconstructions of the linguistic situation at time of contact, is the apparent absence of Arawak speakers further downstream, along the lower Purús and Madeira (see Kaufman 2007), which must at one time have been important routes connecting the Arawak speakers in western Brazil, Peru, and Bolivia with their allies around the mouth of the Río Negro. At the time of contact, the lower Purús was inhabited by speakers of Arawá, once believed to be genetically related to Arawakan languages but currently viewed as related to them merely through areal contact (see Facundes and Brandão, this volume). Contiguous and parallel to this stretch of the Purús occupied by Arawá speakers is the lower Madeira, the obvious link between the western Arawaks and the Río Negro, yet conspicuously empty of Arawak speakers since the sixteenth century at least. To understand this gap, we must next consider the expansion of Tupí speakers from Rondônia down the Madeira and then up the main Amazon and Ucayali in the centuries preceding European contact. The recent Tupí expansion over much of Brazil generally seems to have involved more military violence than did the largely mercantile and ceremonial Arawak expansion a millennium earlier, but even the Tupí were often inclined to incorporate and assimilate neighboring groups (Brochado 1984:402–403). It seems plausible that the disappearance of Arawakan languages along the Madeira can be accounted for in this way. We find it noteworthy that several discoveries of

the Guarita pottery style have been made by archaeologists working on the lower Madeira, since this is a type of ceramics that can elsewhere (particularly along the Río Negro) be correlated with a presence of Arawak speakers. We have not found clear evidence regarding the languages spoken on the lower Madeira at the time of European contact, but whether the native inhabitants here spoke Arawak or Tupí, they were obviously more or less annihilated by this meeting. Alongside the Guarita ceramics, the long stretch of Arawá speakers north of and parallel to this zone may possibly be a reminder of the former presence of Arawaks in the area. For if there are linguistic similarities between Arawá and Arawak strong enough to suggest areal affinities (Payne 1991; Facundes 2002:81–82; Heckenberger 2002:103, 122n5; Facundes and Brandão, this volume), then the Arawá should once have had Arawakan neighbors. The Arawá languages may not be genetically related to Arawak (Dixon and Aikhenvald 1999:12–15) but may indicate a kind of historical “shadow” of their former presence in the area.

The Tupí expansion westward along the main Amazon continued to displace Arawakan languages, although not necessarily the genes of former Arawak speakers. Nimuendajú's (1987) map identifies eighteenth-century Arawak-speaking groups along the Brazilian Amazon upriver from the Purús, a stretch of the Amazon that had recently been almost completely “Tupinized” when the Europeans arrived. The Tupí languages along the western Amazon, Ucayali, Napo, and Huallaga (spoken by the Omagua, Cocama, and Cocamilla) appear to be the result of a widespread shift from some non-Tupí language to Tupinambá (Jensen 1999:129, ref. to Cabral) not very long before European contact. Heckenberger (2002:122n6) suggests that these populations were in fact former Arawak speakers who had recently adopted a Tupí lexicon. Indeed, from the mouth of the Purús to the Peruvian border, the Tupí speakers along the main Amazon had Arawak-speaking neighbors immediately to their north, and the Waraikú, the only Arawak speakers between the upper Purús and the Amazon, suggest a refugee population surrounded on all sides by Pano and Catukína speakers. Meanwhile, as the Arawakan sphere of interest had been obliterated along the Madeira and Guaporé, the Bolivian Arawaks on the Llanos de Mojos would have been largely cut off from the Arawakan territories in the north, and the Bolivian Panoans were able to occupy the upper Madeira and lower Guaporé. Although conjectural and open to modification, this reconstruction would account for the distribution of Pano, Arawak, Tupí, and Arawá speakers in western Amazonia.

### **CERAMIC STYLES AS INDICATIVE OF REGIONAL INTERACTION**

Very little archaeology has been conducted in the area defined above. The most thorough and well-known excavations are those of Donald Lathrap and his students at some sites on the central Ucayali. Lathrap (1970) attempted to establish

correspondences among ceramic styles, linguistic families, and migrations of human populations across the Amazon basin. To the extent that such correlations continue to be interesting and relevant, it is now generally acknowledged that they are fraught with great theoretical and methodological difficulties. It will not do to simply assume that changes in ceramic style correlate with changes in language, or that either of these changes correlates with patterns of human migration. Social and cultural theory can offer much more complex explanations for such discontinuities. Most important is the recognition that material culture and language tend to be media for expressing ethnic distinctness, that the incentives to communicate distinctness of identity can be expected to change over the course of history, and that ethnic identity need not have anything to do with migration. It is thus unwarranted to assume that a discontinuity in material culture necessarily represents demographic displacement from the arrival of a new wave of migration, as Lathrap suggests. This is not to deny that the archaeological record, properly used, should have a lot to tell us about social processes in the past.

Lathrap's (1970:14) stratigraphy from the central Ucayali basin suggests that the earliest Tutishcainyo ceramics from around 2000 BC show affinities with the ceramics from the floodplain of the lower Orinoco and several early ceramic complexes in Colombia (ibid., 86). The Shakimu ceramics around 800 BC, to Lathrap (ibid., 94), suggest influence from the Chavín style centered on the upper Marañón, which expanded over much of the Andean area during the Early Horizon (900–200 BC). The Hupa-iya style appearing around 200 BC shows Barrancoid features and to Lathrap (ibid., 117) again suggests an intrusion from the central Amazon of peoples related to the "Barrancas peoples," who several centuries earlier would have pushed down into the lower Orinoco. Around AD 100, the Yarinacocha style is interpreted as yet another displacement, interpreted by Lathrap (ibid., 131) as the return of "culturally degraded descendants of the Late Shakimu peoples, who had been pushed off the floodplain by the Hupa-iya invaders" two or three centuries earlier. According to Lathrap, by AD 400–500 this population was nevertheless again displaced by "another ethnic group" producing ceramics of the Pacacocha style. Over the next 400 years, this ceramic tradition evolved through three phases, before being displaced by the Cumancaya style around AD 800, marking the arrival of Panoan-speaking peoples (ibid., 140) and showing continuities with the pottery produced by contemporary Panoans such as the Shipibo. Finally, the appearance of the polychrome Caimito style around AD 1200, in closely resembling ceramics of similar age from the Río Napo in Ecuador and from the eastern coast of Brazil, reflects the arrival of the ancestors of Tupí speakers such as the Cocama and the Omagua (ibid., 150–151). The polychrome decoration of recent Panoan pottery can be traced to their close coexistence with the Cocama at mission settlements during the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries (ibid., 184; Myers 1976; Brochado 1984:304; DeBoer and Raymond 1987:128–129; DeBoer 1990:87, 103).

In terms of the essentializing correspondences Lathrap posits between ceramic styles and migrating linguistic families (Saladoid/Barrancoid = Maipurean/Arawakan; Cumancaya = Panoan; Caimito = Tupí), the general reconstruction he thus proposes for the central Ucayali sequence is as follows: Arawak speakers arrived in two waves around 2000 and 200 BC, Panoan speakers around AD 800, and Tupí speakers around AD 1200. Although the latest of these events appears plausible in terms of historical evidence and linguistics, the notion that Panoans “arrived” in the area at such a late date is contradicted by historical linguistics, as we have argued above. Even more problematic are Lathrap’s conclusions about the migrations of Arawak speakers in the second and first millennia BC. To the extent that there are stylistic parallels between ceramics from the Ucayali and the Orinoco at this time, these could conceivably be accounted for in other ways than through migration and may in fact have nothing at all to do with linguistics. What can be reasonably concluded from Lathrap’s chronology, however, is that (1) some form of cultural interaction may have connected eastern Peru and the Orinoco basin as early as 2000 BC; (2) the Chavín phenomenon in the Andes had strong connections with the tropical lowlands; (3) this Chavín-related interaction sphere suffered an abrupt discontinuity in the lowlands around 200 BC; (4) there were significant cultural discontinuities around AD 100, AD 400–500, and AD 800, the reasons for which are not immediately evident; and (5) the arrival of Tupí speakers from downstream around AD 1200 can be detected in the ceramic record.

Plotted onto a map of the postulated sixteenth-century distribution of linguistic families, as should be expected, these archaeological discoveries from different time periods show no clear pattern (Map 6.2). The Tutishcainyo and some of the Cumancaya ceramics were found inside the area historically populated by Arawak speakers, while the Hupa-iya, Yarinacocha, Caimito, and some of the Shakimu pottery was unearthed within the area dominated by Panoans. One Shakimu site and two Cumancaya finds are located on what may have been the sixteenth-century border between the two linguistic areas. Considering how such borders may shift over time and the uncertain historical data, not much can be concluded from these correlations. It is obvious, however, that the central Ucayali for a very long time has been a zone of intensive exchange and cultural interaction. Upriver Arawak speakers have for much of this time served as intermediaries between downriver Panoans and the Andean peoples, possibly since the Early Horizon.

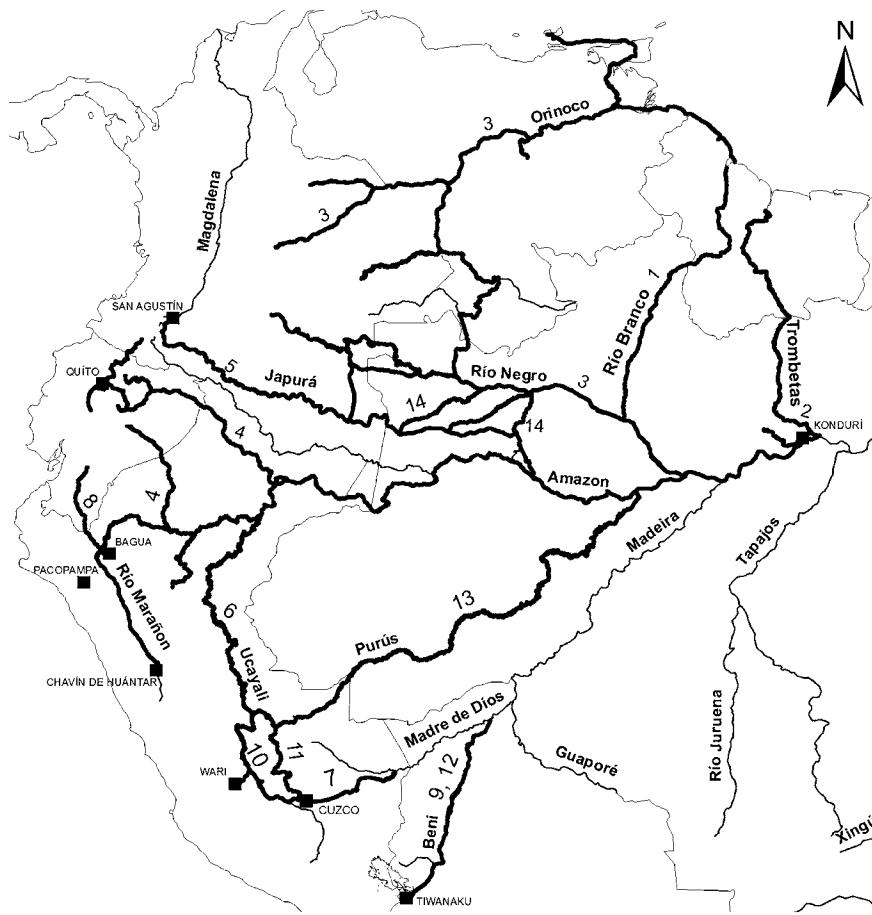
#### **HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE OF LONG-DISTANCE EXCHANGE**

To be able to interpret the stylistic similarities observed by Lathrap and others, it is useful to consider what historical and archaeological evidence can tell us about the extent and major routes of pre-Columbian long-distance exchange. There are innumerable

historical anecdotes, from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries, about these connections, many of which we have plotted onto the GIS database (Map 6.3). The highlands of Guyana were obviously commercially linked through the Río Branco with the Río Negro (Myers 1981) and also with the Trombetas-Kondurí area (Boomert 1987). The Antilles and the Colombian Andes were linked with the Orinoco and Guyana, and thus in turn with the Río Negro and the Amazon (Hill 1996:149–150). The Napo was linked with the Huallaga and the upper Ucayali (Oberem 1974 [1967]), as well as with the Japurá/Caquetá and the Vaupés (Porro 1994; Newson 1996). Although much of this trade was obviously influenced by the arrival of Europeans and their trade goods, there are unmistakable continuities in the exchange of items more or less completely geared to indigenous demand—such as dart poison, drugs, and blowguns.

Moving further back in time to the sixteenth-century contact period, we can see how this vast Amazonian network was linked to the economies of the central Andes. The Urubamba River in Peru connected the Cuzco area with the Ucayali and beyond, and the Madre de Díos connected it with lowland areas further south (Camino 1977; Lyon 1981; Santos-Granero 1992; Pärssinen and Korpisaari 2003). The highlands of southern Ecuador were linked through trade centers such as Bagua with the Marañon (Burger 1992:117; Salomon 1977–1978, 1986), and the Titicaca basin through the Beni River with the Llanos de Mojos in lowland Bolivia (Torres 1987; Santos-Granero 1992:48). The Beni River route was controlled by groups such as the Leco and the Arawak-speaking Apolista or Aguachile (Métraux 1963b [1948]:505–506; see Dudley, this volume). These routes seem to have been the main Amazonian connections during what Andeanists know as the Late Horizon, that is, the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries.

During the Andean Middle Horizon—roughly the second half of the first millennium AD—the main route from the southern Andes into Amazonia appears to have been the Apurímac River, which connected the Mantaro basin with the Ucayali and beyond (Raymond 1972, 1988:291, 298). The shift in political and economic dominance from Middle Horizon Wari to Late Horizon Cuzco was later to involve military conflict over the control of Vilcabamba, the rainforest area between the Apurímac and the Urubamba, and the shift from the Apurímac to the Urubamba as the main route to the lowlands (Santos-Granero 1992:43). In the Titicaca basin, the Tiwanaku polity was strongly oriented toward trade with the Bolivian lowlands (Wassén 1972; Browman 1978; Torres 1987), and at San Agustín in southern Colombia, situated between the headwaters of the Magdalena and the Caquetá, there are compelling stylistic similarities with stone carvings from Kondurí, on the lower Amazon (Torres 1987:52, 85–86; Aires Ataíde 2004:30). The Purús River may have served as an important route between the southern Andes and the central Amazon at this time (Camino 1977:126–128). The evidence is fragmentary but can be connected to other kinds of evidence to produce a more complete



1. Highlands of Guyana - Río Branco - Río Negro (Myers 1981)
2. Highlands of Guyana - Trombetas-Konduri area (Boomert 1987).
3. The Antilles - Colombian Andes - Orinoco - Guyana - Río Negro - Amazon (Hill 1996:149-150).
4. Río Napo - Hualaga - upper Ucayali (Oberem 1974 [1967])
5. Río Napo - Japurá/Caquetá - Vaupés (Porro 1994; Newsom 1996).
6. Cuzco - Río Urubamba - Río Ucayali (Taylor 1999)
7. Cuzco - Madre de Díos (Camino 1977; Lyon 1981; Santos-Granero 1992; Parissinen and Korpisaari 2003)
8. Highland Ecuador - Bagua - Río Marañón (Salomon 1977-78, 1986; Burger 1992:117)
9. Titicaca Basin - Beni River - Llanos de Mojos (Torres 1987; Santos-Granero 1992:48)
10. Apurímac River - Ucayali (Raymond 1972, 1988:291, 298)
11. Urubamba - Ucayali (Santos-Granero 1992:43)
12. Tiwanaku - lowlands (Wassén 1972; Brownman 1978; Torres 1987)
13. Purús River (Camino 1977:126-128)
14. Río Negro - Japurá - Amazon River (Hemming 1995; Vidal 2000; Boomert 2000)

0 250 500 Kilometers

**MAP 6.3. Major indigenous trade routes of northern Amazonia as reconstructed from archaeological and historical evidence.**

picture. Is it a coincidence, for instance, that all these riverine trade routes—the Apurímac, Urubamba, Ucayali, Beni, Purús, and Caquetá—were dominated by Arawak speakers characteristically preoccupied with long-distance trade? In several parts of Amazonia, from the Río Negro to the eastern slopes of the Bolivian Andes, Arawakan languages have served as trade languages well into the twentieth century.

Going back, finally, to the Andean Early Horizon—the tenth to third centuries BC—we find evidence of interaction connecting the Guayas basin of coastal Ecuador as well as the north-central coast of Peru over the highlands to the lowlands of eastern Peru (Lathrap 1971; Rostain 1999:74; Shady 1999). These trade routes, which were probably crucial to the emergence of centers such as Pacopampa (Raymond 1988:291; Shady 1999) and Chavín de Huántar (Burger 1992), strategically situated near the headwaters of the Marañón, seem to have been more significant at this time than in later periods. The major centers of Andean horizons, however—Chavín de Huántar, San Agustín, Wari, Tiwanaku, Cuzco, and Quito—all had this in common: a middleman position in the eastern sierra, close to the headwaters of some river serving as an easily controlled route into the lowlands. They all represent strategic points of accumulation (and subsequent decline) within a shifting field of social reproduction that was much more enduring than the various attempts at control and political consolidation. We would thus conclude that the network itself was more persistent than its individual nodes and subsystems in time and space. The archaeological evidence from Amazonia is much poorer and patchier than the Andean material, but it suggests that similar shifts in cultural and political hegemony occurred there in prehistory, also geared to the fortunes of the system as a whole, and that the discontinuities in material culture and historical linguistics may reflect such shifts (see Neves, this volume). GIS cartography, in permitting us to juxtapose and correlate such diverse and complex data, is an appropriate way to go about exploring these questions. It is within this wider field of economic and cultural interaction that the emergence and assertion of each constituent ethnolinguistic unit, including that of the Panoans, should be understood.

Based on our synthesis of the above-mentioned data, we find it plausible to hypothesize that sub-Andean Arawak speakers have mediated commercially between highlanders and Pano-speaking lowlanders since the Early Horizon. The commodities exchanged among these three ethnolinguistic categories have shifted over the centuries. Before the adoption of polychrome pottery inspired by Tupí speakers, which has become an important trade item in recent history, Panoans were probably primarily specialized in delivering tropical forest products such as medicinal herbs, hallucinogenic drugs, tobacco, parrot feathers, birds, monkeys, reptiles, turtle oil, animal skins, tropical woods, resins, waxes, honey, and vegetable dyes. The Cashibo also mined and traded salt (Steward and Métraux 1963 [1948]:570). The Quechua- and Aymara-speaking highlanders, on the other hand, offered gold, sil-

ver, copper and bronze tools, seashells, beads, and pottery. In addition to conveying the produce of their trade partners in both these areas and of ethnic groups further downriver (e.g., blowguns and dart poison from the Yagua and Ticuna), the Arawak speakers contributed *montaña* products such as coca, salt, soapstone, cotton cloth, and canoes. More recently, Panoans have become known for their painted pottery, mats, hammocks, and gourds, while Arawak speakers are associated with cotton textiles with decorative motifs or feathers woven into the fabric, canoes, and pearls (Renard-Casevitz 2002:133; Métraux 1963a [1948]:417; Steward and Métraux 1963 [1948]:543, 545). The exchange of painted pottery for cotton cloth is documented on the upper Amazon as early as 1639 (Hemming 1978:233), but at this time, it was probably a transaction between Tupí and Arawak speakers.

Recent archaeological work on both sides of the border between Brazil and Bolivia (Pärssinen and Korpisaari 2003) provides additional clues on interethnic relations in pre-colonial Amazonia. The Inca fortress of Las Piedras, at the confluence of the Madre de Díos and Beni Rivers, is located deep within a lowland area historically inhabited by Pano speakers, suggesting not only that the Inca consciously struggled to control their trade with the tropical lowlands in much the same way as they sought to control trade in highland and coastal areas but also that this strategy brought them into violent confrontation with Pano speakers in the lowlands. The authors suggest that not only the floodplains of the Beni and Madre de Díos but also some more northerly sub-Andean groups like the Campa, Piro, and Conibo may have been considered a part of the Inca domain Tawantinsuyu (Steward and Métraux 1963 [1948]:540; Pärssinen et al. 2003:110). The extent of the Quechua language and Andean religious influence in the lowlands in early colonial times (cf. Métraux 1963a [1948]:441, 447, on seventeenth-century Tacanans) may be an indicator of pre-colonial interaction between highland and lowland groups (see Muysken, this volume; Whitten, this volume).

In the area east of Río Branco, in the Brazilian state of Acre, the discovery of hundreds of geometric earthworks dating from around 1000 BC to the thirteenth century AD (Pärssinen et al. 2003; Schaan et al. 2008) may in part be remains of fortifications built by densely settled Arawak speakers as protection against raids from Pano or Tupí speakers. The string of fortifications runs parallel to the traditional linguistic boundary between Arawak and Pano speakers south of the Purús River. The propensity of Arawak speakers to build earthworks such as raised fields and causeways has been documented over much of their former territories in South America, including, of course, the nearby Llanos de Mojos (Erickson 2006). The Arawak-speaking Bauré built villages surrounded by ditches and palisades (Métraux 1963a [1948]:415). The construction of fortifications appears to have increased in the thirteenth century in several parts of Amazonia and the Andes, possibly suggesting a general and interrelated intensification of conflicts over a vast area (Pärssinen et al. 2003:127–130).

## **TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE REGIONAL SYSTEM OF INTERACTION OVER TIME**

Historical documents provide important clues regarding traditional alliances and hostilities among different ethnolinguistic groups in the sub-Andean lowlands (Reeve 1993). They suggest, for instance, that Pano and Tupí speakers were commonly allied with each other. Spanish missionaries were thus able to use Tupí-speaking Cocama as mediators in their efforts to contact and reduce the Pano-speaking Aguano, Mayoruna, and Urarina (*ibid.*, 120; Steward and Métraux 1963 [1948]:557–559). In 1660, the Shipibo joined the Cocama in their hostilities against Spanish missions on the Huallaga River (Steward and Métraux 1963 [1948]:561), and in 1663, an alliance of Cocama and Pano-speaking Chepeo and Maparina rebelled against the Jesuits (Reeve 1993:121–122). European slave traders nevertheless destabilized the fabric of interethnic relations. By 1695, the Tupí-speaking Omagua refused to sell any more captives to the Portuguese (Reeve 1993:130). In fact, the Arawak-speaking Piro and Campa also supported the Conibo and Shipibo in repelling a Spanish punitive expedition in 1698 (Steward and Métraux 1963 [1948]:563). The Pano-speaking Conibo and Arawak-speaking Piro were both actively engaged in slave raiding, which must have truncated much traditional interaction among ethnolinguistic groups and intensified interethnic hostilities. Yet Pano and Tupí speakers readily co-resided in early nineteenth-century missions such as Sarayacu (Steward and Métraux 1963 [1948]:565; DeBoer and Raymond 1987:129) and San Joaquín (Steward and Métraux 1963 [1948]:552), which contributed to cultural homogenization and the interethnic diffusion of crafts such as pottery styles, canoe-making, and weaving.

Powerful indigenous groups continued to be persuaded by the Europeans to become slavers, trading captives from neighboring tribes for metal tools and other colonial merchandise (Métraux 1963a [1948]:418). Patterns of slave raiding often built on and accentuated preexisting interethnic hostilities, pitting the Campa against adjoining Panoans like the Cashibo (Steward and Métraux 1963 [1948]:537, 561); the Conibo against the Piro (*ibid.*, 540, 583); the riverine Ucayali Arawaks and Panoans (the “Chama,” i.e., Setebo, Shipibo, and Conibo) against hinterland groups like the Amuesha (Yanesha), Amahuaca, Cashibo, and Remo (*ibid.*, 548, 555, 564–565, 582–583, 586–587); the Cocamilla and Conibo against the Mayoruna (*ibid.*, 552); and even the Shipibo against the Conibo (*ibid.*, 561). Already in the seventeenth century, the Conibo were exchanging slaves from other groups with the Cocama on the lower Ucayali for iron tools (*ibid.*, 562). In 1791, the Conibo and other Panoans also traded textiles, resins, canoes, and other products with the Omagua and the missions for tools (*ibid.*, 581).

A characteristic feature of the hinterland Panoans studied in the twentieth century is their inclination toward locally introverted, endogamous marriage prefer-

ences (Hornborg 1993; Kensinger 1995). The four-section kinship terminologies of, for example, the Cashinawa and Sharanawa contrast sharply against the preferences for long-distance exogamy expressed by riverine Arawak speakers such as the Piro (Gow 1991). This difference may be relevant to the history of interethnic relations in the area in two ways. Obviously, the inclination toward local contraction and societal atomism in the hinterlands may reflect the historical experience of predation by the riverine slave traders. More fundamentally, however, we may be dealing with two complementary and diametrically opposite modes of human sociability that were generated by the regional system of interaction in western Amazonia many centuries before the arrival of Europeans. The Arawak-speaking traders who expanded along the main rivers were agents of regional integration, linking vast areas of the lowlands into interconnected systems of exchange reaching even into the Andes and the Caribbean. The Panoans originally represented a tropical lowland population of western Amazonia that was not directly in contact with the Andean highlanders but indirectly so, through the mediation of the sub-Andean Arawaks. The Andeans, Arawaks, and Panoans thus occupied three distinct socioecological niches within a regional system of exchange that had crystallized by the time of the Middle Horizon.

This regional system was decisively transformed by the upriver expansion of Tupí speakers in the thirteenth century and then by the European conquest in the sixteenth. The Omagua, Cocama, and Cocamilla colonized a riverine niche along the upper Amazon that may previously have been occupied by Arawak speakers (cf. Heckenberger 2002:122n6). By the time Europeans reached the area, the exchange system thus had four ethnolinguistic components arranged more or less in geographical succession: Andeans, Arawaks, Panoans, and Tupí. The Panoans and Tupí forged many alliances, but there is little evidence of direct contact between Tupí and Arawak. When the Europeans introduced a market for slaves, Tupí, Panoans, and Arawaks alike turned to slave raiding. Particularly prominent in this predatory trade were the Omagua, Conibo, and Piro. The predations of Panoans and Arawaks had little regard for linguistic boundaries, however, as both groups raided weaker neighbors, irrespective of ethnolinguistic affiliation. If in the Middle Horizon there may have been a fair degree of correlation between ethnolinguistic affiliation and socioecological niche, the slave trade and missions in the colonial era distorted the picture considerably. The polarization of riverine and hinterland groups within linguistic families became more prominent than the differences between Panoans and Arawaks, and the rationale of regional exchange shifted from the geographical distribution of resources to the relative military strength of different settlements. These processes had the effect of generating new contradictions and distinctions within linguistic families while contributing to cooperation and cultural diffusion across linguistic boundaries. They are thus crucial to our understanding of the internal distinctions and external affiliations of Panoans and other ethnolinguistic families,

which suggest several historical sediments of identity superimposed on each other: an ancestral background that can be traced through historical linguistics, shifting ecological niches in regional exchange, roles as predator or prey in the colonial slave trade, and processes of cultural hybridization in the Spanish missions.

## CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, we have indicated the kind of rethinking that is required if we are to understand the culture history of indigenous Amazonia through the lens of modern anthropological theory on ethnogenesis. In the examples discussed, we have approached ethnolinguistic categories not as bounded populations with a permanent and coherent biological identity over the course of history but as socially negotiated and shifting constructs with highly permeable borders. To trace the emergence, expansion, and decline of such ethnic identities over time, we need to understand the sociocultural logic as well as the empirical manifestations of such processes. The logic of ethnic identity construction is ubiquitously geared to the constitution of regional socioecological systems of power and exchange, in the sense that people's positions within such a system will influence their internal as well as external identification. The empirically retrievable manifestations of such ethnic identification include various aspects of material culture, economic practices, trade, political boundaries, and—perhaps most importantly—language.

## NOTES

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2. In offering a reconceptualization of the Arawakan “migrations” in Amazonian prehistory (Hornborg 2005), we have been challenged to provide additional examples of similar processes on other continents so as to augment its credibility (Heckenberger 2005). It has thus been gratifying for us to discover significant parallels in the expansion of Arabic through North Africa, which similarly appears to have involved the dispersal of limited numbers of men rather than substantial population movements. According to Kouloughli (2007), in most areas former Berber-speaking groups shifted to Arabic, while in some isolated areas the Berber language survived. The surviving pockets of Berber speakers subsequently appear to have developed their own linguistic specificity, diverging from each other over time. This is the same kind of process that we suggest may have contributed to the diversification of Tupí, Carib, and Gê linguistic families in Amazonia. These families, which originally occupied territories in south-central Brazil, the Guyana uplands, and the east-central Brazilian uplands, respectively, eventually became circumscribed by riverine Arawak speakers on all sides: along the Orinoco, Negro, and Purús Rivers in the west; the main Amazon (separating Caribs in

the north from Tupí in the south); and parts of the Xingú (separating Tupí in the west from Gê in the east). Linguists have suggested that these three linguistic families have a common genealogy (the so-called Tu-Ca-Gê hypothesis; Rodríguez 1985). It thus seems reasonable to hypothesize that the establishment of powerful Arawak-speaking settlements along the floodplains of major rivers accentuated the ethnolinguistic fragmentation of what was once a more homogeneous population speaking proto-Tu-Ca-Gê, much as the establishment of Arabic-speaking communities in North Africa led to the fragmentation of Berber groups. A regional lingua franca such as Arawak or Arabic may thus simultaneously serve as a medium of integration and as a source of ethnolinguistic differentiation.

3. In searching for a possible archaeological correlate of this early ethnolinguistic identity in the eastern foothills of the central Andes, the best candidate may be the Chavín “horizon” centered on the upper Marañón from 900 to 200 BC (Hornborg 2005:601, fig. 3). The consolidation of this trans-Andean interaction sphere, clearly oriented toward trade with the Amazonian lowlands and an elaborate ceremonial life, generated a characteristic and widespread iconography suggesting a mythology with Amazonian roots. This cultural tradition influenced later art styles in the region, particularly those of Tiwanaku (200 BC–AD 1000) in the Titicaca basin (Isbell 1988), whose inhabitants maintained continuing contacts with Arawak speakers in the lowlands (cf. Wassén 1972) and may in fact themselves have spoken an Arawakan language (Puquina) later serving as a trade language in the region (Parsons and Hastings 1988:227; Brownman 1994; Torero 2002; Hornborg 2005:605n49; Dudley, this volume).

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P A R T I I

**LINGUISTICS**





## Amazonian Ritual Communication in Relation to Multilingual Social Networks

*Ellen B. Basso*

### INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I describe several approaches to how we might enhance our understanding of Amazonian ritual communication, offering suggestions for incorporating aspects of language use in the region into the new orientation to regional ethnogenesis (Hornborg 2005). As we have learned from studies of Amazonian welcoming rituals and other ceremonial dialogues, ritual practice probes the sources of community, helping participants to understand how latent hostility and tension among participants are transformed into some concrete, positive social relationships. Writers exploring this subject have adopted processual, affective, and ultimately evolutionary models involving the “sensory preconditions of meaning” (Urban 1986, 1988, 1989, 2002; Erikson 2000; Surrallés 2003). Along the same lines, a look at the more private “little” rituals of everyday life (Haviland 2009) demonstrates their considerable overlap with public discursive contexts (Basso 2007, 2009a, 2009b). Joking and avoidance relations, greetings, leave-takings, protests, and the languages of trade and marketing seem to have important resonances within the far-better-

known public ceremonial practices of Amazonia. Furthermore, linguistic anthropology oriented to psychological questions about experience and personal meaning is also one of the rare sites of interest in the specific details of non-communitarian “chaotic” discourse and of “language ordeals” (Basso 2009a), communicative phenomena that have quickly led us away from assuming the presence of social “community” and “solidarity,” the idea of inherently unified communities. This suggests that people can belong to many communities or cultures at once, an idea that may be combined with the fact that “many traditional communities have had elaborate internal differentiation from time immemorial” (Gumperz 1996b:362). What these data suggest are the benefits of (1) an orientation to social networks rather than to sodalities; (2) a recognition of multilingual discursive areas rather than an assumption of monolingualism; and (3) the value of looking at stance alignments between participants in ritual practice, particularly the epistemic and evidential aspects of ritual communication and how these are manifested in what has been called the “I” of discourse (Urban 1989; Rumsey 2000).

### **SOCIAL NETWORKS**

The discourse-area approach suggested for the study of Amazonian languages (Dixon and Aikhenvald 1999; Beier, Michael, and Sherzer 2002; Passes 2002) is of value for understanding one of the more important contemporary problems being raised by ethnographers and archaeologists: the formation of large-scale polities in pre-colonial Amazonia and Mesoamerica. Sylvia Vidal's examination (1993) of early colonial documents pertaining to the northwest Amazon region demonstrates the presence of several multilingual and multiethnic macro-political complexes in which intermarriage, descent, trade, shamanic and other public ritual, and warfare functions interacted within a hierarchic system of local group interaction and network relations. While the role of “language exogamy” was probably the main theme to address interethnic relations, of special interest is the role of shamanism, particularly in more recent, multiethnic political history (Vidal and Whitehead 2004; Wright 2004). Aikhenvald's study of multilingualism and languages in contact (2002) has also shown the importance of individual network relations within ongoing interethnic relations (see also Epps 2007) and the effects of such in forming “linguistic areas” (where diffusion has caused local genetically distinct languages to share extensive and reasonably distinctive linguistic traits not found elsewhere; Aikhenvald 2002:8).

The discourse-area idea is particularly useful when considering the historically changing linguistic functions in such multiethnic and multilingual settings. In this regard, by understanding speech practices through the idea of the discourse area, John Gumperz's notion of speech communities as collectivities of regional social networks (versus “sodalities” or “societies” as the locus of language processes)

becomes particularly interesting (1996b:362). Discussing the interaction of community, network, and language differentiation, Gumperz writes:

Modern sociolinguistics had its beginning with the recognition that anyone seeking to relate linguistic to social and political forces must take the speech community, as a group of communicating individuals, as the analytical starting-point rather than focusing on languages or dialects as such. Speech communities, broadly conceived, can be regarded as collectivities of social networks . . . of crucial importance . . . is the primary network of socialization, into which one is recruited by kinship, and from which are recruited friends and often neighbors and co-workers. Yet as they enter adult society, individuals are socialized into additional occupational, educational, and other networks. (1996b:362)

Note that Gumperz's work highlights the individual's personal development of such networks over time; in this regard, the individual is (to use Edward Sapir's wording) the "locus of culture." Rather than trying to understand communicative practices as functioning to maintain broad social units, the author calls for observing closely those sites in which the greatest range of language functions are handled (1996b:363). In Amazonia, these are often multilingual sites, where interpersonal activities involving marriage, trade, and ritual activities occur. In such contexts we see some of the most distinctive genres and enregistered practices described by ethnographers: ritual dialogues, the "welcome of tears," shamanistic and chiefly discursive styles, as well as honorification and affinal civility registers that are in constant use in ordinary, daily interaction.

### **RELATIONS BETWEEN MICRO-POLITICAL AND MACRO-POLITICAL RITUALS**

Micro-political communicative rituals are thus central to any consideration of ritual communication as the locus of macro-political and multiethnic genesis. In situations of new and often sudden encounters, people seem to have drawn on existing discursive practices, particularly those everyday little rituals, to project forward in imaginatively new ways. The result has been newly emergent communities of practice. How, then, are special genres, registers, or styles in use in one sociopolitical context connected to those of another context or contexts, particularly when multilingualism and multiethnic relations are involved? With regard to ritual genres, such an inquiry could help us think about how ritual communication operates as a kind of epistemological modality that may lead to the construction of shared stances.

A focus on stance-taking and alignment (Du Bois 2007) is one useful approach to interpersonal communication that would serve researchers well in understanding these matters. The notion of "alignment" (Goffman 1981) involves the active seeking or rejection of a shared evaluation of some event/object, a kind of ongoing activity "in which two participants in dialogic interaction . . . converge to varying degrees"

in taking a stance (Du Bois 2007:22–23). Thus, the individual is not isolated from others or defined mainly through social position and status but as a participant within a complex communicative process that emerges from, and may modify, the social grounding of personal identity and power. Ritual communication is the locus of such processes.

### **AFFINAL CIVILITY AND LEADERS' TALK: SOME KALAPALO (SOUTHERN CARIB) EXAMPLES FROM THE ALTO XINGÚ**

The Alto Xingú region of central Brazil is a multilingual discursive area, in which rituals involving hereditary leadership provide a rare opportunity for examining what Inomata (2006) appropriately calls (in the context of Classic Maya) “political theaters.” The communicative practices involved with “leadership rituals” (Basso 1973, 1985, 2007, 2009a; Franchetto 1983, 1986, 2000) suggest some connections to the affinal civility register, another form of ritual communication that also appears to transcend language differences.

Kalapalo affinal civility is a register that develops over time in the speech of individuals, from the time of their earliest change of status from unmarried to “engaged” person, through movement into the spouse’s family household, and continuing well into old age when such persons may themselves become grandparental household leaders. The repeated use of affinal civility among relatives is a continual doing or making of the familial interpersonal. A closer look at this process suggests how we might come to understand how registers more generally constitute changes in a social world of personal differences. In the Kalapalo case, affinal civility enables specific domestic unions and, through its extension beyond the immediate household, also more extensive social networks or chains of partnerships within a major geographical region, to the extent of contributing to a regional multilingual macro-polity, which I have called Alto-Xingú society. Much evidence suggests that affinal civility is a register that occurs in all the different language groups in the region and perhaps is a means for developing communication across language barriers. But the question of how this register might contribute to developing trans-language communication requires a close look at how metacommunicative gesture and activity complement speech.

Much Kalapalo affinal communication follows a “triadic” formula (Ameka 2000), with an intermediary acting to transmit a message between two avoidance relatives. Ameka explains that triadic communication in West African societies involves diffusion of responsibility among speakers, particularly in contexts of hierarchic social formations where chiefs and religious leaders do not speak openly or display emotion in public.

Triadic communication is one example of more far-ranging and, in communities with strict status hierarchies, spatially and interpersonally elaborate ritual communica-

tion between persons of different rank who must avoid direct contact with those of the highest status. Avoidance or distancing of “commoners” from such elite persons is an important factor here, as was the case among the Aztec observed by the Spanish chroniclers (Carrasco 1982). Such deictic mediations also occur in the northwest Amazon, involving gender relations during male initiation rituals. Probably the most detailed account of “intermediary” communicators is seen in the work on the Kuna gathering house, by Joel Sherzer (1983) and James Howe (1986). In the gathering house, the *arkar* (“chief’s spokesman”) translates the words of the chiefs (themselves excellent speakers, they are in line to be chiefs as well according to Sherzer [1983:58]). Finally, Rivière (1969, 1984) and Gow (1991:135) briefly describe similar avoidance-related triadic communication involving husband/wife/mother-in-law among the Carib Trio and Arawak Piro, respectively.

### **ALTO XINGÚ LEADER’S TALK: STANCE AND THE LEADER’S THEATRICAL “I”**

Special registers associated with public speaking by officials of various kinds are very common, perhaps ubiquitous in Amazonia. In addition to Sherzer’s description of Kuna chiefly oratorical style cited above, there is the work of Laura Graham on Shavante chiefly oratory (1995) and Bruna Franchetto’s discussions of the “*fala do chefe*” in the Alto Xingú (Franchetto 1983, 1986, 2000; see also Basso 1973, 2009a). There is some mention of Bororo public night addresses that are “performed in a loud singsong and frequently make use of special phraseology and vocabulary of the native tongue” (Fabian 1992:92). Finally, we have very good ethnographic and historical descriptions of other discursive areas in the northwest Amazon region of Venezuela, Colombia, and Brazil. These were, and to some extent still are, multilingual discursive areas with elaborate ritual practices that brought together members of different ethnic groups associated with different languages. Yet while detailed and complex ethnographic descriptions of these ritual practices are available, less has been made of the interlanguage relations and of the registers or speech varieties in use within particular communities and between members of different communities.

Urban’s notion of the “I of discourse” (1989) is of special value for understanding Kuikuro and Kalapalo leaders’ public speeches (*anetu itagiñu*, “the leader’s conversational speech”), a form of ceremonial dialogue. Bruna Franchetto observes about the Kuikuro leaders’ talk:

As “conversation,” this verbal genre is characterized by the preponderant use of interactive modes and of first and second pronominal affixes, and above all, of inclusive, collective duals . . . which can be considered not only an index of the “elusion of individuality” as that the speaker places himself at the same level as this listener, even confusing himself with the latter, but also enabling everyone

to feel immediately involved with the orator's declarations. (1986:364; my translation)

The format and words of these speeches are memorized, taught to the young future leader by an older person, ideally the grandparent who is passing on his knowledge, status, and names to the younger man, but also on occasion it may be taught by another hereditary leader who has knowledge that might not be available because of the untimely death of the grandparent. Such leaders are hereditary officials who are responsible for organizing the work and in other ways representing the community consensus regarding important ceremonial gatherings configured around the life-status rituals of hereditary persons (male and female): boy's ear piercing, marriage of the daughter, memorialization after a death.

Hereditary leaders may have political power that is a consequence of a variety of factors, including a large family with supportive inmarried and permanently resident sons-in-law without many relatives of their own, and status as shamans and as *ife* ("knowers") of ceremonial songs and other musicality.

In leaders' talk, the speaker may declare he is using deceptive language (*augunda*), actually a kind of synecdochal substitution of one locution (verbal, visual) for another. Examples here are using first person for third person (in reference to an ancestral leader) and first person singular for first person inclusive plural (the leader then stands for the entire community, and also for the messengers and their sponsors—i.e., for leadership throughout the Alto Xingú). Also, leaders' talk is characterized by self-deprecation or humility expressed with epistemic particles such as the counter-factive *muk"e* and negative or inverted metaphors. Continuity with the past is developed through evidential "hearsay" and "speech about the past" morphemes, and with "now as before" and "still" or "again" morphemes that connect the leaders' current ceremonial behavior with what is known about their predecessors. There is continual reference to ancestral leaders, the "grandchildren of the past" (young men who were chosen by their elders to be ceremonial messengers), and "my ancestor" (a named "true hereditary leader" associated with the origins of the ceremonial practices).

Discontinuity with the past comes through the implicit knowledge that these ceremonial dialogues are not the truly original dialogues, because after slave raiders took away all the hereditary leaders in the eighteenth century, new words had to be introduced (according to Kafutani). Also, implicitly, the persons speaking might not themselves be "true leaders" but only "partial leaders" because (according to the late Kalapalo leader Kambe) they were either appointed by Orlando Villas Boas after a measles epidemic devastated the population in the 1950s or they inherited their position through a maternal line (and therefore the knowledge of the dialogue came from a more distant or even unrelated individual). These factors might be even heard explicitly in the kind of ceremonial speech made by the hereditary leader

early in the morning as he enjoins the community to engage in proper behavior. The ceremonial system must depend on there being a number of men and women with this hereditary leadership status; it is a “representative,” “meditative,” and “organizational” hereditary officialdom.

Like affinal civility, *anetu itagiñu* has a processual feel to it, as it begins when the *etinupe* come into their village and are greeted and then receive *uguka*, shell belts. *Uguka* are given by other leaders so they have to have them to participate (and for the community to participate). Then the *uguka* givers will be *etinupe* (“askers,” i.e., messengers) themselves later on (and hopefully receive *uguka* from other communities in exchange). Then when the *etiñu* are given *uguka* and before being sent off there is a long *taginu* to them and to the settlement about the finality of the acceptance of the invitation, commenting on the *etinupe* of the visitors, not the hosts. Upon arrival at the host village, the leader greets the host leader, and then the people enter. This requires yet another speech by the hosts. So there is a circulation of discourse as well as a circulation of objects from one community to the next. Then there is a final dialogue involving the *etiñu* and the hosts in which the active agency of the participants is acknowledged in a way not heard in earlier talk.

To develop this kind of discourse, a new stance positioning of hereditary leaders (officials) needed to also be engaged through performance of the “theatrical I.” This involves a change of intersubjectivity that begins with subjective and objective changes in the self-presentations of the leaders. Together with special linguistic registers, synesthetic practices (using body paint, dress, objects used in postures, postures themselves) are crucial for presenting and performing the leader’s “theatrical I.” The performed “I” of *anetu* status in the settlement, of membership in the regional *anetu* collectivity that presents itself in a ritual event’s macro-political structuring, is also an iconic enhancement of the moral aesthetics of these performances that enables further development of individual networking on the margins of the performances themselves.

A variety of self-humbling and related avoidance practices index both affinal civility and leaders’ talk. In both familial micro-political and transcommunity macro-political ritual settings, aspects of the speaker’s personal self are suppressed while multiple self-positionings and non-verbal indexing of shared stances arise among people who otherwise do not or cannot communicate directly through language. First, the Amazonian “perspectivism” (Viveiros de Castro 1999, 2002) that is so characteristic of people’s openness to otherness, the consequence of their awareness of phenomenal transformability, appears in the many Kalapalo epistemic-centered dialogues (particularly where the “counter-perspective” form *muk<sup>w</sup>e* is used) that appear over and over again in both registers. Second, just as this “otherness” is only partially and gradually revealed, so is one’s commitment to the perspectives of “affinal” or “community” others. The repeated and repeatedly ritualized expressions of commitment to a collective project are an ongoing process both within a particular

ritual communicative event and processually, as over time both affines and leaders participate in one another's domestic and/or ceremonial goals. Third, evidentiality in the context of narrative and didactic discourse about the past (mythic or inherited) appeals to tradition and to custom. Finally, validation and verification forms (stereotyped utterances, expletives, and the use of certain epistemic markers, both grammatical and lexical) stand as tropes for this "social truth."

Kalapalo affinal civility thus appears to enable transposing the meanings of affinal activities such as gifting in one or another form to new situations. Kalapalo marriages should be seen as icons of that continual "making" of domesticity and its relational consequences outside the household, leading even to the success of more elaborate arrangements among people who do not share a single language. Thus the suppressed persona of the young husband, negotiating the perils of his wife's family's household, and that of his father-in-law, showing the newcomer an elaborated deference, jointly contribute to the complex dramaturgical "I" of the principal leader in the large-scale ceremonies characteristic of the Alto Xingú, where through complex overlapping self-representations, speakers are at once themselves, the local community of leaders, their own ancestors, and visiting messengers.

### **THE SHAMANIC "I" AND STANCE POSITIONING**

Jonathan Hill's ethnography of Wakuénai shamanic ritual poetics (Hill 1993) and Audrey Butt Colsen's work on Akawaio (1977) provide us with some all-too-rare examples of the special registers used by shamans. Using the perspective of the "I" of discourse and stance alignment, comparison of examples taken from the rich ethnographic literature would be of particular interest.

For example, the messianic and the dark shamans of the northwest Amazon (Wright and Hill 1986; Wright 2004) make use of an epistemic ground quite different from that of hereditary leadership, in which kinship relationships are central. The shamanic "I" seems to construct stance positioning around both a theatrical and a personal "I," but these are more visionary, less kin-based than the leader's "I." While the leader's "I" is more theatrical, even depersonalized, the trope of kinship stands for larger-scale relationships. In the Alto Xingú, many if not most non-leadership ritual practices are of shamanic origin. Shamanic visionary encounters with powerful beings lead to a translation of the experience into masked ceremonial activities taught to, and performed by, ordinary people (Basso 2003). Shamanic revelations of hidden realities are thereby introduced to, and subsequently shared by, a larger community. Often, as Clark (2004) suggests with regard to archaeological concerns, performances become so large-scale that a need for large public spaces occurs and, ultimately, shamanic revelations become important within larger-scale polities. While visionary culture offers a special kind of participant grounding that is different from that of kinship relations, in combination with the latter, visionary

cultures can be very powerful. Indeed, Mesoamerican (as Alto Xingú) leadership involved striking combinations of kin-based and visionary shamanic practices.

## **RITUAL COMMUNICATION DURING ENCOUNTERS WITH STRANGERS**

Kalapalo mythological and historical memory has preserved many examples of people using preexisting ritual patterns in actual situations of new contact. In these examples, we can see how speakers used ritual communication to good effect in situations of perceived danger.

The story of Afuseti (a woman abducted by a “fierce person” or stranger) was told to me by Tawana at Tanjugu settlement (Tanguro) in 1998. This “stranger” was a man who (for a reason never made clear) had left his own community to find a wife. After three years’ search, her relatives finally find her living with her children in her husband’s settlement. They must decide whether, and how, they will bring her home. After learning that his wife’s brothers have arrived, the abductor, Pañeta—now described as the woman’s “husband”—greets them respectfully.

1. *Lepene tikutsegá tifigí, kafokombéfa, isinitsígi, onca igelifa buh!*  
‘Next, all painted, wearing his toucan feather headdress, his macaw feathers, and the jaguar hide, covered all over!’
2. *Lepene telufá, tinjeyeta iñó telu.*  
‘Then he went over to them, fearing them the husband walked over to them.’
3. *Ñeyetunda ifeke. Atani tugipugu egeni. Nele aksetegei ifotugu fegey. Fotugupe ege. Matuga feke. Nelefa, nelefa, nelefa, iñope gele.*  
‘He was afraid of them. They stood lined up, he himself (whom I spoke of earlier) decided to be the first, the first one was Matuga, then another one, then another one, then another one, then her (original) husband as the others.’
4. *Uum, adyogu, nigifeke. Amagoka fegey.*  
‘“It looks to me, their uncles,” he said. “My relatives, you seem to be here.”’
5. *Eh ehta tisuge aka tsíñeta. Ulimosiko itigi, ititgi.*  
‘“Yes, we’ve come here to you as you can see. To get the mother of our children, to get her.”’
6. *Eh dyogu. Amagoka fegey idyogu, idyogu.*  
‘“Yes uncles. These are my relatives it seems, their uncles, their uncles.”’
7. *Etagimbakita. Ah itseta itsa iñuyó. Itsako.*  
‘And so they kept on talking. They stood there outside the house. They stood there.’

8. *Kekigefa, Pañeta kili kekigefa uñati.*  
“Come with me,” Pañeta said, “Come inside the house with me.”
9. *Eh he nüifeke. Sinuñgolefa uñati.*  
“All right,” they answered. And so they came inside the house.

Pañeta fearfully approaches the visitors in his ceremonial regalia, indicating his status as an important leader of his community (the jaguar hides and many feather ornaments). The visitors are lined up in a defensive posture, headed by their skilled war leader (“bowmaster”) the brother Matiga. They are greeted (line 4) as “the uncles” (i.e., of Pañeta’s children). They in turn inform him why they are there, using a very formal affinal register (line 5). Both lines 4 and 5 are the “core” of the ceremonial greeting, including the use of the epistemic *=aka* clitic (“seem to be”). Pañeta then invites them into the house. And they agree, another subtle indication of the peaceful intentions of the visitors (line 10). Yet the narrator’s description of the event and the dialogue itself involve considerable tension. This continues when the visitors see that there are many “fierce people” in the settlement, and that they are ethnically different from themselves. In what follows, there are hints of a hoped-for peaceful resolution of the problem. Although the tension escalates on the side of the residents, the visitors assert their peaceful intent:

10. *Ayikogo aketsigei. Ayikogo.*  
‘They (saw) that they were fierce people. Fierce people [i.e., ethnically different].’
11. *Boh! Kaa, kaa, kaa, kaa, ah yikogo kita.*  
‘So many of them, calling out [to mark visiting strangers], was what the fierce people cried out.’
12. *Tsakefofo. Um, tak, tak, ah iñali. Wefotako ayikogo feke, Matigako.*  
‘Listen now. I’m thinking, as the others beat their arrows on the ground, violently. The fierce people intended to shoot them, Matiga and the others.’
13. *Afitti Afitti afitti afitti afitti. Ah, kuk<sup>w</sup>etijiko, kuk<sup>w</sup>etiji.*  
‘No no no no. I assure you, we’re not here to kill you, we’re not here to kill you.’

Later Pañeta escorts the visitors to the bathing area, where they successfully shoot a flock of macaws flying overhead. As the storyteller took care to tell me, this shows the woman’s abductor and his own male relatives that the visitors are (as they suspect) dangerous warriors. Upon their return to the house, the following conversation and activity ensue:

14. *Lepe itsako. Kupiñano tuilulefa injandsukofeke. Intsene tuilulefa, kine, payine, ah injandsoko.*

‘Then they stayed there. Their sister made something for our brothers. Their sister made piqui soup, bread, toasted starch.’

15. *Uum, aningo iñó ikanigifeke iñó feke.*  
‘They sat there as her husband talked to them.’
16. *Amago, amago. Ukiyandsukogele aketsigey efeke apitsako. Ukiyandsukogele.*  
‘My relatives, my relatives. You should stay married to our sister. Our sister, still.’
17. *Afitti-dyogu nügifeke afitti.*  
‘“No uncle,” he answered. “No.”’
18. *Aña teke. Ah kapohoyo eñugu feke atebe.*  
‘“Take these for yourselves.” Indeed, he brought over a huge pile of things.’
19. *Ah tafagufofo eitue. Tafa feke.*  
‘“Keep all this wealth of yours.” About the wealth.’
20. *Ule titu endifegiku, uguka, uguka. Ipigi-iñó fegey.*  
‘That’s what things like feather headdresses, shell belts, shell belts are called. This was going to be the payment.’
21. *Lepene dududududzz, ah ñenitigi.*  
‘The next thing that happened was they were dragged over and displayed.’
22. *Ah dyogu, igea igetue. Igoko igetue. Tohoyo iña puk, Tohoyo iña puk. Tohoyo iña puk. Inigilefa ifeke.*  
‘Believe me uncle, keep these things. Keep these ornaments. To another [visitor], puk, to another puk, to another puk. He gave it to them.’
23. *Agetsiki nügifeke, efisuko ekugufa tueluti. Tifametigu eluti. Akagofale ñalifale. Agetsikifofo nügifeke.*  
‘“More,” someone said to him, their youngest brother who still wanted to kill him. He wanted to kill their brother-in-law. But their relatives didn’t want to do that. “Do more right now,” he said to him.’
24. *Ah dyogu nügifeke.*  
‘“Believe me, uncle,” he answered him.’
25. *Amagofa. Ab kogetsi aketsaye ejufa kukwiyandsuko inotifeke. Um aña teke. Atafagupita tumugufeke. Endifegikumba figey. Ekugu. Teh! Uumpok, pok, pok, pok, ab fiputeli.*  
‘“My relative. Because tomorrow you must leave our sister. I think you should take these for yourselves. Our son is presenting your wealth.”  
Feather headdresses was what he was talking about that way. The best kind. Beautiful. Uumpok, pok, pok, pok, really, he put them all down in front of them, and paid them all.’

26. *Atanje gebale teŋali iña teke. Ab, tutafisufoso ita. Tafisu. Tukayapifeke. Kafokogu, teh, eh, kafokugu eleña tundi, eleña tundi, eleña tundi, fiputega ifeke. Tufitsu fiputelu.*  
‘“There’s even more that I’m going to give you to take away.” He opened up his storage mat. Looking into his mat he took out toucan feather ornaments, beautiful, yes, giving these toucan ornaments to first one and then another and another one of them, he paid them all. Paid for his wife.’

27. *Aña teke. Ah tafisufofeke kokafeke mbege ige eki, kajundafisugu inde fipigü puk’puk’puk’, iña teke. Ah tafisufofo heitsue. Ah tolokuegi ogokugufeke. Lepe tunigifeke tukumiluiñe fundagi tunigifeke, tupsuguiñe fundagi tunigifeke, ah katote ekugu.*  
‘“Take these for yourselves.” From the storage mat he took out more feather ornaments, another kind of toucan feather ornament. “Here, payment” puk, puk, puk. “Take this. Keep this set of feathers.” About all his harpy eagle feathers. Next he gave tail feathers of the blue one, everything he had.’

28. *Aifa katote ekugu tunigifeke.*  
‘Finally he had given everything he had.’

29. *Tufigipe, tunigifeke, tunukau tunigifeke, tugifondogupe, tufiguguiñe, ulepe.*  
‘He gave his arrows, he gave his piqui oil.’

30. *Fitsu egete fitsu egete.*  
‘“Keep your wife, keep your wife.”’

31. *Eh he niñifeke kupamuwiñekefa injugitako. Egefekefa, ugukafeke, akiñji hipí, ihipigü.*  
‘“All right” he answered. Our nephew is presenting wealth to them. About this thing, the shell belt, he had many of them. Payment.’

32. *Inde kwijandsu itsa. Lafa inde kwijandsuko itsa. Aifa ige.*  
‘“Our sister stays here. Let our sister stay here forever. It is finished.”’

33. *Eh he niñifeke.*  
‘“All right,” he answered.’

34. *Apigü ige kugumbe satanjagi. Tufufu ititë . . .*  
‘The very last one of these things was his flute. Called tufuu . . .’

35. *Tisetañifa, tisetañifa. Muh, ah yeñkogu . . .*  
‘“We’re leaving now, we’re going to leave.” Muh, so much of their things . . .’

The loving detail (in lines 19–31) with which the narrator describes what has been remembered of the objects given to the brothers is remarkable. Yet, this is not unex-

pected as the leader's offering of "everything he had" makes sense in this situation. Only then does the tension ease to the extent the brothers agree to leave their sister with Pañeta. They depart burdened by all their newly gained wealth.

Stance-taking is an overt and repeatedly asserted matter in the private ritual dialogues in this story. There are at least five predication in the inventory of the epistemic-affective field. The first involves imagining "likeness" and a sharing of these relations through the use of kinship terms such as "uncles" and "our nephew." At least there is the possibility of that sharing, an openness to the otherness of the other. Second involves wishing to agree or validate the other: through standard agreement and validation forms such as *eh-he*, *eh-he kingilu*. Third is an epistemic scale of validation, using markers characteristic of affinal civility and greetings. Fourth is the ethic of sharing, either through outright exchange or more commonly through an offering of gifts for receipt of whatever the recipient has in the past, or may in the future, be able to provide the giver. While these may be initiated in a situation of danger, the fact that they occur leads to future development of positive relationships. Fifth is the use of gestural, postural, and self-presentational features to convey all the preceding elements. Sixth involves hortative invitations for both proximate and distal activities involving a collectivity formed by the potential antagonists, members of two different communities. That such ritual communications are so carefully remembered suggests that storytellers used their narratives as metacommunicative models, repositories of speech heard in unusual contexts, in need of memorization for potential need.

## CONCLUSION

The approaches in linguistic anthropology discussed in this chapter are perhaps somewhat distant from archaeologists' interests in environments built for ritual practice. Nonetheless, the fact of multilingual polities and large-scale local communities with such ritual environments is obvious to Amazonian comparativists. In Amazonia, traditional settlement structures were often developed with large-scale ritual practice in mind; this was also often true of the interior of households (and, of course, in certain areas settlements consisted of groups of houses, but elsewhere of single, very large communal households). In some areas, hereditary leadership and elaborate collective shamanic and initiation rituals were performed involving members of many communities and often different language groups. A close look at the practices recorded in ethnographic literature would serve archaeologists who are concerned with the relationship among development of hereditary leadership, social inequality, and the building of public spaces, particularly what appear to have been structures designed for large-scale ceremonial gatherings (Hill and Clark 2001; Schortman, Urban, and Ausec 2001; Clark 2004; Inomata 2006). Archaeologists' treatment of these subjects focuses on social sodalities rather than individuals and

interpersonal communicative practices. Yet it is with a focus on the individual control of discourse styles and interpersonal stance alignment processes (many seeming to be represented in ancient documents—stele and codices) that some of the more interesting recent understandings of political status and rank have emerged.

It would be worth examining further the multimodal aspect of ritual events with regard to the ethnic identities of the participants, especially their particular linguistic abilities. Participants in collective ceremonial gatherings make elaborate use of gestures and postures that also index shared epistemic and affective stances. When people come together without good control of one another's languages, it makes sense that other communicative modes appear: elaborate treatment of the body's appearance, musical performance, presentation or display of objects, and gestures are characteristic features of Amazonian collective ritual practice involving members of different communities. Both leader and shamanic ritual communications at once instantiate personal agency and interpersonal alignment; the importance of bodily actions in both genres and related registers enabled them to be effectively shared across language boundaries. Where personal voices cannot be heard because they can't be understood and/or have been suppressed to achieve at least temporary harmony, people may use the body to act out hidden predication. In such cases, the material body and its activities serve as a safe and effective device for communicating feelings of comfort, solidarity, patience, respect, and a peaceful, humble demeanor (and at the same time, similarity or differences in identity, ethnic affiliation, and the like), especially if they contrast with the usual or expected behaviors of the participants indexed as potentially violent. Non-verbal media may be understandable and workable where words cannot at first be shared and understood very well if at all. (We also see that in many ceremonial gatherings certain languages are prohibited, as they are not associated with the identities of major participants.) Not only do para-linguistic features have meaning in themselves, in Gumperz's (1996b) words they are also "context-invoking meta-messages" or "contextualization cues." With repeated use of these multimedial events in more predictable contexts, the same hidden meanings are developed further through accompanying verbal locutions, referencing ideological experiencing. With the sharing of the semantics of this acting out, meanings cumulatively pool as people continue to experiment in similar, continuously repeated contexts of interpersonal activity. As these locutions are experimented with, the semantic may come to be paraphrased and metaphorized in ways that conform to the language ideologies pertinent to these locutions. Greg Urban (2002) writes that a locution itself may in fact be a metacommunicative ideological statement as well as an index of relationship. Where language ideologies developed from the ability to metaphorize, to invert what was performed non-verbally, these processes may also contribute to Amazonian perspectivism and to a sense that language can be deceptive because it is the means through which people create and manipulate what they already know

and do. In multilingual situations, a common normative discourse may begin to appear, behind which lie other voices and their accompanying participant roles available for future use.

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## The Spread of the Arawakan Languages: A View from Structural Phylogenetics

*Swintha Danielsen, Michael Dunn, and Pieter Muysken*

### INTRODUCTION

Over the last three decades the Arawakan language family has drawn increasing attention in a number of disciplines (cf. Hill and Santos-Granero 2002). The family is unique in South America in several respects. It has the widest geographical extension of a language family in the continent. Furthermore, the literature reports for many individual members of the language family considerable influence from other languages in their immediate surroundings. In this chapter we aim to accomplish four things. First, we present a first analysis of a database of *structural* (as opposed to *lexical*) features of the Arawakan languages (Dunn et al. 2008). Comparative linguistic work on Arawakan languages was generally based on lexical material, such as that by Payne (1991). Structural features have been compared, for example, by Aikhenvald (1999a), but not systematically. Second, we carry out an analysis of the structural database using *isolation by distance* measures. Our third objective is to present the outcomes of a statistical analysis of the distribution of the structural features, using the SplitsTree program (NeighborNet) to yield a classification of the

language family. Discrepancies between the classifications on the basis of structural features and the traditional lexical features may give us insight into the role of spread as a second language, as in the case of pidgins and creoles. The data may support Hornborg's hypothesis that the Arawakan diaspora was in part a relatively recent phenomenon and that languages did not spread successively in one big migration phase, but rather in waves (cf. Hornborg 2005:603). Finally, we survey the data on the role of *contact* in shaping Arawakan languages.

## CLASSIFYING THE ARAWAKAN LANGUAGES

### Survey of Linguistic Analyses of the Arawakan Language Family

Since the language family was established in 1783 by Father Gilij, many languages were found to belong to it.<sup>1</sup> The relationship is not only lexical, as shown by Payne (1991), but many morphosyntactic features recur in the languages of the family as well (cf. Aikhenvald 1999a). However, even though it is clear which language is part of the phylum, it is not at all clear how the languages are related internally (cf. Facundes 2002:80). Therefore the suggested subdivisions can differ considerably. This section surveys these and points to the major differences.<sup>2</sup>

Various preliminary reconstructions of proto-Arawakan and subclassifications in the family can be gathered from earlier sources (Mason 1950; Noble 1965; Loukotka 1968; Matteson 1972; Tovar and de Tovar 1984). Because by the late twentieth century only some fifteen Arawakan languages had been described (today the count is approximately twenty), we can easily draw the conclusion that these authors did not have enough available sources for a well-founded linguistic analysis. More serious classifications of Arawakan languages were attempted by Payne (1991), Kaufman (1994), and Aikhenvald (1999a/2002). In addition, there are individual comparative studies of subgroups of the linguistic family, for example, the Brazilian Arawakan languages (Derbyshire 1986), North Arawakan (Aikhenvald 2001), North Amazonian Arawakan (Ramirez 2001), pre-Andean Arawakan languages (Wise 1986), and other valuable studies (Facundes 2002; Adelaar and Muysken 2004).

Various suggestions have been made for the internal subdivisions of Arawakan languages. The different classifications were based on different linguistic features, making comparison difficult. Payne (1991) based his classification on lexical material, while Aikhenvald (1999a) based hers predominantly on phonology and morphology. It is common to use geographical closeness rather than linguistic evidence as the deciding factor in subdividing the languages, as in, for example, Ramirez (2001:3), who posits a great Western (forty-eight languages in eight geographical subareas) versus a small Eastern cluster (seven languages in two subgroups).

In this section two subdivisions are discussed in more detail.

*The Spread of the Arawakan Languages*

**TABLE 8.1.** Payne's classification of Arawakan languages (1991:489).

<i>Arawakan</i>				
<i>Northern</i>	Wapishana			
	Caribbean	Garífuna		
		TA-Arawakan		Lokono, Guajiro
<i>Inland</i>	North Amazon	Resigaro		
	Río Negro	Achagua, Cabiyári, Kurripako, Piapoco, Tariana, Yucuna		
	Yavitero			
<i>Eastern</i>	Palikur			
<i>Central</i>	Paresí, Waurá			
<i>Southern</i>	Bolivia-Paraná	Teréna, Bauré, Ignaciano		
	Purús	Piro, Apuriná		
	Campa	Machiguenga, Ashéninka		
<i>Western</i>	Amuesha, Chamicuro			

*Payne's classification.* Payne (1991) compared twenty-four Arawakan languages and reconstructed 203 cognates for proto-Arawakan. His analysis is based on lexical retentions and he used the lexicostatistic method.<sup>3</sup>

Heckenberger (2002:112) infers from the cognate set: "Preliminary linguistic reconstruction (Payne 1991) of Proto-Arawak demonstrates that these groups . . . already had developed agricultural technology, including ceramics, diverse domesticated plants (e.g., manioc, corn, sweet potato, pepper, urucu, and tobacco), and possibly 'domesticated' . . . animals (e.g., agouti, paca, coati, and large fowl)."

However tempting this conclusion may be, it should be approached with care. In particular, resemblances in cultural (e.g., numbers and names of edible foods) and ecological vocabulary (e.g., names of specific plants and animals) may be more likely due to borrowing than resemblances in the core vocabulary (cf. also Payne on Resigaro 1985:229). If we categorize the cognate sets in Payne (1991) we find 41.4 percent cultural terms, animals, and plant names, and only 45.7 percent actually refer to core vocabulary (23.6 percent core nouns and verbs, 17.7 percent body parts, 4.4 percent kinship terminology). It is possible that a large part of the analyzed resemblances among the languages is due to contact and borrowing and not to shared ancestry. Without criticizing the method by itself, it is important to realize that the comparison of only the lexicon gives us limited information on the relation among languages; lexical borrowing is frequent in South America. Payne's classification of the twenty-four Arawakan languages is presented in Table 8.1.<sup>4</sup>

Payne distinguishes six different geographical clusters and altogether mainly three levels of subclassification, with the exception of the Ta-Arawakan subgroup

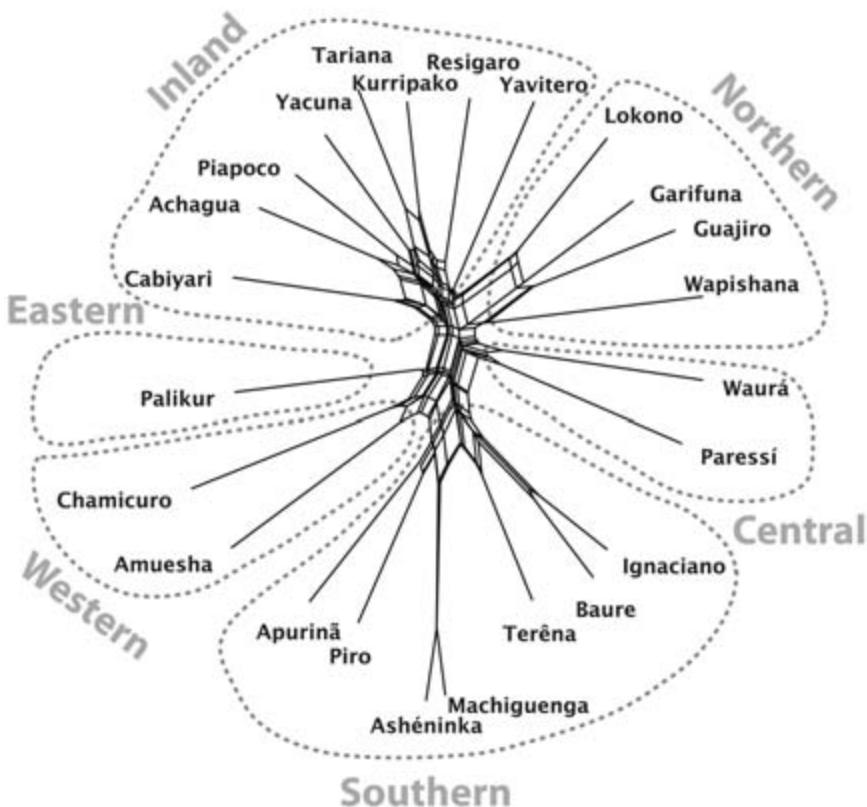


FIGURE 8.1. NeighborNet representation of the relation of Arawakan languages in Payne's lexical retentions model (1991).

within the Caribbean cluster. This classification is based on lexical retentions (cf. Payne 1991:489) and can also be represented in a more objective way in a NeighborNet figure (cf. Figure 8.1).

Figure 8.1 highlights the six main lexical clusters postulated by Payne (1991:489). In addition, more specific lexical clusters identifiable in Figure 8.1 are, for example, the two Campan languages Machiguenga and Ashéninka; also Bauré and Ignaciano, two closely related Bolivian Arawakan languages; and the northern group Garífuná, Guajiro, and Lokono. The languages Amuesha and Chamicuro seem to cluster somewhat as well.

*Aikhenvald's classification.* Father Gilij already included the striking set of personal affixes for argument marking on verbs and possessor marking on nouns, thus grammatical morphemes. Indeed many morphemes have similar forms and func-

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**TABLE 8.2.** Morphological similarity of Arawakan languages.

Examples	Reciprocal (~Causative)	Attributive	Privative
Apuriná	-kaka	ka-	ma-
Piro	-kaka (also causative)	ka-	ma-
Iñapari	-haha	aa-	ma-
Bauré	-koko	ko-	mo-
Moxo	-kaka	ka-	ma-
Teréna	-koko	ko- (also causative)	o-
Paresí	-kakoa	ka-	ma-
Piapoco	-yakaka	ka-	ma-
Resígaro	-kakavu	ka-	ma-
Tariana	-kaka	ka-	ma-
Yavitero	-tata (causative)	ka-	ma-

tions and occur in the same slot. This is not only true for the personal affixes but also for the attributive *\*ka-* and privative/negative *\*ma-* prefixes and the prevailing so-called absolute or thematic suffixes on verbs and nouns. Further on, a striking number of Arawakan languages have reduplicated the absolute suffix or some other verbal root suffix and thus derived the reciprocal suffix *\*-ka* (sometimes the form deviates because of a different root suffix, but it is reduplicated; the function may also be causative). Table 8.2 presents a list of languages that contain the reduplicated reciprocal as well as an attributive and privative prefix that clearly go back to the same proto-form (in Iñapari attributive and Teréna privative the consonant was dropped, and in Paresí, Piapoco, and Resígaro one more element has been lexicalized with the affix).<sup>5</sup>

Aikhenvald (1999a, 2001, 2002) reconstructs an “archaic nucleus” of Arawakan languages, those grammatical characteristics supposedly already present in proto-Arawakan. She analyzed the languages phonetically, morphologically, and also to some extent syntactically. Her formal comparison of the Arawakan pronominal system is frequently cited (Aikhenvald 1999a:88). The comparison also includes a structural analysis of morphological categories and morphosyntactics of parts of speech; however, there is no quantitative analysis. Summing up, Aikhenvald suggests a new subclassification of the Arawakan languages family, which is represented in Table 8.3 and Figure 8.2.

This classification can probably be regarded as the most detailed and most reliable one to date, given the author’s expertise regarding the language family. The most striking contrast with Table 8.1 and Figure 8.1 is that there is a main subdivision between northern and southern Arawakan. The argument for this is mentioned by Aikhenvald (2001:171): the northern Arawakan languages are slightly

TABLE 8-3: Aikhenvald's classification of Arawakan languages. (Aikhenvald 1999:66–67; 2002:282–285)

Arawakan			
North Arawakan	Caribbean / Extreme North	Island Carib, Garifuna	Lokono, Guajiro, Paraujano
Palikur	Palikur, Marawan, Aruán	TA-Arawak	
Rio Branco	Wapishana, Mawayana		
North Amazonian	Orinoco	Bare, Baniya, Yavitero, Mandahuaka, Yabana	
	Middle Río Negro	Cawishana, Manao, Bahwana	
	Upper Río Negro	Kurripako, Tariana, Warekena	
Columbian	Resigaro, Yucuna, Achagua, Piapoco, Cabiyarí, Majpure		
South and South-Western Arawakan	South-Western Arawakan	A-P-I	Piro, Apuriná, Inapari
	Paresí-Xingú	Paresí-Saravéka	Paresí, Saravéka
		Xingú	Waurá, Mehináku, Yawalapiti, Kustenau
South Arawakan			Teréna, Kinikináu, Chané, Apolista, Bauré, Trinitario, Ignaciano, Paunaca, Paiconcea, Ewanewé-nawé
Campa			Asháninka, Ashéninka, Caquinte, Machiguenga, Nomatsiguenga
Chamicuro			Amuesha

*The Spread of the Arawakan Languages*

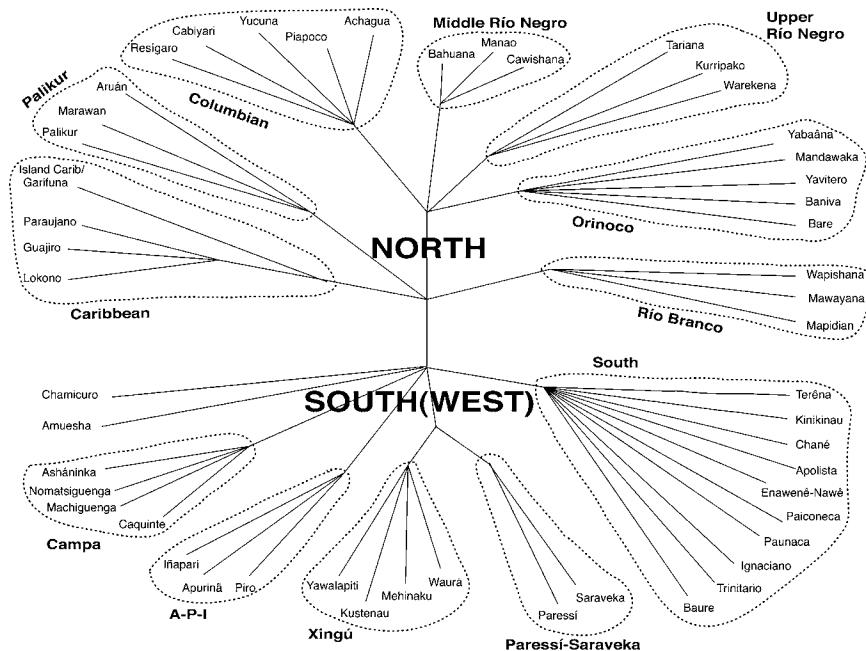


FIGURE 8.2. Aikhenvald's classification of Arawakan languages in the shape of an (unrooted) tree.

less morphologically complex; that is, there are fewer morpheme slots in a verb. Northern Arawakan languages have generally only one prefix slot, tend not to incorporate classifiers or nouns into the root, and have fewer suffix positions as well. South Arawakan languages, on the other hand, can have additional prefixes after the personal prefix and before the root, and there may be two personal suffixes attached (referring to different other participants). In addition there is generally a more complex applicative system with many specifications. Within the two major groups the subdivisions are again basically geographic. This does not mean that these languages do not show signs of clustering, and the subclassification also partly coincides with others (such as Kaufman 1994 or Ramirez 2001). Most subgrouping goes as deep as four levels. Aikhenvald included the findings of Facundes (2002) on Apuriná, Piro, and Iñapari as belonging to a subgroup (the so-called A-P-I cluster). The close relation of Paresí and Saraveka presumably derives from the finding by Créqui-Montfort and Rivet (1913:517), who actually noticed that the two languages were more closely related to northern Arawakan languages<sup>6</sup> and could be the outcome of a separate migration from the north, apart from the other Arawakan languages in the same area (cf. also Métraux 1942:134). The most detailed subdivision can be

observed in the area of north Amazonian Arawakan languages, where Aikhenvald has worked with several of the listed languages. What most classifications, if not all, have in common is the outsider position of the languages Amuesha and Chamicuro within the language family (cf. Payne 1991:fig. 1; Kaufman 1994:57; Adelaar and Muysken 2004:424).

## **A NEW ANALYSIS OF THE INTERNAL RELATIONS**

No thorough structural comparison including all Arawakan languages has been made so far. While the lexicon has been widely compared with the nowadays less accepted methods of lexicostatistics or glottochronology, a full comparative method reconstruction has not been carried out, and other systematic methods for validating the proposed subgroups have yet to be applied. This chapter presents a quantitative analysis of structural similarities among Arawakan languages based on a systematically compiled questionnaire of typological features (Dunn et al. 2008). The data are analyzed using network methods to visualize the patterns of interrelationship in a way that does not presume a genealogically consistent pattern but rather allows for the possibility of considerable horizontal transfer. The resultant network shows which languages seem to cluster and can be compared to the postulated internal relationships within the phylum presented in Figures 8.1 and 8.2.

### **Methods**

Relationships among the Arawakan languages were characterized by measures of structural distance. A list of typological features was coded for each language in the sample, along with geographical coordinates. A test was carried out to measure the correlation between geographic separation of language pairs and their structural distance, measured as the proportion of the coded typological features that are different between the two languages. This measure (known as “isolation by distance,” IBD) indicates the degree of geographic order within the data. A high correlation indicates an orderly historical process, whether a simple model of languages splitting and resettling nearby or a signal of significant levels of language contact and concomitant horizontal transfer of structural features. Lower levels of correlation might indicate high levels of migration and/or a recent dispersal. As will be shown below, the situation for the Arawakan languages is nearer to the latter: the geographical proximity of a pair of languages does not strongly predict that they will be especially similar on a structural level.

Given the relatively low signal of isolation by distance, it is likely that the relationships among the Arawakan languages are not especially treelike. The structural data were thus analyzed using the NeighborNet algorithm (Huson and Bryant 2006), which produces a network visualization that can capture the effect of conflicting his-

torical signals, such as might be produced by large-scale borrowing, dialect chain phenomena, and so forth. In a NeighborNet “splitsgraph,” languages are clustered according to similarity. In the graph, sets of parallel lines show competing ways of splitting the data into clusters, in contrast to a tree representation, which can only show a single split. Orthogonal parallel lines show conflicting signals, where two different splits of the data are possible, with the length of the lines showing the amount of evidence within the data supporting each split. For a detailed description of the application of this technique to linguistic data, see Bryant, Filimon, and Gray (2005).

## The Questionnaires

To produce lists of grammatical features we used two questionnaires. One was the Constenla questionnaire (CQ), used in Constenla (1991) to study areal patterns in the transition zone between the Mesoamerican and the South American languages.<sup>7</sup> The eighty-one features of CQ include different parts of general linguistic typology: phonology, morphology, and syntax (e.g., word order). An additional number of more specific Arawakan distinguishing features, often of a morphological nature, were added using the Danielsen questionnaire (DQ), partly based on the “archaic nucleus” reconstructed by Aikhenvald (2001). The DQ contains seventy-three additional features, including the pronominal affixes, and attributive and privative, and also the place of attachment of affixes. Taking one example, causative is a morphological category marked on verbs in Arawakan languages. However, some languages have a variety of causative affixes with different meanings, and some use a causative prefix, others a suffix. Compare Bauré (example 1), Nanti (2 and 3), Paresí (4), Amuesha (5), and Lokono (6):<sup>8</sup>

(1) *Ni=imo-kotoreko-wo=ro*

1SG=CAUS-work-IPFV=3SGM

‘I make him work’ BAURÉ<sup>9</sup> (SOUTH ARAWAKAN)

(2) *no=ogi-pig-ab-i=ro*

1=CAUS:AGNT-return-REG-REAL=3f

‘I returned your axe.’

*pi-hacha-ne*

2-axe-POSS

NANTI<sup>10</sup> (SOUTH ARAWAKAN)

(3) *te tsini pakuh-akag-Ø-a=ri=me*

NEG

who

drop-CAUS:INFL-IPFV-REAL=3m=CNTR

‘It’s not as if anyone induced him to abandon (his spouse).’

NANTI<sup>11</sup> (SOUTH ARAWAKAN)

(4) *o?ka? ž-at-ež-ey ačkaš y-ač-or*

already eat-CAUS-REP-1PL dwarfs 1PL-mother-POSS

‘The dwarfs have already fed our mother.’ AMUESHA<sup>12</sup> (SOUTH ARAWAKAN)

(5) *ahaka-ki-sa*

work-CAUS-IND

‘cause someone to work, give someone work’ PARESÍ<sup>13</sup> (SOUTH ARAWAKAN)

(6) *ly-fara-kota*                    *no.*

3SGm-fight-CAUS    it

‘He caused it to fight.’ LOKONO<sup>14</sup> (NORTH ARAWAKAN)

Examples 1 through 6 show that the simple question of the existence of a causative affix has to be differentiated to yield distinguishing results.

Other features include the existence of aspirated plosives (rather than a voice opposition) and morphophonological processes that have a voicing effect of plosives or nasalization of vowels. Some Arawakan languages have locative classifiers, and the word for “house” frequently has suppletive possessed forms.

### The Language Sample

In the literature the given numbers of Arawakan languages vary extremely (from 41 to 154);<sup>15</sup> Aikhenvald estimated forty living languages (1999a:65). In our analysis we tried to include as many languages as possible in the database, but the degree of reliability of the information available for each language is very different. Our sample consists of thirty-six languages, as indicated in Map 8.1. We considered, as sources for the investigation of the grammatical features, not only basic descriptive grammars but also grammar sketches, text samples, teaching materials, word lists, and specific or general articles where information on certain features could be excerpted (labeled as a “secondary” source in Map 8.1). In addition some questionnaires were double-checked with specialists working on a particular language (labeled as a “primary” source in Map 8.1).<sup>16</sup> The reliability of the data was divided into four different levels. Level 1 is excellent information on the basis of detailed grammars or expert consulting; level 2 is still reliable but some information may have been analyzed by the authors themselves; level 3 is rather tentative data, predominantly analyzed on the basis of sketchy information or a few articles or older data; level 4 is really tentative, on the basis of one or two articles, which accounts for languages of which we have very little (published) information.

## RESULTS

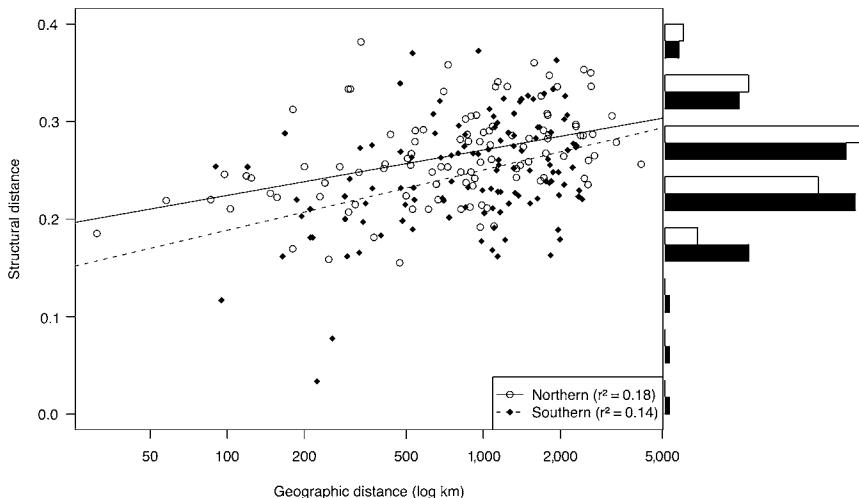
We first present the results for the isolation by distance analyses and then those for the NeighborNet analyses.



MAP 8.1. *The Arawakan languages of our sample and the reliability estimation of the input data.*

### Isolation by Distance

Figure 8.3 plots the correlation between the geographic separation and the structural distance between pairs of languages in the database. The overall measure of isolation by distance is  $r^2 = 0.07$ , that is, that geography predicts only 7 percent of the typological similarity among the Arawakan languages. This is a very low figure. The data are further partitioned into northern (white) and southern (black) groups, matching Aikhenvald's putative subgroups. The structural-geographic correlation within these groups is higher: within the northern group, geography predicts 18



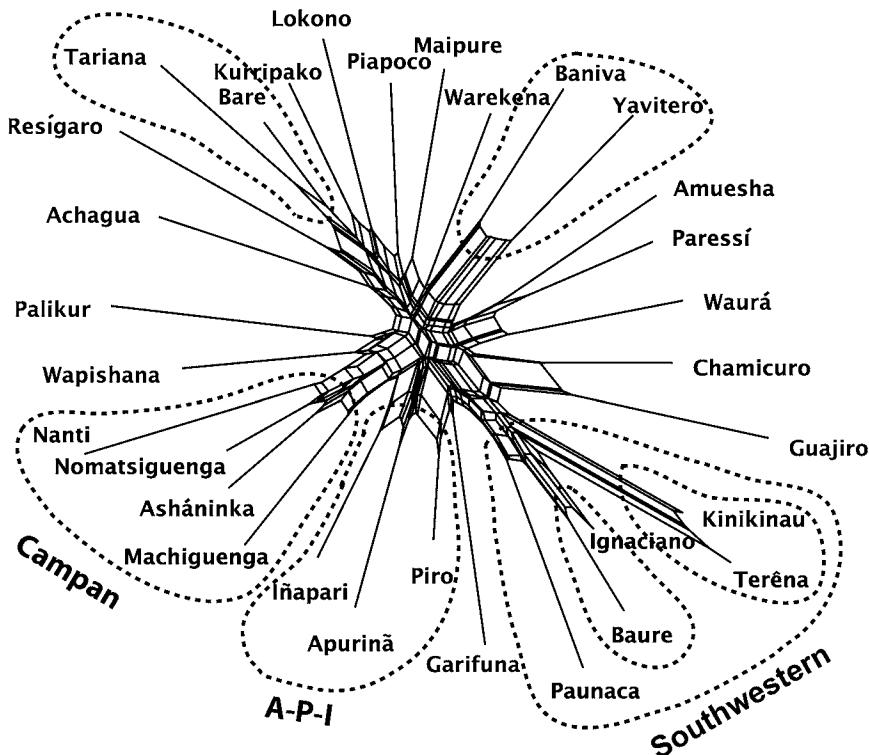
**FIGURE 8.3.** Isolation by distance analysis of the Arawakan language sample. The measure of correlation for the “all together” category is based on the Northern (white), Southern (black), and mixed (gray) points.

percent of structural variation, and within the southern group, geography predicts 14 percent. While still on the low side, these figures suggest that the northern and southern groups are typologically more coherent than the family as a whole. The marginal histogram shows that the structural distances among the southern languages are distributed around a mean slightly higher than among the northern languages: the southern languages are typologically more diverse than the northern languages.

### NeighborNet Analyses

Figure 8.4 presents the results for the combined CQ+DQ questionnaires. Languages postulated to belong to the northern branch of the family were marked by gray script and those of the south by black. A number of striking features come to the fore, which we will discuss one by one.

*No major splits.* In contrast to other well-established language families, such as Indo-European (cf. Atkinson and Gray 2006), the Arawakan language family does not show any clear tendency of a major split. These results were quite surprising for us, in particular in relation to the suggested models of subclassification, such as Aikhenvald's in Figure 8.2, where a major north/south split is postulated.



**FIGURE 8.4.** Structural analysis of thirty-one Arawakan languages (CQ and DQ features).

*Recency of expansion.* The lack of major splits is compatible with a scenario in which expansion was relatively recent.

*Clusters.* In Figure 8.4 we can identify three clear clusters: the Campan languages, the A-P-I group (cf. Facundes 2002), and a southwestern cluster, including the closely related Bolivian Arawakan languages Ignaciano and Bauré. Guimarães de Carvalho Couto (2005) also argues that Kinikinau is closely related to Terêna, which is verified by a clear cluster in the net. Two of the northern languages cluster quite clearly: Baniva and Yavitero. For the rest of northern Arawakan languages there does not seem to be any clear structure.

*Discrepancy with lexical classification.* The outcome of the analysis of grammatical features is also different from the lexical analysis, where certain stronger clustering tendencies could be observed (cf. Figure 8.1). This discrepancy is sug-

gestive of processes of transmission through second language learning, possibly pidginization.

*Diversity and direction of migration.* One of the northern languages, Garífuna, even appears right among the other southern languages. Amuesha and Chamicuro do not cluster, even though this should be predicted from the lexical analysis. The configuration in Figure 8.3 is most compatible with the idea that there is ancient diversity in the north and more recent migration to the south. There is no evidence for a scenario where there was an early cluster in the south and subsequent migration to the north.

*Multiple migrations.* There is evidence for multiple southerly migrations, in that the southern groups do not cluster together as a whole.

In Figure 8.4 we omitted five languages, for which we had exclusively secondary data of very bad quality (level 4), because it seemed that those blurred the whole picture too much.

### **The Role of Language Contact**

For the assignment of Arawakan languages to the phylum, most accordance is found on the level of basic verbal morphology, but the structural differences among the varieties are greater. It is possible that some Arawakan languages have become very different from proto-Arawakan, at least morphosyntactically. Within the undifferentiated group of northern Arawakan languages in Figure 8.4, a number of languages have been shown to have undergone extensive changes stemming from contact with other languages. Some of the cases of contact with Arawakan languages that have been described are listed in Table 8.4 (cf. Muysken 2011), and discussed subsequently.

A first special case concerns the Garífuna (Black Caribs), descendants of the Island Carib. Their history is a complex one and involves Arawaks, Caribs, and descendants of African slaves. Their Arawakan ancestors left Guyana, Surinam, and Venezuela in the second century AD, settling in the Greater Antilles. The Caribs left the Orinoco delta in the thirteenth century and conquered the Lesser Antilles. From the mixture of Cariban and Arawakan the well-known but now extinct language Island Carib resulted. The descendants of the original mixed communities formed new communities on Saint Vincent. There, a number of escaped slaves were adopted into the community. Finally the ensuing group, the Black Carib, were deported and thereafter settled on the coast of Honduras and then spread into Belize, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Hoff (1995:50) argues that the contacts between the Kariña-speaking Caribs and the Igneri-speaking Arawaks took place in Kariña pidgin, which survived until the twentieth century along the northern coast

*The Spread of the Arawakan Languages*

**TABLE 8.4.** A schematic overview of contacts involving Arawakan languages.

<i>Language</i>	<i>Arawakan in Contact With</i>	<i>Type of Contact</i>	<i>Linguistic Effects</i>
Garifuna / Island Carib	Kariña/Kariña pidgin	Male conquest of female community; pidgin use	Gender differences in language use
Palikur	Carib and unknown other languages	Possibly shift to Arawakan	Grammatical borrowing
Amuesha	Quechua	Close trading relationships	Intensive lexical and grammatical borrowing
Resigaro	Bora, Ocaina	Close contact in terms of dependency relations	Borrowing of nominal morphology and classifiers
Tariana	Eastern Tukanoan	Exogamous bilingualism	Extensive grammatical borrowing

of the South American mainland (cf. Taylor and Hoff 1980:311). Taylor and Hoff (1980) conclude that the Carib elements in Island Carib actually derive from the contact with the Carib pidgin.

Palikur is spoken by slightly over 1,000 people in the border area of State of Amapá, Brazil, and French Guyana. The first historical records after contact with the Portuguese situate the Palikur slightly to the north of the mouth of the Amazon River. Since they became involved in conflicts between the Portuguese and the French colonial powers in Cayenne, they were forced northward and subject to bad treatment by the Portuguese. The language has undergone a number of grammatical changes, without a clear source as far as is known at this moment.

The Amuesha originally lived in a region stretching from the Department of Huánuco to the Department of Junín, immediately west of Quechua-speaking territories in the Andes of central Peru. Since the Cerro de la Sal (Salt Mountain) was located in their area, they had frequent contacts with traders from various places looking for salt. For several centuries contacts must have been intense even if the Amuesha now live further eastward in the Amazonian lowlands. Building on earlier work by Wise (1976), who definitely established both the Arawak genetic affiliation and pointed to the influence of Quechua on the language, Adelaar (2007) has provided a detailed analysis of the layers of Quechua influence on the language. What makes the Amuesha case particularly complicated is that there is evidence not just of Arawakan and Quechuan linguistic elements but of a third as yet unknown language as well, currently being investigated. The influence on Amuesha is not primarily from the Quechua lingua franca associated with the Inca Empire but rather from the neighboring Quechua dialects of central Peru that are part of the so-called Quechua I cluster (Adelaar and Muysken 2004). There is phonological evidence that these loans are quite old. However, there are also a few

loans, specifically referring to personal status terms, that must come from the later Inca period.

Quechua loanwords cover all word classes and include a striking number (at least sixty) verbs, often with core meanings. In addition, there are a number of suggestive structural resemblances between Amuesha and neighboring Quechua varieties in the negation system, an apprehensive construction, an applicative reversal construction, subordination, and double possessive marking. Altogether, however, Amuesha has not converged structurally with Quechua.

Payne (1985) has established that the genetic classification of Resígaro is squarely within the Arawakan language family, in spite of the many elements shared with Bora that Allin (1975) had discovered. Aikhenvald (2001) has further analyzed the considerable influence from Bora on the language, pointing to the predominance of borrowed Bora classifiers in Resígaro. This influence is currently being further studied by Seifart (2010) and Włoczkowska (2006), partly on the basis of new fieldwork data. In Resígaro 24 percent of the core vocabulary is of Bora origin, while there is no borrowing in the other direction.<sup>17</sup> Resígaro has adopted a two-tone contrast, a phonemic glottal stop, and syllable structure restrictions from Bora. In the pronominal system, it has adopted the inclusive/exclusive distinction in the first person plural through a Bora pronoun.<sup>18</sup> Of the fifty-six classifiers in Resígaro, only eight or nine have an Arawakan etymology, and thirty-six are from Bora. Striking and highly unusual is that borrowing is limited to the nominal domain and involves a high proportion of the nominal affixes and the pronouns.

Starting with the work of Arthur Sorensen (1967), it has been noted that the Içana and Vaupés river basins in northwest Amazonia, on the border of Colombia and Brazil, are a region with extensive multilingualism and language contact. The results of this have been documented in detail by many scholars, including Jackson (1983) and Gomez-Imbert (1996) from the perspective of the Tukanoan languages, Aikhenvald (1996, 1999, 2002) for the Arawakan languages, and Epps (2007) for the Makú languages. The most likely scenario is that originally the relevant part of the region was inhabited by the Makú, who were forest-dwelling semi-nomadic hunters, and that later the Tukano and the Arawak arrived, in that order. These latter groups lived along the rivers and were agriculturalists. The Arawak and the Tukano intermarried, in accordance with ideals of linguistic exogamy, so that many children grew up multilingually. However, all groups maintained their languages as separate entities, at least at the level of the lexical shapes and the morphemes (except for the existential verb *ni-*, which has spread across members of all three families); there is little lexical borrowing. The Arawakan language most directly influenced by Tukano is Tariana. In the processes of structural and semantic change, which has led to the emergence of a linguistic area in the Içana and Vaupés river basins, the Tukanoan languages have been the source of innovations. In other words, the change was unidirectional and involved a number of domains of the language. In phonology,

nasalization, a particular pitch accent system, and a number of segmental features have spread from the Tukanoan languages (Aikhenvald 1999a:394–396). In the lexicon, particular features of the Tukanoan classifier system have spread to Tariana. Likewise, a particular organization of the numeral system has also been adopted by Tariana, as well as a split number system (based on animacy) and associative plural. A striking case of diffusion concerns the complicated Tukano five-way evidential system, into which tense, person, and number markings are embedded. In addition, there is evidence for the spread of additional tense distinctions marked by particles. In the case marking and alignment systems, Tariana adopted typical Tukano features as well, for example, in the system of animacy-based differential object marking, where human objects are always marked, animal objects are marked depending on the degree of individuation, and inanimates are not marked. While Arawakan languages originally probably had a system of noun incorporation, it does not occur in Tariana or in Tukano.

## CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions drawn in this chapter are not definitive, but we hope they will contribute to the further debates concerning this language family and lead to further research. The isolation by distance measure indicates that geography predicts only 7 percent of the typological similarity among the Arawakan languages, a very low figure. There is an overall clustering of a northern and a southern group.

The analysis of the NeighborNet does not show any clear north/south distinction. The results suggest relatively limited branching within the language family and a disparity between classifications based on structural and lexical data. We may hypothesize that the Arawakan diaspora is a relatively recent phenomenon, that the languages did not spread successively in one big migration phase but rather in waves (cf. Hornborg 2005:603), and that spread was from north to south. The fact that many Arawakan languages were in intense contact with their neighbors further complicates the classification.

Hornborg's hypothesis of ethnogenesis of Arawakan languages is interesting in respect to the interpretation of our results: "In view of its conspicuously riverine distribution, there is a distinct possibility that the Arawakan language family (i.e., proto-Arawak) . . . originated as a trade language of prehistoric Amazonia" (Hornborg 2005:602). The expansion of Arawakan groups has also been analyzed from the perspectives of archaeology, history, and anthropology, of which we mention here Oliver (1989), Hill and Santos-Granero (2002), and two articles by Hornborg (2005, 2007). In Santos-Granero (2002:44–46) the "Arawakan ethos" was summarized as consisting of the following important elements: no endo-warfare, alliances with other Arawakan peoples and sometimes also with cross-linguistic or transethnic alliances, and an emphasis on descent, hereditary rank (social hierarchy),

**TABLE 8.5.** Arawakan languages in this chapter.

<i>Language Name</i>	<i>ISO Code</i>	<i>Language Status</i>	<i>Payne Model</i>	<i>Present Sample</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Achagua	Aca	Endangered	X	X	Speakers are bilingual with Piapoco
Amuesha	Ame		X	X	Difficult classification
Apolista	—	Extinct		X	
Apuriná	Apu		X	X	
Aruán	Ara	Extinct			
Asháninka	Cjo, cni, cpb, cpe, cpu, cpy, prg		X	X	Asháninka and Ashéinka are part of a wider dialect group
Bahuana	—	Extinct			
Baniva	Bvv	Endangered		X	
Bare	Bae	Endangered		X	
Bauré	Brg	Seriously endangered	X	X	
Cabiyarí	Cbb	Moribund	X		
Caquinte	Cot	Endangered			
Cawishana	—	Extinct			
Chamicuro	Ccc	Extinct	X	X	Difficult classification
Chané	Caj	Extinct			Difficult classification
Enawenê-nawê	Unk	Endangered		X	
Garífuná	Cab		X	X	Partly mixed language with Carib and European languages
Guajiro	Guc		X	X	
Ignaciano	Ign	Endangered	X	X	Moxo dialect (cf. Trinitario)
Iñapari	Inp	Extinct		X	
Island Carib	Crb	Extinct		X	Hardly distinguishable from Garífuná
Kinikináu	Ggn	Moribund		X	Closely related to Teréna
Kurripako	Kpc		X	X	
Kustenau	—	Extinct			
Lokono	Arw	Endangered	X	X	
Machiguenga	McB		X	X	
Manao	—	Extinct			Closely related to Xiriâna (xir)

TABLE 8.5—*continued*

<i>Language Name</i>	<i>ISO Code</i>	<i>Language Status</i>	<i>Payne Model</i>	<i>Present Sample</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Mandahuaka	Mht	Extinct			
Mapidian	Mpw	Moribund			
Marawan	—	Extinct			
Mawayana	Mzx	Moribund			
Mehináku	Mmh	Endangered		X	Closely related to Waurá
Nanti	Cox			X	Not included in Aikhenvald
Nomatsiguenga	Not			X	
Paiconeca	—	Extinct			Presumably a dialect of Paunaca
Palikur	Plu	Seriously endangered	X	X	
Paraujano	Pbg	Moribund			
Paresí	Pab	Endangered	X	X	
Paunaca	—	Moribund		X	
Piapoco	Pio		X	X	
Piro	Pib, cuj	Endangered	X	X	
Resígaro	Rgr	Moribund	X	X	Under strong language contact with Bora
Saraveka	Sar	Extinct		X	
Tariana	Tae	Endangered	X	X	
Terêna	Ter		X	X	
Trinitario	Trn	Endangered		X	Moxo dialect (cf. Ignaciano)
Wapishana	Wap		X	X	
Warekena	Gae	Seriously endangered		X	
Waurá	Wau	Seriously endangered	X	X	
Yabaâna	Ybn	Extinct			Closely related to Xiriâna (xir)
Yavitero	Yvt	Almost extinct	X	X	
Yawalapiti	Yaw	Extinct			
Yucuna	Ycn	Endangered	X		

and ritual and religion. Another important feature is that Arawakan groups have maintained long-distance trade relations.

## NOTES

1. He called it the “Maipure” family, later renamed “Arawak” by others. However, the terms “Maipuran” (e.g., in Payne 1991), “Maipurean” and “Arawak” (e.g., Dixon and Aikhenvald 1999), and “Arawakan” or “Aruák” (Spanish and Portuguese versions, respectively) are still used synonymously by different authors.

2. It is possible that the focus of some listings of Arawakan languages was not exactly the detailed internal classification; some authors simply prefer a practical geographically clustered overview (e.g., Ramirez 2001:3).

3. Payne calls it the “Maipuran” language family.

4. All Arawakan languages mentioned in this chapter are listed in Table 8.5; cf. ISO codes and state of the languages there.

5. The attributive prefix *ka-* should not be confused with a root suffix *-ka*, which was reduplicated in so many Arawakan languages; this is a case of simple homophony.

6. This has also been taken into account in other classifications (cf. Kaufman 1994: 57).

7. For a broader comparison, the Sahul questionnaire (cf. Dunn et al. 2008) was used, but these results are not presented in this chapter.

8. Glosses: CAUS = causative, CAUS:AGNT = agentive causative, CAUS:INFL = influential causative, CNTF = counterfactual, IND = indicative, IPFV = imperfective, m = masculine, NEG = negation, PL = plural, POSS = possessive, REAL = realis, REG = regressive, REP = repetitive, SG = singular.

9. Cf. Danielsen 2007.

10. Cf. Michael 2008:281, glosses slightly simplified.

11. Cf. Michael 2008:284, glosses slightly simplified.

12. Cf. Adelaar and Muysken 2004:429.

13. Cf. Rowan and Rowan 1978:xiv.

14. Cf. Pet 1987:68.

15. Ramirez (2001) lists 41; Aikhenvald (1999a), 61; Noble (1965), 89; and Loukotka (1968), 154.

16. Thanks to Lev Michael for filling in the Nanti questionnaire, to Marie-France Patte for checking the Lokono questionnaire, to Lucrecia Villafañe for letting us have her Paunaca data, and also to the students who double-checked a questionnaire each in Danielsen’s class at the University of Leipzig in 2008.

17. The high percentage of non-Arawakan vocabulary led to the earlier conclusion that it might be part of the Huitotoan family (cf. Payne [1985], who confirms its classification as Arawakan).

18. The first person plural inclusive/exclusive distinction was also innovated in the Campa language group in Peru, presumably under long-term Quechuan influence. This distinction has not been reconstructed for proto-Arawakan, and it cannot be found in other languages than those that were in contact with another language that had this category.

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Comparative Arawak Linguistics:  
Notes on Reconstruction, Diffusion, and Amazonian Prehistory

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## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we address two issues related to the historical-comparative studies of Arawak. First, we will review the Apuriná-Piro-Inapari linguistic subgrouping hypothesis that we have previously presented (Brandão and Facundes 2007). Second, we will make an exploratory analysis of twelve lexical similarities between Arawak and Arawá languages. And third, we will present suggestions on possible implications of the answers to the first two issues for the historical development of Arawak.

In 1492 Christopher Columbus landed on an island he called San Salvador, where he met the Taíno people. It was the beginning of the end of the Taíno communities and the language they spoke. Taíno was one of the languages belonging to the genetic group proposed in 1782 by Fillipo Salvadore Gilij then called Maipuran, based on a comparison between the languages Maipure and Moxo (Noble 1965:1; Payne 1991:363; Aikhenvald 1999:73). Although Gilij used the name of the Venezuelan language Maipure to name this genetic group, Brinton (1891) and von

den Steinen (1886), according to Aikhenvald (1999:73), named the same group “Arawak” after the Arawak (or Lokono) language spoken in the Guyanas.

As modern historical-comparative studies of putative Arawak languages have been carried out, languages of the Arawá family, the Guahibo group, as well as Puquina and Harakmbet, have been excluded from the Arawak family (Payne 1991; Aikhenvald 1999; Ramirez 2001). The picture currently presented in these studies in the English literature on Arawak, in terms of the languages that are truly Arawak, is very close to what some South American linguists had already presented earlier (e.g., Tovar 1966, 1983, 1986; Rodrigues 1967, 1982, 1985, 1986).

The issue of internal classification is one of the major problems to be resolved in Arawak studies (Facundes 2002). The overall family internal classifications that precede Payne’s 1991 paper and their various problems have already been discussed in various places (Payne 1991; Aikhenvald 1999; Ramirez 2001; Fabre 2005). A comparison of the three most recent classifications reveals important differences. Payne (1991) initially departs from a classification based on Noble (1965), Grimes (1988), Kaufman (1990), and “[his] own perusal of data and literature” (1991:365) for all Arawak languages and then proposes a new Arawak internal classification based on shared lexical retentions among 203 cognate sets for the following twenty-four languages: Achagua, Amuesha, Apuriná, Ashéninca, Bauré, Cabiyarí, Chamicuro, Curripaco, Garífuna, Guajiro, Ignaciano, Lokono, Machiguenga, Palikur, Paresís, Piapoco, Piro, Resígaro, Tariano, Terêna, Wapishana, Waurá, Yavitero, and Yucuna.

Aikhenvald’s classification builds on previous works, especially that of Payne (1991), noting that her internal classification is preliminary and based on an “areal-geographical principle.” Ramirez’s classification includes forty-seven Arawak languages (where the language names coincide, the spelling used is based on Payne 1991): Baniwa-Curripaco, Tariano, Warekena (Guarequena), Mandahuaka, Piapoco, Achagua, Cabiyarí, Resígaro, Wainumá, Mariaté, Yucuna, Cayuixana, Yumana, Passé, Baré, Guinau, Bahuana, Manao, Yabaana, Wiriná, Anauya, Cariaí, Aruán, Mawayana, Wapixana, Baniwa de Maroa, Yavitero, Maipure, Guajiro, Paraujano, Lokono, Island Carib, Marawa, Waraikú, Kuniba, Canamari, Piro, Apuriná, Campa, Bauré, Mantinera, Terena (Kinikinau), Palikur, Paresís, Waurá, Mehináku, and Amuesha. This classification is also based on lexical retention, using Swadesh’s 100-word list. In addition to that, Ramirez presents an internal classification for a branch of northern Amazon languages; he labels his proposed branch Japurá-Colômbia.

Therefore, among the three most recent classifications, Aikhenvald’s is based partly on geographic and partly on phonological or grammatical features shared among languages; Ramirez’s is based on a comparison with Swadesh’s list but without presenting the conclusions of this comparison; and Payne’s is based on standardized lexical retentions. Moreover, these classifications generally agree at the lowest levels but not so much at the intermediary or higher levels. This is natural when classifications have been mostly based on preliminary evidence, without the

support of reconstructions and innovations. Therefore, more work is still needed to distinguish language similarities due to genetic relationship from those due to areal diffusion.

### **THE PLACE OF APURINÃ, PIRO, AND IÑAPARI IN ARAWAK**

A recent attempt to verify the place of three Arawak languages was presented in a previous publication (Brandão and Facundes 2007). In this text, we examine the relation involving Apurinã, Piro, and Iñapari, languages spoken mainly in a region that includes the following: the Purús river basin, Acre River, and Iaco River, in Brazil; and the Urubamba River, Cushabatay River, Madre de Díos River, and Piedras River near Puerto Maldonado, in Peru. Apurinã and Piro had long before been classified as belonging to the Pre-Andine Arawak branch, and Valenzuela (1991) had already presented evidence that also placed Iñapari within this same branch. Moreover, the general classifications of the Arawak family include Apurinã, Piro, and Iñapari (the latter, when included) as a sub-branch within a larger major Arawak branch. Different authors name this putative sub-branch differently: Purús (Payne 1991), Piro-Apurinã (Aikhenvald 1999), and Apurinã, Piro-Kuniba-Canamari-Mantineri (Ramirez 2001). We extended a preliminary project described by Facundes (2000, 2002), based on the author's own extensive work on Apurinã, published resources on Piro (Matteson 1965, 1972, 1994) and Iñapari (Parker 1995, 1999), and one field trip to a Manchineri community in Brazil.

Our project reinforces Facundes's (2000, 2002) proposal about the Apurinã-Piro-Iñapari grouping, based on a comparison involving lexical correspondences among twenty-five Arawak languages, built on Payne's (1991) 203 cognate sets, where the data for Apurinã and Piro are revised and for Iñapari added. To ensure that only terms that are most likely cognate forms among the languages compared were used, that is, to eliminate possible instances of loanwords from the comparison, only words that showed systematic sound correspondences were included in the comparison.

The numbers for Apurinã, Piro, and Iñapari showed that these three languages share 48 percent of lexical items. Asheninka shares the most cognates with Apurinã, Piro, and Iñapari, averaging 38 percent; however, while the sharing among Apurinã, Piro, and Iñapari is mutual (i.e., Apurinã shares more cognates with Piro and with Iñapari than with other languages, Piro shares more features with Apurinã and Iñapari, and Iñapari shares more cognates with Piro and Apurinã), the same does not happen with Asheninka. Asheninka shares more cognates with Machiguenga (49 percent) than with Apurinã, Piro, or Iñapari. Other languages share significantly fewer cognates with Apurinã, Piro, and Iñapari. On the basis of these numbers, our conclusion was that, in terms of shared lexical retentions computed over 203 reasonably reliable cognates, Apurinã, Piro, and Iñapari are likely to form a

group together as a sub-branch of Arawak, regardless of larger branches they may belong to.

The phonological reconstruction that we proposed for Proto-Apuriná-Piro-Iñapari is based on preliminary work by Facundes (2000, 2002), and the establishment of phonological innovations still has not been presented. As a result, the proposal of the Arawak branch Apuriná-Piro-Iñapari is promising, although not yet conclusive. As acknowledged previously, further work is required to determine whether these three languages alone derive from a single proto-language or whether there are other languages that would have derived from this same group. Keeping in mind this observation, the existence of this subgrouping will be our working hypothesis, whose implications will also be examined in terms of whether they lead to a better understanding of the development of the Arawak family.

### **SOME ISSUES ON LOANWORDS IN ARAWAK**

All modern classifications of the Arawak family exclude the Arawá languages (Kulina, Deni, Jamamadi, Paumari, and Suruwahá), since no evidence of genetic relationship among these groups has been found. In fact, only recently a detailed historical comparative work has been done for Arawá languages. In his comparative work reconstructing the phonemes of Proto-Arawá, Dixon (2004) found no evidence of a genetic relationship between Arawá and Arawak. That being the case, one may wonder what led linguists in the past to include Arawá within the Arawak family, aside from the similarities in the names of the groups and the geographic region they share. The most obvious reason is of course a few vocabulary items some languages of these groups share. However, if the lexical similarities among Arawak and Arawá languages do not show any systematic sound correspondences, as shown in Dixon's work, we are bound to conclude that such similarities are likely to have been acquired through contact among speakers of those languages rather than by transmission from one and the same putative ancestral language (some sort of Proto-Arawak-Arawá); that is, these lexical similarities are loanwords. The study of such loans in terms of who borrowed what from whom, when, and under which social and historical conditions may reveal information about the history of the peoples speaking those languages.

The Arawak languages geographically closest to where Arawá languages are spoken are precisely those making the A-P-I Arawak sub-branch described above and are, thus, among the languages still alive, the most likely candidates to have been involved in prehistorical contact with Arawá languages. In fact, Apuriná is the only Arawak language with speakers (in some communities) in permanent contact with speakers of Arawá languages, including some degree of intermarriage. In the next paragraphs we will examine lexical similarities between languages of these two families in an attempt to shed more light on the historical development of these two groups of languages that led to such vocabulary diffusion.

To determine the historical status of shared lexical similarities between Arawak and Arawá, we will depart from Dixon's (1995) cognate sets for Arawá languages, since they constitute the most reliable historical comparative data from such languages. The aim of the comparison below is, first, to determine the status of the lexical similarities involving Arawá and A-P-I languages and, second, to determine which generalizations or paths for further research into the historical development of Arawak can be proposed. In determining the direction of borrowing we will rely on reconstructions already proposed for Arawá, reconstructions already proposed for A-P-I and/or Arawak, and, finally, the existence or not of lexical similarities in Arawak languages outside the region where A-P-I and Arawá languages are spoken. Table 9.1 lists twelve cases of lexical similarities between Arawá and Arawak languages. There certainly are more lexical similarities between the language groups, and the twelve cases chosen for analysis here are the ones on which relevant information seems to us to be most reliable.

In the list of words given in Table 9.1, Dixon identified:

- 1–3 as loans from Apuriná
- 4–5 as either loans from Apuriná into Arawá or vice versa
- 6 as onomatopoeia
- 7 as an areal feature of Amazonian languages
- 8 as a loan from Arawak into Arawá, either into Proto-Arawá or into the individual Arawá languages
- 9 as a loan from the Nheengatú Língua Geral

The following comments are in order:

- Form 1 ('clothes') also has cognates in Piro (*maka* ~ *mka*) and Iñapari (*maha*[*tiri*]) and in Arawak languages outside the Purús region (Nanti, Tariano, Paresís) and corresponds to the form reconstructed as 'sleep' in Proto-Arawak. Thus, the source must be Arawak, most likely Apuriná, as Dixon suggested.
- The same reasoning applies to 2 ('river'), *wenu* in Piro and *iwána* in Iñapari.
- As for 3–4, there is no clear cognate form for *tsipari*<sup>1</sup> or *sáku* in other Arawak languages. The Apuriná forms do not reconstruct to earlier stages of Arawak, which would suggest that it is more likely that Apuriná borrowed the words *tsipari* and *sáku* from Arawá. The form *tsenko-ri* is attested in Nanti, but the nature of its similarity to the Apuriná requires verification. Dixon reconstructs in Proto-Arawá the form for 'traíra fish' (\**shako*), but not for 'banana'.
- 5 ('corn') has no obvious cognate for the Apuriná form so far attested in other Arawak languages. In fact, Piro and Iñapari have the cognate forms *fixi* and *bisí*, respectively, thus different from the Apuriná form and, to some extent, from the forms commonly found in other Arawak languages, which Payne

(1991) reconstructs as *\*marizi* (the historical source of the Spanish *maíz*, French *maïs*, and English *maize*). Therefore, since the Apurinã form is not cognate with any other Arawak language, it is more likely that the source of the loan is in Arawá, where the word is reconstructed in Proto-Arawá as *\*kimi*. However, Dienst (personal communication, 2009) confirms the existence of the form *tapa* for ‘corn’ in Deni, Kulina, and Jamamadi of Capana, suggesting that *kimi* could be a loan in Arawá.

- 6, ‘woodpecker’ is treated by Dixon as onomatopoeia. This form has potential cognates in Piro (*koka*[*skonru*]) and in Iñapari (*u?a*), but this cannot yet be conclusively affirmed, lacking more phonological correspondences (i.e., the correspondence *k:k?* is not robust enough to substantiate their status as cognates). However, the fact that likely cognates are found in other Arawak languages such as Nanti (*konkari*) and Amuesha (*konka're* ‘bird of red color’), which are outside the Purús region, suggests Arawak as the source.
- As noted by Dixon, 7 (‘mother’s brother’) was reconstructed for Proto-Arawak as *\*kukho*, and for Proto-Arawá as *\*koko*, and to the extent that languages outside these two families show related forms it indeed seems to be a case of areal diffusion that predates the languages that currently show such word forms. In Suruí we find the form *kokó* (Galucio, personal communication, 2009), and in Puruburá we find the form *koko* (Galucio 2005:185). Presuming that Proto-Arawak is older than Proto-Arawá, we can conclude that the form in Proto-Arawá is possibly a loan from some intermediary stage of Proto-Arawak, assuming borrowings into Arawá are more likely to come from the neighboring Arawak languages.
- As for the word for ‘timbó/tingui’ in 8, it is common in Arawak languages such as Iñapari (*uná, uná*) and Tariano (*kun:a ~ kun:a*), among others, and was reconstructed by Ramirez (2001) for his proposed Japurá-Colômbia branch of north Arawak as *\*kuuna*. Since cognates are also found in languages outside north Arawak, it is probable that, as Dixon suggests, ancient Arawak (at some level) is the source of the loan into Proto-Arawá.
- In 9 we have the word for the ‘matrinxá fish’ (*Brycon cephalus* sp., also referred to as one type of *aracu*), which Dixon lists as a loan from Nheengatú, citing Tastevin (1910) and Stradelli (1929). Although Portuguese dictionaries such as Houaiss and Villar (2001) indeed list *mamuri* as of Tupí origin, we have not been able to gather conclusive evidence of this analysis. On the other hand, the word is present in languages of different branches of Arawak such as Apurinã (*mamuri*), Piro (*mamalu*), Iñapari (*mamuuri*), Amuesha-Yanesha (*mamore*), Asháninka (*mamori*), and Tariano (*mánuri*), some of which did not have a history of contact with Nheengatú. Moreover, this fish (greatly appreciated by the people living in the Purús region) has special status in the Apurinã oral history. In fact, in Apurinã, *mamuri-ni-ri* (matrinxão-PLURAL-MASC) is, not coincidentally, the name of a mythical flute that plays the matrinxá’s song and is used in the name of two rivers, tributaries of the Purús main river, namely *mamoriá* (from *mamury-á*, where *-á* refers to ‘liquid, water’) and *mamori-*

TABLE 9.1. Arawak loans into Arawá languages.

*continued on next page*

TABLE 9.1—*continued*

1- 'clothes'	2- 'river'	3- 'banana'	4- 'traira ( <i>Hoplias malabaricus</i> )'	5- 'corn'	6- 'woodpecker'	7- 'mother's brother'	8- 'timbó / tingui'	9- 'mamuri fish'	10- 'eagle sp.'	11- 'earth-worm'	12- 'dove sp.'
Jarawara	<i>mahari</i>	<i>jifari</i>	<i>sako</i>	<i>kimi</i>	<i>koka</i>	<i>koko</i>	<i>kona</i>	<i>kokowi</i>	<i>somi</i>		
Jamamadi		<i>sibatí</i>	<i>sako</i>	<i>kimi</i>	<i>koka</i>	<i>koko</i>	<i>kona</i>		<i>somi</i>		
Banawá	<i>mahari</i>	<i>jifari</i>	<i>sako</i>	<i>kimi</i>	<i>koka</i>	<i>koko</i>			<i>kokowi</i>	<i>somi</i>	
Deni	<i>mdasí</i>	<i>jipari</i>	<i>shako</i>	<i>kimi</i>	<i>koka</i>	<i>koko</i>			<i>mamore</i>	<i>shomi</i>	
Kulina		<i>weni</i>	<i>shako</i>		<i>koka</i>	<i>koko</i>	<i>kona</i>	<i>mamore</i>		<i>shomi</i>	
Suruwahá		<i>siari</i>	<i>sako(sa)</i>	<i>kimi</i>	<i>koko</i>		<i>kona(ha)</i>	<i>mamori</i>		<i>somi</i>	
Tupí											
Suruí											
Puruburá									<i>koko</i>		

1. Dixon gives the form *mayka*, which is not phonologically accurate. The first nasal vowel is contrastive, whereas the velar nasal is not. Also, contrary to what Dixon says, the noun can take the suffix *-tʃi*, but not *-ri*.

2. Dixon gives the form *sauko*, but the actual Apuriná is as given above.

*azinho*, where -(z)inho is the diminutive suffix of Portuguese. It is worth noticing that in that part of the Purús basin, south of Lábrea, toponyms of Tupián origins are uncommon, if not nonexistent. Therefore, most likely this is a word that predates the contact of speakers of Arawak languages from the Purús region with Nheengatú. It also indicates that the source of the word is most likely Arawak, not Tupí.

- In 10, 'type of eagle', the phonological correspondences suggest that the equivalent words are cognates in Apuriná (*kukui*), Iñapari (*ukui*), and other Arawak languages such as Paresi (*kokoi*) and Nanti (*ukui*). The form \**kokoi* is reconstructed by Dixon for Proto-Arawá, but it could be a loan from Arawak, most likely from Apuriná, in which case, and due to their formal similarity, it is not clear whether the forms should at all be reconstructed for Proto-Arawá.
- In 11, 'earth worm', aside from Apuriná, related forms are also found in other Arawak languages such as Piro (*tsomi*), Iñapari (*tómi*), Nanti (*tsomi/ri*). Dixon reconstructs \**shomi* for Proto-Arawá and the Arawak forms seem to reconstruct for pre-Apuriná-Piro-Iñapari, which, added to the fact that Arawak languages outside the Purús region show cognate forms, suggests that the source of the loan is in Arawak. In addition, this noun is used in the name of the Tumiá river (*tsumi-á*, cf. *mamoriá* above), where the most traditional members of the Apuriná ethnic group currently live. Dixon's reconstruction standing, we can presume that the loan was acquired by Proto-Arawá rather than by each individual Arawá language. Moreover, although Dixon does not list any related form in Paumari, a suspicious form (*domi*) is given by Salzer and Chapman (1996).
- Finally, 12 ('dove') is found in Apuriná (*kamuwa*) and Piro (*kamowa*), but not in other Arawak languages. Although the form \**kamowa* was reconstructed for Proto-Arawá, what we have are two very similar forms in two languages in each family, and on the basis of this information alone we cannot resolve the status of these forms in terms of the direction of borrowing or the extent to which they are reconstructible to earlier stages of any of the families.

In sum, out of twelve related forms we have ten terms for fauna and flora, one for kinship that appears to result from diffusion involving many genetic groups from different regions, and one for clothes, all of which clearly show no evidence of genetic relationship between Arawak and Arawá. The preliminary evidence indicates that the terms for 'clothes', 'river', 'uncle', 'woodpecker', 'timbó', 'matrinxá fish', 'eagle', and 'earth worm' are loans from Arawak into Arawá; that the terms for 'banana', 'corn', and 'traíra fish' are loans from Arawá into Arawak; and that direction of borrowing cannot yet be determined for 'dove'. More attentive perusal through Arawá and Arawak languages will reveal more related forms in both families, and it is also true that more information is needed to confirm the direction of borrowing in some of the cases compared, as well as the consideration of more cases; however, it is highly significant that eleven out of the twelve related forms so

far attested for Arawak and Arawá languages refer to terms for elements of fauna, flora, and material culture, that is, concepts commonly borrowed between languages. Furthermore, according to these preliminary results, Arawá has generally borrowed terms for fauna from Arawak, whereas Arawak has borrowed important flora terms related to agriculture (e.g., 'banana' and 'corn'). As it happens, Apuriná have a rather poor agricultural system and historically spent most of their time with internal and external conflicts (the main cause of their presently wide geographical distribution; Facundes 2000), such that at least for this group it would make sense to acquire knowledge of domesticated plants from other groups. However, in light of Dienst's (personal communication, 2009) observation that languages outside of both Arawak and Arawá also show some of the terms compared here, this hypothesis is highly speculative.

### **FINAL REMARKS**

The first two issues addressed here involved the current status of knowledge of the place of Apuriná, Piro, and Iñapari in Arawak, and the status of twelve lexical similarities involving Arawak and Arawá languages. On the first issue, we reviewed the evidence previously presented in favor of an Arawak subgroup consisting of Apuriná, Piro, and Iñapari, on the basis of shared lexical retentions. Although still lacking the support of phonological innovations, A-P-I stands as a plausible working hypothesis that sheds some light on the second issue. As to this second issue, the twelve lexical similarities compared between Arawak and Arawá all constitute instances of loanwords. Although data for more languages in the region need to be included in these comparisons, the preliminary results would seem to indicate that, of these loans, eight may originate in Arawak, three may originate in Arawá, and for one the direction cannot yet be determined.

The third issue was the relevance of resolving the first two questions for the historical development of Arawak. The preliminary exploration of lexical similarities in Arawak and Arawá points to the possibility that some of the contacts among these two groups led to Arawá languages borrowing mostly terms for fauna, and Arawak languages borrowing mostly terms for flora. Although the significance of the first type of borrowing is not clear, we speculate that the second type of borrowing may result from the need of some Arawak groups, especially Apuriná, to acquire some specific knowledge of domesticated plants that they did not possess.

As to when in time the contact among such groups took place, some of the linguistic data described above suggest that it preceded the final split that led to the present-day Arawak and Arawá languages, while others suggest a more recent contact, especially involving Apuriná and Arawá languages. As far as we know, there is no historical record of any systematic contact among speakers of Piro (or Manchineri) and Iñapari with any Arawá languages. As for Apuriná, however, they

generally live in areas nearer or overlapping with those of Arawá groups. In a few cases, where Apuriná, Jamamadi, Paumari, and Jarawara groups live in the same officially designated land but in different villages, permanent contacts occur, with a few cases of interethnic marriages (see survey presented in Facundes 2000, section 1.1.5.1). In more recent years such kinds of intermarriage have become more common, even in areas where they did not happen before, such as the Japiim village, on the Paciá River, near Lábrea.

One of the first historical documents to mention Apuriná is one by Chandless (1866). However, Chandless mentions an earlier contact with this group made by Manoel Urbano da Encarnação. Other explorers mentioned in connection with the first explorations of the Purús River are João Cametá and someone only identified as Serafin. Gonçalves (1991) asserts that the second explorer had contact with the Apuriná group. Labre (1899:497) cites Chandless as “[t]he first explorer of the Purús and its tributaries,” noticing that in the years following Chandless’s visit to the region, the Purús River was to become the main trading area for Indian rubber in South America. Although Labre reports no indication of contact involving Apuriná and other indigenous groups, Chandless states that intermarriage between Canamari and Apuriná was common (Chandless 1966:100). According to Ehrenreich (1897:59–60), the Canamari or Kanamirim (a group already extinct) from the Purús was not the same as the homonymous Panoan group. Ehrenreich, Chamberlain (1913), and Loukotka (1968) believed that the Canamari from the Purús also belonged to Arawak. This is, in fact, what the Canamari word list found in Martinus, Johann Baptist von Spix, and Carl Friedrich P. von Martius (1867, see Ramirez 2000:606–610) suggests. So, the earliest historical records of Apuriná indicate contact with another Arawak group only. Thus, it would seem that even the contact that produced loanwords involving Apuriná and Arawá languages would have to have preceded historical records. Another fact that reinforces this idea is that Suruwahá, a language group located outside the areas where Apuriná live and whose contact with outside society did not happen until the 1980s, shares most of the words with Arawak that other Arawá languages also share.

We should add that a resource of information that still needs to be added to this comparison would come from ethnology, where the oral historical records can be studied on the basis of traditional narratives. While writing this chapter, we have not had access to systematic studies on this subject, probably in part because they are still lacking and in part because of little interaction among Arawak specialists from anthropology and linguistics. This shows how important it is that more work, such as the studies assembled in this book (and earlier in Hill and Santos-Granero 2002), be done. As we advance in improving this picture, the comparison between Arawak and Arawá presented here is only partial and is strictly based on linguistic data, more with the aim of raising specific questions that may help improve our knowledge of Arawak than to present final answers.

In conclusion, although it is not yet possible to be conclusive about the particular source of all words shared by Arawak and Arawá, they clearly are all loanwords and thus are not evidence of genetic relationship among any of the languages involved. Such loanwords instead are indications of prehistorical contacts among speakers of these languages and possibly other (non-Arawak and non-Arawá) languages.

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#### NOTE

1. The variant form *sipari* is also attested in Apurinã. Iñapari has the word *xipátfi* 'banana,' which, however, does not present recurrent phonological correspondences. Stefan Dienst (personal communication, 2009) notes that the forms for 'banana' in Arawan languages also lack regular correspondence and that some Katukinan languages (Katawishi and Katukina do Biá) also have related forms, opening the possibility of a non-Arawak and non-Arawá source for these forms.

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## Linguistic Diversity Zones and Cartographic Modeling: GIS as a Method for Understanding the Prehistory of Lowland South America

*Östen Dahl, J. Christopher Gillam, David G. Anderson, José Iriarte, and Silvia M. Copé*

The vast geographic scale, time depth, linguistic variability, and inherent complexity of long-term cultural trajectories influencing social ethnogenesis in lowland South America have presented scholars with many challenges in the past century (see Hornborg and Hill, this volume). However, it is this multifaceted character of the problem that lends itself to meaningful interpretations of ethnic identity and transformation in Amazonia. Traditional methods that focus on specific localities or groups and then extrapolate to the broader area often create generalization where differentiation is due. With few exceptions, our ability as anthropologists to manage and manipulate vast quantities of cultural and environmental data has lagged behind the technological advances of recent decades. Nonetheless, progress is being made on the technological side as user-friendly applications become more mainstream in the academic setting.

Advancements in the design and implementation of archaeological databases, geographic information systems (GIS), and cartographic modeling enable archaeologists today to construct empirical models of past cultural systems at a variety of

scales. GIS environmental and archaeological datasets for lowland South America have recently become available at various resolutions that can be used to address a broad range of questions. Examples of significant environmental GIS data include 1 km resolution datasets such as GLOBE and HYDRO1K for regional-scale analyses and high-resolution 90 m data such as SRTM digital elevation model (DEM) data suitable for local-scale studies. Archaeological datasets remain project specific (e.g., Copé 2007), with few region-wide databases currently available. This situation may become less restrictive in the years ahead as accessible, and ideally online, projects such as the Paleoindian Database of the Americas (PIDBA) and others make regional- and continental-scale datasets available to archaeologists worldwide (Anderson et al. 2005, 2010; Gillam et al. 2008; Suárez and Gillam 2008).

The challenge for current research in Amazonia is to expand the use of GIS beyond data storage and visualization. Pioneering geographic studies will lead to a better understanding of the unique historical trajectories that shaped the landscape over time. Research directed toward defining group association and territories, as well as routes and networks for migration, interaction, and trade between human groups, will permit the development of a better understanding of cultural landscape change, human agency, and the uniqueness of specific cultural trajectories. For example, Thiessen polygons (Haggett 1966) are a simple method of evaluating potential territory size and, when combined with other cartographic modeling output (e.g., predictive models), provide an effective estimation of territorial extent and potential productivity. Kinship, natural resources, and polity strength also shape (and reshape) such boundaries over time and need to be integral to the modeling process whenever possible. Least-cost paths analyses provide the means to examine overland movements on the landscape and, when expressed in units of caloric cost, represent an economic variable for understanding trade and interaction.

In this chapter, we explore current uses of cartographic modeling techniques in archaeology and suggest how some of these techniques—especially GIS and least-cost paths analysis—may contribute new understandings of long-term processes of ethnogenesis and historical change in ancient Amazonia. We will conclude with a brief consideration of the interesting discovery that the results of least-cost pathway modeling of early movements into the interior of South America bear striking resemblance to the contemporary geographic distribution of language isolates and members of very small language families in western areas of Amazonia. This finding suggests a scenario in which ancestral languages might have arrived at the time of the earliest human migrations into South America and given rise to daughter languages whose speakers have continued to inhabit the same regions of western Amazonia.

## LEAST-COST PATHS AND CALORIC COST

Least-cost paths analysis provides an empirical and replicable means of modeling terrestrial routes or movement corridors across a landscape using a DEM and site location data. Typically, the elevation values of the DEM are converted to percentage slope, degree of slope, or caloric cost to represent a roughness layer for the model. Percentage and degree of slope are calculated from the DEM grid layer using a moving  $3 \times 3$  neighborhood of cells (each center cell and its 8 adjacent neighbors) and is equivalent to calculating the local derivative of a plane. Values for percentage slope range from 0 to infinity (not 0 to 100) as steepness increases. Values for degree of slope only range from 0 to 90 degrees as steepness increases. Either method can be used for deriving least-cost paths; obviously, there will be a greater range of values influencing the results with percentage of slope than for degree of slope.

For caloric cost, Pandolf, Givoni, and Goldman (1977) provide an equation for estimating energy expenditure for people moving at walking speeds. The unit of measure of that equation is in watts, easily converted to nutritional calories by multiplying the equation by 0.000238846. The modified equation (Gillam 2008) is:

$$\text{Nutritional Caloric Cost} = (((1.5 * W) + (2 * (W + L) * ((L / W) * (L / W)))) + (T * (W + L) * ((1.5 * (V * V)) + (0.35 * V * \%SLOPE)))) * 0.000238846$$

In the GIS, the percentage slope grid layer is used as the mapped variable in the equation to derive nutritional caloric cost for each cell on the landscape. The additional variables include a hypothetical subject weight (W; kilograms), carrying load (L; kilograms), terrain factor (T; value range from 1.0 to 2.0: 1.0 for hard surface, 2.0 for loose sand), and hypothetical walking speed (V; m/s).

The least-cost paths are derived by a “wave” function acting on the roughness layer (Tomlin 1990). From the starting cell (such as an obsidian quarry site), a wave front extends in all directions and is impeded by the values of the roughness layer (the percent slope or caloric cost values in the adjacent cells). For each cell, a cumulative cost of movement is established from the source. A least-cost path is then created by defining a destination cell (archaeological site or sites) from which the minimum cumulative cost is traced backward through the cost surface to the source cell.

Anderson and Gillam (2000) used this method to explore potential migration corridors for the peopling of the Americas during the late Pleistocene. Likewise, Gillam and Tabarev (2004) examined possible exchange networks of obsidian raw materials in Primorye by linking known quarry locations with habitation sites throughout the region. If caloric cost is used instead of slope, the cumulative cost between the source and destinations can be further used as an economic variable to evaluate hypotheses related to interaction and exchange practices in a region.

## PROSPECTS FOR GIS MODELING IN AMAZONIA

The complex cultural trajectories of prehistoric Amazonia are becoming well understood, and research interest in the human ecology, sociopolitical organization, settlement systems, and migration, interaction, and exchange networks of the region remains fervent (Neves 1998; Heckenberger, Peterson, and Neves 1999; Hornborg 2005; Erickson 2008; Roosevelt 2008). The use of GIS modeling in Amazonia can go far beyond mapping of site distributions and can provide new insights into the complex cultural dynamics of the region through time and space. There are a variety of free online global-scale GIS data sources in the United States and elsewhere that are enabling cartographic modeling in Amazonia and other regions of South America for the first time. Of particular interest are the Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM) 90 m DEM; the GLOBE, HYDRO1K, and GTOPO30 1 km resolution DEM datasets; and the ETOPO2 4 km resolution DEM data that also include seafloor bathymetry for modeling palaeo-landforms and shorelines (e.g., Gillam et al. 2006).

In Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, recent research in the southern Brazilian highlands highlights the significance of regional data sources, such as national base-map datasets, for conducting archaeological GIS analyses. DEMs and derivative GIS data were developed from Brazilian 1:50,000-scale elevation contour maps to study the cultural landscapes of the Taquara tradition near Pinhal da Serra and Bom Jesús (Copé 2007). The sites at these localities are characterized by pithouse habitations and mounded funeral enclosure complexes. At Bom Jesús, nearest neighbor analyses and Thiessen polygons revealed that Taquara sites ( $n = 53$ ) were significantly clustered, not randomly located, on the landscape. GIS three-dimensional visualization of the sites also revealed that they were intentionally positioned on the landscape to maximize viewshed. Likewise, GIS analyses of 104 Taquara sites in the Pinhal da Serra locality revealed that pithouses were often located along least-cost pathways on the landscape. Interestingly, funeral mound enclosure complexes seem to be located at nodal points connecting least-cost paths across the landscape, and these funerary sites are all intervisible to one another. These patterns suggest non-random distributions of habitation sites and symbolic meaning in the placement of funerary sites.

The SRTM 90 m DEM data form the highest-resolution global dataset freely available today and will result in a significant expansion of GIS applications in archaeology throughout the world, particularly in rural areas such as Amazonia. In the southern Brazilian highlands, SRTM data are being used to explore the expansion of Taquara/Itarare culture in Misiones Province, Argentina, where mounded earthen funeral enclosures also served as significant ceremonial places and territorial markers on the landscape (Iriarte, Gillam, and Marozzi 2008). The DEM was used to develop ancillary datasets (e.g., slope model and stream networks) that were in turn utilized as variables in a predictive model of site location for the Piray

mini basin. The predictive model serves as the basis for a stratified random sampling strategy for gaining a better understanding of Taquara/Itarare settlement and sociopolitics of the river basin that lies on the periphery of the greater culture area.

## **AN AMAZONIAN CASE STUDY: LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY ZONES AND POSSIBLE INITIAL IMMIGRATION PATHWAYS IN SOUTH AMERICA**

For a long time, the Americas, in particular South America, have been reputed to house an unusually large number of unrelated language families. In spite of Joseph Greenberg's late twentieth-century attempt to subsume all languages in the Americas under three families, one of which, "Amerind," would cover all languages traditionally regarded as "American Indian" except those belonging to the Na-Dene family in North America, most linguists still regard the Americas as having a higher degree of linguistic diversity than other continents. Usually, statements to this effect are formulated in a rather general fashion and are often restricted to noting the large number of language families in the Americas, in particular in South America. Digital databases and mapping techniques (GIS) now make it much easier to study the distribution of both genealogical (genetic) and structural diversity and relating them to each other. In this section, we shall focus on South America, presenting a bird's-eye view of the linguistic diversity found there, and try to relate it to recent proposals about the initial peopling of the continent.

For genealogical (genetic) diversity, we will be using the Ethnologue database (Gordon 2005), not because it is more authoritative than any other work but because it not only has reasonably full coverage of South America but also presents data on other parts of the world, making global statistical comparisons possible. Although the Ethnologue differs in details from other surveys, those details are of little importance to the general picture, which is more or less the same in most recent sources.

The number of living spoken languages of pre-Columbian origin in South America is around 400; according to the Ethnologue database there are 381 such languages, which is about 5.5 percent of all living languages in the world. A considerable number of languages are also known to have gone extinct; the Ethnologue lists over 100 but there are many more not mentioned there. For many of the languages, in particular the extinct ones, there is not sufficient available information to determine their genealogical (genetic) relationships; the Ethnologue lists thirty-three such languages in South America, eleven of which are said to be still spoken. This leaves us with 370 languages that are given a genealogical classification in the Ethnologue. Most of them are assigned to one of thirty-four language families, which make up one third of the total number of language families listed in the Ethnologue; this figure in itself shows us that the diversity in South America



MAP 10.1. *The distribution of language isolates and small language families (fewer than four members) in the world.*

is higher than in the rest of the world. Twenty languages, however, are classified as “language isolates,” meaning that there is supposedly sufficient information about them to determine that they do not belong to any known language family.<sup>1</sup> The total number of living isolates in the world according to the Ethnologue is thirty-six,<sup>2</sup> so here the South American cases make up as much as 60 percent. Map 10.1 shows the distribution of language isolates and language families with fewer than four members in the world. It is obvious that the clusterings in the western parts of South America have no counterparts anywhere else.

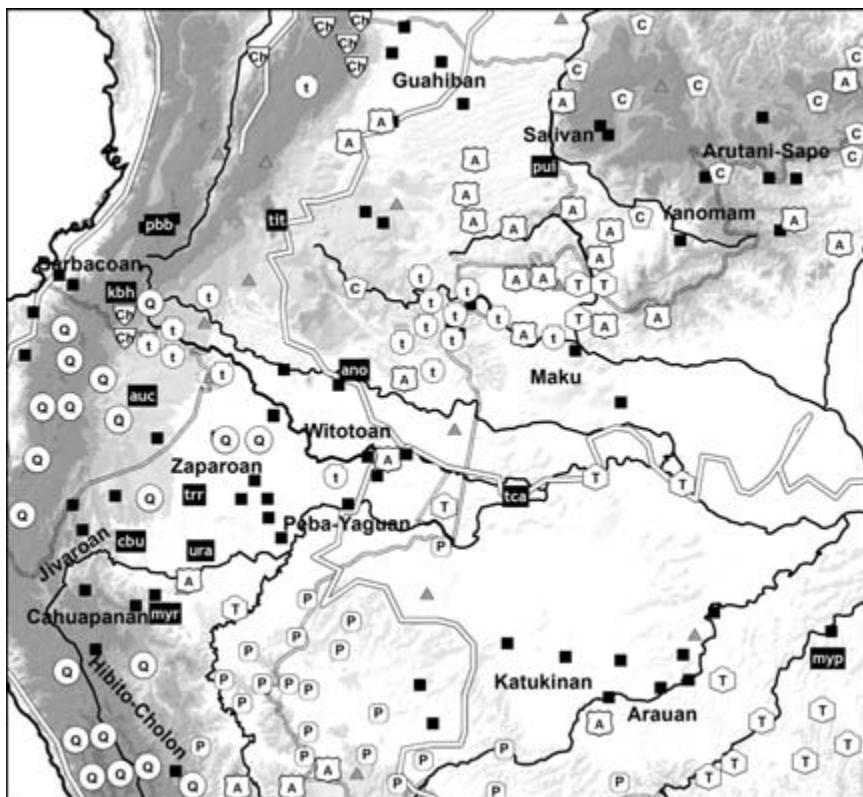
If we look closer at the genealogical and geographical distributions of the indigenous languages in South America, we can see that they are far from even. There are nine families with more than ten members. These are Tupí (57), Arawakan (47), Quechuan (44), Carib (28), Macro-Gê (24), Tukanoan (20), Panoan (19), Chibchan (11), and Mataco-Guaicuru (11). Together they have 259 members, which is 70 percent of the classified languages in South America. At the other extreme, sixty languages are isolates or belong to families with fewer than four members. Map 10.2 shows that the latter group are not spread evenly over the continent but are concentrated in the western half—in fact, there is not a single such language east of 57°W. The majority are located in two relatively restricted regions, shown on Maps 10.3–10.4. The larger one, what we will call the “northern diversity zone,” is centered in northern Peru, along the Marañon River at the foothills of the Andes, but spills over into Ecuador, Brazil, Colombia, and Venezuela. The second, the “southern diversity zone,” covers northern Bolivia and surrounding areas of Peru and Brazil. These regions, then, have the highest linguistic diversity in the world from the genealogical point of view, if we are to believe standard assumptions about genealogical affiliations of languages.



**MAP 10.2.** *The distribution of language isolates and small language families (fewer than four members) and the “least-cost pathways” of Anderson and Gillam (2000).*

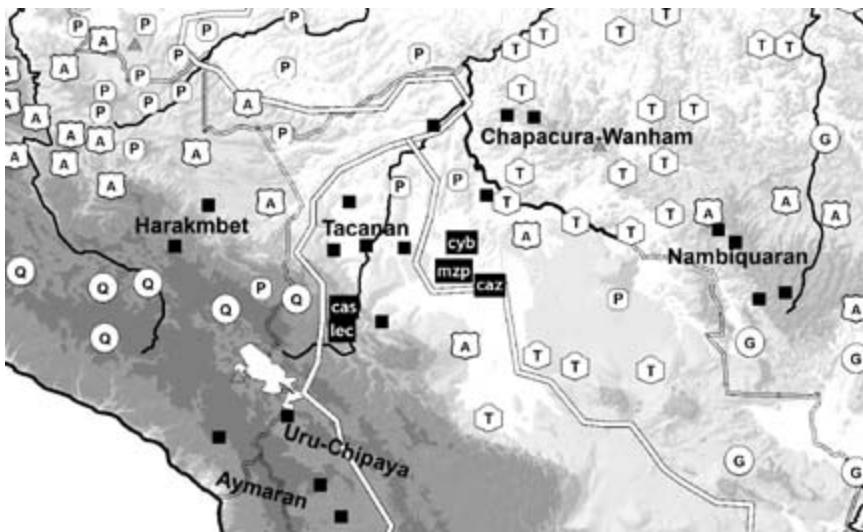
The last caveat is important, because it is of course possible that these assumptions are wrong. It could well be that future research will show that, in fact, many of the small families and isolates are related. Before discussing this question, we should first look at another kind of diversity, that is, typological or structural diversity.

The genealogical diversity of South America is matched by diversity also with respect to the structural properties of languages (Dahl 2008). This conclusion is based on the data presented in the World Atlas of Language Structures, WALS (Haspelmath et al. 2005), a typological atlas mapping the geographical distribution of about 140 linguistic features. On the basis of the database underlying WALS, a measure of typological distance was defined between languages in terms of the proportion (expressed as a percentage) of structural features with respect to which they differed (Dahl 2008). For instance, the difference between English and French was 24.0 and that between English and Imbabura Quechua, 46.3. Each map in WALS shows a sample of the world’s languages, which varies from map to map; because



MAP 10.3. *The northern diversity area.* Black symbols represent languages belonging to families with fewer than ten members; languages belonging to larger families are shown as encircled letters (A = Arawak, C = Carib, T = Tupí, Q = Quechua, P = Pano, t = Tukano, Ch = Chibcha). Three-letter abbreviations represent language isolates; gray circles, unclassified languages. For explanations of abbreviations for languages and language families, see the Ethnologue Language Code Index ([www.ethnologue.com/language\\_code\\_index.asp](http://www.ethnologue.com/language_code_index.asp)).

of this, the study focused on the set of 222 languages that were represented on the largest number of maps. One way (not unproblematic) of measuring the internal typological diversity of an area is by the average distance between the languages from that area in such a sample. The average distance between pairs of languages in the whole 222 sample is 41.73. Continents such as Europe and Africa, with 23 and 38 languages in the sample, have average typological distances of 34.2 and 37.2, respectively. The average distances in Europe and Africa are thus considerably lower than the world average; not unexpectedly, the languages in these continents are more similar to each other than languages chosen arbitrarily from the world's



MAP 10.4. *The southern diversity area. For explanations, see Map 10.3.*

languages. This is due to both genealogical affinities and areal pressure, that is, structural convergence due to contact between geographically close languages. The average distance between the twenty-eight pre-Columbian South American languages, however, is 41.1, not significantly lower than the world average, suggesting that the internal typological diversity of the continent is quite high. We should treat these figures with some caution, perhaps, since they depend on, among other things, how well the languages have been sampled. A few other measures have been quoted, some of which suggest that South America and Africa have roughly the same internal diversity (Dahl 2008); even this is rather striking in view of the fact that Africa has five times as many languages as South America. But what may be more relevant to our discussion is what happens if we (somewhat like Pope Alexander VI) divide South America into two halves and measure the internal diversity in those. Dividing the twenty-eight South American languages along the 65th west parallel yields average typological distances of 39.0 (to the west) and 41.6 (to the east). In other words, even these smaller areas still appear to have a higher internal diversity than the whole of Africa.

Another way of illustrating the structural diversity of South American languages is to look at some individual typological parameters. An important such parameter is what (following Greenberg 1963) is often called the “basic word order” (BWO) of a language, loosely defined as the typical order of subject, verb, and object in a declarative main clause. Which BWO a language has is largely predictable from where it is spoken: thus, most of the Asian continent belongs to a

zone with almost exclusive SOV (subject-object-verb) order, except Southeast Asia, which is equally solidly SVO (subject-verb-object) and a few VSO languages at the western end of the continent. By contrast, in a rectangular area of about 1 million square kilometers just south of the equator in western Amazonia, and largely coinciding with the northern diversity zone, all six logically possible basic word orders are found (including the rare ones where the object precedes the subject) and, in addition, languages “with no dominant word order” (Dryer 2005).

What all this suggests is that although there are no doubt structural features that tend to unite South American languages (such as the ones discussed for Amazonia in Aikhenvald and Dixon 1999:8–9), areal pressure has been lower than in many other parts of the world. There is also little evidence from structural similarities to indicate that there are hitherto undiscovered large-scale genealogical relationships within the time span where such relationships have not yet been obliterated by language change.

Nichols (1990:475) claimed that the linguistic diversity found in the New World is so great that it can only be explained if the New World was colonized much earlier than is usually assumed, “perhaps some 35,000 years” ago. Nettle (1999:3325) argues against the assumption that genealogical diversity increases over time. Rather, he says, it is the other way around: “[E]arly in the peopling of continents, there are many unfilled niches for communities to live in, and so fissioning into new lineages is frequent. As the habitat is filled up, the rate of fissioning declines and lineage extinction becomes the dominant evolutionary force.” Aikhenvald and Dixon (1999:16) argue for a “punctuated equilibrium model” of language development (also discussed in Dixon 1997), according to which periods of equilibrium, during which languages in an area tend to become more similar structurally, converging toward a common prototype, are punctuated by “cataclysmic events” during which peoples and languages expand and split. Applying this model to South America, they assume that after the initial entry about 12,000 years ago, people “would quickly have expanded to fill the continent… There would have been many small groups of hunters and gatherers living in a state of relative equilibrium with each other. Linguistic traits would have diffused across the languages in each region.” Then, about 5,000 years ago, the adoption of agriculture triggered a major punctuation, leading to the expansion of families such as Arawak, Carib, and Tupí, although leaving scattered groups of hunters and gatherers between the settlements of agriculturalists.

Nettle and also Aikhenvald and Dixon seem to think of an increase in diversity as essentially being limited to periods during which there is movement of people. But it does seem more correct to think of these periods as the initial points of longer periods of gradual divergence. If a language community splits up into two groups, the languages used by the two groups will accumulate changes that will make them more and more different from each other; this will only partially be mitigated by

convergence that is due to subsequent contact between the groups, and the extent of this convergence will depend on the degree of contact. A net gain in structural similarity is not plausible unless two initially very dissimilar languages get into close contact with each other. In the case of western Amazonia, it appears that the degree of contact has on the whole been relatively low, which has allowed the typological distances between the languages to grow over time.

Nichols is most probably correct in assuming that it takes a very long time for two languages to diverge so much that their genealogical relationship will not be recognizable. Thus, assuming no recent immigration of any significance, a high degree of diversity in an area does indicate that the initial settlement took place at a relatively remote point in time. However, at the same time there are always forces present that counteract the increase in diversity, not only convergence through language contact but also extinction of lineages through language shift and population replacements, as Nettle notes. What we can see in South America, then, is that over large areas, any previously existing diversity was wiped out when the agricultural expansion took place. In addition, European colonization has led to the extinction of indigenous languages over large stretches in central Amazonia. The areas of high diversity, however, appear to have been spared these processes to a large extent. It is reasonable to assume that the isolates and members of small families in these areas have been there at least since the expansion of the large families, but what things looked like before that is of course not immediately obvious. Theoretically, the languages in question could be the remnants of earlier expansions within the continent, or they could derive from the initial peopling of the Americas.

As noted above, we can see from Map 10.1 that small lineages are rather seldom clustered together. Except for the Amazonian diversity areas, the only place where we can see more than two such lineages close together is western New Guinea, but even there the clustering is considerably smaller. Thus, in many places, language isolates or small families look more like accidental survivors of the expansion of larger families, or they are situated in locations of very low population density, such as northern Siberia. The concentration in western Amazonia, on the other hand, in particular that along the Marañon River, calls for an explanation of another kind.

Anderson and Gillam (2000:46) calculate “least-cost pathways between presumed points of initial human entry into North and South America and 45 early archaeological sites selected to provide coverage to most parts of each continent.” For South America, the most striking result is that

the primary pathway does not follow the coastline for more than a short distance but instead swings south near Caracas . . . and proceeds through the central part of the continent well to the east of the Andean chain . . . While movement in the interior of South America may seem implausible, it must be remembered that in the Late Pleistocene some of this region may have been in grassland, scrub forest, or savannahs. (Anderson and Gillam 2000:51)

What is striking is that a large part of the language isolates and members of small families are located quite close to these possible routes for the initial entry of humans into South America, suggesting a possible scenario where those languages (or rather their ancestors) would have arrived with the first peopling of the continent and then remained in place until the present day.

Even if some of the assumed isolates and small families in South America turn out to be genealogically related to each other or to other languages, it is unlikely that the present-day linguistic diversity of western Amazonia has arisen through splits that have taken place after the estimated time for the expansion of the large families; this would most probably have left more easily observable traces in the form of common vocabulary and structural similarities. It is also unlikely that the diversity has arisen through migration to the diversity areas after that date, given that the diversity areas are more or less encircled by the large families. One possibility is of course that it was the expansion of those families that pushed some or all of the small groups into the diversity zones. At present, the northern diversity zone, which is the largest one, makes up some of the remotest and most inaccessible parts of South America,<sup>3</sup> so it would appear plausible that they would be colonized last. However, Anderson and Gillam's suggestion that the situation looked quite different at the time when the continent was first populated opens up another possibility: that these regions were in fact among the earliest to be reached, but that the groups who settled there were later more or less trapped when the climate and the vegetation changed. Until we know more, such a suggestion will have to remain speculative, but given that the linguistic diversity found in western Amazonia is unique, it may also need a rather complex story to explain it.

## NOTES

1. The distinction between “unclassified languages” and “language isolates” is a tricky one. Not only is it problematic to determine when there is enough information to rule out a genealogical relationship between a language and established language families, but the existence of unclassified languages, where information by definition is insufficient, also makes it impossible to exclude that an assumed language isolate in fact has relatives among hitherto unclassified languages. Also, as is discussed in the main text, relationships that are older than the time limit for the application of traditional historical-comparative methods cannot be taken into account.

2. Some of the speaker information in the Ethnologue is rather old, so this estimate is probably too high. However, there are some isolates that are not mentioned at all in the version of the Ethnologue used, such as Aikaná and Kwazá. It should also be noted that the estimates given in the Ethnologue are by no means higher than those found in other sources. Thus, according to the Multitree website ([multitree.linguist.org](http://multitree.linguist.org)), Campbell and Grondona (forthcoming) postulate sixty-two isolates in South America, out of which twenty-eight are still spoken.

3. The southern diversity zone is different in this regard, since the largest concentration of isolates and small families is not in a particularly inaccessible place; in fact, it is within or close to the savanna-like area called Llanos de Moxos, where in pre-Columbian times there was an advanced system of “raised-fields” agriculture. It is rather unexpected for radical linguistic diversity to be compatible with an economy of that kind, but it is possible that the diversity of this particular region is indeed a result of later migrations.

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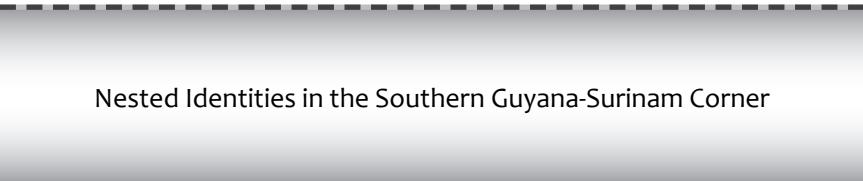
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## Nested Identities in the Southern Guyana-Surinam Corner

*Eithne B. Carlin*

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the history of contact between several borderland language communities who live in the triangle that forms the southern border between Guyana and Surinam. In particular, focus is on the histories of four groups in this triangle that have been intricately intertwined through trade and intermarriage for more than two centuries, namely the Waiwai, Mawayana, Taruma, and Wapishana. Linguistically these four groups are quite distinct in that Waiwai belongs to the Cariban family, Mawayana and Wapishana are Arawakan languages that share no more than half of their basic vocabulary, and Taruma is unclassified. An additional group that held some dominance, though short-lived, on the Essequibo in the eighteenth century was the Manáos, who spoke an Arawakan language.

Although the larger and dominant groups on the Guyanese side of the border nowadays are the Wapishana and Waiwai, many Guyanese toponyms and hydroonyms in the Rupununi are of Taruma origin, an indicator of Taruma dominance at some stage in history.

In the following, I start by giving a short introduction to the groups and where they are currently living, after which I present a brief synopsis of what is known about the history of the Taruma and Wapishana, both of whom are presumed to have originated around the Río Negro, as did the Manáos, who seem to disappear from the colonial records before the beginning of the nineteenth century. Then follows a summary of the history of the Mawayana and Waiwai, whose homeland is assumed to be the Mapuera River. I conclude this contribution by looking at the linguistic consequences, or lack thereof, of the intermingling and regrouping of these groups as we know them today, showing how the amalgamation of groups leads to a seemingly uniform ethnicity seen from the outside, yet nested identity structures from the inside. Currently the southern borderland corner of Guyana, Surinam, and Brazil is home to several ethnic groups that share a history of trade, war, and intermarriage.

### **LOCATION AND IDENTIFICATION OF THE GROUPS IN 2009**

The Rupununi savanna in Guyana, as far as Boa Vista in Brazil, is now mainly Wapishana territory. The Wapishana are an Arawakan-speaking group who possibly originated from the Río Negro area. Their closest relatives are the Atorai, few in number nowadays, who have for all intents and purposes become absorbed by the larger Wapishana group; these two languages are said to share about 50 percent of their basic vocabulary.<sup>1</sup> Only few speakers of Atorai now remain in Guyana. A few Taruma can also be found nowadays living among the Wapishana, south of Aishalton. They are now all Wapishana-speaking, with only one family who still speaks Taruma, which till now remains unclassified. The area to the north of the Wapishana is inhabited by the Cariban Makushi, who were living further south in the Rupununi and who were pushed back northward by the Wapishana in the mid-eighteenth century (de Villiers 1920). The forested area immediately to the south of the Rupununi savanna and along the Mapuera River in Brazil is inhabited by the Waiwai groups. In addition, quite a large Waiwai-speaking community, some 200 people, has also been living in the Trio (Cariban) village Kwamalasamutu in Surinam since the 1960s. This distribution has served to ensure a continuity of contact across the three national borders. The name Waiwai is an umbrella term used to designate several different ethnic groups who came to live together and who now all speak the Cariban language Waiwai, namely the Parukoto, Shereo, Mawayana, Tunayana, Katwena, Karafawiana, and Taruma, to name at least those we know for certain. Only the older generations of the distinct ethnic groups still speak or have some knowledge of their former languages. In fact, two of the groups that now make up the Waiwai agglomeration were non-Cariban-speaking, the Mawayana and Taruma, the former of which is Arawakan, and the latter of which remains unclassified. The only active Mawayana speech community is now found in Surinam, in

Kwamalasamutu; the remaining ethnic Mawayana reside along the Mapuera River in Brazil and are Waiwai-speaking.

### **THE RÍO NEGRO GROUPS: WAPISHANA, TARUMA, AND MANÁOS**

The Taruma and Manáos are assumed to have migrated northward from the Río Negro to the Essequibo and the Rupununi savanna in Guyana. The Manáos, after whom the port at the entrance to the Río Negro is named, were a powerful and fearsome Arawakan group who traded in gold and native slaves, across large areas of the Río Negro up to the Río Branco and Essequibo. After the death of their chief, Ajuricaba, in 1727, the Manáos dispersed and are sporadically mentioned in the Dutch sources until the 1770s, after which they seem to disappear from the Essequibo area.

Although an early reference by Scott in the 1670s to a group called Swanes (Shahones, Shawhauns), near the source of the Río Negro, is assumed to refer to the Wapishana (cited in Rivière 1963:115), the name Wapishana is mentioned relatively late in the colonial records. The Portuguese sources located them around the Maruwa River in 1770. Dutch references place them around the Río Branco and finally as far north as the River Ireng at the foot of the Pakaraima mountains around 1769. The earliest definite reference to the Wapishana is found in Storm van 'S Gravesande in 1753 when he reports their having killed three Dutch traders in the Essequibo, and also that they were at war with the more northern Cariban groups such as the Makushi and Caribs in the Rupununi area (de Villiers 1920). However, another name that has been identified with the Wapishana is Guaypés (and Uaupés), which Harris and de Villiers (1911, quoted in Rivière [1963:115]) state to have originated in the area around the River Uaupés (Vaupés). If we accept these identifications, then we can conclude that the Wapishana migrated eastward along the Río Branco toward the Essequibo-Rupununi area.

From the early to mid-nineteenth century, as well as from personal testimonies collected from the Wapishana around the turn of the twentieth century and which were used in the British case in the boundary dispute with Brazil, we know that on arrival to the Takutu River area (tributary of the Río Branco), the Wapishana absorbed the group already living there, the Atorai, who likewise appear to have come from the Río Branco area. It is generally believed that the Atorai were closely related to the Wapishana, although as stated above they share no more than half of their basic vocabulary. Farabee's short Atorai word list was possibly taken from Atorai who had already adopted the Wapishana language since the differences between his Wapishana and the Atorai word lists are minimal (Farabee 1918).

Today the Wapishana number somewhere between 5,000 and 6,000 people, living in some seventeen villages in the Rupununi area in Guyana, with fewer than 1,000 of these living across the border in the area of Boa Vista in Brazil. The

Wapishana are now found in approximately the same location as they were throughout the nineteenth century (see Schomburgk 1843, 1845; Barrington Brown 1877). The Wapishana have been in contact with non-Amerindian society for the better part of two centuries now. Their relatively isolated location afforded them some security from acculturation to the national society early on; however, since most of the Wapishana villages can be reached by road (by contrast to the Waiwai and Trio villages further south and east), influence in language and lifestyle from the coast has been rapidly encroaching upon the Wapishana with the result that the number of the ethnic group is no longer the same as the number of speakers of the language. The language organization Wapichan Wadauniinao Ati'o (WWA) estimates that the number of speakers is well under 5,000 and dwindling, and it is now the case that the language is no longer being transmitted to the younger generations in many areas.<sup>2</sup>

Considering that the Taruma are mentioned with relatively great frequency in the early published sources, tantalizingly little is known of their history or their language. The most probable history of the Taruma is that they originated near the mouth of the Río Negro and, under pressure from the Portuguese, migrated north to the Essequibo River in present-day Guyana. First references to the Taruma are found in the early colonial literature from 1657, when they came into contact with a Portuguese slaving expedition at the mouth of the Río Negro, near the Amazon River. This slaving expedition was accompanied by two Jesuits who subsequently set up a mission post until the Jesuits were temporarily expelled in 1661. In 1691 the German Jesuit missionary Fr. Samuel Fritz, who had acquired an almost godlike reputation among the Omagua Amerindians of the Solimões, was passing through the mouth of the Río Negro when he was approached by about fifty Taruma who asked him to stay with them as "their" father, promising that they would cease hostilities with their neighbors the Carabaina (Fritz 1922). A Jesuit mission post was set up for the Taruma in 1693. However, a year later, after a reshuffling of mission districts, the Jesuits ceded the Río Negro area to the Carmelites, who took over the Taruma mission settlement in a very remote area near the mouth of the Río Negro. By 1732, as a punitive measure from the Portuguese, the mission post had been moved up the Río Negro to the Jauaperí River opposite the mouth of the Río Branco, from where the Taruma, apparently at the instigation of the Carmelite missionary Fr. Jeronimo Coelho, were upholding trade relations with the Dutch in the north.

By 1770–1771 the Taruma, who previously had counted some 800 "fighting men," were claimed to have become extinct (Colson and Morton 1982). However, under pressure from the Portuguese slaving expeditions and in view of the good trading possibilities to the north, the Taruma had headed north to the Dutch territory of the Essequibo, where in 1764 they are mentioned by Director-General of the Province Essequibo Storm van 'S Gravesande as "the numerous and powerful tribe called Tarouma" to whom he ordered his postholder on a visit (de Villiers

1920:245). Positive identification of the Essequibo Taruma with the Río Negro Taruma is confirmed by the ethnonym Uassahy, given by Gillin (1945) for a group on the Jauaperí River. As shown by Colson and Morton (1982:215), three names are found in the sources for the Essequibo Taruma, namely Ujessi from Farabee (1918), Kuase from the notes of missionary priest Fr. Cary-Elwes, and Coarse from Schomburgk. In fact the Taruma ethnonym is Kuase, 'human being'; the word *hujase* is a predicative form that is combined with a preceding or following pronoun, for example, *hama hujase* or *hujase hama* 'I am a Taruma', *hujase ikiya* 'he is a Taruma', *hainao hujase* 'we are Taruma'.<sup>3</sup> It is unclear where the name Taruma itself comes from; it may be a xenonym. The Wapishana assume that it comes from Wapishana *tarum*<sup>a</sup> 'biting ant species', but this now seems unlikely given that Taruma was the name used before the Taruma came into contact with the Wapishana. Whether it was a name given them by the Manáos cannot be confirmed because of a lack of language data.

It is in the area of the Essequibo that the Taruma are again mentioned in connection with the Manáos, a group with whom they had been living together at the last-mentioned mission station where they were claimed to have become extinct. Indications from independent sources, namely the Dutch miner and adventurer Salomon Herman Sanders, who was searching for gold and other valuable assets around the Corentyne River on the border of present-day Guyana and Surinam, are that the Taruma had already been trading just to the south of the Essequibo by 1720 (Boomert 1977:14). Since both the Dutch and the Portuguese were vying for power in the Río Branco and Essequibo area, each trading slaves from the Amerindians, both sides documented the alliances and hostilities of the Amerindian groups moving northward since these were causing some disruption to the existing slave trade. The Taruma and the Manáos, the latter of whom were much feared by the other tribes in the area, were the sworn enemies of the Cariban tribes, who had a monopoly on slave and other trading in that area, and the Dutch ordered their southern-most post to be moved further south to make peace and establish good relations with both groups. In 1769 the Dutch received a report that the Wapishana, who had moved from the Río Branco area to the Essequibo, were in hiding in caves at night for fear of the Manáos.

An alternative history of the origin of the Taruma, put forth on the basis of John Scott's 1699 "Description of Guyana," is given us by the English anthropologist Peter Rivière (1966/1967), who suggests that Taruma presence on the Essequibo may have been much earlier, and that they originated in the area around the headwaters of the Essequibo, Trombetas, and Cutari. The attractiveness of this alternative history is that a Taruma origin in the corner that Brazil makes with Guyana and Surinam would fit in with that of the rest of the groups who have lived there and who originated there (i.e., the Waiwai groups); however, an origin at the mouth of the Río Negro and subsequent migrations as early as the 1720s would better explain the

connection between the Taruma and the Manáos, as well as being a more plausible explanation for the unclassifiable status of the Taruma language, since it is clearly not Cariban, nor are there any indications that it is an Arawakan language since no cognates have been found at all with the geographically contiguous Arawakan language Wapishana, among whom some of the remaining Taruma live. Furthermore, many hydronyms and toponyms of Taruma origin in the southern Guyana area point to a greater dominance and historical continuity than those offered by the Río Negro origin. Many hydronyms in the south of Guyana end in *kidiu* (*kityou*), which means 'river' in Taruma, for example, Wakidiu (meaning uncertain, could mean 'Sun River'); Assimarikityou 'Aimara (fish sp.) River'; Kuasekidiu 'River of the People', which has a Waiwai name *Totoukï* with the same meaning (see Butt Colson and Morton 1982:250n60) and which is also called Diawarawau by the Wapishana; and the Kassikidiu 'River of the Dead', given by Schomburgk (Rivière 2006:246). The Taruma called the Essequibo the Koatjangkityou 'River of the Coati', and according to Butt Colson and Morton (1982) the name Essequibo itself may be from the Taruma name of a tributary of the Essequibo, the Isikidiu. In fact, most hydronyms and toponyms are nowadays referred to by both a Wapishana and a Taruma name interchangeably. According to Wapishana oral traditions, the pyramid-like rock formation known as Ataraipu<sup>4</sup> was so named after a Taruma called Taraiporo, who with his brother Kobararu had been invited to a Makushi village to teach them the Parichara dance. On the way back from the dance they were turned to stone by two *píjais* 'shamans' as a remembrance that they had been among the Makushi for the Parichara dance. The Makushi village in question is just north of Lethem and is called Parishara.

We know from the first ethnographic reports on this group, by the German explorer-geographer Robert Schomburgk, from the 1830s onward, that their influence on the material culture of the Waiwai, Wapishana, and Trio groups of the Essequibo-Corentyne river area was immense. Having settled in the Essequibo region, the Taruma strengthened their reputation as traders, their wares being mainly cassava graters, pottery, basketry, loincloths, hunting dogs, and other goods they received from their middlemen who brought Western goods from the coast, and most likely also from the Amazon via the Río Negro and Río Branco. In fact, the goods that the Taruma manufactured themselves, such as the cassava graters and the pottery, were of such a high quality that they were in great demand with the Wapishana, the Waiwai, and even the Makushi to the north. From the nineteenth century onward we have reports that the Taruma were living in close contact with the Waiwai and Wapishana, Cariban and Arawakan, respectively.

The few data we have on the language of the Taruma are from the indefatigable work of another Jesuit missionary in Guyana who visited the Taruma in 1919, 1922, and 1923 and who recorded a word list and some phrases and translated some prayers into the Taruma language; for a detailed account of Fr. Cary-Elwes's visits

to the Taruma, based on archive records and his own diary, see Butt Colson and Morton (1982). Around the same time, the American anthropologist Farabee also recorded a Taruma word list and gives us some ethnographic information on the Taruma, when he found them living among both the Waiwai and the Wapishana. By 1925 it was claimed that the Taruma, then few in number and sickly, had stopped existing as a separate group, having been absorbed by the Waiwai and Wapishana. The one Taruma-speaking family left in Guyana now speaks Wapishana as their primary language.<sup>5</sup> While it is the case that some ethnic Taruma live among the Waiwai, according to our information, they have become fully acculturated to this group and no longer speak their original language.

### **THE WAIWAI AND MAWAYANA**

According to Rivière (1963), Sir Robert Schomburgk was the first Westerner to hear the name Waiwai during his travels in Guyana in the mid-nineteenth century, which is not really surprising since the Waiwai group as it is known today is an amalgamation of smaller ethnic groups, namely the Parukoto, Shereo, Mawayana, Tunayana, Katwena, and Taruma, to name a few that we know for certain. The dire situation of these groups around the first half of the nineteenth century was such that they were doomed to extinction, as a result of sickness and animosities, unless they intermarried. The anthropologist Farabee gives an account of the intermarriage between the Waiwai and the Taruma; Father Cary-Elwes also records his own advice to the Taruma to intermarry with the Waiwai if they wanted to survive. According to their own accounts, the Waiwai originate from the Mapuera River region in Brazil. The name Waiwai, which is probably a xenonym meaning ‘Tapioca (-colored) people’ since at least some of the group are quite light-skinned, is used to identify a relatively newly formed ethnic identity, yet at the same time it stands for a motley group of people who spoke different languages belonging to different language families (Mawayana is Arawakan and Taruma as yet unclassified). Waiwai is a Cariban language spoken in all three countries spanning the border region of Surinam, Guyana, and Brazil. The basis of the Waiwai language is probably Parukoto, the speakers of which no longer form a separate ethnic group. However, there is clearly some Arawakan lexical borrowing, probably from Mawayana. While using the name Waiwai as an ethnonym, especially in their dealings with the relevant national authorities, and notwithstanding the fact that all those who refer to themselves as Waiwai speak/spoke a language called Waiwai, there is an acute awareness among themselves, especially the older generations, of their different ethnic origins, namely Shereo, Tunayana, Katwena,<sup>6</sup> Mawayana, and Taruma.

The Waiwai number in total not more than 1,000 people dispersed over five main villages in Brazil just to the south of the Acarai mountain range, with village population numbers ranging from 25 to 35 in the smallest four villages to around

300 in the largest village. They also live in two main villages in Guyana and in the Trio village Kwamalasamutu in Suriname. All the Waiwai are in constant contact with each other, both via the radio and because they frequently travel to visit family who live in one of the other countries. The Waiwai are renowned for their excellent cassava graters and for their body decorations, mainly with featherwork, although in fact it is mainly the Tunayana who are now specialized in making cassava graters, intricate basketry, and beautiful featherwork. As a group the Waiwai are also renowned for their hunting dogs.

Virtually nothing is known about the early history of the Arawakan group Mawayana.<sup>7</sup> A possible first mention of the group, according to Rivière (1963), was by Fr. Francisco de San Marcos during his journey in the Trombetas in 1725; he refers to a tribe called the Mapoyena on the upper reaches of the Urucurin River. It is unlikely that we will ever be able to say for certain whether the Mapoyena mentioned in that source were the forebears of the present-day Mawayana or not. The first definite reference to the Mawayana that we have is found in the 1840s, when Schomburgk was told in 1837 of their presence in the area to the east of the Parukoto and not far from the Taruma, but it was not until 1843 that Schomburgk actually met any Mawayana. During this encounter, Schomburgk (1845) noted that the Mawayana were dreadfully underskilled both in making boats and in water navigation. The significance of Schomburgk's comment lies in the fact that a lack of these skills forms a grave restriction on one's mobility and ability to flee enemies if necessary. Their lack of means for mobility is perhaps one reason why the Mawayana were formerly always found in the same area around the Urucurin River. Schomburgk (1845:55) recorded that about twenty Taruma had moved to the Mawayana to form one community with them, the Taruma chief becoming the captain (leader) of them all. Again in the 1870s Barrington Brown mentions close interaction between the Mawayana and the Taruma (Barrington Brown 1877). It is not clear whether there was any major influence on either language as a result. A comparison of the Taruma and Mawayana word lists found in Farabee (1918), as well as my own recent data on both languages, shows similarities of loanwords such as cutlass, beads, and such other trade items and several cognates of flora and fauna, which are probably indicative of an old layer of borrowings of Arawakan or Tupían origin. In the mid-1950s, Danish anthropologist Niels Fock, who worked among the Waiwai, states that the Mawayana (referred to as Mouyenna by Fock [1963]) lived on the upper Urucurin River and were the closest neighbors of the Waiwai.

According to their oral history the Mawayana also comprise several different groups that spoke different languages, namely the Jiwiyyana, Buuyana, Wadayana, and Sariyana. It is not clear how different these languages were because the few people from these groups grew up speaking Mawayana and Waiwai. The Jiwiyyana women were taken by Tunayana men, and the Katwena captured and appropriated Wadayana women. In this way, these groups were also absorbed into the Waiwai

group. Fock's compatriot Jens Yde, working among the Waiwai in the same period, noted that in the Waiwai village of Kanashen in Guyana, a center of missionary activities populated by several different ethnic groups of Amerindians, among them the Mawayana, all the smaller groups were quickly adopting the Waiwai language (Fock 1963:20). To this day, the fate and the language of the Mawayana have been interlocked with those of the Waiwai group, through the Tunayana, Katwena, and Taruma. Currently there are three fluent speakers of Mawayana left in the Trio village Kwamalasamutu in Surinam. There are still some older ethnic Mawayana in Brazil who still remember the language but who no longer actively speak it on a daily basis. All Mawayana, however, speak Waiwai, and those in Surinam also speak Trio. A strong tendency in such situations of language shift is that the target language being shifted to undergoes interference from the original language; however, in the case of Mawayana, interference has been in the other direction, namely from Waiwai into Mawayana (see Carlin 2006).

## CONCLUSIONS

Of all the possible outcomes of contact between groups and the concomitant linguistic consequences such as minimal or maximal lexical and structural borrowing, language loss, or language birth, we can conclude here that there was little lexical or structural borrowing across the languages. All the languages in question have similar phonological features, such as implosive consonants and nasalization, with the exception of Cariban Trio and possibly Manáos, although a scarcity of data does not permit speculation here. Waiwai and Tunayana (Katwena) have morphophonologically conditioned implosives, whereas Wapishana, Taruma, and Mawayana already had phonemic implosives. The result of the fusion of the Wapishana and Atorai groups has led to language loss since Atorai is now moribund. Likewise, Taruma is also moribund, with only hydronyms and toponyms as evidence of their former distribution. Flora and fauna nomenclature in the Guyanas is similar across most of the languages, an indicator of a very old spread of a possibly Arawakan or Tupían layer; however, a more complete list may be able to distinguish some differences. Examples of the spread of the terms are Taruma *assimari* for the *Hoplias macropterus* fish species, Mawayana *atimara*, and the Cariban languages' *aimara* or another similar form; the bird species *Ortalis ruficauda* is *karahpada* in Mawayana, *karap<sup>a</sup>* in Wapishana, *harakwa* in Taruma, and *arabka* in Trio. Taruma and Mawayana seem to have similar phonological systems and there may be more lexical or structural borrowing than is presently discernible, but this will only be evident if more data on Taruma are forthcoming. However, currently there are no indications that the period the Mawayana spent under the leadership of the Taruma, as described above, had any linguistic consequences. The names *Kuase* and *hujase* are not recognized nowadays by the Mawayana, and the carriers of the name Taruma are also not

recognized since they are confused with a group with a similar name, the Saluma. The contact between the Mawayana and the Cariban groups Waiwai and later Trio shows a reverse pattern of borrowing, namely structural changes to the original language (Mawayana) rather than the target language (Waiwai) as one would expect. Again, it is not clear if Mawayana had any major influence on Waiwai at all, and Mawayana is now moribund. Where groups merged into what might be called a political relationship (vis-à-vis outsiders)—as, for example, Wapishana and Atorai did and also the Waiwai groups—this resulted in language loss or at least imminent loss, but this did not happen when the Mawayana joined the Taruma. One explanation could be that this contact was too short-lived and that both groups merged with the Waiwai and learned Waiwai shortly after they came together. The linguistic differences between Waiwai on the one hand and Mawayana and Taruma on the other are enormous, and Fr. Cary-Elwes in his notes also states that the Taruma had great difficulty learning Waiwai. However, observation of the present-day Surinamese mixed Wayana/Trio village of Palumeu shows that even after a period of living together in one village for over fifty years there is still no active bilingualism there. How this works is that the Trio asks a question in Trio and is answered in Wayana by a Wayana speaker. One reason for this is that although they live in the same village, the Trio and Wayana do not consider themselves to be a political unit. Likewise it is often the case that when two people from different linguistic backgrounds marry, they both keep to their language;<sup>8</sup> their children, however, grow up as passive bilinguals who clearly have a tendency for one language over the other. It appears that language is a more binding factor in determining group identification. If groups are in contact for social and economic reasons or by way of trading, then language spread is relative to the function and intensity of the contact.

The colonial and the missionary records consistently make reference to the intense interactions among the different groups from the Río Negro and Río Branco up to the Essequibo, whether these were chance meetings along a river, wars, trade, or social contacts. In spite of most of the groups having similar needs and skills—for example, both the Taruma and the Waiwai were trainers of hunting dogs and skilled makers of cassava graters—it appears that some did have particular specializations, such as the pottery-making skills of the Taruma. In such a case we can then pinpoint the direction of the trade. However, in general, trade was not just a matter of acquiring goods, it was a communicative act literally performed by making a gesture to the outside, a means toward extending and maintaining one's familial and social network. It created continuity and expansion at the same time. So buying a cassava grater from a Taruma or a Waiwai, for example, served to keep open that trade route, foster good relations, and catch up on news from the outside. Recent research on the mobility and exchange of contemporary Trio society has shown that the Trio do not need to travel far to obtain goods, but they do travel to villages further afield simply to sustain the contact they have with that other village, whether this be a

family or a trade relationship.<sup>9</sup> For this reason assumptions of a complementary distribution of specializations and trade wares do not paint the whole picture. Trade, it seems, is a tool for upholding existent relationships and carving out new ones rather than an end in itself.

## NOTES

1. This information I received from Richard Hicks, an SIL linguist working on Wapishana and Atorai, shortly before his tragic death in 2005.
2. The WWA, which stands for Wapichan Wadauniinao Ati'ó ('Wapishana for our Descendants'), is a Wapishana organization set up to promote the language.
3. This information is based on my own brief fieldwork with Auntie Irene Sottie in Guyana in 2005.
4. This rock formation is referred to by Schomburgk as Mount Kalishadakar (Rivière 2006).
5. With the help of Adrian Gomes, a Wapishana from Marurunau, I was able to collect some language data from this family during a short visit in January 2005.
6. The Katwena are a subgroup of the Tunayana.
7. The name Mawayana means 'Frog People', *mawa* 'frog' and *-yana* a collective suffix for human (ethnic) groups; the other name found in the literature is Maopityan (Mapidian), *mao* meaning 'frog' and *pityan* (of Wapishana origin) meaning 'people', literally 'human being'.
8. This process was explained to me in a very matter-of-fact way by an ethnic Mawayana who spoke Waiwai but not Mawayana and who was married to a Mawayana woman whose first and primary language was Mawayana. He said: "Just the same way that you are married to a foreigner who is a native speaker of another language, it's the same with us, I speak Waiwai to my wife and she speaks back to me in Mawayana." I have also observed this with mixed marriages between the Trio and Wayana.
9. This research is being carried out by the ethnoarchaeologist Jimmy Mans of Leiden University in the Trio villages along the Corentyne River.

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Change, Contact, and Ethnogenesis in Northern Quechua:  
Structural Phylogenetic Approaches to Clause-Embedding Predicates

*Pieter Muysken*

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter is part of a research program focused on the long-term history and development of the South American languages. It tries to study grammatical properties of these languages as potential indices of genetic relationships. Under current analyses, based on years of research and using the well-established methods of historical linguistics, over 100 language families are postulated, many of them quite small or even unaffiliated or isolated languages, the so-called isolates. This is very surprising since other continents may have only half a dozen families, even though they were settled much earlier in the course of human history. South America is the most recently settled continent. There is widespread consensus that research in the coming years will yield further insights into links among now-recognized families, but I am pursuing the exploration of possible structural relationships because structural features as clusters may be more stable and revelatory of deep-time genetic links.

Ecuadorian Quechua (henceforth EcQ) and some of the other varieties of northern Quechua (henceforth NoQ), including those of northern Peru, occupy

a special position in the Quechuan (henceforth Q) language family, with a number of features that set it apart from all other varieties. Arguably, this is due to its late consolidation during the Spanish colonial period, after having been brought to Ecuador during the Inca expansion. In this chapter, I discuss the differences between EcQ and related Peruvian Quechua II (QII) varieties. QII refers to a large number of Q varieties in southern Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, northern Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia. They are somewhat distinct from the central Peruvian varieties, labeled QI. The special features of EcQ have emerged gradually, during the colonial period (Muysken 2009). I will also try to distinguish which of these differences are due to substrate influence from the Barbacoan and Jivaroan families, and which are due to autonomous processes of restructuring as an Andean creole language.

These issues will be illustrated in this chapter through an overview of the various non-finite complements taken by a series of predicates in NoQ, of the type 'I want *to eat*' or 'I start *eating*' (okay in English would also be 'I start *to eat*' but not 'I want *eating*'). The research questions I want to address here are:

- What is the variation in the form of non-finite complements in NoQ?
- Which processes of change were responsible for this variation?
- Can we map the variation and change using methods from structural phylogenetics?
- Can we attribute some of the changes to language contact and processes of ethnogenesis?

## BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

### The History of NoQ

While some of the varieties in northern Peru date from the Incaic or even pre-Incaic period, the major impetus for the consolidation of Q in Ecuador and Colombia came during the Spanish colonial period. Twenty years after the conquest, the chronicler Cieza de León (1984 [1553]) reports that ca. 1550 the sierra was basically non-Q speaking, with a series of smaller languages, many Barbacoan and Jivaroan, some as yet unclassified, spoken from north to south. Q was a language of the elite, spoken as a second language (L2) in the urban centers. Almost at the end of the colonial period, the Spanish royal investigators Juan and Ulloa (1826) note that in the late eighteenth century, large parts of the sierra, both rural and urban, were EcQ-speaking. Place-names in the sierra are overwhelmingly non-Q, and the minority of Q names are often Spanish+Q combinations, as in Cruzpamba. We must thus assume massive shift to Q, first as a second language (L2) and subsequently as first language (L1). Several original languages, notably Puruhá and Cañar, survived into the Republican period and in part into the twentieth century but now have been absorbed by EcQ.

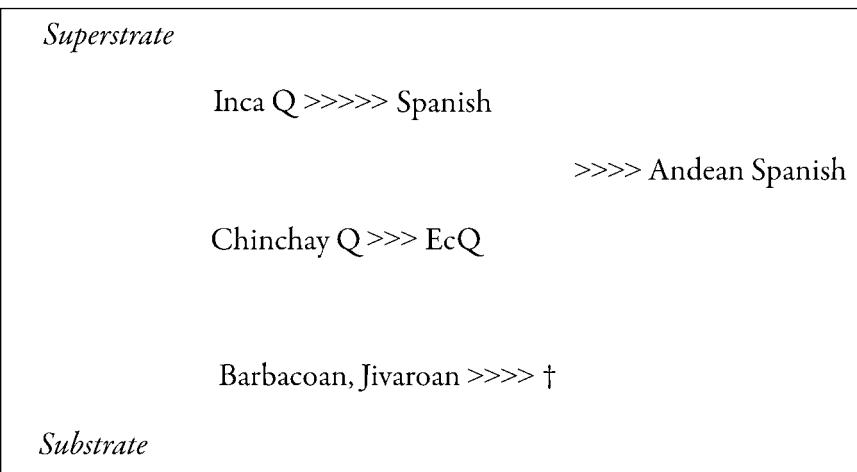


FIGURE 12.1. Schematic overview of the development of highland EcQ.

Thus the basic picture for the sierra can be summarized as in Figure 12.1. The linguistic development of EcQ away from Peruvian Quechua (henceforth PeQ) models was gradual in the colonial period, involving many intermediate stages, and of course is still going on.

Why did Q spread in the Spanish colonial period? Several factors can be mentioned. First, there was considerable ethnic restructuring, leading to the creation of a *runa* 'Indian' caste in the colonial period, with distinctive dress (fairly uniform through the sierra), rights and obligations, and identity. Additionally, as a reaction to Spanish rule there was considerable identification with the Inca past. Finally, partly because of demographic decline in the early period (Newson 1995) and partly because of economic restructuring, there were considerable population movements (Powers 1995). Newson estimates that the overall population of Ecuador in the post-conquest period declined from 1.5 million to 217,000 at the end of the sixteenth century (see also Phelan 1967).

As to the actual type of Q brought to Ecuador, there has been much discussion. The colonial Jesuit source Juan de Velasco writes that the Incas were surprised to hear their own language when they reached Quito. The (premature) interpretation of this observation, which has no independent support, is that Q was already the language of Ecuador in pre-Inca times. This is clearly not the case. However, the data are compatible with a scenario in which Chinchay Q was basically brought to Ecuador in pre-Inca times as a trade language, and then in Inca times Cuzco Q varieties were introduced as a superstrate on top of the basic trade language variety.

EcQ is part of the complex of NoQ varieties but shows at least some irregular features of southern (Cuzco) varieties as well. It has aspiration, like Cuzco, but the

TABLE 12.1. The distribution of selected morphosyntactic and phonological features of a number of northern QII dialects.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
HIGHLA (Ec)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LOWLA (Ec)	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
INGA (Col)	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NAPO	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PASTAZA	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
SAN MARTÍN	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
CHACHAPOYAS	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
COAST ('Tomas)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	±	-
CAJAMARCA	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	±	+	-
AYACUCHO	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
CUZCO	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

1. No serial comparative with *yalli*

2. *Yki* as 1su/2ob marker

3. Benefactive *pu*

4. Nominal agreement markers

5. *Ku* reflexive

6. No *naku* as pluralizer

7. Distinction 1incl/1excl

8. Distinction genitive *-pa*/benefactive *-pag*

9. Phonemic distinction between *k* and *q*

10. No voicing after nasals

aspirated words correspond to plain, aspirated, and glottalized words in Cuzco Q. This suggests that it was more of a superstrate relation, with imperfect imitation of a prestige model, than of direct inheritance.

Table 12.1 gives an overview of some of the key linguistic features involved. It shows that at least for some features, highland EcQ is the most innovative of the northern dialects, furthest removed from Ayacucho and Cuzco Q, while the other northern varieties are somewhere in between.

With respect to the Q spoken in the foothills and Amazonian lowlands of Ecuador, the Oriente, Q expanded (and is still expanding) into the Oriente in the colonial period, and has replaced several other languages (Zaparoan, Jivaroan) in many communities even in recent times. Oriente Q has several distinct substrate features but also some archaic features, suggesting a possibly pre-colonial or very early colonial origin.

The key feature in the above array, for the purpose of the present study, is the loss of personal agreement markers on the noun, as illustrated in example 1.

(1) a.	b.
<i>PeQ</i>	<i>EcQ</i>
mama-y [mother-1SG]	ñuka mama [1SG mother]
mama-yki [mother-2SG]	kan-bu mama [2SG-GE mother]

‘my mother’  
‘your mother’

This loss has implications, of course, for the system of nominal possession, but equally for subordination, which involves nominalization, and hence nominal person marking. Consider example 2 from a *PeQ* variety. The *EcQ* (Salasaca) equivalent of this example would be example 3:

(2) llaqta	ri-na-yki-ta	willa-nki-chu
town	go-NOM-2-AC	tell-2-Q

‘Will you tell him that **you** have to go to town?’

AYACUCHO Q (SOTO RUIZ 1976:155)

(3) llakta-mu	ri-na-da	yacha-ngi-chu
town-to	go-NOM-AC	know-2-Q

‘Do you know that **you** (or she/he/I) have to go to town?’

SALASACA Q

Notice that the actual subject of the subordinate clause (*you*) now has to be inferred (it can also be overtly expressed with a pronoun); the ‘*you*’ interpretation is achieved pragmatically as the most likely inference. Since person marking is no longer expressed, the difference between infinitival complements and finite although not tensed complements has disappeared. This has led to a large number of changes in the system of infinitival complements in northern varieties, as we will see below. The loss of noun agreement marking is best interpretable as the result of imperfect language learning, as we find in many pidgins, where agreement marking of the lexical target language has been lost.

### The Varieties Involved in This Study

The varieties listed in Table 12.2 will be considered in the analysis given below. Most of the original data come from my own fieldwork, primarily carried out in central Ecuador.

The Peruvian materials come from published sources, notably the series of grammars published by the Instituto de Estudios Peruanos in Lima in 1976.

The last two varieties, Ancash and Junín-Huanca, come from varieties historically the most distant from NoQ, namely the central or QI dialects. The historical split between QI and QII (which should be thought of more as a gradual divergence) dates to around 2000 BP. Thus Q can be likened to the Romance family in its time depth and historical diversification. Imagine Ancash and Junín-Huanca to be like Portuguese and Catalan, and EcQ like Romanian.

**TABLE 12.2.** Varieties taken into consideration in the present study, with the main source and the country where spoken listed.

Code	Location	Source	Country
sal	Salcedo (Cotopaxi)	Fieldwork	Ecuador (QII)
tig	Tigua (Cotopaxi)	Fieldwork	
sca	Salasaca (Tungurahua)	Fieldwork	
chr	Chimborazo	Ross 1963	
chs	San Juan (Chimborazo)	Fieldwork	
zam	Zámbiza (Pichincha)	Fieldwork	
orm	Oriente	Mugica 1967	
ara	Arajuno (Oriente)	Fieldwork	
imb	Imbabura	Stark et al. 1972–Cole 1982	
sar	Saraguro (Loja)	Fieldwork	
ing	Inga (Colombia)	Levinsohn 1967	Colombia (QII)
caj	Cajamarca	Quesada 1976	Peru QII
pas	Pastaza	Landerman 1973	
sma	San Martín	Coombs et al. 1976	
cha	Chachapoyas	Taylor 1979	
aya	Ayacucho	Parker 1965; Soto Ruiz 1976	
cuz	Cuzco	Cusihuamán 1976	
anc	Ancash	Parker 1976	Peru QI
wan	Junín-Huanca	Cerrón Palomino 1976	

## CLAUSE EMBEDDING PREDICATES AND COMPLEMENTS IN NoQ

### Complementation and Subordination in Q

In Q, the core strategy to create subordinate complement clauses is through the use of suffixes on the verb of the clause, marking its status as a nominalized argument of the main clause (4; repeated from example 2), marked with *-na*, or as an adverbial clause (5), marked with *-pti*. Argument clauses receive the appropriate case marking; thus in example 4, the complement clause is marked with *-ta*. Adverbial clauses receive no case marking.

(4) llaqta ri-na-yki-ta willa-nki-chu NOMINALIZED  
 town go-NOM-2-AC telL-2-Q  
 'Will you tell him that you have to go to town?'

AYACUCHO Q (SOTO RUIZ 1976:155)

(5) *kay-pi ka-pti-y-qa allin-ta-m llamka-n ADVERBIAL*  
this-LO be-SUB-1-TO good-AC-AF work-3  
'When I am here s/he works well.'

AYACUCHO Q (SOTO RUIZ 1976:157)

In the case of adverbial clauses, we find a switch reference system in place. For each adverbial clause, it is made clear through endings on the verb whether the subjects of the main or the adverbial clause are identical or not.

In addition to nominalization markers and adverbial switch reference markers in non-tensed subordinate clauses, we often find tensed clauses (6) in some varieties, linked with discourse particles and marked with various enclitics.

(6) *tari-mu-saq chay-ri, apa-mu-saq-chu icha mana-chu*  
find-CIS-1SG.FU that-RES take-CIS-1SG.FU-Q or not-Q  
'If I find it, will I bring it or not?'

CUZCO Q (CUSIHUAMÁN 1976:282)

However, in this chapter, I will focus only on non-tensed subordinate clauses and for the most part on nominalized complements.

In Table 12.3 the core morphological elements involved in subordination are listed, together with their meanings, for seven varieties of Q. From the overview in this table we can conclude several things. First, the original Proto-Q nominalization system may have involved five forms, four of which have survived more or less intact in most varieties. Least stable was the form *-nqa*, which appears to be imperfective in some central Peruvian varieties, notably Ancash, and marks definite future in early Cuzco Q and in EcQ. Also, the adverbial switch reference system likewise is simplified in some varieties but the distinction between same subject and non-same subject marking is retained in all varieties. Finally, the most innovative system is the one of EcQ. Not only do we find differentiation in the forms used for the infinitive, but also the original different subject form *-pti* has been replaced by composite suffix *-kpi*, the agentive nominalizer *-k* combined with a locative suffix *-pi*.

In this chapter I will focus on the area where most changes have occurred: combinations involving a modal or auxiliary plus an embedded verb. Before turning to this issue in more detail, I will sketch verbal complexes in one variety, central to the concerns of this study, Ecuadorian Q, from a slightly wider perspective.

### **Verbal Complexes in NoQ**

In all or most Q varieties, infinitival complements can be made with the aid of the infinitive + accusative combination *-y-ta*. In example 7, some of the verbs are listed that can take an infinitive complement of this type in southern Q:

TABLE 12.3. The core morphological elements involved in subordination, together with their meanings, in seven Q varieties.

	<i>Ancash-Huailas</i>	<i>Jinín-Huancaya</i>	<i>Ayacucho</i>	<i>Cuzco Old</i>	<i>Cuzco Modern</i>	<i>Cajamarca</i>	<i>Ecuador</i>
<i>Nominal subordinators</i>							
Infinitive	-y	-y	-y	-y	-y	-y	-y -na -nga-pak
Agentive	-q	-q	-q	-q	-q	-q	-k
Indefinite future Action	-na	-na	-na	-na	-na	-na	-na
Instrumental Locative							
Resultative	-shqa	-sha	-sqa	-sqa	-sqa	-shqa	-shka
Stative							
Imperfective	-nqa	-sha	-sqa	-nqa	-sqa	-shqa	-nga
Definite future							
<i>Adverbial subordinators and switch reference markers</i>							
Same subject previous or simultaneous action	-r (-spa)	-l	-spa	-spa	-spa	-shpa	-shpa
Same subject simultaneous action	-r (-spa)	-shtin	-stin	-sti	-sti	-shpa	-shpa
Different subject	-pti	-pti	-pti	-pti	-pti	-pti	-kpi

(7) tukuchi- 'finish, end'  
 muna- 'want'  
 yacha- 'know'  
 qallari- 'begin'  
 pudi- 'be able' AYACUCHO Q (SOTO RUIZ 1976:155)

In this study, not all verbs are taken into consideration; only the ones focused on are given.

In addition to these types of infinitival complements, there are a number of other constructions involving a non-finite complement: quotative complements, inchoative complements of movement verbs, purposive and subjunctive complements, serial comparatives, and potential and past obligation complements. These will be analyzed in further detail in this study and briefly presented below.

### 1. Finish, end V

Generally the aspectual verb 'finish' or 'end' is expressed with a variant of *tuku-* or the causative form *tuku-chi-*; in San Martín we find the Spanish loan *bense-*. In Salasaca we find cases such as:

(8) miku-sha    *tuku-chi-ni*  
eat-SUB    end-CAU-1SG  
'I finish eating.'    SALASACA Q (FIELDWORK DATA)

In other dialects the complement is marked with *-y* [-INF] and *-y-ta* [-INF-AC].

### 2. Want V type 1

A typical example of a complement of a verb of wanting is:

(9) muna-nki-chu    llank'a-ku-**y-ta**  
want-2SG-Q    work-RE-INF-AC  
'Do you want to work?'  
CUZCO Q (CUSIHUAMAN 1976:220)

With this verb, there is considerable variation in the morphology of the complement.

### 3. Know how to V, be used to V

A very similar verb in its complement-taking properties is *yacha-* 'know'. Here a Salasaca example is given with the nominalizer *-na*:

(10) tuka-**na**    *yacha-ni*  
play-NOM    know-1SG  
'I know how to play.'    SALASACA Q (FIELDWORK DATA)

In Peruvian varieties we generally find *-y-ta* [-INF-AC].

### 4. Begin V

A number of forms occur in the complement, one of which is illustrated in example 11:

(11) kapari-nga-k    kallari-ni  
cry-NOM-BEN    begin-1s  
'I begin to cry.'    ARAJUNO Q (FIELDWORK DATA)

However, regular infinitive endings are found as well.

### 5. Can V

A typical infinitival verb cluster involving the verb 'can' from EcQ is example 12:

(12) awa-y            pudi-ni  
       weave-INF    know-1SG  
       'I can weave.'            SALASACA Q (FIELDWORK DATA)

### 6. Want V type 2: Complements derived from quotatives

In EcQ the verb *ni* 'say' has acquired the secondary meaning of 'want' in a specialized grammaticalized context with the embedded verb in the fixed form meaning first person singular future:

(13) miku-sha    ni-ni  
       eat-1SG.FU    say-1SG  
       'I want to eat.'  
       (lit., 'I say I will eat.')            SALCEDO Q (FIELDWORK DATA)

### 7. Inchoative

Various forms occur under this rubric. With movement verbs the subordinate verb marked agentive indicates the goal of the action:

(14) puñu-k    ri-ni  
       sleep-AG    go-1sg  
       'I am going to sleep.'            SALCEDO Q (FIELDWORK DATA)

### 8. Subjunctive and purposive same subject

With same subject purposives often a nominalizer + benefactive combination is found:

(15) Puyo-ma    lumu-ra            randi-nga-k            ri-u-ni  
       Puyo-to    manioc-AC            buy-NOM-BEN            go-PR-1s  
       'I go to Puyo to buy manioc.'            ARAJUNO Q (FIELDWORK DATA)

### 9. Subjunctive and purposive different subject

With different subject purposives often a nominalizer + benefactive combination is found, as in example 16, or the marker *-chun* is employed, as in example 17. All examples are from Chachapoyas Q, in northern Peru:

(16) nima-ta-ka    ku-rka-n-sa    miku-na-n-pa    upia-na-n-pa  
       nothing-AC-TO give-PAS-3-PL    eat-NML-3-BEN    drink-NML-3-BEN  
       'They did not give him anything to eat drink.'            (TAYLOR 1975:61)

(17) maña-ku-y    ku-chun  
       ask-RE-IM    give-3.EXH  
       'ask (him) to give you some'            (TAYLOR 1975:47)

### **10. Serial comparative**

The remarkable type of verbal complex to be discussed here is the EcQ serial verb pattern involving the comparative forming *yalli* 'exceed':

(18) Manil-da    **yalli**    puri-ni  
Manuel-AC    exceed walk-1SG  
'I walk faster than Manuel.'

This element occurs as a main verb (with obligatory inflections) in other types of Q but remains uninflected in many Ecuadorian varieties. The only argument that it has retained its verbal status is that only verbs can assign accusative case in Q.

### **11. Past potential**

An auxiliary construction involving the copula is example 19, the past potential or irrealis. In EcQ the person is marked on the copula itself (with an unanalyzable remnant on the main verb), while in PeQ the person is marked on the main verb and the copula is marked impersonal third person:

(19) a. rura-y-mu    mi-ga-ni  
do-XX-POT AF-be-1SG  
'I would have done it.'    SALASACA Q (FIELDWORK DATA)

b. rura-y-man    ka-rqa-n  
do-1SG-POT be-PA-3  
'I would have done it.'    CUZCO Q

The element *-y-* in example 19a is originally the non-finite first person singular marker, at the time when the copula was an impersonal third person form. However, in Ecuador the paradigm of first person singular marking has been lost, and now the form no longer has a clear function.

### **12. Obligation**

Obligation is generally marked in Q with the aid of the nominalizer *-na* on the complement verb and the auxiliary *ka-*. There is variation, however, on the placement of the person marking for the person being obliged, and on the marking of the V-*na-* combination. In PeQ, we find an impersonal construction, and the embedded verb carries the person marking, while in Ecuador, the copula itself carries the person marking, and the V-*na-* complement is either bare or carries an uninterpretable *-y* marker, remnant of the first person singular.

(20) a. ri-na    ka-ni  
go-NOM be-1SG  
'I have to go.'    SALASACA Q (FIELDWORK DATA)

TABLE 12.4. The predicates studied here and the relevant complement types.

<i>a. Predicates Involved</i>	<i>b. Complement Types</i>
finish, end up V	-y(-ta) [INF-AC]
want V	-na(-ta) [NOM-AC]
know how to V, be used to V	-q / -k / -j [AG]
begin V	-shpa / -sha [SUB]
can V	-nga(-pak) [NOM-BEN]
want	-saq / -sak / -sha [1SG.FU]
inchoative	-y-man [1SG-POT]
subjunctive and purposive same subject	[0]
subjunctive and purposive different subject	-na-..-ta [NOM-...-AC]
more than NP	
past potential	
obligation	

b. ri-na-y-mi            ka-ra

go-NOM-1SG-AF be-PA

'I had to go.'            AYACUCHO Q (HARTMANN AND SOTO RUIZ 1985:142)

### Clause-Embedding Predicates and Their Complements: A Summary

The main issue raised in this chapter then is a shift in the types of complements used with different predicates. Table 12.4 summarizes both the predicates studied here and the relevant complement types.

While the original system has remained remarkably stable, various innovations are visible in different northern varieties. To give just one further example, while in most of Peru the verb 'begin' takes a *-y-ta* [INF-AC] complement, in Cajamarca we notice a shift toward the agentive marker, which traditionally had been reserved for motion verbs:

(21) pay-mi    qallari-rqa-n    yanapa-q    mana-raq    maña-pti-ki  
 3-AF        start-PA-3        help-AG      not-yet      ask-SUB-2  
 'He started to help without you asking him.'

CAJAMARCA Q (QUESADA 1976:169)

These different innovations, which have led to the genesis of a separate variety of Quechua in Ecuador, will be explored more systematically below.

### The Variants and Their Coding

The variants are clustered in terms of the actual predicate involved; this is shown in Table 12.5. They have been split in specifications for separate binary values. Using binary values makes the processing easier, since all data can be compared. Nonetheless, the values within a cluster are not independent from each other.

**TABLE 12.5.** Variants of the predicate complements in the analysis.

Code	Description	Gloss	Morpheme
A1	V-na-ta tukuchi-	Finish, end up V	-na
A2	V-y-ta tukuchi- /bense- (sma)/tuku-(cuz)		-y
A3	V-sha tukuchi-		-sha 'SUB'
A4	V-j tuku-		-j
B1	V-na-ta muna- / V-na muna-	Want V	-na
B2	V-nga-pak muna-		-nga-pak
B3	V-y-ta muna- / V-y muna-		-y
B4	V-j-ta muna		-j
C1	V-na-ta yacha- / V-na yacha-	Know how to V, be used to V	-na
C2	V-y-ta yacha-		-y
D1	V-na-ta kallari- / V-na kallari-	Begin V	-na
D2	V-nga(-pak) kallari-		-nga(-pak)
D3	V-y-ta / V-y kallari- / qallari-		-y
D4	qallari- V-q		-q
E1	V-na-ta / V-na pudi- / usha- / atipa- (sma, pas) / ati- (aya)	Can V	-na
E2	V-y-ta / V-y pudi- / usha- / atipa- (sma, pas) / ati- (aya) / pweedi- (anc)		-y
E3	V-nga pudi-		-nga
G	V-sha ni-	Want	-sha '1SG.FU'
H	V-nga-pak (ru)ra-	Inchoative	-nga-pak
I1	V-nga-pak	Subjunctive and pur- posive same subject	-nga-pak
I2	V-na-X-ta/paq		-na
J1	V-chun	Subjunctive and purposive different subject	-chun
J2	V-na-X-ta/paq		-na
J3	V-nga-pak		-nga
K	NP-ta yalli	More than NP	[0] serial
L1	V-y-man ka-rka-ni 'I would have V'	Personal past poten- tial 1SG	-y-man
L2	V-y-man ka-rka 'I would have V'	Impersonal past potential 1SG	-y-man
L3	V-sqa ka-y-man	Personal past poten- tial 1SG	
M1	V-na-X ka-	Personal obligation	-na
M2	V-na ka-X	Impersonal obligation	-na

However, sometimes various options are possible in a variety, and hence it is hard to reduce the number of variants more. Several analytical reductions have been applied to the data.

1. The presence or absence of *-ta* accusative marker and *-paq* benefactive marker has not been taken into account. The variants in example 22 are not distinguished.

(22) apa-y(-ta)      muna-n-chu  
take-INF(-AC)    want-3.NEG  
'S/he does not want to take.'      JUNÍN-HUANCA (CERRÓN PALOMINO 1976:260)

2. Word order variation is not taken into account, as in the two possible orders in example 23. The innovative order in example 23a has the complement following the matrix verb, while in example 23b it precedes the matrix verb.

(23) a. yatra-ni      kanta-y-ta      waynu-kuna-ta  
know-1SG    sing-INF-AC    huayno-PL-AC  
'I know how to sing huaynos.'      CAJAMARCA Q (QUESADA 1976:161)

b. waynu-kuna-ta    kanta-y-ta    yatra-ni  
huayno-PL-AC    sing-INF-AC    know-1SG  
'I know how to sing huaynos.'      (HYPOTHETICAL TRADITIONAL FORM)

3. Variation in the actual forms of the nominalizers, for example, *-sqa* versus *-shka*, is not taken into account, and neither is variation in the lexical realizations of the matrix predicates.

Table 12.6 represents the codings for the various complements. The resulting data were analyzed with the SplitsTree4 analytic package of D. H. Huson and D. Bryant (2006), yielding a NeighborNet tree.

## RESULTS

### Classification

The resulting classification is represented in Figure 12.2. The relative distance in the tree measured on this cluster of variables is very different from what we find in the NeighborNet trees constructed on the basis of lexical data by Heggarty (2005 and subsequent publications), as well as from traditional trees drawn in Q historical linguistics.

Notably, the varieties assumed to be farthest apart in traditional classifications of the Q family, such as Ayacucho (aya) and Cuzco (cuz) on the one hand and Ancash (anc) and Junín-Huanca (wan) on the other, are now clustered together into



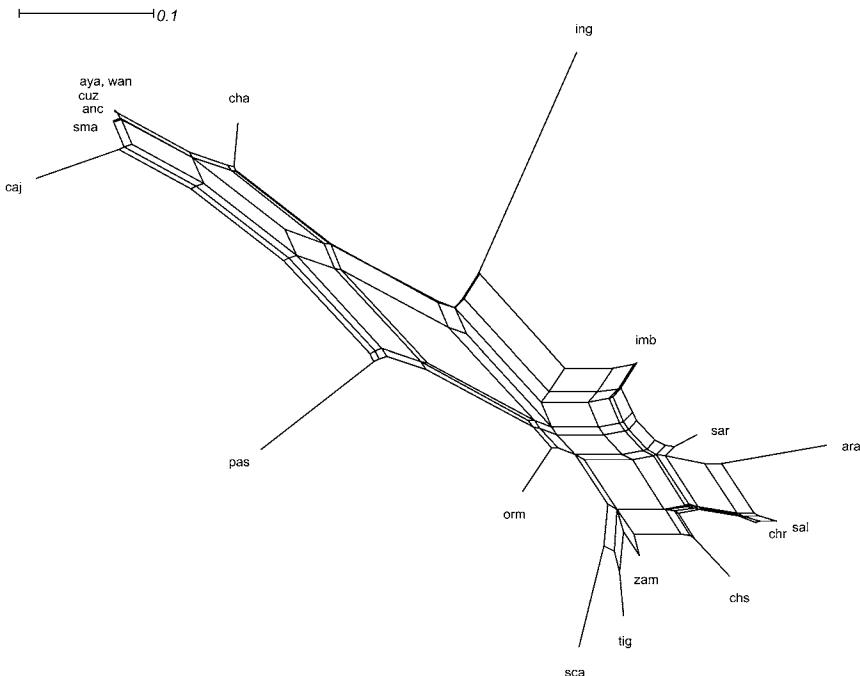


FIGURE 12.2. NeighborNet representation for the Q varieties discussed in this chapter.

a single branch. Northern Peruvian varieties such as San Martín (sma), Cajamarca (caj), and Chachapoyas (cha) are still quite close to this cluster, while the extreme northernmost Peruvian variety Pastaza (pas) and Colombian Q (ing) are intermediate. The major split is with the cluster of Ecuadorian dialects, which are most innovative with respect to their Peruvian ancestors. This split reflects the considerable restructuring that the EcQ variants have undergone as a result of the processes of ethnogenesis characteristic of highland Ecuador in the colonial period. I assume that in the colonial period many speakers of smaller Indian languages learned Q as a second language, simplifying it in the process.

### Substrate Influence

There are a number of features that may be related to possible substrate influence.

First of all, feature G, the use of the verb *ni-* ‘say’ in combination with V-*sha* ‘V-1SG.FU’ to indicate desire or intention, is a feature of Shuar as well (Adelaar with Muysken 2004:447):

(24) išičik    úm-in<sup>y</sup>-á-yt-hey    nampék-ay-h    tu-sa-n  
 modest drink-AG-EU-be-1SG get.drunk-NEG-1SG say-ss-1SG  
 'I am a modest drinker, not wanting to get drunk.'    SHUAR (JUANK 1982:12)

Second, Jäger (2006) shows that the use of 'do' as an auxiliary, feature H above, as in V-*nga-pak* (*ru*)*ra*- 'I am going to V' (where (*ru*)*ra*- is the verb 'do, make'), is present in several languages in the immediate neighborhood of EcQ, notably various Barbacoan (Colombia, Ecuador) languages, some Chibchan-Paezan languages (Colombia, Mesoamerica), nine Tukanoan languages (Colombia, Brazil), and the isolate Waorani (Ecuador). Given that the variety of Q where (*ru*)*ra*- 'do' is used is spoken very near Waorani and may have been Waorani (as well as Shuar) speaking before (in fact, when I visited the Q community Arajuno, there were some uninvited silent Waorani 'guests' there to learn Q), influence from that language seems most likely. In Waorani the verb 'do' illustrated in example 26 is homophonous with what is analyzed as the inceptive suffix in example 25:

(25) bo-tō    taa-mi~æ-**kæ**-bo~i-pa  
 1-PN    cut-tail.ID-INC-1-IFR-AS  
 'I am going to cut off his tail.'    WAORANI (HOLMAN 1988:63)

(26) æ-bā-nō    biwii    **kæ**-kā-ta-wo  
 how    bird    do-3-PA-DUB  
 'I wonder how the little bird is doing?'    WAORANI (HOLMAN 1988:65)

The different morphological status of the two forms *kæ* might be problematic, but notice that what is analyzed as a suffix may be an enclitic auxiliary, carrying the tense and person marking. The way the auxiliary (*ru*)*ra*- is used in the relevant Q variety also suggests enclitic status. In the complex in example 27 the main stress is on *ra*-.

(27) ri-*nga*=**ra**-u-ni  
 go-NOM=do-PR-1SG  
 'I'm gonna go.'    ARAJUNO Q (FIELDWORK DATA)

With respect to feature J, the use of V-*chun* as a subjunctive and purposive different subject marker, Adelaar with Muysken (2004:149) suggest that Barbacoan substrate may have played a role in its genesis. Consider the following forms (cited from Bruil 2008) from Tsafiqui:

(28) a. miku-*nga-pak*    randi-rka-ni  
 eat-NOM-BEN    buy-PA-1SG  
 'I bought it to eat.'

b. mi-chun      randi-rka-ni  
eat-DS.BEN    buy-PA-1SG  
'I bought it to eat.'

(29) a. fi-chuu      cáyoe  
eat-SS:BEN    I have bought  
'I bought it to eat.'      TSAFIQUI (MOORE 1979:48)

b. sona      mera-sa      tayoé  
woman    listen-DS:BEN    I have  
'I have it so that my wife can listen to it.'      TSAFIQUI (MOORE 1979:49)

With respect to feature K, the use of the serial verb *yalli* 'exceed' in comparatives, it is clear from work by Curnow (1997) and others that the Barbacoan languages show a rich set of serial and converb constructions. It remains to be established, however, that the emergence of *yalli* as a comparative marker can be attributed to it.

### FURTHER DISCUSSION

The set of features used in this chapter was focused on a very particular group of features, related to the complex verbal predicates and sentential complements. As such, it diverges from what has been used, for example, by Dunn and colleagues (2008), who mostly include a comprehensive list of typological features, syntactic, morphosyntactic, and phonological, characteristic either of the languages of the world in general or of the languages of a given large region. The features used here rather reflect particularities of a given set of constructions within the Q family, which prove to be highly indicative of a set of structural changes accompanying the creation of a new set of varieties of Q in Ecuador. The roots of the restructuring lie in processes of massive L2 acquisition of Q by non Q-speaking Barbacoan and Jivaroan populations, as well as introduction of substrate features, but the tremendous variation found in this domain, unheard of in the history of Q, reflects the break with tradition accompanying ethnogenesis. In general, new ethnic varieties of a language can be seen as rooted in processes of L2 learning and substrate transfer but as manifesting themselves through the active elaboration of these new features.

At the time of the Spanish conquest, a series of languages was spoken in the Ecuadorian highlands. From north to south, these include Pasto, Cara, Panzaleo, Puruhá, Cañar, and a complex including Palta, Malacato, Rabona, Bolona, and Xiroa (Adelaar with Muysken 2004:393). Two centuries later, these have been replaced by EcQ, and a new *runa* ethnicity was created in Ecuador (see Whitten, this volume). It should be noted that the transformation of these earlier societies into the *runa* caste or ethnic group was not an instant process, but took some time,

although the sixteenth-century colonial experience must have been intense and had drastic consequences (Newson 1995; Powers 1995). Obviously, the pace of ethnic transformation must have been different in different parts of the highlands, but this is an issue for further research.

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P A R T     I I I

**ETHNOHISTORY**





## Sacred Landscapes as Environmental Histories in Lowland South America



*Jonathan D. Hill*

### INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I will focus on ritual practices as active components in the ways that indigenous peoples of lowland South America have historically constructed power relations and the material, ecological landscapes that these different ritual practices have produced. The term “landscape” is used here to refer to a “historical construct, the visible imprint of past human agency” (Neves and Petersen 2006:279), or reflections of interactive processes that are at once organic, inorganic, and semiotic. Ritual practices and associated mythic narratives play a central role in the way material and organic phenomena are signified (i.e., named, classified, consumed, handled, or otherwise transformed) or imbued with culturally specific patterns of meaning, intentionality, and emotion.<sup>1</sup> Significant features of the landscape are in turn recursively introduced as signifiers into the processes of reproducing human social relations.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, special attention is given to indigenous verbal artistry, including chanted, sung, and other musically performed ways of speaking in ritual settings as well as narrative discourses that explain the origins of such ritually powerful ways of speaking.

This chapter builds on several previous efforts to document and interpret complex ritual practices of musical naming power and related mythic narratives (Hill 1993, 2009b) as processes of constructing environmental histories through toponymy, musicalization, and other ways of imbuing natural phenomena with social meanings and of reintroducing nature into society (Hill 1989, 2002). At the same time, I will expand on my earlier efforts to develop a comparative historical perspective, both among Arawak-speaking peoples of lowland South America (Hill and Santos-Granero 2002) and across different language families (Hill 2000) by comparing narratives and ritual chanting based on ethnographic field studies among the Arawakan Wakuénai of the upper Río Negro region in Venezuela with the genre of ritually powerful speech known as “the beautiful words” (*ayvu porä*) among the Tupí-Guaraní chiefdoms of coastal Brazil during the early colonial period (Clastres 1995).

My approach to ritual practices, and especially ritually powerful ways of speaking, as the production of environmental histories aims to raise questions about place-making in human communities. How is the concept of place understood in culturally specific terms and how did differentiated places come into being from a primordial time in which there was merely space, or only a single place? What are the material ways in which such ontological differences enter into indigenous peoples’ ways of interacting with natural habitats and exploiting natural resources? Are there recognizable ecological or other (i.e., cultural) material imprints of past human agency left by contrasting modes of ritually producing the world? I do not intend to provide any definitive answers to these questions here but merely hope to suggest some lines of comparative inquiry that may be productive.

One of the most impressive ethnographic demonstrations of indigenous place-making in lowland South America is the use of toponymy to construct geographic images of mythic consecration and historical desecration among the Arawak-speaking Yanesha of eastern Peru (Santos-Granero 1998). Subsequent research has noted the strong parallels between these Yanesha practices of place-naming in narratives and Wakuénai naming of sacred places in ritual singing and chanting performed during male and female initiation rituals (Hill and Santos-Granero 2002). Among the Yanesha, Wakuénai, and other indigenous peoples of lowland South America, place-naming and the more general process of attributing significance to specific features of the landscape are centrally concerned with ways of making history.

The importance of verbal artistry, such as restricted genres of ritually powerful speech and associated narrative discourses, must not be allowed to overshadow or obscure the fact that ritual “languages” also encompass musical and bodily ways of poeticizing space. In Wakuénai mythic narratives, place-making begins as a bodily process of making animal sounds and speech-like “word-sounds” that are said to open up the world by travelling far away and creating the various species and objects of the natural world. This musical naming power of the primordial human being

later transforms into the making of sacred flutes and trumpets from trees and vines, and the collective playing of these wind instruments by groups of men and women opens up the world for a second time. This complex of verbal artistry and instrumental music forms a poetics of history in which the musicality of chanted and sung speech is integrated with both special, restricted, and ritually powerful linguistic forms (or “spirit-names”) and the myriad melodic and rhythmic patterns produced on a variety of musical wind instruments.<sup>3</sup> Through this poetics of history, communities of people transform mere space into a world of meaningful places. Although toponymy and sacred place-naming are central to this poetics, it is more accurate to describe it as a musicalization, or “musical naming power,” instead of “writing history” or inscribing cultural meanings into the landscape.

### **CARTOGRAPHIC CONSCIOUSNESS IN WAKUÉNAI MYTH AND RITUAL**

The idea of spatial distinctions between different peoples and places making up a cultural and geographic landscape does not emerge until relatively late in Wakuénai mythology. The lengthy cycle of narratives about the struggles between “Made-From-Bone,” the trickster-creator, and his animal-affinal adversaries during primordial times takes place in a microcosmic world consisting of a single village at the center of the world and the surrounding forests and rivers. The main theme of these narratives is the omniscience and omnipotence of Made-From-Bone, who always knows his enemies’ violent plans in advance and can thus manage to thwart them.<sup>4</sup>

In a second cycle of myths, called “The World Begins,” the trickster-creator’s power and fame are taken as well-established facts, and he begins to create the worlds of nature and human society by using his skills of trickery to obtain important things—night, cooking fire, and peachpalm fruits—from animal-persons and other mythic beings. Unlike the life-and-death struggles of Iñápiríkuli against Kunájwerrim and other adversaries during the primordial times, the confrontations between Iñápiríkuli and others during “The World Begins” are more like puzzles or games in which the trickster-creator must outsmart his interlocutors to take away their goods. Violence and bloodshed are almost entirely absent from these interactions. And the rationale for the trickster-creator’s actions is no longer to inflict violent revenge but is now much more directly focused on the need to create things that are necessary to pave the way for “the new people of the future world.”

In the third and final period of mythic history, or “The World Opens Up,” the trickster-creator continues to display the same powers of omniscience and invincibility that he had wielded since his creation in primordial times and that had become the basis of his fame in the period of “The World Begins.” However, in “The World Opens Up,” the trickster-creator’s powers of creativity are largely overshadowed by the powerful musical sounds and naming processes embodied in the primordial human being, Kuwái, who is the child of incestuous sexual relations

between Made-From-Bone and a paternal aunt, named Ámaru (“First-Woman”). It is the musical voice, or word-sounds, of Kuwái as he flies across the skies overhead that begin to open up the closed, miniature world of the mythic primordium into the cultural and geographic landscape that humans, fish, forest animals, birds, and plants inhabit today.

“Kuwái began to speak the word-sounds that could be heard in the entire world. The world was still very small. He began to speak, ‘Heee.’ The sound of his voice ran away and opened up the world.”

Through a series of episodes, Made-From-Bone and his brothers use various forms of deceit and trickery to cajole Kuwái into coming down to the ground and teaching them the sacred singing and chanting (*malikái*) for puberty initiation rituals and other rites of passage. After the brother of “Made-From-Bone” has memorized all these ritually powerful ways of singing and chanting, they push Kuwái into a bonfire, and the world shrinks back to its original miniature size. However, out of the ashes of Kuwái grow trees and vines that are used to make sacred flutes and trumpets, which are stolen by “First-Woman.” As the women play these sacred flutes and trumpets in various places, the world opens up for a second time. Eventually, Made-From-Bone and his brothers regain control of the sacred musical instruments from the women.

The sound of Kuwái’s voice, or musical naming power, along with its transformation into an orchestra of ritual wind instruments representing different parts of the body of Kuwái as well as different natural species, is the mythic source of ritual power through which Wakuénai chant-owners and shamans episodically re-create a culturally differentiated landscape of peoples and places. Female and male initiation rituals are complex social events at which chant-owners must sing and chant-into-being the names of all the places, foods, and peoples making up the world. They tap out the rhythms and tempos of this mythic-historical “opening up” of the world with ritual whips by striking an overturned basket that covers a pot of hot-peppered, boiled meat that will form the initiates’ first food as adult women or men.

For a girl, initiation is an individual ritual taking place shortly after she reaches her first menses, and the emphasis is on attaching moral and historical meanings to her sexuality and fertility. Female initiation rituals are called *wakáitaka iénpiti* (“we speak to our child”), referring to the ritual advice that the girl receives from the chant-owner, her grandparents, and other elders. There is less emphasis on teaching practical skills to the girl-initiant, since she has already demonstrated mastery of these activities prior to reaching puberty. Male initiation, however, involves prolonged training in adult male activities, such as weaving baskets, making tools and weapons, and felling trees for new gardens. The boys are initiated in groups, and they are expected to learn sacred narratives about the mythic creations of the world during the life cycle of Kuwái, the primordial human being. Most importantly, boys are

shown how to make and play the sacred flutes and trumpets of Kuwái, which is why male initiation rituals are called *wakapéetaka iénpitipé* (“we show our children”).

The central activities of both male and female initiation rituals are fasting and seclusion. During the period of seclusion, the initiates must survive on drinks made from wild palm fruits, water, and manioc flour. The culmination of male and female initiation rituals is a long series of *malikái* songs and chants in which all species of edible animals, fish, birds, and plants must be named in all the places where Ámaru and the women played the sacred flutes and trumpets of Kuwái during the second creation of the world. For both male and female initiation, the opening *malikái* song is a movement between distinct pitches at the mythic center of the world, Hípana, the place of ancestral emergence. After invoking the places of sacred power in the sky-world, the chant-owner names the celestial umbilical cord (*hliépule kwá éenu*) that connects the sky-world to the terrestrial world of human beings at the “navel of the world” (Hípana) and that nourishes the latter with the power of mythic ancestors. From that point of departure, the chant-owner and an accompanying chanter “go in search of the names” of the mythic ancestors of the initiates’ patrilineages. The chanting continues for at least six hours and makes use of microtonal rising, different starting pitches, acceleration, crescendo, and other musical dynamics. Between each chant, the chant-owner kneels on the ground, lifts the overturned basket covering the pot of hot-peppered boiled meat (*káridzamái*), and blows tobacco smoke over the food. Finally, after chanting the last places along the Isana and Aiarí Rivers leading back to Hípana, the chant-owner sings a closing song using exactly the same four pitches as the opening song and invoking one last time the celestial umbilical cord connecting sky-world and human world.

Despite the similarities between *malikái* singing and chanting for male and female initiation rituals, there are also important differences. For female initiation, the first song is performed at noon, and the chanting continues throughout the afternoon. The closing song is performed shortly before sunset. The naming of places moves across an area that roughly approximates the ancestral territories of the Wakuénai phratries living in the Isana and Guainía river basins at the headwaters of the Río Negro (see Figure 13.1). For male initiation, the first song is performed at night, with chanting throughout the night and the closing song coming just before dawn. In these chants, a much larger area covering the entire Río Negro, lower Amazon, and middle and lower Orinoco basins must be named (see Figure 13.2). This vast set of rivers, forests, and savannahs corresponds approximately to the areas that were inhabited by northern, or Maipuran, Arawak-speaking peoples at the time of the arrival of European colonizers in the sixteenth century.

The contrast between place-naming in female and male initiation rituals can be understood as two complementary forces of political history. In female initiation rituals, place-naming outlines a relatively closed, hierarchical pattern of movements that reasserts and commemorates connections between specific social groups, or

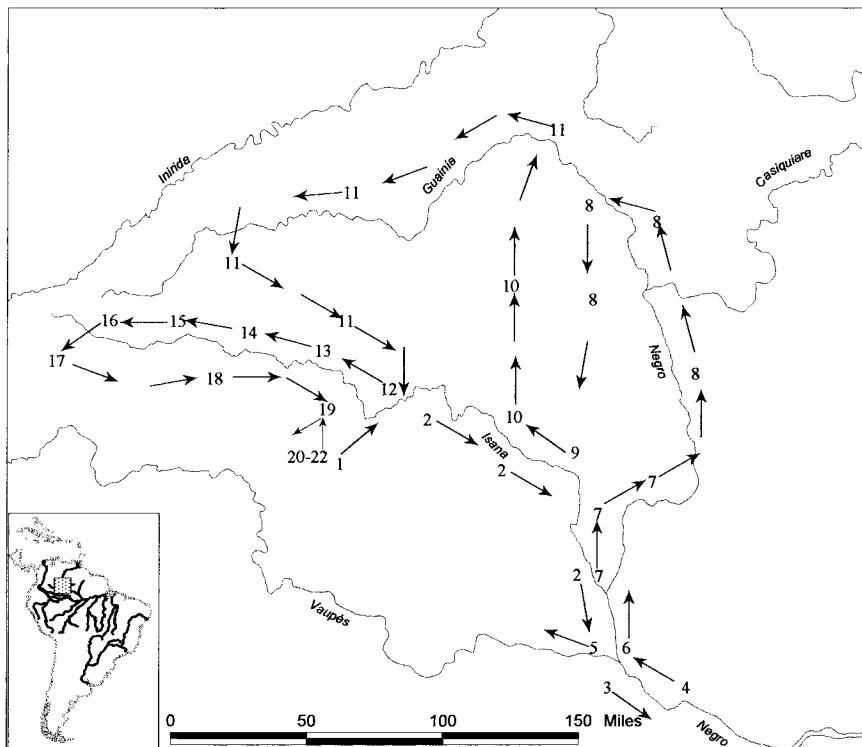
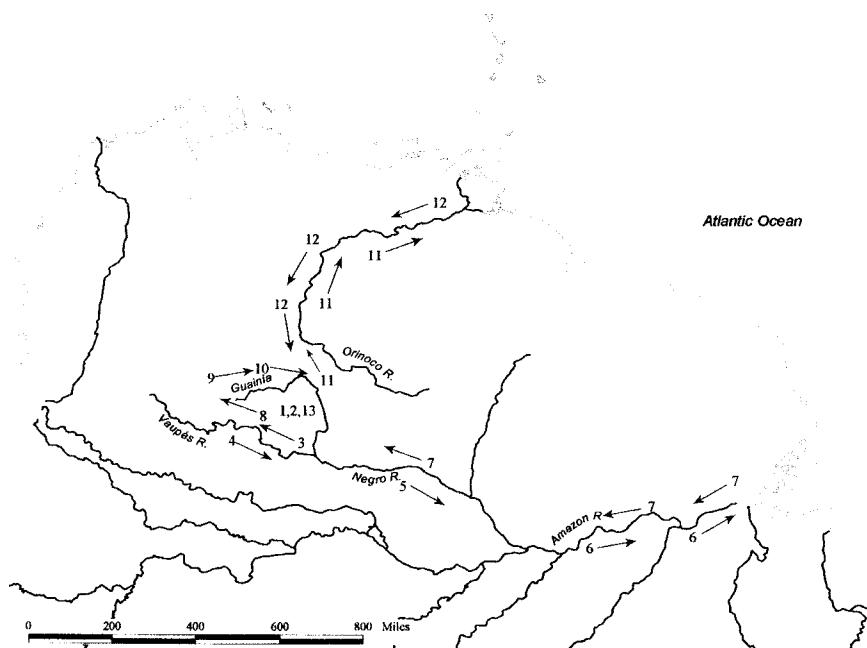


FIGURE 13.1. Place-naming in sacred chants (malikái) for female initiation ritual among Arawak-speaking Wakuénai (Curripaco) of Venezuela, 1981.

localized sets of patrisibs organized into ranked phratries, and sacred places *within* the upper Río Negro region. Place-naming in male initiation rituals depicts a more open, expansive pattern of interconnections *between* Wakuénai phratries of the upper Río Negro region and other, downstream regions in the Orinoco and Amazon basins that were inhabited by other large Arawak-speaking polities prior to the nineteenth century. The pattern of place-naming is more centripetal for female initiation and more centrifugal for male initiation. The former is mainly concerned with defining relations between Wakuénai phratries and a shared site of origins at the mythic center of the world, whereas the latter aims at defining a number of widely dispersed regional centers in relation to a single mythic center in the upper Río Negro region. In both cases, the mythic center at Hípana is verbally depicted in opening and closing songs as the “navel,” where a “celestial umbilical cord” (*bliépule-kwa dzákare*) connects the sky-world of mythic ancestors to the terrestrial world of human descendants. And in both male and female initiation rituals, the mythic center is also defined through the use of four stable pitches that are sung in opening



**FIGURE 13.2.** Place-naming in sacred chants (*malikái*) for male initiation ritual among Arawak-speaking Wakuénai (Curripaco) of Venezuela, 1985.

and closing songs before and after the chanting of place-names that “opens up” a sacred landscape.<sup>5</sup>

### MATERIALIZING THE OCCULT: SACRED LANDSCAPES AS ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORIES

In the brief account of Wakuénai mythic narratives and initiation rituals related above, we learn how the idea of a sacred landscape germinates in the second musical opening up of the world as a series of collective movements away and across the world and back down underground/underwater to the mythic center of the world at Hípana, the place of ancestral spirits’ emergence. The mythic process of creating an expanding world of distinct peoples and places is then episodically reenacted in the singing and chanting of place-names away from and back to the center of the world and in the spatial movements of male flute and trumpet players in initiation rituals. In Wakuénai ontology, making history is a process of musically, verbally, and bodily singing, chanting, playing, and dancing-into-being the places, natural species, and peoples making up the known universe for each new generation of women and men.

To leave the analysis at this point, however, would give us only an incomplete understanding of indigenous history making, since this complex of myth, music, and ritual also embodies a reflexive awareness of what previous generations of human actors accomplished through opening up a social world of trade and inter-marriage, an expanding political economy based on fishing, horticulture, and other subsistence activities.<sup>6</sup> In female and male initiation rituals, geographic knowledge and historical memory converge in the making of specific ethnic identities that are defined in relation to mythic places and episodes as well as to historical events. Although this process of ethnogenesis unfolds primarily through such non-material resources as mythic narratives, specialized knowledge, and restricted musico-linguistic forms, it is also directly connected to material ways of interacting with natural habitats and exploiting natural resources.

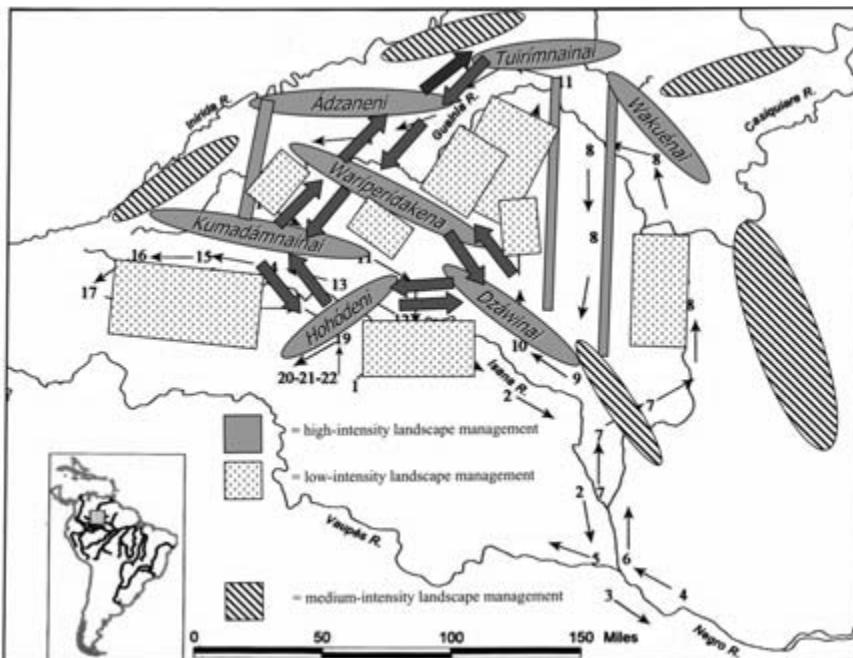
One of the most dominant features of Wakuénai ecology is the degree to which their everyday lives are oriented to rivers, streams, flooded forests, and other bodies of water. At the height of the annual long wet season in June, 65 percent of the region's forests are flooded with several feet of water. Villages are always located on major rivers or tributaries, and social visiting and ceremonies require people to travel by canoe along rivers and streams. Going to manioc gardens and hunting grounds also requires travel by canoe. Settlement patterns are set up in ways that allow people to efficiently exploit the interfacing of rivers and forests, especially during the first weeks of the long wet season (late March through early May) when the rivers are rising most rapidly and begin to overflow their banks. At these times, people use weirs and traps to capture large quantities of migrating *Leporinus* fish as they move into newly flooded forests and return to the main river channels after spawning. *Leporinus* spawning grounds are highly site-specific and are a major determinant of human settlement patterns.

Wakuénai cosmology is every bit as "hydrocentric" as their everyday subsistence and social activities. The trickster-creator, Made-From-Bone, created the ancestor spirits by lifting them from a hole beneath the rapids along the Aiarí River (a tributary of the Isana River in Brazil) at Hípana, the mythic center of the world and place of emergence. Living people who are descended from these mythic ancestors live in "this world" (*hekuápiriko*) along with fish and aquatic animal species, but they do not reside in the forests, which are home to game animals and bird species that are strongly associated with spirits of the dead. And as we have seen, chanting in both female and male initiation rituals follows major rivers, with the exception of a few key passages across forested lands. The migrating of fish species up rivers and from one river to another serves as a basic metaphor for the "mixing" of peoples from different river basins in the long series of place-naming that unfolds during the chanting for female and male initiation (Hill 1993). In short, Wakuénai cosmology, mythic narratives, and major rituals symbolically overdetermine the "hydrocentricity" of everyday social and economic practices.

A second, equally dominant feature of Wakuénai socioecology is the omnipresence of bitter manioc cultivation in swidden gardens and the processing of manioc into flour, bread, and other foods. Manioc gardens are mentioned in several places during the first narrative set in primordial times, the story of the origin of Made-From-Bone. Adult men are expected to cut a new swidden plot for cultivating manioc and other cultigens each year during the short, September–November dry season and to burn the felled vegetation in the longer January–March dry season so that it will be ready for planting before the heaviest rains begin in April. Although the custom of bride service is no longer in common practice, older people remember it as a period when young men were tested by their prospective in-laws in terms of how well they could provide for a wife and children. Felling and burning new manioc gardens was a central criterion in this testing of young men during bride service.<sup>7</sup> Time allocation studies demonstrate that adult women spend more time on manioc cultivation, processing, and cooking than any other activity, with the possible exception of childrearing. And in ritual chanting for female initiation, the spirit name for bitter manioc is “the stomach of the world.”

Fishing and manioc cultivation are complementary to one another in a number of practical and symbolic ways. A good meal consists of fish boiled in hot peppers served with manioc bread. The main periods of male labor required for felling and burning new gardens take place in dry season months when fishing is far more productive than in the wet season (Hill 1984). In general, fishing and gardening are viewed as equally important and valuable contributions to everyday social life and subsistence. There are no mythic narratives or ritual practices asserting that fishing is more valuable than gardening. The complementarity of fishing and gardening is also expressed in cycles of ceremonial exchange, called *pudáli*. In an opening “male-owned” ceremony, a group travels to the village of potential affines and offers them a large gift of smoked fish in return for which their hosts are obligated to sponsor a female-owned ceremony in which the main gift is processed manioc pulp.

Wakuénai ecology outlines a strategy of “let the fish and game come to us.” Fish traps or weirs (*cacuri*) are built along the banks of the river in areas of forest that become flooded during the long wet season, taking advantage of the natural feeding and spawning behaviors of fish species as they move into the flooded forests during the wet season. This settlement pattern is highly sedentary and promotes strong, enduring attachments between specific groups of people and specific places.<sup>8</sup> Wakuénai ways of interacting with the environment and exploiting natural resources outline a pattern of relatively high-intensity landscape management (Neves and Petersen 2006) in areas situated along major rivers and streams, especially in areas where there are significant seasonal migrations of *Leporinus* and other fish species to specific sites but also along entire river margins (see Figure 13.3).<sup>9</sup> As a result of many centuries of human occupation and swidden cultivation on pockets of terra firma, these areas of high-intensity landscape management contain large concentrations of



**FIGURE 13.3.** Pattern of low-, medium-, and high-intensity landscape management among Arawak-speaking Wakuénai (Curripaco) of Venezuela, Colombia, and Brazil.

Amazonian Dark Earth (ADE).<sup>10</sup> Low-intensity landscape management is found in areas away from major rivers and streams, except for heavily used portages between river systems (e.g., Cuyarí-Naquen, Guainía-Temi, and Xié-Tomo/Aki pathways). These overland trails are relatively short distances through forests at the headwaters of tributaries that feed into major rivers and serve as shortcuts connecting the river systems across the entire region. Such trails are very important as routes for trade between affinally linked sibs of different phratries and as escape routes in survival migrations during periods of traumatic changes, such as the Rubber Boom. In addition to these areas of high- and low-intensity landscape management, the Wakuénai and other Arawak-speaking groups of the upper Río Negro region make regular annual, or semi-annual, use of remote fishing and hunting lands (e.g., Caño San Miguel and Pasimoni River). In some cases, people make small manioc gardens in these remote areas, allowing them to reside there for an entire season. Also, some of these areas were formerly occupied by large, sedentary Arawak-speaking peoples, and one can still see evidence of their villages and gardens. These regularly used areas of fishing and hunting grounds are usually located at a considerable distance from

the main villages along major rivers and can be seen as areas of “medium-intensity” landscape management.

It is worth noting that this “hydrocentric” pattern of settlement and trade relations at the local/regional level is consistent with the broader pattern of Arawak-speaking peoples’ dispersal across lowland South America. Like the local and regional settlement pattern of Wakuénai sibs and phratries in the upper Río Negro region, the continent-wide distribution of Arawak-speaking peoples follows main rivers, coastlines, and islands with shorter “bridges” across important terrestrial areas (e.g., through the llanos connecting the middle Orinoco region to the Caribbean basin or across headwater areas of the Urubamba, Madeira, and Xingú Rivers in Peru, Bolivia, and southern Brazil).

### **“THE BEAUTIFUL WORDS”: IN SEARCH OF THE LAND-WITHOUT-EVIL**

Ethnographic and historical research among the Tupí-Guaraní peoples of Brazil and Paraguay has demonstrated the widespread emergence of utopian socioreligious movements across several centuries of recorded history (Léry 1880; Staden 1962 [1557]; Nimuendajú 1978 [1914]; Clastres 1995 [1975]; Aguero 1992).<sup>11</sup> More than any other single work, Clastres’s study succeeds in combining historical accounts from the early colonial period with ethnographic knowledge of Tupí-Guaraní religions in the twentieth century. Clastres’s main argument was that Tupí-Guaraní migrations in search of the Land-without-Evil were generated by basic contradictions in indigenous societies rather than the history of interethnic relations with Catholic missionaries and other Europeans during the colonial period. These migrations resulted in massive population movements over very long distances during the early colonial period. Between 1539 and 1549, for example, some 10,000 to 12,000 Tupí-Guaraní abandoned their agricultural communities in coastal Brazil and traveled westward to the headwaters of the Amazon River in Peru. Only about 300 pilgrims survived this journey to the source of the Amazon. In 1609, a single prophet (*karai*) led some 40,000 to 60,000 Potiguara people from Pernambuco to Maranhão, a distance of more than 1,000 miles. Examining the historical and ethnological evidence, Clastres argued that these great religious movements were not attempts to restore social order in the face of disintegration brought on by contacts with Europeans but a negation of the social and political expansions of Tupí-Guaraní chiefdoms that were already taking place before the first Europeans arrived in Brazil.

Clastres’s argument revolved around two foci: (1) the analysis of power relations within indigenous societies, and (2) the exploration of mythic narratives and ritual speech as forms of indigenous discourse that are constitutive as well as reflective of sociopolitical relations. Prophets (*karai*) were ambiguous “outsiders” whose powers stood in opposition to the established order of chiefs, or hereditary nobles,

and councils of elders, or senior men who had distinguished themselves in warfare and acquired prestige. The *karai* was a wandering prophet without any known place in the networks of kinship and affinity that ran through local communities of chiefs, elders, and warriors. Unlike chiefly authority based on inheritance or the elders' political power acquired through warfare, the prophets' powers to lead migrations in search of the Land-without-Evil arose from their understandings of aesthetic principles manifested in "the beautiful words" (*ayvu porã*), or chanted and sung speeches that directly embodied mythic powers of creation and destruction.

Tupí-Guaraní chiefdoms were pyramidal structures of power based on patrilineal inheritance of chiefly status. Ritual powers were distributed according to individuals' abilities to demonstrate shamanic "gifts," or chants, that indicated the presence of auxiliary spirits and conferred the ability to lead collective dances in sacred rituals and ceremonies. Among the Apapocuva-Guaraní, for example, Nimuendajú (1978 [1914]) found that individuals were ranked into a ritual hierarchy consisting of four levels: (1) children and those few adults who had no chant; (2) the majority of adult men and women who had one or two chants and who could potentially lead collective dances; (3) male and female shamans who had numerous chants and who could use these powers for curing illnesses and other purposes; and (4) senior males who were great shamans capable of leading the most sacred ceremony, or Nimongarai (male initiation ritual). This hierarchy of ritual power trickled through the interstices of the all-male political order of chiefs, elders, and hunter-warriors.

Although a fundamental contradiction between political and ritual powers ran through the entire social formation at all levels, the contradiction only erupted into the open when great shamans, or prophets, attempted to be chiefs. Such individuals were rare, since they could not succeed in balancing the two kinds of power. The story of Obera, a prophet and chief who attempted to lead a massive uprising against the Spaniards in 1579, demonstrates the impossibility of simultaneously exercising ritual and political powers. Obera's uprising failed when local chiefs withdrew their support because they could not allow him to make such a major political decision (i.e., to oppose the Spaniards) for their own political provinces (Clastres 1995 [1975]:58–64).

Since there was no way to fuse political and ritual powers into the same individuals or offices, the prophets' only way to put their ritual powers into practice was through organizing migrations in search of the Land-without-Evil. Jean de Léry's description (1880) of a major ritual in which twelve prophets led the men of several Tupinambá villages provides an extraordinary view of the potential for social upheaval in the prophets' exercising of ritual power. Women and children were secluded away from the ritual proceedings, which consisted of groups of warriors who stood motionless in circles around the visiting prophets as they jumped into the air, shook their rattles, and performed chants interrupted by speeches. Such massive rituals took local communities to the very threshold of abandoning their villages

and following the prophets in search of the Land-without-Evil. The juxtaposition of stationary warriors with hyperactive, chanting prophets neatly symbolized the fusion of political order and ritual transformation into a single social event.

To the prophets and their followers it was society itself—the political order of chiefs, elders, and hunter-warriors—that embodied Evil, and the musically sung and chanted “beautiful words” were the only forms of communication capable of restoring the bonds between human beings and mythic deities. Like the prophets who performed them, the “beautiful words” were dynamic embodiments of movement back and forth among spoken words, chanted speech, and unspoken melodies. The prophets’ musicalized speeches were ritually powerful ways of prefiguring the subsequent movements of people through geographic space in search of the Land-without-Evil. The “beautiful words” constituted a search for ultimate meanings or a metadiscourse capable of transcending the limitations of everyday speech through exploring the musical, poetic dimensions of speech and the nuances of mythic meaning. The beauty of the prophets’ speeches emerged from the arrangement of sounds in words, such as doubling of vowel sounds to accentuate the musicality of words, and from the use of sacred metaphors that heightened verbal specificity in ways that everyday naming processes could not achieve.

Stylistically, the prophets’ “beautiful words” were a dynamic movement through the metaphorical power of words and the musicality of language. In more substantive terms, the prophets’ speeches were a form of social commentary that criticized existing social norms from the perspective of the powerful beings of myth. This mythic critique of human society did not call for minor changes in individual behavior but asserted the need for radical disruption and negation of the most fundamental principles of Tupí-Guaraní social life, including rules of incest avoidance. The prophets also called for a total rejection of the comforts of sedentary agricultural life in favor of an austere, painful, and dangerous nomadism. The human/god distinction could not be transcended simultaneously because the mythic Land-without-Evil, being a negation of human society, could not coexist at the same place and time with that secular order. However, mythic paradise and the unification of human beings and deities could be achieved successively, over time, or historically, through ritually moving outside of the mundane social order in search of the ultimate meanings of human existence and the Land-without-Evil. In their “beautiful words,” the prophets joined together the musicality of chanted and sung speech and the call for a rejection of human society to create a poetic search for a mythic paradise on earth.

### **COMPARING SACRED LANDSCAPES**

For both the Arawakan Wakuénai and Tupí-Guaraní peoples of lowland South America, ritual hierarchy is based on differential knowledge of and control over

specialized musical and verbal artistry as well as closely associated patterns of dance and bodily movements or postures. In both cases, verbal naming processes are central to indigenous ways of defining and exercising ritual power in the making and transforming of places. Wakuénai chant-owners understand and teach *malikái* in the first place as a verbal process of spirit-naming. Primary emphasis is placed on acquiring and demonstrating a command of the complete repertoire of spirit names for animals, plants, objects, and places and the interpretive nuances of intertextual meanings among different subgenres of *malikái* and with narratives about the mythic creation of the world. In the case of Tupí-Guaraní ritual power, the central importance of verbal naming is clearly indicated in the naming of the genre as the “beautiful words” (*ayvu porä*). The importance of verbal naming, however, does not mean that either *malikái* or *ayvu porä* is reducible to purely linguistic processes of place-naming, since both genres of ritual speech are heavily dependent on non-verbal (or “extra-linguistic”) dimensions of performance, such as the musicality of sung, chanted, and spoken speech; bodily movements and postures; and the making and consuming of ritual foods, drinks, and artifacts. Moreover, both *malikái* and *ayvu porä* are dynamic modes of producing sacred landscapes as environmental histories, and both continue to be performed in different regions of lowland South America that have been engaged in direct interethnic relations with expanding colonial and national states for three centuries or even longer (Aguero 1992; Richard Reed, personal communication, 1996).

Important contrasts between *malikái* and *ayvu porä* also deserve attention. Knowledge of *ayvu porä* is distributed in a spectrum of less-to-more powerful individuals, ranging from children and a few adults who have no songs, through most adult men and women who have one or two songs, through male and female shamans who perform curing songs and a variety of others, to the master shamans or prophets who are the only individuals who know how to perform the songs of male initiation rituals. Among Tupí-Guaraní peoples, most adults are expected to learn how to perform at least one or two of the sacred songs in the course of becoming adults, and those few who do not do so are stigmatized by being categorized as children. For the Wakuénai, ritual hierarchy is more “top-heavy” insofar as only specialists known as chant-owners have memorized and can perform the ritually powerful ways of chanting, singing, and speaking (*malikái*). Also, Wakuénai chant-owners are not to be confused with shamans (*malírri*), who have learned the special singing and chanting for male and female initiation rituals. Instead, *malikái* is an entirely distinct genre making use of spirit-naming that does not occur in shamanic singing (*malírrikairi*).

Underlying all these social and musical contrasts between *malikái* and *ayvu porä* is a profound ontological difference in the poetics of history and place-making. For Wakuénai chant-owners, the poetics of history begins and ends with the musical and verbal definition of the center of the world, the place of ances-

tral mythic emergence, the “navel” of the world, or the place where mythic beings of the celestial world are connected via a cosmic umbilical cord to their human descendants, both living and dead, in the terrestrial and aquatic worlds. History and place-making open up in the second creation of the world as groups of men and women compete for control over sacred flutes and trumpets, play these wind instruments in various places, and return to the mythic center. The overall pattern that results from this mythic performance of ritual music is a series of movements away-across the world and back to the center of mythic space (see Figures 13.1 and 13.2). The center of mythic space is constructed through the use of fixed verbal forms learned by rote memory and stable musical pitches. For Tupí-Guaraní prophets, the “beautiful words” result in a strikingly different pattern of spatial movement that is far less continuous, flowing, and chiasmatic and far more discontinuous and unidirectional. Instead of a series of movements away from and back to a mythic center, Tupí-Guaraní prophetism consists of one-way movements away from the center, resulting in a pattern of dispersal from central places to a number of distant “colonies.”

### CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This brief comparison of ritually powerful musical and verbal artistry among the Arawakan Wakuénai and Tupí-Guaraní peoples reveals interesting similarities as well as striking differences in the ways that ritual place-making is conceived and practiced. To carry this comparative poetics of history to the next step would require similar analyses of other well-documented genres of ritual musical speech in lowland South America. The dreaming and performance of Hallelujah hymns among Makushi, Akawaio, Patamona, and other Carib-speaking communities in the Guyana Shield region of northern South America would make for interesting comparison with Wakuénai and Tupí-Guaraní ritual singing. These Hallelujah hymns must be performed only in the language in which their composer originally dreamed them, resulting over time in vast networks, or “routes of knowledge,” in which each specific song has a historical pedigree of “owners” going back to its original composer/dreamer (Butt-Colson 1971, 1985; Staats 1996). Another important set of ritual and political genres of singing and speaking is found among the Gê-speaking peoples of central Brazil, who have developed a hierarchy of fully lexicalized political oratory (“plaza speech”), semi-lexicalized ceremonial singing (*da'nore*), and fully melodic/non-lexical ritual wailing (*dawawa*) (Graham 1985, 1996). These Xavante performances outline a poetics of social and natural space in which lexicality is clearly dominant in defining the political center and where musicality is dominant in the domestic space of uxorilocal extended family households as well as in movements away from the ritual/lexical center of political power into the extrasocial space of savannahs and forests.<sup>12</sup>

## NOTES

1. *The Occult Life of Things: Native Amazonian Theories of Materiality and Personhood* (Santos-Granero, ed., 2009) contains numerous examples of how things become “animated” or “subjectivized” in a variety of ethnographic settings around lowland South America. The introductory essay to the volume provides a highly useful theoretical overview of how materialities are subjectivized as well as how subjectivities become materialized among indigenous Amazonian peoples (Santos-Granero 2009).

2. For a detailed consideration of how these twin processes operate in the ritual production of environmental histories among the Arawak-speaking Wakuénai of the upper Río Negro region in Venezuela, see Hill (1989). And for a current theoretical approach to material artifacts as signifiers and “the distribution of cognition in the material surround of the body (‘extended, situated embodiment’)” (Sinha, Rodríguez, and Vang 2008), see Sinha (2009).

3. Elsewhere I have explored this integration of shamanic naming practices with collectively played instrumental music as “shamanic musical configurations” that take shape in a variety of different ways across lowland South America (Hill and Chaumeil 2011).

4. I explore these themes and provide detailed translations of the entire three-part cycle of Wakuénai mythic narratives in *Made-From-Bone: Trickster Myths, Music, and History in the Amazon* (Hill 2009b).

5. A more detailed study of the instrumental and verbal musical processes at work in male initiation rituals and related ceremonial exchanges is available in Hill (2009a).

6. See my analysis of regional historical patterns in *Comparative Arawakan Histories* (Hill 2002).

7. The central importance of making gardens in bride service was captured by Matos Arvelo when he wrote, “La mujer es adquirida por la fuerza del conuco” (1912:44).

8. My statement about the importance of sedentary settlement patterns among Wakuénai sibs and phratries in the upper Río Negro region is consistent with Max Schmidt’s more general assertion of the linkage between sedentism and bitter manioc cultivation among Arawak-speaking peoples of lowland South America. “Sedentism among the Arawak population was, indeed, encouraged to the greatest degree by the immense amount of work necessary for the planting and the long maturation time for manioc . . . Only compelling reasons and overwhelming forces could move tribes with such a marked sedentism like the Arawaks to leave their homeland forever and with that build up their economic existence completely anew elsewhere” (Schmidt 2006 [1917], chap. 2:5).

9. Neves and Petersen argue that high- and low-intensity landscape management are “nonmutually exclusive” categories. High-intensity landscape management is associated with “the development of stable, sedentary, socially complex lifeways across Amazonia” and “represents the constitution of cultural places and territories loaded with material and symbolic meanings” (2005:286).

10. There are two distinct kinds of ADE: *terras pretas*, resulting from long-term human settlements, and *terras mulatas*, located in “fields where spatially intensive, organic amendment-reliant cultivation took place” (Arroyo-Kalin 2010:473).

11. This section of the chapter is focused on Tupí-Guaraní communities of coastal Brazil during the early colonial period and their ritual language, or “the beautiful words” (*ayvu porã*). Contemporary ethnographers have observed similar ritual performances among

the Chirapa and other Tupí-Guaraní communities in Paraguay and adjacent areas of Brazil (Richard Reed, personal communication, 2002). Tupí-Guaraní-speaking peoples exhibit an extraordinary variability in levels and forms of sociopolitical organization (Viveiros de Castro 1992), and I make no claim that the model of ritual and political power being discussed here can in any way be generalized to all Tupí-Guaraní communities.

12. Other interesting potential cases for comparative study include the Aguaruna genre of magical singing (*anen*) (Brown 1985), political speeches or chiefly chanting among the Kuna (Sherzer 1983), and the Mehináku chiefly speeches in the upper Xingú region (Fausto, Franchetto, and Heckenberger, forthcoming).

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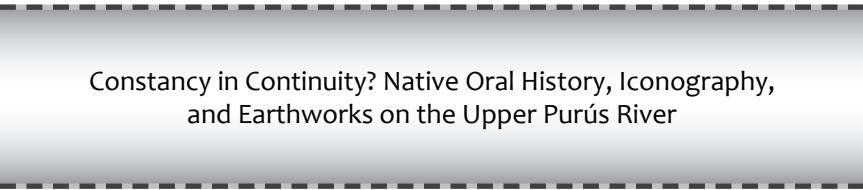
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## Constancy in Continuity? Native Oral History, Iconography, and Earthworks on the Upper Purús River

*Pirjo Kristiina Virtanen*

### INTRODUCTION

When I was working with the Manchineri in Acre state, Brazil, I asked young people to produce drawings as a way of gaining more insight into their lived worlds. Once a young man drew the ayahuasca (*Banisteriopsis*) vision he had seen during a shamanic ceremony. When I later compared this shamanic Manchineri design with a satellite photo of an earthwork of the same region, I was surprised by how similarly the drawing followed the geometric forms of the earth structure. According to the young man, the geometric design was the “vehicle” of a palm spirit, which he depicted above it.<sup>1</sup>

According to Manchineri people, the shamanic visions come from entities such as palm spirits, one of the most powerful non-human beings in Manchineri sociocosmology. These visions, similar to dreams, provide an important source of knowledge from non-human beings. The visions allow transformation through the interaction with non-humans whose real nature and forms are expressed. They are experienced at a very personal level and represent a totalizing image of the world in which things are connected in complex invisible ways.



FIGURE 14.1. Satellite photo of an earthworks situated in western Amazonia.

The current relationship of contemporary Arawak-speaking peoples to the earthworks found in this region of Acre is very distant, but as there are many similarities in their cosmology and the forms of the sites, in this chapter I compare the Manchineri's oral history and iconography with currently available data on the upper Purús River earthworks. The Manchineri's oral history, including the myths, memories, and stories, forms their *historicities* (Whitehead 2003), their view into the past. Myths allow the logic of the impossible and help people to organize their thoughts and memories (see, e.g., Turner 1988). In addition, their internal structure may contain past experiences, events, and ways of thinking, while also permitting transformations, reviewing the past and present time (Lévi-Strauss 1964; Gow 2001:285).

### GEOGLYPHS IN WESTERN AMAZONIA

The discovery of large pre-Columbian settlements and road systems has changed our view of the Amazon region's past (Erickson 2006; Heckenberger et al. 2008; Schaan, Ranzi, and Pärssinen 2008; Pärssinen, Schaan, and Ranzi 2009). In western Amazonia, the earthworks identified by Brazilian and foreign researchers on the upper Purús River have contributed to a new picture of Amazonian civilizations.



**FIGURE 14.2.** *The Fazenda Paraná earthworks. (Photo by Edison Caetano)*

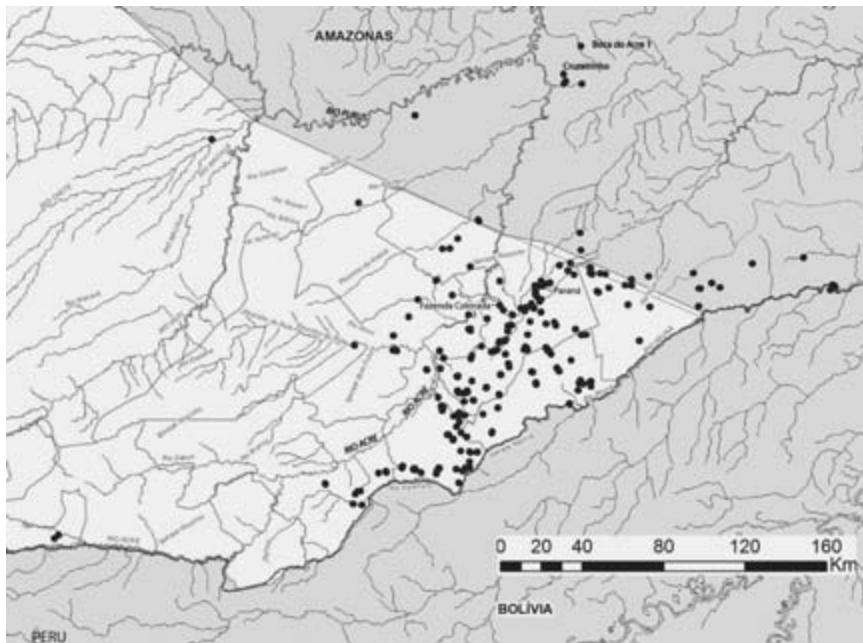
These earthworks are situated between the affluents of Purús River in terra firma but also in varzea. They form large-scale enclosures with diameters extending up to 400 meters. Straight causeways often connect the enclosures, which may have entrances and exits. Today the sites are identified best from above by airplane. The features are called geoglyphs (“earth marks”) and are mostly circular, hexagonal, rectangular, or elliptical in shape. They are also U- and D-forms or circles inside squares. The geoglyphs have walls, banks, and ditches with a depth of between one and four meters (Schaan, Ranzi, and Pärssinen 2008; Pärssinen, Schaan, and Ranzi 2009).

These geometric earthworks were first studied in the 1970s.<sup>2</sup> The ceramic styles were shown to be part of the same tradition and the oldest sites constructed 2,500 years ago (e.g., Dias and Carvalho 1988; Dias 2006). They may have been ceremonial sites, settlement sites, fortifications, meeting places, or all of these. The sites were still in use in AD 1250 (Pärssinen et al. 2003; Schaan, Ranzi, and Pärssinen 2008). Nevertheless, there is still little known about the prehistoric builders of these sites and their functions.

Today some 270 geoglyphs have been identified in Acre, southern Amazonas, and Rondônia states along the deforested stretches of the BR-317 highway (Schaan, personal communication, 2010). Unfortunately, many of the earthworks have already been destroyed by cattle ranching, road construction, or farming activities.



**FIGURE 14.3.** The Fazenda Colorada geoglyph. (Photo by Martti Pärssinen)

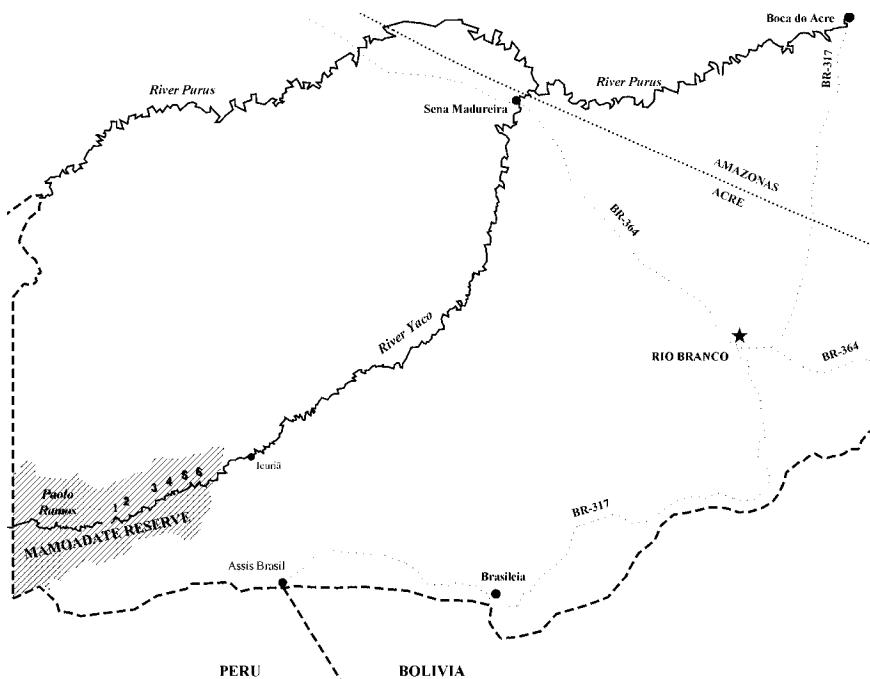


MAP 14.1. *The earthworks region in western Amazonia. (Pärssinen, Schaan, and Ranzi 2009)*

All of them have been added to the Brazilian national register compiled by IPHAN (Instituto de Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional) and have consequently become more widely acknowledged as part of humanity's cultural patrimony.

### THE UPPER PURÚS AND ARAWAK-SPEAKING PEOPLES

The Manchineri inhabit the area close to the densest earthwork area identified so far in the upper Purús. Today the Manchineri number some 900 persons, most of whom live in an officially recognized area, Mamoadate reserve, located along the Yaco River. The Manchineri used to live by the Purús River and its affluents, the Aracá, Caspaha, and Yaco Rivers (e.g., Chandless 1866b; Métraux 1948). The Manchineri are closely related to the Yine (Piro) living today in Peru, who say that the former speak "ancient people's language" (Gow 2001:81). The ancestral population may have migrated to Brazil long before the Yine people started to migrate downriver from the Urubamba region. The Yine in the Urubamba and Madre de Díos Rivers and Manchineri speak mutually intelligible languages, but their traditions are slightly different, including their body paintings. The Yine are one of the most numerous indigenous peoples of Peruvian Amazonia (numbering some 3,000).



MAP 14.2. *Location of the Mamoaadate reserve and the principal Manchineri villages.*

The language maps and the first historical records of the upper Purús geoglyph region show that at the time of the European conquest the dominant people in the area were Arawak-speaking Manchineri and Apuriná peoples (see, e.g., Chandless 1866a, 1866b; Labre 1872; Métraux 1948; Steward 1948; Nimuendajú 1981). Many other indigenous groups no longer live in the area today, such as Tacanan group Kapechene (Araona). We can suppose that the Manchineri and Apuriná were already the area's dominant groups long before the arrival of non-Indians, but the area has been inhabited by numerous groups. The etymology of river names in the Purús region shows that they have an Arawakan origin, indicating the dominance of this group of peoples. Further north, many rivers have Apuriná names, such as the Pauini and the Inauini.<sup>3</sup>

The Manchineri and other Yine groups were known as skilled canoe builders and travelled long distances. Similar to the Shipibo, they acted as the intermediates before direct contact with non-natives. They were familiar with the Ucayali River and metal tools in the era of colonialization (Chandless 1866a). Manchineri trade relations may have extended as far as the Juruá. They still know the forest paths between the region's main rivers. Although stones are very rarely found in the rivers of Acre state, in older village sites the Manchineri occasionally come across

stone axes and other “ancient” objects. This indicates trade relations as far as the upper Madeira River, for example, where stones are more frequently found. The Manchineri may have exchanged cotton textiles with people from other areas since the Manchineri were famous for their weaving.

Long-distance exchange may even have connected the Manchineri with the Andean highlands. Representations of Amazonian flora and fauna are common in Andean prehistoric art. The influences between Amazonia and the Andes have been mutual. In addition to textiles, the Andean groups may have obtained Amazonian seeds through trading (Lentz 2000), as well as remedies, shamanic healing, and hallucinogenic plants. The use of different types of hallucinogens has been common practice among both Andean and Amazonian shamans as a means of communicating with the non-human world. The name of the hallucinogenic drink made from the leaves of Amazonian vines and other plants, today commonly known as ayahuasca, originates from a Quechuan term meaning “vine of death.” However, the plant itself is native to tropical forest areas. Among Amazonian groups, most Arawakan languages call it *kamalampi* or *kamarampi* while most Panoan languages call it *oni* (vine) or *nixi pae* (concoction).

The interchanges between the Amazonian lowlands and highlands also influenced the cosmovision of tropical forest peoples. For Panoan-speaking groups, for example, the name “Inca” still refers to the mythical mountain people who are admired for their riches, technology, and clear, wide pathways, but also binarily to greedy and evil people, cannibal gods, or spirits that are associated with death (Roe 1988; McCallum 2000; Calavia Sáez 2006; Lagrou 2007). Arawakan myths, by contrast, rarely mention Incas, except in groups such as the Ashaninka and Yanesha, who are located in lowland areas that are immediately adjacent to the central Andean highlands. Unlike the Panoan groups, for whom the Inca is a primary symbol of alterity, the Ashaninka identify themselves as direct descendants of the Inca. It may be that the ancestors of Arawakan speakers had more organized contacts with the Andean groups, and Panoan-speaking groups were more dominated by the peoples of the highlands.

A Yine myth from the region of the Urubamba River even mentions great cities with wide streets that belonged to the white-lipped peccaries of the endogamous Yine groups, the Manchineri among others (Gow 2009). The contemporary Manchineri, though, say that their ancestors lived on smaller tributaries as a way of protecting themselves from other groups with whom they clashed and later to hide from the eyes of non-Indians, who enslaved Indians to work in rubber extraction. That can be a huge contrast to pre-Columbian time. Many elder Manchineri were born by tributaries that were hard to find and from there they navigated into the bigger affluents. Their former gardens and banana plantations can still be found along the courses of these tributaries. For the Manchineri, self-protection has been a crucial factor in choosing where to live.

## HUMANITY AND PALMS

According to the Manchineri elders, in the past, three palm trees functioned as particularly important food sources: peach palm (*Bactris gasipaes*) or *kiru*, ouricuri (*Attalea phalerata*) or *ksami*, and ivory nut palm (*Phytelephas macrocarpa*) or *kyawe*. Their fruits (*coquinhos*) were their ancestors' primary source of food. The ancestors of the Manchineri used especially the cooked fruits of peach palm, as well as soft ouricuri leaves to prepare a soup (*bipru*), all rich in protein and oils. Among the Manchineri, other nutritive drinks are still prepared from bataua, assai, jatobá, tucuma, and moriche palm. As well as being an important source of nutrition, palm trees are exploited for housing material by the region's native peoples. Permanent residential houses are still constructed of stilt palm wood, and the leaves of ivory nut palm or ouricuri are used for the roofs. The Manchineri also prepare bows and the heads of arrows from the very hard peach palm wood.

Palm trees are common in the geoglyph areas (Dias 2006) and were therefore probably the main source of alimentation and construction material for the local population at the time when the geoglyphs were made. Today an extensive literature exists on the use of palm trees and domesticated crops. Studies have also revealed the management and domestication of palms in prehistoric times (e.g., Balée 1988; Balick 1988; Clement 2006). In fact, western Amazonia has the richest genetic resources in terms of palm trees, and for many of the area's indigenous groups these plants offered a means of subsistence prior to agriculture (e.g., Clement 2006).

In general, palm trees are central to the indigenous origin myths explaining the relations between humans and non-humans as well as ritual life (e.g., Hugh-Jones 1979; Erikson 2001; Zucchi 2006; Hill 2009a, 2009b). In northwestern Amazonia these often include festivities held during the palm fruit seasons, which are generally not open to everyone. Among the Maipure, Jagua, Wakuénai, and Desana, for instance, these festivities involve the construction of a ritual hierarchy among men (both ancestors and new generations) who can see and employ the sacred instruments made of palm tree products (usually *Socratea exorrhiza*), re-creating ritual power relations between men and the sacred world. As sacred instruments wielded by shamans, flutes mediate between sky and earth, humans and non-humans, the living and the dead (Hugh-Jones 1979; Zucchi 2006; Hill 2009a).

Interestingly, the Manchineri envisage a close relationship among the three palm trees mentioned above—ouricuri, peach palm, and ivory nut palm—and the most important non-human beings, forest spirits called *kajpomyolatu*. Elsewhere in Amazonia, a similar kind of spirit is known as *cabocinho da mata*, *curupira*, or *chul-lachaki*. In the Manchineri cosmos these non-human (spirit) beings may be either female or male and represent precisely these aforementioned palm trees: *ksami*, *kiru*, *kyawe*. In effect, the forest spirits represent the “peoples” (or “nations”) of these trees: ouricuri people (known as the master of forest), peach palm people (known as the being of wind), and the ivory nut palm people (known as the being of thun-

der). These spirit peoples are considered to be teachers who differ in their size, knowledge, and activities. Their visible appearance is human, but they have great physical powers and other non-human qualities. The master of forest is immensely strong and can kill anyone who harms the tropical forest, through overhunting for example. Hence this being acts as the guardian, owner, and protector of the jungle and game animals. In addition, the other qualities of the palm spirit peoples—wind and thunder—refer to vital elements of human life: breath and strength. The latter has also been associated with maleness/loudness performing successful pollination (e.g., Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975).

*Kajpomyolatus* can be encountered in the forest and may also appear in ayahuasca (*kamalampi*) visions where they teach the secrets of the forests, essential to becoming a good hunter or healer. The contemporary shaman from the Manchineri reserve was lost in the forest for months and during this time was looked after by this spirit. He now lives in isolation and many villagers come to him to be cured. Some men still make voluntary contact with this non-human being and are good hunters. Palm trees are associated, then, with knowledge and resources that ensure the community's health and well-being. However, only a few men have entered into contact with a *kajpomyolatu*, since the person must observe strict precautions or risk being killed by this powerful entity. Many people, though, told how this non-human being had tried to catch them or had already enchanted someone else in the forest. *Kajpomyolatus* mark moral acts, but they are also transformers similar to the palms that produce human life through their resources and social relations created between generations and genders, whose work is divided in preparing food, shelters, and objects from the palm materials (see Virtanen n.d.).

## DESIGNS OF RELATEDNESS

The Manchineri relate palm spirits to ayahuasca visions, among others. These designs appear and the palm spirits “arrive” when non-human knowledge becomes available. Furthermore, the same ayahuasca vision containing an iconography similar to the one of the earthworks structures, as mentioned above, appears also with a Manchineri ancestor, Pwernokatu. The design is visible on his *koshma*, a long cotton dress, when he has been presented in drawings or described after ayahuasca visions.<sup>4</sup> In the young man's ayahuasca drawing, then, it is the ancestor's design that acted as the “vehicle” of the palm spirit. It shows a close relationship between the ancestors and the palms but also the power of designs to intermediate.

In western and northwestern Amazonia many native groups use ayahuasca in collective ceremonies to reproduce social relations between humans and non-humans. The geometric designs become visible only when the person interacts with non-human beings and is able to transform and produce one's knowledge and relatedness with them (Lagrou 2007; Virtanen 2009). A shaman leads the ayahuasca

ceremony by the music and the visualizations of the participants. Generally speaking, the hallucinogenic effects produced by ayahuasca can involve geometrical forms such as circles, squares, and rectangles (see, e.g., Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975) similar to those of the geoglyphs. They represent the designs of the powerful non-humans in native cosmology, such as the boa constrictor and jaguar, but they can also be ancestors' designs, such as the one of the ancestor. Moreover, Reichel-Dolmatoff (1975:170–177) shows that in a common agreement of the Tukanos, ayahuasca visions represented fertility and exogamy. For instance, squares represented uterus, circles semen, and U-shapes entrances/doors to the uterus or to other states of consciousness. These forms are common in earthworks sites in the Acre region, but for the Manchineri, squares (*pixkaklu tsojri*) are associated with resistance or sameness. Further north, for the Apuriná, circles are important forms of celestial bodies.

In addition to hallucinogenic visions, the geometric designs are the source of the patterns applied to cotton clothing, pottery, and the human body, although specific designs are used for particular purposes and things (see Gebhart-Sayer 1985 on the Shipibo-Conibo; Gow 2001, 1999 on the Yine; Lagrou 2007 on Panoan speakers). Manchineri body paintings relate to qualities and powers of certain beings. For instance, Manchineri elders paint the rectangular and square design of a tortoise on the legs of young girls undergoing puberty initiation rituals to bring resistance, and paint the design of the ancient durable being, Hoyakalu (also often called "God"), with long transitory lines on the whole body to reach a long life. These designs, among others, can be used for younger generations, contrary to the paintings of the entities whose life is short, such as a ray (*hpuyo*). Designs like body ornaments or clothes mark cultural human entities, and thus the forest spirits and transformable objects, for instance, lack them (see Erikson 2001:109; Gow 2001). Lagrou (2007) has also emphasized that designs are about relatedness as they point to interdependence of different kinds of people.

The Manchineri also visualize designs by the *kamalampi* chants, which are about non-human entities called by kinship terms and pictured in human forms and activities, such as playing instruments. Designs accompanied by music make non-human entities present, reestablishing the balance among different entities.<sup>5</sup>

## HIGH PLAINS TROPICAL AREAS

In addition to ancestors, the non-human palm tree beings are associated with the high plains areas. According to the Manchineri, two of the palm spirit peoples like to live in terra firma areas similar to those of the earthworks: places that have slopes on their sides and where palm trees grow. Natural clearings, mounds, and mountains are features that are often associated with spirits. However, Erikson (2001:109) has shown that for the Matis, ancestor spirits, contrary to other spirits, reside in cultivated clearings where there are domesticated palms. Most of the geometrical earth-

works are situated in places that combine these features, in plains elevations with domesticated palms (Dias 2006; Schaan, Ranzi, and Pärssinen 2008; Pärssinen, Schaan, and Ranzi 2009). These sites stand out from the surrounding environment, can be observed from afar, and thus may also have been points of orientation and cultural reproduction.

The series of earthworks in the Acre region may have been used as public spaces for formal meetings and ceremonies. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Fawcett (2001:81) noticed enormous village clearings up to “a mile and more in diameter” in the area occupied by the Apurinā Indians, closer to the Bolivian border in the Abunā region. Western Amazonia forms the border area between the Amazon and the Andes. The zone of earthworks may, therefore, have played a special role in connecting these two regions. Visitors may have been welcomed to native villages in much the same way as in many indigenous villages in Amazonia today. The village circles are still the lines separating “us,” people, and “others” (Ewart 2003). In general, it seems that plains areas were favored sites of political and ceremonial centers already during the prehistoric period (see, e.g., Heckenberger et al. 2008).

In the narratives recounted by Manchineri elders, their ancient ceremonial site is emphasized as a large, clear space. This means separating a space for specific usage. The elders underline that the ceremonial field was carefully tended: “the ground was kept very very clean” (Virtanen field notes). This was the place where festivities were held, dances called *yikaklu*, described as “games” (*brincadeiras*) involving all the community members in the big ceremonial space of the village. Chandless (1866a), in his description of the Aquiri River, mentions that in one indigenous community, which he was unable to name, they saw trenches (*trincheiras*) between an open construction inhabited by the Indians and the closed house built for ceremonial objects. The Indians said that the trenches were ceremonial in purpose rather than defensive, as Chandless had initially presumed. These could be the same kind of trenches that border geoglyphs or are found inside them.

Choosing the location of ceremonial sites has been an important issue for Amazonians. The Yagua, for instance, locate their ceremonial activities on a mound at some distance from the villages (Fraysse 1975). Many ritual spaces enable a special relationship to the landscape. Specific territories can be bound to the human body insofar as some natural boundaries, such as cliffs and waterfalls, enable new relationships with the human body (Anttonen 2005). By adapting to landscape, ceremonial sites can support interaction with natural environment, such as cardinality. Some earthworks are positioned following cardinality, although not necessarily their positions in relation to each other on a larger scale.

The plains sites may also have been the location for sporting games and contests. According to Manchineri elders, archery tournaments, races, and strength-based competitions were common in their ancestral past. The sporting competitions were also an important element in instructing young men. In these competitions,



FIGURE 14.4. Borders of the Jacó Sá geoglyph and an ouricuri palm. (Photo by Pirjo K. Virtanen)

players represented the different groups or *nerus*. According to the Manchineri, the competing groups were also fundamental units of their social organization in the past. Together all these different groups formed the Yine (“humans,” “us”), as many Yine in Peru and Manchineri identify themselves today. In fact, they consist of different groups, including the Koshitshineru (Little Bird People), Hahamluneru (Low River People), Jiwutaneru (Mouth of the River People), Wenejeneru (Riverside People), Himnuneru (Snake People), Natshineru (Hungry People), Getuneru (Frog People), Poleroneru (Macaw People), and Manxineru (Inharé Tree People). These ancestral groups migrated to different geographical locations and started to intermarry when the rubber bosses arrived in the region (Matteson 1965; Gow 1991; Virtanen 2008).<sup>6</sup>

Elsewhere in Amazonia, competitions have typically acted as a means of displaying the power and prestige of clans. Many indigenous peoples in central Brazil still engage in various game activities. Historical writings on the Purús area mention that the Caxarari played games with rubber balls in which the objective was to avoid allowing it to touch the ground (Labre 1872). The Arawak-speaking Taíno people

in the Caribbean islands engaged in similar practices, their ceremonial sites also being rectangular. Although they lived far from western Amazonia, there are various similarities. The sacredness of the ceremonial sites is expressed in social boundary building.

The high plains areas are often mentioned in the origin myths of Arawak speakers. The Manchineri ancient people's myth tells about a natural catastrophe and the people who escaped by digging a pit in the ground. In this particular Manchineri myth, an ancient shaman learns that the world is about to end. Some of the people refuse to believe him, but those who do flee to a high place and begin to dig a great pit "in that high land." The tools used for this work were two sticks tightened together with a stone. When the people hear that the world is about to end, they enter the pit and the earth covers them over. The pit is described as circular, located in a very high place with no jungle. One old Manchineri woman added that there were also rectangular pits. But the world did not end: there was only thunder and a period of darkness and heavy rain during which everyone was afraid. When the storm was over, the survivors emerged from the pit. It is interesting that in this narrative there is mention of rectangular earthworks, since circular archaeological earthworks are more common in other parts of Amazonia, for example in the Xingú region (Heckenberger et al. 2008) and in Bolivia (Erickson 2006). Rectangular symbolic forms are very common in the Andes as well as in the designs of pre-Andean Arawaks such as of the Yine and Manchineri. The Manchineri also say that in the past they used to evade their enemies by digging pits in which people (primarily women and children) could hide during an attack while the warriors protected them.

One central aspect for Amazonian peoples is the stories about the end of the world, related to tempests, floods, and deluges, followed by the world beginning anew. The Manchineri origin myth tells of a deluge that destroyed everything and that was caused when a boa constrictor enchanted a young woman and made her pregnant. The only survivors of the deluge that followed the enchantment were two women who escaped the flood by climbing up a genipap tree. At the end of the myth, the older woman gives birth to the first human, Tslatu. Amazonian deluge myths can be related to climate changes in the area, as well as to the rainy season when the rivers flood and the new cycle of production begins.

The relation between mythic and historical narratives can be complementary (see, e.g., Hill 1988). The geoglyphs are located in the high plains areas cited in Amazonian origin myths related to natural catastrophes. According to Pärssinen and colleagues (2003), earthworks sites reveal the existence in the area of a large population combined with a well-organized social system before the fourteenth century, followed by a decline due to climate changes and, finally, the Spanish conquest and the arrival of European diseases. The end of the civilizations responsible for constructing the earthworks may be connected to natural catastrophes and the turmoil that followed.

## **NON-HUMANS, HUMANS, AND THE LANDSCAPE**

Although the earthworks may also have had functional purposes, such as crop cultivation, orientation, or defense, the perfection of geometrical structures indicates that they carried symbolic meanings for their builders. Although the aerial photos of the earthworks seem to be unfamiliar to the Manchineri today, the earthworks designs may have carried the same meanings that traditional designs possess for many Amazonian natives today. Gow (1999:236) states about the Yine designs, “All designs are properties of surface which differentiate the interior and exterior of a body or substantial form.” Consequently, designs make people healthy and powerful. The designs are an important way and a source of knowledge for controlling life and death.

The designs used specifically in the earthworks may have been an attempt to render the earth fertile and productive—and to make certain locations (and their non-human subjectivities, such as trees, animals, plants, and earth) into kinspeople. The hills that the Manchineri cross today to reach their gardens, for instance, are regarded as their ancestors. Human interaction relating to their landscape is thus particularly manifest in earthworks. Their iconography also allowed a manifestation of the social boundaries uniting the people of the area. It may have allowed the ancestors of the Manchineri to express their identity and interact with non-humans, as well as with groups arriving from other parts of the lowlands and highlands. When the structures of the earthworks are perceived on the ground and when their forms are recognized, they offer a sense of power and continuity. They may also have been ways to show symbolic power, as Heckenberger (2003:35) suggests about the symbolic power of Kuikuro chiefs through their control of cardinal points, roadways, and plazas. Moreover, cardinality is a significant element in the design of Amazonian settlements, their transition lines, as well as activities uniting groups, generations, and genders (see, e.g., Hugh-Jones 1979). That is not characteristic only of pre-Andean Arawaks, but their iconography and oral history indicate a long-term Arawakan-mediated adaptation and disturbance of forests in the upper Purús region.

For the Manchineri, the high plains areas, palms, and their iconography indicate the power of transformation. Hence they continue to mark important cultural values. Palm trees especially have been subjectivized, as they have had close relations with them (Virtanen n.d.; see also Hill 2009a). Non-human palm spirits show cultural potentialities: things to be valued and attained because of their importance for the continuity of society, or those things to be devalued and avoided (Anttonen 2005) such as exploitation of forest resources. Today they are said to inhabit remote high plains areas that are no longer interacted with by the contemporary natives of the region. The same logic is expressed by the Manchineri claim that the spirits of the palm trees do not live near the villages closest to farms and deforested areas. As a special category, the guardians of the forest environment manifest their values, continuity, and symbolic limits of the sociocultural system.

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## NOTES

1. The drawing is not shown here because the Manchineris prefer to avoid materialization of the palm spirit.
2. The project PRONAPABA (Programa Nacional de Pesquisas Arqueológicas da Bacia Amazônica) started the archaeological studies in Acre state in 1977. Since 2002 the Brazilian-Finnish multidisciplinary research team has studied the earthworks. Excavations and mappings started in 2007 after obtaining the final research permits.
3. The names of the Iquiri and Aquiri Rivers may derive from the Arawakan word *kiri*, signifying peach palm.
4. There is not enough space to present the oral history of Pwernokatu here, but it can be said to be about gender relations.
5. See Gebhart-Sayer (1985) on how designs accompanied by music are also used for curing.
6. The Apurinã are also divided into subgroups called *nerus*, which determine the people with whom one can marry. The groups had different lifestyles and physical characters, and their interrelations were conflictual.

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Ethnogenesis at the Interface of the Andes  
and the Amazon: Re-examining Ethnicity in the  
Piedmont Region of Apolobamba, Bolivia

*Meredith Dudley*

On June 1, 2007, a group of Andean colonists and peasants (*campesinos*) blockade the road between the highland city of La Paz and the small provincial capital of Apolo, located in the piedmont region of Apolobamba, Bolivia. Throughout the summer of 2007, the normally bucolic town was engulfed in chaos as protesters razed the local headquarters of Madidi National Park and the military police responded to protests with rounds of tear gas. Conditions in Apolo, which had been simmering unnoticed for years, were suddenly thrust into the national spotlight (ABI 2007a, 2007b; APB 2007).

The dispute arose in response to the legal recognition of an indigenous land claim, or *Tierra Comunitaria de Origen* (TCO, Communal Land of Origin) by the Lecos of Apolo, who had been organizing to reclaim their ethnic identity and territory for more than a decade (MACPIO 2001). What was being contested by both the campesino sector and the white provincial elite (*vecinos*) was not just the designation of the land itself but the very legitimacy of the people who were claiming it—the Lecos of Apolo. Although portrayed in the ethnographic literature and census

data as on the verge of extinction (e.g., Varese 1983; Ibarra Grasso 1985; Martínez and Carvajal 1985; Montaño Aragón 1989; Lema 1998), Lecos ethnic identity was targeted for revitalization by the indigenous organization CIPLA (Indigenous Center of the Lecos People of Apolo), which formed in 1997 (MACPIO 2001).

In addressing this contemporary struggle, it is important to convey that neither the lands being claimed nor the social actors involved represent bound, static entities. Instead, both Lecos territory and ethnic identity have been actively shaped through historical interactions, and continue to be. While this may seem obvious to Andean and Amazonian scholars who have contested essentialized representations of indigenous peoples and replaced these with more nuanced explanations of hybrid identities and ethnogenesis, many state policies continue to assume a static relationship between indigenous peoples and places (Balza 2001). Opposition groups are also able to appropriate the underlying rhetoric of authenticity to contest indigenous claims. As the multicultural reforms adopted by South American nations in the late twentieth century provide new conflicts as well as opportunities, a more accurate conceptualization of ethnolinguistic diversity, and its relationship to the land and natural resources, is necessary.

Understanding long-term patterns of ethnogenesis and landscape transformation in indigenous South America may well be crucial to both decipher the past and negotiate the future. The situation in Apolo is informative because it provides us with the opportunity to re-examine issues of ethnic identity and landscape in a region long overlooked because of assumptions of acculturation and environmental degradation. Moreover, the piedmont region of Apolobamba is strategically located at the intersection of the Andes and the Amazon and constitutes an interactive frontier in which indigenous communities have long been transformed by the movement of persons, resources, and ideas between the *altiplano* (Andean high plateau) and the tropical lowlands (Saignes 1985; Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988).

The autochthonous peoples of Apolo once played an important role as intermediaries of exchange between highland and lowland interaction spheres (Meyers 2002). As the dynamic interface between the highlands and the lowlands expanded and contracted in response to historical restructurings of space and power, Apolobamba became embedded in, or excluded from, different macro-political and economic contexts. The transformation of ethnolinguistic identities and landscapes in Apolobamba must be examined against these changing historical contexts, in particular the way the region shifted between Andean and Amazonian spheres of interaction. Furthermore, the contemporary multilingual and multiethnic character of the region requires a shift in focus from specific ethnic groups to interethnic interactions from a regional system perspective (Hornborg 2005). Focusing on Apolobamba as a region takes into account the mutually constitutive, and historically contingent, relationship among landscape, language, and identity.

## THE PIEDMONT REGION OF APOLOBAMBA

Located in northern La Paz, Bolivia, Apolo is situated along the eastern slopes of the Andes between the *yungas* and the interior tropical lowlands.<sup>1</sup> This piedmont region was historically referred to as Apolobamba, a combination of the terms “Apolo,” which may derive from the Lecos word for puma/jaguar (*polo*), and a Spanish corruption of the Quechua word *pampa*, meaning flat plain (Machicao Gámez 1990).<sup>2</sup> The name references the long stretches of flat grasslands that crosscut the mountainous region in the general direction of southwest to northeast. The open pampas of Apolo contrast with the precipitous slopes of the adjacent *yungas* and provide an optimal space for encounter and exchange. Andean and Amazonian bioregions overlap in Apolobamba, which contains diverse habitats, including cloud forest, tropical dry and wet forest (*monte*), and tropical grasslands (*pajonal*) (Hilari 1991; MACPIO 2001). Yet neither the forest nor savannah ecosystems in Apolobamba conform to traditional assumptions of “pristine” environments; instead, the region is illustrative of the concept of landscape as the material manifestation of human-environmental interactions through time (Balée 2006; Balée and Erickson 2006).

The regional landscape of Apolobamba impacted, and was transformed by, local productive practices that straddled the shifting forest-savannah (*monte-pajonal*) interface. Changing macro-historical circumstances introduced new resource demands and productive activities into the region, with consequent changes to the *monte* and the *pajonal*, as well as the indigenous communities that lived within these. The *monte* provided forest resources for hunting, gathering, and extractive enterprises (e.g., quinine and rubber), as well as land for swidden horticulture. The flat *pajonal* regions—partially, perhaps primarily, anthropogenic in origin—were utilized for the cultivation of the region’s most renowned resource: coca. Coca from Apolo was, and is, traded far and wide for its superior quality and remains the preferred source among Kallawaya herbal specialists (Bastien 1978). Europeans later introduced livestock, which resulted in accelerated conversion of forest to savannah, particularly around the environs of Apolo (MACPIO 2001).

Apolobamba’s interstitial geographic positioning and landscape qualities impacted the flow of people and resources and variably linked it to both highland and lowland interaction spheres. Ancient overland trade routes took advantage of the particular geographic and environmental conditions in Apolobamba and secured the region’s role as a dynamic frontier of interaction and exchange between the Andes and the Amazon. This stands in contrast to the evolutionary and environmentally deterministic assumptions that underlie the standard model of Amazonian ethnology (cf. Viveiros de Castro 1996) and the interpretations of piedmont peoples outlined in the *Handbook of South American Indians* (e.g., Métraux 1948; Steward 1948). For instance, Steward (1948) claimed that the piedmont environment, with its rugged topography and turbulent rivers, “isolated the tribes from one another, restricted inhabitable areas, and limited navigation.” Not

only did Steward (1948:507) presume that piedmont societies were isolated from one another, but he also suggested they were isolated from neighboring highland and lowland cultures.

Ethnohistorian Anne Christine Taylor (1999:196) observed that piedmont societies have been traditionally “belittled as incapable of drawing inspiration from the example of their highland neighbors, and at the same time lacking the ritual and social-organizational complexity of the ‘true’ Amazonian groups.” Piedmont societies therefore are doubly discriminated against in cultural models that define the Andes and the Amazon as separate and distinct and obscure cross-cultural intermediation that once existed along the eastern slopes. Yet far from being isolated from one another and their highland and lowland neighbors, the autochthonous peoples of Apolobamba took part in both interregional interactions and intraregional intermediation. It is against the background of these historical shifts that the transformation of ethnolinguistic identities in Apolobamba must be understood.

### ETHNOHISTORY, ETHNOGENESIS, AND ETHNOLINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN APOLOBAMBA

The central Andean piedmont was inhabited during the late pre-Hispanic and early colonial period by a diversity of indigenous groups generically referred to as the *chunchos* (Métraux 1948; Steward 1948; Lyon 1981; Saignes 1985; Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988; Lara 2001).<sup>3</sup> Early colonial documents (e.g., Bolívar 1906 [1621]; Cabello de Balboa 1906 [1594]) explicitly named the various *chunchos* groups and mention the Lecos as inhabiting both the open pampas of Apolo and the dense humid forests (*monte*) to the south. The Lecos are often mentioned alongside the Aguachile, a neighboring group to the north and east, who appear to have played an important role in the ethnogenesis of the contemporary Lecos of Apolo. Numerous Tacanan-speaking peoples inhabited the tropical lowlands to the north, while the Lecos were bordered to the southeast by the Mosetene (Machicao Gámez 1990, 2000, 2002; Métraux 1948). Although Julian Steward (1948:507) classified the Lecos and other piedmont peoples as “tropical forest tribes,” the history of the region demonstrates that they were never simple, isolated tribes. Instead, the contemporary Lecos of Apolo are the product of a long history of highland-lowland intermediation and regional interaction spheres in the piedmont.

Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor (1988:15) suggest that examinations of the eastern slopes of the Andes supply a useful counterpoint to old debates about cultural evolution and environmental determinism by questioning the rupture between the *sierra* (mountains) and the *selva* (jungle), or between civilization and savagery. Different ecological and production zones along the steep slopes of the eastern cordillera were historically connected by vertical exchange networks hypoth-

esized to have played a critical role in the development of highland cultures (Murra 1972, 1995; Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988; Assadourian 1995; Larson 1995). The adaptive strategy of ecological complementarity, or “verticality” (Murra 1972), was well established in the central highlands and significant to the intermediation strategies of the Puquina-speaking Calabaya (Kallawaya) kingdom that emerged during the Late Intermediate period (AD 1000 to 1300) (Saignes 1985; Renard-Casivitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988; Moseley 1993; Meyers 2002).

The historical relationship between the highland people who would later become known as the Kallawaya and their *chunchos* neighbors in Apolobamba underscores the importance of this region to Andean-Amazonian interactions. Furthermore, the ethnogenesis of both the Kallawaya and the Lecos may be the product of highland-lowland intermediation, and, as a result, there are many—even if poorly understood—mutual influences between these groups.

Famed medicine men (*curanderos*) and itinerant merchants of the Andes (see, e.g., Wrigley 1917), the Kallawaya were described by Saignes (1985) as constituting one of the greatest enigmas of South American ethnohistory. Saignes (1995) contrasted the situation of the highly visible yet historically unnamed Kallawaya Indians with the seemingly invisible yet named *chunchos* Indians who occupied adjacent downhill territories. In her ethnohistorical examination of Kallawaya intermediation, Rodica Meyers (2002) explores the mystery of Kallawaya ethnicity and the strategic relations they had established with their *chunchos* neighbors. Meyers (2002) defines four vertical environmental zones that provided ecological complementarity in Kallawaya territory and enabled them to expand into adjacent regions: (1) the glacial peaks of the Apolobamba range, which provided an abundant, year-round source of water; (2) the humid *punas* that generated permanent pasture for large herds of camelids; (3) the temperate valleys that supplied fertile lands for intensive tuber and cereal cultivation; and (4) the semitropical *yungas*, in which tropical products were gathered or grown.

According to Meyers (2002), interactions between the “mobile-sedentary” agro-pastoralists of the highlands and the “mobile-sedentary” horticulturalists/hunter-gatherers of the *yungas* resulted in a slow process of ethnogenesis, ultimately culminating in the recognition of a group of people called the Kallawaya. As the intermediation sphere of the Kallawaya expanded and contracted, so did the number of ethnic groups that participated in this process. At its ultimate phase of expansion, Kallawaya control extended into the pampas or llanos of Apolo and included the *chunchos* who lived in this region, most likely the Lecos, given their territorial position at the time of European contact (Cabello de Balboa [1594] 1906; Meyers 2002).

The llanos of Apolo are situated immediately interior to the Kallawaya *yungas* and marked the fluctuating frontier of direct influence (Meyers 2002). Trade networks linked the Kallawaya communities of Charazani and Camata with

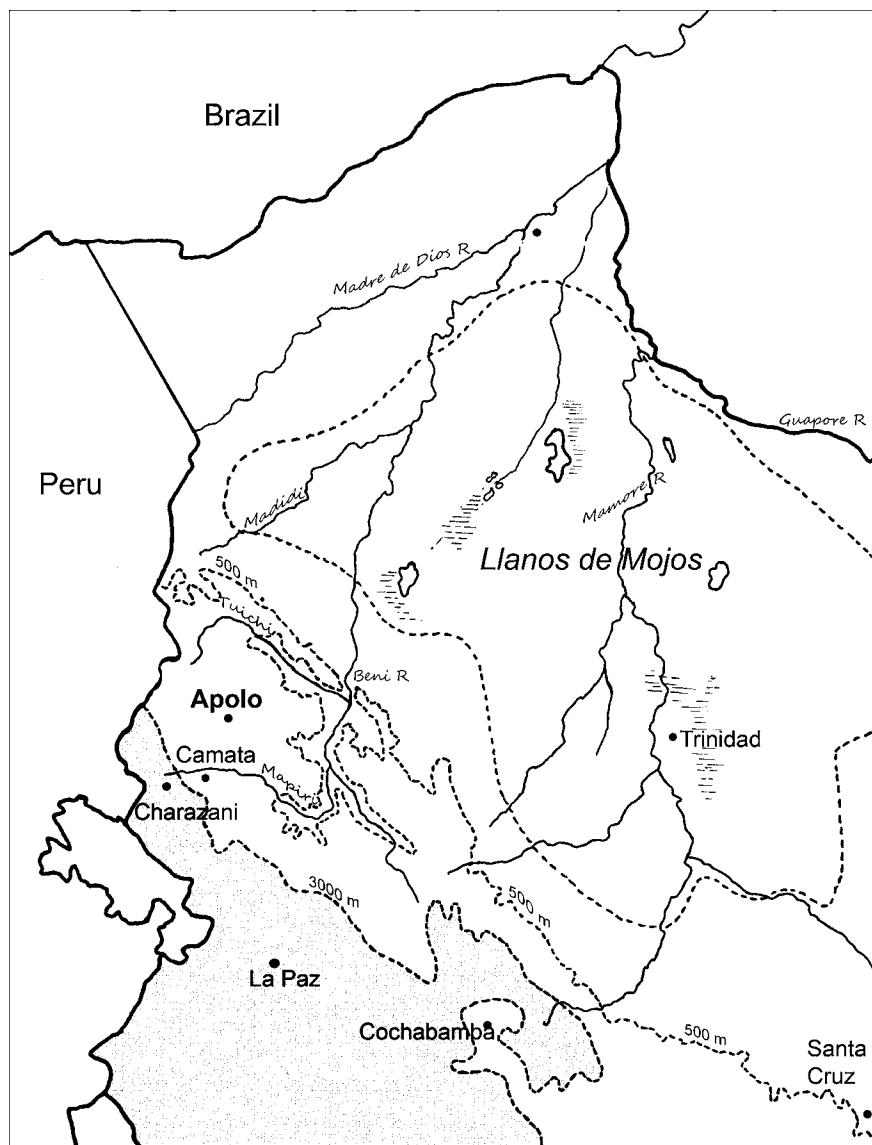
Apolobamba and led into the Beni and Mamoré lowlands, or Llanos de Mojos (Saignes 1985), which were home to mound-building Arawakan chiefdoms in the pre-Columbian era (Erickson 2000; Heckenberger et al. 2003; Hornborg 2005; see Map 15.1).

Throughout their extensive range, Arawak societies have been implicated in both Amazonian trade systems and highland-lowland exchange (Heckenberger 2002; Hill and Santos-Granero 2002; Taylor 1999). Although archaeological evidence in Apolobamba is scant, the region appears linked to both the lowland Arawak chiefdoms of the Llanos de Mojos and the Kallawaya polity in the highlands. For instance, in 1904, Erland Nordenskiöld (1906, 1953) discovered ceramics and lithic axes near Apolo similar in style to those found in the Llanos de Mojos. These finds suggested to Nordenskiöld (1906, 1953) that the region may once have been a part of a more sophisticated cultural complex.

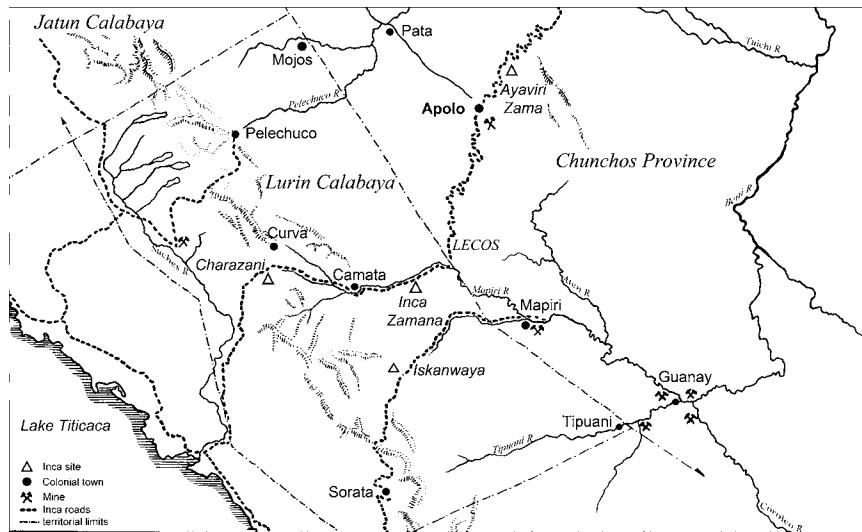
Linguistic evidence also provides compelling evidence for an Arawakan connection in Apolobamba. Although Quechua and Spanish are currently spoken, two indigenous languages are recognized as contributing to the ethnic heritage of the Lecos of Apolo. These include the Lecos language, locally called Rik'a,<sup>4</sup> and another autochthonous language termed Lapacho. Although the Lecos language is an isolate, Lapacho has been classified as belonging to the Arawak language family (Créqui-Montfort and Rivet 1913; Rivet 1913; Pauly 1928; Métraux 1942, 1948; Mason 1950; Greenberg 1960; Migliazza and Campbell 1982; Potter 1983; Montaño Aragón 1987, 1989; Payne 1991).<sup>5</sup>

The local indigenous language known as Lapacho (or Apolista) may be a remnant of these past contacts between the Arawak-speaking polities in the Llanos de Mojos and the Kallawaya polity in the adjacent highlands, where Puquina was spoken. Interestingly, certain linguists have labeled Puquina an “Arawak affiliate” because of underlying affinities with the Amazonian language family (Créqui-Montfort and Rivet 1913; Kaufman 1990; Adelaar 2004). Some Puquina lexicon survives in the contemporary Kallawaya language, a pidgin spoken only by indoctrinated healers (Oblitas Poblete 1968; Kaufman 1990; Adelaar 2004:356). The main characteristic of the Kallawaya language is that it combines Quechua morphology with a Puquina vocabulary (Stark 1985; Kaufman 1990; Adelaar 2004).

The dialect of Quechua shared by the contemporary Kallawaya and the Lecos of Apolo likewise attests to the long history of interaction and intermediation between these regions. The appearance of Quechua in the piedmont and Amazonian lowlands is often attributed to its spread by Spanish missionaries; the form of Quechua spoken in Apolobamba, however, reflects a much longer history of highland-lowland interaction. Linguist Louisa Stark has identified two variants of Bolivian Quechua that reflect distinct histories of contact in the discontinuous regions where it is spoken (Mannheim 1985; Stark 1985). The variant of Quechua spoken in Apolo, or Northern Bolivian Quechua (NQ), differs from the southern



MAP 15.1. *Kallawaya-Apolobamba intermedium zones.* (Redrawn and adapted from Erickson 2000:16; Girault 1987:47; Meyers 2002:15; and Siiriäinen and Pärssinen 2001:55)



**MAP 15.2. Kallawaya and Chunchos Provinces during the Terminal Inca Empire.**  
 (Redrawn from Meyers 2002:15 and adapted with information from Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988:153)

variety (SQ) in phonology, grammar, and lexicon and is spoken only in a restricted range in northern La Paz (Albó 1980; Stark 1985).<sup>6</sup> According to Stark (1985), NQ reflects an older history of contact with the Inca that extends back to the initial expansion in the mid-fifteenth century. Documentary and archaeological evidence supports the time depth of Inca expansion into Apolobamba.

Like highland peoples before them, the Inca relied on important resources procured from the piedmont and tropical *selva* and employed strategies to annex or engage these regions (Saignes 1985; Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988; Taylor 1999; Siiriänen and Pärssinen 2001; Meyers 2002). According to the Inca chronicler Cieza de León (*Crónica del Perú* 1551–1554, in Julien 2000:150), Inca Pachacuti Yupanqui traveled “as far as Ayaviri, where he found resistance.” Historians Thierry Saignes (1985) and Rodica Meyers (2002) hypothesize that the ancient political and ceremonial center targeted during expansion may be the site of Ayaviri Zama, located slightly northeast of Apolo and indicative of the region’s cultural importance (see Map 15.2). Rebellions following Pachacuti’s death required a second annexation, as the Inca secured access to Apolobamba diplomatically by employing the Kallawaya as intermediaries (Saignes 1985; Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988; Meyers 2002).

Vertical exchange networks that connected the Kallawaya and Chunchos Provinces were maintained, although restructured, during the lowland expansion

of the Inca Empire (Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988; Assadourian 1995; Meyers 2002). Once integrated into a single continuum of interaction, the eastern slopes were bifurcated into two administrative divisions, a Calabaya Province and a Chunchos Province, which extended from the heart of Lecos and Aguachile territory into the interior lowlands. Once firmly secured under Inca administrative authority, Apolobamba functioned as a secured “fortress zone” and a staging ground for expeditions into the more loosely integrated frontier or “contact” zones of the Beni and Madre de Díos river basins (Siiriänen and Pärssinen 2001).<sup>7</sup> The ancient site of Ayaviri Zama served as the administrative capital of the Chunchos Province (Armentia 1897, 1905; Maúrtua 1907; Saignes 1985; Meyers 2002).

The incorporation of Apolobamba into the administration of the Inca Empire had a lasting impact on the region. The Inca introduced infrastructural developments, such as roads and mines, and reoriented agricultural production to coca, which was cultivated for tribute (Armentia 1897, 1905; Maúrtua 1906; Saignes 1985; Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988; Meyers 2002). New processes of ethnogenesis also emerged as a result of Inca social engineering. For instance, the Inca established a series of *mitmaqunas*, colonies of persons loyal to the empire, to control links between the different ecological zones (Taylor 1999; Meyers 2002).

As discussed previously, the dialect of Quechua introduced during the initial Inca expansion remains a distinctive hallmark of identity in the Apolobamba region, and one that is shared with the neighboring Kallawaya. Early documentary records not only confirm this intermediation route and the role of the Lecos in it but also demonstrate that the indigenous people of Apolo were already bilingual in Quechua at the time of Spanish contact (see, e.g., Armentia 1905; Cabello de Balboa 1906 [1594]). Apolobamba, connected to the highlands and lowlands, had become more firmly embedded in highland dynamics by the eve of Spanish colonial contact.

However, highland-lowland intermediation routes through Apolobamba contracted dramatically because of territorial and administrative restructurings during the early colonial period. This was part of a broader process of disarticulation of Andean and Amazonian realms of interaction in which frontier regions of the piedmont were disempowered and indigenous groups marginalized (Saignes 1985). The disarticulation of the eastern slopes of the Andes, however, did not occur immediately after the arrival of the Spanish (Saignes 1985; Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988; Taylor 1999; Julien 2000), nor was it as complete as later researchers assumed (e.g., Steward 1948).

During the first century of colonial rule (AD 1530 to 1620), the administrative limits of the Audencia de Charcas extended to Ayaviri Zama in Apolobamba (Saignes 1985). Subsequently abandoned and forgotten, this site was encountered by some of the first Spanish conquistadores, who utilized Inca roads to penetrate *chunchos* territories (Saignes 1985; Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988).

In 1563, the Chunchos Province (Provincia de Chunchos) was officially created as a “minor province” to be “discovered and populated” by the Spanish (Maúrtua 1907:54). The province, however, already was populated by the Lecos and Aguachile, often the first peoples encountered by Europeans who descended the slopes in search of wealth or souls.

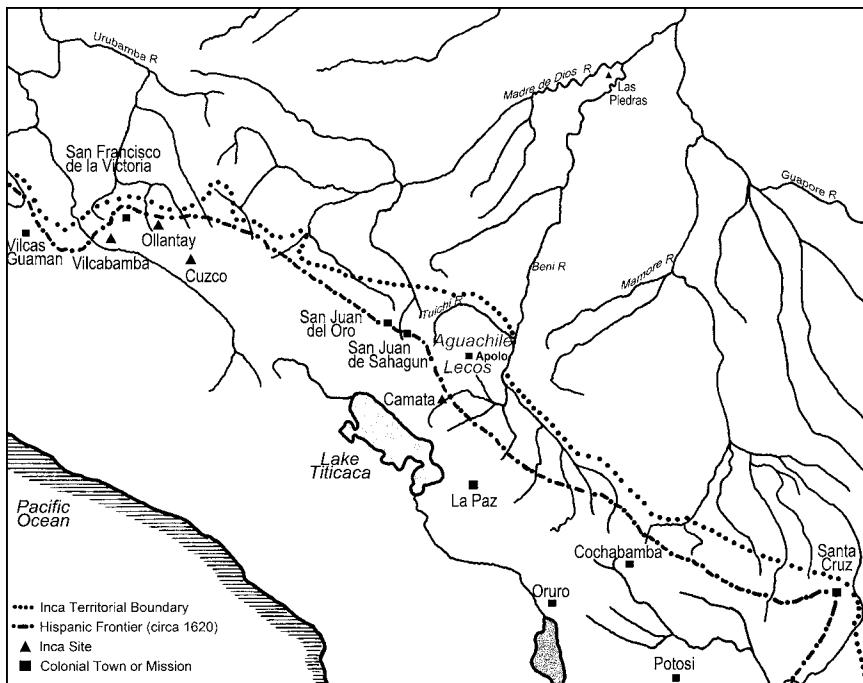
Soon after the Chunchos province was created, the formal relationship between Spanish authority and its indigenous subjects changed. The “Toledo reforms” of the late sixteenth century radically transformed native Andean populations and led to the emergence of the generic Indio, or Indian, as a fiscal and social category (Harris 1995; Larson 1995; Saignes 1995, 1999; Schwartz and Salomon 1999). In an attempt to categorize and control indigenous peoples, colonial regimes created new social and judicial groupings that initiated novel processes of ethnogenesis in the Andes (Schwartz and Salomon 1999).

Many of the social categories that emerged in the colonial highlands became incorporated into state ideologies and would thus be transmitted to the piedmont much later. The indigenous peoples of Apolobamba, however, were initially removed from the direct application of the Toledo reforms and tribute demands, which had initiated massive highland migrations (Harris 1995; Larson 1995; Saignes 1995, 1999; Schwartz and Salomon 1999). Instead, the territorial location of most piedmont peoples remained relatively stable during the early colonial period (Taylor 1999).

The disruption of ecological complementarity by forced *reducción* settlements in the Andes impacted Spanish ability to maintain control over peripheral regions, including the piedmont (Assadourian 1995; Murra 1995). The majority of European expeditions into the Chunchos Province failed at this time because of a lack of colonial infrastructure and the hostility of local populations (Saignes 1985; Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988; Taylor 1999). As a result, by 1620 the limits of colonial administrative jurisdiction contracted to the Kallawaya town of Camata, as the Chunchos Province slipped out of direct colonial control (Saignes 1985; Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988).

In fact, the region between the previous boundary of Inca administration and subsequent colonial jurisdiction in the piedmont coincided almost exactly with the extent of Lecos and Aguachile territories in Apolobamba (see Map 15.3). In the process of disarticulation, the intermediate territory of the Lecos of Apolo lost some of its former strategic significance and became increasingly unfamiliar to adjacent centers of power in both the highlands and the lowlands. The transformation of Apolobamba from a dynamic zone of interaction into a disarticulated and fragmented region had important consequences for the ecological and cultural strategies of the Lecos and their neighbors.

Although no longer embedded in primary intermediation networks or maintained under direct administrative control, Apolobamba remained important to



**MAP 15.3. Contraction of the highland imperial frontier between 1530 and 1620.** (Adapted from Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988:278, with information from Siiriäinen and Pärssinen 2001:55)

missionaries who wished to establish lowland predication routes. For the remainder of the colonial era, the frontier dynamics of Apolo more closely resembled those of adjacent lowland regions, although differences would begin to emerge after the permanent establishment of the Franciscan mission system in the late seventeenth century. Prior to that time, missionary contact was sporadic, although documentary accounts hint at the former complexity of Apolobamba's autochthonous societies, including the existence of temple-idol cults and pan-local leaders called *maranis* (Bolívar 1906 [1621]; Torres 1972 [1657]).

As elsewhere in South America (Powers 1995; Schwartz and Salomon 1999), internal power relations and intertribal interactions in Apolobamba were likely transformed by differential access to European goods, weapons, and diseases. For instance, the Aguachile appear to have maneuvered privileged access to European goods by maintaining peaceful relations with Spanish missionaries, a situation that contrasted with the deteriorating relationship between the missionaries and the Lecos (Torres 1972 [1657]).

In 1615 the Augustinians established the first mission of Apolo, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, which was twice abandoned because of the hostility of its Lecos and Aguachile inhabitants (Torres 1972 [1657]). Rather than simply accepting or resisting the missionaries, indigenous peoples of Apolobamba actively positioned themselves to compete for favors. In the mid-seventeenth century, Augustinian missionaries reported that the local nations convened a grand assembly to decide the future of indigenous-Spanish relations (Torres 1972 [1657]; Quiroga Gismondi 1991). The principal outcome was a stated desire to establish reciprocal trade and to ensure continued possession of tribal lands. When promises were not met or advantages not forthcoming, however, indigenous groups rebelled. Unable to secure enough support to prevent rebellions, Augustinian missionaries eventually withdrew from Apolobamba (Torres 1972 [1657]; Machicao Gámez 1990; Quiroga Gismondi 1991).

Franciscan missionaries entered the region at this time and began to incorporate native populations under Spanish authority (Ballivián 1898 [1747]; Armentia 1905; Maúrtua 1907). After decades of intermittent interaction, the Lecos and other piedmont peoples were concentrated into multiethnic missions by the end of the seventeenth century. In 1681, the Franciscans reoccupied the former mission of Apolo. The mission of La Inmaculada Concepción de Apolobamba was moved to its present location in 1696 and reconstituted with Lecos and Aguachile, as well as Pamainos and other Tacanan-speaking peoples from the north (Santamaría 1990). Apolo became the regional center of the expansive “Missions of Apolobamba,” and a place of embarkation for lowland expeditions (Quiroga Gismondi 1991; Machicao Gámez 2002).<sup>8</sup>

Franciscan missionaries implemented a concentrated settlement pattern and lifestyle in which indigenous production was divided between meeting subsistence needs and producing a mission surplus. Trade routes were reestablished connecting Apolo to the highlands to trade native-produced coca and other products (Quiroga Gismondi 1991). While Apolobamba once again functioned to connect lowland and highland regions, the Lecos neither controlled nor were empowered by mission trade. Furthermore, Spanish missionaries considered the open savannahs of Apolo optimal for the introduction of European livestock, and this new form of production initiated profound environmental transformations (Armentia 1905; D’Orbigny 1946). While the llanos of Apolo may have been partially anthropogenic in origin, the balance between forest and savannah ecosystems shifted as more grasslands were cleared and burned at the expense of the surrounding *monte*.

Processes of landscape transformation and ethnogenesis, however, were not uniform throughout the region. In the Franciscan Missions of Apolobamba, permanent missionary presence during the eighteenth century led to more communal, less stratified lifestyles, while interethnic marriages helped promote the emergence of new collective identities based on mission affiliation. In the mission center of

Apolo, for instance, a slow process of ethnogenesis resulted in the creation of a new ethnic category: “Apolistas.” Although treated by D’Orbigny (1944, 1946) as a distinct ethnic group, Apolista clearly derives from the name for this multiethnic mission center.<sup>9</sup> The enigma of Apolista identity, which emerged as a product of mission ethnogenesis, provides a vivid example of the multiethnic heritage of the Lecos of Apolo.

Apolista also refers to the Lapacho language, which has been classified as Arawakan and is one of two local languages affiliated with the Lecos of Apolo (Machicao Gámez 1990). The other language, Lecos or Rik’á, remained prominent in the multiethnic mission of Atén, which constituted a secondary pole of activity in the *monte* to the south.<sup>10</sup> The historic “Apolistas” and “Atenianos” that emerged as products of mission ethnogenesis are both important components of contemporary Lecos heritage.

Yet perhaps the most important impact of the Franciscan missions on Lecos ethnogenesis was the reincorporation of Apolobamba under highland colonial authority. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the Missions of Apolobamba began to transfer from religious to secular control as the colonial government decided to extend indigenous tribute to the mission inhabitants of Apolobamba. Many Andean historians have interpreted the implementation of indigenous tribute during the Toledo reforms as pivotal to the colonial ethnogenesis of highland identities (Harris 1995; Larson 1995; Powers 1995; Saignes 1995, 1999; Schwartz and Salomon 1999). I argue that something similar happened in Apolobamba after tribute obligations were extended toward the end of the colonial period.

Census data and observations dating from the secularization of Apolobamba’s missions indicate a shift in identification away from distinct ethnic (or mission) affiliations to more generic fiscal categories of *originario* or *forastero* based on location of birth and residence (Santamaría 1987, 1990).<sup>11</sup> During this time, processes of ethnogenesis in the piedmont region of Apolobamba became distinct from those of the tropical lowlands to the north and east, which remained exempt from onerous tribute demands and where ethnic identities (such as Tacana and Uchupiamona) continued to be named and registered in colonial accounts (Santamaría 1987, 1990).

As in the highlands, indigenous tribute demands in the piedmont sparked revolts and led to the involvement of the Lecos and other indigenous peoples of Apolobamba in the Wars of Independence (1809–1825) (Oblitas Fernández 1970; Montaño Aragón 1987; Machicao Gámez 1990, 2000). For instance, the Lecos leader Santos Pariamo organized an army of archers from Atén to defeat Spanish royalists in Apolo and offer resistance throughout the piedmont (D’Orbigny 1946 [1845]; Oblitas Fernández 1970; Machicao Gámez 1990). Hunted down and killed by royalist forces in 1816, Santos Pariamo remains a venerated martyr and cultural symbol for the region of Apolo and the Lecos people (MACPIO 2001; Machicao

Gámez 2003). Yet despite their involvement in the patriot cause, the condition of indigenous peoples changed little with the creation of the Bolivian Republic in 1826.

The young Bolivian Republic encouraged the development of extractive economies to integrate the tropical piedmont and modernize the “Indian” nation. The creation of the Caupolicán Province in Apolobamba coincided with international demand for quinine, and the Bolivian government granted Cinchona tree concessions to attract Bolivian *criollos* (of European descent) and foreigners (Jiménez 1991; Luisa Soux 1991). Reclassification of indigenous lands as *tierras baldías* (vacant lands) initiated the first significant penetration of non-indigenous society in Apolobamba, with profound consequences for its autochthonous population (Luisa Soux 1991).

Apolo, the provincial capital, and Atén, located in the heart of extractive forests, emerged as quinine exportation centers. Trade routes linking these regions, however, were as ephemeral as the boom itself, which declined after 1860 (Armentia 1905; Jiménez 1991; Luisa Soux 1991). Indigenous communities that reorganized to take advantage of the economy, particularly the Lecos near Atén, were hard hit by tribute demands in the wake of the bust (Armentia 1905). However, by the end of the nineteenth century, international demand for rubber once again changed productive and power relations in the province as the first hacienda estates were established and a powerful non-indigenous elite (*vecinos*) emerged (Luisa Soux 1991).

Throughout Apolobamba, numerous haciendas were dedicated to rubber extraction, sugarcane and coca production, and cattle ranching. Indigenous subsistence strategies existed along with *haciendado*-controlled market activities, although the wealth generated neither compensated indigenous peoples, bound by debt peonage, nor led to the sustained development of the province. Although they did not experience the population displacements imposed on interior tribes (Alexiades and Peluso 2009), the indigenous peoples of Apolo were gravely exploited by a hacienda system located on the periphery of state control (Luisa Soux 1991). The hacienda system also appears to have reinforced the trend toward place-based and class-bound identities as generic indigenous-campesinos whose ethnic heritages became buried in the politics of subordination.

The extractive cycles of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries tentatively linked Apolobamba to the altiplano and adjacent lowlands, although under conditions that created a situation of dependency rather than development (Jiménez 1991). As with the quinine boom, the Rubber Boom collapsed in 1912 and left the region isolated and impoverished. The indigenous peoples of Apolo bore the brunt of the region’s economic isolation and remained dependent on the haciendas, which continued to encroach on traditional lands and resources (MACPIO 2002).

The 1952 Bolivian Revolution and 1953 Agrarian Reform ended this exploitative system and served as a watershed event in the historical consciousness of

Apolobamba's indigenous inhabitants, who reorganized in accordance with the national syndicate model and acquired communal land titles. Newly formed communities affiliated with the National Peasant Union (CSTUB), which reinforced generic identities as campesinos, as the mestizo ideology of the state promoted policies of assimilation (Ströebele-Gregor 1994; Healy and Paulson 2000). Moreover, the revolution valorized a campesino identity as an alternative to the ongoing discrimination confronting indigenous peoples and the negative stereotypes affiliated with being an Indio, or Indian (Albó 2002). Loyalty to a syndicate organization remained particularly strong in Apolobamba and peasant syndicates functioned as local bodies of political representation for its indigenous peoples (Yashar 2005).

The post-revolutionary period tied Apolo more firmly to the dynamics of highland identity politics for the next few decades. However, government policies also targeted the country's vast lowlands as the state simultaneously sought to ease political pressures in the highlands, promote lowland economic development, and integrate lowland regions through colonization programs and agro-industrial enterprises (Albó 2002; Stocks 2005). These development programs, however, did not have a significant impact on the Caupolicán Province—renamed Franz Tamayo. Circumvented by national currents, Apolo remained isolated and economically stagnant throughout the second half of the twentieth century (Hilari 1991). This had particularly adverse consequences for indigenous campesinos, who struggled to make a subsistence living under increasingly degraded environmental conditions.

The current movement to recuperate and revalidate indigenous heritage in Apolo arose from local concerns about access to land and resources, as well as the desire to recover a sense of cultural pride in the wake of historical repression. However, the Lecos indigenous movement must also be understood in the broader context of ethnic-based political organization during the late twentieth century (Alexiades 2003). Since the Lecos of Apolo are neither highlanders (*cambas*) nor lowlanders (*collas*), the indigenous movement also must be situated among the different trajectories of highland and lowland indigenous mobilization in Bolivia.

While Apolo had been influenced by highland identity politics and political organization for much of the twentieth century, the increased visibility of Bolivia's lowland indigenous movement began to impact the interstitial region of Apolo. In response to policy reforms that addressed lowland demands for territory and autonomy, the Center for the Original Peoples of Apolobamba (CIDEPOA) formed in 1994 and affiliated with the lowland organization CIDOB, the Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia (MACPIO 2002). The indigenous organization recognized the importance of a place-based, regional identity while giving particular attention to Lecos and Aguachile heritage. In 1997, the nascent movement reorganized as the Indigenous Center of the Lecos People of Apolo (CIPLA), which

focused on the most salient strand of indigenous heritage—that of the Lecos—while continuing to recognize the multiethnic and multilingual character of the Apolo region (MACPIO 2002). As indicated in the opening statement, the indigenous movement was met with staunch resistance by the campesino federation, despite the fact that most campesino-affiliated communities share, to varying degrees, the same multiethnic heritage as communities newly identified as Lecos of Apolo.

### **CONCLUSIONS: RE-EXAMINING ETHNICITY IN APOLOBAMBA**

The complex and contested identity politics of Apolo arose, in part, from the region's multiple hybrid and often hidden ethnic heritages. Understanding historical transformations to identity and territory is crucial for the establishment of policies that allow indigenous peoples to live and prosper from the land. Essentialist stereotypes affect the ability of local communities to implement projects and gain legal recognition for land and natural resources. Unfortunately, the "politics of authenticity" that informs funding priorities and policies, including TCO legislation, continues to assume a static relationship between indigenous peoples and places (Balza 2001). These assumptions present challenges to the Lecos of Apolo as they struggle to define their relationship to other peoples and places.

According to anthropologist Roberto Balza (2001:4; my translation), "territorial demands include a fundamental justification . . . a historical-anthropological argumentation that references the indigenous character of the solicitants and the relations they maintained with the Western world that resulted in the progressive reduction of their spaces." Balza (2001) points out that the underpinning logic of TCO legislation is flawed in its assumption of an ahistorical relationship between people and the land. The diverse cultural heritage of the contemporary Lecos of Apolo defies presumptions that "indigenous character" is something static, without agency or historical change, as Amazonian peoples are often portrayed.

The autochthonous peoples of Apolobamba were never isolated "tropical forest tribes" but have long been transformed by both interregional interactions in the piedmont and highland-lowland intermediation. Shifting boundaries of Andean and Amazonian interaction spheres variously impacted the region and exposed it to broader currents. Ethnogenesis in Apolobamba was impacted by Arawakan intermediation, Inca expansion, Spanish missions, colonial tribute demands, hacienda estates, the Bolivian Revolution, and recent indigenous mobilization in the highlands and lowlands. The contemporary Lecos of Apolo are heirs to the multiethnic and multilingual character of the region and the way that these identities were variously transformed by historical circumstances. In the process of recuperating their ethnic heritage, the Lecos of Apolo are continually negotiating images and understanding of the past in accordance with contemporary needs, the most pressing of which relate to land and natural resources. It is hoped that situated analysis of

historical transformations to landscape and cultural identity can contribute to the resolution of similar local conflicts that emerge in larger spaces of ethnic reconstitution and resource competition.

## NOTES

1. The Spanish term *montaña* is used in Peru to indicate the forested slopes between 400 and 1,800 meters in elevation, whereas the term *yungas* is often substituted in Bolivia (Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988:43). However, the *yungas* generally refer to the steep slopes immediately adjacent to the Andes as well as specific provinces. To clarify, I use the term *piedmont* to refer to the elevation range of Apolobamba (900 to 1,500 meters) (Hilari 1991).

2. Apolobamba originally referred to the pampas or llanos of Apolo and was later applied to the surrounding region, including the Cordillera Apolobamba. I use the term in its original sense to refer to the llanos of Apolo and the surrounding geographic area, which corresponds to the principal sector of the historic Caupolicán Province (now Franz Tamayo) and the Missions of Apolobamba.

3. The Inca distinguished the *chunchos*, who occupied the southern and eastern slopes, from the *antis*, who inhabited the slopes immediately to the north and east of Cuzco, and from the *sacharuna*, or forest people, who occupied the Amazonian interior (Lyon 1981; Saignes 1985; Renard-Casevitz, Saignes, and Taylor 1988). The term also differentiated the central piedmont nations from the Arawak-speaking *mojos* of eastern Bolivia and the *chiriguanos* to the south (Quiroga Gismondi 1991:21).

4. The Lecos language, occasionally referred to as Lapa Lapa, is a linguistic isolate that evidences both Andean and Amazonian characteristics (Brinton 1892; Lafone-Quevado 1905; Chamberlain 1910, 1913; Mason 1950; Greenberg 1960; Ibarra Grasso 1982; Potter 1983; Montaño Aragón 1989; Kaufman 1990; Aikhenvald and Dixon 1999; Adelaar 2000; Van de Kerke 2000:32).

5. Saignes (1985) incorrectly classified Tacanan peoples and languages as Arawakan. The fact that the Arawakan linguistic connection is associated with the Lecos, not the Tacana, suggests that both groups may have played a historical role in these intermediation routes, and not just the Tacana, as Saignes (1985) presumed.

6. This conclusion was derived from the fact that “certain phonological and morphological features are shared by Cuzco and SQ, but which do not occur in NQ and Proto-Quechua,” suggesting that NQ is a more archaic variant of Quechua introduced earlier (Stark 1985:530).

7. According to Siiriäinen and Pärssinen (2001:72), the Apolobamba fortress zone “extend[ed] down to the upper reaches of the rivers flowing into the lowlands, to just below where the fortress of Ixiamas represents the [outer] border garrisons.” Although not explicitly mentioned by Siiriäinen and Pärssinen (2001), the unexcavated site of Ayaviri Zama fits into their model of Inca border policy.

8. The classic Missions of Apolobamba include San Juan de Buenavista (Pata), La Inmaculada Concepción de Apolobamba (Apolo), San Antonio de Atén (Atén), Santa Cruz del Valle Ameno (Santa Cruz), San Juan de Sahagún (Moxos), San José de Uchupiamonas

(San José), La Santísima Trinidad de Yariapu (Tumupasa), and San Antonio de Ixiamas (Ixiamas) (Ballivián 1898 [1747]; Chávez Suárez 1986 [1944]; Machicao Gámez 1990, 2000; Quiroga Gismondi 1991).

9. Certain scholars (e.g., D'Orbigny [1944]; Métraux [1948]) believe that the Apolistas derive from the ancestral Aguachile, whereas Montaño Aragón (1987:81) concludes they may be descendants of the Pamainos. Given complex processes of mission ethnogenesis, a one-to-one correlation is not likely.

10. French natural historian Alcides D'Orbigny (1944 [1839], 1946 [1845]) misclassified the indigenous residents of Atén as Tacana rather than Lecos. Unfortunately, D'Orbigny's mistake was adopted by future scholars unfamiliar with the history of the region (e.g., Oblitas Fernández [1970]).

11. The colonial tribute category *originario* referred to an indigenous person who resided in his or her place of birth, whereas a *forastero* resided in a foreign location.

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Ethnogenesis and Interculturality in the “Forest of Canelos”:  
The Wild and the Tame Revisited

*Norman E. Whitten Jr.*

In this chapter I focus on indigenous ethnogenesis and interculturality of the Canelos Quichua and Jivaroan people of the “forest of Canelos” as the former perceive themselves as emerging in a regional cultural system. I also focus on historical ethnogenesis wherein the portrayal of Quichua-speaking and Jivaroan-speaking people in Dominican archives established a strategic polarity seized upon by some scholars who, however inadvertently, subvert the epistemology revealed in serious, extended ethnography.

#### **ETHNOHISTORICAL SKETCH**

In 1536 Gonzalo Díaz de Pineda identified a place or region known as Canelos from his expedition’s terminal point of sub-Andean Quijos. This region constituted a crucial trade node between Amazonia and Quito that predated the Inca. The Inca continued to exploit the resources of the region radiating out of Quijos, although it constituted a land beyond their dominion. The *tierra de la canela* was said to

be inhabited by dispersed people who spoke different languages and were aggregated under the rubric “Canelos.” There followed a period of violence initiated by the atrocities of the expedition led by Gonzalo Pizarro and continuing until the Quijos revolts beginning in 1579. Somehow, by 1581, the mission of Canelos, to the south of Quijos, was founded in various locations from Puyo to Canelos, and Dominican ecclesiastical territoriality rhetorically divided the region into “wild” Jívaro and Záparo “indians” on one side and “tame” Quichua “indians” on the other (see Whitten 2008 for specific references).

By the early 1600s the Puyo-Canelos sector of the Andean foothills—upper Amazon, known as “the forest of Canelos,” had become a nexus of travel and exchange relationships among Andean, Montaña, and Amazonian riverine and interfluvial people. By the eighteenth century, and probably before that, Canelos had become a prominent cultural switchboard not only between Amazonia and Andes but also for the Zaparoans of the Napo, Curaray, Conambo, Bobonaza, and Ishpingu river systems; the Achuar of the Capahuari and Copataza river systems; and some of the Shuar in the hilly country to the south of the Pastaza River.

Abbot François Pierre (1983 [1889]) documented how the Dominicans divided the territory of Macas-as-Jívaro from Canelos-as-Quichua—the former as savage (wild) and the latter as semi-civilized (tame)—and how the Dominican order strove to maintain this distinction even though using the same techniques of reduction and evangelization in both “savage” and “semi-civilized” sectors of their publicly proclaimed dominion. Although classed in perpetuity as heathen (wild savages), Jívaroan people were also nucleated and baptized as the Canelos remained dispersed and resistant to proselytization. I return to this below, after establishing some ethnographically induced concepts of ethnogenesis.

## ON ETHNOGENESIS AND THE CANELOS QUICHUA INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

In 1974, after eighteen months of intensive ethnography with the Canelos Quichua people of Amazonian Ecuador, working in multiple contexts where a military dictatorship was bent on destroying their lives, I concluded the book *Sacha Runa* (1976) with a discussion of “ethnocide and ethnogenesis”:

Peoples whose cultures are acknowledged by an application of ethnocidal policies often intensify and adapt ways of doing things which underscore their own implicit, transformable symbolic relationships. The symbolic template, so to speak, provides a manageable cosmogony . . . linking the known and the unknown and provides a set of ethnic markers . . . in the face of . . . nation-state expansion. Such adaptive processes, known as ethnogenesis, are taking place everywhere. (Whitten 1976:281)

In 1990 the Canelos Quichua people of Amazonian Ecuador joined with their Quichua-speaking Andean neighbors in the great Levantamiento Indígena

and followed that two years later with the March for Land and Life. The latter was a joint endeavor with Achuar and Shiwiar Jivaroans, but boycotted and derided by Shuar Jivaroans. By now we had been working with people of the region that includes Quichua speakers, Jivaroan speakers, and (a few) Zaparoan speakers over a fourteen-year period. I returned to the subject to write that my perspective

continues my interest in ethnogenesis: the public, historical emergence of culture . . . To express this in technical language, processes of ethnogenesis subsume both the expansion and condensation of contrast sets among and between human aggregates. These processes manifest all of the structural properties of symbols, as set forth by Victor Turner . . . Consciousness of ethnic-bloc formation as manifest in public discourse focused on us/other (or us/them) is fundamental to ethnogenetic processing of aggregate contrast sets into culturally meaningful systems of social movement. Ethnogenetic processes are profoundly symbolic and value laden; however we conceive of them, we must always bear in mind that *these cultural processes move people to action.* (Whitten 1996:193–194, emphasis added)

These definitions were ethnographically induced from people in motion, a people described in five substantial ethnographies (Whitten 1976, 1985; Reeve 1985, 1988b; D. Whitten and N. Whitten 1988; N. Whitten and D. Whitten 2008), the most recent of which explores the topics of ethnogenesis, alternative modernities, and interculturality in depth and detail, complementing Michael Uzendoski’s ethnography of the adjacent (northern) Napo Runa (2005; see also Uzendoski and Whitten, forthcoming). In all five of the Canelos Quichua ethnographies two salient features are the role of powerful male shamans in shaping and transmitting culture through men, and the role of insightful, creative female ceramists in shaping and transmitting culture through women. The articulations and mutual relationships between the male shamanic complex and the female pottery complex were explored extensively as the nexus of both continuity and change, reproduction and transformation.

In spite of these ethnographies and their documentation, backed up by ethnohistorical research by Naranjo (1977) and Reeve (1988a, 1993–1994, 1994, 2008), a pervasive distortion, which I take to be “epistemic” (an adjective meaning of or having to do with knowledge), emanating from structuralists (e.g., Lévi-Strauss [1988]) and neostructuralists (e.g., Taylor [1999, 2007]; Descola [1996]), has had the effect of essentializing as a systemic dichotomy the intertwined Jivaroan and Canelos Quichua cultural orientations. In this chapter I sketch ways by which colonial categories may become reified and totalized. I first note salient features of contemporary Canelos Quichua culture and then turn to the dynamics of epistemic distortions to be revealed in abstract modes of analysis that do not conform to ethnohistorical documentation.

## THE CANELOS QUICHLA PEOPLE OF AMAZONIAN ECUADOR

The Canelos Quichua people of east-central Ecuador are an Amazonian people who live on the fringe of western Amazonia, in an Andean nation. They are of the upper Amazon canopied rainforest. From time to time the indigenous people of Ecuador, along with others in various socioeconomic classes, have moved as a chiliastic Amazonian-Andean political force united by intersecting cultural systems to change the face of the nation. Many Canelos Quichua people intermarry with Achuar and Shiwiar Jivaroans, and less so with Shuar Jivaroans. Probably 20 percent are bilingual in Achuar. Their name derives from the widely dispersed settlement of Canelos, into and out of which Dominican priests and friars moved from time to time to temporarily stimulate sporadic and short-lived nucleation of the people and to launch their infrequent mission *visitas* hither and yon in a vast and rugged mountainous rainforest territory to which Spain laid claim over Portuguese pending domination.

Culturally, Canelos Quichua territory includes regions of the Bobonaza River system, especially, in addition to Puyo and Canelos (moving east), Pacayacu, Sarayacu, Teresa Mama, Montalvo, down to Nuevo Andoas in Peru. Northward, Canelos Quichua have long lived on the edges of Waorani territory in sectors of the Villano and Curaray River regions (Reeve 1993–1994, 1994, 2008; Cabodevilla 1994). Within their territory the Canelos Quichua people seem to “emerge” out of a confluence of Zaparoan people (especially Zápara, Andoa, and Shimigae) and Jivaroan people (especially Achuar) in the Bobonaza River region. To the north of the Bobonaza and to its south, conflicts between Zaparoan and Jivaroan peoples escalated in mutual hostilities but were buffered through an emergent and expanding culture whose carriers spoke a dialect of the Quechua language identified as “Canelos Quichua.”

Indigenous ethnogenesis—the emergence of a people in specific times and places in indigenous historicity—clearly came to define the Canelos Quichua people in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries as a sustained cultural identity of place-named “Runa,” forged by a synergy of mutually hostile Zaparoan and Jivaroan people who communicated through the Quichua language. Runa-ness again emerges in indigenous memory in several languages as a cultural force of Amazonia at a time when the Liberal Republic of Ecuador appears on the world capitalist stage in the 1890s. This period is appropriately remembered as *alfaro rucuguna*, one of many “Times of Destruction” that come long after *callarirucuguna* (“Beginnings Times-Places”). The name *alfaro* derives from the great liberal *caudillo* Eloy Alfaro Delgado, sometimes known as “*el indio alfaro*.” Finally, the reader needs to know that although Inca Quechua and Canelos Quichua both belong to the division of “peripheral Quechua” (Mannheim 1991), one probably does not derive from the other (N. Whitten 2008:13–14). The homeland of Quichua dialect that probably became that of the Canelos Quichua people may be found in the San Martín

Amazonian region of Peru in the southern Marañón basin, not from the adjacent Ecuadorian or Peruvian Andes. “Amazonian Quichua [and Quechua] existed in pre-historic times as one of many languages of upper Amazonia. It became a lingua franca of the Spanish conquest linked to long-distance trade relations” (Uzendoski and Whitten, forthcoming).

The Canelos Quichua upper Amazonian cultural system at the base of the Andes presents serious scholarship with an apparently unique system with characteristics worthy of study in their own right. Here we find a deep historicity (e.g., Whitehead 2003) of relationships to Zaparoan peoples (Zápara and Andoa-Shimigae) and to Jivaroan peoples (especially Achuar and Shiwiar). Interculturality, in other words, is a defining cultural-historical theme. Men and women seek to balance experiential knowledge (*ricsina*) with cultural knowledge (*yachana*) and visionary experience (*muscuna*) with learning (*yuyana, yuyarina*). Central to the transformative paradigm involving these critical concepts is the *yachaj*, the “one who knows,” the “possessor of knowledge.” This concept often means “shaman” when applied to males but may also be used to refer to master potters (women), who otherwise are known as *muscuj warmi* or *sinchi muscuyuj warmi*, strong visionary woman. This paradigm pertains to two realms of existence, one called *ñucanchi yachai* (our cultural knowledge), and the second *shuj shimita yachai* (other cultural knowledge). As shamans and master potters show us again and again, one cannot understand one’s own people’s perception without understanding something of the lifeways and thought processes of other peoples. This relationship of signification between “ours” and “others” applied reflexively, exegetically, and epistemically to culture defines the concept of interculturality as it pertains to the Canelos Quichua people within the regional system I am describing.

Within the kinship system, which is part of the shamanic system, strong emphasis is placed on intergenerationality and affinity. Marriage, whether by arrangement or elopement, is eventually framed structurally as some replication of affinity resulting in descent from grandparental generations, and in these generations the historicity of interculturality is again reaffirmed and elaborated. A related theme is the system of cultural transmission of knowledge and imagery in a parallel way through men and through women. Men pass cultural imagery and knowledge on to other men through shamanic gnosis, while women pass imagery and knowledge to other women through Amazonian ceramic design, decoration, and sung exegesis. One cannot overemphasize the importance of ceramic techniques and imagery in cultural transmission in Canelos Quichua culture, something that is not shared with living peoples of Ecuadorian Amazonia or of the Ecuadorian Andes.

The kinship festival system is itself a performance that includes souls of the deceased and souls of the spirits. Here people recount and perform imagery of the origin of the people before and after destruction while leading toward destruction. Living people are (re)connected to the historical and contemporary dominance

from the outside world and a palpable resistance to that dominance is enacted dramatically. The very terminal enactment of the festival threatens to unleash the awful transformations that led to and lead to the end of the world (see, e.g., Whitten and Whitten 2008:141–166).

The above synopsis of salient dimensions of historical and enduring Canelos Quichua cultural features should negate the prevalent idea from neo-evolutionist Julian H. Steward (e.g., 1948) to structuralist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1988) and neo-structuralists Anne Christine Taylor (e.g., 1999, 2007) and Philippe Descola (e.g., 1996) that there is a progression from savage to civilized through which the people I have described are passing. The Canelos Quichua do not occupy some “intermediate” position between pristine indigeneity and whiteness or constitute a tertium quid that connects whiteness with “indianness.” The Canelos Quichua constitute a salient part of a coherent and complex system with clearly defined dimensions that many of us have sought to understand and about which we have been communicating for a long time.

### **HISTORICAL ETHNOGENESIS, COLONIAL CATEGORIES, AND EPISTEMIC DISTORTION**

The Canelos Quichua were written into history primarily by Dominican priests seeking a basis for soul conversion and western territorial presence in the “untamed” land east of the Andes. The Shuar (“Jívaro”) to the south of the Pastaza had driven out white settlers (some with black slaves) and Catholic missionaries, and the Quijos to the north had done the same, both at about the same time (1579 for the Shuar—Santos-Granero 1993:215; 1578–1579 for the Quijos—Oberem 1971). The first priests to explore the upper Pastaza region in the 1570s seemed to settle in the area from Puyo through Indillama to Chontoa to Canelos and established their base there in 1581, where they found dispersed Quichua-speaking peoples in a region where the Inca never penetrated. These people were intermingled with Jivaroan (especially Achuar) speakers and Zaparoan (Shimigae-Andoa) speakers in an area that came to be known as “the forest of Canelos.”

The Dominicans encountered a multilingual aggregate of tropical-forest people who had long brokered relationships of exchange between upper Amazonia and the nearby Andes, using both Jivaroan and Quichua as their languages. Unlike colonists to the north (Quijos) who sought to establish *encomiendas* for trade and food production, and to the south where the search for placer gold promised instant wealth, the Dominicans moved to continue the brokerage of east-to-west flow of such goods as *canela* (faux-cinnamon or *ishpingu*; *Ocotea quixos*), broom fiber, cotton, dyes, capsicum, tobacco, calabashes, bottle gourds, and bird feathers.

The friars and priests contributed to the writing of history through their journals, using a limited and highly charged vocabulary laden with very few cultural cat-

egories established by Columbus in the earliest days of conquest. The first was that of *indio* in contrast with *español*, which seems to emerge on the admiral’s home voyage in 1493. Before he departed the Greater Antilles, Columbus named the island where he planned the first Spanish colony La Española. By so doing he sought to negate indigenous Taíno identity and agency, treating them instead as a potential labor force of indios to be harnessed to Spanish profit (see, e.g., Whitten 2007; Wey Gómez 2008).

These rhetorical acts established two hierarchical binaries of dominance: the first was *español* in superior relationship to *indio*; the second was between the *indio manso* and the *indio bravo*, that between the tame (Arawak-Taíno in the Caribbean) and wild (Carib in the Caribbean and mainland South America). These terms, *manso* and *bravo* in Spanish, targeted indigenous people as either malleable laborers for European profit and soul-saving protection (the tame) or as only suitable for “just wars” and enslavement (the wild). This introduction and sustenance of a historical category of indios divided into wild and tame were carried forth through the centuries, in spite of attempts through ethnography and ethnohistorical reconstruction to right the record.

The inhabitants of the forest of Canelos constituted and still constitute a regional system wherein three or more languages belonging to three different divisions of the Andean-Equatorial stock (Greenberg 1960) were and are spoken. According to the governor of the province of Maynas, Francisco de Requena y Herrera (1991 [1784]; see also Cabodevilla 1994:476), the Puyo-Canelos sector of the Andean foothills—upper Amazon was the jumping-off point for travelers to the Jesuit-controlled Huallaga-Marañon Spanish territory of the Mission of Maynas. By the eighteenth century, and probably before that, Canelos was the cultural switchboard not only between Amazonia and Andes but also for the Zaparoans of the Napo, Curaray, Conambo, Bobonaza, and Ishpingu river systems; the Achuar of the Capahuari and Copataza river systems; and some of the Shuar to the south, then and now known as the Chirapa. Over thirty years ago Marcelo Naranjo (1977) argued that Canelos emerged and endured as a refuge region for people from all of these areas and, as such, was the site of preference for traveling curates and explorers seeking labor and knowledge (see also Reeve 2008). I stress here again that “*Canelos*” refers to a region where three languages of interacting people, of which Quichua was but one, were spoken. People speaking three languages were utilized by priests and explorers as guides, bearers, hunters, and food suppliers, although Quichua predominated.

The concept of ethnogenesis does not only refer to a people’s own sense of coming into being; in Western history it also refers to the symbolism of “being” as a social and cultural “fact” of history—the historically signified. We call this *historical* ethnogenesis. Signification here looms large. People are inscribed not as who they say they are but also as they were or are named, framed, and written down. Even the most simplistic of named frames can carry enormous power of false conviction.

What the name for a people “stands for” is what symbolism is all about. For the early Church in this region—the Dominicans in the late 1500s—the symbolism of “Canelos” was that of a *reducción*, reduction (nucleation) to control the “savage” Jivaroans and Zaparoans at the borders, even though they were well intermingled with Quichua speakers in the Canelos territories and in the specific nucleation of Canelos itself. Language itself became totalized and essentialized into all aspects of culture and then polarized into two defining qualities, tame and wild.

The *reducción* was what the mission was expected to accomplish, and it could only do so if it claimed that it had, indeed, executed the task of semi-civilization of colonial Christendom as a wedge between savage peoples. Maintenance of a Western colonial polarity between tame (*manso*) and fierce or wild (*bravo*) was a rhetorical stratagem of ecclesiastical self-aggrandizement. Unfortunately, for a productive relationship between ethnography and ethnohistory, the colonial categories morphed easily into the “acculturated” and “pristine” or “authentic” (sometimes written as the “contacted” and the “uncontacted”) categories that worked their way into prominent anthropological publications (see, e.g., Steward 1948; Steward and Métraux 1948; Descola 1996; Taylor 1999, 2007). On each side of the dichotomy we find not “humans” or “people” but “indios,” an appellation of multiple stigmas originally applied to all native peoples of the Americas by Columbus in 1493 and subsequently elaborated as early modern Western mercantilism transformed into modern capitalism in the Americas.

By the time the concepts of “indians” and “Canelos” and “Jívaros” become imprinted in history, all “indians” have been separated out of Western development and have been divided into—and contrasted as—the “reduced Christians” on one side of the polarity and the “heathen savages” on the other: the tame and the wild. François Pierre (1983 [1889]) documents convincingly that the Dominicans carefully divided the territory of Macas-as-Jivaro from Canelos-as-Quichua—the former as savage and the latter as semi-civilized—and strove to maintain this distinction even though using the same techniques of reduction and evangelization in both “savage” and “semi-civilized” sectors of their dominion. Although classed in perpetuity as heathen—wild savages—some Jivaroan people were also baptized from time to time. Indeed, the renowned warrior Sharupe, leader of the Chirapa, who waged constant war against the people of the Puyo area (led by Nayapi, who spoke both Jivaroan and Quichua) and Canelos (led by Palati, who also spoke both Jivaroan and Quichua), was baptized with great ecclesiastical pomp and circumstance as José María Sharupe in Andean Riobamba in the 1890s (a time of *alfarorucuguna*, one of many periods of destruction). Jivaroan people were also nucleated as the Canelos remained essentially dispersed and resistant to proselytization.

Historicity—high salience given to past events and people in indigenous discourse (see, e.g., Whitehead 2003; Whitten and Whitten 2008)—again enters our anthropological understanding. The concept of Runa as “fully human being”

reemerges as focal in several territories of upper Amazonian Ecuador in the 1890s. The fact that Canelos territory and Runa run together through time and the fact that the Shuar, Achuar, Shiwiar, Andoa-Shimigae, and Zápara people in various locations often use the word “Canelos” to refer to people from the Runa territories lead to a focus on the term “Canelos” as a multicultural and intercultural ethnogenetic way of life that developed out of antiquity and projected into specific histories of a nation-state with extensive Amazonian and Andean territories.

### **EXTENDING THE BINARIES: NEOSTRUCTURALISM AND ETHNOHISTORICAL ESSENTIALISM**

Transformation, *tucuna* in Quichua, is a key to structuralist and neostructuralist analysis and to the conjunctural analysis that I have undertaken (Whitten 2008). Transformative analysis consists of cultural explications and theoretical explanations of indigenous life at the conjuncture of ethnography, which is fundamentally synchronic, and history, which is diachronic (see, e.g., Sahlins 2000; Whitten 2003; Whitten and Whitten 2011). It is in this conjuncture that scholars such as Clifford Geertz (1973) and Marshall Sahlins (2000) stimulated interpretive studies of synchronic texts within a framework of shallow and deep diachrony. It is illuminating to compare the writings of these scholars with statements made by spokespeople during the Ecuadorian national indigenous uprising of 1990 (Whitten 1996) and the March for Land and Life from Amazonia to Quito by Canelos Quichua, Achuar, and Shiwiar in 1992 (Whitten, Whitten, and Chango 1997; Whitten and Whitten 2008).

Although relying on a concept of transformation, structuralist and neostructuralist interpretation may—however inadvertently—negate the conjuncture of ethnography and history in favor of a nexus of limited, colonial, textual binaries as explanation applied to history and/or ethnography. Such interpretation may eclipse the strength of indigenous explication that leads to generalizations at the conjuncture of ethnography and history. Lévi-Strauss’s macro-dichotomy of “hot” (“Western” and acculturated) societies contrasted (radically) with relatively pristine “cold” societies is illustrative and has been properly addressed by Hill (1988), Turner (1988), Whitehead (2003), and Whitten (2008). A recent macro-contrast is offered by Anne Christine Taylor (2007).

Taylor groups all “Jivaroans”—not only the Shuar, Huambisa, Achuar, Shiwiar, and Aguaruna (Awajún) but also the Candoan-speaking Shapra and Murato Candoshi—into the category “Jívaro,” calling them the “Jivaroan ensemble” and negating difference in dialect and cultural features (e.g., sex roles, trade patterns, interethnic kinship, particular material foci, and even language family). She lumps all Quichua and Quechua speakers on the Jivaroan “periphery” or “borders” together (even though bilingualism within Achuar and Shiwiar regions is very common).

Employing Spanish colonial and ecclesiastical categories, she labels “Jivaroans” as wild and all Quichua-Quechua as *mansos*, tame. The Jivaroan ensemble reflects the quintessential stereotype of Amazonia, “a last frontier for the study of history—the epitome of a place where we may yet find ‘people without history’” (Whitehead 2003:vii). They are presented as one side of a polarity: a people without history who maintain reciprocal systems of intracultural vengeance and intertribal raiding. Quichua-Quechua are then portrayed on the other side of the macro-contrast as domesticated, civilized, subservient to whites, Christian, hybrid, Incaized, found around *reducciones*, and come into being in the late seventeenth century (Taylor 2007:136). This adds to the qualities of “being Quichua” previously published (Taylor 1999).

Then her skills as ethnographer and ethnohistorian are clearly demonstrated as she informs the reader that “the two groups [Runa and ‘Jívaro’] in fact share a great deal of common ground, a kind of ‘zero degree’ of habitus, the commonality of which goes largely unperceived because it is, in a sense, meant to go unperceived” (Taylor 2007:158). In spite of aforementioned ethnographies and the work of Cabodevilla (1994) on a regional system, she goes on to add that “it [the regional system of transformable cultural and ecological orientation and practices] is salient neither for the Indians nor for their ethnographers” (Taylor 2007:158). This statement is especially puzzling in that others of us have been “perceiving” these matters since the publications of Pierre (1983 [1889]), Karsten (1935), Harner (1972), and Whitten (1976).

With her macro-contrast (or polarity) between Runa and “Jívaro” in play, and with her hard ethnohistorical and ethnographic evidence before her that “Quechua and Jivaroans . . . move in and out of each other’s societies with such facility” (Taylor 2007:158), she comes to the climax of her thesis. Stated as a syllogism, illness is to Jívaro warriorship as shamanic curing is to Runa identity. When a wild “Jívaro” becomes sick, his radical transition to health is through the morphing identity as *mансо* Runa. “The move from a Jivaroan to a Runa identity is, in essence, a shift from warriorhood to shamanic dual selfhood” (Taylor 2007:138).

Let me introduce more about interculturality here, for it constitutes a concept and theme that pervades not only scholarship on Ecuadorian peoples but also a popular grassroots dialogue that unites scholarship and the discourses of people-in-motion. Interculturality stresses a movement from one cultural system to another, with the explicit purpose of understanding other ways of thought and action. Building on the triumph of 1990 when an indigenous uprising occurred nationwide, the myriad non-indigenous people of Ecuador and an Amazonian segment of indigenous people were able to view each other in rather stark relief in 1992. Interculturality among Canelos Quichua and, especially, Achuar and Shiwiar has long been noted (e.g., Pierre 1983). Interculturality is a bugaboo of both Catholic and Protestant evangelical endeavors, for each of these competing

ecclesiastical forces seeks its borders in the Quichua/Jívaro rhetorical divide. This is the very divide that Taylor seizes on for her neostructuralist analysis of her tame/wild macro-contrast.

From my perspective, structuralism and neostructuralist orientations and procedures provide a framework that overwhelms the evidence induced through ethnographic explication essential for close historical reading and careful historical interpretation. They also force their adherents to decontextualize historical texts and abstract ideal types from ecclesiastical ideology in search of macro-contrasts that lead to epistemic distortion.

## SUMMARY

The forest of Canelos, identified as the land of Canela in the 1500s, came to be recognized scientifically as a distinct ecological and regional social system inhabited by various peoples speaking three unrelated macro-languages (excluding Waorani), of which a branch of peripheral Quechua, now known as Canelos Quichua, was one. If, as many now think, its homeland is in the southern Marañon basin, then, as I postulated in 1976, it may parallel Andean Inca (also a variant of peripheral Quechua) in its northern movement.

By the 1570s and 1580s the Dominican Church personnel, prior to evangelization, divided the peoples of the forest of Canelos into “tame” and “wild” to establish their ecclesiastic territorial hegemony and their *raison d'être* as a civilizing evangelical force. At this early juncture a phenomenon of historical ethnogenesis occurred, which distorts the ethnographically induced indigenous ethnogenesis about which many of us have written. I recently summarized these twin phenomena.

In the Runa system I am describing identity is found in the Quichua language and also in Achuar and Záparo ancestries and antiquities, and increasingly in Andoa, Shimigae, Caninche, and even Cocama descent systems. A polarity exists wherein indigenous ethnogenesis of a people (Runa), of fully human beings, is opposed to a Western historical ethnogenesis of a-cultured “indians” . . . In the first—*indigenous ethnogenesis*—a vigor of oneness subsuming diversity and a turn to mythohistory for future understanding is epitomized. In the second—*historical ethnogenesis* of a-cultured indians—a stupor of diversity-into-hybridity leading to cultural *mestizaje* creates national and perhaps anthropological ideological order by silencing indigenous voicing. (Whitten 2008:26)

In the late twentieth to early twenty-first centuries processes of ethnogenesis are well under way in this region, as myriad people once submerged in the realm of “Runa” cultural orientations again emerge as distinct, although usually Quichua-speaking, peoples, who divide over resources when individualized ethnicity is strategic but unite when threatened. If these peoples are contrasted as a

“post-colonial” or “Incaized” or some other unitary aggregate in sharp contrast to other aggregates of this regional system lumped as “Jívaro,” our perspectives of interculturality are palpably dampened, and our ability to view ethnohistorical roots is dulled.

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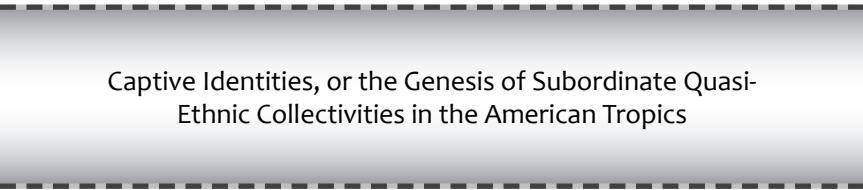
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## Captive Identities, or the Genesis of Subordinate Quasi-Ethnic Collectivities in the American Tropics

*Fernando Santos-Granero*

Situations in which different social groups come into close contact and become engaged in a power struggle constitute an especially propitious terrain for the unfolding of processes of ethnogenesis. This is particularly true of colonial situations, where ethnogenesis has been characterized “as a creative adaptation to a general history of violent changes” (Hill 1996:1). In the Americas, the economic, demographic, cultural, and political processes triggered by the presence and pressures of colonial agents have undoubtedly affected indigenous peoples, leading to the disappearance of some identities, the emergence of new ones, and the transformation and reinvention of most. Thus, much of the literature on ethnogenesis in the Americas deals with situations of conflict derived from colonial encounters in what has been labeled the “tribal zone” (Ferguson and Whitehead 1992; Anderson 1999; Schwartz and Salomon 1999; Heckenberger 2001). This chapter focuses instead on processes of ethnogenesis resulting from the activities of native tropical American peoples engaged in large-scale slave raiding and/or the subjugation of enemy peoples as servant groups during pre-colonial and early colonial times (see also Santos-Granero

2009b). It is thus concerned with ethnogenesis as the result of native- rather than foreign-induced sociopolitical dynamics. In such situations, captors were faced with the problem of how to incorporate large numbers of war captives and servant populations, whereas the latter were faced with the dilemma of resisting or giving in to the forces of assimilation. The tensions derived from this relationship had important consequences with regard to the identities of both masters and servants. Through the examination of three historical cases—Taíno/Naborey, Tukano/Makú, and Chiriguaná/Chané—I will assess the role of Amerindian forms of slavery and servitude in the transformation of existing identities and the production of new ones, a process that, from an Amerindian point of view, involves the transformation of less-than-human subordinates into “real people” and, eventually, into friends and kin. In other words, I propose to determine the role of relations of extreme dependence in the genesis of subordinate, quasi-ethnic collectivities and identities.

### TAÍNO/NABOREY OF THE GREATER ANTILLES

In the millennium preceding the European conquest, the Caribbean region had been in turmoil as the result of the migration of several large waves of Arawak- and Carib-speaking peoples, who having left the mainland along the Orinoco river basin had been gradually settling in the arc of islands that span the region (Rouse 1992). At the time of the Spanish conquest, the Arawak-speaking peoples that came to be known as Taíno had completed the subjection of Puerto Rico, Hispaniola, and Jamaica and were in the process of occupying Cuba, after having subjugated the native Ciboney and displacing segments of the more “primitive”—and some say “semi-mythical” (Keegan 1989)—Guanahatabey to the western tip of the island (Casas 1986, 3:90; Rouse 1992:20). In turn, Carib-speaking peoples from the mainland had occupied the Lesser Antilles, merging through military conquest or peaceful exchange (opinions vary) with the native Arawak-speaking Igneri and giving rise to the transethnic Kalinago (previously known as Island Caribs), who spoke an Arawak-based language but had adopted Cariban cultural practices (Rouse 1992:21; Whitehead 1995:9–10; Santos-Granero 2002:48). In addition, they were raiding, with great success, the Taíno of Puerto Rico and Hispaniola, to the point that a Kalinago group had managed to settle on the northeastern coast of Hispaniola by the time of Columbus’s arrival (Fernández de Oviedo 1851, 1:67). It is in this context of expanding peoples, demographic pressures, and interethnic strife that the region witnessed the unfolding of more complex forms of social stratification, including the appearance in Taíno society of a group of people with servile status known as *naboría*.

From the very beginning, Columbus and his companions realized that the Taíno sociopolitical system was highly hierarchical, comprising three levels of *caciques*, or chiefs, each with power over increasingly large areas of influence: vil-

large headmen, local chiefs, and regional chiefs. At the time of conquest, Hispaniola was divided into five large regional chiefdoms (Casas 1992a:18–22), whereas Cuba was divided into two (F. Columbus 1992:139, 141). Some of these regional chiefs had authority over up to eighty local caciques. None of the regional caciques of Hispaniola and Cuba, however, held paramount power. In contrast, Puerto Rico was ruled by a paramount chief, suggesting that this was a structural possibility of the system (Fernández de Oviedo 1851, 1:465).

Taíno society was also hierarchical. It was divided into three social strata. At the head there were the *nitaino* (“good or noble people”), members of chiefly families or lineages, who were considered to have “better blood” and constituted the ruling class (Casas 1992b, 3:1280). *Nitaino* were divided into three hierarchical categories—*guaoxerí*, *baharí*, and *matunherí*—corresponding to the three levels of village, local, and regional caciques. Under the *nitaino* were the “common people,” free people of Taíno descent, but who did not belong to prestigious lineages. The native term for these commoners is not known; in colonial times they were referred to, however, as *indios de servicio*. Finally, there were the *naboría*, who, according to Spanish sources, had a servile status.

Early chroniclers did not agree as to what exactly was the status of the *naboría*. Some, like Fernández de Oviedo (1851, 1:471), asserted that they were slaves. Others, like de las Casas (1992b, 1:484; 1986, 2:6), contended that there were few captive slaves in the Greater Antilles and that the term *naboría* meant “servant” in the Taíno language. This confusion did not last very long, however. In a 1509 Royal Decree, the King of Spain authorized the conquistadores of Hispaniola to capture *indios caribes* (reputedly fierce and anthropophagous Indians) from the Lesser Antilles with the proviso that if they opposed resistance, they should be captured as slaves, whereas if they did not, they should be taken as *naboría* (Cédula Real 1509). This distinction was maintained in subsequent decrees. By doing so, Spanish authorities were adhering to indigenous notions and practices, which established that captive slaves could be traded but *naboría* could not.

Some authors claim that the term *naboría* derives from the Arawak substantive *bor* (in *statu constructo ubórun*), which means “digger,” “digging tool,” and the “act of digging,” plus the pronominal prefix *na-*, meaning “they,” “their,” or “them” (Perea and Perea 1941:56–57). In this view, *naboría* were those in charge of the heaviest agricultural and mining tasks, including the digging of the elevated fields and canals typical of Taíno agriculture. Other authors suggest, instead, that the term *naboría* derives from the Arawak (Lokono) stem *budia*, meaning “remainder” or “rest,” plus the prefix *na-*, and thus could be translated as “the rest of them” (Taylor 1960:348). Although these are plausible etymologies, there is an alternative explanation that may be more accurate.

None of the early chroniclers provides an answer to the questions of who exactly were the *naboría* and how they originated. However, in referring to the situation in

Cuba, de las Casas (1986, 3:83) makes an assertion that, from my point of view, provides a reasonable hypothesis as to the origin of *naboría* servants. De las Casas asserts that Cuba was originally inhabited by the Ciboney but that the Taíno of Hispaniola “willingly or by force took over the island and its people, occupying them as their servants, not as their slaves.” In other words, they accorded Cuba’s vanquished native peoples the status of what in Hispaniola were known as *naboría*. This has been corroborated by archaeological studies where Taíno artifacts are always found above a different type of artifacts that have been associated with the native Ciboney (Harrington 1979 [1921]), but also by the fact that some authors claim that the termination *-ey* found in the names given by the Taíno to the native inhabitants of Cuba—Ciboney, Guanahatabey—is related both to the Arawak terms *eyeri*, meaning “men” in Kalinago, and *biaeru*, meaning “captives” or “slaves” in Lokono (Brinton 1871:440). If this is true, the term *naboría*, which Spanish chroniclers sometimes rendered as *naborí*, could have actually been the name that the invading Arawaks gave to the native population of Hispaniola under the form of Naborey.

Several authors (e.g., Harrington [1979 (1921):411]; Perea and Perea [1941: 51–52]; Moya [1973:16]) have suggested that the *naboría* (or Naborey) of Hispaniola were the original inhabitants of that island and, after having been conquered and subjected, were gradually integrated into Taíno society as a low-status stratum. This would explain why they exhibited some of the traits associated with captive slaves—insofar as they had also been subjugated by the force of arms—but had in fact the status of a servant people and thus could not be traded or sold. The main difference between the Naborey of Hispaniola and the Ciboney of Cuba is that the latter had been conquered in more recent times and still retained a distinct ethnic identity—expressed, for instance, in the fact that they did not flatten their heads as their Taíno masters did (Harrington 1979 [1921]:386, 390). In contrast, the Naborey of Puerto Rico and Hispaniola, who had been conquered in earlier times, had foregone their former identity by adopting the language and cultural practices of their Taíno masters. This integration was, however, more cultural than social, since the Naborey continued to act as an endogamous group whose servile status was transmitted from generation to generation. If this hypothesis is true, then the Taíno term *naboría* must have alluded not only to a stratum of people of low socio-economic status but also to a kind of people who had a distinct—and allegedly inferior—ethnic origin.

### **TUKANO/MAKÚ OF THE VAUPÉS RIVER BASIN**

The subjugation of original populations by foreign invaders was not always as inclusive and complete as that of the native peoples of Hispaniola. This is the case of the Makú of the Vaupés river basin, displaced and partially subjected beginning in the

eighteenth century by Tukano- and Arawak-speaking peoples, who had fled into the region to escape from European slavers (Coudreau 1887:163–164; Stradelli 1890:445; Nimuendajú 1950:163). This event is confirmed by Makú oral tradition (Giacone 1949:88), as well as by the name the Tukano gave the Vaupés River: *Dya Poxsá*, where *dya* means “river” and *poxsá* means “slave/servant,” the exonym Tukano use to refer to Makú people (Knobloch 1972:102). From a Tukano point of view, *Dya Poxsá*, or “Slave River,” was the original homeland of the subordinate Makú.

Divided into a large number of language groups—Cubeo, Desana, Bará, Wanano, Tuyuka, to name but a few—the Tukano regional social system is kept together by the rule of linguistic exogamy. Language groups are internally divided into sibs, clans, and phratries. Within each group, patrilineal sibs are ranked hierarchically according to seniority (the place of disembarkation of their mythical ancestors) and ritual role (chiefs, chanters, warriors, shamans, and cigar-lighters), with downriver groups always ranking higher than upriver groups (Jackson 1983:72; Hugh-Jones 1988:25). These differences in status were maintained and strengthened through rank marriages.

The relationship between the invading Tukano and the native Makú involved a variety of forms of servitude that through time ranged from predatory to symbiotic. Because of their disparate cultural practices, the riverine, horticultural Tukano consider the forest-dwelling, hunting-gathering Makú as inferior people, halfway between humans and animals (Stradelli 1890:433). After being displaced from their territory, Makú bands were often raided by the Tukano and Arawak invaders, who sought to capture children to keep as slaves or, later on, to sell to whites (Coudreau 1887:179; Koch-Grünberg 1995, 1:56–57). Such slaves often adopted their masters’ language and mores but were rarely incorporated as affines or kin, since Tukano refused, and continue to refuse, to marry Makú people. Other Makú bands were subjugated by the invaders and attached to their settlements as servant groups (Coudreau 1887:179). Such groups lived close to their masters’ *maloca*, or longhouse, but never within it (Koch-Grünberg 1906:881). They retained their families and their headmen, although they were entirely at the service of their Tukano masters.

In more recent times, Makú bands began to work as client groups for the Tukano not on a permanent but on a seasonal basis (Ramos, Silverwood-Cope, and de Oliveira 1980:153; Chernela 1993:115, 163). They toiled for their masters during several months every year in exchange for food and a variety of gifts and then returned to their lands. Makú client groups maintained their own leaders and a higher degree of autonomy than those groups attached as servants, but even in such situations, coercion, or the threat of coercion, continued to be a central feature of the relationship (McGovern 1927:177; Knobloch 1972:106). The most common ties of subordination linking Makú to Tukano during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were captive slavery and group servitude. In contrast, the

most common form of subordination in the twentieth century was group clientship. With the passage of time, however, some Makú bands associated with Tukano groups either as clients or servants underwent a process of Tukanoization, eventually becoming integrated—together with Tukanoized captive slaves—into the language group of their former masters as low-ranking “cigar-lighter” or “servant” sibs (Koch-Grünberg 1906:878; Nimuendajú 1950:165).

Such situations have been reported among the Cubeo (Koch-Grünberg 1995, 2:91), the Tukano proper (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1996:42), and the Bará and Tuyuka (Jackson 1983:159–160). Some authors claim that the Desana had assimilated so many such Makú groups that in the late 1800s they were considered to be of mixed Tukano-Makú heritage (Coudreau 1887:164). The same seems to be true of the Makuna (Århem 1989:13). In such cases the process of integration was cemented through marriage alliances, generally between people of similarly low-status sibs, at which point Tukano masters chose to forget the ancestry of their Makú forest affines. Although affinal amnesia seems to have played a key role in the integration of Makú servant groups into Tukano language groups, their Makú origins were never totally forgotten (Goldman 1963:96). Thus, it is said that although the Cubeoized Makú considered themselves to be *mira*, or “people,” their “true” Cubeo neighbors regarded them with contempt and still called them Makú, although not to their faces (Koch-Grünberg 1995, 2:91–92, 99). In brief, whereas the existence of low-ranking servant sibs allowed for the structural incorporation of Makú servant groups into the Tukano regional social system, the adopted identity of these groups could always be impugned by recalling their servile origin.

### CHIRIGUANÁ/CHANÉ OF SOUTHEASTERN BOLIVIA

The case of the Arawak-speaking Chané of eastern Bolivia, gradually conquered by Tupí-Guaraní invaders throughout a long period beginning in pre-colonial times, stands somewhere between those of the Naborey and Makú. Although they were subjugated as a collectivity like the Naborey, they were not integrated as a servile stratum. And although they were attached as servant groups like the Makú, they were not integrated as marriage partners. The earliest mention of the existence of the Chiriguaná places them raiding the eastern frontiers of the Inca Empire during the reign of Tupac Inca Yupanqui, around 1471–1493 (Garcilaso de la Vega 1963:322). Sources differ about their origins, but taken together they suggest that the Chiriguaná originated as a result of several waves of migrating or raiding Tupí-Guaraní-speaking peoples from the Atlantic coast of Brazil that began well before Columbus’s arrival in America (Anonymous 1941:66; Alcaya 1961:47–49; Díaz de Guzmán 1836:15–18).

At the time of contact, the Chiriguaná were still in a process of vigorous geographical and political expansion, having already occupied the headwaters of

three important rivers along the Andean piedmont—the Guapay, Parapetí, and Pilcomayo. In the process, they had displaced or subjugated the native populations, an ensemble of mostly Arawak-speaking groups who recognized themselves as Chané (“men,” “people”), as well as the highland Indian colonists settled in the region by the Inca state. With a reputation for being fierce warriors and insatiable cannibals, the Chiriguaná were feared by all their neighbors (Garcilaso de la Vega 1963:322). Adult men captured in war were killed and consumed in cannibalistic rituals. Young women and children were kept as slaves (*tapui*) and eventually assimilated through adoption and marriage, their slave origin being gradually erased from the collective memory. Although there is evidence that the invaders brought with them some of their women, it is said that in the early stages of the invasion, most Chiriguaná warriors took women from among the local Chané.

Spanish authorities estimated that by 1586 half of the Chiriguaná population descended from mixed marriages between Chiriguaná men and women from the various nations they had conquered (Suárez de Figueroa 1965:405). The offspring of these mixed marriages were raised as Chiriguaná and were assimilated as fellow tribespeople (Díaz de Guzmán 1979:72–73). Additionally, the Chiriguaná invaders had under their direct dominion several thousand Chané, who were described in colonial sources as “slaves” (Suárez de Figueroa 1965:405). Under this term, the Spanish conflated both prisoners taken in war and held as slaves and subjected collectivities incorporated as servant groups. By the mid-sixteenth century, most Chané had been either subjected as slaves or servants or displaced to the arid plains of the Parapetí River (Matienzo 1918–1922, 1:54). The adoption of the horse in the early seventeenth century increased the military capacity of the Chiriguaná, allowing them to wage war against distant groups formerly out of range from their raids.

Chané servant groups lived under the authority of their own leaders in the periphery of Chiriguaná settlements (Arteaga 1961:172, 176–177). Their main duties were farming and soldiering, but they also played an important role as personal attendants and retainers. Often, the size of the Chané servant population was much larger than that of their Chiriguaná masters (Suárez de Figueroa 1965:405). The incorporation of such a large number of people posed very different problems from those entailed by the integration of war captives.

The process of Chiriguanáization of Chané servant groups was gradual and extended for almost three centuries. It was achieved partly through direct contact with the language and culture of their conquerors, partly through the incorporation of Chiriguanáized but unassimilated Chané captive slaves who, after being emancipated, had married into these groups. As a result of these concurrent processes, by the early twentieth century the Bolivian Chané had ceased to be an autonomous, self-identified ethnic group and were indistinguishable for all practical purposes from their former Chiriguaná masters (Métraux 1930:329), although a smaller group of Chiriguanáized Chané migrated to northern Argentina, where they have

maintained their Chané identity (Villar 2006). This process of ethnic transfiguration was not, however, unidirectional. As some authors have noted, the Chiriguaná were highly influenced by their Chané subordinates, adopting some important cultural traits, such as a hierarchical model of social organization, hereditary leadership, and a complex ritual life revolving around the use of masks (Combès and Lowrey 2006; Villar 2006:208).

The gradual integration and emancipation of Chané servant populations led to the consolidation of two groups that share Chiriguaná language and hybrid cultural practices but distinguish themselves in terms of their origin and a few minor linguistic and cultural elements. One group was the Ava, which is the Chiriguaná self-designation term meaning “man,” a hybrid group comprising the descendants of Chiriguaná warriors and their Chané and other non-Chiriguaná wives, who regard themselves as “masters” (*yara*). The second group comprises the Chiriguanáized descendants of Chané former slaves and servant groups, who refer to themselves as Izoceños, inhabitants of Izozog, the area in which they are at present concentrated, and who are still regarded by the Ava as their slaves/servants (*tapui*). Although in the early stages of interaction these two groups intermarried, with the passage of time such exchanges became increasingly rare, until both groups acquired an almost endogamous character. The Chiriguanáization of the Chané was completed in the late 1700s. By then, it is said, the former Chané spoke, acted, and behaved in everything “almost identically to the Chiriguaná” (Mingo de la Concepción 1981:116–117). Despite having undergone a profound process of Chiriguanáization, however, the Izoceños still bear the stigma of their previous servile status, being viewed by the Ava as somewhat second-class fellow tribesmen (Métraux 1930:329; Riester et al. 1979:263; Combès and Lowrey 2006:692–693).

### CONCLUDING REMARKS: ASSIMILATION OR ETHNOGENESIS?

In his groundbreaking opus *Slavery and Social Death*, Orlando Patterson (1982) argues that one of the main constitutive elements of slavery is “natal alienation,” the process by which, after being captured and removed from their land and society, captives are alienated from all the rights and ties to which they are entitled by birth, thus ceasing to belong to any legitimate social order. From this point of view, captive slaves are “socially dead,” a precondition for their eventual incorporation into the society of their captors. Natal alienation is possible when slaves are captured as individuals, intermittently, and in relatively small numbers. In such cases, captive slaves or their descendants underwent a three-step process of assimilation through which they were first integrated as captive slaves, later on as consubstantial household members, and, finally, as kin or affines. From an Amerindian point of view, such assimilation was always understood as a process of “taming” or “civilizing” enemy others (Santos-Granero 2009b:chap. 8).

In contrast, when entire collectivities are subjugated, conquerors are by definition the outsiders, whereas the conquered are the natives. In such situations, according to Patterson (1982:111), natal alienation is “almost impossible to achieve either intrusively or extrusively.” The cases analyzed here fall within this latter category. They involve native populations conquered partially or entirely by immigrating peoples belonging to different cultural and linguistic traditions. Unlike captive slaves, who within the space of one or two generations were totally assimilated—the memory of their slave past gradually fading with the passage of time—conquered populations underwent a much longer process of ethnic transfiguration that ended, I argue, not with complete assimilation but rather with the emergence of a new, hybrid identity embracing elements from the cultural traditions of both conquered and conquerors.

From an Amerindian perspective, the difference between the processes of integration of captive slaves and servant groups is explained by the fact that, unlike subjected populations, captive slaves were immediately integrated as subordinates into their masters’ households. As such, they shared food, beverages, and other substances like tobacco, yagé, achiote paint, and medicines with their masters. They also shared their roof and often even their beds. Close physical contact through joint work and sexual relations increased their degree of intimacy. Given the widespread Amerindian understanding that consubstantiality through co-residence and commensality leads to important bodily and identity transformations (see Gow 2007; Vilaça 2007; Santos-Granero 2009a), it is not surprising that given enough time, Amerindian masters came to consider a captive slave as being “one of their own.” This process was facilitated by the fact that captive slaves were generally children and young women who, deprived of affective and social ties, were more inclined to view their masters’ families as their own and thus to adopt their masters’ language and customs. Under such circumstances, the process of assimilation was relatively smooth and speedy.

In contrast, the integration of conquered populations faced three main problems. First, servant peoples like the Makú and Chané—and probably the Naborey—were generally relocated in the periphery of their masters’ settlements, where they had their own houses and where they ate and slept separately. This conspired against the possibility of a rapid assimilation via co-residence and commensality. Second, the Naborey, Makú, and Chané maintained their own family networks and often continued to be ruled by their own leaders, making it unnecessary to seek affection and social position through incorporation into their masters’ families. Last, conquered populations often outnumbered their masters—as was the case of the Naborey and Chané—which made it easier for them to cling to their own language and traditions.

Since there is no historical evidence supporting the notion that the Taíno, Tukano, and Chiriguaná coerced their servant populations into adopting their

language and cultural practices, we must necessarily conclude that this process entailed a certain dose of willingness on the part of such populations. I propose that the ethnic transfiguration undergone by the Naborey, Makú, and Chané was the outcome of “selective emulation,” a process by which collectivities involved in political or cultural hierarchical relations seek to imitate or adopt some of the practices of another collectivity perceived as being in some way superior. The Frenchification of the Russian court and elites in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Anglicization of the Indian upper castes during the nineteenth century, and the Americanization of the Filipino ruling class during the twentieth century are milder forms of this kind of strategy, which in more hierarchical contexts can result in even deeper identity transformations.

Selective emulation differs from assimilation insofar as it does not entail a complete renunciation of one’s cultural traditions. It also differs from assimilation because the emerging identities are not identical to those of the prestigious or dominant emulated groups. In this sense, selective emulation might be characterized as a strategy aimed at acquiring through mimicry the prestige and authority of the dominant group while at the same time preserving a differentiated identity. Some authors, like Bhabha (1994), go even further, arguing that in such situations the colonized do not produce a copy of the original but rather misappropriate it, subverting it in the process by revealing its ambivalence and denying its authority. From the perspective of the dominant mimicked group, however, the process of selective emulation is seen as producing a copy that is always inferior to the original. Incorporated as Taíno servants, Tukano low-status sibs, or Chiriguana second-class fellow tribesmen, the former Naborey, Makú, and Chané may speak, act, and behave in everything “almost identically” to their former masters; they retain, however, a series of cultural and physical traits that betray their foreign origin. Moreover, despite having adopted—often wholeheartedly—their masters’ cultural makeup, they still bear the stigma of their captive origin. Theirs are thus “captive identities,” that is to say, hybrid quasi-ethnic identities marked by the experience of captivity and servitude, which represent a particular form of ethnogenesis situated midway between ethnic assimilation and the emergence of novel ethnic identities.

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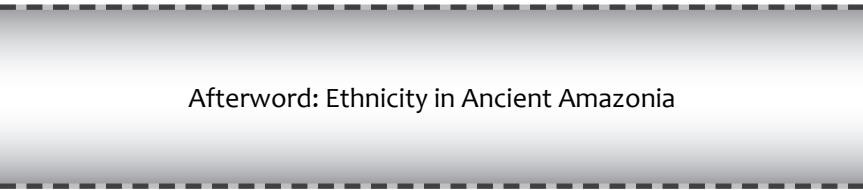
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Afterword: Ethnicity in Ancient Amazonia

*Neil L. Whitehead*

This volume makes a major contribution to rethinking the history of South America by directly confronting some of the major theoretical constraints that have interfered with a better appreciation of the nature of ancient Amazonia. Several authors in the volume use the lens of Arawakan peoples to begin to provide a coherent ethnological framework for thinking through the interrelationships of language, society, culture, and history over extended time frames. This necessarily means that archaeological, no less than linguistic and sociocultural, materials are brought together into an emerging theoretical and historical paradigm. This has been achieved by rejecting earlier simplistic conceptions that picture a series of “peoples” distributed across a static landscape and forming neat, coherent, bounded populations linked by a common language, which, it was supposed, gave rise directly and distinctly to equally discrete and bounded “cultures” and “ethnic identities.” The apparent plausibility of this model no doubt has many roots, including inherent biases deriving from the colonial entanglements of anthropology and archaeology as intellectual projects; a lack of basic information on the archaeology, ecology, and

ethnology of many parts of this vast region; and the resulting assumptions that the character of groups encountered in twentieth-century ethnography was essentially unchanged “survivors” from earlier times. Nothing could be further from the truth of the matter, and in fact the situation, demographic and sociopolitical, of modern Amazonians is more in the character of refugees from genocide than of untouched relics of a sylvan past.

As the chapters in this volume clearly demonstrate, not only are those kinds of intellectual biases being reworked in theoretical terms but also at the same time important new information is emerging as a direct result of asking the new kinds of questions that these emerging theories allow, consistent with the rapidly changing historical and archaeological record. Progress is certainly uneven in terms of both data and theory, but this volume establishes that the intellectual trajectory of Amazonian anthropology has changed definitively and that while many issues still stand in need of resolution (chronologies, distributions, and interactive processes), it is only with the kind of radical new approaches shown in the chapters collected here that such issues have any hope of being better addressed.

The existing social and cultural theory that obviously defines how we might come to understand the processes through which such archaeological traces were left in the landscape is manifestly defective in the way in which it tries to understand the relationship among language distributions, archaeological distributions, and sociocultural forms. Thus it needs to be reemphasized that the subjects/objects of linguistics, archaeology, and ethnology are by no means uniform and that much theoretical confusion (and lack of its resolution) is created by a failure to recognize this. In the absence of a more developed history or archaeological record, language came to stand for people, and likewise ceramics were seen as almost isomorphic with their producers and users (Whitehead 1998). Happily, many researchers have now realized the problems with such an approach, but the hard work of then developing new theory and datasets is still under way and this volume makes a major contribution to that process.

In the chapter by Eduardo Neves, for example, he writes that

correlations of this kind can and need to be done if one is willing to integrate archaeology and cultural anthropology in understanding the long-term history of occupation of lowland South America . . . Such advances have been freeing the discipline from an exclusive reliance on the traditional, ceramic-based typological approach as the major source of information about the past. Today we have much more data on other dimensions of variation in the archaeological record, such as site size and shape, settlement patterns, regional chronologies, and so forth.

However, just because techniques and technologies are new does not mean they are apposite. Moreover, given the way in which professional practice is driven by fund-

ing formulas and fashions, we need to be wary of simply replacing the old arrow-laden maps of migration and distribution with GIS-generated hexagons of spatial patterning.

Dahl and his colleagues in this volume make a good case for using GIS potentials but, as has been found with war-gaming and other virtual media that feed into ongoing military programs of mapping “human terrain,” such modeling always entails implicit cultural and social theory that must be overtly expressed. A failure to do so results in a failure to take account of other subjectivities. The self-maximizing, rational human subject so beloved of the military planners, development aid specialists, and global economists is hardly an adequate theoretical coat hanger for a better understanding of Amazonian worlds. Dahl and his colleagues write, “The SRTM 90 m DEM data form the highest-resolution global dataset freely available today and will result in a significant expansion of GIS applications in archaeology throughout the world, particularly in rural areas such as Amazonia.”

This is well and good but it is important, because of the long history of inscribing Western models onto non-Western peoples, that such approaches do not unwittingly promote the idea that Amazonia only gets to join “Club Civilization” by being articulated through “scientifically endorsed” normative modes of representation developed in other cultural contexts. It is always possible to draw lines between points but what the meaning of the line is and what constitutes the data points are perennial and sometimes neglected questions. The interplay between our research technologies and the intellectual questions we choose to ask will always be with us, but a more critical reflection on those relationships will do much to obviate past errors in blindly following academic models rather than fully engaging with people and their material traces. The chapter by Hornborg and Eriksen on rethinking the idea of migration and how a GIS-generated database might allow correlation of material culture, linguistics, and geography is therefore revealing for the sheer complexity that such correlations would be required to take into account. On the basis of these chapters it remains open as to whether GIS will have a significant role to play, given the limitations of the datasets it can handle and the complexity of the issues yet to be addressed.

In this way the chapter by DeBoer does an exemplary job of picturing a series of complexities that such modeling necessarily must confront. As he writes:

Looking beneath the mass behavior of artifacts in abstract space, yet other scale-contingent phenomena emerge. Overarching distance-decay relationships break down along major waterways and at mainstream-sidestream interfaces. Artifact collectivities fracture along technological, social, and ideological dimensions. Quotidian and utilitarian artifacts readily diffuse to neighbors, resulting in a large cluster of contiguous groups sharing the trait. In contrast to this contagious pattern, ornaments tend to hopscotch across groups as if striving to maximize perimeters of difference. Such ornaments, including perishable hairdos and body

painting, are rare in the archaeological record but are likely to be the most telling carriers for group identity.

DeBoer thus provides a timely reminder of the meaning of complexity in the variability and dispersion of material remains, as well as the limits of inferences that we can make from those material objects, especially when considered against the backdrop of cultural life as a whole. DeBoer's careful and systematic unpacking of material life is both inspirational and cautionary for the promise and challenges that future anthropologies must engage.

It is also critically important to distinguish prehistory from archaeology if we are to make any theoretical advances. The research questions in Amazonia at this moment, or at least in this volume, are derived from issues of how a prehistory is to be constructed. Thus the methods of archaeology and historiography are discussed as potential tools for that prehistory project, but much less evident is discussion of what the ends of that prehistory project are or should be.

Certainly questions of Arawakan identity, as focused on here, by no means exhaust the issues that might be addressed, including the idea, discussed by Tarble and Scaramelli, that obsession with the politics of identity is very much a product of European colonialism itself. In short, we should also aim to be more explicit about the agenda of prehistory and make sure that it includes due attention not only to the influence of other somatic distributions than just ethnic or political ones—gender being particularly important in this regard and more or less absent from this volume—but also to the experiential and sensual character of the past. “Things of beauty replete with meaning—metals and crystals in Colombian cosmology” is the unforgettable phrase with which Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff (Furst et al. 1981) conjured up this interlacing of experience and identity. And in this volume Warren DeBoer similarly crafts a complex vision of such interlacing with his analysis of “things” and “meaning,” pottery and its potters, among the Shipibo and Conibo, as mentioned already.

Another illustration of this concern for a combined focus on meaning and materiality is provided by both other recent publications on Amazonia (Santos-Granero 2009; Whitehead and Aleman 2009) and my own research with Michael Heckenberger, who writes for this volume. Direct collaboration between ethnographers and archaeologists through the medium of ethnohistory is therefore a key research principle that is suggested repeatedly in this volume, and which was the basis of the Berbice Project in Guyana, initiated by me and Heckenberger in August 2009. The project originated in ethnographic work I had conducted in Guyana in 1992. At that time my collaboration with George Simon, himself of Arawak Lokono descent, led to field investigations of cultural and geophysical remains along the Berbice River, a historic center of Lokono settlement. This resulted in the discovery of a vast complex of agricultural mounds in the savannahs adjacent to the Berbice

River and a large *terra preta* site, Hitia, which today is still occupied by a largely Lokono community. The sheer scale of this evidently anthropogenic landscape in the little-known inland areas of the coastal plain of the Guyanas demanded closer attention, the more so when an initial radiocarbon date from the mounds placed their construction at around 1800 BP, contemporary with the earliest raised-field complexes of coastal Surinam and French Guyana (Rostain 2008; Versteeg 2008).

In August 2009, George Simon, Michael Heckenberger, and David Steadman (Florida Museum of Natural History) and I returned to the Berbice and were able to recover preliminary data on occupation sites associated with the mounds, which already promise to substantially change our view of long-term human occupation in the tropics, and in particular the important role that Arawakan peoples may have played in that process. The agricultural mounds stretch over hundreds of miles, comprising the Berbice, Canje, and Corentyne river systems. Moreover, given that this was an initial and limited survey, we might expect that a proper delineation of this region will reveal far more than we saw on the two-hour overflight of the area. On the ground, and linked to the more localized distribution of the mounds, were very ancient settlement sites, such as Hitia and the Dubulay site, which was marked by large *terra preta* deposits, up to two hectares across and to a depth of two meters, within an overall occupation site perhaps fifteen to twenty-five hectares in size. Remarkably, samples from the mid-layers of the *terra preta* as well as non-*terra preta* deposits at the Dubulay site yielded two radiocarbon dates of ca. 5000 BP, representing an extremely early example of the large bluff settlements, *terra preta*, and ceramics widely seen as typical of settled agriculturalists across Amazonia (Oliver 2008). These very early settlements rival large communities found along the Amazon and Orinoco, associated with much later time periods, such as those discussed by Eduardo Neves in this volume, and challenge the view that large settled communities only appeared along the larger Amazonian rivers. At Açutuba, which at just over thirty hectares is one of the larger sites so far uncovered, the river is twelve kilometers wide. The Berbice River at the site of Dubulay is barely 120 meters across. In itself this fact elegantly dispatches the once-prevailing notion that some form of “environmental limitation” inhibited social and cultural development.

The survey of sites along the Berbice established at the very least the need to approach questions of long-term cultural development in different ways. It also underlines the dynamic role that Arawakan peoples, who still live at these archaeological sites, seem to have had in the wider story of human occupations throughout the Amazonian region. It will not be surprising to learn, given the existing research interests of myself and Heckenberger, that we naturally assumed we were encountering a major chapter in the Arawakan Lokono role in a scenario of ancient and ongoing diaspora among Arawak peoples. However, the radiocarbon dates recovered from the *terra preta* deposits and the ceramics embedded within the soils, in fact, open up many new questions even as they seem to lay to rest some past ones.

Dated at 5000 BP, from samples taken from the mid-layers of the *terra preta* as well as a non-*terra preta* deposit that was also part of the site, Dubulay has a history much older than the Lokono. Moreover, ceramics of this date have only previously been encountered in association with shell middens—for example the geographically proximate Alaka phase of the Puerto Hormiga complex—so that the overall ceramic chronology for South America may well have to be reconsidered in light of these dates.

Whatever the eventual outcomes of more focused and sustained research along the Berbice, it is clear now that the histories of indigenous peoples are far older and more complex than has been previously allowed, and this is in complete harmony with the arguments and evidence presented in this volume. As indicated in the introduction to the volume, issues of human demography and settlement as framed by an earlier anthropology are being “increasingly transcended by archaeological discoveries, notably of extensive and deep deposits of dark, anthropogenic soils.”

However, meta-theories as to the relation of language to polity and culture in Amazonia have often hindered the appreciation of the actual speech variety within indigenous communities, and this relates directly to issues of archaeology since, especially in South America, language distributions have so often stood for cultural and historical distributions. As a result, the reevaluation of standard linguistic models that emphasized a one-to-one correlation between ceramic styles and language is superseded in this volume by more sophisticated analyses that are very much in accord with the emphasis on complexity and time depth also emerging from the archaeological materials.

In particular, authors in this volume (Basso, Carlin, Muysken) stress the significance of multilingual areal networks. Thus Ellen Basso shows how people “can belong to many communities or cultures at once” and rightly suggests that this may be as true of the ancient past as it has been of more recent colonial history, which, in the wake of demographic collapses, forced the melding of many disparate linguistic and social communities. Eithne Carlin’s brief history of some of the Carib- and Arawak-speaking groups of the Surinam-Guyana-Brazil border zone demonstrates this very well for the colonial period. Likewise, much more ancient contexts, such as that along the Berbice River discussed above, which show continuity over the last 5,000 years, need not be assigned to one or another language grouping since the chapters here amply demonstrate how dynamic the pattern of language use has been and can be.

Carlin’s focus is on the colonial histories of four ethnic formations in the eastern highlands of Guyana, known in the documentation as the Waiwai, Mawayana, Taruma, and Wapishana. Despite linguistic differences, these groups have been closely connected through war, trade, and marriage throughout colonial history. This in itself may partly be explained by the pattern of colonial occupation in this region, which, through the necessity to sustain alliance with native groups, meant

there was no direct conquest or sustained evangelization of these populations. As these groups were at the periphery of Brazilian, Dutch, British, and French colonial administration, they were subject to varying forms of alliance, raiding, and trading by both indigenous and colonial interests. As such, the processes of ethnogenesis, discussed extensively by other authors in this volume, did not simply follow linguistic formations. The case of the Carib-speaking Waiai is particularly relevant here as they incorporated not only other Carib speakers but also Arawak speakers.

Indeed, as Basso also suggests, large-scale polities in Amazonia, as in Mesoamerica, were unlikely to have been based on monolingual populations but necessarily incorporated populations over large geographic areas. In such contexts certain languages may have become the basis for those processes of exchange and affinity out of which large-scale social and political arrangements formed. An ongoing contemporary example of this, documented in the chapters by both Ellen Basso and Michael Heckenberger, relates to the emergence of a Xinguano identity among populations with distinct language heritages. In her chapter for this volume Basso also provides a subtle and detailed analysis of the kinds of linguistic practices that can foment such a supra-linguistic ethnic identity, and this provides a model for the interpretation of the formation and development of Amazonian macro-polities from the past as well.

In many ways the chapters in this volume that are collected in the “Ethnohistory” section, along with Heckenberger’s notion of “deep history” shared with DeBoer, provide the most illuminating insights into the Arawakan past and by implication also reveal the kinds of methodologies and theoretical priorities that are critical to future anthropologies of Amazonia. Partly this results from the nature of the ethnohistorical enterprise itself, which is necessarily sophisticated with regard to interpreting past/present, cultural/material, long term/short term, artifact/act, and so on, exactly the theoretical binaries that have otherwise seemed to offer only either/or choices for those working with Amazonian materials. The chapters collected in this section, cognizant of the datasets of archaeology and linguistics, thus provide a more fully anthropological vision of Arawakan history: pre-, deep, and even post-, since history is never over and is always about the present as much as about the past.

Thus the chapters by Hill, Santos-Granero, Virtanen, and Whitten all share a consciousness of how that past is never really over, remaining as a point of dispute and vital meaning in the present moment. This also returns us sharply to the question asked above as to what the point of a “prehistory” as opposed to an “archaeology” would be. Just as ethnographers have come to realize that their intellectual agenda may well be outpaced by the peoples they hoped to study, or even be part of their ongoing subjugation (Whitehead 2009), so too archaeologists and historians (ethnohistorical or prehistorical) must also interrogate the origins of their own research questions and consider how (if at all) they play into the lives whose pasts

they seek to resurrect. The polemical tone of the chapter by Whitten illustrates what is at stake here, not just for the anthropologists but also for those peoples whose life histories, as unraveled by ethnohistorians, can become the life destinies they must face. Historical frameworks, no less than archaeological or ethnographic ones, can immobilize and constrain the present in significant ways and, where adopted into the national histories, also serve policy and political ends that may not at all enhance the destinies of indigenous peoples. So it is important to recall that, as Hill shows, our competence to unravel others' pasts may be culturally limited by our own ideas of history and its place in social life; that is, we have a culturally distinct historicity whose origins and purposes may be occluded for the ethnohistorian. Critical examination of the history of history, just as this volume in part charts a chapter in the history of anthropology, is therefore an important contribution from this section of the book. Musicality, the cosmology of the spirit world, and the deeds of ancestors in fashioning the landscape are shown by Hill and Virtanen not just to be curious and notable features of Arawakan societies through time but also to open up a vista on all histories that suggest that theoretical insights from Amazonia can play a leading role in advancing historiographical thinking and writing more widely. As Hill suggests, “[t]hrough this poetics of history, communities of people transform mere space into a world of meaningful places,” but one should add that this poetics may also extend beyond verbal artistry to other forms of ritual acts, such as assault sorcery, hunting magic, and gender performance (Whitehead 2003).

In her chapter on the piedmont region of Apolobamba, Bolivia, Dudley forcefully underscores this point through a careful examination of the identity politics related to land claims and seizures of ancestral Lecos territories in this region. As Dudley suggests, governmental agencies and institutions are apt to prefer to operate with highly essentialized and “authenticated” conceptions of identity, thus allowing plenty of room to deny those whose histories are not easily or obviously documentable through the kinds of legal requirements governments demand. Many indigenous groups, in South America and elsewhere, are keenly aware of the need to produce such documentable histories, and the history of “ethnohistory” in the United States is closely tied to claims being made under federal legislation after 1934 that comprised historical and archival materials as much as cultural claims, collective memories, and even the notorious “blood quantum” rules.<sup>1</sup> In these ways, states and government agencies, both ancient and contemporary, are often part of the reason for ethnic self-fashioning, just as such ethnic groups can come to exercise profound influences on the nature of the state and governmental authority itself, as “states make tribes and tribes make states” (Whitehead 2000).

Another way in which this process of reconceptualizing our fundamental categories of analysis can begin new and relevant debate is provided by Santos-Granero, who is also concerned with ethnogenesis but particularly as the result of native rather than colonially or nationally induced sociopolitical dynamics. Although

the author somewhat misconstrues the concept of the “tribal zone” as having originated only in consideration of European colonial processes, since in that work Sri Lankan, Roman, and indigenous West African state expansion was also considered (Ferguson and Whitehead 2000), for the purpose of modeling dynamic social processes through time, particularly in this case for Arawakan societies, as well as for more broadly understanding indigenous colonialism, the employment of the notion of the “tribal zone” is entirely apposite. Indeed, such indigenous colonialism can even be accessed ethnographically, as with the contemporary Waiwai, who capture “wild” Indians from the forest and domesticate them into becoming Waiwai, or “civilized.” Similar accounts are also given by the contemporary Patamona, who likewise colonized and domesticated the Kowarianas at the time of their first settlement in the Yawong valley in Guyana (Whitehead 2002). Santos-Granero’s examination of the forms and meanings of captivity in two historical Arawak societies is thus a valuable and thoughtful addition to this growing topic.

In these many ways the chapters of this book lay out important approaches that will contribute to a revisioning of Amazonia. The key point is that a much-needed debate, previously often stifled by the vagaries of professional practices, is now under way and the certainties of yesterday are replaced by the exciting possibilities of things to come, and for that the editors and all the authors of this volume are to be congratulated.

#### NOTE

1. “Blood quantum” refers to the degree of ancestry in a specific racial or ethnic group. Although many racist ideas have employed such schema, its modern usage started with the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. The government started using it to document who could be recognized as Native American and be eligible for financial and other benefits under treaties that were made or sales of land.

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