HISTORY, KINSHIP AND COMUNIDAD:
LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER AMONGST AMAHUACA PEOPLE
ON THE INUYA RIVER IN THE PERUVIAN AMAZON

Christopher Erik Hewlett

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews

2014

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History, Kinship, and *Comunidad*:
Learning to Live Together Amongst Amahuaca People
on the Inuya River in the Peruvian Amazon

Christopher Erik Hewlett

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Social Anthropology
School of Philosophical, Anthropological and Film Studies
University of St Andrews

25th of November 2013
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Abstract

This thesis examines the processes through which Amahuaca people began living in Native Communities where they have legal titles to land, and are organized through the ‘corporate’ body of elected officials mandated by Peruvian law. The thesis focuses on the period beginning in 1953 when the Summer Institute of Linguistics established the first mission among Amahuaca people at the headwaters of the Inuya River in Eastern Peru. This initiated a period of continuous contact between Amahuaca people and wider Peruvian society. By taking a historical approach to understanding contemporary life among Amahuaca people, the thesis engages with the problem of how they have come to understand their past and how this is expressed today. The primary narrative is that through their engagement with the Summer Institute of Linguistics, Amahuaca people have learned to live together. This notion of living together stands in sharp contrast to the ways they often appear in the literature, which focuses on the lack of large villages and any overarching social and political organization. Through an analysis of the transformations Amahuaca people have undergone as a result of their decision to participate in the SIL’s project, the thesis challenges this notion of lack and sets out an alternate way of perceiving of Amahuaca sociality. The analysis begins with a series of collective ceremonies in the 1960s, which were the only moments when Amahuaca people were said to coordinate activities at a level beyond the extended family. Taking this as an entry point, the thesis tracks the movement of a specific group of families through time and space to explore the types of relationships they were engaged in during this period of massive change. The overall aim is to locate continuities in the ways Amahuaca people relate with one another and the wider world to better understand how processes of transformation might be understood as the outcome of particular relationships people made over the past half-century. Today, the same families who lived in the first mission are spread out from the headwaters of the Inuya and Mapuya Rivers to the provincial capital of Atalaya. The overarching narrative of becoming civilized is given geographic significance based on this movement from the headwaters to the larger rivers and towns; however, most of these families reside in one of two Amahuaca Native Communities (Comunidades Nativas) located near the midpoint between these two poles. One of the major themes of the thesis is to understand how people negotiate living together in a Native Community as a formulation of becoming other.

Transformation, Native Community, Peruvian Amazonia, Government, History, Amahuaca, Sociality, Missionization
**Table of Contents:**

Table of figures ......................................................................................................................... 5
Acknowledgements ................................................................................................................... 8
Glossary: ................................................................................................................................. 10
  Terms ................................................................................................................................. 11
  Places: ................................................................................................................................. 13
Prelude ......................................................................................................................... 14
Introduction .............................................................................................................................. 16
  Part One: The Summer Institute of Linguistics and the Expansion of the Peruvian State ................................................................................................................................. 17
  Part Two: Methodological Framework ............................................................................... 21
  Part Three: Brief Theoretical Background ....................................................................... 23
  Part Four: Summary of Chapters ..................................................................................... 25
Chapter One: Amahuaca People ............................................................................................ 28
  Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 28
  Section I: Positioning Amahuaca People Geographically, Historically and Anthropologically ......................................................................................................................... 30
  Part One: Panoan Peoples ................................................................................................. 30
  Part Two, Pananos of the upper Yurua River and upper Purus River ............................ 32
  Part Three: Amahuaca People: Early to Mid-20th Century .......................................... 35
  Section II: Marriage, Residence Patterns and Kinship Terminology ............................... 38
  Part One: Kinship Terminology ....................................................................................... 38
  Part Two: Subgroups ......................................................................................................... 40
  Part Three: Personhood and Ethnonyms ......................................................................... 41
  Section III: Woodside’s Composite Person, Clusters, Neighbourhoods, and Villages ................................................................................................................................. 43
  Part One: The Composite Person ..................................................................................... 44
  Part Two: The Cluster, Neighbourhood and Village ....................................................... 48
  Section IV: The SIL Project .............................................................................................. 51
Part Four: Roano

Part Five: Roberto Pansitimba

Section III: Contemporary Layout of Amahuaca People

Part One: San Martín and extensions

Part Two: San Juan and Extensions

Part 3: Upper Inuya and Mapuya

Conclusion

Section II: The Contemporary Lived World of Amahuaca People

Introduction

Chapter Four: Kinship and Contract: Ordering Collective Activities within Comunidades

Introduction

Section I: Summary of Argument

Section II: Humanity and Gender

Section III: Household Oriented Collective Activities

Part One: Minga

Part Two: Fiestas

Sandra’s Quinceañera

Rebecca’s fiesta

Analysis

Section III: The Comunidad

Part One: Faena

Part Two: Campeonato

Conclusion:

Chapter Five: The Spatiality of Relations: Comparing Civilización On the Inuya River

Introduction

Section I: School

Part One: San Juan

Part Two: San Martín

Section Two: Authenticity, and Civilización
# Table of figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Mortuary diagram.</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Mortuary diagram 2</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Ayahuasca ceremony.</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Ayahuasca/mortuary—synthesis</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Amahuaca Men Adorned for Glutton Feast, 1961 (Huxley and Capa 1964)</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Growing Children, 1961 (Huxley and Capa 1964)</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Feast diagram.</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Ceremonial synthesis</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Abuela Margarita and Children, 1961 (Huxley and Capa 1964)</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Robert Russell at Varadero, 1961 (Huxley and Capa 1964)</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Amazonian Peru.</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Comunidades in the department of Ucayali, province of Atalaya. San Juan (16); San Martín (15)</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Middle Inuya and Mapuya; San Martín, San Juan, and Inmaculada</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Diagram for Maxopo and family</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Diagram for Manayama and Collazo and family</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>San Martín – major clusters</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>San Martín – diagram 1</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>San Martín – diagram 2</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>San Juan and Inmaculada</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>San Juan – diagram 1</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>San Juan. - diagram 2</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 25. San Juan – map of households ................................................................. 152
Figure 26. Upper Inuya .......................................................................................... 153
Figure 27. Upper Inuya and Mapuya ...................................................................... 154
Figure 28: Comunidad of San Juan on the Inuya River, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett ........................................................................................................... 168
Figure 29: Abuela Margarita and her daughter Rosa. Rosa was one of the children in photograph above. Photo by Christopher Hewlett 2010 ........................................... 169
Figure 30: Roberto Pansitima Reading Farewell to Eden in San Martin on the Inuya River. Photo by Christopher Hewlett 2011 .............................................................. 169
Figure 31: Pedro Collazo in town of Atalaya, 2011. Photo by Christopher Hewlett ..... 170
Figure 32: President Fermin and wife Giovana working together, San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett .......................................................................................... 183
Figure 33: Men taking a break during minga to drink masato, San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett .......................................................................................... 184
Figure 34: Manioc from garden harvested for masato, San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles ........................................................................................................... 184
Figure 35: Preparing masato, San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles .............. 185
Figure 36: Amahuaca women preparing masato, San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles ........................................................................................................... 185
Figure 37: Preparing Masato in Canoe, San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett. ...................................................................................................................... 186
Figure 38: Fiesta in San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett. ....................... 187
Figure 39: Men at Fiesta in San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett. ............... 187
Figure 40: Women at Fiesta in San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett. ........ 188
Figure 41: Abuela Margarita and Rosa at Fiesta in San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett ........................................................................................................... 188
Figure 42: Fiesta in San Martin, 2011. Photo by Christopher Hewlett....................... 188
Figure 43: Women at Fiesta in San Martin, 2011. Photo by Christopher Hewlett......... 189
Figure 44: Football Club from San Juan on Wining Day, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett ........................................................................................................... 189
Figure 45. Fiesta diagram .......................................................................................... 193
Figure 46: Schoolchildren Singing Anthem in San Martin, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles. 209
Figure 47: Children entering school in San Martin, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles. 210
Figure 48: Carlos teaching Amahuaca language in San Martin, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles. 210
Figure 49: Fishing upriver, San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles. 211
Figure 50: Abuela Margarita and Enrique, San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles. 211
Figure 51: Two boys in San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles. 212
Figure 52: Ayahuasquero Adorned for Photograph, Upper Inuya, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles. 212
Figure 53: House in Caserío of Maldonadillo near town of Atalaya, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles. 213
Figure 54: Abuela Margarita in San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles. 214
Figure 55: President Manuel Sarasara in Atalaya, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles. 215
Figure 56: Family from Upper Inuya Visiting to Discuss Land Titling, San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles. 215
Figure 57: Communal meeting diagram (Acta/Contract). 285
Figure 58: Fiesta diagram (Composite person/kinship). 286
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In the loving memory of Mary Agnes ‘Deedee’ Dinsmore

July 10, 1918 - September 26, 2013
Glossary

Terms

SIL
Summer Institute of Linguistics
Instituto Lingüístico de Verano

Comunidad
Comunidad Nativa, Native Community

Comunero
Official member of Comunidad Nativa (Comunidad)

Reunión, Communal Meeting
Communal meeting in which issues related to community affairs are discussed.

Junta Directiva
Authorities of Comunidad comprised of a jefe (president), vice-jefe (vice-president),1 secretario (secretary) and tesorero (treasurer) by a group of officially recognized indigenous people;

SINAMOS (Sistema Nacional de Apoyo a la Movilización Social)
Government organization that explained the mechanism of voting and rights and responsibilities corresponding to the land titling. It no longer exists, but played an important role in demarcating land in the 1970s and 1980s, primarily on the Urubamba and Ucayali Rivers.

Serrano
Andean person.

Comunidad, Comunidad Nativa
Native Community. Legal name for titles Indigenous Territories granted by the Peruvian State.

Faena
Communal work in a Comunidad organized by the president or other member of junta directiva.

1 The position of vice-president is not actually designated as necessary in the law, but it is very common in the area and all the Comunidades I visited did have a person with this title.
**Minga**
Work party held by a family who invite men to work, usually in their garden, in exchange for future participation in their minga. *Masato* is always served.

**Patrón**
Boss. They most often have a timber camp. They hire workers in exchange for either money or forms of wealth. They are usually mestizo, but occasionally indigenous.

**Comuneros**
Members of a *Comunidad*.

**Sendero Luminoso**
‘Shining Path,’ a Maoist Guerilla that initiated an internal war in Peru.

**Acta**
This is officially the *Libro de Actas*, but I use it in the thesis, as Amahuaca people do, to refer to the map of demarcated territory, official title to land, and the notebook where minutes of meetings are kept.

**Campeonato**
Football tournament organized by either a *Comunidad* or a *Caserío* in which they host others and have multiple games over the course of one day. This is most often organized by teachers in schools and is intended for schoolchildren, but adults also play.

**Caserío**
A non-indigenous village that is divided into plots of land that are owned by individual families. It is organized in a similar way to a *Comunidad*. Although not technically indigenous, it is common for some indigenous people to live here. There are two I discuss. The first is Maldonadillo, which is located on the Urubamba River near the town of Atalaya. The second is Inmaculada, which is located at the mouth of the Mapuya River between the *Comunidades* of San Juan and San Martín.

**Masato**
Manioc Beer. It can either be boiled to prevent it from fermenting, or allowed to ferment and become strong with alcohol.
Places

Atalaya
Provincial Capital

Pucallpa
Regional Capital

Maldonadillo
*Caserio* at mouth of Tambo River across from Atalaya
Site of house owned by president of San Juan de Inuya

Jatitza
First Amahuaca Comunidad on the Ucayali River
Located near Chumichinia, island in middle of Ucayali River

Bolognesi
Small Town on Ucayali River
Home of Plácido Sanchez in 1960s and 1970s

Sepahu
Location of Comunidad, Dominican Mission of Santa Rosa and Town.
Location of Largest Concentration of Amahuaca People Outside of Inuya River

Nuevo San Martín (San Martín)
First Amahuaca *Comunidad* on Inuya River Established with Assistance from SIL

San Juan de Inuya (San Juan)
Second Amahuaca Comunidad on Inuya River Established with Assistance frm Franciscan Missionaries

Maldonadillo
*Caserio* located at mouth of Mapuya River between San Juan and San Martín
Site of killing in 1974
Home of Don Juan del Aguila, father of teacher in San Juan, Manuel

Floresta
*Caserio* at mouth of Inuya River, Formerly home of Amahuaca people
Prelude

The culture of the Amahuaca is of the familiar Tropical forest type, but in many respects it is a very primitive representative of this type. Settlements are small, averaging perhaps three single-family houses and 15 people, and are very widely dispersed. These Comunidades are politically autonomous, and their location and composition are constantly changing. Amahuaca social and ceremonial organization is exceedingly simple: headmen and shamans are absent, and there are only two ceremonies. (Carneiro 1964c: 9)

When I arrived at the Comunidad² of San Juan, the first Amahuaca person I met was a boy of about 13 who was fishing alone in the river below the Comunidad. He paddled towards us, hopped into the boat and said smartly: ‘Hola mister. ¿Cómo te llamas?’ ‘Me llamo Chris. ¿Y tú?’ I replied. He told me a name I quickly forgot. I was in a bit of shock after months of preparation and two days of traveling.

As my guide, the Amahuaca boy, and I climbed out of the canoe and walked up the bank, people began to congregate around us. They seemed to come from everywhere. As I stood there, I was not really able to speak. My guide took control and began talking to everyone. First and foremost he wanted to know who was in charge.

He asked ‘¿El jefe³ está?’ Yes, he was there and he was walking towards us. A thin-boned man, short in relation to myself, approached me and said hello. I said hello and told him I had come to visit. He invited me to his house where we could sit and talk. We were followed by what seemed like the entire population of the Comunidad. I was a spectacle and perhaps the most exotic person who had come to San Juan in years. White people do not tend to visit this part of Peruvian Amazonia very often.

Once we were settled in our chairs on the open deck of the jefe’s house, surrounded by Amahuaca people, I was introduced more officially by my guide. He said I was a lingüístico who wanted to come there and visit and that I wanted to learn the language. I chimed in that I was not a lingüístico, but I was there to visit and, ‘I would like to visit for a few days if that is ok, with the idea that I will come back and live here.’

² I use the word Comunidad throughout the thesis to gloss the term Comunidad Nativa or Native Community. The Comunidad is a legally recognized entity with an official charter and legally recognized territory. In this sense the social organization of the Comunidad is dictated by the government, though the manner in which Amahuaca refer to it and implement the socio-political mechanisms it entails are a main themes of the thesis.

³ The word jefe was used by my guide in this particular instance, but the meaning of this is more complicated, which is discussed below. He was referring to the leader of the Comunidad.
‘Está bien,’ he said, ‘porque el gobierno nos olvidó. Usted puede venir y vivir con nosotros y podemos enseñarle nuestro idioma.’

‘That is good,’ he said, ‘because the government has forgotten us. You can come and live here and we can teach you our language.’

This statement, as part of my very first encounter with Amahuaca people became a formative moment for my time on the Inuya River and my writing of the thesis. I address the meaning of his comment by connecting it to another statement I heard on many occasions: that the missionary Robert Russell ‘taught Amahuaca people how to live together.’

This narrative of ‘learning to live together,’ or ‘being taught how to live together,’ is the basic theme of the thesis. What I want to explore is the history of Amahuaca people’s engagement with the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) and others to offer a model for how we might understand these two statements, while not overlooking the interests and intentions of Amahuaca people themselves.
Introduction

The Amahuaca of Eastern Lowland Peru have been designated a discrete language group among the larger language family known as Panoan. The groups comprising the Panoan language family are located in Eastern Peru, Western Brazil and North Western Bolivia (see map one). This is the fifth largest language family in Amazonia and the most geographically concentrated (Carneiro, forthcoming; 1973; Erikson 1992). A long list of different names have been affiliated with the Panoan language family, but there are currently 17 known languages that are still spoken (Fleck 2013). Today, of the 52 indigenous groups officially recognized by the Peruvian government, 12 are from the Panoan language family.

This geographic concentration is both relevant and deceiving in terms of the homogeneity of the group as a whole. On the one hand many of the Panoan groups share common characteristics beyond those accounted for linguistically, while on the other they tend to be very ‘atomized’ (Erikson 1999). This ‘atomism’ has been discussed in terms of a general socio-political tendency against large, highly concentrated villages, as well as historical interactions with other indigenous groups and non-indigenous people (Calavia Sáez 2004; Erikson 1992; Gow 1991; Townsley 1988).

The short introduction by Robert Carneiro captures how Amahuaca people were described in early literature: widely dispersed small settlements with no shamans, no headmen, crude material culture and limited ceremonial elaborations. Taking this as a starting point, I aim to introduce themes discussed in literature on Amahuaca people and examine some of the main points they raise in this regard.

I want to draw attention to the fact that Amahuaca people were largely discussed in the literature based on what they ‘lacked.’ Based on research from the 1950s and 60s Amahuaca people lacked a classifiable ‘social structure’ because they did not have dual organization, which is inconsistent with other closely related Panoan groups. This meant that their kinship system did not rely on reciprocal exchange between defined groups. There was also no apparent ‘political organization’ beyond that of kinship in which
extended families lived around a clearing owned by the most senior man. Residence was mostly patrilocal at that time, so the small amount of authority granted to the ‘owner’ was based primarily on the father-son relationship. Finally, the material culture of Amahuaca people has been described as less ‘developed’ than these other groups, mostly based on the ‘lack’ of intricate design in their textiles and pottery (Carneiro 1964c; Dole 1998). By building on Julian Steward’s (1949) classification of tropical forest people, Robert Carneiro, Gertrude Dole and others (Lathrap 1970) framed Amahuaca culture in the terms set out in the opening statement by Carneiro. Despite methodological and theoretical shifts regarding how other Panoan groups such as the Cashinahua, Sharanahua and Yaminahua have been discussed, this remains how Amahuaca people generally appear in the literature on the region. A similar conceptualization also guided early engagement with Amahuaca people by the Summer Institute of Linguistics and Peruvian Government.

**Part One: The Summer Institute of Linguistics and the Expansion of the Peruvian State**

In 1953 two American members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) made the gruelling two-week trip punting up the Inuya River to establish the village of Varadero as a mission for Amahuaca people. The SIL is an evangelical organization that bases its work on the belief that indigenous people should learn about the bible in their own language. The SIL signed a contract with the Peruvian government in 1946 and set out to establish posts throughout Peru with the intention of creating bilingual educational material (Stoll 1982) and schools. While the project was linguistically oriented, a central aim was to bring indigenous people into the modern world and allow them to participate in Peruvian society while maintaining their cultural identity (Huxley and Capa 1964).

According to available documents, the SIL viewed this part of their work as necessary in order to ‘save’ Amahuaca people from what, at the time, seemed an inevitable fate: debt slavery, loss of culture and language, and eventual disappearance as a people (Dyck 1992; Huxley and Capa 1964). If they did not intervene and teach them how to negotiate relations with different types of people (loggers, NGOs, governments, colonizers) they would be lost to history (Huxley and Capa 1964).
Between the 1940s and 1950s the Peruvian government set out to consolidate the territory it claimed ownership over in the Amazon region. This renewed interest coincided with many different events, three of which are worth mentioning. First, the area being discussed, the region of the upper Purus was in danger of being taken by Brazil due to their efforts to consolidate their own territory through various projects. Second, the war with Ecuador (1941) over a border dispute not only demonstrated the fragility of Peru’s political control, but also its weak logistical presence as the costs of the war were incredibly high due to a lack of infrastructure and communication. This also corresponded to the hopes of finding oil in the region. Third, the outbreak of WWII meant that demand for many natural resources found in the region increased dramatically. This proved to be the impetus for a systematic and profound transformation in governmental policies towards the region. It was in this economic and political climate that the Peruvian government established a military outpost at the headwaters of the upper Inuya River in 1947, followed by the mission of Varadero in 1953.

By supporting the SIL and particularly their work on the Inuya, the Peruvian government’s interest was to bring the Amahuaca and other groups into the fold of state power and make them and the land they occupied productive in terms corresponding with the aims of consolidating the nation-state (ILV 1960; Stoll 1982). They also supported the work of the Dominican order that established the mission El Rosario de Santa Rosa at the mouth of the Sepahua River during the same period. The government wanted to make good Peruvian citizens out of indigenous people, an intention that is stated quite explicitly in the opening pages of bilingual textbooks published by the SIL.

[...] this task of great social and human importance is entrusted to the Summer Institute of Linguistics, whose specialist orientation as mediators through bilingual communication will guide the teaching of literacy and basic knowledge in their own native tongue, then gradually incorporating the Castilian language with the intention of national integration. (Quirica 1960, my translation, my emphasis)

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4 There had been previous attempts, but for various reasons these had not resulted in gaining full control over the region. During the rubber boom this was largely due to pressure from local bosses who resisted governmental oversight. In the 1920s ad 1930s this was more a result of lack of infrastructure, which was the focus of attention in the post-WWII period (Stoll 1982; Santos-Granero and Barclay 1998; Yashar 2005).

5 President Alan García’s ‘El Perro del Hortelano’ article (Comercio Oct. 28, 2007] demonstrates that this attitude towards the Amazon and indigenous people still dominates political rhetoric and agendas.

6 The mission of Sana Rosa was established at the mouth of the Sepahua River in order to attract Amahuaca people from the headwaters of that river. Initially the Dominicans had been working with the Piro and Matsiguenka, but turned their attention towards PANOAN groups particularly on the Purus River during the late 1940s and early 1950s.
In order to do this, the government needed indigenous people to leave the forest and live in established villages. While the details of how these processes are enacted have changed, the central aims are still relevant for Amahuaca people today. The expansion of governmental policies to integrate indigenous people into wider Peruvian society, and the national economy, have been resisted by some groups at the regional and national levels. As suggested by the comment made by the president of San Juan upon my arrival, however, there are some areas where these projects seem to be welcomed.

It was in the context of the government’s consolidation of the lowland areas, and a wider project of transforming state-citizen relations, that the mission of Varadero was founded in 1953 (Yashar 2005). As the SIL project developed over the next decades and Amahuaca people moved down river and congregated around SIL schools, the aims of the program evolved. By the 1980s ‘Community development projects’ were a priority for members of the SIL throughout the region (Stoll 1982).

There were several reasons for this shift, which occurred at both the local and national level. First, the Peruvian government passed a series of laws regarding the citizenship of indigenous people throughout the country. The agrarian reform law in 1964 created Comunidades Campesinas in the Andean region. This gave collective ownership of land to groups living in the highlands of Peru. In 1972 the government passed a law making bilingual education an official government policy and made the SIL responsible for its implementation. The SIL was responsible for producing bilingual material in indigenous languages, training bilingual teachers and overseeing their work in schools located in villages throughout the country. The SIL had begun training indigenous leaders as part of the bilingual teacher programs, but during the 1970s they were charged with the formalization of training programs for the leaders of communities:

The bilingual school system provided a model of organization that modified traditional patterns of organization. Annual teacher conferences provided a model for inter community organization and problem solving. The bilingual school system was a training ground for leadership development. Teachers learned about keeping records and the administrative processes of the dominant culture. (Olson 1995: 31)

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7 In the past decade, for example, the Peruvian government has promoted the further integration of indigenous people into national society by expanding agricultural programs aimed at increasing food and cash-crop production, creating new oil, gas and logging concessions, and trying to change laws that would potentially dissolve communal land rights.

8 One historical example is the rebellion led by Juan Santos Atahualpa in the 18th century in which all missionaries and government posts were expelled from the lowland region (Santos-Granero and Barclay 1998). Another example is the clash in Bagua, Peru over land rights in 2010 in which a number of indigenous people and soldiers were killed.
This need for leadership corresponded to the Ley de Comunidades Nativas (Ley 20653), ‘law of Native Comunidades,’ which was passed in 1974. This extended the agrarian reform bill to give indigenous people in the Amazon region collective ownership of land. The government agency involved in this process, SINAMOS (Sistema Nacional de Apoyo a la Movilización Social) explained the mechanism of voting and rights and responsibilities corresponding to the land titling. The process of forming a Native Community or Comunidad Nativa entailed the following of specific mandates: the election of a governing body, Junta Directiva, comprised of a jefe (president), vice-jefe (vice-president), secretario (secretary) and tesorero (treasurer) by a group of officially recognized indigenous people; the demarcation of the land by forest engineers; and, the certification of territory and populations by the Ministry of Agriculture. The jefe was officially called presidente in early versions of the law, though this was changed to jefe.

As a note on terminology, throughout the thesis I will use the English word ‘president’ to represent the position of leader (jefe or presidente) of a Native Community. I will use the capitalized ‘Comunidad’ to mean Comunidad Nativa. In the cases where there is ‘community,’ this is meant to signify a sense of togetherness or conviviality unless otherwise indicated. The word ‘comuneros’ will be used to designate members of the Comunidad when referring to them as a group. I use ‘SIL’ for the Summer Institute of Linguistics. Where I refer to the Inuya it always references the Inuya River and its tributaries unless otherwise stated.

The government organization, SINAMOS, was charged with realizing the work of making Comunidades in collaboration with indigenous leaders. The responsibility for coordinating this was later passed to the Ministry of Agriculture. While the Ministry of Agriculture was officially in control it was often missionaries and NGO’s that did much of the work. In the case of Amahuaca people, discussed in more detail in chapter 3, SINAMOS played a role for those living on the Ucayali River, but not on the Inuya where it was the SIL and then the Franciscan missionaries who were most influential.

The Comunidad has official title to land and is given usufruct rights to the forest but does not own the subsurface rights. In order for people to extract wood for sale on the

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9 The position of vice-president is not actually designated as necessary in the law, but it is very common in the area and all the Comunidades I visited did have a person with this title.
market the government must give permission. This entails intensive bureaucratic processes, which is most often done by loggers who coordinate with the president. All contracts between loggers, the government and Comunidades must be passed by comuneros during an official meeting. The president is meant to mediate relations with outsiders and also coordinate activities within the Comunidad.

The formation of Comunidades has been discussed in detail elsewhere (Brown 1984; Gow 1991; Greene 2009; Hierro, Hvalkof and Gray 1998; Killick 2008; Sarmiento Barletti 2011; Yashar 2005). The key point from these authors and my own research is that the potential for access to schools attracted people to live in established villages and apply for official recognition of land titles. Without a Comunidad it would be impossible to get a school, so people who had lived in small clusters over large areas, or who moved regularly, were concentrated into bounded geographical and political units. This was a major transformation for people who had not lived in permanent villages, which was true for most indigenous peoples in the area (Gow 1991). While residing in a Comunidad offered certain securities and access to schools, it also imposed certain restrictions on indigenous people (Greene 2009).

Finally, it was expected that living in larger permanent villages would create a greater need for social, political and economic development. The political and social organization was perceived as necessary in order to create individual specialization and an internal economy. Following the aims of the SIL this would provide more opportunities for indigenous people who not only had the skills to enter the regional economy, but the desire to improve their position. I return to this in the next chapter.

**Part Two: Methodological Framework**

When I arrived in San Juan in November of 2009 I had already spent a summer living in New York where I had the privilege to spend time with Robert Carneiro at the American Museum of Natural History. By spending time with Robert Carneiro, I learned more about how Amahuaca people lived in the period from 1960-61. He gave me access to his notes, photographs and shared his ideas. When I left to go the field I was equipped with a massive amount of information about specific people and how they were related. I also had a copy of the book *Farewell to Eden*, which was published in 1964. This book
was the result of collaboration between the missionary Robert Russell, the anthropologists, Robert Carneiro and Gertrude Dole, the photographer Cornell Capa, and writer Matthew Huxley. This book, which has extensive photos, became a valuable tool for me during fieldwork as I traced the history of the families who had lived at Varadero. As the title suggests, this book was positioned within a very particular framework in which change was inevitable and perceived as the loss of an authentic culture. This thesis examines Amahuaca people’s history from 1960 to the present in order to offer an account of how Amahuaca people do not perceive of these changes as a loss, but instead as a becoming.

I had set out to locate the same families from Varadero and was lucky that they had not moved very far: the majority of them were living on the middle of the Inuya River. What I came to realize over time was that these families had not lived there for very long. In fact, the two Comunidades of San Juan and San Martín where I spent most of my time, had only been established in the 1980s and 90s after most of the people had returned from living elsewhere. In some case they had travelled hundreds of miles away to large jungle cities such as Pucallpa and Iquitos.

Between November 2009 and November 2011, I spent 18 months in the region living with Amahuaca people and researching their history and perceptions of the past. I spent the majority of my time in San Juan, which is the upper Comunidad, but also lived in San Martín and travelled to the headwaters of both the Inuya and Mapuya Rivers on many occasions. As part of my research I carried out a mapping project to locate all the Amahuaca families living between the headwaters and the town of Atalaya, as well as previous settlements. Unfortunately, I have not been able to reproduce this map for the thesis, which is something that I aim to do in the coming months.

My research focused on collecting the stories of how people came to live where they do. By spending significant time in the different Comunidades, and with Amahuaca families in town, I was able to gain a good understanding of the types of changes that mattered most to Amahuaca people themselves. I focus on these changes and suggest a model for understanding what it means to be an Amahuaca person today, which is oriented around the notion of becoming civilized.
I focus on what it means to live in a Comunidad on the Inuya River and how different collective activities are organized around different principles of sociality that are recognizable from early ethnography and have proven to be important for all Panaon people. By focusing on collective activities I am attempting to draw out how new social forms might be understood as transformations of those that appear in early literature. As part of my research I participated in all collective activities organized for the Comunidad, which were coordinated every other week. I also participated daily in fishing and collecting manioc and plantains from gardens while living with families. I spent considerable time living with two separate families: the president of San Juan who is mentioned above, and the president of San Martín, who I discuss in the thesis. In both cases the president was married with children, so I engaged with children of different ages throughout my time on the Inuya. I also taught English while living in both San Juan and San Martín. This was done at the request of parents and teachers. I participated in football tournaments as a player in both Comunidades, as both the host team and guest team. Finally, I spent most of my time sitting and speaking with older men and women in both places collecting their histories and impressions of the many changes that had occurred over the course of their lives.

**Part Three: Brief Theoretical Background**

Focusing on the period from the first sustained peaceful contact in the 1950s to the present, I will set out an ethnographic account of the many transformations Amahuaca people have actively pursued over the past half-century. Drawing on particular traditions in the anthropology of lowland South America (Clastres 1987; Overing10 1975; Rivière 1969), I aim to render Amahuaca sociality in more positive terms.

Taking as a starting point the early influence of Claude Lévi-Strauss (1949, 1969a, 1969b, 1973), and later work by Peter Riviere (1969, 1984) and Joanna Overing (1975, 1981), I position my own work in line with attempts to locate Amerindian models of relatedness, social organization, and continuity. I take as an assumption that change or transformation is easy to point out and difficult to theorize. This is true no matter what

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10 When citing Joanna Overing’s work I use ‘Overing’ throughout, whether or not it appears in the original publication as ‘Overing-Kaplan’ in order to maintain consistency.
scale is taken as the level of analysis. What is even more difficult, however, is to locate and put forth models of continuities.

Thus, from the very beginning the relation between time and sociality were central to understanding Amazonian peoples (Lévi-Strauss 1978; Overing 1977, 1981; Maybury-Lewis ed. 1979; Rivière 1969, 1984). Some of these works focused on the obliteration of time (Lévi-Strauss 1972; Overing 1977) and the struggle against the emergence of the state (Clastres 1974, 1994). Others, aiming to examine the experiences of indigenous people in dealing with colonial frontiers, turned to the past and concentrated on history and myth as ‘modes of consciousness’ (Hill 1988, Turner 1988), thus critiquing the notion of ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ societies (Lévi-Strauss 1972). Still others examined the role of ‘historical consciousness’ and ‘historicities’ in everyday practices (Whitehead 2006), with particular emphasis on indigenous experiences of interactions with expanding and contracting colonial frontiers (Rubenstein 2001, 2002, 2004a, 2004b).

It could be said that aspects of the former paradigm are limited by failures to account for colonial encounters, state domination, and other ‘outside’ influences (Hill 1988; Whitehead 2003). Although this literature remains important for contemporary ethnography, it is difficult to ignore cases in which the government and others play important roles in indigenous people’s lives, even if at a distance. On the other hand, in trying to fill this gap, there has been a tendency to overlook internal mechanisms for transformation by placing colonialism and modern influences at the center of arguments on history and colonialism (Gow 2001). More recent literature has moved beyond these two positions to locate new ways of approaching these questions (Fausto and Heckenberger 2007; Gow 2001; Vilaca 2010; Viveiros de Castro 2011). Following this trend in anthropology of lowland South America, I approach the processes through which Amahuaca people began living in Comunidades where they have legal titles to land and are organized through the ‘corporate’ body\textsuperscript{11} of the junta directiva. I set out a more detailed theoretical framework in Chapter 1.

\textsuperscript{11}\textsuperscript{11} I use this word as a way of situating the official political structure of a Comunidad. While this usage does not correspond to how the term is often used in anthropological literature on kinship, it is meant to imply a reformulated relationship with that literature.
**Part Four: Summary of Chapters**

In Chapter 1, I examine the history of how the Amahuaca have appeared in anthropological literature and a series of documents written by members of the SIL. I focus on the fact that Amahuaca people have primarily been described in terms of what they lack. I take this as a way to position my own argument. The first section of this chapter is a general introduction to Amahuaca literature broadly comparing them to other Panoan groups. The second section focuses on the categories and concepts that appear in the literature such as kinship terminology, residence patterns, and forms of sociality. The third section moves in a slightly different direction by focusing specifically on the work of Joseph Woodside who offers important ethnography regarding both changes and continuities in Amahuaca people’s lived world. One of the main points I take from Woodside’s work is the ‘composite person,’ which is an image taken from Amahuaca linguistic analysis in which a male and a female are joined together. Woodside connects this image to reproduction and the complementary work of men and women, which I extend into a wider discussion of Amahuaca sociality throughout the thesis. I do this by drawing on the work of Philippe Erikson (1992, 1999) who has set out the most comprehensive comparative analysis of Panoan groups. Also in this chapter is a discussion of how Bill Dyck (1992), the last member of the SIL to live with Amahuaca people, describes Amahuaca people. One of the main points is that they lack the necessary ‘social and political organization’ necessary to sustain themselves as a group as they integrate further into Peruvian society.

Chapter 2 approaches Amahuaca sociality in the mission of Varadero by focusing on three ritual events: mortuary rites, ayahuasca ceremonies and glutton feasts. By separating the ethnographic material in this way I aim to make space for an alternative vantage point for thinking about how Amahuaca people form and regenerate their social world. I start with the idea that for Amahuaca people the world is inherently transformational and seek continuities in the ways people make sense of their position in this changing world through time. Thus, rather than examine identity as stable I focus on the relations through which people actively pursue engagement in processes of becoming.

At the end of Chapter, 3 I summarize the argument and discuss the notion of becoming civilized among Amahuaca people on the Inuya River. I discuss the
implications of this for the history set out in Chapter 3 and then, in Chapter 4, I introduce the concepts of kinship and contract, which I use to highlight different ways Amahuaca people relate to one another in a Comunidad. I call these ‘modes’ of relating and set out in order to discuss five collective activities held within the Comunidad: minga, fiesta, faena, campeonato and communal meeting. I argue that the minga and fiesta are related to the concept of kinship while the faena, campeonato and communal meeting are related to contract. I connect the concept of kinship to the notion of the ‘composite person’ discussed by Woodside, and connect contract with the ways comuneros relate to one another and the president based on the notion of the Acta.

In Chapter 5, I draw a comparison between the two Comunidades of San Juan and San Martin in order to examine in more detail how Amahuaca people perceive themselves as civilized. I focus on the distinction between upriver and downriver, which is a common theme throughout the region. It is in this chapter that I discuss schooling, productive activities, and the notion of Amahuaca culture. I use these as a way to draw out important differences between the two Comunidades.

In chapter 6 I continue my discussion regarding the ‘composite person’ and analyze how children are made into Amahuaca people. I argue that while there is an important difference between inside and outside, as well as between men and women, the common theme relating men to the outside and women to the inside does not necessarily work in the case of Amahuaca people. I discuss the case of women who work beyond the Comunidad and send some of their children back to be raised by their mothers and aunts. I end the chapter by giving a few examples of these children who are considered ‘mixed’ and attempt to work out the implications of this for Amahuaca people.

In Chapter 7, I return to the concepts of kinship and contract to examine leadership and power in the Comunidad. I draw together the analysis from Chapter 4 to argue that these two modes of relating are complementary aspects of living together in a Comunidad, which is a central feature of being a civilized Amahuaca person on the middle Inuya River. I draw this analysis out to connect it back to the opening discussion on ceremonies held in 1960. I argue that within a particular framework, the collective activities that are important for Amahuaca people today might be understood as
transformations of earlier ceremonies. I extend this further in the conclusion, and then raise a few more questions to be addressed at a later time.
Chapter One: Amahuaca People

Introduction

In this chapter I deal specifically with themes of kinship terminology, residence patterns, social organization and leadership based on research and engagement carried out by Robert Russell (1953-1968), Robert Carneiro and Gertrude Dole (1960-61), Matthew Huxley and Cornell Capa (1961), and Joseph Woodside (1974-77). The next chapter approaches the same period by focusing on three ritual events. By separating the ethnographic material in this way I aim to make space for an alternative vantage point for thinking about how Amahuaca people form and regenerate their social world. I start with the idea that for Amahuaca people the world is inherently transformational and seek continuities in the ways people make sense of their position in this changing world through time. Thus, rather than examine identity as stable I focus on the relations through which people actively pursue engagement in processes of becoming.

The first section is a general introduction to Amahuaca literature broadly comparing them to other Panoan groups. The second section focuses on the categories and concepts that appear in the literature such as kinship terminology, residence patterns, and forms of sociality. The third section moves in a slightly different direction by focusing specifically on the work of Joseph Woodside who offers important ethnography regarding both changes and continuities in Amahuaca people’s lived world. Woodside’s ethnography examines the developmental cycles of domestic groups (Goody 1958) beginning with conjugal pair and building the analysis to include marriage, residence patterns and the formation of villages. He gives specific space to focus on the conjugal pair and how the complementary capacities of men and women inform Amahuaca people’s notion of gender. In doing so, he draws attention to the concept of a ‘composite person’ based on the idea of physical features, reproduction and complementarity in work. He connects this ‘composite person’ to wider sociality and argues that the conjugal pair is the most basic and important unit for Amahuaca social life.
Woodside’s thesis was never published, which means that Amahuaca people are primarily known through the work of Carneiro, Dole, Russell, and Huxley. While these earlier analyses are important and offer ethnographic data, they were based on methodological and theoretical interests of their time. Additionally, neither Carneiro nor Dole published a full-length monograph based on their fieldwork and this has impacted the ways Amahuaca people are positioned in wider literature. Thus, the section where I focus on Woodside’s dissertation stands out from the rest of the chapter this is intended to highlight a specific point: despite his extensive ethnography and a more nuanced analysis of Amahuaca sociality, the fact that it was not published has meant that it is rarely drawn upon in wider debates. The significance of this is that when Amahuaca people appear in the literature, the aspects of their social and political life that are emphasized tend to be what they do not have compared to other Panoan groups. The one important exception to this is Philippe Erikson’s (1999) comparative analysis of Panoans, which is discussed in detail at the end of the chapter.

The general notion of ‘lack’ is raised again in the final section of this chapter where I give a general overview of the history of the SIL project from the founding of Varadero in 1953 to their departure in the mid-1990s. This discussion offers a particularly useful way to think about the ways indigenous people have been perceived by the Peruvian government, NGOs and missionaries. I aim to draw out different aspects of social life among Amahuaca people in order to do two things. First, demonstrate that they have in some ways directly responded to these outside perceptions and pressures, but not in the ways people may have suspected. The second, and related point, is to compare my own analysis with that of Bill Dyck (1992), a missionary who lived and worked with Amahuaca people in the 1990s, in order to argue that although we experienced many of the same aspects of sociality, the focus of our discussions lead to very different conclusions. Dyck’s assessment focuses on the need for building greater community cohesion by strengthening ‘social and political organization’ that is based on an ideal of Western personhood in which individuals are bounded and discrete units. I take this as a starting point to offer an alternative way of thinking about Amahuaca sociality. My aim is to render Amahuaca people’s categories analytical (Toren 2007) in positive terms to
demonstrate why this was not always visible in other accounts, and most specifically in that of Bill Dyck’s.

**Section I: Positioning Amahuaca People Geographically, Historically and Anthropologically**

**Part One: Panoan Peoples**

According to Donald Lathrap (1970) and later Graham Townsley (1988) the most important distinctions among Panoans have been between the Cashibo; Ucayali Panoan; and Southeastern Panoan (D’Ans 1973). Following this early model, the Ucayali Panoans are the most numerous of the three sub-groups and arguably most important socio-politically due to their large population and position on the Ucayali River, which is a major tributary of the Amazon River (see map two). They are also known as ‘riverine Panoans’ and have elaborate material culture, wide-reaching exchange networks and a relatively well-known history based on the archaeological excavations carried out by Lathrap (1970, 1977) and his students (DeBoer 1981, 1986; Myers 1974, 1990; Roe 1982).

The other two groupings (Cashibo and Southeastern Panoan) have been classified as ‘backwoods,’ ‘headwaters,’ or ‘interfluvial’ Panoans by Lathrap (1970), meaning they are not Riverine like the Shipibo-Conibo, have less sophisticated material culture and are more isolated from wider networks of exchange. Based on Carneiro and Dole’s research Amahuaca people were one of the better-known ‘backwoods’ Panoans. In fact, their analysis was used by Lathrap, and others, to demonstrate differences between them and ‘riverine’ groups.

Lathrap’s model has been criticized by Philippe Erikson (1992, 1999) and David Fleck (forthcoming) for four main problems: it does not account for the more complex

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12 The Shipibo-Conibo is an amalgamation of different Panoan groups that have come together under this ethnonym. They are sometimes referred to simply as Shipibo and are the second largest group of indigenous people living in the Peruvian amazon and number between twenty-five and thirty-five thousand people. The largest group is the Ashaninka, who are Arawakan and intermarry with Amahuaca people.
geographical, linguistic and socio-cultural distribution of Panoan groups; it draws a sharp division between ‘riverine’ and interfluvial groups; this division is taken as the most important distinction ignoring the diversity within each grouping and the fluidity between the different categories. Additionally, the riverine groups have often been positioned as being more ‘evolved’ based on their material culture, large population and more ‘developed’ socio-political organization.

More recently, Erikson (1999) divides the Panoans into 8 groups based primarily on linguistic evidence, but also accounting for geographical clusters. The eight groups are: Shipibo-Conibo; Southern Panoan (Chacobos, Pacaguaras, Karipunas and Kaxararis); Purus Panoans (Yaminahua, Sharanahua, Marinahua, Mastanahuasa, Morunawas, and Nahuas); Amahuaca; Cashinahua; Cashibo/Unis; Middle Panoans (Marubos, Capanahuas, Katukina-Panos, Remos and Poyanawas) and Mayoruna (Matis and Matses). The following descriptions are summaries of a more detailed account by Erikson (1999: 48-51).

The first grouping, Shipibo-Conibo, correspond to the Ucayali Panoans in Lathrap’s model and are primarily located near the Ucayali River and heavily clustered near the city of Pucallpa. The second group, Southern Panoans, is not as well known, while their clustering is based as much on geographical proximity as linguistic correlations. They are located in Northwest Bolivia and in the State of Rondonia in Brazil. A similar argument could be made for the middle Panoans, as they are grouped together based on cultural, geographic and linguistic reasons. They are found in Eastern Peru and Western Brazil. The Cashibo are separated out in large part because of their geographical location on Western tributaries of the Ucayali River, unlike many of the other groups that are on Eastern tributaries of the Ucayali River or in Eastern Peru and Western Brazil. The Matsis and Matses, or the Mayoruna, are distinct from other Panoans on account of their unique histories.  

Finally, Erikson makes a point to differentiate the terms ‘Purus Panoans,’ which designates the Yaminahua and closely related peoples often designated by the ‘nahua’ suffix, and the ‘Panos of the Yurua and Purus.’ The latter label, ‘Panos of the Yurua and

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13 As Erikson points out, they resisted contact more than any other known Panoan group, which resulted in them being classified by early travelers, missionaries, and later Lathrap and his students, as the ‘least developed’ of the Panoans (Erikson 1999: 51).
Purus,’ is used to designate the three distinct groups in this area, Cashinahua, Yaminahua (including other ‘Nahua’ groups) and the Amahuaca. This corresponds to the ‘Southeastern Panoans’ in Lathrap’s model and remains a useful clustering based on geographical proximity and some socio-cultural similarities, which is why I think Erikson includes it in his discussion. Furthermore, although Lathrap’s and Townsley’s divisions are not as precise, exclude groups in Brazil and Bolivia, and maintain too sharp a divide between riverine and ‘interfluvial’ groups, it remains somewhat useful. Thus, rather than taking distinctions between ‘riverine’ and ‘interfluvial’ as coherent and stable divisions it is more useful to think of them as a continuum (Erikson 1999: 51). This continuum captures the fluidity and complexity of socio-cultural distinctions, and also corresponds to an argument made by Paul Henley (1996) regarding the differences found among Panoan groups, which are discussed below.

**Part Two, Pananos of the upper Yurua River and upper Purus River**

In Lathrap’s, Erikson’s, and Fleck’s models Amahuaca is considered as a distinct language, but is also combined with the other two named categories in the geographical area, Cashinahua and Purus Panoan, to form a geographically important cluster. While the Amahuaca language and the Cashinahua language comprise separate categories within this cluster, the Purus Panoan category is divided into a large number of named groups such as Yaminahua (Calavia Sáez 2004; Townsley 1988), Sharanahua, (Siskind 1973), Marinahua, Chitonahua, Morunahua, and many other Nahua groups (Feather 2010; Townsley 1988). Although distinguishing between these groups was historically very difficult, as they all speak mutually intelligible languages, today many of them use their respective ethnonyms as a marker of their differences.¹⁴

Panoan peoples from the Yurua and Purus Rivers have Dravidianate kinship terminologies and tend to be divided into moieties that are named and exchange with one another. Among Cashinahua people (Kensinger 1974; Lagrou 1998; MacCallum 2001) and Yaminahua people (Calavia Sáez 2004; Townsley 1988), which are arguably the two

¹⁴ This is not to say these boundaries are stable or that the names are traditional self-designations, but only that they are often used to differentiate between historically constituted groups.
best known examples, villages were ideally based on named moieties that intermarry with one another. Among Cashinahua people, for example, the ideal village is comprised of two extended families that are divided into four sections. The village is divided into two patri-moieties, *inubake* and *duabake*, which are themselves divided into two generations. A child is born into one moiety and is expected to marry into their paired moiety. Girls receive their names from their mother’s mother (or MMZ) and boys receive their name from their father’s father (or FFB), leading Kensinger (1984) to call these ‘alternating generation namesake groups.’ In an ideal situation, this social form could be seen in the physical layout of villages, when they are divided into two large houses at either end of a clearing. Each house would then be divided in terms of generation resulting in the appearance of four groups. Yaminahua people in Peru had a similar system that included names passed along both paternal and maternal lines\(^{15}\) that was disappearing when Graham Townsley carried out his work in the 1980s. A somewhat similar system is found among the Sharanahua (Siskind 1973).

It is suspected by Dole (1998), Carneiro (personal communication, 2009-2010) and Hornborg (1988) that Amahuaca people also had namesake groups in the past, which they base on three main pieces of evidence: one linguistic and the others historical. Linguistically, for example, father’s fathers and son’s sons are called by the term *xota*, which according to available evidence corresponds to *xuta* in Cashinahua, which means namesake. Second, Amahuaca people had named sub-groups that are considered to be possible residues of moieties. These are discussed below. The third is historical and stems from the work of W. C. Farabee (1922) who collected details about Amahuaca people from Mathias Scharff\(^{16}\), one of the rubber bosses in the headwaters of the Purus and Piedras Rivers. According to Scharff’s account collected by Farabee, Amahuaca people lived in very large houses, some one or two hundred feet long that housed fifty or more people. These houses were loosely organized around a ‘chief’ who ‘inherited his position, but exercises very little authority except in times of warfare, when he has full control’ (Farabee 1922: 105).

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\(^{16}\) His brother, Carlos Scharff had been killed by Amahuaca people on the upper Piedras. Leopold Collazo was also killed who is from the Collazo family that is discussed in the next chapter.
Building on this, Hornborg (1988) argues these houses may have been organized on the basis of two separate leaders, each of which was the head of a moiety. He takes Dole’s description as evidence:

one earlier settlement was described as having two divisions. Each division had a leader, one of them being the principal leader of the settlement. People in one division were ‘brothers’ (hermanitos) of their leader; those of the other part ‘brothers’ of the other leaders. People in one division married into the opposite one and not within their own. (1979: 34-35)

This offers one way to think about why Amahuaca people have most often been defined by their ‘lack’ of large villages and dual organization, (Carneiro 1964, forthcoming; Dole 1998; Hornborg 1988). While they do have Dravidianate terminology similar to other groups in the same category, and there is a preference for cross-cousin marriage, particularly patrilaterally, there is only circumstantial evidence that they ever had namesake groups like those described above. While a common explanation for this is ‘loss’ or ‘degeneration’ due to disruptive interactions with outsiders, which I return to below, there are others who seek explanations elsewhere.

Paul Henley (1996), for example, points to the importance of position within wider networks of exchange for transformations of Dravidianate systems. Those living along larger rivers and engaging in more intensive exchange with other groups seem to be more exogamous and follow a pattern of post-marital residence that focuses on bringing in others and extending alliances outwards rather than intensifying those that already exist. According to Henley, the Yaminahua and Amahuaca likely fit into a wider system of transformation in which they offer a middle ground between groups like the Cashinahua that inhabited very remote areas of the headwaters region and are endogamous based on the system discussed above, and riverine groups such as the Shipibo-Conibo.17 Henley states this the following way,

Cashinahua […] represent one extreme of this contrast, expressing a strong preference for geographical and genealogical endogamy and rejecting relationships even with other Panoan groups. The Shipibo-Conibo represent the other extreme, ready to intermarry not only with other Panoans, but even in theory with non-Indians […]. The other Panoan groups (Amahuaca, Yaminahua et al.) lie midway between these two extremes, being disposed to

17 Piro people (Gow 1991) would also fall into this latter category. This is important because Amahuaca people have likely had closer contacts with Piro people than the other larger Panoan groups over the past several centuries. For evidence see Roe (1982) and Gow (2001). It does seem that Amahuaca people have in some sense been ‘Arawakenized’ through these interactions, but this topic is left aside for later investigation.
Henley’s point offers an alternative to the idea that Amahuaca people had simply undergone massive changes based on incursions from the outside, particularly during the rubber boom. Questioning this argument is not meant to deny the importance of the rubber boom, but to point out that it can be given as an explanation for most changes that occurred without examining other possibilities (Calavia Sáez 2004). Rather than seeking disruption as a causal mechanism, Henley takes Dravidianate systems throughout lowland South America as transformations of one another.

**Part Three: Amahuaca People: Early to Mid-20th Century**

The notion of ‘loss’ of larger more complex systems of social organization is typical, particularly for explaining Amahuaca people’s ‘lack’ of moieties and loose Dravidianate system. The primary narrative offered is that Amahuaca people were forced into small clusters as a result of extended periods of violent interactions with outsiders, both indigenous and non-indigenous. While Dole (1979) points out that we will almost certainly never know, she suggests that it was likely that this was the reason for Amahuaca people’s ‘simple’ society (Carneiro 1964c).

There are also stories demonstrating Amahuaca people could not live together due to violent interactions amongst themselves, including killing, which led to distrust, fear of violence, and an emphasis on living with very close relatives. This theme will re-appear in Chapter 3 where I give a detailed account of the history from early 20th century to the present. For now, it is worth pointing out that Amahuaca people gained a reputation in the area for being violent against outsiders. For example, they are credited with the killing of Delfin Fitzcarraldo who was the brother of Carlos Fermín Fitzcarrald, the ‘king of rubber.’ It is important to point out that not all relations between Amahuaca people and bosses were entirely bad, particularly beginning in the 1930s, which I discuss in more detail in Chapter 3.

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There were at least three attempts to form larger villages at the end of the rubber boom bringing together remaining people from the then reduced populations of two or more subgroups. Two or three of these villages were apparently maintained for about a decade (Dole 1998). Writing about these temporarily established Comunidades, Dole states that there was something of a hierarchical structure regarding leadership and organization, which was primarily based on relations between younger men and their ‘uncles.’

Some of the large settlements established around 1900 were constituted by remaining people from more than one subgroup and had various leaders: one primary leader and one or two subordinate leaders, one for each of the groupings that made up the settlement. Adult men of each grouping were considered nephews or dependents of their leader who had some authority over them. (1998: 187, my translation)

There is not much direct evidence of the manner in which leaders gathered these larger groups together. The following statement, however, is potentially insightful regarding how Amahuaca people at Varadero recalled leaders from the past.

The chief tried to maintain order and solve disputes. A curaca teaches his paisanos. Teaches ‘para vivas bonito.’ Teaches his paisanos to make chacras, houses, to plant, etc. teaches them not to fight with others. He teaches people to live with kinsmen, not to go far away. The chief is not rich. He has no more property than others. Non-chiefs have no special name. Apparently no special insignias for chiefs. Women are never chiefs. Curaca leads in warfare. (Pablo and Feliciano, Oct. 30, 1960) (Carneiro u.r.d)

This emphasis on teaching ‘to live well’ and ‘to live with kinsmen’ is interesting in light of the fact that Amahuaca people say Robert Russell ‘taught them to live together.’ I return to this theme in chapters 2, 3, and 7. It is also interesting to note that the description of the ‘chief’ corresponds with many other descriptions of leadership in lowland South America (Clastres 1987; Kracke 1979, 1993; Lévi-Strauss 1949, 1967; Overing 1992; Ruedas 2001), which I discuss in chapter 7. In any case, the evidence available tends to show that these villages did not remain organized for very long and once they separated Amahuaca families spread out over the area continuing to visit, exchange, fight and hold festivals with another.

While these details collected at Varadero offer insight into the types of social organization and leadership that correspond with previous attempts to live together, these do not necessarily resonate with the way life in Varadero has been described. Just prior to the establishment of Varadero at the headwaters of the Inuya River in 1953, most
Amahuaca people lived in small hamlets scattered in the forest mostly on the Inuya, Sepahua, Purus, Yurua and Piedras Rivers (see maps). At that time (1960-61) Amahuaca people were described in terms of what they lacked, or had potentially lost, in comparison with other groups in the region. For example, Varadero was the largest known collection of Amahuaca people when Carneiro and Dole lived there. It was comprised of 11 households in 1961, the majority of which were built around or near the central clearing that was used as an airfield by the SIL. Each household had at least one garden a short walk away and often two additional gardens deeper in the forest, sometimes more than a day away.

Daily life revolved around the independence of different households with little coordination of productive activities: hunting, fishing and, most importantly, gardening were activities organized almost exclusively around members of a given household. While this is not exactly uncommon, even such activities as clearing gardens and building new houses, which often entail assistance from close relatives in other contexts were carried out by the members of a single household and not through extended kinship networks. Amahuaca people did not drink *masato*, hold work parties organized by a household, or gather together for many large social events. The only exceptions to this were three ritual events (mortuary rituals, *ayahuasca* drinking sessions, and large ceremonial feasts), which are discussed in the next chapter. Additionally, the families living in Varadero did not seem to have any leader at all. Carneiro (1993) noted that the Amahuaca people had ‘no headman and indeed would resent anyone who attempted to assume the role’ (4). The one person who could be considered a sort of headman because of his age, strength and family position does not seem to have been considered a leader by other people living in the village, at least not in the same terms described by Amahuaca people discussed briefly above.

During the rainy season most Amahuaca families would live in their forest gardens. The missionaries also left during this period traveling back to their base in Pucallpa, sometimes taking Amahuaca individuals with them to work on translation. Thus, the

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village was only inhabited for part of the year, which seems to have suited Amahuaca people’s tendency to travel around, each household living quite independently.

It was from his experience in 1960 and 1961 that Carneiro came to make the statement cited above about Amahuaca culture being quite ‘simple.’ I return to this idea of ‘lack’ in the final section of this chapter. First, however, it is important to describe in more detail what categories have been used to describe Amahuaca people based on research in the period from 1953-1968 and why these are important. I now turn to details regarding social organization and kinship. I then move on to Woodside’s ethnography, which offers very interesting and useful details and analysis, before returning to the SIL and government’s interests in groups such as the Amahuaca.

Section II: Marriage, Residence Patterns and Kinship Terminology

Part One: Kinship Terminology

Amahuaca kinship terminology has been designated as typical of lowland South American Dravidian or ‘Dravidianate’ (Henley 1996). At the time of Carneiro and Dole’s fieldwork in 1960-61, cross-cousin marriage was preferred though not prescribed. At the time parallel cousins were referred to as siblings, while cross-cousins were referred to as either ‘husband’ vunu or ‘wife’ ain, for girls and boys respectively. Marriage with MBD for boys and FZS for girls was preferable. This also corresponds to the use of the term coca for both mother’s brother and father-in-law, and achi for both father’s sister and mother-in-law (Russell u.m.2: 195). It was relatively common for marriages between cross-cousins to be arranged when children, especially girls, were still very young. Although cross-cousin marriage was not always practised, young people’s first marriage was usually with a bi-lateral cross-cousin (Dole 1998). Given that divorce was quite high and men often died violent deaths, many older married couples were not married to their cross-cousins.
In the 1950s and 1960s the Amahuaca were patrilocal, but there was some evidence for matrilineal descent in the past. According to Russell (u.m.2), ‘it is probable’ (26) that they practised matrilocal residence and followed matrilineal descent, a suggestion he bases on several pieces of evidence. First, that people tended to trace their membership in sub-groups through their mothers, though there were exceptions. I return to sub-groups in a moment. This also corresponds to the system of ‘marital privilege’ as it was not uncommon not to know who the father of any given child was. People used the term uvunanutz to refer to a sibling who came from the same mother, as it means ‘put in with me,’ or ‘wombed with me’ (ibid.: 12).

Second, that vocative terminology placed the father in a position to his children based on his relationship with his wife and their mother. Russell (u.m.2) puts this the following way:

Amahuaca children choose the address term for their father on the basis of his kinship to their mother. Although coca […] is the most common term used in addressing ones father, it must be remembered that the father is usually called jochi […] by his wife. In one particular family, all the children addressed their father as jochi. (ibid.: 26-27)

And, finally Russell’s other argument, though perhaps less convincing, is based on evidence of ceramic deposits found at the headwaters of the Inuya and Purus Rivers that suggest extensive ceremonial feasts and ‘large scale cooperative horticulture carried on mainly by women’ (26). I take this to mean that women’s coordinated activity would be more likely to take place among already related women rather than between daughters-in-law and sisters-in-law.

While these arguments are worth mentioning Russell, Dole and Carneiro are all clear that Amahuaca in the 1960s were patrilocal, which, given Russell’s hypothesis is correct, raises many questions as to how and why this may have changed. While I do not intend to answer this directly, I do hope to shed possible light on the problem in chapters 3 and 5. Today this is not the most significant way people trace their relations to one another or how post-marital residence is decided.

The main point to be made is that the position of women among the Amahuaca has been precarious since at least the middle of the 19th century due to raids and wife-capture (Roe 1982; Gow 1991). Due to the extent of these activities by other groups, as well as Amahuaca people themselves, women were more likely to live in a village where they
did not have close kin. It is worth suggesting that the patrilocal residence patterns may have been connected to this fact, which Hornborg argues is the case for Mayoruna people (1988: 164). And, as I will show, women’s relationships to the outside today are very different than those of closely related groups (Cashinahua and Yaminahua) in part based on their relationships to the outside. The other implication of the raiding is that closely related men, mostly brothers, would tend to live near one another either in clusters spread out on a tributary or, in some case, in a larger clearing with their parents. This is how most Amahuaca people were described at the time the first mission was established in 1953.

**Part Two: Subgroups**

Prior to the mid-20th century Amahuaca people were divided into named sub-groups, which were mostly associated with geographical locations (rivers) as well as physical and social characteristics (big, tall, painted) rather than moieties.\(^{20}\) The major groups were:

- **Inohuo** (Jaguar People). Headwaters of the Yurua and Purus River and particularly the Curiuja, which is an affluent of the Purus River.
- **Punchahuo** (possible branch of Inohuo). On upper Sepahua River.
- **Ronohuo** (Snake People). From Purus River, near Esperanza, but moved to Sepahua River and Madera Rivers.
- **Shahuo**. Headwaters of the Inuya and Caballani Rivers above the mouth of the Curiuja River.
- **Isahuo** (possible branch of Shahuo). Headwaters of the Yurua and Caballani Rivers.
- **Shahuanahua**. Yurua River.
- **Cutinahua**. On a tributary of the Curiuja called *Maxaxya*.
- **Kapii Xochi**. On upper Yurua, Mapuya and Sheshea Rivers.
- **Xaanwo** (Red Guacamayo People). Purus River.
- **Chay’ahuo**\(^{22}\) OR **Kapuxchiwo** (Cayman Chest People). Piedras River and Manu River.\(^{23}\)

\(^{20}\) The origin of these sub-groups seems to have been mixing with different species, which could be considered the basis for the ontological differentiation of the groups: ‘In brief, a large gourd exploded, and as the pieces of the gourd became human beings, jaguar flesh became mixed in and the result was Inovo, Jaguar People.’ (Russell u.m.: 9). This story corresponds to a longer myth in which a gourd is the womb for the first Amahuaca offspring.

\(^{21}\) This term was used in reference to groups with which a given group intermarried and is translated by Dole as ‘pariente político’ (1998: 185), which corresponds to models of other Dravidianate systems discussed by Henley (1996).

\(^{22}\) Two other groups that no longer existed. Na’inhuo (those who have died) Cha’yahu or Chiayahu (the affines), lived on tributaries of Sepahua, Piedras and Manu Rivers (Dole 1998: 184-85; Woodside 1981: 92). The primary groups (*Inohuo* and *Ronohuo*) are the same names used for sub-groups among the Sensi (*Ynubu and Runubu*), Cashibo (*Ronobo*), and Marubo (*Inonahua*) (Roe 1982).
Dole (1998) describes these sub-groups in the following way:

Generally, people affiliated with one named group have beliefs and practices different from the others...The large variation could be the result of marriage exchange between groups and fluid social boundaries. Due to the drastic decreasing demography and continual fracturing of regional groups, for centuries the Amahuaca have been very mobile. Some named groups have disappeared as separate entities and many other diminished groups have joined others. All these processes continue to apply today. (Dole 1998: 185, my translation)

Affiliation with a named group seems to have come from both parents, though Woodside (1981) suggests that the mother’s affiliation was more weighted, which corresponds to the likelihood that Amahuaca people had been matrilineal and, perhaps, matrilocal. There has been a lot of speculation that these were moieties in the past. In either case, when Varadero was established, the boundaries between these sub-groups were apparently being eroded (Carneiro u.r.d.; Dole 1998; Russell u.m.2), a process that continued into the 1970s (Woodside 1981) and resulted in their becoming mostly irrelevant to people’s lives today.

Part Three: Personhood and Ethnonyms

As with other Panoan languages, Amahuaca people use the word yora for ‘body’ and yoshin for ‘shadow,’ ‘spirit’ or ‘soul’ (Dole 1998; Erikson 1999; Lagrou 1998; McCallum 1989). Yora is also be used to refer to a group of people as an inclusive term, with yoratza, signifying ‘other bodies.’ The term yoshin is used for spirits who live in the forest, river and sky, as well as to describe the soul of certain species of plants and animals. Both these terms are very common among other Panaon groups (Roe 1982).

Among Amahuaca people the phrase, huni kuin, which means ‘real people,’ is used to designate a more general humanity. For example, according to Erikson, for Matsis and Yaminahua people the term huni kuin does not seem to have been used as a particularly exclusive category, but includes a variety people including other Panoan peoples living nearby (Erikson 1999).

The most exclusive term to distinguish a grouping among Amahuaca people is nokun nami or namiwo, which means ‘our meat’ or ‘our flesh.’ This seems to have been used for one’s closest kin including mother, father, biological siblings as well as some
classificatory siblings who lived nearby. It did, however, sometimes include cross-cousins so that one could marry a person considered *namiwo*.

A more inclusive term used by people to designate a commonality was *nokun kaiwo*, which translates as ‘our people.’ It could be used to define shared language, sub-group affiliation, common bodily practices and an idea of relatedness based on kinship terminology (Dole 1998). The terms *yora* and *yoratza* seem to overlap somewhat with these designations. According to Erikson (1999) the difference between these terms among many Panaon groups corresponds to different positions within a shared human world. Thus *nokun nami* would mean one’s closest family, and *yora* might extend this to include all those in one’s co-resident group. Then *nokun kaiwo* would include people living in the same area who interacted on a regular basis, such as during ceremonies. Beyond this, *yoratza* would be used to position people in similarly constituted groups living elsewhere. These were intermediate terms that included many positions, but excluded *yamawo* ‘enemy others,’ and, most importantly, *nawa*, ‘other, outsider, white person.’ This term has been discussed in detail by Erikson (1999) based on the importance of ‘alterity’ for the self-constitution of Panoan peoples. I return to this at the end of the chapter where I highlight three points made by Erikson (1999) that are relevant to the wider argument of the thesis.

Dole (1998) points out that named sub-groups were sometimes described as ‘of which some are related like kaiwo’ (184, my translation). In other cases this same term was used to define those whom one could marry. The term *nokun kaiwo* was probably the closest concept for marking a bounded group, but was itself quite fluid in both directions. According to Erikson (1999) this same term is the exclusive marker for Yaminahua and Matsis people. For Yaminahua people, *kaiwo* ‘is those who grew up together’ (Townsley: 1988:88). The verb *kai* signifies ‘to make, or grow’ for Yaminahua people and to flower or germinate for Sharanahua (Erikson 199: 46). As mentioned, in Amahuaca language the term means ‘pariente,’ relative. It is unclear what ‘*kai*’ itself means, but the root is found in the word *kainhi*, which means ‘to leave’ and can be used as a way of expressing the birthing process (Wise 1980: 18). This is potentially interesting given the importance of non-resident affines in the ceremonial feast, which discussed in the next chapter.
Dole states that the name ‘Amahuaca,’ was first heard by Amahuaca people when they met the soldiers at the headwaters of the Inuya River in the late 1940s. And, by the 1970s, the term *kaiwo* included all people considered Amahuaca as well as some other indigenous people such as the Ashaninka or Shipibo-Conibo. This was noted by Woodside (1981) and *kaiwo* seems to have become more inclusive since then. Today it is often translated into Spanish as *paisano*, country person, and includes all indigenous people from the *selva*, jungle, and excludes mestizos, ‘white people’ and most importantly, *serranos*, or people from the Andean region. I return to these distinctions below, but the reason this is important to point out here is that as an ethnonym Amahuaca became more exclusive than the term *kaiwo*.

**Section III: Woodside’s Composite Person, Clusters, Neighbourhoods, and Villages**

Before moving on, it is worth recapitulating what I have tried to show. First, Amahuaca people were defined more by what they ‘lacked’ than what they had to offer in terms of social order and a clear system of political structure and marriage practices. Much effort was given to speculating about what had existed previously such as subgroups based on matrilineal descent, larger more organized villages and a well-defined position of leadership. It was assumed that these cultural ‘traits’ were lost and what Amahuaca people had was a watered down version of something more stable and clearly defined that existed in the past. As I will try to show in the final section, this same idea remained important for how Bill Dyck (1992) and others perceived Amahuaca people into the 1990s. However, Woodside’s fieldwork in the 1970s offers a somewhat different perspective as well as some interesting insights into Amahuaca people.

Woodside carried out fieldwork between 1974 and 1977 in two locations: the Ucayali River where Carneiro and Dole had done fieldwork in 1960, and with a group of inter-related families on the Sepahua River. In his analysis, which examines the development cycles of social groupings among Amahuaca people, Woodside (1981) sets
out five social groupings found among them: composite person, household, cluster, neighbourhood, and village.

**Part One: The Composite Person**

Woodside’s analysis begins with the joining of a couple in marriage, which he describes as ‘the fusion of two actors to form a new social unit. Marriage entails cleavages in prior social units and forms a nucleus for building up subsequent social units’ (ibid.: 29). According to Woodside, the conjugal pair is the most basic unit in Amahuaca social life and he offers important insights regarding the complementary capacities of men and women and how this is connected to their bodily desires and broader relations of (re)-production. He does this by drawing attention to a feature found in the Amahuaca language in which the genitalia for males and females correspond to one another and come to form what he calls the ‘composite person.’ I take this ‘composite person’ as a way of thinking about kinship and the making and growing of bodies. As I stated above, it is the logic of complementarity between men and women that seems to direct all household production and social activities.

While Woodside set out some of the groundwork for making this connection, I take it one step further by extending it out into the wider social field in more detail based on my own analysis of contemporary ethnographic material. He states:

The vagina (Chishpi) has external lips (Kuxaa)—also ‘gunwale of a canoe’—that conceal its mouth (Janda). A virgin’s vulva is partially obstructed by a top or lid (Wupoti). The clitoris is the vaginal tooth or beak (Xuta) which ‘resembles the beak of an owl.’ Vaginal mucous (Towishton) is ‘phlegm,’ is salty (Tashi), and smells delicious. The vaginal canal is the genital flesh or meat (Nami) which connects to the uterus (Waku nanti) where the fetus (Too) grows into an infant (Waku).

The penis is (Woshki) has a mouth (Janda), the urethral orifice which is the terminus of a small vessel (Xowi). The glans penis is the head (Mapo), covered by the prepuse, or adam’s apple (Tutusti). The shaft of the penis is its neck (Tuxo). The scrotum (Jowo) contains the testes or eggs (Wachi). Inside the shaft of the penis are two tubes, holes or caves (Kindi) that merge to forms the urethral orifice. One, the (Tandu), conducts the sperm (Jora). The other conducts urine (Jintzon) The same words denote both benders’ buttocks (Chixo) and anus (poingi Kindi) excrement cave. (ibid.: 100-101)

He continues on to argue that these come together in the image of the ‘composite person’ which he describes in the following way:
a fleshed (f.) head (m.) with two mouths (m. and f.), lips²⁴ (f.), teeth²⁵ (f.), and adam’s apple (m.), and throat (m.), filled with salty phlegm (f.), blocked by a lid (f.), and connected to the uterus (f.), scrotum (m) and testes (m). (ibid: 101)

There are no terms used to describe the genitalia that are perceptual organs, i.e. ears, eyes, nose. The word for buttocks and anus is the same for both males and females, the latter of which is excrement cave (ibid.: 100). According to this portrayal there are six parts of each person, which makes a symmetrical, although somewhat complex being that is androgynous.

This ‘composite person’²⁶ image seems to reflect the (re)-productive capacities of men and women when joined together, which is one of the basic ‘relations of difference’ for the making and growing of people and sociality. It is the most intense combination of difference out of which children are made and grown and kinship is fabricated.

This ‘composite person’ is opposed to another type of composite, ‘composite monsters’ discussed by Woodside (1981). These kill humans, live in the forest and are said to be immortal. Examples of these are ‘Jaguar-Snake,’ ‘Tapir Snake,’ and ‘Howler-Monkey-Snake.’ There are two other types as well, which are ‘forest spirits’ and the yoshin of dead humans that also live in the forest. Unlike the ‘composite monsters’ these spirits can either appear in human form or ‘be hirsute bipeds with fangs, glowing eyes, and repugnant sexual appetites. All spirit beings can speak Amahuaca, and move about, but cannot be killed by humans’ (ibid.: 89). These spirits and monsters are part of the Amahuaca people’s lived world and are capable of causing harm to humans. I return to this in chapters 2 and 6.

As Woodside made clear the composite person, whether it is something fully recognizable to Amahuaca people or not, offers a good entry point for thinking about the Amahuaca lived world. And, as he points out: ‘Babies are the output of the combined image’ (ibid.: 101). Thus, to be born from this image is one of the basic criteria for being considered human. Additionally, ‘There seem to be parallels between genital imagery and

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²⁴ Additionally, a ‘canoe-like trough’ is used to make manioc beer and is covered with a lid (Woodside 1981: 222). Thus we have these three components coming together in the production of manioc beer by women. Finally the woman’s vagina has lips that are considered to be like a ‘gunwale of a canoe,’ which is one of the only items that a man cannot make during his wife’s pregnancy. He should also not hunt or harpoon fish immediately after the birth of the child (ibid.: 105).

²⁵ The lid brings in another aspect of this person that is of interest and might help to understand the meaning of the beak as the teeth are also called a beak, ‘which resemble the beak of an owl’ (ibid.: 100).

²⁶ The ‘non-human person’ is a composite of different creatures ‘believed to prey on humans’ (Woodside 1981: 89). This valuation and notion of an improper or even absurd joining of unlike things is discussed in chapter six.
the complementary work roles Amahuaca assign men and women in domestic life’ (ibid.: 101). I return to both of these points below.

Following this, the reproductive potentials of men and women are based on a differentiation of capacities that are said to exist as part of the body and can be seen in the form of external genitalia. The outer genitalia correspond to inner organs with particular generative capacities for men and women: men’s bodies produce semen (*jora*) and women’s bodies are capable of growing a fetus (*too*). Sexual intercourse entails the penetration of a woman by a man who deposits semen in her uterus (*wakunanti*, literally ‘baby canoe’). Unlike other groups (see for example, Conklin and Morgan 1996; and Crocker C. 1977), among Amahuaca people one sexual encounter is all that is needed to deposit sufficient sperm into the uterus. From that moment on, the woman is said to grow the fetus on her own (ibid.: 102).

As Woodside states, the imagery of the composite person is not only connected to reproduction, but extends into many spheres of life. Thus, like many other Amerindian people, among Amahuaca people the division of work is ordered by gender to produce good food (a proper meal) and proper social relations (Gow 1989; Mentore 2005; Rivière 1984; Siskind 1973). Men hunt, fish and clear gardens, which often involves the assistance of others, discussed below, while women harvest crops from the garden, cook and take care of other household work including watching young children. Through this work, which is learned from an early age, men and women are brought into the wider social world of Amahuaca people.

The desires for certain foods and sex are one of the reasons given for marriage (Woodside 1981: 101). People desire proper meals consisting of cooked meat, some manioc or plantain. Men also desire manioc beer, *masato*, which has to be prepared by women. They clearly value the food provided by women in their gardens and some meals consist of just manioc and rice, though this is insufficient for long periods of time. While men desire cooked food, women desire meat or fish. They also desire a large garden that has been cleared by their husband, as well as a house with a kitchen and all the necessary

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27 It would be tempting to suggest that *jora* (semen) is connected to *yora* (body) although this remains tenuous. If connections are demonstrated with further research it might be extended to an argument relating men’s contribution in reproduction with flesh and women’s with other parts, such as bone. This would correspond to a connections made by Lagrou (1998) and McCallum (2001) regarding the link between eating maize and having strong bones.

28 I focus on this in chapter six.
utensils and manufactured goods for cooking, which today include pots, pans, oil, salt and soap. They also require firewood and water, which men or children bring from the forest or cleared gardens.

For Amahuaca people this productive mutuality appears on the bodies of kin as their products move outwards from the conjugal pair, which is symbolized by the ‘composite person.’ Woodside puts this the following way: ‘Human well-being is a primary goal for the domestic economy. The ‘fatness,’ xundiyaa, of family members indicates the accomplishment of this goal’ (ibid.: 140). This ‘fatness’ is perceived as being the outcome of good relations, and is how people see their work as the healthy bodies of others. It is through the sharing of these mutually constituting experiences that gendered personhood is realized and well-being is accomplished. I return to the question of how children become gendered adults in Chapter 5, but here I want to argue that the ‘composite person’ offers a good grounding from which to approach wider sociality. It seems that this image captures quite well the notion gender and sociality discussed by McCallum 2001). For example, McCallum states this the following way,

The complementary nature of male and female production is dependent upon the gender-linking of activities and styles of doing them. It is merely assumed that the person of the appropriate age and sex will perform the activity in question…[...] Gender does not emerge within a rigid code or bound by restrictive rules, but rather follows the logic of Cashinahua epistemology. Both sexes are fully human; that is, complex persons whose bodies bear the imprint of the myriad experiences that form their capacity to act, to know and to be gendered. Through these fragile bodies they are able to work together and thus to produce not just the food and goods that survival requires, but also the morally informed if imperfect form of sociality that shapes their world. (ibid.: 88)

I stress this point because while there are some who cite Woodside’s dissertation (Erikson 1999), it does not generally appear in work on gender and sociality in the region. This includes work on the Cashinahua (McCallum 2001), although similar arguments made just a few years before Woodside’s became central for discussions on the topic (Siskind 1973). I return to the ‘composite person’ in chapters two and six, but move now to Woodside’s discussion of clusters, neighbourhoods and villages occasionally comparing this with the way social life at the mission of Varadero was described.

29 Interestingly, this word xundi also means old person.
Part Two: The Cluster, Neighbourhood and Village

A cluster is an extended household comprised of a leader who is the elder head of a family who clears a patio around which his family makes the houses. He is considered the ‘owner’ (dueño) or ‘headman,’ yooa, of this clearing and has some authority over those who reside there. Woodside states that Amahuaca people tended to ‘affiliate with kinspeople who have productive power’ and not on the basis of a ‘lineal relation (1981 27). This might suggest that in a system of patrilocal residence, strong men could recruit their sons-in-laws to live nearby, thus creating a larger grouping and gaining greater influence. At the time of his fieldwork people who lived together assisted one another in certain activities and socializing mostly takes place within the cluster. Dole (1998) describes clusters in a similar manner, but uses the word ‘hamlet.’

These clusters often divided as a result of either friction or the relocation of a couple to be closer to other family members. Each household was independent in the sense that they could decide when and where to move; however, when the group decided to move together the decision was made by a consensus among all the adult males. The decision to fight with others was made the same way (Dole 1998: 187).

Neighbourhoods are loosely related groupings of clusters that do not socialize frequently with one another or cooperate at a larger level. While individuals may visit or participate in activities organized in other clusters each of these groupings is autonomous and led by the ‘owner’ of the patio around which people live. Each cluster has its own leader and there is no overall organization or leadership. This category seems to correspond to the way Varadero was organized.

Amahuaca villages, according to Woodside, are a more organized grouping of clusters and understood by Amahuaca people to represent a unit. Villages are named, which signifies an identity and village members socialize more regularly with one another than within a neighbourhood.

The word denoting village (MANAAN) also denotes a herd of animals, such as white-lipped peccary, that travels and feeds together in the forest. In contrast to neighbors, villagers consider themselves members of a larger unit. (Woodside 1981: 46)
While each cluster maintains autonomy within the village they may cooperate in work and when a manioc beer party is held all the members of the village attend. According to Woodside, the naming of the village, assisting village members beyond the limits of the cluster and drinking together at these parties give the village a more consistent form than a neighbourhood.

At the village level, the position of chief, or what Woodside calls ‘leader-mediator,’ is a more prominent role. The leader-mediator is chosen by the heads of each cluster comprising the village so the size and organization of a given cluster corresponds to influence in intra-village relations. The leader-mediator is responsible for coordinating all group activities and is expected to be a strong speaker, know Spanish and at least one other indigenous language (Conibo, Piro, Campa, or Yaminahua). The position is held by a married man who is most often the headman of a cluster.

The roles of the leader-mediator include representing the villages to outsiders; greeting and questioning travelers, visitors and village members returning from a long journey; serving as liaison between missionaries and the villagers; mobilizing and leading men in clearing villages trails and soccer field (…) He has authority to permit or prevent villager members killing non-Amahuaca thus controlling conflicts with outsiders who might retaliate against villagers. (ibid.: 54)

The two other roles of the president/leader are to be the ‘custodian’ of all communal property and to organize Comunidad assemblies. The Spanish word used for leader-mediator is jefe, (boss), or curaca, (chief) which implies a relation of authority over ‘subordinates’ that Woodside says is analogous to ‘their own political system’ (ibid.: 55). He is referring here to loggers, missionaries and government officials, each of whom has their own specific notion of and interest in the Amahuaca political system. While outsiders viewed the leader-mediator as a person with specific powers, Amahuaca people ‘deny they are obliged to obey commands of the leader-mediator but they seek his opinions on collective issues’ (ibid.). Russell, Dole and Carneiro made similar points about the importance of personal autonomy, but connected this to an apparent ‘lack’ of any overarching political leadership.

Woodside’s work was carried out after the mission of Varadero was abandoned, in 1968 on the Sepahua and Ucayali Rivers. Thus, historically and geographically Amahuaca people were positioned very differently than they had been in 1960-61. Furthermore, relations with logging bosses and government officials was a topic
Woodside made a point to discuss. For example, he describes how outside organizations including missionaries, ‘tried to bolster, indeed transform, the leader-mediators position’ (ibid.: 58) by assigning him roles such as ‘pastor, timber foreman, administrator/president (…) attempting to transform the nature of the ties between villagers in a corporate direction while linking them to outside organizations’ (ibid.: 59).

These attempts by outsiders to empower the leader-mediator were institutionalized with establishment of Comunidades, Native Communities. According to Woodside, most Amahuaca accepted this transition while some families ‘refused to participate’ (ibid.: 57). The President was then recognized as having the right to organize activities and ‘levy fines for non-compliance. Several [Amahuaca] regarded this an imposition which conflicted with their domestic production’ (ibid.: 58). I return to the details of Comunidades in the next section.

It is worth mentioning now that the notion of village that Woodside discusses was the outcome of transformations that were occurring as people left the headwaters region. When Amahuaca people moved to the Ucayali River beginning in the early 20th century, but more systematically in the 1960s, they began to interact more intensively with other indigenous groups including Shipibo-Conibo and Ashaninka as well as new younger members of the SIL. It was there that Amahuaca people began working together in ways that are more familiar today, for example masato parties. The combination of masato and the formation of Comunidades became central for life on the Inuya. I return to this in chapters three, four and five, but want to draw attention to the connection between the ‘lack’ of a unifying social organization and strong political leadership prior to this period and the ways this continued to be a problem as Amahuaca people began to form more Comunidades.

As discussed above Dole (1998) and others (Hornborg 1988; Russell u.m.2) believed it was likely that more ‘complex’ forms of social organization had existed in the past. The evidence given includes certain kinship terminology, a tendency towards bi-lateral cross-cousin marriage, the sub-groupings, and the passing of names based on what seem like

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30 The foundation of Comunidades formalized the selection and position of the leader-mediator transforming the category into that of President of the Comunidad. The government agency involved in this process, SINAMOS (Sistema Nacional de Apoyo a la Movilización Social) explained the mechanism of voting and rights and responsibilities corresponding to the land titling (Woodside 1981, see also Gow 1991)
lineages through alternate generations. They also used evidence of strong leadership, which they took as something that would exist if Amahuaca people were more organized. The point is that these residues were understood as potentials of something that was lost through the rubber boom. This theme persisted into the 1990s when one of the last members of the SIL offered a survey of Amahuaca people. Building on the Introduction and previous discussions, I make the history of the SIL, including the formation of Comunidades the focus of the final section of this chapter.

**Section IV: The SIL Project**

In this section I draw out very specifically the ways these ‘lacks’ continued to be perceived as impediments for a coherent and unified collection of people. What was perceived as ‘lost,’ could be salvaged and/or replaced with new stronger weapons for the defense of an identity that was constantly being threatened by outside influences. And, it is the perceived failure of these new weapons that I want to re-think. I do so by taking two particular positions. First, that for Amahuaca people the world is inherently transformational as discussed above and elaborated upon throughout the thesis. Second, Amahuaca people seem to have a general disposition against the emergence of internal hierarchies. This becomes clearer in the next section that focuses on the SIL’s engagement with Amahuaca people and the general sentiment that they were unwilling to engage in the types of relationships deemed necessary for progress at the level of Comunidad.

**Part One: From Varadero to Comunidades**

The first goal of the SIL’s project in the 1950s was to attract Amahuaca families out of the forest to the site where a village with an airstrip could be established. Following

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31 The Dominican mission of Sepahua recruited indigenous people to live in a village on the main river. They did not promote bilingual education. Thus, Amahuaca people’s experiences in the two missions were very different and had an impact on later developments, though this is beyond the scope of the thesis.
SIL protocol, the site was located near where Amahuaca people were known to be living and well away from town and the direct influences of loggers and other groups. The site was chosen, in part, because of its strategic position not far from the military outpost\(^{32}\) where soldiers had had peaceful interactions with Amahuaca families for a number of years. At that time, the Amahuaca people were one of the least known of the Panoan groups, and considered less ‘advanced.’ This made them interesting for anthropologists, but also both a threat to the logging industry’s expansion into the area and susceptible to violence and abuse by these loggers (Carneiro 1964a). In either case, when the first missionary appeared, many Amahuaca families,\(^{33}\) in their own way and for their own reasons, chose to be active participants in this project and the village of Varadero was created at the headwaters of the Inuya.

The SIL program was based on a set of assumptions about what people like the Amahuaca lacked in terms of social and cultural orientations. It was assumed that if indigenous people could be taught how to read and write in their own language, and live in permanent villages, this would eventually result in their learning Spanish and becoming good Peruvian citizens. The lack of sociality from the government’s point of view entailed a nomadic lifestyle, hostility towards outsiders, an inconstancy in terms of working for the logging industry and an unwillingness to surrender personal autonomy to strong leaders who could be held accountable to followers and, more importantly, the government (Stoll 1982; Yashar 2005). In order to deal with this problem the government needed indigenous people to leave the forest and live in established villages.\(^{34}\)

In the Amahuaca case, their geographic isolation was perceived as an impediment because once people were educated they would have to leave the village to make the most of their abilities. This was due to the understanding held by SIL members that life in the village ‘consists of little besides hunting, [collecting]\(^{35}\) and taking care of the garden’ (Dyck 1992: 30). In other words, the success of the project at the individual level

\(^{32}\)A military outpost was established at the headwaters of of the Inuya River in 1947 as part of a wider government initiative to claim their ownership of the upper Purus and Yurua Rivers (Huxley and Capa 1964).

\(^{33}\)There were Amahuaca who remained at the periphery of this village and some who intended to kill Robert Russell, which draws attention to a diversity of perspectives in regards to outsiders that remains salient today.

\(^{34}\)President Belaunde of Peru wrote a book ‘Perú’s Own Conquest’ in 1959 that sets out a clear agenda for expanding economic and political influences in the region. In this book, he wrote about the Amazon as being ‘una despensa para Lima’ (a pantry for Lima) and as territory available for those in the Andean region who had limited access to land, especially from Ayacucho and Cuzco.

\(^{35}\)The word ‘taking’ appears here and I make the assumption they are either referring to collecting or would at least include it in the same category as the other activities.
compromised the coherency of the group, or what little coherency there was, due to the fact that people had to leave in order to fulfill their potential. A person’s departure from the Comunidad was perceived as a one-way road that would result in acculturation and the loss of Amahuaca people’s identity. Thus, a greater sense of ‘Comunidad’ was necessary in order to prevent this loss of ‘identity.’

**Part Two: The Problem of Comunidad and Social Cohesion**

The notion of Comunidad aspired to by SIL projects of ‘community building’ was based on the training of a group of leaders who would coordinate collective activities through their positions in the political organization, which is an entity separate from and above other productive activities oriented around the household. It was assumed that people’s desire for health, schooling and other resources would motivate them to act collectively under the guidance of their elected leaders. This group, or in some cases one individual, were not able to carry out their work because their authority within the Comunidad was not recognized. In terms of relations with outsiders these leaders were more effective in gaining assistance from the government or helping comuneros negotiate the regional bureaucratic system. Within the Comunidad, however, the building of the institution of the political organization was seen as a failure by the SIL.  

One of the primary problems was that Amahuaca people would not submit to the authority of their own elected officials. According the Dyck (1992), there seemed to be a connection between a lack of ‘followership’ in both political and religious terms. I offer two examples of where this seems to be the case.

There is great reluctance to accept leadership. Where we have encouraged leadership there is an overwhelming reticence to follow. Culturally their independence has contributed to a lack of followership making it very difficult for organizing a religious system for worship or Bible study. (ibid.: 42)

Besides a lack of leadership they have not learned a followership essential to political and social organization. They are concerned primarily with their nuclear or extended family.

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Dyck uses linguistic evidence to show how Amahuaca have ‘traditionally’ conceptualized the leadership role: ‘Linguistic support for the cultural devaluing of political authority can be found in the Amahuaca word ‘to govern, or rule,’ *hinaquin*. The verb root means ‘a domestic animal’. Hence the underlying meaning is ‘to domesticate.’ The verb also means ‘to make suffer,’ or ‘subjugate.’ We see the cultural roots for avoiding any formal authority structure...’ (ibid.: 19). According to Erik Leven (personal communication, 2013) it is unclear whether this linguistic analysis of the root of the word is valid, which is why it is not used in the body of the thesis.
They have an unconscious need for significance as a people in the larger culture. The cultural and social value of Scripture could make a significant impact in their reintegration. Literacy and education will contribute toward this goal. (ibid.: 49)

There was a void left within Amahuaca people’s world that needed to be filled in order for collective action to be possible. This required becoming followers of something ‘more’ than just their family’s needs. In short, they lacked faith or commitment to anything above the family or beyond lived experience: they did not have belief in anything that transcended kinship. While they were said to have had a ‘belief’ system this had been corroded through time and they no longer seemed to have faith in it and only reverted to it in times of crisis when everything else seemed to fail. The traditional ‘beliefs’ had not yet been replaced by anything in a coherent way and this was one of the goals of the SIL. This idea of religious coherency and belief is explicitly interconnected with the political, social and economic ideals of Comunidad development set out by the SIL.

The mention of ‘reintegration’ above is based on the idea that Amahuaca once had a more complex social and political organization that had been disrupted due to disease, violence, and atomization. The document cites earlier work that demonstrates Amahuaca people once had powerful headmen who ‘exercised supreme authority’ (ibid.: 2). Thus, Amahuaca people had been capable of following a leader. They also lived in large ‘multifamily houses’ and held ‘tremendous harvest ceremonies’ that required intensive and extensive coordination. These ceremonies, however, ‘have been replaced entirely by Spanish national holidays where neighboring villages are invited to play soccer and drink masato’ (ibid.: 2). Thus, these parties are considered important events for Amahuaca people and one of the few events held at the Comunidad level. The other two are the weekly work parties and communal meetings. Apparently in the early 1990s, discussions at these meetings focused primarily on who is going to make the manioc beer for the parties and what other villages should be invited.

The SIL aimed to build a community in an objective sense and while these types of activities were perceived as important they did not correspond to the creation of

37 According to Dyck (1992), these household parties are an important way to gain influence: ‘Throwing a masato party is a good way to share your wealth and increase your status’ (9).

38 This is typical of the area. See Gow (1991) and Sarmiento Barletti (2011) as examples.
community identity and more solid political, economic and social organization. Furthermore, the SIL and government’s ideal of cooperative action is based on a specific notion of the individual that is defined in and against society; however, personhood for Amahuaca is somewhat different. The assumption was that the capacity for an individual to act in the world was directed by their commitment to their close relatives. The goal was to unhinge commitments to families and create a sense of community. It was assumed that individuals could realize their full potential through collective or coordinated action at a level beyond or above the household or ‘extended family,’ which was perceived as an obstacle. The collective identity would become more coherent through the development of a ‘social and political organization,’ which was an objectification of community relations based on the political structure of elected representatives such as a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. The problem was that after forty years, this ‘organization’ was not the basis for the types of collective action it was apparently intended for, such as carrying out communal health projects, building infrastructure and improving economic conditions. It seems that members of the SIL perceived people’s refusal to ‘follow’ their leaders as a lack of the necessary trust. According to the document, Amahuaca people feared dependence to the point that they resisted positive change despite the many benefits they could imagine.

What I suggest is that for Amahuaca people this project was not about making a collective identity or ‘social and political organization,’ as these already existed, but in a form that may have been invisible given the focus of the assessment. In either case, my point is not to claim that SIL members misrepresented Amahuaca people, but instead to take a different criterion as a point of departure for Amahuaca people’s involvement in their project. Thus, one of my aims is to critically engage with the assessment of the project and shift registers away from Euro-American conceptions of the individual/society, nature/culture and private/public and focus on notions of collective action as well as growth in order to discuss what it might mean to have been taught how to ‘live together.’

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39 Taking a critical approach to the SIL’s assessment is not intended to discount their efforts, accomplishments, and the amount of affection many Amahuaca people feel for the individuals with whom they lived. Many individuals who worked with Amahuaca people are remembered fondly and this is the reason they stress that it was ‘they’ who ‘taught them how to live together.’ And indeed, during my own fieldwork, I found myself frustrated by many of the same problems as those mentioned in Dyck’s assessment.
This allows me to compare the ways Amahuaca people speak about their experiences, with the ways the SIL assessed their own work. By exploring the disjuncture between the negative assessments made by the SIL, and Amahuaca people’s sentiments that seem to demonstrate the project’s success, I aim to highlight important differences in the grounds upon which these valuations are made. On the one hand, the SIL based its assessment on a set of questions that were meant to evaluate a social, economic, political and religious context in objective terms. The criteria used and the methods of measurement were based on the idea of western institutions such as a political organization, an economy and a religious institution. One the other hand, Amahuaca people seem to base their evaluations on their capacities to engage in productive relations with different types of people. The relations they actively pursued have been incorporated as knowledge through the bodily practices of becoming civilized. This notion of becoming civilized, however, does not correspond to becoming modern individuals, which I discuss throughout the thesis.

**Theoretical Implications**

The point I want to emphasize is that measuring the project in terms of Western categories probably tells us more about ourselves than it does about the Amahuaca and their ‘capacities’ and interests. It is the wrong body, so to speak, and I shift the focus away from a western idea of ‘social and political organization’ and towards alternate conceptualizations of personhood, sociality and collective action.

In doing so, I am following a specific tradition in anthropology that attempts to work against certain theories that seem to overwhelm (overlook) indigenous potential and instead focus on the possibility of a more promising assessment (Clastres 1987; Overing 2012; Rivière 1969; Viveiros de Castro 2010, 2012; Wagner 1967, 1974).

I take Woodside to be situated as a middle point between the earliest ethnographers and contemporary work because it does not focus on the same categories, but instead sets out a theory of sociality based on Amahuaca people’s own notions of collectivities. What it does not do, however, is examine the connection between these collectivities and the importance of alterity as a value and the body as inherently transformational. In short, it remains focused on individuals as social units and how they interact, and while offering
insights regarding what Marshall Sahlins recently called ‘mutuality of being’ (Sahlins 2012), there is space for extending Woodside’s insights.

I want to draw on the insights of Carneiro, Dole, Russell and Woodside in order to mark a distinction between a past in which Amahuaca people were discussed based on specific methodological and theoretical interests and what they came to be seen as lacking in terms of wider Western categories. In other words, while drawing on Woodside’s work, I want to point out that what Amahuaca people were said to be lacking in terms of dual organization, strong leadership and certain marriage practices in the 1960s correspond to the lacks that have been highlighted by members of the SIL in the 1990s based on their work of community development.40

Viveiros de Castro (2011) offers a potentially insightful example in his work regarding the problems and frustrations expressed by missionaries and government officials in Brazil dating back to the 16th century. As part of this discussion he draws attention to conceptualizations of persons and groups based on two contrasting images taken from European thought: the marble statue and the myrtle statue. He argues that when missionaries had difficulty with the conversion of Amerindian people it was not because they were difficult to change, but it was difficult to keep them changed. The notion captures beautifully the endurance required of the missionary sculptors and the enduring quality of the final product: Christian people. The problem was, he argues, that Amerindian peoples were eager to change, but seemed incapable of maintaining shape, thus giving meaning to the title of the work ‘The Inconstancy of the Indian Soul.’ Amerindians were,

[…] people receptive to any shape but impossible to keep in one shape, the Indians—to use a simile less European than the myrtle statue—were like the forest that sheltered them, always ready to regain the spaces precariously conquered by cultivation. (ibid.: 3)

The Brazilian Indians were described as having no ‘faith’ (fé), ‘law’ (ley) or ‘king’ (rey), thus no solid ground upon which to build a civilized society (ibid.: 3). Yet, they seemed so eager to be converted by the missionaries as they often sought out missionaries. Building on this idea, he emphasizes that for Amerindian people ‘relational

40 Community Development is an early manifestation of ‘capacity building,’ (Verity 2007) which has become the catch-phrase for projects in the area today.
affinity, not substantial identity, was the value to be affirmed’ (ibid.:31). This corresponds to ‘the opening to the Other’ that Claude Lévi-Strauss pointed out was central for Amerindian thought. And, through his extensive analysis of myths, with particular focus on ‘twinning,’ Lévi-Strauss argued that this ‘opening to the Other’ was ‘manifested […] in a demonstrative manner during the first contact with whites’ (1995: xvii).

This line of argument leads Viveiros de Castro to a detailed discussion of attempts to halt two durable practices among the Tupinamba: maize beer parties and cannibalistic feuding. It is in the latter that ‘openness to the Other’ is most explicitly manifested. In the case of the Tupinamba, the exchanges valued were in some ways at odds with one another. On the one hand, Tupinamba were eager to convert to Christianity and exchange their ‘souls’ for relations with the missionaries. On the other, many Tupinamba groups continued to practice forms of vengeance killings including ritual cannibalism, despite clear and sometimes violent attempts by missionaries and others to stop these practices. According to Viveiros de Castro, these seemingly contradictory practices are rendered coherent once one can see them as part of an underlying logic of sociality based on the necessity of exchange for the constitution of kinship.

In detailing the importance of vengeance, he states:

The abandonment of such a practice would mean, in some way, the loss of an essential dimension of Tupinamba society: its ‘identification’ with enemies, that is to say, its self-determination through the other, its condition of perpetual alteration. (2011: 201)

Although he is discussing the act of vengeance in particular, it seems that a similar logic also pertains to relations with missionaries. Through their exchanges with outsiders, whether they are missionaries or enemies, the Tupinamba determine their own ‘alteration.’ This set of values differs greatly from those of the missionaries and other Europeans who place consistency and continuity at the centre of discourses concerning identity, which remains pertinent today, as I have tried to show in discussing Dyck’s analysis of Amahuaca people’s sociality.

41 I do not focus on this aspect of his discussion due to word limitations, although as will become clear this should be expanded upon in the future.
This notion of a ‘social and political organization’ set out by Dyck is based on a specific idea of the individual and their relations to society in Western terms. This notion of the individual is based on the idea that each individual is a bounded unit that possesses a culture or tradition that should be sustained. In order to do so, Amahuaca people should organize themselves to defend themselves from the complete loss of their collective identity. What is lacking is belief or faith. There seems to be no ground upon which society can be built. The Amahuaca people were quick to take on the form of ‘civilization’ as they moved into Comunidades, voted for their leaders and attended school, yet they seem reluctant to put the ‘corporate’ mechanisms into action to ‘develop’ the Comunidad. The political structure is there, but is ineffective. There is ‘no faith, no law, no king’ and this results in failures to grow a sense of community. This notion of community, however, does not really account for Amahuaca people’s own evaluations of what they have gained through their engagement with the SIL project.

The notion of ‘self-determination through the other’ strikes me as an apt way to think through how and why Amahuaca people chose to participate in the project and why they came to frame their transformations in terms of their being ‘taught’ how to live together.

If, for the Tupinamba, the moment when the enemy captive and the killer come together is a defining one for society, and key for their ‘perpetual alteration’ on multiple levels, then what positions might be perceived as central for Amahuaca people’s ‘alteration’?

While the literature discussed above is crucial for addressing this question, there is one omission that is worth discussing very briefly. I am referring to the work of Philippe Erikson (1992, 1999) who has carried out research with the Panoan speaking Matis people. In his discussion of Matis people’s contact with Whites, nawa, and the impacts this has had on their social and ritual life over the past decades, Erikson makes four points regarding comparative Panoan ethnography.

The first entails the centrality of the division between men and women and their complementary capacities and positions for Panoan peoples. Erikson uses the phrase ‘sexual dimorphism’ to capture this specific theme in Panoan literature. He describes it in the following way, ‘In many respects, sexual dimorphism appears to be the metaphorical key to provide a conceptual model that will serve to think through all the other
sociological oppositions among the Panoans’ (1999: 117, my translation). Erikson references Woodside’s thesis to raise some points regarding the conjugal pair as being a basic unit of difference and points to his analysis of complementary desires for meat and sex as being important for wider argument. He does not mention the ‘composite person’ and how this might relate to his argument.

Second, in his discussion of rituals, such as tattooing and piercing, he builds on the argument of Seeger et al. (1979), as well as others (for example, Crocker C. 1977) to argue that for the Matis and, other Panoans, transformations of the body are not just sociological, but have real ontological ramifications. McCallum summarizes his point by stating, ‘these body techniques are “ontological components (componsantes)” that are part of the flesh, not just added on’ (2001: 177).

The third point concerns the importance of ‘alterity’ for understanding Panoan people’s sociality. In his detailed account of kinship and ritual among Matis people, he uses the distinction between two categories, ‘Matis Kumi,’ (‘our group’ or ‘real Matis’) and ‘Matis Utsi’ (‘other groups,’ or ‘other Matis’) to draw a wider argument surrounding what he calls, ‘constitutive alterity’ (Erikson 1999). While the distinction between these two positions is important, they are not static and the boundaries between them can often be blurred. The continuum extends from the inside where most people are related ‘Matis Kumi,’ towards the outside where people are unrelated, but still considered knowable as humans, ‘Matis Utsi.’

He draws a comparison between this and the Amahuaca terms, yora, (‘cuerpo’ ‘body’) and yoratza, (‘otro cuerpo,’ other body). These same terms are used among other Panoan peoples such as the Sharanahua (Siskind 1973) and Yaminahua (Townsley 1988), and appear in slightly different forms among a wider collection of Panoan groups (Erikson 1999: 86). Erikson points out that these terms have the important quality of basing people’s notions of relatedness in the formation of collective bodies that are qualitatively different from other bodies that are similar, but not the same. This ‘other,’ yoratza, is considered human, but positioned from an alternate point of view within the human world. This also allows for a better understanding of how, among Matis people, those related as ‘Matis Kima’ conceive of themselves as a group that relate to and exchange with other equally comprised groups, or ‘Matis Utsi’ (Erikson 1999: 88);
however, in order to really understand these two positions, we have to relate them to another, which is the position of nawa.

The category of nawa can similarly be divided into the ‘Nawa Kima,’ (very white, very stupid and very rich) and ‘Nawa Utsi’ who mostly have the appearance of indigenous people’ (ibid.: 90, my translation). Thus, there are two poles of the social world, ‘Matis Kima’ (‘real Matis people’) and ‘Nawa Kima’ (‘real white people.’) The position of nawa is definitive of alterity for Panoan people: they are radically other, while not being considered the ‘anti-thesis of humanity’ (ibid.: 90). And, Erikson argues, it is this position that is the most important for understanding commonalities among Panoan people’s sociality. He argues that a common feature of Panoan peoples is that they define themselves through the other.

Ultimately, alterity (including the most radical) does not appear just ideologically indispensable for the perpetuation of the self; paradoxically, it is even perceived consubstantial with it. The Pano identity, not content with defining itself face to face with alterity (which is true), comes to symbolically edify through what I have called the principle of constitutive alterity (Erikson, 1986: 189). Not just the ‘other’ groups (utsi, futsa, etc.), but with the nawa, they find the ingredients that enter into the composition of the pano identity, and could even be said that it is an exoticism that confers those nawa their extreme valoration as dispensers of identity.’ (ibid.: 94)

He argues that one of the ways this commonality can be located is in shared mythic traditions in which the Inka, appears as a figure that gives Panoan people their identifying attributes such as adornments. A variation of this appears among Amahuaca people, which I discuss in the next chapter.

The reason I waited to raise these points here is that it seemed worthwhile to set out as completely as possible the ways Amahuaca people have been described in the literature on their own terms. Amahuaca people appear in Erikson’s work, but not in any systematic way, and one of the reasons for this is that many of the themes he addressed have not been discussed in previous ethnographies of Amahuaca people. This thesis aims to do just that.

In the next chapter I discuss three ceremonies focusing on how a ‘corporal entity’ is fabricated in order to then demonstrate how this relates to notions of ‘becoming civilized’ over the past sixty years, and ‘being Amahuaca’ today. Instead of taking as the object of assessment ‘political and social organization’ as a type of ‘corporate body,’ I build on the idea set out by Seeger (1981), and elaborated upon by Vilaça (2010), that there is a
difference between ‘corporate’ and ‘corporeal’ groups. I argue these conceptualizations of ‘corporality,’ combined with the notion that ‘history is kinship’ (Gow 1991) prove insightful for examining the disjuncture between Amahuaca people’s statements regarding their participation in the SIL project, and the SIL’s assessment of Amahuaca people’s potential future. As I aim to show, it is through others that Amahuaca people ‘determine’ their ‘perpetual alteration.’
Chapter Two:

Feasting for humanity

Probably the most striking thing about the fiesta was the close teamwork displayed in the singing and its related activities, the preparation of the special beverage, and the various phases of the drinking of the beverage. The reason this teamwork impressed me so much as that during the eight years I had lived among the Amahuacas I had seen them as individualists…A man lived in his own clearing, sharing that clearing with the members of his own family and sometimes with a male kin and that kin’s family. The man did his own work, usually went hunting alone. An Amahuaca family is usually quite independent…Through the years there had been some examples of cooperation and group activities, such as the time five Amahuaca men helped old Nisho finish off his clearing, the time a group of the men helped young Runtooyama fell the final trees in the clearing for his mother’s cornfield, the valuable help a number of the Amahuacas gave us in making the landing strip, and their recent interest in gathering for prayer and Bible study, as well as for literacy classes. However, none of these would have suggested the possibility of such smooth-running teamwork as we saw in action during this fiesta. (Russell u.m.1: 7)

In this chapter I take three ritual events (mortuary rites, ayahuasca ceremon) as entry points to examine how real human sociality was understood by Amahuaca people and what insights this may offer for thinking about the emergence of social collectivities. I will then discuss these events by reference to songs sung by people during their preparations for the glutton feast. Finally, I discuss both events and songs at a more abstract level by relating them to two myths. I argue that these offer key insights into the ways Amahuaca people framed the making and growing of real humans. This entailed social collectivities emerging through the process of making and growing real Amahuaca people. According to Robert Russell, glutton feasts were coordinated in ways that differed from everyday practices. They required the cooperation of a wide collection of people who participated in different ways. I will argue that this participation resulted in the manifestation of groups at different scales. I focus on these groups to

42 Ayahuasca (Banisteriopsis caapi) is a vine that is mixed with chacruna (Psychotria viridis), which is a smallish shrub to make the brew that is consumed in liquid form. The Amahuaca word is honi, which I mention below, but do not use to maintain consistency.

43 I take this term from Woodside (u.d.) and use it from here onwards, but shift to lower case without quotation marks. For details regarding Woodside’s documentation of the feast, as well as a full list of the feast songs, including translations, see Appendix B. The use of the terms ‘rite,’ ‘ritual events’ and ‘ceremonies’ are not meant to distinguish the three on the basis of any claim. This is something I need to work out as I move forward. For example, Turner distinguishes between these in the following way: ‘Ritual is transformative, ceremony confirmatory’ (1967: 95).
demonstrate that they emerge when boundaries of different kinds are enacted through collective effort. And, while these three ritual events differ in substantial ways, they share common themes regarding how knowledge and substances are mediated as they move between insides and outsides. The mortuary rites and collective ayahuasca ceremonies are used in this chapter as a background from which to offer a more thorough analysis of ceremonial feasts.

Based on the differences I drew with other Panaon groups in the last chapter I want to raise questions regarding the ways groups emerge among Amahuaca people. While groups like the Cashinahua negotiated relations based on more formalized positions such as moieties, which I return to briefly in the conclusion, Amahuaca people lived in small clusters, sometimes neighbourhoods and seldom in villages. Moreover, given that in other places throughout lowland South America social life and particularly ritual events are ordered by wider social organization (see Hugh-Jones, S. [1979], and Maybury-Lewis ed, [1979], for exemplary cases), what can we say about the relation between ritual and sociality among Amahuaca people? How were differences between those who resided with or near each other and others who lived elsewhere made productive of a wider social world? Since boundaries were not determined through ‘structure’ how do groups emerge through time? Furthermore, how can connections between the feasts, mortuary rites, ayahusaca ceremonies and myths be elucidated and what might this offer in terms of a better understanding of Amahuaca people’s lived world?

I will argue that through these ritualized events dangerous potencies are restrained so as to reveal the positive potentialities of outside substances that are utilized in the making and growing of real humans (Crocker 1977; Mentore 2005; Overing 1981). I am not arguing that there is an a priori distinction between two positions, inside and outside, or that there is a radical break between ritual events and everyday practices. On the contrary, what I will show is that the distinction between insides and outside emerge through the work of making human bodies both in the ‘everyday’ (Overing 2003; Overing and Passes 2000) and during ‘ritualized events’ (e.g. Crocker 1977; Fausto 2007; Hugh-Jones 1977; Rival 1998; Seeger et al. 1979). However, while the positions of inside/outside are immanent to everyday life, during specific events, they tend to be evinced more clearly. Relations between substances and symbols that are part of quotidian life become
refigured and made the focus of transformative action (Crocker 1977; Turner V. 1967; Wagner 2012).

I do not take the differentiation between positions such as inside/outside, human/non-human, us/them as given in the world, but attempt to demonstrate how they are realized through collective action that works to form divisions that draw people together on different scales. In other words, it is not that pre-existing boundaries necessarily exist between individuals or groups, but, on the contrary, that through exchanges of different kinds specific positions and collectivities emerge (Wagner 1967, 1974). Moreover, the forms that different collectivities take through such exchanges come to define them as certain kinds of beings that form a group.

This argument corresponds to that made recently by Aparecida Vilaça (2010) in her account of encounters between the Wari and whites over the course of the 20th century. As part of her discussion she raises the importance of taking seriously a notion of Amerindian corporality when thinking about the emergence of groups in lowland South America. Building on Lévi-Strauss’ (1995) insight that the ‘opening to the Other’ that defines Amerindian thought is ‘physiological’ she argues that although Amerindian societies may not be ‘organic’ in the sense that has often been attributed to them in functionalist terms, there is still a relationship between individual bodies and the collectivities they generate. Vilaça states:

> While society may not be an organism, in the sense of functionally differentiated parts, it is a somatic entity, a collective body formed from bodies. Located at diverse levels, the boundaries separating kin from non-kin, and the latter from enemies, are corporal. What the consubstantial group exchanges with other equally conceived units are substances: foods, semen, sweat, blood, and human flesh... (2010: 316-317).

Furthermore, she asks what this might mean for thinking about ‘tradition’ among Amerindian people, which, she argues, does not correspond to identity as it might in Western terms. For Amerindian people, tradition is ‘body, substance.’ This alternate notion of ‘tradition’ is not located in the practices of Amerindian people, as might be expected, but instead in their point of view, which ‘is determined by the body.’ Thus, their ‘tradition’ is ‘internalized’ in that it is the internalization of different substances that ‘constitute the body’ in both an individual and collective sense (ibid.: 317).
These analytical approaches offer important insights regarding Amahuaca people’s understandings of real humanity. I will draw on them to demonstrate that these three ritual events are aimed at mediating relationships between close kin (consanguines) and others (real and potential affines) at different scales (Viveiros de Castro 2001). Through these events, spatial and bodily aspects of real Amahuaca humanity are realized against other possibilities.

The mortuary ritual aims to transform the deceased into ‘pure spirit’ by ritually destroying the consubstantial body; the drinking of ayahuasca allows humans to take the perspective of spirits through changing their own bodies, and the ceremonial feasts increment bodies based on the mediation of knowledge and substances originating from the outside. These ceremonial feasts are aimed at growing the bodies of individuals, but, also work towards the growing of collective bodies (Fausto 2007; McCallum 2001; Vilaça 2010). This includes the emergence of boundaries at different scales. As Carlos Fausto has pointed out, the consumption of food, particularly certain foods during important events, ‘appears less as an activity directed toward the production of a generic physical body than as a device for producing related bodies—literally, ‘bodies of a kind’ (2007: 500).

As I tried to show in the last chapter, the notion of closely related people appears in the Amahuaca language as namiwo ‘our flesh,’ and yora ‘body’ which is differentiated from kaiwo ‘our people’ and yoratza, ‘other bodies.’ Given that the boundary between these terms was quite fluid, I explore how Amahuaca people relate to one another and others to fabricate bodies of different kinds. Within these ceremonial events relations based on differences between men/women old/young, guest/host, human/animal and human/spirit are all manifested, marking specific positions encompassed by a wider social field. Furthermore, the position of ‘real’ humans is fabricated out of a wider field where difference is given (Viveiros de Castro 2012) and analyzing these three events offers a way of thinking about how this position is realized. This is used to formulate a model for locating collective bodies at different scales, which I follow through time.

Thus, my aim in this chapter is to demonstrate how glutton feasts can be perceived to be a synthesis of themes found in the mortuary rite, collective ayahuasca ceremonies and myth. I will argue that ceremonial feasts offer a variation on the origin of how humans
came to differentiate themselves from animals and spirits and move to villages on high bluffs where they came to be real human beings. Thus, feasts are events during which Amahuaca people celebrate their humanity as well as their capacity to regenerate themselves. Amahuaca people came to transform themselves from people living on beaches, sharing wild foods with animals, to living truly human lives, eating truly human food, in a truly human space. They became huni kuin, or ‘real people’ by eating cooked food, maize and living on high bluffs.

The description which follows is based on a series of primary accounts most of which are not available in print. The chapter is based on these. Although these documents have existed for some time, no attempt has been made to offer a comprehensive analysis of the feast, or connect it to other rituals, mythological themes or wider social life.\textsuperscript{44} The mortuary rite was only documented by Dole in 1961. The ayahuasca sessions were discussed in most detail by Huxley (Huxley and Capa 1964) in \textit{Farewell to Eden} based on his visit to Varadero and the insights of Carneiro, Dole and Russell. There are additional details available about this in Dole’s (1998) account of Amahuaca people. Woodside offers some additional insights into ayahuasca from the 1970s, though this is quite limited.

\textbf{Section I: Funerary Endocannibalism, Collective Ayahuasca Ceremonies and Glutton Feasts}

\textbf{Part One: Funerary Endocannibalism}

According to Dole (1974b) the stated aim of the rite is to compel the spirit of the deceased, which is dangerous to their living relatives, to leave the village. Until the bones are consumed in a mix of maize gruel the spirit ‘hangs around wanting to kill someone’ (ibid.: 305). Once completed, they were said to go to the forest or sky where they can be

\textsuperscript{44} It is worth offering a note concerning the methodology and interest of the analysis below. The way I approached the connections between these events, their symbolic aspects and sociality more broadly are inspired by the work of Lévi-Strauss in broad terms and Roy Wagner more specifically. I also draw inspiration from Peter Gow. Although I do not reference this work explicitly throughout, it has greatly influenced my thinking including attempts to work through similar themes in other contexts (Hewlett 2007: u.d.). I would also like to thank Priscila Santos da Costa for insights based on an early version of this analysis.
with other spirits, including ancestors. Dole describes the following event, which occurred as a result of a young child’s death.\footnote{This is a summary of Dole (1974b).}

The mother was heard crying in the morning and preparations for the cremation began that same day. The process entailed digging a hole in the dirt floor of the hut where the child was placed inside two pots situated end to end so that they created a container. While men were digging the hole the mother wailed. All of the items related to or touched by the child were collected and placed around the pots, then the hole was filled with dirt and the pots were left to sit for approximately ten days. During these ten days the mother remained near the hole wailing and crying. The father did not seem to have any role during this period. Meanwhile, a relative made a new pestle for the mother (the older one was discarded) in which she ground maize.

The pots were removed from the hole and a fire was built just outside the hut. As the child’s decaying remains were pulled from the pot, the mother wailed heavily. The remains were placed in a different pot with a hole cut in the bottom. The child’s body was left inside the pot. While it was cooking the mother and father wailed, exuding tears and mucus. Other family members joined in and, ‘crouched in a huddle near the fire and chanted and wailed loudly as the fire blazed’ (1974b: 304). According to Dole, the large amount of mucous pouring from their noses as they mourned showed their love for the deceased.\footnote{This was supported by comparative data taken from the Cashinahua who explicitly stated that the amount of mucous was proportional to the love and sadness felt for the deceased. Dole cites Tastevin’s description, ‘The more one moans and sobs, the better the deceased’s shade [yoshin] is appeased. The depth of one’s sorrow can be measured by the length of the mucus hanging from one’s nose’ (Tastevin 1925: 34, in Dole 1974b: 305). Cashinahua people who are mentioned by Dole had similar practices, but they also consumed the flesh of their deceased relative. According to Lagrou (1998) and McCallum (2001) the flesh and bones corresponded to the two different spirits Cashinahua people are said to have, the ‘body soul’ yuda yuxin and the ‘eye soul’ bedu yuxin. There are some who believe that Amahuaca people may have similar differentiations between two ‘souls’ (Leven, personal communication 2013), though this remains unclear.}

Once the body had been cremated the pots were removed. All that was left inside were ashes and small pieces of bone\footnote{The word for bone is xau, while yora xau means skeleton. This translates as ‘body bones.’} that the mother collected. The ashes were collected and thrown carefully into the river. The disposal of the rest of the ashes into the river ended the ritual, which had taken almost two weeks. She stored the bones until a new mortar could be made at which point she ground them into a powder, mixed them with the maize beverage, and drank the mixture. This is where Dole’s account ends.
It is unclear whether the mother alone drank the mix or others were involved. I was told during my own fieldwork that when an older person died more than just the mother would participate in consuming the mix. In this particular case it is possible the mother was the only one who would because she alone had grown attached to the child, although this is not clarified.

Internalizing the body of a consubstantial person was apparently carried out so that the spirit departs—the living participants compel the deceased to become other by destroying and consuming the objects of their relations such as the body, adornments and other personal items. I suggest that through this ritual, a close kin, seen as a consubstantial body, is made into a type of affine, that is, pure spirit. This spirit becomes part of a wider matrix of ‘affines,’ but does not end the possibility of further relations. The spirit of the deceased is said to go to the forest where it stays until all the proper rites are performed. At that point the spirit travels to the sky where it remains, sometimes returning. In the sky life is like on earth, but better because there is plenty of game and no dangerous beings of any type (Huxley and Capa 1964: 116). The spirits of the deceased were said to visit when Amahuaca people gathered together to consume *ayahuasca*.
Part Two: Collective Ayahuasca Ceremonies

To the Amahuaca an *ayahuasca* evening is the most common social occasion with somewhat ceremonious overtones. While outwardly the *ayahuasca* binge has many of the earmarks of an endless cocktail party, its focus upon the supernatural world gives it a somewhat different flavor […] At Varadero *ayahuasca* is usually drunk as soon as it has been prepared. Within a very short time the drinker starts feeling dizzy, sometimes tinglingly numb, and is shaken by great gusts of trembling. As soon as an Amahuaca feels the drug acting, he starts chanting in a near falsetto, full of tremolos, the words barely intelligible. A man sings without regard to his neighbor’s efforts, and key words are picked up and repeated by the others. *Ayahuasca* sessions frequently last from dusk to dawn, and the men sing virtually without interruption. (Huxley and Capa 1964: 109)

This description by Matthew Huxley is the only written account of Amahuaca collective *ayahuasca* ceremonies. I use this term here to differentiate between the coming together of a group of people to drink the *ayahuasca* brew and individuals who prepare and drink it on their own in their houses. While anyone can consume *ayahuasca*, there are certain individuals who are more knowledgeable and have greater capacities than others.
who are called *Yovu* (Woodside 1981). These people, usually men, often have relationships with different types of beings, usually jaguars, and can have a separate family. I was told about some men who would have feathers growing from their bodies as they transformed into different birds and could fly. I do not focus much on this here as research continues (Leven and Karadamou, pers. com. August 2013), but want to point out that the process of bodily metamorphosis, becoming other, is one way of acquiring knowledge. This knowledge becomes effective to protect and allow for the health and growth of one’s relatives, especially children. And, while it is manifested in the taking of *ayahuasca* in explicit terms, this potentiality for metamorphosis is always present. There are very little data on this from the period of the 1960s and 1970s and today Amahuaca people do not join together for collective *ayahuasca* sessions. I focus on them here in order to make a point regarding the sociality of these events, and because they are integral to an understanding of the feasts discussed below.

The consumption of *ayahuasca*, *honi*, seems to have been aimed at transforming one’s subject position to congregate with *yoshin* that are always present, but often go unseen in daily life. In *ayahuasca* sessions the humans act on their own bodies in order to change their position. The term used for the state of being when taking *ayahuasca* is *paunaa*, which translates into Spanish as *borracho* or drunk. By consuming the drink and singing people open themselves up to a wider social world. These songs attract spirits who come and congregate with them, which is apparently one of the aims of consuming the drink. Amahuaca people communicate with spirits who act as teachers or sources of knowledge. For example, they help locate lost items, offer information about far off people and places, and guide people to see who is trying to do them harm. This sometimes entails the spirit of the human traveling with their companions to far away places.

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48 There is a difference here between what Carneiro and Dole say about the ‘lack’ of shamans, and Woodside who points out this position. In his ethnography little attention is given to describing what exactly *yovu* do and what their position is except that the leader-mediator cannot be considered a *yovu*, so it is unclear whether it is an actual position recognized formally, or whether some men are simply more knowledgeable. In the case of the latter, it would correspond to the description by Carneiro. Also, in the 1960s it was said that only men could take *ayahuasca*, while Woodside does not say one way or another, and I know women who have taken it and do so relatively regularly. This is important to point out for a discussion in chapter 6.

49 The word *honi* differs from the most common Panoan term in the area for *ayahuasca*, *shori*, found among Cashinahua and Purus Panoans.

50 This word is similar to a term *pauyanu*, which means venomous and is used for snake venom. I need to explore this linguistic connection. Also, while people do still take *ayahuasca* I did not witness this so there are still certain aspects of this I need to research further.
As I turn to the discussion of the feasts it is necessary to make several points regarding the mortuary rites, ayahuasca ceremonies, and their connections to wider Amahuaca sociality. In these two ritual events one part of a circuit is shown to exist. The living die and become spirits that return to teach Amahuaca people about the world beyond the limits of their cluster, neighbourhood or village.

In the case of mortuary rites the kinsperson’s body is placed inside a pot, under the earth, inside the house. During this period their spirit is said to wander around in the forest, though it is said that spirits sometimes inhabit abandoned houses. Then the body is unearthed, removed from the pot, taken outside the house and placed in a different pot with a hole facing down towards fire. As the body burns, the family wails and the spirit ascends from outside the house to the sky where it lives in a parallel world better than earth, but very similar to it. During ayahuasca ceremonies these same spirits, now
anonymous, return to the inside of the world of the living as a result of people transforming their own bodies. The spirits socialize and share knowledge of the wider world. This movement back and forth, from inside to outside, and outside to inside, is clearly important, as is the imagery of the contained and container (Lévi-Strauss 1988), or elicitation and containment (Wagner 1987). I extend this logic to an understanding of the feast, to which I now turn.

![Figure 4. Ayahuasca/mortuary—synthesis.](image)

**Part Three: The Glutton Feasts**

For the Amahuaca, poverty means starvation, the opposite of a glutton feast. Such a feast is a display of wealth, an abundance of food in combination with a social organization able to produce more of it. The maize leaves tremble in the wind on the hilltops where people plant

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51 The feast description is an unpublished document and was made available by Robert Carneiro. The songs and descriptions of certain aspects of the feast were all available on a Joseph Woodside’s website. This site no longer exists and the songs and other material were given to me in digital form. I have included all the songs in Appendix B, including the Amahuaca, Spanish and English versions. I cite this throughout as Woodside (u.m).
their gardens. Men make new clothes for the feast which is an occasion to be seen and admired. People should be ready to eat and drink. (Woodside u.m.)

Based on the description given by Russell (u.m.1) at the opening of the chapter, feasts open up an exceptional social space for examining notions of relatedness not readily apparent in everyday interactions. The overarching theme taken from the descriptions is that during these feasts, Amahuaca people seemed more organized and gathered in larger numbers than during any other event in Amahuaca life. These feasts were important events in Amahuaca life until the 1970s or mid-1980s when they were apparently performed for the last time.52

According to all those who described aspects of the feast, the stated aim was to ‘make children grow,’ but also entailed the growing of the celebrated crop, and host couple. Although I follow Woodside in using the term ‘Glutton Feast,’ this is analyzed here as involving a more encompassing aesthetic of growth such as in Cecilia McCallum’s (2001) description of a similar ‘increment ceremony’ held by the closely related Cashinahua people.

This feast among Amahuaca people requires intensive effort and the feasts are made possible through a month-long series of preparations carried out by a host couple. The preparations culminated in the gathering of a large group of Amahuaca people for one day to feast on the ceremonial drink, sing, swing children over the smoke and vomit on them. The swinging and vomiting were the specific practices that caused the children to grow. The success of the feast depended on the knowledge, capacities and social relations of the host couple(s) who were said to ‘stand up tall.’ Once the feast was over the guests returned to their homes, which were sometimes several days walk from the hosts’ house.

The plantain feast described below is taken from an unpublished document made available by Robert Russell based on his witnessing the event in 1962 when he had been at Varadero for nine years (Russell u.m.1). There had been a maize feast held in 1960 that was partly documented by Robert Carneiro (u.r.d.) and Gertrude Dole (1998, 1973), but they were not present for most of the preparations, which last much longer than the feast

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52 The last feast that was held on the Inuya River was a plantain feast apparently celebrating the birthday of the oldest daughter of the current president of San Juan de Inuya, which by my calculations was in the early to mid-1980s. This feast was organized by her grandfather who had lived at Varadero. It was during the 1970s and 1980s that manioc beer parties became common as Amahuaca people began living in Native Comunidades, which is a topic I deal with in the next two chapters.
itself. Thus, Russell’s is the most complete and detailed account available of ceremonial feasts among Amahuaca people.

Given the general lack of collective activities and limited social organization, this type of cooperation offers grounds for examining how and why Amahuaca come to value cooperative action in certain contexts. It is my contention that these groupings offer a good way to think about the ways Amahuaca people made kinship. This entails the work of making insides at different scales. Through the preparations for the feast seven positions can be distinguished, which I will return to in my discussion. I use these positions to make evident how different scales of closeness or consubstantiality emerge through the feasts.

I aim to show that the songs are crucial for understanding the feasts themselves, how they are connected to the other two rituals, and wider sociality. I then shift to a wider analytical frame by discussing two myths that help support my argument that the making and growing of real humans is made possible through the internalization of substances and knowledge from the outside.

**Feast Description**

The preparations for the banana feast lasted one month from the September 23rd until October 22nd 1961 when the actual feast was held over the course of one full day. The exact number of people who attended the feast is not known, but the number of people who participated in the singing over the course of the month was thirty-five. This consisted of twenty men, thirteen women and two adolescents. Of the women only the hosts’ wives sang most of the time. There was a core group of about ten men who were active throughout the process. The two adolescents were closely related to this core group of men.

The initial stage of the preparations entailed the host or hosts along with their helpers singing in the evening. The exact number of people is not mentioned in Russell’s text, but excluded four of those who would later become part of the core grouping and integral to the process. The following morning the two hosts visited those living nearby by singing and shooting them with ceremonial arrows made of arrowcane with a soft tip of banana
leaves.\textsuperscript{53} After they were recruited, they all went to plant manioc. All the people recruited on the first morning eventually became part of the core group.

Once they returned from the garden, the men gathered in the open field of the airstrip and shot padded arrows at one another. Afterwards, they visited other couples’ houses recruiting men and bringing them along as they sang and walked visiting houses a further away where related people lived.

When the group returned, they sang and danced. The dancing entailed forming a chain by locking arms and moving in a circle. The singing continued from the time of their arrival back at the village at dusk until nearly sunrise. The next day some people went hunting, others went to their gardens, and others slept. In the afternoon, people gathered again and sang while visiting houses to recruit people, presumably the same men as the previous day. This was followed by singing, dancing in a circle, then shooting each other with padded arrows and whipping one another with banana shoots. At this point almost all the men had new headbands, which they made themselves. Once the hunter returned, the men visited his house and shot him with arrows.

In the afternoon the group of men set off into the forest singing. They returned hours later with arm and chest bands made of bark. They arrived in the form of a snake chain and then proceeded to form a long line on the airstrip and dance back and forth. The wives of the two owners joined the men. This was followed by an evening of singing. This pattern of recruiting, singing, dancing continued for days being broken only occasionally by other activities.

There are several themes apparent at this point that are worth pointing out. First, the continued recruitment of the same men who became closely connected to the preparations through singing and dancing, and eventually by their contribution of plantains from their gardens. This is the core group of helpers. Second, the coming and going of the group, which almost always entails singing and dancing in a line upon arrival back in the ceremonial space, seems important. For example, patterns seem to appear in the way people dance depending on the coming and going of the hosts or helpers. Third, the mock

\textsuperscript{53} The covering of the sharp arrows with banana leaves follows several logics discussed below, including container/contained in which the inside is potential enmity while the outside is amity or conviviality.
competitions of shooting each other with arrows tipped with banana leaves inverts everyday potentials for hostility. Finally, almost every night, despite what activities took place during the day, the core group comprised of the hosts and their close helpers sing in the ceremonial centre.

The daily activities continued more or less in this fashion up until the final days of preparation. There are, however, three moments that stand out from the rest of the description and are worth noting before moving to the final preparations. First, one morning the two hosts left Varadero and travel to another river, most likely the Purus to visit and invite people living there. The trip was probably between one and two days walk both ways and they were gone for six days. On the evening of their departure five men were singing as a favour to a specific person, though the reasons are unclear. The members of the core group continued to sing in the absence of the hosts. When the hosts could be heard approaching the village, still singing, the others gathered in the clearing and formed a chain. As the hosts came nearer all but four of those gathered in the clearing went out to greet them in the forest to shoot them with arrows. Those who stayed behind sang and then, when the other came out of the forest, they formed a circle and continued singing.

Second, on the day following the arrival of the hosts back to the village, they formed a line and sang on the airstrip. They were there singing and dancing at the moment that the SIL supply plane landed. Then, that afternoon they set off and prepared new hip and chest bands. When they returned they danced in a line and sang, then stayed up and sang until dawn. This occurred about two weeks into preparations and from this point onwards the intensity of singing seems to increase as they sang almost every night until about dawn.

Third, about three weeks into the period of the preparations the core group travelled downriver to recruit a few people and returned in the evening ‘carrying glowing brands.’ They stayed up all night singing and in the morning made ‘special arrows’ with which they shot two recruits. With these men incorporated, the group proceeded to pass through all the houses singing and grabbing the women to join them. They arrived at the ‘banana house’ where they ‘marched in and out and around the house in a single file holding on to
each other. They sang inside the house and danced.’ Then they decided the plantains were not yet ripe enough and most of the new people returned to their houses.

**Final Preparations:**

Five days later, the men woke early and went hunting. When they returned in the afternoon they rested and then began to sing, which they continued until dawn. During the course of the night’s singing session the group had recruited those not present, and gathered at the ‘banana house’ to carry out certain activities. These activities were described by Russell in more detail and are summarized in chronological order.

1. The group jumped in a single line down the airstrip, to the plantain house, circle house once, then entered.
2. Collected those not participating.
3. Circled house again.
4. Placed sixteen pots in two rows (straight) through house and dug a hole for each pot.
5. Banana leaves brought for each pot and used to cover them.
6. Group marched around pots in one direction, then other direction.
7. Ripe plantains collected from rafters, placed in baskets, then put in pile on banana leaves in front of the house.
8. Singer formed circle chain and marched around pile singing.54
9. Men brought water and in a line poured a little bit in each pot.
10. Men formed a circle around a pile of plantains and peeled them, placing peels in basket and biting off parts to masticate and spit into a bowl of which each man had his own.
11. As small bowls were filled they were emptied into pots in the house.
12. Ingredients of large pots were stirred and strained.
13. The hard parts were boiled by women, then ground up by men and mixed into rest of the beverage.
14. When straining was done, men made paddles to stir beverage.
15. Older children rubbed pulp left inside the plantain skins on themselves and smaller children.

54 Throughout the preparations there is a movement back and forth between dancing in circles and dancing in lines. This appears again during the final days when the pots are lined up inside a house and people dance around them first outside and then inside. It seems to correspond to the relation between container and contained, but also penetration. Peter Gow (Pers. comm. 2013) suggests the lining up of the pots may signify the fact that some groups prepare drinks in a canoe, which also holds men as they set out to visit others to either make marriages, or, in the case of the Piro visiting the Amahuaca, to steal women.
16. Afternoon-fires were started and bits were taken from firewood and roof of house. Initial fire was started inside house and men took embers to start their own fires. When fires went out and had to be reignited, there was a commotion.

17. When fires were ready, men moved inside the house and placed burning logs around pots. There was competition over who boiled their water first.

18. Men stirred pots with hands until it got too hot and then used their paddles—the smoke kept them outside and they ran in and out to stir their pots.

19. When beverage began to steam—before it was stirred with paddles—small children were held one by one over pots—two men took one child stretching him over steam—‘they said the purpose for this was to make the children grow tall.’ Fathers did not swing their own children, but others only did it upon request.

20. When beverages came to a boil fires were pulled apart and thrown outside—then men went to bathe. They returned and drank a bit then went to rest at their houses.

(Russell u.m.1: 13-18)55

At sunrise the next day, feasting that included drinking and vomiting began.

55 This particular section is not entirely a direct quote, but is paraphrased from the original document. The entire description of the feast is taken from this same document. I cite it directly in other places where it is not paraphrased, but quoted.
Figure 5: Amahuaca Men Adorned for Glutton Feast, 1961 (Huxley and Capa 1964)
Figure 6: Glutton Feast. Photo by Robert Carneiro, 1961 (American Museum of Natural History).

Figure 7: Glutton Feast. Photo by Robert Carneiro, 1961 (American Museum of Natural History).
Figure 8: Glutton Feast. Photo by Robert Carneiro, 1961 (American Museum of Natural History).
Figure 9: Growing Children, 1961 (Huxley and Capa 1964).
Of all the people who assisted in singing at one point or another only one was absent for the feast itself. There were also other people who had arrived just in time to assist in preparing and drinking the beverage, presumably a result of the hosts’ visit to the other river, although this is not clearly stated. At the end of the feast at least one person who had come from further away took some of the beverage with him to share with his family who had not participated. The reasons given were fear of snakebite and so their children could benefit from the beverage to make them grow. There were also exchanges between some of the men. One of the hosts, Luis, gave his belt to Miosh. The other example is Rontiyama (Mario) who gave his belt, fibre skirt and headband to Tiio in hopes that he would one day receive an axe and machete from him. Both of these men had participated as core members in the preparations for the feast and lived relatively near one another. Rontiyama was a young man of about 14 at the time while Tiio was married with children.

**Analysis**

Above I stated that different positions appear during preparations and on the day of the feast. There are seven different positions that I want to point out: conjugal pair, host couples, helpers, children, older people, women and guests. I present these in the diagram.

56 The is not data on all the people listed in Russell’s account. Those who are known are discussed in detail in chapters 4 and 5.
The most basic unit for the making of a feast could be said to be the conjugal pair. No single man or woman could or would hold a feast. The couple would also have to have children. It seems that hosts tended to be couples that were mature, but not yet past their most productive age. Given what I stated earlier about the ‘composite person,’ the fact that men cook the ceremonial drink rather than women, and that it is their vomit that makes children grow, it seems clear that the feast is largely concerned with celebrating reproduction: the ability to make and grow real humans. I make this point before moving on to show that the feast offers a particularly useful vantage point for viewing wider processes of regenerating the lived human world of Amahuaca people. I return to this below.

During this feast two couples join together to become hosts. In the present case the four hosts were Pucohnho (Luis) and Vahincaín, and their wives Quiztooyama and
Puconvucu). These two couples, four people, all lived at Varadero. During preparations for the feast they regularly participated in the singing and dancing. The women were apparently responsible for making the special pots used to make the beverage. While the feast seems to entail certain gender role reversals, such as when men cook, both husband and wife are said to ‘stand up tall.’

The third group are the helpers who not only supply the hosts with plantains for the feast, but participate in singing and dancing, as well as other preparations such as adorning themselves, collecting firewood, hunting, fishing and harvesting the plantains. This group consisted of Tiio, Wina, Rontiyamba, Nutuyama, Runtuyama, Xau Vaxu, (Pedro) Coyazo and Manayamba. Of these men only the first six supplied plantains for the feast. Coyazo was still relatively young at the time and Manayamba was living further downriver with his family and only participated irregularly.

The fourth position is that of women who would mostly be the wives of the helpers who are men. This could also include the hosts’ mothers. Women’s exclusion from the preparations and particularly the preparation of the drink itself is obviously important. While some might interpret this as an attempt for men to harness the power of women based on a fear of loss (e.g. Gregor 1985), I take this to be based on a notion of complementarity (McCallum 2001; Mentore 2005; Strathern 1988; see Gregor and Tuzin 2001 for wider discussion). This is why I place the image of the ‘composite person’ at the centre of the diagram.

The fifth position is that of older people in the village, and specifically the parents of the four hosts. While this group does not play any particular role in the feast described by Russell, their position of authority in guiding the hosts is referred to in many of the songs. Furthermore, their symbolic position as old people who are not capable of producing in terms of their gendered roles, but who are knowledgeable, corresponds in interesting ways to both the hosts (particularly the wife as I will show) and the children.

57 There is little known about them except that one of them had come from the Cabaljani River (where the sub-groups Shahuo and Isahuo lived). He had presumably married into the families that came to live at Varadero. There is not much data available on the two hostesses (Quiztooyama and Puconvucu) either probably because Amahuaca people have multiple names. These names do not appear anywhere else in the notes or other documents. It is also not immediately clear which woman is married to which man. This has to be examined further.

58 Most of these people appear in the kinship diagrams in the next chapter. Additionally, it was Manayamba who apparently held the last feast for his granddaughter on the Inuya in the 1980s mentioned above.
The sixth position is that of the children who do not seem to participate in preparations at all. They do not sing, dance or travel with the hosts and their helpers to invite people to the party. As mentioned, there are two exceptions to this, but they are older boys who at the time of the feast were already capable of hunting with their fathers and uncles. The only other time children are mentioned outside of the day of the actual feast is when the plantains are being peeled and some older ones rubbed the pulp left on the inside of the plantain peels on their own bodies and those of younger children. As a brief aside, this captures well the overall theme of marking distinctions based on relations of difference (age) through the application of the potency of an inside (plantain pulp) on the outside of a younger or weaker body to elicit growth. Again, the notions of container/contained and elicitation/containment seem to be central for these ceremonies.

The seventh position is that of visitors or guests who arrive for final preparations and help consume the beverage. These visitors are families so would include people in positions 4, 5, and 6. In terms of the men, they are the most central for the feast because the host couples need affinal men to consume the drink and vomit on their children. Women are the ones who ask men to do this and a father cannot vomit on his own children. Although there is no evidence of this, it would be reasonable to point out that adult men are growing the bodies of their potential future sons-in-law. As I point out below, in the songs, affinal relations are defined as relations between potential brothers-in-law. I also suggest these groups do not seem to be given prior to the initiation of preparations for the feast. While they are clearly based on pre-existing relations, the boundaries between the insides and outsides that emerge are realized through the month-long process of preparing for the feast. And, on the day of the feast these different groups relate to one another in very specific ways that mark the potency and significance of their differences.

Finally, this implies an eighth group that will be called ‘others’: people who did not attend, but were invited; people who were not invited because they are physically distant though socially proximate: socially distant others such as enemies, spirits and animals. The importance of these groups will become clearer below as the songs are incorporated into my analysis.
Section III: Feast Songs

Part One, ‘The Twisted Branch’

The feast song ‘The Twisted Branch’ asserts that the spirit of the original bringer of the song returns to earth when people sing it, perhaps coming from the Magellanic Clouds where the spirits of the dead go (Woodside u.m.).

In this section I examine the feast songs that were recorded by Woodside in the 1970s probably on the Sepahua River. In total he recorded, transcribed and translated 17 songs. This form of singing is among three ‘traditional’ types that Amahuaca people practised: mourning singing, ayahuasca singing and feast singing. The wailing that takes place during funerary rites by loved ones of the deceased is mentioned in ‘The Twisted Branch.’ This song is the only one that specifically mentions spirits in relation to the feast, which is quite interesting given that many other types of beings appear in them. The only other context in which Amahuaca people call the spirits and invite them to come sing and dance is when they take ayahuasca. As discussed above, Amahuaca people describe ayahuasca songs as invitations to the yoshin to come and speak with them. They say that they often appear as Amahuaca people fully adorned in the types of dress one would wear during a feast.

Singing is a way of communicating with non-humans whether they are a spirit of a recently deceased person, a forest spirit, an ancestor or an animal as in the songs examined below. The relationships between singing, spirits (affines) and the feast are set out in the song, ‘The Twisted Branch.’ The song explains the origin of the maize feast song(s), which seems to imply the origin of the feast itself, and includes some important themes for understanding the relation between the feasts and wider Amahuaca life.

In the story a young man dies when he is walking in the forest when a twisted branch that is meant to warn him of danger kills him. His sister mourns him in the proper way (burning his belongings and consuming his bones in a maize drink) and he is able to leave. He travels to the sky where he meets others who teach him the song of the maize feast. He returns as a spirit and teaches his living relatives the song.
Now, when the song is sung his spirit returns, which means that spirits are also present during the feast. In turn, the hosts teach their children what to do, while looking to their parents for guidance.

If you are having a feast. You are going to make children. My father tells me. My mother bringing me, clasping my arm. My father will show me how. They did this back then. Like me with these older people. (Woodside u.m.)

The maize feast comes from the ancestors and is passed down through the generations. It is made possible through the death of a man, but also makes life possible by regenerating humanity. This theme of regeneration is an important aspect of the feast. In ‘The Twisted Branch,’ the theme of death is connected to the regeneration of life by way of outside knowledge; in this case, from those who live in the sky. The man (son and brother) becomes a spirit that is able to bring knowledge from the sky back to his family, but only once the proper mourning practices are carried out.

Death and danger in the songs are expressed through the notion of snakebites. In the song the man is killed by a ‘twisted branch’ that was meant to mark danger. In this case, the marker might be viewed as the snake itself, which kills him. The threat of snakebites seems to refer to both a lack of caution, but also the lack of sociability. If the feast is largely about growth and regeneration (birth, growth, maturation, death) that must take place through relations with others, then the snake is an anti-social creature. It does not exchange anything and does not die—it is generally believed to be immortal as it sheds its skin—and ultimately regenerates itself.\(^{59}\) The other aspect of this song is the calling of the yoshin or spirits to come and speak with humans when they take ayahuasca. The relationship between three types of singing is made evident. As discussed above, each entails different ways of relating with affines of different types. Furthermore, in most of the other songs these affines appear as animals. Woodside translates the word used in the songs to refer to animals as ‘forastero,’ which means ‘stranger’; however, the root that consistently appears in the songs is chaí, which is the word for brother-in-law. This positions all animals and others who are mentioned in the songs as classificatory brothers-in-law.

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\(^{59}\) This is indirectly related to menstruation by Amahuaca people as snakes and snakebites are especially dangerous for pregnant women.
In the majority of the songs, the initial hosts of the feasts are different animals, mostly birds, that want to invite others to join them. In each case they have their own songs, which are eventually shared with real humans. In the cases of birds they intend to host a ‘false plantain feast’, which, when taken over by humans, becomes a maize feast. There is only one song that is about a proper plantain feast, and it is sung from the point of view of a young man who is preparing a feast. The other exceptions in terms of animals are the ‘Jaguar Song,’ the ‘Fawn Song’ ‘Sungaro Song’ and ‘Green Bee Song.’ A brief discussion of this can be found in Appendix B.

In the songs in which birds are the initial hosts there is a more or less consistent model that begins with birds hosting a false plantain feast and singing, then sharing their song with people who take it over and make it into a maize feast. The only exceptions to this model are the ‘Gavilan Songs,’ ‘Grey Hawk’s Song’ and ‘Vulture’s Song.’

In the ‘Grey Hawk’s Song,’ for example, blood appears in the tracks or dance steps of the host’s sister after he gets the song from the hawk. There is clearly a problem and the host checks to make sure the feast is being done in the proper way. Once he clarifies he is doing it properly the feast continues without problems. The blood in the tracks is likely a symbol of improper relations in which case it is likely incest as the host’s sister is too close a relation for this type of interaction. In the feast it should be his wife who is dancing, not his sister. The improper feast is most apparent in the ‘Vulture’s Song,’ which is also the most comprehensive in terms of bodily, social and spatial transformations from commensality with animals to a proper human way of life that includes eating maize in a clearing above the river.

**Part One: The Vulture Song**

I take ‘The Vulture Song’ as a synthesis of the others as it demonstrates most directly and clearly how and why the key aspects of a good feast—maize, high bluffs and real humans—are connected to the positions discussed in the last section. Since these songs were sung during preparations for the feast they set out the underlying logic of where the

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60 The ‘sungaro’ (Zungaro zungaro) is a large catfish with beautiful designs that is one of the prized fish for Amahuaca people.
feasts came from (as with ‘The Twisted Branch’) why the feasts were being held, and what they aimed to accomplish.

**Vulture Song**

The vulture makes a wonderberry\(^6\) feast
There, on a large sandy beach
There, on a large sandy beach, dear
Everybody stepped on his wings
The Vulture sings, ‘Sheen-Sheen’
The Vulture makes a wonderberry feast
The guests, marlito [mar-LEE-toe] birds, take away the feast from the Vulture
The Vulture gives the feast
Let’s go to drink
‘We are going to make the feast,’ they say
‘We are going to make the feast’
‘Let’s stand up,’ say the guests
The guests are making the feast, the Vulture already flew away
The younger brother of a marlito bird gets ahead in the dance line
The marlito bird’s older brother is in the middle of the dance line
We are going to have a feast
There on a high hill, they have the feast
The Vulture sings, ‘Sheen-Sheen’
The Vulture dances, leaping
The Vulture moves around jumping, leaping
We are going to take over the feast
They make the false plantain feast
The false plantain leaves wave and rustle in the wind
The false plantain leaves rustle
People at the feast will feel pain (from snakebites)
We are going to have a maize feast
We are going to prepare it
The maker of the feast invites the people
I am making a feast. Come to drink!
(Woodside u.m.)

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\(^6\) The wonderberry, or sunberry (*Solanum retroflexum*) is a small purplish berry that fruits from small plants.
The transformations found in the Vulture Song that I focus on are based on three concepts: bodies, substance, and location.

Bodies: vulture/birds/humans
Substance: berries/false plantains/maize
Location: beach/hilltop/clearing

In the song a vulture tries to hold a feast on the beach with wonderberries and apparently invites others to join him, but this fails for several reasons. While other types of birds may be viewed as being capable of sociability, the vulture is not. The vulture is anti-social; it lives alone, eats the raw meat of dead animals, travels by itself without leaving tracks or marks of its movements and survives on the death of others. The vulture is alone and therefore has no others to help it. Furthermore, the wonderberries it wants to serve at the feast are not grown, but are a weed that appears in an overgrown garden. They are not produced through work and are not considered ‘real food.’ In an interesting symbolism, the outside of the berry is useless, but ‘looks like a little tent’ (Woodside u.m.) similar to huts people make when they sleep on a beach.

This song follows an important trope in other songs and stories relating agriculture and domesticated spaces to hilltops. The beach is a specific kind of space that is not properly human. While maize can be planted there, the beach is not a space that can be turned into an inside in the same way as a hilltop. There is not the same sense that it can be owned as with a clearing, although it can be inhabited for periods of time. In short, the beach is an itinerant space that is inhabited by those who are less than fully human.

The marlito bird that takes over the feast is more sociable and come one step closer to making the human type of feast. These birds appear as having kinship: they form a line of brothers, which corresponds in another song to the pots in the maize feast being lined up in a perfect row. The birds step on the vulture’s wings as he tries to dance on the beach. The birds, as opposed to the vulture, dance properly in a line. The vulture tries to dance around ‘jumping’ and ‘leaping’ before eventually flying away. He is not capable of being sociable. It is worth pointing out that during preparations for the feast, the hosts and helpers oscillated between dancing in a circle and dancing in a line. Although there
are insufficient data to make a strong case, I want to suggest that the lines and circles complement one another. This is most notable when the pots are lined up in the house where they are contained; and, while people return from a walk in the forest, they return in a line that moves immediately to the ceremonial singing place, thus entering the ‘contained’ space. And, while this has to be investigated further, I want to point out that the day after the plantains were collected and brought into the house, a new variation of singing and dancing occurred on the airstrip after the SIL plane arrived with more supplies. Without making any claims, the combination of a circle with ‘pairs of runners’ breaking through suggests a climax somewhat similar to the pots lined up in the house. This combination appears in other places and in each of them it is a heightened moment of sociability, such as when the hosts return from the other river and are greeted by a ring of helpers, which they then enter; or, when the group, including women, form a single line and move in and out, then around the ceremonial house before inspecting the plantains. Movement is crucial, as is marking the movement with tracks.

The stepping on the wings might relate to the fact that the vulture cannot dance properly, has large wings and flies very high travelling alone without leaving any tracks of its movements. In another song, ‘When I Fly,’ for example, birds teach people to fly and ‘to defecate on a leaf of the false plantain’ thus leaving tracks that can be seen by others. They come and go from their nests, which are like homes, where they live with kin and are fed when young. Vultures do not seem to have kin in the songs. Additionally, tracks or marks seem to hold a certain social significance regarding the traceability of movements of more sociable beings. In another song, for example, when a feast is over all that remains of the guest is a piece of their clothing hanging on a twig on the trail marking the track to their houses. In ‘The Taon Song’ the following lines make a similar point, ‘From the place they trampled underfoot. Their footprints are the same. When these people leave. We will see whether they come back.’ This can also be related to the origin of the feast in ‘The Twisted Branch.’

The false plantains, though not proper, are closer to the correct food to serve at a feast. And, though the inside is not edible, the outside is used to make mats for sitting and eating, which is a proper way of interacting. Moreover, while the inside of the false plantains are not consumed by humans, their hardness relates to the hard parts of the real
plantains that remain stuck to the skin when they are peeled. These hard parts are sometimes cooked by women and then added to the pots for the feast, or are picked up by children who rub the insides over their bodies and that of smaller children. This was said to make them grow, which reinforces age differences among children.

The birds also move the feast to the hilltop where they dance in a line. This movement is significant for the creation of domestic space that is cleared and transformed into an inside. This also relates to the origin of maize as it was originally stolen by a bird and planted on a hilltop, which is discussed below. It is said in this song that the leaves of the false plantain blow in the wind on hilltops. The same thing is said of maize as stated in the opening of this section: ‘maize leaves tremble in the wind on hilltops where people plant their gardens.’ Thus, we might view this part of the feast in the following way. The false plantains being served are not produced through work but can be consumed by birds. This differs from the vulture that does not eat wonderberries, for example. The outsides of false plantains are useful and they are seen as containers, but what is contained is not edible by humans thus not producing growth and/or sociality in the same way as real plantains or maize.

Birds are viewed as sociable creatures and require nurture from their parents. In another song, for example, birds sing about being nurtured by their mothers, but then go on to say that humans hunt and kill them. They have homes and socialize, but the practices through which they make kinship are not properly human; the processes, substances and types of care do not create humans, though they are closer than vultures. Furthermore, because false plantains are not edible, the types of guests that are invited to participate are not proper—the vulture is trying to be a part of the feast.

Finally, the songs of birds are beautiful, but they do not make the plantains grow. The songs do attract humans but as another song demonstrates, the humans who look for them want to kill them, cook them, and share them with other humans. This is a problem of point of view: the birds remain prey to human predators.

This is also true of the deer that becomes sad and then, apparently, angry because humans refuse to recognize it as a proper affine by not inviting it to their feast. While

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62 This is an interesting inclusion of women who cook parts of the plantains that are too hard for the men to cook. In a sense, it reaffirms women as 'proper' cooks while men only imitate this.
deer are willing to learn how to eat properly—they like maize in the song and are attracted by its scent ‘on their tongue’—they are not invited to the feast. The fawn even has fire, but it does not realize that what it is cooking is a ‘purgative for humans.’ This brings me to a final point regarding the ‘Vulture Song.’ When humans come to the feast they end up stealing the song and making their own feast with maize, but this transition is marked by an interesting connection between rustling plantain leaves and snakebites.

The false plantain leaves wave and rustle in the wind. The false plantain leaves rustle. People at the feast will feel pain (from snakebites). We are going to have a maize feast.

This transition from false plantains to maize is marked by the potential danger of snakebites, which occurs when things are not done properly. The snake and snakebite are a consistent trope in the songs. As mentioned earlier when a feast was documented those who did not attend were said to be in danger of being bitten by snakes. In order to prevent this, some of the drink was taken back to their houses so they could drink it and ward off the potential danger.

The song ends with humans holding a maize feast, which is the most potent of the three feasts for reasons I return to below. In the songs the maize plants must grow tall. This corresponds to the growth of the host couple themselves as they are said to ‘stand up’ as they serve others. The parents of the hosts are viewed as old and weak, but wise and as they grow old they hunch over like mature maize plants; this allows for the regeneration of life when younger people stand up. The group itself also grows as people come from far away to participate, thus augmenting the potentiality of social life. Finally, children grow during the feast as men consume great amounts of the maize drink and then vomit on them, thus eliciting their capacity to grow tall. It is important that men cannot vomit on their own children, but only on children of others when they are asked to do so by their mothers.

The host couple, and particularly the husband, are said to ‘stand up’ when the feast is given, and become proper members of the adult group. Take these two lines from ‘The Pretty Song,’ ‘What does it mean to him that he can stand up. Amidst the adults?’ This idea is connected to the feast in particular and sociality in general. This also corresponds to the growth of maize, which is seen as standing tall, and is said to sway in the wind on the hilltops where gardens are made. Eventually, though, it becomes so mature that it
begins to bend over or droop due its own weight. It is heavy because it is truly mature. This maturity is productive of life, but implies death as well.

In the songs the maize plant is related to both old women who are hunched over, and to younger women who hold the feast. In ‘The Maize Song’ the following lines appear, ‘Does your body feel well? Being an old lady, her body aches. The old lady looks down at her own body. Her mother shakes her skirt throwing off ashes.’

This connection between women, maize and ash has several interesting implications. Maize is wrapped in a leaf that is its container where the maturation/growth process takes place. The maize is hidden, but as it grows so does the container. It is the relation between inside and outside here that I think is important, between the contained and the container not unlike that of arrowheads covered in banana leaves by men who shoot their helpers and guests, or the clearing that contains the human feast, or the banana house, or the pot used to cook the beverage. The same might be said for the pot in which the deceased is placed or pit where they are buried before being cremated. Men’s bodies also become containers somewhat like the pots where the beverage is prepared. They transform the substance and make it potent to grow the children of their affines who are their future sons and daughters-in-law.

Maize and maize feasts contain the potential for life, but also imply death and the regeneration of real humans through time. This is made apparent by recurring mention of the old parents of the hosts who walk hunched over and need assistance to get to the feast. It also appears as an old woman shakes ash off herself. While the ash marks her inevitable fate of death, her ability to shake it off reaffirms her place among the living where she is the source of knowledge. Older men and women are consulted by the young hosts to ensure that preparations for the feast are being done properly, and there is reference to the importance of following the proper procedures ‘like the ancestors.’ It should be remembered that it was an ancestor who gave songs to the people making maize feasts possible. This is a major connection between the mortuary feasts, ayahuasca sessions and the feast. The repercussions of not doing it properly are manifested in the form of snakebites: the snake is antithetical to human reproduction and sociality.

63 This is an inversion of a snake that contains itself and can regenerate life by shedding its skin. It is also not unlike the stick placed in the groun to mark potential danger, which end up killing the brother in ‘The Twisted Branch.’
Section IV: Myth

I mentioned above that the maize feast is the most properly human of the three types of feasts. There are two reasons that I think this is true. First, maize was the most important staple for Amahuaca people (Carneiro 1964c). The majority of the songs end with a maize feast held by humans. This may only be due to the context in which the songs were recorded, but there are other points that make this unlikely. In the songs, for example, the maize is related to women on several occasions. In some cases this is an old mature woman who is hunched over like the maize when it is almost ready to be harvested. In other cases, it is compared to a younger woman, the host of the feast, who is

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64 Plantains are important, but do not seem to have the same symbolic value for the Amahuaca. Manioc was eaten by Amahuaca people, but only became central for their consumption later. See Balée for an interesting point about maize and nomadism, which does seem to correspond with the Amahuaca case to some extent. Feather (2010) also makes this point.
children who consume much corn have strong bones and grow fast and tall; children who are fed principally on sweet manioc have fragile bone structures and grow slowly. Hardening the teeth, which are the visible endpoint of the bone structure, completes the process begun in kawa, when the skeleton was ‘cooked’ firm and straight. As she says, Nixpo Pima moulds the children in a complete sense, reaching bones through the teeth and flesh through the skin. (2001: 47)65

If false plantains are dismissed as being improper in exchange for maize (rather than ‘real’ plantains), as I have argued, and manioc does not make people grow (Amahuaca people grew manioc but did not rely upon it [Carneiro 1964c, u.r.m.]), then it would seem that maize was the most properly human food.

Second, there is a story about the origin of maize that emphasizes some of these same symbolic features, but in an inverted way: maize is related to male reproduction. I argue that this inversion and the role reversal of work during the festival make the notion of gender complementary more plausible. This is particularly important given the imagery of the ‘composite person’ mentioned in chapter one and elaborated upon in chapter six.

The origin of maize is also related to the origin of fire. In the story ‘The Little Bird that Stole Maize Seeds’ (Woodside u.m.) a little bird visits the only person who has maize who is named Yovashico and is a greedy person. The bird wails 66 and begs for the seeds, but the man only gives him cooked maize that cannot be planted. When Yovashico goes to urinate the bird steals two seeds and hides them in the foreskin of his penis. Upon his return, Yovashico searches in the bird’s eyes, mouth, anus and then is about to search his foreskin when the bird flies away. The man sets the bushes on fire, but the bird escapes and plants the seeds on a hilltop where they grow and produce more seeds, which he shares with others. This is how people acquired maize.

In this story there are some interesting parallels to the songs sung for the feast, as well as the other two types mentioned. First, that the bird travels to visit the greedy man

65 This has many implications, especially if we take seriously the idea that maize is like a woman because according to Lagrou (1998) it is bones that are connected with the eye spirit, which goes to the sky while the body spirit goes to the forest. Thus, it would seem that ancestors are those who come from woman, which corresponds to their matrilineal system.

66 This wailing might be seen as an inversion of the wailing during the mortuary ritual in which the relatives want the soul of their deceased relative to depart.
sets him apart in terms of space. Second, the bird cries and wails to get the maize, but the man will not respond, which is a denial of positive exchange. This is a variation on the singing that takes place during mortuary rituals and *ayahuasca* ceremonies. The feast implies both other types of singing, which result in multiple exchanges that become important components of human sociality. The incapacity of the bird’s song to elicit favour with the man makes it necessary to invert the relation and steal the maize. Third, the man goes to urinate, which is a substance that comes from the inside of his body, but is not productive. As the man leaves the clearing, thus leaving his socially constituted space, the bird places the maize inside its foreskin creating a sort of double move in which one thing moves out and another moves in. Then the bird flies back to the hill where he plants the maize. He departs from one space owned by *Yovashico* and plants the seeds making another space possible, but one based on conviviality rather than stinginess as he shares the maize with everyone.

The aesthetic of maize plants blowing in the wind on a hilltop seems to be one that Amahuaca people find quite striking as it appears in a good portion of the songs. It is not only related to becoming more human in terms of creating social space, as in the Vulture song, but also to the adornments people wear such as the grass skirts, or *Raoti*, worn by men during the feast. While these skirts can be worn on other occasions, the feasts are a time when people are expected to dress well and show off their beauty and potency. They wore armbands, strings of beads across their chests, the grass skirts, and painted elaborate designs on themselves with *huito*, (*genipa Americana*) a fruit used to make a blackish-blue dye. They also wore coronas that have multiple tiers and are brightly decorated.

The relation between the maize and reproduction is quite clearly marked by the positioning of the two kernels in the foreskin of the bird. While the implications of this point are discussed in the next chapter, this is related to a similar story about the origin of fire.

In the story ‘the little bird that stole fire from Yovashico’ (Woodside u.m.) a little bird goes to visit the large greedy man crying for fire. While he is there *Yovashico* offers

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67 According to Russell (2011) Amahuaca people paint themselves red when they visit with no intention of enmity and black when they prepare to fight and/or kill. During the feasts people all wore black which may correspond to the covering of arrowheads and inversion of other roles, but may also have been connected to the fact that while Russell was there people mostly painted themselves black. Whether this was a statement regarding their role as protectors of him and having hostile relations with other is not likely but possible.
him food, but he steals fire instead and then as he is escaping he flies into a dried out tree where he hides the fire. He goes to the creek to put his burnt beak in water. Having seen the bird steal fire a woman who had ‘lost her blood,’ appears and begins to scream and move around her hips saying, ‘come hard rain with hail.’ While the fire is burning in the tree a strong rain comes and all the birds came to protect it from going out. This is how people got fire and are able to eat cooked meat. Prior to this they ate meat heated by the sun.

In these stories there are correlations between maize/fire, the outside and reproductive capacities that might be related to the feast and its corresponding songs. That men’s bodies and not women’s produce growth is quite apparent. Maize is stolen by placing it in the foreskin of a penis. Men make the fires and cook the brew, which they would never do in everyday life. Finally, it is women who ask ‘affinal’ men to vomit on their children, men who are potential sexual partners.

This substitution of men’s bodies for women’s bodies corresponds to the importance of transformation from animal bodies to properly human ones, which is the focus of all the songs, and the vulture song in particular. The progression from the beach to the high bluff and from wonderberries to maize show a transition from a non-human to a real human body. In the case of the feast, it is the real human guests who have the capacity to make the children grow and the hosts ‘stand up tall.’ The guest is, in a sense, the most potent symbol in the ritual feasting because without them the children of the hosts could not grow. Following the logic set out earlier, it is the guests’ position as potentially close and potentially distant that is the most important. As I have demonstrated, this notion of guest is directly related to a specific type of affine, the brother-in-law. Thus, through the position of the potential brother-in-law children are made and grown.

Conclusion

During the feasts the hosts, both conjugal pairs, grow: they ‘stand up tall’ and do so together based on their cooperative action. This implies multiple relations, and while it is conceivable that they were brothers or brothers-in-law, without further evidence it is not
worth projecting. In either case their cooperation results in the growth their children, themselves and potentially others, but is not possible without the group of helpers.

In the feast, the grouping of helpers marks a wider boundary: an inside is formed that incorporates multiple households, which is why it struck Robert Russell as unique compared to everyday life in the mission village. This inside was not a given, but made through the month-long process of preparing for the actual day of the feast. Through singing, dancing and working together, a group is constituted against a background of difference. This is one of multiple scales (conjugal pair, host couples, and the guests), that also marks a boundary with those who do not attend. This would include animals, spirits of ancestors, as well as Amahuaca from other areas, Yaminahua, Cashinahua, and other enemy groups.

As simultaneous processes, age differentiations are continually being reinforced between children, mature adults and old people. Again there are internal differentiations within these categories. Older children rub younger children with the pulp of the plantains stuck on the inside of the skins. They use the inside of the plantain, rather than their own inside, to create a difference between them. Then there are the younger adults who participate, but are not invited to vomit on children. Although it is not clear at what point a person becomes mature it would appear that it is mostly married men with children who are the focus of this type of relation. This is also true of older men who participate, but are not central to the feast. They are sources of knowledge about the proper way to hold a feast, but are not active participants in the preparations or the actual day of the feast. The maturation of the young people and differentiations amongst the children, between children and adults, amongst adults, and between adults and old people imply a movement towards an inevitable fact of humanity, mortality. This appears in songs when old people are described as needing help to walk, by the connection between drooping maize and hunched over old women, and most explicitly when the old woman shakes ash off her old body.

The ability to incorporate substances from ‘outside’ and make them productive towards the growth of children only becomes possible after the hosts and their intimate helpers make the plants grow and then hold a proper feast. If the feast is wrong, then danger appears. This happens when snakes appear, and this is paralleled in life when
people took some of the drink back to their families because they ‘might be bitten by snakes for having failed to participate’ (Russell u.m.1: 20). Additionally, jealousy and bad relations between hosts and guests are signified as present when the fires will not light. Finally, in one song blood appears in the tracks of the sister of the host, which suggests a different problem: incest.

If we take the connection between maize and women seriously, then it is men who come to contain women and grow bodies on the outside, rather than women who consume male substance (semen) and usually grow children inside. This connection between cooking, transformation and internal capacities is elaborated in the story about the origin of fire where it is stolen from the outside, but becomes connected to an already potent/pregnant woman who unleashes a storm upon the birds.

This brings us to another group that appeared, though in the background, and were in a sense what it was all about: women. While in everyday life women cook, which is part of the daily exchanges that take place between husband and wife, during the feast men cook. While more could be said of this, for current purposes it is sufficient to note that by participating in the ways they do, men are both collapsing and reinforcing the boundaries between them and women. Husband and wife both participate in the preparations, but it is men who cook the drink and then transform it into a substance that grows the bodies of children, but only after passing through a process of transformation themselves.68

In the beginning of the songs kinship includes all the species of animals; however, they come to be differentiated as humans hold their maize feast on the high bluffs. This movement is powerful and important for looking forward in the thesis. First, to become human is to reject the ‘real’ affinity of animals, although it would seem animals do not reject humans in the same way. This means that they may continue to pursue their potential wives: they continue to want to become kin. This is how and why spirit children

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68 Here it is worth citing a series of points made by Cecilia McCallum (2001) in her discussion of the Cashinahua and particularly the kachanaua, their ‘increment ceremony,’ which entails divisions between men and women. She argues for caution regarding three ‘suppositions’ that have often been used in describing and analyzing such ritual events. ‘[…] all three suppositions—that gender is added on to previously sexed biological individuals; that sexed individuals form interacting pairs and are members of opposed collectivities internally united by shared biological characteristics; and that relations between groups and individuals concern a dispute for power carried out in the “natural idiom of sexuality”—are difficult to apply’ (ibid.: 162) She continues on to discuss the implications of these suppositions for ethnography of lowland South America in order to point out that it is important not to draw conclusions based on our own conceptions regarding the problems of a ‘gendered identity’ in other contexts. Her point is a valid one. I hope it becomes clear as I move forward with my own argument that I am approaching these issues with this particular position in mind.
are possible, which is mentioned in the last chapter and elaborated upon in chapter three. Second, the substances and spaces that are marked as human come together in the image of blowing maize on a hilltop thus marking a transition from one form of life to another. Physical movement becomes a social movement, but importantly the potential for commensality with others remains. Humans must work together to make and grow real humans and this takes place both in everyday life and during rituals such as the feasts. The significance of this cannot be overstated because it is not a collapse of space and time. The centripetal force draws individuals outwards and it is only through effort that a human space and body can be fabricated. This is the fabrication of a human lived world where the other possibilities always remain immanent. The ontology of Amahuaca people is based on the notion that one’s subject position is realized through the body; and, the body and world are inherently transformational. Growth implies the internalization of substances brought in from the outside, and these notions of inside/outside, processes of cohesion and elicitation of growth, are an underlying logic for Amahuaca principles of sociality. There can be no growth without the internalization of outside substances, and there can be no outside until an inside is fabricated. Amahuaca people do not have stable social categories such as moieties that exchange with one another. They make ‘corporal groups’ through collective activities, a process the entails the rejection of other possibilities, which I discuss in more detail in chapter 4.
Figure 12: Abuela Margarita and Children, 1961 (Huxley and Capa 1964).
Figure 13: Robert Russell at Varadero, 1961 (Huxley and Capa 1964).
Chapter Three: The History of Kinship or Kinship as History: From Varadero (1960) to Comunidades (2010)

Pedro Collazo was born at the mouth of a tributary of the Purus called Vacayo circa 1945. He does not remember his Amahuaca father who died when he was very young but his mother told him that he was the son of a mestizo man named Collazo,\textsuperscript{69} which is where his name comes from. She became pregnant whilst working in a logging camp either on the Purus or the Sepahua Rivers. (See diagram one)

Pedro Collazo was living in a cluster comprised of his mother, brothers, sisters, uncles and in-laws when Robert Russell first arrived. The family was recruited to the village of Varadero by Pedro’s uncle. They were afraid, especially the children, but decided to find out for themselves.

Pedro was living at Varadero as an unmarried man with his mother when Robert Carneiro and Gertrude Dole arrived in 1961. At the time a young girl was living with Pedro’s mother. Pedro told Carneiro and Dole she had been adopted.

Around 1962,\textsuperscript{70} a group of about thirteen Amahuaca men visited some Yaminahua people on the Purus with whom they usually had friendly relations. During their visit a Yaminahua man poked one of the visitors with an arrow. Seeing this as an aggressive action, the Amahuaca men killed five Yaminahua people. It was likely that it was during this killing that the Amahuaca men took a young Yaminahua girl, Gloria, although it is also possible that she had been taken during an earlier raid. Gloria was raised by Pedro’s mother to become his wife.

Gloria’s sister, Maria, was in the garden with her mother on the day of the killing, so they were both able to escape. They eventually found their way to the Sepahua and were able to move into the mission of Santa Rosa where a group of Yaminahua people had recently arrived. These people, brought by the Dominican missionaries from the Mapuya, Jurua and Juacapistea rivers had a long history of violent conflict with the Amahuaca people who moved to the mission a few years earlier.

The Amahuaca people living at the mission were unhappy that these Yaminahua with whom they had many feuds were living in the same area. In

\textsuperscript{69} This corresponds to the name of a large family named Collazo who worked rubber and then logging in the area. Leopoldo Collazo, along with others, was the first to open the passage from the Sepahua River to the headwaters of the Purus in the early 20th century (Soria and Soria 2010).

\textsuperscript{70} Part of this story is mentioned by Dole (1998), but all of the details regarding what happened after the initial killing including what people were involved were collected between 2009-2011.
1964 a group of Amahuaca men lured around thirty Yaminahua people upriver and killed nearly all of them. María was one of the survivors and she later married. María became the wife of an Amahuaca man who had not participated in the killing, continuing to live on the Sepahua for a number of years.

María had children with this man and was relatively happily married until they finally separated. She eventually married a Yaminahua man, Manuel, who had come from the Purus a few years earlier. Manuel had a son, Antonio, from a previous marriage and María had a daughter, Sara, from her marriage to the Amahuaca man. The son, Antonio had married an Amahuaca woman on the Inuya River and in the 1990s brought his father Manuel and stepmother María to live in the Amahuaca Comunidad of Nuevo San Martín on the Inuya.

It turns out that the Amahuaca woman Antonio had married, Elsa, is the former wife of Wilson Collazo who is Pedro and Gloria Collazo’s son.

Pedro Collazo was a single man of about 17 or so when he was recruited to work as a translator for the SIL and travelled to their base in the city of Pucallpa by plane. He was trained by the SIL as a medical assistant and worked with them closely for a number of years traveling to Pucallpa and to the Purus and Ucayali rivers.

After returning to the Inuya in the 1970s Pedro married Gloria, the young Yaminahua woman his mother had raised. They moved to the upper Inuya where their children were born. The whole family later moved to San Martín, so the children were raised on different parts of the Inuya. Pedro and Gloria recently moved to a piece of land near the city of Atalaya where all their children currently live and work. Their son, Wilson, is now married to a non-Amahuaca woman from Pucallpa. He is very interested in moving back to the Inuya so his children can learn to speak Amahuaca language.

For a couple of years the two Yaminahua sisters, Gloria and María, who had lost their parents, and extended families, in two separate killings perpetrated by Amahuaca people, lived in the same Amahuaca Comunidad. Their divergent paths re-united in the Comunidad of San Martín where María’s stepson, Antonio, is married to the previous wife of Wilson, Gloria’s eldest sons.

María was helping to raise Wilson’s children who are the grandchildren of Gloria. Thus, the two Yaminahua sisters are both abuelas, ‘grandmothers,’ of these children who are being raised in an Amahuaca Comunidad.
**Introduction**

This short narrative offers a brief glimpse of the complex histories of people living on the Inuya today. The period between the end of the rubber boom (1880-1912) and my fieldwork (2009-11) was one of extensive movement and transformation. In this chapter I draw out aspects of this history relevant to the thesis by describing in detail how and why people came to live where they do. I raise questions regarding ‘kinship and history,’ which have particular salience for the topic and region of my research.

According to Peter Gow (1991: 271), for Piro people living on the Bajo Urubamba ‘kinship is history.’

For native people, historical change can be tracked by generational transformation, and vice versa. History, in the sense of particular phases in the relations between native people and powerful outsiders, is not separated from the creation of kinship and the cycling of generations. For native people, history and kinship are the same thing.

The Inuya is a tributary of the Urubamba and Amahuaca people appear in Gow’s work as potential kin for Piro people. Thus, it seems reasonable to ask how this conceptualization of history resonates with the ethnography on the history of Amahuaca people’s relations with one another and outsiders. In this chapter I follow this argument in a way that captures my own fieldwork experiences. Rather than give a single narrative of the transition from living in the forest to living in Comunidades, I set out and interconnect different modes of addressing the question of history. I do so by addressing four questions: Where do people live? How do they connect to others in the same vicinity? How do they connect to others beyond? And, how did they get to where they are? These are all oriented towards one unifying question: what are the different ways to approach Gow’s (1991) argument that ‘kinship is history’?

In addressing this question I set out five different modalities for trying to capture how Amahuaca people’s history has been lived, the ways it has come to be remembered and the forms of sociality that appear as a result: (1) biographies or focused narratives (like the one above) that give coherency to the stories people told me about themselves and others; (2) kinship diagrams, though they do not exactly follow the conventional model; (3) maps of the area based on extensive travel on the Inuya and Mapuya; (4)
broad narratives regarding the ‘history’ of the people who lived at Varadero and how they came to live where they did during my fieldwork; (5) and, a description of the four contemporary groupings of people with specific attention to their relationships with one another, other people who resided at Varadero and outsiders. In short, this chapter offers different expressions of how people related (their history) to me.

These questions and the different modalities are not presented in order, but are woven together because they have been and continue to be mutually constitutive of my own understandings. This is not meant to be a more complete history (Trouillot 1995), but captures my experiences of engaging with how Amahuaca people consider themselves connected to people and places (Rosaldo 1980). I engage with the complex manner in which this ‘information’ was both collected in the field and organized into a relatively coherent narrative. 71 As set out in the introduction, I am drawing inspiration from a particular tradition in regional ethnographic research.

While I draw attention to this problem, there is no simple way to set out the relationships between all Amahuaca people without overlooking significant aspects of their interconnectedness (Trouillot 1995). 72 There are, among others, four problems I faced in piecing together the history of specific people’s relationships. First, in the 1950s and continuing into the 1980s sororal polygyny was practised and polygyny very common. It was also stated that in the 1960s brothers had ‘marital privileges’ over their brothers’ wives (Dole 1974a, c.f. Woodside 1981). Additionally, it was common for men to take the wives of their deceased brothers. Due to the high number of deaths, particularly in the 1960s, children born to the same mother or father may or may not be considered a ‘legitimate’ sibling, hermano legitimo, depending on the specific relation they ended up having with their ‘next’ parents. This raises the problem of how people trace their relationships to different people at different times.

Second, divorce and remarriage, as well as adoption, were and remain common. While people do tend to remember who their ‘legitimate’ parents are, this does not correspond to how they relate to people more broadly. Caring and nurturing a child is

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71 Although it is not mentioned explicitly in the text and there is no place to engage with his work in real terms I have been influenced by Marshall Sahlins’ extended discussions of history, culture and the interplay of structure and agency (1985, 2004).
72 I could include a much more detailed discussion of the work on history, historiography and narrative here, but due to space and time limitations this will have to be discussed at a later time.
more likely to result in close bonds than in a person being recognized as progenitor, an ambivalence that extends outwards from the loci of relations of caring (Gow 1989). This is examined in chapter five, but again raises the problem of how to track kinship through time.

Third, as a result of several mass migrations both away from and then back to the Inuya, relationships of co-residence ‘became’ much more important than kinship terminology. People may be closely related, but if they live far apart or do not interact at all then it is difficult to speak of a relationship in terms that make sense for Amahuaca people.

Fourth, due to certain events such as killings and bitter divorces, those who may have been closely related in terms of kinship terminology have little contact with one another. Thus, in Amahuaca understandings of relatedness, certain aspects of what could be defined as kinship become irrelevant to where people choose to live and whom they choose to call their kin. When asked to clarify a relationship most people over the age of forty can give their exact connection to any other person of their generation or above. However, this is not in and of itself very informative as to what matters to people because in some cases they refuse to recognize relatively close kin for historical reasons, and in other cases people refer to others using terms that bring them closer than they would otherwise have been. This is noteworthy as Amahuaca people are meant to be in a transitional space between the ‘open’ groups of the big rivers, and the ‘closed’ groups of the headwaters area (Henley 1996). So, a person who might have been a cross-cousin, distinguished from parallel cousin in kinship terminology, could today just as easily be referred to as the latter and thus be called a sibling. Furthermore, over the past decades marriage to a cross-cousin on many parts of the river has come to be considered incestuous, which would correspond to a necessity for openness; however, locating the reasons for this are not so simple. Gow (pers. comm. 2013) suggests this may come from their interactions with other Panoan groups, while others argue it likely has to do with missionary influence and the use of Spanish which lumps cross and parallel cousins into the category primo/prima, ‘cousin’ (Sarmiento Barletti 2011). I do not intend to answer these questions here, but raise them because through the processes of setting out
Amahuaca people’s history, the relevance of certain types of questions becomes clearer, even if only some of them can be addressed in the thesis they have to be addressed later.

What remains clear is that it is impossible to discuss kinship, history, myth, temporality, or landscape among Amerindians without paying attention to how a general ‘openness to the other’ that seems to motivate people’s engagement in the wider world is realized through corporal transformations at different scales. This includes the alteration of bodies, discarding of ‘traditions,’ and a willingness to commit to projects of a foreign nature. It is important and necessary to ask questions regarding how discourses, socio-political forms and economic conditions have been pushed upon indigenous peoples, but it is equally important to ask what is made of these pressures, and whether they are remembered as such over time. While I do not directly engage with much of this literature due to word limitations, my argument is guided by these debates.

In this chapter my aim is to build on previous work in the region to give coherency to the ways Amahuaca people remember the past. My problem rests with my own interests rather than those of Amahuaca people, as I want to make their past relevant for my own understanding of their present. The period discussed in this chapter entailed dramatic transformations in the ways they related to one another and to outsiders. Amahuaca people remember this as the process through which they became civilized, which is the unifying narrative of an otherwise mostly disparate history. I discuss the implications of this for contemporary life in the next chapter.

### Section I: Historical Overview

This section offers a broad description of the movements of people over the last 80 years. I present a general overview of the movement from the headwaters of the Inuya and Sepahua down to the large rivers, and then back to the Inuya, where three Comunidades are located today, to make the specific cases discussed in the following sections more comprehensible. Individuals and families moved back and forth continuously beginning as early as the 1930s, which is examined in sections 3 and 4.
focus on mass migrations here because they are easier to track as they were often caused by specific events that are important for understanding the history of the area.

This general outline of some key movements in Amahuaca people’s history begins in the 1930s, a period dominated by the system of *habilitación* (see Carneiro 1964a, Gow 1991, Hierro, Hvalkof and Gray 1998; Woodside 1981). In this system a *patrón*, usually either white or mestizo, gave individuals or groups goods in return for their work in contracts that were meant to last a year or two. Yet, most of the time *patrones* continuously increased their debts so those who worked for them remained permanently in debt. This debt was then passed from adults to children, which meant that owning a person’s debt entailed owning the person. *Patrones* had the full support of the military, police and judicial system, so all attempts to either flee or raise charges of abuse with officials were met with violence and incarceration.

Sometimes a *patrón* would recruit people from the headwaters of smaller rivers such as the Inuya and Sepahua, while other times individuals or families would venture out to the larger rivers in search of work, goods and knowledge. Despite the abuses inflicted upon indigenous people through the region under *habilitación*, Amahuaca people, like many other groups, were growing accustomed to having certain Western goods (metal axes, pots, clothing, salt etc.) and the best way to gain access to these things was to work for a *patrón*. As I will later show, this has changed dramatically.
Figure 14. Amazonian Peru.
Part One: Farewell to Varadero From Headwaters to the Ucayali River and Town

Around the mid-1930s a man named Valdez Lozano recruited Amahuaca people living on the Inuya and Mapuya to work timber for him. He took this group down to Atalaya and some of them eventually moved further down to the Ucayali.

Around 1940 a different Amahuaca man from the Inuya who worked as a logger on the Sepahua travelled to the Ucayali. He established a settlement for a cluster of families at a place called Chumichinia, which is an island located in the middle of the Ucayali River. This would become an important place for Amahuaca people and was also the site of fieldwork for Robert Carneiro and Dole 1960 and Woodside in the 1970s. This young Amahuaca man later connected with the group who had left to work with Valdez Lozano, slowly forming a village comprised of people from the Inuya, Curiuja, Sepahua and Purus. By 1960 this site was the home of around twenty-five people (Dole 1998: 150).

This group of Amahuaca people connected with a different patrón named Placido Sánchez who was based out of the town Bolognesi, a few hours downstream from the village. The Amahuaca people at Chumichinia with whom Carneiro and Dole spent some time in 1960 were still working for Sánchez, and he remained a figure into the 1970s when Woodside also carried out fieldwork there. Sánchez was a relatively big patrón in the region and his family still has a strong presence in Bolognesi.

The number of people living at Chumichinia fluctuated greatly as families came and went. While more families were recruited from the Inuya and Sepahua, others travelled down river to Pucallpa. In either case, Amahuaca people at Chumichinia were closely related to those at Varadero on the Inuya. For example, some of those at Varadero referred to the leader of the group at Chumichinia, Francisco, as a ‘nephew’ (ILV 1993: 77-80). Francisco had travelled from the upper Sepahua with a group of related people, and went back on multiple occasions to recruit others. This relation between Francisco

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73 At the time of the founding of Varadero in 1953 the Inuya River was closed to loggers, but it seems this was not the case with the Sepahua, which would make this possible.
74 When Carneiro and Dole first made their trip to Varadero by plane Francisco was supposed to travel with them, but delays resulted in him not going.
and those at Varadero became important when, in 1964, many of the people living at Varadero decided they wanted to leave to move to the Ucayali.

According to personal narratives I collected, SIL data (ILV 1993: 77-80), and what I was told by Russell, some Amahuaca men killed a group of Yaminahua people around 1964. This might have been a killing in which a Yaminahua girl (Gloria) was taken or the large killing that took place near the mission of Sepahua, both of which are mentioned in the opening ethnography. It is also possible that yet another killing on the Curiuja took place. In either case, the killing(s) resulted in people wanting to leave Varadero due to fear of reprisals.

Once Russell heard that people wanted to leave Varadero, he travelled up the Inuya with a motor to collect them. The return trip took several days. The four canoes traveling with Russell comprised a majority of the people then residing at Varadero. Once the group arrived to Chumichinia it took them several days to locate Francisco’s village and, in the end, they eventually established a village on the east bank of the Ucayali that became known as Jatitza, ‘other house.’ It is unclear exactly what specific people were on the boats, but to be clear not everyone left. This new village eventually gained official title to land in 1976. This was made possible based on the 1974 Ley de Comunidades Nativas, which gave indigenous people in lowland Peru titles to land and officially recognized their rights as juridical persons under the law (Gray 1998; Greene 2009).

Part Two: Second Flight

Between 1975-76 there was another exodus from the Inuya that involved the killing of several Yaminahua people. In 1968 Shell Corporation established a base at the mouth of the Mapuya to explore for oil and gas in the area. This was the site of a military base in

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75 According to Russell (pers. comm. 2013), Francisco visited Varadero while he was away and recruited people to come and live with him. Russell was adamant that he believed this was a bad idea because he feared Amahuaca people would lose their autonomy and were giving up more than they would gain by moving. When he could not stop the group from leaving, he decided to assist. There were some who listened, however, and they stayed at the headwaters of the Inuya and Purus, which is important for later parts of the story.

76 It would have likely meant that some of the Amahuaca people living on the Sepahua also left the area in fear of reprisals. There are several accounts of Francisco and others traveling back to the Sepahua to bring their family members to Chumichinia.

77 While I focus here on the move downriver, which resulted in a return later, those who stayed at the headwaters are integral for understanding the Inuya as a social space defined by the making and unmaking of kinship for a variety of reasons discussed below.
the 1940s-1960s that was founded as part of the government plan to consolidate the region. This base on the Mapuya coordinated with the outpost at the headwaters of the Inuya established in 1947, which was near the site where Varadero was founded. There were a few indigenous people living in and near the Shell base in the late 1960s, including a group of Amahuaca people related to those living at Chumichinia and Varadero. As was common during this period, relations between people from the base and indigenous people, especially women, fluctuated between amity and enmity. To illustrate, in 1975 a Yaminahua man killed the camp boss after an altercation. The Yaminahua man and a few others fled up the Mapuya, being pursued by several Amahuaca men who worked for the company. The Amahuaca men caught the group and killed a small child and injured others.

The rest of the Yaminahua people escaped up the Mapuya and, once they reached their relative’s village, they began to organize a revenge-attack on their assailants. Fearing repercussions many Amahuaca people left the Inuya and moved to Sepahua and Chumichinia. Woodside offers the following account: ‘In 1975-76 Jondo village on the Inuya River dissolved and many members relocated to Otracasa [Jatitza] to escape Yaminahua reprisals’ (1981: 48). As a result, the population at Jatitza nearly doubled from 38 to 66 between June 1975 and June 1976.

At the time of this killing (1975), there were several men from Jatitza visiting the Inuya looking for a good place to make a new village. The killing apparently resulted in postponing this move, which would take place later with the assistance of the SIL.

Part Three: ‘Return to Eden,’ Making Comunidades on the Inuya River

According to both SIL documents and many Amahuaca people’s stories, five things happened on the Ucayali that had important repercussions for their history and contemporary life on the Inuya: (1) they lived with Shipibo-Conibo people who taught them to drink fermented manioc beer, masato, and work together; (2) SINAMOS helped

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78 Woodside (1981) offers a detailed account of these killings from both the Amahuaca and Yaminahua point of view.
79 A group people also moved to ‘chico,’ which I can only presume is the location of Francisco’s cluster based on Woodside’s description of its location.
them establish a *Comunidad* and taught them how to organize themselves politically by electing a *junta directiva* (president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer); (3) people got tired of working for Placido Sánchez and other *patrones* and found protection with the SIL; (4) many people died of witchcraft, violence and sickness; (5) the river flooded making it nearly impossible to grow crops, and the mosquitos were unbearable. It is worth discussing these five issues separately.
Figure 15. Comunidades in the department of Ucayali, province of Atalaya. San Juan (16); San Martín (15).
At the time of Carneiro and Dole’s research in 1960 Amahuaca people on the Inuya did not drink strong *masato*. They would prepare sweet *masato*, but when it fermented they would throw it away. I collected a story, likely a myth, about an Amahuaca woman who prepared strong *masato* and attracted people to her house. When they got drunk the men fought, so one day Amahuaca people killed her. She had been evil because she made men fight.

As for how and why Amahuaca people began drinking *masato*, there are two separate but connected stories. The first story involves the first logger to work on the upper Inuya after the military left in 1958 and the ban on logging was lifted.\(^{80}\) This logger, named Juan Zegarra, apparently had an Ashaninka cook who taught people that it was good to drink fermented *masato*. He was the first supplier of shotguns and chainsaws to Amahuaca people.\(^{81}\) This was likely the late 1960s and prior to this they had used a shotgun but did not own them individually. They had apparently used long saws and axes to cut trees.

The second narrative may be more important due to the wider impact on social life. This was that Amahuaca people lived in close proximity with Shipibo-Conibo people at Chumichinia. Shipibo-Conibo people are a ‘riverine’ Panoan group that has lived along the Ucayali since the Spanish first arrived (Lathrap 1970). They taught Amahuaca people how to drink fermented *masato*, make work parties and wear clothing.\(^{82}\) As discussed above, prior to this time Amahuaca families tended to do all domestic work such as clearing gardens and building houses themselves. The Shipibo-Conibo had large *masato* parties both as social events and, when they had large projects, as work parties. This is a common practice among many groups in the region such as Piro (Gow 1991) Ashaninka (Sarmiento Barletti 2011) and Aguaruna (Brown 1984) peoples. Thus, Amahuaca people began drinking fermented *masato* and working more closely together. By the time I carried out fieldwork 2009-2011 it was impossible to think about life without *masato*, which is discussed in chapter four.

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\(^{80}\) Since the 1940s it had been illegal to enter the Inuya for defensive purposes.

\(^{81}\) Russell had a shotgun and lent it to them but apparently did not give them guns. He likely had a chainsaw, but did not give it away.

\(^{82}\) There are photos of Amahuaca people living on the Ucayali at this time wearing Shipibo style clothing that is well-known for its elaborate designs.
The *Ley de Comunidades Nativas* was passed in 1974, after which the government organization SINAMOS travelled on the Urubamba and Ucayali Rivers working with different groups to establish their *Comunidades*. Amahuaca people were taught how to organize themselves based on the system of electing leaders for the official political organization. This included a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. While some families did not participate in the forming of the *Comunidad*, because they claimed it denied them autonomy, most people did. They formed Jatitza in 1976, the first official Amahuaca *Comunidad*. The second *Comunidad*, discussed in the next section, was established on the Inuya.

While there were positive aspects of life on the Ucayali, there were also serious problems. For one, people were tired of feeling cheated by their *patrón*, Placido Sánchez. As I will discuss below, one couple was so tired of being cheated that they sent their son to live with Sánchez’s mother in order to learn how to read, write and do arithmetic. Amahuaca people had fought with and even killed many of their *patrones* at the headwaters region in the 1920-30s, but violence was not an option on the Ucayali where *patrones* had the military and police at their disposal. Amahuaca people would have had to retreat back up the Inuya and hide for many years, cutting themselves off from the goods they had come to consider necessary for living well. There was also a shift in Amahuaca people’s perception of violence based, though not entirely, on their relations with the SIL. I discuss this in the next chapter.

Additionally, there were three *brujos*, ‘witches,’ who were responsible for the killing of many Amahuaca people on the Ucayali. One of them was not an evil man, but had a policy of placing a curse on his material possessions so if someone touched them they would get sick and die. This man apparently lived on Chumichinia, a few hours walk from the Amahuaca settlement, and was responsible for the death of several Amahuaca people. The other two *brujos* were much worse and made a point to attack and kill Amahuaca people. There is not much information about these men, except that most of the illness and deaths suffered at Chumichinia and later on the Inuya (at least ten adults and many more children in total) were blamed on them.

Thus, between flooding, insects, witchcraft, and the fact that they felt mistreated by Placido Sánchez, a good number of Amahuaca people decided to try to return to the
Inuya. The group was comprised mostly of those who had come from Varadero in 1964 or Jondo in 1975, though there were families some from Sepahua. Amahuaca people were assisted by Margarethe Sparing from the SIL who took a small group to the middle Inuya by plane in the early 1980s to look for a suitable place for a village.

They located a site near a tributary called Pacheco and this eventually became the Comunidad Nuevo San Martín, which was officially recognized in 1984. This meant that the land was titled and they were eligible for a state-funded school funded when the SIL eventually pulled out of the area in the mid-1990s when their contract with the state was not renewed. Nuevo San Martín still exists and is the most centralized population of Amahuaca people outside of Sepahua, which is a Catholic mission, a town and a Comunidad. Nuevo San Martín’s population grew to approximately 200 people, the largest village ever known among Amahuaca people in living memory.

**Part Four: From One Comunidad to Two**

The Comunidad of Nuevo San Martín (henceforth San Martín) was the focus of the SIL’s attention for the next decade. Margarethe Sparing married a Chilean man who joined her in the Comunidad, continuing their linguistic work and expanding their mission to include ‘Comunidad Development’ projects (Olson 1995; Stoll 1982) that included lessons on proper hygiene, agricultural projects and working with leaders to help build a greater sense of Comunidad cohesion (Dyck 1992).

It was not long, however, before a group broke away from San Martín and formed another Comunidad further up the Inuya. The exact reasons for this are unclear, despite the fact that there were sufficient numbers of people living in the area who were interested in having a school. There are two other sets of interests worth mentioning here. First, a bilingual schoolteacher, Manuel, divorced his wife and quickly married another woman named María who was the daughter of a respected ‘strong’ man who lived

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83 The original San Martin was located on the Sepahua River and was established by Father Alvarez. The members of this Comunidad were related to those in Varadero. San Martin, like Varadero, was eventually abandoned due to the mass killing of Yaminahua people in an incident that has been documented elsewhere.

84 There is an article by Dennis Olson 2003 ‘Comunidad development through indigenous leadership’ that I cannot access, but hope to find in the future to follow up on the methodology and aims of SIL Comunidad development programs.
upriver named Manayama. Manuel and Maria eventually moved upriver and recruited her family members from even further upriver to make a village and apply for a school. The husband, Manuel, became a founder of San Juan de Inuya. He also became the schoolteacher, president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary, to which I will return later.

This school and the Comunidad received a lot of support from the Franciscan Mission at Maldonadillo, across the Tambo from Atalaya. The Dominicans and Franciscans supported the formation of two Comunidades on the Inuya: San Juan as well as Floresta. Floresta was comprised of some Amahuaca people, but also Shipibo-Conibo, Piro, and Ashaninka peoples. This is important as the influx of indigenous and non-indigenous people up the Inuya really began around this time.

The formation of San Juan involved a battle between the potential comuneros and a mestizo patrón who lived at the mouth of the Mapuya named Juan del Aguila. Don Juan, as he is known, had been living there since the oil company left in 1968. In fact, the camp boss killed by the Yaminahua man died in his house. Don Juan wanted to own the property, which many indigenous people were against because they thought he was, un estafador, cheat, swindler. A political and legal battle took place and as a result both Don Juan and Amahuaca people got what they wanted.

Don Juan received 100 hectares of land at the mouth of the Mapuya, the most strategic location on the Inuya. There is currently a caserío called Inmaculada positioned around his land. A caserío is an officially recognized population that lives on parcels of land around a central area that is organized communally. It is not defined as indigenous and each household owns their own houses and plots of land. Collective work is organized by a junta directiva like in a Comunidad.

San Juan was granted its official title for 46,364 hectares of territory in 1993. This makes it the largest Comunidad in the area. I return to this later.

Floresta is not discussed here because the Amahuaca people living there had either moved away or died by the time I carried out fieldwork.
Figure 16. Middle Inuya and Mapuya; San Martín, San Juan, and Inmaculada.
Part Five: Another Flight, The Shining Path Arrives

During the late 1980s an internal war was being waged by Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), a Maoist group that wanted to take over the government (Grotti 1999; Sarmiento Barletti 2011). While the war began in the Andes, the violence spread throughout central lowland areas and reached the lower Urubamba. At the beginning of the 1990s the Sendero expanded their area of influence to the Inuya, and around 1991 occupied San Martin for about two weeks. From the stories I collected, Sendero treated Amahuaca people relatively well. They confiscated a cow from one of the neighboring patrones and organized a party for Amahuaca people. However, prior to and upon their arrival, many Amahuaca people were afraid based on stories circulating about intensive violence in other areas. They did not want to fight, so many of them, especially young men and older people, fled to the Yurua where they joined the Comunidad of San Luis, more than a week away by canoe and foot. San Martín’s population was cut in half between people leaving to form San Juan and the exodus to San Luis in fear of Sendero.

It was during this period that Bill Dyck wrote the assessment of the SIL project discussed in chapter one. Although he does not mention Sendero, it seems that his assessment is based on his experiences in the early 1990s, which would be after the Maoists visited San Martín. In 1994 the SIL’s contract with Peru was not renewed and they left the Inuya.

In 2010 a third Amahuaca Comunidad, Alto Esperanza del Inuya (Alto Esperanza from here onwards), was formed at the headwaters of the Inuya covering the territory where Varadero had been located. When I left the area in 2010 there were three Amahuaca Comunidades on the Inuya, another cluster of Amahuaca families living at the headwaters of the Mapuya, and multiple families spread out along the river and a few in towns.

86 See Sarmiento Barletti (2011) for details of this for Ashaninka people on the Urubamba and Tambo rivers.
87 Two Amahuaca men I met had joined the Shining Path separately. Each one was interested in what they were doing, but both ended up leaving and joining the army, thus fighting on both sides of the war. This was not uncommon. As far as I know, Shining Path did not kill anyone in San Martin, though there is some evidence they did (Leven, personal communication).
88 According to Sarmiento Barletti (pers. comm. Nov. 13, 2013) ‘This was a common experience in the whole Atalaya area (and outside it too) as the first visits did not include punishment but instead were about meeting people, playing football, teaching them songs, giving advice and inviting people to come with them. Sounds as if they were talking about missionaries at times. They did tell them that they would come back after the attack on Sepa and they would have to join the war too.’
89 San Luis had been established a few years earlier with the help of the SIL. I have very little concrete information about this Comunidad, but the families living there are related to people in San Martin.
This long transition from living in the forest to residing in established Comunidades on the Inuya was mediated by a series of outsiders: rubber bosses, logging bosses, members of the SIL such as Russell and Sparing, Catholic missionaries, other Amerindians such as Piro, Shipibo-Conibo, and Ashaninka peoples, as well as Andeans. It is not that these outsiders simply changed Amahuaca people, but that Amahuaca people were transforming themselves. Based on contemporary narratives, they were becoming ‘civilized’ through their active and multifaceted engagement with a variety of others with whom they interacted in different ways, at different moments, and at different scales. This was not a uniform process that resulted in a homogeneous group of Amahuaca people although, as I discuss below, the notion of being ‘Amahuaca’ emerged as an identity against other possibilities. While some Amahuaca people share certain positions in what I have made into a common history, and give certain broad narratives, they also have unique and personal stories.

**Section II: Kinship Through History**

In this section I offer a description of the four main families who lived at Varadero in 1961. The people comprising these four families are considered the most important people for contemporary history of Amahuaca people living on the Inuya. I offer some personal narratives as a way of connecting these people (groups and individuals) to the different sections, to then give a list, in broad terms, of the four contemporary groups as they are set out in the maps and diagrams. This includes some personal stories and narratives that aim to draw out some important themes for how people relate to their pasts. This section shows the layout of people that resulted from the movements discussed in the previous section, and also introduces people in more concrete terms.
Part One: Tiio, Wina, Rontiyamba, Nutuyama, Runtuyama

There are four families that resided in Varadero that allow for an entry point into the contemporary distribution of people in the area. These are:

Family One: Maxopo and his brothers, sisters and their children. Maxopo had at least six wives during his life and at least as many names, so I focus on the one name and two of his wives: Roano and Yambawachi.

Family Two: Manayama and Collazo.

Manayama, his brother Pedro Collazo, and two sisters Pikosiiri and Kiio were part of a large family. Their mother, Choroyama, had many siblings. Again, I focus on these four because they are most relevant for contemporary life and particularly for the organization of San Juan and San Martín. Collazo was discussed in the opening narrative.

Family Three: Roano.

Roano was married to Maxopo, so is discussed above, but it is worth discussing her directly as well. Roano was an influential woman because of her siblings, children and grandchildren who are currently spread out from Atalaya to the headwaters of both the Inuya and Mapuya. Her daughter María is the core of a large group in San Martín and her brother’s children all live at the headwaters of the Mapuya.

Family Four: Roberto Pansitima

Finally, the family of Roberto Pansitima, including his parents, aunts, uncles and cousins. This was the second largest family at Varadero, the first being Maxopo’s family. This family is also important due to Roberto’s marriage to Roano’s granddaughter, which resulted in the formation of the core cluster in San Martín. He was also a prominent figure in the 1964 book, *Farewell to Eden*.

In this discussion there is mention of multiple killings that occurred among Amahuaca people. It is important to note that no person was killed at Varadero, though killings occurred elsewhere between 1953-1968 when it was an official mission. Also, in most of the cases when Amahuaca people killed one another, those involved were closely related as it was not uncommon for brothers to fear being killed by their male siblings, and most of the killings involved classificatory siblings.
Finally, there are extensive interconnections between these families, as the diagrams show, but they are set out separately in order to offer a general idea of how people are connected to one another. The diagrams do not follow the classic model for kinship and I do not use terminology, but instead attempt to trace the key relationships between people through time. As there are multiple diagrams, there is significant redundancy to make this section easier to follow.
Figure 17: Diagram for Maxopo and family.

- Unknown
- Vano-Shiquina (F)
  - Chitono (F)
  - Unknown
  - Roano (M)
    - Maxopo (M) (Yamawachi, Parents unknown)
      - Ishman (M) (Killed by Yamawachi)
      - Tumonde (M) (Killed by Tii)
      - Maswa (F)
        - Tochibiro (M)
          - Xatia (M)
          - Toshimbo: Raised Xatia. They were involved in a killing on the Inuya River in 1988 and fled to the headwaters of the Mapuya River where they still live.

- Maria (See Diagram)
  - Sara (F)
    - Jorge (M)
      - Ampico (M)
        - Sara (F)
        - Pacho (M)
          - Mario (M)
            - All Live at Vacay on Upper Inuya (see Diagram)

- Dario (M)
  - Maria (F)
    - All live at Vacay on Upper Inuya (see Diagram)

- Live on Middle Mapuya
  - Maitawari (M) (San Juan)
  - Enrique (M) (San Juan)
  - Roberto (M) (San Juan)
  - Ivan (M) (San Martin)
    - All live at Xinbol on Upper Inuya (see Diagram)
**Part Two: Maxopo**

Maxopo, or Big M as Russell called him, was the closest thing to a leader at Varadero in 1961. He and his many brothers and sisters were involved in numerous events both violent and peaceful that changed the ways people related to one another. When others left in 1964 due to the killing discussed above, Maxopo and his wives remained on the upper Inuya, which is why the group living there today is comprised exclusively of his children and grandchildren.

Maxopo had at least three brothers and two sisters. None of his known brothers survived into the 1980s due to a series of killings. One of his brothers fought with his brother-in-law because he said he was being lazy when helping him pull a canoe. The two men attacked one another with machetes and both eventually died as a result. Another of Maxopo’s brothers was killed by Yaminahua as revenge for his having killed one of their relatives. The third ‘brother,’ Muxcawana, was killed by his own nephews because he was considered a bad man: he had wanted to kill Russell. The two nephews were later killed by a relative of Muxcawana, most likely Muxcawana’s son, Toshombiro (the man responsible for killings in 1988 discussed below).

One of Maxopo’s sisters, Maswa, married a man named Tiio. Tiio and Maswa had two children, a girl named Chipio and a son named Xatira. When Tiio and Maswa divorced, Maswa married Toshombiro, who was the son of Maxcuwana, the man who was killed by his own nephews. Muxcuwana was a classificatory brother of Maxopo.

Toshombiro raised Xatira like a son. This is important for reasons that will become clear later because these two men are considered responsible for the killing of at least five Amahuaca people in 1988. They fled to the headwaters of the Mapuya, which is one of the reasons why this cluster is so isolated today.

Maxopo had two wives: Yamawachi and Roano, both of whom had multiple children. I will return to Roano’s family as her and her brother are the parents of most of the people who live at the headwaters of the Inuya and Mapuya and a large group in San Martin.

The most important of Maxopo’s children for current purposes are two sons: Jorge (from Roano, an Amahuaca) and Mario (from Yamawachi, a Yaminahua). Both of them
still live at the headwaters of the Inuya. Jorge and Mario were alive in 1960. Jorge was only about 6 years old. Mario was older and was a participant in the banana feast discussed in Chapter 2.

Mario’s mother was Yamawachi (Yaminahua) and Jorge’s mother was Roano (Amahuaca).

Jorge is probably 57 years old. He lives about two hours upriver from his half-brother Mario and they do not visit each other anymore, though their children are friendly. Jorge married his MBD: Roano’s brother Julio’s daughter whose family live on the upper Mapuya River, which is accessible by a series of paths and takes two days to cross. Jorge and his wife have at least seven children and many grandchildren who live with them. The children travel extensively and often appear in Atalaya or working with loggers throughout the Inuya. I give a more complete description of this cluster later on. Their children tend to intermarry with people living on the upper Mapuya, meaning that they still practice cross-cousin marriage, which is considered incest in San Juan and San Martín. There are no mestizos living with Jorge’s family, but they do work with mestizo loggers.

Mario, Jorge’s half-brother, is likely 63 years old. Mario’s wife died a few years before I arrived in 2009. When Varadero was abandoned in 1968, Mario seems to have left to live at the SIL base in Pucallpa whilst Jorge remained at the headwaters of the Inuya. Mario eventually made his way back to the upper Inuya where he currently lives with his two daughters and their husbands, as well as one son and his young wife. This young wife is the daughter of a woman who lives in San Martín (see description below). Mario’s two daughters are married to mestizos. Mario’s other four sons live downriver: Roberto and Enrique live in San Juan with their wives and children; Maitawari lives in Inmaculada with his wife and children, and Ivan lives in San Martín with his wife and young children. On the two trips I made to visit Mario there were a number of loggers staying in his cluster.

The families of Jorge and Mario formed a new Comunidad called Alto Esperanza in 2010 that should include the entire Inuya watershed above San Juan. This has many

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90 Inmaculada is the caserio surrounding the land of Don Juan discussed above. A caserio is an officially recognized population that lives on parcels of land around a central area that is organized communally. It is not defined as indigenous and each household owns their own houses and plots of land.
implications due to changes in the law regarding logging, the entrance of a gas company that purchased the rights to the area covering the potential territory of the *Comunidad*, and for their potential integration, all of which were being discussed on my last visit in 2010.\textsuperscript{91} 

\textsuperscript{91} I do not discuss these aspects of the *Comunidad* due to word limitations.
Figure 18. Diagram for Manayama and Collazo and family.
Part Three: Manayama and Collazo

Manayama, Collazo, Pikosiiri and Kiio are the children of a woman named Choroyama. Their father had died when they were still very young. The two sisters, Pikosiiri and Kiio, married two brothers who are members of the family discussed below.

Manayama was married in 1960 to a woman named Margarita who he had brought from the Purus a few years earlier. They had one child, María, before leaving the Purus to move to Varadero where they had twin girls. One of the twins later died and the surviving one, Rosa, lives in San Juan. They had another son, Francisco, who was born on the island of Chumichinia. These children are María, Rosa and Francisco who lived in San Juan in 2010 along with Margarita and her second husband, Enrique. Margarita is the most central figure in San Juan and continues to raise the children of her granddaughters who live in town. Manayama died in the 1990s, but was one of the founders of San Juan.

Manayama’s brother Collazo was younger and unmarried in 1961 though he had Gloria, a young Yaminahua girl who his mother was raising to be his wife. He is the main protagonist in the opening story. Collazo ended up having several wives, though his only marriage that lasted to the time of my fieldwork and which impacts the current discussion is with Gloria. He had three children with her and they were involved in the establishment of San Juan. They later moved down to San Martín and eventually to Atalaya where they currently live.

Part Four: Roano

Roano was married to Maxopo when Russell arrived in 1953. Her brother, Julio, became Russell’s first language helper. Roano had one daughter, María, from a previous marriage who was also briefly a ‘wife’ of Maxopo, though this did not last long. Maria became the language helper for Russell’s wife Deloris during her time in Varadero. This is important because María’s life is indicative of wider trends among her family, and she remains an important figure in San Martín.

Roano’s mother, Shiquina, was an old woman in the 1950s and had been living with the soldiers at the garrison on Teniente Mejia, the tributary of the Inuya. Eventually

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92 This is the young boy who was sent to live with Placido Sánchez’s mother mentioned earlier.
Roano’s oldest daughter, María, joined Shiquina and ended up marrying a soldier and traveling with him to Pucallpa where she had her first child Ruth.

Roano’s brother Julio was married to Chitomo and they had at least five children: Felipe, Jorge, Dario, Melissa, and Sara.

Melissa is married to Jorge, son of Maxoopo and Roano. They live on the Inuya not very far from where Russell first met her father, Julio, who was Roano’s brother. Most of the other children live on the upper Mapuya.

Here I return to María who had left with the soldier, given birth to Ruth, and had been abandoned in Pucallpa. María and Ruth found their way back to the Inuya where Ruth ended up marrying Roberto Pansitima and having six children. Five of these children and their children were living in San Martín in 2010. During fieldwork the oldest daughter, Elizabeth, was the president of the Comunidad. Since that time, her brother Roberto (jr.) has taken over the position.

When María returned to the Inuya she married Maponi (the brother of Nutuyama who is Roberto Pansitima’s father) and had four children. María was living up the Inuya in 1988 with Maponi, their children, and her sister and her family. Maponi and María’s daughter Anita, was married to a man named Toshombiro. After an argument between Toshombiro and Anita and María, Toshombiro shot Anita and fled upriver. A group of about ten people pursued him to the Curiuja, an upper tributary of the Purus. While some people turned back, a group including Maponi and Yomini continued on and were eventually ambushed by Toshombiro and Xatira, who killed five people, including Maponi and Yomini. This was the last intra-Amahuaca killing on the Inuya.93

From this moment onwards Toshombiro and Xatira have been considered to be enemies of people living in San Juan and San Martín as well as their close relatives. Toshombiro and Xatira moved to the headwaters of the Mapuya and remained there, only passing by the Comunidades downriver at night. Despite the fact that no others living on the upper Mapuya were involved in the killings, their attachment to these men has meant

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93 There was one other killing in the 1990s; it involved an Amahuaca man who shot a logger in the throat with an arrow.
that all the people living there are considered *asesinos*, ‘assassins,’ including all the children of Julio, María’s mother’s brother.

Today people are not interested in revenge, but are curious to know why this man who was considered family to so many people killed his kinspeople. When I travelled to the upper Mapuya, I was told by one of María’s daughters to find out the reason Toshombiro killed her father. She was not angry, but sad and just wanted to know why he had done it. In the end I never met him.

**Part Five: Roberto Pansitimba**

Roberto Pansitimba (Roberto from here onwards) and his family were the focus of large portions of *Farewell to Eden*, largely because the authors thought he was an interesting boy.

Roberto’s father was Nutuyama (brother of Maponi) and his mother was Pikosiiri, the sister of Manayama and Collazo. Nutuyama and Pikosiiri had many children, but only two of them, Roberto and Elsa, live on the Inuya today (in San Martín). Another son had lived there until recently and was a leader and teacher but had recently left to live with his Ashaninka wife’s family on the Tambo. I return to all three below.

Nutuyama had at least three brothers, Wina, Maponi and Yomini, none of which is currently alive.

Maponi married María who is discussed in detail above. He was killed by Toshombiro in 1988. Their children live in San Martín and Atalaya. Wina married Kiío (Pikosiriri, Manayama and Collazo’s sister), and they had one child named Lucho who lives in San Martín with his wife Dora.

Wina was one of the main founders of San Martín as he travelled with Sparing to locate the site and organized people’s return to the Inuya. He died in the 1990s while living in San Martín.

Yomini was also killed by Toshombiro at the headwaters of the Inuya in 1988. One of his sons was previously married to a woman who currently lives in San Martín, but he now lives alone after returned from serving in the army. His brother is married to
Ampico’s daughter, who is Maxopo’s son who lives far away from any other people on the upper Mapuya.

As these descriptions demonstrate, the 1960-2010 period involved extensive movement and the spreading of people from the headwaters region to Atalaya and beyond. The discussion so far has given a general impression of how the four main families who lived at Varadero have come to live where they do and why. I now turn to a more detailed description of the contemporary layout of the population. While I use four groups as a starting point, these are not meant to coincide directly with the four families discussed above.

Section III: Contemporary Layout of Amahuaca People

Part One: San Martín and extensions

The children of María (daughter of Roano) and Roberto’s family (including his sister’s family) comprise more than 60% of the population.

Pedro Collazo and his wife Gloria lived in San Martín until very recently. They moved to Atalaya and then to a garden on the Urubamba to be near their children Wilson, Doris and Ana, who all live and work in town. The two who are married, Wilson and Doris, want their children to learn to speak Amahuaca.

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94 There are others who live in Sepahua, Atalaya, the Tambo River and Pucallpa who are not mentioned because they are beyond the scope of the thesis.
Figure 19. San Martin – major clusters.
Figure 20. San Martín – diagram 1.
San Martín is larger (the population fluctuates between fifty and eighty people), older, and further downriver than San Juan. The core of the Comunidad is set around four older people (three women and one man), their extended families, and the profesor who is the only active bilingual Amahuaca teacher. Each of these older people lives in a specific part of the village and their children and grandchildren surround them, making clusters or neighbourhoods. While this was the case during my fieldwork, I was told of the many different shapes and forms the Comunidad had taken over the years as the population fluctuated and people grew up, got old and either died or left to live in town. Currently, the center of the Comunidad is the soccer field that is enclosed by houses, school, communal building, and a thin line of trees hiding gardens that extend for more than a kilometer.

The most important older person in San Martín is named Roberto (Pansitima) who was a boy when Varadero existed. He has five children, four of whom live in San Martín. Roberto’s houses, along with those of three of his children, are located directly above the Comunidad’s main port/beach. When he is not in his garden, hunting, fishing, or working he is one of the first people to greet visitors. His children have all been educated away from the Inuya and lived in urban centers such Sepahua, Quillabamba, Atalaya and Pucallpa. One of them is currently living in Sepahua while the others have moved back to San Martín to be near him. His sister, Elsa, lives within the limits of the Comunidad about fifteen minutes downriver along a footpath with her children and grandchildren.

During my fieldwork his daughter was the official president; although her husband, Monsin, played the role of president during communal assemblies and official visits. Monsin is Piro and would not be elected to the position of president for this reason based on current sentiments among Amahuaca people in San Martín. People became unhappy with his leadership, often citing his ‘otherness’ and ‘cleverness’ as reasons he was not a good president, and he was said to have cheated the Comunidad out of money and expensive items. As a result, Roberto’s son, Roberto (jr.), was elected to the position.

Maria, the young girl who married the soldier, is another central figure. Ruth, the product of that marriage, was Roberto’s wife making Maria his former mother-in-law and the grandmother to his children, as well as his classificatory aunt because his uncle married her. Maria’s four children who live in San Martin (two other daughters live in
Atalaya) have their houses built around hers. This cluster of houses is located just downriver from Roberto’s family cluster and since the children are quite close as they grew up together in the Comunidad. As discussed in the previous section, María’s husband was killed upriver in the 1980s by Toshombiro, the Amahuaca man who currently resides at the headwaters of the Mapuya. People in San Martín speak differently about the killings. María is the most explicit about these people being asesinos, assassins or murderers, and affirms that, despite their actual closeness in terms of kinship classification they are no longer family or even real humans. Enrique, closely related to María and thus to those killed, told me that whilst he would not seek them out for revenge, he would have to kill him the man who killed his ‘brother’ if he ever appeared. As I mentioned earlier, when I told María’s daughter I was going to visit them, she told me to ask him why he killed her father.

The third elder, Teolinda, is probably around eighty years old. She lived down on Chumichinia before moving to San Martín.

Teolinda was born on the Purus to Xatayamba (mother) and Romano (father, died on the Purus). Her brothers came and got her from the Inuya and took her and her mother to Chumichinia. Shipibo-Conibo people killed her mother because she would not sleep with a man. Teolinda’s brother, Carlos, took her to Pucallpa when she was 13. The military conscripted Carlos and she was left alone.

Her brother returned when her baby was 15 days old (she was 14 or 15 years old). The father was a Shipibo man. They were living in Robuyo, which is a tributary of the Ucayali between Pucallpa and Contamana. She returned to Chumichinia where she met Carlos Inuma, an Amahuaca man and they had a child, Hortencia.

After Sparing brought them to the Inuya in the 1980s, Carlos Inuma left Teolinda and married his current wife. They live less than a mile upriver and he still visits Teolinda and his daughter, Hortencia. Hortencia, who lives next to Teolinda, is married to a mestizo man with whom she has a daughter, Elsa. Elsa lives next door to them both, and is married to a Yaminahua man, Antonio. Elsa has three children from a previous marriage with Wilson, the son of Pedro Collazo and Gloria discussed in the opening narrative. Thus, these are the children who are mentioned in the opening narrative.
The Yaminahua husband, Antonio, is part of a larger family who live in the Comunidad. Antonio’s parents, Manuel and María, are both Yaminahua and have three children in total. Their house is positioned between María downriver and Roberto upriver. Their daughter, who lives next door, is married to a man from Iquitos who came to the area as a logger and never left.

María is Gloria’s sister and it was Antonio who brought María and Manuel from Sepahua to live in San Martín. This is how the two sisters came to live in the same place and be ‘grandmothers’ to the same children.

There are two other families that participate in communal activities in San Martín and send their children to the school and regularly participate in Comunidad activities. Both couples consist of Amahuaca women and their mestizo husbands. Each couple lives outside the perimeters of the Comunidad on land they own, but are considered and consider themselves members of San Martín. One of the men, Juan, lives directly across from the center of the Comunidad and is a highly respected person. While he could never gain a leadership position in San Martín because he is not Amahuaca, he is considered a trustworthy person who is hardworking and participates in all communal activities. His wife is the ex-wife of Manuel Sarasara, the first leader and teacher in San Juan. The ex-wife in San Martín does not speak with Manuel.

The most central figure in San Martín is the teacher, Carlos, whose house is adjacent to Roberto’s and faces the soccer field. Carlos was born at Jatitza on the Ucayali and raised in Sepahua, the Catholic Mission. He was educated there and went to university in the city of Pucallpa. For San Martín, at least, he most clearly establishes what it means to be Amahuaca, what it means to be civilized, and why the balance is important. In many ways he is an intellectual who is attempting to shape the Amahuaca people through his own embodiment and teaching of certain principles. While schools are often the reason people choose to live in Comunidades, many families remain in San Martín because of Carlos. Although he is related to many people in the village, the reason people respect him and want their children to study there is based more on his leadership, attitude towards education and his ability to teach the Amahuaca language. He is part of the discussion about schools in chapter 5.

142
Figure 22. San Juan and Inmaculada.
Manayama lived here with his second wife but, he died in the 1990s.
His first wife Margarita is currently married to Enrique.
Margarita’s three children and their families comprise more than 50% of the population.

San Juan is located one hour by boat above the caserio of Inmaculada located at the mouth of the Mapuya River, which was discussed earlier. The centre of the Comunidad is the soccer field, which is surrounded by a Comunidad building, school, several houses and a line of forest against an upward slope where gardens begin and extends another kilometer.

The Comunidad is comprised of two older women (Margarita and Juana) and their extended families including great-grandchildren.

The central figure is Margarita who is married to Enrique, Teresa’s brother. Margarita was a young woman when the mission at Varadero was founded and she moved there with her former husband, Manayama, father of her two daughters and son. He died in 1995 in San Juan. Margarita and her current husband, Enrique, are two of the most important people for my research. Their house is directly above the beach/port of the Comunidad that most people and all visitors use to enter and leave.

Enrique was born on the Purus, but his first memories are traveling to the Sepahua and then eventually down to the Ucayali with his mother, father and sisters. They were recruited to live at Chumichinia by Francisco who he called his paternal uncle. Enrique’s father, Alberto, along with Francisco, worked for Placido Sánchez, the patrón mentioned above. When Enrique was around the age of 8, he was sent by his parents to live with Sánchez’s mother in the town of Bolognesi. He spent a good amount of his childhood living with this woman.

When Carneiro and Dole were doing fieldwork at Chumichinia in 1960, they noted that the son of Alberto was living with the boss’s mother in town. According to Carneiro, the boy had been sent there to learn how to read, write and do arithmetic so his family would no longer be cheated. Coincidentally, Enrique became one of my most trustworthy assistants in understanding Amahuaca people’s history on the Inuya and I was able to
hear how his relationship with Sánchez’s mother impacted his life and perspective on non-indigenous people. He remembers living with Sánchez’s mother as if he were a slave or peon as he was not treated well, unlike the other children in the house, and was forced to work long hours bringing water and cleaning. He did learn how to read and do basic math, but left when he was still relatively young.

He eventually made his way to Sepahua where he worked as a logger. He was able to save quite a lot of money and bought a pekepeke motor. He travelled to Pucallpa because he says gasoline and oil were much cheaper there. Enrique eventually met Margarita in Abujao, which is near Pucallpa, where her daughter, María, was living with her Cocama husband. The two, Enrique and Margarita, travelled back to the Inuya together.

Margarita had left the Inuya in 1964 as well and moved to Jatitza, but went to work on a river boat for a number of years traveling as far as Iquitos. The details of this are not clear, but she made it back to Jatitiza where her son, Francisco, was born.

Margarita and Enrique were among the original members of the Comunidad of San Juan, discussed in detail below. They stayed together and still live in San Juan where they are central figures.

Margarita’s two daughters and one son live in San Juan as well. The oldest daughter, María, is married to the current president, Manuel Sarasara.

María had been born on the Purus, and was a small child in 1960, perhaps 3 years old. She grew up on Chumichini and eventually travelled to Pucallpa and married the man at Abujao, where she lived for several years and had two girls, both of whom were born in Pucallpa. This family and particularly these two girls, Lucy and Daisy, are the focus of chapter five.

It is unclear whether Enrique took María’s daughters as well or whether they came later, but they all eventually lived on the upper Inuya from the late 1970s-early 1980s. They were not living there when the killing happened at the oil base at the mouth of the Mapuya in 1975, but were there when San Martín was founded.

Once they moved back to the Inuya, María left her two daughters with her mother, Margarita, and travelled to work in town. While living there she met Manuel Sarasara who was an SIL-trained bilingual school teacher and was married to a woman in San Martín at the time. He eventually divorced his wife and moved back to San Martín with
María, soon after the couple moved upriver and joined with María’s family to establish San Juan. It was this young couple that was mentioned earlier in terms of the split from San Martín.

María has four daughters. The youngest daughter is Sarita who lives in the caserío of Maldonadillo across the Tambo from the town of Atalaya where she studies. She is 14 and has a baby girl who is being raised by her parents. The second youngest is Rebecca who is married to an Ashaninka man, Percy, with whom she has three children. Their house is positioned between Margarita and Enrique’s, which is located next to the port upriver and her maternal aunt Rosa’s house located a few minutes downriver.

The other two daughters, Lucy and Daisy, live in their mother’s house in Maldonadillo (caserío). The three daughters (Daisy, Lucy and Rebecca) have a total of 11 children 7 of which live in San Juan with aunts, grandparents, or great-grandparents. Lucy and Daisy are half Amahuaca as their actual father is a non-Amahuaca. In turn, their children’s fathers are also not Amahuaca, so most of them are described as not ‘really’ Amahuaca, which is a topic addressed in chapter 5.

Margarita’s other daughter is Rosa who is married to an Ashaninka/Cocama man, Agucho. They live a few minutes walk downriver from the center of the San Juan. Although not isolated, they live somewhat separate lives and sometimes days will go by without them visiting. Agucho came to the Inuya as a logger with his brother over thirty years ago and ended up staying. When I asked about their marriage, I was told by Margarita’s husband, Enrique, that Agucho was informed that if he wanted to marry her, he could, but they had to stay. Enrique stressed that this was important and that he threatened to kill Agucho if he tried to take her. He says that non-Amahuaca men can marry Amahuaca women (as long as they are from an indigenous Amazonian group, which I return to in the next chapter), but they have to stay in the Comunidad. This was a rule I heard him state openly on multiple occasions, but in reality it was not enforced. What seemed more of a norm, and the reason there were so many mixed children, is that almost all children of Amahuaca women stayed in the Comunidad even if their mothers left as they were adopted by others, and raised as Amahuaca children, though they almost always knew who their real parents are.
While the central figures of San Juan are Margarita and Enrique, there are other families living in the \textit{Comunidad}. Upon my arrival the president of San Juan was a man of around 40, Fermín who had been born and raised in Sepahua. He took over the position of president for a time when the other president, Manuel (who was married to María), left to live in town so his youngest daughter could study. Fermín had been president because he could read and write relatively well, a necessary skill for the position. His young wife was an Ashaninka woman whom he brought to live with him.

Although Fermín was Amahuaca and was the nephew of María and Manuel (separately) he was not from the Inuya, but born and raised in Sepahua. He was always considered an outsider. This was emphasized more and more as people became unhappy with his leadership. The most common complaints were that although he had been elected president, he was not from there and did not know how to live well. He had been raised in town and had learned to live like a mestizo, stealing and cheating people. Amahuaca people in San Juan, I was told, do not steal or cheat, as opposed to those who live in San Martín or in town who have learned those antisocial practices from others.

Along with Fermín, there are two other men from Sepahua who live in San Juan. One, Jaime, was married to the sister of Manuel Sarasara, the husband of María and president of San Juan. Manuel’s sister is also named María. Jaime and his wife live ten minutes upriver and only come to the centre of the \textit{Comunidad} for occasions such as meetings, work parties (\textit{faenas}), and \textit{fiestas}. The other man from Sepahua lives with Rosa and Agucho as a single man. He had divorced his wife in Sepahua and moved to San Juan to get away and live quietly. These three men, Fermín, Jaime and Fernando, would often get together and talk and, at least when I was around, would comment on how the members of San Juan did not know how to live well together. The examples they gave included: theft, an inability and unwillingness to work together, and, living separately (i.e. not communally).

Margarita’s youngest son, Francisco lived on the opposite side of the river with his Ashaninka wife, Norma. He was sick while I was there and did not participate in many collective activities. Francisco had previously been married to Zoila who was born at Chumichinia and raised mostly in Sepahua. She lives next to Margarita, her ex-mother-
in-law, along with three of her children. Her other daughter lives about ten minutes walk upriver with the other grandmother, Juana.

Juana is probably more than 65 years old. She was born on the Purus and was raised in the headwaters region moving back and forth between the upper Sepahua, upper Inuya and upper Purus. She had been married to Maxopo’s brother who was killed in the 1960s. She later married Manayama and, when he died, married Federico who had lived at Varadero and died in 2010. Juana lives with her granddaughter Estela, who she raised, and Estela’s husband Julian who is the son of Jaime’s wife María, and thus Manuel Sarasara’s nephew. Julian was born in Sepahua and raised there, but came to the Inuya to be with his uncle, Manuel. Julian and Estela have three children, two of which are being raised predominantly by Juana. Another of Estela’s daughters from a previous marriage (with her uncle) is also being raised by Juana. Juana does not participate in any communal activities and refuses to speak Spanish.

The final family in San Juan consists of two brothers, Roberto and Enrique, who have their houses about twenty minutes upriver where they live with their wives and children. Roberto and Enrique are children of Mario (discussed above) who is the son of Maxopo and his Yaminahua wife, Yamawachi.

Roberto is married to Irasi who was raised by Juana. Enrique is married to an Ucayali Ashaninka woman, Gali.

These brothers are the children of Mario and grandchildren of Maxopo and Yamawachi. They are in some ways both physically and socially peripheral to Comunidad life and visit often, but irregularly. These visits range from a few minutes to hours or even days. These brothers like to drink masato and trago (sugarcane liquor), and people say that ‘they do not drink well’, ‘no toman bien/tranquilo’ as they often become violent and are jealous of their wives. I was told stories of fights that had occurred between the two brothers and other people in San Juan, as well as with their own wives. Because of this they are sometimes the target of gossip and occasionally ridicule. When people in San Juan speak about them negatively, they regularly point out that, even if Roberto and Enrique speak Amahuaca and live with Amahuaca people, their behavior and social distance was due to their being only part Amahuaca and mostly Yaminahua.
Figure 24. San Juan - diagram 2.
These families make up the majority of San Juan, which fluctuates in population depending on who has gone to town, is fishing upriver, or how many people are visiting during a feast. While many people living in San Martín, Atalaya and Sepahua consider the Comunidad of San Juan the most tradicional, traditional, it is clear from the demographics that it is mixed. By my calculation one third of the population is fully Amahuaca while the other two thirds are either non-Amahuaca or mixed, as is the case with many of the children. As we will see, San Martín has a similar proportion of Amahuaca people; although, some people in San Juan describe San Martín as being ‘less’ Amahuaca because of the way they live and who they choose to live with.
Figure 25. San Juan – map of households.
Figure 27. Upper Inuya and Mapuya.
Upper Inuya
Maxopo’s two sons, Jorge and Mario, and their families.

Upper Mapuya Amahuaca
The children of Julio (brother of María in San Martín) and Chitomo live there with their families. When Russell took a group to the Ucayali in 1964, apparently Chitomo stayed and raised her children in this area.
Also the two asesinos, Toshombiro and Xatira.

I discuss these two groups together and use a different style because I did not live with them but only saw them occasionally in town or when they came to San Juan. Because I met them while traveling, the narrative is more about my own movements.

On my first trip to the headwaters region of the Inuya where the Comunidad of Alto Esperanza now exists, I did not know what to expect. I had been in San Juan for several months and had heard about the different groups living upriver, but had never met any and was really curious. I was told that while they were family, they were a bit dangerous and could not be trusted. People in San Juan went back and forth between agreeing that they were actually close relatives—the two brothers who were the heads of the households were actually close cousins to Margarita, Roberto, and María—and saying that they were not really good people and were only partly civilized.

When I arrived in the upper Inuya for the first time in 2010, they were working with loggers from Atalaya who were considered good people by people in San Juan. I spent several days there and when we left we had a boat full of people all headed back towards their homes. One girl was about 13 and lived in the caserío just below San Juan and above San Martín. I later learned she is the daughter of Maitawari, who is the oldest son of Mario.

It turned out that this extended family not only had social relations that extended down the Inuya, but also to Atalaya and Pucallpa. Moreover, they had access to solar panels and a radio. They were happy to have visitors and agreed to stop by when they travelled downriver. Over time, I slowly got to know them better and learned more about how they lived.
According to Jorge, the son of Maxopo and Roano, when the others left for Chumichinia in 1964 his family, as well as some others, decided to stay. He remembers Russell saying that they will die if they leave, and they took it seriously. Jorge has lived almost his entire life at the headwaters of the Inuya, occasionally crossing over to the Purus or the Mapuya where his wife, María, is from.\footnote{His brothers-in-law live on the Mapuya and are closely related to the man who fought with his in-laws in the 1980s. This group living there is considered socially dead to most Amahuaca people living in San Martin and San Juan. They no longer recognize them as kin and call them ‘asesinos’ despite the fact that the younger generation had nothing to do with the killing. I return to this in Chapter 3, where I discuss in detail the positions of different people on the river.} He has worked as a logger in the area, but has never travelled to Sepahua. He visits Atalaya quite often to get supplies.

A few months later I ran into one of Jorge’s sons, Avispa, in Atalaya and had a beer with him. We ended up meeting two of his uncles who lived on the upper Mapuya a two-day walk from the upper Inuya. I made a point of inviting them for a beer and got to know one of them, Jorge, over the next day and a half before I returned to San Juan. He invited me to visit and I said I would come. This Jorge is Avispa’s mother’s brother. Thus, Jorge on the upper Inuya is brother-in-law to Jorge on the upper Mapuya.

A few months later, on my second visit to the upper Inuya, I asked one of the younger sons to walk me across to the Mapuya. He agreed and took his wife, young child and another boy, who had been born on the Mapuya. We walked for two days and when we finally arrived it was to the house of Jorge’s brother, Felipe. We spent the night and the next morning we took a canoe twenty minutes down river to Jorge’s house. When we arrived in the canoe he walked out to the bank overlooking the river and said, ‘Gringo, you came. But you came from upriver. I thought you would come from down there,’ pointing downriver.

Once we settled down at a table he turned to me and said, ‘Somos civilizados, ahora. Hablamos español’ [We are civilized. We now speak Spanish.]. He was making the same claim as every other Amahuaca I had met, but in a different way and in a different context. No other Amahuaca person I had met would make this statement in this way. He claimed his position against those living in the forest who do not wear clothing. This theme is elaborated upon in the next chapter.


**Conclusion**

In this chapter I set out to address a series of questions: Where do people live? How do they connect to others in the same vicinity? How do they connect to others beyond? How did they get to where they are? I have tried to do this in terms of individuals, groups and wider narratives of movement and transformation. The transition from living in the forest to residing in established *Comunidades* involved a series of different events and processes that I have set out using a variety of approaches. There are two main points worth taking from this chapter.

The Amahuaca people discussed here decided, for their own reasons and with their own ideas, to engage in relations with different types of outsiders of the past century. In some case, as with the rubber boom, they were not always given a choice, but with the collapse of the rubber economy (1912) the amount of outside goods flowing into the area would have been greatly reduced. Around this time the first Amahuaca people for whom I have direct historical evidence ventured out to work and live on the Urubamba and Ucayali Rivers. Those who stayed upriver were eventually contacted by either the Dominican Mission based on the Sepahua River, or the SIL representatives at the headwaters of the Inuya River. From that period onwards the transformations that Amahuaca people actively pursued were in one way or another mediated by outsiders who Amahuaca people chose to live with: Robert Russell and Margarita Chavez from the SIL, loggers such as Lozano and Sánchez, and other indigenous groups such as the Shipibo-Conibo. Thus, in this period, Amahuaca people were transforming themselves into a different type of people by incorporating knowledge, wealth and substances from the outside. And, this was by no means a simple process, but entailed complex webs of relations that different individuals and groups made and unmade over time.

For present purposes, this process was taken to begin in the early 20th century, which is obviously not the case. Amahuaca people, like all people, have never been isolated in terms of having no contact with other peoples whether they were Piro, Shipibo-Conibo, Yaminahua, Cashinahua. There was, however, a shift that took place in the middle of the 20th century in which these specific Amahuaca people began to have sustained and mostly peaceful contact with outsiders and this was largely mediated by Robert Russell.
and other members of the SIL. As I will discuss in the next chapter, they perceive this as a disjuncture between when they lived in the forest and now when they live in Comunidades. The idea of living together was not new to Amahuaca people, but in living memory they had not managed to maintain a Comunidad of significant numbers.

The Amahuaca families I am discussing had been recruited to live together by Robert Russell who ‘taught them to live together’ in terms of residing in a village and working together. This mostly took the form of them working for Russell in exchange for goods and his teaching them Spanish and about the bible. Later, in the 1970s, SINAMOS assisted Amahuaca people in forming the political organization of a Comunidad. This transition into Native Comunidades was not something they pursued at first, but as people moved back to the Inuya it became increasingly important. Furthermore, while the political organization of the Comunidad is clearly a non-indigenous form of organization, their learning how to organize themselves in this way coincided with Shipibo-Conibo people teaching them how to work together and make masato parties. This came to replace the feasts discussed in chapter one. Thus, the transition to Comunidades involved multiple transformations, all of which were made possible through different forms of relations with different types of people: bosses, missionaries, anthropologists, government officials and other indigenous people. These transformations were aimed at the regeneration of social life that focused on living well together.
Section II: The Contemporary Lived World of Amahuaca People
Introduction

I hope to have demonstrated that the people living in San Juan and San Martin share much of their wider history with one another based mutually shared experiences held together by a narrative of ‘learning to live together.’ The other side of this is, of course, that these histories can also be perceived as fractured and this is the case because individuals and extended families have chosen to live together with certain other types of people and deny commonalities with others. I will explore these decisions to show they are given moral importance as people continue to negotiate their positions in the world.

I ended Chapter 3 with the statement by Jorge at the headwaters of the Mapuya River who claimed they he and his family were ‘civilized’ now and used as evidence the fact that they spoke Spanish. Jorge told me later that they no longer fight anymore, and referred specifically to his uncle, Toshombiro, who lived upriver, explaining that: ‘El es viejo. Ya no se rabia,’ ‘He is old. He no longer gets angry.’ This is a very particular way of saying that even he, who killed his Amahuaca kinspeople, is becoming civilized.

What is interesting about this example for the notion of becoming ‘civilized’ is that no matter where an individual or family lives on the river, they consider themselves to be civilized Amahuaca people. It tends to be the case that those upriver are more interested in claiming their position as being ‘civilized’ against both a past in which they fought and killed one another, but also against the naked Indians living nearby in the forest. Amahuaca people who live in town are more interested in expressing their Amahuaca identity against their assimilation into mestizo society. Thus, I take the history of Amahuaca people as the history of becoming ‘civilized Amahuaca people,’ which entailed processes of transformation they actively pursued since at least the early 20th century.

According to Gow (1991, 1993), who worked with the Piro located between the Amahuaca Comunidades and the town of Atalaya, the concept of gente civilizada is best understood as a position on a continuum between two poles: ‘wild indians’ and ‘gringos.’

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96 This was at least true when they spoke to me, though sometimes people did hide their identity as Amahuaca people in town, especially in Satipo, where they are mistreated. I discuss this briefly in chapter five.
The quintessential ‘wild indian’ for the Piro is the Yaminahua, a closely related group to the Amahuaca, who are considered as such because they, ‘do not wear clothes, they do not eat salt, and they live off there in the forest’ (1993: 331). While their distance is physically important based on an upriver/downriver axis, more importantly, this distance is social and is viewed as a ‘moral choice.’ These types of people live in the forest and ‘avoid contact with other people, and in particular to avoid exchange relations’ (1993: 332). As I will show, in the case of Amahuaca people, each group tends to consider themselves morally superior in one way or another, and how this is expressed depends on the context.

Piro people talk about the past as their becoming ‘of mixed blood’ as they began to mix with different types of people. A major shift for Piro people occurred when they began working and living with patrons on the Urubamba River. Despite this being a period of abuse and brutality, Piro people do not focus on this aspect of their history, but instead emphasize that through living with bosses they learned about how to live well by gaining access to cosas finas, or ‘fine things’ that they came to value. Piro people lived in large haciendas owned and organized by their boss who coordinated their work in exchange for this wealth. This relation was not only based on work, however, but the boss’s influence permeated most aspects of social life, including marriages and initiation rituals. Thus, this was not simply a relation based on the labour of Piro people but entailed transformations in the ways Piro people made ‘kin out of others’ (Vilaça 2002). As Gow states: ‘History is the narrative of the creation of contemporary kinship, and the source of native people’s response to new situations’ (1991: 285).

Thus living and working under the bosses was part of wider processes in which Piro people were transforming themselves through their relations with others. Another shift occurred when Piro people stopped living with bosses and moved into missions where they began to attend school and learn how to defend themselves against the possibility of further abuses. These missions were perceived by Piro people as a way of escaping the bosses, and later became the source for them to form their own Comunidades. Through learning from ‘white people,’ getting schools, and claiming territorial autonomy Piro people learned how to ‘live well.’ Although this appears to involve the loss of ‘authentic’ Piro culture, Gow’s primary argument is that this way of perceiving history and culture
denies indigenous people’s creativity. For Piro people, ‘[…] it was the system that orders the inner logic of how Piro people think that was impelling them towards certain kinds of changes, towards abandoning certain kinds of practices in favour of novel but analogous practices, and this was happening because the system is inherently transformational’ Gow 2001: 286). Their adoption of certain practices and transition into Comunidades allowed Piro people a new way of making kinship that became the foundation for how ‘living well’ is defined today.

As the previous chapter demonstrated, Amahuaca people clearly have their own history that is different from, but also interconnected with, the history of others in the region, including Piro people. Amahuaca people experienced the same system of habilitación, but from a very different point of view. While Piro people lived with, and under, the bosses for decades, most Amahuaca people only came to live ‘with’ outsiders in the 1950s and the conditions were quite different than on the fondos described by Gow. Additionally, Amahuaca people have similar ideas concerning what it means to be ‘gente civilizada,’ but their values are based on different socio-spatial positions, varying histories of relations with different types of people, and their own ideas of what it means to be a ‘real human.’

For example, among the Amahuaca the ‘wild Indians’ or ‘indios’ are given the name ‘Chitonahua,’ a group of isolated indigenous people living in the reserves at the headwaters of the Inuya and Mapuya Rivers. They are said to live in the forest wandering around with no clothes, salt or soap because they do not know how to relate with other people. They say, ‘no saben vivir con otro gente,’ or ‘they don’t know how to live with others.’

They are indios, often called callatos, naked, and it is important to point out that these are not imaginary people, but have come out of the forest on multiple occasions over the past decades. For example, at least one small group of people called ‘Chitonahua’ came out of the forest in the early 2000s on the upper Mapuya River.

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97 The best-known case from the region is that of Nahua people who appeared in the mission of Santa Rosa on the Sepahua River in 1984. According to Conrad Feather the narrative of the Nahua can be summarized by their sense of having ‘fallen out of the forest’ (2010: 38). They lived in the forest for many years fighting with, stealing from, and avoiding being captured by loggers. Then, one day they decided to come out of the forest and interact with people on the rivers. The reason Nahua gave for making contact is explained as follows: ‘Contact with white people was, for the Nahua, more a product of their desire for material goods, powerful
This is important because the choice to live in the forest, or upriver is considered a moral one and becomes a way of positioning one’s self or family against others. This is also true of the other end of the continuum, which is oriented around the category of ‘gente racional’ or ‘rational people.’ To be clear, this is not a category used in everyday conversation, but was used as a way of explaining differences between Amahuaca people’s world and how they imagine my own world and the world of rich mestizos in town. The primary difference is that ‘rational people’ have the knowledge to make things, such as technological innovations and to make things work efficiently. This notion of ‘rationality’ does not conform to common Western understandings of the term. This is not a way of thinking, per se, but a way of relating to each other and with the world. The ability to make things work entails a different form of power. The expression of this power is productive, but sometimes costly as indigenous people are often the recipients of abuse from those with power, such as bosses. Not being able to negotiate the systems of power, such as government, places Amahuaca people in a position in which they rely on others such as the loggers who work their land. Technically, the Comunidad is in a position to control these activities, but in order to do so they must have a good understanding of the system. And, most Amahuaca people have limited capacities to deal with government bureaucracy. This means that they rely on loggers to help them complete all of the paperwork. I return this to in chapters 5 and 7.

Connected to these categories are valued attributes of being ‘civilized,’ which depend on one’s social and physical position: being able to speak Spanish, knowledge of the outside that makes exchange relations possible, and being able to live together in a Comunidad. For Amahuaca people in Comunidades, for example, the ability to live together entails maintaining good relations with kin and co-residents. And, this also means that people make boundaries through the division of who they consider to be kin, ‘como nosotros,’ ‘like us,’ and who they exclude in different contexts. In short, living together is a way of framing the work of making kinship. I discuss this at different levels of analysis in the following chapters, focusing on corporeal aspects of wider practices that are aimed at meditating relationships with one another and the outside.

knowledge and sexual relations overcoming their fear of the nafa [other] than a process of ‘acculturation’ and erosion of ‘culture’ imposed on them by powerful outsiders […] (ibid.: 64).
98 Members of the SIL, or lingüísticos would be a part of this category.
The ideal of a civilized Amahuaca in the middle Inuya is based on balancing a desire for outside wealth, substances and knowledge and their potentially dangerous qualities. The outside is considered potentially dangerous, but is also connected to individual and group desires. Overing describes this problem as ‘the necessity of differences to social life in a world where the coming together of differences implies danger, while the conjoining of like things implies safety and non-society or anti-life’ (Overing 1981: 163).

I have demonstrated that for Panoan groups, this relation to the outside is not only important, but is an underlying logic of sociality.

What I will show in this section is that for Amahuaca people the capacity to negotiate the types of differences found in their contemporary social world defines one’s position in relation to others who are either too open or too closed. In both cases they are in danger of not being considered ‘civilized Amahuaca.’ They are either ‘uncivilized’ or they are ‘forgetting’ how to live like an Amahuaca person.

I opened up the thesis with my arrival to San Juan where the president greeted me kindly and offered to let me live in the Comunidad with him and his family. He made reference to the reason for his enthusiasm for hosting me as being somehow related to the government’s ‘forgetting them.’ I opened with this as a way of raising one problem, which was how Amahuaca people living on the Inuya River have come to understand their position in the wider world. This was set out as a type of ‘lack’ from the perspective of Amahuaca people.

In the introduction and chapter one I set out two other conceptualizations of ‘lack,’ but from different perspectives. These focused on what Amahuaca people were said to ‘lack’: one from an anthropological perspective and the other from the point of view of the government and missionarises, who actively sought to persuade Amahuaca people to leave the forest and move into established villages. On the one hand, early anthropological research on Amahuaca people was positioned within a paradigm that placed them in a specific category, which today does not resonate with political and theoretical sentiments. On the other, members of the SIL were engaging in development projects that have correlates around the globe. The SIL hoped to assist Amahuaca people in developing a sense of identity that would become a weapon against complete assimilation into Peruvian society. I thus engage with this early anthropological work and
more recent development work in an attempt to draw out the components of social life that are in tune with contemporary debates.\footnote{I am in the luxurious position of having access to data based on early fieldwork by expert ethnographers whose published work on the topics is limited. This allows me to frame my own work in relation to theirs in multiple ways. For this thesis I have chosen to approach the problem of ‘lack’ because it offers me the space to fulfill certain aim, although this same material could be apporached in different ways that I will explore in the future.}

This brings me to the third ‘lack,’ which is that of the SIL assessment of their project with Amahuaca people. As I stated earlier, it seems the aims of the SIL to develop a sense of cohesion among Amahuaca people were frustrated by a ‘lack’ of trust and ‘social and political organization.’ My addressing this problem stems from my own similar experiences. The primary difference between the assessment discussed in chapter one, and the argument set out here is analytical.

The reason this necessitates explanation here is that I will bring together two of these questions in the following chapter. I conjoin my analysis of the collective ceremonies from 1960, Woodside’s notion of the ‘composite person,’ and contemporary ethnography to argue the following: although Amahuaca people may not have moieties or other clearly defined groups that persist through time, it is possible to demonstrate how they continue to transform themselves based on a notion of how ‘real’ humans are made and grown.

As McCallum argues, in terms of the Cashinahua, this remains the general principle,

\[\ldots\] whether one takes the \ldots internal perspective, seeing micro-histories sedimented into the bodies of active living persons as knowledge and power, or whether one takes an external perspective, seeking trends and structures in the modern political economy of the region. Transformation from the outside to the inside is the dominant movement in these historical processes, and may be distinguished as the constructive element par excellence in the ‘making of community’ (2001: 129).

This has been shown to be the case for all Panoan groups (Calavia Sáez 2004; Erikson 1999; Feather 2010; Lagrou 1998; McCallum 2001; Roe 1982), a fact which allowed Philippe Erikson (1999) to formulate the notion of ‘constitutive alterity.’ Besides arguing that Panoan people have a very intense and specific relations to otherness, he also suggests that, ‘From many standpoints, sexual dimorphism appears as the key metaphor, furnishing the conceptual model that serves to think all the other sociological oppositions among the Panoans’ (1996:102). Building on these arguments, I position the ‘composite person’ as an analytical device to argue that if we take the conjugal pair as a basic unit of
analysis and follow the logic of gender complementarity through collective activities, we gain a better comprehension of Amahuaca people’s idea of ‘living together.’

I will begin with reproduction and discuss how the notion of the ‘composite person,’ as set out by Woodside, proves insightful for analyzing contemporary productive activities at the household level. This addresses the notion of a ‘lack’ stemming from earlier models. This is not because earlier work was oblivious to these phenomena, but only because interests and emphases have shifted. There is another component to the chapter; however, I am addressing the ‘lack’ of ‘social and political organization’ by demonstrating two things. First, the logic of gender complementarity can be followed through activities based on household production. Second, this logic does not fully account for relations at the level of Comunidad. It is in the latter half of the chapter that I engage with the notion of ‘lack’ as it appeared in the SIL document discussed in chapter one. Building on the notion of gender complementarity, I will demonstrate that once activities begin to be organized at the level of Comunidad, there is a shift in the ways people relate to one another. I draw this out and argue that this ‘social and political organization’ may not be very efficient in ordering work aimed at developing the Comunidad in our terms, but it does seem to function quite well for Amahuaca people. I set out these two conceptualizations by calling them, kinship and ‘contract.’ I address the reasons for this in the opening of Chapter 4.

In the previous chapter I tried to convey as clearly as possible the most important aspects of Amahuaca people’s transition from living at the headwaters of the Inuya, Sepahua, Purus and Yurua Rivers to residing primarily in Comunidades on the Inuya River. In this section I shift registers to address similar questions as in the previous chapters, but in terms of how Amahuaca people negotiate their identities within a wider field of relations in their contemporary lived world.

I am drawing on five conceptualizations that are helpful for framing distinctions between individuals and groups at multiple scales. These different ways of marking boundaries are not held together to form a stable identity, but are underlying values that I suggest inform people’s notions of self as they are engaged in processes of transformation.

The five modes are:
1) Ontological\textsuperscript{100}
2) Gender (male:female),
3) Spatial: (up/down: chacra\textsuperscript{101}/town: house/forest),
4) Kinship (Consanguine/Affine: Older/Younger: Amahuaca/Non-Amahuaca: Indigenous (paisano)/Non-Indigenous),
5) Comunidad (Comunidad/Comunidad: Comunidad/Caserio\textsuperscript{102}: Comunidad/Town: Comunidad/Cluster).\textsuperscript{103}

Over the remaining chapters I discuss different aspects of Amahuaca people’s lives in order to draw out the different ways these conceptualizations may be understood. I do not necessarily flag the points where these distinctions are made, but it should become clear through the ethnography and analysis of how and why they are important for Amahuaca people.

\textsuperscript{100} I am using this term in a basic way to situate Amahuaca people within a general understanding of Amerindian people based on the discussion and analysis set out in Chapter 1.

\textsuperscript{101} Garden.

\textsuperscript{102} A caserio is a village comprised of different families that may or may not be indigenous who live on parcels of land. They often resemble a Comunidad, but are differentiated both legally and indigenous discourses.

\textsuperscript{103} This term denotes a group of people living together outside of a Comunidad or caserio, often in more isolated areas.
Figure 28: Comunidad of San Juan on the Inuya River, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett
Figure 29: Abuela Margarita and her daughter Rosa. Rosa was one of the children in photograph above. Photo by Christopher Hewlett 2010.

Figure 30: Roberto Pansitima Reading Farewell to Eden in San Martin on the Inuya River. Photo by Christopher Hewlett 2011.
Figure 31: Pedro Collazo in town of Atalaya, 2011. Photo by Christopher Hewlett.
Chapter Four:
Kinship and Contract:
Ordering Collective Activities within Comunidades

Introduction

This chapter takes two problems set out in chapter two, ‘Feasting for Humanity,’ and discusses them in the context of contemporary life in Comunidades. First, what is the connection between collective activities and the growing of people? If the glutton feast required collective action to realize the growth of plants, people and, as I argued, sociality, then how are these grown today? Second, given the importance of inside/outside, male/female, consanguinity/affinity for the growing of people and regenerating social life, what are the different ‘insides’ that emerge through the processes of sociality in contemporary life?

In building on chapters two and three, this chapter focuses on specific events that entail collective effort at different scales and through which different groupings become visible. The four events are the minga, fiesta, faena, and campeonato. The minga is a collective work party organized by a single household. A fiesta is a party hosted by a single household. A faena is a communal workday that is organized by the president to carry out projects at the level of the Comunidad such as fixing the school, cutting the grass of the soccer field or clearing communal trails. The campeonato is a soccer tournament hosted by a Comunidad with neighboring groups being invited to play football, eat, drink masato and then participate in a party. These four activities are the only times that people living in a Comunidad come together to do something as a group with two exceptions. The first is that children attend school as a group. The second, are the communal meetings held by the president to discuss important issues, have people vote on whether to make contracts with loggers and to distribute wealth coming either from loggers or the government. I discuss the school in the next chapter, and communal
meetings in chapter 7. It is not uncommon for two or three men to go fishing or hunting together, or for women to join together to help prepare masato, which are addressed in the next chapter. All the events discussed in this chapter are either organized by a single household and draw on inter-household relations (minga and fiesta) or are organized by the president for the benefit of the Comunidad and draw on relations between Comunidad-comunero mediated by the president and schoolteacher.

I begin with making of human children as an outcome of the complementary desires and capacities of a man and a woman. I give a brief description of the process through which this is said to occur as well as how a child comes to be recognized as human against other possibilities. Here, I return to the notion of the ‘composite person,’ which is an image of gender complementarity pointed out by Woodside (1981). I take this notion of personhood as a tool for thinking through certain problems regarding Amahuaca sociality. This includes a discussion of relations between husband and wife and the productivity of their mutually met desires for proper food and sex, and how this informs their engagement in wider sociality. I transition from a discussion of the ‘composite person’ to describe the minga and fiesta. I then shift to a wider frame by discussing the two events organized at the level of the Comunidad: the faena, and campoenatos.

By setting out the chapter in this way, I draw attention to four things: first, that the regeneration of life is based on relations between a husband and wife, but that recognition of a child as a human implicates others. I demonstrate that recognition of a human child not only requires that people other than just the potential mother decide whether it is human, but also raises the possibility that it may not be human, which means women’s bodies are susceptible to the agency of non-human beings (Vilaça 2005).

Second, households are interconnected through multiple ties and are the source of important productive activities that extend from the connection of a husband and wife to a broader idea of what it means to be part of a Comunidad. I focus on the minga and fiesta to argue that both of these events are based on the complementary capacities and positions of men (husband) and women (wife). In other words, they are ordered by the
logic of gender complementarity, and even as the events involve individuals from other households, they maintain coherency in terms of this division.

Third, there is a distinction between the ways people relate to one another in activities organized by a household and those organized at the level of the Comunidad. I will demonstrate how these latter activities (faena and campeonato) are not fundamentally based on the complementary work of men and women. Instead, during faenas, people participate based on relations between comuneros/Comunidad. For campeonatos preparations are based on the same logic as faenas, but during the event the primary logic is that of guest/host, or Comunidad/Comunidad.

Based on my analysis I come to define this division as that between kinship and contract in order to try to make a certain point, which refers back to chapter one. The distinction between contract and kinship is both problematic and important for the history of anthropological thought. While divisions such as public/private, individual/society, traditional/modern have extensive baggage, they can also be used as devices to challenge the precepts of their formulation in other contexts (Strathern 1988; Viveiros de Castro 1998; Wagner 1981). I attempt a similar project here, but on a very small scale by doing two things: I take the distinction between kinship and contract as real by demonstrating that given a certain position, they appear as different modes of relating. Second, in setting this argument I am implicitly making a comparison with the idea of ‘social and political organization’ imagined to be ‘lacking’ by Bill Dyck (1992) whose analysis was discussed at length in chapter one.

I refer to the relations as ‘modes’ because they modulate a wider system of relations and give it certain order or what I call ‘form.’ Thus, I refer to two ‘modes of relations’ the outcome of which are different ‘social forms.’ These are kinship and contract. Rather than using the term kinship as a marker of family relations in terms of blood and affinity, it is intended to encompass a wide-range of notions. I use this term as a marker for a mode of relating that can be perceived in activities at different scales, not as a sphere that corresponds to what is often called ‘domestic’ (cf. Strathern 1988). On the one hand, it appears in the form of the ‘composite person,’ but this is a way of accessing a wider

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104 I also raise a point later on regarding the (re-)productive power of women who live and work beyond the limits of the Comunidad.
system of relating in which the complementary work of men and women, their consubstantiality, their mutuality, comes to appear as the healthy bodies of kin and co-residents. It is primarily a way of engaging with activities through which Amahuaca people are made and grown. This is meant to capture the notion that one way of perceiving of Comunidad is as a ‘corporal entity.’ The Comunidad is the idiom used in the contemporary lived world for making kinspeople out of others, for making and growing good Amahuaca people.

The concept of contract is based on the logic of Comunidad-comunero and reified in the Acta, which has been discussed briefly and is examined in greater detail in chapter seven where I discuss communal meetings. I use this term as a marker for a different mode of relating than kinship, which I will demonstrate is made visible through different, yet comparable social forms. And, like the term kinship this is not meant to correspond directly with our notion of contract as meaning a ‘public’ sphere. As the argument moves forward it should become clear why it is that these distinctions are necessary.

Fourth, while there is not necessarily a disjuncture between the two in everyday life, I argue kinship and contract are differing modes of relating that appear in distinct forms during these four events, which I break into pairs to draw out their coherency. I suggest that these two modes of relatedness are both mutually constitutive of Amahuaca people’s notions of ‘living together.’ As should be clear, my point is that both of these ‘modes’ can be understood as historical transformations (Gow 2001). In the previous chapter I tried to demonstrate how and why it is these ‘forms’ and not others that have become important for Amahuaca people. Amahuaca people learned how to drink fermented masato and work together from outsiders (Shipibo-Conibo, Ashaninka).

Amahuaca people learned how to coordinate activities at the level of the Comunidad from both SINAMOS (government agency) and the SIL while living on the Ucayali River, and then the Inuya River where San Martín and San Juan were established. While this process seems to have been initiated when Amahuaca people were learned Spanish with Robert Russell, I would argue this extends much further back. Finally, although I am not drawing a direct relation between the transition from beaches to bluffs found in ‘The Vulture Song,’ and the transition from living spread out in the forest into Comunidades on the middle Inuya River, the parallels are interesting. In both cases knowledge and
substances were taken from the outside, primarily from positions of radical alterity, and made absolutely necessary for the making and growing of ‘real people.’

Section I: Summary of Argument

In chapter two, I focused on ritualized events that brought together the first four conceptualizations of drawing distinctions to argue that becoming huni kuin, real humans, was achieved through the collective effort in making and growing bodies of kin. The mortuary endocannibalism, ayahuasca ceremonies and glutton feast demonstrate clearly that the lived world of Amahuaca people is one in which ‘real’ humanity is rooted in the body. Through the making, growing and destruction of the body of a kinsperson, a real human position is made possible. As I demonstrated, this required the internalization and transformation of outside substances, including knowledge. The mortuary rite entails the destruction of a kinsperson’s body and the consumption of their bones. The destruction of the locus of shared substances and affects, the body and other articles, positioned a kinspersons yoshin as an affine that travelled to the sky.

During ayahuasca ceremonies Amahuaca people most regularly interact with the spirits of the deceased, and this was the origin of the glutton feast. The feast was first learned from a man who died, went to heaven, and returned to teach it to his kin. Other songs were learned from different animals. What became clear is that through consuming ayahuasca, people were actively engaging with a series of beings that are always present, but mostly invisible. Amahuaca people engage in conversations with the spirits during these ceremonies and learn about the outside. And, it is understood that these others are always potentially present and are capable of acting in the world.

By looking at these rituals three interesting themes arise. First, that ‘real humanity’ was made possible through the internalization of different forms of wealth (maize, fire, songs, knowledge) from the outside. Second, that the boundary between the inside and outside is not given, but involves the active work of making humans, which requires that things from the outside be transformed in order for them to be safely consumed. Third, that real humanity is a position located in the body of kin at the individual and collective
level. This is connected to the term for close kin, *namiwo*, our flesh or meat. What these three things indicate is that Amahuaca people, not surprisingly, share a way of being in the world with other Amerindian people (Viveiros de Castro 1998). The Amahuaca world is inherently transformational and this extends to a notion of the body in which taking the position of the other entails bodily transformation.

The other aspect of the ceremonial events that became apparent was importance of gender complementarity, and the notion of the ‘composite person.’ According to Woodside’s portrayal there are six parts of each person, which makes a symmetrical, although somewhat complex androgynous being. The image of what Woodside called ‘composite person’ seems to reflect the (re-)productive capacities of men and women when joined together, which is one of the basic ‘relations of difference’ for the making and growing of people. I am arguing this corresponds to Erikson’s notion of ‘sexual dimorphism,’’ which he says is found among all Panoan groups.

This ‘composite person’ is extended into the lived world of people by taking this model of difference, *as if* it were *real* to draw out a specific point that slowly appears through the thesis. It becomes a way of giving expression to forms that appear in contemporary social life. Whether or not Woodside would agree with this application of the ‘composite person,’’ I think it is worthwhile to take this image and his related arguments as a point of departure.

As Woodside made clear, the composite person, whether or not it is something fully recognizable to Amahuaca people themselves, offers a good entry point for thinking about the Amahuaca lived world. And, as he points out: ‘Babies are the output of the combined image.’ (1981: 101). Thus, to be born from this image is one of the basic criteria for being considered human. Additionally, ‘There seem to be parallels between genital imagery and the complementary work roles Amahuaca assign men and women in domestic life’ (ibid.: 101).

Following this logic, to be born from this image is one of the basic criteria for being considered human. A human child must come from a woman, be alive, have the capacity to grow, have the proper form and be mortal; only spirits and monsters are immortal105

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105 There are also snakes, but these are quite different as they can regenerate themselves, but can also be killed.
(Woodside 1981). In short, at birth a child is recognized in terms of two distinctions. They are either male or female and human or not, thus marking two important distinctions in Amahuaca people’s notion of true humans, *huni kuin*.

**Section II: Humanity and Gender**

Among Amahuaca people this ‘composite person’ is opposed to another type of composite, ‘composite monsters’ (Woodside 1981: 89). These kill humans, live in the forest and are said to be immortal. Examples of these are ‘Jaguar-Snake,’ ‘Tapir Snake,’ and ‘Howler-Monkey-Snake.’ There are two other types as well, which are ‘forest spirits’ and the Yoshin of dead humans that also live in the forest. Unlike the ‘composite monsters,’ these spirits can either appear in human form or ‘be hirsute bipeds with fangs, glowing eyes, and repugnant sexual appetites. All spirit beings can speak Amahuaca, and move about, but cannot be killed by humans’ (ibid.: 89). These spirits and monsters are part of the Amahuaca people’s lived world and are capable of causing harm to humans. The *yoshin* of dead humans are apparently the same as those that appear during ayahuasca ceremonies and speak with people. They arrive fully adorned in ritual attire. On the other hand, it is the *xawakandiwo yoshin* ‘incubus-like Spirit’ that are said to be capable of impregnating a woman, the result of which is the ‘spirit-being child’ that is killed at birth (Woodside 1981: 102).

Most of the time, however, a newborn child is recognized as human in which case it is treated to a proper human reception: the placenta is buried, by either a woman of the preceding generation or in some cases today by the husband, and the mother begins to feed the baby breastmilk and paint it with *huito*.106

As the child’s spirit grows so does the body. It becomes recognized more and more as human when it responds to the feeding and caring offered by others, mostly the mother

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106 Besides the possibility of their impregnating a woman, these spirits and monsters are most dangerous to small children because their soul, spirit, *yoshin*, is small and weakly attached to the body *yora*. To protect newborns against malevolent spirits and *mal aire*, ‘bad air,’ it is covered in *huito*. This is used for protection as well as for curing when a person is ill. Thus, the baby’s fragile state may be compared to a very sick person whose spirit is thought to be in danger of leaving the body. The other times that this is relevant are after a person has killed another human in which case they go into seclusion (Huxley and Capa 1964), after the death of a relative, or during pregnancy when a woman and fetus are in a vulnerable state.
who carries her child with her in a sling wherever she goes.\(^{107}\) Often times a name is not given to the child until later when it is considered to be stronger. According to Dole (1998) once the soul is attached to the body in a secure way the soul is considered immortal and a more real human is recognized. I deal with children and how they are raised in more detail in chapter six, which focuses particularly on adoption and fostering. Now I turn to the relationships between husband and wife and their complementary work in regenerating life.

As Woodside pointed, the imagery of the composite person is not only connected to reproduction, but extends into many spheres of life. Thus, like many other Amerindian people, among Amahuaca people the division of work is ordered by gender to produce good food (a proper meal) and proper social relations (Siskind 1973). Men hunt, fish and clear gardens (which often involves the assistance of others, discussed below) while women harvest crops from the garden, cook and take care of other household work including watching young children. Through this work, which is learned from an early age,\(^{108}\) men and women are brought into the wider social world of Amahuaca people.

The desires for certain foods and sex are one of the reasons given for marriage (see also Woodside 1981). People desire proper meals consisting of cooked meat, and manioc or plantain. Men also desire masato, which has to be prepared by women. They clearly value the food provided by the women in their gardens and some meals are comprised of just manioc and rice, though this is insufficient for long periods of time. While men desire cooked food, women desire meat or fish. They also desire a large garden that has been cleared by their husband, as well as a house with a kitchen and all the necessary utensils and manufactured goods for cooking, which today includes pots, pans, oil, salt and soap, among other things. They also require firewood and water, which men or children bring from the forest or cleared gardens.

This corresponds to having the right ingredients and components to prepare what the right types of meals. This corresponds to several points made by Peter Gow (1989, 1991) including the centrality of the married couple for the production and distribution of proper foods or ‘comida legitima’ (1989). For Piro people a proper meal is meat or fish

\(^{107}\) I deal with raising children more in chapter 6 where I point out that adoption is very important, so mother here does not necessarily mean ‘biological.’

\(^{108}\) I return to this in Chapter 6.
and manioc or plantain, as opposed to just meat, or the food that is eaten by white people (Gow 1991). As I will show below, the types of foods Amahuaca people perceive as proper depends on one’s position on the River. In either case, however, this meeting of mutual desires for proper food and sex is what brings men and women together and allows for the regeneration of life. Gow states this the following way: desires ‘expressed by people in these economies are not abstracted desires that can be satisfied in a variety of different ways, but rather…these desires link people inevitably to certain other people’ (1989: 568).109

George Mentore (2005), for example, takes the construction of the house among the Waiwai as the background for examining the interconnectedness of gendered knowledge and action in the making of properly human spaces. The house is comprised of different components that through being woven together come to encompass humanity, much like the embrace of a man and a woman. In his rich discussion, he states, ‘[I]t could be argued that it is actually in the erotics of a legitimately placed sexual other that the conviviality necessary for society to continue begins’ (2005: 302).

Among Amahuaca people, the atmosphere of a couple working in the garden is very different than a collectivity. A couple working in their garden together and alone or with a small child is in many ways an intimate moment. They work along side one another and, apparently, take breaks to have sex and drink masato. Through sharing their bodies and exchanging substances they are mutually constituting one another as full gendered persons and the image of the ‘composite person’ is a symbolic manifestation of this relationship. This is why Woodside claimed that children come from this combined image, which could also be said of proper food and masato.

For Amahuaca people this productive mutuality appears on the bodies of kin as the products of their complementary work is consumed by their kin. As Woodside states: ‘Human well-being is a primary goal for the domestic economy. The ‘fatness’ (Xundiyaa) of family members indicates the accomplishment of this goal’ (1981: 140). This fatness110 is perceived as being the outcome of good relations, and is how people see their work as the healthy bodies of others. It is through the sharing of these mutually

109 I return to the question of desire and children in Chapter 6.
110 Interestingly, this word xundi also means old person.
constituting experiences that gendered personhood is realized and ‘well-being’ is accomplished.

Section III: Household Oriented Collective Activities

Part One: Minga

Collective work parties, or *mingas*, are organized by a husband and wife in order to undertake large projects such as building a new house, or clearing and planting a garden. The process of a *minga* is based on the combined effort of the husband and wife beginning with the making of manioc beer, *masato*. The preparation of *masato* entails a couple visiting the garden together to harvest a large amount of manioc and sweet potato, *camote*. Once they have collected a sufficient amount, the husband finds firewood and brings water to fill the large pot, while the wife makes the fire and peels the manioc. Once the water is boiling a husband’s work is basically over, and the woman begins cooking. During this part of preparations she sometimes has help, usually from a younger unmarried woman, such as a daughter or niece.

The wife boils the manioc, mashes it and spits masticated *camote* and manioc into the mash. Once it is properly mixed, it is set aside for two days in order to ferment. During this time, the husband makes suggestions to other men that he is going to work in his garden and could use help. Most people already know this based on their preparation of *masato*, but his remarks and rounds of recruitment are integral aspects of the living together because he cannot make demands on others for help no matter how closely related they may be. If certain people do not arrive, the couple complain, gossip and refuse help in the future, but do not confront them directly. Confrontation is strongly avoided with very few exceptions that are discussed in chapters 5 and 7.

Once the *masato* is sufficiently strong, usually on the second or third day, the husband invites other men to come to his house, where his wife serves them a few bowls. The ‘helpers’ come prepared to work and once they are full the ‘host’ heads off to the garden taking along a large bucket of *masato*. This prompts others to follow, though he
says nothing. In some instances the wife goes with them and serves them, but most of the time the men go alone. If they are only clearing a garden the wife stays behind, but if they are planting then she is more likely to attend in order to dictate where things are planted. It is she more than he who will be returning the garden to harvest. They both weed, usually spending an entire day together in the garden.

During a minga men work in the garden all day taking breaks to drink, talk and rest. These days are very relaxed despite the hard work. The men talk, joke and enjoy the company of one another as they work. Men do not stress over the work, but make it playful and fun. They work hard and sweat, but are not eager to finish or return home. They seem content in the garden cutting, talking and joking. This sense of working together is put eloquently by Mentore in his description of Waiwai men as they work together in the village. According to Mentore, Waiwai men

'commune with each other in ways that allow the day to pass in pleasurable circumstances. No raised voices. No anger. No singing. Just quiet talk and noncompetitive work. No need to objectify work as an obstacle, as an imposition, as an enemy to be defeated. The joy of being together, of unison, is not to compete and to overcome but to balance the divided containment of each other as a sweet concordance' (2005: 289).

It is very similar among Amahuaca men with the only exception being that they do ‘hoop’ and ‘holler’ as a source of inspiration and freedom both for and from the others. If they finish the bucket of masato they will have more brought by sending a young man or anthropologist to retrieve it from the house. It can take an entire day to clear a large garden and even more if there are lots of large trees. Planting is somewhat less arduous, but if it is a large garden it can take an entire day or more.

Most mingas include between four and ten men. Once the job is done the men will sometimes stay in the garden and finish what is left of the masato. Once they return to the village some of them may continue to drink at the house of the host. On some occasions food is served, though this is not required; however, a work party cannot be held without masato.

Masato is food for the body and a form of ‘social lubricant’ (Brown 1984) that binds people in their collective endeavours.111 The amount of masato and its strength have an impact on people’s ability and willingness to work for long periods of time. I stated

111 Sarmiento Barletti (2011) for contemporary description of importance of masato for ‘living together’ on the Bajo Urubamba.
earlier that *mingas* occasionally result in spontaneous celebrations of conviviality. During ‘work’ people draw themselves together through the consumption of *masato*. It is an intoxicating drink, so some people will end up being drunk while they work, and indeed, a good host is one who has an abundance of good strong *masato*. I use the word conviviality (Overing and Passes 2000) to show that while they are working, they share a certain attitude towards work and the physical body that is made possible through the presence of others and the drinking of *masato*. I also mean that once the work is done people may return to the ‘hosts’ house and continue drinking and socializing. In some cases, it can end in an impromptu party, which I return to below.

The *minga* follows the logic of the complementary work of men and women from the first preparations until the final outcome, which includes a garden, planted crops and thus the possibility of holding another one in the future. A single man or woman has difficulty finding good help to make a garden. This is also part of wider processes of legitimizing a couple as accepted in the wider network of families. Men who participate are almost invariably related to one of the hosts, and their absence is a way of showing their disapproval of marriages or of specific people. On the other hand, the participation of men is a way dealing with the temporality of life.

While men may be seen as ‘owning’ the *minga*, it is made possible by the work of the wife, and is also in a way, for her. This complementarity of male/female or, more accurately, husband/wife is important as a focal point for the generation of flows, which extend out from this relationship and contribute to the formation of wider social relations. The men who participate and assist the host seem to be looking forward towards the time when these same men will work to make a garden for their wives. Through their work with other men in the garden they take the position of men, while the wife prepares the *masato*, thus re-affirming her position as well.\(^{112}\)

As discussed above, men want to eat ‘real food,’ which for Amahuaca people means manioc or plantains with meat or fish and sometimes rice or noodles. Women are responsible for harvesting the garden to keep a steady supply of manioc and plantains available, and this garden is cleared by men. This is only possible, however, because the

\(^{112}\) Women do hold work parties, though these are not held very often and seem more spontaneous. Women may invite others to their garden to harvest manioc or plantains when they are abundant. They do not usually drink manioc beer. Each woman is allowed to take what she harvests.
woman has already prepared *masato*. Every time a husband and wife have a *minga*, it is a celebration of their mutual work and compatibility as well as the wider group of related people who join them in their productive activities. I have tried to show that the groupings that occur do so at two relations of difference, gender and those who help and those who do not. This will become relevant in later discussions. The process of men working together is one that contributes to the consubstantiality of people, and this focuses on a group of men; however, it is, in a sense, for the wife.

**Figure 32**: President Fermin and wife Giovana working together, San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett.
Figure 33: Men taking a break during minga to drink masato, San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett.

Figure 34: Manioc from garden harvested for masato, San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.
Figure 35: Preparing masato, San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.

Figure 36: Amahuaca women preparing masato, San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.
Figure 37: Preparing Masato in Canoe, San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett.
Figure 38: Fiesta in San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett.

Figure 39: Men at Fiesta in San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett.
Figure 40: Women at Fiesta in San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett.

Figure 41: Abuela Margarita and Rosa at Fiesta in San Juan, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett.

Figure 42: Fiesta in San Martin, 2011. Photo by Christopher Hewlett.
Figure 43: Women at Fiesta in San Martin, 2011. Photo by Christopher Hewlett.

Figure 44: Football Club from San Juan on Wining Day, 2010. Photo by Christopher Hewlett.
Part Two: Fiestas

Fiestas are usually held for a person’s birthday and can take place either in the host family’s house or, in the case of big parties, in the communal building located adjacent to the soccer field. When a big party is being planned, the hosts may ask others to assist them by preparing masato. It is more common, however, to hold the fiesta in the house. Here I give a general description of the preparations and then give two specific examples of fiestas, one held in a house and the other in the school building. The aim is to show how the complementary work and positions of men and women can be recognized from the preparation of masato, to the height of the party when men and women sit across from one another, meeting on the dance floor to dance. During these events men locate themselves near, and control music and trago,\textsuperscript{113} while women congregate near buckets of masato and control its distribution.

Three to four days before the party will be held, preparations begin with the collection of manioc. Organizing must begin days in advance for the preparation of masato requires at least two, if not three days to ferment to the ‘proper’ strength. Often times two batches will be prepared a day apart so there is ‘good’ masato when the party carries over to the second or even third day. This follows the same processes as the minga.

On the day of the party things begin like any other day, people get up, go fishing for breakfast, go to the garden to bring food, and so on. Parties tend to begin after lunch so that people have time to carry out their daily tasks in the morning. These preparations are important because people perceive the likelihood of drinking the whole day, if not two or even three days, or until there is no more masato. This means they will not have time to collect and prepare food, so they do so prior to the beginning of a party.

The party I will describe takes place in the local or community building and as every party site is arranged in more or less the same way, my description here of this site is indicative of how other sites are organized. The local or community building is a

\textsuperscript{113} Luisa Elvira Belaunde (pers. comm. 2011) has suggested this is one of the major issues facing Comunidades and gender relations in lowland Peru. As women’s position as producer and distributor of masato is replaced by men’s purchase and sharing of trago, this disrupts wider relations of caring and exchange.
rectangular structure with three walls and a dirt floor. The CD player and speaker are set on a table that is placed at the closed end of the structure. Boys (ranging in age from 12-17) tend to take control of the music equipment since they are the ones who know how it works and are responsible for music. It is very seldom that women touch, try to use, or even go near the music equipment. There is no rule, but I have only seen one 14-year-old girl using the equipment.

Music is entirely Peruvian and mostly by bands from the jungle. It is often not played until later in the day because gasoline I required to run the generator powering the equipment. Gasoline is always a problem and will run out over the course of the party multiple times and is refilled from different stashes people have and are willing to share.

There can be no ‘real’ party without music and masato. Music alone is good for some things, but is not sufficient to make a party without masato. Masato without music is acceptable, but the lack of music is commented upon and some people will not attend. It is the music that calls people to the local because when they hear it they know the party has begun, and it is the masato that gets people drunk so they dance to the music. Both elements have been incorporated from the outside over the past decades by making contracts with loggers.\textsuperscript{114}

Once the music begins and people congregate they will drink masato sitting and talking. They come in groups and sometimes a few will come and say hello, have a few bowls, see how much masato there is, and then leave returning later on in the evening. Dancing almost never begins before dark because of the heat, so the party commences with drinking, talking, socializing, and joking, mostly among men. Hammocks are hung or blankets are put down outside the structure and near the masato containers. This is where women sit and babies sleep. The placement of music at one end and masato and children at the other divides the space into the domain of women and the domain of men. These domains become the sources, from which the party derives its energy.

Men are given large pitchers to drink individually or share amongst a small group while women have their own pitchers or drink together with one another, but separately

\textsuperscript{114} This is discussed in Chapter 7.
from men. Generally, men locate themselves near the music and women near the masato, which is at the open end of the building. The centre of the room is left open and will become the dance floor. Before the party begins this space is occupied by dogs, or the lone toddler who dances and is a source of joy and laughter. As adults begin dancing this changes the atmosphere. Pitchers are slowly taken back from men and the host woman or a close female relative begins moving around the room, distributing masato out of pitchers into bowls they carry with them and serve individually to guests.

This is a social shift and marks a moment when the groups of men and women who were drinking together, but separately, become part of the larger process of mixing in the central area. The music is played at a volume that makes it difficult to talk and does not stop until there is no more gasoline. People dance in more or less the same simple style stepping back and forth in rhythm with their partners. At the end of every song people just return to their seats. There are no rules about men asking women or women asking men to dance. Either one is normal. At the end of every song, the dancers sit down even if they are immediately asked to dance again. During the entire party masato is being distributed by women to people lining the walls around the dance floor. While the masato continually flows, women take turns serving it. At the peak of the party few people are sitting, so they are served while dancing.

The music is always blaring, but certain songs or styles energize people to dance while others only draw a few couples. The discs constantly break and parties are sometimes held with only a few different ones so the same music is played over and over for hours on end. As people get drunker they dance more and the motion of the different dancing couples becomes less differentiated. People are laughing, smiling and dancing together. This is the climax of the party and the most visible social division is based on gender, which is continually realized as men and women get up to dance, only to return to their respective areas.
Sandra’s Quinceañera

I give a brief description of Sandra’s quinceañera, fifteenth birthday, in order to draw attention to two points. The first is that Sandra was not a typical Amahuaca person, but her party did follow the same pattern as all the others. Second, that despite a different layout for the party, men and women remained separated, which I think proves the point I made in the earlier section.

Sandra is being raised by María and Jaime who live in San Juan. She is actually María’s granddaughter, the daughter of her daughter who lives in town. Sandra’s case is an interesting one because she is very different than the other young women in the Comunidad. She works in restaurants in town on contract between her grandparents and the restaurant owner who takes care of her in exchange for work. While it not unusual for young women to leave and work in town (see chapter 6), this is the only case I heard of on the Inuya River concerning a contract between parents and a proprietor. In town
Sandra attends the evangelical church several times a week and considers herself *Cristiana*. She has a cross tattooed on her forehead, which is common in the region, but again, she is the only Amahuaca person I knew with this feature. When she returns to visit her family she refuses to drink *masato* for the first week, saying she is not allowed because she is evangelical. This usually ends shortly after her arrival for a visit. By the time she leaves she is drinking and dancing like many of the others, though she is always dressed differently, to which I return below.

When I arrived to Jaime and María’s house in the mid-afternoon, women were gathered on the outside veranda of house drinking *masato* and talking. The men were gathered on the opposite side, where there is a covered area that was extended for the occasion. This covered area shoots off the back wall of the house dividing the social space and drawing a greater divide between men and women than was usual. The gathering area’s floor is packed dirt with benches lining both sides and the far end. There are a few hammocks set up for the babies. Dogs come and go.

The music was set up against the house facing out towards the far end. This was the male space and the only women there were those serving *masato*. It was during this party that I asked about the division between men and women. The response I received was not particularly helpful, though all the men I asked did recognize this as normal; however, they had no explicit reason for why it was done.

As I was sitting with the men, Sandra came around serving *masato*. She was wearing a white dress and red shoes. While people do wear clean clothing for these occasions, it is more common for men to get ‘dressed up’ than for women. Men wear shoes, for example, while women usually do not. So, seeing her dressed in what were likely to be her church clothes, serving *masato* and drinking when invited by the guests, struck me as a powerful image. Despite her clear intentions of setting herself apart from people in the Community, she celebrated her birthday in the only way that is recognizable to Amahuaca people, by having a party with *masato*, music and food.

Once the food was ready, each person received a bowl of chicken soup accompanied with manioc. The music was only put on later in the day because there was not much gasoline. Unfortunately, I was ill and had to leave before the height of the party.
**Rebecca’s fiesta**

The celebration of Rebecca’s birthday was both very similar and quite different. Rebecca is the daughter of the president, Manuel Sarasara and his wife Maria. Maria’s mother, Margarita, is the central figure in San Juan. Rebecca’s parents had coordinated with other families to have a large amount of *masato*. The families who contributed *masato* included Rebecca and her husband, her parents, her mother’s sister and husband, and grandparents. All of the members of the Community were invited as well as some people living downriver with whom the president had good relations. Unlike Sandra, Rebecca did not change her clothing for the affair, but wore her usual dress.

This party was held in the schoolhouse that was arranged like a banquet hall. The tables were lined up making one large table extending for most of the school. Chairs were arranged around the table and guests were seated and served food. Once all the guests had been served chicken soup and manioc, the tables were removed and the chairs placed against the walls opening up space for dancing. From this moment onwards, the party followed the same pattern as the others. Men congregated around the stereo located in the corner while women congregated near the door with small children lying on blankets.

**Analysis**

In these events the division and complementarity of men and women is evident from the preparations until their climax. In the case of the *minga* the logic of gender complementarity pushes it, and other productive activities, in a cycle that are re-initiated every year when new gardens are cleared, burned and planted. This requires the manioc from the previous garden in order to make *masato*. The height of the event is men working together in the garden consuming a substance that is identified with the wife.

The preparations for a *fiesta* follow more or less the same processes until the day of the event when instead of working, guests are invited to the house of communal building to drink *masato* and eat. The climax of the *fiesta* is when men and women are dancing together in the open area at the centre of the space. Dancing among Amahuaca people is very simple consisting of stepping back and forth, following the rhythm of the music.

While this may not seem in and of itself unique to Amahuaca people, I argue that when placed in opposition to two other events, *faena* and *campeonato*, to which I turn
next, a distinction can be drawn between modes of sociality. These other events are based on a different logic in which it is not gender complementarity, but instead relations between comuneros and the Comunidad that order people’s activities.

**Section III: The Comunidad**

As discussed in earlier, the Comunidad is a state-recognized collective of indigenous people governed by a corporate body comprised of a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. This was set out in a series of laws in the 1960s and 1970s and heavily implemented in the 1980s giving recognition of indigenous land rights. According to the law, these Comunidades maintain some autonomy in the form of self-governance and legal rights, although they are limited to certain categories. Despite this arrangement, Amahuaca were said not to organize themselves for communal activities. The two exceptions pointed out by Dyck (1992) are the campeonatos and faenas. These activities are, I think, undervalued in Dyck’s assessment of Amahuaca people’s social life.

**Part One: Faena**

The faena or communal work party is different than a household work party or minga in several important ways. Mingas are organized by a household for specific work such as clearing a garden, building a house (men’s work), cultivating a garden, and harvesting garden products (women’s work). The faena, on the other hand, is organized by the president and is done so in the name of the Comunidad, not for him as president or his household. The president and his wife work alongside the others and can be understood as leading the work, but this is not done on their behalf and they cannot be considered the ‘owners’ of the faena in the way a household might be understood to ‘own’ a minga (see McCallum 2000 for an alternative system of leadership). The president and his wife, however, tend to work longer. They are often the first to start and the last to stop. They, like others, do take breaks.
Comuneros work for the Comunidad, but are organized by the president. The faena follows the logic of mandatory work in large caseríos which are non-indigenous villages that are divided into plots of land that are owned by a specific person or family. In caseríos there is no communal property. The caserío of Maldonadillo, located across from Atalaya, for example requires that all families who own plots of land work. If they do not do their work then they are forced to pay a fine. Apparently, this is also the case in some Comunidades (Brown 1984; Sarmiento Barletti 2011), but not among Amahuaca people on the Inuya River.

Another major difference is that masato is almost never prepared for a faena. I only witnessed one case where masato was specifically prepared for a faena and this entailed intensive work. There is a long trail leading to a house beyond the limits of the Comunidad where an Ashaninka family live. This trail is used by comuneros, the children of the Ashaninka family to come and go from school, and by visitors who walk from downriver. The Ashaninka family and several families were the ones who made masato and they began working at their respective ends and met in the middle. The work took all day. As this was partly organized by the family downriver and entailed a full days work, masato was prepared. This was the only case in which I witnessed masato served for a community work party. Incidentally, it was only men who participated in this work. Women remained in the village and cleared a different area.

The division of work during a faena takes a much different form than that of a minga. For example, during the former both men and women work together. This does not always entail them working side-by-side, but they all work towards the same end—a clean and beautiful Comunidad. In the cases when there is a division men tend to clear the soccer field and for women to weed the area around the paths and communal building. In this case men’s work tends to be harder and they cover more ground, while women’s work is more detailed. The president leads the men on their task and the president’s wife leads the women in their task. They do not serve masato, though I have heard people complain they should as it makes work easier and more enjoyable.

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115 According to Sarmiento Barletti (pers. comm. 2013) among the Ashaninka it is not only the jefe that calls for faenas.
These *faenas* are organized more frequently leading up to a large party and it is the responsibility of the president to make sure the surroundings are presentable for the event. If a *Comunidad* does not look good, the visitors will see this as a lack of civilization, organization and group cohesion. If a village is *como monte*, like jungle, this will be used as an insult against the *Comunidad* as a whole. There is a strong competition between *Comunidades* to present themselves in a specific way as being better, more civilized, more generous, and more organized than others. This competition is expressed explicitly during soccer tournaments, which I turn to next.

**Part Two: Campeonato**

*Campeonatos*, championships or football tournaments, can take different forms on the Inuya. They are all organized on the basis of wider Peruvian standards, which are localized such that it seems that they are all the same.

There are roughly three types. The first is organized solely by the schoolteacher and is mainly for the children. The second is organized by the president or other community leader, often in the absence of the professor, in order to reciprocate a previous invitation. This is more rare as most *campeonatos* organized by the professor entail the establishment of dates in the three schools that partake on this part of the river so each *Comunidad* hosts once in a given period. It is very rare that more than two other *Comunidades* visit for a *campeonato* and I never witnessed such an event, though I did hear of some in San Martín. There have been occasions when the professor has been away or is absent on the date of a scheduled *campeonato*. In these cases, the president or other leader is the primary organizer.

The final type revolves around a party or *fiesta* and is organized by the professor and president together. This is usually the anniversary of the *Comunidad* or for another national holiday such as independence day, father’s day, mother’s day, etc. In any of the cases, within San Juan the schoolteacher send invitations and the president organizes preparations of *masato*. I focus on the third type as it is the largest and includes components from the other two.

In San Juan *campeonatos* are organized by the schoolteacher, but other preparations such as making *masato* and food, as well as the cleaning of soccer field, are organized by
the president. It is the responsibility of the Comunidad and not the professor to play host to the guests. The schoolteacher is responsible only for the aspects of the campeonato related to the football and volleyball matches for children. He does often organize the students in order to clean around the school and public toilet, which is located directly behind the school, but is not responsible for the soccer field or other communal areas. He often does not participate in the cleaning of these areas.

This is different, for example, than San Martín where the professor organizes everything including: the invitations, who will prepare masato, preparation of food, and collection of bets. While the president is mainly responsible for organizing the faena to clear communal areas, including the soccer field, it is most often the teacher who raises the issue. The main difference between San Juan and San Martín is the presence of an indigenous schoolteacher in the latter who is arguably the most powerful influence in the community. This is in contrast to San Juan where the professor is a mestizo and is for the most part respected, but does not involve himself in the daily activities of communal life. I discuss this at length in chapters 5 and 6.

Prior to a tournament, an official invitation must be written and delivered to the other communities or they will not show up. There is often a meeting held by the professor in the week leading up to the day of the tournament to discuss the preparations, which are not many. Unless there is a special event such as the anniversary of the community that specifies the date of a tournament, the games are always held on a weekend, usually Saturday.

As discussed on the Saturday before the tournament, the Community also clears the bushes on the slope below the houses leading down to the river. This is purely aesthetic. Nobody uses this space, but it is seen from the river as people arrive. The beach area of the port and the trail leading up to the village are especially important spaces. This is part of communal pride and it is the president’s job to organize this work and it would be shameful if it were not clean, limpio. This is one aspect of the competitive relationship between hosts and guests. Additionally, during the week leading up to the anniversary people gather to cut the plastic sheets into special designs to be hung near the entrances to the community. People seem to enjoy the preparations and it turned into a social event at
the president’s house where small groups of people, mostly young men and women, sit and talk as they inflate balloons and make designs out of the plastic sheets. Some people are more adept than others and one young man, by accident or not, managed to make a large phallic-shaped paper cutout. This ended up being placed in the middle of the largest collection of designs hung over the main pathway through the community so as not to be missed.

For one anniversary, Aniversario, people began to prepare masato three days before. This was organized by the president and carried out by his wife in an empty house near the centre of the Comunidad. Each family was meant to bring manioc from their gardens. People break into groups according to household and head off to their respective gardens to dig, collect, and haul back baskets of manioc. Both men and women take part in the collection of manioc. In the garden, men tend to cut the stalk, and pull out the tubers that are found in bunches, while women move behind them gathering, cleaning and placing it in baskets. Manioc that is left by men is dug up by women. While this is generally true, there are no set rules regarding the division of labour for this specific work. Once a large amount of manioc is gathered each person takes a basket and heads to the village. Gardens can be anywhere from 5 to 20 minutes from the centre of the Comunidad.

In order to boil the manioc, a fire must be built and water must be brought from the river. Usually one man organizes some boys to collect firewood for the entire preparation process. This is brought after the manioc is piled while women clean off the excess dirt and peel it, preparing it for cooking. Men and boys also bring the water up from the spring or river. For a good party two or three very large pots will be cooked.

Once the pots are boiling, the work of men is mostly completed except when they help to move the pots around or pull them off the fire when the manioc is cooked. Women mash the cooked manioc and chew and spit the masticated manioc back in as they stir and mash, thus, mixing it up to begin the fermenting process. Once it is well mixed and the water level is right, the pots are set aside to ferment for the next two or three days.

116 The president’s wife sometimes organizes a small minga in her garden. This entails a small group of women, usually three to five, digging, cleaning and hauling the yucca. Sometimes in these cases men will help carry the large sacks back to the village, but often the women do this themselves.
The day before the party a group of four men were sent upriver to spear a large fatty catfish. The aim is to collect at least one large fish for each household, which will then be prepared and served to the guest. Each household is responsible for cooking what they receive from this collective effort organized by the president.

On the day of most parties people work in their gardens or at home. The day seems to begin as most others. In fact, people are preparing food and visiting their gardens because the masato can sometimes last for days and men will not usually hunt, fish or work in their gardens while they are drinking.

In the case of the Anniversary, women wake up extremely early to prepare food for the guests. Some of the fish are smoked over night and must be checked and turned. As part of the preparations each family received a kilo of rice and were expected to prepare between five and ten plates of food. This is cooked rice with a small piece of meat in the middle, which is wrapped in a banana leaf and cooked again. Some people used chicken and others the fish, but in either case this tasty food spoils quite quickly so women had to get up very early to prepare them the same day. The food was gathered in the house of the president.

The final touches are put on the community in the late morning. The plastic streamers are hung securely across the trail. The Peruvian flag is situated on the high bank overlooking the beach where people will arrive in their boats. The community building, a tall rectangular structure with no walls is decorated with balloons and the plastic. The music equipment is hauled out of its storage box in the school and placed on a table at the far end of the building. Young men and boys are in charge of the music with one man of about 17 usually taking complete charge. Some small buckets of masato are carried over to the site of the party where people can serve themselves until the guests arrive.

Mostly people stay in their houses or sit in the house of the president nursing a jar of masato served by his wife. Women are finishing their preparation of the food and feeding their younger children.

While some people dress up for the party, the people who are going to play do not. The players arrive in their soccer shoes, shorts and older jerseys. Most men have a pair of
shoes to play in and many have special cleats. A few play barefoot. Later on they will put
on their jerseys, which are kept by the captain of the team, a young man of twenty who
lives 10 minutes walk upriver. He almost never brings them when he first arrives, but
waits until the guests arrive. Then he runs home and gets them. In 2010 these were
burgundy jerseys with a small patch on the left breast with the San Juan and Atalaya
written around a seal in the middle.

It is not until around eleven or twelve that people form the community begin to
gather in the main communal area. Small groups will begin drinking, but people will try
not to get too drunk. Younger people begin to kick the soccer ball around taking turn in
goal while other take shots. This is a very casual affair and people come and go from the
group. The sun is high in the sky and it is hot, so this does not last long. People begin to
discuss the collection of the bet.

While campeonatos are organized by the schoolteacher and seem oriented around the
children, this is not so. The children’s matches are the prelude to the more important
matches played by adults. In large tournaments the order of play is: children, women,
then men. For large tournaments, such as an anniversary, this can involve nine separate
matches apart from the volleyball games. Adults do not compete in volleyball, though
they play for fun.

As the time passes by, people begin to gather in greater numbers in the centre of the
community, mostly in the president’s house, which is situated along the soccer field. By
about twelve or one people being to get anxious, though they do not say so. People often
say that nobody is going to show up, that the other villages are not going to come to their
party. There are often multiple conversations detailing radio calls confirming whether a
group would come or not. Sometimes this involves people remarking about how they
participated in the others’ tournaments, so it would be an insult for them not to show up.

People say that if you arrive too early, then the hosts will get you drunk and you will
not be able to play. So, the delayed arrival is in some ways strategic. People hope to
arrive when the games are about to begin, so they can play quickly. This is never the
case, as sorting out the teams, bets and referee always takes a long time, but the intention
is clear. This also leads to a certain amount of drama as the hosts wait in anticipation for
the guests.
People begin to buzz when they hear the first sounds of pekepeke motors downriver. It is amazing how they detect the noise amid conversations and music, often an hour before the boat’s arrival. Individuals comment on the type and size of the motor, thus guessing what group it is. In some case, they are familiar with the sounds of individual pekepekes so they know exactly who is coming and gauge from the strain of the motor and flow of the river how many people are onboard and when they will arrive. At this point couneros, especially the younger men, are ready to play and—though they disguise it—are getting excited. People begin drinking a bit more and joking with one another.

As the other teams arrive, people get more excited, but also relaxed. Sometimes the other teams do not show up and this is considered a great insult, but also means people will not get to play. A good party should have at least three if not four teams: one from each of the two Comunidades, one from the neighboring caserio, and one team of loggers. In the invitation sent to nearby Comunidades, it has to say how much the bet will be. In the case of campeonatos organized by the school, the bet is set for all three events held in each village. This cannot be changed. The typical bet is 10 soles for the children’s match, 20 soles for the women’s match, and 30 soles for the men’s match. Despite the fact that each person knows they are meant to contribute their part, negotiations over how much each person will put forward can take hours. Often, games are delayed as people scramble to find enough money for the bet. In the case of a person not having any money, they may not be allowed to play. This depends on the amount of money and number of players. In some cases, outsiders such as loggers will be recruited to take the place of comuneros who do not pay. This is more about collecting the necessary amount than the intentional exclusion of people who have no money. The best players are always allowed to play even if they have no money.

As others arrive they are given masato and a place to sit. People who are closely related to certain host families will visit them. Others go directly to the school where they place their things and make their space. In some cases, people from other Comunidades spend the night, so they bring their playing gear, a change of clothes and beds.

Once the playing begins all of people’s attention is turned towards the games, which are very competitive. At this point, the music is blaring and people are getting mildly drunk.
During a big event the children will be divided into girls’ teams and boys’ teams, though this does not happen often. Volleyball and soccer matches for the children take up the first hours of the event after which it is the adults’ turn to play. These games are very competitive and it is not uncommon for people to be injured. As mentioned, it can take hours to get all the bets settled, but once it begins, the players take very few breaks. If there are four teams then each team should play all the others at least once. If time is running short, then two teams play and the winners play the winners in the title match.

The players are rough and some do not wear shoes while others wear cleats. This does not slow people down. It is not uncommon for disagreements, disputes and even hostilities to arise. However, the animosity on the field is limited compared to the shouts, criticisms and insults that come streaming in from the sidelines where guests and hosts cheer on their teams. And, unlike competitions in other places, many of the insults are not aimed at the other teams, but at one’s own players. People yell at their husbands or brothers, in the case of men, and wives and sisters in the case of women. In both cases, they are telling them they are playing horribly.

Having said this, some insults are made against opposing teams. In one case, which is connected to a discussion in Chapter 5, an Amahuaca woman yelled at her own team saying, ‘ganenles a los Amahuaca’ or ‘beat those Amahuaca’ referring to the San Juan team. This seems to be using the name Amahuaca in a pejorative way, though it is quite complicated. Other than this, general insults regarding the skills of a team or its inability to score are shouted. Screams erupt when shots pass outside of the arc, and when a goal is scored cheers rain out from the crowd for the scorer, and insults for the team who has lost a goal.

It is important to keep in mind that people on the sideline are being fed massive amounts of masato so they are getting quite drunk. It is also common for men to share trago, sugar-cane liquor. Most large parties are accompanied by a small store that one or more households set up to sell candy, soda, cigarettes, and trago. In the case of San Juan, this is not necessarily a regular part of life, while in San Martín there are couples that always have these things on hand to sell. I discuss this in chapter five.

In the mid to late afternoon, once the games have been played, the guests are served their food. Women form each household gather in the location where the food had been
collected and walk around making sure each person receives a plate of food. This can take an hour or more as plates are limited and must be reused.

Once the games are over and guests have been fed, some of them will leave and go back to their own Comunidades. Those who stay for the night will bathe and change into their party clothing. Once clean and ready, they congregate in the communal building to dance, drink and socialize. This can go on all night and if there is lots of masato, then the party will continue for days as long as there are a few men to drink and women to serve. For the most part, the guests who stay overnight leave early the next morning.

Once the antagonism of the day is left behind and people drink and socialize, all people come to relate to others based on their positions as either men or women. In this way, the end of this party is much like that of the household party.

Conclusion:

In this chapter I set out the notion of the composite person, which is based on the realization of fully gendered bodies as they are related to their counterpart. By taking gender as the outcome of activities such as those discussed above, the logic of complementarity can be extended into other relationships and exchanges. And, there is a point in which this particular difference begins to blend with a different one: relations between comunero and Comunidad.

I took the conjugal pair as an intense relation of difference and followed the logic of gender complementarity through the minga and household party. I then tried to show that these two events had their corollaries in the faena and soccer tournament in which the ground of action moves more towards relationships between people and the Comunidad.

This is a way of drawing out the differences between an analysis in which the connection between individual and society is a given and, one in which a specific notion of personhood informs specific forms of relating. The reason I point this out now is that in this chapter I offer an analysis of four events that correspond in different ways to those presented in chapter 2 and chapter 7.
By building on the logic of gender complementarity, inside/outside and the principle of ‘dimorphic dualism’ proposed by Erikson (1999), it seems reasonable to begin arguing more explicitly that in the absence of moieties or other structuring dualisms, the form of events today matter much less than the underlying mechanisms, or modes, through which people are regenerating the world of ‘real’ Amahuaca people.

As should be clear, the relation between ‘mode’ and ‘form’ is one of coherency, but this is not meant to deny the interconnections between them. I have set these out as a mechanism to make a specific point. What may not have been made clear is that the relation between kinship and contract is not one in which kinship is the base and contract the more developed or ‘political’ sphere. It is not that contract is built on the ground of ‘kinship,’ as it could easily be said that the opposite is true. These two modes are mutually constitutive of ‘living together’ in a Comunidad. They are different modes through which the work of making kinship can be realized.

Take for example, the campeonato, which brings together both principles in a variety of ways. While there is a division between comuneros and Comunidad during some of the preparations, this is transformed into relations between host and guest. And, although the notion of Comunidad is expressed through the organization of the event, preparations of masato and food draw on the complementary work of men and women. This does not erase the divisions between men and women, however, because during the matches men play one game and women play another. Games for children, on the other hand, often include teams comprised of both boys and girls. Moreover, while the event is in a sense supposed to be about the children (they are organized by teachers) it is really about much more than this.

Finally, while what I term contract is aimed primarily towards relations beyond the Comunidad and kinship towards intra-household and inter-household relationships, I am arguing that this is connected to the logic of dualism found among Panoans (Erikson 1999) rather than the logic of ‘public’ and ‘private.’ I am attempting to pull together two principles of sociality (‘constitutive alterity’ and ‘sexual dimorphism’ (Erikson 1999) among Panoan peoples) to make a specific point: despite being expressed through forms that might easily be perceived as ‘public or political’ and ‘private or domestic’ spheres, separating them along these lines would be to mistake our way of understanding these
divisions for another one. The reason I think this is important is because there does seem to be a difference between these two spheres, and trying to draw out what this might mean is a worthwhile project.

In Chapter 6 I examine these modes of relating in terms of a different problem in which the relation of men with the outside (affinal relations) and women with the inside (consanguineal relations), which is common among other Panoan groups, are problematized when examining the case of Amahuaca people. This includes an important shift from relations based on gender complementarity to those based on inter-generational caring and memory. In chapter 7, I return to the question of kinship and contract again by discussing communal meetings and the role of leadership for entering into exchange relations with the government and loggers. The next chapter is more ethnographic and compares life in San Juan and San Martín.
Chapter Five:
The Spatiality of Relations:
Comparing Civilización On the Inuya River

Introduction

Due to the distribution of Amahuaca people from the headwaters of the Inuya to the town of Atalaya, mission of Sepahua, and the cities of Pucallpa and Satipo, the ways in which people talk about kinship are both very simple and very complicated. As the maps and kinship diagrams demonstrate, there is a tendency for people who are closely related to live in clusters within larger groupings. In the case of certain clusters it is very easy to show how they are related and why they live where they do. What the maps and kinship diagrams fail to capture, however, is the fluidity of boundaries and the almost incessant movement of people between different locations.

This chapter builds on the history set out in Chapter 3 and examines some of the themes of contemporary life in the Comunidades of San Juan and San Martín. While I will also refer here to people living beyond the two Comunidades, the general aim of this section is to highlight some of the more important aspects of life in these two places, and to draw comparisons between them. I begin this section with an examination of schools in San Martín and San Juan, as a way of drawing out differences in what it means to be a good Amahuaca person in each place. I then move to a discussion about how the two places relate to one another in terms of being a civilized Amahuaca. Each Comunidad is positioned, in a sense, against the other, and this positioning is particularly visible during certain moments, when it becomes clear that although the two are quite similar, they also have very different notions of what it is that is most important for a good social life. In the last section of this chapter I focus primarily on economic activities of the Comunidades to highlight that although San Martín is more integrated into the capitalist
economy, the distinction between helping one another during mingas and being paid money for work remains clear. Overall, this chapter is less theoretically engaged than most of the others. What I aim to do here, is not to engage directly with literature on these topics from the region or beyond, but to set out a description of problems that can be explored in further work. The issues set out here should therefore be seen as a part of wider processes of transformation that can be understood as a continuum, rather than as stark contrasts; although there are points which do highlight important differences between San Juan and San Martín on the one hand, and both of these places and the Urubamba River on the other.

Figure 46: Schoolchildren Singing Anthem in San Martín, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.
Figure 47: Children entering school in San Martin, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.

Figure 48: Carlos teaching Amahuaca language in San Martin, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.
Figure 49: Fishing upriver, San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.

Figure 50: Abuela Margarita and Enrique, San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.
Figure 51: Two boys in San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.

Figure 52: Ayahuasquero Adorned for Photograph, Upper Inuya, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.
Figure 53: House in Caserio of Maldonadillo near town of Atalaya, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.
Figure 54: Abuela Margarita in San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.
Figure 55: President Manuel Sarasara in Atalaya, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.

Figure 56: Family from Upper Inuya Visiting to Discuss Land Titling, San Juan, 2011. Photo by Katherine Needles.
Section I: School

As I mentioned earlier, many indigenous people move to Comunidades so that their children can attend school (Gow 1991; Aikman 1999; Killick 2008; see Rival 1992 for another context). Evan Killick (2008) has argued that Ucayali Asheninka people make Comunidades and move to them primarily for this reason, and not to claim rights to a territory. The same was true for Amahuaca people on the Inuya, although territory has become increasingly important over the past decades, as more and more outsiders move to the Inuya. Today, these two things are closely related.

In Chapter 3 I spoke about Enrique who, as a boy, was sent to live with the mother of his family’s patrón, Placido Sánchez. He was mistreated while living there, but it is also there that he had learned how to read, write and do math. Enrique now lives in San Juan and is very outspoken against the incursion of non-Amahuaca people into their territory. He seldom travels to Atalaya and does not like Don Juan, the local elite, who lives just one hour downriver, because he is ‘un estafador,’ a cheat. Enrique recounted on multiple occasions why serranos cannot be trusted. He told me the following to make his point:

A person from the Andes moved to the area and asked local residents if he could make a garden and live there. They agreed and he cleared a place to live. They got along relatively well until one day he arrived back from a trip to town and, having called them together, told them they would have to move. He presented a land title he had been granted for the area where they had all been living together. While people were angry and wanted to fight, they moved. This is why people from the Andes should not be trusted. They know the value of land and can negotiate relationships with the government. For this reason it is important to be able to read, write and do math as well as to know how to deal with outsiders. It is important to learn so that you do not get cheated.

Knowledge of the outside and being literate are highly valued attributes among Amahuaca people, as it empowers them to negotiate with loggers and prevents them from being cheated. Many people say they live in the Comunidad so that their children can attend schools and thus learn in order to avoid being vulnerable to abuses when they get older (Gow 1991). People in San Juan see the school as a way for their children to become ‘civilized’ as they learn about what it means to be Peruvian. It is, in a sense,
where they learn how to become mestizo, which is a way of being in the world, similar to becoming ‘white’ in other contexts (Vilaça 2007, 2010). I argue that this is not contradictory to being Amahuaca, which is a topic explored further in the next chapter.

Children begin going to school at age five and are expected to attend regularly until they complete primary school around the age of twelve. Currently in San Juan and San Martín there are only primary schools, so when children graduate they must either move to a different Comunidad, or to a town where they can attend secondary school until around the age of 17. Most Amahuaca children today complete primary school but only a few go on to complete secondary school.

As I mentioned, the ability to read, write and do arithmetic is important for the people who view it as an expression of power when it comes to entering into relationships with others, especially the government, loggers and shopkeepers. The school is perceived as a site where children can learn about the outside, yet remain close to their families. I will argue that differences in the ways in which people perceive school in the two Comunidades is a useful way of exploring how they position themselves in the wider world and imagine the future of their children.

**Part One: San Juan**

In San Juan the schoolteacher, Manuel, is a mestizo man who was born in Atalaya and grew up between the caserío of Inmaculada on the Inuya, and town. He spent the first part of his life in Atalaya and then travelled to Lima for college where he trained to be a teacher. Due to his position as an outsider, non-Amahuaca and mestizo, Manuel does not participate in most social activities in San Juan. This is also in large part because his parents and brother live only an hour away. His father is Don Juan who was discussed earlier as an adversary of some families in San Juan. His brother is the teacher in the Caserio of Inmaculada that was formed around Don Juan’s land and is comprised of mostly Ashaninka and a few Amahuaca people. Manuel sells things out of his house (cigarettes, candy, soda, shotgun shells), like his father, which places him in an awkward position vis-à-vis members of the Comunidad (see Aikman 1999 for a similar case in Madre de Dios).
Manuel leaves regularly on weekends to visit his parents, or even to travel to town, and is sometimes gone for extended periods of time. The parents in San Juan regularly complain about his extended absences, which he says are required for further training. The school has a very low number of students and the government has threatened to close it down. One of the main reasons this has not happened is due to Manuel’s efforts, because he likes teaching there. In general, relations between Manuel and comuneros are not particularly amicable, but he is an important figure in the Comunidad nonetheless. He does not interact much with the families of his students beyond his official capacities, which include his role as organizer of campeonatos. It is his responsibility to organize these with the teachers in the other villages.117

In San Juan, the school day begins at 7:45am when Manuel rings the bell and enters the school building. As children arrive, they sit in their respective seats and he sets out the agenda for the day. The primary subjects are math, history (primarily of Peru), Spanish and literature. Most children live between five and twenty minutes walk from the school, so if they arrive early they wait in a nearby house. More often, however, children arrive late. There is only one school for all the children, so they learn all the subjects together and receive work based on their age. Manuel teaches them from 8am to 11am, when they go home for lunch and return at 1pm until 3pm. The day usually ends with a game of either soccer or volleyball in which both boys and girls participate.

Manuel is relatively relaxed in his approach to teaching in the school, not taking a strong position in terms of discipline. Students are mildly castigated for being tardy, for example, but are not sent home or given extra work. One morning a boy of about 12 walked into the school smoking a cigarette. Manuel asked him what he was doing, and when the boy replied he was coming to study, he was told to either discard the cigarette or leave the school. The boy left and did not return. Later on that day, Manuel told me the story and laughed about how ‘wild’ some of the kids are, especially that particular boy. This situation demonstrates his relatively relaxed position on discipline, and how he approaches his work with humour.

117 I use the word village here because soccer tournaments take place between Comunidades, but also include Caseríos, which are non-indigenous villages. This is an important distinction both legally and for Amahuaca people. Organizing a tournament entails setting three dates, one for each village, to host one tournament and then each teacher is expected to send an invitation to the others officially inviting them to participate.
He teaches the students based on the supplies he is given by the Ministry of Education, and though he makes some of his own lesson plans, he does not use their life in the village as a teaching tool. This is not to say he is not a good teacher, but rather that he is invested in his job in a particular way. He is there to teach certain subjects and assist young people to learn how to engage with wider Peruvian society based on his own ideas concerning indigenous people. He looks to the urban areas of the region and Peru for his identity, and is not interested in sharing his personal life with Amahuaca people. His job is to teach children the skills they need to be Peruvians, and he does this well. Although he does not dislike indigenous people, he has an attitude common in the region of Atalaya that indigenous people are first and foremost Peruvians. In short, being indigenous should not stop them from integrating into wider society.

One way to think about this is to look back at the roots of the SIL’s engagement with indigenous people and the aims of the Peruvian government when Varadero was founded. The early bilingual language books developed by the SIL detailed the full scope of the project, which included incorporating indigenous people into wider Peruvian society:

…this task of great social and human importance is entrusted to the Summer Institute of Linguistics, whose specialist orientation as mediators through bilingual communication will guide the teaching of literacy and basic knowledge in their own native tongue, then gradually incorporating the Castilian language with the intention of national integration. (Quirica 1960, my translation, my emphasis; see also Greene 2009)

As the requirements for being considered a qualified teacher are continuously being modified, and as full literacy in indigenous languages is being used as a marker of ‘authentic’ identity (Sarmiento Barletti 2011), there are fewer and fewer bilingual school teachers in the region. Thus, the project of ‘national integration’ may be said to be succeeding in the eyes of the State (Ferguson 1990; Scott 1998; Stoll 1982). This is not only because Manuel cannot teach the Amahuaca language, but it is also connected to the notion of what it means to ‘become civilized.’ This is something parents in San Juan want for their children and they want Manuel to teach their children how to be Peruvian.

118 There are very particular programs that focus on bilingual education that have large amounts of funding. This is problematic for certain young people who are raised to speak primarily Spanish although they understand Ashaninka.
Part Two: San Martín

The teacher in San Martín, Carlos, is an Amahuaca man in his fifties who was born in the village of Jatitza on the Ucayali, and raised in the Catholic mission of Sepahua. He is the only remaining Amahuaca bilingual schoolteacher, and an important influence for Amahuaca people living on the Inuya. He is also a leader who organizes events such as *campeonatos,* as well as *faenas,* among other activities. As I discussed above, the school in San Juan is not bilingual and it is focused on teaching children to be Peruvian citizens. Carlos, however, explicitly states that he is teaching children how to be both Amahuaca and Peruvian, making the school a very important site for understanding what it means to be Amahuaca in San Martín and on the Inuya.

A school day in San Martín begins at 7:45 Am with the students lining up in two rows, boys on the right, girls on the left, with the shortest in front and the tallest in back. On Mondays and Fridays they raise the Peruvian flag, as they sing the national anthem. Once the flag is raised, another Peruvian song for school children is sung. Everyone sings and all children over about six years old know the entire songs. In between songs Carlos scolds children who fall out of line, do not stand up properly, or are not paying attention. It is during these moments when the ideal of ‘Amahuaca Civilizado’ is explicitly set out. For example, if students are not paying attention, staring off into the distance or at a passing dog they are scolded: ‘You, Juanito, you are not paying attention. You stare off at the dog and do not know what is going on. You are like one of those Amahuaca who lives upriver and does not know discipline. They do what they want when they want. They do not know how to sit still and behave and look at them. They do not know how to read or write.’

After the songs have been sung, which usually takes place on Monday and Friday, children are called up front to perform. In those performances they do two things. They sing, and they give puzzles about animals, plants, bugs and other facts about animals from the forest. The other children are meant to guess the answer. I never figured out if Carlos gave them the puzzles beforehand. The riddles were quite clever and I never heard them in other contexts. The children almost always figured them out.

119 I do not include the Spanish version of these comments because they would be too long for the thesis.
Prior to the morning inspection, Carlos reviews the schedule of events for that week and reminds students of their personal responsibilities, and of those of their parents. Fridays, for example, are usually work and athletic days so students are told what to wear and what tool to bring to do their work. This usually entails dressing in their soccer jerseys and bringing a machete to cultivate the area around the school or the soccer field for an upcoming campeonato.

Before entering the school, students are inspected. They come forward and Carlos checks their hands, fingernails, and arms for dirt. He also examines their collars, scalp and necks for lice, and their clothing to make sure it fits properly and that it is relatively clean. He comments on students’ cleanliness, health, clothing, and tells them they need to ask their parent to remedy any problem identified during the inspection. If a student is dirty, he will send them home to wash or change.

Inside the school, the atmosphere is somewhat more relaxed, in large part due to the fact that Carlos is meant to teach students ranging from age five to fifteen. In order to keep it all together, he allows certain distractions. For example, younger children who are not yet studying will walk around the classroom. One young boy comes and goes often, bringing laughter at his antics. He has a strong personality and is basically left to do as he wishes. He comes into the school, marches around for a few minutes, and then leaves. Older children, on the other hand, are scolded for not paying attention, not doing their work, or taking too long when they ‘go to the bathroom’. They often go out, pick and eat fruit. If a child does not pay attention or do their work, they are reprimanded in front of the whole class. I have seen Carlos complain to and about a child for three straight minutes saying more or less the following:

‘You don’t do anything. You do not work, you do not pay attention. You do not help at home. You fish, you like to fish because it means you don’t do anything. You just sit there. And you eat all day. Every time I turn around you are eating something. You stole watermelons from your grandmother and you ate them. How could you do that. You cannot just steal. People work hard and plant their watermelons and you just eat them.’

The teacher has a set schedule for the week, in which he spends certain days teaching mathematics, Spanish grammar and history. Two days of the week he teaches Amahuaca language. According to Carlos, when he arrived to teach in San Martín none of the children knew how to speak the language. Today, most of them understand a good amount, and the older ones can write the language relatively well. He wants them to be
able to read, write and speak the Amahuaca language before they graduate. When I asked Carlos what it means to be Amahuaca today, he responded that it was important to know the language, drink *masato* and know how to work in the garden.

At this point it is worth pointing out again that not all of the children living in San Martín are Amahuaca. The population of the *Comunidad* is comprised of Yaminahua, Amahuaca and mestizo people, so Carlos is teaching the Amahuaca language to children who may not be considered Amahuaca in any way. In some cases children are mixed, but when this is the case they are living with both parents and are being raised speaking only Spanish at home. This will become important as I move to a discussion of people in San Juan because while children in San Juan might be considered ‘mixed’, they are being raised differently than in San Martín. And this is an important distinction: in San Martín, Carlos is using the school to shape children into Amahuaca people, but in a very methodical, organized and explicit way. He has a discourse concerning what it means to be a good Amahuaca person, and this excludes those living up river, which may or may not refer to people in San Juan, depending on the context. He has set out a very purposeful project that reflects his own identity as a civilized Amahuaca.

Carlos was trained in the Dominican Mission, known for having strict disciplinary procedures, and for not being bilingual. In fact, the Mission refuses to teach indigenous languages. Carlos was supported by the Mission throughout his studies and has a strong sense of pride for his training with the Dominicans. He joins together the discipline of the Dominicans with his sense of duty to take care of his Amahuaca family. He is called by kinship terms in direct conversation with most Amahuaca people living in San Martín. Carlos wants young people to be self-sufficient, so when they go to work or have families they can take care of themselves and others. This includes boys being able to wash their own clothing and girls being able to cook for themselves and take care of their younger siblings.

On the other hand, the language has specific meanings for him, which differ from those in San Juan. As a way to explain why the language matters so much to Carlos and others, he gave me the following example. His niece was working on her degree to become a teacher, and as part of the final requirements she had to write a dissertation. When she met with the board to discuss her project, they told her that because she did not
read and write the Amahuaca language she would not be allowed to fulfill the requirements to become a bilingual teacher. She could complete her studies, and become a teacher, but not an officially recognized bilingual teacher. Apparently she called her mother that same day and, crying, asked why her mother had not taught her more of her own language.

For Carlos, it would seem, the Amahuaca language is about empowerment and identity. To be able to speak the language is important. He told me people in Sepahua, the mission town, people joke that they are not ‘really’ Amahuaca because they do not speak the language. However, it is also about empowerment because he has a vision of another side of indigeneity, in which the power of language is the power of ‘authenticity.’ This comes from the programs present in the region that reify language and make it a marker of authenticity. For example, one mother told me that she wants her daughter to learn the language so she can get a scholarship to study in Canada. Apparently, Carlos knows of such a program and stresses that one must know the Amahuaca language to be eligible. The girl is half Amahuaca and half mestizo. The importance of this and the Amahuaca language is discussed further in the next chapter.

In another example, a group of Amahuaca people living in Madre de Dios, hundreds of miles to the South, had stopped speaking the language. When I visited them in 2010, they told me they wanted to learn the language. This was in large part because in that area, a person who is considered an authentic indigenous person is one who has a language (Aikman 1999). They perceived their inability to speak the language as a loss of identity, and thus felt disadvantaged in terms of the many indigenous organizations, NGO’s and tourists who only worked with ‘authentic’ indigenous people. This corresponds to Aikman’s (1999) description of the region where ‘indigeneity’ has been highly politicized in more concrete terms due to tourism, mining and land disputes for several decades. This group was also trying to renegotiate for more territory due to greater encroachment by outsiders.
Section Two: Authenticity, and Civilización

Part One: Residence and Relationality

Amahuaca people in San Juan say that people in San Martín are not ‘really’ Amahuaca because they are mixing with other people and do not speak the language. People in San Juan speak about specific people they are related to, often using the most direct kinship terms. In many cases, especially with older people, they are classificatory brothers and sisters. These relations, however, are often suppressed when speaking about the Comunidad in general, as if it were some distant unrelated group. Socially and historically, as I have tried to show, Amahuaca people are separated through the decision to live in particular places.

According to people in San Juan, people in San Martín steal, fight, and cheat. They did not always do this, but have learned from the others living there, such as Yaminahua people and mestizos. People in San Martín, on the other hand, speak about San Juan in similar terms when you ask about specific relations. Most people acknowledge close connections. However, as above, these relations are not emphasized. Instead, the general distance of the Comunidad is stressed and particularly their lack of certain attributes of ‘civilization.’

One woman, for example, told me that people in San Juan were not bad, but really that they resided there because they did not know how to live well with other people: they lived only with family. In terms of San Martín, San Juan did not constitute a Comunidad, despite the fact that the core group of Amahuaca in San Martín is also comprised of extended families related through multiple marriages. It is their unwillingness to accept different types of ‘otherness’ that makes people in San Juan seem ‘less’ civilized to people in San Martín. They are too closed. This perception extends to their knowledge of the outside.

I was told on numerous occasions that people in San Juan did not know how to negotiate with loggers and were always getting cheated. The reasons given were two-fold. First, they lacked the capacity to really know the value of timber and thus could not calculate the amount being taken out of their territory. Second, because they were not
organized and lived only for themselves, nobody was willing to take responsibility for regulating the loggers. This corresponds to the statement I heard on multiple occasions that people in San Juan do not ‘really’ know how to live together.

On the other hand, there have been several cases when Amahuaca I knew from San Juan were uncomfortable visiting San Martín despite what might be considered close kinship connections. In one case, I was living in San Martín and a group from San Juan stopped by on their way up the river. One of them was a person from Sepahua who had lived in San Juan for several years. He was a person I had come to know and respect. I felt obligated to invite him to eat, but I was living with my comadre (literally co-mother, but based on a system of godparenthood) and had to ask her if there was ‘food.’ I had plenty of food, but she did all the cooking and it was her kitchen. She made a comment to the effect that the young girls he was travelling with could easily prepare food in her kitchen, implying that she should offer him nothing. When I told her they were not going to eat, but I wanted to serve him food, she finally said: ‘pues, el es mi tio’ [well, he is my uncle], and laughed.

On another occasion, when a young couple from San Juan came to pick me up in San Martín, they refused to enter the Comunidad and spent the night on the beach under a plastic sheet. This young couple was related to multiple families in San Martín, and visited often for soccer tournaments, but in this context did not feel comfortable visiting. When I asked why they slept on the beach, they said they did not mind, and when I pushed, they said people would steal their things.

**Part Two: Culture, Politics and Authenticity**

Through my conversations with Carlos in San Martín it became clear that the importance he gave to the Amahuaca language extended to a broader notion of indigeneity that may be considered a form of cultural consciousness, similar to that described for other groups in the immediate region (Gow, pers. com.; Sarmiento Barletti 2011) and beyond (Conklin 1997; Conklin and Graham 1995; Rubinstein 2004; Turner, T. 1991, 1992). Carlos has the idea of constructing a special building to store and exhibit Amahuaca cultural artefacts. I do not know exactly where this idea came from, as there
are very few tourists in the area, but his aim was to have these available for both Amahuaca people themselves, so the children can learn about the past, and for tourists who may arrive. Interestingly, I heard that since I departed, a group of tourists from Europe travelled to San Martín. I have very little information about this, but perhaps Carlos is using his connections in town to have people sent to San Martín. The notion of a cultural patrimony being presented in a space, (a museum, of sorts) or this idea of Culture (Wagner 1981), is not an aspect of engagement with the outside that people in San Juan would express. While I do not focus on this anymore here, this is clearly something that could be explored further. I point it out here because this is a way of highlighting the many differences between San Juan and San Martín that have implications for the ways in which people relate to one another, and to the outside.

The only other person besides the Carlos with whom I discussed the issue of Amahuaca culture, tradition, and social difference in a direct way was an Amahuaca man of about 45 named Wilson. He was born on the upper Inuya (above the current centre of San Juan) and raised in both San Juan and Nueva San Martín, but currently lives in town where he works as a motorist for forest engineers. He is very proud of being Amahuaca (though he is very aware he is half Yaminahua). While he lives in town, two of his children live in San Martín with their mother, and he is glad they are learning how to speak the language. Like Carlos, he had an interesting and influential perspective on what it meant to be Amahuaca in the Province of Atalaya. He was interested in learning about and discussing the past and traditions and also cared about school and having good work that was valued by him and other people. He made a point to tell me on several occasions that he likes to work with gringos, which means he has a certain interest in them.

I travelled with Wilson and his parents Pedro Collazo and Gloria to the headwaters of the Mapuya River to visit a group of Amahuaca living there. Pedro and his wife both lived at Varadero with the missionaries, and are important figures in both San Juan and San Martín. He is Amahuaca and she is Yaminahua, having been ‘captured’ when she was young as discussed in the opening of the previous chapter.

Wilson was a good guide because he had family in every Comunidad including the Yaminahua Comunidad of Raya two days up river from where the Mapuya enters the
Inuya. Each time we arrived to a new house, people were happy to see us and offered us *masato*. In some cases it had been many years since the old couple had last seen these people, some of who were relatively close relatives. I cannot discuss the details of this trip here, but these Amahuaca families are mentioned in other sections of the thesis.

There were a few things that struck me about travelling with Pedro and Gloria. One was the fact that Pedro wore a plastic hardhat and a large jacket almost the entire trip. He sat in the front of the long canoe and was enjoying himself thoroughly. Second, he insisted that while he liked to travel and visit people, he hated working for mestizos. He only worked with white people, *gringos*, or lingüístico. He said this over and over again and I did not quite know what to make of it at the time. Third, he told me on multiple occasions that his wife, Gloria, had been brought along as the cook. He was the guide. He also claimed that he no longer liked to eat fish from the river, but preferred canned tuna. He drank a lot of my coffee and demanded that I give him my tent. Finally, he seemed to both desire and fear contact with this man who had become so important for the history of people on the Inuya River, Toshombiro. He had known him when they were young, and did not say much about him, though I did not ask directly. As we made our way upriver, which took a week, he became very excited and seemed anxious when the time came to think about their actual meeting. I think he was afraid for his safety, and perhaps rightfully so, but also afraid because if Toshombiro accepted him into his home, this would be a dramatic event. Toshombiro has come to define the position of uncivilized Amahuaca for all the people living on the Inuya. Although I cannot be sure, I think that Pedro’s insistence on wearing the extra clothing and eating only civilized food was related to this fact.

I only saw one other person wear clothing in quite the same manner, and that was Ayahuasquero, who I have not yet discussed. He lived three hours above the centre of San Juan and only visited once during my fieldwork. He lived with his wife and their children and grandchildren. It was his son who walked into the school smoking a cigarette. When I visited him in 2011 with a colleague to take photographs, he would not allow us to take the picture *until* he dressed in his oil company uniform. He had never

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120 Pedro’s classificatory sister is married to a Yaminahua man and lives in Raya. Apparently, she was abducted from her garden up the Inuya when she was younger.
worked for the company. The suit was given to him as a gift. I do not explore the importance of clothing specifically in the thesis due to word limitations, but there is clearly space for elaborating on this topic (Seeger et. al. 1979; Turner 1980; Vilaça 2007; Viveiros de Castro 2012). I am discussing this problem with two linguists who are currently carrying out research on the Inuya, one of whom is examining Amahuaca notions of the body. I return to this in the next chapter.

Another topic that Wilson and I discussed was the fact that the two Comunidades, San Juan and San Martín, are basically one large extended family, yet, they are quite different and socially distant from one another. While they are only two hours apart by boat, socially they are in some ways different worlds. This is despite what may be seen as close kinship connections. In a related conversation, Wilson made a statement about a group of Amahuaca living on the upper Mapuya that struck me as similar to those made about people in San Juan. He said they did not know how to deal with outsiders and had been severely cheated by the loggers who they had worked with. The reason given was the lack of experience, capacities to negotiate, and forms of knowing that make dealing with certain types of people both more acceptable and productive. If they had known more, he said, they would have been able to get more for their work. While this seems an obvious point, it has important implications for understanding how different Amahuaca view themselves in relation to others based primarily on the distinction between upriver and downriver.

What Wilson was referring to was the fact that this group had worked with loggers and received pots, pans, radios, solar panels, shotguns and other western goods. As such, in many ways these families had more ‘wealth’ than people living in San Juan or San Martín. In San Juan and San Martín, large items such as solar panels are owned collectively. Taken from the point of view of people on the Mapuya, for example, they seemed happy to have received what they did for their work. They considered themselves ‘civilized’ because they could speak Spanish and thus work with loggers and receive all this wealth. This is, I think, why Jorge told me upon my arrival, ‘Somos civilizado ahora. Hablamos Espanol’ [We are civilized now. We speak Spanish]. In fact, I already knew he spoke Spanish as I had met him in Atalaya and we spent two afternoons together, speaking at length. Moreover, the way he defined himself as civilized places him on
equal grounds with people downriver and against the ‘naked Indians’ who are said to live nearby. In fact, it is because of where he lives and who he lives near (his uncles who killed Amahuaca people) that he is considered a certain type of person, ‘un asesino,’ which, as I showed above, from certain points of view actually denies his existence. This does not, however, mean that he is not, in fact, a ‘civilized Amahuaca’ in his own terms and against those whom he chooses to relate through. From this position, he is civilized against the indio, while from other points of view, he is the indio, or ‘wild indian’ (Gow 1993).

Section III: Productive Activities

As I have tried to demonstrate earlier in this thesis, the household (conjugal pair), based on complementary work and capacities of husband and wife (aided by children to a certain extent), is the basic unit in the ongoing processes of sociality among the Amahuaca people. Relations within and between households are the focus of three types of productive activities. First, activities surrounding the making of food (gardening, fishing, hunting, collecting and cooking) for consumption within the household, and sharing beyond the house, either by inviting visitors to eat or drink there or by giving surplus goods to other households. Second, activities related to making goods (fishing nets, canoes, hammocks, raising chickens) for the market or working for money (logging, cooking in either logging camps or town). The money is often used to buy things for oneself or other member of the household. Money is never shared or given to anyone beyond the household, though it may be used to buy gifts for friends or relatives. Ownership of specific items, ranging from chickens to shotguns, is quite important, as it pertains to personal and household autonomy. While people may share items such as an ax or a specific pot across households, everyone knows who owns it and the object is

121 This phrase is used to leave space for a later discussion concerning the problems of differentiating between the term production and exchange in this context.
cleaned and returned immediately after use so as not to cause a problem. The third type of activity is the minga, which has been discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

While these comments are consistent for people living in San Juan and San Martín there are also some differences that are worth pointing out.

**San Juan**

The population of San Juan is concentrated on a series of bends in the river that cuts against a high bank upon which the centre is located. Below this high bank is a large deep pool, or pozo, where most daily fishing takes place. Early in the morning and in the afternoon, two or three canoes can be seen maneuvering back and forth across the pozo as people, mostly boys and men, fish with nets, or nylon and hooks. This pool supplies most of the food for the Comunidad. A variety of fish are caught there, including the three most common types: small cunchi (Pimelodus pictus), medium boquichico (Prochilodus nigracans), large cawara (Lithodoras dorsalis); and the most sought after zungaro (Zungaro juruense). As I discussed earlier, a proper meal consists of fish or meat and either manioc or plantain. In San Juan, people eat fish almost everyday.

In some cases people will hunt for fish with a bow and arrow. Most men own at least one bow, and multiple arrows. They do not use the bow for hunting large animals anymore, but are still very capable of using it to kill small birds and fish (as a note, the men living at the headwaters of Mapuya use shotguns to hunt, but are capable of killing large animals with their bows). When they do not have cartridges, they hunt with dogs and bows. There is much more game in that area, so they eat meat more regularly.

In San Juan, every family owns at least some chickens, which are not eaten except on special occasions. They are sometimes sold to loggers and, more rarely, to other Amahuaca people for parties. People know who owns each chicken and every house has a small coop where the chickens are kept overnight.

At the time of my fieldwork, between 2009-2011, only one family in San Juan had pigs. The owner, Francisco, lived on the other side of the river directly across from his parents, Margarita and Enrique. He had two large pigs until one was attacked by a jaguar early one morning. Francisco shot the jaguar, but hit his pig as well. The jaguar died
instantly and the pig lived until later that afternoon when it was butchered. The other pig was sold shortly thereafter. The man’s father, Enrique, had been building a new hut a short distance above the centre of the village on the other side of the river in a large garden. He said he intended to raise pigs. Apparently, he had between six and ten pigs at some point in the past decade, and then sold them all. They are a great nuisance and cause many problems with neighbors as they enter people’s gardens and eat their manioc. This is why he was building his new house on the other side of the river, and one of the reasons Francisco lived across the river.

Most families own a shotgun and boys learn to hunt at an early age. While there are many animals in this part of the forest, hunting is not a reliable source of food. It is not uncommon for a man to go hunting and return with only a medium-sized bird, small rodent, or nothing at all. It is very rare that someone kills a larger animal such as a deer or peccary, though this does sometimes happen.

The most common and sought after animal is the majaz, (agouti paca), which is mostly hunted at night. This can happen in one of three ways. Firstly, a person can find tracks either on a trail or in their garden and set up a trap consisting of a small gun with a string attached to the trigger, so when the animal passes by, the gun fires and kills the animal. In my limited experience in which I supplied the cartridges there is about a 50% success rate with this type of trap. The other option is to sit in the garden all night and wait for the animal to come out to eat, then shoot it. The third and most successful option is to hunt on the river at night. This entails moving along the river in a canoe with one person in the front, with a shotgun and flashlight, and another in the back, steering. Hunters do not usually go to this trouble unless they know there are many majaz in the area. If they have seen tracks, for example, they will go out at night. While sometimes hunters get nothing, it is not uncommon for them to come back with two or three good-sized majaz. On one occasion a young man came back with four, as well as two caimans. Caimans are the other animal that is hunted at night with a flashlight, but they are mostly found up smaller tributaries, not on the main river.

The other animal that is important both for the diet and economy of people in this area is the motelo, a type of land turtle. They are considered very good food, and can also be kept and sold in town or to loggers. A female can be sold for up to 30 soles (more than
$10), but a more common price is 20-25 soles. Males sell for less. Most Amahuaca people take turtles to town to sell, so they have money to buy goods. People often send them with family or friends to be sold, with the money being used to buy necessary items, which are then brought back. Once, while I was in Atalaya, an Amahuaca man from up the upper Mapuya arrived to town with fifty motelos he had collected.

All men and most women over the age of 17 have worked away from the Comunidad for at least some period of time. The most common ways to earn money for men in San Juan is to work for a logger for a few months. They earn between 10-15 soles a day, which is 4-6 U.S. dollars. Over the course of a few months they can earn enough money to buy western goods to last them for about a year. Most young men make their first journey to work to the town of Satipo, which is located two days from the Inuya, at the base of the Andes. In Satipo young men work collecting coffee, but earn very little, are fed poorly, and are mistreated by their bosses. They return with new clothing and stories of being called chuncho, which is a derogatory term for people from the jungle in Peru. This is an example of the costs of living in the mestizo world.

Women tend to work in restaurants, bars or as cooks in logging camps. It is quite common for young women to move to town and work for several months when they are still teenagers. This usually continues until they have multiple children and a husband who can clear them a garden back on the Inuya. In some case, which will be discussed in the next chapter, women remain in town and send children back to the Comunidad where they are raised by aunts and grandparents.

It is becoming more and more common for Amahuaca people to work for the oil and gas companies in the region, but this requires having more documentation. There were no Amahuaca men in San Juan working for the company in 2010, but this has more recently changed because a new company has entered the Inuya to explore for gas.

San Martin

The Comunidad is located on a sharp bend in the river with a tributary entering the river from the opposite side from the village centre. The pozo, ‘deep pool’ here is not large, but sufficient for fishing. There are two larger pozos located a bit upriver that can
be reached within an hour by canoe. People fish up and down the river, and it is common for two men to fish together, sharing the catch.

In San Martín people use large nets strung across the river at night to catch fish that are collected early in the morning for breakfast. The same three kinds of fish are caught, but it is rare for a person to get a larger fish such as a zungaro unless they go upriver. Most common are cunchi and boquichico, which can be caught on a daily basis.

When large amounts of fish are caught, they are shared among close relatives such as parents, brothers and sisters, but not to other parts of the Comunidad. There are three ‘sections’ of the Comunidad, which have been described earlier, and while they are related, sometimes in multiple ways, they exist as separate spaces with food and gifts being exchanged internally. Most of people’s time is spent interacting with those who live near them, and those tend to be close relatives, such as brothers and sisters who all live around an older parent or parents.

The families in San Martín also have more store-bought food and the president almost always has onions, cans of fish, rice, oil, flavor packs such as cumin, and spaghetti fideos on hand. Cans of tuna are eaten once or twice a week. This increased while I was there as I contributed a good amount of food to the family, but the difference with San Juan is noticeable. While these items were not eaten most of the time, they were always present.

The most common food is a fish soup made of small fish, usually cunchi, eaten with plantains or manioc. This can be eaten for any meal, but is most often eaten for breakfast as these small fish are easily caught in the short time available in the morning before school, or are found in the net left out over night. The family with whom I lived always had a form of ‘aji’ or spicy mixture of lemon juice, garlic and chili that was mixed with the soup to give it more flavor.

There is always masato, which is kept in a large container in the kitchen and can be accessed by any member of the household at any time. All guests are offered masato. There are usually two types, the one for the baby (a boy of 2-3), which is boiled so as not to ferment, and the fermenting or strong masato. There is almost always unfermented masato for the boy, although the strong masato occasionally runs out. In the case of the opposite being true, the baby will drink strong masato because he becomes irritable
without it. On several occasions I saw him mildly drunk. Once, he was marching around
the cleared area below the kitchen barking orders at people. After drinking *strong masato*
he is very amusing and much more pleasant than when there was nothing at all in which
case he just cried and screamed. His screams and cries would be met with some form of
drink, and only when he kept screaming was he reprimanded.

The biggest difference economically, besides the more common use of store-bought
foods, is the cash-economy within the *Comunidad*. The president and her husband have a
‘store’ in their house. They mostly sell candy, soda, cigarettes and trago. While they do
sometimes run out of these things, they have them on a consistent basis and the ‘store’ is
open all the time, not just during parties. People are extended credit, but they are
reminded of their debt when they ask for more stuff. There is always the possibility of
exchange, but this rarely occurs. Most people owe things to someone at any given point.
This is usually gasoline as it is an important part of life, but is expensive. People often
borrow gasoline to go down river and pay back the same amount upon their return from
town. There is no extra added, no fee, but those who lend the gasoline often ask the
person to bring them back stuff, sending along money. This happens in either case,
however, as any person going to town is liable to the requests of their family and
neighbours to bring back certain goods.

The sale of chickens and ducks is also more regular in San Martín than in San Juan.
*Comunidad* members will buy chickens, ducks, and eggs from their neighbours and
family. One older woman always had eggs, and her niece purchased these regularly. She
had her own chickens, but did not seem to harvest the eggs. This was in part, I believe,
because it offered her aunt a source of cash as she lived with her grandchildren and
without a husband or son. One of her grandchildren was a young man who supplied most
of her fish and meat, but there were two little ones and a girl of about twelve. Two of her
sons lived and worked in town.

In San Martín more people grow cash crops than in San Juan, mostly rice and more
recently Cacao, which is part of a government program that was started before my arrival,
and extended further upriver during my fieldwork. Two Amahuaca living in San Martín
chose to participate in the program and are growing the crop. Another man, married to an
Amahuaca woman, has three different Cacao plantations. He is an important member of

234
the Comunidad, although he lives across the river on land he, his brother and his sons own.

Rice is a common source of money for many Amahuaca people on the Inuya as it can be planted easily, does not require much work and can be either consumed or sold in town for a good profit. There does seem to be, however, a difference in the way people treat this type of labour regarding other comuneros. While most people get some help clearing their gardens, planting a crop is something done either alone, with a spouse or, on some occasions, with the help of immediate family. In the case of one man, however, he recruited Comunidad members to help him plant rice. He cleared the garden himself, but held a big work party to plant. In this case, he purchased a chicken from his sister and killed one of his own. He spoke about the investment of money in the crop. It seemed that other people also noted the difference. In many cases, masato might be sufficient to gather a group together for work in a garden. In this case, however, he made a point to serve chicken soup with rice. I believe this marks a difference between labour in a garden to produce food for consumption rather than profit. When the rice did not grow, he had to replant the entire garden and killed another chicken to recruit help. In no other case did I participate in or witness a work party in a garden that required food. In San Juan, people are offered masato, but not necessarily given food. It is not part of the minga system. People are meant to show up having eaten breakfast and are given masato before, during and after the work is being carried out.

From what I witnessed this was the case in San Martín. While it might seem to be a minor difference, this is an important distinction for the way people view work, money and kinship. It seems that this is marked through the serving of specific or special foods, not payment for labour. This is in contrast to the Urubamba (Sarmiento Barletti 2011) and the caserio of Maldonadillo where people sometimes will pay others to clear their gardens. Similarly, Don Juan, the owner of land in Inmaculada, pays people to clear, plant, weed, and harvest his garden. This is also true of the teacher in Inmaculada and San Juan (both of whom happen to be sons of Don Juan).

The distinction between helping one another, working, and payment follows two courses: mutual assistance and cash. In the case of working to help a person who is considered closely related in their garden for the production of food, there is no payment.
There is an expectation that the person being helped will reciprocate in kind, but no agreement or contract is made. In the case of working in a garden that will be used for profit, a distinction is made through the giving of special types of food. This, however, remains a relation based on help rather than payment. I should point out here that the man who served chicken for the work party was later elected president. He is a well-respected and liked person who is related to almost everyone in the Comunidad. The third case relates to working for ‘others’ in exchange for money.

Being paid for work in the production of food does not occur amongst Amahuaca people in either San Juan or San Martín. The shift from serving just masato to serving food like chicken or duck soup, as described in the example above, does suggest that a shift is possible, but it has not yet happened. This might be connected to the fact that when a president holds a faena he does not serve food or masato, as this would make him the ‘owner’ of the work party, when he is not. This does occur in other contexts, such as on the Urubamba River (Sarmiento Barletti 2011), but not amongst Amahuaca people.

The only other case that is similar is when comuneros work as loggers for other comuneros. I only witnessed one example of this in San Juan, and it became a problem. A logger hired the two Amahuaca brothers living in San Juan, Roberto and Enrique, to cut wood for him. They, in turn, hired some members of the Comunidad, their kin, to work. While some young men worked for a while this did not last long. They returned after a week saying that the camp was not well organized, that there was not enough food, and that the brother in charge kept the best parts (sugar, salt, coffee) in his house for his family. While it was not a complete failure, the two brothers, Roberto and Enrique, could not keep comuneros as employees and ended up doing most of the work themselves. They hired people mostly to help move the logs to the river once they were cut. I did not visit the camp, so do not know how relations were among the individuals involved, but the comments made certainly marked a particular attitude towards working for kin, which seemed a particular reluctance to accept this breaking of boundaries.
Conclusion

In this chapter I set out to examine the ways in which different forms of personhood among the Amahuaca living on the Inuya River are understood and how this is connected to knowledge and positionality in the lived world on the Inuya.

There seems to be a consistent desire to relate to people from other Comunidades in a way that creates both closeness and distance. This takes its most extreme form during soccer tournaments when the two Comunidades, San Juan and San Martín, come together for a day of sports (soccer and volleyball), food, drink (masato and trago), music and dancing. While these tournaments are the only times when many of these Amahuaca people see one another, the structure of the event is such that social distance is foregrounded in the form of guest/host relations.

The choice to live in either of the Comunidades, at the headwaters area, or in town, is considered a moral choice that becomes the basis for valuations by others. While people who live in San Martín might think of individuals in San Juan as their close relatives, their choice to live separately, and not intermix with non-Amahuaca people, is considered to signify their isolationism and their ‘lack’ of ability to relate to outsiders in a way that is really ‘civilized.’ On the other hand, people in San Juan view those in San Martín as somehow becoming less Amahuaca and learning how to live like people in town, which entails picking up bad habits like stealing and fighting. In both cases, however, those living further upriver or in town not only become targets of ridicule, but also a subject position through which they can claim their own proper balance between being open to the outside, but also maintaining their autonomy and ability to live like ‘real’ people.

In San Martín the teacher plays a central role in defining and maintaining a very specific idea of what it means to be a good Amahuaca person. This particular form of the ideal might stem from a long history of colonization and interactions with missionaries, but cannot be reduced to outside influences beyond the Amahuaca people themselves. In fact, I have tried to show how different Amahuaca people, and the social relations they choose to engage in, are continually being formed in terms of their specific desires. While other chapters are more analytical, this chapter focuses more on describing certain
features of life that are useful for thinking through how people relate to one another and the outside. I examine this theme in more detail in the next chapter.
Chapter 6
Cooks, Foster Mothers and Teachers:
The work of Making Children into Amahuaca People

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the relationships through which children are born, raised and made into Amahuaca people within Native Comunidades on the Inuya River. Extending arguments made in the previous chapters regarding personhood, positionality and kinship, I take two questions as the premise of the argument: where do children come from, especially those who might be considered ‘mixed’? And, how do the two Comunidades of San Juan and San Martín differ in the ways children are raised to be Amahuaca people? What I aim to show is that while there are a high number of ‘mixed’ children living in these two Comunidades, the relationships through which they ‘come into being’ are framed in slightly divergent ways. This is the case both in how children come to live in each Comunidad and the notions of what it means to become Amahuaca.

As discussed earlier, the Inuya River has been a major site for logging over the past several decades and it is quite common for indigenous and non-indigenous men who arrive as loggers to marry or have children with Amahuaca women. It is also common for Amahuaca men to leave to work in town and some of these men return with wives who are not Amahuaca, mostly Ashaninka. Also common, though not often addressed in literature in the region, are women who leave to work in town, which is a major point of the chapter. These marriages are not necessarily ‘new’ as people from different groups have always intermarried, but there are differences in the types of people involved and the implications for what it means to be a good Amahuaca person in the two Comunidades.

To begin with, the relationships through which children are made and potentially grown into Amahuaca people differ in the two Comunidades. In San Martín, of the ten
households, only three are comprised of an Amahuaca man and an Amahuaca woman living together. There are 4 households that are mixed Amahuaca and non-Amahuaca. They are split between men and women as to which is the Amahuaca adult. In one case a woman is married to a mestizo, in another a woman is married to a Piro man. There is one family of Yaminahua and the other two are Yaminahua and mestizo. Notice that there are non-Amahuaca families in San Martín and women married to mestizo men.

Of the 9 families living in San Juan, five of them are comprised of an Amahuaca man and an Amahuaca woman, two are an Amahuaca man and non-Amahuaca woman, and two are an Amahuaca woman and a non-Amahuaca man. In the cases where it is an Amahuaca man and a non-Amahuaca woman, there is only one child in total, while in the opposite there are four children. Of the four households with mixed couples one of them is made of an Amahuaca woman and a Cocama man who has lived there so long he understands the language and speaks it with his wife on occasion. He is considered to be ‘like’ Amahuaca. He has lived in the Comunidad since its founding, is married to an Amahuaca woman, has an adult child who considers himself Amahuaca and, most importantly, is said to live like Amahuaca people do including understanding the Amahuaca language. There is no person like this in San Martín. Another of the couples does not have children, which leaves only 2 couples with children that are mixed in the same terms as in San Martín. Finally, in San Juan 1/3 of the school age children are the children of two women who do not live in the Comunidad on a regular basis, but pass their children to grandparents and aunts and uncles to be raised there. These women and their role in the regeneration of Comunidad life are discussed in detail below.

The comparison is not meant as a definitive distinction as the boundaries between the two places are by no means static, as discussed in earlier chapters. This form of ‘mixing’ in and of itself says little without a better understanding of what it means for the ways people live and raise their children. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, however, there are differences in the ways that people realize their relationships with outsiders and, more importantly here, with one another. And, it is worthwhile to point out that people do recognize a difference in the ways that Amahuaca people are mixing with non-Amahuaca in the two Comunidades. An example of this comes from a conversation I had with an Amahuaca man living in the town of Atalaya, Wilson. He was born in 1970 on the upper
Inuya River and spent his childhood there, but later moved to San Martín where he attended school. He got married to an Amahuaca woman with whom he had children, but later divorced and moved to Atalaya. He re-married, but with a non-Amahuaca woman, and had more children with her. At the time we spoke in 2011 he expressed a concern that his children from his second marriage—to a non-Amahuaca woman—learn the Amahuaca language. This interested me, and as a way of raising a question regarding why it mattered whether they speak Amahuaca or not, I asked about the differences between San Martín and San Juan, implying that there were more ‘mixed’ children in San Juan, but it was considered to be ‘more Amahuaca’122. He thought for a moment, and responded that despite this point, which he acknowledged San Juan was ‘more’ Amahuaca because they spoke more ‘idioma’ and ‘live more like Amahuaca people.’ I do not take this as a basis for discussing ‘authenticity’ as I think that the question was loaded, and framed in the wrong way; however, it does introduce a distinction between the two Comunidades that is recognized by Amahuaca people themselves. This difference is one of position, as discussed in the previous chapter, but also about language, substance and kinship. I think one way to think through this difference is by discussing the ways children are taught what it means to be Amahuaca in different ways.

There are three basic points I want to make by drawing a distinction between the two Comunidades: first, that if in both of the Comunidades it is possible to say that they are comprised of both Amahuaca and ‘mixed’ children, the organization of how these children are positioned differs greatly between the two places. In San Juan almost all of the ‘mixed’ children are being raised by Amahuaca people—mostly from the generation above their ‘biological’ mothers—who might be said to be making them into Amahuaca people. There is not the same system of ‘fosterage’ in San Martín as there is in San Juan where it is systematic and has been repeated over several generations. In San Martín, these children live with their parents, usually one of which is Amahuaca though in some cases neither, and are being made into Amahuaca children more by the schoolteacher who is the only Amahuaca schoolteacher still working. The teacher in San Juan is mestizo.

122 I realize this was an odd question about ‘authenticity’ and I only raised it towards the end of fieldwork and with certain people such as this man because of his position in town and his interest in what it meant to be Amahuaca. As will become clear, I also discussed similar topics with the teacher in San Martín.
This brings me to the second point, which is that in San Martín the teacher, Carlos is a profound moral voice for what it means to be considered a good Amahuaca person, and he has considerable influence within the Comunidad and even beyond. His discourse on being Amahuaca is based around the notion of being civilized and being able to read, write and speak idioma. I return to the details of this towards the end of the chapter, but want to point out that this discourse draws quite heavily on ideas about ‘authenticity’ and the importance of language in the politics of ‘indigeneity’ in the region. Both teachers have travelled extensively and spend time in Lima, the capital of Peru, but relate to this in different ways based on the fact that one is Amahuaca and the other is mestizo. This is reflected in their teaching and roles in their respective Comunidades.

Third, the differences in the ways people live between San Martín and San Juan are noticeable, as discussed in the previous chapter, and are important for the ways they relate to one another and other people. The major differences are that in San Martín there is a greater openness to the outside in terms of influence, people and interactions, which has been discussed in detail in chapter four. To summarize the location of San Martín in the middle of the Inuya means there are more people coming and going from town and other Comunidades. As I made clear above, there is a tendency to marry different types of people. Also, people are more connected to town through work and the fact that they have more money. This creates an internal economy based on cash in which people buy and sell things such as chickens, eggs, and outside goods such as cigarettes, trago (cane liquor) and candy. Thus, people tend to consume more food and drinks that they do not produce themselves. Finally, there are more people and the Comunidad is more organized in terms of collective activities. This is, in large part, because the teacher is the one who organizes events ranging from soccer tournaments, to Comunidad work-days, to the preparation of lunch for the school children in which parents are obliged to cook based on a set schedule.

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123 This term has a long history in debates including the critique set out in ‘writing culture’ (Marcus and Fisher 1992) against representation, but has come to include the politics of indigeneity (see below). In this context it is based on specific projects based in the town of Atalaya.

124 I use this term in a broad sense (cf. Graham and Conklin 1995).
Section I: Making People

As with many Amerindian people, the process of becoming Amahuaca is not given at birth. As Woodside pointed out for Amahuaca people: ‘All humans are born by women, but this origin is insufficient to establish humans status’ (1980: 96). A mother may deny the humanity of the infant in which case it is allowed to die. Furthermore, recognition of a child as human is not the end of a process—it is not the recognition of a bond that will persist through time—but marks the beginning of a process through which a child’s spirit will grow more attached to their body, and to others. Recognizing a child as human makes it potentially kin, and the work to realize this potentiality entails a complex matrix of desire, care, affection, agency and substances (Belaunde 2000; Carsten 2004; Feather 2011) or what Gow (1989) calls ‘relations of caring.’

In chapter three, I extended the discussion of reproduction to analyze the relationship between husband and wife focusing on their complementarity in the processes of production. I used this as a way to draw out a difference between collective activities organized at different scales. This chapter builds on these points, but shifts the focus away from gender complementarity towards inter-generational relationships and compares the two Comunidades: San Juan and San Martín. I set out the argument through two separate examples. The first is the connection between women who work outside the Comunidad, but who leave their children to be raised by their mothers, aunts and grandmothers. For example, in San Juan many of the children were born to women who live and work outside of the village, but are being raised by others. And, were it not for these children, for these women, the Comunidad would not have sufficient numbers to maintain a school based on the mandates of the Peruvian government. These women who live and work beyond the limits of the Comunidad are vital for its regeneration.

The second is the relationship between these adults and children within the Comunidad. I want to make a specific point about what it means to be raised by an Amahuaca person or people and how this is much more important than ‘biological’ kinship between parents and their offspring. In San Juan I focus more on those who are ‘adopted’ as they comprise such a large portion of the children with whom I interacted.

125 Again, this might be perceived as a shift from synchronic analysis to a diachronic one, as mentioned earlier.
There are also several ethnographic examples that allow for a good comparison of how people in San Juan talk about children as potentially becoming Amahuaca people and the teacher in San Martín’s discourses on being a good Amahuaca. In other words, by taking a specific issue in one place—’mixed children’ in San Juan—and comparing it to another—’mixed children’ in San Martín—I aim to draw out some of the similarities and differences in how children can become Amahuaca people and the processes through which this is realized, or not.

While I am highlighting the differences between these two Comunidades, it should be pointed out that in both places there is no sense that what is being taught is the knowledge of ancestors or a tradition that comes from a past that was more ‘authentic.’ As I have tried to show, history for Amahuaca people on the Inuya is understood as a series of transformations through which they have become civilized, which itself should not be considered ‘inauthentic’ for these same reasons.

It seems that the past is not something that is celebrated or perceived as a way of life that was ‘lost.’ As I pointed out earlier in following Vilaça, ‘tradition’ does not correspond to identity, but to something else, which she argues is, ‘body, substance’ (2010: 317), an idea I explore further in this chapter. This different idea of ‘tradition’ is not located in practices as might be expected from a Euro-American thought, but instead in a point of view. Thus, the ‘tradition’ is ‘internalized’ in the sense that it is the internalization of different substances that ‘constitute the body’ (317).

Amahuaca people on the Inuya do not perceive of their ‘culture’ as ways of maintaining ‘tradition’ through which continuity with the past is celebrated. People generally say that life today is good and certainly better than when they lived in the forest. They do not necessarily look to the past for ways to deal with contemporary problems.

In speaking about this problem in terms of people from the Urubamba River, Gow (1991) makes the following point,

The native people of the Bajo Urubamba do not see their ancestral culture as heritable property, but as weapons for the defence of kinship. At particular times such weapons may be useless, and are dropped, to be picked up later when circumstances change. This is why native people are so lacking in nostalgia for the ‘authentic culture’ we attribute to their ancestors. The ancestral ‘ancient people’ made contemporary people, but they are now dead
and cannot help them. It is the living who must be defended, with whatever comes to hand. Native people fear the loss of their children, not their ‘culture.’ (286)

In building on this idea, the point is that Wilson was not necessarily expressing nostalgia for a past in which people were more ‘authentically’ Amahuaca. He is not referring to a reified culture that is passed down from generation to generation as if it were an object, or particularly ‘authentic’ practices that define the Amahuaca as a coherent and bounded group. What Wilson seems to be demonstrating is his interest in maintaining connections with specific people who care for one another in particular ways. On the other hand, Wilson’s relations in town do position him similarly to Carlos who seems to perceive of culture as something that should be saved. I think he, like Carlos, has a slightly different perception of what it means to be Amahuaca in the wider world.

Wilson lives in town and often speaks of returning to live on the Inuya, but he has a good job, which keeps him there. He does not perceive people in San Juan as having greater knowledge of ‘Amahuacaness’ or representing a link to an ‘authentic’ identity that is being lost, but he is expressing a concern for something and capturing this is quite difficult. Wilson has children from a previous marriage who live in San Martín, and children in town with his current wife. He was born there and his interest in his children learning the language seems to be about his own memory of the people who raised him, the threat of losing these connections, and his own identity.

I think a similar experience or position is helps explain why women give children to their grandmothers and aunts to be raised, which is detailed in the next section. Amahuaca people like Wilson and the women discussed below, who live and work in town find ways of expressing the difficulty of reconciling the desires and fears that are part of living in the world of the other. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2012) captures this tension by pointing out that Amerindians,

are afraid because alterity is the object of an equally radical desire on the part of the Self. This is a form of fear that, far from demanding the exclusion or disappearance of the other in order for the peace of self-identity to be recuperated, necessarily implies the inclusion or incorporation of the other or by the other as a form of perpetuation of the becoming-other that is the process of desire in Amazonian socialities.’ (29)

126 I used the word ‘consciousness’ in the previous chapter, although this should examined further by drawing on other examples. I cannot do this here due to word and time limitations, but will continue thinking about this.
For people in San Juan and San Martín, history is the making and unmaking of kinship relationships through the processes of becoming civilized, and I think Viveiros de Castro’s point that this relation to alterity ‘implies the inclusion or incorporation of the other or by the other’ (italics and bold not in original) captures very well the ambivalence regarding relations with the outside. As people come to see themselves as being incorporated more and more into the world of mestizos, they fear that their children will not remember the people who fed and cared for them when they were young. They remember the relationships through which they learned about what it means to be an Amahuaca person when they were younger, and I think this memory and connected decisions to maintain engagement in people’s lives are part of their way of negotiating ‘becoming other.’ This might be understood as their fear of becoming incorporated into the mestizo world, which, through radical bodily transformations and processes of forgetting, would be a denial of kinship. This is because people in San Juan and San Martín say those who live in town are forgetting how to be Amahuaca people.

Carlos expressed this most directly once during a meeting when he said that people who do not return to visit, ‘se han olvidado como vivir en chacra.’ This translates literally as ‘they have forgotten how to live in the garden,’ but means to live and work with others in a Comunidad, which includes sharing food and masato that has been produced through the mutual work of people who live together. The Amahuaca word for ‘forgetting’ is shinanyamakuin.

shinanyamakuin: shinan is the stem of the verb 'remember', yama= no hay (a negative morpheme, turning the verb into its negative equivalent) -quin: suffix signifying transitivity (Karadamou. pers. com. 2013)

The word, shinanya, in which ya marks a possessive ‘with’ or ‘having,’ translates as ‘amicable, good, intelligent.’ And, the word shinanvukui means ‘to come to visit.’ For Amahuaca people this forgetting is a denial of kinship because if people live for too long in town they no longer participate in the continuing processes of making kin by ‘living together.’ They forget how to be good people, which entails visiting as a way to demonstrate one’s connections. As I want to show, absence is not located only in a person’s physical body, but in their intentionality and care, which can be perceived as continuing in other ways.
Section II: Focal Mothers, Affect and Language

Part One

As I pointed out, many of the children living in San Juan are being raised by the women from the generation above their ‘biological’ mothers who live and work in town. This idea of having one’s children raised by others has been a part of Amahuaca people’s way of relating to one another for a long time, and is quite common in the region (Killick 2010127; Maizza 2013) and beyond (Alber 2003128; Leinaweaver 2008; Gay y Blasco 2012;). Dole pointed out that in 1960-61, Amahuaca children were often adopted by others, and this occurred because a parent could not take care of them, a person did not have a child, or the parents simply did not want them. Woodside discusses the same processes, but pointed out that there was a difference between what he calls ‘adoption’ and ‘fosterage.’ He claims that adoption takes place across ‘societal lines’ and a parent who gives up a child in this way loses all rights to the child. In this case, the child is renamed and raised like an ‘actual’ child by their new parents. More common, he states, is the practice of fosterage, in which a child is sent to reside with an older woman, usually the grandparent or great-aunt of the child. The older woman becomes the primary nurturer of the child and calls them ‘my child.’ Children call this person ‘mother,’ but not ‘my mother,’ which distinguishes them from their ‘actual’ mother, as these children maintained certain relationships with their parents and sometimes visited them (1981: 108-109). This coincides quite well with some of the cases in San Juan.

Today, children may call the person who takes care of them either mother ‘mama,’ uha, or ‘abuela,’ uha xunday, ‘grandmother.’ They tend to use corresponding terms for

127 Killick (2020) who works with Asheninka people on the Ucayali River states that although sexual relationship outside between Asheninka and mestizos ‘…might therefore be considered illicit, such relationships and resulting children are accepted in both Asheninka and mestizo society. Throughout the area there were a number of both men and women who had had a number of children by different partners. These children were always accepted by whichever partner one of their parents finally settled with, even though their original parent was remembered.’ (56)

128 In his article on adoption in Northern Benin, Alber (2000) points out that instead of studying the place ‘we should aim at understanding society-specific ideas about relatedness, or, as Edwards and Strathern (2000) have pointed out, of belonging.’ (489) I raise this to point out there is clearly space for a wider comparative study of adoption and fosterage that I have not dealt with in the thesis.
their father ‘papa’ (upa) or grandfather ‘abuelo,’ *upa xunday*. The difference in choice seems to be based more on factors of age than ‘closeness.’ For example, the children William and Jessica, who refer to the person who cares for them as ‘mama’ are referring to a woman, Rosa, who is the maternal aunt of their ‘real’ mother, Lucy. Thus, she is only one generation above and not considered *xunday, vieja*, old. She also still lactates and has breastfed these children, so this might play into the fact that they call her ‘mama,’ ‘uha,’ ‘mother.’ The other woman, Margarita, is the maternal grandmother of the children’s ‘real’ mother, which positions her two generations above the children. She is quite old and they do not call her mother. I do not know if she breastfed the children because when I arrived the youngest boy was 5 years old.

This form of ‘fostering’ corresponds to what Susana de Matos Viegas calls a ‘focal mother’ (citation). According to De Matos Viegas, among the Caboclo-Indians living in the village of Jara in Bahia, Brazil post-marital residence is virilocal and, interestingly, when a divorce occurs the woman leaves the children behind to be raised by the father. Apparently this is quite common, and the father is assisted with the care of children by an older woman, usually his mother or aunt. These women are what De Matos Viegas calls ‘focal mothers’ because they are nearby and give attention to the children. ‘Focal mothers’ can become the ‘care mothers’ of these children, which means this relationship is the most intensive in terms of daily interaction, feeding and caring. An alternative is that a couple hands a child over to be raised by an older woman even if they couple remains together. In either case, this relationship between ‘care mother’ differs from the ‘real mother’ who is still recognized as a significant person and through whom descent can be traced. Often times, however, the ‘care mother’ becomes ‘mother-like’ and the bond between her and the child sometimes come to be considered stronger than those between the child and the ‘real mother.’

This is not necessarily the case, however, and De Matos Viegas offers two cases worth mentioning. The first is a boy who has been raised by a ‘care mother,’ but whose ‘real mother’ lives nearby with her family. The boy sleeps at his ‘care mother’ s’ house, but also visits the house of his ‘real family’ almost everyday. He tends to eat his meals with his ‘care mother’ and often leaves his ‘real family’ to return home to have lunch in the house where he sleeps. When he does not return, however, his ‘care mother’ gets sad
and fears that his ‘real mother’ is trying to draw him in by feeding and caring for him. This is why De Matos Viegas entitled the paper, ‘eating with my favourite mother’ because it is the boy’s choice where he eats. This choice allows the possibility of unmaking a parent-child relationship. And, De Matos Viegas argues, this is not a decision based on ‘rational choice,’ but is largely based on affect and the intersubjective relations between adults and children. This is carried on with people as they themselves become adults. She puts this the following way:

> From an adult point of view, relations towards their parents are not chosen but selected in affective memory. Adults who early in their lives had been taken to become raised children state clearly that the situation had never displeased them. They maintain they belong to the woman who cared for or raised them, and it is to her that they want their children to grow attached. (2003: 32)\(^{129}\)

This conceptualization of sociality in general and its connection to raising children in particular are important for two reasons. First it is to recognize that ‘sociality is something that must be strived for,’ (ibid.: 34), which entails meeting the desires of children through feeding and caring. This is connected to the second point, which is that this remains unstable. Arguing against the notion that once kinship is established it becomes a social fact (Fortes 1969; Bloch 1973) she points out that the ‘sociality of becoming’ implies history, and while relationships can be made, they can also be unmade. The bonds between a woman and a child can always be minimized and although they not usually erased completely, they might be substituted for other bonds. Thus, there is always the threat that children will become ‘dissatisfied,’ which is one of the major points of her argument. ‘Caring-mothers’ must continually work to meet the desires of the children so that they do not become ‘dissatisfied’ and begin eating in the kitchens of others, including their ‘real mothers.’

In this way, she connects the focal mother and the ‘care mother’ to the work of Gow (1991), McCallum (2001) and others (Overing and Passes 2000; Toren 1999). Conklin and Morgan state this the following way:

> The accrual of personhood is not necessarily a one-way process; under certain conditions, personhood may be lost, attenuated, withdrawn, or denied. Processual-relational systems appear to be especially common in two major areas: Melanesia and lowland South America (Amazonia and adjacent regions) (Conklin and Morgan 1996: 667).\(^{129}\)

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129 De Matos Viegas’ article inspired the work of Toren (1999).
As mentioned De Matos Viegas was drawing on the work of Gow (1989, 1991, 2001) who states that for Piro people the passing of time, ‘is primarily experienced as the making, living out, and unmaking of kinship’ (Gow 2001: 290). And, while Gow demonstrates the importance of mortality for the unmaking of relationships, he also points to the potential denial of kinship through the disruption of flows of desires and substances by what he comes to call ‘the perverse child.’ This idea comes from a Piro child who eats dirt, which is not only perceived as negative because it is a filthy thing to do, but more importantly because,

it is children who make the whole subsistence economy function, but only because they are the passive recipients of the products of adult labour and are not sexually active. What seemed to me an innocuous activity on the part of certain children, the eating of earth, is experienced by adults as a threat to the entire subsistence economy. (Gow 1989: 579)

The position of children at the centre of the adult world, based on their passive position is threatened when a child tries to feed himself. It is the fragility of these bonds that makes this work useful for thinking through the Amahuaca ethnography because there is a fear among Amahuaca people that as children grow up and enter the world of the Other they may forget those who cared for them. Furthermore, building on De Matos Viegas, when people grow up and have their own children they demonstrate their choice of who to remember, and the processes through which this can be realized become meaningful. One way of making this relationship meaningful is by giving your own children to the same older people that raised you, which continues the cycle through time.

Part Two

There are two women in particular in San Juan who are raising or have raised multiple children passed to them by the two sisters, Lucy and Daisy. One of these women is their maternal grandmother (Margarita) and the other their maternal aunt (Rosa). Lucy and Daisy’s mother María is raising the child of her youngest daughter as she is still in school. In total Margarita and Rosa are raising or have raised at least six children who could be considered their grand, or great-grandchildren. And, this is not a burden but something that they really want to do.
Rosa’s ‘daughter’ Susana had her first child when she was 13 years old and still attending school. I arrived when the baby boy was probably 6 months old and Rosa was already his primary care-giver. She would take him away from Susie whenever he cried to nurse him herself. About a year later, Susana left to go work in town and the baby stayed with Rosa who is raising him like it is her own. I met Susana in town a few times and she told me she misses her child and parents, and wants to return, but will not go back to live there any time soon. The child will be raised by Rosa and become her ‘son,’ though he will probably know Susana is his ‘actual’ mother. Based on the ways people talk about the numerous children who live in the Comunidad who are ‘biological’ children of Lucy and Daisy, this is consistent with the way most of them came to live where they do. Furthermore, almost all of these cases entail an Amahuaca mother and non-Amahuaca fathers. For example, Susana’s ex-husband was Ashaninka who had come to the Inuya River as a logger.

Margarita had had also raised the two women, Lucy and Daisy who, in turn, have left Margarita at least two children to raise who were living there in 2010-2011. And, one day, as I was asking her about her family she turned to the children who were playing nearby and, pointing towards them in a general way, said:

‘None of these children are really Amahuaca. They are all mixed. But I speak to them in Amahuaca, and though they do not speak now, when they get older they will remember.’

The ‘nature of blood and substance’ passing from parent to child is something that is still unclear to me. I know the placenta is buried in the forest and some people refer to the place where their placenta is buried as where they come from, but beyond this the evidence is quite mixed. I was told by one woman that when a boy is born they are ‘de su padre,’ ‘of their father,’ and when a girl is born they are ‘de su madre,’ ‘of their mother,’ though this is quite vague. Another man told me when the child is being formed the man’s and woman’s blood (sangre) fight (pelea) and the outcome depends on which side wins. He was not speaking about the sex of the baby, however, because he told me his wife ‘won’ and that is why his son is not normal, because his ex-wife was not normal130.

130 I do not deal with this here due to issues of space, but his son likely suffered from some type of developmental problem that became apparent when he was still very young.
This vagueness is not uncommon in lowland South America as indigenous people do not always have elaborate explanations for processes of pregnancy (Vilaça 2002: 351). What I do think is important is that humans are born from a woman, and it is the children of Amahuaca women, not men, who are those raised by others. Rather than focus on this, however, I want to explore the latter part of this statement, which is that the children will learn and remember when they get older. I focus on this because it is important and offers a good comparative example to the ways people in San Martín talk about language and becoming Amahuaca.132

As I discussed in the previous chapter, the types of food people eat come to make them certain types of persons.133 For Margarita, it seems, that this is so obvious that it would never make sense to say so instead she focuses on idioma. According to Leven and Karadamou (pers. com., 2013) for Amahuaca people it would seem that idioma is one of the substances that helps to form the body of a person in a specific way. As a person learns idioma their body, particularly their throat, is said to transform (Leven forthcoming). Thus, the comprehension of and capacity to speak the Amahuaca language implies a type of shared body. It is one part of the wider processes of making similar bodies out of a background of difference.

I will give an example of why I think this is the case, though this is still something that needs to be worked out in more detail. In a conversation described to me by Erik Leven, a linguist working with Amahuaca people in San Juan, a girl of about 8 said that another boy of about 13 was indio, which, as discussed in the previous chapter, means that he is not a civilized person. She made the comment because the boy did not know how to drink coffee. She called herself mestizo because, she said, she had been drinking

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131 While among many groups women are said contribute blood that forms the body, and men contribute semen that forms the bone, I found no such correspondence with Amahuaca people.

132 There is, however, one thing to point out that makes this meaningful in terms of a further shift from previous terminology. According to Woodside, ‘When an Amahuaca woman marries an outsider, Amahuaca consider her daughter and son Amahuaca. Her daughter’s daughter and son are likewise considered Amahuaca, but her son’s children are not considered so unless he married an Amahuaca. One explanation for this is that giving a sister in marriage demands a woman in return, specifically her daughter. This obligation does not lapse with time. Passing citizenship though women is one way of keeping track of marital exchanges’ (1981: 134). What this means is that Lucy’s children should be considered Amahuaca, but they are not. This is explained by Margarita, I think, when she pointed out that both her daughter both Lucy’s and Daisy’s father’s are not Amahuaca people. There is clearly something occurring in this context that is important for Margarita and others that can be explored further.

133 I think this corresponds to ‘comida legitima,’ following Gow (1991), and differences between San Juan, San Martin and other places. For example, there are older people upriver who do not eat chickens. They raise them to sell, and their children eat them. Also, the man Pedro Collazo who I travelled with said on numerous occasions that he no longer likes fish from the river, but only eats fish from a can. It took this as an expression of his ‘civilized’ body and particularly in the context of us moving up river to see people considered to be less ‘civilized.’
coffee since she was five. When pushed as to whether she was Amahuaca or mestizo, and which was better, she hesitated, then said, ‘mestizo…no, Amahuaca…maybe mestizo.’ When her mother heard what she said, she began to tease her and ask her to do things by referring to her as mestizo. And, as mentioned above, if idioma is a substance, then Castellano might be logically considered a substance as well, but one that changes the body in a different way.¹³⁴

Also, the difference between the substances of food and language is that the latter is what makes Amahuaca people different from other indigenous people. Other indigenous people eat many of the same foods, but they speak their own languages. The fact that Margarita feeds, nurtures and takes care of them, as well as calling them her children, makes this true. This is, in a sense, too obvious to say. The point about language is that it entails a very particular bodily transformation. To speak to children in idioma is to transform their bodies and make them grow into Amahuaca people.

In other words, if language is a substance then to speak idioma and Castellano do not simply entail language proficiency, but bodily transformation. Leven (forthcoming), in particular, has stated that the difference between speaking and understanding idioma and Castellano is very likely an ontological one that may be compared to clothing (Gow 2007; see Ewart and O’Hanlon 2007 for extended discussion on this topic). And, this is not to say people ‘wear’ clothing, but they change their bodies. The question is whether feeding people idioma may be said to be something like feeding them ‘real food’ as Castellano would be like white people’s language? I cannot answer this here, but there is reason to think it would make sense to Amahuaca people. Furthermore, if this is true, then speaking Castellano is a specific way of becoming-Other, that is one aspect of wider bodily practices of transformation. As children are being grown into Amahuaca people, today this includes the capacity to transform into mestizos as well. And, this is not perceived as a negative thing given how important the school is for people. There is, however, a fear of children becoming other and forgetting their kinspeople, thus denying their relationships to the people who have cared for them. Some of the pressure on

¹³⁴ There does not seem to be an emphasis in the regional literature on the possibility that language is a substance. The places where it is discussed tends to involve either discourse (Sherzer 1990; Urban 1991) ayahuasca singing (Townsley 1993) or ceremonial songs (Sherzer 1990; Seeger 1990; Viveiros de Castro 1992). It seems many regional specialists include it in their understandings of the body, but there is space for further investigation into the ways languages change the body (Leven and Karadamou, forthcoming). I would like to thanks Erik for sharing this story with me as well as offering other insights into my own experiences.
children as they are growing up arises from a fear of losing them to the outside when they go and work in town. I think that the fear is that if children leave too early and/or do not have a strong body—a strong memory of those who raised them—they are more easily lost to the world of mestizos.

Section III: Cooking to Become a Mother

I will now turn to a brief examination of how and what children learn in order to become adults. I extend this discussion to try and make a point about women working beyond the Comunidad that builds on the idea of becoming-Other. When Margarita made the statement about the children she was referring to specific children: those who were born from a mixing of Amahuaca women and mostly mestizo men. What I want to do is explore for a moment the importance of these women. I emphasize the possibility of their becoming-Other and the ways they constitute themselves as Amahuaca women even though they live and work away from the Comunidad.

Small children are carried by their mothers in a sling almost all the time even after they are able to walk on their own. If the mother is doing a stationary activity, they may be set down nearby where they tend to play. From a very early age boys and girls mimic the actions of adults. By the time they begin to speak they have already begun showing some adeptness at the activities of their parents and games often mimic the types of activities they will do in the future. As Russell (u.m.2.: 11) has stated, children learn from adults through a pattern of leader-follower in which mimicry is the most common form of teaching. There is very little direct instruction given by adults (Woodside 1981; or see Johnson 2003 on Matsigenka people for more extreme example).

Gender roles are taken on by children from a very early age and are part of their maturing into adults in a similar way to the Cashinahua. Young girls help their mother in the kitchen and in the garden and young boys will go along with their father when he fishes. I offer two cases as examples that illustrate the young age at which children enact their gendered position. First, one day two boys around the age of four were playing nearby my house with a small boat carved out of wood. They told me they were madereros or loggers. They pulled the boat behind them and collected large sticks that
were rolled down the hill like loggers do with entire trees. In another case, a young boy of about one who spent hours with his father while he was working on making a fishing-net cried and yelled when he was not allowed to work on the net himself. I never saw him try and help his mother in this way.

Upon returning from the garden where they had gone to collect manioc a young couple found that their daughter who was two had taken all their chicken eggs and cooked them in a small pot. Instead of yelling at her, they turned to her older brother who was four and admonished him for allowing his sister to cook all the eggs. He was supposed to be watching her, which is one the primary jobs of all children with younger siblings. As they get older, however, this job falls more on girls than boys.

By the age of 8 or so boys and girls are capable of carrying out the general tasks related to the complementary work of men and women. Both boys and girls are expected to help their parents with small chores such as collecting water, gathering firewood and working in the garden. At this age boys will often participate in mingas. Young girls are able to cook, clean, collect manioc and spend much of their time not in school watching their younger siblings and helping their mothers. Young boys mostly collect fruit from nearby trees and fish.

Since there are no initiation rituals of any kind, the transition from childhood to adulthood is not marked in any way, except when a person gets married or has children. By the time they are 12 most boys are capable of hunting small game, though fishing is far more important. They have also participated in logging in one way or another, either by helping collect logs that escape when the river rises, or spending time in a logging camp with their father. Thus, the space of the household and garden are where women learn the skills that make them into adult women, while the river and forest are where boys learn to be adult men. This corresponds to the Cashinahua as well.

For Cashinahua people, gender relations are oriented in part by the way men and women relate to difference. From an early age, difference between boys and girls is deliberately created through teaching boys and girls the skills connected to their respective gender. According to McCallum gendered agency is developed through the types of activities that are learned as well as the geographical and social spaces in which this takes place. This entails an opposition between the ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ that
corresponds to women and men respectively. Women tend to learn ‘inside’ the villages, while men’s agency is connected to their relationships with the ‘outside.’

If for Amahuaca people we take the household/village and forest/river as corresponding to the ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ respectively, then this seems to correspond to the Cashinahua where the ‘opposition is reflected in the way that agency is formally acquired. Women’s learning takes place, socially and geographically, on the ‘inside’ while men’s learning often involves relationships with beings and spaces linked to the ‘outside’ (McCallum 2001: 50-58).

There is an important difference between the Cashinahua and the Amahuaca, however, which brings us back to the problem of women who work beyond the Comunidad. For the Cashinahua, the geographical and social space of the inside where women learn is where they remain as they grow into adulthood. McCallum summarizes this the following way: ‘This division of labour, whereby men are responsible for direct contact with the outside and with outsiders and women for transforming external products and people for internal consumption, underlies the central place of gender in the constitution of sociality…” (2009: 48).

This not only entails specific types of activities—women learn design and weaving, while men learn how to hunt, fish and interact with spirits—but also about movement and the relationships through which these skills are acquired. According to McCallum, Cashinahua ‘men learn by moving away from the village, travelling in the forest and the city whilst both conscious and otherwise, whereas women learn when relatively immobile, staying, for example, in their chichi’s house’ (ibid.: 48). The chichi is the woman’s maternal grandmother who is her own namesake and teaches her many of the skills she needs to know to be a fully productive female agent. Men, on the other hand, learn from their maternal grandfather who, following the system of marriage, is their brother-in-law’s namesake. Women’s immobility and men’s mobility are central aspects for Cashinahua people coming into adulthood and becoming full gendered persons.

What I want to point out is that this specific connection between gender, space and affinal relations does not necessarily apply in the same manner to the Amahuaca case once people become adults. Women and men both have relations with those from the outside and the ways this occurs differs based on the skills and work they do, but not
necessarily on a division of ‘inside’ and ‘outside.’ Among Amahuaca people, men learn from their ‘fathers’ and women learn from their ‘mothers,’ and the locations of where skills are acquired might be related to the household and garden for women, and the river and forest for men, but this is where the correlation with Cashinahua people becomes difficult to sustain. This is because women are just as likely to engage in direct relationships with affines and potential affines as men are, and this can occur within the village when loggers visit, or beyond the village when girls go to cook in a logging camp or town.

I will offer one more example of a difference in how gender is realized between the Amahuaca and Cashinahua before moving on to a short discussion of why this is so important. The example entails the connection between alterity, gender and embodied knowledge in the form of shamanism. For Cashinahua people, and other groups in the region (Gow 1991; see Townsley 1983 for discussion of Yaminahua), there is an explicit connection between taking ayahuasca and relations with the ‘outside.’ According to McCallum (2001) ‘men learn bravery by taking the drug, a quality that they will also need during their lifetime as hunters, traders and (in the past) warriors. Women do not need this skill, since they neither hunt nor kill…’ (57). Cashinahua women do not take ayahuasca, as this does not correspond to the types of qualities necessary for them to act in the world.

Amahuaca women can take ayahuasca and have visions of traveling, visiting and being visited by forest spirits and the spirits of dead relatives. The fact that women can participate in the taking of ayahuasca means that they acquire similar capacities to men in this context. Moreover, there is some evidence that there is a relationship between the ways people experience taking ayahuasca and other types of experiences.

Aparecida Vilaça makes the point that traveling to towns and cities might be understood as being analogous to the travel of shamans, which opens up a significant space for further research in general, and with women in particular. After discussing an example of a Yaminahua man who had travelled extensively in towns in Brazil, Vilaça states that, ‘learning here is acquired through bodily experience; indeed, I would suggest
that by constituting ‘bodily displacements,’ these visits to the cities are equivalent to shamanic journeys for the Pano’ (2010: 315).  

Like in the Cashinahua case, it seems that women’s agency among Amahuaca people is necessary for ‘transforming external products and people for internal consumption’ (McCallum 2001: 48), but this does not necessarily entail them remaining in the village. Nor, does it entail the same processes of mediation between the inside and outside. The active pursuit of outside wealth, which today includes paying for their children’s education and wellbeing, connects them with others in complex, but still under-investigated webs of relations. And, it seems that these relations and the capacities involved are crucial for the regeneration of Amahuaca sociality at a variety of scales. In their pursuit of money and outside forms of wealth, they come to be producers of a different form of wealth: children, and potential Amahuaca people.

The forms this takes can vary, but there is a certain type of work that has predominated for at least the past sixty years or so, which is cooking, whether this takes place in a restaurant in town (Maria, Susana), on riverboats travelling between cities (Margarita, Maria), or in logging camps (Lucy, Daisy, and also Pedro Collazo’s mother). Some of this work carried out by women beyond the village blurs western distinctions between work, love and relationality. For example, I was told on numerous occasions that, in general, women who work as cooks for loggers often have relations with these men. This usually entails the exchange of gifts.

Rather than looking to escape the strictures of the kinship system (Wardlow 2004), these women seem to be following a certain desire for a life beyond the village, but reaffirm their position as Amahuaca people through transforming the substances found in the mestizo world. Here, I refer back to the logic set out in earlier chapters in which outside knowledge (songs, Spanish, work parties) and substances (maize, masato, and ‘civilized things’) are brought in and made productive of Amahuaca people’s lived world. Through the transformation of others into consubstantial persons, they are denying the process of being fully incorporated themselves. They are remembering the woman or women who raised them, and speak in Amahuaca with her and others, but live and work

135 Pano refers to the Panoan linguistic family.
136 Just like women married to men working timber (for example) transform the money they bring back (or the wild game, in the case of hunters) into socially-productive substances.
in the mestizo world. By returning to the *Comunidad* both literally to visit, and by extension through children, they maintain a bodily connection with those who raised them.\textsuperscript{137} Furthermore, it should be noted that they also maintain their claim on communal wealth, thus not losing their position as *comuneros*. This latter point is raised again in the next chapter on exchanges between *Comunidades* and loggers.

The two women who initially inspired me to think about this issue both worked as cooks in logging camps and in town. Most of their children come from different fathers who are men they had relationships with while working in a logging camp. In some cases, these relationships lasted for extended periods of time and in others they did not. By raising the position and work of these women I am highlighting the need for further research into this topic. I am not sure if the metaphor of them living and working away from the *Comunidad* and shamans is the best way to approach the question, but it warrants more discussion. In either case, clearly these women are controlling the processes through which their bodies transform and how these same bodies are used to transform external relations into children.

In discussing the Amahuaca women who married non-Amahuaca men, mostly mestizos, Woodside pointed out that this was widely disapproved of because these men did not give sisters in return. He continues on to say, this asymmetrical form of marriage contributes toward maintaining the barriers between the two societies and provides reason for Amahuaca to hate Peruvians. Peruvian mestizos refer to it as ‘tomando su cuerpo de los indios.’ I translate this ‘consuming the body of the Indians’ or ‘taking shape from the Indians.’ It is a formula for mestizaje. (ibid.: 137).

I examine this from the other side of the encounter by focusing on how Amahuaca people, and particularly women, work towards the internalization of outsiders and the making of bodies of kin. These women do not give their children away, but ‘make kin out of others’ (Vilaça 2002, 2010) in an opposite manner than what Woodside describes.

I did not carry out fieldwork with these women, but they directly influenced my research because I lived with their children who comprised a good portion of the total population of San Juan. As a way of transitioning back to this problem I now turn to an ethnographic example of how one of these children met his father and how their mutual

\textsuperscript{137} There is a potentially interesting connection here between ‘base’ and ‘extension’ that could be explored further following McKinnon (1991).
denial of one another might be seen as the ‘successful’ transformation of outside substances into Amahuaca people.

**Section IV: An Amahuaca Made**

On a rainy day in February a group of loggers arrived to the *Comunidad* in three boats. They arrived amidst a dispute between a former leader and *Comunidad* members. The former president had, while still in office, made an agreement with them that entailed him cutting trees up river and allowing them access to *Comunidad* land. He had apparently been paid a good amount for the work he was meant to do and the contract they were meant to have with the *Comunidad*. He had not done any of the work he was paid for nor did he have the contract signed by the *Comunidad*, so their arrival meant he had many problems on his hands. As the former president sat in his house speaking with the representative of the loggers, the rest of us were resigned to sitting in the next house trying to catch what we could of the conversation and speaking amongst ourselves.

As we were sitting talking, the conversation turned to the identity of one of the loggers who a *Comunidad* member named Percy said he knew. He could not remember his name or how he knew him, but he kept asking people and seemed excited. All of a sudden he hopped up and walked quickly over to an older Amahuaca man named Agucho who was speaking with a group of loggers a few meters away. Percy said one thing and a big smile appeared on Agucho’s face as he nodded in affirmation. When Percy came back I could not resist and asked what he was going on. Percy said the man sitting in the canoe was a man named Pablo and was Angel’s father. He had come to the Inuya years earlier to work as a logger and slept with Lucy. He had seen him in town, but the man had never returned to the Inuya.

When Percy told this to Angel, he denied it and got a bit upset. Over the next couple of hours Percy kept teasing Angel who got more and more irritated. Finally, the man came up from the beach port and walked past us towards the groups of loggers sitting a bit further down the past. He looked almost exactly like an older version of Angel and indeed had exactly the same gait. It was uncanny how similar this man was to Angel and it became obvious to me that he was his biological father. As the man walked past us he
made a point of not looking in our direction, avoiding the gaze of Angel, who, in turn, did not look at this man who was meant to be his father. When I asked him later, Angel claimed he did not know him and perhaps he was but he did not care to speak with him. He might be his father, but he had no relation with him and neither one seemed interested in acknowledging the other.

Angel was born a bit upriver and is about 18 years old. He is Lucy’s oldest child, but has been raised by Margarita and Enrique since he was very young and still lives with them in their house. He understands Amahuaca, though he does not speak much. He is treated and behaves like an Amahuaca in every way. He knows that his mother is Lucy, and addresses her as such when she is there and stays with her when he goes to town to work, but always returns to the house where he was raised.

If not for this incident he would likely never know who his father is and did not seem interested. The fact that he was raised by his grandparents and in the Comunidad makes him Amahuaca. Angel’s close relationships, like most of the people living in San Juan, were not given at his birth, but are part of an ongoing process of ‘making kin out of others’ (Vilaça 2002). All children are, in a way then, recognized as partly ‘other’ when they are born, but grow into human beings as their spirit grow more firmly attached to their bodies, and they begin to demonstrate recognition of those who care for them.

Today, Amahuaca people are marrying or having children with more and more non-Amahuaca people. If a child is raised in a home where parents are from different groups (Ashaninka and Amahuaca, for example), then they may come to recognize themselves as being ‘from’ both groups; however, when they are raised in an Amahuaca Comunidad far away from the family of their Ashaninka parent, this has little baring on the way they perceive the world. This is not to deny the care they feel for their non-Amahuaca parent, but there are two reasons this is worth taking seriously. First, through time Ashaninka people who live with Amahuaca may also become ‘like’ them. This is the case with Agucho discussed in chapter four. He is considered to be consubstantial with people in the Comunidad and is the father of a child who considers himself Amahuaca (he is adamant about this) and many adopted children who are raised the same. Second, that even if a person does not ‘become like Amahuaca,’ the fact that the people with whom they live show caring and affection for their children makes them remember these people.
in a way that is a slow denial of their ‘relatives’ living far away in an Ashaninka Comunidad.

Amongst the Caboclo-Indians discussed by De Matos Viegas (2003), when a woman leaves after divorce, fathers and others point out how quickly the children forget their relationship with their mother. ‘They do this in order to erase the memory of the former mother relationships and emphasize the power of the daily responsibility of feeding and caring in the making of kinship’ (29).

This occurs with women who take care of the children of their daughters, granddaughters and others, but I believe in a way it also occurs with the families of parents who are not ‘from’ there. This is particularly true of women who marry non-Amahuaca men because there is a general sentiment among people in San Juan that men who marry Amahuaca woman cannot take them away, but must live nearby. This brings me back to the issue of the women who work away from the Comunidad because I think in a sense it is not necessarily, or always, ‘women’ that are targets of this sentiment, but the children of these women because they are what make life fulfilling for older generations of Amahuaca people. Without these children to care for their lives would be sad and lonely living in the village by themselves. They work in the gardens and make masato, but without having children and grandchildren—children in general—this work would not have the same meaningfulness (Gow 1989).

There are a few important aspects to take from the discussion relevant for the remaining sections of the chapter. The first is that the relations of consubstantiality are made through the sharing of substances and language is a potentially important substance that is linked to what might be called an Amahuaca notion of the body. Second, that the internalization of substances from the outside is a necessary aspect of the ongoing processes of making Amahuaca people. I have demonstrated the internalization of substances—knowledge, people and forms of material wealth—are part of wider processes of becoming Amahuaca people. Third, and the focus of the rest of the chapter, that children are not automatically considered consubstantial beings, become Amahuaca through the intersubjective relations of care and affection with adults, which can become problematic.
Section V: Un malcriado

The boy I discuss here, William, was raised by Rosa, the maternal aunt of his ‘real’ mother Lucy. My choice to use boys as examples more than girls is not arbitrary. There was only one girl (Susana, discussed above) being raised by others in the Comunidad, but she left during my fieldwork to work in town. And, in general there were more school-aged boys than girls in San Juan (see table above).

William is in many ways a typical thirteen-year old Amahuaca boy. He can fish, hunt, handle the motor in the canoe and has an extensive knowledge of gardening. He is capable of doing most of the work an adult does, but is different than some of the other boys because of his age and behaviour. As a boy of 13, he has few concrete responsibilities beyond attending school and spends most of his time visiting people, looking for fruit, fishing and playing soccer. He is considered one of the best soccer players in the school. He often fishes with other people and spends a good amount of his time away from Rosa’s house, which is located five minutes downriver from the main area of the Comunidad. This absence from the home did not really seem problematic at first until I began hearing certain comments regarding his behavior. And, as my time in the Comunidad progressed it became clear that the William’s activities are more scrutinized than any other person, which takes the form of both gossip and direct accusations. The primary accusation made against him, usually in his absence, was that at night when nobody is watching, he steals chickens. He is said to take them to an abandoned kitchen, roast them, and eat them all by himself. He is occasionally accused of this openly, usually when he is being irritable and not helping. His response is to deny it vehemently, get angry and ask if anyone has actually seen him doing it. If so, then they can say something, but if not then they should leave him alone. He is quite obstinate when accused and gets very defensive.

While many people have told me this about William, only one person claims to have witnessed him actually cooking chickens at night. This is tio Fernando or ‘uncle’ Fernando who lives alone, but is part of the household of William’s parents, Rosa and
Agucho. Fernando did not think fondly of William and complained of him often. He says that William is not a good person ‘un malcriado’ who is selfish ‘egoista.’ He claimed that William never helps his family with work including fishing, weeding the patio or clearing, planting and harvesting the garden. As he lives with William, he has a particularly harsh attitude towards him. According to Fernando, the reason William does not work is because he does not have to. When he steals chickens and eats them alone he gets so full that he does not have to eat with others. As he does not have to eat with others, he does not have to help. Fernando was not the only person who made this connection, but he was the most adamant about it. Interestingly, nobody ever said who the owner of the chickens William stole was. In all the discussions I had with people about William, it never came up, which to me signifies that it had less to do with stealing chickens and more to do with something else.

As evidence of this, I offer another example of a person in the Comunidad who has been accused of stealing chickens under very different circumstances. Angel, the young man mentioned above who lives with Margarita and Enrique, is said to have taken his grandmother’s chicken while they were away. I was told that when he was left alone to watch the house he sold two of the chickens to loggers to buy cane alcohol ‘trago.’ This claim was made on several occasions, but the reasons for him doing so were quite different than William. Angel is a young man who is not in school, does not have a wife and so has little to do but fish and drink. Although both Angel and William ‘stole’ chickens their perceived aims were understood very differently. The fact that he stole his grandparents’ chickens to sell is not good, but this accusation does not take the form of a Comunidad-wide concern.

Although when Enrique told me this he pointed out that he had raised him and even given him a pekepeke motor for his 18th birthday. He was not happy with Angel about this theft, but is not a topic of communal discussion. Angel sold the chickens to buy alcohol, but he did not drink this alcohol alone so although this is in some ways bad it does not carry the same connotations as stealing chickens and eating alone.

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138 All of Fernando’s food (fish, meat and manioc) is given to María to cook, and people joke that she is a curaca because she has two husbands.
I want to compare this to the theft of some of my crackers that took place in San Martín mentioned in the last chapter because there, like in San Juan, the entire Comunidad seemed to worry about it. In San Martín the idea was that people should not steal because it is wrong. Although this may seem oversimplified, the issue came down to the combination of a belief in property and morality. Although I did not explore it much at the time, there did not seem to be any further elaboration on the theft of my crackers. And, I never heard other thefts referred to in similar terms to those in San Juan. Even in the cases of the watermelons, also discussed in the previous chapter, the problem was selfishness, but was not expressed in the same way as with William. The boy in San Martín was said to be stealing from a grandmother who planted them and this made it bad. She had worked and he had eaten.

The Comunidad concern with William in San Juan is not, however, limited to his theft of chickens. Margarita’s son Francisco had a skin infection that was likely leishmaniasis or ‘uta seco’ that appeared on his face, torso and limbs. The skin infection got worse during 2011 and he ended up dying from malnutrition after it entered his throat and he could not eat. During the end of his life it became apparent that his wife was pregnant. His wife, Norma, is Ashaninka and is thus not directly related to anyone in the Comunidad, though most people address her using kin terms.

Many people believed it was not Francisco’s child and as he was dying people began to say that William was the person who got her pregnant. Although there are several people in the Comunidad who are closer to her in age and are not in a kin relation that would prohibit them having sex with her. There are several men who would be more likely to have sex with her either due to their age or their close physical proximity, but only William’s name was mentioned. To my knowledge nobody else was ever accused. When he was directly accused he got angry and denied it stating that she was his aunt and that he would never sleep with his aunt.

His theft of chickens and potential sexual relations with Francisco’s wife are considered a failure to acknowledge kinship relations. It was anti-social because it was seen as a way of ignoring or denying the relations of caring he received from his parents, on the one hand, and from respecting incest taboos on the other. What more might be said about this in terms of his ‘coming into being’? In the case of the chickens the fact that he
eats alone seems more problematic than the actual theft. Rather than choosing one mother over another, as with the case of the Caboclo-Indians (Mato de Viegas 2003), he is perceived as choosing his own kitchen, which cuts off all possible relationships. I quoted the beginning of a statement made by Gow (1989) earlier regarding the fact that children drive the domestic economy because they are recipients of the work of adult work. The rest of the quote is worth setting out in its entirety.

Perverse children, in the eyes of adults, are moving outside the subsistence economy which gives life to people, and by destroying themselves threaten to destroy that economy as well. For this, and out of parental love, their parents force them to vomit out the earth inside them. The subsistence economy of the native people of the Bajo Urubamba works because only certain forms of sexual and oral desire are legitimate, and the desire to eat earth is not one of them. (ibid.: 579)

Following this point regarding the subsistence economy, William would be very much like the boy who eats dirt: he is a perverse child. Furthermore, in the case of Francisco’s wife his classificatory relation could mean any sexual relation transgresses potential taboos. But, I do not think it was the fact that she was his uncle’s wife that made the accusation so negative. It was embedded in the anxiety of the inevitable fate of Francisco, accusations that his wife had poisoned him and William’s potential of becoming other.

In this case his perversion and disruption of the domestic economy is extended to wider social relations because he is at that age when he can and potentially already has been sexually active. Thus, the perversion of stealing and eating chickens alone, which is a way of trying to make one’s self rather than recognizing the intersubjective relations through which proper human beings are made. It is as if he were denying all kinship and proper sociality which is what ‘perverse children’ (Gow 2001) and also child witches (Sarmiento-Barletti 2011) do elsewhere.

This is also connected to another aspect of the situation. William’s ‘actual’ father is Percy, the man who was accused of being a witch by Enrique discussed in the previous chapter. Prior to my fieldwork Percy had not recognized William as his son, but at this point was beginning to treat him more like a son and openly acknowledged his paternity. William began spending more time with Percy and sometimes ate at his house. This was a problem for several reasons. First, William’s parents could not openly deny him the right to spend time with his ‘father,’ let alone eat with him, but they did not like the idea.
One component of this was the fact that Percy was not well liked in the Comunidad. The man who Percy was accused of poisoning was the brother of William’s ‘raising mother.’

William was also spending lots of time with the mestizo schoolteacher Manuel and often fished with him and even travelled to town. This was another relationship that would have bothered William’s ‘raising parents’ because again, Manuel was not well liked by many in the Comunidad. William’s interest in spending time with him, even when in the Comunidad, marked his potential denial of the close relationship he had with those who raised him. And, although his ‘raising father’ was not Amahuaca, he is the man I discussed earlier who is considered ‘like Amahuaca’ because he has lived there for a long time, is said to live well and understands the language. There was a sentiment that William’s desire to be independent was threatening multiple aspects of Comunidad life.

**Conclusion**

I began the chapter with a discussion of reproduction and tried to connect this to some important differences between San Juan and San Martín in terms of marriage practices, demographics and, eventually, the intersubjective relations between children and adults. I tried to demonstrate that relationships between children and adults differ between the two Comunidades due to several factors.

First, the types of people comprising the household specifically and Comunidad more broadly differ. In San Martín there are multiple non-Amahuaca adults in both Comunidades, but in San Martín some of these adults are non-indigenous. Also, there are non-Amahuaca couples. In San Juan this is not the case because people say they do not want non-indigenous people living there and they do not tend to allow non-Amahuaca families to move into territory collectively owned by the Comunidad. One way that they keep the population going is by older women becoming ‘mothers’ to children who may otherwise end up living in town, or another Comunidad. It is possible to keep prevent people they do not want from living there because the Comunidad is located upriver from all other non-Amahuaca people, which brings me to a second point.

San Martín’s location in the middle of the river makes it impossible to prevent non-indigenous people from living there. This is not to say they would stop people, because as
I have shown they are more open to outsiders. However, in the case of several couples, they own their own land outside of the Comunidad limits, but send their children to school.

This brings me to a third point, which is that the schools have very different places in the Comunidad. As I showed in the last chapter in San Juan the school is meant to teach children how to be Peruvian (mestizo) while the school in San Martín is a space where children, including mestizos, are taught how to be both Peruvian and Amahuaca. This cannot be stressed enough, nor can the importance of profesor Carlos’ position in the Comunidad. He is a moral force and a political leader who guides all the people of the Comunidad based on his teaching their children. For example, when a man, Juan, who was not technically a member of the Comunidad lost his garden hut and tools in a fire it was Carlos who organized a work party to help him rebuild. In addition to telling others they should help, he took all the children from school and they assisted. Juan was not a member of the Comunidad because he owned his own land and he was mestizo. This did not matter and the ill fortune of Juan was used to set an example for the Comunidad and the children on how to take care of one’s neighbours.

Finally, the difference between the two places is also seen in their relation to the monetized economy. In San Martín there is a more extensive economy based on cash. This includes people planting cacao, which is a large investment and requires years before one can begin to harvest the plants. There is also at least one couple that sells goods, and also people coming and going from town who can purchase things for others. Without making any grand claims, it is worth suggesting the possibility that the two cases of theft in San Juan could be compared to the two in San Martín: the boy who took watermelons and the other who took my crackers. There seems to be a significant difference between the logics underlying the negative value of theft in the two Comunidades. In San Martín the profesor made a statement about the morality of theft that was based on the individual ownership of the items. In the case of the watermelons he stated that it was wrong to steal because the woman had worked hard to plant them. This could be interpreted as a way of saying they were being alienated from their work. While there is more going on here that requires further research, the negativity of theft in San Martín does differ greatly from San Juan where the notion of stealing chickens
seemed primarily concerned with the problem of reciprocity and memory. As I said, nobody ever directly mentioned who owned the chickens when William was blamed.

The comparison is not meant to imply a definitive division, as the boundaries between the two places are by no means static, as discussed in earlier chapters. However, there is a difference in the ways that people realize their relationships to one another, and outsiders. The point I want to make is that the relations through which children bring themselves into being are not only unique in the two places, but based on different underlying assumptions about what it means to be a real Amahuaca civilizado. The differences include people’s relationships to money, work, wealth, education, as well as outside substances more broadly. And, while it remains somewhat uncertain whether language might be considered a substance like food, there are clearly differences in the ways that the Amahuaca language is situated in how people perceive their position in the world.

I do not want to imply Carlos does not perceive of language as Margarita seems to or that Margarita does not understand the power of Castellano when I draw a distinction between these two places. To be clear I am drawing out differences for analytical purposes; however, there some important points to drawn from this. In San Martín idioma is perceived as an asset in negotiating relationships, as is exemplified by the example of Carlos’ niece. The ability to read, write and speak idioma is based on very particular notions of the power that these capacities entail in terms of the outside world. Most people living in San Martín have spent considerable time living and working in town, sometimes very far away. The current jefe, for example, had worked for many years in Pucallpa and is currently working for the gas company on the upper Urubamba River. So, for these people the importance of their children learning idioma is quite different than the people living in San Juan. For people in San Juan speaking idioma is not empowering in terms of relations with the outside and, indeed, as young people come into contact with non-Amahuaca people they tend to stop speaking the language in public. The importance of understanding and speaking idioma is connected to the idea that this transforms the body and thus relations with other bodies (Leven and Karadamou, pers. com. 2013).

And, were it not for the notion of Comunidad, the form of collectivity would be very different as well as each group’s composition. As collectives, their internal relations are
formulated differently, which is then expressed as they turn outwards towards others. I discuss the connections between internal composition and external relations in the final chapter. I focus on these Comunidades as entities and explore what exchange might mean from the point of view of a Comunidad. In doing so, I return to the analysis of kinship and contract and set out a model in which the ‘composite person’ is juxtaposed with the Acta, or Comunidad charter.
Chapter Seven: Comunidad, Leadership and Exchange

Late Night Visit

One night in San Juan we were sitting at Eva and Jesus’ drinking masato and talking. We were at the tail end of a party that had been held in the communal building and had lasted two days, so most people were sleeping. I was sitting with Jesus and Eva, along with their father, Francisco, and grandfather, Enrique. Another young Ashaninka man married to a young Amahuaca girl had recently left to ‘go to bed’ after waking up from a slumber. We were chatting about the party and I was talking with Enrique, when we heard a cry from the other side of the river. I did not know anyone was there, but they immediately said it was Norma’s daughter.

The immediate fear was that a jaguar was killing chickens, pigs or even attacking the girl. Norma went across the river to find out what happened. I did not think too much of it as the others did not really seem to think it was a jaguar. When she came back a half hour later, she told us that the young Ashaninka man who had woken up and left a short while before, had entered the house and crawled into bed with her daughter. Norma arrived and chased him off into the forest like an attacking animal. In many ways this was amusing because nothing had actually happened. Enrique, however, was outraged. This should not have happened,

This is against everything we have worked for. Amahuaca do not act like this. He should be punished for what he did. He should be publicly criticized in a meeting tomorrow morning.

I became interested, listening intently and asking questions. What he wanted to do was hold a meeting the next day, call him in and shame him in front of the whole Comunidad. He was going to make him walk around the soccer field carrying something heavy. He would have to be physically punished. He continued,

139 Importantly, the person who said this spent his youth as a ‘student’ living in the house belonging to the mother of his father’s patron. He was sent to live there to be educated so he could help his family understand the system of debt.
As a Comunidad we have the right to punish people. We can even vote to kick people out of the Comunidad. It is in the Acta (Comunidad charter) that we have these rights.

He stressed the same points over and over,

*Amahuaca do not do this. We do not cheat on our wives. We do not molest other women. We are good. Ashaninka are this way. They do not know how to live.*

The next morning I walked over to the president’s house. He had been asleep during the incident. I waited all morning to see what would happen. Finally, Enrique came over and they chatted, but not about the incident the night before. In fact, nobody talked of it. They had all basically forgotten or were not interested. When I asked Enrique later what would happen. He said that the president was not going to do anything and therefore nothing was going to be done. He did not know why the president was not interested, but maybe because he did not care about people. ‘He is not a good jefe,’ he said, ‘but he has the power to do this and if he does not then we cannot do anything.’

**Introduction**

In this chapter I conclude my discussion of social forms by focusing on how leadership, cooperation and the power of the community charter, *Acta*, are manifested at the level of the *Comunidad* and the ways this relates to productive activities and exchange. In previous chapters I have set out different aspects of the ways Amahuaca people interact with one another and engage in wider social and economic activities beyond the *Comunidad*. In chapter four I focused on four collective activities (*minga, fiesta, faena* and *campeonato*) to draw out a distinction between two modes of relating that result in the emergence of different forms of sociality. While I called these *kinship* and ‘contract,’ I tried to be clear that these are not meant to coincide with the categories of ‘public’ and ‘private,’ or ‘domestic’ and ‘political’ as they may appear in Western terms (Strathern 1988). What I intended to demonstrate is that both of these modes are
part of wider social and historical processes in which Amahuaca people have learned how to ‘live together’ through their relationships with others.

In setting out the argument in this way, I am building on three key points made by Philippe Erikson concerning Panoan people, which are worth mentioning again. First, that ‘sexual dimorphism appears to be the key metaphor to provide a conceptual model that will serve to think through all the other sociological oppositions among the Panoans’ (117). This clearly appears as a major theme in the feasts discussed in chapter two, and was raised by Woodside when he pointed out the ‘composite person.’ And, as I tried to make clear, this notion of the ‘composite person’ is part of a model that I am using to try and understand the ways Amahuaca people made sense of their relations with outsiders over time. This brings me to the second point, which is that for Panoan people, there seems to be a dramatic version of what Lévi-Strauss (1995) referred to as a ‘general openness to the other.’

Erikson argues that what Townsley (1988), said of the Yaminahua—that the regeneration of life requires the internalization of powers from the outside—is not only true for all Panoan peoples, but,

One could take it much further still to affirm that the outsider is not perceived solely as a kind of source of brute power that they will try and socialize—or to put towards therapeutic or mystical ends, following a universal process extended in the practices of curing and sorcery—but that it is more exactly defined as a model, if not a guarantee, of the virtues constitutive of society. (Erikson 1999: 91).

The idea is that the outsider is not just a source of power, but relating to the outside in a particular way is a model for all of Panoan sociality. There is a notion that Panoan peoples do not just want to internalize certain aspects of the outside, but want to merge themselves with it. One could argue that this desire is manifested in the notion of the ‘composite person’ as this division based on difference is more than just a relation in which substances are passed back and forth, but also one of an intensive merging of bodies, substances and capacities. This should be explored further. In either case, it seems clear that the notion of ‘self-determination through the other’ that Viveiros de Castro (2011) argues is central for the Tupinamba’s ‘perpetual alteration,’ not only works for Panoan people, but is the logic upon which sociality is based. This entails a multiplicity of others located at different scales.
In short, by taking the two principles ‘sexual dimorphism’ and ‘constitutive alterity’ I have set out two separate models, *kinship* and *contract* that are mutually constitutive of how Amahuaca people have come to live in, and continue to realize *Comunidades*. By bringing these two points together in this chapter I focus on the *junta directiva*, which is the organized structure of the *Comunidad* comprised of a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, to draw out some of the ways that Amahuaca people seem to make sense of the *Acta*, or ‘community charter.’

My primary interest in this chapter stems from trying to think through the formation of official *Comunidades* in terms that might build on the extensive literature from the region concerned with leadership, sociality and productive activities while not denying the external forces that were the impetus for such a specific socio-political form. In other words, although *Comunidades* have been established relatively recently in the area, and seem like a major shift in the ways indigenous people relate to one another and outsiders, Amahuaca people continuously referred to the *Comunidad* as a defining feature for their way of life. And, the concern that Amahuaca people living in these *Comunidades* expressed in the government, as well as the power invested in the *Acta*, raised problems for me regarding how to deal with questions concerning social groups, political organization and the state.

Given the centrality of the Peruvian government in the formation of *Comunidades*, and the fact that they are organized around a specific model of governance, it seems an interesting case for re-visiting some of the questions raised by Pierre Clastres (1987, 1994) regarding society, leadership and political power. I am referring to his idea that in lowland south America the problem was not that the state had not developed, which was the common perception in the 1970s and 1980s (Steward 1949), but instead how one might theorize the functioning of a society against the state: a society that resists the emergence of a coercive power that would open up society to hierarchical divisions.

Following Clastres, this resistance functioned through the exchanges of words, wealth and women between the leader and group. Extending the argument made by Robert Lowie, Clastres argued that in these societies, women were given to the chief by the group and in return he gave his words, his wealth and became a mediator in the case of disputes. He stated that relations between leaders and the group are not based on a
notion of reciprocity, as Lévi-Strauss (1967) had argued, but instead on the idea that the chief is the captive of the group. The gifting of ‘women’ to leaders was perceived as a way toindebt him, thus expelling political power from society. Rather than leading the group, the chief served the group. Thus, instead of having a right to give orders, he had a duty to speak. His speech was key because it was meaningful, yet powerless in terms of what Clastres understood as political power defined in terms of the control of violence and coercion.

There are many aspects of this work that have been critiqued by others, and for good reason. These include the focus on coercion as political power, a preconceived acceptance of the existence of a group and a leader, the problem of polygeny and a tendency to generalize beyond the available ethnography, which was also limited. In other words, there are many aspects of Clastres’ argument that cannot accepted as being relevant for many ethnographic cases.

The notion of coercion as an analytical device for understanding power in lowland South America has been criticized by a number of authors (Overing 2003; Santos-Granero 1993, 1988). And, as others have noted (Gow 1991; Kracke 1979; Thomas 1982), in much of lowland South America the work of a leader is not to ‘lead’ the group, but to form it and keep it together. Moreover, the work of Overing (1975, 2012) and others (Rivière 1969) demonstrated the notion of a ‘corporate group’ has proven difficult to locate in much of lowland South America. Thus, one of the problems with Clastres is how he came to define the chief in terms of a group. As McCallum puts it, the notion of reciprocity proposed by Clastres, ‘may be criticized for using a false dichotomy between leader and group, that reifies the notion of ‘group,’ making it at times a subject (the giver of women) and at times an object (the receiver of words and things)’ (2001: 128).

However, as Michael Brown pointed out, despite Clastres’ oversimplification, he has pointed to an important phenomenon in the region because even among those groups who recognize chiefs, little ‘physical coercion’ appears as part of the processes of leadership. He asks, ‘if force is not commonly an element of leadership in Amazonia on what does it rest?’ (1993: 309). This is an important point that remains a central problem for

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140 For a discussion of the importance of different forms of Power in lowland South America see Philippe Erikson and Fernando Santos (1992).
ethnography of lowland South America because as groups become more and more concentrated, the ways they come to relate to one another are changing. For example, in some places in Peru, Comunidades are creating jails (Brown 1984), and sanctions to deal with social issues (Sarmeinto-Barletti 2010). Furthermore, the incorporation outside wealth and power includes relations of production that can transform leadership positions into those between boss and worker (Fisher 2000; Rubinstein 2004).

For example, when Woodside translated the term for leader Yovuu as ‘leader-mediator’ he chose this over the Spanish term, jefe or caraca, for specific reasons. He said jefe implies a relation of authority over ‘subordinates,’ which is analogous to ‘their own political system’ (1981: 55). In this case ‘their’ refers to loggers, missionaries and government officials, each of which has their own specific interest in empowering leaders. While outsiders view the leader-mediator as a person with specific powers, Woodside pointed out that at that time Amahuaca people ‘deny they are obliged to obey commands of the leader-mediator but they seek his opinions on collective issues’ (ibid.: 56, italics mine). Today, the term jefe is applied by most indigenous groups in the area, and, if we recall, it was the jefe that my guide asked for when I first arrived in San Juan. In San Juan, they have used this term, but they also use presidente, which is what I use here.

Finally, there is the question of how indigenous people are dealing with the bureaucratic aspects of leadership. As brown points out the ‘appearance of written codes of law in native communities- a development that has received inadequate attention from anthropologists - expresses the extent to which Amazonian peoples are struggling with their own ideas of how to modernize their societies’ (1993: 309)

What I find interesting in the case of Comunidades is that they may open up space for re-addressing some of Clastres’ questions. While these communities are by no means stable and fully realized ‘corporate groups,’ they do exist through time with a certain amount of consistency. Moreover, the system of leadership is such that president’s change quite regularly while the group maintains a specific form. I do not mean to say they remain the same, but they do tend to remain. Furthermore, there is also a notion that the Acta may allow for certain forms of coercion with the confines of the Comundiad.
And, as a way of approaching these issues, I have set out a model for trying to understand how productive activities and exchanges between people at varying scales may be understood as emerging from historical interactions between Amahuaca people and different kinds of outsiders. I started the thesis by demonstrating how the two principles, ‘sexual dimorphism’ and ‘constitutive alterity’ were expressed in the 1960s. Then, through following Amahuaca people’s interactions with different kinds of outsiders, I have tried to come to an understanding of how they have determined themselves through these others over time. What I am suggesting is that the contemporary manifestation of this might be gender complementarity as the ‘composite person,’ and ‘alterity’ as the Acta are realized in the forms of mingas, fiestas, faenas and fiestas. The one part that is missing is the community meetings, which I discuss below.

**Section I: The Acta and the Comunidad**

Through the establishment of Native Communities in the 1970s and 1980s, the state institutionalized the leadership position into that of leader of the community. Today, the legal term for this role is jefe, but among the Amahuaca it is more common to hear presidente. For the Amahuaca, and I would think many other indigenous peoples, however, the position of jefe or president is not based on the dominate/subordinate distinction—community members being subordinate to president—but on a relation of mediation, as Woodside pointed out. And, if there is a power resembling that of the State in the system of relations in an Amahuaca Native Community it is not embodied by the president, but should be understood as resting in the Acta.

In following the Amahuaca, the word Acta is used to refer to the notebook, the map of the titled area, and the original charter of the Comunidad. I was told over and over that the Acta gave the president certain powers that might be categorized as ‘coercive’ in our sense of political power. Individuals, not always the president, referred to the powers granted to the president by the Acta such as the right to punish an individual for an offence through physical labour, or expelling them from the community. Having said this, I never witnessed or heard examples of the president actually carrying out a
punishment. The fact that people recognize a power in the Acta, or more accurately a potential to enact power, does not mean that the president can carry out any of the punishments it makes possible. Furthermore, while people refer to the Acta as a charter, the original document no longer exists, and the notebooks where meeting notes are kept are continually lost. Today, when people refer to a set of bylaws, or rules, they are referring to an idea: this form of the Acta does not exist.

**Part One: Conflict**

This incident discussed above and the conversation with Enrique led to a series of discussions about leadership in general and the president’s responsibilities and failures. I mentioned earlier that Enrique was raised in the house of the patron’s mother in Bolognesi. I think Enrique is a very interesting example to use because his experiences have influenced his ideas in complex ways. He is the most outspoken against the intrusion of outsiders, especially mestizos and serranos, and is also the one who spoke to me the most about the need for strong leadership.

According to Enrique there were several main problems with the ways Fermín behaved as president. These were, his inability to organize the Comunidad for work and to make wealth available; his position as partial outsider; and the fact that he kept things for himself. Enrique stressed that Fermín was not ‘from here,’ but had been born and raised in Sepahua and Atalaya, thus his position as president was problematic. He was too much like the outside. This was connected to the fact that his young wife was Ashaninka and came from a Comunidad on the Urubamba River. Enrique and many others said that Fermín gave many presents to his father-in-law that belonged to the Comunidad. The implication of this was that Fermín’s allegiances were to his wife’s family and not to the Comunidad.

This turned into accusations of theft that were openly made against him and his wife in two separate meetings. I discuss this further below, but it is important to note that meetings are the only space in which Amahuaca people openly criticize one another.\(^{141}\)

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\(^{141}\) This is described in chapter 5.
When I asked the President, Fermín, about the incident described in the opening of the chapter, he said it was not an issue because nothing had really happened. If the Ashaninka had molested the girl this would be a problem, but Norma had chased him away. This led to conversations with him about the Comunidad and presidency as well. From Fermín’s point of view the Comunidad’s problems were very different then Enrique had expressed. He believed the Comunidad was very disorganized and people did not know how to work. He had been raised mostly in town and consistently commented on the difficulty of fulfilling his intention of bringing more order and civilization to the Comunidad. He said,

Los comuneros no saben a trabajar y viven aparte. No pueden vivir juntos y colaborar. Yo intente producir orden aquí, pero ellos no la quieren. No son gente civilizada.

He had been president for three years prior to my arrival and had apparently attempted to organize people, but was frustrated. He talked of leaving the Comunidad often and sometimes lamented having taken on the job.

In complaints about Fermín’s job as president, the former president, Manuel Sarasara, was almost always remembered as a ‘good president’ or ‘buen president.’ Apparently, he organized people in the Comunidad, made work available through contracts with loggers, and was more social as a person. Comuneros, as well as the former president himself, told me on many occasions how much work he had done for the Comunidad. One man told me how, as president, Manuel had organized logging upriver so they could all work and make money. It was as if the president himself had funded and actually worked with people. It turned out this was absolutely not the case, but this is how many people remembered it. The work that people did was with loggers who had been contracted by the Comunidad. This was still ongoing, but the prices of wood had gone down in recent years so the number of loggers was fewer. The important thing is not whether the older president did nor did not actually organize the logging, but that he was remembered as being more productive and active in and for the Comunidad. The question becomes why?

Manuel Sarasara (who was re-elected during my fieldwork) had also been an outsider, but married into the core family of the Comunidad. He is the husband of María.
I discussed their marriage in chapter 3. She brought him to become the professor and founder of San Juan. He was younger at the time and through his work as president and professor, and having children and grandchildren he became a person de la Comunidad, ‘from the Comunidad.’ None of the elder people had been born there, so he was able to become more like them by marrying into the family and giving children and grandchildren to the Comunidad. In many respects he was the perfect leader because he was married to a woman from the founding group of Amahuaca families, and an outsider who had the knowledge and skills to deal with the government and loggers. He was, in a way, captured by the group, but in a very different way than might be expected. María found him and made him into family and into the leader of the group. Furthermore, this was a completely new form of group.

And, it turns out Manuel had also taken a lot of stuff from the Comunidad, but was still remembered as a good leader. This was, I think, because he was family to the entire Comunidad and if some things were kept for he and his wife, the most important things were available to everyone. For example, during his presidency he bought a house in the Caserio adjacent to the provincial capital of Atalaya. It was a concrete house with a metal roof adjacent to a small tributary leading out to the Urubamba River. While he did receive a salary from his position as teacher, the house was quite expensive. The reason I think this house never became a source of conflict was that it was available to anyone who wanted to live there. Even if people believe he had used money meant for the Comunidad to buy this house, this was never said openly because it was, in a way, made into communal property. It became an extension of the Comunidad.

**Part Two: Leadership and Civilización**

Uncle Enrique, Fermín and Manuel Sarasara all referred to the Acta in their remarks regarding Comunidad organization and discipline. According to Enrique the Acta gave the president the right to punish the young Ashaninka man, even throw him out of the Comunidad, but it was up to the President to decide this.\(^{142}\) According to Fermín the Acta granted him the right to do many things, but the Comunidad members would not listen—

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\(^{142}\) In the Ashaninka case the offended person has to request the sanction (Sarmiento).
they did not understand the importance of order, discipline and work. Manuel Sarasara also spoke about the *Acta* and its importance, but while he mentioned the rights granted the president, his discourses concentrated on the importance of the land title in terms of relations with loggers and the government. He stressed how he had done much more as president, but spoke more in terms of being a father figure there to help others and take care of his family than about the authority he had the right to use. His style of leadership was much different than Fermín’s.

Manuel Sarasara visited people in the morning, spent time talking with the *Comunidad* members. His presence was acknowledged by *comuneros* when he was in the *Comunidad*. While Fermín received visitors and occasionally visited other houses, he spent most of his time in his own house with his young wife or working on projects for himself and his family, which was much smaller than that of Manuel.

Finally, in the period leading up to the election I was told by Fermín and Manuel, separately, that one of the potential candidates would be wrong for the position because he was egotistical, ‘un egoista,’ and could not be trusted. They said that he would boss people around and even try and throw people out of the *Comunidad*. The *Acta* would give him this power and they were afraid he would use it. When his mother was nominated for president she was not elected mostly because people were afraid she would pass over power to her son. They were afraid of his potential abuse of power, and this despite the fact he was a nephew or cousin to almost the entire *Comunidad*.

**Section II: Community Meeting, Reunión**

In this section, I describe the community meeting, *reunion*, as they are held in San Juan. While I was present for three meetings in San Martín, they were each held for a very specific purpose, so were each slightly different. From my experiences they were similar to those in San Juan, but were held more regularly and organized with the assistance of Carlos to coordinate activities for the school, such as a *campeonato*. I do not attempt a comparison here, though this would be worthwhile at a later time.
Communal meetings in San Juan are generally organized in the days leading up to an actual event. They are usually held on Saturdays in the late morning so that people have time to fish or go to the garden before it begins. Around 9 or 10Am the president has one of the boys blow the conk shell horn. This can be heard in all of the houses except those of Roberto and Enrique who live 20 minutes upriver. They do not attend these meetings, which is an issue I return to in the final section. When the horn is blown people begin to make their way to the president’s house.

The meetings could be held in his house or in the schoolhouse in the centre of the main clearing adjacent to the football pitch. In either case, one the horn was blown, the president began setting up the space of the meeting. This entailed placing a table and two chairs at one end of the platform of his house, situating himself at the large desk in the school. Chairs are situated around the centre of the room leaving space in the middle. This physically creates the space of the meeting as all people are facing the front where the president sits with the Acta. During the time Fermín was president, his nephew Rildo\textsuperscript{143} was the secretary so was positioned next to him. The Acta was used to make the agenda for the meeting and then take minutes to document all the activities and decision that are taken.

People come in waves and there is no sense of urgency to arrive, or get started. Once most of the people are there the president will be notified is a particular person is not attending the meeting and why. This is usually because they are away from the Comunidad. Although it is not exactly mandatory to attend, all the comuneros do with the exception of the families of Roberto and Enrique and Juana, the grandmother who lives with Estela and Julian. She only entered the centre of the Comunidad on two occasions while I was living there. Once everyone who is attending is present and seated in the chairs, the president begins the meeting.

He welcomes the comuneros and has a list of his agenda that he reads out to the group. He usually speaks in Spanish first and then in Amahuaca. If there is a guest such as a logger he will make note of them but it is rare that a new person comes to ask to log, so there is no need for an official introduction. It was during one of these meetings that I

\textsuperscript{143} I have not mentioned Rildo, because he is not from the Inuya. Fermín brought him to San Juan when I arrived to live with me. He was meant to be my helper, and was in many ways.
was introduced. While the president speaks people tend to remain attentive. If he speaks for a long time (more than a half hour) people begin to chat amongst themselves, but they still pay attention. For the most part, they already know what he is going to say.

The most common themes are: upcoming *campeonatos* or *fiestas*; news from town such as government programs or development projects that will impact San Juan (one example is the program to give each house a solar panel and light that was fulfilled in October 2011); discussions concerning the school (this either involves people complaining that Manuel was not present and their children were missing school, or Manuel himself giving an update on programs for the school such as the arrival of personal laptops for each student); problems with outsiders such as fishermen who come from Atalaya, or people cutting timber illegally inside their territory; internal disagreements or arguments; and, updates on potential logging contracts.

The most important meetings involve contracts with loggers because this is the only time people actually vote, besides the election for leaders. Dealing with loggers and logging contracts is one of the primary jobs of the president. The *Comunidad* has usufruct rights over the land they have been title over, but in order to enter into contracts with loggers this must be certified by the government ministry for agriculture, which is located in Pucallpa. This is an arduous process that requires the president to travel to Pucallpa at least once if not more often. The trip to Pucallpa takes several days by boat from Atalaya, or thirty minutes by plane. The loggers pay for this travel, which is a way of indebting the president.

During the period 2009-2011 San Juan had one official contract and several other partial contracts. In the case of the official contract, one logging boss had the rights to extract timber from a specific area of the *Comunidad*. This is regulated by a group of forest engineers who make regular visits to San Juan to check what trees have been cut. If there has been illegal cutting, the *Comunidad* is forced to pay a large fine of tens of thousands of soles, $10,000 or more. Thus, it is very important that the president be an expert in the laws and follow proper procedures for making contracts with loggers.

Most negotiations to set the payment to be made to the *Comunidad* are done while the president is in town, so he arrives back to San Juan with a specific offer. *Comuneros* must decide whether they accept the offer, and if they do the payment will be made the
following year. They do not get paid until the logger has cut the timber, had it certified, then transported it to Pucallpa where the mills are located and he can get a better price. A contract is made each year even if the same person is going to be extracting timber. As part of the contract they may request that the logger sponsor their anniversary party, or help build a new communal building. The logger also makes gifts during the course of the year.

In the meetings when a decision needs to be taken by the Comunidad, individual comuneros are called upon to give their opinion. This can take the form of a yes or no answer, or they can give a longer description of what they think about the problem and why. For example, in one of the meetings the main issue to be discussed involved a specific logger who wanted to extend his contract. The president stated that the logger known as Jose who they all knew well wanted to extend his contract with the Comunidad and petition for another lote, or concession. The president said he thought maybe it would be a good idea, but that the person had to pay what he owed from the year before prior to any new arrangement being made. He made a point to be forceful and say he would not give permission to him just because he wanted it, but that the logger had to show his commitment to a previous contract and fulfill outstanding obligations. There was no vote taken as a consensus was created through his skepticism and they agreed to wait and see whether the logger made good on his promises. In this case, the perceived position of the president as protecting the Comunidad from potential cheating by an outsider convinced them to trust his leadership.

At other times contentious issues or disagreements arise and the mood switches from being quite calm and relaxed to heated and tense. People will make direct accusations against others including the president for perceived transgressions. In one case, the then-president Fermín and his Ashaninka wife were accused of stealing money and goods meant for comuneros. One woman directly attacked the president’s wife saying that they took money meant for the Comunidad and gave it to her father. The wife was an Ashaninka and was said to have a lot of wealth hidden at her father’s house. This became quite heated as the argument went back and forth and the young Ashaninka woman, then only 17, was forced to get angry and argue aggressively back at the woman making the accusation. Fermin also defended his wife saying this was not true. The accusation was
being made at them both. The woman making the accusation was Rosa, an aunt of the president, and a central figure in the *Comunidad*. The argument finally stopped after about a half an hour when the president chose to end the meeting. The woman stopped arguing and left. She never confronted him outside the space of the meeting, although she continued believing in what she said they had done.

All meetings end in the same way. Each individual is called to the front where they either sign next to their printed name or, if they cannot write, they give a thumbprint.

I now turn to two final ethnographic examples of meetings: an election and one in which outside goods are distributed. In the conclusion I will draw together the arguments made in the opening section with the descriptions of the different communal activities.

Figure 57. Communal meeting diagram (Acta/Contract).
Election

This example is taken from a meeting held to elect a new president, which had been anticipated for several months. The meeting was attended by all comuneros including a logger who happened to be there and was made to bear witness to the event. It began with Fermín covering a range of issues related to programs, schooling, and logging. He had been working in town and there had not been a meeting for months. While he was going through the agenda his aunt, María, interrupted him and began criticizing him in a very harsh manner. I could not record the event, but managed to take some notes. The following is a general summary.

While Fermín was going over the agenda, María interrupted him and said he was a liar and a bad president. She said he was a thief, he abused his power, that he was not a
good president or a good person. She said that she had brought him to San Juan and helped him when he needed it, and then once he arrived and became president he became a different person. She was clearly intent on hurting him. At the beginning he spoke back, trying to answer her accusations, but after a couple of minutes he stopped defending himself and just looked at her. Finally, after about five minutes, Fermín said, ‘tía, me de pena’ ‘aunt, you are hurting me.’ She did not stop immediately, but made a few more remarks and then stopped talking. He simply continued with the agenda.

María’s husband Manuel Sarasara had been president and when they left to go to town so their daughter could attend school, Fermín took over. He is her classificatory nephew. Apparently, Fermín had made accusations against Manuel Sarasara and this was part of why she was attacking him, but this all took place before my arrival so I cannot speak to it directly. Clearly, she wanted to punish him and make it impossible for him to be re-elected. He had told me he did not really want to be president again, so this would not have mattered to him. Moreover, there was a general consensus that when Manuel Sarasara returned, which he had, he would take back the position. Thus, in a sense, the attack was politically unnecessary. In the end, Manuel was elected president with all of the votes except six, which were divided between Rosa (María’s sister), and Enrique (their step-father). Fermín did not get any votes. While María’s comments were unnecessary in terms of the outcome of the election, the way she positioned herself raises some interesting points.

In order to grasp the significance of this, it is important to return to what I said earlier regarding the avoidance of conflict. During the period I lived with Amahuaca people I only saw three moments in which people allowed their anger to spill over into direct and personal confrontation. As a general rule, which is both openly expressed and for the most part followed, Amahuaca people avoid conflict with one another. They gossip, and speak negatively about other people regularly, but they do not confront one another directly even if they could be considered as having the right to do so. Even in the case of William discussed in chapter 6, people very rarely accused him directly.

During communal meetings, however, there was no sense that conflict should be avoided. In fact, the space of the meetings was used quite practically to express anger, frustration and other concerns that would be manifested as gossip or avoidance in other
contexts. Furthermore, the confrontations do not necessarily entail problems relating to the Comunidad as an entity, but can be personal. The case of María is one example, among many. 144

So far, I have covered three different aspects of the meetings: informing people of what is happening; making different communal decision by voting, including whether to sign a contract and who to elect to be president; and, as a space where conflicts can be expressed openly. There is one more aspect of the meetings, which is the distribution of wealth.

Wealth and Comunidad

The President Manuel Sarasara had recently returned from town and was in possession of pekepeke motors that had been given as payment by a logger for his previous year’s work. Many months earlier, under the presidency of Fermín, comuneros had been given a choice of how they wanted to be compensated. Each household had the option of receiving a pekepeke motor, 700 soles ($250), or combining the money into one lump sum for the construction of a health post. All of them chose the motor, despite the fact that many of them already owned at least one.

After many months of waiting, and a change in president, the motors arrived. It was the dry season and the meeting was held at 11 in the morning, so the sun was high and strong. I happened to be visiting from San Martín where I had been living for a month, so was there when the motors were distributed. The meeting was held in the communal building as the motors were big and could be spread out on the ground.

As the comuneros gathered, the president began to speak and went on for about 25 minutes. He began by directly referring to the importance of working together in terms of

144 There is another component to this historically that needs to be investigated further. In the 1960s Amahuaca people had a ritualized form of speech that they would use when arriving or departing from a place they were visiting. It involved two people, the host and guest simultaneously telling the other either where they had come from or where they were going to go. It also appeared when there were conflicts among closely related people, such as brothers. Two or more men would sit side-by-side and while facing forward, not towards one another, they would speak simultaneously telling the others that they wanted to live in peace and had no intention of causing conflict (Dole 1973). This form of speech has received relatively little attention and could be another way of coming to an understanding of how and why Amahuaca people use the space of the meeting in the manner they do.
the faena. He said that everyone should participate, and if they do not then they will not be able to share in the distribution of goods received from loggers or the government.

He went on to speak about how these motors were being given to each family, but that they must be taken care of. If they are not taken care of, then they will fall into ruin and if they fall into ruin then they will not work. When they do not work, it will be the fault of the owner and there is nothing he can do to help. They are being given to people and those people have the responsibility to take care of them. Then he shifted tone and made an analogy between motors and people. He said, ‘motores son como gente. Necesitan comida’ [motors are like people. They need food]. He went on to say that their food is gasoline and oil and they must be kept well nourished so they function.

As he continued, he compared a Comunidad with a caserío, which is not by definition indigenous or a Comunidad. It is a caserio, which means it is a place that is comprised of different individuals and families who live on parcels of land or divided up, and work apart. This was drawn as a contrast to a Comunidad in that a Comunidad is defined by working together. He referred directly to the neighboring caserio that is organized around Don Juan, a mestizo elite.

In a Caserio they don’t know how to work together. They live apart. Being a Comunidad means working together. When we have a work party everyone should participate because we live together in a Comunidad.

The relation between the motors and people combines a morality of caring with the importance of personal responsibility. Each family is autonomous in terms of their possession of the motor, but motors, like people, require care in order to work. The shift from this metaphor to a discussion of what it means to live in a Comunidad, rather than a caserio, places that autonomy within a wider context. They only receive motors because they are part of a Comunidad and these relations have to be maintained. They cannot exist without the maintenance of the people who comprise it, and because of that they must work together. I take this as a statement about the work of making a good Comunidad, and the focal point of the speech is the dual nature of the outside: only through living well together can wealth be brought in from the outside. Furthermore, by referring to the fact that he decided who should receive the motors, he was claiming the right to hold back the goods from people who do not help. He was using the potential of
holding back goods as a coercive tool to get people to work together. Everyone who attended the meeting, and even all those who did not, received their motor, making this, in a sense, an empty threat, but it was meaningful nonetheless. For that moment he held power over them in the form of controlling wealth, and he used the opportunity to make it clear that they should listen to him when he organizes a faena.

At that moment he had control over the wealth that is brought in from the outside. This wealth is made possible because they live in a Comunidad. Prior to living in Comunidades Amahuaca people would have had to work directly for a patrón to gain access to wealth such as motors. They would not be able to work for themselves. By living in a Comunidad the logger works with, or even for, them. They are in control, but in order to make this productive they must also control the knowledge of how to negotiate, calculate, what they value. In essence, they must decide two things. First, what they want and how much they want of it. In this case they chose pekepeke motors over money and the health post. If they had wanted something else, this would have required more negotiation and more effort because it is still the logger who sets out the deal.

At this point the knowledge that is referred to throughout the thesis is crucial because differentials in the ability to control the quality and quantity of the wealth that is being brought into the Comunidad becomes grounds for the moral judgement by others. This is often expressed through the valuation of groups or individuals in terms of their being civilized and having the knowledge and capacity to exchange with outsiders and not get cheated. This was expressed by Wilson when he pointed out that people living up the Mapuya River had been cheated by the loggers. While they seemed quite happy, he perceived the values exchanged as being incredibly unequal.

The second thing is more complicated, and is a job that falls primarily on the president. This is to teach the comuneros the value of motors in their own terms. What I mean is that in that moment when the wealth stands in front of each household, but is still under the ‘control’ of the president, he has the duty to speak. As McCallum points out,
This moment of exchange is a potent one because it exists as a revelation of the productive power of ‘living together.’ At this moment the words of the president have greater significance than they might in other contexts and he will demonstrate whether he is a leader that speaks for the group, or one that speaks for himself. In this case, Manuel Sarasara related this exchange back to comuneros by drawing on metaphors and direct comparisons he was translating the value of the motors.

The outside form of wealth is, in this case, a machine that is made through the knowledge and practices of the people Manuel Sarasara calls ‘gente racional’ or ‘rational people.’ The types of wealth and goods that are made by these types of people are good. They are civilized things. By relating these things to the body he was, I believe, trying to say that for the Comunidad, the people and their bodies, are their wealth made through their knowledge and practices. The analogy of motors being like people and oil and gasoline like food focuses attention to the caring of a body through feeding and consumption. The food that is consumed is often acquired through the caring of other people in the Comunidad. The Comunidad is wealthy because it is comprised of good people and the perspective this entails can become the site of exchange with outsiders such as loggers. In exchanging in this way, Amahuaca people are not only internalizing the goods, but the president seems to be saying they should incorporate the quality of taking care good care of the motors and, by extension, other types of goods brought from the outside. For Amahuaca people gente racional do have a lot of things and knowledge. Thus, the good qualities of gente racional should be incorporated, while the negative qualities of not living and working well together, exemplified in this case by the caserío, are contrasted with good communal living.

**Conclusion**

Through the different types of relations examined in this chapter the productive activities of comuneros are manifested through different types of exchange. The faena is an activity that brings people together in the name of the Comunidad and through the
work of clearing the patios, soccer field and trails they are revealing their own capacity to live with one another in a civilized way; however, this only really becomes visible through the perspective of the guests. The same is true of the food and masato. Amahuaca people can make masato any time they want and food in this area is quite plentiful, but it is the serving of these things to the guests, which makes them meaningful at the level of the Comunidad. The form the Comunidad takes in an exchange with other Comunidades is different than that with loggers or the State. This form of an Amahuaca Comunidad is realized through guest-host relations that are in many ways joyous, but also competitive.

The Comunidad demonstrates their wealth by presenting their beautiful village, cleared soccer-field, indigenous types of food and drink and by demonstrating they know correct ways of socializing. The soccer tournaments entail important aspects of being a civilized Amahuaca Comunidad—to have money for their portion of the bet, drink lots of masato and play well—showing their ability to live a certain way. When the visitors are sitting in a house, or communal building being given more than they can eat or drink and looking at the ordered state of the village, they are exchanging their point of view. And, every time a guest is served, this is being done in the name of the Comunidad, not in the name of the person doing the serving, which is always a woman. From any given person’s point of view they may be visiting with people they share a close history with, or with whom they consider kinspeople, but at the collective level a competitive exchange is taking place and this becomes the most common topic of discourses comuneros have about themselves and others. The Comunidad takes the point of view of One, but this is not the point of view of the President. He is a mediator who is largely responsible for making this possible, but does not represent the Comunidad in relations with other Comunidades as he does with loggers or the government. All the wealth is focused towards the outside, but in a different way. Certain types of this ‘wealth’ (masato and food) is based on the complementary work of men and women, while other types (loud music, beautiful football jerseys) are based on exchange with loggers, and the other type (beautiful communal space, cleared soccer field) are based on collective effort done during a faena. These are all made possible by the ability and willingness to ‘live together.’ Despite that the Comunidad often appears as a fractured collectivity, during
these *campeonatos* the multiple positions comprising a *Comunidad* are unified and made visible through the position of the guests, which give it the appearance of being One.

In the exchanges between the *Comunidad* and loggers, however, the person or entity with which the *Comunidad* exchanges is often not present for the distribution of the wealth. The president arrives from town with the goods. Furthermore, every exchange between the *Comunidad* and loggers must be based on a contract that is certified by the State. While all *comuneros* know the loggers with whom they make contracts, they do not trust them and they look to the president to negotiate on their behalf. This does not mean, however, that they view the president as being the reason these relations are possible, or, as we have seen, that the president is completely trusted. For Amahuaca people, this power is made possible through the *Acta* and this is part of a longer history of relations with outsiders such as missionaries, government officials, and loggers, which is the theme of the thesis because of its implications in moments such as these.

The distribution of motors in the meeting is not understood by *comuneros* as a gift of the president, but as the outcome of communal activities mediated through the *Acta* and, in turn, the work of the president. It is the realization of the potential that is immanent, but only materialized in the form of exchange. Furthermore, this exchange cannot be considered as a transaction between two equal and established units, but as part of a process that not only includes all the relations between individuals, but also the collective knowledge embedded in the *collectivity*, here defined in terms of *Comunidad*. In turn, the president takes advantage of the authority this event allows by revealing the motors as a form of wealth made possible through their ability to live well together. In essence, this event is the culmination of a long history that must be remembered. His speech highlights the relation between history, work and wealth. The president does not take this moment to claim authority over individuals, but returns to an idea of the group as a set of relations that must be continually re-affirmed.

In conclusion, what I have tried to show in this chapter, and in the thesis, is that for Amahuaca people the *Acta*, and the socio-political relations involved, is incredibly important for making *this* communal body possible. I have also tried to show, however, that despite the attempt by the government and other outsiders to give *Comunidad* certain form corresponding to that of the State, Amahuaca people do not simply accept this, but
work hard to make it their own based on a specific set of values. This includes a specific discourse realized by the President himself to maintain a certain relation between the work of the Comunidad, and exchange with ‘outsiders’ for different forms of wealth. It also entails a notion of autonomy that is frustrating for outsiders when trying to organize people towards what may seem beneficial ends. This is what Bill Dyck and others were doing and why the document expresses a greater need for organization.

What I have tried to demonstrate, however, is that the political system of the Comuniad is, in effect, doing more or less what Amahuaca people themselves want it to. While it may not be as productive as we would like, or even sometimes as much as certain Amahuaca individuals would have it, it is through the Acta, and its seeming ‘lack’ of real power that they maintain their autonomy.

In his discussion of the campeonatos and manioc beer parties Bill Dyck pointed out that these were events when people who had had conflicts would come together and forget their troubles. These events, especially campeonatos, are structured on divisions and antagonism between Comundiades, but they offer a space for this to be revealed that is productive of something bigger, which is both an internal coherency, and a wider sociality.

The same could be said for the communal meetings in which people express their frustrations with one another. These meetings can become painful to sit through either because nothing at all happens, or when people become aggressive and verbally abusive. This is in stark contrast to the everyday relationships when people avoid such conflict. They may not always be nice to one another, but they tend to avoid this type of conflict. Thus, these meetings, as spaces for the airing of grievances and the coordinating of collective activities, are central for the processes of living together. Rather than being ineffective, the social and political organization in a Comunidad, seen from this vantage point, is exactly what it should be: productive of wealth and personal autonomy.

Finally, the Acta is also similar to another important theme in literature in lowland South America, which is the State. And, although I have not developed this theme in a methodical way in the thesis, it has been central for answering one of the primary questions introduced in Chapter 1. That is, why was Bill Dyck so frustrated by a lack of ‘social and political organization?’ As a form of conclusion, I will give a provisional
answer to two questions I raised in the beginning of the Thesis. The first is what the president meant when he said the government had forgotten them and the second is what exactly Bill Dyck meant when he said that Amahuaca people lacked effective ‘social and political organization.’

In short, the Acta may be an instantiation of the State, and it allows for certain forms of exchange and the possibility of a coercive power, but I demonstrated that this does not actually appear within Comunidades. The reason is that people simply would not stand for it, they would not allow another person within the Comunidad, whether the president or otherwise, to force them to do anything or punish them in these terms for something they had done. The power of the State is effective as a way of relating with the outside, and these relations elicit a certain form within the Comunidad; however, Amahuaca people resist in their own subtle ways the emergence of hierarchy within the Comunidad. They do not allow for the emergence of coercion or hierarchy in terms that will impact their relationships with one another. This power exists as a potential, and is maintained as such. There is a tension between Amahuaca people’s interest in the potential for the Acta to be more productive within the Comunidad, and their resistance to becoming subordinate to another Amahuaca person. This sentiment is captured well by the ways people, such as Enrique, talk about the right to punish offenders. It is also relevant to Fermin’s sense that although he had the right to organize people, they resisted his leadership.

Perhaps what Fermin meant by saying the government had forgotten them, is that the government is what makes the Comunidad productive and allows for him to bring people together. By making wealth available, whether through loggers or government projects, he is able to frame his leadership as productive and then organize people to work. Without the government, without wealth, his attempts to organize people and ‘civilize’ them is perceived as a form of intrusion upon their autonomy that is not accepted. The use of language and styles of leadership from the outside within the Comunidad simply do not work, and his attempts to do so were ineffective because, he said himself, nobody cared. (cf McCallum for a similar case with Cashinahua leaders). This is, in part, why he was considered an outsider. The other aspect of this was that he siphoned wealth from the Comunidad to his father-in-law who is not Amahuaca and not from the Comunidad. As I
argued on several different levels, it is not theft, as such, that is so horrible in San Juan, but the antisocial aspect of theft that raises real problems. He is, in some ways, like William who steals chickens and eats alone. The combination of these factors resulted in Fermin’s failure and people’s perception of him not only as an outsider, but a bad person. This may change over time when a new leader takes over and Fermin is remembered as not being so bad. From my point of view, he was not such a bad leader, but Manuel is an exceptional one. He is by no means perfect, but he has managed to find the right balance between giving and taking. Very few people want to be leaders and by the end of his term in office Fermin no longer wanted the position. And, although Manuel Sarasara returned for a short time, I have been told he has given up the position. He is tired of the work of dealing with loggers, traveling and being the target of demands.
Conclusion

Compared to other groups in the region, and other Panoans in particular, Amahuaca people do not seem very remarkable. Based on the activities I set out here, they are just like every other Comunidad in the region. They have mingas, faenas, host campeonatos and participate in meetings. They send their children to school and they have gardens where they grow manioc and plantains, among other crops. They drink masato and sometimes take ayahuasca, watch movies on their t.v. and listen to Peruvian music. They wear Peruvian clothing and with a few exceptions do not paint themselves with huito. They fish with nets and hunt with shotguns, and both men and women spend time away from the Comunidad doing the same sort of work as they would do if they remained on the Inuya, but in very different contexts.

During my fieldwork and after my return I have been struck by the fact that despite their apparent ‘lack’ of social organization Amahuaca people have managed to maintain a coherent identity that is more or less concentrated in one area. I am still in awe that people could spread out across the region so rapidly and then, after living with the other, simply return to the Inuya River and make Comunidades. It seems at times like the period from the 1960-1980s was a great experiment in which they systematically set out to become like nawa. Then, after a number of years, they returned to the Inuya having transformed themselves into something more. Prior to 1960, Amahuaca people did not exist. There were people who spoke the language we call Amahuaca, but the name itself seems to have been foreign to them, and like so many other things, they took the name that outsiders gave them and made it their own. They have continuously transformed themselves through the other, a process that is ongoing. If I had to guess about why the
young girl made the statement she did about drinking coffee I would say it was because I drank coffee everyday and she was my neighbor and friend. It is not that she took the idea of coffee from me, but she chose it over other possible substances to express a transformation she perceived, which is clearly one that she is negotiating in terms of the categories I discussed throughout the thesis. I think her ambiguity regarding whether it was good to be mestizo or Amahuaca and who might be considered an indio captures well the ambiguous nature of becoming other.

Through living together, the Comunidad is able to make and maintain relations with other individuals and entities/institutions with whom different forms of wealth can be exchanged. In the first case, the organization of Comunidad members’ productive activities culminates in the distribution of food and masato to guests during campeonatos.

I am suggesting that this form of relating to other indigenous people makes perfect sense for Amahuaca people because it builds on a logic that combines kinship and contract such that it entails a relative balance of both. It brings together the Comunidad that exchanges with other equally constituted entities.

What I find interesting is that the ‘other entities’ with which the Comunidad exchanges differ (loggers, government, Comunidades), and as I have ordered my analysis, through exchanges with different others, different forms of Comunidad are revealed. In the case of campeonatos, for example, San Juan, San Martín and Inmaculada exchange with one another as entities, but through the sharing of specific substances and positions. They exchange food, masato and positions of guest and host. They also reveal the inner coherency of one another, as well as the work that has gone into making the space of the Comunidad beautiful. It is clean, ordered, organized, and in some cases, decorated. These events are a middle ground, so to speak, between the ways Amahuaca people relate to one another within the Comunidad, and the ways the Comunidad relates to the government and other outsiders such as loggers. In 145

145 Although Inmaculada is technically a caserío, it is primarily comprised of indigenous people, and in either case during campeonatos it functions in the same way as a Comunidad.
campeonatos, the Comunidad is both a ‘corporal’ and a ‘corporate’ entity that exchanges perspectives and substances with other ‘equally conceived units’ (Vilaça 317: 2010).

In the latter case, the Comunidad as an entity enters into exchanges with loggers and, in order to do so, a more explicitly ‘corporate’ form is manifested. This entails a division of the group into separate and bounded units such as individuals (during meetings) and households (when wealth is distributed). The aspect of their mutual growth of one another through the sharing of food, work and masato—what I call kinship—is hidden during specific moments. As the individual households are divided through their receiving of the motors, their interconnectedness is not the most relevant relation. It is at this moment that president Manuel draws them back together and reminds them that it is only through living together that the wealth is possible. He translates the value of motors into terms that posits togetherness, collective effort and a sense of community as the wealth being exchanged. He does not speak about the timber that was taken from the Comunidad, but instead about their ability to live together. He reminds them that this takes effort as people make the choice to participate in communal life. He uses this moment to make a statement about the power of the Comunidad and rather than trying to claim this as his own, he posits it as their power made productive through the Acta.

What the Acta does, and particularly during meetings, is individuate the comunidad. Each individual adult is made to give their vote and place their mark in the Acta, which places them in direct relationship to the State. This individualization is different than the personal autonomy that people seem to desire; it is an expression of a different type of personhood, contract that, I have argued, stands in a complementary position to the kinship. I have called this kinship for lack of a better word, but it should be clear that it is meant to signify much more than this. On the one hand, it appears in the form of the ‘composite person,’ but this is a way of accessing a wider system of relating in which the complementary work of men and women, their consubstantiality, their mutuality, comes to appear as the healthy bodies of kin and co-residents. This is meant to capture the notion that one way of perceiving of Comunidad is as a ‘corporal entity.’ The Comunidad is the idiom used in the contemporary lived world for making kinspeople out of others, for making and growing good Amahuaca people. I have tried to demonstrate how this differs in San Juan and San Martín, although in descriptions of collective events I have
focused on San Juan. This is due to word limitations, but also because it could be argued that the same logic appears in both places. In order to draw this out, I would have to extend the comparison more fully, which I intend to do in later work.

In the case of San Juan then, these two modes of relating and the forms that appear as an outcome of different exchanges are not in opposition. I am arguing that they are complementary. They both constitute the Comunidad and one is not possible without the other. If this logic of the Comunidad being a kind of ‘corporal body’ is extended, then the Acta does not stand for its antithesis, but instead as a different aspect of the whole: alterity. The Acta is the outside physically manifested in the Comunidad, it is the power of gente rational. As Amahuaca people become civilized, this is a process of becoming other, and this is based on a logic that seems to be constitutive of all Panoan groups. This is what Erikson (1999) calls ‘constitutive alterity,’ and I am suggesting that the Acta is a manifestation of this notion of alterity, which sits at the centre of their social world.

Furthermore, this is a continuum and not a stark contrast; there is a movement from one pole to the other that can be perceived in the different collective activities. Moving from the daily productive activities that are oriented around a husband and wife outwards towards the exchange that occur with loggers, a series of shifts occur that emphasize different aspects of the persons involved. At one end of the spectrum is the individual comprised of a yoshin and yora, a soul and a body. If we follow the logic set out by Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2001) that the soul matter is the affinal aspect of an Amerindian person, and the body is the consanguineal aspect, then the basic unit is an Amahuaca individual that is comprised of both. Although I may not have stated this outright, this I demonstrated that this does seem to work for the Amahuaca case. As this is extended outwards, this combination re-occurs in the form of the ‘composite person.’

This is the most intensive relation of difference and, as Erikson argues, “In many respects, sexual dimorphism appears to be the metaphorical key to provide a conceptual model that will serve to think through all the other sociological oppositions among the Panaons” (ibid. 117, my translation).

At the opposite end of this continuum we find the Acta, which is a way of relating with the outside, but is also constitutive of the group. In the meetings there is a division between comuneros and the president, those who are considered adults and those who are
still too young to be considered full *comuneros*, and those who are not *comuneros* at all and are excluded from participation.

I suggest that in many ways the logic behind the meeting and the *campeonato* are not so different from that found within the glutton feast discussed in Chapter Two. The different events that make up the most important aspects of contemporary life could be understood as transformations of events that took place in the 1960s. The implication is that the *Acta* is only a name for something that has always existed in Amahuaca people’s lived world, but is expressed differently today.

There are many aspects of Amahuaca life that I have not addressed in this thesis some of which are quite important. In some cases this was due to a decision I made regarding how to frame the thesis. In other cases, it is based on my own experiences in the field. I moved around quite extensively and focused on the history of a larger group of people rather than focusing in on just San Juan or San Martin, or what became Alto Esperanza. I became interested in the history of these families in part because of my relationship with Robert Carneiro and in part due to my interest in the topic more generally. I am also clearly influenced by my supervisor whose work inspired me to continue studying anthropology and guided my interests during my own fieldwork.

There are other aspects I did not address because of happenstance. I know that Amahuaca people still take ayahuasca, for example, but I never witnessed them doing so. I have had many conversations with people about what this means to them and how it inflects their way of being in the world. I focused on this in the thesis more in historical terms because I did not ever witness or participate in them doing this. I think it is relevant for their way of being in the world, which is why I made a point to discuss it in chapters one and two. It is no longer an activity that is done as a collective, which is one of the reasons I have left it aside for now.

I also carried out fieldwork in Spanish. I could understand some Amahuaca, but not sufficiently to do the research that I felt I should. And, since with only one exception all Amahuaca people speak Spanish, I was able to communicate with everyone. This is clearly something that is missing in my research and I am currently working with two
linguists to expand my understanding of the language and engage with a different set of issues by passing along a series of questions that they would not think to address otherwise. This is already proving to be important, as we have begun collaborating on a joint project.
Appendix A. Methodology

In total I spent two years off and on living on the Inuya River in the province of Atalaya, region of Ucayali, Peru. The research combined a series of different activities including moving between a variety of sites, carrying out interviews, visiting different people and participating in everyday life as much as possible.

Prior to fieldwork I spent three months at the American Museum of Natural History where I worked closely with Robert Carneiro who shared his fieldnotes and other documents with me. This included more detailed information regarding the book Farewell to Eden, which was a collaborative project undertaken by Robert Carneiro, Gertrude Dole, Robert Russell, Cornell Capa and Matthew Huxley. The book details life at Varadero with specific attention on the tenuous position of Amahuaca people as they were deciding whether to remain in the headwaters area of move closer to town to be near relatives who had already moved. The book has numerous photos that I used to collect information about people who had lived at Varadero. In addition to copies of the book, Robert Carneiro gave me copies of his notes and an additional 40 photographs to take with me. This data and the photos were used as a background for my research. I spent a considerable amount of time visiting different people and collecting their stories, with particular attention on how they came to live where they do and why.

In the case that people had died I tried to document when, where and how they died. I carried out personal recorded interviews with as many of the living Amahuaca people from that period as possible. In some cases I spent a considerable amount of time living with these people and did more long-term interviews most of which were not recorded. While these interviews are not transcribed within the text, they offer a basis for the narratives I discuss throughout the thesis.

While in the communities I participated in daily life helping when I could and sitting nearby as Amahuaca people carried out daily activities. Most of my data regarding the tenor of Amahuaca life comes from spending time in the San Juan and San Martin talking
to people about whatever most interested them. I also joined the football teams of the respective communities and participated in parties as both a host and a guest depending on the context. The other event that was essential for my research was Comunidad meetings, which I attended regularly. In the meetings I took notes of the topics discussed and tried to take down specific quotes when they seemed important. I did not record any of these meetings, as this would have been inappropriate.

During my first six months in San Juan I lived with the president of the Comunidad, which offered particular insights into his role as leader. As is often the case, this living situation also shut me off from some of other people’s opinions and ideas about him and leadership in general. During my time, however, there was an election and a previous president was re-elected, which allowed for a different perspective on the former president who then left San Juan. Witnessing the election process was quite useful for understanding the processes of how the Comunidad is organized. Finally, I spent considerable time speaking with the new president who was an original founder of San Juan and had been the secretary, treasurer and president from its establishment until relatively recently. Thus, I was able to engage with two different presidents offering important insights for my work.

While living in San Martin I spent most of my time with the president and her husband, as I ate almost all my meals with them. Over the course of fieldwork they became my compadres. The wife, Elizabeth, is the daughter of Roberto Pansitimba who is a main protagonist in the book Farewell to Eden.

The teacher in the primary school is the only Amahuaca schoolteacher still working. He is a very highly respected person and became a good source of information into life on the Inuya River and the history of the families living there. While he had grown up in the mission of Sepahua, he had worked with the SIL for a number of years.

I also spent a considerable time going back and forth from the town of Atalaya and a neighboring caserio called Maldonadillo. Maldonadillo is an important site for Amahuaca people, and particularly those living in San Juan because one of the most important families has a house there that is used by most people from the San Juan when they travel to work, visit or study in town. This house is mentioned in the thesis on several occasions, as it is a social extension of San Juan. During these trips up and down the river
I visited almost all of the Amahuaca families spread out on the Inuya. In some cases I ended up spending a good amount of time visiting the same families, as we would stop in their houses to eat, sleep and drink *masato*.

I also visited one large family living in Atalaya on a regular basis. The older parents both lived at Varadero and became a great source of historical data. Their children were all born on the Inuya River. It was this older couple that accompanied me up the Mapuya River. Finally, I visited the mission of Sepahua on two separate occasions where I met with and interviewed older Amahuaca people.

As a way to make sense of the landscape as it was lived by people I carried out a mapping project in which I plotted all the locations on the Inuya River where events had occurred that were significant for people. I am currently making of a map detailing many sites that have been occupied by Amahuaca people since the 1960s. In general I found traveling with Amahuaca people a very productive way to learn more about them, the area, history and other information such as stories, myths and anecdotes. This was particularly true regarding several trips to the headwaters region where I was able to meet Amahuaca people who have little or no contact with those living in the established communities.\(^{146}\)

In total I visited the cluster of Amahuaca families living at the headwaters of the Inuya River in what is now the Comunidad of Alto Esperanza two times. On the first expedition I spent three days there speaking with them and making plans to return or have them visit me downriver. On the second visit I spent almost two weeks in the area. It was during this visit that I first travelled to the headwaters of the Mapuya River where relatives of those living on the upper Inuya group reside. From the headwaters of the Inuya I walked several days to the upper Mapuya guided by a young Amahuaca couple and a boy of about 13 who wanted to visit his relatives. This group has no interaction with those living in Comunidades on the middle Inuya due to a killing that took place in the 1980s. My second visit to the upper Mapuya entailed traveling by boat with the Collazo family who reside in Atalaya. This trip took several weeks during which I was able to visit the Yaminahua Comunidad of Raya and other Amahuaca people spread out

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\(^{146}\) This is not to say that they are isolated, but that in some cases there are almost no relations between these people and other Amahuaca.
along the river. During this trip I tried to gather as much information about people’s histories and relationships through informal conversations, recorded interviews and gathering data on Amahuaca people found in the book and photos. Despite fears that people would not want to see these images, Amahuaca people were not only interested in seeing them, but often asked for copies of photos of their deceased relatives.

While these trips were invaluable for a better understanding of the wider history of Amahuaca people’s distribution in the area, the majority of my time was spent living in San Juan and Nuevo San Martin on the middle of the Inuya River. I spent most of my time in San Juan, which was the smaller of the two and two hours upriver from San Martin.

There are many aspects of Amahuaca life that I have not addressed in this thesis some of which are quite important. In some cases this was due to a decision I made regarding how to frame the thesis. In other cases, it is based on my own experiences in the field. I moved around quite extensively and focused on the history of a larger group of people rather than focusing in on just San Juan or San Martin, or what became Alto Esperanza. I became interested in the history of these families in part because of my relationship with Robert Carneiro and in part due to my interest in the topic more generally. I am also clearly influenced by my supervisor whose work inspired me to continue studying anthropology and guided my interests during my own fieldwork.

There are other aspects I did not address because of happenstance. I know that Amahuaca people still take ayahuasca, but I never witnessed them doing so. I have had many conversations with people about what this means to them and how it inflects their way of being in the world. I focused on this in the thesis more in historical terms because I did not ever witness or participate in them doing this. This is relevant for their way of being in the world, which is why I made a point to discuss it. It is no longer an activity that is done as a collective, which is one of the reasons I have left it aside for now.

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linguists to expand my understanding of the language and engage with a different set of issues.
Appendix B
Amahuaca Songs

A note on orthography

According to my Amahuaca orthography, the letters correspond to their sounds in Spanish with a few exceptions. The letter “H” between two vowels, word initial before a vowel, and word final after a vowel stands for a glottal stop which is the sound “Uh” in the English expletive “Uh, Oh”. The “W” corresponds to “HU” in Spanish. The “U” is unrounded, and the “X” is a retroflex “S” sound. I believe a simple alphabet can encourage use of written Amahuaca language.

WAKA TAA YAIN / La Ave de la Caña Brava / The Arrow Cane Bird

WAKATAA YAIN YAIN NI
Cuando la ave “yain” canta
When the “yain” bird sings

HOWA TAAWAKA TOHAI
Está sentado en palo de caña brava torcido como arco
It is perched on an arrow cane stem that is bent like a bow

HOWA TAAWAKA TOHA
El palo de caña brava está torcido
The stalk is bent
Jawi Tza Noko
Así mismo está sentado
It is perched this way

Wakataa Yain Yain Ni
Cuando la ave caña brava “yain” canta
When the “yain” bird sings

Yain Yain Iin Non Mai
No van a cantar los otros “yain” pájaros
These other “yain” birds will not sing

Nokun Rokon Wakataa
Éstas caña bravas nuestras
These arrow canes of ours

Wakataa Yainmun
Éstos caña brava “yain” pájaros
These arrow cane birds

Jawi Wua Wianxon
“Vamos a quitar esta canción”
“Let’s take away this song”

Wua Wian Xonkomun
Quitando la canción
Taking his song

Ombaha Xaan Muthanon
Voy a hacer un festín y cantar
I am going to hold a feast and sing

Hiyan Muthaxon Kanpu
Me preparo a cantar
I prepare myself to sing

Muthaxon Kanpu Jondi
Cantame, hombres!
Sing it to me, people

Jawi Jondi Atanmun
Diciendo a los hombres
Speaking to the men

Jondi Mutha Kihinxon
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

Ombaha Xaan Muthaxon
El festín se prepara cantando
Getting ready for the feast singing
MUTHAXON NON NINKAPU
Voy a cantar, escuchen
I am going to sing, listen

JAWI MUTHAPU JONDI
Cantan ya, hombres
Sing now, guys

JONDI ATAN KOWINMUN
Diciendo a los hombres verdaderos
Speaking to the real, true men

JONDI MUTHA KIHINXON
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

OMBA YOWAA AXANKIN
Vamos a hacer un festín grande
Let’s make a big feast

JAWI MUTHANON KANPU
Vamonos a cantar
Let’s sing, everyone

HIYA MUTHA XONDIPU
Ven, cantame
Come, sing to me

MUTHA XONDIPU JONDI
Vengan a cantar, hombres
Come to sing, men

JONDI ATAN KOWINMUN
Dice el hombre verdadero
Says the true man

JONDI MUTHA KIHINXON
Canta con los hombres
Singing with the men

JAWI MUTHANON KANPU
Vamos a cantar, hombres
Let’s all sing, guys

MUTHA NON KANPU JONDI
Vamos a cantar, hombres
We are singing, men

JAWIMUN MIN AKUMUN
Cuándo tú haces el festín
When you have the feast
RAMBI OKUX WUNDITAN
Yo también voy a levantarme para hacerlo
Even I will get up to do it

MIYA MUTHAXON KATHI
Voy a cantar para ti
I will sing for you

MUTHAXON KATHI UN GAI
Yo voy a cantarme
I will sing myself

HIYA MUTHA XONDIPU
Ven a cantarme
Come sing to me

JONDI ATAN KOWINMUN
Diciendo a los hombres verdaderos
Speaking to the true men

JONDI MUTHA KIHINXON
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

MUTHA KIHINXON KOMUN
Cantando con los hombres verdaderos
Singing with the true men

WARIWIN / Huayo del Sol / Fruit of the Sun

WARI WINSHIN MUYORI
El sol naciente pintado rojo, su luz torcida alumbra lejos
The rising sun colored red, its inclined rays spread far

WARIWIN WARIWIN
Huayo del sol
Fruit of the sun

MUYORIA XUKIMUN
Pintados granos de maíz
Colorful maize kernels

AYAMUNKA MIYA JAN
Vamos a hacer beber
We are going to make drink

OKAN XUKI WUCHONYA
Bien espesa la chicha del paucar negro
The maize drink of the black tanager is nice and trick
OMBAH AKATHI UN GAI
“Voy a hacer un festín,” dice el paucar negro
“I am going to give a feast,” says the black tanager

JAA CHAI ASTIWOH
“Hay maíz bueno de mazorca larga,” dice el paucar negro
“There is good maize with long cobs,” says the black tanager

NOKU OKAN KIYONI
El paucar negro ya ha terminado el maíz
The black tanager already consumed the maize

OKA THISKO RIHINI
El paucar negro ha sentando y silba su canción
The black tanager has perched and whistles his song

IIKIKIHA OKAKI
Dice así el paucar negro: “II-Ki-Ki-AA”
The black tanager sings like this, “II-Key-Key-AH”

NOKUN ROKON AKANXAN
“Nosotros vamos a hacer un festín,” canta el paucar negro
“We are going to give a feast,” sings the black tanager

OMBA ANON IIKAMAI
“Vamos a hacer un festín “
“Let’s give a feast “

RAMBA SHAARA WOKAMUN
“Ahora está bueno,” dice
“Right now is good,” he says

JAA WAKU WUNDIKAN
Desde chico ha aprendido el festín
Since he was little, he learned about the feast

OMBA ANDI KATOMUN
“Yo he hecho un festín,” dice
“I have made a feast,” he says

OKAN XUKI WUCHONYA
Bien espesa la chicha de maíz de paucar negro
Good and thick is the maize drink of the black tanager

OMBA AXAN MUTHA AI
“Vamos a hacer el festín con alegría,” dice
“Let’s make the feast with happiness,” he says

MUTHAHI UN GARITHI
“Yo estoy alegre!” dice el paucar negro
“I am happy!” says the black tanager
JAHI WOKOWINI
“Yo estoy el dueño mismo,” dice el Paucar quitando el festín del Sol
“I am the host,” says the bird stealing the feast of the Sun

ONAAN JAN NUPU XUKI
Cuidado! El maíz va a cutipar
Watch out! The maize is going to retaliate

IYATIN SHAARA WOTANNOT
“Qué vos vais bonito”
“That it goes well for you all”

HIWO WOMUN UMAN XAAN
El paucar negro invita al dueño del festín, el sol, a tomar chicha
The black tanager invites the original host of the feast, the sun, to have a drink

UMAN XOMUN IWOWO
Ya invita al dueño
He invites the actual host

NOKIH THISTO KOHONI
Aumentando la muchadumbre de gente hasta que la casa está llena
The crowd of people gets larger until the house is full

YOTHIN KAMUN AKIMAI
No vas a hacer más que una olla de chicha
Surely you will make more than one pot of maize drink

BAKUX PISHTA THAONDA
En un pedazo de olla chancado, él va a cocinar chicha
In a sherd of broken cooking pot, he is going to cook maize drink

HIYATIN SHAARA WOTANO
Qué te vaya bien
That it turns out well for you

WARIN KUSPO JAYORI
La tason del Sol, bien pintada la boca
The bowl of the Sun, its mouth very colorful

JAYORIYA MISTINNI
Bien pintadas las bocas de los cuatro “mocahuas”, platos hondos
Very colorful are the mouths of the four drinking troughs

RAMBA MAKON PANNOKI
Mucha gente está esperando mucho tiempo
Now many people are waiting a long time

RAMBA AKIKI NON GAI
No vamos a hacer el festín pronto
We are not going to have the feast soon
NOKUN OMBA KAKARIH
Gente ha sabido nuestro festín desde lejos
Even people from faraway knew about our feast

NOKU NINKA KAHANA
La gente oyó el ruido
They heard the noise

NOKI JONDI THUKUNI
Más gente todavía viene
Even more people come

MOHA JONDI JATHANA
La gente ya está cansado de esperar
Now the people are tired of waiting

JONDI JATHA NAMBU WAHIN
La gente ya está cansada y está yendose
The people are tired and begin leaving

JONDI TUXU WOHI WOHI
Alguna gente cansada ya sale
Some of the tired people leave

JONDI WOHI WOHANNO
La gente ya está yendo
People are leaving

JAA CHIPO THUKUTA
Detrás, más gente viene todavía
Behind them even more people come

JONDI MACHO AMBAXON
“Yo doy a la gente afrecho,” chicha mezclada con agua
“I give the people only watery maize drink”

NOKUN IWO RASINGI
“Nootros vamos a ser los dueños”
“We are going to be the hosts”

JAA NAKIYA RASI
“Vamos a hacerlo en el medio “
“Let’s do it in the middle”

AXAN ANONGA JONDI
“Vamos a hacer un festín, hombre”
“Let’s have a feast, people”
CHIKIN / El Gavilán / The Sparrow Hawk

CHIKIN AIN AKIKI
El gavilán ya ha “tirado”, hecho el amor, a su esposa
The sparrow hawk ‘shot’, made love to, his wife

KUNAAN RAWUU TSUKANDA
Los dos pegan bancas, como perros
The two birds are stuck fast together, butt to butt, like dogs

IROMAHAN KAMUN JAN
No va a hacer el feo
He is not going to do anything nasty

CHIKIN AIN ANONMAI
Gavilán no le va tirar a su esposa otra vez
Sparrow hawk is not going to do it again to his wife

TSUKA MANON WOKAN MAI
Vamones a hacerle sacar
Let’s pull him out

NON CHIKIH WUNDIHA
Cuando hacemos sacar gavilán
When we make sparrow hawk pull out

CHIKIH WUNDI KAAINAIN
El gavilán se voló
The sparrow hawk flew away

CHIKIN WUA WIANXON
Quitan canción de gavilán
They take away the sparrow hawk’s song

OMBA YOWAA AMUN NACH
Los gavilánes hacen un festín grande
The sparrow hawks throw a large feast

MUTHA JAN KI AKATI
Alegría van a tener
The birds are going to rejoice

AKATIMUN MUTHACHO
“Voy a preparar alegría,” dice el gavilán
“I will prepare the merriment,” says the sparrow hawk

MUTHA SHARAA MATHINRA
Alegría vamos a ver
We will be merry
NOKUN XOWO NAA TINTAIN
Dentro de nuestra casa de festín
Inside our feast house

NAIUN KURU SUTUNTTAA
Se ponen ollas en una fila
The cooking pots placed in line

CHIKIN MUNDI KAHAN KIN
El gavilán anda bailando
Sparrow Hawk moves around dancing

JANDOH WUAN TSAOONI
Sentado, él canta
Seated, he sings

KUNTI KORO CHINON TAAN
Olla ceniza se pone agua en la olla para hacer la bebida
Ash grey cooking pot, pouring water in it to mix the drink

CHINON TANKI RUWUSON
Poniendo olla completo, como vacía
Setting down the finished, empty pot

INDON WUA / Canto del Tigre / Jaguar’s Song

UPA INDO WUTOYA
Mi padre tiene cara salpicada
My father has a spotted face

YORA INDO WUTOYA
Gente tigre tiene cara salpicada
Jaguar people have spotted faces

MOHA KAMBA YOXAAN
Ya se ha matado un jaguar hembra, mi madre
A female jaguar has been killed, my mother

CHAHIN YOXAAN KUSTUNNA
Un forastero, tal vez otro tigre, le ha matado a la hembra
A stranger, perhaps another jaguar, killed the female

YONKUTAI TANDAHIH
Ella anda torcido tambaleandose
She walks bent swaying from side to side

WAON WAON KIITHE
Andaba cantando, gritando
She was walking singing, crying
HIKITHI CHAHI KI
Así anda un forastero
The stranger walks this way

HIYA CHAHIN AKAMUN
Un forastero a mí me ha hecho
A stranger did this to me

WAON WAON INDOCH UN
Yo ando gritando, cantando
I walk crying, singing

WAON WAON INDOCH UN
Yo ando gritando, cantando
I walk crying, singing

JARI KARA UN KANDIH
Por allí me he ido
I went over there

UN PARACH IKAN NI
Me he ido saltando
I went jumping, bounding

NISHIWUN NAWUXNAHANI
Una neblina tapa a la pisada del tigre
A mist rises from the tracks of the jaguar

KATAN XANGIN HIXON WAHIN TANON
Yo estoy yendome voy a hacer cantar
I am leaving I am going to sing

HIXON WAHIN TAN PANNA
“Escuchame! Yo voy a cantar”
“Listen to me! I am going to sing”

HIXON WAHIN TANPANANTHIA
“No voy a cantar. No me diga!”
“I am going to sing. Don’t tell me!”

MIN HAIN XUCHIYA
“Diga a tu esposa qué pela tu muela”
“Tell your wife who is showing her teeth, grinning”

HUKI XUCHI MANDAPU
“Conmigo, no pela tu muela!” es decir no se reia de mí
“With me, don’t peel back your lips showing your teeth!” Don’t laugh.

XUCHI JANDAPU MAI
Diga a tu mujer que no se reia de mí
Tell your wife not to laugh at me
AYAMUN KA MIYAN XAAN
Vamos a hacer tomar
Let’s have a drink

OMBAHAI UN GARI
Voy a hacer un festín
I am going to give a feast

ONAAAN XANDAPU OMBAH
Voy a conocer mi festín
I am going to understand my feast

HIYA HIWON KOWINNI
Yo soy el dueño de el festín
I am the host of the feast

HIYA ONAAAN XANNAPU
Yo no conozco mi festín
I do not understand my own feast

JAA JONDI TSUKUTAH
Primeramente, gente viene
First people come

JONDI ONAAAN HIMBATHI
Ahora, voy a conocer toda la gente
Now I am going to meet everyone

ONAAAN XANDAPU OMBA
Hoy voy a conocer el festín
Today I am going to understand the feast

MANDIMUN NO AKAMUN
Voy a hacer un festín de “bijao”, plátano falso
I am giving a feast with “false plantains”

NISHI ANDO JAN KIKI
Tiene como corteza de árbol
It has bark like a tree

SHAARA KUMUN XUKIKI
Maíz es mejor que aquél bijao
Maize is better than that false plantain

XUKI HI AXANKIN
Mejor hago mi festín con maíz
It is better to make my feast with maize

NOKUN TORO XANDOWO
Mi mujer bajita
My short little wife
NOKUN NAMAN KAXAMAH
Las mujeres tienen que cantar en voz baja
The women have to sing in low voices

KAXAMATAN AXANGIN
Vamos a hacer que grita la gente
We are going to make the people shout

AXANKIN ANONGAN JONDI
Nosotros hombres vamos a hacer el festín
Lets make a feast, people

NOKUN JUMBA PONCHAKUN
Nuestro patio pintado
Our patio is colourful

JAA YOWAA KUHJWI
Se va a hacer “yowaa” o dueño del festín
He is going to become “host” of the feast

MAINRAMUN KOHOKAHIN
Este “yowaa” está sentado, borracho
This “host” or “spokesman” sits there, drunk

MOHA PANKAH HIYA
“Ya me he hecho! Ya quiero vomitar”
“Now I have done it! Now I want to vomit”

JONDI WATA THAKAMAH
“Yo estoy lleno, duele mi barriga”
“I am so full my belly hurts”

WATA THAKAMAHOHAI
“Yo estoy borracho, quiero vomitar”
“I am drunk, I want to vomit”

ITAAN JANAN TORACHKI
“Ya no me aguanta, estoy vomitando”
“I can not stand it, I am vomiting”

INDI KONDO JONDIHKI
Ya no aguanta la gente tampoco
The people cannot stand it either

JANAN TORACH AKATOH
Ya está vomitando la gente
Now, the people are vomiting

JONDI MUKAN NIKOXAAN
Para que la gente se les ría a ellos
So the people laugh at them
JONDI WATA THAKAMA XANGIN
La gente ya no aguanta la dulce bebida
The people cannot stand the sweet drink

OMBA ANON IKAMAI
Vamos a hacer un festín
We are going to have a feast

XUKI OMBA / El Festín de Maíz / The Maize Feast

XUKI TURACH CHAIWOH
Mazorca larga de maíz
Long ears of maize

OMBAHAMUN MIYA XAAN
Van a hacer un festín de maíz
They are preparing a maize feast

UN TOROCH XANDO WAAN
Mi mujer bajita hace el festín
My short woman hosts the feast

AKON MITI CHAITAN
Van a sembrar con palo largo
They plant with a long digging stick

NOKUN YAKON JOMPAN NIH
Ya ha hecho el hayco para sembrar
She already made the hole to sow

NOKUN YAKON JOMPAN NIH
Ya ha hecho el hayco para sembrar
She already made the hole to sow

MUTHA SHAARA WOKOMPAN
Lindo está haciendo
Doing it beautifully

NOKI XUKI RAOCHKI
Ya está secando el maíz
Already the maize is drying

NOKUN XUKI OMBABA
Vamos a hacer un festín de maíz
We prepare a maize feast

XUKI OMBA ANON HIYA
Yo voy a hacer festín de maíz
I am going to make a maize feast
HIYA JONDI AKUMUN
Yo estoy haciendo, hombre
I am preparing it, man

RAMBI OKUCH WUNDITAN
Viene un invitado hambriento
A hungry guest arrives

HIYA MUTHA JONKATHI
“Ven a ayudarme,” llamando a sus paisanos
“Come help me,” calling her people

MIYA MUTHA JONKATHI UN GAI
Después cuando tú haces, te voy a ayudar
Later, when you make one, I will help

KUSAJON WORAMIN
“¿Cómo se hace el festín?”
“How do you make the feast?”

MIWU YOWAA WOWUTAN
“Cómo se hace,” dicen entre mayores
“How is it done,” several adults speak among themselves

MIN APANH NI IKI
“¿Cómo ha hecho el festín antes,” preguntando a su papá
“How did you make the feast before,” asking her father

UHA RANTO MAWUKIN
Ha venido su mamá cojeando para que le enseña
Her mother hobbles over in order to teach her

UHA RANTO IMBA WUTANGI
Viene su mamá trayendo un hijo quién le apoya
Her mother comes leading a child who supports her

SHAARARA MIN YORAKI
“¿Está bien tu cuerpo?” Siendo vieja, duele su cuerpo
“Does your body feel well?” Being an old lady, her body aches

YORA RAIS SIHIHTAN
La vieja está mirando a su propio cuerpo
The old lady looks down at her own body

KORO RAPONGI RANDA
Su mamá golpea la pampanilla y bota cenizas
Her mother shakes her skirt throwing off ashes

MUTHAXONDIPU UHPA
“Ayudame, Papá!”
“Help me, Father”
NOKUN TOROCH XANDO WAAN
“Venga mi Señora bajita para que me ayuda”
“Come here my short little Wife to help me”

NOKU AXON UMANINA
La mujer invita a su marido con bebida
The woman invites her husband with drink

YANDI TIMBA PAANGI
No puede llenarse pero quiere tomar más
He cannot satisfy himself with it, but he wants to drink more

JONDI AXON UMAN JAN
Voy a invitar gente
I am going to invite people

XUKI PUHI / Hoja de Maíz / The Maíz Leaf

XUKI PUHI XAAXAA
Está sacudiendo una hoja de maíz
A maize leaf trembles

MOHA KARA AKAITHO
Ya está haciendo
It is doing it now

NOKU ONAAN NIKOTAN
Nosotros estamos conociendo pobreza, estamos hambrientos
We are getting acquainted with poverty, we are starving

JAA KARUNGNACH CHAIWI
Una loma larga
A long hilltop

XUKI PUHI XAAXAA
Está sacudiendo una hoja de maíz
A maize leaf shakes

XAAXAA IKIKI
Sacudiendo está
It shakes

AMUN NONO IKIKI
Ya está haciendo
Already preparing

AMUN NONO IKIKI
Ya está haciendo
Already making
OMBA ANON IKAMAI
Vamos a hacer un festín
We are going to make a feast

NOKUN OMBA KAKARI
“Ya está sabiendo nuestro festín”
“Already she knows our feast”

NOKUN OMBA RAOTI
Nuestro “raoti” toneletes de festín, su ropa buena!
Our feast “raoti” (“RAH-oh-tay”) kilts, their good clothes!

NOKU KUUN NAHAHNA
Gente te va querer a porque de tu raoti tonelete
People are going to love you for your raoti kilt

JONDIN GIYA OMBAKI
Gente ha hecho para un festín
People have prepared for a feast

AYA JONO WOKAMBU
Vamos ir a tomar
Let’s go to drink

RAOTI NON WOKANMAI
Nuestros raotis toneletes nuevos
Our new raoti kilts

ITAAN WUNDI WOHANDAN
Vamos a hacer levantar
Let’s make ourselves stand up

JONDI RAOTIKIKI
Gente está alistando su raoti para el festín
Men ready their raoti kilts for the feast

JOND I AYAKIN INXAAN
Vamos a hacer tomar con gente
We are going to drink with people

OMBA ANON IKAN MAI
Vamos a hacer un festín
We are going to make a feast

WUA SHAARA / Canción Linda / Pretty Song

MAPO TOHO KAANGIN
De flor de maíz está cayendose su cabeza
The head of the maize flower drops
NOKUN TOROCH XANDOWAAN
Nuestra mujer bajita
Our short little woman

NAKI WUAN TSAONI
Agua clarito está en el caño
Crystal clear water is in the creek

WUHA WUHA PAKUXON
Sacando agua del caño
Drawing water from the creek

NOKU AXON UMANNA
Su mujer le invita a tomar
His wife invites him to drink

YANDI TIMBA PANKIKI
Él no puede llenarse con la bebida
He cannot fill himself with it

NORTHIN JATON UMAN JAN
Yo te voy a invitar
I am going to invite you

OMBAH ANON IKAN MAI
Vamos a hacer un festín
We are having a feast

JAWIMUN MIN AKUMUN
¿Cuándo lo hará usted?
When will you have it?

MIYA MUTHA JONKATHI
Después te voy a ayudar
I will help you afterwards

MUTHA JONKATHI UN GAI
Te voy a ayudar
I will help you

ITHI NIMUN WAYOKI
Va hacer doler la víbora
The snake will make you hurt

KARAWI KOWIN WUNDITAN
¿Qué le importa que levante
What does it mean to him that he can stand up
WUTHA XUNDI ANDAKA
En medio de mayores?
Amidst the adults?

POYAAAN TCHANTIRI / La Rama Torcida / The Twisted Branch

YAMBA POYAAAN TCHANTIRI
La rama de un árbol es torcido
The branch of a tree is twisted

MOHA PANKA EIYIA
A mí, ya
Now towards me

HIYA YAMA RUTUHAI
Ya me ha matado ése palo
That tree branch killed me

JAWI IKAEEIMUN
Así no más yo me voy
I go away just like that

KOSHI KAHIN NAITO
Yo voy corriendo
Running, I go

KUSA AMUN NAITO
¿Qué hacías?
What were you doing?

MIYA YAMA RUTUHE
A ti ha matado un palo
A tree branch hit and killed you

MIYA RUTUHI CHAMBE
El palo mato al hermano menor
It killed you, little brother

HIYAN ATAN KOHINMUN
Avisando a mí
Telling me about it

HIYAN CHOKA RATAHNA
Mi hermana mayor me está haciendo echar
My big sister tosses me out

NAMUN NACHMUN KAXONMUN
En morir me fui como espíritu
On dying, I went like a ghostly spirit
NUCU NAAMAN NOHAPAN
No hacia nadie en esta tierra
Not towards anyone on this earth

WUA WIYA MAKIN UN
Yo no cogía esta canción
I did not steal this song

MANAAN OKUHA SHAARA
Yo consegí esta canción allá en el cielo
I obtained this song up in the sky

UN WUA WITANHAI
Yo trajé esta canción
I brought this song

ISHON WAHIN TANNNOMUN
Voy yendo cantando
I am going singing

HIYAATIN IHKIN PUNMAIN
Ven a cantar
Come on and sing, people

MAI WOMUN ATAN UN
La gente de la tierra como nosotros
People of the earth like us

WIRA MIHA EXANBU
“¿Has consiguido la canción?”
“Have you gotten the song?”

MAI WOMUN AWANIN
Dice el hombre de la tierra
Says this man from the earth

YAMBA WAHE MUSTUN UN
Hay camino derecho que un palo bloquea -- allá es parado el camino derecho
There is a straight path that a tree branch blocks where the path stops

MUSTUNUNGMUN KAKIN UN
Yo ando derecho
I walk straight

UN NINKA WOAHINMUN
Yo me voy escuchando a la canción
I go away listening to the song

UNNA MANDO IKAITO
Abajo de mí ellos cantan
Below me, they sing
WIMUN MINKIN INN XANBU
“¿Has consiguido esta canción tú? Canta”
“Have you gotten this song? Sing it!”

MAI WOMUN AWANHIN
Dice el hombre quién se fué al cielo
Says the man who went into the sky

AYAMUN KA MIYANXAAN
Te voy a tomar
I am going to drink you

OMBA YOWAA AKATSIN
Vamos a hacer un festín grande
Let’s prepare a big feast

MUTHA INN UN KARITHI
“Vaya prepararme!” dice el hombre
“Prepare it for me!” says the man

JAWI IROMAHAN PAN
Así como mala persona
Like this, like a bad person

NOKU JAA YOWAA THAONI JONDI
Ése hombre tremendo, sentado
That huge seated man

NOKUN OONAN PAIHIHI
Nosotros queremos saber
We want to know

XUKI PUHI RURUSU
Hoja de maíz suena
The maize leaves rustle

RURUSUNDO MIN GARI
Te suenas
You rustle

OONAN XANDAPU XUKI
¿No me sepas, maíz?
Don’t you know me, maize?

IIN SHAARA KOHIXON
Viendote bien
Seeing you well

IROMAKI WOHINON
No cantamos bien la canción
We sing your song polory
MUTHA NOMUN IIKAITO  
Nosotros hacemos alegría  
We rejoice

MUTHA SHAARA KOHIN TAAN  
Vamos a preparar bien  
Let’s prepare well

XUKI OMBA AKATHI  
Vamos a hacer un festín de maíz  
Let’s have a maize feast

MUTHA SHAARA KOHIN TAAN  
Vamos a preparar bien  
Let’s prepare well

NINKA MUNDO JONDIKI  
El hombre escucha  
The man listens

NOKUN OMBA KAAKARI  
Va a escuchar a nuestro festín  
He will listen to our feast

NOKUN NINKA KAHANHNACH  
Oyendo nosotros  
Hearing us

NOKI THUKU AHIHTO  
Ellos van a reunir adonde nosotros  
They will gather at our place

JONDI AYAKIN INXAAN  
Vamos a hacer tomar los hombres  
Let’s make the men drink

AYAKIN INXAANGIMUN  
Voy a hacerles tomar  
I will make them drink

OMBA YOWAAN AKATHI  
Vamos a hacer un festín  
Let’s have a feast

AKATINON MUTHANON  
Vamos a preparar  
Let’s get ready

IYATI MUTHAPU JONDI  
Preparase, hombre!  
Get yourselves ready, man!
JAWIMUN MIN AKUMUN
¿Cuándo haces tú el festín?
When will you hold the feast?

RAMBI OKU WUNDI TAAN
“Voy a levantar yo también,” dice él quien trajo la canción del cielo
“I will get up and sing, too,” says the man who brought the song from the sky

JAA MUSHON KIRIWI
Esa misma carbon de la candela
That same glowing ember in the fire

MUSHON RIWI NAHASTAN
Esa carbon misma vamos a sacar
That same ember we will pull out

AKATOMUN GA MIYA
¿Cuándo hagas tú el festín?
When can you have the feast?

MIYA MUTHA JONKATHI
Voy a hacer alegría contigo
I will make merry with you

MUTHA JONDATHIN UNGAI
“Voy a cantarte,” dice
“I will sing to you,” he says

JAU THIMUN ROKON UN
No es cualquier fiesta
It is not just any party

UN KUTHA AHAHMIN
Cuando yo hago una cosa
Whenever I would something

WUTHA TSAHO KAHANKIN
Mis hermanos hubieran asentado para dejarme hacerlo
My brothers would have sat there and let me do it

ITHIN NIMUN WAIYOKI
Duele es la mordida del víbora
Painful is the bite of a snake

MIYAN WAIYON POKO MIN
Cuidado! Él te va a picar
Watch out! The snake will bite you

KARA AWI TUNDU TAAN
Aguantando
Enduring it
IYATI MUTHAPU JONDI
Rejoice, people

OMBAHA AHIRA MIN GAI
If you are having a feast

AHIRA MIN KAI CHAMBI
You are going to make children

ITAAAN KOINMUN UPAN
My father tells me

UHA WAU WURAMAN
My mother bringing me, clasping my arm

HIYA UPA MUTHAXON
My father will show me how

KAA AXON WOMUN UN
They did this back then

UWUU YOWAA WOWUTAN
Like me with these older people

IROMAMUN XOMUNGA
Let’s get ready as usual

UN APA JONDI KU
I did this way back then

WUHAA XUNDI TANDAXON
I am going to sing this old song

TANDAXON NON IHKIPU
I will teach you, come on!

UN SUNNUN POOIWO
My sisters in the same way
WAHUAIMUN KEONYI
Abrazando todos como para bailar y cantar
Everyone clasps hands to dance and sing

JOKON WURAN KOOINMUN
Saliendo todos
Everyone goes out to dance

IYA JONDI MUTHAXON
La gente hace alegría en el festín
The people make merry at the feast

MUTHA XONKU AYAXAAN
Dentro de alegría nosotros vamos a tomar
Out of joy we are going to drink

JAHA CHIPO THUKUTA
Los que vienen atrás
Those who come after us

JAA KIKAIN IMBAXON
Ellos van a creer que es bueno
They are going to believe this is good

JAA MACHOMUN JONDI
Afrecho de masato, hombre
Watered down manioc drink, man

JONDI AYAMAXONMUN
Dando a tomar a los hombres
Giving it to the men to drink

JONDIMUNKA NIKONXAAN
Para hacer reír éstos hombres
In order to make these men laugh

JONDI KAKA AXANKIN
Para llamarles hombres
In order to call them men

**TAA WATA / Caña de Azucar / Sugar Cane**

TAWAA APAN NANTIYA
Voy a hacer un festín de caña
I am going to have a sugar cane feast

ONAN ROKON SHANAPU
Y tú no me vas a saber
And you will not know or understand me
TAWAA APAN NANTIYA
Voy a hacer un festín de caña de azúcar
I am going to make a sugar cane feast

ONAN ROKON SHANAPU
Tú no me vas a saber
You will not know or understand me

JAWIH APAN NANTIYA
ONAN ROKON SHANAPU TAWAA
Así no más voy a hacer un festín de caña y no me vas a saber
I am just going to have a sugar cane feast and you will not know or understand me

TAWAA PUHI RURUSU
TAWA PUHI RURUSU
Susurran las hojas de la caña de azúcar
Susurran las hojas de la caña de azúcar
The sugar cane leaves rustle
The sugar cane leaves rustle

RURUSUMUN INDOCHMIN
JAWI INDOCH MIN GARIH
Susurran tus hojas
Tú eres así
Your leaves rustle
That is the way you are

PARAN YOWAA KOINXON
AXAN ANGIN ANON GAAN
Vamos a engañarles bien en hacer este festín
We are going to really deceive someone to have this feast

PARAN YOWAA KOINXON
AXAN ANGIN ANON GAAN
Vamos a engañar bien en hacer el festín de caña de azúcar
We are going to really trick someone with this feast

PARAN YOWAA KOINXON
TAWA OMBA AXANGIN ANON GAAN
Vamos a preparar la caña de azúcar cantando
We will prepare it singing

MUTHAN NONKANPU JONDI
JONDI ATAN KOINMUN
Vamos a cantar, hombres
We are going to sing, men

JONDI ATAN KOINMUN
JONDI MUTHAN KIHINXON
Cuando el hombre canta, vamos a preparar un festín
When the man sings, we will prepare the feast
JAU TIMUN ROKON UN
UN AKAN IIMUNMIN
Él hubiera hecho otra cosa vamos a preparar el festín
He should have done something else, we are getting the feast ready

WUTSA TZAHOKAHANGI
HIYA MUTHA XONDIPU
Hubieron sentado otros hermanos, ven a cantarme
Other brothers would have sat down, come sing to me

KARACH WIKON WUNDITAAN
HIYA MUTHA XONDIPU
Parate con todo y ven cantarme
Stop everything and come sing to me

HIYA MUTHA XONDIPU
MUTHA XONDIPU JONDI
Ven a preparar a cantar, hombre
Come and get ready to sing, people

UN JONDI AKUMUN
UN JONDI AKUMUN
Yo digo al hombre, yo digo al hombre
I tell the man, I tell the man

JAA MANAAN KIYOHWI
CHIWI KIHI WURAMUN
Todo el caserío qué vengan todos sin faltar
Everyone in the whole village must come without fail

UN JONDI AKUMUN
HIYA JONDI MUTHAXON
Le digo al hombre cuando canta
I tell the man when he sings

HIYA MUTHA XONKUMUN
OMBA AXAN MUTHACHOO
Cuando me canta yo voy a cantar para hacer el festín
When he sings to me, I am going to sing to make a feast

HIYA JONDI MUTHAXON
HIYA MUTHAXON KUMUN
Cuando canta el hombre ellos me cantan
When the man sings, they sing to me

OMBA AXAN MUTHANON
HIYA MUTHAXON KANBU
Voy a cantar para hacer festín. Cantamelo!
I am going to sing in order to have a feast. Sing it to me!
UN JONDI AKUMUN
OMBA AXAN MUTHACHO
He dicho al hombre cuando ellos cantan
I speak to the man when they sing

JONDI ATAN KOINMUN
OMBA AXAN MUTHACHO
Dice al hombre, “Voy a preparar para un festín”
He tells the man, “I am going to get ready for a feast”

WAIN WUA / Canción de Sungaro / Channel Catfish Song

WAIN NIA WUOKON
Los sungaro rebosan
The sungaro are plentiful

RAKI APAN KARA UN
No sé de dónde vienen
I do not know from where they come

JUNDUH TSAA NAKIA
De otro río
From some other river

WAIN NIA WUOKON
Sungaro rebosan
The sungaro are plentiful

WUOKOHO NIXOH UN
Rebosado
Plentiful

UN JIXTAN NI KUKU
Lo he visto antes
I have seen it before in the old days

NON ANON MIN XOHINON
¿Para qué haces? Para comer
Why do you do it? To eat

AXAN ANDI KAXANGIN
Ya vamos ir a picar (pescado) (con fletcha o arpón)
We are going to spear fish (with arrows or harpoon)
AXAN ANDI KAI YAMAHIRI
¿Porqué no te vayas a picarles?
Why don’t you go spear them?

KAI YAMAHIRA MIN GAI
¿No te vas?
Aren’t you going?

AXAN ANDI KAI YAMAHIRA MIN KAI
¿Porqué no te vayas a picar?
Why don’t you go along to shoot them?

HIYAN CHOKA AKAMUN
Cuando me ha dicho mi hermana mayor
When my older sister told me

KARAWIKON WUNDI KAHIN
Aguantando y levantando
Putting up with it and standing up

WUNDI KAHIN KAXONMUN
Cuando me levanté, me fui
When I got up, I left

WAIN ATAN NIKUCHOH
Me fui a casear sungaro
I went to hunt sungaro

OMBAHAMUN MIYAN XAAN
Voy a hacerte festín de sungaro
I am going to give you a sungaro feast

OMBAHA XAAN MUTHANON
Vamos a cantar para el festín
Let’s sing for the feast

JAWI MUTHANNON HIYA
Yo voy a cantar
I am going to sing

MUTHA XONDIPU JONDI
Ven a cantar, hombres!
Come to sing, guys!

UN JONDI AKUMUN
Cuando yo he dicho, hombres
When I said, men

JONDI AKA KOWINMUN
Cuando he dicho, hombres verdaderos
When I said, real men
JONDI MUTHA KAYHIXON
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

JONDI OMBAB AXAANKIN
Para hacer un festín con los hombres
In order to have a feast with the men

MUTHA NONKANPU JONDI
Vamos a cantar, hombres
Let’s sing, people

JONDI ATAN KOWINMUN
Diciendo a los hombres verdaderos
Telling the real men

OMBAH AXAAN MUTHACHO
Voy a cantar al festín
I am going to sing at the feast

RATON OMBAHAIRO
¿Cuál de ellos va a hacer el festín?
Which one is going to give the feast?

HIYAN JONDI IHINAI
Cuando me ve el hombre
When the man sees me

RAOTIMUN SUNUNRIIS
Igualito al “raoti” tonelete
The same as the “raoti” kilt

SUNUNRIIS MUNTAAMUN
“Igualito estoy vestido,” dice el sungaro
“I am dressed similarly, “ says the sungaro

OMBAH AXAAN MUTHANON
Voy a cantar en el festín
I am going to sing at the feast

JAWII MUTHANON HIYA
Yo mismo voy a cantar
I myself am going to sing

MUTHA XONDIPU JONDI
Ven a cantar, hombres
Come to sing, men

JONDI ATAN KOWINMUN
Cuando he dicho los hombres verdaderos
When I told the real men
JONDI MUTHA KIHINXON
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

MUTHA KIHINXON KOMUN
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

OMBAHAXAAN MUTHACHO
Voy a cantar en el festín
I am going to sing at the feast

MUTHANON KANPU JONDI
Vamos a cantar, hombres
Let’s sing, people

JONDI ATAN KOHINMUN
Dice a los hombres
Telling the men

JONDI MUTHA KAYHINXON
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

JAWIN MUTHANON HIYA
Yo mismo voy a cantar
I myself am going to sing

MUTHA XONDIPU JONDI
Qué vengan a cantar, hombres
Come to sing, men

JONDI AXON KOHINMUN
Dice a los hombres verdaderos
Telling the real men

JONDI MUTHA KIHINXON
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

OMBAHA AXAN MUTHACHO
Voy a cantar en el festín
I am going to sing at the feast

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**CHAXO WAKU / El Cervato / The Fawn**

CHAXO WAKU NITUKIN
Un cervato se para, escuchando
A fawn stands motionless, listening
JANDO KARA RARAXA
Muchos huayos están caiendo
Lots of fruit falls

RARAXAHA MAPOKU
Huayo de oje
Ficus fruits

ITSIIS NITINITIHIMUN GAIN
Andando acá y allá
Walking here and there

ICHA RAKI IHIN WAIN
Ve donde hay bastante huayo de oje
Seeing where there are lots of Ficus fruit

JANTSIN ROHOMUN KAHIN
El cervato saca su lengua
The fawn sticks out its tongue

RAMBA PANKAN HIYAH
Qué tiempo a mí!
What a season for me!

WURO KAYIMUNGA HIYA
Mi ojo ve
My eye sees

HIYA CHAHIN JANDUHA
Me habla el forastero, un humano ser
A stranger, a human being, speaks to me

KACHIKIMUN IIN WAIN
El cervato mira por atrás
The Fawn looks behind itself

JINDAMUN KAA WIRIHA
Moviéndose su rabo
Switching its tail

JANTSIN ROHOMUN KAHIN
Sacandose la lengua
Sticking out its tongue

XOIIWINMUN OMBAJHA
Haciendo festín grande
Preparing a big feast

OMBAH AKI KOHINMUN
Haciendo festín de huayo de oje
Throwing a big feast with Ficus fruit
KOHHIN POWU AHITO
Sale humo de la candela
Smoke rises from the fire

CHAXONKIA OMBAKI
Los venados se festejan
The deer celebrate

OMBAKIN INNKANPU
Miren! Hace un festín grande
Look! The fawn prepares a big feast

HIYA CHAHIN AKAMUN
Humanos seres me han dicho
People told me

OMBA ANDOCH UN KANU
Yo hago festín grande
I am making a big feast

JAWIS UN KANU CHAI
Así soy yo, forastero
That’s the way I am, stranger

AIYAMUN KA MIYA XAAN
Te voy a hacer tomar
I am going to make you drink

MIYA AKI UN GA RI
Te voy a hacer
I will do it to you

ONAAN ROKON JANHA PU
No me vas a saber, hombre
You won’t recognize me, man

JAWI XANAPU XUKI
No me haga maíz
You do not make maize for me

JAWI IROMAHAN PAAN
“Tú eres malo,” dice el cervato
“You are bad,” says the fawn

WAKUWOMUN GA NOKU
Nuestro hijo, un muchach
Our son, a lad

NOKUN ONAAN NAHANNI
El cervato está sabiendo de nosotros
The fawn learns about us
XUKI PUHI RURUSUU
Susurran las hojas de maíz
The maize leaves rustle

RURUSUNDO MIN GARI
Estás susurrando
You are rustling around

UNDA ROKON JANDA PU
“No vas a saber, hombre,” dice el cervato
“You will not know, human,” says the fawn

WAKON OMBHA / La Abeja Verde Festeja / The Green Honey Bee Throws a Feast

WAKON WAKON WAHATCHO
Reunidos en el festín de la abeja verde
Assembled at the feast of the green bee

WAKON OMBAH AXAN KIN
Voy a hacer el festín de la abeja verde
I am going to make the feast of the green bee

WAKON ANIN MUWIXON
Cogiendo su goma de abeja verde
Gathering the gum from the comb of the green bee

WAKON ANIN TAXNAMAA
La apegosa goma de abeja verde
The sticky gum of the green honey bee

JAWI TAXNA MAXOMUN
Haciendo a pegar
Making it stick

JONDI MUKAN NIKO XAAN
Para hacer que los hombres se rían
To make the men laugh

WAKON OMB A AXAN KIN
Vamos a hacer el festín de abeja verde
We are going to make the feast of the green bee

JAWI MUTHANO HIYA
Yo mismo voy a cantar
I myself am going to sing

MUTHA XONDIPU JONDI
Ven a cantar, hombres
Come to sing, pe ople
JAWI JONDI ATHAMUN
Diciendo a los hombres
Telling the men

JONDI MUTHA KIHINXON
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

WAKON JAYA WIANXON
Quitando la miel de abeja verde
Taking the green bee’s honey

WAKON OMBA AXAN KIN
Vamos a hacer el festín de la abeja verde
Let’s make the feast of the green bee

WATA MATHIN ROANMAI
Tan dulce va a ser
It will be so sweet

JONDI RUKIN XOHITCHIN
De los haycos de las narices de los hombres
From the nostrils of the men

WAKON JAYA JOKON WAHIN
Sale la miel de la abeja verde
The honey of the green honey bee runs out

JOKON WAHINMUN DATO
Saliendo, saliendo
Running out, running out

UN JUMBA PONCHAKUN
En el medio de mi patio
In the middle of my patio

JANAN TORACH IIKAITOHN
Vomitando en los niños
Vomiting on the children

JONDI MUKAN NIKO XAAN
Para reír a los pobrecitos
In order to laugh at the poor things

JONDI WATAN THAKAMAA
Los hombres se hartén de la dulzura
The sweetness will overwhelm the men

WATA THAKAMAA XANKIN
Para hacer que los hombres se harten
In order to glut the men
WAKON OMBHAHA NONGAAN
Vamos hacer el festín de la abeja verde
We are going to give the feast of the green bee

ANON IINKANPU JONDI
Vamos a hacer lo, hombres
Let's do it, people

JONDI MUTHA KIHINXON
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

UN XOWO NATIIN TAIN
Medio de mi casa grande de festín
In the middle of my feast house

KUNTI KORO SUTUNXON
Se ponen las ollas grises en filas
Putting the ash grey cook pots in rows

MUTHA SHAARA MATINMUN
Esta linda cosa va a ver
This beautiful thing you will see

UN KORO WAKUWO
Mi hijo gris, el color de cenizas
My son ash grey

KUNTI KORO KUMBUPI
Esos niños agarrando la boca de la olla
Those children holding tight to the mouth of the clay cooking pot

KUMBU PIKIN KIYOHA
Agarrando las bocas de todas las ollas
Holding tight to the mouths of all the cooking pots

JAYAN MAHI KAYIN XAAN
Para ver
In order to try it out

WAKON OMBHAHA NONGAAN
Vamos hacer el festín de abeja verde
We are making a green bee feast

ANON IINKANPU JONDI
Vamos hacer el festín, hombres
Let’s make the feast, people

JONDI ATHAN KOWINMUN
Diciendo a los hombres verdaderos
Telling the real men
JONDI MUTHA KIHINXON
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

MUTHA KAYHIN THAN KOMUN
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

JONDI OMBA NAKIN XAAN
Con los hombres vamos a preparar el festín
With the men we will prepare the feast

OMBAH AKIN AXANKIN
Haciendo el festín
Having the feast

JAWI MUTHANON HIYA
Yo mismo voy a cantar
I myself am going to sing

MUTHA XONDIPU JONDI
Ven a cantar, hombres
Come to sing, people

JONDI ATHAN KOWINMUN
Diciendo a los hombres
Telling the men

JONDI MUTHA KIHINXON
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

OMBAH AXAN MUTHACHO
Voy a cantar al festín
I am going to sing at the feast

JAWI MUTHANON KANPU
Vamos a cantar, todos
Let’s sing, everyone

MUTHANON KANPU JONDI
Vamos a cantar, hombres
Let’s sing, men

JONDI ATAN KOWINMUN
Diciendo a los hombres verdaderos
Telling the real men

JONDI MUTHA KAYHINXON
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men
OMBA YOWAA AXANKIN
Vamos a hacer un festín grande
We are going to make an outstanding feast

JAWI MUTHANON HIYA
Yo mismo voy a cantar
I myself am going to sing

BAKIN MATIN RONHANMAI
Estarán cansados, va a ver
They will be tired, you’ll see

JAMUN JAWISH KARI MIN
Así es un festín
A feast is like that

MIIN OMBA YOHIHA
Has dicho de el festín
You told about the feast

OMBA YOHI AKIKI
Tanto qué quieres a un festín
How much you love a feast

KARA WIKON WUNDI TAAN
Aguantando a levantar
Struggling to stand up

RANTU YOHOMUN TAMUN
Sobando la rodilla porque está cansada
Massaging your knee because it is tired

JAWI MUTHAPU JONDI
Canten, así no más, hombres
Just sing like this, men

JONDI ATHAN KOWINMUN
Diciendo a los hombres
Speaking to the men

JAA YOWAA THAONI
Esos viejos sentandos
Those old people seated

JONDI WUNDI NIKOXON
Haciendo levantar los hombres
Making the men get up

JONDI MUTHA KIHINXON
Haciendo cantar los hombres
Making the men sing
MUTHA KIHIN THANKOMUN
Cantando con los hombres
Singing with the men

JARI AKARA WUNDIIS
Hombre que ha venido (al festín) de lejos
A man who comes from far away (to the feast)

JONDI WOHI WONDIIMUN
Cuando se fueron los hombres
When the men left

RAOTIHI TUSUMUN
Un pedazo de “raoti” tonelete
A piece of “raoti” kilt

JII MUCHTI MUN YAYO
En esa ramita está atajado este pedazo de “raoti”
That piece of “raoti” kilt is caught on this twig

MUYAYOHO KIONI
Atajado, roscado
Caught, curled up

MOHAMUN JONDI
Ya está, hombre
There it is, man

JONDI WOHI WUNDIKUN
Se fueron los hombres
The people left

HIWO AASTI TSAHOTAAN
Solamente el dueño del festín está sentando
Only the host of the feast is sitting there

JAWI MUTHAXONKUMUN
Cuando cantan ya
When they are singing already

AXAN AKIN MUTHATCHO
Voy a preparar, voy a cantar
I will get ready, I will sing

MUTHANON KANPU JONDI
Vamos a cantar, todos
Let’s sing, everybody
MANIN KORO TAKO / Cepa Gris de Plátano / The Grey Banana Stock

MANIN KORO TAKO
La cepa gris de plantano
The grey banana plantain stock

SHAARAWO KOHIN WOMP AHUN
Qué bueno es!
How good it is!

KARUNG NAMUN RUWUSKIN
En todas éstas alturas
On all these uplands

UN MANDI MAPONIH
Cuando yo siembro el plátano
When I plant bananas

UKIH MANDI KANDIKIH
Los plátanos ya están gordos
Suddenly, the bananas are plump

AYAXAANGIN AKATHI
Lo hacemos para tomar
We do it to drink it

AKATHI MUN MUTHATCHO
Yo voy a preparar
I am going to get ready

MUTHANON MUN KI HIYA
Ven a ayudarme
Come help me

KUZAHAXON WORA MIN
“¿Cómo has hecho antes?” pregunta a su papá
“How did you do it back then?” he asks his father

MIWUU YOWAA WUTAAN
Como tú, iguales ya
The same as you do today

OMBA YOWAA AMUNACH
Este festín grande
This big feast

MIN MUTHA PAHONIH
¿Cómo has hecho alegría?
How did you make merriment?
MUTHA PAHON NIKIMUN
Cuando tú has preparado
When you got ready

OMBA YOWAA AKATHI
Para hacer el festín
To give the feast

AKATHIMUN MUTHANON
Yo voy a preparar
I am going to get ready

MUTHANONMUN KI HIYA
Voy a preparar lo mismo como antes
I am going to prepare the same way

HIYA MUTHA XONDIPU
Ven a enseñarme
Come show me!

MUTHA XONDIPU UPAH
Ven a cantar, Papá!
Come and sing, Father!

UN UPAH AKAIMUN
Cuando yo le dije a mi papá
When I told my father

OMBA AKIRA MIN GAI
¿Vas a hacer un festín grande?
Are you indeed going to throw a big feast?

HOXA YATON ROKON JAN
Ese hombre tiene mucho sueño después de todo el día haciendo festín
That guy is very sleepy after feasting all day long

JAWI ROKON JAN KIKI
Así es un festín
That is the way a feast is

IIN NORA UN MIYA
Vas a ver
You’ll see

WUA XUNDI TANDAXON
Vaya cantar una canción vieja
Go sing an old song!

TANDAXONDI KAIPU
Voy a enseñarte
I will show you how
INDI KOTAAN KOHINMUN
Cuando yo he dicho
When I have said

UHAH RANTON IMBAWU
Trayendo cojicando mi mamá
Bringing my limping mother

RANTON IMBAWURAMUN
Trayendole ella está cojiendo
Bringing her she is limping

UHAH WAU WURANTAN
Abrazando a mi mamá
Embracing my mother

HIYAN HUPA MUTHAXON
Cuando me enseña mi papá
When my father shows me how

MUTHAXON KUN AKATHI
Mi papá me va a enseñar
My father will show me how

AKATHIMUN MUTHATCHO
Mientras tanto me voy a preparar
Meanwhile I am getting ready

JAWI MUTHATCHO JONDI
Voy a cantar hombre
I will sing, man

WATA MATIN ROHANMAI
Bien dulce
Very sweetly

JAH NOKI TSUKUHA
Cuando la gente reune adonde nosotras
When the people gather at our place

JONDI WATA TSAKAMAAN
Vamos a hacer hartar la gente
We are going to stuff these people

TSAKA MAXON MUKAXAN
Cuando estamos llenos, nosotros los hombres, vamos a reír
When we men are full we will laugh

MOHA PANKAHIIYA
Ya me he hecho
Now I’ve done it
HIYA WATAN TSAKAWAIN
Ya estoy más cargado
I am full to the brim

WATAN TSAKAWA JONDI
Ya la dulzura me ha hartado
I’ve had enough of this sweet stuff

HINDI KOOMUN KAIMUN
Así dijeron
They spoke like this

JAHAH JUMBA PONCHA
Está medio del patio que rodea la casa
In the middle of the patio that encircles the house

JUMBA PONCHA NAKIMUN
En medio del patio
In the middle of the patio

JAHA YOWAA KUXWII
Así hombres mayores y viejos
Thus adult men and old men

RAKU PANDUPU JONDI
Da miedo al hombre
Scare the man

INDI KOOMUN NAITO
Han hecho él
Really scare him

JONDI MUKA JAN KINON
Vamonos a reí del hombre
Let’s laugh at the man

TAAHA TUKUUMUN JONDI
Con pedazos de isana al hombre
With pieces of arrow cane toward him

JONDI AKI WOXANGIN
Para ir así al hombre
To behave like this towards the man

RAOTI NON AKAMAI
Vamos a preparar los “raotis” toneletes
Let’s make the “raotis” kilts

RAOTI YA MUNKIMUN
Cuando los toneletes están listos
When the kilts are finished
RAOTI SHAARATAN
Están bonitos los “raotis” toneletes
The raoti kilts are beautiful

TORO KORO / El Halcón / The Grey Hawk

TORO KORO KOE
“Toro Koro Koe,” canta el halcón
“Toro koro ko AA,” the grey hawk sings

IROMAHA KAMUN JAN
El halcón no va a hacer el malo
The hawk is not going to do wrong

JANDO KARA XAAWAA
“Seguamente, hay un vacío en el monte,” dice
“There must be clearing in the forest,” it says

XAAWAA MANDISH JAAKUNMUN
En el vacío hay hierbas a palitos
In the clearing there are some dry stalks of grass

JAAMUNKA IWONNACH
La ave va a hacerse el dueño
The bird is making itself the owner

TORO KORO KOE
“Toro Koro Koe,” canta el halcón
“Toro Koro Ko AA,” sings the grey hawk

NOKUN ROKON WUUA
Nosotros vamos cantar
We are going to sing

TOROKO MUWUA
La canción es “Toro Ko”
The song is “Toro Ko”

WUA YOWAA WIAXON
Quitando su canción
Taking its song

OMBA YOWAA AKATHI
Vamos hacer un festín grande
We are going to have a big feast

CHIPI PARACH IKANNATON
Hermana menor ha ido pisando
Younger sister steps forward
RUSONMUN KA KASHTITAAN
Brincando adelante
Leaping forward

UN IIN NAINMUN
Viendo yo
I watch

CHIPI PARACH IKANNANTON
Hermana menor ha saltado de sus pisadas
Younger sister jumps in her tracks

JINTAAN NAWUU XAHANI
La sangre de un animal está en la misma pisada
Animal blood is in her footprints

WUCHI TANDI JOTAMUN
Me fui a ver
I went to see

NOTHI MUNDACH NIHACH
Amarga, ella está parado
Angry, she stands still

UN XONKU TAAINNO
Moviéndose de un lado al otro
Moving back and forth

XONKU MUNDI NIACHMUN
Allí parado moviéndose de lado a lado cabeza y cuerpo
Standing there moving her head and body back and forth

“TORO KORO KO,” INDOCH UN
“Toro Koro Ko. Así canto yo,” dice el halcón
“Toro Koro Ko. I sing this way,” says the hawk

IKA TOMUN KAHIIYA
Yo lo hago
I do it

WURO KIMUN KEHIYA
Mi ojo
My eye

HIYA CHAIN JANDUHA
La persona me habla
The person speaks to me

“TORO KORO KO ,” INDOCH UN
Así canto yo, “Toro Koro Ko”
I sing like this, “Toro Koro Ko”
INDOCH UNGANU CHAI
“Yo lo hago, forastero”
“I am doing it, stranger”

OMBA YOWAA AKATHI
Yo hago un festín grande
I am hosting a big feast

AKATHINON MUTHANON
Vamos a preparar para el festín
We are getting ready for the feast

HIYATIN MUTHA KA JONDI
Preparase hombre!
Get yourself ready, man!

TAON / La Ave Momotidae / The Taon Bird

TAON XUTA KURUXYA
La ave momotidae tiene un pico como serocho
The Taon bird has a serrated beak

TAON TAON HIKINRAN
La ave momotidae viene
The Taon bird is coming

MAPOGIMUN RUSOKAHIN
Volando, pone la boca abajo
Flying, it tucks its beak down

YONDO WIAIMUN TSIKUS WAIN
Coge huayos de moena
Gathering fruit from a moena tree

IROMAHAN KAMUN JAN
No ha hacer maldito
It does not have to make mischief

TAONMAMUN KAA WUA
La ave momotidae no va a cantar su canción
The Taon bird will not sing its song

WUA YOWAA WASHINON
No va a mesquinar la canción
It will not refuse to give its song

WUA WASHINON BAIMUN
No va a mesquinar la canción
It will not refuse to give its song
NOKUN ROKON TAAON
Nosotros estos pájaros
We these Taon birds

TAON WUA WIANXON
Quitando canción de la ave momotidae
Taking away the song of the Taon bird

OMBA YOWAA AKATHI
Hacemos un festín grande
We are having a big feast

AKATHINON MUTHANON
Vamos a preparar
We will get ready

IYATIN RAOTI KANBU
Hagan sus “raotis” toneletes
Make some new “raoti” kilts

RAOTI KANBU JONDI
Haga su raoti tonelete, hombre
Make your raoti kilt, man

JUTUU SHAARA MATINRAH
El raoti es bien oloroso
The raoti is very fragrant

JAA KARUNG NAAN CHAWIH
Toda esta altura loma
Every part of this hilltop

RAOTIMUN SHAARAWO
Raotis toneletes buenos
Fine raoti dress kilts

SAUKIN KIYOWUH
Poniendo en los brazos las cinturas de pequeñas semillas negras
Adorning your arms with strings of small black seeds

HUKI JONDI WAHAHAH
Adonde mí, gente va a reunir
People will gather at my place

AYAMAHI KININXAAN
Vamos a ver si no van a tomar
Let us see if they refuse to drink

JONDI KAKA NINKAMAAN
Para hacer que oyen éstos hombres
In order to make these people hear
NINKA MAXAN ANONGAN
Vamos a hacer que oyen otra vez
Let us make them hear it again

JAWI ANONGAN JONDI
Vamonos a hacerlo, hombres
Let's do it, guys

JARI AKARA WUNDI
¿Dónde qué ha venido?
From where has it come?

JONDI PARACH IWANI
Donde qué se fueron pisando
From the place they trampled underfoot

TAHU CHIPON SUNUN NON
Sus pisadas son iguales
Their footprints are the same

JONDI WOHI WOHAMUN
Cuando se van éstos hombres
When these people leave

UNDA WUKAA THIH IRAA
Vamos a ver si vendrán otra vez
We will see whether they come back

JONDI WOHI WOCHAKIH
Cuando los hombres se van
After they leave

SHINAN NIMUN TSAHOH JAN
Voy pensando sentado
I sit thinking

SHINANGIMUN AXANGIN
Yo pienso en lo que voy a hacer para el festín
I am thinking about what I will do for the feast

NON MUTSA NOMUNGIH
Vamonos a prepararlo
Let’s get it ready

IYATIN MUTHA PU JONDI
Canten ya, todos!
Sing it, people!
XUTUN WUA / Canto del Gallinazo / Vulture’s Song

XUTUN WARIN SHIMON OMBAHI
El Gallinazo hace un festín de “mollaga”
The vulture makes a wonderberry feast

HOA MASHI MANAN
Allá en una playa arenosa grande
There, on a large sandy beach

HOA MASHI MANAN NU
Allá en una playa arenosa
There, on a large sandy beach, dear

PUHI RUTSIS SINANDA
Con ala pisado por toda la gente
Everybody stepped on his wings

XUTU SHIIN SHIINHGI
El Gallinazo canta, “Shin-Shin”
The Vulture sings, “Sheen-Sheen”

XUTUN SHIMON OMBAHU
El Gallinazo hace un festín de mollaga
The Vulture makes a wonderberry feast

IROMAHA WOKAMUN JAN OMBAHU ANONMAI
Los invitados aves marlíitos quitan el festín del Gallinazo
The guests, marlito” (“mar-LEE-toe”) birds, take away the feast from the Vulture

XUTUN OMBANON MAI
El Gallinazo está haciendo el festín
The Vulture gives the feast

NOKUN ROKON AYAXAN
Nosotros vamos a tomar
Let’s go to drink

NOKUN ROKON ANON GAAN
“Nosotros vamos a hacer el festín,” dicen
“We are going to make the feast,” they say

NOKUN ROKON ANON GAAN
“Nosotros vamos a hacer el festín”
“We are going to make the feast”

ITAAN WUNDIWO ANDA ANON GAAN
“Vamos a levantar,” dicen los invitados
“Let’s stand up,” say the guests
OMBAH ANDI KATONMUN
Los invitados ya hacen el festín, ya ha volado el Gallinazo
The guests are making the feast, the Vulture already flew away

ANDAKA RUSOOTAN
El hermano menor del marlito está adelantandole en la fila de baile
The younger brother of a marlito bird gets ahead in the dance line

NAKIMUN KA TURUNTAN
En medio de la fila está su mayor de el marlito
The marlito bird’s older brother is in the middle of the dance line

OMBAHA ANDOCH UN GATCHO
Vamos a hacer un festín
We are going to have a feast

HOA MACHI MANNAN NU
Están haciendo el festín allá en un cerro alto
There on a high hill, they have the feast

XUTU SHIIN SHIIN GI
El Gallinazo canta, “Shin-Shin”
The Vulture sings, “Sheen-Sheen”

XUTU PARACH PARACHGI
Gallinazo baila, saltando
The Vulture dances, leaping

PARACH PARACH IINOMAI
Saltando, saltando anda el Gallinazo
The Vulture moves around jumping, leaping

NOKUN ROKON AKAN XAAN
Nosotros vamos a hacer quitar el festín
We are going to take over the feast

MANDI KINON ANONMUN
Ellos hacen el festín de “bijao”, ‘plátano falso’
They make the ‘false plantain’ feast

MANDI PUHI KURONHI
Las hojas de bijao están moviendose y sonando en el viento
The false plantain leaves wave and rustle in the wind

KURONHIKI MANDIKI
Están sonando las hojas de bijao
The false plantain leaves rustle

ISING YATOCH MANDIKI
Va hacer dolor (de mordidas de víboras) a la gente de el festín
People at the feast will feel pain (from snakebites)
XUKI ROKON AXANGIN
Vamos hacer un festín de maíz
We are going to have a maize feast

AXON JANKI ANONGI
Vamos a hacer prepararlo
We are going to prepare it

OMBA ANDI KATONMUN
El dueño de el festín invita la gente
The maker of the feast invites the people

AXON NOMUN AKIPU
Yo hago un festín. Ven a tomar!
I am making a feast. Come to drink!

WUNDI KAHINNOX / Cuando Vuelo / When I Fly

WISRIWI REMUN EH KAHEN
“Juntos vamos cantando,” dice la ave
“Let’s go singing together,” says the bird

WUNDI KAHINNOX UN GAI
Cuando yo me voy volando
When I go flying

KAHAMUN XAANBU CHAHEH
Haga así, hombre
Do it this way, man

UN POHIH SUWIA
Mi mierda así roscada
My poop is coiled like this

MANDI PUHIH KARA TAA
Así encima de hoja de plátano falso
Like this on a false plantain leaf

WUNDI KAHINNOX UN GAI
Yo me voy volando
I go flying

RISWIRIMUN EE KAHEN
Cantando, me voy
Singing, I go

WUNDI KAHINNOX UN GAI
Cuando me voy volando
When I go Flying
KAHAMUN XAANPU CHAHI
Haga así, forastero
Do it this way, stranger

IROMAMUN NAIITO
Cuando haces malo
When you do evil

MIYA KUSTU IHIRA
¿Comó te matan?
How do they kill you?

KUSTU HIRA CHAIHUKI
¿Te mata ese hombre?
Does that man kill you?

WAKA XAANDA WUROMUN
Su semilla de ese huayo tamamori
The seed of that tamamori fruit

KUXUXONMUN KA HIYA
Cociendo me, traicionandome
Cooking me, betraying me

HIYAN CHAHIN KUSTUHA
Cuando me mata este forastero
When this stranger kills me

SHARAA AWIMUN PANNAN
Si yo estuviera bien
If I were good

WAKA XAANDA WUROMUN
La semilla de árbol tamamori
The seed of the tamamori tree

XUHA MAHAKIN UN HAH
Cuando mi madre me ha hecho tragar
When my mother made me gulp it

UNHAN KORA SHWINDIMUN
Mi mamá me ha hecho abrir la boca
My mother made me open my beak

JAHAA WINDI XOHIYA
Ya quedó mi manera
Already set in my ways

HIYA JANDU AITO
Cuando me habla
When she speaks to me
PUXWAMUN KA TANDA WAHIN
Siguiendo este huayquito por allá hacerme volar
Following along this little tunnel to make me fly from there

CHAHI WUCHI NIKOHA
Cuando yo he visto este forastero
When I saw this stranger

PITI XUTA RATAN NAH
Poniendome el pico en mi pecho
Putting my beak on my breast

“JII” IKA TOHIYA
Cuando canto “Ji” la canción de la paloma
When I sing “Hee” the song of the dove

IYA CHAHIN JANDUHA
Cuando aquellos forasteros me hablan
When those strangers speak about me

RUKIIN KINUM KIHIYA
Ellos hablan de mi nariz
They speak of my beak

IIN INDOX UNGANU
Yo canto así
I sing like this

INDOX UNGANU CHAHE
Canta, forastero
Sing it, stranger
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