

# Hybrid Bodyscapes

## A Visual History of Yanesha Patterns of Cultural Change

by **Fernando Santos-Granero**

This paper examines cultural change and hybridity through a visual history of the alterations in dress, ornamentation, and body treatment experienced by the Yanesha of Peruvian Amazonia in postcolonial times. Such transformations often appear to be fluctuations between tradition and modernity explained alternatively as instances of “acculturation” or as expressions of “invented traditions” and “postmodern identity politics.” By focusing mainly on external factors, these theoretical approaches pay insufficient attention to the role of native perceptions and practices in promoting cultural change. Approaches that do take into consideration these perceptions, such as those centered on the notions of “passing” and “mimesis,” do not apply to this particular case. Adopting a Yanesha perspective as a departure point, I argue that what appear to be expressions of acculturative processes are the result of a long-standing indigenous openness to the Other—particularly the white and mestizo Others—and the native conviction that the Self is possible only through the incorporation of the Other. Such incorporation always finds expression in bodily transformations, hybrid bodyscapes that change throughout time according to the shifting relationships between Self and Other.

The importance of cultural change as an ongoing process of bodily and identity transformation first became clearly apparent to me on the day when I met Chemell, a Yanesha acquaintance, after many years of not seeing him. I was attending the Fourth National Congress of Anthropological Research in Lima, Peru (August 2005), and had been invited to the screening of a video titled *Yatañneshañ: Remembering Our Ancestors* made by anthropologist Richard Smith and a Yanesha collaborator. When I entered the auditorium accompanied by Marietta Ortega, a Chilean colleague, I realized, with pleasure, that the Yanesha collaborator was Chemell, whom I had known as a young man back in 1977 during my first fieldwork among the Yanesha. He was dressed in a long white cotton cushma, or tunic, decorated with dark vertical stripes (fig. 1). Around his neck he had tied a black scarf, and across his chest he had hung wide bands of red, gray, and black seeds as well as a striped shoulder bag. His head was covered with a striped cotton hood decorated on the back with a fringe of long bright feathers. On top of it he wore a round headdress ornamented with long red and blue parrot tail feathers. He had several thin cotton bands on his wrists and a large stainless steel watch on his left arm. Chemell was accompanied by his wife and son, also dressed in cushmas. His wife had painted

her face and that of her son with a few dabs of red achiote paste. They all wore shoes. “Is that the traditional Yanesha dress?” my Chilean colleague asked. I was at a loss as to what to answer.

When the screening and discussion of the video finished, I went up to the stage to greet Chemell and his family, but because he was soon surrounded by a crowd of people eager to talk to him, I left him to chat with colleagues. Half an hour later, when we were leaving, I saw Chemell outside the auditorium and waved him good-bye. “Who’s that?” asked my Chilean friend. Chemell had taken off his cushma and other ornaments and was in the process of packing them together with those of his wife and son into a large duffel bag. He was dressed in a pair of blue trousers and a checkered shirt, and he sported a black baseball cap. The only objects that reminded me of the man dressed in Yanesha attire were his wristbands and his shoulder bag. His wife and son were also dressed in Western-style clothes. They had rubbed off the red achiote paint from their faces. When I told my Chilean friend that the man was Chemell, she asserted, a bit puzzled, “I would have never recognized him.”

Chemell’s transformation had indeed been quite radical. The man in native garb was a far cry from the person dressed in Western-style clothes, ready to take a bus and return home. My friend’s impressions about the meaning and direction of this metamorphosis were, however, totally different from mine. She had first seen Chemell dressed in Yanesha regalia, so her interpretation was that he had shifted from being “tra-

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Figure 1. Chemell dressed in full Yanesha attire, Lima, 2006. In this photo Chemell is dressed very much like he was when I met him in Lima at the Fourth National Congress of Anthropological Research. Photo by Joaquín Rubio. Source: Landolt Pardo 2006, 110. Reproduced with permission of Joaquín Rubio and Gredna Landolt Pardo.

ditional”—native—to being “modern”—Westernized. In my case, it was the other way around. When I met Chemell in 1977, he was a young man traveling from settlement to settlement in search of a wife. He dressed in Western-style clothes and already sported a wristwatch and a baseball cap, which he had bought with his earnings from harvesting coffee for local settlers. He was a modern young man—at least from the perspective of nonnative Peruvians—who did not wear a *cushma* in public and showed little inclination for native traditions. Thus, when I saw him in the auditorium clad in a *cushma* and native ornaments, I was rather struck by his transformation from being modern to being traditional.

In this paper I attempt to understand Yanesha patterns of cultural change, taking Chemell’s “transformations” as a stepping stone. In the Amazon region, the replacement of native forms of dress and ornamentation by Western-style equivalents has been generally explained by means of the paradigm of “acculturation” (Herskovits 1958; Linton 1940). In its most narrow acceptance, acculturation is understood as resulting from exogenous factors related to the colonial expansion of “civilized” or “developed” societies at the expense of more “backward” ones, a process inevitably leading to cultural im-

poorishment and the social mutation of the colonized. From this understanding, acculturation is to be dreaded and regretted because it prefigures the disappearance of the acculturated collectivities as distinctive peoples and the replacement of their rich cultural traditions with a generic hybrid culture. “Our first impression of the Tenetehara,” wrote Wagley and Galvão (1949, ix), “was disappointing. . . . During the first day . . . we had difficulty distinguishing an Indian from the mestiço Brazilians of the region.” In such a pervasive view, hybridity is always perceived as a threat (Werbner and Modood 2000, 10). Although the acculturation paradigm has been largely abandoned in Amazonianist studies, its basic tenet—that cultural change is only the result of external pressures—has had a much longer life and has only recently been contested (Albert and Ramos 2000; Hill 1996; Wright 1999).

In turn, the revival of traditional forms of dressing has been understood either under the paradigm of “invented traditions” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) or as an expression of “postmodern identity politics” by which native peoples all over the world take advantage of both traditional and modern elements as building blocks “for the construction and/or affirmation of their functioning indigenous identities” (Veber 1996, 157, 159). In both cases, the stimulus for readopting traditional forms of clothing and decoration is conceived of as coming from the exterior. Indigenous peoples either revive old traditions to fit Western views and expectations of native Others, and thus obtain certain political benefits in what is conceived of as an “exercise of social engineering” (Conklin 1997, 712; Hobsbawm 1983, 13; Warren and Jackson 2002, 9), or they recycle traditional elements together with Western imagery and technologies in ways that reinforce traditional cultural values, thus not only refuting but actually subverting the notions of acculturation and Westernization (Turner 1991b, 70; Veber 1996, 158). By viewing native Amazonians as skillful consumers of tradition or creative users of traditional elements for modern or postmodern purposes, these approaches—unlike those upholding the notions of acculturation or deculturation—have the merit of recognizing the agency of native peoples. However, by focusing mainly on external factors, all these perspectives pay insufficient attention to the crucial role played by native Amazonian conceptions of Self and Other in promoting changes in cultural practices and identity.

In arguing this point, I follow the path opened by Overing (1977, 1983–1984), who states that from a native Amazonian point of view, society and people can exist only through the incorporation of dangerous foreign entities and forces. The Self is only possible through the incorporation of the Other, that is, socially significant aliens in contrast to which and in relation to which native Amazonians construct their sense of Self. Given the widespread belief that all living beings are “people” endowed with human-shaped souls, the Other may be human or nonhuman, native or nonnative. In either case, the Other is always a constitutive Other insofar as it is a part of the Self. This central notion explains a broad range of native

Amazonian cultural practices, from Tukanoan linguistic exogamy and Jivaroan head-hunting to Tupian cannibalism and Gê dualistic systems. This Amerindian openness to the Other—and particularly to white people—was pointed out long ago by Lévi-Strauss (1943a). More recently, it has been underscored by both Hugh-Jones (1992) and Viveiros de Castro (1993) through the analysis of native Amazonian “consumerism” and “ideological voracity,” that is, the Amerindian fascination with both foreign goods and foreign ideas.

Coupled with the insights of Seeger et al. (1979) on the centrality of the body in native Amazonian ontologies and Viveiros de Castro’s (1998) reflections on Amerindian “perspectivism,” these contributions established the theoretical framework for new understandings of native Amazonian notions of personhood and identity. In recent works, Gow (2007a, 2007b) and Vilaça (2006, 2007) have applied these notions with notable success to the analysis of cultural change among the Cocama, Piro, and Wari’, viewing it as a process of bodily transformation or metamorphosis. What appear to be expressions of acculturative forces—the adoption of the dress, language, and names of white and mestizo peoples—is nothing more, they argue, than the result of a long-standing native openness to the Other. Thus, from a native point of view, cultural change is not only the consequence of external pressures or coercive socioeconomic structures but also the result of a conscious indigenous attempt to incorporate the Other into their sphere of social relations. Through the adoption of foreign ways of dressing, adorning, and treating the body, native Amazonians seek to adopt the perspective of their most powerful social Others in the hope that by becoming the Other—even if only partially—they will be able to understand them and establish peaceful social relations with them (Gow 2007b, 300; Vilaça 2006, 512).

By bringing to the fore such native perspectives, it is not my intention to deny the profound injustice and cruelty that has characterized colonial and postcolonial domination in native Amazonia for the past 500 years. Rather, I seek to restore a sense of native historical agency—in Sider’s (1998, xviii) sense of a “people’s capacity to act both within and upon larger social forces”—into the sociological equation, a task that is all the more necessary given that the central premise of colonialism is the negation of the capacity of the colonized for cogent thought and action.

Although at first sight Chemell’s transformations seemed to derive from tensions between the forces of tradition and modernity acting in a context of postcolonial interaction and each pulling in different directions, as García Canclini (1995) would have it, such an interpretation is insufficient. It takes for granted what these notions mean in the Yanesha context while at the same time assuming that there is only one tradition and one modernity. In order to understand what exactly Chemell’s transformations meant in terms of his personal identity, and that of the Yanesha as a collectivity, I will approach the topic through the analysis of a series of images—actual photographs and mental snapshots—showing how

clothes, ornaments, and forms of body treatment are important signs of personal and collective identity. Through such an analysis, I hope to show that Yanesha identity is a hybrid identity in the sense of the term as elaborated by Taussig (1993) and Wade (1999) discussed below; that such hybridity finds expression in important bodily transformations, particularly with regard to dress and ornaments; and that these changes have given way to a variety of hybrid bodyscapes, corporeal configurations resulting from the dynamic interface of biological, psychological, and cultural elements that are endowed with personal and collective identities. Being genetically marked, culturally constructed, and historically situated, such bodyscapes are subject to changes due to a variety of internal and external processes.<sup>1</sup> Yanesha hybrid bodyscapes are not, however, the result of the collision between tradition and modernity but rather the product of native conceptions that have been operative since precolonial times regarding Self and Other.

### The Ancient Ones’ Way of Dressing

The notions of “traditional” and “modern” are alien to Yanesha thought and are only used in political discourses delivered in Spanish for the benefit of Spanish-speaking audiences. Rather than characterizing Chemell’s attire at the video screening as traditional, they would refer to it as “the ancient ones’ way of dressing.” The first time I heard this expression was in 1977, while attending the Ninth Congress of Campa-Amuesha native communities in the Yanesha settlement of Huacsho.<sup>2</sup> Early in the morning on the day the meeting was supposed to begin, I heard the local kids shouting “They are coming! They are coming! The Compall people are coming!”—*Compall* being the term used by the Yanesha to refer to their Arawak-speaking neighbors, the Asháninka and Ashéninka. There was a flurry of excitement as the people that stood outside the large assembly house turned around to watch the arriving Ashéninka.

The visitors did not disappoint them. They looked impressive as they marched into the large village plaza in a long, single file. Led by their leader, the 15 or so men and women were clad in native attire—long vertically striped cotton cushmas with V-necks for men and solid-color cushmas with crew necks for women. They had washed in the river before entering the village and were freshly painted with red achiote paste. The men wore headdresses decorated with long parrot tail feathers. Women sported bunches of thin palm fiber bands across their chests, and a variety of ornaments—fragrant

1. This view differs radically from that of art historian Mirzoeff (1995), who conceives bodyscapes as a representation, a complex of signs that is both metaphysical (different from the actual body) and transhistorical (in that it spans the passing of time).

2. *Campa* and *Amuesha* were the terms used by nonnative Peruvian people to refer to the Asháninka/Ashéninka and the Yanesha peoples, respectively. They were rejected by their respective federations in the 1980s.

seeds, animal claws, beaks and bones—sewn along the shoulders of their tunics. The most impressive, however, was their leader. A tall, powerfully built man, Churihuanti—as we later learned was his name—was dressed in a brand new white cushma decorated with vertical stripes of gray cotton and a long bunch of strung green parrot feathers hanging from the back of his V-neck (fig. 2). He wore broad, flat seed chestbands arranged in a crisscross fashion and numerous cotton bands on each of his wrists. Slung across his shoulders he carried a striped cotton bag matching his tunic. But what most impressed onlookers was his headdress. He wore a striped cotton hood ornamented with a fringe of bright green and red parrot feathers; on top he bore a tall headdress decorated with geometric figures and crowned with the longest parrot tail feathers that I had ever seen. Like all his followers, he was barefoot. Most of the onlookers were silent, a mix of admiration and mockery showing on their faces. Kids, however, could not stop whispering. “Look, look,” they said. “They are dressed like the ancient ones.”

Their remarks made sense, because in 1977, Yanesha men wore cushmas only at night, in the privacy of their homes. Many Yanesha women still wore cushmas during the day, but most preferred homemade dresses. The only time men and women wore cushmas in public was during ritual or formal

events. The children of Huacsho were thus right in claiming that the Ashéninka visitors dressed like *yatañneshañ*, “our dead grandparents” or the “ancient ones.” At the time, I did not know exactly why the children said that Churihuanti dressed like their ancestors. It was only much later, when I came across a photograph of a Yanesha headman dressed in exactly the same way as Churihuanti, that I realized what they meant (fig. 3). The photograph, taken in the 1920s, shows a Yanesha headman in native attire surrounded by his family. The likeness between his attire and that of the Ashéninka leader was astounding. When I saw Chemell at the video screening, I could not help but remember Churihuanti and the old Yanesha headman.

That Churihuanti and his followers dressed in traditional clothes and ornaments was not surprising to their Yanesha hosts. In the 1970s, Yanesha people regarded the Ashéninka and Ashéninka as being less “civilized” than they were. Evidence of their lack of civilization consisted of their limited knowledge of Spanish and their inability to read, write, or count money; their lack of identification documents; their non-Christian beliefs; their inexperience in dealing with government officials; and, of course, their way of dressing. It is true that at the time, some segments of the Ashéninka and Ashéninka peoples had as much contact with the national



Figure 2. Churihuanti at the Ninth Congress of Campa-Amuesha Native Communities, Huacsho, 1977. From left to right, Churihuanti is the fifth man sitting in the front row. When this picture was taken, he had given his white tunic as a gift to his local *ayompari* trading friend and was wearing two old dyed tunics, one on top of the other. Photo by Fernando Santos-Granero.



Figure 3. Yanesha headman and his family, Metraró, 1920s. Source: Stahl 1932, 59.

society as the Yanesha. But most lived far away from settler towns and roads and had only sporadic personal interaction with nonindigenous peoples. This was certainly the case for Churihuanti and his people, who lived in a remote tributary of the Pichis River and who had to walk 10 days along forest trails in order to attend the meeting. Dressing like the ancient ones (fig. 3) was, for the Yanesha, an expression of a way of life that they had left behind a long time ago, one that entailed the domination of Yanesha people by white, mestizo, and highland Indian settlers who had gradually usurped their lands, their sacred sites, and their forest resources. This was a time when Yanesha people were constantly deceived, exploited, and ridiculed; it was a time when they were impotent in the face of external pressures and violence. Now, those abuses were things of the past. The Yanesha were literate, Christian, and experienced in the ways of white peoples. In white-mestizo Peruvian parlance, they were modern, and they had their way of dressing to prove it.

### The Peruvian Way of Dressing

How did Yanesha people describe this new way of dressing? If pressed hard, they would say that when not wearing cushmas, they dressed “like Peruvians.” Yanesha people are aware

that they are Peruvian. In the 1970s, they placed great value on the fact that they possessed personal identification documents, knew the national anthem, and had done their military service, all of them important signs of Peruvianness. In such a context, the term *Peruvian* did not simply refer to nationality but rather to a certain kind of Peruvian, the white (*ocanesha*) and mestizo (*pueñanesha*) people, who differ radically from both highland Indians (*cholles*) and native Amazonians. White people are identified as such more by their way of talking, dressing, and behaving than by their phenotypic traits. They have greater economic capacity, generally belong to the urban middle and upper classes, and almost always act in an imperious manner. Except for the descendants of German and Italian settlers, Yanesha people are seldom in contact with white Peruvians. In contrast, they are surrounded by a large mestizo population. Mestizo people dress in simple Western-style clothes, seldom wearing ornaments or items of clothing that might recall their more- or less-distant indigenous ancestors. Thus, when Yanesha say that they dress “like Peruvians,” what they mean is that they dress like the Peruvian mestizos with whom they interact on a more regular basis.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, most Yanesha men wore Peruvian clothes and shoes on all public occasions, to wit,

while working, visiting relatives and neighbors, meeting in church or the assembly house, traveling to other communities, or going to neighboring settler towns to do business. When going to work, they wore a pair of old pants or nylon shorts, a ragged T-shirt, and a pair of patched rubber boots, whereas to visit other folk they would put on a pair of clean polyester trousers, a new shirt or T-shirt, and the newest pair of black rubber shoes they possessed (figs. 4, 6). In no case did they wear socks. Men wore *cushmas* only at night, in the privacy of their homes. Often, they slept in their *cushmas*, which doubled as blankets in the chilly *montaña* nights. Many women wore *cushmas* on a daily basis, but most preferred homemade dresses or blouses and skirts made from light cotton fabrics with small floral or geometric prints (figs. 5–7, 11). In every community, at least one or two women owned sewing machines, which they would readily lend to their relatives and friends so that they could make clothes for themselves and their younger children. Most women went about barefoot, although some wore flip-flops or colored rubber shoes to attend church, local assemblies, or other community events.

For certain public events or family affairs, however, men and women—particularly the older ones—wore *cushmas*, for instance, at drinking parties held by a family to feast friends and neighbors or at celebrations to mark the end of the ritual confinement of one of their pubescent daughters. This was also true of large intercommunity festivals, particularly at the end of soccer or volleyball championships and of official meetings of the Campa-Amuesha Congress (fig. 4). On such formal occasions, in addition to donning *cushmas*, men used to adorn themselves with feather headdresses and women with palm fiber chestbands and *cushma* shoulder ornaments. Some individuals would even paint their faces and bodies with red *achiote* paste or black *huito* juice. Very few wore shoes.

The use of ancient ones' and Peruvian clothing was not, however, mutually excluding. This is clearly depicted in figure 4, showing two Yanesha delegates attending the same meeting in which Churihuantí made such a strong impression. The man on the left is dressed in his best Peruvian clothes, the pullover being a necessary item of clothing in the cold mornings and nights of the Peruvian *montaña*. The only element that denotes that he is dressed for a formal intercommunity meeting is his headdress, which, although not as elaborate as those used in past times, is a clear concession to the ancient ones' way of dressing. The man on the right is dressed more traditionally, wearing a *cushma* that he would rarely use in any other public occasion except, as has been said, at drinking parties. He also wears a feather headdress only slightly more elaborate than that of his companion. Both men wear rubber shoes and cotton shoulder bags.

This picture also shows that ancient ones' garb is never wholly native, as Peruvian attire is never totally Peruvian. In less formal circumstances, the man dressed in Peruvian clothes would not wear the headdress, but he would carry his shoulder bag wherever he went. The major difference would



Figure 4. Yanesha delegates at the Ninth Congress of Campa-Amuesha Native Communities, Huacsho, 1977. Photo by Fernando Santos-Granero.

be that for the rougher day-to-day activities he would carry an old, stained working bag, whereas for social occasions he would use his newest bag. However, even the most Peruvianized Yanesha men and women always display an item of native clothing or ornamentation. Similarly, but in reverse, they seldom wear native clothes without combining them with Peruvian accessories, such as wristwatches, baseball caps, sunglasses, or hairpins (figs. 6, 7).

If Yanesha people intended to “pass” as Peruvian mestizos when wearing Peruvian clothes, they would remove every item of clothing or ornament that would betray their ethnic origin. Wherever they go, however, including settler towns and large cities, Yanesha men take with them their cotton shoulder bags; they also wear cotton wristbands and small seed necklaces. Even the most Peruvianized among the young men, those living in Lima and studying in college, carry their shoulder bags, often proudly filled with papers, like the man on the left in figure 4. Women are more prone to wear *cushmas* in nonindigenous settings. But if they do not, they always wear wristbands or an assortment of necklaces combining colored seeds, industrial beads, and animal parts such as teeth or beaks (fig. 6). If Yanesha people did not intend to pass as Peruvian mestizos, why would they dress like Peruvian mestizos at all?



Figure 5. Yanesha women wearing homemade dresses, Yorenaco, 1977.  
Photo by Fernando Santos-Granero.

### Clothing as a Bodily Extension

To understand the relationship between dress and body in Yanesha perceptions, Pa'yón's story will serve as an example of the connection between bodily transformations and changes in identity. I met Pa'yón in early July 1979 in the community of Tsachopen. I was watching a soccer match with colleague Frederica Barclay when we saw a girl of about 17, dressed in a miniskirt and tight tank top, who was coming toward us along the trail that led to the soccer field. She sported a permanent, was heavily made up, and had put on abundant perfume. Her lips and fingernails were painted a bright red. She wore long earrings and a golden necklace. A small synthetic leather purse hung from her shoulder. Most strikingly, she was wearing high heels and walked gingerly, trying to negotiate, with careful little jumps, the many puddles that had formed along the trail after the usual morning shower. We asked who she was and were told that she was the daughter of a member of the community who a year ago had gone to Lima to work as a maid for relatives of one of the neighboring settler families of German descent. She had arrived a few days previously on vacation; apparently this was her first public outing.

We inquired about her with several of our friends, eager to learn how they felt about her way of dressing. No one

seemed to find it as extravagant as we did. A young woman remarked, however, "That's what happens when you live a long time with white people." At the time, I took this statement to be a variation of the proverb "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." Retrospectively—and in regard to the writings by Gow (1991), Conklin (1997), Belaunde (2001), and Londoño-Sulkin (2005), among others—I came to realize that what she meant was that when you share food, beverages, illnesses, shelter, and the company of people different from you for a long time, you are bound to incorporate other peoples' substances and thus gradually become like them. According to Gow (2007a, 204), Cocama girls working as maids for white/mestizo patrons tend to change their Cocama surnames for foreign ones as the result of bodily transformations linked to prolonged coresidence and commensality with them. "The change of surname," he argues, "would express this bodily change in the onomastic register."

Transformations through the sharing of substances are quite common in Yanesha mythology as exemplified by the myth of the man who turned into a tapir. It is said that after killing a tapir, an old man told one of his sons to go and fetch the dead animal. The young man could not find the tapir. Instead, he entered a cave where he found a beautiful young woman. She told him that the tapir the old man had



Figure 6. Yanesha family, Huacsho, 1977. Photo by Fernando Santos-Granero.

shot was her mother. After visiting her wounded mother, the tapir woman told the man that he would have to stay three days in the cave before he could leave. During his stay, the tapir woman fed him abundant tapir food. As a result, the man developed some tapir features—tough hide, a long nose, and a strong, acrid odor. In other words, he adopted a tapir “perspective” and in the process fell in love with the woman. After three days, the tapir woman told him that he was free to leave but that if he wanted to return to live with her, he should never tell his relatives what he had seen. The man agreed to keep the secret, but when he went back home, pressured by his relatives, he told them what had happened to him. As a result, he lost his tapir traits and could never reunite with the tapir woman. Similar transformations are found in the mythologies of other Peruvian Arawak peoples,

as Rosengren (2006) has shown in a recent work on Matsigenka notions of corporeality.

From a Yanesha perspective—one shared by many native Amazonian peoples—all living beings have a human, largely inalterable soul. Their bodies, however, are prone to constant changes, changes associated with the life-development cycle or derived from one’s personal activities and from the activities of close relatives and friends. None of these processes are conceived of as being “natural.” They are always social processes insofar as they take place in contexts of interaction between humans or between humans and other live beings conceived of as nonhuman persons. Yanesha parents are particularly careful about what they consume, for the ingestion of some kinds of foods and beverages can have very negative effects on an unborn child. Similarly, they make an effort to





Figure 7. Yanesha family, Omas, 1977. Photo by Fernando Santos-Granero.

consume certain foods and beverages that they believe will guarantee a safe delivery and a healthy baby. As a Yanesha mother once told me, “Parents must be careful, for what they eat may make their babies cry unceasingly or make them lazy or turn them ill.” The making of beautiful, skilful, and moral Yanesha men and women requires the ingestion of certain foods and the avoidance of others at different stages of a person’s life. Training as a Yanesha shaman often depends on the sharing of bodily and other substances with animal spirits. Regular contact with the spiritual owners of particular animal species, including commensality and sexual relations, endow would-be shamans with the capacity of transforming themselves into those animals and using the latter’s powers to cure fellow Yanesha. Close contact with animal substances can also induce important transformations. Stepping on the urine or the feces of powerful animals may make a person ill or de-

ranged. The use of certain animal ornaments may confer on the user the skills of those particular animals.

From a Yanesha point of view, conviviality and commensality are crucial components in the process of fabrication and transformation of bodies, which is tantamount to saying the fabrication and transformation of persons, whether human or not. If you eat tapir food, drink tapir beverages, and live in close quarters with tapirs, you will become a tapir. The same holds true for other kinds of beings, including the *ocaneshas*, or “white people.” This is what happened to Pa’yon. She had for a long time resided among white people, and now she dressed in “white people’s dress” (*ocom*). In other words, she had become like the white people.

In Yanesha thought, a strong connection exists between body and clothing. Although Yanesha people use the term *chetsots* (flesh) to refer to the body, at another level they

conceive of the body as a tunic that cloaks the noncorporeal aspects of Self, that is, one's vitality (*camuequeñets*) and one's shadow soul (*choyeshe'mats*). This is not surprising; wrapped up in their tunics, Yanesha men and women become their tunics (fig. 8). For the Yanesha, however, the relationship between bodies and tunics is not metaphorical but quite literal. This is related to their belief that those items of personal clothing and ornamentation with which a person is in closest contact become "ensouled" and thus grow to be an extension of one's body (Santos-Granero, forthcoming), or as Erikson (forthcoming) would put it, an "extra-somatic body part." The ideas that the destruction of a person's ornaments will make that person ill, that it is possible to bewitch a person by simply cursing an item of his or her clothing, or that the clothes of dead people should be destroyed or disposed of lest they harm the person who wears them are some of the many conceptions that attest to the connection that Yanesha draw between body and clothing. The special place accorded to clothing and ornaments as corporeal extensions is linguistically marked by the use of the privative suffix *-Vts* or *-ts* in the nonpossessed forms of terms referring exclusively to body parts (e.g., *oñets* = head), immaterial aspects of the self (e.g., *noñets* = words), and items of personal use (e.g., *cashe'muets* = cushma) (Duff-Tripp 1997, 31–32).

Given such an intimate connection between bodies, clothing, and personal ornaments, it is not surprising that changes in dress and bodily transformations are perceived as one and the same thing. Historical changes in dress and decoration among the Yanesha should be understood from this perspective. Like

the Wari' described by Vilaça (2006), Yanesha people have undergone a long process of contact with Peruvian national society since 1847, when the Selva Central region was reconquered by military force after 100 years of independence. In the following decades, a large proportion of Yanesha people converted to Catholicism and moved into the various mission posts founded by the Franciscans. Many Yanesha men started working for the German, Italian, and Peruvian colonists who gradually settled in Yanesha territory beginning in the mid-1850s.

This process deepened with the foundation of the Perene Colony in 1891, when large numbers of Yanesha men were recruited by the British-owned company to work seasonally as coffee harvesters. As a result of Pastor Ferdinand Stahl's missionary activities, large numbers of Yanesha and Ashéninka who lived along the Perene River converted to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in the 1920s (Bodley 1972). Stahl (1932, 85) provides unwitting testimony of Yanesha openness to the ways of the whites when asserting that "the most encouraging feature of this whole work with these people is their willingness to learn." Religious conversion went hand in hand with greater participation in the regional economy. The arrival of the evangelical missionaries of the Summer Institute of Linguistics in the late 1940s triggered new processes of religious conversion, formal schooling, and economic transformations. By the late 1970s, Yanesha people were deeply integrated into the regional economy either as laborers for large coffee plantations, cattle ranches, and logging companies or as small producers of coffee, fruit, and

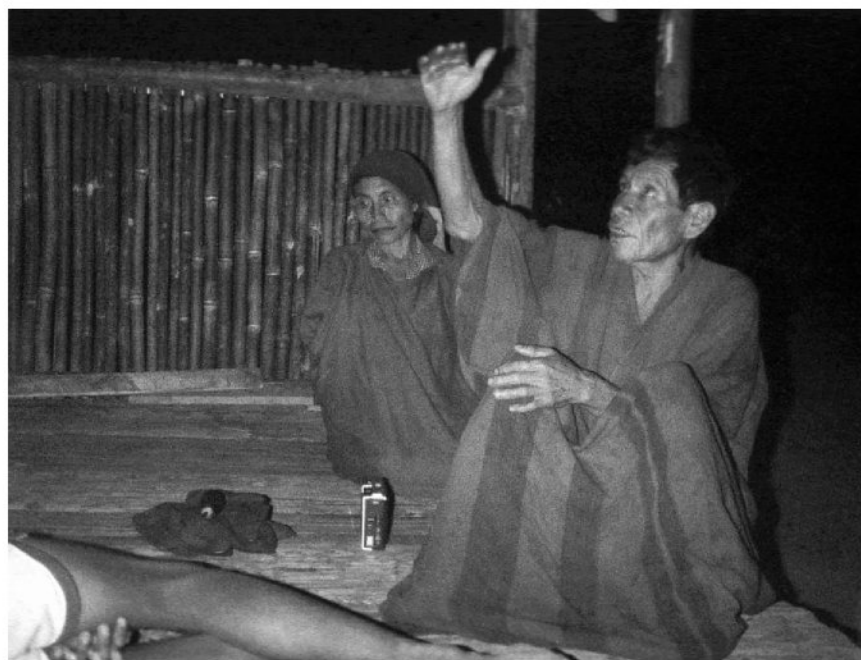


Figure 8. Yanesha couple dressed in cushmas in the privacy of their house, Muerrato, 1983. Photo by Fernando Santos-Granero.

cattle. This brought them into much closer contact with white and mestizo peoples.

As a result of this contact, Yanesha have come to share with white and mestizo Peruvians a variety of substances through ingestion or bodily contact; among these are food, beverages, spices, holy water, money, medicines, vaccines, chalk, batteries, kerosene, gasoline, books, and identity documents. Among these diverse substances, food and beverages are the most emblematic. The Yanesha see themselves and their native Amazonian neighbors as peoples defined by their consumption of manioc, game meat, and manioc beer, all of which they consider to be “real food.” By way of contrast, they see Peruvians as shaped by their ingestion of onions, canned foods, and barley beer (see Gow 1991, 114, and Renard-Casevitz et al. 1986, 104, for similar Matsigenka and Piro notions). The Yanesha continue to consume large quantities of manioc and manioc beer, but since at least the 1950s, they have increasingly incorporated “Peruvian foods” into their diet. The food taboos imposed by adventists in the 1920s and by evangelicals in the 1950s, together with the increasing depletion of forest resources as a consequence of colonist encroachment and a tendency to devote a larger proportion of cultivated lands to the production of market crops, has increased Yanesha dependency on nonnative foods and beverages, such as rice, spaghetti, black-eyed beans, tomatoes, onions, canned tuna, corned beef, sardines, sugar, oil, coffee, canned milk, and soda. From a Yanesha perspective, the sharing of these foods, together with other foreign substances, has made them partly Peruvian in the sense mentioned above. These transformations have found material expression in a new bodyscape, to wit, “the Peruvian way of dressing.”

### Passing and Mimesis versus Bodily Change

Transformations such as those experienced by the Yanesha in general and by Pa’yon in particular have little to do with attempts at “passing,” a notion mostly developed in the United States to indicate a person of African American ancestry who attempts to pass as a Caucasian; however, it has also been applied to Jews trying to pass as Christians, homosexuals trying to pass as heterosexuals, or males trying to pass as females and vice versa. Although many authors have drawn attention to the performative dimension of passing (Goffman 2004; Phelan 1993; Robinson 1994)—arguing that racial, ethnic, and gender identities are mainly a matter of performance—all agree that passing is possible only when the physical traits, gestures, and ways of speaking that are thought to be characteristic of the discriminated group are absent, have been disguised, or have been transformed. Even Butler (2004, 155, 162), who argues that gender identities are nothing but a “compelling illusion” and thus “can be neither true nor false,” admits that such identities are shaped by social sanctions, taboos, and expectations that must be complied with

in order for the performance to be effective—for instance, in the case of transvestites. In other words, the act of masquerading is central to the notion of passing (Ginsberg 1996).

With her marked native Amazonian features, Pa’yon would have never been able to pass as a white Peruvian woman. Even if that had been her intention—which I doubt—and her performance had been impeccable—which it was not—Pa’yon’s efforts would have clashed with Peru’s dominant ethnoracial classification system, which—in contrast to that prevalent in the United States—is not based on essentialist considerations and the “one-drop rule,” but rather on how people look and act and the idea of “improving the race” (*mejorar la raza*). According to this system, if you look white and act white, you are white—even if you have various non-white ancestors and might look mestizo in the eyes of a European white (see de la Cadena 2005 for an analysis of this system). Like all Peruvian adults, Pa’yon must have been acutely aware of the workings of this system and would have had no hope of beating it. Neither can it be argued that Pa’yon was trying to pass as a white person in the eyes of her relatives and friends, who had known her since she was born and who she could never have hoped to deceive.

More importantly, the notion of passing is based on the desirability of the assumed identity, which, it is expected, will open to “passers” a series of possibilities that they would otherwise lack. In this case, however, there is little evidence that Yanesha people view whiteness as a desirable state of being. On the contrary, the literal meaning of the term *ocanesha*’ is “the collectivity of non-people.” According to myth, white people were created by Yosoper, the evil classificatory brother of Yato’ Yos, the creator god, and as such are classed together with all the noxious beings that people this earth, including poisonous snakes, stinging insects, and evil spirits. From this perspective, and despite their awesome technological and creative powers—acquired from Yanesha gods, as the Yanesha are quick to indicate—white people are conceived of as the antithesis of the Yanesha, who see themselves as *the* people. Given this widespread perception, it is difficult to believe that Pa’yon’s transformation was the result of a conscious attempt at passing.

Similarly, Pa’yon’s transformation can not be understood as being the result of an act of mimesis as discussed by Taussig (1993). Mimetic acts proliferate in colonial and postcolonial situations where groups of unequal social and political weight are engaged in a power struggle. In such contexts, mimesis appears as an attempt by the less powerful to appropriate the power of the hegemonic people through acts of “sympathetic magic.” By imitating or mimicking the powerful, subordinate groups hope not only to acquire the extraordinary powers they attribute to their dominators but to “explore difference, yield into and become Other” (Taussig 1993, xiii). Mimesis of course is, above all, about copying. The thing copied might be material or immaterial—objects, rituals, gestures, ways of speaking, dancing or making music—but it is always a copy. As I have shown in several articles (Santos-Granero 2002,

2007, 2009), Yanesha history is full of instances of mimetic appropriation of the power of the white people. Crosses, Bibles, Franciscan hoods, St. John's bonfires, images of saints, and the liturgy of the Catholic mass are some of the many objects, actions, and rituals that Yanesha have copied throughout their history of contact with Europeans and Peruvians in their eagerness to acquire their powers for their own benefit. Such propensity is in line with the native Amazonian openness to the Other that I have mentioned above.

I do not think, however, that the adoption of Peruvian clothes can be interpreted as an instance of mimesis, for two reasons. First, in all known cases of Yanesha mimesis, the object, act, or ritual being copied was transformed through the act of copying. Yanesha copies of Franciscan hoods were woven with native cotton and adorned with feathers and animal skins. Their copies of Catholic sacred images were bathed in manioc beer and blown over with tobacco smoke. Reproductions of Bibles were made of feathers, not paper. Mimesis among the Yanesha is not about adopting white people's objects but about appropriating their power through magically produced and altered—that is to say, Amerindianized—copies. What is central to mimesis is not the actual appropriation of foreign objects but rather the creation of a sensuous connection between Self and Other through the act of copying such objects (Taussig 1993, 21).

Second, the objective of mimesis is not turning into the Other. Rather, it is about exploring difference by becoming—only partially and temporarily—the Other. Through the act of copying, the copyist becomes the Other in the act of making or enacting that which is being copied. Mimesis is not about erasing the frontiers between Self and Other but about redressing the power inequalities that exist between both. This can be achieved only by temporarily turning into the Other to appropriate the Other's powers. Once this objective is achieved, the mimetic agent goes back to being Self. This is indirectly confirmed by the myth of Yompör Santo, the mythical equivalent of the eighteenth-century messianic leader Juan Santos Atahualpa. In it we are told that Yompör Santo was sent to this earth by the creator god to save the Yanesha, who “had become like the white men” because, among other things, “they did not wear cushma anymore” (Santos-Granero 1991, 81–85). Yompör Santo expelled white people, creating the conditions for the Yanesha of old to become Yanesha once more. It is clear from this myth that turning into whites is not a desirable option. Thus, tempting as it is to view acculturation as a large-scale collective enterprise of mimesis, neither Yanesha ethnography nor Yanesha cosmology supports this possibility.

We will never know what exactly went on in Pa'yón's mind while she worked as a maid in Lima. What we do know, however, is first, that in the eyes of the Yanesha people who were acquainted with her, she had changed as the result of prolonged coresidence with her white patrons, and second, that in contrast with Peru's ethnicracial classification system, the bodily transformations that Yanesha people consider as

indicative of changes in identity have less to do with phenotypic traits than with attitudes, capacities, affects, and bodily decoration.

I had a glimpse of this Yanesha perception while visiting for the first time a household in the community of Camantarmas during my second fieldwork (1983–1984). As I entered the house, I greeted those present with the Yanesha formula “*Elleero, nemo'tas*,” or “Good afternoon, I'm visiting you.” The lady of the household asked me to sit down and offered me a gourd of manioc beer. After I drank the full gourd, not before pouring a few drops on the ground as an offering to the sun god, she proceeded to ask me a few questions in *yeñoño*, the Yanesha language. When I told her that my command of *yeñoño* was poor, she said, half surprised and half amused, that she had thought I was her *paisano gringo*. From my perspective, this was a contradiction in terms; in Peru, *gringos* are non-Peruvian whites, whereas in that context *paisano* referred to a fellow Yanesha. From her perspective, however, no contradiction existed in my being her “*gringo fellow countryman*.” I might have looked white, but the fact that I had learned some *yeñoño*, knew how to drink manioc beer, carried a Yanesha shoulder bag, and wore Yanesha cotton wristbands was a clear sign—in her eyes—that through prolonged residence among the Yanesha, I was turning into a fellow Yanesha. Not surprisingly, Yanesha describe those undergoing such a process—the few mestizos who have married Yanesha people or have lived among them for a long time—as people who “have learned to eat our food.”

The people of Tsachopen interpreted Pa'yón's transformation in a similar way. What appeared to me and my colleague as a rather ludicrous attempt to mimic white urban female fashion was perceived by them as a normal outcome of her choice to live with white people in Lima. Thus, they did not find Pa'yón's high heels and miniskirts amusing at all. If anything, they felt like the man in Rosengren's (2006) Matsigenka myth who was eager to rescue his neighbor from the peccaries and turn him again into a human being. In both the Matsigenka and the Yanesha myths, the transformed men recovered their human appearance only after renewing their social links with their families, relatives, and neighbors. This is exactly what happened to Pa'yón. By the time I left Tsachopen two months after meeting her, she had stopped talking about going back to Lima. In the meantime, she had gradually abandoned the more urban among her garments. She still dressed very differently from her peers, but she did not stand out as conspicuously as she did when she first returned from Lima.

Many years later, my colleague Frederica Barclay asked, “Guess who I saw in a recent trip to Tsachopen?” When I could not guess, she proceeded to update me as to the whereabouts of Pa'yón since we last saw her. As it happened, Pa'yón never went back to Lima. Instead, she married a Yanesha man and had several children. With the passage of time, she became increasingly involved in the affairs of her community, working on a variety of projects to improve the lot of local women and children. She also became an ardent advocate of Yanesha



Figure 9. Yanesha women wearing different types of cushmas, 2007. Photo by Alexandre Seydoux. Source: [http://pachamama.ciap.org/IMG/cache-379x600/yanesha\\_24-379x600.jpg](http://pachamama.ciap.org/IMG/cache-379x600/yanesha_24-379x600.jpg). Reproduced with permission of Alexandre Seydoux.

traditions, wearing a cushma and traditional ornaments to local assemblies, to meetings of the Yanesha organization, and to all situations requiring interaction with government officials. In brief, she had gone from tradition to modernity and back again, although perhaps, as we shall see, it would be more accurate to say that she had gone from tradition to modernity to a new tradition.

### Tradition as a Sign of Change

The issue of what is traditional and what is new in Yanesha ways of dressing is more complicated than it would seem at first glance. Figure 9 illustrates the difficulties encountered when making such distinctions. In the photo we see two women dressed in cushmas and decorated with seed chestbands and shoulder ornaments. At first sight, one would be tempted to say that both are dressed in traditional native attire. A closer look, however, shows that the older woman is indeed dressed in traditional attire, if by this we mean the way Yanesha women dressed in the late 1920s. By way of contrast, the younger woman's attire displays an important innovation that is quite recent despite its traditional look.

Yanesha women abandoned the use of handwoven cushmas in the 1920s. These were replaced by cushmas made of *tocuyo*,

a sturdy industrial cotton fabric dyed orange brown with *pa'yon*, the bark of a native tree. The older woman in figure 9 wears a *tocuyo* cushma of this type. In the 1960s, *tocuyo* cushmas began to be gradually replaced by cushmas made of brightly colored lighter industrial cotton fabrics. In the late 1970s, this latter type of female cushma was very much in vogue, the brighter the color—red, blue, turquoise—the better. More recently, the older *tocuyo* cushmas have made a comeback, but with a twist. This time they are not only dyed with tree bark but are also decorated with geometric designs painted with natural clays, such as those in the cushma of the younger woman. This is a completely new development, one that can be directly traced to the influence of a small pottery established in the community of Tsachopen in the late 1970s with the support and technical guidance of potter Connie Talbot. The pottery was devoted to the production of stoneware using local materials. Both Connie and her then husband, anthropologist Richard Smith, encouraged the young Yanesha potters to decorate their wares with traditional geometric designs. In the 1980s, the women of Tsachopen—among them Pa'yon—started painting their cushmas with those same designs. In the 1990s, the new fashion spread to other communities, finding particular favor among the younger generation (fig. 10).

The revival of cushmas as garments to be worn not only



Figure 10. Young Yanesha woman wearing a painted cushma, 2007. Photo by Alexandre Seydoux. Source: [http://pachamama.ciap.org/IMG/cache-450x600/yanesha\\_17-450x600.jpg](http://pachamama.ciap.org/IMG/cache-450x600/yanesha_17-450x600.jpg). Reproduced with permission of Alexandre Seydoux.

in the privacy of one's home but also on public occasions involving interaction with nonindigenous peoples is related, I suggest, to changes in attitudes with respect to nonnative cultural practices and institutions. In the 1970s, most Yanesha were Christian, belonging mainly to the Peruvian evangelical church or to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. Adventist missionaries, who began working in the region in the 1920s, imposed a series of alimentary taboos that followed the precepts of the Old Testament. Such prohibitions encompassed many animals traditionally eaten by the Yanesha, such as peccaries, monkeys, or catfish. They also forbade the consumption of alcohol and stimulants such as manioc beer, liquor, tobacco, ayahuasca, and coca. These latter prohibitions were also upheld by the missionary work of the evangelicals beginning in the 1950s.

By the late 1970s, formerly radical Adventist and evangelical Yanesha were beginning to find these prohibitions limiting and burdensome. This reaction coincided with an increased population pressure on forest resources and the consequent scarcity of permitted game animals and fish to exploit. It also coincided with a revalorization of the country's indigenous populations during the government of reformist General Juan Velasco Alvarado, the emergence of the first native Amazonian federations, and the incorporation of the rights of indigenous peoples into the agenda of most international organizations. Native Amazonians were no longer perceived by Peruvians as an obstacle to progress but began instead to be gradually considered an asset, a valuable component of the national identity. Added to the increasing discontent with some aspects of organized religions, these political and cultural changes created favorable conditions for a renewed expression of Yaneshaness.

Matar's story provides a good example of such identity changes. Born in the late 1920s in the area of Muerrato, he was sent by his father, while still a boy, to work with a Peruvian settler family so that he would "learn the ways of the white people"—a widespread native Amazonian strategy before the expansion of formal schooling (Graham 2002, 192–193). Matar lived among settlers until he was in his 20s. In the early 1950s, he went back to live with his family. Shortly after, he married an Adventist woman from the settlement of Camantarmas and moved to her community, where he converted to Adventism. For most of his adult life, Matar was enthusiastically involved in the activities of the Adventist church. By the time I met him, in February 1977, although he still claimed to be an Adventist, he did not comply with Adventist precepts. He seldom went to church or said grace before meals. He ate forbidden animals and drank manioc beer—although not barley beer or other alcoholic beverages, which he disliked. And he had started chewing coca and smoking cigarettes. Not surprisingly, such changes in diet went hand in hand with changes in dress. When I met him, Matar never wore a cushma, not even at home. By the time I finished my first fieldwork, in December 1977, he had not only acquired a cushma but would often wear it, especially while practicing at playing *requerqueñets* (sacred pan-

pipe music). As a boy reared among Peruvian settlers, Matar never had the opportunity of learning Yanesha sacred *coshamñats* music. It had taken him more than 40 years and multiple changes in diet and dress to recover his pride for "the things of the ancient ones."

Matar's transformations are not exceptional, however. A general tendency among Yanesha people has been to slacken religious prohibitions and adapt their Christian faiths to traditional cultural practices. A Yanesha elder who appears in a recent video produced by the Instituto del Bien Común summarizes nicely this new, more relaxed attitude with respect to Christian dogmas (Martínez et al. 2008):

Let me say this: Today we all know how to read the Bible. Thus we know Our Father Jesus existed and is immortal. But the Bible does not tell how Our Father Santo [Juan Santos Atahuallpa] came to the center of the earth, here in Metraró. The Bible doesn't tell about Our Father Partsesha [the solar divinity] either. But we know that they came here too and continue to protect us. Even today.

This conscious distancing from the evangelical and Adventist church has affected Yanesha patterns of consumption and, as a consequence, their bodily composition and way of dressing. Today many young Yanesha men and women dress in cushmas, not only at home but also in public. This does not mean that cushma-wearing Yanesha are more traditional than those who do not wear cushmas. Rather, it indicates that wearing a cushma has become a symbol of being progressive or forward looking.

This transition is clearly illustrated in figure 11, which shows a Yanesha woman (seated, center) and her daughter (standing next to her) flanked by the founders of the Hospital Amazónico de Yarinacocha on the Ucayali River. At first sight, it would seem as if the mother, dressed in a Western-style dress, is more modern than her daughter, dressed in a traditional cushma. The reverse is true, however. The mother wears a homemade dress of the kind few young Yanesha women would wear nowadays, given their preference for mass-manufactured clothing. She represents an old type of modernity, an excluding modernity associated with conversion to Christianity, avoidance of traditional Yanesha foods and beverages, rejection of shamanism in favor of modern medicine, and the acquisition of literacy. In contrast, her daughter, a professional nurse, represents a new way of being Yanesha, one that is comfortable with both the new and the old ways and that is characterized by constant, largely unproblematic shifts from one to the other.

## Hybridity as a Cultural Praxis

Chemell's reversal when adopting the ancient ones' attire can only be understood within this broader sociopolitical framework. His gesture does not represent a return to tradition but rather a new way of being Yanesha that appeals to and rein-



Figure 11. Yanesha mother and daughter (*center*) wearing different types of clothes, Yarinacocha, 2001. Source: <http://www.indianerhilfe-doktor-binder.de/Peru6.jpg>.

vents tradition (see Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983). Such shifts are not novel in Yanesha history. Chemell's attire is only traditional with respect to latter-day ways of dressing. In fact, what is known as the ancient ones' way of dressing is not ancient at all. Doubtless, Peruvian Arawaks have used cushmas since precontact times (Veber 1996, 160–161), but other items of their seemingly traditional attire are not accounted for in early historical sources. This is certainly true for cotton hoods (figs. 1–3). Known as *caperosh* among the Yanesha, this garment appeared in the historical record for the first time in pictures taken around the turn of the nineteenth century. This, and the fact that the term to designate it derives from the Spanish *caperuza*, suggests that hoods were adopted sometime during the eighteenth century and modeled after those used by Franciscan missionaries. The same can be said of the black scarf Chemell was wearing around his neck (figs. 1, 3). The fact that Yanesha call them *pañell* (from the Spanish *pañuelo*) and that they are always made of industrial cloth indicates that scarves are also a recent acquisition. Silver medals appeared in the historical record at around the same time (fig. 3). Yanesha informants say that they were made out of old, hammered religious medals or silver coins, so there can be no doubt that they were adopted in postcontact times.

Briefly, the traditional Yanesha male outfit combines diverse elements, some of them being more traditional—in the sense of older—than others. The same holds true of the traditional female attire, which, since at least the 1920s, includes cushmas made out of industrial cloth. Thus, Yanesha native clothing is far from being traditional. It betrays a long history of interaction with foreign agents. Because most of the changes in

dress, ornaments, and bodily care are linked to contact with Europeans and nonnative Peruvians in colonial and post-colonial situations, it would seem appropriate to view Yanesha clothing as hybrid products resulting from the merging and the coexistence of traditional and modern elements. As such, they would reveal the influence of various modernities.

Although the notion of hybridity has become a staple of culture theory in the past two decades, there is little agreement as to its analytical status. A brief review of what has been written on the topic (e.g., Kapchan and Strong 1999; Werbner and Modood 2000) reveals not only the multiple ways in which this notion has been defined and used but also the very different social and cultural phenomena to which it has been applied. It is thus not surprising that some authors argue that more than an analytic concept, the notion of hybridity is an “analytic allegory,” a trope that defines “lines of interest and affiliation” for the interpretation of situations of cultural mixture and border crossing in colonial contexts (Kapchan and Strong 1999, 246).

Here, I would like to call attention to what I see as the two main ways of understanding hybridity in colonial and post-colonial situations. On the one hand, hybridity is defined as a space “where traditions have not yet disappeared and modernity has not completely arrived,” a notion advocated by García Canclini (1995, xi) in his study of Latin American social formations but also present in the works of Bhabha (1994) and Brah and Coombes (2000). On the other hand, it is defined as “an encounter of same with a difference,” a phrase coined by Wade (1999, 332) inspired by Taussig's (1993) writings on mimesis and alterity. In the first, more sociological approach, hybridity

appears as a well-delimited historical phenomenon resulting from the clash of two narratives or ways of understanding the world—labeled respectively tradition and modernity; a clash that is never quite resolved. It views hybridity as an “in-between space” that comes into being through the blending of the traditions of the colonizers and the colonized. Rosaldo (1995) and others have criticized this position on the grounds that it does not problematize the use of the terms tradition and modernity, which are conceived of as two pure and distinct fields of practice or habitus, when by default they are multiple and hybrid.

The second, more subjective and processual approach, underscores the relational aspect of hybridity; the personal and collective motivations that promote hybridity. It represents hybridity as an encounter between peoples with different historical trajectories engaged in a halting dialogue through which the parties involved attempt to understand and come to terms with each other (Wade 1999). Its focus is on the connections rather than on the connected. Such an approach echoes Latour's (1993) philosophical outlook. By placing emphasis on “translation” and the dialogic dimension of hybridity, it seeks to overcome the shortcomings of “purification,” the act of distinguishing and separating ontological spheres into binary oppositions—nature/culture, tradition/modernity, Western/non-Western—which Latour regards as being the ideal objective of modernity. Whereas by tracing the connections that exist between these spheres, it reveals them as hybrid objects—“hybridization” being, according to Latour, the real outcome of modernity. The ultimate goal of this approach would be to render visible the hybrid objects unwittingly produced by modernity.

Contemporary Yanéscha bodyscapes could be said to be hybrid in both the above senses. They appear simultaneously as the product of clashing traditions and as the expression of an enduring Yanéscha openness to the Other. However, if one assumes a long-term perspective, it becomes clear that the view of hybridity as contingent on notions of tradition and modernity is insufficient to understand Yanéscha patterns of cultural change. Hybridity among the Yanéscha is a cultural praxis—as much a point of view as a way of being—not just an isolated and well-delimited historical event. As such, it was already operative in precontact times as manifested by the great number of Quechua borrowings found in Yanéscha language as well as by the many cultural elements Yanéscha share with the Inca, the radical Others of precontact times (Santos-Granero 1991, 247–255). The arrival of Europeans introduced into the scene a new and even more distinct Other: white people. As a result, as expressed in Yanéscha mythology and landscape lore, hybridity continued to play an important role in shaping Yanéscha culture and society (Santos-Granero 1998, 2002). Hybridity as a clash between Yanéscha and European traditions is thus only an example of a much broader phenomenon: the constant incorporation of selected aspects of socially significant Others for the constitution of the Yanéscha Self.

From the above, one could conclude that there are no pure

or authentic Yanéscha traditions. All their traditions must of need be an “invention” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). The idea of invented tradition as an outcome of the interaction between so-called Western and non-Western peoples is somewhat risky, as Ranger (1994) himself has more recently admitted. It allows only for pre- and postcontact states and the view that the only authentic tradition is one uncontaminated by Western culture. This view rests on the notion that traditional peoples entered the stream of history only as the result of their encounter with the West. Not only is this perspective ahistorical, but it also goes against indigenous understandings of history and tradition. Clearly, from Yanéscha descriptions of “the ancient ones’ way of dressing,” they are unaware of and totally indifferent to the fact that what is considered to be traditional Yanéscha attire contains nonnative elements. What was important to them in the 1970s was that such a manner of dressing was expressive of a past way of life—that of the ancestors—characterized by very negative elements, such as ignorance of the ways of the white man and its dire consequences: scorn, deceit, and exploitation.

Such an understanding, being a historical product, has also changed. Nowadays, the Yanéscha continue to see themselves as being more civilized than some of their Asháninka and Ashéninka neighbors insofar as their close contact with white/mestizo Peruvians has made them partly white/mestizo. However, their gradual distancing from Adventist and evangelical food taboos has encouraged the shaping of a new bodyscape, one closer to Yanéscha roots. Despite these changes, Yanéscha bodyscapes continue to be hybrid, combining not only elements of native and foreign clothing but also of native and foreign habits and ways of treating the body. Today, Yanéscha women who regularly use industrial sanitary towels may simultaneously favor herbal vapor baths administered by shamanic specialists to remove mystical pathogenic objects from their bodies. Yanéscha men who use deodorant when meeting government officials do not hesitate to rub their bodies with nettles in order to chase off laziness and ensure a greater disposition to work. The perception of what is traditional or new in these different practices varies throughout time. Thus, yesterday's novelties become tomorrow's traditions and yesterday's traditions become today's novelties. If, as Wade (1999, 339) has argued, “the process of becoming hybrid is an ontological and epistemological *pas de deux*,” then the task of rendering hybrid objects visible—as proposed by Latour—would necessarily entail a reconstruction of both its choreography and the creative process that made it possible. This is the task that lies before Amazonianist anthropologists; this article is only a first step in that direction.

## Conclusions

Clothes and ornaments are not only important signs of personal and collective identity. They can also assume the form of powerful political statements at junctures in interethnic



power struggles. In native Amazonia, the use of clothing and ornaments for political purposes has been reported among the Kayapo (Conklin and Graham 1995, 700), Xavante (Graham 2002, 195), and Gran Pajonal Ashéninka (Veber 1992, 57). Among the latter, clothing options often respond to personal political strategies. When dealing with neighboring mestizo settlers, some Ashéninka men wear Western clothes to signify that they are civilized, thus ensuring a more deferential treatment (Veber 1992, 57; 1996, 174). In contrast, when engaging with other, more modern Ashéninka and Asháninka who have to a large extent abandoned the use of cushmas, they dress in traditional attire to extol masculine values such as bravery, sternness, and resilience (Veber 1996, 175–176). In so doing, they seek to counteract the prevailing image among their more modern brothers, who view them as less civilized and less experienced in the ways of the national society than they themselves are. In the rapidly changing context of postcolonialism and globalization, dress and ornamentation, together with other visible markers of identity, have become an important indigenous resource, a symbolic or cultural capital that can be used for a variety of purposes (Conklin and Graham 1995). This has led some authors to contend that in postmodern times, native cultures have become commodities, expertly instrumentalized by savvy indigenous leaders (Morales 1998).

The analysis of clothing and bodily treatment as vehicles for the expression of personal and collective identities, social rank, and political stances has been a staple of anthropological discourse since its beginnings (Kroeber 1919; Simmel 1904). Like the Gran Pajonal Ashéninka, Yanesha people can also be said to use clothing and ornamentation as ways of expressing personal or collective attitudes and positions. This is particularly true when in the terrain of interethnic politics. Chell's decision to don ancient ones' attire for the presentation of a video titled *Yatañneshañ*, or "Our Ancestors," can be easily interpreted from this paradigm. In this article, however, I have preferred to stress the importance of native conceptions for the understanding of changes in dress and body treatment. These changes may serve to convey personal, political, and/or identity statements. Nevertheless, from a native point of view, this function cannot be mistaken for their cause. As Vilaça (2007, 177) has rightly argued, "if these transformations are the product of a political consciousness, they are only possible or only take place in this form as a result of their compatibility with structuring aspects of thought, such as the dualist logic that, according to Lévi-Strauss, is related to the structural openness of Amerindians to the Other, and the notion of corporality as central to the constitution of the person."

Bodyscapes change over time as a result of shifting social relations; that is, in accordance to changes in alimentary and residential patterns. Among the Yanesha, such transformations have led to the appearance of hybrid bodyscapes. The same could be argued in relation to the hybrid means of cultural representation that have emerged among the Kayapo

(Turner 1992, 12), the hybrid forms of language developed by Brazilian indigenous leaders (Graham 2002, 210–211), or the hybrid knowledge of Canelos Quichua shamans (Whitten and Whitten 2008, 61–64). They are not only powerful political instruments in a context of violent interethnic strife but also can be seen as the result of bodily processes by which, as a Kayapo leader has ascertained, "we are becoming more like the whites" (Turner 1992, 8).

As Gow (2007b, 290) has recently suggested, however, this kind of assertion cannot be interpreted literally as responding to a native desire to become white. Rather, the adoption of white people's ways of dressing constitutes a native attempt to adopt the "perspective" of their most significant social Others in order to better know how to deal with them. "Wari do not want to be like the whites," argues Vilaça (2006, 515) along similar lines, "but rather keep them as enemies, preserving the difference without, however, ceasing to experience it." In this view, acculturation is not about the passive adoption of the dominators' culture; it is a conscious effort to establish social relations with them via the incorporation or embodiment of their point of view (Gow 2007b, 300). As Frank (1990) and others (Albert and Ramos 2000; Gow 1991, 276) have suggested, the aim of this widespread native strategy is to "pacify" the belligerent and savage white people in order to have access to their "beautiful things." The adoption of Peruvian ways of dressing by the Yanesha must thus be seen as the result of conscious personal or collective strategies informed by unconscious cognitive processes—a cultural disposition to consider Others as constitutive parts of Self. The decision to work for white/mestizos as peons or maids, sign up for military service, send a child to be raised by white/mestizo families, or register one's children for missionary boarding schools are some among the various strategies through which Yanesha have sought to become acquainted with their most powerful Others in past times.

A comprehensive understanding of cultural change in colonial and postcolonial situations requires paying closer attention to the cultural perceptions and practices of the colonized in order to determine how these conflate, compete, or collide with those of the colonizers, producing new socio-political configurations as well as the means to understand them. When assuming such an approach, the adoption of white and mestizo cultural elements ceases to appear as an instance of passive subordination—an inevitable consequence of the impact of modernity—and reveals itself as a creative strategy to subdue and subject the hegemonic Other. From this stance, the culturally impoverished and "disappointing" Amerindians appear as active social actors, making the most of the cultural tools at their disposal in order to maintain both their ethnic identity and political autonomy. This is no simple postmodern play of perspectives. The demographic strength and cultural vigor of the Yanesha people after 400 years of colonial and postcolonial oppression constitutes a compelling testimony to the success of the very tricky strategy of becoming the Other in order to remain oneself.

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## Comments

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This paper brings together current developments in Amazonian politics, embodiment, and cosmological perspectivism. Santos-Granero argues that since first contact in 1847, the Yanesha have related to whites, meaning Peruvian mestizos, using the same strategies of incorporation used for all powerful Others, whether hunting prey, spirits, or colonizers. They have been drawn toward whites to acquire goods and knowledge and at the same time have avoided residing in too close quarters with them for fear of definitively becoming Other. Such an underlying “cultural disposition to consider Others as constitutive parts of Self” has informed Yanesha sense of historical agency.

Yanesha willingness to learn from whites stems from their understanding that bodies, which is tantamount to saying persons, are socially produced through sharing food, residence, rituals, and effects. Bodies and their extensions—clothing and ornaments—are also sites of perspective; thus, changes in clothing, diet, and surroundings entail changes in perspective. Working as peons and maids, attending school, and eating and dressing like whites are strategies used by the Yanesha to acquire white people’s bodily dispositions in order to see and act on the world like whites. Incorporation also has a defensive aim to avoid exploitation, which the Yanesha attribute to their ancestor’s ignorance of the ways of the whites. Thus, the Yanesha “becoming the Other in order to remain oneself.”

The argument follows from Gow’s (1991, 2007*b*) and Vilaça’s (2006, 2007) critiques of acculturation theory and takes the debate to a new stand by discussing the relevance of concepts such as passing, mimicking, and hybridity for Amazonia. The shift from studying historical changes in material culture to positing the existence of an enduring cultural disposition leaves, however, some open questions. Has such a cultural disposition remained unchanged since precolonial times? The author suggests some ideas I wish to tease out here.

Ethnographic evidence from contemporary Peruvian Ama-

zonias and other areas indicates that seduction is a key aspect of embodiment with regard to powerful Others. Hunters, for example, make mating calls, wear scents and paint, and have visionary experiences of sex and marriage with prey. An equivalent eroticization takes place from the prey’s point of view: Hunters are desirable lovers lured by their prey in the forest, causing them to lose their path, forget their kin, marry prey, and physically mutate into prey. The tapir myth mentioned by the author describes how seduced hunters may feel torn between their desire of remaining among prey and going back home.

Usually, though, hunters do not mutate into prey. They engage in the game of seduction with prey without losing sight of their hungry wives and children and return home bringing them meat. The same could be said about women who, for example, might be seduced by dolphins while washing clothes in the river and follow their lovers into their underwater realm. Both genders desire and are desired by their powerful Other lovers. They are expected to use their relationships with Others to provide for their kin and not abandon their kin. However, if they were to fall under a spell, their kin would attempt to rescue them and would usually welcome them back.

How does this apply to relationships between natives and whites? Ethnographic evidence shows that seduction is also crucial here. White lovers pervade the Amazonian imagination in narratives, rituals, and cosmology, and they are also actively sought after in daily life. However, in contemporary Peruvian Amazonia, sex and love between whites and natives bears different implications for men and women: Most white men do desire native women but most white women do not want native men. As a result, some native women who get involved with white men have lasting relationships, but many are relegated to single-parent status and prostitution. As for native men, access to white women is restricted, requiring money to pay white prostitutes and buy alcohol. Recent ethnic politics, however, have redressed the gender asymmetry. Native men wearing “traditional” attire have become desirable to white women, especially NGO workers, and female leaders have also found a new glamour and respectability.

The case of the Yanesha woman who returned home clearly dressed as a prostitute and later on in life became a married leader wearing “traditional” garments illustrates the bodily mutations Amazonian women may undergo as their seductive involvement with whites and kin evolves. As Santos-Granero points out, often the most native-looking person, at least to a white observer, has a surprising life history of travel and transformation. Exploring gendered experiences of seduction brings a perspectivist account to the historical changes that occurred in clothing and to how the Amazonian disposition to incorporate Others into Self may vary depending on native’s and white’s desires for each other. The approach also helps us better understand whites, because many actually descended from natives who at some point in history left their kin behind.

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“O hábito não faz o monge,” says an old proverb in Portuguese, which we could translate as “You can’t judge a book by its cover”—things are not always what they seem to be, and therefore, you can be fooled by appearances. This could be taken as a departure point for Fernando Santos-Granero’s analysis of the Yanesha in the Peruvian Amazonia, and certainly it is true of many indigenous peoples in lowland South America. Tradition and modernity are poor categories to use in trying to understand the alterations in dress and body treatment experienced by indigenous people. These categories ignore the obvious fact that what is modern now may not be modern in the future or that what is considered to be traditional may be a modern statement sometimes and therefore adopted. The way you dress may be a statement of what you want to state, not necessarily of what you are.

I remember a trip I made in 1971 with some Bororo men from their village in central Mato Grosso, Brazil, to Cuiabá, the capital of the state. They wanted to press FUNAI (Fundação Nacional do Índio [National Foundation for Indigenous Affairs]) agents for medicines, tools for work, seeds, salt for the cattle, and the most important item, an official document forbidding fishers from entering the indigenous area. We traveled to Cuiabá in the same University of São Paulo Volkswagen Kombi that we used for the trip from São Paulo. The Indians were all well dressed in shirts and trousers and wearing flip-flop sandals or boots. Just before arriving in Cuiabá, they all took off their shoes or sandals and their nice shirts, and we could see that underneath they were wearing ragged clothes that had lots of holes and were absolutely dirty. They were not the only ones to state through their way of dressing what they were up to. The colonel in charge, a mestizo retired officer, was wearing a navy blue suit, a white shirt, and a tie matching the suit. Cuiabá is a terribly hot town; it was 100.4°F that day, and no one would wear clothes like that except someone trying to demonstrate authority.

What may be considered as a strategy in social engineering is in fact a strategy consistent with Bororo myths and the way they perform rituals. To sum up, they are in this dual society always playing the role of the Other in order to be themselves. When a man from one clan is performing the role and the rituals that belong to the other clan, from the opposite moiety, it is the owner of the ritual that should provide everything for the performers. The same is true in the relationships among the Bororo and the non-Indians (*baraedu*). For the Bororo to behave like the *baraedu*, the non-Indians should provide everything that is necessary for the role. The Bororo seem to be masters of tropes, masters of a rhetoric that operates in the meaning but not in the form of words.

Santos-Granero’s article offers not only great pictures but also a detailed analysis of the images. The discussion Santos-Granero proposes on what he calls “passing” should, I think, take into account generations or the place an individual is in the life cycle. It is common in young indigenous people to want to try to “pass” as a white person, as did Pa’yon, even temporarily, to explore the possibilities of being Other. As time goes by, as people marry and have kids, the desire is to stress one’s own identity, be it wearing cushmas and traditional ornaments or displaying what is at the time considered to be “traditional.” The story of Pa’yon and Matar illustrate this well. Santos-Granero says that “cushma wearing” is not an indication of being traditional but that it “indicates that wearing a cushma has become a symbol of being progressive or forward looking.” The same could be said about Muslim immigrants in Brazil or in France. Women of the old generation in Brazil do not wear veils, but many women of the younger generation do.

The way you dress and all your body ornaments are certainly powerful public political statements in interethnic contexts. This is evident when Evo Morales presents himself in international public meetings or when the Arabs present themselves in a meeting such as the G-20. This was evident in the 1960s when business women adopted the male perspective in order to be considered competitive. I perfectly agree that adopting the perspective of the most significant Other in order to know how to deal with them better is not the adoption of the dominators’ culture but a conscious effort to establish social relations with them via the incorporation or embodiment of their point of view. This is true about the Yanesha and many other minority groups, Indians and non-Indians.

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Santos-Granero’s article provides an interesting reflection on a very real and debated topic, in Amazonia and elsewhere, concerning the indigenous way of thinking about “contact” and the cultural change. One of the benefits of this kind of study is to part with explanatory models in terms of “acculturation” or mimesis that have dominated the social sciences for a long time and to promote an approach that invites us to consider from indigenous perspectives these historic processes that are often labeled “contact situations.” By adopting a Yanesha perspective, Santos-Granero shows that this process is in fact the result of a long-standing attitude of openness to the Other, of a very receptive philosophy or cosmology in which the Other is not only considered but essential to the

construction of Self (Viveiros de Castro 1993). In several studies of the last 20 years, the central value of the alterity in the Amazonian cosmologies has been shown. One will recall the expression “constitutive alterity” coined by Erikson (1986). We also know that most of these modes of incorporation find their principal forms of expression in the body and in corporal transformations (alterations to the skin, clothing, or the body interpreted of as a change of perception and the form of acting). This process has been well documented by Vilaça (1999) concerning the Wari’ adoption of “white” clothes and behaviour in the very same way they were adopted by the Yanesha. The question here is not whether to imitate whites to become like them but rather of assimilating their points of view while remaining in some way “oneself.” The photographs in the article provide additional visual arguments concerning the new way of being Yanesha by showing a dialogue between text and image.

Having said that, this article begs comment. When the author writes, for instance, that “from a native point of view, cultural change is not only the consequence of external pressures or coercive socioeconomic structures but also the result of a conscious indigenous attempt to incorporate the Other into their sphere of social relations,” this can be questioned in the sense that the openness to the Other no doubt has its limits. We know numerous cases of Indian insurrections against the colonial/postcolonial power in the Andes, as in Amazonia. It would nevertheless be interesting to examine the relevance of this kind of approach in the case of societies such as the Asháninka, nearest neighbors of the Yanesha, who oscillated between their adherence to the Shining Path movement and their participation in the *rondas* anti-Senderistas, finally adopting a few years later the government designation as “victims” of the violence and no longer being seen as “warriors” or followers of the Shining Path (Leslie Villapolo, personal communication). Such an approach might allow better understanding of this kind of situation, which appears at first to be paradoxical. That is not to conclude that whites and Amerindians constitute two homogeneous blocs: we have only to remember the ambiguous nature of their relations over the centuries. Speaking of these two categories as if they were opposite entities makes no sense, all the more so because their respective universes are complex and affected by forces of internal differentiation.

In other respects, when Santos-Granero underlines that Yanesha hybrid bodyscapes are not “the result of the collision between tradition and modernity but rather the product of native conceptions that have been operative since precolonial times regarding Self and Other,” he refers basically to the Amazonian sociocosmologies. The Yanesha present some interesting sociological characteristics as an intermediate group between the Central Andean and the Panoan/Arawakan societies. The influence of the Andes and the Quechua over the culture and the Yanesha language is well known. Smith’s recent works (2004, 2006) suggest a great cultural proximity between the Yanesha and the Central Andes civilization, while

Santos-Granero follows the Amazonian model of the Arawakan migrations proposed by Lathrap (1970). Why did the author not consider or discuss this Andean hypothesis and its possible implications for rethinking the terms of the comparison between Andean and Amazonian societies that concern precisely the question of alterity and of the various modalities of incorporating the Other? Regarding the conformity of the Yanesha to the “Amazonian standard model,” Santos-Granero (2006) distanced himself from this in a previous text in which he proposed a critical revision of Amerindian perspectivism. The Amazonian standard of the incorporation of the Other as a constitutive mode of the self certainly suffers from some exceptions, as it seems in the case of the Tucano, who, according to Hugh-Jones (2009), tend toward closure and conservatism with a natural predisposition for the patrimonialization of their culture. In place of a definition of society in which alterity acts as a strong encompassing value, we find another definition centered much more on the self. Does this distinction modify something in the way we understand cultural change?

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As usually happens with rich, innovative, and thought-provoking papers, Santos-Granero’s excellent study of Yanesha clothing brings many field-related reminiscences to mind. One is the story of a young French tourist who tried to introduce a red baseball cap among the Chacobo, in Bolivia, when I was living with them in the early 1990s. Back then, red hats seemed exclusively reserved for prestigious seniors such as Taita Kako and Taita Wara, the two village elders, and former leaders. No one else ever sported headgear of that color. Even the current *capitán grande*, Kako’s eldest son, had to be content with orange. So when that young French *carayana* (gringo) suddenly appeared wearing a flashy red cap, it attracted unusual attention, obviously making people uneasy. A little investigation soon revealed that in former times, Chacobo shamans wore red cloth headbands as features of distinction (Erikson 2000). Those were called *paniario*, a term derived from the Spanish *pañuelo*, just like the Yanesha *pañell* scarves. Needless to say, the young visitor’s red cap soon disappeared, and retrospectively, I regret having spent so much time asking Kako about the itchy barkcloth tunics he formerly wore and so little about the red cap that never left his head.

Santos-Granero’s fascinating study also reminded me of the very cautious way in which the Brazilian Matis, with whom I had lived in the mid-1980s, began to wear imported clothes when first given access to them. Unlike the Yanesha or the Chacobo, the Matis seem never to have used cushmas. They went naked, which, by the way, did not prevent them

from conceiving “souls” as invisible basketlike envelopes surrounding carnal bodies, just like the Yanasha. As related in several previous publications, the then recently contacted Matis were initially quite suspicious of Western-style clothing (Erikson 1996, 2003). They would accept only previously unworn pieces of garment and seldom let such items enter their longhouses. I was usually forced to take my T-shirt off before entering that dome of tradition.

In tune with Santos-Granero’s argument, the Matis seemed to use clothes to signify engagement with white-related activities rather than for practical reasons. In other words, clothes were not worn to keep warm or as protection against mosquito bites or scratches. Rather, they were used when people clearly meant to emulate neo-Brazilian ways. Hunters would never wear clothes, but fisherman would dress up in full regalia with shorts, shirts, hats, and even rubber boots, probably because the Matis traditionally stayed away from large streams and had only recently taken on serious fishing. Longhouses were erected by crews of bare-chested men, whereas stilted houses (in imitation of the regional *caboco* style) were built by smaller groups of men systematically dressed up for that purpose. (Ultimately, foreign goods were stocked in those buildings, which were mainly used as “quarantine houses.”) When the first soccer ball was introduced to the village, the only boys who ever attempted to play were those who owned proper uniforms, including moulded shoes and knee-high socks. In sum, clothes were used very much like ritual disguise, such as face masks, to temporarily impersonate potent figures of the outside.

Field anecdotes such as these mostly confirm Santos-Granero’s analyses, and he is to be commended for attracting attention to the major issues lurking behind Amerindian fascination with Western clothing, well attested from the early chronicles on (e.g., Collomb 2006) but rarely subjected to in-depth analysis as it has been here. Santos-Granero’s paper also has the merit of illustrating the recent shift of focus in Amazonist studies from ethnosemiotics to ethno-ontology. Most previous studies of native Amazonian body ornaments and clothing treated them as media, mainly used to signify sociopolitical messages. What was once mainly perceived as a means of communication now tends to be interpreted in terms of shape-shifting and perspectivist spinning devices. This theme had already been explored with respect to traditional ornaments such as beads and lip plugs; Santos-Granero is to be praised for taking up the task of adding Western clothing to the list.

The only minor objection I have to Santos-Granero’s paper is his uncritical use of the concept of “metamorphosis,” where “transformation” might have been more appropriate (Monod-Becquelin 1982). In most cases, what is at stake when clothes are introduced in an Amerindian context is not irreversible transformation implying total assimilation of outsider’s perspectives (true metamorphosis) but rather transient states of being put forth as much as they are expressed by the use of proper “disguise.” I would also suggest, in view of

further comparative studies, that the author pay more attention to local narratives about nudity, because exclusive focus on clad bodies somewhat occults what lies beneath: naked bodies—often considered, in an Amazonian context, as the likes of presocial invisible spirit beings—simply awaiting the imposition of cushmas, beads, haircuts, tattoos, and so on, to promote them to full social being.

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Santos-Granero offers us a fine historical ethnography of changes in dress and bodily ornamentation among the Yanasha. The argument depends on a long-standing idea in Amazonian anthropology: the constitutive role of alterity in the production of Amerindian sociality, which can be traced back to Lévi-Strauss’s (1943*b*) article (Coelho de Souza and Fausto 2004). He later expressed this idea as an Amerindian “openness to the Other” (Lévi-Strauss 1991). The main virtue of this approach is to see appropriation and transformation as autochthonous mechanisms for producing persons and social life, thus circumventing the theoretical and political difficulties of acculturation theory or “the invention of tradition” paradigm. The challenge is to address social change from the perspective of indigenous modes for producing transformation (Gow 2001). This implies a change of perspective: in order to study the invention of a tradition, one has to first study the “indigenous tradition of invention” (Fausto 2006; Strother 1998). Things that, at first sight, appear inauthentic (such as adopting Western clothes or performing rituals in schools) are seen as expressions of the way indigenous peoples appropriate and digest the Other. Santos-Granero’s article is a wonderful example of such change of perspective.

I have a number of points to share with the author. The first concerns the limits of this indigenous logic and its relation to historical processes. When we affirm that changes are not merely cultural loss but part of a pattern of allopoietic cultural invention, are we implying that the indigenous world is a machine capable of infinitely digesting the nonindigenous world? What are the limits to and conditions for such an openness to function as a means for indigenous continuity? This is a complicated question because it has significant impact on contemporary Amerindian peoples, who are always on the verge of being considered “acculturated” or *mestizos*. The Yanasha have reconfigured their tradition many times throughout their history in interaction with distinct powerful Others, such as the Inca, the Spanish, and Peruvian national society. These are different Others immersed in different historical processes. How do these differences affect indigenous modes of transformation? Is the openness to the Other an absolute ontological desideratum, or is it also inflected by the

very structure of the wider historical process in which it operates?

Many Amazonian peoples today, and probably in the past, affirm that they are “turning into whites,” that they do not live any more as the “ancient ones.” However, this transformation is always in the process of completion, never completed. Amerindians are always turning into, not definitively becoming whites, like a shaman who becomes both human and jaguar, himself and the Other (Vilaça 2007). My second point is, can we understand the reverse process of becoming an “authentic” Amerindian, normally interpreted as an expression of “postmodern identity politics,” in terms of Amerindian modes for producing transformation? Is Chemell’s reversal an expression of an Amerindian logic for producing internally multiple persons?

My third point involves the notion of hybridity. Although I am basically in accord with Santos-Granero’s use of Latour’s concept as a counterpoint to the modernist effort to produce “pure” and “authentic” traditions, I would like to see him distinguish this notion from a related one, *mestizaje*, which is both an important local category in Latin America and a renewed academic one (Gruzinski 1999). Moreover, Amerindians also play on “purification” or, to employ Strathern’s (1988) vocabulary, “eclipsing,” Amerindians hybrid body-scapes have their own mechanisms for rendering them visible as nonhybrid in specific relationships (Kelly 2005). Is Chemell not eclipsing his hybridity to ritually appear as “one and whole” in a public interethnic *séance*?

Finally, I am not entirely convinced that the recent changes in Yanessa dress do not imply mimetic appropriation. Why can we consider the adoption of Catholic liturgical objects or the Franciscans’ *caperuza* in colonial times as instances of mimesis but not that of Peruvian ways of dressing? I see three difficulties here: (a) the argument is based on evidences from two different timescales: one historical, the other ethnographic; (b) the former process is described as an instance of cannibal appropriation and the latter of commensality; and (c) Benjamin’s concept of mimesis is applied to the former, whereas Deleuze’s concept of becoming underlies the latter. Because I have argued that both vectors of transformation (cannibalism and commensality) are intertwined in the production of Amerindian sociality (Fausto 2007), I would rather interpret them as part of the same movement and look to differences in historical context and timescale. Moreover, if Deleuze’s concept of becoming explicitly excludes imitation (seen as mere identification), Benjamin’s notion of mimesis is as much about imitation as alteration, copying as becoming. I would like Santos-Granero to address this point further, which relates to his 2007 article on Yanessa historicity.

Let me finish by acknowledging my pleasure in reading this fine piece and my gratitude for having the opportunity to ask the above questions of the author.

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The problem with the notion of “incorporation” in Amazonian societies is that etymologically, it refers to taking individually *into* the body, ingesting. Here, dresses and ornaments are items to be worn and as such are not so much incorporated as they are collectively carried on the body. The distinction between the two notions can be illustrated as the difference that exists between anthropophagy (incorporating the Other) and ornaments (wearing the Other’s cloths, or skins, in the case of animal “dresses”). When something is taken from the Other, the “Self versus Other” distinction relies on an “inside versus outside” opposition. It also has to be linked to local construction of ontology based on continuity or discontinuity of interiorities and “physicalities” (as proposed by Descola [2006]). If we look at the same construction in terms of Viveiros de Castro’s perspectivism (1998), the dress/appearance of the Self conditions the way the Other perceives him and thus attributes an identity. Thus, to be recognized as “human” by the Other is to wear his appearance or to behave like him. A human subject who presents to the Master of the Animals presents an “animal” appearance, in the way the Amazonians imagine the Master of the Animals would see himself.

Identity thus relies on the possibility of changing “skins,” back and forth, and to be able to change the points of views without having to “die” each time it is done. Shamans are the typical specialists in this inside Amazonian societies and are, in a certain way, “hybrids” as Santos-Granero defines it in his paper. But they are never true hybrids because they completely adopt the new appearance each time they change their physicality. Their interiority continues to be the same (they are thus able to give an account of their encounter with nonhumans).

What a shaman can do, that is, changing its physical appearance to the eyes of nonhumans to communicate with them, is not an ability that everyone has in Amazonian societies. Common people are rather the victims of diseases that are understood as “transformations,” which are seen as processes originated by the animals to change a human into one of them. This process can be compared to the way women socialize pets, feeding them, to make them part of the human social realm.

As Santos-Granero describes it, commensality with a tapir makes one become a tapir. But Amazonians understand this as an attempt by tapir people to domesticate a person, to change him into one of them. The tapir people are the subject, and the person is the object. It is thus a way of incorporating the Other by capturing him socially through feeding; something similar to changing him into a pet, which is typically

attributed to women as in the *gringo-paysano* anecdote. The Yanesha woman recognized a petlike attitude in the author's behavior, and thus she addressed him as *her* "gringo-paysano" as she would have done with one of her parrots.

The validity of the argument Santos-Granero presents in this paper relies on knowing whether Amazonian people *adopt*, collectively speaking, the dress, language, and name of whites and mestizos or whether they are *taking* them *from* them. The distinction seems rather subtle, but since the relation to the Other in Amazonia is based on predation or is understood in terms of predation, *adopting* somebody's clothes is just the same thing as being changed into this Other. Perhaps it is not so much "a long-standing native openness to the Other" as a way of keeping them apart from the social Self by preying on them. Do the Yanesha "adopt" the dress or do they think they are "taking it"—stealing it—from the white and mestizo peoples?

The agent of such a process is not the person who wears the dress, takes the name, or speaks the language but the one who provides them, enabling transformation of the person into an object of the same kind as the agent. In this sense, the process is the opposite of masculine predation, just as predation can be seen as the opposite of taming by a woman. Where the masculine agent kills an enemy or an animal to take something from him (meat, skins, teeth, identity), socialization through taming is the feminine equivalent of this practice. It leads to collective incorporation of a new member into the society. A masculine agent wearing these things that he preyed on has to be understood as a domestication of alterity; it is like wearing trophies. When an enemy sees him, the agent intends not to adopt the enemy's point of view but to present testimony of his victory that he imposed on his enemy.

If, as Santos-Granero presents in his paper, the Yanesha people adopt the appearance of the Other, is it not because the whites and mestizos, with their food (as in the example of the young women returning from Lima), had already "domesticated" or tamed them? Or, to make a mythological metaphor, have they not become similar to the human changed into a tapir by a tapir woman? To put it in a formulation that would agree with Joanna Overing (Overing and Passes 2000), did the Yanesha people definitely fall in love with the whites?

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Santos-Granero's essay converges with other recent anthropological work to create the sense that there is a package (my term) of native accounts (or a structure, or a logic) generating patterns in historical change in Amazonia. This ancient and enduring package, assorted versions of which are widespread

in the region, comprises imbricated accounts to the effect that human bodies are fabricated socially, that this process requires that individuals and collectivities engage with dangerous Others, and that this takes place in the context of a perspectival cosmos.

Santos-Granero's contribution focuses in particular on the complex transformations in Yanesha people's dress over centuries, and he explains that these are best understood not as the passive adoption of foreign forms or merely the manipulation of traditional forms for purposes of political negotiation but rather, and more fundamentally, as a case of *hybridity*. This term refers in a social-theoretical sense to what can be imagined as a "halting dialogue" between people with different historical trajectories, but Santos-Granero tweaks the concept to claim that hybridity is in the Yanesha case a native "cultural praxis," and indeed, a "point of view" operative since precontact times. This praxis—Santos-Granero's description of which situates it very much within the package I describe above—is an "openness to the Other" manifest in the Yanesha's disposition to transform their bodies in order to incorporate the Other's perspective. Santos-Granero's argument is that for centuries the Yanesha have been changing clothing and other corporeal features in order to become, temporarily, like whichever outside Others were most significant at the time, be they Quechua speakers before the European conquest or any of a series of Europeans and nonnative Peruvians that came their way later. Individuals in each generation would be motivated to seek by this means to share a perspective with these always dangerous outsiders and thereby to establish profitable or at least peaceful relations with them.

Thus far, Santos-Granero's account is persuasive, but it elicits another historical question: how have Yanesha people reproduced their cultural praxis of hybridity so conservatively over time? This hybridity, after all, scaffolded people's desires and practices in such a way that over centuries they adopted clothing and certain other foreign forms, but it does not itself appear in this account to have "hybridized" in the more inclusive social theoretical sense of the term. How did this happen? Or to address recent Amazonianist literature more widely, how has the "package" I mention above—which other authors might call a "structure," "system," or "logic"—reproduced itself so effectively and conservatively over time and space such that we recognize versions of it among diverse Amazonian peoples? Santos-Granero speaks admiringly of the Yanesha as "active social actors" who have successfully deployed the "very tricky strategy of becoming the Other in order to remain oneself," but this suggestive picture of historical agency seems to conflate Yanesha people's conscious strategy for social reproduction with the social reproduction of the strategy.

My sense is that Santos-Granero's account requires a more detailed theoretical framework concerning the scope of agency and the temporal dynamics of the symbolic constitution of selfhood and of sociality. Perhaps a theory of performativity extrapolated from Judith Butler's theory (1993) would work,

but unfortunately, Santos-Granero bypasses serious engagement with her theory by focusing exclusively on, and then rightly discarding, a dated conceptualization of “passing” that essentializes subjects and desires. Butler’s scheme accounts for the generation of selves endowed with intentions and capable of being at times Machiavellian, phony, or strategic, but it does not treat these occasional masqueraders as essentialized subjects. It also addresses both continuity and change in symbolic forms, underscoring their reiterative citation in performative deployments but also the contingency and inherent slipperiness (what Derrida calls *differance*) that makes changes in these forms and their associations inevitable. *Differance* also excludes the possibility of individuals or collectivities having an overarching, clairvoyant grasp or control over the conditions and effects of their symbolic deployments and thus over historical processes.

The Amazonian package is about bodies and subjectivities, so it is a good candidate for treatment as key performative symbolic practices that interpellate and shape subjects. The virtue of addressing it in terms of performativity is that its own reproduction as a complex and cohesive set is problematized. This in fact seems to me to be one of the most fascinating problems in the anthropology of the region. A performative account, however, would not treat this package, or Yanésya hybridity, as a tricky, creative strategy. Rather, it would be the condition of intelligibility of individuals’ strategies, and its reproduction, all the more interesting as a problem because of it, would be shown to be the contingent, unpredictable, and uncontrollable effect of people’s often reflexive actions.

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Fernando Santos-Granero offers an insightful coordination of recent perspectives on cultural change in Amazonia that is itself a delightfully hybrid view tying together his own work among the Yanésya with ideas from several anthropologists. These anthropologists have noted that Amazonian peoples (1) consciously and intentionally adopt the “perspective” of cultural Others as a means to control dangerous or foreign entities or to establish peaceful relations with them; (2) understand many such cultural encounters to be embodied, in the sense that bodies undergo changes as a result of propinquity, shared diet, marriage, etc.; and (3) often regard clothing or ornamentation as the external expression of such bodily transformations. The result, as Santos-Granero illustrates, is that native Amazonian bodies and selves are always hybrids, not merely of the problematic notions of “modernity” and “tradition” but of potentially many culturally distinct Others.

This proposal is consistent with much of the ethnographic work in Amazonia. I noted during my own first fieldwork with Kulina Indians in western Brazil that they had a curious

insistence that virtually every aspect of their culture, from gardening techniques to ritual, was acquired from some cultural Other—usually another indigenous group, sometimes from local Brazilians or Peruvians—and over time I have come to understand this as an example of the kind of reflexive hybridity that Santos-Granero describes here among the Yanésya. In that regard, his article is a creative extension of this notion in which he works to understand the use of clothing as a kind of synecdoche for cultural change among the Yanésya, and I would only caution against the potential dilemma of treating this perspective as a procrustean bed against which all cultural acquisitions are automatically regarded as a conscious (or even unconscious) attempt to incorporate the Other. For this reason I take the major strength of Santos-Granero’s article to be the exploration of the means through which this happens, when it does happen.

Santos-Granero examines the awkward interface between implicitly taken-for-granted Western notions of authenticity and more nuanced indigenous perspectives on Self and person. He explores what might be called the semiotics of identity (Pollock 1995) by focusing not merely on possible cultural motivations for changing identity but also on the specific mechanisms and means through which such incorporations and changes are effected. Clothing and ornamentation are not semiotically neutral but are especially significant *technique du corps* that act on and constitute one of the most public expressions of identity. Clothing has a special power to signal authenticity or just as often its loss. It is ambiguous in that we commonly find that Western-style clothing is literally a thin veneer that barely conceals deeper springs of “traditional” culture and practice. As thin as clothing may be, however, it is still a powerful signifier. I assume that this is the relevance of Vilaça’s observation, quoted by Santos-Granero, that expressions of identity are necessarily compatible “with structuring aspects of thought” (Vilaça 2007, 177).

I would like to highlight another area in which this principle of incorporation of the Other may help to clarify aspects of indigenous history. Santos-Granero alludes to the flexible forms of Christianity adopted by Yanésya, and it is worth drawing attention to the ways in which indigenous Amazonian peoples challenge traditional understandings of religious “conversion.” I commented in an earlier essay on the subject (Pollock 1993) that the history of indigenous encounters with Christian missionaries in lowland South America reveals how permeable and flexible indigenous religious beliefs appear in the face of rigid and conservative Christian beliefs. For Christian missionaries, religious faith has always been exclusive: one cannot be Catholic and Muslim at the same time. For indigenous communities, quite the opposite is true, and we have seen over 400 years of the easy absorption of Christian deities, rituals, and prohibitions into indigenous practices, sometimes quasi-permanently, sometimes only briefly. The insight that such Christian practices and beliefs are taken on as part of this complex attempt to incorporate the Other—in this case missionaries—offers a way to understand the



flexible and often temporary adoption of bits and pieces of Christianity.

This insight offers a productive framework for understanding indigenous responses to and use of “Western” illness beliefs and medications as well, and it opens the possibility that hybridity operates in multiple directions. Michael Taussig explored the historical irony that the colonizers who enslaved and massacred Indians during the rubber boom later turned to those same indigenous peoples for shamanic healing (Taussig 1987), and the adoption of indigenous religious practices by non-Indians in Latin America is a well-known challenge to Weberian assumptions about the direction of religious change. The growth of Santo Daime, the ayahuasca religion that emerged in “white” communities in western Brazil, and the spread of ayahuasca religion and ritual around the world (like the urban Brazilian turn to Candomblé) reminds us that religious and ethnomedical beliefs and practices may be no less hybrids among the Western communities with whom Indians interact. Perhaps Santos-Granero’s cloth bag, his woven bracelet, and his knowledge of Yanesha beer drinking intrigued Chemell as much as Chemell’s clothing intrigued Santos-Granero, although Santos-Granero lets us believe that Chemell already understood.

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“Hybrid Bodyscapes” is rightly critical of models that view culture as unchanging or that ignore the agency of indigenous people and locate the sources of change as always external to their society. This article is especially timely and welcome because too many Amazonianists (with many exceptions, as Santos-Granero rightly points out) continue to view culture as a bounded and static (or tending toward homeostasis) system. And too many anthropologists working outside of Amazonia have abandoned the concept of culture altogether, which I consider less a theoretical advance than a premature shrug of resignation. The author makes clear that he is working within a larger emerging movement in Amazonian ethnology, and in the process, he is making clear just how dynamic Amazonia is and how it is a fruitful place for anthropologists to research modernity, countermodernities, and postmodernity.

Against the theory of acculturation, the author offers two indigenous models that I find very interesting, but there are a few places where I am unsure of how these models fit together or move us beyond acculturation theory. First, the author proposes that natives believe that individuals and society can exist only through the incorporation of dangerous foreign entities and that the Other is always constitutive of the Self. I find this very persuasive, especially because it res-

onates with Hegel’s dialectic of recognition and much Western social theory. Whereas in acculturation theory, the native is incorporated into the colonizing society; according to incorporation theory, elements of the colonizing society are incorporated into indigeneity. But are these really so different? In both models change comes from “outside.” It seems to me that in Santos-Granero’s account, the only difference is that acculturation theory presents such change as bad, leading to impoverishment, and the indigenous theory presents such change as good, leading to “understanding” and “peaceful social relations.” If this is the main difference, we need to know much more about the economic and political position of the Yanesha in the Peruvian state. Indeed, a brief mention of the Velasco government and international organizations suggests that Yanesha ethnogenesis has depended on new forms of state incorporation.

If the indigenous incorporation model is correct, why do Yanesha respond that they dress like Peruvians only when “pressed hard”? If it is their practice to incorporate foreign elements, would they not find it easy to identify the foreign?

According to Santos-Granero, the notions of “traditional” and “modern” are alien to Yanesha thought and used only for the benefit of Spanish-speaking audiences. Yet he then describes how Yanesha viewed Asháninka as less “civilized”—does this not rely on the same basic binary as “traditional” and “modern”? Perhaps this opposition is one of those alien elements that Yanesha incorporated to reconstitute themselves. The problem is, this incorporation seems not to have led to understanding, it seems to have led to an internalization of colonial hierarchies in which Yanesha are below mestizos but Asháninka are below Yanesha. This sounds like acculturation.

Second, the author proposes a theory of consubstantiality: when one consumes the substances of others, one becomes like others. As a paradigm, the author provides the myth of the tapir woman. How, though, does this help us explain why Chemell wore a cushma at the congress in Lima? Chemell is able to go back and forth between having Yanesha clothing and Peruvian clothing (like Yanesha in villages who wear the cushma at night)—but the myth is about the *impossibility* of going back and forth. Consubstantiality seems to be a theory of transforming ontologies, and there appear to be rules governing such transformations that the author does not specify. After noting Chemell’s change of clothing at a video screening, the author exclaims, “I was rather struck by his transformation from being modern to being traditional.” What is the evidence for a change in being? Is not the author assuming ontology?

Similarly, Pa’yon “had become like the white people.” But according to the native theory of incorporation, could not the incorporation of alien elements be a way of making her more Yanesha? These two theories seem to be in conflict. Incorporation is a theory of becoming Yanesha; consubstantiality is a theory about becoming white. But how do we know when one practice will occur rather than the other?

The author then makes it clear that Pa'yon would never attempt to pass as white, because whites are nonpeople. How then did Pa'yon "become" white? It seems that consubstantiality does not require (and in this case violates) the individual's agency. But how then is this model an improvement over acculturation theory? I admire the search for an indigenous model of culture change, but I wonder if the author's turn to theories of "performance" and "mimesis" might be more fruitful.

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Santos-Granero's paper offers a timely discussion of Amazonian, or Yanésa, culture change as based on native perspectives and aspirations. Santos-Granero discards the analytical approaches to culture change adopted by much previous research, including the ideas of acculturation, mimesis (in the sense of straightforward copying), and attempts at "passing" by assuming the identity of the Other. Critique of these approaches is no news; I argued the nonrelevance of "passing" in an Amazonian context in my 1996 paper. Santos-Granero refers to it on a different matter. Mimesis, as discussed by Taussig, was never about copying in the simple sense of the word. This is made clear by Willerslev, an anthropologist whose studies among hunters in northern Siberia (Willerslev 2007) echoes current discussions of mimesis and perspectivism in indigenous cosmologies (see also Bird-David 1999). Acculturation, a term rarely encountered in contemporary cultural analysis, is generally recognized as a much more complicated issue than imagined by the scholars who put the term on the analytical map some seven decades ago.

What Santos-Granero brings into the debate on culture change in colonial and postcolonial settings is the idea of radical openness to the Other, apparently specific to native Amazonians. The idea forms part of the "moral economy of intimacy" perspective, designated as such by Viveiros de Castro in his review (1996) of Amazonian ethnology. Adherents of this approach contend that from an Amazonian point of view, the Self is made possible through the incorporation of dangerous foreign entities and forces. This makes the body central to native ontologies and renders indigenous bodyscapes central to perceiving and understanding Amazonian culture change.

Presenting and interpreting his ethnographic data in well-written prose, Santos-Granero makes a convincing argument for the importance of Amazonian conceptions of Self and Other in promoting culture change. Taking these conceptions into account helps explain a range of phenomena that have puzzled many scholars investigating Amazonian cultures, including the easy switching back and forth between visual na-

tive, nonnative, and hybrid identities that also provides the essence of Santos Granero's ethnographic examples. When the idea that the Self is only possible through the incorporation of the Other is made central to analysis, a variety of interesting research questions opens up. Hence, the approach presents a refreshing contribution to Amazonian scholarship despite the likelihood that the focus on openness to the Other combined with insistence on its status as a cultural characteristic *sui generis* may render any and all evidence of culture change the effects of native ontological cannibalism. Its productive creativity notwithstanding, the approach entails a few problems that may be generic to the "moral economy of intimacy" perspective. One of these problems concerns the question of agency; the other is one of the relative importance of internal versus external relations.

It is Santos-Granero's explicit objective to restore the sense of native agency into an interethnic equation focused mainly on external factors. He follows Sider in seeing agency as historical and as a "capacity to act both within and upon larger social forces," yet in Santos-Granero's case, the sense of agency is based on and solely directed toward maintaining primordial native values. This focus may be helpful in comprehending Amazonian capacities for acting *within* a world of marginalization of the indigenous person by the powerful Other. Whether it also helps us see how the indigenous Self manages to act *on* this world is more doubtful. Santos-Granero does not engage this aspect of the equation either empirically or theoretically. Yet agency, by any definition of the term, is definitely about acting *on* the world. The Yanésa undoubtedly act on the world, but I am not convinced that it may be fully accounted for through Santos-Granero's approach.

Santos-Granero notes the calibrations between trends in national politics and native uses of items of clothing and ornamentation marked as generically Yanésa. However, whereas the adoption of nonnative apparel may be explained by reference to the native openness to the Other, the *changes* in native fashion remain unaccounted for—except as results of changing national attitudes toward indigenous populations, an explanatory perspective focused on external influences that the author has otherwise discarded. Hence, despite the explanatory primacy attributed by the author to native openness to the Other, external pressures are brought back in through the rear door, a contradictory U-turn of logics of a sort.

These misgivings notwithstanding, I appreciate the paper for its valuable presentation of ethnography and discussion of the notion of hybridity as cultural practice in the paper's final section. It presents a useful crossbreeding of Amazonian ethnography and the debate on hybridity—up till now mainly going on in cultural studies and allied disciplines. In taking on this debate, the author highlights the continuing importance of Amazonian ethnography in developing anthropological bases for understanding cultural phenomena in a globalized world.

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Santos-Granero's contribution is a welcome addition to a recent spate of attempts to theorize change in Amazonia. He deftly demonstrates that Yanéscha ways of dressing have never been fully "traditional" nor fully "modern" but are instead part of the constitutive engagement with alterity that characterizes local cosmologies. In identifying a distinctly Yanéscha "modernity," the paper has the considerable merit—albeit one left largely implicit—of opening up potentially fertile grounds for engagement with debates surrounding concepts of "multiple modernities" and the like, which are yet to make any real inroads into Amazonian scholarship.

The various factors exerting sway over changing Yanéscha fashions are clearly multiple and complex, but priority is given to the Yanéscha's own perspective in an endeavour to foreground their historical agency. This involves showing how clothes may be treated as extensions of the body and therefore subject to the same transformative logic. The irony here is that the kinds of transformations ostensibly undergone by Pa'yón or by the mythic hunter among the peccaries are generally of an involuntary nature, independent of human consciousness. Given the power asymmetries at work, one might well ask whether the piecemeal adoption of items of Peruvian clothing could not be interpreted as the result not of Yanéscha attempts to incorporate the Other but the reverse, of successful (if transient) attempts by whites to "familiarize" Yanéscha and turn them into kin.

Notwithstanding her elders' interpretations of her behavior, it seems to me that foregrounding Pa'yón's own agency—along with that of Chemell, or the younger generation who have opted to dress more "traditionally" than their missionized elders—obliges us to consider further not only the politics of self-representation but also how body ornamentation is used selectively and strategically within Yanéscha communities: in extraordinary circumstances and for ritual ends, for example, or to express differences between commoners, chiefs, priests, or shamans. There seems little scope for Yanéscha themselves to figure as constitutive "Others," which arguably results in their collective homogenization. Not much is made of gender differences either, although it might be interesting to pursue these further: how does the fact that men's clothes are today mostly bought while women's are homemade relate to the pervasive association of men with the "outside" and women with the "inside" (e.g., Seymour-Smith 1991)? Might "openness to the Other" reflect a predominantly masculine perspective on Amazonian society? Just as importantly, what is the significance of the shift from wearing homemade and personalized to imported and mass-produced clothing and other accessories? There are good reasons for supposing this distinction to be a particularly salient one in the Amazonian

context, given the ideological importance and widespread conceptual conflation of ownership and fabrication.

The larger issue here is how to address the transformations of Yanéscha consciousness that are presumably taking place. Turner (e.g., 1991a) has documented the Kayapo's passage from seeing themselves as the prototype of humanity to being one ethnic group among many—a shift "from cosmology to ideology" that rendered the preservation of cultural identity a matter for conscious concern and concerted action. Although Santos-Granero certainly allows for such a shift, he prefers to align his contribution with those of Gow and Vilaça, venturing into the familiar structuralist territory of "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose," in this case becoming the Other in order to remain oneself. The Yanéscha viewpoint is preserved but at the risk of reducing their action to execution; especially given the characterization of Yanéscha identity as always and "essentially" hybrid, it is difficult to imagine a fashion innovation that could not be interpreted as stereotypic reproduction of the cosmology.

Santos-Granero rightly seeks to avoid portraying Yanéscha as the "victims" of modernity or Western consumer capitalism, but his primary strategy for doing so consists of demonstrating that this is not how they perceive themselves. The problem, of course, is that these are not mutually exclusive possibilities. Although I am in broad agreement with the general argument, I am not sure that it escapes the dichotomy of "internal" versus "external" forces of change. Is there no middle ground from which emphasis might be placed both on Yanéscha agency and on their subordination vis-à-vis outsiders and agents of the market economy? One promising way forward might be to consider the agency of the subject as itself the effect of a subordinating power (e.g., Butler 1997). Widespread practices of "taming," accompanied by ethnohistorical discourses about an ascent into "civilization" from an earlier state of untamed ignorance, would appear to have risen to prominence in tandem with the colonizing project but are no less expressions of indigenous agency for it. The capacity of capitalism to shape local interests and produce desires for foreign goods (e.g., Rubenstein 2004) is another potent example of why Yanéscha hybrid bodyscapes are far from external to the workings of power.

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This article is a very welcome discussion of a neglected topic—clothing practices—and the author brings to his consideration of the ethnographic materials a theoretical sophistication that is sorely needed. Fernando Santos-Granero's discussion of clothing practices and their meanings among the Peruvian Yanéscha makes the excellent point, and one that resonates far more widely than clothing practices alone, that "By focusing

mainly on external factors, these [prior] theoretical approaches pay insufficient attention to the role of native perceptions and practices in promoting cultural change." Proponents of such concepts as "acculturation," "invented traditions," "postmodern identity politics," or "mimetic appropriation" would no doubt demur as to the degree to which they in fact intend to obscure native perceptions and practices because at least notional attention to the "native point of view" has been at the heart of anthropological theorizing for over a century.

Nonetheless, there is never going to be a formulaic resolution of the issue as to what degree of significance is given to external versus internal factors in anthropological debate, or in any other intellectual context. In this way the author's argument, although carefully laying out a perceptive historical and ethnographic understanding of Yanesha viewpoints, itself necessarily configures Yanesha practice as responding to external Others. Although the author indicates "change throughout time according to the shifting relationships between Self and Other" is key to understanding Yanesha clothing practices, in fact this seems to offer little theoretical difference to viewing such "shifting relationships" as evincing "acculturation," "identity politics," or "mimetic appropriation" except perhaps in the way in which individual and cultural motivation are being differently understood in each of the theoretical frameworks that support these concepts. In other words, the ethnographic inquiry into clothing practices also needs to focus on the meaning of shifting individual clothing practices of particular Yanesha and their relation to collective Yanesha experience, not just their evident disjuncture with the various external models that are used to try to capture such phenomena.

The opening discussion of the Yanesha performer Chemell and his change of clothing from "traditional" to "Peruvian" is nicely described by the author, as is the case of the young woman, Pa'yon, returning to village life from employment in the city. However, in neither of these key examples do we learn anything of the views of those individuals as to the strategies of clothing that they pursue in different contexts. Although, as the author says, "we will never know what exactly went on in Pa'yon's mind while she worked as a maid in Lima," this does not preclude asking what her attitude to clothing, style, fashion, or traditionality might be. Similarly, how did Chemell understand his dramatic change in clothing? What were his reasons for donning Peruvian dress for the journey home? It may be that the author's concept of "visual history" is intended to bypass the emic perspective, but this seems unlikely in view of the stress otherwise given to the Yanesha perspective as the missing element in prior discussion of clothing practices.

If indeed there is a general "native conviction that the Self is possible only through the incorporation of the Other," then this article could have been the opportunity to illustrate that not just through visual surfaces, as they appear in the important photographs that are reproduced in the article, but

also through the testimony of Yanesha themselves. Equally, unless the ontology of Self/Other is to be seen as historically transcendent and culturally universal, we must also account for variation in such ontological perceptions. For example, in other Amazonian times and places, semiovestiary seems to have taken a significant place alongside semiophagy such that the manner of "colonial" clothing and "savage" nakedness in the course of cultural encounters evinces a cultural dynamic in which collectivity rather than individuality played the greater role in influencing cultural practices of clothing and cannibalism (Whitehead and Harbsmeier 2008, lxviii–lxx). In contemporary Guyana, the refusal of Western dress can be understood as an explicit rejection of the national and colonial "Other" in a way that simultaneously invokes deep historical experience (Whitehead 2002, 46–47, 176, 182, 186).

The author is to be congratulated for having emphasized the importance of thinking about clothing and the necessity of giving due theoretical space for the existence of other ontologies of the body. In turn, the additional suggestions made here and the opportunity to adduce other examples indicate the richness and significance this discussion can have for anthropology more widely. Thus, not only the adoption of Western dress but also the Western adoption of exotic dress (Abler 1999) is an additional avenue of inquiry that would enrich the theorizing of this topic.

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I welcome this opportunity to comment on Santos-Granero's article. I find it remarkable how the Baniwa/Walimani of the Northwest Amazon, people about whom I have done anthropological and historical research for the past 30 years, are experiencing processes very similar to those undergone by the Yanesha. "Hybrid bodyscapes" is a notion that is familiar to many ethnographers; Santos-Granero's analysis extends it to show how people can nuance their bodily attire to make statements about the construction of their historical identities and the possible combinations of historically significant clothing "types" among the same people.

Santos-Granero rightly notes how symbolically charged hybrid bodyscapes can be for communicating political meanings. To illustrate, I refer the reader to the new online journal produced by the students of the new Baniwa school of the Içana River (see <http://www.robinmwright.com>). Two striking photos are published side by side. The first shows a line of young Baniwa men and women from the middle Içana, painted and adorned in evidently a new "traditional" way with barkcloth skirts (something never recorded before), prepared to dance for their distant kin of the upper Aiary (with whom they normally have little contact except for this occasion, a regionwide meeting on indigenous education). The

second shows Baniwa elders dressed in brand new city clothes and holding newly painted and decorated surubim flutes, the mark of Baniwa identity par excellence, but with no other “traditional” ornaments. Both the elders and the young men and women were from evangelical communities that, decades ago, were radically against “traditional culture” and did what they could to axe the longhouses, burn sacred flutes, and persecute the shamans. In fact, the meeting was being held in 2008 in the same community that was the target of persecution in the 1960s and 1970s.

For the past 20 years, the evangelicals have undergone significant change mainly guided by a powerful NGO supported by wealthy European foundations. Today, these communities are far more advanced technologically than their more “traditional” kin of the upper Aiary. Concurrently, the evangelicals have performed a 180-degree turn regarding their “ancestors’ way of life.” Instead of condemning it, they are now recreating it and greatly valuing their new creations. What was going through the minds of the Baniwa of the upper Aiary during this meeting? They, whose ancestors defended their culture against the ancestors of those who now came to show them their beautiful dance attire and flutes? Today, the Baniwa of the Içana are eager for me to send them all of my archives on their past, especially photos, so that they can—quoting a recent e-mail from one young Baniwa—bring their “ancestors back to life.” How fragile the notion of “hybridity” seems to be to describe situations as powerful as these: how do both the Baniwa and their anthropologists feel at seeing these changes in “bodyscapes” and knowing their histories?

Another recent example of hybridity as political praxis: a very well-known young Baniwa leader, named Andre, is the subject of a film produced last year (*Baniwa: A Story of Plants and Cures*; see also my article on Andre in *Identities* [Wright 2009]) that relates the drama of this leader’s political career. In the opening interview, we see Andre with an enormous woven hat decorated with white heron feathers and a long tail of heron feathers tied to the headdress. The hat is evidently a totally new creation to mark his status as “chief” of the Baniwa. The very fact that a film was made about a single leader among the Baniwa would, by traditional norms, be exceptionally strange, because—as a people who highly value egalitarian relations—only their prophets (usually powerful jaguar shamans) have ever stood out in such a way. The prophets have, according to oral traditions, negated any hierarchical superiority because this would make them vulnerable to assault sorcery (see Wright 2005, 2009). The film tells the story of how, during his political career, Andre was indeed attacked by sorcerers and survived, which, by “tradition,” makes him a sort of “man-god” like the prophets of the past. He was recently elected vice prefect of the municipal capitol city—adding a politician’s attire to his repertoire of situation-specific bodyscapes. This has not done anything to diminish assault sorcery, however.

The present moment is one of intense creativity in which “old” ideas and styles are being reshaped and remodeled.

What the younger generation is creating through this praxis is a “new Baniwa”—redressing the old, giving a new face to the old look, and presenting the new to the world. So, hybridity involves novelty through a mixture of various “bodyscapes” that come from different periods of history. Is this *bricolage*, or is this term insufficient to describe a powerful process of rewriting history? Undoubtedly, much has been lost over the past century, and some institutions—such as jaguar shamanism—are on the brink of extinction without anyone—even the NGO and the leader Andre—seeming to care very much. What the Baniwa are showing today is a very powerful ethnic pride in a way that perhaps they never did before. It is certainly a positive moment, even if what was so dear to their ancestors has now gone along with them to the Other World.

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## Reply

The large number of responses and the vigorous discussion they have generated suggests to me that the theme of this article is a worthy platform from which to discuss the broader issue of cultural change in an increasingly globalized world. In Amazonia, this issue has gained considerable urgency as native peoples adopt new information and communication technologies, develop alternative forms of leadership, engage in national party politics, participate more actively in the international arena, embrace the multiple possibilities offered by the Internet, seek higher levels of education, move in larger numbers to the city, and interact in novel ways with nonnative peoples. Together with recent theoretical developments on Amazonian sociality, ontology and historicity, these processes have turned Amazonia, as Rubenstein asserts, into a “fruitful place for anthropologists to research modernity, counter-modernities, and postmodernity.” This said, the issue at hand is evidently far more complex than I assumed when I set out to write this article. I am thus grateful to the readers for their enlightening—if not always concordant—comments, which have forced me to reflect on aspects of cultural change and incorporation that I had not previously thought about.

As I see it, the readers’ concerns revolve around five broad questions. First, what is the nature of the relationship between native Amazonians and their powerful Others? Second, what is the connection between incorporation and identity politics? Third, how important are the notions of performance and mimesis for the understanding of changes in clothing? Fourth, what is the relative weight of external factors and native agency on processes of cultural change? Finally, what are the conditions of reproduction and the limits of the native logic of openness to the Other?

1. Karadimas addresses the first issue head on when he asserts that the validity of my argument depends on determining whether native Amazonians “adopt” or “steal” white

people's dress, language, and names. Fausto appears to assume the same view when opposing Benjamin's concept of "mimesis," with its connotations of cannibal appropriation, to Deleuze's notion of "becoming," and its underlying idea of commensality, as contrasting explanatory models for the adoption of white people's dress. The similarity is deceptive. Whereas Karadimas considers that relations of alterity are always predatory, Fausto adopts a more inclusive position, regarding cannibalism and commensality vectors as "intertwined vectors in the production of Amerindian sociality." In Karadimas's view, native Amazonians can be either prey—in which case, by "adopting" white people's creations they are in fact being "tamed"—or predator—so that by preying on white people, they seek not to incorporate them but rather to keep them at a distance. Walker adheres to the first proposition, stating that the adoption of white people's clothing could be seen as "successful (if transient) attempts by whites to 'familiarize' Yanesha and turn them into kin." In contrast, Veber seems to espouse the latter interpretation when mistaking my take on incorporation theory for an instance of "ontological cannibalism." From the opposite end of the spectrum, Belaunde introduces the notion of "seduction" as "a key aspect of embodiment with regard to powerful Others," suggesting that relations of alterity are based on a "game of seduction" that does not necessarily end in the transformation of one into the other.

These conflicting positions confirm that, far from being exhausted, the debate about the nature of native Amazonian sociality is still very much alive and kicking—if somewhat worn down by the persistence of markedly entrenched and irreducible positions. Let me say from the outset that, together with Fausto, I regard commensality and cannibalism as alternative modes of incorporation that combined provide the basis for Amerindian sociality. I nonetheless agree with Karadimas, Veber, and Walker that native Amazonians often conceptualize relations of alterity in terms of predation. In such cases predation—cannibalism or trophy taking—and familiarization—taming of war captives—appear as alternative modes of appropriating the vital forces of enemy Others, a theme that I elaborate in a recent book on native Amazonian forms of slavery (Santos-Granero 2009).

It should be remembered, however, that not all Amazonian peoples were involved in the capture of enemies or the taking of bodily trophies. No historical evidence exists that the Yanesha ever engaged in these practices or that they perceived their relationship with white people as one of predation—something that has not prevented them from occasionally fighting against the whites to defend their autonomy. More importantly, it is often the case in Amazonian ontologies that that which is good for indigenous Others is not necessarily good for radical Others such as whites or Inkas. It is well known, for instance, that Jivaroans refused to shrink the heads of white enemies ritually and that the Carib and Chiriguana declined to cannibalize their European prisoners of war. In this context, the Tupian peoples mentioned by Whitehead

seem to be more of an exception than the rule. Native Amazonians often consider whites as spirit people, or nonpeople, and as such unworthy of being included in their networks of predatory ritual exchanges. This would explain why the phenomenon of "becoming like white people" is played out in the key of commensality—a kind of consubstantiality that allows for reversals—rather than in the key of cannibalism—which admits no turnaround.

It may well be the case, as Karadimas and Walker suggest, that some white/mestizos view the adoption of Western-style clothing as an instance of domestication of "savage" Others. This is not, however, to be taken as evidence that Amerindians perceive the relation in similar terms. On the contrary, as several authors have pointed out, native Amazonians conceive of their efforts to acquire a white perspective as a means of "pacifying" or "taming" the white *man's* aggressiveness—with emphasis on *man* because men are the most visible agents of exploitation. Such processes, as Belaunde affirms, involve a large dose of seduction. Long-standing Yanesha miscegenation with settlers of German, Andean, and mestizo stock confirms the fact that female seduction is an important strategy of incorporation of radical Others, as is sending children to mission schools or volunteering to serve in the military. That the children of such unions are not rejected and are brought up as Yanesha confirms Belaunde's position that the aim of seduction is always incorporation without complete transformation.

2. Whereas Erikson celebrates the article's change of focus from ethnosemiotics to ethno-ontology, other readers insist on the importance of clothing as powerful signifiers within a native Amazonian "semiotics of identity." Caiuby argues that ways of dressing "may be a statement of what you want to state, not necessarily of what you are," and she presents a fascinating example of how changes in clothing are used as powerful political statements, not only by native Amazonians but also by their white or mestizo interlocutors. Similarly, Pollock asserts that "clothing and ornamentation are not semiotically neutral but are an especially significant *technique du corps* that act on and constitute one of the most public expressions of identity." Taking the discussion a step further, both Rubenstein and Fausto ask whether we should interpret Chemell's changes in clothing at the video screening as an instance of incorporation or of identity politics, whereas Whitehead and Walker suggest that in order to have a better understanding of how Yanesha use changes in clothing as a means of self-representation, I should delve more extensively into the "shifting individual clothing practices of particular Yanesha" and how changes in body ornamentation are used internally to signify age, gender, status, and ritual differences.

Erikson is right in welcoming the recent shift from ethnosemiotics to ethno-ontology—to which he has contributed so significantly—for it involves taking into consideration native cultural understandings that operate at a less conscious and more collective level. This does not mean that incorporation and identity politics are excluding interpretative models or

that in order to be consistent one should explain all changes in body ornamentation as resulting from either one of them, as Rubenstein and Fausto seem to suggest. It is legitimate, however, to ask how these two models are connected. Are they alternative explanations? Or can they be fitted into the same explanatory framework? I think they can. Chemell's decision to wear ancient ones' attire at the video screening can certainly be interpreted as an instance of identity politics, an attempt to stress before a nonnative audience Yanesha Indianness and cultural vigor despite centuries of white-mestizo oppression and discrimination. I would argue, however, that this decision would have been impossible had Chemell not undergone a more important personal transformation long before that. The Chemell I met in 1977—who was proud of his Peruvian garments and accessories as well as his close contacts with the white-mestizo world—would have never worn ancient ones' attire, not even for political purposes. It was only after he started working as a translator for the Amuesha Cultural House—a project to preserve and disseminate Yanesha cultural traditions—that Chemell began to take distance from the white-mestizo world and reapproach Yanesha lifeways. Such a change involved a certain degree of consciousness and intentionality, but it is understood by Yanesha people as a shift in perspective by incorporation of those substances that make Yanesha people Yanesha. So, in answer to Fausto, yes, becoming an “authentic” native Amazonian requires the same kind of consubstantial transformation as that involved in becoming like white people. In fact, when Yanesha federation leaders fail to live up to their followers' expectations, people often say that this is because they have adopted white people's mores after living for too long in the city, in close contact with them. In such cases, the recommended remedy is to go back to one's community and immerse oneself in communal life until one regains a Yanesha perspective.

From a conjunctural viewpoint, then, Chemell's decision to dress in ancient ones' attire for the video screening might be regarded as a conscious choice with specific political aims. From a long-term perspective, though, it may be understood as the result of an intentional but largely unconscious process of incorporation. In Bourdieuan rhetoric, the difference between the two would be that between “habitus” and “strategy,” where changes by incorporation—whether or not intentionally sought out—become internalized as unconscious habitus, whereas changes due to political strategy, despite their conscious nature, can be accomplished only in accordance with the unconscious habitus that inform them (Bourdieu 1977, 73, 76). I should add—in response to Rubenstein—that this is why I wrote that only if “pressed hard” would the Yanesha of the 1970s say that they dressed “like Peruvians,” for by then such a way of dressing had become so internalized that it was regarded as a Yanesha trait. This is also why, even though the analysis of daily life individual choices in clothing—suggested by Whitehead and Walker—would increase our knowledge of the ways in which Yanesha use body or-

nammentation as identity signifiers, it would contribute little to our understanding of their widespread adoption of Peruvian clothes.

3. Both Caiuby and Erikson emphasize the notion of performance as a key to understanding native Amazonian adoption of white people's dress. Caiuby argues that in Bororo dual-society people are “always playing the role of the Other in order to be themselves.” And Erikson states that among the Matis, white people's garments “were used very much like ritual disguise, such as face masks, to temporarily impersonate potent figures of the outside.” Rubenstein goes further, suggesting that performance theory, together with the notion of mimesis, might be a more fruitful approach than incorporation theory to explain this kind of phenomena. Similarly, Fausto questions my rejection of mimesis as a theoretical explanation for Yanesha adoption of Peruvian dress, proposing that Benjamin's understanding of that concept may constitute a more appropriate tool for the analysis of cultural change.

Performance theory, whose roots can be traced back to Goffman's (1956) “dramaturgical approach,” has given rise to an “interdiscipline” encompassing a variegated range of social, cultural, and artistic phenomena. This is not the place to attempt a detailed critique of this theory. Suffice it to say that, like many fashionable theories, performance theory has suffered from what may be called the imperialist temptation, in this case, the temptation to view all kinds of social interaction as theatrical events (Maxwell 1998, 78). When overstretched in such a way, the notion loses its power as an analytical category to become a mere metaphor for social interaction. If one were to adopt such a loose understanding, it could be argued that Yanesha use of Peruvian clothing is indeed a performative act, a masquerade in which alien forms of dressing are used as a disguise. This is not the case.

In the eyes of Yanesha people, the adoption of Peruvian dress is the result of a process involving a pervasive and enduring personal transformation. This situation contrasts sharply with the performative acts discussed by Erikson and Caiuby. When a Bororo man dons the clan attributes of a member of the opposite moiety or when Matis men wear mestizo clothing to build a *caboclo*-style house, the transformation they experience is limited in both time and space. Theirs are representations insofar as the performers become signs that stand in for and take the place of something. When the performance finishes, the actors go back to being their old selves. Such a view may be helpful to understand Chemell's shifts in clothing at the university auditorium. It is, however, insufficient to explain the deeper kind of transformations believed to be brought about by commensality and coresidence.

More importantly, although both types of transformation involve a certain degree of consubstantiality with powerful Others, this is achieved through opposite means. When in the context of Bororo male initiation rituals, sponsors and initiates decorate each other with the ornaments of each

other's clans, it is believed that in so doing they "literally and symbolically become the other" (Crocker 1985, 107). The same happens when Matis men put on the masks representing the ancestors' spirits during the initiation of young boys and girls (Erikson 1999). By disguising themselves as socially significant Others, they become Others, if only fleetingly. Thus, whereas in performative transformations people become consubstantial with powerful Others by temporarily adopting their way of dressing, in incorporative transformations, people adopt the powerful Others' way of dressing only after becoming enduringly consubstantial with them.

The concept of mimesis has suffered a similar depreciation and for the same reasons. When I argue that Yaneshá adoption of Peruvian clothing cannot be interpreted as a case of mimesis, I assume Taussig's view that, although inspired by Benjamin's reflections on the "mimetic faculty," is closer to Frazer's notion of "sympathetic magic." In Taussig's own words, "For this is where we must begin; with the magical power of replication" (1993, 2). The Yaneshá mimicking of Inca sacred stones, Christian Bibles, and Franciscan hoods are without doubt instances of mimesis, that is, attempts to appropriate the power of socially significant Others through the magical replication of their possessions. Note, however, that the objects replicated are always those that the Others themselves regard as being endowed with power, namely, objects used by religious, military, or governmental agents as emblems of their authority or signs of their connection with powerful beings. Note also that in this view, mimesis is not a collective but an individual endeavor generally undertaken by specialists: shamans, priests, or chiefly leaders. The Yaneshá's generalized adoption of white people's clothing does not fit this model. Only by assuming a laxer definition of mimesis is it possible to regard this notion, as Fausto (2007, 11) proposes, as a "new way of conceiving processes previously subsumed under the label of 'acculturation.'"

4. Although he finds the incorporation approach persuasive, Rubenstein asks whether it is really so different from acculturation theory because "in both models change comes from 'outside.'" Veber makes a similar observation, noting that whereas I attribute Yaneshá adoption of Peruvian dress to internal factors, I credit changes in native fashion to "external influences . . . otherwise discarded." In connection with this point, she wonders whether incorporation theory can account for native historical agency not only as the capacity to act *within* the world but, above all, *on* the world. Whitehead asserts that despite my careful consideration of Yaneshá viewpoints, my argument "configures Yaneshá practice as responding to external others." As a result, my approach offers little theoretical difference with respect to "acculturation," "identity politics," or "mimetic appropriation." In a similar vein, Walker states that while broadly agreeing with my argument, he is "not sure that it escapes the dichotomy of 'internal' versus 'external' forces." He asks whether there is no middle ground where both Yaneshá agency and subordination can be accounted for and, together with Londoño Sulkin, suggests that

Butler's notion of "performativity" could provide such a theoretical framework.

I agree with Whitehead in that "the issue as to what degree of significance is given to external versus internal factors" will never be resolved. I would argue, however, that by posing the debate in those terms, he—as well as Rubenstein, Veber, and Walker—is missing the point. The question at issue is not whether cultural change is caused *objectively* by external or internal factors but how the oppressed perceive cultural change *subjectively*—and act accordingly. It is not a question to be resolved via "etic" disquisitions about the relative weight of internal and external elements but through an exploration of the "emic" understandings of the colonized. This does not entail dispensing with the externalities that frame cultural change or ignoring the coercion and violence involved in such processes. What I propose instead is not to rely exclusively on etic approaches that present a unidimensional portrayal of the oppressed as powerless victims but to incorporate into the equation the latter's understandings of the colonial relationship. As Walker notes, these two perspectives need not be mutually exclusive, and it is certainly not my intention to fall for the imperialist temptation of elevating incorporation to the category of an all-encompassing theory. I do believe, however, that by adopting a phenomenological perspective, it is possible to inject new life into old ethnographic topics as I have attempted to do in my analyses of child sorcery, historicity, and native forms of slavery.

Such an approach has been gaining ground, as shown by Gose's 2008 book *Invaders as Ancestors*, which explores Andean "incorporative strategies" in order to draw attention to native agency and recasts Spanish colonialism as intercultural alliance. It has the advantage of bringing to the fore a kind of native agency that is rendered invisible by acculturation theory—not so by the "identity politics" or "mimetic appropriation" approaches, as Whitehead would have me claiming. Veber is right in pointing out that incorporation theory only reveals the native capacity "for acting *within* a world of marginalization" while saying little about their capacity to act *on* the world. Much could be said about this latter kind of agency. For reasons of space, however, I can only say that in Yaneshá history, this kind of agency has assumed a spiritual rather than a political form (Santos-Granero 2007, 66–67). It often materializes in messianic movements and revolts—probably not the kind of agency Veber had in mind.

Despite Londoño Sulkin's ardent advocacy of performativity, I fail to see how this approach can help to understand the issues at hand. In Butler's (1990) use, agency is the subjects' capacity to reinscribe their bodies in order to highlight the latter's factitiousness rather than their facticity. Such reinscriptions can only take place within the law, but they enable the reinscribed subject to subvert the law against itself—which explains why Walker views this approach as accounting for both agency and subordination. Because Butler elaborates this notion in her writings on gender, by reinscription she means the intentional alteration of the gender "script" imposed on



everybody—in the literal sense of every body—in the form of performative illocutionary acts even before birth. In Butler's view, gender is a "doing" rather than a "being." Thus, cross-dressing, transvestism, and transexuality are among the various ways in which bodies can be reinscribed for subversive purposes. This view is far removed from Yanesha understandings of the bodily processes underlying changes in clothing. Unlike Bororo parodies of white men during funerary rituals (Caiuby 2006, 187), Yanesha daily use of Peruvian clothes is not perceived, either by them or by others, as a subversive act. It is neither an imposed script nor a subversive reinscription—neither a "being" nor a "doing" but rather a "becoming."

5. The shift from studying cultural changes objectively to viewing them as the result of an "enduring cultural disposition" poses, according to Belaunde, the very important question of whether this disposition "remained unchanged since precolonial times." Similarly, Londoño Sulkin wonders how what he amusingly calls the "package"—the native logic based on notions of fabricated bodies, constitutive alterity, and a perspectival cosmos—has "reproduced itself so effectively and conservatively over time and space such that we recognize versions of it among diverse Amazonian peoples." From a slightly different perspective, Fausto and Chaumeil suggest that this native Amazonian strategy cannot possibly reproduce itself indefinitely and must surely have certain limits. Even more interestingly, Fausto poses the question as to whether the native Amazonian openness to the Other is "an absolute ontological desideratum, or is it also inflected by the very structure of the wider historical process in which it operates?"

Yanesha mythology suggests that openness to the Other is indeed a cultural disposition that has been operating since precolonial times. Confirming Belaunde's views about the importance of seduction as a key strategy of incorporation, Yanesha myth tellers assert that the creator god sent his daughter Yachor Palla to marry Enc, the mythical personage representing the Inca, to prevent him from ascending to the heavens and to force him to stay on this earth to guide and protect his human creatures. Archaeological and historical evidence confirms that the interaction between Yanesha and Andean peoples at the time of contact was intense. As Chaumeil points out, Smith's recent works on Yanesha territoriality suggest that this interaction was even more extensive than previously assumed—although Smith has never claimed, as Chaumeil erroneously implies, that this is evidence for the Yanesha having an Andean origin. Because it is well known that Yanesha people have adopted numerous linguistic and cultural traits from Andean peoples, it is not impossible that they also adopted Inca tunics (*unku*), which are very similar to the ones they use. This possibility is supported by the myth stating that it was Yachor Palla, Enc's wife, who taught Yanesha women the textile arts (Smith and Bautista Pascual 2006, 105).

How this cultural disposition is reproduced is an intriguing question but one that is outside the scope of this response. What is important here, as Londoño Sulkin himself admits, is that slightly different versions of the "package" are found

among a large number of native Amazonian peoples. Rather than attempting to determine the conditions for its reproduction—something that would probably lead us into teleological arguments—it would be more fruitful to focus on its limits, that is, on the conditions for its disappearance. Once again, Yanesha mythology provides us with vital clues to determine these limits. In the narrative of Yompor Santo—the mythical character representing the eighteenth-century messianic hero Juan Santos Atahualpa—it is said that "in those times our people were almost finished. They had become like white people." The elements mentioned by the narrator as evincing this state of things are loss of language, traditional dress, sacred music, devoutness, and territory. It does not seem to me that Yanesha people view the loss of any of these elements as conducive on its own to a loss of identity. But, taken together, they seem to constitute the limits of the openness to the Other—at least from a Yanesha perspective. Past these limits native people lose their identity. They are no longer "like white people"; they "become white people."

So, yes, openness to the Other seems to be a desideratum, a native Amazonian way of being in the world, but this openness is in no way indiscriminate. Native Amazonians know the risks that it entails, and if the numerous religious and secular movements against external domination are in any way an indicator, they seem to know when this openness has reached its limits and when it is time to fight its excesses. This is not, however, always the case. Plenty of evidence exists to show that from time to time, native Amazonians have succumbed to the temptation of trespassing these limits and becoming the Other. The Caribized Kalinago and the Tukanoized Tariana are cases in point. Whether these radical transformations were the result of coercive processes or of conscious political strategies is open to question. Obviously, however, although changes by incorporation operate at an unconscious level, the decision to approach or reject the Other is always a conscious matter—even if it is influenced by the "structure of the wider historical process."

—Fernando Santos-Granero

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