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1 The Arawakan Matrix: Ethos, Language, and History in Native South America

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THE RELATIONSHIP between language and culture has been the subject of much speculation in Western philosophy and social sciences. In the recent past, the tendency has been to contest the one language-one culture hypothesis implicit in the writings of eighteenth-century German philosopher Johann G. Herder, an idea that, under several guises, dominated early anthropology and linguistics. In his 1769 essay "On the Origin of Language," Herder asserted that polities are unified neither by the acceptance of a common sovereign power, as proposed by Hobbes, nor by a social contract based on the general will, as advocated by Rousseau (Barnard 1969). Instead, he indicated, first, that the basis for the sense of collective political identity was the sharing of a common culture and, second, that the emergence and reproduction of a group's culture are based on the use of a common language. Herder referred to units possessing a common culture and language by the term *Volk*, or nationality. Members of such communities are united by the collective consciousness of a common cultural heritage. This consciousness, which distinguishes members of a collective from those of similar communities, is what Herder calls "national character."

Herder's propositions found their way into historical linguistics and through it to modernist ethnology. The detection of connections between Sanskrit, Persian, and European languages by Sir William Jones in 1786 and the discovery by Jacob Grimm of the existence of regularities of sound change between different but related languages established the framework for the emergence of comparative linguistics. The Neogrammarians, a group of scholars working in Leipzig, formulated the principles and methods of the new discipline in the late nineteenth century. Its basic premise is that languages that have a

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large number of cognate words descend from a common ancestral language and thus belong to the same family. Implicit in this proposition is the assumption that speakers of the protolanguage constituted a culturally unified community and that its descendants share at least some aspects of that culture.

This was Brinton's (1891) approach in *The American Race*, which provides the first modern linguistic classification of Native South American languages. In addition to associating language and culture—in Herder's tradition—the author posited a linkage between language and race. Brinton (1891, 57) suggested, "Similarity of idioms proves to some extent similarity of descent and similarity of psychic endowments." In an intellectual environment in which evolutionism was becoming a dominant mode of thought, it was only a short step from here to assert that certain combinations of language, culture, and race were superior or inferior to others. Anthropology was quick to reject this argument by refuting the assumption that there existed an immanent connection between language and culture or race and culture.

In *The American Indian*, Wissler (1917) asserted that there are "no correlations between culture and linguistic type." According to him, the fact that speakers of the same language stock are represented in several cultural areas demonstrates that "language can travel independently of culture" (Wissler 1917, 332). Edward Sapir (1921/1931, 143) went a step further, declaring that "races, languages and cultures are not distributed in parallel fashion, that their areas of distribution intercross in the most bewildering fashion, and that the history of each is apt to follow a distinctive course." Franz Boas (1928) was equally definitive. From then on it became almost anathema in anthropology to propose a connection between language and culture, except as formulated in the milder versions of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which postulate that language influences but does not determine the way we think and perceive the world (see Sherzer 1992, 274).

The notion of language family, seen by Brinton (1891, 57) "as the only one of any scientific value," became outdated among anthropologists and was replaced in subsequent classifications of South American indigenous peoples by that of culture area. Julian H. Steward's (1946–59) *Handbook of South American Indians* is the most outstanding example of this new approach. He and Louis C. Faron (1959, 26) argued that although linguistic affiliation and distribution have certain implications for the cultural history of South American Indians, "there is no direct relationship between language groups and culture." The principal value of linguistic classifications and the comparative method was to supply, through the method known as glottochronology, information on the dates of divergence of languages belonging to the same family and thereby on possible migration routes.

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However, even the scholars who most firmly opposed the idea that people belonging to the same language family shared a common cultural tradition had trouble accounting for the numerous ethnographic cases that did not fit their model (e.g., Wissler 1917, 333). In fact, to explain the relative cultural homogeneity that characterizes members of the most important Amazonian language stocks, despite their widespread geographic distribution, Steward and Faron (1959, 26) suggested that they must have separated quite recently and in fairly rapid waves of migration.

A certain ambiguity with respect to the sociological value of the notion of language family is also found in two collections devoted to the study of Carib-speaking societies. In the first, Ellen B. Basso (1977, 17) identifies eight material and nonmaterial cultural traits of what she considers to be a typical Carib complex. However, Basso warns the reader that these traits are not uniquely Carib and concludes that most Amazonian indigenous societies fall "into general social and cultural units that often encompass local groups of different language affiliation and history." In short, after a painstaking reconstruction of Carib culture, we are advised that it is more productive to think in terms of culture area than of language family.

This same stance is defended by Audrey Butt-Colson (1984a, 11) and, even more strongly, by Simone Dreyfus (1983-84, 39-40), who argues that what is perceived as "Carib unity" appears to be based more on the characteristics of culture areas—geographic, ecological, historical, and sociological—than on linguistic affiliation. From a slightly different perspective, it is also supported by Whitehead (1994, 34; chapter 2), and by Urban and Sherzer (1988, 297), who assert that to have a better understanding of the history of Amerindian cultures, researchers should pay more attention to cases of actual multilingualism and to the more-than-one-language-per-culture hypothesis.

In this chapter I assess the sociological significance of the notion of language family by analyzing "Arawak unity," which has been the object of little attention from specialists. Based on the premise that ethnohistorical studies can be meaningful only if one adopts an interethnic perspective (Santos-Granero 1995), I examine the issue of "Arawakness" by comparing Arawakan cultural and social organization with that of their most meaningful counterparts in three tropical regions: eastern Peru (Panos), northwestern Amazonia (Tukanos), and northeastern South America (Caribs). I argue that there is a connection between language and culture expressed in the fact that peoples belonging to the same language family share a common cultural matrix and a certain ethos.

In so doing, it is not my intention to perpetuate early colonial stereotypes or subsequent ethnographic accounts depicting the Arawak as "gentle, hos-

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pitiable and cultured" pioneers, in contrast with other peoples, such as the Carib, characterized as bellicose "adventurers, cannibals and colonists" (Radin 1946, 23, 25, 49). It is not my intention to uphold the notion that such a connection is in any way immanent or essential. The dialectical relationship between language and culture is historical and can be understood only through history. Thus, together with determining what are the central features of the Arawakan ethos, I examine situations of interethnic cultural influence and exchange. I pay particular attention to the emergence of what I call transethnic identities, that is, groups that adopt the cultural ethos of another language stock but retain their language or, conversely, groups that adopt a different language but retain their ethos. It is in the boundaries between peoples of different linguistic affiliation that we may observe the intricate ways in which ethos, language, and history combine in the negotiation of ethnic identity, sometimes reinforcing existing ones and sometimes promoting the formation of new identities.

The Arawak-Pano Cluster of Eastern Peru

When the Spanish entered into the tropical forest region east of the Peruvian central Andes in the second half of the sixteenth century, they encountered two different types of indigenous societies. Along the Upper Ucayali and Lower Urubamba rivers they found two bellicose peoples—probably the Pano-speaking Conibo and the Arawak-speaking Piro—living in large settlements under the rule of powerful war leaders (Ales 1981, 93, 95). In contrast, the Arawak-speaking peoples living along the eastern slopes of the Andes lived in small, scattered settlements led by headmen with little political power (Santos-Granero 1980, 29; Renard-Casevitz 1981, 130). Because of the high uniformity of their cultural practices, these hinterland peoples came to be known collectively as Chunchos or Antis in the sixteenth century and as Campa in the seventeenth century. In the early 1900s, linguists began to refer to them as the pre-Andine Arawak (Rivet and Tastevin 1919–24).

In the second half of the seventeenth century, when Franciscan and Jesuit missionaries started working in the area, the Conibo and Piro monopolized trade along the Ucayali-Urubamba axis by means of large armed fluvial expeditions. These two dominant peoples are described as engaged in constant war with each other and with their weaker semiriverine or interfluvial neighbors: the Pano-speaking Shipibo, Setebo, Cashibo, Amahuaca, Mochobo, Comabo, Remo, and Sensi, who lived along the tributaries of the Lower Urubamba and the Ucayali River, and the Arawak-speaking peoples who inhabited the vast area along the Andean piedmont (see map 5, p. 000). The

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Spanish divided these latter peoples into two large nations: the Campa (the present-day Asháninka, Ashéninka, Matsiguenga, and Nomatsiguenga) and the Amage (the Amuesha, known at present as Yanesha). For reasons of simplicity, from here onward I shall refer to all of these peoples as Campa, except when it is necessary to distinguish them from the Yanesha.

Pano warfare against the Arawak had a long tradition. Archaeological evidence and oral tradition suggest that the Arawak were gradually pushed against the Andean range by successive waves of Pano-speaking peoples who settled in the Ucayali River (Lathrap 1970a; Santos-Granero 1998). The Piro (Yine), who had reached the Urubamba River from the east (see chapter 6), also pushed the Arawak in a westward direction.

In addition, Pano-speaking groups were in constant war with each other. In general terms, the Conibo raided the semiriverine Pano groups, while all of them assailed the more interior, headwater groups; these, in turn, were continually raiding each other (Frank 1994; Erikson 1994; Townsley 1994; Dole 2000; Morin 2000). Pano endo-warfare, under the guise of blood feuds, slave raids, and pillaging, increased in colonial times as each group attempted to monopolize trade in tools with the Spanish (Frank 1994, 148).

Conibo raiders killed adult men and elderly people who could not work as servants and took with them their women and children (Biedma 1981, 95; Huerta 1983, 123–24). They also plundered their villages, stealing all valuable goods, such as spun cotton, cotton textiles, feather ornaments, and salt. Enemies were beheaded, their heads ritually insulted, and their blood drunk, mixed with manioc beer (Amich 1975, 108). As a sign of their courage, victorious warriors hung the heads and dried hearts of their enemies from the rafters of their houses (Biedma 1981, 95). Captive women were taken as co-wives or servants. As a result, most Conibo men had two or more wives (Beraún 1981, 181). Captured children had to work for their captors but were raised as Conibo and eventually married into the group (Amich 1975, 93). The Conibo came to depend so much on pillage that their women no longer spun or wove cotton. Conibo pillaging and raiding created many enemies for them. To enhance their capacity for defense, allied Conibo groups gathered in large settlements of up to 2,000 people under the joint rule of their respective leaders (Amich 1975, 93).

The interfluvial Arawak presented a stark contrast with their Pano neighbors. As France-Marie Renard-Casevitz (1985, 1993) has pointed out, one of the outstanding features of pre-Andine Arawak social organization was the absence of endo-warfare. The only exceptions were the Piro, described in more detail later in this chapter. This in no way means that conflicts, hostility, and violence had been eradicated from Campa society but, rather, that

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aggression was canalized through intrafamily or intracommunity individual violence or through exo-warfare (Renard-Casevitz 1985, 90). When conflicts at the local level could not be resolved peacefully, they usually led to sorcery accusations and even to murder. However, these killings involved individuals rather than the social groups to which they belonged and never gave rise to intratribal cycles of vendetta. The only context in which intratribal attacks were admitted was in case of betrayal of common "tribal" interests, such as support of foreign invaders when this was not a collectively approved political strategy (see Biedma 1981, 162; Amich 1975, 73).

The rejection of endo-warfare among the Campa must not be taken as an expression of pacifism or a peaceful disposition. With the exceptions of the Yanesha and the Matsiguenga (Rosengren 1987), Arawak leaders derived much of their authority from their capacity as warriors. This was especially true of the Campa peoples of the Apurimac, Ene, Tambo, Ucayali, and Gran Pajonal areas, whose territories bordered on those of the Piro and Conibo. Although weaker in military capacity than their riverine enemies, Campa leaders not only defended their communities from enemy attacks but also waged an active war against them (Steward 1946-59, 3:537). However, the Campa shared none of the ritual war practices characteristic of the endo-warring Pano, and there is no evidence that they took war captives to transform them into wives or servants. This took place much later on, during the late nineteenth century, as a result of the demands of powerful rubber extractors.

Renard-Casevitz (1993, 32) explains Arawak suppression of endo-warfare as resulting from the need to present a common front vis-à-vis constant attempts by Andean state societies to subjugate them. However, the fact that other peoples facing similar threats—such as the Jibaro of eastern Peru and Ecuador—did not follow the same strategy suggests that the suppression of endo-warfare must be attributed to other factors. Risk of revenge feuding and slave raids was avoided among Campa groups by promoting regular dialogue between local leaders, intersettlement quarantine in case of conflicts, or, in extreme cases, geographic distancing (Renard-Casevitz 1993, 33). A concentric model of social organization, based on ever-increasing spheres of solidarity in which each local settlement created its own social network through marriage ties, residence rules, ritual gatherings, commerce, and political alliances, generated a dense web of relations of exchange, stimulating greater social cohesion.

Particularly important in this context were salt extraction and trade centered on the Cerro de la Sal, which each year, during the dry season, promoted the peaceful communication of hundreds of peoples belonging to the diverse groups that composed the Arawakan cluster (Tibesar 1950, 108). Central fea-

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tures of this kind of trade were formal trading friendships, which could be established only between Arawak speakers and were based on deferred exchange (Bodley 1984, 49; Schäfer 1991). After the expulsion of the Spanish in 1742, trade between Arawak-speaking groups was further enhanced by the emergence of numerous temples that functioned simultaneously as forges in the Upper Perené region (Santos-Granero 1987). Yanesha and Campa ironworks became the center of an active trade in iron tools that overlapped with the more traditional salt trading network.

Equally relevant for intra-Arawak cohesion were the pilgrimages and religious celebrations that took place regularly in places of panethnic mythological significance. The most important landmarks in the Campa sacred landscape were two hills in the Cerro de la Sal, where the Arawak venerated the sun (Salgado de Araujo 1986, 153; Ordinaire 1988); three stone divinities adored at Palmaso (Navarro 1924, 16); a site in the Gran Pajonal, where people gathered for an annual sun festival (Ordinaire 1988, 71); and, later on, the tomb of the messianic leader Juan Santos Atahualpa in Metraro, a place that at least the Yanesha came to consider the "center of the world" (Carranza 1894, 23). Intratribal cohesion was further reinforced by what Ordinaire (1988, 91-92) called the Campa "moral decalogue," a ritual litany recited when two unrelated Arawak men met, in which the speaker lists all the moral duties owed to his interlocutor for the mere reason of being a fellow Arawak.

Despite the lack of centralized political structures, this intricate web of relationships and the values that sustained it allowed the rapid establishment of military alliances against indigenous or foreign enemies whenever necessary. Alliances could be regional and brief (Arnich 1975, 73), or they could involve several regions and persist for a longer time (Biedma 1981, 181). More importantly, under special circumstances, the Arawak could confederate with non-Arawakan groups to undertake particularly ambitious military enterprises. The best known of these multiethnic military alliances was the one inspired in 1742 by the messianic and anticolonial leader Juan Santos Atahualpa, who was able to persuade ancestral enemies such as the Campa, Piro, and Conibo to put their differences temporarily aside to join forces against the Spanish (Santos-Granero 1992). Whites were not able to reenter the region until 1847, allowing the native population to recover from the impact of colonial subjection.

The Piro occupied a singular place within the Arawakan cluster, for despite an undeniable Arawak linguistic affiliation they shared many traits with the riverine Pano, a fact that was noticed by early colonial chroniclers. This has prompted Peter Gow (1991, 31; chapter 6) to assert, quite justifiably, that "there is little justification for lumping the Campa, Matsiguenga, and Piro

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together on linguistic grounds alone." Like the Conibo, the Piro were great warriors and pirates, navigating in large flotillas of canoes along the Urubamba, Tambo, and Ucayali, to trade with or steal from their Panoan and Arawakan inhabitants. They took war captives and lived in big riverine settlements under the rule of influential war-trading leaders. According to at least one source, Piro warriors drank the blood and ate the flesh of enemies killed in war, much like their Pano neighbors and sometimes allies, the Comabo (Maroni 1988, 180; Huerta 1983, 121; Amich 1975, 107, 114; Vital 1985, 159, 164). Like most riverine Pano, they also practiced female circumcision (Amich 1975, 298). Piro clothing combined Panoan and Arawakan traits (Steward 1946-59, 3:544); whereas Piro pottery, although of a lesser quality, was very similar in design to that of the Conibo.

This evidence would be more than enough to assert that at the time of contact the Piro had undergone an intense process of Panoization. However, the most conclusive piece of evidence of the Panoization of the Piro is the fact that they did not reject endo-warfare as their Arawakan neighbors did, constantly raiding the Matsiguenga for slaves (Camino 1977) and combining trade, pillage, and slave raids in relation to the Campa (Zarzar 1983).

The Piro were not the only example of an Arawakan group that practiced endo-warfare, regularly organizing slave raids against other Arawak-speaking groups. In the context of the late-nineteenth-century rubber boom, large rubber extractors engaged the Ucayali Campa into this kind of slave trade through a combination of force and persuasion. The most famous Campa slaver was Venancio Amaringo, the leader of a large village of 500 people located at the mouth of the Unini River (Santos-Granero and Barclay 2000, 42-43). In the 1880s and 1890s, Venancio's followers attacked the Campa of the Gran Pajonal (Sala 1905-09, 12:85, 91, 64, 114; Hvalkof 1986, 24). Not surprisingly, however, like the Piro, the Ucayali Campa are described by contemporary sources as being very different from the Campa but quite similar to the riverine Pano (Samanez y Ocampo 1980, 83). Thus, we may conclude that the only Arawakan groups that practiced endo-warfare were those that had undergone significant processes of transethnic change.

The Arawak-Tukano Cluster of Northwestern Amazonia

Whereas in Peru most Arawak-speaking peoples were sandwiched between powerful riverine Amazonians and imperialistic highland Andeans, in northwestern Amazonia they had a dominant position, occupying both margins of the Rio Negro. In the late sixteenth century, these riverine Arawakan groups were the center of a vast network of indigenous peoples, which Silvia Vidal

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and Alberta Zucchi (1996, 113–15) call the “Manoa political macrosystem.” This polity was divided into three confederated “provinces”: Yumaguaris, Epuremei, and Manao. It was a multiethnic, plurilingual, and hierarchical political formation based on economic specialization, increasing levels of alliances between chiefs, and the subordination of weaker by stronger groups (Vidal and Zucchi 1996, 116). The polity involved peoples belonging to three linguistic families: the dominant riverine Arawak and the subordinate interfluvial eastern Tukano and Makú (see map 4, p. 000).

In the late seventeenth century, European competition for control of lands, resources, and Indians led to armed confrontation, slave raids, and rapid dissemination of epidemics. In turn, Amerindian competition for control over trade in European goods led to the rupture of old allegiances and to intratribal and intertribal warfare. All of these elements caused the breakdown of the Manoa macropolity by the early eighteenth century (Vidal and Zucchi 1996, 117). Its constituting provinces separated, and the groups that composed them regrouped (by revamping old alliances or establishing new ones) into three multiethnic confederations. These were composed of several allied chiefs under a powerful shaman-warrior leader who presided over large settlements and was in charge of complex religious ceremonies (Vidal 1999, 519; chapter 10). The new confederations comprised almost the same areas as the old provinces and were controlled by the two most powerful riverine Arawakan groups, the Manao and Baré (Vidal 1997, 120).

Beginning in 1720, the Portuguese increased slave raiding along the Lower Rio Negro. The Manao fiercely opposed their attempts to achieve control of the slave trade, which until then they had monopolized (Wright 1992b, 211). To counter their resistance, the Portuguese enrolled two Baré groups belonging to the Manao confederation (Vidal 1997, 32). This promoted hostilities between the dominant Manao war chiefs and their respective allies, leading to the defeat of the Manao in 1727 and to the subsequent “pacification” of the Lower and Middle Rio Negro. In 1731, the groups that had not been enslaved or exterminated were reduced to mission posts. Portuguese pressure eroded the power of the Manao and forced the riverine Arawak who had escaped colonial domination to move into the Upper Rio Negro.

Between 1725 and 1755, the Arawak reorganized themselves into three significantly smaller military confederations led mostly by the Baré, who replaced the Manao as the dominant Arawakan group (Vidal and Zucchi 1996, 119). Beginning in 1731, the Portuguese started raiding the Indian peoples of the Upper Rio Negro and Upper Orinoco region, where they clashed with the Spanish. To better confront the Spanish, the Portuguese recruited the paramount chiefs of the three Baré-led confederations as allies and com-

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mercial partners (Vidal 1997, 34). This enhanced intertribal competition for control of commercial routes. Between 1740 and 1755, the Portuguese enslaved and removed around 20,000 Indians from the region (Wright 1992b, 211). It is not clear who were the victims of Arawakan slave raids, but the evidence points to hinterland peoples, who were mostly eastern Tukano, at least on the right bank of the Upper Rio Negro.

Around 1755, competition between the Spanish and the Portuguese, attacks by Caribs along the Orinoco River, and intertribal warfare led to the fragmentation of the existing confederations into six much smaller and weaker ones (Vidal 1997, 38). Although these confederations were still multiethnic, comprising Tukano-, Makú-, and Carib-speaking groups, they were composed mostly of Arawakan groups, including the ancestors of the present day Baré, Baniwa, Wakuénai (Curripaco), Tariana, Warekena, and Piapoco. They consisted of groups of allied settlements or "tribes" united under paramount military chiefs whose office was hereditary (Chernela 1993, 20).

In the 1750s, these confederations were engaged in fierce warfare against Carib- and Arawak-speaking groups of the Orinoco River. The two most important groups, who vied for control over the region, were the Guaipunavi and Warekena, allied with the Spanish, and the Baré and Manao, allied with the Portuguese (Vidal 1997, 37; Chernela 1993, 19). With Spanish support, the Guaipunavi were able to vanquish their Arawak rivals in the Upper Rio Negro and displace the Carib from the Orinoco River. However, by 1759 the Spanish and Portuguese forced their former allies to accept subjection to their respective crowns.

During the second half of the eighteenth century, the Manao and other large riverine Arawak-speaking groups were exterminated, and large tracts of the Lower and Middle Rio Negro became depopulated (Wright 1992b, 211). To escape enslavement, the ancestors of the Baniwa and Wakuénai (Curripaco), who until the 1750s had been able to avoid direct European control, had to flee upriver, to the headwaters of the Isana/Guainía drainage area (Hill 1993, 46). In the 1780s, severe epidemics decimated the indigenous population of the Upper Rio Negro, leaving vast areas largely uninhabited. By the end of the eighteenth century, most of the riverine Arawak had been exterminated, reduced, or forced to flee into interfluvial areas. However, the collapse of the Portuguese colonial government of Manaus at the end of the century, and the inability of the Spanish to settle permanently in the region, created the conditions for the demographic recovery of the region's native peoples (Hill 1993, 46).

During this period, the Arawakan groups that migrated upriver along the Isana and Guainía rivers came into close contact with the eastern Tukano of

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the Vaupés basin (Hill 1993, 47). Some of these groups merged with the Cubeo (Nimuendajú 1927/1950, 165; Goldman 1963, 26). From this region, the Baniwa moved southward and westward into the Middle Vaupés River, where they clashed with the native Tukano-speaking population (Chernela 1993, 25). At about the same time, the Tariana expanded northward, from the Rio Negro into the Lower and Middle Vaupés River, displacing or absorbing the Tukano-speaking Arapaço, Pira-Tapuya, Miriti-Tapuya, and Tukano that they met on their way (Chernela 1993, 24). Finally, the Baré, who had disintegrated as the result of colonial domination, reconstituted through the fusion of Arawak, Tukano, and Makú groups and the adoption of Tukano or Nheengatú (*lingua geral*, "common language" or "trade language") as their common language (Vidal 1997, 41–42; Sorensen 1967, 682).

All of these events gave rise to an intensive process of ethnic and cultural exchange that led to the Tukanoization of Arawakan groups and the Arawakization of Tukano groups. This has prompted much discussion as to whether what are considered to be typical northwest Amazon traits—social organization based on exogamous patrilineal sibs, association of sibs into exogamous patrilineal phratries, origin myths depicting the emergence of hierarchically ranked sibs, and rites involving the use of sacred trumpets—are Tukano or Arawak in origin. Goldman (1963, 14) and Jackson (1983, 19) propose that the eastern Tukano preceded the Arawak; Wright (1992c, 257) and Hill (1996b, 159) suggest instead that the Arawak were the original inhabitants, whereas the Tukano were latecomers. Be that as it may, most specialists agree that at present northwestern Amazonia is composed of a variety of societies displaying Arawakan and Tukanoan cultural traits in different combinations. The center of the region, comprising the Vaupés river basin, is occupied by the eastern Tukano, who form what Jean Jackson (1983, 101) calls the "Central Northwest Amazon multilingual system." What distinguishes this cluster is language group exogamy, a practice that has led to multilingualism at the social level and polylingualism at the level of individuals (Sorensen 1967, 671).

The eastern Tukano are surrounded by Arawak-speaking groups to the north (Curripaco and Baniwa), east (Tariana and Baré), and southwest (Kabiyerí and Yukuna). These groups have a similar social organization but do not practice language exogamy. Additionally, they distinguish themselves from their eastern Tukano neighbors, among whom phratries are epiphenomenal, by the fact that their phratries are territorially localized and often function as political units composed of allied sibs under the leadership of phratric chiefs (Hill 1996b, 143). In between these two clusters are a series of Tukano-speaking groups that display what Stephen Hugh-Jones (1979, 19) has called "tran-

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sitional features," that is, Arawakized Tukano traits or Tukanoized Arawak features. These groups include the Cubeo to the north, the Wanano to the east, and the Barasana to the south. The Cubeo do not comply with the rule of linguistic exogamy and for this reason are sometimes excluded by the Tukano from the category of "real people" (Jackson 1983, 97). They and the Wanano are closer to the Arawak than to the eastern Tukano in that they are divided into territorially localized phratries and link marriage preferences to inherited rank (Wright 1992c, 260; Hill 1996b, 146; chapter 9). Finally, the Barasana and other Tukano-speaking peoples of the Pirá-Paraná and Apaporis river basins reveal Arawakan influence in such cultural features as the masked dances associated with pupunha palm fruit (Hugh-Jones 1979, 19).

Jonathan Hill (1996b, 158–59) has put forward the provocative hypothesis that the two main features that characterize the Arawak and eastern Tukano—ranked localized phratries and linguistic exogamy, respectively—emerged in the postcolonial period of recovery. According to this view, to create social distance between the Arawak and themselves, the Tukano inverted the Arawakan practice of dividing the language group into ranked, exogamous phratries, promoting instead the emergence of ranked phratries through language group exogamy. In this sense, Tukano language group exogamy and Arawak ranked phratrie organization would be mirror-image institutions.

Whether or not this distinction took place at such a late stage, it would explain why endo-warfare was more prevalent among the eastern Tukano than among the Arawak. Whereas phratrie organization within language groups promotes intraphratrie and interphratrie alliances and therefore the formation of large political conglomerates, phratrie organization involving various language groups seems to inhibit political aggregation. One of the most remarkable features of the northwest Amazon Arawak was their extraordinary capacity to build alliances between a variety of Arawak-speaking peoples under strong military leadership and for prolonged periods of time. Such alliances, which could be extended to include linguistically different peoples, prevented the eruption of internal warfare within vast regions. In this context, the instances of Arawakan endo-warfare reported in late colonial times seem to have been a response to increasing European demand for Indian slaves rather than an integral feature of Arawakan social organization.

This is confirmed by what we know of northwest Amazon Arawakan warfare through oral tradition. Robin Wright (1990, 222) argues that there is no evidence of intraphratrie hostilities among the postcolonial Baniwa and that the few cases of interphratrie warfare reported ended with the formation of alliances through marriage exchange. He concludes that Baniwa warfare was waged mainly against "other peoples," linguistically different or geographi-

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cally distant, and was therefore "situated at the periphery of their society" (Wright 1990, 219, 222). Vidal (personal communication, 2000) confirms this view and adds that interphratic warfare generally occurred when one of the phratries did not comply with the Kúwai rituals. In contrast, there is plenty of evidence that in the not so remote past the eastern Tukano were in permanent war with each other (Goldman 1963, 162; C. Hugh-Jones 1979, 11, 63; Jackson 1983, 97, 133; Chernela 1993, 23–24). Except for this difference, Arawakan and Tukanoan war practices were very similar. Peoples belonging to both language families practiced feuding and raiding, took women and children as spouses and servants, and practiced war cannibalism (Wright 1990, 222–25; Goldman 1963, 162–64). In addition, the Baniwa decapitated their vanquished enemies to prevent mystical attacks from the dead (Wright 1990, 231), whereas the Cubeo wore the smoked genitals of killed warriors over their own as a war trophy (Goldman 1963, 164).

The Arawak-Carib Cluster of Northeastern South America

By the end of the fifteenth century, Arawak- and Carib-speaking peoples occupied most of northeastern South America and the Caribbean. The region's ethnic configuration suggests that the Carib had expanded as a wedge north from the Amazon River into the Lower Orinoco (Durbin 1977, 34). As a result, Carib-speaking peoples composed a solid mass, occupying the Guiana Highlands, the Gran Sabana, part of the Lower Orinoco, and large tracts of the coast of present-day Venezuela and Guiana, surrounded by Arawak-speaking peoples to the west, east, south, and north (see map 3, p. 000). Arawak-speaking peoples also occupied the Lesser and Greater Antilles, and there is evidence that by then they were also experiencing the pressures of the expanding Carib.

The Spanish recognized two large groups in the Caribbean region: a number of highly sophisticated hierarchical chiefdoms sharing many cultural traits, which occupied most of the Greater Antilles, the Bahamas, the Virgin Islands, and the northern portion of the Lesser Antilles (Leeward Islands), which generally but not always welcomed the Spanish peacefully; and a number of smaller and less complex groups, which occupied the southern portion of the Lesser Antilles (Windward Islands), who shunned contact with the foreigners or opposed firmly their presence. The sociological differences between these two clusters have been confirmed by archaeological information (Sued Badillo 1995, 17).

The diverse peoples belonging to the first category—the Boriqua, Ciboney, Ciguayo, and others—came to be known collectively as Taíno in 1836 (White-

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head 1995a, 92). In 1871 Daniel G. Brinton demonstrated that theirs was an Arawakan language—similar to that of the Lokono or mainland Arawak—and for this reason decided to call them Island Arawak (Rouse 1992, 5). The Taíno referred to peoples in the second category, the inhabitants of the Windward Islands, as *caniba* or *caribe* and portrayed them as bellicose, cannibalistic savages who constantly waged war against them. This label was later applied to mainland indigenous peoples who had similar cultural traits and, more particularly, to the Kariña of the Lower Orinoco. In time, the Kariña came to be referred to by Europeans as Caribe, Carib, or Caraïbe, whereas the inhabitants of the Windward Islands came to be known as Island Carib, which, as we will see, was an unfortunate denomination.

The Taíno were divided into three subgroups that differed slightly from each other in terms of language, social organization, and cultural practices (Rouse 1992, 5–7). The classic Taíno lived in Puerto Rico, Hispaniola, and the eastern tip of Cuba. The western Taíno inhabited Jamaica, the Bahamian archipelago, and Cuba, except for its western tip, which was occupied by the Guanahatabey, the remainder of the island's original population. The eastern Taíno lived in the Virgin Islands and the Leeward Islands.

Classic Taíno lived in large villages of several hundred houses, each inhabited by an extended family, ruled by village chiefs (Dreyfus 1980–81, 240). The houses of village chiefs were always associated with ball courts, a trait that might have been adopted through contact with Mesoamerican societies. Independent villages were loosely organized into district chiefdoms, which in turn were grouped into regional or provincial chiefdoms, each headed by the most prominent district chief (Rouse 1992, 9; Sued Badillo 1995, 78). Although these chiefdoms were not integrated into larger polities under unified leadership, there is evidence that under external threat they were able to confederate.

Chieftainships were divided into three ranked groups. At the top was the *casik*, or provincial chief, who could be a man or a woman. Paramount chiefs were transported in litters, sat in ceremonial seats, and were surrounded by servants, councillors, and wives. These external signs of power led the Spanish to call them “kings.” Beneath chiefs and their families there was a class of nobles, who under the chief's orders commanded the rest of the people. At the bottom were the commoners, who had a low status and did most of the work but were not slaves taken in war (Dreyfus 1980–81, 241; Rouse 1992, 9).

The Taíno had priests, temples, and shamans, but life, reproduction, and the welfare of the people were guaranteed by chiefs who owned the mystical stones used to ensure fertility of the gardens, control of the weather, and safe childbirth (Dreyfus 1980–81, 242). Succession to chiefly office was matriline-

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eal and avuncular, from chief to eldest sister's son. The notion of noble descent was central to Taíno chieftainships, as expressed in ancestor worship, ritual narration of chiefly genealogies, and endogamy among high-rank lineages (Dreyfus 1980–81, 243).

Endo-warfare, in the sense of cyclical blood feuds and regular slave raiding between settlements, was absent among the Taíno. Armed confrontation was limited to avenging murders, resolving disputes over hunting and fishing rights, or forcing a chief who had received a bride price to deliver the promised woman (Rouse 1992, 17). In none of these cases did warfare include the taking of women as wives or servants or of men and children as slaves. According to Taíno sources, the only other cause of war was defense against attacks by the Island Carib. Although the reliability of these reports has been questioned (Sued Badillo 1995), it seems to be confirmed by the fact that the eastern Taíno, who were closer to the Windward Islands, territory of the Island Carib, are portrayed as being much more militaristic than the western Taíno, who were farther away and buffered from their attacks by the classic Taíno (Rouse 1992, 18–19). Ritual war cannibalism, which was so prominent in depictions of the Island Carib, seems to have been absent among most Taíno groups (Rouse 1992, 146). However, it has been recently asserted that the Taíno of Puerto Rico and Hispaniola also practiced it (Sued Badillo 1995, 79; Whitehead 1995a, 96).

The Island Carib have been the subject of much discussion in anthropology. They were originally thought to speak a Cariban language. Later on, it was acknowledged that they spoke two languages: an Arawakan language that differed from Taíno (Island Arawak) and Lokono (mainland Arawak) and was everybody's mother tongue; and a Cariban language or Cariban-based pidgin that was spoken only by men among themselves or during their trading expeditions with Carib-speaking mainland groups. On the basis of oral traditions gathered in Dominica in the seventeenth century, it became accepted that this patterned bilingualism or gender dimorphism originated in the invasion of the Windward Islands by the Carib-speaking Kariña of the Lower Orinoco River, who killed most of the male inhabitants and took their wives and children. The Kariña were unable to impose their language but retained it as a prestige men's language and as trading language with their mainland relatives. In their Arawakan mother tongue these people referred to themselves as Karipuna—the term I will use to designate them from now onward—and in the Cariban men's language as Kalinago.

This traditional view has recently come under heavy attack by Neil Whitehead (1995a, 1995b; chapter 2) and some of his colleagues in an edited volume on the so-called Island Carib. They argue that the oral tradition on

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which this view is based is suspect and that Karipuna bilingualism could also be explained as the result of peaceful immigration of Kariña-speaking peoples into the islands (Boomert 1995, 32) or of a political and economic alliance with the mainland Kariña to confront sixteenth-century European colonial pressures (Whitehead 1995a, 93).

Be that as it may, what seems clear is that the Karipuna are an outstanding example of transethnic identity. Although their mother tongue was Arawakan, their social organization and cultural practices were closer to those of the Carib-speaking Kariña than those of the Arawak-speaking Taíno or Lokono. The Karipuna lived in small villages composed of a single uxori-local extended family led by a headman and a men's assembly (Dreyfus 1983-84, 43). Village headmen who had a reputation for being courageous warriors were able to gather around them a large following through polygyny, a larger number of children, and the practice of exceptional virilocality for them and their sons. Old men's councils led groups of villages interconnected by marriages and other exchanges. Karipuna political institutions were based on frequent war and trading parties. Chiefs chosen for courage displayed in war led these expeditions, whose main objective was the taking of slave-wives and captives, some of whom were consumed in anthropophagous ritual performances (Dreyfus 1983-84, 43-44). The Karipuna waged war against their northern Arawakan neighbors, the eastern Taíno, from whom they took women and children, whereas they alternated war with trade with the Lokono, or mainland Arawak (Dreyfus 1983-84, 45).

The Taíno disappeared as a distinct ethnic group early on, in 1524, as a result of bad labor conditions, failed rebellions, and foreign epidemics (Rouse 1992, 158). During the remainder of the sixteenth century, the Spanish were not able to subject any of the other major groups of the region: the Caribized Karipuna, the Kariña, or the Lokono. However, as a result of preexisting conflicts and European pressures, by the early seventeenth century the Lokono allied with the Spanish. To counter their power, the Kariña allied with the Dutch and British. What began as an Amerindian conflict entailing warfare and a multiplicity of commercial, ritual, and marriage exchanges was elevated to the rank of "ethnic vendetta" (Whitehead 1990a, 360). It was in this context that the Lokono and Kariña, designated misleadingly as True Arawak and True Carib, respectively, became the models on which the stereotypes of the peaceful and civilized Arawak versus the warlike and savage Carib took shape.

They did not differ so much, however. The Lokono were not the peaceful victims of the Kariña and Karipuna, as they were depicted in colonial chronicles. They were organized in powerful chiefdoms interlocked in a large pol-

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ity, which extended from the coast of Guiana to the Amazon, and linked the Essequibo and Corentyn with the Paru and Trombetas (Whitehead 1994, 38). Lokono settlements were also found in the right bank of the Lower Orinoco River and on the island of Trinidad (Whitehead 1988, 18). Early chronicles mention the existence of large Lokono settlements of up to 200 houses under numerous chiefs led by a priestly leader (Whitehead 1988, 12). There is also evidence of segmentary lineage and matrilineal organization (Whitehead 1994, 39). Lokono chiefdoms were ruled by elite lineages in which transmission of chiefly status was, as among the Taíno, avuncular. The Lokono were also brave warriors who regularly organized and conducted long-term war and trading expeditions. In their raids against the Kariña and Karipuna they took goods, women, and slaves (Dreyfus 1983–84, 45). However, there is no evidence that they practiced endo-warfare; on the contrary, Lokono groups tended to establish extensive alliances. Some authors assert that, unlike their Carib neighbors, the Lokono did not practice exocannibalism (Dreyfus 1983–84, 45); others say they did (Whitehead 1995a, 99).

Strategically located along the lower course of the Orinoco River, the Kariña were at the center of a vast polity comprising the Orinoco River basin, the Venezuelan Llanos, the Venezuelan Guiana, and the Lesser Antilles (Biord-Castillo 1985; Arvelo-Jiménez and Biord 1994). This vast network was to a large extent a horizontal system composed of culturally and linguistically distinct units of similar category, integrated by relations of warfare and exchange. It was a decentralized polity in which no group dominated or oppressed the others.

Kariña social organization at the local level—very similar to that of the Karipuna—was based on numerous independent communities, each under the leadership of a war chief and an elders' council (Biord-Castillo 1985, 86). Village chiefs built their followings through control and manipulation of marriage alliances involving members of their extended family and through exogamous polygamy, mostly through capture of slave-wives (Biord-Castillo 1985, 95; Whitehead 1994, 41, 1995a, 96). In times of war several communities could ally to form a "province" led by a war chief elected from among the diverse village leaders, who composed his advising council. However, the authority of provincial war chiefs was temporary, and the position was that of *primus inter pares* rather than paramount chief.

The Kariña practiced both exo- and endo-warfare. The scope of warfare increased in the early seventeenth century, after the Kariña allied with the British and Dutch against the Lokono and their Spanish friends. Because of their access to European firearms and in response to European demand for slaves, the Kariña intensified slave raiding (Biord-Castillo 1985, 86). Alone,

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or in alliance with the Karipuna, they regularly attacked coastal peoples such as the Carib-speaking Yao of Trinidad and the Arawak-speaking Lokono and Palikur (Pa'ikwené) (Dreyfus 1983–84, 50). They also navigated up the Orinoco River and its tributaries, raiding Carib groups such as the Akawaio, Ye'kuana, and Cabré, as well as the numerous Arawakan peoples living along the Middle and Upper Orinoco (Whitehead 1990a, 365; Dreyfus 1983–84, 48; Biord-Castillo 1985, 87). Carib endo-warfare continued in postcolonial times (Farabee 1967; Butt-Colson 1984b, 114; Hoff 1995, 40–43).

The Arawakan Ethos

This quick overview of the Arawak and their neighbors at the time of European contact shows that there was no single Arawakan type of social organization and culture. On the contrary, Arawakan social and cultural patterns varied significantly. Nonetheless, beneath the important differences in form and structure there are a number of elements that keep reemerging and suggest the existence of a common Arawakan matrix, which, in turn, finds expression in a particular Arawakan ethos. I understand the notion of “cultural matrix” in the traditional senses of “womb” and “mold” but also in the newer, cybernetic sense of “network” (*womb* because it refers to the original Arawakan culture, the historically produced set of cultural perceptions, appreciations, and actions of which the Proto-Arawak were bearers; *mold* because, as in type-founding, the cultural matrix of a given language family leaves a certain imprint—which, I shall argue, is its ethos—in all its members). However, as a historical product, a cultural matrix is not a closed, integrated, coherent, and fixed whole but rather a loosely organized network that, very much like the Internet, constitutes simultaneously the background, framework, and source of information that informs the sociocultural practices of the members of a given language family. Thus, the imprint it leaves and the ethos of its members have common elements without being identical.

In Aristotle's original usage, *ethos* referred to the prevalent tone of sentiment of a people or community. Anthropology has appropriated this Greek notion for similar purposes—the description of a certain dimension of a people's culture—but with widely varying meanings. In *Naven*, arguably the first attempt at reflexive anthropology, Gregory Bateson (1936/1980) uses the terms *ethos* and *eidos* to refer to two different but complementary dimensions of cultural “configurations.” Bateson (1936/1980, 33) argues that the pervading and recurrent characteristics of a given culture not only express but also promote the standardization of individuals. In his view, *ethos* alludes to the “emotional tone” of a culture, the expression of the “culturally stan-

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standardized system of organization of the instincts and emotions of the individuals." In contrast, *eidōs* refers to the corresponding expression of their standardized cognitive aspects (Bateson 1936/1980, 33, 118). Thus, whereas *ethos* alludes to the tone, behavior, and system of emotional attitudes of the culture of a given group, *eidōs* refers to its logic, ways of thought, and system of classification (Bateson 1936/1980, 265). Bateson does not state whether the *ethos* and *eidōs* of a culture operate in conscious or unconscious ways but seems to suggest that they relate to the notion of "tradition" as unconscious to conscious aspects of culture (Bateson 1936/1980, 121).

Clifford Geertz proposed a similar dualistic conception of culture in a 1957 essay in which he contrasts the notion of *ethos* to that of worldview. In his use, however, the term *ethos* refers not only to the tone, character, and quality of a people's life (in accordance with the original Greek notion) but also to the evaluative elements of a given culture, that is, to its moral and aesthetic aspects (Geertz 1993, 127). In turn, the worldview consists of a people's ideas of order, their concepts of nature, self, and society—in brief, the cognitive, existential aspects of culture. Like Bateson, Geertz (1993, 130) argues that, considered separately, the *ethos* and the worldview, the normative and metaphysical aspects of a given culture, are arbitrary, but taken together they form a *gestalt*, a whole or configuration. He contends that *ethos* and worldview are related in such a way that each acts upon the other to render it meaningful and thus legitimate (Geertz 1993, 127). Unlike Bateson, however, Geertz (1993, 129) implies that both *ethos* and worldview are conscious aspects of culture in that they explicitly establish "the approved style of life and the assumed structure of reality."

In his *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Pierre Bourdieu (1972/1993) sets about to explain social regularities—Bateson's systematic aspects of culture—without resorting to the concept of "culture," which he believes has been extremely reified. Central to his theory is the notion of "habitus," or "ethos," a term that he sometimes uses as a synonym (Bourdieu 1972/1993, 77, 82, 85). The notion of habitus dispenses with the dualistic perspectives of culture characteristic of previous analysis, integrating the emotional with the cognitive, the normative with the metaphysical, and the perceptual with the factual. In his view, habitus is a system of dispositions—schemes of perception, thought, and action—characteristic of a social group or class, which is the historical product of a given set of objective conditions of existence (Bourdieu 1972/1993, 85, 90). Among these objective conditions or structures, Bourdieu places particular emphasis on language and economy. The habitus acts as "structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations"

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(Bourdieu 1972/1993, 72). The practices—and the dispositions of which they are the product—are the result of the internalization of the same objective structures while being indispensable for the reproduction of those objective conditions. They are normative without responding to explicit rules and are well adapted to their goals without being the product of conscious aiming (Bourdieu 1972/1993, 72). Moreover, although they are well orchestrated they do not respond to the action of a conductor; in other words, they do not function as ideological constructs.

My use of the term *ethos* is consonant with Bourdieu's rather than with that of Bateson or Geertz, for I conceive of the ethos of a people as expressing not only one particular facet of their culture, whether standardized affective aspects of behavior or moral and aesthetic prescriptions, but as a set of perceptions, values, and practices, which are unconscious but inform the more conscious aspects of culture. The ethos of a people is made up not of rules, strategies, or ideological constructs but of unconscious dispositions, inclinations, and practices, which shape those rules, strategies, and ideologies while being shaped by them.

However, because I am not dealing with the ethos of a group (or of a social class within a group) but with that of the several groups that compose a language family, some allowances must be made. First, given that a certain ethos is the historical product of a particular set of objective conditions and given that the objective conditions of the several Arawak-speaking peoples have changed through time as a result of diasporic movements, occupation of different ecosystems, and interaction with different peoples, the Arawakan ethos should not be expected to be as dense and rich as the ethoses of particular Arawak-speaking peoples. In other words, given that the objective conditions that gave rise to the Arawakan cultural matrix have changed, the ethos shared by Arawak-speaking peoples today is more abridged and general. Second, although Arawak-speaking peoples share a common ethos or set of dispositions, the actual practices that result from them in particular settings can differ substantially in form and structure. In other words, what persist are the organizing principles rather than the organized practices or, in Bourdieu's terminology, the structuring structures rather than the structured structures. Third, given that the different groups belonging to the Arawak language family have undergone different historical processes since their separation, the elements that define their common ethos are in some cases manifested as unconscious general dispositions, whereas in others they might assume a more conscious normative nature.

Bearing these caveats in mind, I suggest that five elements define the Arawakan ethos. First and foremost is an implicit or explicit repudiation of

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endo-warfare, that is, of war against peoples speaking one's own or related languages, people who share one's own ethos. Second is an inclination to establish increasing levels of sociopolitical alliance between linguistically related peoples. Third is an emphasis on descent, consanguinity, and commensality as the foundation of ideal social life. Fourth is a predilection for ancestry, genealogy, and inherited rank as the basis for political leadership. Last but not least is a tendency to assign religion a central place in personal, social, and political life. None of these elements can be said to be exclusively characteristic of Arawak-speaking peoples. Each can be found among members of other language families. What makes them meaningful is that all of them are present in the Arawakan clusters examined here.

The avoidance of endo-warfare seems to be one of the most outstanding pan-Arawak characteristics. Even in the case of northwestern Amazonia, where the evidence is not conclusive, we know that endo-warfare was not practiced, at least not within the boundaries of the large military confederacies that prevailed during much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This in no way implies that internal conflict or violence had been eliminated or that the Arawak were less aggressive than their neighbors. It indicates only that for the Arawak the "other," or enemy, is not to be found within the boundaries of one's own macrosociety but beyond, among those speaking different, unrelated languages. It does not mean that the Arawak were less fierce, either. Although the Campa, western Taíno, and classic Taíno did not take slaves, accumulate human war trophies, or practice war cannibalism, other Arawak-speaking peoples, such as the Manao, Baré, Baniwa, eastern Taíno, and Lokono, did. Therefore, the distinction is not one between "peaceful" and "bellicose" peoples or between "civilized" and "savage" but rather one between endo-warring and exo-warring societies. This distinction, I believe, is particularly relevant for our understanding of tropical forest native societies and introduces a much-needed historical perspective into the present debate between defenders of the "predation" and "morality" models of Amerindian sociality (see Taylor 1996; Viveiros de Castro 1996; Overing and Passes 2000; Santos-Granero 2000).

Intimately linked with the abstention of endo-warfare is the Arawakan propensity to establish political alliances with linguistically related peoples. These alliances were not aleatory or temporary military confederacies with specific narrow aims but an integral part of Arawakan sociopolitical systems. They were more developed and enduring in the Caribbean and northwestern Amazonia, where they involved hundreds of villages under the rule of powerful paramount chiefs, than in eastern Peru. But even in this latter region, where alliances tended to be established only in response to external

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threats, there is also evidence of more permanent coalitions (Renard-Casevitz 1993, 37; chapter 5). It should be noted that these political alliances did not necessarily coincide with ethnic or linguistic boundaries. The Baré and Taíno were divided into different confederacies. In turn, the Manao, Baré, and Campa coalitions could be extended to incorporate peoples of different linguistic affiliation—the endo-warring eastern Tukano and Pano—if the latter complied with the inhibition of endo-warfare.

The importance attributed by the Arawak to descent, consanguinity, and commensality as the proper basis for a “good” social life acquires a more visible expression in northwestern Amazonia and northeastern South America. The patrilineal sibs and phratries of the Baniwa and Wakuénai (Curripaco), the patrilineages and patrilineages of the Palikur (see chapter 7), and the matrilineages and matrilineages of the Taíno and Lokono constitute the social expression of this kind of ideology. The ideal of consanguinity was further reinforced by concomitant postmarital residence rules: virilocality in northwestern Amazonia, uxoricity in northeastern South America. Although the Arawak of eastern Peru are cognatic, named descent groups are mentioned frequently in Yanésa and Piro oral tradition (Santos-Granero 1991, 48–54). This has led Gow (personal communication, 2000) to talk of a Piro and Yanésa “ghost clan organization.” Although in an earlier work I have argued that reference to the existence of descent groups in past times is a mythico-philosophical device to stress the contrast with and desirability of present-day social organization (Santos-Granero 1991, 48), I am now inclined to concur with Smith (1985, 13–14) that they may be reminiscences of actual past social structure.

Hereditary leadership has been reported for all Arawakan clusters. In northwestern Amazonia and northeastern South America this trait was associated with a hierarchical social organization and an emphasis on high rank ancestry. Chiefly lineages, clans, or sibs have been reported among the Taíno, Lokono, and Wakuénai. The noble or divine ancestry of these groups was periodically reinforced through mythical narratives, genealogical recitals, and ritual performances. It was also marked through chiefly elite languages or specialized ritual languages. High status was maintained through “royal marriages” between chiefly families (Taíno), endogamous polygamy of chiefs, priests, and warriors (Lokono), or marriages between highly ranked patrisibs belonging to different phratries (Wakuénai) (Dreyfus 1980–81, 243; Whitehead 1994, 41; Hill 1996b, 144). A similar phenomenon was taking shape among the Yanésa, where descendants of priestly leaders composed a high-status, named descent group (Santos-Granero 1991, 309–10). Affiliation into this group was not indispensable to become a priest, but its members tend-

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ed to intermarry, and priestly leaders tended to pass on their office to their actual or classificatory sons.

The tendency to assign religion a central place in personal, social, and political life is manifested in several forms. Unlike other Amazonian peoples, the Arawak have elaborate mythologies, often organized sequentially in temporal terms, in which creator deities or cultural heroes play leading roles. These mythologies were associated with complex ritual ceremonies. Among the Taino, the Yanéscha, and the Upper Perené Campa such celebrations were held in temples and conducted by specialists who combined the functions of shaman and priest (Rouse 1992, 14; Santos-Granero 1991, 126; Weiss 1973, 46). Similar specialists are reported among the Lokono and Baniwa (Whitehead 1994, 41; Wright 1992b, 196) and among the Mojos (see chapter 5). Arawak-speaking peoples imbue their environment with religious significance, writing history into the landscape through origin myths, the sagas of creator gods, the journeys of the ancestors, petroglyphs, musicalized naming of places, and an iterative toponymy (Santos-Granero 1998; Hill 1989, 1993; Renard-Casévitiz 1993; see also chapters 8 and 10). Some of these sites were the object of pilgrimages and periodic ceremonial celebrations.

Among the Arawak, political power was often linked with religious authority. Sometimes this took the form of an association between secular and religious leaders, as was the case among the Taino, Lokono, and Baniwa. In other contexts, secular and mystical power was vested in a single person, as was the case of Yanéscha priestly leaders or Manao shaman-warrior chiefs (see chapter 10). This connection, together with millenarian conceptions, often gave rise to messianic movements in response to situations of internal or external crisis (Wright and Hill 1986; Brown and Fernández 1991, 1992; see chapter 11). Above all, however, religious ideologies promoting generosity, hospitality, and fraternity—even with strangers—contributed to inhibit endo-warfare and generate broader spheres of intraethnic and interethnic exchange and solidarity.

Ethos, History, and Transethnic Identities

The Arawakan ethos differed sharply from that of their neighbors. In contrast with the exo-warring Arawak, the Pano, eastern Tukano, and Carib placed great importance on endo-warfare and wife-taking raids not only as means of building society but as constitutive elements of their identity. Rather than encouraging social integration through descent, consanguinity, and increasingly broader spheres of solidarity between like peoples, the Pano, eastern Tukano, and Carib favored affinity, exogamy, and the constant incor-

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poration through warfare of differentiated others—whether or not linguistically related—to enhance their demographic base. The Arawak privileged what Whitehead (1994, 39) calls a theocratic-genealogical mode of leadership based on notions of noble ancestry, social rank, and priestly attributes. In contrast, the Pano, the Carib, and, to a lesser extent, the eastern Tukano favored a trading-military mode grounded on martial prowess, control of people through military subjection, and the constant conversion of trading partners into political supporters and military allies. In fact, one could affirm that the Arawak-speaking peoples were able to maintain their distinctive ethos despite the spatial and temporal distance that separated them because of the constant interaction with peoples who had antithetical social practices.

However, such clear-cut contrasts are too tidy and do not reflect the complexity of identity affiliations and political arrangements over time. Although it is possible to recognize a distinctive Arawakan ethos, there is clearly no essential, straightforward connection between speaking an Arawakan language and behaving in a certain “Arawakan way.” On the contrary, the historical data suggest that there was a continuous flow of exchange between the Arawak and their neighbors. Ideas, values, know-how, practices, and objects moved freely between the different groups involved in the vast political macrosystems of pre-Columbian times. In fact, there are probably more outer cultural similarities between the Arawak and their non-Arawakan neighbors in each of the clusters mentioned earlier than between Arawakan groups pertaining to different clusters. This would support the relevance of the notion of culture area. However, this does not negate the existence of an Arawakan ethos that likewise is a historical product and, as a constitutive element of one’s identity, is generally reinforced by historical interaction with peoples bearing other, contrasting ethoses.

However, the permeability of ethnic boundaries and the ease with which ethnic groups could shift language, identity, and political affiliation are well illustrated by the numerous cases of transethnic transformation reported in pre- and post-Columbian times. Such cases present us with a great variety of situations. The Piro and Ucayali Campa retained their Arawakan languages but assumed the ethos of the riverine Pano, with whom they continued to be bitter enemies, however. Karipuna men adopted a Kariña-related Cariban language in addition to the Arawakan language everybody spoke, but along with it they adopted a Cariban cultural ethos and shifted political allegiance from their Arawakan to their Cariban neighbors. The Tariana, having vanquished and absorbed several Tukano-speaking groups of the Lower and Middle Vaupés River, adopted the language of their subjects while retaining most of their Arawakan ethos, particularly the propensity to forge alliances under

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powerful chiefs. This situation suggests that adopting the language of another group is not necessarily proof of a weaker political or military position.

Transethnic changes were neither gradual nor irreversible affairs. Koch-Grüneberg (quoted in Goldman 1963, 14-15) reported the case of a north-west Amazon Arawak-speaking group whose members adopted a Tukanoan language but who in less than a generation switched back to Arawakan. As a result, in 1903, by the time he met them, the elders of the group were speaking Arawakan again, whereas the young could speak only Tukanoan. The Tariana shift to a Tukanoan language and the Ucayali Campa adoption and subsequent suppression of a Panoan ethos were equally quick. This suggests that shifts in identity and language cannot be conceived of as mere cultural phenomena or as passive responses to external events (acculturation) but above all are conscious political strategies. In such cases, the innovators adopt the cultural elements, expressive of their neighbors' ethos, that they consider more adequate for their survival and that eventually they may internalize as part of their own ethos.

It should also be stressed that transethnic changes do not necessarily involve whole ethnic groups, whatever the notion of ethnic group means in contexts of such fluid and rapid interethnic flows. For instance, there is evidence that the Piro did not experience a uniform process of Panoization. Subgroups that were in closer contact with the Pano-speaking Conibo, Comabo, and Mochobo, such as the Chontaquiرو (Urubamba River between the Sepahua and Yavero), the Simirinche (confluence of the Urubamba and Tambo rivers), and the Cusitinavo (left margin of Upper Ucayali), underwent a more complete process of Panoization. In contrast, subgroups such as the Upatarinavo (Upper Tambo and Ene rivers), which settled in areas closer to the Campa cluster, shared with members of this cluster many of the basic features of the Arawakan ethos (Maroni 1988, 294; see chapter 6).

In short, language and culture are connected. This connection is not genetic but historical and thus dependent on geographic contiguity and social vicinity. In other words, the notion of culture area could be more adequate than that of language family if the aim is to understand interethnic similarities and dissimilarities. However, if we agree that there is something like an Arawakan ethos, we must conclude that the ethos of a particular language family can persist long after the societies that belong to it have separated. In the case of the Maipurán branch of the Arawak language family—to which most of the above-mentioned Arawak-speaking peoples belong—this would mean more than 3,000 years (Noble 1965, 111). This is remarkable considering that the Arawak of eastern Peru, northwestern Amazonia, and northeastern South America have been heavily influenced by their Pano, eastern Tu-

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kano, and Carib neighbors, as well as by other quite different peoples from the Andean highlands, Central America, and even the southeastern United States. However, the constant emergence of transethnic Arawakan groups demonstrates that despite this remarkable persistence, the link between language and culture is indeed historical and therefore subject to the broad fluctuations of political and economic interests.

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