Burst of Breath

Indigenous Ritual Wind Instruments in Lowland South America

EDITED BY JONATHAN D. HILL &
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Set in Sabon.

We dedicate this book to our friend and colleague Maria Ignez Cruz Mello (1962–2008), whose death was a terrible loss for the community of scholars interested in the anthropology of indigenous Amazonian musical and other cultural practices. No act of commemoration or dedication can fill the void left by the death of such a creative scholar who was still in the early postdoctoral years of her career and who undoubtedly had so much more to contribute to ethnomusicology and anthropology. The pairing of Maria Ignez's work with that of her widower, Acácio Tadeu de Piedade, is one of the greatest strengths of *Burst of Breath,* since it will mark the first time that anthropology will have achieved a truly cross-gendered documentation and analysis of indigenous Amazonian music—both vocal and instrumental, women's and men's—written by husband-and-wife fieldworker/collaborators who are (or were, sadly, in the case of Maria Ignez) also both highly accomplished musician-composers as well as recent doctorates in social anthropology. It is our sincere hope that by dedicating *Burst of Breath* to the memory of Maria Ignez Cruz Mello and publishing her superb essay on the complex and highly creative synergy between Wauja women's iamurikuma singing and the men's sacred flute music, we will have planted a seed that will inspire generations of researchers to emulate her skillful blending of musical creativity and ethnographic inquiry.

Contents

List of Illustrations ix

Overture 1
Jonathan D. Hill and Jean-Pierre Chaumeil

FIRST MOVEMENT:
Natural Sounds, Wind Instruments, and Social Communication

1. Speaking Tubes: The Sonorous Language of Yagua Flutes 49
Jean-Pierre Chaumeil
2. Leonardo, the Flute: On the Sexual Life of Sacred Flutes among the Xinguano Indians 69
Rafael José de Menezes Bastos
3. Soundscaping the World: The Cultural Poetics of Power and Meaning in Wakuénai Flute Music 93
Jonathan Hill
4. Hearing without Seeing: Sacred Flutes as the Medium for an Avowed Secret in Curripaco Masculine Ritual 123
Nicolas Journet
5. Flutes in the *Warime*: Musical Voices in the Piaroa World 147
Alexander Mansutti Rodríguez
6. Desire in Music: Soul-Speaking and the Power of Secrecy 171
Marcelo Fiorini

SECOND MOVEMENT:
Musical Transpositions of Social Relations

7. Archetypal Agents of Affinity: "Sacred" Musical Instruments in the Guianas? 201
Marc Brightman

8. From Flutes to Boom Boxes: Musical Symbolism and Change among the Waiwai of Southern Guyana 219
Stephanie W. Alemán

9. From Musical Poetics to Deep Language: The Ritual of the Wauja Sacred Flutes 239
Acácio Tadeu de Camargo Piedade

10. The Ritual of Iamurikuma and the Kawoká Flutes 257
Maria Ignez Cruz Mello

11. Spirits, Ritual Staging, and the Transformative Power of Music in the Upper Xingu Region 277
Ulrike Prinz

12. An "Inca" Instrument at a "Nawa" Feast: Marubo Flutes and Alterity in Amazonian Context 301
Javier Ruedas

13. Arawakan Flute Cults of Lowland South America: The Domestication of Predation and the Production of Agentivity 325
Robin Wright

CODA:
Historical and Comparative Perspectives

14. Sacred Musical Instruments in Museums: Are They Sacred? 357
Claudia Augustat

15. Mystery Instruments 371
Jean-Michel Beaudet

Contributors 395
Index 401

12. *An "Inca" Instrument at a "Nawa" Feast*

Marubo Flutes and Alterity in Amazonian Context

JAVIER RUEDAS

This chapter explores the connections between flute use and concepts of alterity in Amazonia by analyzing a Marubo headman's comments on flute use. The Marubo, a Panoan society of the Javari River basin in western Brazil, do not have sacred flutes, but their youths play flutes in informal settings such as manioc beer feasts. During one such feast at Maronal, a village on the upper Curuçá River, the headman explained to me that flutes were Inca instruments and what we were attending was not a Marubo event but rather a *nawa* (distant stranger, white man) feast. I will analyze Marubo concepts of identity and alterity (otherness) to show the importance of nawa and Inca in Marubo thought and, more broadly, in the constitution of Panoan (including Marubo) social forms. I then will use ethnographic observations to point out that the Marubo associate youths with alterity (the nawa) and elders with Marubo identity. Youths incorporate nawa elements into Marubo rituals, while a core set of ritual actions organized by elders remains central to the Marubo self-definition. The Marubo preserve identity by associating youth with alterity.

Marubo flutes, used by youths and defined as "Inca," reproduce the broader Amazonian connection between flute use and concerns with alterity. Although they are not sacred and occupy a marginal place in Marubo ritual, the comparison with sacred flute complexes "may bring us insight into more fundamental

Amazonian social themes" (see Brightman, this volume). Throughout Amazonia, the connection between flutes and discourse on alterity reveals the ways in which different Amazonian peoples worry about what they perceive to be the dangerous other and then set about socializing or domesticating the danger or, in the Marubo case, turning it into an object of laughter. Although the ritual and discourse surrounding most Amazonian flute use exhibits a concern with sexual difference or with affinity, Marubo flute use reflects the Panoan concern with the radical otherness of those who represent distant states—the Inca and the white man.

The Headman Says Flutes Are Inca Instruments

In September 1997, a new *shovo* (longhouse) was completed at Maronal, and this event occasioned a feast. The longhouse belonged to the headman's son-in-law, Mayãpa, and was built to house him and his wife and son as well as his three brothers and their wives and children. Because these brothers were all members of the Varináwavo section, the longhouse was called the Varináwavo shovo.[1]

The occasion for the longhouse's inaugural feast arose on October 4, 1997, when an *ako* was heard to sound in Maronal. An ako is a hollowed-out log drum that is found in almost every Marubo longhouse. The ako is used mainly during feasts that involve multiple longhouses. It was once used as a warning that enemies had been sighted. Its main nonceremonial use was to signal that a herd of white-lipped peccaries had been located. As soon as the ako sounded, all the hunters in the village dropped whatever they were doing and gathered to discuss their strategy. They sent spotters out to keep track of the herd, while the bulk of hunters waited for the next day. Early the following morning, twenty-eight hunters surrounded the herd and forced it through a gauntlet of shotgun fire. Forty-three peccaries were killed. The bulk of the meat was given to the Varináwavo brothers so they could host their inaugural feast.

On the day after the hunt, young men all over the village rolled up their hammocks and went to the Varináwavo shovo to eat grilled peccary.[2] The older men stayed in their own longhouses. Accompanying a group of elders, I visited the new longhouse on October 7. In addition to grilled peccary, the Varináwavo brothers' wives had made a large batch of the slightly fermented corn beer, *waka*. We ate to our heart's content and then I returned with the elders to the center of the village, where I lived.

On October 8, the remaining inhabitants of the longhouse compound where I lived returned to Mayãpa's shovo for breakfast. This morning, however, the feast had changed in quality. As we approached, I saw many splotches of a congealed white semiliquid substance all around the edge of the new swidden clearing surrounding the longhouse. I asked what this was and was told that the feast organizers had finished brewing manioc beer. The young men had been drinking and had vomited in order to continue drinking.

Along with the elders that I had accompanied, I sat on the *kenã* benches that flanked the shovo entrance and ate peccary, corn beer, plantains, manioc, and banana porridge. The young men of the village were coming into the shovo, filling cups from a large pot of manioc beer, and drinking deeply, then going back outdoors. Outside, one young man carried a radio playing a cassette of Brazilian dance music, while another young man banged on a handheld peccary-skin drum and others played plastic flutes.

After eating, the elders went outside to sit on a log and watch the proceedings. I sat with them and elicited oral histories from the headman, Alfredo. The histories ranged from the arrival of the first government officials in the 1970s, through his youth, to the story of his father's family during the rubber boom (c. 1890–1910) and its aftermath. During the rubber boom, he said, several women in his family were kidnapped by Peruvians. He then explained that what we were watching was a *festa nawa*. The predominant contemporary meaning of *nawa* in Marubo is "white man," synonymous with the Portuguese term *o branco*. I asked Alfredo what made this a festa nawa. He responded that the skin

drum, the flutes, and the radio playing dance music were nawa. He said, "This is not our way, it is another." Referring to the flutes, he said, "This is not Marubo, it is Inca."

While the elders and I returned to the village center to work and sleep, the youths continued drinking manioc beer—without sleeping—for the second night in a row. I was told that, during that last night of drinking, a conflict arose when a young man from another village tried to persuade his host affines to let him take his wife into virilocal residence. I also heard that a young man came to blows with a young woman. By the time I returned the next morning, the manioc beer was finished, but many youths were still awake and still playing flutes and drums. While Mayãpa served food to the elders and me, the youths dug a pit outside, filled it with water, and began to throw mud at each other and attempt to tackle one another in the pit. The young men and women irreverently threw mud at the headman, who sat in immutable dignity during this process. Noticing my efforts to avoid the mud, a group of mud-covered women seized me, covered me with mud, and threw me into the pit. I escaped, bathed in a nearby rivulet, and left with the elders. With the end of the manioc beer, the inaugural feast for Mayãpa's shovo ended that day.

The events described above raise a number of important questions. Is it significant that the participants in this feast were all youths, while the elders were observers? Why is this feast classified as festa nawa, and why is the flute considered an Inca instrument? What can this tell us about Marubo and Panoan concepts of identity and alterity, and how can this shed light on flute use in Amazonia more generally?

Nawa, Inca, Yura: Marubo and Panoan Concepts of Identity and Alterity

Nawa is a category of alterity found in nearly all Panoan societies (Erikson 1986, 1996). The term *nawa* is often glossed as "stranger," but can also mean "people." When used as an affix, nawa generates ethnonyms, descent group names, or the names of other internal groups. In this sense, it is often used in combination with the pluralizer *vo*. The Marubo descent groups, for example, have names such as Iskonáwavo, "oropendola people," or Varináwavo, "sun people." Similar internal group names are found among the Katukina-Pano (Coffaci 1994) and Amahuaca (Russell 1964). This morpheme is also commonly found in Panoan ethnonyms, often exogenous such as the insulting *Kashinawa*, (bat people). However, as a free morpheme, *nawa* is used by Panoans to refer to the outermost limits of alterity: the Inca and the white man (Keifenheim 1990, 1992). In this sense, *nawa* refers to peoples who originate beyond the forest, belong to powerful states, and create metal tools and merchandise. Alfredo's statement that the youths were conducting a nawa feast thus meant that the festivities belonged to this furthest conceivable realm of alterity, consisting of elements imported from—or created in imitation of—the white man and the Inca.

The presence of the Inca in Panoan mythology and concepts of alterity has occupied the attention of scholars for some time (Roe 1982, 1988; Melatti 1985, 1986; Lathrap et al. 1985, 1987; DeBoer and Raymond 1987; Erikson 1990; Harner 1993; Kensinger 1993; Calavia 2000; McCallum 2000; Cesarino 2008; see also Bardales Rodriguez 1979). Julio Cezar Melatti was the first to draw attention to the particular place of the Inca in Marubo mythology and cosmology. For Melatti's informants, the Inca and the white man were thoroughly fused into a single category. In the Marubo creation story (Melatti 1986), the first people emerge from the ground and learn to have sex by watching capuchin monkeys. Although the ancestral leaders know to have sex only with cross-cousins, some of the people have sex indiscriminately with forbidden categories of kin. When the people reach a wide river spanned by a living caiman bridge, the leaders tell the people who have proper sex to cross first. Then, when the incestuous transgressors are crossing, they cut the bridge, and the

transgressors fall into the water to be eaten by piranhas and catfish. Some women take the water with the blood of the dead into their mouths and blow it to the west. The blood goes to a place called Roe Inka (Inca Axe), where it becomes the white man and the Inca and where, according to Melatti's informant, the axe factory is. Another of Melatti's informants described Roe Inka as being inhabited by "a tribe of whites, Americans, over there in the West, where the axe factory is" (Melatti 1985: 53), again equating the Inca with the white man and metal goods. More recently, Cesarino (2008) has translated a Marubo myth describing a journey by the Marubo ancestors to Roe Inka to obtain stone axes.

Melatti (1985: 80–85) argued that the "Inca" in Marubo myth and cosmology could refer to any of three groups. First are the actual subjects of the Inca empire, with which some ancestors of the Marubo probably had contact. Second are Quechua speakers associated with the Spanish colonization of the upper Amazon, including missionaries, traders, and soldiers. Finally, Quechua speakers entered the Javari River basin during the rubber boom. Melatti argues that the figure of the Inca in Marubo mythology most likely originates in contact with the pre-Hispanic Incas, but has been reinforced and altered by subsequent regular contact with other "Incas." Cesarino's translation of the Marubo myth Inka Roe Yõka seems to indicate at least some pre-Hispanic contact, because it portrays the Marubo ancestors as obtaining stone axes, whereas colonial and postcolonial Quechua speakers would have owned metal axes. On the other hand, Melatti's informants associated the Inca with metal tools and equated the Inca and the white man, indicating a postconquest reformulation of the "Inca" category. Furthermore, whereas the Inca seems to have once been the paradigmatic representative of the category of distant stranger (nawa), that position has more recently been occupied by the white man. In contrast to the Shipibo (Bardales Rodriguez 1979) or Kashinawa (Kensinger 1993), among whom the Inca occupies a central position in mythology, in Marubo mythology the Inca is a marginal figure whereas the white man is the subject of considerable speculation (Melatti 1985).

The Marubo Inca is a variant of the generalized Panoan Inca and of the Panoan theories of alterity that are represented in the varying definitions of the category of nawa. For example, for the Kashinawa, the Incas and white man also originated in the crossing of a bridge consisting of a living caiman (family Alligatoridae). However, in the case of the Kashinawa, those who cross become the Inca, while those who stay behind become the Kashinawa. In this myth (Deshayes and Keifenheim 1994: 168–70), the ancestral Huni Kuin (the Kaxinawa autonym) are upset because they have no stone or metal. Deciding to travel, they reach the wide river bridged by the caiman. The caiman allows families to cross in return for gifts of meat. However, when one family brings a gift of caiman meat, the caiman is offended and refuses to allow any more crossings. Those who had already crossed reached the land of metals and became the Inca; the white man is the son of the Inca. Thus, for the Kashinawa, the Inca and the white man also fall into the same category of alterity, characterized by possessing metal. Renard-Casevitz et al. (1986: 100) also report a Kashinawa myth collected by Deshayes and Keifenheim in which the Kashinawa travel to work for the Inca in return for metal but, receiving nothing for their hard work, plan to kill the Inca and return to their own villages. Calavia (2000: 11–12) discusses the Kashinawa myths of the Inca collected by Capistrano de Abreu and by Tastevin, in which the Inca is a powerful figure controlling both natural forces and cultural knowledge. This is similar to the Shipibo Inca (Bardales Rodriguez 1979; Lathrap et al. 1985; Roe 1988), which, though not a single figure but rather a multiplicity of distinct characters, is almost always a culture hero that controls essential cultural knowledge. In contrast, the Marubo Inca is neither a culture hero nor a co-resident of the Marubo, nor does the Marubo go live near the Inca; rather, the Inca is a

distant owner of stone and metal tools and of the knowledge of their production.

Although there are clear indications that the Marubo Inca has its roots in pre-Hispanic contacts, there is also little doubt that it has been reformulated over time to account for new contacts with Quechua, Spanish, and Portuguese speakers (cf. Calavia 2000).[3] The rubber boom, in particular, seems to have brought Quechua speakers into direct contact with the immediate ancestors of the Marubo (Montagner Melatti and Melatti 1975: 22). My informants stated that during and after the rubber boom, several Marubo who worked as rubber tappers spoke "Inca" fluently. One of the most prominent Marubo elders during my fieldwork was nicknamed "Kuraka," the Quechua term for chief, and several other Marubo words are Quechua in origin (Cesarino 2008). The rubber boom contributed to reinforcing and changing the position of the Inca in Marubo categories of alterity, but also to fusing the Inca and the white man together in the category of nawa, the attractive but dangerous metal-owning representatives of the distant and mysterious state.

Although Alfredo called the manioc beer feast of October 1997 a festa nawa, much of this event was indigenous and Panoan in form and content. The occasion was the inauguration of a new shovo, it was preceded by a communal peccary hunt, the peccaries were distributed by an elder, the entire village was invited to the feast, and all guests were offered cooked peccary meat and corn beer. This was followed by the consumption of a batch of manioc beer, which was the scene for the expression of tensions between affines and between people involved in sexual relationships, very much like the informal feasts of the Brazilian Yaminawa (Calavia 2004). Among the clearest Panoan components of the feast was the mud fight, which is one of the sequence of semiformal intergeneric insults preceding the biannual Kachanaua fertility ritual among the Kashinawa (Kensinger 1995: 70–71).

Within this generally Panoan context, Alfredo identified specific ritual elements as nawa: the stereo playing Brazilian music, the skin drum, and the flute, this latter more precisely identified as Inca. The stereo and the Brazilian music are relatively recent incorporations into the Marubo cultural repertoire and self-evidently originate in the world of the white man. Although there are some known Panoan aerophones, they are clay transverse aerophones with resonating chambers (Erikson 1996: 263–70), whereas the flute identified by Alfredo as Inca was a plastic end-blown flute. The skin drum is found among the Shipibo, but there it is called *tampora*, a cognate of the Spanish word *tambor* (Roe 1982: 100, 321n45), indicating a nawa origin. The Marubo skin drum and flute ensemble used at the manioc beer feast so closely resembles the highland Quechua *flauta y caja* ensembles (Olsen 2004: 304–305) that, as a preliminary hypothesis, we can take at face value the emic identification of the instruments as Inca, incorporated into the Marubo repertoire during and after the rubber boom when the Marubo were in contact with Quechua-speaking Peruvians. Thus imported ritual elements are being consciously embedded within the framework of a Panoan-style ritual.

If the category of nawa, with its Inca subset, represents the outermost band of alterity, Marubo identity is represented by the category *yura*. *Yura* is a Panoan cognate generally meaning "body" (Erikson 1996: 75). Among some Panoans, in combination with a morpheme meaning "other," it can be used to refer to the intermediate band of alterity occupied by other Panoans (e.g., Dole 1979: 35). Although most Panoans use some variant of the proto-Panoan **oni* as an autonym (Erikson 1996: 73), the Marubo (as well as some Amahuaca) use the corporeal metaphor *yura*. The Marubo are the result of the fusion of Panoan groups in the immediate aftermath of the rubber boom (Melatti 1977: 92 and 1986: 30–37; Ruedas 2003, 2004), and today consist of nine intermarried exogamous matrilineal units. In its most limited usage, the Marubo use *yura* to refer to themselves, that is, any member of the nine matrilineal units that survived the rubber boom by hiding

together between the Ituí and Curuçá rivers from about 1895 to 1965.[4] However, *yura* is also applied to any Panoan group with an ethnonym containing the morphemes *nawa* or *vo*, and it can also be applied to any indigenous peoples, in which case it forms part of a dualistic opposition with nawa (Montagner Melatti and Melatti 1975: 3). The categories of yura and nawa are frequently opposed in Marubo discourse, as when the elders complain that youths listen to *nawã vana* (white man's words) instead of *yurã vana* (Marubo words, meaning the elders' formal discourses; Ruedas 2002). The yura and nawa categories are also opposed in the classification of feasts, as will be described below.

This analysis of the Marubo concepts of identity and alterity evoked by Alfredo in his explanation of the manioc beer feast shows that Marubo flute use is described in terms of the principal categories of distant alterity, nawa and Inca. The close connection between flutes and alterity that is common throughout Amazonia thus holds for the Marubo, albeit in a rather different form from that found in classic Amazonian sacred flute complexes. Among the Marubo, ritual flute use is one part of the insertion of non-Panoan motifs in indigenous Panoan ceremonies. To understand this phenomenon, it is necessary to examine, first, what the Marubo consider a "Marubo" feast as opposed to a festa nawa, and secondly how the categories "youth" and "elders" correlate with the distinction between Marubo and nawa ritual.

Youth Is to Inca as Elder Is to Marubo

The principal feasts that are considered "Marubo" are the *akoya* and the *tanamea*. The akoya is the feast held to celebrate the construction of a new hollowed-out log drum, or ako. These drums are considered by the elders to be the only authentic yura instrument (other than the human voice). All Marubo shovo should have an ako hung next to the benches lining the front entrance. The absence of an ako is considered a sign of poverty or laziness. When a new longhouse is constructed or an old ako is damaged, longhouse owners seek the opportunity to hold an akoya. The ako is constructed by a group of youths supervised by elders. While it is being constructed, a communal hunt takes place, often of a spider monkey troop or a peccary herd. The ako is carried back to the longhouse where it will be placed. A group of strong young men carry it by hanging it from a long pole. Along the way, they stop repeatedly to play it. While they play the ako, women playfully poke their cross-cousins in the ribs. Arriving at the longhouse, they hang the ako, play it, and eat. Subsequently, one or more elders begin to sing *saiti* (myth songs), and the youths walk around the open space in the center of the longhouse repeating the elders' verses in a call-response format. This lasts until dawn, when the ritual ends. The two akoya that I observed at Maronal involved the entire village (twelve longhouses at that time). The ako, the akoya, and the saiti are all considered "Marubo" by the elders.

The second major feast that the elders considered "Marubo" is the tanamea. The tanamea takes months of planning and involves the entire village in organizing to host several other villages. During the single tanamea that I observed from beginning to end, multiple longhouses cooperated to assemble enough food for the feast. Plantains, bananas, and manioc were brought from swiddens around the village. After a one-day ceremony called the *vina atxia* (wasp-grab), the young men in the village went hunting. Simultaneously, two elders set out to invite other Marubo villages to the feast. One crossed the forest to the Ituí River, where he went from longhouse to longhouse issuing formal invitations in ceremonial dialogues. The other went downstream to another village on the Curuçá. The Curuçá guests arrived first, bringing baskets of turtle eggs and smoked game. Once the guests had arrived, young men began to play the ako and elders began to sing saiti while young men walked around the longhouse center repeating the verses (see Ruedas 2003 and Cesarino 2008 for more details on saiti). When enough guests had arrived, the singing was moved outdoors to the longhouse patio; eventually singing took

place simultaneously indoors and outdoors. When the Ituí guests arrived, they staged an invasion of the host village, tearing up pepper bushes, chopping down fruit trees, churning up the pristine patios, and chopping down the ako of the host longhouse, severely damaging it. (This, of course, necessitated the celebration of an akoya a few months later.) The guests then took over the inside of the host longhouse to sing. They sat down to eat smoked meat, turtle eggs, manioc, plantains, and banana porridge, and offered presents of arrows, feathered headdresses, and spears.

Several youth-led events took place in conjunction with the elder-led feast. In the days leading up to the feast as well as in its immediate aftermath, Alfredo's son took advantage of the presence of elders from other villages to hold political meetings to discuss land rights, education, health care, and economic development. These meetings were initiated and led by the young political activists in the village, not by the elders. On the night that the tanamea ended, the electric generator was turned on, a stereo system was activated, and a festa nawa lasted all night, involving Brazilian and Spanish American music, pharmaceutical alcohol, and nonindigenous dancing. The following day, a soccer tournament was held pitting the various villages against one another. A similar festa nawa was held at the end of a tanamea on the Ituí River a few months later. Thus the incorporation of imported elements into traditional feasts is itself something of a tradition. This aspect of Marubo ritual highlights the distinction between generations, because it is always the elders who organize and direct the ritual elements that are defined as Marubo (or yura), while it is the youths who organize and direct the ritual elements that are defined as nonindigenous, or nawa.

The associations between elders and yura ritual, on the one hand, and between youths and nawa ritual, on the other, make sense if we consider the economic and political activities that are culturally appropriate for these categories of Marubo. Alfredo's personal history exemplifies these associations. Alfredo's father had been headman before him, prior to official contact with the Brazilian government in the mid-1970s. Alfredo, however, was not the eldest of his father's sons; his brother Zacarias was considerably older. According to Alfredo, as his father got older he first passed the duties of headman to Zacarias, but Zacarias did not know how to organize labor. Alfredo did, he said, and so he assumed the role of headman. When Alfredo said this, he also emphasized that, prior to marrying, he had been to Rio Branco, Manaus, and Brasília. This accords with a comment later made to me by Zacarias, namely, that Alfredo was nawa chief while he himself was yura chief, implying that Alfredo was leader in terms of relations to nonindigenous people, while he himself was leader in traditional matters. In fact, Zacarias was not residing at Maronal during the year of my fieldwork; he was attending to pension paperwork in a village closer to Brazilian government offices. Alfredo was the headman of Maronal in all respects, not only in the realm of relations to nonindigenous people. He coordinated labor for projects of communal interest such as trading logs for a generator, cutting and maintaining an airstrip, or maintaining and operating radios; he engaged in healing rituals and issued lengthy sermons on proper social behavior, behaving in every way as the embodiment of oft-stated ideals for leaders' behavior (Melatti 1981; Ruedas 2001). But it is interesting to note that this highly traditional leader had, in his youth, visited far-distant nawa cities and that this was considered a positive factor in evaluating his worthiness to lead a village (Erikson 1996: 80–82).

The cyclic nature of orientations toward tradition and toward the nonindigenous world are further revealed in considering the way Alfredo's son, Alfredinho, spoke of his father. Alfredinho once told me that it was important for youths such as himself (meaning bilingual and politically active youths) to "present ideas to the elders" and to "present the reality of the situation" to the elders. Otherwise, he said, the elders just wanted to plant new swiddens, order hunting to take place, and organize traditional feasts. But

the youths, Alfredinho said, "have been to the city and returned. They have seen the reality and learned." Only if they present ideas to the elders will the elders take steps in directions such as education and economic development; otherwise, they focus only on "traditional" goals. Alfredinho attended political meetings, frequently traveled to cities, communicated with indigenous political organizations, conveyed news of the outside world to his father and to the other elders, and called meetings of elders. Alfredo was perfectly content with this state of affairs. But it is interesting to note that Alfredinho's behavior was not so different from the behavior of his father when the latter had been young. The older Alfredo had also once traveled to the cities and been considered nawa-oriented, only to turn into a traditional leader who delegated the responsibility for nonindigenous affairs to his own son. Four years after my initial fieldwork, I heard that Alfredinho was married and was traveling less; it is possible that he was beginning his own transformation into a traditional leader whose children would handle relations with nonindigenous people.

Similar relationships between youth and elders were discernible in the family of my host, José (Alfredo's brother). José had traveled to the cities in his youth, learned some Portuguese, and worked as a rancher and logger. After his marriage he engaged in rubber tapping and continued to travel to towns, now with heavy balls of rubber on his back. But during my fieldwork he almost never left his village and refused to travel to cities. His son Manoel was bilingual and worked first as secretary-treasurer for the indigenous political organization CIVAJA and later as an agent of the Brazilian government Indian agency, FUNAI. Manoel once gave me a speech almost identical to Alfredinho's about how young people needed to learn about the nonindigenous world and influence the elders on policy toward the nawa.

There is thus evidence that the emphasis of youth on nonindigenous affairs and of elders on tradition is a cultural tendency based on age and not an idiosyncrasy based on individuality. Young men tend to focus on nonindigenous affairs, both political and economic, but eventually diminish their emphasis on these affairs as they marry and raise a family. By the time they have grown sons, the same men who once focused entirely on nonindigenous affairs at the expense of tradition have morphed into traditional elders. The focus of youth on nonindigenous affairs therefore seems to be a long-standing tradition and a very old one, considering its presence in the myth in which young men travel to obtain Inca stone axes. The association of youth with the external and of elders with the internal is clearly established in the cultural expectations concerning the social behavior and interactions of these two categories of Marubo people, the *vevoke* (those who came anciently) and the *txipoke* (those who came afterward).

The associations of youth and elders to forms of social behavior are reflected in their ritual behavior. Thus, while the elders lead youths in ceremonial activities considered "Marubo" or "traditional," the youths insert imported elements into the framework of the traditional feasts. A festa nawa, led and attended exclusively by youths, follows the end of the traditional tanamea feast, and the next day a soccer tournament is organized by the same youths. On the symbolic and ritual level, this completes the analogy of elder:yura::youth:nawa, which already exists on the level of social behavior.

Conclusions

The Marubo system of permitting youths to contribute imported elements to the structure of indigenous rituals is a variation on the general Panoan concern with the absorption of alterity (Erikson 1996). "The great Panoan rituals have been analysed as episodes of assimilation of otherness, or more precisely as the constitution of the social self through this assimilation" (Calavia 2004: 164). But although this is a pan-Panoan process, its specific consequences vary from group to group. Among the Yaminawa, the leaders organize feasts in which nonindigenous elements such as

cachaça, *forró*, and exotic commodities predominate (Calavia 2004). In the Marubo case, the assignment of otherness to youth prevents the imported elements from permanently changing the definition of Marubo-ness, which appears quite rigid. Elders delegate relations with nonindigenous peoples to the youths who, many years later, delegate nonindigenous affairs to their own children. Elders, by definition bearers of what they consider to be authentic Marubo culture, have undergone a transition from youthful fascination with alterity to sober orthopraxy. A core set of ritual actions remains central to the Marubo self-definition (emically phrased as "yura," not "Marubo"), while ceremonial activities imported from other groups remain defined as nawa even when, as in the case of the flute and skin drum, nearly a century has passed since their introduction to the Marubo cultural repertoire. The Marubo use flutes in ceremonial contexts, but flutes remain excluded from the definition of Marubo-ness by this long cultural memory concerning what youths have brought from outside and by the equations of youth with otherness and of elders with indigeneity.

The presence of flutes in an informal, youth-led ritual that the elders specifically define as non-Marubo seems very distant from flute use in Amazonian contexts where flutes are considered sacred, but it highlights themes common to the region. Piedade (this volume) writes that "even in sociocultural systems in which there are no sacred flutes, the sacred flute complex is generalized in indigenous South American societies as a collective form of thinking about sensitive points in social existence." Indeed, flute use in Amazonia is embedded in cultural reflections on otherness, and its analysis reveals important regional differences in systems of thinking about alterity. Hill (2001) has pointed out that the classic ritual cults of Amazonia fall in a spectrum from "marked" to "unmarked." In marked fertility cults, "ritual power is exercised in ways that define masculinity in opposition to femininity," while in unmarked cults "the dominant theme is the building of male-female complementarity" (Hill 2001: 49). The Xinguano flutes described by Piedade and Cruz Mello in this volume are used in "rituals in which questions relative to gender relations are emphasized." In contrast, in the Wakuénai *pudáli* ceremony, musical meanings are "rooted in beliefs and attitudes about the potential problems created by social 'others,' or affines" (Hill 2004: 35). The pudáli deals with male-female relations, but in an overall context of concern with affinity, a situation fitting Descola's 2001 argument that, although some Amazonian societies—those with what Hill calls marked fertility cults—exhibit a cultural concern with sexual differences as dangerous alterities, in most of Amazonia the concern with gender is subsumed within a broader concern with affinity, and affinity is the really dangerous otherness that must be, in Piedade's terms, collectively thought about. Among the Marubo, flutes seem linked to generational difference rather than to gender or affinity, but generation, as explained above, stands in here for a bigger problem: ethnocultural otherness. The Panoan case thus suggests a third option within Amazonia: the concern with ethnocultural otherness as the dangerous alterity that must be ritually absorbed or, at least, contained.[5]

In the Marubo case, the concern with absorption of otherness is not surprising: Marubo ethnogenesis involved the coming together of several groups, speaking at least two (and possibly more) languages (Ruedas 2001: 709–41). The elders who managed this process had to think carefully about how best to effect this fusion, and they left behind a series of rituals in which internal oppositions are dialectically opposed and then converted into alliance and reciprocity (cf. Hill 2004). Although Marubo feasting is very much concerned with affinity, informants told me that they considered all members of the nine Marubo lineages, including affines and potential affines, to be kin (Portuguese *parentes*; Marubo *wetsama*, "not others"). But beyond the concern with internal difference, there is a concern with radically different otherness, the nawa—after all, the cause of Marubo ethno-

genesis, via the violence of the rubber boom—and the methods for coping with its presence. This concern is shared with other Panoans: "among all Panoans, the assimilation of the exterior is perceived as a sine qua non condition for social reproduction" (Erikson 1996: 78). This takes different forms among different Panoan groups. The Matses captured women from other groups in order to ensure their own survival (Fields and Merrifield 1980; Romanoff 1984), while the Shipibo have absorbed not just individuals but the entirety of the Conibo, Shetebo, and perhaps other ethnic groups (Morin 1998). For the Yaminawa, "the internal social order requires the incorporation of the powers of the society of the 'others'" (Townsley 1986: 24), while the Matis "aim for the symbolic incorporation of alterity rather than its exclusion from the human category" (Erikson 1996: 77). Erikson (1996: 79) argues that conceptualizing the nawa is not just about incorporating their qualities, but also about finding oneself in them, so that the nawa is not only an antagonist but also a self-reference.

The Marubo are unique within the Panoan continuum in that, whereas in many Panoan societies the incorporated other is central to self-definition, the Marubo system ensures that the incorporated other does not alter the definition of yura. Marubo flute-playing is a form of incorporating the other, but it takes the form of youthful play, and men stop playing flutes as they become the elders whose behavior defines what it means to be a yura. The Marubo use of "Inca" flutes domesticates the predatory outsider—the powerful nawa—within a symbolic economy of alterity (cf. Wright, this volume, on Arawakan flutes) in which this domestication is a fundamental process of constituting the social body (yura), for if the nawa are not properly managed, the yura cannot exist. The Marubo manioc beer feast thus contains a distinctively Panoan variation on the Amazonian connection between flutes and alterity, one in which neither the woman-as-threat nor the affine-as-threat constitute the focus of collective thought, which is instead the powerful representatives of the distant and dangerous state.

Notes

1. There are nine Marubo matrilineal units, each with two denominations that alternate each generation. For example, the child of a Varináwavo woman is Tamaoavo, and vice versa. Melatti (1977) called the units formed of two denominations "matrilineal units" and the alternating-generation groups within each unit "sections" by analogy with the Kariera type of kinship. In this chapter, I follow his terminology.

2. In transcribing Marubo words such as *shovo*, I have rendered their bilabial fricative with the letter *v*. In addition, for this paper I have ignored the difference between the retroflex fricative and the palato-alveolar fricative, which is a phonemic distinction in Marubo. In his earlier writings on the Marubo, Melatti (1977) transcribed the bilabial fricative with the letter *b* and distinguished the retroflex fricative by transcribing it *sr* instead of *sh*. In his later writings, Melatti (1986) shifted to a *v* for the bilabial fricative and ignored the *sr*/*sh* distinction. I follow his later model.

3. There is an ongoing debate among Panoanists concerning the existence and extent of contacts between Panoans and highland Quechuans in pre-Hispanic times. Lathrap et al. (1985) utilized evidence from archaeology and the analysis of myth to argue that Quechua-speakers lived among riverine Panoans in pre-Hispanic times, establishing a ruling class and dominating the area for a time. This argument was refuted by DeBoer and Raymond (1987: 130), who suggested the presence of the Inca in Panoan myth is a postconquest phenomenon, noting that "use of the generic term 'Inca' to refer to the peoples of the Andes is a Spanish practice." Melatti (1985) has argued that the Inca as represented in Marubo myth could only be derived from experience with pre-Hispanic Andean peoples, and Cesarino's translation of a Marubo myth has the Marubo trading for stone axes rather than metal axes, which strongly suggests a pre-Hispanic context. Calavia (2000: 8) discusses the idea that the presence of the Inca figure in Panoan myth may result from missionaries using Quechua as lingua franca and leaders of messianic movements acting as descendants of the Inca or spokespersons of Indianist nationalisms, who have all updated and altered the meaning of "Inca" in regional discourse over time. Calavia notes that recognition of pre-Hispanic contacts between Andean elites and Panoan peoples is compatible with the idea of a constant reformulation of the Inca figure during postconquest history, a position I agree with. The extent and nature of pre-Hispanic contacts between Panoans and Quechuans remains very much an open question.

4. The traumatic nature of contact between native Amazonians and rubber workers during the rubber boom (see, e.g., Taussig 1987 and Reeve 1988) was

a crucible for ethnogenesis in the Panoan area (cf. Erikson 1996). According to oral histories gathered by Montagner Melatti and Melatti 1975, Coutinho 1993, and this author, some ancestors of the Marubo sought isolation from the rubber workers by migrating to a remote area near the headwaters of the Arrojo River by the 1890s. Various Panoan groups joined these original migrants over the next forty years, and it is from these people that the contemporary Marubo are descended. The exogenous term *Marubo* has only recently become an autonym. The concept of ethnogenesis is one that has been receiving increasing attention in Amazonian studies in the past decade (Hill 1996; Hornborg 2005).

5. While Panoanists have long noted the tendency of Panoans to absorb the cultural other in a variety of ways, Arawakanists (Santos-Granero 2002: 28–32) have noted the process of "Panoization" whereby some Arawakan neighbors of Panoan groups—notably the Piro—tend to undergo a form of transethnic change whereby they come to resemble Panoans more than other Arawakans in a number of ways including clothing, pottery, and specific practices of warfare.

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