

Memories, Identity, and Indigenous/National Subjectivity in Eastern Peru

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In Latin America the forging of national identities has been problematic, especially in countries where large indigenous populations have remained marginalized through colonial ideologies of exclusion. This is changing, however, as processes of globalization are reshuffling old orders and indigenous people become active participants in new social movements of their own making. Founded on shared experience and emergent feelings of solidarity, a new political body is created, defined by indigeneity and shared interests vis-à-vis the state. Based on autobiographical narratives from Asháninka leaders in the central Amazon of Peru, the paper looks at the memory-identity nexus and the way it is reflexively tied to the process of forging new political subjectivity as Asháninka *and* Peruvian citizens. Even if indissolubly linked with a verifiable past, Asháninka memories are also the products of signifying processes associated with the present, with hopes and dreams, and with the production of meaning in the context of de-colonization.

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“... hablar de identidades nacionales en América Latina es referirse a relaciones de poder, de clases gobernantes, que utilizaron los poderes centralizadores del Estado y decidieron - de una manera selectiva - qué iban a contar como cultura nacional y qué no.” (Larrain 2004:26)

In Latin America the forging of national identities has been problematic due to immense cultural and ethnic diversities, especially accentuated in countries with large indigenous populations. Moreover, in seeking to forge national

identity, elite sectors in Latin America for years continued to uphold colonial ideologies of exclusion of the indigenous populations, turning them into Latin America's 'Others within', all the while pretending their non-existence or claiming their imminent extinction whether biologically or through cultural assimilation into mainstream society. Indeed, when indigenous culture presumably *was* cherished, it was basically cherished as *something of the past*.

In this context memories shared among indigenous populations have by and large remained 'muted', i.e. seldom articulated in public (Ardener, 1989). This is changing, however, as old orders are reshuffled and indigenous people are taking on the role of active participants in political processes set off in the course of globalization spanning broad sectors of postcolonial society. These processes challenge the state as the singular locus of governmental power and divert influence to infra- or supra-national institutions, including global corporations and transnational organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund on the one hand and non-governmental organizations and social or identity-based movements, including indigenous movements, on the other (c.f. Trouillot, 2003; Cheater, 1999). These movements appear to be founded on shared experience giving rise to feelings of belonging and a sense of loyalty and solidarity with a political body defined by indigeneity and shared interests vis-à-vis the state. The paper will take a closer look at the memory-identity nexus and the way it is reflexively tied to the process of forging new political subjectivity in an indigenous population.

As a form of collective identity, indigeneity is forged through invocation of historical memory that simultaneously serves to legitimize the political interest and collective claims of the group (Rappaport, 1998; Hoffmann, 2002). Yet, memory and identity are not pre-existent or 'natural' phenomena that simply remained hidden for so many years waiting to emerge into broad daylight when the opportunity presented itself. They are better seen as socially constituted forms of consciousness founded, indeed, on a moral link with the past that is operationalized in the interests of achieving political goals in the present (Rappaport, 1998:9). In this situation we may expect indigenous memories of shared experiences of the colonial situation to represent patterns of action (e.g., resistance, adaptation, withdrawal) that comprise the indigenous group's differential relation to the colonial situation. Such memories may offer insight into the ways indigenous identities are formed as subaltern identities. Yet, who are these indigenous groups? Do they exist ready-made as collectivities? And if so what is the level and nature of their inclusiveness?

Benedict Anderson (1991) has called attention to modern nations as '*imagined communities*' constituted in political and social processes set off in specific historical contexts. By implication, not only nations, but any community beyond the size of groups interacting face-to-face may be considered equally imagined, as scholars generally recognize (e.g. Larrain, 2004:52). Processes of forging *nacionalidades* ('nationalities') as a sort of

imagined communities are conspicuous among contemporary indigenous populations in Latin America. As has happened among Native Americans and Andean peasants in the past, indigenous Amazonians now engage in political activism and struggles for socio-economic change. Similar efforts are evolving among Maya Indians and among descendants of run-away Africans brought to the New World by the slave-trade in previous centuries. The processes of struggling for change and developing political consciousness often combine to accomplish chains of *ethnogenesis*¹ forging collectivities in the form of named indigenous peoples from what was previously a plurality of autonomous local groups and extended families. In practice these processes of creating collective identities work by bridging differences in language, dialect, sense of locality, and historical 'situatedness'. Whether the processes unfold at local, regional, national or international levels and within or across borders defined by existing nation-states, collective identity is endorsed by mobilizing memory and a sense of shared experience, shared interests and aversions, and identical objectives. Examples are legion (for excellent case studies and overviews see Hertzberg, 1971; Roosens, 1989; Hill, ed. 1996; Rappaport, 1998). From comparative studies² of indigenous forms of historical and social consciousness, both of themselves and of their contact with outsiders, one lesson learned is not to assume homogeneity in indigenous groups' formulations of their contact experiences (Turner, 1988). First of all indigenous narratives of the past vary according to the cultural genre (historical account, myth, extemporized oratory, etc.) and dialogic context of its expression; secondly, interlocutors may convey different perspectives on events in the past, forcing a consideration of the nature of indigenous historical and social consciousness.

Following Halbwachs (1992), the 'founding father' of memory studies, scholarship generally recognizes the past as shaped by the concerns of the present; yet, memory is not *only* a reflection of signifying processes associated with the present or with culturally determined rather than given meanings; memory is also representation of lived *experience*, a representation that in one way or other continues to hold a *relation* to things that have happened, to 'events'³, to history. 'Memory', therefore, may best be seen as "those parts of the past which remain in the present life of groups or indeed what these groups make of the past" (Hoffmann, 2002:135, n.1). Indeed, the process of forging national or political subjectivity in a context of de-colonization is simultaneously a process of reflexively mobilizing memory and constructing indigenous identity.

In the following we shall contemplate the meaning of memories of a shared colonial situation in the creation of indigenous/national identity among the Asháninka of the Upper Amazon in eastern Peru. The discussion will evolve around selected excerpts from two autobiographical narratives collected by the author in 2004 and 2005⁴. The excerpts have been chosen because they represent two different aspect of a particular colonial situation at a particular point in time, i.e. the rubber boom in the Ucayali river region in the early 20th century. Obviously the excerpts are far from exhaustive of Asháninka historical consciousness. For the purpose of the paper they serve

to illustrate analytical points emerging from current research – my own and others' – on the poetics and hermeneutics of history, myth and indigenous identity in Latin America (Hill, ed. 1988, 1996; Rappaport, 1998; Veber, 2006; Gow, 1991; Hoffmann, 2002). Having sorted out the minutiae of Asháninka identity constructions, the paper moves on to consider the context in which the Asháninka are emerging as political subjects within the framework of the Peruvian state.

The Asháninka - and Rubber Boom History

In older literature the Asháninka were known as *Campa*, a word of undetermined origin used by outsiders as a generic term designating the major conglomerate of Arawakan-speaking populations in Peru's Upper Amazon. Not part of the natives' own vocabulary the term carried negative connotations and by the 1980s when several regional native organizations had been formed, their leaders demanded to be officially known by their autodenominations *Asháninka* or *Ashéninka* depending on the dialects spoken⁵ (cf. Hvalkof & Veber, 2005).

Older literature sometimes speaks of a 'Campa tribe'. Yet, there is not and there never were any such phenomenon, if the colloquial use of the word 'tribe' is taken to refer to "a group of persons, ... forming a close community under a leader, or chief" (definition taken from Webster's New World Dictionary, 1989 edition). Anthropologists were always aware that the Campa " ...were split into small river-named groups" (Steward & Metraux, 1963:537) and that the connotations carried by the word 'tribe' rendered the term meaningless when applied to the conglomerate of numerous scattered Arawakan groups of eastern Peru. Explorations of the Spanish colonial period describe native sociopolitical organization as one of *parcialidades*, i.e. localized and extremely fluid units composed of extended family groups headed by a given leader. The composition of these *parcialidades* varied over time, their membership growing or shrinking according to the degree of respect or influence generated by their leader. Each *parcialidad* was identified by the name of its leader or the river, pond, or valley where they lived (Santos-Granero & Barclay, 1998:26).

Regional differences notwithstanding, the different groups share basic features of language, culture and ways of living, but they do not and never did form a single or coherent social or political entity. Linguists distinguish three major divisions of Asháninka: 1) The Asháninka, the Ashéninka, and the Pajonal Ashéninka⁶. Within these divisions further variations of dialect are found (Payne et al., 1982). For the purposes of this paper 'Asháninka' will be used as a generic term for all subgroups⁷. Their territories lie within the high rain forest zone, designated in Spanish as *montaña*, in the Peru's *Selva Central* where the Asháninka were established at the time of the earliest Spanish explorations in the 16th century (see Varese, 1973). Colonization started in the 1630s spearheaded by the Franciscan mission that quickly faced intermittent violent resistance from the

Asháninka. By 1742, at a time when the Franciscans felt highly optimistic about the progress of their colonizing efforts, a major indigenous rebellion forced their total retreat from the Selva Central. Re-conquest of the Selva Central did not gain momentum until after Peru's independence in the 19th century when settlers from Europe and from the Andes gradually began to take possession of the immense *montaña* territory where the Asháninka lived widely dispersed in small settlements subsisting from horticulture, hunting and gathering and, for those living near a river, fishing⁸. Settler colonization brought diseases that took heavy tolls on indigenous lives. Native population decline was arrested by the 1960s through massive vaccination campaigns undertaken by American missionaries from the Summer Institute of Linguistics. Since then the Asháninka have regained their numbers, and counting today a total around 90,000⁹ they possibly constitute the largest ethno-linguistic group of contemporary Amazonia. But they find themselves residing within a territory that has become severely restricted, and the lands they retain are mostly on marginal soils.

Over time native-settler interaction has been conditioned by settler needs for labor and native needs for industrially produced merchandize such as axes, machetes, knives, guns, ammunition, aluminum pots and other items. Relations of mutually interested exchange, however, do not evolve independent of power and in Peru's Selva Central they generally turned into relations of abuse and exploitation of natives by *colonos*. Native labor would be recruited through a form of advance payment known as *enganche* ('hooking'). This system of labor recruitment is adopted in situations where a free labor market is non-existent and where there is recurrent shortage of disciplined workers. It had become widespread in the Selva Central with the establishment of large coffee haciendas by immigrant colonists who hired large contingents of Andean labor each year for the harvest. In the Ucayali River region further to the east, the system became known as *habilitación*; it was central to the rubber economy that saw a virtual boom in the Amazon in the period roughly between 1860 and 1920.

Rubber made from plant latex had been used for waterproof clothing since the late 18th century, but with Charles Goodyear's discovery in 1839 of the vulcanization process, rubber emerged a major Amazonian export article. The advent of steamboats and, in 1868, the opening of the Amazon to international navigation, made trade in rubber lucrative, and when rubber car tires began to be used in 1895, Amazonian rubber could be exploited at handsome profits. The Amazon lowlands were turned into the world's principal sources of crude rubber until production gradually shifted to plantations in Southeast Asia after 1915 (Hvalkof 2000; Santos-Granero & Barclay, 2000). The rubber boom created massive profits for the handful of European and Peruvian families, mainly based in Iquitos, who controlled the trade.

Collecting wild rubber requires a large number of mobile workers capable of operating in the forest on their own. The Ashéninka were considered good workers by the *caucheros*, but they tended to stop working once they had satisfied their own needs for merchandize. So *enganche*

backed by armed force became the rubber patrons' means of securing the labor they required. Collectors of raw latex, the major varieties known in local vernacular as *caucho* and *shiringa*, worked in small teams who would locate and harvest the rubber and bring it to their patron who would then calculate its value and discount it from the debt owed him by the workers. As the merchandise advanced by the patron to the workers was always overvalued while the rubber delivered by the workers to the patron was systematically undervalued, it was impossible for the worker ever to settle his debts. This mode of labor recruitment has become known as debt-peonage. As a permanent arrangement it allows patrons to wield tight control of the work force. Should workers attempt to resist or escape, physical punishment was, and in some places continues to be, cruel. It constitutes a form of modern slavery disguised sometimes as 'contract-work'¹⁰.

Labor recruitment may take different forms; in the past recruiters operating on behalf of the rubber patrons would appear in armed groups in native settlements and coerce the men to accept certain merchandise with an obligation to pay for it in rubber delivered to the patron. Should they fail in supplying the specified quantity, punishment was brutal. Some Ashéninka headmen tied themselves to rubber bosses on their own and settled near to their headquarters. Such headmen would then organize their own people, i.e. groups of men, who would camp by the rubber stands in the forest to produce the rubber required. The arrangement worked to the apparent advantage of both parties.

In addition, rubber patrons in the Ucayali encouraged bands of native raiders to devastate the settlements of other natives to capture women and children. Over time raiding for this traffic in humans developed into a separate industry, directed at long term production of malleable labor for the patrons. The 'raw material' consisted in native women and children taken captive and traded among the rubber patrons and their henchmen. Raids on native settlements became known as *correrías*; the men would be killed and women and children would be carried off and be forced to work as domestic labor in various capacities; the children would become 'domesticated' and boys would grow up to serve as compliant labor in rubber tapping and other services. The women would bear children fathered by the rubber patrons and with time these children would form the core of the patron's private work force. This trade in '*carne humana*' ('human flesh', the colloquial term in the Selva Central) developed as a side effect of the rubber boom; but it quickly became a separate business that continued to function for a long time after the collapse of the rubber economy in the second decade of the 20th century. Indeed, the rubber boom era in the Upper Amazon is infamous for the atrocities against the indigenous populations and genocidal practices it generated (Hvalkof, 2000).

Asháninka Memories of the Rubber Boom

The history of the rubber boom has been written entirely from the distanced perspective of historians, anthropologists, and other non-natives who tend to concentrate on the economics of overseas exports and the political maneuverings of rubber patron to outsmart each other. Their renditions generally pose the indigenous populations as victims of the actions and politics of the (European and mestizo) rubber patrons and their henchmen. Little has been known of the rubber boom from the native perspective. Yet, rubber boom stories do circulate among the Asháninka. I have been fortunate to be able to collect some such stories in the form of Asháninka family memories that relate to the dealings of parents or grandparents who found themselves in the Ucayali in the early 20th century¹¹. The recollections of one informant, a native leader, political activist, and former *teniente alcalde* of the town of Atalaya, Bernardo Silva Loyaza, report the following:

“El padre de mi madre se llamaba Mokatzari, ashéninka de la comunidad Mankoite en la actualidad¹². Mi abuelo tenía muchos huecos en la parte más abajo del labio para poner plumas, cartuchos o palos que servían de adorno para ellos. Por eso le pusieron el nombre de Mokatzari (el nombre significa ‘huequitos’) ... Aproximadamente en el año 1920 mi abuelo Mokatzari emprendió una aventura de caza con otros más de Mankoite, cruzando los cerros del alto Pítza, hoy comunidad nativa. Después de caminar por varios días salieron al río Tambo y mi abuelo se quedó en Cushireni porque se había enamorado de mi abuela Shina. Los otros sí regresaron a sus lugares de procedencia, a Mankoite. Vivió varios años en Cushireni con mi abuela y tuvieron 4 hijos, Iroisa Lucía que fue mi madre, Berta, Eliseo y Nicolás. Por invitación de otros paisanos para trabajar shiringa y madera viajó a Masisea¹³. Uno de sus parientes, primo hermano de mi abuelo, tenía contacto con unos mestizos que compraban niños y le animó a mi abuelo a trabajar para los compradores de niños, pero mi abuelo rechazó ese tipo de trabajo aceptando solo a trabajar la madera y shiringa. Y mi abuelo con mi abuela viajaron con 4 niños río abajo en una balsa, para encontrarse con los mestizos madereros y shiringueros. Llegaron al pueblo pequeño de Masisea. Allí se quedaron por varios meses, también los otros paisanos que formaron un grupo de ashéninka. En un masateo¹⁴ se agarraron en una pelea con punta de flecha donde el vencedor fue mi abuelo. La discusión fue de trabajo y más adelante le tendieron una trampa a mi abuelo. Unos matones vendeniños que eran mestizos y aliados a algunos malos asháninka acusaron a uno de mis tíos, el pequeño Eliseo, como niño brujo y le pidieron a mi abuelo que fuera vendido a los que compraban niños. Caso contrario sería asesinado y quemado como un verdadero brujo. Mi abuelo peleó y quiso matar al comprador de niños pero sus

matones eran demasiados y lo capturaron. Lo amarraron bien con una soga y lo dejaron atado en un árbol y al niño se lo llevaron atado de la mano al interior de la lancha, y nunca más fue visto al pobre Eliseo.”

Subsequently Mokatzari manages to escape with his wife and the three remaining children. Heading for their home in the Tambo they traverse the swamps along the river where hungry crocodiles, electric eels, poisonous reptiles and other horrible creatures terrify the young children, particularly on the occasions when their make-shift raft disintegrates. Later on they cross the high mountains and deep ravines to the west of the Upper Ucayali surviving on the edibles they collect as they move along. Dangerous predators and rattlesnakes lurk in the mountains but after four months of cutting their way through the dense rain forest they make it to their home in Cushireni.

The story is part of Bernardo's family history. He got it from his mother, Iroisa Lucia, daughter of Mokatzari. Bernardo's parents broke up when he was nine years old; his mother left him with other relatives and he never saw her again. So he must have been fairly young when he was told the story of his grandfather's adventure in the Ucayali. The story may not be a reliable historical record of 'what really happened' but offers a rough idea of the sort of 'us' and 'them' categorizations at work in the construction of Asháninka and mestizo as separate identities.

Current approaches to identity-making based in poststructuralist and constructionist thinking generally suggest that identity is an aspect of a social relationship between agents who consider themselves distinct from the other with whom they interact (Eriksen, 2002:12). Hence, one way to get a good grip on identity-making is examining the ways binaries are constructed and made a basis for identity through a process of exclusion of the binary other (Søndergaard, 1999:4). Bernardo's story appears to work from a fairly simple 'good guys'/'bad guys' dichotomy identifying the Ashéninka in Mokatzari's company as the 'good guys' and the mestizo murderers and slave traders as the 'bad guys'. For brevity of argument we may summarize the moral pertaining to the ethnic identity aspect of the story as the following: Don't expect anything good from mestizos! Such reading would conform plainly to a subaltern skepticism of the dominant Other.

Yet this is not the reading of the story an Asháninka optic permits. According to Bernardo's rendering of his grandfather's unhappy fate, the mestizos are not to be held responsible. Mokatzari himself is! He was asking for trouble. He was a strong man and a warrior, but he was not capable of controlling his anger. He got himself into trouble quarreling with his fellow Asháninka, and being unable to defeat him with bows and arrows, they 'set a trap' for him conspiring with the mestizos to carry off the young boy, Eliseo. So there is no simple dichotomy where the moral 'good guys'/'bad guys' binary is made analogous to the ethnic indigenous/mestizo division. The us/them division is murky. The mestizos are clearly 'bad guys'

but the Asháninka are not categorically 'good guys'. The good/bad dichotomy does not divide unequivocally along an ethnic fault line. Something else is going on.

Obviously, the common binaries at work in processes of categorization, i.e. good/bad, us/them, civilized/savage, do not originate from a pre-discursive 'reality'; they are constructions, part of the metaphysics that make up meaning systems. We should not assume that the Asháninka construct meaning in ways entirely identical to those at work in Western culture. It may be a truism that all peoples are ethnocentric, but the principles at play in their constructions of alterity vary decisively. Norms of inclusion and exclusion combine differently to produce boundaries that may be highly permeable or very rigid. As many writers have noted, Western systems of identification and construction of otherness appear to give weight to strategies of exclusion and to exclusivist ideologies that assume the superiority of self vis-à-vis all others (Todorov, 1999; Pearce, 1988; Said, 1983; Thomas, 1994). Its systematic 'inferiorization' of the excluded Others provides an efficient strategy through which to disempower these Others, as Rapport and Overing have it (2000:13-14).

In contrast, some non-Western modes of dealing with identification of self and Other appear to operate according to principles that prioritize inclusion and assimilation as a means of neutralizing the ontological insecurity presented by the 'Other'. This means that 'the Other' is never exclusively 'Other' but always potentially liable to becoming 'one of us'. Among native Amazonians there is a widely spread notion, in the words of Overing Kaplan, "...that differences are necessary to social life in a world where the coming together of differences implies danger, ..." (1981:163). Indeed, important forces for life within the Amazonian world, including the powers of the self crucial to the production and reproduction of social life, have their origin in the dangerous and violent exterior domains beyond the homely everyday universe, and they appear to acquire their potency by capturing and assimilating the powers of the dangerous 'Others' (Overing & Passes, 2000:6; see also Taussig, 1993).

In reading native myth and history paying attention to the story line may help in discovering regularities of sequence and tropes between the historical or mythic narrative and other cultural discourse. In Bernardo's grandfather story it goes something like this: Man travels to a distant place to find wealth and glory. He gets into trouble and goes through all sorts of hardship before he returns home safely. Dangerous travel to odd spaces appears to be a culturally prescribed story line recognizable in much Asháninka mythology. The consequences to the protagonist range from gains in knowledge to transformative changes of being, e.g. through dramatic death or through the remaking of man into animal or other non-human being – eventually followed by a return home with gifts acquired through the encounters with the dangerous and/or powerful Others. The gifts invariably prove crucial to the resumed reproduction of native society

(see Turner 1988 for similar interpretation of Amazonian mythology from central Brazil).

This desire to engage the dangerous ‘Other’ may account for Mokatzari’s adventure with the mestizo *matones vendeniños* in Masisea, in foreign territory¹⁵ far away from his home turf. The way his story is told, these mesitzos and their Asháninka henchmen are not presented as ‘bad guys’ by virtue of their being murderous raiders trafficking in women and children; indeed, Mokatzari, our protagonist, was going to join their business. They become the story’s ‘bad guys’ only by their getting into a fight among themselves thus violating the principles of peaceful co-existence dear to the Asháninka – and to most other native Amazonians.

Mokatzari subsequently redeems himself by saving the remains of his family, proving himself a good father to his children and a loyal husband to his wife. But the family does not go on living ‘happily ever after’. Some years later when the family has gone to live in a newly established Adventist mission at Sutziki in the lower Perene¹⁶, the wife is bitten by a poisonous snake and dies. Mokatzari slides into a depression, refuses to eat, and sits idle and sad most of the time, yet suddenly launches into furious outbursts of frenzy shooting off arrows “... *como lo hacía cuando estaba sano, cuando comandaba en las emboscadas guerrillas, como guerreros de mucho poder.*” The other Asháninka in the mission are terrified. They see their lives threatened and they decide to kill Mokatzari. But even after his execution, he continues to haunt his neighbors:

“Luego de 3 días lo quemaron porque en las noches la gente sentía ruidos como si él estuviera vivo. Por eso lo quemaron, y cuando lo quemaron ya volvió la noche tranquila como antes que lo mataran a mi abuelo.”

Clearly, the story does not permit a construction of virtuousness or viciousness as inherent characteristics of specific ethnic categories. The ‘good Asháninka’ are not ‘good’ by virtue of their belonging to the category of the indigenous. Their ‘goodness’ is not even a function of what they do; it is rather a quality inherent in their relation to Mokatzari – and, by implication, to the storyteller, his grandson. They are kin, or at least potential kinsmen. Kinsmen are good to each other; they may count on each other for assistance and solidarity. Only where these qualities are present, does it make sense to speak effectively of ‘us’. This is a highly egocentric form of constructing collective identity. Without delving deeply into debate on this issue – important as it is to contemporary Amazonian anthropology (see Overing & Passes, ed. 2000) – we need to note that from the native perspective anger and lack of self-control are not part of the repertoire productive of Asháninka sociality. This was Mokatzari’s real problem.

In the eyes of the storyteller – and his presumed Asháninka audience – the sad fate of Mokatzari makes perfect sense. As a violent man out of control he had it coming. Neither the mestizo traders, the rubber boom, nor the scheming Asháninka raiders in Masisea can be blamed for his misfortune. The perpetrators and the victims do not divide nicely along an ethnic us/them schematic. Noting the storyteller's invoking indigenous values of peaceful co-existence then, is there a way in which we may arrive at a systematic appraisal of a mode for the construction of Asháninka identity on the basis of the sort of family narrative presented in Bernardo's grandfather story? Obviously we may suspect the story represents merely an idiosyncrasy of a particular family. Yet I suggest that this is not the case. For a wider perspective on Asháninka experiences with the rubber boom we may consider the family memories of another Asháninka leader, Alfredo Gutierrez, who relates the story of his parents, unequivocally victims of the Amazonian trade in rubber and human beings.

“Mi padre se llamaba Andrés Gutiérrez Shimuncama. Era de Atalaya. Era el criado de un patrón llamado Jaime Morón y trabajaba con ese patrón la mayor parte de su vida. El patrón tenía dos mujeres, una de las cuales se llamaba María Gutiérrez de Morón. Ella adoptó a mi padre. Y por eso es que se llama Andrés Gutiérrez. Porque por supuesto que su apellido era Shimuncama, así que ahora es Gutiérrez Shimuncama. Mi padre trabajaba con ese patrón y le encargaba que busque a gente en diferentes lugares. Pero, no los conseguía para trajera así libremente, sino que tenía que hacer cambios, o sea trueques para conseguir personas para su patrón. Inclusive traía niñas, niños y ancianos para el patrón. Y así trabajaba haciendo trueques, llevando escopetas, ollas, municiones, bueno, también tocuyos¹⁷, machetes para hacer cambios por lo cuál había venido por esta zona del Perené. Y pasó para Alto Yurinaki. Por ahí tenía su cliente, vamos a decir así, su cliente el cual le daba la escopeta para que le consiga gente.

Mi mamá, todavía niña, vivía acá en Yurinaki. Entonces, en un momento, vinieron los señores de Alto Pichanaki, llamados Quintori. Vinieron a robar, a raptar a mi madre. Se llevaron a mi madre, y mi madre era melliza y con mi tía María y las vendieron para allá, para los señores alemanes¹⁸. Mi madre se quedó por Atalaya con mi padre porque la señora de mi papá no tenía hijos. En el momento que llegó la señora de mi papa dijo: “Sabes qué Andrés, mejor que a esta chica no le entregas al patrón. Mas bien vamos a hacerla quedar para que me ayude siquiera en casa. ¡Yo ya soy vieja! Bueno, que nos ayude hacer algunas cosas.” Mi padre obediente, bueno, hizo quedar a mi mamá. Quedó con mi padre. Entonces después de un tiempo, como ya había crecido, ya era señorita....

Entonces después de un tiempo, como mis padres no tenían hijos, en un momento le dijo su señora que: “Andrés, tal vez, vas a vivir con la criada. De repente con ella vas a tener hijos”. Y mi padre obedeció a mi madrastra; que puedo decir, empezó a querer vivir con mi mamá. Pero mi madre, según ella dice, no quiso al principio. Pasó un tiempo en que no quiso, pero después poco a poco se acostumbró con mi padre. Y mi padre ya era viejo, todo canoso. Entonces mi mamá ya había concebido. Nació una hijita. La primera mujercita. Pero al mes falleció. Entonces ¿qué pasó? Mi padre era criado del patrón. Cada vez le llamaba, le llamaba para hacer unas cosas, y si se perdía una cosa, era culpable mi padre. Le castigaban, le llevaban al cepo, en fin, le castigaba... pues le ajustaba aquí para que, en fin, esclarezca donde se fue lo que se ha perdido. Si se pierde una canoa, de igual manera. Entonces todo era castigo. Y la que lo salvaba siempre era mi madrastra. Se iba al patrón, le gritaba y agarraba un palo como para defenderse... entonces decía: “¡Suéltale, suéltale!”. Entonces le soltaba mi padre. No solamente a él sino también a mi tío. También le han llevado preso a mi otro tío, porque yo tengo varios tíos y mi tío así el cuñado de mi padre. Los primos de mi padre se llamaban Victoriano, Sargento, Kirebo, Irantishi y Lucas. Eran cinco hermanos. Dos de ellos son primo-cuñado y cuatro de ellos eran hermanos de mi padre. Entonces de tanto cansarse... en todo caso... ya tenía cuentas mi padre con el patrón, que le debía escopetas. Por cajas le daba para hacer trueques. Y entonces ya le tenía una cuenta. Entonces mi padre dijo: “¡Mejor vamos a otro lugar!”.

The story goes on to explain how they have heard of Adventist missions that various indigenous preachers were setting up along the Río Tambo. Eventually the family travels up-river and settles in Sutziki where two little girls are born by Adolfo's mother. His father dies in 1935 from tuberculosis allegedly following from the constant series of punishments inflicted on him by his patron, leaving him confined in the stocks time and again exposed to heavy rains that had made him shiver from cold on bad days.

In telling the story of his parents, Adolfo never uses the words 'slave', 'slavery', or 'raiding'. These are terms applied by historians and anthropologists to activities and contexts perceived somewhat differently by the people who lived them. At the time when Adolfo's mother was forcibly taken from her home in Yurinaki and traded to Adolfo's father who was supposed to deliver her to his patron in Atalaya, neither the indigenous raiders and traders nor the patron for whom they worked harbored notions of 'slavery'. Legally and in principle, the patron did not 'own' the person who worked for him; what he owned was his worker's debt. For this reason the term debt-peonage is a technically correct term (c.f. Santos-Granero & Barclay, 2000: 53-55. Compare Gow, 1991:66, n.7 for a slightly different

interpretation of the use of terminology). The women and children forcibly procured through raiding indigenous settlements were not included in the patron's work force as 'slaves' but, technically, as members of his household. Adolfo's father was one such person, the *criado* of his patron, abducted as a child from an Asháninka settlement and left with his name *Shimuncama* as the only traces of his indigenous origin. He grew up working for his patron as the one responsible for delivering rifles to the raiding gangs and making sure they kept up a steady supply of 'people' for the patron. Unlike Mokatzari, Andrés was no warrior and neither a strong nor a violent man. He was constantly subjected to cruelty at the hands of his patron and he was only able to escape when a safe place became available in the form of the Adventist mission station. Adolfo's mother was kidnapped as a little girl by the very raiders his father had paid to do the raiding on behalf of the patron. She was kept by his father in violation of the patron's orders and subsequently, at the instigation of his father's first wife, forced to become his second wife¹⁹. The story is bizarre but it is also a story with a clear sense of victimizing of the Asháninka by the patron.

In telling this story of his father, Adolfo is not establishing Asháninka identity by invoking the trope of valiant quest for Other-originated resources or the violation of indigenous values of peaceful co-existence the way Bernardo does in telling the story of his grandfather's frustrated attempts at realizing these Asháninka ideals - leaving a similar quest open to Bernardo himself. Adolfo has no grandparents. They remain unknown to him. Moreover, his father died when Adolfo was 5 years old. By the time he was 9, his mother had found herself a new husband and decided to go live with relatives in the Ucayali. She wanted the boy to come along. But Adolfo absolutely refused to leave the Adventist mission where he had been born and raised and where he was attending school and learning Spanish. He was terrified at the thought of his father's former patron and especially at the thought of the patron finding out that his runaway worker had a son; Adolfo was afraid that if he showed up in the Ucayali, he might risk being forced to work off his father's debt for the rest of his life:

“Yo pensé en las cuentas de mi padre con el patrón, y si va a llegar a descubrir que yo soy el hijo de Andrés, entonces me va a llevar y hacer pagar la cuenta. ¿Y cuanto voy a pagar yo?”. Entonces yo no quise ir.”

As Adolfo recalls, the missionary sought to persuade the boy to follow his mother but to no avail. Adolfo had insisted on staying in Sutziqui. He would work at the mission and take care of himself; and this is what he did. He established close relations with the missionaries and their wives and remained dedicated to the Adventist mission. He grew into a man who believes strongly in personal autonomy and looks toward national society for his

orientations in life as much as towards Asháninka ideals of peaceful co-existence. Compared to Bernardo's story Adolfo's memories may appear even further away from constructing identity through exclusion of the Other based on a straightforward indigenous/non-indigenous dichotomy. Yet, he very explicitly self-identifies as *indígena* despite his adoption of many overt signs of being *civilizado* and hence, in theory, qualifying for identification as non-indigenous (cf. Veber, 1996). As Adolfo puts it:

"... he usado zapatos y pantalones, camisas. Pero no obstante, no digo que soy mestizo, eso no. Siempre he sido indígena de la selva. Llego donde llego, siempre hablando mi idioma."

To arrive at a perspective on the way Adolfo's self-proclaimed indigeneity is reflected *and reproduced* in his narrative we may need to shift focus from the contents of the story to its narrative form and process of emplotment.

Poetics of Asháninka Memories

Following Fernand Braudel, American anthropologist Terence Turner has pointed out that indigenous historical narratives, including personal memories, usually represent the past as a sequence of events – as in Bernardo's account of how his grandfather escaped the slave traders, or Adolfo's story of the way his parents ended up as husband and wife (Turner, 1988:240). Events, however, are the forms in which historical processes manifest themselves, and as forms of appearance "... they may obscure as much as they reveal of the structural connectedness of the process or processes out of which they arise" (ibid.). For the purposes of this paper the point is – as analysis of indigenous myth and historical narrative suggests – that indigenous historical narratives typically order the events they recount according to schemata representing the processes that constitute the structure of the colonial situation from which they emerge. They represent this structure in terms of a pattern of action through which they define the subjective meanings that provide the general framework and orientation of their acts (ibid.). Hence, Bernardo's and Adolfo's stories may be read more fruitfully as indigenous programs for the orientation of action within the framework of the colonial situation. The schemata and the structures in question are encoded and enacted as events that convey the meaning of those structures and situations to the storyteller and his audience. So, to summarize, the Other is defined in contrast to the self, and the self is discursively constituted in terms of the structure of the operations of the process of the society's self-production. The representation of the relations comprising the colonial situation may then take the form of a transformation of the basic processes of reproduction of the society of the self.

Read in this way, both stories appear to foreground withdrawal from situations beyond the actor's control; but at the same time a premium is put on risk-taking and involvement with the non-native dominant society. This may permit the mavericks of native society to participate in the structure of domination *as dominators* at a low level and in some sense become the vicarious authors of their own subordination. By identifying indigenous agents as active producers of their own subordination – as well as that of others, some measure of control over the situation is asserted. In this way submission and resistance is rendered simultaneously possible. Indeed, dominant society is presented as accessible and, by implication, vulnerable to counterattack and manipulation by the indigenous actors.

Appropriating space and resources from the outside is essential to the reproduction of Asháninka sociality; and the notion of keeping the channels open to influence and subvert the dominant Other – if not in some sense ‘cannibalizing’ the life-force of this ‘Other’ – is part of this plotment. This is the message of the family history of Adolfo, the alienated and victimized slaver's son, and of Bernardo, the grandchild of an unfortunate warrior, and it is the operating logic that at its most trivial level permits both men to perceive of themselves and be perceived by others as fully Asháninka all the while adopting Spanish, literacy, Adventism, Catholicism, modern technology, and a life-style oriented towards the market economy.

Where Bernardo emerges a political activist explicitly dedicated to the preservation of Asháninka language and culture and working to enhance indigenous participation in provincial level government, Adolfo is a faithful upholder of the Adventist faith, and teacher of indigenous knowledge in an intercultural teachers training program. From his orientation toward independence and self-reliance grows his engagement in the struggle for indigenous land rights, self-determination, and freedom from dominance by settlers. For Bernardo, engagement in the same struggle derives from his strongly felt need for space in which proper Asháninka forms of life may unfold undisturbed and in peace (cf. Veber n.d., 2006). Their differences notwithstanding two men come out as embodiments of the ethnocentric adaptability and pragmatic flexibility that appears to have sustained Asháninka survival through four centuries of violent and unpredictable colonization and resistance.

As we have seen, the personalized historical memories are complex productions shaped in the tension between the historically constituted and the active production of meanings and strategic interpretations (Radstone, 2000:10-11). This point is particularly important to scholars of oral history and history ‘from below’ who take an interest in narrative tradition and memory as repositories of counter-histories (Rappaport, 1998; Sharpe, 1991; Prins, 1991). Scholars working with victims and victims' testimonies similarly confirm memory's underpinning in the constituted – in ‘happenings’ – and they recognize that even if memory is in some sense a

depiction of the present in the past, it is not purely fabrication. There has to be some relation to veracity in any shared memory for people to recognize it as *their* memory; hence, there is a limit to how far it may be distorted or repressed; indeed, as several scholars make clear: "... any attempt to distort memory arguably leaves its traces in the form of *interpretable* 'silences and forms of forgetting' ... which, once seized, constitute the memory of and the grounds for resistance" (Radstone, 2000:12; see also Jackson, 2002). We owe to Maurice Halbwachs the important insight that memories are fundamental to the creation and maintenance of community and serve as a program for orienting social, political and other forms of historical action²⁰. As a mode of social consciousness, memory echoes the awareness that social relations are in significant respects shaped by individual or collective social action in the present rather than in the past. It is this awareness of the present as actively constructed by the social beings who inhabit it that renders the past worth remembering, giving it historical significance as sequences of acts and events that have contributed to creating the present. In this sense memory helps explain the present situation of those whose past is remembered. It elucidates the manner in which the group, the 'we' of the present, came into existence through actions by 'those who went before', the fathers, mothers, ancestors who fashioned '*our*' world. The critical element here is the collective's consciousness of their ability to shape their own social existence. It is this orientation toward creative social agency as a property of the members of the group that feed the desire on the part of subaltern populations to coin their own independent histories as political assets in processes of decolonization.

As we have seen, Asháninka memories of the past do work to constitute Asháninka identity, albeit through strategies of differentiating degrees of relatedness and inclusion rather than through mechanisms of dichotomous categorizing and exclusion, but whether the Asháninka identity may rightly be perceived as *national* identity is debatable, and equally so whether we refer to a sense of self-identity as citizen within a nation-state, or to a sort of pan-Asháninka identity. Surely, to warrant designation as *national*, collective identity must embrace an awareness of social relations in contexts where members of the collectivity experience themselves as shaping, through their interaction, significant aspects of their social existence. This experience, to be intrinsically *national* in character, must transcend the memory span as well as the normal sphere of social relations and activities of individuals. Asháninka experiences of social interaction, as exemplified in their historical memories, are not of this nature. Asháninka representations of social experiences tend to be relatively simple, episodic, accounts of particular situations and events revolving around family and seemingly unconnected to universal history. This would appear to reflect the atomized character of their social universe, made up – as it is and has always been, apparently – of scattered autonomous local groups or conglomerates of extended families. Leaving aside the question of whether or not Asháninka identity is conceivable as all-embracing pan-Asháninka identity that may or may not shade into a sort of *national* (Peruvian) identity, it needs to be pointed out

that there is one sense in which *national* identity is meaningful to the Asháninka. This national identity is not supported by Asháninka social memory. It is relatively new and emerges not from social interaction but from the Peruvian state itself.

The Politics of Memory and Experience

Bernardo's and Adolfo's stories recalling family memories of the Ucayali rubber boom represent no simple or straightforward invocation of 'Asháninka-ness' as a moral community, and they offer no basis for concluding that Asháninka identity is discursively constructed as a *national* identity. The term *nacionalidad* or 'nationality' is sometimes used by indigenous activists elsewhere to designate indigenous consciousness of being a *nation of people* that share all the characteristics of a *nation* but do not constitute a state and have few intentions of constituting one. Therefore the word 'nationality' rather than 'nation' is used. The term signals the possibility of re-imagining the state as embracing many nations/nationalities, equally valued and in control of their own lands and local forms of sociopolitical organization. From this perspective 'national identity' in the Asháninka context may refer equally to identity as Peruvian or as Asháninka. In practice it may refer to both at the same time, as we shall see. To what extent then, and in which contexts, may the Asháninka be aware of or think of themselves as Peruvians? I suggest Peruvian identity is in some practical sense part of day-to-day living where individuals are constantly reminded of their Peruvian identity.

Like all Peruvians, Asháninka individuals frequently need to use their personal identity card and their personal identity number. The personal identity number must accompany a person's signature every time a document is signed. Moreover, a person's identity number is registered with his/her name every time he/she buys a ticket for long-distance transportation by bus, boat or air-plane, pays for accommodation, or for other services. Yet, possession of identity documents is relatively new to the Asháninka. Obviously, those living close to settler communities and those having grown up in mission villages have known about identity cards for a long time. But until recently Asháninka living with *colono* patrons generally had no knowledge of identity cards, and if they had, they had no means of acquiring them. This has changed over the past decades. A majority of the adult Asháninka of today hold personal identity cards. Those who do not are most often people who continue to live independently in isolated regions, are illiterate and/or monolingual speakers of Asháninka. Such groups of people may have only a vague idea, if any, that the territories where they live are technically part of a state called Peru. They do not own birth certificates and personal identity cards; they have not gone to school, and they do not cast their vote in national elections. Technically, as they are not registered, they do not exist. They are likely to self-identify as Asháninka vis-à-vis members

of other indigenous populations, but this does not mean that they imagine themselves as part of a community that encompasses *all* Asháninka.

The educational system is another important means of conveying national identity. Today most Asháninka children attend school. Twenty years ago the situation was quite different. Many middle-aged Asháninka have no or very little education and they may or may not self-identify as Peruvians. So Peruvian identity is pertinent, but it is something that has become part of the Asháninka self-consciousness quite recently. It is important to note, however, that Peruvian identity has not come alone. It has emerged alongside the consciousness of being Asháninka. Indeed, from the Asháninka perspective Peruvian identity and Asháninka identity may be two sides of the same thing. One would not have emerged without the other. They both came to light as part and parcel of indigenous organizing that took off gradually from the late 1960s onwards. There had been sporadic local efforts by Asháninka headmen to secure possession of lands in the face of massive immigration into the Selva Central in the middle 1900s but indigenous organizing was only set off on a grand scale when indigenous leaders became aware that they could count on support from the central government in Lima. This was not the case until the military government under Army General Juan Velasco Alvarado seized power in 1968 with a program of serious land reform and rural development.

During the Velasco administration special legislation concerning indigenous land rights in the Amazon, *Ley de Comunidades Nativas y de Promoción Agropecuaria de las Regiones de Selva y Ceja de la Selva*, (D.L. 20653), was promulgated in 1974 as the first of its kind ever in Peru. Moreover, the government created a special agency, *Sistema Nacional de Movilización Social*, SINAMOS (National System of Social Mobilization) to promote indigenous and popular organization, informing people that they had rights to land and citizenship, and educating local leaders as to the ways the reform legislation ought to be implemented. The law was reformulated in 1978 as the *Ley de Comunidades Nativas y de Desarrollo Agrario de las Regiones de Selva y Ceja de Selva* (D.L.22 175) to facilitate business investments in the Amazon lowlands and the montaña. The changes, however, did not immediately affect the status of the *comunidades nativas*.

The law was modeled on legislation intended to accommodate peasant communities in the Andes, and it presupposed a communal village-type organization of the rural population that was foreign to many Amazonian peoples, including the Asháninka. The law stipulates the *comunidad nativa* as the legal entity under which formal recognition of indigenous people in the Peruvian Amazon may be granted. Yet, the law provides only a most general definition of a *comunidad nativa* and its organization. The native people are not necessarily required to physically form villages or otherwise give up their existing patterns of residence. Many Asháninka groups that have organized under the law as *comunidades nativas* in fact continue to live in small dispersed settlements each exploiting their immediate territory for their subsistence needs.

From the 1970s onwards the Asháninka have gradually built political organizations of their own to claim rights to territories, capture the attention of governments and public opinion and demand access to education and health services. These organizations are localized in terms of a particular river valley or region. In the Selva Central there are currently 8 such organizations plus one or two supra-regional organizations that aim to coordinate between the member organizations they include. Within this grid of indigenous organizing, indigeneity and memories of suffering as well as of resistance and adaptation in the past are shared and reproduced. They emerge as a form of confession or a *mise en discours* of the truth about the self and about the collectivity – about being indigenous. It is a mode of objectification which transforms human beings into subjects - Foucault termed it a ‘technology of the self’ - the significance of which is only brought to its full importance by an active, forceful Other (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983:174-79). In dealing with indigenous people’s memories, identities and current processes of subjectification, this forceful Other invariably appears to be the state, not the state as monopoly of power or guarantee of social order, but the state as the crucial source of recognition of the subject population as citizens.

It is in this sense the Asháninka may begin to perceive of themselves as political subjects within the Peruvian state, as subjects who exercise their right to vote and make claims on the state and demand accountability to be guaranteed by it. The Asháninka are also aware that the state may promulgate laws in their favor that it has no means of implementing. Accordingly some Asháninka leaders step in to implement the law by their own force, including the *Ley de Comunidades Nativas* (D.L. 20653), when the state fails to do so. They see this not as resistance to a recalcitrant state but as much as a way of assisting the state in fulfilling its duties. Along the way the Asháninka effectively become part of the state. In the process indigenous memories clearly turn into means or even effects of strategic positioning; they rhetorically provide definitions of situations and encode models for action creating indigenous agency as imaginable and effective. Even if indissolubly linked with an actual verifiable past, Asháninka memories are also the products of signifying processes associated with the present, with hopes and dreams, and with the production of meaning. They help forge self-confident indigenous identity and re-create the Asháninka as political subjects in the double sense of the words while simultaneously speaking some ‘truth to power’.

Notes

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- ¹. Jonathan D. Hill defines *ethnogenesis* as “... the historical emergence of a people who define themselves in relation to a sociocultural and linguistic heritage” (1996:1).

- ². See papers in Hill, ed. 1988 for examples and theoretical summaries of this research. Note that the Lévi-Straussian notion of indigenous societies as ‘cold’ societies without history, i.e. lacking historical consciousness and possessing instead a totally mythic formulation of social reality, is rejected by this scholarship (see specifically discussions by J.D. Hill and T. Turner in the same volume)
- ³. Events are the units of processes and the form in which they manifest themselves; yet it is important to keep in mind that sequences of events generate structures of their own and constitute processes, hierarchies, and contradictions, as Terence Turner has pointed out (1988:239-40).
- ⁴. Primary fieldwork was carried out over a period of 22 months between October 1985 and October 1987 supported through grants from the Council for Development Research (RUF) of the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and the Danish Research Council for the Humanities (Veber 1989). The project was entitled ‘Campa Cultural Identity and the frontier of Development’. Subsequent field studies in 2004 and 2005 were centered on the collection of autobiographical narratives from a series of Asháninka leaders. This project was supported by a grant from Danish Research Council for the Humanities.
- ⁵. Arawakan groups in Peru’s Selva Central include the closely related Asháninka, Ashéninka, Pajonal Ashéninka, Caquinte, Nomatsiguenga and Machiguenga. Some linguists retain ‘Campa’ as the formal term designating the classificatory linguistic family of Arawakan spoken in the Peruvian Amazon (Payne 1991).
- ⁶. The Asháninka inhabit the regions of rivers Ene, Apurímac, Tambo and the lower Perené; the Ashéninka inhabit the regions of rivers Pichis, Pachitea, Apurucayali, the upper Perené, the tributaries of the upper Ucayali, and the upper Yuruá in Peru and in Brazil; and the Pajonal Ashéninka are found in the Gran Pajonal region and the western headwaters of the Ucayali River.
- ⁷. I follow general anthropological practice in considering the Campa-speaking groups Caquinte, Nomatsiguenga and Machiguenga as separate groups, not part of the Asháninka ethno-linguistic conglomerate.
- ⁸. Prior to colonization Asháninka territories extended over approximately 100,000 km² in the central Peruvian Amazon from the upper Pachitea River in the north to the lower Apurímac River in the south (lat. 10°-14° S.), and from the Chanchamayo in the west to the Tambo-Ucayali river regions in the east (long. 72°-76° W.).
- ⁹. Verna Doerksen of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, personal communication, Pucallpa 2004, HV.
- ¹⁰. This form of slavery was a taken-for-granted practice in the Ucayali River region up until the late 1980s (Hvalkof 1998). In 1996 the regional indigenous organization in Atalaya, OIRA (Organización Indígena Regional de Atalaya) was awarded a prize from Anti-Slavery International in London after they had helped free some 6.000 indigenous persons from this debt-bondage on mestizo owned haciendas in the Upper Ucayali (see Hvalkof 1998:148-49).
- ¹¹. The stories were told to the author as part of the autobiographical interviews made with Asháninka leaders in 2004 and 2005. The stories are being edited for publication by IWGIA in a book with the title ‘Historias de Vida’ (Veber n.d.).
- ¹². Mankoite is located in the Gran Pajonal, an interfluvial region between the rivers Ucayali, Tambo and Pichis. The population is known as Pajonal Ashéninka (c.f. Hvalkof & Veber 2005).
- ¹³. Masisea is located on the right bank of the Ucayali River below the mouth of the Pachitea. It was a local center in the rubber trade.
- ¹⁴. Fiesta en la cual se toma la bebida fermentada de *masato* fabricada por mujeres asháninka a base de la yuca dulce (*Manihot esculenta*).

15. Masisea is located in territory previously the domain of Panoan-speaking Cashibo and Conibo.
16. An Adventist mission station was established in Sutziki in 1930 (Veber 1991).
17. *Tocuyo* is the local term for a sturdy sort of industrially produced cotton fabric brought into the region to satisfy the Asháninka demand for material from which to fashion the cotton tunics that make their traditional clothing.
18. Settlements of immigrants from Prussia and the Tyrol had been established in the Pozuzo River valley in the mid-19th century; German colonization subsequently expanded in the districts of Villa Rica, Oxapampa and Palcazu (Santos-Granero & Barclay 1998).
19. Polygamy is customary among the Asháninka even if mostly practiced by the more ambitious men (c.f. Hvalkof & Veber 2005; Veber 1997).
20. Lewis A. Coser – who translated Halbwachs' work (1992) into English – makes this point (op.cit.21-28).

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