

Different but the Same



Different but the Same

Negotiation of Personhoods and Christianities
in Western Amazonia

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Academic dissertation
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Layout: Tero Kuusisto

Printed by Gummerus Kirjapaino Oy 2008



Acknowledgements

Always, when I met Yine people on their path going through the community of Diamante, I was greeted with the same question: '*Ginaka pyanu?*' 'Where are you going?' The expected answer to such an enquiry was something rather general in nature: either '*Mala*' (downstream) or '*Gawaka*' (upstream), depending on the direction I was heading to. I often wondered why people kept asking me this question – and not only me but also each other – even if the expected answer was so obvious, as they could easily see which way the other person was going. Looking back the time I spent in Diamante, I have come to realise that as much as a way to greet people, the question was perhaps a way to become convinced of the intentionality of the other's actions; that people were not just loitering pointlessly, which would have signalled that perhaps all was not well with them, but that they knew where they were going.

The same applies to doing research, as well. Time and time again, one needs to explain to other people what kind of research one is doing. When the answer is often repeated, it becomes self-evident. This may mislead the researcher into thinking that one really knows where one is heading; that the direction of the research has remained the same throughout the process. But every now and then, one needs to stop to really think about the seemingly obvious issue: Am I really going where I think I am? There are several people I want to thank for making this research possible. During the course of the research, they challenged me to clarify to myself which way I was going.

The research has been funded by the Academy of Finland research projects AMARE (# 201114) and AMACULT (# 117045), headed by docent Matti Kamppinen, and by the Finnish Cultural Foundation.

The research would not exist if the people in Diamante had not let me into their lives, for which I remain most indebted. I especially thank Albertina Cushichinari, Maria Belen Zorrilla, Dedith Vargas, and Mariluz Chu for taking care of me, and my godchild Yulissa, whom I cherish. I think about them a lot. Special thanks belong to all the people I worked with in Diamante for their patience and willingness to teach me how to live well.

I am grateful to my supervisors for the academic freedom with which I have been allowed to do my research. From the very beginning of my researcher's career, Professor Veikko Anttonen has encouraged me and challenged me to ask questions about religion. Working in the two Academy of Finland research projects headed by docent Matti Kamppinen has enabled me to concentrate on doing research without constantly having to apply for funding.

A researcher working on Amazonian indigenous cultures in Finland is often rather alone with her research, especially when it comes to questions that specifically relate to Amazonia. My contacts to international colleagues have therefore proven vital for the development and improvement of my analysis. I feel privileged for having had two scholars, Professor Robin M. Wright and Professor Dan Rosengren, whom I highly respect as the preliminary examiners of my thesis. I thank them for their knowledgeable and

valuable comments. I also want to thank Thomas Moore and Carlos David Londoño-Sulkin for reading and commenting parts of the manuscript. Professor Peter Gow's texts on the Yine people have been a continuous source of inspiration for my work and it is a pleasure to welcome him as the opponent at my doctoral disputation. I have also greatly benefited from the collegial atmosphere at the sesquiannual meetings of the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America. These meetings have provided me with a forum where to present and discuss my work. Similarly, the recently established co-operation between Nordic Amazonianists – Hanne Veber, Søren Hvalkof, Professor Dan Rosengren and Professor Alf Hornborg – has added meaning to my work. Pirjo Kristiina Virtanen, in addition to being the one person in Finland with whom to discuss questions relating specifically to Amazonia, has also been part of this Nordic co-operation. With her, I share an interest in the Yine-speaking peoples. I have sincerely enjoyed our discussions.

I have always found the atmosphere among graduate students and researchers at the Department of Comparative Religion at the University of Turku open and inspiring. I especially thank Anu Isotalo for the long methodological, theoretical and ethical discussions we have had. Together, we have grown as researchers. The many pleasant coffee table discussions on methodology, theory and our everyday lives with Tiina Mahlamäki, Nina Kokkinen, Pekka Tolonen, Tuija Hovi, Jenni Heinonen, Teemu Taira, Kati Mikkola, Johanna Ahonen, Riikka Saarimaa, Outi Fingerroos, and Anne Puuronen have also guided my research forward. Moreover, I am thankful for the secretary of our department, Irmeli Kivekäs, for her help in all kinds of practical problems. The co-operation with my colleagues at the University of Helsinki – Professor (act.) Elina Vuola, Pirjo Kristiina Virtanen, Sarri Vuorisalo-Tiitinen and Auli Leskinen – has given me new refreshing insights.

I also owe a great deal to various other persons. I am obliged to Kalle Ruokolainen for initially helping me in choosing a research site. Without his suggestion I would probably never have ended up doing research in Diamante. Giovanna Bacchiddu I thank for her friendship. In Peru, I was lucky to meet people who were of considerable importance in establishing contacts and helping me in many practical matters. Special thanks are due to Marianne van Vlaardingen and Ricardo Sanchez. With Glenn Shepard, Alvaro Urquía, Rebecca Hanson and Alejandro Smith Bisso, I share an interest in the lives of the people in Diamante. I thank Clive Tolley for checking the language of the thesis and Eeva Pekanheimo for revising the Acknowledgements.

Finally, my whole family and many of my friends have supported me throughout the long process of doing this research. I thank my parents for their constant support during my studies. I thank my husband, Tero, for always being there for me during the ups and downs of the many research-filled years and even when we have been apart during my stays in Peru. I also thank him for the layout of this book. Finally, I thank our daughter Venla, who was born only two months ago in August, for bringing such great joy into our lives.

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Prologue: Puzzling testimonies

Contradictions and divergences are often the most revealing factors in human social life. At times explicit, at others subtly embedded in the flow of the everyday, they point towards the interfaces at which fundamentals of humanity and sociality are negotiated¹. In the native community of Diamante in south-eastern Peruvian Amazonia – as I came to know – the everyday flowed onward in a seemingly unhurried manner. During the midday hours, one could easily walk on the path through the community without seeing anyone, as children were at school and adults were working in the plantations, washing laundry by the river, fishing and hunting, or were engaged in other activities in the vicinity of the community. By the afternoon, however, people started slowly returning home to prepare meals, to take care of the house or just to relax after the day's work. People rarely appeared to be in a hurry or agitated.

Despite this outward quietude of the everyday, life in the village was by no means always harmonious. Disagreements frequently arose over communal matters, property issues, unlucky love affairs, unfaithfulness or people becoming gravely ill, in which case witchcraft was often suspected. The majority of the community's approximately three hundred inhabitants being Yine, these events and disagreements could be heard to be discussed and settled both in Yine language and in Spanish at communal meetings, at spontaneous gatherings at the verandas of the village's few shops and between family members spending their early morning hours just before sunrise or evenings before going to bed by chatting on the patio in front of their houses.

A controversy that caught my attention, however, was somewhat less visible in the daily life and centred on the two Christian churches active in Diamante: the Catholic and the Evangelical. Judging by their outward characteristics, these churches were fairly distinct from each other. The Catholic chapel building had not changed much during the period between my first visit to the community in 2000 and my latest lengthier visit in 2005. The chapel stood at one corner of the football field, which served as the centre of the community. It was a wooden building with an aluminium roof and a concrete floor. The white walls were covered with black geometrical Yine designs. The upper parts of the walls were left open with only nets covering the openings in order to let light into the building but to keep mosquitoes out. The interior had experienced some minor changes in between my visits. The benches that used to be very simple had been changed for new ones with backrests, and pictures telling about the life of Jesus had been placed on the walls. At the wall behind the altar the crucifix and the small statues portraying Saint Mary and John the Baptist had been

¹ In this work, I use the terms 'negotiate' and 'negotiation' to designate the acts of discussing and attempts to reach agreement over the ways of being a socially, corporeally and morally proper Yine person and a proper Christian. However, the acts indicated by these terms do not necessarily need to involve actual face-to-face discussions but are rather to be considered as embedded in people's everyday social interaction and activities.

decorated with red velvet backgrounds and two new pictures illustrating the wine and the bread of communion had been placed at their side. The Catholic church in Diamante was led by a Dominican padre who was stationed at the mission in the community of Shintuya, four hours upriver by 55 hp motor or around eight to ten hours by *peke peke*, a boat with an outboard motor. The padre came to hold masses and baptisms in Diamante three to four times a year. In his absence, the daily and weekly religious practices were taken care of by the two missionary teachers of Diamante's Catholic primary school. The main form of worship was the rosary held at the chapel every day around five o'clock in the afternoon. What was striking in these rosaries was the absence of adults: only school children participated in the Catholic gatherings at the chapel, although there were many avowed adult Catholics in the community. Furthermore, with a few exceptions, adults only came to the mass when it was followed by a baptism in which their own child was to be baptised or where they were to become godparents for some child. In general, the adult public practice of Catholic Christianity in Diamante was not very active.

In contrast, the practice of Evangelical Christianity in the community was lively and both the church building and the practice had undergone several changes after my first stay in the community in 2000. First of all, the old church, a palm-leaf canopy held up by poles, standing at the lower end of the community, had been taken down and a new church had been



Figure 1. A visiting pastor preaching at the Evangelical church in 2003



Figure 2. Children at a rosary, held daily at the Catholic chapel

built next to it, only to be replaced by a third one set up by the football field where it could be seen to stand in a central place in the community together with the Catholic chapel, the communal house, the medical post and the primary school. The new church building was slightly larger than the previous ones and had walls made of wide boards enclosing the church space, where several rows of wooden benches stood. Whereas in the first church benches extended from one side to the other, in the third one there was a passageway left in between the rows of benches. This change in the interior had also enabled one adjustment in church practices. People participating in the meetings used to sit freely wherever they wished but now men sat on the left and women on the right side of the church. This was not, however, mandatory and in the relatively rare cases when the church became full the latecomers sat wherever they found an empty space. Nevertheless, during the many weekly meetings at the church, men and women now sat separated from each other.

These changes were mostly due to the new Evangelical pastor in the community. He was Yine himself and had most of his brothers and sisters living in Diamante. He had arrived there just two days before I departed from the community in 2000 so that I knew of his presence there but had not had time to get to know him or his nuclear family until my second visit in 2003. He was a trained preacher and had studied at the Swiss Mission (Misión Suiza) at the Kilómetro 15 near Pucallpa in the 1960s and had been

preaching both in Yine and other indigenous communities ever since. In 2000 he had been asked to come to Diamante to preach and to organise the church meetings – in short, to lead the church. And this he had done. Before his arrival, the meetings were held more or less regularly on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays but now the three weekly meetings were on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays. Although already lengthy before this, the Sunday meetings were now notably longer than the weekday meetings, lasting usually from nine o'clock till noon or even one o'clock. The services were always called together by blowing a horn, or rather a special conch. Unlike in the Catholic masses and rosaries, the participants in the Evangelical meetings were mostly adults, although there were always some children present who came in for some time and then left, only to return after a while. The programme at the meetings themselves had also undergone some changes. Previously they had consisted of Bible reading, prayer and singing. Now there were also a section for notices where the pastor took up current issues of common concern and informed participants of forthcoming events, and a testimonial section where participants could come to stand in front of the lectern and either sing, read texts from the Bible, pray or tell a personal narrative as a testimony to the effect of God's presence in their lives.

In addition to the differences in the external characteristics and weekly practices between the two churches – differing church buildings, indigenous and non-indigenous leadership, participation of adults and children, and the form of worship – the members of these two churches were often at odds on many issues concerning the everyday social life in the community. The Evangelicals accused the Catholics of excess use of alcohol, quarrelsome behaviour and domestic violence. They disapproved of the Catholic worship of Saint Mary and the saints because these, according to the Evangelicals, were not needed for a person to be saved. Furthermore, they condemned the repetitive style of Catholic prayer, as they saw it, as lacking in authenticity and personality and found unacceptable the non-participation of Catholic adults in church services. The Catholics for their part accused the Evangelicals of hypocrisy, as in their view the Evangelicals drank and behaved inappropriately, for instance by having loose sexual relationships while claiming to live decent lives. Even though these accusations were rarely discussed in public, there seemed to be no end to them in the privacy of people's homes.

Given this background, I was for a long time puzzled by the views held both by the Evangelicals and the Catholics according to which 'there was no difference' between the two churches and their adherents or that the two churches were 'different but the same'. First I dismissed these comments as statements of the two churches having different practices but still both being recognised as Christian and as such being equally valid. After all, it is common among both indigenous and mestizo or caboclo populations in Amazonia to hear people state: 'There is only one God', by which they mean that it does not matter what denomination a person belongs to even though they are at the same time eager to draw a socio-political line between the Catholics and the religious groups collectively

called either *evangelistas*, *creyentes/crentes* (believers), or *cristianos*, such as Evangelicals, Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses. In Diamante, however, many Evangelicals considered the Catholics not to be Christians at all or at least not true Christians like the Evangelicals – opinions that were clearly not just a matter of rhetoric, as when distinguishing between *cristianos* and Catholics in the manner stated above. The tones and contexts in which these views were presented suggested that there was something more to these views. Consequently, I came to reconsider people's statements on the two churches being 'different but the same'. If the Evangelicals did not hold the Catholics to be (true) Christians, there evidently had to be something else behind these statements than the two churches being just two different and equally valid ways to practise Christianity. For how could they be the same if the other was not considered Christian enough? And why would the Catholics want to emphasise the differences between the two churches even though they did not seem to question the validity of the Evangelical practice as properly Christian? In general, how did the Yine interpret Christianity and what was central for them in their Christianities?

This study is largely about the *process* of finding an answer to the question of the two churches in the community of Diamante being different but the same. The question may at first seem quite insignificant but, as I came to see, in order to answer it we must generate a much deeper insight into the Yine lived world, that is, their world as experienced in and through everyday social actions. The key to developing such insight was something I first thought to be very different from and unrelated to this puzzle. This was Yine relations with the diverse non-human beings inhabiting their world. In Diamante I heard numerous narrations of people's experiences and ideas of interaction with a variety of non-human beings such as souls of the dead, brocket deer, the guardian figure called hand-whistler, God and Satan, as well as the mother spirits of white-lipped peccaries, of the river and of different psychoactive plants. Listening to people telling of these beings and observing how they took them into account when carrying out their daily activities, I often wondered what the relationships and encounters with non-human beings meant for the Yine people. Why were such experiences and encounters continually told, retold and referred to in different contexts? In spite of the diversity of narrations and encounters and their interpretations, was there something in common in these experiences that made them worth telling, discussing and analysing to the extent they were?

One of the occasions – or rather series of narrations I was told – that helped me to see that there was indeed something fundamental in common in people's interpretations of their experiences of interaction with non-humans, and one that also led me to better understand the dynamics of the relations between the Evangelicals and the Catholics, was initiated at the Evangelical meeting one Sunday morning in November 2003. Towards the end of this meeting, one of the oldest Yine women came to the front of the church space to give her testimony concerning a dream she had recently had. Even though I could not at the time understand the particularities of the testimony very well owing to the difficulties of hearing, as the woman

had an old and somewhat fragile voice, and to my insufficient command of the Yine language, I did manage to grasp what she was talking about. She mentioned having been tempted (*yantaleta*) by the devil (*kamchi*) or demon (*yawlo*) and talked about the Word of God (*Goyakaltokanu*). It was only afterwards that I learned from other people about the details of what she had been testifying at the church. In the dream the devil had tempted her and asked her to prove her faith in God by traversing a river by walking on the water. She had begun crossing the river but soon a massive wave had come and threatened to drown her. She had, however, managed to lie down on the water and had consequently been washed ashore unharmed. That was when she had woken up.

As such, there was nothing peculiar in Yine people telling of their dreams to others. In fact, since dreams were considered a reliable – although often metaphorical – channel for gaining knowledge about the world, they were a common topic in people's daily conversations. It was therefore not exceptional that people should talk about them at the Evangelical meetings either. But what caught my attention in the situation was not so much the old woman's testimony in itself but the narrations other people told me concerning it right after and during the days following the meeting. As I had not at the meeting been able to understand the whole content of the woman's testimony, I asked a few persons to tell me what she had been testifying about. What was striking in people's answers was that even though they did briefly mention what the testimony had been about, they – several persons separately – began to tell me about another dream or dream-like experience the same old woman had recently had. According to these narrations, a few months back the woman's husband, then chief of the community, had been out of the village taking care of administrative tasks and the woman had been left alone at home. She had not been feeling very well but was a little sick with flu. In the middle of the day, she had seen two persons approaching her. These people had taken her to the plantation where they were collecting wood for the hearth and had asked her to help them. There were two men and two women, all of whom she recognised as her relatives. But once she realised that all these people had died long ago and could not therefore be alive, but were souls of the deceased attempting to take her with them, she told them she did not want to help them collect firewood. She did not want to be carried away by them. Some narrators related that the old woman had also begun actively to think about God in order for the souls of the dead to go away. Then all of a sudden, she noticed that she was, in fact, standing alone in the middle of the plantation unaware of whether everything had happened in a dream or in a waking state. Nevertheless, she did not understand how she had got there and began to feel nauseous, for she had not seen souls of deceased kinspeople before.

The question that bewildered me in people's answers to my enquiries was why did the Yine find this latter dream narrative more interesting to tell than the one the old woman had presented at the church? What was it that intrigued people more in this second narrative? There were probably several answers: the familiarity of the characters and the setting in the latter narrative in comparison to the anonymity of the former, and

the nuanced and complete plot of the second narrative in contrast to the incompleteness of the first, just to give a couple of examples. But these did not yet explain why people felt it necessary to tell me about the old woman's other experience in the first place. It was only by further comparing these two dream experiences that I realised that the point at which they mostly differed, and what thus made the second narrative worth telling, was the way in which proper morality and genuine trust in God were expressed in them. Whereas the first narrative centred on an action – walking on the water – that bore no immediate connection to people's normal experiences, in the second account morality was anchored to Yine everyday socio-corporeal life. Being moral appeared then not to be something one could express just by resisting Satan's temptations but was to be constantly lived as true in daily actions. In the second narrative, the souls were said to have disappeared first, because the woman, after realising that she was dealing with the deceased, refused to help them in collecting firewood for cooking. Acquiring and preparing food in a Yine community were joint activities and by denying her help and refusing to co-operate with other family members (even though deceased) the old woman showed that she no longer desired to be kin to these people. Under normal circumstances and between kin, everyone would not only help in the preparations of a meal but also eat together. The woman did not therefore join the deceased kin but remained alive because in relation to the deceased she refused to act according to the Yine socio-moral ideals and showed how proper moral life was possible only among the living kin. Second, the woman was said to have been saved because of her active thinking of God. When realising the non-human nature of the persons the woman had accompanied to the plantation she had begun intensely thinking about God, which eventually had had the effect of expelling the souls of her deceased relatives. What in this second narrative stood out, then, was the (successful) attempt to morally, through proper action, demarcate the boundary between the living and the dead or humans and non-humans. The narrations I was told about this encounter dealt quite explicitly with what was socially approved and valued and therefore morally right among the Yine in general and among the Evangelicals in Diamante in particular. Consequently, the second narrative also worked better than the first one as a testimony of the ways in which a true moral Christian condition could be achieved and maintained by the Yine and of God's direct influence in people's lives.

It was due to this series of narrations as well as the numerous other occasions of listening to the Yine people talk about their views on and experiences of interaction with non-human persons and of observing their everyday practices that I began to understand that it was to a significant extent at the interface of human and non-human existence that the negotiation of what it meant to be a socially, morally and corporeally proper Yine person took place. Therefore relating, discussing and analysing the experiences with, and views about, non-humans were highly meaningful for the Yine. The woman's testimony at the church and especially people's reactions to my enquiries about the content of this testimony had been part of this same negotiation, which in the end was also revealed to be behind

the many disagreements between the Catholics and the Evangelicals and their commonly held view of the two churches being 'different but the same'.

The discussion above leads us then to a set of problems and questions I shall examine in this study. Trying to understand what the Yine people meant when they said that the two churches in Diamante were simultaneously different but the same requires us to try to comprehend what it means, for the Yine, to be a proper person in their lived world. Approaching the question through Yine relations with different non-human beings, I shall ask: How are persons formed and transformed socially, corporeally and morally in the Yine world? How is people's proper human condition evaluated among the Yine? And finally, how can Yine Christianities be understood through this negotiation of proper humanity?

Introduction: Approaching Amazonian lived worlds

The setting

The Yine (Piro) are an Arawakan-speaking¹ indigenous people living in Western Amazonia. Their main territory lies in central Peru in the departments of Ucayali and Cusco alongside the River Urubamba and its tributaries. In addition, there are Yine living in the city of Pucallpa and different size Yine communities in the department of Loreto by the River Cushabatay and in the department of Madre de Dios by the Rivers Upper Madre de Dios (including the community of Diamante, see Figure 3), Madre de Dios, Acre and Las Piedras.² Furthermore, the Manchineri, who are closely related to the Yine, inhabit several communities in the state of Acre in Brazil, and some of them have moved to live in the city of Rio Branco (Virtanen 2007).³ In Peru the Yine people number today some 3500–5000 persons depending on the source.

Linguistically the Yine are closely related to speakers of various dialects of Campa-Asháninka, Matsigenka and Yanésa. It has been suggested that these groups of Maipuran speakers form a linguistic-cultural unit called the *pre-Andine Arawak* or alternatively belong to a larger group called *sub-Andine Arawak*, composed of the Yanésa, Asháninka, Nomatsigenka, Matsigenka and Yine languages (see Gow 2002; Renard-Casevitz 1993).⁴ Despite these groupings, however, the Yine language (*Yineru tokanu*) is linguistically most closely related to the Apurinã and Iñapari languages: as many as 48% of the words in Apurinã correspond with Yine words (Gow 2002; da Silva 2002; Schiel 2004:7).⁵ Culturally speaking, however, the Yine have been noted to be quite different from the Apurinã and Iñapari and instead to have similar ceramics, clothing and rituals to the Panoan-speaking Shipibo-Conibo (Gow 2002; Zarzar 1983: 31; Santos-Granero 2002: 31).⁶ As this variety suggests, the categorisations of different ethnic

¹ Arawak languages form one of the principal language families in Amazonia. Other large language families include e.g. Carib, Tupí-Guaraní, Macro-Gê, Pano and Tucano languages. For an early account on Arawakan cultures see Schmidt 1917.

² The migration of the Yine to the River Cushabatay in the Department of Loreto took place at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Gow 2002: 158). In the Madre de Dios area, the communities of Monte Salvado and Puerto Nuevo situated by the River Las Piedras were formed at the beginning of the 1990s (Smith 2003a: 133) and in the year 2000 (Fagan & Shoobridge 2007), respectively.

³ There are also records of some Yine speakers living in Bolivia (Smith 2003a: 132).

⁴ The groups included in these categories vary from author to author. For a concise account of the categorisation of these languages see Gow 2002. On the classification of Arawakan languages see Aikhenvald 2006 and Payne 1991.

⁵ On early sources on the Apurinã see Ehrenreich, Paul 1948 (1891), *Contribuição para a Etnologia do Brasil*. – *Revista do Museu Paulista*, vol XVI, 93–136; Steere 1903; see also Schiel 2004.

⁶ On Yine transethnic change and Panoisation see Santos-Granero 2002.

groups on linguistic, cultural and geographical bases depend largely on the approach and historical time-scale chosen and are to be understood only as devices for research rather than as normative classifications.

In literature the term most commonly used of the Yine ethnic group is Piro.⁷ The origin of this name is not known other than its being a Panoan word (Alvarez 1972: 17; Gow 2002: 152). The word *piro* means a species of catfish (*Megalodoras* sp.; *taya* in Yine) (see Smith 2003a: 140) and as such is sometimes considered pejorative by these people. Recently, however, the members of this ethnic group have begun to use the ethnonym *Yine* instead of *Piro* when in contact with the outside world. This shift is in line with the current development among the many other Amazonian indigenous groups who have begun to use an autonym to enhance the group's self-identification as indigenous people: Jivaro have changed to Shuar, Campa to Asháninka and Pakaa Nova to Wari', to give just a few examples. Such changes have been brought about largely by projects led by different NGOs and other institutions as well as by the self-organisation of indigenous groups. In the case of the Yine, the transition has been inaugurated by the foundation of different organisations such as Consejo Harakmbut-Yine-Matsiguenga (COHARYIMA) and Federación de Comunidades Nativas Yine-Yami del Río Urubamba (FECONAYY). Furthermore, in the community of Diamante ecotourism has had a significant part in promoting the use of the autonym Yine.⁸ The name shift has recently also been reflected in literature as some authors in the field of anthropology have begun to employ the term Yine instead of Piro (see Belaunde 2003; Huertas 2004; Smith 2003a).

The word *yine* means *people* or *humans* and, like many other Amerindian words usually translated as *human*, it does not denote humanity as a separate natural species but rather evokes the position of the subject and the social condition of being a person (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 476). This condition is intrinsically multiple. By examining the Yine word pair *yine* and *yineru/yinero*, meaning *people* and *person* (male/female) respectively, Peter Gow (2000: 48–49) has shown how the word *yine* is grammatically distinct from other Yine words in that it is plural by nature.⁹ It is technically composed of a root *yi-* and a pluraliser *-ne*, but as there does not exist a singular form of this noun in the Yine language, the singular form of the word *people* is formed by singularising the plural word *yine* and so arriving at the forms *yineru/yinero*. Consequently, as Gow (2000: 49) states, for the Yine “‘humanity’ is multiple, and uniquely so’.

It should not, however, be taken for granted that the ethnic group ought to be called Yine. People in Diamante were not unanimous on the

⁷ In addition to Piro, the Yine have been called *inter alia* Chontaquiros, Chichineris and Simirinichis (Zarzar 1983: 42; see Paul Marcoy 1875. *Travels in South America from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean*. 2 Vols. London: Blackie & Son).

⁸ In 2000, a tourism company *Pantiacolla* based in Cusco launched an ecotourism programme called the Yine Project in the community (TKU/N/04/3:11). After facing some difficulties, however, the project was suspended in 2006. The Yine of Diamante are partners also in another ecotourism company called Wanamei Indigenous Tourist Company.

⁹ The only other similar words in the Yine language are the names of the Yine endogamous groups, *neru* (Gow 2000: 49).

question. While some persons voted for the use of the term Yine, others maintained that Piro should be the correct term for their ethnic group (TKU/N/04/3:21). Their argument was that the word *yine*, people, could be used to denote not only people delimited according to ethnic background, but also any other persons, depending on the context. Some suggested that they could be termed *Piro-Yine*, Catfish-People, in order to designate the difference between 'us' and 'others'.¹⁰ Nevertheless, as will be discussed later, such ambiguity is characteristic of the words *yine* and *yineru* and should not be dismissed as an anomaly but rather seen as an intrinsic property of these categories. The category of persons or people in the Yine world is fluid and its contents are essentially dependent on circumstances. It may be used to denote the boundary between the Yine and all other human persons, between kinspeople, *wumolene* (Yine, Yanesha, Matsigenka and Asháninka), and other humans, or between human and non-human persons. For the purposes of this study, the last point in particular is of vital importance, and reinforces the employment of the term Yine rather than Piro.

A brief history of the Manu and Madre de Dios regions

Madre de Dios and especially the Manu region have during the past five centuries experienced many dramatic changes, between being either at the centre or at the margins of general attraction. During both the pre- and post-conquest eras, a wide pan-indigenous trade network was the core of socio-economic life in Peruvian Amazonia. The Urubamba area was one of the cores of this network, in which the Yine were the dominating group mediating between Andean peoples and various lowland groups such as the Asháninka, Amahuaca, Shipibo-Conibo, Cocama, Yanesha and Matsigenka. (Gade 1972; Camino 1977; Santos-Granero 1992: 16–23; 2002: 28; Román 1983: 95; Zarzar 1983: 52–53; Alvarez 1984; Myers 1974; Moore 2006: 17.) Traded items included salt, canoes, corn, tobacco, *cushmas* (men's woven cotton robes) as well as animals and their skins. Also slaves or domestic servants, parrots, cacao, silver, gold and copper items, ceramics and stone axes were interchanged. (Gade 1972; Camino 1977; Román 1983: 95; Miller 1836.) This trading in the Urubamba and Upper Ucayali area revolved around different market places such as Cerro del Sal, Feria del Carmen (later Ferias de Santa Rosa) in Cocabambilla, the peak separating the rivers Picha and Apurímac, and two sites close to Pongo de Mainique: one at the headwaters of the river Yavero and one on the left bank of the river Urubamba in Ayahuanca. The trade continued until the early twentieth century.¹¹ (Santos-Granero 1992: 23–47; Zarzar 1983: 55;

¹⁰ One person suggested that I should write about Taya-Yine, *taya* being the word in Yine language for the fish called *piro* in Spanish (TKU/A/05/48c:9; on the discussion see TKU/A/05/43a:9; TKU/A/05/48a:9; TKU/A/05/37a:13).

¹¹ Newcomers such as missionaries were incorporated into the trading network along with the items they introduced such as animals, tools, clothes, fishing hooks and artificial pearls (Zarzar 1983: 55).

Gade 1972; Camino 1977; Biedma 1981; Varese 1973.)

There is evidence that indigenous people from the Manu and Upper Madre de Dios regions were also part of this inter-ethnic commerce (Renard-Casevitz et al. 1988: 127–139). During the pre-conquest time, one of the Inca Empire's four quarters, *Antisuyo*, extended to the headwaters of the river Upper Madre de Dios. Even though the Inca never conquered the Manu or Upper Madre de Dios areas, it is probable that the indigenous people in the area, named by the chronicles as *Antis* and *Chunchos*, traded with the Andean population in the present day Paucartambo and Pilcopata areas and in the plateau of Pantiacolla in the Madre de Dios headwater region (Miller 1836; Santos-Granero 1992: 42–43; Moore 2006: 17; see Lyon 1976).¹² Also the passes between different river systems were used in trading. According to one analysis, the petroglyph found near the River Yavero in the ancient site of inter-regional commerce portrays the rivers Upper Piccha, Yavero, Upper Madre de Dios and Upper Manu, as well as Pongo de Mainique and the pass connecting the two big river systems, and thus points towards early interaction between the people living by these rivers (Román 1983: 97).

After the Spanish conquest, the Madre de Dios region witnessed several attempts to explore and conquer the area. The first recorded penetrations during the colonial era into the Manu and Upper Madre de Dios regions took place in the sixteenth century. Pedro de Candia, Gómez de Tordoya and Juan Alvarez Maldonado were among the first to explore the Madre de Dios region. Many of the expeditions were, however, unsuccessful owing to strenuous living and travelling conditions, indigenous resistance and rivalries between conquerors.¹³ This caused the region to be spared major invasions and assigned to the margins of general attention for over two centuries, until in the early 1860s a Peruvian Colonel Faustino Maldonado set out to explore the River Madre de Dios from its headwaters (River Piñi Piñi) all the way down to the Rivers Madera and Beni.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the expedition ended with the drowning of Maldonado and several of his companions. A decade later Baltasar La Torre – the prefect of Cusco – began his scientific expedition from the same point of departure at the River Piñi Piñi, only to become killed at the outset of his journey.¹⁵

In the 1880s the rubber boom hit the Amazon. This transferred the Upper Madre de Dios, Manu and the whole wide Madre de Dios area from the

¹² A stone-paved path leading from the Andes to Madre de Dios has been regarded as proof of the interaction between the lowland and highland peoples in the area (see Hyslop, John 1984. *The Inca Road System*. New York: Academic Press. See also Gray 1996: 10; Huertas 2004: 26; INEI 2002: 19–20; Vera & al. 1986: 17–24; Wahl 1995: 169).

¹³ See Gray 1996: 9–11; MacQuarrie 1992: 44–53. See also Cieza de León, Pedro de 1991 [1550]. *Crónica del Perú. Cuarta Parte, vol 1. La Guerra de las Salinas*. Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú.

¹⁴ For other early expeditions in the Madre de Dios region see Aza 1927; Gray 1996: 11; INEI 2002; Vera & al. 1986; Wahl 1995: 160, 222–225.

¹⁵ There are two versions of the death of La Torre (Moore 2006: 53). According to some sources he was killed by indigenous people (Göhring 2006 [1877]) but other sources raise the suspicion that he might have been killed by his own men (Aza 1927).

margins to the centre of events. After several colonist attempts to explore the Manu area from the Cusco direction, the region was reached through the pass between two different river systems, the Urubamba and Manu. By 1892 a Peruvian rubber baron, Carlos Fermín Fitzcarrald, had established his headquarters on the River Upper Mishagua at the headwaters of the Urubamba and set out on an expedition with a great number of Yine and Asháninka to the River Camisea. Following his indigenous companions' instructions, he decided to walk the path leading across the pass separating the two water systems and ended up at the headwaters of the River Manu.¹⁶ Three years later he returned to the area, this time on a steamship, Contamana, and had the steamship transported over the pass between the Rivers Serjali and Cashpajali. This enabled him to transport rubber straight to Iquitos in northern Peru instead of taking it to Manaus through the dangerous and costly Brazilian Amazonia. After establishing this route, Fitzcarrald quickly organised the systematic suppression and enslavement of the native population for the purpose of extracting rubber.¹⁷

The 'finding' of the pass uniting the two river systems launched a massive rubber industry in the Manu and Madre de Dios areas. At the turn of the twentieth century, a thousand rubber workers providing rubber for the commercial house of Fitzcarrald in Mishagua were counted on the banks of the River Manu and over two thousand in the larger Madre de Dios region. (Robledo 1899: 444; Fernández 1952: 69; Osambela 1897: 221; MacQuarrie 1992: 54–61.) In 1909 the Dominican Padre Pío Aza reported on twelve settlements on the hitherto all but unknown River Manu: Sutilija, Santo Domingo, Buenos Aires, Cumerjali, Providencia, Salvador, Soledad, Altamira, Santa Marta, Moteloyoc, Pinquen and Boca Manu (or San Luis del Manu) (Fernández 1952: 158).

The rubber boom made the region an area of interest also to the Peruvian state and missionaries. In 1901, the River Network Board (Junta de Vías Fluviales) was created in order to explore passable river routes. Important geographical expeditions were undertaken by Ernesto La Combe, Juan S. Villalta, Jorge M. von Hassel and César A. Ciprani. (Church 1904; Fernández 1952: 99–100; Huertas 2004: 30; Markham 1903; Vera et al. 1986: 50–52).¹⁸ In 1908, a Dominican mission of San Luis del Manu was founded by Padre Pío Aza at the mouth of the river Manu where already was situated a rubber 'warehouse' of the rubber boss Bernardino Perdiz

¹⁶ The pass had already by that time been described in literature by Samanez y Ocampo (1980 [1884]; see Church 1904: 602), whose sources were Yine.

¹⁷ It is possible that there had been rubber workers in the Manu area already before its 'discovery' by Fitzcarrald but the sources on this point are not adequate (Wahl 1995: 255; Valdez 1944:18).

¹⁸ The first non-indigenous person to settle in Madre de Dios was presumably Ernesto L. Rivero who arrived in Puerto Maldonado in 1900 (Thomas Moore, personal communication).

(Fernández 1952: 146–149; García 2003: 29).¹⁹ It was the first mission in the area and was established to attend the rubber workers and the indigenous people working for them.²⁰ (Zarzar 1983: 54.) At the mission there was also a school for the children of the rubber workers as well as for indigenous orphans – ‘Piro, Chamas and Campa’ children (Fernández 1952: 149). The mission was inaugurated on 4 October 1908 and by the end of November of the same year the school was already functioning under the direction of Fray Pedro Serna. (Fernández 1952: 149; Pérez 1995: 66.) However, as the rubber prices started falling in 1914 owing to rubber production having spread to Asia and Africa, most rubber barons and workers left the Madre de Dios area,²¹ so that in 1922, owing to the diminishing number of people, the mission too was abandoned (Fernández 1952: 349–352, 374). A new Dominican mission, Nuestra Señora del Santísimo Rosario de Pantiacolla, was established on the River Palotoa further up the River Upper Madre de Dios, only to be abandoned in 1926 owing to violent attacks by some indigenous groups (Fernández 1952: 433–436; Jungius 1976).²²

The end of the rubber boom and the subsequent closing of the mission at San Luis del Manu left the River Manu isolated and once again on the margins of general attention. This marginalisation was further enhanced by two factors. First, according to reports in 1916, groups of indigenous ‘mascho’ people appeared along the Rivers Colorado, Amigo and Madre de Dios and attacked many who dared to travel along these rivers, making the region risky for travellers (Fernández 1952: 287–288; Wahl 1995: 331–334). Second, the official formation of the department of Madre de Dios²³

¹⁹ The mouth of the Manu river was selected as the location of the mission owing to the suggestion of the von Hassel expedition in 1904 (Fernández 1952: 100, 104; Álvarez 2001: 81–83. Álvarez cites the magazine *La Rosa del Perú*, Julio de 1905: 144–149). Other influential rubber companies or commercial houses operative in the Madre de Dios at that time were Paucartambo Rubber in Upper Madre de Dios, Baldomero Rodríguez in Upper Manu, Máximo Rodríguez on the Rivers Purus, Manuripe, Buyumanu, Tahuamanu, Yaverija and Iñapari, Inca-Rubber in Tambobata and Madre de Dios, and Sociedad Ipinza-Vargas in Manu and Madre de Dios rivers (Fernández 1952: 179, 189, 663). Yet other actors in the business were Brailard, Bruno Paulsen, Teobaldo González, Hidalgo-Hidalgo, Rivero, Carlos Scharf, Bartra, Izurieta, Casa Forga y Hnos., Antonio Rengifo, Eustaquio Bardales, José Cota and Octavio Fernández as well as N. Requejo and Ricardo Garrote (Fernández 1952: 146, 179; Tízón y Bueno 1911: 38; Vera & al. 1986: 56).

²⁰ A Dominican mission had been established closer to Cusco at Q’osñipata in the Paucartambo province already in 1902.

²¹ Especially the Piedras and Upper Madre de Dios rivers were emptied while entrepreneurs in the regions of Tahuamanu and Acre, where the rubber house of Rodríguez was, were able to resist the rubber crisis by diversifying their production into agriculture and livestock activities (Huertas 2004: 30; see Fernández 1952: 349–350). There were, however, some foreigners who also stayed in the ‘emptied’ areas and established *haciendas* there (e.g. Reyna 1942).

²² The two Dominican missions that exist today in the Madre de Dios area are the mission of San Jacinto in Puerto Maldonado established in 1910 and the mission of San Miguel Arcángel, which was first established at the Palotoa river in 1954 and three years later in 1957 moved to its current location at Shintuya.

²³ The name Madre de Dios became generalised between 1825 and 1848, according to the Dominican priest Jose Pío Aza (1927), because an image of Virgin Mary was found on the banks of this river. Before, the river had been known by the names Tono, Mano, Mango and Amarumayo.

and the establishment of Puerto Maldonado as its capital on 26 December 1912 drew attention away from Manu. Even though in 1911, when the rubber boom was still at its height, there were not yet any large towns in the Madre de Dios area and the capital-to-be of the department, Maldonado, was described as a group of only a few houses (Tizón y Bueno 1911: 5),²⁴ the new capital began to grow steadily over the following decades. By 1940 the population of the town had increased to a little over one thousand inhabitants, by 1961 to 3500 and by 1972 to over 5300 (Lossio 2002).

For almost the next forty years following the fall of rubber prices and the subsequent collapse of the rubber boom in Amazonia, the Manu area did not attract many outsiders, although the more extensive department of Madre de Dios did experience other economic booms. In the 1920s began the commercialisation of Brazil nuts, in the 1930s interest was directed towards gold mining and the commercialisation of animal skins and pelts (especially those of jaguar, white-lipped and white-collared peccary, brocket deer, otter and ocelot), and from the 1950s onwards towards logging. Agricultural and livestock activities were also undertaken. Gold-mining and logging have continued in the area up to the present. Oil companies were also prospecting for oil in the Manu area in the late 1960s and in the Madre de Dios region too during later decades. It was due to the oil and especially the logging business that the River Manu region was once again invaded by hordes of outsiders in the mid-twentieth century. (Huertas & García 2003; Huertas 2003; 2004; Vera et al. 1986; Urteaga 2003.) Loggers were after cedar, mahogany and other commercial timbers, which abounded in the Manu area. An airstrip was constructed near Boca Manu in the 1960s to serve the loggers.²⁵ For the same purpose, in 1968 the road leading from Cusco to Pilcopata was continued all the way to Shintuya, an Amaracaeri community with a Dominican mission (García 2003: 31).

In tandem with the increasing logging activities, the richness of wildlife in the Manu area was noticed by scientists. In 1967, the biologist Celestino Kalinowski together with an English naturalist Major Ian Grimwood suggested to the Peruvian government of President Fernando Belaunde that the Manu region should be protected. In 1968 the entire Manu watershed was declared a National Reserve and in 1973 it was made a National Park. In 1977 the park was recognised by UNESCO as Manu Biosphere Reserve and ten years later in 1987 Manu National Park became a World Heritage Site. (Vera et al. 1986: 95–96; MacQuarrie 1992.) The park is located in the departments of Madre de Dios and Cusco and comprises areas in the Andes as well as in the lowlands. Since the establishment of the area as a National Park, Manu has attracted an increasing number of scientists and tourists.²⁶

²⁴ The settlement in Puerto Maldonado was founded in 1902 by Juan S. Villalta (Moore 2006: 39).

²⁵ The airstrip was constructed by Lomellini and Barton (García 2003: 30).

²⁶ During the disturbed years of the Shining Path activities in Peru in the 1980s and early 1990s, the Manu region also attracted people involved in the drug business. These activities came to an end in February 1994, when the police authorities organised a raid against the region. (Zileri 1999.)

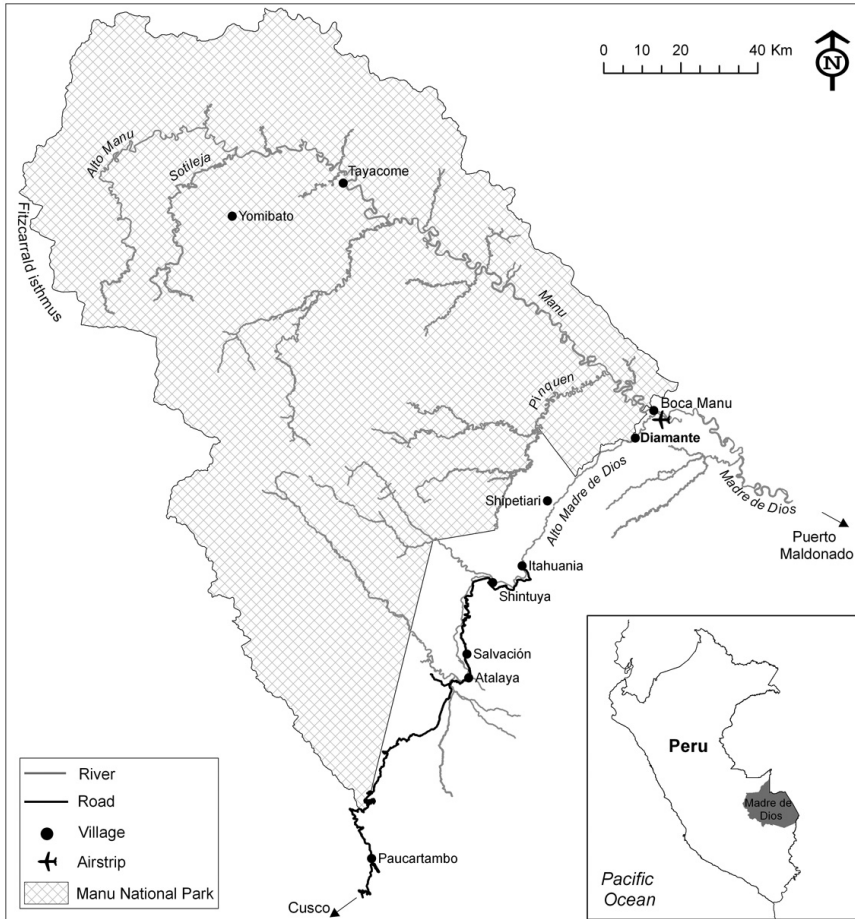


Figure 3. Map of the Upper Madre de Dios and Manu area.

The Yine in Manu and Upper Madre de Dios

It is not known when the Yine settled in the Manu region. Owing to the area remaining largely unexplored until the late nineteenth century, documents concerning the population before that time, especially in the headwater region, are few. What seems certain, however, is that there were already Yine in the Manu region before the rubber boom. When Carlos Fitzcarrald arrived at the River Manu for the first time at the beginning of the 1890s, the first native population he encountered after a day's journey downriver was at a Yine settlement. (Valdez 1944: 16; Román 1983: 108.) Other sources affirm that the pass 'found' by Fitzcarrald was already in frequent use by the Yine, who used it to travel between the Urubamba and Manu regions (Robledo 1899: 443; Samanez y Ocampo 1980: 91–92; see also von Hassel 1904: 241; Farabee 1922: 53; Llona 1903: 140–141; Gow 1991: 30, 39, 45n22; Moore 2006: 53).²⁷ One of the most revealing pieces of information is the description by the Franciscan Padre Luis Sabaté (1925: 280–281) of his journey to Urubamba in 1874, almost twenty years before Fitzcarrald's heyday. Travelling from Miría down the River Urubamba, Sabaté ended up in Camisea (Camsia) where he reported having met a group of Yine people who had come from Manu. These Yine had come to the Urubamba area to trade with other Yine and other indigenous peoples. They exchanged cotton clothes, sacks and bags, as well as feathers, birds, vanilla for tools, salt, fishing hooks and beads.²⁸

Also the Yine people I talked to in Diamante were of the opinion that there had 'always' been Yine people in Manu and that there had 'always' been movement between the Manu and Urubamba regions (TKU/A/04/45a; TKU/A/05/45a; TKU/A/05/38a:2; TKU/N/01/2:12). Peter Gow (2002: 159–161) hypothesises that the ancient Piro-Apurinã speakers originally moved from northern Bolivia towards the north and some of them continued westwards to the Purús headwaters ending up on the Rivers Yurua, Manu

²⁷ A similar pass frequently used by the Yine (Chontaquiuro) connected Urubamba to Purús through Sepahua and Cujar rivers (Llona 1903: 126, 134; Samanez y Ocampo 1980: 87–88; Gow 1991: 40).

²⁸ The Yine told Padre Sabaté that they had never seen such people (white or Catholic) as he was before, which Sabaté considered possible as they lived relatively isolated from other Yine people who were said to be hostile towards and abusive of the Yine from Manu. The Manu Yine people also told Padre Sabaté that the indigenous people of Paucartambo (possibly Amaracaeris) near whom they lived were extremely hostile. (Sabaté 1925: 280–282.) This information seems relatively credible, although Sabaté's motives as a Catholic priest and the nineteenth century conventions of writing need to be taken into account when assessing these kinds of historical documents (see Gow 2001: 22–23). Nevertheless, based on this evidence it is difficult to estimate how many and where exactly the Manu Yine came from. Were there Yine settlements close to the confluence of the Rivers Manu and Upper Madre de Dios already before the rubber boom or were such settlements (like the one reported to exist by the river Condeja [Upper Madre de Dios] in 1903) owing to later movements of the Yine (Llona 1903: 175; see Moore 2006: 34)?

and Urubamba.²⁹ This view is backed up by existing toponyms. Whereas in the Lower Urubamba the most important place names seem to be of Panoan origin, ending in the Panoan suffix *-ya* (e.g. *Ginoya*, *Miyariya* and *Pakiriya*), east of the Urubamba Yine names (*Sotlija*, *Curiuja*, *Yavari*) are more common (see Smith 2003a).³⁰

The present-day Yine people of Diamante narrate their recent past in terms of two sets of events: the debt-peonage and slavery during the rubber boom and the more recent community life led by Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL)³¹ missionary teachers. During the rubber boom, the number of Yine people in the Manu and Madre de Dios regions increased dramatically. The Yine were brought from the Urubamba area to work for rubber bosses by the Rivers Upper Madre de Dios (Paucartambo Rubber), Manu (Firm Bernardino Perdiz and Ipinza-Vargas), Upper Manu (Firm Maximo Rodriguez and Baldomero Rodriguez), Piedras and Purús (Carlos Scharff) as well as Acre (Alvarez 1972: 67; Fernández 1952: 159, 211, 249; Matteson 1954a: 27; Moore 1984; Torralba 1978). The elderly people in Diamante told stories of their grandparents working in slavery for the rubber bosses (TKU/A/04/45a; TKU/A/05/45a). The Yine often worked as allies or intermediaries between the rubber entrepreneurs and the indigenous population and were accustomed to enslave other tribes but also suffered enslavement themselves (Wahl 1995: 259). Together with other indigenous peoples, the Yine did not, however, just submit to the harsh working and living conditions or, for instance, to the separation of families and spouses from each other. Many rubber bosses and their workers were killed by indigenous people in rebellions between 1890 and 1925. For instance, the Yine have been reckoned to have killed such influential rubber patrons as Carlos Scharf and his associate Leopoldo Collazos in 1909, Baldomero Rodriguez in 1910 and Bernardino Perdiz in 1921.³² (Fernández 1952: 159–160, 209; Rummenhoeller 2003; Torralba 1978; Valdez 1944: 42.)

²⁹ Thomas Moore (personal communication) also supports this interpretation. Moore suspects that when for instance the SIL missionaries transported Yine from *Miaria* to the Acre River in the late 1950s, they were taking the Yine 'home' at their request. See also Matteson 1954a: 27.

³⁰ Smith (2003a) lists also *Cashpajali* and *Cumerjali* as names of Yine origin. In addition, Smith (2003a: 139) argues that the term for the Yine living in Manu, *Yine Manu-gajene*, implies origin rather than migration.

³¹ The Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) is one of the largest missionising institutions in the world. It was founded by William Cameron Townsend, who in 1934 organised the first linguistic summer course aimed at training people to translate the Bible into different indigenous languages. From the early days on, the institution had a dual identity. The SIL was a linguistic and cultural organisation while the Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT), also founded by Townsend, was the missionising face of the joint endeavour. On the SIL/WBT history and the double identity strategy see Hvalkof & Aaby 1981; Stoll 1982.

³² The information concerning the deaths of these rubber patrons is rather indefinite. Alvarez (1972: 71) says that Perdiz was killed by the Yine but Fernández (1952: 350) states only that he was killed by someone he thought was his friend. Reyna (1942: 158) notes that Scharff together with his workers was killed in 1911 instead of 1909 and Gow (2001:46) states that Scharff was in fact killed by the Amahuaca rather than the Yine.

Even though the rubber boom came to its end before the 1920s, the indigenous population was not freed. In spite of many Yine and other indigenous peoples moving back to their original regions, they remained living in *haciendas* or agri-communities and working for and being exploited by patrons or plantation owners. (Alvarez 1984.) According to people in Diamante, the Yine remaining in Manu at that time stayed upriver by the Sarayacu³³ stream and were joined by other Yine escaping from the Urubamba patrons. The Yine maintain that the River Manu and its headwaters were empty of outsiders during this time. (TKU/A/05/38a:2; TKU/N/04/3:6; Gornikiewicz 1993: 65; Gow 2001: 222). The only existing larger settlement was close to the mouth of the River Manu at the confluence with the River Pinquen. But there was also a flip side to this isolation. Void of outsiders, the upriver Manu region did not provide the Yine with possibilities for trade and they were also constantly in fear of other hostile indigenous groups. Consequently, they moved down river, establishing a new settlement relatively close to Pinquen and eventually moving to Pinquen to work for and trade with the patron (TKU/A/01/26:8; TKU/A/01/29:4). They also made trading trips up the River Upper Madre de Dios to Atalaya and even to Pilcopata in the Andean foothills. In addition, they hunted for skins and pelts to meet the emerging call for these in national and foreign markets (TKU/N/04/3:16).

Despite the trading and the presence of foreign people in Pinquen, the Manu area was extremely cut off from the rest of the world. This is well demonstrated by the 'finding' of the Pinquen settlement in 1940. During the Peruvian census of that year, a hydroplane used in the census and collaborating at the time with the Wenner-Gren expeditionaries had to land at the confluence of the Rivers Manu and Pinquen owing to bad weather conditions. There they reported having found a settlement of old rubber gatherers that was not shown on any map. Two months later, in August 1940, the Wenner-Gren Scientific Expedition visited the settlement. The leader of the expedition, Paul Fejos, described the discovery as follows:

All the inhabitants of the colony speak Spanish. They also speak one or two of the neighboring Indian dialects, that is Machiguenga or Campa. . . . The oldest member of the colony is one Anacleto Fernandez, 81 years of age, and Spanish by birth. He provided the information that he arrived in Peru in the early years of the twentieth century from Brazil. He gathered rubber on the northern shores and tributaries of the Madre de Dios, with nine companions. After the collapse of the rubber market, they decided to settle at the Manu river, the present location of the colony. He is the authority of the colony, and

³³ This small stream in Manu is not to be confused with the Franciscan mission of Sarayacu in Upper Ucayali.

settles disputes, etc.³⁴ However, the colony at present seems to be completely under the influence and control of an *hacendero*, Sotirio Tercera, who owns the *hacienda* at the confluence of the Rio Carbon and the Alto Madre de Dios.³⁵ Tercera has a contract arrangement with the colony to take their entire tobacco crop, and supplies them with the necessary goods and implements in trade. . . . The settlement has twenty-four families. On average each family has three to four children. The population is showing an increase, as according to local information there are about eight to ten births per year as against one or two deaths. Health conditions are excellent. Malaria, dysentery and other tropical diseases are unknown. The people are well nourished, and clean in their habits. . . . In their well-kept *chacras* they have rich harvests of all possible vegetables and fruits. Poultry farming is also practised, and with excellent success. The colony also has extensive tobacco fields. The tobacco crop is exported several times a year to the *haciendas* around the Rio Carbon, and also to the Pilcopata region. They transport the tobacco themselves, by means of their canoes, via the Alto Madre de Dios. They trade their wares for textiles, iron implements etc. . . . There are practically no urgent needs. The settlers expressed the wish to have a teacher so that the children could learn reading and writing. As none of the children up to the age of twelve were baptised, the Expedition has towed two canoeloads of them to the basecamp at Manu, where Padre José Alvarez has baptised them. (Fejos 1940: 28–31; for the full text see Appendix; see also the summary in *The Geographical Review* [Anonymous 1942: 162].)

Although Fejos mentions only Matsigenka and Campa (Asháninka) having been spoken at the settlement in addition to Spanish, other sources and the accounts the people in Diamante gave me indicate that there were a relatively large number of Yine people living in Pinquen (TKU/A/01/26:8; TKU/A/01/29:4; Gornikiewicz 1993: 66–68; Reyna 1942: 158–161). Ernesto Reyna (1942: 158) mentions this same settlement and states these colonists had not heard anything from the outside world after the end of the rubber boom. Although certainly relatively isolated (not having people from the outside visiting the settlement), the description given by Fejos shows, however, that people made the long trading trip upriver along the Upper Madre de Dios several times a year and were therefore in regular contact with the outside world.³⁶ Nevertheless, the next report on this settlement is only from December 1941, when two Dominican padres

³⁴ Different sources give rather distinct information on the patron of the Pinquen colony. Reyna (1942: 160) states that the chief of the colonists, a man in his seventies, had arrived in the region with Fitzcarrald through the pass of Fitzcarrald around 1895. This contradicts Fejos's report, according to which the man was in his eighties and had arrived in the area from Brazil. On the other hand, according to Gornikiewicz (1993: 66), the patron at Pinquen was called Vaiez. The right form is probably Valles, the name still surviving as a surname in the community called Isla de los Valles situated some half a kilometre from Boca Manu where some of the Yine people settled after the dispersal of the Pinquen settlement. This man apparently did live in Pinquen but was probably not the oldest colonist at the settlement.

³⁵ In addition to Sotirio Tercera, Gornikiewicz (1993: 67) mentions also two other *hacenderos* in the Carbon-Pilcopata region: Enrique Oroeste and Palomino.

³⁶ Reyna's account has been considered rather inaccurate in many respects (see e.g. Valdez 1944: 1–2).

travelled up the River Manu and found the same settlement now plagued by smallpox. The Dominicans helped the survivors, who apparently were not many. (Fernández 1952: 640.) The settlement, plagued by disease, collapsed; some people headed deeper into the Manu region while others settled in Boca Manu (Gornikiewicz 1993: 67–68).

The more recent history of the Yine people in Manu and Upper Madre de Dios is narrated by the Yine in terms of the comings and goings of Protestant missionaries. In the early 1950s, people said, the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) missionaries came to gather the Yine people on the river Manu at a place on the right bank of the river Madre de Dios close to Boca Manu. This was the first site of the community of Diamante.³⁷ According to the elderly Yine people the settlement was formed in 1953. However, the first missionary teacher in this settlement was not a foreigner but a Yine leader called Morán Zumaeta,³⁸ accompanied by another Yine man, José Trigoso. They came from the Yarinacocha missionary station in Urubamba, where they had been trained by the Summer Institute of Linguistics, and they worked among the Yine in the newly formed community for three years.³⁹ According to the Yine, it was due to Morán Zumaeta's work that during this period children and also many adults learned to read and write.⁴⁰ (TKU/A/05/45a:2.)

After Morán Zumaeta, there were several missionary teachers who stayed a few years in the community.⁴¹ In the early 1960s the community of Diamante was moved to a new location on the left bank of the river Upper Madre de Dios just above the mouth of the River Manu. While there, the

³⁷ According to the ProManu report (2002) this site was originally called Puerto Indefinido. However, no one in Diamante mentioned this name to me and even the elderly people I asked about it did not recognise this name.

³⁸ In the ProManu report (2002) Morán Zumaeta is referred to as being Matsigenka, not Yine.

³⁹ The Yine told me that Morán Zumaeta had a 'brother' (possibly either cousin or brother in Christ) called Ulises Diaz. Ulises was said to be Adventist while Morán himself was Evangelical. According to the Yine, Ulises was mainly teaching in Miaría and was far stricter than his brother Morán. He scarcely let people eat any traditional foods and forbade the drinking of fermented manioc beer. On Morán Zumaeta and Ulises Diaz see also Gow 2001.

⁴⁰ It is interesting that the Yine in Diamante always spoke about Morán Zumaeta as a teacher or SIL missionary and never emphasised or even mentioned that he was Yine. According to Gow (2001: 208; see Matteson 1965: 2), Zumaeta had himself learned to read only in 1948 (or was still in the process of learning in that year) under the guidance of the SIL linguist Esther Matteson. It seems therefore quite exceptional that only a few years afterwards Zumaeta was able to work both as a teacher and a missionary among the Yine of Manu.

⁴¹ They included Luciano Canayo, Parcimon Sebastian and Manuel Lizardo (TKU/N/01/1:2–4; TKU/N/01/2:3).

missionaries of the Summer Institute of Linguistics left the area⁴² and the Catholics came to Diamante. They built a chapel in the village but there has never been a Catholic priest permanently living in the community. (TKU/A/05/45a:2.) After the departure of SIL and the subsequent cessation of teaching activities a new school was founded by the Catholics in 1976 (ProManu 2002).

The late 1960s and early 1970s were an economically prosperous time for the Yine. People in Diamante worked for oil companies prospecting the region (Gornikiewicz 1993: 61) and because of the increased traffic along the Upper Madre de Dios, a consequence of the increasing logging business and the subsequent opening of the road to Shintuya, they were able to sell their products to people passing by. The establishment of the Manu National Park in 1973, however, caused the traffic to diminish. In the early 1970s the river moved its course so that people had to abandon the community, which came to be known as *Diamante Viejo*, Old Diamante, and moved to the community's current site on the right bank of the Upper Madre de Dios, which lies at approximately 380 meters above sea level (Gornikiewicz 1993: 68; Shepard 1987: 37). In 1976 Diamante was given the title of native community and in 1980 official land titles (García 2003: 227–279).⁴³

Diamante today

On its current site the population of Diamante had by the time of my visits to the community grown to approximately 300 persons and 70 nuclear families.⁴⁴ The majority of the people living in Diamante defined themselves

⁴² Shepard (1987: 37) states that owing to 'a scandalous fur trade within the Park established by the SIL and uncovered in 1971, the SIL was forced to withdraw its missionary and bilingual teaching operations from Tayacome and Diamante'. SIL encountered other difficulties in Peru in the mid-1970s (Stoll 1982: 201–210; Jungius 1976; Hvalkof & Aaby 1981; Moore 1981; 1984; d'Ans 1981). But SIL was not the only organisation receiving criticism. Whereas the SIL missionaries were blamed for encouraging indigenous people into the illegal fur trade, the Catholic padre of Shintuya was said to be doing the same with illegal logging (Moore 1984).

⁴³ The Peruvian *Ley de Comunidades Nativas y de Promoción Agropecuaria de las Regiones de Selva y Ceja de Selva* defining a Native Community and granting territories for Native Communities was promulgated in 1974.

⁴⁴ I have heard from various NGO workers that the population of Diamante exceeds 400 persons but personally I have never encountered such a great number of people there. The number of inhabitants calculated in Diamante seems to vary greatly depending on the source. According to Pro-Manu (2002) the population was in 1975: 129, in 1989: 267, in 1990: 280 and in 1997: 363. Shepard (1987: 42) states that in 1986 the figure was 146, while Gornikiewicz (1993) says that in 1991 it was 248 and according to Ruiz (1994) in 1994 it was 206. These latter figures do not fit into the Pro-Manu schema. My own calculations also differ from the Pro-Manu data as I counted the number of inhabitants to be in 2000: 277, in 2003: 310 and in 2005: 285. In 2003 the community itself made a census for obtaining certain official documents. The result was 305 persons excluding a few recently born babies (TKU/N/04/3:17). The higher numbers of Pro-Manu probably represent the total number of members of the families living in Diamante of whom not all are living there any more.

as Yine but there was also a fairly large group of Matsigenka people (app. 40 persons) living in the community. In fact, the official name of the community is *Native Community Piro Matsigenka of Diamante*. In addition to the Yine and Matsigenka, there were some Asháninka, Wachipayre, Mascho-Piro, Amaracaeri and some non-indigenous people living in the community. This kind of mixed community is not a new phenomenon among the Yine. Renard-Casevitz (2002: 144n14) notes that throughout the sixteenth century and up to modern days there have been mixed villages of Yine-Asháninka and Yine-Matsigenka, especially in the borderlands of their territories. Also Gow (2002: 156) states that there are no ethnically homogenous Yine communities in the Urubamba area but that all have at least some Asháninka residents in them. Furthermore, the indigenous people themselves are often of multi-ethnic descent.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, although living in the same community with the Yine, the Matsigenka people formed in many ways their own rather separate group in Diamante. The families where both parents were Matsigenka formed the uppermost sector of the community and they were far less active in participating in communal meetings and communal working parties than the Yine. (TKU/N/04/3:9.)

The people of Diamante continued to rely for their basic subsistence mainly on agricultural activities, hunting and fishing. However, paid labour as a form of subsistence was again increasing after a few difficult decades. People earned income for instance from logging (see Wahl 1995: 348–352), selling handicrafts, working as chauffeurs and from tourism (see Chapter 4). The community also owned the airstrip situated near Boca Manu on the right bank of the Madre de Dios. The airstrip served mainly tourists visiting the Manu National Park and provided regular income for the community. Occasional income and educational, legal and economic help were also provided by various NGOs and other organisations. Diamante was part of FENAMAD (Federación Nativa del Río Madre de Dios y Afluentes) and COHARYIMA (Consejo Harakmbut-Yine-Matsigenka). FENAMAD is a multi-ethnic organisation formed in 1982 to defend the territorial and cultural rights and the socio-economic development of the different indigenous groups in Madre de Dios. COHARYIMA is a sub-organisation of FENAMAD. It was formed in 1993 to represent the peoples of the upper part of the Madre de Dios valley. Different NGOs, such as Cedia, Pro-Manu, and Racimos de Ungurahui, have also launched projects in Diamante, concentrating on improving agricultural production and communal infrastructure or promoting the use of medicinal plants and the making of handicrafts. Apart from the land-titling process, few of these projects have, however, achieved any long lasting results.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ In his well-known study Peter Gow (1991) shows how the Yine people of Urubamba are 'of mixed blood'. Also in Diamante many Yine had one parent or grandparent Matsigenka. Therefore, calculating the exact number of representatives of different ethnic groups in Diamante was difficult. In 2003 there were twenty adults in Diamante who defined themselves as Matsigenka but it was not uncommon for people's self definitions to change from one situation to another (see Gow 1993; 1995; 1996).

⁴⁶ Also the Fondo Nacional de Cooperación para el Desarrollo (FONCODES) has had activities in Diamante.



Figure 4. Opening of a school day in Diamante's primary school. Primary school building on the right, Catholic chapel in the centre and health post at the back, behind the tree

The community had an elected chief, secretary, treasurer and board members. While they were legally in charge of the community administration, all adult community members gathered approximately every second week for a communal meeting to decide on community management issues. Also the missionary teachers of the Catholic primary school exercised power over certain communal issues, not only in school-related questions but also in those concerning for instance the communal festivities organised annually (TKU/N/01/2:7).⁴⁷ In addition to the Catholic primary school with two missionary teachers, a state-run secondary school was established in the community in 2000, with several teachers from Cusco or other Peruvian cities. The beginning has not, however, been promising for the secondary school as it has suffered from a constant lack of registered students. The health post, run by a trained mestizo nurse (see Chapter 5), and three small grocery shops (see Chapter 7), were also part of the community infrastructure.

This was the overall setting, although a constantly changing one, during my stays in the community of Diamante. The everyday life of the community revolved around school and church activities, communal meetings and work parties (Spanish: *faena*). Mostly, however, people went

⁴⁷ Also previously teachers and other foreign leaders have been noted to have had great influence in Yine communities (see Gow 2001: 46–47; Shepard 1987:43).

about engaged in their daily activities. Women washed clothes and dishes, cooked, prepared manioc beer or *koya* (Spanish: *masato*), worked in the fields, took care of children and visited each other. Men hunted, fished, cleared gardens or worked in paid labour and relaxed, for instance by playing football in the evenings. In the midst of these ordinary-looking activities people were, however, interacting with the world and its different beings in ways that made the everyday social life among one's kin not a given but something to be achieved. It was these forms of relatedness that I became increasingly interested in while living with the Yine people in Diamante and which provided me with a way in to the study of personhoods and eventually Christianities among the Yine.

On doing ethnography

The diversification of ethnographical studies into new academic disciplines and new geographical settings was the background for the rise of the post-modernist and feminist critique of ethnography in the 1970s and 1980s (Abu-Lughod 1986; Asad 1973; Clifford 1988; Clifford & Marcus 1986; Marcus & Fisher 1986; Said 1978).⁴⁸ In the field of anthropological research, the critique stemmed to a large extent from the questioning of Western and male dominance in ethnographical writing, from the emergence of indigenous anthropologists and from attention being paid not only to far-away places but also to the home setting.⁴⁹ The then prevailing conceptions for instance of the separation between home and field, the ethics of participation and the position of the researcher no longer applied to these new situations. Furthermore, the meaningfulness of the whole ethnographic project came to be questioned in what has come to be called the crisis of representation in ethnography: is it ever possible to understand and describe the lived worlds of other people?⁵⁰

Today, as a consequence of these developments during the past three or four decades, every step of the ethnographic research process, beginning with such key issues as the conceptualisation of the field and of ethnography itself, research methods and ethnographic writing, has been reconsidered. It has become a standard requirement for ethnographers to position

⁴⁸ Some of the critique has its roots already in the 1960s feminist movement as well as for instance in the ethical agitation caused by the publication of Malinowski's field diary in 1967. Later works that continue this critique include Hammersley 1992; Jackson & Ives 1996 and James et al. 1997.

⁴⁹ In the field of religious studies researchers seemed to react to the critique and begin to reflect upon the ethical and epistemological questions specific to the field with some delay. As Spickard and Landres (2002: 4) note 'it is ironic that scholars of religion have started to adopt what they understand to be the "standard" ethnographic practices, just when those practices have come under attack from anthropologists'. In Finland, it has been in particular during the past decade that scholars of religion have begun to take seriously the requirement of reflection in ethnographic research (see e.g. Fingerroos 2003; 2004; Puuronen 2004; Sakaranaho et al. 2002; Utriainen 1999; see also Suojanen 1978).

⁵⁰ On the crisis of representation in ethnography see Marcus & Fisher 1986; Bennett 1996.

themselves in relation to the research subject and to the academic field and to reflect and self-reflect upon the epistemological, methodological and ethical premises of their research processes, whether separately discussed in ethnographies or embedded in the body of the works.⁵¹ This is highly important, as the ethnographer is always part of the research process, the ‘tool’ of her own research. She cannot reach the other in isolation but only through interaction, which makes her inevitably part of the process by which the material for the research is constructed. Open reflection is thus necessary in order to make the research process and the choices made by the researcher visible for readers. Overall, I therefore consider reflexivity in research to be first and foremost an ethical choice. (See Abu-Lughod 2006; Ahmed 2000a; Amit 2000; Davies 1999; Stacey 1991.) Nevertheless, a researcher also needs to know when not to write down one’s reflections: otherwise there is a danger of the research losing its focus.

Interfacing with such an approach, I position this research and myself as a researcher within the body of reflective ethnographic research approaches, which aim to carry out research by acknowledging and recording the constraints of research in order to produce as ethically sustainable a knowledge as possible about the lived worlds of others.⁵² This endeavour is not, however, unproblematic, as will be discussed below.

Constructing the field and research materials

The formation of research material for the present study took place in interaction with the Yine people of Diamante mostly through participant observation and interviewing during three separate visits in the years 2000, 2003 and 2005, amounting to thirteen months of living with the Yine.⁵³ During my visits to Diamante I lived with two different families. I was first accommodated in the house of the then chief of the community, but on the

⁵¹ Fingerroos (2003) divides the requirement of positioning in research into four levels: self-reflection, methodological reflection, epistemological reflection and the reflection over the commitments of the research. I would add to the list also a fifth level: reflection or positioning of the research in the academic field.

⁵² Having a background in the Finnish study of religion, I am at the same time part of the ethnographic research tradition prevailing in this field. From its early days on, study of religion in Finland has been ethnographically oriented. Although the first academic chair in the study of religion was established in Finland only in 1963, the background of the academic discipline lies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in the ethnographical research on religion (especially by Uno Harva) as well as in ethnographically coloured sociological, anthropological, linguistic and folklore studies carried out especially among the Finno-Ugric peoples of Russia (Anttonen 1987; 2007). This ethnographical interest was also influenced by Finnish anthropologists such as Edward Westermarck and his students Rafael Karsten and Gunnar Landtman, working during the early decades of the twentieth century. My reflective ethnographical research interest differs, however, from the comparative interest, which inspired the early academic study of religion in Finland, and is more aligned with the new generation of ethnographical studies of religion produced in Finland especially during the past decade (see note 49 on page 17).

⁵³ In 2000 I lived in Diamante for six months, and both in 2003 and 2005 for three and a half months. In addition, in September 2007 I made a brief visit to the community.

insistence of one elderly woman with whom I had become close during my initial stay in the community, for my second visit I moved in to live with her family. I first chose to stay in a separate house situated in the midst of the houses of her extended family to abate my intrusiveness, although still closely participating in their lives, but when my house collapsed owing to the work of termites, I was invited to live with the family of one of the elderly woman's daughters in their one-room house. Although meaning a total loss of privacy for both them and me, I think this arrangement proved valuable for both parties. The family gained a better opportunity to influence me, to make me more kin-like, which was a prerequisite for the success of our living together. At the same time, I learned much about their lives, the minutiae of the everyday social process, and their conceptualisations of what it means and requires to live well, for which I am indebted to this family.⁵⁴

The fact that I am here talking about my *visits* and *stays* in the community of Diamante rather than about being *in the field* is not accidental. Unlike those ethnographers who see the field in the first place as a site of fieldwork, I do not understand the field only in spatial terms. I conceptualise the 'field' rather as a *relation* between the ethnographical research site, the research subject⁵⁵ and the lived and experienced research process (see Söderholm 1997; Amit 2000; Lederman 1990). In the end, its limits become demarcated by the research problems, the researcher's interpretations and the writing process. My field in the present study cannot thus be defined geographically as the community of Diamante situated in the Peruvian Amazonia, but has to be understood as the process during which research material was being constructed and interpreted in the space formed by Yine understandings of Christianity, morality, corporeality and relatedness and the relationships I had with the Yine people of Diamante. This kind of field cannot, by definition, be stable but is highly situational and momentarily materialises in encounters, moments of observing and interviewing, reading and remembering, and writing and interpreting. During my stays in Diamante, the field became intensified because of the multitude of moments experienced. At other times, for instance at the time of interpretation of research materials, the relationship came into being more in reading and listening to these materials produced. This did not mean, however, that the people with and among whom the material had been produced became invisible or imperceptible. On the contrary: the moments remembered and

⁵⁴ Such a situation, however, makes the use of time challenging for the ethnographer. In my case, complying with the family's daily rhythm left me very little time for instance for writing notes in the evenings, thus often forcing me to postpone the writing down of the day's observations and thoughts till the following day (for similar experiences see e.g. articles in Golde 1970).

⁵⁵ The understanding of the field is closely related to my understanding of the research subject. Instead of being the 'Yine people', the research subject in the present study forms at the intersection of the research questions and methodology used. The subject thus becomes Yine relations with non-human beings, especially the socio-moral and corporeal formation of persons in these relations as well as their links to Yine interpretations of Christianity. It is not, however, a static construction but one constantly under redefinition. As the research questions change or are transformed during the research process, so the research subject transforms.

voices listened kept the memories and experiences alive and produced new interpretations, new views that kept the field in ongoing transformation and reshaped it during the whole research process. (See Gupta & Ferguson 1996: 37–38; Opas 2004b; Söderholm 1997.)

Methodologically, there are both advantages and disadvantages in dividing the research period spent among the people studied, in my case the Yine of Diamante. The intervals in between the periods gives the researcher time to reflect upon everything experienced, the material constructed and the process of construction, as well as to redirect the research to answer new questions that have arisen. Such a situation enabled me for instance to make the connection between Yine interpretations of Christianity and the non-human world fundamental for this study – a connection that I otherwise might have failed to notice or understand. The intervals also allow the interpretations made to be tested and discussed with the people whom they concern during later visits. They may also enable the researcher to better detect and take into account changes taking place in people's social, cultural, political and economic surroundings. On the other hand, however, such partition sets limits, especially for language learning. During the intervals when not surrounded by native speakers a lot of already learned material is forgotten, which slows down the process of linguistic immersion. In my case this meant that even though my language skills improved with time, I never felt competent to interview people in the Yine language, but used Spanish instead. I had similar experiences to those described by Peter Gow (1991: 18–20) of trying to learn the Yine language. While people in general urged me to learn their language, mispronunciations and other mistakes were laughed at, criticised or even disliked. (TKU/N/05/3:20.) Unlike Gow, however, I was able to get formal lessons in Yine from two women, although the lessons were held irregularly, with meagre results. Consequently, my ability to understand Yine outstrips my competence in speaking it.

Nevertheless, while I totally acknowledge the role of language competence in immersing oneself into the lived worlds⁵⁶ of others and in generating comprehension and interpretations, I do not regard the limitedness in that competence as preventing the ethnographic process in which understanding is by definition always partial (Clifford 1986). If we accept that the aim of the whole ethnographic process is the description and understanding of people's lived worlds (e.g. Sakaranaho et al. 2002: 4), the task of an ethnographer then becomes to describe the other so that this other becomes familiar and conceivable to the reader but still retains its

⁵⁶ I have adopted this concept from Peter Gow (2001: 26–27; 1999). The term emphasises the constructive nature of people's socio-moral worlds and the fact that such worlds are necessarily always *someone's* lived worlds.

otherness (Crapanzano 1992: 44; see Ahmed 2000a).⁵⁷ These descriptions are then necessarily constructions or inventions since they come into being as interpretations made by the positioned researcher (Wagner 1975). In the manner expressed by Anna-Leena Siikala, I comprehend the process of ethnographic description and interpretation as writing about moments and their texture⁵⁸:

Writing about moments is a research process, a means for trying to understand people, traditions, cultures, and the interaction resulting in the generation of ethnographical knowledge . . . Still, moments do not tell everything about people or cultures. They evaporate and reveal interfaces between participants, sporadic glimpses of understanding, and inevitable misunderstandings, but never the whole. Only the texture of moments, in which the past and the present, the familiar and the strange, are tied together, can create views from where the essentials emerge. (Siikala A. 1997: 47; see Siikala & Uljašev 2003: 132–133. My translation.)⁵⁹

Participant observation⁶⁰ is intrinsically linked to the moments that make up the texture for generating understanding. What is lived through, experienced and observed are these moments, the most brief ones taking place in the setting of the everyday – smells and sounds of daily tasks, brief conversations with people met on the path that passes through the community, eating with the women of my host family, washing clothes by a nearby stream, digging up manioc roots during the hot midday hours and

⁵⁷ The perpetual dilemma in ethnography is finding the balance between seeing the research subject as other without downplaying similarities, but also without making it hierarchically other, the oppressed (see Abu-Lughod 2006: 470–471). I agree with Sara Ahmed (2000a: 60), according to whom researchers should not write their ethnographies in a manner that conceals the double nature of ethnographic translation – the simultaneous creation of the other (strangers) as the ‘they’ in the narrative (as in asking ‘What is it like for them?’) and destruction of this otherness or the idea of ‘themselves’ through the assumption that the researcher can know what they ‘themselves’ are – but to openly acknowledge the confines of this process.

⁵⁸ There is a danger of holism even in the construction of and talking about such textures. If the texture comes to be seen as a coherent whole where irregularities are downplayed, the research subject described easily becomes bounded, a generalisation (see Abu-Lughod 2006: 471). Downplaying differences between persons has a homogenising effect: diversity of voices is lost and the object becomes for example the ‘Yine people’. According to Abu-Lughod (2006: 474–476), a better alternative would be to study individuals and how they experience and live in specific institutions or societies. However, I think we still need to be able to talk about groups of people. In fact, as Schweizer (2000: 60) points out, ‘some sort of generalisation is unavoidable; otherwise the difference between the particular and the general does not become revealing’.

⁵⁹ Cf. the Malinowskian relationship between the ‘slight dust of little bits of information’ and the ‘final ideals of knowledge’ (see Stocking 1992: 51; see also Siikala J. 1997: 27).

⁶⁰ The use of this term has also been criticised. It has been suggested that the method should rather be called for instance *observing participation* or *witnessing* (Scheper-Hughes 2006; Tedlock 1991). In my view, however, the latter term makes the researcher a passive bystander while the former masks the fundamentals of the research process: ethnographical presence always stems from the interest in studying the other. Therefore, although also fully acknowledging the problems with the term participant observation, I have used it in my research.

listening to a sermon at one of the churches – as well as the more marked ones connected to particular occasions – consoling a grieving woman who has lost a loved one, waking up in the middle of the night to domestic fighting in the neighbouring house, interviewing people after sunset at their porches and participating in dancing during communal fiestas.

Even though many of the moments experienced seem sporadic at the time, when often remembered, they become keys to the world of the other (Siikala & Uljašev 2003: 132), they become ‘research material’.⁶¹ Because of the scattered nature of the moments, however, the researcher’s ‘exploratory gaze’, as termed by Siikala & Uljašev (2003: 132), has to be aware of its direction. In this context, however, the term ‘gaze’, is an overly one-sided and biased metaphor for describing the diversity of human experiences and forms of experiencing. I would rather speak about the researcher’s ‘exploratory perception’, a term which incorporates other than visual observations: sounds, smells, tastes, touch and, as a consequence, emotions, sentiments and over-all atmospheres. It needs to be seen as an informed sensitivity to themes of interest to the researcher. Defined in this manner, the researcher’s exploratory perception becomes, in fact, the core of the ethnographic method when ethnography is conceptualised as research approaches. Instead of there being only one *ethnography*, a research methodology, I conceive there to be an infinite number of *ethnographies*.⁶² These are dynamic research approaches or positions generated and guided by the researcher’s questions, aims, experiences and personal reactions, and her theoretical, methodological, epistemological and ethical attitudes. They do not exist apart from the researcher and her personal interests and characteristics nor are they separate from the lived worlds of the people involved.⁶³

In the present research, during time spent among the Yine and the whole research process my exploratory perception gradually turned towards the moments of Yine people living out, narrating and discussing their own and others’ encounters with and relations to different non-human persons and the moral understandings and socio-moral values manifested, questioned and reproduced in these relations. The moments were part of the flow of the everyday and were sometimes so subtle that without a special directed perception they would have remained unnoticed, as many undoubtedly were. For one could easily not pay attention to a woman on her way to the forest with her baby ripping off some leaves from a bush

⁶¹ The view of the texture of moments as research material, as the process of research itself, is reminiscent of the view of cultural research as the ‘mapping of contexts’ (Grossberg 1995; see Taira 2006: 71–76) and that of historical and microhistorical research as searching for and following leads or clues (Ginzburg 1996; see Fingerroos 2004: 100–101). These expressions are all employed to show how the context or background for interpretation is also formed, not given.

⁶² Ethnography in the singular is used in this work in referring both to the field of studies demarcated by ethnographic research interests and to ethnographic monographs.

⁶³ These approaches are affected by each side’s different interests, socio-political and economic backgrounds and the means and aims of their exercise of power and thus are constantly being redefined (Opas 2004b).



Figure 5. Women resting during a fishing and fruit-collecting trip to the forest. The baby's head has been smoothed with odorous plants in order to protect her from malicious spirits

or to a bowl of manioc beer someone has left in the porch of a house for the night. Acts like these are easily dismissed as meaningless, the former as a way of finding restless fingers something to play with and the latter as someone's lapse of memory before going to bed in the evening. But these acts that first appeared so insignificant gain meaning in the context of people's observations and opinions concerning them, and call for new interpretations: ripping off the leaves now manifests itself as an essential act for protecting the child from malevolent beings believed to reside in the forest, for it is the odour from the leaves that may expel them; and the bowl in the porch is no longer seen as something accidentally left there but as a means to appease a hungry soul of a deceased relative, so preventing it from coming to harass the living.⁶⁴ In this manner, when new moments are woven into the texture, the texture itself is shaped, transformed and reinterpreted.⁶⁵ (TKU/N/01/1: 10; TKU/N/05/3: 18, 23.)

⁶⁴ This is not to say that everything and every act would or should be somehow meaningful for people. There are certainly also things and issues in people's lived worlds that are meaningless. Although in anthropology the interest in meaning would seem to be in-built in the discipline (especially after Talcott Parson's and Clifford Geertz' interpretations of the Weberian interest in meaning), we should not take this 'will for meaning' for granted and fail to problematise it. For discussions on the (Geertzian) role of meaning in anthropology see Asad 1993; Keyes 2002; Tomlinson & Engelke 2006.

⁶⁵ This process can also be understood as the hermeneutical cycle.

Interviews are also such moments but are also made up of moments themselves. They can be described as highly situational narrating and interaction influenced by the participants' conscious and unconscious aims, knowledge, emotions, desires, fears and forms of use of power (Scheurich 1997: 70–71; Anderson & Jack 2000; Basso 1990; Briggs 1986; Bruner 1984b; Patai 1991; TKU/N/04/4:1).⁶⁶ Together with the diversity of the interview settings,⁶⁷ these motivations make interviews situations, which on the one hand comment on and discuss, and on the other hand are part of the ongoing production of social life in a multitude of ways. In Diamante, for instance, people found in interviews a means for a variety of ends, some of which seemed predetermined while others arose during the course of the interviews. One Evangelical woman used an interview as a means to comment on and to defend her position against the power and politics rehearsed by the Evangelical pastor not present in the interview situation; another woman seemed content with showing off her abilities in narrating myths and stories; one man apparently saw the interviews as a source of prestige gained by interacting with a foreigner; and yet another man seemed to find them favourable for promoting Yine cultural heritage. In addition, even though all these interviews were initiated from my research project, thus giving me considerable dominion, the interviewees also exercised their power over the course of interviews. People guided the interviews to new paths, avoided and refused to answer questions or refused to be interviewed altogether.⁶⁸ Each situation, each interview, was therefore full of meanings, only some of which, I am certain, were explicit enough to be accessible. Often these meanings were also contradictory or

⁶⁶ For questions of positioning, reflexivity and power relations in interview situations see also e.g. Berger Gluck & Patai 1991; Briggs 1986; Davies 1999: 94–116; Denzin 1997; 2001; Heyl 2000; Ruusuvauro & Tiittula 2005.

⁶⁷ Almost all of my interviews in Diamante were thematic interviews and were conducted at people's own homes. In some rare cases I was alone with the interviewee, but usually there were also some other family members present. Sometimes this impeded the interview situation, for instance in cases when children needed to be constantly attended to, but at other times the presence of family members made the atmosphere more open and relaxed than a situation unfamiliar to many would otherwise have allowed. However, the presence of others undoubtedly also affected the course of the interviews in what was being told and what remained untold.

⁶⁸ The power situations may even concern the whole interviewing process, not just its contents. As Ellen Basso (1990: 8) notes, ever since the European conquest of the continent indigenous South Americans have had to formulate new forms of discourse conforming to the requirements of the conquerors often at the expense of indigenous ways of speaking. I once found myself in Diamante in a similar situation, in which the interviewee's understanding of the interview situation differed considerably from mine. While I had prepared to ask this man questions about the history of the Yine of Diamante, the man – based on his previous experiences of having been asked to narrate myths and histories on tape – was prepared only to narrate, not to answer questions or to engage in discussions. Without any invitation or instructions, when I started the recording, the man began to narrate, stopping only after almost half an hour, apparently having finished his story. For him that seemed to be all, but I – having recovered from the surprise of the interview not following my lead – still had a great many things I wished to know and I started to ask him some correctives and additional questions related to his narration. In this manner, I later realised, I eventually imposed on him my understanding of an interview.

transformative, rarely static.⁶⁹ Even though perhaps temporarily delimited, the interview situations were thus not separate from the everyday life but formed parts in the construction of the texture of moments, in which knowledge was constantly formed and reinterpreted.⁷⁰ Participant observation and interviews (as well as less formal discussions) need therefore to be considered not as separate research methods but rather as complementary to each other, as for instance the cases of the manioc beer bowl left in the porch and the leaves ripped off the bush described above demonstrated.

In studies such as the present one, ethnographic research material is often seen as consisting of the outcome of participant observation and interviews: interview recordings and notes and diaries written while living with the people under investigation, as well as additional photographs, video recordings and drawings.⁷¹ However, what has not, in my view, received enough attention or even been considered as proper 'research material' are the memories and reactions of the researcher that never got to be written down or recorded. Despite the wide acknowledgement of the researcher as the tool by which the research is realised, these embodied research memories – also termed headnotes (Ottenberg 1990; see also Emerson et al. 1995: 18–19) – are usually considered inferior to the 'hard' verifiable materials of interviews, notes and diaries. However, they do not differ that much from diaries: they just never for one reason or another came to be written down. But in the process of interpretation and analysis, and especially in the process of ethnographic writing, these experiences

⁶⁹ An important question to consider in relation to interviewing is, who speaks and to whom? (Ahmed 2000a; see also Spivak 1996.) Interviewees may even during the one and the same interview speak from various distinct positions and place the interviewer in different positions (and vice versa), which may even dramatically influence what is said and what is not. During one of my interviews, for instance, a woman was first telling me about traditional Yine customs in a tone which was first and foremost that of a 'teacher', a person proud of her cultural background and willing to pass the knowledge on to younger generations. However, when I asked her whether she herself had ever used traditional Yine clothing her tone changed and – apparently based on her previous experiences of interacting with foreigners – she seemed to see in me 'the white foreigner' accusing the Yine of forgetting their traditional customs. Later on her tone changed again and we continued the interview in an atmosphere that would perhaps best be described as a conversation between a mother and a daughter. (TKU/A/01/26:8.) This is but one example of the dynamic nature of positioning and power relations that need to be taken into consideration in relation to interviews.

⁷⁰ In interviewing some elderly people I used a local translator. This was on the one hand problematic because one could not be certain of the accuracy and completeness of the translations. On the other hand, however, it proved fruitful since the translator seemed also to be sincerely interested in the topics discussed and sometimes even asked questions in her own right. Furthermore, her presence made it possible to enter into some delicate topic areas that otherwise would not have been discussed. (TKU/N/04/4:1.)

⁷¹ Nowadays, the spectrum of research methods used and materials produced has widened. Even though interview transcriptions and field notes and diaries have remained as the standard materials, a whole range of new materials and methods (e.g. video and audio messages, e-mails, drawings, maps and diaries produced by the people under study etc.) are used in ethnographical research. The accessible research materials in the present study include 88 interviews and 8 recordings of religious or other events (app. 200 h), 1000 photographs, 700 slides, 4 hours of video material and approximately 500 pages of typed field notes.

may spring to the surface, allowing something that at the time seemed irrelevant or marginal to be seen in a new light (see also Urban 1996: 1–27). Images of people, their comments or tones of voice, their reactions in different situations or their silence or absence may suddenly become significant in relation to the questions at hand and may change the texture of moments or open whole new questions for research. Like diaries and interviews, a researcher's experiences and memories are produced in interaction with people and, in spite of their sometimes vague nature, their value in the ethnographic process should not be underestimated.

Positioning and being positioned in Diamante

Choosing a certain subject for ethnographic research is intrinsically related to our personal projects, personal histories and views of the world. In a way, the subject has gradually been woven into who we are, and is realised as a research topic which, however, is constantly being reworked. Therefore our perceptions are also influenced and informed not only by research problems and methodology, but by the people we are: our age, gender, socio-economic and cultural background, personal opinions and ethical decisions. While it is not meaningful or possible to treat each of these things separately here, there are a few observations on positioning in ethnographic research, and in this research in particular, that I wish to make.⁷²

I do not think it was a coincidence that many of the people I developed the closest relationships with in Diamante were women of my own age. Most of my days were spent with adult women, helping to carry out their ordinary everyday tasks. Therefore my insights often concern their lived worlds instead of that of men (or of children). This does not mean, however, that men's worlds would have been totally inaccessible to me. I occasionally accompanied men on their hunting and fishing trips and interviewed and conversed with them just as I did with women (TKU/N/01/2:14; TKU/N/04/3:14, 16). Furthermore, many of the most verbal Yine willing to discuss and ponder on the question of Christianity were male. Nevertheless, perhaps because Yine everyday life seemed in its outward heteronormativity to correspond with the gender norms still largely prevailing also in Western societies, it was much easier for me to slip into the world of women's daily practices than that of men. But, as I came to experience, on a more minute level this heteronormativity and Yine understandings of the formation of proper men and proper women proved to differ to a significant extent from my preconceptions: I was not, in fact, so axiomatically considered a proper woman.

⁷² It should be noticed, however, that owing to the complexity and transformability of research settings, the mere listing of the various aspects of one's person does not make the position of the researcher transparent or unproblematic.

A fruitful approach for looking at gender⁷³ among many Amazonian societies (not least because of its strong resonance with the Amerindian perspectival logics discussed further below) – and one that helped me to unravel some of the more particular ways of gender-based positioning in Diamante – is developed by Cecilia McCallum (on gender in Amazonia see also Belaunde 2001; Gregor & Tuzin 2001a; Perruchon 2003; Rival 2005). According to her (2001: 178; see Butler 1999: 174–179, 185), gender in the Amazonian context is an aspect of social relationships not necessarily in a ‘static form as embodied knowledge’ but more dynamically, when it transforms into energy in social action. For McCallum, ‘[s]ocial action is infused with male and female agencies engaged with each other in a complementary fashion.’⁷⁴ The (heterosexual) meanings given and attached to gender thus become embodied in persons as certain potentialities and capacities for action that are constantly manifested and reworked in social interaction. The meanings are attached not only to people’s bodies but also to substances and items passing between them.

This kind of view on heterosexually gendered materiality as potentialities or capacities directs interest towards the moments of their reproduction in the course of everyday life. It thus allows the researcher to better detect the subtleties in the ways gender is being produced, reproduced and more generally understood by the people under investigation and the possible differences in comparison to the researcher’s own understandings. Despite the outward familiarity of the heteronormatively organised social life in Diamante, when looking from the above-described perspective the differences between my views and those of the Yine also became increasingly manifest during my stays in Diamante. I came to view, for instance, Yine women’s long hair as one of the manifestations of their gendered agency and one that was constantly being negotiated in social relationships. Once, a father unhappy with his teenage daughter’s behaviour threatened to cut her hair very short, an act which, judging by the girl’s and other people’s comments, would not only have deprived her of (some of) her potential for relating to the boys of her age but would also have been noted (and gossiped about) by the whole community. For the father’s part it was an act of controlling his daughter’s female potentiality and consequently her social interaction. I found myself permanently in a comparable situation as the women in Diamante often made comments on my shortish hair. (TKU/N/05/3:13.) I obviously lacked some of the potential that other women

⁷³ Contrary to many gender theorists who have tried to dispense with the sex/gender distinction (e.g. Butler 1999; Grosz 1994; Moore 1994; on the history of the sex/gender debate in feminist ethnography see Visweswaran 1997), some anthropologists have reintroduced the division as a methodological tool, finding it to correspond in various ways with indigenous experiences and being therefore useful for describing and understanding their worlds (e.g. Astuti 1998; Rival 1998). Although tending to align with the latter view, in this study I do not operate on the sex/gender division to any significant extent.

⁷⁴ The problem with McCallum’s view (or rhetoric) lies in her seeing gender as some kind of separate entity, ‘invisible force’ that ‘takes material shape’ as if it was somehow autonomous or independent of people (McCallum 2001: 178).

possessed for being conceived as proper women.⁷⁵ For its part, this also made it difficult for people to categorise and relate to me. The comments about my hair were not only attempts to persuade me to grow my hair longer but also, even if unconsciously, bids to make me a more potential woman since long, healthy, beautiful hair was considered important for proper womanhood.

This was only one of the many subtle ways of the people of Diamante to position me. On a more general level, positioning was related to people's need to understand why I had come to live with them. This was, however, a perplexing task. For to understand why I wished to live in Diamante, people had to position me in some way but in order to position me they needed to understand. For my part, in a fashion familiar from ethnographical studies, I tried to become the student, the person in need of being taught the basic premises of social life.⁷⁶ This was not difficult, as prior to my first visit to Diamante I had never been to the rainforest before nor did I possess many of the skills required for taking care of everyday tasks in the community, such as selecting the right kind of firewood for the hearth or digging up manioc tubers without breaking them. I also tried to be as open as possible about my aims and objectives and about the reasons for my wish to stay in the community. This meant constantly having to demarcate the line between myself and other groups of people visiting or having stayed in Diamante. I was a student interested in people's ways of living and their socio-cultural understandings, not an NGO project worker, not a spy, and not a teacher (for similar experiences see e.g. Urban 1996).

The Yine, however, initially still had difficulties in positioning me. This was by no means surprising, given that positioning is necessarily a process in which contextual information plays a central role.⁷⁷ Since people did not know anything about me beforehand, they sought to find a suitable context within which to place me. The logical place to start with was the groups of foreign people most familiar to them: NGO and project workers and government authorities. But since I did not fit well into these categories, people were left with the need to get more information about me. The principal way, which became very familiar to me during my stays in the community, was to ask about my family: who were they and what did it mean that I had chosen to be separated from them for such a long time

⁷⁵ Living in a Western society, despite the fact that there too a woman's long hair can still be said to retain some of its feminising power, I have not felt having shortish hair as a lack.

⁷⁶ Placing oneself in this kind of position of learning-to-be native has been noted to accentuate the actual impossibility of ever becoming one. Sara Ahmed (2000a: 61–62) notes that the position of *learning-to-be* is different from simply *being* already in that it is the very knowledge of this difference that sets the person in the first position apart from those in the latter.

⁷⁷ Similarly, it took me a long time and much accumulation of contextual information before I could position different persons in Diamante as part of the social network.

by coming alone to live with the Yine?⁷⁸ Nevertheless, perhaps because my answers to these questions were not satisfactory, it was only when I was asked to start teaching English at the newly established local secondary school, which I did, that they could find a suitable category for me: I was a teacher.⁷⁹ I immediately noticed some changes in people's attitudes towards me, especially in relation to some people who until then had related to me with some caution. They seemed to open up and were eager to talk with me, first about the teaching but later on about a variety of issues. Before, it seemed, they had not found a proper way to relate to me. With time, however, I came not only to be seen as a teacher but, depending on the relationship I had with each person, I came to be called – using kinship terminology – daughter (*wgene*), sister (*shte*) or niece (*paliklero*). Some people did continue to call me by my first name and yet others preferred to call me *señorita* (or *señora* after I had married).⁸⁰

After getting to know and be known in the community, I was also positioned within the community's social network. In the setting of the everyday, including disagreements and friction between families, between individual persons and between the Catholics and Evangelicals, I am certain that my every move – who I lived with, talked with, worked with or frequently visited – was noticed and, even though not necessarily explicitly, influenced people's attitudes towards me. However, I wish to note that at no point were Yine attitudes towards me unfriendly or hostile – on the contrary. There were no houses where I would not have been welcome, although, as will be discussed in Chapter 7, people sometimes avoided interaction by retreating inside their homes when seeing me (or any other person, for that matter) approach. In spite of people's welcoming attitude, the social discrepancies in the community often surfaced in everyday conversations or were readable between the lines, thus affecting also my interaction with the Yine and our mutual positioning. It was in these situations also that ethical issues related to doing ethnography often materialised. In what follows, I shall continue to discuss positioning in relation to the ethics of ethnographic research.

⁷⁸ My 'willingness to step outside of social relatedness, and inhabit a world where [I] had little or no connectedness to anyone' (LiPuma 1998: 73) appeared to go counter to Yine understandings of the behaviour of proper persons since for them a properly moral person would never choose to be separated from one's family (see Chapters 1 and 2).

⁷⁹ I do not wish to say that this was the only position people placed me in: positioning clearly varied from situation to situation, as described for instance above in relation to interviewing. The position of a teacher, however, gave people a general context for my stay in Diamante.

⁸⁰ The fact that I had got married before my visit to Diamante in 2005 caused some changes in people's attitudes towards me. Now I was no longer a girl but a woman. However, being a married woman with no children was seen as perhaps even stranger than being a single childless woman because basically all women of my age in Diamante already had two or three children.

Ethics of research

The minimum requirement for ethical research is the openness of the aims and objectives of the research at all phases of the research process from the initial stages of planning to writing and publishing the research. It is in interaction with the living people, however, that ethical questions and dilemmas become most concrete. While some of the ethical questions are highlighted later in the text, there are three general points related to this interaction that I wish to examine here in more detail: living as an ethnographer in the midst of intra-communal social frictions, protecting and respecting people's rights and immunity, and the inequalities of the research situation. What is common to all these issues, although in different ways and to differing degrees, is the question of whose ethics are we talking about. As I came to see in various ways among the Yine of Diamante, the research ethics were *my* ethics, not necessarily theirs.

In a research in which the aim is to generate understanding of the diversity of positions and people's ways of being in the world in a smallish community such as Diamante, it is essential to be able to work with diverse groups of people. This can be achieved only by trying to build relationships of trust with different kinds of people and remaining at least to a certain extent impartial.⁸¹ Owing to intra-communal social dynamics, frictions and hostilities, achieving that aim is not, however, unproblematic. The ethnographer visiting different houses and different 'camps' easily becomes someone from whom people try to find out what is going on in other families and within other groups of people. But willingness to reveal other people's affairs would not only be incorrect, but impede the formation of trust as people would need to assume that also their affairs will be told to others. On the other hand, a total refusal to engage in this kind of social talk would, in the case of the Yine, leave the ethnographer in a position of a person not able to be social, which would be opposed to the high value the Yine place precisely on people's ability to be social (see especially Chapter 4). Struggling with this dilemma for quite some time, and after many seemingly unsuccessful attempts to explain to people the ethical principles I wished to follow by not gossiping about other people's matters, I gradually learned to employ their own methods for avoiding certain types of questions without abandoning social participation. (See Briggs 1986; Metcalf 2002; Tapaninen 1996: 356–391.) The often-employed response to undesired questions was to imply ignorance: *Quién sabe? Qué sera?* Who knows? or in Yine, *Gi numata*, I do not know. These replies tell the questioner that the person either does not know or, what is more likely, does not wish to answer. In the end, judging by the nature of things people told me in discussions and interviews, I believe I did manage to establish relationships of trust with various distinct groups of people in Diamante and to navigate successfully

⁸¹ Remaining totally neutral is not, of course, possible if one really wishes to participate in people's lives.

in the midst of their differing attitudes towards each other.⁸²

The second issue I wish to consider here is protecting and respecting people's rights when doing research. Whether we like it or not, ethnographic research is always invasive (Ahmed 2000a; Nygren 1997; Patai 1991; Stacey 1991). Therefore the task is to try to minimise the downsides of the intrusion. This does not mean that the people studied should just be victims unable to have their say in forestalling harm caused by the research. On the contrary, they often take an active role in resisting and denying the researchers' attempts when these tend to go too far, the content of 'far' being defined separately in every case. Nevertheless, researchers themselves need to take responsibility for making sure that they are not intruding into people's lives at any cost. A much-discussed method for protecting people's rights in ethnographic research is getting people's informed consent for participating in a particular piece of research. Obtaining such permission does not signify that every single person should be asked to sign a written consent form, but rather that people should be made aware and understand what they are participating in and what it means when they do so (Fluer-Lobban 2000; Loue 2002; Pekkala 2003). While I totally agree with the requirements of openness and of informing possible interviewees and participants in the study about its future uses, in practice a researcher often faces problems in fulfilling these requirements. For how does a researcher explain the possible consequences of participating in the study to people when, first, the people studied may have a totally different conception of the contexts, aims and settings of academic research and, second, when the researcher herself is unable to know all the possible future uses and consequences of her research? (Korom 2001.)⁸³ I faced the first problem often in Diamante when trying to explain what it was that I wished to do, why I was doing it, what would be the material outcome of the study, and that the interview recordings made would be archived at my university and their later use would be controlled (TKU/N/04/4:1). Even though I did keep explaining these things to people, I noticed that it was only with time, by participating in the research and interacting with me, that they generated understanding of the nature of my work and my aims. It was in the process, through getting to know the kinds of things I asked and what I was interested in that they formed their picture – which, I am certain, differs from mine – of me and my work. Consequently, I gathered, people's informed consent was not so much a verbal acceptance but rather their willingness to continue to let me participate in their lives, to be interviewed, in short, to live with me, and perhaps more importantly, after my initial

⁸² I was not, however, above or outside the Yine social network in terms either of good or of bad, and there were always rumours about me (about who I had been talking with, who I had given gifts to etc.), only some of which, I am sure, came to my knowledge. (TKU/N/01/2:9; TKU/N/04/3:20; TKU/N/05/3:25.)

⁸³ A further problem with the notion of informed consent is that it entails the Western concept of the individual as an autonomous being. In many non-Western societies, such as among the Yine, persons are not viewed as individuals in a similar manner but are predominantly defined in and through their relations with other persons. (Loue 2002: 114–116; see also LiPuma 1998.)

visit to the community, to accept me there again.⁸⁴

In spite of this consent, I have taken certain measures to protect the people participating in the study. Not being able to control how and by whom my text will be used after publication, and because of the sometimes turbulent nature of the everyday social life in the community of Diamante, I have decided not to mention people by name in my writing.⁸⁵ I also hold the view that not everything experienced, heard and seen while doing ethnographical research can be written about, even if it means that something important connected with one's research problems cannot be used as evidence.⁸⁶ Some of the things that came up during this research and which I have decided not to write about are either very personal matters or such as may possibly harm the community in some way.

The third issue I wish to discuss here concerns the inequalities of the research situation, especially the socio-economic differences between the researcher and the people among whom she lives. This problem can be summed up in the question often presented in ethnography of how research should and does benefit the people studied. The question is not an easy one, not least because often the expectations and visions of possible benefits held by the people studied and the researcher do not meet. On the one hand, a researcher may easily think that she knows better than the people themselves what they need and what their reasons for participating in the research are. On the other hand, people's expectations for benefits sometimes do not correspond in the least with the possibilities available in practice.

What people consider as sufficient benefit for participating in a research project varies from person to person. For instance, after already having been in Diamante for some time, I learned that one elderly man was very upset at my not having taken any special interest in him. Therefore, when I began first conversing with him and later on interviewing him, he appeared pleased and wanted me to visit him often. It seemed important for him that he should also be among those who worked with me on a regular

⁸⁴ The Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association (1998) also acknowledges some of the problems embedded in the concept of informed consent and states that '[i]t is the quality of the consent, not the format, that is relevant'. (For a critical view of the AAA Code of Ethics and a discussion on ethics in anthropology see Pels 1999.) The research material constructed for and used in this research is archived in the archives of the School of Cultural Research at the University of Turku, Finland. The archive is bound to protect the rights of people studied and access to the materials is granted for persons using them for scientific purposes only. For each interview, I asked permission for the use of the material on the tape for my research and for archiving the tapes, even though the concept of an archive probably still remains foreign to most people interviewed. I also emphasised to people that they were under no obligation to answer my multiple questions.

⁸⁵ Still, if wished, some people can be identified from the text by those who know the community well.

⁸⁶ This does not mean that the things not written about would not influence the conclusions one makes: the challenge is to be credible, to build the argument, without having to write about everything experienced.

basis.⁸⁷ Perhaps it was a question of prestige acquired from the relation to a foreign researcher, a need to get the researcher's undivided attention, to get some material outcome or just having someone from the 'outside' to talk to. But these possible benefits that this man or other people might 'get out' of the interaction still do not make the setting a 'fair exchange' where both partners give and receive equally (de Laine 2000: 121–145; Patai 1991: 142–143; Wolcott 2005: 115–146). They do not justify the utilisation of other persons for the ethnographer's own purposes. But does anything? An argument widely used especially in early feminist ethnography is that the research gives voice to the underprivileged and otherwise silent, empowers them, and in this manner returns the research to those studied. But a fair question is, is this really empowerment or is it actually appropriation? (Patai 1991: 147; Ahmed 2000a; Visweswaran 1997; Wilkinson & Kitzinger 1996; Yeatman 1993.) Another manner of ethically justifying research is the promises made to people of keeping in touch and nurturing the friendships formed even after the research is over.⁸⁸ Despite the sincerity of most of these promises, they often end up vitiated for one reason or another. Sometimes it is the large number of people one has promised to stay in contact with, sometimes the mere distance or the requirements of one's 'life at home' which make the promises difficult to keep. Writing about ethics in feminist research, Daphne Patai (1991: 149) points these inequalities out by stating:

In the end, even 'feminist' research too easily tends to reproduce the very inequalities and hierarchies it seeks to reveal and to transform. The researcher departs with the data, and the researched stay behind, no better off than before. The common observations that 'they' got something out of it too – the opportunity to tell stories, the entry into history, the recuperation of their own memories, perhaps the chance to exercise some editorial control over the project or even its products etc. – even when perfectly accurate, do not challenge the inequalities on which the entire process rests. Neither does a sisterly posture of mutual learning and genuine dialogue. For we continue to function in an overdetermined universe in which our respective roles ensure that *other* people are always the subject of *our* research, almost never the reverse.

Acknowledging the inevitability of inequalities in ethnography should not, however, drive ethnographers into indifference or unconcernedness. In my research, I avoided making promises I knew I could not keep. For even if it would feel like turning people down at the time, making no promises was better than making false promises. I witnessed several people in Diamante time and again talking about their children's foreign godparents who had promised some day to come and take their godchild to study in the United States or some other country but had not, after ten or fifteen years, yet

⁸⁷ I had, in fact, first misinterpreted the man's attitude towards me. As he seemed always to be quite sour towards me when I talked with him, I thought that he was reluctant to interact with me although his attitude more probably derived from him being unhappy precisely with the fact that I had not ask him to be interviewed. (TKU/N/05/3:2.)

⁸⁸ On friendship as a 'technique of knowledge' in ethnography see Ahmed 2000a: 60–61.

returned. (TKU/N/01/2:2, 14; TKU/N/04/3:12, 21, 25.) Nevertheless, the people were still waiting. They were awaiting perhaps not so much the person him or herself, but the promise of a better future for their child to be fulfilled. I do not think that making no promises somehow nullifies the friendships I established with the people in Diamante or my desire to keep in touch with them and to aid the community in some way in the future. Even though I could promise the people nothing more than to come back one day, there are things concerning the maintenance of our relationships and helping the people that I have promised to myself.

In the daily life among the people studied these promises and ideas of future benefits feel, however, quite distant for both parties, as people are often more interested in instant material benefits. Writing about the everyday community life in Amazonia, most ethnographers have noted the constant demand for items – clothes, knives, medicine, batteries, etc. – from the researcher either as gifts or in exchange (e.g. Hugh-Jones 1992: 42–43). Sometimes this feels frustrating, as Anthony and Judy Seeger (2004) humorously demonstrate in their tune ‘The Anthropologist Song’ about life among the Suyá.⁸⁹ Despite seeing the material inequalities and people’s need and consequently wishing to give things to them, in the daily life in an Amazonian community these benign wishes can be fulfilled only up to a certain limit. In addition, people have expectations also at the communal level. Many indigenous peoples are today increasingly global and have particular and well-articulated communal goals and socio-economic and legal expectations towards the local, national or international communities. They have co-operatives or enterprises for producing items for international markets, they sell ritualistic songs as ringtones, engage in the tourist business, are organised to protect their territorial rights and to promote their cultural heritage, engage in politics and in many other ways are increasingly part of, and in interaction with, national and international communities. Consequently, they often do not see the researcher as a ‘scholar’ but as a door towards these possible futures. It is in the midst of such expectations that the ethnographer has to make her choices.

It has not yet been economically possible for me to answer the Yine requests for launching some communal project in Diamante that would benefit all.⁹⁰ However, I have always felt the need to somehow take cognisance of the whole community even though there were many men and women with whom I scarcely interacted. In the existing economic framework, in addition to teaching English at the local school, my solution was to give a gift, for instance a mosquito net, to each family upon my arrival

⁸⁹ In the song to which Judy Seeger has written the lyrics she explains how the Suyá ‘liked to corner’ her husband and say: ‘Give us your hammock. Give us your blankets. Give us your salt and your soap and your mattress. Why did you bring us so few beads and mirrors? Why didn’t you bring us a new soccer ball?’

⁹⁰ I have attempted to find financing e.g. from different Finnish NGOs but thus far without success.

in the community.⁹¹ I had not actually realised the meaning of such a gift to the people until when I returned to the community after one and a half years absence and people still remembered and came to thank me for that gift. (TKU/N/05/1.) Later on I understood that it was perhaps precisely the communal nature of that gift that mattered to people. Disagreements over access to manufactured goods were common in the community and even became one of the decisive mediums for discussing socio-moral stances between Evangelicals and Catholics, as will be discussed below in Chapter 7. Consequently, giving something, and the *same* something, to every family, proved to be important. This was not to say, however, that in the daily life of Diamante I would have escaped people's constant demand for items – clothes, tools and medicine (TKU/N/01/1:1; TKU/N/01/2:15).

However, reflecting on people's demands but also on their generous gifts to me, I have come to rethink the logic behind these requests. As has recently been discussed in relation to distinct Amazonian ethnic groups, perhaps the desire for different items is one manifestation of the way also the Yine have for centuries related to and constructed relationships with strangers by means of exchange (Conklin 2007; Oakdale 2007; see also Gow 2001: 305–306; Hugh-Jones 1992: 61). When examined against the background of the Yine history of trading and their views on the ways of constructing persons and relationships, relating to an ethnographer through requesting, giving and exchanging items becomes comprehensible. Friendships and material requirements do not have to be at odds with each other but positive relations may, in fact, be expressed through materiality, through exchange (Conklin 2007). Nevertheless, understanding this does not yet eliminate the difficulties in the practicalities one faces in the face of people's frequent demands for manufactured items.

Apart from the daily activities, I also wished to compensate the people with whom I worked most. During my first visit to Diamante, I never paid anyone for their participation, nor did they directly ask to be paid. However, for my second visit I decided to pay people for being interviewed (TKU/N/04/4:1). Even though I interviewed some people only once or twice, most of my interviewees were engaged in working with me on more or less regular bases. It felt therefore natural to pay them for these formal interviews even though we were often also engaged in long discussions and hours of working together with no payment. Some NGO workers visiting the community criticised me for paying the Yine for this kind of work, claiming that it would only add to their 'greed' and make future ethnographic research among them more difficult if not impossible. I did not agree. First of all, some people explicitly and justifiably expressed their contempt for researchers who 'come to live in a community, write a book and earn a lot of money', leaving them nothing: a scene too often

⁹¹ Every time when leaving the community I left most of my things for those with whom I had mostly been working or to the elderly people who did not have access to paid labour and consequently did not have much.

seen in the past.⁹² In spite of the earning part not being true in most cases, it is true that ethnographies are vehicles for advancing one's career and thus benefit the researcher. Therefore, people should receive at least some direct benefit for taking part in such researches.⁹³ In addition, no one, I'm sure, would call into question the payments made to indigenous people working for natural scientists for instance by guiding them in the forest, teaching them plant knowledge, carrying research equipment or clearing pathways. In what way does people's engagement in ethnographic research differ from that? On what basis are indigenous people's knowledge of flora and fauna or their skills in trekking in the forest to be seen as more valuable and more worth paying for than their socio-cultural and moral knowledge and understandings of the world?

In the following section I shall discuss the ways in which this latter type of knowledge and Yine means of comprehending the world are approached in the present study.

Approaches to Christianity, relationality and morality

The past three decades in anthropology have witnessed a rise in the number of studies concentrating on Amazonian, that is Amazon-basin, indigenous people. This rather recently developed broader interest in the region has resonated with similar developments in other academic fields. Researchers have shown how Amazonia, in addition to being anthropologically speaking the 'least known continent' (Lyon 1974; Jackson 1975; Rivière 1993), has also been conceived for instance as the 'last frontier for the study of history' (Whitehead 2003a: vii). Such recently awakened academic interest has also had its effects on the visibility of Amazonia in anthropological theorising. Apart from Lévi-Strauss's work, it was for a long time felt that no general theoretical contributions in the field of anthropology came from the Amazonian context.⁹⁴ Correspondingly, researchers tried to understand Amazonian worlds by using anthropological concepts acquired from the study of other geographical contexts, resulting in a rather distorted picture

⁹² Furthermore, I was by no means the first person to pay the people for their services or co-operation. For instance, several NGO projects paid people small monthly salaries for participating in the project activities (TKU/N/04/3:2).

⁹³ There exists, of course, a danger that people wish to be interviewed solely for the material benefits, which may also compromise the reliability of their accounts. However, I find this problem marginal in situations where the researcher spends long periods of time among the people he or she studies and where interaction with the interviewees is not restricted to the moments of interviewing.

⁹⁴ Certain early Nordic ethnographers, such as Rafael Karsten (1879–1956) of Finnish descent, Erland Nordenskiöld (1877–1932), a Swede whose father was the Finnish-born Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld, as well as the Germans Karl von den Steinen (1855–1929) and Theodor Koch-Grünberg (1872–1924) had, however, published some influential works on Amazonia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, which had profound influence on the development of the discipline of anthropology not only in the authors' home countries but also for instance in Great Britain and France. See Karsten 1920–21; 1932; 1935; Koch-Grünberg 1916–17; 1921; Nordenskiöld 1910; 1912; 1915; von den Steinen 1886; 1897.

of Amazonian peoples (Clastres 1987; Overing 1981).

During the past decades, however, research has taken big steps forward in examining the characteristics typical of Amazonia and in developing a vocabulary for talking about particularly Amazonian phenomena. It has been noted, for instance, that Amazonian marriage and kinship systems differ in significant aspects from those described for other continents like Africa (e.g. Kensinger 1984; Rivière 1969; 1993). Also the egalitarian nature and rejection of roles in Amazonian societies differs from the more structured versions of social organisation found in some other parts of the world (Clastres 1987; Goldman 1979; Overing 1989b; Rivière 1984). Furthermore, social life in Amazonia has been seen to revolve more around the cosmological axis than for example the gender division so significant among Melanesian peoples (Descola 2001; Vilaça 2005: 451; see Gregor & Tuzin 2001a).⁹⁵ From this background have emerged also the more specific theoretical contributions in Amazonian anthropology concerning for instance Amazonian interpretations of history (Gow 1991; Whitehead 2003c; Wright 1998), cannibalism (Conklin 2001), emotions and relationality (Overing & Passes 2000b) as well as perspectivism (Lima 1999; Viveiros de Castro 1998; see Willerslev 2004). Alongside the search for particularly Amazonian characteristics of people's social, cultural and economic lives, researchers have, however, warned about seeing all Amazonian societies as similar and demanded the recognition of the complexity and distinctiveness of different Amazonian indigenous groups.

The present study examines, comments on and discusses some of these theoretical viewpoints in relation to the material formed among the Yine people of south-eastern Peruvian Amazonia. Epistemologically the research stems from an ethnographic interest in generating understanding in a dialogical process with the Yine people, thus gaining insights with which to approach questions of anthropological theory (bearing in mind that epistemology and methodology are also already theoretically informed). As discussed above, the challenges to our scholarly understanding presented by the people living in Amazonia (or any other place, for that matter) are such that we can never really solve them but only gain partial and positioned understandings of their worlds.

Disciplinarily I anchor the research in the field of anthropology of religion, which, however, I approach from the perspective of two distinct academic disciplines: religious studies and social and cultural anthropology. As in Finland religious studies (or comparative religion, as the discipline is officially called in Finland) has characteristically been an ethnographically oriented field of research, anthropological study of religion becomes a terrain shared by both disciplines.⁹⁶ I consider both of these approaches

⁹⁵ For opposing views on the question of the centrality of gender in Amazonia see Gregor & Tuzin 2001b: 8; Rival 2005.

⁹⁶ Overall, I do not think disciplinary boundaries should restrict our scholarly objectives, especially as these boundaries vary from one country and continent to another. Inter- and multi-disciplinary research opens up prospects and questions that otherwise would not arise. Acting on multiple fields requires, however, that researchers are aware for instance of the different histories and usage of concepts in distinct academic traditions.

as having an impact on this work.⁹⁷ On the one hand, the discussions within social and cultural anthropology (especially those in Amazonian anthropology) both provide me with the general ground on which this study operates and serve me as a conversation partner in relation to which the findings of this research are evaluated. On the other hand, my sensitivity towards and understanding of religion as a phenomenon derive to a large extent from my background in religious studies. This becomes explicit in this study in two ways in particular. First, it comes forth in my interest and inclination to ask questions about religion. It was the refusal to take Christianity for granted – as will be further discussed below – and to accept the view held by Evangelicals and Catholics in Diamante according to which the two churches were ‘different but the same’ as deriving merely from socio-political allegiances that gave form to this study in the first place. Second, it is shown in the way I locate religion as part of people’s lived worlds. Although this work is largely about themes that would commonly be identified as belonging to the domain of ‘religion’ – such as Christianity and Yine relations with non-human beings – I do not view religion as a given quality of these phenomena. Doing so would easily lead to the petrification of these phenomena as something called the ‘Yine religion’. I have therefore not taken the notion of religion as my starting point.⁹⁸ Rather, I have wished to leave the category of religion open⁹⁹ and instead see religion as something that emerges (for research) from the fundamental questions of

⁹⁷ The majority of research concentrating on religion in Amazonia has thus far been conducted in departments of social and cultural anthropology and only to a lesser extent those of history, Latin American studies and religious studies.

⁹⁸ In the academic study of religion the concept of religion has been considered problematic and its contents and usefulness much debated: what do we actually talk about when we talk about ‘religion’? I agree with Willi Braun (2000: 3–4) when he states that religion ‘presents us with the dual problem of being flamboyantly real, meeting us in all forms of speech and in material representations, on the one hand, and frustratingly apt to turn coy or disintegrate altogether when put under inquisition, on the other’. Owing to this fluidity of the phenomenon, present-day scholarship has largely abandoned the quest to find a single comprehensive definition of religion and instead has come to see religion solely as a scholarly concept, the use and content of which needs to be produced and defined separately for the purposes of each research task at hand. The concept of religion thus becomes a tool which directs the researcher’s exploratory perception towards finding ‘religion’ in different, even unconventional, places and thus enabling them to answer the research problems posed. Alternatively – and as has been done in this study – the category of religion can be left open and can be understood as something that takes shape as a result of certain social processes chosen for study. (On defining religion see e.g. Arnal 2000; Braun 2000; Comstock 1984; McCutcheon 1997; Saler 2000; Segal 2005.)

⁹⁹ The first scholar of religion to explicitly demand the abandonment of closed definitions of religion and to develop a methodology for studying religion through open and instrumental definitions was W. Richard Comstock (1984). For a similar contemporary view see Fitzgerald 2000.

human existence.¹⁰⁰ The question I have in particular focused on concerns the definition and negotiation of humanity and personhood: how are proper persons constituted among the Yine? Religion is therefore in this study understood to materialise at the interfaces where humanity is being negotiated in social interaction. Such interfaces are found especially in the sphere of Yine interaction with the various actors of their social cosmos. Subsequently, it is only through this negotiation – not by predetermination – that Christianity too and human–non-human relations take on religious significance.

The remaining sections of this Introduction are windows or rather lenses through which I shall begin to approach the research questions examined in this work and placed in the Preface: How are persons formed and transformed socially, corporeally and morally in the Yine world? How is people's proper human condition evaluated among the Yine? And how can Yine Christianities be understood through the negotiation of proper humanity? My understanding is generated at the interface of three lenses – everyday Christianity, corporeal relationality and embodied morality – which themselves are not given but formed in the same research process in which they are used. They are also not separate from each other but closely intertwined. In a Bakhtinian manner (see Bowers 2003: 236), I see these lenses – in other words the theoretical background of this work – as tools for searching instead of concluding. As our understanding of the world and others' worlds is always necessarily partial, what becomes central in ethnographic research is not so much the outcome but rather the process of generating understanding. Before going on to examine these lenses, however, I shall take a brief look into the themes previous ethnographic works on the Yine seem to have identified as somehow pertaining to the sphere of 'religion'.

'Religion' among the Yine: previous accounts

Among the Yine of Diamante, as will be further examined in Chapter 7, the word *religion* was used very rarely and only to denote differences between separate Christian denominations, or 'religions'.¹⁰¹ When speaking about issues that in anthropology and ethnography of religion have been aggregated under terms such as 'folk religion' and 'vernacular religion' – terms which do not exclude Christianity but refer to the idea that rather than

¹⁰⁰ Clifford Geertz (2005) presents a similar idea when he states that 'the notion that it is at the point at which our cultural resources fail, or begin to fail, where our equipment for living creaks and threatens to break down in the face of the radically inexplicable, the radically unbearable, or the radically unjustifiable – irresolvable confusion, ineluctable pain, invincible evil, the primitive surds of finitude – that the sort of concern, often enough in itself referred to as "ultimate", that we recognize as religious comes into play'. However, whereas Geertz seems to understand these as points where religion comes into being, I see them as points where we as researchers can approach religion.

¹⁰¹ The word religion itself is a late-comer in Amazonia, having been spread by Christian missionaries, and it does not have an equivalent in the Yine language.

some religious authority it is the local community as a social collectivity that controls the religious criteria and practice (Anttonen 2004) – the Yine spoke of *creencias* (Spanish), *galixlu* (Yine), that is beliefs. Apart from its classificatory properties the term religion did not therefore appear as having much content for the Yine (see Chapter 7).

In many previous descriptions and studies of religion among the Yine the content of ‘religion’ has not been specifically defined, but religion seems to have been detected in the first place in overt ritual practices and myths, which on the basis of the concepts familiar from the Western Judaeo-Christian tradition have been recognised as something religious. Already some early sources describe – although in a fragmentary and partial manner – different aspects of Yine ritual practices (Farabee 1971; Fry 1889; Sabaté 1925; Samanez y Ocampo 1980; Valdez 1944; Biedma 1981) but more detailed treatments of these practices – girls’ initiation rituals, marriage, mortuary and birth-related rituals as well as ritualised curing practices – have been published only during the latter half of the twentieth century (Alvarez 1962; 1963; 1970; Baer 1969; 1974; Belaunde 2003; Gow 1987; 1991; 1995, 1996; 1999; 2001; Matteson 1954a; 1965; 1994; Román 1983). Not much attention has been paid to the more subtle ritual production of everyday life, that is, to those acts further discussed in Chapter 1, which easily go unnoticed owing to their mundane nature (but see e.g. Matteson 1954a: 74; Gow 1989; 1999).

In the case of literature on Yine mythology there has been a tendency to identify only certain kinds of narratives as myths. Even though the Yine themselves (at least in Diamante) did not make a strict distinction between what researchers would call *myths* (narratives situated in mythic time) and *memorates* or *personal experience narratives* (stories of events having taken place in historical time) – they could refer to all of them as ‘ancient people’s stories’ indicating the difference often only by stating to whom the events recounted had happened or whose narrative they were telling – such a distinction is clearly visible in the written corpus of Yine narrations (Alvarez 1956; 1958a-e; 1960a-d; Baer 1996; Matteson 1951; 1954b; Sebastian et al. 1998).¹⁰² It seems that authors have written down almost exclusively narratives that they themselves have recognised as ‘myths’, leaving aside those that for one reason or another did not seem to fit this category.¹⁰³ It has been only recently with the emergence of more in-depth anthropological analysis of Yine narrative tradition that the overlapping nature of Yine narrative categories has been acknowledged (Gow 2001;

¹⁰² Other sources on Yine oral tradition and language include Matteson 1954b; 1972 (this latter text has been considered ‘deeply flawed’ [Aikhenvald 2006: 73]); Forrer 1957. See also Loeffler, L. G. & Gerhard Baer 1974. The Kinship Terminology of the Piro, Eastern Peru. – *Ethnologische Zeitschrift* 1, 257–282.

¹⁰³ For example in Matteson’s (1965) collection of Yine myths and stories there is only one story, that of the brocket deer, which is not a narrative placed in the mythic ahistorical time (see also Alvarez 1960a: 114–115). Also the Yine school reader *Gwacha Ginkakle* (Sebastian et al. 1998) is divided into two parts according to this historical–ahistorical division.

Smith 2003b).¹⁰⁴

Apart from the ritual and mythic contexts, previous authors have also identified Yine spirituality or religiosity to be manifested in people's relations with the surrounding social environment.¹⁰⁵ For instance, Dominican padre and anthropologist Ricardo Alvarez (1970: 63, my translation) writes that

A Piro considers himself as one with the cosmos and the cosmos as the domain of the spirit. . . . He cannot understand that something could be external to the spirit. . . . The spirit has many manifestations . . . attributes of divinity . . . which appear to people as messengers, protectors and advisors. It is also not an obstacle that these beings manifest themselves without a human shape or some other form. It can be a breeze, a breath, an animal, a bird, a sound, *susto*, a dream, a figment of imagination or a memory.

Based on these kinds of observations, both Ricardo Alvarez (1972: 317–330; 1970: 63) as well as the SIL linguist Esther Matteson (1951: 37–38; 1954a: 58–77; 1955: 59–60) – the two earliest authors to write extensively about the Yine – have in their writings mentioned a large variety, and described in more detail some of these non-humans present in the Yine social cosmos. In the latter category are beings such as the creator hero *Tsla*, the brocket deer, mother of the river, *lupuna*-tree, hand-whistler, *Goyakalu* (god), mothers of psychoactive plants and the two 'demons of the dead': the ghost of the soul and a rattling ghost of the bones. Nevertheless, given the acknowledgement and emphasis on the manifold nature of non-human presence in the Yine world and how much interest for instance the Yine people in Diamante put into discussing and interpreting their relations with different non-human beings, it is still surprising how little interest Alvarez and Matteson have taken in analysing the Yine lived experiences of interacting with these different beings.¹⁰⁶

In his extensive scholarly production, anthropologist Peter Gow (e.g. 1987; 1990; 1991; 2001; 2002; 2006) has taken Yine relations with some of the non-human beings in their social world into closer consideration.

¹⁰⁴ Despite transformations in individual mythic narratives, the core of the Yine myth corpus seems to have to a large extent remained unchanged during the past century. In the various accounts of Yine mythology, two myths – 'The Birth of *Tsla*' and 'The Kochmaloto Women' – that have also been considered the Yine myths or 'ancient people's stories' par excellence (Gow 2001: 94), are best represented (Alvarez 1960a; Gow 2001; Matteson 1951: 1954a: 70–71; Smith 2003b). I had a similar experience among the Yine of Diamante. The myth most often told to me was that of 'The Kochmaloto Women'. However, the myth about the birth of *Tsla* was told to me only by three narrators.

¹⁰⁵ The SIL linguist Esther Matteson divides the different beings in the Yine social cosmos into two groups based on where they are thought to reside. She (1954a: 72–73) first writes that the Yine 'tribal religion is a polytheism with innumerable gods and goddesses living in heaven' and then continues: 'Apart from the supernaturals religiously regarded, there are a great number of demons and powers with which the Piro feels that he must cope.' The Judaeo-Christian mindset is apparent in this classification.

¹⁰⁶ Although both Alvarez and Matteson were in the first place missionaries – the one Dominican Catholic, the other Protestant – a point which could be considered to explain this lack, they still shared a keen anthropological interest in Yine culture and religiosity.

Approaching the Yine social cosmos from various angles and owing to his eloquent style of writing, he has – in my view – managed to capture well the embeddedness of the non-human world in the flow of Yine everyday social life. He has taken interest especially in the relationships humans have with the souls of the deceased among the Yine, a question to which I shall return in Chapter 1. He has also studied Yine shamanry, the relationship with mothers of psychoactive plants and on a more general level indigenous peoples' relationship with 'nature'. Furthermore, he has examined Yine ideas of certain animals like white-lipped peccaries and jaguars as well as other beings and personages such as the Christian God and face-takers called *sacacaras* and *pishtacos*. He also mentions many of the beings and demons listed by Alvarez and Matteson.

This comprehensive presence of different non-human beings in the Yine world noted formerly by various authors was visible also among the Yine of Diamante in the early twenty-first century (TKU/N/01/1:9; TKU/A/01/26:3). While some of the non-human beings mentioned by Matteson and Alvarez in their texts in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s were clearly no longer part of the everyday lives of the people in Diamante, the extensiveness of non-human presence in their social world in general had not diminished. On the contrary, whereas other beings had been reduced in importance, some new figures, such as the Antichrist or the Mark of the Beast, had become increasingly important. In this study I shall examine in depth Yine relations with souls of the dead, brocket deer, the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries, the trickster figure hand-whistler, God, the Mark of the Beast and the mother spirit of the psychoactive plant *toé*. Some beings, such as the bird *ataao* (Yine: *gopo*), angels, the bone demon, personified smallpox, sirens and the malevolent *tunchi* spirit will be examined to a lesser extent. In Diamante, these beings were not considered separate from people's lives but were part of the same socio-moral network in which all social actors executed their daily activities. As such, people's relationships with these beings were subject to the same moral judgements and cultural logic as human-to-human relations in the Yine world and formed a suitable ground for approaching Yine socio-moral evaluations, ideas concerning the formation of persons and, perhaps less evidently, their interpretations of Christianity.

Indigenous Amazonians and Christianity

*I'm an . . . what do you call it, Evangelical. I accept God but I have two churches, as I told you. I have been baptised at the Catholic church but just the same I still accept also the Evangelicals . . .*¹⁰⁷ (TKU/A/05/37a:8.)

Christianity in its different forms has influenced and been part of the Latin American religious scene for over five centuries. First Catholic, and later on waves of Protestant missionaries have contributed to spreading the gospel

¹⁰⁷ The man actually says *evangelio* instead of *evangelico* but he refers to a member of the evangelical church, not the gospel.

in this 'New World'. While the expansion of Christianity in Latin America has been widely documented by explorers, missionaries and researchers, it was especially the appearance of Pentecostalism¹⁰⁸ on the continent that motivated an increase in studies of Latin American Christianity in general and Christianity among indigenous peoples in particular.¹⁰⁹ In fact, Latin America has been considered one of the forerunners of the anthropological study of Christianity in so-called non-Western contexts (Robbins 2001a: 7). To a large extent this is true. During the past two decades, for instance, a number of collections of studies on Christianity in Latin or South America, each presenting cases from several Latin American countries, have been published (e.g. Boudewijnse et al. 1998; Chesnut 1997; 2003; Cleary & Stewart-Gambino 1997; Cleary & Steigenga 2004; Corten & Marshall-Fratani 2001; Gill 1998; Martin 1993; Sieder 2002; Sigmund 1999; Smith 1998).

Something, however, is conspicuous by its absence in these works: the study of Christianity in Amazonia. While for example highland and urban Latin American regions are well represented in the collections, discussions of the Amazonian area rely upon a few observations and comparisons (but see Barabas 1994). The impression gained that Amazonia has remained a rather marginal area in the anthropological studies of Christianity is further enforced by the small number of articles on Amazonian Christianities in edited works concentrating on non-Western Christianities in the world.¹¹⁰ What is it, then, that lies behind this neglect of the region in these wider contexts? Is the absence of contributions concentrating on Amazonia owing to researchers' general lack of interest in Christianity in the area or is it rather symptomatic of some tendency to approach these questions only from certain viewpoints?

At least the former alternative does not describe the situation correctly: the five centuries of Christian influence in Amazonia have not passed without notice in anthropology, study of religion or social sciences

¹⁰⁸ The advance of Christianity in Latin America is often divided into four waves of missionary activity. The first and second waves in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were made up of immigrant churches from Europe and mainline denominations from the United States. The third wave was that of the fundamentalist 'Faith Missions' and the fourth that of Pentecostals. (Stoll 1993: 3; see Jenkins 2007: 41–46, 72–73.)

¹⁰⁹ It has been especially due to the increase in the number of Pentecostals and adherents to different Protestant churches in Latin America, but also to the dogmatic autonomy gained by the Latin American Catholics relative to European Catholic Church, that the 'center of gravity in the Christian world has shifted inexorably southward' (Jenkins 2007: 1).

¹¹⁰ In the edited collections of Cannell (2006b) and Hefner (1993) there is one article on Amazonia in each (Gow 2006 and Pollock 1993 respectively) but none for instance in the collections of Brock (2005), Engelke & Tomlinson (2006), Olupona (2003) or Van der Veer (1996). The situation is even more critical if we consider the low number of published monographs concentrating on Christianity in Amazonia and can be compared with that of Melanesian anthropology. Robbins (2004a: 27–34) states that in Melanesian studies by 2004 there were only four (five with his work) monographs published which focused entirely on Melanesian peoples as Christians. He holds the number of monographs to be the 'meter' for evaluating the importance of a topic for the anthropological quest. In this regard, Christianity in his view has not yet arrived at anthropology. But he sees the situation as changing with monographs such as those of Meyer (1999), Dombrowski (2001) and Austin-Broos (1997).

at large. Attention has been paid especially to the study of Christian-based 'messianic', 'prophetic' and 'millenarian' movements.¹¹¹ The most prominent religious figures in these movements in Amazonia – for instance Juan Santos Atahuallpa, Venâncio Kamiko and Sophie Muller – as well as different movements or 'religions' – such as Hallelujah, Kuwé, Orden Cruzada and Tupi-Guarani searches for the Land without Evil – have become familiar to readers from the pages of different anthropological and historical studies. Often these historical events, movements and people have been approached in research as forms of indigenous resistance to colonial and neo-colonial domination or more generally as vehicles in intra- or interethnic power struggles. (Aguirre 1988; Brown 1994; Clusters 1975; Shapiro 1987; Vidal 2000; Wright 1998; 2002a; Wright & Hill 1986; 1988; 1992.) It has also been commonplace to examine the social conditions in which the movements have been born and their religious and ideological resonance with native cosmologies (see Veber 2003). Another vein of study that has attracted perhaps a yet larger number of researchers is the study of ethnic and religious encounters, the subsequent religious conversion of Amazonian indigenous people either during the early colonial times or during the past century, and the reconciliation or incompatibility of indigenous and Western worldviews.¹¹² (Albert & Ramos 2000; Bonilla 1972; Capiberibe 2007; Fausto 2005; Gow 1990; 1991; 2003; Hugh-Jones 1994; Hvalkof & Aaby 1981; Jackson 1984; Miller 1975; 1979; Montero 2006; Pollock 1993; Rubenstein 2005; Smiljanic 2002; Stearman 1987; Stoll 1982; Taylor 1981; 2002; Vilaça 2002b; Viveiros de Castro 2002a; Wahl 1985; 1995; Wright 1998; 1999b; 2004b.)

However, an approach which has attracted little attention among scholars is the study of present day indigenous Amazonian Christianities as they are lived and experienced in people's daily lives.¹¹³ People's self-descriptions like the one at the beginning of the present section, spoken by a Yine man living in Diamante, have largely been ignored in the study of contemporary indigenous Amazonian cultures. While a large number of Amazonian indigenous people consider themselves to be Christians, the majority of ethnographies published concerning their daily lives concentrate rather on the so-called 'traditional' indigenous praxis such

¹¹¹ The use of these notions to describe indigenous movements is not unproblematic since the terms have been derived from Christian contexts. We have to bear in mind that there are also indigenous movements that have been termed messianic, millenarian or prophetic that have pre-Christian roots, for instance the Tupi-Guarani quest for the Land without Evil (see Brown 1994).

¹¹² For the critique of the one-sidedness of these approaches see Wiik 2004a: 197–203. See also Viveiros de Castro 1995: 7–11.

¹¹³ One indication of the lack of this kind of approach in the Amazonian context (and also more generally) is the way in which anthropological studies of indigenous Christianities has recently been classified. For instance, Capiberibe (2007:187) divides previous research into three principal groups according to their focus, none of which directly addresses the question of people's everyday lived Christianities: indigenous people's responses to historical missions and evangelisation, the expansion of Christianity and the identity and goals of missionaries, and indigenous people's interpretations of their conversion to Christianity and the results of such conversion.

as couvade practices, initiation rituals, traditional marriage and burial practices, shamanism, ethnomedicine and myths, and lack ethnographical accounts of Christian baptisms, weekly Church services, Christian burials, evenings spent in reading the Bible or the role of prayer in healing.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, researchers have largely failed to pay attention to Amazonian 'everyday millenarianisms' (Robbins 2001b), that is, the ways in which people's millenarian expectations are intertwined with and lived out in their normal everyday activities. A positive exception to this pattern is the Brazilian context where anthropologists and scholars of religion have begun to examine contemporary indigenous everyday Christianities (articles in Wright 1999b; 2004b; see Cohn 2001; Capiberibe 2007 (Ch. 5); Loures de Oliveira 2002; Vilaça 1997; 2002b; on non-Portuguese speaking Amazonia see Belaunde 2000a; Gutierrez 1992; Passes 1998; Perruchon 2003; Regan 1993; Uzendoski 2003). Nevertheless, the problem noted by Robin M. Wright in his introduction to the first volume of *Transformando os deuses* (1999b), that the majority of studies on Amazonian Christianities in Brazil are unpublished masters and doctoral theses, seems to prevail.¹¹⁵

The main reason behind the neglect of research on contemporary Amazonian Christianities and the absence of Amazonia in the edited works on non-Western Christianities would then seem to lie not in the lack of studies on Christianity in Amazonia in general but rather in the failure to recognise Christianity as meaningful for contemporary indigenous peoples. Research on Christianity in Amazonia has so far largely concentrated on what presents itself as different enough to attract research: religious movements, forceful missionary activities, cultural encounters and to some extent charismatic forms of Christian practice. While these phenomena are interesting and worth devoted study, the sole concentration on 'things other enough' leaves the day-to-day practice of indigenous Christianities unheeded. Despite anthropologists' withdrawal from the early anthropological quest to study 'savage' cultures in their 'pure' form before 'the modern world contaminates' them, this kind of attitude is still, unfortunately, clearly

¹¹⁴ But see e.g. Cohn 2001; Miller 1979: 122ff; Wiik 2004a and several articles in Wright 1999b and 2004b.

¹¹⁵ There have recently been interesting theses written on Christianities of South American lowland peoples, but they remain little read owing to their inaccessibility. See Almeida 2004 and Wiik 2004a. See also Grazielle Açcolini 2004. *Protestantismo à Moda Terena*. Tese de doutorado, Universidade Estadual Paulista Julio de Mesquita Filho; Melvina Afra Mendes de Araújo 2003. *Do Corpo à Alma: Missionários da Consolata e Índios Macuxi em Roraima*. Tese de doutorado. Universidade de São Paulo; Valéria Esteves Nascimento Barros 2003. *Da Casa de Rezas à Congregação Cristã no Brasil: O Pentecostalismo Guarani na Terra Indígena Laran-jinha*. Dissertação de Mestrado. Florianópolis: Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina.

present in today's ethnography at the level of topics chosen for study.¹¹⁶ This is not, however, a problem faced solely by Amazonian ethnographers. The lack of interest in indigenous Christianities has been criticised also for instance in the Melanesian context.¹¹⁷

My demands here are, therefore, akin to Joanna Overing's (2003) call for the 'anthropology of the everyday' further discussed below. In order to understand indigenous people's lived Christianities, ethnographers need to become sensitive to their ordinary everyday Christian practices and statements even though they may seem already too familiar to researchers, especially to those coming from a Christian background. Only in this way may we grasp something of the wealth of meaning Christianity has for people. Furthermore, in order to generate understanding of indigenous Christianities, it is also crucial to study not only the meanings people give to Christianity but also the absence of meaning and moments of meaningfulness in their Christian practices (Engelke & Tomlinson 2006).¹¹⁸ In the present work, I aim to avoid the research pitfalls described above by acknowledging that for the indigenous Yine Christianity is meaningful: they *are* Christians, and they are not *just* Christians but Christians in very varied, complex and at times ambiguous ways, like people in other parts of the Christian world. There is not just one Christianity people ascribe to in Diamante but rather various Christianities. These Christianities are different corporeal interpretations of people's lived worlds and are not only manifested in multiple ways in the setting of the everyday but also continuously reinterpreted owing to the transforming environment. They are thus not separate from other aspects of social life, and consequently, as shown in the Prologue, cannot be comprehended or explained just by examining people's overtly Christian ideas and praxis. Rather, we may need to search for other keys for approaching people's Christianities. In this work, such a key has been found in Yine conceptualisations of the notion of the person. Therefore, although directed towards studying Yine Christianities, the research has had to take an indirect course through the study of

¹¹⁶ It has been noted that by choosing to study only indigenous peoples still outside any missionary activities, researchers only perpetuate the absence of an anthropology of Christian cultures (Robbins 2007). As reluctant as we may be in admitting it, this failure to perceive indigenous Christian practices as worth studying is, I think, largely a consequence of different forms of exoticism still prevailing in anthropology and has kept us in a situation that is somewhat reminiscent of Malinowski's (1961: xv-xvi) view: '[f]or though at present, there is still a large number of native communities available for scientific study, within a generation or two, they or their cultures will have practically disappeared. The need for energetic work is urgent, and the time is short.'

¹¹⁷ Joel Robbins (2004a: 30-31) notes that the lack of interest in the study of Christianity among Melanesian indigenous people has been due to the anthropologists' 'perceptual handicap' of being unable to see Christianity as cultural (see Barker 1992: 185).

¹¹⁸ Anthropologists have recently been debating whether the interest in meaning is a particularly Christian problem or more linked for instance to modernity (see Cannell 2006a; Keyes 2002; Tomlinson & Engelke 2006). Especially Talal Asad (1993) has criticised the Geertzian interest in meaning for having a specific Christian history. Although also Asad's position has been contested, it is evident that Christians throughout the world often express a concern with meaning and therefore provide us 'with a productive set of ethnographic issues to explore' (Tomlinson & Engelke 2006: 1).

human–non-human relations in order to access people’s understandings of Christianity.¹¹⁹

In relation to the study of Yine everyday Christianities there are four issues I wish to point out in particular. First, when studying indigenous Christianities researchers cannot confine themselves to objects and phenomena which they identify easily as Christian on the basis of their former experiences and knowledge. As Fenella Cannell (2006: 5) in her introduction to the collection *The Anthropology of Christianity* notes, we should set ‘aside the assumption that we know in advance what Christian experiences, practice, or belief might be’. The facts that the Christian groups in Diamante are not very visibly religious in everyday life and that their practice of Christianity does not appear exotic or different enough should not make Yine Christianities less interesting or pointless to study. On the contrary, the situation poses a challenge for the researcher to be able to appreciate and understand the subtleties in people’s interpretations of Christian concepts and practices. The adult Catholics in Diamante do not actively participate in Catholic masses or rosaries or practise their religion in any other visible manner. Nevertheless, when talking to people one can easily notice that Catholicism is still highly meaningful for them. We just need to look for those meanings outside the ritual and dogmatic contexts, for instance in the association of Christianity with education and with what to the Yine appears the ‘civilising effect’ of Christianity (see Gow 1991; 1993), as well as in the Catholic views on the tension between continuity and change in social life (see Chapter 6).

Similarly, even though Diamante’s Evangelicals’ practice of religion is much more visible than that of the Catholic Yine, there is nothing particularly exotic or charismatic in their practices. In his article on the globalisation of charismatic and Pentecostal Christianity, Joel Robbins (2004b: 119) criticises the translation of the term *evangélico*, commonly used of Protestant Christians in Latin America, into English as *evangelical Christians* or *Evangelicals*. In his view, many groups so labelled should rather, for comparative purposes, be called Pentecostal-charismatic Christians (P/c). While in many cases this undoubtedly is true, the Evangelical church in Diamante hardly fits into the category of Pentecostal and charismatic Christian churches.¹²⁰ The Yine members of the *Iglesia*

¹¹⁹ The aim of the present research – the examination of how the Yine people conceptualise Christianity – connects the study in the first place to the vein of studies examining indigenous moralities and worldviews, rather than to the objectives of the ‘Anthropology of Christianity’ as presented for instance by Joel Robbins (2007) according to whom anthropology of Christianity is a comparative project seeking to develop a set of shared questions for research: What is specific and what is shared in people’s Christianities? Nevertheless, certain commonalities in different Amazonian indigenous Christianities will be searched for and discussed in the present work as well.

¹²⁰ Philip Jenkins (2007: 73) makes a similar observation when he writes that ‘[a]cross Latin America, the term *evangélico* refers indiscriminately to both Protestants and Pentecostals. Increasingly, though, observers differentiate between the two in matters of faith and practice.’

*Cristiana Diamante*¹²¹ (or *Iglesia Evangélica Camino Nuevo de Diamante* or *Iglesia Evangélica Independiente Libre Piro* as the church has been formerly called) do not emphasise the work of the Holy Spirit, practise glossolalia, fall into trances, become possessed, dance or sing ecstatically, or rehearse other characteristically charismatic forms of worship.¹²² The meetings are held with considerable quietude, although recently people have started clapping hands while singing. Even though some central concerns of the Evangelicals in Diamante, such as the expected coming of the Mark of the Beast (see Chapter 7), are in line with those of charismatic Christians around the world, the forms of expressing these concerns do not correspond to their charismatic counterparts. Rather, their practices conform to the characteristics Robbins (2004b: 120) gives for the 'Evangelicals proper', for instance Methodists and Baptists: a voluntary choice of evangelical faith and a high regard for the Bible as a religious authority. Consequently, and given the background the Evangelical church of Diamante has in the missionary work of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) or the Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT) and the Swiss Mission, which put emphasis on teaching, reading and studying the Bible instead of charismatic practices, I shall refer to the *evangélicos* in Diamante as evangelical Christians or, in short, as Evangelicals.¹²³

Second, as noticed from people's statements such as that the two churches in Diamante are different but the same, the distinction between Catholics and Evangelicals in the Yine context is hardly clear cut. Even though the division is relevant not only as a researcher's analytical tool for understanding Yine lived worlds but also for the Yine themselves, who frequently use it in their daily lives, the division cannot be taken as given but must be conceived of as continually re-elaborated and formed in social interaction.¹²⁴ The task is then to try not to present one 'Yine religion' or to see 'Yine Catholics' and 'Yine Evangelicals' as homogenous groups but to understand the versatility of Yine socio-cultural and lived religious

¹²¹ This church belongs to the Asociación de Iglesias Evangélicas Libres Yine (A.I.E.L.YINE), which on its part is a member of the Fraternidad de Asociaciones de Iglesias Evangélicas Nativas de la Amazonía Peruana (FAIENAP). FAIENAP is an umbrella organisation for the Evangelical Churches of different ethnic groups in Peruvian Amazonia and according to its internet pages (www.faienap.org) has as its aim (1) to give the native churches their own identity, (2) to advance interchange between different ethnic groups, and (3) to give the churches a platform for mutual help. The organisation was founded in 1988.

¹²² For charismatic forms of Christian worship see e.g. Anderson 2004; Coleman 2006; Cox 2001; Poewe 1994; Robbins 2004b.

¹²³ Gow (2001: 234) notes that among the Yine of Urubamba the term *Evangelista* is used to denote both SIL missionaries and the followers of their message.

¹²⁴ A further distinction significant for the Yine, and one that is also at times drawn in this study, is that between 'traditional' and 'Christian'. Even though there is a danger here of falling into the trap of seeing 'Christianity' as something separate from the Yine 'traditional' worldview, I think it would also be a mistake to hold on to the other extremity and look at every aspect of Yine socio-cultural world through Christian lenses. The fact that the Yine subscribe to Christianity, whether Catholic or Evangelical, does not mean that Christianity penetrates every aspect of their world in an equal manner. Some beliefs and practices are more open to transformation and outside influences than others.

experience. In each of these groups, there are many different voices, motives for speaking, understandings. It is not possible to highlight them all at all times, but I will try to show the diversity or many-sidedness wherever relevant in this study. In the end, however, it is only through at least some degree of generalisation and the juxtaposition of the two categories that the differences between Catholics and Evangelicals become explanatory.

Third, and related to the second point, there was one methodological problem I encountered when studying Yine Christianities. It concerned the difference between the Evangelicals and Catholics in their willingness to talk about and articulate their views on Christianity. While most Evangelicals took an interest in elaborating their Christian understandings to me, most Catholics preferred to avoid the topic or did not concern themselves with speculating with questions they did not have a solid answer for. Therefore, my understanding of Catholic Yine views on Christianity is built up from sparser material than in the case of the Evangelicals. I presume that the Catholics' reluctance was largely derived from the fact that – as will be discussed in Chapters 6 and 7 – the Catholic Christianity among the Yine was to a great extent directed towards everyday social interaction instead of questions about such issues as the afterlife and salvation. Nevertheless, together with the Evangelicals' very pronounced views on the Catholics, the Catholic padre's and the missionary teachers' opinions, the Catholics' comments tangential to Christianity and my own observations, I believe these less elaborated views also suffice for constructing an understanding of Catholic Christianity in Diamante.

Fourth and last, unlike the many previous studies on Amazonian Christianities which have concentrated either on indigenous people's attitudes towards different groups of missionaries or on the relationships between indigenous communities representing the same ethnic group but affiliated with distinct Christian churches, I shall concentrate on the Protestant–Catholic relationship *within* one community and one ethnic group (see also Veiga 2004; Capiberibe 2007).¹²⁵ In such a situation the negotiation of the meaning of Christianity for people and of its place in their lives is something that is constantly done in daily communal life. In Diamante, central to this negotiation are the same issues that are focal to other aspects of Yine socio-moral living as well. One such issue – and at the same time my second lens for approaching the research questions of the present study – is the intertwinedness of corporeality and relationality, a theme to which I shall next turn.

Related through the body

In the encounter of the old woman with the souls of the deceased kinspeople discussed in the Prologue, the dead were said to have been collecting firewood from the field. In this task, they asked the old woman

¹²⁵ Fajardo (1999) and Kapfhammer (2004) do examine religious rivalry within one ethnic group but they do it in situations where adherents of distinct denominations live in separate communities or even in different countries.

to help them. Should she have agreed and helped them, the Yine explained, she would have been carried away by them and would have become one of them. But as she did not comply, the souls disappeared. The conduct of the souls of the dead and of the woman, and the interpretations people gave to the event suggest that the engagement in mutual efforts in daily tasks is part of the production of social relationships as well as of persons among the Yine. But how does this production take place? What tools do we have for understanding this production? How should we approach the forming of social relationships and personhoods in the Amazonian context?

Recent studies of Amazonian relationality and agency draw heavily on post-modernist and post-structuralist perspectives. In spite of usually being implicit in anthropological and ethnographical accounts, the influence of these approaches on current theorising is evident. Ideas of such scholars as Judith Butler, Bruno Latour, Michel de Certeau, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Mikhail Bakhtin can be found echoed in Amazonian ethnographic analyses.¹²⁶ On this post-modernist, post-structuralist axis, I have found certain views of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, but in particular those of Mikhail Bakhtin, relevant for the present discussion not only as a theoretical stepping stone to understanding Amazonian worlds but also as linking the theoretical developments in Amazonian anthropology to those in other contexts. Furthermore, they in many ways parallel the phenomenological approach to the body employed in this study. Consequently, before reviewing the anthropological and particularly the Amazonian approaches to the topic I wish to briefly review some of Bakhtin's and Merleau-Ponty's notions related to the formation of persons and relationships.

Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975), a Russian 'philosophical anthropologist' (Clark & Holquist 1984: 3), has during the past decades been rediscovered as a philosopher who treated various themes central to present-day anthropological theorising.¹²⁷ His work presents many valuable insights applying not only to the human condition in general but also to Amazonian anthropology in particular. Bakhtin most explicitly treats the theme of persons and social relationships – focal in the present research – in his early texts from 1918 to 1924, which, although not designated so by Bakhtin himself, have been called collectively *The Architectonics of Answerability*¹²⁸ (Clark & Holquist 1984: 63). Also Bakhtin's contemporary, the French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961), examined similar

¹²⁶ See Butler (1999; 2005) Latour (1993; 2005) and de Certeau (1988). These authors have influenced especially certain Brazilian Amazonianists, see e.g. Lima 1999; 2000; Vilaça 2005; Viveiros de Castro 2004. Judith Butler's views have been widely employed especially in the discussions concerning gender in Amazonia (see McCallum 2001).

¹²⁷ Bakhtin's views, in fact, predate the emergence of post-structuralism but they were received especially in the English-speaking world within that particular context (Rutland 2003; Erdinast-Vulcan 2003).

¹²⁸ According to Clark & Holquist (1984: 63, 365n1) none of these early texts of Bakhtin appears to be complete. They are not fragments of different texts but attempts to write the same book 'to which Bakhtin never assigned a title' but which Clark & Holquist call *The Architectonics of Answerability*. The early texts include *Art and Answerability*, *Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity*, and a series of lost or unpublished works.

thematics in his main work *Phenomenology of Perception* first published in 1945. From these works emerge the ideas of people's interhuman condition, incompleteness of the self, and the corporeal formation of selves and relationships, so prevalent in current Amazonian anthropology.

In Bakhtin's thinking, the distinction between *self* and *other* is seen as the primary opposition on which all other differences are based. His views on the self are based on the acknowledgement that the *I* – or *self* – can never exist by itself but needs the *other* in order to exist. We get ourselves from others: in order to be me, I need the other. (Bakhtin 1990; Clark & Holquist 1984: 65, 73, 79.) In Bakhtin's thought to be human is thus to be interhuman (Yol Jung 2003: 109) or put another way, sociality is the only form of existence for a human being (Bakhtin 1990: 49).¹²⁹ Merleau-Ponty (2002: xiv) presents a similar idea when he states that 'we are through and through compounded of relationships with the world'. A result of this view of the self existing only dialogically is that the self can never become whole. It is in a constant state of transformation as it interacts with others. The human task of achieving a self is thus an activity a person can never complete. (Clark & Holquist 1984: 65, 67, 72.) While the idea of incomplete self chimes in with many Amazonian notions, instead of saying that self can never become *whole*, based on the Yine ethnography I would rephrase it as the self being whole but never ready or solid.

A further point of interest in Bakhtin's and Merleau-Ponty's thinking – and one which also resonates with Amazonian concepts of person – is the idea of the material world as constitutive of a human being. The body for Bakhtin, like the self, is open and unfinished. It goes beyond its own limits by 'assimilating the material world and by merging with the other beings, objects and animals that populate it' (Gardiner 2000: 67). This assimilating is realised for instance in sexual activities and consuming and ingesting foods and beverages. The openings of a body are thus places where two bodies or a body and the world intersect. All actions involving the openings of the body take place at the borders of the body and the world or the interface of the old and new body. (Bakhtin 2002: 281–282.)¹³⁰ But the interface between the body and the world is also a point of great vulnerability. Since, as Merleau-Ponty (2002; see Priest 1998) maintains, 'I am my body', the substances and the materiality of the world influence not merely one's body but who one is. As will be seen below, many of these views concerning human relatedness and the role of corporeality in forming relations are coterminous with – although also at times differing from – the views presented within Amazonian anthropology.

¹²⁹ Cf. Butler 1999: 15, 187; 2005: 3–40; see also Gow 2000.

¹³⁰ In this research bodies are viewed as in relation to the world not solely through the openings of the body but also, and perhaps more importantly, through action. See the discussion below.

The notion of the person

The main concept with which I shall operate in this study is that of the *person*. Although the notion of the person has from early times been one of the central objects of anthropological studies, addressed already by authors such as Durkheim, Evans-Pritchard and Malinowski, for instance, the past few decades have witnessed a greater interest in this topic.¹³¹ As discussed above, the Yine term for person, *yineru*, is not exclusively reserved for humans. It does not make a distinction between humans and non-humans or between ethnic groups. *Yineru* may equally well be a white person, a metamorphosed animal or a guardian of rivers or the forest. As tools for approaching Yine conceptualisations of the person, the present study employs the two main oppositions – or rather continuums – in regard to which the concept of person has generally been contemplated in anthropological theorising, that is, body vs. mind and individuality vs. relationality.¹³² In what follows, I shall first examine the anthropological discussion around these two continuums in more detail and then move on to consider their role in the construction of persons and relationships in the Amazonian context.

Discussion concerning the first analytical axis, the distinction between the body and the mind, has a long history not only in Western philosophy but also in anthropology. Central to this debate have been questions about the nature of these two constituents and especially about their relationship to each other.¹³³ Although the ontological separation of mind and body in the Cartesian dualistic fashion has long been contested,¹³⁴ the division remains not only useful for analytical purposes¹³⁵ but can also be identified in one form or another in many ethnographic settings (see e.g. Lambek & Strathern 1998).

The first part of this pair, the concept of the body, has over the past decades become a major focus in anthropological theorising. It has been

¹³¹ This greater interest started developing with certain seminal works and articles, many of which concentrated on Melanesian or African worlds, such as Bloch 1988; Carrithers et al. 1985 (especially the articles by La Fontaine and Mauss); Fortes 1987 [1973]; Leenhardt 1979[1947] and Read 1967[1955]. Later influential works on the topic include Lambek & Strathern 1998 and M. Strathern 1988.

¹³² Other dichotomies through which the notion of the person has been approached include subject vs. object, substantiality vs. insubstantiality, sex vs. gender, and morality vs. juralty. However, I consider these viewpoints as arising through the discussion of the continuums body–mind and individuality–relationality.

¹³³ Michael Lambek (1998: 105) suggests that the two main approaches in examining the interrelatedness of mind and body, namely phenomenology (e.g. Csordas 1990; 1994) and cognitivism (e.g. Johnson 1987), differ from each other in that while the former concentrates on mindful bodies (or embodiment), the latter focuses on embodied minds (or imagination).

¹³⁴ Thomas Csordas (1994: 9) notes that Descartes himself introduced what has come to be called ‘Cartesian dualism’ as a methodological division and is therefore ‘doubtless not entirely to blame for the ontologization of the distinction’.

¹³⁵ I think Michael Lambek (1998: 104) puts this aptly when he states that the notion of the body is anthropologically relevant only when it is in relationship to other significant categories, such as that of mind. ‘Anything less’, Lambek notes, ‘is simply biology’.

viewed as replacing even 'culture' and 'society' as the central concept in anthropology. Even though this development was brought about largely by feminist theorising on the body, as well as by linguistic and philosophical contributions (e.g. Ahmed & Stacey 2001; Csordas 1994; Johnson 1987; Price & Shildrick 1999; Schiebinger 2000), anthropology was not merely a passive receiver in this process. For instance in the Amazonian context researchers' interest in the body has been observed to have arisen independently of the general social scientific attention directed towards corporeality (Viveiros de Castro 2002c: 16; see Vilaça 2005: 447). The insufficiency of the more general views on corporeality for analysing and interpreting indigenous understandings of the body was noted in Amazonian anthropology already in the late 1970s (Seeger et al. 1987 [1979]). The researcher most openly criticising the earlier scholarly neglect of the manifold ways in which Amazonian bodies are constituted in and by relations with others has been Terence Turner (see Conklin 1996: 374). In a manner I consider to echo Bakhtin's views, Turner (1994; 1995) sees the body in the first instant as a relationship but also warns of the danger of misrecognising or ignoring the simultaneous materiality of the body. Turner (1994: 28) notes that taking into account only one of these two poles leads us astray. Ignoring the social nature of the body and the ways in which it is socially constituted leaves us with a rather static view of the body as a bounded entity, but similarly, the tendency to ignore the materiality of the body makes it little less than a conceptual object of discourse. Embracing these criticisms, Amazonian ethnography of the body has been developing towards viewing the body as 'both the principal instrument of indigenous sociology and at the same time its most privileged form of expression' (Taylor 1998: 317; see also Henley 2001: 201; cf. Mauss 1985).¹³⁶

Despite the strong emphasis on the body, the 'mind' aspect of persons has not been left without attention in contemporary anthropological theorising either. Recent studies discussing this side of human beings operate with various concepts stemming either from ethnotheories or trying to establish a common language for comparative purposes. For these comparative purposes, a variety of terms such as *self*, *selfhood*, *subjectivity*, *person*, *personhood*, *consciousness*, *ego* and *identity* have been employed to shed light on different aspects of people's ontological and epistemological understandings. The ethnotheoretical terminology is obviously even more diverse, although some consistencies between distinct cases can be found. Among many Amazonian groups representing different language families, such as Huaruani (language isolate) (Rival 2005), Txapakura-speaking Wari' (Vilaça 2005) and Jivaroan-speaking Achuar (Taylor 1993), a person is understood to comprise three parts: body, vital life force and self-reflective soul. In each of these ethnographical cases, however, these three parts have different characteristics and are linked to each other in distinct

¹³⁶ There are, however, also views in which the body is wanted to be put aside from the central position in the social construction of persons. Donald Pollock (1996), for instance, shows how a sick body is not a prerequisite for curing illnesses among the Kulina but curing rituals may take place also without anybody being physically sick. According to him, we should therefore not concentrate only on corporeality at the cost of 'the social'.

manners.¹³⁷

Peter Gow (2000) notes that the Yine too see persons as equally comprised of three parts – *gimane* (body – which Gow does not discuss in detail), *nshinikanchi*¹³⁸ (mind, memory, will) and *samenchi*¹³⁹ (soul/self).¹⁴⁰ While I agree with this division – which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 1 – I shall, when talking about the ‘mind’ aspect of Yine persons in general and when contrasting it with the body, refer to *nshinikanchi* and *samenchi* collectively as the ‘relational self’ of a person, making the distinction between its two constituents only when necessary. Viewing these two sides in this manner as one is by no means alien to the Yine either. In trying to understand how the Yine conceived their dream experiences, it was often explained to me how it is not a separate *soul* – in Spanish the Yine referred to *nshinikanchi* and *samenchi* by a single word *alma* – that in its entirety would leave the body but rather part of one and the same *soul*. Nevertheless, I shall in this work also examine in more detail the nature of the *gimane-nshinikanchi-samenchi* triad, the nature of each of these parts separately and their attachment to one another, since it is only together that these parts form – in relation to other beings – what can be called a ‘person’. The word *soul* will be used in the text when generally speaking about the souls of dead people (*samenchi*) that can be seen by the living.

By using the term *relational self* instead of plainly *self*, I wish, first, to avoid the confusions occurring in the anthropological uses of the latter (see Spiro 1993) and second, rather than draw attention to the ‘inner’ or ‘I-for-myself’ aspect of the self, to emphasise persons’ interactive nature, the ‘I-for-the-other’ aspect (Bakhtin 1993). Differently put, my aim is not in the first place to study the Yine agency experienced reflexively by the agents themselves but rather the general social agency recognised by the society at large.¹⁴¹

In relation to the individuality–relationality axis in the definition

¹³⁷ There are, however, also several Amerindian languages, such as Kayapo (Turner 1995: 165) and Piaroa (Overing 2003: 306), that lack a word for body and other Amazonian groups where the tripartition of a person is quite different from the Huarani, Wari’ and Achuar cases (see e.g. Seeger 2004: 129).

¹³⁸ Esther Matteson (1965: 351) translates *nshinikanu* as ‘mind, memory, intellect, soul, emotions, will’ (see Gow 2000; 2001: 42, 82, 115). I shall employ the term in two interrelated senses. First, I use it to denote the mind as opposed to the soul (*samenchi*) and second, when in particular exploring the nature of *nshinikanchi* I shall employ it in the meaning ‘memory, will, intellect’ to emphasise its relationality.

¹³⁹ I follow Peter Gow (2000: 62n9) in using the absolute form *samenchi* (which can by definition refer only to detached souls) for both attached (*samenu*) and detached souls.

¹⁴⁰ Such tripartition is found also among other Arawakan groups closely related to the Yine such as the Matsigenka (Rosengren 2006a: 97n2) and the Yanesha (Santos-Granero 2006: 59).

¹⁴¹ Laura Stark (2006: 22–28) distinguishes persons from selves along these lines. She sees a *person* (she uses the term to designate only one side of what I have called the relational self) as an entity defined according to a theory of public, social individuals, while *self* denotes a personally appropriated theoretical concept used to organise subjective feelings, beliefs and understandings. Nevertheless, the self in her view is neither more empirical nor more essential than the person.

of persons anthropological discussions have largely revolved around the question of the bounded nature of a person: whether a person is a separate entity to which relations are attached or an intrinsically relational being. These two positions have been termed for instance 'bounded individual' vs. 'unbounded person' (Bloch 1988) or 'individual' vs. 'dividual' (Strathern 1988). Whereas in the first components of these pairs persons are viewed as unique, indivisible and as owning their own bodies, in the latter ones they are seen as partible and as being formed in relation to other persons (see also Fortes 1987; La Fontaine 1985; Mauss 1985). These two positions have been often considered in one way or another as characteristic of Western and non-Western societies, respectively. Maurice Bloch (1988: 18), for instance, even though arguing that societies cannot be divided into individualistic and holistic ones but that individuality (or in his terms individualism) is something that exists in all cultures, saw the difference between Western and non-Western societies lying in that in the former persons are *nothing but* individuals while in the latter a person has both an individualistic and a holistic side (see Tan 2003). Similarly, Marilyn Strathern (1988) bases her argument largely on the differentiation between Western and non-Western societies. Although viewing all societies as having individualistic and relational characteristics, she sees Western societies accentuating unique bounded individuals and non-Western societies placing more emphasis on relationality.¹⁴² Also in the Amazonian context the individual and social characteristics of persons have been made visible by comparing them with their prototypical Western counterparts. It has for instance been noted how in Amazonia 'personal autonomy' is very different from Western individualism in that the former is not opposed to sociality but rather complementary to it. It is only 'through the personal autonomy of individuals . . . that Amazonian sociality can be built' (Overing & Passes 2000a: 21; see also Goldman 1979 [1963]: 165–189, 273–294; Overing 1988; 1989a; 1989b; Rivi re 1984; Viveiros de Castro 1992: 109–116).

More recently, however, researchers have started to question the usage of the 'Western individual society' as a counterpart to non-Western contexts. Janet Carsten (2004: 83–108) notes how research has for a long time relied on a view of Western persons and society, which is based on philosophical, legal, medical and theological understandings instead of ethnographical accounts of Westerners' lived experience (see also LiPuma 1998: 57–58). 'While fully acknowledging the importance of the value of individualism in the West', she (2004: 97) states, 'it is important to recognize that Western notions of the person express other values too. These are present in very familiar and everyday contexts, and they also evoke qualities similar to those that anthropologists have been accustomed to attribute to persons in non-Western cultures'. For instance, Carsten shows how in Western countries some people who have been separated

¹⁴² This division of Marilyn Strathern's has been criticised for being based on a failure to self-reflect on the ethnocentric presuppositions underlying it and of being rationalised by overemphasising the difference between the West and the Rest (Josephides 1991; LiPuma 1998: 55, 76n7, 78n14). What concerns me here is, however, not Strathern's dichotomy as such but rather the qualitative emphasis it conveys.

from their birth kin in childhood try to seek them out because otherwise, she notes, they cannot be complete: it is the only way to get to know who they really are. These kinds of instances of everyday life show that Western persons are not only bounded individuals but also intrinsically relational.

I completely agree with this view according to which when defining persons in different ethnic contexts we should be careful not to make comparisons between these definitions and some idealised picture of Western persons. Nevertheless, as will be discussed below, we should also not ignore the differences in distinct peoples' concepts of the person and try to establish some universalised understanding of this notion (e.g. that all peoples are equally relational) but rather to be sensitive to the possible ontological and epistemological dissimilarities these concepts may carry. Furthermore, there is also another and equally serious problem inherent in some of the above described views, which I see weakening the potency of the individuality–relationality opposition as a tool for examining people's conceptualisations of the person. It is the failure to differentiate between the dichotomies or continuums individuality–relationality and individualism–sociality. Bloch (1988) and Carsten (2004), for instance, talk about individualism when referring to the boundedness of an individual person, while Overing and Passes (2000a) use the same term to denote personal independence, or egoism. This kind of ambiguousness easily leaves unclear for the reader both the level of analysis (whether e.g. social, ontological or corporeal) and the role of physicality in it. In this study, I shall employ the individualism–sociality opposition in the manner used by Overing and Passes to mark the tension between individual aspirations and collective benefits. Even though the level of examination inherent in this dichotomy is that of social life, these two conditions are still not separate from human corporeality but actualise in bodily interaction. My principal interest in this study is, however, in the other dichotomy, that between individuality and relationality, which will be used to map the ontological, epistemological and corporeal conditions of persons. My usage of the notion of individuality thus corresponds to Strathern's (1988) notion of individuality as opposed to dividuality (see Viveiros de Castro 2002b: 444). I therefore consider the above examples given by Bloch and Carsten to be also more about individuality vs. relationality than about individualism vs. sociality.

Through these two continuums, mind–body and individuality–relationality, I wish to be able to shed light on various different sides of the Yine notion of the person and thus to gain a richer picture of Yine socio-corporeal dynamics. Furthermore, the dichotomy individuality–relationality will also be central for the discussion of Yine views concerning Christianity and especially salvation. As will be further explored in Chapter 6, the tension between the inherent relationality of Yine persons and their more individualist comprehension of life in Christian heaven is a substantial

concern especially for the Evangelical Yine in Diamante.¹⁴³ In the following section, I shall discuss in more detail how the formation and transformation of persons and relationships have been examined in the Amazonian context and how they will be accessed in the present study.

The formation and transformation of persons and relationships in Amazonia

As the discussion above already strongly implies, the continuums body–mind and individuality–relationality intersect in various ways. When these notions are examined as intertwined, what emerges is a more dynamic view of the socio-corporeal constitution of persons. In Amazonian anthropology such a view has previously been largely influenced by social constructionist thinking and phenomenological views of the body in general as well as by some recent discussions on the formation of bodies and relationships specific to Amazonia (e.g. Conklin 1996; Griffiths 2001; Henley 2001; Lima 1999; Londoño-Sulkin 2005; McCallum 1996; 2001; Overing 1988; 1989a; Rival 2005; Rosengren 2005; Storrie 2003; Taylor 1996; Viveiros de Castro 1998). The present study is also closely connected to this vein of research. In order to conceptualise the intertwinedness and the dynamism of the construction of persons I shall in this work employ the much-used but also debated notion of *embodiment*.¹⁴⁴ I use the term in two interrelated ways, drawing on both the phenomenological theorising on the body and on the critique of it presented by Amazonianists (Pollock 1996; Vilaça 2005). First, I employ the term embodiment to overcome the mind–body dichotomy in examining the different sides of a person’s constitution or human condition. Despite the analytical (and ethnographical) separation of the body, the mind and the soul (e.g. *gimane-nshinikanchi-samenchi*) these different sides of persons are not ontologically disconnected but closely interwoven.¹⁴⁵ This intertwining can be seen to take a multitude of distinct forms among different Amazonian peoples, some more ephemeral and unstable than others. There are various examples where this intertwining has been previously described with the vocabulary of embodiment, such as the Cashinahua ‘knowing body’ (McCallum 1996: 348; Kensinger 1995) and the Kayapo ‘living social body’ (Turner 1995: 164; see also Lagrou

¹⁴³ Herein also lies a danger of comparing indigenous understandings of salvation to some idealised view of ‘Christian salvation of the individual’. We should, however, take into consideration, as for instance Burnett (2001) shows, that there is also a strong relational side to Christian (Paulinian) understanding of salvation.

¹⁴⁴ On the notion of and previous discussions on embodiment see Bourdieu 1977; Csordas 1990; 1994; Johnson 1987; Merleau-Ponty 2002; Strathern 1996.

¹⁴⁵ In what is taken to be the Cartesian ontological separation between the body and the mind, these two components are seen to be related as if two particles were glued together, whereas according to the phenomenological understanding a person can perceive the world only through the body. When talking phenomenologically about the mind and the body, these two sides can in a *gestalt*-theoretical way be perceived as the figure and the background (Nettleton & Watson 1998: 9–10; see Vilaça 2005: 454; Viveiros de Castro 2002b).

2000). I view the notion of embodiment in this sense accentuating the body as the *subject* of social life (Csordas 1990; 1994; Merleau-Ponty 2002) and referring to the general human (and non-human) embodied condition.

Second, I shall use the term embodiment to lay emphasis on the dialogical construction of persons for which a wide range of evidence exists in Amazonian ethnographies. Various authors have noted how persons in Amazonia are relationally constituted through corporeal interactions (Conklin & Morgan 1996; Conklin 2001; McCallum 1996; Opas 2005; cf. Holland 1997; Markus & Kitayama 1991; Bakhtin 2002: 270–326). This observation was initially made by Seeger, da Matta and Viveiros de Castro (1987 [1979]) when they viewed Amazonian social groups as ‘communities of substance’. They put forward the idea that corporeal substances impart qualities of identity to those who incorporate them (see Conklin & Morgan 1996: 668). Other authors have provided further evidence for the way in which in the ongoing process of relationality, where corporeal substances and their analogues (e.g. semen, food) involved in these processes are internalised, the value given to them becomes part of both persons. (Descola 2001: 108; Fisher 2001: 123; Lagrou 2004: 247; McCallum 1997).¹⁴⁶ Also the meanings given to living close to and to working together with others have equally been considered constitutive of persons (e.g. Griffiths 2001).¹⁴⁷

Although the Yine material also largely conforms to these observations, we should, nevertheless, be cautious about not taking the constituents of these processes – bodies, different substances and the meanings attached to them – as something given. Aparecida Vilaça (2005: 450) warns us against taking the body as a starting point and seeing bodies as impregnated with dispositions and affects (e.g. mindful bodies and embodied knowledge) – as according to her has been done in many Amazonian cases – instead of seeing ‘ways of being’ actualised in bodily form. In her view, talking about embodiment in relation to these processes freezes persons into entities to which things can be attached instead of paying attention to people’s lived experiences. She sees the term embodiment as connected to the phenomenological views of the body (see also Pollock 1996: 320–322), which she criticises for their universalising aim of overcoming the divide between the West and the Rest by attempting to see bodies as similar everywhere. Such an approach, she states, does not apply to Amazonia, first, because in Amazonia the body is exactly the site of differentiation – not of similitude – between beings and persons, and second, because Western and Amerindian conceptions of the body are different. Consequently, she considers phenomenological views of the body

¹⁴⁶ In this interaction also the histories of both parties affect the constitution of their bodies and relational selves (also called social or interrelated selves) (Ahmed 2000b; Holland 1997: 184).

¹⁴⁷ The dialogic view of the production of persons used in this study has in Amazonia been studied particularly in relation to human reproductive activities and bringing up children and to people’s understandings of illnesses and curing, and more recently in the setting of everyday practices such as work and consumption (see Conklin & Morgan 1996; McCallum 1996: 354; Gow 1989; Taylor 1996; Henley 2001).

(especially those of Thomas Csordas¹⁴⁸ and Maurice Merleau-Ponty) as incompatible with Amazonian notions: while in the first the body is seen as existing as a sum of perceptions, in the latter different perspectives do not add up: they are not complementary nor equivalent (Vilaça 2005: 458). Rather, in Amerindian perspectivist understandings (see below) form is held to be defined by relation, not vice versa. In Amazonia bodies cannot therefore, Vilaça notes, be seen as 'being in the world from the start' as stated by phenomenologists because for Amazonian peoples there does not exist any pre-given natural or objective universe.

Even though I agree with Vilaça on the critique she presents on the universalising attempts in the anthropology of the body and the incompatibility of the phenomenological view according to which the body exists as a sum of perceptions with Amazonian conceptions, I do, however, find the phenomenological approach and the notion of embodiment still in many ways useful and usable. We need not cast out the phenomenological views on embodiment (persons existing only in relation to others and perceiving the world corporeally, and the material world being constitutive of persons) or the term embodiment itself if, rather than focusing on the question of the existence of the body, we employ these notions to describe the epistemological and formational/transformational processes of being-in-the-world.¹⁴⁹ Consequently, while I think that Vilaça's warning about taking the body as a starting point is in place, we need not see the two sides – embodiment of dispositions (or impregnation of bodies with dispositions) and actualisation of 'ways on being' in bodily form – as contradictory. Building on Vilaça's approach and on McCallum's (2001: 178) views on gender discussed above, I apprehend different dispositions, knowledge, values and meanings as being embodied in persons not 'as such' (not as pre-existing) but as potentialities and capacities for action and therefore also as being actualised and reworked only in corporeal social interaction. In this sense, the term embodiment comes to signify the *process* of formation and transformation of persons and provides us – instead of a frozen image – with a dynamic concept to study these processes with.

The above view also entails an understanding of persons as fluid or 'open'. This kind of openness has been considered characteristic of Amazonian indigenous societies at large (Conklin 2001a; Henley 2001; Pollock 2004: 211; see also Carsten 1995: 224, 235) and has been understood as a prerequisite for conviviality. Nevertheless, it is simultaneously a source of great vulnerability since it is not only other human persons but different

¹⁴⁸ Csordas (1990; 1994) bases his argument largely on the views of Maurice Merleau-Ponty but also on those of Pierre Bourdieu. Csordas operates with the dialectics between the pre-objective phenomenological experience and the objectification of that experience. My second manner of speaking about embodiment is, in principle, a question of this dialectics but I relate it rather to the discussions in Amazonian anthropology.

¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, I agree with the five strategic advantages Strathern and Lambek (1998: 7) see the concept of *embodiment* offering over a more generalised approach to personhood. According to them, embodiment (1) indicates the intersection of the biological and the cultural in the sphere of lived experience, (2) indicates the inscription of memory in somatic and somatised forms, (3) is a processual term, (4) gives an approach to genesis of symbolism and classification, and (5) implies agency in terms of willed bodily actions of persons.

non-human persons as well who interact with each other through such openness. (Pollock 2004: 211.) Thus, for many Amazonian peoples, and – as I have noted elsewhere (Opas 2005) – for the Yine, no one ever becomes fully ready or solid; there is no end to the process of becoming a human person (see Griffiths 2001: 255). Being a person is not a static state of existence but a highly unstable condition under constant negotiation. This is because to be a person is *always* to be a person corporeally in relation to other persons (Taylor 1996: 206; Storrie 2003: 422; cf. Bakhtin 1990: 49; Merleau-Ponty 2002: xiv).¹⁵⁰ It is therefore in the first place human and non-human agency and actions that we need to pay attention to in examining the production of persons – as well as relationships – in Amazonia.

In sum, the notions of the body and the person are to be considered to overlap to some extent. When the body is considered the subject of social life, it coincides with the notion of the person being both fundamentally relational and fluid. As noted above, the materiality of the world influences not merely one's body but who one is. But together with the relational self, the body may also be seen as one constituent of the person. From this standpoint, the notion of the person retains its physicality but emphasis is laid on the aspect of social agency.

Just as persons are made through social interaction, social relations have also been shown to be formed through bodies or corporeality (Conklin & Morgan 1996; Conklin 1996: 374).¹⁵¹ It is through everyday corporeal processes and activities that for instance the Yine form, maintain and regulate relations to each other. Very strongly put, 'society is nowhere if not in the body; that is, in the sequence of sets of relations involved in constructing and deconstructing it'.¹⁵² (Taylor 1996: 202; see Strathern 1992). In the past, the formation of social relationships in Amazonia has been largely discussed through the 'making kin' aspect of social interaction. As many Amazonian peoples prefer, or need, to live in 'communities of similars' or among those 'of a kind', as fully human life is possible only among one's own kind, they are in a constant process of 'making kin out of others' (Overing 2003; Vilaça 2002a). This has been shown also in relation to Amazonian inter-ethnic relations, as well as to ethnographers' accounts of their lives among indigenous people. The physical mixing of different substances is – as in the case of a non-Wari' person who undergoes a blood transformation and becomes Wari' (Conklin & Morgan 1996: 670) or myself as an ethnographer producing food and eating together with the Yine – a way to make others similar.

However, more recently, instead of the term *kinship*, researchers

¹⁵⁰ Paralleling the Bakhtinian notion of *transgradience*, persons in Amazonia gain meaning through other persons' perceptions of them (see discussion on the notion of transgradience below in this Introduction).

¹⁵¹ This is of course not an exclusively Amazonian observation. On a more general level and in other ethnographical contexts it has also been noted that 'intersubjectivity is grounded in bodiliness or corporeality' (van Wolputte 2004: 252; cf. Merleau-Ponty 2002; Bakhtin 1990; 1993).

¹⁵² This differs from the view of Douglas (1984) in that the focus is in the action and relationships rather than in structures.

have started to use the term *relatedness*. This term highlights the common observation made among Amazonian peoples that kinship is in many cases not determined by biological ties but by convivial living, working and eating together as well as by sexual interaction. Relatedness emphasises the process of making others similar rather than a system of classification (a connotation which the term kinship carries) (Storrie 2003: 409). It also affords a better possibility of examining relationships between different kinds of others, namely non-human persons. Robert Storrie (2003: 419) notes that 'relatedness . . . describes not merely the relationship between human beings, but in a fundamental way it provides a lens with which to examine Hoti ideas about the interrelationship of all environmental objects and persons'. In examining Yine relations with different non-human beings I shall accordingly employ the notion of relatedness.

Both of the topics examined above – the relational constitution of persons and the corporeal constitution of relationships – have during the past decade in Amazonian ethnography been discussed largely in terms of the perspectival logic found among many Amazonian groups. Perspectivism, a theory first formulated by Viveiros de Castro (1998) and Tania Stolze Lima (1999),¹⁵³ treats the ability of different beings, separated by their differing physiological characteristics, to transform into others. According to this theory, all beings possessing a soul see themselves as humans. From their own perspective, they act and behave like humans and have a human culture. They see their food as human food and their dwellings as human houses. The way they experience other beings depends on the different points of view of the observer and the observed. For instance, what from a human being's point of view is blood, is manioc beer from the point of view of a jaguar. The point of view of a being, according to Viveiros de Castro's original formulation (1998), is located in the body. Different beings' distinct corporeal characteristics and dispositions produce different points of view. Perspectives, then, are not different kinds of representations or metaphors but distinct corporeal points of view.

The basic postulates of the perspectival theory have in a short period of time gained support and become widely accepted and used in research (Rival 2005, Vilaça 2005; 2006; Storrie 2003; Londoño-Sulkin 2005). However, the theory itself has also been criticised and developed further. The main criticisms presented concern the theory's insensitiveness to, or in fact ignoring of, gender, the hegemony attributed to sight over other senses and the rigidity of the theory, which does not easily allow variation (Rival 2005; Rosengren 2005; Santos-Granero 2005). More recently, researchers have begun to develop the theory further to include also the aspects of morality (Londoño-Sulkin 2005) and gender (Rival 2005) and to examine the applicability of the perspectival theory for understanding human-

¹⁵³ The theory of perspectivism was a result of a dialogue between Viveiros de Castro (1996. *Os Pronomes Cosmológicos e o Perspectivismo Ameríndio*. – *Mana* 2(2), 115–144) and Lima (1996. *O Dois e su Múltiplo: Reflexões sobre o Perspectivismo em uma Cosmologia Tupi*. – *Mana* 2(2), 21–47) but it was only the translation of their articles into English that raised wider interest in the theory. Viveiros de Castro's and Lima's views were influenced by Kaj Århem's article of 1993.



Figure 6. A typical house with a patio in Diamante

to-human transformations (Rival 2005; Vilaça 2006; Virtanen 2007). The present study continues to explore and assess the workability and applicability of perspectival theorising, firstly by paying attention especially to the role of morality in perspectival relations and secondly by examining the viability of the notion of perspective or point of view in relation to Yine Catholicism and Evangelicalism.

Values and moralities

One of the principal constituents in the socio-corporeal formation of persons and relationships among the Yine – and my third lens for approaching the research questions posed in this study – is morality. Questions of morality are intrinsic to the anthropological quest of getting to know and understand other peoples and are among the things first observed in the settings of cultural encounters. Already the early explorers commented on the strange habits of distant peoples whose behaviour did not fit into the explorers' moral principles but seemed immoral (or amoral) and animal-like. Instead of highlighting differences, in modern academic anthropology the focus has been on generating understanding of the logics of morality among different, especially indigenous, peoples. Nevertheless, anthropological works addressing this topic (e.g. Evans-Pritchard 1956; Lienhardt 1961; Leenhardt 1979; Perestiany 1966; Malinowski 1926; Read 1967; Durkheim 1992; Lutz 1988) have rarely been in the first place about morality, nor have they discussed peoples' moral concepts and understandings explicitly

in terms of morality (see Howell 1997a). Only recently have anthropologists taken a renewed interest in the study of morality, bringing it from the background to the fore and thus making it one of the central research topics in the field. Along with this change, the emphasis has shifted from morality to moralities. (Parkin 1985; Howell & Willis 1989; Howell 1997b; Edel & Edel 1968; Robbins 2004a; Overing 1985; see Rosengren 1998: 269.)

Anthropological approaches to the study of values and moralities

In ethnographies concerning Amazonia, examination of indigenous moralities has thrived especially since the 1980s.¹⁵⁴ The discussion of Amazonian moralities and sociality has centred roughly around two poles, which, often needlessly, have been seen as opposed.¹⁵⁵ One of these approaches – most visibly represented by French and Brazilian Amazonianists¹⁵⁶ – concentrates on the predatory aspects of production and reproduction of Amazonian societies and cosmoses, emphasising especially affinal relations as the core socio-cosmological mechanism. Even though most of these scholars do not systematically use the terms moral or morality in their writing, they do talk about them through the ‘unpleasant’: violence, predation and death. The other approach is exemplified by the theorising of Joanna Overing who, beginning from the 1970s, has been developing the ‘anthropology of the everyday’ approach not only within Amazonian studies and but also more generally in the field of anthropology.¹⁵⁷ The scholars aligning with this approach to Amazonian sociality emphasise moral virtues and interpersonal relations and concentrate especially on consanguineous relations.¹⁵⁸ In the same vein as many feminist scholars (e.g. Baier 1995; Gilligan 1982; Held 1998; Koehn 1998), they criticise Western moral philosophy for its rights-centred approach, where the domestic is left outside the realm of the moral, and morality is attached to notions like rule, obedience and justification of coercion instead of virtues.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, these researches have

¹⁵⁴ But see e.g. Goldman 1979 and Karsten 1935: 250–256. Compiled works dealing with the aspect of indigenous Amazonian moralities include Overing & Passes 2000b and Whitehead & Wright 2004.

¹⁵⁵ On the differences between Franco-Brazilian and British approaches in Amazonian anthropology see e.g. Lorrain 2001; Rival 2005; Santos-Granero 2000; 2001; Taylor 1996.

¹⁵⁶ These include e.g. Tanya Stolze Lima, Philippe Descola, Anne Christine Taylor, Aparecida Vilaça and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro.

¹⁵⁷ One culmination point in developing this approach has been the publishing of the volume *The Anthropology of Love and Anger* co-edited by Joanna Overing and Alan Passes (2000b). See also Overing 2003.

¹⁵⁸ Other researchers that have been grouped in this category include Peter Gow, Louisa Elvira Belaunde, Fernando Santos-Granero and Dan Rosengren, along with many of their students.

¹⁵⁹ Overing (1989b) sees that in the search for Amazonian aesthetics of sociality and informal conviviality – the ethnography of ‘the ordinary’ – Western dualisms of civil society and the domestic, society and the individual, reason and emotion, mind and body, subject and object, and art and work have to be overcome.

increasingly paid attention to what has become known as the 'aesthetics of Amazonian morality' (Overing & Passes 2000a: 3–4; Overing 1989b; 2003; Londoño-Sulkin 2005) – the subtle and frequently (for outsiders) not easily detectable ways of acting and living morally.¹⁶⁰ Overing (1989b: 159) points out that aesthetics in the modern West have been made exclusively an aspect of art and thus separated from other spheres of life like those of religion, politics and knowledge. Also in moral philosophy ethics have been detached from aesthetics and desire. Overing (1989b: 159) writes that

for us to understand what 'the social' is for the Amerindians of the South American rain forest, we must return to our former understanding where aesthetics was not the autonomous category it is today, but a political and moral one. It is only when we reintegrate aesthetic judgement with the morally good and the morally bad, and both judgement and morality with productive knowledge and activity, that we can begin to say sensible things about the economy, the polity, and the social philosophy of these peoples.

Aesthetics being a moral category is most explicitly seen in those Amerindian languages which denote moral judgements with the vocabulary of aesthetics. For instance among the Venezuelan Piaroa the morally good is incorporated in the evaluation of something as beautiful, clean and restrained while the morally bad is connected with ugliness, dirt and excess (Overing 1989b: 168). In a similar manner among the Yine, the aesthetic statement that something is *kigler* means that it is beautiful, good, well done and/or accepted.

Another, and perhaps less systematically examined way to approach moralities in anthropology is the study of values. In academic anthropology the project that brought the study of values into relief was the large-scale Rimrock value project led by Clyde Kluckhohn in the 1940s and 1950s.¹⁶¹ However, at least in part because the project was considered something of a failure – it fell short in answering the questions posited largely because it failed to define the central concept of *value* – the anthropological attempts to develop a theory of value went out of fashion for a few decades. Even though values (in the plural) were much written about, the interest in developing an anthropological theory of value (in the singular) was low (Graeber 2001: 1).

Recently, the anthropological study of value(s) has regained researchers' interest. Contemporary researches have drawn on multiple sources in order to study values: functional, structural, psychoanalytical, phenomenological, post-structuralist and symbolic explanations have been brought together in a dialogue in order to understand how values

¹⁶⁰ On aesthetics of morality and values in moral philosophy see Kotkavirta 2003 and Lewis, David K. 2000. *Papers in Ethics and Social Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁶¹ The project was originally called 'Comparative Study of Values' or 'Ramah' and it aimed at describing the value systems of five neighbouring but culturally different communities in north-western New Mexico (Navajo, Zuni, Spanish American, Mormon, and Anglo). (See Nuckolls 1998: 20–24; Graeber 2001: 2–5.)

are constitutive of culture and society. Among others the theorising of Louis Dumont, Émile Durkheim, Sigmund Freud, Catharine Lutz, Karl Marx, Marcel Mauss, Nancy Munn, Talcott Parsons, Marilyn Strathern, and the only scholar to have developed a systematic theory of value(s) in the Amazonian context, Terence Turner,¹⁶² have been revisited (Graeber 2001; Hallen 2000; Munn 1992; Nuckolls 1998; Robbins 2004a; Turner 1979a–b; 1995; 2002; 2003; see Uzendoski 2004). Nevertheless, the term value is still rarely defined in terms of what it *is* but rather of what it *does*, what it *is like* and *how it is produced*. The emphasis seems to be on the act of valuing rather than on values. This becomes, however, understandable – and a fruitful approach – when considering the goals of the anthropological quest of locating the active moral subject within the dynamics of peoples' transforming social and cultural worlds.¹⁶³ Developing a theory of value (in the singular) remains an entirely different kind of project.¹⁶⁴

Valuing is commonly defined through its relation to desiring: valuing is connected to but not the same as desiring, the difference lying in the latter denoting what we want and the former what we *most* want (Nerlich 1989). This is, in fact, a view already presented by Kluckhohn (1961: 289). He stated that '[v]alues do not consist in "desires" but rather in the desirable – that is, what we not only want but feel that it is right and proper to want for ourselves and for others'.¹⁶⁵ Perhaps more succinctly the same idea can be rephrased as valuing being *desired desiring*. 'Valuing involves desiring, but valuing is not simply desiring, as one can desire things one does not value. Rather one value[s] those things that one desires *and* desires to desire.' (López de Sa 2005: 5; 2003: 93.) This kind of rather broad definition of valuing seems practicable when discussing the processes of valuing – what and how people value what they value – in a given cultural context. Nevertheless, if the emphasis is laid on valuing instead of values only in order to avoid problems of terminological definitions, or if values are talked about without defining them in any way, just relying on the readers sharing a common understanding of what values are, we go astray. In my view, we should be able to talk about values even without generating a universal theory of value, the task being comparable to defining or talking about such concepts as 'religion' or 'culture'. We are able to approach and make

¹⁶² Turner's theory rests heavily on concepts such as role, status and hierarchy. Given the high emphasis certain Amazonian societies place on egalitarian relations and their lack of institutionalised roles (see Overing 2003), the opportunities to apply the theory in its present form more generally in the Amazonian context appear somewhat limited.

¹⁶³ This is not, however, solely the case in anthropological studies of value but also a tendency in moral philosophy (e.g. López de Sa 2003; 2005. See Lewis, David K. 2000. *Papers in Ethics and Social Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Nerlich 1989).

¹⁶⁴ Some recent attempts to create anthropological theories of value (in the singular) have, however, been successful in shedding light for example on the processes of value formation (Turner 1979a; 1979b; 1995; 2003) and value transformation (Munn 1992).

¹⁶⁵ It has been noted that as such there was nothing wrong with Kluckhohn's definition. Rather, his problem was first that this approach was not designed to answer the objectives he pursued: the systematic comparison of values rather than the interpretation of their meanings for people, and second that he failed to account for the aspect of motivation in valuing. (Graeber 2001: 2–5; Nuckolls 1998: 19–26.)

analytical use of the term value (in the plural or singular) even when we define it more specifically for the purposes of each research task at hand. What this requires, however, is that researchers give their readers the keys first, for understanding *their* way of using and understanding the term value be it derived from moral philosophy or based on ethnoterminology, and second, for evaluating the methodology used in extracting particular values from the ethnographical setting or material.

In the present work the understanding of values is developed through comparing themes emerging from the close study of the research material constructed with the Yine people with four issues recent works on anthropological study of values have, in fact quite unanimously, found central for the task (see Graeber 2001; Hallen 2000; Howell 1997b; Munn 1992; Nuckolls 1998; Robbins 2004a). These are first, as will be discussed further below, the valuing situation or the media through which a value becomes visible is regarded as relevant in understanding the dynamics of valuing. Second, active social agency is considered central to the processes of valuing. Values do not exist separately from human agency, actions and human bodies but are part of the ongoing definition of both persons and social relations. Even though strongly bound up with the definition of persons, they are still not merely aspects of individuals as they become visible only in social interaction (Nuckolls 1998: 3–4), especially in the context of the everyday. Simultaneously, however, these moments of interaction are points where persons' moral condition is evaluated. The commitment into living out a certain value in relation to other persons is a measure of the importance of that value to a person but the commitment in pursuing a value or the lack of it also measures them as a person. Socio-moral valuing in a way, then, makes us who we are. (Nerlich 1989: 148–150.) This attachment of morality to agency makes it necessarily embodied: a human person is a bodily moral being. There is ample evidence in Amazonian ethnographies of the right kind of morality being definitive of humanity and a human person's moral condition being manifested corporeally. Thomas Griffiths (2001), for instance, shows how the Uitoto see corporeality and especially bodily activities such as work as generative and a proof of a person's human condition. Failure to act morally together with others may cause bodily degeneration. Therefore morality becomes manifest in the corporeal relations and interaction a person has with other persons.

Third, the moral judgements or evaluations of people's actions also involve knowledge, emotions and desires. As seen already above, among many Amerindian peoples moral judgements are denoted with the vocabulary of aesthetics. In a similar manner, the vocabulary of emotions may express socio-moral evaluations (e.g. Lutz 1988; Santos-Granero 1994). For instance, among the Enxet of the Paraguayan Chaco *love* is conceptualised as a moral value and it should characterise all interaction between human persons in a sociable relationship. The notion of love, then, goes beyond a mere feeling to encompass both a moral principle and a mode of behaviour (Kidd 2000: 118). Love is something that is done, the practice of sociality itself. The morality of a person, according to this account, is

evaluated by the success of people in loving one another.¹⁶⁶ Nevertheless, even though moral judgements would not be expressed with the specific vocabulary of emotions, they still involve emotions. In Graham Nerlich's (1989: 140–142) terms, emotions mean something: their meanings are evaluations about how the world *is*. In contrast, desires (or values when defined as desired desires) contain evaluations about how the world *might / should / ought to be*. Socio-moral evaluations are then constant comparisons between how the world or relationship is and how it should be. These evaluations are also bound to knowledge about the criteria of proper moral human condition. We evaluate our own and others' actions against our cultural background and cultural knowledge of how the world should be. (Socio-moral) values are in this sense embodied knowledge and express the inherent dynamic relationship between the 'ought' and the 'is' (see Howell 1997a: 8, 11). These criteria are continuously redefined and expressed in people's daily interaction, thus combining emotions and knowledge in a 'type of sociality that continually demands reflection upon the moral virtues and their practice' (Overing & Passes 2000a: 19).¹⁶⁷

Fourth, and what most of the authors hold to be most important in examining values in a different cultural context, is the question of motivation (see Graeber 2001: 12). What motivates people into valuing certain things? Recent anthropological studies give multiple answers to the question of motivation. The driving force behind people valuing something has been seen to lie in irresolvable value contradictions (Nuckolls 1998); valuing has been considered a result of fetishisation: value seems to come from objects or qualities themselves whereas, in fact, they are rather the tools through which value is mediated and measured (Graeber 2001; see Munn 1992; Turner 1979a; 1979b; 1995; 2003); and motivation behind valuing something and devaluing something else (in the context of cultural change) has been seen to derive from undesired emotions (Robbins 2004a).¹⁶⁸ This suggests that there is no single solution to the problem of motivation in valuing. Owing to the multitude of different kinds of values people have, and depending on the approaches and aims of each piece of research, motivation seems to be something that needs to be carefully examined and paid attention to in each separate case. In order to approach the role of valuing in the Yine moral constitution we thus need to develop an understanding of valuing as dynamic, social, corporeal, situational and motivated action which is not separate from emotions and knowledge.

¹⁶⁶ More generally it has been stated that '[f]or Amazonian people, love and anger are the very strong markers that tell respectively of the success or failure of social process'. (Overing and Passes 2000a: 3.)

¹⁶⁷ The moral evaluations, however, do not take place in a vacuum of each separate moment of interaction and are not directed only towards the future but also towards the past. Just as social interaction and every encounter has histories and politics (Ahmed 2000b) the evaluations of a person's actions stem from evaluations of and attitudes towards the former actions of the person, be they self-experienced or heard from others.

¹⁶⁸ Robbins draws here on Marshall Sahlins (1992. *The Economics of Develop-Man in the Pacific*. – *RES* 21: 13–25).

Outlining Yine moralities

My focus in this research is not on the Yine understanding of value or values in general but on how certain types of values, which I call socio-moral values, are generative of persons in the Yine lived world.¹⁶⁹ If we take the above definition of valuing as desired desiring as a starting point, we may, conforming with the definition, view values as things, conditions, characteristics or states of affairs that we desire and desire to desire to have or to live out. Consequently, as sociality is inseparably related to morality, Yine socio-moral values become the desired desired conditions of social interaction turned towards the ongoing production of society and proper persons, which again are constitutive and generative of sociality and relationality. In addition, they form the background against which a person's human condition in the Yine social world is evaluated.¹⁷⁰

There is ample ethnographical evidence that many Amazonian peoples, such as the Yine, place substantial effort and thought in the relations they have with other humans as well as with non-human beings in their lived worlds. In fact, the social life of many of these groups is to a large extent turned towards establishing and manipulating relationships. This relational quality of different Amazonian peoples becomes evident especially for the reader familiar with Amazonian ethnographies when we rephrase people's drive to emphasise relationality and relatedness as their

¹⁶⁹ The task sets the study in the 'sociological' or 'cultural' stream of value studies, where values are approached as conceptions of what is good and desirable in human life (Graeber 2001) and are related to peoples notions about the human being, about personhood, agency and sociality (Howell 1996).

¹⁷⁰ The given definition of socio-moral values in this research is by no means unproblematic. First, the definition is a researcher's construction, which does not necessarily have any meaning as such for the people studied. Previous research has shown how in order to understand for instance emotions in the Amazonian context the concept of emotion itself has to be redefined (articles in Overing & Passes 2000b). Similarly, in the case of values we should ask what Amerindian values are in the first place. We should be sensitive to the possible differences between our understanding of such categories as value and valuing and the local people's conceptualisations. In this study, the definition I have employed was arrived at in a hermeneutical process starting from the thematic study of the material concerning Yine human-non-human relations and ending up, through various cycles of setting previous definitions of values found in literature into discussion with the Yine conceptualisations, with the definition of socio-moral values and valuing used. Therefore, even though the definition of socio-moral values employed is my construct, it is deeply embedded in the Yine conceptualisations of their lived worlds and inseparable from human corporeality, emotions, knowledge and motivation. Second, and related to the first point, also the individual socio-moral values extracted from the field of value of Yine human-non-human encounters are in the first place research extractions and do not necessarily as such have their counterpart in the Yine language. Although some terms, such as what I have termed the ultimate goal in Yine social life, living well or living tranquilly (*gwashata*) and some socio-moral values like tranquillity (*gwashatachri*), sharing (*gapiklu*) and ability to cure (*gimatpinitlu*) correspond to ethnic categories, not all of the socio-moral values exist as separate categories for the Yine. Nevertheless, I am certain that the Yine do also recognise these latter kinds of categories as something they desire to desire in order to secure the ongoing production of society and proper persons.

emphasis on their *ability to be social*. (Overing & Passes 2000b.)¹⁷¹ Among the Yine, valuing of the ability to be social is manifested and lived out in and by their everyday pursuit and negotiation of different socio-moral values such as those examined in this work: sharing, proximity, tranquillity, ability to cure, going ahead, having the same opportunities and the negative value of excess. But the question remains: what motivates the Yine into valuing their ability to be social in general and different socio-moral conditions in particular? Many recent ethnographies suggest that in Amazonia (and elsewhere), morality is intrinsic to humanity. In fact, among the indigenous Amazonian people, to be *human* is to be *moral* (Storrie 2003; Opas 2005). Although certain non-human persons are considered equally moral beings, their morality is different. What separates humans from other kinds of persons is exactly their *right kind* of morality. Therefore, if we take this proposition seriously and examine its implications, we will see that what is at stake in morality is nothing less than humanity itself. In humanity therefore lies also the motivation for socio-moral valuing: since the right kind of morality (humanity) is an intrinsically multiple and social condition the motivation lies in achieving and ensuring proper human existence. For the Yine, immorality is a sign of a person transforming into a different kind of person but to be amoral is to renounce personhood altogether. This whole socio-moral process is then aimed at achieving both the proper human condition and what can be seen as the ultimate goal of Yine sociability and convivial¹⁷² community life, a state of *living well*.¹⁷³

What made social life in Diamante dynamic was the fact that there was not one sole moral human condition which was considered proper by the Yine. Rather, there were different views on this proper condition, different moralities. This became visible for instance in Yine relations with different non-human beings and in the relations between the Catholics and the Evangelicals in the community. As for the Yine proper sociality and morality, and thus humanness, was a multiple condition; they, Evangelicals and Catholics alike, aimed at their ultimate goal of living well through making others similar. On the one hand pursuing this objective protected people from the threats posed by the non-human world, but on the other

¹⁷¹ In the context of Papua New Guinea, Robbins (2004a: 290–294) terms a similar kind of society, that of the Urapmin, *relational* but differing from my usage he uses the term in a Dumontian structuralist manner to denote a society's paramount value. He considers the two paramount values of individualism and holism introduced by Luis Dumont inadequate to describe the realities of different societies and widens the concept of paramount value to which all societies ascribe to differing extents to include also the paramount value of relationalism.

¹⁷² Juxtaposed with 'society', conviviality emphasises individual agency as constitutive of collectivity and stresses the affective side of sociality. As Overing and Passes state (2000a: 16), 'the idea of a convivial sociality . . . captures, better than most of our notions of social relatedness, the enormous valorisation which the indigenous peoples of Amazonia place upon good humour, affective comfort and sociable mutuality in their everyday, intimate relations and practices of community living'.

¹⁷³ Peter Gow defines 'living well' (*gwashata*) for the Yine people as 'kinship' but also as 'the key value of an aesthetic of social life' (2000: 52, 61) or as a Yine 'core social value' (Gow 2000: 56).

it was prone to cause tensions within the community. In general, then, making others similar can be seen as a cultural logic by which not only human social life but the social life of living beings in general was organised among the Yine.¹⁷⁴

Searching for values

How can people's socio-moral values then be extracted from the flow of their lives? What are the valuing situations that reveal to us what people desire to desire? For studying Yine dynamics of valuing I have taken as a starting point the observations made above in relation to defining the notion of socio-moral values. In order to locate and study Yine values, I needed to consider that first, the meanings given to values, especially socio-moral values in this case, are formed in interaction between persons. Second, socio-moral values are embodied. In social interaction values become embodied in persons' bodies as potentialities and capacities to act and become formed, remoulded, transmitted and changed in this same corporeal interaction. Third, it is at the 'points at which impasse looms' (Geertz 2005: 7) that the socio-moral values or traces of these values may be found. Numerous cases show how Amazonian moralities are so subtly embedded in the everyday that they can only be seen when the system breaks down (Overing & Passes 2000b; Whitehead & Wright 2004).

This is how I have traced what in this study I call Yine socio-moral values. In order to study morality I have searched for situations where morality can be seen embodied in action, in interpersonal relations that constitute 'the primary terrain on which our values are actively constructed' (Gardiner 2000: 56; see Overing & Passes 2000a: 5).¹⁷⁵ As described above, my understanding of people's relationships with non-humans as such situations developed gradually. I began to see that it was in these relations that Yine socio-moral valuing became materialised. As non-humans in the Yine social world were very similar to humans but still not quite like them, and as it was valuing that made humans what they were, the encounters became exactly the interface where human morality and values, and more generally humanity, was negotiated (Opas 2005). They therefore formed a suitable arena both for identifying and studying the Yine socio-moral values.

A useful tool for conceptualising these relations is the moral philosopher Graham Nerlich's (1989: 148) notion of fields of values. According to Nerlich, values are there not just to be carried off and kept; rather, 'we have to make them real, bring forth embodiments of them, make

¹⁷⁴ I am not in the first place examining in this study how 'indigenous' moralities differ from 'Christian' moralities (see Rosengren 1998 and Vilaça 1997). The underlying assumption in this study is that the Yine *are* Christians.

¹⁷⁵ According to Rescher (1982), values can be manifested in two principal ways: in speech and in action. Unlike some works in which values are extracted from the flow of people's lives by studying propositions or speech acts (e.g. Hallen 2000; see Nuckolls 1998: 21), my approach emphasises action.

them tangible, concrete, datable, placeable, accessible so as to appropriate them'. A field of a value is then the area of human life where a value can be made real but also lost or transformed. The Yine encounters with non-human beings may be understood as such fields. In the encounters – and especially in telling about them – the Yine were constantly living out and redefining their values. These were moments when values were expressed and materialised in the face of intense epistemological, moral or emotional experiences or conflicts. It was at these moments of negotiating values and making them real that the Yine expressed who they 'were as persons' (see Nerlich 1989: 151).¹⁷⁶ As Paula Cooley (1994: 32) notes '[w]e are what we value, for by giving us worth, what we value gives us recognizable shape'.

I learned about these moments of human–non-human encounters and about people's interpretations of them through conversing, interviewing, observing and participating in people's everyday activities (cf. Lutz 1988: 44–46). Often people also told me specific stories or narrations about their or someone else's experiences and encounters with non-humans, some of which will be presented in the chapters to come. They also told me many mythic narratives concerning human–non-human interaction. Even though such a variety of forms of telling about the relationships with and attitudes towards non-humans raises a multitude of questions related to the ethnography of speaking or orality it is not my aim in this study to examine this variety. Rather, I consider all narrating to be both personal and collective action, which gives people a chance to discuss morality and their values. On a personal level, narrating can be seen as both constitutive of and constituted by experiences. Narrating is a way to experience perceptions and to interpret, reorganise and to change these experiences (Urban 2000: 9–10; Hovi 2007: 30; Ukkonen 2000a: 40; 2000b). Nevertheless, people's experiences are never exclusively personal as the ways to experience, to interpret, and to narrate experiences are collectively constructed.¹⁷⁷ Similarly, even the most generalised mythical narratives are not exclusively communal, since the meaning of any of them remains personal. Gregg Urban (2000: 9; see Bruner 1984a: 4–5) points out that '[w]ithin a discursive community, an instance of discourse arises only against the backdrop of a continuing history of such instances, in relationship to which it can be situated. The actual situating is done subjectively, but it is based upon a vast range of historical experience with other instances, which are also part of the public circulation of discourse in the ongoing life of a community.' All narrating is thus both shared and personal.

Consequently, narratives are also a fitting medium for studying

¹⁷⁶ Also Urban (1996: 67) notes that '[w]e cannot adequately assess the significance of meaningful cosmological ideas without also looking into how those ideas themselves make their way through space – a space that can be described by an outsider'.

¹⁷⁷ Personal-experience narrating is always influenced by the narrator's personal goals, the context of narrating and the interpretations of the audience, and depending on these may have several meanings both to the narrator and to the audience. In some context the experiences may seem irrelevant or even be negated whereas in others the same experiences become highly meaningful and are eagerly narrated. (See Basso E. 1990; Basso K. 1984; Gow 2001; Koski & Enges 2003.)

people's moral conceptions. In the fields of socio-linguistics and folklore studies it has previously been noted how a narrative is always crucially involved with moral evaluations of both the actions and actors in a narration. In narrating people give meaning to events from a moral perspective. (Järvinen 2004: 203; Linde 1993: 121; Riessman 1993; see Koski & Enges 2003: 85, 92.)¹⁷⁸ In approaching this formation of moral meaning in the field of human–non-human relations, I have found useful the Bakhtinian notion, little used in anthropological study, of *transgradience*. Bakhtin (1990: 13–16) characterises the relation between self and other as transgradient. This notion, borrowed from the nineteenth-century German school of aestheticism, refers to the idea that the other sees things about the self that the self cannot see. A self alone cannot therefore constitute and be itself within its own realm of existence without the other. Bakhtin uses the notion especially in the context of an author's relationship to the heros in his or her texts but also extends it to the 'real life' relations between the self and the other.¹⁷⁹ I consider the narrator of personal experiences or mythic narratives to be in this kind of transgradient position.¹⁸⁰ In narrations, people can evaluate the actions of the characters from an external point of view. They can see the characters against the socio-moral background and as part of a network of social relations and thus evaluate the actions and the consequences of the characters' actions from a moral perspective.

In this evaluation, even though the generalised mythic narrations and the many personal experience narrations influenced by them can be seen as windows towards the cultural logics of relating in the Yine social world, it is the exceptions, dissimilarities and controversies in the narrations that often reveal the most about people's moral conceptions. For the Yine, relations with non-humans and the narrations concerning encounters with these beings appeared to be channels for negotiating morality and social relationships in their lived world and for treating themes topical to the social reality of the community of Diamante. The chapters in this study each address different aspects of this reality.

Outline of the main body of the study

In order to be able to answer the research problem posed in the Prologue – What did the Yine people mean when they said that the two churches in Diamante were different but the same? – I shall proceed by examining Yine

¹⁷⁸ Although Santos-Granero (1994) has also examined indigenous morality in relation to mythic narratives, I consider my approach to differ considerably from his. Whereas he approaches Yanesha moral conceptions mostly through structural analysis of myths, I approach morality and values through people's evaluations of the actions of characters in the encounters with non-human beings.

¹⁷⁹ On the critique of this 'slippage from the semiotic into the somatic realm' see Erdinast-Vulcan 2003.

¹⁸⁰ Although transgradience can be considered to be inherent in all kinds of narration, I think owing to their nature as often shared or told, personal experience and mythic narratives give a possibility to *consciously* reflect upon and evaluate the actions of the characters.

relations to different non-human beings and especially the ways of forming and transforming persons as well as the forms of evaluating persons' proper human condition in these relations. The dynamics between similarity and difference thus becomes the overarching theme examined in and structuring this study: it comes up in relation to several oppositions the study examines, the most central of which are those of humans vs. non-humans, Catholics vs. Evangelicals and Yine people vs. white people. These dynamics also connect the study closely to other works on Amazonian cosmologies and epistemologies. The problematic of difference and sameness has in many previous studies been found elemental to understanding Amazonian indigenous forms of relatedness whether between humans or humans and non-humans.

The main body of the study is divided into two parts, which both discuss the corporeal, social and moral constitution and evaluation of persons and relatedness in the Yine world through Yine encounters and interaction with different non-human persons. Each chapter centres upon one non-human being central to the Yine social cosmos and examines how the Yine articulate and negotiate their basic socio-moral values, one of which one is highlighted in each chapter, in the sphere of human-non-human relations. The logic behind dividing the main body of this study into two parts lies in the first place in the negotiation of differing Yine Christianities and, intertwined with that process, differing humanities. In Part I, Yine experiences and narrations of encounters and interactions with non-humans centre on establishing and protecting the commonly accepted view of what it means to be a corporeally and morally proper Yine person. In Part II, however, the focus is on the differences between the Catholics and Evangelicals in Diamante and the subsequent production of differing Yine humanities.

Part I focuses on Yine relations with the souls of the dead and with different animals. In Chapter 1 I concentrate on the meanings sharing (food) has for the Yine and on how these meanings are being negotiated in Yine relations with the souls of deceased kinspeople. It will be shown how in Diamante sharing food has a prominent role simultaneously in protecting the Yine against the forces of the non-human world and in endangering them before those forces. In Chapter 2 the focus is on Yine relations with the grey brocket deer considered able to metamorphose into a human person. In this chapter I demonstrate how in the encounters with the brocket deer the Yine live out and manifest the importance of different forms of proximity for their human existence and social life. In this chapter I also explicitly address the question of Amerindian perspectivism in Yine relations with non-humans. Furthermore, the chapter discusses knowledge as an important element in the manipulation of social relationships. In Chapter 3 I take up yet another kind of human-non-human relation. The value of tranquillity is examined in the context of Yine relations with white-lipped peccaries and their guardian, the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries. It will be indicated how the subterranean world where the white-lipped peccaries are thought to be taken care of by their guardian is connected to the Yine moral quest for a tranquil and moral life in the 'world-without-evil'.

In the chapters of Part II, the main personages with whom the Yine interact are not souls of the dead or animals but different, perhaps more human-like beings. Chapter 4 concentrates on the figure of *kaxpomyolutu* or hand-whistler – the guardian of wind, game and valuable trees – and to a lesser extent on the siren, the guardian of the river. Through examining Yine encounters with these beings, I shall show how the negative value of excess inherent in these relations is seen as destructive of relatedness and a cause of grievances between the Evangelicals and Catholics in Diamante. In Chapter 5 the focus is on Yine relations with the mother spirit of the psychoactive plant *toé*. This mother spirit is found to be a central figure in the negotiation of people's abilities to cure. I shall show first how the relation to the Mother of *Toé* differs in its bodily moral constitution from most other relations in the Yine social world, and second how through these relations the Yine comment on and draw a line between the Evangelicals and the Catholics. Chapters 6 and 7 centre upon the two poles of Judaeo-Christian morality: God and Satan. In Chapter 6 I show how the coming of the Word of God is in various different ways seen to enhance people's possibilities of 'getting ahead' in life and how the Catholics and Evangelicals largely differ in their views on the meanings of this Coming. I will also show how these two forms of being Christian are related to Yine corporeality. Chapter 7 explores how the Yine in Diamante live in the riptide of Catholic and Evangelical moral understandings epitomised by, and awaiting resolution in, the expected coming of the personified Mark of the Beast, known from the mark 666. In their accounts of this figure, the Yine express their concern over the present communal situation where people are, in their terms, in highly unequal positions as regards economic and educational opportunities. Despite its late appearance in the Yine social world, it is shown that the figure of the Mark of the Beast is not unique in Yine historical lived experience but has its equivalent in the similarly personified Smallpox (*viruela*). These figures also provide grounds for assessing avoidance in Yine communal living as a specific social strategy. Finally, it will be shown how in relation to the expected coming of the Mark of the Beast the difference between Yine Evangelicals and Catholics is revealed to be a question of distinct corporeal points of view. In the final Discussion, I shall revisit the questions of corporeality, morality and relationships in the Yine lived world.

Part I

Collective aspirations: valuing relatedness



CHAPTER 1

Food relations: sharing with the deceased

On the morning of 17 April 2000, the community of Diamante started bustling. The oldest man and the last shaman in the community had died just after dawn. He was presumably in his eighties and was respected for his abilities to cure people. Now, however, he had been sick for some time so that even though I had at that time been in the community for a little less than two months I had never seen him outside his mosquito net and had never had a chance to talk with him. He had had difficulties in ingesting and in the end even in breathing so that he quite literally withered away during the last weeks of his life. I was told that everything possible had been done for him: his family had treated him with herbal baths and other remedies they knew of and he had been taken to the community's medical post to be attended by the nurse. These measures had, however, been rather desperate as people were quite certain that his illness was caused by witchcraft and therefore could only be cured by a shaman. The failure of the cures employed was considered the final proof of this. The man was said to have become ill while trying to cure a child when he himself was weakened by flu. The child had been cured but the spirits had attacked the shaman instead and he being the last able shaman in the community there was no one left to cure him. In the last week or so prior to his death his condition had worsened. His family explained that the man's dead aunt had appeared to him, wishing to carry him away, and, judging by the death of the man, they were certain that she had succeeded. (TKU/N/01/1:5; TKU/N/01/2:5; TKU/A/01/26:6; TKU/N/04/3:8.)

After the news spread, some people gathered at the communication radio to inform nearby communities and the Yine communities in the Urubamba area of the death. Preparations for the wake and the burial were also commenced. A request of two boxes of candles, 15 kg of rice, 1½ boxes of pasta, twelve boxes of cigarettes, 10 kg of sugar and three boxes of strong alcohol was made to the mayor in the nearby community of Boca Manu, the capital of the district of Manu. (TKU/N/01/2:5.) At noon some men, close relatives of the deceased, carried the corpse to the health post. The corpse was bathed and clothed. Men carried out the bathing as it was customary for men to take care of the corpses of male relatives and women of female relatives in this respect. However, some women did help in the procedure. The corpse began to reek quickly so that everybody had to put cotton drenched in a strong red liquid over their nostrils to prevent the smell from causing queasiness. Nevertheless, some women had to run out of the room to vomit, their qualm no doubt being aggravated by their grief. The deceased's son asked me to take photographs of him and his now dead father for remembrance for his children. After the bathing and dressing, the corpse was carried to the Catholic chapel situated next to the health post.

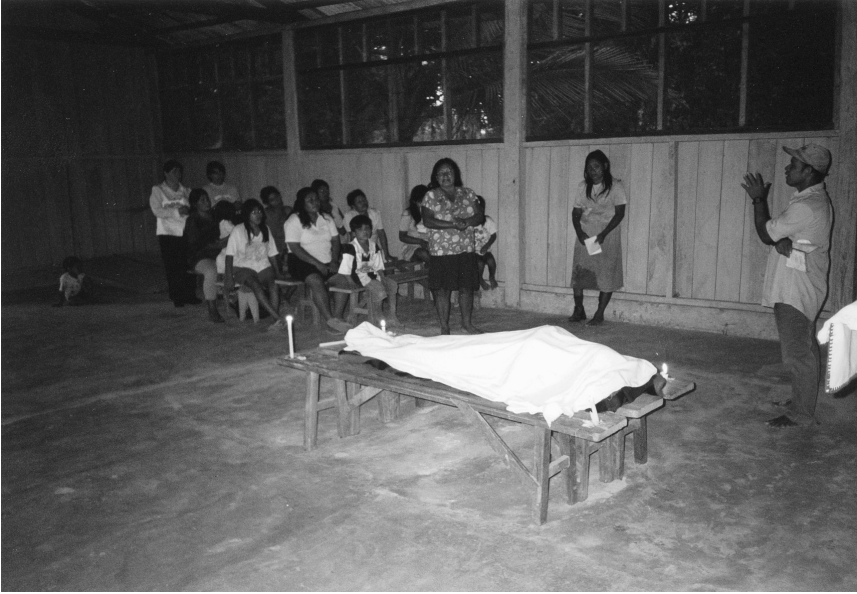


Figure 7. Funeral service at the Catholic chapel

The corpse was put on a bench in front of the altar and covered with a white cloth or a pall. Candles were lit in the corners of the bench to wait for the funeral service to begin.

Meanwhile, the women of the family began preparing food for the wake. Several chickens were killed in order to prepare soup. An old shelter nearby the communal house was chosen as the cooking site. I was asked to come and help the women in the preparation of the food, which was taken care of mainly by the daughters-in-law of the deceased man. Even though they had been very close to the old man they concealed their grief and seemed occupied with the task of cooking. While we were cooking, a few men began to build a coffin. They cut boards from a thick piece of wood with a chainsaw and built a simple coffin with one end a bit higher and somewhat wider than the other, leaving room for the deceased's upper body and head.

After these preparations, which took up most of the day, the funeral service or funeral liturgy was ready to begin just before sunset.¹ Twenty-five adults had arrived at the Catholic chapel for the service. Women sat mostly on the benches on the left and men on the right side of the church space. One of the two Catholic missionary teachers in the community

¹ Formally the Catholic funeral rites include three main parts: the Vigil, the Funeral Liturgy and the Rite of Committal. According to the Western Catholic teachings, the Vigil or the wake takes place before the Funeral Liturgy. The Rite of Committal is performed at the burial. In Diamante, the Funeral Liturgy was performed first and was followed by the wake. The wake, however, did not include the actual Catholic Vigil service, which was performed the following morning by the Catholic teachers and school children.



Figure 8. Mothers and children at the wake

started the service with some opening words and by reading a Bible text (Matt. 6:25–26). These were followed by confession, a prayer, thanksgiving, the Lord’s prayer and a closure. Almost none of the Yine participants, however, knew the prayers or could read the confession – not least because they were read in Spanish – leaving the teachers to conduct the first part of the service on their own. After the teacher, one of the Evangelical brothers who was also nephew to the deceased said a prayer and led two songs in the Yine language. Then he delivered an address, again in Yine, and people silently listened as he spoke. Thereafter, the mayor, who had come to the community to bring the requested items from Boca Manu, read a Bible text in Spanish. After half an hour, the funeral service was over and the coffin that had been made earlier during the day was brought into the chapel. First, some of the deceased’s personal belongings were put into the coffin: his clothes, mosquito net, flashlight and a plastic bag whose contents I did not find out, but which apparently consisted of some smaller items. Then the corpse was lifted in, the cover was put on and was loosely nailed up. Finally, the coffin was carried to the communal house where the wake was to be held. (TKU/N/01/1:6; TKU/N/01/2:5.)

At the communal house the coffin was placed on a table in the middle of the room. While most people came straight from the chapel to the wake – after all, the sun had already set and darkness descended – some women went to fetch blankets on which their children could sleep later on in the evening. The women in charge of cooking for the wake left to finish the task. At the wake, a few men started preparing an alcoholic drink – a constant cause of disagreement between Evangelicals and Catholics – by mixing

alcohol, sugar, water and powdered juice. Little by little the house was filled with people. Some people sat on the school desks placed by one of the walls. Most people, however, sat on the floor by the other walls. After nine o'clock no more people came in. There were forty-four adults present, the majority of whom were men, as well as fifteen children. Most people from the upstream end of the community did not participate, probably owing to grievances between families and the long distance they would have needed to walk in the dark. Also most Evangelicals were absent. This, I thought, resulted from the deceased's sons being Catholic and, consequently, the wake being conducted in their fashion with drinks being served the whole night.²

The Yine people entering the communal house went straight to sit by the walls. Foreign people like the teachers, the nurse and some mestizo workmen, upon entering the building, lit candles by the coffin, crossed themselves and only then found a place to sit down. One man brought two bottles of alcohol and placed them on the table by the coffin. Two male relatives of the deceased walked around in the room serving alcohol and cigarettes to everyone. Although some people abstained from drinking, everyone – including the women, who normally did not care for cigarettes – smoked. Wondering why they did so, I was told that the smoke would prevent the soul of the recently deceased from approaching them and from harming their small children through the mother's body and especially the breast milk. For the same reason, and perhaps even more importantly, mothers of small children present at the wake blew smoke on the crown, the head and all over the bodies of their children. (TKU/N/01/1:6; TKU/N/01/2:15.)

Slightly before nine o'clock in the evening, even though not everyone had yet arrived, the food that we had been preparing earlier on was served. I was taken by surprise because when cooking the meal the women had specifically explained to me that food at the wake was always served at midnight. We were thus three hours ahead of time. However, as I gradually came to learn by living among the Yine, departure from established (or perhaps idealised) practices was more a rule than an exception. Practicality overran the intention and the food was served while it was still warm. Everyone in their turn received a plate of chicken and rice soup. There were only about ten plates and even fewer spoons available so that many people ended up eating the pieces of chicken and rice with their fingers and drinking the soup from the plate. Nevertheless, everyone was served. After the meal, children started to sleep on the floor on their blankets (see Figure 8) and some women left the wake to put their youngest children to bed. The atmosphere was very tranquil the whole night. No one cried, laughed or made any noise, not even the children. The men continued to offer alcohol and cigarettes to those willing. Little by little people began to leave for their homes so that at one o'clock in the morning there were twenty, and at two o'clock only nine adults present at the wake. The remaining eight men and

² I do not know the religious conviction of the deceased but I suspect that he, like his sons, was Catholic. Some of the old man's nephews, however, were Evangelical.

one woman started to become quite drunk and continued drinking, so I decided it was time for me too to go to bed.

At seven o'clock in the morning there were still five men – sons and nephews of the deceased – exceedingly drunk in the communal house, and two had passed out and slept on the floor. At nine, the missionary teachers brought schoolchildren to the communal house to read prayers for the deceased (to participate in delivering the vigil for the deceased). They had gathered flowers, which they placed on the coffin. Meanwhile, some men had gone to dig the grave in the graveyard. By noon, enough men had gathered at the communal house to carry the coffin. They lifted it up and began carrying it on their shoulders towards the graveyard. Even though the burial ground was not very far away – less than two hundred metres – half way there the cortege had to be halted to give a lighted cigarette to each pallbearer because the reek of the corpse was already appalling.

Arriving at the graveyard, the coffin was nailed up properly and lowered carefully into the grave. One of the teachers led the Lord's prayer, after which the grave was filled in. Everyone willing participated in filling the grave, some using their hands and feet, some working with shovels. After the hole was filled, a small hump was gathered above it. More alcohol



*Figure 9.
Men lowering Diamante's
last shaman's coffin into grave*

and cigarettes were distributed at the graveyard. While most men present were very drunk, crying and unable to conduct the burial, none of the women cried. After some confusion on how to proceed, the teachers again led the Lord's prayer, the Hail Mary and the Confession, thus performing the Catholic rite of Committal. As at the funeral service, there were twenty-five adults as well as a lot of children present at the burial. Most Evangelicals and people from the upstream end of the community were again absent. After the teachers finished speaking, people started leaving for home. Some men had passed out and were left sleeping close by the graveyard.

For the night, the family of the deceased's son lit three small fires – each containing some scented plants – around their house. These fires, and especially the scent rising from them, were meant to prevent the soul of the deceased from haunting the family. (TKU/N/01/1:10; TKU/N/01/2:15.) Whether it was on account of these defensive measures or for some other reason, the family slept the night tranquilly without being disturbed. As it turned out, however, not everyone had been so lucky. The following morning, a young woman who had lived for a while in the same house with the deceased related that the soul had come to harass her family and had thrown pieces of wood at their house. Nevertheless, the second night after the burial and for a long time thereafter, no one reported seeing or hearing the soul of the old man again.

In this particular case, one of the deceased's sons wanted to organise a second wake for his father eight days after the death (TKU/N/01/2:15).³ It was celebrated on a small patio close to the community's football field. The clothes of the deceased – his cap, shirt and trousers – were placed on a table with some candles again lit in the corners. However, unlike for the first wake, this time only a handful of people showed up. Many I talked to about the second wake were of the opinion that it was not something people should do. (TKU/A/01/27:7; TKU/N/04/3:10.) This general opinion was confirmed by the fact that in addition to the sons of the deceased and a few other local men only a guide and two foreign tourists who chanced to be in the community were present. In spite of people's non-participation in the second wake, the eighth night after the old man's death did not go unnoticed by others. The dead man's daughters-in-law placed a bowl of manioc beer, *koya*, together with some food in the porch of their house. (TKU/N/01/2:13; TKU/N/04/4:3; TKU/A/04/51a.) Asking what the food in the porch was for, they told me that the old man had not eaten anything for the last couple of days before his death and therefore he must have been hungry. Subsequently, out of care for the man and to prevent him coming to haunt the living because of his hunger, they left this meal for him. At the crack of dawn, all the food was gone (not surprisingly, considering the large number of dogs in the village) and the bowl of *koya* was full of moths. (TKU/N/01/1:7; TKU/N/01/2:6.)

Having at the time been only a short time in Diamante, this all –

³ According to the general Catholic tradition, the second wake is usually held either on the eighth or ninth night after a person has died. In the latter case, a term *novenario* is often used.

the wake and the burial – appeared to me to take place simultaneously in a quite uncontrollable but still somehow silently controlled way.⁴ The drunkenness of the men and their subsequent open wallowing in sorrow and longing seemed to dominate especially the late hours of the wake and the burial, making the organising of these events difficult. At the same time, however, after the death and during the preparations for the wake, everybody seemed to know exactly what to do depending on their relationship to the deceased. People close by and far away were informed of the death, the corpse was washed and clothed, the coffin was made, food prepared and the necessary items requested without, as it seemed, any previous planning or agreement. It was only with time that I began to understand that the sharply contrasting (drunken) men's emotion-laden actions and the women's seeming lack of emotion in these situations were both – although to differing extents – generalised ways of expressing sorrow at losing a beloved one and anxiety over the changed social setting.⁵

If much of the preparations and organising in relation to a person's death in Diamante took place in a subtle and unmarked way and might easily have gone unnoticed, even more so was this the case with the changes occurring in Yine relations to the now deceased person. Concerning marriage practices among the Piaroa, Joanna Overing (2003: 300–301) points out that '[n]o other ceremony marks the marriage event. Blink, and you miss a ritual among the Piaroa, a people for whom most ritual activities are carried out casually as part of the everyday activity. The most normal looking procedures in daily life could deeply signify.' In a similar manner, the seemingly everyday activities at the Yine wake and afterwards were, in fact, quite intentional, aimed at disentangling the deceased from the living kin and preventing his soul from harassing the living. It was certainly noticeable that those who normally did not smoke smoked a lot at the wake. And it was, perhaps, evident that the women who blew smoke on the bodies of their small children did so for some purpose. (TKU/N/05/3:7.) But some precautions were so subtle that they could easily have been taken just for ordinary routine activities: mothers leaving early from the wake to

⁴ This wake and burial was one example that clearly showed me that my (research) ethics did not necessarily coincide with what the Yine held appropriate. Especially at the wake, I was at times quite at unease since I thought my presence there – writing notes, taking photographs and staying long after most people had left – was somehow intrusive. After all, I had not known the deceased personally. But after the burial, one of the sons of the deceased came to thank me for accompanying them and staying so long at the wake. He genuinely seemed to value my presence there, 'sharing their grief', as he put it.

⁵ Women's attempts not to express their grief by crying was related to their concept of beauty (*kigler*). They told me that a woman became ugly when she was crying and therefore crying was something done only in the privacy of the home. (On the meaning of beauty for the Yine see Gow 1999.) In the case of men, crying was equally de-emphasised or played down but seemed in a way to be considered elemental to their behaviour when they were drunk. The Yine downplaying of expressions of grief is in sharp contrast to the practices of ceremonial or public wailing found for instance among many Amazonian Jívaroan, Gê and Tukanoan groups (Descola 1996a: 363–383; Goldman 1979: 184–189, 219–252; Karsten 1935: 455–465; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971: 147–148; Seeger 1981: 172–176) but conforms to the practices of their neighbouring Arawakan groups, the Asháninka and Matsigenka (Johnson 2003: 138; Shepard 2002; Weiss 1975: 435).

sleep at home with their tired and sleepy children and parents of recently born children not attending the wake at all but taking care of their babies at home. In part, I am sure this was the case, but it was not the whole story. Mothers of small children left the wake early because it was considered dangerous to be close to the corpse at night time. And for the youngest babies, it was thought it might be lethal to even go to the wake, where the soul of the deceased could possibly try to capture these young souls.

Furthermore, there was one thing that I at least in part ignored during the above-mentioned events, and only later, after further moments were attached to my ethnographical texture, understood to be fundamental for the Yine not only in regard to protection from malevolent souls but also to the formation of persons and relationships and to their quest for good life. This was the role of and meanings attached to food and especially to sharing and consuming it. Sharing food was present in the event of death in various ways. At the end of his life the man had not been able to eat anything and consequently withered away; at the wake chicken soup was served to everyone; and during the eighth night after death the deceased was kept from haunting the living by satisfying its hunger for food. But at the time, I did not understand what these different moments of sharing food had in common and what they meant for the Yine. In fact, I was not even able to pose these questions until I gained experiences of producing food and eating together with the women in Diamante and heard multiple accounts of their encounters with the dead and the role of food in those encounters. In what follows, I shall first reflect on what I learned of the significance of sharing food for the Yine when participating in their everyday food-related practices, and then examine Yine narrations of their encounters with the souls of the dead as fields in which the socio-moral value of sharing food is both negotiated and used for evaluating Yine persons' human condition.

An ethnographer made similar

The importance of food in the construction of social relationships and persons has been a common theme in recent studies on Amazonian sociality. It has been noted to be one of the primary means of making others – for instance people of other ethnic backgrounds and ethnographers – similar (e.g. Conklin 2001b; Gow 1989; McCallum 1997; Vilaça 2002a). In Diamante, it was my own experiences of preparing and consuming food with others that first made me pay attention to the food-related social processes in the Yine lived world.

One of the practical problems an ethnographer faces when living in a village setting such as that of Diamante is how to organise one's food consumption. One alternative is to cook for oneself and to eat alone. In this way, avoiding many food-related health problems perhaps becomes easier. Preparing food, however, takes a considerable amount of time each day and acquiring food and firewood may be laborious or difficult. In addition, one loses the opportunity to share these moments with the local people.

Another option is to organise eating in one way or another with the locals. I opted for this latter alternative. Even though in this way I perhaps risked being sick more often – not because the food would have been somehow badly prepared but because I was not yet accustomed to local foods – when eating with the extended family with which I lived for half of my time in the community, I gained the opportunity of getting an insight to the meanings people attributed to preparing food and consuming it together.

Every day the women of my host family, the mother in her fifties and her three adult daughters and two daughters-in-law, gathered to eat together in a circle at one of the extended family's houses. The houses were situated very close to each other, thus forming a cluster. Men and children ate in their own circles if there were enough of them present. If most men were hunting or working elsewhere, those remaining either ate outside the circle or joined the women. Sometimes children also ate from the same plates with the adults although remaining seated outside the circle. Each woman brought a plate of food to the meal: some soup, boiled or fried meat or fish, plantains, boiled manioc, rice or pasta. The plates were placed in the middle of the circle and everyone ate what they wished. The one or two spoons available were used collectively and the food disappeared quickly as the women engaged in chatting, discussing topical issues and gossiping. If people were left hungry, one or more women went to fill the plates. To end the meal, everyone was usually offered a bowl of manioc beer, *koya*, by the 'hostess' of the day.



Figure 10. A Yine family gathered to have lunch

The women were apparently content with the fact that I joined them for these meals (TKU/N/04/3:4; TKU/N/05/3:3). At the beginning, I was often offered a plate of food for me to eat alone while the women gathered in their circle to eat. However, after indicating that I would rather eat with them than alone, they willingly took me into their circle. They often made remarks on how I was unlike other foreigners because others, they said, preferred to eat alone. They also eagerly observed what I ate or did not eat. Meat and fish being 'real food' (on the notion of 'real food' see Gow 1991: 124), it was important that I showed signs of behaving in a proper manner as people should, and eat these foods, their food (TKU/N/05/3:2). Except for the occasional tiredness with the relatively one-sided diet, this was not a problem as the women were extremely able cooks. Consequently, the women began commenting: 'She knows how to eat! She is just like us!', or '*Tumata! Wixa pixka rixa!*' (TKU/N/05/3:11.) These comments pointed towards the great importance that sharing and eating food together had for acting out sociality, enforcing kin ties and transforming persons into similars among the Yine people of Diamante.

However, I could at times notice the unease of these women caused by my position as a 'paying customer'. I was an adult woman and thus I should have contributed my own plate of food to the common meals. Often the women noted to me how the merchant woman from the city of Cusco living in the community and sometimes eating with us came with her own plate even if it was just a few cooked eggs or a couple of boiled plantains. My inability to produce and contribute my share of the food caused by my position was difficult for the women. They intended to make me as similar as possible, which included eating together but the arrangement made me unable to conform to all expectations. My freedom in my use of time provided by the choice of not cooking for myself had the disadvantage of not having my own place to cook or networks for buying foodstuff, both of which I would have needed in order to be able to contribute food instead of money to the common meals. Being at the same time conceptualised as unable to be fully kin-like in this respect and having an agreement of being provided with food by the family left me and the women in an ambivalent situation. Trying to make me their similar they could not properly do that.

It was these experiences and especially the gaps and interfaces in reconciling the different positions that enabled me to pay attention to food relations also in the relationships the Yine people had with the various non-human persons in their socio-moral world. One incident I was told about, and one that was very revealing concerning the role of sharing food in forming persons and relationships among the Yine, was related to the death of the community's last shaman, described above.

Sharing food as constructive and deconstructive of persons and relationships

The fact that the old man, the last able shaman of Diamante, had not wished to eat anything during the last week of his life and consequently died was not, according to his family, a coincidence. On the 9 April 2000 there were presidential elections in Peru and every adult from Diamante had to go to the nearby community of Boca Manu to vote. The old man, however, was unable to travel and the family was therefore forced to leave him alone in the community. This, according to the woman telling me about the incident (and whose son-in-law's father the old man was), had been a mistake:

We left him here the day of the elections, in April, the ninth of April. . . . He was sick, I didn't want to leave him here but I had to get my personal document made official. . . . That's why we left him here. . . . So we went and he was here alone eating what we had left him to eat. We told him not to go to the river, that he should just stay at the house. . . . I felt very uneasy leaving him behind. 'Perhaps the dead will carry him away', [I thought]. . . . It was already late when we returned home, I thought that my grandchildren's grandpa might be dead already. I was very worried. We arrived and I ran to the house bringing food for him . . . But that day he didn't want to eat any more. . . . I called him: 'Uncle, uncle'⁶, but he did not answer me. He was lying in his hammock . . . and I asked him:

'Aren't you hungry? I have brought food for you, I bought a chicken. One of those that they sell [in Boca Manu].'

But he said:

'No, I don't want to eat. . . . I'm full already. My aunt Eva [name changed] came here and cooked for me. . . . She gave me catfish to eat. I'm full.'

But I didn't see a fire . . . the fireplace was cold. . . . And [the old man's] daughter-in-law, [my daughter], came there too . . . and I said to her:

'Why did your husband go and did not stay here? He shouldn't have left but should have taken care of his father.'

That's why I didn't want to go to vote but my son told me that I would have to go to make my personal document official because if I didn't go they wouldn't stamp it and it would be no good. That's the only reason I went. And the next day [the old man] didn't want to eat any more . . . He was going to die. . . . He said that he saw his aunt walking to her house with the cooking pot to feed her family too. . . .

'There she is, now she is going', he said. But my granddaughter asked:

'Where, there is nobody walking in the path, nobody', and later he said again:

'Now she has gone. Haven't you seen her, my daughter-in-law?'

'Yes, she has gone to her house now.'

And this is how he died. We fed him and the following day my daughter even killed a chicken because her husband had said: 'We have nothing to eat, kill a chicken so that he can eat' . . . And my daughter killed a chicken for her father-in-law but still he didn't eat. . . . She never forgot her father-in-law. That's why she always says: 'I couldn't forget my father-in-law', that's what

⁶ Uncle, *koko* (in Yine), does not necessarily indicate a blood relationship but is a common way of addressing men of the previous generation up from oneself.

she says. . . . He always used to come to my house, to my kitchen, and he had ripe bananas and he said: 'I'm going to roast banana.' . . . And when he had finished roasting he gave some to his daughter-in-law, to my daughter, and that's why she always remembers him and says: 'Mum, that's what my father-in-law did'. (TKU/A/04/56:2.)

This narration illustrates very markedly the role of sharing food in forming and maintaining, but also in deconstructing social (and especially kin) relationships among the Yine. It shows how food relations in general and sharing food in particular characterise Yine social relations from early childhood to adulthood and even across the border of death. Describing the relationship her daughter had had with the old man, the narrator explains how the now dead man always gave fried bananas to her daughter when she was little and in this manner the daughter had developed a special relationship with the man. Now, as an adult she still always remembered her father-in-law and referred to her childhood in which she had received food from him (see Gow 1991: 167; see also Lagrou 2004: 256.) The memories of care and love generated by receiving and sharing food seemed then to be the cornerstone of forming early kin relations among the Yine.

In his work among the Yine of Urubamba, Peter Gow has come to similar conclusions. He shows how early kinship relations among the Yine are formed through care in the form of gifts of food which, in due time, enable the child to develop what the Yine call *nshinikanchi*, memory, knowledge and respect. (Gow 1991: 124, 159; 2000; see McCallum 2001; Nuckolls 1998: 66–67.) *Nshinikanchi* is the side of a person's relational self visible in everyday actions, which enables the person to act properly and thus to be part of the multiplicity of Yine humanity. Therefore, it is vitally important that a child lives close to and is in constant interaction with loving kinspeople who feed the child. For it is the only way to generate *nshinikanchi* and to make proper persons, and the Yine devote much energy to achieving this.⁷ Therefore they also grow to be very possessive about their children. If they have brought a child up, the child is Yine and belongs among the Yine. Once, for instance, a grandmother of one child whose mestizo father had not wanted to take the child to the city as a baby to be brought up there but who now, when the child was six years old, did finally want to take her, was deeply indignant about the situation. She said, as was very common in Diamante, that they had suffered so much (Spanish: *tanto hemos sufrido*) bringing up this child that she belonged with them. Had the father claimed her when she was little, it would have been a different situation. (TKU/N/05/3:7.) But growing up with the Yine, the child had become Yine and was inseparably connected to them. One way of showing this connection and the respectful relations formed through giving and being given food was the use of kinship terms. (TKU/A/01/31:2; TKU/N/04/3:8; TKU/N/05/3:4.) The child's use of kinship terms was, as

⁷ Among the Yine, just as among many other Amazonian groups, a new-born baby is not yet considered properly human but has to be made one through different socio-corporeal processes (Gow 1989; 1991: 156–162; Opas 2004a; see Conklin & Morgan 1996; McCallum 1996: 354; Taylor 1996; Vilaça 2002a).

shown also by Gow, a way of reciprocating the love given by adult kin in the form of food and also in itself both a means to develop, and a product of developing, *nshinikanchi*. (Gow 1991: 160–161; 2000; see Opas 2004a.) That is why in the narration above the girl and her father-in-law continued to call each other by kinship terms and the girl wished to share food with him, so showing love and respect for one another.

Using kin terms and sharing food were important, for in the world where the integrity of the human group was constantly in danger of being dispersed – by illnesses, deaths, non-human activities and social discrepancies – the existing kin relations needed continuous renewal. As is common in Amazonia, it was especially the old and the sick that were vulnerable to the outside forces. The woman narrating the story was very aware of this. She explained how she had been very uneasy about leaving the old man behind on election day. She had anticipated that something bad might happen to him while they were away as the man was very old and already sick. Therefore, she had forewarned the man about going to the river to bathe because the mother spirit of the river was known to do harm especially to the vulnerable. She had also left food for the man to eat in order to protect him from the souls of the deceased. (See Conklin 2001b; Lagrou 2004: 256–257; Rival & Whitehead 2001a: 8.) These precautions were not, however, enough to save the man. While the man was alone in the community, he saw his dead aunt coming to visit him. When the aunt had still been alive their relation had been one based on care, as the man had always received food from his aunt and consequently loved and cared for her. Now, when the soul of the deceased aunt had come to visit the man the memories formed during the man's lifetime made him want to 'live' again with his caring and loving aunt. (See Gow 1991: 186–187; Teixeira-Pinto 2004: 237; McCallum 1997; on food in human-non-human relations see Fausto 2004.)

Nevertheless, as I have elaborated also elsewhere (Opas 2005), my research material strongly suggests that even though seeing a dead relative evokes a longing to join the deceased, it is not the presence of a dead loving relative as such that kills a person but rather the act of re-entering into a relationship of giving and receiving food, that is, sharing food with the dead person. Generally, the souls of dead relatives, *samenchi*, do not come just to visit the living in order to take them along but they come especially to cook for or to share food with them. As one woman explicitly stated, when 'a person appears [from the cemetery], appears when one is alone, when one is sick, when one is sick it can kill you, no, no it doesn't kill you, it takes you with it, your soul, and it gives you food to eat and . . . you die, *at that moment* you die, because they love you, they are carrying you away' (TKU/A/04/52a:5, my emphasis). When a person has eaten food offered by dead kin, there is no turning back.⁸ In all cases I was told about, it was impossible to cure those who had accepted food from the dead. After coming back from

⁸ The observation that it is the acceptance of food from spirits which denotes the entry of a human 'soul' into the world beyond has also been made among other Amazonian groups (e.g. Viveiros de Castro 1992: 213).

voting, the old man's family tried in every way to persuade the man to eat their food. Given the lack of game meat they even killed a valuable chicken for him to eat but he no longer wished to consume anything. He felt full after eating the food offered by the dead aunt. No matter how hard the family tried to keep the old man among the living, it was too late for that. This outcome was exactly what the woman tried to prevent by leaving the old man food to eat while they were away voting. She had tried to ensure that hunger would not add to the man's desire to accept food from the dead and therefore, to his vulnerability.

The condition of hunger was undesired and even considered dangerous among the Yine because a hungry person was more tempted to get their desire for food satisfied from other, illegitimate, sources, thus weakening the bond between family members. I experienced this quite frequently in Diamante in everyday life with my host family. When visiting, working with and interviewing other people in the community, I was often away from 'home' for many hours and did not join the family for meals. Consequently, my host mother every now and then told me how one of her daughters had been worried about me and had asked her: 'Has my sister eaten anything yet? She must be hungry. Let's save her some food.' (TKU/N/05/3:8.) In this case, I reckon, the concern for removing my hunger stemmed not so much from trying to protect me against possible non-human threats but was rather tied to inter-family relations and family morals in the community. By providing me with food, the family tried to ensure that I developed and maintained the strongest social relationships in the community precisely with them and only secondarily with other families. As much as genuine care for me, keeping my hunger satisfied was a way to publicly manifest the family's proper moral condition: they cared for each other and were able to provide food and protection for one another.⁹ This interpretation is further reinforced by one disagreement I heard taking place between a mother and her child. The child had been offered food by another family and had eaten with them. At home, when finding this out, the mother chastised the child in Spanish saying: *¿Por qué comas con otros? ¿Acaso no tenemos comida acá?* Why did you eat with others? We have food here, don't we? (TKU/N/05/3:18, 20.) The ability to provide food and in this manner to take care of all family members was thus considered something by which a family's morality was evaluated.¹⁰ Furthermore, providing food was also a means to prevent people from dissociating from the family group. In his analysis of the meaning of satisfying one's hunger among the Yine, Peter Gow (1989; see TKU/N/04/3:8) notes how Yine children may start eating earth when their hunger for food is not satisfied. He sees this as terrifying for the adults because in this manner the child becomes alienated from their kin. (See Carsten 1995: 233; Fausto 2004: 168; Lagrou 2004: 251.) It seems evident,

⁹ Every now and then women from other families tried imperceptibly to enquire of me whether I was given enough food by my host family. The enquirers came often from the most rivalrous families.

¹⁰ I often heard people in Diamante criticising those they thought not to take proper care either of their children or elderly relatives (TKU/N/04/3:9; TKU/N/05/3:8, 13).

then, that the formation and reproduction of relatedness among the Yine is dependent upon the satisfaction of one's hunger with proper kinds of food.¹¹

Similarly, in the case of the old shaman, what conspired to re-establish the former kin relationship with the dead aunt was his desire to satisfy his hunger by eating the food offered by her. Nevertheless, we are still left with the question of why the food the family left for the man before leaving to vote – and which he presumably ate – was not enough to save him. Why did he still feel hungry and accepted the food offered by the dead aunt? In the light of the above discussion, I think that the food as such was not enough to satisfy hunger because what the man would have needed – especially in his sick and therefore vulnerable condition – was the closeness of his living kin (see Opas 2005; Gow 2000: 47, 49–50; Lagrou 2000: 162) and the possibility of *sharing* the food, to share the moment of eating with others.¹² It is in sharing food in particular that relatedness is produced and reproduced. As examined above in relation to my own experiences of eating with the Yine in Diamante, consuming food – even the right kind of food – does not in itself equate in value to sharing it with others. My host family was very pleased at my desire not to eat alone. Furthermore, almost every time when returning home after a day spent with other people, the mother of my host family urged me to come to eat. 'Have you eaten anything today, my daughter?' She would ask me. 'Come, come, I have saved some food for you.' And then she would sit down with me, discussing the day's happenings, watching me eat and accompanying me for my meal even though she herself had already eaten. Only very rarely was I left to eat alone.

Sharing food was then one of the foremost means for generating social relations in Diamante. In fact, not sharing was not only *not constitutive* of relationships but also *deconstructive* of them. Among the Yine, this deconstructiveness became exemplified in the mythic narrative of *Watawgero*, the dragon man, who never shared and was never satisfied, so that after killing and eating in total four of his subsequent wives, he ended up eating his own legs, which eventually led to his death. (TKU/A/04/49b:2.) In my host family, a little six-year-old girl was often disciplined by being called *Watawgero* because she was eating all the time, sneaking food and not leaving anything for others. (TKU/N/05/3:20.) Her actions clearly deviated from the family's socio-moral principles and it was feared that by continuing not to share with others she would not only be breaking family ties but risk being left without the protection of strong vital kin relations. The lack of such protection was, according to the old shaman's family, also

¹¹ The satisfaction of hunger was a collective endeavour during shared meals. The women always urged each other to eat more, especially me as I ate relatively slowly in comparison to them (eating boiling hot food with hands, fish full of bones or huge pieces of meat is not the easiest task for an inexperienced ethnographer).

¹² This was evident also in Yine accounts of their visits to large cities. In addition to the change of altitude and diet, it was the imperative of having to eat alone that made people say: 'I did not want to eat anything in Cusco' or 'I was not hungry there' (TKU/N/04/3:3; TKU/N/05/3:5).

the final cause of his death.

The close relationship between sharing food and forming relatedness among the Yine was yet further manifested by the narrations of encounters with unknown dead. The dead that are not relatives to a person they show themselves to (also usually healthy adult persons) do not engage in food relations with them. In these cases the dead are never recognisable and interaction with them is rather impersonal. In one case I was told about, a man always walked home through a shortcut that passed by the graveyard. Once he saw people sitting in the graveyard and only when he came closer did he notice that these persons were souls of the dead. They never showed their faces but bent their heads and asked the man to change his route because he was disturbing their quiet 'living'. What they wanted was just to live peacefully among themselves. Subsequently, it was related, the man changed his route. Hence, there was no desire from either side – the unidentified dead souls or the healthy adults – to be engaged in a lasting social relationship. The dead were considered not to desire for the living to join them when they had not had any relationship to them during their lives. They just wanted to live their 'lives' in peace without being disturbed. (See TKU/A/05/51c:4; TKU/A/04/43b:2) Engaging in a relationship with the dead seems then to require a former relationship between the two subjects based on care that in the event of the encounter arouses an aspiration in the living person of 'living' together with the dead soul (Gow 1991: 186–187). The unidentified souls of the dead¹³ are not kin to the living they show themselves to and therefore cannot (nor desire to) act on the living people's *nshinikanchi*, memories, love and respect formed

¹³ The anonymity or unidentifiability of these souls is revealed by the manner they are described as bending their heads and looking to the ground when encountered (TKU/A/04/43b:2). The face seems to function as a point of identification of these souls. Anne Christine Taylor (1993) has made similar observations among the Ecuadorian Achuar.

through sharing food with significant others in a person's childhood.¹⁴ (Gow 1991; 180–187; TKU/N/04/4:3; TKU/A/04/51a.)

These examples reveal that the meanings attached to food and especially to sharing food were something related especially to the forming of (long-lasting) social relationships among the Yine. While (ingesting) the right kind of food, real food, carried the meaning of making one's body strong and proper, it was of far less significance without the aspect of sharing the food and eating together with others. It was especially during such moments that the value and meaning of sharing food became actualised and constitutive of Yine bodies and relationships. These were instances when people's *nshinikanchi* was formed and enforced and put into action – or put another way, moments when the properly Yine 'way of being' actualised in bodily form (Vilaça 2005: 450). Similarly, whereas willingness to eat the right kind of food was one marker of a person's proper way of being and of their similarity with other Yine people, it was in particular by people's willingness and capability to share food with others that their proper socio-moral human condition was evaluated.

Corporeal memories

While the previous section concentrated on exploring sharing food as a Yine socio-moral value and the formation of social relationships through food, I now wish to examine more closely the element of corporeality in these relationships. The examples discussed above already illustrated how relationships and persons among the Yine were not only formed but also deconstructed through sharing and ingesting food, depending on the

¹⁴ I also heard of one being, the falcon *ataiao* (Spanish) or *gopo* (Yine) (red-throated caracara), which presents an interesting aberration to the views discussed above. This bird is considered able to metamorphose into a human being. Even though the narratives concerning the falcon are manifold and markedly diverse, what is interesting in this figure is the resemblance it has in some of the narratives to the dead kinspeople appearing to the living. One of these narratives greatly resembles the old shaman's encounter with the deceased aunt. An old man, the narrator's grandfather, had been sick and unable to attend the weekly religious meeting. He was therefore left alone at home in his hammock. While resting there, he heard a falcon getting closer and closer and finally saw it appear by the hammock. But after looking down and lifting his eyes again, he could no longer see the falcon but instead there were two women standing by the hammock offering him manioc beer and *patarashca*, the traditional fish dish. The man accepted and ate the food, with lethal consequences. When his wife returned from the church he no longer wished to eat anything she offered and consequently died after a few days. (TKU/A/05/42b:7; TKU/N/05/3:24.) At the time of hearing this narration, the link between food and kinship relations had not yet opened to me to the extent that I would have been able to pursue the questions of whether the man had recognised these women as kin or not and of the relationship between *gopo* to the souls of the dead. Nevertheless, the close link between sharing food and forming long-lasting social relationships is equally visible in the narration. This story, alongside two other narratives of this falcon I was told (TKU/N/05/3:24; TKU/A/05/46c:3), place the falcon *ataiao* somewhere in between the dead and the living humans in the Yine social cosmos. It is strongly associated with the dead and is considered able to appear to people in a human form. (TKU/N/05/3:24.)

willingness of sharing and the quality of the substances eaten. Through other cases, I wish now look more closely at Yine corporeality in order to generate a fuller picture of the materiality of the Yine relational self or rather the intertwinedness of these two sides of persons. In the following narration, a woman now in her late forties told me how as a nine-year-old child she had seen the soul of her dead mother and how that had affected her life.

Woman Once my sister [said to] me: 'Let's go, let's go to find *wayo* [a forest fruit]!' I came behind . . . and my sisters were already going ahead. . . . And I was looking: . . . 'My mum is standing there! My mum is standing there!' . . . I saw my mother, just like a person. It looked like my mother, my real mother. . . . I yelled to my sister: 'Sister!', I said, 'There is... I don't know what is here. I saw here what looked like my mum.' And she answered me: . . . 'How can your mum appear if she is dead?' . . . My mum died two years ago. . . . I was scared and then we came back and my sister said to me: 'Now you are going to die.' . . . And later I started to have a fever, a fever, high fever. I said to my sister that I have fever: 'I don't know what it is but I have fever.' And she said to me: 'Now you are going to die because mum has carried away your soul. She has taken you away.' . . . And the following day, the whole night I vomited, I had fever and vomits, very bad. Then I didn't want to eat any more. 'I don't want to eat any more. I'm not hungry', [I said]. In the night when I was asleep my mother came and she said: 'Let's go, daughter. Daughter, let's go. I have been looking for you. For a long time I have been looking for you. Now I have found you. Now let's go.' I didn't want to go. . . . And I didn't eat what she gave me because my sisters told me: 'When your mum brings you food in your dream don't accept because that is not our food.' . . .

Minna How did you recover from that?

Woman I recovered, with this . . . there is a herb for when one sees a soul of the dead and you bathe with that. You are treated with smoke and you are saved, yes. . . . I bathed, I bathed twice, two times I bathed, and with that I became better for a while . . . But I was not healed. . . . And that time, the whole night, the whole night I dreamt of my mum. I clearly saw my mother in my dream, it was very clear. I slept and again my mum appeared by my side: 'Let's go, my daughter! Look I, look, I am alive, I am living tranquilly, I live happily, I live at ease', my mum said. One night I wanted to receive food from my mum . . . She offered me food and I wanted to eat so badly. And she brought me food, fried fish and red sweet potatoes, red sweet potatoes, that's what she brought me on a plate [and said:] 'You are hungry, my daughter. Eat now', my mother said to me in my dream. 'Eat now, eat now', my mum said to me.

Minna But you didn't eat?

Woman I didn't eat because my sisters told me: 'You should not eat. That food is not . . . , it is no good. That food is not good. When you eat that food, you'll die', they told me. (TKU/A/04/43b:2; TKU/N/05/3:8.)

Whereas in the previous example the vulnerable ‘victim’ was an old sick man, in the present case it was a young girl who had lost her mother and was still emotionally very much attached to her. The woman had had a similar kind of loving relationship based on giving and receiving food with her mother as the young woman above had with her father-in-law. When the mother was still alive the narrator (then still a girl) received food and care from her. Now, when the soul of the deceased mother appeared to her, the memories formed during their life together caused highly ambiguous feelings in the girl. Seeing her dead mother in the woods had made the girl feverish and had made her lose her appetite for the food the sisters offered her.¹⁵ According to the sisters’ interpretation, this happened because becoming frightened when seeing a dead person had enabled the deceased mother to take away the girl’s ‘soul’. This condition, in anthropology commonly referred to as ‘soul loss’, was not in itself yet considered lethal but was seen as a sign of the girl being caught in the cross-pull of two worlds: one of the living and the other that of the dead. On the one hand, she wanted to re-establish her relationship with the caring and loving mother, but on the other she did not wish to cut her ties with her sisters, her living kin.¹⁶ This dilemma, centred upon the ideas of the proper human moral condition – which social ties the girl in the end valued more – and the formation of persons and relationships through the meanings attached to sharing of food, kept bothering the girl for a long time.

The narrator emphasises how the soul of the dead mother wished to take the beloved girl with her and tried to convince her of the happiness and tranquillity of the life she was living. Reunited with her, the daughter would no longer have to suffer. Peter Gow has aptly analysed the illusion embedded in this kind of situation. He (1991: 186) writes that ‘while they [the dead] call the living to join them in death, this reunion can never occur. The soul of the dead person does not join those of its kin in a happy afterlife, but rather wanders around alone begging its living kin to join it. The claims of the dead souls on the living are always illegitimate, for the dead do not keep each other company.’¹⁷ This incongruity between the two persons, one dead, other alive, derives from the difference between the two sides of the Yine relational self; *nshinikanchi* and *samenchi*. Gow (2000: 53–54) conceptualises *nshinikanchi* as ‘embodied intersubjectivity’ or the social human condition and *samenchi* as the ‘radical experience of personal uniqueness’ or the non-social human condition. Whereas *nshinikanchi* –

¹⁵ Similar losing of appetite may take place also when a person is bewitched. Whereas a sick person loses the desire to eat, a bewitched person may start eating earth, charcoal or ashes or in the case of men, even their own penis. This is highly disapproved of by other people because earth and ashes are not produced by humans; they are not human food. This kind of action is interpreted as a sign of close death. (See also Chapter 2).

¹⁶ As discussed in the Introduction, the ambiguity was caused by the contrast between the evaluation of how the world was, expressed in the language of emotions, and how it should be expressed by the girl’s desires (see Nerlich’s 1989: 140–142).

¹⁷ There are also exceptions to this view as seen in the example of the souls of the dead gathered to the graveyard. Nevertheless, these souls were not kin to each other or to the person who met them.

memory, love, respect – is essential for human relations in that it is the only condition through which *nshinikanchi* can be generated in others, *samenchi*, as Gow (2000: 54, 62n9) notes, can no longer generate *nshinikanchi* of others but has to rely on its already existing relationships (cf. Teixeira-Pinto 2004: 237). While my ethnographical material conforms to Gow's observations on the general nature of *nshinikanchi* and *samenchi*, I would not classify the latter as inherently 'non-social' but rather as unable to act out its intrinsic sociality.¹⁸ Even though attempting to conform to the same moral standards as living human persons – sharing food and living close to others – the soul of the dead, *samenchi*, can no longer actively practise its sociality and morality and is therefore no longer considered a real human person. As one woman said: 'the dead are already like demons, they are no longer people' (TKU/A/04/56:1).¹⁹

These different positions of *samenchi* and the living can be further illuminated through the Bakhtinian notion of *transgradience* (Bakhtin 1990: 15–16).²⁰ Whereas the living are in a transgradient relation to each other – they see other persons against the background or as parts of larger networks of social relations – the deceased have lost their ability for such transgradient view. A *samenchi* can only concentrate on one particular relationship at a time. It cannot see beyond that which fills its perception and cannot perceive the object of its longing as part of other simultaneous relationships. In the case of the young girl and the mother, the soul of the mother did not see her daughter as related to her other daughters, but what was meaningful for her and what she was concerned with was the one particular relationship, that with her daughter. In this manner, the deceased are not only themselves cut off from the network of social relationships but also unable to perceive other persons entering into such networks. This is, I suggest, also the reason why the dead cannot lead a social life among themselves.

Nevertheless, the already formed emotional bonds uniting the girl to her mother were so strong that her sick condition and not eating made her all the time less able to resist the temptation of once again living with her mother. This case shows how among the Yine emotions, and more generally relational selves, are intrinsically tied to human corporeality (see Overing & Passes 2000a). Emotional bonds, like memories – the two are interlinked – have physical consequences for people. This is further illustrated by another case. Once an Evangelical woman described to me what had happened when her two-year-old grandson had died far away in the River Piedras in 2005. She had, in her dream, seen the boy running towards her on the path

¹⁸ Gow (2000: 54, 62n9) in a way also acknowledges this as he states that after a person's death, *samenchi* (which strictly speaking can only refer to the dead) retains *nshinikanchi* although it can no longer generate it.

¹⁹ The dead are also no longer legitimate persons in the sense that their bodies have changed. Persons 'being their bodies' (Merleau-Ponty 2002), the transformed body of a deceased person becomes a strong marker of difference between the living and the dead.

²⁰ As noted in the Introduction, Bakhtin himself (1990) used the notion of transgradience both to describe the relationship between the author and the hero (literary usage) and the self and the other (somatic usage) (see Erdinast-Vulcan 2003).

that passes her house in Diamante and embracing her affectionately. The following morning the woman had learned by communication radio that the boy had, in fact, died in the morning.

I saw, when my grandson died, when he came here, he came to me happily and embraced me. The following day I fell ill . . . my whole body seemed as if it had been beaten with a stick. . . . I believe his soul came here before he died. (TKU/A/05/50b:8; TKU/N/05/3:15.)

According to the woman, her aching body was caused by the visit of the soul of her grandson just before he had died. Such visits of souls taking place in dreams are therefore not to be understood solely as mental phenomena, as properties of the 'mind'. Rather, they are activities of the relational self, which, being one with the body, experiences the world as a body (Csordas 1990; Merleau-Ponty 2002). Nevertheless, the two can be temporarily separated, as for instance in cases of soul loss. But as I have come to understand, soul loss among the Yine is never total until death occurs (Opas 2004a). In soul loss or when dreaming, it is not the relational self as an entity that leaves the body but rather a part of it. According to the Yine, the *samenchi*-part of the relational self may wander around experiencing things in dreams (Gow 2000: 53; TKU/A/05/51b:5). It is not, however, an autonomous entity. The fact that it is strongly attached to *nshinikanchi* and together with it forms the relational self is manifested in the opinions the Yine in Diamante expressed concerning the actions of *samenchi*. As discussed above, when *samenchi* becomes separated from its counterpart in death it still remains tied to the relationships formed during the person's lifetime. Similarly, the Yine said, *samenchi* cannot act alone, independently of social relations, in dreams either. For a person can see in dreams only *samenchi* of persons they know (TKU/A/07/71). The *samenchi* thus depends on already existing relations also when it wanders around in dreams.²¹ Furthermore, even though separated from the body in death, *samenchi* retains also a kind of 'material memory' of the body. When seen for instance walking in the community at night time, *samenchi* was told to have a body like the one it was attached to when the person was still alive.²² This body is not an immaterial projection of the physical appearance of the person but, the Yine insisted, a real flesh and blood body.²³

A further example demonstrating how memory and longing are not only mental but also physical activities and how the body carries memories

²¹ When I returned to Diamante in September 2007 for a brief visit with my husband, one elderly woman told me how she had already known that I was coming. She had seen my *samenchi* in her dream. My *samenchi* had, according to her, arrived before I had in Diamante. The woman said, however, that she had not seen my husband since she did not know him beforehand. (TKU/A/07/71.)

²² Also among the Matsigenka the soul, at least when it wanders around during *ayahuasca* experiences, is said to have a body of its own. This body, however, seems to be distinct from the living person's actual body. (Rosengren 2006: 90.)

²³ I remember being taken by surprise when I first learned of this materiality of *samenchi*. I had clearly been led astray by my embeddedness in the common Western conception of souls of the deceased being spiritual beings with spiritual, not material, bodies.

in flesh and blood was explained to me by the same woman who had seen her grandson in her dream. She told how a woman whose child has died has to be bathed in a herbal bath in order for the soul of the child not to appear to the mother. The bathing, however, has to be done by a person who has never lost a child: otherwise the woman keeps losing children. These examples suggest that (especially emotion-laden) memories are indeed intrinsically corporeal and have physical consequences in people (see also Chapter 2): lost of appetite owing to longing, aching bodies caused by encounters in dreams, and altered corporeal ways of being after traumatic experiences such as child-loss. The two sides of Yine relational selves – *nshinikanchi* and *samenchi* – and of Yine persons – the body and the relational self – are therefore to be considered as fundamentally intertwined.

For this reason, when trying to cure the girl who saw the soul of her dead mother, the girl's sisters also concentrated on treating her body. By bathing the girl in herbal baths – the bath both carrying the meanings of relatedness and expelling malevolent souls with its odour – they tried to bring the girl's soul back, but that only gave an ephemeral relief: the baths did not prevent the mother from appearing. The sisters also tried to get the girl to eat proper food in order, as discussed above, to enforce her bonds with her living kin. The woman explained how her sisters had killed a turtle and prepared it as food for her to regain appetite, but it had been in vain. She had not wished to eat. The logic by which the soul of the dead mother acted was similar to that of the sisters. She also offered what from her perspective was real food, fish and sweet potatoes, for her daughter. However, by human standards, the food offered by the mother was not real food. As the narrator explains, her sisters had warned her against accepting the food offered by the mother in the dream: 'I didn't eat what she gave me because my sisters told me, when your mum brings you food in your dream, you won't, don't accept because that is not our food . . . that food is not good, when you eat that food, you'll die'.²⁴

The paradox caused by the appearance of the dead mother was so strong that it kept troubling the woman for a long time. The woman tried different measures to make her mother leave her alone. Since herbal baths and proper food did not work, she was even baptised at the Evangelical church, despite having been baptised at the Catholic church as a child.²⁵

Woman For that reason I was baptised in the name of the Lord. I was baptised in order not to dream about my mother. . . . When I was baptised I no longer dreamt of anything; she left me totally. . . . But she left me only for a while. Then she started appearing again. I fell asleep, she appeared, I fell asleep, she appeared. She didn't let me sleep at all, at all. . . . I was afraid. I couldn't sleep alone but had to sleep in the same bed with my sister [laughs],

²⁴ A few elderly Yine told me that the souls of the deceased ate moths and maggots – which they saw as real food, as meat and fish – but most people I asked about this did not seem to know whether the deceased ate anything or not (TKU/N/05/3:8).

²⁵ The woman also explained that praying helped her to sleep without the mother appearing to her in her dream (TKU/N/05/3:8).

- the one living downstream. . . . Aha, my mother harassed me.
- Minna When did she stop harassing you?
- Woman When I had my son, my eldest son, then she no longer appeared.
 . . . How my mum wanted to carry me away! [Laughs.] . . .
- Minna But why do the dead always want to carry the living away? . . .
- Woman It is said . . . [the dead] can carry away the most beloved ones of
 their children. My mum loved me. (TKU/A/04/52c:2.)

Baptism was considered a powerful means to expel souls of the deceased (see Chapter 6). Through baptism, it was thought, the power of God became part of the person, so keeping the malevolent souls away. This was also why, in the case of encounter with the dead presented in the Prologue, it had been by praying to God that the old woman had been – according to one explanation – able to chase away the souls of her deceased kin.²⁶ Even though seemingly different, the two logics – thinking about God and sleeping close to one’s sisters – were revealed to bear resemblances. It was in close relation to others that a person was formed, no matter whether the ‘other’ was living or dead kin or God. It was the proximity to the other, further discussed in Chapter 2, that strengthened a person’s socio-moral position.

However, whereas the old woman of the Prologue, after dreaming about her deceased kin, was saved by her relationship to God, being baptised did not help the other woman in the long run. The final relief came only after the woman gave birth to her first child. This seems to conform to the role of the body and its analogues in forming and deconstructing relatedness among the Yine. One of the strongest relationships among the Yine forms between mothers and their children. As such this is nothing special. Throughout the world this particular relationship is highly significant. In the Yine case, however, it became clear that the relationship between the mother and her children was considered the most significant among social relationships. As herbal baths and baptism did not expel the soul of the dead mother, the woman had to seek protection from the proximity of her living relatives, her siblings. She slept together with her sisters in order to make their relationship as strong as possible but that was still not enough to stop the soul of the mother from acting on the memories of her child. An even stronger kinship relation was needed and it was established through the birth of the woman’s first child. Only then was her affection directed away from her mother: she herself became the one nurturing others, her own child, instead of being nurtured by her mother, aunt and sisters.

(Un)thinking the deceased

Considering the possible nuisance and trouble caused by the souls of the deceased, it was of primary concern to the Yine to make a clear distinction

²⁶ Even though rather exceptionally in that case the deceased did not directly offer food for the old woman but wanted her to help them in another food-related activity, namely gathering firewood, the pattern was the same: the person had to choose whether to continue living with the living kin or join the dead.

between the living and the dead, those who are similar and are meant to live together and those who are not. While this is throughout the world a common way of relating to the deceased (see for instance Huntington & Metcalf 1979; Bloch & Parry 1982), the ways of achieving this goal differ from people to people. Among the Yine, as with many other Amazonian groups, the most important means was to suppress the memories one has of the deceased relative.²⁷ This was a difficult task. As Anne-Christine Taylor (1993: 669) notes for the Achuar, '[s]uppressing the memory of the dead is one thing: suppressing the memory of a memory yet another'.

The process of alienating the soul of the deceased from the group of the living is begun soon after death by making the living unrecognisable to the dead. Whereas the unrecognisability of the souls of the dead is marked by not showing one's face, in the case of living human persons recognition is linked in the first place to a person's hair. The Yine in Diamante said that they always recognise a person by their hair. Even when seen from a long distance it is the haircut that reveals the person. (TKU/A/05/53c:1.) Therefore, at the occurrence of death those closest to the deceased, often just the spouse, should cut their hair shorter in order to make themselves unrecognisable to the deceased (cf. Weiss 1975: 434).²⁸ The cut, however, is not undertaken every time and even when it is, it is not dramatic but rather unnoticeable. Nevertheless, it is considered as the only means available for making oneself look alien to the former kin person and one way of separating the dead from the living. Since the soul of the dead person no longer recognises their former family, it is less likely to come to harass them, and is left to wander in loneliness.

However, the souls of the deceased do not recognise the living only by their physiognomy. More important in linking people together, as shown in the two narratives above, are the memories formed during people's lifetimes. As it is especially on these emotion-laden memories that the souls of the deceased act, they are particularly prone to appear to a person if they are explicitly and actively thinking about the deceased. One Evangelical man explained that the soul of his father-in-law had appeared to his mother because 'she was thinking about how he has now left me alone, she was thinking about him. But if one does not think, it [the soul] cannot appear.' (TKU/A/05/48c:4; see TKU/A/04/52a:5.) By dying the husband had left the woman alone and by grieving she had been keeping the memory of the husband alive. This is why the soul of the deceased had come to haunt her. But as the Evangelical man explicitly states, had the woman not been thinking about the husband he could not have come to harass her.²⁹

The importance of suppressing the memories of dead persons for

²⁷ On suppressing memories of the deceased see e.g. Descola 1996a: 363–383; Gow 1991: 179–187; Taylor 1993; cf. Viveiros de Castro 1992: 201, 206–207.

²⁸ To my knowledge the Yine do not associate the cutting of the hair with the possibility of remarrying when the hair has grown again, as some Amazonian groups do (e.g. Harner 1984: 167; Karsten 1935: 461; Seeger 1981: 175).

²⁹ The Yine always emphasised that one should not be afraid of the souls of the deceased. When seeing one, they said, it should be told to go away and leave the living alone. It was said that the souls did obey such demands. (TKU/N/04/4:3; TKU/A/04/51a.)

separating the dead from the living is further manifested when examining the meaning memories have for constituting and maintaining social relationships among the living. When I returned to Diamante in 2005 after a little over a year's absence, during the first weeks I heard numerous different persons tell me how they had never forgotten me. They had always thought about me and remembered me. It seemed that these memories were viewed as something keeping the relationship between us alive. At the same time they were manifestations of people's continuous care for me: when it was not possible to enforce social relations by sharing food, the relationship was maintained and renewed by remembering the other. This was the case also with one woman who constantly talked about her son, who was studying far away in Sepahua in Central Peruvian Amazonia. Almost every day she told me how she was thinking about her son all the time, worrying over him because he was living far away from the family with no one to share food with. She had even contacted her distant relatives so that her son could occasionally visit them and share meals with them. Nevertheless, even though bringing some relief, thinking about someone was still a poor substitute for being able to share food. As the woman said about her son in an agonising tone: 'He does not even live close like for instance in Boca [Manu] so that I could send him something to eat!'³⁰ (TKU/N/05/3:15.)

As the Yine did not desire to actively remember their deceased relatives in order not to induce the latter to act on these memories, they also needed to remove or eliminate everything around them that might remind them of and make them think about the deceased. At the occurrence of death in Diamante, as in many parts of Amazonia (see for instance Goldman 1979: 187; Karsten 1935: 458–459; Seeger 1981: 172–176; Weiss 1975: 431–434), the personal belongings of the deceased were either burned or thrown into the river. My conversation with one Evangelical woman illustrates well the reason for this:

- | | |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Minna | But why . . . why do you wish to throw those things away? |
| Woman | [Laughing.] We no longer wish to see them; the person is dead already. Why would we still want to be looking at those things all the time? We have to throw them away. |
| Minna | But don't you want to remember this person any longer? |
| Woman | No, we no longer wish to remember . . . if we remember he may appear to us. (TKU/A/04/52b:1.) |

As the woman stated, items that used to belong to a dead person reactivate the memories of that person, giving the soul of the dead a possibility to act on them and to appear to the living. Therefore, only items of some value like rifles and machetes may be spared. Also a person who had not seen the

³⁰ In Spanish the woman said: '*Ni siquiera está cerca como en Boca para mandarle algo para comer!*'

deceased wearing certain clothes could take them into use.³¹

For the same reason that people wished to get rid of the belongings of the deceased, also the house where the deceased had lived was, at least in the past, deconstructed and constructed again on a different site. (TKU/N/04/3:20, 24; see also Karsten 1935: 459; Weiss 1975: 433.) This was considered to prevent the soul of the deceased from lingering by the house impregnated with memories linking it to the living. (TKU/N/01/2:11, 14.) Nowadays, however, the situation has changed somewhat. Even though some people still asserted their readiness to comply with this tradition, like one woman who stated that 'when my husband dies I will take everything down, gather my planks over there in another place and after a month start living in a new house' (TKU/A/04/52b:1), others no longer considered that possible. Even though they also saw the old way as better than the present custom of 'assembling their dead'³² in the graveyard, so causing the souls to be around all the time, they now saw no real possibility of continuing to deconstruct the houses and of moving away every time a death occurred.³³ (TKU/N/04/3:15; TKU/N/05/3: 19.) This was because the community with primary and secondary schools, two churches, a football field, and a health post was not easily left behind by moving away. Nor was building a new house in the community easy, for it would require a lot of effort in clearing a place for the house and in constructing it. The situation was a dilemma for the people in Diamante. On the one hand, they tried to expel the souls of the deceased as far as possible because their presence posed a constant threat to the living but on the other, they were forced to keep living next to the abode of these souls, the graveyard.³⁴

It was not then because the threat was no longer relevant that people did not deconstruct their houses but rather that they were forced to find and use other means to avoid the dead. People kept away from the graveyard especially during the night time and special times like the All Saints' Day in November, and warned particularly the children against going there. They also spread pieces of or an infusion made of a plant called *kamchi kamalegite*, *piri piri* of the devil, around their patios, for the strong odour of the plant was considered efficient in expelling souls of the deceased. (TKU/N/04/3:20; TKU/N/05/3:4.) Sometimes for the same purpose other

³¹ This is in stark contrast with our Western culture of remembering: we not only wish to remember the dead but also store and keep on view items that remind us of our deceased loved ones.

³² One man said that before 'when someone died in here, they [the living] no longer lived here, they went far away to live in another place, that's how it was before, but here we continue assembling the dead' (*Aquí estamos siguiendo juntando los muertos*). (TKU/A/05/48c:5.)

³³ One Evangelical woman explained that placing a cross on the path leading to the graveyard would prevent the souls of the deceased from entering the village area (TKU/N/05/3:19).

³⁴ It was very common in Diamante for people to experience meetings with souls of the deceased. Habitually people related that they had seen them when alone in the woods or walking in the village during the night-time. (TKU/A/01/27:7; TKU/N/01/2:4, 8; TKU/N/04/3:9; TKU/N/04/4:2; TKU/N/05/3:4, 5, 8, 17, 19.)

scented plants were burned in fires around houses, as was done in the case of the death of Diamante's last shaman, described above (TKU/N/01/2:13, 15). Furthermore, many Evangelicals considered prayer an important – but not necessarily a sufficient – means for staving the dead off. Enforced with the Word of God through prayer, the souls of the deceased, they thought, would not dare to approach them. Nevertheless, *piri piri* was also used by many Evangelical families and was not only spread on the patio but necklaces were also made of its bulb for small children to wear.³⁵ (TKU/N/04/3:8; see Chapter 6.)

Furthermore, *piri piri* was considered efficient against *ceiba* or *lupuna* tree (Yine: *sunu*). *Lupuna* is the biggest tree in the Peruvian Amazonia and probably because of that also a subject of a variety of beliefs related to different curing practices and witchcraft among Amazonian peoples.³⁶ In Diamante, it was commonly thought that when a person dies the Mother of *Lupuna* – the spirit master of the tree – will go from house to house transformed into a human being as if to announce the death of the person.³⁷ It was thought to look for people sleeping and upon finding such a person to touch their mouth (*tocar la boca*). This had the effect of making the person feel nauseous in the morning and to lose appetite, but was said to lead to no grave illness. (TKU/A/05/39b:1.) To protect themselves and especially the children from the visits of this tree spirit, people in Diamante tied pieces of *piri piri* to the arms and legs of especially small children for the night because, as people said, for the mother spirit of *lupuna*, *piri piri* was a snake. Seeing snakes in people's beds, *lupuna* would not dare to enter the house. Another method was said to be painting the skin around the eyes black with *genipa*. This would make a person look strange and potentially dangerous in the eyes of the Mother of *Lupuna* and would therefore protect people from its visits. It seemed strange to me, though, that if the *lupuna* was coming to touch people's mouths, the Yine still painted their eyes with *genipa*. When I enquired about this, people laughed but gave no explanation.³⁸

Another question was, why did the *lupuna* wish to touch people's mouths in the first place? Based on different Amazonian ethnographies we could deduce that this had something to do with affecting a person through their breath. Among many Amazonian peoples, breath is associated with the life force or spirit of a human being. By touching the mouth of a person, the *lupuna* could therefore make them fall ill. In Diamante, however, people denied that breath had anything to do with a person's relational self. *Samenchi* was not a life force which left the body through the mouth nor

³⁵ At wakes *timolina*, flower water with a strong scent, was used for warding off the dead (TKU/N/04/3:8).

³⁶ For interpretations of the *lupuna* among the Shipibo see Illius (1992) and among the Yagua see Chaumeil (1983).

³⁷ Some people said that the *lupuna* carries the soul of the deceased around in all the places they came to know during their lifetime.

³⁸ Shepard (2002: 212) notes that for the Matsigenka the crown of the head, eyes and nostrils are 'portals of the soul' and when painted with *annatto*, the soul becomes firmly sealed within the body and the paintings scares away invasive spirits.

was it considered to be located in the lungs.³⁹ I suggest that touching the mouth was more plausibly related to the theme of eating. As the deceased person is no longer around eating and sharing food with their kin, the loss of appetite following the visit of *lupuna* could be seen as a form of grieving on the part of the kin left behind. It is in a way a reduced version of the deceased coming to offer food for the living, causing people to physically remember and grieve the recently dead. Nevertheless, the living kin need to continue living and not be remembering the deceased and therefore precautions against the visits of the Mother of Lupuna were taken.

All these measures, cutting of the hair, disposing items of the deceased, deconstructing houses, using odorous plants and painting the eyes for keeping away the *lupuna* tree were, then, aimed at repressing the memories of the deceased. When no longer remembered and part of the social life, what was left of the deceased was, as Taylor (1993: 669) states for the Achuar, 'the shape of a permanent residue of depersonified human deadness which is a vague but constant menace to living humans'. The dream soul of a person, *samenchi*, becomes then just an unidentifiable malevolent being, *kamchi*. The category of *kamchi* among the Yine was not, however, a simple one but included a variety of beings.⁴⁰

What becomes of the dead when they are forgotten?

Kamchi in the Yine language was a general word used of a variety of different kinds of non-humans, as will be further discussed in Chapter 4. It was also commonly used of different beings that are – sometimes more, sometimes less vaguely – thought to be former souls of the deceased or at least to have some connection to them. That what is left of the dead person after all the memories of it have been suppressed was thought to present itself to the living in different forms: it could be a malevolent being moving in the air or a shadow (Spanish: *bulto*) behind a tree, whose aim is to make children and old people sick. Even though often referred to as *kamchi* (Yine), especially beings travelling in the air could also be called *tunchi* in Spanish. In fact, the Yine in Diamante often translated the Spanish word *tunchi* into Yine as *kamchi* and vice versa. *Tunchi* was a spirit (of a witch), which was said to make a crying or whistling sound in the forest and during the night time also within the village (see Chapter 5).⁴¹ A couple of times during my stays in Diamante, a *tunchi* was said to have gone around in the community making whistling sounds (TKU/N/05/3:12). In the morning, people discussed the event and asked me if I had heard the sound. I had,

³⁹ If anywhere, the Yine thought the relational self to be connected with the heart but they were not explicit on this point.

⁴⁰ In an early account on western Amazonian Arawakan peoples, Steere (1903) connects *kamchi* (*kamatxi*) beings to sacred flutes.

⁴¹ According to some people in Diamante, *tunchi* was an auxiliary spirit sent by a witch to harm people (see Chapter 5). The idea of *tunchi*'s connection to shamans and shamanism is commonly found in Amazonia (e.g. Brown 1986: 60).

of course, been fast asleep and had heard nothing. *Tunchi* was said to go around searching for people still awake in the community and trying to make these fall ill. Therefore, it was dangerous especially for the children to be outside in the night time. When the whistling sound was heard, adults also stayed inside their houses.

Another being related to the deceased and sometimes referred to as *kamchi* was the bone-demon perhaps more commonly called *kamchitskeru*. The Yine told me how this demon is very thin, pure bone, and walks miserably in the forest. In the past, it was said, it had been seen to eat papayas and consequently children were advised not to eat too much papaya and not to eat papayas with a hole: the demon had sucked the juice out of the fruit through this hole. One woman described this being as follows:

Kamchitskeru, the one that whistles: it doesn't have a body but walks just with its bones. It is a demon as well. It is said when you encounter one and it sees you you'll be frightened and therefore it enters your body and you begin to vomit, to have fever. That's what it is like. It is said that it likes to eat papaya. It blows on papaya and then when you eat that papaya you begin to vomit, your stomach begins to hurt – that's why we don't eat papayas that have fallen to ground; perhaps a demon has touched them. Those papayas that are still up in the tree, those we'll guard, we'll eat them. It is young children that *Kamchitskeru* likes best just as we like young birds; wherever we see them we wish to take them with us – they are so cute, we say of them. That's also what the dead say. They wish to take along the persons who are already sick and are vomiting or have headache. When you don't take care of these people they die (TKU/A/05/37b:5; see also TKU/A/05/42b:4).

There are two points that are of interest here. First, it is through sharing some substance with the bone-demon that a living human person may fall ill and even die. Even though not deliberate, as in the case of the identified dead kin, sharing or rather eating the same food makes the two become similar: the bone-demon may influence the human person through the substance they share. And as the woman asserts, if not taken care of, the sick and children may even die. Second, despite lacking many human qualities, the motivation driving the bone-demon into taking the living with it is utterly human. The woman compares the fondness of the bone-demon especially for young children to their own habit of taking along and raising young birds. I several times in Diamante witnessed how people took little birds they had found alive back home and began feeding them and raising them as pets. As they were cared for and fed, they gradually became part of the family. In a similar manner, it was thought, the bone-demon and many other non-human beings took 'helpless' persons (Gow 2000) along and began caring for them. Nevertheless, as seen above, at least in the case of the dead the paradox always remained: the dead could not keep each other company. (TKU/A/01/29:6; TKU/N/04/3:2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 16.)

All in all, I think there was an aura of vagueness surrounding these different beings the Yine connect with the deceased. In Diamante, there were many views of the essence of the beings called *samenchi*, *kamchi*,

kamchitskeru in Yine and *tunchi* and *bulto* in Spanish.⁴² A good example of this was one man's attempt to define for me what *kamchitskeru* actually was. He said that 'it is *tunchi*, perhaps, or a skeleton, a soul of the dead, I think'.⁴³ (TKU/A/04/55:7.) Also Esther Matteson's and Peter Gow's descriptions add to this vagueness. Matteson (1965: 337) describes *samenchi*, soul of the dead, as 'lingering by the grave, living on papaya, suffering and crying when soaked by the rain, until it eventually passes out of existence'. The Yine in Diamante also consider the soul of the deceased, *samenchi*, residing in the graveyard but it is never said to eat anything, let alone papayas. Eating papayas is exclusively a characteristic of the bone-demon, *kamchitskeru*, which Matteson (1965: 281) refers to as 'daddy longlegs' (see Gow 1991: 187). Gow (1991: 187) on the other hand describes the bone-demon (which the Yine in the Urubamba call *gipnachri*) as a skeleton with shining red eyes that resides in the forest and chases people and sometimes kills and eats them. He states that this bone-demon is closely linked with the *tunchi*. In Diamante I did not hear people speaking about *gipnachri*, but when I asked about it I was told that *gipnachri* is an unidentifiable soul of the dead: it is a soul of someone people never knew.

The primary distinction, which emerges from the multitude of these differing views on the various beings referred to as *kamchi* by the Yine, is that between the recognisable and unrecognisable dead. The only being which can be recognised by the living is *samenchi*, the soul of someone they have known during the person's lifetime. All other beings mentioned – in Yine *kamchitskeru* and *gipnachri* and in Spanish *tunchi* and *bulto* – are unidentifiable to the living.⁴⁴ This observation also allows us to approach Yine views on the relationship between individuality and collectivity. It is exclusively those who can be recognised (*samenchi*) that are granted individuality. In all other cases, the beings seen or encountered are just representatives of their group of beings – nothing distinguishes one creature from the other (cf. Viveiros de Castro 1992: 205). Individuality is thus dependent on collectivity and vice versa (see Overing 1989a; 1989b; 1993). A person – dead or alive – cannot be an individual without simultaneously being (or having been) a member of a community. There is therefore no individual distinctiveness without relationality in the Yine social world.

⁴² Also the term *yawlo* (devil or demon, from the Spanish word *diablo*) was sometimes used interchangeably with *kamchi*.

⁴³ The bone-demon was also thought to be either a soul of the deceased sinner (TKU/A/05/48c:5) or guardian of small birds. (TKU/A/05/42b:4, 6.)

⁴⁴ Gow (2001: 64) has made a similar observation. He sees *samenchi* and bone-demon (*gipnachri*) to be the two primary experiential forms of the dead among the Yine people. While the former retains an identifiable human form, the latter bears no resemblance to the living. The above description by the woman in Diamante shows, however, that even though the bone-demon (*kamchitskeru*) is unidentified and does not resemble the living, it still acts in some respects according to the same logic as the living Yine, eating the same food and capturing children to raise them.

Back to the wake

Through various examples, I hope to have shown in this chapter how Yine encounters and relations with the souls of the dead, *samenchi*, can be seen as fields in which the socio-moral value that food and especially sharing food have for the Yine is manifested, negotiated and re-enforced. In these relations the value of sharing becomes consolidated at the cross-pull of the worlds of the living and the dead: sharing is central to establishing relationships in both cases. Willingness to share works also as a criterion for evaluating a person's moral condition: whether a child is appropriately developing *nshinikanchi* or not, as in the case of the girl sneaking food, or whether a person is still attached to the living instead of the dead, as in the case of the girl seeing the soul of her dead mother. The socio-moral value attached to sharing food and to the right kind of food was thus also essential among the Yine for forming and deconstructing persons. This also explains why food had such a prominent role simultaneously in protecting the living against forces of the non-human world and in endangering them in the face of those forces: why the Yine in their everyday life wished not to consume food alone but eat together and share it with others and why not sharing with others could result in lethal consequences.

It still remains to go back to where we started and look more closely at Yine attitudes towards the wake, the meanings they attribute to it and the meaning of food in relation to the wake. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the wake was altogether quite an ambiguous institution among the Yine of Diamante. Commonly people viewed the wake as something that had been adopted from people in the Andean region, and which the Yine themselves just organised because it had become customary to do so. The elderly people recalled that in their childhood corpses were wrapped inside large leaves and buried as such. Later on, they started burying their dead in old canoes covered with planks. In either case, according to the

elders, no wake (in the Christian sense) was held.⁴⁵ Nowadays, a wake was held for all the deceased, whether Catholic or Evangelical, even though the way in which the wake was organised varied. I never had the opportunity to participate in a wake organised by the Evangelicals for an Evangelical person but from their accounts I gathered that they were organised so as to be with the deceased for a little while but without serving alcoholic drinks. (TKU/A/01/27:7.) Keeping company with the dead was, in fact, the general motivation people in Diamante – both Evangelicals and Catholics – gave me when I asked them what the wake was organised for. Although wakes in Diamante did not include praying the rosary or saying other parts of the Catholic Vigil Prayer, the Yine view corresponded to the general Catholic dogma, subscribed to also by the missionary primary-school teachers in the community, according to which the wake was held in order to ‘accompany the deceased’. Only one man was able to develop a more detailed reason for why wakes were held (see below). Even though the Yine held a variety of theological views concerning the faith of believers and sinners after death (see Chapter 6), most people seemed to agree that the dead were still around for a short period of time after death and therefore had to be kept company for the last time.

Nevertheless, participating in a wake was considered somewhat dangerous. The soul of the dead being present and possibly malevolent, people were quite cautious. Smoking and blowing tobacco smoke on little children and taking them home well before midnight were measures taken in order to protect the living, especially the most vulnerable ones, the children. But since the deceased had in most cases been closely related to most people in Diamante, children and adults alike, some kind of collective protection was also needed. This was – as I came to understand it – part of the meaning of the meal served at the wake. The collective meal, the chicken soup, which along with game meat and fish was considered

⁴⁵ This contrasts with some earlier accounts describing Yine death-related rituals. Valdez Lozano (1944: 34) describes a Yine funerary ritual he had had the opportunity to witness in 1895 or 1896. According to his account, the Yine ‘put the corpse in the ground in the middle of a house or hut and two or three elderly people began playing the *pifano*, which is like the *quena*, playing very sad notes; thereafter, getting up and forming a line they went around the deceased and other people, men and women, followed them, dancing to the sound of the *pifanos*, sometimes jumping, turning around and crying, according to the music. After these dances, which lasted for several hours, they went on with the burial of the corpse, so finishing the mortuary ceremony.’ (My translation.) Samanez y Ocampo (1980: 67–68) also describes how the Yine (in 1883–1884) bury their dead in the house and destroy all his belongings but he does not mention anything resembling a wake. Alvarez (1970: 58) observes that the Yine sing about the deceased and his or her life in order to avenge the death of a loved one but does not connect the singing with the wake or burial. Matteson (1954a: 80–81), however, describes how food and beverages were served at a wake and some ‘games’ played (what these games were, is not specified) but that there were no rituals during the burial of a corpse. (On ceremonial funeral games of the Canelos-Quichua see Karsten 1935: 466–478.) Thus, if Valdez Lozano’s accounts can be considered reliable, it seems that considerable changes in the funerary practices have taken place during the past century as there is no longer any music or dancing involved in the rituals. However, this could in part also be related to the overall decrease in the practice of music and dancing among the Yine rather than to an exclusive change in the funerary rituals.

real food,⁴⁶ enforced the kin ties between the living, thus making a clear distinction between the recently deceased and those left behind. While generating togetherness and making people similar through sharing food, this collective meal also had the purpose of making the deceased aware of its condition, reminding it by active rejection that it really was dead (Gow 2001: 64). Nevertheless, these measures did not remove the danger caused by the deceased since people could not know for certain how the deceased had assumed its new condition: whether they were benevolent, malevolent or perhaps already on their way to heaven. Therefore, they needed to be alert. In a wake that took place after the death of one old man in Diamante in the autumn of 2003, it was well past midnight and I started planning to depart. I had observed that one of the women present had been anxious to leave already for almost an hour, but since there had not been anyone to accompany her, she had had to wait. Finally a few more women agreed to leave and we all departed together. The women told me that we should walk together because it was safer that way. Not only could the dogs that barked nastily during the night time be dealt with more easily in a group but also – even though not explicitly stated by these women – when in a group the soul of the dead would not appear to us. (TKU/N/04/3:8.)

But why would the Yine then assist the wake if they considered it dangerous? Why would they want to accompany the deceased if it was considered risky or even possibly lethal? The only man I talked to who was able to explain in somewhat more detail the meaning the wake had for him and the reason for people's wish to accompany the dead was one of the Evangelical brothers who regularly held prayers and sometimes even preached at the church. Even though his explanation was not all that clear, the point he tried to make was, I think, understandable and intriguing.

Why do we hold the wake? Because we have to accompany the soul of the believer so that it can be together with us. . . . If the person was a believer the Lord will also be with us. . . . If the person is with the Lord, we can go forward in his mind and so become better persons. . . . In contrast, in the case of a wake of an unjust person... sometimes people [Catholics] become drunk, they do not think what they are doing . . . they don't think about the consequences. If it is a drunk who dies . . . they will follow (*seguir*) just like the one they are holding the wake for, they will argue, they will treat each other badly. . . . But I think that if it is a believer who dies, we'll have to accompany him so that we can go forward, to be able to work like the deceased worked in his life. They commission the deceased to pray to the Lord for them (*engarga con el Señor*). That's what we do. (TKU/A/01/27:7.)

Although the interview during which the above explanation was given took place during my first stay in Diamante in 2000 and I came to understand its significance only during the process of writing with no possibilities of further clarifying it, the man's account gives room for an interpretation according to which accompanying the soul of the deceased is not just a

⁴⁶ Among the Urubamba Yine, as Gow (1991: 223–224) discusses, chicken was not considered equally 'real food' as game meat and fish were.

matter of keeping the soul company but has a deeper meaning for the lives of those left behind. In the case of the deceased being a believer, the man states how the living can go forward in the 'mind' of the deceased's soul. It is as if the soul could carry its memories of the living with it to God and the living could therefore be somehow positively influenced by or linked to God through this new connection. They in a way commission the deceased to establish this connection. In the case of the deceased being a drunk, the effect is the opposite. Being closely connected to the dead, the – for the Evangelicals – inappropriate behaviour of those present at the wake will be further enforced. The corporeal connection and memories between the living and the recently dead still being strong and vital, the wake seems to influence strongly the fates of both the living and the dead.

Even though this one, rather ambiguous, account leaves space open for a variety of different interpretations and hardly gives us any opportunities to generalise, I think the above interpretation conforms with what has thus far been presented about Yine relatedness. People continue, even across the border of death, to be highly influenced, even corporeally, by the memories formed of significant others in early childhood and by living and sharing food together as adults. These processes make persons, both their bodies and their relational selves, similar and it takes a long time after a person's death to dissolve those memories. Therefore, just as emotions were shown to have physical consequences, so too the connections people have with their recently deceased relatives continue to affect their bodily existence on earth.

But the account above may also be understood as an Evangelical man's critique of the mentality of many Catholics in Diamante. The Evangelicals often blamed the Catholics for their excessive drinking, which caused quarrels and violence in the community. In his explanation, the man was in a sense then also making a distinction between the proper actions of the Evangelicals and the non-acceptable behaviour, the kind that did not take people forward towards salvation, of the Catholics. The idea that the drunken deceased may have a profound negative influence on the living also in part explains the reluctance of the Evangelicals to participate in Catholic wakes. They did not wish to risk being exposed to negative influences. (TKU/N/04/3:8.) These two interpretations are therefore not to be considered mutually exclusive.

For similar reasons, the Evangelicals, as well as many Catholics, disapproved of holding a second wake eight days after death, and therefore it was not very common in Diamante to hold a second wake. If they were vague about the motivation for the first wake, they were even vaguer about the second one. In general people did not understand why they should hold a second wake and said that it was something that is done all over Peru and was not their custom (TKU/N/01/2:15). I think the greatest problem they saw in holding the second wake, even though they did not explicitly articulate it, was related to remembering. As discussed above, the Yine put much energy into trying not to remember the deceased. Therefore deliberately evoking the soul of the dead while simultaneously trying to distance it from the living did not make sense for them. Nevertheless, in

the case of the old shaman's death, a second wake was organised. The shaman's sons seemed not yet able to let go of their father. They said that their father was still present, he lived in them and only when no longer actively remembered would he finally go away. (TKU/N/01/1:7.) Now they still wished to accompany him, to remember him a little while longer, and therefore placed the deceased's clothes on the table in the centre of the space in front of one house where the wake was being held. As a person's clothes were considered to be linked to the person, some Evangelicals saw the second wake as playing with the deceased person.⁴⁷ The same man who commented on the drinking at wakes said that as a consequence, God would also play with humans: 'we can only hold [one] wake because we cannot have our persons played with, a believer in God cannot hold that [another wake]'. (TKU/A/01/27:7.)

Whatever people's views of different details concerning the deceased and how they should be dealt with were, what everybody seemed to agree on was the constant presence of demons, in particular the souls of the dead, *samenchi*, and more generally *kamchi*, among the living. Although the times right after death were the most critical ones, causing people to protect themselves and relate to the dead in different ways – offering food for the hungry soul, smoking at the wake, avoiding being alone and driving away the deceased with *piri piri* plants – in everyday life people also needed to consider the threat of these and a multitude of other beings. One of the most important means to protect oneself, and the one examined in this chapter, was sharing food, producing and consuming it together. Another important means was ensuring proximity with one's kin. That is my topic in the following chapter.

⁴⁷ A person's belongings are commonly in Amazonia considered to retain the link to their owner. In the case of the living clothing could be used for instance in sorcery for harming the person while in the case of the deceased the clothing was considered to draw the deceased close to their former belongings. (E.g. McCallum 2001.)

CHAPTER 2

Transforming humans, metamorphosing deer: the role of proximity in making others similar

One of the Yine women once told me about what had happened to her husband's grandmother and the latter's brother-in-law probably some time in the 1920s:

It is true! Once the mother of my mother-in-law, grandmother of my spouse, when she was young . . . She was beautiful. . . . She had two brothers-in-law. . . . The elder lived with the grandmother of my spouse. . . . She never went to the forest but . . . one day her brother-in-law went hunting, and she appeared . . . In the middle of forest she cried: 'eeee . . . Wait for me! Pkagwakamtanunnoch! Pkagwakamtanunnoch!' . . . He thought it was her. [A person] just like . . . his sister-in-law came. He said:

'Why has my sister-in-law followed me? I don't have anything to do with my sister-in-law because she lives with my brother. Why should I be with that woman?'

Already from a long way off he recognised that it is not even a human person. 'Aha', he said. 'This is a brocket deer. It is not even a person, it is a brocket deer.' . . . And when she . . . was close he asked:

'Where have you come from?'

'I have come searching for you', she said.

But he first looks at her leg. . . . If it is a brocket deer it doesn't have a leg of a woman. It is able to transform into a person, the brocket deer. And so he said to her:

'I won't have anything to do with you because you live with my big brother. Why should I be with you?'

[And then] he fooled her:

'Look! What is that? People, people are coming!'

She looked and right then he killed her with a rifle. He got scared: 'I have killed my sister-in-law', he said. And right then he left.

'I'll go and cross the path so that I don't have to see her [again].'

He crossed [the path but], came back to the same place where he had been. Again he went and again he came to the same place. Four times, four times . . . he came where she was. He said to himself: 'This is not, this is not my *comadre*.¹ This is not my sister-in-law either.' . . . When he had come back to her four times, he began to search for herbs, special ones. . . . With these he [rubbed] his face and then he left and no longer came back [to that spot]. He was afraid and came back to his wife.

'I have come back, he said. Is my sister-in-law here?'

'Yes, there she is.'

'I killed something that looked like her; it followed me to the forest. What could it have been?'

¹ Co-parent, see Chapter 6.

His mother replied:

'You have been followed by a brocket deer. It is not human, it is a brocket deer. . . . The brocket deer has fallen in love with you. That's why it has followed you.' (TKU/A/05/44b:4.)

In addition to the souls of the deceased, one of the most frequently mentioned non-humans that the Yine of Diamante had experiences of interacting with was the brocket deer (Spanish: *venado*; Yine: *kshoteru*). The Yine differentiated between two types of brocket deer: grey and red (*venado cenizo*, *kshoteru ksoliri* and *venado rojo/anaranjado*, *kshoteru serolu*, respectively).² While the red brocket deer was considered a good game animal and its meat was highly valued, the grey brocket deer's meat was said to reek and so it was not hunted for food. Nevertheless, it was exactly this smaller grey brocket deer³ that people so often heard or even encountered metamorphosed into a human being. (TKU/N/04/4:3; TKU/A/04/51a; see Gow 2001: 65.)

In Diamante, most adults had experiences of at least hearing the call of a metamorphosed grey brocket deer. I was told first or second-hand about fifteen different cases of encounters with brocket deer and several other stories of encounters that had taken place in the more remote past. Even though many of these narrations, like the one above, are quite generalised in form and even correspond closely to a story recorded by Esther Matteson among the Yine of Urubamba already in the 1950s or late 1940s (1965: 203–205, see Appendix)⁴ it became clear to me that for the people of Diamante the brocket deer was not a frozen personage living a changeless life only within mythic narratives (Urban 2000: 2–4) but was a vital and meaningful part of both Evangelical and Catholic Yine people's present-day lived worlds. In a narration recorded by Matteson (1965: 204–205), the interviewee explains that

[The deer] still appears today too. Now also in the Kosta – what do you call it – the Manu region, there is said to be news of Haperomkalu.⁵ Before Uncle went there the deer was carrying on like that. Haperomkalu was appearing to the people who live on the Manu River, they say.

According to the narrations of the Yine of Diamante, the brocket deer had

² The red brocket deer was sometimes also called orange or chestnut brocket deer.

³ Henceforth, when using the term brocket deer I will refer to the grey brocket deer.

⁴ The only other published Yine story on the deer that I have found is the one recorded by Ricardo Alvarez in 1960a (pp. 114–115). This version differs from Matteson's but has its counterparts in some of the stories about the brocket deer I was told in Diamante (see note 27 on page 129).

⁵ The name *Haperomkalu* is not explained or translated by Matteson. It might come from the words *hapawata*, to metamorphose into bird or animal, and *gimkata*, to be able to. Thus, the deer Haperomkalu would be 'the one who is able to metamorphose'. This would correspond to the interviewee's explanation on the nature of the being: 'He was called Haperomkalu. He kept taking the form of a person right along and so appeared to people.' (Matteson 1954a: 203.) The Yine in Diamante said that the word *haperomkalu* is no longer used but is still understandable and refers to the grey brocket deer (not the red one), which metamorphoses.

continued to appear – although not necessarily as often as before – in the Manu (or Madre de Dios) region up till the present. But what was it then in the figure of the brocket deer and the narrations concerning it that intrigued the Yine so that people kept telling these narrations still and the stories had remained so homogenous for at least half a century or more?

It is clear that stories and experiences like these are being constantly reinterpreted alongside changes taking place in people's immediate socio-cultural, economic and physical environment. Therefore the meanings the brocket-deer experiences and narrations were given by the Yine people in the 1940s or 1950s were also in all likelihood at least in part different from those at the beginning of the twenty-first century. As will be discussed at the end of the present chapter, in Diamante the brocket-deer stories were newly interpreted, for example as part of Yine Evangelical Christian understandings of the relationship between God and Satan and their work in this world. Nevertheless, considering how little the form and the storyline of the brocket-deer narrations had changed during the past fifty or sixty years, it is probable that the core meanings given to them had remained to a degree unaltered. Listening to people's accounts about the brocket deer, my answer to the question of what intrigued the Yine in these stories began to form around two main themes. First, the brocket-deer narrations seemed to be fundamentally concerned with the socio-moral value of proximity – manifested in various ways ranging from mere co-residence to kin relations and to intimate sexual relations – as constitutive and deconstitutive of Yine persons and social relations. It was in these different kinds of proximal relations that the Yine capacity for legitimate sociality was assessed. Second, the narrations highlighted both the transformative and perspectivist nature of the Yine social cosmos and the tendency of different beings in the Yine social cosmos to aim to make others similar. In the case of the dead relatives discussed in the previous chapter, food was seen to be the most important intermediary substance in forming persons and social relations and in transforming persons into others. In the case of the brocket deer, food was also of great importance but even more so were sexual fluids (or rather sexual interaction). Furthermore, just as has been seen in relation to the souls of the deceased and as will be further demonstrated here, thoughts and memories also played a significant role in this process.⁶

Narrations and talk about these human–brocket-deer relationships therefore give us an opportunity, first to examine Yine perspectival logics in comparison to those described for other Amazonian peoples, and second to see how the Yine use narratives – whether biblical or indigenous in origin – dynamically for various (and changing) purposes with the aim of understanding and explaining their lived world and the changes taking place in it. Noteworthy in the Yine brocket-deer discourse is, however,

⁶ The observation that thinking and dreaming also play a significant role in the formation of Amazonian persons is commonly made by ethnographers. Robert Storrie (2003: 414), for instance, writes that '[p]ersons, and beings, can also affect, influence, change, and transform each other to varying degrees – principally through ingestion and consumption, but also through dreams and direct confrontation'.

that even though the interpretations of people's personal experiences of encounters with the brocket deer were clearly highly influenced by the collective narrative tradition and hence tell us about Yine shared values and expectations, it is especially the discrepancies in many of these narrations that give us a window for examining more deeply Yine socio-moral and cosmological understandings.

Connecting through thoughts

The danger in the encounter with a brocket deer, according to the people of Diamante, was that it could result in the human being obtaining a deer's point of view.⁷ Among the Yine, the changes in people's points of view were closely related to the cosmological idea of different persons – human and non-human – aspiring to enlarge their network of social relations by making others similar. In the previous chapter this was seen in the ways in which the souls of the deceased longed for the company of their beloved ones. The same logic seemed to lie behind the Yine wishes to make me one of their kind by residing, working and especially eating with me, and is furthermore here shown to be central to their accounts of the brocket deer. In Amazonian anthropology this transformational quality of different beings has during the past decade been discussed under the topic of Amerindian perspectivism – the view found among many Amerindian peoples according to which different beings experience their world as a human world but each does so from its own specific point of view (Århem 1993; Lima 1999; Londoño-Sulkin 2005; Rival 2005; Rosengren 2005; Santos-Granero 2005; Storrie 2003; Viveiros de Castro 1998; 2002; 2004; Vilaça 2002a; 2005; 2006; Virtanen 2005.)

While the transformational nature of Amazonian social cosmoses – the tendency of persons to facily slide from one point of view to another – has been extensively documented, there still remains much divergence in regard to the original formulations of the perspectival theory and the question of the exact nature of a point of view or perspective. The issues I have found problematic or thus far inadequately examined in perspectival theorising and which I shall discuss in this work are related to the nature of the transformations, materiality of a point of view, role of morality in demarcating the line between different points of view, self-consciousness of non-human perspectives and applicability of perspectival logics to the field of human-to-human relations (on this last point see chapters 6 and 7).

Perspectival changes have previously been conceptualised either to take place as short and intense episodes, as a result of long processes or as some combination of these two (e.g. Lima 1999; Rosengren 2005; 2006a; Viveiros de Castro 1998; 2004). Whatever the view, researchers have seen

⁷ The notion of 'point of view' has been used in relation to Amazonian transformational worlds to imply 'a particular conception according to which the world only exists for someone' (Lima 1999: 117).

transformations as rather uniform processes, showing how among a given ethnic group changes of points of view take place in one particular manner, whether sudden or more gradual. My research material strongly suggests, however, that among the Yine there are (at least) two different types of perspectival changes that co-exist. The Yine seem to differentiate, although not on a terminological level, between what I shall call *metamorphosis* – a sudden change of a being's outer characteristics without affecting a being's relational self – and *transformation* – a change in a person's point of view taking place in a long-lasting process through different phases. As will be further discussed in this chapter, both processes are, in diverging ways, closely linked with corporeality (cf. Conklin 2001a; Storrie 2003).⁸

It is usually non-human persons that are held to undergo metamorphosis while human persons are thought to go through the process of transformation. As in the above narration, the brocket deer appeared to the hunter as metamorphosed into a human being but the man himself started going through a slower change of his point of view, which was interrupted by his killing the animal. Many other narrations on human-brocket-deer encounters I heard in Diamante suggest that had it been allowed to continue, the transformation would eventually have been fatal for the man. Such transformations of point of view can be perceived to consist of three separate phases: the initial encounter in which a relationship is established, then a phase in which the deer uses *pusanga*, attraction medicine, to deepen the transformation, and finally sexual intercourse with the animal; after this last phase, there is no turning back. I wish to examine these three phases separately and see what they tell us about the role of different forms of proximity in the construction of Yine persons and relationships.

In the first phase, interaction or close relationships with non-human beings begin with an initial contact or invitation to contact. While in the forest, the Yine always keep in contact with others by calling out. Always, when I was for instance with some women collecting palm leaves for making roof elements or gathering fruits in the forest, everyone dispersed to find suitable trees and to cut leaves. Every now and then they confirmed the location of others by producing a long, high-pitched *gwo* sound and were answered with a similar, although a shorter, call. If someone heard unexpected sounds as if something or someone were moving in the bushes, they would also call out and relax only after receiving reassurance that the noises were made by fellow humans from the community. (TKU/N/01/2:2; TKU/N/05/3:4.)

These calls were aimed at making sure that nothing had happened to the others and that no dangerous animals such as jaguars were approaching. The replies were also listened to carefully in order to distinguish human calls from the deceptive non-human ones. There was always the possibility that the caller might be a brocket deer in human disguise. One woman advised me, saying: 'In the forest one cannot trust anything – there is

⁸ Also ethnic transformations may be achieved through similar processes (see McCallum 1997).

everything there.' (TKU/N/05/3:24.) Even though the brocket deer was considered to appear usually to a man when he was hunting alone in the woods or to a woman when she was working alone in the fields, the call of this animal could be heard even when in a group. The brocket deer could either call out the *gwo* sound or as in the story above call the people in the Yine language: '[I]n the middle of forest she cried, eeee . . . Wait for me! *Pkagwakamtanunnoch!* *Pkagwakamtanunnoch!*' (TKU/A/05/44b:4; see TKU/A/05/44a:2; TKU/A/05/45b:3; TKU/A/05/35a:1; TKU/A/04/52a:1; TKU/A/04/40d:5; TKU/A/04/54:3.) Such calls could be mistakenly taken for human calls and the voice recognised as that of the person's spouse, lover, former girl- or boyfriend or an in-law, and might therefore be answered.

One evening during my stay in Diamante when I had spent my day elsewhere and my host mother had been in the forest with her daughter collecting leaves, she told me how they had heard just as if her spouse had called them but that she was sure that it had been a brocket deer.

We went to collect firewood by this path and it started to follow us there. I don't know if it was a brocket deer or what, heeeeewe thought it was her father. 'What is it with my father? I think my father has come after us', [my daughter said]. Already from far away we heard: heeee . . . heee . . . I said: 'What is it? What has happened at home?' He called us. I said to my daughter: 'Perhaps it is not your father. What could it be? Let's go.' We went to another path, we returned by another path. It wasn't my spouse. What could it be? Seems like . . . perhaps it was a deer. Because in the past we knew that it appears, the deer appears as a person, that is why I knew. (TKU/A/04/40d:5.)

The women became suspicious of the caller's identity because they did not see any reason for the spouse to follow them. Therefore, they decided not to answer the call and instead to take another path home because otherwise, they thought, they might become caught unawares by a metamorphosed deer. Answering such a call is interpreted among the Yine as a call for interaction and constitutes the first phase in the transformation of a person's point of view. As pointed out by recent research, in Amazonian worlds there seems to be only one, human, phenomenology available for different persons – a point which will be further discussed below: a person believing that whoever is calling for them is a fellow human and answers the call, simultaneously accepts the position as the second person, the 'You', of the caller (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 483). Consequently, the nature of their relationship and their positions in regard to each other have been initially determined already when the brocket deer appears to the person looking exactly like the supposed human being apart from one of its legs, which it hides in the undergrowth. But a person believing the other to be a kin person does not notice the untransformed leg – they have no reason to suspect anything. Even someone who suspects that the person encountered is a brocket deer, the Yine explained, may become fooled by the animal when it skilfully hides its leg. Thus, believing oneself to be engaged in interaction with a human being makes the person vulnerable and predisposes them to a change of point of view. The person does not, however, realise this.

He thinks that he is still the 'I' in the relation between legitimate humans when, in fact, he has been drawn to a different position in another kind of relation (cf. Lima 1999). Differently to Viveiros de Castro's view, however, this does not yet mean that the person has already totally assumed a brocket deer's point of view – its way of perceiving the world. Many Yine assured me that seeing the brocket deer as a human being was not in the first phase a matter of the person's altered vision but that the brocket deer actually metamorphosed, took another bodily form.

Whatever the case, if a person knows the story about the metamorphosing brocket deer and does not believe the person encountered to be human, he or she is, as the examples above demonstrate, either able to escape in time or detect the difference in the other person's legs. (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 483; TKU/A/04/52a:1.) As one man in Diamante explained of such an encounter: 'But the man knew the story: if you encounter a woman calling you, that's a brocket deer, you have to kill it.' (TKU/A/05/45b:3.) If a person detects that the person's other leg is not human but animal, the only thing left to do is to kill the creature. When the brocket deer is dead, it can no longer sustain its human form but transforms back to a brocket deer, roaring 'meeeeeeee!' as it dies.⁹ (TKU/A/05/40b:7.) After killing the animal the hunter is said to become dizzy because the brocket deer has somehow cast a spell on him. The usual symptom, as shown in the narration at the beginning of this chapter, is that the person cannot find their way back home. Even though being a skilful hunter and knowing all the paths by heart, the person keeps losing the track and returning to the same spot where he has killed the brocket deer. (TKU/A/05/40b:7.) The only way to be released from such a spell is to rub special herbs, leaves of *huicungo* tree (Yine: *kona*; *Astrocaryum murumuru*), or decomposed leaves from the ground all over one's body and especially the face. (TKU/A/05/37b:2.) The power of *huicungo* and decomposed leaves lies in their nature: *huicungo* is full of spines and decomposed leaves carry an unpleasant odour, which both, I understood, are repulsive to the brocket deer and serve to exorcise it. They make the person look unpleasant, scary or unrecognisable to the brocket deer, which thus leaves the person alone.

The initial opening up of a social space for interaction between humans and non-humans could take place without spoken words as well, through thinking or wishing. This is epitomised in the many Yine narratives placed in the mythic past where an animal takes a human form after being invited to do so by a human person thinking or wishing it. In one such story, a hunter hears a cricket singing close by and thinks: 'Why are you singing there as a cricket? If you were a person, I would live with you.' The next day

⁹ However, in the narrative at the beginning of this chapter the brocket deer did not change its form back to animal but even when dead continued to look like the man's sister-in-law. It is these kinds of discrepancies in the narratives which allow us to pay closer attention to the meanings the stories have for people. In this case, for instance, I see the deviation from what according to people's views should happen to the brocket deer when it is killed as emphasising the importance kin relations have for the Yine. The man does not wish to engage in an illegitimate sexual relationship with his sister-in-law for fear of destroying his relationship to his brother, but on the other hand after killing the creature he is desperate to receive confirmation that he has not, after all, accidentally killed one of his relatives.



Figure 11. A woman working at the plantation

when the man returns from hunting there is a beautiful woman sitting in his hammock and she advises the man not to be afraid because she is the cricket he was hoping would turn into a human person. (TKU/N/05/3:12.)¹⁰ The cricket thus acted on the thoughts of the hunter, in a sense answered the call for interaction. With the brocket deer, human thoughts in a similar manner serve as an invitation for the deer to act upon them. However, there is a difference in the motivation for interaction between the brocket deer and the non-humans in Yine mythic narrations. In the mythic time, a human being deliberately wished for the animals to metamorphose and the animals acted on these wishes but in the case of the brocket deer, the deer is acting on 'stolen' thoughts of a human being.¹¹ This can be seen in the explanations people gave for the resemblance of the brocket deer's human form to that of some known person.

Brocket deer that take the form of human beings were always described as looking exactly like some known human person. (TKU/A/04/40a:1.) They had identical hair and wore the same clothes and ornaments as their models. They also spoke in the same way. My question to the Yine thus was, how does a brocket deer know people's names and how can it appear looking exactly like the target person? Even though people were somewhat unclear on these matters, the common conception seemed to be that the brocket deer somehow extracts the knowledge from the person it appears

¹⁰ A similar case is described by Basso (1987: 217) for the Kalapalo.

¹¹ Vilaça (2005: 452–453) has noted a similar phenomenon among the Wari', where instability 'is conceived as a capacity typical to humanity which must be controlled since transformation may always be the result of the agency of other subjects rather than ego's desire (such as the processes of illness conceived by the Wari' as the capture of the soul by animals wishing to make the victim into kin)'.

to. How exactly this happened did not seem to concern people, but in the several personal-experience narrations I was told people described how the deer took a human form if a person was *bien pensativo*, absorbed in thinking about someone. As one woman explained: 'When you are absorbed in thinking [about someone], really thinking in your heart, it appears to you' (TKU/A/04/52a:1; see TKU/A/05/50b:4; TKU/A/04/54:3). It was the physical form of this particular person thought about, commonly a lover, girlfriend or spouse, that the brocket deer assumed. As the same woman stated: 'if [you] love your spouse, you can never leave him in your heart, you keep thinking about him, and let's say you'll go to the forest, there he is already [as a metamorphosed deer]' (TKU/A/05/50a:5).

Therefore, Yine relationships with the brocket deer conform to the idea of thoughts and memories being conceived not only as something mental but also as having physical consequences. Thoughts and thinking are not to be understood as located exclusively in the head or mind of a person but as the woman states, are also connected to a person's heart, or more generally, to the body.¹² Owing to a life lived together, close to one another, the memories of loved ones become an integral part of a person, who therefore cannot easily forget them in her heart. (See Vilaça 2005: 449; Gow 1991: 160–167.) This interconnectedness of thinking, emotions and corporeality links the Yine experiences of the metamorphosing brocket deer to the idea common among Amazonian peoples – and seen also in the previous chapter – of emotions as feeling-thoughts that are 'social, cultural experiences learned and expressed in the body in the daily process of personal interactions' (Overing & Passes 2000a: 20; see Kidd 2000). Therefore also the 'love that never ceases to exist' in a person's heart serves as an 'engram' based on which the brocket deer may metamorphose as that particular person.

The nature of memories as essentially corporeal features among the Yine is further illuminated by a narration told by a Yine woman about her son's mother-in-law having encountered a brocket deer. I was told that a brocket deer that had appeared to a Yine woman probably in the 1950s and with whom she had had a sexual relationship¹³ appeared again to the woman's granddaughter in the 1990s. It was explained that the deer remembered the woman and therefore appeared to her grandchild because she was of the same blood: 'It saw her grandmother, that's what made it appear to the granddaughter, that's what happened, it followed the grandmother's filiation.' (TKU/A/05/41b:4.) This statement seems to suggest that the close relationship formed between the grandmother and the brocket deer remained inscribed in the bodies of these two persons and was further transmitted to the next generations. The associations

¹² The Yine never explicitly stated that some particular part of the body would be doing the thinking. Nevertheless, this same connection between thinking/knowledge/memory and the heart can also be found among the Arawakan Matsigenka (Rosengren 2006) and Yanasha (Santos-Granero 2006) peoples who are linguistically and culturally related to the Yine.

¹³ The Yine narrators suspected that in this particular case the deer had been a red brocket deer, not a grey one, and therefore the woman was not harmed by her intimate relationship with the deer-man.

of this relationship for the narrator reveal something about her way of conceptualising the connection between relatedness and transmittance. After stating how the brocket deer followed the grandmother's bloodline she continued explaining how children resemble their parents in their appearances: 'She turned out just like her mother, yes, she was beautiful and appealing, the mother, slim but beautiful, just like her daughter. The other daughter was born just like her father, but the first daughter looked exactly like the mother. Always in a family one resembles the mother, the other the father, that's what happened.' (TKU/A/05/41b:4.)

Just as appearances and other characteristics are transmitted from one generation to another, it seems that the Yine also consider corporeal memories of social interaction as something that can be passed down. We are then led to ask how this view relates to the idea of the socio-corporeal fabrication of kinship and relationality in general. In Amazonian ethnography the absence of a genetic notion of kinship has been noted by various researchers (Vilaça 2002a: 354; Storrie 2003: 416; Rival 1998). Rather than being genealogically formed, kinship is constructed in social interaction, whether through sexual intercourse (viewed as social action) or through adoption. Among the Yine, this is also evidently the case (see Gow 1991: 159–160). Nevertheless, it puts the above example into a peculiar light. If relatedness is formed exclusively in 'face-to-face' interaction through different substances, how can common physicality (Rival 1998: 621) between the grandmother and the deer end up affecting the woman's granddaughter? In her recent article, Isabella Lepri (2005: 721) has noted that the current emphasis in Amazonian studies on affinity and alliance in forming kinship has led to a partial neglect of 'indigenous conceptualizations of filiation and of fixed aspects of kinship'. Conklin and Morgan (1996: 669) also have discussed these 'indigenous conceptualizations of filiation' in relation to what they have called the biosocial vision of human bodies. They write that '[b]lood conveys qualities of identity so that interpersonal exchanges of body fluids create shared substance and, hence, shared social identity. Wari' conceive of interpersonal attachments as shared physical substances that link individual body-selves in an organic unity that transcends the boundaries of discrete physical forms.' In the Yine case, the grandmother had had sex with the brocket deer, so creating shared substance and common physicality with it. The relationship between the two had become part of their corporeal existence or way of being and was, through sharing substances, transmitted further from one generation to another. Just as children were acknowledged as inheriting their appearances from their parents, so, it seems, relational qualities or memories were thought to be equally passed on. Based on this evidence, I would suggest that there is some kind of filial notion of relationality at work here. It is not a question of genetic relatedness in the purely biological sense but is perhaps better described as memories inscribed in the flesh. This enforces the view presented in the previous chapter of a person's *nshinkanchi*, memory or love, being corporeal in nature. The memories can be transmitted even from one generation to another – as long as the older generations are still remembered – without the original social bonds

to which they were attached being lost or dissolved.¹⁴ In this way, humans are tied even more closely to the web of socio-cosmological relations.¹⁵

Thinking, memories and knowledge are seen to be intensively related to Yine human-brocket-deer encounters. They are not only central when encountering this animal but were also used as a means for avoiding encounters with it. First, knowing the stories concerning the brocket deer made it possible for the Yine to realise in the first place that they have encountered a brocket deer instead of a human being and consequently take action against this creature. Being familiar with the narratives was essential for the Yine in order for them to be able to orient themselves and to survive in the world.¹⁶ Therefore, even though the elderly people in Diamante complained that the young people were no longer learning their traditions and customs, many children were still readily able to comment and correct any narratives the adults told concerning different non-human beings; knowing these narratives was – although I am sure the children did not think about it in such terms – something that could even prove to be a matter of life or death later in life. Second, by regulating one's thinking a person could avoid encountering a metamorphosed brocket deer. When entering the forest people tried not to think of their beloved ones. As one woman said: 'If one just walks without thinking, the brocket deer will not appear' (TKU/A/04/52a:1.) Despite these preventative measures, however, people still avoided going into the forest alone.

Pusanga and sexual relations in making others similar

In the first phase, then, when encountering a brocket deer a person is initially drawn towards, but not yet completely into, the animal's point of view. In the second phase after the initial contact, the brocket deer uses its magic, *pusanga* (Yine: *kshana* [also more generally herbs]) on a person, initiating them into the point of view of the deer. *Pusanga* is usually described as a herb or potion, which the deer casts into the person's eyes.¹⁷ Some Yine related that the deer rubs or blows something into the person's crown.

¹⁴ This view resembles the Lamarckian notion of inheritance of acquired characteristics.

¹⁵ This view also enforces my interpretation presented in the previous chapter concerning the way in which relationship between the soul of a deceased person entering God's kingdom and their living relatives may also work as a bridge between God and the relatives left behind.

¹⁶ According to Gow (2001), Yine mythic narratives are told because they are interesting to people (cf. Rosengren 2000 on Matsigenka myths) and the reason why they remain interesting is because they mask historical change and because they function as a basis for relating to the outside world. However, I wish rather to emphasise the importance of these stories for the Yine everyday life: the narratives are told because they have practical meaning for people's welfare.

¹⁷ Cf. Yine face paintings to ward off the Mother of Lupuna (Chapter 1). The brocket deer's *pusanga* is sometimes described as red *achiote* (Yine: *gapijru*), which it rubs into the face of a person, thus altering their point of view.

Either way, as a result the person starts experiencing the environment from the deer's point of view: the deer no longer needs to be metamorphosed but is nevertheless seen as human by the 'victim'. What previously was forest now looks like a human settlement.¹⁸ I was told of a woman who had been enchanted by a deer:

She has seen a brocket deer in the forest: 'I don't like it here [at home] any more. I have a beautiful village there', she said. . . . She sees a beautiful village but in fact, as the other people saw it, it is not a village. Rather, it looks like a mere thorn-filled clearing, one with leaves on the ground. In there it is said she went and she couldn't come back. People brought her back all tied up, yelling. She didn't want to be in the house, she just wanted to be in the forest: for her it was a beautiful village, her house. (TKU/A/05/37b:2; TKU/N/05/3:24.)

The woman thus saw a clearing filled with thorns and leaves as a beautiful village where she wished to stay. Other narrations describe also how people see inedible substances as food and lose their appetite for real human food (TKU/A/05/47a:3). One man in Diamante told me of his own first-hand experience of encountering and living with a metamorphosed brocket-deer woman. In his youth, the man had been seduced by a brocket-deer woman in the forest and had lived there with her for a period of three days. (TKU/N/04/3:20, 24.) He described how he had seen the brocket deer as a woman, aerial roots of a tree as a man-made hut and other human beings as non-humans, as tree-like stiff figures. He had once during the three days gone back to the village but had not felt comfortable there and had returned to the forest. He had everything he needed there: a woman who offered him good food. He related that his mother had been desperate because he no longer wished to eat the food she had prepared for him but instead ate with the brocket-deer woman in the forest. However, even though the man had seen the food offered as edible, for other humans it consisted of inedible fruits. Finally, as in the above case of the woman wishing to live in the 'beautiful village', the man's relatives came to drag him back to the village and he was cured by a healer in a long process lasting for months. (TKU/A/04/52a:1; see Opas 2005.)

Similar processes of transformation appear in many Yine narratives situated in the mythic past. In one of these, a man is deceived by his brother-in-law and is left to die high up in a tree in a hawk's nest. Nevertheless, the hawks accept him as one of their children and in this manner he is saved. At first, he is only able to talk with the hawks but later on, after the mother hawk uses *pusanga* on him, he begins to see the nest as a house and the wide branches of the tree as a patio. Consequently, he no longer fears that he will fall down from the treetop. (TKU/A/05/45c:2; TKU/N/05/3:11; Alvarez 1960a: 208–213.) The *pusanga* then enforces the initial positions adopted

¹⁸ Also the fact that people say that the deer may first take the form of a known human being but later change into an unknown human being would suggest that it is first metamorphosed but when the person's vision alters it no longer needs to sustain the deceptional form.

by the two persons in the new relationship. The person's position as a 'you' in the relationships is deepened and hence in the case of a brocket deer the person enchanted no longer sees the deer-person as metamorphosed but 'really' as a human. Therefore, he or she is no longer in a position to suspect the nature of the other party. As noted by one man: 'When it makes him well accustomed it takes him further away' (TKU/A/05/47a:3). This corresponds to the perspectival idea that when a human being is in a transformed state, the difference between the two beings breaks down and they experience each other as similars, namely human. Tania Stolze Lima (1999) has argued that (at least among the Tupi-speaking Juruna) this situation is due to the mutually exclusive nature of people's two sides that she terms 'body' and 'soul'. According to her, a human being cannot be conscious of its double's (soul's or body's) experiences and the body's point of view (the normal waking human condition) can grasp the experiences of the soul's point of view only through some remnants from dreams that the person remembers.¹⁹ A human soul's experiences escape the human body's experiences so that a person does not know when the soul's perspective has taken over. Such a person thus does not realise that she no longer experiences things from a normal human point of view.²⁰ Yine views, however, show the transformations not to be – at least as experienced and interpreted in everyday life – as black and white as described by Lima but instead rather complex in nature. Furthermore, they present a different picture of the interrelatedness of what Lima calls the soul's and body's experiences.

The man telling his personal experiences of living in the forest with a brocket-deer woman told me that when he had been in the forest and seen there a beautiful woman, lived in a hut and eaten lollipops, he had still somehow simultaneously known that these things were something else: a deer, aerial roots of a tree and inedible *ojé* fruits, respectively. He had also voluntarily gone back to the village but since people there looked and acted strangely he had gone back to the forest where everything was 'normal'. This seems to suggest that it is not an either/or situation where – using Lima's terminology – it is either the experiences of the 'soul' or the 'body' that are active but rather that these two states are intertwined; a person vacillates at the interface of these two conditions. As Vilaça (2005: 449) notes, there is a general uncertainty over form in Amazonian worlds. The Amazonian body's existence is fleeting and its reality lies in the eyes – or rather perceptions – of others. (Cf. Bakhtin 1990, 15, 49; 1993; Merleau-Ponty 2002: xiv.) In fact, the terms 'body' and 'soul' are misleading, at least in the Yine case, because they entail the separation between the material body and immaterial soul. Analysing the Juruna material Lima (1999: 122) writes that '[t]he double is invisible not exactly

¹⁹ According to Lima (1999: 114–115) dreams are the central sphere of communication between 'real' humans and different animal species.

²⁰ Lima (1999) discusses a case where a Juruna hunter's soul is captured by peccaries. From the hunter's body's point of view the peccary is an animal but from his soul's point of view it is human. Similarly, from the point of view of the peccary's body, the peccary itself is human.

because it is immaterial, or even because its substance is different from that of the body. Soul and body are concepts which primarily designate not substances but perspectival effects.' Even though she wishes not to stress the immateriality of the soul's perspective, her argument relies on it.²¹ Her view thus seems to differ from Viveiros de Castro's view according to which a point of view is necessarily corporeal and therefore also differs from the Yine case. The Yine relational self is not, as discussed above, immaterial or separate from a person's physicality. I conceive the difference between the Juruna and Yine cases to derive both from their differing views on the intertwinedness of the body and the relational self (soul), and from the distinct nature of the transformations taking place in each case. Whereas in the Juruna case described by Lima the transformation is due to soul loss (the soul of a hunter is captured by peccaries that see themselves as warriors and is separate from the body), in the Yine case of the brocket deer the person's *samenchi* is not separate nor does it leave the body. Lima (1999: 122) states that 'the soul of a hunter, should it be dislodged from the body as a consequence of the fear affecting the subject, not only becomes visible to the peccaries but it is also captured and goes to live with them, over time gaining the body of a peccary, one visible to human sight'. The soul is therefore immaterial but departing from the body it can gradually, by living with the peccaries, gain a bodily form.²² However, in the case of Yine encounters with a brocket deer the encounter is not one between predator (or hunter) and prey and consequently it is not a question of the person becoming frightened. Instead, it is a matter of forming one's person amicably in relation to another person: the brocket deer influences the person's relational self through corporeal actions. Therefore, what Lima terms the 'soul's perspective' can in the Yine case be conceived as a name for the point of view that has become or is becoming dominant in a person owing to non-human influence. The relationship between the body's and soul's perspectives will be further discussed below.

In the second phase of a transformation the new point of view is thus enforced in a person through a substance, *pusanga*. In the third phase of the transformation, the person engages in sexual intercourse with the brocket deer and is consequently irreversibly taken over by the deer's point of view. Having sex with this animal thus corresponds to eating food offered by the souls of the deceased. According to the Yine people, the objective of the brocket deer is to have sex with the person it appears to. The deer is said to fall in love or have a crush on the person in question. (TKU/A/04/40d:5.) However, people were very definite that it is not possible for a (human) woman to become pregnant in such an act. For how could a human being

²¹ Lima (1999: 125) states, for instance, that the 'notion of human soul does not refer to a subjective experience'. In her analysis, soul is thus totally separate from the experiencing human body. The materiality of the body's point of view is, however, something she in my opinion should have elaborated further (see also note 22).

²² One weakness in Lima's argument is that she does not elaborate on how exactly this acquiring of a bodily form visible to human sight takes place or on the physical nature of the human soul, which appears visible to the peccaries. We are then left with rather little information on the nature of the materiality (or immateriality) of the Juruna soul.

have a baby with a brocket deer? The fact that these sexual relations were not aimed towards reproduction would seem to point towards their significance lying somewhere else, namely in fulfilling sexual desires (and in the consequent transformation of a person).

Among many Amazonian indigenous groups, sexual desire is considered dangerous, at least when it becomes overwhelming. Different demons are thought to seduce humans and kill them with their huge penises, and trickster figures may appear as attractive seductors (e.g. Londoño-Sulkin 2005: 18; Gregor 1985: 53–59). Many of these groups also connect the deer closely with sexual desire and in that way with human peril. The Tukanoans, for instance, connect the deer with female sexuality in various ways, seeing the deer woman as a seductive grandmother-mother-sister figure and the deer man as a castrated hero. (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1985: 132; see 1971: 87, 100, 179, 205.)²³ In the Yine accounts of human–brocket-deer relations, sexual desire between a human person and the metamorphosed brocket deer is mutual: ‘He wants to make love quickly, also she wants that . . . it asks you right away, it wants to make love to you . . . when it has made love to you, thereafter you die, it kills you’. (TKU/A/04/52a:1.) However, the motives of the human person and the brocket deer for engaging in a sexual relation are different. Whereas the human person aims at fulfilling their sexual desire with what she or he thinks is an already known partner, the brocket deer aims at establishing a relationship with a formerly unknown person and tries to make them to adopt its point of view.

The vulnerability caused by sexual desire is the key to understanding the dangers the Yine see embedded in making love to a brocket deer. A useful account for comprehending this vulnerability – and one that seems to link the Yine case to an at least to some extent general human experience – is given by the moral philosopher Graham Nerlich, who argues (1989: 122–123) that the satisfaction of one’s sexual desire, especially at the height of arousal, is a helpless condition. Even though voluntarily engaged in the sexual act, people are passive in it, they undergo it, suffer it, rather than do it. What one in such a moment desires to observe and respond to is not oneself but the other (cf. Bakhtin 1990). Therefore, according to Nerlich, ‘sexual passion endangers to some degree – and the degree may be felt considerable – that very self-possession and self-direction which characterises what one is as a person’.

²³ There are other similar cases in Amazonia. In one Chamacoco myth, women learn the secrets of men and the men kill all women except one who changes into a deer and escapes. The men become sad without wives and find the one woman left. They rape her and cut her into pieces which are soaked in sperm. From these pieces all women are born. (Lévi-Strauss 1986: 112–113.) The Asháninka trickster-figure *irampavánto*, partly corresponding to the Yine *kaxpomyolutu* (see Chapter 4), may appear as an attractive woman, wife or former intimate partner and have sex with the person. (Weiss 1975: 285.) Among the Desana, deer is the most human-like animal and the most important game animal. ‘[I]t is said that the deer speak and that the male is always accompanied by the same female as if they were “a married couple”. . . . The tongue is thought to be the most essential part of this animal because “the deer speak”. When the tongue is buried in the forest, the danger of revenge from *Vai-mahsê* is avoided, at least near the maloca, but the spot of the burial must be avoided from then on.’ (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971: 205, 225.)

In Yine encounters with the brocket deer, it is exactly this kind of vulnerability that causes the person to be irreversibly transformed. During the sexual act, a person surrenders themselves to the other person, in this case a brocket deer, and becomes in part consubstantial with it. A person reflects herself only in relation to the deer: it is the only 'mirror' for her relational self. A person's sexual desires are satisfied in relation to the brocket deer and therefore, through the exchange of sexual fluids and the moment of total submergence into the other, they become similar.²⁴ Consequently, as having sex with the brocket deer always ends in tragedy, these relations also epitomise the dangers of engagement in illicit sex. In fact, in some cases (in which this aspect was apparently intended to be emphasised) the deer was said to appear only or mostly as a result of the person having illegitimate sexual relationships: either having several lovers or having engaged in intimate extramarital relationships, for instance with one's brother or sister-in-law, as suggested in the case described at the beginning of this chapter. (TKU/A/05/37b:2.)

Nevertheless, the danger of having sex with a brocket deer is not related exclusively to illicit sex. In several cases I was told about, the deer had taken the form of the person's husband or wife.²⁵ (TKU/A/05/47a:3; TKU/A/04/54:3.) In such cases, from the human person's point of view these relations were hardly illegitimate. It was common in Diamante for spouses (as well as lovers) to meet each other in the woods or in plantations in order to make love undisturbed. Although when directly asked, the Yine in Diamante claimed to make love at home in their own beds, I think disappearing into the forest for that purpose was common. For instance, while living in the one-room house with my host family, it was clear that the couple could not make love at home, or at least not as often as usual. Normally when the children were at school, the house was empty for the couple's private use but as I did not follow any regular schedules but came and went irregularly, the couple apparently opted for having sex elsewhere. In the early evenings or late afternoons, I often noted how first the one and then the other spouse left the patio without a word and headed to their plantation only to come back after some time with nothing to carry and with no explanations.²⁶ (TKU/N/05/3:9, 12.)

There was, then, nothing peculiar in spouses meeting in the

²⁴ The resemblance here with the views of the Arawakan-speaking Matsigenka described by Allen Johnson (2003: 134) is striking: '[i]f a man dreams of an encounter with a deer, he will encounter Deer (spirit) in the form of his wife or lover and have intercourse, not realizing that his soul is being broken up until later, when he becomes ill and then dies. This belief is an aspect of the fear that sexual desire makes one vulnerable to spiritual danger, and it is related to the belief that dead loved ones will (out of desire or longing) try to take their surviving spouses down into the underworld with them.' The role of physicality – the interchange of sexual fluids – and thus of consubstantiality in the Matsigenka dream experiences is, however, here left unclear.

²⁵ Also among the Matsigenka the danger of sexual impulsiveness is not limited to illicit sex but the deer can equally well appear as a husband or wife (Johnson 2003: 95).

²⁶ These were instances when I felt my presence at people's houses to be extremely intrusive. It was almost as if I had abused people's kind gesture of inviting me into their lives by taking over their home.

plantations to have sex and therefore a woman seeing her spouse following her to the fields would not necessarily have suspicions over the nature of that person. Also a man – overwhelmed by sexual desire – might not suspect anything when a person looking like his spouse followed him into the woods. This was, however, highly uncommon and often the men were said to be suspicious in such a situation: ‘What would a woman of the house do in the forest?’ On the human person’s part engaging in sexual interaction with the brocket deer metamorphosed into the person’s spouse is not, then, something illegitimate. Unknowingly, however, the person is interacting sexually with a non-human – with lethal consequences. It seems, then, that the human–brocket-deer encounters are not a question of one single type of affinal relationship but of affinity in general and especially about making others similar to oneself through affinal relations. The deer may take the form of a spouse, girlfriend or boyfriend, lover or illegitimate partner, or appear because of the extramarital relationship the person has had, with the sole purpose of transforming the person into its likeness.

Whatever form the brocket deer takes, however, it is never a question of a homosexual relationship but always involves a male and a female agency. People were very explicit that a female brocket deer could not metamorphose into a male person nor a male deer into a female person. (TKU/A/05/50b:4; TKU/A/05/45b:3.) Even though quite common, homosexual relationships were highly unacceptable among the Yine of Diamante and always caused a lot of discussion. (TKU/N/05/3:15.) There was one case during my stay in the community in which two men had engaged in sexual interaction with each other and the spouse of one of them had seen them. As a consequence, the Evangelical pastor wanted to counsel the men, addressing the point publicly, but one of the men left the community, leaving only the other one to admit what he had done. The public opinion seemed to favour the men leaving the community because this kind of behaviour was regarded as very reprehensible as it was considered to work as a model for young people, who would learn to behave in a similar manner. By being in close social interaction with these men it was feared that adolescents would become partly consubstantial with them as the meanings attached to homosexuality would become part of their bodies. (TKU/N/05/3:4, 9; TKU/N/01/2:14; Opas 2005.) In Diamante, just as Cecilia McCallum (2001: 166) shows for the Kaxinawa, there appeared to be a great number of possible male and female positions, both human and non-human, but no mixed-gender positions available for young people. This heteronormativity was clearly manifested in the Yine accounts of their encounters with the brocket deer. Heterosexuality was a given condition in these relations and it was rather the interplay of sexual desires and their satisfaction as well as the negotiation of what was considered approved sexual behaviour that was at the centre of Yine sexual relations with the brocket deer.

Consequences and cures: from solitude to the proximity of others

People did not have a single explanation for the destiny of a person who has had sex with a brocket deer. While most asserted that such a person would die soon afterwards, others held that a person could continue living in the woods with the brocket deer. In fact, I was told of several cases in which someone people knew personally had been engaged in a long relationship with the brocket deer, with the deer visiting the person in or close by the village.²⁷ (TKU/A/05/45b:3.) Nevertheless, it was not clear in these cases whether the person had already been in a sexual relationship with the brocket deer or not. What people did agree on, however, was the destiny of a person who had had sex with a brocket deer and had returned to the village either voluntarily or after being caught by fellow villagers.

The Yine explained that a man or a woman accepting the brocket deer's proposition and engaging in sexual intercourse with it becomes mad, *seprolu*, and begins to act inhumanly. After returning home the person is no longer tranquil and acts in a way no real healthy human being would. He tears off his clothes, speaks strangely, acts violently and eats ashes or even still-smouldering firewood from the hearth. Furthermore, he no longer desires to eat human food, consuming only tiny portions at best, and does not want to eat together with others. He walks around naked and loiters aimlessly, has increased physical powers and avoids the company of other people. Women leave their children unattended and so endanger their lives. In addition, such a person does not sleep during the night but during the day, just as a brocket deer does. Moreover, men may pull their penises and women may act in a sexually grotesque manner. In short, as one woman put it, 'a mad person does not feel ashamed any more.'²⁸ (TKU/A/04/52a:1.) From these symptoms people are able to tell that the person has had sex with a deer: 'From that people know - it's certain - that he has made love to a brocket deer; there is no cure for that'; 'From that it is noticed that he has transformed into a brocket deer.' (TKU/A/05/37b:2; TKU/A/05/44a:2; see also TKU/A/04/40a:1; TKU/A/05/35a:1; TKU/A/05/45b:3; TKU/A/05/47a:3; TKU/A/05/48a:6; TKU/N/05/3:24.)

The state of madness is, then, in such cases a sign that a person has severed their relations with humans and has established a relationship with a brocket deer. It is caused by what Anne-Christine Taylor has called 'ambiguity of the social environment'. She (1996: 207) describes the process of sickness for the Achuar as follows: 'Sickness, in Jivaroan terms, is the suffering experienced by individuals when they become overwhelmed by the ambiguity of the social environment and thereby lose a clear sense of their identity; that is, when their perception of self is clouded by uncertainty.' The old 'mirrors' for the formation of one's relational self or person are

²⁷ These stories resemble the story recorded by Alvarez (1960a: 114-115), in which the brocket deer came to live with a person in their house while the real spouse was away.

²⁸ Similar symptoms of 'madness' are described for instance by Wright (1998: 174; 2004a:91) for the Arawakan Baniwa and by Overing (1985) for the Piaroa.

scattered and new ones have been found. The only means for curing a person suffering from such a condition is to restore these old 'mirrors', the previous condition in which the person was able to strengthen their human self in relation to other humans.

The narrations about encounters with the brocket deer then exemplify the socio-moral value the Yine place on physical proximity and especially on its most intense form, sexual intercourse. As such, sexual relations were positively valued among the Yine. After all, they were – in addition to giving sexual pleasure – a means for turning potential affines into kin and thus to enforce people's common physicality. However, therein also lay danger. If sexual desire could not be controlled or if it was diseased, as in the case of homosexual relations, sexual interaction with close kin or with non-humans, a person's human condition could be compromised. People's engagement in different kinds of sexual relations was thus yet another way of evaluating their moral state, and consequently their humanity.

Although people asserted that the condition of severe madness is incurable, they nonetheless tried every means to cure their loved ones. The only chance of this working after such an incident is to call a shaman or healer to help. The methods used by the healer are similar to those used in curing other illnesses: blowing smoke on the person's crown and preparing herbal baths. It is revealing, however, that the curing does not take place overnight or after only one treatment but requires a series of subsequent treatments. When talking about less severe illnesses that are treated at home by the parents, for instance cases of children suffering from *susto*, the Yine always emphasised that one treatment is not enough for curing a person but that the treatment has to be repeated three times on different days. The purpose behind the requirement of multiple curing sessions seems to be to restore the socio-moral and physical proximity between the sick or mad person and his family. It is not the several treatments as such that induce the cure but the process of re-establishing, little by little, a proper sociality between the person and his human kin, thus making the person reach a 'minimum level of stability' (Vilaça 2005).

This restoration of proper relations centres around two closely intertwined axes: food relations and living close to one's family. Much like a person who encounters a soul of the dead, a mad person is said to reject human food and eat inedible substances. This makes it impossible for people to construct a common physicality or strengthen the relationship with the mad person. However, as the different meanings sharing food has for the Yine were discussed in the previous chapter, I here wish to concentrate on another factor: the dynamics obtaining between solitude and proximity and its role in forming relationships and personhoods among the Yine people.

We have already seen how people who are somehow weak are especially vulnerable to encounters with non-humans. The most vulnerable to the non-human world are on the one hand babies, who have not yet had

time to properly form their personhoods in relation to their human kin²⁹ and whose relational selves are not yet stable, and, on the other hand, sick and old people who little by little become distanced from their families. But what about healthy adults who encounter a brocket deer? Where does their vulnerability derive from? The condition that makes healthy adults vulnerable is solitude. The lack of proximity with kin corresponds to the above-mentioned conditions and creates the right circumstances for encountering a non-human being (see Rosengren 2005). For instance, as discussed above, in the company of other people the voice of the brocket deer calling may be heard but the deer never exposes itself. On the contrary, as one woman stated: ‘when you are alone, when you feel alone or if you are far away, the brocket deer metamorphoses (Spanish: *convierte*), just like that’. (TKU/A/04/40a:1, 51a; TKU/N/01/2:10; TKU/N/04/4:3.) The theme of being alone is also common in other Amazonian narratives about people’s encounters with non-human beings (e.g. Teixeira-Pinto 2004: 235; Taylor 1993: 669).

The fact that being alone exposes a person to interaction with other beings of the cosmos and makes them vulnerable is something the Yine experience intimately in everyday life. One day during my stay in Diamante, I decided to do my laundry at a nearby forest stream because I had no clean clothes left. I had asked the women in my host family if they had any laundry to do, but they had other things to do, so I went alone. Back in the village, returning from the stream after an hour or so, I first met a teenage girl who asked me where I had been. I responded that I had been doing my laundry by the stream. Obviously surprised, she asked me if I had been there alone. I said I had and continued my way back to the house. But the next woman passing by also asked the same: had I been to the stream alone? I had not seen anything strange in going there by myself since all the other women seemed to have better things to do (although I must admit glancing over my shoulder at the forest several times just to make sure I would not be taken by surprise by any dangerous beasts). At home, the women were also surprised to hear that I had been doing my laundry alone. They told me they never went to the stream alone but always took at least some children with them (TKU/N/05/3:8). The logic behind this cautiousness seems to be that when in the company of other humans a person forms her relational self and personhood in general in relation to others and thus other people, whether adults or children, ‘confirm her point of view’ (Vilaça 2005). When alone, a person does not have this backup and is therefore vulnerable to seduction by non-humans, just as, in the women’s view, I must have been when washing clothes by the stream in the forest by myself. After that day, the women never let me go to do my laundry alone. (TKU/N/05/3:6, 8.)

²⁹ Rosengren (2005: 3) puts this aptly when he writes in relation to Matsigenka couvade-related regulations that ‘[i]f the regulations are not honoured, the household members run the risk of losing the control and monopoly over the formation of the baby’s soul since other beings may be attracted and come in contact with the baby’.



Figure 12. Washing clothes by a stream

Living close to one another is thus one of the most important means of forming and enforcing relatedness and continuously making others similar. Yine people constantly tried to make me similar to them not only through food-sharing but also through attempts to prolong our co-residence. They often suggested to me, especially during the first months and last weeks of my stays in Diamante, that I should find a man from the community and stay there, living with them. (TKU/N/01/2:11; TKU/N/05/3:22.) I remember being at first somewhat uncomfortable in the face of these suggestions. I took them as being entirely sexual in nature (as to some extent they were, I am sure) but only later realised that the motivation behind these suggestions was probably something totally different. I came to understand that people were hoping I could become more of their kind if I lived with them for a longer period of time. By means of intimate interaction in a marital relationship I would also become proper kin as I would really be someone's sister, niece, granddaughter and spouse. In my relationship with the people as well as their relations with the brocket deer, proximity was therefore essential because sharing and caring for others was not possible with more distant people (Storrie 2003: 425; Gow 1991). Vilaça (2005: 449) points out the importance of living together for the Wari': '[i]n this way, husband and wife become consubstantial; indeed, they often say that they have the same body. Since physical proximity is just as important as consubstantiality, the Wari' usually consider all those who live together or nearby to be consubstantial kin.' Among the Yine, willingness to live close

to one's relatives was also one way to assess their proper moral condition. Because proper humanity was achievable only in relation to other like people, unwillingness to comply with that expectation was criticised. For instance, I heard one Yine woman who had moved to the city of Lima and had not kept in contact with her family often described as 'mad': she was no longer a proper Yine person and she was often omitted when people were listing their kin.³⁰

The importance of similar physical form for generating relatedness applies also to Amazonian people's relations to various non-humans. In the case of the Yine, the meaning of the similarity of bodies for relatedness was manifested also semantically. In the context of human-non-human relations, the Yine sometimes used the verb *manewata*, 'to transform' or 'to equalise', for describing metamorphoses. More often, however, they referred to this activity with the verb *rayineruta*, 'to belong to one's group, to be(come) kin'. Metamorphoses were thus indeed conceptualised as becoming kin, becoming similar, to the other being.

Diving equipment and carnival masks – or, bodies as viewpoints and disguises

The transformation of one being into another is considered possible in Amazonian worlds because of the common humanity of different beings. The basic postulate in perspectivism (as articulated by Viveiros de Castro) is that as the phenomenological world of all beings is human, what different beings perceive as the human world differs according to their particular points of view. Different beings therefore see unlike things in a similar, human, way because their points of view are distinct (Viveiros de Castro 1998; 2003). Although – as will be shown below – humanity was not necessarily the same kind of humanity in all beings, this idea is also found among the Yine of Diamante. Perhaps most explicitly it was pointed out to me by few elderly persons in Diamante when they were telling about the *gonginro*, siren:

She is the Mother of Fish and of the river too. . . . The fish are her pets (*cria*) and she is the mum, the mother. . . . She gives names to the fish, for instance *taricaya*; it is her stool. What they call *piro*, that is her grater; she has names for all fish. For instance, what is it called... *paco*. It is her paddle because it is half round, her paddle. . . . And for instance *bagre*. That is maize ear because

³⁰ I think that the Yine people's eagerness to always enquire how far away it was that I lived and upon receiving the answer to exclaim: 'Uuu, you've come from far away', was related to their valuing of living close to each other. It was clear that after I left, closeness (at least physical) between us would cease. Therefore they also often told me how they would always think about me and remember me. In the absence of physical proximity, thinking and remembering were the only means of keeping relationships alive (see Chapter 1). This was also the case when young people left the community to get an education. Although having to leave their families behind, they were not thought immoral (they had not left without a reason) but people constantly worried about them and their welfare.

it is longish, like maize . . . as the maize has its beard, that's also how she sees it. . . . She has names for the fish.³¹ (TKU/A/05/42a:2.)

For the siren, Mother of the River or Mother of the Fish, which will be more closely discussed in Chapter 4, different fish are utensils, objects for domestic tasks. The siren's reality is a human reality for her just as for instance fishing is part of a human reality for human persons. Their points of view are just different. But the question central to Amerindian perspectivism is the nature of this difference: what makes the points of view distinct?

The discussion of perspectivism in Amazonian anthropology revolves greatly around the question of the relationship between the 'body' and the 'soul'. As discussed above in relation to Lima's (1999) notions of the soul's and body's points of view, there are different understandings on the question of what exactly constitutes a 'point of view' and of its materiality. According to the view represented by Viveiros de Castro, among others, the body determines the being's point of view. The point of view of a subject is located in the body: 'Animals see in the *same way* as we do *different* things because their bodies differ from ours.' (Viveiros de Castro 2004: 474.) For instance the siren sees things differently from fishermen because its body and bodily capacities are different: it has a fishtail and it can see and breathe under water. Rather than to a carnival mask that conceals a person, Viveiros de Castro (1998) likens the Amazonian body to a diving suit: by putting this 'clothing' on, the diver is able to breathe and see well under water.³² The point of view varies in accord with corporeal shape (see Rosengren 2005). Different beings' spiritual component is then formally identical to human consciousness and it is the bodily form that determines the perspective. This view emphasises the dominance of the body or form over 'soul' and the simultaneous change of both. As Viveiros de Castro (2004: 476) states: 'Bodily metamorphosis is the Amerindian counterpart to the European theme of spiritual conversion.'

Recently, there have been other views that are rather opposed to the one above. For instance Rosengren (2005; 2006a) states that among the Matsigenka *self* (= conscious agency and personal identity) is socially rather than physically constituted and is less variable than the physical form. The body is a shell that contains the self. In transformations the self remains the same while the being physically adapts to new conditions. Bodily form thus does not affect agency, memory or consciousness nor does it determine identity. As Rosengren (2005; 2006a: 96) states, the 'body and mind are clearly kept separate and consciousness is nothing that can be reduced to physiology'.³³ In his account, the body resembles more a carnival

³¹ Yine names for the turtle and fish mentioned are the following: taricaya: *supru*, piro: *taya*, paco: *gamjiru*, bagre: *kolyo*.

³² For the meaning of clothes and body ornamentation in Amazonia see e.g. Conklin 1997; Santos-Granero 2006; Turner 1980; 1995.

³³ For similar views among the Yanésha and Juruna see Santos-Granero (2006) and Lima (1999), respectively.

mask than a diving suit. But like Viveiros de Castro although in a different manner, Rosengren does not consider the body to be just a wrapper but regards it as having a task: it functions as a means of communicating with other beings. He gives an example of a Matsigenka myth in which a man turns into a peccary only after establishing convivial relations with them. However, even though the man can no longer communicate with humans, his personal identity remains the same. Rosengren's point therefore is that rather than individual identity being a function of corporeal shape, it is the social setting of which a person forms part that determines their outlook and identity, and consequently transformations are produced by socialisation.

Among the Yine, neither of these views was unfamiliar.³⁴ In mythic times, as Yine mythic narrations reveal, human beings were able to metamorphose into other beings and still preserve their conscious selves, or relational selves, intact, just as the Matsigenka man in the myth about the peccaries was able to do.³⁵ For instance, in the myth of the man in the hawks' nest described above, the man was given feathers and was treated with *pusanga*, thus ending up with a hawk's body with its characteristic bodily dispositions. Nevertheless, the man was still concerned about his human family and thought of himself as a human. In the end, the man transformed back into his human form but owing to social conflicts he decided to fly away again, this time with his family. They had all put on birds' clothing and received *pusanga* in their eyes, which enabled them to fly. (TKU/A/05/45c; TKU/A/05/46a.) In this myth, the change in the bodily characteristics or clothing of a being together with the *pusanga* effectuates a metamorphosis into a hawk but the relational self of the person remains the same. The 'body' and 'soul' thus remain to a large extent separated.

However, in the Yine world nowadays the situation is different, at least for human beings.³⁶ The relational self – the composite of *nshinkanchi* and *samenchi* – no longer seems to be as independent of the 'body' (*gimane*) as in the mythic times. As seen in the case of the brocket deer and noted at the outset of the present chapter, a person does not metamorphose

³⁴ I would not, however, make such a stark contrast as Rosengren makes between these two views. Although he acknowledges that his critique (2005; 2006a:82–83) of Viveiros de Castro's approach is based on 'certain degree of generalization and simplification' – noting, for instance, that Viveiros de Castro's approach asserts a 'straightforward and uncomplicated correlation between the body and the perceived subjectivity of "Self" and "Others"' and that, emphasising the uniformity of each species, it has little to say about intraspecific variation and individual agency – I think the contra-position Rosengren makes is needlessly simplistic. It leads to the antithesis of two extremes, the one alleging a total unity between the body and the soul (Viveiros de Castro (1998), the other asserting a complete separation between the two (Rosengren 2005; 2006a; Santos-Granero 2005; 2006; Lima 1999). As will be shown, in the Yine perspectival logic there are elements of both approaches.

³⁵ One problem in many accounts of perspectivism among different Amerindian peoples is that the argumentation is in the first place based on mythical narrations instead of present-day ethnographic materials (e.g. Lima 1999; Rosengren 2005; 2006a; Viveiros de Castro 1998).

³⁶ Shamans, however, are considered able to preserve their relational selves even when in contact with the spirit world.

but rather transforms into a deer. Unlike the deer's metamorphosis, the transformation does not include a sudden change of the 'envelope' or clothing but rather the transformation of the relational self and the bodily dispositions or ways of being of the human being through a longer period of socialisation and physical interaction. The relational self and bodily dispositions of the human being gradually change first, through the *pusanga* put into the person's eyes, and later, through prolonged social and physical interaction with the brocket deer.

Although Yine myths seem then to correspond to the view advocated for instance by Rosengren, Lima and Santos-Granero, according to which the body and the relational self are separate and bodily form does not affect a person's consciousness, the present-day Yine experiences of transformations speak for the unity of the body and the relational self. It is not, however, a question of a one-way relationship in which the bodily form straightforwardly determines the person's agency. Rather, since relational selves are inseparable from the body and the body exists only in relation to others, we can state that at least nowadays among the Yine corporeal points of view become socially constructed and transformed through the materiality of the body. Although the point of view is thus necessarily corporeal, privilege is given neither to the body nor the relational self. In addition to this debate over the relationship between the 'body' and the 'soul', there have surfaced also other controversial issues in regard to the theory of Amerindian perspectivism. One of these concerns the nature of different perspectives or points of view in Amazonian social cosmoes: are they all of equal value?

Detecting the fraud: are deer really human?

Recently, especially the first formulations of the Amerindian perspectival theory have been criticised for not showing whether animals know that they are humans, i.e. whether they are conscious subjects or not (Lima 1999: 113–115; Santos-Granero 2006a: 73–74).³⁷ Responding to this critique, Viveiros de Castro (2004) notes that attributing conscious intentionality (intentionality or subjectivity) and social agency to non-humans is to say that these beings are persons with a point of view: 'Animals and other non-humans are subjects not because they are human (humans in disguise); rather, they are human because they are subjects (potential

³⁷ Both Lima and Santos-Granero state that according to the Yanesha and Juruna, respectively, animals do not know that they are different from humans. Lima (1999: 115) notes that animality can never be experienced as a second-person position. The subject is always a legitimate (human) person and the Other is the animal. The worlds of a legitimate human being and an animal are different, but they both experience themselves as human. In Lima's (2000: 50) view, the difference lies in the animal knowing itself to be human, knowing that a Juruna is a similar being, but not knowing that it *is* an animal *for* humans. As will be discussed below, the Yine case demonstrates, however, that although animals (at least the brocket deer) do not necessarily know that they are animals for humans, they do acknowledge that they are different kinds of *humans* for humans.

subjects).’ (Viveiros de Castro 2004: 467.) Nevertheless, relatively little ethnographical evidence has thus far been presented to support this view. The Yine relations with the brocket deer provide just that. In human-brocket-deer encounters the most revealing in this sense are the moments when a Yine person notices that another person is not a real human. The first such moment is when a person detects that the other person’s leg is that of a deer. The metamorphosed brocket deer tries to hide its leg in the undergrowth in order to deceive people. Doing so, however, the deer must know that its other leg is different; otherwise it would not need to hide its leg. This suggests that the brocket deer is, indeed, understood to be a conscious subject by the Yine. It knows that it is not fully metamorphosed and needs to distract the person until it can use its *pusanga* on him, thus altering his perception. After that the man no longer sees the leg as different. It is only through a longer period of living together that the deer really wins the man over to its side, to seeing its point of view.

Further evidence is found in a story I was told in Diamante first in 2003 and again two years later. It was said that a young Yine woman, probably in the 1920s or 1930s, had escaped from her village because she did not want to live there with a man she did not love. Instead, she was in love with a man living in another community. Having escaped and camped on a beach with her infant daughter, she saw her lover appear in a canoe, bringing food and all kinds of necessities without which they had had to leave their community. The narrator related:

The brocket deer brought something looking like *masato* [manioc beer], but it was not *masato* but more like stirred clay.³⁸ . . . She thought it was *masato*. . . . And he gave her *guayaba* to eat because a brocket deer does not eat like people . . . it ate just forest fruits. . . . It cannot eat fish or manioc. . . . But he did not let her see . . . He pretended to be eating like her so that she would not feel bad. (TKU/A/04/40a:1.)

The brocket-deer man was said to have pretended to be eating the same food he offered to the woman because he knew that it was not his food, he could not eat it. However, a year and a half later when telling the same story, I asked the narrator specifically how these persons saw the food they were eating and she explained that the deer had brought all kinds of foods and manioc beer for the woman and they both ate everything.

He said that they would need to cook, and he ate as well: Let’s eat! The two ate together, and they drank *masato* too, she drank and he also drank. . . . The brocket deer ate and drank *masato*. What could the girl’s vision have been like, I wonder. How would she have seen? Because an animal does not eat like we do, it just looks for *huayo* fruits. (TKU/A/05/41a:3.)

In this second version, the narrator suspects that the girl’s vision must have been altered in some way because otherwise she could not have been eating the same food with the brocket-deer man.

³⁸ Cf. Lima 1999: 109.

We are here shown that the deer is considered to know that what to him is clay is drinkable manioc beer for human beings. Consequently, it makes sense too that the narrator suspects that in the latter case the deer had used some kind of attraction medicine on the woman because otherwise they could not have been eating the same food. It was thus clear that the Yine attributed conscious intentionality and reflexivity to the brocket deer. Nevertheless, the above examples also show that there is a difference between the brocket deer and real human beings. Although the humanity of different kinds of persons is very similar, it is not exactly the same kind of humanity. Not only do the Yine know that brocket deer are different from them – ‘It is a person but not a real person!’ – but also the brocket deer know that there is a difference between them: they cannot have exactly the same physical form and they eat different things. We can therefore conclude that in the Yine social cosmos there is no one single humanity common to all but rather a variety of humanities – a point which will also prove relevant in regard to the relationship between Yine Catholics and Evangelicals in Diamante (see Chapter 7). Similar observations have recently been made among other Amazonian groups as well (Londoño-Sulkin 2005; Rosengren 2006a; Storrie 2003; see also Santos-Granero 2006: 73).

Thus far, I have discussed mainly physical differences in relation to the question of the brocket deer’s subjectivity and humanity. However, one of the problems seen in the first formulations of the perspectival theory has been exactly the privilege given to visibility (Santos-Granero 2005; 2006). In the light of the Yine example, this criticism seems to be legitimate. Even though visibility does play an important role in perspectivism, there is much more to it than visual experience. Among the Yine at least, perspectivism culminates very centrally in socio-moral interaction.³⁹ Humanity is for the Yine, as well as for many other peoples such as the Wari’, the Hoti and the Muinane, as much a moral condition as a physically defined one. (Vilaça 2005; Storrie 2003: 424; Londoño-Sulkin 2005, respectively; see also Taylor 1996.) Therefore it is also, and perhaps more importantly, in the socio-moral field that different kinds of humans are in the end separated from each other.

Socio-moral differences, and especially those related to proximity, are seen to play the most important role in detecting the fraud when encountering a brocket-deer person. Even though the brocket deer is often recognised from its deer leg, sometimes the animal is said to succeed in hiding the leg, so deceiving the human person. The fraud goes unnoticed and the person continues interacting with the metamorphosed brocket deer. However, in such cases it is still possible to notice the deception by the brocket deer’s improper behaviour. In the case of the Yine woman escaping

³⁹ Only the beings that are capable of interaction with ‘real human beings’ are considered persons. The Yine are not that interested in what different beings do when they are not interacting with humans. When asked whether the animals had social life, if they ate together, had parties etc. the response was negative. At times, people explained that the transformed animals felt like humans when transformed into a human form but at other times they explained that it was just a guise, they took the form in order to fool people, but in the end they were animals.

from her community described above, the woman and her lover spent one day and one night on the beach and the following day they paddled upstream towards the community where the woman lived. The lover, however, left the woman on the shore close by the village and continued his journey upstream alone. The narrator said that

She thought, she started thinking, right? . . . I don't think it was my boyfriend because he didn't follow me to my community but just left me there. . . . My boyfriend wasn't like that, she said. He wasn't like that. He comes and we talk. . . . She started thinking that he was different: Why does he come and leave me like that? So she says: . . . It is a deer that has fallen in love with me. It is said it appeared transformed as if it was her boyfriend. (TKU/A/04/40a:1.)

A real human boyfriend would not have left her in the forest by herself but would have come along to the community where she lived. He would have wanted to live close to her. It was thus the strange – even immoral – behaviour of the boyfriend that made the woman suspect that it was really not a man but a brocket deer. Similarly, in the case of the woman and her daughter hearing the call of what seemed to be the woman's husband referred to above, it was the unusual behaviour of the husband which led the women to suppose that the caller was, in fact, a brocket deer. The centrality of morality in detecting different persons' human or non-human condition has been noted also by Aparecida Vilaça (see also Griffiths 2001). In one Wari' narration a child follows what she thinks to be her mother to the forest to gather fruits but at some point discovers that the mother has a jaguar tail, which it hides between its legs. Vilaça (2005: 458) notes that 'the child only saw the jaguar as a mother because it acted as such, inviting her to walk in the forest and taking care of her in just the same ways as a mother would a child. The jaguar form emerges at the moment in which the child starts to suspect the behaviour of this mother.'

Still more commonly the brocket deer's otherness is detected from its insuperable desire for sex. The deer-man or woman was said when encountered to want to make love to the person almost directly. This should, according to the Yine people, ring a bell, since no real human being asks for sex directly: 'When it is a legitimate [person], like equal to us, a person, it does not ask you right away to make love' (TKU/A/04/52a:1). 'A woman never asks you to have sex quickly, right? Neither the man, nor the woman. Instead, they have to respect you' (TKU/A/05/40b:7). The brocket deer's outspoken desire for sex thus reveals its 'true' nature to the human person. A true human being wants to live close to family and kin and does not ask for sex straight away. Real human beings respect each other and act accordingly. As Carlos D. Londoño-Sulkin (2005: 12–13) has shown for Muinane people, 'different beings in the world have social lives roughly analogous to their own, but usually flawed in ways that exemplify the undesirable. . . . Animals constitute – each species in its own way – failures in moral sociality.'

In the light of the discussion above, it therefore seems that although Amerindian social cosmoes incorporate various humanities instead of just one shared human point of view, these humanities are, as Santos-Granero (2006:74–75) notes, on the one hand not of equal value,⁴⁰ but on the other, none of them is superior to the others either. This is because these points of view or perspectives are always the outcome of a relationship and cannot be determined *a priori*. This in a way calls also into question the ontological facet of Viveiros de Castro's (1998: 477) formulation according to which Amerindian cosmoes are multi-naturalist instead of multi-culturalist, i.e. that 'all beings see ("represent") the world in the same way – what changes is the world that they see'. Tania Stolze Lima has aptly delineated the problemacy when she states (1999: 123) that 'framing this problem [the simultaneous existence of different points of view] in relativistic terms and then invoking an "ultimate truth" would amount to failing to perceive the nature of the problem'. According to my experiences among the Yine, and as has also been noted in relation to other Amazonian ethnic groups (Lima 1999; Rosengren 2006), the Amazonian peoples do not as a rule dwell on ontological questions; hence what surfaces in relation to the perspectival logics are questions of epistemology rather than of ontology. What interests the Yine in their relations with the brocket deer and with other non-human beings is not the nature and existence of some 'ultimate reality' but the question of maintaining a mastery over one's own human point of view. All in all, then, we can state that there is much more variety to perspectivism than the original formulation of the theory by Viveiros de Castro suggests (see Londoño-Sulkin 2005; Rosengren 2006a; Santos-Granero 2006).

Brocket-deer narrations remained a meaningful part of contemporary Yine life because, as I have shown, the narrations addressed one of the central themes in Yine social life, the transformative quality of the social cosmos in general, and one of the central means of resisting – but also of becoming vulnerable to – this transformability, proximity, in particular. Proximity in its different forms was constructive of Yine persons and relationships. In social interaction common physicality and relatedness was formed not only through living close to one another and exchanging sexual fluids but also through thinking, as in the case of the brocket deer following the Yine woman's filiation. But proximity could also be destructive when illegitimate. If a person engaged in a relationship with a non-human, they began losing consubstantiality with humans and their point of view began to change. It was in these instances when the boundary between humans and non-humans was negotiated. A person could not deviate too far from the Yine understanding of a proper proximity. Human encounters with brocket deer were therefore also instances where the interface between the individual and the collective became exposed. How much could the boundary be stretched before a person's actions became no longer acceptable? The type

⁴⁰ In the case of the Yine the reasons for this are different from those presented by Santos-Granero (2006) on the basis of his work among the Yanéscha. As noted above (note 37), according to Santos-Granero animals and spirits are not aware of the perspectival nature of perception whereas among the Yine, at least the brocket deer is attributed this kind of reflexive consciousness.

of proximal relations a person was engaged in was one way of evaluating how far a person had possibly deviated from what was held to be a proper socio-moral human condition.

However, this was not the only meaning the Yine of Diamante gave to the brocket-deer narrations. The figure also remained meaningful for the Yine because it could be related both to the fundamental question of the origin and cause of animal metamorphoses as well as to people's interpretations of the changes taking place in their socio-moral environment. It was especially the Yine Evangelicals who seemed to be concerned with the positioning of the brocket deer and the idea of animal metamorphosis within their present-day social and moral understandings. This, I assume, was largely due to their elevated interest in the message of the Bible in comparison with the Catholic Yine and to their consequent greater challenge in finding and establishing some degree of coherence or unity between the Word of God and their experiences of the transformative nature of the social cosmos.

Souls, sins and brocket deer

Whereas in most questions concerning the metamorphosis of the brocket deer people in Diamante were – despite the multitude of different opinions over particularities – of one mind on the question of the brocket deer's motivation for metamorphosing and deceiving people, the Evangelicals seemed to differ from the Catholics to some extent. Although people were unanimous that the deer acted on the memories and desires in a person's heart and that it aimed to win people over to its side, to make them similar because it was in its nature, many Evangelicals also had an additional explanation. In their view, the animal metamorphosed because Satan entered its heart (TKU/A/05/47a:3). The Evangelical pastor explained: 'They transform because, as the Word of God tells, Satan enters the heart of every person and also the animals: Satan enters in its heart and that is why it transforms into a human so that it can deceive people' (TKU/A/05/45b:3). More specifically, some Evangelicals explained that it was because of people's sins that the brocket deer metamorphosed. Although ordinary people rarely spoke about it, the idea of original sin caused by the Fall was something the Evangelical pastor often preached about. The point he wished to make was that since everybody was a sinner owing to original sin, it was all too easy to give in to Satan's temptations. The only means to resist sinning was to control one's thoughts and actions, which was only possible if one actively participated in Christian worship. Nevertheless, although original sin was shared by all, sins (Yine: *mukochri* or *gocha* from Quechua *huča*) people more often talked about seemed to be in the first

place considered an individual matter.⁴¹ Sins were those thoughts and actions which contradicted the Word of God. According to the Evangelicals, the worst sins were murder, adultery, illegitimate sex, robbery and getting drunk. It was these sins which could also enter the deer – an Evangelical woman explained to me in an interview – as in the biblical story of Jesus driving Satan out of a man into a herd of pigs.

- Woman I believe that perhaps . . . To me it seems that perhaps. . . when one has a lot of sins then it is said to appear. That is what I also think. . .
- Minna But how can it have sins if it is just an animal?
- Woman No, when *our* sins enter the deer, that's what I think.
- Minna Aa . . . and how do our sins enter it?
- Woman Like in the case of the leper. Like the Word of God says, there was a leper I think, right? He could not walk, right? And [the demon] entered a pig. That's how it has to be, I think. (TKU/A/05/53c:4.)

Even though the woman talks about a leper, I think she is referring to the biblical story of the Gaderene/Gerasene swine, in which Jesus meets one or two demon-possessed men who act violently and the demons ask Jesus to drive them out of the men into a herd of pigs. Jesus exorcises the demons and the herd of pigs rushes down a steep slope into a lake.⁴² (Mark 5:1–13; Matt 8:28–32; Luke 8:26–32.) It remains unclear whether the woman thinks that Jesus or God drives persons' sins into deer but given that these sins are the reason why deer try to seduce people I think this is not the case. Rather, it seems that as the deer is able to know what a person feels in her heart (filled with sin), these sins enter also the heart of the deer, causing it to metamorphose. The deer is thus like the pigs in the biblical story and the human person is like a demon-possessed man.

But there seemed to be more to the issue of a person's sins entering a deer than the above extract reveals. Although only scantily alluded to by the same Evangelical woman, I think the connection she made during our

⁴¹ Matteson (1965: 309) translates *mukochri* (*mukotš'i*) as 'to displease a supernatural being, fail to observe taboo'. However, I think that the Yine in Diamante did not conceptualise sins in the first place as something taking place between a human being and a supernatural being. Rather, as Matteson notes that sin in the Yine language means also to cause damage to others by failing to observe a taboo, I think a person may act erroneously towards a non-human but the consequences of the act and therefore the guilt of the sin are directed towards other people.

⁴² The version in the Gospel of Mark (5:1–3, 6–8, 11–13) reads: "They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain. – When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won't torture me!" For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you evil spirit!" – A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." He gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned."

conversation between people's sins entering a brocket deer and the souls of the deceased was not just a matter of misunderstanding or a slip of tongue. Her view came as a response to my question about how the brocket deer knew what someone's husband looks like in order to mimic his appearances when appearing before a person in the forest:

- Minna You'll go to the forest and [a deer] appears like him. But how does he know what [your husband] looks like?
 Woman I told you because. . . the devil is also entering him. Because the devil is also listening to us right now, but we just don't see it.
 Minna So it would be the devil that makes it look like that?
 Woman Aha. . . I think that perhaps it is sins of the dead people. That's what I think. [Laughs.]
 Minna Of what dead people?
 Woman Of dead people, I say.
 Minna Aa . . . any dead people?
 Woman Yhm . . . any dead people. (TKU/A/05/53c:4.)

At the time, I could not continue pressing the point, but I think she was indeed referring to the (sins of the) the souls of the dead people entering the deer. This interpretation is supported by ethnographic material from other Amazonian indigenous peoples. Among many Amazonian groups like the Jivaroan Achar (Taylor 1993) and – perhaps more importantly for the case of the Yine – especially among the Arawakan-speaking Matsigenka and Asháninka it is a common belief that the souls of the dead enter into deer. That is the main reason why these peoples avoid eating the meat of this animal. (Baer 1994: 111; see also Rosengren 1987: 65; Weiss 1975: 291; Descola 1996b: 92.)⁴³ According to Farabee (1971 [1922]: 55–56) the Yine also still refused, at least at the beginning of the twentieth century, to eat common red deer 'because the soul of man at death goes into the red deer'.⁴⁴ Farabee compares this custom to that of the Matsigenka and writes that the Yine (Piro) belief 'in this respect is similar to that of the Macheyenga, except that among the Piro it is only the man's soul, not the woman's, that goes into the deer'.⁴⁵ Although no one else told me so, the Evangelical woman's statement would seem to suggest that some

⁴³ The Araweté do not share the widespread Amazonian belief in the 'recycling' of the dead into game animals, and of dead animals into human souls or humanlike agents, although they do have the notion of animal spirits. Among the Araweté, deer (as well as tapir, howler monkeys and fish) must be shamanised before being consumed rather because they liberate 'shamanic stuff' and spirits that must be killed. (Viveiros de Castro 1992: 136–137; 355n19; see also Whitten 1976: 201n7.)

⁴⁴ The deer the Yine nowadays consider inedible is not the red but the grey brocket deer. (TKU/A/04/52a:1; TKU/A/04/54:3; TKU/A/04/40d:5; TKU/A/05/44a:2.) Farabee's account on this point cannot, however, be held entirely reliable but only suggestive considering the many other errors found in his descriptions.

⁴⁵ According to Farabee (1971 [1922]: 14), the Matsigenka belief was once generated by an incident in which somebody had seen how a red deer came out of the grave of a recently buried man and from then on they have believed that the soul of a human being goes into the deer. Although such an incident may have been experienced, it was most likely not the sole origin of this view.

connection between souls of the dead and the brocket deer was still alive among the Yine. In fact, I was told that the soul of a dead sinner could go into animals, although the brocket deer was not explicitly mentioned in this context. Such animals would be distinguished from others based on their abnormal behaviour: they could come close to the community and would not be afraid of people.⁴⁶

Furthermore, even though not making the connection between the deceased and the deer, Peter Gow shows that the Yine of Urubamba also view brocket deer as inedible because of their demonic nature. His analysis, however, differs to some extent from mine, based on my experiences among the Yine in Madre de Dios. Gow (2001: 65) writes that ‘Demons are “human” because they have “knowledge”, the knowledge of sorcery. Sorcery is thought of as a mode of predation, with the victim becoming the “game animal” of the sorcerer. Demonic deer only look like deer, for they are actually demons, and, as such, inedible.’ Even though the Yine of Diamante as well said that the deer has its *pusanga*, its magic, which it uses against people, and they also demonise the deer, I would not in the first place conceptualise the interaction between deer and human beings as one of hunting or warfare, as one between predator and prey. Over and over again, the Yine juxtaposed the situation in which a non-human – whether a soul of the deceased, a brocket deer or some other being – tried to take humans with it and make them similar to it with the relationship between the Yine and their pets. Just as the Yine took baby birds and other young animals they found and raised them, so did non-humans (such as *kamchitskeru*, the bone demon) take humans, especially children (see Chapter 1), to be raised by them. Therefore, rather than being a relationship between predator and prey as most other analyses of perspectival relations argue (Viveiros de Castro [1998: 471] states, for instance, that ‘one of the central dimensions, possibly even the fundamental dimension, of perspectival inversions refers to the relative and relational statuses of predator and prey; see also Lima 1999), the relationship between humans and brocket deer is characterised by the same elements of sociable relations that also mark human–human relations, through which people intend to transform others into being similar to them. (Opas 2005.) Among the Yine, human–brocket-deer relations were therefore more a question of positive relationships, of conviviality and similarity, than of negative or dangerous ones. The end result, nevertheless, is the same as in predation: the person is taken over by the deer’s point of view.

Changes taking place in people’s social worlds and in their way of life had their influence also on the actions of non-humans in the Yine social cosmos. For instance, according to the Yine the brocket deer no longer metamorphosed as often as before. Even though, as stated by one of Esther Matteson’s (1965) interviewees, in the mid-twentieth century, the brocket deer had been seen to metamorphose also in Manu, now some people in Diamante believed that in the Manu/Madre de Dios area the deer now no

⁴⁶ In one case the soul of a man who had committed suicide was said to have entered a jaguar, which had come to the community on several subsequent days. When shot at, the jaguar had not died immediately but only after several attempts.

longer metamorphosed but in the Urubamba area they still did. Others claimed that the deer could still be heard calling people but it no longer appeared before them. Representative of this ambiguity was the opinion of one Catholic man, who said: 'That's how it was before, but now it is not like that any more. It's no longer like it used to be, but nevertheless it can also still appear nowadays. If it [sees] someone it can appear. Sometimes it happens like that to someone.' (TKU/A/05/44a:2.)

It was perhaps people's experience that the deer did not appear as often as they used to according to the stories told by elderly people, but most adults, as noted, had heard the deer calling them in the woods. Often people did not reflect much on the reasons: it just was like that. Some people, however, explained the diminishing number of animal metamorphoses by the increased number of people living in communities, by the lower number of hunting trips made or by people putting their trust nowadays in God (see Chapter 6). Again, some Evangelicals had an additional view on the issue.⁴⁷ One woman explained that the cessation of metamorphoses was an act of God himself:

At the time of Adam and Eve . . . the serpent also metamorphosed as a person. . . . God himself told him: 'And now you'll have to [crawl] on your stomach.' It is going to be always on the belly . . . that's what He'd say. That's what I'm thinking. Perhaps God himself has taken away [the deer's ability] . . . to metamorphose. (TKU/A/05/53c:4; see TKU/N/05/3:15.)

The woman juxtaposed the brocket deer with the serpent in the biblical story of the Fall and used the story as an explanation for the diminished number of encounters with a metamorphosed brocket deer. In her interpretation the serpent-devil first metamorphoses as a human being, as a man, and tempts Eve and Adam into tasting the fruit of knowledge. Consequently, God turns it permanently into a serpent that no longer is able to metamorphose but has to crawl on the ground.⁴⁸ Similarly, God has now taken away the brocket deer's ability to take a human form and therefore it no longer appears to people in a human form as often as it used to. And as the Word of God keeps coming closer, its appearances will diminish further (see Chapter 6).

This is a good example of the Bible not being conceived as contradictory to the socio-moral world the Yine lived in. On the contrary, the Bible was understood as providing ontological explanations of the nature of the world and of different beings' place in it. Like the Yine narrations about non-humans, Bible stories were considered not only as something belonging to the mythic past but as valuable assets in analysing the changes – such as the decreased number of encounters with the brocket deer – taking place in people's present-day social environment. In the case presented above, the brocket deer narratives were in a way used for understanding and

⁴⁷ One man reckoned that in the past people's sins abounded and therefore also the brocket deer metamorphosed more often. However, in other places he referred to the past as being more tranquil than the present, which is filled with different problems and sin.

⁴⁸ For Amazonian interpretations of Bible stories see Murphy 1958: 79–82; Wiik 2004a: 275–276.

making meaningful the biblical stories of the Fall, but at the same time the biblical stories helped legitimise the Yine 'ancient people's stories' and the erstwhile lived everyday experiences they presented. Similar connection is found also in the case of Yine narrations of the white-lipped peccaries, to which I shall now turn.

CHAPTER 3

In search of a tranquil life by the Shallow River

It was a late Saturday afternoon in Diamante in April 2005. The day had been extremely hot but the heat had already begun to cool down. I had spent the entire day with the women of one family in the lower part of the community digging up and peeling manioc and making manioc beer. Arriving home after a refreshing wash, I was told that a large herd of white-lipped peccaries was crossing the river Upper Madre de Dios from the Manu National Park to the community's side and were unable to ascend the high and steep river bank. People, men as well as women, from almost every family had already left for the site, some by foot, others by boat and canoe, each armed with whatever they had at hand: rifles, bows and arrows, spears, machetes and clubs. I too headed towards the upper end of the community but as night was falling by then, I had to turn back. Back at home the hunters were just arriving with their prey. Judging by a quick glance at some of the boats, I could see that dozens of animals were killed that evening. Until late at night people were excitedly discussing and going through the episode over and over again, in part because they were delighted by the abundance of 'real food' obtained for the meals of the following weeks but probably also because of the still active adrenaline rush generated by the somewhat risky hunt. Over the following days the community was filled with the smell of meat being smoked. (TKU/N/05/3:9; cf. Lima 1999: 108; Rival 1996: 155-156.)

Myths about white-lipped peccaries in the subterranean world

The white-lipped peccary (Yine: *giyalu*; Spanish: *huangana*) is one of the most important game animals of the Yine. It is the most desirable and, during certain times of the year, the most common game the men bring back from their hunting trips. Since food – and especially real food (game-meat and fish), as seen above in Chapter 1 – is crucial for the Yine in their quest for a good life it comes as no surprise that this valuable animal should appear in many Yine myths and narratives as well. In addition to hunts, interaction with the white-lipped peccary takes many variable forms in Yine everyday life and experiences. Some people described to me how a white-lipped peccary had appeared to them or to someone they knew in dreams in a human form, protesting against the excessive hunting of these animals, and others told how their newborn babies had been taken vengeance (Yine: *gapnuru*; Spanish: *cutipar*) by a white-lipped peccary killed by the father of

the child. The most common storyline told to me, however, and one known already from Yine myths recorded by Ricardo Alvarez and Esther Matteson in the 1950s and 1960s, tells about white-lipped peccaries that live in the subterranean world.

According to the Yine, beneath this world there is another called *Mtengatwenu*, the 'Shallow River'. The other world is similar to this world: there is a sun, a moon, stars, rivers, game, white-lipped peccaries and people, Yine kinspeople. Humans from this world, at least in the past, could enter the subterranean world through a hole in the ground to which they were usually led by following one or more white-lipped peccaries during their hunting trips. One version of this 'ancient people's story' was told to me by an Evangelical man perhaps in his late seventies:¹

Yes, it is said it exists. . . . There is a herd of white-lipped peccaries and they can go inside the earth. And a man said: 'I'll follow the white-lipped peccaries'. And he followed them all the way to where there was [a hole], where they could enter . . . He ran to reach them and said: 'I'll leave my arrow just here. I'll follow them.' He followed them all the way to the hole which they had entered and went . . . all the way inside he went as well. . . . He wanted to return but could not return because the hole had shrunk . . . he could not leave. So he went further and further in.

When he arrived inside it was just like here [on this earth]. The white-lipped peccaries live there just as we do. But when he saw them they lived like pigs. They had their enclosure, they had an Owner, a girl, her who takes care of the white-lipped peccaries. And the Owner scolded him: 'You are the one who treats my white-lipped peccaries badly. You treat them badly.' . . . *'Why don't you kill them properly? Kill them. Don't just hurt them but kill them for good so that they won't come here wounded and get skinny' . . . she said. 'If you wish to kill my pets (*cria*)', she said, 'kill them properly, don't send them here wounded because they suffer here.' She removes arrows [from the pigs] because the arrows pierce them, because before they did not use rifles. She removed them and guarded them in the houses and so there were lots of arrows already, arrows that she had removed. That is why it is said there are skinny white-lipped peccaries and there are fat white-lipped peccaries; those are not wounded.* . . . She scolded harshly the man who had followed them there. . . . He could not answer her because she was the Owner and he came there because he was following the white-lipped peccaries. She looked at her pigs. She examined them. Every single one she examines and they are always wounded. They are pierced and wounded and she starts to cure them so that the white-lipped peccaries can be healthy. After that – there is a stream, not a very big but just a small one – she tells the man to sit down: 'I'll serve you my drink (*chapo*):' He drank.

He was there inside the earth for one month, for one month he stayed there. Others said he was lost already. But he was inside the earth and there were lots of white-lipped peccaries that live there. They have their Owner. There is a corral where they can live tranquilly. They have their corral just like pigs so that they cannot escape and there are streams, there is everything, they lacked nothing. Just like [we live here] they lived there. But

¹ The man told the story in Yine and one woman translated it to me during the same interview. The order of the narrative has been changed to enhance readability. The original place of the section now in between the two * -signs is by the sign □ in the text.

there was also another village there where people lived. But often he thought: 'When will I leave from here?' And after one month a giant armadillo . . . said: 'I'm going to go now to the other earth.' 'Can you take me with you?', [the man asked.] 'Yes, I can take you with me. I'll take you to the other earth.' . . .

[His wife] thought he had got lost while hunting. . . . He related everything that had happened to him inside the earth: how the white-lipped peccaries lived there, how they had their Owner, their stream, and that people lived there. He told everything, the history of the white-lipped peccaries. So they all understood that the white-lipped peccary has its Mother. She has them as pigs. They live happily and when we treat them badly the Owner gets angry. ▫ That's why he told it. He said that he has seen it and that's why he told it. It is not a lie. (TKU/A/05/38a:4; cf. Alvarez 1960a: 152–153.)

Peter Gow has previously analysed this myth of the man who goes to the subterranean world as a myth about human mortality and the relationship between the living and the dead metaphorically seen in the relationship between humans and white-lipped peccaries (Gow 2001: 56). Gow bases his analysis on the examination of four different versions of the same myth recorded and published separately. These are 'The Mother of the White-Lipped Peccaries' recorded by Ricardo Alvarez in the 1950s, 'The Shallow River' told by Juan Sebastián Pérez in 1968 and published in the Yine school reader *Gwacha Ginkakle*, 'The Sun' told by the same Sebastián and published by Esther Matteson in *The Piro (Arawakan) Language* (1965), and 'A Man Who Went under the Earth' told to Gow by Artemio Fasabi Gordón in 1982. Gow shows how these myths, despite their divergences, all discuss the ontological questions of human existence and in particular the human relationship to death. This theme emerges especially in the versions told by Artemio Fasabi and Juan Sebastián.

In Fasabi's version 'A Man Who Went under the Earth' white-lipped peccaries living in the subterranean world are shown to conform to the dead. The man who in the narrative goes to the subterranean world changes his human clothing into that of a peccary and is hence seen as one of the peccaries. However, when he returns to the world above his family no longer recognises him and rejects him. Only his eldest son accepts him and returns with him to the subterranean world. This, Gow (2001: 64) argues, corresponds with the relationship of the dead with the living. The dead kinspeople, as I have shown in Chapter 1, are no longer accepted among the living even though they come to fetch their loved ones with them. The man in a sense had therefore turned into a dead person. In Sebastián's version 'The Sun', the protagonist arriving in the subterranean world is considered dead by the different beings residing there. Upon his arrival, the man receives *pusanga* in his eyes and consequently his sight is changed. He sees the subterranean world as a world of the peccaries but the different beings there see him as 'one who has thrown his clothing away'. Gow juxtaposes this episode with the Yine custom of throwing the clothes and belongings of a dead person in the river (Gow 2001: 64). Unlike the man in Fasabi's version, this protagonist returns to his family and is received well there.

Based on these myths, Gow argues that the white-lipped peccaries in the subterranean world correspond to human beings and 'stand for the

mutability of the central character's point of view and ontological condition' (Gow 2001: 65). If the peccaries in the subterranean world are like Yine people, the upper world for them has to be the sky. Similarly, for humans living in this world the upper world, the sky, is the abode of the dead. (Gow 2001: 66; see Alvarez 1960a: 199–201.) Gow finds further evidence in support of this interpretation from the etymology of the central words in these myths, which, as he shows, point to the theme of death and dying. The Yine words for a hole and the dead are derived from the same root *-pna*. The Yine word for a 'hole' is *kapna*, for a 'corpse' *gipnachri* and for 'dying' *gipna*. Gow (2001: 64) writes that '[i]n this sense, a man who falls into or goes down into a hole is, by definition, a dead man'.²

Connecting both the subterranean world and the white-lipped peccaries with the realm of the dead is not unique in Amazonia. Similar accounts are found for instance among the Txapakura-speaking Wari' (Vilaça 1997; 2000; Conklin 1995), Tupi-speaking Juruna (Lima 1999), Tukano-speaking Airo-Paj (Belaunde 2001) and Desana (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971; 1985), the Arawá-speaking Kulina (Pollock 1992) and the Harakmbut-speaking Arakmbut (Gray 1997). Some of these peoples, like the Juruna, see the connection as symbolic: the peccaries are like the dead in that they live in subterranean villages and try to capture human beings (Lima 1999: 112). For others, like the Wari' and the Desana, the souls of the dead are said to literally turn into peccaries (Vilaça 1997 and Reichel-Dolmatoff

² Esther Matteson translates the root *-pna* also as anus. Gow (2001: 71) manages to relate this meaning too to the theme of death, stating how the ultimate destiny of white-lipped peccaries is to come out of human anuses after being digested and how the ultimate destiny of people is to be buried and to rot in a hole, the grave. See also Cordeu 2002: 260, 265.

1971, respectively).³

In Amazonian cosmologies white-lipped peccaries are thus closely connected with the destiny of the dead and the theme of death in general. According to Gow, however, Yine myths about the white-lipped peccaries and the subterranean world can also be considered to be about cosmogony: about the origin of the sun, the moon and the constellations. In Sebastián's version 'The Sun', the shallow river is considered to correspond to the route of the sun when it travels across the sky during the day. The myth is also held to explain the origin of the Pleiades. Even though these themes no longer appeared in the myths told to Gow in the 1980s, he sees the myth told to him by Artemio Fasabi as 'a privileged point at which certain aspects of "ancient people's knowledge" can be brought into relationship with the potent knowledge of *gringos*' (Gow 2001: 56, 77). The myth of the structure of the cosmos is used to communicate with white people's 'scientific' knowledge about the universe and so a dialogue between these two modes of knowledge, those of the Yine and white people, may be established. Thus, Gow suggests, these myths have served as points of dialogue concerning knowledge of writing, the cosmos and the destination of the dead, and questions of the human condition and the tenability of the myths (Gow 2001: 77).

The themes of the myth about the white-lipped peccaries and the subterranean world discussed above were not alien to the Yine of Diamante either. One man mentioned to me that according to his father the subterranean world is a place where the dead go. He, however, claimed not to know more about this nor did I hear it from any other person. While the narrations recounted to me and the myths analysed by Gow have many such resemblances, there are also many differences: the things that allow

³ Ethnographical accounts of the relationship between the deceased and the peccaries are many. Among the Wari', when a dead soul 'wants to see the living, it transforms into a white-lipped peccary, and comes up to the earth' from the house of the dead in the sub-aquatic world. When a peccary is killed 'the soul is freed again and goes back to the waters'. (Vilaça 1997: 101–102; 2000: 97; Conklin 1995; see Cormier 2003: 147–148; Kracke 1992: 148n2.) Among the Juruna, peccaries are juxtaposed with the dead: '[b]oth are taken to live in subterranean villages and to be led by potential affines (and not kin); both become excited by the prospect of drinking beer with the Juruna and both attempt to capture them'. Human souls may also depart to live with the peccaries if the person gets frightened: 'his soul flees and is captured by the peccaries' (Lima 1999: 108, 112.) Among the Airo-Pai, if a person dreams of killing a human being it is interpreted as a good peccary hunt but dreaming of a dead peccary means that someone close will soon die. (Belaunde 2001: 78.) Among the Desana, the Master of Animals gives people game but requires human souls in compensation. Shamans are the ones who negotiate this exchange. The shaman, *payé*, 'does not ask for individual animals but asks for herds or a good hunting season, and as "payment" he promises to send to the house of *Vai-mahsë* a certain number of souls of persons who, at their death, must return to this great "storehouse" of the hills to replenish the energy of those animals the Master of Animals gives to the hunters' (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971: 82; 1985: 120; see also Karadimas 1999: 84). The Arakmbut say that part of the soul of a hunter that has had good relations with white-lipped peccaries during his life will join the peccaries (Gray 1997: 31). Finally, among the Culina 'the peccary is a social, gregarious animal, which often appears in myth and ritual representing Culina themselves. . . . The souls of the dead, if properly conducted to the *nami budi* [underground world], are eaten by and are transformed into peccaries, but those not properly conducted to the *nami budi* wander the earth and are ultimately eaten by jaguars.' (Pollock 1992: 29–30.)

for interpreting the narrations as being about the mutability of people's points of view and their ontological condition were, if not absent from, at least very marginal in the narrations I heard in Diamante. In addition, while several of the narratives about the subterranean world I was told – like the one above – could be classified as myths or mythic narratives, the majority of the accounts were based on Yine personal experiences of observing and interacting with the white-lipped peccaries in their everyday lives. They were thus concerned with the Yine present-day lived world and expectations for the future. These differences with Gow's analysis led me to explore other possible meanings of the interaction with peccaries and the narrations about the subterranean world for the Yine people. Concentrating especially on the themes of social relations and relatedness in these personal-experience narrations and 'ancient people's stories', I began to see that what they were mostly about and what people emphasised was the (unattainable) ideal of tranquil and burden-free living. Thus, in what follows I shall examine the many different ways in which through the narrations and experiences of the white-lipped peccaries and the subterranean world the Yine communicate and reproduce the socio-moral value of tranquillity.

The enormous value that Amazonian peoples place on tranquillity in their social life has been noted by many Amazonianists (e.g. Alès 2000; Belaunde 2000b; Ellis 1997; Gow 2000; Kidd 1999; 2000; Overing 1988; Overing & Passes 2000a). Tranquil social life is something people constantly strive for but which has to be carved out from the multiplicity of social relations and forces influencing the social cosmos. In most of these accounts the greatest danger for achieving this condition of tranquil conviviality is considered to come from within the Amazonian peoples' own communities in the form of individual anger, which is destructive of both the person and the collective. In the Yine narrations and accounts of the subterranean world, however, the value of tranquillity is not depicted or defined so much against the background of violence and mayhem caused by individual antagonism as against that of people's fear of social deconstruction caused by some uncontrollable outside force. Therefore, although the tranquillity of social life in the community of Diamante was often endangered by domestic violence and conflicts between individuals and families, which could develop into physical confrontations, the narratives and accounts discussed in this chapter direct attention away from this level of personal relationships to that of maintenance of the collectivity in the face of external threats. The importance of achieving and maintaining tranquil conviviality comes up in Yine myths about the white-lipped peccaries in all the different social relations the myths portray: in the relations between the Mother of the White-Lipped Peccaries and the Yine man descending to the other world and their relations to their people, between the Yine man and the white-lipped peccaries, and finally within the group of Yine people as a collectivity. The same theme is also at the heart of Yine accounts of their present-day experiences of interacting with the white-lipped peccaries and views about the subterranean world: how the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries still provides people with game meat and how the establishment of the Manu National Park – despite also causing inconveniences – has

worked in favour of the Mother's actions, as well as how the underworld together with the Christian heaven are considered places of abundance and refuge in the face of insuperable threats. I shall first discuss the theme of tranquillity as it emerges from the mythic versions of narratives about the subterranean world the Yine told me and then move on to study it in the context of Yine everyday personal experiences.

Shamans of the upper and of the subterranean worlds

The mythic narratives concerning the subterranean world I was told in Diamante can be seen to treat in particular the theme of what are the right and necessary conditions for people to be able to live well. In the narrations this theme is manifested through the several social relations the myths depict and especially through the actions of the two protagonists in the narrative: the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries and the Yine man descending to the other world. In the versions of the myths I was told emphasis is laid largely on how these figures work towards generating proper conditions for living for their people. What is of interest in this respect are therefore the protagonists' relations with their people as well as with each other.

Both Ricardo Alvarez (1960a: 152–153) and Peter Gow (2001: 67–70) have previously perceived the protagonists in the myth, the Mother and the man, as shamanic characters. The shamanistic nature of these figures is discernible also in the versions I heard in Diamante. One of the aspects usually attributed to shamans is their work as healers. In the Yine myths, the Mother of the White-lipped Pecacries exemplifies this facet. When removing hunting arrows from wounded animals the Mother is acting like a human shaman removing small invisible darts from patients' bodies by sucking. As the narrator in the above version says: 'She looked at her pigs. She examined them. Every single one she examines and they are always wounded. They are pierced and wounded and she starts to cure them so that the white-lipped peccaries can be healthy.' (TKU/A/05/38a:4; Gow 2001: 69.) Because of being hit by hunters' arrows in the above world, some peccaries are slim while those that have not been victimised by humans remain fat. Like humans when they are ill, the wounded peccaries lose weight and suffer. Nevertheless, under the care of the Mother who removes the pernicious arrows they may grow fat again and continue living well. Good health, as will be further discussed below in Chapter 5, thus appears as one of the central prerequisites for good life.

The man descending to the subterranean world also clearly resembles a shaman in his actions. (TKU/A/05/38a:4; Gow 2001: 69.) He functions not so much as a healing shaman as a leader taking care of his people by providing them with another necessity for living well, that is, game. In the narrative cited above, the man was said to receive a horn (Yine: *kowi*) from the Mother so that he could call the animals near whenever his people were hungry.



Figures 13 and 14. On the left, a horn, *kowi*, used for assembling Evangelical meetings. On the right, one of the Evangelical brothers blowing the horn

When he came out of the hole of the white-lipped peccaries, the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries gave him [an instrument] for blowing . . . and he had it in his power. . . . When they did not have anything to eat . . . he went to the forest to blow it. And the white-lipped peccaries came near and he told his people: 'Now go to kill the white-lipped peccaries.' And they went to kill them. . . . 'I will give you this horn', which we call *kowi*. 'I will give you this but you'll never eat white-lipped peccary again', that is what she said to him. . . . It was for his people. He blows and the white-lipped peccaries respond quickly and they walk close by so that people can go to kill them. . . . He only sends them but he does not eat them. (TKU/A/05/38a:4.)

In a manner resembling the calls of the metamorphosed brocket deer discussed in the previous chapter, the sound of the horn serves as a means to attract different beings and as an invitation to social interaction (Gow 2001: 147; see Chaumeil 2001; Lima 1999; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971: 223). Many other sounds in Yine daily life also have this same capacity or purpose; different malevolent beings such as the *tunchi* whistle in a flute-like manner to attract people, a big bell is used for calling children to school in the mornings and a horn calls the Evangelicals to their weekly meetings at their church. But the horn used by the man in the myth also has other qualities. The instrument in his possession, the man acquires power over a certain species of animal. The horn does not attract all animals but summons solely the white-lipped peccaries. Thus, it is manifested as a

means of dominating and gaining knowledge over the secrets of a certain species.⁴ Corresponding items are not absent from today's world either. A Yine man in his fifties told me how he had once found *pusanga de sajino*, the fetish of the collared peccary, inside a peccary he had killed. By carrying this fetish with him when hunting, he said, the collared peccaries had come close to him, so making it easy for him to provide food for his family. His wife commented on the issue by saying that 'during that time we were never hungry'. At some point the man, however, lost this fetish and consequently became deprived of his ability to hunt collared peccaries.

In spite of the powers the man in the narrative was endowed with by possessing the horn, the instrument was not in the first place used to exercise power over other beings. It was also not a means to gain individual prestige or power. The man himself did not personally benefit from using the horn but was blowing it to benefit his kin. Even though he had the ability to summon peccaries for people to kill them, he himself was forbidden to eat the meat. Viveiros de Castro (1992: 346n34; see Chaumeil 2001: 91) points out that among the Araweté '[w]hat characterizes the "owner" of a species is that he does not eat this species; he takes care of it . . . and controls its reproduction'. The man in the myth thus resembles such an Owner. He does not eat the most valuable game animal of human beings⁵ and takes care of his fellow humans by generating the right conditions for living well by providing them with game and the possibility of an easy hunt.⁶ The correspondence of the owners of animal species and shamans is further demonstrated by various Amazonian ethnographies. For instance, among the Juruna the shaman is the person who takes care of the subsistence needs of his fellow humans. The shaman may in his dream see a peccary-shaman transforming into a man and after establishing a friendly relationship with him by offering him a cigar he may ask the peccary-shaman to arrange with him a location and day when the peccaries will traverse the river for people to hunt them.⁷ (Lima 1999: 109–110.) The shaman among the Juruna is thus the person who arranges peccaries to be hunted by other people, just as in the Yine version the man blows the horn in order to summon the peccaries for his people.⁸

⁴ Similar themes are found in other Yine myths as well. For instance, in the story about a giant bat, *kopupu*, metamorphosed as a human being, some Yine women wanted to obtain the bat's flute in order to gain its songs and thus its knowledge (TKU/A/04/40d:6). Corresponding myths are found in various Amerindian mythologies (e.g. Murphy & Murphy 2004; Sullivan 1988:431–440.)

⁵ In order to provide his people with game, the Yine man of the myth cannot join in the eating of the meat. In this manner, he socially distances himself from his kin. As will be explored in Chapter 5, similar distancing needs to take place when shamans, as well as ordinary Yine people, use psychoactive substances.

⁶ Also, if we consider proper humanity to be formed through food relations, the man in a way has the key to control human social reproduction.

⁷ Among the Manchineri Indians living in the state of Acre in Brazil and closely related to the Yine, white-lipped peccaries may teach both good and evil things to people taking *ayahuasca* (Pirjo Virtanen, personal communication).

⁸ For a similar case among the Kulina see Pollock 2004: 205.

In their own ways, both the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries and the Yine man therefore resemble, or are, shamans. But what stands out in the way they are portrayed in the myths is the emphasis on the light side of shamanism instead of the dark: both protagonists are benevolent and aim to help their people. Unlike in the myth recorded by Alvarez (1960a: 152–153; cf. Wright 2002b: 226), in which the man steals the horn from the Mother of the Peccaries and is thus able to release white-lipped peccaries into the upper world, in the narratives I was told in Diamante the same benign tone that dominates the protagonists' relations with their people also characterises the relationship between the two shamans: the Mother gives the horn to the man. However, what emerges in their relationship as the key intermediary element or tool is not the horn but the hunting arrow. Observing closely the relationship between the two shamans in the mythic narrative cited above, attention is drawn to something the protagonist says when following the peccaries to the hole leading to the subterranean world. The man says: 'I'll leave my arrow just here. I'll follow them.' (TKU/A/05/38a:4.) But why should the man want to leave his arrow behind? He was, after all, hunting, that is, killing the white-lipped peccaries, which are also very capable of killing a human being. What is more, he was entering into an unknown place that could possibly be hostile. In such a situation one would presume that a man would want to carry a weapon with him. The logic behind abandoning the arrow seems to lie in what it represents. Arrows are intrinsic to predatory relations, in which they are destructive of social relations: they are a means to kill the Other.⁹ Carrying an arrow thus makes the man a predator and therefore upon entering the subterranean world he wishes to make sure that he is not seen as a threat, and hence leaves the arrow outside. The arrow is therefore seen as an instrument which can be used to draw social boundaries (cf. Rival 1996: 156–159).¹⁰ In this myth the man opts not to do so. Although there is not much in this particular story that points towards perspectival changes, we could also – following Lima's (1999) analysis discussed in the previous chapter – see the man's cautiousness as derived from his anticipation of another point of view than that of his dominating in the subterranean world. Even though the man sees himself as a hunter trying to catch peccaries, he understands that the peccaries may conceive him as a warrior trying to kill them, the humans. The man thus does not want to risk becoming killed by such an

⁹ On the other hand, arrows are also constructive of social relations: hunting with arrows is a means to acquire game meat for one's family.

¹⁰ Hunting, and especially hunting peccaries, is among many Amazonian groups conceptualised as interaction between men and women and talked about with sexual terminology (Goldman 1979: 236–237; Pollock 1992: 34; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1971: 220–221) but in this case, the attention is directed to the interaction with the man and the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries.

'enemy'.¹¹

The arrows can be seen to have another role too in the relationship between the two shamans. In the myth above, the narrator explains how the Mother removed arrows from wounded peccaries and 'guarded them in the houses and so there were lots of arrows already, arrows that she had removed'. But why does she not just throw the arrows away instead of keeping them? A consideration of contemporary Yine life may give us a clue. In spite of rifles partly replacing bows and arrows in hunting, it is still customary for Yine men in Diamante to store their arrows in the ceiling of their house to await use. Even though an inexperienced eye can hardly see them, the Yine, I am certain, can with one glance evaluate the quality and number of a man's arrows and thus also his ability as a hunter. Following this thought, the arrows the Mother in the narrative has placed in the ceilings of the houses may be understood as a means of the Mother to position herself in relation to other persons. As men's hunting arrows are in the subterranean world parallel to shamanic darts, the great number of these darts removed and guarded by the Mother can be seen as some kind of exhibitionist manifestation of her powers as a shaman. They are there as if to say: I am in charge here! Therefore the narrator also explains that the man could not answer the Mother back who was scolding him for hurting the peccaries because 'she was the Owner and he came there because he was following the white-lipped peccaries' (TKU/A/05/38a:4; TKU/A/07/71). In the subterranean world, he was in a subordinate position in relation to the Mother. The arrows then mark the nature of social relationships both in the subterranean realm as well as in the upper world.

All in all, then, the versions of this myth I was told in Diamante portray the two shamans through qualities that are generative of conviviality and social life rather than destructive of them. The protagonists' relations with their people as well as with each other emphasise the importance of good health and real food, game meat, for living well. Furthermore, the narrations also stress the significance of humans' good relations with the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries for their well-being – an issue which the people in Diamante still found vital in their lives today, as will be discussed further below.

¹¹ Leaving an arrow outside as a mark of willingness to create peaceful or even intimate social relationship is a common theme familiar from other Yine myths as well. One myth, for example, tells about a man desiring to marry an animal instead of a human girl. He sees an armadillo excavating a hole and enters this hole after her, wanting to begin living with her. In entering the hole he leaves his arrow outside. He travels to the subterranean world with the armadillo and stays there for a year. His grandfather misses him and thinks that he has been killed. However, one day a man finds his arrow outside the hole and tells the grandfather of his find. From this they know that the man has entered with an armadillo and that he might still come back some day. He is not dead. (TKU/A/05/47a:2.)

Are humans kept in corrals in the subterranean world?

In the myth about the subterranean world, the relationship between the Yine man and the white-lipped peccaries seems to touch in many ways upon the ontological questions discussed at the outset of this chapter. Various myths and stories from different parts of Amazonia maintain or suggest that the peccaries living in the subterranean world are somehow human. (Lima 1999: 109; see Descola 1996a: 130; Viveiros de Castro 1992: 67–68.) This view derives from the impression of white-lipped peccaries as animals that most resemble people.¹² They not only eat everything that people eat (Belaunde 2001: 205), but – what is most important – also live in herds and are therefore social. ‘It is this heightened sociality of the white-lipped peccaries which makes them appropriate “humans”, for, like the Piro people, they too live in large groups and, indeed, in villages or cities.’ (Gow 2001: 67; see Baer 1992: 81.) In Diamante I was told that

It is because they are many that they have a Mother. But other animals don’t have because they are few in number. White-lipped peccaries are the ones who have a Mother. . . . Others don’t, not even the collared peccary. It doesn’t have a Mother because there are only a few of them. But white-lipped peccaries do because they live in herds. (TKU/A/05/38a:4.)

Because the collared peccaries do not live in herds, they do not resemble people. For – as seen in the previous chapter – persons cannot maintain their proper human point of view in the absence of others. (See Gow 2001: 65; Lévi-Strauss 1986: 86; Vilaça 2005: 451.)

But in the Yine narrative, white-lipped peccaries are depicted acting like animals rather than humans: ‘[t]here is a corral where they can live tranquilly, they have their corral just like pigs so that they cannot escape’.¹³ How should this be interpreted? In discussing the perspectival changes in this myth Peter Gow concludes that ‘[i]n these mythic narratives, the peccaries seem to stand for the mutability of the central character’s point of view and ontological condition’.¹⁴ (Gow 2001: 65; see also Calavia 2001.) The peccaries in the subterranean world are, then, humans although they

¹² Among the Airo-Paj, white-lipped peccaries are also associated with white people, sharing the same name, *anque*, which means loud or noisy. This refers to the habit of white patrons and traders of ordering the indigenous people loudly, just as peccaries make loud noises. Also as peccaries are essential for Airo-Paj subsistence, so are white people with their commercial products. (Belaunde 2001: 206–207; see Descola 1996a: 130.)

¹³ Lévi-Strauss (1986: 87) hypothesises that the enclosures present in Mundurucú and Kayapo myths about the origin of peccaries correspond to ‘a technique of hunting that was no longer practiced and consisted of driving peccaries into enclosures where they were kept and fed before being killed according to need’. In the Yine myth the fact that in the subterranean world people killed their fattest pigs for the man to take with him to his family would also point in this direction. Nevertheless, among the Yine I have not come across any mentions of this kind of hunting method.

¹⁴ These myths relate to what Gow (2001:67) calls *shamanic discourse*, ‘where “humanity” is attributed to those who “know”, those who are shamans.

can be seen as such only by shamans. They see themselves as humans, but from the man descending to this underworld's point of view they are white-lipped peccaries. Similarly, what the man sees as a corral would be a house for the peccaries. A further sign of the white-lipped peccaries being (or having been) humans is their organisation in the world below. The animals are said to live in corrals, which, in the versions analysed by Gow (2001: 68), are divided into multiple enclosures. These enclosures, Gow suggests, correspond to Yine endogamous groups.¹⁵ One man in Diamante also described the different Yine endogamous groups by comparing them to white-lipped peccaries:

Manchineru means that they are many, like white-lipped peccaries, *gixolune*, a great number. They are a big family, a heard, *tsukakalune*. They are not tiny but huge, as the Manchineru have the tallest bodies of all. There are also Getuneru, Etene, they are also many but they are small, they are not big, they live in Puija, in Puija there are just Getuneru people. (TKU/A/05/48a:4.)¹⁶

The comparison between the white-lipped peccaries and the different Yine groups that live in separate villages – for instance the Getuneru (Etene) people in the community of Puija in the Urubamba area – would seem to support Gow's analysis. It also gives an additional, although extremely speculative, viewpoint for the arrows the owner places in the ceilings of houses. Perhaps the houses with most arrows belonged to the thin Getuneru peccaries while the fat Manchineru peccaries would live in houses with fewer arrows: they were not wounded and thus healthy and fat. Whatever the interpretation, however, there seems to be a close connection between white-lipped peccaries and humans – not only dead ones as discussed earlier, but also the living – in the Yine cosmivision.

Despite this evidence, however, when examined more closely the versions of this myth I was told seem to point away from the significance of this myth for the Yine in Diamante lying in the first place in such ontological issues. In some of these stories it was stated that in addition to the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries, there are people, Yine kinspeople, living in the subterranean world. These people are the ones living in the houses while the white-lipped peccaries live below their floors as their pigs. (TKU/A/05/35a:3.) But who then are these people who clearly do not share the same point of view with the peccaries, their pigs, but rather with the Yine

¹⁵ In a similar manner, the Arawakan Wakuenai place houses of the dead belonging to different patrilineal descent groups in the subterranean world (Hill 1993: 142).

¹⁶ Not all Yine endogamous groups receive their names from white-lipped peccaries, however. I was told that the names derive from the following species with certain characteristics and are represented by certain families living in Diamante: *Manchineru*: big and fat animals, white-lipped peccaries, numerous; *Getuneru*: white-lipped peccaries, bearded people like mestizo, smaller than Manchineru but also numerous (Etene-family); *Cushichineru*: small birds, slim animals like slim white-lipped peccaries (Cushichineri-family); *Paknuneru*: sanipanga people, bold (Trigoso-family); *Gimmuneru*: snake people, very fast (Zorrilla-family); *Kiruneru*: pifayo people, bearded (Vargas-family); *Gopshineru*: duck people, bold like Paknuneru (TKU/A/05/38b:3; TKU/A/05/36c:8; TKU/A/05/37b:8; TKU/A/05/48a:4; TKU/A/05/48c:8).

man descending to the underworld? In their accounts, people in Diamante seemed to view these people either as kin who at some point descended to the other world but who could not return because the hole in the ground was closed or – as will be further discussed below – just as people living in the other world created by God. The question therefore is, should the peccaries after all be considered just as pigs taken care of by humans? The situation is further complicated by the fact that it is only in one narrative version I was told that the protagonist is invited to visit these subterranean people. In all the other narrations the Yine man interacted exclusively with the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries, the narrators pretty much ignoring the other people after mentioning them. This is somewhat strange, because in all cases they were still said to be kinspeople (Spanish: *paisanos*; Yine: *wumolene*), with whom the Yine normally would want to interact (but see Alvarez 1972: 351–360).

It seems to me that what is at work here is the transition of the emphasis in these mythic narratives from ontological questions towards those concerning social relations – the reason why these other people were in the subterranean world was a breach in sociability, as will be discussed below – and tranquillity and good life: living in the underworld was characterised by abundance and ease. Although certain ontological issues were still clearly detectable in the myth, attention had been directed more towards questions that bore relevance for Yine contemporary life. What was important to people in these narratives were the topics they dealt with and not the cohesiveness of the whole.

Destructive menstrual blood

The final social relation taken up by these mythic narratives is that of the Yine as a collectivity, which presents us with further evidence for the centrality of the themes of sociability and tranquillity in this myth. As shown in the narrative above, the hole through which people were said to have descended to the subterranean world had been closed at some time. No reason, however, was given for this closure in most of the versions of the myth I was told. Only one Evangelical man explicitly addressed the question of why the hole had become closed. He told how the Yine people used to have the subterranean world as a refuge where they would escape the evils of this world but once a menstruating woman had tried to go through the hole, with devastating consequences.¹⁷

Before . . . let's imagine that something is happening here, problems. The people went there under the earth. It is said that there was a hole. There was also a rope . . . two ropes, one for getting out, another one for descending. That is how they descended, it is said. . . . And one with blood entered . . .

¹⁷ This is different from the account Gow (2001: 154) gives. He was told that the reason behind the closing of the hole was that old shamans, *cajunchis*, had 'deprived local people of an important game animal, the white-lipped peccaries, by hiding the hole by which these enter this world'.

gimtugachri we call her, the one that is . . . menstruating. . . . Everyone went there but there was one who was menstruating but still wanted [to enter]. . . . They didn't want to let her in. . . . The others had already entered and she came last and wanted to enter and so the hole closed. And so it was fully closed and no one could enter any longer. . . . If she had not entered the hole would still exist. . . . Until this day no one has been able to enter any more. . . . But the white-lipped peccaries continue [to use the hole]. Wherever it is that the hole nowadays is, that is where they come out from, but we can no longer witness that. (TKU/A/05/44a:6.)

Numerous ethnographies from throughout the world demonstrate how menstrual blood is something needing to be set apart and controlled.¹⁸ In indigenous societies prohibitions on menstruating women are often related especially to hunting activities or to shamanry, as is the case also with the Yine. In the past, the Yine said, when a man was being cured in order to become an able hunter or before he took psychoactive substances he could not have sexual intercourse or interact with menstruating women. Nowadays, however, in Diamante the hunting-related prohibitions were no longer (at least actively) practised but some restrictions were still actualised when a person was taking the psychoactive plant *toé* for curing purposes (see Chapter 5). For a couple of days before and after taking *toé* a person was not supposed to have sex or to eat food prepared or offered by a menstruating woman. This was said to make the healing fail. I never, however, got an explicit account on why menstruating women and menstrual blood were considered so dangerous in certain contexts, but through examining the implications provided by the mythic narrative above we can gain some understanding of the meanings menstrual blood has in Yine thought.

In the above section of the myth, the menstruating woman enters the subterranean world regardless of other people telling her not to. Also she wants to escape the problems taking place in the upper world and be together with others. This theme of collective salvation is common in Yine myths. A parallel case is found for instance in the Yine myth called 'The Journey of the Yine to Paradise'. In this myth, the Yine people wished collectively to enter the sky where their fellow kinspeople already resided. They began drinking *ayahuasca* in order to be able to travel to the world above and finally on the third day, they saw how the heaven descended and a baulk was lowered down so that people could be lifted up with it. On the third lift, however, one menstruating woman came along, causing the ropes holding up the baulk to break. As a consequence, the rest of the people awaiting their turn could no longer ascend and join their kin. (Alvarez 1960a: 28–31; Gow 2001: 245–246.) It is clear that in these two narratives, the menstruating women tried to access the other world because they did not want to be left behind. As Gow (2001: 245), analysing the same myth, states, they wished to enter because '[h]umanity, for Piro people, is a

¹⁸ Setting anomalous things apart and establishing prohibitions in relation to them is, of course, a phenomenon widely demonstrated and analysed in anthropology and the study of religion (e.g. Douglas 1984; Anttonen 2000).

collective project'. They could not live well when separated from others.

Considering this high value the Yine place on proximity and living together, we must therefore ask why the others in these narratives forbade the menstruating women from entering? I see the key as lying in the classification of menstruating women and in the connotations or associations this condition has among the Yine. The narrator tells that in Yine a menstruating woman is called *gimtugachri*. The word is composed of an accompanitive or associative verb prefix *gi-*, the verb root *-mtu-* 'to injure', together forming a verb base *gimtu-* 'to injure'. The verb 'to menstruate' is in Yine *gimtuga* (3. pl. *tumtuga*). Other verbs of the same verb stem are *gimtuka* 'to damage', *gimtoteta* 'to injure another, cause him to do wrong', *gimtotewna* 'to be spoiled, ruined' and *gimtuwna* 'to become angry' (Matteson 1965: 77–78, 308).¹⁹ These verbs, whether transitive or intransitive, can be understood to be in one way or another connected with suffering and deconstruction of social relationships and persons. Thus, Matteson's translation of the verb base *gimtu-*, to injure, describes well the undesirable nature of the kind of action represented by these verbs. Someone always gets hurt and consequently social relations are negatively affected. But how does the verb 'to menstruate' fit into this picture? Is not menstrual blood a vital element in procreation and therefore rather constructive of sociality? It is, but when menstrual blood has not been constitutive and flows out, it becomes a threat, 'blood out of place' (Douglas 1984). Just as food may simultaneously be constitutive and destructive of social relations, as seen in Chapter 1, menstrual blood may also have both of these qualities.

Nevertheless, blood crossing the boundary of the body in the Douglasian structuralist sense (in a sense of this crossing becoming juxtaposed with a breach in the unity of the social group)²⁰ is not, however, the primary reason for this. Rather, I consider the non-generative and thus negative connotations and value given to menstrual blood becoming physically constitutive of a menstruating woman and thus simultaneously both to inhibit her social actions and to threaten tranquil collective life. There is ample evidence from Amazonia (and elsewhere) that when menstruating, the physical interaction between a woman and other people alters (Belaunde 2001; Gregor & Tuzin 2001a; McCallum 2001: 50–53; Rosengren 1987: 90–94). Because of the negative meanings attached to menstrual blood and thus to menstruating women, women may become secluded and restrictions are set on their interaction with others, especially hunters and shamans. Just as in the case of homosexuals discussed in the Introduction, there is a fear of others becoming 'polluted' by too close an interaction with a menstruating woman. These measures cause the negative connotations to be embodied in the woman's body as a diminished capacity for social interaction and make her temporarily

¹⁹ Also a verb *gimtuponalha* 'to quiver, to twitch' is of the same verb stem. According to Matteson (1965: 308) this action is considered as a bad omen and is, thus, in line with the negative connotations inherent in the other verbs.

²⁰ See Douglas 1984; 2003.

incapable of acting out proper sociality.²¹ Thus, in the myth the entering of a menstruating woman, *gimtagachri*, into the hole and the underground world was bound to cause 'injury' or 'damage' to the collectivity at large. As seen in the myth extract, after the woman had entered, the hole closed and return to the upper world was no longer possible. The people underground and overground were separated for good and could no longer live tranquilly together.

What thus far has emerged from the discussion on the Yine mythic narratives about the subterranean world is that even though the narratives do also point towards ontological understandings, the main concern of people telling these stories was the maintenance of social relations and the welfare of the collective. This observation is enhanced by the fact that in Diamante people discussed their views of the subterranean world more often in relation to their everyday life and experiences without presenting their ideas as mythic narratives. The meaning of the subterranean world for the Yine was constantly being negotiated against the background of their daily life and preoccupations. I shall now turn to examine these views.

Disappearing and reappearing white-lipped peccaries

As already discussed, real food was not solely of nutritional value for the Yine people. When shared, food became one of the central means of producing similarity and thus protecting humans from non-human beings. Consequently, sufficiency in game meat (or fish) was a precondition for achieving tranquil social living among family members as well as in the community as a whole. And the easier the accessibility of this resource and the less the suffering in hunting, the more time was left for conducting everyday conviviality. It was thus no wonder that encounters with large herds of peccaries, like the one described at the outset of this chapter, were enthusiastically remembered by the Yine long after these rather rare occasions. Such abundance was also one of the meanings the Yine people in Diamante gave to the narrations about the subterranean world. In the subterranean world, people said, the peccaries lived tranquilly in their corrals²² and fish, plantains and other food were abundant. In short, life was thought to be much easier by the Shallow River than in the upper world. As in the Yine story above, the narrator said that in the subterranean world 'there is everything, they lacked nothing' (TKU/A/05/38a:4).

Fishing in particular was considered undemanding in the subterranean world, not least because of the shallowness of the river

²¹ Cf. the case of women's short hair discussed in the Introduction.

²² This contrasts with the normal fierceness of the peccaries. In fact, the attribute most commonly attached to white-lipped peccaries in Amazonia is exactly their fierceness. For instance, the Airo-Pai call verbally or physically violent persons 'fierce white-lipped peccaries' (Belaunde 2001: 205).

there.²³ In the upper world people got only small catches of fish, if any, and fishing was an extremely time-consuming activity, but in the subterranean world, by the stream called *Kolyoga* (catfish stream),

They don't see fishing hooks, nothing. They have only a stream, a stream with lots of small catfish. . . . They take a pole of balsa wood, put it in the water and catch lots of catfish because . . . the pole has thorns. They just put that in the water . . . take it out and plenty of catfish are caught. They don't use fishing hooks. That is what they do. (TKU/A/05/38a:4; see also TKU/A/05/44a:6; TKU/A/05/35a:3.)

Thus in the subterranean world one does not need fishing hooks or nets in order to get a large catch. However, hunting game animals is never mentioned as taking place in the subterranean world, although some people said that there are all kinds of animals there.²⁴ This nevertheless becomes understandable as in the underworld the most important game animal for the Yine, the white-lipped peccary, is kept as a pet or domestic animal in corral.

The Shallow River represented a place of abundance where people did not need to work hard to get their livelihood. It was not, however, solely a mythic place contrasting drastically with the hardships people experienced today but was significant also in the Yine present-day world as a source of game. Listening to the many explanations and contemplations people expressed to me concerning this abode of the white-lipped peccaries it started to make sense to me why in the versions of the myth about the subterranean world the Yine related to me the emphasis was on the interaction between the two worlds and the abundance and health of the peccaries instead of on ontological questions. The existence of the subterranean world, and consequently also the mythic narratives concerning it, continued to be significant for the Yine in Diamante because it was through the hole leading there that the white-lipped peccaries still came to this world. One Evangelical man told me that

Inside there is earth, there is *Mtengatwenu*, that is where the white-lipped peccaries come out from. . . . It is said that there is a hole from where the white-lipped peccaries come out. . . . When they come out they are very tame, they do not escape because they do not know people yet. It is said that only inside the earth there are tame animals. (TKU/A/05/44a:6.)

People in Diamante with whom I talked about the subterranean world were unanimous that all white-lipped peccaries they encountered here on earth had at some point come from the subterranean world. However, whereas

²³ Fishing in shallow water is much easier in Amazonia than in deep rivers. During the rainy season, for instance, the strong current in the rivers makes fishing very difficult. Therefore people in Diamante usually opted for fishing in small forest streams rather than in the large rivers.

²⁴ In the subterranean world, fishing is seen as equivalent to hunting. One man speaking about fishing said that the man in the myth wanted to 'see how they hunt down here' (TKU/A/05/35a:3).



Figure 15. A family skinning and dismembering the white-lipped peccaries they killed when the large herd had been trapped between the river and the river bank

some maintained that every white-lipped peccary had come from there, in which case there would have to be several holes in different countries through which the animals came out, others were of the opinion that peccaries in far-away places were offspring of the ones that had emerged from the one hole. (TKU/A/05/38a:4.) In either case, it was the recently arrived peccaries that had not yet met people that were the easiest prey for hunters: they were tame and did not yet know how to be afraid of people.²⁵ The Yine men were experts in the habits of white-lipped peccaries and therefore animals that did not escape the hunter were considered anomalous or else ‘recently arrived’ individuals.²⁶

What was also commonly noted by the Yine men in the habits of the white-lipped peccaries were the fluctuations in the number of these animals each season. Sometimes, they said, there are almost no white-lipped peccaries around at all but then they suddenly appear in abundance again. The same Evangelical man continued by saying that for years there had not been many peccaries around but now suddenly they were proliferating because the hole had been opened and ‘the Owner is letting

²⁵ Here the narrator also ignores the possibility of human people living in the subterranean world as he states that the peccaries ascending to this world do not yet know people.

²⁶ As discussed in the previous chapter, some animals could also behave strangely because they have been entered by a soul of a dead.

them out now . . . that is why they are growing more numerous'. (TKU/A/05/44a:6.) The periodic disappearance and re-emergence of the white-lipped peccaries was thought to be due to the activities of their Mother living in the subterranean world and thus corresponds to the knowledge of the ancient Yine people (see Gow 2001: 68). It is the Mother who decides whether to let the animals up to the upper world or not.²⁷ The Mother was described as a beautiful woman wearing a skirt, *pampanilla*, painted with geometrical figures.²⁸ Several people juxtaposed the actions of the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries with that of human beings when they take care of their domestic animals. As one man explained: 'She is a person like us. For example, we keep hens, right? And we note that they are disappearing little by little. To prevent that, I don't take them out any more, I just close them in. . . . Because if I take them out more will disappear, right? . . . So it is with the white-lipped peccaries as well according to the story.' (TKU/A/05/36a:2; TKU/A/05/45b:5.) As a pig-raiser, the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries thus controls the numbers of these animals and takes care that they are not hunted in excess in the upper world.

On the other hand, as seen in the mythic narration above, the Mother also dislikes incapable hunters and hunting which results in the peccaries becoming wounded and suffering instead of being killed. She advises the hunters to kill the animals properly so that they will not return to the subterranean world wounded. The abundance of the white-lipped peccaries is therefore highly dependent also on the hunters' skills and morals: if the animals are mistreated or hunted in excess in the upper world, the Mother keeps the white-lipped peccaries in the subterranean world.²⁹ Nowadays, when the men hunt mostly with rifles, the importance of hunting skills in this sense has diminished. With a rifle, the men more easily kill an animal straight away, leaving a probably smaller number of wounded animals to escape. The men always said how men hunting with rifles did not need to be treated with herbs to become able shooters as they used to be when practising hunting with bows and arrows. With rifles, the Yine had in

²⁷ Also among the Airo-Paj it is the Master who lets white-lipped peccaries out from the subterranean world. However, the Master is not a woman but a short man called *Macatañe*. He guards the door to the subterranean world and lets peccaries into the upper world only at the petition of shamans. Like the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries among the Yine, the *Macatañe* is described as a benevolent being. (Belaunde 2001: 204.)

²⁸ The Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries has been previously seen as being the leader of its group but nonetheless an animal. Gow (2001: 69) discusses how the Mother is usually the fiercest member of a species (see Matteson 1965: 361). In the case of the white-lipped peccaries, *giyalu*, their Mother, *giyalutna*, would be the largest and fiercest member of the peccary species and their owner. In Diamante, however, the owner is not called *Giyalutna* but *Giyalginro*, literally Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries. She has no animal characteristics but instead acts and appears as a real human being.

²⁹ The Achuar have similar ideas about the subterranean world and the Master. Descola describes how one man explained about hunting deer that: 'only clumsy people wound animals without finishing them off. Why cause suffering to creatures with a soul like our own? They go off to see their own shamans, to be cured, but they bear us a grudge and take care never to expose themselves again to us. That is how it is that hunters often return empty-handed.' (Descola 1996a: 114.) Similarly the Campa think that wounded animals return to their Master who becomes mad at people not killing the animals properly. (Rojas 1994: 181.)

a sense fulfilled the wish of the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries to not just hurt animals but to kill them directly. Although the Mother was considered strict in this sense, it was also thought that she could feel for the people of the upper world if these were hungry and had lived for long periods without game. She could then send animals to the upper world for people to eat. (TKU/A/05/38a:4.)

What is clear in the narrations people tell about the white-lipped peccaries is the significance of ‘ancient people’s knowledge’ in the present-day world. As in the case of the grey brocket deer, knowing the tales may save a person from transformation; in the case of the white-lipped peccaries knowledge about the subterranean world and the Mother was considered important for securing abundance of game. Success in encountering animals in the forest and providing game for one’s family seemed, in light of these examples, to depend in part on the maintenance of good relations with the Mother. This took place through practising hunting only according to one’s needs, not in excess. One of the oldest men in Diamante told how younger people there no longer know that peccaries should not be wounded: ‘They should never be harmed, but here the people don’t know, they don’t understand that the man who went [to the subterranean world] tells us this.’ (TKU/A/05/38a:4.) It was through ‘ancient people’s knowledge’ that the surrounding environment was interpreted. This kind of cultural knowledge enables people to act properly in their environment and to maintain and renew sociable relations in their socio-moral world. One rather concrete example of the meaning of such interpretations and of how Yine ‘ancient people’s knowledge’ can be brought into dialogue with the modern world – although in a quite distinct manner from Peter Gow’s analysis of the myth (Gow 2001: 56, 77) – were Yine attitudes towards their neighbouring Manu National Park.

Peccaries in the Manu National Park

As discussed in the Introduction, the Manu area is an old Yine territory. Many of the present-day elderly people in Diamante spent their childhood along the tributaries of the River Manu. It is no wonder, then, that the other beings in the Yine social world should be considered to originate and dwell in the Manu region as well. After all, people had personal experiences of interacting with non-humans in this area. As Esther Matteson (1965: 202–205) was told, the metamorphosing brocket deer was known to appear to people living in Manu. The headwaters and tributaries of the river Manu, which were outside the reach of rubber collectors, were suitable dwelling grounds for non-human beings, which, as the Yine claimed, like to live in virgin forests where there are no humans around.³⁰ Therefore, during the latter half of the twentieth century when Yine people moved away from

³⁰ This is a good example in support of the commonly held view that ‘Amazonia should really be considered a cultural artefact, as much as a natural environment’ (see Whitehead 2003b: 61).

the River Manu and its tributaries to the more crowded River Upper Madre de Dios and engaged for instance in the logging business, the non-human beings were in great part left behind in Manu. Often people in Diamante said that some beings no longer appear to people but that they may still exist along the tributaries of the River Manu.³¹

Unlike the Urubamba Yine, who claim the location of the hole leading to the Shallow River, *Mtengatwenu*, to be unknown or known only to powerful shamans (Gow 1991: 76), the Yine in Diamante – even though unaware of the exact location – considered it to be somewhere deep in the Manu area. It was the Manu region where the white-lipped peccaries were most abundant and from where they migrated to other places. (TKU/A/05/36a:2; see Whitehead 2003b: 70.) This idea was not based solely on the Yine people's previous residence in Manu but was continuously enforced and renewed by their personal everyday experiences of the density of peccaries in different areas. Hunters said that in Manu the white-lipped peccaries were numerous while on the other side of the River Upper Madre de Dios, on the Diamante side, they were less frequently encountered. Also the large herds of peccaries sometimes crossing the river from Manu to the other side as described at the outset of this chapter were considered a proof of this. As one woman explained concerning the location of the hole to the subterranean world: 'At the headwaters of Manu, that's where it existed; there are more white-lipped peccaries there than here, that is why they come from Manu, that is why they come to cross the river here because . . . there are more white-lipped peccaries on that side.' (TKU/A/05/38a:4.)

As the Manu area was significant for the Yine not only as a dwelling place of non-humans but also as a place for hunting and thus for the well-being of their families and kin, it is clear that the establishment of the Manu National Park in May 1973 wrought many changes in Yine attitudes towards, and uses of, the area. It also brought the Yine 'ancient people's knowledge' about different non-human beings residing in Manu into dialogue (within Yine discourses) with the national environmental conservationist discourses and measures.

The Yine attitudes towards the park and especially its conservational aims were both positive and negative. On the one hand, the establishment of the park drastically diminished their possibilities of obtaining subsistence and using the resources in the Manu area. Before, the area had provided grounds for hunting, fishing, agricultural activities and fruit-gathering and its natural resources had been used in various ways, for instance in constructing houses, in handicrafts and for making everyday utensils. Since the establishment of the park, however, people had experienced a continuous narrowing down of their right to use the land areas. Furthermore, as the demarcation of the park had during the past years been constantly modified

³¹ Like the Yine, the Matsigenka also live close to the two fluvial systems: Urubamba and Madre de Dios – Manu, but their mythology concerns primarily the Upper Urubamba area (Baer 1994: 139). One could therefore expect that the Yine living in the Urubamba area would also situate non-humans either in Manu or in the Urubamba, but they apparently do not but instead locate them in the Cushabatay area in northern Peru (Gow 1995). Currently I am not able to evaluate why this should be so.

by the authorities, it had been challenging for the Yine to keep up with these changes. For instance, some of the parts previously marked as the park's cultural zones were no longer part of the park but were demarcated as buffer zones. Also the area across the River Upper Madre de Dios from Diamante, which used to be marked as the park's reserved zone, was in 2002 incorporated into the park proper and marked as a natural zone (*zona silvestre*). In this natural zone, in addition to directive and administrative tasks, scientific, educational and recreational activities were allowed, excluding the use of the area for subsistence activities. The rest of the park formed a conservation area where all human activities, excluding those of the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation, were strictly forbidden (Ley no. 26834; see Huertas 2004).

These recategorisations of the park area understandably worried the Yine people in Diamante because since the establishment of Old Diamante before the creation of the Manu National Park, and probably long before that, they had been able to grow plantains, different vegetables, fruits and manioc, and hunt and fish on the park side of the Upper Madre de Dios. Now they feared that they would have to stop all their subsistence activities on the side of the river they considered much more fertile than the Diamante side. Therefore, the Yine attitudes towards the conservationist aims of the Manu National Park were, in this respect, quite negative. Protecting the environment had made their life more difficult as for instance they were no longer allowed to use their old hunting trails extending deep into the Manu forests, and as they today also needed permission from the park authorities every time they wished to enter the park even for getting clay they used in making pottery.

On the other hand, however, the park's nature preservation activities were also viewed positively by the Yine as they helped to ensure the availability of at least some game animals for hunting. As the animals could live and procreate in peace in the Manu area, they were in no danger of being totally exterminated from the region. One Evangelical man alluded to how the tranquillity of life in the park afforded the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries the opportunity to raise her pigs in peace, and therefore she had recently been able to release a great number of peccaries to the upper world.

Now just a little while ago white-lipped peccaries have come out through the hole. There weren't any white-lipped peccaries for almost five, ten years. Now they are becoming more numerous. For sure the hole has been opened and they come out from there. Before there were only some in the park but now there are lots in all parts. For sure the Owner is letting them out. Now, for how long, thirty years that the park has existed . . . she has been growing them.³² (TKU/A/05/44a:6; see Albert 2000; Whitehead 2003b.)

³² In using old people's knowledge for interpreting present-day events the Yine relate closely to other Arawakan groups. Silvia M. Vidal (2003: 40) notes that 'Arawakan historical interpretation and mythical representation of the world, society, natural beings, and humankind is closely related to their system of ancient beliefs. Their mythic narratives and oral history constitute two complementary genres through which they can narrate and interpret their past and present processes of transformation.'

Even though the Yine themselves did not explicitly make the connection, the conservationist objectives of the park can be seen as analogous to the aims of the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries and consequently as beneficial for the Yine in Diamante. Just as the Mother wished to protect her animals and condemned hurting them and their excessive hunting, so too the park regulations were directed towards the same objective.

This did not, however, mean – as some might say – that the indigenous people, in this case the Yine people of Diamante, lived in harmony with something we call ‘nature’. Rather, they tried to live in a harmonious relationship with the different beings that inhabit their world. (See Turner 2002: 288–290; Whitehead 2003b.) These two things may seem to coincide but there is a crucial difference: for the Yine, ‘nature’ exists only as relationships to other beings (see Gow 1987: 118). If we examine Yine attitudes towards ‘nature’ we presuppose an ontological distinction between them and ‘nature’, a distinction which actually belongs only to our own concepts. As Tania Stolze Lima (1999: 112) notes in another context, ‘we then deprive ourselves of any possibility of approaching the system which we wish to understand’. Similar observations are made by various Amazonian ethnographers (e.g. Viveiros de Castro 1992: 71–73; Storrie 2003: 419). The Yine ‘environmental’ attitudes were not in any way directed towards not polluting the environment or keeping it clear of rubbish but rather towards not ‘polluting’ their social environment – their relationships with various non-human beings. It was not then a question of not caring about ‘nature’ but a totally different conception of the world. The Yine did not live ‘in nature’ but rather ‘in the midst of other beings’.

Tranquil life by the Shallow River

Above I have discussed the meanings of the Shallow River for the Yine in terms of generating tranquillity. The mythic images of the subterranean world as a source of abundance remain even today very much alive in people’s everyday lives as it was in part through the resources proffered by the world below that people were able to live tranquilly among their families and kinspeople. But the Shallow River was a living image of tranquillity for the Yine in another way as well. Some versions of the myth about the Shallow River explain, as discussed above, that it was not only one man, a shaman, who entered the hole but that in the case of severe problems arising in the upper world, all Yine people could descend there:

Before, it is said, there was . . . far away there was a rope. . . . And let’s say here something is going to happen, problems. So if there was a problem in this world people went there inside the earth. There they fished with nets and nothing happened to them. (TKU/A/05/44a:6.)

The subterranean world was, thus, seen as a kind of sanctuary, a peaceful and tranquil place where all worldly worries could be left behind. In cases of severe problems people could flee to the subterranean world and live

there peacefully fishing and waiting till the problems or threats were over. What people sought and most valued was tranquil living without disputes and predicaments.³³ The theme of such a sanctuary is familiar from other Yine myths as well. For instance in a myth called 'The Journey of the Piro to Paradise' recorded by Ricardo Alvarez (1960a: 28–31) and cited above, a Yine *kagonchi*, shaman, visits his dead father in the realm of the dead in heaven. There he learns all the secrets of this worldly life as well as of life in the other world but prefers the happiness he found in the latter over the misery he has experienced on earth. He invites all the Yine to join him in the other world because, as he says, 'we are happy in the other life and we are not even a bit interested in life on earth, and we would be even happier if we were together with all our kin in the other life'. (Alvarez 1960a: 29; see Rosengren 1998: 235–257.)³⁴

This image of life surrounded by abundant game, peacefulness and conviviality was not for the Yine in Diamante something belonging only to the past, to the lives of the Yine of long ago. In the present, in addition to being the provider of game, the Shallow River was still meaningful for them as a place whither they could escape if severe problems appeared in this world. One Evangelical man recounted that

Some people talk like that when we sit about. . . . They say: 'This is how it used to be. Being sick or hearing a war approach, that is where we would go', That is what is said. Before, nothing happened . . . [The entrance] was tightly closed . . . they hid it so that no one could enter. When the problems were over, one person came out to look. Only one person came and saw that everything was fine and then the others too returned. That is how the ancient Yine people were. I wonder what it was like? (TKU/A/05/44a:6.)

The possibility of this kind of refuge thus seemed to keep intriguing people when, men and women alike, they gathered to talk during the first light

³³ Rosengren (1998: 235–257) shows how for the Matsigenka there is no such paradisaal world. The world beneath this one is a 'barren world in constant dusk where human life is characterised by hopelessness, tedium, and no pleasures. Game animals are scarce and lean, the rivers are polluted and have little fish, the soils are infertile and the production of the swiddens is meagre.' The upper world where some shamans go is no paradise either. However, there the shamans are happy because their stay there is based on close social relations with powerful non-human beings. According to Rosengren, '[i]t is, thus, not the adherence to a transcendental moral system that determines the fate of afterlife but the kind of social contacts that one can rely upon.'

³⁴ Also the myth called 'The Journey of a Piro to the Other World' recorded by Alvarez (1960a: 34–36) tells of a similar contrast between life in this and in some other world. In this myth, a Yine person finds a hill inside which people live, singing and playing beautiful music. The Yine protagonist wants to stay with these people taking part in their happiness but is unable to do so. Only rarely do the Yine from this other world come outside but if they see people there they retire back inside. They do not want to mix with the people of this world nor come back to their homes here. They are happy in their world and their happiness 'is so perfect that it causes them to despise the earthly pleasures'. The same theme of dissatisfaction with life on earth comes up also in another myth called 'The Reform of the Earth'. People are dissatisfied with the structure of the earth, the position of the rivers and types of crops. Therefore they ask a shaman to reorganise them and they dig a hole in the ground and stay there until the reformation is over. (Alvarez 1960a: 45–47.)

of day or when the sun had already set in the evening. The idea seemed to resonate in particular with the thinking of the Evangelical Yine in Diamante. In their apocalyptic expectations, nourished especially by the pastor, the problems on earth would eventually culminate in the spreading of the Third World War throughout the world.³⁵ Speaking about his late uncle, the Evangelical preacher said that: 'When the Third World War is on this earth, he is going to go inside the earth. . . . He didn't want to suffer here on earth' (TKU/A/05/45b:5). In these Evangelical interpretations the problems in this upper world thus materialise or become concrete in the image or idea of the Third World War. Even though many evils have not yet reached Diamante, in due time they will, and the predicted war will be the prologue for the end of this world (see Chapter 7). This idea of the inevitability of the Third World War is common especially among Pentecostal and charismatic Christians throughout the world. For instance the Papua New Guinean Oksapmin people hold exactly the same view as the Yine of Diamante, according to which the battles between the United States and Iraq are the beginning of the final war, which will eventually spread to all countries (Brutti 2000: 107; see also Bashkov 2000: 136; on Amazonian expectations of the final war see e.g. Capiberibe 2004: 91).

Whereas in the mythic narrative versions of the subterranean world the external threat to the welfare of the Yine collectivity was the scarceness of game meet or food, which they tried to overcome by maintaining productive and amiable relations with the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries, in today's world the image of the Shallow River works as a promise of a refuge where people as a collectivity can escape world wars, epidemics and other insuperable dangers. Just as the apocalyptic expectations of the Evangelical Yine are shared by many, so too their image of a refuge where people can escape the maladies of this earth is common in Amazonia. The Araweté cosmos, for example, is filled with innumerable paths connecting different layers. The main road by which shamans ascend to the heavens is closed by the gods, for instance during epidemics and the periods immediately following a death. Part of this road is used by the souls of the recently deceased. Interestingly, this path leading to heaven is named after one of the two Araweté Masters of the White-Lipped Peccaries as Mo'iročo's way. (Viveiros de Castro 1992: 61.) A still more evident resemblance to the Shallow River as a haven is found among the Tupi-Guarani-speaking peoples of Brazil and Paraguay. Their mass migrations, aimed at bringing them to the 'Land without Evil', were attempts to escape from the evils of this world. Like the Yine subterranean world, the Land without Evil interconnected the realms of the living and the dead. It was not solely a place for the deceased but also 'a place where the living would

³⁵ According to the Yine, the expected Third World War is referred to already in the Bible in the Gospel of Luke 21: 9–11, which reads: 'And when you hear of wars and rebellions, do not be afraid. For these things must happen first, but the end will not come at once. Then he said to them, "Nation will rise up in arms against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, and famines and plagues in various places, and there will be terrifying sights and great signs from heaven."'

escape the coming destruction of the earth'.³⁶ (Shapiro 1987: 131.) The Shallow River and the Land without Evil are not, however, solely places to go to but should also be seen as particular moral conditions. (Sullivan 2002: 186–188; Shapiro 1987; Clastres 1975; Regan 1993: 126–130.) They stand for an abundant life full of joy and tranquillity and without hardships, which a person can share with their kin. This was the moral condition the Yine in Diamante strove for in their life on earth – but which they simultaneously thought they could never reach (cf. Alès 2000: 139).

The Yine emphasis on tranquillity in the subterranean world suggests that myths do change, as Peter Gow (2001) argues, depending on the circumstances in which they are told. According to Gow, the myth of the 'Man Who Went under the Earth' told to him was different from its predecessors because it had changed in response to the knowledge of *gringos*, white people. The different narrations and versions of the myth of the subterranean world told to me in Diamante were, I argue, a reaction to yet another situation and to different discourses. The new 'conversation partners' seemed no longer to be just the white people, but the rapidly changing socio-cultural, technological and economic environment at large. Even though the Yine have always experienced wars and battles and as merchants have met different kinds of people, indigenous, mestizo and white, it has been especially during the twentieth century that the novelties and changes in their environment have become increasingly fast and difficult to adapt to or to appropriate. Even more importantly, they have become more and more difficult to control. These changes have allowed the mythic narratives to be reinterpreted and used in novel ways and for new purposes among the Yine. As a result, it has been the opportunity for tranquil life that has become central for them in the stories about the subterranean world.

The three-layered world

Despite the emphasis on the value of tranquillity, the narrations on the subterranean world told in Diamante still retain their connection to Yine cosmology and ontological questions of the afterlife, as argued by Gow (2001), even if – as I will suggest – in quite a different way. Comparing earlier accounts of Yine cosmology with the situation I encountered in Diamante, it seems that the structure of the Yine cosmos has gone through great changes during the past century. In the mid-twentieth century, the Yine in the Urubamba still remembered and described to Padre Ricardo Alvarez the seven distinct layers of the Yine cosmos:³⁷ the earth (*Gosha*,

³⁶ Judith Shapiro (1987: 131) refers to the Tupi-Guarani land without evil as a permanent abode of the culture hero and a place where the souls of exceptional individuals went after death. It was also possible for the living to reach the land without evil by finding the right path and by following proper ritual practice.

³⁷ The multiplicity of layers is a common feature in Amerindian cosmoses (e.g. Roe 1982: 127–136; Rosengren 1987: 29; Weiss 1975: 256; Wright 1998: 66).

forest, and *Gonu*, river), *Maylewaka* (place of vultures), *Gipnachriwaka* (place of the dead), *Kagonchiwaka* (place of shamans), *Goyakaliwaka* (place of gods), *Kpashiriwaka* (place of the supreme god) and *Maleshawaka* (empty place where no one lives).³⁸ (Alvarez 1972: 317–330.) This list does not, however, include any mention of the subterranean realm of the white-lipped peccaries, which in Alvarez’s texts appears only in a myth he wrote down and is not analysed any further (see Alvarez 1960a). The same seems to be true of Esther Matteson’s writings. For instance in her discussion (1954a) of Yine ‘Mythology’, ‘Ritual’ and ‘The Supernatural’ she does not mention white-lipped peccaries, their Mother or the subterranean world.

In Diamante I heard no one talking about nor did anyone tell me about the seven layers of the world.³⁹ Instead, for both Evangelicals and Catholics, the world consisted of three layers, which God has created: the subterranean world of the white-lipped peccaries, the world people live in and heaven, the abode of God. One woman translated for me what an elderly Evangelical woman stated about the subterranean world:

My grandmother is saying that it must be the first, the first earth God created, right? In order for people to live there as well. Because it is said that there are people living there too and [that world] is just like this one: there is a moon, stars, the sun. It is the first earth, we are here in the middle and the third one is heaven (*cielo*), right? . . . The man spent one month there and he saw everything that there is and what there isn’t. And he told the others what that earth is like. Here is the middle where we live and heaven is the third one where God lives, that’s what he said. So my grandmother relates. (TKU/A/05/38a:4.)⁴⁰

This view of a three-layered world could easily at first glance be juxtaposed with the popular Christian, or Dantean, image of hell below, the human world in the middle and heaven above, and as such be seen as a result of Yine evangelisation. However, like most contemporary Christians, the Yine in Diamante did not locate their dead in or envisage hell as an underground realm. For the Yine, the subterranean world was not identified either as the abode of the dead or hell; rather, they located their dead either in heaven above or in hell, considered to be in the sky or here on this earth (TKU/A/05/48c:5; TKU/A/01/27; TKU/A/04/43b:2; see Vilaça 1997; cf. Gow 2001: 66). Apart from some mythic versions of the Shallow River, no one

³⁸ In his 1970 work, Alvarez (1970: 62–63) gives somewhat different names for some of these dwelling places: *Galnachriwakni* (Sky of birds), *Gipnachriwaka* (place of the dead), *Kagonchiwaka* (place of the shamans), *Goyakalunewaka* (place of gods), *Tengogne goyakalniwaka* (sky of Goyakalu), *Klataarixawaka tengognepotni* (empty place where no-one lives).

³⁹ During one interview I asked an elderly Yine couple if they knew about the different layers reported by Alvarez (1970; 1972). After a long consideration they did manage to produce a list of five layers but they differed from those told to Alvarez. These were *Maylune pokchi* (Village of Vultures), *Jpirone pokchi* (Village of Lizards), *Kewene pokchi* (Village of Dogs), *Porolo pokchi* (I am unable to translate this name) and *Klatatalunpokchi* (Village of White Vultures). (TKU/A/07/71.)

⁴⁰ Cf. the biblical explanations the Yine give to metamorphoses described in Chapter 2. Christian dogma and Yine tradition are also here used to confirm each other’s factuality.

seemed to consider the subterranean world to be the final destination of the deceased and most certainly not the location of hell.⁴¹ While the Yine conceptions of hell are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, I shall here concentrate on their understandings of heaven and how it is related to the subterranean world of the Shallow River.

In general, people in Diamante did not have very clear images of heaven. A few Evangelicals envisioned a beautiful shiny house or houses (TKU/A/04/43b:2; cf. Andrelo 1999) but most people saw it just as a place of abundance and tranquillity where everyone would be happy and where no one had to work. One woman described heaven as a place where people had one set of clothes that never got dirty because, as she asked, how could clothes get dirty if one did not work? Food was plentiful in heaven and no one grew old but all – old and young – were pictured there as young adults.⁴² I was also told that those who could not read on earth knew how to in heaven. Heaven stood for the end of all subjugation because there people would no longer be ignorant and backward but civilised and would master the skills of the ‘white people’. In short, for the Yine in Diamante heaven was a place of plenitude and absence of suffering.⁴³ This abode of the Christian God was very similar in outlook to the realm of the Yine culture hero Tsla described in a myth called ‘The World on the Other Side’, recorded by Esther Matteson (1965: 210–215). Tsla is depicted here as living in the sky, where the Yine people enter through a hole.⁴⁴ There they see a village: ‘Tsla’s house was in the middle of the village, a shining house. They went ashore and climbed up to the village. There they saw all sorts of goods, machetes, axes, cloth, and money. Silver coins were strewn all over the clearing.’ Despite the ‘cargo’ element in this myth, absent from the accounts of the Christian heaven, the correspondence between these two places is evident: a shiny house stands in the middle and the place abounds with necessities.

The Yine image of heaven resonates still more strongly, however, with the subterranean world of the Shallow River. In both places there is food in abundance and getting one’s livelihood is easy. Both places also lack disputes and quarrels. It would thus be easy to conclude that the Christian heaven in the Yine cosmos has appropriated the qualities attributed first to the subterranean world or vice versa. Such a chronological view does not, however, take into account the versatility and dynamism of people’s lived experience. As seen above, both heaven and the subterranean world

⁴¹ In the Yine school reader *Gwacha Ginkakle*, a Yine man Juan Sebastián explains that first hearing about God his father had wondered whether God lived below the earth or in the sky and had tried to find this out by taking *ayahuasca* (Sebastián 1998 [1974]: 153). This also suggests that the subterranean world has not been identified as a realm of peril or evil by the Yine.

⁴² People had, however, ambiguous feelings towards everyone being the same age in heaven because the image did not match with the high-value the Yine placed on family life (see Chapter 6).

⁴³ On similar views among other Amerindian groups see Capiberibe 2004: 93–94; Passes 1998: 224–226; Wiik 2004b: 161.

⁴⁴ Note here the similarity with entering the subterranean world through a hole.

continued to be vital images in Yine views of the cosmos and did not in any way exclude each other. Also the Owners of these two realms, God and the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries, co-existed. Even though one Evangelical man told me that God is the one who decides whether a man will find game when hunting or not, God had not replaced the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries as the one on whom the abundance of peccaries at any given time depends. In fact, this same Evangelical man was the one who confirmed that the current abundance of these animals is due to the Mother of the White-lipped Peccaries letting them out. (TKU/A/05/44a:6.) Heaven and the subterranean world both exemplified the socio-moral value tranquillity had for the Yine and therefore rather than the characteristics of one being transferred to the other, they confirmed each other's meaningfulness.

The ontological questions the Yine in Diamante discussed through the narrations about the Shallow River were not in the first place connected to human existence or the human transformative condition but to morality. It was Yine moral ontology which became expressed through the moral topography of the tripartite world.⁴⁵ As their surrounding environment was becoming all the time more complex, posing a variety of external threats to the Yine people's attempt to practise tranquil conviviality, the subterranean world had come to stand for the value of tranquillity. It was not, however, a mere symbol but remained a concrete part of the Yine world. People had not jettisoned the possibility of one day being able to descend to the subterranean world and thus to escape the evils of this world. Similarly, the Christian heaven was depicted as a place of bounty and serenity where mundane worries could be left behind. What intrigued the Yine in the images of these worlds below and above was the promise of a collective salvation. Whereas on this earth tranquil life was an achievement requiring considerable effort in acquiring food to be shared and maintaining and renewing sociable relations in the everyday community life, in heaven and by the Shallow River tranquillity was a given condition. However, as will be discussed in Chapter 7, in heaven this tranquillity was clouded in ambiguity.

⁴⁵ The moral boundary the Yine in a way were drawing between the Manu National Park and its surrounding areas could also be understood as a spatial expression of Yine moral ontology not on the vertical axis but on the horizontal one.

Part II

Diverging positions:
Evangelical-Catholic controversy



CHAPTER 4

Guardians of resources and the menace of uncontrollable excess

'Money is mad, like madness. It makes one go mad.'
– Evangelical Yine woman –

In social scientific research, societies have been, and often still are, categorised in terms of individualism and sociality, or independence and dependence, understood as opposites (see Spiro 1993). As also discussed in the Introduction, this dichotomy has led to the common conception of many indigenous small societies being collective in nature whereas the so-called modern Western societies have been perceived as dominated by individualism, although the past few decades have managed to some extent to break this rather black-and-white approach. For instance in Amazonian anthropology researchers noted, early on, that in many Amazonian societies individualism was in fact not opposed to sociality but rather complementary to it (Goldman 1979: 165–189, 273–294; Rivière 1984; Overing 1988; 1989a; 1989b; Viveiros de Castro 1992: 109–116.) More recently, this complementarity between what have come to be called *personal autonomy* and *sociality* has been studied more in depth among several Amerindian peoples (see articles in Overing & Passes 2000b; Whitehead & Wright 2004). Crystallising the idea of this complementarity in relation to regulating one's emotions, Joanna Overing and Alan Passes (2000a: 21) write that Amazonian indigenous peoples

have very few collective means for handling psychologically, or otherwise, actual acts of conflictive violence within the context of community life. The emphasis, instead, is upon the personal mastery of the life of affect in both its positive and negative manifestations. Children and young people are carefully trained to contain their own asocial inclinations, such as anger, avarice, self-centredness, and to master the positive virtues that make the convivial social state possible. This is why we can say that it [is] only through the personal autonomy of individuals . . . that Amazonian sociality can be built.

Still, in relation to the study of the effects of modernisation on indigenous peoples a common observation has been a movement away from emphasising sociality to valuing individualism and independence. Such a transition has in many cases been understood to derive from changes in local economics (see Parry & Bloch 1989). The processes of modernisation leading to wealth accumulation and its unequal distribution have in small societies been seen to promote people's individualism and independence at the cost of social well-being. Although such a one-to-one

correspondence between the processes of modernisation and the increase of individualism is excessively simplistic, the ever more rapid changes in the local, and especially the economic, environment and the increased importance of the monetary economy certainly do present challenges, especially to people's moral understandings and forms of social life. In Diamante, the increase in the importance of paid labour and in particular the logging business as a source of income, and the substantial profits this business promised in comparison to other means of earning a living were causing a lot of tensions: the community needed to protect its rights and its territory against illegal logging; there were disputes between families over malpractices and over-logging; and within families and between spouses there were disagreements over the correct uses of income. These made it necessary for people to constantly reassess their position in regard to the relative value given to personal well-being and progress, on the one hand, and the tranquil and sociable communal life, on the other.

The challenges the situation posed to Yine sociality and morality were in Diamante negotiated in relation to encounters with and narrations about a trickster figure called *kaxpomyolutu* or *hand-whistler*, commonly known in the Peruvian Amazonia as *chullachaqui*, as well as – although to a lesser extent – to the Mother of the River, *siren* or in Yine *gonginro*. In these relations, Yine attempts to find a balance between individuality and sociality and the constraints to finding such a balance were manifested and reworked through the socio-moral value of sharing as expressed by its counterpart, the negative value of excess. The relationships the Yine had with hand-whistlers highlighted the destructiveness of excess in terms of physical strength and money and exemplified the undesired effects of the social and moral imbalance in situations where personal profits were stressed over communal welfare. These relations therefore also worked as a window for examining the interrelatedness between the individuality and relationality of Yine bodies. Furthermore, they also formed one field for articulating the controversy between Yine Evangelicals' and Catholics' views on what constituted proper sociable living.

Hand-whistler as the Guardian of Game Animals

One woman in her fifties told me a personal-experience narrative about how her father had encountered a hand-whistler in his youth and had subsequently established a lifelong relationship with it. The man had been alone in the woods searching for game when a midget-like being, which he recognised as a hand-whistler, had appeared before him. The hand-whistler asked what the man was looking for in the woods and he replied that he was searching for food¹ for his family and wanted to kill a *tinamou* (Spanish: *perdiz*; Yine: *yoko*). The hand-whistler told him that all the animals, including the *tinamou*, were his as he had brought them up and that the man was not to kill them. Instead, the hand-whistler wanted

¹ On the notion of 'searching for food' among the Yine, see Gow 1991: 101–103.

to fight the man but the latter resisted saying that he had no reason nor did he wish to start fighting. But the hand-whistler insisted and assaulted the man, throwing him against a tree trunk with tremendous force. Then he urged the man to strike him in turn. In this manner, the hand-whistler and the man continued throwing each other around until they were both exhausted. When the battle was over, the hand-whistler declared that from now on the two of them would be friends. He blew on the man's crown so that he would become as strong as he was, after which the man was finally able to return home.² Reaching home, he felt totally deprived of his strength and remained in his bed for several days. After a while he felt that he had regained his strength and, to his surprise, he had in fact become unusually strong. From then on, he always encountered hand-whistlers in the forest and these showed him where he was to find game animals for feeding his family. (TKU/N/01/2:7; TKU/N/05/3:24.)

According to the Yine in Diamante, the hand-whistler or *kaxpomyolutu* is the Guardian of Game Animals or the forest at large. This figure is very common in different Amazonian traditions – mestizo or caboclo as well as indigenous – and the Yine stories and experiences to a large extent conform to this tradition. (Luna 1986: 74–77; Regan 1993: 175–182; 189–190; Smith 1996: 42–53.) The common name of this being in Peru, *chullachaqui*, recognised also by the Yine, comes from Quechua and means 'dissimilar foot' (*chulla*: dissimilar; *chaqui*: foot).³ Its other leg is commonly seen as reversed, facing backwards, or to be that of some animal like a deer or tortoise. In Diamante, however, very few people paid attention to the different leg of the hand-whistler: the difference in a being's legs was generally considered a quality of the grey brocket deer rather than that of the hand-whistler (TKU/N/01/2:7). Whether or not the creature's two legs were viewed as dissimilar, it was considered antithetical to humans in many other ways. It resided in the forest instead of villages, kept wild animals as domestic ones and, despite its otherwise human looks, it measured up to only half of the height of adult men. In Diamante people described the hand-whistler as being as short as a six- or seven-year-old boy. Despite its shortness, however, it was held to be extremely strong, its strength being exemplified by its tremendously thick and powerful arms (TKU/A/01/25:1).⁴ In its essence as the Guardian of Game Animals, it was described as wearing a small *cushma* (Yine: *koshma*, *papowalutu*), the painted cotton gown worn by Yine men in the past, and also otherwise resembling a midget Yine person. As far as I know, as in the case of the

² In another version of the same narration I was told the hand-whistler blows on the man's head and arms already before the fight therefore making him able to fight him evenly (TKU/N/05/3:5).

³ Other common names of this figure are for instance *sacharuna*, *shapshico* and *curupira* (Luna 1986; Regan 1993). Luna (1986) explains that among the mestizo there are believed to be two different kinds of *chullachaquis*: one evil, the other one good. Of the people with whom I talked about the hand-whistler in Diamante, one woman and her adult daughter were the only ones who were of the opinion that there were two different kinds of *chullachaquis*. (TKU/N/01/2:7, 14; TKU/N/05/3:24.)

⁴ Matteson (1965: 424) defines the hand-whistler as 'demon noted for physical strength'.

brocket deer, all adults (and probably most children) in Diamante had heard the call of a hand-whistler and many had also seen its footprints. People said that in the brooks with sandy banks one can see the footprints of this creature, which are small, like a baby's prints. (TKU/A/05/50a:3.) From this people know that a hand-whistler has walked there since, as they asked, how could so small a human baby walk there by itself?

The meaning of the *chullachaqui* figure for Amazonian peoples has been previously explained in various ways. According to one explanation, as the guardian of animals and the forest, *chullachaqui* functions as a cultural regulation mechanism against the excess use of natural resources, thus guarding the ecological equilibrium. It is seen as protecting especially the game against excess hunting – it 'is on the lookout for those who abuse nature's providence' (Smith 1996: 43; Luna 1986: 76).⁵ One man should therefore not kill more than he actually needs to feed his family or otherwise the consequences may be destructive. According to another interpretation, in its antithetical nature the figure symbolises marginality and repression. Human encounters with *chullachaqui* are from this angle seen as protests of people in different marginal situations, whether economic, social or religious. (Regan 1993: 189.) Furthermore, the encounters have also been seen as projections of aggressive sentiments resulting from social disputes between family members (Regan 1993: 190). The first of these explanations does to some degree resonate with the Yine narratives and the views they expressed concerning the hand-whistler. The hand-whistler was referred to as the Guardian of Game Animals who would either approve or disapprove of hunters' intentions to kill game. Also the theme of marginality was – even though not necessarily in the context of stories about hand-whistlers – common in the many mythic narratives the Yine told about people of times past encountering different non-human beings. Nevertheless, these explanations appear inadequate in the Yine context. Their functional tone does not correspond to the wealth and versatility of meaning in the encounters with hand-whistlers in the Yine people's lived experiences. In Yine social life the relationships and encounters with hand-whistlers and narrating about them were revealed to be much more than devices for protecting resources or manifestations of people's marginality.⁶

Producing strong bodies

The narrative above includes most of the central elements common to the stories the Yine in Diamante told me about encounters with hand-whistlers. As in the case of the brocket deer discussed in Chapter 2, the Yine encounters with hand-whistlers were usually said to proceed through three phases: the initial verbal contact is further consolidated through

⁵ According to Yine accounts, the hand-whistler is not specialised in caring for any single species (although it is often associated with *tinamou*) but was said to take care of them all.

⁶ Also Regan (1993: 190) does, however, acknowledge that *chullachaqui* may have multiple meanings for people depending on the situation.

physical contact (fighting) and the process is sealed by the hand-whistler blowing smoke onto the crown or arms of the person. (TKU/A/05/35b:1.) First of all, the interaction is commenced by the hand-whistler deceiving the person walking alone in the woods with a call resembling something else. (TKU/A/01/26:7; TKU/N/05/3:23.) The hand-whistler imitates the call of the *tinamou*, an important game bird, calling out five times: 'fii fii fii fii fii'.⁷ This is also where the Yine name of this being derives from: *kaxpomyolutu* signifies 'hand-whistler', the one who makes a whistling sound by blowing air through the hands. From these five calls the hunter should realise that the caller is not a bird but a hand-whistler and escape. Nevertheless, if the hunter is fooled and takes the calls to be the authentic calls of a *tinamou* he will try to approach it. At this point the hand-whistler appears before the hunter.⁸

Sometimes, as in the story above, the hand-whistler asks for a man's hunting intentions and may either approve or condemn them, in the latter case with fatal results for the hunter. Of one mestizo man it was told how he had been killed by a hand-whistler. He had heard a *tinamou* calling and had followed the sound when suddenly a hand-whistler had appeared before him and asked why the man was harassing his chicken. Without waiting for an answer the hand-whistler killed the man by throwing him against the aerial roots of a tree. The man's wife found him the following day with his body badly smashed.⁹ (TKU/A/05/50a:3.) More often, however, the hand-whistler in Yine narratives was first said to ask the person encountered whether he was of its kin, a countryman, or friend, or not. Whereas the Yine and many non-humans usually initiated social interaction with strangers by proceeding cautiously, the hand-whistler was said to do so in a very straightforward way by directly posing this question to the person encountered.¹⁰ It was as if it was excessively shameless, something (healthy) Yine people never were. In many different contexts I heard people exclaiming over someone: '*Giwa patewata!* *'No tiene verguenza!*', meaning that they do not feel ashamed or is shameless. When I asked what a person who did not feel ashamed was like, people explained that such a person would go to people's homes and eat there or take their belongings even if not invited to do so and would not be afraid to speak before a crowd

⁷ Some people said that the hand-whistler calls only two or three times instead of five.

⁸ One man told me also of another trickster figure called *tsotsotso*, which could appear before a person in the woods with violent intents. As a defence, when seeing this being, a person should either show the trickster their naked bottom or in the case of men, the penis, which the figure was said to fear. I heard about this being only from one person, however.

⁹ The incoherence in such stories never seemed to bother the Yine. For instance in this case, if the man had been in the forest by himself, how could his family know what exactly had happened to him? Either these incoherencies were just dismissed because they were not central to the point, or the stories were not considered incoherent. The Yine seemed to rely heavily on their narrative tradition in interpreting different phenomena and therefore, as all evidence so indicated, it probably made perfect sense that the man had, indeed, been killed by a hand-whistler.

¹⁰ Similar directness was already encountered in relation to the brocket deer and will be further seen in the case of the Mark of the Beast discussed in Chapter 7.

or to strangers. To some extent being shameless was lawful in Diamante. Especially women said, although contrary to what they usually did, that it would be good not to hide inside the house upon someone's approach and not to feel ashamed of talking to strangers. In practice, however, especially some women and adolescent girls often hid inside their homes and did not want to go alone even to the shop in the village but needed someone to accompany them. They did not wish to become the sole targets of (young) men's possibly sexist comments. Nevertheless, even though a certain amount of shamelessness was desirable, if a person did not feel ashamed at all and walked into people's homes, eating their food without permission, he was considered mad (on the conceptualisation of madness see Chapter 2). (TKU/N/04/3:21,22; TKU/N/05/3:11,13,18.)

The hand-whistler was thus considered excessively shameless as it straight away asked how a person positioned himself in relation to it. One woman explained that 'it appears to you like a person, a baby, it tells you, it asks you: "Are you my brother?" "Yes, I am", you'll have to reply, because if you don't it kills you right away.' (TKU/A/05/50a:3.) It was thought that if a person in this manner positions himself as different from the hand-whistler, the result is lethal: the hand-whistler fights the man until he is killed. However, if the man answers affirmatively, viewing the hand-whistler as his kin or friend, it saves his life. Nevertheless, it still demands to fight the man, but not to the death. As in the story above, they will fight until they cannot keep on going any more.

What appeared curious to me in these narrations was the insistence of the hand-whistler on fighting the men it encounters. It seemed logical enough that if the person denies their similarity and kinship, the hand-whistler kills the self-declared stranger or 'enemy'. But the fact that the hand-whistler was always said to fight even those men who accept it as their kin or friend seemed peculiar. Why would the hand-whistler wish to hurt his newly gained friends or kin? Trying to answer this question led me towards one of the meanings the image of the hand-whistler seemed to have for the Yine.

In the narrative version concerning the hand-whistler recorded by Esther Matteson (1965: 174–179), a young Yine man summons a hand-whistler in order to test out his own strength against it. Having followed a strict diet in his youth, he has become so strong that no human being is a match for him. Consequently, he decides to fight the most powerful being he knows. He summons a hand-whistler, who asks him: 'Do you want a test of strength?' The man replies: 'Do I? That's exactly what I came for.' They fight and the man defeats the hand-whistler and acquires its powers. Subsequently, he is successful in killing many hand-whistlers until one of them finally gains victory and kills him. However, owing to these fights the secret behind the powers of these beings – an *achiote* (*Bixa Orellana*; Yine: *gapijru*) pulp inside the heart – became known to people, who were therefore able to defeat many hand-whistlers despite the enormous powers these beings possessed. In this version the fight is therefore motivated by the Yine man's desire to test out his strength.

However, the Yine in Diamante did not consider it possible to defeat

a hand-whistler, and I never heard a narration resembling the one recorded by Matteson in this respect. Rather, the Yine were somewhat cautious about these beings. They said that while in the forest or having encountered a hand-whistler no one should even think, let alone say aloud, that they were stronger than the midget-sized hand-whistler or that they could easily beat it. Despite its small stature, the hand-whistler was regarded as enormously powerful and impossible to beat in a fight.¹¹ In addition, like the souls of the dead (Chapter 1) and the brocket deer (Chapter 2), it was thought to be able to hear and act on people's thoughts. It does not therefore seem plausible that a fight between a man and a hand-whistler who had already agreed to be friends or family would result from a man's desire to test out his strength. Instead, I suggest that the fighting between friends or kin made sense for the Yine people because it was one of the ways of influencing other people by making their bodies not only strong but also similar.

The generation of physical power was important for the Yine socialisation process and was an essential prerequisite for being able to live well. I experienced this importance of physical strength for the flow of everyday life and for generating relatedness when participating in daily tasks with the Yine women in Diamante. Working together with the women, I often felt physically very flawed. Just as I could not properly engage in the production and sharing of food, as discussed in Chapter 1, I also lacked the physical strength to carry out many other everyday tasks adequately. While each of the women and adolescent girls of my host family could for instance carry back home from the forest a bunch of palm leaves that would suffice for making five to eight pieces of roof elements, I could only manage to carry leaves for one to two roof elements at a time. Similarly, whereas the women carried full sacks of manioc roots weighting probably up till 30 kg, my sack always had to be left half-empty in order for me to be able to carry it home. Consequently, my manioc beer ran out much sooner than those of other women, making me unable to invite people over to the house to drink a bowl of beer and to relax and chat with me. I clearly did not possess the same female potentiality as the other women did in this respect for generating and reproducing tranquil sociable everyday life. That, I gathered, would only come through proper treatment of my body and prolonged living with the Yine.

Among the Yine, the process of making the body strong was initiated early on in a child's life. Beginning from birth, several different practices were undertaken in order to manipulate the body. In the past, and still during the childhood of the present-day grandparent generation, different herbal and other treatments were widely used in order to strengthen the body, especially the limbs, and to generate beautiful and fitting Yine bodies. (TKU/N/01/2:15; TKU/A/01/33:5.) Different herbal drinks were prepared, herbal baths were taken, and the body was treated by rubbing herbs onto it. Children were also advised to bathe in the river very early

¹¹ Like the brocket deer, the hand-whistler was in a way an archetype of the transformative nature of the cosmos: people should not rely on outer appearances in determining a person's essence and characteristics.

every morning so that their bodies would not become lazy but strong. As adolescents and adults, when grease and other impurities accumulated in the body, people drank bitter herbal infusions, causing vomiting, which was considered to purify the body, let the laziness out and make the body willing to work. Girls in particular also whipped their legs and arms with nettles or other pain-inflicting plants in order to make their limbs grow fat and enduring. Treating bodies in this manner was considered vital, for sociality could only be achieved through the labour of bodies capable and willing to work: to construct houses, to clear fields and to produce food by cultivating, hunting and fishing (see Griffiths 2001). But the bodies needed to be not only strong but also able and beautiful in various other ways. For girls, the time after the first menstruation was important in this sense because it was in the celebration of initiation, *pishta*, that their and the community's ability to produce beautiful and capable new women was evaluated, largely based on their bodily appearance (see Gow 1999; 2001: 158–187). Slices of plantain peel were run on their skin to make the girl's posture correct, the hair was regularly treated with the black *huito* (*Genipa Americana*; Yine: *nso*) dye and their bodies painted with geometrical figures with the same fruit dye for the initiation. Corpulence being a sign of a healthy, sociable and beautiful body, girls and women also drank large quantities of manioc beer. Correspondingly, male bodies, especially the arms, were treated with different herbs in order to produce able hunters and fishermen with accurate aim. (TKU/N/04/3:18; for means to affect Yine bodies and to make them beautiful see Alvarez 1962; 1963; 1970; Gow 1999; 2001: 158–164; Matteson 1954a.)

Many of these measures were no longer practised among the present-day Yine of Diamante. For instance, men no longer needed to be made able pointers since rifles had largely replaced bows and arrows, as discussed in Chapter 3. And since girls did not go through seclusion, the practices related to this liminal period were unnecessary. Nevertheless, the idea of producing strong, able and beautiful bodies through physical hardship and different herbal treatments was still very much alive and even young people, especially girls, did continue treating their bodies: they used genipa to blacken their hair, drank a lot of manioc beer, ingested plant infusions that made the bodies corpulent and sometimes whipped their legs and arms with pain-inflicting plants.¹² (TKU/N/04/3:19; TKU/N/05/3:13.) It was especially this last practice that caught my attention, perhaps because it seemed to deviate most from the meanings I had personally attached to physical pain. Whereas for me physical pain carried in the first place negative connotations, slight physical pain seemed to be viewed positively among the Yine: it was still considered one of the central ways of making bodies strong. In addition to girls whipping their limbs with plants, even small babies' bodies were treated in a similar manner. It took me first by surprise when I observed the Yine women cooing at their babies and

¹² Owing to the fact that most of my days in Diamante were spent with women and girls, I do not know exactly what measures the Yine boys in Diamante took in order to influence their bodies.

simultaneously gently slapping them on the cheeks with the palm of their hand. (TKU/N/05/3:13.) This kind of practice was very different from the way I had been used to in nurturing babies and became understandable to me only after examining it in relation to the adolescent praxis described above. I soon realised that I had never actually in Diamante seen even children older than perhaps two or three years, let alone adults (except drunken men), crying. Some children, when joining in nurturing small babies and also gently slapping these, were amused if the baby started crying owing to the treatment and often commented on the situation with excitement and surprise in their voice: 'Look, she is crying!' Crying, then, at least in public, seemed to be considered not only unaesthetic, as discussed in Chapter 1, but also a sign of weakness and therefore a reaction strongly repressed in Diamante. Thus, the process of making people capable of bearing physical discomfort was begun early on with measures suited to the child's age. In the case of small babies, I think, they relatively soon got used to such mild discomfort and no longer started crying because of such treatments.

Beginning in this way little by little to grasp something of Yine conceptualisations of physical hardship led me to understand another, at first similarly bewildering, practice, namely children's fighting, and consequently also the role of fighting in the Yine narrations concerning the hand-whistler. I was quite amazed when I first saw two small boys in Diamante fighting with fists over some presumably minor injustice which had taken place between them. It was not the fighting as such that amazed me – after all, most young boys do engage in fights – but rather the fact that the boys' parents were watching them and supporting them in punching the other boy back. Had I been there as the only adult present, I would probably have gone to separate the boys and give them a lecture condemning physical violence, but the parents just looked amused and were supporting the children, so I too had to settle for observing the situation. (TKU/N/05/3:13.) For a long time I could not understand this kind of behaviour on the part of the parents, especially as adult violence was considered a sign of madness, as has already been discussed in previous chapters. Esther Matteson (1954a: 82; see Gow 2000) describes a similar situation among the Yine of the Urubamba. In the case she witnessed, a young boy was beating his 'slightly younger but huskier cousin' with a stick while the boys' adult relatives and the chief of the community were watching. The chief asked the boys which one of them had started the fight and 'upon learning that the one receiving the punishment had started the quarrel, he sat down and watched with amusement'. According to Matteson, the adults thus let the boys continue in order to let justice be meted out. She also considers other forms of physical punishment among the Yine as means to chastise disobedient children. While these explanations were undoubtedly valid – certain physical measures like whipping with nettles were also used in Diamante as punishments for disobedient children – I think the meaning these fights had for the Yine in Diamante, and especially the meaning of the adults' unwillingness to stop them, was not restricted to inducing feelings of guilt and encouraging correct behaviour in children. Rather, I think these measures were largely also aimed at manipulating children's bodies so that

these would grow to be durable and adept at acting in ways that would enhance the production of everyday sociable life.

One example in support of this interpretation was what one old man told me during an interview. He said how he had become bewitched at some point of his adult life and consequently had lost all strength in his body. He lamented the fact that the physical strength he had gained in his childhood and adolescence through bodily practices such as those described above, and which had for instance enabled him to carry heavy loads of timber alone for constructing his house without the help of others, was lost and now he felt weak and not even up to hunting for his family. He could only provide for his family by fishing because it did not require walking for long distances or carrying heavy loads. (TKU/A/05/40b.)

What then appeared to be common to the three cases described – whipping limbs with nettles, gently slapping babies on the cheeks, and giving and receiving punches – was the attempt to influence people's bodies and to make them strong. Through physical hardship the body would gradually become enduring and resistant and able to produce sociality through work and through production of food for the family. (TKU/N/04/4:2; Griffiths 2001.) Looked at from this angle, the fight between a hand-whistler and a man who have agreed to be friends or kin to each other does not appear destructive and violent but rather constitutive of bodies and relationships. Through fighting, the man's body would become strong and capable of standing physical hardships in the future. This process was further enhanced by the hand-whistler blowing on the man's crown: it was said by some narrators that the blowing gave the man powers equal to the hand-whistler's.

However, in the hand-whistler narrations the fighting and the blowing were not, I think, solely a question of making the man's body strong. The process was also one means of making bodies, and more generally personhoods, similar to others. In this sense the hand-whistler could be seen to conform to the general endeavour of most beings in the Yine social cosmos of expanding their network of social relations by making others similar through corporeal activities. Whereas other beings begin making others similar through sharing substances – the souls of the dead by offering food and the brocket deer by asking for sex – the hand-whistler does it through another form of physical interaction, namely fighting. As will be further examined in the following section, the positive and generative meanings people associated with this kind of physical pain become during the process part of people's ways of being and will thus be manifested later in their capacity and willingness to act productively, to act as proper Yine people should.

In the end, then, and despite the dissimilarities, the fights in the Matteson's version of the narrative where the man wanted to test his strength against a hand-whistler and the versions current in Diamante where hand-whistlers were feared and invincible, all discuss the importance of physical strength in being able to live well. They therefore also relate to the general Amazonian experience of corporeal interaction as constitutive of proper sociality and personhoods (Conklin & Morgan 1996; Gow 1999; Heise et al.

1999; McCallum 1996; 1997; Rival 1998; Rivière 1974; Seeger et al. 1987; Sullivan 1988: 303ff; Turner 1980; 1995; Vilaça 2002a). Not all fights, however, were considered constitutive in such a positive way. It was only fighting that was somehow regulated – agreed beforehand or supervised by adults – and not induced by anger¹³ that was productive. The cases of violent fights prompted for instance by drunkenness that I witnessed in Diamante were condemned by all. They were considered inappropriate, even mad, behaviour and destructive of relatedness. Like other unwanted characteristics (such as homosexuality, discussed above), it was feared that such angry ways of acting could influence also other people's ways of being. As shown also by people's experiences of interaction with hand-whistlers, mad behaviour expressed as violent action was largely thought to be caused by an inability to hold one's physical powers in check.

Excess power as destructive of personhoods and relatedness

As already touched upon above, while physical strength and endurance were highly valued among the Yine, powers that were too great were considered menacing. In narrations concerning the hand-whistler, the enormous powers men could receive from hand-whistlers were thought to easily lead to trouble. It was said that men who have become strong also become mad: they do not know how to control their powers. As one Evangelical Yine man related about such a person: 'He was no longer as he used to be, his body was now mad' (TKU/A/04/47b:2). Of one mestizo man with whom some of the Yine men had been working in logging it was said that after encountering a hand-whistler he had become incredibly strong but no longer had any 'respect'. He had felled trees in vain and had flaunted his strength. Through a shamanic healing process his madness was eventually calmed down but he never lost his powers. Consequently, he could no longer go into the forest by himself in case he encountered a hand-whistler, who might – after their relationship had been vitiated by the curing process – kill the man.

The theme of the danger of possessing some quality in excess is common among Amerindian peoples. For instance, among the Venezuelan Piaroa all knowledge is thought to come from the Tiwanaku gods but if a person receives too much knowledge and is unable to control it, he is led into trouble (Overing 1985). Similarly, among the Brazilian Culina, it is possible for men to gain an excess of 'wild substance' (Pollock 1992) and among the Argentinean Toba the guardian of forest resources, *no'wet*, is understood to offer powers to a person, who should accept only part of them in order to avoid becoming mad (P. Wright 1992: 162).¹⁴ Together

¹³ On the destructiveness of anger among Amerindian peoples see Overing & Passes 2000b.

¹⁴ The theme of overabundance of qualities making someone ill or mad is common also in other parts of the world (e.g. Laderman 2001).

with the Yine hand-whistler narrations these examples point towards the processual nature of Amazonian persons. Taming and gaining control over one's newly acquired powers or other constituents of a person, especially those concerned with the success of the everyday production of sociality and relatedness, cannot in Amazonia be achieved at once – new building blocks cannot just be attached to a person – but requires a gradual domestication process in which these qualities are woven into one's body, into who one is. This domestication necessarily requires a social context: a person cannot construct one's body alone but only in social interaction with others (Bakhtin 1990: 49). In this interaction socio-moral meanings attached to the qualities become both constitutive of a person and harnessed for the good of the collectivity. This explains why too large a quantity of a given quality received at one time makes a person mad: since the quality is not gradually entwined into a person in social interaction with other persons, it cannot be mastered. In the Yine case, physical strength was thus not only a bodily achievement but was part of defining the person's socio-corporeal and moral condition.

The process of domesticating different qualities – be it knowledge, physical power or some other quality – opens up a question of the nature of the body. How are bodies conceived in terms of their individuality and relationality in Amazonia in general and among the Yine in particular? Janet Carsten (2004; see also LiPuma 1998) has examined this relationship in a Western context. She shows how in Western discourses concerning persons and their bodies both individual and relational sides are present. On one hand, as examined already in the Introduction, the example she gives regarding people's attempts to find their birth kin, from whom they have been separated in childhood and without whom they think they can never be complete as persons, is a demonstration of how close kin ties are intrinsic to the socio-corporeal formation of persons. On the other hand, Carsten shows how Westerners can also be conceived very markedly as bounded individuals who own their bodies and bodily substances. She discusses a case in which a woman was denied the use of her late husband's sperm for artificial insemination. The woman wanted to preserve the relationship she had had with her husband by having *his* baby. Legally, however, it was viewed that since before his death the husband had not been able to give his consent for using his sperm, his individual rights to and integrity of his body had to be respected. Western bodies are in the light of these examples shown to be – using the Marilyn Strathern's (1988) terms – as much individual as they are dividual.

One incident in Diamante, which gave me an insight into the relationship between the individuality and relationality of Yine bodies, was a casual encounter I had with a woman carrying her child on the path passing through the community. Having stopped to talk for a while with this young woman whom I did not yet know very well, she suddenly reached out and explored my breast with her hand with the intention of deciding, as she said, whether I would in the future be able to nurse a child long enough for the child to grow healthy. I was slightly taken aback by this because for me the act equalled a penetration into my bodily space. I was used to retaining

my physical integrity and considered certain body parts as something personal. In the Yine social life, however, a woman's breasts did not receive a meaning only, or in the first place, as something belonging to her. Rather, their meaning resided largely in the capacity to feed children and thus to contribute to the production of sociality. Even when women's breasts and bodies were valued for aesthetic reasons, the evaluation contained a social aspect: the bodies were beautiful because they demonstrated the collectivity's ability to reproduce and generate sociality (Gow 1999).¹⁵ This, I think, was a general way of conceptualising bodies among the Yine. When not viewed in relation to others, bodies and corporeal substances and dispositions were considered either inconsequential or destructive. For instance, physical power and menstrual blood (as discussed in Chapter 3) became dangerous when not put into productive use. Similar observations have been made throughout Amazonia (Conklin 2001a; McCallum 2001: 50–53; Rival 1998; see also articles in Gregor & Tuzin 2001a). In the most extreme form this has been shown in relation to bodies of abandoned babies. As Conklin & Morgan (1996) discuss in the case of the Amazonian Wari', a mere human body without any social ties is not even considered to be a person (see also Gow 1997).

These examples suggest that the individual side of people's corporeality was highly downplayed among the Yine. The body for the Yine was not in the first place private nor did a person own their body in the Western (legal) sense. Bodies were open to the world, making the flow of substances and qualities and meanings between bodies constant (Bakhtin 2002: 280–286).¹⁶ Nevertheless, the individual side of Yine bodies still did exist: individuality could not be totally dismissed or ignored. This became apparent for instance in relation to Yine understandings of sins and their relation to the body. As discussed in Chapter 2, Yine Evangelicals viewed sins on the one hand as intrinsic to all human bodies in the form of original sin. This original sin could, it was thought, be kept at bay by active Christian practice. Nevertheless, it did form a ground for Satan to work on and to seduce people into sinful action. It was in social interaction that sins, like other human capacities, became constitutive (or destructive) of bodies and personhoods. Although embodied in individual persons, sins became actualised only in interaction with others. Therefore sins, such as violent behaviour, were thought to 'spread' easily from one person to another in social interaction. Nevertheless, in the final judgement it was thought that a person would be judged by their sins. At that point, a person would be alone with their 'own' sins and the body would be in a way shut down from interaction with others. As will be further discussed in Chapter 7, the End Times were considered to mean the cessation of relatedness in many other ways as well. However, in this world, the Yine bodies remained open and intrinsically related to other bodies.

¹⁵ However, I never asked the Yine men or women explicitly about for instance the possible sexual meanings they might have associated with women's breasts.

¹⁶ Amazonian bodies are open not only in the Bakhtinian sense through the openings of the body but through all the interfaces a person has with the world.

Although the openness of Amazonian bodies has been widely examined (Conklin 1996; 2001a; Taylor 1996; Vilaça 2002a; 2005), not much attention has been paid to indigenous people's ways of controlling such openness. In the Melanesian context it has been argued (Michele Stephen, cited in Pollock 2004: 211) that although local conceptions of personhood present persons as open and unbounded, people still have a desire for a bounded self. Pollock (2004: 211–212), on the other hand, notes that among the Amazonian Kulina who also place high value on fluid and open selves, this kind of desire for a bounded self has to be repressed. The Yine seemed to lie somewhere in between these two positions. Although they greatly valued the openness of persons without which social life would not have been possible, in everyday life the Yine in Diamante put considerable effort into trying to control the relationality of the body and its openness to the world. In previous chapters we have seen how the Yine tried not to think about their deceased relatives in order to prevent these from appearing to them. They also tried not to think about their spouses or lovers when entering the forest so that the grey brocket deer would not be able to act on these thoughts. A further means to control the body's relationality was the Yine practice of withdrawing from social interaction altogether (see Chapter 7). Moreover, as will be discussed in the following chapter, closing the body was a necessary measure also in relation to the use of psychoactive substances. These attempts to temporarily close the body from others were not contradictory of the valued openness of the body but rather both a means to protect oneself from the misuses of the open condition, thus guarding the person's stability, and a tool for a person to retain control over oneself. Nevertheless, owing to its intrinsic relationality, the body could only be kept closed from others for short periods of time during the person's waking hours. In dreams, the body kept interacting with the world through the actions of the relational self, or more specifically the person's dream soul *samenchi*.

A person's ability to control their openness to the world was put to the test also in people's relations with the hand-whistler. According to the narrations, there was one condition for being able to successfully continue an established relationship with a hand-whistler: the concealment of the relationship. If a person revealed to others what had really happened to him, his newly gained powers were nullified (see Storrie 2003) and the person was at risk of being killed by a hand-whistler. As one woman explained: 'But you must not inform other people. . . . If you inform, when you encounter it again, it will kill you. . . . Because also *chullachaqui* is like a devil: it knows.' (TKU/A/05/50a:3; TKU/N/05/3:5.) Following the marginalisation thesis employed in interpreting *chullachaqui* narratives in Amazonia (Regan 1993: 189), the requirement of concealment could be understood in terms of the empowerment of a socially marginalised person. The relationships with hand-whistlers could be explained as means for incapable hunters or other unfortunate persons to gain a useful power and thus respect from other people. Therefore, revealing the source of their new skills would nullify the powers and the person would have to return to his marginal position in the society or community. While this interpretation seems logical and can be

employed for understanding several Yine myths where incapable hunters have interacted with non-humans and thus gained transcendent hunting abilities, the stories about hand-whistlers told to me in Diamante did not emphasise or even deal with the theme of marginalisation. Rather, I think the prohibition against telling anyone about such encounters was in a way a test of the capability of the hunter to manage his newly acquired powers and to rehearse his control over his body. A hunter who can control his powers does not become overwhelmed by them and can therefore keep the secret. Little like shamans, such a person can act in between the two sets of relationships – one with non-humans, the other with humans – without consequences. Consequently, assisted by hand-whistlers he becomes very able to provide for his family. On the other hand, a hunter perplexed by the situation and unable to control his powers faces a different destiny. After revealing the secret such a man cannot hunt alone any more for fear of getting killed by a hand-whistler, and therefore his ability to provide for the family diminishes.¹⁷ He can no longer bring ‘real food’, meat, home thus leading to the failure of the social process. Such a person is left out from both sets of relations. Being able to tame physical power can then also be seen as a result of one’s capability of regulating the openness of the body.

Sirens and the agony of loss

In addition to the theme of excess power, Yine narrations concerning the guardians of so-called natural resources also discussed the theme of excess in another way. In the case of the Mother of the River, *gonginro* (Yine), or *sirena* (Spanish) mentioned already in Chapter 2 (on sirens in Amazonia see Regan 1993: 162–174; Smith 1996: 81–82; see also Slater 1994) it was not a question of excess power but rather of excess loss. The siren was described as a beautiful woman with long hair but with a lower body of a fish. Just as the hand-whistler was the guardian of forest resources, the siren was the guardian of the river and the fish, harassing fishermen if they fished in excess. She was thought to be able to grab a fishing line with her powerful arms and pull it so hard that it became impossible for the fisherman to hold on to it. Nevertheless, the siren was considered to be even more dangerous when she tried to seduce fishermen to live with her in the underwater world. After enchanting a man, the siren was said to introduce her *pusanga* into the man’s eyes, thus enabling him to breathe normally under water. However, once in the underwater world, such men could never return to their lives on earth: they had become sirens’ spouses (with a changed corporeal point of view).

People said that sirens were not very common in the Upper Madre de Dios because the river lacks deep sumps or whirls. But down river in Madre de Dios sirens were said to abound. Nevertheless, at least two men told me of their personal experiences of seeing a siren in the Upper

¹⁷ Cf. Overing (2003: 310), who shows how among the Piaroa power is always a ‘matter of personal trust – or distrust’.

Madre de Dios. In one of these cases, the man had been fishing with line and hook not far from Diamante late in the evening. Suddenly he began to hear music and saw a beautiful woman ascending from the river in the nearby whirlpool known for its abundance of fish. She had a stool and a lantern, which gleamed against the black water and the dark sky. The woman started dancing to the music. The man was afraid because he knew he had encountered a siren. Nevertheless, he could not move but almost as if petrified watched the woman. Near day break he managed to look away and when he turned back, the woman was gone. The man had been saved this time. He returned home and for a long time did not go fishing alone in the night time. (TKU/A/04/49a; TKU/N/04/3:15; TKU/N/05/3:17; cf. TKU/A/04/55; TKU/A/05/42a.)

According to Yine narrations about the siren, men who have been seduced by sirens and have gone to live in the underworld do not age at all. If they manage, as in many cases they do, to come to visit the world above, they are still as young as they were when lost to the siren. The theme of not ageing is common to Yine stories concerning the forest realm as well. Some narrators told me how people have been kidnapped by hand-whistlers or jaguars and have lived for decades in the forest.¹⁸ When they finally return to visit their family, they have not aged at all and still wear the same clothes they used to wear. In both cases, these hapless people find out that their parents have passed away long ago and their siblings are decades older than they are. (TKU/N/05/3:22; TKU/N/04/3:15.) The question that puzzled me in these narrations was: why did not the people in the stories age? Why did time elapse more slowly in the forest and the river than among humans? It was clear that the forest and the river were considered non-human spheres in contrast to the human sphere of the village. After all, it was often explained to me that most hand-whistlers and other non-human beings inhabited the virgin parts of the forest, *selva virgen*, where nobody desired to go, at least not alone.¹⁹ However, this moral geography did not yet explain why people visiting or living in these remote places did not age. Although the Yine people in Diamante could not provide me with an elaborate answer – it just was like that – I suggest that by approaching this phenomenon from the point of view of relatedness, one thing that at least in the daily life preoccupied the Yine emerges. It is the question of loss, and to be exact, loss in excess. In these narrations, a family always first loses one of its loved ones, which – as seen in Chapter 1 – is a blow to people's attempt to live well close to their kin. As Gow (1991: 192n7) has also noted, these people become dead to the living: they exist but cannot be interacted with. But those left behind are not the only ones suffering. The lost person, when visiting the human sphere, notices that they have

¹⁸ According to the Yine people, also jaguars have their guardian. These guardians look like people but instead of wearing a white painted *cushma*, they wear ones that are totally black. These guardians live in caves like people and shepherd a herd of small jaguars, which are their dogs. These small jaguars are considered to be extremely dangerous, killing everything in their way. (TKU/A/01/25:3; TKU/N/05/3:5.)

¹⁹ On demarcating the boundary between the familiar and that which is set apart see Anttonen 2000; Douglas 1984.

also been deprived of most of the family members. As time in the village passes faster than in the forest or in the river, most people the lost person formerly knew are already dead and the remaining ones have – owing to ageing – almost become strangers. In this way, by doubling the theme of loss, these narrations seem to highlight the agony the Yine feel upon losing a family member and witnessing the shattering of the web of kinship. These narrations are therefore similar to the narrations describing the misery of the lonely souls of the dead and their grieving families.

The theme of excess was thus in different ways present in people's narrations about both the hand-whistler and the siren. In addition, there were still other narratives concerning these figures, especially the hand-whistler, which emphasised the destructive consequences of excess, yet in a different way. Sometimes, the Yine said, the hand-whistler took the form of a game animal and led hunters following it astray in the woods, whence they had difficulties in finding their way out. Getting lost was in part due to the hunter's excessive desire to kill game, which surpassed their ability for calm consideration. In other narrations, the hand-whistler was said to take the form of a human being and steal away especially female children to raise them to be its wives.²⁰ This way of losing a child together with the guilt of not having been able to take care of and protect one's children raised strong feelings of loss in Yine adults (TKU/N/05/3:5). But it was in the narrations depicting the hand-whistler as the Guardian of the Forest that the theme of excess seemed most closely to relate to the present-day life of the Yine in Diamante.²¹ As the Guardian of the Forest, the hand-whistler was associated especially with some large tree species such as *shoshwasha*

²⁰ In the context of these kinds of narrations, the Yine often said that hand-whistlers abounded especially where there were hills (TKU/N/05/3:15) and that in their hilly homes they lived exactly like the Yine, cultivating their land, fishing and hunting and taking care of children. Therefore, they also needed wives and occasionally stole human children for that purpose. Nevertheless, in other contexts the Yine could say that hand-whistlers did not have homes at all and just wandered around in the forest. In either case, just as sirens were considered to be exclusively female, hand-whistlers encountered were without exception described as male: no one had ever seen or heard about someone encountering a female hand-whistler. However, while some people insisted that there were no female hand-whistlers and that God had created all these beings male, others reasoned that hand-whistler women must live somewhere deep in the forest in their homes for how could these beings otherwise procreate? Their explanation for the invisibility of the female hand-whistlers was that just like Yine women, these were 'women of the house' who did not walk much in the forest and consequently could not be seen by humans. (TKU/A/05/50a:3.)

²¹ In addition to being the Guardian of Game Animals and Guardian of the Forest, the hand-whistler was also sometimes referred to as the Mother of the Wind. It was said to travel as wind, taking a visible form only when appearing before a person. (TKU/A/04/52a:2.) Sometimes the presence of a hand-whistler was said to be sensed from the strong gusts of wind blowing in the forest. Wind in general among the Yine was associated with malevolent beings and viewed negatively or with slight fear. Before, people told, children and old people were not allowed to stay outside when strong gusts of wind blew for otherwise they would risk becoming ill. Especially small babies were in danger of being attacked by demons (Mateson 1954a: 74). Still today, some Yine mothers kept their babies close to their or another adult's body when the wind was blowing hard. One woman in Diamante explained to me that this is because the spirits of the dead travel in the wind, bringing sickness upon the living (TKU/N/05/3:17). This idea of the wind making people sick is widespread in Amazonia and throughout the world (e.g. Low & Hsu 2007; Luna 1986).

(Spanish: *chuchuhuasi*) and *komlo* (Spanish: *shihuahuaco*). It was thought to be a devil living in these trees, or rather, he was the trees. As one man in Diamante explained, hand-whistler was the back (Spanish: *respaldo*) of those trees: 'It is a person but not a person – it is people of the forest.' (TKU/N/04/3:15; TKU/N/04/4:3.) It was when seen as the Guardian of the Forest or large trees that the hand-whistler also worked as a profitable image for negotiating socio-moral differences prevailing in Diamante, and in particular the relationships between the Evangelicals and the Catholics.

Change of tasks: from animals to valuable trees

As in the narrations in which the hand-whistler was seen as the Guardian of Game, in those in which it was depicted as the Guardian of the Forest the figure travelled in the wind and wanted to fight the men it appeared to. Nevertheless, in the latter narrations the hand-whistler had a different primary task: it controlled the use of valuable trees. Therefore, instead of appearing to hunters, it was now said to appear to loggers. The Evangelical pastor in Diamante related how he had once in the Urubamba been in the forest with his nephew when they had heard someone whistling. He had thought it would be better not to answer but his nephew had wanted to summon the hand-whistler so that it could show them where they would find valuable trees. The whistling had come closer and they had waited for someone to appear but no one ever did because, as the man reasoned, they had been together and hand-whistlers only appear to people when they are alone. Nevertheless, they had decided to spend the night in a different place in order to avoid the possible attacks of the hand-whistler during the night. (TKU/A/05/46c; TKU/N/05/3:13.)

Taking into account the fact that the hand-whistler was often referred to as the Guardian of the Forest at large and that it was thought to reside or, in fact, to *be* some of the largest trees in the rainforest, it is not surprising that this figure was seen also as the guardian of some specific tree species. What does raise interest, however, is that among the Yine it had become the guardian especially of a few commercially valuable trees like mahogany and cedar. In order to understand why many Yine emphasised the hand-whistler's nature as the guardian of commercially valuable trees over that of the guardian of game, it is worth briefly examining the local economics and Yine subsistence activities in Diamante as I observed them in 2005.

Despite their long history as merchants, the basic subsistence activities of the Yine people have been hunting, fishing and agriculture. In Diamante, these still remained not only the main source of people's everyday livelihood but also continued to have the utmost significance for producing relatedness, as seen in previous chapters. Nevertheless, during the past half a century, manufactured foods had gained an increasingly important role for everyday nutrition. In addition to salt and sugar, the Yine bought pasta and rice – which sometimes replaced plantains and manioc at meals – as well as tinned tuna, potatoes, juice powder, refreshments,

biscuits and sweets. Apart from foods, other often-bought items included soap, batteries, candles, school supplies and clothes.

To be able to buy these things and for instance to educate their children, people naturally needed economic assets. There were many possible sources of income for people in Diamante, but few of them provided income on a regular basis and in most cases the profits were low. There were a couple of people who were working for the government of the Manu district and who received a monthly salary: a woman working as a lieutenant governor (*teniente gobernador*), responsible for the overall order in the community, and a man working in the district administration. Furthermore, there was one Yine woman who received a salary for teaching at the community's infant-school. The other school teachers in Diamante were non-indigenous people.

Keeping a shop was quite a good business by local standards. One Evangelical family keeping a shop was especially well off (TKU/N/04/3:2). They were able to build a new house with a concrete floor, tin roof and a gas stove in the kitchen and to send their eldest son to study in Cusco. They had also purchased a small solar panel for producing electricity, which they used for playing a VCR, a DVD player and a radio-cassette player, and to run a small freezer. These were luxuries considering that their next-door neighbours were cooking with firewood and could make use of electric light only for a few hours each evening, as the community had to use petrol to run the power generator. However, the owners of the other two shops in the community were not quite as wealthy in appearance. The mestizo woman from Cusco used most of her income for the benefit of her children living in the city and the other, Catholic, family, even though they had also constructed a new house with a separate room for the shop, did not seem to sell as much as the others.²² (TKU/N/04/3:14; TKU/N/05/3:1.) What was common to all these shops, however, was that at least one of the persons operating them was non-indigenous. In addition to the mestizo woman, the woman in the Evangelical family and the man in the Catholic family were people from the outside who had married into Yine families.

Apart from the longer-term jobs of keeping a shop in the community, being a teacher or holding some administrative position, other alternatives available for people for earning money were occasional and usually short-term. People could get income from working as chauffeurs for different entrepreneurs or companies or operating either the community's communication radio or the aggregate for electricity. These jobs rotated, so that one person at a time worked for a period of three months after which a new worker was elected. The radio operator received S/100²³ per month for handling the radio traffic every morning from seven till eight o'clock and in the afternoon between four and five o'clock. The operator of the

²² Although this was the situation in Diamante in 2005, there had also previously, in the year 2000, been three shops in the community: one owned by the same Evangelical family as in 2005, one by a different Catholic family and one by a different mestizo woman. (TKU/N/01/2:5.)

²³ In 2005, S/ 100 (=PEN, Nuevo sol) corresponded approximately to 30 USD and 24 EUR.

power generator received S/200 for starting the aggregate every night at around six o'clock and turning it off at eight or nine o'clock. However, in this task there were often breaks lasting as much as a few months owing to the community's lack of money for buying petrol. (TKU/N/05/3:10-11.)

Selling different agricultural and other products was also quite occasional. Every now and then someone in the community bought meat from another person at the cost of S/4 per kilo but usually products were sold to people in the nearby mestizo community of Boca Manu. Before the construction of the road between Puerto Maldonado and Colorado, both situated downriver from Diamante, a large number of merchant boats on their way from Shintuya, where the road from Cusco ended, to Puerto Maldonado had to pass by Diamante, so establishing a market for Yine agricultural products. However, after the opening of the road, traffic on the river Upper Madre de Dios slackened and the activity of selling food dwindled. In recent years, the increasing tourism in the area had given the Yine an opportunity to gain income from selling handicrafts but this activity had not been organised in a very systematic manner and relied



Figure 16. A shopkeeper's solar panel and henhouse

largely on the sporadic tourist visits to the community.²⁴ Ceramics were sold at S/3–10 per item depending on the size, which seemed quite a cheap price considering the amount of work put into making them. Women also sold necklaces made of animal teeth and plant seeds and painted cloths and cotton bags from cotton processed by themselves. A small cotton bag cost around S/20–30. In addition, men made sets of bows and arrows (one bow, four arrows) for sale, each set coming to S/40.

Tourism also provided other kinds of jobs, which, however, benefited only some people directly. Apart from the rather significant income the community received from renting the airstrip located in their territory, the ecotourism lodge by the airstrip employed two persons from Diamante at a time for a period of three months. The work at the lodge included for instance cooking, gardening and cleaning. The pay for a month's work at the lodge was S/200, amounting to S/600 for the period of three months (TKU/N/04/3:10). However, despite the good idea of rotating these works, not all adults proved fit for the tasks. Working at the lodge was very difficult for those with small children and as some single adults otherwise eligible for the task did not manage to restrain themselves from abusing alcohol, the number of possible workers was quite small. In addition to these jobs, from time to time some women and men went to the lodge to teach ceramics, painting and archery to tourists or to work as guides.

One source of income engaging most adults in the community was making palm-leaf roof elements for different construction sites (see Figure 23). In 2005 these pieces were purchased mostly by the guardian posts to be built alongside the borders of the Manu National Park. The weaving of one piece took about half an hour (more than an hour for an inexperienced ethnographer), and each piece was sold at the price of S/5. In addition, different NGOs paid the Yine for participating in their projects, for instance by collecting seeds and organising and leading working groups. Furthermore, the municipality had different construction projects in which the Yine could also participate. One such project was the construction of a building for Diamante's secondary school.

Even though there were many different sources of income available for the Yine, it was very difficult for a single family to gain enough money to cover all their living expenses. Although managing to buy the daily necessities, most people were unable to buy new clothes or to pay for their children's education, for pharmaceuticals or for medical treatment. Sometimes the reason for this inability lay, however, in the income having been used for leisure, that is, on alcohol or recreational items such as biscuits, sweets, soft drinks and balloons. Therefore, people were constantly also in search of means for receiving *apoyo*, support from different non-governmental organisations, and for ways to make money easily.

Against this background, it seemed understandable why logging had become such an important business among the Yine of Diamante. Logging

²⁴ At one point, women took their handicrafts to the Boca Manu airstrip to be sold there but after constant disappearances of these items and malpractices in selling them most women no longer wished to continue this practice.

was considered in a relatively short period of time to produce unparalleled income in comparison to other sources. Each adult community member (or family) was eligible to cut down and sell a certain amount (7000 board feet) of timber each year from the community's territory. (TKU/N/01/2:6; TKU/N/04/3:1, 6.) The timber was sold in 2003 at the price of S/0.5–2.5 per board foot depending on the species so the total amount in theory possible to earn for an individual adult rose up to thousands of Peruvian *Nuevos Soles* (TKU/N/04/3:2; see Fagan & Shooobridge 2007: 36). This was a significant amount and even though every person had to give ten percent of the logging incomes to the community, it was still a high-profit job. In practice, however, very few actually engaged in larger-scale logging in the territory of Diamante (TKU/N/01/2:14; TKU/N/04/3:2). This was because the mahogany and cedar trees were already scarce or extinct in the area and also because only a few families had been able to purchase their own chainsaw needed for the work (TKU/N/04/3:6). Rather than something that actually took place, it was then more the *possibility* of gaining a large amount of money by logging that intrigued people and made this enterprise so significant.

However, logging was also prone to cause severe disputes and anxiety in the community. The most active loggers were accused of selling timber over the quantity assigned to them by the community (TKU/N/04/3:6). People, both indigenous and non-indigenous, were also said to cut down trees in spite of the official ban against felling valuable trees in certain areas.²⁵ The Yine also resented the fact that they were paid only a fraction of the income gained by the intermediary loggers selling the timber on.²⁶ In addition, foreign exploiters extracting wood without permission from the legally recognised Yine territory were a constant trouble.²⁷ (TKU/N/05/3:1, 18, 23, 25.) They often worked during the night-time at the far ends of the community's territory where guarding was difficult, and so diminished the villagers' possibilities of profiting from this already scarce natural resource. The problem of illegal logging often took the form of witchcraft accusations. During my stays in Diamante, several illness cases were thought to be caused by foreign loggers that had visited the community (TKU/A/01/26:6; TKU/N/01/2:8, 11; TKU/N/04/3:4, 6, 17). In addition, logging caused anxiety in Diamante also when the actual work was being done elsewhere. Quite a few

²⁵ People in Diamante expressed to me their uncertainty over which areas were under such a ban. They also thought that the ban could have been just a mestizo plot for deceiving the Yine people. (See *Ley de Áreas Naturales Protegidas*.)

²⁶ It has been estimated that in the Piedras region the indigenous people have received only a tenth of the amount gained by the buyers selling the timber in Puerto Maldonado (Fagan & Shooobridge 2007: 36; see also Bedoya & Bedoya 2005; Schulte-Herbrüggen & Rossiter 2003).

²⁷ Facing uncontrolled logging of mahogany and other tree species, Peruvian lawmakers took action in 2000. They approved legislation requiring timber concessionaires to file forest-management plans as well as annual operating plans (POAs) specifying the trees to be cut. Five years later, however, illegal timber extraction was continuing apace – especially in the case of mahogany. Meanwhile, illegal loggers often sought out mahogany in state-owned natural protected areas or struck deals with indigenous communities, where official controls were particularly weak.

young, but also some older, men from Diamante were working by the River Piedras in search of a better income. Many wives and mothers who stayed in Diamante were worried about their welfare since the Piedras region was well known for the debt labour of the indigenous peoples engaged in logging, which was said to resemble the system enforced by the rubber barons a century ago.²⁸ (Bedoya & Bedoya 2005; Fagan & Shoobridge 2007.) Moreover, in the Piedras region hostilities between local people, loggers, drug pushers, drug cultivators and indigenous people in voluntary isolation were commonplace. For instance in May 2005, when rumours spread that a whole logging camp of people had been massacred in the Piedras region, one woman in particular in Diamante whose sons had been working there became extremely upset and tried to get all the information possible over the communication radio to hear any news of her sons. Fortunately for her, after a few days she learned that the story had grown in the telling and in reality only one person had been killed. Her sons were well and had not been harmed.²⁹



Figure 17. Men making canoes

²⁸ The situation with illegal logging and forced labour in the Madre de Dios has been considered to be worst in the regions of the Rivers Tahuamanu, Los Amigos, Las Piedras. (Bedoya & Bedoya 2005.)

²⁹ The rumours had been caused by an incident where a logger had been killed to his boat by an arrow while the female cook had been able to escape by jumping into the water and floating down the river. Later the logger's body had been found mutilated. Such incidents were widely discussed all over the Peruvian Amazonia, even far from the actual site like in Diamante. The loggers were often said to blame the indigenous people in voluntary isolation for the killings but according to many eye-witness accounts the loggers themselves often impersonated indigenous people in order to shift the blame onto them. (Fagan & Shoobridge 2007.)

Whether viewed negatively or positively, logging was a frequently discussed topic in Diamante. Under these circumstances, it does not seem surprising that the Guardian of the Forest, the hand-whistler, had gained more significance as the guardian of valuable trees than of game animals. As the Evangelical pastor told me, people were simultaneously afraid of the hand-whistler but intrigued to summon it in order to receive knowledge of the location of valuable trees. What therefore also spoke to people in the figure of the hand-whistler was the equality it stood for. The idea of everybody having the same possibility of prospering was something the Yine highly valued as will further be discussed in Chapter 7. But the meaning of this figure as the Guardian of the Forest for the Yine did not lie in the first place in this idea of equal possibilities or in punishment for the Yine exploiting either the scarce natural resources or even in mestizos exploiting the Yine. The Evangelical Yine in particular had found in the image of the hand-whistler as guardian of valuable trees also a meaningful way to negotiate the relationship between individuality and relationality, personal autonomy and sociality and above all the discordant relationship between Evangelicals and Catholics in Diamante. This negotiation took place largely through demonising both the hand-whistler and the profits gained from logging.

Demonising the hand-whistler and money gained from logging

Among the Yine, as noted in Chapter 1, most non-human persons were called devils (Spanish: *diablo*; Yine: *kamchi, yawlo*).³⁰ This designation came up most frequently in the language usage of the most active Evangelicals, but other people – Evangelicals and Catholics alike – did refer to different non-human beings as devils. The ambiguous moral nature of the beings the Yine called devils is, however, in rather stark contrast with the generalised Western Christian concept of the fundamentally evil devil as opposed to the categorically good God (see Russell 1977: 221–249): some devils in the Yine social world could also undertake good deeds, like the hand-whistler showing the location of game or valuable trees to people (see Morgado 1999: 238).³¹ As is the case with many indigenous and peasant populations

³⁰ Gow (1991: 236n7) uses the translation ‘demon’ for *kamchi*. He sees the use of the translation ‘devil’ as problematic as the Yine ‘demons are not uniformly evil in intent’. He states that in the Urubamba, the Yine always referred to the Christian devil as *Satanás*. In Diamante, the situation was different as people used the term *kamchi* in Yine and *diablo* in Spanish also of the Christian devil, of the Antichrist, but also of the different non-human beings such as the metamorphosing brocket deer, hand-whistler and unknown souls of the dead. Consequently, I am here using the translation *devil* for all these different beings.

³¹ It should, however, be remembered, as Dan Rosengren (1998) points out, that the notions of good and bad or good and evil do not necessarily bear the same contents in Western and Amerindian conceptualisations. For one thing, as discussed in the Introduction, in Amerindian usage these notions often convey strong aesthetic associations. Furthermore, they are closely tied to corporeality and do not necessarily entail personal morality or immorality: a person may for instance be tempted into bad or evil actions by other actors.

throughout the world, this discrepancy was, in fact, most likely produced by missionaries evangelising people and trying to implant Christianity in indigenous worlds. Birgit Meyer has shown how in the process of introducing Christianity among the indigenous Ewe of Togo and the Gold Coast, the devil was of focal importance. She (1996: 218–219; see also Harris 2006) writes:

Thus, there was a paradox inherent in the Ewe mission. On one hand, the mission intended to abolish the old religion; on the other hand, it was indispensable in order to demonstrate the meaning of Christianity. In this context the Devil was a key figure, because through him the gods and other spiritual beings remained real powers. Hence, the old religion was never abolished but only looked upon from a distance and through a particular filter.

Even though we do not have a direct access to the past evangelising practices of the Catholics and Protestants among the Yine (but see e.g. Matteson 1954a; 1965; Alvarez 1955; 1958f; Gow 2001; 2006; Sebastián et al. 1998), it is probable that something similar to the Ewe case has taken place in the process of proselytising the Yine people.³² In order to bring out the dualistic relationship between the good God and evil Satan, the various non-human persons of the Yine social cosmos have been demonised. They have not been dismissed as pagan, indifferent or non-existent beings but, on the contrary, have become essential in defining the basic postulates of Christianity for the Yine. In this process, the Yine concept of the devil has become defined not so much through the notion of evil as opposed to good – which in many cases has been the intent in Christian proselytising activities – but rather through the characteristics ascribed to the non-human persons in the Yine socio-moral cosmos. Consequently, the different devils in the Yine world are to be understood as moral beings with self-understanding, objectives and self-reflection and not as plain henchmen of evil.³³

Presumably in consequence of the nature of this demonisation process, the devil status of non-humans was often quite latent in people's thought in Diamante.³⁴ When telling me about the hand-whistler, for instance, people in Diamante seldom referred to this being as a devil. Nevertheless, in relation to the economic profits gained with the help of a hand-whistler its

³² No written documents exist for determining when and by whom the term *kamchi* was first translated into Spanish. The first linguist working among the Yine, Esther Matteson (1965: 281), translated *kamchi* into English both as demon and devil. However, for the different non-humans in the Yine social cosmos she used the term demon. Both the 1960 and the 2002 Yine New Testaments (*Gerotu Tokanchi Gipiratkaluru*) translate Satan as *Satanasyo* and devil as *tsru kamchi* (great devil).

³³ On the demonisation of non-humans in Amazonia see Wright 1999a; Morgado 1999.

³⁴ Gow (2006: 227) notes how in the Urubamba the Spanish term *cristiano* was used to mean 'human' and was contrasted with the category of animal: 'Cristianos, "people," were those entities with which it is possible to have ongoing and moral social relationship, and it was perfectly correct to describe the forest spirit *sacha supay* as both a *diablo*, "demon," and as a *cristiano*, "Christian, human": this spirit is a "demon" when he attacks people with illness, and a "Christian" when he helps shamans in curing.'

devilish nature did become activated in people's – especially Evangelicals' – explanations and descriptions. Such linkage between the devil and commerce is not uncommon in indigenous and agricultural societies facing and going through great changes in their local economies. In the Latin-American context, devil-beliefs have previously been regarded as deriving from indigenous or peasant people's subordinate position within the economic environment. Michael Taussig (1980: 18–19) argues that among the Columbian peasants (roughly three decades ago) the world of market relations was inseparably connected with the spirit of evil and was viewed as unnatural and wrong. Some persons were believed to make contracts with the devil in order to increase their agricultural production and their wages. However, such contracts were said to have destructive consequences for capital and for human life: land purchased became sterile and animals died. In Taussig's view, devil-beliefs thus emerged from the critical comparison of the peasant mode of production controlled and organised by the peasants themselves and the capitalist mode of production in which everything is controlled from the outside. According to Taussig (1980: 25), in the peasant mode of production the person uses cash, not capital and sells in order to buy, whereas in the capital mode of production the person uses cash as capital to buy in order to sell. In Taussig's view it was these differences that led people to demonise the capital mode of production.

John Ingham (1986) describes a similar case in one Mexican Catholic peasant village. Among these peasants, wealth accumulated with the help of the devil was thought to be non-productive and in the end fatal for the person, who has sold his soul to the devil. Ingham (1986: 108) writes that the '[d]evil, then, personifies an unmitigated expression of the profit motive. He uses money and a parody of contractual relations to appropriate a person's soul, their essence. In this respect, his behaviour mimics that of the Spaniard who appropriated the labour of Indian peasants and took advantage of them in commercial transactions.' The relationship between the devil and the Spaniards was manifested in the devil being seen either as a gentleman in black business suit carrying a briefcase full of money or a *hacendado* on horseback. In either case, Ingham shows, the devil was a wealthy Spaniard or Creole, never an Indian.³⁵ (Ingham 1986: 105.)

Although the Yine did not view the devil in such an unambiguous manner as evil as described by Taussig and Ingham for the different Latin-American peasant populations, economic inequalities between the Yine and the outside world and changes in the local economy were without doubt themes negotiated also in Yine relations with the hand-whistler. As discussed above, the people in Diamante did feel exploited by outsiders in that they had to sell timber at a bargain price whereas mestizos made a profit. Nevertheless, following some critics of Taussig's views (Parry & Bloch 1989; Harris 1989; Sallnow 1989), I argue that among the Yine the devil nature of the hand-whistler derived neither from the mestizo loggers

³⁵ Among the Achuar the Mother of Peccaries is thought of as a white man with a beard and long hair speaking every language, wearing boots and a metal helmet and carrying a sword. In other words, he resembles a Spanish conquistador. (Descola 1996a: 130.)

taking advantage of indigenous people nor from the difference between 'peasant' and 'capitalist' modes of production. First, the hand-whistler was thought just as frequently to be encountered by mestizos as by indigenous people and to help also them in finding valuable trees. As one man in Diamante said: "The people in Pucallpa also have this. *Chullachaqui* is pointing them [trees] out and so the *Loretanos*³⁶ know that there is timber." (TKU/A/05/46c:5.) Second, in Yine narrations, unlike in the Mexican and Columbian cases, the emphasis was not on how money is gained (modes of production) but on how it is used. The 'contract' made with the devil, the hand-whistler, would be beneficial for the person if he stuck to it and did not use the money on alcohol or other unnecessary commodities but for the benefit of the family. One Evangelical woman told me what happens if a person misuses the aid received from a hand-whistler:

Because money is mad, like madness, right? It makes one go mad. When we grab money it besets us: we just wish to drink. . . . 'I should drink with my friends and have a good time, right?' That's how timber is too, right? When they work timber . . . and sell it and receive their money they immediately begin to drink alcohol. The one who thinks can buy everything he needs, right? But the Mother is watching that: he does not buy what he should. That's why it is said the Mother of Timber (*Madre de la Madera*) does not wish him to lose the money on drinking. . . . One should buy what one needs, not just throw the money away. . . . After that the Mother no longer wants to give him wood. No matter how much you are searching for wood, no more, no more . . . The Mother no longer shows you because you have let her down. You have not bought what you have told the Mother. You have not fulfilled your promise. You have not bought what you need but have just wanted to drink with the money. You have used it all up, you have finished it. Again you'll have to search for trees so that you can drink your alcohol. But the Mother is also seeing that, like a devil it is also watching: "That's it. No longer will I show him" . . . the Mother says. When he wants to show you wood he says: 'He is suffering a lot. My fellow countryman, I'll show him. He is suffering a lot in searching for wood', so the Mother shows you. If you don't fulfil your promise, neither will the Mother give you what you are asking for. If you buy what you promised him, he will give you even more. (TKU/A/05/53c.)

The hand-whistler was considered to show a person the location of valuable trees so that by cutting and selling the trees he could buy items needed by his family and thus gain wealth. However, if the person, tempted by the sudden income, uses the money on alcohol, the Guardian no longer shows him where to find trees. In this case, as the woman states, money obtained from logging becomes tainted. It induces a person to act insanely: often people said of such a person that 'he is no longer like us' (see also Hugh-Jones 1992: 46). Like a person bewildered by the great physical powers received from the hand-whistler or one who had been seduced by a brocket deer, a man overwhelmed by excess money acts unacceptably, that is, according to his own desires, disregarding the welfare of his family. In a situation like that, the hand-whistler was thought to not only withdraw its

³⁶ *Loretanos* refers to people living in the Peru's northernmost region called Loreto.

help but also to fight the man and often even kill him. The hand-whistler as devil was thus not the personification of evil pursuing its own aspirations as it was argued to be in the Columbian and Mexican cases. It was rather seen as an ambivalent figure willing to do good deeds if the person chose to do so as well. Neither was the money received from logging viewed as categorically evil or bad. As the Evangelical pastor said, one can tell a hand-whistler that one lacks money and it will show you: 'Come, I'll show you where there is money, where there are trees. . . . Hand-whistler is kind and at that moment such a person is very lucky.'³⁷ (TKU/A/05/46c:5.)

The activation of the devil status of the hand-whistler results, then, from the fear of a person losing control over money (or money gaining control over him) and for the subsequent failure of the social process within one's family and kin. This moral pattern seems very similar to those described for instance for many Latin American and Melanesian peoples (Harris 1989; Sallnow 1989; Toren 1989).³⁸ As these cases suggest, short-term individualistic transactions are in many non-Western contexts morally acceptable so long as they do not compete with the long-term cycles generating sociality and relatedness. Often these two sides are bridged by transforming money into something neutral or beneficial through processes in which a new set of meanings is attached to it. (Parry & Bloch 1989.) In Diamante, we could view this kind of bridging taking place for instance in men giving (part of) the money they had gained to their wives to be used for the benefit of the family. It was generally thought in Diamante that women could take better care of money than men, who too easily slipped into using it for their own purposes. When in the possession of the women, the primary meaning attached to money would be that of a tool for enhancing the quality of the family's everyday life whereas in men's possession money would receive its meaning as an instrument of diversion.

However, I think that in the case of Diamante, it was not so much a question of bridging the gap between the short-term and long-term cycles by transforming the money. As seen above, money was not considered categorically evil or destructive and consequently did not require transforming. Even though the Evangelical woman said that money is mad as it makes a person go mad, I think it was rather a question of the person's incapability of relating to money in a way that was commonly considered legitimate. As in the case of physical power, the meanings people associate

³⁷ Even though in some respects the Evangelicals feared that excess money would lead to an increased emphasis on personal autonomy at the cost of sociality, their view was still very different from the approaches presented in the field of economics according to which the introduction of money inevitably leads to the increase of individualism and the disintegration of community life through depersonalising social relations (Marx 2001; Simmel 2004; see Parry & Bloch 1989; Kidd 1999). Money was considered good if rightly used.

³⁸ Toren (1989) describes how Fijian fishermen, once having earned money considered corrupt, hand it over to their spouses who, 'uncontaminated' by contact with the world of market transactions, symbolically transform it into something beneficial for the family. Harris (1989) and Sallnow (1989) on the other hand discuss the dangers the Andean peoples see embedded in taking resources meant for the long-term benefit of a family or community into one's own short-term usage. By doing so, they argue, the consequences an individual should have suffered because of his (or her) actions come to be felt by the community at large.

with money can be seen to become generative of them as persons. If for instance a man viewed money as a tool for sensuous enjoyment and luxury, when using the money these meanings would become constitutive of him. This, in return, would cause other people to say that the money made the person mad. Therefore, money gained from logging becomes productive of Yine sociality only when it can be properly controlled. Money needs to be domesticated, to be associated with work and social relations, as it usually is when gained little by little. But in the case of logging, the problem was the same as with suddenly obtaining excess physical power: it overwhelmed a person, usually not allowing the domestication process to take place. Therefore, gaining control over the money acquired from logging came down to a person's general moral condition. If a person wished to produce and share food with others, desired to live close to one's family and highly valued tranquil domestic life, it was more likely that such a person would also not be overwhelmed by great amounts of money but could put it to generative use. Logging was therefore one instance where a person's moral condition could be evaluated.

For this reason, the encounters with and narrations concerning the hand-whistler when depicted as the guardian of valuable trees also provided a field for discussing socio-moral differences between Evangelicals and Catholics in the Yine community. Even though extra income from logging was welcomed by everyone, in the Evangelical view it was especially the Catholics who were prone to become overwhelmed by the money.³⁹ They no longer provided real food for their families, but rather bought canned tuna fish and pasta from the local shops.⁴⁰ The excess time and money thus gained were used for the Catholic men's (but also some women's) own purposes, mostly in alcohol consumption.⁴¹ In this manner, the Evangelicals worried, not only was the family economy in danger of degenerating but also the fundamentals of good life were endangered: sociable relations would not be renewed, children's bodies could not be formed through providing proper food and the complementary relations between husbands and wives would become distorted. It was, in fact, especially the Evangelical *women* who demonised the money gained from logging. Theirs was a constant fear that their husbands would fall into the same trap as the women considered many Catholic men had already fallen into (see Veiga 2004: 184). This fear was not entirely illegitimate, since some Evangelical men did occasionally join the drinking parties. By demonising the profits from logging the Evangelical women therefore drew the line between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour exemplified by the acts of Evangelicals and

³⁹ This topic was also addressed in Evangelical sermons (TKU/N/04/3:3).

⁴⁰ What kind of food people ate was one way of evaluating the properness of Yine persons and families in Diamante. One family, for instance, never used pasta or canned food in preparing their meals: for them, those were not real foods and they looked down at those families which regularly used these food stuffs.

⁴¹ The situation was already similar in the mid-1980s when Glenn Shepard (1987: 54) visited the community. According to Shepard, it was women who complained of men's use of alcohol. In my experience, however – fifteen to twenty years later – alcohol was equally a cause of disagreements between Evangelicals and Catholics as between men and women.

Catholics respectively.

But herein lay one rather fundamental difference between the Evangelicals and Catholics. I never heard any Catholic person demonising the money gained from logging with or without the help of the hand-whistler. For the Catholics with whom I talked about this, using money for recreational purposes was not to be condemned but on the contrary was at the heart of the production of sociality. For them there did not seem to be a controversy between using money on alcohol and generating relatedness because conviviality – an issue I shall further examine in Chapter 6 – was central for the production of relatedness (Gow 2001: 232; see Kapfhammer 2004: 113; Veiga 2004: 184–187). It was in the moments of cheerful togetherness that social bonds were best renewed. In fact, I do not think the Evangelicals did disagree on this point either: it was rather a matter of degree. Diversion was welcomed by them as well as long as it did not affect the adults' capability to care for their children, work the land and search for food, and thus endanger the welfare of the family. In the Evangelical views, however, the Catholics' excessive use of alcohol did just this.

Having argued that demonising the money gained from logging results from the destructive consequences for Yine social life caused by this excess wealth, I think we should still not dismiss another plausible reason for marking the profits from logging as devilish, namely jealousy. As numerous ethnographies demonstrate, jealousy has throughout the world been one of the major reasons for social discrepancies and one that especially in many small societies has often led to witchcraft accusations. Frequently, jealousy is caused by economic differences. For instance in Diamante, people were constantly keeping an eye on the possessions of other families and when someone bought or received something new, people eagerly speculated about where the person had received the item or the money for buying it from. Correspondingly, people were also keen to conceal their new belongings and thus to avoid rumours concerning themselves. I frequently discovered that people had told others that they had bought some item from me even though in reality I had given the item as a gift (sometimes on request). (TKU/N/01/2:1; TKU/N/04/3:20; TKU/N/05/3:20, 25.) People also did not take items I had bought for them in the city and for which they had paid me into use immediately but only after a week or so in order for others not to be able to determine their origin.⁴² Given this background, it is plausible that jealousy was also one significant factor in Evangelical women demonising money people gained from logging but, I suspect, a minor one in comparison to the causes discussed above. Otherwise, one would have expected the Catholics too to demonise the money gained by Evangelicals

⁴² I was often put in a difficult situation when people came to ask me how much I had asked for a certain item 'bought' from me by someone. I could not lie but had to tell that I had given the item to the person for free but simultaneously I was then revealing that the person who had been given the item had been lying to others. In these situations I also gradually learned to employ people's own vagueness and to reply that I had not 'asked much' for the items.

equally, which, however, they did not do.⁴³

In addition to the demonised money, the images of the guardians of resources were opportune for discussing the relationship between individual interests and sociality in another way as well. In its essence as the guardian of valuable trees, the hand-whistler was described as wearing a dark-blue suit, a vest, a white tie, black hat and shoes – clothing resembling that described by Ingham for the devil in the Mexican case. (TKU/A/05/52e:1; TKU/N/05/3:13.) I cannot be sure who the clothing was thought to remind one of – a logger, rubber baron, or some Peruvian authority – but the clothing clearly differed from the *cushma* used by the hand-whistler when it was seen as the guardian of forest animals.⁴⁴ The Western clothing certainly was a reaction to the outside world which the Yine in Diamante were (or had been) in dealings with and could be seen as a way to discuss the relationship between indigenous and white people. However, I do not think this was the primary message incorporated into this clothing. Rather, as clothing as an extension of a person's bodily surface can be seen to express the person's moral condition and values (Turner 1995; Seeger et al. 1987; see also Chapters 6 and 7), the hand-whistler's Western-style clothing served as a warning against employing one's personal autonomy at the cost of sociability and care for one's family – a pattern exemplified by the behaviour of many foreigners. The designation often used by the Yine of Westerners was that of millionaire. White people were *millionarios* (Spanish) who, as the term suggests, possessed excess wealth and were not willing to share it with others. Just as Peter Gow (1991) reports the Yine in the Urubamba as having exclaimed: 'Go to visit a white man and see if your are given food!', the Yine in Diamante assigned excess wealth and greed as intrinsic qualities to Westerners. On the other hand, people using the term millionaire did not necessarily wish to emphasise the wealth differences every time they used the word but rather just employed it as a synonym for white people. For instance, when explaining something to me, a good Yine friend of mine once said that 'you as a millionaire', meaning 'you as a white person'. Nevertheless, the two terms being used synonymously does suggest that the Yine conceptualised white people through their actions in the socio-moral field. Therefore also the hand-whistler in its Western clothing reminded people of the dangers latent in logging: becoming too carried away by the promises of great income from logging would make a person more Western-like, that is, a person mostly concerned with his personal welfare.

In addition to the hand-whistler, the siren was also often depicted

⁴³ Jealousy was not, however, solely something emerging from and generated by monetary economy and the introduction of manufactured goods. The Yine in Diamante also seemed to have a silent competition over various other issues: who made the most delicious manioc beer, who wove the finest cloths, whose daughters were the prettiest and who was the most able hunter.

⁴⁴ According to Regan (1993), *chullachaqui* beliefs boomed in the Peruvian Amazonia during the rubber boom and consequently, the hand-whistler's Western-style clothing could be mimicking that of a rubber baron.

as wearing Western-style clothing.⁴⁵ Some people described it not only as a beautiful woman but a beautiful white woman with light hair and red lipstick, and instead of having the lower part of the body like a fish as in many other narrations, as wearing shoes and a skirt. Sirens were often understood to live close by cities or population centres. One Yine woman told me how her uncle had seen a siren. The uncle had lived on the River Tahuamanu where, as the woman explained, there were lots of sirens. Once, the man had seen a young woman bathing in a pool near the town of Iberia. He was going to take a bath himself but upon seeing the woman he got scared. He thought to himself that it was strange to find this woman there because women never bathed in that pool. When the woman saw that the man was watching she left. She wore a skirt and high-heel shoes. The following day the same happened but this time the woman spoke to the man. She said that she loved him and wished to take the man to the underwater world: she was the Queen of the River (*Reina del Rio*) and the man would become the King. But the man did not want to go with her and fooled her by saying that he would love to join her but that he first had to finish a job he had left unfinished in another city. He left the woman and never returned to the pool.⁴⁶ (TKU/A/04/49a:2.)

These kinds of narratives about the siren could be understood like those concerning the hand-whistler as warnings of the dangers inherent in interacting with foreign people. The siren seemed to be an opportune image for discussing the dangers especially the young Yine men faced when encountering 'city girls' when leaving the community in search of paid labour. In these trips, for instance when adolescents from Diamante left for the River Piedras for logging and on their way spent some of time in the city of Puerto Maldonado, the boys often found spouses among the non-indigenous population. This was something the Yine parents often resented, especially if it meant that their child went to live elsewhere permanently. The danger in engaging in such a relationship, accentuated in the narratives about the siren wearing Western-style clothing, was that a person would forget and ignore his family, which therefore in a sense would become deprived of a beloved kin person.

The demonisation of money and the narrations concerning the hand-whistler revealed people's concern for the distortion in the delicate relationship between personal autonomy and sociality constantly renewed in Yine daily practices. When the eligible resource was game meat, the success in acquiring the resource even in quantities did not directly lead to individual wealth accumulation. Game was distributed to kin and to co-parents⁴⁷ (although there was great variation in what parts of the animal were given to whom and how often, and thus disagreements over this matter were constant) because otherwise it would go off before consumption. In the case of money, however, the resource did not need to be shared with others but stayed with the person or in the nuclear family. Money could

⁴⁵ Cf. Amazonian accounts concerning the river dolphin (Slater 1994).

⁴⁶ This is a shortened version of the original longer narrative.

⁴⁷ Godparents of one's child.

be saved or, what was more common in Diamante, used at least to some extent for recreation.⁴⁸ The changes in local economics, and especially the increased importance of logging, aggravated this dilemma. This also seemed to explain why the hand-whistler had become more important as the guardian of valuable trees than of game animals: it was a suitable field for conceptualising and discussing the problems concerning personal as opposed to social welfare caused by the changes in local economics.

Nevertheless, these problems were not simply a question of increased individualism at the cost of sociality. The individual well-being made possible by economic assets should not be juxtaposed with the asocial individualism often considered to prevail in so-called Western thinking. Personal autonomy and the ability to be social were equally valued and the one could not exist without the other (Overing & Passes 2000a: 21). Able hunters, well-off families and skilled artisans were envied but also admired, especially when their capabilities worked to benefit the whole family. It was then not the individual wealth accumulation as such that was disapproved of by the (Evangelical) Yine and that needed to be negotiated in the socio-cosmological field. Rather, it was more a question of new kinds of challenges presented to people's morality and of the reconciliation of the to some extent differing answers of the Catholics and the Evangelicals to these challenges.

In addition to these differing views, there were also other fields in which the ideas and responses of the Evangelicals and Catholics in relation to changed social environment diverged. One such sphere was that of medicine and healing, which is examined in the following chapter.

⁴⁸ Miller (1979: 156–163) discussed a similar case among the Argentinean Toba. Nevertheless, I did not find this 'windfall mentality' (Hugh-Jones 1992), where money was spent as soon as it was gained, in Diamante to be in the first place a levelling mechanism, as shown by Kidd (1999) for the Paraguayan Enxet. Rather, alcohol consumption was disapproved by all.

CHAPTER 5

To be able to cure: shamans, doctors and the Mother of Toé

Treatable ailments such as pulmonary infections, diarrhoea and painful insect bites were very common in Diamante. The last two especially were something for which people often went to get remedies, painkillers and diarrhoea pills, from the community's health post or, for instance when I was in the community, came to ask for them from me. Owing to the curable nature of these minor illnesses, people, although clearly hoping to avoid ill health, were not too concerned about catching them. Conversely, they were very preoccupied with becoming seriously ill by witchcraft or through contact with malicious non-human beings. Therefore, precautions were taken in order to protect oneself and one's family. These safeguards in part described in previous chapters included for instance eating well, avoiding being alone, especially in plantations and the forest, and using certain scented plants for keeping pernicious spirits at bay.

In spite of these preventative measures, however, people sometimes did fall seriously ill. In such cases, remedy was sought from all sources available: herbal treatments, Western medicine and often, as a last resort, the use of psychoactive substances.¹ Curing illnesses with psychoactive or other curing substances has generally in anthropological literature on Amazonia been considered a characteristic of shamans and therefore something belonging to the institution of shamanism. The shaman has been seen as the holder of power and thus often a religious-political leader of his (or her) community, the most common role still having been that of a healer. The powers of the shaman have been considered to derive from the person mastering the ecstatic experience and from acquisition of auxiliary spirits and curing songs. Although not all shamans rely on psychoactive drugs but emphasise for instance dreaming, usually ecstatic experiences in Amazonia are achieved through different substances such as *ayahuasca* (*Banisteriopsis caapi*, Yine: *kamalampi*), *tobacco* (*Nicotiana sp.*; Yine: *yiri*) and *toé* (*Brugmansia sp.* [formerly *Datura*], Yine: *gayapa*).² (See e.g. Baer 1992; Bennett 1992; Chaumeil 1983; Crocker 1985; Hugh-Jones 1994; Luna 1986; Matteson 1992a; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975; Rosengren 2006b; Sullivan 1988: 390ff.; Vidal & Whitehead 2004; Wilbert 1993.)

Among the Yine of Diamante, however, the relationship between

¹ I am using here the term *psychoactives* instead of *hallucinogens* to refer to different substances such as *ayahuasca* and *toé* affecting a person's state of consciousness. I thank Dan Rosengren for pointing out for me that although the latter term has been commonly used in Amazonian anthropology, it carries the connotations of unreality and illusoriness, which do not correspond to Amazonian lived experiences.

² *Ayahuasca* is also known e.g. as *caapi*, *yagé*, *natem* and *daime* and *toé* as *datura* and *maikua*.

the use of psychoactive substances and shamanism presented itself in a different light for two interrelated reasons. First, it was not in the first place specialists like shamans but ordinary people who utilised psychoactives. This was largely a consequence of the last person recognised as a shaman in Diamante dying in 2000³ (see Chapter 1) so that there were no able practising healers remaining in the community (cf. Rosengren 2002). Therefore, curing had been almost entirely left to the domains of ordinary people's knowledge of healing and Western medicine. This did not signify, however, that shamanic conceptualisations of the world would have been alien to the Yine of Diamante. Rather, even though shamanism did not materialise in the work of shamans, the shamanistic world and conceptions were actively engaged with by ordinary Yine people. Second, and at least in part deriving from the lack of practising shamans, unlike the many Amazonian peoples who hold *ayahuasca* or tobacco to be the primary psychoactive substances used in healing (Caiuby & Sena 2002), the Yine of Diamante preferred *toé* over other psychoactives.⁴

In the current situation in Diamante where there were no practising shamans left and where the national health-care facilities were rather inadequate, as will be discussed below, people's own abilities to cure became vitally important (TKU/N/05/3:19). Being able to cure was considered not only a personal skill to be admired but also a moral stance: a person's ability and willingness to cure others was a sign of his or her care for loved ones. In contrast, unwillingness to use one's abilities for the benefit of others was deeply reviled. To be able to cure and to develop one's skills further, every household had at least some medicinal plants growing in the vicinity of their home and possession of new plants was actively sought after. But the intermedical condition (Greene 1998) of healthcare in Diamante posed a challenge for people's curing skills. Pharmaceuticals were also highly valued for their curative powers and people were eager to access and use them. With few opportunities for administering or prescribing the efficient biomedicine or pharmaceuticals even though receiving them in small quantities from nurses and doctors, the Yine had to find other ways for including them in their curing repertoire. This incorporation was done in the field of visions induced by psychoactives. Western medicine was integrated into *toé* imagery and into Yine relationships with the mother spirit of *toé*. However, the incorporation was not solely a question of Yine relations with the foreign outside, or Western, world. *Toé* visions had become one arena for manifesting the differing views of the Evangelicals and Catholics on proper forms of curing and for a power struggle between these two groups. In relation to *toé* visions these differences culminated

³ The man had considered himself too old for curing effectively already in the mid-1980s (Shepard 1987).

⁴ Also the different Jivaro groups of Ecuador and Peru have been reported to use *toé* customarily. (Bennett 1992; Brown 1978; Karsten 1935; Perruchon 2003). Furthermore, although Baer (1992: 86) states that the Matsigenka use predominantly *ayahuasca* in healing, they have been noted to use also *toé* frequently (Gray 1997: 77n7 > Bennet, B. 1991. *Illness and Order: Cultural Transformation among the Matsigenka and Huachipaeri*. PhD thesis. Cornell University).

round the question of the nature and meanings given to shamanism.

In this chapter, I shall examine the Yine use of *toé* imagery as an instrument for negotiating intra-village socio-moral relations. I shall first look at the current health-care situation in the community of Diamante and especially the role of *toé* in Yine curing practices. Special attention will be paid on the relationships people have with the Mother of *Toé*. Then I shall move to explore the appropriation of biomedical elements into the Yine medical repertoire by means of *toé* visions and last, I shall concentrate on the Evangelical Catholic relations as they are expressed through people's *toé* experiences.

Diverse cures for diverse illnesses

Like many Amazonian societies, the Yine held most deaths and grave illnesses to be caused by some moral actor. So-called 'natural deaths' were extremely rare, though not entirely unknown (TKU/N/05/3:4). In the old days, people said, when the Yine were still strong, they lived long healthy lives and died of old age. Nowadays, however, people had become weak and could no longer resist the dangers of the world and consequently died from different illnesses caused by witchcraft, sorcery, spirits, revenging animals or other external causes.

The Yine in Diamante recognised a variety of causes for illnesses. In earlier chapters I have discussed illnesses caused by fright (*mal aire, susto*) and madness caused by encounters with different non-humans. In addition to these, people could become ill for instance through vengeance taken by animal spirits (*cutipa*) (see Chapter 6), through bewitchment or by catching some not so dangerous illness such as flu.⁵ Minor illnesses like the cough and flu were seen as something people could catch during cold weather, especially during *friaje* – the cold air brought by northern breezes in June.⁶ Even if these minor illnesses were usually said to result from cold weather, the Yine still often noted that they were carried, along with other evil things, in the wind (TKU/A/01/26:6; TKU/N/01/2:9; TKU/N/05/3:4, 23–24). Alternatively, people said that such illnesses rose up from the soil.⁷ A commonly used cure for calming down feverish flues was, as among many other Amazonian peoples, taking cool baths in the river (e.g. Murphy 1958: 37; TKU/N/05/3:24).

⁵ Gow (1991) divides Yine causes of sickness that may lead to death into four categories: the revenge of natural beings (*cutipa*), fright (*manchari*), the evil of people/the evil of demons (*mal de gente/mal de diablo*) and illnesses sent by God. Also Shepard (1987) notes that the Yine attribute the source of some illnesses to God. During my stays in Diamante, however, I only in a few occasions heard people referring to God as being the cause of illnesses.

⁶ The Yine in Diamante often deplored the changes taking place in the climate. They noted that for instance the *friajes* were now much more common than before and no longer occurred only in June but throughout the dry season. Also the River Madre de Dios was according to their observations becoming dryer and dryer every year.

⁷ Also the Matsigenka consider illnesses to be brought by 'intoxicating vapours' rising from the earth or falling from the atmosphere (Shepard 2002: 217).

More serious illnesses were attributed to witchcraft (Spanish: *brujería*) and sorcery (Spanish: *hechichería*) in Yine called *kagonchiwlu* or *kayinretlewlu*. The most common symptoms of these attacks were aches in different body parts, swelling of the abdomen or legs and different skin problems. Bewitchment was thought to result from the plain ill-will of a witch or from personal problems between the witch and the victim (see articles in Whitehead & Wright 2004). Often the witch was somehow related to the victim (see Chapter 7). In witchcraft, people said, the harm-doer sends pathogenic items that penetrate into the body of the victim, causing pain and rapidly causing their health to deteriorate. Death was thought to follow the bewitchment quickly. In one case told to me an adolescent boy had been working at the construction of a school building in Diamante when someone had bewitched him. Returning home in the afternoon he had started feeling ill and soon developed vomiting and cramps. Owing to the intensity of the condition the boy had died before dawn the following morning. It was never found out who was to blame for his death. (TKU/A/04/56:4.) Witches were also considered capable of bewitching by sending their spirit, *tunchi*, in different forms (see Chapter 1) – for instance in that of some animal – to hurt the victim (TKU/A/01/27:7; TKU/A/01/30a:5). The latter kind of case had taken place in Diamante in 2001 when a woman was bitten by a venomous snake when returning home in the evening and died early the following morning. It was said that the snake had been sent to bite the woman as a test for her husband, who was thought of as a witch by many. People supposed that another witch had wanted to test the healing powers of the man and his inability to cure his wife after the snakebite was considered a proof of his not yet fully developed powers (TKU/N/04/3:4, 7–8).

In contrast to the almost immediate death caused by witchcraft, the *hechicheria* type of sorcery was believed to kill the victim slowly but surely. In sorcery, it was said, the aggressor does not have to be a witch – anyone who knows the particular herbs needed can perform the task. Such a person steals an item or piece of clothing that belongs to the victim and buries or hides it together with herbs in a hole in a tree trunk (usually *lupuna*-tree, Yine: *sunu*) (TKU/A/01/26:6; TKU/N/04/3:8). The symptoms are said to develop gradually. Sorcery was diagnosed by odd illnesses or by the swelling of certain body parts. People said that it might take up to two years or more for the victim to die. Cases of sorcery were fairly common in Diamante and almost without exception there was someone who was suffering from symptoms related to it. (TKU/N/04/3:12, 23.)

As in other parts of Amazonia, being sick and dying among the Yine were multi-dimensional and thoroughly social processes. What was common to all diseases was that the victim lost her appetite and consequently, in serious cases if no remedy was available, drifted away from the domain of the kin and of human beings. As the victim no longer wanted or was capable of receiving or providing food for her family, she was in danger of becoming disconnected from all the fundamental social relationships

based on reciprocation of food that had been established earlier in life.⁸ (See also Gow 1991: 180; see Chapter 1.) Illnesses thus broke up the group of kinspeople or family wishing to 'live well' and so victimised not only the patient but influenced also the whole family and kin group. Consequently, it was not surprising that the Yine placed a high value on people's abilities to cure and welcomed all means of treating illnesses, whether of native or foreign origin.

The health post of Diamante, the *posta* as it was generally referred to, was a government-run unit of the departmental health care in Madre de Dios. There was usually one trained nurse or health promoter attending patients in the community. However, when the nurse left for vacations, to update her training or for some other reason, the health post could be closed for several weeks (TKU/N/04/3:24). The closest aid during those times was found in Boca Manu, but the almost hour-long boat trip was undertaken only in severe cases. The nurse helped people with acute illnesses and in accidents, and women in labour, and gave health instruction and contraceptives to women (TKU/N/04/3:11; TKU/N/05/3:9). However, the resources at the health post were insufficient. There was a constant lack of medicines and often there were just painkillers and some general antibiotics available (TKU/N/04/3:21). In addition, medicines at the post were free only for children. Adults had to pay for their pills, which – even though not extremely expensive – tended to decrease people's willingness to seek aid from the health post (TKU/N/04/4:2). Furthermore, the nurse, regardless of who was holding the position, was often criticised for not being available when needed and of being unskilled.⁹ (TKU/N/01/2:1; TKU/N/04/3:8; TKU/N/05/3:25.)

While the health post was for a good deal of the time functioning but lacked the material wherewithal to be efficient, there was also another institution practising Western medicine which, unlike the health post, was operative for only a few days a year but which had more medicines available. A few times a year,¹⁰ a group of doctors from the United States visited the communities in Madre de Dios, giving people medical assistance (TKU/N/05/3:7). The doctors were associated with a non-denominational Christian organisation called Christian Emergency Relief Teams International (CERT) based in Tennessee. The organisation takes volunteers to different parts of the world to give medical and dental aid to rural populations and

⁸ In a similar manner with the Yine, Murphy (1958: 35) describes witchcraft illnesses among the Mundurucú proceeding in three stages. In the first phase the patient is unhappy and eats mud, soap and other inedible substances. In the second phase he turns yellow and thin and in the third phase dies.

⁹ In Diamante the nurses changed every couple of years as, after gaining experience, they probably got better jobs in some city or at least closer to their homes. For an extensive treatment of health workers in indigenous communities in South America (Bolivia) see Bastien 1992.

¹⁰ According to the CERT Monthly Newsletter (December 2005), in 2006 the team had increased the number of its visits to the Manu area to four per year. However, when I visited Diamante briefly in September 2007, people told me that the CERT-team no longer came to Diamante but treated people only in Boca Manu and in the communities inside the Manu National Park.

to support local churches. On each visit to Diamante, the group stayed in the community for one day, during which time they attended to almost all its inhabitants. They held their reception at the communal house where everybody gathered to receive treatment or simply get medicines, some first thing in the morning, some later in the afternoon. People went to the reception to obtain medicine for future use even if they were presently in good health. During one such visit in the spring of 2005 when I was in the community, the group gave out vitamin pills and anti-parasite medication for children and painkillers to most adults (TKU/N/05/3:7; see TKU/N/04/3:21). What people in particular desired to receive were antibiotics, which when purchased at the medical post were considered relatively expensive. Most of the visiting doctors did not speak Spanish at all since it was not required of volunteers. But there was at least one translator in the team who helped the doctors and nurses in difficult situations. Often the dentists' only possible treatment was to pull out aching teeth. In the Madre de Dios area the group travelled with an Evangelical pastor from the city of Cusco. Normally at some point during the team's visit to Diamante the pastor held a meeting at the Evangelical church.¹¹ With a visiting speaker at the church and most people present for the reception, these meetings usually drew a lot of people to the church.

In more serious cases of illness or accidents, the patients from Diamante had to be transported to Cusco for treatment. These included cases requiring surgery or when a thorough examination was needed. The problem in these situations was not so much the transportation – a person could be transported to the city usually within a few days – but the cost: who would pay for the transportation expenses? Financial aid was sought for this purpose from the municipality, tourist companies or other partner organisations. Often also the community agreed to pay some part of the expenses but settling the matter normally caused a lot of discussion and disagreements as people were keen to make sure that patients from different families received equal support from the community. In addition, in severe and prolonged cases of sorcery or unexplained illnesses, the healer from the nearby community of Shipetiari could be called on to help but owing to the expense this was very rare.

Often then, as seen from the description above, Western medicine was not available for people in Diamante when an illness struck. Thus people had to rely on their own knowledge of medicinal plants. Even though people claimed no longer to know the cures their grandparents had been using when they were young – herbal cures for making people good hunters and fishermen and different cures for making bodies strong – my impression was that the Yine did still know a large range of healing plants for present-day purposes. One day I asked an Evangelical woman to show me all the medicinal plants she had growing in the immediate surroundings of her house (see TKU/N/05/3:19). We ended up with a

¹¹ Apparently the pastor had later moved to Puerto Maldonado but continued travelling with the CERT-team and helping them, for instance in 'planting' a new church in Boca Manu in 2006 (CERT Monthly Newsletter, End of the Year 2006; December 2005).

list of forty-five different plants with their uses, probably not covering all the plants growing close by the house (TKU/N/05/3:23).¹² The woman indicated that there were more plants to be found near the house and still more which she would recognise in the forest.¹³ The plants she showed me served for a great number of purposes ranging from treating wounds, cough and stomach aches to relieving delivery pains and protecting a person from malevolent spirits, the police and unwanted lovers (TKU/A/01/26:9; TKU/A/01/29:2; TKU/A/01/30a:3; TKU/N/01/2:1, 8; TKU/N/04/3:18; TKU/N/05/3:15, 22). The plants were prepared as infusions and teas, bandages, steam baths and herbal baths, ingested as such or crushed and used on the skin or scattered around the patio as well as in various other ways (TKU/A/01/26:9; TKU/N/04/3:13; TKU/N/05/3: 2–3, 17). Also smoking different substances (see Chapter 6), blowing cigarette smoke, and rubbing *timolina* (flower water) on the skin were methods commonly used in curing (TKU/N/05/3:19). People in Diamante also actively tried to obtain new medicinal plants or replant those that had for one reason or another not flourished. When visiting relatives in other communities, whether in Madre de Dios or Urubamba, the Yine often brought back plants they had received during their visit. They were also eager to acquire plants from the Matsigenka people, especially those living inside the Manu National Park in Tayacome and Yomibato (see Figure 3), because these Matsigenka were viewed as extremely potent curers in comparison to the Yine.¹⁴ It was presumably not so much a question of the Matsigenka knowing many plants yet unknown to the Yine people, but rather – as has previously been described for the Arawakan Ashéninka people – of the power deriving from the plants' association with certain groups of people. The healing powers of plants were considered to depend in great part upon their connection with different categories of people in themselves considered to be more or less powerful (Lenaerts 2006).¹⁵ The healing powers of the Matsigenka living in Manu were conceived of as influencing and being part of the plants

¹² Collecting plant names and their uses from this woman was not motivated by any interest in using the information in the future for commercial or any other purposes, which would violate the property rights of the Yine people.

¹³ The picture Shepard (1987: 86–89) gives based on his visit to Diamante in the 1980s seems very different from the situation I encountered there twenty years later. Shepard writes that '[m]ost people from Diamante admitted to having little knowledge of plants aside from a few very common plants such as *tohe* [*toé*], *ajo sachá*, *piri-piri*, and others' and notes that the use of medical plants in Diamante in 1986 was minimal. I am not, however, entirely convinced by Shepard's account. I think part of the alleged ignorance could have been caused by people's reluctance to reveal their plant knowledge to outsiders.

¹⁴ In contrast to some previous accounts of Arawakan peoples (Gow 1994; Lenaerts 2006), the Yine in Diamante seemed to consider indigenous people living in remote areas powerful healers because these had not yet lost the knowledge of the past generations. However, this did not prevent them from viewing people living closer to cities as potent healers, as well.

¹⁵ Marc Lenaerts (2006) notes how among the Ashéninka and their neighbouring indigenous groups the healing power of a certain plant is not so much considered to be a result of its pharmaceutical or chemical effects as of its relationship with definite human groups. The Ashéninka, for instance, 'trust the Shipibo medicinal plants primarily because they are related with Shipibo people, and because Sipibo [sic] people themselves are related with urban people'. Also Peter Gow (1996) has made similar observations among the Yine.

received from them. For this reason, it was also essential that plants be *received* from someone in order for them to retain their curative powers. A stolen plant or one taken without permission would not, according to the Yine, survive or if it survived, would no longer be curative.



Figure 18. A healer from a nearby community curing a patient in Diamante

But when the means used by ordinary people to cure others were not enough, people had to turn to specialists for help. Even though they lacked a powerful shaman, there were a few people with greater knowledge in herbal healing in Diamante. Three men – two Catholics and one Evangelical – were acknowledged to be herbalists although they were still in the process of training (TKU/N/04/3:7–8, 18).¹⁶ Nevertheless, they all took special interest in developing their skills further. The two Catholics had participated in the AMETRA 2000 (Asociación de Aplicación de Medicina Tradicional), an NGO-based traditional medicine project designed to increase the importance and valuation of herbal healing among indigenous peoples. (TKU/N/04/3:8, 20; see Gray 1997: 64–65.) Even though people acknowledged the interest these men had in herbal healing, they nevertheless still viewed their healing abilities as more or less equal to those of common people. Consequently, their help was not often sought by members of other families. In addition to these three men, there was one Adventist mestizo man, a teacher, who had lived in the community for some years but who before my visit to

¹⁶ *Herbalists* have been distinguished from *vegetalists* on the grounds that while both are knowledgeable in medicinal plants, only the latter are thought to receive their knowledge from plant spirits (Luna 1986: 14–15).

Diamante in 2005 had already moved to live in Shintuya.¹⁷ He was said to be a more potent healer than the other men and was even considered a shaman by some (TKU/N/04/3:3). As I understood, he took *ayahuasca*, if not often, at least quite regularly, and people came to see him with their health problems.¹⁸ Perhaps as knowledgeable as the Adventist teacher was considered to be one Catholic Yine man in his forties – the same man whose wife had been killed by a snakebite – whom others deemed to be a witch. The stigma was probably due to him having participated in several courses on ethnomedicine outside the community but still not taking any interest in curing other people, thus failing to employ his abilities to heal for the benefit of others (TKU/N/04/3:8, 18).

In addition to these herbalists, the Evangelical pastor was sometimes called on to pray for a sick person. Praying to God was seen as a potent means for curing but its efficacy depended also on the person doing the praying (TKU/A/04/3:5, 8). People told me of a few instances when, while in Pucallpa or in Puerto Maldonado, they had used the services of some Protestant or Pentecostal healers, who were thought to be able to ‘cure well’ (see Shepard 1987). The Evangelical Pastor in Diamante was not considered very powerful in this respect and was rather called on to pray whilst trying other remedies as well.¹⁹

If the patient was not successfully cured by any of these means available in Diamante, the last option was to rely on the help of mother spirits of psychoactive plants. As one Catholic man said: ‘For instance, if the post and the hospital do not cure you, that is to say you have fallen victim to witchcraft or sorcery. . . . So just like before, when there weren’t many possibilities for going to the pharmacy . . . so where we most seek help from are these plants, *gayapa* [toé]’ (TKU/A/05/36a:5; TKU/A/05/46b:4; see also Shepard 1987: 113).

Ayahuasca or toé?

As noted above, *ayahuasca* (Yine: *kamalampi*) was in Diamante considered something only shamans or healers used. Ordinary people said they did

¹⁷ In 2007 the man had again moved to Diamante after having been appointed to a teaching job at the local secondary school.

¹⁸ Once when my foot became infected and swelled to the extent that I could no longer walk properly, he wrapped a herbal compress around my foot and the following morning the swelling had decreased so that I could move better. Nevertheless, I had to leave for the city to get antibiotics for the infection. (TKU/A/04/3:11.)

¹⁹ The Evangelical pastor in Diamante did not practise curing very visibly as for instance some Pentecostal pastors in Amazonia have been known to do (Miller 1979: 127–131; P. Wright 1992: 153; see Hugh-Jones 1994; Wiik 2004b: 153). He did not for instance consider the Bible to be a sacred object with curing powers (P. Wright 1992: 153) nor did he view himself in the first place as a curer. According to my observations he did still often pray for sick people and his aid was sought for but perhaps not relied on, at least not as the only means for curing. (TKU/N/04/3:4.)

not have any experience in using the substance.²⁰ Even if sick, people themselves would not take *ayahuasca* but it was the healer who took it and consequently could search for remedies and causes for illnesses with the help of different spiritual beings (TKU/A/01/29:1). But since there were no curing *ayahuasca* healers left in the community, the last one having owing to his old age reduced his activities already in the 1980s (Shepard 1987: 125–135) and having died in 2000, the use of *ayahuasca* in the community had significantly decreased. Nevertheless, the practice of curing with *ayahuasca* was not alien to the Yine. They had been and still occasionally were cured in this manner by shamans from other communities.

But there was another psychoactive plant that was widely used in Diamante, namely *toé* (Yine: *gayapa*).²¹ *Toé* is generally in Amazonia considered the most powerful psychoactive substance, even to the extent that it is feared and used only in extreme cases of illness. Among many peoples, shamans prefer using *ayahuasca* rather than *toé* to go into trance because the potency of *toé* is ‘too great for the shaman to be able to function ritually in singing, sucking, and the accompanying social interaction’ (Harner 1984: 153; 1990: 15–16; Bennett 1992; Perruchon 2003: 230; Rosengren 2002; Whitten 1985: 134). Furthermore, the repeated or careless use of *toé* is believed to lead to insanity. However, the Yine in Diamante viewed the plant somewhat more positively. Even though they also acknowledged the forceful effects of *toé* – I was told that under the influence of *ayahuasca* a person knows that they are seeing visions, but intoxicated by *toé*, everything ‘happens for real’ – and used it only in serious cases of illness, they considered *toé* visions beautiful and good to have and the plant itself more effective than *ayahuasca* (TKU/A/01/26:9; TKU/N/01/2:6; TKU/N/05/3:16).²² Most adults in the community – Evangelicals and Catholics alike – had at least once during their lives taken *toé* for curing. It was taken for illnesses caused by witchcraft or sorcery and also other serious illnesses such as persistent toothache or back pain. However, it could not be used by children, who still lacked strength and knowledge and hence in cases of children getting seriously ill or an adult being too weak to take *toé* a shaman’s help was still needed.

Another reason why people preferred *toé* to *ayahuasca* was economic. As was customary in Amazonia, in cases where a healer’s or shaman’s services were used, these specialists had to be paid (TKU/N/05/3:25; TKU/A/04/42b). Common payments were domestic animals such as chicken and certain utility articles like fishing line and hooks. However, people often did not have money to buy the goods for the payment, a reason why a shaman’s help was sometimes not sought even though the situation would have required it. Furthermore, as ability to cure in Diamante was seen as

²⁰ The Yine did not consume *ayahuasca* even for ritualistic purposes, unlike, reportedly, for instance the Manchineri people in Brazil (Virtanen 2007).

²¹ This is different from the situation among the Yine of Urubamba where people used more *ayahuasca* and only sporadically *toé* (Gow 2001: 136).

²² See Gow 1991: 272; Shepard 1987. Also the Shuar people seeking *arutam* visions use *toé* because of its potency to produce visions (Harner 1984: 154).

something directed to helping others, people's attitudes towards paying for healers' services were made even more ambivalent. On the one hand, people were grateful for their or their loved one's recovery but on the other, they saw curing as something people should do out of their good will and respect for others. For these reasons, using the services of shamans was not very common in Diamante. When I asked one man how the lack of shamans in the community affected people's lives, he rather laconically replied that 'since there are no healers, we just die'. But before dying, people used every curing method available to them.

The tendency of the Yine to prefer curing themselves should not, however, be understood entirely as a consequence of the current situation without shamans, of unwillingness to pay for shamans from other communities or as something done only by compulsion. Also in the past when able healers and shamans were available, ordinary Yine people had apparently been skilled healers. Farabee (1971 [1922]: 60) describes the Yine people as he encountered them a hundred years ago during the first decade of the twentieth century: 'The people are all taught to take care of themselves, and one is constantly surprised at the things they know.' Therefore, the Yine preference for healing themselves is best understood as relating to the high socio-moral value they placed on a person's abilities to cure and thereby to take care of one's family (TKU/N/05/3:19).

Nevertheless, the Yine people's desire to be capable healers was still not something entirely altruistic. Even though a person's abilities to cure were designed to benefit others, people were anxious to develop their own personal skills without necessarily sharing everything with others. On one occasion in 2005, representatives of one NGO came to Diamante to launch a first phase in a project on medicinal plants. They wished to get a few knowledgeable persons to show them different plants which they would then send to Lima for chemical examination and after which the results and knowledge on these plants could be shared by all people in the community and possibly with neighbouring communities. The issue was discussed at one communal meeting in Diamante for quite some time because there seemed not to be any volunteers for the job. There were many suggestions but people were reluctant to accept the proposal because, as one man finally said, they did not want to give their knowledge away if they did not receive anything themselves in return. People thus valued their personal abilities to cure and were in constant need of reassessing those abilities against the abilities of other people and against the changing medical environment. One thing that was central to this process, and one that was more or less accessible to every adult in the community and therefore had also become a means for the Yine to relate to Western biomedicine, was the psychoactive plant *toé*.

Taking toé

Since *toé* was always taken in relative solitude for reasons explained below, I never witnessed anyone taking *toé* in Diamante or saw how it is prepared. However, I was told that there are different ways to prepare the potion.

Some people boil the plant in water thereby getting a ready potion while others first roast the plant wrapped in big leaves of *pifayo*-palm, taking care not to burn it, and then take the plant out and mix it with a little bit of water. (TKU/A/05/36a:5; on preparing *toé* potion see Whitten 1976: 98; Chiappe et al. 1985; Shepard 1987: 113–116.) There were also various views on when the drug should be consumed. Most people said that it should be taken either early in the morning or in the evening just before or after sunset.²³ Depending on the amount ingested, the intoxication was described as lasting from some hours up to two or three days. After ingestion, *toé* was said to take effect quickly – in a few minutes or a maximum of half an hour. A person was said to feel hot and thirsty, the mouth becoming dry, and in most cases people were reported to get rid of their clothes.²⁴ Then a flashing light like a lightning bolt was said to appear, which meant that the person had achieved the altered state of hallucination or rather, as the Yine themselves called it and as termed by Gow (2001: 140), drunkenness.²⁵ In this state, everyone said, night seems like day.²⁶ (TKU/A/01/26:2; TKU/A/01/29:1; TKU/N/04/3:13; TKU/A/04/42b:4–6.)

There were also two different views among the Yine on where *toé* should be taken (TKU/N/01/2:11; TKU/A/04/42b:4). Some maintained that the person has to stay locked in a room during the whole period of intoxication so that they will not hurt themselves or get lost in the forest while wandering around. In this view, it is a person's *samenchi* which goes around while the physical body stays inside. At first, a person is said to be extremely violent, for instance banging and kicking the walls of the room, but later on when the *samenchi* leaves, the body remains 'sleeping' or 'dead' in one place. According to the other view, however, the person is to be left to roam freely in the forest since the Mother of *Toé* will guide the person and does not let anything happen to them. According to this view, the *samenchi* does not leave the body but everything 'happens for real' (TKU/A/01/29:1). The majority of the people with whom I talked about this opted for the latter alternative. However, in both options there should always be someone looking after the intoxicated person in order to avoid accidents. (See Whitten 1976: 98; 1985:140–142, 155–162.)

People emphasised that *toé* should be taken when there are no other people – except the person looking after the patient – around. This is because in drunkenness, a person's vision is altered so that they may

²³ Also Shepard (1987: 114) notes the various views in Diamante on when *toé* should be taken. Some people told him that it should be taken only at night; others preferred the new moon, full moon or just good weather.

²⁴ Shepard (1987) notes that undressing was a result of a trick played on the person by the Mother of *Toé*. I was never told this. People just referred to the body being burning hot and the person therefore wishing to remove the clothes.

²⁵ Gow (2001: 140) states that since the Yine people use the same term *gimru* equally of the state of intoxication caused by beer, tobacco and hallucinogens, and since hallucinatory experiences are therefore not classified on the basis of hallucinations, he uses the English term *drunkenness* also of the altered state of consciousness caused by *ayahuasca* and *toé*.

²⁶ Lightning or intense light are commonly experienced in *toé* drunkenness (e.g. Baer 1992: 90).

see other people as devils.²⁷ This could be dangerous for both.²⁸ Therefore, *toé* was taken either on some beach revealed from the river during the dry season or in the village during the night time when most people were asleep. Furthermore, one woman explained that the reason why *toé* prefers quietude is because it is used to living alone, tranquilly, where it has been planted and where there is no noise around.²⁹ (TKU/A/05/51b:2.)

When the visions begin, the person is usually said to see the mother spirit of *toé* appearing to cure the patient. Shepard (1987: 117) notes that in Diamante people saw the Mother of *Toé* as a tiny old woman, young girl or boy, or an androgynous figure. In the accounts I was told the Mother was almost exclusively depicted as a male figure and was often described as a small, midget-size person.³⁰ According to several descriptions, the Mother guides the person on a path, indicating which way to take and where the dangers lie. It also explains who the different persons seen in human form are: jaguars, witches or souls of the dead. The souls of the dead are the beings most commonly seen in drunkenness alongside different plant spirits. These plant spirits include plantain, *huicungo*, papaya and *pifayo* (TKU/N/01/1:10; TKU/A/01/26:2; TKU/A/01/29:2). Plantains and papayas are seen as mothers carrying their babies: an allusion to the feminine plants with bunches of fruits. The *huicungo* tree is seen as a Catholic padre clothed in a white gown and wearing a long beard – the thorns of the trunk. Furthermore, small stones on the beach are seen as either small mirrors or as little people carrying their plates (dark flat rocks) and fishing hooks (thorns on the ground). Also twisted branches of trees found on the ground appear to be rifles.³¹ (On *toé* visions see Chaumeil 1983: 102–103, 116–119; Shepard 1987.)

This kind of changed perspective in *toé* drunkenness corresponds for instance to the different point of view of the siren or a person's altered vision caused by encounters with a brocket deer described in Chapter 2. The drunkenness caused by *toé* opens another dimension for people to experience the world around safely and to gain a different kind of knowledge. Gow (2001: 142) writes of the juxtaposition between Yine

²⁷ Cf. visions when a person has encountered a brocket deer (Chapter 2; cf. Gow 2001: 137).

²⁸ Gow (2001: 135) describes how in the Urubamba area people close to the person taking *toé* paint their faces black with *huito* in order to prevent the intoxicated person recognising them. Furthermore, they try to avoid the drinker during the drunkenness. In Diamante, however, I never heard anyone explicitly stating that they would be afraid of persons taking *toé*. Rather, it seemed that the act of avoiding the person taking *toé* was directed towards securing a successful *toé* experience for them.

²⁹ This was also the reason why people said that after taking *toé* one should not eat food from a pot from which water had boiled over: it would disturb the Mother of *Toé* (TKU/A/05/51b:2).

³⁰ On different descriptions of Mothers of psychoactive plants see Amaringo & Luna 1991; Chaumeil 1983: 74–89; Luna 1986.

³¹ In addition, under intoxication a person could also see their own body as 'transparent' and consequently could observe the presence of an illness in the body. (TKU/A/01/26:9; TKU/N/01/2:7; see Whitten 1976: 100; 1985: 140–142.) Gow (2001: 142–143) describes how in *ayahuasca* drunkenness among the Yine of Urubamba, *ayahuasca* has been depicted as a beautiful woman and a strangler fig as a person or a house full of singing people.

everyday experiences and the *ayahuasca* hallucinatory state that in the latter ‘certain others reveal themselves in human bodily form, their “true” forms’. These certain others are different ‘powerful beings’ such as Mother of *Ayahuasca* and specific large trees. I think it is important to emphasise, however, that it is only these *certain* others that are seen in what Gow calls their ‘true’ forms in drunkenness. In fact, I would rather say that it is not a question of the beings’ true *forms* at all, but rather of gaining knowledge about the possible distinct points of view existing in the social cosmos. The world of altered vision as such was not any truer for the Yine than the world of their everyday experience (TKU/A/01/29:2). The Yine in Diamante emphasised that the things seen in drunkenness – for instance stones seen as little people with their instruments or the *huicungo* seen as a Catholic padre – were not really the things they appear to be in *toé* drunkenness. Rather, the little stones were – for the Yine people – just stones, not people, and the *huicungo* was a tree, not a padre. Only certain important plants, such as *toé*, were people, or perhaps more precisely put, had mothers. The world of the everyday experience and that of *toé* drunkenness were then two perspectives existing simultaneously: one was not any more authentic than the other.³² I think Marie Perruchon (2003: 218) has described this relation aptly in relation to Shuar *ayahuasca* experiences. She notes that the waking world is not false but one just ‘needs deeper knowledge to be able to interpret it correctly, to “see the whole picture”’. I think it was the attempt to ‘see the whole picture’ that was at the heart of Yine *toé* experiences too.

The real interest for the Yine in taking *toé* lay, therefore, not so much in producing visions but rather in gaining a better understanding of the world and especially of one’s ailing condition. This understanding was achieved only with the help of the Mother of *Toé*. The drug was thus not taken for the sake of an adventurous mind but in order to be cured of an illness (see also Shepard 1987: 117). Although people did assert that *toé* could also be taken in order to find lost property or to identify a witch, no one actually admitted having taken *toé* solely for such purposes to me (TKU/A/01/29:1; TKU/A/01/30a:5). Rather, these could be a shaman’s uses of *toé* or ‘by-products’ of *toé* being taken for healing.³³ In healing, the Mother of *Toé* and the relation the person had to it was, then, the main focus.

Relationship with the Mother of Toé

One important characteristic in Yine relationships with the Mother of *Toé* was respect. The Mother of *Toé* was treated respectfully not only because her help was sought but also, I suggest, because she exemplified superior abilities to cure. She was often referred to in Yine as *nato*, an archaic term

³² As discussed in Chapter 2, different perspectives are not equal but at the same time none of them is ontologically superior to others: the dominant perspective is never defined prior to a relation.

³³ Among the Shuar peoples *toé* is taken for a variety of purposes ranging from hunting and warfare to healing and getting visions for conducting a successful family life (Brown 1978).

for 'mother'. As 'mother', *toé* cared for her 'children' and was capable and willing to cure them, especially if they acted correctly towards her. The mother spirit of *toé* needed no payment for curing but respectful behaviour towards her was required (see Shepard 1987: 115). Especially those persons in Diamante who were specialising in curing practices emphasised the importance of proper treatment of the mothers of psychoactive plants. As one of them, a Catholic man, said

One has to ask permission from the Mother of *Toé*, and from all plants. First, you approach the plant and say: '*Toé*, please, I will now take a leaf because I need you to cure me of an illness.' . . . So the plant listens and in this manner the healer may prepare it and give it to you. (TKU/A/05/37a:5.)

This man was appalled by the manner in which people, for instance when clearing the forest during communal work parties, ruthlessly cut down *toé* plants without consideration.³⁴ (TKU/A/05/36c:5.) This, he thought, was disrespectful towards the Mother of *Toé*. Treating the spirit respectfully was in his view the only way to ensure that the spirit would safely guide the patient under intoxication. However, respect was not solely a matter of a mother-child relationship. The Yine practice of calling the mother spirit *nato* instead of *ginro* (the Yine word for mother, which was used of different guardians such as *gonginro*, Mother of the River) can also be understood as a way to essentialise this being. Calling the Mother of *Toé nato* in a way evokes the associations with the ancients' greater skills as shamans and healers in comparison with the present-day Yine people.³⁵ In this way the Mother of *Toé* comes to represent transcendent curing powers, which the living Yine people can never themselves reach. Therefore, they need to respect the Mother in order to receive help from her.

Whereas respect was something the Yine needed to take account of in their relations with the Mother of *Toé*, these relations were devoid of all other elements central to forming social relations in the Yine social cosmos. Unlike in other social relations in which emphasis was laid on sharing food, living close to one another and on legitimate sexual interaction, in the case of *toé* all these attributes were rejected or negated. Elsewhere (Opas 2005), I have argued that this negation results from the aim of forming a temporary – not long-term – relationship with the Mother of *Toé*. This requires, contrary to the case of lasting social relations, that a person distances herself from other people both physically and socially. The body of the person has to be momentarily shut down from interaction with others (see Chapter 4).

As discussed above, when taking *toé* physical distance from other people was established through retreating from the presence of others. *Toé* was taken either on a beach with only one other person present or in the

³⁴ The Yine in Diamante knew three or four different varieties of *toé*, *gayapa*, but they did not seem to have specific names for all of them. The most commonly taken ones were *toé* with white flowers, reddish flowers and a forest variety. A fourth type was said to grow in purmas and was presumably the one people called *ikuga* or *yokuga*. (TKU/A/05/36c:5; cf. Brown's [1978] description of different varieties of *toé* known by the Aguaruna.)

³⁵ Cf. with Urban (2000: 2) according to whom for instance narrations and myths may be essentialised by giving them names.

community during the night time when people were asleep. In addition to securing people's safety, the solitude also worked in favour of establishing the relationship with the Mother of *Toé*. With no people around, there was no back-up for the human perspective of the patient to be cured. This enabled the adoption of another perspective, that of the Mother of *Toé*, in *toé* drunkenness. (See Teixeira-Pinto 2004: 231, 235.) Social distance, on the other hand was achieved by detaching from all relationships of giving and receiving food with other people. This applied equally to the times before, during and after drunkenness. Before taking *toé*, a person was not supposed to eat anything the previous day. This was partly due to the fact that the person would vomit the food anyway because according to the Yine, *toé* has the effect of cleansing the body of all greasy substances and other filth (TKU/N/05/3:12; see Gow 1991: 181; 2001: 139). However, as discussed in Chapter 1, the food restrictions were even more due to the attempt to distance oneself from other people. By not accepting food from relatives a person temporarily withdrew from all human contacts and proximity of other people. After the action of *toé* had ended a person still had to keep to a strict diet for a short period of time. She was not to eat certain foods like salt, sugar, and *ají*, food offered by neighbours or by a menstruating woman, or food cooked in a pot from which water had boiled over (TKU/A/05/50b:7; see note 27).³⁶ This was in order to give time for the curing to take permanent effect and, I suggest, to enable a controllable and tranquil return to everyday life and social relations. If these restrictions were not followed, the original sickness for which *toé* was taken could return even more harmfully.

However, whereas in the relationships with beings striving to make others similar food relations were negated between humans and established with non-humans, in the case of *toé* all relations of food were negated also in the newly formed relationship. I was never told of any case where the mother spirit of *toé* offered food or beverages to the patient under intoxication. The mother was also never described as eating or having a family, unlike many other spirits and animals.³⁷ It could, however, be argued that when drinking the *toé* potion the person was, in fact, consuming the plant in order to induce the altered state and therefore would be in a consubstantial relationship with the Mother of *Toé* (see Sullivan 1988: 407). Nevertheless, as discussed in Chapter 1, it was not

³⁶ Similar restrictions are common in Amazonia as well as in other parts of the world (Crocker 1985; Luna 1986: 51–55; Pollock 1992: 37; Perrin 1992: 107) and resemble the restrictions that many novice shamans in Amazonia have to follow (e.g. Matteson 1992b).

³⁷ Gow (2001: 136; 1991: 273) does tell of Yine drunkenness experiences where the mother spirit of *toé* 'takes the drinker into the villages and houses of powerful beings, where they eat the best of foods and drink the finest of liquors'. The only context in which I heard of something similar was when people told me about afterlife in the Christian heaven, where they would sit in great white houses and eat fine foods that would never be exhausted. Also among other Amazonian peoples, food is shared between people (shamans) and curing spirits (e.g. Pollock 1992). Wilbert (2004: 39) shows, however, how in the spirit world food may have an opposite role. Declining food offered by a non-human establishes a relation between them as they are not competing for the same food supplies. On the role of food in human relations with spirit helpers see also Sullivan 1988: 407.

only the consuming activity that mattered for establishing and reinforcing relationships. In order to strengthen social relations and make persons alike people needed to *share* food and to satisfy feelings of hunger. It was therefore especially the consuming activities performed together with other persons that enhanced relationality.

Furthermore, if it was important to achieve solitude and social distance when taking *toé*, it was even more important to abstain from intimate relations. Sexual intercourse being highly significant in the formation of social relationships and in turning potential affines into kin, it was essential that it be prohibited. Abstaining from sexual interaction in relation to the use of psychoactive substances (and becoming a shaman) is a practice commonly found in Amazonia (Harner 1984: 155–156; Perrin 1992: 116; Pollock 1992). Ideally among the Yine, a few days before and after drunkenness a person should not engage in any sexual activity. Gow (1991:152–154, 239) notes various reasons for this. First, the mother spirits of psychoactive plants do not like the smell of sexual fluids and therefore sexual activities should be avoided before ingesting the plants. Second, the mother spirits are extremely jealous and therefore do not appear to those who have been in sexual contact with other humans. Last, in order to interact successfully with the mother spirits, they should be respected. Even if the first two reasons seem plausible, no one in Diamante ever explained their relationship with the Mother of *Toé* and the required diet to me in those terms. Rather, as seen above, they emphasised the importance of respect for undergoing a successful drunkenness experience. Just as people needed to respect their parents by not making sexual jokes (or engage in an incestuous relationship), they had to avoid any reference or sexual contact with the Mother of *Toé*, *nato*. This kind of action might have dangerous results: the mother spirit might not guide and take care of the person, who could be left to take care of himself among a variety of malevolent beings. Moreover, sexual interaction being a powerful means of uniting people and making them consubstantial, the transformation of a person's point of view might fail altogether.

Negating the attributes of good life in the relationship with the mother spirit of *toé* made these relationships temporary. Even though people purposely sought interaction with the Mother, the relationships were not meant to last longer than a maximum of two or three days. People did not desire a long-lasting relationship but rather the ability to return hale to their human kin as soon as possible. Therefore, even though the relations with the mother spirit of *toé* differed in their goals and motivations from other human–non-human relations in the Yine social cosmos, they still revealed the importance of the same morally and socially salient corporeal aspects of everyday life as all other relations, namely the importance of food, sexual relations, proximity and tranquillity. (Opas 2005.)

Although I personally never took *toé*, based on the Yine descriptions it seems to me that taking this psychoactive drug must be an extremely intense experience, not only physiologically, but also morally, ontologically and epistemologically, differing considerably from the *ayahuasca* experiences described for other peoples. According to ethnographic

descriptions, in the latter case the psychoactive itself is not considered curative but it rather ‘empowers shamans with knowledge’ (Matteson 1992b: 46–47; Luna 1986: 62–66) thus making the shaman possess a double nature: he is simultaneously identified with the powerful beings and the human patient he is curing (Gow 2001: 149–150). In the case of an ordinary Yine person taking *toé*, however, the person does not gain power or knowledge to cure but the power remains with the Mother of *Toé*. Such a person has to give up temporarily all their social relations with human persons and throw themselves into the possibly dangerous world of spirits where normal conventions of social interaction do not apply. It is this kind of social noviciate, I suggest, which makes *toé* drunkenness experiences simultaneously so powerful and fundamentally precarious. The person has to put all their trust in the Mother of *Toé* because the spirit is the only refuge during the period of drunkenness.³⁸ But the reward or outcome of this surrendering to the other, the process of healing, is usually worth the risk.

Pills, aeroplanes and suction

There was great variation in the accounts the Yine told me about their *toé* drunkenness visions. Although there were some themes common to most accounts – the mother asking what was wrong with the patient, curing her, and guarding her against all harms, especially malevolent spirits that were seen alongside souls of the deceased – the visual imagery people described having seen was extremely diverse.³⁹ While some accounts revolved completely around shamanic practices and imagery, in other accounts elements relating to Western medicine were predominant (see also Illius 1992). One of the learning healers or herbalists in the community, a Catholic man in his early forties, explained that he had in the past been bewitched by a witch who had sent his spirit as a large insect to sting the man⁴⁰ and as a consequence, four *chonta*-wood sticks had been left in the man’s knee, making him unable to walk properly.

³⁸ Nevertheless, a person taking *toé* for curing is not totally separated from the human world. She is still part of the Yine moral universe and her actions under the *toé* drunkenness have consequences also when she recovers from the condition. As *toé* is often taken in cases of witchcraft and sorcery, the Mother is also said to show the patient who the aggressor is and to ask whether the patient wishes to take revenge. Authorising the mother to take action against the aggressor would, however, make the person taking *toé* an aggressor as well. Even though the temptation must be great to take vengeance on the wrong-doer, at least some people acknowledged that they will need to continue living together with these people and therefore cannot take any action. Furthermore, justice would be done anyway. As one Catholic man said, he would not take revenge on the aggressor because he was a Christian and God would take care of the punishment in due time.

³⁹ We do not have access to people’s *toé* visions but only to their accounts of them. It is therefore not of concern here whether the people had in their *toé* drunkenness actually seen the things they described. The interest lies rather in exploring the uses and meanings people gave to the visions and *toé* imagery.

⁴⁰ Cf. Gow 2001: 149; see Karsten 1935: 399–405; Luna 1986: 110–115.

- Man There is an insect, insect that comes in the night . . . and bewitches you. . . . That's what always comes from the witch. . . . The power of the witch is the insect. . . . That is what bewitched me.
- Minna The insect comes to bite you or what?
- Man Well the insect mediates, as it is the evil spirit of the witch. . . . [The witch] blows and [says]: 'Go to bewitch the one who did this to me.' . . . It stuck four sticks into me . . . four, in each [leg]. That's what was taken out of me. . . .
- Minna You yourself removed them from your knee?
- Man No, I didn't. I was looking at the Master of *Toé*. . . . It was like a child who was blowing smoke on me, sucking [sticks] from me. 'Look at this!', he puts [the stick] down and sucks again. He takes another one: 'Look at this!' . . . He collected them, each one of these [four sticks that had been stuck into me]. . . . It was a boy, he was blowing smoke on me. It is a healer who blows smoke on me. He was the one who extracted everything. (TKU/A/04/50a:5.)

In the man's *toé* drunkenness the Mother of *Toé* had appeared as a child-sized male shaman who sucked the *chonta*-sticks out of the man's knee, thus enabling him to move without pain again.⁴¹ In regard to his curing methods, he was exactly as the Yine people described a living human shaman to be, his curing methods including blowing tobacco smoke and sucking out pathogenic objects from the patient's body. (Luna 1986; see Shepard 1987: 121.)

But not everyone described the mother spirit of the psychoactive as a shaman. One Evangelical man in his fifties, who told me he had taken *ayahuasca* many times and *toé* at least twenty times when the old shamans in Diamante were still alive, also pictured the Mother of *Toé* as a midget-size person but did not relate specifically how the actual curing in *toé* drunkenness took place (TKU/A/01/29:1). He explained that when he had taken *toé* the healing had taken place in an aeroplane, which took him wherever he wished to go. The aeroplane had been green and bigger than the narrator's house.

- Man You can arrive in your village, it takes you there. . . in an aeroplane. You are flying in the aeroplane, yes . . . You can [travel] all the way to your land and come back the same night. . . . They take you in an aeroplane . . . a different kind of aeroplane, green like a leaf. . . . I have taken [*toé*] twenty times.
- Minna And you have always travelled in an aeroplane?
- Man Yes, in a big one, bigger than this [house]. (TKU/A/04/40d:10; see TKU/A/01/29:1.)

Although there is no one-to-one relationship between socio-economic changes and people's cultural expressions such that the former straightforwardly influence the latter (but rather a two-way negotiation

⁴¹ Also Harner (1984: 155, 158) describes shaman spirit helpers as insects attacking a person and shamans curing them by sucking. (See also Whitten 1976: 100; Brown 1986: 60-65; Kamppinen 1989; Karsten 1935: 399-422; Luna 1986; Sullivan 1988; 452.)

between them), it is evident that people's surrounding environment cannot remain just as something outwardly experienced but penetrates and needs to be incorporated into people's lived worlds through different cultural media. Relating *toé* experiences can be seen as one way of constituting one's world and of making experiences comprehensible. For instance, the appearance of the aeroplane in the man's Yine *toé* drunkenness visions probably has its historical reference in the activities of the first SIL (Summer Institute of Linguistics) missionaries working in the Peruvian Amazonia and among the Yine in the mid-twentieth century. The aspect people in Diamante often mentioned when telling about the work of the early missionaries was the transportation the missionaries had used in their comings and goings to and from the area. SIL had had a light aircraft, which they had used in transporting people and materials. That had made a strong impression on the Yine people, as for many it had been the first aircraft they had ever seen (TKU/A/05/36a:1; see Gow 1990). In the Yine view, aeroplanes therefore became closely connected with the image of white people and even with God (Gow 2001: 228ff). Similarly, as the missionaries were also among the first to administer pharmaceuticals to indigenous people, the connection between aeroplanes and medicine in *toé* visions seems comprehensible. But in Diamante this connection was probably not just a vestige of the past but corresponded also to the present-day Yine lived experience of transporting seriously ill patients from Diamante to Cusco for treatment by air.

But the aeroplane was not the only element associated with Western medicine that appeared in Yine *toé* experiences. According to some people, the Mother of *Toé*, instead of using shamanistic curing practices, appeared as a doctor curing with pills and injections. In the narrations of the wife of the man with visions of aeroplanes, the Mother of *Toé* appeared as a doctor, even though again a midget-sized one, who cured the patients with pills. And, what is noteworthy, not just one pill but with lots of pills. She explained

One day when I was to be cured, a doctor appeared in my *toé* drunkenness, a great great intoxication. And he told me that I should take these pills. . . . He inspected me: 'Where are you hurting?' He went through my whole body and gave me pills, lots of pills in my drunkenness. 'With this I'll be cured.' 'You will be cured', he tells you in the drunkenness. And that is why I think that *gayapa* . . . *toé*, *toé* has its Mother. It is small like this [shows with his hands] and it takes you . . . by the hand and takes you around [to visit different places]. (TKU/A/05/39a:9.)

The non-availability of medicine was, as discussed above, an issue painfully present in the everyday life of the Yine in Diamante. When people got ill they faced a situation where pills, at least the right kinds of pills, were not at one's disposal at the health post, or if they were, they were costly. This was a real problem, since people regarded certain illnesses as much easier and quicker to cure with pills than with herbal cures and therefore having the possibility of a quick recovery in sight but not being able to reach it was frustrating. I often heard people complaining that health care, especially

drugs, should be free of charge also for adults, not just for children. The desired situation was exemplified in the CERT-doctors' visits when pills, it seemed, were abundant and free of charge. Every family at the reception received a small plastic bag of different kinds of pills, even if just vitamins, and even though not everyone received the medicines they most desired, namely antibiotics and pain killers, the day was still always one of abundance of medicine. In a way, the woman's account of her *toé* vision in which the doctor administered lots of pills can be seen to echo this plenitude.

A similar experience of *toé* drunkenness was narrated to me by the Evangelical pastor, a man in his late fifties. In his vision, the setting of the curing was that of a modern city with lots of people and cars around. A nurse and a doctor cured the patient by giving him an injection.⁴²

I have taken *toé* once when I was a little bit sick. At this hour I took it. When you begin to get dizzy, it seems as if you are sleeping. So [you hear] a blow, like thunder, bang! And suddenly you see people around you . . . lots of people. They are not people from here but mestizos, all kinds of people. There are cars and everything like in a city. They are looking for [me] already: a doctor comes and a nurse comes.

'What is going on? . . . the doctor asks. . . Who is sick? . . .'

People accompany me and the doctor accompanies me. . . . So everyone gathers around me. I was in the middle. There was also a doctor who was just like the doctors who come here. . . . He won't speak to you in Spanish but in your own language. So he asks me:

'What is it that you have?'

'I'm sick' . . .

'We'll cure you. The doctor will come in a minute,' [the nurse says].

The nurse calls him . . . and the doctor comes running.

'Where is he?'

'Over here.' . . .

The nurse pulls my hand and it is the doctor who will cure me. . . .

'What is it that you have?'

'I'm itching' . . .

'I'll cure you, then'.

So he puts down his, what is it called, backpack, he takes medicine out [and] . . . gives me an injection.

'Now you will be healed.'

'Ok, thank you then.' (TKU/A/05/46b:4)⁴³

Even though located in a modern city where most people are mestizos, the social setting of the healing in this narration otherwise resembles quite precisely the visits of the CERT-doctors to the community of Diamante. As the man states, the curing in *toé* drunkenness takes place 'just like here when the doctors come'. During the visit, as described above, lots of people are gathered together and the patient, at his or her turn, sits in the middle

⁴² Similarly, Andrew Gray (1997: 76) has described an Arakmbut *ayahuasca* vision in which the spirits 'appear as medical doctors with suits, ties, and shoes; they carry briefcases and have stethoscopes around their necks. They enter and carry out an examination of the sick person and then they advise the participants what to do.'

⁴³ The order of some sentences in the extract has been changed to enhance readability.

– like the people at the communal house in Diamante waiting for their turn to take the seat in the middle of the room for examination. First a nurse examines the patient and if necessary will call the doctor to look at the patient more closely. The curing is done by giving medicine or injections.



*Figure 19.
A woman receiving medicine during a CERT-doctors' visit. In the background a doctor and a dentist are attending patients and on the left men are sitting by the wall waiting for their turn*

The continuum in these different descriptions of visions during *toé* drunkenness seemed to me at first not necessarily to correspond with, but to reflect the ongoing transformation the Yine were experiencing in their socio-economic and medical environment. In the sphere of health, the lack of shamans and the somewhat forceful arrival of Western medicine, for instance in the form of groups of Christian doctors visiting the community, seemed to transform the *toé* images into incorporating and privileging the latter kind of curing. I assumed that because some people still described the Mother of *Toé* as a shaman but others saw the spirit as a doctor, there had to be an ongoing process of change taking place in Yine *toé* imagery towards abandoning shamanistic imagery and beginning to employ biomedical imagery instead. However, coming across what Glenn Shepard wrote about his experiences in Diamante almost twenty years earlier in 1986, I had to reconsider that position.

Shepard (1987: 117–118, 123–124) describes how in the mid-1980s some people in Diamante saw the Mother of *Toé* as a tiny person removing spines and worms from patients' bodies, rubbing affected body parts with

herbs and blowing on them with tobacco smoke, in general, using the traditional techniques of healers or shamans. On the other hand, he tells how other people told having in *toé* drunkenness experienced driving in cars on wide highways, flying in gigantic aeroplanes, visiting large cities such as Pucallpa, Ayacucho and Lima, going to pharmacies with 'huge shelves of pills and injections', and seeing the Mother of *Toé* as a white-robed doctor curing with drugs. Even though many of the persons Shepard mentions were already dead or no longer lived in Diamante during my visits, and consequently tracking down possible changes in individual persons' *toé* narratives and imagery was impossible, I found the overall correspondence between the situations almost twenty years apart striking. Acknowledging that the differences between people in relation to Yine *toé* imagery did not derive from recent changes of the socio-economic and medical setting in Diamante and that despite the decades of acquaintance the Yine had had with Western biomedical practices the image of the Mother of *Toé* as a midget-sized shaman still persisted, I was led to search elsewhere for understanding the dynamics of these visions induced by psychoactive drugs. It was by examining the *toé* imageries both from the inter-ethnic and inter-communal perspective and in relation to the intra-communal social discrepancies and the relationships between Yine Evangelicals and Catholics that a different picture on the meaning of the divergence in people's *toé* experiences began to develop.

Negotiating abilities to cure

It has been commonplace in ethnography to see shamanic practices and the spirit world as 'critical sites for the engagement of local peoples with global processes' (Roseman 2001: 110).⁴⁴ Also in the Amazonian context – even though the appropriation of and reaction towards the processes of modernisation have been widely examined in relation to myths and mythopoeia (Albert 1988; Gow 2001; Hugh-Jones 1988; Perrin 1988; Renard-Casevitz 1988; see also articles in Albert & Ramos 2000) – perhaps the greatest attention in this respect has been directed precisely towards shamanism and visions induced by psychoactive drugs. It has been in this field that for instance biomedicine has been observed to be incorporated into indigenous curing practices, thus producing an 'intermedical condition' (Greene 1998) in Amazonian understandings of illness and curing. The authors previously examining this intermediality in South America have also emphasised the theme of power – power having been considered the key concept in shamanistic practices (Matteson 1992a:13) – in trying to understand the fusion of diverging curing practices. Across the range of studies, shamans have been deemed to appropriate new powers from Western sources. Among various Amazonian groups, the power attributed

⁴⁴ For instance, among the Malaysian Temiar, '[t]he realm of songs, dreams, and spirit-medicine provides a space for Temiars to incorporate the knowledge and power of "outfor-ester" peoples and commodities, as well.' (Roseman 2001:110.)

to the west in general and Western medicine in particular has been seen to be incorporated into and thus to validate shamanic practices, so strengthening shamans' power (Ramírez & Pinzón 1992; Taylor 1981; Taussig 1987: 320–335; Hugh-Jones 1988; see also Murphy 1958: 36–37).⁴⁵ Shane Greene (1998) shows how the (re)creation of a hybrid shamanic medicine revalidates both shamanism (and witchcraft) and Western medicine when examined from the local socio-cultural point of view.⁴⁶ For instance, writing about the incorporation of hypodermic needles into shamanic curing practices among the Jivaroan Aguaruna, Greene (1998: 652) states that

Western medicine, epitomized in the injection procedure, stands out as another raw power source to which shamans may appeal, but one with particular medical-symbolic significance (because of the way injection analogizes sorcery) and particular socio-political resonance (because of the culturally powerful West with which this medicine is inextricably identified).

The use of needles thus activates simultaneously attributions to both shamanism and Western medicine therefore empowering both (see Shepard 1987: 56).⁴⁷

Similarly, Anne-Christine Taylor (1981: 671–673) sees power as the central issue in the incorporation of foreign elements into indigenous worlds but sees the integration as taking place not at the level of praxis but at that of hallucinatory imagery. Among the likewise Jivaroan Achuar, the shaman's power was, according to Taylor, derived from sources outside the group and the more distant the source, the more powerful it was. Taylor notes that 'Achuar shamanism seemed to be, among other things, a means of capturing and appropriating white power from Tsunki underwater spirit domains where the Tsunki travel by car but are seated on turtle carapaces, spirit seats' (cf. Ramírez & Pinzón 1992).⁴⁸

The power of the white people has therefore been considered to derive largely from their advanced technology and wealth. These have been viewed as produced either by a specialist with privileged relation to the supernatural or by people such as Christian missionaries who themselves

⁴⁵ However, Perruchon (2003: 232–234) argues that some Ecuadorian Shuar living close to white people no longer view whites and mestizos or their goods as charged with power but rather *lacking* in spiritual power.

⁴⁶ I agree with Greene (1998; see also Rosengren 2002) when he criticises some previous works for seeing the incorporation of Western elements into shamanic understandings as either threatening indigenous shamanic practices with extinction (e.g. Ramírez & Pinzón 1992) or for failing to provide ethnographic details of the indigenous logics of shamanic practices (e.g. Taussig 1987).

⁴⁷ The use of needles also evokes allusions to the ambivalent nature of shamans as being capable both of curing and harming a person. It has been noted that power is generally associated with practices – whether indigenous or foreign – that have the ambivalent quality of both creating and destroying. (Greene 1998; see also Hugh-Jones 1988.)

⁴⁸ Perruchon (2003: 232), however, has a contradictory view concerning the Shuar of the Upano Valley. 'There', she writes, 'the underwater domain is described in purely native terms' and therefore it is not the locus whence the power of the whites can be appropriated.

are endowed with exceptional supernatural powers, which are then juxtaposed with indigenous peoples' shamanic competence (Gow 2001: 156; Hugh-Jones 1988; Illius 1992; Taylor 1981).⁴⁹ Similarly, foreign symbolic techniques such as those of missionaries and – as shown by Gow (1990) – new technologies like writing, have been seen as keys to the reproduction of white manufactured wealth and dominance (Taylor 1981; Gow 2001; Wright 1998). In this way, the 'other' faced by the Amazonian peoples may be interpreted and incorporated into people's lived experience in particular through their shamanistic practices and drug-induced experiences (see Gow 1990). Because of the ability of shamanism in this manner to adapt to new circumstances and of people to constantly reinterpret their socio-moral environment, shamanistic practices are capable of remaining culturally and socially effective.

In Diamante, it was first and foremost in relation to people's *toé* drunkenness imagery that the mutual validation of Western and indigenous medical practices seemed to take place and was manifested.⁵⁰ Like shamanism, the use of *toé* was commonly understood among the Yine as something indigenous, as something only they (and other indigenous people, as well as perhaps some skilled mestizo shamans) could effectively use for curing. They demarcated this boundary by stating that commonly foreign people, white people or mestizos, could not take *toé* since they were not strong enough for it. For instance, it was only after my long residence among the Yine and consequently becoming a little more like them, that one Yine man said to me – although never carrying out the idea in practice – that I could now be given *toé*. I would be capable of handling it. In contrast, he was not willing to prepare it for some visitors requesting a *toé* experience because he thought that those people would not have been able to sustain the effects; they were too ignorant. Whereas curing with *toé* was identified as something indigenous, biomedicine was strongly associated with white people. At the same time, however, the latter was something the Yine were at pains to domesticate. Because biomedicine had become part of Yine methodology for curing illnesses but as they did not yet – as described above – have the skills or resources to make use of these on their own, they needed some way to make these practices theirs, to appropriate them. *Toé* drunkenness visions were found to be a locus where new curing

⁴⁹ Peter Gow has also discussed the incorporation of modern elements into Yine lived experience through shamanistic practices. Gow (2001: 156) examines how the Yine related to Christian proselytising activities by attempting to see the Christian God in their *ayahuasca* visions. They had heard about God and tried to see him by taking *ayahuasca*. (Sebastian & al. 1998: 150, 152–153.) According to Gow's (2001: 156) analysis the 'Piro people were conceiving of Christian missionaries' discourse as analogous to shamanry, and Piro shamans had assimilated some features of that discourse to their own cosmology'. The process of interpreting Christianity is notably similar to that of Yine encounters with Western medicine. Also in the latter case that which is foreign becomes appropriated by means of visions induced by psychoactives (see Gow 2001: 136).

⁵⁰ Among the Yine, *toé* experiences were by no means the only sphere where foreign elements became domesticated and their meanings negotiated. Rather, as seen already in the cases of the hand-whistler and the siren, it was typical for Yine relations with the non-human realm at large (see also Roseman 2001; Lattas 1993:53).

technologies were domesticated by means of, and without giving up, the cultural meanings attached to mother spirit of *toé* as a healer.

Merging the imagery of something legitimately Yine such as the mother spirit of *toé* with the images of doctors and medicines thus made the latter authorised parts of Yine healing practices but also yielded further efficacy to the indigenous practices. In the views of the elderly couple discussed above, even though the mother spirit of *toé* cured them in an aeroplane by giving them pills, the Mother had preserved the appearance of a midget. It was the mother spirit related to the Yine world who had taken Western medicine into its possession and tamed it. In the vision of the Evangelical pastor, however, the power relation seemed at first to be different. The mother was not a midget but a full grown man who seemed to have lost all references to the indigenous world. Nevertheless, the mother spirit seen as a full-size doctor was not, in fact, foreign: he spoke Yine, not Spanish or English (TKU/N/05/3:18). This was an indication that the doctors and nurses in the pastor's *toé* vision were – to quite a great extent – Yine. As discussed in the Introduction, their own language was at least to the elderly population in Diamante a highly significant factor in the formation of proper Yine personhoods (see also Gow 2001: 236–237). Therefore, mestizo doctors speaking Yine in *toé* visions could be understood as a means to turn Western medical practices into something people had access to and which were as much theirs as other people's. Furthermore, appropriating biomedicine and impregnating both forms of medical practice with the power and elements typical to the other was also a way to level indigenous knowledge with Western technological understandings (Ramírez & Pinzón 1992: 293).

However, approaching Yine *toé* drunkenness imagery in this way from the perspectives of inter-ethnic relations and the compatibility of ethnomedical and biomedical perceptions of curing does not yet answer the question of the divergence of the imagery in Diamante. For that we need to turn to the level of intra-communal social relationships. At this level too, power has formerly been considered the central element. Previous analyses approaching indigenous appropriation of Western medical elements at the intra-ethnic or intra-communal level have largely viewed the process as relating to social power struggles: as shamans' attempts to enhance their own position within the social group (Greene 1998; Ramírez & Pinzón 1992) or young people's pursuit of claiming an authority over elderly people or shamans (Shepard 1987; Pereira 2004). Although in Diamante the differences in *toé* imageries were clearly not related to these reasons, my research material suggests that power was still a focal issue in the Yine *toé* drunkenness visions at least in two differing ways.⁵¹

First, telling about *toé* visions appeared as a way for people to

⁵¹ If modern elements in *toé* visions were in the first place shamans' means of appropriating new powers, we would expect the novice Yine herbalist to be the one telling of the mother spirit of *toé* appearing as a doctor or as healing with Western medicine. And if it were mainly young people or well-travelled persons who incorporated modern imagery into their visions, the elderly couple would not be expected to have visions with modern technology and biomedicine in them.

reinforce both their abilities to cure and their ideas of the proper ways of curing. Being able to cure oneself and others around was important for the Yine as life was pretty uncertain and the life expectancy rather short. As people themselves said, 'before people lived longer but now we hardly reach our fifties'. Nevertheless, as examined above, not everyone relied on exactly the same cures and people often discussed what, in their opinion, others did wrong in some failed curing processes and what they themselves would have done. Every person had their own repertoire of methods and their own pharmacopoeia for realising their ability to cure. *Toé* visions and especially narrating about them was part of this effectuation. The Catholic man learning to be a herbalist concentrated his attention on being able to cure with herbs and shamanism-related practices such as treating patients with smoke and although by no means refusing to use biomedicine, he wished to learn more and more about plant medicine. It was in this field of expertise that his abilities lay. In his descriptions of *toé* visions, the Mother of *Toé* appeared likewise as a shaman curing by blowing smoke and sucking items from the victim's body, thus legitimating and affirming the potency of shamanistic curing methods. In other people's *toé* experience accounts biomedicine and indigenous curing practices were more intertwined. During my stays in Diamante, I observed the elderly couple discussed above relying on various different kinds of curing practices and substances: herbal baths, diets, teas, smoking different materials (hair, feathers, animal skin etc.), using *timolina* and taking pills and other drugs administered by the community's nurse (TKU/A/01/26:6). In other words, as they did not possess any special curing skills they used all means available, not necessarily grading one over the other. For instance, when their daughter developed some perplexing and unidentifiable illness symptoms, they talked about taking her both to see a shaman and to the city of Cusco for medical examination. Such an intermedical approach became visible also in their narrations of their *toé* experiences in the form of a midget doctor healing in an aeroplane and giving pills to patients. The Evangelical pastor, on the other hand, seemed to be the one most keenly identifying with Western medical practices. After all, he was to some extent involved in bringing the Protestant CERT-doctors to Diamante (or at least working as something of a host when they came) and was also eager to take credit for it. His abilities to cure relied largely on his association with Christianity whether in the form of evoking the power of God in prayer in order to heal the sick, or being involved in making Western medicine more readily available to the people in Diamante. These examples suggest that telling about one's *toé* visions was one means not only for expressing one's view of the best and proper practices for curing but also for validating and authorising them. If the Mother of *Toé* possessing supreme abilities to cure used the same practices as the people themselves in everyday life did, these practices would have to be legitimate and effective.

Second, people's *toé* drunkenness visions had become harnessed for manifesting and negotiating socio-moral differences in the community. In particular, differences in *toé* visions seemed to relate to the social dynamics and power relations between the Catholics and the Evangelicals

as exemplified in the views of the learning Catholic herbalist and the Evangelical pastor. As will be further examined in Chapter 7, these men were in some sense the leading figures of their 'camps': the pastor overtly, the Catholic man less so. The novice Catholic herbalist was considered a strong and outspoken man. Even though he had no formal status, he was one of the persons who usually spoke at communal meetings for the people living in the upper end of the community. He was also ready to execute decisions made at the meetings and although appreciated for that, he was often also criticised by the Evangelicals. The Evangelical pastor, on the other hand, tried to exercise his power over others not only in communal and Evangelical meetings but also in casual conversations. He had in a way assumed a position as the guardian of morale in Diamante and readily counselled those who had lapsed into unapproved behaviour.⁵² *Toé* imagery – the Mother of *Toé* seen as a midget shaman and Western-style doctor by the Catholic and Evangelical men respectively – was one way to reinforce their positions (and simultaneously criticise other people's) regarding not only proper ways of curing but also more generally the desired and approved forms of social life.

This negotiation revolved around the issue of the dual nature of shamanism. In Amazonian anthropology the two sides of shamanism – light (curing) and dark (witchcraft and sorcery) – have been widely examined and have been understood (as in the example of Aguaruna healing above) as complementary opposites instead of adverse possibilities (see Brown 1988; 1989; Buchillet 2004; Crocker 1985; Greene 1998; Hugh-Jones 1994; Santos-Granero 1994; Wright 2004a).⁵³ In Diamante, *toé* experiences were found to be a suitable, although by no means unproblematic, field for discussing this duality.⁵⁴ In the Evangelical pastor's accounts, shamanism was defined in the first place through its dark side, witchcraft, which he condemned as something markedly unchristian (TKU/N/04/3:7).⁵⁵ It seemed that he tried to deprive witchcraft (and by implication shamanism) of its authority and promote what in his view were more moral medical practices: Western medicine and relying on God's help. When I asked him

⁵² This situation seemed reminiscent of the observation made in relation to the north-west Amazonian Arawakan peoples, according to which the old shamans (*payé*) were replaced by a new form of religious leadership, Protestant pastors (Hugh-Jones 1994: 72–73; see Chapter 6).

⁵³ However, the 'light' side of shamanism has been noted to have received much greater attention in research than its 'dark' counterpart (Wright 2004a: 82).

⁵⁴ This duality became observable also in people's attitudes towards one of the novice healers who refused to use his alleged healing skills for the benefit of others. Instead of being talked about in terms of curing he was often declared a witch. Edward LiPuma (1998) notes that witchcraft accusations, that is, connecting someone with the dark side of shamanism, are often linked to the condemnation of a person's individualistic objectives.

⁵⁵ It is common for (especially Protestant) Christians in South America to accentuate the relationship between shamanism and witchcraft and on that basis to condemn both as somehow diabolic. (See Hugh-Jones 1994; Kamppinen 1989; P. Wright 1992: 170.) Also Shepard (1987: 133) describes how the last real shaman in Diamante had explained to him that he only used *ayahuasca* for good purposes and that the missionaries, including his own son, were therefore wrong in condemning his use of *ayahuasca*.

whether he had seen the Mother of *Toé* as a midget shaman as many other people had told me having seen, the pastor insisted that the Mother of *Toé* was not a midget but a full-grown man, a Western-style doctor: 'It's a lie' he said. 'I have taken *toé* and have seen only normal people.' (TKU/A/05/46b:4.) He therefore seemed to wish to deprive the use of *toé* of all possible connections with shamanism. The Catholic novice healer, on the other hand, appeared to define the Mother of *Toé* through its connection with the light side of shamanism. In his accounts the Mother of *Toé* was a shaman curing people from illnesses caused by witches. Although shamanism could clearly also be associated with witchcraft and sorcery, he did not seem to essentialise shamanism as something good or evil in itself. It was up to the person themselves how shamanistic skills were used. Similarly, the Mother of *Toé* was considered capable of evil deeds but it was up to the person's morals whether this capability would be put into action. Thus, whereas the Evangelical pastor wished not to separate the light and dark sides of shamanism and categorised it on the basis of the latter side, in the narrations of the Catholic man the Mother of *Toé* was associated in the first place with the light side of shamanism, thus validating it as a curing method.

Toé imagery was thus manifested as one field in the intra-communal if not rivalry, then at least negotiation, between Evangelicals and Catholics concerning the correct ways to live and to cure. Although not (to my knowledge) discussing or debating *toé* visions face to face, when relating their visions to others the two men were simultaneously enforcing the presuppositions underlying their *toé* imageries. It was one way to express their approval or condemnation of shamanic practices and thus to communicate their views of what constitutes moral social life in the community. The field of *toé* imageries was therefore also a tool for delineating the boundary between the Evangelicals and the Catholics. Whereas ideal Evangelical social life would be void of shamans and thus of witchcraft, in the Catholic view the dark side of shamanism was inevitable, thus rendering also the light side necessary for the production and continuation of social life (cf. Overing 1981; 1985; Overing & Passes 2000a: 6–7).

This situation in Diamante, the antithesis between the pastor and the novice herbalist, echoes the processes described for other Amazonian indigenous Christian peoples concerning their attitudes towards shamanism. Many examples show how Catholics have been more positive than the Evangelicals in their approach to shamanism (Belaunde 2000a; Capiberibe 2004: 85–87; Fajardo 1999: 432–434; Hugh-Jones 1994; Kapfhammer 1999: 104–105; Wright 1999a: 201), and how Catholicism and shamanism have been seen not as competing but as two complementary sides of people's lived worlds (Tassinari 1999). Although the historic-religious backgrounds among Amazonian peoples greatly vary, the relationship between distinct modes of Christianity and shamanism would seem to take similar forms in different parts of the vast rainforest area (see Wright 2004a). While Protestant Christians wish to push shamanism to the background to the position of an evil that, even though a requisite complement of social life, can be kept at bay by proper Christian practice, the Catholics take shamanism

into active use against the immanent evils of the world.

However, *toé* drunkenness visions being a site for negotiating many distinct social relations, the Evangelical pastor in Diamante could not totally condemn the use of *toé* and was therefore left in a rather ambiguous situation. Wishing to deprive *toé* visions of all connections to shamanism, it was still at the same time necessary for him to retain these connections to some extent. Diseases caused by malicious non-humans or by witchcraft could not be cured with biomedicine, but were curable only through certain more traditional practices: blowing smoke, sucking projectiles and taking *toé*. Consequently, the use of *toé* necessarily preserved some of the shamanistic meanings associated with it. In addition, as people's access to Western medicine was sporadic, the community needed people competent in herbal treatments as well as the possibility of using *toé* for curing. Furthermore, *toé* was not only much needed in curing but was also an important means for the Yine to relate to the outside world – to make a distinction between indigenous and white people – and to appropriate new powers. Prohibiting the use of *toé* would have deprived the Yine people of one of their methods of domesticating Western technologies. Therefore, the pastor – even though condemning shamanism on the basis of its association with witchcraft – could not totally resign from it either.

But in the end, I think the pastor had managed to find a kind of middle road in (his) relation to this ambiguous situation. By contrasting *toé* with *ayahuasca*, the former could also be to a certain extent distanced from shamanism and therefore made more acceptable for the Evangelicals. The pastor explained that *ayahuasca* was not good because it made a person suffer, to see boas or Satan. On the contrary, he said, *toé* was good. It did not show the person any repulsive things (TKU/A/05/46b:4). When contrasted with *ayahuasca*, the use of *toé* thus became legitimate as it was contrasted with something that was much more associated with witchcraft.

In sum, *toé* experiences in Diamante were found to be a suitable field for negotiating relations with the outside world and between Evangelicals and Catholics, between proper ways of living and those that were considered destructive of social life. Even more prominent fields for the negotiation of these relations were, however, found in the Christian images of God and the Mark of the Beast to which I shall turn in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 6

Closer to God: going ahead in life

For the Yine in Diamante, the arrival of Christian missionaries and their teaching and preaching activities in Diamante Viejo, Old Diamante, from the 1950s onwards continued still to be an extremely important event in various ways. First, Christianisation and the schooling brought with it were seen to mark the beginning of the end of Yine socio-political subordination to the white and mestizo exploiters. Second, receiving education had opened up possibilities for economic growth and given people more direct access to manufactured goods, that is, to a better life. Moreover, this 'coming of the Word of God' had given the Yine a means to resist and defend themselves against various, especially malevolent, non-human beings and consequently to avoid illnesses and live more tranquilly. The value of such steps was expressed in the everyday life of Diamante as a desire to *seguir adelante*, to go ahead in life. In this chapter I shall examine the ways in which the Yine of Diamante valued progress, be it bodily-moral, economic or social, and how this progress was seen to derive from the coming of the Word of God and from the Christian practices and schooling it entailed. I shall also explore how the Catholics and Evangelicals differed in their views on what kind of progress was the most desirable and how these differences were connected to the Yine notions of proper personhood. But while this Coming of the Word of God was viewed positively by the Yine, there was another change related to their Christian lives which they were more ambiguous about: life in heaven after salvation. Salvation as such was something people strove for – it took them closer to God and was the final step (especially for the Evangelicals) to go ahead in life – but they were very apprehensive about the one question concerning life in heaven which was left unanswered by the Bible: would there be family life in heaven? Why this question preoccupied the Yine to the extent it did will be my topic at the end of this chapter.

'It is no longer like that' – the coming of the Word of God

The coming of the Word of God and the social and technological changes brought by it altered the position of many non-humans in the Yine social cosmos. In addition to the many non-human beings described in earlier chapters, on which the Yine had well-elaborated views, they also lived in the midst of many other – less elaborately viewed – harmful beings, mainly animals, that were considered 'strong' (Yine: *gichkolu*; Spanish: *fuerte*). These animals were thought capable of vengeance, especially against children when their father had killed the animals, or when the mother had

eaten the meat of these animals. This group of animals included smaller species such as various snakes, catfish, ocelot and spider monkey, but bigger species like jaguar and white-lipped peccary were also considered able to take vengeance on people. (TKU/A/01/26:3.) Such retaliation was said to take place for instance when the *samenchi* of a recently born child followed the father to the forest as he went hunting. Some people said that the *samenchi* or soul is able to follow the father because it is attached to his heel:

The men carry our children in their heels. Foot, as it is said, in the foot we carry the little souls of our children. And if [the man] sees or kills something dangerous the baby or the child is always shocked (*chocar*). The father has not yet returned but the baby has already been shocked at home while he has been away. He does not yet know that his child is ill but arrives home and the wife says to him: 'Your child is already ill' or 'Your child is crying a lot' or 'Your child may die.' When it is a question of a very dangerous animal she says to him: 'What is it that you have seen there in the forest? What have you killed?' This is what the woman asks the man. (TKU/A/05/40b:6.)

It was, however, only part of the child's soul or relational self that followed the father. The Yine said that if the whole relational self left the body the baby would die. Even though with adults the *samenchi* normally wandered only in dreams, the *samenchi* of the child was, in a manner familiar from many Amazonian ethnographies (Rival 1998; 2005; Rosengren 2006; Taylor 1996; Vilaça 2002), considered not yet firmly attached to the body and thus capable of wandering even when the baby was awake. Therefore, newborn babies and small children were also held to be in the greatest danger of becoming targets of vengeance (TKU/A/01/26:3). It seems that the key for steadying the child's *samenchi* lay in the development of *nshinikanchi* (memory, love and respect), the other side of the relational self. As discussed in Chapter 1, feeding children with real food and not keeping them hungry was essential for generating positive feelings in them towards the mother, siblings and other adults, and for generating *nshinikanchi*. It was thus through the ability to drink fruit drinks, *chapo* (*serolga*), and even manioc beer, *masato* (*koya*), that babies' *nshinikanchi* really began to develop.¹ With these, especially if the mother did not produce enough breast milk, the baby was kept full and thus did not cry from hunger. (TKU/A/05/40b:6.) *Nshinikanchi* therefore in a sense 'glued' *samenchi* to itself and to the body, making it impossible for the *samenchi* to leave while *nshinikanchi* was active, that is when the person was in a sane

¹ Before understanding the meanings food and satisfaction of hunger had for the Yine, I was amazed by how the Yine gave fruit drinks and fermented manioc beer even to very young babies. I often saw how for instance a sister or mother dipped her finger in a manioc beer bowl and rubbed the beer on the lips of the baby. And the older the children got, the more manioc beer they were given. Nevertheless, most often the manioc beer was *dulce* (Yine: *potswalu*), meaning it had not fermented for many days and therefore did not contain much alcohol. It was only with time that I understood that these often very imperceptible actions were aimed at making the children proper humans and at linking them closely to their families.

and wakeful state (see Gow 2000).

General symptoms from such vengeance were crying and fever but different animals were also thought to generate specific symptoms in children. Killing a white-lipped peccary made the baby cry a great deal and killing a snake made the eyes of the child turn white as well as causing the baby to cry. (TKU/A/05/40b:6.) The jaguar was said to keep the child in its grip with its long nails, causing the child back home to start to cry out in pain. Also, if the father went fishing with a net the child's *samenchi* could be caught under the fishing net in the water, making the child unable to breathe properly (TKU/A/05/48c:3). Some birds could also cause a baby to suffer. In all these cases the diagnosis is made when the father returns home from forest and finds his child sick or crying. As explained in the extract, the mother asks the father what animals he has killed and encountered in the forest so that they may find out the cause for the child's crying and begin the curing. In addition to these strong animals, recently born children were also in danger of being harmed by the fathers' and other adults' various actions. People said that the father should not play football because expending a lot of effort running after the ball might cause the umbilicus of the child to drop off. Some people also considered the gaze of a pregnant woman to have a similar effect on the child. (TKU/A/05/40b:6; on similar hazards among four indigenous groups in the Peruvian Amazonia see Heise et al. 1999.)

Cases of vengeance were also considered to be situations where a man's fatherhood could be evidenced. When a child was not conceived by a particular man, it was thought they could not get sick when the man killed a powerful animal. The child's *samenchi* was regarded as not following any adult other than ones to whom it was linked through blood ties.² This was why some Yine said that during the first weeks of the child's life the father should not go hunting or enter the forest for any other reason either. The same applied to the mother who was not supposed to eat the meat of strong animals, especially if they had been killed by the father of the child. One Evangelical woman, however, told me, laughing, that in her view the father *must* hunt for the family during the first weeks of the new born baby's life as well, for how else, she asked, could the family survive?

The diseases caused by vengeance and the father's activities were not normally considered lethal for the baby; they were thought to be curable by means of smoking at home. Therefore people guarded many necessary items and substances at their homes in case they should need to cure their children. I was told that when curing, different grated substances are first gathered on a plate. These include the horn of the brocket deer and cow, feathers of *chachalaca* (spix's guan, pucacunga) and macaw, the tail of the skate, the shell of the tortoise and hair from the legs of the mother if the baby is a girl or the father if it is a boy (TKU/N/01/2:5). These substances are set on fire and the fire is extinguished in order to produce smoke. The baby is then held in the smoke until he or she begins to sweat. The

² The Yine did not, to my knowledge, have the conception of multiple fatherhood common among many other Amazonian peoples (e.g. Beckerman & Valentine 2002).

treatment is repeated on three subsequent days.³ (TKU/A/04/55:8.) In this manner the baby is cured. The smoke's effect seems to lie in the strong smell of the burning substances. The smell expels the animal spirit taking revenge on the child by making it let the *samenchi* of the child off its grip. In this manner, the child's *samenchi* can return to the body.⁴ (TKU/A/04/54:7; TKU/A/05/36c:1.) Also the mother's breasts have to be treated similarly because the mother is still breast-feeding the baby and thus the baby might get sick through feeding. (Opas 2004.)

But it was not exclusively the small children who were considered to be in danger of being avenged. Also pregnant and menstruating women had to take precautions against malevolent beings in order not to inflict harm upon themselves or their unborn babies. According to the Yine, a foetus is extremely vulnerable to mutations caused by different non-humans and spirits (cf. Belaunde 2001; McCallum 2001: 58; Rival 1998; Vilaça 2002). Therefore, pregnant women were not to bathe in the river after sunset, or else, it was thought, the Mother of the River might harm the foetus (TKU/N/05/3:19). I was told of several cases that people had witnessed in which the foetus was unintentionally aborted after one to three months of pregnancy, presumably because the woman had bathed in the river when it was already dark and consequently the child had been born resembling a skate or a snake. One man told how he had personally seen his aunt giving birth to something resembling a skate. The woman had bathed in the river late in the evening; an act which was said to have resulted in the mutation or metamorphosis of the foetus. (TKU/N/04/3:20)

In addition to bathing in the river, pregnant and menstruating women also needed to be careful when going into the forest. I was told that

You should not bathe during the night time when you are menstruating. . . . And it is also said that when you go to the forest you should not sit down because *tunchis* are around. Our spirit is always left there in that spot and there it has sex . . . where we sat down. But we are no longer there but already at home. So it exploits our soul, which has been left behind to have sex there. That's why it is said that when you stop to rest you should strike (*chicotéa*) the place where you sit so that when you return nothing will happen. It is only when you are menstruating that you should not take a bath, you should not go to the forest because your child will change into a little devil, it will no longer be a person. (TKU/A/05/40b:6; see TKU/A/04/55:4.)

When a menstruating or pregnant woman sits somewhere in the forest and leaves the place, part of her relational self is always left behind on that

³ Note how here too healing does not take place immediately but needs a longer period of time spent close to the family (see Chapters 1, 2 and 5).

⁴ People talked about this curing process in two different ways. Sometimes people said that the smoke caused the avenging animal to let go of the child's soul but at other times they explained that smoking expels the malevolent beings that have invaded the child's body. These statements seem at first contradictory but become comprehensible when we remember that in Yine thought, the soul or relational self is a whole: when the child's soul goes wandering after the father, it is still attached to the part 'remaining in' the child's body.

spot. If she does not sweep the spot clean malevolent spirits may copulate with the residue, with what is left behind of the woman's relational self, and so turn the foetus thus conceived into something resembling a frog, serpent, bat or some other smallish animal. Consequently, pregnant or menstruating women were obliged to brush the place where they sat in the forest or, what was considered even better but not very feasible, not to go to the forest at all.

When telling me about these vengeance of animals and about encounters with different non-human beings, the Yine – both Evangelical and Catholic – often ended their stories by saying *Ya no es asi*, 'It is no longer like that'. Beings do not appear to people or harm them any more as they used to do because, as the Yine said, 'now we are with the Word of God'. One woman explained that 'They no longer transform into people. . . . Before God existed they appeared like that, before we knew the Word of God, that is when the animals transformed into people, in those times' (TKU/A/05/41b:2; cf. Andreello 1999). Correspondingly, one Evangelical man explained that

We are changing with the, with Him, what is it called... I mean when we are with the Bible, with prayer. . . . That is why they don't turn into people any more. . . . That is what people say. Before . . . not only did the deer change; also jaguars knew how to change and the partridge cried and then turned into a man. . . . That's how it was before. . . . But when the Word of the Lord came, that's when they stopped turning into people. It ended there. (TKU/A/04/54:3.)

These speakers used the notion of the Word of God, *Goyakalu Pirana*, to refer to the salvational message about God and Jesus and to the Bible as a source of this revelation.⁵ The gospel reaching the Yine people was considered to have had an enormous influence on the power relations in their social cosmos. In the Word of God the Yine had a powerful 'ally' against malevolent non-human beings, an ally, which – as discussed in Chapter 2 in relation to the grey brocket deer – could even deprive non-humans of their ability to metamorphose and thus to harm people (see also TKU/A/04/54:6).

However, even though people said that things were no longer like that – beings did not harm people any more – they in the next sentence could very well tell of some incident involving non-humans that had taken place just a short time ago. It was clear then that people could not totally disregard the possibly malignant non-humans in their socio-moral environment. One woman translated me what an elderly Evangelical couple said about the current situation:

⁵ In Christian theology and praxis the notion of the Word of God has been used in three interrelated ways. First, when referring to Jesus Christ as God's Word that has become flesh, to Jesus as the incarnation of God's Word (John 1:14). Second, to refer to the revelation or message of Jesus and thus to what God has wished to make known to people through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Third, to refer to the Bible as a source of revelation. (McGrath 1996: 209–210.) In the usage of the Evangelicals in Diamante, the notion of the Word of God included and oscillated between these three meanings depending on the context.

At the time of my grandfather they had to diet for their children because any animal that they killed could take revenge so that [the child] started to cry. They were very afraid of this and had no reason to kill these animals. . . Before the coming of the Word of God we had to diet in that way because we had to take care of our children, that's why [the diets] existed. But when the Word of God arrived, this started changing little by little. . . 'And it is very late for me to come' [meaning: it is not long before Jesus will come]. Before, the coming of God was still far off. Now it is very late and [children] no longer become shocked. Little by little [the animals] are losing that [quality], they won't take revenge because the men do not hunt, people just eat [the meat but do not kill the animals]. That's what it is said. (TKU/A/05/42a:3; see also TKU/A/04/55:4, 8.)

These narrators seemed to use the notion of the Word of God to refer to the Second Coming when Jesus would return to earth as the incarnation of the Word. Before, the Second Coming was still far away in the future but now people (the Evangelicals) felt it was already close and coming closer every day. And the nearer this moment and God were thought to draw, the greater their power of diminishing the threat caused by non-human beings. This was how the animals taking vengeance were little by little made harmless to people. (See Gow 2001: 221, 223.) The idea is parallel to the meaning of physical proximity discussed in Chapter 2. Just as physical closeness to other people has the effect of strengthening a person's point of view and so protecting a person from other beings, (temporary) proximity to God would seem to reinforce a person's human perspective and to keep the retaliating animals, or devils, at a distance.

The most concrete manner in which the coming of the Word of God was considered to protect people from the non-human threat was thinking. The Yine, especially Evangelical women, said that when they needed to go alone into the forest they tried to think about God and thus prevent the non-human beings from appearing. (TKU/A/05/51c:4; TKU/N/05/3:8.) Just as thinking about deceased kinspeople was likely to make these act on the thoughts and appear to the person, thinking about God or Jesus was thought to made God more immanent. Thinking about God could be conceived of as a means for blocking the person's openness to the world thus leaving no room for non-human influence (on the openness of the body to the world see Chapter 4). The act of thinking was a way to incorporate the power associated with God into oneself as a capacity to resist the unpredictable exterior.⁶ This capacity became actualised as a more secure and dauntless way of being, which enabled the person to carry out everyday tasks irrespective of the non-human threat even when the tasks required entering the forest (cf. Coleman 2006; McCallum 2001: 178; Vilaça 2005).

In addition to the power of the Word of God, Christianisation had also restricted the actions of non-human beings of the Yine social world through the economic and material developments it had brought along. As the elderly couple above alludes, different beings did not take vengeance

⁶ Cf. with the old woman's encounter with the souls of dead relatives discussed in the Prologue.

on people as often nowadays because the Yine men did not hunt as much any more. The changes brought along by evangelisation – such as schooling and the overall changes in local economics – had diminished the number of men's hunting trips. As seen in Chapter 4, instead of hunting, fishing and working the land people more and more often preferred to buy their food from the local shops. With fathers not killing animals and consequently wives not eating game killed by their husbands, the possibilities for animal vengeance had decreased. Furthermore, when the men did go hunting or the women went gathering fruits in the forest they used smoke for protection against dangerous beings. Before, people said, it had been only shamans who had been able to exorcise non-humans with tobacco smoke but nowadays, when there were no longer able shamans in the community, cigarette smoke was held to have an equal effect. Every time people went farther into the forest to hunt, to fish in the streams, to collect fruits or raw materials, they said they would carry cigarettes with them. Whether they really did this every time, I do not know, but I did see people carrying cigarettes with them to the forest relatively often.

Some also said that the danger of strong animals had diminished owing to the world being more crowded now than before. Previously, it was said, there were fewer people and thus various beings appeared to people more often. (TKU/A/05/53c:4.) At the time I did not quite understand what difference it would make that there were more people in the community if on their hunting trips they still walked alone in the woods where the non-human beings resided. However, after beginning to grasp something of the importance proximity had for the Yine, I stated to perceive the connection. Because people had settled down into large villages – largely owing to the establishment of schools – instead of living in smaller scattered groups, the human point of view had become stronger in these densely populated areas and thus it was thought to be more difficult for the various beings to live in the vicinity of humans. People nourished each other's human points of view and consequently it was no longer easy for non-humans to enforce theirs on humans. The crowdedness of the world was nevertheless not viewed as an entirely positive development. As will be discussed below, with the number of people in Diamante increasing, it had become ever more difficult for them to lead a good life, to live well.

Also the changes in Yine material and technological environment were seen to diminish the non-human danger. Electric streetlights, which were put up in the community in 2000, were considered to enhance the quality of people's lives and affect the behaviour of different beings. The path, which passed through the entire community, was provided with streetlamps every 50–100 metres except for the uppermost part of the village where the Matsigenka families lived. In addition, most individual houses in the upper section were also connected to the power line and had light bulbs giving light to the interior of the houses. These electric lights were said to keep harmful spirits away from the community. Still, one Evangelical man expressed his concern to me over the way young mothers walked around with their babies in the evenings: although the problem had diminished with electric lights, this was exactly the time when babies were

easily attacked by spirits. The man explained:

But [*kamchi*] do not appear any more. Before there was no light. . . . That's why they walked in the night. . . . I always tell this one girl when I see her walking in the night with her baby: . . . 'One should no longer walk when the lights go out, one should go to bed.' . . . But now as there is light it is like day till nine o'clock. Before there weren't lights. . . . That's why the spirits went around. When it is cloudy ... during the night, like there would be smoke in the air . . . That's where *susto* or *mal aire* always come to shock people. . . . That's how it used to be, they appeared to people here. But these almost don't exist any more. (TKU/A/04/54:7.)

When there was light, either electric light or clear sky with the moon shining, it was unlikely, although not unheard of, that spirits and souls of the dead would come to the community. Rather, they would stay in the darkness and shadows of the forest. However, as the man explains if there is fog in the air it is likely that the spirits will be travelling there and make children sick. This was still often the case, because owing to a constant lack of money for buying petrol, the lights which were in principle on from 6 o'clock to at least 8 or 9 o'clock in the evening were frequently shut off even for weeks. Nevertheless, when there was light, people's active time in the evenings was extended as housework and handicraft-making were made possible during the otherwise dark hours.

All these developments described above and related to the coming of the Word of God and to the material enhancements deriving from it were considered to enable people to go ahead in their lives. When they did not have to suffer from illnesses caused by non-human beings they could live an easier life and could have time and strength to concentrate on making their living and on prospering. Being healthy, their children could also become strong and able to get an education. This change, the 'coming of the Word of God' was, in fact, conceptualised as a major turning point in recent Yine history (see Sebastián et al. 1998: 185).

From the time of the Old Testament to the time of the New Testament

Both Catholics and Evangelicals alike in Diamante referred to the time before, when the world was full of dangers, as the 'time of the Old Testament' whereas they now saw themselves living the 'time of the New Testament' (cf. Fajardo 1999: 438). This distinction was, however, used in two different manners by the Yine. On the one hand, these notions were employed to denote the change from the mythic time of the ancients to the world as it is known to people of today. The Yine myths were said to have taken place in the time of Adam and Eve and thus in the Old Testament time. During this era, animals were human persons also in their appearances, people were able to metamorphose into different beings and plants as well as animals had their beginnings. But with the life and death of Jesus Christ, the New

Testament time was thought to have begun and these mythic possibilities to have ceased to exist.⁷ Humans and most animals lost their ability to metamorphose, animals were separated from humans⁸ and new flora and fauna species no longer came into being. On the other hand, people also used these terms to point to the difference between the time when they themselves did not yet know much about the Christian God during the first half of the twentieth century and could not read or write, and the time when they had become Christians and received basic education with the help of the Summer Institute of Linguistics missionaries.

I heard the separation between the times before and after being used in the first sense mostly when I asked the Yine about their ideas of non-human beings and their position in today's world. More commonly, however, people referred to the difference between the times of the Old and the New Testament when making a distinction between how the Yine lived during the still remembered old days and how they lived today. Nevertheless, in both cases the rather abrupt change was conceptualised as a fundamentally socio-moral one. The first case involved a differentiation between humans and non-humans – especially animals – after which the latter were no longer able to interact socially and morally in a 'human' way with humans. The second instance included in some sense a reverse development. The Yine became more like white people: they were educated and were no longer uncivilised 'forest people' (see Gow 1991; Wright 1998: 224). In general, transitions from one period of time to another seemed to be conceived qualitatively in terms of relatedness and morality rather than quantitatively as durations or chronologies among the Yine.⁹ One context in which this was vividly expressed was that of birthdays and birth dates.

Women in Diamante were often engaged in talking about birth dates, especially those of their children, so that I came to know the birth dates of all the members of some families almost by heart. I first thought that because I was an outsider these were told to me for some particular reason, perhaps in the hope of presents on birthdays. But gradually I noticed that people talked about these dates not only in my presence but among themselves as well. (TKU/N/05/3:11.) In the family where I lived for most of my time in Diamante, I every now and then overheard or was talking with the women when they told each other when the birthday of each of their children was and how their birth dates related to those of the children's cousins. This seemed peculiar because women of one family already knew by heart the birthdays of their children and their siblings' children so that

⁷ Some people did, however, place myths in the time when 'God [Jesus] went to heaven' (TKU/N/04/3:14) or when 'Jesus was on earth' (TKU/N/05/3:13).

⁸ Unlike in evolutionary thinking, it has been shown how in Amazonia animality separated from humanity, not vice versa (Viveiros de Castro 1998).

⁹ Joel Robbins (2007: 6–7) has argued that this kind of temporal discontinuity is characteristic of Christianity. In his view, anthropology has generally been a science of continuity and as such has failed to recognise and appreciate that Christian ideas about change are based on assumptions 'organised around the plausibility of radical discontinuities in personal lives and cultural histories'. Nevertheless, as the Yine case will show, these two poles are necessarily complementary to each other.

their constant repetition seemed pointless to me. There were, however, a couple of reasons which made these conversations intelligible to me and by which I began to understand the multiple meanings birthdays and birth dates had for the Yine people.

First, in addition to communal feasts such as San Juan, the anniversary of the community, Peru's National Day and the New Year, birthdays were expected occasions when people gathered to eat well, drink manioc beer and to enjoy themselves. Mostly children's birthdays were among those celebrated but it was not unusual to celebrate an adult's birthday too. At least close relatives, co-parents and close neighbours were commonly invited to attend a birthday party. To begin with, food, usually a soup, was served to all guests and the rest of the evening was dedicated to drinking manioc beer until it ran out. Also an almost obligatory feature was the throwing of sweets in the air, at which people, children and adults alike, dived to catch them. Every single time this practice resulted in some small children being caught in the middle or under some other children or even adults and getting slightly hurt. Anyway, people enjoyed themselves. These were occasions when kin ties with co-parents and other relatives were nurtured and re-enforced by offering food and spending time together. They were, of course, also perfect opportunities for having fun, enjoying the convivial atmosphere and getting drunk. As discussed in earlier chapters, such relatedness was vital for people to be able to live well. Being intoxicated was an important part of this relatedness, as among the Yine it was conceived of as 'an important social state, which allows for ongoing social life through the transformation of respectful relations in the festive forgetting of drunkenness' (Gow 2001: 232; Kapfhammer 2004: 113; Veiga 2004: 184). Even though birthday celebrations in Evangelical families took often place earlier in the afternoon to avoid the parties turning into all-night drinking feasts, birthdays were still one of the most important forms of production of sociality in the communal life in Diamante. (TKU/N/01/2:3; TKU/N/04/3:6.)

Second, birth dates were closely associated with the current educated and 'civilised' state of the Yine. In order to travel or to work for different companies, people needed their national identification documents (DNI, Documento Nacional de Identidad). To acquire such a document, as well as to register for school, people needed to possess a birth certificate showing their date of birth (TKU/N/04/3:10; TKU/N/05/3:8). Knowing one's birth date and thus being able to obtain a DNI and being eligible for schooling seemed therefore to be related to the prestige given to education and the subsequent state of being civilised. The elderly people in Diamante did not know when they had been born and even though they were not looked down on for that – on the contrary, they were highly respected – they reminded people of the time of the past generations when the Yine were still, according to their own view, ignorant. Today, the educated Yine knew their birth dates and possessed a document stating it, in contrast to the *gente bravo*, the uncivilised forest Indians such as those living in voluntary isolation just across the river from Diamante inside the Manu National Park (cf. Gow 1991: 62–63, 86–88, 213–215, 247–251, 265–270). DNIs

were therefore closely associated with demarcating the moral boundary between the Yine human condition of today and of the past, and served as an emblem of their success in going ahead in life.

Lastly, birth dates were also closely connected to people's fate after the expected Second Coming of Jesus Christ and thus to their soteriology. Both Evangelicals and Catholics saw God as having supreme power over everything and everyone on earth because he knew the birth and death dates of each person. He was said to possess a book in which the birth and death dates were marked alongside all the actions a person had committed during their lifetime. Only those people whose names were written in this Book of Life were thought to be saved and to gain eternal life. (TKU/A/01/27:3; see e.g. 2 Moses 32:32-33; Daniel 12:1, Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8 and 20:11-14.) The fact that this biblical image and birth dates were highly meaningful especially for the Evangelical Yine becomes, as will be further discussed in the following chapter, even more explicit in the way the Evangelicals resented the fact that the Catholic missionary teachers collected their pupils' birth dates. The Evangelicals held this as a sign of the closeness of the coming of Antichrist. Because birthdays and birth dates had such a central position at many levels in the Yine lived world – in constructing relatedness, going ahead as educated people and in determining the final fate of people – it was no wonder that people in Diamante were often engaged in talking about them. It was one way of actualising and reproducing the meaning of moral sociable life so as to be able to live well and to go ahead in life.



Figure 20. Trying to catch sweets thrown in the air during a birthday party

Yine conceptions of time in general and the change from one period of time to another were then intrinsically about socio-moral relations and human progress. It was a shared view of the Evangelicals and Catholics that the coming of the Word of God had been a watershed in this sense. There was, however, one major difference in what the Catholics on the one hand and the Evangelicals on the other emphasised as being of the greatest value in the change from the time of the Old Testament to that of the New, especially when it was defined as a transition which took place through the coming of the Summer Institute of Linguistics missionaries to the area in the 1950s. Many Catholics habitually talked about the transition in terms of becoming educated. When people learned to read and write and to count, they could not be cheated by outsiders as easily, for instance in the matters of paying for work or for goods (TKU/N/05/3:21). This had enabled people to go ahead. As one Catholic man said:

Teachers from the Summer Institute of Linguistics were just beginning to teach in the community. There were grades just till the fifth of primary school; before there were five [grades], now there are six. When a student graduated, he did not have support (*apoyo*), [the studies just ended there]. Now we have progressed. Now there is support. You finish the sixth grade, you'll go to the secondary school and in this manner the community is going . . . is progressing. Another word is, now the people are a new generation, they are not like we were before, without knowing anything. (TKU/A/05/37a:10.)

Now that there were more possibilities to study, such as the secondary school, the whole community was going ahead. No longer could people from the outside come to cheat the Yine – at least as easily as before – because the new generation, the young people, had studied and could defend the community and themselves.

As important as this educational aspect was also for the Evangelicals, it was not the principal meaning they gave to the transition from the Old to the New Testament time. Rather, what the Evangelicals emphasised in the change which took place when the Summer Institute of Linguistics missionaries arrived was the Gospel. It was receiving the message of God which they viewed as the most valuable aspect in the change.¹⁰ The Catholics seemed to conceptualise the progress taking place in relation to the outside world of the whites and mestizos, whereas the Evangelicals apprehended it against the background of socio-moral changes which were at the same time internal to the community and shared with the whole (Protestant) Christian world. These differing positions became manifested in people's attitudes towards moral progress, for instance in relation to sexual behaviour.

¹⁰ This contradicts Gow's analysis of the meanings of Christianity for the Yine of Urubamba. According to Gow (2006), the Protestant Yine also chose to downplay the missionaries' religious message and instead emphasised the educational side of their work.

Moral progress and sexual relations

Little by little getting the upper hand in regard to different non-human beings was considered a moral triumph among the Yine. To be human was to be properly moral, a condition separating humans from non-humans. Even though easily deluding people with their appearances, these beings were considered not to respect others but to ask for sex immediately, to live in solitude and to eat non-human food. However, in order to live well it was not sufficient to prove that one was morally different from non-humans. People also needed to act morally among themselves in everyday community life, which meant proper actions and conduct in relation to one's family and kin, in other words, willingness to live close to one another and to respect other people. This was not easily achieved.

When measured by people's willingness to live close to each other, the Yine in Diamante had succeeded quite well in achieving everyday moral living. The community had steadily increased in size since its establishment at its current site in the 1970s, as more and more people wished to settle down by a school and in a place with relatively good opportunities for earning money. Furthermore, some families had moved more or less permanently from the Urubamba area, especially from the community of Miaría, to Diamante. However, there was also a negative side to this increase in the size of the community. With such a large number of people living together, people told me, it was becoming, contrary to the aim, all the time more difficult to live a moral life and to respect others. Since resources were limited, people stole from each other's homes and plantations, did not share with or 'remember' their co-parents by giving them gifts of food, and gossiped and accused others of witchcraft. Illegitimate sexual relations were also common.

Sexual behaviour was one of the fields in which moral life in general and people's personal moral condition were assessed. Moral weakness was something that was considered to be corporeally visible to others. Before, people said, if a person had had sexual intercourse with one's close kin or even made sexual remarks about or joked with one's relative, a boil (Yine: *yma*) appeared somewhere on that person's body. This was something people were still very apprehensive about. One woman explained that when a boil appeared on someone's body it was a sure sign that the person did not have respect for other people, for one's parents and siblings, for instance (meaning that he or she interacted erotically with or made sexual jokes in their presence) (TKU/A/05/51a:1). There was one case during my stay in Diamante when people speculated that a boil would appear on one girl's body because she had presumably been in intimate relations with her cousin. Boils appearing on the body were therefore a very concrete demonstration of the corporeal nature of Yine morality. Immoral actions had physical consequences. Bodily degeneration owing to immorality was considered to manifest itself not only as laziness or improper actions (Griffits 2001), but also on the surface of the body, on the skin (Robbins

1997; Turner 1980).¹¹

Sexual morality was also an issue in the relationship between Evangelicals and Catholics in Diamante. The Evangelicals often stressed that it was especially the Catholics whose sexual morals were low. The Evangelicals ‘had to respect’ (Spanish: *tenemos que respetar*) their kin – meaning that an Evangelical person could and would not act disrespectfully – and consequently would never engage for instance in extramarital sexual relationships. This respect, however, did not always materialise in practice and when someone calling themself Evangelical did deviate from these moral expectations the resentment was even greater than in the case of a Catholic person doing the same. Furthermore, in these situations the Catholics were able to show their disapproval towards the Evangelicals who, in the Catholic view, alleged that they possessed high sexual morals but who in practice did not comply with these claims. Especially resented by both parties, however, were homosexual relations, as they represented in a very explicit manner a drift away from the bodily-moral ideal of what it meant to be a Yine person and were seen to pose a danger not only to the people themselves but to the whole community, as noted in Chapter 2. Among the Yine proper sexual relationships were always heterosexual and thus, as in the case which took place in 2005 where two men were caught in the act of intimate sexual relationship, people always speculated – partly in jest, partly with resentment – which of the partners in a homosexual relationship was the woman and which the man. Such men were commonly called *maricones*, gays or poofers.

If the Evangelicals saw the ability to act morally when it came to sexual relations as a consequence of their Christian life style, the Catholic emphasis in the question lay elsewhere. At least one Catholic couple viewed the Yine people’s improved moral condition and respect for others as stemming from school education. According to this couple, owing to the educational work commenced among the Yine by the Summer Institute of Linguistics missionaries and continued by the Catholic church, people now knew that they were not supposed to have relationships with close kin and knew how to treat one’s cousins and brothers properly. The man explained that

Yes, that’s what happened before, but not any more. Now we know already. We have finished the fifth grade, now everybody is respecting others. . . . But before, no. People did not respect each other. [They engaged in sexual relations with anyone.] . . . Now that I have studied a lot I know that. We know that this is your aunt. . . . That is your second cousin, your aunt, that is your sister-in-law and so on . . . (TKU/A/05/36c:1.)

The picture the Catholic couple wished to draw here was one in which

¹¹ In addition to boils, people said, a person who treated his siblings and other close kin with disrespect risked being hit by the tail of a snake and consequently becoming ill with fright. This was especially used as a warning for children if these behaved in an undesired manner towards their kin.

receiving basic education worked as the turning point in the Yine moral life. Given the fundamentality of the use of kin terms and respect for one's family to Yine moral human life (see Chapter 1), I think this kind of articulation of school education and improved sexual morals was again not so much a question of chronology but a means of demarcating the boundary of the 'uncivilised' past of the Yine people. In their view, it was education that had turned people from uncivilised respect-lacking people to the people, respectful of others, they were today.¹² Whereas many Evangelicals viewed respect for others as springing from their Christian conviction and Christian bodily conduct, at least for this one Catholic couple the ability to respect others was one way of emphasising the meaning of schooling in their lives.

Complex meanings of Christian baptisms

There was one context in which the differences between the Evangelical and Catholic views towards what constituted moral progress became even more evident than in relation to sexuality. It was Christian baptism. This ritual and its different aspects had multiple, and often contradictory, meanings for the Yine in Diamante, beginning with the place and number of baptisms performed for a person. Even though both Catholic and Evangelical baptisms were practised in Diamante, it did not mean that all Evangelicals were baptised at the Evangelical church and all Catholics at the Catholic church, that everyone was baptised at all, or that people were baptised only once at one of the two churches. I was intrigued by these versatile practices, not only because I too at one point during my stay in Diamante became caught in the middle of the controversy caused by differing views on the meaning of Catholic baptism, as will be discussed below, but also because as the most visible Christian ritual performed in the community baptism offered a window for examining Yine ways of interpreting Christianity. For the Yine people, the centrality of baptism in their Christian religious practice made this ritual a suitable ground for the negotiation of proper ways of being a (Christian) Yine person.

On the level of praxis, Catholic and Evangelical baptisms differed significantly from each other. Catholic baptism took place in Diamante approximately once a year when the Catholic padre from Shintuya came to the community. During my stays in Diamante, I had the opportunity to participate in two such occasions. In the year 2000, the padre and the two missionary primary-school teachers first held a service, which was attended exclusively by schoolchildren. After the service, the padre proceeded to the actual baptism and the chapel was instantly filled with parents and

¹² According to my observations, children in Diamante were from early on raised to respect their kin. I often heard parents chastise their children for their lack of respect. If a child for instance called a person by their first name, let's say Maria, they were quickly corrected: 'She is not Maria to you, she is your Aunt Maria'. Similarly, failures to greet people upon encountering them by saying, for instance, 'grandmother, good afternoon grandmother' were considered signs of immoral and thus less human behaviour.

godparents bringing their children for baptism. In the chapel they gathered around the altar, the youngest children being held by their godparents and the oldest ones standing by their parents' side. The age of the children to be baptised varied from a few months up to nine years. They were all dressed in their best clean clothes, the oldest having their hair neatly combed. After some initial words, the priest went around in a circle with a ewer, pouring water on the heads of the children and baptising them. After this he wrote the children's and their godparents' names down in his book and the event was over.

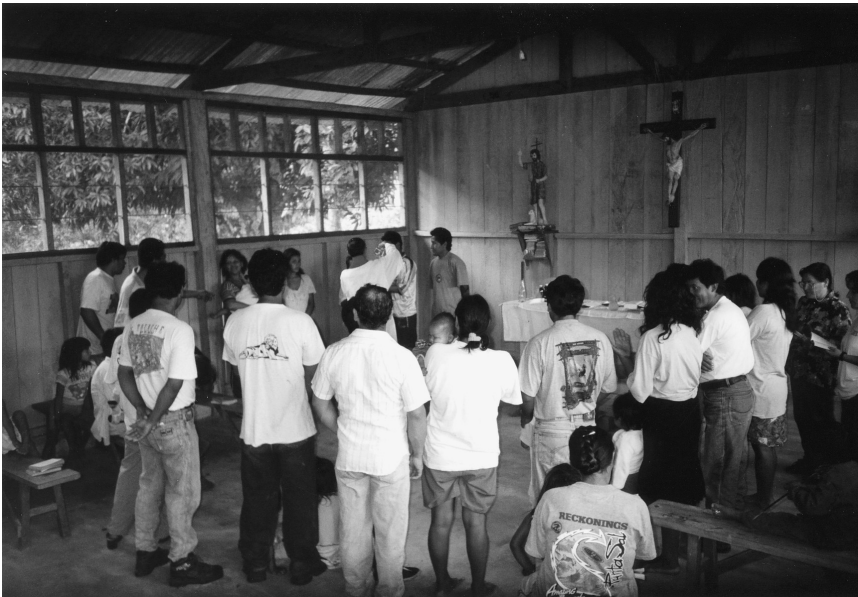


Figure 21. Catholic baptism in Diamante in July 2000. The Catholic padre is in the background baptising a child

By the time of my second attendance at a Catholic baptism in Diamante in 2003, the ritual had at least externally undergone some notable changes. First, the service held before the baptism filled the Catholic chapel not only with schoolchildren but also with adults. This change was due to the padre obliging all parents whose children were to be baptised as well as the children's godparents-to-be to participate in the service before the baptism could take place. In his view, the baptismal service was an essential part of the ritual, serving also for educating parents and godparents of the meanings the Catholic Church gave (and the Yine were expected to give) to baptism. People did participate but as in the case of the funeral service described in Chapter 1, many of them were very clearly ill at ease at the service, not knowing when to stand up and sit down during the liturgy and not being able to recite the prayers. Second, in the baptism of 2003 most children being baptised, especially the younger ones, were dressed

in white baptismal dresses according to the general (Catholic) Christian custom. Most of the older girls were not bought new dresses for baptism, presumably because these were not available in Diamante and because they were expensive, but wore old ones. Babies, however, were clothed in white frilled dresses. Boys wore trousers and a white dress shirt. In many cases these clothes were bought by the child's godparents-to-be. Third and last, an additional feature that was absent from the baptism of 2000 but present in that of 2003 was related to the end of the ritual. Whereas in 2000 the baptism ended with writing down the names of the children and their godparents, in 2003 people gathered outside the chapel for an additional small event. In a custom familiar from birthday celebrations, some godparents threw sweets in the air and people excitedly ran after them. It seemed that whenever possible, the Yine people tried to enjoy the moment and therefore also the baptism ended with everybody with sweets in their mouth. (TKU/N/04/3:5.)

In contrast to the Catholic child baptism, the Evangelicals in Diamante practised adult baptism by immersion, as many Protestant and Charismatic Christian groups do. I never had a chance to witness a baptism since it was only held when an Evangelical pastor from the city of Cusco came to the community and when there were at least a few people to be baptised. Apparently, the baptisms took place approximately once a year or every second year. I was told that these baptisms were performed in the river, where the people to be baptised were led, wearing white clothes. After a prayer, people were immersed and emerged as new people supposedly having left all their sins in the water. The Evangelicals said that a person could not be baptised before the teenage years because a person to be baptised needed to make the willing personal decision to follow Jesus and turn a new leaf in life. Small children were therefore not eligible for Evangelical baptism. Nevertheless, the Evangelicals did wish to bring their children to an awareness of God. This was done through what the Yine in Spanish called *entrega*, presentation of the child at the Evangelical church in order for God to take the child under his protection. In one such presentation I witnessed in Diamante, at one point during a regular weekly meeting the parents holding their infant child came to stand in front of the lectern and faced the congregation. The presentation included a hymn sung together, a reading from the Gospel for children and a prayer, after which the meeting continued normally. (TKU/N/05/3:20; TKU/A/01/27:5.)

These different forms of Christian baptism practised in Diamante were given many meanings by the Evangelicals and the Catholics. Baptism was viewed both as an elementary part of the nexus of social relations consisting of godparent and co-parent ties (*compadrazgo*) and as a ritual connected to salvation and to the purification of a person from their sins. It was in relation to the respective weight given to these two sides that the Evangelicals' and Catholics' understandings of baptism differed from each other.

Baptism and compadrazgo

In Diamante, the Catholic baptism especially was closely connected to the institution of *compadrazgo*, that is, to both acquiring godparents for a child and making the parents of the child and the child's godparents co-parents (*comadres* and *compadres*) to each other through diverse rituals (Alvarez 1976; Gow 1991: 172–178; Gudeman 1971).¹³ Both these newly established relationships were characterised by mutual respect, the other person being treated as kin. As the Evangelical baptism was possible only for adults or adolescents and not many people underwent the ritual, it did not seem to have equal relevance for acquiring godparents or co-parents as the Catholic baptism did. In fact, some Evangelicals said that although godparents could be acquired, no co-parent relations were established through the Evangelical baptism (TKU/N/01/2:8). Moreover, no co-parent relations (to my knowledge) resulted from the presentation of a child to God at the Evangelical church either. Nevertheless, godparents and co-parents were just as important for the Yine Evangelicals as they were for the Catholics, and therefore – in addition to other means for establishing these relations – many Evangelicals also baptised some of their children at the Catholic chapel. A similar observation has also been made among the Yine of the Urubamba area (Gow 1991: 173).

In addition to baptism, there were also other institutionalised ways of acquiring co-parents and godparents in Diamante: the cutting of the umbilical cord and – although very rarely – the first cut of the child's hair.¹⁴ The cutting of the umbilical cord was naturally conducted right after the birth of a child. After the delivery, the person chosen to cut the umbilical cord was brought to the house and they performed the cutting with scissors. (TKU/A/01/33:3.) Most people considered the father of the child ineligible to perform the task. Because he was already close kin to the child and of the same blood, he could not contribute to widening the family's web of kin through becoming a co-parent. A preferred cutter was a person, male or female, who was not close kin but could become one by touching the blood of both the mother and of the child when cutting the umbilical cord (see Alvarez 1976). Sometimes, the same cord was even cut twice by two different persons. This was done for instance in cases when the delivery had taken place in the forest with no one around to cut the cord but the mother herself. The second cut was possible if the remaining cord had been left long enough to allow it to be cut shorter. The second cut, as I learned through personal experience, was also sometimes used in cases where the chosen godparent had not been reached in time. I had been asked to become godparent to a child that was due to be born in May 2005. (TKU/N/05/3:7,

¹³ On *compadrazgo* see also Mintz, Sidney W. & Eric R. Wolf 1950. An Analysis of Ritual Coparenthood (*compadrazgo*). – *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 6, 341–368.

¹⁴ According to Alvarez (1976), in the Urubamba co-parent relationships were among the Yine established through the cutting of the umbilical cord, through the initiation ritual, as well as through the Christian rituals of baptism, confirmation and marriage. Since initiation, confirmation and marriage ceremonies were not celebrated in Diamante, it was clear that these were not means for getting co-parents.

16.) Unfortunately, when the baby was born I was just returning to the community after spending a week in the city of Cusco. When I arrived, I was told that the baby had been born just a few hours earlier and that the umbilical cord had already been cut. Nevertheless, people urged me to go to see the mother and the baby because sometimes, they said, it was possible to cut the cord again. However, in this particular case, the cord had been cut so short that it was not possible to cut it any shorter. In my absence, the parents had asked one of the missionary teachers to cut the cord and thus to become the child's godparent and the parents' co-parent. She had also already bought the newborn baby a set of clothes, an act that was nowadays thought if not obligatory for godparents, then at least highly desired.

The first cutting of the child's hair was another means of acquiring godparents and co-parents but it was very rarely performed. I never saw such an act and in fact only two of the families in Diamante with whom I discussed these issues mentioned it to me as an option. According to these few Yine accounts, when the hair of the child had grown long enough at the age of three or four it was cut shorter by the godparent to be. In this case, more people were invited to witness the act and they were offered manioc beer and food. A whip-round was organised to get some money with which the mother could buy clothes for the child. The cutting of the hair thus seemed more like a response to the ever growing need for economic assets for getting necessities for children and for educating them, and did not seem to have great social importance for the Yine.¹⁵ (TKU/A/01/33:2.)

Of the institutionalised ways of acquiring godparents and co-parents, the cutting of the umbilical cord and baptism were thus considered the most important. However, during the period from 2000 to 2003 I witnessed the diminishing of the meaning of Catholic baptism in this respect in the eyes of the people in Diamante, a process which in some sense seemed to culminate in 2003 during my stay in the community. Before the baptism that year, the Catholic padre started applying the Catholic ordinance more strictly according to which all godparents (sponsors) had to be Catholic, either married couples or single, but under no circumstances non-Catholics or non-married couples. Till then, the practice had been more permissive, enabling outsiders and to my knowledge all people in Diamante to become godparents (TKU/N/04/3:5, 7). The majority of people in Diamante had been, in fact, eligible in terms of being Catholics because many of them, including some of the Evangelicals, had been baptised at the Catholic church as children and were thus both Evangelical and Catholic – a feature they could use to their benefit when opportune (see Fajardo 1999). Owing to the padre's new policy, however, since to my knowledge only one couple in the whole community was legally married, with the other couples, old and young, just living together, the number of possible godparents fell to a minimum.

I was probably one reason for the new stricter way of applying the ordinance. Both in 2000 and in 2003, some parents in Diamante asked me

¹⁵ For some Amazonian peoples the first cut of a child's hair carries deep social and symbolic meanings (e.g. Turner 1980).

to become the godparent for their child to be baptised (TKU/N/04/3:2). At both times, however, the padre denied the possibility that I, as a non-Catholic, could become a godparent. In addition, he justified his view with the fact that as I was a foreigner and not permanently living in the community, I could not take care of the child's religious instruction in the long run as godparents according to the Catholic Church's understanding should.¹⁶ Therefore, as two separate couples asked him about the possibility of me becoming their co-parent in 2003, he apparently became tired of what for him must have appeared a loose or weak Christian moral and decided to take a stricter approach towards eligibility for becoming godparents. I do not think that I was the only cause of his decision but probably epitomised the point of conflict between Yine understandings of the meaning and role of godparents and the ideals of the Catholic Church. (TKU/N/01/2:8, 11; TKU/A/01/27:6.)

This decrease in the importance of baptism as a means for acquiring co-parents and godparents led people to search for new channels for continuing with this important aspect of their social life. One such channel was found in the primary-school graduation (TKU/N/05/3:8). The school year in Peru lasted from April to December and the same schedule was naturally followed in Diamante as well. In December, a school ending party was held in which the pupils of the sixth grade celebrated their graduation. I do not know how long a history such festivities had in Diamante but I presume the school ending had been celebrated in one way or another for many years if not decades. Nevertheless, in 2005 I experienced quite a sudden increase in the importance the party had for the Yine. Whereas in 2000 and 2003 I heard no one mention they had acquired co-parents or godparents for their children at graduation – even though I am certain graduating children had had sponsors before – in 2005 people listed their co-parents from the cutting of the umbilical cord, from baptism and from graduation alike. This suggested that graduation had become or was becoming an institutionalised form for getting godparents for a child and co-parents for the parents. Similarly as in the Catholic baptism, godparents through graduation were expected to buy a white graduation dress for their godchild, possibly accompanied by beautiful shoes and hair decorations. Graduation was also a means by which I as a non-Catholic could become a godparent. Not being eligible to become a godparent for one Evangelical woman's granddaughter through the Catholic baptism, the woman asked me to become one for her other granddaughter through the primary-school graduation.

But why was acquiring co-parents and godparents so important for the Yine people in the first place? Why did they wish to seek new forms of generating these kinds of social bonds when for instance it became virtually impossible to produce them through Catholic baptism? There seemed to be

¹⁶ Some Yine people asked me why I did not just tell the padre that I was Catholic: in that way I could have become their co-parent (TKU/N/04/4:2). It was clear from these kinds of comments that in Diamante denominational boundaries were easily crossed when the situation required, or better still, people used their 'interdenominational' condition (that is, being baptised at both churches) creatively in different social situations.

two principal interrelated reasons for this. First, obtaining co-parents was a way to enlarge the nexus of close kinspeople, which in turn was essential for people in order to be able to act out relatedness and to produce sociality. Second, co-parents and godparents were an economic resource – but also a burden – for people.¹⁷ These reasons were in constant cross-pull when people in Diamante assessed their existing co-parent or godchild relations or were thinking about the establishment of such connections in the future, and made people's attitudes extremely ambiguous towards this institution.¹⁸

Within the system of *compadrazgo* in Diamante, the meaning of the godparent–godchild relationship did not lie in religious instruction but seemed to focus around gift-giving. As seen above, the first task in every newly formed godparent–godchild relationship was considered to be the first purchasing of clothes for the latter; either the first set of infant clothes, a new set of clothes or a dress for baptism or for graduation. Later on, people hoped that the godparent could keep providing necessities for the child throughout their childhood, but in most cases this was not economically possible. People in Diamante had their own children to take care of and hardly seemed to have sufficient money for their maintenance. Consequently, many parents preferred foreign people as their children's godparents. In the community this meant that the foreign merchant woman, the missionary teachers and the padre were often asked to become godparents. In addition, foreign researchers, workmen and NGO-workers alike were also desired as godparents.¹⁹ (TKU/N/01/2:14.) Nevertheless, as already discussed in the Introduction, these relations were prone to cause a great deal of agony. People expected their children's foreign godparents to come and fulfil the promises they had made when living in or visiting the community but they very rarely did so. One woman therefore told me that in her opinion it was not good to get godparents for one's child when this was a baby because the godparents would not remember the child and after some years would no longer provide the child with necessities (TKU/N/05/3:8). It would be better if the child was already older so that the grandparent could know them personally.

This view reveals that the expectation of gifts from godparents was not directed merely at gaining economic benefits but also towards establishing relationships: material exchanges were one important means of forming positive social relations (see Introduction). As seen in Chapter 1, a small

¹⁷ Alvarez (1976) sees the institution of *compadrazgo* among the Yine as including three different kinds of relations: social, economic and political. In Diamante, however, the political relations and aspirations mentioned by Alvarez (e.g. acquiring power and prestige in the community) did not seem to have much relevance. It was clear that the more co-parents a couple had, the greater a workforce they had when for instance it was time to clear a field, but this necessarily meant that the couple also had more families to help in return.

¹⁸ Co-parents were often chosen by the parents of the child but it was equally common that a person wishing to become co-parent announced their desire to the parents. It was practically impossible to turn down such a request.

¹⁹ This was in contrast to the situation among the Yine of the Urubamba where outsiders were rarely asked to be co-parents (see Alvarez 1976; Gow 1991: 175).

child has not yet developed *nshinikanchi*, memories of loving adults, and equally the adults have not yet become so emotionally attached to a child as to remember them after many years. It is through gifts, especially gifts of food but also of other items, from adults to children that such memories are generated and emotional ties are formed. Therefore the expectation of gifts from godparents can also be understood as a desire to form a long-lasting relationship, which will be nurtured in the future through further gifts. Foreign godparents giving something once for a small child was apparently not considered enough for forming such a relationship: the act would not generate *nshinikanchi* in the child, thus impeding the establishment of a reciprocal relationship.

Also when *compadrazgo* is examined from the point of view of co-parent relationships the focus is on the cross-pull of economic benefits and formation of social relationships.²⁰ The relationship between co-parents was characterised by a similar kind of respect as was typical of relationships between siblings: one was not supposed to make (sexual) jokes about one's co-parent especially if they were of the opposite sex (Gow 1991: 174–175). Co-parents were in a way considered extensions of the family and they had an important role as providers of extra food for the family and as help in work parties (*faenas*). It was expected that co-parents would give gifts of food to each other when they had something to share, and would participate in working parties to cut and cultivate each other's fields. These forms of constant interaction generated and reaffirmed their kinship. In this regard, people preferred locals over foreign people as co-parents. Foreigners could not be present in people's daily lives and were thus unable to participate in the ongoing construction of social life. However, having locals as co-parents was not unproblematic either. Some people said that they did not want more co-parents from among the local people because of the obligations of sharing food with so many (TKU/N/01/2:15; TKU/N/04/3:3; TKU/N/05/3:8). They already had too many co-parents and could not necessarily take everyone sufficiently into account. One woman, for instance, after receiving a piece of game meat from one of her *compadres*, exclaimed partly delightedly, partly annoyed that 'Finally my *compadre* has remembered me!'

All in all then, the situation was rather ambiguous. The Yine people had to ponder between extending their web of kin and engaging in a relationship of mutual help and food provision, and leaving these and hoping for foreign people to provide material gains for their children. As a result of this situation, most people had both local and foreign co-parents.

²⁰ Gow (1991: 176) argues that among the Yine of Urubamba, *compadrazgo* was less important for women than it was for men. His argument is based on the observation that women preferred kin relations to co-parent relations, continuing for instance to call sisters who were their *comadres* sisters. In Diamante, however, both men and women usually continued to call their siblings and cousins by kin terms even though these were their co-parents. Furthermore, co-parents were extremely important for women in Diamante for acting out their everyday sociality. They constantly visited each others houses and invited co-parents over to drink manioc beer. Co-parents were also persons from whom the women could loan items such as cooking pots. I assume Gow's analysis derives at least in part from his spending less time with Yine women than with men.

The practice of co-parenthood among the Yine was not a rigid system for regulating social relationships but rather a cluster of motivations and practices that was constantly in flux. It was based on the value of going ahead, both socially and morally, by generating good life, and economically (materially) by concentrating on children's and families' well being. These two sides were closely intertwined. But whereas in the cutting of the umbilical cord and in graduation²¹ the central social meaning seemed to lie in acquiring godparents and co-parents, the meaning of baptism for the Yine was not, however, restricted to that. Baptism was also considered a way to relate to God. It was here that the greatest differences between the Catholics and Evangelicals concerning their views on baptism emerged. These views became most explicit in relation to the Catholic child baptism.

Theological meanings of Catholic baptism

Few Catholics readily discussed, let alone raised, themes concerned with God or baptismal practices; those I managed to talk to about their views on baptism seemed not to have pondered its theological meanings deeply either. One Catholic man was of the view that Catholic infant or child baptism was performed for the removal of sins but simultaneously thought that children did not yet have sin.²² When I asked why would they then baptise children if these did not yet have any sins, he reckoned that baptism was also performed in order to present the child to God so that he or she could be taken care of and watched over by the Lord. Gaining protection through the connection with God thus established seemed for this man to be the most central meaning of baptism. When it came to baptism's relationship to salvation he was very uncertain and replied that what the Catholic padre always says is that a person cannot go to heaven without being baptised. The man himself did not seem very sure about that. (TKU/A/04/53:7.) One Catholic woman, on the other hand, was of the opinion that the meaning of Catholic baptism lay exclusively in establishing godparent and co-parent relations. After the Catholic padre had implemented the new stricter line on who was eligible to become a godparent through baptism and who was not, the woman wondered to me what the point in baptising children was if one could not acquire godparents through it. (TKU/N/05/3:8.)

Even though generally having thought about the meaning of the ritual more than the Catholics, the Evangelicals were also still very ambiguous when it came to baptism. As will be discussed below, they had quite elaborate ideas about the theological meaning of Evangelical baptism but in relation to Catholic baptism they seemed to be even more

²¹ Graduation was, of course, also closely connected with the meanings the Yine gave to education (see below).

²² He did not mention anything about original sin and I think by 'sins' he referred to 'every-day' sins such as stealing, lying to others, etc.

indeterminate than the Catholics.²³ Many adult Evangelicals in Diamante had been baptised both at the Catholic church as children and in the Evangelical ritual as adults. However, they saw the Catholic infant or child baptism as erroneous for the reason that a small child, in their view, had not yet sinned. Baptism for them meant cleansing oneself from sin (see Andrello 1999: 299–300) and thus ‘going ahead’, and since children had not yet sinned the Catholic ritual was theologically meaningless.²⁴ Also the baptismal water was in their view void of meaning; water was used in the ritual just out of custom (TKU/A/01/33:3; see also TKU/A/04/53:7).

This ambiguousness of the Evangelicals towards Catholic baptism was demonstrated by one woman’s explanation of the baptisms of her children. The woman was in her mid-thirties and had six children. She herself had been baptised only as an adult in the Evangelical ritual. She was very critical towards the idea of Catholic child baptism and held that a person him- or herself should be able to make the choice of leaving everything that belonged to the previous life behind and beginning to follow Jesus instead. In her view, Catholic baptism served only to give the child a name. When I asked her about the possibility of a young person never baptised getting to heaven in the case of her premature death, she explained that the child could be recognised in heaven and her name found in the Book of Life if she had been presented to God by praying at the Evangelical church. (TKU/A/05/51c:2; TKU/A/01/27:5.) However, only the first three of her own children had, in fact, been presented to God at the Evangelical church when they were babies and most of them were still too young to go through the Evangelical adult baptism. The last three, in contrast, had been baptised at the Catholic chapel. I was slightly puzzled by this because of her rather stark attitude towards Catholic baptism. The woman said:

- | | |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Woman | For example my son, we presented him to God when he was a baby. Also my two other children, altogether three have been presented to God, but the rest we haven’t presented as babies. |
| | ... |
| Minna | Have they then been baptised there at . . . |
| Woman | They have been baptised at the church of the Catholics. |
| Minna | . . . Why have you done so? Why have you taken them to the [Catholic] church to be baptised? |
| Woman | They say it’s for giving a name, that’s why, I think. . . They were not with God so that’s why I have taken them [to the Catholic church to be baptised] so that God would recognise them too. (TKU/A/05/51c:2.) |

She gave no real reason for the three of her children not having been brought

²³ Some Evangelicals, however, expressed their doubts about the significance of any act of baptism – whether Evangelical or Catholic – for salvation. Some people held the Evangelical baptism as the prerequisite for getting to heaven but thought that it did not guarantee access there. Others thought that one did not need to get baptised at all in order to go to heaven but what mattered was the way a person lived. (TKU/A/01/27:5; TKU/A/01/33:7.)

²⁴ Some people, however, were of the opinion that infants did have the original sin of Adam and Eve in them.

to the Evangelical church for presentation as babies and only explained that because of that she wanted to take them to be baptised at the Catholic Church so that God would get to know them. Later on she explained that the reason she had done this was because the Catholic missionary teachers in Diamante had come to tell her to bring her children to be baptised at the Catholic chapel so that they could be with God (TKU/A/05/51c:2; TKU/A/05/47b:5; TKU/N/04/3:16).²⁵ Even though on the one hand disapproving of the Catholic practice, on the other hand she considered it to correspond to the Evangelical practice of presenting the child to God at the church in order for God to take the child under his protection (TKU/A/01/27:5).

Yine attitudes towards and opinions about the Catholic baptism were then rather versatile and there were differing opinions concerning it within both the Catholic and the Evangelical group in Diamante. In general, however, the Catholics viewed infant baptism as a means both for obtaining godparents and co-parents and for presenting the child to God. Although they acknowledged the padre's view according to which baptism was a necessary means for getting to heaven, they were quite uncertain about it. The Evangelicals were to a large extent in the same camp. They seemed to view Catholic infant baptism as passing for the Evangelical practice of presenting a child to God and as one way to acquire co- and godparents, but were equally critical of its relationship to salvation. Therefore, I was left wondering what was behind the Evangelicals' generally negative tone towards Catholic baptism. It seemed that the Evangelicals did not condemn the Catholic practice as such – it could be made use of by the Evangelicals too if the situation required. What did emerge after closer examination, however, as a definitive difference between the Catholics and the Evangelicals on this issue was related to the significance of Catholic baptism for becoming a true Christian, and what is more, a socially and morally true Yine person. Whereas according to the Catholics a person needed not to be baptised in order to be a legitimate Christian Yine person, according to the Evangelicals, this condition was achieved only through Evangelical adult baptism and more generally through active engagement in Evangelical Christian praxis.²⁶

²⁵ She thought that she had been deluded by the missionary teachers into leading her children to damnation for reasons I shall discuss in the following chapter (TKU/N/05/3:4).

²⁶ The ambiguity of the Yine people towards the theological meanings of baptism is not exceptional. In fact, the question of the legitimacy of child baptism is one of the oldest controversies in Christianity. It is not entirely clear whether infant baptism was practised in the early church. The New Testament does not mention child baptism explicitly although the Apostle Paul's view according to which baptism was the spiritual counterpart of Judaic circumcision can be seen to point towards baptism having been performed also to small children. In addition to baptism's relation to Yine understandings of proper personhood, the Yine views on baptism would seem to echo all of the three main approaches to baptism in the Christian tradition: considering baptism to remove the guilt of (original) sin and thus enabling a person to be saved, making a person a member of the Christian community, and as a declaration of a person's conversion. (McGrath 1996: 558–563.)

Becoming a proper Christian person through Evangelical practices

According to the Evangelicals, their baptism was very different from the Catholic one. A person was expected to leave everything behind²⁷ in the water, emerge as a new person and thus be able 'go ahead' morally. The old habits of drinking, smoking, fighting and having illegitimate sexual relations were to be forgotten and a new life begun. (TKU/A/01/27:5; TKU/A/04/55:8; see Andrelo 1999.) One Evangelical woman expressed this by saying:

God himself sees what the person has done in this world. . . . What he has done and he himself has to repent, that what happens in his body. And when he repents he has to present himself to God. He confesses his sins and so he no longer wishes to be like he was before. 'I'll have to be with God', [he says]. And he presents himself and he confesses his sins and then he is baptised so that he will no longer return to what he did in his youth. (TKU/A/05/51c:2.)

In Evangelical baptism as the woman explains, a person is presented to God but not by the parents of the child but by the person themself. When the person repents and confesses his sins to God, he is ready to be baptised. The baptism marks the turn after which the person no longer desires to go back to the former but wishes to go ahead with God. (TKU/A/01/27:5; TKU/N/01/1:3, 7.) It is not therefore the act of baptism which brings about the change. Baptism is more a declaration of this change having taken place and of the person's willingness to continue living as an Evangelical. Even though it is not the act that transforms a person, baptism in a way seals the decision and frees the person from their former baggage. Evangelical baptism seemed thus to be understood both as a declaration of the transformation and as a cleansing of the body of all residual sin left in the person.²⁸ For the Evangelicals, baptism was thus a sign of a person's willingness and ability to 'go ahead' and was considered vital for a person's moral progress. However, the change had to be constantly renewed and lived out by leading a Christian life. By living as an Evangelical, a person could leave all evils and temptations of this world behind and thus become a better, and legitimate, Yine person.²⁹

²⁷ This rhetoric is used by many Protestants all over the world and in Amazonia (e.g. Droogers 2001: 45–46; Wright 1998: 263).

²⁸ The Evangelical baptism in Diamante was conceptualised very differently from the spirit baptism practised by the Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians (see Anderson 2004: 187–205). I never heard the Yine speak about the Holy Spirit in relation to baptism. Nevertheless, the Evangelical Yine views on the meaning of the baptismal water did also vary. Some people considered it to be a symbolic element while others saw it more concretely as an element washing away sin.

²⁹ In 2000, one man explained to me how he prayed for God to send a pastor to Diamante so that he could teach them and they could all progress, to go ahead. For the same purpose he also prayed for God to give him more wisdom. (TKU/A/01/27:9–10.)

The extract from the woman's account above indicates also that moral progress was understood as something taking place essentially in the body of a person. A proper relationship to God took place through proper actions of and in the body. Just as illegitimate sexual relations caused boils on a person's skin, as noted above, alcohol drinking, smoking and violence were also all understood to contaminate the body. Therefore, these habits had to be left behind in order for the person to go ahead. A mere desire for change was not considered to be enough; the person had to leave the old body behind and acquire a new one through baptism and thereby acquire control of the body. Of one woman it was said that

She was baptised here in the Evangelical church and she was asked if she wanted to be baptised and she said yes. And after they had baptised her and she returned home from the baptism the following day she was already drinking her spirits, her drinks. One is not supposed to drink afterwards because that's what happened to you before, you were with Satan. Everything you did you were. When you are baptised, you should no longer return to what you were before. (TKU/A/05/51c:2.)

The woman had been baptised but immediately the following day returned to her old habits of drinking alcohol. In the narrator's view, she had not succeeded in leaving Satan out of her body and therefore all the things she had done remained with her and she continued to live in the same way as before.³⁰ (TKU/A/01/27:5.) The meanings attached to alcohol and its excessive use became part of her bodily existence, distancing her body all the further from what the Evangelicals considered a proper person to be. Mere words reaffirming a will to follow God were therefore not considered enough for a person to become and to live as an Evangelical. The ability to leave old habits behind was the only proof of a person's real desire to follow God.³¹ But in order to do this a person needed to be constantly engaged with evangelical actions.

Part of going ahead for the Evangelicals was therefore to regularly attend church meetings so that they could listen to the Word of God and be among other, similar, people. Like proximity in general, being close to other similar people was thought necessary for reaffirming the shared corporeal point of view of the Evangelicals. Alone, people could easily drift away from what the Evangelicals considered to be proper action and proper bodily conduct and therefore it was essential that people participated in the Evangelical meetings. Although I am sure that the church meetings were important for the Evangelicals for a variety of reasons, I think it was in particular the cultural logic of making others similar discussed in earlier chapters that was echoed also in the Evangelical church activities and that

³⁰ Correspondingly, Andrelo (1999: 300) shows how among the Seventh Day Adventist Tau-repáng of Brazil a person who after baptism returns to the old habits of for instance eating prohibited foods is thought to become sick and eventually die.

³¹ Just as in the case of the grey brocket deer it was a person's actions that were considered to reveal their true moral (and thus human) condition (see Chapter 2).

brought people together for the weekly services.³²

At the weekly meetings, people had the opportunity not only to relate to other similar people but also to God. As discussed above, the Word of God was considered something that had a profound effect on the lives of the Yine. The proximity of the Word of God had the effect of exorcising evil and non-human beings (devils), and consequently made moral progress easier to achieve. At the Evangelical meetings, the Word of God came close to people in many ways: through prayer, testimonies, singing and preaching. Praying was an elementary part of Evangelical praxis. As such there was nothing peculiar in Yine prayer. The Evangelicals read intercessions, asked God for help in various things and thanked God for the things that they had, like Christians in other parts of the world. However, considering praying in relation to Yine forms of communicating with different beings in their socio-moral world, interesting – although suggestive – viewpoints emerge. As has been noted in several places above, in the Yine social cosmos thinking was a central way of attracting the attention of another being. For instance, in various Yine mythic narratives, upon hearing or seeing an animal the protagonist wishes that the animal were human so that they could get married. Upon hearing the wish the animal decides to act on it. Similarly, the souls of the deceased were regarded as prone to appear before people if these were grieving over and thus thinking about them. Also the grey brocket deer approached a person more easily if they were thinking about some other person. Praying to God seemed to have the same basic tone as these instances: a wish (or thanks) was presented to God, who was thought to act on the wish if choosing to do so. If ‘devils’ were able to do so, even more capable of listening and acting on people’s wishes was God. This kind of interpretation, even if allusive, would seem to shed light also on why the Evangelicals were so critical towards the Catholic manner of praying. In the Catholic praxis, prayers such as Our Father and Hail Mary were learned by heart and recited (especially the latter) over and over again during a service. According to the Evangelicals, this was wrong because prayers were about a real living relationship between two socio-moral actors and should therefore be personal and living addresses. Only by asking God directly what one needed, the Evangelicals said, could God act on these requests.

In a similar manner, testimonies at the Evangelical meetings could be seen to resonate with Yine socio-cultural logic. Testimonies had become a regular part of the Evangelical meetings after the Yine pastor arrived in Diamante in 2000. A person wishing to give a testimony would come to the front of the church space and either sing a song, read a Bible verse or give a personal account of a dream or some event that had taken place and which they had interpreted as somehow relating to God or the person’s Christian condition. Among these testimonies, what most seemed to interest and speak to people were personal accounts, such as the one given by the elderly woman concerning her dream, which was discussed in the Preface. These

³² The Yine Evangelicals did not go through any sudden religious experiences such as possession, for instance (cf. Strathern 1996: 179–180), but their Christian bodies were built gradually, in a long process, like bodies that were recovering after illness or ‘madness’.

kinds of accounts were akin to Yine 'ancient people's stories' in a sense that they were based on the authority of personal witness. 'Ancient people's stories' were a source for Yine knowledge about the world and about different beings' relations in that world. People were able to gain knowledge about the aims of the souls of dead kin, about the subterranean world, the metamorphosis of the grey brocket deer and the fate of someone battling with the hand-whistler because someone in the past had experienced these things and had told others about them: 'We know because the person told everyone', people said (e.g. TKU/A/05/38a:4). A testimony at the church was a place where the authority of the first-hand experience was put in the service of the Christian God as a message of protection and power over Satan. Empowered by the performing situation and the authority of the Word of God thus attached to them, these testimonies also gave the other church-goers reassurance of the power of God and further support for their attempt to lead a Christian life.

A further form of embodying the Word of God at the Evangelical meetings was singing. People sang both in Yine and in Spanish. The songs in Yine were all from a Yine hymn book called *Goyakalu Gimalwutikaluru*. Most people had at least at some point had their own hymn book but in most cases these had already perished owing to the extreme humidity of the rainforest. However, they knew the songs easily by heart and even those who had the booklet with them at the church did not usually sing from it.³³ Almost as often hymns at the meetings were sung in Spanish, the words having also been memorised. Attending the Evangelical meetings rather regularly, I observed that one of these songs, introduced only in 2005, was sung increasingly often at the meetings. It was a song called *Cristo no está muerto* (Christ is not dead), and it was always sung standing up because it included some movements as well: praising Christ with hands (clapping), feet (thumping) and with the whole body (turning about). Some people looked slightly embarrassed when doing the movements but everybody still seemed to enjoy doing them. After hearing the song and participating in singing it time after time, I started to wonder why it was that this particular song had become so popular that it was sung almost at every meeting? Two obvious reasons were the charm of novelty the song carried, and the pastor's attempt to make people familiar with the new song. But there were, I suggest, two other motives for the popularity of the song. First, I think the singing and the movements remotely reminded especially the elderly people of the dances related to the initiation celebrations of the past (on similar observations among the Kaingang see Veiga 2004: 189). The old people in Diamante often thought with nostalgia about these parties where people could dance, drink manioc beer and enjoy the conviviality.³⁴ Since nowadays dancing was restricted to schoolchildren's performances

³³ This contrasts with Gow's (2001: 239) experience among the Yine of Urubamba of people finding the act of reading an important aspect in singing. One reason for this difference could be the twenty-year gap between the observations made by Gow and myself.

³⁴ I think the same applied not only to the dance movements but also to the singing itself. As women's songs were no longer heard in the village, singing at church meetings came close to this practice (see Miller 1979: 123ff).

and to disco-type dancing during communal fiestas, the elderly people no longer had the chance to enjoy dance as they had in their youth. Second, I think this particular song, where the whole body was harnessed to praising God, spoke to people in that it was a concrete way of making one's body Evangelical through physical action.

The theme of making persons and bodies Evangelical reappeared also in many of the Bible verses read and taught at the Evangelical meetings.³⁵ The verses were chosen by the Evangelical pastor or one of the three brothers sometimes leading the meetings. Whereas in 2000, prior to the pastor arriving in Diamante, the verses chosen dealt mostly with the Creation, the victory over Satan, the relationship between men and women, human social relations in general, and the evanescence of outward wealth (TKU/N/01/2:1), after his arrival the focus seemed to have changed to the themes of the Apocalypse and salvation. The verses were mostly, although not exclusively chosen from the New Testament.³⁶ Gospels (especially Matthew and Luke), Acts, and letters, most important among which seemed to be that to the Romans – the general statement of the apostle Paul's dogma.³⁷ The general message the pastor seemed to try to convey to his congregation at the meetings was summed up in the few verses from Romans 13 he thoroughly examined at one meeting in 2005:

And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.³⁸ (Romans 13:11–14 [New International Version].)

There are four important points in these verses, which spoke to the Evangelicals, which they seemed to be concerned with in their daily lives, and which separately also appeared in many other Bible verses studied at the meetings. First, as discussed above, the Word of God was little by little coming nearer. This was experienced for instance in the way malevolent non-human beings were viewed as having moved further and further away from the human sphere. Therefore, people needed to prepare themselves for the end times. Second, God's presence or proximity worked as armour against the evils of the world. For the Yine, this became concrete for instance when

³⁵ Unlike among some Amazonian groups (e.g. Andreello 1999: 288) the Bible itself as an object did not have a sacred nature among the Yine. Although it was important that everyone had a Bible, possessing one was not considered sufficient: people needed to read it regularly.

³⁶ The Old Testament has not been translated into the Yine language.

³⁷ Recent research has questioned the view of Romans as the statement of Paul's general theology (Burnett 2001: 93). Nevertheless, Romans does address several fundamental questions of Christian faith, including salvation.

³⁸ Or flesh.



Figure 22. *The Evangelical church in Diamante as it was in the year 2000. A visiting pastor is accompanying the singing with a guitar*

they went to the forest or to the plantations alone and thought about God in order to keep the beings dwelling in the forest away. Third, a real Christian should not act in an improper or immoral way but ‘behave decently’: not drink alcohol, have loose sexual relations, fight or be jealous of others. These were exactly the things the Evangelicals considered the Catholics did. Last – and perhaps most intriguingly – a person should not contaminate their body with immoral deeds but should ‘clothe oneself with the Lord Jesus Christ’. Unfortunately, when listening to this sermon I did not yet understand the significance corporeality had for the formation of personhoods among the Yine, and consequently, I did not try to find out more about people’s interpretations of the passage above.³⁹ It seems plausible, however, that ‘clothing oneself with Jesus’ was for the Yine something other than just a metaphorical expression of becoming a Christian.⁴⁰ As seen in Chapter 2, putting on different clothing equalled a change in a person’s corporeal dispositions and point of view. In the mythic time putting on for instance bird costume made the person turn into a bird in a sense of giving him the ability to fly, to see like a hawk and to eat like one. In a similar manner, I suggest, clothing oneself with Jesus was understood as a rather concrete

³⁹ On manipulating bodies in order to make them Christian see Barker 2003; Eves 1996; van Gent 2005.

⁴⁰ In the Yine New Testament, *Gerotu Tokanchi Gipiratkaluru* (2002), the beginning of Romans 13: 14 reads: *Seyni Gitsrukaachi Geso Kristo gwanu*. This means: ‘But stay in / take up Lord Jesus Christ.’ The aspect of putting on clothing is not apparent in this version. However, in the first Bible edition of the Yine New Testament (1960), which was used in Diamante until September 2003, the passage reads: *Seyni Gitsrukaachi Geso Kristo wutakinwa*, which means ‘But let us clothe ourselves with Lord Jesus Christ.’

act among the Yine: a person's corporeal dispositions would change into those of Evangelicals and in a longer process, by engaging in Evangelical life without drinking, loose sexual relations and fighting, and by attending the Evangelical meetings, a person's corporeal point of view would become that of a proper Christian, an Evangelical. There was, however, one problem: the 'clothing' – as seen in the case of the metamorphosing brocket deer – could be deceptive. This was the point the Catholics seemed to emphasise when assessing the proper nature of the Yine Evangelicals. I shall discuss this deceptiveness in the following chapter along with some further evidence for my interpretation of the Yine views of the intertwinement of corporeality and Christianity.

Considering the importance the Evangelicals laid on assisting the weekly meetings and so keeping the body Christian, it was no wonder that this was also an additional point where the Evangelicals criticised the Catholics. The Evangelicals said that it was not good for the Catholics not to hear the Word of God because in that way, they would keep on sinning. One Evangelical man said that the Catholics

should approach the Catholic Church, that's what we always tell them to do. If they wish to come where we are, welcome. . . . If they want to go to the Catholic church, they should participate in services there. Every time the teacher rings the bell they can [attend the Catholic meetings], no one can [stop them]. And if they want to come here they can come. (TKU/A/04/55:8; TKU/N/01/1:10.)

Even though the Evangelicals in this manner urged the Catholics to participate in Christian activities – it was after all better that they listened to the Word of God at the Catholic church than not at all – for the Catholics, attending Catholic rosaries and masses was not something they considered necessary in order to go ahead in life. As discussed above, for them going ahead was rather connected with education and schooling and especially with becoming civilised. For the Evangelicals, in contrast, listening to the Word of God was essential for being able to go ahead in life. It was also the only manner in which a person could achieve the final goal in life: going to heaven and being saved.

Heaven and hell – seeking life without suffering

For many people in Diamante, the ultimate goal or inevitable closure of trying to go ahead was getting to heaven after the second coming of Jesus Christ. It was for that goal, the end of the need to go ahead, that especially the Evangelicals aimed in their everyday lives, acting out their 'everyday millenarianism' (Robbins 2001b). For the Catholics, the eventual end of the world was equally evident but the expectation of that moment was less important in their everyday lives. They seemed to be more concerned with living well in this life. For both, however, heaven was a place where they would finally go after death and meet God at the last judgement. If their

name then appeared in the Book of Life they would stay in heaven, where abundance and tranquillity prevailed. If a person's name did not appear in the book they would be sent to hell.⁴¹ (TKU/A/01/27:3.)

Whether a person would end up in heaven or in hell was of common interest to people in Diamante. Therefore, especially the few days following a person's death were a time for interpreting auguries and signs revealing the faith of the person: whether during their lifetime they had progressed morally and would be eligible to go to heaven.⁴² The most commonly consulted augury in this respect was thunder. People agreed that there were two kinds of thunder. Sometimes, they said, thunder simply brings rain. This is when the claps of thunder are strong and the thunder seems to be right above. In contrast, when thunder is heard far away and the claps are weak and somewhat sad, it is a sign of someone having died and their soul being carried away. How this latter kind of thunder was to be interpreted was, however, a matter of opinion.

According to one interpretation, if it was thundering right after the occurrence of death it meant that the person had been a believer and was being carried to heaven while the heavenly beings, angels, played their horns in delight at another believer arriving in heaven. Delayed thunder, on the other hand, meant that the soul of the person was being returned to earth after being turned back from heaven. The person's name had not been written in the Book of Life and the heavenly beings were playing in their sadness for losing this soul. Other people maintained that it was not important whether the thunder came right away or after a delay. Any such thunder was a sign either of believers being taken to heaven or sinners being brought back to the earth. In both interpretations it was angels, *Goyakalu towerune* (God's messengers), that made the sound of thunder, either by playing their horns or crying for the lost soul.⁴³ (TKU/A/04/54:10.)

There were also another sign from which people could tell if a person recently deceased was destined to go to heaven or to hell. A few elderly women told me that when a flock of bees is heard to pass by it means that a person is on their way to heaven.⁴⁴ The soul of a believer is said to walk on a narrow path leading to heaven and on the way passes by a tree (Yine: *gapigru*; Spanish: *achiote*) full of bees that have gathered to suck the nectar.

⁴¹ Some people were of the view that believers would go straight to heaven and sinners to hell. Others thought that believers would go straight to heaven but sinners would be left to walk around on earth. Still others held that all people were left to walk on earth until the end of the world and some added that in this case the believers would not come to harass people as the non-believers would.

⁴² There were also auguries – such as the appearance of certain birds in the vicinity of the house – that were thought to announce the time of a person's death, in particular when they had been ill for a long time and death was to be expected.

⁴³ Death and resurrection were also conceptualised as metamorphosis. One Evangelical man explained that in death, a person's body stays on earth but during the Second Coming of the Lord, the soul puts on again its old clothing, the body (*cuero ya levanta ya alli te pones*). (TKU/A/04/54:10.)

⁴⁴ A daughter of one of these women had heard her mother talking about this but was not herself quite sure how to interpret this augury. The sound of bees as a sign seemed thus to be known mostly by elderly people.

Because of the narrowness of the path, however, the soul touches the tree, causing the bees to fly in a large flock and make a loud noise. From hearing this sound, people know that someone is walking to heaven on the narrow path. Sinners, on the contrary, do not cause the bees to fly. They are walking on a wide path leading to hell and thus do not poke the trees by their sides.⁴⁵ (TKU/A/05/38c:5; see TKU/A/05/51c:3.)

There is an interesting parallel to this idea among another Arawakan group, the Baniwa of northern Brazil. In Hohodene thought, *kuwainyãi* are bees or bee-spirits that produce honey and the nectar of numerous fruits. These in turn are considered vital in bringing the souls of the victims of witchcraft back to life. This resuscitation takes place through a journey from the edge of the world to its centre. During this journey, the soul stops several times to receive the fruit nectar of the *kuwainyãi*. Robin M. Wright (1998: 183) writes that 'the *kuwainyãi* would thus seem to represent this notion of reversible death through proper relations between individuals and the spirit world' (see also Hill 1992).⁴⁶ Even though not necessarily in any way related, the role of bees in these two cases appears to be relatively similar. In the Yine case, the bees also mark access to a new life, resuscitation. The soul of a person who passes by the tree in which bees are sucking nectar and makes the bees fly is on their way to a new life in heaven. However, it is not the nectar of the bees but the faith of the person that makes them alive again. As in the Baniwa case, the Yine journey to new life can be interpreted as a result of proper relations between people and non-humans. In the eyes of God, the person has succeeded in maintaining their faith and is thus eligible for heaven. But in order to be a believer, a person has had to act correctly not only towards God but also towards other people. They cannot have been violent, deceived people, had illegitimate sex, or conducted any other sins or vices: otherwise, they would have been condemned to hell.

Hell was an ambiguous concept for the Yine in Diamante. There were several different views on its location. As discussed in Chapter 3, the Yine did not locate hell below the earth's surface, which was reserved for the *Mtengatwenu*, the world of the Shallow River. Rather, some people said that hell was in the sky just as heaven was. For others it was a gorge, a biblical furnace, here on earth where sinners burned in flames but which could be seen and entered only by the deceased. Still others said that hell was this same Earth where they were living now but that it was experienced only by the deceased, i.e. from the perspective of the souls of the dead, and it would disappear at the end of the world. (TKU/A/01/27:3; TKU/A/01/33:8; TKU/N/04/3:22.) Yet other people combined elements from these approaches in their views of hell. There was, however, something these differing views had in common. In all cases, hell was seen as a place of torment where suffering was caused not so much by burning flames or nothingness, but

⁴⁵ This was also one case pointing towards the souls of the dead having physical bodies, as discussed in Chapter 1.

⁴⁶ Also among the Brazilian Taurepáng wasps are found on the path leading to afterlife but contrary to the Yine and Baniwa cases, they sting the soul and block its way forward (Andrello 1999: 293–294).

by separation from one's kin (cf. Wiik 2004a: 292). Being alone apart from other people was the opposite of the ideal of living well. Living well was something achievable only by being among one's kin and was something people strove for in their everyday lives. Hell was then a condition known to people from the desperate attempts of the helpless souls of the deceased to re-establish their relations with their living kin (see Gow 2000).

Contrarily, for the Yine heaven, as discussed in Chapter 3, was a place of abundance and tranquillity. Nevertheless, even though heaven was considered a place where suffering ended – people did not have to work, food abounded and everything was resplendent and beautiful – one point still seemed to preoccupy people, Evangelicals and Catholics alike. This was a similar concern that people had in relation to hell: When at death they were separated from their families and kin, would they be seeing them again in heaven? And if there was no need to work or to search for and prepare food, would there be family life? And furthermore, if people in heaven were all young adults or genderless people as they said the Bible described them to be, would there even be families? (TKU/A/01/27:4.) Because if there was not they would certainly suffer. When I asked one Evangelical woman what she considered a good death, she responded that she would want to die with her children so that they could all go to heaven together. She did not wish to suffer.

One should not do these things [in order to be with God]. One should not be envious, one should not be a thief, one should not commit adultery. None of these things I want to have in my body. I want to die with clean hands. That's what I'm thinking. But my children . . . I also think that I would like to die together with my children, so that they could go to Heaven with me. I don't want to leave my children. . . . I don't want to suffer, to be [alone] in the place God offers us. That's what I think. (TKU/A/05/51a:3; see Gow 2001: 226.)

The view emphasised in Western Christian traditions according to which ultimate happiness in heaven derives from a person finally being brought to communion with God did not correspond to the Yine image of a place of everlasting joy.⁴⁷ For them, it was hard to imagine that a place where family and kin ties, relatedness, would no longer exist could be this much-praised 'heaven'. This caused ambiguity among the Yine as they could find no affirmation of the continuity of family life in heaven from the Bible (cf.

⁴⁷ Recent theological research has problematised the individuality of salvation in Christianity. Based on his study of Paul's letter to the Romans, Burnett (2001: 147) argues that it was Paul's conviction that 'it is those who are counted part of the righteous community by virtue of their faith response to God, who will experience eschatological life and salvation'. Although the relational side of Christian salvation has often been downplayed and Christianity has been viewed as an individualist religion, I think Burnett's view parallels the Yine understandings. A person could be made and their body maintained as Christian only through corporeal interaction with like people but it was, in the end, personal sins that defined one's fate. It seemed to me that the Yine were not so much concerned with the individuality of the actual salvation but rather perturbed by the lack of relationality in heaven.

Gow 2001: 226–227).⁴⁸

Similar sociological concerns about the afterlife in heaven have been found among other Amazonian peoples. While in some of these cases, as in that of the Yine, the question of relatedness is conceived as a problem, in other cases heaven is seen as bringing a solution to such problems experienced on earth. In the former category are for instance the Brazilian Wari'. Aparecida Vilaça (1997; 2002b) shows how among the Wari' eschatological ambiguities were related in the first place to relatedness. In the Wari' case, however, it was not a question of heaven but of a celestial hell where God resided. Ambiguity was caused by the fact that while in the Wari' afterlife people became consanguines, in the Christian afterlife relations were affinal, or what was even worse, affinity too was negated. In the latter category we can find for instance the similarly Brazilian Xikrin and Taurepang peoples. Clarice Cohn (2001) shows how among the Xikrin, a Kayapó sub-group, Christian heaven was a welcomed image because it solved the problem of separation of kin at death. While before, people tried to separate the dead from the living but were unable to fully do so, a situation which resulted in the continuous threat from the souls of the deceased, the idea of Christian life in heaven solved this dilemma. It did not solve it by making the dead *less dead* but by finally separating the dead from the living by making the dead *more alive* and thus capable of autonomous decisions to cut their connections with the living. Furthermore, Geraldo Andreello (1999) shows how for the Brazilian Taurepáng the celestial paradise is characterised by the presence of Jesus, who restores proper social conduct in contradistinction to the cultural hero *Makunaima*, who was asocial and left people to suffer on the violent earth. In the celestial paradise the Seventh Day Adventist Taurepáng could lead a peaceful and tranquil social life without suffering. What these examples together with the Yine case thus suggest is that the views on God (or Jesus) and heaven of these peoples are based on a certain kind of soteriology of relatedness. Regardless of whether heaven is welcomed as a paradise or viewed ambiguously, it receives its meaning in one way or another in connection with the question of relatedness. Such soteriologies of relatedness seem then to be characteristic of many Amazonian societies.

In spite of the dilemma of relatedness, in Diamante to be chosen for salvation remained the objective of the Yine Evangelicals' daily practices. They intended to have a close personal relationship with God in their lives here on earth because it both gave protection against non-humans and helped them to go ahead in the moral sphere.⁴⁹ Given this background, it

⁴⁸ Passes (1998: 225) notes that among the Pa'ikwené, people expressed their concern over the fact that not all kinspeople would be reunited in heaven. Although the believers would see each other again, the sinners and people who had never heard about God before passing away would not be eligible for heaven.

⁴⁹ The Holy Spirit did not seem to have much importance for the Yine as a separate entity. I heard people mentioning it only a few times. This is out of step with the practices and ideas of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians, for whom the Holy Spirit is fundamental to a person's ability to live as a Christian. This also supports my decision to write about the Yine *evangélicos* as Evangelicals instead of as Charismatic Christians (see Introduction).

was striking how little of a specific nature the Yine had to say about God himself. Whereas most other non-human beings were described quite vividly and in detail, God was left almost totally without descriptions of his personal characteristics.⁵⁰ God was depicted as male but was not described in more detail. The only context in which God was somehow portrayed was when he was seen as the defender of the underprivileged. Some Evangelicals described God as sending earthquakes to rich countries because he was said to pity poor people, such as the Yine. In these descriptions God was seen as a stiff figure that could not just turn his head but in order to look in some particular direction had to turn his whole body. When he did this, people explained, the earth trembled in that direction.⁵¹ (TKU/A/05/42b:2.) It remained unclear to me what lay behind this depiction of God as a rigid and almost motionless figure. It was, however, in stark contrast with the other non-human beings in the Yine world – beings that metamorphosed and moved around in the wind, beings that were rather examples of the endless transformability and flexibility of the cosmos. Perhaps it was exactly this radical contrast between God and other non-humans that served to highlight the meaning of God for the Yine. God was far superior to the devils of this world and did not need to move around but could see everything with one glance. But this also meant that God was not actively battling against every single malevolent non-human the Yine encountered. Therefore, in their daily lives, it was people themselves who needed to ‘summon’ God by thinking about him and by praying because the threat of non-humans had not completely ceased to exist.

It looked then as if the Yine viewed the two abrupt changes inherent in their understandings of Christianity in very different ways. Whereas the change from the ‘time of the Old Testament’ to the ‘time of the New Testament’ in the 1950s was seen as a positive development both by the Evangelicals and the Catholics, both groups were very uncertain about the change to come: the change that would be brought by the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. This difference, I suggest, derived from the degree of concord between Christian ideals and Yine morality in each case. When the missionaries first came to assemble the Yine into one community in the Madre de Dios in the 1950s, I do not think the Christian message they delivered deviated much from Yine socio-moral understandings. People were to respect one another, be generous and live tranquilly without causing harm to others – all aspects of social life the Yine in Diamante highly valued today and that had according to the elderly people’s accounts been valued already in their youth before the arrival of the missionaries.⁵² The Yine did not need to make great adjustments to their socio-moral values. On the

⁵⁰ On the relation of the Christian God to the multiple celestial gods in the Yine cosmos see Gow 2001: 248.

⁵¹ Ramírez de Jara and Pinzón Castaño (1992: 294) describe how among the Sibundoy the shaman visits heaven and sees God as inactive and static, enclosed in a cupboard surrounded by genuine crystal.

⁵² The Adventists’ way of prohibiting the consuming of many foods and manioc beer, which the Yine who had lived in the Urubamba had become familiar with, formed an exception.

other hand, life in heaven after the Second Coming of Jesus would require the Yine to do exactly that. If the core of relatedness, family life and kin relations, were to be removed from their lives, what would be left?⁵³

But there was also a third change linked to Christianity awaiting the Yine in the future: the coming of the Antichrist preceding the Second Coming of Jesus. During my stays in the community, this eschatological theme was all the time becoming more topical and the presence of Satan was ever more keenly felt, especially among the Evangelical Yine of Diamante. These apocalyptic expectations and the discrepancies between the Evangelicals and Catholic connected with it are my topic in the following chapter.

⁵³ This dilemma resembles that which the Yine, according to Gow's analysis, experienced in the Urubamba area. Gow (2001: 232) writes: 'As I noted above, drinking fermented manioc beer is one of the key forms of *gocha* or *mukochri*, "sin". To abandon its use implies that Piro people thought that contact with Divinity was imminent and hence ongoing social life was no longer necessary.' Gow finds further proof for this in the abandoning of the girls' initiation ritual during the period after Vargas's death.

CHAPTER 7

End of equal opportunities: the coming of the Mark of the Beast

He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name.

(Revelation 13:16–17.)

Thus far, we have seen how the Evangelicals and Catholics in Diamante disagreed on the questions of wealth accumulation and the ways of going forward in life discussed through the images of the hand-whistler and God, respectively, and how they had differing views on the place of shamanism among Yine curing practices. Yet another issue encompassed by the differences and controversies between Catholics and Evangelicals in Diamante was the value placed on everybody having equal opportunities, whether social, economic or educational. In the daily life in the community, the Yine on the one hand tried to ensure (especially in public) that everyone would be treated equally and given the same opportunities, but on the other hand aspired to preserve the best opportunities for themselves or for their families. These tensions were also expressed and discussed in the socio-cosmological field. According to the conviction of the Evangelicals, a personified *Sello de la Bestia*, the Mark of the Beast (666), would arrive in the near future in Peru and eventually also in the Yine community, killing those not willing to receive the mark on their skin and giving economic privileges such as an exclusive right to sell and buy products to the Catholics. The ‘true believers’, the Evangelicals, would therefore be left without any chance to prosper. This image was compelling to the Evangelicals because, I suggest, it afforded an opportunity to address relatively directly many of the topical contradictions prevailing in Diamante. What was less evident at first sight was, however, how in the views concerning this figure also culminated the negotiation of what it meant for the Yine people to be corporeally and socio-morally proper persons.

Religion and religions, or missionaries, schooling and Yine social dynamics

The term *religion*¹ was not often heard in Diamante. People rather spoke of *culto* (cult), *iglesia* (church) or *evangélicos* when referring to the

¹ As noted already in the Introduction, there is no equivalent for the word ‘religion’ in the Yine language.

Evangelical church and practices and of *capilla* (chapel) or *católicos* when speaking about the Catholics. Often they also referred to the Catholics by saying *donde padre*, 'where padre is'. Asking how they understood the word religion (in the singular), people without exception replied that religions (in the plural) were for instance the Catholics, Evangelicals, Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses. Religion was thus clearly not a term used to describe contents and particularities but rather to differentiate, to make a distinction between groups of people. In contrast, when speaking about their relation for instance to different non-human beings, whether a vengeancing peccary or God, they used the word belief: *es nuestra creencia*, *walixlu*, 'it is our belief'. It was thus people's belief that the soul of an infant followed its father to the woods, just as it was their belief that people should be baptised because Jesus had received baptism.² Hence, the term 'religion' was left for people to use in positioning both themselves and the form of Christianity they advocated in relation to other Christian denominations.

Ricardo Alvarez (1972; n.d.) and Peter Gow (2001; 2006) have both previously tracked the role of different religions (in the Yine sense of the word) among the Yine people living in the Urubamba area in central Peru.³ Although these two authors approach the issue from very different angles, what emerges from the comparison of their views is a picture pointing towards the interrelatedness of Christianity, missionary work and education in Yine thought. This picture, which strongly resonates with the situation I found in Diamante, may also help us to better understand the inter-religious conflict in the community.

Alvarez, both a Catholic padre and an anthropologist, sees the Yine adherence to different Christian groups to be intrinsically related to their social organisation and social dynamics. Although his approach is deeply sociological and his argument at times suffers from the lack of ethnographical evidence, his observations concerning the dynamic relationship between

² Drawing on Talal Asad's (1993) work, Joel Robbins (2007) has recently addressed the conceptual problem of believing in relation to indigenous Christianities. Robbins discusses the distinction between the two aspects of believing, namely *believing in* and *believing that*. Whereas the former usage denotes trust and commitment towards the object of belief and conviction about what one says, the latter usage is often applied to propositional statements and expresses uncertainty about the truth of the proposition. Robbins argues that much of anthropological discussion has been based on this latter kind of believing which has, however, made it difficult to appreciate people's true dedication to the things they believe in and, in the case of Christianity, has led to picturing people's religious convictions as somehow insincere. (Robbins 2007: 14–15.) In the Amazonian context the relationship between believing in and believing that would seem to present itself in a different light, however. Although in Diamante people could state that they for instance could believe in the souls of the dead appearing to the living only after seeing it themselves, they did not nullify or dismiss as untrue the fact that someone else had seen these souls. Belief was revealed to be something constitutive of Yine lived worlds, which, however, were not necessarily the same for all: they were always someone's lived worlds (Gow 2001: 26–27). It was a question of the world being viewed from different perspectives. It would seem then that in order to fully account for believing in Amazonia (especially in relation to Amazonian Christianities) and to take it seriously it is not sufficient to consider people as *believing in* something, as Robbins suggests, but to consider the implications of both alternatives.

³ Also Esther Matteson (1954a) and Sebastián et al. (1998) make some observations concerning different religions in the Urubamba area.

solidarity and opposition in the Yine world do resonate with the social reality in Diamante. According to Alvarez (1972: 334, 374, 379; n.d.), Yine social organisation was still at the time he was writing at the beginning of the 1970s based on a division of people into different totemic 'tribes' (Fr. *tribu*) or subgroups,⁴ which were further divided into matrilineal clans.⁵ These differed from each other in the same manner as the animals and plants they were named after differed from one another. Alvarez (1972: 351) argues that the social relations between these groups were based on a tension between two principles, solidarity and opposition. As he maintained, the subgroups were opposed to one another even to the extent that their members lived in different villages and engaged in transactions rather with members of other ethnic groups than with those of other Yine subgroups. On the other hand, when faced with a common enemy the subgroups became allies.⁶ Solidarity and opposition as fundamental social principles should not therefore, according to Alvarez (1972: 353), be understood as contradictory but rather as complementary.

According to Alvarez (1972: 355), after the recession of the *hacienda* period between the years 1947 and 1970, Yine society in the Urubamba area became reorganised in compliance with the subgroup and clan system. Each subgroup inhabited a distinct territory and was constantly in search of situations where the motif of opposition could be used for political purposes. For instance, the *Manchineru* living in the community of Miaría and the *Koschichineru* in Sepahua were in Alvarez's words 'in permanent war' with each other. However, there were also occasions, such as festivities, when these differences were downplayed and the similarity between the groups emphasised. (Alvarez 1972: 360).

In addition to inhabiting separate territories, Alvarez (1972: 357) argues, the Yine attempted to demarcate the boundary between different subgroups by means of linguistics and, more importantly for the present

⁴ According to Alvarez (1972: 334), there were twelve existing subgroups: *Manchineru*, *Koschichineru*, *Nachineru*, *Gagamluneru*, *Sochichineru*, *Poleroneru*, *Getuneru*, *Gimneneru*, *Kuirikui*, *Kushupati*, *Mayleneru* and *Giyakleshimane* (cf. Chapter 3 note 16). The inclusion of the last one, *Giyakleshimane*, in the list raises interest. According to a Yine myth, the *Giyakleshimane*, Miraculous Fish people, were a group of people who after an unsuccessful attempt to ascend to heaven with other Yine people fell into a lake. According to Gow (2001: 98, 246; see also Alvarez 1972: 346–348), in today's world they form a parallel humanity to the Yine and keep interacting with them. In Diamante, the people I talked with did not profess knowing anything about the *Giyakleshimane*, but they were also of the view that there were Yine people living in the forest. These were the people who had escaped smallpox epidemics in the forest and had continued living there up to today. (TKU/N/05/3:17.)

⁵ According to Alvarez (1972), there are altogether fifteen to forty existing Yine clans. These include for instance *Nachi*, *Kawo*, *Yoto*, *Manshako*, *Shipa*, *Kinini*, *Pagio*, *Skete*, *Shopi*, *Totiste*, *Prejua* and *Sholene*.

⁶ Alvarez (1972: 359–360) describes how the Yine and Asháninka people united against the Amahuaca, the greatest enemy of the Yine, but after these had been defeated, the Yine and Asháninka continued to battle against each other.

discussion, of Christian adherences.⁷ He writes:

The battle to live beside the Mission established in Sepahua was, according to the indigenous ideology, a battle to obtain prestige assumed by living beside an institution. The Mission represents an object to possess. As we have said above, it is an object of the same nature as the Cerro de la Sal and forges. . . . In the Piro ideology, the Catholic mission has come to signify an emblem of the *Koshichineru* through which they are identified in the eyes of other Indians and which differentiates them from others. . . . In 1953 the members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics intensified their action on the River Urubamba. . . . These Evangelicals formed a sector separate from the Catholic Mission of Sepahua. Logically, the *Manchineru* became associated with the SIL. . . . One Piro said to me: 'Now we are equals, we, we are Catholics and those of Miaría and Bufeó are Evangelicals'. (Alvarez 1972: 361–367. My translation.)

According to Alvarez (1972: 365–366), the *Manichineru* thus differed from the *Koshichineru* just as the Evangelicals differed from the Catholics. Consequently, a person living in a Catholic community could not be Evangelical and vice versa. Therefore villages or communities inhabited by certain Yine subgroups became Evangelical while others took up the Catholic religion. According to this same logic, Alvarez writes, the *Getuneru* subgroup appropriated the Adventist religion. Adventists, however, were considered very different from the Catholics and the Evangelicals and thus became isolated: since they could not drink fermented manioc beer or eat certain meats they could not take part in the celebrations vital for maintaining the balance between opposition and similarity in the Yine society. Also schools and teachers, Alvarez notes, were appropriated by the Yine in a similar manner to religions. The bilingual SIL-led schools and bilingual teachers were considered very different from their Catholic counterparts, each of them becoming the 'property' of a certain Yine subgroup.

In Alvarez's view, the Evangelical, Catholic and Adventist religions were means by which the Yine reinforced their social organisation and identified different subgroups. He does not make any observations concerning the dogmatic or cosmological meanings Christianity might have had for the Yine. In contrast, Peter Gow (2001; 2006) bases his approach precisely on Yine theological or rather messianic expectations. Gow seeks to understand why the Yine people in the Urubamba area during his initial visit to the area in the 1980s paid little attention to the 'coming of God' although it had, apparently, been a decisive moment in their recent history, not least because it had freed the Yine from the suppression of the *hacienda* period. He links this problematic to what he sees as the central preoccupations of Yine cosmological speculation; human mortality, the fate of the dead and the existential problem of abandonment: what happens to

⁷ Alvarez (1972: 357) argues that distinct Yine subgroups used different morphemes in speech. Even if it is probable that the two groups he takes as examples, *Manchineru* and *Kushichineru*, did use different morphemes – at least the *Manchineru* living in Brazil today differ from the Yine in Diamante in this respect, as do the Yine from Miaría who have come to live in Diamante – I doubt that there were morphemic differences between all Yine subgroups.

those left behind when someone dies? (Gow 2001: 226.)

Gow (2001: 222) suggests that in the years right after the *hacienda* period in the late 1930s and early 1940s when people were deprived of communal life and of the social organisation maintained by bosses like Pancho Vargas, their life was chaotic and in need of reorganisation. Therefore, as also suggested by Alvarez, they sought to transform their social world and to begin to live a 'new life'. However, whereas in Alvarez's interpretation this reorganisation had purely socio-political objectives, according to Gow it was closely connected to cosmological concerns: it aimed to overcome mortality. According to Gow's analysis, the Yine people saw three options for achieving this goal. First, through correct techniques, mortality could be postponed so that people would live long enough to exhaust their social productivity and so become 'far too old' and ready to die. Second – because shamans were considered capable of communicating with other worlds – by individual projects of shaman becoming persons could identify themselves with powerful beings and consequently avoid death. Last, by a collective shamanisation – living without sin and seeking identification with God – people could escape mortality through a radical transformation of the human condition. (Gow 2001: 226–227; see Santos Granero 1994.) According to Gow, it was this last option that caused people to 'take on the radical [Adventist] messianism of their Campa [Asháninka] neighbours, and to believe that the arrival of Divinity on earth was imminent. . . . The Adventists, preaching about "the coming of God", had brought Piro people the necessary technical knowledge for entry into the sky, and hence for becoming divinities themselves.'⁸ (Gow 2001: 233.) This radical messianic expectation also rendered unnecessary the reproduction of sociality by means of consuming fermented manioc beer and celebrating rituals, a situation which corresponded to the Adventist dietary restrictions and preaching.

In spite of this compatibility, Gow notes, Adventism was not unproblematic for the Yine. It was institutionally tied to the Asháninka people – who for the Yine people stood for historical backwardness – and to their differing cosmological understandings (Gow 2001: 231, 235–236). Therefore, the arrival of the SIL missionaries in the Urubamba offered the Yine a better alternative: the SIL missionaries did not prohibit fermented manioc beer and thus proper social life and possessed greater wealth than the Adventists. They also wished to learn the Yine language and to teach the Yine people to read and write. This made the SIL project fundamentally a Yine project in the Yine eyes. (Gow 2001: 231–240.)

According to Gow, the SIL project posed, however, another problem for the Yine. Why would the SIL people wish to establish schools, teach people different skills and thus encourage social life to continue, if the message they simultaneously preached would render all these things

⁸ The phenomenon that Protestant and Charismatic forms of Christianity attract indigenous people at the time of existential crisis has been observed also for instance by Miller (1979: 115ff) among the Argentinian Toba people. It is not, however, something related solely to indigenous worlds but common to many social and geographical contexts (e.g. Chesnut 1997; Cox 1995; Corten & Marshall-Fratani 2001; see articles in van der Veer 1996).

unnecessary? The Yine therefore had to choose between two antithetical solutions to the problem of living well: the educational dimension of the SIL project, which would concentrate on the continuation of social life on earth, and its specifically religious aspect, which could enable a collective shamanisation and subsequent identification with divinities. According to Gow's analysis, the Yine people chose the first option and de-emphasised the specifically religious aspects of the SIL activities. Therefore, Gow argues, in the 1980s during his stays in the Urubamba area people took little interest in the religious dimension of SIL work. Even in the nominally Protestant communities such as Huau, Nueva Italia and Pucani, there were only sporadic revivals of religious enthusiasm while in general people went on living their lives regardless of the religious regulations.⁹ (Gow 2001: 240–242.)

What significance, then, do these earlier studies concentrating on the period of Yine social reorganisation after the disbandment of the *hacienda* system in the Urubamba area have for understanding Yine attitudes towards Catholicism and Evangelicalism in Diamante in the early twenty-first century? I think they provide an intriguing continuum or background for the issues the Yine in Diamante were concerned with in relation to their community life. Although there were approximately three decades in between Alvarez's and Gow's initial experiences in the Urubamba area, it is noteworthy how they both came to see the different forms of Christianity as means of identification for the Yine and the process as closely intertwined with the educational dimension.¹⁰ First, both saw different Christian denominations as connected to Yine self-recognition, although in quite distinct manners. For Alvarez, Catholicism, Evangelicalism and Adventism came to be emblems of different Yine subgroups and thus important in differentiating one from the other. In Gow's view, during the period of Yine reorganisation these denominations were in the first place associated with distinct ethnic groups, Adventism being linked with the Asháninka people and Evangelicalism with the Yine. Gow does, however, analogously to Alvarez's observations in the 1970s, note how in the 1980s some Yine villages in the Urubamba area were Catholic and others Protestant. Second, both Alvarez and Gow acknowledge that the appropriation of these 'religions' was closely linked to the meanings the Yine people gave to education. Albeit in these ways parallel, we must still remember that there was also a great difference in approach between these two authors. Whereas Alvarez's account pictures religion as almost purely instrumental for the Yine – although deeply intertwined with social organisation – Gow sees the Yine fascination for Protestant Christianity as lying in deep existential questions. Nevertheless, as seen already in previous chapters and as will be further discussed below, the link between 'religion' and education was

⁹ Gow (2001: 241n18) states, however, that the religious practice was more active in the large communities such as Miaría and Bufo Pozo in 1988.

¹⁰ It is not clear whether Gow was familiar with Alvarez's PhD thesis (1972). Gow does cite Alvarez's other works but not his thesis although he does note that Alvarez had a degree in anthropology (Gow 2001: 244n20).

central to Yine understandings of Christianity in Diamante as well.¹¹

There is, however, one major difference between the cases described for the Yine in the Urubamba and the social situation I encountered in Diamante. Both Alvarez and Gow describe how different Yine villages professed different variations of Christianity to the extent that it was very difficult – if not impossible – for instance for an Evangelical person to live in a Catholic community. Alvarez (1972: 356–357) notes, although without analysing the situation further, that when the Yine went to sell their products to Sepahua or Pucallpa they did not even talk to the Yine living there because these were of another subgroup.¹² Gow (2001: 243, 246), on the other hand, describes the difficulties an Adventist Yine man called Ulises Diaz had in finding a place to live. People did not want him living in the same community with them because he did not drink, avoided sexuality and did not take part in festivals, which was ‘tantamount to a refusal of social life’. The Yine people also described to Gow how being an Evangelical was very difficult outside the Evangelical communities. As someone said to him: ‘To be an *evangelista*, you have to live in a village of Piro *evangelista* people’ (Gow 2001: 244). In the Urubamba, the Yine people thus seemed mostly to live in communities with one active Christian denomination present. In Diamante the situation was different, however. Evangelicals and Catholics – although the line between these two groups was often vague or flexible – lived together in one community and were numerically more or less equivalent. They were therefore continuously in their daily lives faced by problems caused by this situation and were forced to cope with them. Moreover, these denominational differences were intertwined with other social divisions, which added to social tension in the community.

¹¹ What I do find slightly disturbing in both of these previous accounts is their tendency to downplay or neglect in their analysis the meanings of Christianity’s theological and cosmological sides for Yine people of the present day – that is the 1970s or 1980s. Even though I am not in a position to fully evaluate the accuracy of the researchers’ accounts concerning the socio-religious situation among the Yine of the Urubamba – I have never been to the Urubamba area and have also known the Yine people in Madre de Dios only from the year 2000 onwards – based on my observations in Diamante it still seems likely to me that Christianity was more present in the Yine daily lives in the Urubamba area in the 1970s and 1980s than Alvarez’s and Gow’s descriptions impart. I do not think that the Christian denominations were for the Yine mere means for identification and separation, as Alvarez shows. I am also confident that if there were sporadic periods of religious excitement in the Urubamba villages in the 1980s as Gow asserts, the meanings behind the enthusiasm did not cease to exist during the more latent periods, but were probably woven in other ways into the daily social life in the communities. I am quite confident that even if not overtly practising Christianity, people did go on being Christians also outside the context of religious revivals.

¹² Alvarez’s observation seems quite peremptory. If the Yine people did not really talk to each other, I think there was more to it than the fact that these people belonged to different subgroups.

Socio-religious dynamics in Diamante

As noted above in the Prologue and in the previous chapters, there were tensions and differences between the Evangelical and Catholic churches in Diamante in terms of right Christian practice. Even though the churches were 'the same', as there was only one God (see Wright 1998: 264; Kamppinen 1988), they were still very much apart. (TKU/A/05/48c:8; TKU/N/04/3:10, 13.) The Evangelicals criticised the Catholic church practices principally for three features: worship of the Virgin Mary (Mary was not alive, unlike Jesus, and therefore it was in vain to worship her or to direct prayers to her); monotonous and repetitive prayer practices (see Chapter 6); and teaching of only the acts and life of Jesus instead of the message of the Bible (TKU/N/04/3:3). The Catholics were less critical towards Evangelical church practices although they did acknowledge the differences between the two 'religions'. One Catholic man said that the greatest difference between the two churches lay in the fact that while the Catholics prayed on Sundays and in rosaries, the Evangelicals prayed in the mornings, before meals and before going on a hunting trip. Nevertheless, in his view the two forms of practice were equally legitimate and he asserted that he participated equally in worship at both churches (see Introduction). In practice, however, I never saw him at the Evangelical church.¹³

Given the fact that the Catholic adults did not usually participate in church activities, it would seem that the Evangelical criticism of Catholic worship was not directed so much towards the Catholic Yine people as the missionary primary-school teachers and the Catholic padre. The Evangelicals did, in fact, also directly criticise the padre and the missionary teachers. In Diamante, the Catholic padre from Shintuya and the Evangelical Yine pastor were somewhat at odds with each other although they still attempted to avoid open conflicts. The Evangelical pastor told me that the padre was not interested in preaching to adults because, as the padre apparently had put it, 'their hearts were of stone'. Adults could no longer be helped but the hearts of children were still soft and could therefore still be manipulated. The missionary teachers seemed to hold a similar view: they explained me that the Yine adults had already been lost and therefore their missionising interest was directed towards the children (TKU/N/05/3:22). The Evangelical pastor, however, was determined to have an impact precisely on the adults¹⁴ and encouraged them, Evangelicals

¹³ As seen in previous chapters, at the level of social conduct the Evangelicals criticised the Catholics also for alcohol misuse, (domestic) violence, engagement in witchcraft, illegitimate sexual relations and non-participation in worship. The Catholics on the other hand blamed the Evangelicals for committing just the actions they themselves condemned.

¹⁴ This was different when compared to the Amazonian cases where (Protestant) Christianity was something only young people were engaged with while adults and elderly people were doubtful towards Christianity and preferred to practise their old shamanic tradition (e.g. Belaunde 2000a; Cohn 2001).

and Catholics alike, to attend the Evangelical meetings.¹⁵ He also mentioned that he avoided getting into arguments with the padre on theological issues because the padre, he said, was *muy adelante*; he was very much ahead of the pastor when it came to religious dogma. Nevertheless, the Evangelical pastor maintained that there were no disagreements between him and the Catholic padre. From other Evangelicals I learned, however, that the pastor's attitude towards his Catholic colleague was at the very least reserved. People said that he did not wish to approach the Catholic chapel in fear of 'contamination': he thought that he would become somehow associated or physically connected with the Catholics – perhaps in a similar manner to how adolescents could become connected with men having engaged in homosexual relations – and hence, to be more vulnerable when facing the Antichrist, the Mark of the Beast, impending in the future (TKU/N/04/3:20). If the Catholic padre was thus criticised by the Evangelicals, the Catholic missionary teachers also received their share. Some persons, for instance, complained that the missionary teachers had made the daily rosary obligatory for all school children at the risk of them having to cut the grass from the school yard during the following school day's breaks. One Evangelical mother was horrified by this because she was worried that children might cut themselves with their machetes while serving such a punishment. (TKU/N/05/3:19.)

Although the Catholic teachers and the padre for their part also reaffirmed that there were no conflicts between the two churches, they still confessed that there was no co-operation between them either (TKU/N/05/3:22). Furthermore, the padre also criticised the Evangelicals, saying that in his view, the Evangelical church was turning into a messianic movement, and that the Evangelicals tempted people into joining their church by offering for instance medical services: otherwise many of the Evangelicals would not have attended the meetings. (TKU/N/01/2:14; TKU/N/04/3:4, 5.)

In sum, even though usually not openly expressing their critique to the other party, there were a lot of accusations concerning the leading figures of both churches in the air. Seldom did people direct their criticism on issues related to religious praxis towards the ordinary Yine Evangelicals or Catholics. This did not mean, however, that they would have been out of such criticism's reach. In fact, even though Peter Gow has made very similar observations concerning the disagreements between Evangelicals and Catholics among the Urubamba Yine – noting that as the differences between them depended on minor variations in practice, 'the major cause of dissension was laid at the door of the priests and Protestant preachers, not at differences in the personal beliefs of the followers' (Gow 2001: 244–245) – in Diamante the Catholic–Evangelical controversy was also deeply

¹⁵ The Evangelical pastor had assumed the role as a sort of guardian of people's morals in Diamante. He counselled people and tried to 'convert' them to Evangelicalism. He did have quite a lot of influence in the community, not only among Evangelicals but also among the Catholics (at least in matters concerning faith) and he was a very active speaker at the communal meetings. Other people viewed him as one of the leaders of the community alongside the chief, vice-chief and the *teniente gobernador*.

embedded in the social life and everyday activities of the followers, the ordinary Yine people. Since the split was not caused exclusively by church-related issues but rather intrinsically linked to social life and Yine social organisation at large, the negative connotations of both Catholicism and Evangelicalism were surely attached also to ordinary Yine adults.

The division between the two churches in Diamante was quite visibly linked to controversies between families and was therefore also spatially framed. Even though many adult brothers and sisters were members of different churches, in most cases spouses were affiliated to the same church. There were also families where all adult siblings were either Catholic or Evangelical. Thus, there was a division into nuclear families or family groups which were Catholic and those that were Evangelical, the situation being very much like the one described by Robin M. Wright for the Baniwa. Wright (1998: 265; see Wright 1999a) notes that among the Baniwa, religious divisions between Protestants and Catholics took place along the same lines as social divisions. There was thus a 'group of Sofia', 'group of padres' etc. In Diamante, people likewise spoke about the 'troop' (Spanish: *la tropa*) of this or that person. These troops, that is, the predominantly Evangelical or Catholic families, inhabited different parts of the approximately two kilometre line of houses forming the community of Diamante. Apart from a few elderly persons, no Evangelicals lived in the upper part of the community but rather inhabited the upper centre and lower part, while the Catholics formed three nuclei; one in the upper part, one in the lower centre and one at the lowest end of the community.

Whether the problems and disputes between families originated in the differing Christian standpoints or had other principal causes is difficult to assess. They were probably caused by a tangle of reasons, Christianity not always being the most manifest among them; there were as many disputes within a single family as between two Evangelical families or two Catholic families. Many of the controversies and disputes between families seemed, however, to be connected to the highly regarded value of everybody having *equal opportunities*. At least in public, the Yine people in Diamante were very careful about everyone in the community having the same opportunities, especially in the fields of economics and education. This did not mean that in the Yine view everybody should have *been* in an equal situation; the fact that some people were better off economically or were for instance more able as hunters, preachers or football players than others was natural and accepted. What it meant was that people should all have equal possibilities to try to go ahead in life. Whether they chose to use the opportunity was not the issue.

When it came to communal matters people were careful in giving opportunities equally to all extended families: to Evangelicals and Catholics and families from the upper and lower ends of the community alike. For instance, the chief of the community was elected for a period of two years and his (or her) successor was always elected from a different family. Furthermore, in each communal board there had to be a representative from all extended families so that information would find its way equally to everybody. (TKU/N/01/2:8; TKU/N/04/3:13; TKU/N/05/3:20.) Also

the rotational jobs of radio operator, light operator and tourist lodge worker were passed from one family to another. Exception was made only if in the other families there were no suitable persons holding no other posts and having no regular income available. But even if these intentions were emphasised at the communal meetings it did not mean that people would not have seized any opportunity to receive benefit or profit for one's own family. Such a two-faced situation was, of course, prone to cause disagreements in the community. When in 2005, for instance, people were asked to make roof elements for the new guardian posts in the Manu National Park, some people blamed the person effectuating the order for giving only her own family and close relatives the possibility to earn money by making the elements, leaving others altogether without the job or giving them a smaller number of elements to supply (TKU/N/05/3:1).

Disagreements were also caused by the everyday trading activities. Although the nearby mestizo village of Boca Manu was the main market for Yine products, primarily raw materials such as game meat, fish, timber and pet animals, for buying daily food stuffs and materials Boca Manu was too far and often the prices were not much lower than in Diamante. Therefore, much of the everyday buying and selling went on within the community, making the village's three shops the centre of everyday economic activities (see also Chapter 4). Most problems around this business arose from people wishing to purchase goods on credit while often unable or unwilling to settle their debts in due time. Consequently, the shopkeepers refused further credit to these persons. (TKU/N/04/3: 4, 15.) But since two of the shops operating in the community in 2005 were owned by locals and the owner of the third was connected to the people in Diamante through co-parenthood, the shopkeepers were often faced with the situation of people requesting them to remember their kin or co-parents by giving them the goods they were in need of on credit because, although lacking money, they said, they should have the possibility of buying the manufactured goods they needed. The shopkeepers, on the other hand, felt that their business was to be left outside kinship or co-parenthood ties and that the requests people presented to them were unjustifiable. (TKU/N/04/3:14; on similar problems among the Paraguayan Enxet, see Kidd 1999.)

Further difficulties were caused by pricing. People naturally made comparisons between the prices in the community's three shops and were ready to announce their disapproval of someone's higher pricing. Most commonly people considered the mestizo woman from Cusco to keep the highest prices and some people avoided buying things from her.¹⁶ Nevertheless, prices were not the only criterion for choosing where to shop. Social relations also affected the choices so that some people never bought anything from a particular shop if their relationship with the shopkeeper was inflamed. Still, when that particular shop was the only one selling an

¹⁶ Disputes were also caused by the selling of alcohol. The community had agreed that no strong alcohol was to be sold in the shops but in practice the agreement was not respected. Alcohol was a good source of income and selling strong liquors was easier for the shopkeepers than for instance bringing in large amounts of beer bottles from the city for the community. (TKU/N/04/3:20; TKU/N/05/3:1, 10.)



Figure 23. Yine woman making roof elements for sale

item people needed right then, they could send a child or some other person to do the shopping for them.

In addition to economics, it was important for the Yine that everyone had equal opportunities for education. The elderly people in Diamante had personally experienced the time of suppression when indigenous people had no access to formal education and were consequently very concerned that their children and grandchildren should have this opportunity. In Madre de Dios Yine children had been able to receive primary-school education – first organised by the SIL missionaries, later on by the Dominicans – since the mid-twentieth century but secondary school was established in Diamante only in 2000.¹⁷ The new two-storey secondary-school building finished in 2004 was considered to guarantee equal opportunities for all children and adolescents to continue their studies as they did not need to leave the community. Nevertheless, even though people placed a high value on this opportunity, in practice this had little to do with seizing it. Although there were at least forty or fifty students who in principle could have studied at the secondary school and of whom many were also registered at the school, the number of students attending the classes often varied between ten and fifteen counting all grades from the first to the fifth. When, for instance, I taught English jointly to all grades at the secondary school, there were often only six to twelve students present. This was despite the

¹⁷ Some Yine children did go to school at the mission of San Luis del Manu during the rubber boom.

people often expressing their interest in learning English in Diamante. In 2005 this led to a situation where the secondary school was under the threat of being closed owing to the lack of students (TKU/N/05/3:3, 10). In part this was because the municipality had – in the Yine view contrary to previous promises – also built a secondary school in Boca Manu. This had had the effect of emptying the school in Diamante of students coming from this and some other nearby villages. (TKU/N/04/3:4.) However, had even half of the prospective students in Diamante registered at the school, there would have been enough students from the community itself to keep the school running. Still, people harshly criticised the few families that had had the economic possibility of sending their children to study in some other secondary school, for example in Cusco or Puerto Maldonado for not enrolling their children in the local school. (TKU/N/04/3:5; TKU/N/05/3:18.)

As people in Diamante had no real choices (nor perhaps desire) to leave the community, these difficulties between families and between members of different Christian churches continued to spoil social relations. This led to a common feeling of loss of unity in the community. Communal projects were hard to carry out because, as people themselves often exclaimed, ‘We are not united!’ (TKU/N/01/2:11.) Some people never participated in communal work parties and thorny situations were created – deliberately or unintentionally – for instance by setting up work parties on Sunday mornings when the Evangelicals were supposed to have their meeting (TKU/N/04/3:7). There was also little to do to enhance the situation or to increase the feeling of solidarity. Even though communal fiestas such as the Midsummer Festival and the community’s anniversary were organised every year (often by school teachers) and were occasions that everybody enjoyed, some disagreement usually arose over at least the use of alcohol in these events. If little or no alcohol was served people became bored quickly and went home, whereas in the opposite case many Evangelicals returned to their homes early.

As already noted in earlier chapters, many problems in the community life were expressed through witchcraft accusations (TKU/N/04/3:14). This was the case also with the disputes related to not having equal opportunities. People could blame others for instance for some injury that had caused them to become unable to work and thus to earn money. Not all of these accusations were, however, directed towards a different family line or members of the other church.¹⁸ It was not uncommon that adult siblings, consanguine relatives or members of the same church blamed each other for inflicting harm upon one another. During my stays in Diamante there

¹⁸ There were a few persons that everyone in the village (except these persons themselves, of course), regardless of their background or position, acknowledged to be witches. The most menacing of them was thought to be an old man who died in September 2003, probably in his seventies. (TKU/N/04/3:8; see also Shepard 1987; TKU/N/01/2:1.) He was thought to have killed and harmed several adults and many children in the community through the years. In addition to him, people mostly named two Catholics, one man and one woman, whom they thought to have the ability to harm people by witchcraft. (TKU/N/01/1:2, 7; TKU/A/01:26:6; TKU/N/04/3:4, 8.)

were cases where a Catholic woman was accused of bewitching her older Evangelical sister; a Catholic man was blamed for attacking his Evangelical female cousin; and a fifty-year-old Evangelical man accused his likewise Evangelical older brother of bewitching his son, the man's nephew (TKU/N/04/3:8).

But in addition to witchcraft, there was another field which especially the Evangelicals saw opportune for negotiating the value of equal opportunities and any breaches in achieving such a situation. It was the expected coming to Diamante of the personified biblical Mark of the Beast.

The coming of the Mark of the Beast

During my first stay in the community of Diamante in 2000, I did not hear anyone talking about or even mentioning the Mark of the Beast, not even at church meetings. However, in 2003 and particularly during my stay in 2005, everybody in the community knew what it was. I also often heard it spoken about or referred to, especially at the Evangelical church but also at people's homes (TKU/N/04/3:13). The Catholics also knew about this figure although every Catholic person I talked about this emphasised that what they knew was told to them by the Evangelical pastor – they themselves did not have any deeper knowledge about it. I think the adoption of the idea of the Mark of the Beast was largely due to the preaching activities of the Evangelical pastor.¹⁹ As a powerful person and leader in the community, and as one person who according to the people in Diamante was 'well ahead' of them when it came to Christian teachings²⁰ – just as the pastor held the Catholic padre to be well ahead of him – the pastor had in just the few years since his arrival in the community in 2000 been able to introduce and imprint the Mark of the Beast as a meaningful figure on people's thoughts.

Generally, Yine accounts of the Mark of the Beast could have been recorded among Protestants, Pentecostals or Charismatic Christians in almost any part of the world: there was a great deal of similarity to many ethnographical accounts of views of this global, transnational Antichrist figure (cf. Brutti 2000; Jebens 2000; Robbins 1997; Stewart & Strathern 2000). Nevertheless, most people did not have any detailed view of the Mark of the Beast other than picturing it as a personified character, a man, who was expected to come to Diamante at any time; this year, next year or perhaps not before the adult lives of the community's grandchildren. Some Evangelicals said that the Mark of the Beast would come from Italy or Rome but others asserted that it would originate in Spain (TKU/N/05/3:12). One woman described the Mark of the Beast as the Antichrist who was born in Spain and who was currently fifteen years of age. At birth this Antichrist

¹⁹ The pastor told me that when he had been living in the Urubamba area in Miaría visiting preachers from Lima and from foreign countries had always spoken about the Mark of the Beast (TKU/N/04/3:13).

²⁰ Some Evangelicals still criticised the pastor (and especially his wife) for not himself living as he preached.

had already had two horns growing in his head and these kept growing longer all the time as he got older. Soon, the woman thought, this Antichrist would start his journey through the world. Another Evangelical woman incorporated the Catholic world into her end-time visions by stating that it was the former Pope John Paul II who had mandated the Mark of the Beast in the first place. When the news of the death of John Paul II arrived during my stay in Diamante in April 2005, the Evangelicals anticipated that whoever the new pope would be, he would continue the task. (Cf. Jebens 2000.)²¹ The Evangelical pastor, on the other hand, seemed to think that the Mark of the Beast was already on the move and explained to me that the reason why the Mark of the Beast had not yet arrived in Peru was that the Peruvian president Alejandro Toledo had not signed an agreement for him to enter the country.²² The pastor said that he had once received a leaflet relating this when he lived in the Urubamba area and that it would be only a matter of time before the Antichrist would be let into the country.

When the Mark of the Beast arrives in Diamante, the Evangelicals explained, he will come with the police and ask every person if they are *creyentes*, believers (TKU/N/05/3:4). This will be the moment when true believers are distinguished from fake ones. True believers – Evangelicals, Adventists, Jehovah Witnesses – will not be afraid but rather willing to die in the name of Jesus Christ, whereas those with little belief will let themselves be marked in order to save their lives. The mark 666 will, as the Bible tells, be inscribed on the forehead or the upper arm of such a person. According to the Evangelicals, the marked persons will thus join the Catholics and the devil. The only other alternative for people will be to flee to the forest and stay there until the years of persecution are over. (Cf. Robbins 1997: 39.)

But why then had this image of the Mark of the Beast become such a meaningful part of people's lives in Diamante in such a short period of time? I think that the reason why especially the Evangelicals found the idea of the Mark of the Beast meaningful and had adopted it was that it provided a suitable field where the current situation and conflicts in the community could be made understandable and somehow conceptualised. This became evident in the way the Evangelicals talked about what will happen when the Mark of the Beast comes: it will be a moment when people's equal opportunities, especially those concerning economic life and education, will come to an end. The Evangelical pastor explained that

When the Mark of the Beast arrives in Peru and you are Evangelical, you can no longer do business. If you have cows or poultry to sell there in Boca [Manu], no more: only if one already has the Mark of the Beast can he sell

²¹ The view of the Antichrist coming from Rome in Italy is based on Revelation.

²² Also other presidents in Peru have been labelled Antichrists. For instance during the presidential elections that took place in Peru on 6 June 2006 (the date 666), one of the candidates, Alan Garcia, was commonly in the press called Alan 'Damián' Garcia after the protagonist in Richard Donner's movie *The Omen* (La Profecía) made in 1976 and remade in 2006 (directed by John Moore) telling about a boy named Damian who was thought to be the Antichrist. Graziano (1999: 23–24, 174) shows how it has been common throughout Latin America to connect political leaders and leadership with the Antichrist.

them. . . . He will mark us here, on the front, that's what the Bible says. So he who has the Mark of the Beast can do business; his sons can go to the secondary school or to the university. They don't have any problems. But he who has the Mark of the Holy Spirit, so it is said, he can no longer do business here where we normally do business. You cannot sell any of your products. Selling is prohibited for those who are believers. He will persecute us. This will last for three years. In the meantime [the believers] must go somewhere else. When the Mark of the Beast comes you'll have to plough a field there far away. When the three years have passed you can come back. Therefore one has to buy salt, soap, kerosene, so that one can be away. That is the Word of God. (TKU/A/05/47b.)

Thus the coming of the Mark of the Beast will mark the beginning of a new era when Catholics with the mark of the beast will be given privileges and the Evangelicals will be left in a peripheral social and economic position. For the first three years, the Evangelicals will have to live deep in the forest to avoid being killed. To reckon with the situation, they will need to buy all necessities in advance. After three years, when the direct persecution will be over, they may return to the community but will still remain in a subordinate position.²³ Just as the Bible text in Revelation²⁴ reveals, people said, only the Catholics will be allowed to do business and sell their products in the nearby mestizo village of Boca Manu as people in Diamante usually do. In addition, the Catholics will be the only ones eligible to buy goods from the local shops. (Cf. Andreello 1999: 298.) Also one Catholic man explained that as far as he understood, when the Evangelicals go to buy food from one of the shops in Diamante, at their return home there will no longer be anything in the bag, the food will have disappeared. The Evangelicals were thus believed to be left with no means to prosper economically and to use commercial goods. They would be excluded from the processes of modern life, which would be reserved for the use of the Catholics only.

The preacher's account shows clearly how through the figure of the Mark of the Beast people could address exactly the points discussed above, which were currently causing conflicts in Diamante. The biblical vision, according to which no one will be allowed to buy or sell things unless they bear the mark of the beast, resonates with the hardships people experienced in their daily economic life: difficulties in buying things at a suitable price or on credit from the local shops and in finding markets for selling their products in order to get income. When the time came, only those who bore the mark, that is the Catholics, would be able to go about doing their business. There was, in fact, some congruence between this vision of Catholic prosperity and the prevailing situation in Diamante. Even though the majority of people, Evangelicals and Catholics alike, had insufficient incomes to be able to buy everything they needed, there were

²³ People were quite ambiguous about the duration of the underprivileged situation of the Evangelicals. Some people said that the prohibition against buying and selling would cover only the period of the three years that people needed to be in exile in the forest and would presumably end after that.

²⁴ The verse in Revelation 13:17 has been central also for other indigenous peoples, for instance in the Melanesian context (Robbins 1997: 40).

some people or families that were economically slightly better off. Of these people, the majority were Catholics, though the Evangelical couple who kept a shop formed a major exception. Several Catholic men and women were engaged in paid labour such as logging or were working as chauffeurs, and some of them also worked outside the community for the municipality or for other organisations.²⁵ Furthermore, through the idea of excluding the Evangelicals from market exchanges the figure was opportune also for addressing the question of the proper civilised human condition so central to Yine self-definitions, as has previously been discussed by Peter Gow (1991). Unlike uncivilised forest Indians, proper civilised Yine people used salt, valued cleanness and had lights during the night-time. These items – salt, soap and kerosene – mentioned by the Evangelical pastor in his account were thus things that enabled people to live civilised lives. By depriving the Evangelicals of these elements, the figure of the Mark of the Beast underlined the importance of market transactions for Yine self-identification as legitimate parties in modern-day community life.

Moreover, according to the Evangelicals the coming of the Mark of the Beast did not signify only economic privileges for the Catholics. The Catholics were also thought to gain an exclusive right to schooling and to university education, which would, of course, like the prohibition on buying commercial goods, leave the Evangelicals in a position as 'backward forest people' so much shunned by the Yine.²⁶ The potency of the image of the Mark of the Beast as a lens through which the present-day situation with unequal opportunities in Diamante was assessed became perhaps most explicit precisely in relation to the field of education. When I asked one Evangelical woman what she knew about the Mark of the Beast and what she thought about it, she answered that the Mark means that Catholic padres disregard Evangelical families and help only the children of Catholic parents in getting an education. (TKU/N/05/3:12, 25.) The woman had wanted her eighteen-year-old son to go to study in Sepahua, where he could have lived under the supervision of the local Catholic padre. However, the woman explained, the padre had at first been reluctant to take charge of the boy because of some bad rumours he had heard about him (allegedly told by a Catholic family in Diamante whose son was studying in Sepahua) but had finally agreed to take the boy to Sepahua (TKU/N/04/3:8). Nevertheless, for the woman this was a proof of the Mark of the Beast already at work in the present.²⁷

²⁵ According to my perception, of the most well-off families or individuals in the community only about a fifth were Evangelicals although it has to be remembered that the Catholics slightly outnumbered the Evangelicals in the community. I did not, however, conduct any systematic economic survey in the community. The view is rather based on my perception through knowing the different families and their ways of livelihood.

²⁶ This could also be seen as reflecting the current situation in the community. Most of the (few) young persons studying for a profession outside the Yine community came from Catholic families.

²⁷ The changes in local economics and the possibilities of studying outside the community have also compromised other Yine social values, such as that of proximity. Similarly with logging and other paid labour, education takes people away from the community and thus away from their kin. This makes 'living well' together impossible (see note 30 on page 134).

The Evangelicals saw in the present further evidence of the coming of the Mark of the Beast. The missionary teachers running the community's primary school and the Catholic padre visiting the community a few times a year were accused, although not very openly, of being the heralds of the new order coming with the arrival of the Mark of the Beast. One Evangelical woman explained that the teachers were writing down the names and birth dates of pupils at the beginning of the semester in order to ease their stamping with the mark 666 when the time comes (TKU/N/05/3:4, 8). She said that before the teachers only noted down the names of pupils in each class but now they noted down their birth dates too. Given the great importance people laid on birth dates and their connection with acquiring an ID, which enabled people to travel and underlined their position as 'civilised people', and with the Book of Life in which God had the birth and death dates of all those who would be saved written down (see Chapter 6), it was not strange that writing down birth dates at the Catholic primary school should come to be associated with the devil's work. Just as God had a Book of Life, the teachers and the padre were in the Evangelical view maintaining a devilish list with people's birthdates – a list which would eventually lead to the predicament of the Evangelicals. The Catholic school was thus from the Evangelical perspective related to a satanic plot preceding the apocalypse.²⁸

Schooling therefore caused very ambiguous and conflicting feelings in the Evangelicals in Diamante. Even though they anticipated that their children going to the Catholic-led primary school would eventually receive the mark of the beast as their names and birth dates appeared in the Catholic files, the parents still seemed unwilling to take any action to prevent this from happening, for instance by removing their children from the school. When I asked the Evangelicals about this they sidestepped the contradiction by saying that upon the arrival of the Mark of the Beast, there would still be time to take the children and escape to the forest. It seems that even though the expected coming of the Mark of the Beast was used as a frame for interpreting the present-day life in the community, there were other things that outweighed its threat. If schooling was for the Catholics fundamental for going ahead in life, as shown in the previous chapter, it was not insignificant in that sense for the Evangelicals either. They were not willing to give up the opportunity to get their children educated. Furthermore, as the advent of the Mark of the Beast was not known – it could be generations hence – the everyday sociable life needed to go on. After all, the Evangelicals and the Catholics inhabited the same community and would continue to do so in the future. As one Evangelical woman explained, everyone in the community should live and interact normally with others, whether they were Evangelical or Catholic, because after the arrival of the Mark of the Beast it would no longer be possible. That is when all equal opportunities would end. There would be only one religion, the

²⁸ Wright (1998: 230) writes about similar fears among the Baniwa, who thought that white people noted down all the houses for the purpose of later on coming to imprison people.

Catholic one, available for people and accordingly, only one way to live.²⁹ (TKU/N/04/3:13) Those who did not comply with it would be persecuted.

I heard the Catholics in Diamante talking about the threat of the Mark of the Beast only when I asked them about it. They did not seem to use it as a means to assess or interpret the discrepancies in the social life of the community. Nevertheless, the assumption that they considered talk about the Mark of the Beast as merely the foolish notions of the Evangelicals did not seem to be correct either. One Evangelical man told me that some Catholics had recently started going to the Evangelical meetings because they were anxious about the rumours they were hearing about the Mark of the Beast. Whatever the Catholics' reason for attending the Evangelical meetings, it was true that some people who in 2003 had not so much as glanced at the Evangelical church participated in 2005 more or less regularly in the church activities. It was clear then that the Evangelical pastor had considerable influence in the community and had assumed a certain kind of leadership role, although an unofficial one, in Diamante. He not only seemed capable of influencing people in religious matters but also had a strong opinion on many issues discussed at communal meetings, and was able to receive support for his views.³⁰ Nevertheless, he still continued to be a controversial figure in the community. Some Catholics, for instance, tried to vitiate his opinions and possibilities of influencing communal issues by invoking the fact that he was not officially a community member: only those who had lived in the community for more than five years could acquire that status. (TKU/N/04/3:21.) In the end, therefore, it was not clear how profound and lasting his influence in the community was. Even some Evangelicals speculated that when the pastor left Diamante, very few people, not even avowed Evangelicals, would keep going to the Evangelical church (TKU/N/05/3:25).

In addition to basic schooling, university education also had a contradictory echo for people in Diamante. Although they valued the 'professionals' who had studied at university highly and wished that their children would have an opportunity to go to university, they simultaneously connected these professionals or *universitarios* with the stories about *sacacaras* or *pelacaras*, face-takers, and *pishtacos*, fat-stealers, common both in the Peruvian high and lowlands (see Gow 2001: 256–266; Siskind

²⁹ The idea of 'one religion only' is common for indigenous Christian apocalyptic expectations also in other geographical contexts (e.g. Jebens 2000: 177).

³⁰ The pastor was yet another example of strong leadership among the Yine. The Yine had a long tradition of organising themselves under the leadership of powerful persons, such as the former *curacas*, the leaders of Yine communities, *hacienda* bosses such as Pancho Vargas, linguists and missionaries such as Esther Matteson and Morán Zumaeta as well as founders of communities like the founder of Diamante Nuevo, a Matsigenka man named Aladino Vargas. Also many school teachers including Alejandro Smith who lived in Diamante in the 1980s and early 1990s had great influence among the Yine (Shepard 1987: 43, 63–64). The Evangelical pastor was in a similar position, although not all were ready to acknowledge his leadership. Nevertheless, he did have at least an equal say to the administrative chief (formerly *presidente*) of the community, whose power derived from his formal position, not from his personal characteristics. For this reason, just as Rosengren (1987) has shown for the Matsigenka, the chief's leadership was often questioned.

1973; Stoll 1982; Weiss 1975; Bastien 1992: 183–186).³¹ Among the Yine, both the face-taking and fat-stealing aspects of these figures became mingled in the figure of *pelacaras*, who were believed to kill people and remove their faces as well as gather blood and fat from their corpses. They were thought to be people well educated at the university and therefore to be endowed with lots of knowledge with which to fool others. In this sense, they epitomised the separation between the ‘intelligent white people’ and the ‘ignorant indigenous people’ of the time before basic education became available for the Yine. These people were also said to possess all sorts of technical equipment, from low-noise motorboats to aeroplanes, for executing their mission. The Yine told me that they had been seen to operate particularly in the Camisea area but had not yet been seen in Manu, possibly because there were fewer people living in the latter region. The *pelacaras* were interchangeably also called *universitarios* and *terroristas* by the Yine. Although on the one hand highly regarded, this association gave university education another, sinister, connotation. This was also the undercurrent that was probably evoked in relation to Yine Evangelicals’ views of the workings of the Mark of the Beast.³² (TKU/N/05/3:4, 21, 24; on *pelacara* beliefs among the Yine of Urubamba see Gow 2001.)

Antichrist and the Mother of Smallpox

Even though the belief in the coming of the Mark of the Beast, as well as perhaps to some extent the beliefs concerning *pelacaras*, had clearly been diffused and consolidated in Diamante by the Evangelical pastor, the characteristics of this personified figure had not been foreign to the Yine in Diamante beforehand. A similar personage is found in the Yine narratives about the Mother of Smallpox and smallpox (Yine: *Moro* from Quechua *murú*; Spanish: *viruela*) epidemics, which caused the death of numerous Yine people (cf. Buchillet 2000). I once overheard women referring to the Mother of Smallpox when they were doing their laundry by the river. It was the first time I heard anyone speaking about this character so I did not manage to pay sufficient attention to it at the time. It was only later that I understood that the discussion by the river had taken place during the days just after the killings of loggers in the Piedras region in 2005, which were widely discussed in Diamante. Whether these two things – the Mother of Smallpox and the killings possibly made by the *universitarios* or *terroristas* – were, in fact, in any way connected with each other I cannot be sure. Nevertheless, the fact that people in casual discussion among themselves

³¹ On similar cases of blood stealing in the African context see Weiss 1998 and White 1993.

³² The Evangelical pastor, who had relatively recently come to Manu from the Urubamba area, also told me about the *serolune*, a Yine word meaning ‘the Reds’, who were terrorists that extracted both blood and fat from people with a needle while they were asleep but did not necessarily kill them. The *serolune* also had university education and were ‘intelligent’ and therefore ‘far ahead’ of the Yine people. (TKU/A/05/48a.) They were also one group suggested when people tried to guess who had been behind the killings of loggers which took place in the Piedras area in 2005 (see Chapter 4).

were talking about the Mother of Smallpox indicates that the narrations about this personage did resonate at least in some ways with Yine daily life in Diamante. Some of these possible meanings can be evoked by comparing the figure of the Mother of Smallpox with that of the Mark of the Beast, which likewise was employed to address issues focal to Yine socio-moral life.

One version of the Yine narrative about the Mother of Smallpox was recorded already in 1960 by Ricardo Alvarez (1960a: 138–139). The versions I was told in Diamante almost half a century later were strikingly similar to that of Alvarez. According to the narrative, smallpox had already killed most people in a Yine village. The remaining Yine fled to the forest in order to avoid the fate of their kinspeople. Only one grandmother was unable to escape and stayed behind with two of her grandchildren. In the evening she heard noise and wondered who it might be because everyone had already escaped. Then she saw a man and a woman, the Mother of Smallpox – depicted as a male figure – and his spouse, approaching in a canoe full of the souls of the people that had already been killed by the epidemics. These souls were like dogs, pets following the Mother of Smallpox. The old woman hid her grandchildren in a big clay pot, herself hiding in a henhouse. Nevertheless, the Mother of Smallpox found her and asked where all the others were because he wished to extract fat from them. But the woman lied, saying that she was the only one in the village; all the others had left while she had been asleep. The man ordered the grandmother to kill a chicken and cook it for them to eat and she obeyed. After eating, the Mother of Smallpox shook the grandmother's hand in farewell. He was covered with boils³³ and his excrement was pure blood, and the grandmother was certain that she would also get sick. But, probably for having treated them with generosity, the Mother of Smallpox did not make her ill but sailed away in his canoe. However, the woman was to follow the party as long as the canoe was in sight. Again, she obeyed the man and only after she had lost them from sight did she begin to clean her house and the community in the fear of something having been left behind of the smallpox. The Mother of Smallpox had gone to another village to complete his task because he still needed ten gallons of fat for his nutrition. Having gathered the missing amount, the Mother of Smallpox returned to the village, where the old woman was still alive. Once more, he asked the woman to cook for them. As the woman complied with the request, the Mother of Smallpox promised never to return. He had extracted enough grease for his needs. (TKU/A/05/42a:5.)

In the past, the Yine people had experienced some devastating epidemics, which had decimated the population in some villages or areas such as for instance in the one village in Manu by the river Pinquen in the 1940s (see the Introduction). Although not telling of any single case but being rather generalised in form, the narratives about the Mother of Smallpox

³³ If a boil appearing on a person's body was considered to reveal their illegitimate moral actions as discussed in Chapter 6, the Mother of Smallpox covered in boils then appeared as the embodiment of immorality.

did address many of the concerns and anxieties the Yine people must have experienced when facing smallpox and other epidemics in the past and ways of coping with these situations. These concerns and ways of responding to them were mainly similar to those connected with the anticipated coming of the Mark of the Beast. First, the Mother of Smallpox and the Mark of the Beast were both seen as personified threats endangering not only people's lives but also the integrity of Yine families and communities. The images of these two personages thus spoke about solitude and abandonment – conditions eschewed to the last by the Yine – in their most intense forms. It was not that people would lose only one of their beloved family members, which in itself was almost an overwhelming experience. Rather, the visit of these personages was something devastating because it meant the death of the majority of Yine people in a particular village, causing the group to be split up and to be almost completely destroyed. In the narratives, the Mother of Smallpox killed almost everyone he encountered, leaving only a few persons alive, while the Mark of the Beast was thought to arrive with police and kill those not willing to join him. These personages therefore exemplified the highly undesired condition of being abandoned by loved ones (see Gow 2000; see also discussion on the siren in Chapter 4).

On the other hand, and as my second point, the killings in the narratives repeat the theme of different beings or persons in the Yine socio-moral cosmos trying to make others similar. Both personages aim at increasing the number of their followers, or subordinates. The canoe or boat³⁴ in which the smallpox arrives was said to be full of the souls of deceased people that had become the followers, the pet dogs, of the Mother of Smallpox. Likewise, those accepting the mark of the beast were thought to become followers of Satan. In both cases, the transformation of personhoods takes place corporeally through modifying the victims' surface, the skin. The Mark of the Beast labels those who decide to follow him with a tattooed 666 on the person's forehead or upper arm. The Mother of Smallpox on the other hand transmits the blisters and wounds on his skin to the skins of his victims. The meaning these kinds of marks on the skin have for the Yine people will be further discussed below.

Third, the two narratives also resemble each other when we examine the relationships they portray between the Yine people and the two personages. When facing a supreme and unbeatable enemy, the narratives show how the importance of the otherwise highly valued sociability diminishes. People become devoid of methods for forming a constructive relationship as the social skills they normally employ have become useless. Only the old woman in the case of the smallpox narrative is able to successfully use the skills of everyday sociability in coping with the Mother of Smallpox. She generously kills one of her chicken to feed the Mother of Smallpox (cf. Chapter 1) and does not deny her house to these uninvited guests. She also obeys the wishes of her guests and is thus saved. It is her

³⁴ When telling me his version of the story of the Mother of Smallpox the Evangelical pastor referred to the boat as a submarine that would go to other villages under water. The image of the submarine is also found in other contemporary versions of various Amazonian myths (e.g. Hugh-Jones 1988).

generosity towards other people which produces a sociable relationship. In this case, the solitude of the woman saved her but had there been other people around, the smallpox would probably have killed them all. No matter how good the social skills a person possesses, they are shown to be inadequate in relation to the Mother of Smallpox. Similarly, in the case of the Mark of the Beast, there seems to be no point in trying to cope with the situation by normal means of constructing relationships. When facing such an insurmountable threat as presented by the two narratives, the only real option for the Yine people – and also my fourth and last point – seems in the light of these examples to be to escape.

Avoidance as a social strategy

Some Evangelicals in Diamante speculated that when the Mark of the Beast arrives, before coming to their community it will first stop in the mestizo community of Boca Manu one hour downstream from Diamante. Consequently, people hearing the news of the Mark of the Beast approaching will still have enough time to escape to the forest and in that manner avoid becoming either marked or killed. As the Evangelical pastor in the interview extract above explained, they will therefore need to equip themselves with kerosene, salt and soap in order to survive in the forest for three years, after which they will be able to return to their community.

Escaping when faced with an enemy such as the Mark of the Beast or the Mother of Smallpox appears not to be a course of action unique to these particular cases among the Yine people. As noted in Chapter 3, people saw the subterranean realm, Mtengatwenu or the Shallow River, as a place where the ancient Yine people escaped when facing for instance the danger of raids by other indigenous groups. Today, this image was still alive to the extent that the Evangelical Yine wished they could also descend to this other world when the Third World War began. Avoidance therefore strikes one as a Yine social strategy aimed at maintaining the prerequisites and capacities for living well.

However, this strategy was not something belonging exclusively to the domain of Yine stories about past and future events. The pattern of escaping into the forest after hearing evils reaching Boca Manu and approaching Diamante had also been experienced by the Yine in the near past. At the beginning of the 1990s, drug traffic boomed in the Peruvian Amazonia and also quite a few persons from the Manu and Madre de Dios regions were involved in these activities. What caught my attention in the few accounts I was told about these events concerned the end of the drug-trafficking in the area. I was told that when the drug traffic in the area collapsed in 1994, the police had first arrived in Boca Manu to arrest people (see Zileri 1999). The word had quickly spread to Diamante that the police were heading next towards their community. Even though several people in Diamante were arrested for questioning – and the principal Columbian actors were, as usual in such cases, never caught – people told me that because the news

had arrived faster than the police, they had had time to escape into the forest and so avoid being caught, no matter whether guilty or innocent.³⁵ The resemblance between these events and what people told me about the coming of the Mark of the Beast is rather striking.

In the everyday life in the community of Diamante the strategy of avoidance was frequently used in different ways. Most clearly it could perhaps be seen in the manner in which people hid inside the walls of their homes when strangers or unwelcome persons were approaching. Walking through the community, I could sometimes see how (usually) a woman left her task on the veranda of the house and went inside when I was approaching. Understanding that they did not want to interact with me at that moment, I usually passed the house pretending to think there was no one at home. On some occasions, however, when I wished to discuss something with that particular person, I approached the house and called her. Both of us knowing of the presence of the other, the person sometimes still stayed quietly inside, refusing to interact with me. At other times the person would come out only after a long bout of demanding calls.³⁶

In previous chapters I have discussed Yine ways of controlling relationships and the openness of their bodies – by thinking of God and not thinking about lovers when entering the forest or by refraining from the sharing of food, for instance. I suggest that the Yine avoidance of social interaction in ways described above is also related to this control and manipulation of both bodies and relationships in the Yine world. Bowing out of social interaction, from the proximity of the other, is a way to control the social life around. Instead of seeing it as passive withdrawing, it thus appears to be an active strategy employed by the Yine to control the set of relationships they form part of. This was seen also in an inverse way in the manner in which especially the Yine women avoided going to the forest or to the plantations alone – it was in a way withdrawal from the possible relationships that might await them in the forest. Escaping or avoidance seemed then to be a general social strategy employed by the Yine in dealing with dangers or other unwanted business coming from the outside.

There were, however, also other kinds of dangers that were not as easily avoided. In relation to the Mark of the Beast, one elderly Evangelical couple saw the danger as something coming not from the outside but from the inside. In their view, the Mark of the Beast would not come from foreign countries and arrive in the community with the police but it would rather be their own children or grandchildren who would execute the killing of believers and mark the followers of Antichrist in Diamante. This view echoes one Bible verse also discussed at the Evangelical meetings. Luke 21:16 says that 'You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will have some of you put to death.' I do not, however,

³⁵ Even after a decade, the people in Diamante were reluctant to speak about these events and consequently I have no knowledge of how many from Diamante were in fact involved in the business or of any details concerning the activities.

³⁶ In due time, I also learned to use the same strategy for avoiding for instance conversations with drunk men passing by my house, although more often, I think, I was an 'easy prey' to be approached when lying in my hammock and writing notes.

see the elderly couple's views just as a repetition or literal reading of the Bible verse or as an expression of real anxiety of perhaps ending up killed by members of one's own family. I think the elderly couple's opinion resonated against the then current disorganisation in the community of Diamante. The disagreements, thefts and other problems emerging almost daily in the community were in stark contrast to the simultaneous Yine expectations and efforts to live well. One cause for the problems – and the one discussed in the present chapter – was the impossibility of everybody having equal opportunities. Some adolescents were able to study and perhaps one day become professionals while others would never have this chance. These former kinds of persons were perhaps in the elderly couple's view those who would at some point undergo *capacitación*, training, somewhere outside the community and then return to Diamante to execute the task of marking and killing people. This kind of threat was something the Yine could not easily escape from because it involved their own flesh and blood, shared corporeality, and was therefore in a rather concrete manner tied to their socio-corporeal and moral existence. But the anxiety related to the social disintegration in Diamante was also in another, a more fundamental way, intertwined with Yine corporeal understandings.

Deceiving Evangelical bodies?

In previous chapters, I have shown how for the Yine in Diamante, as for many other Amazonian peoples (e.g. Belaunde 2001; Overing & Passes 2000b), the ultimate goal in social life was to live well. This meant above all tranquil conflict-free living together with similar people who continually enforced their social ties and consubstantiality through normal everyday activities. However, as I have also discussed above, achieving this goal in the situation prevailing in the community of Diamante seemed a remote dream. Since the Catholic and Evangelical views of how the condition of living well could and should be achieved differed from each other to a great extent, it was clear that community life was not always genial and easy-going. The only possible solution to the problem, and one that I think both sides were more or less actively trying to achieve, would have been to bring these two sides together by making the others similar. This setting was akin to the situation described by Gow for the Yine of the Urubamba during their messianic expectation and quest for good life in the 1930s and 1940s. Gow (2001: 242) notes that achieving the intended situation of living well, *genshinkanrewlu*, would have required a collective transformation in people's ways of thinking and consequently the endeavour would have been extremely vulnerable to any mass defections from it. In order for the Yine people to succeed in their quest for this kind of collective socio-moral condition, everyone would have needed to co-operate. However, the difference between the situations in 1930s Urubamba and in contemporary Diamante – which made people's efforts to unite the community of Diamante behind one common goal perhaps more complicated – lay in the fact that

in the latter case it was not a question of any 'mass defections' from one predominant way of being but rather a permanent situation in which two equally strong competing views existed side by side.³⁷

Although the contradictory views of Evangelicals and Catholics in Diamante were certainly closely related to differences and disputes between families and to tension between people's personal interests and social benefits (or individualism and sociality), they were not just a question of social dissociation but were fundamentally tied to Yine understandings of what it meant to be a corporeally and socio-morally proper person. While the Evangelicals viewed life with God – that is, living and acting as a good Christian should and through such consideration for others achieving tranquil social life – as the only true form of being, the Catholics held the Evangelical actions and for instance their abstention from alcohol use as unnecessary measures for living well and being a true and good Christian. In the Catholic view, tranquil social life and relatedness could be generated primarily through instances of festive togetherness (see Gow 2001: 165–166, 232).

However, both the Yine Catholics and the Evangelicals in Diamante seemed to feel that such a situation could not be achieved in this life: it would be only the coming of the Mark of the Beast which would bring the final resolution to the dilemma here on Earth.³⁸ People thought that when facing a gun pointed at one's forehead a person's true essence, what one really thought and was, would be revealed: people could no longer pretend to be something they were not. The Yine said that true believers would not be afraid to die in the name of Jesus Christ and would take the bullet rather than let themselves be marked, but that there were many who claimed to be Evangelicals and thus true believers but who would not be ready to die. In order to save their lives, they would let themselves be marked with the symbol 666.

One Catholic man explained that when the Mark of the Beast arrives with the police and asks the Evangelicals about their religious conviction

... if you say I'll now follow the Catholics, they mark you. That is to say you do not believe in God. At your choice (*por gusto*) you had a different body, for example Evangelical [body], and now you'll be with the Catholics ... (TKU/A/05/37a:9.)³⁹

On its own this opinion or description would not yet give grounds for any far-reaching interpretations. After all, the Yine Catholics mostly relied in

³⁷ Whereas in Gow's analysis the adoption of Protestant Christianity appears as a matter of a collective decision, of thinking, my research material emphasises the role of corporeality and slow production of personhoods in achieving the collective state of living well.

³⁸ Miller (1979: 159; see Belaunde 2000a for a similar case among the Airo-Pai) shows how the Argentinean Toba – in a similar manner to the Yine – projected their quest for harmony onto the future because they saw the socio-moral problems as irresolvable in their earthly life.

³⁹ I think that by 'not believing in God' the man here refers not so much to the act of believing (the Catholics in Diamante did also believe in God) but rather to the Evangelical Christian praxis as a means of getting to heaven.

the question of the Mark of the Beast on what they had heard from the Evangelical pastor. However, when examined in relation to other revealing instances concerning the construction of (Christian) Yine persons examined in this work, the man's account seems to reveal how Yine Christianities were, indeed, conceptualised as two distinct bodily-moral conditions or points of view. Perspectivist thinking was therefore not something belonging exclusively to the realm of human–non-human relations but permeated through the Yine relational world at large. As discussed in the previous chapter, an Evangelical Yine person embodied the characteristics of not drinking hard liquors, not being violent, abstaining from work on Sundays and engaging only in legitimate sexual relations. These features were constantly renewed and the particularly Evangelical point of view strengthened by engaging in Evangelical activities together with other similar persons. However, as the Catholic man above explained, the visible form did not necessarily indicate a person's true essence. In the man's opinion a person might have the Evangelical body on as 'clothing' concealing their true essence. This 'mask' would make the person look Evangelical to others.⁴⁰ The deceiving nature of the visible form of a person was then shown to be not only a property of different non-human beings such as the grey brocket deer but was a characteristic applied equally to all bodies in the Yine social cosmos and was therefore prone to cause epistemological uncertainty in Yine everyday life.

What is noteworthy here is that rather than juxtaposing Evangelicals with people going through a transformation of the corporeal point of view (such as victims of souls of the deceased), the Catholic man uses the tension between the two forms of corporeal changes – metamorphosis and transformation – to illustrate the (in his view) true nature of Evangelical bodies: he parallels Evangelicals with beings capable of metamorphosis such as the grey brocket deer. In such a view, Evangelical bodies were not in their entirety different from Catholic ones; the differing Evangelical corporeal dispositions were merely a disguise. This links the man's account closely to the Yine negotiation of proper personhoods. Instead of seeing the Evangelicals and their practices as a way to go ahead, to embody and enhance that which is morally good, the man seemed to view their practices just as a cover concealing what a true Yine person is like, that is, a Catholic, or perhaps more accurately, one who in spite of denominational liabilities places the construction of relatedness through festive togetherness at the centre of social life.⁴¹ Consequently, the coming of the Mark of the Beast would be a decisive moment in Diamante for it would bring an end to

⁴⁰ People said that only God knows a person's true essence. Therefore when someone dies, people cannot be sure whether the deceased is destined for heaven or hell. Only by interpreting omens, such as thunder and the flying of bees (see Chapter 6) can people gain some knowledge of a deceased person's destiny.

⁴¹ The Evangelicals in Diamante criticised one another on similar grounds. For instance people who attended Evangelical meetings and in other ways too conformed to the Evangelical life-style in public but deviated from these ideals at other times were harshly criticised. This kind of action was exactly what the Catholic man also disapproved of: claiming to be something other than one is.

the constant struggle of defining a proper Yine personhood and to the uncertainty with which it clouded social life. The mark 666 on people's skin would thereafter tell who a person really was. In a way, it would correspond to the final corporeal act in the perspectival transformations, after which there would be no return. In the case of the hand-whistler the final transformation took place by blowing something onto the head or eyes of a person; the grey brocket deer had sex with the 'victim', and in the case of the souls of the deceased the finishing touch was given through accepting food from the dead beloved relative. In the context of the Mark of the Beast the crucial element was the acceptance of the tattoo or mark 666 on one's skin.

The mark 666 as a mediating physical element or a tool for consubstantiality is in itself intriguing. I did not find the symbol, the triple six, as such or its numeric value to have any particular significance for the Yine. Rather – and in a manner resembling Joel Robbins's (1997) analysis in the case of the Papua New Guinean Urapmin people – the mark was among the Yine understood in terms of its placement on the skin. Robbins shows how among the Urapmin the only means to gain knowledge about a person's inner nature that is normally concealed from others is through the skin. The skin then, according to Robbins, 'becomes a solution to an epistemological problem about how to gain trustworthy knowledge of other people' (Robbins 1997: 43). The placement of the triple six on a person's skin therefore reveals their moral condition; the person is connected to Satan.



Figure 24. People gathered to enjoy their leisure time and to drink manioc beer

In the case of the Yine, the markings on people's outer surface likewise connected epistemological contemplations to morality. First, even though the Yine considered a person's body, the skin or clothing, to be possibly deceptive, therefore making it difficult to assess a person's human (or non-human) point of view, the skin was still thought capable of revealing something about a person's moral condition. As seen in the previous chapter, a person who has engaged in sexual relations that people considered illegitimate will have a boil appearing on their skin. From this the others know that the person has deviated from what is considered morally proper in social relationships. In a parallel manner, the mark 666 on a person's skin will be an emblem through which other people have access to what is going on with the person's corporeal point of view: whether they has accepted communion with the Antichrist or not.

Nevertheless, the Yine material gives room also for another, a broader, interpretation. Among these people, as shown by Gow (1999), marks on the skin – for instance body paintings made during the girls' initiation ritual – do not tell so much about the person herself (although they do mark the success of the girl's puberty seclusion and make her beautiful, *kigler*) – as they do about the success of the social process. Body paintings in this particular case are a demonstration of the ability of the elderly Yine women to turn their skills acquired during their long lives into the generation of sociality: they have been capable of producing menstrual blood, controlling the flow of the sexual fluids in having children of their own, producing manioc beer for the initiation festivities of their daughters and finally making girls of their granddaughter generation beautiful by body paintings (Gow 1999: 242). Instead of skin being merely a canvas of an individual person, it was thus a canvas for evaluating society's moral condition (see Turner 1980; 1995). Similarly the appearance of an emblem, the mark of the beast, on various people's skin could be understood as eventually revealing the true moral condition of the Yine people in Diamante as a collectivity. For the Catholics, this would confirm that their way of being Yine Christians has been the true one all along while the Evangelicals' appearances have been deceptive. For the Evangelicals, on the other hand, it would mean the (temporary) victory of Satan and the ceasing of communal life. Whichever the case, the coming of the Mark of the Beast would signify the end for the debate over proper humanness and the negotiation between difference and similarity within the one Yine community. In the Evangelical view, however, this would still only be a prologue to the final battle taking place at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.⁴²

The image of the Mark of the Beast can then be seen as a means for the Yine to negotiate both the socio-moral value of equal opportunities and to frame the difficulties within the community. In the present, the lack of unity

⁴² Some Evangelicals remarked that the inequalities in this life did not matter because all wealth would be taken away when the Mark of the Beast arrives. What the Evangelicals would then gain was an eternal life in heaven, whereas the Catholics would lose everything they owned upon the Second Coming of Jesus Christ following the Antichrist. Nevertheless, I do not think that the image of the Antichrist was in the first place a means for the Evangelicals to justify their underprivileged situation in the community.

in the community prevented people from 'living well' among their kin and inhibited the ongoing generation of relatedness and sociality that would ensure the common point of view so important for defending the Yine from the dangers of their surrounding socio-moral world. Such common human condition would not have been important only in relation to protecting the Yine people from different non-human persons, but would also have enabled them to efficiently fight for their rights and position in relation to different human actors of their socio-economic and political environment – such as mestizo loggers, for instance. In the current situation this was not, however, possible. The community was not united and different problems prevailed. Even though seeing each other as legitimate Yine people, the Catholics and Evangelicals considered people like themselves to be still more properly so.⁴³ This was also the reason why both the Catholics and Evangelicals in Diamante considered each other to be 'different but the same'.

⁴³ A similar observation was made by Ricardo Alvarez (1972: 356) when he stated that the different Yine (Piro) subgroups say of each other: 'They are Piro but they are not really Piro in the way we are.' See also Fajardo (1999: 442–443) for a corresponding case among the Tiriyó.

Discussion: different but the same

This study has been about the process of trying to understand what the Yine people living in the Amazonian community of Diamante meant when they said that the two Christian churches in the community – Catholic and Evangelical – and their adherents were ‘different but the same’. One might ask, however, why is it about the *process*? Instead of long discussions on non-humans, could not the study have been written by concentrating on the relationship between Catholics and Evangelicals and on their visibly Christian practices using material relating to the wide non-human world only for evincing arguments and illustrating points made? It surely could have. Such an approach would probably have resulted in a very different kind of ethnography than the one presently at hand. Just providing an answer to the question was not, however, my objective. As noted in the Introduction, people’s understandings of their world and the worlds of others are always partial. Consequently, what becomes focal in ethnographic research is not first and foremost concluding but the process of research itself. Conclusions are, in my view, just intermediate stopping points from which we can redirect and continue the journey. It has therefore been my intention to make manifest to the reader the process as a result of which I have been able to shed light on the above-mentioned puzzle. Although it is evident that an ethnographic (or any other) research process includes a great amount of to-ing and fro-ing, of detours and impasses leading nowhere, and that it is not possible or necessary to display them all, I have wished to show the ways in which understanding has been generated during the process and how I have arrived at the interpretations presented in the research.

The process of research is made visible for the reader at two levels. At the level of minutiae I have tried to show how the research, the ethnographic texture, has become woven from moments. How something at first insignificant or perplexing – such as for instance food being served at a wake or adults supporting their children in fighting – becomes understandable and significant when further moments are merged into the texture. In this way too deadlocks in the research process become significant. They force one’s exploratory perception to be redirected into searching for keys to understanding elsewhere, as was seen for example in Chapter 5 in relation to my attempt to comprehend the entry of Western biomedical elements into Yine *toé* imagery. This does not mean that all controversies and people’s differing views emerging during the research have been explained away or reasoned out. They remain part of the texture, making it intricate just as human life in general is. Furthermore, the fabric created of moments, which is thus constantly in motion, becomes also the background against which interpretations are made. This entails that the research material and interpretations are necessarily a product of interaction between the researcher and the people under study.

When looked at from a greater distance, the research process has

been made visible at the level of the structure of the study. The chapters of the study have proceeded from examining the production of personhoods and the ways in which the boundary between different kinds of persons is being constantly drawn and redrawn in the context of human–non-human relations, to exploring the relations between Evangelicals and Catholics as being based on these same principles. The methodological observation that the field of human–non-human relations was an arena not only for negotiating personhoods but also for discussing the relationships between Evangelicals and Catholics led me to understand that the reason for the controversies between the Evangelicals and the Catholics in Diamante was to be found largely in the negotiation of what it means to be a corporeally and socio-morally proper Yine person.

In the seven chapters forming the main body of this study I have examined the ways in which persons are formed and transformed in the Yine social cosmos and how the Yine demarcate the boundaries of proper human existence: how they evaluate people's human condition. The three chapters in Part I of the study examined Yine relations with souls of the dead, the grey brocket deer and the Mother of the White-Lipped Peccaries and the socio-moral values of sharing, proximity and tranquillity, respectively. The four chapters in Part II concentrated on the figures of the hand-whistler and siren, the Mother of *Toé*, God and the Mark of the Beast, and discussed the socio-moral values of excess (negative value), the ability to cure, going ahead and having equal opportunities. The chapters in Part I differed from those in Part II in that it was only in relation to the human–non-human relations discussed in the latter part that the differences between Evangelicals and Catholics were negotiated. This, I suggest, was due to the areas of life dealt with in these relations. The non-humans discussed in Part II were all in one way or another considered closely related with those processes of modernisation the people in Diamante had to deal with in their everyday lives: changes in local economics, in medical practices and in the educational field and the increased availability of modern commodities, for instance.

In what follows, I shall discuss the most focal methodological and theoretical implications and outcomes of this research. These observations focus upon the three research questions presented in the Prologue: How are persons formed and transformed socially, corporeally and morally in the Yine world? How is people's proper human condition evaluated among the Yine? And how can Yine Christianities be understood through this negotiation of proper humanity? I shall first examine the Yine notion and construction of the person. Second, I shall consider the methodology used for studying personhoods in the Yine world, and especially the role of socio-moral valuing in the constitution and demarcation of proper persons. Third, I shall pull together the observations made in regard to the Amerindian perspectivist theory, and last, return to the question of the two churches in Diamante being different but the same.

Construction of persons in the Yine social cosmos

As noted in the Introduction, the study of the notion of *person* has a long history in ethnographic research. Some kind of condensation of anthropological interest in this topic was experienced in the 1980s with the publication (and reprinting) of several works on the different aspects of personhood (e.g. Bloch 1988; Bloch & Parry 1982; Carrithers & al. 1985; Fortes 1987; Leenhardt 1979; Strathern 1988). Since then, the notion of person has remained a much examined subject in the field, not least because of the wide interest that has risen in the notion of the body (Csordas 1994; Strathern 1996; Strathern & Lambek 1998: 5–13; Turner 1995). It has been argued that the body has succeeded the person as the principal focus in anthropology (Strathern 1994). In my view, however, instead of succeeding the interest in the concept of the person, the emphasis on the notion of the body has *revitalised* this interest. In Amazonian anthropology, for instance, the general emphasis on the body has produced a thriving interest in studying Amazonian personhoods and their construction from a variety of standpoints (e.g. Conklin 1995; 1996; Conklin & Morgan 1996; Griffiths 2001; Henley 2001; Lima 1999; McCallum 1996; 1997; Perrin 1992; Pollock 1996; Rival 1998; 2005; Storrie 2003; Taylor 1996; Turner 1994; 1995; Vilaça 2002; 2005; Viveiros de Castro 1998).

The movement during the past few decades in ethnography has been away from the study of bodies (and minds) as empirical things or analytical themes towards the examination of embodiment as the existential ground of culture and persons (Csordas 1994: 6). In other words, the movement has been away from the objectifying ‘anthropology of the body’ towards the more phenomenological focus on the condition of embodiment (Strathern & Lambek 1998; Csordas 1990). This does not mean that we would, or should, do away with the separation between the body and the mind. Rather, we just need to see it not as an ontological fact but as an analytical tool and consider the possibility that it is the body and not the mind which is the source of subjectivity – a possibility which in Amazonian anthropology has recently been examined under the heading of Amerindian perspectivism discussed in the following section. Bodies are thus no longer to be seen as objects but as subjects of culture (Csordas 1994; Strathern 1996).

I have, however, wished to examine embodiment among the Yine in the two manners described above. First, I have explored the way the Yine conceptualised the different parts making up persons and their views on the relations between these parts. Second, I have viewed embodiment as the process of becoming, as the process in which human bodies are formed and transformed. These two forms of embodiment interrelate with the two principal oppositions used in this work for studying the notion of the person among the Yine: body vs. mind and individuality vs. relationality. A further differentiation has still been made between the latter opposition and that between individualism and sociality.

In relation to the body–mind dichotomy, it was revealed that the Yine view of the constitution of persons was parallel to the apprehension common in Amazonia, according to which ‘the mind (the capacity to reason,

which gives agency, judgement and intent) is fully embodied, hence part and continuous with the body in a way that the soul (the life force) is not' (Rival 2005: 295; see also McCallum 1996). The Yine approximate equivalents for these terms, the body, the soul and the mind were *gimane*, *samenchi* and *nshinikanchi*, respectively. For analytical purposes I have sometimes used this tripartition and at other times either viewed *samenchi* and *nshinikanchi* together forming what I have termed a *relational self* – the counterpart of the body, or considered *nshinikanchi* and *gimane* as constituting the Yine corporeal agency. The research material I constructed among the Yine people of Diamante affirmed the view previously presented by Peter Gow (2000) on the nature of *samenchi* and *nshinikanchi*. Gow described the former as the 'radical experience of personal uniqueness' and the latter as 'embodied intersubjectivity'. It was shown how *samenchi* comes within the reach of people's experiences and perception for instance in dreams, in experiences induced by psychoactives, when a person dies and when a small child's *samenchi* follows the father to the forest. It is an experience of personal uniqueness in a sense that it cannot generate relationality but can only act on the relations the person has formerly established. But *samenchi* is not entirely unsocial: it tries to act socially without being able to do so. A *samenchi* separated from the body at death harasses the living it is attached to because it has lost its ability for a transgradient view: it cannot perceive the living persons as belonging to a nexus of social relations but is overwhelmed by its own relation to them. As embodied intersubjectivity *nshinikanchi*, on the other hand, is the more established yet partible side of the relational self: it is one with the body. As discussed in Chapter 1, it is the will, memory and respect for others – or human agency – generated in a person at childhood through corporeal interaction, especially through sharing food and through living close to other persons. *Nshinikanchi*, in a sense, is the person's comprehension of 'being one's body'.

Although different in their characteristics, neither *samenchi* nor *nshinikanchi* were found to be separate from each other or from the body, *gimane*. First, the two parts of the relational self are interconnected. As seen above, after becoming separated from the body at death, *samenchi* still retains the relations the person has formed during their lifetime. If *samenchi* were totally disconnected from the corporeal *nshinikanchi*, it would not – owing to its inability to generate relatedness – have any opportunities to interact with its living kin after death. It is therefore in a way one with *nshinikanchi*. Second, even though capable of leaving the body, *samenchi* is not separate from the body either. For instance, when an animal takes vengeance on the *samenchi* of a child that has followed the father to hunting or fishing, the baby at home begins to cry and have somatic symptoms even before the father has returned from the trip. The *samenchi* is connected to the body as if it was something akin to gum: it stretches endlessly but does not break loose. But it is not only connected to the body: it also is the body, although in a different way than *nshinikanchi* (cf. Viveiros de Castro 2002b: 443n36). This became clear to me when I tried to understand one woman's narration of one of the Yine men having seen a soul of a dead, *samenchi*, walking in the community during the night

time. I assumed at first – clearly influenced by my cultural background – that the soul had been an immaterial ghost. But when the woman explained how she had asked the man why he had not gone and caught the *samenchi* I began to understand that in the Yine view souls of the dead were not immaterial. Further evidence for this was provided by the elderly Yine people's view according to which the souls on a narrow path on their way to heaven poked the trees by their side, thus making the nectar-sucking bees fly. *Samenchis* were therefore material beings retaining also the person's physical appearances. As *samenchi* preserves the memories of social relations generated through *nshinikanchi*, it thus also retains the form of *gimane*, the body. Consequently, although analytically separated, the parts of this triad cannot be disunited; the relational self is fully embodied.

However, my principal interest in regard to embodiment has not lain at this level of the embodied condition of persons. More importantly than seeing embodiment as a state of being, I have considered it fundamental to becoming. By concentrating on embodiment as becoming we can turn our attention towards the formation and transformation of persons. In this form embodiment can be best accessed in relation to the second principal opposition in the examination of the notion of the person, namely that between individuality and relationality. Before going into embodiment as becoming I wish to examine this division between individuality and relationality in more detail.

Despite the (past?) tendency of researchers to over-generalise and thus to lose sight of variation within societies, it is nowadays commonly acknowledged that in all societies people incorporate both individual and relational aspects and that societies differ in the position, weight and visibility granted to these aspects. It thus becomes the task of research to study the relationship between these two aspects by exposing the conditions 'under which dividual and individual aspects of personhood emerge and are hidden' (LiPuma 1998: 61). It is important to take notice here of the difference between individualism and individuality. While concentration on the first directs attention towards the tension between people's individual desires and social benefits, focus on the latter produces information on the nature of their relationship with other persons in a given society. Although my primary interest has been on the notions of individuality and relationality, the different chapters in this study have also revealed interfaces at which individualism and sociality have been negotiated. For instance, in relation to money and physical power received from the hand-whistler it was shown how the construction of sociality was considered possible only by the mastery over individual aspirations and the consequent domestication of the assets. Similarly, as shown in Chapter 7, the Yine did not consider themselves as having many means to collectively secure equal opportunities for going ahead economically for every family and therefore it was left to the domain of personal self-rule (e.g. decisions to give everybody an equal opportunity to weave palm roof elements) to ensure this equality and thus to produce tranquil social living. Individuals' self-determination was therefore a precondition for successful and tranquil social life. This corresponds to the widely cited view presented by Overing

& Passes (2000a), according to which it is only through personal autonomy that sociality in Amazonia can be constructed.

In this research, however, I have mainly operated in the field of the dynamics between individuality and relationality. From an ontological point of view, I have demonstrated how among the Yine individuality as a condition was dependent upon relatedness. Yine interaction with the souls of the dead discussed in Chapter 1 revealed that in the Yine social cosmos a person cannot be an individual without being related to others. The *samenchis* that were not related or known to the living were shown to be devoid of individual characteristics. They could not be identified but melted into the large mass of unrecognisable souls. On the contrary, the known and recognisable *samenchis* retained their individual form and social connections. Individuality, among the Yine, was then a condition granted only for those who are in relation to others. If in Amazonia, as the present and various other ethnographies demonstrate, humanity is a multiple condition, so is individuality.

But a more dynamic view of the relationship between individuality and relationality and of the significance of this dichotomy for Yine social life is produced when examining the dialectical pair from the point of view of corporeality. It is at this level that embodiment can also be conceptualised as becoming rather than being. In this study, understanding of Yine bodies as subjects has been generated by approaching Yine attitudes towards the body from two directions: the phenomenological theorising of the body and the theory of Amerindian perspectivism. As a result, a view has emerged of Yine bodies as loci of persons' perspective or point of view; of Yine bodies which are inexorably open to the world and constantly being formed in relation to other bodies (Conklin 2001a; Henley 2001; Pollock 2004). Bodies in the Yine world, as in many other Amazonian worlds, are never ready or complete. This quality of the bodies made people's lives in Diamante excessively uncertain. Since the perspective lay in the body, and the bodies' openness made them vulnerable to non-human influence, the Yine were constantly in need of reaffirming their proper human point of view by interacting socially among similars. The construction of bodies and thus personhoods took place in corporeal interaction through the embodiment of meanings, socio-moral values and qualities attached to different actions and substances circulating between persons. These qualities and meanings did not, however, become embodied in persons as such but as potentialities and capacities for action.¹ They were therefore both embodied in socio-corporeal interaction and also actualised only in interaction between persons. As people in this way got themselves from others (Bakhtin 1990: 13–17) bodies (i.e. persons) in the Yine social cosmos were first and foremost relational.

Nevertheless, although the basic tone of corporeality among the Yine was relational, there was also an individual side to Yine bodies. This

¹ One set of potentialities and capacities, which have been largely left outside this research, and which will deserve more attention in the future, is that related to gender (see Gregor & Tuzin 2001a; McCallum 2001; Vilaça 2005).

became visible in the many instances when the Yine tried to protect their bodies by closing them from (certain kinds of) outside influences: for instance by not thinking of loved ones when alone and by retreating from sharing food and from sexual relations before taking *toé*. The Yine people did not therefore just passively give in to their vulnerability caused by the openness of their bodies but actively tried to control it by both participation and non-participation in social interaction and the regulation of the degree of the openness of their bodies. Nevertheless, while the Yine could for short periods of time give priority to the individuality of their bodies, the relatedness of the body was still the predominant condition. The Yine could not for instance easily retire into their shells, to be by themselves with the aim of self-reflection and re-integration because solitude was exactly the condition in which they were at their most vulnerable, in their most open state. The above discussion suggests, then, that – as Edward LiPuma (1998: 57) has previously noted – persons emerge precisely from the tension between relational and individual aspects of bodies and relationships. In the following section I shall examine the way in which this emergence of persons has been studied in this work.

Fields of value – methodological considerations

The present study has continued the socio-cultural stream of value studies, which aims at examining what in a given society is considered good and desirable and how values and valuing these things is connected to corporeality, agency and personhood in general. Within the field of Amazonian anthropology this kind of approach to values has been common and in particular during the past decade a number of studies which take cognisance of the aspect of valuing have been produced. Nevertheless, the study of values and valuing in the Amazonian context still appears to have been left in a strange position. On the one hand, values and valuing are much written about and have become central to many arguments but, on the other, researchers have rarely studied them in any systematic manner (but see Turner 1979a; 1979b; 2002; 2003; Uzendoski 2004) or even explicitly laid out for the reader their understanding of the notion of value(s). Considering the basic requirement in research of defining and making transparent the concepts used, such practice seems peculiar. Given that the notion of value(s) may be used in a variety of ways for multiple purposes,² leaving it undefined

² To give an example of different usages of the notion of value, my approach to values and valuing in this study has differed considerably for instance from the project of Terence Turner (1979a; 1979b; 2002; 2003), who has developed a theory of the production of social values in Amazonia. The dissimilarity derives in large part from the difference in aims: while Turner sets out to explain the dynamics of Kayapó social hierarchy and thus to see how through surplus value extraction individual persons become 'superior' to others in their authority and social influence, my task has been to generate understanding on the meaning of socio-moral values in the Yine production of proper persons through examining the ways in which the values are being negotiated in human-non-human relations. In short (and simplifying), as Turner has concentrated on the question of who is *the most influential* person in a society, my aim has been to study who, according to the Yine, *is* a person.

not only diminishes its analytical power but also creates confusion. In this research, the understanding of values and valuing has been produced at the interface of the research questions posed, the close study of research material and literature.

Just as the dynamics between difference and sameness have proved fundamental for the social organisation and cosmology of many Amazonian peoples, so too was Yine social life very much grounded in the opposition between becoming other and what I have termed the 'ultimate goal' of Yine social life, making others similar. It was this opposition, the attempt to ensure a proper human condition both on a personal and a social level, which motivated the Yine into valuing certain characteristics of their socio-corporeal and moral life.³ In the present research I have studied this process and the valued characteristics, which I have termed socio-moral values. Socio-moral values have been defined as desired conditions of social interaction turned towards the ongoing production of society and proper persons. They do not exist apart from human agency and as basic constituents of human corporeal points of view they become, as discussed above, embodied in interaction as capacities to act in a morally approved way. It was in pursuing their values that the Yine expressed who they were as persons and through which their moral, and thus human, condition was evaluated. The socio-moral values that emerged from the research material as something the Yine in Diamante pursued and which came to be examined in this study were sharing, proximity, tranquillity, ability to cure and to go ahead in life, having equal opportunities and the negative value of excess.

I have examined the (moral) construction of persons among the Yine primarily in the field of value of human–non-human relations. The notion of field of value was adopted from the moral philosopher Graham Nerlich (1989), who considered fields of value to be those spheres of human life where people's values are lived out and are negotiated, revitalised or possibly dismissed and where people's moral condition can be evaluated. It is exactly this double nature Nerlich assigns to the field of value which made it a suitable tool for the present research. Examining social interaction in

³ The approach employed echoes also the value theorising of Charles Nuckolls (1998). According to Nuckolls, culture can be understood as partial solutions to 'problems that can never be solved' caused by oppositions between equally desirable values pulling in different directions. In his view, the motivation of valuing lies in the desire to solve these value contradictions – a dialectics that makes cultures dynamic. Although we can in a sense see this kind of contradiction at play among the Yine of Diamante as well – in the opposition between difference and similarity – we should avoid what I see as the danger in Nuckolls's project, namely the reduction of human social life to actions revolving around a single dialectic relation. I hope to have shown in this study that Yine everyday social life was by no means simple but extremely diversified. Despite the unquestionable significance the above-mentioned opposition seems to have for the Yine, their daily lives were still full of other meaningful contradictions, values to be cultivated and negotiated and topics to be discussed. I see human lives in general as so complex in nature that single contradictions can never suffice to fully account for or explain them. Moreover, the Yine case has demonstrated that values do not motivate human action only when opposed to other values but that there are other interrelated, but more subtle, ways in which the processes of valuing can be seen as dynamic and motivational, such as the differences in the content different groups of people (e.g. Evangelicals and Catholics) give to the same values.

the field of value of human–non-human relations made it possible on the one hand to study the socio-moral values the Yine pursued in their lives and view how the Yine themselves used this field for evaluating others as pursuers of these values, and on the other to access the differing contents the Evangelicals and Catholics in Diamante gave to some of their shared socio-moral values (cf. Gershon 2006: 148). There are, however, two issues in which I have departed from (or amplified) Nerlich’s view. First, instead of seeing people acting out their values in only certain fields, I consider socio-moral values to be constantly lived out in people’s everyday action. Fields of value are therefore positioned only as those arenas where valuing is made *particularly* visible and accessible to others. Second, if we accept that valuing makes people who they are and that socio-moral values are intrinsically corporeal and are actualised only in bodily interaction, these fields of value become not only loci for making moral evaluations but also sites for negotiating personhoods more generally.

But what it is then that makes human–non-human relations such fields of value among the Yine? Aparecida Vilaça (2005: 451; see Descola 2001) has noted that ‘[t]he question of humanity is so central in Amazonia that the human/non-human opposition . . . ends up encompassing all others. It therefore comprises the key idiom for expressing difference in general.’⁴ The present work has provided further evidence for the centrality of the distinction between humans and non-humans as an important organising element in indigenous Amazonian societies. However, although I agree with Vilaça when it comes to the significance of the question of humanity for Amazonian peoples, I do not think the question of demarcating the boundaries of proper humanity should be understood as something belonging exclusively to the context of human–non-human relations. Rather, as shown in this study, defining humanity is central also to human-to-human relations. Keeping bodies human is a task with which people are constantly engaged in their daily lives. What thus becomes the central organising element of Yine social life is not the human–non-human opposition but rather the demarcation between proper and improper humanity (or personhoods). This kind of approach allows the consideration of a variety of aspects, including the much-debated aspect of gender, in the question of similarity and difference in Amazonian social life. Having said that, however, I must emphasise that given the fundamentality of human–non-human relations in Amazonian lived worlds, these relations do form an excellent window for exploring the demarcation of the boundaries of (proper) humanity in Amazonian societies.

In order to approach the socio-moral and corporeal formation of persons in Yine lived worlds, the concentration on the field of value of human–non-human relations has thus proved fruitful and possibly an applicable method especially in the Amazonian context. Although the approach is limited in a sense that not necessarily all people’s central values get their expression or are negotiated in the field of human–non-human relations and may therefore be omitted, the present study has proved the

⁴ For a critique of this view from a gender perspective see Rival 2005.

approach to be profitable in various ways. First, it operates on the human-non-human axis which is so central – although not perhaps the most central – to Amazonian peoples. Second, as knowledge about the non-human realm is manifested and realised both in mythic narratives and through personal experiences and narrating, it becomes possible to take into account and appreciate the many forms of and media for communicating human socio-cultural experience. Third, as the human–non-human relations are one of the principal arenas for relating to and appropriating changes (for instance the processes of modernisation, as shown in Chapters 4 and 5), these relations are also suitable for examining transformations taking place in the meanings and contents people give to values. Last, by concentrating on action the approach enables research to take into account the different sides of socio-moral valuing: corporeality, morality, emotions and knowledge. Furthermore, through this field of value we may also incorporate into our examination the perspectivist logic central to demarcating the boundary between human and non-human existence.

Perspectivism and epistemological dynamics

As has been described for many other Amazonian ontologies, there was quite explicit evidence in my research material for the perspectivist nature of Yine ontology. In addition to the various Yine myths in which non-human beings perceive their surroundings from a human perspective, in today's world different non-human persons of the Yine socio-moral cosmos were understood to experience their world as a human world. For instance, what for the Yine were different species of fish were everyday utensils such as graters and paddles for the siren and what for humans appeared as a space in between aerial roots of a tree or *ojé* fruits, for the grey brocket deer were a house and lollipops, respectively. However, while these examples underpin the basic perspectival setting described for instance by Viveiros de Castro (1998) for Amerindian animistic ontologies, the Yine material also demonstrates that as such the theory is too rigid to account for the considerable amount of variation in particularities and especially for the vagueness and indeterminacy of people's views on for instance the nature of social life led by non-human beings. Not only does the theory need to take into consideration other aspects than corporeality central to the construction of persons (such as morality, for instance), it should also allow more diversity when it comes to the characteristics of distinct social cosmoses. Even though perspectivism has during the past ten years been approached from various angles and in relation to indigenous peoples representing many different language families (e.g. Arawakan speaking Matsigenka, Manchineri and Yanesha, Tupi speaking Juruna, Tupi-Guarani speaking Araweté, Witotoan speaking Muinane, Txapakuran speaking Wari'

and Huaruani [language isolate])⁵ I think we are still at an incipient state in understanding Amazonian (perspectivist) ontologies. More research is required for instance on the differing ways discussed above in which ‘souls’ are attached to ‘bodies’ (Rival 2005; Rosengren 2005; 2006a) in Amazonia and the implications of this variation for perspectivist theorising. I think the outcome of further research on the attachment of the soul to the body among different Amazonian peoples may be – and as the many perceptive addresses on perspectivism (Londoño-Sulkin 2005; Rival 2005; Rosengren 2005; 2006a; Santos-Granero 2005; 2006) already indicate – that under the umbrella term of Amerindian perspectivist theory we have a variety of (subtly) different perspectival logics operating in Amazonia.

In the present study, the contemplation of the human–non-human interaction in general, and the relation between the triad *gimane-nshinikanchi–samenchi* and Yine perspectival logic in particular, has disclosed at least four interrelated points relevant for the discussion on perspectivism. First, the Yine examples revealed that not all corporeal changes taking place in social interaction and discussed in the framework of perspectivism are due to homogenous processes. Thus far, the notions of metamorphosis and transformation of a perspective have been used largely interchangeably in literature. The Yine material suggests, however, that these are two distinct processes. With the term metamorphosis, I have described the process in which a person’s outer appearances change without (significantly) affecting the person’s corporeal point of view – or the relational self. The metamorphosed body works in the first place as a mask, as a medium for communication. Examples of such metamorphoses are found for instance in many mythic narratives and in cases in which the grey brocket deer is said to have taken human form. The notion of transformation, on the other hand, I have used for depicting the process in which a person’s corporeal point of view changes into another in a (relatively) slow process, profoundly influencing the whole complex comprising the body and the relational self. Examples of transformations were cases when a human person’s point of view changed or began to change owing to encountering either a metamorphosed grey brocket deer or for instance a siren or hand-whistler.⁶ The two processes, metamorphosis and transformation, thus differed from each other not only in relation to their composition but also epistemologically. While metamorphoses accentuated the deceiving nature of bodies in the Yine social cosmos, transformations spoke for the reverse: the true condition of a person – or a person’s body – could be verified (to

⁵ See Rosengren 2005; 2006a; Virtanen 2007; Santos-Granero 2005; 2006; Lima 1999; 2000; Viveiros de Castro 1998; 2004; Londoño-Sulkin 2005; Vilaça 2002a; 2005 and Rival 2005, respectively.

⁶ But as these three cases mentioned demonstrate, not all transformations are uniform either. They vary in regard to the length and comprehensiveness of the process. Whereas the point of view of a person encountering a grey brocket deer is thought to transform rather quickly and thoroughly, a human person living with a siren may still after a long time remember his human family and crave for their company. A man who has received great physical powers from a hand-whistler and who has successfully domesticated them may have his perspective transformed only to the extent that he is able to continue living with his human kin while also socialising with hand-whistlers.

a certain extent) by examining the types of social relations in which the person had been involved and the person's actions in relation to others. Although metamorphosis did not thus include a comprehensive change of a person's point of view, together with transformation it formed a dynamic pair in which the Yine perspectival logic became visible and was materialised in action.

The difference between these two processes leads us to my second point. What appeared to be focal in perspectival logics for the Yine of Diamante was not ontology but epistemology. The Yine people were not in the first place interested in recounting differences between distinct beings' perspectives such as those described above. Instead, they were extremely concerned about the difficulty of knowing other persons' true point of view and were continuously dealing with the consequences of this epistemological uncertainty in their daily lives. Even though constantly reproducing their human points of view in everyday communal life, the Yine could never be absolutely certain of the true condition of other people (on similar problems in the Melanesian context see Leenhardt [1979]). While people could by and large rely on the people they lived with having a similar corporeal human perspective to their own, it did not rule out the possibility that the other people were not, in fact, what they appeared to be. A person encountered in the woods whom one seemed to know could just as well be an animal deceptively metamorphosed into a human being. Alternatively, a person might have a different point of view owing to their clandestine engagement in another, illegitimate, set of social relations. It was the tension created by the co-existence of these two processes, metamorphosis and transformation, which made Yine social life uncertain.

Third, while Viveiros de Castro's original formulation of the theory of Amerindian perspectivism (1998) placed visual experience in a central role in evaluating the nature of a person's perspective (Santos-Granero 2005; 2006) – judgements were made on the basis of how a person viewed the world and what the differing bodily dispositions enabled the person to do – among the Yine equally, if not even more, important in this respect was the *morality* of a person's actions (see also Londoño-Sulkin 2005; Storrie 2003; Vilaça 2006: 258). Whereas a person's visible appearance could be deceptive, the difference in moral condition could not so easily be concealed. Even though morality was bound to corporeality and a human person's deviant moral condition could become revealed on the surface of the body (for instance as boils), it was immoral action, which most undeniably unmasked especially non-humans' true moral condition. This conforms to earlier observations made by Amazonian anthropologists, according to which in judging the identity of a being 'behaviour is a better guide than appearances' (Peter Rivière cited in Griffiths 2001: 257). Therefore, if not identified on the basis of the incompletely metamorphosed body, the cases examined in this research demonstrated how a person encountered could be recognised for instance as a grey brocket deer by its pronounced desire for sex and unwillingness to live close to others. The taking into account of this kind of immoral behaviour and the actions of non-human beings was also in the research shown to have a further implication for perspectivist

theorising. The research indicated that instead of there being one single human perspective common to all humans and non-humans, there in fact seem to be many subtly different human perspectives, at least in the Yine social cosmos. This is why, even though many non-humans were said to be persons, they were not real human persons.

Last, the research has demonstrated that the study of perspectival logics should not be restricted only to the sphere of human–non-human relations. If we accept that perspectivism is a fundamental principle underlying socio-moral interaction in many Amerindian societies, and that interaction between different kinds of persons operates from the same premises, it follows that it is unlikely that perspectivism would be left to work solely in the domain of human–non-human relations. As this study has shown and as will be further discussed below, among the Yine too the socio-moral differences between Catholics and Evangelicals were conceptualised as a difference in their corporeal perspectives. What future studies on perspectivism thus need to take better cognisance of is the workings of perspectival logics at the level of everyday social life. Tied to corporeality and agency, a perspectival logic materialises only in moments of social interaction, whether between humans or between humans and non-humans. It is these moments that we should in the first place study.

Yine Christianities as differing corporeal perspectives

As discussed in the Introduction, Christianity remained outside the main interest of anthropological research for the greater part of the twentieth century. It was largely due to a tendency to assume that Christianity was somehow obvious and a familiar phenomenon, which – when spreading to new locations – did not require explaining (Cannell 2006a: 3). In recent years, however, Christianity has been brought from the margins (at least close) to the centre of the field of anthropology. It has been acknowledged that ‘when locality encounters Christianity, it is never obvious in advance what that “Christianity” is; it can be defined only in reference to its own historical development’ (Cannell 2006a: 43; see Tomlinson & Engelke 2006.) Such observations have rendered non-Western Christianities something worth studying and have generated a growing interest especially in situations of contact or encounter between local worlds and Christianity.

In the Amazonian context it has also been the contact situations which have attracted the greatest attention. Researchers have studied on the one hand how indigenous and missionising logics resonate or conflict with each other, and on the other the millenarian and messianic movements that have often followed these contact situations. However, when the Christian and indigenous logics have appeared to conform to each other to a great extent and people have become Christians, the interest in indigenous Christianities has usually abated. This is, however, exactly the kind of condition I have sought to study (see also e.g. Almeida 2004; Capiberibe 2007; and articles in Wright 1999b and 2004b). In contrast to the cases

in which Christian proselytising has led to a situation where two or more contesting moral discourses or logics have come to exist within a single society (Robbins 2004a; Morgado 1999; see Howell 1997a), among the Yine of Diamante Christianity was not, in any drastic manner, conceived of as contradictory of their socio-moral understandings. Discussing the Yine encounter with SIL missionaries in the Urubamba area after the *hacienda*-period, Peter Gow (2006: 221–222) states that ‘it would seem that Piro people did not experience Evangelical Christianity to be a new religion, in the sense of a new set of beliefs or as a cosmology. Evangelical Christianity was simply their own cosmology better explained by people who knew more about it.’ Correspondingly in Diamante, even though there certainly were irresolvable issues related to Christianity, which caused discomfort and confusion – such as life in heaven without family life – the Christian ideals did not form a competing moral sphere (cf. Gershon 2006).⁷

The contribution I have sought to make with the present research to the field of the anthropological study of Christianity is thus threefold. First, I have wished to make Amazonia more visible among the ever-growing body of anthropological studies on non-Western Christianities, and second, I have sought to emphasise the importance of the study of *present-day* indigenous Christianities in the field of Amazonian anthropology by trying to understand what Christianity means for Amazonian indigenous people, particularly for the Yine. What do the Yine consider to be the core of their Christianity and what do they consider themselves to be doing when practising their Evangelical or Catholic religion? In short, what do they mean when they identify themselves as Christians? (Cf. Harris 2006; Keller 2006.) Third, and related to the second point, I have intended to establish some ground – or preliminary criteria – for the comparative study of Amazonian Christianities.

The community of Diamante was proved a fruitful terrain for the task. What was different from many previous studies examining discrepancies between people belonging to the same ethnic group but subscribing to two different denominations was that whereas in these previous settings Catholics and Protestants inhabited different communities (e.g. Almeida 2004; Alvarez 1972; Fajardo 1999; Gow 2001; 2006; Kapfhammer 2004), in the case of the Yine of Diamante they lived in a single community (for a corresponding case see Veiga 2004). Consequently, the everyday life in the village was filled with situations where the Yine had to draw the line between their different Christianities, thus exposing the interface not only between the two denominations but also between proper and improper humanity. It was through understanding this interconnectedness of Christianity and the definition of a person among the Yine that the meanings people attributed to their religious practices and what they meant when they said they were Christians (or rather Evangelicals and Catholics) began to unravel. This proved also to be the key to understanding the question

⁷ This did not mean that Christianity was not also conceived in terms of discontinuity rather than continuity (see Harris 2006; Robbins 2007). The coming of the Word of God and the expected Second Coming and the arrival of the Antichrist were definitely considered as moments of discontinuity by the Yine.

posed in the Prologue concerning the attitude held by both Yine Catholics and Evangelicals according to which the two churches in Diamante were 'different but the same'.

This account was shown to derive from people's differing views on what it means to be a corporeally and socio-morally proper Yine person. For the Yine, Catholicism and Evangelicalism were different points of view, different moral and corporeal perspectives. The difference between these perspectives was an important factor contributing to the discrepancies in the social life of Diamante. Since Yine Catholics and Evangelicals living in the same community both considered themselves to be legitimately Yine and tried to generate a 'community of similars' (Overing 2003), the situation resulted in an (in this life) irresolvable contradiction. Although all Yine in the community were continuously being made similar by many corporeal and moral actions and sharing of substances – especially by those discussed in Part I – there were some measures which inhibited the uniting of the community. For the Catholics, especially drinking of fermented manioc beer and festive togetherness were necessary forms of ongoing social life (see Gow 2001). It was only through this kind of sociality that people could live well. For them, the generation of convivial social life here on earth seemed to be the main objective – not anything that might possibly come after that – and consequently, they deemed many of the Evangelical practices unnecessary for being proper Yine persons and proper Christians. For the Evangelicals, however, even though togetherness was considered vital for sociable communal life, proper Christian Yine persons were those who tried to ensure salvation through abstaining from excess drinking of fermented manioc beer (and of spirits) and by attending Christian worship at either church, so making their bodies Christian. Since persons were formed only in relation to other people, it was essential that people regularly engaged in Evangelical church activities and thus enforced their corporeal Evangelical point of view. It was exclusively through these activities that a person would be able to go ahead in life morally and achieve what the Evangelicals considered to be the ultimate purpose of living well: eternal life. To use Robbins's (2001b) vocabulary, the Evangelicals could be seen as 'everyday millenarianists', daily preparing themselves for the Second Coming by constantly making and trying to keep their bodies Christian. Since being a proper Yine person was a collective endeavour, these differences – combined with the social discrepancies between families and family members subscribing or not to the same Christian denomination (see also Wright 1999: 196) – made living in Diamante at times difficult; they were also negotiated in the field of human–non-human relations, as shown by the chapters in Part II. Although the Yine Evangelicals and Catholics did consider each other to be Yine, they viewed their own sect as being more properly so. The difference between Catholics and Evangelicals thus did not lie in their distinct practices or allegiances to different religious or political reference groups, as suggested for some Amazonian groups, but in more fundamental epistemological (and ontological) questions.

Although this study has not had as its aim to pursue the objectives set for the field of study that has come to be known as 'anthropology of

Christianity', that is, seeking to develop a set of shared questions for this field, certain commonalities in different Amazonian indigenous Christianities have arisen during the research process. It has been noted previously how conversion to Christianity in Amazonia is often not in the first place a question of individual choice but to a great extent a collective endeavour (e.g. Gow 2006; Pollock 1993; Vilaça 1997; Viveiros de Castro 2002a; Wright 1998). The present research has raised two further issues, which may serve as a ground for future comparative study of Amazonian Christianities. First, and related to the collective nature of conversion noted above, there is some evidence that the question of Christian salvation in Amazonia is fundamentally one about relatedness. I suggest that what we have in Amazonia are different soteriologies of relatedness, in which the images of heaven or life with God are seen either as solving the problem of social disintegration in people's earthly lives with the promise of an everlasting togetherness, or as causing bewilderment by offering only uncertainty about the continuity of social life after death. Second, although more studies are required on the applicability of the perspectival theory for analysing different human-to-human relations, the finding in the present study that perspectivism is not only something belonging to the field of cosmological relations but equally to that of organising Yine human-to-human relations, and especially the relations between adherents of different Christian denominations, may be an observation more widely applicable in the study of Christianity in Amazonia. Given the wide range of studies proving the universality of perspectivism in Amazonia, this socio-cultural logic may be found, in differing forms, to underlie many Amazonian indigenous interpretations of Christianity.

This study has in various different ways treated the dialectic between difference and similarity in the social life of the Yine people living in the community of Diamante, situated in south-eastern Peruvian Amazonia. The everyday social life in the community was largely directed towards the ongoing production of proper and similar Yine persons through pursuing and living out their central socio-moral values in corporeal interaction and through constantly drawing and redrawing the line between proper and improper humanity. Although during my visits to Diamante people were also trying to make me a proper human in their likeness, I could never be completely made one but vacillated between the two conditions of similarity and difference. Nevertheless, I hope that the Yine – when looking back at our journey together – are able to say that they managed to make me at least a bit more like them; someone who was 'different but the same'.

Appendix

This appendix contains two English texts and transcriptions of all interview extracts presented in the text separately in their transcribed Spanish language form.

Introduction

See page 11

Paul Fejos: *Report on the Exploration of the Region of the Rio Colorado Departamento de Madre de Dios by the Wenner Gren Scientific Expedition to Hispanic America 1940*, pp. 28–31.

The Pinguin Colony

All the inhabitants of the colony speak Spanish. They also speak one or two, of the neighboring (sic!) Indian dialects; that is Machiguenga, or Campa. Only the older people in the settlement can read or write. As the population has intermarried Machiguengas and Campas; they have – chiefly the younger people, – adopted many of the Indian customs. Such as painting the hand with Huito, and in many instances wearing painted designs on the face. (Mostly the women.) The oldest member of the colony is one: Anacleto Fernandez, 81 years of age, and Spanish of birth. He gave the information, that he has arrived to Peru in the early years of 1900 from Brazil. He has been collecting rubber on the northern shores and tributaries of the Madre de Dios, with nine companions. After the collapse of the rubber market, they decided to settle at the Manu river, – the present location of the colony. He is the authority of the colony, and settles disputes, etc. However; the colony at present seems to be completely under the influence and control of a haciennero, Sotirio Tercera; who owns the hacienda at the confluence of the Rio Carbon and the Alto Madre de Dios. Tercera has a contract arrangement with the colony to take over their entire tobacco crop, and supplies them with the necessary good and implements in trade.

Location: The colony is located immediately below the confluence of the Manu and Pinguin rivers. It is composed of 24 houses, – mostly built upon the Northern shores of the Manu river. The houses are surrounded with well kept, large chacras. They are built of hardwoods of the district, with palmthatched roofs. All the houses are built on stilts, of about 1 meter height. They are kept in perfect cleanliness, and comparatively well furnished.

Population: The settlement has 24 families. At an average each family has 3–4 children. The population shows an incline, as according to local information there are about 8–10 births per year, – as against the 1–2 deaths.

Health conditions: Health conditions are excellent. Malaria, dysentery, or other tropical diseases are unknown. The people are well nourished, clean in their habits.

Mode of Subsistence: Agricultural. In their well kept chacras they have rich harvests of all possible vegetables and fruits. Poultry farming is also practised, and with excellent success. The colony has also extensive tobacco fields. The tobacco crop is being exported several times a year, to the haciendas around the Rio Carbon, and also to the Pilcopata region. They transport the tobacco themselves, by the help of

their canoes, via the Alto Madre de Dios. They trade their wares for textiles, iron implements etc.

Security of the Settlement: According to the information gathered by the members of the colony, they live in security. The Mascho tribe never makes excursions farther, than the confluence of Manu and the Madre de Dios. The two Machiguenga tribes in the neighborhood of the settlement are friendly towards the Pinquin people; and are often hired by them, – to work in their chacras, or help with transportation on the river.

Needs of the Settlement: There are practically no urgent necessities. The Expedition has presented large amount of textiles, iron implements, medicines, matches, kerosene, etc. The settlers expressed wishes, that they would like to have a teacher, that the children could learn reading and writing. As none of the children up to the age of 12 were baptised, the Expedition has towed two canoe-load of them, to the basecamp at Manu, where Padre José Alvarez has baptised them. (Fejos 1940: 28–31.)

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Yo soy este, cómo se llama... evangelio. Yo recibo el Dios, pero yo tengo dos... cómo te digo, yo estoy bautizado con católico pero así mismo recibo también el evangelio ... (TKU/A/05/37a:8.)

Chapter 1

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Acá le hemos dejado un día elecciones, en abril, nueve de abril. . . . Estaba enfermo, yo no querría dejar porque yo tengo que sellar mi documento . . . Por eso le hemos dejado. . . . Hemos, hemos ido, el estaba solito, comiendo le hemos dejado, le hemos dejado su comida. 'No vas a ir allá, acá no más vas a estar', le hemos dicho . . . Yo no estuve tranquilo. De repente muertos le va a llevar . . . Era ya tarde cuatro de la tarde ya, vamos ya mama, yo creo de repente ya estará muerto este el abuelito de mi nietito, estuve preocupada. Hemos llegado, yo corriendo he dejado, estuve trayendo este comida para el . . . pero ese día ya no va a comer . . . Cuando he llegado: 'tío, tío', ya no me contesta ya, estaba echado en su hamaca . . . Digo:

— No tienes hambre, yo te he traído para ti, comida he traído, gallina he comprado gallina así lo que vende, ese he traído yo. . . .

Pero dijo:

— No quiero comer . . . Estoy lleno, la Eva ha venido acá, ha cocinado, allá tiene lo que estaba cocinando.

Eva es mi cuñada afinada . . .

— Ella estaba cocinando y me ha dado de comer este puro carachama. Estoy lleno. Pero no he visto candela, no hay nada, estaba muerto candela . . . Atrás ha ha llegado ya su su nuera . . . allí le digo:

— Por qué se va tu marido en vez que queda acá, el no ha ido, en vez que cuida su papa.

Yo no, por eso yo no querría votar, mi hijo no más me ha dicho. Por qué no vas a hacerle sellar tu libreto? Si no, no va a sellar, no vale. Por eso no más me he ido yo. Y al día siguiente ya no comía ya . . . ya va a morir ya. . . . A mi hija le estaba hablando: 'Este se ha ido a su casa llevando su olla para que coman' . . .

— Allí está, ahorita está pasando. Este mi nieta pregunta:

— Dónde, por camino no hay nada. De allí, tarde dice otra vuelta:

— Ya se ha ido ya, no has visto *mamitginro*? Aha, se ha ido ya a su casa, dice . . .

Y con ese se ha muerto. Le hemos dado de comer, al día siguiente mi hija ha matado gallina, todo. Su marido decía: ‘no hay nada para comer, mata su gallina para que come su suegra’ . . . Mi hija así ha hecho, nada, pero no comía . . . Verdad, ella no olvidaba a su suegro, por eso ella ahora siempre dice: ‘Yo no podía olvidar mi suegro’, así decía ella . . . Siempre venía a mi casa, acá en mi cocina y tenía maduro y decía: ‘Mami, voy a asar plátano’. . . Cuando termina de asar le daba a su nuera, a mi hija, por eso ella siempre recuerda y dice: ‘así hacía mi suegro, mama’. (TKU/A/04/56:2.)

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Mujer Me ha llevado una vez mi hermana: ‘vamos, vamos a buscar este wayo’. Yo atrás he venido . . . mis hermanas adelante se ha ido ya . . . y yo este... estuve mirando yo . . . mi mama está parada allí, mi mama estaba parada . . . He visto así igualito gente mi mama, parecía mi mama, mi mama propia . . . Yo he gritado a mi hermana, ‘hermana!’ Le digo, ‘está allá, está que cosa será acá, acá he visto no sé parece mi mama’, y ella contesta . . . ‘Como va a salir así la mama si está muerto?’ . . . Hace dos años que ha muerto mama . . . Yo no, asustada estaba y de allí hemos regresado vuelta, y mi hermana me dice: ‘ahora vas a morir ya’ . . . Ya más tarde, comienza tener fiebre fiebre, fuerte fuerte, yo, mi hermana le digo: ‘tengo fiebre, no sé que cosa, tengo fiebre’ y ella me dijo, ‘ahora te vas a morirte, porque a la mama te ha llevado en tu alma te ha llevado’, me dice . . . Y al día siguiente, toda la noche he, he vomitado este ... tenía fiebre y vómito tenía, fuerte fuerte. De allá, no quería comer ya, ya no quiero comer, y para nada, no tengo hambre. En la noche, cuando duermo venía mi mama, decía: ‘vamos ya hija, hija vamos ya, Usted te estuve buscando, tiempo te estoy buscando, ahora te he encontrado, ahora vamos ya.’ No quería . . . que me alcanzaba comida, no comía, porque mis hermanas me decían: ‘co..cuando te trae comida la mama en tu sueño, no vas a, no vas a recibir, porque ese no es comida de nosotros’ . . .

Minna Co.. cómo has sanado de eso?

Mujer Eso he sanado, con este . . . hay este hierba para cuando mira este alma, ese hierba tu te bañas, te ahuma, te salva, si

Minna Yhm, cómo se llama ese hierba?

Mujer Este ese hierba de este *shwamkalo* ... color rojo tiene, aha, y ese... y ese baña, ahuma, rápido te sana ... me ha bañado, me ha bañado dos veces, y dos veces me ha bañado, y con este he calmado un rato . . . Pero no voy a sanar . . . Y esta vez ya, toda la noche, toda la noche he soñado mi mama, clarito soñaba mi mama, clarito clarito. Duermo, otra vuelta aparecía mi mama en mi lado: ‘vamos ya hija, mira yo, mira yo vivo, yo estoy viviendo tranquilo, yo vivo feliz, tranquilo vivo’, decía mi mama. Yo decía, este, una noche quería recibir mi mama comida . . . tanto que me ofrecía comida y quería comer y me traía comida, pescado frito y... este, camote roja, camote roja, ese me traía, en un plato: ‘estas de hambre ya hija, come ya’, me decía mi mama en mi sueño. ‘Come ya, come ya, me decía mi mama.

Minna Pero no has comido?

Mujer No he comido. Es que mis hermanos me decían: 'no vas a comer, esa comida no es, no vale, esa no comida no vale, cuando tu te vas a comer esa comida, te vas a morirte', me dice. (TKU/A/04/43b:2.)

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He visto cuando se murió, cuando mi nieto, dice cuando ha venido ya, así alegre ha venido y me abrazó. Al día siguiente me he enfermado . . . todo mi cuerpo parecido golpeado con palo. . . . Mientras que no ha muerto todavía creo ha venido su alma. (TKU/A/05/50b:8.)

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Mujer De eso me he hecho bautizar a nombre del Señor. He hecho bautizar para no soñaría me, mi mama. . . . Cuando me he hecho bautizar ya no le soñaba ya nada, totalmente me ha dejado. . . . Pero un tiempo me ha dejado. Un tiempo comienza venir ya. He dormido, aparecía mi mama, he dormido, aparecía. No me ha dejado dormir para nada, nada. . . . Yo asustaba. No podía dormir solita, yo tenía que dormir con mi hermana [refa] lo que está abajo. . . . Aha, me ha molestado mi mama.

Minna Y cuando terminó a molestar?

Mujer Cuando he tenido mi hijo, mi este, mi hijo mayor. Ya no me viene ya. . . . Cómo a mi me querría llevar mi mama! [Refa.] . . .

Minna Pero por qué quieren los muertos siempre llevar a los, los vivos? . . .

Mujer No dice . . . este, los muertos dice...más queridos su hijo si puede llevar dice, aha. A mi me querría mi mama. (TKU/A/04/52c:2.)

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Minna Pero por qué . . . por qué quieren botar esas cosas?

Mujer [Riendo] No, ya no queremos ver, ya está ya afinado pues, para que va a estar mirando esto cada rato todavía pues, tenemos que botarlo.

Minna Pero no quieren, ya ya no quieren recordar a esa persona?

Mujer Si, ya no quiere recordar ya . . . si recordamos de repente nos hace aparecer también pues. (TKU/A/04/52b:1.)

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Kamchitskeru, lo que silva, no tiene su cuerpo, el está caminando con su hueso no más. Es diablo también dice. Cuando te encuentra, allí te ve, te asusta y te entra el en tu cuerpo y comienza vomitar, comienza tener fiebre, así, te asusta ya. Eso quiere decir, eso. Le gusta dice comer papaya, y le sopla dice papaya, y eso cuando le come ese papaya, comienza vomitar, duele tu barriga. Por eso nosotros lo que cae papaya no comemos, de repente el está tocando diablo también. Lo que está arriba, lo guardamos, lo comemos. Así papaya también así malogrado hay, no? Así dice es eso, se ha salido de los muertos, siempre hay eso. Pero más o menos los chiquitos les quieren más bien. Igual como nosotros queremos su cría de pajarito. Donde vemos, le queremos llevar ya, 'bien bonito', le decimos nosotros. Así también lo dicen los los este muertos, aha, quieren llevar. Lo que llevan ya está enfermo ya tiene vómitos, dolor de cabeza. Cuando no le cuidas ya, muere ya. (TKU/A/05/37b:5.)

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Por qué velamos? Porque hay que acompañarle a su alma un creyente para que pueda estar junto con nosotros. . . . El señor también está junto con nosotros si es creyente . . . Si es ya con El, nos puede, en su mentalidad de el podemos pasar más adelante nosotros lo que nos falta. . . . En cambio un velorio, si un injusto muere, a veces viene borracho, no piensa que cosa lo que van a hacer . . . ni piensan que cosa van a salir. Si es un borracho muere . . . van a seguir igualito lo que están velando. Van a discutir, van a maltratar. . . . Si un creyente, supongo, así un creyente muere, hay que acompañar a el para que se... salga un chico, un joven, una chica, una señora, para que sea más adelante igualito como que ha ha hecho el su trabajo. Le deja uno encargar con el Señor pues. Eso lo que hacemos nosotros. (TKU/A/01/27:7.)

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Verdad dice! Una vez su mama de mi suegra, su abuelita de mi esposo, ella dice era joven . . . bonita era dice su abuelita de mi esposo. . . . Tenía dice dos cuñados. . . . Su mayor dice de ellos vive con su abuelita de mi esposo. . . . Ella dice nunca dice se iba al monte su abuela pero . . . un día dice se ha ido mitayar su cuñado, y se parecía dice ella . . . el medio monte dice ha gritado: eee... Espérame! *Pkagwakamtanunnoch!* *Pkagwakamtanunnoch!* . . . El creía dice ella. Igualito dice venia una mujer igualito su cuñada. El dice decía:

— Cómo me ha seguido mi cuñada? Yo no tengo que hacer nada con mi cuñada porque ella vive con mi hermano. Por qué voy a estar con esa mujer?

Desde lejos dice el conocía no es gente tampoco. 'Aha', el dice decía. 'Ese es *kshoteru*, no es gente tampoco, ese es *kshoteru*'. . . . Y cuando ya está dice cerca . . . le pregunta:

— De donde has venido?

— He venido en busca de Usted, ha dicho.

Pero dice el dice primero ve su su pata. . . . Si es venado no tiene dice pie de una mujer. Sabe si, convertirse como gente *kshoteru*, y así dice le dice:

— Yo no tengo que ver nada contigo porque tu vive con mi hermano mayor. Por qué vas a estar yo contigo?

Le ha engañado:

— Mira! Que cosa será, viene, viene gente!

Va a mirar dice, allí dice lo ha matado con escopeta. El dice se ha asustado: 'He matado ya mi cuñada', diciendo. Y allí mismo dice ha dejado.

— Voy a cruzar para no mirar.

Lo ha cruzado, allí mismo donde que está, allí mismo dice ha salido. Otra vuelta se iba, allí mismo dice ha salido. Cuatro veces, cuatro veces . . . dice ha salido donde es ella, diciendo yo este: 'Este no es, este no es mi comadre. Esta no es mi cuñada tampoco.' . . . Cuando ya dice regresa cuatro veces con ella, comienza este buscar este hierba, especial para esa. . . . Con ese mismo dice todo su cara ha hecho, ya se ha ido ya, ya no ya ha regresado donde... El asustado dice ha venido donde su mujer de el.

— He llegado dice. Mi cuñada está?

— Si allí está.

— Allí he matado parece ella; me ha [seguido] donde el monte. Qué cosa será?

Dice le ha contestado su mama:

— *Kshoteru* te ha seguido, ese no es gente, es *kshoteru*. . . Ya le quiere creo *kshoteru*, por eso le ha seguido. (TKU/A/05/44b:4.)

See page 113

The Deer, Matteson (1965: 203–204.)

Now I am going to tell about the deer, and how a demon entered him. They say the deer transformed himself into a person. He was called Haperomkalu. He kept taking the form of a person right along, and so appeared to people. When a woman or a man in the woods saw him – when men followed game, then the deer, Haperomkalu, would come to the woods. When it went to the woods it cried with a sound like a human cry, saying “heeeeeee, heeee, heeeeeee.” It was like the cry of a person. Therefore when it was heard from far away it really seemed to be a person, though it was the spotted deer. If he was answered, he – she metamorphosed herself in human form. She would change herself into the form of whatever woman a man loved; she would take her form. One who knew better would not answer, but would hide himself among the tree trunks to see the deer and shoot it. It went along crying, “Neeeeee.” If it was heard from far away, it sounded like a human cry. It would call out names as it went along. Whatever the person’s name, it would call exactly that. If someone in ignorance answered, it would assume the form of the woman he loved. The deer would metamorphose itself in her likeness. It did the same thing with women. The deer would appear in the body of whoever she loved, loved in her heart. He was called “*Haperomkalunru*” (the one whose form Haperomkalu had taken). He would be looking at her as they very man she loved, whoever he might be, having taken his form. A demon entered the deer. When seen, it always hid its feet by thrusting them under the leaves. It was known by that, recognized by that action. The whole deer was known by the appearance of its feet. A human being has all his toes, but it is said to have only two toes, though its face is the very face of a person and then –. When he did that, when he treated a woman like that, she became completely depraved. She was no longer in her right senses. She would eat coals of fire, and she had no shame of anything. That was the effect of Haperomkalu. He still appears today too. Now also in the Kosta – what do you call it – the Manu region, there is said to be news of Haperomkalu. Before Uncle went there the deer was carrying on like that. Haperomkalu was appearing to the people who live on the Manu River, they say. That is the story about Haperomkalu. Others also take human form. And demons also appear like people or like just anything. They take the form of anything, and appear like people. That is all I can think of. That is all I am going to tell. It is finished.

Page 117

Allí hemos ido nosotros este camino, allí comienza seguirnos. No sé, venado será o que cosa será, heeeee . . . nosotros creíamos su papa. ‘Qué cosa tiene mi papa? Mi papa creo que nos ha seguido’, Lejos ya allá, eeee . . . ee . . . Yo digo: ‘Qué cosa? Qué cosa habrá pasado en la casa? Nos han llamado. Yo le digo a mi hija: ‘No será tu papa. Qué cosa será? Vamos ya.’ Nosotros hemos cruzado de allí no más otro camino, otro camino hemos venido. No era mi esposo. Qué cosa será? Parece . . . de repente venado, y porque nosotros más antes sabíamos aparece dice este, aparece

venado como gente, por eso yo sé. (TKU/A/04/40d:5.)

Page 123

Ella ha visto el venado en el monte: 'Acá no vale ya. Yo tengo un pueblo bonito dice allí' . . . Ella ve dice pueblo bonita ya dice. Total, la gente ya ha visto ya, no es este, una vez que hay un, parece puro espinal, este lo que tiene hojita. Dentro de ese dice se ha metido, no ha podido venir. Así amarrando dice le ha traído, gritando. No querría estar en la casa, ella querría estar en el monte no más: para ella es dice bonito ciudad, de su casa dice. (TKU/A/05/37b:2.)

Page 133

Ella es la Madre de los Pescados, y del río también. . . . Ella dice también como eran sus cría y ella es la mama, la madre como dice. . . . Ella le pone como nombre los pescados, por ejemplo el taricaya, es su asiento de ella, dice. Por ejemplo le pone así como piro que le dicen, es su rayador de ella, el tiene nombres así cada pescado, para ella, no? Por ejemplo este, cómo se dice, paco, es su remo de ella dice porque es un medio redondo, su remo dice ella, no? . . . Por ejemplo este...este bagre. Es un maíz, porque es medio largito dice, un maíz . . . como el maíz sale sus barbas, así también dice ella sale. . . . Tiene nombres los, para ella tienen nombres. (TKU/A/05/54a:2.)

Page 137

Trajo dice como masato dice el venado, pero no es masato sino es... como arcilla así, movido . . . Le han pensado que era masato . . . y se le daba así guayaba para comer, porque el venado no, no, no comía así como como gente . . . comía fruta no más del monte. . . . Porque el pescado ni ni, puede comer yuca dice . . . pero no se hacía ver, no? . . . Como si estaría comiendo como ella para que ella no se sienta mal, la mujer. (TKU/A/04/40a:1.)

Page 137

Le dijo hay que cocinar dice, y come dice el también: Hay que comer! Los dos juntos dice come ya, para tomar masato también, ella va a tomar y el también dice va a tomar. . . . así el venado comía dice, tomaba su masato. Será, cómo será pues su visión digo no, la chica. Cómo habrá visto? Porque un animal no come así [cualquier] nosotoros, busca su huayo así el. (TKU/A/05/41a:3.)

Page 139

Se ha pensado, ha puesto a pensar, no? . . . No creo que era esté mi enamorado porque el no me ha seguido hasta mi comunidad, sino me dejaba allí no más . . . Así no era mi enamorado, dice. No es así. Sale y conversamos . . . Pero ella se ha puesto a pensar, diferente es el: Por qué me viene a dejar no más? Pero dice ella: . . . Es un venado que me ha enamorado. Dice se ha aparecido, se ha transformado como se fuera su enamorada. (TKU/A/04/40a:1.)

Page 142

Mujer De repente yo creo, no? De repente me parece que . . . cuando tienes creo dice muchos pecados allí si dice te sale, y así estoy pensando yo también
 . . .
 Minna Pero cómo puede tener pecados si es un animal no más?

- Mujer No, cuando le entre . . . le entra ya pecado de nosotros creo, digo yo.
 Minna Aa... cómo le entra nuestro pecado?
 Mujer Como, como un lepra lepra, como dice la Palabra de Dios, había un lepra creo, no? No ha podido caminar, no? Y le entraba chanchito, así será el, digo yo. (TKU/A/05/53c:4.)

Page 143

- Minna Tu te vas al monte y aparece como el. Pero de dónde sabe como, que forma tiene [tu esposo]?
 Mujer Te estoy diciendo porque este... le está entrando diablo también. Porque diablo nos está escuchando ahorita también, nosotros no vemos.
 Minna Entonces será el diablo lo que le hace así?
 Mujer Aha . . . Yo digo de repente su pecado de los muertos digo yo. Ese estoy pensando. [Reía.]
 Minna De cual muerto?
 Mujer De muerto digo.
 Minna Aa...cualquier muerto?
 Mujer Yhm . . . cualquier muerto. (TKU/A/05/53c:4.)

Page 145

Cuando estaba creo Adán y Eva digo yo . . . también víbora dice se convertía como una persona, no? . . . Dios mismo que le ha dicho: 'Y ahora tienes que [reptar en] tu pecho ya.' Lo va a estar como siempre en tu pecho . . . así dirá pues, así estoy pensando yo pues. De repente Dios mismo le ha quitado su..lo que convierte. [Este convertían en en persona así, Dios mismo le habrá quitado.] (TKU/A/05/53c:4.)

Chapter 3**Page 148**

Si dice existe . . . Hay una manada de huanganas donde que ellos puedan entrar dentro de la tierra. Y el dijo dice: 'Voy a seguir a la huangana dice'. Y les siguió hasta ellos donde estaban, donde pueden entrar . . . ha corrido para alcanzarles a ellos, pero dice: 'Voy a dejar mi flecha acá no más. Voy a seguirles.' Ha seguido hasta el hueco donde que ellos han entrado y el también siguió hasta allí, hasta dentro entro también el . . . El dice quiso regresar pero ya no pudo seguir regresar porque dice el hueco ya se ha hecho pequeñito . . . ya no pudo salir. Vuelve otra vuelta dice hasta dentro, a dentro.

Igual que acá dice cuando llegó dentro, igual que nosotros así viven ellos también las huanganas. Pero ellos dice cuando el vio, así como chanco vivían, tienen su corral, tenían dueño como una chica, una señora vivía allí que les cuidan las huanganas y el dice la dueña le reno a el: 'Tu eres lo que le maltrata mis, a mis cómo se dice, las huanganas. Tu les maltratas.' . . . * 'Por qué no le matan verdaderamente, mátenle, no le hagan heridas, sino mátenle bien para que no vengan con herida y se enflaquece.' . . . Y dijo ella: 'Si Ustedes quieren matar a mi crías dicen, no, mátenle de verdad, no le manden con heridas porque acá sufren.' Le saca sus flechas dice de allí, porque se quedaban las flechas, porque antes no utilizaban escopeta. Sacaban y le ponían en cada casa y ya dice, hay hartas flechas ya de lo que ya sacaba las flechas. Por eso ellos dicen, por eso hay flacos huanganas flacos, hay huanganas gordos;

ellos no tienen heridas.* . . . Le ha [reinado] fuerte al al señor que les ha seguido allí. . . . No le pudo responder porque ella es la dueña y el vino por seguir a las huanganas ellos. Vea sus chanchos, revisa, todos dice revisa ella y siempre salen con heridas, con flechas salen con heridas y ella dice les empieza a curar, para que ellos puedan estar sanitos las huanganas. Después . . . tienen una quebrada dice así no tan grande sino pequeñito no más y le dice al señor: 'ya siéntate'. 'Te voy a invitar su chapo de ella, no?' Tomó.

Allí ha estado un mes allí dentro de la tierra, un mes ha tirado el. Ya se había perdido dice, no? Pero el dice estaba dentro de la tierra, estando allí y estaban cantidad de huanganas allí viven allí, tienen su dueña, allí es un corral que ellos puedan estar tranquilamente, tienen su corral como chanchos, para que ellos no puedan escaparse, y hay quebradas, hay todo dice, no faltaba nada, así igual que acá dice allí vivían ellos. Pero hay otro pueblito dice para ellos que había gente también que vivía. Pero el dice pensaba muchas veces: 'Cuándo yo me voy a ir me de acá?' Pero dice cuando cumple un mes, yacunturu . . . dice: 'Yo voy a irme otro tierra dice. 'Me puedes llevar?' 'Si te puedo llevar, te voy a salir a otro tierra'. . . .

Ella se suponía ya está perdido el . . . El ha contado todo lo que le ha pasado dentro de la tierra, las huanganas, como vivían, tenían su dueña tenían su quebrada, allí vivía la gente. El ha contado todo, la historia de las huanganas. De allí se enterraban todo que la huangana tiene su madre, tiene tienen como chanco dice, viven feliz ya nosotros le maltratamos su dueña se amarga. ▢ Por eso se dedicaban de contar, el dijo que yo he visto, por eso cuenta, no es mentira, así dice. (TKU/A/05/38a:4.)

Page 154

Cuando ha salido del hueco de las huanganas, este la Madre de las Huanganas le dio como este para soplar . . . y el se lo tenía en su poder. . . . Cuando dice falta así algo para comer . . . se va al monte a soplar eso. Y viene dice cercita las huanganas y les dice a la gente: 'Ahora si vayan a matar las huanganas.' Y ellos se van dice a matar. . . . 'Yo te entrego este como kowi', que le decimos kowi, no? 'Yo te voy a entregar pero tu ya nunca vas a comer huangana', así le dijo a el. . . . Ese sea a su gente. El sopla y contesta la huangana rápido y cerca anda las huanganas para que la gente vaya matar. . . . El les manda no más ya pero el no come. (TKU/A/05/38a:4.)

Page 158

Es que son este muchos, esos tienen Madre. Pero otros animales no tienen porque son pocos no más. Huanganas son los que tienen Madre. . . . Otros no, ni sajino no tiene Madre porque son pocos no más. Las huanganas si, unas manadas que ellos son. (TKU/A/05/38a:4.)

Page 159

Manchineru quiere decir que son varios, como huangana, *gixolune*, hartos. Es son familia grande, manada, *tsukakalune*, no son así enanitos sino grandes, cuerpos así lo que tienen más altos los Manchineru. Getuneru también hay, Etene, ellos son varios también pero son chiquitos, no son grandes, allí en Puija viven ellos, en Puija viven puritos, puritos son ellos. (TKU/A/05/48a:4.)

Page 160

Antes . . . supongamos, aquí dice quiere hacer cualquier cosa, problema. Allí iban la gente dice dentro de la tierra, hay un hueco dice. Había un sogá también . . . dos sogas, otro para salir, otro para bajar. Así bajaban dice. . . . Y ha entrado dice una, lo que tiene sangre . . . *gimtugachri* le decimos nosotros, lo que tiene . . . regla. . . . Todos iban allí, había una lo que tiene regla, y querrían [entrar]. . . . No le querrían dejar entrar. . . . Se han ido todo ya y ella viene ultimo de allí querría entrar ya se ha cerrado ese hueco ya dice. En todo estaba este tapado ya, ya nadie se puede entrar. . . . Si no entraba ese, seguía dice este ese clase. . . . Hasta ahorita ya no se puede entrar ya. . . . Pero los huanganas siguen. Donde será hueco ahora, allí lo que saldrán ahora, pero ya no se mira eso. (TKU/A/05/44a:6.)

Page 164

Ellos no, no ven anzuelo, nada. Solamente tienen una quebrada, una quebrada que hay bastantes bagres. . . . Cogen este palo de topa, meten eso y cogen bastantes bagres porque . . . tienen su espina. Ese se meten no más . . . y saca su palito y bastantes bagres salen. Ellos no utilizan así anzuelos. De eso no más se dedican ellos. (TKU/A/05/38a:4.)

Page 164

A dentro dice tierra hay *Mtengatwenu*, hay dice lo que salen los huanganas. . . . Hay dice un hueco lo que sale huanganas. . . . De allí lo que salen los huanganas son mansitos no más, no escapan como no conocen gente todavía. Solamente dice dentro de la tierra dice hay todo animales mansitos. (TKU/A/05/44a:6.)

Page 169

Ahora poco no más ha salido huanganas, que no había ya . . . no había huanganas casi cinco, diez años. Ahora poco está abundando. Seguro han abierto hueco de allí están saliendo. Antes no había, solamente había parque, a dentro no más había poco, no ahora si hay harto por todo lado hay. Seguro a dentro ya está sacando su su cuidante. Ahora, cuanto, treinta años creo parque está . . . estará criando digo de allí no. (TKU/A/05/44a:6.)

Page 170

Antes dice había . . . lejos lejos había un sogá dice . . . Aquí supongamos, aquí dice quiere hacer cualquier cosa, problema. Allí iban la gente dice dentro de la tierra. Si había problema este mundo allí iban tarrafeando no pasaba nada dice. (TKU/A/05/44a:6.)

Page 171

A vez siempre hablan, algunos hablan así cuando sentamos recién. . . . Conversan: 'Así era antes. Si ahora tenemos enfermedad, escuchamos guerra, allí iríamos', siempre decían. No pasa nada . . . le cierra bien . . . le tapa para que no entra dice. Cuando pasa ya otra otra sale mira, uno no más salía, vio lo que está bien, otros están regresando. Así eran antiguos, los Yine. Cómo serán? (TKU/A/05/44a:6.)

Page 174

Mi abuela está contando será la primera, no? La primera tierra que Dios ha creado,

no? Que la gente pueda vivir también allí, porque dice hay gente que viven allí también y es igual que acá: hay luna, hay estrella, hay el sol. Será la primera tierra, nosotros seremos este medio, y tercero es el Cielo, no? . . . Por eso el como ha estado un mes el señor y le están mirando todo que cosa hay que no hay y el dijo que esto hay allí en este tierra, acá será en el medio que nosotros vivimos, el Cielo sea el tercero que vive el Dios, así dijo el . . . eso lo que me está diciendo mi abuela. (TKU/A/05/38a:4.)

Chapter 4

Page 205

Porque plata es loco, como loca, no? Se hace loquear. A veces cuando agarramos plata y nos molesta: queremos tomar lo que le gusta tomar. . . . 'Mejor voy a tomar con mis amigas y pasar este tiempo, no?' Así también pasa la madera, no? Cuando trabajan la madera . . . y después cuando sale ya madera recibe su plata ya comienza tomar trago así. Lo que piensa puede comprar todo su lo que necesita, no? La madre eso está viendo pues: no compra lo que quiere el también por eso dice su Madre de la Madera no quiere que le pierdan esa plata así tomando . . . Lo que la persona necesita debería comprar este lo que necesita, no así . . . como gastar su plata. . . . Después ya no, ya no, ya no quiere darle ya madera, más que estas buscando madera, dice ya no, ya no . . . ya no te muestra ya porque le has hecho fracasar porque tu también no has comprado lo que le has dicho el, no le has cumplido, lo que necesita no has comprado, has querido tomar con esa plata, has terminado, has acabado, de nuevo tienes que buscar este palo para que puedes tomar este su trago. . . . El también está viendo pues, como diablo está viendo el también: 'Esta ya, ya no le voy a mostrar' . . . el dice. Cuando te quiere mostrar madera: 'Mucho sufre', dice, el te está viendo. 'Mi paisano. Yo le voy a mostrar. Mucho está, está sufriendo buscar palo.' El le este, te muestra dice. Si no le cumples lo que estas pidiendo el también no te va a cumplir ya. Si le compre, más también dice te da el. (TKU/A/05/53c.)

Chapter 5

Page 226

Hay que pedir al Madre del *Toé*, y cualquier planta. Primero le acercas a la planta, y dices: ya *toé* este por favor, ahora te voy a sacar la hoja porque yo necesito que Usted me cure tal enfermedad. . . . Entonces la planta escucha, de esa manera el curandero ya prepara y te invita. (TKU/A/05/37a:5)

Page 230

- Hombre Hay un insecto, insecto es que vienen de noche . . . que te hace daño . . . Eso que viene siempre del brujo. . . . El poder del este del brujo es es insecto. . . . Ese lo que me ha hecho daño.
- Minna Y que te viene este insecto te viene a picar o que que cosa?
- Hombre Bueno insecto media, como el es espíritu malo que tiene brujo. . . . Le sopla y [dice]: 'Anda da le daño a lo que me ha hecho.' . . . Cuatro me han pon..chonteados . . . los cuatro cuatro cada [lado]. Y ese me han sacado. . . .

- Minna Tú mismo estabas sacando estos de [tu] rodilla?
 Hombre No, yo no. Sino estaba mirando el el su..el Poder del Gayapa. . . . Que el, como un, como un niñito me está soplando, me está chupando. 'Mira esto!' . . . Pone, otra vez chupa, otra vez toma, 'Mira este!' . . . Ponía así juntando cada uno de estos. . . . [Fue un] chico, me estaba soplando. . . . Hay un curandero que me sopla . . . ese lo que sacaba todo eso. (TKU/A/04/50a:5.)

Page 230

- Hombre Puedes llegar tu pueblo, te lleva . . . en avión. Estas volando con avión si . . . Puedes ir hasta tu tierra mismo, regresa, esa noche . . . Te llevan con avión . . . otro clase avión como hoja, verde con este . . . Yo he tomado veinte veces.
 Minna Y siempre has viajado en avión?
 Hombre Si, grande, como más grande como este [casa]. (TKU/A/04/40d: 10.)

Page 231

Un día cuando voy a sanar, un doctor aparece en mi borrachera de *toé*, borrachera grande grande, yhm, y me ha dicho, que este pastilla vas a tomar. . . . De dónde te duele? Me mira, todo me ha revisado y me ha alcanzado pastilla, un montón de pastilla en mi borrachera. 'Con este voy a estar sano.' 'Vas a sanar', te dice en tu, en su, en tu borrachera. Si, por eso yo creo este gayapa . . . este *toé*, *toé* tiene su madre. Tiene así asisito no más, te lleva . . . te agarra tu brazo, te hace pasear. (TKU/A/05/39a:9.)

Page 232

Una vez he tomado yo *toé*, cuando yo estaba un poco enfermo. Como esta hora he tomado. Entonces, cuando cuando ya te va a comenzar este . . . marear, parece que estas endormecido en tu cuerpo. Entonces, un golpe no más parece trueno, pom! Entonces, ya tu vea ya gente ya . . . cantidad gente es. No era gente de aquí sino gente de, son mestizos, toda clase de gente. Viene carros, viene todo no más viene, como en la ciudad. Entonces ya, te está buscando ya: viene doctor, sanitario viene.

— Que pasa? . . . dice este doctor. . . . Quien está enfermo? . . .

Me acompaña gente, me acompaña doctor. . . . Entonces toda gente alrededor todito, yo estaba en medio. El doctor también estaba, como aquí también cuando viene doctor igualito. . . . No te va a hablar en castellano sino en tu propio idioma. Entonces me pregunta:

— Que tienes?

— Yo estoy enfermo. . . .

— Nosotros te vamos a sanar ya. Ahorita viene doctor.

Le llama . . . viene corriendo este doctor.

— Donde está?

— Aquí está. . . .

Me hala mi mano, este sanitario y el doctor lo que va a sanar me.

— Que tiene?

— Este me da así rasco, me da comezón. . . .

— Entonces yo te voy a curar.

Entonces pone su como se llama su mochilla, como, le saca este remedio o cualquier

cosa . . . me pone inyección.

— Ahora si vas a sanar ya.

— Ya gracias entonces. (TKU/A/05/46b:4.)

Chapter 6

Page 243

Los hombres nuestros hijos los llevamos en nuestras plantillas, no? Pie, como dice en el pie, lo llevamos su almita de nuestros hijos. Y si ve algo o mata algo peligroso siempre le va a chocar al bebito, al hijo. El papá no llega todavía pero el hijo ya, ya le ha chocado ya en la casa ya, mientras el estaría lejos. Todavía no sabe si estaba mal su hijo pero llega a la casa y ya le dice la mujer: 'Ya tu hijo ya está mal' o 'Está llorando mucho' o 'Se puede morir'. Cuando es muy un animal peligroso y le dice este 'Qué has visto allá, en el monte? Qué has matado?' Así le pregunta, la mujer le pregunta al hombre. (TKU/A/05/40b:6.)

Page 245

Cuando te baja tu regla, no debes bañarte en la noche ya. . . . Pero también dice cuando vas al monte, donde que tu te sientas, cuando baja tu regla nada más, no debes sentarte así en el monte porque el tunchi pasa. Aquí esta, nuestra alma siempre queda allí, y allí dice hace relaciones . . . donde que nos sentamos, pero ya nosotros ya no estamos allí, sino estamos en la casa ya. Si aprovecha el nuestro alma así no más se queda siempre hacer relaciones allí. Por eso dicen ellos no debes, cuando te paras chicotea tu, donde que tu te sientas, y allí ya te vienes ya y eso no te pasa nada. Solamente cuando tu te baja tu regla, no debes bañarte, no debes ir al monte, por que se transforma tu hijo así como diablito, ya no es gente. (TKU/A/05/40b:6.)

Page 246

Como estamos cambiando con, con El, cómo se llama, como estamos con la Biblia con ese, con la oración . . . Por eso ya no conforma como la gente ya . . . así dice la gente. Antes . . . no solamente conformaban dice venado, como sabia conformar los tigres, gritaba dice perdiz y de allí conforma como, como hombre dice . . . así era antes . . . Pero cuando paso la palabra del Señor, de allí se han, ya no conforma como la gente. Allí terminaba. (TKU/A/04/54:3.)

Page 247

Tiempo de mi abuelo tenía que dietar de sus hijos porque cualquier animal que mata ya le va a cutipar, va a estar llorando. Ellos tenían mucho miedo de esto, no tenían porque matar ... antes que llegue la Palabra de Dios, eso si nosotros dietabamos porque teníamos que cuidar nuestros hijos, de eso existía eso. Pero cuando ha llegado el, la Palabra de Dios, eso poco a poco va cambiando. . . . 'Y es muy tarde para que yo venga.' Antes si era mucho tiempo para que venga todavía Dios. Ya muy tarde y ellos no le va a chocar ya. Poco a poco va perdiendo esto, no le va a cutipar porque el, su esposo no mitaya, ellos van a comer no más. Ese lo que dicen ellos. (TKU/A/05/42a:3.)

Page 249

Pero ya no salen [*kamchi*]. Antes no había luz . . . Por eso en la noche camina . . . Le

digo siempre [a una chica], en la noche le veo caminar con su bebito: . . . 'No hay que caminar de no... cuando ya se apaga la luz, hay que ir a la cama.' . . . Por eso, ahora como hay luz, hasta nueve de la noche es un día. Antes no había eso . . . Por eso caminaba los espíritus. Cuando es este nublado . . . en la noche hay también, parece humo así . . . De este lo que siempre choca el susto o mal aire . . . así era antes, acá aparece. Ya no hay casi ya. (TKU/A/04/54:7.)

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Ya recién estaban empezando a enseñar a la comunidad, había profesoras lingüísticos de veranos. Están recién hasta, hasta quinto primaria, antes era quinto, ahora es sexto. Cuando terminaba un estudiante, no tenía apoyo, allí no más quedaba. Ahora estamos más adelante. Ahora hay apoyo. Terminas este sexto, te vas al secundaria entonces en esa manera la comunidad está yendo, están adelantando. Otra palabra es, ahora la gente son nueva generación, ya no están como lo que nosotros pasábamos antes sin, sin saber nada. (TKU/A/05/37a:10.)

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Si, ese pasaba antes, pero ahora ya no ya. Nosotros ya sabemos ya. Hemos terminado quinto ya, ahora es todo ya respetando. . . . Pero anterior no. No se respetaba uu.. cualquiera iban, no? . . . Ya mucho estudiar ya sé ya eso. Nosotros sabemos que esto es tu tía. . . . Que es tu segundo, tu tía, este es tu cuñada etcétera etcétera. (TKU/A/05/36c:1.)

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Mujer Por ejemplo acá mi hijo, le hemos entregado al Dios cuando era bebito. También este mis [dos otros hijos], son tres, pero los que los resto no le hemos entregado cuando eran bebitos . . .

Minna Tampoco están bautizados allá en . . .

Mujer están bautizados ya en la iglesia de católicos ellos.

Minna Por por qué has hecho así, por por qué les ha, les has llevado allá a la iglesia para que le bauticen?

Mujer Dice por su nombre dice, eso creo igual será pues digo. . . . Ellos no están este con Dios por eso he llevado allí para que Dios también que le conozca. (TKU/A/05/51c:2.)

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Dios mismo le está viendo qué cosa lo que ha hecho este mundo . . . Y que cosa ha pasado con el y el tiene, este tienes que arrepentirse de el mismo, qué cosa que pasa de el en su cuerpo. Y cuando se repienta ya, el mismo tiene que entregar a Dios ya, aha. Se confesa sus pecados y ya, ya no quiere estar como antes. Tengo que estar como, como con Dios y el, el entregó pues, se confesa sus pecados y le bautizen ya para que no vuelva ya otra otra vuelta lo que hacían de su juventud. (TKU/A/05/51c:2.)

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Se ha hecho bautizar acá en la iglesia evangélico y le han dicho que si has querido bautizar, 'Si' dice ella. Y cuando se le bautizaron y regresó de bautismo en su casa y al día siguiente estaba tomando ya dice, su cancan, drago. Eso no tienes que tomar ya porque más antes eso pasaba, estabas con Satanás, todo lo que hacías, estabas.

Pero cuando, cuando te bautizan ya no tienes que regresar ya como estabas, como antes. (TKU/A/05/51c:2.)

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Ellos deberían acercarse al, a la iglesia católica, ese lo que siempre mandamos nosotros. Si quieren venir a donde nosotros, bien venir . . . Si ellos quieren católico, deberían participar allí. Si cada toca de la señorita pueden ir, nadie le pueden [impedir]. Si quieren venir por acá, pueden venir. (TKU/A/04/55:8.)

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No hay que hacer estas cosas [para estar con Dios]. No hay que hacer envidioso, no hay que ser este ratero, no hay que hacer este adulterio. Todo esas cosas no quiero tener en mi cuerpo. Quiero morir así mano limpio. Eso estoy pensando. Pero de mis hijos, también estoy pensando yo quisiera morir con mis hijos mismos totitos, para irme al cielo ellos también. Yo no quiero así dejar a mis hijos. . . Yo no quiero sufrir; estar [sola] en lo que nos ofrece Dios. Este estoy pensando yo. (TKU/A/05/51a:3.)

Chapter 7

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Cuando llega en el Perú Sello de la Bestia, tú eres evangélico, tú no tienes que este hacer negoció ya. Si tienes ganados y este gallina para que Usted negocia allá en Boca, ya no: solamente cuando ya tiene Sello de la Bestia . . . Aquí nos va a sellar dice, frente así dice la Biblia. Entonces el que tiene Sello de la Bestia puede negociar, sus hijos tienes que ir al colegio o universidad, no tiene problema. Pero el que tiene Sello de, del Espíritu Santo, entonces dice, ya no va a tener su negocio aquí donde, donde que siempre negociamos. Este cualquier cosa de nuestro producto ya no vas a negociar, entonces prohibido negociar los que son creyentes. Nosotros nos va a perseguir. Pero va a durar dice tres años, entonces hasta mientras pueden, pueden ir otro sitio. Tienes que hacer chacra allá lejos entonces viene Sello de la Bestia, cuando ya pasa los tres años pueden regresar otra vez. Por eso hay que comprar dice sal, jabón, kerosenes para que pueda estar lejos. Así dice la Palabra de Dios. (TKU/A/05/47b.)

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. . . si Usted dice ya voy a seguir este Católico, te sellan. Entonces quiere decir tu no crees el Dios. Por gusto estabas con otro cuerpo, por ejemplo evangelio, entonces ahora pasas con católico . . . (TKU/A/05/37a:9.)

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