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Food Taboos in Lowland South America

Kenneth M. Kensinger and Waud H. Kracke, Editors

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FOREWORD

This volume had its beginning in a discussion between the editors in August 1978, shortly after the appearance of Eric Ross' stimulating paper, "Food Taboos, Diet, and Hunting Strategy: The Adaptation to Animals in Amazon Cultural Ecology" in Current Anthropology (1978:1-36: including critical commentary, 16-27; Ross' response, 28-33; and cumulative bibliography, 33-36.) We decided to organize a symposium on food taboos throughout lowland South America for the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association in Cincinnati, Ohio in November 1979.

Although we were using Ross' paper as our starting point, it was not our intention to use the symposium as a forum for the symbolic ritual slaying of the "materialist" dragon; we did not ask the participants to restrict their papers to a consideration of Ross' arguments. We selected scholars whom we felt would represent a diversity of theoretical perspectives and whom we knew were interested in and had field data on the topic. Kracke's statement, published in "Abstracts of the 78th Annual Meetings (p. 61), summarizes our objectives:

> Food avoidances are a significant ritual observance in most Lowland South American cultures. Though in some ways similar to systems of food taboos in other world regions, Lowland South American food taboos tend to share certain distinctive patterns, such as an emphasis on situational and life-stage taboos, prohibition of large mammals, and a high variability among individuals in naming specific prohibited animals. A recent discussion of them (Ross 1978) has suggested ecological explanations for these taboo systems, but they also call for exegesis in cultural-symbolic terms. This symposium offers ethnographic data on food taboos in cultures from all parts of Lowland South America, examining them from a variety of viewpoints including symbolic, (British and French) structural, and psychological perspectives. Discussants will provide comparison with New Guinea food taboo systems, and raise issues of the relationship between ecological and cultural-symbolic analyses.

The papers appearing here are, with minor editorial changes, as they were written for the symposium. Bamberger's paper, "The Rules of the Game: Diet and Dietary Restrictions of the Kayapo" has been deleted at her request. However, we have included two papers not included in the published list of participants, those by Taylor and Kelekna. Taylor's paper was written and a summary presented at the November 1979 meeting. Kelekna's paper was presented at the August 1979 meeting of the South American Indian Caucus held at Bennington College; it is included here because of its interest as a complement to Ross' paper which also used the Achuara as its primary ethnographic focus.

New Guinea specialists Donald F. Tuzin and John Fitz Porter Poole, both of whom presented papers on food taboo systems in New Guinea at a 1977 AAA symposium in Houston, graciously provided written copies of their thoughtful and provocative discussions. We deeply regret that a full transcription of the discussion of both individual papers and of the full symposium is not available; the poor quality of the tape recordings makes transcription impractical. This is particularly unfortunate in that we are unable to provide our readers with Ross' response to the papers.

When the papers were assembled we were struck by a number of common themes that emerged in them. The authors uniformly felt that the social and symbolic content of taboos was as important as the environmental relations implicit in them. Taboos as markers of social categories were noted as elsewhere in the world, but in these South American cultures the categories marked were more generally age-level statuses more often than and sometimes prior to marriage groups. Consubstantiality of the nuclear family was another recurrent theme. These and other convergences justify publishing these papers together.

We acknowledge with gratitude the financial support from the Center for Latin American Studies, Program for Tropical South America, which made possible the publication of this symposium.

Kenneth M. Kensinger
Waud H. Kracke
EDITORS

August 1981

FROM FOREST TO MOUTH:

REFLECTIONS ON THE TXICÃO THEORY OF SUBSTANCE

Patrick Menget

University of Paris X (Nanterre)

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> "The road from the wilderness to the savage's belly and consequently to his mind is very short, and for him the world is an indiscriminate background against which there stand out the useful, primarily the edible, species of animals and plants". Malinowski. Magic, Science and Religion, 1948 (1925):44.

One first difficulty in Ross's argument is that the two approaches that are neatly confronted and opposed do not have the same epistemological status. The "mentalist" school tries: (1) to make an exhaustive list of food prohibitions as they are culturally defined in a given culture; (2) to demonstrate that their modus operandi is contingent upon their systemic arrangement, whereas the categories of age, sex, physiological status, kinship relatedness, social or symbolic affiliation intervene as discriminant variables; (3) to relate the system of prohibitions to other sub-systems in the culture, thus establishing its necessity in terms of internal and external consistency.

It seems then a well-taken point to state that food prohibitions, in that perspective, are not explained in any deterministic sense. In his inspiring paper on dietary restrictions among the Island Caribs, D. Taylor (1950) relates a series of prohibitions and limitations to the cultural definition of "life's critical corners", thus offering a native explanation - or theory - for food prohibitions. We understand something of the vanished Islands Caribs, but the model is not necessarily replicable elsewhere, it is a matter of empirical verification that the relationship between these norms and values and a set of practices would apply in another culture. However, it has defined a precise object of inquiry ("dietary and occupational restrictions"), developed from actual observation, both behavioral and linguistic (in that case, the observation is second-hand). Such an object, if and when found elsewhere, will lead any reader of D.

.or to inquire into the beliefs about life crises. The choice of a
ı-circumscribed object allows comparison, and some more general
ɔthesis on the relationship established might be formulated. The
:oach belongs to the interpretative trend in social anthropology, where
eralizations proceed from comparisons, and feed back new inquiries etc..
does not exclude hypothesis on the relationship between its models of
ture and the total eco-system, but has not succeeded in establishing
erministic chains of causation.

The "materialist" school, strongly suspicious (if worn-out labels still
ry some meaning) of the idealism of the mentalist - structuralist
ɔroach, purports to explain behavior in terms of adjustment to different
.ieus. Cultural norms presumably are reflections of practices that will
ınge with environmental pressures and modifications. The materialist
:hropologist, as defined by Ross, tries: (1) to establish a list of food
ɔhibitions ("general" taboos so far) and avoidances, the main focus being
he range of diet", in a culture or rather a series of cultures in the same
ɔad milieu; (2) to set up an ecological description of the availability of
ible resources in the biotope of the societies under consideration, with a
ecial emphasis on four-legged, two-winged and n-finned protein- carriers;
) by a rapprochement of (1) and (2) and the use of general hypotheses
ıainly two: the "predator-strategy" from biology, and the
:ost-and-benefit" from political economy), to explain that a maximum number
: items "rare species in the milieu" will be connected to items "prohibited
ıvoided) species to eat" as cause to effect.

The selection of animals as the focus of Amazonian diet can be
ıstified by the human biological requirements, but also by the strong
remium that most, if not all, Amazonian cultures put on hunting and/or
ishing. Furthermore, both the anthropologist's choice and the indigenous
alorization reflect the basic fact that the availability of proteins in
hat form may be the "major limiting factor" for Amazonian peoples. Thus,
ıiet-selection would belong to a class of phenomena along with female
nfanticide, warfare, vendettas, etc.. However, in spite of Ross's
ejection of the classic debate over the meaning of "taboo" as futile, there
.s a problem of definition for the "negative eating practices." If
ɛdibility is to be defined in cultural terms (see Ross's answer to

Wetterstrom, p.33), then one has to differentiate avoidance and prohibition, because cultures do. Likewise, one ought to take into account technical impossibility, another limit, however partial and temporary it may be, on the access to living proteins. So the problem becomes not what people do not eat, but rather what they define as edible and non-edible, and to what extent they follow their guide-lines or rules. Thus a society might avoid the South American "forest-dog" (Speothos venaticus) "because its meat stinks" and prohibit the wolf, a similar species (Canis jubatus), "because it is a spirit," and its consumption would cause disease and death. The Txicao, who make such a distinction, have been seen eating the first in hard times, not the second. Definitional problems affect the behavioral sphere, and if diet is the problem, why exclude non-animal food, since no known South American society exclusively prohibits animals? Similarly, there is no convincing reason to treat separately "general" taboos and restricted or specific ones, since it appears that the wide majority of food prohibitions belong to the second type rather than to the first, and since the cultural frontier between both kinds seems very often an uncertain one. In other words, if the set of items to be defined consists of cultural rather than natural terms, the cultural dimensions of this set cannot be dismissed, and should determine the contours of the class of phenomena.

The array of ecological data - sometimes minutely precise - that Ross has gathered is both impressive and fundamental for comparison. Yet a difficulty arises from the units of space and time implicitly employed in the comparison. Is it possible, from the mean values for species frequencies, as observed on very limited tracts (or itineraries) of tropical rain-forest, to extrapolate to the territories of human groups? A good deal of the information gathered on species increase/decrease relies heavily on native estimates, or on the anthropologist's. The lesser-known side of participant observation is that Indians participate in our observations, whether we fully realize it or not, and we cannot rule out their value-judgements. This objection is probably weak, since a corroboration of independent ecologist's measurements and anthropologist-cum-indian estimates will carry more weight. The problems of a time unit appear more formidable. We do have instances of changes in the diet selection of indian societies, under a variety of external causes (epidemiological and geopolitical, mostly), but no long historical record of any amazonian society. Our

observations are diachronic to the extent that these societies have not been crushed out of existence in the first half-century of contact, and in as much as we can rely on their oral tradition. Now, with the possible exception of very circumscribed micro-ecotopes, the time-unit involved in large-scale change in the eco-system (relative balance of species, trend toward more specialization...) is not commensurable with our ethnographic and ethnohistorical water-clock. There is at least a possibility that we simply lack the evidence to document selective pressures on cultural traits or complexes, without falling back on the pseudo-history of 19th century evolutionists. The analogical reasoning from the long trend of evolution to the short term of actual change in taboo-systems is questionable when we can find a more simple explanation (as in the now famous case of the upper Xingu, where the prohibitions may have shifted in their object, due probably to easier accessibility of fish, but appear to retain their gradual organization, from specific to general restriction on both game and fish).

When Ross is relating the features and dimensions of the eco-system to the actual sets of food restrictions, he is combining the use of a biological, Darwinian, hypothesis (selective pressures and adjustment) and of a more limited one, a cultural attitude, "a strategy of cost and benefits." On the one hand, we have an unconscious mechanism, such as population geneticists have been proposing, relating for instance size of population to the number, quality and nature of a gene pool in a given environment, on the other hand, we have a conscious working out of maximizing returns from the milieu. It is hard to see how these two lines of explanation actually combine, and in spite of the wide range of cases considered, we are left with either (1) "advantageous" situations, where the population has adapted dynamically to the resources, as in the case of small sedentary groups hunting mostly small game; but then, why the avoidance and prohibition of large game? They could be a rare but welcome addition to the diet and the population could be checked by other means (all of which are in evidence, spacing of children, birth-control...) to avoid over- predation. Or else why not taboo small-game, if it is more crucial to equilibrium and survival, and more easily accessible? In other words, there is no necessity of prohibiting (restricting rather) large game if it is a tedious, risky and secondary (from the point of view of resource management) affair; or (2) disadvantageous situations where the population is no longer adapted to the

environment, its nutritive possibilities, either through over-predation, soil-exhaustion or a combination of both. Under-population would be an interesting case too, as a counter-example: would all food taboos disappear in order to maximize food returns and further population increase? No such cases are known though many societies can be said to live below the carrying-capacity level of their territory. Of course, Ross argues that under-population is adaptative to the alleged relative scarcity of animal life in Amazonia, which may be, but then, this supposes a conscious estimation of the carrying capacity, and the voluntary decision of restricting hunting, fishing and horticulture, for which he gives no real evidence. In the former case, though, a crisis in resources procurement would certainly lead to dramatic decision, migration, expansion, risks of warfare, perhaps drastic birth-control, but why make it worse by limiting predation? It seems common sense enough to forget about the fineries of avoidance and prohibition when hunger is at stake. After all, we do allow ourselves something we unanimously find repugnant and sanctimoniously forbid and condemn, the eating of human flesh, in cases of dire necessity. The lessons of this case may be that we do practice cost and benefit analysis, with the blessing of our bishops, and that they do not, with the help of their shamans.

So Ross's model is deterministic in its intention to relate through a causal chain food restrictions to environmental limitation, as well as the host of other phenomena that depend on the milieu. The weaker parts of his argument seem to be the lack of a satisfactory definition of the end-product namely the category of "cultural edibility," and the logical uncertainties raised by the combination of two widely different hypotheses. Empirical issues that received an extensive coverage in the comments (Ross et al., 1978) are decisive, and it seems that a crucial verification is yet to be done, but there is nothing in Ross's attempt that invalidates the "mentalist" approach. The structuralist tries to describe and interpret a cultural situation, the determinist to explain culture from non-cultural causes, and there is no real contradiction between the two. Though I raised some doubts on the materialist model at this juncture, my choice of a structuralist point of view cannot be grounded in the falsity/veracity of either approach.

The Txicáo are recent intruders in the Upper Xingu region, since they were first contacted by Brazilians in the mid-sixties and resettled at the heart of the Xingu National Park in 1967.[1] Before then, they had inhabitated the Upper reaches of the Xingu river-network (Jatoba, Ronuro, and Von den Steinen rivers) only since the beginning of this century. Their record, as well as their material culture and scanty historical material point out to a recent Amazonian origin (Xingu-Amazon confluence area). To casual observers, they look today much like the Xinguano tribes. This resemblance in dress, ornament and activities is very superficial and recently acquired through imitation. In fact, their horticulture used a wider variety of cultigens (with a notable presence of beans, peanuts, and yams) and stressed the cultivation of maize much more than the Xinguano. They make manioc and maize beers, unknown in the Upper Xingu but current on the mid- and lower Xingu. They put an explicit emphasis on hunting, use a variety of techniques unknown or almost forgotten in the Upper Xingu (traps of various sorts, specialized arrows, marksmanship contests or games with bows but no communal hunt), and have been seen in their new milieu to harvest sizable amounts of game, of species not commonly hunted by the Xinguanos, and also of species prohibited by them. Yet they did practice fishing, with roughly the same techniques as the Xinguanos (minus the indigenous net[2]), but, according to them, taking second place in their sources of flesh. Animal proteins are also collected, and this is important, all year round, by both men and women. Several species of frogs and lizards are gathered during the rainy season, minute fish are lifted in round, individual shrimping nets along the river and marsh shores by the women, "flying" ants are caught on the ground during the mating season (leaf-cutting ants), crabs and crayfish are caught....Seasonal and daily adjustment to the uncertainties of hunting and fishing returns rely importantly on varying quantities of these smaller life-forms.

Yet the last ten-odd years of the existence of the Txicáo before they were resettled were times of trials and hardship. Ever since 1935, they were at war with the Xinguano tribes, those of the upstream region. They became known as a formidable adversary, raiding villages for pots, steel-tools, and children. The Xinguanos recounted lurid tales of surprise-attacks, killings (very few when it comes to body-count, roughly a dozen victims of the Txicáo in thirty years) and capture of their children

(half a dozen at most). In the late fifties, the situation changes abruptly. After a raid on the Waura where two young girls were captured by the Txicáo, the Xinguanos mounted a retaliatory expedition, well equipped with fire-arms, and struck terror in their turn on the Txicáo. In one blow, they killed fifteen adults, and around the same time the Txicáo acquired their first contact with European viral diseases. In a few years, their numbers were reduced from 150 to 54. The older generations were struck first, so much so that only one Txicáo over 45 survived into the seventies, and that the survivors looked both young and fragile to their former enemies. In their last ten years of independant existence, the Txicáo had a definite food crisis, because of hasty resettlement away from their destroyed village, of the prevalence of diseases, and of the brutal demographic fall. To the Xinguanos as well as to the casual observer, one fact was obvious, the extreme difference in physique from the Xinguanos of the remaining Txicáo.

There must be a difference of 6-8 cm in mean stature between the Xinguanos and the Txicáo, the latter have a different body-build, leaner and more sinewy. While the difference in body-fat can be easily attributed to the dearth of food in the sixties, low stature is more difficult to account for. The more so since it contradicts both the Txicao and their old enemies, claiming that some warriors were very tall (and frightening). Closer observations on some individuals showed that the claim may be partially exact, and that their growth must have been stunted in their early years for lack of proteins.[3] Not that tallness would have been selected out (an unlikely proposition: for all we know stature looks like a neutral trait), but rather, it is the majority of Txicáo (under 25) who suffered food deficiencies in the crucial formative years. It is strange indeed that Ross, in his discussion of selective pressures for cultural traits, consistantly implies that such adjustment must be cultural. There is no reason why adaptation could not be largely biological, as in the case of the Txicáo low stature. We deal in Amazonia with small natural populations, exhibiting a surprising degree of physical variations. It is conceivable that some of this variability is a response - or partial response - to differential environmental pressures, including the availability of animal proteins. I would, of course, leave to geneticists the delicate task of appraising and measuring the heritability of these phenotypic traits, but

would insist that short term adjustment to different diets - or changes in diet - are more likely to be biological than cultural.

Though the time involved is fairly short, the change of environment of the Txicáo before I observed them might constitute an interesting element of comparison with the Xinguanos. Is there a significant change in the diet of the Txicáo and correlated transformations in the code of "edibility", which would tend toward the Xinguano pattern? In other terms, does the transition from the Txicáo's former habitat (Upper Jatoba River), characterized by a narrow, winding river, a thin gallery-forest, and large expanses of wooded and grassy savannah, to the Xingu confluence area (now inhabited by the majority of the Xinguanos), with its luscious, well-forested, riverine and lacustrine milieu induce a change of food habits among the Txicáo? Secondly, is such a modification as there can be observed reflected in variations of the taboos, prohibitions and avoidances of foodstuff?

To the first question, the answer is facile and can be phrased in the very words of a Xinguano Indian who paternalistically took care of a couple of Txicáo families, before they had set up a new village close to the Indian post: "We will teach them to eat fish, they will turn fat." In fact, many species of fish, rare or non-existent on the Upper Jatoba, were adopted as food by the Txicáo at least within the limits of the traditional specific prohibitions - notably, the large scaleless fish (Nematognaths), which were rare or absent in the Jatoba river.[4] Actually, it is mainly a question of technology, since the Txicáo did not have the means of catching those species on the rare occasions where they could sight them. In quantitative terms, the consumption of fish increased noticeably among the Txicáo, mostly through their adopting the hook-and-line import common nowadays in the Upper Xingu. However, catching and eating of smaller fish, present in both environments, continued without apparent modification, especially the bone-plated species (mostly Loricariidae, vulgarly "cascudos"). For some species, among which the "pacu" (several species of Caracidae), the Txicáo did not seem to have a generic taxon and adopted the vernacular term "pacu." If not actually "taught" how to catch fish, the Txicáo certainly increased their consumption. In all likelihood, this augmentation partly substituted meat (game) consumption. However, they did not give up hunting, the less so since they were rapidly turned into semi-official meat providers for the

hungry Indian Post and equipped with rifles and shotguns. Their own predilection for capybara meat did not abate, the acquisition of dogs made it easier for them to hunt "difficult" game such as jaguar and more efficient generally. It is hard to measure the impact of their acquisition of guns, since they tend to use fire-arms much in the way they do bow and arrows: at close range. Of course, the effects on gregarious animals (monkeys, mostly) is probably a diminution of the kill rate. The essential point is that no new species was added to the Txicáo diet among land animals and birds. Clearly, the time of adaptation to the Xingu confluence area has been too short for drawing any meaningful conclusion. However, the Txicao have taken up consuming new species of fish without breaking any of their former specific prohibitions.

Before weighing the effects of this change of diet on food prohibitions, one must define the notion of prohibition. Forbidding something does not define a class of identifiable phenomena, except in a purely linguistic sense. The Txicáo express the food prohibitions in a two-clause phrase, the second one sometimes omitted: "We (exclusive) do not eat X (for fear that our belly will swell)." The second part is not only an explanation of the prohibition in native terms, it is the very object that is being avoided. That is people do not avoid eating the meat of an animal because of some properties of it, they try to avoid being ill and dying, and abstain from the animal that will make them sick. In native medicine, many a sickness is diagnosed through a careful examination of the previous diet of the patient. This is more than an analytic refinement in the understanding of indigenous belief, it is the positive foundation of a class of otherwise heterogenous negative phenomena. In a very penetrating analysis of Rwanda prohibitions, P. Smith shows that: "the idea of prohibition (interdit) appears here as only a consequence, in the subject's psychology, of the dispositions indicated by the notion and marked by a tradition" (1979, p. 39, my translation). What appears from the outsider's viewpoint as a negative injunction is to the insider a positive action, choosing carefully one's path amidst pitfalls. Therefore, I will consider as a key to the ordering of food prohibitions the effects the actual eating of forbidden food would have had (and may have, according to the current prevailing cultural notions); as a further consequence, I may well have to include in this class other objects than food, since the effects are really

he cause. Another implication of this method is that one has to consider ositive prescriptions as well as negative injunctions, and thus take into ccount the whole range of diet. Another way of looking at positive rules or eating is the simple notion that when some foodstuffs are prohibited, omething else must be eaten.[5]

One question has to be answered before examining the various prohibitions, that of more simple avoidances, without any statement. The Txicáo do gather and collect a variety of small animals considered inedible by the Xinguanos (rats, frogs, lizards, a small iguana...) but they also abstain from a few species, smaller birds of prey specially, both diurnal and nocturnal, saying simply that their flesh is "bad." A matter of taste? There might be more to it, but I confess ignorance. The vast majority of animal species are actually classified according to their effects, and prohibited as such. The list of general prohibitions is rather limited: sloth, tapir, turtles (all species, at least 3 native taxa), small deer (the "forest deer" of the Brazilian vernacular, i.e. Mazama americana), anaconda, and with some ambiguity crocodiles (one native taxon seemingly) and the larger otter. On the last two species, informants vary, some of them claiming that they belong to the next group, i.e. edible only by "old people." the effect of the consumption of these animals is death, and the native explanation is that they are men, or spirits sometimes. In fact, it is apparent, though never explicitly stated by the Txicáo, that "distinguished ancestors turn into some sort of spirit; hence the hesitation in qualifying those animals. It is a list of general prohibitions that includes both large and small species (turtles, forest-deer), both easily accessible and more remote or difficult game. Furthermore, the death that they provoke is not morbidly specified, it is "straightforward spiritual" death, that is a spirit taking possession of either the soul or the body, all in all a rather abstract proposition. I suspect that these absolute interdictions are not as absolute as they seem: two young Txicáo working at the Indian Post did eat tapir meat, and said that "at the Post, such food would not have ill effect." Yet the father of one of these got both worried and angry, and forced them to take an herbal remedy. In fact, those general prohibitions do not seem essential to the system, and might well turn into "restricted" prohibitions. Violating them is a degree more dangerous than breaking the rules of the next group, but not really different in kind, in

spite of the Indian explanation.

Restricted prohibitions apply to all but the "old people." Here the practical contents of this category varies with informants between two extremes, the very old (post-menopause women and "white" men) and all those who have passed through the stage of having small children, even if they still are in the age of procreating. It may include an occasional adult bachelor, or a childless married man. The list is impressive, for game as well as for fish. The restricted game includes armadillos, peccaries (the two species), coati, anteaters, papa-mel (a mustelidae), the smaller otter, the two large "savannah" deer, hedgehog, wild cats of all size, the various wild dogs, harpy eagle and large hawks. If anyone but the old people should eat those animals, they would be taken ill; namely, the meat would be "overactive" in the belly (sometimes expressed also in spiritual terms "the spirit would provoke a great heat inside"). Without proper treatment, such a condition leads to death. Treatment consists of proper diagnosis of the kind of food wrongly eaten and administration of "cold" and "fresh" remedies, and external washing with various decoctions. As to the fish, all the very large scaleless ones belong in this group, plus the stingray (extremely dangerous but acknowledged as a treat, reserved to the very old one) and all of the larger individuals of most current species. In fact, the Txicáo classify many fish species (caracidae and ciclidae, most abundant in the Upper Xingu) into two pseudo-varieties according to size: the younger (or smaller) ones are distinguished from the older (larger) ones, often by a different term. The larger "species" are restricted (the size-criterion is about 15-20 cm long) the smaller ones allowed to all. There are a few exceptions, the piranha for instance. Smaller fry (dozens of tiny species) are food for all, as the (rather small) bone-plated species. The consequences of violation of this rule for fish is the same as for game.

In practical terms, this set of complex prohibitions is widely respected, yet with an interesting flexibility. First, it varies in rigorousness with the biological condition of the eater. The closer one is to a process of internal transformation (growth, pregnancy, lactation) or external contamination (contact with someone in the former state, ritual activity, homicide), the stricter the diet will be. New species will be

added to the prohibited list, and vegetal food will be excluded. Thus the couvade alimentary prohibitions extend the dangerous list to rodents (from rat to capybara), most birds with the exception of a few tinamidae and parakeets etc...(see Menget, 1979) and the tatooing of the young Txicáo excludes fishes that have a soft epiderm (lest the flesh of the face should be covered with pimples). Secondly, there is an important variation according to sex: women have to respect all of these in a much more stringent manner, and they do end up eating much less animal protein and fat-rich food. Thirdly, there is flexibility according to the individual interpretation of the rules. Since no one is there to enforce prohibitions, some people feel strong enough to run risks for their own sake; however, when other people are involved, as in the couvade, respect of the rules is maximum.

The best case for the actual efficiency of these cultural prohibitions may be found in the inversion of them, that is their transformation into positive prescriptions. When Txicáo were preparing for a retaliatory raid (all forms of war were retaliatory for them) they would eat jaguar and harpy-eagle meat, drink their manioc-soup too hot which would provoke toothfall in normal times ... thus realize in themselves a condition of over-activity, over-flow with "fury". After they had killed at war, they had to be isolated and cooled down with the strictest of all Txicao diet, only given in the first two or three days to a woman after giving birth, that is cold manioc gruel made of fine white flour.

In the bewildering complexity and range of prohibitions, can one find an order? From the start, I will eliminate a principle that clearly works in some cases (and in all known societies), but not for all, the principle of the homogeneity of cause and effect. Initiates abstain from sweet potatos (reddish in the Upper Xingu) lest their face should become red. In their discourse on disease, the Txicáo locate in the human body "evil" spirits that provoke internal over-activity, over-heating, disorder and eventually death if nothing is done. Now, the various game and fish prohibited have in common, as opposed to the prescribed food (to the young, to the women, to the young fathers, etc...), that they are rich in blood and fat, what one might describe as "energetic" food. On the contrary, the non-foods that are used as medicines (a functional non-botanical class) and

drunk, are characterized by their blandness, their weakness in fragrance and taste, and what the Txicáo describe as "coolness." They serve to correct the excess (internal) of rich substances and restore health. Likewise, the very bland, white, vegetal diet of killers after war, restores their body overchaged with enemy blood (which penetrates by inhalation); otherwise, they will quickly become pot-bellied, fat and ill. Living beings are thus made of two kinds of substance, one "strong" kind includes blood, fat (hence most meat), fermented vegetals and is often smelly, the other "weaker" including water, white flour, milk and lean flesh. The human body is the seat of a constant process of exchange between these two substances, transforming milk into blood and fat, and vice-versa. One can suppose that an equilibrium is never reached, since growth, a process of very active internal transformation, should be accompanied by a limited ingestion of "strong" food. The risk then is over-charge. On the contrary, old age is a gradual loss of substance where the weak principle dominates; very old people "whiten" and die of dessication, say the Txicáo. Hence they no longer run the risk of overheating their somatic processes, and can gorge on rich food. The Txicáo do not explicitly account for life-processes in terms of substance, yet they do qualify interesting somatic conditions in terms of hot and cold, describe some vegetal food as cold or hot, take great care in avoiding the ingestion of crude blood (in an unevenly cooked fish, for instance), and describe the dangers of food (or sex, or other activities) with the notion of "evil spirit," which has connotations of hyper-activity, heat and agressivity. So the model sketched here can be checked against different domains of activity, the life-crisis rituals, the conception of disease and the practice of medicine, the relationship between man and the animal world.

The conceptual system of food prohibitions among the Txicáo is not a metaphysical speculation built out of scattered bits of information on the environment but an ordered arrangement of rules and attitudes focusing on the implicit notion of energy in human life processes. Basically, it is a charter for everyday life, which informs eating as well as non-eating practices, working as well as non-working patterns, and sexual activities as well as abstinence, inasmuch as they are crucial determinants of health and vital functions. An examination of other domains of this culture, such as

mythology would reinforce the present model. I have attempted to show elsewhere (Menget, 1979) that deep anxieties surround such activities, and work as efficient enforcements of these prescriptions, as well as native explanations of disease and misfortune. If I am correct in presenting the fundamental mechanism of the system as an energy-transmission and heat-degradation process, we ought to have a closer look at an aspect of the eco-system that has been rather neglected in the current discussion, namely the energetic exchanges between its various components. It is unlikely in the extreme that native conceptions of life and its production, maintenance and reproduction would have nothing to do with the actual biological processes as they can be observed. It is noteworthy that very little is known on biological functions, needs and even forms of the Amazonian populations. Discussions of energetic and protein requirements of Amazonian indians show a startling lack of agreement, due mostly to ignorance of such basic parameters (for instance Gross, 1975 and Lizot, 1978). It is a domain where extrapolation can be misleading, and well worth further research. My suggestion here is two-fold. On the one hand, as far as selective pressures and deterministic chains of phenomena are concerned, human biological adaptation to the Amazon should not be written out, with possible long-range genetic transmission; it looks a less remote possibility than a problematic cultural adaptation. On the other hand, the model sketched here is more directly related to the way various human societies have conceived of and elaborated on biological processes in the amazonian milieu than to little-known and isolated variations in species frequencies within the total bio-mass. Thus, there might be a correlation between the adaptative biological processes and the ideological systems which conceive of them, accounting for the fascinating recurrences of common themes in Amazonia. Further research may bridge the gap between the wilderness and the savage's belly, on a road certainly not as short as Malinowski had fancied.

NOTES

1 I have studied the Txicao over a 24 month period of time, 1967-69, 1972, 1975 and 1977, with the assistance of an NSF grant (1967-8) and later funds from the CNRS (Paris) and the University of Paris X Nanterre.

2 Net-fishing, now common in the Upper Xingu with imported industrial nets, was mentioned to me by an old Aweti informant as an indigenous technique exclusively practised for the amassing of food before the Kuarup inter-tribal festival.

3 I owe to the Escola Paulista de Medecina some of these observations and wish to thank Dr. Roberto Barruzzi who gave me free access to the medical and anthropological census of the Xingu Indians.

4 The most common Nematognaths in the Kuluene and Xingu rivers are the jaú (Paulicea lutkeni), the surubim (Pseudoplatystoma corruscans), the pirarára (Phractocephalus hemiloptérus)...It seems very probable that those very large scaleless fish were not harvested by the Xinguanos with any consistency before the importation of big metal fish-hooks and nylon lines. Furthermore, all of them are subject to specific and wide-ranging alimentary restrictions for the Xinguanos.

5 I seem to exclude fasting from my analysis. Fasting is relevant in Amazonian cultures in at least two specialized situations:
a- preparation for certain rituals, such as the wrestling contest in the Kuarup of the Xinguanos;
b- initiation of shamans, where substitutes for food are often used (drugs, tobacco smoke, fragrant anointments...)
In both situations, the suspension of ordinary physiological body functions enhances powers of the mind and/or body and temporarily excludes an individual from the common weakness and fragility.

6 In amazonian cultures, ancestor-cults are noticeably absent. One of the two sources of "spirits" (generally evil) has to be remarkable ancestors, as exemplified in the mythology, the other one being the spiritual "owners" of animal species. For the Txicáo, all these animals (except one turtle) appear prominently in myths.

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PROTEIN, PROTEIN, WHAT IS DONE IN THY NAME?

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In writing together, Marshall Hurlich, an ecologist committed to a scientific approach to anthropology, and myself, a symbolist committed to a humanistic approach to anthropology, we have tried to establish a long overdue dialogue between two main trends of recent investigation in anthropology. The point of our association is, by using a concrete ethnographic example of food taboos in the South American lowlands, to address the more general questions raised by the seminal papers of Gross, Ross, and Beckerman. In so doing, we hope to go beyond what has been confined to a sterile polemic and arrive instead at a more productive encounter. Maybe our widest, if not wildest, goal is to be programmatic and in so doing to generate future research which could more adequately integrate ecological and symbolic data in a more meaningful way.

We believe that ecology has explanatory value, and we believe that symbolism has explanatory value. But we both object to the frankly imperialistic attitude with which each approach considers the other, and we altogether reject the purely reductionistic claims that each one makes to the detriment of the other. There are essentially two opposite, although not necessarily contradictory ways of tackling the problem of anthropology. Homo sapiens may be perceived in a continuum with the environment (or nature) and placed thereby in its Darwinian context. As a result, people must be studied as a natural entity and thus no differently from other social animals. Or, man may be considered as fundamentally different, which is the basis of a humanistic endeavor. From that point of view what constitutes the radical departure of human beings from nature is the ability to symbolize and use a language, thus the ability to impart meaning to anything and everything, to create even ultimate meaning--that is, to be religious beings. Now, as it happens, although these views are contradictory, both are correct.

There are at least two implications to the above statements. It is

absurd to pretend that symbols are negligible or that ideology can be explained purely in terms of ecological arguments; and for similar and reverse reasons, it is equally absurd to blind ourselves to the ecological constraints that nature puts upon the symbolizing abilities of Homo sapiens. In other words, where ecologists and symbolists have clashed so far is at the level of two diametrically opposed dogmas, the former devoting themselves to a natural approach to man, the later devoting themselves to a cultural approach to man. Or, said differently, since both use the concept of culture as the key or root concept of anthropology, the clash is located at the definitional level of what culture is supposed to be and to do. Of course, each sees in the blurred distance the other's focus, but only to disqualify it on the basis of its purported irrelevance. It is no wonder that any attempt at dialogue has fallen so far in the vacuumm of two unconvincing monologues. At the same time, it seems ironical that anthropologists who pretend to understand the cultures and societies of the world are unable to understand each other. Maybe some more epistemological reflection would help.

But for the time being, let us descend to a more mundane level and let us consider the example of food taboos among the Panare Indians of Venezualan Guiana. And let us take more specifically the example of the deer, since the gentle cervidae seem to be the object of less blood-shedding than of ink-spilling. In two years of field work, I once ate a deer which I had killed myself and on which my informants gorged themselves. It may be noteworthy that there is no formal taboo on the deer, but to an ecologist the uniqueness of this event--the Panare eating deer--does make sense, despite the deer not being taboo. This first case can be considered as a "neutral" example, neutral in the sense that along the continuum whose end points are "food-avoidance-for-strictly-ecological-reasons" and "food-avoidance-for-mainly-symbolic-reasons". The case of the deer, we feel, belongs at the "ecological explanation" end for the following reasons:

1. Deer are not tabooed as food.
2. The Panare do not pass up deer, because these Indians as many others are opportunistic hunters.
3. Deer are fast game and escape easily.
4. As far as we can tell, the density of deer is low, and thus they are infrequently encountered by Panare hunters.

5. Deer are eagerly sought by the Creole population in the area, and the Creole hunt exclusively with guns. Thus, hunting by the Creoles may reduce deer populations to a level where they become marginal game to the Panare, given their technology and hunting strategies.

Our second case is slightly further along the continuum just mentioned. There is a specific food taboo on dogs because of their function as hunting animals. This is a formal taboo for which an ecological explanation seems reasonable:

1. Dogs track game; they allow hunters to "hear" game, and thus help in locating it, hence their main ecological significance.
2. Dogs eat settlement refuse, and are caloricallyb inexpensive; they are the only domesticated animals around.

This evidently does not mean that dogs do not also play a significant symbolic role in Panare culture, as I demonstrated in The Headman and I. We would also like to point out that if the Panare suffered from protein scarcity, we would expect them to eat their dogs, at least on occasion, since they acquire those dogs from the Creoles and can resupply themselves.

Our third example presents a more difficult, and yet more interesting case for our present concern, since it requires for its understanding an interpretation that is both ecological and symbolic. We are referring here to the jaguar which is completely tabooed. The symbolic significance has been pointed out by Levi-Strauss in particular that it stands out in relation to man as a true hunting competitor and in addition as the only animal which reverses the relationship hunter-hunted. No wonder, then, that its presence keeps reoccurring in a variety of myths in which the jaguar is conceived either as an ancestor or as double of human beings.

This evidently does not mean that, in addition, the prohibition of jaguar hunting does not make sense from an ecological perspective, and this for some of the same reasons, to wit:

1. Jaguars are dangerous as game.
2. As "top carnivores", their population density is much lower than that of herbivorous, frugivorous, and insectivorous game

species, and as such they are infrequently encountered.

We have given so far examples of animals which are not eaten for ecological reasons (deer, dogs) and examples of animals which are intermediary cases, i.e., cases where both ecological and symbolic explanations for their avoidance as protein sources are satisfactory. In fact, in conjunction with each other such explanations make more sense, i.e., are more robust, than each explanation taken separately.

Our last examples concern the Panare taboos on several species of birds, with which the ecologist has more difficulty. The Panare do hunt and eat many species of birds: parrots, ducks, curassow, quail, macaw. Ducks are not often eaten because they are difficult to approach and kill, but they are considered prize food. I never saw a Panare eat dove, although these animals are killed since they are used for target practice by young boys with toy blowguns. True, the meat of doves and smaller birds is sometimes but not always used as bait for fishing, and therefore retain a marginal ecological value.

It becomes difficult, however, to understand the formal taboo on several species of birds, especially the cock-of-the-rock (Rupicola sp.), the toucans (the Ramphastidae), and all the species of herons (the Ardeidae). Let us consider these animals in more detail, starting with the toucans. Toucan pelts (skin and feathers together) are used as ceremonial ornaments by men. The beaks are used as part of a percussion instrument by women. The cock-of-the-rock is in the same position, although it is less prized as decoration, and it is also a less abundant species. Interestingly, neither toucans nor cock-of-the-rock are hunted by the Creoles. When a Panare kills a toucan, he takes the beak and skin and leaves the meat to rot. The same applies to the cock-of-the-rock except that the beak is not used.

Given that a Panare adult male wears some 10 to 15 toucans on his back, and that the skins must be replaced every year at the end of the dry season as they rot, hunting toucans and cocks-of-the-rock does not consitute a negligible endeavor either in terms of time or effort. In other words, the cost is high, but again toucans are never eaten. The explanation of this avoidance does not rest with ecology, but with a symbolic understanding of

ıe Panare world view, which I have detailed in Under the Rainbow.

Similarly, herons are never consumed, and their avoidance as meat is a ɔrmal taboo. But for herons, there is more balance between ecology and ymbolism. Herons are prize game for the Creoles. The Piaroa Indians, the outhern neighbors of the Panare, use the long-bones of their legs in ıiffing hallucinogenic drugs. So it might be that hunting pressure on ıerons from other ethnic groups, and differences in their densities over short geographical distances may make herons a less desirable species to ɔursue in the hunt for reasons of energetic efficiency. Only future ɛesearch may tell.

In conclusion, there are two main points we wish to make. First, it is in the long run more analytically fruitful to consider examples of food avoidance and food taboos and possibly other aspects of behavior and ideology, as floating points along a continuum ranging from "attributes resulting primarily from ecological constraints" to "attributes reflecting primarily structural and symbolic parameters." We call these "floating points" because where they actually occur will be influenced by several factors--the abundance of data concerning natural history, the sophistication of our symbolic analysis, the actual environmental parameters relevant to the specific case, such as the possibility of protein scarcity or protein abundance.

Secondly, we must realize that it is possible to find for anything an "ecological" explanation, because the answers are already determined by the questions which are raised. The same is true, by the way, of symbolic interpretations. A better epistemological reflection seems to us largely overdue, and this cannot be achieved if we take our respective positions as articles of faith rather than as working hypotheses which must be dialectically confronted with ethnographic realities. Taken as dogma, such hypotheses are condemned to fall into the domain of received ideas that are simplistic and reductionistic in essence, and ultimately ridiculous. Taken as conceptual tools which are to constantly superseded by better tools, they retain their heuristic value in fulfilling the task of anthropology, namely, to find the relationship or articulations between the natural necessities to which men are submitted and the cultural necessities to which they submit themselves.

KNOWLEDGE AND PRAXIS IN SANUMÁ FOOD PROHIBITIONS

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INTRODUCTION

In a recent article, Godelier (1978) has put forward a unified approach to the study of society. Focussing on the concept of infrastructure he examines the question of which institutions in a given case may function, explicitly or implicitly, as relations of production. Social relations of production, for Godelier, not only control access to resources and the means of production and allocate the labour force among the different labour processes found in a given case, but also determine "the social form of redistribution of the product of individual or collective labour and, consequently, the forms of circulation or noncirculation of these products." An infrastructure, he suggests, includes these social relations of production, the ecological and geographical context of a society's existence, and also "the material and intellectual means that the members of society implement ... in order to work upon nature and to extract from it their means of existence, thereby transforming it into a 'socialialized' nature" (1978:763, emphasis in the original).

Godelier makes the important proposal that, in certain circumstances (specifically in non-capitalist societies), a given institution (kinship, religion, politics, are the examples he cites) may "in addition to its own ostensible purpose and its explicit functions, function directly and internally as a relation of production" (1978:765, cf. 1972:93-5, 1977a:2-11, 1977b:16-17). This is particularly relevant to the recently raised issue of the so-called "materialist" versus "mentalist" approaches in anthropology (see, for example, Ross 1978). In the light of Godelier's discussion it is my intention to demonstrate that this dichotomization of approaches is less than useful for the understanding of social phenomena. For this purpose I present an analysis of certain aspects of the food

prohibition system of the Sanumá of north Brazil.

The system of food prohibitions of the Sanumá is a particularly apt example of the need for a unified approach. Only in this way can we fully understand its many implications and subtleties. In order to bring out the various ramifications of this food prohibition system and its relevance to the infrastructure of Sanumá society, in addition to its own workings as a system of taboos with supernatural sanctions, I have divided the paper into two parts. The first part describes what the system is, what it consists of, who is affected by it, what consequences it has for those who infringe the prohibitions. The second part analyses what the system does, how it represents a type of control of the use of and access to the natural faunal resources and the distribution of their product, how it provides a classification of social units, and how it supplies a corpus of explanatory statements for illnesses of a certain kind.

I will show that, just as Godelier proposes, "intellectual " aspects of the ethno-zoology and the food prohibition system of the Sanumá (what he terms "idéel realities") are a fundamental part of the "productive forces" of that society, in that they contribute to the definition of the channels for production and circulation of an important part of Sanumá economy, viz. animal food.

1. THE PROHIBITIONS AND THEIR SANCTIONS

The Sanumá are tropical forest horticulturalists who live in a region of uninterrupted tropical rain forest, at an altitude of some 2,500 feet, on the border between Brazil and Venezuela. My research has been with the Sanumá of the upper Auaris river valley in the extreme northwest of Roraima Territory, in Brazil.[1]

The Sanumá category salo bɨ can be glossed as 'edible fauna'. This category includes those species subject to "general" prohibitions, i.e. prohibited to everyone at all times.[2] It also includes those species subject to "specific" prohibitions, i.e. prohibited to certain people at certain times (for this specific/general distinction see Basso 1973:16-17; cf. Gross 1975:543, note 4). Other species also included are those few normally not prohibited to anyone apart from males and females during

puberty seclusion, menstruating women, etc., to whom all other species are also prohibited (see below). Those species under a general prohibition, although they are not killed or eaten by a given group of Sanumá, are known to be 'other people's salo bɨ', killed and eaten by other Yanoama Indians.[3]

Most insects, and also worms, are not considered edible. The 'edible fauna' include: fish; crustaceans; amphibians; certain ants and termites, wasp larvae and the larvae of one species of beetle, and numerous species of caterpillar; reptiles; birds and mammals. A very few species of mammals, birds and reptiles, however, are considered spirits of one or another kind and are not salo bɨ. These fauna with supernatural attributes include such rarely encountered (but, in Western terms, perfectly "natural") species as the king vulture and the koliomoni, a very large stork-like bird. These are both 'Sky People'. The latter is dangerous as it can kill human beings and they are both important as assistant spirits in shamanism (see Taylor 1976). The harpy eagle and the hanagaza ('bush dog') are two other supernaturals, being the most common of the nonosi ('alter ego') spirits of men and women respectively.[4] When a person's alter ego spirit dies or is killed, that person also dies. For the Sanumá of the upper Auaris valley, the alter ego spirit animal normally lives far distant in the forest, beyond the limits of the hunting territory of one's village (cf. Wilbert 1963:227, 233; Barandiaran 1965:8).[5] Other examples of supernatural fauna are three kinds of feline, one related to the jaguar and the other two related to the cougar or puma, and the much-dreaded 'anaconda' (lalagigi). The supernatural fauna, pet animals (hima bɨ) including hunting dogs, and, as mentioned, certain insects and worms are not considered edible fauna.

The species which are considered edible are involved in a number of different kinds of food prohibition. All such species are prohibited to males and females during the few days of their puberty seclusion, to menstruating women, to men in ritual seclusion after the killing of an enemy (or of an alter ego spirit animal). The eating of any meat during the puberty seclusion would result in an automatic and generalized (i.e. the same no matter which faunal species was involved) penalty, a disorder of the liver and possible death. If a menstruating woman eats meat the penalty, again automatic and generalized, is that her husband will lose his 'good aim' and become unsuccessful in hunting. If meat is eaten during the

seclusion, known as kanenemo, after a killing, the ghost of the dead person will attack and possibly kill the breaker of the taboo.

There are two further sets of prohibitions related to edible fauna. In these the penalty varies from one faunal category (or group of categories) to another, is not automatic, and is inflicted by the spirit of the dead animal itself. I have called these two sets the self-affecting and child-affecting prohibitions (see Taylor 1974: 66-74). The latter set consists of what are also termed couvade restrictions (cf. Riviere 1974, Menget 1979). In the Sanumá case, these affect the mother and the sociological father. In this paper I discuss these two sets of prohibitions. The separation of these prohibitions, for the purposes of analysis, is in agreement with the point made by McDowell (1977) and other participants in the 1977 American Anthropological Association symposium on Food Taboos in New Guinea, that the food taboos of a society do not necessarily constitute a single set.

For an understanding of these prohibitions it is necessary to take into account the three phases of the existence of the edible fauna, in post-mythological times.[6] These are: (1) the salo bɨ phase, as living fauna, available in the forest to be hunted and eaten by the Sanuma; (2) the uku dɨbɨ ('animaloid spirit') phase of the spirit of the recently dead animal which, in the case of a prohibition not being observed, may or may not inflict the associated penalty; and (3) the hekula dɨbɨ ('humanoid spirit') phase. When an uku dɨbɨ spirit does not inflict any penalty, whether because no prohibition was broken or because, in spite of this, the spirit refrains from inflicting the penalty, it will metamorphose into a hekula.[7] It will then go to live in the 'hekula house', for its species, in the vicinity of its territory when alive. The 'houses' are typically in mountains, waterfalls, rivers, but not simply "in the forest". These spirits are then available to be called by a shaman to go and live inside his chest and become one of his many assistant spirits.[8]

The penalties which the uku dɨbɨ spirits can inflict are illnesses and bodily disorders of various kinds such as a sore back, diarrhea in one's child, one's child being too weak to walk, etc. Of a total of 34 such penalties 27 are inflicted by the uku dɨbɨ spirit using a particular body part (e.g. its beak, its sharp teeth, its sting), 2 are inflicted by (the

spirits of) items associated with the animal (the giant worm eaten by certain species and the webs of the spiders eaten by certain species), in one case the spirit as a whole inflicts the penalty, and in four case I do not have information on how the penalty is inflicted.[9] Throughout this paper I shall refer to the penalties using the word "illness".

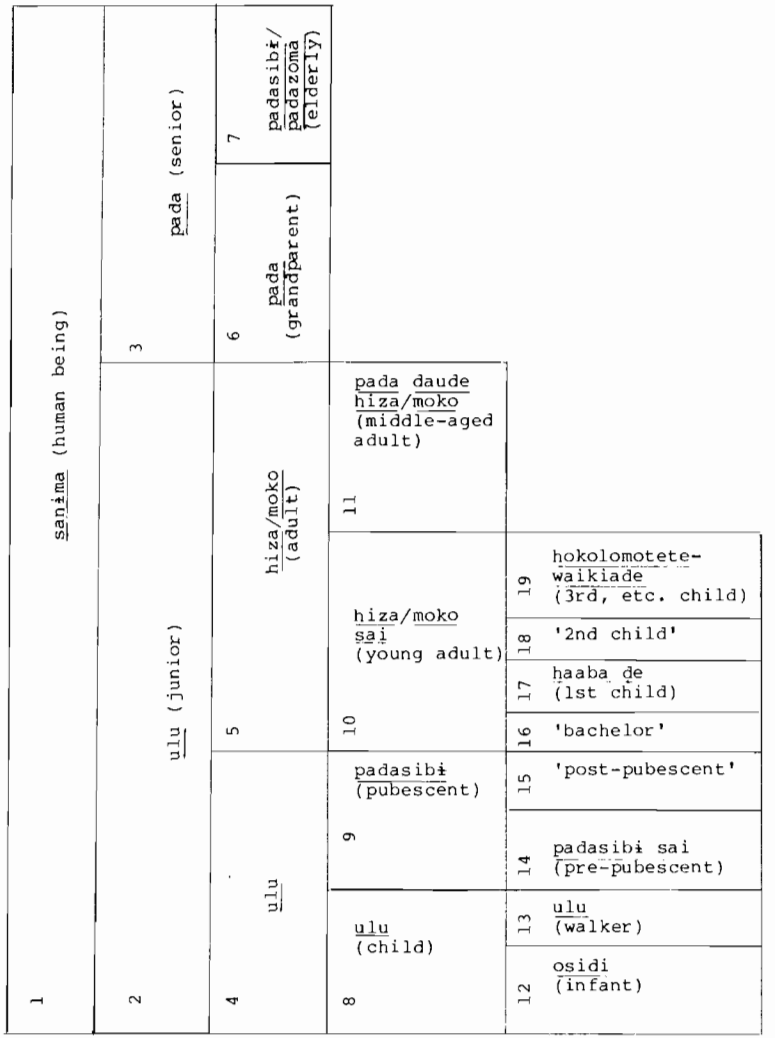
The prohibitions and the classification of society in population segments

Who is subject to the prohibitions is expressed by the Sanumá in terms of the subdivisions of the four basic age grades. I refer to these as "population segments". They are the terminal categories of the taxonomic classification of human beings shown in figure 1.

The criteria of this classification are based on considerations of biological maturation and the number of one's children. The classification is discussed in detail in Taylor (1973, 1974:62-74, 1977a and 1979). The prohibitions state, for example, that 'walkers' should not eat 'kinkajou' (haso) meat or they may become 'lazy'. The parents of an 'infant' child should not eat snake meat or the child may get 'diarrhea'. Various prohibitions can apply to people in the same population segment and most prohibitions apply to people in two or more successive segments. For example, the prohibition on snake meat begins with one's first child and continues throughout one's adulthood, middle-age and grandparenthood. Some species are what we might call "lightly" prohibited, being so for the people of only one or two population segments. Other species are "heavily" prohibited, to the people in as many as nine successive population segments. 15 species are not prohibited at all. These are the 'tapir' (sama), 'woolly monkey' (wisa), 'curassow' (paluli), 'piping guan' (manasi), 'guan' (kulemɨ), five species of frogs, three species of fish, and two species of termite. 'Possums' (pumodomɨ gɨgɨ), 'lizards' (sɨsalɨ bɨ) and 'mice' (tholobo bɨ), on the other hand, are prohibited to everyone. It should be noted that in this paper I am, most of the time, discussing the prohibitions as the apply to members of the kadimani lineage. Other lineages apply the prohibitions differently as I also discuss below.

FIGURE ONE

The Taxonomy of Population Segments



he continuum of specific and general prohibitions

The prohibitions under discussion can be seen as constituting a continuum with the non-prohibited species at one extreme and the totally prohibited species at the other. This can be shown by considering especially the self-affecting prohibitions as in figure 2 (the 'infant' population segment is not shown in this and other figures as, by definition, 'infants' do not yet eat meat). The "+" signs indicate prohibition, the "-" signs the lack of such.

In addition to these prohibitions, the members of the '1st child' through 'grandparent' population segments are subject to the child-affecting prohibitions, as shown in figure 3. As can be seen, certain faunal categories occur only in the child-affecting set (e.g. toucans, snakes), certain only in the self-affecting set (e.g. peccaries, doves), while several appear in both sets (e.g. squirrels, felines, etc.).

It can also be seen in figures 2 and 3 that in both sets of prohibitions, with the exception of the situation of the 'walkers' in the self-affecting set, there is an initial point at which a maximum number of the prohibitions apply after which they taper off to reach zero for the people in the 'elderly' population segment. The location of these maximum points at the 'pre-pubescent' and 'first child' segments would seem to correlate with certain Sanumá beliefs regarding the especial vulnerability of pubescents and first-born children to attack by various kinds of spirit. These are not only the uku dibi spirits of the food prohibition system itself, but also the sai dibi ('evil spirits') and certain hekula dibi. At puberty both males and females must strip themselves of all adornments to look as 'ugly' as possible so as not to attract an evil spirit (male for girls and female for boys) which would kill them by having sexual relations with them. Young children are vulnerable to attack from a number of different evil spirits and also by hekula dibi which can be sent by shamans of enemy villages (see Taylor 1976:27-39). A woman's first child (as for that matter the first offspring of animals, pet dogs, etc.) is considered especially vulnerable. This haaba haaba de child is, in fact, not really

FIGURE TWO

Self-Affecting Prohibitions (kadimani lineage)

	'walker'	'pre-pubescent'	'post-pubescent'	'bachelor'	'first child'	'second child'	'3rd, etc. child'	'middle-aged'	'grandparent'	'elderly'
tapir, woolly monkey, curassow, guans, 5 frogs 3 fish, 2 termites	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
kinkajou, olingo, nocturnal monkey, coatimundis	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
peccaries, deer, paca, 3 monkeys, 2 armadillos, 2 birds, doves, ground birds, 5 fish, 3 bats	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
wasps, coatimundis, armadillos	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
parrots, noct. monkey	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
4 monkeys, sloths, anteaters, 2 armadillos, ant, 2 frogs	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
tayra, porcupines, squirrels, capybara, paca, agoutis, rabbit, felines, otters, eels, turtles, crabs	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
toads, owls	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-
2 bats	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-
possums, lizards, mice	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

FIGURE THREE

Child-Affecting Prohibitions (kadimani lineage)

	'walker'	'pre-pubescent'	'post-pubescent'	'bachelor'	'first child'	'second child'	'3rd, etc. child'	'middle-aged'	'grandparent'	'elderly'
macaws, ground birds, toucans	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
wasps, 3 bats	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-
parrots	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-
2 monkeys, hawks, crabs, turtles	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	-
4 monkeys, tayra porcupines, sloths coatmundis, squirrels rabbit, felines, otters capybara, paca, agoutis, deer, 4 birds, snakes, alligators, toads, turtles, 6 fish, caterpillars	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	-

expected to survive at all.[10] These two sets of food prohibitions can be said to implicitly reaffirm Sanumá beliefs regarding the high risk of spirit attack to which pubescents and first-born children are exposed. These vulnerabilities diminish progressively with age, in the one case, and from child to child, in the other.

As to the "general" prohibitions on 'possums', 'lizards' and 'mice', all informants agree that these are not uniform for all Sanumá or for all Yanoama. Distant Yanoama to the south, referred to as waikiạ dibɨ (the more inclusive term) and samatali dibɨ (a more specific term for the geographically closest grouping of the waikia) are said to have the same general prohibitions. These people are of the Yanomami linguistic sub-group.[11] The Sanuma of the lower Auaris river valley, on the other hand, are said not to have general prohibitions on these faunal categores. The kobali dibɨ, who seem to be a sub-group of the Sanuma with a different dialect from that of the upper Auaris region, are also said not to have these general prohibitions.[12] Within the villages of the upper Auaris valley region, these general prohibitions apparently differ from lineage to lineage just as do the specific prohibitions (see below).[13] The 'possums', 'lizards' and 'mice' already mentioned are the faunal categories under "general" prohibition to the members of the kadimani lineage. Other lineages have general prohibitions on different faunal categories, e.g. 'rabbit' and 'squirrel'.

As figure 2 also shows, the general prohibitions are simply the extreme, limiting case of a continuum of prohibitions. In the case of the kadimani lineage, this continuum ranges from the 15 species which are not prohibited at all, through the increasingly severe specific prohibitions, which affect an increasing number of population segments, to culminate with the three faunal categores prohibited to everyone. The general prohibitions of the kadimani lineage, moreover, carry a penalty (going blind by what sounds like cataracts in the eyes) of the same type as those of the specific prohibitions. This penalty is an illness which may or may not be inflicted by an uku dibɨ spirit of the dead animal, just as is the case for the specific prohibitions.

This being so, it would seem inappropriate, at least in this Sanumá case, to analyze the "general" prohibitions separately from the "specific"

es (cf. Basso 1978:17; Lizot 1979:150-1).[14]

THE PROHIBITION SYSTEM AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF MEAT

For the effects of the prohibitions on the individual's access to meat can consider, for example, a 14 day period of above average hunting and thering productivity. This occurred in September of 1969. During this eriod the following animal food was caught at the Kadimani village:

1 tapir (sama)
1 collared peccary (pose)
1 agouti (thomi)
1 curassow (paluli)
1 bush chicken (hasimo)
1 bushmaster snake (isikolosimamigigi)
fish of several species (salaga bi)[15]

According to the prohibition system, as it affects the kadimani lineage, the meat of these animals was available to the members of this lineage (and their wives or widows), resident in the village at that time, as shown in figure 4. In this figure the "+" sign indicates that the meat of that faunal category is not available to people in that population segment; the "-" sign indicates that it is. The numbers in ( ) above the population segment columns indicate the number of people affected, of either sex. It should be noted that these figures do not, of course, indicate those residents and visitors who are members of other lineages or married kadimani women who observe the prohibitions of their husbands' lineages. The total population of the village was, in those days, of 49 people and there were some 10 or 12 visitors present during the period in question.

From the data shown in figure 4 we can see that, while 'walkers' and 'elderlies' could eat the meat of all these animals (etc.), the 'pubescents' were much more limited in their access to the meat. 'Young adults' also were, and in the case of the snake meat and certain fish (of the list shown) people of child-bearing age are under additional restrictions. The prohibition system may be said to have as one of its functions the distribution of meat in such a way as to guarantee the very young and the very old a share of all available meat.

FIGURE FOUR

Restrictions On Access To Meat (kadimani lineage)

	'walker' (6)	'pre-pubescent' (5)	'post-pubescent' (0)	'bachelor' (0)	'first child' (6)	'second child' (4)	'3rd, etc. child' (3)	'middle-aged' (2)	'grandparent' (0)	'elderly' (2)
tapir	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
collared peccary	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
agouti	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-
curassow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
bush chicken	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
bushmaster	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	-
fish (a)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
fish (b)	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
fish (c)	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	-

As well as the question of which population segment the individual is in, at a given time, a person's access to meat is also determined by lineage membership. To illustrate this aspect of the system we can consider the situation at another village, Mosonawa (population 40), on an occasion when several obo ('armadillo') had been caught. At this village there are representatives of three different lineages: kadimani; mosonawa; and osigatali; and of the ǒka agnatic nucleus (which for ease of presentation I shall also refer to as a lineage).[16] The data is given in figure 5. Here the "+" signs indicate that the meat is prohibited to people in the population segments in question and the "-" signs that it is not.

Of the 4 people who observed the kadimani prohibitions, which included the mother of the family, the widow of a kadimani man, none was 'pubescent' at the time and all of them could and did eat some of the obo meat. Of the 8 people who observed the osigatali prohibitions, which included two wives of osigatali men, on the other hand, only 5 (4 'walkers' and one 'grandparent') were free to eat some of the meat. As is also shown in figure 5, the mosonawa and oka people were more restricted than the kadimani's but less so than the osigatali's.

The data shown in figures 4 and 5 indicate that it is through a combination of lineage membership and position in the sequence of population segments that the system regulates the consumption of the meat of the great majority of 'edible' species.

To return to figure 4, the data shown may seem to suggest a tendency for the system to favour the older people and discriminate against the younger (with the obvious exception of the 'walkers). It would not, however, be entirely correct to interpret the data in this way. Parallel to this distribution of meat effected by the prohibition system is the distribution in terms of the body parts of the butchered animal. Except when the animal is very small and is eaten by the members of the hunter's own nuclear family, the meat is distributed to all the families in the village. The younger people (when the prohibitions permit) receive the choice portions of the meat. 'Elderlies', who seem so favoured by the prohibition system in that they can eat virtually all the edible fauna,

FIGURE FIVE

Restrictions On Access To 'Armadillo' Meat (Mosonawa village)

	'walker'	'pre-pubescent'	'post-pubescent'	'bachelor'	'first child'	'second child'	'3rd, etc. child'	'middle-aged'	'grandparent'	'elderly'
kadimani	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
mosonawa	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
osigatali	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
ǒka	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-

will only receive the 'feet' and the (by Sanumá standards) less valued 'lower back' of those animals large enough to be worth butchering and sharing around the village. The 'pubescents', on the other hand, who seem so unpriviledged by the prohibition system (see figures 2 and 4) are, together with 'walkers', members of the 'youngster' age grade and may eat the meat of any part of the body of those species not prohibited to them. The heart of a tapir, considered a special delicacy, is always given to a hiza de sai, a 'young adult' male (see Taylor 1974:43-48, 75-76). Thus, we have the following distribution of animal body parts by age grade:

age grade	body part
'youngster'	all body parts
'adult'	quarters and upper back
'grandparent'	no information[17]
'elderly'	lower back and feet

These two complementary distribution systems, that of the prohibition system and that of the body part distribution, necessarily always act together with each "cancelling out", as it were, any discriminatory tendency in the other.

The food prohibition system and the relations of production

In figure 2, it is notable that a very high proportion of the faunal categories mentioned (38 of 49, i.e. 78%) are prohibited to the 'pubescents'. If so many species are prohibited to them, it is reasonable to ask: what are the pubescents allowed to eat? In figure 4 we have a concrete illustration of the answer to this question. Of the faunal categories shown they can, in fact, eat the meat of five. 'Tapir', 'curassow', and 'fish' of set (a) are available to them because not prohibited to anyone. 'Bushmaster' and 'fish' (c) are prohibited only to people of child-bearing age and are therefore available to them. The complete list of faunal categories whose meat can be eaten by 'pubescents' is as follows.

A. species/faunal categories not prohibited to anyone:
   1. 'tapir' (sama);
   2. 'woolly monkey' (wisa);
   3. 'curassow' (paluli);
   4. 'piping guan' (manasi);
   5. 'guan' (kulemɨ);
   6. 'fish' (a) (salaga bɨ - 3 species);
   7. 'frogs' (a) (mŏka bi - 5 species);
   8. 'termites' (anebo gɨgɨ - 2 species).

B. species/faunal categories prohibited only to people of child-bearing age:
   9. 'toucans' (masubi bɨ - 7 species);
   10. 'hawks' (kokoi bɨ - 6 species);
   11. 'large birds' (various - 4 species);[18]
   12. 'snakes' (olɨ bɨ - 20 species);
   13. 'alligators' (iwatam gɨgɨ - 2 species);
   14. 'caterpillars' (kasa bɨ - 10 species);
   15. 'fish' (c) (salaga bɨ - 3 species);

C. species prohibited only to 'walkers'
   16. 'kinkajou' (haso);
   17. 'olingo' (hela).

This list includes a wide range of types of fauna as regards the economic activites involved in their acquisition. Snakes, for instance, are never "hunted" as such but simply killed, if possible, when encountered by chance. Fish, for example, are a resource caught by "fish poisoning" in the dry season and, nowadays, by hook and line. Both are of the sort which can be acquired by women and also by the elderly. One point of interest about this list is that it includes virtually all of those species of birds which are hunted in the wizai huu ('dusk hunting') and wizai huu hena ('dawn hunting') procedure, ala bɨ ('psittacidae' or 'parrots') and hasimo bɨ ('ground birds') are the only exceptions.

The Sanumá have two principal hunting procedures. First, there is

the namo huu which is the common day-to-day hunting done from the village itself. It is normally a one-day affair and, depending on whether or not fresh tracks have been seen the day before and particular game is being hunted, is carried out by individuals or by groups of hunters. Second, there is the hinomo huu which is a long range hunt of several days duration. A group of men go together on such a hunt, although most of the actual hunting is done individually, from the base camp which they set up in the forest. These hunts are usually, though not exclusively, for the purpose of providing a supply of roasted/smoked meat for a festival.

A third type of hunting is the wizai huu and wizai huu hena ('dawn/dusk hunting') just mentioned. When observed as a regular part of village life it is seen to be much practised and yet gives the impression of being of relatively little importance. The expression refers to hunting carried out at dusk or at dawn for birds getting ready to roost or awakening in early morning feeding. They are said to be much less wary at these times of day. It is the least enjoyable kind of hunting, being done by one hunter alone, leaving or returning to the village in what, to Western eyes, would be the darkness before dawn or after dusk. When practised "at dawn" then, in fact, in the pre-dawn cold, and often in the wetness of the dew, mist or rain-drenched forest. Its results are often meagre - sometimes nothing at all, at others a tiny partridge which might seem hardly worth all that trouble and discomfort, but occasionally a larger bird, a 'guan' or a 'curassow'.[19]

It is 'pubescent' youths and 'young adult' men who practise this form of hunting. It is most unusual for a man as old as 'middle-aged' to go 'dawn/dusk hunting'. It may be noted that this is a form of hunting traditionally based entirely on skill and strength with the bow and arrow.[20] Older men (generally from when they become 'grandparents') no longer have the strength to use a Sanumá bow. They increasingly resort to alternatives such as the use of the hunting lance and to hunting which depends on the use of dogs and other ancillary techniques (see Taylor 1974:21-24). For these younger men who can and do practise this form of bow and arrow hunting, the 'curassow', 'piping guan' and 'guan' are all permitted meat. They are large birds (more or less the size of a wild turkey) and provide meat to spare which will be shared with other families

of the village.[21] The 'toucans', 'hawks' and 'large birds' are all permitted meat for the 'pubescents' and the 'ground birds' (also caught by 'dawn/dusk hunting') are permitted for 'bachelors' and '2nd child' and '3rd child, etc.' young men, who all practice this form of hunting. The pokola ('partridge'), one of the ground birds, is relatively easy to hunt and when a young man goes 'dawn/dusk hunting' it is often said that he is after "his pokola".

In this 'dawn/dusk hunting' procedure we have, then an arduous and not entirely enjoyable hunting practice which the older men avoid (and the oldest, indeed, have not the strength to engage in) and to which the younger men and youths are motivated to devote a significant amount of their time and energy by the restrictions and permissions of the food prohibition system. Here we have an aspect of the relations of production which involves 'middle-aged' and (especially) 'senior' men, on the one hand, and youths and 'young adult' men, on the other, being regulated and motivated by the workings of the food prohibition system.

The food prohibitions and the metaphorical explanation of illness

Thus far I have discussed certain aspects of the prohibition system which go to confirm Godelier's perception that in addition to functioning in its own terms as a kinship system, a religious system, etc., such institutions can also function and in an important way, as regulatory aspects of the basic infrastructure of a given society. In the Sanumá case, the faunal food prohibition system, a system of taboos and supernatural sanctions, has been shown to function in the economic sphere both in regulating the consumption of animal meat and in regulating and motivating at least one aspect of the relations of production.

In confirmation of Godelier's assertion that in such situations the institution in question will also function in its own terms I shall now discuss one aspect of the system in terms of the supernatural sanctions involved and the animal spirits which apply these sanctions. By means of a symbolic analysis of this material I shall show how the prohibition system provides a corpus of explanations for a particular class of illness. These explanations are a part of the knowledge, of the

intellectual means, by which the Sanumá define, in the process of interpreting them, certain features of the natural reality of which they are a part.

I have mentioned that, when a food prohibition is not observed, the uku dibi spirit of the animal in question may inflict a particular penalty on the offender (or on his or her infant child). For the Sanumá, as is the case for so many different societies, breaking a food taboo can result in a state of illness or bodily disorder. My previous analysis of this aspect of the food prohibition system (Taylor 1972, 1974:62-92) focused on the animal body parts involved in the inflicting of these penalties. Here I discuss the system as presenting a series of metaphorical explanations for these illnesses.

Eating sloth meat when it is taboo to you can make you thin, eating snake meat when your child is still nursing can give the child diarrhea, you will get boils if you eat wasp larvae, when these are taboo to you. Becoming thin, getting boils, diarrhea in young children, are things which do happen. The penalties inflicted are not imaginary illnesses but matter-of-fact, day-to-day problems. For the Sanumá, explanations of this particular set of illnesses are provided by the food prohibition system. The explanatory proposition involves a connection between the animal species in question and the human population segment (or segments) vulnerable to the illness in question. In our terms, this connection can be seen as a metaphorical association. Metaphorical association is, of course, also used in the generation of symbols and for the purposes of certain kinds of classification, totemic for example. Here, as is so often the case in systems of folk or ethno-medicine, the metaphors are used in the formulation of explanations (cf. Taylor 1977b:141-145).

Why does the infant have diarrhea? Because the uku dibi spirit of a snake attacked it after its parents ate the (tabooed) meat of the snake. As a result the child suffers a "pesudo-transformation" (cf. Taylor 1976:40) and becomes snake-like to the extent that its diarrhea resembles the liquid excrement of snakes. The Sanumá theory of this class of illness involves the association of the domain of prohibited fauna and that of those vulnerable to this set of illnesses. Snakes are metaphorically associated with infants and an attack by the spirit of a

snake is then considered the cause of an infant's diarrhea. Thus:

the snake (with its liquid excrement) : the fauna

::

the infant (with its diarrhea) : human society

The snake's excrement and the infant's diarrhea are observably similar in that they are liquid. It may be noted, then, that the metaphor is "motivated" or "non-arbitrary".

To take another example, in the case of the child-affecting prohibition on 'sloth' meat the penalty is that the offender's infant child may develop a twisted wrist. Here the explanatory metaphor is:

the sloth (with its curved forelimb) : the fauna

::

the infant (with its twisted wrist) : human society

These are two of the more straightforward examples and I am still in the process of analysing the data along these lines. Of the 34 penalty-illnesses of this kind, 12 seem to be similar to the two examples given. The others require more complex explanatory propositions involving sequences of two or more metaphors. In at least two cases the reference is not to some characteristic of the species in question but to events which affected the mythological ancestors of these species. At this point I can only indicate in what way I consider the Sanumá prohibitions to provide metaphorical explanations for a particular set of illnesses.

The complete explanation has, for the Sanumá, two explanatory elements. First, one or both parents of the infant (who is ill) ate the tabooed snake meat. Thus the child is ill because they broke the taboo. Second, the snake's uku dibi spirit attacked the infant, giving it diarrhea. Thus the child is ill because the spirit attacked it. The snake (a specimen of a particular faunal category) is brought into association with the infant (who is in a particular population segment). This association is, on the one hand, what we would call factual in that the parent of the child did eat the snake meat. It is, on the other hand,

what we would call metaphorical in that the spirit of the snake is then believed to cause the infant's diarrhea. The explanatory proposition consists of an independent variable (the eating of the prohibited meat) and an intervening variable (the attack of the uku dɨbɨ spirit). The eating of the meat is a necessary condition, only, of the the eventual illness. The attack by the spirit is a necessary and sufficient condition of the illness (cf. Spiro 1968:106-7). The necessary condition, the eating of the meat, is an empirically observable fact, i.e. the breaking of the taboo.[22] The necessary and sufficient condition is the postulated attack of the uku dɨbɨ spirit which, from our analytical point of view, involves a metaphorical association between the snake and the infant.

The prohibition system and the classification of social units

The Sanumá prohibition system is such as to not only function in its own terms as a system of taboos and supernatural sanctions and also to function as an aspect of the infrastructure, as discussed above, but to function as well as a classification device of the social structure. Certain features of the variation found within the system constitute para-totemic classifications of the population segments and of the lineages.

The Sanumá have named, patrilineal sibs and lineages which are exogamous. There are also a number of agnatic nuclei which consist of individuals who have lost lineage affiliation or who are in the process of establishing a new lineage (see Ramos 1972, 1974, 1978 and Ramos and Albert 1977).

The prohibition system provides symbolic classifications of the population segments and of the lineages (but not the sibs), which are of the same general type as totemic classification.[23] My analysis of the symbolic classification of the population segments appears in Taylor (1974:62-74; cf. Poole 1977 on the association of taro taboos and age grades among the Bimin-Kuskusmin). A brief summary of my analysis of the symbolic classification of the lineages is presented here (see Taylor 1973, 1979).

I have mentioned above that I was referring to the prohibitions of one particular lineage, the kadimani lineage. This is because the precise details of which population segments are affected by which prohibitions differ from lineage to lineage. In figure 6 I show how the "range of application" of the prohibitions varies from lineage to lineage in the case of the obo ('armadillo') (part of this same data is also shown in figure 5). Again, the "+" sign indicates that the meat is prohibited to people in that population segment, for that lineage. The "-" sign indicates that it is not. By "range of application" I refer to the fact that the prohibition first applies in a given population segment (here, the pre-pubescent in each case) and extends through a varying number of these segments. For five lineages the range of application is of two segments; for three lineages it is of three segments; and for two lineages it is of four segments. For one and only one lineage, the osigatali, the range of application is of six population segments. Where the data show a situation of this kind for a given species, I say that the species in question is "distinctively prohibited" to the members of that lineage. In the example given in figure 6, the obo species is distinctively prohibited to the osigatali lineage. In only 5 cases of the 43 species for which I have data on this aspect of the system is there no variation, with all the lineages prohibiting the species in question in the same way. In some cases there is variation but not such that the species in question is distinctively prohibited to any given lineage or lineages. In 13 cases of a selection of 25 used in the analysis, the species in question is distinctively prohibited to one or more of the lineages. The situation is shown in figure 7. It can be seen that no lineage shares identically the same distinctively prohibited species (one or more) with any other lineage. Each lineage has its own "discrete cluster" of "distinctively prohibited" species. In (Taylor 1979) I discuss this feature of the prohibition system as constituting a para-totemic classification of the Sanumá lineages.

CONCLUSIONS

What I have presented here is no more than a series of outline analyses of some aspects of two among several sets of Sanumá food prohibitions. Nevertheless, the material discussed is sufficient to demonstrate the

FIGURE SIX

Differences by Lineage in the obo ('armadillo') Prohibition

	'walker'	'pre-pubescent'	'post-pubescent'	'bachelor'	'first child'	'second child'	'3rd, etc. child'	'middle-aged'	'grandparent'	'elderly'
azagosi	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
kadimani	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
lalawa	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
mamugula	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
mosonawa	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
osigatali	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-
sogosɨ	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
haniso	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
õka	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
sadali	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
sabuli	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

FIGURE SEVEN

The Species "Distinctively Prohibited" by the Eleven Social Units

	'rabbit' (hãuhõ)	'porcupine' (hiwala)	'tayra' (hoali)	'capibara' (kazu)	'cougar' (kitanani)	'nocturnal monkey' (koalɨ)	'wasp' (kobinana)	'armadillo' (obo)	'coatimundi' (salusi)	'parakeet' (sigimɨ)	'sloth' (simɨ)	'toad' (sozo)	'turtle' (totoli)
azagosi										*			
kadimani												*	
lalawa		*											*
mamugula	*												
mosonawa									*	*			
osigatali								*					
sogosɨ			*										
haniso						*	*						
õka			*	*									*
sadali					*		*				*		
sabuli													*

complexity of a system which cannot be handled by one single analysis nor by either an exclusively "materialist" or an exclusively "mentalist" approach. The material discussed confirms the view that such a dichotomization of approaches does not contribute to adequate anthropological analysis. What is needed is a unified approach capable of dealing with both the material and the intellectual aspects of a body of beliefs and practices and also capable of respecting the need for differing analytical emphases. The different emphases become necessary whenever the material in question functions both "in its own terms" and, implicitly, as a contribution to the workings of other institutions, infrastructural or not. The unified approach which has been put forward by Godelier would seem to be of the kind which is required.

One aspect of the Sanumá system (the unequal "load" of prohibitions on the various population segments) has been examined by enquiring into the effect which this has on the individual's access to animal protein. By this approach we are able to understand that the prohibition system both guarantees a generous share of available animal protein to the very young and the very old (both without the strength necessary, for example, to use the bow and arrow) and also requires the strongest and most active members of society to devote considerable effort to securing their (and therefore also other people's) protein supply.

By a different analytical emphasis another aspect of the same material is shown to constitute a particular kind of symbolic classification of the descent groups of Sanumá society. By another application of this same approach we are able to see that the food prohibition system presents an explanatory theory, based on metaphorical association, of a certain class of illness.

I have presented the discussion using a series of emic faunal categories which I have glossed as 'edible fauna', 'snake', 'sloth', 'armadillo', etc. These are, or course, categories of the Sanumá ethno-zoological, taxonomic classification of certain of the fauna of their environment. Although in this paper it has remained "offstage", the ethnoscientific analysis of this classification previously carried out (Taylor 1972, 1974) has been present throughout as the essential basis of the discussion. The classification of human society in population segments

has also appeared as an essential element of the system. This is another of the ethno-semantic classifications which form part of the knowledge of the Sanumá, part of the way in which they "know" their natural and social environment.

Apart from whatever other interest it may have, the Sanumá food prohibition system provides us with a demonstration of the need for the openness and breadth of a unified analytical approach if we are to understand and do justice to the extraordinary richness and complexity of the societies we study.

NOTES

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2 I shall use the word "species" for any terminal category of the Sanumá faunal ethno-taxonomy, without going into the question of whether certain of these are "varietals" rather than "specifics".

3 I use Yanoama for all 18,000 speakers of this language family in both Venezuela and Brazil. There are four principal linguistic subdivisions: Yanam, Sanumá, Yanomamɨ, and Yanomam (Migliazza 1972).

4 There is some uncertainty about the identification of the hanagaza (see Wilbert 1963:227, 233; Barandiaran 1965:8). From the descriptions given by the Sanumá, it would seem to be the 'bush dog' (Speothus venaticus) (see Walker et al. 1964:1164; Langguth 1975:198-200). This is a semi-aquatic canid, with webbed feet, which hunts in packs for certain rodents and is able to pursue the paca (Cuniculus sp.) underwater.

5 On the alter ego spirit among the Yanomamɨ, in Venezuela, see Chagnon (1968:48-50) and Lizot (1971:145-6, 1976:227-8, 1977:60).

6 This is the more so because, as I have discussed at length in Taylor (1974:passim), while the Sanumá ethno-taxonomic classification does establish and define the species and the various more inclusive categories (e.g. 'aboreals', felines', 'frogs') used in any discussion of the fauna, it is not always these categories which are associated with the various penalties of the prohibition system. Nor, for that matter, is it these categories which are associated with the use of the various 'spirit weapons' by the hekula dɨbɨ. The penalties are inflicted by groupings of fauna which in many cases crosscut quite radically the categories of the taxonomy. An example is the grouping of 'felines', 'rodents', 'nocturnal monkey' and 'toads', whose uku dɨbɨ spirits can inflict the ulu a gilimaiqide ('child scared') penalty by means of the large eyes which, although not a criterion of the taxonomy, all these animals are said to have.

7 I do not have much information on this point. It does seem that when away from home a man is more likely to infringe a child-affecting prohibition, in the hope tht the spirit may not find his child. Relevant to this is the relative ease with which most of these illnesses are believed to be curable by shamanism.

8 Not all a shaman's hekula live inside his chest. Mythological ancestral, 'Sky People', and 'evil spirit' hekula, for example, do not (see Taylor 1976:36-7).

9 25 of these penalties are discussed in Taylor (1974:66-79).

10 In part this is because of the extreme youth of the mother. Sanumá women are typically married before puberty and become pregnant within a few months of menarche (cf. Taylor 1950:348; Menget 1979:253).

11 It is of interest to note that Lizot, speaking of the Yanomamɨ of the Manaviche river valley, says that these Indians do not, in fact, eat possum (1979:150-1). It should be noted that the samatali dɨbɨ are not the same people as the Shamatari reported on by Chagnon (1974).

12 These are presumably the same as the cobari, given as a dialect group in that region by Smole (1976:53, 56).

13 This was established during my 1973 research and supersedes the information in Taylor (1974:76-9).

14 This became clear to me only after analysing my 1973 data and long after leaving the field. I do not, unfortunately, have sufficient information on the "general" prohibitions and my analysis of the symbolic classification of the lineages (pages 26-29) has to be based on the "specific" prohibitions only.

15 I have information on 11 species of fish (which are all extremely small in the upper Auaris river system). Three of these are not prohibited to anyone of the kadimani lineage, and the other 8 are variously associated with four different penalties.

16 For details on the lineages and agnatic nuclei of the region, see Ramos and Albert (1977) and Taylor (1977a and 1979).

17 At the time of the fieldwork, there was no-one in the Kadimani village (source of these data) who was in the 'grandparent' age grade (coterminous with the population segment, see figure 1, page 7).

18 I have less complete information on the many other birds of the Sanumá fauna. 'Song birds' (piomɨ ose wai) are not prohibited but are hunted only by little boys in learning to use the bow and arrow. There may be a category of 'small birds' (the size of a starling more or less), known as salo bɨ ose, also not prohibited and perhaps occasionally shot by hunters.

19 Note that this is not an ethnocentric judgement on my part. It is the Sanumá themselves who say that they do not like the dark, that they hate the cold and that they detest moving through a wet forest before the sun has had a chance to dry it off for a time. On one occasion a young 'post-pubescent' was so late in returning from 'dusk hunting' (well after dark by anyone's standards) that his father went out into the forest to look for him.

20 Shotguns, acquired in recent years by a few hunters, can be used by older men than can the bow and arrow and have the potential to disrupt this aspect of the relations of production. At the time of the fieldwork they were still too recent a phenomenon and there were still too few of them for the traditional pattern to have been altered.

21 Various authors have reported that Yanoama hunters do not eat the meat of the animals they kill themselves. For the upper Auaris river valley Sanumá at least, this is not so as a general rule. A hunter eats the meat of his own catch provided he is not at the time in a population segment to which the species in question is taboo.

22 In practice, of course, it is often the occurrence of the illness which sets in motion a conscious consideration of the whole process. Rather than actually "observed" (though this does happen, as I have seen myself) the breaking of the taboo is often "remembered" in the process of diagnosing the causes of an illness (cf. Reichel-Dolmatoff 1976:315).

23 It is important to maintain the distinction between ethno-semantic and symbolic classification, while recognising the invariable dependence of the symbolic on logically prior ethno-semantic classifications (see Taylor 1972, 1974, 1977b, 1979; cf. Poole 1977).

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FOOD TABOOS AND THE BALANCE OF OPPOSITIONS AMONG
THE BARASANA AND TAIWANO

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This paper briefly describes and analyzes a system of food restrictions which forms part of the medical system of the Barasana and Taiwano Indians and neighboring groups. The fieldwork was done in the remote southern part of the Vaupés Territory of Colombia. These two local, exogamous groups define themselves as distinct peoples, eligible for intermarriage and as having distinct languages. However, their dialects are almost exactly the same, and they share virtually the same culture.

Most Barasana and Taiwano live in communal longhouses, malocas, which vary in population from a few people to 40 or 50. These houses are usually separated by at least half a day's journey by trail or canoe. The ideal pattern is virilocality, the core of the longhouse being composed of the nuclear families of a headman, those of his biological brothers and/or those of his fictive brothers of the same sib. Several brother sibs make up each of the two groups, and both the Barasana and Taiwano are eligible to exchange women in marriage with other such named groups.

My research was done at one local longhouse community of the Barasana, on the upper Caño Tatú, and in one community of several Taiwano houses on a part of the Pirá river and tributaries. The two communities are separated by two day's journey by trail.

The remote location of these groups has meant that so far they have changed their culture only slightly through contacts with non-Indians. The material culture changes introduced via rubber contractors have not altered the basic food getting techniques--hunting and fishing by the men and shifting horticulture relying primarily on manioc by the women. New tools such as the shotgun, fishing hooks and the machete have been integrated into their horticultural, hunting and fishing economy.

The major economic concern in the Northwest Amazon is, of course, food, and in the houses of the Barasana and Taiwano at least, food is quite often scarce. The reality of times of hunger cannot be avoided by anyone growing up in the culture. This applies mostly to game and fish, rather than manioc products. Thanks to the continuous, strenuous efforts of the women, the essentially carbohydrate cassava bread and other manioc products are usually on hand in sufficient amounts. They are supplemented by other cultivated tubers, fruits, green leaf foods, and by collected jungle fruits and small animals such as ants and larvae.

The reasons for the lack of a steady supply of game and fish in the diet are mixed, I believe. Part of it is probably due to the shotgun and the fishing hook having led to a depletion in the numbers of animals and fish. But in this region there is considerable variation in the local hunting and fishing opportunities. For reasons having nothing to do with availability and territoriality, ample fish and game from the nearby Apaporis River, for instance, are rarely exploited by the Barasana community. This is because the spirits associated with that food are seen as quite dangerous. The local shamans potentially could reduce and prevent the dangers, but in this case, they do not have enough knowledge and power to do so.

The shaman is the central figure in the medico-religious system. The most respected are those who have the greatest knowledge in matters of cosmology and myth and who are most capable of conducting ceremonies, performing cures and preventing misfortune. Virtually all men aspire to and attain some degree of knowledge and power in these areas. Concerning medical practice there is a clear demarcation, such that only a few curers are capable of performing the most secret, most dangerous and most effective curing techniques. These more advanced techniques of treatment involve the removal of objects from the patient's body, objects which may be either visible or imperceptible to all except the curer. The intrusive objects are said to be sent to the victim's body either by spirits, with no human involvement, or by enemy shamans. Depending on his knowledge, the curer may apply to the affected part of the body the separate techniques of blowing of breath and cigar smoke, sucking to remove the intrusive objects, and/or the pouring of water or prepared liquids over the patient. The latter technique

is especially rare and powerful.

All of these curing techniques are relatively specialized in comparison with the preventive medical techniques which are involved with food restrictions. The latter are practiced to one degree or another by most men. They consist of chanting over and blowing on bits of food as a means of prevention. If this food chanting is not done, and properly done, members of the community become liable to a whole range of illnesses and other misfortunes, occasioned by their having eaten foods. My research focused on this system of preventive medicine, as the more basic and more accessible part of the whole medico-religious system, in an attempt to understand some of the ideological features involved with food.

The food restrictions are complete, in the sense that they apply to all foods, and in the sense that all members of the community are subjected to them, (See figure one), in various contexts. There is scarcely a time when no one is restricted in his diet. The first context in which the restrictions apply in his diet is that of growing up. As a child progresses from mother's milk to adult food, each category of food must be made safe by the chanting shaman, before it is incorporated into his diet. The shaman, as well as the parents, decide when a child is ready to advance. He must be old enough, but also healthy and strong enough. All species of edible flora and fauna fit into at least one category (usually more than one) and the categories form a cumulative series of phases, which is repeated in the same temporal order in the other contexts which call for food restrictions, (See figure two).

Thus, a restricted diet is also called for whenever one is ill, in undergoing male adolescent initiation, female first menstruation (and following menstrual periods as well), when one parents a child or is participating in any ritual or when a community member has died. Therefore, it is mostly in the context of life crises that the eating of foods becomes unsafe, unless they are first chanted over.

Each category of food, in any of these contexts, is associated with specific illness symptoms and in some cases the misfortunes of snakebites or jaguar attack (See figure three) and with specific spirits, which will send these misfortunes to the individual who has eaten food in that category

without first having eaten a small bit of it that has been ritually chanted over. So the danger of spirits causing misfortunes through foods is especially great when the individuals are passing through times of growth and procreation, or showing signs of fertility, as well as when they are showing signs of weakness, in illness and dying. The danger also increases temporarily for all members of a community when any ceremony takes place, that is, when there is public communication with spirits. In the latter case, full restrictions apply briefly, during the ceremony, and their progressive removal is rapid.

A more severe and prolonged application of the restrictions comes in the context of male initiation rites (commonly called "Yurupary" rites in non-indigenous languages). In every context the restrictions start with a complete fast, and are then progressively removed in the same order. In this case, after the ceremony that marks the first stage of initiation (done in early adolescence) the boys spend a period of six weeks in the earliest stage of the series of foods, eating only pure starch cassava bread and special varieties of ants. This is concurrent with a period of other limitations and disciplines, including vigorous pre-dawn cold baths and isolation from women. In the context of illness, also, the restrictions may be quite severe. In fact, the more serious the illness, the fewer foods one can eat, and as long as no improvement is seen, one's diet does not expand. In the more serious illnesses, for instance when one is very weak and has a fever, the patient's diet may be reduced to pure manioc starch foods.

The series of foods, in each case, starts with manioc products, moves to other cultigens, wild fruits, insects, small fish and then on to larger fish and to game animals, in order of increasing size, (See figure two). In this series there is an explicit correlation with size of fish and animal and the degree of danger it can bring. The really large fish, and large game animals such as tapir, are the most difficult for which to do a food chant. They come last in the series; thus they are the first foods to be dropped and the last to be added, when some, but not all foods are restricted, in the case of illness. Only when one shows signs of new strength and recovery can the restrictions be removed, at the shaman's discretion.

The food chanting which the shaman does is the locus at which his

knowledge and power is brought to bear against spirits that strive to send misfortune through food, (See figure four). From analysis of a chant, it seems that the protection works not by transforming the food nor by infusing it with a quality of strength. Rather, the process seems to be one of communication. As he chants, the shaman fights the spirits, and temporarily they and their misfortunes are thrown back from the human arena--but they are not eliminated. Then, the food from the container under the chanter's lips, when eaten by the appropriate persons, serves as a sign to the spirits. It communicates the message that those individuals have the protection of the powers which the shaman demonstrated to the spirits during the chant. The spirits, never permanently vanquished, are nevertheless temporarily convinced by the power of the shamans not to send misfortune, (See figure five). It should be noted that I am inferring that spirits perceive threats and have "motivations" of fear (and of envy). However, all other points in this model were directly reported or observed, and the hypothetical concepts are supported by other data and reasoning.

Figures six and seven are charts of additional processes of misfortune that informants describe as applying to two particular kinds of spirits associated with food: "Soul takers" and "Greasers". All of these processes illustrate an apparently competitive balance of power between the world of humans and that of spirits.

My analysis of the processes of misfortune and its prevention in the food restriction system, together with evidence from mythology suggests an implicit world view theme of a balance of oppositions. At the most general level, there is a balance between the status of being human and that of being non-human. That the food restriction system is so thorough and pervasive indicates a great insecurity related to eating; part of this insecurity seems to result from the precarious nature of human status. The preferred destination of a person's soul after death is in the body of another human, but there is the highly undesirable possibility that a human soul can be taken to replenish the spirits of a game animal community, when one of its members have been killed and eaten without "permission", (See figure six). This is similar to a Desana belief reported by Reichel-Dolmatoff, in which there is explicit negotiation by shamans with the master of animals spirit, trading human souls for game. Some of the

names of other spirits appearing in food chants indicate that they also were once human beings but are now non-human spirits. Perhaps the greatest threat from the spirits is the possibility of becoming one of them.

In mythology, many figures were originally ambiguous, having both human form and animal or plant forms simultaneously. Much of the action of the myths results in physical differentiation, so that humans now have a physical form distinct from that of animals and plants. Numerous original ambiguous characters became permanently transformed into various kinds of animals, fish and plants, including game animals and cultivated manioc. In each case, the context of the myth suggests that the reason for their being banished from the human to the animal or plant realm was either impropriety or ignorance. In some myth sequences, improper ritual observance of food restrictions and ignorance of the proper food chants has the result of physical differentiation of ambiguous characters through their being permanently transformed into animals and plants. Elsewhere transformations resulted from sexual improprieties, drunkenness, greed for honey, improper playing of the male role of food chanting, killing one's own monkey men as game, laziness in the female role of food preparation, improperly tending coca fields (a male role), excessive scolding by a wife, and excessive female curiousity about ritual matters. Many of the myth sequences can be read as parts of general processes of physical differentiation, establishing palpable distinctions between human and non-human forms, (as well as underscoring male/female role requirements), seemingly "because" the original beings failed to maintain the proper distinctions in their behavior. At the general level the myths leave the message that death and transformation to non-human status can result from impropriety and ignorance. In spite of the trend of differentiation in original myths, human status for the soul is precarious. Perhaps the repeated emphasis on human distinctiveness is a cultural defense mechanism, a denial that we are creatures.

A parallel to the tenuous balance of human and non-human status is the implicit concept of balance between the strength and well-being of the human world and the strength and well-being of the spirit world. Not all of the known spirits are attached to animals and plants, but many of them are, so we may be justified in speaking here also of an "ecological" balance of

sorts, between the thriving of human life and that of living plants and animals. This balance is such that the well-being and strength of humans is inversely related to that of the spirit and natural worlds, a sort of cosmic zero-sum game in which a gain for one side is a loss for the other. When humans flourish in the sense of being strong, healthy and numerous, it is possible only by diminishing the malevolent influence of the spirit world, including the animal and plant spirits. This is possible especially through the ritual knowledge, power and efforts of the shaman exercised in encounters with the spirits, in food chants as well as in other contexts. Conversely, if the shaman does not have or fails to exercise much knowledge and power, the spirits will be successful in their malevolent efforts, (and we can infer) thereby gaining advantages to their side.

Perhaps it is because of an inverse relation between the fortunes of humans and those of spirits that the spirits are especially malevolent when humans are thriving; the dangers from spirits increase in contexts associated with procreation, birth, growth and transition to adult status. In many cases, informants seem to speak and act as if we can expect the spirits to be resentful or envious of human exploitation of nature, although I haven't heard this directly expressed. But in some specific cases, misfortunes were said to be "payment" or "restitution" for food taken improperly from the jungle.

The insecure status of the human soul seems to be a main reason for the antagonistic balancing of power between humans and spirits. From the human side, spirits threaten to harm bodies, cause their bodies to perish and thus deprive the souls of human existence, in some cases taking them to reside in animal and plant foods. And for the spirits, perhaps the continuing thriving of humans is a threat because it deprives them of the physical bodies in which they live, and sometimes deprives them of souls that are potential additions to their numbers.

Congruent with the balance of oppositions between the spirit and human realms, there is an intrapsychic dynamic that can best be described as a set of oppositions: weakness vs. strength, fear vs. courage and being fierce, self-indulgence vs. self deprivation. Socialization experiences seem to result in a common and ideal type male personality that is strong, courageous, fierce and self-depriving, but the other sides of the

oppositions are part of the common experience. Weaning is gradual and without difficulty, but because of mothers' work schedules, the infant soon learns that while hunger and deprivation are a frequent reality, at other times he might indulge himself. After starting to eat the first foods in the series of phases and until about age five, the child is subjected to the repeated frustration of being with older people who are obviously indulging themselves on a feast of delicious meat, for instance, while being denied it himself. Simultaneously, he is taught to fear the foods that are denied him, through stern and frightful voices of elders scolding him for any attempt to join them around the pot, telling him the food is /wisiogu/, "one who causes weakness." Weakness is a symptom common to all dangers that come from food restriction infractions. It is clear that quite early the child learns to associate prohibited food with weakness, self-indulgence and fear, and later to associate proper observance of food restrictions with strength, self-deprivation and courage. This learning continues even after reaching a full diet; the child is repeatedly taught to fear the eating of foods that are prohibited to all during ceremonies, and to him, during times of illness.

Later, when the youth undergoes initiation, proper balance of fear and courage are dramatically highlighted by the structure and intensity of the ritual procedures. Because the danger from spirits is especially great at this occasion, especially if one does not do the ritual details with great care and precision, a major consequence of the rite seems to be the inspiration of great fear, which the boys must encounter with great courage. Watching the initiation instruments blown and seeing the jaguar spirits they represent, while drinking the vision-producing yagé for the first time is the climax of the ceremony, an experience unanimously reported as extremely fearful.

The complementary character of fear and courage is illustrated by the often used term /guarioca/ which refers to a highly desirable male characteristic, roughly translatable as "fighting essence" or "fierceness," and having the connotation "impressiveness." This quality is desirable in some degree for all males, and to the largest degree for shamans, so as to be effective in confrontations with spirits and with sorcery. Those distant people who are supposed to be killers are said to have been given an excess

of this quality in mythical times. This special characteristic is acquired through ritual knowledge and experience generally, e.g. at the initiation rites, but more particularly from the use of non-food substances which are chanted over in a way similar to that for foods. These include coca powder, tobacco, powder snuff, tobacco cigars, beer and the vision-producing yagé. Stephen Hugh-Jones (1974:63) has suggested the term "anti-foods" for these consumables, which are not to be used when one is eating or waiting to eat, and which unlike foods, are cultivated, prepaid and used exclusively by men. Their improper use may cause misfortunes through processes similar to those for foods, but their importance lies in their being positive agents of strength and fierce aggressiveness. Additionally, beeswax that produces smoke to be fanned around the house before any ritual, and paints for the face and body are chanted over to provide protection and the qualities of strength and fierceness. The "essence" provided by these items is sometimes described as a skin or cloth shield which protects the user from spirit dangers such as intrusive darts and arrows.

But the protection has an active rather than a passive nature; this quality is said to promote fear in others. From these and many other ethnographic data it appears that a major component of courage in this culture is the ability to inspire fear. Thus, in a mature, strong man, frightening threats are balanced by the cultivation of frightening aspects in oneself.

Fierceness in this sense has importance for interpersonal relations, but also is the most important quality for a man to have in his encounters with the antagonistic spirit world. It appears that the shaman, especially, must have a "courage" that inspires fear in the spirits, so as to be able to protect himself and his community from misfortune. By cultural definition, it is a courage that does not deny or try to eliminate fear, but turns fear against fear. There appears to be a kind of economy of emotions, by which, after years of being taught to fear spirits, for instance, the wandering /watia/ who may eat a child who wanders too far from the clearing, the young man now learns how to turn against them their own weapons.

As there is a precarious balance between being bodily a human and being a non-human spirit in nature, the powers by which one can maintain one's bodily manifestation are in precarious balance between the possessors of

human and non-human forms. An important part of the powers in this struggle seems to be the ability to inspire fear.

A closely related inner dynamic is that of self-indulgence and self-deprivation. We saw that the infant is indulged and deprived by turns, in the daily work cycle of mothers; but people of all ages are also familiar with cycles of hunger and gorging. Partly because of the environment but also because of the fear of spirit dangers in foods from nearby fertile areas, there are often periods of a week to a month of eating only starch manioc products and a few other root crops supplemented by grubs or caterpillars, or tiny amounts of fish. Extreme hunger for meat or fish is not at all uncommon. I have no good figures, but even the "average" day brings only about one pound of animal protein to be distributed among 10-15 eaters, in the form of birds, monkeys, fish, etc. But at infrequent intervals, larger game animals are had, occasioning a two to eight day period of eating all the meat one can hold, providing one is not at the time under a prohibition. In these times, if there is no ritual occasion for fasting, etiquette calls for much obvious enjoyment of the food, with smacking and clicking of the mouth as well as appreciative comments.

But all children learn a contrasting etiquette in the context of the smaller feasts that follow the lifting of restrictions when a ceremony is finished. Here, and more emphatically for the male initiates at their ceremonial times, one learns that showing enjoyment in food can invite dangers from spirits that are especially immanent at these times. They must eat slowly, quietly and with the mouth closed, so as not to attract the spirits' notice. This circumspection is the style of all those who are returning to their normal diet after restrictions are lifted. It reflects an association that is reinforced also by the rigorous program of deprivation of food, sleep and sex which is undertaken by all young men who endure the prolonged initiation period. They also subject themsleves to cold predawn baths during this period and thereafter, and in some initiations, to painful whippings. All of these self imposed deprivations and discomforts are for the purpose of increasing one's strength, both of the body and of the soul. And of course, the whole system of food restrictions has the effect of associating weakness and sickness with inappropriate indulgence in food, even to the extent of withholding more

foods from a person, the more serious his illness, to prevent his becoming still weaker.

It would seem that there is an intra-psychic economy of indulgence vs. deprivation that connects to the cosmic balance of power between human and non-human. Indulgence is balanced with deprivation in the sense that indulgence in not proscribed in some contexts, but is in others. The times when it is most proscribed are when humans are most open to spirit dangers. Indulgence might be equivalent here to an excess of thriving, in a context of limited resources. Self-deprivation might be seen as a denial that one is thriving too much. An inner economy of reserving and accumulating strength and vivacity by avoiding excess indulgence may be, at another level, a strategy of presenting oneself as relatively non-threatening to, (and thus relatively safe from) the spirits with whom which humans are engaged in an antagonistic zero-sum struggle. Although the spirits can be directly countered with the knowledge and power of the shamans, unbridled self-indulgence would arouse in them too much envy and anger to deal with successfully. So self-restraint may be a way of preventing the level of antagonism from escalating too much. We might also interpret this indulgence/deprivation balance as a kind of implicit recognition of the biological balance between humans and the rest of nature. Even though there are many cultural assertions of human distinctiveness and superiority, the balanced opposition world view includes an emphasis on self-restraint, as an implicit acknowledgement of human afinity with and dependence on nature.

A final and tentative suggestion from my research is that the cosmological balance between the fortunes of the human vs. those of the non-human world gives impetus for a similar opposition among human groups. I was unable to learn enough from informants about sorcery to allow a full account of it, but there are enough data to suggest how it may be related to food restrictions. Informants are quite taciturn about sorcery practices, but some have mentioned chanting over a cigarette, waving an arm, or just thinking, as types of techniques. But I suspect that sorcery methods include chanting to influence spirits to cause illness through foods.

First, the powers and objects attributed to spirits associated with foods in the chants include those said to be used against the victims of sorcery: slivers of glass, darts, small stones, down feathers. Food-linked

spirits are said to "do sorcery" to humans and the chanting shaman is said to do it back to them. The visible symptoms of sorcery are no different from misfortunes attributable to food restriction improprieties. In many cases of misfortune associated with food restrictions, sorcery was said to be at work also. The knowledge and skill of the best curers are of the same nature as those of the sorcerer, and there is presumptive evidence that to be of greatest use to one's community, the curer must be a sorcerer, even though it is not admitted to be a local practice.

The most suggestive evidence comes from connections between food chants and myth. When the shaman recites at great length the objects, substances, powers and spirits associated with foods at various geographical locations, he includes in the latter, references to those locations at which, in mythical times the various sibs of the region were granted their particular spirits, initiation instruments, and objects, substances and powers of sorcery, in addition to being granted the sites themselves. The chants include references to sites and powers other than those of the chanter's own group. This is a clear implication that the misfortunes that are being prevented in food chants can be sent not only be the motivation of the spirits but also by the shamans of other groups who have some degree of control over the spirits associated with their mythical sib locations. So among other techniques, there are probably ways in which a sorcerer can, to some extent, direct the misfortunes sent to others by spirits in connection with eating prohibited food. It may be that the initiation spirits granted to the sibs and used by the shaman to battle against food spirits can also be used by him to send misfortunes to other people.

This is consistent with the culture's view of misfortune in general as undiminishing in quantity or power. In the food chant, the actions that the chanter describes his soul as performing against the spirit dangers are never actions which destroy or diminish those spirit objects, substances and powers. Mostly, these agents of misfortune are delayed, deflected, sent away, thrown down, tied up, or returned to the sender. It seems likely then, that one of the ways that a shaman may reduce the threat of misfortune to his people is by having it directed at other people. Implicit in the world view is the concept that misfortune is for humans an ever present possibility, and does not diminish in the absolute, but can be passed from

one human group to another, depending on the knowledge, power and effort of the shamans.

If misfortune from spirits cannot be diminished <u>in toto</u>, then by <u>defensively</u> reducing it for the in-group, one automatically increases it for other groups. Given this situation, it seems but a small step to <u>offensively</u> tip the balance of misfortune away from the in-group by encouraging its being visited upon other groups, through sorcery. For instance, it seems logical in this world view for a strong shaman to "pick on" a weaker group, in order to deflect actual or potential dangers from the spirit world. And whether or not it is relatively weaker, if the other group is an enemy, then sorcery not only weakens that opponent but also strengthens the in-group, in its continuing battles with the spirit world.

The concept of undiminishing misfortune which can be balanced among groups gives sorcery battles a broader motivational basis. Beyond simple revenge, sorcery has positive effects in protecting one's own group. Even if the powerful enemy shaman himself is not killed by sorcery, as long as his people are suffering from the sorcery of the in-group shaman, the balance of misfortune means that the sorcerer's group may have a better chance to flourish. It gives more reasons for <u>suspecting</u> sorcery of another group as well, whether they be relatively weak and therefore suspected of planning it, or relatively strong and therefore suspected of having done it. These suspicions could operate even when there are no particular social relations with the other group, positive or negative. It may contribute to the tendency to categorize all "other" groups, even distant groups, as either enemies or potential enemies. It would also tend to arouse suspicion among close groups, even among those that have ongoing exchanges of women, ceremonies, food and trade items, deepening the ambivalence of the ties such groups have.

FIGURE ONE

Summary of Contexts for Food Restriction, and
Rates of Progress Through Phases of Diet

Birth: Infant begins first phase of diet with mother's milk
Mother fasts, progresses through phases in three months (approx.)
Father fasts, progresses through phases in two months (approx.)

Childhood: During development, child progresses through all phases, reaching full diet by approximately age four or five. If strength is shown, progress is quicker.

Male Adolescence: Prolonged initiate status and repeated rites, beginning with fasting, then slow progress through each phase, until after final initiation rite, approximately 1 1/2 years after entering status.

Female Adolescence: At first menstruation, various ritual precautions include initial fasting and progress to final phase of diet after two months.

All Ceremonies: For the duration, fasting for all (except for beer), followed by a return of each to his/her previous phase of diet, on the day that the ceremony ends.

Illness: Whether or not due to food restriction infraction, diet is cut back to an earlier phase. The most serious cases involve diet restricted to pure starch foods. As patient shows signs of strength, he/she progresses more or less quickly.

Death: Fasting followed by return to previous diet, as with all ceremonies; no data on details of timing of phases.

FIGURE TWO

Outline of Food Categories, by
Diet Phases in Serial Order

(NOTE: Food restrictions are sequential by phase and also to some extent by categories within phases.)

1. First Phase
   - A. Mother's Milk
   - B. Species of berry (for infants and initiates)
   - C. Beer
   - D. Water
   - E. Manioc products
     - Pure starch manioc foods (various)
     - Other manioc foods (various)
   - F. Various species of ant

2. Second Phase
   - A. Jungle fruits (various)
   - B. Cultigens (other than manioc; various categories eaten raw or boiled)
   - C. Hot Foods (various spicy hot; various cooked by roasting or grilling)
   - D. Insects (various)
   - E. Shrimp and land crabs
   - F. Small fishes (various categories, some by type of catch)

3. Third Phase (includes only mammals, birds, reptiles, and large fish)
   - A. Large fishes (various categories; species associated with myth characters and initiation spirits.)
   - B. Hollow log dwellers (various fish, rodents, by habitation in logs)
   - C. Soul-takers (tapir, deer, wild pig, some fish; may take a soul)
   - D. Greasers (many types of animal that may bring snakebite or jaguar attack; includes category of smoked game)
   - E. Categories by type of kill (e.g. netted, poisoned, torch attracted, blowgunned, shotgunned, etc.)
   - F. Categories named only by type of symptom caused if not chanted for (e.g. sores, swelling, chills)

FIGURE THREE

Partial List of Symptoms and Other Misfortunes
Brought by Food Restriction Infractions

(NOTE: Most are associated with several species and several categories. "Weakness" is associated with all foods, when they are prohibited.)

Aching body	Ache in heart (soul)	Snakebite
Headache	Itching throat	Jaguar attack
Blisters	Dizziness	Muscles tighten, body draws up
Coughed up blood	Fever	Vomitting
Feeling cold	Shortness of breath	Sleepiness
Coughing	Being thin	Perspiring
Hearing loss	Swollen body	Weakness
Local swelling	Tooth decay	Soul is taken
Chills, trembling	Tightening of heart, soul.	

FIGURE FOUR

Structure of the Food Chants

(NOTE: The food chants are whispered as a single sentence having this general cyclic form, and lasting up to about two hours.)

(Transition Phrase, T:) "I, (the soul of the chanter) ascend there to a higher level and descend to enter there at that named location (L), seeing and measuring spirits (S) of that place and/or their objects and substances for causing misfortune (M), and I act (A) upon them, and then I see (M) and I (A) and then I see (S) and their (M) and (M) and I (A) and I see (S)...(M)...(A)...etc...and then repeating at another place I ascend and descend there at (L) where I see (M), and I (A), and I see (S) and their (M), and I (A)... etc.....(T)...etc.

Examples of items included:

L: Named Rapids, Waterfalls, Rock Formations, etc., some mythically allocated to sibs of associated spirits.

S: Thunder People, sun, star people; myth characters; sibs' initiation jaguar spirits; various fishes, cayman, birds, monkeys, etc.

M: arrows, stones, down feathers; "starch", various paints; coca gourds, pots; barbasco vine, vision-producing yage vine, tobacco plants; spirit fires, etc.

A: Disentangle, take and throw away; send back; tie up; tear and cut; clean; cause to get dizzy, intoxicated; knock over; appraise and know; cause to pass beyond, etc.

FIGURE FIVE

General Processes of Misfortune Associated with Food, All Categories

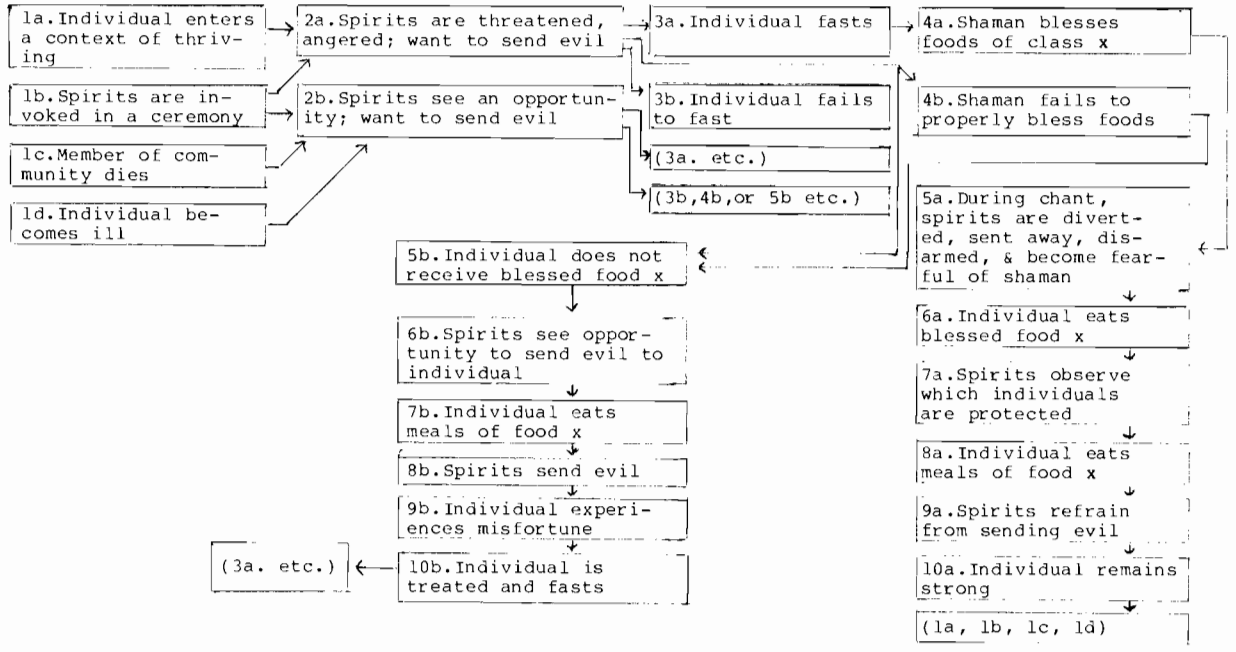


FIGURE SIX

Special Process of Misfortune: "Soul-Takers"

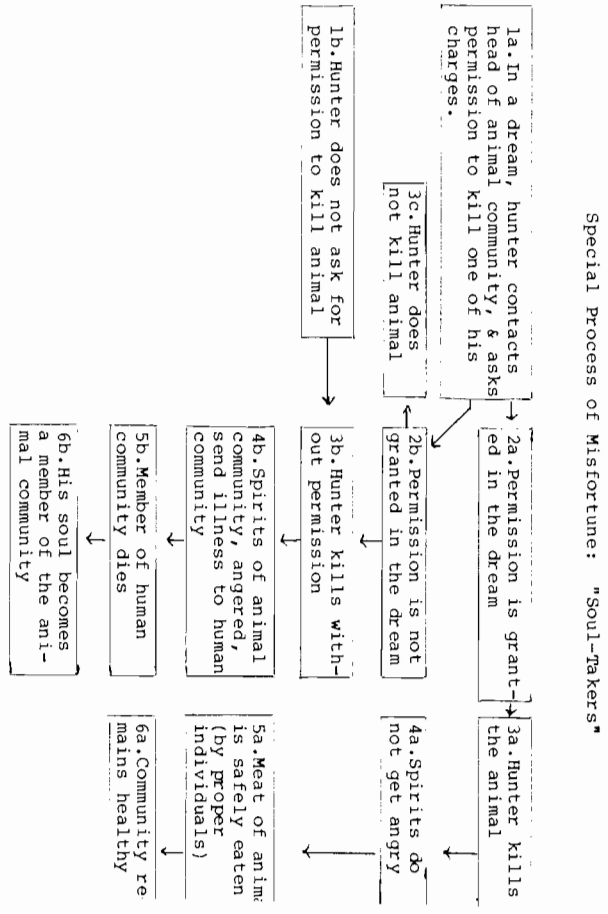
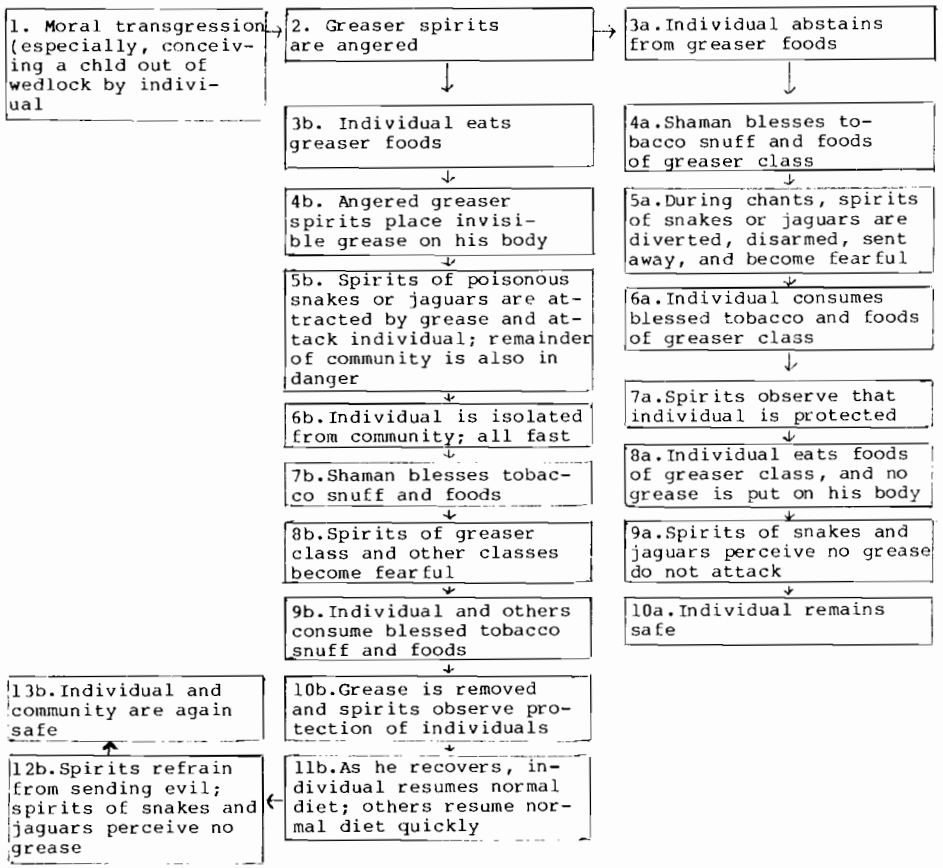


FIGURE SEVEN

Special Process of Misfortune: "Greasers"



THE SEMIOTICS OF TABOOED FOOD: SHOKLENG (GÊ)

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1. PROBLEM-FOCUS

Ross (1978) distinguishes two perspectives on food taboos, which he labels "mentalist" and "materialist". My own work may be reasonably classed with the former. What I hope to show is how the conceptual tools supplied by semiotic theory, and especially the theory of markedness, can illuminate the problem of edibility restrictions. I argue that food taboos, in one of their possibly multiple functions, serve essentially communicative ends.[1] Taken as a set, the food taboos of a society constitute a more or less complex signal system, sufficiently powerful to specify status within some matrix of social categories. They therefore properly form a part of "culture", conceived as the shared means of communication employed by a society.

By adopting this perspective, I do not mean to withdraw comfortably from the so-called mentalist/materialist debate. On the contrary, by analyzing the rich and highly intricate internal structure of a single edibility code--that of the Gê-speaking Shokleng Indians of Brazil--I hope to show for just how much an adequate "explanation" of food taboos must account. None of us, I am sure, doubts that ecological factors place some constraints on culturally constituted edibility codes. Of course, the sensible model is one involving two interacting hierarchies of determination, that supplied, on the one hand, by nature, and, on the other, by culture. What I hope to demonstrate, however, is that the specifics of a given edibility code are so intricate that only a theory possessing the richness and delicacy of semiotic theory can be sufficently fine-tuned to account for them.

In arguing for a semiotic approach, I emphasize simultaneously that I am not espousing some variant of what might be labelled the "classificationist" perspective. I mean that perspective, encapsulated so

nicely in the work of Leach (1964), wherein tabooed species are viewed as the anomalies within an ethnobiological classification scheme. I hope indeed to show the distinctiveness of a semiotic approach, which views the taboo itself as a sign, and thus considers only its requirements within a signal system.

So as to focus the problem at hand, let me distinguish a number of questions that might be asked regarding food taboos. We could ask (1) why there should be food taboos at all. What purpose (i.e., ecological, cultural, psychological and so forth) do they serve? (2) we could ask why the taboo applies to just those persons to whom it applies, i.e., to members of certain age, sex, or segmentary categories, or to members of the entire community.[2] (3) we could ask why only certain classes of food should be tabooed, e.g., certain species, or certain cuts of meat, or foods prepared in a certain way.[3] Finally, (4) we could ask about the significance of ethnotheories natives elaborate about their food taboos. Do they play some positive role, or are they simply "rationalizations"?

Now I think it is obvious that various studies have focussed implicitly on certain of these questions, to the exclusion of others. Thus, Ross (1978) deals entirely with (1) and (3), ignoring altogether (2) and (4). What I wish to make clear at the outset is that this paper is as well limited in scope. My concern is primarily with the first three questions. While I believe that the question of ethno- theoretic conceptions can be handled within the framework of semiotics, and I suggest as much subsequently, nevertheless, I consider it in need of a somewhat separate treatment.

2. THE SEMIOTIC FRAMEWORK

Let me now sketch briefly the rudiments of a semiotic approach to edibility codes. My argument is that dietary restrictions serve to "index" or point to those to whom the restriction applies. Taboos thus serve to "mark" certain classes of individuals, and so may be investigated within the context of markedness theory, deriving from the Prague school linguists, which makes use of such notions as "privative" and "equipollent" marking. I will take up this investigation subsequently (Sections 3 and 4). What is important here is the observation that food taboos are, whether by design or

chance, signs, and so they become organized in some measure willy nilly into a signal system.

Moreover, food taboos are, as conceptualized within semiotic theory, a specific type of sign, which Peirce (1940:107-11) called an "index". This is one of the types within his trichotomy of signs--the remaining two being the "icon" and "symbol". That is, food taboos are signs having a necessary spatiotemporal connection with what is signalled. And their character as indices lends to them certain constraints as to signalling use. Thus, they may be used for marking or discriminating various aspects of the world, such as the social class membership of individuals, but they cannot combine so as to encode more properly propositional content. The edibility code per se is thus highly circumscribed as regards its possible use as a signal system.

From my point of view, what is most striking about taboos is that the class of individuals for whom a taboo applies is never conceptualized as an arbitrary class. Instead, it is invariably a class whose membership reflects some underlying social category. Consequently, the edibility code as a signal system can be viewed as functional relative to an underlying system of social categories. Moreover, insofar as that latter system is hierarchically organized into component subsystems, as I argue elsewhere (Urban 1978) is the case for Shokleng, so too must the signal system be analyzed as multitiered. This is what I attempt in what follows. What I call Level-I analysis deals with markedness relations within component subsytems of social categories, e.g., the age-category system or the moiety system. Level-II analysis deals with the hierarchically superior markedness relations obtaining between component subsystems. Finally, I note that food taboos apply only to what I call 1-place categories, that is, classes whose membership consists of individuals. They do not apply at all, and for obvious reasons, to 2-place or relational categories. Consequently, we can perhaps envision a Level-III analysis beyond the first two.

3. LEVEL-I ANALYSIS: THE SHOKLENG EDIBILITY CODE

Let me turn now to the Level-I analysis of markedness relations within various "subsytems" of social categories in Shokleng. I will need to distinguish, following the Prague school theorists (e.g., Trubetzkoy 1939), two types of marking, namely, "privative" and "equipollent". By "privative

marking, I mean a situation wherein only a single overt signal is used in differentiating a two-term set. One term will thus be "marked", as in those English noun plurals marked by a final voiced or voiceless grooved alveolar fricative, and one term will be "unmarked", as in English noun singular forms. A marked term is thus juxtaposed with an unmarked term. In "equipollent" marking, in contrast, each of the terms to be differentiated is marked by a separate overt signal. I will argue in what follows that Level-I marking of social categories in Shokleng is primarily or exclusively privative, at least insofar as the edibility code is concerned. Equipollent marking is confined to Level-II.

Thus, one key component subsystem of categories is the binarily contrastive set Shokleng/non-Skokleng, or, translating more literally the native terms, "human beings"/"non-human beings". Taking the taboo itself as the overt signal, "human beings" is here the marked term. For Shokleng consider inedible or "repulsive" (dãgrig) certain species, namely, lizards and various snakes, that they know to be eaten by non-Shokleng in the region, e.g., by Tupian-speaking tribes and by local Brazilians. Incidentally, it is true that Brazilian settlers consider the large lizards found in that region a special delicacy. To the Shokleng mind, this is a sure sign of barbarism.[4] In any case, if we treat the taboo as a signal, it is evident that we have here an instance of privative marking.

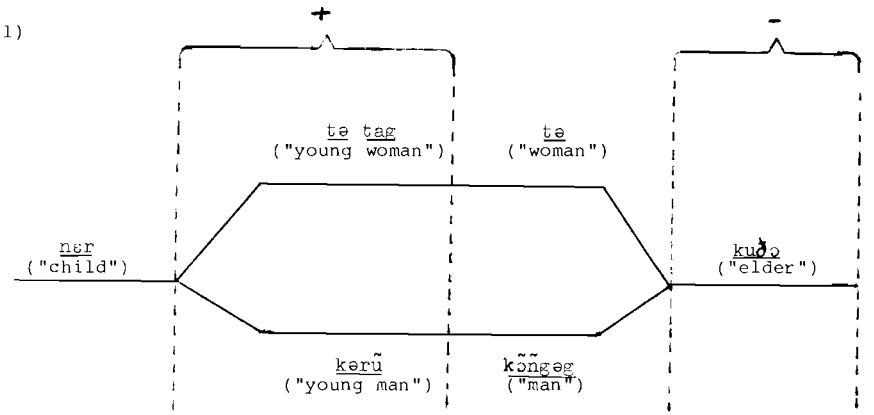
There are two other privatively-marked binary categorial subsystems. One is the male/female contrast, wherein "female" is the marked term. For women are explicitly prohibited from eating the meat of armadillos and soft-tailed armadillos, as well as eagles, falcons, and other birds of prey. Men are under no such restriction. Consequently, taking the taboo as overt signal, "male" is the unmarked term. The second subsystem consists of the eastern/western moiety contrast, wherein "western" is the marked term. Members of this latter moiety are prohibited from eating the meat of large and small anteaters, capibaras, and various of the smaller cats. No such taboos apply to members of the eastern moiety. We thus have once again a marked/unmarked contrast.

A final major subsystem is that of the age-grade categories, where markedness relations are somewhat more complex. For we are dealing here not with a simple binary system, but instead with an ordered series of

categories. Nevertheless, and precisely because the system is ordered, we can conceptualize it in terms of binary contrasts. Thus, we can imagine that any two adjacent categories constitute a binary set, and so argue that, when all of the constituent binary sets have been accounted for, in terms of privative or equipollent marking, the linear system itself is adequately marked.

Now such is, or so I argue, just what we encounter in connection with the Shokleng age-grade system. (1) depicts a structural model of this system, showing parallels between the male and female grades.[5]

(1)



Collapsing the male/female distinction, we have four-term linear system, which may be represented as ABCD, corresponding to the roughly glossed series: "child"-"young person"-"adult"-"elder".

What we find are two instances of marking. First, there are taboos applying only to members of the "young person" age grade. These individuals must refrain from eating agouti and paca, and as well all of those foods prohibited for members of the western moiety, and some of those considered taboo for women. The result is a situation in which B is marked as opposed to A, on the one side, and C, on the other. We thus have the contrasts A/B/CD, where only C and D are left undiscriminated. The second set of taboos handles this. For D is opposed to ABC by virtue of the "elders" being permitted to eat certain foods prohibited for everyone else. Such seems to be the case, anyway, for jaguar meat. We thus have D as the

unmarked term, contrasting with marked ABC.[6] And so all of the consitutuent binary sets of this linear system are privatively marked, leading us to conclude that the edibility code indeed functions adequately as a mechanism for signalling underlying categorial distinctions within this component subsystem.

I have now discussed nearly all of the 1-place categorial subsystems of the Shokleng system.[7] Before turning to a Level-II analysis, however, I note that this approach applies to yet another class of food taboos. I mean those associated with so-called "liminal phase" restrictions, e.g., in Shokleng, sickness and mourning. Indeed, this latter, which entails a prolonged seclusion, is surrounded by an especially dense cluster of prohibitions, which I argue act as a powerful signal, highlighting the distinctiveness of this phase vis-à-vis everyday social life. Now what I wish to remark upon is simply this: whereas an ecological analysis requires distinct (and perhaps ad hoc) explanations for each distinct "type" of taboo, a semiotic analysis integrates these phenomena into a single framework: the same general principles of sign functioning may be seen to operate everywhere.

4. LEVEL-II ANALYSIS

Level-I analysis supplies a partially adequate answer to the question "why does a taboo apply to just those persons to whom it applies". My argument has been that food taboos function to signal categorial distinctions within component subsystems of social categories. Indeed, the edibility code neatly marks virtually all of the component subsystems. Of course, there are in each case alternative ways that the signals could have been set up. Nevertheless, the particular system employed by Shokleng can be seen to meet quite nicely the requirements of discriminative marking. But Level-I analysis tells us nothing about the third question: "why are only certain classes of food tabooed?"

Indeed, staying within the confines of Level-I analysis, which here focusses primarily on privative marking in binarily contrastive sets, nothing can be said about this question. For in each binary set there need be only one signal, and the sole requirement for that signal is that it be cognitively discriminable. Discrete signals need not enter into systems

contrast with other signals. Such a necessity arises only in connection with a more complex markedness arrangement, such as the "equipollent" marking we encounter in a Level-II analysis. It is therefore at this level that we may expect to address the question of why just these signals, or why just these foods.

From a semiotic perspective, and perhaps even more transparently in semiology, part of Saussure's legacy, the sole requirement for the overt signals of an equipollent marking system is that they contrast. That is, they must be cognitively discriminable one from another. So when we inspect the relationships between component categorial subsystems, we should expect to find some signal contrast. The signals should be in some measure distinct. And this means that the "food types", and therefore in most instances the animal species, must be different. Such a requirement of contrast therefore places one (admittedly broad) constraint on the choice of species.

Let me describe the Shokleng system from this perspective. Now my data by no means indicate perfect distinctiveness. Instead, as in the phonological systems of language, one finds considerable overlap of the formal, overt signal types (i.e., the specific tabooed species) between subsytems. Indeed, although I cannot do so here, it would be of interest to inquire into the significance of this overlap. Nevertheless, while there is overlap, analysis reveals a perfectly unambiguous system of marking.

(2a)

1=	capibara anteater puma leopard wildcat	2=	agouti paca jaguar	5=	snakes lizards
3=	armadillo soft-tailed armidillo	4=	eagle falcon . . .		

(2b) I = moiety subsystem
II = age grade subsystem
III = male/female subsystem
IV = Shokleng/non-Shokleng subsystem

(2c)

I	1
II	1+2+3
III	3+4
IV	5

(2d)

I	0
II	/2/
III	/4/
IV	/5/

In (2a)-(2d), I have illustrated the relationship of signal to subsystem. In (2a) I have assigned to each bundle of signals (i.e., species) a number, and in (2b) I have assigned each categorial subsystem a roman numeral. The relationship of signal to subsystem is shown, finally, in (2c). From this it is immediately obvious that each subsystem is uniquely specified. There are no ambiguities in the relationship of code to categorial substratum.

Thus, the moiety subsystem (I), whose overt signal is 1 , is unmarked vis-a-vis the age grade system (II), whose signal is 1 + 2 + 3 . Those subsystems indicated by roman numerals II, III, and IV are differentiated by equipollent marking, the "distinctive" signals being respectively 2 , 4 , and 5 . The contrastively meaningful signals may thus be simplified to a quasi-"emic" set. It is this simplification that I have represented in (2d). From this it should be apparent that Shokleng food taboos do not operate only at Level-I, i.e., only in the marking of distinctions within simple categorial subsystems. They operate as well at Level-II, supplying a perfectly adequate means of distinguishing the component subsystems themselves.

As it stands, however, the semiotic analysis still provides little insight into the choice of species. The requirement of contrast, while telling us that the signal system must contain a certain number of distinct species, as a minimum, places only moderate constraints on species selection. Any additional constraints must go beyond the principle of contrast alone.

One hypothesis that helps in this regard is the following:

> Signals must appear as cognitively distinct in proportion as the entities signalled are themselves distinct.

I mean this to be taken specifically in connection with food taboos; but I will presently argue for its broader applicability. In any case, note that from this we should expect that the markers of Level-II distinctiveness would be drawn from (what are considered) maximally distinct classes of

animal species. Such is indeed what we find in Shokleng. /2/, /4/, and /5/ contrast nicely as "mammals" versus "birds" versus "reptiles".[8]

Correspondingly, we should expect equipollent marking of Level-I contrast to correlate with minimal distinctiveness of the animal species. Unfortunately, Shokleng Level-1 contrast is overwhelmingly privative. But we can readily look for confirmation to a much broader class of familiar phenomena. I mean the use of so-called "totemic emblems" for distinguishing moieties and clans. Perhaps most familiar are the Australian examples, where we have such contrasts as "white cockatoo"/"black cockatoo" (Radcliffe-Brown 1929:118), or "eagle hawk"/"crow", or "hill kangaroo"/"long-legged kangaroo". Another familiar example from the North American Northwest Coast region is the "raven"/"bluejay" contrast. But we need not go so far afield as this. Provided that we are prepared to view totemic patterns as part of a truly broad-spectrum semiotic phenomenon, we can find the principle operative in Ge-land itself. Hence, the oft-cited contrasts "sun"/"moon", "up"/"down", and "east"/"west". Indeed, this last contrast is used by the Shokleng themselves. In each case, what we have are highly similar species or "terms", differentiated in perhaps just one respect, just as the underlying categories themselves are maximally similar.

By entertaining this hypothesis, we come considerably closer to specifying just what species are tabooed. We know that they must be chosen from certain classes. This of course by no means constitutes a complete "explanation". But it is just about as close as Ross (1978) comes, in his discussion of "big" versus "small" animals, and so forth. Moreover, we must allow that the choice of species is, within certain more or less precise constraints, in some measure arbitrary. In any case, the semiotic approach discussed thus far can take us only so far.

5. ON THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE

My assumption in this paper has been that edibility restrictions manifest themselves in actual ("objective") conduct. Moreover, I have assumed that it is this conduct, as broadly conceived, that constitutes the signal. Obviously, however, such taboos are also, in Shokleng anyway, "linguistic" phenomena. That is, they are expressed in linguistically encoded rules, and they are surrounded by linguuistically formulated

ethnotheoretic conceptions.[9] Moreover, these conceptions are a key component of their "cultural dimension".[10] Language is thus clearly an important factor in connection with food taboos.

Indeed, I have implicitly suggested as much in arguing for the proximity hypothesis. For I suspect that "distinctiveness" is probably distinctiveness relative to a semantic space. Of course, it is always possible that there is a natural substratum for such distinctiveness. But it seems likely that a thorough investigation of this hypothesis--which is, however, much beyond the scope of this present work--will lead us into the semantics of language itself.

At yet another analytical level are the ethnotheoretic notions that can be conveyed only through language. Thus, Shokleng are able to say, for most dietary restrictions, what consequences would befall a transgressor. Most of these turn out to involve an "iconic" (or what used to be called "sympathetic") connection between the species and supposed consequence, where the latter must be restricted to members of a certain category. Thus, Shokleng say that eating paca or agouti meat would cause the teeth of a "young person" to grow too rapidly, and so to ache. Now it happens that agouti and paca, as large rodents, are notable for the size of their incisors.[11] Moreover, it is only in the "young person" category that the growth of permanent teeth is a factor. Consequently, there is here a quasi-natural fit between sign vehicle, consequence, and entity signalled. One may entertain the hypothesis, indeed, that food tabooing in Shokleng is constrained by the semiotic capacity of speakers to draw such appropriate connections. In any case, it is obvious here as well that language plays a key role in connection with food taboos.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Edibility codes must surely assume a position of importance for socia theorists. For, on the one hand, they embody something of what is unique t a specific culture, and thereby are evidence for "the principle o variability". Yet simultaneously, on the other hand, they are at th junction between nature and culture. One must eat to maintain himself as biological organism. But in the matters of what he eats and how, in thes matters culture can act as a determinant.

Now no one can seriously deny that a food taboo may have ecological consequences. This is especially so in the case of so-called "general" taboos, such as Ross (1976) considers. My argument is only that the functions of edibility codes far transcend their purely ecological functions.[12] Food taboos as signals as well mediate the relations between members of society, by signalling categorial status. They function as sign vehicles. And I submit that no one can seriously deny this function of edibility codes as well. For the Shokleng edibility code anyway seems constructed in conformity with the constraints, such as markedness, on semiotic codes generally.

It is precisely when viewed as a component of culture, not simply as a "reflex" of material conditions, that the true complexity and richness of an edibility code emerges. Not only does a food taboo exist as actual, objective conduct. Simultaneously, it subsists in and through language, linking up with the ethnotaxonomy of a "semantic field", and also with the broadly ethnotheoretic notions, expressible only by means of language, that serve to make sense of it. This I submit is the best argument for continuing to view food taboos as quintessentially cultural phenomena.

NOTES

1 I consider it indisputable, as Ross (1978) contends, that food taboos have ecological consequences, and so can be profitably analyzed within the framework of an ecosystem perspective. Indeed, maintenance of species population levels may be one of the multiple "functions" of edibility restrictions. My purpose is not to deny any validity to the ecosystem approach. It is instead to assert that they may also be profitably analyzed and in certain respects more profitably analyzed, within the framework of a semiotic approach.

2 Ross (1978:1, f.n. 2), following Basso (1973:16), distinguishes "general taboos", which apply to an entire community, from "specific taboos", which apply to only certain subclases within society. He states explicitly that he is concerned only with the former. And with good reason. For "specific" taboos constitute the most important evidence in favor of a non-materialist analysis, such as the semiotic analysis I propose here. Of course, ad hoc ecological arguments can be constructed for specific taboos pertaining to certain quasi-natural classes, such as age and sex classes. Basso (1978) actually attempts as much. But for such taboos as apply to intrinsically social classes, such as one, but not the other, of the Shokleng moieties, any serious ecological explanation seems impossible. Moreover, there is the complementary argument that a semiotic analysis makes very good sense of these, within the context of a systematic approach.

3 In the Shokleng case, one specific taboo applies to a certain "cut" of tapir meat. Such taboos make it evident that we are not dealing simply with species-wide restrictions, but with restrictions on certain types of food. While it is obviously difficult for an ecological approach to account for such restrictions, I note the problem is equaly thorny for classificationists. For they invariably consider the placement of tabooed species within an ethnotaxonomic classification scheme of the biological world. They fail to appreciate that it is not classes of animals or plants, but classes of food that are restricted.

4 I may note here that the neighboring and very closely related Kaingang Indians have a taboo on beef. Kaingang with whom I spoke told me that eating beef would make them sick. Of course, this taboo functions very nicely to signal their distinctiveness vis-à-vis the local Brazilian population, all of whom, to my knowledge, value beef most highly.

5 My data on age-grade food taboos are not fully adequate. For in my earlier analysis of Shokleng social categories (Urban 1978), I hypothesize that the kərũ category consists really of two underlying categories. Unfortunately, my field notes do not go beyond the label kərũ, with the consequence that I may not have understood to precisely whom the taboos in question apply. This aspect of my discussion may therefore stand in need of revision.

6 If we think of the marked term as correlating normally with the "semantically" most restricted entity, then we may construe this as a reversal of normal markedness relations.

7 The exception being only the three "class" system, that I have elsewhere hypothesized intersects with the moiety system (cf. Urban 1978). Because I unravelled this system only late in my field stay, it is once again possible that I failed to understand the precise nature of certain taboos, namely, of those I label subsequently "1". It is possible that these, or some of them, may have both moiety and class restrictions.

8 We are probably dealing here with proportionality within an ethnotaxonomic system of some sort. I say this because of the Kaingang restriction on beef (cf. f.n. 4). It was evident to me that Kaingang made a primary distinction between game or aboriginal animals, on the one hand, and domesticated or European-imported animals, on the other. Thus, the restriction on cattle makes sense in terms of the proportionality argument given here, only if we accept this as a primary distinction. From our scientific biological perspective, of course, cattle are simply "mammals".

9 It will be evident that I have already snuck certain linguistic factors into my analysis of Level-II, especially where I extend the hypothesis to include such linguistic labelling of moieties as "up" vs. "down", and so forth.

10 It is such ethnoconceptions that Ross (1978:5) terms "native rationales" for the taboo, indicating thereby his belief that the ethnoconceptions play no role in determining which species are tabooed.

11 Of the large rodents, only the capibara seems--according to my data anyway--to be missing here. This may have to do with the special beliefs surrounding this creature, which is thought to have been, in reasonably recent times, a human being.

12 Of course, if we think of the whole social organization as ecologically adapted, then in an indirect way the semiotic code I have discussed also functions ecologically. But this indirect ecological functioning is quite different from the immediate ecological consequences of food tabooing discussed by Ross (1978) and others.

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DON'T LET THE PIRANHA BITE YOUR LIVER:

A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH TO KAGWAHIV (TUPI) FOOD TABOOS

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> When you first have a child, you can't throw a cipó like this. If you do, the child will cry at night. When he is born, like it's today, tomorrow you don't go working. If you do, the child won't grow up--he'll die. Don't even take hold of a palha (palm leaf for thatching), he'll cry a lot. You have to not eat agouti, or paca. Piranha, too. Paca, agouti, deer, monkey, either. All you eat is peccary--porco grande, porquinho. Tinamou you can eat. And tapir, too, you can eat. You go fishing--but you don't clean the fish, or when the child grows up he'll throw up a lot. You don't go messing with this cipó, either, so that he won't cry, too...
>
> Papa instructed me. When I got married, he gave me all sorts of advice. Water, too, you don't drink--only boiled water like you drink. That's the way it is when the child is first born.
>
> Jovenil--at the end of an interview
> July 16, 1968

The Kagwahiv have been in contact for over fifty years now since they were pacified in 1923, and although the frame of their social structure--moiety exogamy, for example, and bride service--still held firm, at least as of 1973, much of their ritual life has fallen into abeyance. Even the tradition of shamanistic curers has come to an unfortunate end, its transmission interrupted by the demise of the last surviving pajés before they could pass their knowledge on to their chosen successors. But one element of religious observance remains strong: the practce of food avoidances.

Of course, there are transparent reasons why these observances might be retained when more spectacular ceremonies were given up. they are, for one thing, a form of ritual that can be practiced individually, without shamanistic assistance or even ceremonial cooperation. And in a group acutely attuned to the judgments of their Brazilian neighbors, observing food taboos is far less conspicuous than shamanistic healing ceremonies or head-trophy festivals, more easily denied and hidden from outsiders. But I

believe that there are deeper reasons as well for the tenacity with which the observances are maintained. The very intensity with which these observances are preserved, the emotional conviction with which Kagwahiv insist on them, are impressive, and suggest that they fill deeper personal needs for those who hold them.

Their importance must, I think, be seen in a broader perspective. Everywhere food observances are among the most binding emotional symbols of cultural identity, whether for primitive tribes or religious or ethnic groups in modern society; as Levi-Strauss holds, cuisine may be the very symbol of a cultured (as against a natural) existence. Perhaps if we can understand something of the personal significance of food taboos for Kagwahiv, we may throw some little light on some of the sources of the emotional intensity with which food observances symbolize cultural identity.

A proper approach to this question must draw together a variety of frameworks. Food taboos may be important features in the balance between a society and its natural environment, as both Eric Ross (1978) and Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff (1971, 1976) concur from somewhat polar orientations; they are often markers of social status differences (Fortes, 1967; Poole, 1977; Tuzin, 1977); their reasons are closely intertwined with the native taxonomy of natural species (Poole, 1977), and with the cosmology; and they form an important symbolic part of the moral injunctions of a culture's value system (Fortes, 1967). But in addition to all of these features, taboos also clearly have a psychological importance to individuals in modulating their emotional responses to critical situations. I hope to touch on all of these aspects to a greater or lesser degree in this paper, and I will draw on data of both a social or cultural nature and of a psychological sort.

To coordinate these varied domains calls for a unifying schema. The point of view I will attempt to maintain is that food taboos are a multiply determined code which may do any and all of the following, alternately or simultaneously: (1) It formulates in terms of moral imperatives, and so regulates, certain aspects at least of the relationship between man and his environment, including wild and domesticated plants and animals and human actions or tasks which modify the environment. (2) It serves as an "index," in Meyer Fortes's (1967:10) term, of certain social statuses. These are not, in Kagwahiv society, membership in kin-defined groups as in many

Guinea and African societies, but rather life-stage statuses (cf. Kensinger, this symposium), critical states, and liminal states in ritual. (3) In certain cases, it serves also to delineate interpersonal relationships which become critical at certain stages or in certain situations (cf. Abelove and Campos, this symposium)--notably the parent-child relationship during the critical transition of birth or during a child's illness. (4) It defines and symbolizes as a moral imperative the maintenance of certain attitudes, including, in the cases just mentioned, nurturant attitudes toward one's child, and (as the analysis will show) the inhibition of anger and destructive wishes. (5) In so doing, it offers a symbolic realm for conceiving and articulating feelings contrary to expected attitudes, aiding in the personal working out of conflicts arising from such feelings.

The multiplicity of domains intersecting in the system of food taboo necessarily creates some fuzziness and ambiguities in its rules an categories, but makes it a preeminent field for the "negotiation o meanings" which, as Victor Turner (1977:33) points out, anthropologists ar increasingly aware of as an essential aspect of cultural processes.

In the rest of this paper, I will carry out both a cultural analysis c various cultural subsystems of Kagwahiv food taboos, dealing with th species prohibited, the situations under which they are forbidden, and th system of beliefs concerning the operation of the taboos (Part II)--and psychological analysis based in part on a series of intensive interviews had with a father at a time when the taboos came into personal focus for h (Part III). First, however, in Part I, I will give a brief description the situation in which I first became aware of the importance of fo taboos. I have two goals in beginning thus: First, it gives a concre sense of the part that food taboos play in Kagwahiv life; and secondly, believe it is important in anthropological studies to give as full a pictu as possible of the circumstances under which data on a topic were gathere It gives, I think, a more accurate picture of the status of the da themselves.

FOOD AVOIDANCES IN OPERATION: A SKETCH

I learned of the existence of food taboos quite early in my field wor but I did not immediately get a sense of their importance. The members the first settlement I stayed in, more oriented than others to the opini

of their Brazilian neighbors, at first denied practicing them, although they gave me accounts of them. When I moved to a settlement that was more open about traditional practices, taking pride in them, I quickly became aware of certain avoidances observed by married people with children, and learned of others accompanying various states and situations. But it was not until an intense period when severe illness oppressed the settlement just at the time a baby was born that I became aware how important food taboos were, culturally as an active ritual response to the danger of life transitions or the afflictions of illness, and psychologically as a way of mastering the anxiety of threatened disruption to life.

The series of events, which also marked a transition for me from my status as a transient visitor to a more significant role in the group, began with an epidemic of measles which swept the area just before my arrival in the settlement for my second extended stay in it. A month after my November arrival, two children of the headman Jovenil, weakened by the measles, fell seriously ill with pneumonia. After having overcome Jovenil's reluctance (he feared that in their weakened state they might be overcome by the very power of injected western medicines) I treated the two children. One of them, a one-year-old girl, had actually reached the point where she was considered "dead" in Kagwahiv terms. With penicillin, however, she pulled through, and gradually got better. By the time I left in February, they had almost recovered. But in the meantime, I observed a period when all the children's immediate family were intensely concerned about what they could kill or eat without harming the sick children, causing a relapse and death. Those who had close contact with them (such as the woman who held the one-year-old girl while I gave her injections, since her mother could not stand doing it) were meticulously careful to be free of dangerous substances such as traces of the "fumes" of manioc from processing manioc-meal, which could also have a fatal influence.

At the same time, another event occurred which greatly complicated the situation: Just before the illnesses of the two children reached a crisis stage, their mother, Jovenil's wife Aluza, gave birth to a new daughter. Both before and after the birth (and indeed for the whole time since I had arrived) this added a whole new set of taboos which Jovenil and Aluza had to observe. Although the spacing of these two children suggests that Jovenil

was less assiduous in observing the post-partum sex taboo than the food taboos, (and much less careful to inform me about it: it was only in a confessional state of mind the following dry season that he told me about it at all), he was quite strict about following the food and work prohibitions. At first, the combined prohibitions on hunting certain animals that might harm either the sick children or the infant, and on performing various tasks that would hurt one or the other, left him virtually immobilized, sitting around the settlement or lying in his hammock all day. Gradually, as the sick children got better and the infant older--and perhaps as his patience wore thin, for he was always a man of activity--he relaxed his strictures on some species and on some work activities, though others he continued to observe.

During this period, then, I gained many observations of what species were eaten or not eaten by which relatives of the infant or sick children, or what species a hunter refrained from killing. A hunter would come back bemoaning the lovely, fat deer he had to pass up, or kicking himself for refraining from killing an agouti when really the children were so much better it would have been all right to have killed it. And also, of course, since everyone was deeply concerned about the matter, people were willing and eager to sit down and list for me all the species that could not be killed or eaten under these or other circumstances, or (when a honey-tree find brought that subject up) which honeys were harmful and which safe.

The conjunction of events brought to the fore one more belief which is related to food taboos. When Aluza's one-year-old was sick, she could not be weaned, for milk was the only food she could digest; but Aluza could not nurse both the infant and the one-year-old, for two children cannot nurse at the same woman's breast: they poison the milk for one another. The ultimate solution, after a period of living with the quandary, was that Jovenil's childless sister adopted the infant, with the milk her foster-mother claimed the baby could get from her breast supplemented by a tin of Ninho powdered milk I supplied. I supplied another for the older child, as well--the two children could not even share a tin of milk without endangering each other.

To sum up these observations: In day to day life, people go along without much thought to the avoidances, although people of certain statuses

will routinely observe certain major prohibitions, or individuals observe personal taboos they have acquired. But in a crisis of health or of birth--in time of threat to life or the tenuous appearance of new life--the food, work and hunting taboos become a matter of consuming interest and concern, leading to intense debates and worry.

I have gone into some detail, perhaps too much, in describing these scenes to give a sense of the place food taboos have in Kagwahiv life, but also in order to give a sense of the kind of situation in which I learned about Kagwahiv food taboos--important contextual information which, as Devereux points out, is often missing from anthropological accounts. Now, however, let us turn to the cultural analysis of the taboos and their symbolism.

FOOD TABOOS AS A SET OF CULTURAL SYSTEMS

For a full picture of the complex system formed by Kagwahiv food taboos, it is necessary to examine four aspects of them: (1) the situations in which food taboos are operative; (2) the individuals who must obey the taboos in those situations; (3) the species of animal or types of food prohibited, in general and in each particular situation; and (4) the ideology of food taboos--the explanation given for the harmfulness of the food, including the mechanism through which the harmful result is brought about.

These four aspects of the phenomenon evidently bring us into varied domains of inquiry. The first two largely bear on aspects of social structure and the organization of ritual life. The third topic touches on a variety of issues relating to the importance of animals in the life of a tropical forest society, which may include their symbolic and mythological importance; but the aspect which has been focal in the literature is the ecological relations of the animals prohibited. The fourth topic gets us into an area of more purely cultural issues of conceptualization, but even this may touch back on ecology in its conceptual frame, the conception of the relations between man and the species of the forest.

I add one note here on the arbitrary limitation set by the term "food taboos," to say that I will violate it wherever it seems called for. In

each situational set of injunctions, while the majority are prohibitions on killing and eating certain species, or eating certain foods (forest fruits, honeys, etc.), a number have to do with economic or recreational activities that are prohibited. I do limit myself to kinds of situations that involve prohibitions on food among others--thus excluding, for example, the prohibitions around fish poisoning which are exclusively against sexual activities and premature harvesting of poisoned fish, or the very complex set of prohibitions (on the manner of eating, contact with menstruating women, etc.) whose violation results in that curse on one's hunting/fishing success known as panem (De Matta, 1967) which would require a separate paper to itself. But it would be thoroughly artificial to exclude interdicted activities from the analysis of those situations of prohibition that I do discuss simply because they are not prohibitions of food. Conversely, as has been pointed out on an earlier occasion by one of our discussants (Poole, 1977--and still earlier by Radcliffe-Brown (1952:147)--one cannot understand food prohibitions without at the same time considering the prescriptive obligations relating to food. One cannot treat food taboos, in short, without considering both taboos that are not of food and injunctions about food that are not taboos.

Who Can't Eat What When?

There is no specific term I know of in Kagwahiv for "food taboo." The term most commonly used is a demonstrative, ikwahy, meaning "is harmful" (from -ahy, "hurts"), which may be applied to any food which causes illness or discomfort. The term has no sense whatsoever of "forbidden," with the implication of the Polynesian term tabu (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952:1). Perhaps the term which covers a field closest to what we generally mean by "taboo" is the verb okwaku, meaning "refrains from eating harmful food" or as we might say, "observes a taboo." Nevertheless, the Kagwahiv do have a clear notion of what kinds of food should not be eaten in certain situations because they will be harmful to them. Such avoidances that are contingent on a situation I will call conditional or contingent avoidances, in contrast to absolutely prohibited foods that are definitely inedible altogether.

The five situations for which I have extensive data on food avoid

are illness, pregnancy-childbirth-early infancy, the life stages of parenthood and of adolescence, and the ritual state of seclusion which is part of the menarche rite and of the ritual of purification for the slayer of an enemy. A sixth type that might be added is the prohibition on two infants being nursed by the same woman. Finally we could also consider as a separate category, though allied to the taboos for during illness, the set of personal taboos acquired empirically from the observation that one became sick after eating a certain species.

1. In the situation of illness, certain animals should not be killed or eaten by the sick person himself or by the parents of a sick child--or indeed, in serious illness--theoretically--by anyone living in the child's settlement. Especially noxious in this respect are the paca, whose very name (karugwaruhu, "lover of eating") is synonymous with "big fever" (karugwar- + -uhu), and the piranha. Certain sweet honeys are also to be avoided, notabley uruçu and one called heirunyun'di, which is said to have struck the robust Igwaka dead when he ate just a little while he had a fever. Other animals and honeys-- agouti and canudo honey (heirete)--are less harmful, exercising influence only "on the same day" in which they are shot or eaten; as Jovenil's daughter improved to the point of eating some tinamou, an easily digestible gallinaceous bird, he said he would just let her get a little better and then he would fell a tree with canudo in it, a honey he said was even better that uruçu. Sick people and their parents should also refrain from handling manioc, and anyone who has done so should stay away from a sick child until they have bathed thoroughly. At the height of a child's illness, the parents should refrain from all strenous work, expecially chopping firewood or cutting with a machete, or the child will die. These restrictions end when the child is well on the way to recovery; Jovenil resumed toasting his own farinha, rather than having others toast it for him, when his daughter was first able to eat a bit of the chicken-like meat of tinamou.

2. During the last months of pregnancy and through the first weeks of an infant's life--the stated period after birth varied from eight days to a month, depending on the informant--both parents must refrain from eating or killing toucan, piranha, paca, and perhaps (with somewhat conflicting testimony) some or all monkeys. The father must not kill a jaguar or handle

cipó (liana used for binding) or buriti (palm used for floors). The avoidances are observed by the parents of the expected/new-born infant only, but the harm if they violated it would come to the infant him or herself.

3. From the time of conception of their first child, the parents must also observe a further set of avoidances which lasts through their lives until they achieve the status of "old person" (čava'e, m, or ngwãivĩ, f). The "type animal" for this avoidance--the one most people mention spontaneously as an example of it--is mutum, the curassow (as it is toucan for the pregnancy/birth taboos); the highest degree of consensus I have among informants is on this. The other allied cracids--urumutum (nocturnal curassow), jacu (guans) and aracuã (chachalacas)--are also included. So are the paca and the brocket (veadinho), with almost as high a degree of consensus. This class, in other words, which affects most adults all of the time, is the most clearly defined.

These taboos are sometimes spoken of as affecting "married people," but detailed accounts always specify more exactly people who have borne at least one child, whether or not that child survived. Young married couples without children are sometimes mentioned specifically as not having to observe the avoidances yet. The upper cutoff point is when one reaches advanced age at which one is considered to have accumulated sufficient spiritual strength to abandon all taboos except the absolute ones, unless one is sick. Throughout this age range, relative age is a factor. Once while eating an agouti, Jovenil told me that his younger sister Anita could not eat agouti because she had had a child; and when I pointed out the discrepancy--Jovenil had had ten children--he said he could eat it because he was older than she.

In contrast to the two sets of taboos discussed before, the consequences of violating these are only to the taboo-breaker himself, not to his or her children. The person who eats something he should not grows weak and sluggish, lacking in energy, and above all grows thin (ontĩnĩ)--a sure sign of the violation of a taboo. When a newlywed man found himself feeling tired and sluggish, his brother jokingly suggested that his wife might have conceived and not have told him yet, with the result that he would be unwittingly eating things he should not. When I was tired, it was

suggested in a similar tone that I might unknowingly have a child somewhere (cf. Wagley, 1977:140 n. 66).

4. A less frequently mentioned set of taboos is primarily for adolescents--or postpubertal unmarried young men-- although it applies in principle to all adults. This concerns especially the agouti and also the tinamou which are said to cause laziness, which, in the old days, would have been especially troublesome for the young warriors who had to defend the community (or take the offensive) in warfare.[1] Jovenil blamed his lassitude one day on having eaten agouti a few days earlier. Nonetheless, as a prescribed avoidance it is life-stage specific, and might be regarded as a less stringent life-stage marking food avoidance corresponding to the more restrictive "parenthood" set just described.

5. A set of food injunctions no longer practiced, and difficult to get precise data on, are those enjoined in ceremonies. Ritual seclusion, in particular, which is part both of the approximately ten-day long menarche ceremony for women, and of the ceremony which protects a warrior and returns him gradually to participation in daily life after he has killed an enemy, involves an initial period of consuming practically nothing except boiled water. During this time, the person must lie straight and still in the hammock in a walled-off part of the longhouse, feet never touching the ground. Gradually, small amounts of food may be eaten, gradually increasing until the seclusion is terminated by a ritual bath in the river.

6. A sixth situation is one that would not usually be included under the concept of "food taboos," yet in the context of a lifelong progression through stages marked by prohibitions it is the first and perhaps the formative one. This is the prohibition on the simultaneous nursing at the same woman's breast of two infants, who are believed in such a situation to poison the milk for one another. This belief, an evident symbolic recognition of sibling rivalry, equally evidently intensifies it, since it results in the abrupt weaning of an older sibling when his younger one arrives. Ideally, the succeeding child is delayed two or three years, so that most children will have reached an age when they have some understanding of the taboo being imposed on them. This has some claim,

therefore, to be the first ritual prohibition a child is likely to be aware of, hence a kind of template for all later situational taboos. I have already described the strength of this belief, and the extent to which it can get generalized--although the insistence that the two children required separate tins of powdered milk from me cannot be said to have greatly inconvenienced the recipients of the tins.

7. A few individuals have acquired "personal taboos" by a strictly empirical procedure of avoiding foods once eaten just before becoming seriously ill, which may be presumed to have caused the illness. The avoidances that I am aware of anyone adopting in this way--they are relatively rare--are all game animals. In the case I am most familiar with, an old woman who became seriously ill from tuberculosis but was cured, they included animals only mildly or not at all prohibited for other people, both species of peccary, as well as cracids that would normally be prohibited to younger women who had borne children. Her taboos apply to the animals being killed as well as to her eating them, for it was said to have been someone killing a peccary that precipated her illness.

It is interesting to note that, despite the central importance of the exogamous patrimoieties in Kagwahiv life, only one informant mentioned any moiety-specific prohibitions of any sort, and his testimony was so contradictory as to cast doubt on its validity. I did not hear from any other informants about moiety-specific taboos on these or an any other species--including the eponymous birds themselves, although I spent some time probing for exegeses of them.

These seven situations are the major ones of which I am aware in which conditional food avoidances are prescribed in Kagwahiv society. They fall naturally into three general categories: those which apply during critical periods of peril to life (illness, childbirth, and the early weeks of infancy), prohibitions that mark major life stages (nursing, adolescence, parenthood, and--by the cessation of restrictions--the license of old age) and the blanket proscriptions of food that are imposed during periods of ritual seclusion. The first of these categories is marked off from the others by several distinctive characteristics. First, in them the interdiction is not merely on the consumption of the species in question

but also on the killing of it, and they include a number of interdictions on work activities as well as on foods. Secondly, while the other categories are reflexive (Da Matta, 1976:85) in that the taboos relate to the condition of the person who observes them, have their effect on him alone, and are observed by him alone, the avoidances in the first category are relational: they are imposed on a group of people linked by close ties to the person whose condition occasions them, and their violation causes harm to someone other than the violator. Thus they underscore something in the relationship--an implicit unity between parent and infant, or between parent or older sibling and sick child.[2]

Food observances, as a number of commentators on food taboos have recently stressed (Poole, 1977), are an integral cultural system, and avoidances should not be considered in isolation from the corresponding positive food injunctions--the things one should eat in order to get well, to remain strong and energetic, or to have a healthy baby. Unfortunately, my data are somewhat thin in this regard. There is an array of medicinal teas, infusions and baths made of roots and leaves, used curatively during sickness, but I have not gathered systematic data on them. The only generalization I can make is that they are all, to my knowledge, roots or leaves of wild jungle plants, in contrast to the prohibitions, which are largely of the animal kingdom or animal products (such as honey). Some of the herbal medicines do, however, have names that link them with animal species, such as the roots tajahu-pohang ("white-lipped peccary medicine") used for fevers and ja'guara-pohang which produces a lather that was applied to a badly infected cut on my foot. Warm water, with or without herbal infusions, is used to bathe the limbs, especially hands and feet, of a sick person to maintain the warmth of life in him. In ritual seclusion, the minimal ingestion permitted on the first, most stringent day is to drink boiled water (lit. ytaku, "hot water"), which one informant also told me was prescribed for parents of infants. (I do not believe that this information reflected their perception of the ethnographer's boiled water fetish.) The only animal preparation I can think of that was positively prescribed for its curative value during illness was--tinamou soup!

The one other positive prescription of meat that I am aware of--and certainly the most dramatic--is the ceremonial consumption of specified

certainly the most dramatic--is the ceremonial consumption of specified parts of the body of the slain enemy during the head-trophy celebration. The specifics of this practice are very difficult to learn, for it is one aspect of past custom that has undergone a thorough cultural denial. Only on terms of very close intimacy would informants acknowledge it to outsiders, or in the heat of intense emotion (cf. Nimuendaju, 1924:233). My closest informant, Jovenil, only told me about it three weeks before my departure in 1968. Explaining to me why the phrase "se tu mata, tu come" (e'u ti he jukavove'e) had been used to reprimand a man who had beaten his wife nearly to death, he acknowledged the ancient practice of eating "just a taste" of the flesh of a slain enemy. The women, he told me, ate the cheeks and the nape of the neck "in order to get fat." The other person to give me an account was a psychotically disturbed old man, who gave a rather confused but circumstantial description from his traumatic childhood memories of it (Kracke, 1979a:185), stressing the hand, leg, and (contradicting himself) the penis as the parts eaten. Garcia de Freitas (1926:70), the SPI encarregado who gives the fullest available account of the head trophy ceremony, mentions the eyes, lips, tongue, and muscles of the right arm, which he says are eaten so that the enemy (ghost?) "cannot see them, talk, pursue them or have the strength to pull the bowstring."

From these fragmentary accounts, we can extract only two clear facts. One, on Jovenil's testimony, is that this ritual exocannibalism did involve the symbolic acquisition of benefits or traits by eating certain body parts (cf. Clastres, 1963), and two, it is the most energetically hidden and denied of all past Kagwahiv practices.

The Species and Behaviors Forbidden

Several anthropological theories of taboo deal primarily with the question of which species from the potential roster of the region are chosen for prohibition. In this secton, therefore, I will touch on the theories of Radcliffe-Brown (1932:270-72), of Douglas as developed by Leach (1964) and Tambiah (1969), and most recently Eric Ross's (1978) cultural materialist theory of foods excluded from the diet in the South American Lowlands. First, however, let me summarize and elaborate on the data concerning the species that are subject to various prohibitions. See Tables pp. 136-137.

I have not yet mentioned one extreme category, the animals, types of honey, etc., that are regarded as altogether inedible for explicit symbolic reasons. Some of these, at least, are regarded as too dangerous to eat. They are sharply distinguised from foods like capybara meat which are edible but highly unpalatable, or takwainuruity, a kind of honey that acts as an emetic. But it is not perfectly clear whether they are all regarded as an extreme of the series of situationally prohibited foods, an apex of tabooed foods that are so dangerous that no one (even old people) dare eat them, or whether some are inedible simply for aesthetic or sentimental reasons.

One category of inedible animals includes most species of major predators--jaguar, puma wildcat, cayman, harpie eagle, and large and small Amazonian otter. One informant explicitly explained, when assigning the last two to the inedible category, that the larger otter (y'yj) "eats jatuarana, it eats traira, tucunaré (all staple fish)--it eats everything. Jatuarana are afraid of otter." Scavengers such as vultures are also included.

The inedibility of carnivores and other "co-predators" with man is not thoroughgoing, however. One old man claims to eat the puma (sussuarana), which he compared to deer, although he said only an old person could eat it. (In name, it is classed with deer: yhuarana = "pseudo deer.") The piranha, while regarded as highly dangerous in sickness and pregnancy or for the parents of infants, is a highly prized food.

A completely different category which may have been prohibited in the past--early observers and my informants differ on this--is the class of primates. Monkeys, in the Brazilian pattern, are now eaten, though regarded as dangerous to newborns. But two of my old informants mention a blanket prohibition on eating monkey. One still refuses to eat monkey herself, and the other gives the same rationale for the prohibition that was given by the early observer Hermann Dengler (1928:120): They are too much like human beings.[3]

One other category of absolutely prohibited animals cuts across nearly all taxonomic classes of animal species. No Kagwahiv kills or eats "pets" (renymbav), a category which for some includes all domesticated mammals such

as cattle or pigs. Some elderly Kagwahiv still refuse to eat fresh pork and beef, and are shocked at the willingness of Brazilians, missionaries and anthropologists to do so. This is a major element in the culture shock that traditional Kagwahiv experience when living among Brazilians. An old woman who left to work as a servant in a Brazilian household returned after a year or so, giving as one of her main reasons her discomfort at eating "pets". Chickens, however, seem to be (or to have become) entirely acceptable as food, and a few men even raise pigs for food.

Practically any animal may be raised as a pet; the criterion is simply that it is kept, cared for and to some degree fed by its "owner" (-jára), often though not always a child. Favorite children's pets include monkeys, parrots and parakeets, but just about any game animal may be kept: I have seen a young tapir and (briefly) a capybara. Harpie eagles (kwandu) were kept in cages before pacification for their feathers, used (along with mutum feathers) for fletching arrows.

Unlike other categories of tabooed food, this one is open to considerable negotiation. I have vivid memories of one young hunter coming back with a young capybara he intended for supper, only to have it (somewhat to his disgust) appropriated by the children for a pet. (At night, however, it slipped its peg and escaped.) The newly introduced domesticated animals are especially ambiguous. When Moha'gi listed beef (yhuranuhũ, "prodigious deer") as a completely forbidden and dangerous meat, he carefully qualified his statement by saying that it was all right to eat if I gave them a can of it. Pigs, although in Portuguese classified with peccary as "porco," are perhaps rendered edible in Kagwahiv by separating them from their animal status altogether: they are called mbiarirevuhu, which refers to their ultimate destiny as "a big piece of meat" (mbiara).

Among the animals that are conditionally prohibited, a few are strongly associated with particular contingent classes of prohibition--as the toucan (and handling cipó or buriti) with pregnancy/infancy, the cracids (especially curassow) with the parental stage taboos, and agouti with the adolescent "laziness" taboos.[4] Manioc seems to be dangerous only in illness, for the same woman who carefully bathed before handling a sick child after working with manioc, freely nursed an infant after toasting manioc meal.

Otherwise, however, the species prohibited do not fall so much into situational categories as into an overall hierarchy of the severity of their dangerousness (cf. Radcliffe-Brown, 1932:269). Paca is unquestionably the most dangerous. It was mentioned frequently and emphatically in all the conditional categories of taboo whose infringement leads to illness or death. Piranha is a close runner-up, included in almost all those categories. Mutum (curassow), although mostly considered taboo only for parents, was very emphatically placed in the taboo category by more informants than agreed upon any other item, and was considered quite dangerous. Paca and mutum, I was told, used to be skinned or plucked and butchered by old men far from the settlement, so that younger parents would not even smell them.

Agouti are named quite consistently in all categories except parenthood taboos, but the attribution is frequently qualified by a remark that they are "only a little" dangerous, or are dangerous only on the day they are killed or eaten. It is quite definite, though that agouti causes laziness.

Tapir and white-lipped peccary are rather more marginally forbidden. To kill either was agreed to be seriously harmful to a sick person (though not, for most informants, an infant), but to eat them is only mildly harmful.[5] Collared peccary is safe for anyone unless it falls under a personal prohibition.

Many other species on my list are mentioned by one or two people as being dangerous in one situation or another, with varying degrees of conviction and mutual contradiction. One bird, however, seems almost untainted: the tinamou, a bird much like chicken, is not only not dangerous in any situation, but is positively recommended for sickness by at least one informant. (Perhaps it is the assimilation of chickens to this category, as inamutĩ, "white tinamou," that makes them so readily edible despite being "pets".) Even the tinamou, however, has one drawback: two informants told me that it makes one lazy--"because it doesn't work," one said--and another told me that the parents of an infant should avoid it lest the child grow up to be lazy.

As with animals, so with the incredible variety of honeys produced by different kinds of Amazonian bees. Unlike the animals, however, the honeys

can be arranged into what amounts to a Guttman scale of severity. Of 31 kinds of honey on which I have some data, fifteen are listed as harmless (including one said to be "not very good" and another which one informant said causes vomiting). One was listed (with some disagreement) as harmful only to sick people, five more avoided in pregnancy and just after birth as well as by sick people, and four avoided by all parents (or married people) in addition to the other situations. Five types (again with some disagreement) are not eaten by anyone, even old people. One kind, teive'ri - also called mohã'gi ("little medicine")--was said to be of positive medicinal value in curing fever.

After collecting as much data as I could about the habits and appearance of the bees that make these honeys, I found that their harmfulness roughly correlated with the ferocity of the bees, with the amount of black in their coloration--two variables suggested by an informant--and the sweetness or desirablility of the honey; but even these variables taken together were far from perfect predictors.

Finally, besides a number of palm fruits that should be avoided during pregnancy and after childbirth, there are a number of proscribed activities. Expectant or new parents should not handle pindova leaves (for thatch), buriti wood (for floors), or cipó (lianas for binding). Sexual relations are prohibited (one man told me) for two months following birth. Sick persons and their parents should not handle manioc, chop wood or even touch a machete or an axe, or pound with a pestle in a mortar. In fact, several people told me that the parents of a sick or newborn child should refrain from work altogether.

In general, most of the conditionally prohibited animals that are most strongly avoided, and the types of honey considered most dangerous, are among the foods of their kind considered choice. Capybara, which is regarded as highly unpalatable--one informant said he would not eat its meat because of the foul taste it gets from the animals eating an oniony-smelling marshgrass--is rarely listed prohibited. But the correlation is far from perfect. Tapir, one of the most highly prized game animals-- Nimuendaju (1924:251, 1948:285) calls it "their favorite game"--is rather weakly and ambiguously prescribed, at least for eating. The prized uruçu honey is regarded as quite harmful for sick people and for infants, but canudo--which

Jovenil said is "really good, better than urucu"--only does mild harm: It hurts on the same day you eat or gather it, but after three days it doesn't hurt any more."

A few of these rules might, to the delight of cultural materialists, be explicable quite simply in epidemiological or nutritional terms--in one case reminiscent of the old trichonosis-and-kosher-rules argument. One old informant said that certain meats--tapir, white-lipped peccary, and surubim fish--are perfectly all right if roasted as soon as they are brought in, but harmful if left lying around before they are cooked or if pounded into small pieces for use in farofa. This statement would seem a fairly good prescription for avoiding parasitic infection and food poisoning from the spoiling of such fatty meats. Conversely, the prescription of tinamou broth for sickness might possibly be justifiable in terms of all the beneficial ingredients recently being discovered in our mothers' chicken soup.

This does not take us very far, however. Pace Harris, the Kagwahiv seem quite able to conceptualize the exact conditions under which fatty meats may undergo pathogenic transformations, even if they do not conceptualize the pathogenic agents in exactly the same terms we do. They do not altogether prohibit their consumption for such reasons, but are well aware which foods need special handling. We must look elsewhere for explanations of the great majority of food avoidances.

The absolutely prohibited species--those to which Ross's recently published (1978) theory of ecological balance was addressed--seem least aptly explained by his hypothesis. Raptors and carnivores are not major dietary items for any of the neighbors of the Kagwahiv, so there would be little advantage in perpetuating those genera. In recent times, of course, spotted jaguar, cayman and otter have become valuable for their pelts; but their exclusion from the diet does not prevent Kagwahiv from killing them for their skins whenever they are encountered. There is no evidence, also, that they were any more readily eaten before their skins became of value. Pets, on the other hand, are too random a category, and too occasional, for their exclusion from the diet to benefit any particular species. They are in any case removed from the breeding population, and often do not survive the settlement's dogs.

All of these nonfood species--including the monkeys which may once ha been excluded from the diet--are more naturally accounted for in Leach (1964) axis of distance from man: pets are metonymically close to man, a monkeys metaphorically so (cf. Tambiah, 1969). The maj predators--carnivores, raptors, etc.--are geographically distant (th maintain a healthy distance from human habitation) but metaphorically, hunters, close to man: the species that fear man, fear them (c Levi-Strauss, 1969: 97-98n).[6]

The food prohibitions that do seem to jibe much better with Ross hypothesis are the conditional ones. Here, his explanation holds in a mu more evident way; it becomes an ecologically-worded form Reichel-Dolmatoff's (1971, 1976) cultural argument, that Amazoni cosmologies conceptually and morally regulate the relationship betw members of a society and the animal species on which their livelih depends. For if certain species are prohibited to individuals in cert stages of the life cycle or in certain crisis situations, the pressure those species will be reduced. If the species prohibited are among the m desirable, the net effect will be to increase at least some hunte interest in less desirable species, thus diversifying the larder distributing the pressure more evenly on all species in the environme (Cf. Taylor, this smposium).

This argument would receive corroboration if it could be shown that species most protected by prohibitions were indeed among the most endange by overpredation. Unfortunately for the argument, one species known to seriously endangered (d'Aulaire, 1979:30), the tapir--which shows itsel rarely that a good Kagwahiv hunter can be satisfied if he kills about on year--is only ambiguously prohibited, while some of the species protecte the strongest taboos--paca, piranha--are not to my knowledge serio threatened. Cracidae, on the other hand, are all endangered (Delacour Amadon, 1973:75-76), so the prohibition on parents eating them may indee important for their local preservation.

These conditional taboos, expecially the life-cycle related ones, an evident advantage for the distribution of food among various groups the society as well. By prohibiting some choice foods for the age gr that are most active in hunting, they not only lessen the pressure on

species, but also ensure a more readily available supply of those species for children and the elderly. The strict prohibitions on a mother during pregnancy and lactation, however, would not seem to be nutritionally sound.

The fact that a system of food avoidances may well contribute to the maintenance of an ecological balance between man and his prey, and even that it may guarantee distribution of some species to segments of the population with less direct access to the products of hunting, do not preclude the equal usefulness of other frameworks of explanation. Indeed, in the realm of conditional prohibitions, it is difficult to distinguish the predictions that would be made by Ross's theory (in my modified form) from those which would be made by Radcliffe-Brown's theory, at least in its earlier (1932) and simplest form. He maintains (1932:270-272, 1952:151) that the species which receive the greatest "ritual value" are those of greatest "social importance," in which he includes (1932:269-270) two factors: the difficulty and danger involved in procuring the species, and their desirability for eating. Much the same species that, by the ecological argument, would be "protected" by food taboos, are the prized animals that would take on ritual value in Radcliffe-Brown's theory. Both theories stumble equally on the prized, muscular and endangered (so difficult to find) tapir which is not strongly prohibited. (The tapir, also, has added social value as one of the game animals that is prominent in mythology, albeit representing the asocial force of unrestrained sexuality.) But Radcliffe-Brown's theory does add one additional line of explanation to the ecological one: It accounts for the factor of ferocity which one informant explicitly said is an element in determining which of the honeys are harmful, and is certainly also a factor in the high place the piranha has among the prohibited species. The fiercer the bee, the greater the risk in gathering it and therefore the degree of cooperation needed to gather it.

This is far from all Radcliffe-Brown had to say on the topic of taboos, and his name will recur more than once in this paper. At this point, I will make but one negative comment. While the taboos do quite evidently mark important social groups categorized by age, as well as people in "abnormal" (we should now say "liminal") ritual states, no prohibitions whatsoever refer to the most important social classes of the society, the exogamous moieties. The mytum (curassow) and kwandu (harpie eagle), eponymous birds

of the moieties, are, one notes immediately, both subject to prohibitions, and the macaws associated with the Kwandu moiety are not considered edible; but the prohibitions on curassow and eagle have no reference whatsoever to moiety membership--both are prohibited equally to members of both moieties, and the situation for which each is prohibited have no moiety associations--and, in addition, the two birds are prohibited in altogether different situational categories. Levi-Strauss, of course, might see in this discrepancy evidence of the asymmetrical relationship between moieties (Levi-Strauss, 1963)--the Kwandu perhaps associated with change and crisis (as harpie eagles must not be killed in situations of birth and illness) and the Mytum with stability and structural continuity. In the absence of any explicit connection between the taboos on those birds and their moiety associations, however, I am rather inclined to regard this as one more example of the rather thorough absence of representation of the moieties in Kagwahiv mythology and ritual symbolism (cf. Kracke, 1979a:13, and n.d).

I cannot close this section without considering the one kind of flesh which is positively enjoined in ritual--the flesh of the human enemy, tapy'yn. As a predator on man, the enemy might be considered analogous to the jaguar which is not eaten. It is especially surprising if, as some informants assert, monkeys were not eaten because of their similarity to man.[7] It may be significant that the ceremonial context in which human flesh was consumed as (ritual) food initiates the period of seclusion during which the warrior who slew the enemy must abstain from all other meat: it is perhaps part of a ritual inversion.

In any case, the consumption of an enemy's flesh in celebration of his slaying has a decidedly inimical connotation, and so colors the act of eating with an aggressive tone. In contrast to Guayaki endocannibalism (Clastres, 1963), it defines the consumed human as being outside the pale of society. This is underlined in the admonitory phrase used when someone is fighting with a close relative: "If you kill him, eat him!" implying that the admonished person is treating his relative as an enemy. José Garcia de Freitas's (1926) interpretation of the consumption as stripping the ghost of its retaliatory capacity continues this antagonistic line of interpretation. At the same time, Jovenil's information suggests an additional theme--one of identification with the (growth of) the slain enemy: women eat the

cheeks and back of the neck in order to become fat--i.e., to acquire a sexually desirable quality. This also adds an erotic element to the cannibalistic act--shades of "Como Era Gostoso o Meu Frances!"

Since ritual cannibalism is one of the dramatic ceremonial food injunctions, all of these symbolic meanings shape the ritual meaning of eating, and hence of abstaining from eating--especially from eating meat--and must be considered relevant to the analysis of the food taboos. All of the themes mentioned in the preceding paragraph will be seen emerging further as we examine the symbolism implicit in the idealogy of the prohibitions.

Why and How? The Ideology of the Sanctions

It is important to get a sense of the tone in which the food taboos are regarded as "binding." Unlike African--or at least Tallensi (Fortes, 1967)--food taboos, the Kagwahiv food taboos (as Gerald Weiss has pointed out for the Campa) do not have a strongly moral overtone. Although it is of course morally incumbent on a parent to observe food taboos for the protection of his or her child, the keeping of the taboos themselves is largely a matter of practical foresight rather than of predominantly moral pressure: the consequences of infringement are automatic, like failing to take medicine in our culture. Overlooking them is foolhardy rather than immoral. The transitive verb okwaku means "protects another through observance of avoidances," and the reflexive form ojikwaku, "keep the taboos for one's own benefit," has the connotation of "take good care of oneself." The moral issue where one's child is involved comes not in observing the taboo per se, but in showing enough concern for one's child's life, health and safety to take the precautions necessary for the child's protecton.

For a more direct view of how Kagwahiv conceptualize their food taboos, we may turn to the explanations they give for the avoidance of particular species or acts, and their depiction of the mechanisms by which the tabooed species, if shot or eaten, act on the people who are harmed by their breach. These explanations vary along two major dimensions: they differ from species to species, and they differ according to the situational categories of prohibitions; it depends on the particular case which dimension "overrides" the other. Some kinds of explanation are so closely wedded to a

certain taboo situation that they do not apply outside of it, so that one or two species may be attributed different kinds of action in different situations. In many cases, however, the mechanisms by which the avoidance is sanctioned are closely tied to a particular species, and apply to it across the board in every situation in which the species is forbidden.

There is some range in the degree of clarity and specificity with which the retributory mechanisms are formulated (or, perhaps, with which they are recorded in my notes), but the mechanisms that were explicitly elaborated were generally of two sorts: the spirit of the animal makes a retaliatory attack on the body/spirit of the person harmed (the paca and piranha "bite one's liver," the deer "tramples one's soul"), or else a behaviora characteristic of the animal sympathetically induces a (metaphorically similar state in the mind of the person affected.

The taboos on cracidae during the stage of parenthood seem to be amon those which are rather vague in their operation--or perhaps my informant were more interested in volunteering information on the "crisis" taboos tha were in the foreground when I gathered the data. Breach of these avoidance leads to fever, headaches, lethargy, and weight loss. One "becomes thin (ontĭnĩ̃)--a phrase often used for wasting away due to violating any kind o taboo--but I got no further clarification on the mechanism by which it make one do so. In a different avoidance situation, curassow was said by one o two informants to cause thrush (juruahiv) in an infant's mouth if killed b the child's father. This might be related to the bird's prominent red beak

The more elaborated mechanisms are those occuring in the two "crisi categories, pregnancy/childbirth and illness. These are also the t "relational" categories--those in which the "victim," the person affected the taboo violation, is someone other than the person who violated t taboo. The induction of a harmful state of mind in the victim of the tab violation occurs only in the case of the taboos which must be observ during pregnancy and just after birth. The victim is, of course, always t unborn or newborn infant. The most frequently invoked such a reverberati involves the image of "going around in circles" (onhatĩmã̃), reflecti peculiar movement patterns of certain birds, expecially the toucan and al the jacamin (a trumpeter--Kagwahiv gwyrajehe'o, "weeping bird"). "When kill it," an informant said of the latter, "it goes around in circ

(onhatĭmã). The child 'sees' it running, [gets dizzy] and cries." A slight variant of this explanation, given for the toucan, is that the toucan is always picking around in its feathers for lice, and the child, "seeing" this, gets itchy.[8] The end result, in both cases, is that the child goes crazy, "cries in the afternoon" (see n. 8, last sentence), and dies. Handling cipó (liana) has the same effect: one wraps it around (omonhatĭmã, "causes it to go around") when binding something with it, "the child sees it twisting around and cries." It "drives him crazy" (omboheagwyry).

Monkeys, also prohibited primarily for pregnancy and birth, likewise have their effect through induction. The spider monkey, coata, makes a child cry at night because of its wailing cry. So do the saki monkeys, and the jaju'i or "jogo-jogo" (which I cannot identify). The baby's crying one day was attributed to Jovenil's having eaten some of the jogo-jogo shot the day before by Francisco. The wooly and capuchin monkeys (barrigudo and prego), according to my young informant Carlo, cause an itchy skin infestation called curuba (mange?) which, again, drives the infant crazy and makes it cry.

It will be noted that the harmful effects of many of these species conclude with driving the infant crazy and making it cry--in that order. Most of the species just mentioned which have this effect are noted for their mournful or piercing vocalizations. Crying is considered highly dangerous among the Kagwahiv. One adult woman's death was blamed by her father on her excessive weeping for the death of one of her children. A child's crying is regarded as a serious matter, precipitating a flurry of efforts to calm and quiet the child. The association of crying with craziness thus reflects deep Kagwahiv attitudes about its danger.

The other main type of explanation for the effect of breaking taboos is that involving direct retaliatory attack on a person's spirit (ha'uv), by the spirit of the slain or consumed animal. While the "induction" explanation seems to be limited to animals tabooed during pregnancy and childbirth, the "retaliation" explanations apply to species which are tabooed over a wide range of circumstances, and, for each species, apply in the same way over all the situations. Only the identity of the victim changes; it may be the taboo breaker himself or his child or close relative, according to the category of prohibition.

Foremost among these species are the most strongly tabooed, the paca and piranha, which, when either killed or eaten, "bite one's liver" (ahe py'a hu'u'u) or one's soul (ohu'u'u ahe ra'uva), or occasionally "cuts one's liver" (ahe py'a kyti). This "causes diarrhea" (ahe revikawarãi), makes one thin (ontĭnĭ) and one dies. This type of action is attributed to just about any animal with prominent teeth--agouti, cutigwaiba, white-lipped peccary, and the fish traíra, tambaquí and pacú--sometimes with the gloss "because it has teeth." It is also attributed to the crab, and, according to one informant, to one species of honey, hejuv, which is the only one made by a wasp. Agouti and cutigwaiba are also said to "put a paw up the anus" (opo'ẽ ahe revikwáripe) and cause diarrhea.

If toothed animals bite one's soul, hoofed animals kick it. The deer, said one informant, "is pugnacious--it kicks or steps on you, on your spirit" (iporová--ipyvondýgi ahe-rehe, ahe ra'úva-rehe). "You kill it and it beats your soul" (ha'úva onupãnupã), giving you a headache and fever. The same informant also said a tapir "steps repeatedly on your soul" (opyrupyru ahe ra'úva-rehe). Similarly a harpie eagle, if you kill it, is said to "grasp" you (opyhypyhy) in its claws.

That these acts are considered as retaliations for killing and eating the animal is confirmed by a remark of Francisco's: "Paca is bad for your liver, because you eat the animal, it eats your liver, and you feel it."

For a few of these, there are said to be remedies. An agouti's baneful influence, in particular, can be counteracted by taking the jaws of the agouti that was killed and clamping them on a piece of wood, causing them to bite the wood (instead of the soul, presumably). This is called ombojurujai, "cause to gape or yawn," "cause it to open its mouth." A deer killed or eaten during a child's sickness is said to cause diarrhea for the child which can be counteracted by "medicines from the forest," though my informant did not specify which.

One other kind of effect is attributed to actions such as chopping or pounding with a pestle while one's child is sick: these actions make the child cold (omboro'y, a term used also for chills and fever). Asked for a clarification, the informant said "one chops and chops, it is cold, it causes the person to be cold" (ombogwai, ombogwai, irotĭahĭ, imboro'y). It

would seem, then, that the mediating element might be the breeze caused by the chopping motion--or by an eagle's wings, for killing an eagle is also said to make a sick child cold. Conversely, air blown from a shaman's mouth has ritual efficacy in curing or in bringing about other desired outcomes.

One more significant group of avoidances constitutes a nearly autonomous subsystem of taboos in itself: the honeys. The ordering of this set is in some ways neater than that among the various tabooed species of animals, yet the exact principles of its ordering remain elusive to me, and its sanctioning mechanisms seem unclear. Like the cracids, the honeys that are harmful, with one or two notable exceptions, also vaguely cause headaches and fever and "make one skinny" (ahe mboyvyahiv). "If you eat that honey," said Jovenil of one potent kind, "you will never be done with fever!" The exceptions are the honey made by the wasp hejuv which, like paca, "bites one's liver," and heikã'nãuhu which makes one crippled (kã'nã) and can only be eaten by old people, if by them. Two kinds cannot be eaten by anyone because they "split one's liver" (ahe py'a mondok). The only additional detail I could get relating to the mechanism of the influence of honeys in general was one informant's remark that "the ones that aren't fierce don't hurt, it's the fierce ones that are harmful." Uruçu is harmful, Jovenil told me, because when you cut down the nest "they sting your head all over." From this one could deduce that, as with the "soul biting" of the paca and piranha, the illness and malnourishment visited on the taboo-breaker or on his or her child is the bees' spiritual revenge--not, in this case, for killing them, but for destroying their home and depriving the larvae of their food.

One other special feature of honeys anticipates a theme which will be developed later on: honey is the only tabooed foodstuff whose harmfulness can be transmitted through an amorous relationship. The honeys prohibited for parents or married people (and in the case of honeys these two statuses are not so sharply distinguished as for other tabooed species) if eaten by a man will harm his wife, or any woman with whom he is sexually involved.

Discussion: An Interpretation of the Cultural Symbolism

The retaliatory acts of the prohibited animals are, it is my very strong impression, taken by the Kagwahiv as quite real, not at all "merely

metaphorical." The prophylactic action of abstaining from killing or eating harmful species is a practical act of protection for oneself and/or one's child. One's newborn child would be harmed by one's eating paca or piranha, and the harm would come to the child in something like the manner described. The food taboos are not regarded as a metaphoric statement but as a real system of causation. On this point, if one were to draw a parallel between the Kagwahiv food taboos and the Trobriand garden magic described by Malinowski and reanalyzed by Tambiah (1968), I would see them acting more in the way Malinowski presents them than the way Tambiah does (1968:198-210), although I agree with much of the rest of Tambiah's insightful argument in that paper. That the mechanisms are perceived as really operating does not prevent either Trobriand magic or the Kagwahiv food taboos having metaphorical significance embedded in them, and communicating ritually a cognitive and emotional message; medieval theologians were also fond of seeing metaphoric messages from God to man encoded in the real order of nature.

The action of killed animals on their victims was further clarified by a couple of demonstrative displays by two elderly informants. In one instance, Mohã'gi, telling me he had refrained from killing a paca explained that had he done so it would have bitten the sick child "here"--and he demonstrated graphically by aggressively pinching me up and down my right side and chest about the level of my heart and lungs. An even more illuminating demonstration was given by Ukarepuku. When a deer had just been shot, he explained what the effect could be on one of the sick children:

> Ikwahy Josinho'ga-pe. [it is harmful to J.] Josinho would say "hah!" (and Ukarepuke put his hand to his chest in an imitation of sudden pain) "What is it? I don't know if someone killed peccary. I don't know if it was a deer,--Miguel killed brocket [yhun'di, veadinho]."

On another occasion, Moha'gi, arguing for the harmlessness of agouti claimed that he had been watching one of Jovenil's sick children when Jovenil killed an agouti and the child had not given any indication of an effect at the moment the agouti was shot.

The first of these demonstrations bears out the conclusion that t

illness caused by killing or eating the tabooed animal is indeed the animal's spiritual retaliation for this infringement. Ukarepuku's description, however, leaves a rather different impression. His little pantomime suggests that the child directly experiences the pain of the hunter's shot, as if the child were somehow spiritually identified with the prey and the hunter's attack were directly on him. Indeed, insofar as the two kinds of description are given by the same informant and about the same kinds of animals, it would appear that they are synonymous, or two alternative ways of describing the same process. The culturally stereotyped image of the animal biting or stamping on the child's soul is not sharply distinguished from the hunting father shooting, in the guise of the forbidden prey, his own child. With this rationale, the violation of the taboo on killing an animal takes on a far greater enormity than would initially appear.

Putting together the cultural data, we see several themes emerging from it. One theme, certainly, is an aggressive one. Exocannibalism gives a clearly hostile tinge to the act of eating itself; food becomes the slain enemy. From the taboo concepts we can add kicking and biting in the imagery of retaliatory action of the animals, and the acts of chopping, cutting, pounding, and tying that are prohibited for illness. All of these aggressive expressions, whose victim may be the transgressor himself but in most cases is the unborn/newborn infant or sick child, are inhibited by the prohibition of the acts in question. It is defining the child thus symbolically as a friend, a kagwahiv to be protected from being shot and eaten, in contrast to the tapy'yn who is both shot and eaten.

In the exocannibalistic rite, in addition to its antagonistic side, there is also an element of identification, if through this consumption one symbolically acquires desirable qualities. Thus, in terms of this dominant symbol which must strongly shape if not define the significance of "eating" as a ritual act, eating is both a hostile act and an identificatory one--with even an erotic shading (in the enhancement of the beauty of the women who eat him.)

Identification is also evident in the ideology of the operation of the food taboos observed by parents for children. That the parent's eating something will directly affect the child implies a consubstantiality or

identification between the parents and the child. (It is the parents, of course, who experience this identification through the belief of connectedness, not the child, who may be too young to comprehend such cultural beliefs-- especially in the case of infancy taboos. It is always important to keep in mind who participates actively in a ritual, and for whom it has meaning!) A different kind of identificaton or equation is evident in the belief that a child directly feels the death of the forbidden animal as an attack on himself (and presumably the same for the eating of the forbidden animal). The child is here identified (in the adult's mind) with the forbidden species; the kicking, biting, squalling, squirming infant may be metaphorically portrayed in the qualities of the animals that are highlighted in their selection for prohibition.

On the other hand, the deer stepping on the child's soul, or the paca or piranha biting his liver, are retaliating for their own deaths and consumption--visiting upon the child their retaliation for the father's violence. As the hunter's violence against the prey, felt directly by the child, seems scarcely distinguished in conception from the prey's retaliatory attack on the child, one may see here a third identification or metaphor: the pugnacious aggressiveness of the prohibited species may be considered a representation of such tendencies in the parent. Again, to refrain from killing and eating the animal is to protect the child from the animal's (reactive) aggression-- ultimately, from one's own.

The most stringently prohibited of all contingently avoided animals is the paca, so it is interesting to look in particular at the characteristics noted in this large rodent. Besides its especialy prized meat, one other quality claims attention: As its very name suggests (karugwaruhu, "big lover of eating in the afternoon," or "big lover of eating by chewing") the paca has something of the reputation of the pig among us, as a noisy, voracious and unmannerly eater--a reprehensible trait in a society which admires those who eat lightly and share their food widely. Surely the danger attributed to paca meat is a symbolic condemnation of such asocial self-indulgence.

Why, one may ask, does the paca or piranha bite one's liver? Here I must touch on some Kagwahiv ethnopsychology and anatomical symbolism. The liver, the Kagwahiv would have it, is the seat of the emotions; hence, the

defined situations rather than statements about the psychological responses of individuals in those situations. To the extent that psychological considerations were found implicit in these guidelines, it was as ritual prescriptions for handling the feelings and issues precipitated by the situations. A question to be considered separately, and with different types of data, is how individuals use the socially given beliefs and ritual injunctions in coping with their own feelings that are stirred up in situations like those covered by the prescribed food taboos. In particular, I will discuss here what part the food taboos play in the modulation of a man's feelings in response to the birth, sickness and death of his children.

To discuss these questions, I turn to data of the appropriate kind--psychological data on the subjective status of mind of an individual in such situations. For such purposes, I conducted depth interviews with some of my Kagwahiv informants, engaging each one for an hour or so each day or two, over several weeks. I began such interviews (described more fully in Kracke 1979a and 1979b), in which each person was encouraged to talk freely about his feelings, dreams, fantasies, childhood memories, etc., in the summer (dry season) of 1968, the next stretch of field work after the events related in Part I of this paper.

I do not make any claim that the informant I quote here, Jovenil, is in any way typical of my informants. In many ways he was quite atypical: a young headman and father of ten with striking openness, psychological acumen and awareness of others, notably successful at making the difficult combination of adapting to the Brazilian economic world while retaining a firm commitment to Kagwahiv values. In short, he is as healthy and well-adjusted a person as the stresses of acculturation and permanent contact will permit, and a man particularly adept at making appropriate uses of his own cultural forms for maintaining his psychic balance. His use of food taboos in dealing with his emotional conflicts is not the same as the way another informant would use them, but it does demonstrate one constructive and positive way in which food taboos may be integrated into a person's psyche and used to deal with the issues raised by a difficult and painful loss.

Jovenil, whose year-old daughter and six-year-old son had died not long before I started my series of depth interviews with him, about midway

through the interviews reported a dream that a neighbor, Daniel, accidentally shot his own pet monkey while hunting; when he saw a monkey sitting on a stump, "he thought it was a mother" and shot it, but it turned out to be his and his wife's beloved pet monkey he didn't know had run away. When he returned home with his sad prize, his wife was furious at him and fought with him, driving him from the house. Later, elaborating the dream, Jovenil added that Daniel's wife came along tearfully pleading for him to come back, but he wouldn't.

As the associations to the dream emerged in this interview, it became clear the the "pet monkey" in the dream, which was like a child to the couple who had no children of their own, represented Jovenil's own six-year-old son who had died five months before. Although he did not explicitly refer to that son's death in this interview--his grief over that began to come out in subsequent interviews--toward the end of the interview he began talking about other children of his who had gotten sick or died in the past. He went into an elaborate enumeration of the taboos one should observe in a child's infancy (including monkey!), and blamed himself for one child's illness because he had killed an agouti shortly after the child was born (three or four years before). The message of the dream seems to be that he himself had unwittingly killed his own son, through his own negligent mistake-or misdirected aggressive act. The dream hints at anger directed at the child's mother--twice in recounting the dream Jovenil stressed that Daniel shot the monkey because "he thought it was a mother"--and indicates a fear that the misdirected aggression would cause considerable disruption in his own marital relationship (represented in the dream by Daniel and his wife).

The sources of Jovenil's sense of responsibility for his child's death turned out, as the interviews unfolded, to be twofold. First (although Jovenil never explicitly made the connection) it was clear that he felt his son's death was the long delayed retribution for the incestuous relationship Jovenil had once had with a moiety sister. This was a violation of exogamy whose consequence in Kagwahiv belief is the ultimate death of one's parents and/or children: the violation, then, of a different set of taboos. When a few interviews later, he did bring up recollections of his child's death and start to express grief for it, the theme was introduced by a dream that his

son was drowned "in the deep" (no fundo). The Kagwahiv phrase to which this would correspond, typyovy, "deep green/blue water," has explicit allusions to incest.

This can explain some of Jovenil's feeling of responsibility for the child's death; but it cannot explain the specific form the feeling took in his dream--the vivid and angry fantasy of shooting his son down like a wild monkey. This is better accounted for by a second source of Jovenil's sense of guilt, which he expressed a little more explicitly: an ambivalence toward the five-year-old boy himself--a sense that he did not love the child enough, but bore him some malice. Shifting from a Kagwahiv idiom, to a Brazilian one, Jovenil said, in an interview continuing his expression of grief for the child's death:

> The Brazilians say it is God who gives the orders. If you scold your child too much, He kills him. If you scold your child too much, God is watching and says, "He doesn't like his son, I'm going to kill him, to see if he will be sad." (Did you feel you scolded him too much?) I scolded him a lot. Afterwards, Papa said to me, "One doesn't scold one's son."
>
> First I thought children didn't die. That's why I married, to have children.... It happens a lot when you are married. If your wife doesn't die, your child dies.

The source of the ambivalence that makes him so concerned about having mistreated his child is not made so explicit. In the dream, it was juxtaposed with hints of anger at the child's mother and an angry disruption in the marital relationship. His anger at the child seems to be linked with anger at his wife. The age of Jovenil's child when he died gives us a clue that would make sense of both of these: he was about six, still within the time range of late phases of the Oedipal period. Jovenil might well have responded with some jealousy to the child's possessive interest in his mother, to which she, a warm, maternal woman, no doubt responded appropriately.

The dream that Jovenil reported in the very next interview after his acknowledgement of ambivalence explicitly brings up this theme. He dreamed that, walking in the jungle, he came upon a family of anhang (bichos, jungle

spirits) in which the young boy was watching his anhang father and mother make love, "showing him how." Jovenil identified the boy's age (by referring to his two youngest sons) as between four and six. Although this scene seemed peaceful and amicable enough, Jovenil was terrified and ran. Later in the dream someone else went out to kill the anhang father.

On one level in this dream, Jovenil identifies with the anhang child. He is relatively at ease with his childhood curiosity about his parents se: life (he told me memories of instances of this curiosity), and even of hi: wish to learn from his father how to do it. But he is unable in the drea: to acknowledge his envious wish to have his father out of the way--h assigns to someone else the task of doing in the father.

On another level, however, in identifying the child in the dream wit two of his own Oedipal-age sons, he puts himself in the place of the anhan father who is the object both of the child's curiosity and of murderou anger, and his wife Aluza in place of the anhang wife and mother. Thus th inhibition he felt in being able to show as much love as he should have t his son, as this dream indicates outspokenly, is a response both to th son's wish to have his mother, Jovenil's wife, for himself (to "learn hov from his father), and to the child's wish to have him, the father, out c the way. He had either sensed these wishes in his deceased son Alonzo, th dream implies, or attributed them to Alonzo on the basis of his own pa: Oedipal wishes. Although all these feelings are unusually openly expresse in Jovenil's dreams and memories, they are quite normal feelings in paren of Oedipal-aged children (although not, of course, on a conscious level, Jovenil or in most parents).

These feelings which Jovenil expresses, of competition with his son f the exclusive love and attention of his wife, the child's mother, would times naturally take the form of a wish to be rid of this child who intrud into Jovenil's relationship with his wife--a wish, of course, which totally unacceptable to him and inconsistent with his deep devotion to h child, and so is not admissible into his consciousness. It can only expressed disguisedly in his dreams. Similarly, the situation would aro some anger at his wife for entertaining the child's wishes and withdrawing some of her attention from him to the child--feelings, aga which would be totally unacceptable to Jovenil's adult ego, and theref

remain unrecognized. But only such wishes and angry feelings would explain the intense feeling of responsibility that Jovenil had for his child's death, taking the form of a vivid fantasy (dream) of shooting the child like a wild monkey (or like an anhang) and shooting a "mother" in the bargain.

These Oedipal considerations may make sense of Jovenil's dream, and of the other dreams and feelings I have reported of his. (They are more fully discussed in a paper published in Annual of Psychoanalysis in 1980 on Jovenil's mourning process.) But what, you may well ask, does all this discussion of Oedipal issues, in the relation between six-year-old children and their parents, have to do with taboos around birth and at the time of a child's sickness?

Jovenil himself makes the connection. At the end of the interview of the monkey-killing dream, in the context of thoughts about other children of his that got sick or died, he brought up the account of the importance of food taboos quoted at the beginning of this paper. He added to this a confessional recollection of shooting an animal just after the birth of his now three-year-old son, which had caused that child's chest to hurt. This incident closely parallels the dream, especially when we consider the close relation between the child and the forbidden prey in Kagwahiv belief. Jovenil clinches the connection when he lists monkeys as one of the foods forbidden for the first month of a child's life.

When you consider it, the emotional issues facing a parent at the time of his or her child's birth are not altogether different from those Jovenil experienced in relation to his Oedipal sons, only they are still more clear-cut. For the father, the child is an intrusion into his intimacy with his wife, absorbing all of her attention and demanding much of her time that might before have been given to taking care of her husband. In Kagwahiv society, this shift in the mother's concern is formalized in a postpartum sex taboo which Jovenil told me lasts for two months after the child's birth. Naturally, this situation arouses some resentment in the deprived parent toward his newborn child, albeit the resentment is counterbalanced by love and pride. Jovenil's own discomfort with the postpartum sex taboo is perhaps reflected in the fact that he never mentioned it to me when he was describing other taboos around a child's birth. He only mentioned it to me in the very last interview I had with him in 1968, while we were discussing

sex in general, and just after he mentioned marital fights that occur when sex is curtailed in the last months of pregnancy; and even at that, he only told me of it when I explicitly asked him about it. The spacing of some of his children suggests that he resumes conjugal relations as soon as it is permissible--if, indeed, he waits the full two months he claims is the stipulated period--but this only underlines his discomfort with the constraint.

For a woman, the issues would be slightly different. As much as she may desire children, at some level the expectant mother must resent the restrictions imposed on her, the pain of childbirth and its threat to her own life, and the demands of the infant on her once it is born. As Erikson puts it (1950:133):

> ...different cultural systems have different outlets for the expression of the deep ambivalence which pervades the woman who, much as she may have welcomed the first signs of pregnancy and much as she may be looking forward to the completed baby, finds herself inhabited for nine long months by a small and unknown, but utterly dictatorial being.

If killing and eating the tabooed animal (like the monkey in Jovenil's dream) represents the killing of the child--the symbolic enactment of the disavowed wish--then the prohibition on killing those animals which are identified with the child is a symbolic injunction to control angry, jealous feelings toward the newborn infant. It offers, perhaps, a symbolic field within which the parent may work out, in displaced and symbolic fashion, the unacceptable wishes and the conflicts over them. The abstention itself focuses attention on the dependency wishes (normally gratified in eating food acquired or prepared by one's spouse) that must be denied in oneself in order that one may nurture the infant (or sick child), and on the angry wishes arising from the frustration of sexual and dependency needs. By focusing attention on these difficult and conflictful feelings, the ritual observances prevent them from being repressed, compelling the person observing the taboos to come to terms with the feelings in at least these

displaced and symbolic embodiments.

In a child's illness, some of the same dynamics may be in play, but the accent slightly different. Both parents, and older siblings as well, must devote themselves to nurturing the sick child, renouncing to some degree their own needs to be taken care of. As in infancy, resentment over the demands of the sick child may be one feeling apt to be submerged and to cause problems; but far more focal is likely to be the parent's guilt over past and perhaps continuing envious or resentful feelings toward the child, and angry fantasies which now threaten to find fulfillment. Jovenil touched on this when he blamed his own lapse for the chest pains of his youngest son, as well as his breach of a different taboo for Alonzo's death. In this situation, abstention from choice foods offers a symbolic atonement for the very wishes that are symbolically represented in the forfeited act of eating or killing paca, piranha, agouti or deer.

Parenthood more generally is a phase of life during which one must take responsibility for others, to some degree renouncing one's own dependency needs and gratifying them vicariously through the satisfaction of such needs in others, such as the children one nurtures. This renunciation is both symbolized and enacted in the taboos on cracids, which are taboos only on consuming, not on killing for others to eat. The sanction against eating cracids does not stress aggressiveness like the infancy taboos, but general malaise (headaches) and the inablility to profit from the nourishment one wrongly acquires through eating forbidden meat: one wastes away and becomes thin (ontĭnĭ̂).

The agouti prohibition for adolescents may be seen as an intermediate step toward assumption of adult responsibilities, for what is stressed is working unflaggingly at one's social duties, not giving in to laziness.

Psychologically speaking, the wishes and feelings that are most likely to cause trouble are those unwelcome ones that are allowed to slip into being unrecognized, that then find disguised expression in various indirect ways. A language must be found in which to express and articulate these difficult wishes, to work out better ways of dealing with them than disguised and unrecognized expression. Like ourselves, the Kagwahiv find one such language in their dreams, each person creating his own metaphors in

terms of which he may work out his conflicts in his dreams. But in addition, the Kagwahiv (and many other peoples) have shared symbolic languages in terms of which particular kinds of conflict may be articulated for personal manipulation and solution. The ritual language of food taboos, I here submit, is one of these.

CONCLUSIONS

The Kagwahiv food taboos do not just regulate the consumption and potential overexploitation of certain species, although in some cases at least the contingent avoidances do seem to do that. They also invest the hunter's environment with meaning, domesticating the inhuman forest (with "pets" as a concrete mediating category) with human qualities: the plaintive call of the jacamin, the wail of the jogo-jogo, and the more raucous cry of the toucan are identified with a baby's crying, while the tapir is a sexual competitor, the paca self-indulgent, and the agouti and tinamou lazy (or what we would call "slothful"). Not that all these identifications are created by the food taboos, but they are codified by them into an organized system that orders these meanings in the environment.

This humanizing of the prey is expressed in other cultural forms akin to the food taboos, as well, which create a social relationship between the hunter or fisherman and his prey. The set of prescribed behaviors to avoid becoming panem (cursed with ill luck in the hunt), which I have not discussed in this paper, enjoins respect for the species hunted. When one of my informants as a child fought with his brother for a choice morsel (the head) of a jatuarana his father had shot, his father went two weeks without being able to catch another jatuarana until the fish "became accustomed to him" again.[12] The phrase he used was ojipokwahá ga-rehe, a term used for the developing sexual relationship of a newlywed couple, or for married couples making up after a fight. The imagery is not only social but specifically sexual, confirming Reichel-Dolmatoff's (1968:220ff) assertion that the hunter's relationship with his prey is imaged in sexual terms. Fish are sometimes said to "court" the pirá-rangav ("fish-image" lures).

Food taboos invest the hunt, and the consumption of its products, with moral significance as well. Man does not hunt indiscriminately, but selects his prey in such a way as to protect (okwaku) those close to him, as

selects what he eats to protect both his offspring and himself (ojikwaku). He does not, like the bestial jaguar (in Kagwahiv folklore the dumb, gullible predator, the "Br'er Fox" of ours) randomly kill every animal that crosses his path, but exercises restraint and selectivity. At this level, the food avoidances become parallel to the exogamy rules (which are also contrasted with the indiscriminate mating habits of other animals like the agouti), although there is no explicit connection or correlation between the two domains as there is in some societies (Levi-Strauss, 1966:104-106).

The food and hunting taboos equally play a part in ordering social relationships. They mark major life stages (cf. Kensinger's paper), and liminal phases in certain life-crisis rites. They also demarcate crucial relationships, and the conditions under which those relationships become most critical: the relationship of parent to unborn child and newborn infant, and of parents and older siblings to young child in the period of heightened dependence during the child's illness. Even the life-stage avoidances for parenthood, although simply reflexive in their action (harming the taboo violater himself), implicitly appear to mark the additional responsibility undertaken in parenthood: cracids are notably monogamous birds in which both parents care for the young; and the curassow is distinguished among the cracids by its elaborate courtship display, by the length of time the young are cared for by their parents, and by the vehemence with which the cock defends the nest (Delacour and Amadon, 1973:14-16, 72). Of these life-stage avoidances, moreover, one set are relational, not reflexive: the honeys forbidden for married people, if eaten, will harm the sexual partner. This particular group is in perfect consonance with Tuzin's (1977) observation on Arapesh taboos that the commencement of sexual relations initiates the complementary prohibition of certain foods which symbolize (and in a sense replace) sexual gratification.

It may be noted that this interpretation of the parenthood and pregnancy/infancy avoidances bears considerable resemblence to Radcliffe-Brown's formulation in his (1952) article on "Taboo," although the analytic route by which I have arrived at it is quite different. I refer not just to his general theory that food avoidances mark important social groups and statuses, but to the specific analysis of a set of Andaman avoidances. Perhaps this is not surprising, since the avoidances in

question cover exactly the same period covered by one of the Kagwahiv sets, from pregnancy "until some weeks after the baby is born" (p. 146). Radcliffe-Brown writes (1952:150):

> In a given community, it is appropriate that an expectant father should feel concern or at least should make an appearance of doing so. Some suitable symbolic expression of his concern is found in terms of the general ritual or symbolic idiom of the society, and it is felt generally that a man in that situation ought to carry out the symbolic or ritual action or abstentions.

In the Andamans (as in Kagwahiv) "the parents show their concern by avoiding certain foods" (1952:148).

The difference of my formulation from Radcliffe-Brown's, aside from details of its development, lies largely in the overall frame in which it is cast. I have framed my conceptualization not in the model of structure and social functions, but rather in the model of a social code which permits the transmission of multiple kinds of message, and which serves several domains of culture. As the meeting ground of these different cultural domains--or, if you prefer, of the domains of different anthropological analytic models--the code becomes the field for an array of conflicting pressures, which, as Victor Turner very cogently observes (1977:63), allows considerable scope for personal "negotiation of meanings" by participants in the cultural process.[13]

I would stress the importance of including in the package of frameworks for understanding food taboos a formulation (following Reichel-Dolmatoff, 1976) of the ideological regulation of ecological balance. The slipping into disfavor of the Malinowskian functionalist paradigm, which united an interest in subsistence technology with a stress on "the native point of view," has left the exploration of the biotic relations of culture to "materially" oriented anthropologists who eschew "mentalist" subjective frameworks--what Harris in a misconceived appropriation and distortion of a once useful term has called "emic approaches."[14] The exclusion of ecological considerations from relevance to the understanding of food taboos, a ritual realm which pertains directly to the relations of man to other species, would be as demeaning to the native's understanding of his

natural environment as is the cultural ecologist's insistence that the ecological consequences of such practices are unintended and unconscious. Rather it is in part the understanding of the dynamics of ecological balance, subsumed under a cosmological framework and expressed in ritual terms, that leads hunters to establish rules which do promote good environmental relationships.

The cultural depiction of the causal mechanisms causing harm when a taboo is broken are equally instructive, though in a different vein. At the grossest level, the very existence of relational taboos whose breach harms one's child rather than oneself implies a substantial identification between parent and child. It is not a question of identifying oneself with one's clan ancestors, as in Tallensi totemic observances (Fortes, 1967), but rather parents identify with their unborn or newborn child (cf. Da Matta, 1976:91-92)--an apt representation, perhaps of the difference between African descent concepts and South American concepts of filiation (Seeger, 1975). More deeply, while these mechanisms are indeed regarded as concretely real--a part of the Kagwahiv construction of reality--they also partake of a metaphorical level of meaning, and play a major part in the "construction of the person" (Seeger, Da Matta and Viveiros de Castro, 1979:12). Through the medium in some cases of physiological imagery, and drawing on a wide knowledge of ethology and natural history, the Kagwahiv use nature as a rich source of metaphor for depicting emotional states and intimate relationships.

It is, of course, this aspect of the food avoidances that brings into focus their usefulness for the modulation of personal emotional responses to the situations to which they pertain. "It is possible to argue," Tambiah says (1968:202)--and Radcliffe-Brown would agree--"that all ritual, whatever the idiom, is addressd to the human participants and uses a technique which attempts to re-structure and integrate the minds and emotions of the actors.[15] The technique combines verbal and non-verbal behavior and exploits their special properties." Kagwahiv symbolism draws on metaphor and metonymy in a network of associational meanings which equate violation of the food taboos with the expression of wishes ranging from infanticidal to sexual, with strong allusions to jealousy.

Spiro makes essentially the same point that Tambiah does but formulated

from the standpoint of the individual rather than from a sociological point of view, in a recent paper on "psychodynamic explanations of cultural belief systems." "Cultural belief systems," he says (n.d.:34, italics his), "...are <u>adaptive</u> means for the forging of a symbolic reality that integrates the (often conflicting) demands of man's inner (fantasy) life and the requirements of his outer (social) life."

Yet it is not strictly true, as we can see from the example analyzed in this paper, that ritual or cultural belief "restructures and integrates the minds and emotions" of those who participate in it, in the sense of imposing its own ordering on the individual's psychic organization. Rather the individual may, if he is prepared, <u>use</u> the ritual symbols to formulate and restructure his own conflicts. Jovenil, it is true, used the imagery of the Kagwahiv food taboos in a very appropriate way in articulating his conflicts--with a due regard, that is, for the cultural structure and associations of the symbols--but he also used them in a highly creative way. Not every individual would use the taboo imagery in the same way, nor would they highlight the same emotional meanings and conflicts. Nor did Jovenil utilize the whole potential range of meanings implicit in the imagery of the prohibitions; for example, he hardly drew at all on the sexual symbolism, nor did he mention the honeys in which such themes are especially highlighted. The system of food taboos, like the Bible, is a rich source of themes from which different individuals, with diverse personal needs and conflicts, may draw different messages according to their needs.[16]

Now I may formulate a tentative answer to the question raised at the beginning of the paper. Food is the ideal medium for transmitting messages about social identity and personal state of mind because it is amendable to encoding on so many affective and cognitive levels. The very range of analytic frameworks touched on in this paper demonstrates the centrality of food in the network of cultural models. One may attend to the characteristics of the species consumed (or, with Levi-Strauss, to the structure of the differences among them), to the nature of man's (ecological) relationship with these species, to the act of obtaining them to their qualities as food, or to their physiological effects on the organism that consumes them. Each of these aspects offers a set of symbols and contrasts that may be used to formulate and convey a cognitive message

At the same time, food is a focus of affective expression which embodies with intensity a wide variety of feelings and affectively charged fantasies--aggressive, dependent, amorous, or jealous feelings, or (with special appropriateness) fantasies and feelings related to fundamental psychological issues of identity and separateness from others: it is an external substance that becomes part of oneself.[17] Finally, of course, consumption was the most intense emotional transaction in one's first social relationship, the one in which these psychological issues first arose, and in which these emotions or their precursors were first formed; abstention from eating aptly symbolizes the suppression and control of these strong feelings. It is fitting that the regulation that interrupts and transforms this relationship is the first food prohibition in a Kagwahiv's life.

CONDITIONALLY PROHIBITED FOODS AND ACTIONS:

KAGWAHIV (TUPI) INDIANS, RIO MADEIRA

Adults who have had a child	Effects: reflexive
--should not eat	
cracids:curassow (mutum), guan (jacu) or chachalaca (aracuã)	Cause weakness, headaches make one thin (ontini)
paca (karugwaruhu) or piranha	Bite one's liver
brocket deer	Stamp on one's soul

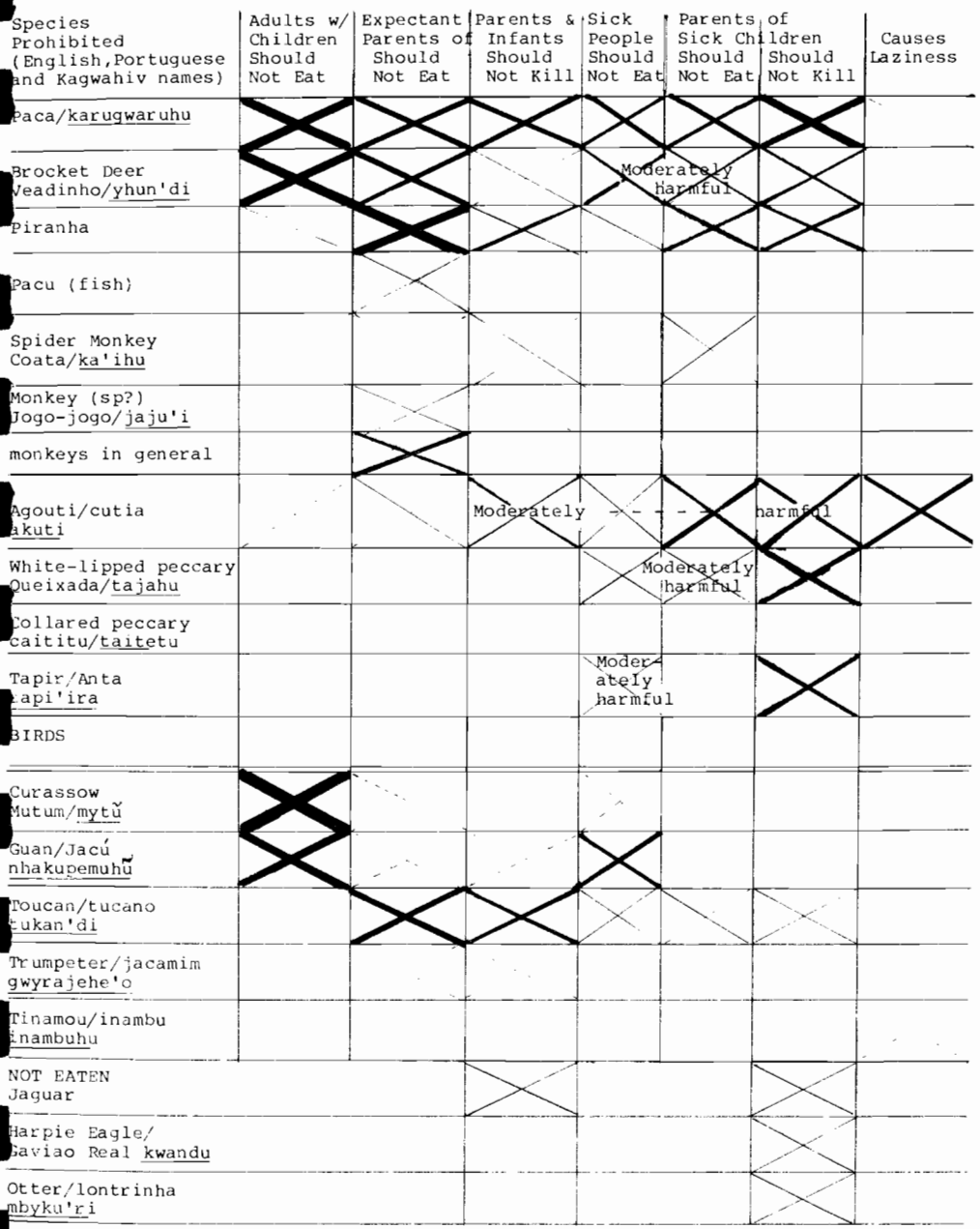
Parents expecting a child or with a newborn child	Effects: relational
--should not kill or eat	
toucan	Child sees it picking at lice, goes crazy, cries in the afternoon
trumpeter (jacamim, gwyrajehe'o [weeping bird])	Child sees it circling around when shot, goes crazy, cries
paca, piranha, pacú (fish)	They bite the child's liver
various monkeys, esp. spider monkey (coata)	Makes child cry at night because of its weeping-like cry
curassow	Gives child thrush
agouti	(Mild effect) bites child's liver
--should not kill: jaguar	
--should not handle: buriti or cipó	Child sees cipó "going around" in binding, goes crazy

Sick person	Effects: reflexive
--should not eat	
paca, piranha, (mildly) white-lipped peccary;, or (mildly) agouti	Bite one's liver
brocket deer or (mildly) tapir	Step on one's soul
duck (only harmful in case of serious fever)	

Parents of sick child	Effects: relational
--should not kill or eat	
paca, piranha, white-lipped peccary or (mildly) agouti	Bite child's liver
brocket deer	Step on child's soul
--should not kill	
tapir	Step on child's soul
harpie eagle (kwandu)	Clutches child's soul in its tenons
jaguar	
cayman	
--should not handle	
manioc	
axe or knife	
--should not	
toast manioc	Heat of oven exacerbates fever
chop wood	Motion of chopping makes child cold
pound anything in mortar with pestle	

Make one lazy; adolescents especially	Effects: reflexive
--should not eat	
agouti	
tinamou	It doesn't do any work

KAGWAHIV PROHIBITIONS



Darkness of X in box is proportional to the number of informants affirming this prohibition out of my twelve principal informants for taboos.

NOTES

1 I have heard other animals mentioned on occasion as having the same effect--once, mutum and paca specifically for young girls--but agouti and tinamou are the only ones mentioned by more than one informant.

2 The nursing taboo combines features of both groups, for while it is only a prohibition on eating (in certain situations), its violation harms another--the rival sibling.

3 Dengler, who quotes as supporting this assertion both the SPI agent José Garcia de Freitas and the seringalista Hermannio Lobo who had initiated the pacification, comments on the inconsistency with eating human flesh. Nimuendaju, however, whose ethnography is accurate in many respects but who knew the Kagwahiv only through contacts at the pacification post, asserts that they did hunt monkeys--although he says they "fear losing their arrows in them" (1948:285).

4 Jacú (guan, a cracid species) was mentioned by three married adults as being bad for a sick person to eat himself, but not for parents of a sick child. I suspect this may simply reflect the taboo on jacú for adults who have had children: they would be especially careful to avoid cracids at a time when they are sick.

5 Mohã'gi said both were bad for someone with a "new fever" (karuguara pyahu) or right after an infant's birth, but all right with an "old" (chronic?) fever, or a few days after birth. But another knowledgeable old man told a story of one Ngwari, a boy who ate tapir (when sick?) and died of a fever in consequence.

6 A case of special interest is the dog, man's aid in hunting (hence a predator), yet for his food (as anyone who has been in a Kagwahiv village will recognize) a scavenger. As a scavenger, he is, like the carnivores, a competitor of man's--one may never safely leave meat untended by the fire--yet he is domestic, a borderline pet (renymbav). Terminologically he is classified as a jaguar: in fact, the unmodified term ja'guára means "dog," and one must add the modifier -eté, "genuine," to specify a jaguar (jaguareté, "echt jaguar"), or else name the species (jaguapinim, etc.). The dog is metaphorically jaguar and only metonymically human (Tambiah, 1969).

7 If, as is one possible interpretation of the confusing evidence, a former prohibition on monkey meat has virtually dissolved over the same period in which the ritual consumption of human flesh has been suppressed (and even partly erased from the body of transmitted lore), one might guess that the two were interdependent. The everyday prohibition on monkeys might have metaphorically replaced the prohibition on human flesh, thus taking the symbolic onus off of the consumption of human flesh itself. This analysis, however, must remain a speculative guess unless further evidence can be collected on this point.

8 The following description of the "odd series of motions" accompanying the toucan's shrill call, may here be instructive:

> At the beginning of each series of [about five to seven] notes the toucan jerks its head and tail up and assumes a very sprightly attitude. Then with each succeeding note the head and tail are dropped a bit until, at about the sixth note, the head and tail are jerked back to the top without any break. Usually the calling bird sways from side to side at the same time. That is, it may swing to the right at the first note, then to the left at the second, and so on throughout the series. This swinging and bobbing motion nearly always accompanies the calling. (Van Tyne, 1929:17).

Since it is "one of the noisiest birds in the jungle," one can imagine it spends a good deal of its time in this squirming dance. They vocalize all day, but especially in the morning and evening, stopping at sunset.

9 The tale also has rather strong Oedipal overtones, for Kagwahivahẽ's son who accompanies her to the shore of the river when she goes on her trysts

is invariably specified to be of four to six years in age--a specification which often takes the form of mentioning the name of a child of that age in the myth teller's family. It takes little stretching of the imagination to see the tapir Kagwahivahẽ meets on the other side of the river as a kind of mythic alter ego of the five-year-old boy she has taken down to the river with her and left playing on its bank. Again, the husband is aided in his revenge by their daughter who imitates her mother's call to entice the tapir to his death: The girl's sexual identification with her mother is put at her father's service.

It remains obscure, however, why it is only for a child's illness that killing a tapir is prohibited, rather than at an infant's birth. Perhaps, if we follow the Oedipal theme in the myth, this is to place the emphasis somewhat later in a child's life--not in the first months of infancy but in the next few years when a child has begun to form a sexual identity and entered into Oedipal issues of rivalry with the parent of the same sex--that is, when the tapir with its allusions to Kagwahivahẽ becomes more pertinent as a symbol.

10 At least two honeys have symbolic reference to the male genitals in their names: hakwãinhuruve'e ("penis-mouth-kind") and takwãinhuruity ("its penis-mouth-broth"), so named from the phallic shape of the entrances to their nests. These, however, are both unrestricted types of honey, albeit one of them "would be hard to find around here."

11 In Kagwahiv, the vagina is hehegwar, from hehe, "delicious" and -gwar, "lover of eating;" and to commit incest is oji'u, "eat oneself." Many food names contain the terms takwai, "penis," or ram'ba, "vulva."

12 This incident is consistent with Roberto Da Matta's (1967) analysis of panema among interior Brazilians, in a paper which stimulated my interest in food taboos while I was in the field, and has much influenced my thinking on the subject.

13 "In this junctural analysis of various systems--not a systems analysis, but, rather, an intersystemic analysis--culture has to be seen as processual, because it emerges in interaction and imposes meaning on the biotic and ecological systems (also dynamic) with which it interacts. I should not say 'it,' for this is to reify what is, regarded processually, an endless series of negotiations among actors about the assignment of meanings to the acts in which they jointly participate" (Turner, 1977:63).

14 Emic and etic, as Pike proposed the terms, are complementary to one another, and refer to successive stages in the analysis of cultural categories. Emic refers to the delineation of the categories of a single culture, etic to the comparison of these categories to other cultures' partitions of the same domain. An etic grid may then be derived from a comparison of all the (emic) ways in which different cultures subdivide the domain in their respective taxonomic systems, much as the International Phonetic Alphabet is a composite of all the phonetic distinctions that are phonemically significant in some language in the world. To take these terms to designate "the native point of view" and "the scientist's presupposed framework of analysis" is a distortion which deprives us of a subtle and useful distinction. Cf. Kensinger 1975, Fisher and Werner, 1978.

15 Contrary to received dogma, Radcliffe-Brown, like Durkheim, was quite interested in the "psychological effects" of ritual and social forms, and drew heavily on his own psychological observations and on psychological (including psychoanalytic) theory in his explanation and analysis of social structure and ritual. He only insisted on the social nature of customary forms, as opposed to their being treated as if they were spontaneous expressions of individual emotions and personality.

16 A formulation stressing flexibility is offered by Vincent Crapanzano (1975) in his discussion of a demoness important in the Moroccan Hamadsha cult and her appearance in Moroccan dreams. 'Aisha Qandisha, he says, serves for these dreamers as a "symbolic interpretive element for the articulation and resolution of conflict.'" If Spiro's formulation suggests that cultural beliefs offer a fairly defined kind of resolution (or at least a relatively restricted range of options for resolution) of

particular conflicts prevalent in a society, Crapanzano's "symbolic-interpretive elements" are ambiguous, nonspecific symbols capable of representing a wide variety of personal conflicts.

The system of food taboos would seem to be intermediate between these. The symbolic references of the forbidden foods and actions, while multi-vocal, are yet fairly clear in meaning when we follow the multiple possible interpretive routes which the complex system offers. Each proscribed food offers a fairly focused cluster of meanings, yet the symbolic system leaves a wide range of flexibility open as to how these elements and their imagery are to be combined conceptually in an individual's mind. The exact meaning of the symbolic prohibition on sex implicit in proscribing honeys, for example, is not at all clear and may be invested with whatever personal significance fits the needs of the individual participant.

17 This point is better expressed by Meyer Fortes (1967:16).

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CUBEO DIETARY RULES

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Cubeo, a Tukanoan-speaking people, occupy a portion of the upper Vaupés and two of its tributaries, the Cuduiarí and the Querarí-Pirabatón, in southeastern Colombia. The "tribe" consists of some 30 sibs grouped into four phratries, which like the sibs are patrilineal, patrilocal, and exogamic. Each sib community occupies one or more longhouses (malocas) that is separated from corresponding communities by some half hour canoe travel. Ideally, each phratry occupies its own stretch of river, or an entire river. The sibs on their river are arranged by seniority-based rank with the highest living towards the mouth and the lowest-ranking towards the source. Cubeo traditions record a former period of moiety organization with cross cousin marriage, brother-sister exchange, along with marriage by parallel rank constituting, in principle, a closed society. While XCM and B-Z exchange are still recognized as ideal the social system has evolved from highly restricted to open marriages.

Cubeo are well-nourished and are free of hunger anxiety. Only the founding ancestors who had not yet acquired the arts of cultivation, of fishing or of hunting, but lived on tree bark and saps had an arduous life, it is said. Food is always available. It is abundant during dry seasons of low river and least abundant at the peaks of the rainy seasons. The crop of bitter manioc is unfailing. The cycles of abundance and scarcity are taken for granted and whatever hunger they may suffer is not, by their accounts, burdensome. Recalling their past history they say they had less food overall before the advent of firearms and metal implements about the turn of the century. At the period of my first field sojourn the Cubeo economy may have been at its peak, with enlarged manioc cultivations, and expanded hunting and fishing. By the time of my last visit (June 1979) game and hunting had become depleted and a new economic adjustment with greater reliance upon crop diversification and animal husbandry in the offing.

Cultural attitudes towards game animals seem to have evolved from restrictions to greater dietary freedom. Before hunting shotguns became generally available, the tapir which in 1939/40 had become a staple was hardly eaten, but its flesh was not forbidden. Some informants claimed that in the past they did not eat peccary, paca, nor armadillo because these animals ate the bones of the dead. They did not eat sloth because it would make one lazy. But in 1939/40 when Cubeo culture was still strongly traditional these animals were actively hunted and eaten. Also in the past, namesake animals were not to be eaten by any in a sib that possessed such a name. But I did not observe this in 1939/40. During the field period 1968-70 informants denied that there were restrictions on the eating of namesake animals.

In evaluating the significance of field data on Cubeo dietary rules one must take account not only of apparent historical and perhaps of evolutionary changes, but of cultural variability. The Cubeo "tribe" is a composite of sibs and phratries that have different backgrounds. Some are of Arawakan descent having assimilated to Cubeo in the recent past. Others have come to the present centers of the Vaupés from other rivers. In general the history of the Vaupés is of an almost endless movement of small groups, combining into new formations. Thus my native informants always cautioned me that what I learned from one sib was not necessarily what I would learn from others. There is indeed a basic Tukanoan culture, but variability of custom is also basic. In this connection, I should also add that the people speaking the Cubeo language variant of Tukanoan consider themselves relative newcomers to their present habitat, and that they were once closer to the Orinoco basin.

My field data reflect some of this cultural variability. During the 1939/40 period I lived with a sib that occupied a very low formal rank and had been a relatively new resident on the Cuduiarí river. My later field work (1968-70, 1979) was with a very high-ranking sib (Hehénawa) but also a newcomer to the Vaupés and Cuduiarí. Thus insofar as these sibs are concerned one cannot relate dietary rules to the local habitat with any degree of reliability. My Hehénawa informants considered themselves authoritative on the traditions of their phratry because of their high rank. They claimed that no edible flesh food was ever specifically ruled out of

the diet. They did not agree that animals that dig up the bones of the human dead to eat them may not be eaten. All animal flesh is edible, they say, but not all is desirable for culinary reasons.

Thus my field data on food "taboos" are not based upon direct observation. Nevertheless, it would be prudent to consider that some branch of Cubeo held at one time to common lowland conceptions of forbidden game. At the same time, I am obliged to deal with the subject in the light of my most fully developed field data. These data, I should emphasize strongly, are not complete because my most systematic inquiries were in other directions. The data I do present draw upon the views of non shamanistic informants, who are, nevertheless, elders and ritual seniors responsible for proper ceremonial behavior.

The concensus of this nonprofessional opinion is that food regulations are in the interest of personal health. In this respect, the ruling doctrine is that all forms of life, apart from Kuwai the creator, are inherently hostile and all forms of food are potentially harmful to human beings. Dietary rules mitigate harm by carefully matching the quality and quantity of foods to the condition of the person. Cubeo cuisine is therefore conservative as a rule. Even now, there is little interest in the white man's diet. Each community, for example, has dozens of chickens, and some have raised poultry for the past 50 years or so, yet hardly any one will eat a chicken or an egg. To my knowledge there is no taboo on chicken nor do they believe that poultry or eggs are harmful.

A most important dietary rule is that food must be shared within the sib and particularly within the maloca. This is more than social obligation. If food is not shared, they say, death may befall the entire community as well as the withholder of food.

A related rule is that food must be brought to in-laws, the givers of the wife, upon the occasion of each formal and ceremonial visit. This offering is not construed as a payment for the wife but as the obligation to draw affinal kin into the food sharing solidarity that is characteristic of the sib. The offering is of fish, the produce of the males of the daughter's new household. The fish offering is also a stage in courtship. Acceptance of the fish can be construed as acceptance of the offer of

marriage. In both instances, the offering of fish to a woman and to her parents may be considered an element within the cycle of reproductivity. Thus, considering both rules, the withholding of food from the sib brings about its death, and the giving of food to in-laws is in the service of the reproductivity of continually intermarrying sibs.

A third rule refers to the obligation to eat sparingly during communal meals. Gluttony is equivalent to not sharing and is particularly conspicuous because Cubeo eat from a common dish. But the rule of eating sparingly is extended into the more general sphere of nutrition: moderation in eating is in the interests of good health.

A fourth rule in this series of social regulations calls for the separation of men and women in communal eating. Men eat first while sitting crouched around the common dish, and women, waiting their turn, sit in a group to one side. Again, there is the obligation of the men to eat sparingly so as to leave behind a decent portion for the women. Moreover, it is customary to pass portions of food back to the women even before their turn at the dishes has come. Thus the sexual division of eating is transformed into a mode of exchange by which men give women flesh food that is the product of their skills and energies as hunters and fishermen, and then give them cooked food which is a product of their acceptance of domesticity and of restraint. There is in this a connotation of sexual restraint as well, since women are embarrassed when men stare at them putting food into the mouth. In earlier days, women of great modesty sometimes ate by themselves behind a screen when visiting a strange house.

I turn now from social to ritual rules of eating, pausing to observe, however, that both sets are concerned with the same issues. Ritual rules regulate the diet during conditions of personal weakness or instability. The paramount obligation is to eat less. The common course is to go from fasting by careful stages to resumption of the full normal diet. The Cubeo may jestingly explain the ritual diet as follows: when you are ill you do not feel like eating, therefore you should not eat. There are two other related obligations: to regulate the intake of hot and especially dangerous flesh foods; to have all foods "blown", that is, imbued with soul substance (umÉ) before allowing them into the body. By and large, the same regulations cover conditions of serious illness, as well as all ritual

states of weakness and vulnerability. These include birth ritual, the so-called "couvade," male coming of age or growth rites, first menstruation rites, shamanistic initiations, mourning rites. On the other side, affinal exchanges, occasions when great quantities of fish have been caught, and the conclusion of mourning rites involve exuberant feasting. The latter three conditions signal the strength of the sib as successful obtainer of wives, as accomplished fishermen, and as exuberant overcomers of the despair of death. But in all instances the feast marks the victory over weakness.

The Cubeo theory underlying dietary rules in weakness and in vulnerability seems to be as follows: When weakened by illness, or when in birth-like passage from one state of existence to another the soul substance within the body is reduced to what it normally is in an infant. It is weak in umÉ. It is then vulnerable to being overcome by the umÉ of the foodstuffs that are commonly eaten. As the passage is being completed the body is regaining umÉ. It is to aid in the recovery of umÉ that each food substance is "blown." Blowing, the act of a shaman or of a knowledgeable elder, associates the food substance with ancestral umÉ: the act of blowing involves the breath, tobacco smoke, and a chant that refers to the ancestors. The food substance then ceases to be completely alien to the body. From a spiritual point of view, it is predigested, so to speak.

The theory of soul substance is comprehensive and complex, and I have only a partial understanding of it. I gather that everything has umÉ. In the case of foods and the community of men all soul substance is regulated from a center, called umÉdü which is also the Cubeo term for heart. The concept of a center or "heart" postulates an organic entity like a body. For example, the maloca has a "heart" (umÉdü) at its center, which in some way regulates the flow of soul to all residents. The house itself is conceived of as a male; and in a vague way all members of the maloca are part of his soul flow when they occupy their designated places. The bearing this organization of the maloca has upon dietary rules is that it provides a rationale for considering all sibmates as bound together. What happens to one soul will affect others. In similar fashion, the manioc clearing is a circle with its umÉdü represented by the coca plant at its center. The coca plant which has its special ritual meaning which I need not go into here is the center of diffusion of umÉ to all the plants, the bitter manioc crop as

well as the fruit trees within the circle. Thus the cultivated plants constitute a single organic entity, a body. The river is a similar entity. It too has a "heart" which circulates umÉ to the fish and to all other riverine creatures such as birds and insects that are eaten by fish. The "heart" of the forest is within a lake upon a certain hilltop that stands for the center of the forest domain. Animals and fish also have owners who are responsible for them. Anaconda in his several manifestations is owner of the fish, and Single Breasted Woman is the "mother of the animals." The fish and the forest animals are considered immortal because they share a collective soul rather than possessing individual souls. When one is killed it returns to the center and then reenters the same world.

This concept of the immortality of fish and forest animals is important in the understanding of Cubeo food taboos because it differs from that of their brother tribe, the Desana (see Reichel-Dolmatoff, G., 1971, Amazonian Cosmos, University of Chicago Press). Desana say that men, fish, and forest share a common store of souls so that the death of one is a gain for the other, and a birth of one is a loss for the other. Cubeo view the rivalry between humans and fish and forest animals from another point of view.

There are then three distinct food domains, each with its own nutritive and metaphysical characteristics. The domain of the garden is domestic, a truly human province where children are often born. Because women are the daily cultivators and processors of cultivated crop, mainly bitter manioc, but also maize and a variety of sweet potatoes, the garden has a strong feminine and nurturing aspect. In this respect, it is in strong contrast to the basically masculine realms of fishing and hunting. Strictly speaking, of course, the gardens are bisexual and represent a truly human sexual domain, even as a likely place for sexual intercourse. The bisexuality derives not only from the fact that it is the men who prepare the clearings, but that in the first plantings, it is the men who pierce every spot of the earth into which the wife, as a rule, inserts the bitter manioc cuttings. That mode of planting is in a metaphorical sense sexual. There is some basis therefore for assuming that the relative safety and passivity of garden cultivated food substances derives from two qualities, the inherent blandness of prepared manioc products, and the character of the domain itself. I am led to this assumption not from what Cubeo say directly about

garden foods but from what they say about fish and forest animal foods.

Large flying ants that are gathered only by women and are to be eaten either raw or toasted are in the same category of passive, nurturing, and non threatening foods as manioc. Fish and forest game form a class of actively hostile beings. Cubeo explain their hostility as due to envy. All were once alike and only men had cast off their animal forms to achieve a permanent human status. Fish are the most hostile because they are the most recent forerunners of men, while forest animals were human in a still earlier past. Fish and forest animals are envious because they were left behind. They are jealous of human sexual relations, and are angered at the birth of human offspring. They were given as food for men by the Creator (Kuwai), but resent being eaten, nevertheless.

It is this primal hostility that makes the eating of animal flesh particularly dangerous and, therefore, most fully regulated. Manioc products are forbidden only during brief periods of fasting. Otherwise they form the basic diet during periods of illness and of ritual states when the body is weak and vulnerable.

The dangers of flesh food come from two conditions, the hostility of the animals, fish and forest animals, and from the inherent qualities of flesh food as "hot. Manioc products, by contrast are "cool." I shall consider first the quality of hostility. I have not succeeded in clarifying to my satisfaction the mechanism by which animal hostility actually affects the body. That is, it is not clear whether animal hostility is an actual attribute of the food itself or is directed against the eater by the owner of the soul substance of the animals. My informants professed not to know. It could be the latter, because when fish are eaten it is the bones, the fins, and the tail, the discarded parts that are considered injurious. The fish, it is said, shoot these parts into the body of the eater as though they are arrows.

On the other hand, there is the clear notion that animal food is dangerous because it is intrusive. It becomes dangerous only after it has entered the body where it exists as a foreign element. It is probably also dangerous because it has been taken out of its own natural realm and transposed into the alien human realm. It is this concept of dangerous

transposition that accounts, I believe, for the meticulous handling of such foods. Men bring forest game only to the canoe landing where women, the cookers and domesticators, are there to take it over and bring it into the house. Less scrupulously they do the same with fish. The animals undergo their own transitions before entering into the center of the human domain.

The infant lives at the center and is, at the same time, most vulnerable to animal hostility, but it is susceptible to harm from all foods including the breast milk of its own mother. It is vulnerable as well to all foods eaten by the mother because, it is said, everything the mother eats is passed to the infant through her milk. This suggestion of direct involvement of a food substance with the body of the infant is countered by the belief that the food of the father will also affect the infant, a simple instance of mystical association. The most credible assumption is, therefore, that foods can harm the body directly by their inherent properties and indirectly through spirit actions. In this connection we must always remind ourselves that all food regulations are the product of a complex history of lowland Indians generally and of Cubeo, a tribe of diverse origins, in particular. Some coherent system has undoubtedly taken root in Cubeo consciousness, but this system need not cover all beliefs.

This coherent system of dietary rules rests primarily upon a concept of spirit forces which I have already described. As it bears upon the question of direct or indirect involvement I shall refer now to the doctrine that spirit substance (umÉ) resides in all tissue and most durably in bone. It then passes into the body of the eater. Cubeo endocannibalism, that is, the eating of the bones of deceased grandparents from whom as a group one inherits a sib name, illustrates in some sense the concept of passage of soul substance from the food to the eater. The bones retain the umÉ for years after the death when mouldered and crumbling they are pounded into an ashen powder, mixed into a beer (chicha) of maize and sweet potato and then drunk down. The spirit then enters the body of the eaters and persists as one line of continuity between the present and the past.

The rules regulating the diet of newborn infants derive from this concept of spirit forces. It is the low level of human spirit umÉ that defines the infantile state. The infant, the Cubeo explain, has so little umÉ that it cannot sustain any food in a raw state or rather in a natural

state. All food that it will eventually eat is "blown," starting with the mother's milk, passing to casava, them to fish, and finally to forest animals, and hot peppers. The food being "blown" need not be present. The chants that are part of the blowing are recited at the same time and long before the child will actually eat of them, and also in advance of when the parents will resume eating. Nevertheless, it is said, that the blowing and the chanting that invokes the founding sib ancestors and, at the same time, enjoins the substance not to harm the eater covers the food with human umÉ.

Infancy and its dietary rules constitutes, I suspect, the central ritual concern of Cubeo for several reasons. The infant is the mark of continuity, the infant is the target most eagerly sought out by hostile animals and all other hostile substances, the infant requires the most protection. There is also the concept that the birth of an infant recapitulates, in effect, the emergence of the sibs, also regarded as a birth. From this point of view, for which a case can be made, the food of the original ancestors, the Ancients, and the diet of infants is similar, so that the ritualization of a developing full diet in infancy refers back to the emergence of the sib founders. Like infants, their diet began with "milk" that is milk of the spume of river rapids, milk of trees (a white sap), continued on to the bark of trees and only after settlement in their regular residential sites did they acquire plantings, fishing, and hunting. The dietary rules of infancy, and the magical blowing and chants over all the food substances creates, as Cubeo explain, the fundamental protection of the human body against intrusive foods.

Even though all foods including the manioc class must be blown and chanted, the basic opposition between cultivated and killed foods remains valid as representing relative degrees of passivity and of aggressiveness. However, even as I stress this principle, I must call attention to a most important overlapping of cultivated and animal foods. The overlap is through odor. Odor is clearly articulated by Cubeo as penetrating, intrusive, and hostile. Thus the odor of raw manioc (perhaps because it is the odor of the poisonous prussic acid in bitter manioc) is as menacing as the odor of cooked flesh of fish and forest animal. Odor has the special ability to disturb or frighten away spirits. The odor of burning hot peppers drives the ghost of the dead out of the house along with all other

visiting spirits at the conclusion of mourning rites. The body odor of an emerging sib ancestor so offended the spirit grandmother that she sent him back to reemerge later and at a lower rank. The odor of genipa pigment blocks the doorways of the houses of fish so they cannot attack human infants. The odor of cigarettes drives away evil spirits. Thus in connection with foods their odor causes some bodily harm. That of raw manioc is so powerful it prevents the casava from nourishing the child: it cannot gain weight. The blowing chant neutralizes the effects of odor.

On the principle that all food is intrusive and therefore potentially harmful, the dietary rules for illness and ritual weakness prescribe initial fasting and periodic vomiting for adults and for those nearing maturity. Fasting and vomiting are among other ritual treatments that purify the body so that it can move without distraction in the proper ritual direction. In illness, however, Cubeo explain fasting very simply as a common sense procedure. Sensing that I might be over-interpreting the significance of fasting in illness an informant reminded me that in illness there is little appetite, a sign that one should not eat. The same informant explained induced vomiting during ceremonies as a common sense means of emptying the stomach so that one could continue to drink heavily.

I am prepared to take these common sense explanations quite seriously, but not for the initial fasting of the first menstruant, the initiate male youth, the shamanic candidate, and all celebrants of other festivals. It is from ritual and from the special preparations for shamanic initiation that we derive the purification theme.

Vomiting that is induced seems to have various meanings, according to ritual circumstance. At the great festivals, where it accompanies the taking of the hallucinogen Banisteriopsis kaapi, vomiting seems to have a rebirth significance, in the special sense that the hallucinogen takes the subject back to a state of infancy where he observes the primordial conditions of the pre-emergence period. But the induced vomiting by young men who bathe before dawn in the chill waters of the river to the accompaniment of ancestral trumpets has a different, though related, significance. In this case, vomiting is part of the ritual for promoting growth and masculine vigor.

It is for these reasons that vomiting, though a form of anti-eating, is not anti-nutritional in the Cubeo sense. In the same way, fasting is also nutritional in that it contributes the strength and power to move in a desired direction.

I turn now to the set of dietary rules dealing with the distinctions between hot and cold. These rules do not apply directly to infants who are on a direct course of development. But they apply to adults within ritual settings that may imply regression to infancy and "rebirth." They apply specifically to shamanic novices, to male growth rites, to first menstruants and, in modified form, to all menstruating women. They apply in short to the classic transition rites. During such rites a short period of fasting is followed by a basic diet consisting of manioc meal in tepid water, and of flying ants. Hot foods are avoided. When menstruating, a woman eats nothing during the cool part of the morning and induces vomiting with an emetic. She returns to her normal diet during the heat of the afternoon. Male adolescents continue this lukewarm diet of manioc meal in water, and ants for 30 days, the first menstruant continues it for 10 days, and the shamanic novice for a much longer period.

The categorization of foods as "hot" and "cold" is, as we know, a part of a wide Latin American distribution and need not be integrally associated with the Cubeo concept of hostilities and passivities. Still it does not take too much anthropological imagination to connect the two: the safer foods are cool and the hostile foods are hot. The Cubeo dictum enjoins moderation in temperature, as it does in quantity.

The measure of cold is the temperature of flowing river water before dawn, and the measure of hot is the flesh of broiling meat which is in direct contact with fire. Water mixed with dry manioc meal is considered as low moderate temperature, and the flesh of boiled fish or games a high moderate temperature. During illness and the transitional states, cold, clear river water, in fact, any clear water is considered harmful. In these conditions a dietary progression moves from manioc meal in water, to dry manioc products, to heated manioc porridges, to boiled flesh and, finally, to broiled meats. At each stage the newly allowed food is blown and chanted.

Neglect produces physical symptoms. Cold water brings fever; hot foods bring on body pain, headaches, and swollen throat. Cubeo are not ordinarily fond of clear cold drinking water preferring to mix it, for health reasons, with manioc meal. But ritual bathing in cold water strengthens the body and promotes manliness. Hot foods with hot peppers and broiled meats are highly appreciated in normal states. In the normal diet, meals without fish or meat are associated with a mood of restraint, sometimes of glumness; hot peppers add not only culinary zest but lighten the mood. Correspondingly, broiled fish and meats prepared outside the house by men is almost invariably accompanied by a mood of boisterousness. From these observations it is possible to propose another dietary principle: the defensive diet is part of a condition of passivity and constraint, the aggressive, that is the full diet, is part of a condition of high energy and exuberance.

It is in the light of this principle that we are obliged, I believe, to consider the Cubeo diet within a larger pattern of ritual regulations. It is significant that what I call the defensive diet exists within a special setting of ritual isolation -- within some enclosure -- and with the requirement of sexual avoidances. The shamanic novice may not even hear the sounds -- the noises -- of female activities within the house without incurring grave dangers from his special spirits. The full diet is sexual, the defensive diet is asexual. An explanation of the relationship between diet and sexuality is an intricate one to be pursued at another time. What may be brought out about it at this time is the Cubeo belief that animals, that is animal spirits, are intensely interested in human sexuality. In a defensive state that degree of interest is unwelcome as dangerous. At the same time, and in the same connection, there is the factor of the emergence period. When the first ancestors were living on their "infantile" diet they were immature, they were not yet sexual. Since all transitional states simulate some connection with primordial founding conditions and ancestors the defensive diet may be considered to be a metaphoric return to beginnings.

The return to beginnings is both a regression and a condition for a metaphoric rebirth in preparation for a more vigorous going forward. Dietary regulations embody that theme. But the control of the body and its spirit substance, umÉ so that it can carry out its metaphoric return to

beginnings and rebirth for a new phase involves more than a conceptualization of motion in time. It involves, as well, a concern with the concept of balances, of homeostasis. That is to say, the reification of the past and of processes of rebirth and new growth is brought into relationship with an understanding of the nature of the body and soul that must enter into these processes. It is a dual theory that formulates dietary rules.

In conclusion, dietary rules are both positive and negative. They may incorporate "taboos," but they form a pattern that deals with much broader issues than those of mere restrictions and avoidances. In the Cubeo case, the rules deal with sound nutrition, the promotion of good personal health and the health of the sib. Eating is rarely a personal matter, however. The obligation to share, or else all will die is reflected in the ritual patterns that regulate all major social relationships and define, at the same time, the inherent connections between human beings and other pertinent natural realms. Eating is always an affair of the sib, and is an integral part of the relations of the sib with its ancestors. Beyond these social relations, eating enters broader metaphysical spheres that concern the flow of vital forces and the organic unity of the Cubeo cosmos. Eating binds together the natural domains of plant, fish, forest game. In some respects the rules of diet are in complementary relation to marriages. Marriage promotes the life of the sibs through sexual reproduction. The regulation of diet serves the complementary purpose of promoting the life of the sib through a corresponding set of alliances with the nonhuman realms of food. While the regulation of diet is indeed defensive from a nutritive standpoint, it may also be looked at as a series of preparations for overcoming resistances to the urgent alliances of men with the worlds of their food animals.

FOOD TABOOS AS MARKERS

OF AGE CATEGORIES IN CASHINAHUA

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Ross (1978:16) in his paper, Food Taboos, Diet, and Hunting Strategy: The Adaptation to Animals in Amazon Cultural Ecology, concluded that "emic inedibility also represents an accurate probabilistic statement of etic hunting realities." [1] Let me attempt to restate this indigestible, if not inedible, quote. What I think Ross is saying is: Native prohibitions against the hunting and consumption of certain animal species corresponds to a high degree with an outside observer's scientific assessment of the prospects for successful hunting of these species.

I agree with Ross that there is a good chance that there can be a high degree of agreement between the native's and the scientist's assessments that a particular hunting strategy will or will not produce an adequate long term game supply.[2] I also agree that such a prohibition may, and often does, function to prevent the decimation of a species which, given its breeding characteristics and/or an ecological niche incapable of supporting large populations, would have low survival chances were it to be intensively hunted. However, I suggest that these facts in themselves do not provide "an intelligible or cogent explanation of the emergence and/or perpetuation of dietary taboos on major animals or their temporal or spatial content or occurence (Ross 1978:1)."

My argument here is that (1) taboo systems are ideological systems and that the reasons for their perpetuation, and perhaps their emergence, are at least partly ideological, (2) that the viability of the taboo systems is to a large extent the result of the degree to which the taboo system is integrated with other aspects of the ideological system, (3) that taboo systems, and probably all aspects of ideological systems, may result in behavior which can be both adaptive and maladaptive, (4) that the degree to which societies enforce taboo systems frequently is related to prevailing

economic circumstances, namely food shortages, and (5) that belief systems which consistently produce maladaptive behavior significantly reduce the survival chances both of the societies and their belief systems. Discovering the ecological factors which justify limiting the exploitation of certain species and demonstrating the beneficial ecological effects of these prohibitions on the concerned species does not provide an explanation of how these prohibitions emerged or why they persist. Nor, on the other hand, does an understanding of the ideological systems provide all the answers. I suspect that the degree to which taboo systems will be explained as being the result of ecological or ideological factors will to a large extent depend on the ideological commitment of the ethnographer.

I do not have a theory for explaining the origins of Cashinahua food taboos, and in this paper, I do not wish to hazard even a guess. Instead I will (1) describe briefly the Cashinahua system of food taboos and the cosmological system within which it operates, (2) examine the way in which some of these taboos are used as defining features or as markers of Cashinahua age categories, and (3) draw some conclusions about the implications of these data for our understanding of the system of food taboos and its persistence.

TAXONOMIES OF FOOD, GENERAL AND SPECIFIC TABOOS

All Cashinahua informants, including children as young as four years of age, are able to enumerate a wide range of dietary prohibitions, which are both general and specific in character (Ross 1975:1n, and Basso 1973:16).[3] General taboos are always spoken of in terms of food items which "we never eat" (nun pismaki) as opposed to those things "we habitually eat" (nun pimiski). These designations correspond but are not identical to the Cashinahua classification of food into three dyadic pairs of categories: piti kuin $_1$ vs. piti kuinman$_1$ ideally and jurally real vs. unreal food or, piti kuin $_1$ vs. piti bemakia$_2$, 'individually and existentially real vs. unreal food', and piti kayabi $_3$ vs. piti bemakia$_3$,'pragmatically real vs. unreal food'[4] (See Tables 1A and 1B.)

For example, the Cashinahua classify all meat as either yuinaka kuin$_1$ or yuinaka kuinman$_1$. Yuinaka kuin$_1$ includes tapir, deer, peccaries, monkeys, birds, rodents, armadillos, alligators, etc. Yuinaka kuinman$_1$

TABLES 1A and 1B: The relationship between polarities 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Table 1A

	Polarity 1		Polarity 2		Polarity 3	
	kuin$_1$	kuinman$_1$	kuin$_2$	bemakia$_2$	kayabi$_3$	bemakia$_3$
pehaida	+	-	+	-	+	-
pe	+	-	±	±	+	-
pe$_4$	-	+	±	±	+	-
pepishta	-	+	±	±	+	-
chakapishta	-	+	±	±	-	+
chaka	-	+	±	±	-	+
chaka$_4$	-	+	-	+	-	+
chakahaida	-	+	-	+	-	+
Polarity 4						

Table 1B

	Polarity 1		Polarity 3		Polarity 2	
	kuin$_1$	kayabi$_3$	kuinman$_1$	bemakia$_3$	kuin$_2$	bemakia$_2$
pehaida	+	+	-	-	+	-
pe	+	+	-	-	±	±
pe$_4$	+	+	-	-	±	±
pepishta	-	+	+	-	±	±
chakapishta	-	-	+	+	±	±
chaka	-	-	+	+	±	±
chaka$_4$	-	-	+	+	±	+
chakahaida	-	-	+	+	-	+
Polarity 4						

includes felines (including weasles, badgers, wild dogs, etc. - all of which the Cashinahua classify as inu), vultures, birds of prey, bats, snakes, marsupials, sloths, anteaters, capybara, rabbits, etc. Generally, when informants say that "we habitually eat" or "we never eat" an animal species they are speaking of this idealogical classification. However, they may also be using the yuinaka kayabi$_3$ vs. bemakia$_3$ classification which reclassifies some species defined as kuinman$_1$ (inedible) as kayabi$_3$ (edible) in light of ecological circumstances, namely the scarcity of meat which is classified as kuin$_1$. This generally is the case when a village is old and the preferred game supply has been depleted by years of hunting to the point that a dependable supply of the kuin$_1$ animals is unavailable. Kayabi$_3$ also is used to define those species which are kuinman$_1$ but may be eaten by all persons belonging to certain age categories. (I will discuss the notions of edibility vs. inedibility as defined by age categories in the section on specific taboos.) The animals which can be reclassified in this way include marisupials, sloths, anteaters, capybara, and rabbits.

Individual Cashinahua informants may choose to classify animals as kuin$_2$ or bemakia$_2$ for highly idiosyncratic reasons, including a personal dislike of the taste or texture of the meat, hunger, a perverse desire to flount accepted norms, or a personal encounter with an animal during supernatural experiences while in a trance, under the influence of a hallucinogen, or in a dream. Some animals can never be classified as bemakia$_2$ and thus are never prohibited as food; others can never be classified as kuin$_2$ and thus can never be eaten. (These restrictions correspond to the classification of these animals as yuinaka pehaida and yuinaka chakahaida respectively.)

Specific taboos are always spoken of in terms of items which a specific ego "is not able to eat" (pitidumaki) at a specific time and under specific circumstances. They involve the prohibition against food items which are classified as piti kuin$_1$ and/or piti kayabi$_3$. Thus, persons who are involved in a ritual fast are prohibited from eating all meat, all sweet foods, and all condiments - foods which under normal circumstances would be defined as edible. In addition, persons belonging to certain age categories may not eat certain otherwise edible foods at specific times during their membership in an age category. For example, an adult male may not eat strong meat like tapir, deer, and peccary for several weeks after the birth

of a child, nor may he eat spider monkey of the same sex as the child during its infancy, nor may he eat stingray while the child is a toddler. Thus, specific taboos operate for limited periods of time and within clearly defined contexts for particular individuals or class of individuals. It should be noted that although a man may be prohibited from eating certain animals, he is not prohibited from hunting these animals. Likewise, a woman may harvest and cook foods which she cannot eat.

CASHINAHUA EXPLANATIONS OF THE TABOOS

Cashinahua informants offer three kinds of explanations for not eating certain foods - traditional, gustatory, and cosmological.

When asked why they did/would not eat an item of food, many informants would respond that it was because their parents or ancestors did not eat it. However unsatisfactory such a response may be to the ethnographer, it cannot and should not be ignored as at least a partial explanation for the persistence of a dietary restriction. We are frequently creatures of habit, whether or not we wish to acknowledge the fact, acting as we do because that is how we learned to behave as children and not as the result of making a conscious choice based on reason.

My informants often said that they did/would not eat certain foods because they had a bad taste. This reason has no real explanatory value with reference to the category of foods which they never eat (nun pismaki) since few, if any, informants have ever tasted these items i.e., foods classified piti bemakia$_3$.

However, certain animals within the categories piti kuin$_1$ and piti kayabi$_3$, which are never the object of general taboos and rarely of specific taboos, are never eaten during certain seasons even by persons not obligated to refrain by specific taboos because in fact they have bad taste due to their seasonal consumption of particular fruits.

Cosmological explanations are much more complex and are of greater importance for an understanding of both the general and specific systems of dietary prohibitions. I turn now to a brief examination of Cashinahua cosmology before discussing its relationship with the taboos.

The Cashinahua cosmos contains three basic categories: people, spirit beings and nature.[5] People and spirit beings live with and within nature and "own" it, or to be more precise, they have rights of unsufruct. The principal, but not exclusive, domain of people is tbe village clearing and the areas immediately surrounding the village which contain the gardens; the principal, but not exclusive, domain of spirit beings is the deep forest. The intermediate area is a transitional zone frequented by both spirit beings and males in search of food. Females, unless accompanied by males, rarely enter the transitional zone; such intrusions are said to endanger the safety and health of both the intruder and her community because this encroachment of the spirit's territory by human females throws female spirits into a jealous rage while driving male spirits into a sexual frenzy. On the other hand, males can and regularly do move in and out of the transitional zone and occasionally into the deep forest with relative impunity.

Hunters are always concerned about maintaining harmonious relationships with the spirit beings.[6] To do so requires them (1) to avoid waste of the shared resources of nature, and (2) to use proper hunting techniques and etiquette.[7]

Cashinahua hunters should not shoot more game than the community can reasonably eat; nor should they shoot more than they can carry unless they call for and get assistance from others. All animals which are killed, except snakes, should be carried back to the village for consumption or, if the animal shot is classed as totally prohibited, for disposal.[8] A hunter reluctantly leaves a spider monkey which died after being shot but failed to fall and so hangs in an inaccessible location suspended by its prehensile tail. Wounded animals which escape are tracked for hours, and the search is only abandoned when sunset approaches and the hunter must leave the forest before night sets in. He generally returns the following morning to continue this search.

Hunters are careful to follow proper techniques. For example, they should use only the force necessary to capture an animal and should dispatch it quickly; if the animal's spirit has difficulty escaping the body it is likely to be angry and probably vindictive. They should kill snakes without breaking the skin to prevent the escape of its spirit. They should shoot

harpy eagles in flight.

And finally, Cashinahua hunters observe proper hunting etiquette. Here we turn our attention to the relationship between people and spirit beings and animals. People have exclusive use of a limited number of species which are never the object of general or specific taboos and thus may always be eaten with one exception to be discussed below. Spirits never interact with, touch or eat the spirits of these species. On the other hand, spirits have exclusive ownership of certain species which are always the object of general taboos and may never be eaten by people. However, they may be killed by hunters under certain circumstances. For example, a hunter may kill a jaguar or snake in self-protection. Should he do so, he must undergo a ritual fast and purification in order to placate the spirits and to protect himself and the community from revenge by the spirits.

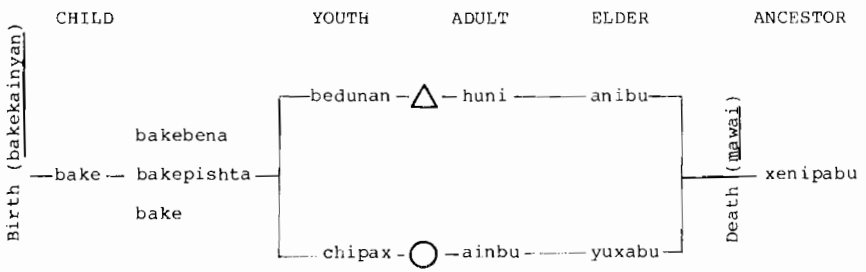
The contrast here is between animals the Cashinahua classify as yuinaka pehaida, and thus kuin$_1$, kayabi$_3$, and kuin$_2$ but never bemakia$_2$ and yuinaka chakahaida and thus kuinman$_1$, bemakia$_3$, and bemakia$_2$ but never kuin$_2$.

All other animals are the object of specific prohibitions, adherence to which either maintains or restores harmonious relations with the spirit beings. A Cashinahua who follows a specific taboo normally may expect little interference from and often the assistance of spirit beings. Many of these specific restrictions apply only during certain periods during the life cycle, and it is to these I now turn.[9]

TABOOS AND THE LIFE CYCLE

Beginning with birth, each Cashinahua potentially develops through four life stages: childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age. (See Table 2.)

Table 2: Life stages in Cashinahua



Childhood, baketian, lasts from the moment after birth when the baby is picked up, bathed, and put to the breast through initiation between the ages of 9 and 12. During that time the child passes through 3 sub-stages: bake bena (from birth to crawling), bake pishta (from crawling to walking), and finally bake (from semi-independence from the mother to the initiation rites).[10]

The diet of a bake bena consists of mother's milk but may be supplemented by small quantities of maize, plantain, and manioc gruels; meat is prohibited. A bake pishta continues to consume mother's milk but its diet rapidly expands to include first foods, including meats, which are piti pehaida, then piti kuin$_1$, and finally piti kayabi$_3$ but may not eat foods classified as chaka$_4$ and bemakia$_3$.[11] A bake can eat anything but those few animals classified piti chakahaida. Initiation rituals involve a month-long prohibition on eating all meats, condiments, and "sweet" foods.

The initiated male youth, bedunan, is generally free to eat whatever he wants. He may temporarily choose to refrain from eating the animal species he is currently learning to hunt; this is particularly true of larger animals.

The initiated female youth, chipax, is also free to eat whatever she wishes, except during her first menses when she may not eat condiments, and may only eat meats classified yuinaka pehaida. During later menses she may also eat yuinaka pe. She often refrains from eating specific species while learning particular crafts, like refraining from eating sting ray while learning how to spin.

These minor restrictions continue from initiation until entry into adulthood. Informants disagree on when the transition from youth to adulthood is made. Some say that it occurs with marriage. Most argue that since first marriages are usually fragile, adulthood begins with the conception or birth of a couple's first child.

Adulthood encompasses the most productive years of a Cashinahua's life; it also is the period during which the person is subject to the largest number of dietary prohibitions. A male becomes a full adult, huni, when he assumes the full responsibilities of husband and father, including the responsibility for adhering to the specific dietary restrictions which

relate to his role as provider and protector of his children. Likewise, a female becomes a full adult, ainbu, when she assumes the full responsibilities of wife and mother, including the responsibilities for adhering to the specific dietary restrictions which relate to her roles as provider and protector of her children. Many of these taboos are in effect only during specific periods during the early years of each child.

For example a huni may only eat meat classified yuinaka pehaida during the first month of his child's life, gradually adding to his diet those meats which are pe and kuin$_1$, with certain clearly defined exceptions, like refraining from eating spider monkey of the same sex as the infant, not eating sting ray while the child is a toddler, etc. These restrictions apply throughout the time his child is bakebena and bakepishta, i.e., during the period of greatest vulnerability in the life cycle, and thus are forms of preventative medicine. He may also refrain from eating certain foods when the child is ill; these restraints are forms of curative medicine. Should he violate proper hunting techniques or etiquette he also will observe dietary restrictions and at times go through a month-long fast and purification to protect the health and safety of his child. Such taboos are forms of protective medicine. Food taboos which simultaneously serve as preventative, curative, and protective medicine are most consistently obeyed.

Because a man's activities frequently take place in the forest where contacts with and offenses against spirit beings are more likely to occur, the father of a bakebena or bakepishta is subject to the greatest number of food prohibitions during these periods in the lives of his children than at any other time in the life cycle. He also avoids hunting in the deep forest, the primary domain of spirit beings.

The Cashinahua are quite explicit about one of the major functions these taboos serve in addition to the medical ones discussed above, namely the establishment of the child's identity. The man who observes the taboos identifies with the child as pater, epa kuin$_1$, and thus establishes the child's social group membership, a fact of no small significance in a society with a patrilineal rule of descent.[12]

Likewise, an adult woman, ainbu, observes a series of specific food

taboos during the time her child is bakebena and bakepishta, which are also preventative, curative, and protective. Because most of her activities take place within the confines of "people" territory, she is less likely to encounter and offend spirit beings than is the child's father. However, during her menses she must be careful to observe scrupulously food prohibitions and to prevent the child from coming in contact with menstrual blood which is defined by the Cashinahua as contaminating and could weaken a child touched by it.

The observation of food taboos establishes the child's mother as mater-birth has already established her as genitrix-and thus real mother, ewa kuin[1].

The point at which a man changes from adult-male, huni, to old man, anibu, and a woman changes from adult female, ainbu, to old woman, yuxabu, is unclear. It is more clear for a female than a male, however. A woman who has gone through menopause and has no children who are bakebena or bakepishta is a yuxabu. She may eat anything she wishes to eat except meats classified yuinaka chakahaida. A man potentially becomes an anibu when he no longer has children who are bakebena or bakepishta, and is free to eat what he wishes, except yuinaka chakahaida, as long as he does not continue to hunt game actively. As he gets older and his hunting is confined to the transitional zone, he observes few food taboos. Both an anibu and yuxabu may optionally observe food taboos during crucial periods in the early years of their grandchildren, particularly of their namesakes, xutabu.

Thus, specific food taboos become one of the defining features or markers of the various stages in the life cycle of an individual. Informants frequently identify a person's membership in an age category by noting the observance of food taboo or lack thereof.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Cashinahua food taboos are dietary rules which in part define appropriate and inappropriate behavior on a permanent or temporary basis. We examined how these taboos relate to and in part define the taxonomic status of flora and fauna, i.e. whether or not species of plants and animals are real food. The four overlapping taxonomic devices used by the

Cashinahua provide both the flexibility needed in order to allow the Cashinahua to respond to short-term food shortages and the potential for long-term changes should conditions change irreversibly.

We also looked at the Cashinahua's own explanations for their taboo systems as they relate to the persistence of these systems. The traditions learned by the growing child act as an inhibiting factor in situations of change, as does gusto which is also learned either as part of traditional knowledge or personal experience.

We also examined the relationship between Cashinahua cosmology and food taboos and observed that the taboos result in behavior which contributes to the maintenance or restoration of harmonious relations between people and spirit beings. Although revengeful or capricious actions by spirits are not the only cause of illness, food taboos contribute to the protection from, and the prevention and curing of, illness caused by either spirit beings or elements of nature.

And finally, we investigated the link between food taboos and the social order. Dietary prohibitions are part of the defining features of the various stages in the life cycle of the Cashinahua, and in turn also define in part the relationship between and obligations toward individuals and classes of individuals within the social system.[13]

Therefore, we can argue that the Cashinahua food taboos contribute to both the ordering of their universe (i.e., the conceptual/idealogical system) and to the maintenance of order (i.e., the regulation of behavior among and between people, spirit beings, and nature).

Such an argument does not necessarily explain why a system of dietary prohibitions exists, but it does contribute to our understanding of why such a system may persist even in the face of ideological or ecological pressures for change.

NOTES

1 This paper is not the appropriate context in which to argue with Ross over his misuse (and that of his mentor Marvin Harris) of the terms etic and emic. For a discussion of this problem see Fisher and Werner (1978) and Kensinger (1975b).

2 The native may be aware that he cannot depend on the hunting of certain species as the mainstay of his meat supply since he has available to him much of the data which serves as the scientist's basis for reaching the same conclusion. However, the line of reasoning used to reach that conclusion may or may not coincide with that of the scientist; i.e., he may not be aware of the carrying capacity of an ecological zone for tapirs, but he is aware that tapirs generaly only produce a single offspring at lengthy intervals in contrast to the more frequent multiple births of certain rodents and therefore he knows that he is more likely to encounter rodents than tapirs.

3 Unlike Ross (1978), I will deal with both general and specific taboos since both share certain explanatory features within Cashinahua cosmology.

4 The Cashinahua use four taxonomic devices for classifying most, but not all, aspects of their life; they use three of them to establish structural relationships between categories within a domain, while the fourth establishes the relative moral value of these categories within a domain. These devices consist of four binary contrasts or polarities.

Polarity 1, kuin$_1$ vs. kuinman$_1$, divides a domain between those things which are real and those which are unreal. It is highly idealistic and produces categories which are rigid and fixed. (Subscripts indicate the polarity being used in order to distinguish between the meanings of the overlapping terms kuin in polarities 1 and 2, and bemakia in polarities 2 and 3.) There is rarely any dispute between informants on the classification of items using Polarity 1.

Polarity 2, kuin$_2$ vs. bemakia$_2$, also divides a domain between those things which are real and those which are unreal. Classifications based on the use of Polarity 2 are highly idiosyncratic; with the exception of a relatively few items wihich must always be classified as kuin$_2$ or bemakia$_2$, most items may be classified by an individual however he/she wishes depending upon the individual's desired goals. Thus, items are kuin$_2$ or bemakia$_2$ because an individual chooses to call them kuin$_2$ or bemakia$_2$.

Polarity 3, kayabi$_3$ vs bemakia$_3$, divides an entire domain or the sub-domains provided by the use of Polarities 1 and 2 into those things which are real or unreal; it carries with it the additional notion of central vs. peripheral. Like Polarity 1 it establishes closed categores which are relatively fixed. However, classifications based on Polarity 3 can be modified when circumstances exist where the use of Polarity 1 makes action difficult or impossible. Such modifications generally result from changing practice of the society through/over time rather than a conscious decision by the society at a specific point in time. However, there is a high degree of consensus between informants about whether or not items within a domain should be classified as kayabi$_3$ or bemakia$_3$.

Polarity 3 does not resolve the dialectic opposition which exists between Polarities 1 and 2, i.e. between the rigid idealistic socio-centric classification produced by Polarity 1 and the existential, almost anarchistic, egocentric classification produced by Polarity 2. However, Polarity 3 serves as a kind of mediating synthesis which makes social action possible.

Polarity 4, pe$_4$ vs. chaka$_4$, divides a domain into two subdomains, those things which are good or bad, each of which may be subdivided into those things which are pehaida 'very good', pe 'good', and pepishta 'a little good', chaka pishta 'a little bad', chaka 'bad', and chakahada 'very bad'. (Subscript is used to prevent confusion between the two uses

of terms pe and chaka.) Thus, items are classified as falling along a continuum ranging from preferred (and under some circumstances, prescribed) to prohibited.

Although it relates directly to the food taboo system, I will not discuss here the use of Polarity 4 as used by the Cashinahua to classify the domain piti. To do so would merely further complicate an already complex description without adding significantly to our understanding of the argument of this paper. In addition to the ambiguity created by two uses of the contrast between pe$_4$ and chaka$_4$ and pe and chaka as subdivisions of that contrast the terms can be used to differentiate between the relative moral status of behavior involving items within a domain, or to state the relative preferences for the items. It is only in a moral sense that pe$_4$ and chaka$_4$ relate to the systems of dietary restrictions. (For a fuller discussion of these taxonomic devices see Kensinger 1975a:18-23).

5 All three categories consist of a physical and a spiritual component. People have both a physical body and no less than five spirits. Nature has a physical element which people see, touch, eat, etc. and a spiritual element seen and used by the spirit beings. Spirit beings are primarily spiritual, but may gain physical substance by entering into natural items and people or by transforming themselves magically into physical beings.

6 Women are also interested in preserving good relationship with spirit beings. However, since the primary locus of interaction between people and spirits is in the transitional zone of the forest - the area of spirits and human males, the discussion which follows will be written primarily from a male perspective.

7 In addition, men attempt to establish cordial relationships with spirit beings encountered during hallucinogenic experiences and dreams. The spirit familiers and pets gained in this way protect and assist the hunter.

8 That is, those animals which are always classified as yuinaka kuinman$_1$, bemakia$_3$, and bemakia$_2$, and never kuin$_2$, i.e. yuinaka chakahaida.

9 For the purpose of brevity, I will not discuss in this paper the dietary restrictions associated with curing of illness or rituals unless they directly and primarily are associated with a stage in the life cycle.

10 Informants disagree about when this period ends. A few argue that it ends with weaning, i.e. between 2 and 4 years. Most say that it ends when the child begins to spend significant amounts of time with peers and older children, i.e. between 3 and 4.

11 From this point onward throughout the rest of the life cycle, statements regarding the foods which may be eaten should be read with the understanding that some of these foods also may be prohibited temporarily in connection with treatment for a personal illness or participation in a public or private ritual.

12 Numerous informants have said to me when speaking of their father "he is my real father (epa kuin$_1$); he didn't eat X (a specific species) when I was a bake bena".

13 It should be noted that in addition to defining, in part, who is one's real father and mother, epa kuin$_1$ and ewa kuin$_1$, observance of food taboos on behalf of a young child by adults other than the parents is an indicator of those persons who are part of the child's network of close, kuin, kinsmen, namely MM, MF, FM, FF, MB, and FZ, and who have obligations toward and responsibilities for the child's welfare.

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INFANCY RELATED FOOD TABOOS AMONG THE SHIPIBO

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Food taboos, like almost every other socio-cultural phenomena, can be looked at and analyzed from a variety of perspectives. Certainly a popular approach to this topic has been to focus on the tabooed objects themselves, that is to look at the specific animals or plants that are tabooed. This approach has been taken by mentalists as well as materialists. A current direction in a materialist approach focuses on the demographic and biological characteristics of tabooed animals-- their ecological niche, predator-prey relationships, life cycle, breeding characteristics. This focus on the "nature" of the tabooed animals is the starting point for an analysis which hopes to illuminate something about the relationship between these animals and the human populations who taboo them.

The mentalist approach also focuses on the objects that are tabooed, but here the hope is to clarify something about the nature of the native symbolic system, the relationship between what the tabooed animals symbolize and the native cosmology or ideological system.

We propose that the place to start to examine the topic of food taboos is to look at the social context and the social process in which the taboos are imbedded. That is, our concern with the topic is not with the tabooed objects themselves, but rather with the social situations in which the taboos operate and how the taboos affect and structure the relationships between individuals in those situations.

Before giving a brief description of the food taboos in Shipiboland, we begin with a few words about the Shipibo, their social structure and organization. The Shipibo are a Panoan group of the Montana of Eastern Peru, who inhabit the river banks of the Ucayali River and its western tributaries. In 1972-1974 we lived for 18 months in a village of 170 individuals, infants and children included, which was situated on one of the small tributaries of the Ucayali. Slash and burn horticulture is practiced

in this village, the major crops are plantains and manioc. Except in the summer when the river is extremely low, hunting provides the major protein supply. Post marital residence is strongly matrilocal; sororal polygyny is practiced.

There are two social situations in Shipiboland which demand that certain foods be tabooed. One is during illness, when native curers frequently prescribe that specific foods be avoided. The other is that of infancy, when parents and full siblings of the newborn are restricted from eating specific foods, lest it cause the infant harm, or even death.

The total range of foods tabooed to sick people is quite large. In the case of infancy-related taboos, however, the case is clearer. The most dangerous foods and those that are invariably avoided by the family of newborn are armadillo, tapir, and "White monkey"; they are desirable foods not inedible. Disagreement exists about deer; some informants insist that it is not to be eaten, while others reported no taboo on eating deer. A few other species are reported tabooed by a small percentage of informants.

Food taboos are observed until the baby's first tooth erupts, at about six months. At this age he will "soon eat food" and parental taboos are no longer necessary. Although mashed bananas, manioc and various fruits have been introduced prior to this time, meat and fish (real food) are not given to the baby until he is approximately six or seven months old, sometimes even later.

Breaking or honoring a taboo is a public statement regarding a man's relationship to the new infant. This highlights a critical problem in Shipibo social organization. Shipibo society is very strongly matrilocal. That is, women live with their mothers for their entire lives, and their daughters live with them their entire lives. So one half of the population, the female half, is de facto kept at home. The problem then is how to keep the other half home--the male half. Marriages tend to be brittle, especially early in the relationship. Shipibo men are much more mobile than the women--they can go home to their own mothers, as well as be drafted into the army or go to work in a town. In this context, the birth of a child represents a crisis. If a new domestic unit is to be established and maintained, a man, the primary protein producer, is essential. Ship-

culture has dealt with this problem in several ways. On the ideological level a new infant is thought of as biologically a man's product. The villagers' view of conception is that babies are formed of accumulated semen from the acts of sexual intercourse that follow menstruation. Repeated acts of intercourse are necessary for the fetus to grow. Since a woman contributes nothing to this process other than to provide a place for the fetus to develop, a man is linked to his offspring by a bond of literally common substance. Or rather men are thereby linked to their offspring, for following the logic of the system, if several men have sexual relations with a woman, they will share a kind of joint paternity. Thus, the ideology of conception is an attempt to bind men to specific infants--hence specific women, and keep them home. The food taboos surrounding infancy seem to be yet another aspect of this struggle to keep men home.

Both the sociological father and the mother's extra marital paramours are responsible for honoring all the taboos surrounding post natal care. Should any of the fathers disregard these taboos, he will be deemed responsible for any ill consequence that his child may suffer, even death. The villagers watch men to see whether they observe the taboos or not. The assumption is that mothers observe them unquestionably, but that men have a choice. The choice is not a free and easy one--on the contrary, the sanction against breaking the food taboo is the possibility of being responsible for the infant's death. This is serious business, and a serious threat--infant mortality is high (50%) in Shipiboland. The infancy related food taboos channel, or dramatize the social pressures on an individual man to accept the role of sociological father. Two brief ethnographic examples should illustrate the variations in individual behavior. One night, while a group of teenage boys were congregated at our house playing cards, we opened up a can of tuna fish for a late night snack. At that point, tuna was considered a great delicacy, although tabooed for parents of infants, and all the teenagers eagerly took a share, all but Carlos. His refusal was noted silently by all present. Shortly after, when Carlos had left, Alberto whispered to me, "You know why he didn't eat that tuna, don't you? Because of his daughter." Alberto was referring to the child of Carlos' lover, who was married to another man. In both this and other instances, Carlos acted in a manner befitting someone who had assumed the responsibilities of fatherhood.

Oscar, on the other hand, was said by the villagers to be responsible for causing the deaths of three of his girlfriend's children. "It's because he eats whatever he wants. He killed three of her babies already." Oscar continues his extra marital affair with this woman, as does Carlos, but unlike Carlos, he refuses to accept any of the responsibilities of being a father to any of her children.

It should be noted that the native explanation of the taboos refers equally to both parents. It is our analysis of the behavior of the villagers as well as other aspects of their social organization that leads us to suggest that in fact the taboos are pointed at men.

In thinking about how the sanctions operated, we realized that although the "legal" situation is that anyone--mother, siblings, father--who broke the taboos is subject to being accused of killing the infant, in point of fact, we only observed this charged to men.

ACHUARA FOOD TABOOS

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This paper will consider the subject of food taboos within the broader context of symbolic deployment of food in Achuara society. Levi Strauss (1969) has stated succinctly that in primitive society social intercourse is regulated through the exchange of words, objects, and women. In general, ethnographic reports indicate that food occupies an unusually prominent place in the category of "objects" exchanged between individuals and groups. Viewing specifically the Amazonian rain-forest, different ethnographers have discussed the social significance of food exchange. Among these are Riviere (1969), who refers to the importance of commensalism in maintaining social bonds between dispersed adult members of the extended family, Chagnon (1968), who gives detailed acounts of Yanomamo feasting and its role as a strategic step in forging inter-village alliance, Siskind (1973), who describes how Sharanahua women bestow sexual favors in exchange for meat provided by men from the hunt.

In this paper, I would like first to examine these and similar concepts as they relate to food exchange among the Jivaroan Achuara and secondly to consider a possible connexion between ritual food exchange and ritual observance of food taboos.

The Jivaroan Achuara number about 5,000 persons and occupy the Ecuador-Peruvian frontier region of the Amazonian rain-forest. The Achuara are hunters and horticulturalists and are of course a dialect group of a much larger language family, the Jivaroan, which comprises the Shuara of the Ecuadorean montana whose population today is over 25,000, the Aguaruna of Peru who are about 20,000 and the Huambisa, a population intermediate between the Shuara and the Aguaruna who are some 8,000. Fieldwork was conducted among the Achuara of the Macuma-Huasaga-Pastaza region during a period of twenty-one months from 1975-1977.

To begin, I will describe briefly Achuara eating habits. The Achuara eat literally at any time of the day or night, many times a day, sometimes once or not at all. The event that most commonly determines when a meal is to be served is the bringing in of meat or fish from the forest. The hunter delivers his catch to the ekent (the women's section in the rear of the house). The exact manner in which the meat is distributed has important social significance. In the Achuara polygynous family, the husband may divide the meat evenly among his wives, or if he has a favorite he may give all to her, or more often the choice morsels to her and inferior cuts to his other wives. It is also possible for an older wife who has fallen out of favor to be permanently neglected in the distribution of meat. In this case she must rely on her adolescent sons or her in-marrying sons-in-law to provide her with meat.

Thus in the very routine situation of the delivery and apportioning of meat the relationships prevailing between different family members are unequivocally defined. These relationships are also reflected in the preparation and serving of food. Each co-wife has her own personal hearth located at the foot of her bed where she cooks her meals and tends her children. This is the nucleus to which her children are oriented and gravitate within the larger extended family setting. If co-wives are friendly and cooperative, it is customary that they allow others' children to join the meals they serve at their individual hearths. However, if two women are inimically disposed they will rigorously exclude each other's children. Thus from an early age, children learn to equate the giving of food with social approval and acceptance and the withholding of food with social rejection and antagonism.

But these intra-familial patterns of food presentation do not merely reflect existing relationships; by varying the manner in which they dispense food, persons also seek to control the behavior of others. For instance, a husband annoyed at his wife's disobedience or laziness will omit to allocate her meat from the hunt. Similarly a discontented wife in an attempt to curb her husband's unfairness or surliness will not respond promptly to his commands and will deliberately delay the serving of food or beer.

Changes from one status to another are signalled and also facilitated

by displays of food. For example in marriage, before a girl is conceded as a wife, the aspiring groom is expected to present a peccary to his prospective mother-in-law. This gift is a symbolic statement of the man's future economic commitment to his wife's mother which he assumes upon uxorilocal residence. It is the mother who leads the girl to the matrimonial bed. The morning following the consummation of the marriage, the bride for the first time serves her husband a meal, then formally serves manioc-beer to the entire family. Subsequently as a married woman, she circulates at all public gatherings serving manioc-beer that is emblematic of her adult female status.

Presentations of food, clearly, are not restricted to the confines of the extended family. On a fairly regular basis whenever a large animal is brought in from the hunt, portions of meat are sent to nearby households. These gifts of meat, which with time are duly reciprocated, affirm and re-affirm the close kin ties, the solidarity and cooperation existing between families. Similarly when work groups are organized for extraordinary labor such as felling trees for canoe construction, clearing land, or housebuilding, it is incumbent upon the host to provide bountiful supplies of beer and food. This is also a time when status is paraded and validated. The household head will summon his wives with imperious tone that is indicative of the authority he wields; depending on the importance of his guests, he assigns one or several wives to attend them. In general a mood of conviviality prevails as the guests are generously served. If a visitor is of important social standing, then his food and drink are formally presented in fine pottery that reflects the industry and wealth of the household, and he receives the persistent attentions of several wives. The honored guest acknowledges his reception with witticism and elaborate protests of the extravagant hospitality that is heaped upon him. This setting has important political implications -- it is a necessary preliminary to trade negotiation, marital alliance, and manoeuvres in war.

Should the climate of amity and cooperation between parties change, in a corresponding manner the presentations of food abruptly cease. In one case that I witnessed, a married woman whose husband was away trading, was actively encouraging her younger sister to resist a political marriage arranged by their brothers. In the husband's absence, the woman's relatives

had regularly provided her with meat from the hunt. But enraged at her defiance of their plans, they immediately withdrew this supply of food thereby inflicting real hardship upon the woman, who with a sick child was in no way able to fend for herself. In another situation, a Shuar man had married into an Achuara family. Little by little over a period of about a year, several male relatives of the groom had become attached to the Achuara household. Indignant at the Shuar violation of Achuara territory, a delegation of warriors made it clear to the intruders that they should leave immediately. Some left but two stayed behind and sought to ingratiate themselves with the Achuara by energetically joining their work parties. In spite of the two men's vigorous efforts, the Achuara remained unsympathetic. Throughout their day's strenuous labor, they were given no beer as refreshment, nor were they served food in the houses where they stopped to rest. Shortly thereafter, they left the region permanently.

On one occasion, I was escorted into a distant zone by the former enemies of the group I was visiting. Since I had been formally invited, I was received with courtesy and ceremony. But my host's demeanour toward the men that accompanied me was of an altogether different sort. While I was given several dishes of food, they received none; and during a period of several hours, the old foes sat poised in cold confrontation while manioc beer was only sparingly served. Of course, the ultimate expression of social rejection or repudiation is the inclusion of poison in food and drink.

With this consideration of Achuara food habits, it becomes evident that the Achuara do not dispense food in a purely arbitrary manner, but bestow it strategically in order to convey the import of their emotions and intentions. Through the judicious allocation of food, in both private and public contexts, they express their interdependence and mutual support, their grievances, and their emnity. In short, this formalized distribution of food is an efficacious means by which individuals relate to and influence their social milieu. Now let us turn to a brief discussion of Achuara food tabus, in which I will propose that dietary prescriptions and prohibitions are a means by which the Achuara attempt to influence their social milieu by relating to aspects of their physical environment

First let us consider the shaman, a focal figure in Achuara society who

strives to influence his social milieu by supernatural means -- but supernatural means mediated by natural or physical factors. The Achuara attribute to the shaman the powers to inflict and cure sickness. He is believed to bewitch by projecting supernatural darts over a distance to lodge in his victim's body and to cause suffering and death. The shaman undertakes curing by first consuming natem (Banisteriopsis caapi) that enables him to perceive in hallucinogenic trance the exact location of the darts. These he extracts and combats by sucking and regurgitation. In order to wield the visionary and manipulative power of natem, a man must undergo an apprenticeship with an established shaman. During this period of initiation when the master shaman concedes tsentsak -- the magical darts of killing and curing, the neophyte is subject to liminal rites of fasting, sexual abstinence, and consumption of hallucinogens. Subsequently on his return home, he is required to follow strict dietary restrictions. Initially he abstains from meat and eats only fish, but not all fish are permitted. Fish caught with barbasco are prohibited because it is felt that just as this drug stupefies fish so it will inactivate the shaman's tsentsak. Nor are all fish caught with hook and line prescribed -- only those with certain special characteristics. Among these are: yutui -- a fish with stinging antennae of which the sting is likened to the tsentsak that inflict illness; also nukump and chuuwi -- fish with many small bones; and kantash -- a fish with a large dorsal spine. All of these prescribed items embody the concept of the tsentsak. Another fish consumed is nayump which adheres with a sucker to the pebbles of the river-bottom; its sucking ability is thought to aid the shaman in curing, in the extraction of the malignant darts. Many meats are forbidden, especially armadillo that is thought to exude a musky odor similar to barbasco that will debilitate the shaman's power, also peccary and all monkeys, with the notable exception of ujukam, a nocturnal monkey with large eyes. Since all curing ceremonies are conducted at night, heightened nocturnal visual ability will aid the shaman in determining the exact location of darts in the body. Other meats prescribed are tatasham -- the woodpecker with its long beak and extractive capability and tsunkumat -- a cricket that has amazing ability to pick out tiny insects, also that sings. Throughout the curing ceremony under the influence of natem the shaman intones incantations in order to invoke the help of the deity, Tsunki, patron of shamans.

I think these examples illustrate that a homeopathic (Frazer 1922) or imitative principle is governing the dietary restrictions imposed on the shaman novice. That is the initiand, through the observance of food prescriptions, purports to appropriate and to possess specific properties that are marked attributes of the animal to be eaten. It is expected that these properties--whether they be qualities or behavioral characteristics--will facilitate and enhance the individual's performance as a shaman. Conversely, animals displaying negative or contrastive traits that would detract from this performance are avoided.

I have chosen to consider dietary restrictions first in the context of shamanic experience, because this is an entirely sacred area of activity and one of intense symbolism. However, I wish to suggest that the same homeopathic principle, which is so apparent in shamanism, pervades multiple aspects of Achuara life, in fact, is operative in many diverse spheres.

In horticultural practices, when maize is sown, the woman who plants the seed may not eat ampakai palm that may cause the leaves to turn yellow. While the corn is ripening, she may not eat meat or touch blood, for this will turn the corn brown; nor may she eat puntish, the weevil grub, lest the crop become infested with worms.

At birth, a woman, in order to arrest the post-partum flow of blood, refrains from eating dark-blooded fowl or birds with talons that will cause her to continue bleeding. A father avoids consuming the intestines of peccary lest his new born child be stricken with diarrhea. As the infant matures, the mother is anxious that her child be strong and walk promptly. She massages his legs with the juice of a garden plant whose fruits resemble the chubby thighs of a toddler. It is important at this time that the mother not eat roasted plantains for they will dry out the flesh of her child. Here dryness is viewed as antithetical to the juiciness and plumpness of the fruit. Nor should the mother touch agouti or monkey for these animals have thin spindly legs; instead she should eat only the meat of large animals.

Food taboos are also extended with respect to the dead. As Harner (1973) has noted for the Shuara, the Achuara avoid eating deer and owl because these creatures frequent the sites of abandoned gardens and are

thought to be the reincarnations of dead ancestors. The Achuara greatly fear the envy of the dead and avoid contact with the deceased at all costs.

In the event that an individual suffers a snake bite, he is secluded in a special shelter. The person who attends him is one who has not eaten meat that day and continues to abstain from meat. The act of eating meat is equated with the snake biting the man, and the presence and contact of a meat eater is believed to intensify the effect of the wound.

In preparation for war, a man will eat the heart of the jaguar so that he will have courage and ferocity in battle. And when a warrior has recently assassinated and expects retaliatory action on the part of the enemy, he is careful to eat the fish wampyu that jumps fiercely and snaps at the fisherman when caught on the line. Also fearful of the avenging soul of the dead man, the assassin will eat sweet potato in the hope that its sweetness will assuage the hatred of the slain foe.

The most elaborate act of ritual consumption takes place at puberty when a boy is inducted into the cult of arutam. After ordeals of endurance, he imbibes the hallucinogen, maikua (Datura arborea) to experience terrifying visions. If the youth confronts these visions valiantly, he is assured of good health, in adulthood, longevity, fecundity, and success in war.

Thus ritual restrictions regarding food pertain to numerous diverse situations: to birth and death, infancy and puberty, subsistence, curing and war. In a manner analogous to food presentation, in which sharing denotes solidarity and withholding rejection, the individual through the ritual consumption of a prescribed item attempts to appropriate the power manifested by a plant, a fish, a bird, an animal. He wishes either to embody this power within himself or to transmit it to another. Through ritual abstention from proscribed items, the individual strives to avoid contaminating or conflicting powers that would affect him adversely. In food allocation, an individual intervenes and influences his social milieu directly. In the observance of dietary restriction, the individual influences his social milieu by first exploring and manipulating his physical environment.

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FOOD TABOOS IN LOWLAND SOUTH AMERICA: A DISCUSSION

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Food taboos hold a perennial fascination for anthropologists, and the reason is clear: they are paradigmatic of the cultural condition--a microcosm of the whole--and, accordingly, understanding their nature is tantamount to understanding the nature of culture itself. Their analysis, like that of marriage proscriptions (another paradigmatic case), begins with an implicit nul hypothesis: that human beings will eat anything that contributes to their biological well-being. Instantly, we know this is false--and not only because the total range of possible foods is rarely if ever known by its possible consumers. The fact is, even within the realm of what is admittedly edible, people exercise amazing discrimination in their choice of foods. The question is, how come?

The contributors to this symposium have shown a keen awareness of the theoretical stakes involved, with the result that their papers are accessible to an ethnographic outsider who, like myslef, does not know the difference between a paca and an alpaca--except, of course, to assume they are closely related. Their excellent data and insights lead me to suggest four major approaches to the "How come?" question, each of which is a contrast to the Rational Man approach implied by the nul hypothesis. Indeed, each rationalizes in its own way the inherently non-rational practice of systematically avoiding healthful and nutritious foods.

First, there are the people's own rationalization for doing what they do. These reasons are often linked to religious or cosmological necessities (e.g., Kensinger's account of the Cashinahua), but sometimes the actors display a more profound insight into the workings of their own system. Such was the claim made by Reichel-Dolmatoff (1976) in his intriguing though largely unsupported Huxley Lecture, which characterized the Tukano as "ecological analysts" in the strict scientific sense. Informants' statements must be taken for what they are: potential data. Still, it

cannot be denied that some individuals--some societies--may possess the detached understanding that Reichel-Dolmatoff reports for the Tukano.

Second, adopting a psychoanalytic view, one might say that food taboos are not only non-rational, they are irrational--a culturally constituted response to phobic and other neurotic tendencies in the population. Granting the possibility that food-taboo systems may originate in primary-process thinking, the problem is to demonstrate empirically how such psychodynamic processes become culturally dignified. Among the papers in this symposium, Kracke's verges closest on this perspective, but without suffering any of the defects of classical Freudianism. On the contrary, he has given us an empirically grounded, to me utterly compelling account of how food-taboo ideas and practices are used by individuals in the resolution of intermittent emotional stress. It seems to me that only in this way--only by showing how real-life actors interpret and re-create cultural ideas in real-life situations--can we hope to arrive at an anthropologically meaningful theory of symbolism. I will return to this point at the end of my remarks.

The third approach proceeds from the well-known (some might say notorious) position of cultural materialism. I gather that one of the inspirations for this symposium was the daring article by Ross (1978), in which a thoroughly ecological explanation was given of the varied food-taboo systems occurring in lowland South American societies. The rationalization, in other words, is cast in terms which embrace the total cybernetic system of which culture is only a part. Epistemologically, the materialist-ecological-evolutionary position (call it what you will), is very appealing. Cybernetics is not only modish, it is an extremely powerful conceptual program. Variation, change, dynamic equilibrium--all of these are properties of the system and are, in principle, analyzable. Also, although pious culturologists tend to regard these materialists as the "Huns at the Gate," it is ironically true that the Huns are in a superior position to account for culture as such. For, inherent in the adaptational framework is a theory (or, if you will, a metaphysic) of culture which does not have a credible counterpart among the culturalogical insiders. And yet, their external vantage-point does confer one serious weakness: no matter how ecologically "rational" a given system of food taboos might be, when all is

said and done the materialist, like the psychoanalyst, cannot explain how (or, for that matter, why) that system becomes culturally significant.

The fourth approach is epitomized by the vaguely pejorative word "mentalist." In the present collection it is well represented by Urban's sensitive structuralist analysis of food taboos as vehicles signalling important social-category distinctions among the Shokleng. The strength of this method is its ability to decipher the logic governing variation within the taboo system: why these animals and not others, why these persons and not others, why then and not now? While ingenious and elegant, this linguistically derived approach cannot avoid raising Hobie Baker Cat's question, namely, why do human beings go to such fantastic lengths to tell themselves things they already know? Why all the fuss about marking social categories, especially when the actors already know very well who they and each other are! Is there an unacknowledged psychological assumption operating here? I think there is, and I think that this might be a bridge to the not-so-distant position of psychoanalysis--which, after all, seeks a logic in its own right: that of the irrational. Indeed, this affinity may have belonged to the consortium envisioned by Levi-Strauss (1966:131), when he wrote that "ethnology is first of all psychology." See also Sperber (1975).

The two schools of "mentalism" and "materialism" have been going at each other for centuries, and I see no future in this other than continued debate deranged by disparate goals and disparate assumptions. They have long since become thoroughly established scientific ideologies. In the spirit of enlightened conciliation, Taylor, in his paper, advocates that these views are complementary, not antagonistic; that both are needed in the analysis of food taboos; that, together, they give promise of a unified theory. Although this position is certainly preferable to any pretending that one or the other is sufficient, or to the attitude which Dumont rightly decries as "imperialistic," there is something faintly whimsical about it. As Menget notes, for reasons having to do with epistemological incompatibility there is an immense difference between admitting complementation and achieving the unified theory that is sought. Even St. Augustine conceded that we need our Body in order to reach the City of God; and although he gave primacy to the Soul, he was no less a dualist for all that! Saying that we need both Body

and Soul--Mind and Matter--may be well-intended, but ultimately it propagates the dualism that it seeks to transcend. The issue, in my view, is not whether we see the boundary between mentalism and materialism to be friendly or hostile, but that we see the boundary at all. As long as we do, there will be no unified theory of food taboos--or culture in general.

Having said all this one is obliged, I suppose, to offer some kind of solution. Unfortunately, time does not permit me to "bell the cat"; but I would like to suggest briefly a possible direction springing from the conjunction of Kracke's and Urban's papers. I refer, on the one hand, to Urban's use of sign theory. Long ago, Charles Morris (1938) developed a theory which provided for three simultaneous dimensions in the phenomenon of the "sign"; the syntactic, the semantic and the pragmatic (anticipating Turner's, 1967:50, latter-day 3-fold-scheme of "positional," "exegetical" and "operational"). Although in the recent semiological literature the first two dimensions have received ample attention, the pragmatic has been relatively neglected. But, surely it is the area of "what people do with signs/symbols" that anthropologists are uniquely qualified to examine! Hence the import of Kracke's attention to the role of the individual--not only as a psychological being, but also as a socialized being. Furthermore, there is promise here of an authentic theoretical unification. This is because the integration we seek in our models finds its truest analogue in the "methodological individual" (Popper 1962:91) of Kracke's analysis. This is not Society reduced to the individual, nor is it the Individual conceived in psychological isolation. Rather, it is the Individual-in- Society--the individual conceived in the simultaneous contexts of Population (genetic space) and Generation (genetic time)--both of which, by the way, are also key variables in the ecological model. When we accept that cultural reality (such as it is) occurs at the intersection of Space and Time--Population and Generation--we will discover something else standing at the same intersection: the methodological individual. The coincidence--I would prefer to say "isomorphism"--is analytically very promising, urging us to the deveolpment of phenomenologically sensitive techniques for capturing the social, cultural, psychological and, indeed, ecological unity that is, in the final analysis, the only reality we know.

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PROTEAN ANALYSES OF FOOD TABOOS IN LOWLAND SOUTH AMERICA

The Search for a Framework

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As one of two discussants imported from the hinterland of New Guinea, I am ill-equipped to deal in much detail with the esoterica of Lowland South American ethnography or ecology beyond these fascinating presentations. I dare not pronounce most exotic ethnic labels, and would not recognize an agouti on the plate before me. Thus absolved from arguing within an areal perspective, I shall direct my remarks toward more general problems in the analysis of food taboos.

As Menget observes, Malinowski once noted that the passage of 'food' from the wilderness through the stomach to the intellect of indigenes is a short one. Yet, the papers in this symposium suggest that the analytic path to be travelled between 'materialist' and 'mentalist' perspectives is long, difficult, and strewn with barriers, and we are not in possession of a map. Throughout many of these papers lurk scattered comments concerning the 'complementarity' of materialist and mentalist 'explanations' of food taboos, roughly following the distinction drawn in Ross' article. Yet, I suggest, none (at least of those available prior to the symposium) address the fundamental question of what would be required of a complementary analysis, with the exception of Taylor's. Minimally, such an analysis requires the systematic partitioning of sets of ecological and of cultural/psychological/social variables within an encompassing analytic framework that permits the generation of hypotheses concerning correlation (in weaker form) and causation (in stronger form) that can be tested empirically. Neither the 'encompassing' nor the 'partitioning' are in any way simple matters. To the degree that materialist and mentalist perspectives are of different epistemological status, however, the alignment tends to be one of mere juxtaposition rather than one of either complementarity or opposition in any logical sense. An alternative to transcendence, of course, is to

choose, and that requires criteria of evaluation vis-a-vis what we expect of an analysis at all and how we assess an explanation. But Ross does present an impressive challenge that mere assertion of complementarity will not confront, nor will Reichel-Dolmatoff's apparent inclination to collapse the problem in producing the image of an omniscient informant - a kind of Amazonian Teilhard de Chardin - who synthesizes elaborate cosmology and sophisticated ecological systems analysis. If anthropologists are ever to forge a theory of culture (or of sign and symbol) that lays claim to "scientific" theoretical status (and many would eschew that endeavor), they cannot remain content to reduce all of the human experience to an omnibus "concept" and then to explore only the "internal" complexities of the matter forever within the protective assumptions that deny analytic status to the non-cultural (be it ecological or psychological), which alone can give us a sense of the constraints and boundaries and causative forces that inform the sphere of so much of our inquiry. Yet, the ways in which materialist and mentalist perspectives might delicately inform each other demands less polemic and much hard analysis.

Of course, since Ross restricts his attention (and understandably so) to 'general' (permanent and universal in a community) rather than 'specific' food taboos, he deletes the bulk of anthropological analysis from his endeavor and thereby provides an apparent vehicle for asserting a complementarity betwen materialist (pertaining to general taboos) and mentalist (pertaining to specific taboos) perspectives. Interestingly, Taylor's paper attempts to transcend (and perhaps must) both distinctions. Specific taboos, with respect to which most of the cultural, psychological, and social intricacies of the 'systems' examined here are analyzed, present a central challenge to Ross' complex argument, although it behooves anthropologists to provide data that permit acceptance of that challenge. But general taboos generate problems as well. I shall not detail the comments of Basso, Beckerman, and Carneiro in particular on Ross' original argument, except to note that they are not so easily dismissed. I would add that a lack of historical data (on both sociocultural and ecological change) weakens claims of 'permanence' and assessments of change in food taboo systems, for some patterning or order of mutual shifts in ecological balance and general food taboos must eventually be examined with respect to Ross' argument (cf. Menget). In addition, the 'universality' of food taboos in a

given society says little about possible and critical variation in general taboos vis-a-vis particular fauna (and flora) among ethnic groups in close proximity that may collectively, but differently 'exploit' an ecologically specifiable region. Some apparent confounding of society, regional population, and/or biological species can create severe problems here. I suspect that our focus, through delicate comparative analysis, must be extended to a systematic examination of multi-ethnic, regional systems of general taboos. Furthermore, we require sensitive and comparative ethno-ecological data (following Frake generally) to avoid the sterility of choosing only between unintended consequences and ecological omniscience in food taboo systems, and to grant our informants neither less nor more ecological wisdom than tough-minded analysis suggests they deserve. Finally, and perhaps most fundamentally with respect to these papers, we cannot equate a priori 'edible' and 'food', or 'avoidance' and 'prohibition' (cf. Menget) in any simple manner if we are dealing with matters of cultural significance. What is consumed at times of stress and famine may be aesthetically, morally, and psychologically (as well as 'nutritionally' in indigenous reckoning) abhorrent and not clearly culturally constituted 'food'. Are condiments food, or adjuncts to food? Surely they are edible. And what is avoided may be 'non-edible' or 'non-food' by cultural reckoning and/or bound up with complex evaluations and preferences that are not readily captured by rules of taboo. Thus Kensinger briefly explores some of the evaluative dimensions of food classification that articulate preference and prohibition.

Most papers deal straightforwardly with mentalist (a rather 'loaded' and pernicious term) perspectives on specific food taboos, although, as Kracke properly observes and I have noted elsewhere, food proscriptions and prescriptions are logically rule systems that do complement each other and perhaps circumscribe a complex and less examined realm of preferences and avoidances (but see Kracke's paper). Furthermore, the focal intersection of food and taboo suggests useful analytic extension in both directions - toward the procurement, preparation, distribution, and consumption of food, and the cultural constitution of 'meals' (cf. Douglas), not to mention the very constitution of 'food' as a cultural category; and toward taboos that are not (at least directly) concerned with food. Such extensions may enhance the analytic elaboration of subtleties in the focal intersection of

food and taboo that are not readily apparent otherwise when attention is directed only to the immediate locus of the intersection. Surely our knowledge of food taboos must be informed by our examination of foods not subject to taboos and of taboos not focussed upon foods.

Most papers are concerned with the structure of food taboos, but the analyses termed 'classificationist', 'semiotic', 'structuralist', or 'symbolic' each subsume a variety of perspectives that often remain entangled. One approach, exemplified in the papers by Urban and Bamberger, (Bamberger's paper was deleted from this symposium volume at her request. Editor.) is labelled semiotic, yet the perspectives differ notably. Drawing on Trubetzkoy's theory of markedness, Urban elegantly demonstrates a mode of analysis that systematically encompasses how food taboos mark ethnic, gender, moiety, and age-grade categories, as well as personae in 'liminal' states. Although Urban hints at the matter, it would be interesting to 'push' this sophisticated analysis of the internal structure of food taboos vis-a-vis social categories toward an examination of food prescriptions (which logically should be susceptible to the same mode of analysis) and of other modes of 'marking' social categories in terms other than food taboos. In partial response to Wagley's remarks (from the audience), a delicate comparison of different modes of 'marking' social categories might illuminate the distinctiveness of food taboos in this regard. Such strategic extensions might also illuminate Urban's acknowledged problems of non-distinctive overlap in food taboos that mark different social categories.

Urban distinguishes his semiotic approach from what he terms a 'classificationist' perspective focussed on 'anomalies', as exemplified in the work of Leach and (but in more sophisticated fashion and with non-exclusive emphasis on 'anomalies') of Douglas. In contrast, Bamberger's analysis admits of some systematic correspondence between faunal taxonomies and food classifications as a structural premise of a food taboo system that interrelates procurement, preparation, distribution, and consumption of food; rules of taboo; and categories of person. Yet, Urban notes that what is restricted in food taboos is not fauna but food. Herein lies a fundamental problem - what do we mean by 'classification'? Are we in fact confounding different classificatory schemes without attention to such

matters as Frake's notion of 'interlinkage'; various modes of articulation, intersection, partial isomorphism, et cetera; and differences in logical form (taxonomies, keys, et cetera). Sperber has noted that classificatory anomalies (marked by rules of taboo) detectd by Bulmer, Douglas, Leach, Tambiah, and others are typically not features of more linguistically-facilitated ethnosemantic analyses, and in this symposium Taylor has rightly noted that ethnosemantic and symbolic classifications (although neither represents a singular mode) must be distinguished and their articulation carefully analyzed. Herein lies a complex and rarely examined problem that demands formal analysis. Yet, be the approach semiotic, classificationist, structuralist, or symbolic, we need perhaps more than formal and often static structure - indeed a sense of how and when and toward what ends our informants deploy such schemes to order aspects of their everyday world. Menget's view of the importance of the consequences of food restrictions in structuring food taboos is perhaps important here. Indeed, in developing Trubetzkoy's insights on markedness, Jakobson came to recognize (as have increasing numbers of linguists) the critical importance of a pragmatics. At a formal level of analysis, the recent work of D'Andrade (on folk illnesses) suggests that the distinctive features that have been so central to our conceptions of ethnosemantic structures may not offer the key to how our informants actually go about categorizing, which draws heavily on more connotative features.

When we turn to individuals and the pragmatics of food taboo systems, Kracke's superb presentation demonstrates the extraordinary richness and complexity of individuals' negotiation of meaning in context with respect to multifaceted cultural belief systems linked to food proscriptions and prescriptions and deployed in struggles to cope - intellectually and affectively - with psychological and social demands that may be in conflict, and even to formulate and restructure such conflict. Here too we see food taboos utilized to communicate a variety of messages to self and social other(s) - reflexively and relationally, in Kracke's terms - in an analysis that forcefully argues for the individual-in-society as a locus of analysis. In fascinating contrast, Kensinger presents an intriguing account of how different sets of rules not only structure food taboos differently on different classificatory grounds, but also provide - in the ways in which they are articulated in varying social contexts - an implication of

meta-rules (rules about rules) that offers much potential in the analysis of how the structure of belief systems permits individuals to negotiate meanings that are not simply 'read off' an abstract scheme, but rather constructed with respect to rules and meta-rules. Here may reside a sense of structure in systems of food taboos that allows for an analysis of pragmatics in a matter that acknowledges the individual-in-society making sensitive and even creative use of food taboo rules in varying social contexts, and yet could be informed by a semiotic analysis as well. And such attention to both structure and pragmatics keeps us in touch with the more phenomenological basis of our experience of persons and food taboos in the field.