

Women's Reflexive Performance in the Northwest Amazon: the Wanano *Kaya Basa*

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Over the last two decades, anthropologists have been pausing to consider their discipline as it has taken shape in the academy. Some have leveled criticism at excessively normative or formal models which discount individuality and internal variation (Crapanzano 1972; Rabinow 1977); others have argued against methods which, in Victor Turner's terms, lead to ethnography as autopsy:

Whereas anthropology should be about, in D.H. Lawrence's phrase, "man alive" and "woman alive", this living quality frequently fails to emerge from our pedagogics, perhaps, cite Lawrence again, because our "analysis presupposes a corpse." (Turner 1980:80)]

The challenge to strive for the "living quality," to avoid squeezing the life out of informants in ethnographies, has been posed in vivid terms by Clifford Geertz, who urged and exemplified a commitment to working toward an understanding of natives own viewpoints (1974:9). Geertz described his own work in these terms:

In all three of the societies I have studied intensely..., I have been concerned among other things, with attempting to determine how the people who live there define themselves as persons, what enters into the idea they have (but, as I say, only half-realize they have) of what a self, Javanese, Balinese, or Moroccan style, is. And in each case, I have tried to arrive at this most intimate of notions not by imagining myself as someone else...and then seeing what I thought -- but by searching out and analyzing the

symbolic forms -- words, images, institutions, behaviors -- in terms of which, in each place, people actually *represent themselves to themselves and to one another*. (1974, p. 30)

In pursuit of methodologies more sensitive to the "native's point of view," a number of anthropologists have, in recent years, placed greater stress on *reflexivity*. Reflexivity may mean the recognition of the anthropologist as a participant in a subject-object interaction (for example, Ruby 1980; Dumont 1978). It may also mean a "public reflexivity" (Turner 1980; Myerhoff 1986) framed in the symbolic forms described by Geertz and others; that is, a self-referential or autobiographical statement or act through which the individual, or the community, seeks to understand itself. In this sense, a cultural performance is reflexive if it reveals or arouses self-consciousness or self-awareness -- a "consciousness of consciousness."

The purpose of this project is to examine the symbolic forms through which an indigenous Amazonian culture interpret themselves to themselves and to others in the form of lament songs. The improvised, self-referential songs of the Wanano-speaking peoples of the Northwest Amazon are performances which are reflexive in the several senses suggested by Turner and Myerhoff. Most essentially, their analysis allows insight into the performers' own understanding of what it is to be a person in their societies. If these verbal forms help the Wanano to better understand the Wanano, it follows that they can help us to better understand them.

The paper discusses one ethnopoetic form known as the *kaya basa*, comprised of two Wanano words that gloss as "sad" and "song." I refer here to it by the term "lament." The *kaya basa* is a form of autobiographic narrative performed in a characteristic keening style. Women perform these spontaneous songs as one exchange in a ritual sequence of performative styles which together comprise the *Po?oa*,¹ a central exchange ceremony among intermarrying Eastern Tukanoan groups.

The songs are of particular interest for several reasons. While ceremonial weeping-as-greeting has been described for native South America, the immense corpus of narrative

material in lament songs has been unmentioned in the literature.² The traditional native wailing-song has been reported elsewhere in South America and is referred to as the "welcome of tears" by Wagley (1977), "songlike keening" by Seeger (1981:172) and "ritual wailing" by Urban (1988) and Graham (1986), though the material referred to does not usually entail lengthy personal narratives.³

Language and Exchange in the Northwest Amazon.

The Wanano constitute part of the Eastern Tukanoan family of languages located in the northwest Amazon, an area roughly delineated by the Uaupes River and its affluents along the Brazilian-Colombian frontier.⁴ Sorensen (1967) calls attention to the remarkable degree of multilingualism and language group exogamy among the peoples of the Northwest Amazon. He identifies 13 languages as members of the Eastern Tukanoan language family: Tukano, Tuyuca, Yuruti, Paneroa, Eduria, Karapana, Tatuyo, Barasana, Piratapuyo, Wanano, Desana, Siriano, and Kubeo. He then delineates four branches of the family, indicating relationships among the languages which form each branch: Tukano, Tuyuca, Yuruti, Paneroa, Eduria, Karapana, Tatuyo, and Barasana form one branch; Piratapuyo and Wanano form a second branch; Desana and Siriano form a third branch; and Kubeo, alone, a fourth branch. Sorensen suggests that the Eastern Tukanoan languages are less closely inter-related than languages of the Romance or Scandinavian groups.

The cluster of groups speaking Eastern Tukanoan languages constitutes one of the world's few stable multi-lingual societies. Of primary interest are the rules of linguistic exogamy, which produce an overarching unity among diverse and sometimes distant language groups so that approximately 10,000 Indians inhabiting some 250,000 km² are related either by kin or in-law ties. The result is a uniquely coherent culture complex, with unilineal descent and cross-cousin marriage major integrating structural principles.

In the Northwest Amazon, the fundamental marker of boundary maintenance is linguistic distinctness (Jackson 1974; 1983). Language is not only a symbol matrix; it is itself a symbol, a marker of identity and filiation. All exogamous units are descent-ordered and linguistically-identified, descent being coterminous with the language group. Marriage serves to link language groups to one another in in-law relation. In such a system, mono-communication is regarded as self-oriented, isolating, and incestuous. Multi-communication, in contrast, is viewed as other-oriented, sociable, and contractual (Chernela 1989, 1993).

Gender, and Language.

The incest regulation forbids marriage or sexual relations with a member of one's own language group and, conversely, requires that one marry into a different language group. Both language and women are objects of exchange: the first through dialogue, the second through marriage. As such, each is both a marker of differentiation and an agent of articulation.

Because of strict adherence to rules of patrilocality, males inhabiting the same settlement are members of one language group. In contrast, because of the rule of linguistic exogamy, all in-marrying females are necessarily speakers of other languages. (In the Wanano village of Yapima, in which I conducted fieldwork, the eight in-marrying wives spoke five different languages.) It is quite ordinary for two speakers to be engaged in a conversation in which each speaks his or her own language, since both females and males are multilingual. A child learns the languages of both his mother and father but is discouraged from speaking his mother's language as he matures.

Speaking competence and rhetorical skill are prized in father's language (the language of speaker's descent group) but public demonstration of one's mother's language is strongly sanctioned. With cross-cousin marriage⁵, spouses normally understand one another's languages, although they rarely speak them in public. Associated with life's two most intimate relations: mother/child and husband/wife, mother's language is equated with the

sphere of intimacy. Relatedly, from the male point of view, female speech is emotional, natural, and relegated to the domestic sphere; male speech, in contrast, is rational, social, and relegated to the public domain.

A female performance, then, occupies the liminal area between the public and the private. Rather than being in the center of the dance house, women's song exchanges occur on the periphery, in the company of women.

Such visits carry particular importance for women, since the visiting sib may include a woman's own relatives. These occasions evoke recollections of separation and recall the cadences of familiar speech associated with familiar speakers. Too, they may arouse sentiments of longing and ambivalent allegiances.

Kaya Basa

Women's lament songs (*kaya basa*) typically accompany the exchange ceremony (*po?oa*) which takes place when two in-law sib settlements visit one another.⁶

Such visits carry particular importance for women, since the visiting sib may include a woman's own relatives. These occasions evoke recollections of separation and recall the cadences of familiar speech associated with familiar speakers. Too, they may arouse sentiments of longing and ambivalent allegiances.

Each lament song forms part of a two-part song exchange which accompanies a beer exchange. The exchange is initiated by a woman of the hosting village as she serves beer to seated recipients. Approaching each seated participant in turn, she dips her gourd ladle into her store of beer and extends it to the recipient with her song. After drinking the full contents of the dish, the recipient is expected to return it to the donor with a return song. All songs are spontaneously composed, although many women have preferred and memorized verses.⁷

Among the Wanano, the *kaya basa* constitute a native class of songs bearing a name and sharing attributes of form and content. *Basa*, 'song' (pl. of *basaro*), is preceded by the descriptive *kaya*, which glosses as 'sad recollections,' or 'sad remembering.' The subject of the lament is typically loss and distance from loved ones. This dilemma, expressed through the conventional imagery of "wandering" and "mixing," to be discussed below, is distinctly female (Chernela 1988, 1993).

The subjects of these songs are women who describe themselves as sad (*buhawetiri koro*); alone (*mariani koro*: 'woman without'); detested (*yabiri koro*); envied (and therefore criticized) (*abiari koro*); ugly (*nyari koro*); sickly (*thipari koro*); not "chosen" (*ti beseweri koro*); wandering (*thinari koro*); or mixing (*su?sari koro*). The construction is, in each case, *koro*, signifying "woman," preceded by a modifier.

The goal of the performer is to cause the listener to weep. To this end, the singer conveys her own sadness through a number of technical and poetic devices. The Wanano combine three technical features, aspiration, voiced breathing, and glottal closure to produce a crying-like sound that dramatizes the singer's pathos.

Transcription and Translation

As Graham (1986) points out, transcription itself is a form of analysis. The task in translating native oral narrative into written form requires lexical, syntactic, and graphic decisions which satisfy both criteria of the original and the translated form. The final version must convey the intent of the original performance, yet be clear and understandable to English language readers.

In determining the representation of discourse units, such as lines, verses, and episodes, a number of principles are available: syntactic, semantic, lexical and paralinguistic. An ideal representation would capture in written form the intersection of the features that occur in actual performance, and retain some of the impact of the artistic work.

The song texts presented here were selected from approximately 200 hours of song and other vocal forms collected between the years 1978 and 1981 among the Wanano Tukano of the middle Uaupes River in Brazil.⁸ (Five songs are published in Chernela 1988 and 1993.) The songs were taped during exchange ceremonies in which the tape recorder was placed on the women's side of the dance house. Transcriptions and interlinear translations were prepared in the field.

I select my sample lament for the range of rhetorical devices it illustrates. The singer, Nicho, is recognized by the Wanano for her skill in the production of lament songs. The selection is based in part, too on the request by the singer Nicho that "her songs be heard in big cities." Her son tells her that "People will cry when they hear your song, Mother."

Nicho's Song

The song translated here was presented at a *Po?oa* ceremony in the Wanano village, Yapima, to a visiting Desana in-law sib. The singer is a Wanano female who sings in Wanano to a Desana sister-in-law. The song was performed at the women's side of the dance house and was overheard by an all-female group of nearby spectators.

This autobiographical account by Nicho, the highest-ranked Wanano, relates a significant transition point in her life, and an event of importance to all Wanano: the demise of her sib. As the last remaining member of the highest-ranked Wanano sib, Nicho has lost all temporal connection with her place. Attributing the deaths of her siblings to sorcery, she fears her own safety and flees to Yapima to seek the protection of a related Yahuri sib, and the assistance of a shaman who might counter the sorcery against her. She sings the following excerpted song after fleeing the settlement her sib had once dominated.

Nicho's song is twenty-two minutes in length. I have chosen to present excerpts of the song which illustrate principal narrative themes and devices.

At the outset, Nicho introduces two themes diagnostic to Wanano laments: isolation and displacement. Nicho describes herself as a woman without brothers (or sib-mates), who wanders:

- 6 A simple woman* [*indicates repetition]
Phakuori masono
- I am passing through
Thiniko niha
- A simple woman
Phakuori masono
- Without brothers*
Wuana mariako
- Like a horsefly
Nonana yoarose
- Whose eyes are plucked out
Khapari⁹ warirose
- Batting, I wander
Dokawa thiniko
- I am¹⁰ sad.
Yu phinita buha wetiko.

Nicho is now a literal and figurative wanderer. She compares herself to a horsefly, who, with its eyes plucked, flies here and there, "batting" or thrashing blindly about (*dokawa*). This implies movement not only in space, but also in time.

Nicho carefully apportions the episodes of her narrative, proceeding incrementally from the least toward the most emotionally laden. She slowly and artfully unfolds the tale of her predicament as a wanderer. The lines which follow invoke the ancestral names of her deceased kin and underscore the depth of her grief. Horipoko and Duhicho are Nicho's sisters, who died months before this song was sung:

My dear younger sisters¹¹
Yuka ba?ana numia

After Horipoko
Horipoko ba?arore

After Duhicho
Duhicho ba?arore

[With] great sadness
Phiro buha wetitjiako

In the village of my brothers
Ari makarinede yuka wuana

I pass through their midst
Kha'are thiniko niha

I am passing through
Thiniko niha

In this same passage Nicho introduces a central theme of the lament song: *kha?are*.

Kha?are refers to the state of "intermixing," or being "in the midst" of strangers, or "others."

Paye masono, (lit., "other people") refers to people who are different from self, alien, or strangers. It also refers to people of a different language group.

Embedded Speech¹²

A traditional lament song consists of a series of segmented discourse units or voice frames narrated in nonlinear sequence. The quotation device permits the singer to speak through numerous "mouthpieces," thus enhancing the personal and aesthetic impact of her song.

A singer communicates to the hearers through direct discourse, then shifts abruptly to cited speech within the same song. This produces a lamination of one frame -- a

"quotation," as it were -- upon another. In this way, passages may be attributed to different raconteurs.

"Mother, mother, you
Mama, Mama [Port.], muka, nihiphoko

After passing through his village
Ba?arore toka yamakare thiniko nina

My mother is passing through*¹³
Yu phoko thiniko nina*

My mother is of the ancestors
Yu phoko himare nyonkoro

That village [over there]
Ari maka

A woman who belongs to a village
Makari korota

A seated person
Duhimare

In our midst
Mari kha?are

My mother is sad
Yuka phoko buhawetire*

On account of her brothers (sib)
Toka wuana masa

After her brothers
Barore toka wuana"

Nicho's references to displacement in time and space reflect her changing position in the social order, from belonging to being displaced. Nicho, once a "belonging woman," (*makari korota*) and a "seated woman" (*duhimare*) is now a "mixer" (*su?sari masono*) who "passes through" (*thiniko*). *Makari korota*, an important concept which I translate as "a belonging woman," or member of a group, refers simultaneously to village (*makari*) and to group membership (*korota* female member of group) (Chernela 1988). *Duhimare* combines

the English "sitting" and "being." In Wanano belief, it is important to "sit" and "breathe" in the place where the ancestors "sat." The concept carries social, spatial, and temporal meaning. One who is seated is placed in space, in time, and in society. In contrast, *su?sari masono* glosses as "mixed one," a wanderer who has no stopping place. A *su?sari masono* resides in a settlement outside his or her own sib. Settlement relocation disrupts the correspondence between descent and locality, dividing residents into *makariro* and *su?sari masono* -- the "belonger" and the "mixer." Nicho, who might have spoken in the language of a "belonger," or "insider," now sings as a "mixer."

Through the device of the voice frame, as shown in the citation above, passages are attributed to different raconteurs. Here Nicho uses her son as a "mouthpiece" to attest to the tragedy of his mothers's predicament. As Nicho's husband is Desana, the woman to whom she sings is her son's aunt. Nicho has carefully chosen her Desana son to speak on her behalf to her Desana sister-in-law. The choice should be effective since the son is forced to accompany his mother into exile.

Internal voice frames within the performance may serve a variety of purposes. By singing "in the voice" of a speaker who is not present, such as a relative, the singer achieves the illusion of distance from the message and from the hearer. In this way the singer may increase her persuasive impact by calling upon authoritative "voices" as advocates. She also creates the illusion of distance between herself and the content of her song. This device is typically used to convey information heavily laden with affect such as shame or outrage. Abu-Lughod describes the way in which songs express hidden sentiments among Bedouin women. The use of "voices" enables the Tukano singer to "veil" or disguise, in the Abu-Lughod sense, her true sentiments.

Transitions from one narrator to another are signalled by specific utterances and intonational markers. A transition to new narrator begins with one of two grammatical

forms: 1) a term (or name) of relational address, followed or preceded by a possessive, or, 2) a form of the verb "to say."

Interlocking Narratives.

A singer may also embed one spokesperson's narrative within another's, thus creating the effect of a "voice-within-a-voice." An example of this is Nicho's citation of her father's voice in which is nested within a citation from her mother. The effect created is of one speaker's voice receding as another's comes forward.

"Mukuti Jaguar [Shaman, ancestral name]
Mukuti Yairo

I am your father, "
Hima?i musa phuku"

290Says* your mother
Niyuka, niyuka musa phokore,

Initiated woman¹⁴.
Masari masonore.

295Desana woman of the Simi seed sib
Khuamaipa Simi pero phonakorore

The ugly one,
Nyarikorore,

Of the people who mix
Masa su?sari masonore

300[My] daughter, my daughter
Mako, mako

"To you, woman of bone
Muputade toka khoarine

Moamechorede [ancestral, fem. name], Moamecho,

She changes places with you
Khototare muretade

Says, says my father.

Nikare, nikare puku

"Mukuti Yairo, I am your father." This said, a new frame is opened with the words "so speaks (*niyuka*) your mother," as the father cites the mother and then continues in his own voice.

Nicho invokes her father who identifies himself, initiates a frame with the word "so speaks," identifies the next speaker through a relationship term and provides one identifying phrase. Nicho's song figuratively describes her futile attempt to connect with her ancestry. The sense of belonging had emanated from temporal links connecting Nicho to her father and his fathers. Nicho assumes the persona of her dead father, invoking his sacred ancestral name. This phrase (literally) glosses as "Of the bones (*khoarine*) exchange(d) with you" (*khototare muretade*) and may be freely translated as "You succeed your forefathers, (now bone)."

The exchange referred to in the phrase *khototare muretade* is the process by which sib membership is passed from ancestor to descendant. To a Wanano the bearer of an ancestral name stands literally "in exchange" for that ancestor. *Biari khototaro* is ancestor Biari's "exchange," his incarnation in the present. *Khototaro*, "the exchanged one", derives from the verb stem used to describe other kinds of exchange, such as sister exchange, and song exchange. Ancestor and descendant are linked in a reciprocal relationship: each endows the other with life: the ancestor's name breathes life into its recipient, at the same time, through his living incarnation, the ancestor retains a vital role in the society (Chernela 1982).

Moreover, Nicho sings, *mure kotota dahpoha*, closely translated as "To you exchange head," but freely translated as "You received the position of leadership." *Dahpo* is a term which refers not only to the anatomical head, but also to one who "leads" as the head is seen to "lead" the body. Here Nicho refers to the senior position in the sib order which she received from her lineage predecessors.

Since the head is also the locus of speech, as one of the "heads," Nicho is expected to show eloquence in genres within her province. Alluding to rank, and speaking now with the authority of her father, she calls her mother a woman of breeding. The term *masariro*, glosses as "made one" and refers to one who has been initiated or "bred" in the sense of "well-bred." Her words recall the elevated rank of her ancestry.

Only as we near the end of the narrative does Nicho reveal the events which she anticipated at the beginning of her song:

365 Sister-in-law
Pasuro

Our poor brothers
Marika wuana

I went to see in the village
Yamakare thinu hitako

I went wandering
Yu mechu thinima?i

As if
Dohse¹⁵

Not one of us
Waerati marine

They are people who envy us
Thutina hirepade marine

They are killing us with smoke
380 Dohachu tinade marine

They are bad, they are
Nyano yoatima, hire

385 My sister-in-law
Yu Pasuro

The phrase "killing us with smoke," *marine dohachu tinade*, is composed of the words *marine* (to us), *dohachu*, to kill with smoke, and *tinade*, to eat. *Dohachu* refers to

sorcery performed through incantation with cigar smoke. It is to this sorcery that Nicho attributes the deaths of her sib-mates. Although she does not name the sorcerers, the listeners know their identities. They are members of a brother sib: thus, "as if they are not one of us." *Thutina*, which I translate as "rage" is a semantic domain combining the English notions of envy and blame. It is the conventional motive attributed to sorcerers, and Nicho and Nicho anticipates her own demise.

Underlying her words is the assumption that the demise of the Biari sib stems directly from sentiments of envy regarding the sib's high standing and related obligatory generosity. Nicho laments that the memory of the Biari, and their generous offerings to other sibs, has not been revered, and argues that history provides no basis for envy. Wishing to vindicate her sib by eliminating any cause for envy, Nicho recalls her sib's past generosity:

405

My Sister-in-law
Yu pasuro

To people that came
Masare tainare

Fish dip
Biato

410I offered those that came
Papoma?i noi tarirore

[A] calabash of manioc drink
Numuko wahaka

415[A] calabash of manioc flour
Phoka wahaka

I gave
Wama?i

My sister-in-law
Yu pasuro

420I also
Yu metede

Showed gratitude
Masarede wakhema?i

My sister-in-law
Yu pasuro

425 To you [I say]
Mure

When you die
Muko yariako nika

430 I will be sad
Yu khayakokare

My sister-in-law
Yu pasuro

In the village
Yamakare

On arriving
Surukako

435 After the Desana
Kunumu barota

I will cry
Yuka¹⁶ tikokari

440 You will cry
Mu tikokari

You
Mu

Meta-narration.

Meta-narration is a shift out of narrative time in which the performer calls the attention of the audience to the performance *as a performance* (Bauman 1986). These devices, often eliminated in translations, tell us much about the way the performer perceives the narrative as both message and as code. Bauman and Briggs (19) argue that in order to make more reliable use of native speaker's meta-level discourse on language we must regard performers and audience members not simply as sources of data but as intellectual partners

who can make substantial theoretical contributions to this discourse.

A number of meta-communicative statements tell us about the form.

After I, too [go/die] you will cry, you will cry
Barota yuku tikokari mu tikokari mu.

After seeing you, after hearing you, people will cry, mother.
Muka masa ba?aro nuku tire thuothiata tiakari inyokoro

Another line specifies a future audience and draws attention to the presence of the anthropologist, the tape recorder, and the possibilities of moving future audiences to sadness:

265 Some far off day
Dacho hoaku

In the big city
Phiri cidade¹⁷

Janet¹⁸ will hear your voice
Janet phini thuorokari mu dukerore

They will hear
Noa thuorokari

Mother,
Inyokoro

275¹⁹
Yu phinita

Mother, hearing you,
Inyokoro, mure thuoku

[They] Will be sad
Buha weti kukare

280 My mother
Yu phoko

Your voice, "
Mu Dukerore, "

Says my son,
Niyuka yu maku phinita

The line states: "Mother, (I am Desana): one day in the big city, Janet will hear your voice [=that which comes from your mouth]. On hearing it, the listeners will be saddened.

These lines clearly state the goals of the performance. The words, *mu dukerore*, "that which is from your mouth", should produce sadness (*buha weti kukare* = they will be sad); and crying, *tiakari*.

At this point Nicho repeats the invocation, now with embellishment. Its augmented repetition contributes to the power of the song's coherence.

180 My younger brother
Yuka bu?u

"My dear Mother, Mother
Inyo, inyo muka

People
Masa

185 After seeing this
Ba?aro nuku tire

Upon hearing
Thuothiata²⁰

They will cry
Tiakari

190 Dear mother²¹ my mother
Inyokoro, yu phoko, yu phoko"

The lines demonstrate the connective and causal role of the gerund-like form of verb, as this case *thuothiata*, which may be translated as "upon hearing," but also as "For having heard," clearly demonstrating the implied cause-and-effect. The influence is effected through seeing (*nuku*), and hearing (*thuoku*). The power lies in "that which is from your mouth" (*mu dukerore*), and the desired result is sadness (*buha weti kukare*: they will be sad) as evidenced by *tiakari* (crying). If a song "works," it will cause its listeners to cry.

Nicho's predicament does not typify the lives of most lament singers. However, the song excerpted here demonstrates some of the themes and rhetorical devices which characterize the lament song genre.

Conclusion

Sherry Ortner paraphrases a fundamental assumption in anthropology that "In order for human beings to operate within any given reality, they must have an ongoing sense of what that reality is all about, what it 'means,' how it is to be conceptualized and felt about in order to be acted upon" (1975:133). Societies produce models of their own situations, then live and define roles according to these models. As Ortner states, "A culture is the system of such publicly and collectively subscribed-to models operating for a given group at a given period of time -- the system of terms, forms, categories, images, and the like which function to interpret a people's own situation to themselves" (1975:133)

The Wanano *kaya basa* (lament song) is key to understanding the system of terms, forms, categories, and images, by which the Wanano interpret themselves.

NOTES

¹The orthographic symbol ? is used throughout this manuscript to indicate a glottal stop.

² The musical form of wailing-song has been reported elsewhere in South America and is referred to as "songlike keening" by Seeger (1981:172) and "ritual wailing" by Urban (1988) and Graham (1986). The first to report a weeping-greeting was Wagley (1977) who gave it the name a "Welcome of tears." Feld's work for New Guinea (1982) has been a major contribution toward a world-wide examination of the lament or wailing-song form.

³An argument can be made that the Wanano women's lament is an extended embellishment of the more widespread "welcome of tears." This theory is supported by a number of observations: first, the songs are stylistically similar to the other "keening" forms; second, the locus of the lament in the context of ceremonial visit suggests that they are functionally and emotionally similar.

⁴The cluster of Eastern Tukanoan-speaking societies is bounded on the north, south, and northeast by Arawakan groups and to the West by Cariban groups. These neighboring groups occasionally enter the Tukano system of extra-tribal marriage (Chernela 1989).

⁵Two forms of cross-cousin marriage are, from the male point of view, marriage to father's sister's daughter, or marriage to mother's brother's daughter. (These may be the same individual.) In the first case, the woman's mother's language is the equivalent of her spouse's paternal, and "official," language. In the second case, the wife speaks husband's own mother's language as her public, and official language.

⁶Lament songs may also be performed when two brother sibs meet, though such meetings are less ceremonious and don't necessarily involve these or other ritual songs.

⁷Because of the informal atmosphere surrounding the song performance, many songs are

interrupted before completion.

⁸Between 1978 and 1985 the work was carried out in Brazil. Since that time I have been working with a linguistic informant-assistant and have made periodic return visits.

⁹I have used an *h* to indicate aspiration.

¹⁰Emphatic form.

¹¹In the above excerpt Nicho addresses a portion of her audience. The "younger sisters" she refers to are her Uanano kinswomen. As the highest ranked Uanano, all women in Nicho's age group will be called younger sister by her, since "younger" denotes less senior in the terminological system.

¹²Embedded quotation as a speech style is reported for several groups of the South American highlands. Adelaar (1990), for example, finds the use of quotations within quotations among Araucanian and Quechua speakers. Basso (1986) reports its use among Kalapalo speakers in the Xingu basin of Brazil.

¹³An asterix (*) indicates that a line is repeated.

¹⁴Literally, "made woman," can also be translated as well-bred woman; according to informants, refers most closely to one who has been initiated.

¹⁵"*Dose*" an important term which signals a comparison. It translates as "like," or "as if."

¹⁶Diminutive, "poor me".

¹⁷*Cidade*: Portuguese borrowing for "city."

¹⁸Emphatic form.

¹⁹Emphatic, as "do declare."

²⁰A gerund-like form which conveys, "upon hearing," or, "for having heard."

²¹Diminutive, affectinate.

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