

## Chapter 16

# The White Monkey and the *Pelejo* Monkey: Primates in the Social and Cultural Configurations of the Shawi People of Northwestern Peru



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### 16.1 Introduction

The Shawi of the upper Peruvian Amazon, also known as Chayahuitas, have an ample relation with their environment. However, the presence of monkeys in Shawi domestic spaces is practically null, possibly because of the fact of low densities of primates in that region and acculturation. The Shawi tend to avoid animals inside their dwellings, while sometimes dogs, which are used as hunting companions, are allowed staying in home premises. This is because they consider that entities of the forest should remain there. Thus, most monkeys, like many other animals at home, are then placed as food sources.

### 16.2 The Shawi of the Upper Amazon

Chayahuita is perhaps the most common name used in the literature as an exonym applied by the local *mestizo* population to them. In their own language, they prefer to use Shawi as their autonym or self-denomination. They belong to the Kawapana linguistic family (Rojas-Bercia 2013). The Shawi occupy an area that extends between the eastern Andean mountains and the upper western Amazonian basin (Renard-Casevitz et al. 1988). Today, their territory extends for more than 10,000 km<sup>2</sup> that combines plains with hills and valleys and a complex hydrographic system dominated by the presence of three major rivers: the Paranapura, the Cahuapanas, and the Sillay (Fig. 16.1). Part of this vast territory, traveled by the Spaniard Alonso de Mercadillo in 1538 (Golob 1982), is entitled under the Peruvian

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**Fig. 16.1** Location of the Shawi territory in the Upper Amazon of Peru. (Base map: Wiki Commons)

law to native and peasant/creole communities, having been demarcated and recognized by the Ministry of Agriculture at the request of the communities themselves. At present, their population is approximately around 21,000 Shawi people (Rojas-Bercia 2013) spread in more than 90 communities throughout their territory. It is interesting to point out that the archaeological complex of Balsapuerto (900 BP–1200 AD) (Rivas-Panduro 2014) is located within today's Shawi territory. At this moment, this territory is also a region of touristic interest and where several archaeological research projects are currently carried out. Within this cultural complex stands out in importance the Stone of Cunpanama, a landmark of ample cultural relevance among Shawi.

The Shawi are horticulturalists and gatherers, hunters and fishers, and inhabitants of an ecologically poor area, marked by the scarcity of animals due to the extreme hunting of people linked to logging and oil companies. In this regard, their diet is basically concentrated in the intake of small fishes, medium rodent species such as the *majs* (lowland paca, *Cuniculus paca*), some monkeys, corn, bananas, and manioc. In fact, this last tuber crop is the most essential food in their diet. With manioc or cassava, they make *masato* (manioc fermented drink), which is popularly consumed among many native peoples of the forest and even among the nonindigenous population. In the case of the Shawi, it also has a special symbolic value in addition to the purely nutritional one. The Shawi *masato*, undoubtedly, is one of the most important elements of the social life of this society.

The Shawi are today considered Christians (Roman Catholics), as they were named as “old Christians” in the Marañón Missions (Figuroa 1904; Chantre Herrera 1901), and their festive calendar is actually the calendar of Catholic holidays (Fuentes 1988). There is no community without a church, and they like to differentiate themselves from the *Awajun* (another ethnic group also known as Aguarunas or Jivaros that are their neighbors and likely alleged enemies), among other indigenous peoples of the area like the *Shiwilu* or *Jebero*, the first Amerindians to be evangelized in the region, and today assimilate by the local *mestizo* society (Joulu 2006), having a language of similar Shawi stock (Grohs 1974). This has not led the Shawi, however, to leave aside their indigenous traditional cultural heritage, as expressed in rituals such as the first menstruation of women or the initiation into the animal world by men (González-Saavedra 2013). The Shawi value showing their particular universe, their special way of conceiving the world, of conceiving themselves within a universe of beings (some of them humans, some not) with which they share their essentiality, their ontological being. It is this particular way of understanding the Shawi conception of themselves together with the beings that inhabit their surroundings, from which this chapter is going to show both, the place and the task, that they had in the beginning of the times of this society: two “primate characters” such as the *white* and the *pelejo* monkeys.

### 16.3 Primates and the Shawi

There is no doubt that forest animals are found everywhere within the Shawi universe. The world of the *campo piyapi* (“us”, “us the Shawi,” or “our people” in Shawi language [Ochoa 2008]) is a human space that cannot be conceived if it is not in continuity with that of the *tanán huayan* or “people” of the forest, where also animals are included. With this qualification, the Shawi refer to a range of beings living outside the space of *campo piyapi*. It includes animals but also other beings (some human and some not) with whom Shawi have different forms of interaction such as “spirits of the forest.”

There are eight species of monkeys under Linnaean taxonomy recognized by the Shawi and four other species of arboreal mammals that are also recognized under their category of “monkey” (Table 16.1). As can be seen in Table 16.1, some of the animals classified as monkeys that do not correspond to primates in Linnaean classification are included as such because of their arboreal life and their similar feeding habits of “Linnaean primates.” For example, the brown-throated three-toed sloth (*Bradypus tridactylus*) is one of those cases. All these arboreal species, like the rest of the forest animals, are also considered “people” by the Shawi, with particular customs and habits. The word “people” is commonly used along the Amazon, as giving the forest life a sense of broad humanity, where it is nature (not culture) that separates species. They celebrate their holidays as Shawi celebrate the *campo piyapi*, they have their own meals and drinks and also their traditional clothes, and sometimes they appear before us with the same appearance as our relatives and with

**Table 16.1** Classification of “monkeys” according to the Shawi of the Upper Amazon (after Emmons 1990, García-Paredes 1994, González-Saavedra pers. obs.)

Name	Size	Color	Edible	Characteristics
Achuni (shu'shu) <sup>a</sup> <i>Nasua nasua</i> Coati	High: 15 cm Long: 50 cm Width: 10 cm	Black	Yes	–
Mono Blanco (ahui') <i>Cebus albifrons</i> White-headed capuchin monkey	H: 17 cm L: 40 cm W: 9 cm	White and brown	Yes	It is very naughty; it breaks everything it sees
Coto (nu'nu) <i>Alouatta seniculus</i> Red howler monkey	H: 20 cm L: 70 cm W: 13 cm	Scarlet	Yes	When it is going to rain it screams
Chosna (cuhuasha') <i>Potos flavus</i> Kinkajou	H: 13 cm L: 45 cm W: 9 cm	Ash	Yes	–
Choro (suni') <i>Lagothrix flavicauda</i> Yellow-tailed woolly monkey	H: 20 cm L: 70 cm W: 13 cm	Black	Yes	Men do not eat their tail because when they go out to hunt it, this monkey gets entangled in the branches of the trees
Huapo (tequerenan) <i>Pithecia monachus</i> Monk saki monkey	H: 12 cm L: 50 cm W: 9 cm	Black and ash	Yes	–
Leoncito (ishi') <i>Cebuella pygmaea</i> Pygmy marmoset	H: 7 cm L: 12 cm W: 6 cm	Black	Yes	–
Maquisapo <i>Ateles paniscus</i> Black spider monkey		Black		Only some are left in the mountains
Musmuqui (cuhui') <i>Aotus nancymaae</i> Nancy Mae's night monkey	H: 11 cm L: 30 cm W: 7 cm	Ash	Yes	The musmuqui makes a living at night and sleeps for the day. The pregnant woman cannot eat musmuqui. In the morning, this monkey is sleeping, and at night it wakes up crying
Pichico (isën) <i>Saguinus fuscicollis</i> Saddleback tamarin	H: 10 cm L: 30 cm W: 7 cm	Brown	Yes	–
Pelejo (tihuín) <i>Bradypus variegatus</i> Brown-throated three-toed sloth	H: 22 cm L: 60 cm W: 18 cm	White and black	Yes	With the claws it is fastened to the ropes of the trees and to sleep does it with the head down; when going up is clinging to the branches of the trees or to the lianas. When a person eats a <i>pelejo</i> , he does not die, because the <i>pelejo</i> is hard to die
<i>Shihui (suruntë)</i> <i>Tamandua mexicana</i> Collared anteater or southern tamandua	H: 16 cm L: 45 cm W: 13 cm	Black and ash	Yes	It walks very slowly. When the woman eats her flesh during pregnancy, the baby becomes sick while the newborn's ribs penetrates his/her body a lot; it breathes quickly and dies

<sup>a</sup>Denomination in Shawi language

intentions to guide us and help us in our walks or in our outings to the mountains and forests. On other occasions; however, their presence is a sign of illness or death. Among those animals, there are boas, jaguars, peccaries, and birds such as parrots or toucans. There is also the *shapsico*, half animal-half man, and the *tunchi*, which presents to humans like skeletons, or the *shansho* (*Opisthocomus hoazin*; hoatzin or stinkbird), which is a pestilent and solitary bird that announces death. *Shapshico* is a fairly popular character in the forest, not only in indigenous areas but also among the coastal people (also named *mestiza*) living in the region where this study was carried out, a rather small being with hat, gnawed shirt and pants, and with his feet pointing backward in the opposite direction to its body. This last feature is the most relevant characteristic of this being which is particularly feared because it is a kidnapper. *Tunchi* is described as the “forest spirits.”

## 16.4 The White Monkey and the Sloth or *Pelejo* Monkey

The white-headed capuchin monkeys or *ahui* (*Cebus albifrons*) are also the forest “people” among the Shawi. They have such a noisy and restless character that provoke the god *Cunpanama*, the most relevant Shawi deity, to divide the land between the Shawi and the Jíbaro Awajun, giving to the latter a larger territory. For that reason, white-headed capuchin monkeys happen to be associated to the *gringo* (Americans) and Europeans, or whitish-skinned and pink-faced foreigner, an archetype that includes Westerner persons today.

On the other hand, the popular sloth or *pelejo* (brown-throated three-toed sloth) is classified as a monkey. Sloths are named *Tihuín*. The *pelejo* monkey, for example, has its particular characteristics because of *Apu* (a Quechua word that means person with authority in the community) as the ability “to see” (which is also called the power of shamans to achieve a connection with what is beyond natural, equivalent to having visions), which made it possible for the Shawi people to be saved from their own disappearance back in the early days. Undoubtedly, the *pelejo* was the first great shaman or *pënoton* among Shawi. *Pelejo* made it possible for the people to be saved and for the wealth of this people to be preserved to our time. For this, as seen below, it had to make the decision to turn many of these people into animals to feed today’s Shawi men and women. Those women and men have to respect these animals as people. Also, they must appear before their “mothers” prior to hunting them, without petting them or killing them indiscriminately. These are nowadays the guidelines of a so-called good Shawi hunter.

The Shawi view and qualify the *pelejo* by the concept that they use, as a monkey, but also a being that is solitary, taciturn, and feeds on leaves and herbs, with claws that serve as a defense element. Thus, the Shawi perceive the sloth monkey as a predator over its own predators, which are the harpy eagle and jaguar. It is not to appear as an animal of agile and strong defense like the other monkeys. The *pelejo* is a being that uses silence as a mechanism of defense. Just like Shawi shamans, the *pelejo* are silent, taciturn, and needy of their medicinal plants which include tobacco. Also, among those relevant plants, the hallucinogenic *ayahuasca* (*Banisteriopsis caapi*) is widely

used by various western Amazonian societies. It is the mother plant that allows them to have a particular and powerful vision of the world. This plant is also one that monkeys used in early times of the Shawi and thanks to which they were able to perpetuate as a group to the present. In this chapter I would like to develop a narrative on the role of these two relevant beings, the white monkey and the *pelejo* monkeys, according to the Shawi social and cultural configuration.

## 16.5 The *Huito* tree and the Hunguyacu Hill: The Actions of the White Monkey

The Shawi tell that in the days of their ancient times, there was within their territory a tree called *huito* (*Genipa americana*) so large and leafy that it shaded all their lands without allowing the sun to grow the fruits of their gardens. In need of food, they decided to ask *Cunpanama'* to cut this tree. *Cunpanama'* gathered around him carpenter birds, monkeys, parrots, and other animals, and next to them he prepared to turn it down. But so hard and tall was that *huito* that the ax of *Cunpanama'* ended up breaking. To fix it, it sent the white monkey to his house for tar. There was his wife who, seeing the white monkey arriving, asked him to accompany her so that he could see for himself at the source of his tar. She showed the monkey her vagina. Thus, the white monkey took so long to return that *Cunpanama'* went back to his house to see what could be happening. When he arrived, he found the white monkey over his wife "bothering" her, that is, having sex with her. *Cunpanama'* gets so angry when he discovers the scene that his fury causes the white monkey to run away so fast that he almost disappeared. The wrath of *Cunpanama'* cursed him thus making him a monkey so that the men would get used to eating them, and, besides, with so much anger it was that delayed *Cunpanama's* return to the *huito*. Once *Cunpanama* returned, he discovers that the tree had already been cut, but not as he had ordered, but in the opposite direction. The branches that should go up were looking down, and the crown of the tree had given rise to the creation of a remote and abrupt hill. The erroneous fall of the *huito* also gave rise to the creation of narrow gorges, for which, however, the Awajun and the *mestizos* would soon enter their territory, not only abducting their members but also stealing Shawi lands.

Seeing such a disaster, *Cunpanama'* decided to retire into the hill created by the fall of the *huito* tree, which was named Hunguyacu hill. Once there, saddened by the action of the white monkey, it climbed the hill with tears in his eyes and some encapsulated fruits stored in his *shicra* (bags made from chambira palm, *Astrocaryum chambira*) as his only food. From those fruits, *Cunpanama'* would actually create the Shawi. And from his tears, they say, created the Awajun (Aguarunas or Jivaros) who appeared by their rivers kidnapping their wives and occupying Shawi lands. This is how the Shawi were created: the result of *Cunpanama's* tremendous anger caused by the white monkey.

This narrative serves to the Shawi as an account for both the disposition of their territory and their own creation as human beings. The time in which the narrative is

placed, the time of the ancients, is nevertheless a time still determined by a basic principle which is repeated with insistence in the references to previous generations of the Shawi as “when the animals were people... and the people animals.” This served to configure Shawi’s space and universe as it is known by them today.

The myth of the fallen *huito* tree gives entrance to the first great transformation of the Shawi past: the conversion of animals into people and also people into animals. This means that up to those times, animals and people shared the same ontological status. This aspect, precisely, is what was broken after the action of the white monkey. At that period when there was no difference between the beings that inhabited the earth, the white monkey was a protagonist of a series of stories that combine the teachings with the determination of several principles that today are considered main references of the social norms of Shawi coexistence. For example, the white monkey taught to build houses; in addition, with his transvestite and mischievous attitude (like the one he showed to *Cunpanama*’s wife), he perpetuated a basic rule of Shawi society: respect for their women, especially if they belong to another man. The actions of the white monkey, on the other hand, earned him the designation of a concrete nature, the nature of today’s white-headed capuchin monkey. And at the same time, they formed a nation that, since that time, all beings were people that stand territorially and culturally between these two human groups: *Awajun* and *mestizo*.

But among the Shawi, who is the white monkey? It is an animal that annoyed *Cunpanama*’s wife, provoking his anger, and turns into a white person with a slightly pink face, someone who used to “bother” Shawi women and at the same time enjoyed learning how their ancestors built their houses. For this, also in times when the animals still were people, the white monkey went into a house pretending to be nice. There they gave this monkey shelter, until its mischief again forced the women to cover the monkey with a basket. Even so, the white monkey continued to enjoy looking at the roofs of Shawi houses, the weaving of its branches and its crosshairs. The women put baskets on baskets seeing that the white monkey was not but enjoyed and felt curiosity by their houses. They almost kill him by suffocation. Then they let him out. And so, it was, as the Shawis tell nowadays, how the monkey learned to build these houses that they build now thanks to the white monkey’s teachings.

It is not especially difficult – though not lacking in audacity – to combine Shawi’s past times with the history that appears in the written sources of the first years of contact between white and indigenous people. In this respect, the combination of the two previous stories (the one of the *huito* and the other that shows how the white monkey learned to build houses) could well sustain a reading on the colonization that arrives and breaks the basic fundamental norms of coexistence (like “getting in” with their women) of the indigenous peoples while at the same time contributing with new materials and ideas that are consolidated over the years in such a way that they are rooted in the primary history of the whole, the one that is situated in the ancient times. Thus, “the white monkey is just like you, missed, like a *gringo*.” This response was repeated to the author in different occasions and asking about those people who became a white monkey after *Cunpanama*’s anger when meeting his

wife. That was the white monkey: that noisy, transgressive being who lived in the trees, walked along its branches with its white and brown hair, and ate the leaves without any other need, never touching the ground.

The importance of this animal, and only this one, is that it is identified with the white men. If the Shawi are asked why the white monkey became a *gringo*, they will surely answer that because he is white as foreigners. It upset *Cupanama'* and pushed him up to Hunguyacu Hill. Actually *Cupanama'* lives there since that moment, according to the Shawi. He entered that land with his wife and later facilitated the inclusion of foreign peoples. To this day, the Awajun are the main alleged enemies of the Shawi, and even today both nations continue to dispute over those territories that were outside the natural disposition originally occupied by *Cunpanama'* because of the white monkey. But there is something else, because it was in the wake of this ill-concealed *huito*, when *Cunpanama'* announces another transcendental fact for the life of the ancient Shawi: the arrival of men, in some versions, the arrival of the Christians, a reason for which many Shawi would be transformed into animals that served as food for those Christians.

In fact, the myth about the tree of the *huito* does not end with the definitive retreat of the creator god to Hunguyacu hill, from where *Cunpanama'* created the Shawi. He, after wiping his tears and giving shape to them, decided to return again to the place where the tree was placed originally. That was when the following happened: "Returning *Cunpanama'* from the place where the *huito* tree was, his canoe cap-sized. This is why he left again and went to the Cahuapanas River and kept marching up to the last hill. So he went to weep, and looking down from the very top of the hill, he called all the beasts of the mountain and said to them: You, from this moment will be animals so that the men can eat you. They are about to come." This end, as we also said above, can easily lead us to make a translation of what was collected in written sources about the first contacts between indigenous peoples and the white man: the appearance of the Spaniards by their rivers, the territorial displacements, the abuse of their women, and even the appearance of the Awajun that were gaining ground throughout the centuries placing themselves in the same whereabouts as the Shawi. Until today, there is a territorial struggle between them, a struggle that clearly started, as observed, with the arrival of Christianity. At this point emerges the first major transformation of the Shawi past, a transformation from animals to people and people to animals. From here begins the entrance of the *pelejo* monkey and its transcendental role in the Shawi culture.

## 16.6 When Animals Became People: The *Pelejo* Monkey and Its Power of Vision

There are several stories in the Shawi mythological repertoire that reflects the transformation of animals into people. In this section the protagonist is the *pelejo* (sloth), which is also accompanied by other monkeys such as the *maquisapo* (black spider monkey) and the *chosna* (kinkajou). It must be said that the leading role of the



*pelejo* is granted by the creator god *Cunpanama'*. From here, the role traditionally occupied by *Cunpanama'* is then attained by the *pelejo* monkey's hands, now referred to as *Apu* (or *Hu'an* in Shawi language). A new era emerged on this change.

As the *Apu* became the highest authority of a Shawi community, a community which is usually made up of a large group of relatives where women will only get together with men who are not in the same line of consanguinity, the Shawi is thus a matrilineal society. The person who looks after the welfare of a group of families, which is a community, is the *Apu*. And this is how the *pelejo* is recognized in the myths that tell about the historical transformation of animals. It means, at the end, that this transformation actually explains the sociability of the *canpo piyapi*.

But how is this transformation? A Shawi informant explained in this way: "Formerly the *Apu*, was the *pelejo*, the sloth; he had in his house a hammock where he would lie down all day, and from there he would command his people. He was the one who knows everything. By that time men were to be transformed into animals, the *pelejo* was at home; there were also other authorities like the *maquisapo* (black spider monkey); but the major authority was the *pelejo*, the sloth. He knew very well that the god *Cunpanama'* was going to bring in new people. Then they, according to story, say that they will be transformed into animals so that new Christians who are about to come will eat them. Thus, they would serve as food to feed them. Being the whole group together, the *pelejo* monkey communicates to them: That certain day a transformation will occur. At this moment, each of them, the *chorito* (yellow-tailed woolly monkey), the black monkey (spider monkey), the white-headed capuchin monkey, their women, and others, started to gather cotton to make their *pampanilla* (traditional Shawi women skirt) so that when they become animals, then they can carry their babies. Women were the first ones to start collecting the cotton. All the animals worried about gathering enough cotton, all of them except the marsupial and the *chosna* [kinkajou]. They say that the *chosna* was lazy and spent the day doing nothing, while the other monkeys and other animals collected cotton and wove *pampanillas*. When finished, it was the time announced by the chief: the sloth. Meanwhile, the spider monkey was in charge of requesting the gathering. Together they took *ayahuasca* (the hallucinogenic *Banisteriopsis caapi*). By taking that plant, they transformed. Everyone took it, got "drunk," and from there the transformation occurred, and they became animals."

Everyone by then had their own *pampanilla*, except the *chosna* (kinkajou). What to do? How are you going to carry your babies? *Chosna* (kinkajou) has not made his *pampanilla* because of its laziness, so it will have to carry the babies using its mouth and teeth; and until today the *chosna* carries them out just like that. The same occurred with the marsupials that were forced to carry their offspring inside their belly.

In the meanwhile, at the communal house they were also ready to transform. Some became white, tall, white monkeys, just like the *gringos*. The black monkeys would transform into *choros* (yellow-tailed woolly monkey). "You into squirrel monkey, you in squirrel... you are going to eat pure *chambira* (*Astrocaryum chambira*)

and nothing else. You, -they say, into the *isula* or bullet ant (*Paraponera clavata*) you are going to sting people without killing anyone. You a viper (*Bothrops asper*), you are going to bite them and suddenly they are going to die. Just like the boa: you're going to hunt Christians and swallow them. So did with everyone. At twelve o'clock they were all transformed."

On another occasion and under the effect of *ayahuasca*, when they were dancing, the *pelejo*, who was actually the boss, was accidentally pushed by a lady. At that point the boss grabbed the woman by her arm and told her: "You're going to be old too, and as a woman, you're going to be older than your husband. You're going to grow up faster; you will have lots of kids and will get old quickly. And you (to the man standing beside her), as a man, will slowly grow up, even if you are eating too much. You're not going to grow old so fast." He blew a spell on them and spread his will all over the group. So, at present days, Shawi women have one child, and they already feel like they want to die, while watching their breasts getting saggy. As to the male, when they are 35 or 40, they still feel young and healthy.

This is how things happened in ancient or mythological times. By midnight they were already changing; they take that plant and also had coffee: they say they take it abundantly so that with its help, they could be transformed (W. Chanchari [Río Sillay], 2006, personal communication). The first societal codes appear with this myth: a system of authorities, a set of rules and behaviors, and tasks differentiated by gender. The ability to contact with *Cunpanama'* and the power of vision, so characteristic of a shaman, also appeared. The Shawi society as we know it today had its inception at this point. A group of beings became a society. The distinction between animals and persons is already a reality, and the characters that define men and women are already set (on the notion of "person" in Amazonian indigenous societies, see, for example, Carneiro da Cunha 1978; Hugh-Jones 1979; Taylor 1996, 2000; Erikson 1996; Goulard 1998; Gow 1991; Surrallés 2002; Surrallés and García-Hierro 2004). The idea of the white monkey that tempted the wife of *Cunpanama'* was a white man is confirmed. Here it is observed how he becomes a *gringo*.

With this transformation, the Shawi actually step away from the world of nature. Something that, in a parallel reading, can also be interpreted as distancing from the "gentility" and a more or less receptive approach to the Christian doctrines. So, it is relevant not to forget the announcement of *Cunpanama'* on the Hunguyacu hill because the men (Christians) are to come. This is, in fact, what historical sources tell us that actually happened. The Shawi, converted into Christians, "into people," moved away from what is "gentile," where they automatically place the alleged Awajun enemies.

In this way, after the conversion directed by sloth "people" became part of the world of human beings, the rest happens to be part of a society that remains under the expression "when they were people." That is, they became part of the world of the ancients. Now, these people do not disappear. They only change the way they appear today.

## 16.7 Conclusion

The fact that the Shawi rely in both, the white monkey and the *pelejo* (sloth), to give their own notion of society leads to suppose that it is on them, and not in other animals of their own environment, where they placed a greater degree of humanization and actions. In other words, with the white-headed capuchin and the brown-throated three-toothed-sloth, the Shawi considered themselves to have a greater degree of similarity with. But this is not simple or even obvious. All animals of the forest, practically without exception, have a certain similarity with the people, in this case with the Shawi, a similarity based in the most vital aspect: their humanity. They are all human beings but also particular bodies that make them appear to be different. This, likely, seems to be another example of Amazonian perspectivism (e.g., Viveiros de Castro 1998). Certainly, the physiognomy of some species of monkeys can best match a person's body, but this does not appear to concern the Shawi. Shawi defend that one's body is what makes them appear specifically different and not their humanity itself.

The white-headed capuchin monkey and the *pelejo* monkey, however, seem to contribute to the Shawi cosmogony with a degree of sophistication in their humanity, something that leads them from "animality to society." In one case, it is the white man, with its colonization process, and in the other, it is that of their own concept of self.

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