Rage, Revenge, and Religion:

Honest Signaling of Aggression and

Non-aggression in Waorani Coalitional Violence.[1]

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Abstract

Until recent contact, the Waorani of eastern Ecuador engaged in a vicious cycle of revenge killing in which men responded to the death of kin by attacking their enemies. Yet their language, Wao tededö, lacks a label for the concept of 'revenge killing.' Apparently, a social pattern of revenge killing is not dependent on the recognition of 'revenge' as an abstract category – revenge need not be an overt cultural construction to be acted upon. This article explores this and other aspects of Wao ethnopsychology as they relate to the perpetuation and cessation of coalitional violence. It interprets Wao ethnopsychology in the light of Frank's (1988) account of emotions as honest signals of human commitment to social contracts. We argue that emotional displays of rage and the threat of retaliatory violence may deter an initial assault, but serve to lock antagonists into an endless cycle of violence once it has started. One needs a means to convey a message contrary to the enraged emotional one – an honest signal of one's commitment to end feuding. In the Waorani case, conversion to Christianity helped play this role.

"A bushmaster bit young Kogï and he died on the spot. Imä, his father, said, "Wäawæ is a sorcerer. He drank *ayahuasca* and caused this!" Imä and Äwä had always said they were going to spear my father Wäawæ. They came upriver and spear-killed my father Wäawæ, Nemonka, Omænæ, Minkaye, Möipa, Kiwa, several other men and the women. They let Nampai go because he was a cross cousin to one of the spearers. Imä, Äwä, Mæñiwæ̈, Nænkemö, Wäiwa, Omaka and Iitomö are the ones who killed my father.

When the spearing happened, we fled in all directions, making new clearings to live. We ended up fleeing with Nampai. Soon thereafter Dayö died of snakebite downriver from us, so her brother and a huge number of men came up and recruited Nampai, the one Imä had let go earlier, to join them to go spear Äwä, Iitomö and those others in return. They killed Iitomö, but Äwä escaped wounded and made it to his relatives.

So we had to flee again, downriver and far across land. But Äwä and Äwäñetæ̈ found us, burst into the house and killed Nampai's young son Wäanæ. Again, Nampai escaped, only slightly wounded. It was just the two of them, Äwä and Äwäñetæ̈, who came and speared. I was sleeping in the garden or they would have killed me too. We fled again, but they found us, kept destroying our gardens, and then came in force to kill us.

Baï, Owæ, Wiidä and Tiwä killed Gawæ̈ along with Wedæ

while inviting them to a feast. The women Omatoki and Boyogömæ̈

helped kill them. Then they said, "Let's go after Wäawæ [Geketa's

nephew, grandson of Geketa's father Wäawæ] and Wamoñe, since

they are Gawæ̈'s close relatives." Baï, Owæ, Tiwä, and Kemontade

went and spear-killed them and wounded Gamë, my sister, in the

abdomen. They also killed Päa and Yiko, both toddlers. Nemonka,

this Anä sitting there, and Oba escaped.

I said, "Let us wait for a while so they think we're all dead.

Then we will go kill them." Nampa, Nænkiwi, Kemö, Dabo,

Nemonka [grandson of the Nemonka killed with Wëwä] and I then

went to kill Imä who had killed my father. I killed Kawiya, and told

Kemö to grab Dawä, Imä's daughter, for a wife. Nampa also killed

two toddlers like those Baï had killed, Tiwä's kids. We killed two

hands of people in all."   Geketa

Until recent peaceful contact, the Waorani of eastern Ecuador were engaged in a vicious

cycle of revenge killing in which men responded to the death of kin by attacking their enemies.

Although the oldest members of the community at the time of contact could remember periods of

peace interspersed with periods of violence in their youth, the Waorani had been convulsed with a

nearly continuous period of raids and vengeful counter-raids for at least four decades prior.

According to Wao oral history, the alternation of periods of violence and periods of peace stretch

back as far as they can remember. Tracing back through the genealogies, over 60% of the deaths

were violent ones (Yost, 1981). Wao oral history is filled with tales of these cycles of violence, such as Geketa's story above. Yet, their language, Wao tededö, lacks labels for the concept of 'revenge killing,' referring to it simply as "*wænongantapa*" ['killed'] or "*tænongantapa*" ['speared']. This lack of a term does not mean that the Waorani cannot express the idea of revenge. Retaliation can be indicated by simple juxtaposition (e.g*, "Äwä ingante Wëwä idongä wængantapa. Monitö Wëwä ingante wænomoni wængakäimpa*" ['Wëwä bewitched Äwä, he died. We killed Wëwä, he died']); by the term *beyæ̈* ['on behalf of'] (e.g., "*Äwä beyæ̈ Wëwä ingante wænomoni wængakäimpa*" ['On behalf of Äwä, we killed Wëwä, he died']); or by the addition of the suffix *wo* ['to pass on'] to the verb *tænö* ['spear'] (e.g., "*Tænöwogadanimpa*" ['They passed on spearing']).[2] Nevertheless, all these ways of indicating revenge involve the use of more general descriptive terms; no single term is semantically equivalent to the English term "revenge."[3] Apparently, a social pattern of revenge killing is not dependent on the recognition of "revenge" as an abstract category; revenge need not be an overt cultural construction to be acted upon.[4]

Overview

Here, we explore this and other aspects of Wao ethnopsychology as they relate to the perpetuation and cessation of coalitional violence. We start with a brief description of the ethnographic setting. We then turn to a discussion of Wao ethnopsychology, the social schemata that the Waorani use to interpret emotions (what Lazarus (1991) calls core relational themes), and the ways in which emotions can serve as reliable signals of social commitments, an argument developed by Jack Hirschleifer (1987) and Robert Frank (1988). We then describe the patterns of Waorani feuds and alliances and the role of the introduction of Christianity in bringing this feuding to an end. In brief, we argue that emotional displays of rage and the threat of retaliatory violence

may deter an initial assault, but the displays serve to lock antagonists into an endless cycle of violence once it has started. One needs a means to convey a message contrary to the enraged emotional one – an honest signal of one's commitment to end feuding. In the case of the Waorani, conversion to Christianity helped play this role.

<center>Ethnographic setting[5]</center>

The Waorani are a group of inter-riverine horticulturalists inhabiting the lowland tropical forests between the rivers Napo and Curaray in eastern Ecuador in an altitude range of 200 to 500 meters. At first peaceful contact in 1958, they numbered around 600 people, and were the only inhabitants of a territory of approximately 20,000 km^2. The population has now grown to approximately 2000. In the 1950's, there were three major mutually hostile groups of Waorani,[6] numbered 1, the Geketaidi; 2, the Baïidi; and 3, the Wepeidi on the map (Figure 1). These three groups established peaceful contact in the period between 1958 and 1972. There are still some unpacified Waorani living in one or two tiny bands. Before peaceful contact, the Waorani were in violent conflict, not only with each other, but with all *kowodë* (outsiders): lowland Quichua, oil company employees, colonists, and anyone else from the outside who came close to their territory.

Traditional Waorani subsistence was based on the shifting cultivation of manioc, plantains, peach palm, and a number of other cultigens; hunting with spear and blowgun; and fishing with palm fiber nets and spears. Favorite game included woolly monkey, numerous species of birds, and peccary. A settlement typically consisted of a single longhouse, often inhabited by a man, his wife or wives, their unmarried children, their married daughters and sons-in-law, and uterine grandchildren. Sometimes a pair or trio of brothers or brothers-in-law would live in the same longhouse with their wives and children. Usually, within a couple of hours' walk from one

longhouse would be found another, belonging to close relatives of the inhabitants of the first. Two or more such related longhouse groups made up a "neighborhood cluster." These neighborhood clusters were typically intermarried, with preferential cross-cousin marriage. Marriage among the Waorani was generally decided by the parents of the young couple. More often than not, the ceremony came as a surprise to the unsuspecting young couple, who might suddenly find themselves thrown into a hammock, bound together, sung over, admonished by their elders, and thereby married. In fact, frequently one of the fathers might also be unaware of the impending marriage, as a mother and her brother arranged the marriage without informing her own husband. This situation accounted for no small amount of marital conflict if the husband had planned to marry his child to his own sister's child.

The Waorani were semi-sedentary. Each longhouse group typically owned two or more longhouses, separated from each other by several hours or days' walk. The inhabitants rotated among their various longhouses as they followed game, sought good fishing locations, harvested crops from maturing gardens, sought resources like roof-thatch, pursued alliance and marriage opportunities, and avoided enemies.

Vengeance for a previous killing was the most important motive for coalitional violence, followed by preemption of a feared attack.[7] Usually, men on a raiding party worked themselves up into a killing rage, worked to recruit more participants in the raid, made spears, traveled to the longhouse of the victims, attacked at night, and fled. Raids and other forms of homicide were all carried out with extreme anger, at least when killing other Waorani; we have no clear record of any intra-tribal killing in cold blood. Most men were introduced to raiding as teen-agers or even younger. Virtually all men participated in killings if they lived past early adulthood, but there was wide variation among men in the number of raids in which they participated.

Wao ethnopsychology

The lack of a term for revenge is not exceptional in Wao tededö, as few complex concepts in Wao ethnopsychology are given a unitary label. For example, unitary personality descriptors (corresponding to terms in English like 'timid,' 'bold,' 'intelligent,' 'responsible,' etc.) are largely absent. To express that someone is aggressive, one says something like *nangï pïinte kæte këwengä* ['he lives acting angrily'], while to express that someone is sociable or generous, one says something like *wadani beyæ̈ nangï waa kæte këwengä* ['he lives doing good things for others']. That is to say, the complex concepts are expressed in a descriptive phrase using the constituent semantic primitives.[8]

One context in which it was necessary to render such complex concepts was in the translation of the New Testament into Wao tededö. This was an enormous task undertaken with great care and dedication by the SIL linguists[9] and their Waorani consultants. Because "getting it right" was so important to them, the correspondence between the English and the Wao tededö translation can provide an insight into the nature of the linguistic differences between the languages. For example, the phrase "Vengeance is mine; I will repay" from (Romans 12:19) was rendered "*Wenæ wenæ kædani adinke botö wenæ wenæ nani kædïnö beyæ̈ ante në apænte pangenemo inte tomemo eyepä̈ wæætë godö kæbo wækædanimpa.*" ['Upon seeing people do bad things, I myself, who should be the one that judges and punishes on account of their bad deeds, shall, in turn, do enough to them that they will suffer.'] Note the massive expansion (21 words in Wao tededö to capture the meaning of 6 words in English) made necessary by the absence of a unitary term for vengeance.

The absence of terms like this not surprising. Franz Boas (1911) long ago offered a utilitarian explanation why some languages may have a much richer vocabulary for certain domains

than others. Accounting for why the Inuit have four words for snow while English has but one, he states:

> As another example of the same kind, the words for "snow" in Eskimo may be given. Here we find one word expressing "snow on the ground"; another one, "falling snow"; a third one, "drifting snow"; a fourth one, "a snowdrift." … It seems fairly evident that the selection of such simple terms must to a certain extent depend upon the chief interests of a people; and where it is necessary to distinguish a certain phenomenon in many aspects, which in the life of the people play each an entirely independent role, many independent words may develop, while in other cases modifications of a single term may suffice." Boas, 1911 [1965]:191-192

In other words, Boas would explain the absence of unitary terms for these complex concepts in Wao tededö by inferring that the Waorani do not have occasion to refer to them often enough to need separate terms. We suspect that the social contexts that have driven the need for an enormous elaboration of personality descriptors in English and other languages of state-level societies are those in which it is necessary to describe the social attributes of an individual known to one and not to the other party. These contexts are less frequently occurring in a society that numbered only 600 individuals at the time of peaceful contact and which was further fragmented into many isolated longhouses. If most of your social interaction is with close kin and in which almost everyone is equally well-known by the parties to a conversation, the need for abstract personality descriptors is diminished. In particular, the Waorani did not need an abstract labeled category of "revenge" to either practice or explain vendetta, as all concerned shared a good understanding of the motives of

allies and enemies alike. One need not explicitly state something that everyone knows. The social context in which it is useful to have an abstract labeled category of "revenge" is when one wants to make a global prohibition of vendetta. The practice or explanation of vendetta involve individual cases; its prohibition requires the recognition of a general category of forbidden behavior and motivates the creation of a label for it.

The observation, following the Gricean maxim of quantity (Grice, 1975), that one need not make explicit that which everyone understands implicitly, helps explain the "hypo-cognition"[10] of personality and emotion among the Waorani (cf. Levy, 1973). For example, it is often difficult to elicit detailed psychological explanations for killings (or anything else). The most typical explanation is *ængï bate ingä* ['he has become enraged'], or *pïinte ingä* ['he is angry'], and further elaboration is often refused or resisted. Although some of this difficulty may be due to an understandable desire to be circumspect when the appearance of being morally judgmental might be dangerous, it is also the case that the reluctance to attribute motive to others extends to other contexts as well. For example, a common response to a question like "*Kinante ponamäï?*" ['Why didn't he come?'] is simply to repeat the known fact, "*Ponamäï.*" ['He didn't come.']. We prefer to explain the resistance of Waorani to attributing motives to others as a consequence of the fact that Waorani share fairly clear schemata for what causes one to experience each emotion they recognize. Because each emotion term indexes a shared understanding of what causes one to feel that way, further elaboration may be unnecessary.

Lazarus (1991) has described these schemata as the core relational themes of emotion. The relational themes he describes for English emotion terms seem to capture fairly well the schemata of their Wao tededö equivalents, certainly better than they fit the schemata Lutz (1987, 1988) describes for Ifaluk emotion terms.

For "fear" (in Wao tededö *ankaï giñente*), Lazarus describes the core relational theme as "Facing an immediate, concrete, and overwhelming physical danger" (Lazarus, 1991). The events that the Waorani volunteer that cause one to feel *ankaï giñente* match this template: ['seeing a jaguar in the forest'], ['seeing a poisonous snake on the path'] and so on.[11]

Similarly for "anger" (in Wao tededö *pïinte* or *ængï bate*), Lazarus describes the core relational theme as "A demeaning offense against me and mine" (Lazarus, 1991). Again, the events that the Waorani say that cause one to feel *pïinte* or *ængï bate* fit this template, with the proviso that what is demeaning to the Waorani may be different than what would be considered demeaning in other societies: ['someone stealing my things'], ['someone passing close to my house without greeting me'], ['coming home and my wife does not serve me manioc beer'], ['someone not giving the game meat they said they would for the manioc and plantains I gave'], etc.

For "relief" (in Wao tededö *ganë ponente* [literally 'cool thinking']), Lazarus describes the core relational theme as "A distressing goal-incongruent condition that has changed for the better or gone away" (Lazarus, 1991). Again, the events that the Waorani say that cause one to feel *ganë ponente* fit this template, but with more restricted range of "goal-incongruent conditions" than contemplated by Lazarus. Waorani say they feel *ganë ponente* when the breach of a social contract that has made one angry has been repaired: ['when someone returns the stolen thing'], ['when my wife serves me manioc beer'], ['someone giving the game meat they said they would give']. Indeed, the majority of Waorani emotion terms (except for *ankaï giñente* ['afraid']) have associated themes that are markedly interpersonal in character, similar to what Lutz (1987, 1988) has described for the Ifaluk[12].

That the Waorani explain killings by stating that the killer was angry is strikingly similar to the account offered by Rosaldo's Ilongot informants (Rosaldo, 1989) for why they went headhunting:

> If you ask an older Ilongot man of northern Luzon,
>
> Philippines, why he cuts off human heads, his answer is brief, and
>
> one on which no anthropologist can readily elaborate: He says that
>
> rage, born of grief, impels him to kill his fellow human beings. He
>
> claims that he needs a place "to carry his anger." The act of severing
>
> and tossing away the victim's head enables him, he says, to vent and,
>
> he hopes, throw away the anger of his bereavement. Although the
>
> anthropologist's job is to make other cultures intelligible, more
>
> questions fail to reveal any further explanation of this man's pithy
>
> statement. To him, grief, rage, and headhunting go together in a
>
> self-evident manner. Either you understand it or you don't.
>
> (Rosaldo, 1989:1)

Like Rosaldo's Ilongot head-takers, the Waorani often experienced intense rage at the death of kin; like them, an emotional explanation (*ængï bate ingä* ['he has become enraged']) is deemed sufficient to account for a subsequent killing; and like them, often there was no clear link between the "cause" and the person killed in response. However, the grief-inspired rage that fueled Ilongot headhunting was directed against members of out-groups, not fellow Ilongot, and so did not spark internal vendetta. In this respect, the Ilongot pattern is more like that described for the Shuar (Harner, 1972; Boster, in press) in which individual Shuar can gain some protection from attack by

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fellow Shuar through taking and shrinking the heads of members of other Jivaroan groups, notably

the Achuar.

We part company with Rosaldo when he says that further elaboration of why grief, rage,

and headhunting go together is impossible. He states:

> In all cases, the rage born of devastating loss animates the old men's
>
> desire to raid. This anger at abandonment is irreducible in that
>
> nothing at a deeper level explains it. Although certain analysts argue
>
> against the dreaded last analysis, the linkage of grief, rage, and
>
> headhunting has no other known explanation. (Rosaldo, 1989:18)

We would argue that the reason an emotional account is a sufficient explanation of violence for the

Ilongot (or the Waorani) is that the Ilongot (or the Waorani) share a set of understandings of what

the emotion means. We outsiders (except insofar as we are fellow-humans) do not necessarily

share those local cultural understandings. It is the ethnographer's task to unpack those shared local

cultural understandings and make them explicit so that they can become available or interpretable

by outsiders. That way, English speakers can learn what the emotion *liget* entails for the Ilongot,

what *song* implies for the Ifaluk, or what *piïnte* means for the Waorani. This does not necessarily

involve discovering a hidden purpose (e.g. "headhunting as the need to acquire mystical "soul

stuff" or personal names" Rosaldo, 1989:19): Explication need not necessarily lead one "deeper"

into the culture, just outward to the connection of emotions with other persons and contexts. Even

though the Waorani may initially refuse or resist a more complete or explicit explanation, they can

eventually substantially aid the ethnographer in gaining a more complete understanding. Other

ethnopsychologists have shown that it is possible to make a great deal of local cultural

understandings of emotion and personality explicit by describing the schemata that socially link

individual emotional displays (Lutz, 1987; 1988); unpacking the premises and purposes of

personality trait descriptors (White, 1985b); or articulating the propositional content of emotion

terms (Wierzbicka,1992).

Emotions as signals of commitments

Frank's (1988) account of emotions as honest signals of human commitment to promises

and threats (and to social contracts in general) is an important extension of this kind of analysis,

because it contemplates not only the appraisal of situations and the resulting individual emotional

displays and action tendencies, but also the way that those displays will be read and responded to

by others. One example he uses to illustrate this account is that of the $300 in lawyer's fees it

might cost me to recover a $200 leather briefcase. If you know me to be "rational," you can steal it

with impunity, knowing that I will calculate the benefits (plus $200) and costs (minus $300) of

recovery, compare them and judge that it is not worth it to pursue the matter. However, if you

know me to be "irrationally emotional," and am likely to come after you with every means at my

disposal, you will not try. Thus, "irrational" emotions and their corresponding action tendencies

serve to protect their bearers from attacks to which the rational are vulnerable. In sum, anger and

the threat of retaliation protect from the initial attack. However, it is important that the impulse for

revenge be sufficiently immediate and powerful lest caution and calculation of risk intervene, deter

the retaliation, and destroy the value of the signal. The Waorani seemed to recognize the

importance of rage for carrying out revenge killings: If enough time elapsed between a raid and a

planned counter-raid that the initial passions cooled, the Waorani deliberately worked themselves

into a murderous fury while making the spears for the counter-raid. Similarly, part of the task of a

coalition leader in recruiting men to accompany him on a revenge raid was to remind them of the

earlier offense, thereby re-enraging them and motivating them to participate in the raid. This can be regarded as evidence that the Waorani tacitly recognize the necessity of anger to carry out revenge. This argument is compatible with that presented by Wilson and Daly (1985) and Daly and Wilson (1988) who assert that the possible reputation costs to young men who fail to respond aggressively to demeaning acts may justify the risks of injury or incarceration brought on by engaging in violence.

Feuds and alliances.

The problem with retaliatory violence is that once started down the path of attack and counter-attack, the same furious dynamic that might have protected against the initial assault perpetuates the violence[13]. This was the case for the Waorani, who were locked in by their coalitions and their history into an endless sequence of revenge killings. The three major coalitions were the Geketaidi (['the people of Geketa'] led by Geketa; the Baïidi, led by Baï; and the Wepeidi, led by Wepe. The narrative that begins this article is that of violent conflict between the Baïidi and the Geketaidi, as told by Geketa himself. These three coalitions were sufficiently stable that one gets essentially the same structure whether one clusters men in terms of their co-participation in raids or by people's judgments of who were social allies of one another. It is clear also that this history of conflict among the coalitions had a long-lasting effect on the reputation of the warriors: Even now, four decades after abandoning the vendetta, Geketa, the aggressive leader of one of the coalitions, is judged by our predominantly Wepeidi informants to be hardworking but extremely hostile and fearsome.

The Waorani realized that they were exterminating themselves in this conflict and that the endless violence had to be stopped. The vendetta was not only killing large numbers of the

population, but by terrorizing and scattering them, it meant that the population was so fragmented kin could not find each other and many could not find spouses. One means of attempting to stop the violence was by presentations of gifts, usually meat, blowguns, or hammocks. Moipa, one of our field assistants, explained this process as follows:

> To put an end to a feud or a conflict, they visit the other house
>
> bearing gifts. The owner of the house asks them why they have come
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> and they answer that they want to put a stop to the conflict. The
>
> visitors give them gifts and the hosts give them manioc beer. And
>
> then, the visitors return home.

Other means of attempting to stop the violence were exchange of spouses, fleeing, and grimly attempting to exterminate the other group altogether. None of the methods worked – fragile truces kept being broken, and it proved impossible to flee as far or to kill as many as would be necessary in order to end the violence.

Rage at the death of kin may honestly signal a commitment for revenge, but how does one honestly signal non-hostile intent? The emotional program surrounding rage and retaliation works too well: It locks participants into a cycle of violence. That is, once there has been one iteration of a cycle of violence, both sides have a strong emotional motivation to continue the vendetta. In addition, the coalitions that serve to help protect one from aggression also increase the number of people whose aggressive actions expose one to risk of retaliation or whose injuries compel one to seek revenge. To escape, one needs as powerful and reliable a counter-signal of non-violence. In the case of the Waorani, peace came following the arrival of Protestant missionaries. The pacification of the Waorani was incredibly rapid – in a six-year period from 1967 to 1973, more than 500 Waorani came to escape the violence and to settle in Tewænö, the Wao community of

converts. The pacification and concentration of 85% of the population on less than a hundredth of

a percent of the original territory accomplished several things simultaneously: It ended the feuding

by offering a refuge area; it allowed kin to reunite with one another; it allowed many people to find

spouses; and it gave the Waorani important access to trade goods. Thus, many of the problems

caused by the endless violence were solved by conversion to Christianity and mass-resettlement in

a newly-created Christian community.

By "pacification," we do not wish to imply that the Waorani were the passive recipients of a

peace imposed by force from the outside. On the contrary, the argument of this article is that the

establishment of peace was a result of the active effort of the Waorani themselves, with the

introduction of a passionately believable means of signaling non-violence (i.e. Christianity) serving

as a catalyst for a social transformation largely undertaken by themselves. "Reconciliation" might

be a better term for this social transformation, but we use the term "pacification" because it more

clearly indicates the result of the transformation: peace and a cessation of coalitional violence.

Geketa explains:[14]

> "Before the *kowodë* came and taught us about God we lived spearing.
>
> Back and forth, back and forth we speared, they died. We tried to
>
> stop killing. We would say "that's enough, leave off spearing." Then
>
> someone would kill and we would return to killing back and forth.
>
> After hearing and believing in God, Kemö and I told them not to
>
> spear on our behalf, no matter how we died. And we ceased killing
>
> others back and forth. Just a few years ago when some young
>
> Waorani men killed my sister, I refused to spear on her behalf. Had I
>
> not believed, they would all be dead now."

We believe that this passage illustrates two important and inter-related reasons for why conversion to Christianity worked to stop the vendetta where indigenous institutions had failed. First, it offered a cultural model of non-violence with sufficient "directive force" (D'Andrade, 1992) to motivate believers strongly, even passionately, to abstain from revenge, even though, like Geketa, they would otherwise have been sorely tempted to retaliate. That is, it is not enough that an ideology be internally consistent to be believed; it must summon up motivations, often linked with other life goals, to impel the believer to act in accordance with the ideology. Christianity recruits motivations to believe and act in accordance with it in various ways: One can want to enjoy a life in paradise after death in the company of angels or avoid an eternity in a lake of fire; one can want to do "God's will"; one can want to do good, because that is something a good person does; one can want to be accepted in the community of believers and enjoy the material fruits of that membership; etcetera. Apparently, for the Waorani, the most compelling part of the Christian message was simply *"Itota beyæ̈, tænonamäï"* ['On behalf of Jesus, do not spear']. That is, it was attractive as an ideology because it offered a way out of the cycle of violence. Even if an individual might be personally more interested in some of the other benefits of Christianity (access to trade-goods or potential spouses), because the endemic violence had caused the other problems, it needed to be stopped before any other goal was achievable. Even now, many older men equate being a Christian simply with abstaining from violence and respond to exhortations by younger people to engage in other expressions of a Christian identity by saying, in effect, 'I gave up spearing, what else do you want?'

The teachings of the missionaries also provided a scaffold for articulating the general concept of revenge in order to condemn and prohibit it. That is, the missionaries did not introduce a term for "revenge," but they did introduce a way of talking about it as a general concept and

proscribing it (witness the translation of Romans 12:19 above). The fact that it is possible to both practice and prohibit revenge without a term for it is a reflection of Boas' principle of lexical elaboration explored earlier: Lexical elaboration follows from cultural interest, but the absence of a term for revenge does not block a people's ability to practice it, recognize it, or even prohibit it. That said, the practice and recognition of revenge only require engaging in or identifying individual events, but a prohibition makes a general label useful, because one wants to condemn practice globally by anyone, not just a specific instance. Again, that is why we argue that the prohibition of vengeance is more likely to produce a unitary term for it than the practice of it.

The second reason that conversion to Christianity worked to stop the vendetta was a consequence of the first reason: It offered an honest and costly signal of a commitment to non-violence, a signal as reliable as the emotional display of anger indicating threat of revenge. It is important that the commitment to non-violence be believable so that non-response will not be interpreted as weakness.

What makes a signal of a commitment believable? There are two principal ways: it should be costly (Zahavi, 1975) and/or it should be hard-to-fake (Frank, 1988). It was somewhat costly for Geketa, the consummate warrior, to tell his kin not to avenge his death if he were to be killed, for this removed some of the deterrence protecting him from assassination: He had a long list of enemies longing to bring revenge upon him. It was even more costly for him to restrain himself from avenging his sister's death even though it apparently gnawed at him for many years. His restraint could not be considered as due to weakness or fear, because he had already amply shown his capacity for retaliation. The fact that as fierce a warrior as Geketa was an early convert, meant that the new belief system gained great credibility as a reliable way of committing oneself to and signaling a commitment to non-violence. Among other early converts were those who, together

with Geketa, had killed the five missionaries at Palm Beach. Again, the conversion of these key warriors to Christianity and their subsequent actions of forgiveness and outreach, even to enemies, created a compelling and costly signal to other Waorani of the power of the new ideology to commit even the fiercest warriors to non-violence. One moment that this signal was particularly compelling was the time of the in-migration of the Baïidi and Wepeidi into Tewænö, home territory of the Geketaidi, when, sick and hungry after an arduous journey, they were nursed and fed by their former enemies. That their former enemies worked hard to keep them alive gave a convincing sign that they no longer wanted to kill them.

However, the in-migration to Tewænö happened several years after the first conversions. To persuade the early converts, it was important that the message was brought to them by a kinswoman, Dayömæ (Geketa's sister's daughter). It was also important that the first missionaries who accompanied Dayömæ had both had close kin killed by the Waorani in the killing of the five missionaries at Palm Beach: Rachel Saint had lost her brother, Nate; and Elisabeth Eliot had lost her husband, Jim. That the missionaries responded to the death of loved ones at the hands of the Waorani not with angry revenge (which would have been the Wao response) but with an effort to "save" them, made the value of the new ideology to get out of a cycle of violence that much more credible. That is to say, if the ideology served to get the *kowodë* (previously believed by the Waorani to be barely-human cannibals) not to act vengefully toward Waorani, it might also work to allow the Waorani to escape the cycle of vengeance with each other. The non-vengeful demeanor of Saint and Elliot reinforced something that had surprised the Waorani assailants of the five missionaries on "Palm Beach." They later expressed their wonder that the five men, who carried guns, did not defend themselves, but responded only by shooting into the air - although a stray bullet struck Dayömæ's brother, Nampa, where he was hidden by bushes on the bank[15]. Likewise,

the Wepeidi were surprised by the fact that Toñæ, an early convert, died saying his killers could harm only his body, but that he would go to God's house.

The non-vengefulness of the missionaries and early converts was probably more important to the Waorani than the fact that *Itota* ['Jesus'], the central figure of the new belief system, was someone who stated before his execution that he did not want his death to be avenged and forgave his executioners, although obviously the two elements reinforced each other. A final factor was probably the strength and forcefulness of the personalities of the missionaries and early converts, Waorani and *kowodë* alike. To illustrate, at one point Rachel Saint learned that Baï and Babæ (imposing brothers who led their coalition in raiding) were making spears and planning a revenge killing. Saint went to their house and broke the spears they had just made, wrathfully excoriating and shaming them for what they planned to do. Clearly, this was an extremely risky thing to do, as the brothers were perfectly capable of dispatching her as they had other *kowodë*, but the display of courage and anger in the service of non-violence made an impression on them and they were deflected from their planned attack. (Both retained an affection for her until her death despite their repeated arguments, and still remember her fondly.)[16]

We want to emphasize the importance of individual agency, both for the missionaries and for the Waorani. We are dealing here with a cultural encounter that involved members of two societies struggling to understand each other and resulting in the substantial transformation of the cultural system of one of the societies. In thinking about this encounter, there is a natural tendency toward self-absorption, toward accounts that emphasize the agency of one's self or the members of one's own society and imply the passivity of the ethnographic Other. This is particularly true of accounts of missionary work, in which the proselytizers are pictured as active and the converted natives as the passive objects. Of course, it would be absurd to deny the agency of the

missionaries: They went to the tropical forest passionately motivated to save the souls of the

Waorani for a life in Christ. However, it would be equally absurd to deny the agency of the

Waorani themselves in recognizing that the new ideology offered them a way of saving themselves

from annihilation and actively seizing the opportunity that it represented. The missionaries were

too few and the Waorani too scattered for the conversions to have been coerced on hapless victims.

Our sense is that cases of rapid conversion of whole populations to new ideologies cannot happen

unless a substantial proportion of the converts see the new ideology as a solution to well-

recognized problems of their own and embrace it to advance their own goals. Indeed, the phrase

"conversion to Christianity worked to stop the vendetta" is misleading, because it seems to imply

that it is the doctrine itself that converts people. It is more accurate to say "the Waorani embracing

the teachings of *Christians* worked to stop the vendetta," because this wording puts proper

emphasis on the actions and teachings of individual humans – in this case, the Waorani in doing the

embracing, and Dayömæ̈, Rachel Saint, and Elisabeth Eliot, in doing the teaching.

Geoffrey White records a similar transformation of the A'ara of the Solomon Islands.

White states:

> "The nineteenth century was a highly turbulent era that witnessed
>
> extensive disintegration of society in Santa Isabel. The island was
>
> the target of repeated large-scale headhunting raids from islands in
>
> the western Solomons capable of devastating entire villages. The
>
> external pressures contributed to massive migration, depopulation,
>
> and increased fighting among Isabel groups. It was in this context of
>
> disruption and failure of traditional religious and political institutions
>
> that the Anglican Melanesian Mission gained a strong foothold on the

island, and ultimately achieved a dramatically rapid conversion to Christianity among the entire island population. The process of conversion involved the adoption not simply of a new syncretic religious creed but of a new social identity ('being Christian') with accompanying social and moral ideals. The Christian ideology of peace and non-violence gave symbolic expression to the cessation of raiding at the turn of the century." White, 1985a:362

We suspect that conversion to Christianity was attractive to the A'ara for reasons similar to its attraction to the Waorani: It offered a reliable way of signaling that one had stepped out of a cultural system committed to continuing the vendetta of raids and into a commitment to peace. If anything, the A'ara conversion seems more profound than the Waorani one. White (1985a, 1985b) details the thorough-going way in which A'ara ethnopsychology has been configured to stem interpersonal conflict. This socially-shared commitment to non-violence through "being Christian" has left its mark on the language. White (1985a) catalogues an elaborate A'ara compendium of stigmatized ways one can engage in "bad ways" and "bad talk," and thereby violate the norms of being a good Christian.[17] That this lexical elaboration came in the wake of the A'ara increased interest in controlling violence parallels our observation that a unitary label for "revenge" is mainly useful to prohibit violence, not to practice it.[18]

Rosaldo's (1989) description of the Ilongot illustrates another way that conversion to Christianity can be implicated in the cessation of coalitional violence. For the Ilongot, the moment of crisis was not brought about by the threat generated by their headhunting from other Ilongot; after all the principal victims were members of neighboring agricultural societies. Instead, the crisis came when they faced the threat of outside military force:

Shortly after Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in 1972, rumors that firing squads had become the new punishment for headhunting reached the Ilongot hills. The men therefore decided to call a moratorium on taking heads. In past epochs, when headhunting had become impossible, Ilongots had allowed their rage to dissipate, as best it could, in the course of everyday life. In 1974, they had another option; they began to consider conversion to evangelical Christianity as a means of coping with their grief. Accepting the new religion, people said, implied abandoning their old ways, including headhunting. It also made coping with bereavement less agonizing because they could believe that the deceased had departed for a better world. No longer did they have to confront the awful finality of death. (Rosaldo, 1989:4)

In other words, according to Rosaldo, instead of serving as a means of ending coalitional violence, for the Ilongot, conversion to Christianity served as a way of coping with the grief that had earlier been expiated by cutting-off someone else's head.

The Waorani and A'ara examples reinforce the argument that adherence to a religious belief may serve as ways of signaling commitments to social contracts as reliable as those provided by our emotions. The argument that religion plays a role in honestly signaling commitment to social contracts has been made by Irons (1991, 1996, 2001a, 2001b) and by Sosis (in press, 2000; Sosis and Bressler, in press). Like Frank (1988), Irons (2001) argues that inflexible commitments can serve one's interests even if in specific situations the behavior is contrary to self-interest. Like emotions, religions can serve the interests of their followers by committing them to engage in

indirect reciprocity with other believers. Religions can do this, in part, because they recruit strong emotional motivation or "directive force" (D'Andrade, 1992). The commitment is costly because acquiring an understanding of the religion often requires many years of study and because it occasionally compels practitioners to act against their immediate self-interest. The costs are more than compensated by the benefits of membership in a large cohesive social group. Research by Richard Sosis and collaborators has offered a number of illustrations of how religion serves to promote this kind of indirect reciprocity. Sosis (2000) shows that religion apparently helps commune members overcome the problems of free-riding and failures of trust that often undermine the survival of utopian communes: Religious communes are more likely than secular ones to survive at every stage of their development. Building on this work, Sosis and Bressler (in press) show that costly signals increase the longevity of religious but not secular utopian communes. They propose an important revision of Irons' (1996) theory of religion as a hard-to-fake sign of commitment, arguing that the reason that costly signaling aids in the survivorship of religious but not secular communes is that only religious communities are able to summon the commitment through religious belief to endure the costs of signaling in-group membership. The argument presented here extends Irons' and Sosis' recognition of the role that religion plays in ensuring cooperation among group members, to a recognition of its utility for ending hostility between groups. It accomplishes this task, in part, by creating a reference community of believers (in the Waorani case, Christians) that transcends or encompasses the contending sub-groups. That is, instead of thinking of Baï as the leader of an enemy coalition, Geketa can regard him as a fellow member of the community of Christians.

Granted, Christianity has not always promoted peace between enemies. A consideration of Europe's thirty years war, "the troubles" in Northern Ireland, the Crusades, or the Knights of

Santiago de Compostela shows that often Christianity has been used to rally combatants in conflict and conquest rather than to end it. A similar observation could be made about the early history of Islam.[19] Our argument here is only that it *can* serve as a means of reliably signaling a commitment to non-violence, not that it always has served this role. We also wish to be clear that other ideologies or religions can serve this role in other contexts. As to the question of whether the Waorani would ever have succeeded in developing an effective indigenous means of signaling a commitment to non-violence: We can never know. If Wao oral history is correct that the alternation of periods of peaces interspersed with longer periods of violent conflict stretched back as far as anyone can remember, then the answer may be no. The failure of social institutions to make a secure peace is certainly not limited to the Waorani.

It should also be noted that religion is not the only hard-to-fake signal of a commitment to non-violence. Boster (in press) argues that the likely reason that it is considered polite to spit on the floor when one is visiting a Shuar household is that spitting is a hard-to-fake signal that one has come without hostile intent. If one were to enter a Shuar household with the intention of assassinating the host, it is likely that one would not be able to spit to save one's life: The 'dry-mouth' associated with the sympathetic-nervous-system arousal that would accompany a planned attack would make spitting impossible. Apparently, Shuar culture has recruited spitting as an honest signal of non-violent intent – a signal that is trustworthy precisely because it is an autonomic one and beyond conscious control.

Finally, we want to stress that our assertion that Waorani conversion to Christianity served as a means of honestly signaling their commitment to non-violence does not imply that it was the only motive for individual Waorani to become members of the community of converts. As noted earlier, there were several convergent reasons for conversion and resettlement: In addition to an

escape from the cycle of revenge killings, the Waorani were anxious to reunite with kin, to seek spouses, to acquire trade goods, medicine, and food, etcetera. The relative importance of these motives for conversion varied over time. The earliest converts, such as Geketa and Kemö, appear to have been primarily motivated to accept Christianity as a means of ending the vendetta. As the danger of coalitional violence diminished, the other motives for conversion became increasingly salient for later converts. But the motives tended to mutually reinforce one another – while many embraced the teachings of Christians to escape violence, some may have abstained from violence in order to avoid jeopardizing the flow of trade goods from Christians. The multiplicity of individual motives is probably important in other cases as well.

In sum, the Waorani showed through a long history of violent conflict both with the outside and with each other that they did not need a labeled category of revenge to practice it and, further that the enthusiastic practice of such revenge did not produce such a category. What they lacked was an effective cultural means to stop the cycle of violence. None of the indigenous methods (gift or spouse exchange, fleeing, or extermination) worked to secure a lasting end to the violence even though it was something that a substantial portion of the population craved. The same emotional displays of rage and entailed threat of retaliatory violence that might deter an initial assault by honestly signaling a commitment to retaliation, served to lock the opposing coalitions into a seemingly endless cycle of violence. Their need for a means to convey a message contrary to the enraged emotional one – an honest signal of one's commitment to end feuding – was met by the introduction of Christianity. Ironically, it may have been the fact that the first missionaries to approach them were kin of those who had been slain by the Waorani that most clearly indicated to them that this religion was a reliable means to signal a commitment to peace.

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Appendix (Yost and Peeke, n.d.)

The following is a translation from the Spanish of a typescript prepared by James Yost and Catherine Peeke circa 1977 to argue for enlarging the Waorani protectorate and to forestall military action by the Ecuadorian government, which at that moment appeared imminent. The original was published in Ecuadorian newspapers at the time as part of a series of articles written by Yost to change the denigrating attitudes Ecuadorians held toward the Waorani at that time.

Reasons that the Waorani killed.

In the list that follows, one must take into consideration that among the Waorani killing itself is principally a cultural reflection of a burning emotion. It serves within the culture like some cases of suicide, especially self-immolation, in some better known cultures; it acts to make graphically explicit the extreme to which the negative emotion has reached. Consequently, the killing does not have to have a logical relation (from our Western point of view) between the "cause" and the victim. Just the presence of some "outsider" whether white or Quichua or even another innocent Wao is sufficient for him or her to become a victim. (This is the reason that it has been so necessary to use only relatives when contacting killers to reduce the probability of a new killing.)

A second important fact concerning killings by the Waorani is that the time that transpires between the "cause" and the killing is indeterminable. It could be that he who contemplates killing fulminates for months to years, or, on the contrary, could explode in the immediate expression of emotion.

The third truth that one must take into consideration is that the Wao man gains status among his people through the display of rage that leads to the killing. We do not believe that he kills only

with the goal of proving himself to the people, but it does serve as an impulse when it is joined with other provocations that facilitate the killing. Note, nevertheless, that in the list is included the idea that the *kowodë* or "outsiders" show more respect to those who have carried out a killing.

Thus, the list that follows includes only the most common immediate causes and serves to give an idea of the variety of "causes" that incite a killing. The groupings are essentially analytic without attempting to reflect any reality felt by the Waorani.

Vengeance:

For a death for whatever cause: accident, sickness, violence.

For a sickness even though it does not lead to a death.

For a previous killing (vendetta).

For someone becoming lost in the forest.

For an accident resulting in an injury.

For a killing done by the *kowodë* (those from the outside – not Waorani)

For having hoarded something, food in particular.

Frustration:

For not permitting one to marry. (note: the kinship requirements for a candidate for a spouse are so restrictive that not permitting the marriage in a given case can carry serious implications.)

For the fury that results from an argument.

For a series of events of bad luck, for example, continued lack of success in hunting.

For the birth of a deformed child.

Acquisition:

Of wives (or husbands) from another group.

Of food or material goods, either of native manufacture or from the *kowodë*, whether the owners are Waorani or *kowodë*.

Of status and approval in the eyes of the *kowodë*.

Prevention

Of the entry of *kowodë* (those from the outside) who presumably would kill and eat them or would carry away children or adults to slavery, or steal their women.

Of the taking away of their territory, foreseeing threats real and imaginary.

Of the effects of the actions of a shaman, whether it be actions proved or only suspected.

Finally, one must conclude that within the culture of the Waorani these immediate motives, at a deeper analytical level, have functions that are as sociological as they are ecological. Sociologically, the killing demonstrates the social maturity and the physical prowess that impart social power since the one who launched the spears made himself appear more impregnable to his friends and his enemies equally. Ecologically, the killings serve to disperse the population, maintaining the minimum of competition for the natural resources of earth, flora, and fauna.

In sum, the implication of all this is that it is impossible to either predict or to prevent killing by the Waorani. Nevertheless, there are various steps that can help control the frequency and the victims of the killings. These are:

1) Limit the contact with *kowodë* within the territory that the Waorani consider theirs. When the contact with the *kowodë* is made with the help of someone who has the necessary kinship relationship, and, of course, knows the language well enough to recognize the emotions of a given situation the dangers can be reduced. It should be clarified that the greatest change in the last years in the Waorani psychology is that the idea of killing someone outside their territory has almost been eliminated except in cases of extreme provocation. Hence, the contact that a Wao has by his own

choice made outside his territory does not necessarily carry with it the threat of a killing. These contacts can be profitable for the mutual understanding between white and Waorani <u>if also, at his own choice, the Wao has his own place to return to</u>, one that serves as a refuge when he finds himself disturbed by the differences and pressures that he finds in the Latin culture. One should recognize that the activity of the Oil industry is risky within the area considered as belonging to the Waorani. This risk one can minimize with the following steps.

     2) Increase the Protectorate to include all of the Waorani thereby reducing the pressure of competition for natural resources. This will avoid one of the underlying causes in the culture that provokes killing: competition. If one strictly protects this "refuge" from threatening intrusion, it will serve the slow and profitable development that will permit the Waorani to become functioning Ecuadorians without losing their character and their Wao way of life. At the same time, enlarging this zone of refuge will also reduce the misunderstandings that fuel the killings.

     3) Increase and invigorate the channels of communication between all the Waorani groups, <u>without reducing the landbase</u> to the point of competition. This can be done through electronic devices but what would the most profitable result in the long run would be to develop trails that will permit constant visits among the Waorani themselves, but at their own choice. The most effective barrier to the killings is social control. It is the Waorani themselves who are the first to feel the threat from those who contemplate killing and it is they who are most effective in dissuading the enraged one from his intention.

Figure 1.

Location of the Waorani

Endnotes

[2] The reciprocal nature of revenge killings can also be indicated by two other terms: *näemæ?* ['reciprocally'] or ['mutually'] and *wæætedö wæætë* ['back and forth']. For example, the term *näemæ?*was used when a jaguar attacked an anteater and the anteater turned on him and squeezed him to death, but the same term can also indicate the reciprocity of a mutual hug.

[3] There are terms for revenge in Shuar and Achuar, speakers of which are also montane forest manioc horticulturalists of Eastern Ecuador. The terms are the same in both Shuar and Achuar: *ikma – k* ['to avenge'] oneself; from the verb from *íkia* ['to reverse' (as in to put a shirt on backwards)] and *yapaj – ia –* ['to change,' 'to move,' 'to avenge oneself' (as in to change clothes)] (Bolla, 1972; Jintia and Ishtik[u], 2000). Both have a fairly transparent metaphorical quality indicating the tit-for-tat or like-for-like exchange quality of revenge, the same metaphor captured in the term 'retaliation' from the Latin, *re – talis* ['for – the same']. Shuar has a much more extensive ethno-psychological lexicon than Wao tededö in general, with much more detailed distinctions made between emotions and their corresponding facial expressions and a much richer vocabulary of personality descriptors. While the comparison is too limited to be much more than an anecdote, it suggests that ethnopsychological lexical elaboration is more dependent on social factors than economic ones. While the subsistence economy of the Shuar is similar to that of the Waorani, Shuar society has much more elaborate mechanisms and ideologies for deflecting in-group aggression to members of out-groups (Harner, 1972; Boster, in press) and has demonstrated the capacity for organizing much larger social coalitions of warriors than the Waorani (Harner, 1972).

[4] Students of animal behavior would not be surprised by the fact that a category label is not a prerequisite to enacting the behaviors the label refers to. As Clutton-Brock and Parker (1995, cited in Beckerman, n.d.) has shown, other mammals such as red deer and chimpanzees routinely punish transgressors, also without the benefit of labeled categories. If other species can punish transgression or retaliate, then we need not regard the human capacity to do so entirely dependent on cultural constructions. The form retaliation takes, the situations appraised to occasion it, etcetera, may all require cultural constructions, but not the retaliation itself.

[5] This description of the ethnographic setting is of the pre-contact Waorani. Contact brought numerous changes in subsistence, trade, settlement pattern, social and political organization, and religion. A full description of these changes is beyond the scope of this article.

[6] The number of groups is somewhat arbitrary, as the pattern of coalitions is more like a tree structure which could be cut at any level than it is a set of fixed and invariant groups. The three groups distinguished here (the Geketaidi, the Baïidi, and the Wepeidi) are on the basis of a preliminary analysis of the pattern of raid co-participation. For some purposes, a fourth group, the Piyæmöidi, can be distinguished from the Baïidi and the Wepeidi.

[7] Yost and Peeke (n.d.) have provided a very thorough inventory of Waorani motives for revenge written circa 1977. Because this document is not widely available, it is reproduced here (translated into English) as the Appendix.

[8] It is as though the Waorani speak Wierzbicka's universal semantic meta-language – many concepts are expressed directly in terms of the sort of semantic primitives Wierzbicka (1992) proposes.

[9] The SIL linguists who translated the New Testament into Wao tededö were Catherine Peeke and Rosi Jung. One reviewer notes that "… one of the authors translated the New Testament into Wao – an activity not unrelated to the claims of the paper about the significance of Christian ideology for achieving peace." The reviewer goes on to suggest that this is a possible source of "authorial

bias." To clarify, Dr. Peeke was invited to become a coauthor of this article after the initial presentation of our analysis at the AAAS symposium. It became clear that her expertise as an eyewitness to many of the events interpreted here would be vital to fleshing out the analysis. In other words, the "authorial bias" in question preceded her coauthorship.

[10] The same contrast between the Waorani (or the Tahitians) and Western societies might also be captured by saying that Westerners "hyper-cognize" personalities and their own subjective experiences of emotional states and are, in general, much more self-absorbed than members of many traditional societies. It is probably a mistake to use Western culture and society as a standard for ethnopsychology as it is likely that it is the West that is aberrant or "atypical" in the over-elaboration of one's intra-psychic life.

[11] These descriptions of what causes one to feel various emotions were collected by James Boster in field work investigating Wao ethnopsychology. For each of a series of emotion terms, informants were asked *Kinö kæte _____ ingä?* ['What makes one _____?']. The responses usually fit a small number of schemata, as described in the body of the article. A more complete treatment of this material will be deferred to a later publication.

[12] White (1985b:342) makes a similar observation for A'ara personality trait descriptors: "The structure and meaning of this dimensional model suggest that A'ara vocabulary for describing personal behavioral traits is essentially *inter*personal in nature." (Italics in the original).

[13] Frank describes the possible risks of anger and revenge in the following passage:

This is not to say that vengeance-seekers will always benefit in the

presence of economies of scale. It would be an obvious mistake, for

example, to claim that the Hatfields and the McCoys did better

because of a moral sentiment that compelled them to seek revenge.

But that is not my claim. Rather, it is that persons endowed with

such a sentiment may do better, *on average*, than persons who lack it.

The potential usefulness of the sentiment lies in its capacity to deter

aggression. When it works, persons with the sentiment obviously do

better. When it fails, as with the Hatfields and McCoys, they do

worse. As things turned out, either family would have done much

better to leave the area once the first shot was fired. But that does

imply that in general a person would do better to be born with out the

tendency to seek revenge. (Frank, 1988:66)

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[14] As told to James Yost in Wao tededö, circa 1975.

[15] Geketa reported that on Palm Beach, Akawo (Dayömæ's and Nampa's mother) grabbed the pistol
one of the missionaries was holding, and in the struggle, the pistol went off and she was wounded
with a .22 bullet in the buttocks. It was most likely that during this struggle Nampa was shot as
well.

[16] The story of the establishment of peaceful contact with the Waorani by the missionaries Rachel Saint and Elisabeth Elliot is told in several places (e.g., Wallis, 1960; Elliot, 1961; Robarchek and Robarchek, 1998; Cabodevilla, 1999)

[17] This is not to say that Christianity 'replaced' A'ara culture, or anything of the sort. White's (1985b) account emphasizes the continuity and syncretism of A'ara conversion: "In a general way, Christian belief and ceremony in Santa Isabel function in much the same way as the old religion to regulate transactions with powerful supernatural forces in the context of pragmatic concerns with personal well-being and community misfortune." (White, 1985b:334)

[18] White (1985b) extends this to personality descriptors in general:

> One of the most fundamental features of ordinary descriptions of
> persons is that they are almost always evaluative in nature. In other
> words, ethnopsychological or social discourse carries moral force -- it
> implies that actions are good or bad, desirable or undesirable. In
> commonsense formulations, behavior is not simply measured or
> represented, it is evaluated in terms of its significance for self, others,
> and the community. (White, 1985b:342)

[19] Although Islam later became a powerful motive force in the conquest of much of the Middle West and North Africa, Armstrong (1993:132-133) makes the argument that Muhammad's development of Islam was in part driven by the threat of within-group vendetta and violence.