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by

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Creating Community:

Feasting among the Nantis of Peruvian Amazonia

by

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For the community of Montetoni

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This study examines contemporary feasting practices in the Nanti community of Montetoni in the Amazon Basin of southeastern Peru. First formed in 1992, Montetoni is a village unlike any Nanti settlement that preceded it. Over the years since coming to reside together in Montetoni, villagers have adapted many aspects of their daily activities to accommodate their new multi-family settlement.

Since 1997, feasting has emerged as both the locus and the focus of village wide-sociability in Montetoni. In this study I explore the historical and social contexts through which contemporary feasting practices have emerged and continue to emerge. I examine in detail many salient aspects of feasting and situate feasting practices in relation to Nanti social practices more generally. In feasting, Nantis form and transform social relationships that cross family and residence group boundaries. I propose that it is through feasting together that Nantis create community in their village.

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