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Duin, Renzo

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Historical complexity of myth: in search of the genesis of the whip-dance whereby Wayana dance in imitation of Tamok (Eastern Guiana Highlands)

A complexidade histórica do mito: em busca da origem da dança do chicote, na qual os Wayana dançam em imitação de Tamok (planalto leste das Guianas)

Renzo Duin

University of Oxford. Oxford, UK

Abstract: This article discusses the conditions of the genesis of the nineteenth century Wayana whip-dance, aiming for what Terence Turner coined "ethno-ethnohistory", through the method of Neil Whitehead's "ethnography of historical consciousness". This study outlines an indigenous historical consciousness of the social present in Guiana as related to events from the past, by means of the entanglement of things, places, and people related to this whip-dance ritual. The article discusses the Eastern Guiana whip-dance as a social field of interaction in three regions and three time periods: (1) the Upper Maroni Basin (French Guiana and Suriname) in the early twenty-first century; (2) the Franco-Brazilian Contested area (today's Brazilian Amapá) in the nineteenth century; and (3) a posited origin of this 'mythstory' at the Lower Amazon in the sixteenth century. Rather than conducting a study of a 'lost tradition', these three case-studies will provide insight into the process of how Wayana indigenous people have managed their histories of first contact in Guiana through ritual performance and the materialization of the evil spirit Tamok.

Keywords: Ethnohistory. Amazonian historicities. Eastern Guiana. Wayana. Ritual practice. Materiality.

Resumo: Este artigo analisa as condições da gênese da dança do chicote dos Wayana no século XIX, objetivando o que Terence Turner definiu como "etno-etnohistória", por meio do método que Neil Whitehead postulou como "etnografia da consciência histórica". Este estudo esboça uma consciência histórica indígena da sociedade contemporânea na Guiana, relacionada a eventos ocorridos no passado, associando coisas, lugares e pessoas envolvidas no ritual da dança do chicote. O artigo discute a dança do chicote do leste das Guianas como um campo social de interação em três regiões e em três períodos distintos: (1) a bacia do alto Maroni (Guiana Francesa e Suriname), no começo do século XXI; (2) a área do Contestado Franco-Brasileiro (atual estado brasileiro do Amapá), no século XIX; e (3) a postulada origem dessa 'mito-estória' no baixo Amazonas, durante o século XVI. Ao invés de realizar uma pesquisa sobre uma 'tradição desaparecida', esses três estudos de caso contribuem para o conhecimento do processo pelo qual o povo indígena Wayana estabeleceu a historicidade de seu primeiro contato na Guiana, através da performance ritual e da materialização do espírito maligno Tamok.

Palavras-chave: Etnohistória. Histórias da Amazônia. Leste das Guianas. Wayana. Prática ritual. Materialidade.

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Autor para correspondência: Renzo Duin. University of Oxford. School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography. 51-53 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 6PE (rsduin@yahoo.fr).

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The work of 'myth' is far more historically complex than had sometimes been allowed, but forms of that complexity are still relatively undocumented (Whitehead, 2003a, p. 76).

INTRODUCTION

This article contextualizes the whip-dance of the Eastern Guiana Highlands (Figure 1)¹ and the associated Tamok mask as situated between tradition, creation, and transformation. The entanglement of things, places, and people, and the consciousness of the social present as related to events from the past, turned out to be more complex than initially anticipated. Furthermore there is the ethno-historical case of the rather enigmatic Tamokome nation encountered in the region in the 1830s (Rivière, 1963, p. 189). This Wayana whip-dance and associated Tamok mask materialize Terence Turner's (1988, p. 279) "ethno-ethnohistory" as "modes of consciousness of the social present, expressed in terms of the relation of that present to its past (and future)" (emphasis added). Rather than, following Pierre Bourdieu (1977, p. 114), "decoding the internal logic of symbolism" of the whip-dance and the Tamok mask, this article is aiming for "restoring its practical necessity by relating it to the real conditions of its genesis, that is, to the conditions in which it functions, and the means it uses to attain them, are defined" (emphasis added). In order to do so, "we must revise our attitude towards categorizing the world", to quote Alcida Ramos (1988, p. 230), because indigenous peoples "are and have always been engaged in interpretations and reinterpretations of contact, [though] their historical consciousness does not follow the path of a Western-style historicity" (Ramos, 1988, p. 230). Twenty-five years later, Amazonianists are aware that mytho-historical narratives must be given serious attention (Hill, 2009), with consideration for time and memory (Fausto and Heckenberger, 2007) and the dynamic authoritative

relationships between history, historicities and myth that offer legitimization of power (Duin, 2009, 2012; Heckenberger, 2005), yet this historical complexity of myth remains largely undocumented (Whitehead, 2003a, p. 76), particularly in the Eastern Guiana Highlands.

Three fundamental themes are discussed in this article, namely (1) the Tamokome nation, (2a) the whip-dance and (2b) associated Tamok mask, and (3) the 'myth' of the Tamok Jolok as narrated by the Wayana indigenous people of the Upper Maroni Basin (French Guiana) (Figure 2). Nineteenth century explorers have informed us about the Tamokome nation and the whip-dance. Tamok masks are mostly described and depicted in the twentieth century, and commonly attributed to the Wayana/Apalai of Brazilian Amapá. In 2003, the narratives of the Wayana dancing as Tamok and of the Tamok Jolok were recorded, transcribed, translated, and analyzed with the Wayana of the Upper Maroni Basin (French Guiana and Suriname). I intended to write three distinct articles, however, it is the interrelatedness and entanglement of people, places, and things, through space and time, which allows us to gain insight into an indigenous Guiana approach of historical consciousness. These three fundamental themes contextualize the conditions in which the whip-dance functions, allowing for a Guiana indigenous historical consciousness of the social present expressed in terms of the relation of that present to its past (and future). In other words, how the Wayana indigenous people have managed their history.

Henri Coudreau (1892, p. 16), although he did not have an answer to the origin of the *pono*-dance (Coudreau, 1893, p. 182), stated that he had discovered "unknown pages of the history of the peoples without history" (emphasis added)². This truism "people without history" remained characteristic for the indigenous people of the Americas, even whilst arguing against this concept (Lévi-Strauss, 1962;

¹ Guiana, or 'the Island of Guiana', is defined in this article as the region comprising Venezuela east of the Orinoco, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, and Brazil east of the Rio Negro and north of the Amazon.

² "Pour ce qui est des résultats historiques, j'ai découvert des pages inconnues de l'histoire des peuples sans histoire" (Coudreau, 1892, p. 16; emphasis in original).

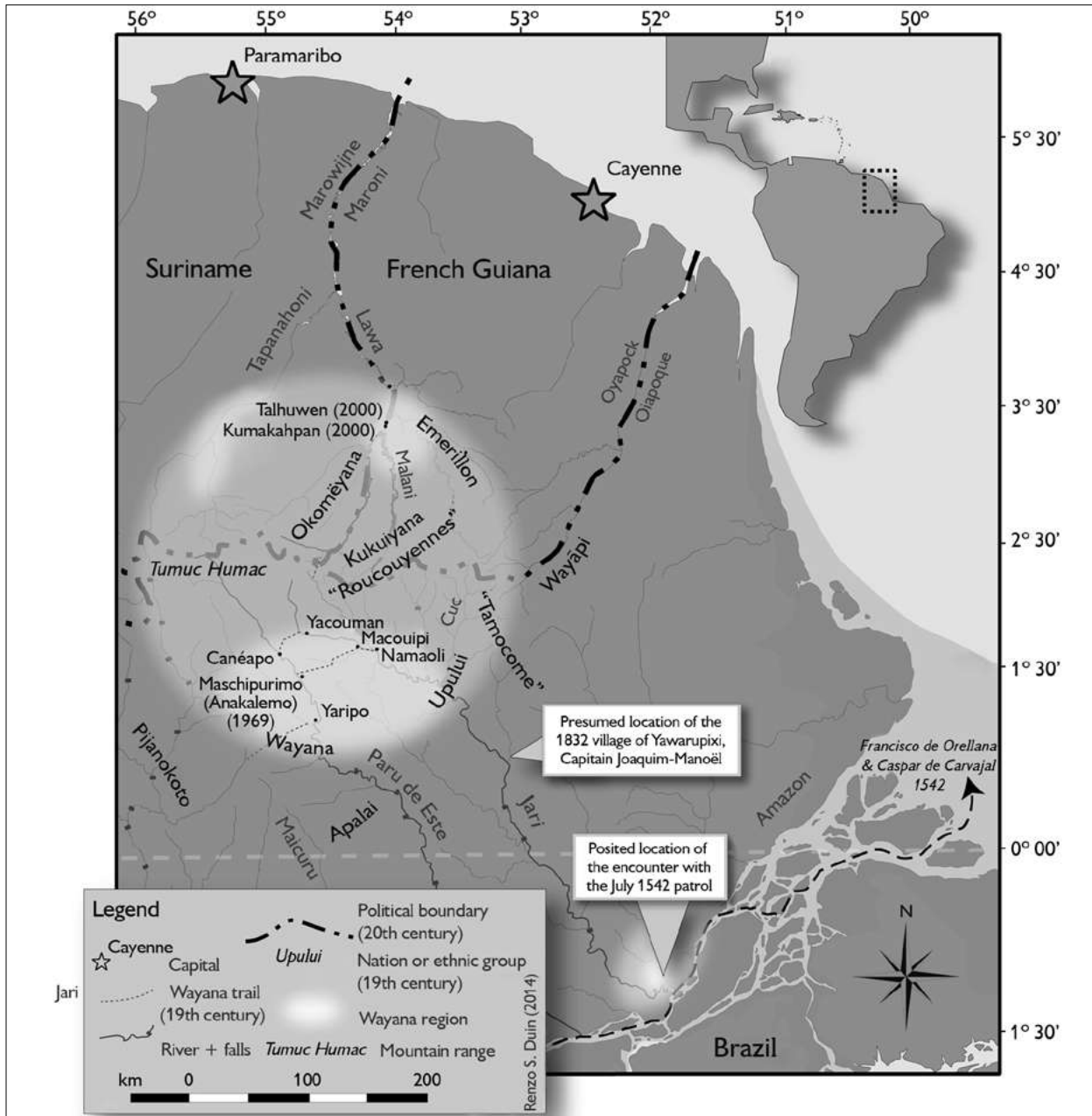


Figure 2. Eastern Guiana Highlands (northern Amazonia), indicating communities, villages, and rivers referred to in the text. This map is a palimpsest of names of nineteenth century ethnic groups or nations (bold italic) mentioned in this article, the Wayana region shaded in light gray (highlighted are the three current Wayana homelands in Suriname, French Guiana, and Brazil), and villages referred to in the text, such as Talhuwen (French Guiana) and Kumakahpan (Suriname) – Wayana villages that have been the author's home base since 1997. The 1969 village of Maschipurimo (also known as Anakalemo), is plotted on this map to demonstrate its proximity to the Wayana villages visited by Jules Crevaux in the late nineteenth century and discussed in this article. Also plotted here is the presumed location of the 1832 village of Yawarupixi, or Capitain Joaquim-Manoël, leader of the Tamokome, and the posited location of the encounter with the July 1542 patrol. I am very much aware of the selectiveness of the labels in this map, other than it is aimed to demonstrate conceivable relations between the places, people, things, and specifically the river systems of the Jari, Paru de Este, and Upper Maroni Basin, discussed throughout this article, whereby chronology, one of the cornerstones of history, is de-emphasized.

new interpretations about Tamok. Furthermore, we have to be aware that these dynamic historical processes of materializing memorialization, from which new meanings emerge, to both the material from the past and the present actors also occurred in the (remote) past.

This study is situated in an Amazonia that is “still ‘being discovered’” (Whitehead, 2003b, p. vii). Analogous Neil Whitehead’s “Amazonia”, Tamok “has ‘no history’ but exists in an eternal present of ‘first contacts’ and ‘marvelous discovery’” (Whitehead, 2003b, p. vii, emphasis added). This article takes up the task set out for us by Whitehead: “not just the study of textual or artifact sources but also the investigation of the social and cultural patterns and attitudes that give rise to those indigenous histories and history making” (Whitehead, 2003b, p. xi). Whereas my available sources are artifacts, written sources and oral histories – because I, nor anybody else in the twentieth or twenty-first century, have never witnessed a whip-dance in Guiana – the aim is to gain an understanding of how indigenous people in the Eastern Guiana Highlands manage their history of first contact by means of ‘Tamok’ (and possibly to draft a hypothesis on its genesis).

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE TAMOCOMES (OR TAMOKOME)

In his comprehensive “Ethnographic survey of the Indians on the divide of the Guianese and Amazonian river systems”, Peter Rivière (1963, p. 189) stated that “the Tamocomes can be dealt with quickly; there are only four references to the tribe in the literature and the authors of two of those (...) never saw them. (...) The tribe is not significant and presumably disappeared”. Further ethno-historical studies of this area were conducted by Pierre Grenand (1972), Dominique Tilkin Gallois (1986), and Jean-Marcel Hurault (1989). These studies mainly focused on the migration of the Wayāpi (Tupí-Guaraní speakers) from the Xingu to the Oyapock and their interactions with other nations in the area (Brazilian Amapá and French Guiana). More recent studies explore frontiers as spaces of interaction and negotiation,

both amongst indigenous peoples as with Maroons and Europeans (Albert and Ramos, 2000; Gallois, 2005). The ethno-history of the Tamocomes, however, has not received sufficient attention. Until new documents are recovered, it seems nothing more can be said about this nation. Then again, as I will discuss in a moment, the primary sources mentioning the Tamocomes contain information that is of importance in contextualizing the historical processes in which Tamok materializes.

Tamokome, or “Tamokom (called Tamokū by the Wayāpi)”, according to Pierre Grenand (1972, p. 107), drawing on Henri Coudreau (1893, p. 336), used to live in the south (i.e., south of the current Wayāpi settlements of the Upper Oyapock) and were in contact with the Brazilians. In the 1850’s, Grenand continued, the Tamokom with their leader Joachim Manuel, Yawalumiti (*sic*), migrated to the Kouc (or Cuc) where they intermarried with the Wayāpi. When Jules Crevaux (1883, p. 229) arrived at creek Kou (Cuc) on October 5, 1878, he realized that the said Calayoua (*kalaiwa*) were not a distinct nation but rather Oyampis (Wayāpi) who have close relations with Brazilians (Wayana today, still refer to the non-indigenous Brazilian as *kalaiwa*). Elsewhere, Grenand (1972, p. 118) proposed that these Calayoua (*kalaiwa*) met by Crevaux, were none other than the “Tamokom”. According to Gallois (1986, p. 183-185), these Tomokomes (*sic*) or *tamo-ko* (*sic*) (Tamocomes or Tamokome) are a sub-group of the Waiāpi-puku, the true Wayāpi, and first ancestors of the nation. Drawing on the expedition reports by François Leprieur (1834) and Adam de Baue (1835) there is general consensus that the Tamokome (or a variation in spelling) are a sub-group of the Wayāpi that resided on the middle Jari in the early to mid-nineteenth century. Beyond this fundamental ethno-historical information, is it possible to draw more facts from the original sources to provide more insight into this presumed Wayāpi sub-group and, if any, its possible relation with Tamok?

During the 1833 exploration of the source area of the Oyapock, Leprieur (1834, p. 224) mentioned

how the “Tamocomes” are a “tribe” of the nation of the Wayãpi residing along the Carapanatoube (or Mapari) and Moucourou (or Noucouru), tributaries of the Jary (or Jari), followed by a short description of their physique and practices. A year earlier, on March 28, 1832, de Bauve (1835, p. 96-98) had visited the settlement of Oarapixi, leader of the Tamocomes, at the mouth of the Carapanatouba (Mapari) at the place where the Topipocho (Upper Jari) takes on the name of Jary (Middle Jari) (Figure 2). De Bauve furthermore specified that, about one month before his arrival, this leader of the Tamocomes had been baptized Joaquim Manoël by a missionary who had reached this area. Oarapixi was not born a Tamokome, de Bauve continued, but resided among them after invitation by the Tamokome of the Piraouër (a tributary of the Cuc) and he was nominated “capitaine” after one of their chiefs had passed away. On March 30, de Bauve continued his exploration of the Jari and its tributaries. Already in 1832, he noted (de Bauve, 1835, p. 100-101) an absence of traditional body painting in red and black with *roucou* and *genipa* respectively, and an influence of European hairstyle and dress.

Not insignificant for the present study is the revealing of an outbreak of measles on the Jari, causing widespread death, including the sudden death of Hilario Feireire da Cruz (de Bauve, 1835, p. 102-103) – son of the colonel-governor of Macapá, who was eager to explore the river that the Brazilians call Jary (de Bauve, 1835, p. 83). A measles pandemic which the Portuguese called “charampa” (or *sarampo*) and the French “rougeole” (de Bauve, 1835, p. 102). The impact of contact with ‘civilization’, and particularly the effects of European introduced diseases on the indigenous population of Guiana, has been well established (Hurault, 1963, 1989), yet still up-to-date (see the recent event of contact at the border between Brazil and Peru). Nonetheless, it is the timeframe (1832) and location (Jari) of this measles epidemic that has not been foregrounded in earlier studies on the Tamokome or the broader Eastern Guiana region.

Another aspect that has not received sufficient attention is the relation between the Tamokome and the *kalaiwa* (non-indigenous Brazilians). In October 1889, Coudreau (1893, p. 331) arrived in the village of Ouira, Upper Cuc Basin. Ouira, the village leader, was estimated at fifty years of age (Coudreau, 1893, p. 336), providing an estimated year of birth of 1839, i.e., seven years after de Bauve’s expedition discussed earlier. Moreover, Ouira’s father is Yaouaroupicic (Coudreau, 1893) who goes by his Christian name of “Joaquim-Manoel” (the very same “Joaquim Manoël or Oarapixi (Yawarupixi)” mentioned by de Bauve, 1835). During a journey to the Grand-River, i.e., the Amazon, Ouira received the Christian name of Joaquim. Capitan Yaouaroupicic, Coudreau (1893, p. 336) continued, was a great leader who led the Wayãpi and Tamokome in one of their last migrations from the Amazon to the north. Furthermore, Coudreau (1893) stated that Yaouaroupicic was raised by the Brazilians of the Amazon, and that he spoke very well their language (i.e., Portuguese). This is in line with Crevaux’s (1883, p. 229) statements regarding the Calayoua (*kalaiwa*) of the Cuc. Instead of an auto-denomination of a nation, *tamokome* appears to be a term of reference for a certain indigenous community that has strong ties with the non-indigenous Brazilians. The suffix [-me] (de Goeje, 1946, p. 125-126) in *tamokome* furthermore indicates that the informant was aware that these people are not the ‘true’ Tamok only like Tamok (Tamok{ø}~me). This leaves us with the question, who, or what, is “tamok(o)”?

RECONTEXTUALIZING THE WAYANA DANCING IN IMITATION OF TAMOK

Before addressing the question who, or what, was the ‘true’ Tamok, I will first discuss the whip-dance and the Tamok mask, based on my research conducted in the Wayana villages of Talhuwen (French Guiana) and Kumakahpan (Suriname) (Figure 2). While all historical sources and ethno-historical studies discussed above point towards a Wayãpi sub-group, it is of interest that the location of the

Cuc region corresponds with the homeland of the Upului. Even Leprieur's (1834, p. 224) description of their physique – short of stature, yet very robust – corresponds with the description of the Upului by Wayana today. Moreover the Wayana who in the early twenty-first century narrated the stories of Tamok (Duin, 2009, tables C-15 and C-16) and who made me Tamok masks (Figure 3), were descendants of the Upului of the Jari (Brazilian Amapá). Because in Amazonia, and specifically in Guiana, “what you see is not always what you get” (Rivière, 1994), it is needed to go beyond existing descriptions and classifications to understand the ‘true’ meaning of the whip-dance performance and the associated Tamok mask.

On the afternoon of October 3, 2000, Talhuwen, Tënepo, a Wayana *píjai* (shaman), was studying my collection of photocopies from book illustrations, museum objects, and other mnemonic devices of the Wayana. When he saw the nineteenth century engraving of the “dance of the *pono*” (Figure 1), he said in loud voice “Tamok”, and emphasized that this whip (*itain*) produced a loud bang. “TAI”, he said. At that very moment, the cord that held his hammock broke and Tënepo fell on the ground. Onlookers awed. Tënepo simply laughed and said “Tamok” while making the gesture of falling; as if Tamok had caused the hammock cord to break. Then he sat himself on a wooden stool and continued his study of the collection of photocopies.

Ronnie Tikaiame, one of the bystanders when Tënepo fell, and my Wayana host, informed me about a Wayana, residing on an island facing the village of Kumakahpan, who knew how to make a Tamok mask³. A few months later he had made the masks and accompanying whip, and after a few attempts Ronnie was able to produce a loud whip crack (Figure 3). Henri Coudreau (1893, p. 182) had claimed that these whip cracks carried over a distance of ten kilometers. Upon return in the village of Kumakahpan – of

which Ronnie's father is the village leader – several Wayana elders greeted us and asked whether we had heard that loud bang; “it has been for a very long time that we haven't heard that sound” they apprehensively said in low voice.

Two years later, after the Wayana had discussed “Tamok” amongst each other, Ronnie told me that Kulienpë knew well the story of Tamok. Later I learned that Kulienpë's maternal grandfather also was an Upului from the Jari. On January 10, 2003, Kulienpë invited me to his village; Alawateimë eni, a small hamlet just north of Talhuwen (French Guiana). Prior to recording the story of Tamok, Kulienpë's son asked me: “which story do you want to hear? The story of *Jolok Tamok* (the Evil Spirit Tamok), or the story of Wayana imitating Tamok?” and he briefly summarized these two narratives as follows: the story of the Evil Spirit Tamok tells us that first there was a small Tamok, followed by a big one who killed people and ate them. Tamok was beautiful. Wayana say that it is hard to see his eyes because fringes covered his forehead. Over his nose and mouth he had a sort of basket; like a long nose without a mouth. On his cheeks he had beautiful drawings. The second story is about Wayana dancing as Tamok; imitating the Evil Spirit Tamok. I asked if his father could tell both Tamok stories; *Jolok Tamok eitoponpë* (recording time: 12 minutes) and *Wayana Tamok ukuknanom* (recording time: 20 minutes) (Duin, 2009, p. 517-526, tables C-15 and C-16 respectively). In the second narrative on the Wayana imitating Tamok in a dance-performance (*Wayana Tamok ukuknanom*), there are several references to the historical encounter elaborated upon in the first narrative on *Jolok Tamok*.

When I showed the late nineteenth century engraving of the *pono*-dance (Figure 1), Kulienpë and his son confirmed astoundingly: “Yes, it was exactly like that!” Kulienpë stated that it were his Upului ancestors of the Jari who were dancing in imitation of Tamok. While my recordings took place in the Upper Maroni Basin

³ Tukano, the maker of the Tamok masks and accompanying whips (Figure 3, standing in the background), is an Upului originating from the Jari (Figure 2).



Figure 3. Tamok masks and whip in the Upper Maroni Basin. Photos: Renzo Duin (2000).

(French Guiana), they referred to an event that had taken place in a different time and a different place. This oral history harmonized with an event described by Jules Crevaux (1883, p. 296-298) witnessed some 125 years earlier! Kulienpë (Duin, 2009, table C-16, line 94) even mentioned the living wheel of dancers playing the flutes as described – and despised – by Crevaux. The return of the dancers, and the envy of the women wanting the objects, is vividly narrated by Kulienpë and positively confirmed (Duin, 2009, table C-16, line 81-84). Even the objects

mentioned by Crevaux are among the objects listed by Kulienpë⁴. Kulienpë's narrative stated that the whip-dance took place before the *tule* and before the dancers brought out their gifts. While the dancers were bringing basketry items, they were no longer dressed in imitation of Tamok (Duin, 2009, table C-16, line 88-89). This is consistent with Crevaux who stated that the dancers were no longer wearing their monumental headdresses. With this correspondence between the two histories, transmitted either in writing or in oral performance, I argue that it

⁴ The very same objects mentioned for the *tule* at Yaripo (Crevaux, 1883, p. 297), are among the objects listed in Kulienpë's narrative (Duin, 2009, table C-16, line 86): baskets (*pilasí*), carrying baskets (*katali* [Crevaux: *catouri*]), manioc sifters (*pamkali*), plates (*lutë*), decorated baskets (*pilasí timilikhem*), mats (*mapitu* [= *opoto*]), fans (*anapami*), beverage sifters (*manale* [Crevaux: *manaré*]), but also wooden objects, such as oars to steer manioc beer (*anekatop oki'itop* [Crevaux: *anicato*]), oars for canoes (*anekatop akupuíta*), and spinning tops (*mawu ekumtop*).

is in all probability a description of the very same event from a European and a native point of view.

Jules Crevaux was an explorer aiming to find the legendary lake Parimé, along which shores was said to be located Manoa, the golden city of El Dorado. On October 28, 1878, during his explorations across the Tumuc-Humac Mountains – and after a long pedestrian journey from the Upper Jari to the Paru de Este – he arrived in Canéapo (Figure 2), the village of chief Canea, in the midst of a festival. Crevaux (1883, p. 258-259) witnessed a dance called *pono*, and prior to departure he purchased a dance costume⁵. This dance costume will be discussed in a moment.

The men are covered with long bark strips, starting from the neck, and a kind of toque similar to that used by magistrates. One man alone stands up, holding in his hand a whip 8 meters long, which with a swirling motion he cracks like a pistol. Each one takes it in turn to get up and crack the whip (Roth, 1924, p. 664-665; Figure 1)⁶.

After a month of his pedestrian exploration of the sources of the Paru de Este, Crevaux took rest in the village Yaripo (about 75 kilometers south of the

mentioned village Canéapo), on November 22, 1878, and noted that “at four o'clock in the evening, twenty men are aligned in a single row and head towards the village plaza” (Crevaux, 1883, p. 296; Figure 4)⁷.

On October 4, 1877, one year before the festivities at Canéapo and Yaripo, Paru de Este, Jules Crevaux (1883, p. 100-104) had arrived in Namaoli on the Jari (Figure 2), where, after sunset, he witnessed a “dance of the Roucouyennes” (Figure 5)⁸. Some of these dancers were dressed in a costume of bark cloth streamers similar to the costume of the *pono*-dance; some wearing the hourglass shaped headdress with macaw tail feathers (compare with Figure 1). None of the dancers, however, appear to carry a whip. The dancers carry in their hands staffs and saplings or tree branches. Crevaux did not describe the development of the dance during the twelve hours from sunset to sunrise at which point the dancers depart from the village by canoe. A year later Crevaux (1883, p. 242-250) returned in Namaoli at the time of the *maraké*, but that is another story.

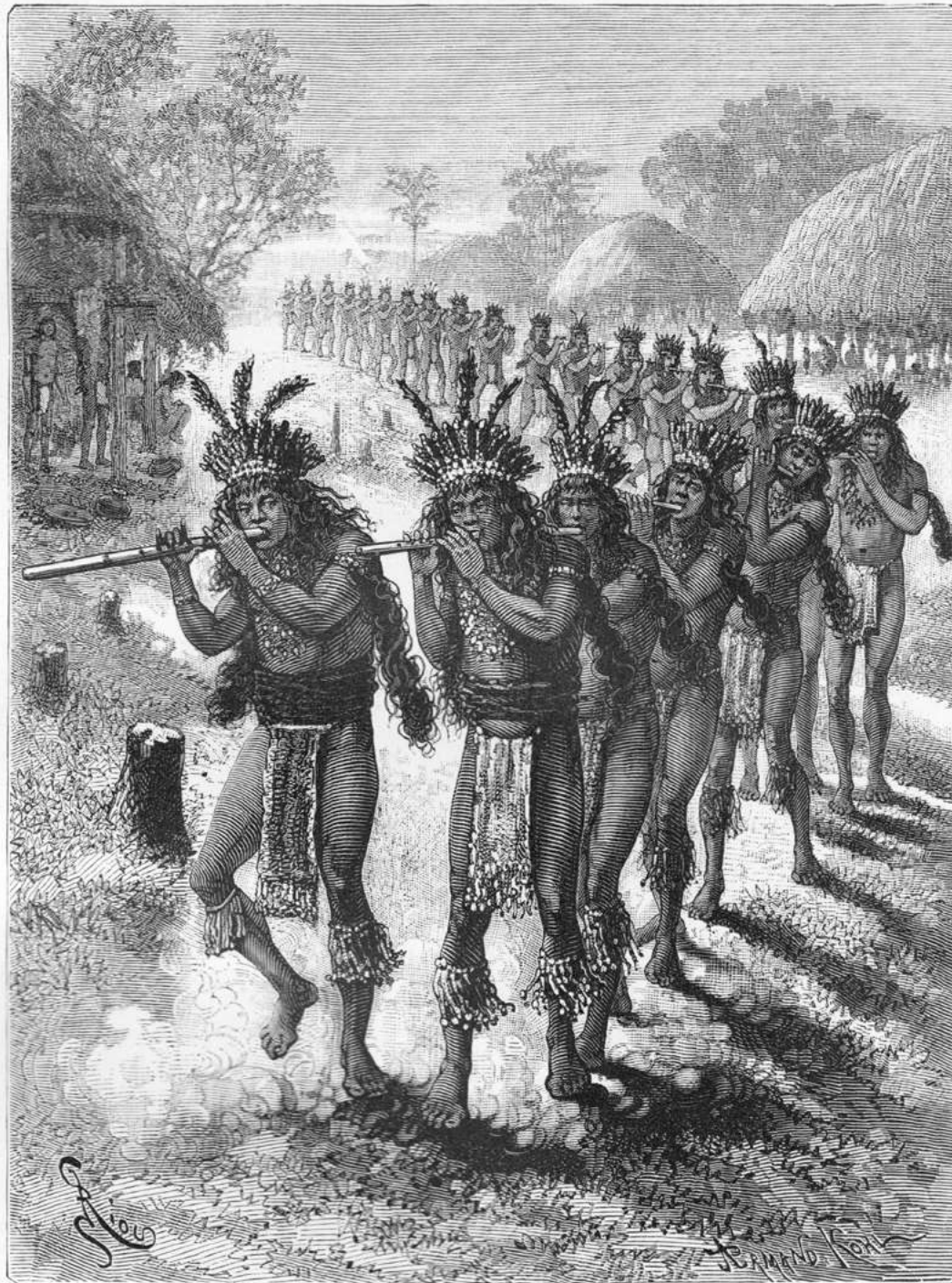
The first two dances, i.e., the *pono* and *tule*, have been discussed in Walter Roth's (1924, p. 664-665)

⁵ At present in the collection of Musée du Quai Branly, Paris (MQB inventory number: 71.1881.34.389). Note that it is erroneously catalogued as made from liana vines, instead this cloak is of made from streamers of inner bark from the *Couratari guianensis*.

⁶ Jules Crevaux described the feast at the village of Canea on October 28, 1878 as follows: “il s'agit de célébrer la mort d'un tamouchi qui a succombé il y a un mois. [Footnote in original source: Il y a deux fêtes en l'honneur des morts: la première est le *Pono*, et la deuxième le *Toulé*]. Tous les hommes arborent de longues lanières noires en taouari qui partent du cou et d'une espèce de toque semblable à celles de nos magistrats. Un seul homme est debout, tenant à la main un fouet dont la corde a huit mètres de long; il tourne sur lui-même en frappant la terre avec le pied droit; puis, soulevant son fouet, il penche le corps en arrière, et, d'un mouvement brusque, projette la corde qui claque comme un coup de pistolet. A chacun son tour de produire ces détonations. Cette danse s'appelle la danse du *pono*. Les autres Indiens, assis sur leurs talons, applaudissent en criant: 'Hé! ... hé!...'” (Crevaux, 1883, p. 258).

⁷ Crevaux (1883, p. 296-297) described the feast at the village of Yaripo on November 22, 1878 as follows: “J'assiste a un *toulé*. Vers quatre heures du soir, vingt homes alignés sur un seul rang débauchent sur la place du village. Ils n'ont plus leurs grands chapeaux, mais de petits couronnes en plume (*pomaris*) (...). Le chef du bande, qui est à droite, tient à la bouche une grosse flute de bambou d'où il tire des sons graves et tristes (...). Arrivés au milieu du village, ils forment un cercle et se mettent à tourner en jouant toujours le même air et en frappant légèrement le sol en cadence avec le pied droit. C'est une roue vivante qui reste en mouvement toute la nuit, en sifflant, et m'agace les nerfs à ne pouvoir fermer l'œil. L'axe de cette machine diabolique est formé par un grand pot de cachiri où les danseurs assouviennent leur soif. Les danseurs, presque tous étrangers à la tribu, se proposent de récompenser les femmes qui leur ont versé des flots de cachiri pendant toute la nuit, montrent, l'un un *catouri* (hotte), l'autre un *manaré* (tamis), un troisième une *anicato* (cuiller) pour remuer la bouillie. Les femmes brûlent d'envie de posséder ces objets qui sont tout neufs et artistement travaillés (...).”

⁸ I posit that the “Roucouyennes” (written sources) are the Kukuiyana (Wayana oral history), one of the core subgroups of the Wayana confederation, as both communities are reported at the Malani (Figure 2). The other three core subgroups of the Wayana nation are the Okomëyana (Aletani), Upului (Jari), and Wayanahle (Paru de Este).



DANSE DU TOULÉ

Figure 4. "Dance of the *Tulé*". Engraving by Edouard Riou, published in Jules Crevaux (1883, p. 296).

certainly to correct Jules Crevaux – that these dances (*pono* and *tule*) are but an occasion to use up the entire manioc surplus from the garden⁹, and not at all festivities to honor the dead.

Both secondary sources (i.e., Roth, 1924; Gillin, 1948) eradicated all local historical components. The two descriptions of two different dance performances, with an interval of a month, in two villages some seventy-five kilometers distanced, were removed from their local historical, geographical, and socio-political subjectivities. Gillin noted that the Wayana (Cariban speakers) may have borrowed elements from the Arawakan *makuari* ritual (on *makuari* see Roth, 1924, p. 645-651). Instead of an illustration of an Arawakan *makuari* ritual, such as for example in the late seventeenth century account by Adriaan van Berkel, Gillin (1948, plate 120 bottom) reproduced Riou's engraving of the *pono*-dance (Figure 1). This practice of generalization is illustrative of the repudiation of a diversity of local indigenous Amazonian historicities.

Roth scientifically objectified these two dance performances as homogenized models by the exclusion of any subjective elements from Crevaux's ethnographic account. While Roth (1924, p. 665) translated that,

upon arriving in the center of the village, the *tule*-dancers form a circle around which they start circling, while playing the same tune by blowing large bamboo flutes and lightly beating the ground rhythmically with the right foot. It is a living wheel, in motion all night.

Roth did not translate that this 'tooting' annoyed Crevaux in that he could not close his eyes that night, and that he even called this 'living wheel' a "machine diabolique" (Crevaux, 1883, p. 297). In the process of an objective scientific synthesis, all historical subjectivities were removed. In order to retrieve the origin of the whip-dance,

it is needed to recontextualize the local historicities in which the whip-dance performance took place.

A decade after Jules Crevaux, Henri Coudreau (1893, p. 174-185) was the second European to witness and describe a whip-dance performed among the Wayana. Preparations in the host village for the upcoming festivities were, amongst others, the burning and clearing of the grassland around the village and the main road ("la grande allée", Coudreau, 1893, p. 177). At the end of this road, near the woods, the hosts had constructed a small hut where the invited dancers could dress, change, and retreat. Coudreau reaffirmed that it is "never young people of the village who dance the *pono*; dancers have to be strangers" (emphasis added). Rather than "strangers to the tribe" (Crevaux, 1883, p. 298; Roth, 1924, p. 665), and drawing on Kulienpë's narrative, these social others probably were Upului from the Jari, dancing as Tamok in the Wayana villages of the Paru¹⁰. That the *pono*-dancers are 'social others' is essential in the indigenous approach to historical consciousness of Tamok. Coudreau (1893, p. 177) described the course of events as follows:

All of a sudden, [at noon] at the other end of the road [that is, from the hut of the *pono*-dancers], appears a dark shape that slowly advances, under an enormous hat adorned with feathers, masked, and holding in his right hand a two meter long baton on which is winded a cord (the whip with its two meter long handle that is black with red stripes¹¹). The cord is six to ten meters long, thick as an arm, ending in a knotted strand. A liana vine attaches the cord to its handle)(...) in front of the house of the travelers (...) the dark shape crouches down (...) the dark being remains unknown, we have not seen his face, we have not heard his voice. At the wrist and elbow, the dancer has 60 centimeter long skeins of white cotton attached, and that the *pono*-dancers mostly wear a simple crown of white feathers [*tipapo*].

⁹ This is an example of reversed reasoning of a ritual economy wherein surplus is intentionally produced to support such a lavish feast (Duin, 2009, 2012).

¹⁰ Remember that the Upului are one of the core subgroups of the Wayana confederation (Duin, 2009, 2012).

¹¹ Wayana have a practice of dying wooden rods red with roucou (*Bixa orellana*; in Wayana: *onot*) and subsequently wrapping these rods in a spiral fashion with two thin liana vines. Next, these rods are placed in a fire. When the liana vines are removed, red spirals become visible.

Coudreau (1893, p. 180) furthermore stated that the proper headdress for the *pono* is monumental and is named *orocapo* (Coudreau, 1892, p. 25)¹².

Coudreau (1893, p. 180-181) draws on, though does not literally copy Crevaux (1883, p. 258): at intervals of about fifteen minutes, the dancers arrive. Some fifteen dancers have silently arranged themselves in front of the house of guests, all dressed in black cloaks (compare with Figure 1). After the whip-dance ended, the dancers – some still in their cloak – may be dancing *toulé* (*tule*) or *acoumeu* (*okomë*-wasp dance) (compare with the earlier discussed dance of the *Roucuyennes*; Figure 5). After sunset, when the whip-dancers retreat in their hut, the young people of the host village (who watched the whip-dance) dance the *ouanépac* (*wanepëk*, literally: search for honey) (Coudreau, 1893, p. 180-181). During the dance of the *Roucuyennes* (or *Ouayanas*, Wayana, Crevaux, 1882, p. 17) – possibly to emphasize that these are Wayana and not dangerous social others – a unique object can be discerned, namely the *halikëtë* (*harikété*, Coudreau, 1892, p. 25), a feather mosaic worn on the back during the *pono*-dance (in Figure 5 some dancers can be seen wearing this object in front of their chest, rather than on their back), of which Coudreau emphasized, and I concur, the most beautiful piece of feather work that he had ever seen among the Wayana¹³. During an interview with Pilima (January 22, 2013), while holding a photo of a similar

object (Tropenmuseum inventory number 403-67)¹⁴, he pondered who could have woven the cotton support: “maybe the Emerillon [as known as Teko], maybe the Wayãpi [both are Tupí-Guaraní speaking peoples]” because the Wayana do not make such a close weave (named *tuluhtuluh*). It thus seems that the Wayana have a long history of incorporating non-Wayana items¹⁵ in their dance costume. Most significant in Coudreau’s (1893, p. 178) description, and likely absent during the time of Crevaux (Figure 1), is that, “the headdress is a mask” (emphasis added)¹⁶ – completely covering the head.

Henri Coudreau (1893, p. 178) regrettably does not provide more detail on the assembly of this mask completely covering the head, neither a drawing, nor a photograph of this mask that is as “a long and straight visor” (“*longue et étroite visière*”). Consistent with Crevaux, Coudreau (1893, p. 174-185) described the dance costumes; named *nouclat* or *noucarat* [= *okalat*] made from *taouari* (*tawari*; *Couratari guianensis*; in Wayana: *okalat*)¹⁷. These inner bark streamers, naturally tan-yellow colored, are blackened with a resist-dye technique in an anaerobic environment¹⁸; usually by submerging them for about twenty-four hours in the mud of a swampy river bend. Next, the streamers are hung to dry. Tie strips are removed and the sections where bark strips were tied have retained their original tan-yellow color (see Figure 6, left). The sections which had not been tied, have obtained a bluish-black color by exposure to swamp water. This bluish-black color is resistant and does not fade or run.

¹² On the feather headdress, Henri Coudreau (1892, p. 24) noted: *oroc*, *tipapo* (Jari), *olocou*, *olokiri* (Upper Maroni Basin). In his dictionary, Jules Crevaux (1882, p. 16) noted that feather bands (*olocou*) serve to adorn headdresses during feasts. These simple feather bands are today known as *tipapo*. Coudreau (1892, p. 24-25) specified that the headdress for the *pono*-dance is called *orocapo* (Jari) or *olonacane* (Upper Maroni Basin), and a collar or ruff of feathers is called *orocane*. Note the slight linguistic difference, including but not restricted to ‘r’ and ‘l’, between the Wayana of the Jari and the Wayana of the Upper Maroni Basin already noted by Coudreau.

¹³ Henri Coudreau collected two such items (MQB inventory numbers: 71.1890.93.183 and 71.1890.93.184).

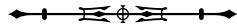
¹⁴ During the collection of this object in 1907 by Claudius H. de Goeje attributed to the Wayana (original ledger).

¹⁵ Other examples of non-Wayana items in dance regalia are glass beads, mirrors, red cloth, and military insignia.

¹⁶ “Le chapeau forme masque” (Coudreau, 1893, p. 178).

¹⁷ Compare with a dance costume collected by Crevaux (MQB inventory number 71.1881.34.389), erroneously labelled as made from liana vines.

¹⁸ This process of resist-dyeing is described in detail for the bark cloaks of Waiwai Yámo and Shodowiko dances (Yde, 1965, p. 273-276); though the dances itself were not witnessed. Waiwai are located at the border between British Guiana and Brazil (Yde, 1965), which situates the distribution of this resist-dye technique for bark cloth from the Waiwai to the Wayana-Apalai, i.e., around the northern frontier of Brazil between Guyana and French Guiana.



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These streamers are about 150 centimeters long, and knitted to the lower rim of the mask to fully cover the body from neck to ankle. A separate set of bark strips covers the head and falls down laterally and posterior. In the time of Crevaux these formed a separate headgear, whereas today the latter are attached to the Tamok mask.

Revival of the Tamok mask a century later can be ascribed to Manfred Rauschert (1982). In 1969, in the village of Anakalemo (also known as Maschipurimo), Paru de Este (Figure 2), Manfred Rauschert (1982, p. 201-207) heard about mythical Tamoko-monsters that almost exterminated the Apalai. A decade earlier, during his 1955-1956 expedition on the Maicuru, Rauschert (1963, p. 188) had heard the myth of men-eating water-monsters named *Tamokoimo* ('giant Tamok' or *Tamokimë*, Velthem, 2003, p. 425); a powerful *Zauberer* (shaman) made his spirit communicate with the spirit of Tamok and forced these monstrous beings back. Rauschert also heard that there used to be a *Tamoko*-feast where people danced as Tamok. The former narrative resonates with Kulienpë's *Jolok Tamok eitoponpë*, which I will address in a moment, and the latter corresponds with the earlier discussed *Wayana Tamok ukuknanom*. Rauschert requested his friend Araiba to gather as much information as possible on this dance. What Rauschert did not highlight is that this village of Anakalemo (or Maschipurimo) is located near a trail connecting the Jari with the Paru, between the historical sites of Yaripo and Canéapo where Crevaux had witnessed the *tule* and *pono*-dances a century earlier.

An old woman, who had witnessed the whip-dance as a little girl, became the key informant to Rauschert (1982, p. 204). This old woman gave further instructions on the

facial painting and emphasized the protruding wax nose. As this woman emphasized a mask with a protruding nose (absent in the data provided by Crevaux), she probably witnessed a later whip-dance as described by Coudreau. According to Rauschert, this woman resided some thirty kilometers upstream¹⁹. In an interview (Cipolletti and Schreiner, 2000, p. 137-142), Rauschert stated that the protocol for the Tamok-dance had been entirely forgotten, and it was only due to this one old woman that Rauschert could reconstruct this 'forgotten' dance and its characteristic mask. While Rauschert was in Belém to purchase beeswax to recreate Tamok masks, Araiba had made several cane Tamok-heads (Rauschert, 1982, p. 203-205, plates 38, 39, and the cover photo)²⁰. A drawing of the *Tamoko*-feast was made (reproduced in Dehnhardt, 2000, p. 126), though the whip-dance itself was not performed (Rauschert, 1982, p. 207). This whip-dance with the Tamok mask, instead of being a typical customary Eastern Guiana ritual, thus appears to have been performed in a rather restricted temporal (late nineteenth century) and spatial (Upper Paru de Este) setting.

MASK OF DEATH

Performance of the full-face Tamok mask, I posit, was first performed around 1880 on the Upper Paru de Este and most likely created by the Upului of the Jari. While the Tamok mask is known in Guiana today, this has not always been the case. Claudius de Goeje (1941, p. 111-113), in his brief cross-cultural analysis of the whip-dance, is the first to associate the name 'Tamok' to the *pono*-dance described by Crevaux (1883, p. 258)²¹. Because these *pono*-dancers (Figure 1) were not wearing masks, Rauschert questioned the

¹⁹ According to my calculations this place must have been near the village of Canéapo where, ninety-one years earlier, Jules Crevaux (1883, p. 258-259) had made the first observations of this whip-dance.

²⁰ In a personal communication René Dehnhardt (December 18, 2007) stated that there are at least six Tamok masks in the Bonner Altamerika-Sammlung (BASA), among others Bonn inv. nr. 03321. The Rauschert collection has not yet been inventoried completely, and the daughter of Manfred Rauschert has recently claimed the collection.

²¹ Claudius H. de Goeje, unlike Jules Crevaux and Henri Coudreau never witnessed the whip-dance. Based on his interviews with the Wayana of the Upper Maroni Basin, he posited that "the [Tamok-] dancer represents the spirit of *Tamoktamok* (that is a *tuna-kaikui* [= water monster] and an *iyum* [*jum* = 1. father, 2. origin, 3. master]), which also is the name of the big blue Morpho butterfly that dwells in the dark woods" (de Goeje, 1941, p. 111). Some sixty years later, when I discussed this hypothesis with Wayana of the Upper Maroni Basin, they told me that Tamok had no relation with *tamoktamok* (blue Morpho-butterfly) or *tamo* (grandfather, ancestor) and that Tamok was a proper name.

relation between the Tamok mask and this ritual (Cipolletti and Schreiner, 2000, p. 142). Then again, Rauschert does not refer to Coudreau who did state that this dance was performed with full-face masks. Rauschert revived the Tamok mask production in the twentieth century among the Wayana/Apalai, albeit he disliked the idea that Tamok masks are being produced today for the global art market²². Next I will discuss the cultural biography (*sensu* Kopytoff, 1986) of the facial painting of the Tamok mask.

At the time of Crevaux, the *pono*-dancers did not wear a full-face Tamok mask and most likely their faces were painted. Kulienpë (Duin, 2009, table C-16, line 63) narrated that the faces of the Wayana dancers were painted like Tamok, and his son confirmed that these were beautiful drawings. In a study on basketry motifs that I conducted in 2000, one of the basketry motifs was recognized as *Tamok ëpata melikut* (facial painting of Tamok). Further study on this particular basketry motif, and drawing on the studies by David Guss (1989) among the Yekuana, resulted in a hypothesis on the origin of the facial painting of Tamok as a Mask of Death, which, in turn, is a materialization of the historical consciousness of the present expressed in terms of the relation of that present to its past. As such the Tamok mask is situated between creation and transformation, in the historical processes of intersubjectivization of materiality.

First I will discuss the actual full-face mask, or 'the head of Tamok'. Next there is the analysis of the Tamok facial painting²³. The Tamok facial painting (*Tamok ëpata melikut*) is unique (Figure 7) and a specific basketry motif is named after it (Figure 7B). This basketry motif must not be confused with the basketry weaving technique called

'the head of Tamok' (*Tamok uputpë*)²⁴, which is almost uniquely used in manufacturing the Tamok mask (Figures 7A and 7C), and occasionally as a basketry support of the *olok* feather headdress.

The basketry framework is made from split cane (*wama*; *Ischnosiphon gracile*; Figure 7C), in a unique hexagonal plaitwork with a triangular open weave (Velthem, 1998, p. 88-89). A horizontal weft is crossed diagonally at a thirty degree angle by two warp elements. One warp element crosses over the weft and the other warp element under the weft. The diagonal warp that crosses over a weft, will cross under the next weft, and vice versa. There are no vertical elements. At eye level, two holes are cut out of this basketry frame, and its rims are reinforced with cane strips sewn together. Note that the masks made by Tukano (Figures 3 and 7C) have rectangular eyes, whereas the masks for the tourist market have round eyes (e.g., Figure 6). Also the bottom edge is reinforced with cane strips sewn together. The diameter of the Tamok masks at eye level present at the tourist and art market is often too constricted to fit over a person's head (i.e., less than 21 centimeter diameter), which makes it doubtful whether these masks were ever designed as a performance-mask.

The basketry framework of the Tamok mask can analytically be divided into four types. The first two types distinguish between a deep reversed basket (Figure 7A), and a shallow reversed basket (about 10 cm deep) with one side dropping down (about 25 cm long) providing the basis for the facial visor (Figure 7C). In the current tourist and art market, the latter type may be shaped more naturally

²² Rauschert commented that the Tamok masks for wholesale are too nice and smooth – in contrast to the rough dance costumes – and the eye-holes are not in the proper place (Cipolletti and Schreiner, 2000, p. 141).

²³ The discussion on the Tamok mask is mainly based on the two Tamok masks made in 2000 by Tukano (Figure 3), and the thirteen Tamok masks present in the Amazonian Collection of the Florida Museum of Natural History (FLMNH). These objects were confiscated by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) in violation of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), U.S. Endangered Species Act, the Lacey Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and U.S. Customs. Over 2,500 objects (including the thirteen Tamok masks) in the Amazonian Collection of the FLMNH were donated to the University of Florida in 2005 by the USFWS under authority of USFWS Investigation number 305 000 215 and case name: "Macaw Feathers" (Transfer order surplus personal property, USFWS form 3090-0014, March 29th, 2005). FLMNH is the repository of the Amazonian Collection (Figures 6 and 7A) (Duin, 2011).

²⁴ *Tamókuputpë, tomôuputpë*, "cabeça do sobrenatural *tamók*" (Velthem, 1998, p. 88-89).

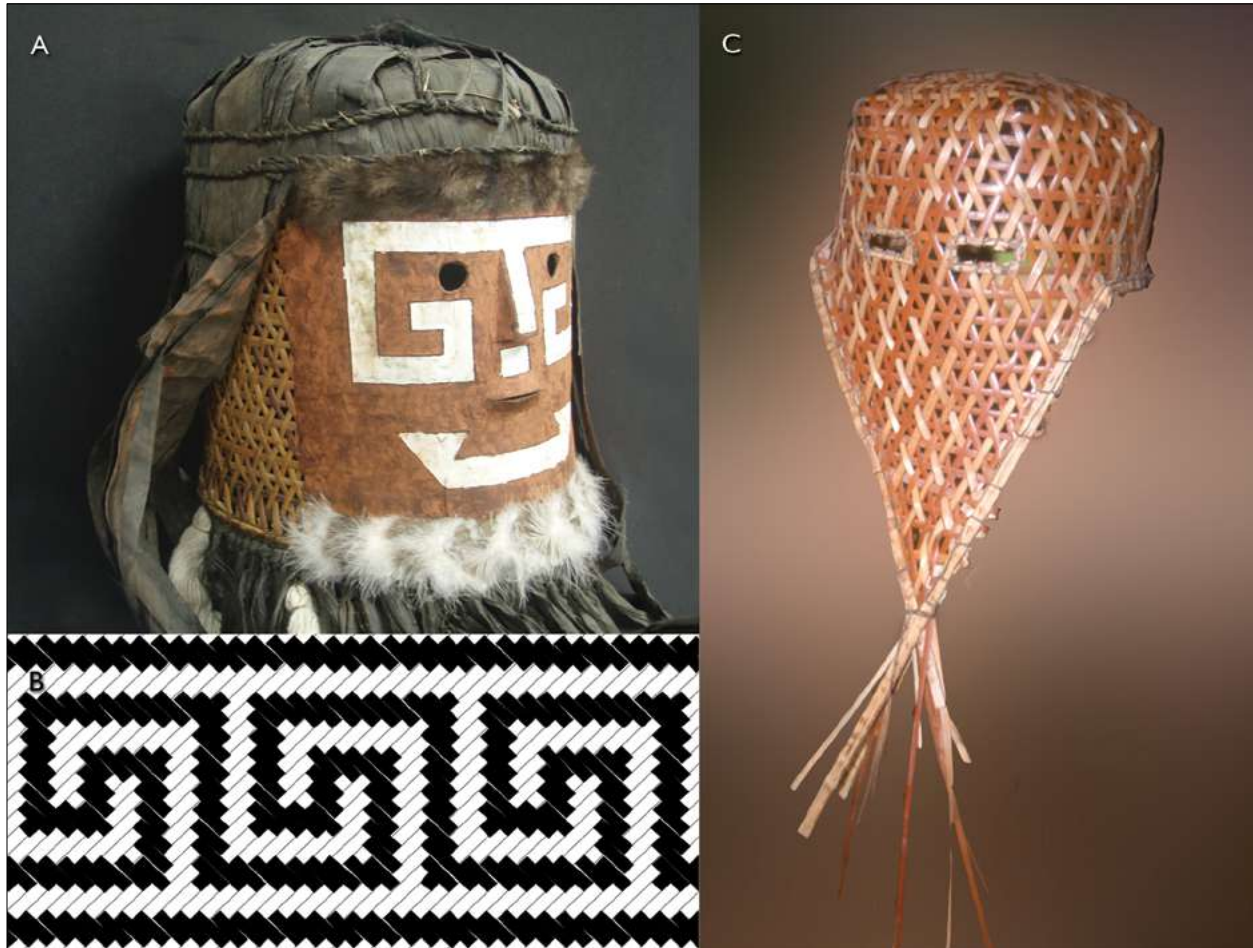


Figure 7. Head of Tamok; basketry frame and Tamok facial painting. A) Tamok mask from the Amazonian Collection of the Anthropology Division of the Florida Museum of Natural History, FLMNH Temporary inventory number T2330; B) basketry motif named “Tamok facial painting” (*Tamok êpata melikut*); C) basketry frame for Tamok mask (*Tamok uputpê*; literally: head of Tamok). Drawing and photos: Renzo Duin.

following facial contour lines (Figure 6, left). The fourth type is a reversed deep basket with a protruding cylindrical frame serving as base for the *olok* feather headdress (Figure 6, right). Tukano (personal communication, 2000), the maker of Tamok masks, stated the difference between Tamok masks with or without *olok* headdress as respectively ‘male’ (*eruwa*) and ‘female’ (*wëlli*)²⁵. Some of the Tamok masks collected by Manfred Rauschert (e.g., BASA inventory

numbers 03321 and 03322; see also cover photo of Rauschert, 1982) have a ‘Mohawk’ from *okalat* in which red macaw tail feathers are set, which is not as elaborate as the monumental *olok* headdress. It thus seems that the shape of the Tamok mask for the tourist market is still in an ongoing process of development towards more ‘natural’ forms that are quite distinct from the rather grotesque Tamok mask used by the Wayana in their whip-dance performance.

²⁵ While some of the Tamok masks in the Amazonian Collection of the FLMNH have a basketry support (temporary inventory numbers: T1596, T2150, and T2152), none came with such a feather headdress. Some ‘female’ Tamok masks have a simple feather crown of white chicken feathers (*tipapo*) (T2149, T2151, and T2153; Figure 6, left).

Beeswax (*molopi*) is molded over the facial part of the Tamok head (Figures 3 and 7A). A protruding nose is modeled with beeswax. A reddish paste is applied onto the beeswax in resemblance of a human face painted with *onot* (*Bixa orellana*) mixed with *kalapa*-oil (*Carapa guianensis*)²⁶. The mouth is absent in the Tamok masks made by Tukano (Figure 3). Only one mask in the Amazonian Collection of the FLMNH lacks a mouth (temporary inventory number T0171). The other masks in the Amazonian Collection have modeled mouths (temporary inventory numbers T0169, T0170, T0377, T1596, T2149, 2151, T2153, T2330, T2331), or even a mouth cut out of the basketry frame (temporary inventory numbers T2150, T2152). Facial painting is applied onto the beeswax face of the Tamok mask.

The facial painting of the Tamok masks consists of linear incisions creating a zone filled in with white kaolin clay (*nenuwë*). Three Tamok masks in the Amazonian Collection at the FLMNH (T2149, T2153, and T2151) have black facial paintings resembling genuine facial paintings with *kupë* (*Genipa americana*) (Figure 8). Furthermore, these three masks have the typical L-shaped outlines above the eyes²⁷. Also the solid bar over the ridge of the nose is noticeable. A variety of motifs may be painted on the cheeks, in real life as on the Tamok masks. Meandering motifs may be applied in Wayana facial painting (e.g., Velthem, 1995, p. 270). While painting allows for curvilinear designs, body painting is analogous the rectilinear motifs in basketry plait work, reminiscent of an interrelationship between the human body and basketry (according to a Wayana myth, one of the Creator twins made a woman out of basketry [*wama*]). Whereas the three 'female' Tamok masks (T2149, T2153, and T2151) have black facial paintings that are dotted white, their 'male' counterparts (T2150 and

T2152) have white facial paintings and the white dots are applied on the red face outside of the motifs (Figure 6). In all aspects, these more 'natural' and 'realistic' female Tamok masks are in a structural opposition to their grotesque male companions (Figure 6).

While some of the Tamok masks for the tourist market bear resemblance of more genuine Wayana facial painting (Figure 8), it is the general outline of the Tamok facial painting that structurally differs from Wayana facial painting. My earlier mentioned collection of photocopies from book illustrations, museum objects, and other mnemonic devices of the Wayana past, also included some sheets with basketry motifs. Some of these designs I had redrawn from Wayana objects in museum collections. Other designs I had redrawn from objects and illustrations related to other Guiana nations (as the Trio, Waiwai, and Yekuana [e.g., Figure 9]; all of the Carib language stock). It was this seemingly unrelated study of basketry motifs that offered me insight into the 'true' sense of the Tamok facial painting.

During my 2000 study on basketry motifs, several Yekuana basketry designs (Figure 9), were interpreted by Wayana as *Tamok ëpata milikut* (Tamok facial painting). First identified as such was a basketry design named in Yekuana: *Mawadi asadi* (Figure 9C); the most complex line drawing in perpetuation of the "Devil's joint" motif (Guss, 1989, p. 183). *Mawadi*, located deep below the water, is entwined with the world of death as these monsters drag people into the depths of the river (Guss, 1989, p. 108). David Guss (1989, p. 109-110) argued that *Mawadi* – represented by the T-shaped figure – is the counter image of a variation of the *Woroto sakedi* (Devil's joints): "foreground and background are suddenly shifted, and while the message clearly remains the same ('the Devil's joints'), the visual emphasis is reversed" (emphasis added).

²⁶ Tamok facial color ranges from Munsell colors: weak red (10 R 5/3) to red (10 R 5/6).

²⁷ It has to be mentioned that Wayana epilate facial hair (eyebrows and eyelashes) and these L-shaped outlines used to be painted above the eye (see photos in: Darbois, 1956; Mazière and Darbois, 1953, 1959; Hurault, 1965, 1968; Velthem, 1995, p. 270; Figure 8).

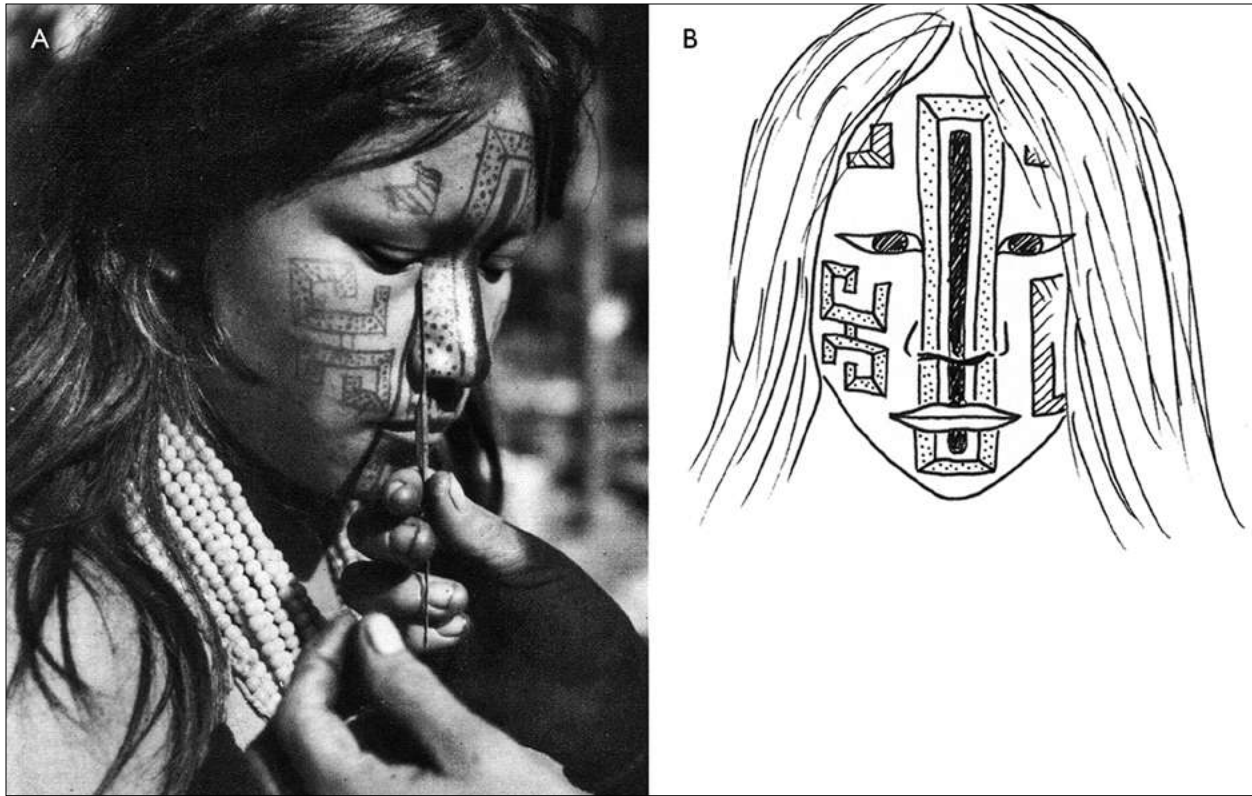


Figure 8. Wayana facial painting. A) Painting of the face of a Wayana girl with line drawings (photograph by Dominique Darbois, 1953); B) artist rendering of the same facial painting (drawing by Renzo Duin, 2000).

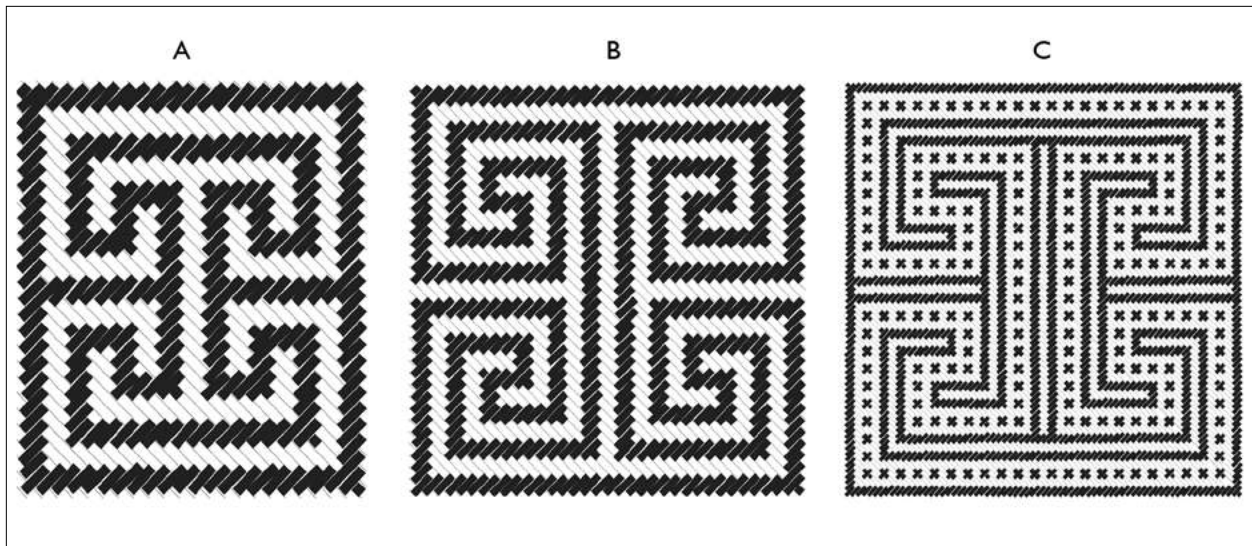


Figure 9. Yekuana basketry motifs (after Guss, 1989, p. 172, 180, 183; redrawn by Duin, 2000). A) *Woroto sakedi* (Devil's joints); B) *Awidi* (coral snake); C) *Mawadi asadi*. In 2000, Wayana of the Upper Maroni Basin interpreted these three drawings both as *Apuweika* (black jaguar – *Apuweika* or *tailiman istaino* [panther or black jaguar]) and *Tamok ëpata milikut* (Tamok facial painting).

Like the Yekuana, the Wayana of the Upper Maroni Basin (more than a thousand kilometers due east) interpreted the Yekuana “Devil’s joint” motif (Figure 9A)²⁸ also as being “turned wrists” (*ëtapëlama*); this stylistic motif is indeed a rather realistic representation of a person (or jaguar) grasping onto something in front of him with his shoulders, elbows, wrists (and fingers) at ninety degree angles as seen from above. Furthermore, for the Yekuana (Guss, 1989, p. 92-125), this is the facial painting of the “Owner of the Basketry” or the “Mask of Death”. Along with Kulienpë’s (Duin, 2009, p. 524) emphasis that the Tamok-dancers were bringing basketry items – in this sense they were the “owners of basketry” – this Yekuana concept of the facial painting of the owner of basketry as the “Mask of Death” was considered worth exploring further.

I posit that the variations of the Yekuana basketry motif *Woroto sakedi* (“Devil’s joints”) (Figure 9), with the sudden shifts between foreground and background, are the foundation for the Tamok facial painting. This is not simply a figment of my imagination; in 2000, Wayana of the Upper Maroni Basin identified the Yekuana Devil’s joint motif as *Tamok ëpata melikut* (Tamok facial painting). Furthermore, the Yekuana *Woroto* (“Devil”) is equivalent to the Wayana *jolok* (with the substitutions w/j, r/l, t/k, and the presence/absence of the ending ‘o’). The original Tamok was an evil spirit *jolok* (compare with the Tamok Jolok narrative discussed in a moment). Variations of the Yekuana basketry design called *Woroto sakedi* (the “Devil’s joints”), depend on the number of “joints” or elbows (Guss, 1989, p. 107), or according to the Wayana: shoulders, elbows, wrists, fingers, and phalanges (maximal up to six joints, i.e., one joint more than *Awidi* [Guss, 1989, p. 107]²⁹). In the following analysis of the Tamok facial painting, I will use the variation with four joints (shoulder, elbow, wrist, and finger), named *Awidi*

(coral snake) by the Yekuana and *Apuweika* or *taliliman istaino* (panther or black jaguar) by the Wayana (Figures 9B and 10B).

For the analysis of the variations and transformation of the Tamok facial painting I use a positive (Figure 10A) and a negative solid fill design (Figure 10F), instead of the outline drawing (Figure 10B) of the above discussed basketry motif (Figure 9B). Note that the outline drawing of Figures 10A and 10F are the same, other than either foreground or background is shaded in gray. When this basic design (Figure 10F) is placed over the face of a Tamok mask there is an interruption at the location of the mouth (Figure 10G; compare with Figure 7A). The vertical bar is continued between the mouth and the chin. Figure 10H has become the general template for the facial painting of the Tamok mask (whereby the lower bracket may be slightly tapered to adjust to the triangular shape of the dropping down facial visor; in which case a triangular shape [compare with Figure 3] may be added below the lower bracket). This typical facial painting is illustrated in the 2012 purchase by the Musée du Quai Branly of two Tamok masks collected in 1984 (inventory numbers: MQB 70.2012.25.1 and 2). The three ‘female’ Tamok masks from the FLMNH Amazonian Collection (temporary inventory numbers T2149, T2151, and T2153), discussed earlier, have a variation of this design (Figure 10I): the lower part, below the mouth, is positive (compare with Figure 10A), whereas the upper part remains negative yet off set away from the center, leaving space for a black vertical bar over the ridge of the nose (Figure 6, left). Tamok facial painting for the masks sold at the tourist and global art market thus continues to develop and transform.

On the other end of the spectrum, we can reduce the number of joints to just two (shoulder and elbow), resulting in the Yekuana motif known as *Woroto sakedi*

²⁸ David Guss (1989, p. 106) refers to Roth (1924) for a similar motif, although he did not mention that Roth (1924, p. 354, 356) interpreted this motif as “wild nutmeg” among Arawak and Warrau, whereas certain Carib groups recognized this motif as “famous mythical snake which originally supplied them with their vegetable charms” (Roth, 1924, p. 355; see also Roth, 1915, p. 283-284). Guss did not account for this incongruity.

²⁹ None of the variations of the “Devil’s joint” motif depicted by David Guss (1989) have up to six joints.

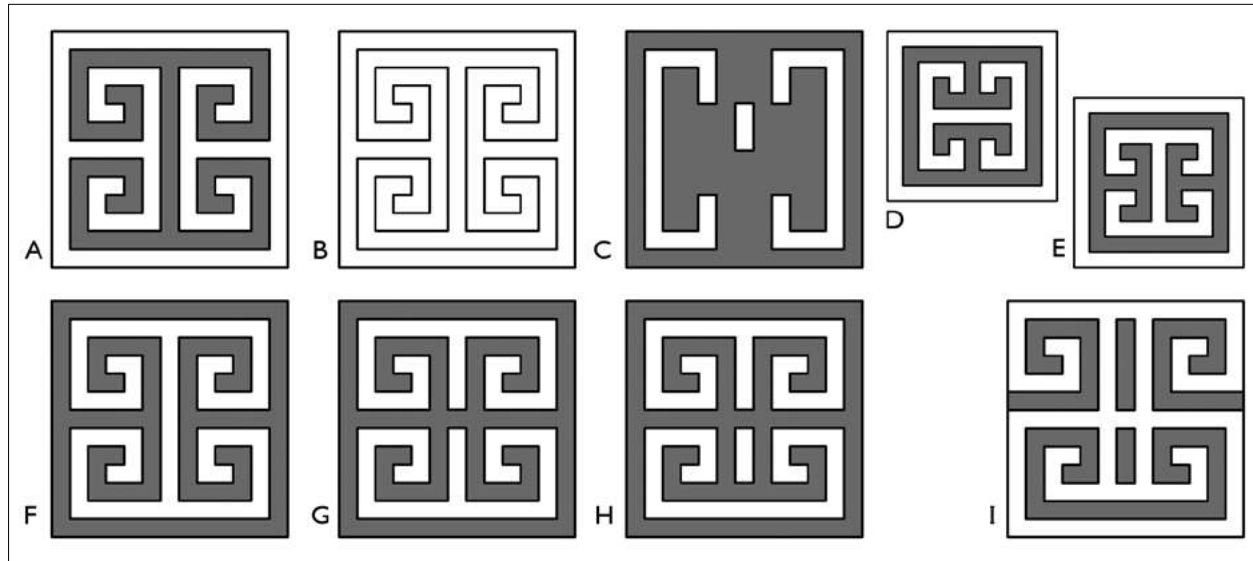


Figure 10. Variations and transformation of Tamok facial painting. A) Basic design: positive solid fill; B) basic design: fine line drawing; C) double hooked brackets; D) the large 'Devil's Joint'; E) the large 'Devil's Joint' rotated 90 degrees; F) basic design: negative solid fill; G) basic design: negative solid fill with interruption at the place of the mouth; H) general template for the facial painting of the Tamok mask; I) composite variation based on both positive and negative solid fill designs. Drawings: Renzo Duin.

ohokomo or “the large Devil's Joint” (Guss, 1989, p. 176; Figures 10D and 10E). The central bar between the two C-shaped brackets result in two T-shaped figures resembling the earlier discussed head and body of *Mawadi* (Guss, 1989, p. 108). This motif (Figure 10E) is actually painted on the cheeks of one of the Tamok mask of the FLMNH Amazonian Collection (temporary inventory number T2331). Concurrently, when removing the central bar between the two C-shaped brackets of this motif (Figure 10C), this results in the two brackets painted on the Tamok masks made by Tukano in 2000 (Figure 3). Therefore, I argue that all Tamok facial paintings are but variations on a single theme.

David Guss (1989, p. 125), throughout his study, stated that life must contain death and he concluded that “to weave is to conquer death”. The Yekuana basketry motifs are variations on a single theme with constant shifts between background and foreground. For the Yekuana,

weaving ‘painted’ baskets materializes the detoxifying duel between humans and the anti-cultural ‘monsters from the forest’. I posit that these vital cosmological elements of indigenous Amazonian religion are the foundation of the facial painting of the Tamok mask, which, not insignificantly, is a woven and painted basket. This detoxifying duel between humans and the anti-cultural monsters from the forest (or rather from the water)³⁰ is the main theme of the myth of the Evil Spirit Tamok (*jolok Tamok*). The Tamok facial painting, I argue, is rooted in a deep-time and broad geographical Guiana tradition of transformation of overcoming death implemented by the social other.

The Wayana also interpreted these ‘Tamok facial painting’ basketry designs as *apuweika* or *taliliman istaino* (panther or black jaguar). The Yekuana (Guss, 1989, p. 110) call the “double-T” shaped figure inside the Devil's joints (Figure 9A) *Mado fedi* (Jaguar face). Moreover, *Mado*, the Jaguar, “is the owner of a deadly armament called *tamu* (...)

³⁰ Claudius de Goeje (1941, p. 111) noted that the Tamok dancers represented “spirits of water monsters” and Jean Hurault (1968, p. 17) listed the Tamok spirits as “dwarfs living in the river” under the category of water spirits (*ipo*).

a three-foot long club” (Guss, 1989, p. 111). With the Carib instrumental suffix *~ke*, e.g., *maria~ke* (“with a knife”, de Goeje, 1946, p. 36), *tamuke* means “with the deadly three-foot long club called *tamu*”. *Tamuke* resonates with Tamok (or Tamoko), and while the Yekuana and Wayana are more a thousand kilometers distanced, this is an example of what Peter Gow (2001) called “a pool of forgotten myths”. This fundamental element in this pool of forgotten myths which may bring us closer to the conditions in which Tamok functions is that it concerns the owner of a deadly weapon.

MYTHSTORY OF THE EVIL SPIRIT TAMOK

Tamok is at once beautiful and horrific. Kulienpë, the narrator of the Tamok Jolok story emphasized that these hitherto unknown beings were beautiful, not ugly (Duin, 2009, table C-15, lines 5, 6, 9), beauty is dangerous and danger is beautiful. Tamok is analogous the Xinguano *Apapaatai apaza* (Barcelos Neto, 2004, 2008, 2011) or Afasa (Basso, 1987, p. 318-350); a powerful cannibal forest monster associated with serious illness and death. These old grandparental sort of powerful beings from the Xingu area are at once beautiful and horrible in their distorted and excessive voice. The voice of Tamok is the cracking whip: “*tai tiki*” (it says/it does “*tai*” whereby *tai* is an onomatopoeia). Moreover, and analogous the Tamok mask, their physical characteristics are molded in beeswax onto the gourd-mask painted red, white, and black. Afasa imitators wear *burity* (*Mauritia*)-palm skirts to cover their body, and carry a staff while they slowly hobble along. Afasa can also be called upon to affect a cure. Analogous the Xinguano cannibal forest monster, Tamok – also a cannibal forest monster – is the impossible imitation.

Anthropological analysis of myths and masks are indebted to Claude Lévi-Strauss (1982, p. 12-14), because

as is the case with myths, masks, too, cannot be interpreted in and by themselves as separate objects. (...) We must reassemble the data available about [the masks]: that is to say, everything known

about its aesthetic characteristics, the technique of its fabrication, its intended use, and the results expected from it; and finally, about the myths accounting for its origin, the way it looks, its conditions of usage.

Earlier in this article I have briefly outlined the aesthetic characteristics, the technique of its fabrication, and intended use of the Tamok mask. I cannot discuss the results expected from it as the whip-dance is no longer performed among the Wayana today, and I rely on historical accounts and oral history. Then again, the results expected from it are directly related with its genesis and conditions of usage. Following Pierre Bourdieu (1977, p. 114), “understanding ritual practice is not a question of decoding the internal logic of a symbolism, but of restoring its practical necessity by relating it to the real conditions of its genesis, that is, to the conditions in which its functions, and the means it uses to attain them, are defined” (emphasis added). An “*approche totale du masque*” is needed, and masks, resonating with Lévi-Strauss, need to be placed in their ceremonial functionality, because a mask is not a mere ‘object’ but rather a dynamic field of interaction (Goulard and Karadimas, 2011, p. 10; Vincent, 1986). A mask is not simply a representation that can be unveiled, but rather an active agent in materializing social memory, allowing for a manifold of interpretations depending on its historical context.

Key in the whip-dance is not the mask – the full-face Tamok mask was even absent at the time of Crevaux – but rather the cracking whip. In his “Vocabulary”, Crevaux (1882, p. 9) stated that *pono* is the name of the whip, whereas Coudreau (1892, p. 25) corrected that the whip used during the *pono*-dance is named *tai*. In 2000 and 2003, the Wayana of the Upper Maroni Basin told me that the whip, the weapon of Tamok, is called *itain* or *Tamok tain*. Its root /*tai*/ is also the root of *taitikai* (thundering; literally: “it does *tai*” whereby *tai* is an onomatopoeia). While this article hitherto focused on the Tamok mask and facial painting, it is this ‘thundering whip’ – the deadly weapon of Tamok – that offers the key to the genesis of the whip-dance and Tamok.

Evil spirits Tamok, according to Wayana social memory (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 10), were carrying a “thundering whip” causing “thunder strikes” so powerful that they brought down trees as when opening a garden plot (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 16), breaking the top of a big tree (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 18), and shattering houses in pieces thereby destroying and collapsing them (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 23). The Wayana imitating Tamok did not have this original weapon of Tamok. This evil power of the original Tamok brought death, yet no person died during the dance performance of Wayana imitating Tamok. This performance of Tamok was simply an event to mock (Duin, 2009, table C-16, line 55-58), in favor of deceit, in the sense of Ellen Basso (1987). These thundering sounds and their deadly effects were so frightening that the indigenous people abandoned their village never to return to this place where this dreadful encounter took place. Rather than the mask, it is the reference to the thunder whip that is key in understanding the historical foundation of Tamok.

This article contributes to “a new ethnology, a new archaeology, and a new history of the indigenous peoples of Amazonia and nearby areas (...), exposing a previously inconceivable dynamism to the region’s societies” (Fausto and Heckenberger, 2007, p. 3). This last section is “about relating alternative histories, each with a unique perspective and voice” (Fausto and Heckenberger, 2007, p. 19; Hill, 2009). While at present there is no further historical or archaeological evidence supporting the hereafter following analysis, the hypothesis posited offers conditions in which the whip-dance and Tamok mask functions. Drawing on the earlier analysis of the facial painting, I posit that the origin of the *pono*-dance is the materialization of the detoxifying duel between humans and the anti-cultural monsters from the forest. The question is if this is a) a general Amazonian theme or b) in reference to a specific historical event. I argue for the latter.

Jules Crevaux (1883, p. 258) wrote that “this feast is to honor the dead of a tamusi who passed away a month ago” (emphasis added), and secondary sources as Walter Roth (1924) and John Gillin (1948) therefore classified the *pono* and *tulé* dances as “mourning ritual”, without critical assessment of the original sources. Nonetheless, Kulienpë in his narrative of Wayana dancing in imitation of Tamok (*Wayana Tamok ukuknanom*) repeatedly pointed out that Tamok dancers were building a community roundhouse (Duin, 2009, table C-16, lines 43-47, 71, 77-78, 90). Tamok dancers were Wayana, more specifically Upului, from other villages (Duin, 2009, table C-16, lines 42, 53, 59) aiding in the construction of the community roundhouse (*tukusipan*); digging holes for posts, debarking stems, cutting leaves for roofing. These construction workers subsequently danced as Tamok. In other villages, during the period of constructing the community roundhouse, they also danced as Tamok (Duin, 2009, table C-16, line 78). In the ethno-historical accounts this important association between Tamok dancers and the construction of a community roundhouse is never mentioned. In all probability, Crevaux did not describe this building process as he arrived in Wayana villages when festivities were already underway, and he left the village soon after. That the dancers are strangers, potentially dangerous social others, yet aiding in the construction of the community roundhouse (*tukusipan*) and bringing the gift of basketry and other small wooden utensils needed in the production of cassava beer – life elixir and social lubricant of Amazonian societies – is vital.

In understanding the means the *pono*-ritual uses, the description by Crevaux (1883, p. 258) of the cracking whip is crucial: “one man alone stands up, holding in his hand a whip 8 meters long, which with a swirling motion he cracks [the whip] like a pistol” (translated by Roth, 1924, p. 664; emphasis added). This play of tropes is also present in the Wayana narrative by Kulienpë (Duin, 2009, table C-16, line 67), who also described the sound

of the cracking whip like a gunshot (*alakapuha katip*)³¹. I bring to mind that the whip – the weapon of Tamok – is called *itain* or *Tamok tain*. Its root */tai/* is the root in *taitikai* (literally: “it does TAI”), referring to thundering. For Andean South America the association between thunder and harquebus/gun has been studied by Irene Silverblatt (1988) and Peter Roe (1988). Thunder clubs come to the scene in the Wayana narratives regarding Wapotoli and Sikëpuli (Schoepf, 1993-1994; Chapuis and Rivière, 2003, p. 144-151; 730-737)³², and are present among other Amazonian peoples (de Goeje, 1943, p. 41). Thunder strikes, thunder clubs, cracking whips, and fire arm shots, stand for similar phenomenological experiences. Each of these metaphors can interchangeably be used to make sense of one of the other experiences. The narrative of the evil spirit Tamok, I posit, has to be perceived as making sense of the sudden arrival of a new entity holding the power to kill people at a distance. If the ‘thundering whip’ of Tamok refers indeed to fire arms (described by indigenous peoples who had no previous experience with such fire arms), then this narrative is unique in that it is a description from an indigenous Guiana perspective of the historical first encounter in Eastern Guiana of Amazonian indigenous people with Europeans.

Most likely candidate for this historical event is the July 1542 patrol on the north bank of the lower Amazon, near the mouth of the Jari. In 1541-1542, Francisco de Orellana and his men would become the first Europeans to sail down the Amazon (de Carvajal, 1934, 1992 [1542]). The journal by Caspar de Carvajal (1934, 1992 [1542]) has been scrutinized by historians to gain insight into the more complex

cultures in the upper and central Amazon (e.g., Sweet, 1974; Whitehead, 1994, 1998, 1999; Porro, 1994; Meggers, 2003). The July 1542 patrol in the country under the reign of *cacique* Arripuna, or Caripuna³³, has been skipped by John Hemming (1978, p. 194) and others, thereby silencing it in the historical process. Historians have not discussed this short passage, consisting of a single paragraph (de Carvajal, 1934, p. 227-228; 1992 [1542], p. 268-269):

When we had gone on a little farther, the Captain ordered us to go on shore to get some recreation and see the resources of that land which was so pleasing to our sight; and so we stopped (a number of) days at this aforesaid place, whence the Captain ordered [some men] to go and reconnoiter the country toward the interior for a distance of one league in order to see and determine what [sort of] country it was; and so they went, and they had not advanced a league when those who had started off (i.e. they) turned back; they told the Captain how the country kept getting better and better because it was all savannas and woodlands of the type which we have stated, and that there had been seen many traces of people who came there to hunt game, and that it was not wise to go on farther; and so the Captain was delighted at their having turned back (de Carvajal, 1934, p. 227-228)³⁴.

Why would this patrol report that it is not wise to go farther, if the lands became better and better, and based on the many traces of people who came to hunt in these savannas and woodlands apparently were good hunting grounds? Especially since the expedition was in need of food! The search for food is why this foot patrol went on land in the first place. Before analyzing this paragraph in conjunction with Wayana social memory, it is needed to briefly contextualize this passage. Captain Orellana

³¹ The Wayana term *alakapuha* is derived from harquebus or *arcabusa* in Spanish. Arquebus or *arcabusa*: interchange of the alveolar liquid/flap *r/l*; *c/k*; *b/p*; and *s/h* results in: *alakapuha*.

³² Upper Maroni Basin, narrated by Kulijaman, Apalai originating from the Jari.

³³ Note that *kalipono* in Wayana is the generic noun for ‘people’, more specifically non-Wayana indigenous people.

³⁴ “Yendo caminando, mandó el Capitán que saltásemos en tierra por tomar alguna recreación de aquella tierra que tanto nuestras agradaba; y así paramos (...) días en este dicho asiento, de donde el Capitán mandó que se fuese a ver la tierra adentro en una legua [about 4 km], por ver y saber qué tierra era; y así fueron y no caminaron una legua cuando los que iban dan la vuelta, dicen al Capitán como la tierra iba siempre mejorando porque era todo sabanas y los montes como dicho habemos, y parecía mucho rastro de gente que venía por allí a caza, y que no era cosa de pasar adelante; y así de la vuelta el Capitán se holgó” (de Carvajal, 1992 [1542], p. 269).

and his men had just withstood an attack by “people painted black” (de Carvajal, 1992 [1542], p. 264-265)³⁵. Heretofore, on June 24, 1542, Gaspar de Carvajal was shot in his eye, and it goes without saying that this affected his perception and writing in the following months. That de Carvajal did not cease his writing underlines the importance of what he witnessed. Near the Rio Trombetas, de Carvajal was shot in his side yet his cloak saved him. Further downstream, the Spaniards were attacked once more, one of the Spaniards died within the day because the arrows contained *curare* poison (de Carvajal, 1992 [1542], p. 266-267). The result was that the Spaniards decided no longer to go ashore in populated areas³⁶. At the mouth of the Xingu, the Spanish brigantine was attacked by two squadrons of canoes. Another Spaniard was hit by a *curare* poisoned arrow and died (de Carvajal, 1992 [1542], p. 268-269). De Carvajal additionally described two remarkable shots fired by the Spanish harquebusiers: two Indians were killed by a single round, and the thundering of another harquebus shot made the Indians jump into the water out of fear. Indeed, de Carvajal (1992 [1542], p. 269) used the word “*trueno*” (thunder) to describe the sound of the harquebus shot. Subsequently, the Spaniards sailed along the left or north bank of the Lower Amazon (“*la banda siniestra del río*”). Although de Carvajal must have been tormented by his wounded eye, he mentioned several times the lack of food and constant preparedness for battle on the side of the Spaniards. This lack of food makes the conclusion by the Spanish patrol in this lush land plenty of resources “that it was not wise to go on farther” (de Carvajal, 1992 [1542], p. 228) even more outstanding, and raises the question: what had happened during this Spanish patrol of July 1542?

With the aim of understanding the conditions of the genesis of Tamok, I will relate both alternative histories,

i.e., the account by Caspar de Carvajal written in Spanish in 1542, and the story narrated by Kulienpë in Wayana in 2003, each with a unique perspective and voice. The 1542 patrol reported that they had seen traces of (indigenous) people who came to these savannas and woodlands to hunt (de Carvajal, 1934, p. 228). Kulienpë begins his narrative with the following opening line: “It is like this they say [the ancestors say], with regard to he who left to hunt, making a hiding place *mimnë*. (...) So he thought that he would have birds under this one” (Duin, 2009, table C-15, lines 1-2). This hiding place (*mimnë*) is a temporary structure made from palm fronds; this camouflaged shelter provides a place from where one can shoot birds and other animals that are feeding on the garden produce (Figure 11). While the Wayana is waiting in his *mimnë* (hiding place), an unknown being arrives in the garden, Kulienpë continued. Shortly after, others arrive carrying a “thundering whip” that does “*ton ton*” (onomatopoeia) (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 10). With this “thunder” emitted from this “thunder whip” these beings slash branches, the crest of the tree and even entire trees (Duin, 2009, table C-15, lines 12, 16 and 18). And the loud thundering sounds awfully frightening (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 21). I posit that this “thunder whip”, with the power to take down trees, is none other than a harquebus. Kulienpë stated that once the shooting had started, various other beings suddenly arrived out of the underbrush surrounding the gardens and the village (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 22). Previous foot patrols during the descent of the Amazon in 1541-1542 consisted of about fifteen to twenty-five men. Almost certainly, this shoot-off must have gathered all members of the patrol, which may explain the sudden arrival of many of these fierce beings. That these beings were wearing a cloak (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 5), may be due to the effectiveness of the cloak against *curare* tipped arrows

³⁵ Note that the Wayana distinguish the Pijanokoto as being painted black when going to war. Pijanokoto are historically situated in the upper Paru de Oeste. The 1542 attack took place near the mouth of this river.

³⁶ The fear of the Spaniards is heard in the citation of de Carvajal of the birdsong “*hui, hui, hui*”, i.e., the imperative of the Spanish verb *huir*, to flee.

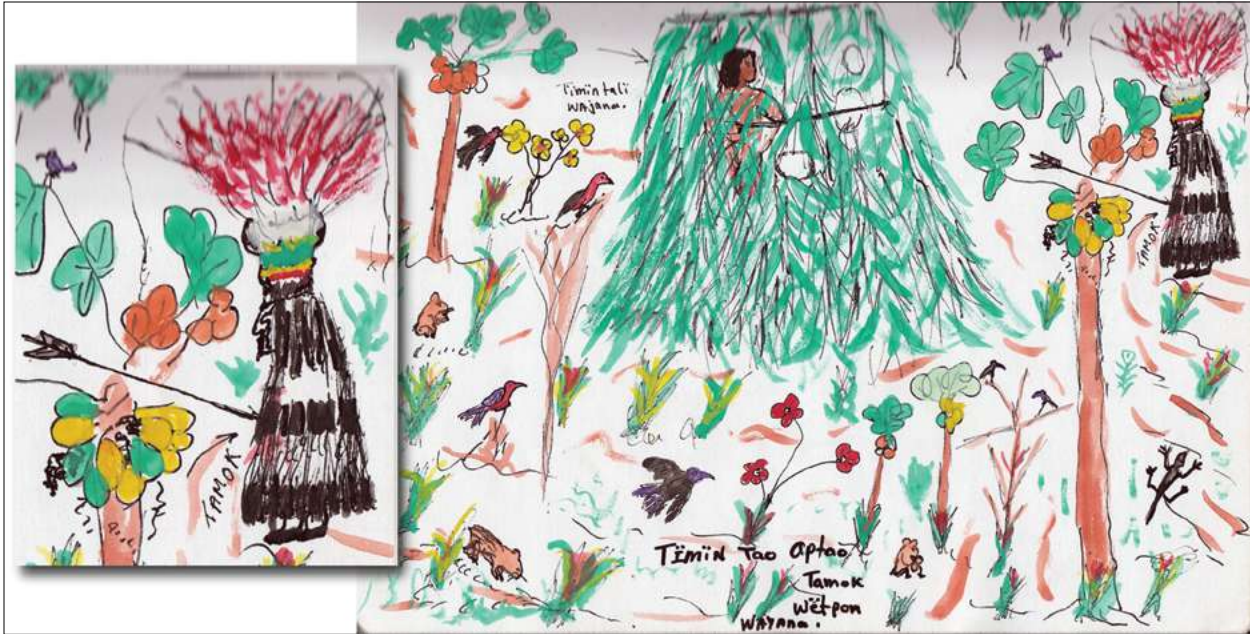


Figure 11. Evil spirit Tamok. Drawing for Renzo Duin by Ronnie Tikaime (2000).

which had saved the life of de Carvajal before. This cloak became one of the means to attain these fierce beings in the whip-dance, as the dancers “are covered with long bark strips, starting from the neck, a kind of toque similar to that used by magistrates (Crevaux, 1883, p. 258; translated by Roth, 1924, p. 664; emphasis added).

The full-face Tamok mask, I argue, also has its origin in this first encounter. The big leader (*umit pepta*) arrived with an onomatopoeic “*ilesoman, ilesoman, ilesoman*” (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 17). This sound is reproduced in the whip-dance by means of *kawai* noise makers tied below the knee of the dancers. I posit that this is the sound of clinging metal body armor. Previously, in April 1542, Orellana had sent out a foot patrol in search for provisions, and this patrol was led by a *hidalgo* named Alonso de Robles (de Carvajal, 1992 [1542], p. 265). A month later, two other foot patrols were sent out to chase down Indians. One of these patrols was led by a *chevalier* named Cristóbal Enríquez; no leader is named for the July patrol (de Carvajal, 1992 [1542], p. 269). The leaders of these earlier patrols were a *hidalgo* and a *chevalier*, and

men of such nobility owned metal body armor. Although it is not mentioned who was in charge of the July patrol, the leader of this patrol may have been wearing metal body armor resulting in the clinging sound “*ilesoman, ilesoman, ilesoman*” when he walked. If this leader of the patrol owned body armor, than most certainly he was also wearing a helmet. Sixteenth century helmets had a visor that could be lowered when necessary to protect the face. Such a visor makes the eyes nearly invisible, and completely covers nose and mouth. This is analogous the full-face Tamok mask. Following sixteenth century Spanish fashion, hats and helmets were flamboyantly decorated with bright red feathers. Wayana have described this headgear in the familiar terms of their feather headdress *olok*. The means to attain this clinging sound, the headgear, and the helmet with visor, are the *kawai* noise-makers, *olok* feather headdress, and the Tamok mask.

Wayana oral history may explain why the patrol reported that “that it was not wise to go on farther” (de Carvajal, 1934, p. 228). Kulienpë stated that Wayana villagers, who had fled out of fear, requested the service of a powerful

píjai (shaman) to bring these fierce beings to a halt (Duin, 2009, table C-15, lines 24-26). Kulienpë continued that, as is custom, a *mimnë* ('shelter') was constructed for the *píjai* to conduct his séance (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 25). Then those who were like Tamok arrived and assembled. The *píjai* (shaman) stopped them and said: "This place is ours!" he said to them, maybe. 'I am here, where do you want to go?' he said. 'I am from here, you are from there!' he said to them, to the Tamok, said the shaman of the evil spirits" (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 26)³⁷. No specification is provided on how, other than in speech act, this *píjai* brought these monstrous beings to a halt and even made them return to where they came from. Was this intervention by a powerful *píjai* the reason why the Spanish patrol returned and reported to Orellana that it was not wise to go farther? If this event indeed relates to the 1542 patrol, this also explains why the Wayana never had seen these evil beings before and why they were never seen again.

If this reading is a native perspective on the first encounter with Europeans on the north bank of the Lower Amazon, then how to interpret the concluding statement that a Wayana was eaten by these monstrous beings (Duin, 2009, table C-15, lines 19, 34-35). Did Orellana's men practice cannibalism? Or, as Tamok represents the archetype enemy (Velthem, 2003, p. 425) – compare with the earlier discussed Xinguano cannibal forest monster *Apapaatai apaza* or *Afasa* – is this statement of anthropophagy merely according to an indigenous Amazonian logic, drawing on the primacy of appropriation and encompassment, with cannibalism being one of its manifestations (Carneiro da Cunha, 2007, p. xii), in order to conclude this narrative of man-killing monsters from a native point of view (*sensu* Viveiros de Castro, 1992). In other words, following Terence Turner (1988, p. 241), the cannibalistic ending of the Tamok narrative was obligatory to describe the social Other contrary to the Self.

This story of Jolok Tamok (the evil being Tamok), whether or not related to the 1542 patrol, provides another and most important key element to understand the nineteenth century whip-dance as a historical "mode of consciousness of the social present, expressed in terms of the relation of that present to its past (and future)" (Turner, 1988, p. 279): after these fierce beings had left, Wayana were struck by an epidemic of fever and headaches, children and pregnant woman died (Duin, 2009, table C-15, lines 29-30). This is why Kulienpë emphasized that the evil spirit Tamok was "without a master, they were of their own creation" (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 27), even though a leader was present (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 17). Tamok was without a Master, because the powerful *píjai* was not able to contain the pandemic causing fever and death (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 31). Kulienpë (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 28 and 33), before concluding this narrative of the fierce Tamok Jolok, stated that after this event the people no longer intended to reside in this village where so many people had died and they left to never return to this river (unfortunately Kulienpë did not name this river).

In his reflective conclusion of the Jolok Tamok narrative, Kulienpë (Duin, 2009, table C-15, lines 31-32) stated that "This is what did the Tamok, the [uncontrollable] evil spirits without master. The latter Tamok were numerous, are very powerful, powerful indeed, incomparable with the evil spirits that we know". Other evil spirits *jolok* have a Master via whom the *píjai* can control the caused sickness (compare with the "Mothers" discussed by Jean-Pierre Chaumeil, 1983). Since the Tamok have no Master – they are of their own creation – and because they have the Power (*tijāsitukenna*), they are very strong *jolok* (evil beings). I argue that it is this pandemic that is the condition in which Tamok functions and epidemic death is the real condition of its genesis.

³⁷ The exact words of Kulienpë, the narrator, were: "Talëhnë mēwai!" *tikai eja, talanme*. "Talëhnë mēwai, talëhnë mumëkja?" *tikai*. "Talë iwu mējëlon, manai tēhejen!" *tikai ēhejatot, Tamok tom, píjai jolonon* (Duin, 2009, table C-15, line 25).

Following Claude Lévi-Strauss (1982, p. 12), I did first “reassemble the data available about [the mask]: that is to say, everything known about its aesthetic characteristics, the technique of its fabrication, its intended use, and the results expected from it; and finally, about the myths accounting for its origin, the way it looks, its conditions of usage” (Claude Lévi-Strauss, 1982, p. 14). The whip, bark-cloth cloak, and mask are means to attain Tamok; to materialize its presence. The real condition of the genesis of Tamok, and the condition in which the whip-dance functions, I argue, is widespread disease and pandemic death, rather than the death of an individual chief (*tamusí*) as suggested by Crevaux (1883, p. 258) and repeated without critical assessment in secondary sources (e.g., Gillin, 1948, p. 852; Roth, 1924, p. 665).

I posit that the nineteenth century whip-dance was an authentic active process to engage with the social present because many Wayana were dying from a disease locally known as *couamaye* (*kwamai* or *kuwamai*) (Crevaux, 1883; Coudreau, 1893, p. 543)³⁸. Some forty-five years prior to the expeditions by Crevaux, de Baue (1835, p. 102) even reported a measles outbreak on the Jari. No wonder that the indigenous people of the Jari must have thought ‘the evil spirits Tamok have returned!!!’. Instead of a mortuary ceremony, I argue, the whip-dance was mocking death itself. This nineteenth century whip-dance, rather than a longstanding ritual, was in full process of development while drawing on ancient Guiana traditions and histories. This whip-dance is *par excellence* a “mode of consciousness of the social present, expressed in terms of the relation of that present to its past (and future)” (Turner, 1988, p. 279); the impossible imitation of the bringer of sickness and death, the impossible imitation of Tamok.

CONCLUSION: A MASK WITHOUT A MOUTH, YET WITH MULTIPLE VOICES

“Yes, it was exactly like that!”: Kulienpë’s son proclaimed on January 10, 2003, when he saw the nineteenth century engraving of the “dance of the *pono*” (Figure 1). Then again, he said that Tamok over his nose and mouth had a sort of basket – like a long nose without a mouth – as is materialized in the Tamok mask, nonetheless, neither the engraving, nor the relevant dance costume purchased by Jules Crevaux in 1878 (currently at the Musée du Quai Branly) contain such a mask (as recently purchased by the Musée du Quai Branly). Telling is that the authentic Tamok masks, in contrast to the Tamok masks currently made for the tourist market, do not have a mouth. The voice of Tamok is its cracking whip, *itain*. When Wayana today describe this cracking of the whip as *alakapuha katip* (“like a gunshot”), then how would indigenous people from Guiana in the sixteenth century, unfamiliar with firearms, describe and materialize a gunshot? The thundering whip became known as the weapon of Tamok. Yet more powerful than its thunder strikes is the pandemic death resulting from the encounter with the fierce Tamok.

This Great Dying in Guiana and the relationships between self and social others (between Wayana, Upului and other indigenous people, as well as between indigenous people and non-indigenous people – Brazilians or Europeans) are dynamic building blocks for the socio-historical construction of new cultural identities, or ‘ethnogenesis’ (Hill, 1996, 2009), but that will start another story (see on Duin, 2009 and 2012 on “be(com)ing Wayana”)³⁹. This article is “restoring its practical necessity by relating it to the real conditions of its genesis, that is, to the conditions in which its functions, and the means it uses to attain them, are defined” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 114, emphasis added), instead of “decoding the

³⁸ See also DE GOEJE, Claudius, “The physical world, the world of magic, and the moral world of Guiana Indians”. Paper presented at the International Congress of Americanists, 29., 1949, New York. Unpublished.

³⁹ Resonating with the ending of Kulienpë’s Tamok narrative (line 123): *Ma, huwalëken man helë ekalëtop. Masike ëtühnëken mija? Imepinpona tikai malalë* (Well, that was the story. What else to add? Otherwise we will start another story).

internal logic of symbolism" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 114) of the whip-dance and the Tamok mask. Instead of writing separate articles discussing each of the themes outlined here, the entanglement of the two Tamok stories, their sense and historical situatedness, and the Tamok mask materializing in the process, urges to combine these studies in one multitude of layers of analysis with the aim to gain insight into an indigenous approach to historical consciousness in Guiana.

Rather than declaring that the 'traditional' whip-dance ceased to exist in the twentieth century, I argue that this impossible imitation of Tamok as the bringer of sickness and death was in process of development in the nineteenth century. The oral histories of the Wayana dancing in imitation of Tamok and the story of the evil spirit Tamok, as narrated by Kulienpë in 2003 in the Upper Maroni Basin, allowed me to (re)contextualize this whip-dance, and go beyond a mere revival of the production of the Tamok mask, as did Manfred Rauschert in the 1960's. Throughout my aesthetic analysis of a monstrous yet beautiful costume, with particular focus on the transformation of the Tamok facial painting, and relating alternative histories regarding the historical encounter with the social other – each with a unique perspective and voice –, this article defines the real conditions of the genesis of Tamok and the conditions in which the nineteenth century whip-dance functioned and the means it uses to attain Tamok. Following Neil Whitehead (2003a, p. 76), and drawing on Peter Gow's (2001) "pool of forgotten myths", this article documents forms of complexity of Tamok demonstrating that the work of 'myth' is far more historically complex than had sometimes been allowed. Human beings, Wayana or otherwise, must gain control over secret weapons of mass destruction that provide the social other with power. Humans must incorporate these powerful weapons into their very existence if they are to survive. Tamok embodies this hot clash with dangerous powers of the social other.

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