


ENGAGED ARCHAEOLOGY
PARTICIPATORY MAPPING WITH
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF
UPPER MARONI RIVER BASIN
NORTHERN AMAZON



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INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF THE
UPPER MARONI RIVER BASIN,
NORTHERN AMAZONIA

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Abstract

New perspectives on the sociopolitical landscapes of past tropical forest cultures have emerged the past twenty years in Amazonian archaeology. Evolving relationships between archaeologists and indigenous Amazonian people, as well as integrating archaeological practice with indigenous Amazonian knowledge, has recently led to groundbreaking scientific discoveries in Amazonia. The present article is a discussion on an ongoing participatory mapping project highlighting this emerging tradition of archaeologists engaging with indigenous people. Specifically, this participatory mapping project in the Eastern Guiana Highlands (Suriname, French Guiana, and Brazil), is part of a recent process of sharing the research agendas of both an anthropologist/archaeologist and the indigenous Amazonian people. Throughout this article, the challenging potential of interdisciplinary and multi-scalar research on historically situated sociopolitical processes is foregrounded. Nevertheless, this emergent relationship between indigenous Amazonian people and a growing number of archaeologists is in its initial stages.

Keywords: Indigenous archaeologies, historical archaeology, participatory mapping

ARQUEOLOGIA ENGAJADA: MAPEAMENTO PARTICIPATÓRIO COM OS POVOS INDÍGENAS DA BACIA DO ALTO RIO MARONI, NORTE DA AMAZÔNIA

Resumo

Novas perspectivas sobre as paisagens sociopolíticas de culturas de florestas tropicais do passado têm surgido nos últimos vinte anos na arqueologia amazônica. A evolução das relações entre arqueólogos e povos indígenas da Amazônia, bem como a integração da prática arqueológica com o conhecimento dos povos indígenas da região, levou recentemente a descobertas científicas surpreendentes na Amazônia. O presente artigo é um relato de pesquisa sobre um projeto de mapeamento participativo em curso, destacando a tradição emergente de arqueólogos que se envolvem com os povos indígenas. Especificamente, este projeto de mapeamento participativo é parte de um processo recente de compartilhamento das agendas de pesquisa de antropólogo/arqueólogo e os povos indígenas amazônicos das terras altas das Guianas (Suriname, Guiana Francesa e Brasil). Ao longo deste artigo, o desafiador potencial de pesquisa interdisciplinar e de multi-escala em processos sociopolíticos historicamente situados está em primeiro plano. No entanto, esta

relação emergente entre povos indígenas amazônicos e um crescente número de arqueólogos envolvidos está em estágios iniciais.

Palavras-chave: Arqueologias indígenas, arqueologia histórica, mapeamento participativo.

ARQUEOLOGÍA COMPROMETIDA: EL MAPEO PARTICIPATIVO CON PUEBLOS INDÍGENAS DE ALTA CUENCA DEL RIO MARONI, AL NORTE DEL AMAZONAS

Resumen

Nuevas perspectivas sobre los paisajes socio-políticos de las culturas de los bosques tropicales del pasado han surgido en los últimos veinte años en la arqueología amazónica. El desarrollo de las relaciones entre los arqueólogos y los pueblos indígenas de la Amazonía, así como la integración de la práctica arqueológica con el conocimiento de los pueblos indígenas de la región, recientemente llevó a descubrimientos científicos sorprendentes en la Amazonía. Este artículo es un informe de investigación sobre un proyecto de cartografía participativa en curso, destacando la tradición emergente de arqueólogos que se dedican a los pueblos indígenas. En concreto, este proyecto de mapeo participativo es parte de un proceso reciente de compartir agendas de investigación del antropólogo / arqueólogo y los pueblos indígenas amazónicos de las tierras altas de las Guayanas (Surinam, Guyana Francesa y Brasil). A lo largo de este artículo, el potencial de investigación interdisciplinario desafiante y multi-escala de los procesos socio-políticos históricamente situados está en primer plano. Sin embargo, esta relación emergente entre los pueblos indígenas amazónicos y un creciente número de arqueólogos está involucrado en las primeras etapas.

Palabras-clave: Arqueologías indígenas, arqueología histórica, mapeo participativo.

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“Reflecting on our idea of archaeology, the phrase we came up with to describe archaeology [was ...] *the study of ‘things left behind in the ground’*. Eighteen months later when 22 [indigenous Palikur] people had been trained in excavation techniques, (...) the dialogues of reciprocal learning had produced a very different phrase: (...) *‘reading the tracks of the ancestors’*” (Green, Green & Neves 2003, emphasis added).

INTRODUCTION

In a recent article, Tim Murray (2011) reviewed the maturing relationship between archaeologists and indigenous people over the past twenty-five years (see also Bruchac, Hart & Wobst 2010). Mainly the decolonization of archaeology in North America, Australia, and New Zealand is addressed. Murray also refers to the post-colonial archaeologies in Africa emerging from ethno-archaeological studies conducted by Peter Schmidt (1997, 2006). Examples from South America, primarily the recent integration of archaeological science and indigenous knowledge in Amazonia (Green, Green & Neves 2003, Heckenberger et al. 2003, 2007, Wright 2013), will enhance Murray’s argument supporting a maturing relationship between archaeologists and indigenous people. The past twenty years in Amazonian archaeology featured new perspectives on the sociopolitical organization of past tropical forest cultures due to a deepening engagement of archaeologists with local indigenous people (Heckenberger & Neves 2009). The Upper Xingu Indigenous

History Project, an interdisciplinary meeting ground allowing to voice different perspectives, including indigenous voices, characterized “engaged archaeology as indigenous advocacy” (Heckenberger 2004). Where archaeology used to be known as “the study of things left behind in the ground” the decolonization of archaeology during the past decade results in a more engaged archaeology where archaeologists and local people, indigenous as well as Maroons, or slave descendants (White 2010), create a meeting ground for “reading the tracks of the ancestors” (Green, Green & Neves 2003:377). Amazonian archaeology remains by and large excluded from global discussions on decolonizing archaeology, albeit ongoing research projects in Amazonia fully embrace current post-colonial understandings of archaeology affianced in local politics, heritage issues and community building.

This article discusses the deep-historical research integrating indigenous knowledge and archaeological practice conducted in the Upper Maroni Basin, the frontier zone of southern Suriname and French Guiana. The core of our research team, implementing an engaged archaeology, consists of one anthropologist trained in the four-field approach at the University of Florida (Renzo Duin, the author) and three indigenous Wayana (Kilian Toinaïke, Tasikale Alupki, and Aimawale Opoya, the co-authors)¹. The indigenous association Kalipo, of which Tasikale Alupki is the director, strives for a safeguarding and cultural transmission of indigenous material and intangible he-

ritage within their Wayana community. The relatively short-term expeditions were embedded in prolonged periods of in-depth ethnographic fieldwork. This article presents findings discovered during the 2011-2012 expeditions, supplemented with unpublished data from earlier expeditions, particularly the 2004 expedition. Above all, we address the process of the maturing scientific interrelationship between the archaeologist / anthropologist and the indigenous Wayana in search of the past of the Upper Maroni Basin, northern Amazonia.

Archaeological discoveries in the Upper Maroni Basin, as for most of Guiana, mainly consist of stone axes, grinding grooves, pottery fragments, and a few sites with rock art (petroglyphs and rock alignments). This assemblage is known for at least sixty years (Abonenc 1952:57-58), and the description of the people who made these objects generally concurs with the definition of tropical forest cultures (Steward & Faron 1959) or tribes (Steward 1948), compliant with the neo-evolutionary cultural ecology paradigm (Steward 1950, Meggers 1996). In the past decades there have been more findings of stone axes, grinding grooves, and pottery fragments; additional discoveries were a site with rock paintings and several *montagnes couronnées* or hilltop sites with encircling ditches (Mazière 1997, Rostain 2008, Versteeg 2003). Some 150 km due west of the rock alignments and petroglyphs of the Upper Maroni Basin, are the rock alignments and petroglyphs of the grand savanna of the Upper Paru de Oeste, northern

Brazil. During his visit of the Upper Paru de Oeste, local indigenous Tiriyo told Protásio Frikel about a ceremonial place, and they brought him to this place “of those transformed” (Frikel 1961, 1969). While archaeologist described, classified, and interpreted the rock alignments of the Upper Maroni Basin from a western perspective (Mazière 1997:117-121), Frikel described the rock alignments of the Upper Paru de Oeste as what can be referred to as an indigenous Tiriyo “mythscape” (compare with Wright 2013). While archaeology in Guiana –notwithstanding ethnographic descriptions of archaeological sites such as by Protásio Frikel some fifty years ago– continues to describe, catalogue, and classify artifacts and determine their provenience, a new Amazonian archaeology and anthropology situated in a historical ecology paradigm is emerging (Heckenberger & Neves 2009). This new Amazonian archaeology (Heckenberger et al. 2003, 2007) is demonstrating that the Amazonian *natural monument* with its rich biodiversity is in effect a *cultural landscape*.

There is a tradition in Amazonian archaeology to link the ethnographic present to the archaeological past, going back to Domingos Soares Ferreira Penna, and in the beginning of the twentieth century both Erland Nordenskiöld and Kurt “Nimuendajú” Unckle conducted ethnography and archaeology conjointly (Barreto & Machado 2001:246-247). Common practice is that historical ethnographies are exploited to illustrate the perished past. Alternatively, archaeology can be a tool

striving for a dialogue to voice local histories that have been “silenced” (*sensu* Trouillot 1995). In other words, borrowing from Henri Coudreau (1893:16)², aiming “to discover *unknown pages of the history of the peoples without history*” (my translation, emphasis added). The truism “people without history” remains characteristic for the indigenous people of the Americas, even whilst arguing against this concept (Lévi-Strauss 1962, Wolf 1982). Although different societies have different approaches towards managing history, it was evident for Claude Lévi-Strauss (1962:280) that all societies are embedded in history. Lévi-Strauss (1962:279) therefore suggested that a distinction between “hot” and “cold” societies is more useful than the distinction between “the ‘*people without history*’ and the others [with *written history*]” (emphasis added). This distinction between “hot” and “cold” societies sparked an enduring debate amongst Amazonianists on history, myth, and local indigenous perspectives on the past (or “historicités”) (Fausto & Heckenberger 2007, Hill 1988, 1996, Whitehead 1999, 2003). Integrating archaeological practice and indigenous knowledge currently results in the rewriting and revealing of unwritten pages of the histories of indigenous Amazonian people.

“WHY DON’T YOU STUDY OUR HISTORY?”³

In 1996, Renzo Duin arrived in French Guiana to study the vernacular architecture and settlement patterning of indigenous people, in order to aid

the archaeological reconstruction of house structures excavated in the Caribbean (Duin 1998). This ethno-archaeological study was mainly conducted among the Carib-speaking Kaliña and Wayana communities of the Maroni River (frontier between Suriname and French Guiana). This research was within the tradition of Caribbean archaeologists from Leiden University drawing on Amazonian ethnographies (Versteeg & Schinkel 1992), and Peter Siegel’s (1990a, 1990b) ethno-archaeological studies among the indigenous Waiwai of Guyana. Duin had taken for granted the leading *generalist approach* searching for cross-cultural comparison (albeit amidst Carib-speaking tropical forest cultures) applicable through time and space.

During the preliminary phase of the ethno-archaeological research, several Kaliña and Wayana took immediate interest in the historical illustrations and wordlists from both the Caribbean and Guiana. Wayana even recognized words from the seventeenth century dictionaries of the Caribbean. While Duin presented these historical documents (referred to by Wayana as *uhpak aptau pampilan* [papers from long ago]), he explained that ethno-archaeology is the study of practices of contemporary people in order to gain an understanding of past practices based on an analogous material assemblage. Throughout the years, Duin’s research gravitated towards Wayana settlement organization. A few years later, Wayana said to him: “*since you are so interested in the past, why don’t you study OUR history?*” Subsequently, a common research

agenda emerged. Out of the pitfall of the generalist approach, Duin almost immediately fell into the pitfall of the *relativist approach*, that is, the in-depth ethnographic study of a small community while embedding the findings in the broader theoretical issues of the discipline.

During his fieldwork between 1999 till 2004, Duin had defended his MA Thesis, but was not yet embedded in a particular school of research for his PhD training. He lived amongst the Wayana, though remained particularly interested in traditional practices, social memory, and the transmission of intangible heritage. Although focusing on the past, this was a pioneering way to facilitate the understanding of the rapidly changing world of the Upper Maroni Basin. In the village, Wayana are eager to demonstrate their longing for Western culture, however, the very same people become nostalgic when in the forest away from the village. This *action approach* demonstrated that for the Wayana, history is very much situated in place. History for Wayana is not fixed in absolute time, but situated in relational temporality. Trained in the archaeological discipline of scientifically placing things in time and space, Duin was confronted with a different ontological paradigm where place incorporated different temporalities. During the past decades, Wayana have been able to acknowledge the Western notion of absolute time and the Gregorian calendar; and in embarking on expeditions with Wayana towards the Tumuc-Humac Mountains, Duin gained an understanding of the

temporality of the indigenous Guiana landscape.

During his PhD training at the University of Florida, Duin was able to contextualize his experiences and theoretically situate his findings; shifting his research towards historical processes, resulted in a multi-scalar understanding of emerging identities and regional sociopolitical landscapes in the Eastern Guiana Highlands (Duin 2009, 2013). Meanwhile, Tasikale and Aimawale, who often had profited from the presence of Duin to ask Wayana elders about the past, used the obtained knowledge to instigate the 2004 *maraké* ritual (Isel 2004, Pellet & Saint-Jean 2006:17-33)⁴. Notwithstanding the cautionary research by “revisionists” such as Neil Whitehead (1989, 1994, 1999, 2000), the neo-evolutionary cultural ecology paradigm of tropical forest tribes living in a counterfeit paradise (Meggers 1996), reigns supreme in the conceptualization of the environmental structure and sociopolitical organization of indigenous peoples in Guiana, and Amazonia at large. The ramification of the neo-evolutionary cultural ecology paradigm is twofold. First, post-1850s images (engravings and black-and-white photographs) of indigenous people are utilized on a regular basis without critical evaluation to illustrate archaeological studies. Second, because of the preconceived assumption that there were no complex societies (no macro-polities or chiefdom level societies) in the Guiana Highlands, there is a lack of research agendas instigating archaeological surveys to further our understanding of

settlement organization prior to 1850. In the context of the shared research interest of Duin and several Wayana that developed over the past sixteen years, a different image of the history of the Eastern Guiana Highlands is emerging.

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Based on various historical sources, Duin had compiled a map indicating historically known settlement locations (Figure 1 is based on this source map). Wayana elders recall the names of several of the historical villages plotted on the map. Concomitantly, these Wayana elders recall settlements from their collective social memory that are not on the map. For example, Wayana social memory indicates that many indigenous people used to live along the Malani (Marouini), while on the map this tributary is largely empty of settlements. This is due to the fact that most explorers travelled via the Aletani. This indigenous knowledge of past settlement is handed down from generation to generation in the form of narratives and chants, or due to the deduction of encountering ecological or cultural indicators while hunting and fishing. Additionally, a growing number of Wayana begin to appreciate that archaeology is a scientific tool to describe the past and a powerful asset to rewrite their history as presented in textbooks. Historical maps provide insight into settlement patterning over the past centuries in the Eastern Guiana Highlands. The first maps of the Waya-

na area were made by Jules Crevaux (1881), an explorer searching for Lake Parime and the Golden City of El Dorado. A decade later, Henri Coudreau (1893) intended to make a scientific study and draw a map of the interior of Guiana, proving there was no vast interior lake and no golden city. Neither Crevaux nor Coudreau intended to map all indigenous settlements in the Eastern Guiana Highlands. Their maps, nevertheless, provided the location of several dozens of settlements and abandoned villages in the late nineteenth century. It is challenging to transfer the historically mapped villages onto modern maps due to the historical map-making by compass, podometer, watch and barometer, in conjunction with an unawareness of magnetic declination. More consistent with modern maps, is the cartographic work conducted after 1945, particularly the work by the French geographer Jean Hurault. However detailed the latter maps may have been (e.g., Hurault 1965: planche VIII facing page 24), along with his kinship charts, these datasets are ultimately incomplete as well. On occasion, the incompleteness of data can be attributed to the border dispute between Suriname and French Guiana. Historical maps, however detailed they may seem, only provide a glimpse into indigenous settlement patterning in the Eastern Guiana Highlands over the past centuries.

Plotting historical villages in time and space is a mere means to further our knowledge of constantly emerging sociopolitical landscapes. Persistently, Wayana invited Duin to visit the places

evoked through social memory. Based on this urge to visit historical sites, we posit that indigenous Wayana history is geographically grounded. That is, one needs *to be in a certain place to understand its history*. Identifying historical places is a collaborative effort between scientists and indigenous Amazonian people who keep these places and related narratives in their social memory, and thus write history in the landscape (Green, Green & Neves 2003, Heckenberger 2005, Wright 2013). Archaeology can contribute to the identification of known villages, but also of historical settlement locations unknown to the local people. For example, Wayana are familiar with the location of the village of Jamaïke visited by the 1903 Gonini-expedition (Franssen Herderschee 1905:120-125, 140-141)⁵. A decade earlier, Henri Coudreau (1893) had mapped the village of Yamaïké just south of the location of the 1903 village of Jamaïke, and an abandoned village of Yamaïké just south of the mouth of Loë creek (Figure 1: inset right). This latter abandoned settlement was unknown to the Wayana. During the 2011-2012 participatory mapping project, a ceramic vessel was recovered from the river bed in the vicinity of the posited location, and secondary forest on the river bank was a strong indicator for a potential former village. For the Wayana, as for Duin, both the cultural and the ecological indicators were undeniable proof that there had been an indigenous village in the past at this location. Another example is Panapi, the second village visited by the 1903 Gonini-expedition (Franssen Herders-

chee 1905:126-127). The Wayana, however, recalled another location of a village of Panapi (Figure 1: inset right). While the latter village dates back to the mid-twentieth century –also indicated by the recovery of a white glazed saucer on site– grinding grooves in the rocks at the river bank indicate a much older occupation of this site; in archaeological terms, this is a multi-component site. An integration of indigenous knowledge and archaeological science furthers the understanding of the temporality of this dynamic historical Amazonian landscape.

In the 1940 census, Lodewijk Schmidt (1942:51-52) lists five villages in the Upper Maroni Basin, namely: Granpassi, Janemale, Makale, Alitowa, and Wapoedoemit. Albeit these indigenous Wayana villages are not mentioned on the map accompanying the 1940 census, most of these five villages are mentioned on the sketch maps accompanying the reports of the 1938 (Ahlbrinck 1956) and 1939 (Geijskes 1957) expeditions (Figure 1). The scale of these maps (one centimeter representing about ten kilometers), is not detailed enough to properly position the settlements. Several Wayana elders are familiar with the location of these five villages. More than seventy years after Lodewijk Schmidt, we proceeded to locate these now abandoned villages from the late 1930's. This 2011-2012 participatory mapping expedition consisted of Kilian Toinaïke (co-author), his wife Elina, canoe owner Küpala, and Renzo Duin (author). The expedition to geographically locate these five villages

was embedded in a four month fieldwork period. By means of historical maps, photographs and film, in conjunction with Wayana social memory, we located the abandoned villages (a

documentary is forthcoming: Duin 2014). The coordinates of the now abandoned villages were recorded by handheld GPS (Global Positioning System)⁶ for future reference.

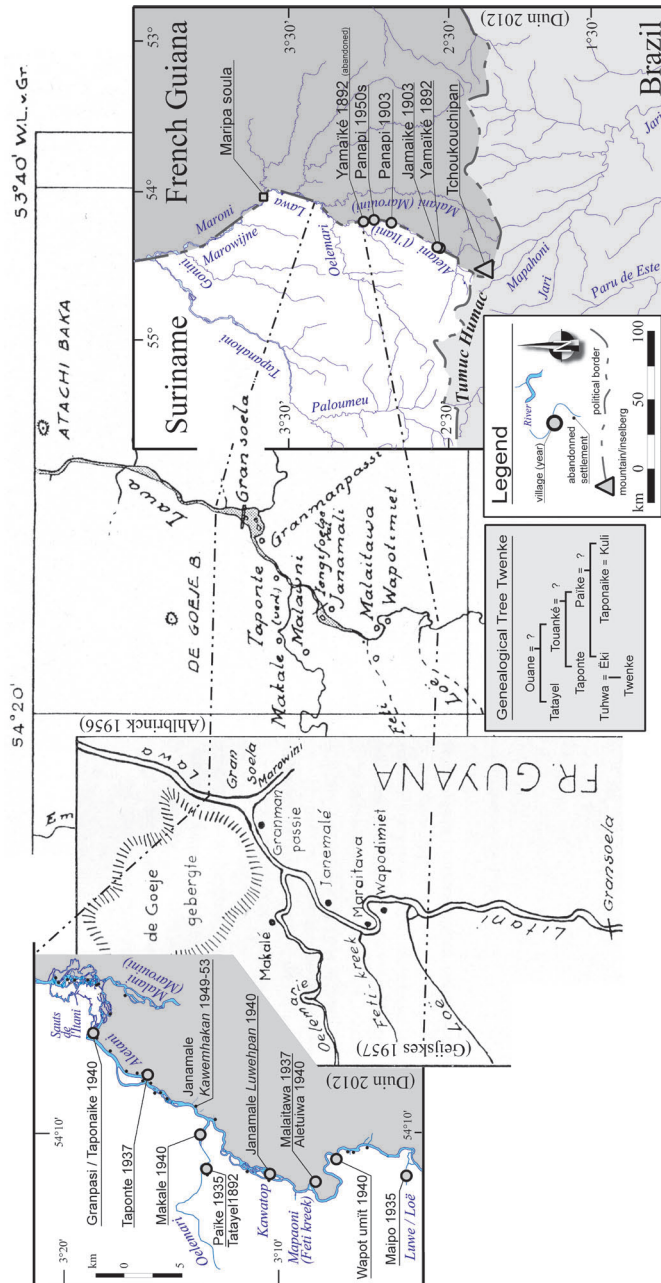


Figure 1 – Wayana villages in the Upper Maroni Basin during the late 1930's following the sketch maps by Ahlbrinck (1956 - center right), and Geijskes (1957 - center left). Inset left (a selection of the map by Duin 2012) is scaled at 200% compared to the maps by Ahlbrinck and Geijskes. Inset right positions the villages of Jamaïke and Panapi.

The first village listed in the 1940 census (Schmidt 1942:51) is Granpassi, and Tipanaike [= Taponaike] is the first name listed. In 1999, descendants of Taponaike had indicated the location of the former village of Taponaike between the contemporary villages of Pilima and Palimino.⁷ This location corresponds with the position of Gran(man)passie on the historical maps (Figure 1). The former village of Taponaike is the most northern settlement of the villages listed in the 1940 census along the Litani [= Aletani]. The most southern settlement is the former village of Wapot umit (Figure 1), which was documented as 'Wapoedoemit' by Schmidt, 'Wapodimiet' by Geijskes, 'Wapotimiet' by Ahlbrinck, and 'Wapurumuit' by De Goeje (1941:123) who also noted that this village is also known as *siye akulikato* (place of broken kettle). This variation illustrates the existing differences between the spoken indigenous Wayana language and the phonetically written variants, which does not facilitate the study on toponymes.

Most village names refer to the name of the founder of the village or village owner, such as the above referred to Wapot umit, or the second village of the 1940 census: Janemale (Ahlbrinck: Janemalé; Geijskes: Janamali). Nevertheless, Wayana chief Janemale had founded several villages in the course of his lifetime (Duin 2009:143-145)⁸. Most likely, the village of Janemale during the 1940 census was the village also known as *Luwehpan* (literally: "full of *luwe*" [*luwe* = 1. bamboo for flutes, 2. flute of bamboo])⁹. A little further

upstream was the village of Alitoewa [= Aletuiwa], as mentioned in the 1940 census, but not present on the historical maps. Wayana elders stated that Aletuiwa had his house next to the house of Malaitawa. The village of Malaitawa is placed on Ahlbrinck's map (Geijskes: Maraitawa). Most likely, Malaitawa passed away in 1939 or early 1940, and his neighbor Aletuiwa became village leader and renamed this village. The location of the village of Malaitawa, and later Aletuiwa, according to the maps by Ahlbrinck and Geijskes (Figure 1), is ambiguous to a certain extent. Fortunately, Wayana elders remember the location of this village, also known as Doisine (de Goeje 1941:123). Significant herein is the large mango tree near the flat rocks at the river bank in the meandering river. Furthermore, the location of this village can be confirmed with the 1937 film by Claudius de Goeje (in the film this village is erroneously labeled Malaitaiwa instead of Malaitawa). The fifth Wayana village from the 1940 census in the Upper Maroni Basin is Makale (Schmidt 1942:52). The village of Makale is positioned along the Oelemari River, a tributary of the Aletani. Based on the information collected during the 2011-2012 participatory mapping project, the position of the former village of Makale is further to the east than indicated on the maps by Ahlbrinck and Geijskes (Figure 1). During the 2011-2012 participatory mapping expedition, GPS coordinates of the five villages listed in the 1940 census have been recorded for future reference.

While recording the GPS coordinates of the abandoned village of Makale at the mouth of the Oelemari River, Kūpala, our canoe driver, mentioned that just upstream of Makale was Païke *patatpë* (former village of Païke)¹⁰. Païke was the father-in-law of the aforementioned Taponaike (Figure 1: inset with the genealogical tree of Twenke). Potsherds found at the former village of Païke were dissimilar from the potsherds recovered in the former village of Makale. Whereas the fragments of pottery from the villages of the 1930's were relatively large, these potsherds at the former village of Païke were smaller than two centimeters. When comparing this location near the mouth of the Oelemari River with the historical maps, the 1892 village of Tatayél (Coudreau 1893) is a potential candidate. The Wayana are not familiar with the location of this village of Tatayél. I argue that Païke had founded his village on the former village of his uncle Tatayél (Tatayél was the brother of Touanké, who was the father of Païke, who in turn was the maternal grandfather of the late *granman* Twenke). On another occasion during the 2011-2012 expedition, Kūpala and Kilian located another site with secondary forest (*ihjan newe*), and, additionally, pottery fragments (*ëlipotpë*) were found in an armadillo burrow. These pottery fragments were comparable to the potsherds found at Païke (or rather Tatayél). When Kilian subsequently inquired about the latter site, no Wayana recalled a former village (*patatpë*) at this location. The archaeological proof in the form of potsherds, together with

the ecological indicators, were evidence enough for Kilian that indigenous people in the past used to live at this place. Furthermore, other Wayana began to refer to similar places, i.e., potential archaeological sites, they had encountered while hunting.

North of the mouth of the Oelemari River, Ahlbrink (1956) positioned the abandoned (between brackets: *ver[aten]*) village of Taponte (Figure 1), also known as Kumakahpan (de Goeje 1941:123). The village of Taponte (brother of the aforementioned Païke), must have been abandoned between the death of Taponte in 1938 (de Goeje 1941:72) and the 1940 census (Schmidt 1942). In 1937, Claudius de Goeje (1937, 1941) conducted most of his research in this Wayana village, and collected an estimated 200 ethnographic objects¹¹. Also on the map north of the mouth of the Oelemari River, is the De Goeje Mountain (on the maps labelled: *gebergte* of *b[erg]*; Figure 1), named after the Dutch naval cartographer Claudius de Goeje who was the first to map this mountain during the 1903 Gonini-expedition (Franssen Herderschee 1905). The former village of Taponte was located during the 2011-2012 participatory mapping project (Duin 2013, documentary is forthcoming). Whereas Ahlbrink had mapped the abandoned village of Taponte on the left bank, the former village of Taponte is actually located on the right bank of the Aletani River. Most likely, this 'error' in mapmaking is due to geopolitical reasons, because the left bank of the Aletani River is Surinamese territory, while the right bank

is French territory (Figure 1). Locating these former villages in a collaborative participatory mapping project, is only the beginning for further research on these shared and yet contested histories.

Today, the locations of the villages mentioned in the 1940 census (Schmidt 1942) are recalled by Wayana elders (above about 40 years of age), allowing the positioning of these former settlements by means of GPS (Global Positioning System). The location of these villages is often near the mapped position, although, due to geopolitical reasons, map-makers sometimes drew villages on the opposite river bank. Numerous indigenous settlements have never been mapped, such as the in 1938 abandoned village of Maipo at the mouth of Loë creek which had been visited by both Ahlbrinck and Geijskes according to the respective accounts. Sometimes a village is renamed when another village leader is appointed. Occasionally it is difficult to identify a specific historical village, because the village leader had several settlements throughout his lifetime. Additionally, during the 2011-2012 participatory mapping project, several abandoned villages dating back to the 1950's and 1960's were visited, some of which had been mapped by Jean Hurault (1965). As personal names are handed down from grandparents to grandchildren, different settlements can have the same name while their occupation is several decades apart. Although indigenous settlements are ephemeral, these named places are entrenched in Wayana social memory.

At present, several sites of former villages are used as camp locations for hunting/fishing expeditions, especially sites with flat rocks in the river. Wayana identify abandoned settlements by ecological indicators (e.g., secondary forest, domesticated plants, and other non-timber forest products)¹², and signs of material culture (e.g., potsherds, the occasional house posts, graves, and stones to support a cassava griddle)¹³. A combination of the following indicators determines (potential) archaeological sites: ecological indicators (mainly botanical) and archaeological indicators (primarily pottery fragments). These indicators are useful for building a GIS-model predicting the location of archaeological sites.

INDIGENOUS HISTORICITY

Wayana elders tell stories of times long ago (*uhpak aptau eitoponpè*), comprising the legends of the historical hero Kailawa who unified the Wayana. In 2000, Kilian and a few other Wayana initiated an expedition, supported by the author, to venture into the Tumuc-Humac Mountains where the legendary stories of Kailawa are said to have taken place. Subsequently, multi-disciplinary expeditions took place in 2003, 2004, and 2006 'in the footsteps of Kailawa' (Pellet & Saint-Jean 2006, Saint-Jean & Pellet 2008). The goal of the 'Kailawa expedition' (Oct. 17 – Nov. 10, 2004) was to climb Mount Tchoukouchipann (*le Pakolo* [the house], also known as Timotakem [Coudreau 1893]), and to assess the potential of this inselberg as the site referred to in Wayana oral his-

tory (Duin 2006b, Reau 2006). Other Wayana stories are situated in mythical times. Among the latter are a series of myths related to the Creator Twins. In one of these stories it is said that the Creator Twins transformed the *tukusipan* (community roundhouse) into stone. In a footnote, Jean Chapuis (Chapuis & Rivière 2003:141, note 326) stated that “I [Chapuis] do not know if there exists a link between this

narrative [i.e., the Creator Twins transforming the *tukusipan* into stone] and the inselberg named ‘Tukusipan’” (my translation).¹⁴ Far more complex than first imagined (Duin 2002/2003) is the synechdochical interrelationship between (a) this inselberg in the Tumuc-Humac Mountains, (b) the Creator Twin myth, and (c) the Kailawa legend (Duin 2009). How can archaeology contribute to this narrative?

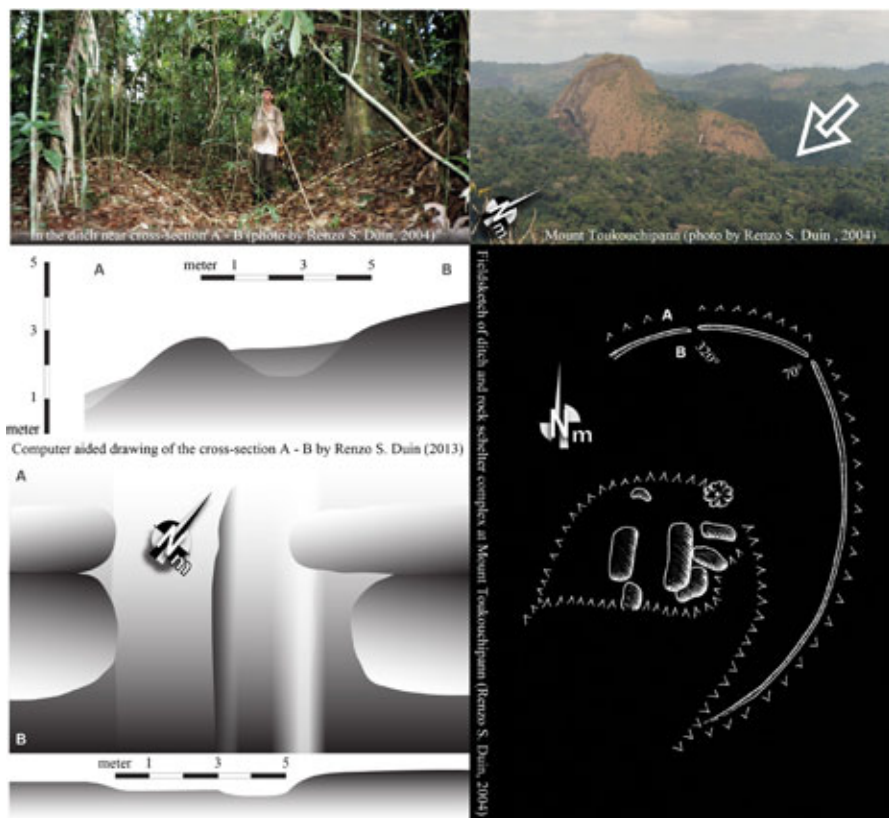


Figure 2 – Sketches of the ditch encircling the rock shelter complex at Mount Tchoukoupann.

These early twenty-first century expeditions in the Tumuc-Humac Mountains on the tracks of Kailawa, were pioneering expeditions, because southern French Guiana

was understood to be an archetypal ‘virgin forest’ with ‘refuse areas’ on the inselbergs (Granville 1978, 1994), an untouched ‘Lost World’ in the sense of Conan Doyle, with

merely a few hunter/gatherers passing through. During a French cartographic mission in 1962, it was explicitly mentioned that no cultural remains were found on or around Mount Tchoukouchipann (Hurault 1968:152, Hurault & Frenay 1998:103). We thus have two conflicting ontologies: 1) a western scientific point of view perceiving this area as the natural heartland of Amazonia, a *natural monument* of rich biodiversity that has to be preserved, and 2) an indigenous perspective perceiving this very same landscape as the heartland of their Wayana culture, hence a *cultural landscape*. Even when discovering cultural remains, the nature of this human presence has to be accounted for: did these cultural remains belong to small bands or tribes roaming in a counterfeit paradise? Or were these cultural remains of a former chiefdom level society where large numbers of people were once fighting, as avowed by indigenous social memory? And what was the contribution of these past indigenous peoples to the rich biodiversity today? Many of these questions remain unanswered.

Forty years after the cartographic expeditions of Jean Hurault and Pierre Frenay and about thirty years after the botanical expeditions of Jean-Jacques de Granville, members of the 2004 expedition had arrived at the foot of the inselberg labeled on the map as "Tchoukouchipann." Halfway up the mountain there is a flat surface of about thirteen by thirteen

meters delimited on the south side by the steep sloping dome of the inselberg and on the east and west side by rock shelters (Figure 2). Wayana refer to these rock shelters as *iëpu pakolon* (house of stone). Some potsherds were recovered from the surface of these rock shelters. At a lower level on the gentle slope, a ditch encircled the area with rock shelters (Figure 2: lower right). This ditch was mapped by means of a handheld GPS for about 240 meters. Due to a thick liana forest the western part of the ditch could not be mapped. On the north end, the ditch measured almost four meter in width and over a meter in depth, and it was interrupted by two passageways of about three meters wide; one at a 320 degree angle (40 degrees west of magnetic north), and, at 48 meters distance, one at a 70 degree angle. The 2004 expedition was granted permission for a pedestrian survey, but not for sub-surface testing. Therefore the exact depth and stratigraphy of the ditch are unknown. While the rock shelters may have provided shelter to passing bands of hunter/gatherers that have been encountered in this area (Ahlbrinck 1956, de Boer 1970, Carneiro 1969, Geijskes 1970), such bands of hunter/gatherers (the so-called Stone Age Indians) are not known for building ditches or moats. Rather than a purely defensive ditch, this earthwork may have been the visible manifest of the people residing in the aforementioned rock shelters.



Figure 3 – T1 (“Mount Tukusipan”) resembling a Wayana community roundhouse (*tukusipan*).

According to the Wayana, who live in keeping with the “law of resemblance” (Ahlbrinck 1937), Mount Tchoukouchipann was *not* ‘Mount Tukusipan,’ as it did not resemble a *tukusipan* (community roundhouse). The 2004 expedition continued towards the next inselberg, unlabeled on the map and therefore referred to as “T1” (first inselberg next to Tchoukouchipann). T1, according to the Wayana, is the “real” mount *Tukusipan*, because it does resemble a *tukusipan*, a community roundhouse when seen from the south (Figure 3). This inselberg is also known as Timotakem (“with a shoulder”), as it does resemble a shoulder (*mota*) when viewed from the east. Moreover, archaeological material was recovered on the forested summit (Duin 2006b)¹⁵. Albeit inselbergs in this region often illustrate the pristine nature of the Amazonian rainforest, our combined efforts argue that this landscape is a cultural landscape and a “mythscape” at the heart of

Wayana ethnogenesis. While inselbergs in the Tumuc-Humac region in the past may have been perceived as “refuge areas,” these very same inselbergs, Mount Tukusipan (T1, or Timotakem), above all, are vital in indigenous Wayana historicity. We have merely scratched the surface of the deep-history of indigenous Amazonian people in the Eastern Guiana Highlands.

Historical sites related to the period of the Great Wars as discussed in many ‘stories from long ago’ (*uhpak aptau ëitoponpë*), are not necessarily distant from current indigenous villages. In fact, most of the contemporary Wayana villages are located on archaeological sites. Some decorated potsherds recovered in the gardens, postholes, and on the surface of the contemporary Wayana villages Aloïke, Elahe, Kumakahpan, and Pilima (all in the Upper Maroni Basin), can be attributed to the Koriabo phase¹⁶. The relationship between the ar-

archaeological Koriabo ‘culture’ (said to have vanished around AD 1500) and the present-day Wayana culture (said to have emerged in the eighteenth century) will be a topic of research in future studies.

Kumakahpan (literally: “place of the *kumaka* [*Ceiba tree*]”; *not* the earlier mentioned village of Taponte, also known as Kumakahpan) yields an exceptionally high quantity of pottery fragments. In 2012, a new slash-and-

-burn garden revealed a ditch or moat measuring over six meters in width (the earth removed was used to build a bulwark), and about three meters between the lowest point of the ditch and highest point of the bulwark (Figure 4, top). Thick undergrowth and bamboo patches block the view over the remainder of the ditch. During the past decennia, inhabitants of Kumakahpan were aware of this ditch, but it had never been mapped.



Figure 4 – Ditch or moat (mapped by GPS) encircling the current indigenous Wayana village of Kumakahpan. Top: A-B section viewed from the southeast (photo by Duin 2012).

On January 8, 2012, in a collaborative effort, Kilian (one of the co-authors) took the lead and cleared a trail following the lowest point of the ditch, while Duin followed with a handheld GPS and camera. Towards the south, the ditch ends into a grove of banana-like *palulu*-plants (*Phenakospermum guianensis*, Strelitzaceae) and the last fifty meters towards the river is swampy and, according to the inhabitants of Kumakahpan, will be flooded when the river is at its highest. Midway the northwestern side, the ditch is leveled out by a path leading to several manioc gardens. The total distance of the ditch is 430 meters. The ditch is hardly visible at the northeastern side, which is mainly due to the fact of several years of slash-and-burn manioc gardens at this location, as can be observed in the aerial photographs made in December 2001 (Figure 4). There is no ditch at the southeastern side, as the natural river bank slopes down for about five meters. The total area encircled by this ditch is about three hectares (length NE-SW: 240 m.; width NW-SE: 125 m.). In the 1990s, the village center of Kumakahpan was located in the epicenter of this encircled space. In 2000, the village leader and his wife had moved their houses to the lower part of the village, whilst some villagers stayed in the upper part of the village (Figure 4: vvvvv indicates the slope between higher and lower Kumakahpan). This is the second time that an archaeological site encircled by a ditch or moat has been recorded in the Eastern Guiana Highlands south of Maripasoula, south of N 3°30' (the first one being

the earlier discussed ditch at Mount Tchoukouchipann – Figure 2)¹⁷.

Capitain Èputu, village leader of Kumakahpan, stated that this bulwark, encircling his village, originated from the times of the Great Wars. On the northeastern end, as on the southern end, the ditch ends into a *palulu* grove (*Phenakospermum guianensis*, Strelitzaceae). During the 2004 Kailawa expedition, upon encountering a similar cluster of *palulu* (wild banana plants), Aimawale stated that these *palulu* were planted in straight lines as to form a shield to fence off the arrows of attacking enemies. Unlike palisades, this “vegetal shield” will leave no archaeological traces. Future archaeological research will provide insight into the exact depth and stratigraphy of this ditch. Although slash-and-burn gardens are located on the ditch, hopefully some good samples for dating can be obtained in the near future. Nonetheless, indigenous historicity is not so much focused on *when exactly* events took place, but rather *that* the historical events *happened at this place*.

BEGINNING OF A MATURING RELATIONSHIP

The standard model of tropical forest cultures reigns supreme in the Guiana Highlands. Lack of archaeological research in the Eastern Guiana Highlands, amongst others to further our understanding of the cultural landscape and indigenous Guiana mythscapes, is mainly due to logistical difficulties in a remote and arduous tropical rainforest set-

ting. The recent Amazonian National Park of French Guiana may facilitate future programs of participatory heritage inventories and archaeological research in southern French Guiana. National Park policies, however, frequently are in friction with practices of local residents (Robbins 2004). Notwithstanding a growing number of archaeologists unearthing large man-made structures that evidence pre-contact supravillage organizations, indicating that social complexity and large populations in Amazonia were not ruled out by environmental limitations (Heckenberger & Neves 2009, Silverman & Isbell 2008). Despite an anthropological plea to reconsider the standard model (Viveiros de Castro 1996) and historians warning of “a very negative and incomplete reading of the historical literature” (Whitehead 1994:46), there remains a general deficiency in Amazonian anthropology and archaeology to historically situate sociopolitical events. In *Exchanging Perspectives*, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2004:484) stated that “we need *richer ontologies* and that it is high time to put epistemological questions to rest” (emphasis added). While western scientific disciplines (archaeology, history, and anthropology, among others), focus on similarities in “cultural assemblages” and endeavor to determine when change occurred exactly, Amerindian ontologies engage with an exchange and transformation of assemblages. Transformation, in other words, is change grounded in continuity, and tradition is continuity situated in

change. Transformation and tradition, rather than continuity and change, are at the heart of an indigenous Amazonian ontology.

CONCLUSION

Preliminary findings in the Eastern Guiana Highlands, as discussed in this article, are not so much comparable with the commonly accepted Standard Model of Tropical Forest Cultures, but rather with recent archaeological findings elsewhere in Amazonia. Moreover, collaboration with indigenous people, while applying the standard model, simply illustrates scientific findings with the typical indigenous imageries. Integration of indigenous knowledge and archaeological science, while engaging in building common research agendas, enriches our ontologies. The active focus on historically situated transformations, rather than scientific universalisms, is changing the current Amazonian anthropological and archaeological traditions. Our ongoing participatory mapping project is of interest for both western science and knowledge production, as we discover unknown archaeological sites, as it is for the young and future generations of indigenous Wayana engaging with their history while keeping their indigenous heritage alive.

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NOTES

¹ Aimawale Opoya participated in the 2003, 2004 and 2006 expeditions (Duin 2006, Pellet & Saint-Jean 2006, Saint-Jean & Pellet 2008). Kilian Toinaïke has been active throughout the research, in particular during the 2000 (Duin 2006a), 2004, and 2011-2012 expeditions. Tasikale Alupki, director of Association Kalipo, has been active throughout the research since 1997. Aimawale is two years older than Renzo and Tasikale is two years younger. Kilian is some five years older.

² « *J'ai découvert des pages inconnues de l'histoire des peuples sans histoire* » (Coudreau 1892:16)

³ This section is written from the perspective of Renzo Duin, yet this question came from the co-authors.

⁴ As noted by one of the anonymous reviewers, it is acknowledged that indigenous people too have their own agenda's or

'strategies' of an ascension trajectory inside their own community, often supported by means of non-indigenous projects.

⁵ In 1903, according to the personal notebooks by Claudius de Goeje, Yamaiké was some fifty years old.

⁶ Garmin GPSmap 62s.

⁷ In 1938, following the boundary expeditions, Paul Sangnier was sent on an ethnographic mission to the Upper Maroni River, returning to the Musée de l'Homme in Paris with some 700 ethnographic and archaeological objects, 250 photographs, and a film (Reichlen 1941). One of his findings, a pottery vessel (Musée du Quai Branly inventory number 71.1939.25.654), was said to have been found near the Wayana village of Taponaike. Dimensions of this bowl are: 12 cm (height) by 35.7 cm (width) weighting 1652 gram. Wide averted and flaring rim with large lobes and a rounded lip is characteristic for the Koriabo style (Evans & Meggers 1960:136). Unfortunately, Sangnier would disappear the following spring in the Dordogne at the age of twenty-one, and would leave no article or monograph on his expedition and findings. In 2000, descendants of Taponaike pointed out the location of the now abandoned village of Taponaike. Possible provenience of the Koriabo site with Sangier's pottery fragments is the current Wayana village of Palimino.

⁸ Janamale is the paternal grandfather of Aimawale, and the father-in-law of Capitain Èputu. In view of the earlier address of indigenous agenda's or 'strategies' of an ascension trajectory inside their own community, this mapping project can thus be perceived as a 'scientific' legitimization of the pedigrees known to Wayana social memory.

⁹ In most cases, the village name refers to the founder or owner of the village. Once

another village leader takes over, the name of the village changes. Villages also have their proper name, often referring to environmental characteristics. For instance, since the death of Granman Twenke, Wayana refer to the current village of Twenke as *kulumulipata* (place of *kulumuli*-bamboo).

¹⁰ It is indeterminate if this is the place mentioned on the map by Ahlbrinck as Malawni, who was “the last of the Wajari-koele” (Ahlbrinck 1956: 133-178).

¹¹ Inventory numbers of ethnographic objects collected during the 1937 Boundary Expedition and currently curated at the Ethnographic Museum in Leiden: RMV series 2352 (195 objects donated by C. H. de Goeje), 2361 (7 objects [three bows and four arrows] donated by W. Rogalli), 2399 (7 objects [two arrows, three flutes, and two samples] donated by R. Käyser), and 2404 (3 objects [three bows] donated by C. H. de Goeje). Based on the location of the (former) village of Taponte (Figure 1), these objects are actually from French Guiana instead of Suriname.

¹² During the 1907 Tumuc-Humac expedition, Claudius H. de Goeje (1908:24) mentioned that Poeloegoedoe, one of the Maroon villages near the junction of Lawa and Tapanahoni, had many fruit trees, namely: mango, bread tree, coconut, *maripa* and *kumu* palms, and orange trees. These fruit trees are indicators of former settlements. Also *Awara* palms are indicators of former Maroon villages.

¹³ Archaeological material present in (abandoned) gold mining camps in the Upper Maroni Basin indicates a further richness of the unknown past.

¹⁴ « Je [Chapuis] ne sais pas s'il existe un lien entre cette histoire [c.-à-d., transformer le *tukusipan* en pierre] et l'inselberg nommé *Tukusipan* » (Chapuis & Rivière 2003:141, note 326).

¹⁵ Next to large quantities of potsherds (Duin 2006b), and botanical indicators, two stone groupings are present, each consisting of a large granite plate (respectively 90x120x10 cm. and 60x130x10 cm.) supported by triangular granite blocks (about 40x40 cm.) and granite plates. Wayana identify these erected stone plates as markers placed by the legendary hero Kailawa to mark his trail. Similar erected stone plates have been found on nearby inselbergs (Duin 2006a), and are different from the stone cairns constructed by the cartographic expeditions. Another stone assemblage can be found on the south side of the summit: a granite plate (80x160x5 cm.) is in the middle of the downslope side supported by a 12 cm. high pile of four smaller stones. This flat stone is oriented towards another inselberg, namely Borne 1, on which summit is an assemblage of stone alignments (Hurault & Frenay 1998:37, Mazière 1997:117). On another inselberg, Mitaraka Sud, we found another remarkable feature: several perpendicular lines were seemingly etched in the granite outcrop. Structural geologists (pers. com. David Deliance and Dr. Charles H. Trupe) interpreted these features as sets of orthogonal joints, or fractures, which is not unusual for granitic or monzonitic rocks. These fractures occur as massive igneous rocks become unroofed by erosion. The reduction in pressure as overburden is eroded away allowing the rock to expand, causing the fractures. Then again, even when these fractures are natural, the possibility remains that indigenous people in the past used these fractures to remove stone plates. At one instance, a stone seems to be intentionally wedged under a plate, potentially to detach it. The erected stone plates attributed to Kailawa are of the width (60 to 90 cm.) and thickness (5 to 12 cm.) corresponding with the dimensions between the natural fractures.

¹⁶The Koriabo phase is dated around AD 750-1500 on the coastal area (Boomert 2004:256-257), Rostain 1994:457-458, 2008). And currently adjusted to AD 1000-1500 (Hildebrand pers. com.). No dates are known for the Koriabo phase in the Guiana Highlands.

¹⁷Neither Kumakahpan, nor Tchoukouchipann are of the “*montagne couronnée*” kind. Kilian, based on his visit to both sites, affirms that a “*montagne couronnée*” similar to Yaou (Petitjean-Roget 1991, Mazière 1997:38, Mestre 2013) is located between the rivers Tampok and Lawa. This site has not been studied, but is currently endangered by illegal wildcat goldmining.

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FILMS

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